

Claremont-UC Undergraduate Research Conference on the European Union

Volume 2015

Article 4

2015

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Recommended Citation

Bebel, Joseph and Collier, Jon (2016) "Euroskepticism's Many Faces: The Cases of Hungary and the UK," *Claremont-UC Undergraduate Research Conference on the European Union*: Vol. 2015, Article 4. DOI: 10.5642/urceu.201501.04
Available at: <http://scholarship.claremont.edu/urceu/vol2015/iss1/4>

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Euroskepticism's Many Faces: The Cases of Hungary and the UK

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ABSTRACT

While increasing numbers of Europeans are skeptical about the EU, the primary causes behind Euroskepticism vary widely from country to country. Our paper examines the differing sources of Euroskepticism within Hungary and the United Kingdom, using these examples as case studies for the broader EU. Hungarian Euroskeptics accuse the EU of suppressing Hungarian culture and violating the country's national sovereignty, fostering a growing sense that EU membership has not brought the promised benefits. The primary driving forces behind British Euroskepticism, however, are opposition to intra-EU immigration and a sense that the island nation is inherently separate from the Continent. The case studies of Hungary and the UK demonstrate that the motives behind Euroskepticism vary widely across the continent. If confidence in the EU is to be restored, the wide array of concerns held by various Euroskeptic groups must be specifically addressed.

KEYWORDS

Euroskepticism, right-wing parties, United Kingdom, Hungary

INTRODUCTION

The European Union has established a strong early track record of maintaining peace and encouraging cooperation among European countries. As Euroskepticism grows, however, this “European Project” is in danger. While the EU is an evolving institution—and as such, its Member States are entitled to a thoughtful discussion of its role—radical Euroskeptic parties threaten to undo many of the significant accomplishments of integration that have characterized the EU’s existence. It is particularly timely to consider this movement now, as Euroskepticism has recently surged to record levels. A 2013 survey done by the European Commission suggests that this phenomenon is particularly acute in the six largest EU states: Poland, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The largest increase in Euroskepticism between 2007 and 2013 occurred in Spain, where 75% of respondents said they did not trust the EU in 2013, compared to only 25% in 2007. Poland, which has been characterized as one of the more pro-EU Member States, saw an increase from 18% to 42% over the same period. In the UK, where Euroskepticism has been a widely publicized movement, the percentage rose from 50% to 70% (Eurobarometer, 2013).

In the recent 2014 European elections, Euroskeptic parties won more seats than ever before, causing widespread alarm within Member States (Geddes, 2014). While many scholars attribute this to second-order election effects, Member States are beginning to realize that it is time to take a closer look at this growing phenomenon. Clearly, this movement is spreading, imperiling what was once considered the inevitability of European integration. Voters are beginning to consider not just domestic issues, but European issues in European Parliamentary elections (Hobolt & Wittrock, 2010). Euroskeptic ideas are creeping into mainstream politics, and pro-EU parties have no answers to the challenges those ideas pose. Pro-Europeanists fear that the nationalism on which Euroskepticism is based bears a strong resemblance to the nationalism that caused much of the violence and wars of Europe’s past. Euroskeptic parties such as Golden Dawn (Greece) and Jobbik (Hungary) have been accused of promoting racism and carrying out violence against immigrants (Leonard, 2014). For the sake of peace and harmony in Europe, the EU must combat Euroskepticism’s harmful ideology. Before it is confronted, however, it must first be understood.

Unfortunately, the growing trend of anti-EU sentiment is widely misconstrued. In recent years, Euroskepticism has frequently been explained solely from an economic standpoint, implying that Europe’s crisis in confidence stems from its recent monetary hardships (Muddle, 2013; Krugman, 2010). This approach ties mounting Euroskepticism directly to the 2008 financial crisis, offering a somewhat facile explanation for the rising discontent. Other, more generalized evaluations explain Euroskepticism in terms of a widespread sense of unease in Europe (“Eurosceptic Union,” 2014). However useful these descriptions may be, they fail to account for the various and complex motives behind Euroskepticism in each Member State.

