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Types of Euroscepticism

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This paper forwards and substantiates the proposition that euroscepticism is a multifaceted phenomenon. Its hypothesis is that aggregate-level public scepticism towards the EU-of-the-day in Denmark, France and the United Kingdom (UK) assumes forms that, if not contradictory, are so diverse that we should be sceptical of the success of any endeavour to address eurosceptics with one message. The paper suggests that to some types of euroscepticism, the EU's communication plans, such as the newly invigorated Plan D¹, may even prove counterproductive. Four distinct dimensions of euroscepticism are discerned from existent literature and examined over time in the three member states through Eurobarometer polls.²

Conceptualising euroscepticism

As most complex social science concepts, euroscepticism can be structured across three levels, according to the approach set out by American political scientist Gary Goertz (2005): a basic level, concerned with defining its positive and negative connotations; a secondary level of constitutive dimensions, identifying its various components from theory; and an indicator level, where each secondary-level dimension is specified in such detail that data can be gathered.

The basic level

Problems involved with defining the positive concept are readily apparent and emerge at all three components of the term: euro, sceptic and ism. From its popular usage in the press and in political and academic discourse, it is clear that 'euro' is not restricted to scepticism towards the euro (the single currency), nor to anything that has to do with 'euro'; however, it is not straightforward to replace the term with the slightly more concrete version, 'EU-scepticism'. While sometimes denoting sceptics of the EU as a whole, euroscepticism is more frequently used in relation to specific areas of concern, such as the Common Agricultural Policy, or the Constitutional Treaty. 'Sceptic', according to dictionaries, refers to 'doubt in the truth of something' – or, as pro-EU politicians have been keen to point out, to people being 'open to

¹ Plan D (D for democracy, debate and dialogue) is the European Commission's official response to the EU's period of reflection, which was initiated following the French and Dutch no's to the Constitutional Treaty in spring 2005; see [http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2005/com2005_0494en01.pdf].

² Focus is on aggregate public opinion in the 15 old member states as well as on relative scepticism (i.e. scepticism compared to the EU-average). The paper, therefore, does not aspire to establish when scepticism is 'severe' enough to for instance result in a no at an EU-referendum.

persuasion'.³ Nevertheless, many eurosceptics are far more sincere in their opinions than this definition would imply; a non-negligible part of euroscepticism, for instance, aims for the complete breakdown of the Union. 'Ism' is the suffix attached to most ideology labels, lending the term to be incorporated into the domain of political belief systems (Flood: 3). However, whether or not euroscepticism can be seen as an ideology in its own right is a topic of on-going debate (Flood & Usherwood).⁴

Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart coined the perhaps most utilized definition of euroscepticism in 2001. While directed towards party-based euroscepticism, its two dimensions—soft and hard—can be applied to public scepticism as well. Soft euroscepticism is defined as the contingent or qualified opposition, while hard euroscepticism denotes the outright rejection of the process of European integration (developed by Szczerbiak & Taggart in 2003). As with attitudes and opinions generally, it makes sense to divide euroscepticism along an intensity spectrum – and several scholars have attempted to nuance Taggart and Szczerbiak's simple dichotomy (for instance Kopecky & Mudde; Flood; Flood & Usherwood). Indeed, as most citizens can be assumed to be eurosceptic to some extent, defining importance in terms of measurement and comparison is allocated to questions of intensity. Nevertheless, the intensity issue arguably steps into the background when interest is shifted from predicting when a population is sceptical enough to vote no in an EU-referendum, to examining relative scepticism in view of illuminating the nature of the alleged gap between citizens and the political elite on EU-issues. At the basic level, this paper therefore contends with defining the positive concept of euroscepticism as '*an opposition to, or scepticism towards, the EU or Europe – reaching a certain degree and durability*'⁵ – which may be directed towards the Union in its entirety or towards particular policy areas or developments'. The negative concept is borrowed from Leon Lindberg and Stuart Scheingold's identification of the 'permissive consensus' (1970), which is taken to imply the lack of relative scepticism towards the EU, or particular policies and developments.⁶

The secondary-level

At the secondary level in Goertz' concept structure, or a step down the 'ladder of abstraction' (Sartori: 1943), the multidimensionality of euroscepticism appears. The link with the basic level is one of ontology, which means that the secondary-level dimensions in combination constitute what euroscepticism is.

