

**Centre for
European and
Asian Studies**

**1/2001
ISSN 1500-2683**

***Opposing the Centre: Euro-Scepticism
and the Politics of Territorial
Opposition***

Nick Sitter

BI NORWEGIAN SCHOOL
OF MANAGEMENT

**Opposing the Centre:
Euro-Scepticism and the Politics of Territorial Opposition**

Nick Sitter

May 2001

A publication from:

**Centre for European and Asian Studies at
Norwegian School of Management**

Elias Smiths vei 15
P.O Box 580
N-1302 Sandvika
Norway

<http://www.bi.no/dep2/ceas/>

Summary

The central argument in the present paper is that Europeanisation of party politics – the translation of issues related to European integration into domestic party politics – is driven by the dynamics of long- and short-term government-opposition competition. This has generated three broad patterns of Euro-scepticism. First, several catch-all parties, which compete along the main socio-economic left-right dimension, have flirted with Euro-scepticism or feature Euro-sceptic factions. Second, parties that have eschewed the catch-all approach in favour of political appeal centred on values, interests or identity make up a second dimension of competition and a second type of potential Euro-scepticism. Finally, parties on the right or left flanks of the party systems, first communist and neo-fascist and later socialist left, green and new populist parties, add a third dimension of opposition and therefore a third type of Euro-scepticism. Whilst the first and third types of Euro-scepticism have attracted some attention, the second dimension remains under-researched.

The type of Euro-scepticism linked to the second dimension of opposition is to no small extent the politics of territorial opposition. The central tenet of the second dimension of opposition is rejection of the catch-all (often centripetal, preference-accommodating) strategies that most centre-left or centre-right parties came to adopt in the mid-Twentieth Century, as well as the subsequent ‘cartel party’ strategy.¹ It stands in contrast to the competition between the main non-socialist party and the social democrats that has dominated most West European party systems, based largely on socio-economic issues. Opposition to the catch-all parties accordingly centres on identity, values or interest, usually based on the translation of religious, centre-periphery or rural-urban cleavages into political competition. To the extent that the defence of these interests or values is linked to the nation state, and external sources of politics are therefore seen as a threat, this second dimension of opposition provides fertile ground for party-based Euro-scepticism.

However, the extent to which this is translated into Euro-sceptic party stances depends on party strategy – both of the parties in question and their competitors. This explains the dynamic nature of party-based Euro-scepticism. A party’s central goals – continued survival, policy influence, vote maximisation and participation in government office – do not necessarily pull in the same direction. The scope for tension between Euro-sceptic policy preferences and participation in a governing coalition is considerable. Much the same holds for competition for votes and policy compromise in coalition government, particularly if the former includes appeal based on Euro-scepticism. Even policy developments may drive reassessment of Euro-sceptic stances, for example if the cost-benefit balance of membership changes (e.g. agricultural policy reform) or two policy priorities become incompatible (e.g. economic protectionism and military security integration). In short, party-based Euro-scepticism is the politics of opposition, and it is

¹ O. Kirchheimer, “The Transformation of West European Party Systems”, in J. LaPalombara & M. Weiner (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966); A. Katz & P. Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organisation and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party”, *Party Politics*, 1:1 (1995), 5-28.

therefore dynamic. Although the interest-, identity- or value-based politics of territorial opposition may be more impervious to pressure for change than the first and third dimension of opposition, even this type of Euro-scepticism is subject to dynamic development.

Opposing the Centre: Euro-Scepticism and the Politics of Territorial Opposition

EURO-SCEPTICISM AND THE POLITICS OF OPPOSITION

The term ‘Euro-scepticism’ has proven somewhat elusive, not least because political competition pertaining to European integration has been cast in terms of existing ideologies, new cleavages, new issues that cross-cut traditional lines of party competition, as well as a broad range of opposition to the process of European integration. The variety of parties, across the ideological spectrum and party families, suggests that Euro-scepticism is best analysed as an encompassing term that “expresses the idea of contingent or qualified, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration.”² Only in a few cases has it prompted new parties. To the extent that opposition to European integration has been translated into party politics, the process has been driven by existing political parties (or factions) and Euro-scepticism has been derived from, or at least aligned with, current patterns of party competition. In what follows, Euro-scepticism is therefore analysed as a product of government – opposition competition rather than as a single issue or cleavage that cross-cuts party politics.

Euro-Scepticism – Cleavage, Maverick Issue, Touchstone of Dissent...

Although it is sometimes useful to present Euro-scepticism as a single cleavage or dimension when mapping party systems,³ this raises both theoretical and empirical questions. By Bartolini & Mair’s definition of cleavages as including an *empirical* element (i.e. objective social structure), a *normative* element (i.e. a subjective dimension) and an *organisational or behavioural* element (i.e. action or organisation), and therefore

² P. Taggart, “A Touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary West European Party Systems”, *European Journal of Political Research*, 33 (1998), 363-388, p.366.

³ S. Hix & C. Lord, *Political Parties in the European Union*, (London, Macmillan, 1997), chapter 2; K. Derschouwer (1999), “Imagining the European Party System: The Use of Comparisons”, 1999-2000 European Forum Conference on Multi-Level Party Systems: Europeanization and the Reshaping of National Political Representation, Conference Paper EUR/12.

constituting a “*form of closure of social relationships*”,⁴ classifying opposition to European integration as a cleavage stretches to concept too far to be very useful. Given the centrality of new cleavages in the debate over de- or re-alignment of West European party systems in the last third of the Twentieth Century, this is far from trivial inasmuch as a new cleavage might be expected to shape party system change.⁵ Moreover, at the empirical level the de-alignment thesis has been questioned, and similar questions have been raised over both the weak bases for voters’ opinions on European integration and its limited impact on national party systems.⁶

Approaching Euro-scepticism as a more diffuse ‘issue dimension’ is, of course, less problematic.⁷ The central question then becomes its effect on party competition, and Maor & Smith suggest that viewed as a single issue Euro-scepticism may be considered a ‘maverick issue’ that cuts across the mainstream left-right dimension of political competition.⁸ The ‘maverick’ element derives from the difficulty in absorbing it into left-right party competition and they therefore emphasise the importance of an issue’s ‘squeezability’, i.e. the extent to which it can be defused and accommodated by transforming it from a value-based to resource-related question. This is particularly problematic inasmuch as Euro-scepticism has developed in the form of anti-elite protest, based on values rather than negotiable disputes over allocation of resources. However, as

⁴ S. Bartolini & P. Mair, *Identity, Competition, and Electoral Availability: the Stabilization of European Electorates 1885-1985*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.216.

⁵ S. M. Lipset & S. Rokkan, “Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: and Introduction”, in S. M. Lipset & S. Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, (London, The Free Press, 1967); R. Rose & D. Urwin, “Persistence and Change in Western Party Systems since 1945”, *Political Studies*, 18:3 (1970), 287-319; R. Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*, (Princeton University Press, 1977); M. Pedersen, “The Changing Dynamics of European Party Systems: Changing Patterns of Electoral Volatility”, *European Journal of Political Research*, 7 (1979), 1-26; S. B. Wolinetz, “The Transformation of Western European Party Systems Revisited”, *West European Politics*, 2:1 (1979); R. J. Dalton, S. C. Flanagan & P. A. Beck (eds.), *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Realignment or Dealignment?*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984).