While there are patterns of Euroskepticism throughout Europe (displeasure with bureaucracy, loss of local autonomy, etc.), more distinct trends begin to appear when the phenomenon is investigated on a national level. In Greece, for example, the Eurozone crisis has prompted a concerted backlash against austerity measures as well as dissatisfaction with debt repayment plans (Clements, Nanou, & Verney, 2014). In the Czech Republic, some forms of Euroskepticism tend to run along nationalistic and even anti-Semitic lines (“Czech Euroskepticism,” 2014). France’s major Euroskeptic party, the Front National, is undergoing an attempt to alter its public image while maintaining its fundamental opposition to

immigration (Godin, 2013). Each of these Euroskeptical movements could be deconstructed in detail, but the following two case studies of Euroskepticism in the UK and Hungary are particularly useful for understanding the various and disparate forms of skepticism across the Union.

The powerful anti-EU movements in Hungary and the UK are representative of major Euroskeptical efforts throughout Europe and a close examination of Euroskepticism in each of these countries illustrates the deep complexity of the issue on a national level. As a relatively new member of the EU, Hungary's Euroskepticism bears some similarity to other movements in Central and Eastern Europe, but the strength of anti-EU sentiment in Hungary sets it apart from its surrounding Member States. The UK, by contrast, is a more established member of the EU and exhibits a more Western form of Euroskepticism, but the tenuous connection between the island nation and the Union has been continually plagued by reluctance on the part of the British. In the UK, Euroskeptics tend to emphasize economic arguments and their distinct separateness from Europe, leading to a firm anti-immigration stance. On the other hand, Euroskeptics in Hungary condemn EU policy decisions as direct attacks on Hungarian sovereignty. Since rampant Euroskepticism endangers the future of a united Europe, the EU government must change its approach: rather than attempting to foster a general restoration of trust in the EU, it must recognize and address Euroskeptical concerns on a national level.

EUROSKEPTICISM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Since the beginning of the "European Project," the United Kingdom's relationship with European integration could well be described as inconsistent. Pro-Europeanists often point out that Winston Churchill advocated a "United States of Europe," and proclaimed that "every citizen of France will enjoy immediately citizenship of Great Britain [and] every British subject will become a citizen of France" ("British Offer," 1940). But as early as 1952, British public figures like Anthony Eden suggested that Britain should never "join a federation on the continent of Europe," and in 1975, just two years after joining the European Economic Community, the country held its first "in-out" referendum (Bognador, 2005). While the referendum failed, the UK has repeatedly chosen to opt out of important EU policies (including the Schengen Agreement and the Eurozone), and the possibility of another referendum looms large on the horizon. Many countries in Central and Eastern Europe, including Hungary, made difficult reforms and endured long waiting periods to be admitted to the EU. The UK, on the other hand, has been an important player in EU politics but has perpetually withheld its full participation. The long history of Britain's reluctance to integrate with Europe naturally informs the interpretation of recent Euroskeptical movements in the UK, but these contemporary movements demand specific attention. Today's Euroskepticism has its roots in the long history of British exceptionalism, but the movement has been galvanized by distinct new shifts in the population and mentality of the country, especially concerning intra-EU immigration.

UKIP, IMMIGRATION, AND BRITISH EXCEPTIONALISM

In recent years, the locus of much British Euroskepticism has been the UK Independence Party (UKIP). Founded in 1993 (not coincidentally the same year the Maastricht Treaty went into effect), UKIP began to pose a genuine threat to more established parties only in the past decade. By 2009, UKIP had thirteen seats in the European Parliament,

surpassing Labour and the Lib-Dems (Flamini, 2013). As its popularity has grown, so has its scope. In recent years, it has attempted to broaden its appeal by moving from a single-issue Euroskeptical platform to include campaigns against wind turbines, same-sex marriage, and smoking bans, while supporting increased spending on defense and the armed forces (Flamini, 2013). The party's anti-Europe position, however, remains its greatest selling point. It is on this point that the Conservative party faces an increasing threat from UKIP; many one-time Conservatives have defected to the Independence Party, and other registered Conservative voters have shown that they are just as likely to vote for UKIP as for the Tories (Webb & Bale, 2014). Around 60% of declared UKIP supporters in 2013 voted for the Conservatives in the 2010 general election, compared with only 15% for the Lib-Dems and 7% for Labour (Webb & Bale, 2014). Which important issue draws these voters to support UKIP's anti-Europe platform? Certainly some voters have concerns regarding the Eurozone crisis or economic entanglement with the continent, but the vast majority of voters are drawn to UKIP's focus on one area: immigration.