The paper deduces four broad constitutive dimensions of euroscepticism from existent literature. To identify the dimensions—in other words, to establish the theoretical expectations about the nature of euroscepticism—the paper has relied on the emerging body of 'euroscepticism theory', a term which I use to denote literature

³ British EU-Commissioner Peter Mandelson in *The Guardian*, January 27th 2005.

⁴ Ben Crum and Harmen Binnema distinguish between thick and thin euroscepticism, where the thick dimension is conceptualised as a full-fledged ideology (Crum & Binnema). Some languages in fact permit the use of the term 'scepticism' without the -ism ending, such as the Danish 'euroskepsis', which may be more accurate.

⁵ Degree refers to scepticism in relation to the EU-average (to be distinct from average, a difference of minimum five percentage points is required), and durability to trends that are sceptical over a minimum of two years. On some of the sub-questions employed by this paper, Eurobarometer does not allow for a two-year comparison – however, at least one indicator for each dimension allows for a long-term time perspective.

⁶ This is thus no minute adoption of Lindberg and Scheingold's own definition of the permissive consensus from 1970. This paper's usage of the term does not distinguish between 'europhile' and 'euro-indifferent' attitudes; it only denotes the absence—for whatever reason—of the positive concept (euroscepticism).

mainly occupied with defining or explaining sceptic public attitudes towards the EU.⁷ This literature, however, is still scarce and often highly empirical. It is therefore useful to root it in broader approaches dealing with the nature of public opinion in a supranational community. As will be demonstrated in the following four sections, devoted to the explication of each theoretical dimension, theories of European integration and political community contain ample clues.⁸

Ideological euroscepticism

Ideological euroscepticism is a term employed by this paper to denote those variants of euroscepticism that are rooted in value-based evaluations of EU-cooperation. Developed in the early 1970s, Ronald Inglehart's influential theory of post-materialism accords prominent importance to this type of opinion: his hypothesis is that post-materialists (typically the post-war generations) have a more supportive attitude towards European integration and the EU than do materialists (typically the war-generations), as the issue of European integration fits in better with their value-orientations, and fulfils their intellectual needs and broad cosmopolitan horizons (e.g. Inglehart 1971). This is in contrast to materialists, who, to Inglehart, tend to be preoccupied with material concerns and devote less time to abstract issues like integration (Janssen: 445). Over time, more and more citizens should thus come to support the EU. Inglehart's theory was in the early 1990s thoroughly criticised for being empirically unfounded (see Janssen), and was arguably dealt a serious blow by the Danish rejection of the Maastricht Treaty one year later.⁹ However, several of its central variables (such as education) continue to be employed in newer influential studies of euroscepticism, where they have a certain explanatory power (see also Anthony Forster (2002), who identifies ideology and sovereignty as the two central axes of euroscepticism). Moreover, criticism of Inglehart's thesis rarely questions his assumption of value-based opinions, but centres instead on the direction of the causal arrow: political scientist Christopher J. Anderson, for instance, claims that post-materialism is in fact negatively correlated to support for EU membership (Anderson 1998: 586; cf. Anderson & Reichert 1995). As the predominant interest of the paper is to distinguish value-based scepticism from other types of euroscepticism, it is only a subsidiary concern to discern what particular values of the EU that citizens may find objectionable. Thus, the various indicators measuring whether there is fertile ground for ideological euroscepticism in a member state will

⁷ I also include studies of support for the EU, which depart from what is seen as sceptic public EU-attitudes. For this study, I am mainly interested in those studies that shed light on general public euroscepticism (i.e. not voting behaviour) at the aggregate country level.

⁸ Indeed, theories intended to explain 'the process and outcome of (European) integration' (Wiener & Diez' definition of integration theory) should be able to account for and contain a phenomenon that may pose a clear constraint on integration. However, in isolation, theories of European integration are likely to paint an incomplete portrait: while euroscepticism may indeed constitute a constraint on integration, it is by definition *not* integration (perhaps it may even be considered the opposite). By incorporating theories of political community into the theoretical framework, the paper acknowledges the contribution of the vast amount of literature on the EU that blossomed following 1992 and the Maastricht ratification crisis: writings on a European *demos*, national identity, and legitimacy, for instance, are not primarily occupied with the processes and ends of integration (thus arguably falling outside the realm of integration theory) but instead with particular features of, or problems posed by, the existing EU. With their focus on various elements of EU-cooperation that may be focal for public opinion, these accounts are in combination expected to form a comprehensive platform for discerning the constitutive dimensions of euroscepticism.

