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European Integration and the Radical Right: Three Patterns of Opposition

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE DURING THE PAST TWENTY years have led to an increased academic interest in radical right parties as well as the study of Euroscepticism. However, studies bridging the two have not yet been systematic. This is partly because radical right parties have been viewed as strong advocates of negative positions on European integration. Indeed, Hainsworth argues that these parties 'are well placed to act as the voice of popular opposition and protest against developments declared to be anti-national'.¹ Radical right parties either because of their extremist ideology² or because of their marginal position in their domestic party system³ have increased incentives to oppose Europe.

It is only very recently that scholars have identified that behind this seemingly uniform stance lies a vast array of party responses to Europe that have also varied over time.⁴ This can also be verified by the latest 2006 Chapel Hill expert survey on party positions,⁵ where radical right parties exhibit varying scores on the question of their overall European Union (EU) position ranging from a strongly

¹ P. Hainsworth, *The Extreme Right in Western Europe*, New York, Routledge, 2008, p. 85.

² G. Marks and C. J. Wilson, 'The Past in the Present: A Cleavage Theory of Party Response to European Integration', *British Journal of Political Science*, 30: 2 (2000), pp. 433–59; L. Hooghe, G. Marks and C. J. Wilson, 'Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?', in G. Marks and M. Steenbergen (eds), *European Integration and Political Conflict*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.

³ P. Taggart, 'A Touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary Western European Party Systems', *European Journal of Political Research*, 33: 3 (1998), pp. 363–88.

⁴ C. Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007; Hainsworth, *The Extreme Right*.

⁵ L. Hooghe, R. Bakker, et al., 'Reliability and Validity of Measuring Party Positions: The Chapel Hill Expert Surveys of 2002 and 2006', *European Journal of Political Research*, 49: 5 (2010), pp. 689–703.

opposing 1 for the French Front National to a comparatively favourable approach of the Latvian For Fatherland and Freedom, which scores 4.75.⁶ Although this indicates strongly that parties belonging to the radical right party family display dissimilar positions on European integration, the issue of radical right EU attitudes remains under-researched in terms of content as well as underlying argumentation. Seeking to build on the above-mentioned literature and to contribute towards an improved understanding of the radical right stance to European integration, this research is informed by two interrelated questions. First, how can we conceptualize the nature of radical right positions on the EU? Second, how do radical right parties respond to the issue of European integration?

This article argues that radical right parties may be categorized into three patterns of opposition towards European integration: the rejecting, conditional and compromising patterns of Euroscepticism. These are identified through the careful examination of party attitudes on four different aspects related to European integration and the EU. These are: a common cultural definition of Europe, the principle of cooperation at a European multilateral level, the EU policy practice and the desire to build a future European polity. In order to address these two research questions and to present the argument, this article is divided into three sections. It first discusses the prominent works in the literature on Euroscepticism, assessing the extent to which they apply to the European positions of radical right parties. Second, it proposes the conceptualization of radical right attitudes to European integration in terms of three patterns of opposition. Third, it conducts a qualitative analysis of party literature of 12 radical right parties from 10 European countries, adding empirical substance to the theoretical reasoning of the article.

DEFINING NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Euroscepticism is a widely accepted term that describes negative attitudes towards European integration. Conceptualizing and defining Euroscepticism has presented researchers with various problems.

⁶ The scale is structured from 1 to 7, where 1 indicates a strongly opposing position and 7 a strongly favourable position.

It is an elusive term that has emerged from journalistic discourse and has assumed different meanings over time and according to region. Its early uses can be understood as being 'embedded within the specific British political and historical context'.⁷ Indeed, the term has been first traced in journalistic articles written for the British press during the mid-1980s, when there was a tendency to use the term 'Euro sceptic' interchangeably with that of 'anti-marketeer'.⁸ The Thatcherite discourse at this period of great tension between the British government and the European Commission gave the term a connotation of extremism. However, the term Euroscepticism 'assumes a meaning which must be understood relative to the different national political traditions and experiences of European integration which frame those debates'.⁹ Although the term has its historical roots in the United Kingdom, it has progressively become established elsewhere, especially since the process of the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. Mudde also identifies 1992 as the 'turning point' for radical right parties in terms of both their position on European integration and the salience of the issue in their agenda.¹⁰

Taggart, being the first scholar to define Euroscepticism, suggested that it is 'the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration'¹¹ and argued that Eurosceptic parties are more likely to stand outside the status quo. Over the years, Taggart and Szczerbiak have further developed this definition by suggesting the distinction between hard (principled) and soft (contingent) Euroscepticism. On the one hand, hard Euroscepticism indicates a party's 'outright rejection of the entire project of European political and economic integration and opposition to their country joining or remaining members of the EU'.¹² Thus, hard Eurosceptics advocate

⁷ R. Harmsen and M. Spiering, 'Introduction: Euroscepticism and the Evolution of European Political Debate', in R. Harmsen and M. Spiering (eds), *Euroscepticism: Party Politics, National Identity and European Integration*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2004, p. 16.

⁸ M. Spiering, 'British Euroscepticism', in Harmsen and Spiering, *Euroscepticism*, p. 128.

