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## **“This Eurosceptic Isle” -**

**How Eurosceptic is the Conservative Party  
compared to the Labour Party in 2015?**

## Declaration

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the bachelor thesis in hand on the topic

*“This Eurosceptic Isle” –  
How Eurosceptic is the Conservative Party compared to the Labour Party in 2015?*

is the result of my own independent work and does not make use of other sources or materials than those referenced and that quotations and paraphrases obtained from the work of others are indicated as such.

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Dajana Lohölter', written in black ink.

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## **Abstract**

Following the UK general election this year, the newly re-elected Prime Minister David Cameron reinforced its party manifesto commitment to hold an “in-out” referendum on the British EU membership. Moreover, reserved attitudes towards the European integration have been found various times in different British political parties. But how Eurosceptic is the Conservative Party really today? And does their main political competitor, the Labour Party, display similar levels? This thesis investigates the current manifestation of attitudes towards the European integration in a comparative case study. In a first step, five dimensions of Euroscepticism with political parties are identified, recurring on Taggart/Szczerbiak, Kopecky/Mudde and Boomgaarden et al. These dimensions are, in a second step, examined in the two parties’ manifestos for the above mentioned election following Mayring’s Qualitative Content Analysis approach. In four of the five identified dimensions of Euroscepticism, the Conservatives show quantitatively or qualitatively more Eurosceptic attitudes. The biggest difference between the two parties can be found with the usage of negative emotions which Labour’s manifesto lacks totally. This leads to the conclusion that the ruling Conservative Party shows, two years before the scheduled referendum, more signs of Euroscepticism.

## 1. Introduction

In times when the portmanteau word “Brexit” resounds throughout Britain and the whole of Europe, Britain’s future in Europe seems once more doubtful. Following the United Kingdom general election of 2015, the newly re-elected Prime Minister David Cameron reinforces its party manifesto commitment to hold an “in-out” referendum on the British membership in the European Union. This is scheduled to take place by the end of 2017 after renegotiations of the terms of Britain’s membership. While the way seems paved now for the “awkward partner” (Gifford, 2010) to head towards the EU’s exit door, Eurosceptic voices have become louder in the UK. In the European elections in 2014 the UK Independence Party whose prime interest is UK’s exit from the EU has triumphed.

But British attitudes towards Europe have always been rather reserved and sceptic. Moreover, EU policy has been a highly divisive topic within the British parties not only since Prime Minister John Major’s majority difficulties during the Maastricht Treaty vote. The crisis in the Eurozone has further raised the salience of the EU issue also for the British parties.

While media and research recently have focused on UKIP and hard Euroscepticism, the attitudes of the two big mainstream parties in Britain – the Conservatives and Labour<sup>1</sup> - towards the European Union have been of lesser concern. Nor does the Manifesto Project Database<sup>2</sup> provide any information on their current positions<sup>3</sup>. The continental perception of the two big parties’ positions on Europe could be misleading when “only” the UKIP is *scapegoated* to represent and fuel British attitudes critical of the status quo and the evolution of the European Union on the one hand and the relationship with Britain on the other. Furthermore, although the influence of niche parties on certain topics shall not be underestimated, the positioning of the two leading British parties will be important not only for the outcome of the referendum but also for the development of British politics and future party shares. But

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<sup>1</sup> In the following the names the “Conservatives” and “Tories” will be interchangeably used for the “Conservative Party” in the UK as well as “Labour” for the “Labour Party”. The focus will be with either one on the party positions in England and Wales, meaning that special regional positions as for example the Scottish case being of lesser concern.

<sup>2</sup> See more: <https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/>

<sup>3</sup> The Manifesto Project Database does only offer information for Great Britain until 2010.

what are the current attitudes of the two big British mainstream parties concerning the European Union? In what aspects do they differ? Is, as sometimes viewed by the continental European public, the Labour Party less sceptical than the Tories? These thoughts lead to the following research question:

***How Eurosceptic is the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom in 2015 compared to the Labour Party?***

In order to answer that question, in a first step, it will be analysed how Euroscepticism manifests itself within each of the two parties. This will be conducted in the form of a qualitative content analysis examining the two respective party manifestos of 2015 along the lines of a multidimensional concept embracing the multifaceted nature of EU attitudes. These dimensions will be constructed by considering and combining different existing concepts of Euroscepticism. In a second step, a comparison between the two parties will be made by quantitatively and qualitatively comparing Eurosceptic attitudes in both manifestos.

The thesis is made up of five chapters. After this introduction, the second chapter reviews in more depths the theoretical debates on attitudes towards the EU and concepts of Euroscepticism and thus shows where this study is embedded. Moreover, the empirical background of the case - the two British parties - and their relation with the EU will be illustrated. The next chapter details the data and methods applied and analysed in chapter four. In the concluding chapter, the study's results will be discussed and summarized.

## **2. Theory**

The absence of broad political support of the EU dominates current debates about the future of the European integration. In modern mass politics, however, individuals do not form their preferences independently of one another and of other social actors. Rather do political parties take up individual topics, aggregate them to programmatically fairly coherent policy packages and nominate lists or parties (Tiemann, Treib & Wimmel, 2011, p. 51).

Further, the erosion of the "permissive consensus" in the 1990s has led to a politicization of the European integration within national publics and party systems (Tiemann, Treib & Wimmel, 2011, p. 48), contributing to the salience of the topic. The "permissive consensus" refers to a climate of diffuse or passive support of or public

disinterest to the European integration which is seen to have long prevailed until the profound Maastricht Treaty negotiation and ratification process (Harmsen & Spiering, 2004, p. 25).

## **2.1. Conceptualization of Euroscepticism**

One word has become increasingly en vogue characterizing a trend in attitudes of the people and political parties towards the European integration: Euroscepticism. The origins of the term do not go back to a scientific discourse, but it was formed in mid-1980s by British journalists (Harmsen & Spiering, 2004, p. 15). In the context of the so-called “Post-Maastricht Blues” (Eichenberg & Dalton, 2007) it gained further prominence. Especially in the media, Euroscepticism has since then functioned as an unspecified umbrella term shaming political urchins. In research, party-based Euroscepticism refers commonly to a variation of differing attitudes towards the European integration, ranging from selective displeasure concerning a concrete policy to a more extensive critique of the EU or a categorical disapproval (Hrbek, 2013). Subject of critique can be the status quo of the European integration or future developments and Eurosceptical attitudes can possibly be found with individuals as well as with political parties. The term has been criticised for being too normative with its negative connotation (Crespy & Verschueren, 2009, p. 381), misleading for not only referring to the common currency Euro (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2008a, p. 348) and unscientific for originating in the media and being too vague (Weßels, 2009, p. 65).

### **2.1.1. Taggart and Szczerbiak’s one-dimensional approach**

Confronting the critique, several researchers have so far tried to capture different forms of Euroscepticism and to conceptualize them (Taggart, 1998). In an early approach, Taggart (1998, p. 366) observes that the term “expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the European integration.” He subsequently differentiates - with the help of the ultimate litmus test of one’s attitudes towards a country’s membership of the EU - between principled, namely hard, and contingent, namely soft Euroscepticism, the latter being “[...] where there 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, or where there is a sense that ‘national interest’ is currently at odds with the EU trajectory” (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2003, p. 6). Admittedly, the hard-soft Euroscepticism dichotomy was originally formulated as a work in progress with the explicit objective of stimulating further debate (Szczerbiak &



Taggart, 2003, pp. 6f). “The most comprehensive alternative conceptualization based on a critique of our Hard-Soft distinction emerged from Kopecky and Mudde.” (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2003, p. 7.)