⁶ Respectively, R. Sinnott, “Europeanisation and Public opinion: The Extent and Implications of ‘Non-Europe’”, 1999-2000 European Forum Conference on Multi-Level Party Systems: Europeanization and the Reshaping of National Political Representation, Conference Paper EUR/21; P. Mair, “The Limited Impact of Europe on National Party Systems”, *West European Politics*, 23:4 (2000), 26-51.

⁷ Hix & Lord analyse party competition in terms of the “integration-sovereignty *dimension*” of EU politics, *Political Parties in the European Union*, p28, emphasis added.

⁸ M. Maor & G. Smith, “On the Structuring of Party Competition: The Impact of Maverick Issues”, (manuscript, The European Institute, LSE, 1993).

Taggart's above-cited definition indicates, Euro-scepticism is perhaps best analysed not as a single issue, but as a multi-faceted phenomenon. It then becomes more 'squeezable'.

Hence the link between Euro-scepticism and dissent: "the European issue [...] provides us with a potential touchstone for domestic dissent", ranging from ideological opposition on the part of protest parties to e.g. leadership struggles within established core parties.⁹ At a tactical level, several parties (particularly of the 'new populist' variety) have found it useful to invoke Euro-scepticism in electoral appeal against the governing party or coalition.¹⁰ At a strategic level a number of parties have found that their main issues have a European dimension, and that opposition to government policy may sometimes be cast in term of opposition to integration. Principled objections to European integration, based e.g. on nationalism, concern for democracy or sovereignty, or even internationalist opposition to regional integration, makes up the third level. To be sure, most Euro-sceptic parties or factions combine several of these elements. The central point, however, is dissent – opposition to government policy on European integration.

Euro-scepticism therefore emerges as a somewhat nebulous phenomenon, potentially linked to a range of ideologies, strategies and tactics, and particularly attractive to dissenting parties or factions. Far from representing a single issue dimension, let alone a new cleavage, opposition to European integration is therefore linked inextricably to party politics. It is not merely the product of policy positions and identity or values, but also parties' "relative position in the political system."¹¹ However, it is not linked only to dissenting factions within catch-all parties and dissident protest parties on the left or right flanks, but also to parties at the 'centre' of the left-right dimension. Nowhere is this clearer than in Norway, where the three 'centre' parties ran a minority Euro-sceptic government under Bondevik, 1997 – 2000, albeit in control of only 42 of 165 seats. Hence the suggestion that there is a broader relationship between Euro-scepticism and competition between government and opposition.

⁹ Taggart, "A Touchstone of Dissent", p.384.

¹⁰ On the 'new populist' concept, see and P. Taggart, "New Populist Parties in Western Europe", *West European Politics*, 18:1 (1995), 34-51.

¹¹ Taggart, "A Touchstone of Dissent", p.379.

... or the Politics of Opposition?

Because European integration remains (despite increased supranationalism) a project driven largely by member state governments, opposition to specific measures tends to be the privilege of the opposition. Unsurprisingly, the governments that have negotiated a compromise tend to defend it.¹² Hence the link between holding executive office and at worst muted Euro-scepticism. To be sure, Euro-sceptic governments may win elections, but this raises potential problems inasmuch as they are constrained by EU policy or required to defend compromised reached (not always unanimously) at the EU level. Parties in opposition, on the other hand, are more likely to face internal dissent over party strategy, often find it harder to impose discipline and have some incentives to oppose government policy as such. Moreover, as per the touchstone-of-dissent argument, parties in opposition on the flanks of the party systems may find it useful to strengthen their dissenting stance by incorporating Euro-scepticism. Hence the focus on dimensions of opposition as explanatory variables for party-based Euro-scepticism.

Three broad dimensions of government-opposition competition can be extracted from the comparative West European politics literature.¹³ In terms of historical development, the first is political opposition prior to the rise of socialist parties, pitting a liberal left against a conservative right and centred on state-church, centre-periphery, urban-rural, or national and regime-oriented cleavages. The second, pitting the new social democratic left against the non-socialist centre-right in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century, provided the dominant left-right dimension in Western Europe and the basis for first left and right mass parties and later post-war catch-all (or cartel) parties. Third, on

¹² The confirmation of Commission President Santer, a Christian democrat, by a socialist majority controlled European Parliament in 1994 is a case in point. The vote was carried partly because socialist MEPs from states with centre-left governments were reluctant to reject compromises negotiated by 'their' governments. *Financial Times* 22 May 1994; S. Hix & C. Lord, "The Making of a President: The European Parliament and the Confirmation of Jacques Santer as President of the Commission", *Government and Opposition*, 31:1 (1996), 62-76.

¹³ See e.g. R. A. Dahl (ed.), *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966); J. LaPalombara & M. Weiner (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966); G. Smith, *Politics in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*, (Aldershot, Gower, 1989).

extreme right or left, communist and fascist parties extended the spectrum and introduced an anti-system dimension to opposition. The ‘new politics’ of both the left and right introduced a degree of anti-establishment politics that has taken over and crowded out much of the old extreme right and left’s opposition. The three central dimensions of opposition relevant to Euro-scepticism are therefore, in increasing order of opposition to European integration, i) competition between centre-left or centre-right catch-all or cartel parties that tend to alternate in government; ii) competition from value- or interest-based parties of the old left or right that have opted not to pursue the catch-all strategy; and iii) anti-establishment opposition in the form of left-socialists or ‘new politics’ on the left and ‘new populists’ on the right.

First, mainstream left-right positions on European integration can be explained largely in terms of socio-economic policy,¹⁴ though of course foreign and security policy played a considerable role during the cold war. On the continent the Christian democrats provided the driving force behind European integration in the original six member states, carefully diluting resistance from socialist parties through compromise.¹⁵ Yet catch-all parties face potential problems in opposition inasmuch as supporting the government’s initiatives may be problematic if its electorate or membership is divided. Discipline may be more difficult to enforce, and strategy debates more legitimate in the wake of defeat. Moreover, as the Maastricht referendums in Denmark, France and Ireland demonstrated, mobilising and influencing the party’s electorate is more difficult in opposition.¹⁶ Principled or ‘hard’ Euro-scepticism (i.e. outright rejection of European integration contingent as opposed to qualified and contingent ‘soft’ opposition to integration)¹⁷ is not expected in parties that compete along this dimension, although a degree of Euro-scepticism might be

¹⁴ G. Marks (1999), “The Past in the Present: A Cleavage Theory of Party Response to European Integration”, 1999-2000 European Forum Conference on Multi-Level Party Systems: Europeanization and the Reshaping of National Political Representation, Conference Paper EUR/8.

¹⁵ See L. N. Lindberg & S. A. Scheingold, *Europe’s Would-Be Polity: Patterns of Change in the European Community*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1970), Chapter 1; E. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe*, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1958), chapter 4.

¹⁶ M. Franklin, M. Marsh, L. McLaren, “Uncorking the Bottle: Popular Opposition to European Unification in the Wake of Maastricht”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 32:4 (1994), 455-472.