While countries like Hungary have few concerns with migrants from other Member States, Euroskepticism in the UK is driven by a strong sense that something must be done to impose tighter restrictions or controls on immigration. A 2014 British Social Attitudes Survey found that 77% of respondents wanted to see immigration reduced to some extent (Geddes, 2014). Another poll found that 34% of respondents saw immigration as one of the most striking issues facing the country, twice as many as those that identified education and schools as the biggest issues facing the country (Geddes, 2014). UKIP knows how large the immigration question looms in the minds of many Britons, and it has addressed those concerns by promising to cut ties with Europe and stem the flow of immigrants. When Romania and Hungary were on the brink of joining the EU's Schengen Agreement, UKIP capitalized on the opportunity by warning Britons that the number of foreign workers living in Britain would increase exponentially if they joined in 2014. While this message came across as xenophobic to some, it clearly appealed to others—party ranks continued to grow even when the projected flood of immigrants failed to materialize (Flamini, 2013). In 2014, riding this wave of support, UKIP won 24 seats in the European Parliament with 27.5% of the overall vote (“Vote,” 2014). This was more than any other British party, including the Conservative and Labour.

Although recent immigration has fallen short of some projections, the number of foreign Europeans in the UK is unquestionably growing. Since the turn of the century, the EU has added thirteen new Member States, mainly from Central and Eastern European countries with lower income levels (Geddes, 2014). This rapid expansion has perhaps driven the rising levels of concern regarding the free movement of people in Europe. The U.K. Home Office originally estimated that this expansion would increase immigration, but only by 5,000 to 13,000 per year from these new Member States. Instead, around 170,000 immigrants from these new Member States arrived in Britain between 2004 and 2012, or roughly 18,000 per year (Geddes, 2014). This new trend was accepted and welcomed by many young, skilled university graduates who had begun to dictate the mainstream worldview in the UK, but other groups felt “left behind” by the shift (Ford & Goodwin, 2014). These older, blue-collar voters form the core of UKIP, but there is some evidence that Euroskepticism is catching on with young voters as well (“Budding Toughies,” 2015). A March 26, 2015 survey by Panelbase found that 44% of the UK population would vote to leave the EU if a referendum were held. As immigration levels have risen, UKIP's anti-European rhetoric has gained increasing traction with the British voter base.

Part of the difficulty of resolving this discontent stems from the fact that the free movement of people is enshrined as a principal aim of the European Union, but it occupies a far different space in the UK. In the words of Andrew Geddes, “Free movement is an article of faith for pro-Europeans” (2014). Open borders are championed by EU leaders like Jean-Claude Juncker, but perhaps more importantly, they are enshrined in EU laws and treaties (Geddes, 2014). The Lisbon Treaty, which was enforced in 2009, states that the Union “shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security, and justice” without internal borders (Roots, 2009). This treaty removed many barriers to intra-EU immigration, making it easier for members of the EU to settle in new places. But, as with the Schengen Agreement and the Maastricht Treaty, the UK once again obtained an “opt-out” on some provisions of the treaty (Fletcher, 2009). The UK has kept its distance from the EU in many respects since it first became a member, but only recently has that separation been so clearly demonstrated in the arena of intra-EU immigration.