### 2.1.2. Kopecky and Mudde’s two-dimensional approach

They, Kopecky and Mudde (2002, p. 300), criticised this one-dimensional concept and in particular objected the concept of soft Euroscepticism to be a too broad catch-all category comprising in the end “[...] every disagreement with any politics of the EU” and thus nearly all European parties. Consequently, they introduced a two-dimensional typology relating to Easton’s concept of political support (1965) and differentiate between diffuse and specific support of the European integration by political parties: “By *diffuse* support we mean support for the general *ideas* of the European integration that underlie the EU. By *specific* support we denote support for the general *practice* of European integration; that is, the EU as it is and as it is

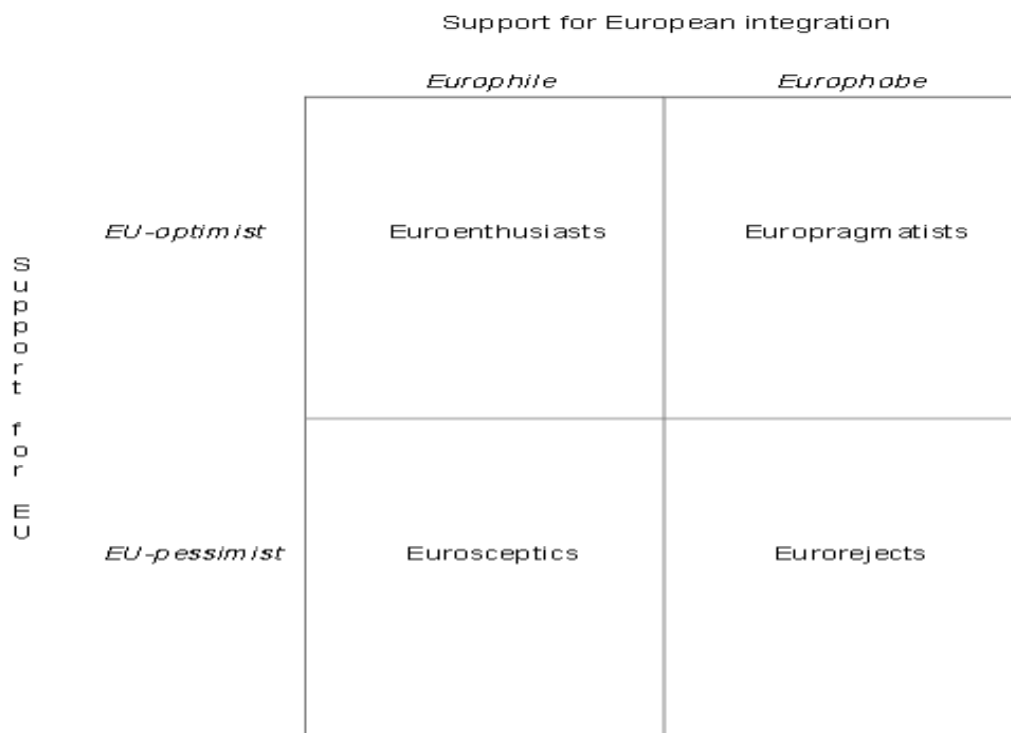


Figure 1: Kopecky & Mudde’s concept of Euroscepticism extracted from Kopecky & Mudde, 2002, p. 303

developing.” (Kopecky & Mudde, 2002, p. 300). In the first dimension, the support for the ideas of the European integration, Europhiles are differentiated from Europhobes: While Europhiles believe in the key ideas of European integration, namely pooled sovereignty (political element) and an integrated liberal market economy (economic element), they do so regardless of how European integration is defined and realized in

detail. Europhobes do not support or even oppose the underlying ideas of the European integration. In the second dimension, *EU-optimists* are distinguished from *EU-pessimists*, the former believing in the EU as it is and as it is developing either because they are satisfied with the EU or because they are optimistic about its future development. The two differentiations result in a two-dimensional matrix distinguishing four ideal types of party positions on Europe as shown in Figure 1. Kopecky and Mudde regard as *Euroenthusiasts* those parties that combine Europhile and EU-optimist positions, supporting the general ideas of the European integration and believing that the EU is or will soon become the institutionalisation of these ideas. *Europragmatists*, respectively, do not support the general ideas of the European integration but support the EU for example for utilitarian considerations. *Eurosceptics*, in the narrower sense of the term, support the general ideas of the European integration but are pessimistic about the EU's current and/ or future reflections of these ideas. And finally, *Eurorejects* do not support neither the ideas underlying the European integration nor the EU's (current) practices (Kopecky & Mudde, 2002, pp. 300-303).

Weßels (2009, p. 53) considers it misleading that those parties are categorized as *Eurosceptic* that do hold in general positive attitudes towards the ideas of the European integration and deems the *Europragmatist* type inconsistent.

Apart from objections concerning the respective types, however, these famous one- respectively two-dimensional concepts by Sczcerbiak and Taggart as well as Kopecky and Mudde have proved to be insufficient regarding the empirical complexity of critique towards Europe (Leconte, 2010). Moreover, the criteria measuring the intensity of Euroscepticism tend to be open to interpretation and are thus not sufficient to examine what Euroscepticism means in a concrete case and less so with a political party. Therefore, multidimensional approaches as the one of Boomgaarden et al. (2011) are discussed as more suitable in the literature nowadays. Apart from Boomgaarden et al. also other researchers have tried to disentangle the underlying dimensions of Euroscepticism. However, they usually relied on Eurobarometer items and have therefore been limited for example insofar as Eurobarometer is a series of public opinion surveys and thus the items are constructed solely to capture the attitudes of individuals. Moreover, the Eurobarometer is an instrument designed and used by political institutions - admittedly with support from researchers - but Signorelli (2012, p. 8) expects this to cause some kind of slight pressure. Boomgaarden et al. having taken some of the limitations of the above named instruments and concepts as

a starting point for their own empirical study have tried to capture the potential multidisciplinary of EU attitudes (2011, p. 242). Although also referring to the attitudes of individuals and not political parties, their approach can give some insight and inspiration for this thesis.

### **2.1.3. Boomgaarden et al.'s multi-dimensional approach**

Boomgaarden et al. (2011) empirically investigated the multidimensional character of attitudes towards the European integration. Based on public opinion survey data (n=1394), they indicate the presence of five dimensions of EU attitudes: performance, identity, affection, utilitarianism and strengthening. They refer, in line with other researchers on the theoretical basis to study the multidimensional nature of EU attitudes (see i.a. Easton 1975, Lindberg & Scheingold 1970, Niedermayer & Westle 1995), to two clusters of attitudes orientations: (1) specific, utilitarian and output-oriented attitudes and (2) diffuse, affective and input-oriented attitudes (p. 244). With a battery of 25 items they investigated the different facets of individuals' attitudes towards the European integration and the EU, including both traditional measures previously employed in EU-related public opinion research and including new ones. Consequently, they arrived at a pattern matrix and component labels for the 25 EU attitude items, as shown in figures 3 and 4 in the appendix, allocated to the five factors, namely the five dimensions<sup>4</sup>. With *negative affection*, emotional aspects as for example fear, anger, threat or disgust concerning the EU are enclosed. The factor *identity* relates to the fear of losing its national identity in the course of an ever closer union. *Performance* comprises critique concerning the general, democratic or financial performance. The factor *utilitarianism and idealism* refer to critique on the economic advantages for a member state. And, finally, *strengthening* relates to fears to give away sovereignty. Concerning the last dimension, Gifford states that sovereignty is at the core of UK's chronically contentious relationship with, and within, the European Union (2010, p. 321).

### **2.1.4. Merging of approaches**

Although on first view capable of being easily transferred to coded categories, two problems remain: Firstly, Boomgaarden et al.'s dimensions are themselves not wholly logical and lack certain aspects of the formerly discussed one- respectively two-

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<sup>4</sup> For more details see Appendix figures 3 and 4 p. 28.

dimensional concepts. For example, the differentiation between ideas and practices of the European integration is not considered and Cronbach's alpha is considerably low for at least two of their dimensions. Secondly, their dimensions relate to individuals and therefore have to be applied to political parties and, more concrete, to party programs.

Concerning the first problem, a combination of different concepts and dimensions of Euroscepticism is proposed. The basis for this will lie in the influential founding works by Taggart/Szczerbiak and Kopecky/Mudde which are directed at political parties.