⁹ Harmsen and Spiering, 'Introduction', p. 17.

¹⁰ Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties*, p. 159.

¹¹ Taggart, 'A Touchstone of Dissent', p. 366.

¹² P. Taggart and A. Szczerbiak, 'Parties, Positions and Europe: Euroscepticism in the EU Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe', *Opposing Europe, Sussex European Institute Working Paper 46*, Brighton, 2001, p. 10.

withdrawal of their country from the EU as a result of their being at variance with the current conception of the project. This objection ‘comes from the belief that the EU is counter to deeply held values or, more likely, is the embodiment of negative values’.¹³ On the other hand, soft Euroscepticism is ‘NOT a principled objection to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of policy areas leads to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU’.¹⁴

Szczerbiak and Taggart’s definition of Euroscepticism is the most widely accepted in the literature for a number of reasons, not least because it successfully identifies Eurosceptic trends and tendencies in countries and party systems. If we apply this typology to radical right parties, however, we are presented with a less clear picture of their attitudes and underlying argumentation. As far as the first type is concerned, Taggart and Szczerbiak argue that parties may adopt a hard Eurosceptic position as the EU epitomizes negative values. This assertion holds true in the case of radical right parties. Due to the nationalistic elements of their ideology, these parties consider supranationalism as an enemy of the nation-state. This, however, presents a conceptual problem as not all radical right parties are hard Eurosceptics. Whereas some seek their country’s EU withdrawal and reject European integration ‘on principle’, others are content to criticize the system from within. Thus, this distinction between hard and soft becomes less sensitive to the fact that some radical right parties may not oppose their country’s EU membership but may rather disagree with the way in which the EU project is run. What is more, the authors rightly argue that soft Eurosceptic parties present concerns over a number of policy areas. Radical right parties, however, are not concerned solely about EU policies but also about the type of EU decision-making and may present conditions under which they would support cooperation at a higher level. The definition of soft Euroscepticism does not capture the further distinction made between opposition to the polity and policy aspects of European integration.¹⁵

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ A. Szczerbiak and P. Taggart, ‘Introduction: Researching Euroscepticism in European Party Systems: A Comparative and Theoretical Agenda’, in A. Szczerbiak and P. Taggart, *Opposing Europe? The Comparative Party Politics of Euroscepticism, Volume 2: Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 2.

¹⁵ This idea is largely based on P. Mair, ‘Political Opposition and the European Union’, *Government and Opposition*, 42: 1 (2007), pp. 1–17.

This distinction is particularly prominent in radical right discourse and will be explained below.

Kopecky and Mudde have suggested an alternative categorization of party-based Euroscepticism, differentiating between diffuse and specific support for European integration. Drawing from Easton's¹⁶ seminal work on political regimes, they define diffuse as 'support for the general ideas of European integration', while specific is defined as 'support for the general practice of European integration'.¹⁷ This framework leads to a two-by-two matrix of possible party positions structured along the Europhobe/Europhile and EU-optimist/EU-pessimist axes. These include first, the Euro-enthusiasts, who support both the ideas of European integration and the general practice of integration. Second are the Euro-rejects, who do not accept either. Next, the Eurosceptics, who support the idea of a united Europe but disagree with the general practice of integration. Fourth are the Euro-pragmatists, who are against the idea of the EU but support the practice of European integration.¹⁸ These categories being ideal types, they argue, makes them serviceable for the qualitative analysis of party positions.

Mudde has used this typology to discuss the European attitudes of populist radical right parties in Europe currently as well as historically.¹⁹ This typology is successful at describing radical right positions on European integration to the extent that it has somewhat (albeit indirectly) incorporated the policy and polity aspect of the EU in the dimensions of diffuse and specific support. However, the four types that are distinguished on the basis of these two dimensions are not entirely relevant to the party family under investigation. The Euro-reject category can be both theoretically and empirically applicable to this party family. The Eurosceptic category is also highly relevant as it is empirically possible for radical right parties to support the idea of cooperation at EU level but not in the shape of the EU. However, the Euro-enthusiast category is not empirically observable, especially after the process of ratification of

¹⁶ D. Easton, *A Framework for Political Analysis*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall, 1965.

¹⁷ P. Kopecky and C. Mudde, 'The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on Euroscepticism in East Central Europe', *European Union Politics*, 3: 3 (2002), pp. 300–1.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties*, pp. 161–5.

the Maastricht Treaty during the early 1990s. Simply put, there are no radical right parties that enthusiastically support the process of European integration. The 'Europragmatist' type is also problematic in this regard as principled opposition to the idea of European integration is highly unlikely to lead to favourable positions on the project of the current EU. Mudde himself accepts this, arguing that 'very few European political parties fall into this category'.²⁰

Sørensen has defined the nature of public Euroscepticism, identifying four broad ideal types: the economic, sovereignty, democracy and social types.²¹ Although the aim of her research has been to discuss public EU attitudes, the sovereignty type can be instructive in discussing radical right positions on European integration. Radical right ideology is rooted in the defence of national interests and identity, drawing mostly on the nationalist political doctrine 'that strives for the congruence of the cultural and the political unit, i.e. the nation and the state'.²² As such, the issue of sovereignty is particularly salient in radical right discourse and differentiates the attitudes of these parties from those of other party families. We can thus group radical right attitudes as mostly belonging to the 'sovereignty type'. However, Sørensen's work does not help us to analyse different European positions of the radical right party family that fall within the sovereignty type to which the article turns.²³

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

²¹ C. Sørensen, 'Love Me, Love Me Not: A Typology of Public Euroscepticism', *Sussex European Institute Working Paper 101*, Brighton, 2008.

²² Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties*, p. 16.

²³ For reasons of space, only the prominent typologies in the literature have been discussed. Others, by no means less important, include C. Flood, 'Euroscepticism: A Problematic Concept', paper presented at the UACES 32nd Annual Conference and 7th Research Conference, Queen's University Belfast, 2002; and J. Ronvy, 'Conceptualising Party-Based Euroscepticism: Magnitude and Motivations', *Collegium*, 29 (2004), pp. 31–47. It is worth mentioning that the Eurosceptic patterns identified below may be seen as overlapping with Flood's rejectionist, revisionist and minimalist categories. However, Flood's categories are broad and, unlike the present article, they 'are not intended to convey any suggestion of a specific content to the positions which they describe, beyond basic stances towards the EU's development', Flood, 'Euroscepticism', p. 5.

CONCEPTUALIZING RADICAL RIGHT ATTITUDES ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: THREE PATTERNS OF OPPOSITION

Aiming to improve the conceptualization of radical right attitudes towards the EU, this section proposes the categorization of their positions on European integration into the rejecting, conditional and compromising patterns. The three categories of radical right party attitudes advanced here are deduced from party positions on four aspects of European integration, which derive from the current literature on Euroscepticism, Mair's distinction between the policy and polity aspect of the EU and an attentive reading of the Treaties Establishing the EU (TEU).²⁴ These include a cultural definition of Europe, the principle for cooperation at a European multilateral level, the current EU policy practice and the future of the EU polity. They represent four fundamental aspects of the debate on European integration and provide the indicators on the basis of which the three patterns of radical right Euroscepticism are identified.

Four Aspects of European Integration

The first aspect of European integration is a cultural 'definition' of Europe. The common identity of European peoples is defined as the feeling of cultural, religious and historical bonds among the European nation-states. Mudde identifies this definition of Europe based on the Christian, Hellenistic and Roman traditions as present in radical right party discourse. Europe is seen as a civilization 'shared by the various different and independent European nations'.²⁵ This definition does not imply that Europe is considered to be above the nation. Rather, Europe as a continent encapsulates the common elements that bind European peoples together and serves to distinguish 'us' from 'others'. This cultural definition of Europe is closely related to a spatial/border definition and becomes the prime justification for the exclusion of Turkey from Europe and, by extension, the EU. Since Christianity is one of the constitutive elements of

²⁴ Note that these three patterns build on the author's previous work: S. Vasilopoulou, 'Varieties of Euroscepticism: The Case of the European Extreme Right', *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 5: 1 (2009), pp. 3–23.

²⁵ Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties*, pp. 169–70.

Europe, its borders must stop at the Urals and the Mediterranean, excluding any non-Christian country to the east and south. If Europe accepted a religiously dissimilar country such as Turkey, then the European construction would lose one of its essential characteristics and would ultimately collapse.

The second aspect discussed here is the 'principle' of European integration. This is anchored in the preamble of the Treaty Establishing the European Union, which states that the member states are 'RESOLVED to mark a new stage in the process of European integration undertaken with the establishment of the European Communities'.²⁶ The principle of European integration indicates a party's wish and willingness for cooperation at a higher multilateral level. This type of cooperation refers only to cooperation within the EU framework, even if the structures of the latter are criticized and reform is actively pursued. It does not signify bilateral or trilateral cooperation between selected European states on particular ad hoc policies, including, for instance, some aspects of trade. In this respect, cooperation under the European Free Trade Area does not imply support of the principle of European integration. The latter is an agreement providing only for trade, requiring no political commitment and taking place outside the EU framework. On the contrary, the principle of European integration refers to a multifaceted multilateral agreement with a political character within the EU structures, even if the reform of the latter is actively pursued. Thus, opposing the principle of European integration entails opposition against 'not only the government and its policies but also the whole system of governance'.²⁷ The principle of integration also features in Szczerbiak and Taggart's above-mentioned 'hard/principled' opposition to European integration as well as Kopecky and Mudde's 'Euro-reject' category.

The third and fourth aspects of European integration derive from Mair's discussion of political opposition in the EU context. They are deduced from the distinction between opposition to the policy and opposition to the polity aspects of the EU and are respectively labelled as the 'practice' and 'future' of European integration.²⁸ The

²⁶ European Union, 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union 1992', *Official Journal of the European Communities* (2002), p. 9. Capitals in the original. The TEU has been selected as it is the major treaty establishing the European Union with which all member states are obliged to comply.

²⁷ Mair, 'Political Opposition', p. 5.

²⁸ Ibid.