⁹ Danes traditionally score high on indicators of post-materialism, such as concern about the environment and gay rights. According to Inglehart's theory, Danes should arguably have been rather fervent EU-supporters.

not necessarily be expressions of the same ideological stance. What they can measure is whether a population is distinguished by a strongly value-based approach to the EU.¹⁰

Utilitarian euroscepticism

The key rationale behind utilitarian euroscepticism, a prominent approach in the literature (e.g. Andersen & Reichert; Gabel 1998a+b), is logically deduced: as the EU itself is driven by a largely economic agenda—integration started with coal and steel cooperation, and still today most initiatives have an anchor in the aim of completing the internal market—the public evaluates the EU according to its economic achievements. David Easton's classic distinction between diffuse and specific support is often taken as the theoretical point of departure (Easton; see e.g. Gabel 1998a): As citizens' affective (or diffuse) loyalties remain largely with the nation-state, the EU has to depend on securing utilitarian (or specific) support – an easily changeable matter.

The utilitarian hypothesis underpins much of the neo-functionalist perspective on European integration. The main ideas with relevance to the conceptualisation of euroscepticism is that public opinion, largely disinterested or passively compliant, would follow much the same logic as the opinion of political actors: citizens would gradually shift their loyalties from the national to the European level when becoming aware of, and getting used to, the functionalist, utility-maximising requirements of policies. It was thus assumed that integration almost automatically would foster increased support among the populations of the member states – although in later accounts it was recognised that this might be dependent on the EU's ability to efficiently perform tasks of public utility (see Niedermayer & Sinnott: 20, monitoring a shift in attitude in e.g. Ernst B. Haas¹¹). Newer works by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, including his famous concept of 'constitutional patriotism', also shares the perception of utility-based public EU-attitudes. Habermas argues that peoples emerge only with the constitutions of their states (Habermas 1998; 2003: 97), and that shared rights may form the foundation for the emergence and unity of a European people (and even for patriotic sentiments): Citizens will come to identify with a construction like the EU when they realise that it provides the infrastructure by which all their other attachments (local, national, gender, sexual, occupational...) can be managed and prevented from coming into excessive conflict with one another (Beetham & Lord: 42, paraphrasing Habermas' line of thought). The EU, in other

¹⁰ It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an illustration of all possible types of value-based EU-attitudes. The below analyses focus on scepticism towards the level of democracy in the EU as well as on citizens' aspirations for a 'Social Europe'. This builds on the assumptions that i) dissatisfaction with the level of EU-democracy only arises if one accepts that the EU should play a prominent role, where its decision-making mechanisms ought to resemble those of modern European nation-states (this is in contrast to 'pure' utility-based attitudes, for instance, to which it is arguably not a main concern that the EU functions according to certain ideological standards as long as it is economically utile); and ii) the EU has been predominantly concerned with market integration (at least from the 1950s to the 1980s, focus was on the economic community, as the Union's then name also testified). There is presumably little disagreement that the EU has and should have an internal market. However, desire for a social Europe is arguably still largely unfulfilled today, wherefore a strong desire for social integration could constitute a source of ideological dissatisfaction with the current state of integration.

¹¹ In Niedermayer and Sinnott's account, Haas, perhaps the leading proponent of neo-functionalism, who virtually renounced the centrality of public opinion in his early works, came to accept that the process of generating public support for European integration might involve increased contact and familiarity with the EC, education and progressively rewarding experiences derived from the activities of the common market (Haas 1971, from Niedermayer & Sinnott: 20).

words, obtains its *raison-d'être* from being utile. As such, these perspectives thus open the door for a type of euroscepticism that is based on the critique of lacking benefits from the EU or the inefficiency of the EU's set up (including fraud and bureaucracy).

On a more empirical note, testing the explanatory power of five different theories of public support for the EU, including Inglehart's notion of post-materialist values, political scientist Matthew Gabel finds support for the centrality of utilitarian EU-attitudes (Gabel 1998b). Although Gabel fails to consider a central independent variable in his test (concerns about national sovereignty), it does seem relevant, in light of these theoretical accounts, to investigate the claim that at least part of the publics in the member states of the EU build their opinion about integration on the ability of the EU to be utile – both in terms of 'cool cash' and in terms of effective policy-making resulting in tangible societal benefits. Whether this is the case will be investigated below.