With reference to Taggart and Szczerbiak, the differentiation between political parties in favour of their national country's membership of the European Union and those opposed, seems to be crucial in order to estimate a party's attitude towards the European integration. However, Euroscepticism is uni-dimensional here insofar as there is no differentiation according to the nature of their critique regarding the EU (Ray 2007, p. 14). Or as they themselves put it, party attitudes towards EU membership do not necessarily tell us what the party's deeper position is on the broader underlying issue of European integration (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2003, p. 8). So, an extension by other dimensions would include the distinction between general attitudes towards the idea of the European integration and specific criticism concerning the practice of EU institutions and measures as presented by Kopecky and Mudde and close to the performance dimensions of Boomgaarden et al. Moreover, Kopecky and Mudde introduced the differentiation between optimists and pessimists concerning the future of the European integration. In this thesis political parties that are in favour of the ideas and practices of the European integration today but are sceptical about its future, are considered to provide some kind of Eurosceptic positions anyways and thus shall not be neglected. The last dimensions for this thesis is extracted from Boomgaarden et al. and concerns negative affection and emotions as their research has shown that this dimension has, in contrast to the other dimensions they propose, a high eigenvalue (p. 249). Emotions cannot only be found within individuals but – apart from being understood as a tool for convincing voters – is also expected to be conveyed in a party program as a reflection of the party's position. Therefore, not only approaches referring explicitly or solely to political parties can be a rich source for inspiration. Moreover, it gives the opportunity to leave the straitjacket of typologies and focus on the variety and nuances of content dimensions. Other dimensions as the desirability of an expansion of

the EU as for example used in the Manifesto Project<sup>5</sup> seem at times of an EU-28 not very relevant. So, the outline of previous approaches has led to the identification of the dimensions used in this thesis:

- Position on the membership of their country to the EU,
- the ideas underlying the European integration,
- the practices of the European integration,
- the EU-future and
- the use of negative emotions.

Their operationalisation will be depicted in the methodological chapter. Before that, information on the development of Euroscepticism in the UK and within the Conservative and Labour Party will be sketched out.

## **2.2. Euroscepticism in the UK and in the Conservative and Labour Party**

„Euroscepticism initially appeared as a distinctively English phenomenon, further contributing to a sense of the country’s ‘awkwardness’ or ‘otherness’ in relation to a Continental European project of political and economic integration.” (Harmsen & Spiering, 2004, p. 13).

Since a time of euphoria in 1990 and 1991 political support for EU respectively EC membership fell drastically in nearly all member states. Nevertheless, in some more Eurosceptic countries - among which there are next to Great Britain also Austria and Sweden – support for membership descended often even below fifty per cent (Tiemann, Treib & Wimmel, 2011, p. 82). So, looking for an interesting example with regard to Euroscepticism, the United Kingdom is not far-fetched. It has been an important element in British politics dividing the public, the media and political parties for quite a long time. Before turning to the two cases of this thesis – the Conservatives and Labour – some more general aspects of Euroscepticism in Britain and British politics will be outlined.

While the UK was unwilling to join the European Economic Community in 1957, it finally joined the European Communities in 1973. But this did not mean that British reservation has faded. On the contrary, several incidents in the development of the EU-

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<sup>5</sup> See [https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/coding\\_schemes/](https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/coding_schemes/).

British relations illustrate the ongoing importance of the Eurosceptic strand in British party politics. The famous demand in 1984 “I want my money back”, the Bruges speech and the UK rebate are all associated with conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990). The unwillingness of successive governments to give away sovereignty to Brussels by joining the European Monetary Union or the Schengen Agreement exemplify that the Conservative’s reservation vis-à-vis Brussels cannot solely be attributed to her.

The example of Great Britain, moreover, is interesting for other reasons. First of all, it constitutes one of the most populous and rich member states and therefore per se being important.

Second, Prime Minister Cameron announced a referendum on the re-negotiated terms of the British membership in the EU respectively on its remaining in the EU. Apart from being of current relevance, this connects the three relevant actors identified beforehand: political parties, the people and the EU. Besides elections to the European Parliament, EU-referendums are a second canal of influence of the people on EU politics (Tiemann, Treib & Wimmel, 2011, p. 153). EU-referendums, in a broad sense, can be defined as official referendums or plebiscites of the people concerning a special aspect of the European integration in a nation state or in a region respectively a province (Tiemann, Treib & Wimmel, 2011, p. 160). Until now, only in two EU-referendums it has been voted upon a departure from the EU and not upon a joining of the EU. This has been the case in Great Britain and in Greenland. The British referendum of 1975 can be traced back to the Labour government that promised – if winning – a referendum in an election campaign on possibly taking back the joining of the European Communities already executed by the Conservatives. But while the Greenlanders used their regional referendum to exit the European Economic Community, the British people voted for staying in the European Communities (Tiemann, Treib & Wimmel, 2011, pp. 161f). Apart from this national referendum, until now, only regional referendums in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland concerning the remaining in the United Kingdom or the introduction of local parliaments have been held (Balsom, 1996, p.215) speaking against a strong plebiscitary culture. Research on EU-referendums concentrates mostly on the decision of the people and less on the roles of the political elites within this process. Especially seldom discussed in the literature is why national governments initiate EU-referendums (Tiemann, Treib & Wimmel, 2011, p. 169). Considering Great Britain not possessing over a long tradition of direct democracy being one explanation approach, making an interparty mark has to

be kept in mind as another. However, although of certain interest, this question would lead too far in the context of this Bachelor thesis.

Having turned to party politics again, Hix, Noury and Roland (2007) showed that voting behaviour within the European Parliament is no longer determined by the national origin of a parliamentary group but by their ideological orientation. Assuming an ideological difference between the Conservatives and Labour, they thus seem to be worth looking at. Although recurring on ideology alone does not predict Euroscepticism, it may still give us a starting point (Taggart, 1998, p. 377). The attitudes of the two biggest British parties in comparison are, besides, of special concern keeping in mind that UKIP is made up primarily of former politicians of the Conservative Party that joined together to a new party in the context of the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 (Tiemann, Treib & Wimmel, 2011, p. 115). Its utmost objective, the EU-withdrawal, does, at least, not seem to be unacceptable for many British voters: In the European Parliament elections of 2014 it reached 27% of the British votes, more than Labour being second place and the Conservatives finishing third place (European Parliament, 2014). Also because of UKIP's previous successes, the Conservatives saw themselves under pressure in the United Kingdom general elections in May 2015.

Earlier studies on the Conservative Party's attitudes towards the European integration have repeatedly classified the Conservative Party within their single-party government, holding office between 1979 and 1997, as *soft Eurosceptic* (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2013, p. 30), following Taggart and Szczerbiak's categorization of party positions along the dichotomy of hard and soft Euroscepticism. Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind firstly that the party has proclaimed itself the "Party of Europe" in the 1960s and, secondly, that the Conservatives have been split over the European integration in several occasions.

In comparison, the split concerning the European integration within Labour can be identified more between the members being more Eurosceptic and the party leadership remaining rather silent on the topic of the referendum. However, between the 1960s until the mid-1980s, stronger Eurosceptic tendencies have been found (Schnapper, 2015, p. 158).

On the other hand, Taggart (1998, pp. 369f.) did not include the Labour Party in any of the four categories: single issue parties, protest parties, established parties or factions showing Eurosceptic attitudes, the last one especially to the surprise of Baker, Gamble and Seawright (2002, p. 420). The Eurosceptical wing of the Conservative

Party, however, is identified by Taggart as an obvious example of a Eurosceptical faction (Taggart, 1998, p. 369).

Contrary to many cases where government participation tends to have a moderating effect for major parties on their European positions, the Conservative Party's presence in government made for a clearly Eurosceptic stance during the terms of Thatcher and Major (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2013). While this can partly be traced back to the peculiarity of the British single-party government model, Lynch (2012) found early signs of a similar effect as during the Thatcher-Major years under Cameron's first premiership in a coalition government. So, if there can be found signs for a Eurosceptic hardening within the constraints of a government made up of more than one party, what will be the Conservative's position in a *one-man-show*?

Following its public image and role so far in the "in-out" referendum, it is expected that the Labour Party shows less Euroscepticism than the Conservative Party. This expectation will be tested after methodological considerations.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research Design: Case study**

The aim of this thesis is to analyse the manifestation of Euroscepticism of the Conservative and Labour Party in 2015, a year in which their position in Europe proved to be crucial for the results of the United Kingdom general election and a year in which the "in-out" referendum is announced. In order to approach this, the investigation will be conducted in the form of a comparative case study. A case study is an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units (Gerring, 2004, p. 342) or to elucidate features specific to a particular case (Seawright & Gerring 2008, p. 296). Therefore, a case study does not comprise a large array of units, but focuses on examining one unit in depths. However, it is also possible to examine a small number of units in depths and then compare the units. In this thesis, the objects of investigation respectively the units are the party manifestos of the Conservative and the Labour Party of 2015.

To conduct a case study in order to analyse the manifestation of Euroscepticism in British parties is suggested, firstly, due to the limitation of possible units. Of course, the development of Euroscepticism of one or more of the parties could be studied over time. But the special interest of this thesis is its current manifestation for reasons



outlined above. Secondly, the focus on a smaller number of units permits to “retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (Yin, 2009, p. 4). So it allows to understand the complex concept of Euroscepticism and its manifestation in political parties, a “contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context” (Yin, 2009, p. 11). Thirdly, a case study is feasible here due to its method of data analysis: Observational data shall be analysed recurring on Mayring’s qualitative content analysis (2010).