Table 1
Conceptualizing European Integration

<i>The four aspects of European integration</i>	
Definition	The feeling of cultural, religious and historical bonds among the European peoples
Principle	The wish and willingness for cooperation at a European multilateral level
Practice	The EU institutional and policy status quo
Future	The making of a European polity

practice indicator is also inferred from the TEU's stipulation, according to which 'The Union shall be served by a single institutional framework which shall ensure the consistency and the continuity of the activities carried out in order to attain its objectives while respecting and building upon the *acquis communautaire*'.²⁹ The practice of European integration comprises the overall body of EU law and institutional framework, which include the policies administered at the European level as well as the nature of decision-making. Opposition to the practice of European integration becomes opposition to the policy aspect of the EU.

The 'future' indicator of the EU refers to the member states' strong desire to promote European cooperation within the EU political framework with the general aim of creating an ever-closer union. This aspect of integration features in the TEU, which specifies that 'This Treaty marks a new stage in the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe'.³⁰ According to the TEU, member states recall 'the historic importance of the ending of the division of the European continent and the need to create firm bases for the construction of the future Europe'.³¹ Opposition to the future of European integration develops into opposition to the polity aspect of the EU. Note that this implies Euroscepticism because it is 'at odds with what is the dominant mode of ongoing integration'.³² Table 1 summarizes these four aspects.

²⁹ European Union, 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty', p. 11.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³² Taggart and Szczerbiak, 'Introduction', p. 8.

The Three Patterns of Radical Right Opposition

In defining the EU in terms of the four fundamental features of the definition, principle, practice and future of integration, our understanding of the range of positions available for parties to adopt increases and the analysis becomes more specified. These four aspects of integration represent the principal point of reference of this article. They provide the researcher with the analytical toolkit integral to the process of identification of potential radical right EU positions. This section argues that radical right Euroscepticism can be categorized into the rejecting, conditional and compromising patterns.

'Rejecting' Euroscepticism is a position that implies acceptance of common cultural, historical and religious European characteristics. However, there is strong opposition to the remaining three aspects of European integration. This includes rejection of the principle of cooperation within the EU framework, disagreement with the European institutional and policy status quo and resistance to the future building of a European polity. Under this stance it is necessary to manage all policies solely at the national level and to withdraw from the EU at any cost. This position is generally associated with an ardent anti-supranationalism and national self-determination discourse. The general aim is to shift power back to the nation-state and to restore the sovereignty of the nation-state's institutions, denying the legitimacy of the EU system of governance as a whole. This pattern largely overlaps with Szczerbiak and Taggart's hard Euroscepticism as well as Kopecky and Mudde's Euro-rejects.

'Conditional' Euroscepticism entails an acceptance of the common heritage of European peoples, approval of the principle of European cooperation but hostility to the current policy practice as well as the future building of a European polity. Although the importance of nation-state cooperation at a European level is acknowledged, the current institutional balance as well as the policy status quo are unacceptable because they compromise nation-state sovereignty. Consequently, closer unification of the European polity is not an appealing option. Conditional Eurosceptics accept by and large the system but have objections to the policies and institutions of EU governance. This pattern is usually connected with a conditional wish for European cooperation to the extent that supranational institutions do not compromise state sovereignty. A 'conditional' position on Europe

implies the rejection of decisions taken by supranational institutions and the endorsement of reform so that nation-state interests are guaranteed. Cooperation has already gone too far, and opposition to an ever-closer union is strong. Whereas both the practice of integration and the institutional balance of powers are dismissed, inter-governmental cooperation within the EU structures and in policies deemed beneficial to the nation-state are largely supported. To be sure, there is a great variation of the policies that each conditional Eurosceptic wishes to be governed intergovernmentally. Conditional Eurosceptics tend to favour the creation of a Europe administered by an institutional framework resembling a confederation, namely inter-governmental cooperation without the presence or with limited power of supranational institutions. The legitimacy of the EU project is denied to the extent that a majority of decisions have been taken by supranational institutions and not by the member states.

‘Compromising’ Euroscepticism comprises acceptance of a common European culture, support for the principle and the practice of integration but opposition to the future building of a European polity. Compromising Eurosceptics admit that European integration is not necessarily a good thing but that some of its aspects are beneficial to the state. Transferring decision-making powers to European institutions is particularly unattractive. However, a degree of integration is necessary for the general prosperity of the state, particularly in the economic domain. Taking part in the EU structures and institutions offers the possibility to (re)negotiate change and reform from within the EU institutional structures in order to promote one’s national interest. This implies a willingness to play by the rules of the game, aiming to reinforce the EU’s intergovernmental aspect as well as the member states’ decision-making power, typically – but not necessarily – to the detriment of supranational institutions. An ever-closer union is not acceptable, however, because that would entail reinforcing federalism. Although this pattern of opposition to the EU project has a negative character, it may not necessarily be considered to be Eurosceptic; Szczerbiak and Taggart prefer to use the term ‘Euro-criticism’ or ‘Euro-contestation’ when discussing similar types of attitude.³³

³³ A. Szczerbiak and P. Taggart, ‘Theorizing Party-Based Euroscepticism: Problems of Definition, Measurement and Causality’, in Szczerbiak and Taggart, *Opposing Europe?*, p. 252.