Sovereignty-based euroscepticism

As for sovereignty-based attitudes, it is not dissatisfaction with few economic benefits from integration, or a critique of its democratic standing, that defines euroscepticism, but a reluctance to increase the competencies of the EU and thereby potentially weaken national sovereignty and/or identity. Nationalism researcher, Professor Anthony D. Smith, conceptualises public *support* for the EU as being essentially utilitarian or ideological (Smith 2005: 1-2), while he perceives *scepticism* as generally signifying 'an emotional detachment from particular claims, doctrines and ideals' (ibid: 1). It is thus not dissatisfaction with few economic benefits from integration that defines opposition, but an emotive stance—public euroscepticism, in other words, seconds utilitarian concerns in Smith's perception, while instead illustrating a lack of 'fit' between the Union and a person's identity and emotional attachments. Political scientists Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks conclude their paper 'Does Identity or Economic Rationality Drive Public Opinion on European Integration' with the finding that citizens '*do indeed take into account the economic consequences of European integration, but conceptions of group membership appear to be more powerful*' (Hooghe & Marks 2004: 415). They thereby suggest that while both theories bite, concerns about national identity override. This hypothesis, which we shall return to in the case studies below, is also implicit in the liberal intergovernmentalist approach to integration theory (Moravscik 1998), which holds that while utility is the very *raison-d'être* for cooperation in the EU, nation-states are to remain sovereign and independent actors, a concern which overrides potentially utility-maximising gains from pooling sovereignty.

These approaches hold that national institutions are the only ones to correspond to relatively uncontested identities and therefore the only ones that possess the capacity to settle major arguments authoritatively. In on-going debates about the relationship between democracy and identity, Smith is, contrary to Habermas, sceptical about the EU's ability to 'cultivate' a sense of belonging amongst the populations of the Union that is strong enough to legitimise true democratisation of EU-cooperation. In Smith's view, nation-state and national identity may well be constructed concepts, but they are 'frozen political identities' and non-transferable to the European level. The nation-state is the carrier of a 'special loyalty' that has been able to contain and arbitrate more diffuse identities in a manner which has made democracy possible (Smith 1991). Today's political leaders, at least, do not possess the mechanisms and means with which to construct a common identity

that were available to their colleagues two centuries ago, wherefore citizens are likely to remain sceptical of EU-initiatives perceived to impair national integrity.

Principled euroscepticism

The fourth, and final, constitutive dimension that the paper finds in the literature is that of principled euroscepticism.¹² By this term, I refer to the rejection of any kind of integration or cooperation: the very idea of the EU is rejected. While the intensity of ideological, sovereignty-based and utilitarian euroscepticism may, to some citizens, certainly be strong enough to constitute a de facto opposition to the Union, there is no telling of this from the unidimensional indicators, which measure these dimensions (see the following section on the indicator level). In other words, different indicators, distinguished by their intensity, are needed to account for the variant of euroscepticism that is principled of nature. To the individual person, rejectionist attitudes may certainly be based on any, all or none of the three theoretical dimensions identified above; what the principled dimension accounts for is simply attitudes that are distinguished by their intensity (wherefore, also, general levels of this type of scepticism are not expected to be high). Although the dimension might appear more appropriate in a study of 'eurorejectionism', than in a study of scepticism, it is included by the paper, as well as in most studies on defining euroscepticism (see e.g. Szczerbiak & Taggart; Kopecky & Mudde; Flood & Usherwood), in order to provide a fuller conceptualisation of euroscepticism as the absence of a permissive consensus.

According to the generational logic inherent in, for instance, Ronald Inglehart's theory of post-materialism, as well as to the 'information-thesis' of the utility approach to EU-attitudes, this type of scepticism should become less prevalent with time: As war generations are being replaced by younger generations, or as people get used to the necessity and advantages of European integration (perhaps through information campaigns, the successful construction of affective EU-attitudes or even a constitutional patriotism), they abandon principled scepticism. A different perspective on this advanced by this paper is that as European integration develops in both depth and width, it is bound to move closer towards the wishes of some and further away from the wishes of others. In this sense, principled scepticism is not seen as age-contingent but rooted in public perceptions of the 'EU-of-the-day'.

