Note to reviewers:

After having been asked to undertake a structural revision, I have changed the following:

- Typology has been changed (Euro-skeptcism / EU-skepticism instead of Euro-skepticism / EU-skepticism and Euro-rejectionism); more clearly stating the difference to other approaches by Szczerbiak/Taggart and Kopecký/Mudde

- Order of chapters has been changed, turning the split of Euro-skepticism into two party families (nationalist/communist) the main finding of the paper and diminishing the importance of the social-economic survey

- (New) last chapter has been strongly revised

    o Data on attitudes has been complemented by data on accession referenda

    o Two-by-two table on attitude / parliamentary representation of Euro-skepticism has been turned into a scatter plot

- Euro-skepticism in the Baltic States has been looked upon more thoroughly, albeit with only slightly different findings

Euro-skepticism in the EU accession countries

Sent to Comparative European Politics, January 2004 (first draft: july 2003)

Abstract: In this paper, Euro-skepticism in post-socialist EU accession countries is conceptualized as a program, which is directed against both idea and practice of European integration. It is argued that Euro-skepticism is not an isolated phenomenon but has to be interpreted as an issue in party competition that is rooted in socio-cultural and socio-economic conflict. Two party families are disposed to rely on the EU issue in their efforts to attract voters: nationalist and communist parties. Euro-skepticism, which is treated both on the attitude and parliamentary level, has different scopes in the accession area. Whereas in the Czech Republic and in Poland Euro-skepticist forces have a considerable weight both in the populations and in the parliaments, Lithuania, Hungary, and Slovenia are countries with low levels of Euro-skepticism in both dimensions.

Key words: Euro-skepticism, Accession Countries, party politics within EU

1. Introduction

The presence of anti-EU parties in the parliaments of post-socialist Europe is a relatively new phenomenon.[1] Beginning about twenty years ago, the "common house of Europe" was not only an abstract vision by Mikhail Gorbachev but was also proposed by the intellectuals of Central Europe who were striving for a "European solution" to remove the iron curtain running through Europe (Konrád 1985). After the fall of communism, almost all political elites of Central Europe envisaged integration into the European Union in order to make the rupture with the Soviet Union, or later the Russian Federation, irreversible. Moreover, despite some writing and talking about third ways between socialism and capitalism, access to the West European market as a cornerstone of developing dynamic economies was closely linked to EU accession. Therefore, both in public opinion and in the view of national elites of post-socialist Europe, general support for the idea European integration was easily explainable.

On the other side of the fallen curtain, the notion of Euro-skepticism as a "doubting of 'Europe' as a great project" (Tiersky 2001: 3) had a long tradition. According to Tiersky's definition, Euro-skeptics "are not against what they see as realistic advantageous cooperation among various groups of European states for greater peace and prosperity." However, politicians like Charles de Gaulle and Margaret Thatcher, or scholars like John J. Mearsheimer (2001) were and are skepti-

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[1] XXX Insert later XXX: Three Thank Yous

cal about the unforeseeable consequences of an ever closer European integration process. In this view, the existing developed and legitimized nation-states should not be put at risk because of the uncertain future merits of integration.

In the literature, one main difference within the camp hesitative towards ever more integration is drawn between moderate and strong Euro-skepticists. As part of the Opposing Europe Research Network at the Sussex European Institute, Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart made a distinction between "soft" and "hard" Euro-skepticism and classified parties accordingly. According to the authors, "hard" Euro-skepticism "involves outright rejection of the entire project of European political and economic integration and opposition to their country joining or remaining members of the EU," whereas "soft" Euro-skepticism stands for "contingent or qualified opposition to European integration" (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2000: 6).

The decision to distinguish between soft and hard Euro-skepticism aims at the phenomenological level, at actor "manifestations involving the use of the rhetoric or discourse of political contestation of the European project" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002, 35). What are the reasons for those manifestations, however? The main answer provided for by authors of the Opposing Europe Research Network sees Euro-skepticism as a product of party strategies implying that parties develop their positions towards European integration and European policies mainly in answer to domestic party system structures (Taggart 1998; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2001; Sitter 2002).

This position has been contested, though. Petr Kopecký and Cas Mudde developed a model based on party ideology being "the crucial factor" in explaining party positions related to issues around European integration (Kopecký and Mudde 2002: 321). In the given text, I try to support and

strengthen the latter authors' position by arguing that strong Euro-Skepticism fits well into the ideologies of two party families which rely on the protest against the hardships of post-socialist transformation: nationalist and (unreformed) communist parties.

In analyzing Euro-skepticism in Central Europe, Kopecký and Mudde in their article lean on Easton's distinction between diffuse and specific support towards Europe. In their model, diffuse support is linked with approval or disapproval to the general idea of European integration, whereas specific support is attributed to its practice. A main advantage of that view is the possibility to differentiate between actors or parties opposing the process of European integration as a whole and between those rejecting the way the real existing EC/EU is functioning. However, Kopecký and Mudde employ a terminology which limps behind their efforts to move from the phenomenological to the analytical level. Idea and practice of European integration are different things, but one is closely related to the other. Therefore, specific and diffuse support towards Europe should not be listed in a two-by-two table (Kopecký and Mudde, 2002, 303). If one likes the idea of European integration, one can like or dislike the way this idea is put into practice. If, on the other hand, one dislikes the idea of Europe, liking the actual practice of European integration is not a very coherent option. Consequently, Kopecký/Mudde have problems finding an adequate term for what they call "Europragmatists" (ibid.).

The second contestable choice Kopecký/Mudde make is the reservation of the term Euro-skepticism to those actors liking the idea but disliking the practice of Europeanisation. A terminology in line with their argument is the distinction between Euro-skepticists and EU-skepticists:

- Euro-skepticists do not like the idea of (what they see as too much) integration and thus also

oppose its practice.