However, case study research is not free of controversy. This specifically focuses on whether the results of one study can be generalized to other cases. Whereas Yin states this as one aim of case studies, this thesis will not aim at a generalization towards a broader theoretical domain (2009, p. 15), but at testing in two combined cases the developed theory of multidimensional Euroscepticism.

### **3.2. Case selection: The Conservatives and Labour in 2015**

Recurring on Seawright and Gerring (2008, pp. 295f.), there are different legitimate factors of case selection. Apart from pragmatic considerations a methodological justification is desirable if not necessary. As pointed out earlier, the aim of this case study is to elucidate features specific to a particular case. Thus, the problem of case selection does not exist here or is at any rate minimized, for the case of primary concern has been identified a priori (Seawright & Gerring 2008, p. 296). So, the aim is to illustrate, analyse and compare in depths Eurosceptic mouldings in influential British political parties. The two big mainstream parties in the UK, the Conservative Party as well as the Labour Party are not only crucial players in the upcoming “in-out” referendum on the British membership in the European Union. They are also of special interest as they constitute the only two alternating in office of the Prime Minister since 1935 and have the most members in comparison to the other British parties (Keen, 2015). They are thus two comparatively influential parties appealing to a relatively broad public. Moreover, they have, as outlined above, a different history of positioning and handling of attitudes towards the European integration. Furthermore, they can be grouped to two different political families, one coming from conservative and one from social democratic origins. Nevertheless, they are nowadays accused of being too similar or converge (Lee, 2013). In how far they differ with regard to Euroscepticism is thus an interesting question.

Following common continental perceptions noted above, the hypothesis being examined combines the two parties as follows:

H1: The Labour Party is less Eurosceptic in 2015 than the Conservatives. The null hypothesis that needs to be rejected therefore suggests that the Labour Party is as Eurosceptic as the Conservatives.

### **3.3. Data: Party manifestos**

Expert surveys are the most commonly used instrument for measuring party positions except for electoral manifesto data (Marks, Hooghe, Steenbergen & Bakker, 2007, p. 24). Despite noteworthy strengths of expert data as for example its flexibility, reputational approaches depend on individual judgement and the less experts, the less trustworthy the evaluation is (Marks et al. 2007, pp. 26f). A lack of sufficient expert data in combination with economic considerations about gaining more, is only one reason for following a textual approach. Other reasons will be outlined below.

Manifesto data – understood as a contract between parties and voters, as advertisement or as a statement of the party’s identity and philosophy (Ray 2007, p. 17) - do have weaknesses and strengths as well. They are strategic documents designed to put a party in a positive light during an electoral campaign and present a political party as a coherent entity without providing information on intra-party-dissent. Nevertheless, the data can be considered objective as they are based on a written, publicly available record which allows replicable measurement. Moreover, a separation of preferences and behaviour conveys intentions of political parties as distinct from their actions. Marks et al., furthermore, deem manifestos more accurate for parties in government than out of it (2007, pp. 26ff). The significance of party manifestos in election campaigns in the perception of the voter might not be as high as for example television debates, especially in times of “the death of the campaign poster” (Wheeler, 2015). But, a party manifesto constitutes the basic demands and positions in an election campaign, being “[...] the only comprehensive and authoritative policy statement produced by political parties [...]” (Bara, 2006, p. 265). Apart from their aim to give a broad overview of a party’s policy platform, manifestos are often the result of a long internal consultation process (Bara, 2006, p. 266ff) and thus form an appropriate tool for analysing the parties’ attitudes towards the European integration. So, relying on manifesto data is far more than a stopgap.

The two election manifestos at hand were released in the context of the United Kingdom general elections held on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The Labour Party Manifesto was published on the 13<sup>th</sup> and the Conservative Party Manifesto on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

While the Labour Party Manifesto is comprised of 85 pages in total, that of the Conservatives is made up of 83 pages. Both manifestos contain texts and images. While little is known about the actual creation process of the two manifestos, its target group has to be kept in mind: persons entitled to vote for the respective party in the UK general election in May 2015 or persons able to influence people of the first group.

### **3.4. Data Analysis: Qualitative Content Analysis**

The above outlined data will be investigated in the form of a qualitative content analysis as elaborated upon by Mayring (2010). Advantages of this procedure are as follows: First of all, this approach combines the virtues of a quantitative content analysis as originating from communications theory with qualitative-interpretative elements. Second, the interpretation is guided by rules and theory (Mayring, 2000). Moreover, it is supported by the application of the software MAXQDA which allows organizing and analysing the data systematically. Although qualitative research commonly is purely inductive, in Mayring's approach the categories along which the data is analysed are determined deductively in advance. This has been criticised for leading to a possible neglect of the object of investigation in its entity (Flick, 2002). Nevertheless, this effect can be reduced by a revision of the categories after a first overview.

Mayring (2010, p. 65f.) suggests three basic forms of interpretation - summary, explication and structuring – depending on the respective aim. For this thesis the last method seems adequate because it is described as aiming at filtering out certain aspects according to previously determined criteria and thus assessing the material.

The following flowchart presents the steps of a qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2010, p. 99) and how it is implemented in this thesis:

**Determination of the units of analysis**

2 election manifestos of the Conservatives and Labour 2015



**Determination of the main dimensions**

See 2.1.4 the elaborated dimensions of Euroscepticism



**Elaboration of a system of categories**



**Formulation of definitions and examples**



**Examination of the material according to the categories**



**Establishing definitions, examples and coding rules for each category**



**Finding of relevant text passages and application of the rules**



**Revision of the system of categories**

See 3.5 Operationalization for revised categories



**Processing and editing of results**

See 4. Analysis

Figure 2: Model of structuring, adapted from Mayring 2010, p. 93.

### 3.5. Operationalisation

The following table shows the five dimensions identified as important elements of a political party's position on the European integration and the respective bivariate items either showing signs of less or more Euroscepticism in a party. The items are specified by respective indicators and examples explaining the coding. One indicator may need special attention and clarification insofar as on a first glance it might be regarded as neutral: Considering the mention of the in-out referendum as an indicator of having a position against the practices of the European integration is suggested by Mayring (2010, p. 29ff.): Recurring on hermeneutics, he points out that an analysis shall not be restricted to the manifest content on the surface, but has to aim at the latent sense of the source as well. In this vein, demanding new conditions for the relation between the UK and the EU indicates that the Conservatives are not content with the current situation. This would suggest being against some practices of the European integration and thus would be adding to the Eurosceptic position according to the above mentioned theory. Moreover, the Conservatives seem to use the proposal of a referendum – apart from interparty competition – as a means of exerting pressure on the EU in order to improve their bargaining position. This only works if leaving the EU is a real option and the future government would cling to the outcome of the referendum. This is proposed by their manifesto (p. 73): “We will honour the result of the referendum, whatever the outcome.” So, the mention of the in-out-referendum does not only demonstrate scepticism towards some practices of the EU but also suggests UK's exit at least indirectly. This is why it is allocated to have a negative connotation regarding their position on the European integration.

Dimension	Items	Indicators	Example
<b>Membership of own country to EU</b>	- Against + In favour	- Suggesting UK's exit + Suggesting UK's remaining	- “It will be a fundamental principle of a future Conservative Government that membership of the European Union depends on the consent of the British people – and in recent years that consent has worn wafer-thin.”  + “[...] we will retain our membership of it.”
<b>Ideas of the European</b>	- Against	- Opposition to pooled sovereignty or an	- “No to ‘ever closer union.’”

