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Euroscepticism and the Perception of Benefits

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Abstract

Since Denmark's 'no' to the Maastricht treaty in 1992, public opinion and support for European Integration has been the subject of increasing study. Now that referendums play a greater role in the construction of the European Union, as demonstrated by the forthcoming ratification of the European Constitution, European leaders are finding it necessary to pay more attention to Eurosceptic factions and public opinion. Their presence in the political arena has the ability to slow or even halt the process of European Integration. Whether integration continues or not, and in what fashion, is becoming increasingly dependent on European citizens and their attitudes to the EU. The appointment of Margot Walstrom as Commissioner for Institutions Public Relations and Communication Strategy has demonstrated the Commissions desire to garner public support for the EU and its initiatives. This study gives a vital understanding of the public's attitudes to the EU and specifically of Popular Euroscepticism, possibly the biggest threat to the continuation of integration since the stagnation of the early 1980s. It introduces the reader to three factors that are commonly associated with the formation of Euroscepticism; 'Knowledge', 'Identity' and 'Benefits'. A social constructivist approach to EU membership then provides further identification of 'Perception of Benefits' as a causal variable in the formation of Euroscepticism. However, an empirical investigation of public opinion follows but does not support the theoretical deduction.

Keywords: Euroscepticism, Public Opinion, Social Constructivism, Eurobarometer, European Union

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1 Introduction

1.1 Subject and Purpose of the Study

In this paper the phenomenon of Euroscepticism will be studied. It is a relatively new term in European Integration studies and has only become part of both popular language and political science in the last fifteen years, since the end of a 'permissive consensus'. For this investigation, the term Euroscepticism is defined as 'seeing one's nation's membership of the EU as a bad thing'.

The purpose of this study is to discover whether the formation of Euroscepticism within EU member states is dependent upon a specific variable or a combination of variables. I aim to demonstrate that there are three factors that are commonly attributed to the formation of Popular Euroscepticism in current research. After a literature survey and a Social Constructivist analysis I identify a citizen's perception of benefits as the most important factor that influences levels of Euroscepticism within EU member states.

The purpose of this study is not to counter the rationalist position that individuals are utility maximisers with fixed preferences, only to suggest an alternative explanation as to how citizens have developed the perception that 'Benefits' is the most important criteria when evaluating their nation's membership of the EU.

1.2 Relevance

Euroscepticism's salience in society and political science is unquestionable. In June last year (2004) European Parliament elections were held with the results demonstrating an increase in support for anti European Union parties across Europe and a large increase in support for other opposition parties. For example, in the Czech Republic, the Eurosceptic Civic Democrats won 30% of the vote compared to the ruling Social Democrats who only managed to poll 8%. In addition to support for opposition parties, voter turnout was also particularly low, not just in the UK and Netherlands, as it was five years ago, but also in the ten new member states (turnout in Poland was below 20%). In addition, support for Eurosceptic parties was particularly pronounced in Britain; the two main parties failed to secure less than half the vote between them for the first time ever

whereas the Eurosceptic United Kingdom Independence Party made massive gains polling up 16.8% compared to just 1.2% in the 1992 European elections.¹

As well as its staggering rise in the last fifteen years Euroscepticism is also a phenomenon that currently has more potential than ever to bring further European integration to a shuddering halt; In October 2004 the heads of states signed the Draft Constitution for Europe in Rome. Its ratification will be brought about in many member states by a referendum in which a no-vote by any of the nations could threaten the viability, or at least the credibility, of the project. EU Leaders, such as former Commission president Romano Prodi, have warned that ‘a French no could trigger the fall of Europe’.² Therefore if pro-Europeans wish to further European Integration there needs to be an identification and understanding of variables that contribute to the formation of Popular Euroscepticism.

1.3 Plan of the Study

The paper is divided into four parts, designed to identify the causes of Euroscepticism using both an empirical and theoretical analysis; Part one explains the concept of Euroscepticism and factors that are commonly attributed to its formation; in Part two Social Constructivism provides a complimentary analysis of EU membership to identify which of these variables is the most important cause of Euroscepticism; Part three tests these variables using Eurobarometer results; Finally, part four analyses the results and concludes that my identified variable, ‘perception of benefits’, cannot be conclusively proved to be the most important variable in the formation of Euroscepticism;

Chapter two introduces the concept of Euroscepticism to the reader and distinguishes two different types of Euroscepticism; Party-based and Popular. The second half of part two uses past literature and investigations by other political scientists to identify the most commonly cited causes of popular Euroscepticism. These are identified as Identity, Awareness/knowledge of the EU and Perceived benefits. Identity is thought to be an influence in opposition to the EU as individuals that do not see themselves in any way as being ‘European’ are often more sceptical of the EU. Knowledge is thought to contribute to shape levels of support for the EU because researchers have found that citizens who have a greater awareness of Union activities and policy are more likely to view EU membership as ‘a good thing’. Perceived benefits have also been identified as a variable in shaping public support for European Integration. Using a cost-benefit approach many studies have shown that support for the EU rises if individuals stand to benefit economically from the European Union.

¹ ‘EU Poll Blow for Ruling Parties’ – <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3803453.stm>

² Quoted in the International Herald Tribune, ‘In 3 elections, voters will have a say on Europe’, p1, Tuesday, May 3, 2005,

Chapter three then identifies Social Constructivism as a suitable theory for the analysis of popular Euroscepticism. Firstly, by using theoretical literature the theory is situated in current theoretical debate. By doing so it provides the reader with a further understanding of its value to this empirical and theoretical study due to its 'middle ground' approach. It is then used as a framework for analysis for four different countries and their membership of the EU. By using Social Constructivist concepts such as socialisation and persuasion I suggest that Social Constructivism is a complimentary theory that can offer an alternative explanation as to how 'benefits' of EU membership may have been constructed as the most important variable when a citizen forms an opinion on the subject of EU membership.

These variables are then tested in Chapter four by comparing them against results from Eurobarometer in order to assess whether 'perception of benefits', more than any other variable, is consistently associated with Euroscepticism. After an explanation of the methodology of the investigation I take results from the four different countries collected from 1992 to 2001 by the EU Commission's Eurobarometer and plot perception of membership against the pre-identified variables of identity, awareness and perceived benefits. By plotting the results of Eurobarometer respondees against levels of Euroscepticism it is possible to see whether there is a relationship between Euroscepticism and the variables. Results from the investigation will unearth an evident positive correlation between levels of Euroscepticism and a citizen's perception of benefits to their nation as a result of EU membership in the case of Portugal only. Denmark and Ireland will show evidence of such a relationship though with less clarity. Britain will not show any evidence of a relationship between any of the variables. Therefore the empirical evidence will not support my hypothesis that Euroscepticism is dependent upon a citizen's 'perception of benefits'. It will also not find evidence to support the claims of the theories in the literature survey. The final part of the chapter is dedicated to a summary and discussion of results.

Chapter five concludes the paper by stating that the Social Constructivist approach helped to identify a causal variable of Euroscepticism and provide this thesis with a hypothesis. However there was little empirical evidence from my Eurobarometer investigation to support the claim that Euroscepticism is dependent upon benefits. More statistical data is needed in order to develop a more accurate investigation.

2 Euroscepticism

2.1 Introduction

This section gives an in-depth introduction to the phenomena of Euroscepticism and the factors that are commonly attributed to its formation. It firstly distinguishes between two types of Euroscepticism; Popular and Party Based. From this distinction I identify Popular Euroscepticism as the primary subject of this investigation.

The second part of this section explains the different reasons for the formation of Euroscepticism. By examining recent literature in this area of research the reader is presented with three variables that are seen to influence popular support for the EU; Knowledge and awareness of the EU, Perception of Benefits and Identity.

2.2 Definitions and Origins

Euroscepticism is a term that has emerged only recently in the lexicon of both political scientists and popular culture in the last two decades. The first reference to it in the Social Science Citations Index stems from Paul Taggart's 1998 article 'A touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary West European Party Systems' though The Economist introduced the term in January 1993 as it sought to replace the term 'anti-marketeters'.

Presently Richard S Katz defines the term as 'opposition to the development of any form of supranational European institutions that would or do impinge on national sovereignty and the traditional European state system'³. Such a definition is however broad and sweeping. Opposition on this basis could be to almost any aspect of the European Union and exist in any form from doubt to hostility. In an attempt to categorise the multiple facets of Euroscepticism we should look to Taggart's original article in which he distinguishes three types of Euroscepticism;

³ Katz, R, 'Euroscepticism in Parliament: A Comparative analysis of the European and National Parliament', European Consortium for political research Joint Sessions of Workshops, Torino, 22-27 March, 2002.

1. Those who oppose the idea of integration and therefore the EU;
2. Those who do not oppose integration but are sceptical that the EU is the best way to achieve it. This results from a view that the EU is too inclusive – i.e. trying to force together too many different national attitudes, cultures, practices and beliefs on politically sensitive issues;
3. Those that are not opposed to integration but think that the EU is not the best way to achieve it because it is too exclusive.

What is clear in all of the above definitions is that Euroscepticism, in its most basic form, infers an opposition to the European Union itself, regardless of sentiment concerning the overall process of integration.

Euroscepticism has only become an object of political research in the last 15 years. According to Katz, the failure of scholars to examine the phenomenon has been the result of the conjunction of three factors. Firstly the EEC seemed to be unimportant to many during the 1980s because of the small amount of money that member states were spending on it, with the EC's budget comprising less than 1% of aggregate GDP. The range of policy areas in which the EC was involved was relatively small, with decisions made by unanimous accord and therefore appeared unthreatening to the primacy of states. Secondly, the EC was being studied mainly by Euro-enthusiasts who debated how integration would or should proceed and those who voiced opposition were deemed to be on the 'wrong side of history', simply lacking understanding of the issue. Thirdly, there seemed to be a consensus among the major European national parties in favour of further integration. Amongst the masses integration was allowed to proceed unchallenged because there appeared to be a 'permissive consensus'⁴. However with the Single European Act and the Treaty of Maastricht the situation regarding the research of Euroscepticism drastically changed. The range of policy areas in which the EU was becoming more significant greatly increased and the 1992 Danish 'no' to the Maastricht treaty emphasised that a 'permissive consensus' might not in fact exist. Thus Euroscepticism became a recognisable phenomenon and therefore the object of intensified study. This intensification of research on the subject has also been aided by a clearer manifestation of Euroscepticism. It does so in two forms; Party based and Popular. By looking at these two different varieties it is possible to see clear trends that may verify the existence of anti-EU sentiment.

Party based Euroscepticism⁵ has revolved largely around a comparative research programme analysing different party systems in European member states and an analysis of party policy. This is predominantly because they provide a visible forum for political beliefs if one accepts that they are 'agents of interests

⁴ P1, Katz, 2002

⁵ This concept has been advanced most by the work of Paul Taggart and Alexis Szczerbiak of the Sussex European Institute and the affiliated 'Opposing Europe Research Network'. See <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/SEI/oern/researchingeuroscepticism.html>

and bearers of ideologies'⁶. For such research programmes the existence of anti-EU policy can constitute evidence of Euroscepticism. According to Taggart, there are four different ways in which Euroscepticism manifests itself within the party system and the parties themselves;

1. The existence of single issue European parties whose very *raison d'être* is opposition to the EU.
2. Protest based parties with Eurosceptic policy. These are protest based parties who have taken an anti-EU position adjunct to their normal position against other governmental policies, for example the Swedish green Party.
3. Established parties with a eurosceptic position. Such parties are firmly established political parties that frequently garner large support from the electorate and have adopted a general position of Euroscepticism. For example, the British Conservative Party.
4. Eurosceptical factions. This is when a significant faction of an existing party advocates Euroscepticism but the party remains generally in favour of European integration. An example of such a faction is the 'Labour against the Euro' faction of the British Labour Party⁷.