- EU-skepticists do not object the idea of integration as such but dislike the way this integration is organized by the EU.

Within both groups, various degrees of skepticism towards European integration are possible. Consequently, actively "rejecting" integration is also feasible from both positions, and not, as modeled by Kopecký and Mudde (2002, 302), necessarily linked to opposition to the idea of integration. Euro-skepticism and EU-skepticism can both be either soft or strong.

2. Interpreting Euro-skepticism in accession countries: protest against transnationalism and socio-economic modernization

Several suggestions have been made on how to conceptualize the structure of the party systems of post-socialist Europe. The cleavage approach (Lipset and Rokkan 1967) has been employed most frequently. Most authors identify several cleavages in post-socialist Europe, each of them able to explain the emergence of some parties in the first years of democratization and consolidation (Beyme 1994; Lewis 2000). Another approach analyses the post-socialist party systems via historical legacies and types of party organization (Kitschelt 1995; Kitschelt, Mansfeldova et al. 1999). In any case, conflicts within the political systems are seen as the main reference of party competition.

When parties in post-socialist EU accession countries relate to the EU skeptically, it is most

likely that two party families with a special relation to these conflicts will play a major role. On the socio-cultural cleavage, nationalist parties will find many areas of friction with the idea and conduct of European integration. In the "national-cosmopolitan divide" we have to distinguish between nationalist and authoritarian attitudes on the one hand and cosmopolitan and social-libertarian orientations on the other hand (Kitschelt, Mansfeldova et al. 1999: 67). Those members of societies that feel threatened by Western individualism may turn to their national communities as authorities to hold up or slow down the scope of societal change. The European Union is both symbolically and in reality a threat to the orientation patterns of post-socialist societies: it stands for the free movement of ideas possibly endangering socio-cultural traditions within a transnational Europe.

On the socio-economic divide, any party opposing the ideology of market democracy has to be skeptical of EU integration. The party family mainly representing this position is the communist one. In post-socialist Europe, that divide cannot be limited to the conflict of market liberalism versus social protectionism that we know from West European societies (ibid.). In the aftermath of the fall of socialism, this conflict in the accession countries also contains a dynamic element. The speed of transition to a market economy has been, and partly still is, the most basic socio-economic conflict in post-socialist party systems. Again, the idea of free trade rooted in the European integration process makes the European Union a major issue in that conflict. Those forces wanting to achieve a slow transition to market liberalism can hardly be fond of EU accession.

2.1 Nationalist parties and Euro-skepticism

Nationalist parties (and their voters) adhere to a romantic vision of the nation or, as Kitschelt and others formulate, to a "communitarian conception of identity" (Kitschelt, Mansfeldova et al. 1999: 67). In doing so, they refer to "imagined communities" (Anderson 1983), that is, to an object which came into being through the construction of its members. The consolidation of a national community was often accompanied by violence, which makes the evaluation of national symbols – e.g. (lost) territories, (hostile) population groups, (heroic) persons, and (anti-occupation) institutions – an important matter.

In opposition to many cases of Western nation building, most Central European nations did not emerge in conjunction with a bourgeois revolution, a strong liberal movement or the establishment of liberal democracy. The Central European type of nation cannot be characterized as a political nation, but as an ethnic nation although it also contains elements of a cultural nation (the distinction of nation types goes back to Meinecke 1908; see Minkenberg and Beichelt 2001). Bearing this mind, we can identify various issues on the nationalist agenda that are sensitive to the European Union:

- *Territory*: Many post-socialist nations can be characterized by a "triadic" configuration of nations between nation-building processes, the existence of national minorities within the new states, and the existence of "external homelands" (Brubaker 1997). In Hungary, the Czech and Slovak republics, nationalist forces may claim that the shape of today's states does not correspond to the size it historically should be. Membership in the EU implies the mutual consent of all members that all existing borders not be questioned.

- *Minorities*: The vision of a national community is mainly characterized by the notion of being ethnically homogeneous. As shown extensively (Brubaker 1997), historical developments in the 20th century have turned Central and Southeastern Europe into an ethnically heterogeneous region. As a consequence, the myth of a homogeneous nation-state is obsolete in many countries. For example, in Romania and Slovakia, large Hungarian minorities have to be included politically, socially, and economically. The European Union, on the other hand, has made minority inclusion one of the Copenhagen criteria. In this respect, EU policy is in full contradiction with the objectives of nationalist forces.

- *Democracy*: In Central Europe, the main period of national independence was between the World Wars. Most states had their first experience with democracy around 1918/1920, but with the exception of Czechoslovakia turned into autocratic regimes within a few years. In Hungary and Poland, but also in the Baltics, autocratic leaders like Jozef Piłsudski or Guyla Gombos embodied the fight against the surrounding hostile powers Germany and Russia. In many accession countries, references to the achievement of independence have an autocratic touch. Although the democratic deficit within the European Union is largely discussed, the organization itself consists of consolidated democracies. The valuation of symbolic "national heroes" by nationalist forces is thus in contradiction to the impetus of the EU mainstream which condemns any form of autocratic rule.

- *Institutions*: In most accession states, democratization has taken place from within. Not exterior powers like in West Germany or Italy, but national elites and the population have fought for democracy by insisting on the right of national self-determination within an undivided

Europe (Rupnik 1990). The process of emancipation often culminated in establishing a national assembly or parliament, which took over power from the institutions of the autocratic regime. Therefore, national parliaments are an important part of the idea of self-determination. European integration, however, means the partial dissolution of parliamentary sovereignty to a supranational institutional system. Almost all nationalist parties in post-socialist Europe therefore tend to see European integration as a betrayal of the ideals of post-communist democratization.