<b>integration</b>	+ In favour	integrated liberal market economy  + Pointing out the advantages of pooled sovereignty or an integrated liberal market economy	+ “Yes to a family of nation states, all part of a European Union [...]”  + “We benefit from the Single Market [...]”
<b>Practices of the European integration</b>	- Against + In favour	- Opposition to specific European policies - Opposition to the practices of one of its institutions - Demanding changes/reforms  + Praise or positive notion on specific European policies  + Praise or positive notion on one of its institutions	- “[...] EU, which is too big, too bossy and too bureaucratic” - “For too long, your voice has been ignored on Europe” - “The EU needs to change.”  + “We will encourage other countries to follow the EU’s lead in banning animal testing for cosmetics [...]”
<b>EU-future</b>	- Pessimist + Optimist	- Pessimist notions on the (possible) future development of the EU - Seeking allies and ties principally outside of the EU  + Optimist notions on the (possible) future development of the EU	- “And when new countries are admitted to the EU in future, we will insist that free movement cannot apply to those new members until their economies have converged much more closely with existing Member States.”  + “[...] back businesses to create jobs in Britain by completing ambitious trade deals [...]”
<b>Negative emotions</b>	- Yes + No	- Notions of fear, anger, threat, distrust - Passages arousing these feelings	- “Our Prime Minister vetoed a new EU treaty that would have damaged Britain’s interests.”

**Table 1: Coding scheme**

The coding unit is a quasi-sentence. One quasi-sentence contains exactly one statement or message. In many cases, parties make one statement per sentence, which therefore would result in one quasi-sentence equalling one full sentence. There are, however, instances when one natural sentence contains more than one quasi-sentence (Werner, Laceywell & Volkens, 2011). Moreover, one quasi-sentence may be coded as more than one item.

## 4. Analysis

As pointed out in the previous chapter, in this section, the manifestos of the Conservative and the Labour Party will be analysed subsequently in the form of a qualitative content analysis as suggested by Mayring. The aim hereby is to find out about the usage of the items elaborated before representing dimensions of Euroscepticism in order to find out and compare how Eurosceptic the two parties are in 2015. At first, their presence in the Conservatives' manifesto will be examined.

The Conservatives dedicate the pages 72 and 73 to the European Union. These are about 2.4 per cent of the 83 pages in total and about 3.4 per cent of the 59 pages with written content. The main pledges of the Conservatives concerning the EU can be summarized as follows:

- To hold an in-out referendum on the UK's renegotiated EU membership by 2017
- To protect the British economy from further integration of the Eurozone
- To scrap the Human Rights Act and replace it with a British Bill of Rights

89 entries that can be coded have been identified. Of these 64 are grouped with the item "Against practices of the European integration", indicating the dominant dimension of Euroscepticism in this manifesto. Second comes the usage of "Negative emotions" with 10 entries. This is particularly noticeable as Labour's manifesto lacks this dimension totally. The other items seem of lesser importance with five entries containing optimistic notions concerning the EU future, four entries grouped as "In favour of the ideas of the European integration" and three against the same and two entries hinting at pessimistic positions on the EU future. One coding can be classified as "Against the membership of their own country to the EU". This will be further examined after outlining the results of the Labour Party's manifesto. In total, the items reflecting a negative attitude towards the European Union amount to 89 per cent of all coded entries in this manifesto.

The Labour Party's manifesto dedicates the pages 76 and 77 to the European Union. These are about 2.3 per cent of the 86 pages in total and about 3.4 per cent of the 59 pages with written content which is similar to the coverage in the Conservatives'

manifesto. A media analysis conducted by Media Standards Trust and a survey among Britons by Ipsos MORI<sup>6</sup> asking for the most important issues facing Britain before the election suggests on a quick look that the EU has not played such an important role in the UK general election in 2015. The media analysis reveals the top four mentions being the economy, health, education and immigration, leaving the EU sixth. The issue index shows the same top four issues in another order. However, while comments on the NHS or education are clearly linked to the national context, the EU may be more or less directly related to the topics of the economy and immigration, as will be seen below. So, it can be concluded that the EU was an important topic – directly or indirectly – in the election. Keeping that in mind, it seems even more surprising that the European Union occupies so little space in the manifestos of the two competing parties.

The main pledges of the Labour Party concerning the EU can be summarised as follows:

- To legislate for a lock guaranteeing no transfer of powers from the UK to the EU without an in/out referendum
- To return the UK to a leadership role in a reformed European Union
- To reform the Common Agricultural Policy
- To reform the immigration and welfare rules

Compared to the Conservatives' manifesto, the Labour's manifesto has only 38 entries that can be coded. The data shows that, just as with the Conservatives, the item "Against practices of the European integration" is the most common item to be found in the Labour's manifesto, about half of the coded entries. One entry is coded as "pessimistic about EU future", making the items reflecting a negative attitude towards the EU amounting to 52.6 per cent of all coded entries, which is considerably less than for the Conservatives. Nevertheless, this percentage can only be interpreted in a relative manner as for example only negative emotions are coded and not positive ones. 18 entries are coded as items reflecting a positive attitude towards the EU, six as "in favor of membership of own country to EU", four as "in favor of the ideas of the European integration", three as "in favor of the practices of European integration" and 5 as "optimistic about the EU future".

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<sup>6</sup> For more details see Appendix Figure 5.



In the following, both parties' coded entries will be examined along the five described dimensions and compared. First, the dimension "Membership of own country to EU" will be of concern.

Although no clear opposition to the British membership of the European Union in general can be found within both parties' manifestos, the Conservatives address the question once with a negative connotation: "It will be a fundamental principle of a future Conservative Government that membership of the European Union depends on the consent of the British people – and in recent years that consent has worn wafer-thin." (p. 72). Although this expresses no clear and fundamental opposition to a membership to the EU, the Conservatives question here the current state of membership at least indirectly. While no entry in favour of the British membership to the EU can be identified within the Conservatives' manifesto, Labour's manifesto contains five entries explicitly in favour of the membership, as for example: "Labour believes that our membership of the European Union is central to our prosperity and security." (p. 76). Moreover, Labour criticises the Conservatives' position. "We believe the Conservatives are damaging the interests of our country by turning their backs on Europe, and isolating us abroad." (p.74). So, with regard to the first dimension, "Membership of own country to EU", it can be shown that the Conservatives demonstrate a higher level of Eurosceptic attitudes than the Labour Party in their respective manifestos.

The second dimension "Ideas of the European integration" reveals different results. Labour says nothing against the ideas of the European integration in its manifesto, while the Conservatives comment twice in opposition to the 'ever closer union' (p. 72f). This expression goes back to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, signed in Rome 1957, and is directed at the aim of working ever more closely together (Treaty of Rome, 1957). For this, the pooling of sovereignty is necessary. While Labour does not want to give away sovereignty without the consent of the people either (p. 77), the Conservatives principally do not want to give away more powers (p. 72). In contrast, they reclaim powers from Brussels (p. 72f). The fact that both parties show to some extent rather reserved attitudes towards further pooling of sovereignty seems not surprising considering the previously identified overall British stance of preserving national interests within the EU. Furthermore, both parties include four entries in favour of the ideas of the European integration. The Conservatives highlight the economic advantages of working together: "We benefit from the Single Market [...]" (p. 73) and argue in favour of "[...] working together where we are stronger together than alone" (p. 72) and the overall concept of the European integration,

namely “Yes to a family of nation states, all part of the European Union [...]” (p. 72). Labour mainly targets values of the European integration as stability, peace and prosperity (p. 75f). So, both parties have the reference to economic advantages respectively prosperity in common and they share the mention of values or underlying concepts of the European integration. That leads to the conclusion that there cannot be found a difference between the two parties with regard to Eurosceptic attitudes in the dimension of “Ideas of the European integration” apart from the Conservatives’ more rigid stance against pooling sovereignty.