However, if the findings of Taggart are to be believed Party Based Euroscepticism does not constitute an accurate method of analysis for this study, in which I am seeking the reasons for an increase in Popular Euroscepticism. Although party based Euroscepticism may give an indication of general levels of Euroscepticism, it does not necessarily reflect the exact extent of popular Euroscepticism in a nation. Support for Eurosceptic parties does not equate to general popular levels of national Euroscepticism; A voter may support a party that has either a) a eurosceptic policy or b) a eurosceptic faction and vote for it, though the voter may not support either the eurosceptic policy or faction. Similarly the existence of Single issue eurosceptic parties in the system may not denote true party orientation. Such a policy can be used by peripheral parties who have little influence in order to primarily distinguish themselves from more established parties and attract votes. Support for such parties cannot be taken as indicative of levels of popular Euroscepticism either as voters may have voted for the single issue party as a form of 'protest vote'. For example, whilst the increase in support for the United Kingdom Independence party in the June 2004 European Parliament elections may have indicated a rise in British Euroscepticism it may have equally indicated an increasing dissatisfaction with the traditionally dominant Labour and Conservative Parties for non-EU related reasons. Thus for this study I must discount party based Euroscepticism because it does not provide a conclusive and accurate measurement of Popular Euroscepticism.

⁶ p367 Taggart, P, 'A touchstone of dissent: Euroscepticism in contemporary Western European party systems', *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol.33, 1998, pp363-388

⁷ Launched in 2002, 'labour against the Euro' is supported by over one hundred members of the Parliamentary party and labour councillors.

Popular Euroscepticism is however empirically verifiable in other ways, aside from the presence of Eurosceptic parties. It is a scepticism of the European Union that is manifested through the results of referenda and statistical enquiry and has been an object of greater enquiry since events such as the Danish 'no' vote on Maastricht in 1992. However, in the author's opinion, it is still a field of enquiry that demands more research. As the statistical data on public attitudes towards European Integration increases, by means of surveys carried out by various EU institutions and private companies, there is greater potential for the study of public opinion towards integration, rather than reliance upon inaccurate party Euroscepticism as a representation on a nation's Euroscepticism. Thus this study constitutes an attempt to rebalance the study of Euroscepticism by looking at the attitudes of the people. The drafting of a Constitution for Europe, its signing in October, 2004 by the European Heads of State and the resulting promises of ratification by referenda show just how much of a pivotal role Euroscepticism will play in the further integration of Europe.

2.3 Competing Explanations

From current and competing theories of support for European Integration it is possible to discern three causes of popular opposition to the European Union; Euroscepticism caused by a lack of knowledge of European policy and institutions; Euroscepticism caused by a lack of perceived benefits; Euroscepticism caused by a non-European identity.

As previously stated, the literature on the formation of Public Opinion on the EU has flourished comparatively recently. Political scientists such as Gabel have focused on public opinion believing that an understanding of mass political behaviour and therefore also public opinion is necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the overall process of European Integration. Policy and public political behaviour are inextricably linked and result from a number of factors; Firstly public interests are linked to policy making through their national representatives who deliberate European Policy in the European Council and Council of Ministers. Second, citizens have direct control over integration in member states that require national referendums on integrative reforms. Thirdly, the public is directly connected to EU policy making through the European Parliament, which is popularly elected.⁸ The salience of public opinion has also been demonstrated by discussions of the 'democratic deficit' and the perceived

⁸ P937 Gabel, M., 'Economic Integration and Mass Politics: Market Liberalisation and Public Attitudes in the European Union', Volume 42, No.3 (July 1998), pp936-953.

need to enforce the legitimacy of EU policy decisions.⁹ Studies have gone beyond the early conclusions that public attitudes on international affairs are generally incoherent.¹⁰ Therefore I now review and analyse competing literature on public support of the EU in order to identify factors that may contribute to the formation of Popular Euroscepticism.

2.3.1 Identity

Though the question of an emerging identity has been at the forefront of political research since the beginning of the integration process, as a multitude of nations and cultures becomes part of a single political institution, it has become more of an issue in the last 15 years. In 1992, the Maastricht Treaty developed a framework for European Citizenship, stating that 'Every person holding the nationality of a member state shall be a citizen of the Union'. This was followed in 2001 by a Commission Whitepaper which stressed the reinforcement of 'European identity and the importance of shared values within the Union'. From such acts it can be deduced that the Commission has based further European Integration upon the notion of an extended European identity. Thus the question of identity is seen by both scholars and the commission as a variable in the formation of support or scepticism of the EU.

Current analyses, however, are divided into two areas of research, those that investigate the link between national identity and European integration and those that investigate identity at an individual level and its effect upon the European Union. Defining national identity as an individual's intensity of positive attachment to his/her nation, some such as Carey, argue that support or opposition to the EU can be largely explained by an individual's feeling of identity. If an individual has a intense attachment to the nation state or a fear of encroachment upon the state by other cultures then the individual is more likely to be sceptical of the European Union and see their nation's membership as a bad thing. Feelings of national identity are likely to increase as a result of conflicts over sovereignty that have developed in the more recent decades of integration such as a single European Currency, a supranational European bank and increased primacy of European law. It is the increased visibility of these European institutions that may threaten sovereignty that Carey focuses on.

Carey also notes the concept of a 'terminal community' as a territory which is responsible for governing the land with which the individual identifies his or herself. For example a Scotch man may view any of Scotland, the United Kingdom or the European Union as the terminal community. According to Carey whichever the individual feels is the terminal community then the individual will

⁹ p508, Eichenberg, R & Dalton R, 'Europeans and the European Community: The dynamics of public Support for European Integration', International Organisation, Volume 47, No.4, (Autumn 1993), pp507-534.

¹⁰ p950, Gabel, M, 1998, quoted from Rosenau, J, 'Public Opinion and Foreign Policy', 1961, New York, Random House.

feel it is this political entity which is responsible for making the law of the land and governing, and will thus be the institution to which they will lend their support and approval. Based on this Concept he argued that those who believe in a shared European identity will see the European Community as their terminal community and are more likely to recognise the authority of the EU. Similarly those who believe that there is no European Identity will see their respective nation state as their terminal community and will therefore be more sceptical of European Integration.¹¹

A second conceptualisation of identity and its role in the formation of scepticism or support of the EU originates from Van Kersbergen who argued that attachment to the nation state was actually a prerequisite for support for the European Union. In this way the European Union facilitates nation states in the provision of economic and security resources, upon which primary allegiance to the nation state depends.¹²

Other streams of the literature narrow down the identity issue even further to the notion of a perceived threat. McLaren argues that cost benefit analyses and other identity focused explanations are missing the key variable that increases Euroscepticism. The key factor is the degree of antipathy towards other cultures because of fear of, and hostility generated towards, those other cultures of the EU. It is argued that we should not simply employ a utilitarian economic cost – benefit analysis but move beyond to a more identity based study. People do not necessarily calculate the costs and benefits of their own lives when thinking about issues of integration but instead are ultimately concerned about problems related to the degradation of the nation state. In other words, the threat that other nations pose may not be so much to the individual's own life but to their own nation state.¹³ It is this perceived threat that can generate Euroscepticism. Such a hypothesis constitutes a more viable argument as the European Union has gone beyond a mere Free Trade Area to cover policies that were previously the competence of the nation state. However, it must be highlighted that McLaren's theory rests upon the precarious assumption that when individuals evaluate political institutions and their policy output they value society level needs above their own personal needs.

Building upon this body of literature, Meier-Pesti and Kirchler examine attitudes to the Euro as an indicator of attitudes to increasing integration. They distinguish between sentimental attachment to the nation state and instrumental attachment to the nation state where individuals are loyal because belonging to the nation-state provides the individuals with more benefits. Consequently they distinguish between Nationalism, a sentimental attachment to national culture, traditions and symbols, and Patriotism, instrumental attachment based upon the

¹¹ p392, Carey, 2002

¹² Quoted from p392, Carey, 2002

¹³ p554 McLaren L. M., 'Public Support for the European Union: Cost / Benefit Analysis or Perceived Cultural Threat', *The Journal of Politics*, Volume 64, No.2, May 2002, pp551-566.

nation state's political stability and economic functioning.¹⁴ Their findings suggest that nationalism obstructs identification with a supranational entity and can lead to a scepticism of initiatives such as the Euro, as a symbol of European integration.¹⁵

2.3.2 Cost-Benefit Analyses

Causes of Euroscepticism and differing levels of support for European have also been investigated from a cost-benefit perspective. This seems a natural development within political science given firstly, the EC's primary role as an economic organisation and secondly, the recognition that evaluation of economic performance at the national level has determined public support for national government¹⁶. Eichenberg and Dalton were one of the first to employ a cost-benefit analysis of public support for European Integration focusing on the forces that determine public attitudes towards Europe at the aggregate national level. They conceptualise the European Union as an international agreement that directly and indirectly distributes costs and benefits to citizens of the member countries with redistribution most explicitly occurring through the EC budget and also by liberalisation of the internal market and regional free trade.¹⁷ This was done by investigating the effects of three national economic variables of Gross Domestic Product, Unemployment rates and inflation rates. EC level economic variables were also investigated. These were levels of intra-EC exports to other member states and direct financial costs of EU membership resulting from taxes levied upon it's members through the allocation of a portion of Value Added Tax (VAT). This was measured by way of benefits minus payments, normalised as a percentage of GDP. Critically, they admit that there are many indirect economic benefits that are accrued through EU membership, but chose this one because it was a 'hard' measure and also politically salient given Margaret Thatcher's preoccupation with the issue. They concluded their investigation by stating that economic gains from trade, at both the national and EU level, provide positive feedback that reinforce support for integration. Thus Euroscepticism in this case may be seen as an inability of the EU to provide economic benefits at the national level.

Taking a more individual rationalist utilitarian approach, scholars such as Gabel and Palmer have hypothesised that citizens of the EU form attitudes towards EU membership depending upon how their individual economic interests will be served.¹⁸ Investigating whether citizens form attitudes about international

¹⁴ p688, Meier-Pesti, K. & Kirchler, E, 'Nationalism and patriotism as determinants of European identity and attitudes towards the Euro', *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 2003, pp685-700.

¹⁵ p694, , Meier-Pesti, K. & Kirchler, E, 2003.

¹⁶ See Lewis-Beck, 'Economic and Elections',

¹⁷ p510, Eichenberg & Dalton, 1993

¹⁸ p936, Gabel, M.,1998.

economic policy that reflect their own individual economic needs, Gabel and Palmer focused upon the issue in the context of public support for the EU.

Gabel then went on to reaffirm his earlier findings by investigating support for EU membership within the labour market. It was conceived that due to internal market liberalisation higher paid workers would be less supportive of the EU because of increased competition within the labour market and therefore less job security. However Gabel's investigation relies upon the assumption that, apart from matters concerned with an individual's socio-economic situation, citizens are generally uninformed and unconcerned about the EU. However, in the author's opinion, basing this assumption on one Eurobarometer year, 1993, in which 27% of the public felt well informed about the European Community but 57% were uninterested in European affairs, seems a rather risky exercise because the results of one Eurobarometer survey do not constitute overwhelming empirical evidence for such an assertion over time. Never the less Gabel affirms that attitudes towards public integration rest upon the extent to which an individual's economic situation will be affected.

Others such as Anderson and Kaltenthaler have also proclaimed the importance of economic conditions upon support for the European Union and have explained it as a causal variable; When the nation is economically successful within the European Union there are higher levels of support for EU membership. However, by examining it in conjunction with other variables they are distinguished from other cost-benefit approaches by virtue of having found out that it is only equal, at best, to two other variables; time and circumstances of a nation's entry into the Community and length of membership in the EU. They argue that countries which joined the Union the earliest had publics which were less sceptical than the publics of nations who joined at a later date. In contrast, public opinion was negatively predisposed to integration in countries that joined in the mid 1970s, thus constraining elite's aspirations to join the community earlier.¹⁹ However, in my opinion, there is evidence to suggest that this is not the case. Ireland is a member state that joined in the nineteen seventies but is one of the most pro-European countries in the European Union. Similarly Portugal can also be placed alongside Ireland as another example of a country joining later but having high levels of public support for membership. Additionally the investigation is weakened by it's time scope; at the time of writing it was not possible to analyse levels of public support in member states of the May 2004 enlargement. Some of the newest member states have the highest levels of support within the Union. Furthermore they employ a social-institutionalist perspective to argue that support for membership increases as a European socialisation process leads to greater awareness and appreciation of benefits derived from integration. Again this can be disproved by the constantly high levels of Euroscepticism in

¹⁹ p177, Anderson, C & Kaltenthaler, K, 'The Dynamics of Public Opinion toward European Integration, 1973-1993', *European Journal of International Relations*, 1996, Volume 2:2, Sage, pp175-199.

older member states such as Britain and Denmark that have, if anything, increased to record levels since 1993, the last year within the scope of their investigation.