Altogether, nationalist forces have many reasons to feel threatened by European integration and therefore see strong incentives to enrich their nationalist ideology by Euro-skepticist elements. The European Union is both symbolically and in reality a threat to the orientation patterns of post-socialist societies: it stands for the free movement of ideas possibly endangering socio-cultural traditions within a transnational Europe. Therefore, nationalist parties rather reject the whole idea of European integration; they are bound to be Euro-skepticist rather than EU-skepticist. They may additionally be bothered by certain issues such as abortion or the role of religion in public life, but in general, it is the underlying principles of European integration that are incompatible with the nationalist parties' political aims.

2.2. Communist parties and Euro-skepticism

In this text, the term "communist" is used for parties with an orthodox Leninist-Marxist ideology, which exist in the EU accession states. Because of the ideological transformation of their successor parties, most of these parties do not have historic roots in the socialist period (see below).

They oppose the extension of market liberalism in many, if not in all, sectors of the economy. They have a tendency to question the border changes that have taken place after 1989/1991. And, last but not least, they only partly support democracy as the best political regime (Ishiyama 2001; Grzymala-Busse 2002). Therefore, all of the below programmatic elements interfere with EU accession:

- *Economic competition*: Not all members of the communist party family are completely hostile to the market economy. However, they oppose economic competition in various fields. First, they are interested in keeping certain "strategic" sectors in the hand of the state. These comprise transportation, energy, and telecommunication; in short all sectors where infrastructure is concerned. It can easily be seen from the EC treaty that most of these matters have a European dimension in today's Europe. Moreover, the general development of European internal market policy is liberalization and the extension of competition to formerly protected sectors. Therefore, communist parties can only dislike the extension of the European market to post-socialist Europe.

- *Ownership of production means*: Closely related to EU accession is the question of ownership in the economic system. Of course, when state ownership is preferred in some sectors private ownership – one of the foundations of market economy – is refused. Additionally, though, communist parties see all forms of non-national ownership with particular suspicion. Again, the structure of the internal market and its freedoms for capital and labor do not match well with that position. When we take into consideration that Western Europe is much wealthier than the enlargement area, it is clear that many asymmetric opportunities of foreign

investment exist – another point for communist parties to reject EU accession.

Still, communist parties are bound not to reject the whole idea of European integration to the same extent as nationalist parties. Ideologically, the preference for a different economic system than that of the internal market is obvious. Pragmatically, however, communist forces have to admit that funding from Brussels will help to smoothen the tough social consequences of the transformation period. Communist parties can thus be expected to have an ambivalent approach towards EU accession. On the one side, they object international capitalism entering their countries. On the other side, they are proponents of strong social struts within a capitalist market and social welfare regime. The ideational skepticism may be outweighed by the advantageous prospects if only the advantages to be expected are great enough.

As long as the national economies of post-socialist countries lag far behind those of Western Europe, Central European communists are bound to see elements of EU-optimism within a general picture of Euro-skepticism. Still, if those parties officially do not reject EU membership as such, they still are in effect Euro-skepticist parties as long as they object to "membership of the EU in any form which will ever realistically be on offer" (Henderson 2001: 22).

Having hypothesized the difference between nationalist and communist parties, it needs to be stated that overall the ideas providing the foundation for rejecting European integration are not far apart. For example, both nationalists and communists are suspicious of foreigners getting even greater access to national economies or receiving the right to own land on the enlargement territory. The phenomenon of "strange bedfellowship" of radical left and right wing forces in the region has been discussed for some time (Ishiyama 1998; Kemp 1999). Also in Western Europe,

opposition to European integration is an issue in which parties of the far left and the far right are united in some countries (Minkenberg, 2000). This does not refute the argument that anti-EU mobilization rests on the ideology of two different party families, but highlights the common ideological basis of two party families usually seen far apart from each other.

3. Euro-skepticism in the parliaments of the EU accession candidates: an overview

Which parties in central Europe can be considered Euro-skepticist? In some cases, when a party either in its program or in its actions voices opposition to both the idea and practice of European integration, the answer is not difficult. However, just as the political elites of the former socialist countries tried to avoid being called "anti-democratic", not all political forces rejecting European integration say so openly.

While distinguishing between "hard" and "soft" Euro-skepticism, party positions are used as a main reference point for classification (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2000). When looking at the possible cases involved, this approach becomes fuzzy, though. For example, it is sometimes stated that there are no Euro-skepticist parties in Romania (Linden and Pohlman 2003). Empirically, however, the actual policies and demands of some Romanian parties, like for example the *Greater Romanian Party* (PRM), stand in clear opposition to the European Union's Copenhagen criterion of providing political and some social rights to ethnic minorities.

In order to escape inconsistencies, I propose a different way of classifying Euro-skepticist parties: whenever a party either in its appearance or program opposes the underlying principles of European integration and/or their realization within the EU, it should be classified accordingly. These principles are the rejection of sovereignty transfer, hostility to economic integration or the denial of democratic principles like equality or self-determination. The effect of this definition is that a party can be listed as Euro-skepticist despite the lack of anti-EU rhetoric if the party fundamentally disagrees with the main ideas and its practical crystallization of European integration.

Table 1 about here

Outright and actual Euro-skepticist parties will now be discussed in alphabetical order by their country of origin. As will be seen, all few parties with Euro-skepticist elements fall into the categories of being either nationalist or communist parties. EU-skepticists parties, on the other hand, belong to different party families (see table 1).