¹⁷ P. Taggart & A. Szczerbiak, “Parties, Positions and Europe: Euroscepticism in the EU the Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe”, paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Political Studies Association, Manchester, April 10-12, 2001.

associates with parties that adopt centrifugal (or adversarial, as oppose to centripetal or Downsian) strategies of electoral competition.

Second, parties that compete along the second dimension of opposition – territorial opposition, including cultural or religious cleavages and defence of rural interests – and therefore reject the catch-all (or cartel) approach in favour of focus on values, interest or identity have adopted a wider range of positions on European integration. The absence of a Euro-sceptic party competing along the first dimension would suggest a potential opening in the electoral market for interest-based, anti-cartel Euro-sceptic appeal. However, this is contingent on a policy- or identity-driven opposition to an aspect of European integration, e.g. its agricultural policy or perceived threats to national culture. This in turn depends on their propensity to perceive the state as a threat to identity and interest, or their bulwark of territorial defence. Moreover, the quest for office or efforts to extend electoral appeal beyond its traditional electorate may push interest- or value-based parties in the opposite direction, away from Euro-scepticism. This dimension of opposition should therefore provide fertile ground for party-based Euro-scepticism, *in the right conditions*.

Finally, the third main dimension of competition is located at the flanks of the left-right dimension. Most West European communist and neo-fascist parties have, unsurprisingly, opposed European integration as part of western capitalism or as a threat to the nation. Much the same can be said of their more moderate (and more successful) successors or immediate rivals on the socialist left and new populist right, but with one major proviso. To the extent that parties on the first or second dimension have already ‘crowded’ out Euro-scepticism and to the extent that the new populist parties seek participation in government coalitions, protest-driven Euro-scepticism may be counterproductive as a political strategy.

The Second Dimension of Opposition – The Politics of Territorial Opposition

The Euro-scepticism-as-opposition model therefore indicates three broad patterns of party-based Euro-scepticism: i) ‘type one’, within catch-all parties that compete along the mainstream left-right dimension, ii) ‘type two’, among parties that compete along a cross-cutting territorial-cultural dimension and iii) ‘type three’, among parties on left and right flanks of the party system. Given the range of party positions on European integration, from outright rejection of membership to enthusiastic advocacy of participation in Economic and Monetary Union in Norway and Sweden respectively, the second dimension of opposition is perhaps the most interesting with regard to party-based Euro-scepticism. Recent debates within the Norwegian Christian People’s Party and Bossi’s Northern League’s (LN) turn toward Euro-scepticism renders the question of how party-based Euro-scepticism changes particularly salient. And the emerging evidence that Euro-scepticism in East Central Europe is not confined to the extreme right and un-reformed communist left indicates its wider relevance. The central point is that ‘type two’ Euro-scepticism is related to and driven by territorial, cultural or primary industry-oriented *opposition*, not merely cleavages or parties as such. Unless this dimension is translated into competition by a party that challenges the policies of the mainstream catch-all parties, it cannot be expected. The next section therefore turns to the link between Euro-scepticism and the politics of territorial opposition, before the final section’s comparative analysis of Euro-scepticism and the second dimension of opposition in European party politics.

EURO-SCEPTICISM AND THE POLITICS OF TERRITORIAL OPPOSITION

The roots of the second dimension of opposition run to the territorial cleavages discussed by Lipset & Rokkan – the centre-periphery cleavages derived from the ‘national revolution’ and the rural-urban cleavages that arose during the industrial revolution.¹⁸ In Western Europe both were usually translated into party politics before the rise of the socialist left, sometimes in alignment with state-church or regime change cleavages.¹⁹ The politics of territorial opposition, in the shape of cleavages translated into party politics, therefore draws on both economic interest and cultural identity or values.²⁰ However, in most West European states the social democrat left emerged as the main opposition in the Twentieth Century, shaping the main left-right dimension around issues related to state ownership of the means of production, its role in the economy, the scope of the welfare state and political redistribution of resources.²¹ Hence the strategic dilemma – whether to compete along this ‘first’ dimension of government-opposition competition, or stake out an interest- or value-based position along a second dimension of competition. Come the 1990s, a series of East Central European parties would face the same strategic choice.

Territorial Opposition as Party Strategy

The long-term strategic choice faced by West European parties, between catch-all and interest-based organisation and electoral competition, is therefore more important than genesis or affiliation with party *familles spirituelles*. To be sure, most parties that have

¹⁸ Lipset & Rokkan, “Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments”, p.14.

¹⁹ On regime change as a cleavage, see H. Daalder, “Parties, Elites, and Political Developments in Western Europe”, in J. LaPalombara & M. Weiner (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966); G. Sartori, “European Political Parties: The Case of Polarized Pluralism”, in the same volume; E. Allardt & P. Pesonen, “Cleavages in Finnish Politics”, in Lipset & Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*.

²⁰ S. Rokkan & D. Urwin, “introduction: Centres and peripheries in Western Europe”, in S. Rokkan & D. Urwin (eds.), *The Politics of Territorial Identity: Studies in European Regionalism*, (London, Sage Publications, 1982).

²¹ A. Lijphart, *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1984) chapter 8.

chosen to compete along a second dimension of opposition, usually cross-cutting the left-right dimension, belong to either von Beyme's 'liberal and radical', 'agrarian' or 'regional and ethnic' party families.²² However, in some cases these parties followed their main competitors' evolution toward the ideal-type catch-all or cartel party, including not only organisational change toward a more professional party, but also playing down defence of special or sectional interest and ideology in favour of focus on issues or leadership competence. In others they retained a more specialised focus on a niche electoral market, be it interest-, identity- or value-driven. Whereas post-war Christian democrats in Italy or Germany may have used the state-church issue to reinforce their competition with the left, most Scandinavian agrarian and liberal parties distanced themselves from the conservative-social democrat government-opposition dimension. In terms of party strategy, these parties rejected the ideal-type evolution toward the catch-all party, remaining what can broadly be called 'interest-parties'.

This primacy of party strategy over cleavages suggests the possibility of new parties emerging along the territorial dimension. If the defining feature is rejection of the catch-all strategy and focus on peripheral economic interest, cultural identity or values, in opposition to the 'cartel' parties on the centre-right and -left, the Danish and Swedish Christian parties that emerged on the scene in the 1970s and 1980s and Bossi's LN would qualify as territorial opposition. Although the latter shares some characteristics with the new populist right, its regional economic interest and anti-Rome rhetoric would qualify it as at least partly territorial opposition. With a view to explaining patterns of party-based Euro-scepticism, patterns of opposition are more telling than '*familles spirituelles*'.