The indicator level

The indicator level is where the four dimensions of euroscepticism are specified in such detail that data can be gathered. The data relied upon in this paper is the European Commission's Eurobarometer polls, from which relevant poll questions are used as indicators (see Annex 1 for a list of used polls). The link between the indicator-level and the level of constitutive dimensions is one of substitutability, which means that each poll question is indicative of the dimension it pertains to. Multiple, unidimensional indicators are required in order to achieve an adequate measure of multifaceted concepts; thus indicators should logically appear to reflect one and only one dimension of euroscepticism, and the more indicators standing in for one dimension that indicate scepticism, the more prominent is that dimension.

¹² This dimension assumes prominent representation in for instance Taggart and Szczerbiak classic distinction between soft and hard euroscepticism (see above), where 'hard' essentially equals what I refer to by principled euroscepticism. I prefer the term 'principled' to denote that this dimension is primarily distinguished by surmounting to a rejection of the EU as such.

For the purpose of this paper, three poll questions (with a number of sub-questions) are chosen as indicators for each of the four dimensions. They are explicated by Table 1 below (the relevance of each poll question and its sub-questions, where relevant, is explicated in Annex 2, while Annex 3 presents the full three-level conceptualisation of euroscepticism).

Table 1: Indicators (see Annex 2 for a fuller substantiation)

IDEOLOGY	UTILITY	SOVEREIGNTY	PRINCIPLED
Dissatisfaction with EU democracy	No benefit: general and specific areas	No support for supranational project	Lack of support for membership
EU priorities (selected sub-questions)	Fears connected to integration (selected sub-questions)	Rejection of EU decision-making	Reason for opposing Constitution (selected sub-questions)
Enlargement criteria (selected sub-questions)	Enlargement criteria (selected sub-questions)	Fears connected with integration (selected sub-questions)	Reason for abstention at European Parliament elections (selected sub-questions)

The remaining parts of this paper are concerned with illustrating the relevance of the conceptualisation, and demonstrating different and perhaps even contradictory patterns of euroscepticism in Denmark, France and the United Kingdom. These cases were chosen by combining a ‘most-similar’ and ‘most-different’ selection strategy: All three are long-term members of the EU, expected to demonstrate relatively high levels of euroscepticism – but in different areas. Denmark and the United Kingdom have often been singled out in the literature as the ‘eurosceptic couple’ in the EU. France, on the other hand, sometimes seen as an extreme opposite to the UK in EU-affairs, has often been heralded as a pro-European driving force in the integration process. Nevertheless, the eurosceptic reputation of the French population, smouldering since its almost-rejection of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, was cemented with its no to the Constitutional Treaty in May 2005. There is reason to believe that there should be both similarities and differences among the three countries in their types of public euroscepticism.

Denmark

Utilitarian euroscepticism

Danes are not relatively eurosceptic on any of the indicators standing in for utilitarian euroscepticism, which is interesting in view of the general consensus that the rationale for Danish EU-membership was and still is economic (e.g. Siune: 94). Danes have for several years scored markedly higher than the EU-average in their evaluation of the advantages of membership: in 1995 with 18 percentage points and in 2005 with 17 percentage points. In 2005, 69 percent thought that Denmark benefited from its membership. As we shall see, the score in the United Kingdom was a mere 37 percent. Danes also perceive positively of the EU’s impact on specific

economic areas. As Table 2 below shows, Danes are on three of the seven areas the most positive in the entire EU-25 when it comes to the perception that the EU has had a positive or a very positive effect. That is the case with regard to national exports, industry and agriculture. With the exception of two areas, security and the service sector, Danish scores are about 20 percentage points above the EU-average, when it comes to perceiving EU benefit, and conversely about 20 percentage points below the EU-average when it comes to the perception of no benefit. 35 percent more Danes than French perceive the EU to have had a positive impact on the national standard of living.

Table 2: The EU's impact on specific areas (Denmark)

Eurobarometer 64, 2005: 'People disagree about the advantages and disadvantages of Denmark's belonging to the European Union. I am going to read out some points and, for each one, I would like you to tell me if Denmark being in the European Union has a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad effect' (EU-average in parenthesis)

DENMARK	Very good/ fairly good effect	Very bad/ fairly bad effect	Don't know
Exports:	88*(64)	7 (23)	5 (13)
Industry:	80*(51)	14 (37)	6 (12)
Our country's security:	79 (67)	15 (23)	6 (10)
Standard of living:	77 (53)	16 (36)	7 (11)
Agriculture:	70*(40)	24 (48)	5 (12)
Our services:	58 (54)	28 (30)	14 (16)
Employment:	52 (35)	36 (54)	12 (11)