In Bulgaria, the idea of completely rejecting European integration is not present in political life. The only group possibly suggesting itself is George Ganchev's *Bulgarian Business Bloc* (BBB), which took in around five percent of the votes in both 1994 and 1997. The BBB's party program included some nationalist issues. For example, in the economic sphere, the state was supposed to protect national business: "selling national capital to foreign countries, beyond certain limits to preserve sovereignty, should be precluded'" (cited from Bugajski 2002: 798). Other experts, how-

ever, do not go as far as characterizing this party as Euro-skepticist (Karasimeonov 1999).

In the Czech Republic, two Euro-skepticist parties have to be named. First, the *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia* (KSČM) has included several points in its program that show strong incompatibility with the principles of the European Union. These include, for example, the strengthening of state control over banks or the protection of domestic markets from foreign competition. In its program, the KSČM expresses the mistrust of "the imperial character of the capitalist concept of globalization". Moreover the party officially "denounced both EU and NATO membership" (Bugajski 2002: 256). On the other side, the KSČM views a role for the European Union in ensuring social welfare.[2]

Another party to be named is the *Association for the Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia* (SPR-RSČ), which, though, has lost most of its political weight during the last years. In that party's case, classification can only partly rely on the party program. The rejection of "all forms of transnationalism" (Havelková 2002: 231) can be discerned, but on the whole, the party program is judged to be quite inconsistent and mainly dominated by protest elements. The party leader Miroslav Sládek has on many occasions expressed xenophobic, notably anti-German and anti-Roma, sentiments. It is this clearly racist component, the dreams of an "ethnically pure greater Czechoslovakia" (Minkenberg and Beichelt 2001) puts the party in contradiction to the underlying ideas of European integration.

The Czech *Civic Democratic Party* (ODS), with the current Czech president Václav Klaus as its

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[2] To be found at http://www.kscm.cz/showeng.php?english/congress1aj.htm, 2003-06-30.

main political figure, should be classified EU-skepticist. In its program, the ODS praises the idea of European integration but declares that it does "not want to dissolve our state in supranational structures (…) without any identity".[3] This and other rhetoric rigorousness unusual for the political discourse on European integration have promoted the party's reputation as EU-skepticist (Gawrich 2003: 280). With its liberal program, the party is critical of the EU bureaucracy, of its alleged tendency to regulate all and everything, and of the social dimension of the European economic sphere. This puts the party in the ideological neighborhood of the British *Conservative Party* (Kopecký and Mudde 2002: 306). The hesitation towards European integration went so far that Václav Klaus did not want to recommend a "yes" during the Czech campaign to EU accession. At the same time, the ODS follows a course of economic integration highly in accordance to the demands of the European Union.

In the three Baltic States, Euro-skepticism is not very relevant at the elite level. Taggart and Szczerbiak (2001: 16) in their overview list some small parties like the Estonian *Christian People's Party* as being "hard" Euro-skeptics, but none of them gained parliamentary seats in the 1999 elections. This finding has to be interpreted in the geopolitical context of the Baltics. After the double occupation by the Soviet Union in the 1940s, one of main political aims of parties in the three countries was to join European organizations. Therefore, open or covered criticism of European integration would have been in contradiction to the overall target of escaping Russian hegemony.

In the long run, however, the rather strong nationalist tendency (Dreifelds, 1997, 142-169; Vino-

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[3] See http://www.ods.cz/.

gradnaitė, 2000; Lagerspetz and Maier, 2002, 94) and the socio-economic decline of parts of the Baltic populations hint at a considerable Euro-skepticist potential in opposition to the traditionally Europhile rhetoric of party leaders. One hint into that direction is the fact that the leftist populist *Centre Party* after a long struggle opposed EU accession shortly before the referendum in September, 2003 (Altenbockum 2003). Other than that, in the run-up to the accession referenda no parliamentary party in the Baltic States acted in an openly Euro- or EU-skepticist way.

In Hungary, the *Hungarian Justice and Life Party* (MIéP) is an ultranationalist formation which supports state protection over the national economy in order to keep it 'purely Hungarian' and to prevent an alleged takeover by foreign capital and 'alien' business interests" (Bugajski 2002: 360). A part of the party's biological-nativist views of the Hungarian nation is the anti-Semitism characterizing the public remarks of its party leader Istvan Czurka in particular (see Karsai 1999). EU enlargement itself was characterized by Czurka as colonization "due to the pressure from global financial interests" (cited from Batory 2001: 15).

A soft EU-skepticist case is *FIDESZ-Hungarian Civic Party* (Fidesz-MPP), the main conservative party. Starting as a strictly liberal formation, the party took a nationalist turn in the mid-1990s (Grotz 2000). During the electoral campaign for the 2002 elections, prime minister Viktor Orbán at various occasions stressed nationalist issues, sometimes with allusions to Hungarian minorities in neighboring states (Vetter 2002) and thus in potential violation of the minority Copenhagen criterion. Altogether, these arguments are interpreted in connection to an internal political fight for cultural hegemony (Bauer 2002: 791) rather than a genuine Euro-phobic ideology, which in the author's judgement makes the party less EU-skepticist than the Czech ODS.

Since the parliamentary elections of 2001, Poland is the early accession candidate with the strongest hold of anti-EU parties in parliament. Before 2001, the *Christian National Union* (ZChN) as part of the *Electoral Action Solidarność* (AWS) was the major Euro-skepticist force in Polish parties (Grott 1994: 26-28; Freudenstein and Czyrny 2001: 30). Then, the AWS failed to get reelected to parliament, but the *League of Polish Families* (LPR) and the peasant party *Samoobrona* – literally: self-defense – together gained about 18% of the electorate. Moreover, with *Law and Justice* (PiS) and the *Polish Peasant Party* (PSL) to further parties in the new Sejm show EU-skepticist tendencies (Klemenska 2003).