Turning to post-communist East Central Europe (Hungary, Poland and the Czech and Slovak Republics), similar strategic choices have shaped party competition.²³ While reform communists may have been constrained to adopt, or at least faced great incentives to embrace, the West European social democratic legacy, the remaining parties were free to choose among several competing legacies. The key legacies invoked by successful

²² K. von Beyme, *Political Parties in Western Democracies*, (Aldersgot, Gower, 1985).

parties include West European liberalism, Christian Democracy, the struggle against communism and inter-war politics. All four states have seen considerable competition as to which party or parties would become the main opposition to the reformed communists. As in several West European cases of competition among the non-socialist parties, a three-party constellation including two catch-all ‘non-socialist’ parties may yet turn out to be the norm in all four states. Although most post-communist parties adopted catch-all-like strategies, a number of parties attempted to base this on specific interests. Rather than move directly to catch-all or cartel status, as the ‘movement’ or ‘conglomerate’ parties did, a few parties built their electoral appeal on an agrarian and/or territorial basis. In the present analysis, the term ‘territorial opposition’ is applied to the parties that, like their West European counterparts, thus at least partly eschewed the catch-all/cartel strategy in favour of interest- or value based appeal. The relevant examples include the Hungarian Smallholders’ Party (FKgP), the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) and, at a stretch, the Communist party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM).

The Strategy of Territorial Opposition and Euro-Scepticism

The first building-bloc in the strategy of territorial opposition is therefore at least partial rejection of competition along the mainstream socio-economic dimension as defined by the two largest parties that dominate the party system (usually both catch-all parties). Although territorial opposition usually involves alignment along the left-right dimension – hence the ‘centre’ names adopted by the Scandinavian agrarian parties – it is based on attaching greater salience to issues derived from cross-cutting cleavages based on territorial or cultural identity or interest. The central questions as far as their susceptibility to develop Euro-sceptic stances is concerned are whether the main centre-left or -right parties have already crowded out the Euro-sceptic space, and whether the territorial opposition perceives the European integration as a threat to its interests, values or identity. The latter depends to no small extent on whether the state is perceived as a bulwark for defence of territorial interests, although to the extent that the EU is perceived

²³ A. Lijphart, “Democratisation and Constitutional Choice in Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary and Poland 1989-91”, *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 4:2 (1992), 207-223.

as a potential ‘super-state’ is could conceivably be portrayed as an even greater danger than the existing state. The first variable that shapes the scope for territorially based Euro-scepticism is therefore the main parties’ stance on European integration. In most West European states they have not invoked it, and there is ample scope for territorial or protest-based opposition parties to invoke Euro-scepticism.

The second building-bloc is the focus on territorial opposition – based on identity, political opposition or economic interest, or a combination of all three. As a strategy of opposition, each represents a potential source of party-based Euro-scepticism. The central questions with respect to Euro-scepticism are whether they perceive the state as the key defender of interests and values, the EU seen as a cosmopolitan threat to national identity and whether EU membership entails policy costs or benefits in terms of specific policies (regional, agriculture). Drawing on Rokkan & Urwin’s analysis, centre-periphery politics is subdivided into three dimensions, cultural, political and economic.²⁴ To be sure, most parties that focus on territorial opposition invoke more than one aspect, but with respect to Euro-scepticism they warrant analytical separation.

Territorial opposition based on culture or identity usually entails religious dissent or ethnic/national minority status. The nationalist or ethnic minority parties are not considered further in the present analysis, partly in the interest of brevity and partly because they are less problematic in terms of Euro-scepticism. They would be expected to perceive European integration instrumentally in terms of their goals of autonomy or independence, i.e. see the EU as an ally in quest for devolution. Data from Ray’s expert survey of 1996 supports this inasmuch as no national/ethnic minority party registers as Euro-sceptic.²⁵ Cultural dissent is more problematic, particularly in the form of more ‘fundamentalist’ shape that formed the basis for the Scandinavian Christian parties.²⁶ To

²⁴ S. Rokkan & D. Urwin, *Economy, Territory, Identity: Politics of West European Peripheries*, (London, Sage, 1983).

²⁵ The Flemish Bloc in Belgium scores 3.5 on a 1-7 anti/pro-EU scale, equalling the UK Conservatives. L. Ray, “Measuring Party Orientations towards European Integration: Results from an Expert Survey”, *European Journal of Political Research*, 36 (1999), 283-306. The survey does not cover Northern Ireland, where the Democratic Unionist Party takes a sceptic stance toward the EU.

²⁶ L. Karvonen, “Christian Parties in Scandinavia: Victory over the Windmills?”, in D. Hanley (ed.), *Christian Democracy in Europe: A Comparative Perspective*, (London, Pinter, 1994).

the extent that the state is seen as the protector of culture or identity, and cosmopolitan regional integration as a threat, Euro-scepticism should of course be expected. However, even where the state or state capital is seen as a cosmopolitan threat, the EU may be perceived as an extension of this threat in the form of a 'super-state'. The relationship between territorial opposition based on culture and identity and Euro-scepticism is therefore to a large extent dependent on the party's interpretation of the nature of the European integration project.

Politically driven territorial opposition combines opposition to administrative centralisation of power with defence of local or regional interests or values. Resistance to central government is cast in terms of defence of local self-rule and local interests, usually linked to identity and culture or economic interests. The potential for opposition-driven Euro-scepticism parallels that of cultural territorial opposition, i.e. it is based on perceptions of European integration as a potential threat to local autonomy. Given the Commission's focus on regional government, the incentives should, in most cases, point toward welcoming European integration. Nevertheless, 'Brussels' has sometimes been cast as an extension of 'distant central government', inasmuch as European integration is perceived as a centralising process.

Economically based territorial opposition should be the least problematic of the three bases of opposition with regard to the potential for Euro-scepticism inasmuch as it entails a simple cost-benefit analysis. The question, to which the Norwegian and Finnish 'centre' electorate and the Norwegian party answered 'no', is: are agricultural and regional policy subsidies expected to be greater under the EU regime? Given that redistribution of resources, such as protection of agriculture and fisheries, should be more easily negotiable than culture or identity, this form of Euro-scepticism should be more contingent on EU rules than the cultural or political dimensions of territorial opposition. However, in its present form, the Common Agricultural and Fisheries Policies have limited attraction to Scandinavian primary industry, and the land-ownership question has raised concerns in the East Central European applicant states' peasant parties.

Countervailing Pressure: Tactical Euro-Scepticism and the Quest for Votes or Office

The third building-bloc in the strategy of territorial opposition has considerable potential to work against Euro-scepticism. If the long- and medium-term goals of political parties that compete along the territorial dimension of government-opposition competition include organisational survival and policy goals cast in terms of defence of territorial interest, identity and values, the more short term tactical goals of maximising votes and gaining access to executive office do not necessarily push or pull in the same direction. If their medium term strategies are based on differentiation from the catch-all parties, immediate electoral competition and compromise in coalition government may require the exact opposite – emulation of catch-all party tactics.

The quest for votes beyond the territorially based niche market should provide incentives for an interest-based party to move toward a catch-all strategy. Assuming that it has proved at least moderately competent in mobilising its core supporters, an interest-based party that seeks to extend its voter appeal will be under pressure to dilute its ideological appeal if it is to attract voters from its catch-all competitors. Even interest-based parties are not immune from Kirchheimers' dynamics of competition. In the present model the politics of territorial opposition is linked explicitly to a non-catch-all party strategy. The party's goals in terms of policy and organisational survival are therefore addressed in terms of focussing on a more or less clearly defined constituency, as opposed to the catch-all party's non-ideological appeal based on accommodating the majority of the electorate. However, both are ideal-types, and most interest-based parties feature internal debates over party strategy.