While most EU member states ratify all EU treaties, the hesitancy of the UK to participate fully in treaties has become more pronounced in recent years, indicating the country’s growing disenchantment with European integration. The UK seemed to share in the development of a European consciousness in the early 1940s, but the end of the World War II marked a change in how Britain and the Continent interacted (Bognador, 2005). For many, membership in the European Economic Community (EEC) was seen as a last resort, an inevitability against which resistance would be a futile endeavor (Bognador, 2005). While there have always been European enthusiasts in UK politics, this hesitancy has characterized much of the country’s interaction with the EU. In 2011, the UK Parliament passed the European Union Act, which contained two key components. First, the act included a “sovereignty clause,” which states that EU Law can take effect in the UK only through an act of Parliament. Its second crucial element deals with approving EU treaties. It gives Parliament a greater say in the ratification process, specifies the conditions under which a public referendum must be held to ratify the treaty, and enhances the scope for UK judicial review of EU treaties (Hodson & Maher, 2014). This approach to EU law is unique to the United Kingdom, but unsurprising when viewed along with the historic British attitude towards European integration.

At the core of Britain’s hesitancy towards full participation in Europe is a deep-seated belief that the UK is somehow separate from Europe. This was demonstrated throughout the twentieth century in the attitudes of Britons towards European integration (Stevens, 2014). While different UK parties have supported EU participation at different times, there has been a general negativity surrounding proposals to increase integration with Europe over the years (Stevens, 2014). The British press has long exhibited an “uncomfortable” relationship with Europe, often writing negative or derogatory stories about the EU (Cooper, 2001). Commentators have suggested that this reluctance to integrate with Europe stems from the mentality that accompanies being an island nation, and one with strong ties to its former colonies (Bognador, 2005). The British emphasis on its trans-Atlantic relationship with the United States, coupled with a faint hope of a trading network with an “Anglophone” or “Commonwealth” trade block (which has historically seemed more appealing than integration with Europe), has kept enthusiasm for the EU at low levels in the UK (Bagehot, 2014). This notion of British exceptionalism has long been part of the UK’s political mentality as well, but when recently combined with fears over immigration and other economic concerns, the result was a resurgent Euroskeptic movement embodied in particular by UKIP.

EUROSKEPTICISM AS NATIONALISM

As demonstrated by the case of the UK, nationalism is a central motivator behind Euroskepticism. Despite its goals of integration, many of the actions taken by the EU have led to the growth of nationalism across Europe. Many Euroskeptics complain that the EU has not lived up to expectations—that it has focused so much on expanding that it has accepted countries with weak economies, stunting the progress of the Union. The EU has promised potential Member States job creation and the quick, efficient establishment of democratic institutions. As promises have not materialized, Europeans have begun to distrust the EU, relying instead on their national governments. The EU's failure to cultivate widespread assimilation of immigrants has also increased feelings of nationalism, leading to violence fueled by xenophobia. Countries with a history of oppression are beginning to see the EU as another force trying to destroy their culture and take away their national sovereignty. The rise of nationalism in Europe could be destructive to the European Project, so the EU must strike a balance between respecting the many cultures of the Member States while at the same time promoting a cohesive European identity.

EUROSKEPTICISM IN HUNGARY

Hungary's case provides a different focus as compared to Euroskepticism in the UK—while both movements stem from nationalistic fervor, Hungary's Euroskeptics have few concerns about intra-EU immigration. Instead, they accuse the EU of destroying Hungarian culture and interfering in Hungary's domestic affairs. For some Hungarians, the EU seems reminiscent of earlier oppressive forces in its history such as the Soviet Union. As one of the most powerful Euroskeptical nations in Central and Eastern Europe, the case of Hungary demonstrates the need to address each national movement individually.

Hungary's position in Europe is pivotal, as it is considered part of Central as well as Eastern Europe. Recently, Euroskepticism in the region has begun to spread, as evidenced by the rise of parties like the Congress of the New Right (Poland). These developments have caused many commentators to focus more closely on Euroskepticism in Central and Eastern Europe. A closer examination of Euroskepticism in Hungary will shed some light on this phenomenon in the region, which is demonstrative of the wide variation in movements that the EU must address.

HUNGARICUM

At the time of Hungary's admission to the EU in 2004, support for the EU was extremely high. A stunning 84% of Hungarians voted "yes" to accession to the EU, and the overwhelming feeling was that the EU could help Hungary modernize and become more Western ("The History," 2014). At the time, Hungary was still struggling to modernize after nearly 50 years of oppressive rule by the Soviet Union. The EU was supposed to facilitate these processes, but despite their successful accession, these efforts have continued to stall. As a result, enthusiasm for the EU has since diminished, leading to an increase in Euroskepticism throughout Hungary.