The LPR combines a strong sense of nationalism with the conviction that EU accession in the current form would ruin the Polish economy, especially the agricultural sector. The founding document of the LPR explicitly asks for a renegotiation of the accession treaty and (awkwardly) demands the stop of all talks with the EU "until a new treaty is negotiated" (cited from Nalewajko 2003: 167). In any case, the perception of EU enlargement as "economic colonialism" (cited from Szczerbiak 2002: 13) is a clear message.

Samoobrona is more and less radical at the same time. It is more radical because of its leader, Andrzej Lepper. He is always ready to be very outspoken on the role of foreign capital and cosmopolitan – read: Jewish – influence in Poland. On the other hand, the party insists that its position represents "Eurorealism" rather than Europhobia. Unlike the LPR, *Samoobrona* concedes that EU accession will bring some advantages that, however, will be outweighed by the negative effects. Therefore, Lepper stated in 2001 "we say no to today's Union because we don't see a basis for partnership. What we see is kneeling down and toadying" (cited from Nalewajko 2003:

170).

In *Romania*, the post-socialist *Party of Social Democracy of Romania* (PDSR) had the image of approaching the process of European integration very ambiguously in the first half of the last decade. The party, however, ended this uncertainty by stating in its 1997 program that EU and NATO integration were the only solution to protect Romania's "vulnerability" (see Nève 2002: 69). This vulnerability as the "Latin island on a Slavic sea," as Romanian nationalists see it, makes the whole political elite sympathetic to European and transatlantic integration (Nève 2002: 8).

That is why hostility to European integration again has to be spotted via incompatibility of the underlying values of European integration. The *Greater Romanian Party* (PRM) clearly notes that it is in favor of European integration as long as the national interests of Romania are preserved.[4] On the other hand, the party leader Cordneliu Tudor argued that it would be best to govern Romania with a machine gun, he praised concentration camp doctor Josef Mengele as a "gentleman" in comparison to Romanian President Emil Constantiniescu, and he characterized the authoritarian pre-war leader Marshall Ion Antonescu as a "holy anti-bolshevist warrior" (see Shafir 2000; citations in Grün 2002: 298). In short, the xenophobic and anti-democratic party ideology cannot be brought into line with several underlying ideas of the European Union, and therefore the party has to be characterized as Euro-skepticist.

Besides the PRM, two other formations with Euro-skeptic ideology have influenced Romanian

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[4] See http://www.romare.ro/partid/progext/c4.html.

politics: the nationalist *Party of National Unity* (PUNR) and the communist *Socialist Worker's Party* (PSM). Both parties were important as parts of a PDSR-led governing coalition from 1992 until 1995/1996 (Gabanyi 1997) but have almost completely disappeared today.

Slovakia is another country where anti-EU sentiments find representation both on the left and right of the political spectrum. On the right, the *Slovak National Party* (SNS) strongly opposes the country's membership in international organizations, a position that was peculiar between 1992 and 1998, when the SNS was present in various Slovak governments. The period was seen as the "triumph of national populism" (Carpenter 1997), and the SNS was the governments' most radical nationalist force. After the elections of 1998, the party leadership changed hands to a new chairperson, Anna Malíková, while former leader Ján Slota founded the *Real Slovak National Party* (PSNS). In its program,[5] the PSNS just like the Polish *Samoobrona* uses the term "euroreal-ism" to justify its opposition of EU enlargement under the current conditions. In any event, both parties are Euro-skepticist.

A difficult case to classify is Vladimir Mečiar's *Movement for a Democratic Slovakia* (HZDS). The party abandoned its former anti-EU rhetoric after losing power in 1998 but in parliament kept voting against taking over some parts of the *acquis communautaire* during the accession negotiations (Kopecký and Mudde 2002: 314). Therefore, the party bears some EU-skepticist elements.

On the left, the *Association of Slovak Workers* (ZRS) opposed Slovakia's membership in the EU

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[5] See http://www.prava-sns.sk/.

and especially in NATO (Bugajski 2002: 311). The party only gained 1.3% in the 1998 elections and has since then lost relevance. On a similar ideological line, the *Communist Party of Slovakia* (KSS) entered parliament in 2002. The party which has the goal of (re)building a socialist society strongly criticizes that Slovak national interests are not being met in the current enlargement process; in the party's view Slovakia is not ready for accession. Consequently, the KSS demands the same level of social security for Slovakia's citizens as in the other member countries before being ready to enter the EU.[6]

In Slovenia, the most important Euro-skepticist party is the nationalist *Slovenian National Party* (SNS). One of the party's main issues is the prohibition of non-citizens purchasing land in Slovenia, a position clearly in opposition to European Community principles. The SNS and its leader Zmago Jelinčič fall in line with several other forces and leaders making Slovenia a playing field for "demagogic populism" (Rizman 1999: 159). Besides the SNS, the *New Party* (NS) has been named as a strong Euro-skeptical Party by Szczerbiak/Taggart (2001). On its homepage,[7] the party declares the neutrality of Slovenia a major policy goal and correspondingly refuses EU accession. However, since the party received less than one percent in the elections of 2000, it is nothing more than a marginal force in Slovenian politics.

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[6] See http://www.kss.sk/program.php, 2003-06-30.

[7] See http://www.nova-stranka.si/volitve2000/pismapodpore_s.htm, 2003-06-30.