Likewise, the quest for participation in governing coalitions is expected to exert a moderating effect inasmuch as a Euro-sceptic party faces a trade-off between policy and office. A number of Norwegian centre-right governments have collapsed over the 'European Question', driving the point home forcefully.²⁷ In a party system where the

²⁷ Two non-socialist coalitions collapsed in the run-up to the EU applications (Borten 1971, Syse 1990), and Bondevik's Euro-sceptic minority government fell in 2000, failing to push through its own policies.

centre-right is divided over European integration, even presenting a credible governing alternative provides incentives to play down the European question. To be sure, this may be the weakest of all the incentives built in to the Euro-scepticism-as-opposition model, but it suggests considerable potential constraints on Euro-sceptic parties in office. Although hardly a case of territorial opposition, Haider's Austrian Freedom Party's (FPÖ) problems in coalition government illustrate the point.

Party-Based Euro-Scepticism and the Politics of Territorial Opposition – the Model

The argument set out in part one holds that Euro-scepticism can be understood as the politics of opposition. Part two has focuses on the second of three dimensions of opposition, opposition based on the territorial politics and interest-based party strategy. Combining the three central elements in territorial opposition – circumventing the left-right dimension, electoral appeal based on territorial identity, values or interests, and balancing this against the incentives provided by the quest for extending the electoral bases and participation in executive office – a model of party-based Euro-scepticism with respect to territorial politics is suggested.

The first factor in explaining party-based Euro-scepticism is the competition between the catch-all parties, which shape the dominant left-right dimension of competition. If one or more adopt Euro-sceptic stances, the scope for territorial Euro-scepticism is reduced considerably. To be sure, an interest-based (e.g. agrarian) party may still face incentives to adopt a Euro-sceptic stance on policy grounds (the cost of the CAP to farmers), but much of the 'opposition' logic for Euro-scepticism disappears.

Second, party-based Euro-scepticism along the second dimension of competition is driven by the politics of territorial opposition. To the extent that the state is seen as the main bulwark in defence of territorial identity, values or interests, this dimension of opposition readily forms the basis for party-based Euro-scepticism. The non-economic aspect of opposition may be based on religious or regional identity, and/or opposition to

supranational governance; the economic aspect on the economic costs or benefits of membership.

Third, if the logic of opposition may provide incentives for party-based Euro-scepticism, the logic of government is likely to operate against this. The two main incentives for playing down Euro-scepticism, which provide the dynamic part of the model, include extension of the party's electoral appeal and participation in coalition government.

In part three, below, this Euro-scepticism-as-the-politics-of-opposition model is applied to party competition along the 'second dimension of opposition' in Western and East Central Europe.

TERRITORIAL OPPOSITION AND PARTY-BASED EURO-SCEPTICISM

Government – Opposition Left-Right Competition and Party-Based Euro-Scepticism

Returning to the first dimension of government-opposition competition, to the extent that Euro-scepticism is associated with the catch-all parties at all it tends to take the form of internal dissent in one party, normally the one that is most likely to find the contemporary EU economic regime a threat to its domestic economic policy. Euro-scepticism therefore tends to be located at the centrifugal rather than centripetal wings of the party, i.e. its extremes, and linked to adversary rather than Downsian (centre-oriented) electoral strategies. Other things being equal, this is exacerbated in opposition because it is more difficult to impose discipline, debates about strategy are more likely in the wake of defeat than in victory, and the party's opposition role may push it towards criticism of (pro-European) government initiatives.

Although this type of party-based Euro-scepticism has been documented within a number of catch-all parties,²⁸ few or no catch-all parties in Western Europe can currently be described as Euro-sceptic, with the possible exception of Hague's Conservatives in the UK. To be sure, the Scandinavian social democrat parties include Euro-sceptic factions, and the Norwegian Labour Party (DNA) split over the issue (the dissidents eventually consolidating the socialist left in the eponymous SV in 1975).²⁹ However, in no case has this crowded out the Euro-sceptic space. The potential for opposition-driven territorial Euro-scepticism therefore survives the first hurdle in most of Western Europe.

Territorial Competition and Party-Based Euro-Scepticism

Despite considerable regional variations in party support, most of 'core' Western Europe and the UK have seen limited party competition along the second dimension of opposition apart from minority or regional nationalism, and little or no territorially driven Euro-scepticism. The British, Netherlands, German (post-war) and French (Fifth Republic) post-war party systems may have featured competition between non-socialist parties, but this has largely been in the form of liberal vs. conservative competition in catch-all terms rather than cast in defence of agrarian or regional interest as in the Scandinavian cases.³⁰ The Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) is closer to the third dimension of opposition, a new populist anti-cartel protest party, than territorial opposition. The weakness of agrarian parties has been explained in terms of catholic parties' appeal to both urban and rural voters, socialist parties' attempts to extend the 'class struggle' to agriculture, and the fascist response during the inter-war period.³¹ Among the Mediterranean (third-wave-of-enlargement) EU member states, only Spain features

²⁸ See e.g. J. Gaffney (ed.), *Political Parties and the European Union*, (London, Routledge, 1996); Taggart, "A Touchstone of Dissent".

²⁹ D. A. Christensen, "The Left-Wing Opposition in Denmark, Norway and Sweden: Cases of Euro-Phobia?", *West European Politics*, 19:3 (1996), 525-546.

³⁰ The Netherlands case is complicated by the 'pillarised' structure of competition, but between 1966 and 1976 the five established parties all shifted toward catch-all strategies. See e.g. R. A. Koole, "The Vulnerability of the Modern Cadre Party in the Netherlands", in R. S. Katz & P. Mair (eds.), *How Parties Organize: Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies*, (London, Sage, 1994).

³¹ D. W. Urwin, *From Ploughshare to Ballot Box: the Politics of Agrarian Defence in Europe*, (Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1980); G. Luebbert, *Liberalism, Fascism or Social Democracy: Social Classes and the Political Origins of Regimes in Interwar Europe*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991).

significant parties competing along the territorial dimension, none of which have embraced Euro-scepticism.

Although the three bases of territorial opposition were considered separately in part two, most parties that focus on territorial opposition combine values and identity with political and economic interest. Dividing this into two dimensions, one based on the material costs and benefits associated with European integration and the other based on protection of values, identity or political autonomy (or sovereignty), the strategic incentives for party-based Euro-scepticism are presented in table one. Hard Euro-scepticism is primarily expected in the south-east (lower right) quadrant, where the politics of identity and economic interest both warrant it, while softer forms of Euro-scepticism is expected in the north-east and south-west quadrants. The fit between cases and theory is relatively unproblematic, though the Finnish Centre Party (KESK) represents an interesting case of overcoming pressure for Euro-scepticism.