*) Highest score for EU-25

Amongst the populations in the EU's 15 old member states, there was in the early 2000s, not surprisingly, a general agreement that new members should be capable of paying their share of the EU-budget, and that they should not be an economic burden to the existing members. On these two indicators, the French and the British both scored close to the EU average, with around 80 percent that found the criteria important. Danes, however, distinguished themselves markedly from the EU-average as far fewer considered the two criteria important for a country's acceptance to the Union. This picture, stable over several years, may signify that Danes to a higher extent than other populations in the EU accepted that Eastern Enlargement could be a costly affair. When asked in 2001 whether it was important that an applicant's membership would not be costly for existing members, a mere 11 percent in the EU found that it was not important. The figure from Denmark was 35 percent.

Perhaps in prolongation of these figures, 72 percent of Danes believed in 2001 that richer member states would have to pay for the rest, and 48 percent that Danes would come to lose social benefits. The EU-average was 59 and 39 percent respectively. The Danish figures, however, represent a six-seven percentage points decrease since the late 1990s in the number of Danes who expect the EU's development to bring about these consequences.

Ideological euroscepticism

Danes were fervent critics of the level of EU-democracy in the 1990s, but since the early 2000s, the mood has shifted, and in 2004 the amount of satisfied Danes was ten percentage points above EU-average. Dissatisfaction levelled the average. In this particular regard, Danes today are not relatively eurosceptic.

Nor have Danes been markedly distinguished from the EU-average in believing the EU should be closer to its citizens. In 1997, 36 percent did not find that it should be a key priority, compared to 31 percent generally in the EU. In addition, Danes found to a lesser extent than the EU-average that the EU should focus on giving more help to poor and socially excluded in the EU. 31 percent did not think that this should be a key priority, compared to 20 percent generally in the EU – in France, the figure was a mere 13 percent. It can be added that 40 percent in Denmark, compared to 33 percent in the EU, believed that it should not be a key priority for the EU to allocate less attention to economics and more to social justice. These figures indicate that a possible Danish euroscepticism does not seem rooted in a critique of a lack of social engagement in the Union or its democratic standing. As the amount of Danes finding it important that new member states accept all that has already been decided upon in the EU is smaller than the EU-average, we may moreover add that the desire for a close, homogenous union does not seem as widespread in Denmark as in the rest of the EU. In particular, great differences between Frenchmen and Danes are revealed in this regard.

Sovereignty-based euroscepticism

Danes are markedly distinguished from EU-average in a sceptical direction when it comes to attitudes towards pooling national sovereignty in the EU. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Danes were largely opposed to ideas of uniting Western Europe and creating an EU-government responsible to the European Parliament – both initiatives that would have implied more supranational cooperation. Eurobarometer no longer poses the two questions, but Danish scepticism in this regard is now reflected in the questions surveying attitudes towards political union. In 2005, 46 percent of Danes were opposed to this, compared to an EU-average of 31 percent.

Even if a political union was guaranteed to bring about economic benefit, opposition to the transfer of sovereignty to the EU is likely to be the weightier stone on the balance to many Danes. While a full test of this hypothesis is beyond the scope of this paper, a several months long collection of all EU-related readers' letters in all Danish dailies prior to the referendum on the single currency in September 2000, lends it its support – two examples from a randomly selected day read: '*All the vague proclamations about the Euro's merits cannot hide the fact that we are heading towards the United States of Europe, which is also stated in the Treaty of Rome*', and '*I have always voted no to the EU, because I do not want the EU to become a super power despite the economic benefits*'.¹³

Sovereignty-based euroscepticism is also pronounced in Denmark with regard to whether or not decisions should be taken at national or at EU-level. In 2001, without one exception, Danes were more supportive than the EU-average of maintaining national decision-making in all of the policy-areas listed in Table 3 below.

¹³ First quote is by E. Lenshoek in 'Jydske Vestkysten'. Second quote is by Erland Knudssøn Madsen in 'Jyllands-Posten'. Both published September 14th 2000. Quoted from the walkthrough of readers' letters relating to the Euro-referendum by the Danish European Movement.

With regard to cultural policy, the difference from average reached 30 percentage points.