4. Support for Euro-skepticism in the accession countries

The next question, then, is to what extent Euro-skepticist forces are bound to influence politics and policies of the new member countries. Except for a short period, when in Slovakia the nationalist SNS and the communist ZRS supported prime minister Vladimir Mečiar, no party with a strong Euro-skepticist ideology has been able to enter government in Central Europe. At first sight, the impact of Euro-skepticist programs on policies in the accession countries therefore seems limited. However, absence from government is not equivalent with lack of influence. In Giovanni Sartori's concept of party systems, even parties with marginal parliamentary power may in certain configurations exert substantial influence (see Sartori 1976). The strength of parties may accordingly be assessed through their blackmail potential – the notion Sartori uses for the influence of minor parties on possible coalition partners. The higher the percentage of parliamentary seats for Euro-skepticist parties, the greater their chances to transform parts of their programs into policies by influencing the agenda, amending legislation, and log-rolling.

Table 2 about here

Seen from this perspective, the party systems of the accession candidate states fall into three categories. Most basically, there is a differentiation between party systems with low and considerable blackmail potential (see table 2). In four countries, namely in Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, parties with strong opposition to the European Union have not been able to get into

parliament at all. In Hungary and Slovenia, Euro-skepticist parties have had some success at the polls and have been able to overcome electoral thresholds. However, with vote and seat percentages of around three to five percent, the MIéP and the Slovenian SNS have remained marginal political powers. Therefore, also in these countries the blackmail potential of Euro-skepticist is rather limited. In the widespread fragmentation of the Central European party systems (Beichelt 2003), government parties usually have different options of securing majorities, leaving a line-up with radical right-wing or left-wing forces as a strategy of last choice. Empirically, Euro-skepticist parties in these countries have largely not been able to influence national policy.

On the other side, in four EU accession candidates, one or several parties with a Euro-skepticist ideology were able to acquire between about ten and twenty percent of the vote in national parliamentary elections. In the Czech Republic, the political home of the anti-EU forces moved from the far right to the far left of the political spectrum. In the 1992 and 1996 elections, the *Republicans* were able to garner the support of about 6% of the voters in 1992 and about 8% in 1996. In the elections of 2002, the Communists had a big success in gaining 18.5% of the popular vote and more than 20% of the seats in parliament. With these results, the KSČM was able to consolidate its role as the most important non-reformed communist party in Central Europe – the party has never fallen below 10% of the vote and has been able to use its blackmail potential many times, especially during the minority government of 1998 to 2002.

In Poland, the political right has not succeeded in forming stable representative structures yet. From 1993 to 1997, the right stayed out of parliament because of its extreme fragmentation that meant that the anti-EU forces within the right were not represented either. In the 1997 elections, a

broad AWS coalition obtained about a third of the votes. With the ZChN, only a relatively small faction within the AWS was openly Euro-skeptic. Still, government policies towards the European Union were heavily influenced by the ruptures within the governing coalition (Bachmann 2001). The 2001 elections were interpreted as the "moment of populism" (Freudenstein and Czyrny 2001) when the LPR attained about 8% and *Samoobrona* even more than 10% of the vote. Both parties in today's *Sejm* make up almost 20% of the mandates and form a decisive blackmail potential against the traditionally pro-European political elites.

In Romania, parties with a reluctant position towards surrendering state sovereignty have been present in every parliament since the first democratic elections were held in 1990. In 1992, the ruling *Democratic Front of National Salvation* – a movement later followed by the PDSR – went into a radical left-right coalition with the PRM, the PUNR and the PSM (see Ishiyama 1998). From 1992 to 1996, these three parties comprised more than 17% of the mandates; that percentage fell to about 11% after the 1996 elections because the PSM failed to surmount the electoral threshold of 3%. In 2000, the PRM was able to gain 19.5% of the vote and 24.2% of the parliamentary mandates and became the anti-EU party with the strongest blackmail potential in any parliament of an EU accession state. The party's chairman Tudor gained additional legitimacy when he received 28.3% in the first round and 33.2% in the runoff of the presidential elections of 2000.

In Slovakia, a similar situation evolved as in Romania. After the elections of 1994, a left-right radical government with participation of the ZRS and the SNS took power. In the 1998 elections, the ZRS fell to 1.3% of the vote, but the SNS was able to increase its share of votes to 9.1%. As

described above, the SNS then lost its political leadership to the PSNS. Both parties obtained about 7% of the vote, but due to the split none of them cleared the 5% electoral threshold. Instead, anti-EU votes are now represented by the Communists, which gained 6.3% of the vote in 2002. Despite their relatively low presence in parliament, anti-EU forces were thus able to acquire about 13% of the vote.

Because of the EU-skepticist parties in the Czech Republic (ODS), Hungary (FIDESZ-MPP), Poland (PiS and PSL), and Slovakia (HZDS), in those countries Euro-skepticist forces dispose of an additional playing field. When in government, these parties may be tempted to cooperate with more radical Euro-skepticist parties. During opposition, government parties being their main adversaries on other cleavages as well mostly block their EU-skepticist ideology. In any case, Euro-skepticist parties can be sure to find programmatic allies in some – not all – areas concerning European integration and EU-related policies.

How is the parliamentary strength of Euro- and EU-skepticist forces backed by the populations? As the Candidate Country Barometer has revealed during recent years,[8] in all candidate countries there are and always have been more supporters than opponents of EU accession. Looking more closely at the polls, however, reveals quite low levels of support in some countries, where the hypothesis of majority support can only be upheld because of the larger number of undecided persons. Not counting the latter category (everywhere about a third of the population), EU opponents make up for more than 10 percent of the population in several countries (see table 3).

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[8] See http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/cceb_en.htm.

Table 3 about here

Another indicator of EU opposition has been the voting in the EU accession referenda. Only partly in coherence with public opinion data, the referenda in Lithuania, Slovakia, and Slovenia have been characterized by very high support rates around 90 per cent for EU accession (again, see table 3). Hungary is an intermediate case, whereas in the Czech Republic (22.2%), Poland (22.4%), Latvia (32.3%), and Estonia (33.0%) the minorities opposing EU accession gained quite some force. Since public opinion in these four countries is more hostile towards the European Union than in the neighboring countries, it seems like two of the four Vyšegrad countries and two of three Baltic countries dispose of populations, which are divided in their attitudes towards the EU and European integration.