Table one – policy goals and incentives for Euro-scepticism (Euro-sceptic parties in bold)

economic cost-benefit analysis	non-material goals: values, identity, democracy	
	EU not seen as a threat	EU seen as a threat
EU impact positive or neutral	Danish V, KrF Swedish C, KD Spanish regional parties Germany's CSU	Norway's KrF, V Finland's SKL Italy's LN
EU impact negative	Finland's KESK	Norway's Sp Switzerland's SVP

Source: Party documents

To the extent that they have staked out a solid opposition stance based on territorial opposition to the national centre (and its centre-left/ -right ‘cartel’) cast in terms of identity, values or defence of local democracy, this readily forms the basis for opposition to a new centre (and elite cartel) in Brussels. Hence the ‘Oslo is far away, but Brussels is further’ anti-EU slogan in Norway. It has been echoed in a milder version by Bossi’s Northern League (LN), which 1999 Euro-election programme includes calls for a confederate union, advocating communities ‘constitutional right of annulment’ of the application of EU law, thus rejecting the ‘continental super-state’.³² By contrast, even the more critical statements on developments in the EU from Germany’s Christian Social Union (CSU) maintain a tone that hardly qualifies as Euro-sceptic.³³ The Norwegian parties have a track-record of harder opposition to European integration. The three successor parties of the Nineteenth Century left in Norway, the Liberals (V), Christian People’s Party (KrF) and agrarian Centre (Sp) have continued to combine opposition to the Oslo elite and the left and right-wing catch-all parties with defence of culture and interest cast in national terms, and incorporated varying degrees of Euro-scepticism into this stance.³⁴ Originally a regional party in 1993, going national after WWII, the KrF partly reflected patterns of Nineteenth Century counter-cultural opposition to the Oslo government. Come the 1970s, it was somewhat divided over European integration “where the country’s more-religious heritage was held by some to be at stake.”³⁵ The KrF leadership’s current draft programme retains its opposition to EU membership,³⁶ but the like V it took a very cautious approach to the possibility of invoking Norway’s veto against new EU legislation under the European Economic Area agreement (in contrast to Sp’s hard-line position).³⁷

³² LN programme for the 1999 EP elections, *Per una Padania libera in una libera Europa*.

³³ CSU party conference paper, *Reformen für Europas Zukunft*, (Leitantrag des Parteivorstandes), 17-18 Nov. 2000.

³⁴ Nelsen, “The European Community Debate in Norway: the Periphery Revolts Again”; P. A. Pettersen, A. T. Jenssen & O. Listhaug, “The 1994 referendum on Norway: Continuity and Change”, *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 19:3 (1996), 257-281.

³⁵ J. Madely, “The Antinomies of Lutheran Politics: The Case of Norway’s Christian People’s Party”, in D. Hanley (ed.), *Christian Democracy in Europe: A Comparative Perspective*, (London, Pinter, 1994).

³⁶ KR draft programme, *Programmforslag til Program for Kristelig Folkeparti 2001-2005*, produced August 2000.

³⁷ *Aftenposten*, 17 January 2000.

Perhaps the best example of politically driven opposition is the Norwegian old left, a “a common platform for [...] varieties of cultural enclaves, whether linguistic, religious or moral,” the core of which formed the Liberals (V).³⁸ Opposition to cosmopolitan central rule (from Oslo) has therefore partly been cast in terms of defence of regional and national values and interests, and this opposition may be extended to the ‘foreign’ centre in the form of the EU (supranational democracy). In the event, the Liberal party divided over European integration in the 1970s: “Rural Liberals in the south and west had been governing since the 1880s and had become the establishment, while their urban allies, especially in the east around Oslo, had been radicalised by their struggle for power with Labour” and accordingly took a more anti-EU stance.³⁹ The party’s current programme is vaguer on the EU issue, but emphasises the need to maintain sovereignty.⁴⁰ This concern for sovereignty is also prominent in the (agrarian) Centre party literature, which includes a call for “open all-European co-operation without walls or unions.”⁴¹ Likewise, the Finnish Christian League (SKL) includes value-based resistance to European integration.⁴²

Even setting aside its opposition to Euro-scepticism based on identity and sovereignty, the Norwegian agrarian Centre party could, on cost-benefit analysis alone, be expected to oppose EU membership based on the current CAP regime. Similar opposition can be found in its Finnish sister party and namesake, although party chairman and prime minister Aho drove a secured a pro-EU party position in the 1994 referendum.⁴³ By contrast, the Danish (agrarian) Liberals’ (V) more free market policy placed it firmly in the pro-EU camp, and the Swedish Centre (C) followed the Social Democrats’ (SAP) lead in switching to a pro-EU stance after the end of the cold war. On the continent, the

³⁸ S. Rokkan, “Norway: Numerical Democracy and Corporate Pluralism”, in R. A. Dahl (ed.), *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966).

³⁹ B. F. Nelsen, “The European Community Debate in Norway: the Periphery Revolts Again”, in B. F. Nelsen (ed.) *Norway and the European Community: The Political Economy of Integration*, London: Praeger, 1993, p.46-47.

⁴⁰ *Venstres Prinsippprogram*, adopted March 1996.

⁴¹ *Senterpartiets Prinsippprogram*, adopted 1995

⁴² SKL, *Kristliga Förbunds Europa-program*, and *Riksdagsvalprogrammet ’99*, undated.

⁴³ T. Raunio, “Facing the European Challenge: Finnish Parties Adjust to the Integration Process”, *West European Politics*, 22:1 (1999), 138-159.

Swiss People's Party (SVP), also drawing on agrarian roots, features Euro-scepticism along Sp's lines, arguing that the cost of EU membership, cast in terms of both sovereignty and economic policy (including agriculture) exceed its potential benefits.⁴⁴

In contrast to their Norwegian sister parties, the Danish and Swedish centre parties range from ambivalent to pro-European. Neither the liberal nor Christian parties have played a strong territorial-cultural opposition role akin to their Norwegian counterparts. The Danish Liberal Party (V) hardly belongs on this dimension of opposition at all, having allied with the bourgeois against absolutism in 1848-49 and gravitated towards economic liberalism rather than protectionism.⁴⁵ Its history is closer to that of the catch-all parties, including a pro-European stance, moving marginally to the right of the Conservatives since the 1980s.⁴⁶ Likewise, Sweden's Liberal People's Party (FpL) has consistently remained pro-EU.⁴⁷ Both Christian parties drew more on moral protest than national identity. The Danish Christian People's Party (KrF), which entered parliament only in 1973, has "vacillated between pro-European and conditional-European attitudes."⁴⁸ Following party leader Sjursen's lead, the party congress voted 196-111 to recommend a 'no' in the 2000 referendum on EMU, invoking defence of sovereignty.⁴⁹ Meanwhile the Swedish Christian Democrat Party (KD), which first entered parliament in 1986, takes a pro-EU stance, even favouring membership of EMU.⁵⁰ The Swedish agrarian Centre (C) moved toward a catch-all strategy in the 1960s, though this proved temporary and it was overtaken by the conservative Moderates as the main non-socialist party in 1979.⁵¹ It has long shared SAP's European policy, including its divisions, and eventually recommended

⁴⁴ SVP, *Parteiprogramm*, 1999-2003.

⁴⁵ T. Kundsén & B. Rothstein, "State Building in Scandinavia", *Comparative Politics*, Jan. 1994, 203-220.

⁴⁶ L. Bille, "Denmark: The Decline of the Membership Party?", in R. S. Katz & P. Mair (eds.), *How Parties Organize: Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies*, (London, Sage, 1994); M. Gilljam & H. Oscarsson, "Mapping the Nordic Party Space", *Scandinavian Political studies*, 19:1 (1996), 25-43.