While nationalism is an element of most Euroskeptical movements, Hungary's Euroskepticism has a nationalistic fervor that is unmatched in other countries. In Greece and the UK, for example, Euroskepticism tends to focus on economic arguments, and as such is labeled "free market" skepticism. Euroskeptics in the UK may also use xenophobic rhetoric to build support against the EU's consolidation of power. In Hungary, however, this skepti-

cism is most keenly rooted in a fear of Hungarian culture and autonomy being subsumed by the larger governing body. Not only do skeptics in Hungary think that Brussels is becoming too powerful, they also believe that the EU is waging a private war against Hungary. The term “Hungaricum” was coined in response to this perceived conflict, providing a way to fight back against Brussels (Novak, 2014). Hungaricum calls for more power to be given to the national government in representing and protecting the interests and needs of the Hungarian people, leading to the militant nationalism that has caused Hungary to become increasingly Euroskeptic.

Euroskepticism has recently been on the rise in Hungary: between 2006 and 2011, skepticism in Hungary grew by 11%, the fifth largest increase among EU Member States. In 2012, only 25% of Hungarians said membership in the EU was a “positive thing” for Hungary (Ritzen, 2014). As of 2014, 34% of Hungarians were characterized as strong Euroskeptics (Novak, 2014). This is particularly significant since countries in Central and Eastern Europe have historically been pro-EU, but in recent years this region has become increasingly Euroskeptic. Much of this increase is due to disappointment with the outcomes of accession to the EU; countries in Central and Eastern Europe do not feel the EU has accelerated the establishment of democracy in their countries, and they accuse the EU of inhibiting, rather than facilitating, economic growth. Only 33% of citizens in Poland trust the EU, and the same figure holds true for citizens of Hungary (Petsinis, 2014). Much of the Euroskepticism within these countries is based on a shared history of being subject to the former Soviet Union, which has led to general distrust of government centralization and foreign institutions. To ensure their security from these institutions, many countries in Central and Eastern Europe are beginning to turn inward and focus on national issues.

Like many other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Hungarian Euroskeptics are primarily concerned with the potential loss of national sovereignty. Hungarians become especially defensive when they feel that outside institutions, especially those in Brussels, are interfering in domestic politics. Political parties have used Euroskeptic rhetoric in an attempt to protect Hungarian identity and culture. The focus is on cultural intrusions such as the EU regulation of ingredients like poppy seeds and paprika, both central to Hungarian cuisine. In 2004, the EU told Member States that they may ban paprika products from Hungarian homes and restaurants because there was evidence that the paprika did not meet EU health standards. Since paprika is the most important ingredient in many Hungarian dishes, this was seen by many as a direct attack on Hungarian culture and evidence of the oppressive nature of the EU (“Hungry,” 2004).

Many Hungarians feel that the EU has exhibited a double standard when reacting to violations of EU policy, and they accuse the EU government of singling out Hungary, a small state (Tisdall, 2011). Skeptics argue that the EU cracks down on some smaller Member States, such as Hungary, while turning a blind eye to violations by other larger Member States. They claim that the EU has been more than willing to look the other way when larger states like Poland and the UK are accused of violations, such as collaborating in the torturing of terror suspects, but when smaller states such as Hungary implement policies that Brussels characterizes as “illiberal,” they are immediately censured. Brussels’ strong criticism of the Hungarian government strikes many Hungarians as unjust, prompting the common feeling that the EU is singling out Hungary.

FIDESZ, VIKTOR ORBÁN, AND JOBBIK

The rise of Euroskepticism in Hungary is characterized by the rise of the Euroskeptic parties Fidesz and Jobbik. Fidesz is labeled as soft-Euroskeptic, meaning that the party holds policies that are not against European integration, but they have different opinions on certain measures and tend to focus on how national interests should be protected (Molnár, 2014). Jobbik, on the other hand, is hard-Euroskeptic, meaning that they are completely opposed to European integration at any level (Molnár, 2014). Although the two parties hold different views, the combined influence of their ideologies has produced a strong form of Euroskepticism in Hungary.