Table 3: Level of decision-making (Denmark)

Eurobarometer 56, 2001: Some people believe that certain areas of policy should be decided by the Danish government, while other areas of policy should be decided jointly within the European Community. Which of the following areas of policy do you think should be decided by the Danish government, and which should be decided jointly within the European Community? (Selection, EU-average in parenthesis)

DENMARK	Nationally	EU & nationally
Accepting refugees	68 (43)	29 (53)
Rules for political asylum	63 (45)	35 (51)
Agriculture and fisheries	44 (40)	54 (53)
Cultural policy	80 (49)	16 (44)
Monetary policy	45 (31)	51 (65)
Defence	57 (45)	40 (51)
Education	72 (61)	26 (35)
Foreign policy towards countries outside the EU	38 (22)	58 (71)
Health and social welfare	82 (59)	16 (37)
Immigration policy	65 (48)	32 (48)
Justice	83 (58)	13 (38)
Police	71 (63)	27 (34)
Environmental protection	44 (33)	55 (64)
Scientific and technological research	32 (27)	65 (68)
The fight against hard drugs	27 (26)	72 (71)
The fight against poverty/social exclusion	38 (30)	59 (66)
The fight against unemployment	62 (43)	36 (53)

Danes, however, are less afraid than EU-average about the undermining of Denmark's existence and Danish national identity as a result of EU-membership. Meanwhile, only few Danes believe that this is a likely consequence of membership. In 2001, 15 percent of Danes reckoned that the EU threatened Denmark's existence. This corresponds more or less to the 18 percent who expressed fear in this regard. A large majority of Danes, it seems, trusts that a large-scale transfer of national sovereignty can be avoided. As we shall return to discuss below, 41 percent of Britons fear that the EU is undermining the existence of the United Kingdom, while as many as 37 percent believe that this will happen.

Principled euroscepticism

In Denmark, the indicators for principled euroscepticism indicate a slightly higher level of this type of scepticism than EU-average. 19 percent of Danes claimed in spring 2005 to oppose the proposed Constitutional Treaty because they were 'against Europe/European construction/European integration'. That is seven percentage points higher than EU-average (and 10 percentage points higher than French opinions). In the poll-question surveying people's evaluation of their country's membership of the EU, Denmark was until recently characterised by a relatively high

number of citizens who believed it was a 'bad thing'. Ten or more percentage points consistently separated Danes in a sceptical direction from EU-average between 1988 and 2000. In 2004, however, Danish public opinion was in line with the EU-average on the issue. This situation in fact reflects a slight drop in the number of Danes thinking that EU-membership is a 'bad thing' combined with a slight increase in the EU-average holding this opinion. While Danes were no longer relatively eurosceptical in this regard in 2004, the general level of this type of euroscepticism in the EU thus seemed to have risen. It is interesting to note that Denmark stands outside this pattern of an increase in euroscepticism, and is perhaps even moving in the opposite direction. We shall return to why this may be so in the comparative section below.

Danish euroscepticism: an overview

To sum up on the basis of this short sample of indicators, Danish euroscepticism appears to be primarily concentrated within the dimension of sovereignty-based euroscepticism and to be virtually absent (in relative terms) in the utilitarian dimension. It assumes close-to-average levels in the two remaining dimensions of ideological euroscepticism (here scepticism is slightly below average on the indicators of a social Europe and a democratic Union), and principled euroscepticism (here scepticism is slightly higher than EU-average). Where the data allows for a time perspective, we note that levels of euroscepticism have somewhat dropped within the dimensions of principled, ideological and in particular utilitarian scepticism, while it has remained relatively stable within the dimension of sovereignty-based scepticism.

France

Utilitarian euroscepticism

About half the population in France perceived EU-membership to be beneficial in 2005. 38 percent claimed the opposite. This brought France close to average in the EU, which was 52 and 36 percent respectively. The trend in the EU has generally been that an increasing number of citizens perceive that their country has not benefited from membership, but this development is particularly acute in France: in 1985 only 26 percent of the French believed not to have benefited.

Further indicators point to a marked increase in the number of Frenchmen who believe the economic expenses involved with EU-cooperation will increase – an increase which has been more dramatic in France than in the rest of the EU. In 2001, 62 percent in France expected that the EU's development would bring about a deeper economic crisis; that is 24 percentage points higher than EU-average. That year, 60 percent (21 percentage points above EU-average) believed they would lose social benefits as a result, and 74 percent that richer member states would come to pay for the rest (15 percentage points above average).

The latest Eurobarometer poll, from autumn 2005, underlines the acute perception in France of a lack of benefit from the EU. French perceptions of the EU's impact on the economic areas listed in Table 2 is consistently more critical than average in the EU. In particular, French citizens are critical of the EU's impact on their work situation and standard of living.