⁴⁷ G. Gidlund, *Partiernas Europa*, (Stockholm, Natur och Kultur, 1992).

⁴⁸ Sauerberg, "Parties, Voters and the EC", p.46.

⁴⁹ KRF press release, 20 May 2000.

⁵⁰ KDS (draft) *Priciprogram 2001*, proposed January 2001.

⁵¹ Elder, Thomas & Arter, *The Consensual Democracies?*, chapter 3; D. Arter, "Sweden: A Mild Case of 'Electoral Instability Syndrome'", in D. Broguthon & M. Donovan (eds.), *Changing Party Systems in Western Europe*, (London, Pinter, 1999).

a ‘yes’ in the 1994 referendum,⁵² but remains opposed to joining EMU.⁵³ The Centre Party of Finland (KESK) represents the most interesting case in terms of Euro-scepticism, given its highly divisive decisions to support Finnish EU membership despite strong opposition from primary industry and its rural supporters.⁵⁴ However, in line with this division, KESK’s position is more supranational integration.⁵⁵

Tactical Incentives (Office and Votes) and Party-Based Euro-Scepticism

Even if mainstream government-opposition leaves room for territorial Euro-scepticism and some parties face incentives to adopt a Euro-sceptic stance, the Euro-scepticism-as-opposition model suggest that competition for votes or office may exert a moderating effect. Hence table two, plotting the potentially moderating effect of efforts to participate in coalition government and efforts to extend the party’s electoral base into the more overwhelmingly pro-EU parts of the electoral market. Parties located in the south-east quadrant thus face little or no incentives to modify any Euro-sceptic tendencies they might have, whereas parties in the north-west quadrant face considerable incentives in this direction. Moderate pressure, but sufficient to undermine hard Euro-scepticism, is expected in the north-east and south-west quadrants. The main problem in terms of territorial Euro-scepticism is clearly the KrF. Moreover, KESK’s pro-EU stance is only partly explained by countervailing tactical pressures.

In terms of electoral competition, the ideal-type distinction between catch-all and interest-based strategies is usually blurred to some extent even in the clearest examples of interest-oriented parties. The Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish Agrarian parties all changed their name to ‘Centre’ in the 1950s and 1960s, thereby moving toward more catch-all electoral strategies but continuing to emphasise their distinction from both social democrats and conservatives.⁵⁶ To the extent that widening the appeal is

⁵² Widfelt, “Sweden and the EU: Implications for the Swedish Party System”.

⁵³ C, 1999 EP election programme, *Program inför valet till Europaparlamentet*.

⁵⁴ Raunio, “Facing the European Challenge”.

⁵⁵ KESK policy position paper, *Politiskt ställningstagande 18.6.2000*.

⁵⁶ D. Arter, “The Finnish Centre Party: Profile of a ‘Hinge Group’”, *West European Politics*, 2:1 (1979), 108-127.

considered, this represents a countervailing pressure against Euro-scepticism if the party's competitors are pro-EU. This pressure would, if anything, be expected to increase with electoral success. Emerging as a challenger to the Conservatives' tradition leadership of the Norwegian centre-right, the KrF has been trespassing increasingly on their pro-European neighbour's traditional electoral turf. Its party conference debates in April 2001 illustrated as much.

Table two – tactical goals and incentives for Euro-scepticism (Euro-sceptic parties in bold)

coalition government	Votes	
	competition for pro-EU votes	anti-EU electorate
coalition politics exerts moderating effect	Norway's KrF Danish V, KrF Swedish C, KD Spanish regional parties Germany's CSU	Norway's V Finland's SKL Finland's KESK
coalition politics exerts little or no moderating effect	Italy's LN	Norway's Sp Switzerland's SVP

Source: Party documents, national media

Likewise, coalition-building and government constrains party policy. The collapse of Syse's non-socialist coalition in Norway when the Sp withdrew its support over European integration in 1990 illustrates the problem – a non-socialist coalition in Norway requires co-operation of pro-EU and Euro-sceptic parties. Bondevik's (KrF) 1997 – 2000 government is the exception inasmuch as it consisted of three Euro-sceptic parties, but its weak parliamentary base (a pro-EU majority) prevented its pursuit of Euro-sceptic policy. Perhaps the clearest evidence of coalition politics counter-balancing Euro-scepticism,

particularly when a party is in office, is the KESK leadership's success in persuading the party to come out in favour of EU membership, a move that required party chairman and prime minister Aho's resignation threat.⁵⁷ Few parties escape this pressure, unless they disdain pro-EU coalitions (Sp) or are guaranteed access to executive office through traditional practices (SVP) or bloc politics (LN). And going on past evidence, the centre-right Italian coalition is likely to generate considerable pressure for policy compromise on its flanking members, the LN and the post-fascist National Alliance.

The Potential for Territorial Party-Based Euro-Scepticism in East Central Europe

Extending this three-step model of territorially based Euro-scepticism to the four East Central European states, permits a degree of speculation regarding the potential for territorial Euro-scepticism in applicant states as well as the limits of the model.

First, three major catch-all parties in the region have flirted with or adopted soft Euro-scepticism. While neither Klaus' Civic Democratic Party (ODS) or Orban's Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Party (Fidesz) qualify as even 'soft' Euro-sceptic inasmuch as they very much favour membership of the European Union, both party leaders have engaged in occasional strong criticism of the EU. As Czech prime minister, Klaus repeatedly castigated unnamed West European states for being 'semi-socialist', and the ODS takes a more sceptical stance on further development of the EU's supranational power than most of its competitors.⁵⁸ Likewise, if on a more cautious scale, Fidesz's "attitude to Europe has also become more critical, at times including elements of 'national-interest' (soft) Euroscepticism."⁵⁹ By contrast the main Polish parties have hardly even flirted with Euro-scepticism.⁶⁰ Only in Slovakia has a major party's nationalist Euro-sceptic appeal contributed to crowding out territorially based Euro-scepticism, in the shape of Meciar's

⁵⁷ Raunio, "Facing the European Challenge", p.144.

⁵⁸ Klaus, cited by CTK, in English, 2 January 1995 (BBC summary of World Broadcasts SWB 04/01/95); J. Pehe "Czech Parties Views on EU and NATO", *OMRI Analytical Brief*, 1:121, 20/05/96.

⁵⁹ A. Batory, "Hungarian Party Identities and the Question of European Integration", paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Political Studies Association, Manchester, April 10-12, 2001.

⁶⁰ A. Szczerbiak, "Europe as a Re-aligning Issue in Polish Politics", paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Political Studies Association, Manchester, April 10-12, 2001

Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HzDS).⁶¹ (In the Czechoslovak context HzDS could of course be seen as a case of territorial opposition. However, it came to play such a dominant role in independent Slovakia that it shaped the main dimension of competition).

The potential for territorially based Euro-scepticism is therefore somewhat limited, but hardly severely constrained except in Slovakia. The lack of territorially based Euro-scepticism in Slovakia is hardly a mystery given the HzDS' stance. Fidesz and ODS' stances are more ambiguous, suggesting some room for harder territorially based Euro-scepticism but limited room for soft Euro-Scepticism. In the light of mainstream left-right competition, however, Poland features the greatest potential for territorially based Euro-scepticism.