Diagram 1 about here

The comparatively high shares of Euro-skepticism in these countries are not mirrored in all party systems, however. Rather, diagram 1 reveals several related cases of patterns in the EU accession area. The countries filling these patterns are characterized by (a) low levels, (b) high levels, (c) over-mobilization, and (d) under-mobilization of Euro-skepticism.

(a) Low levels of Euro-skepticism both on the attitude and representative level can be dis-

cerned in Lithuania, Hungary, and Slovenia. Although the problem of Euro-skepticist blackmail is not settled, the marginalization of parliamentary forces as well as the obviously weak support of Euro-skepticist positions account for a generally positive image of European integration and the EU in national policies. From today's perspective, the politics of integrating into EU structures will not be hindered by these countries because no major party is characterized by Euro- or EU-skepticism, nor is there pressure from the populations on governments to obtain a critical position vis-à-vis European integration. The group, which could be labeled Euro-enthusiast, is flanked by Bulgaria, where Euro-skepticism on the attitude and representative level is low as well.

(b) Comparatively high levels of Euro-skepticism exist in the Czech Republic and Poland. In both countries, numerically considerable Euro-skepticist forces in parliament can count on the support of a similarly high proportion of Euro- or EU-skepticist voters. Depending on election outcomes, Euro-skepticist forces can therefore either influence governments through coalition building or minority government support, or turn to their electorate in cases of target conflicts between national and European interests. Therefore, the policies of Polish and Czech governments on the European scene throughout the next years might well be marked by a preponderance of national interests over genuine goals of European integration, if Euro-optimist forces do not obtain clear majorities.

(c) Over-mobilization: In Slovakia (and also in Romania), Euro-skeptic political forces have had more electoral success than the distribution of anti-EU sentiment in the population implies. An explanation for the Slovak case has to bear in mind that the differences be-

tween attitudes and electoral support are not extreme. A thorough restructuring of the Slovak economy has begun only after 1998, the year Vladimir Mečiar left government. Protest to the hardships of economic and social transformation certainly needs to be expected during this period, and electoral support for the national and communist parties has been explained accordingly (Krause 2003; Pridham 2003).

(d) Under-mobilization of anti-EU forces is characteristic of two further countries, Estonia and Latvia. As seen above, these two countries are (with Bulgaria) those states where EU opposition is virtually non-existent within the political elite. The reason for the high distribution of anti-EU attitudes in these two Baltic States can partly be explained by the separate attitude profile of the ethnic minorities. As a regional analysis of the EU referenda in Latvia reveals, towns and areas with strong Russian populations have been particularly skeptical about EU accession (Eglajs 2003).

The reasons for low levels and high levels of Euro-skepticism in the arguably similar country cases of Central Europe have not been fully discussed yet. As already shortly mentioned, some authors identify party strategies within national party systems as main difference for the strength of Euro-skepticist parties in some countries and their weakness in others (Taggart 1998; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2001; Sitter 2002). The contesting explanation of Kopecký and Mudde (2002), seeing ideology at the heart of Euro-skeptic party positions, lacks a hypothesis on the reasons for diverging levels of Euro-skepticism in the EU accession area. However, the ontology of nationalist and/or communist party families has been studied to some extent (Ishiyama 1999; Mudde 2000; Minkenberg and Beichelt 2001; Grzymala-Busse 2002). When following the hypotheses

layed out in these works, an integrated model to explain Euro-skepticism in the accession area needs to include reactions to socio-economic and socio-cultural change, party strategies and the character of opportunity structures within the domestic representative systems.

Altogether, the basic hypothesis of this text is: Whereas Euro-skepticism bears many faces in Central Europe, its electoral success can to a large extent be explained by looking at two party families. The strength of Euro-skepticist parties depends (a) on the skill of nationalist and communist parties to exploit the everywhere existing protest potential against the hardships of transition and (b) on the space of action moderate rightist and leftist adversaries leave for them. If the moderate right is disintegrated like in Poland, radicalist forces are able to gain ground by using Europe or the EU as a symbol for socio-economic diversification and socio-cultural alienation. If a moderate leftist party can be held responsible for promoting Western integration like in the Czech Republic, radicalist leftist forces face a high electoral potential among the losers of the transformation process. In sum, therefore, both ideology (Kopecký/Mudde) and party strategy (Szczerbiak/Taggart) are needed to explain Euro-skepticism in the new member states.

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Table 1: Euro-skepticist parties in post-socialist EU accession countries and time of presence in parliament

	Euro-skepticism		EU-skepticism in other party families
	Nationalist	*Communist*	
Bulgaria	None	None	None
Czech Republic	Republicans (SPR-RNČ), 1992-1998	Communist Party (KSČM), since 1992	Civic Party (ODS)*
Estonia	None	None	Centre Party (K)**
Hungary	Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP), 1998-2002	None	Union of Young Democrats – Civic Party (FIDESZ-MPP)*
Latvia	None	None	None
Lithuania	None	None	None
Poland	Christian National Union (ZChN) as part of AWS Solidarność, 1997-2001 Samoobrona, since 2001 League of Polish Families (LPR), since 2001	None	Law and Justice (PiS)* Polish Peasant Party (PSL)****
Romania	Party of National Unity (PUNR), 1990-2000 Party of Greater Romania (PRM), since 1992	Socialist Worker's Party (PSM), 1992-1996	None
Slovakia	Slovak National Party (SNS), 1990-2002	Worker's Union of Slovakia (ZRS), 1994-1998 Communist Party (KSS), since 2002	Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)***
Slovenia	Slovenian National Party (SNS), since 1992	None	None

* Party family: Conservative / Christian Democrat.