Table 2
Patterns of Radical Right Opposition to European Integration

<i>Patterns of opposition</i>	<i>Aspects of European integration</i>			
	<i>Cultural definition</i>	<i>Principle of cooperation</i>	<i>Policy practice</i>	<i>Future EU polity</i>
Rejecting	In favour	Against	Against	Against
Conditional	In favour	In favour	Against	Against
Compromising	In favour	In favour	In favour	Against

As shown in Table 2, a cultural definition of Europe is a point of agreement among the three patterns of radical right Euroscepticism. Europe is seen as standing on a tripod composed of ancient Greek democracy, Roman legal tradition and Christianity.³⁴ These three necessary constituent elements provide the basis for a cultural as well as a spatial definition of Europe. They also generate the justification of the almost unanimous position of radical right parties against Turkish EU accession. Furthermore, opposing the future building of a European polity under the auspices of the EU represents the lowest common denominator of radical right negative attitudes on European integration.³⁵

Given that, as mentioned above, radical right attitudes on European integration are a case of 'sovereignty-based' Euroscepticism,³⁶ the issue of sovereignty in their discourse needs to be addressed. The transfer of decision-making power to European institutions is prominent in all three types but is viewed in different manners. Both the rejecting and conditional patterns entail strong opposition to supranationalism and ceding one's sovereignty to the benefit of European institutions. Any type of transfer of sovereignty to European institutions on any type of issue is unacceptable. However, conditional Eurosceptics differ from rejecting Eurosceptics

³⁴ Note that this definition of European identity directly applies to the radical right's world view and may not necessarily be shared by other parties or the European public. For a detailed discussion of European identity from the citizens' perspective, see M. Bruter, *Citizens of Europe? The Emergence of a Mass European Identity*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

³⁵ To clarify, the patterns suggested here are devised in order to provide useful information regarding party discourse. They have indeed an ordinal character, namely ranging from more to less opposition against the EU. However, measuring the exact distance between them is outside the scope of this article.

³⁶ Sørensen, 'Love Me, Love Me Not'.

on three grounds. First, they recognize that particular issues cannot be resolved exclusively at the domestic level. Second, and as a result of the first, they are willing to accept that European countries must actively cooperate at a multilateral level. Third, they agree that cooperation can take place within the EU framework only if the latter is reformed. This entails taking power away from supranational institutions to the benefit of member states. This is sometimes articulated in a ‘Europe of Nations’ discourse or supporting the prospect of a European confederation.

Compromising Eurosceptics do not support the transfer of sovereignty either. Nevertheless, they accept – albeit with criticisms – the current structures of European integration. A degree of European integration is desirable because it brings important economic advantages and prosperity to the member states. The main difference between the conditional and the compromising patterns in terms of the issue of sovereignty lies in how the current EU framework is treated. Whereas the first push for intergovernmental cooperation in all policy spheres, advocating a framework without supranational institutions, the latter are willing to act within the existing EU structures; in other words to play by the rules.

RADICAL RIGHT ATTITUDES ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: AN EMPIRICAL OVERVIEW

This section, which is largely empirical, tests the validity and relevance of the above patterns through a qualitative analysis of party literature of 12 radical right parties from 10 European countries (see Table 3).³⁷ Radical right parties are defined here on the basis of Mudde’s suggestion that their ‘core ideology is a combination of nativism, authoritarianism, and populism’.³⁸ The parties included in this study feature in Mudde’s appendix of populist radical right parties.³⁹ Party programmes have been selected as they are carefully

³⁷ This article does not consider the Greater Romanian Party because of the lack of linguistic skills on the part of the author.

³⁸ Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties*, p. 26.

³⁹ For the appendix see Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties*, pp. 305–8. This article also studies the Italian National Alliance. Recent academic discussions have pointed out the party’s steady evolution towards a mainstream right-wing party under Gianfranco Fini’s leadership. For example, see P. Ignazi, ‘Legitimation and Evolution on

Table 3
Radical Right Party Positions on European Integration

<i>Patterns of opposition to European integration</i>			
	<i>Rejecting</i>	<i>Conditional</i>	<i>Compromising</i>
Austria		Austrian Freedom Party	
Belgium		Flemish Interest	
Bulgaria		Attack	
Denmark		Danish People's Party	
France	Front National		
Greece		Popular Orthodox Rally	
Italy	Tricolour Flame	Northern League	National Alliance
Latvia			For Fatherland and Freedom
Poland	League of Polish Families		
United Kingdom	British National Party		

crafted compromises representing the party as a whole and directed both externally at potential voters as well as internally at the party members.⁴⁰ A qualitative methodological approach is preferred because it can unfold the different arguments of the parties. This will enrich and add qualitative substance to expert surveys' numerical assessments.

The period under investigation is the latter part of the 2000s. This period has been chosen not only because of the article's

the Italian Right Wing: Social and Ideological Repositioning of Alleanza Nazionale and the Lega Nord', *South European Society and Politics*, 10: 2 (2005), pp. 333–49. While I agree with the conclusions in the literature, it is indisputable that the party has its origins in right-wing radicalism, given that it is the offspring of the fascist Italian Social Movement, and as such it is included in the current study.