Second, the three parties that qualify as sources of territorial opposition in East Central Europe, Hungarian Smallholders' Party (FKgP), the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) and, at a stretch, the Communist party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM), all face policy incentives to adopt a degree of Euro-scepticism. To the extent that they invoke protection of agrarian interests, particularly resistance to foreign land ownership, (in the Czech republic the KSCM includes an element of defence of collectivised peasants, or 'workers'), all three see potential costs of EU-driven reform exceed the expected benefits of membership. Moreover, the KSCM has taken as nationalist line against both EU and NATO membership. Both PSL and FKgP have repeatedly invoked the inter-war nationalist peasant populist tradition, thus drawing on the nationalist – cosmopolitan (or authoritarian particularist vs. libertarian cosmopolitan) division that is often identified in post-communist politics,⁶² and provides a potential basis for Euro-scepticism driven by defence of national identity and sovereignty.

⁶¹ K. Henderson, "Euroscepticism or Europhobia: Opposition Attitudes to the EU in the Slovak Republic", paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Political Studies Association, Manchester, April 10-12, 2001.

⁶² H. Kitschelt, "The Formation of Party Systems in East Central Europe", *Politics and Society*, 20:1 (1992), 7-50; A. Bozoki, "Globalists vs. Localists: A Historic Debate, and the Position of the Left in Hungary", paper presented at the Conference on Nation-Building, mass Politics and Development of Cleavages in Central and Eastern Europe", Sandbjerg, Denmark, December 14-17, 2001.

Third, however, given that the overall goals of EU membership is espoused by almost all parties in East Central Europe, there are few or no tactical incentives to exploit Euro-scepticism in the short term. Despite some evidence of increased scepticism toward European integration, the electorates remain balanced in favour of European integration. Even the increasingly Euro-sceptic Polish electorate arguably presents party leaders with a ‘permissive consensus’ rather than opposition to European integration.⁶³ Although a potential Euro-sceptic electorate may exist, any tendencies toward soft Euro-scepticism should therefore be tempered both by the electoral losses a hard Euro-sceptic stance *might* produce (the uncertainty is crucial) and the problems this would imply in terms of making and breaking coalitions with the remainder of the pro-EU party system.

Considering the three parties that qualify at least partly as territorial opposition (four if the Hungarian minority coalition in Slovakia is considered), the limited evidence of Euro-scepticism outside the KSCM is hardly surprising in the light of the politics-of-opposition model. Klaus’ and Orban’s flirting with soft Euro-scepticism may have contributed to crowding out all but hard Euro-scepticism, and there is little doubt that Meciar’s stance did so. However, a recent split in Slovakia’s Christian Democratic Movement has yielded a rump-party that “veers toward not only a Catholic fundamentalism, but also a euroscepticism born of an alternative vision of Slovakia which might have existed if there had not been the unfortunate communist interlude.”⁶⁴ This suggests that large parties’ ability to crowd out Euro-scepticism does not extend across the main left-right divide. Moreover, even though left-right competition leaves scope to territorial Euro-scepticism and policy positions entail some potential to propel agrarian and nationalist parties toward Euro-scepticism, the short-term incentives are limited. Nevertheless, the Euro-scepticism-as-the-politics-of-opposition model suggests that there is considerable potential for territorially based Euro-scepticism in Poland if the short-term incentives for tactical Euro-scepticism were to arise. The PSL’s pro-EU stance may therefore turn out to be ‘soft’, if the hard/soft terminology can be extended to pro-EU positions.

⁶³ J. Kucharczyk, “Class Club Europe? The Examination of Socio-Political Conditions for a Eurosceptic Backlash in Poland”, paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Political Studies Association, Manchester, April 10-12, 2001.

⁶⁴ Henderson, “Euroscepticism or Europhobia”.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysing Euro-scepticism in terms government – opposition competition suggests that, although Euro-scepticism is usually confined to the fringes of parties or the party system, Euro-scepticism may be located across the left-right spectrum. Patterns of Euro-scepticism depend largely on the extent to which parties invoke this in inter-party competition. The first factor in explaining party-based Euro-scepticism is therefore the competition between the core parties, the party system's central 'cartel'. The relationship between territorial opposition and the cartel, the second dimension of opposition, shapes the scope for territorial party-based Euro-scepticism and thus makes up the second factor shaping the translation of the European question into politics in the context of the first. To the extent that these developments preceded competition on the left and right flanks, this means that the relationship between the third dimension of opposition and Euro-scepticism is shaped as much by the core parties as the extreme flanks. Though it is rare outside Scandinavia, territorial competition therefore provides a considerable basis for potential party based Euro-scepticism, which is not confined to protest parties or internal dissent, but rather the product of territorial opposition based on values, identity or economic interest. However, inasmuch as Euro-scepticism is the politics of opposition, parties' quest for access to government, through increasing their share of the votes and participation in coalition government, provide countervailing pressures. Party-based Euro-scepticism is therefore not necessarily stable.

A brief overview of territorial opposition in Western Europe largely supports this model. Party-based Euro-scepticism driven by territorial opposition is found mainly in the three Norwegian centre parties, although other Scandinavian and Swiss parties (or factions) fall into this category as well. The pattern of Euro-scepticism suggests that some of the Euro-sceptic tendencies on the continent, e.g. in regionally based parties such as Italy's LN or in a milder form in the Germany's Christian Social Union, are based on more than

populism. In other words, this is the politics of territorial-cultural opposition. However, this posture is problematic in government, and in the LN's cases it developed into Euro-scepticism after the failure of the 1994 Berlusconi government. In Norway, both KrF and V experienced considerable dilemmas during the 1997-2000 Bondevik government, although the third coalition partner Sp retained a more hard-line Euro-sceptic position. In short, coalition strategies and pursuit of office shapes *changes* in party-based Euro-scepticism.

As for East Central Europe, the Euro-scepticism-as-politics-of-opposition approach suggests that, despite the potential for party-based Euro-scepticism, its limited manifestation should not be surprising. The moderately nationalist (or hard-line in Meciar's case) stance adopted by several of the dominant parties on the centre-right in the region, which has at times included or bordered on soft Euro-scepticism or, has probably contributed to crowding out stauncher forms of soft Euro-scepticism on the right. Moreover, even where, as in Poland, this model indicates a considerable potential for territorial Euro-scepticism, it cannot be expected unless short-term tactical incentives develop. Finally, extending this analysis to the third dimension of opposition (new populism and the far left), beyond the scope of the present paper, would indicate considerable scope for party-based Euro-scepticism on the flanks of the system, where countervailing pressures are weaker.

In short, the central point is that the various bases for Euro-scepticism are translated into party competition in the context of the party system, i.e. the patterned interaction between parties. Euro-scepticism is not a single coherent stance on the EU as a polity, but rather a term that covers a multitude of ideological and interest-driven stances. The scope for party-based Euro-scepticism is shaped by a combination of longer term party strategy and shorter term tactical pressures – and these variables are the product of the politics of opposition.