2.3.3 Knowledge, Awareness and Cognitive Mobilisation

Ronald Inglehart has been one of the most prominent thinkers on the impact of education and communication on public support for European integration by analysing the development of 'the infrastructure of social communications'. He is in no doubt that, drawing upon the work of Karl Deutche, there is a social mobilisation occurring; new societal groups are being integrated into extensive communication networks going beyond the scope of word-mouth communication and bringing them in touch with national politics.²⁰ However, the question for Inglehart was into which sort of network are European citizens being integrated, a national or supranational one? Would social mobilisation have integrative or disintegrative consequences for the EU and cause higher/ lower levels of public support?

Inglehart believed that the rising levels of exposure to formal education and mass communication tend to favour support for integration at the European, as well as the national, level. This was due to the fact that western European countries had already embarked upon the process of 'Cognitive Mobilisation'²¹ in which individuals have an increasing ability to relate to remote roles and situations. Due to the fact that European Institutions seemed remote to the citizen, a higher degree of cognitive mobilisation would be necessary for, and lead to, support for European Institutions and Integration. However, it is necessary to realise that awareness of European Institutions might not necessarily infer support of European Institutions. Just because a citizen has knowledge of something, it does not logically follow that this citizen will believe that this something is good. Inglehart thus looked to the more highly cognitively mobilised, the highly educated, who have a greater ability to receive, absorb and analyse the process of European Integration. If integration was a negative process then we would see national leaders strongly opposed to the process, but if it were a positive process then we would see strong support for the process. Inglehart is then of the impression that European Integration has received predominantly favourable coverage in the mass media and has been strongly supported by national European leaders. It follows for him that the more highly educated will therefore not just have an opinion of European Integration but be supportive of it. In addition, post-materialist societies are more likely to favour integration because of the EU's focus upon post materialist policies such as the environment.

²⁰ P3, Inglehart, R, 'Cognitive Mobilisation and European Identity', *Comparative Politics*, Vol.3, No.1, (Oct. 1970), pp45-70

²¹ Key aspects of which include basic industrialisation, widespread literacy, mass military service and universal suffrage.

The way in which publics receive information and more specifically, the role of the media has also been debated by political scientists concerning whether it has been a reflection of public attitudes or has helped in the construction of them. Whilst political scientists have predominantly favoured the latter, Inglehart suggests that the mass media can serve as an alternative vehicle for cognitive mobilisation among groups who do not have other opportunities to expand their political horizons. He concludes that effect of media exposure seems most marked among the less educated.

However, in the study of popular Euroscepticism it is not the actual phenomenon that is under investigation. It is the public's actual perception of them. Even though a political institution may be delivering real benefits, if it is not perceived to be doing so by the populous, then it is unlikely that the political institution will warrant the support of the populous. It is therefore important to look at the ways in which the European Union is perceived. Ronald Inglehart's Cognitive Mobilisation theory posits that there is a positive relationship between the level of information given about the EU and the level of support for the EU. His conclusions though rely of course on the positive portrayal of the European Institutions by the institutions themselves, national leaders and other communication influences such as the media. However many have found that the EU have not garnered enough support due to a failure by the European institutions to communicate the project enough or in a positive enough light to the citizens of Europe.

Anderson and McLeod have found that the European Parliament has been particularly unsuccessful in handling its relationship with the media, which is of critical importance for the way in which the European publics view a crucial institution of the European Union. If publics are receiving negative or inaccurate information about the Parliament then it follows that this could be a factor in the formation of Euroscepticism.

If the parliament really is to address the democratic deficit²² then it needs to successfully connect with a sufficient number of it's electorate to make the citizens of the EU feel that they have an institution through which they can protect and promote their interests. Thus in a media dominated world of the twenty-first century this depends upon the ability of the European Parliament to convey this message to the media, who will then in turn communicate to the electorate. The utilisation of MEPs as actors than can successfully address the media should also be a crucial part of the EP's communication strategy.²³ However even if one hypothesises, as Inglehart does, that awareness of EU institutions will lead to an

²² a. The inability of National parliaments to represent effectively and adequately all of their voters' interests relating to EU issues.

b. The tendency of the council of ministers frequently to reach compromises that are more the result of inter-state *realpolitik* than of any direct representation of many of their voter's concerns.

c. And the increasingly unelected nature of the Commission.

²³ p897, Anderson, P. & Mcleod, A., 'The Great Non Communicator? The Mass Communication Deficit of the European Parliament and it's Press Directorate', JCMS, 2004, Volume 42, No.5, pp897-917

increase in support for the EU, therefore decreasing Euroscepticism, it is important to note that Euroscepticism may prevail because of the inherent difficulties associated with understanding the European Parliament. These include the complex nature of the Parliament's decision making process, the lengthy period of time which it takes to make a decision using those processes, and the fact that it lacks any single interest-focusing individual with the power of a head of government. In other words, even if this political system is understood by, for example, the British Public it would serve to remind them of its distinction from the attributes of their own national political system. Therefore the EP has an even greater task in winning firstly the interest and secondly the approval of voters throughout Europe. Anderson and McLeod's findings suggest that for the most part the European Union is ineffective in persuading the media, in problem states like Britain, (and even in traditionally pro-European states such as Germany) to run more than a small number of stories relating to its activities.²⁴ However, this is of secondary concern given that the EP managed to achieve little coverage in national media prior to the 1999 EP elections. One needs to consider the quantity of press coverage before worrying about the orientation of the coverage.

They have also found that there are major constraints upon DG Press and Information and the Press Office of the Parliament that limit the various actions²⁵ that the EP is undertaking in order to raise awareness and communicate the parliament's actions to more sceptic parts of the European electorate. Firstly the website is ineffective at communicating the present actions because of jargon, acronyms and impersonality. The local and regional press offices were found to be of little use in bringing European stories to the national political and public arenas and this was demonstrated by an investigation of the London office of the European Parliament. Although the London office was judged to have taken the EP's media image very seriously there were inadequate resources available to do much about it. Although the network of offices are allowed to tailor their press strategies according to the members states within which they operate, senior officials within DG III believe that this lack of basic co-ordination is having a negative impact upon the European Parliament's press strategy and its success. Even more damaging were the views of senior officials that it was not the regional

²⁴ p899, Anderson and Mcleod, 2004

²⁵ Adapted from Anderson and Mcleod, 2004:

The various initiative and actions are:

- Information services provided by the Europarl website, <http://europarl.europa.eu.int>
- Press briefing and statements by the Press and Information Directorate, DG III.
- Visitor programmes.
- Events organised within member states by the external offices to help increase national public awareness of the European Parliament.
- Press, PR and representational functions undertaken by MEPs and their political groupings.

office but the central Brussels office that was inefficient.²⁶ Similarly the newly established 'Rapid Response Unit', created in order to dispel potentially damaging press myths, was vastly under resourced. Thus the funding and inefficiency of the Local Press office network is vastly insufficient given the Public Relations challenge that it is confronted with and citizens are not receiving enough accurate information from them which could raise awareness and alleviate increasing Euroscepticism. The input of MEPs is also crucial in raising awareness of European Parliament activities. However, there is no formal training currently provided by the Brussels press office or by any of its regional offices. Therefore MEPs are constrained in their ability to raise awareness and increase support for the EU amongst their electorate.

Thus given the above weaknesses Anderson and McLeod find that the electorate are not receiving enough information from national media who are in turn not receiving enough information from the European Parliament because of the failings mentioned above in the Parliament press office. It is this lack of information that is causing Euroscepticism if Inglehart's cognitive mobilisation theory is accurate and if the findings of the 2004 European Commission Eurobarometer are correct.²⁷

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have reviewed prominent literature on European Public Opinion in order to identify three variables that are commonly attributed to the formation of Euroscepticism; Attachment to a national Identity, Lack of perceived economic benefits and low levels of Knowledge/Awareness of the EU.

By analysing the concept of Euroscepticism I have been able to formulate a definition that can be used throughout this paper. Defined as seeing 'a nation's membership of the EU as a bad thing', this definition can be applied in the empirical Eurobarometer investigation to determine whether the three variables identified in this chapter are actually associated with the formation of Euroscepticism.

In the next chapter I will introduce the theory of Social constructivism. I suggest that employing a social constructivist approach to a nation's membership of the EU can help us to further identify 'benefits' as a causal variable of Euroscepticism from the three variables prominent in the literature review.

²⁶ P908, Anderson & McLeod, 2004

²⁷ In the 2004 Eurobarometer Full report Summary the reaction of respondents to being given information on EU institutions is noted as:

'When people are given basic information, expressed in simple language and clearly structured, letting them know the European Union does things which concern them, it generates a lot more interest and credibility than might be believed. *In several extremely Eurosceptic countries, the presentation of these texts partially overturned a number of negative attitudes towards the EU, or at least led people to question the stereo-typical ideas they had about it.*' p12, 2004

3 Social Constructivism and Euroscepticism

3.1 Introduction

In the last chapter I used a literature review to identify the possible common causes of Euroscepticism;

1. **Identity** – If citizens do not feel any attachment to Europe and are only attached to their national identity, they will be more sceptical of European Integration.
2. **Perceptions of Benefits** – If citizens feel that either they or their nation will benefit from European Integration and it's associated initiatives such as the Single Market Program, support for European Integration will be stronger.
3. **Knowledge and Awareness** – If citizens are more knowledgeable about the European Union and have a greater and clearer understanding of the aims of the European Union, they are less likely to be sceptical of European Integration.

In this section I develop a hypothesis from a Social Constructivist analysis of national membership of the EU to predict that 'benefits' is a variable from the above list that is consistently associated with levels of Euroscepticism. It is believed that by employing a social constructivist approach to the memberships of different nations within the EU, Social Constructivism can offer an *alternative method to identify* 'benefits' as the most likely cause of Euroscepticism and in so doing can offer an explanation as to *why* citizens have come to perceive 'benefits' as the most important factor when formulating attitudes to the European Union. This is done by looking at social constructivist concepts such as *socialisation and persuasion* and *policy entrepreneurs* that are prevalent in integration discourse. I conclude that membership of the EU, publicity, speech acts of leaders and Integration discourse has focused the public attention on the 'benefits' of membership. This therefore helps us to formulate the following hypothesis that can be tested in the proceeding empirical investigation:

Euroscepticism is dependent upon perception of benefits in member states.

I start by introducing the theory of social Constructivism and then follow this introduction by situating the theory in contemporary debate.

3.2 Situating Social Constructivism

In 1999 there appeared a special issue of the Journal of European Public Policy dedicated to the theory of Constructivism and more importantly, dedicated to Constructivism as a theory of European Integration. Such an arrival was an indicator of a broader research programme that effectively cast the dominance of the positivist neo-neo debate into doubt. Social Constructivism in European politics had almost become a form of spillover from the restrictive nature of the Neofunctional – Liberal Intergovernmentalist debate and sought to challenge the rationalist nature of these approaches. Risse admits that Social Constructivism is not a grand theory proclaiming any fundamental truth claims about the fundamental nature of European Integration²⁸. However constructivist scholars such as Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener believe that it could both broaden and deepen our understanding of European Integration by constituting an approach that forms a bridge and takes inspiration from both rationalism and reflectivism therefore avoiding the weaknesses commonly associated with each epistemology;

In the past, rationalist approaches have been criticised for their focus on actors as calculating machines with preferences as a given. In addition they have been subject to one vital contradiction as exposed by Kratochwil and Ruggie in 1986. They argued that ‘unless the constructed nature of norms was theoretically addressed then regime analysis would continuously face the problem of contradiction between (positivist) epistemology and a social ontology (norms)²⁹. In other words, we know what regimes are by their principles and understanding and are therefore subject to intersubjective forces. However, analyses of such regimes are almost always positivist and focus on objective forces that move actors. It was impossible to analyse regimes by assuming actor’s interests as given when regimes necessarily entailed a convergence of norms, principles, rules and decisions.