The third dimension “Practices of the European integration” is the dimension most present in both parties’ manifestos. Interestingly, in the manifestos of both parties, the negative items dominate by far. Taking into account the nature and logics of election manifestos, however, this is less surprising. Both parties demand changes and reforms either in general or specifically. The Conservatives, however, do demand more changes in general, while Labour proposes more specific reforms. Both parties coincide in that the Common Agricultural Policy needs to be reformed (The Labour Party, 2015, p. 77; Conservatives, 2015, p. 73). Moreover, the Conservatives criticise the migration policies and their effect on the British welfare system in nine entries, whereas Labour dedicates three entries to this topic. Moreover, the tone and demands are stricter and more specific with the Conservatives on this topic. For example they demand “[...] tougher and longer re-entry bans for all those who abuse free movement [...]” (p. 30) and “We will regain control of EU migration by reforming welfare rules.” (p. 30). A stricter position becomes clear for example when comparing time conditions for migrants before they can claim benefits. The Conservatives, on the one hand, “[...] insist that EU migrants who want to claim tax credits and child benefit must live here and contribute to our country for a minimum of four years.” (p. 30). Labour, on the other hand, suggests that “[...] migrants from the EU will not be able to claim benefits until they have lived here for at least two years” (p. 11). In the context of migrant policies, the Conservatives also mention the role of the Human Rights Act: “We will [...] scrap the Human Rights Act and curtail the role of the European Court of Human Rights, so that foreign criminals can be more easily deported from Britain.” (p. 58). Some of the relevant passages here also arouse negative emotions and are thus also addressed in the context of the last dimension further below. The European Court of Human Rights finds further mention in both manifestos. The Conservatives aim at ensuring the supremacy of their Supreme Court over European legislation (p. 60). Labour, nevertheless, “[...] will stand up for citizen’s individual rights, protecting the Human Rights Act and reforming, rather than walking away from, the European Court of

Human Rights.” (p. 76). Another practice of the European integration that both parties oppose is the common currency; both clearly do not want to join the Euro. However, the Conservatives mention this more often than Labour and the Conservatives include critiques of the Eurozone and Eurozone bailouts on top of that explicitly. Furthermore, they demand several times that the interests of non-Euro members need to be protected, while Labour only does so two times. So, at least quantitatively, the Conservatives put much more emphasis on their critique on the Euro and the policies engaged. Another difference with regard to the third dimension, namely the opposition to practices of the European integration, is that the Conservatives directly address the voters, for example referring to the European Union: “It interferes too much in our daily lives.” (p. 72), while Labour tends to propose reforms in a less personalised manner. Its manifesto, moreover, lacks the notion of “unnecessary interference” (Conservatives, 2015, p. 72) totally. Independently of this, both parties share the critique on the working and effectiveness of the European Union: Labour supports a “[...] Commission-led zero-based review of spending on EU agencies to reduce money and inefficiency” (p. 77) and the Conservatives seek to “[...] reducing red tape [...]” and consider the EU “[...] too big, too bossy and too bureaucratic [...]” (p. 72) and press for lower EU spending (p. 73). This exemplifies the difference in tone: Labour suggests a solution while the Conservatives argue in a rather trenchant manner making use of rhetoric means. By now, only items against the practices of the European integration have been included. Both parties’ manifestos show fewer items in favour of the practices. Again, considering the functions of an election manifesto, this seems logical. Within the Labour manifesto three items speaking in favour of the practices can be found, all of which refer to economic advantages. The Conservatives include two entries that can be categorized as in favour of the practices, one also referring to economic positions and the second in favour of the EU’s lead in banning animal testing for cosmetics (p. 30). So, while in terms of items in favour of the practices of the European integration no significant difference can be identified, a difference on the items against the practices can be revealed.

In summary, with regard to the dimension of attitudes towards the practices of the European integration, the Conservatives’ manifesto shows more and stricter demands in the context of migration, demands to leave the supremacy of the European Court of Human Rights and shows more passages criticizing the Euro. Labour, in comparison, focusses on proposing reforms and, doing so, distances itself less from the practices of the European integration. So, concerning the third dimension it can be concluded that the Conservatives show more signs of Euroscepticism here.

The fourth dimension centres on the perception of the EU's future. Pessimism manifests itself hardly in either of the two manifestos. The Conservatives fear that free movement could be applied to new member states in the future before "[...] their economies have converged much more closely with existing Member States." (p. 30) and is against possible developments like a European Army (p. 72). Labour is pessimistic about the current and continuing economic uncertainty in the Eurozone (p. 74). Optimism, in comparison, about the EU's future is expressed five times in both manifestos. While the Conservatives' optimism is based on trade deals with the USA, India and China (p. 72ff), Labour's optimistic notions are more diverse. They want to protect their national interests within the EU (p. 74), continue to open up EU decision-making (p. 77) and return Britain to a leadership role in Europe (p. 81). In conclusion, although the contents partly differ, no significant difference with regard to Euroscepticism can be found within the dimension EU-future.

The last dimension, negative emotions, clearly constitutes a difference between the two parties. As depicted earlier, the tone the parties apply in their respective manifestos differs. While no entry can be found within Labour's manifesto that shows negative emotions, the Conservatives make use of it ten times. "For too long, your voice has been ignored on Europe." (p. 72) is only one example. The choice of words contains more negatively connoted words, as "[...] damaged Britain's interests" (p. 72f), "[...] jeopardise the integrity of the Single Market [...]" (p. 73), "[...] disadvantage the UK" (p. 73) or "acute questions" (p. 73). Another example is "Among other things the Bill will stop terrorists and other serious foreign criminals who pose a threat to our society from using spurious human rights arguments to prevent deportation." (p. 75). This involves a more threatening perception of the EU and thus a higher level of critical attitudes towards it. So, the last dimension demonstrates more Eurosceptic tendencies with the Conservatives than with Labour.

To sum up, in four of the five dimensions of Euroscepticism, as identified in the theory section, the Conservatives show quantitatively or qualitatively more Eurosceptic attitudes. This means that the null hypothesis stating that the Labour Party is as Eurosceptic as the Conservatives can be rejected and the hypothesis of interest here (H1) can be accepted: The analysis has shown that the Labour Party is less Eurosceptic than the Conservatives. The biggest difference can be seen with regard to the dimension of negative emotions. The findings, moreover, suggest for this case that the dimension of "attitudes towards the future of the EU" is not decisive. Moreover, only a few results for the dimension "Membership of own country to EU" have been found.

## 5. Conclusions and Outlook

As the analysis has shown, Labour's manifesto displays a more positive attitude towards the EU. They want to reform some policies and procedures within the overall framework. This becomes clear, for example, as they want to "[...] return Britain to a leadership role in Europe." (p. 81) – apart from indirectly criticizing the Conservatives here – or also in the chapter's title "Standing up for Britain's interests in Europe and the world". The Conservatives, in contrast, envision a real change and are likely to partly roll back from the European Union. Moreover, they mention several times that they already had to do something in order not to let their interests get damaged. However, it has to be kept in mind that they were in office in the last years and therefore do not only have to outline ideas for the future but also indirectly have to justify what they have been doing in the last years.

Although the findings suggest that the Labour Party is less Eurosceptic than the Conservative Party in 2015, the manifesto of the former contains numerous passages criticising the European Union. A possible way of interpreting this is as follows: Labour has to follow the way paved by the Conservatives in a context of political competition as a real pro-European stance could mean political suicide. Another way of understanding the results would be to consider Eurosceptic positions as being at the core of British attitudes as represented in both major parties in the UK nowadays. Further research on this beyond this thesis would be interesting. Nevertheless, a clear difference between the extent of Euroscepticism can be found between the two parties, so that Münchau's conclusion has to be questioned according to which "[...] the real divide is not between Labour and the Conservatives. It is between Britain and Europe." (2015). While there is certainly a divide between Britain and Europe, against the background of this study's results the existing divide between the two main political parties in Britain needs to be taken into account; not only because they largely shape Britain's political development but also because the divide concentrates on the emotions that they might reveal among the British population towards the EU – and the importance of population support for the EU should not be underestimated.

A few concluding remarks have to be made concerning the limitations of the thesis at hand: First, the explanation power of a party manifesto concerning a party's attitudes on the European integration, on the hand, is limited for methodological reasons as a party manifesto is an instrument in order to convince voters and is thus subject to different strategies. Where possible, this has been considered and pointed

out in the analysis. On the other hand, the limitation goes even further insofar as if a party could have attitudes at all and to which degree controversies about positions can be included.

Second, in some passages the opposition of one party to the EU is blurred by its opposition to or differentiation from the other party in interparty competition.

Thirdly, the indicators for the item “against the practices of the European integration” comprise many topics and thus make the item dominant. Another limitation is that a differentiation between non-constructive opposition to certain EU policies and more optimistic proposals for reform could not be adequately considered quantitatively within this item. Either of the two implies to some extent a different tone and degree of opposition and thus, in a second step, also possible Euroscepticism. However, attention has been paid to the qualitative extent of the respective entries.

Widening the perspective and thinking about the UK as a whole and the EU, it furthermore remains to be seen whether the “Mimesis-effect” will effectuate. As Carlos Closa (2007, pp.1325f) pointed out, the effect describes that the decision of a national government to hold a referendum might put other governments under public pressure and in consequence might lead to imitators. So, before and after the referendum in 2017 the question remains open what the effect on other countries might be and what role Britain will play in the future in the EU if at all. However, as James Landale (2013) put it:

*“Think of it - a serving British prime minister has promised an in out referendum on Britain's membership of the EU, opening the door to Britain taking powers back from Brussels or leaving the European Union altogether. And yet the sky did not fall in [...]. The same promise 10 years ago would have provoked uproar in the House of Commons, spooked the financial markets and dismayed the rest of Europe.”*

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## Appendix

### Figures relating to chapter 2 and 4

Figure 3: Boomgaarden et al.'s 5 dimensions of Euroscepticism and 25 items, part 1 of 2.  
Extracted from Boomgaarden et al. 2011, p. 248.