In the 2014 elections, Fidesz secured a two-thirds majority in Parliament. Jobbik came in third, garnering 20% of the votes and 23 parliamentary seats; a notable increase from only two percent in 2006 (Morgan, 2014). In that same year, Fidesz and Jobbik won 15 of 21 possible seats in the European Elections, meaning that Euroskeptic parties won 71% of possible Hungarian seats in the European Parliament (“How Powerful,” 2015). This percentage is the highest among Member States, even higher than in the UK, where Euroskeptic parties won only 60% of seats. This has allowed Fidesz and Jobbik to put their Euroskeptic rhetoric into action. Commentators are beginning to speculate about the possibility of a future coalition between Fidesz and Jobbik despite the differences in their espoused forms of Euroskepticism (Day, 2010). If this were to happen, Hungary would almost certainly continue to move further away from EU ideals and values.

Fidesz first came to power in 2010 with its primary stated goal being to represent the interests of Hungary as a whole. While UKIP uses economic prosperity as an example of why Britain would be better off without the EU, Fidesz focuses on perceived personal attacks by the EU against Hungary. Fidesz likens the EU to the many oppressive forces of Hungary’s past, building on the fact that only a very low percentage of Hungarians feel that Hungary has benefited from EU membership. In October 2014, Parliament Chief and Fidesz member László Kövér said that if the EU “wants to tell a country how it should be governed,” then it is no different from the former Soviet Union, warning that if this were to continue, Hungary would consider leaving the union (“Hungarian,” 2014). If Hungary continues to feel that its identity is being threatened by EU membership, it could result in the eventual exit of the nation.

As the primary framer of Fidesz’s Euroskeptic rhetoric, the most important figure here is current Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. On countless occasions, Orbán has said that preserving Hungary’s national sovereignty should be the highest priority of the current government. He has frequently been charged with defying the EU’s membership laws in establishing what he calls a “social democracy,” and the EU has accused him of attempting “constitutional capture” in an effort to cut the EU out of Hungarian politics and allow for the introduction of undemocratic and illiberal policies. Orbán is convinced that his policy-making is entirely democratic and accuses the EU of “Euro-colonialism,” an ideology defined by the belief that there is an attempt by the EU to direct domestic politics in all Member States; he further decries the EU for trying to tell Hungarians how to live (Müller, 2015). Orbán’s efforts have earned him attention from fellow Euroskeptics, including UKIP leader Nigel Farage. In 2011, Farage lauded Orbán’s efforts in standing up against the EU and called him the “Euroskeptics’ secret weapon” (UKIP, 2011). This title may be particularly apt because Orbán is pushing a brand of Euroskepticism that the EU has trouble addressing: it constantly discusses economic concern but fails to understand and confront the

sense of victimization and growing nationalism in Hungarian Euroskepticism. After being re-elected in 2014, Orbán commented that Hungary will remain in the EU but will take “a different, special, national approach” to politics (“Orbán,” 2015, 23). Orbán plans to focus more on domestic issues in the hope that this will prompt higher numbers of Hungarians to support Hungary distancing itself from the EU.

The rise of Hungary as a Euroskeptic nation is further demonstrated by the growth of the hard-Euroskeptic party Jobbik. Jobbik’s unprecedented climb from an obscure, radical party in 2003 to a central actor in Hungarian politics by 2014 shows that Euroskeptic rhetoric is appealing to Hungarians. Much like Fidesz, Jobbik’s main focus is the protection of national values and interests (Boros, Nagy, & Varga, 2012). Jobbik, however, is more radical than Fidesz, suggesting that Hungarian interests would be better served by turning east to Russia, Asia, and the Middle East rather than to the EU. Jobbik not only wants to cut ties with the EU, but also supports changing Hungary’s focus entirely. At first, Jobbik’s hard-Euroskeptic views did not seem threatening, but after the European elections in 2014, many experts are taking notice. Jobbik has become the second most powerful Hungarian political party in Parliament, but its growth has coincided with the scaling down of its rhetoric, reducing the intensity of Euroskepticism to more publicly acceptable levels (Boros et al., 2012). This has led to even more support among Hungarians, who are beginning to support Jobbik’s nationalistic rhetoric in higher numbers while simultaneously prompting concern from EU officials, who are worried that Jobbik could eventually form a coalition with Fidesz and begin to blend agendas (Day, 2010). Fidesz has already taken several points from Jobbik’s political agenda and adopted them as party policies. The potential combination of these political parties would strengthen this nationalistic, “Eastern” form of Euroskepticism, and the EU does not seem to have any answers for how to confront the growth of this movement.