However, Scholars such as Moravcsik have attacked Constructivism claiming that the theory does not increase our understanding of European integration. Primarily this results from a characteristic unwillingness of constructivists to place their claims at any real risk of empirical deconfirmation and he accordingly declared that hardly a single claim of constructivists had been formulated in such a way that it could, even in principle, be declared empirically invalid³⁰. For example in Marcussen *et al* it was claimed that social Constructivism claims that policies regarding Europe are only subject to change by party elites at ‘critical

²⁸ p160, Risse, T ‘Social Constructivism and European Integration’ in Wiener, A, & Diez, T, ‘European Integration Theory’, 2004, Oxford University Press, Oxford

²⁹ p533, Christiansen, T, Jorgensen, K, E, and Wiener A, ‘The Social Construction of Europe’, Journal of European Public Policy, 6:4, 1999, pp528-44

³⁰ p670, Moravcsik, A, ‘Is something rotten in the state of Denmark? Constructivism and European Integration’, Journal of European Public Policy, 6:4, 1999, pp669-681

junctures', or times at which a political event or crisis has led to a questioning of identity and national policy³¹. However Moravcsik argued that for such a claim to be academically rigorous it would require an identification of causal mechanisms that would help explain *which* political crises lead to a change in *which* ideas and discourses under *which* circumstances.

Though scholars such as Keohane have recognised that Constructivism occupies the 'Middle ground' this is in fact contested primarily for two reasons by others such as Smith. Firstly sociological Constructivism, as determined by Alexander Wendt, shares assumptions with rationalist approaches and secondly because Sociological Constructivism comes in so many guises that they occupy a variety of positions in relations to rationalist and post-positivist theories³². In my social constructivist analysis of Euroscepticism I do not make any claims as to the position of social Constructivism in the rationalist-constructivist debate. I claim that it is merely a complimentary tool which can help to provide a secondary method to identify which of the three variables is most likely to be associated with Euroscepticism.

3.3 Applying Social Constructivism to Euroscepticism

As stated in the introduction, I suggest that by using a social constructivist approach and its concepts, the theory can help to identify that 'perception of benefits' is the variable that will be most causal in the formation of Euroscepticism. In short, we will see from the Eurobarometer investigation that there will be a stronger correlation between 'perception of benefits' and 'Euroscepticism' than any of the other variables identified in Chapter two.

Such a claim is, without doubt, controversial for the following reason. Cost-benefit analyses are undisputedly the sole domain of positivist research and the reader would be justified in asking just how a theory that makes no claim on the interests of actors can help to identify the interests of actors as the pursuit of benefits.

I make no claims as to whether individuals are utility maximising rational choice actors with fixed preferences. I simply suggest that Social constructivist concepts unearth a strong focus on 'benefits' in integration and EU membership discourse. If individual's interests are constituted by their social world, as social Constructivism claims, then we should see that citizens hold 'benefits' as the most important factor by which they assess their countries membership of the EU. I merely suggest that social Constructivism would *also* identify 'benefits' as a

³¹ p616, Marcussen *et al*, 'Constructing Europe? The evolution of French, British and German nation state identities', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 6:4, 1999, pp614-633

³² p683-684, Smith, S, 'Social Constructivisms and European Studies: A Reflectivist Critique', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 6:4, 1999, pp682-691.

causal variable. Though this occurs by a different method to Rational Choice theory, it can therefore increase our chances of developing an accurate hypothesis which claims ‘perception of benefits’ is the most important factor in the formation of Euroscepticism.

Finally I seek to answer Moravcsik’s claims that Social Constructivists do not provide enough empirical evidence by highlighting some empirical examples from the history of EU integration, that relate to the Social Construction of benefits, and in the next chapter by testing this analysis with an empirical Eurobarometer investigation.

3.4 The Social Construction of Benefits

A social Constructivist approach to European Integration does not seek to ignore or invalidate the rationalist search for ‘member state preferences’ but that it should address the wider question of how state preferences have come to be socially constructed. In this investigation it is how citizen’s preferences and focus upon benefits have come to be constructed as an important factor when a citizen assesses whether their nation’s membership of the EU is a good or a bad thing.³³ By examining forces within the social world that individuals inhabit we can see ‘benefits’ is a concept that has become part of the very ontology of the European Union through it’s social construction within the last fifty years. The ontology of the European Union has come to be constructed as a ‘benefit giver’. The project has essentially been continuously marketed to both its current and future citizens as a tool by which nations can deliver benefits to their citizens. The European Union has not been constructed as a community that can deliver a common European identity to the continent, neither has membership been sold to a nation as a means to raise welfare in other existing member states. European Union membership has been wholly marketed to national citizens as a community that can deliver benefits to their own nation, be it in terms of peace, economics, or environmental protection policy. Thus citizens are occupied with what the European Union can do for them: ‘Ask not what I can do for Europe, but what Europe can do for me’. For European citizens there is a focus on tangible benefits, and it is these benefits that have come to be the dominant means by which citizens can assess whether their nation’s membership of the EU is a good thing, or a bad thing, whether they are Eurosceptic or a Europhile. Thus when benefits, through policy output, economic gains or of another nature are contested then Euroscepticism is more prevalent. The European Union discourse has given national citizens an understanding of their interests. By continuously advocating a discourse of ‘benefits’ the European Union has constituted national and individual interests in the European Union as the pursuit of potential benefits. The European

³³ p12, Christiansen ‘The Social Construction of Europe’, 2001, Sage, London

Union discourse has focused upon the delivery of benefits and now the only discourse that European individuals are aware of when it comes to European integration is of benefit delivery. As a result, it becomes the most influential factor in the formation of a citizen's support for his nation's membership of the European Union.

In order to explain why Euroscepticism is dependent upon perceived benefits from a Social Constructivist perspective we must look at three points, predominantly stemming from the work of Jeffrey Checkel. Firstly, that these member states have been open to new ideas and constructs. Secondly, that in these points at which citizens were open to persuasion there were a variety of policy entrepreneurs. Thirdly, that the discourse of these policy entrepreneurs helped to construct the European Union to citizens as an institution whose primary goal was to deliver benefits to member states. Such concepts are applied to four countries that are central to this paper; Britain, Denmark, Ireland and Portugal.

3.4.1 Socialisation and Persuasion

When examining why actors have certain preferences, Social Constructivists concentrate on learning and socialisation processes. Social learning processes are processes by which actors, by interacting within broader institutional contexts acquire new interests and preferences, in the absence of material incentives.³⁴ Thus social constructivists would look to these processes in order to explain European citizen's focus on benefits in the formation of Euroscepticism. Constructivists such as Checkel claim that 'Social learning involves a process whereby actors, through interaction with broader institutional contexts (norms or discursive structures), acquire new interests and preferences. Checkel identifies three instances where social learning is more likely to occur:

- Where agents are in a novel and uncertain environment and thus cognitively motivated to analyse new information.
- When the persuader is an authoritative member of the in-group to which the persuadee belongs or wants to belong.
- When the agent has few prior, ingrained beliefs that are inconsistent with the persuader's message.³⁵

The four case study countries all show instances just before membership in which they seem to be subject to the first of Checkel's criteria that would suggest national citizens were more open to policy persuasion from their leaders. Britain had economically found itself in a novel environment, the first of Checkel's

³⁴ p548, Checkel, J, T, 'Social Construction and Integration', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 6:4, 1999, pp546-560

³⁵ p550, Checkel, 1999

criteria, faced with a slowing economy itself and a booming economy in continental Europe during the late 1950s and early 60s. This also presented a novel situation for Ireland and Denmark, who for the first time were faced with the loss of their principal market. Additionally we can see that Portugal found itself in a radically new environment in April 1974 after the ousting of its right-wing dictatorship 'Estado Novo'. Thus according to Checkel the preferences of Portuguese citizens would have been more open to persuasion from Brussels. So we see that firstly European citizens are, according to Checkel, more open to persuasion on new ideas. But how did ideas of EU membership come to be constructed around benefits? We must now look to the social constructivist concept of policy entrepreneurs.

3.4.2 Policy entrepreneurs and the construction of Europe

The roles of policy entrepreneurs have persuaded the citizens of Europe to turn their attention from the state as the 'benefit deliverer' to Europe. The whole history of European integration is littered with policy entrepreneurs that have helped to shift the emphasis. Monnet, Schuman and De Gaulle's efforts to highlight the benefits of European Integration to their national citizens constitute forms of persuasion by policy entrepreneurs and have helped to diffuse ideas to the citizens. As a result European citizens now look to Europe to deliver benefits and, as a result, perceive Europe purely as a 'benefit deliverer'. This has been possible because the citizens of Britain, Denmark Ireland and Portugal have been open to persuasion from these policy entrepreneurs in order to learn about new alternatives.

Britain's entry into the European Union was based upon the 'benefits of being in Europe'; Originally in Britain, the nation state was the agent that would deliver benefits to the people. For example Britain rejected the ECSC when an invitation to join the negotiations was extended in 1950. In 1950 nationalisation of the British coal and Steel industries had only just been completed. The public ownership of the coal and steel industries had been the most important plank of labour party policy since the party's foundation: a labour government that had finally brought that policy to fruition was not going to give up what it had gained by handing over these two key industries to international regulation.³⁶ There was also a realisation that while the late 1950s and early 1960s were boom years in Britain, growth was even healthier elsewhere. There was a sense of failure in the UK economy when, in comparison, EEC members had almost doubled their standard of living in a ten year period.³⁷ Five points indicated why Britain would turn to Europe in 1964 under Wilson's Labour Party and Europe would be

³⁶ p17 Pilkington, C, 'Britain in the European Union today', , 1995, Manchester university Press, Manchester

³⁷ p23, Pilkington, 1995

constructed as a benefit provider: Trade with the commonwealth was rapidly declining as former colonies went their own way economically; The economies of the EEC were booming whilst Britain's growth was weak; Britain-EEC trade was weak because of exclusion from the single market.; and the 'special relationship' with the US was damaged by American involvement in Vietnam.³⁸

The application of Denmark, in connection to Britain was also focused on 'perceived benefits' as it was faced with the loss of Britain as the principal market for its bacon and dairy products.³⁹

For Ireland, EU membership was constructed around the delivery of tangible benefits. Firstly it offered a chance to break away from External Economic relations that were dominated by a dependence upon Britain. In fact the Irish department of Finance sent all its files on external economic relations with Britain to the basement. The focus of attention changed to a new multi-lateral world where Ireland was legally and de facto equal to all other member states.⁴⁰ Secondly there was great expectation that access to the single market would deliver real benefits to Ireland. In fact, the Single Market and the benefits it would bring were 'were more important than any other economic feature of EU membership'.⁴¹ Thirdly the EU Structural Fund process has caught the public imagination as a manifestation of the positive effects of EU membership.⁴² Ireland has benefited from the Social and Regional Funds since the mid 1970s and these were increased with the completion of the Single Market and then again with the Treaty of Maastricht. We can therefore see how further European Integration and Irish membership of the EU has become synonymous with the delivery of tangible benefits manifested in the form of economic aid.

There is no doubt that Portuguese membership has also been focused around the benefits of membership, especially concerning the economy. When Portugal joined the European Union in 1986, its GDP per capita was 53% of the EU average. By 2002 it had risen to 75% of the EU average. Baer and Leite also point to other economic benefits which include, the labour market restructuring, increases in industrial productivity and an increase in imports and exports.⁴³ Additionally, like Ireland, Portugal has been a recipient of structural funds, totalling over 3% of Portugal's GDP in the 1990s.