⁴⁰ I acknowledge that in order to assess party positions on European integration a greater diversity of documents would have to be analysed. However, due to limited space the analysis is based on party manifestos and some secondary sources on the parties. National election manifestos have been selected instead of European manifestos; this has been a deliberate choice as it is arguable that national manifestos represent the parties' world view as a whole. European manifestos are more likely to be manipulated by opportunistic party actors, who can criticize the EU more severely as they try to exploit the protest character of European elections.

contemporary focus but also because during these years there was extensive discussion over the ratification of the European Constitution and the Lisbon Treaty, which have both aroused strong nationalist sentiments across Europe. The failed 2005 referenda in France and the Netherlands are especially seen as ‘epitomizing a growing mood of scepticism about Europe that could be sensed more or less throughout the enlarged Union’.⁴¹

The ‘Rejecting’ Pattern

The parties belonging to this pattern are the French Front National, the League of Polish Families, the British National Party and the Italian Tricolour Flame. These parties display similar positions on the issues of sovereignty transfer, European legislation, immigration, enlargement and foreign policy. Although they accept that European peoples share cultural, historical and religious characteristics, they are against the principle of ceding national sovereignty to non-national institutions and oppose any European legislation or treaty. They also blame the EU, suggesting that it has been one of the sources of their domestic immigration and economic problems. These parties do not accept the principle that nations should cooperate at a higher European level. They advocate that policies must remain strictly national, and they wish for their country’s withdrawal from the EU. They clearly reject the EU policy practice and the future building of an EU polity, openly questioning the latter’s political legitimacy.

The Front National’s stance on French withdrawal from the EU is slightly indirect but nevertheless existent. The party expresses its desire that the European treaties are overhauled. It suggests a tour of European capitals in order to renegotiate the treaties, and if the EU member states fail to reach an agreement, Front National advocates the organization of a popular referendum on the question: ‘Should France regain its independence vis-à-vis the Europe of Brussels?’.⁴² This rhetoric indicates that the party advances French EU withdrawal, which the party believes should take place in a hassle-free manner,

⁴¹ Mair, ‘Political Opposition’, p. 1.

⁴² Front National, *Programme de Gouvernement de Jean-Marie Le Pen*, Front National, 2007.

just like an amicable divorce. Indeed, the literature suggests that the party ‘calls for a restoration of French sovereignty and independence and for the exit of France from the EU’, quoting Le Pen as saying ‘Let’s liberate France’.⁴³ Most important, the party supports the restoration of the French currency as well as the re-establishment of French internal border controls. The League of Polish Families argues along similar lines in favour of Polish withdrawal. The 2008 manifesto maintains the party’s opposition to Polish EU membership. In the case of a national referendum, the party would reject European integration.⁴⁴ In similar vein, the British National Party argues for ‘leaving the European Union – the sine qua non’, viewing the EU as an aspiring superstate that is contrary to British interests.⁴⁵ The Italian Tricolour Flame indirectly advocates withdrawal, arguing that Italy and the European states should restore political sovereignty and that the EU has been artificially created in Maastricht from the elites and without the will of the people.⁴⁶

The ‘Conditional’ Pattern

The radical right parties adopting a conditional Eurosceptic position strongly differentiate themselves from the rejecting pattern in that they do not maintain that their countries should exit the EU. These are the Austrian Freedom Party, the Belgian Flemish Interest, the Italian Northern League, the Danish People’s Party, the Greek Popular Orthodox Rally and the Bulgarian Attack. For these parties, the EU framework as currently conceived is clearly not the right platform for European multilateral cooperation. In contrast to the previous category, they crucially accept the principle that European peoples need and should cooperate. They refrain from supporting the current policy and institutional practice as well as the future building of a European polity.

⁴³ P. Hainsworth, C. O’Brien and Paul Mitchell, ‘Defending the Nation: The Politics of Euroscepticism on the French Right’, in Harmsen and Spiering, *Euroscepticism*, p. 47.

⁴⁴ League of Polish Families, *The LPR Program*, LPR, 2008.

⁴⁵ British National Party, *Rebuilding British Democracy: British National Party General Election Manifesto*, BNP, 2005, p. 5.

⁴⁶ Tricolour Flame, *Programma Politico*, Tricolour Flame, 2007, p. 2.

As far as the Austrian Freedom Party is concerned, we learn from the literature that it has ‘used the campaign before the general elections to underline its scepticism regarding EU enlargement’.⁴⁷ The party has been sceptical with respect to the lifting of any kind of borders within the Union and has promoted a general rethinking of Austria’s membership.⁴⁸ The party calls the European Constitution a ‘madness’.⁴⁹ Andreas Mölzer, the party’s only member of the European Parliament during the legislative period 2004–9, argues that ‘Europe of the Brussels syndicate has nothing in common with the conception of a Europe of free and sovereign states’.⁵⁰ However, the party’s official programme states that the future of Europe lies in the close cooperation of its peoples. It mentions that the EU is only one part of the European reality and should not develop into a European federal state but into a confederation of independent nation-states.⁵¹ The party puts forward an alternative framework for European cooperation, thus accepting the principle of integration. It nevertheless disagrees both with the EU policy practice and the building of a future European polity. Similarly, the Flemish Interest criticizes the EU for being bureaucratic and intruding in the sovereignty of the nation-state and its people. The party is critical towards the EU as it is currently conceived, arguing that the nation-state should take precedence. It does not, however, advocate withdrawal, but gives preference to intergovernmental cooperation within the framework of a European confederation.⁵²

Conti finds that the Northern League’s position has changed from a supportive to a much more radical stance.⁵³ Quaglia also indicates

⁴⁷ A. Pelinka, ‘Austrian Euroscepticism: The Shift from the Left to the Right’, in Harmsen and Spiering, *Euroscepticism*, p. 216.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

⁴⁹ Austrian Freedom Party, *Dafür stehen wir!*, Austrian Freedom Party, 2007.