** Party family: Leftist Populist.

*** Party family: Rightist Populist.

**** Party family: Agrarian.

Table 2: Electoral success of parliamentary Euro-skepticist parties during the last years

|		*Party name*	*Percentage of votes for Euro-skepticist parties*	
			Next-to-last election	Last election
Low Euro-skepticist blackmail potential	Bulgaria	None	None	None
	Estonia	None	None	None
	Latvia	None	None	None
	Lithuania	None	None	None
	Hungary	Party of Life and Justice	MiéP: 5.6	MiéP: 4.4
	Slovenia	Slovenian National Party	SNS: 3.2	SNS: 4.4
Considerable Euro-skepticist blackmail potential	Czech Republic	Republicans (SPR-RSC) Communist Party (KSČM)	SPR-RSČ: 3.9 KSČM: 11.0	SPR-RSČ: 1.0 KSČM: 18.5
	Poland	League of Polish Families (LPR) Self-defense (Samoobrona)	Parts of AWS (33.8)	LPR: 7.9 Samoobrona: 10.2
	Romania	Party of Greater Romania (PRM) Party of National Unity (PUNR) Socialist Worker's Party (PSM)	PRM: 4.5 PUNR: 4.7 PSM: 2.2	PRM: 19.5
	Slovakia	Worker's Union of Slovakia (ZRS) Slovak National Party (SNS) Real Slovak National Party (PSNS) Slovak Communist Party (KSS)	ZRS: 1.3 SNS: 9.1	KSS: 6.3 SNS: 3.3 PSNS: 3.7

Table 3: Anti-EU attitudes in EU accession states

	Anti-EU attitudes among population*			
	2001*	2002*	2003*	No in EU-Referendum
Bulgaria	2	5	3	
Czech Republic	9	14	15	22,17
Estonia	14	16	16	33,00
Latvia	17	21	16	32,33
Lithuania	11	12	9	8,85
Hungary	7	5	10	16,16
Poland	11	11	11	22,39
Romania	2	2	2	
Slovakia	5	5	8	6,20
Slovenia	11	14	8	10,34

* Numbers are percentages of the population that see EU membership as "a bad thing."

Source: Candidate/Applicant Countries Eurobarometers 2001-2003.

Diagram 1: "No" in Referendum and share for Euro-skepticist votes by new member countries
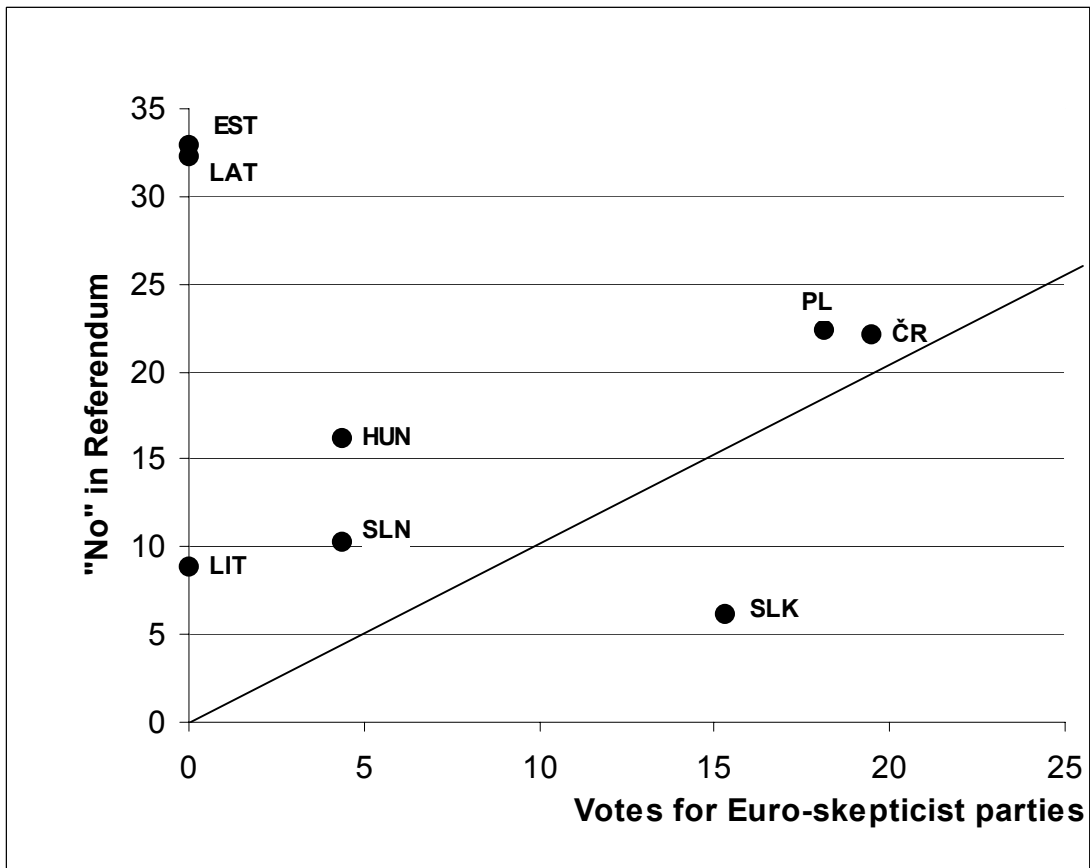
Word count: 8,713

Manuscript date: 7 July 2003 / 7 january 2004 after revision