In fact the construction of European Union 'benefits' and their unquestionable prominence in the European social environment has been evident from the very conception of the ECSC. In 1952, twenty years before Britain's entry to the EU, the process of benefit marketing had already begun with the very founding of the EU. From the very start the rationale of Jean Monnet's European

³⁸ p28, Pilkington, 1995

³⁹ p24, Pilkington, 1995

⁴⁰ p6, Fitz Gerald, J, 'The Irish Economic Boom', Les Etudes du CERI, No 56, November 1999

⁴¹ p7 Fitz Gerald, 1999

⁴² p8, Fitz Gerald, 1999

⁴³ p740, Baer, W, Leite, A.N. 'The economy of Portugal within the European Union: 1990 – 2002', The Quarterly review of economics and finance', 43 (2003), pp738-754,

Coal and Steel community had been to reduce France and Germany's war making capability by placing the raw materials necessary for war in the hands of a supranational authority. Even though the aversion of war might have been the primary rationale for such a project, he realised that if the ECSC was to succeed he would need to advocate the economic benefits. Integration through tangible economic benefits became Monnet's rationale, convinced that economic integration was the only means by which conflict in Europe could be avoided.⁴⁴ Such economic benefits were more marketable in lieu of the destruction of the Second World War, the most costly conflict in modern history. The project's benefits were also promoted in terms of the peace that it would deliver to the continent, at the time far more salient than integration, given the recent destruction of the two recent world wars. De Gaulle equally viewed the EC with the same benefit-centred approach. De Gaulle's rationale acts as an example of European leaders in the benefits they saw in European Integration. 'International competition (of the EC)...offered a lever to stimulate our business sector, to force it to increase productivity, hence my decision to promote the common market'. De Gaulle also saw the benefits that could come from a common European agricultural policy. 'The proposed common agricultural policy would provide an EC wide outlet for French produce, guarantee high agricultural prices regardless of low prices on the world market and subsidise the export of surplus produce'⁴⁵. As a result he pedalled the EU as a benefit provider to both the general population and the agricultural community.

3.4.3 The Role of language

Finally, for Social Constructivists such as Diez, these policy entrepreneurs and the processes of socialisation and persuasion have been aided by the constitutive power of language. Language plays a pivotal role in the construction of identity, ontology and preferences because, according to Diez, it can never be purely descriptive, constative and independent but plays a part in the construction of identity and preferences. Diez places an emphasis on 'speech acts that have biased our understanding of phenomena and influenced our understanding of certain issues'. So much so, that 'the whole history of European Integration can be understood as a history of speech acts establishing a system of governance'.⁴⁶ Originally, Austin pointed out the 'illocutionary force' of language claiming that 'what we say may have an effect on other people; by saying something, we may not only act ourselves, but also force others to do so'.⁴⁷ Thus by looking at speech acts and communication we can see how the various actors may have influenced

⁴⁴ p11, Dinan, D., 'Ever Closer Union: An introduction to European Integration', 1994, Palgrave Hampshire.

⁴⁵ p41, Dinan, 1994

⁴⁶ p601, Diez, T 'Speaking Europe: The Politics of Integration Discourse', Journal of European Public Policy, 6:4, 1999, pp598-613.

⁴⁷ p600, Diez, 1999

European citizens and focused their attention on ‘benefits’ when judging whether EU membership is a ‘good thing’ or a ‘bad thing’. In effect the language of the policy entrepreneurs and European institutions, through socialisation and persuasion mentioned above, has come to construct the EU as an institution primarily for the delivery of benefits.

If such a constructivist perspective is correct we would expect that leader’s speech acts have shaped the perceptions of national and European citizens. For the purpose of this paper we would see speech acts of institutions and leaders that focus on a cost-benefit analysis of EU membership to force others to think in the same way. Perhaps the most infamous example of such a speech act relevant to this discussion was that of Margaret Thatcher who, from June 1979 to 1984, filled the British Domestic media and European political arena with claims of ‘I want my money back’ as she sought to retrieve some of Britain’s net payments back from the EC. Britain’s net payments to the EC had been perceived to be too much, amounting to 369 million in 1977, 822 million in 1978m and 947 million in 1979.⁴⁸ Twenty five years later in Britain Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, is still focusing the public’s attention on the ‘benefits’ of EU membership, making speeches and claiming that the ‘Benefits of Britain’s EU membership are not just economic’, listing the alternative benefits of ‘better environmental policy, and the confrontation of illegal migration and organised crime’.⁴⁹ Even the European Constitution, which is advocated by some as more of a tool for shaping a common European Identity⁵⁰, is sold to citizens in terms of tangibles benefits. Romani Prodi listed ‘Democracy, accountability and transparency’ when trying to sell the ‘long-term benefits of an EU constitution’.⁵¹

3.5 Conclusion

From this chapter we have seen how a social constructivist approach to EU membership has enabled us to make a complimentary and alternative identification of ‘perception of benefits’ as a causal variable of Euroscepticism. If policy entrepreneurs and their language have constructed ‘benefits’ as the central issue of a nation’s membership of the EU, then we should see a strong correlation between support for EU membership and ‘perception of benefits’ in the Eurobarometer investigation.

⁴⁸ p89, Dinan, *Ever Closer Union*, 1994, Palgrave, Hampshire

⁴⁹ Speech by Rt Hon Jack Straw MP, Foreign Policy Centre, 31st March, 2005.

⁵⁰ See Habermas, J ‘Why Europe Needs a Constitution’ (Oct 2001) *New Left Review*, Vol 11

⁵¹ Speech by Romana Prodi, then President of the EU Commission, ‘The Irish Presidency’s Achievements, Irish Presidency’s Report on the European Council of 17th and 18th July 2004, European Parliament’, <http://www.europaworld.org/IGCAWAR/23/speechprodi21072004.htm>

4 Testing the Social Constructivist Hypothesis

4.1 Introduction

As we have seen from the social constructivist analysis of EU membership I have identified ‘Perception of Benefits’ as the most important factor when a citizen judges whether or not his or her nation’s membership of the EU is viewed by that citizen as a ‘good thing’ or a ‘bad thing’, whether a citizen is a Eurosceptic or a Europhile. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Euroscepticism is dependent upon perception of benefits in member states.

I now wish to test this claim in order to see whether this hypothesis is correct, and whether Social Constructivism has been a useful tool in selecting a causal variable in the formation of Euroscepticism. In the following section I carry out an empirical investigation in order to judge whether there is a strong correlation between Euroscepticism and perceived benefits in order to verify my hypothesis. I also include other variables that represent levels of identity, and knowledge/awareness. This will enable me to compare my hypothesis against those of other theories of Public opinion presented at the beginning of the paper.

This chapter comprises of an explanation of the methodology, limitations of the methodology, and discussion of results. In conclusion, section 4.4 presents a summary of results. The results show that there is a strong correlation between Euroscepticism and Perception of Benefits in Portugal, followed closely by Ireland and Denmark. However Britain shows little to no evidence of a correlation between any variables. Therefore my Hypothesis will not be validated but will highlight the need for a revised discussion of Euroscepticism’s causal variables and greater statistical analysis.

4.2 Methodology

Eurobarometer is the Public Opinion analysis office of the European Commission and has been operating since 1973. It has carried out surveys and

studies on major European topics such as enlargement and the Euro in order to give the European Commission a greater understanding when preparing texts, making decision and evaluating the Commission's own work.⁵² By obtaining results from Eurobarometer nos. 29 to 61 on European citizen's perception of the European union and their perception of Benefits, identity and awareness of the Union, we can compare these variables over time. By looking at the variables over time I avoid the risk of basing an analysis and resultant conclusion on an erratic year. It was necessary to choose variables in the Eurobarometer surveys that, although not exactly worded as such, could represent the variables of Identity, knowledge and benefits. For example there is no division between different types of benefits and a citizen's perception of them. Instead Eurobarometer refers simply to 'perception of benefits'.

The results will be collected from four different countries. This is primarily to avoid the risk of basing results upon a country which may be an anomaly compared to other member states. Secondly, I have analysed these countries within the social constructivist discussion and therefore need to know whether their perception of membership is associated with benefits in order to validate my hypothesis. Furthermore, I have deliberately chosen two of the most widely acknowledged Eurosceptic countries, Denmark and Britain and also two of the most pro-European countries, Ireland and Portugal in order to collate the greatest variety of results. All results were collected from Eurobarometer using the Eurobarometer Interactive Search system.⁵³

4.2.1 Dependent Variable

Euroscepticism is the dependent variable. For the purpose of this investigation, I previously defined Euroscepticism as a citizen whose view of his/her nation's membership of the EU is seen as 'a bad thing'. Therefore the variable of Euroscepticism is represented in the Eurobarometer surveys as '% of respondents who see their country's membership as a 'bad thing''

4.2.2 Independent Variables

Perception of Benefits – This variable is investigated because our social constructivist analysis has identified it as a causal variable in the formation of public support for the EU. We would therefore expect to see a correlation between Euroscepticism and perception of benefits in all of the case study countries. 'Perception of benefits' is represented in the Eurobarometer results by '% of people who believe their country has not benefited from European Union

⁵² See http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion

⁵³ http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/cf/index_en.cfm

membership'.⁵⁴ By looking at the percentage of respondents who believe that their country has not benefited and comparing it to levels of support for European Integration we can see whether 'benefits' constitutes an accurate explanation for varying degrees of support for the European Union. However it must be noted that this variable taken from Eurobarometer does not indicate what exactly constitutes a 'benefit'. It may be that the citizen feels that the 'benefit' to their nation has been non-economic such as a greater voice in the international arena or a particularly beneficial policy. Though these results may not constitute an accurate representation of economic benefits, they have merit by allowing us to determine a variable in the formation of support for European membership that is associated with benefits and distinguished from either identity or knowledge and awareness.

Identity – This is a variable that Carey, McLaren and Meier-Pesti, amongst others, have found to affect levels of public support for European Integration. It is represented in this investigation as '% of respondents who feel that they will only be their own nationality in the near future' when asked the question 'In the next five years do you see yourself as...?' By looking at this variable we can observe the number of citizens who feel that their identity is only, and will only be, associated with their own nation state in the near future. By declaring this we know that in the near future they will not feel at all European. If this was not the case they would have answered with one of the other three responses that indicate a greater sense of feeling European.⁵⁵

Level of Knowledge and awareness – According to Inglehart et al, as the level of knowledge increases and further cognitive mobilisation occurs, support for European Integration should increase. For the sake of this investigation we will look at the Public's awareness of the European Parliament (see below – Limitations of the Empirical Investigation), which indicates whether respondees have heard of the European Parliament.⁵⁶

4.2.3 Limitations of the Empirical Investigation

This investigation is looking for a relationship between the public's perception of the EU and one of the three pre-identified variables; perception of benefits. I concede that there are two weaknesses of this investigation. Firstly that my chosen Eurobarometer variables are not exact representations of variables in the

⁵⁴ This answer is a response to 'Would you say that (your country) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Community? Other answers available to the respondent were 'Don't know' or 'have benefited'.

⁵⁵ These were; A. feel nationality (and European), B. European (and nationality) C. European Only

⁵⁶ When asked the question 'Have you recently seen or heard in the papers, or in the radio or TV, anything about the European Parliament, that is the parliamentary assembly of the European Community?'

literature.. Secondly, that the relationship is determined by visual representation and without statistical proof, i.e. without the use of a *Correlation Coefficient*.

With regards to the first case, the Eurobarometer variables have been chosen because they are questions that most closely represent the variables as identified by past research. I stress that this investigation is not an attempt to recreate their experiments using limited Eurobarometer data in order to test the validity of their hypotheses. It is more a comparative attempt to allow me to identify a variable with which there seems to be a stronger relationship with Euroscepticism. Therefore Eurobarometer questions that merely represent the variables of Identity, perception of benefits and knowledge will suffice.

‘Knowledge and awareness’ of the EU should be answered by investigating respondees overall knowledge of the EU. However there is no comparative question carried out by Eurobarometer that tests a respondent’s knowledge of the European Union as a whole. Even if we combine questions about an individual’s knowledge of individual institutions we are constrained by a lack of results over a considerable time span that would allow for an accurate comparison over time. However such yearly data does exist for the European Parliament. In order to test if a greater level of knowledge for the European Union results in greater support for the European Union we must therefore narrow our focus to awareness of the European Parliament. Thus, in this case, our dependent variable becomes ‘perception of the European Parliament as unfavourable’. I concede that knowledge of the other institutions in the EU may also influence public opinion. For example the Commission, the European Court of Justice and indeed the Council. However, as we are investigating low levels of Public support for the EU and knowing that it is the only truly democratic institution of the EU, elected by universal suffrage, we must presume that the EP garners the most public support. Awareness of the EP and it’s influence on Public Opinion is therefore seen as a ‘best-case scenario’.