Table 1. Pattern matrix and component labels for the 25 EU attitude items

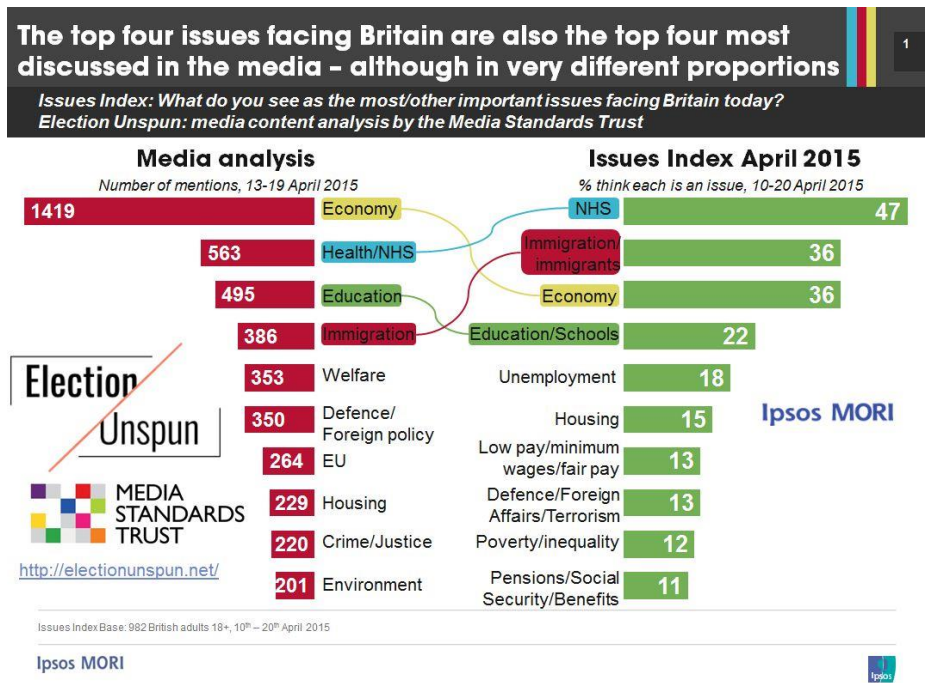
	Factors				
	Negative affection	Identity	Performance	Utilitarianism and idealism	Strengthening
I am afraid of the European Union	.960				
I feel threatened by the European Union	.906				
I am angry about the European Union	.862				
I am disgusted with the European Union	.824				
The European Union poses a threat to Dutch identity and culture	.577				
Being a citizen of the European Union means a lot to me		.866			
Europeans share a common tradition, culture and history		.844			
I feel close to fellow Europeans		.841			
The European flag means a lot to me		.824			
I am proud to be a European citizen		.768			
The decision-making process in the European Union is transparent			.901		
The European Union functions well as it is			.848		
The European Union is wasting a lot of tax money			-.601		
The European Union functions according to democratic principles			.593	.334	
I trust the European Parliament			.509		

Figure 4: Boomgaarden et al.'s 5 dimensions of Euroscepticism and 25 items, part 2 of 2.  
Extracted from Boomgaarden et al. 2011, p. 249.










The European Union fosters peace and stability				.964	
The European Union fosters the preservation of the environment				.879	
Dutch membership of the European Union is a good thing				.637	
The Netherlands has benefited from being a member of the European Union				.555	
I personally benefit from the Netherlands' EU membership				.404	
The European Union should become one country					.851
I support more decision/policy-making at EU level					.748
The decision-making power of the European Union should be extended					.606
Desired speed of European integration					.478
The EU should be enlarged with other countries			.353		.404
Initial eigenvalue	9.12	2.46	1.67	1.20	1.09
Percent explained variance	36.49	9.83	6.69	4.81	4.32
Rotation sums of square loadings	6.36	6.16	5.71	6.50	5.49
Scale reliability Cronbach's alpha	.87	.87	.76	.85	.74











Note: Principal components analysis with promax rotation (Kaiser normalization). Rotation converged in six iterations. Factor loadings below .3 were omitted from the table. Loadings are sorted by size.











**Figure 5: Number of mentions of issues facing Britain before the election 2015 and issue index within the population.**  
 Retrieved September 4, 2015, from: <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3566/EconomistIpsos-MORI-April-2015-Issues-Index.aspx>.























## Coding forms

Document	Item	Page	Quasi-sentence
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the membership of own country to EU	p. 72	"It will be a fundamental principle of a future Conservative Government that membership of the European Union depends on the consent of the British people – and in recent years that consent has worn wafer-thin."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the ideas of the European integration	p. 72	"No to 'ever closer union.'"
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the ideas of the European integration	p. 73	"And we want an end to our commitment to an 'ever closer union' [...]."
Conservatives' manifesto 	In favour of the ideas of the European integration	p. 72	"We say: yes to the Single Market."
Conservatives' manifesto 	In favour of the ideas of the European integration	p. 72	"Yes to working together where we are stronger together than alone."
Conservatives' manifesto 	In favour of the ideas of the European integration	p. 72	"Yes to a family of nation states, all part of a European Union [...]."
Conservatives' manifesto 	In favour of the ideas of the European integration	p. 73	"We benefit from the Single Market [...]."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 21	"We will push for further reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 29	"We will [...] control migration from the European Union"











Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 29	"We will negotiate new rules with the EU [...]."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	We will then put these changes to the British people in a straight in-out referendum on our membership of the European Union by the end of 2017."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	"We will negotiate with the EU to introduce stronger powers to deport criminals [...]."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	"[...] and stop them coming back [...]."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	"[...] and tougher and longer re-entry bans for all those who abuse free movement [...]."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	"We will regain control of EU migration by reforming welfare rules"
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	"Changes to welfare to cut EU migration will be an absolute requirement in the renegotiation."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	"We will insist that EU migrants who want to claim tax credits and child benefit must live here and contribute to our country for a minimum of four years."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	"If an EU migrant's child is living abroad, then they should receive no child benefit or child tax credit, no matter how long they have worked in the UK and no matter how much tax they have paid."
Conservatives' manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 30	"To reduce the numbers of EU migrants coming to Britain, we will end the ability of EU jobseekers to claim any job-seeking benefits at all."











<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 55</p>	<p>“We will ban wild animals in circuses and press for all EU member states to ensure that animals are only sent to slaughterhouses that meet high welfare standards.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 55</p>	<p>“[...] and seek further measures at the EU and internationally to end shark-finnin.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 58</p>	<p>“[...] scrap the Human Rights Act and curtail the role of the European Court of Human Rights, so that foreign criminals can be more easily deported from Britain.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 60</p>	<p>“This will break the formal link between British courts and the European Court of Human Rights, and make our own Supreme Court the ultimate arbiter of human rights matters in the UK.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>“Real change in our relationship with the European Union”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>“[...] commit to keeping the pound [...].”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>“[...] and staying out of the Eurozone [...].”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>“[...] reform the workings of the EU [...].”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>“[...] which is too big, too bossy and too bureaucratic [...].”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>“[...] reclaim power from Brussels [...].”</p>











<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"[...] and reducing red tape [...]"</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"The EU needs to change."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"Only the Conservative Party will deliver real change and real choice on Europe, with an in-out referendum by the end of 2017."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"We cut the EU budget for the first time ever, saving British taxpayers £8.15 billion."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"We took Britain out of Eurozone bailouts, including for Greece."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"Our Prime Minister vetoed a new EU treaty that would have damaged Britain's interests."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"[...] so we will hold an in-out referendum on our membership of the EU before the end of 2017"</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"But there is much more to do."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"The EU is too bureaucratic and too undemocratic."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"It interferes too much in our daily lives [...]"</p>