HUNGARY AND THE UK: A DIRECT COMPARISON

As demonstrated above, anti-EU sentiment in both the UK and Hungary is closely tied to nationalism, but the direct reasons for the recent rise of Euroskepticism vary between the two nations. Nationalism in the UK is driven by growing xenophobia along with its geographical and longstanding ideological separation from Europe. Hungary, on the other hand, fosters a type of nationalism that focuses on preserving Hungarian culture and decrying EU attacks on Hungarian sovereignty. Attacks on national sovereignty is an issue that is shared by most Eurosceptic parties, however this issue is particularly poignant in Hungary where citizens see the EU as directly attacking Hungarian sovereignty while in the UK this issue is seen as a universal product of further European integration. Euroskeptics in the UK focus on breaking from Europe and turning towards the rest of the English-speaking world; Hungarian Euroskeptics, on the other hand, have often exhibited a tendency to turn eastward as an alternative to trading in Europe; some of these Hungarians wish to break from the EU in favor of building closer ties with Russia and China. Both countries are not part of the Eurozone, and each has expressed concerns with the potential loss of economic independence that would result from membership in the Eurozone. Hungary, however, is required to eventually join the currency union, while the UK can remain on the pound through an opt-out. The current UK government is still cautiously pro-EU, while hard Euroskeptics are mainly found in the relatively small UKIP party. By contrast, Hungary’s governing party and prime minister are becoming increasingly Euroskeptic. Their position

of political power allows for the widespread implementation of Euroskeptical policies, and these policies are beginning to influence other countries within Central and Eastern Europe, many of which are also becoming increasingly Euroskeptical. Due to its high profile, the UK's brand of skepticism is generally portrayed as characteristic of Euroskeptical trends throughout the EU, but Hungary—with its new, radical skepticism—demonstrates that this trend has been oversimplified. A general approach to Euroskepticalism will never result in the building of more support for the EU; in order for the EU to be able to overcome this obstacle and move forward, it must analyze Euroskepticalism from not only a supranational level but from regional and national levels as well.

CONCLUSION: COMBATting DIVERSE FORMS OF EUROSKEPTICISM

The EU must face the reality that Euroskepticalism is a plausible threat to its institutions. Failing to understand the nuances of Euroskepticalism—from its nationalistic roots to its individual manifestations in each country—will ultimately lead to a breakdown of all the EU has accomplished. First, EU members must engage in a thorough debate on the role of the EU in European public life. This self-examination will allow pro-Europeanists to approach Euroskepticalism with a clearer vision for the future of the EU (Leonard, 2013). Second, Euroskeptical parties should be acknowledged when they voice concerns particular to their nation, and the EU must be flexible enough to address those concerns, even if they do not apply to all Member States. Third, the EU must make a concerted effort to demonstrate the economic advantages of membership in the Union. Parties that have been shaken by the Euro crisis must be reassured that this great economic experiment is indeed worthwhile. In all cases, the solutions to Euroskepticalism must take into account the motives behind the movements in individual Member States. Euroskepticalism is often oversimplified or even dismissed, but the case studies of the UK and Hungary show that Euroskepticalism varies widely across national borders and poses a real threat to European prosperity. The EU must find a balance between promoting a European identity while also preserving the unique cultures of every Member State, and a closer look at Euroskepticalism will make the reconciliation of these differences possible.

AUTHORS' NOTE

We owe our thanks to Dr. Nicholas Mason and Dr. Wade Jacoby at Brigham Young University for their insight and assistance with this paper. In our analysis, we incorporate scholarly research as well as our respective experiences living in Hungary (Bebel) and working in the Scottish Parliament (Collier).

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