Because of the possibilities offered by Eurobarometer, ‘perception of economic benefits’ as identified in the literature has to be modified to ‘perception of benefits’. This is because it does not offer the respondees a question which investigates their perceptions of the types of benefits. However, as mentioned above, this is not critical as it still allows me to investigate the relationship between Euroscepticism and benefits, as a general concept and as opposed to identity and Knowledge levels.

The second weakness of such a study is more statistical in that there is no employment of a *Correlation Coefficient*. Manheim and Rich point out that this is a valuable tool that allows us to summarise the strength and direction of a relationship.⁵⁷ However, it is hoped that any trends will be evident from a graphic representation.

⁵⁷ Maheim, J, B and Rich, R.C ‘Empirical Political Analysis: Research methods in political science’, 1995, Longman, New York.

Lastly the Eurobarometer results are not available for as many years as would have been desired. Results for all four variables (perception of membership, perception of identity, perception of benefits, and awareness of the European Parliament) are only available from 1992 to 2001 excluding the years 1995 and 1996. However it is necessary to work with the data that we have available. Therefore it is hoped that results from 1992 to 2001 will show any trends accurately and clearly.

4.3 Discussion of Results

4.3.1 Portugal

When we analyse trends from the Portuguese results we see that Portugal provides the starkest evidence for a positive correlation between perception of benefits and Euroscepticism. Fig 4.1 shows that from 1992 to 1994 both the percentage of the respondents believing that Portugal had not benefited from EU membership rose as did the perception of Portuguese membership as a bad thing. Similarly over a period of 5 years from 1994 to 1995 both the percentage of people who believed that Portugal had not benefited from membership fell as did levels of scepticism. The almost perfect correlation between Euroscepticism and perception of benefits is shown in more detail in Fig 7.4.2 in the appendices.

There is no visible correlation between the citizen's views of membership and the other variables such as view of identity and awareness of the European Parliament. Levels of those who see their identity as Portuguese only and the percentage of people who are unaware of the European Parliament fluctuate in different directions and by different aggregate levels than Euroscepticism.

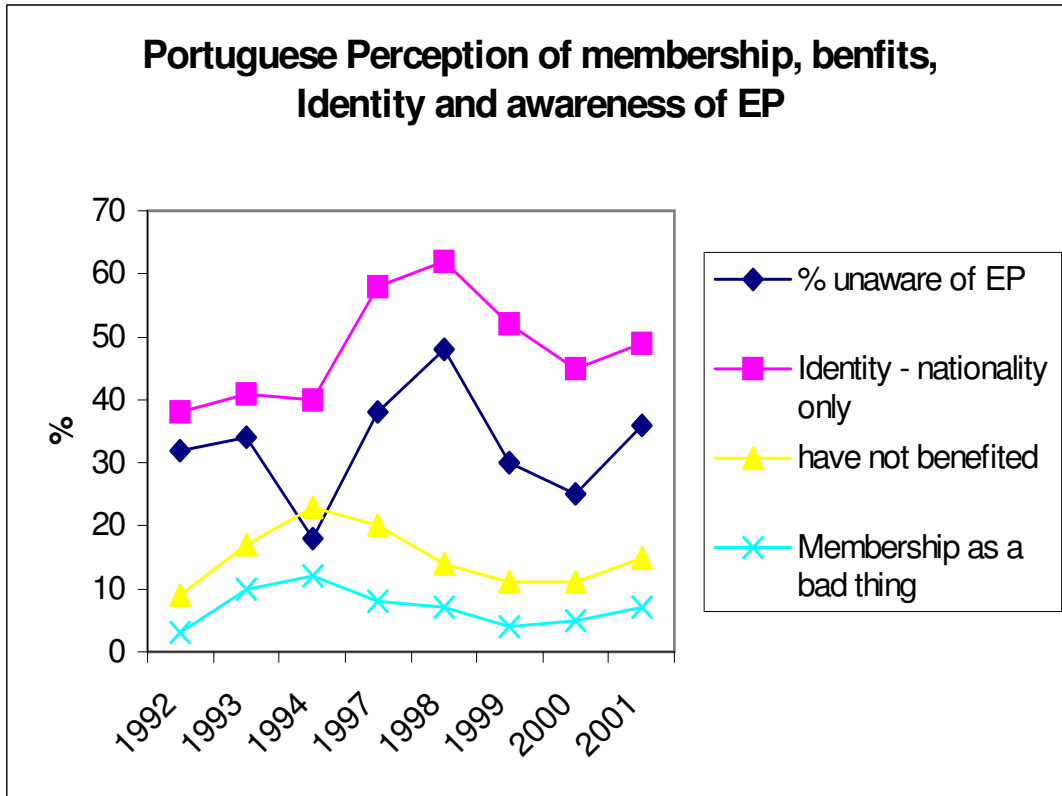


Fig 4.1 Graph showing Portuguese respondents perception on membership, benefits, identity and awareness of parliament over time, 1992-2001.

4.3.2 Ireland

Ireland also provides evidence of similar trends that show Euroscepticism is related to perception of benefits though the trends demonstrated upon the graph are not as markedly clear.

Fig 7.3.2 shows that from 1997 Euroscepticism and perception of benefits converge and from that year on the trend lines follow a similar pattern over time. However from 1992-1993 the number of people who believed that Ireland had not benefited from EU membership was falling, but Euroscepticism was actually increasing.

The other variables of Identity and awareness of the European Parliament show little similarity to Euroscepticism in either aggregate levels or change in those levels over time, as shown by figure 4.2.

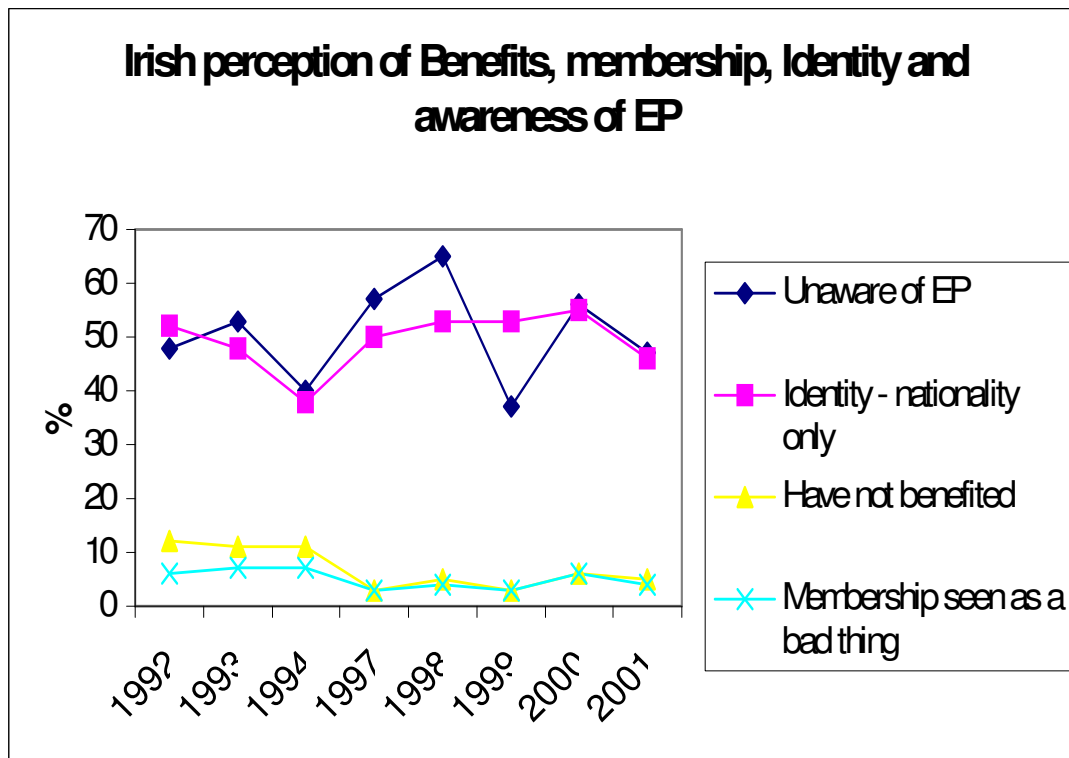


Fig 4.2 Graph showing Irish perception of Membership, benefits, Identity and awareness of the European Parliament over time, 1992-2001.

4.3.3 Denmark

Denmark also shows a slight relationship between perception of membership and perception of benefits, although again not as markedly clear as Portugal and Ireland. In addition aggregate levels of the percentage of respondees who are Eurosceptic and those who believe their nation has not benefited from membership are very similar. Figure 7.2.2 in the appendices shows that there are times when Euroscepticism is increasing and the number of people who believe Denmark has not benefited is also increasing, for example from 1997 to 1998. However there are also times when the levels of Euroscepticism and perception of benefits are moving in opposite directions which is the contrary of what I have predicted, for example from 1992 to 1993 and from 1999 to 2000.

By observing the changes in the levels of those who see themselves as 'nationality only' and those who are 'unaware of the European parliament' in figure 4.3, the reader can see that there is no similarity between these the ways in which these variables change over time compared to levels of Euroscepticism.

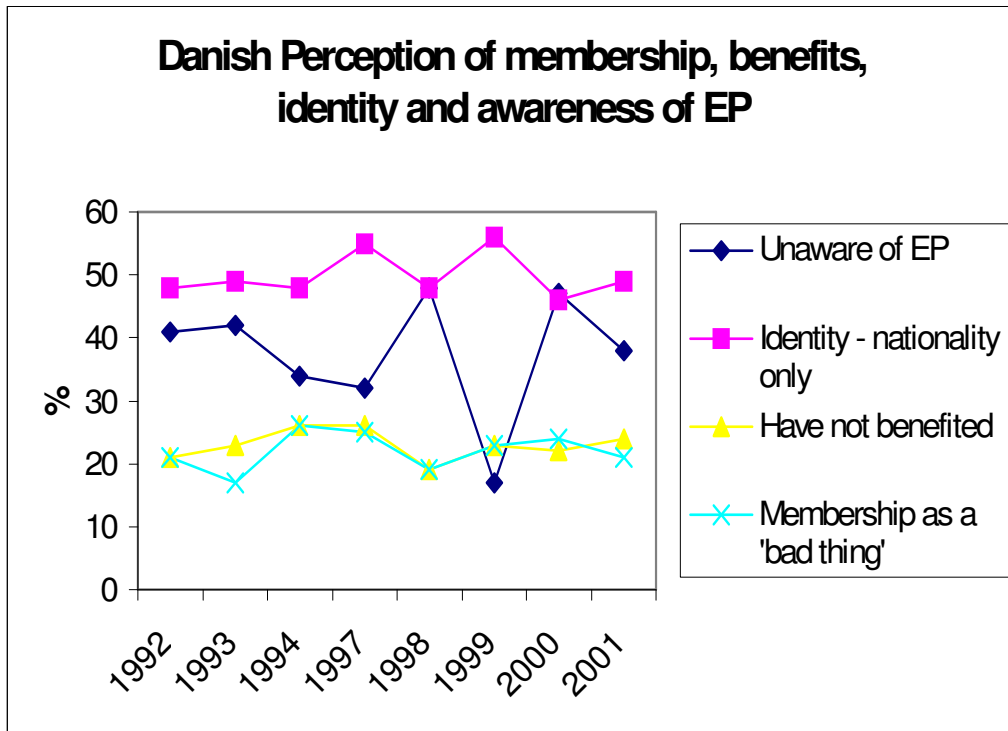


Fig 4.3 Danish Perception of membership, benefits, Identity and awareness of the European Parliament over time, 1992-2004.

4.3.4 Britain

Figure 4.4 shows that Britain demonstrates virtually no correlation between perception of membership and any other variable. If we analyse perception of Benefits and membership in more detail, as shown in Figure 7.1.2 we can also see with more certainty that there is also no further evidence of a relationship.