⁵⁰ Original in English. A. Mölzer, ‘The FPO and Europe’, 2007, available at <http://www.andreas-moelzer.at/index.php?id=62>.

⁵¹ Austrian Freedom Party. *Dafür stehen wir!*

⁵² Flemish Interest, *The Manifesto of Vlaams Belang*, Flemish Interest, 2007.

⁵³ N. Conti, ‘Party Attitudes to European Integration: A Longitudinal Analysis of the Italian Case’, *European Parties Elections and Referendums Network Working Paper 13*, Brighton, 2003, p. 27.

this shift, arguing that it is consolidating its Euroscepticism.⁵⁴ Indeed the party criticizes the European institutions for not being close to European citizens and for failing to respect the traditions and cultures of European peoples. However, it argues that ‘we must construct a Europe that is founded on the respect of national and territorial realities, giving the European Union only a limited degree of sovereignty, delimiting its competences and the fields of its intervention avoiding ambiguities’.⁵⁵ This demonstrates that whereas the Northern League accepts the principle of EU cooperation, it discards the current policy arrangements and rejects future EU cooperation.

While the Danish People’s Party is against European unification and suggests that the EU must not gain power over the member states, it also maintains that particular policies may be dealt with at a European multilateral level. For instance, the party’s official programme states that it opposes the development of a federal EU resembling the United States of Europe. Rather the party seeks a close and friendly European cooperation limited to particular areas of Danish interest, including trade and the environment as well as technical cooperation. Cooperation can occur within the EU framework only at the request of large majorities of member states.⁵⁶ Although the party supports cooperation in general, it opposes the introduction of a European political union and argues that Denmark should remain a sovereign state, especially as far as its borders are concerned.

Similarly, the Greek Popular Orthodox Rally argues that the future of Greece is linked to the EU to a great extent. However, this can only occur in the context of a confederation whereby member states would recognize and protect their historical, cultural and ethnic roots as well as the ethnic characteristics of the European peoples.⁵⁷ Lastly, the Bulgarian Attack does not dedicate much space in its electoral programme to the EU, indicating the low importance of the issue in the party’s agenda. The EU is briefly discussed in the foreign policy section, which argues that Bulgaria’s foreign relations must be

⁵⁴ L. Quaglia, ‘Euroscepticism in Italy and Centre-Right and Right Wing Political Parties’, *Opposing Europe, Sussex European Institute Working Paper 60*, Brighton, 2003, p. 18.

⁵⁵ Northern League, *Errori ed orrori del programma Prodi e dell’Unione*, Northern League, 2006, p. 26. Original text in Italian.

⁵⁶ Danish People’s Party, *Den Europæiske Union*, Danish People’s Party, 2008.

⁵⁷ Popular Orthodox Rally, *Πλάσιτο Θέσεων*, Popular Orthodox Rally, 2007, p. 23.

expanded to include not only the EU but also other states.⁵⁸ This indicates that although the party is a fervent supporter of the maintenance of national sovereignty, it accepts the existence of the EU as a foreign policy actor. While it seeks to reinforce foreign relations with other states, it does not find Bulgaria's withdrawal from the EU a desirable alternative.

The 'Compromising' Pattern

The parties belonging to this pattern agree with the principle for cooperation and the policy practice of European integration. They also acknowledge that their country's economic prosperity is largely a result of cooperation within the EU framework. These parties are the Italian National Alliance and the Latvian For Fatherland and Freedom. They suggest that the EU should be reformed within its existing structures and they refrain from proposing an alternative framework for cooperation, such as the confederation argued for by some of the parties belonging to the conditional pattern. Nevertheless, they are not active proponents of further integration, nor do they promote the uploading of further national policies to the European level.

In his analysis of party positions on integration in Italy, Conti argues that the Italian National Alliance attaches particular importance to the nation. It 'rejects the idea of a federal Europe and supports one of a looser union where the power of nation states are preserved and the outcomes of European integration are systematically checked'.⁵⁹ The National Alliance is in favour of a number of EU policies, including technology, energy and the Lisbon Agenda. It believes that Italy should not entrust itself to Europe but contribute to remaking Europe, taking into account the specifics of the Italian case.⁶⁰ The party views integration through a cost-benefit analysis approach and seeks to reinforce the Italian national interest through participating in the European institutions. This clearly indicates that the party has accepted that it should promote Italian interests within

⁵⁸ Attack, *Програмна схема*, Attack, 2009.