<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"[...] and the scale of migration triggered by new members joining in recent years has had a real impact on local communities."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"No to a constant flow of power to Brussels."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"No to unnecessary interference."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"And no, of course, to the Euro [...]."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"[...] to participation in Eurozone bail-outs [...]."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"[...] we will negotiate a new settlement for Britain in Europe [...]."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"[...] and then ask the British people whether they want to stay in the EU on this reformed basis or leave."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"David Cameron has committed that he will only lead a government that offers an in-out referendum."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"We will hold that in-out referendum before the end of 2017 [...]."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"Only the Conservative Party will deliver real change in Europe [...]."</p>
























<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"[...] and only the Conservatives can and will deliver an in-out referendum."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"We will let you decide whether to stay in or leave the EU"</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"We will legislate in the first session of the next Parliament for an in-out referendum to be held on Britain's membership of the EU before the end of 2017."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"We will negotiate a new settlement for Britain in the EU."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"And then we will ask the British people whether they want to stay in on this basis, or leave."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"[...] as enshrined in the Treaty to which every EU country has to sign up."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"The integration of the Eurozone has raised acute questions for non-Eurozone countries like the United Kingdom."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"We will reclaim powers from Brussels"</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"We want to see powers flowing away from Brussels, not to it."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"We have already taken action to return around 100 powers, but we want to go further."</p>










<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“We want national parliaments to be able to work together to block unwanted European legislation.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“David Cameron vetoed a new EU Treaty that would have damaged Britain’s interests [...]”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“But it will reverse the mission creep that has meant human rights law being used for more and more purposes, and often with little regard for the rights of wider society.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“Among other things the Bill will stop terrorists and other serious foreign criminals who pose a threat to our society from using spurious human rights arguments to prevent deportation.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“We want an EU that helps Britain move ahead, not one that holds us back.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“We want to expand the Single Market, breaking down the remaining barriers to trade and ensuring that new sectors are opened up to British firms.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“So we will resist EU attempts to restrict legitimate financial services activities.”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“We will press for lower EU spending [...]”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“[...] further reform of the Common Agricultural Policy [...]”</p>
<p>Conservatives’ manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>“[...] and Structural Funds [...]”</p>

<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Against the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"[...] and for EU money to be focused on promoting jobs and growth."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>In favour of the practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"Yes to turbo-charging free trade."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>In favour of practices of the European integration</p>	<p>p. 55</p>	<p>"We will encourage other countries to follow the EU's lead in banning animal testing for cosmetics [...]."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Pessimistic about EU future</p>	<p>p. 30</p>	<p>"And when new countries are admitted to the EU in future, we will insist that free movement cannot apply to those new members until their economies have converged much more closely with existing Member States."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Pessimistic about EU future</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"[...] notions like a European Army."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Optimistic about EU future</p>	<p>p. 72</p>	<p>"[...] back businesses to create jobs in Britain by completing ambitious trade deals [...]"</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Optimistic about EU future</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"[...] and kicked-off negotiations for a massive EU trade deal with the USA, which could be worth billions of pounds to the UK economy."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Optimistic about EU future</p>	<p>p. 73</p>	<p>"We want to expand the Single Market, breaking down the remaining barriers to trade and ensuring that new sectors are opened up to British firms."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Optimistic about EU future</p>	<p>p. 76</p>	<p>"[...] push for an ambitious EU-India trade deal [...]."</p>
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	<p>Optimistic about EU future</p>	<p>p. 76</p>	<p>"[...] championing an EU-China trade deal [...]."</p>

<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 72	"For too long, your voice has been ignored on Europe."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 72	"Our Prime Minister vetoed a new EU treaty that would have damaged Britain's interests."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 72	"And no, of course, to the Euro [...]."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 73	"We will protect our economy from any further integration of the Eurozone."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 73	"The integration of the Eurozone has raised acute questions for non-Eurozone countries like the United Kingdom."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 73	"But we will not let the integration of the Eurozone jeopardise the integrity of the Single Market [...]."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 73	"[...] or in any way disadvantage the UK."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 73	"David Cameron vetoed a new EU Treaty that would have damaged Britain's interests [...]."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 73	"Among other things the Bill will stop terrorists and other serious foreign criminals who pose a threat to our society from using spurious human rights arguments to prevent deportation."
<p>Conservatives' manifesto</p> 	Negative emotions	p. 75	"We and our allies face major challenges: Islamist extremism, an aggressive Russia, economic uncertainty in the Eurozone [...]."

Labour's manifesto 	In favour of membership of own country to EU	p. 11	"[...] we will retain our membership of it."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of membership of own country to EU	p. 74	"We believe the Conservatives are damaging the interests of our country by turning their backs on Europe, and isolating us abroad."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of membership of own country to EU	p. 74	"We will protect our national interests, and strengthen our long-standing international alliances, in particular, our membership of NATO and the European Union."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of membership of own country to EU	p. 76	"The economic case for membership of the EU is overwhelming."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of membership of own country to EU	p. 76	"Labour believes that our membership of the European Union is central to our prosperity and security."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of membership of own country to EU	p. 77	"It is not to take Britain out of Europe."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of the ideas of the European integration	p. 67	"A Labour Government will stand up for citizens' individual rights, protecting the Human Rights Act and reforming, rather than walking away from, the European Court of Human Rights."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of the ideas of the European integration	p. 75	"Labour will continue to advocate an EU which looks outward to promote stability, peace and prosperity on its borders."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of the ideas of the European integration	p. 74	"We believe the Conservatives are damaging the interests of our country by turning their backs on Europe, and isolating us abroad."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of the ideas of the European integration	p. 76	"Labour believes that our membership of the European Union is central to our prosperity and security."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p.11	"We will work to reform the European Union [...]."

Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p.11	"With a Labour Government, migrants from the EU will not be able to claim benefits until they have lived here for at least two years."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 34	"We will hold the European Commission to account on issues of concern, including the impact on public services and the Investor to State Dispute Settlement Mechanism."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 62	"Those who make decisions on behalf of others, whether they are in Westminster, the European Union, in business, the media, or the public sector, are too often unaccountable."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 67	"A Labour Government will stand up for citizens' individual rights, protecting the Human Rights Act and reforming, rather than walking away from, the European Court of Human Rights."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 76	"It is why we will work to change the EU, so that it operates in the best interests of our country."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"Our reforms will help deliver a Europe focused on jobs and growth, not simply more austerity and rising unemployment."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"We will not join the Euro [...]."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"Labour will focus on the completion of the single market [...]."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"Labour will focus on [...] tougher budget discipline [...]."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"That means driving reform of the Common Agricultural Policy [...]."

Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"[...] and a Commission-led zero-based review of spending on EU agencies to reduce waste and inefficiency."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"[...] and we will ensure EU rules protect the interests of non-Euro members."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"[...] as well as pushing for stronger transitional controls, which will enable member states to manage the flow of workers for longer when new countries join."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"[...] and implement institutional reforms to help build levels of trust among European citizens."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"We will work to strengthen the influence national parliaments over European legislation, by arguing for a 'red-card mechanism' for member states, providing greater parliamentary scrutiny."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 77	"So we will secure reforms to immigration and social security rules [...]."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 81	"return Britain to a leadership role in Europe."
Labour's manifesto 	Against the practices of the European integration	p. 81	"[...] but reform the EU so that it works for Britain"
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of practices of the European integration	p. 76	"Competing in the single market, with the best companies in the world, drives competitiveness and innovation for firms in all parts of our economy."
Labour's manifesto 	In favour of practices of the European integration	p. 76	"And it helps boost the living standards of people across Britain, encouraging the inflow of capital and investment."

Labour's manifesto 	In favour of practices of the European integration	p. 77	"A Labour Government helped to introduce sensible measures at EU level to protect the rights of British workers, and we remain committed to fighting to protect these measures."
Labour's manifesto 	Pessimistic about EU future	p. 74	"[...] and continuing economic uncertainty in the Eurozone, are each a challenge to our national security."
Labour's manifesto 	Optimistic about the EU future	p. 74	"We will protect our national interests, and strengthen our long-standing international alliances, in particular, our membership of NATO and the European Union."
Labour's manifesto 	Optimistic about the EU future	p. 76	"And it is why we will re-engage with our European allies to protect our national interest after five years of Britain being sidelined in Europe and isolated abroad."
Labour's manifesto 	Optimistic about the EU future	p. 77	"Our reforms will help deliver a Europe focused on jobs and growth, not simply more austerity and rising unemployment."
Labour's manifesto 	Optimistic about the EU future	p. 77	"We will also continue to open up EU decision-making [...]."
Labour's manifesto 	Optimistic about the EU future	p. 81	"return Britain to a leadership role in Europe [...]"