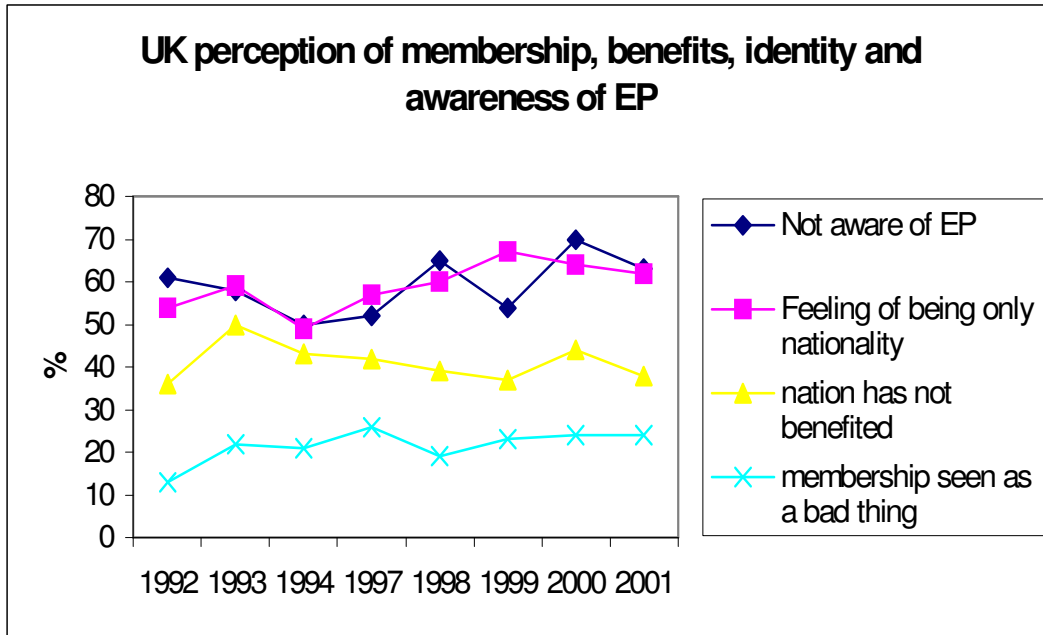


Fig. 4.4 Graph showing British perception of membership, benefits from EU membership, Identity and Awareness of the European Parliament, 1992-2001.

4.4 Summary of results

From the simple empirical investigation that has been carried out I have falsified my hypothesis that was developed from both an analysis of presurveyed literature and a social constructivist analysis of national memberships in the EU. Whilst I predicted that in all of the member states analysed, there would be a causal relationship between perception of benefits and Euroscepticism, I can only be certain that the following finding applies:

Euroscepticism is dependent upon citizen Perception of benefits in Portugal.

Such a correlation may exist in Ireland and Denmark as well, yet figures are too low for us to say with any certainty. Britain certainly displays no evidence of a direct relationship between perception of Membership and perception of benefits. Thus the representation of the benefit-Euroscepticism relationship in Figure 4.5 can only be said to apply to Portugal.

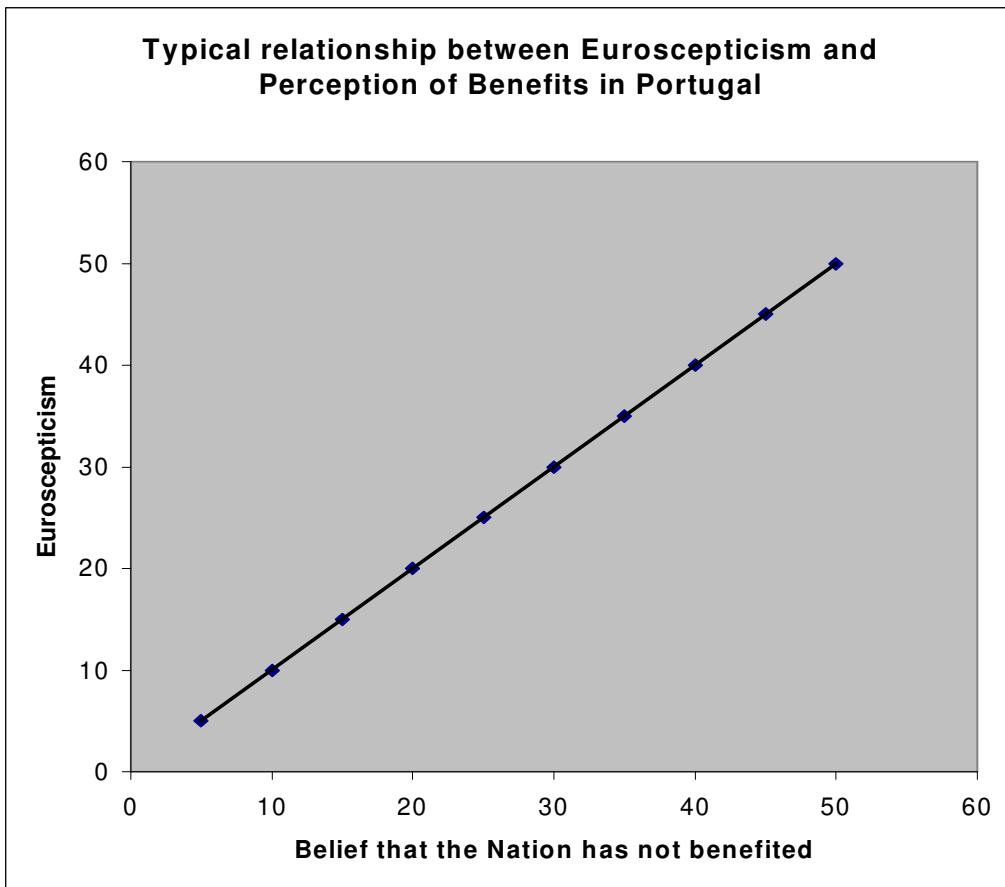


Fig 4.5 – Figure showing the typical relationship between Euroscepticism and a citizen’s perception that his/her nation has not benefited from membership of the EU.

We must also address the claims of the other theories of Public Opinion reviewed in Chapter two. Scholars such as Carey claimed that opposition to the EU should rise as levels of attachment to a citizens own nationality rise. None of the countries in this investigation displayed evidence of such a relationship. Similarly scholars such as Inglehart, and findings from the 2004 Eurobarometer Full Report, predicted that as levels of awareness and knowledge of the EU increased then levels of Euroscepticism would decrease. Although such a theory could only be tested by analysing awareness of the European Parliament in this investigation no evidence of such a relationship was found in Britain, Denmark, Ireland or Portugal.

5 Analysis and Conclusions

There are two points arising from both the social constructivist prediction and the Eurobarometer investigation that need to be analysed to conclude the paper. Firstly, the Social Constructivist approach failed to predict the findings of the Eurobarometer investigation. Secondly the Eurobarometer investigation revealed almost no clear cause of Euroscepticism present in three of the four case studies, even though previous investigations reviewed in Chapter one clearly found empirical evidence to support their theories.

5.1 Criticisms of Social Constructivism

The social constructivist approach to identifying a cause of Euroscepticism may have had serious weaknesses;

Simply because Social constructivists hold the view that there is a possibility the preferences of national citizens may be more open to persuasion by policy entrepreneurs, there is no way to verify that persuasion from national leaders would definitely result in the formation of a benefit centred view of the European Community. Even if the investigation had revealed a benefit centred view, there is simply no way to prove its origin had been constructed. Their origins cannot be distinguished from the methodological individualist/ rationalist account whereby agents acquire new information, alter strategies and then pursue given, fixed interests.⁵⁸

Checkel also claims that social leaning occurs through interaction with an institution. If a social construction of Europe as a 'benefit provider' could be reasoned it would infer that there is actually a sufficient amount of interaction with the institutions of the EU and or information from the media about the institutions. But how much interaction do the citizens actually have with the European Union? We have seen from the work of others, such as Anderson and McLeod, the European Institutions are failing to communicate adequately with citizens. This is especially true when in Ireland, where over half of the population had not even heard of the European Parliament in the year 2000. Thus we ask is there really any form of interaction at all through which the preferences of citizens can be focused on benefits.

⁵⁸ p548, Checkel

Social Constructivism's explanation of benefits in the formation of Euroscepticism could also be enhanced by identification of a point in time where it could identify that socialisation has taken place. It would help the explanation if there was a point which could be identified when citizens did not focus on benefit delivery when judging a political institution but there seems to be no such evident point in time. Therefore, in light of its weakness the value of a social constructivist discussion in this paper was that it merely provided a different possible explanation of why citizens *may* have focused on benefits when considering support for the EU.

5.2 The Eurobarometer Results

The findings of the Eurobarometer investigation must also be addressed. The results show that there is only concrete evidence to support the conclusion that Portugal's Euroscepticism is caused by a lack of perceived benefits. The absence of similar relationships in other countries or for other variables may be explained by either one or both of the following reasons:

Firstly, reasons for popular Euroscepticism may be too wide ranging and diverse to be placed into one of only three categories. It now seems illogical to portray all individuals as benefit seekers only, whether a constructed preference or not, especially in a Europe where there is strong evidence of nationalistic sentiment. One can always find a multitude of other single reasons for a citizen's scepticism of the EU; Failure of the Lisbon Strategy and an opposition to the stalling of economic growth; the perceived democratic deficit of the EU; an incoherent foreign policy; specific policies that originate from the EU; 'Wrongdoings' of the Brussels bureaucracy, e.g. the disgraced Santer Commission; the Common Fisheries Policy; the European Constitution; the Euro; The list is non-exhaustive and therefore a small public opinion analysis, such as my Eurobarometer investigation, will never reveal evidence of one dominant causal variable.

It seems in hindsight that a social constructivist analysis of identity may be required when looking for causes of Euroscepticism. In connection to this it is evident from the current research programme that we must not dismiss Party-based Euroscepticism, a phenomena that may explain why we have less correlation in the results. The rise of support for Eurosceptic parties may be having a constitutive effect on Popular Euroscepticism, by encouraging anti-European opinions and a possible Eurosceptic Identity.

Statistically any potential trends that may have existed in the Eurobarometer investigation may have been obscured by statistical weaknesses such as those discussed in section 4.2.3 ('Limitations of the Investigation'). However we did see one positive correlation in the case of Portugal. The Portuguese may represent a nation whose public opinion of the EU is so dominated by the perception of benefits that such a trend was evident even in this limited Eurobarometer investigation. As we have seen this is more plausible in Portugal. Its membership

of the EU has been dominated by delivery of tangible benefits, with GDP per person growing by half in the fifteen years immediately after entry. However, we would also expect to see the same correlation between benefits and Euroscepticism in Ireland where economic growth has followed a similar pattern, though it may be that the Irish's deep attachment to their nationality as 'Irish only' has obscured the correlation.

Apart from the discovery of the one relationship between benefits and Euroscepticism in Portugal, the additional value of this thesis lies not in its falsification of a hypothesis developed from Social Constructivism, but that it is a text that recognises more research needs to be done, and identifies problems for future enquiries. Whilst Social Constructivism offered a method of identifying one variable, I have discovered that there may be so many reasons for the development of Euroscepticism that it is a pointless exercise to try and point to one causal variable. Euroscepticism may be a phenomenon that has no European wide singular cause and may have to take the form of a country by country analysis, involving a greater number of respondents and more detailed questions within all EU member states if Euroscepticism's causes are to be accurately analysed and truly understood.

5.3 Continuing the Research

The continuation of research for this thesis can develop in one of two directions. Firstly It can take a more empirical approach to EU wide scepticism, collate a larger volume of statistical evidence and a more comprehensive analysis of that statistical evidence. As we have seen from the Eurobarometer investigation the findings of this thesis have been restricted by the small amount of Data that Eurobarometer could provide. The questions that Eurobarometer ask do not cover or explore in detail all of the variables that I wish to analyse. More detailed questions must be asked to more respondents in order to discover more causes of Euroscepticism that have not been listed in previous literature. Additionally the statistical enquiry must employ more rigorous statistical analysis in order to be able to identify trends with more accuracy and conviction. The analysis that I employed, relying upon visual interpretation, is subject to the reader's interpretation and is therefore a source of weakness, confusion and criticism.

Alternatively the investigation could take a less statistical route and investigate the influence of Party-based Euroscepticism on the formation of Popular Euroscepticism. A thorough research programme on the formation of Eurosceptic parties is already underway by scholars such as Taggart and Sczerciabiak. However, so far there has been little work done on the constitutive effects of party-based Euroscepticism on Popular Euroscepticism. This topic would present a more attractive option for those looking to continue with the application of Social Constructivist theory.