⁵⁹ Conti, 'Party Attitudes to European Integration', p. 26.

⁶⁰ National Alliance, *Ripensare il centrodestra nella prospettiva europea*, National Alliance, 2008, p. 13.

Table 4

2006 Chapel Hill Party Scores on the Question: 'Overall Orientation of the Party Leadership Towards European Integration' (1 = strongly opposed; 7 = strongly in favour)

<i>Pattern</i>	<i>Party name</i>	<i>Chapel Hill score</i>
Rejecting	British National Party	–
	League of Polish Families	1.38
	Front National	1
	Tricolour Flame	–
Conditional	Attack	2.46
	Austrian Freedom Party	1.75
	Danish People's Party	2.33
	Flemish Interest	2.5
	Northern League	1.5
	Popular Orthodox Rally	2.38
Compromising	For Fatherland and Freedom	4.75
	National Alliance	4.75

the existing EU structures. Likewise, the Latvian For Fatherland and Freedom argues that the EU must be strengthened only as an association of member states and that Latvian politicians should work hard to achieve advantageous conditions for their country in the EU.⁶¹ Both parties have accepted that they should promote and strengthen their country's position within the existing structures of the EU.

The above analysis has produced the categorization of four radical right parties in the rejecting pattern, six parties in the conditional pattern and two in the compromising pattern. Since one of the aims of this article has been to provide qualitative support for quantitative assessments of party positions, it is worth comparing the results of this study to those of the latest 2006 Chapel Hill survey. As seen in Table 4, they largely overlap. On the question of the 'overall orientation of the party leadership towards European integration', Front National and the League of Polish Families score respectively the lowest scores. The opposite is true for the National Alliance and For Fatherland and Freedom. Six parties rank somewhere in the middle. Note that the Chapel Hill survey has not measured the EU positions of the British National Party or the Italian Tricolour Flame.

⁶¹ For Fatherland and Freedom, *Tēvzemei un Brīvībai/LNNK programma*, LNNK, 2008.

CONCLUSION

In an attempt to provide a bridge between the literature on radical right parties and the study of Euroscepticism, this article has proposed that radical right opposition to European integration is categorized into the rejecting, conditional and compromising patterns. It has presented four facets of European integration: the definition of Europe, the principle, the policy practice and the future building of a European polity. It is on the basis of these four indicators that the three patterns have been identified. Finally, this article has provided a qualitative analysis of party literature in an attempt to improve our understanding of the nuanced radical right anti-EU arguments. By building on our existing knowledge of these parties' EU positions from expert surveys, it has systematically mapped and analysed the nature of radical right Euroscepticism during the latter part of the 2000s.

The identification of four fundamental aspects of European integration may become helpful in providing a solution to the wider problem of measuring the dependent variable – different levels of Euroscepticism. They can add precision and clarity when assessing a party's position on Europe and may be used to identify similar patterns in different party families. This, however, has a caveat. The definition of Europe may need to be refined in order to apply the approach to other party families. The usefulness of this three-fold conceptualization of radical right Euroscepticism lies in identifying the nuances of the phenomenon in descriptive terms. The three categories have also an analytical purpose since different patterns of Euroscepticism may be associated with different party behaviour at the domestic level.

The qualitative analysis of party literature demonstrates that, although these parties belong to the same party family, they exhibit three utterly different patterns of opposition to European integration. This is a striking finding for a number of reasons. First, it provides evidence to support the idea that radical right parties not only differentiate themselves from other party families in that they adopt a 'sovereignty type' of Euroscepticism. They also seek to differentiate themselves from each other. Second, it demonstrates that radical right parties, although highly nationalistic in character, do not present themselves as being anti-European in the wider sense of the term. They willingly accept the common aspects shared by

European peoples because those aspects serve to distinguish 'us' from the 'others'. Third, and perhaps contrary to common 'journalistic' wisdom: not all radical right parties oppose European integration to the extent of pushing for their country's withdrawal from the EU. Instead, some radical right parties are rather pragmatic in their approach to integration.

These findings have important implications in terms of possible explanations of party-based Euroscepticism. Arguably, the issue of European integration may be assimilated into pre-existing ideologies that reflect long-standing commitments on fundamental domestic issues. Traditional cleavage theory may account for the general party response to European integration.⁶² However, the findings of this article demonstrate that traditional cleavage theory is less able to explain the extent of opposition or to predict different types of argument within a given party family. Other predictors of party-based Euroscepticism, including the national context and party strategic objectives within the domestic party system, may also have explanatory power. This is especially true for radical right parties. Given that nationalism is core to these parties' ideology, their European position may be largely influenced by the national context. A comparison of radical right party policies and preferences across Europe 'can tell us a great deal about the boundedness of the various party families'.⁶³ It can offer great insights to how an issue may be emphasized in different political settings and provide some hints regarding the association between the issue of Europe and the dynamics of party competition in EU member states.

⁶² Marks and Wilson, 'The Past in the Present'.

⁶³ A. Treschel and P. Mair, 'When Parties (Also) Position Themselves: An Introduction to the EU Profiler', *EUI Working Papers* 65, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European Union Democracy Observatory, 2009, p. 2.