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7 Appendices

7.1 United Kingdom

Year	% respondents who see membership as a bad thing	% respondents who feel that their country has not benefited from EU membership	% respondents who feel they will be nationality only in the next five years.	% respondents who are unaware of the European Parliament
1992	13	36	54	61
1993	22	50	59	58
1994	21	43	49	50
1997	26	42	57	52
1998	19	39	60	65
1999	23	37	67	54
2000	24	44	64	70
2001	24	38	62	63

Figure 7.1.1 Table showing UK perception of membership, benefits, identity, and awareness of Parliament over time.

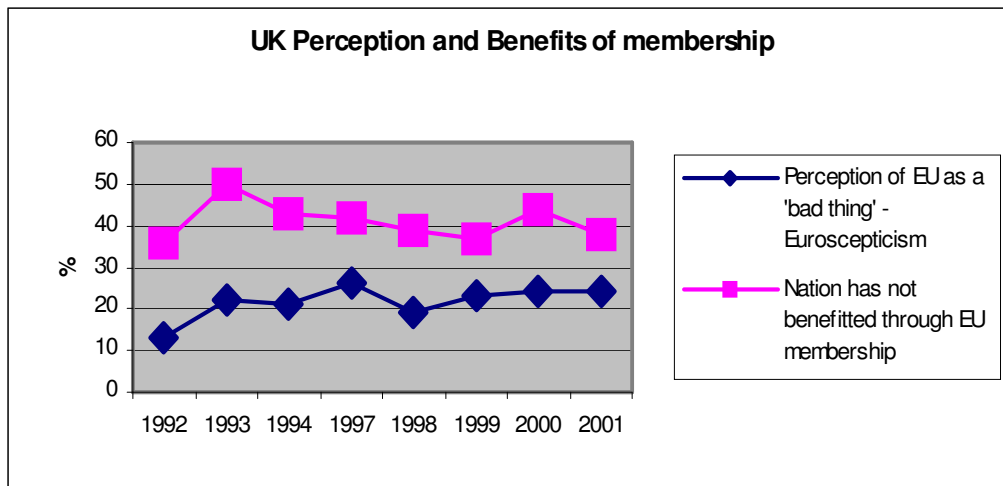


Figure 7.1.2 Graph showing UK perception of Membership and Benefits over time, 1992-2001

7.2 Denmark

Year	% respondents who see membership as a bad thing	% respondents who feel that their country has not benefited from EU membership	% respondents who feel they will be nationality only in the next five years.	% respondents who are unaware of the European Parliament
1992	21	21	48	41
1993	17	23	49	42
1994	26	26	48	34
1997	25	26	55	32
1998	19	19	48	48
1999	23	23	56	17
2000	24	22	46	47
2001	21	24	49	38

Figure 7.2.1 Table showing Danish Perception of national membership, benefits, identity and awareness of the European Parliament.

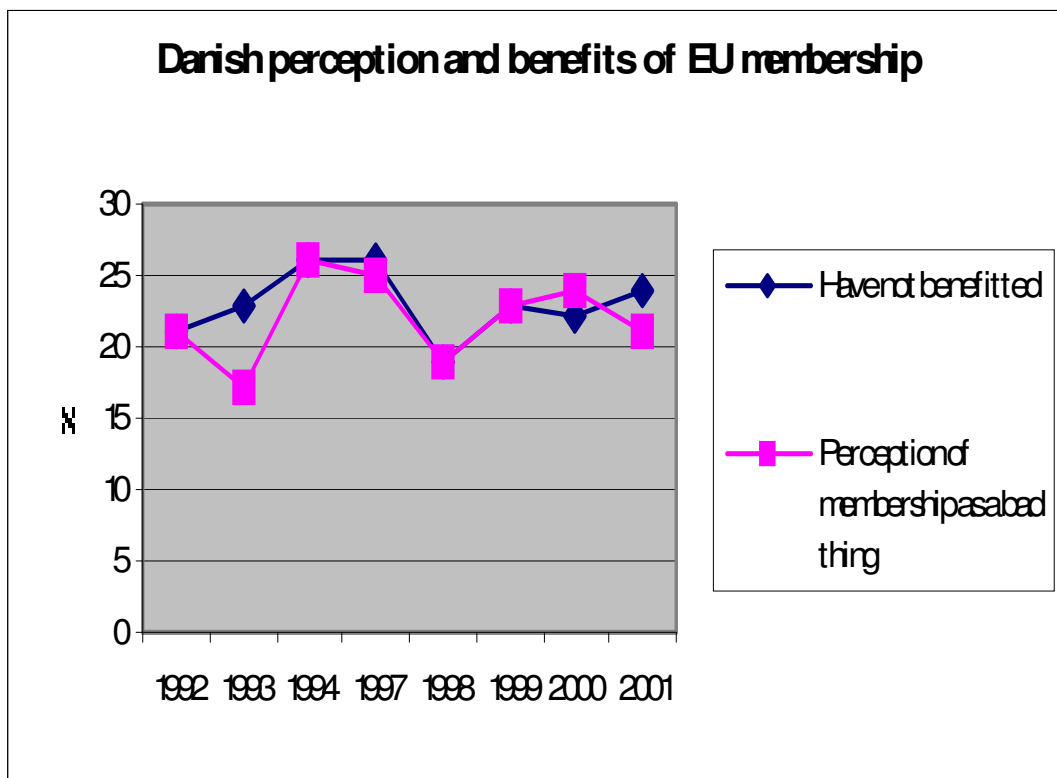


Figure 7.2.2 Graph showing Danish perception of membership and benefits over time, 1992-2001

7.3 Ireland

Year	% respondents who see membership as a bad thing	% respondents who feel that their country has not benefited from EU membership	% respondents who feel they will be nationality only in the next five years.	% respondents who are unaware of the European Parliament
1992	6	12	52	48
1993	7	11	48	53
1994	7	11	38	40
1997	3	3	50	57
1998	4	5	53	65
1999	3	3	53	37
2000	6	6	55	56
2001	4	5	46	47

Figure 7.3.1 Table showing Irish perception of Membership, Benefits, Identity and awareness of the European Parliament.

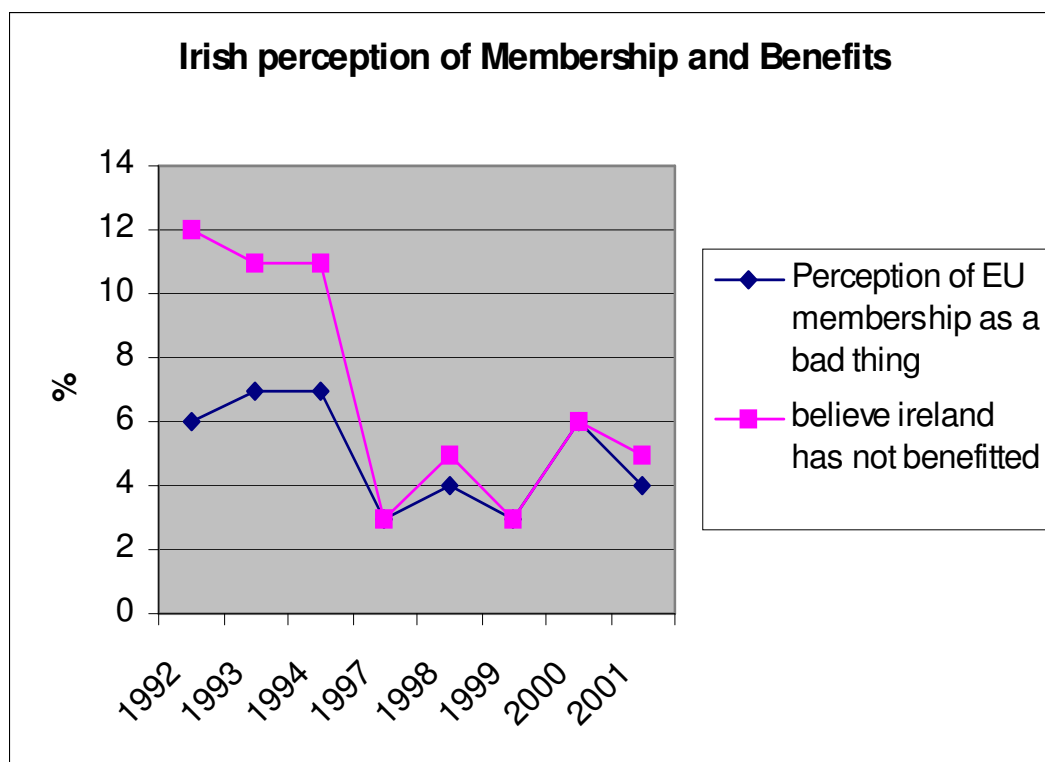


Figure 7.3.2 Graph showing Irish perception of Membership and benefits over time, 1992-2001

7.4 Portugal

Year	% respondents who see membership as a bad thing	% respondents who feel that their country has not benefited from EU membership	% respondents who feel they will be nationality only in the next five years.	% respondents who are unaware of the European Parliament
1992	3	9	38	32
1993	10	17	41	34
1994	12	23	40	18
1997	8	20	58	38
1998	7	14	62	48
1999	4	11	52	30
2000	5	11	45	25
2001	7	15	49	36

Figure 7.4.1 Table showing Portuguese perception of membership, benefits, identity and awareness of the European Parliament.

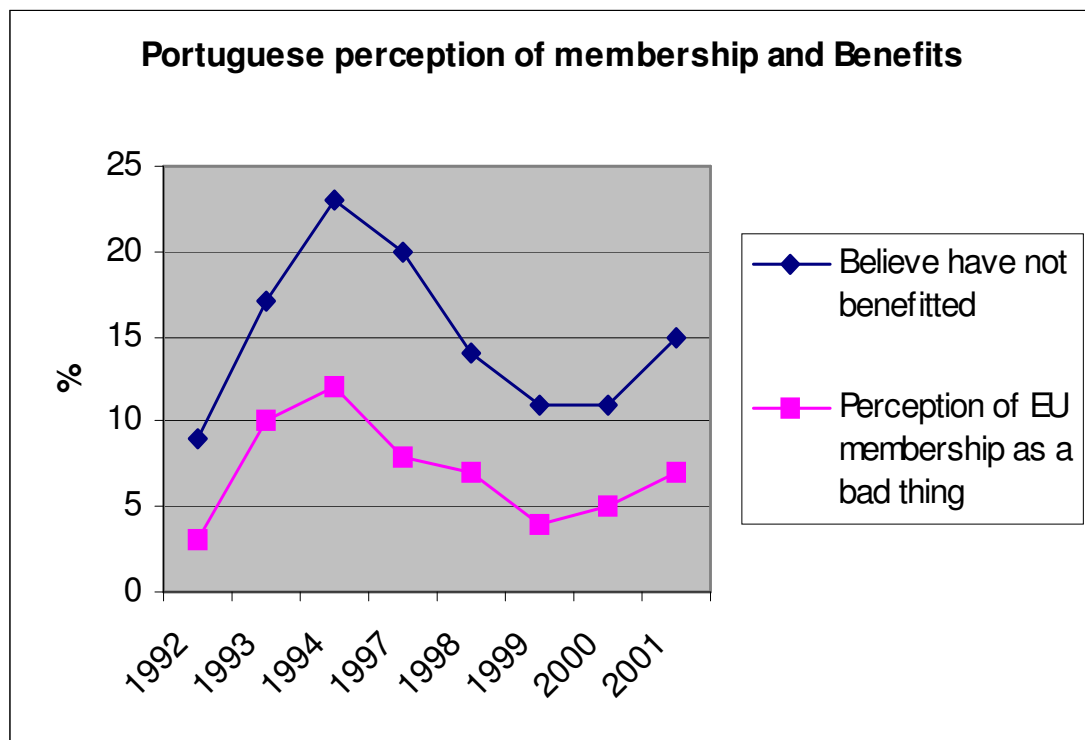


Figure 7.4.2 graph showing Portuguese perception of membership and benefits over time, 1992-2001