Ideological euroscepticism

As regards satisfaction with democracy in the EU, the French level of scepticism is not distinguished from EU-average, and the past ten years have not witnessed any significant increase in scepticism. Meanwhile, more Frenchmen than EU-average value that cooperation is relatively homogenous, social and close. In 2001, 89 percent found it was important for an acceding country to accept all that has already been decided upon and implemented in the EU; that was seven percentage points higher than EU-average. 67 percent saw it as a key priority that the EU got closer to its citizens (eight percentage points higher than average); 83 percent (12 percentage points higher than average) that the EU should give more help to poor and socially excluded within the EU; while 68 percent (14 percentage points higher than average) meant that the EU should focus less on the economy and more on social justice.

Sovereignty-based euroscepticism

There is little sovereignty-based euroscepticism in France. Eurobarometer polls have measured opinions towards a number of far-reaching supranational propositions, including the creation of an EU-government responsible to the European Parliament. French support in 1995 was around 60 percent, while fewer than 20 percent were against. This was considerably less sceptic than the EU-average, which testifies that the principle of handing over sovereignty to the EU-level has not met with great resistance in France, in contrast to the situation in both Denmark and the United Kingdom.

Non-appearance of sovereignty-based euroscepticism in France is also reflected in the relatively high support for EU-decision-making in a wide number of policy-areas. Out of the 18 policy areas listed in Table 3 above, the French were only relatively sceptical towards EU-influence on health and welfare policy.

Principled euroscepticism

France is not distinguished from EU-average by a principled euroscepticism. In none of the three indicators listed in Table 1 does French public opinion differ in a sceptical direction with more than two percentage points. As an example, when asked about their reason for opposing the Constitutional Treaty just prior to the referendum in spring 2005, nine percent of the French population claimed their opposition stemmed from them being 'against Europe/European construction/European integration'. The EU-average was 12 percent. While the French are not distinguished with regard to principled euroscepticism, it should be mentioned that for instance perceptions of EU-membership as a 'bad thing' have generally slightly risen in the EU since the early 1990s. In 1988, 11 percent in the EU thought membership was a 'bad thing'. In 1996, this was the case for 15 percent, while in 2004, 17 percent shared the opinion. French public opinion has followed this general increase.

French euroscepticism: an overview

From this introductory account we may gather that French utilitarian euroscepticism has grown in recent years and is now relatively significant. Another finding is that to a higher extent than average, the French want an EU that is close to its citizens and that has a strong social dimension: This supports analyses of the French referendum on the Constitutional Treaty, which found the absence of a 'social Europe' to be a key explanant of the no (e.g. Flash Eurobarometer 2005). The Constitutional Treaty can be said to have activated French ideological euroscepticism.

There is hardly any relative French scepticism in the dimensions of sovereignty-based and principled euroscepticism. On the contrary, many Frenchmen support propositions that would bring about more supranational cooperation in the Union. There is a marked dynamism in French public attitudes towards the EU in the utility dimension, where a steep increase in sceptical opinion can be observed (both in absolute and in relative terms). Within the ideological and principled dimensions, sceptical figures have risen slightly in absolute terms while remaining stable in relative terms. In this regard France thus forms part of a broader EU-trend of rising scepticism.

The United Kingdom

Utilitarian euroscepticism

Britons very much doubt the general benefit of EU-membership. In 2005, 37 considered it beneficial, while 47 percent held the opposite perspective. The EU-average was 52 and 36 percent respectively. As is the case in France, scepticism can be detected within most of the economic areas listed in Table 2. However, precisely that area where the French are the most critical in their evaluation of the EU's impact, the British are in fact less critical than the EU-average: In France, 71 percent perceive the EU's impact on their work-situation to be negative, while a considerably lower percentage in Britain – 46 percent – shares that opinion.

Britons are moreover far less pessimistic than the French in their evaluation of future economic disadvantages and costs from membership. In 2001, 32 percentage points fewer Britons than Frenchmen believed that the EU would come to experience a deeper economic crisis, and 27 percentage points fewer thought it was likely that membership would lead to a loss of social benefits.

In their evaluation of the importance of economic criteria for applicant countries, Britons side with the EU-average: Both with regard to the importance for a new member state to be able to pay its share of the EU's budget, and with regard to believing that enlargements should not be costly for existing members.

Ideological euroscepticism

Few Britons declare themselves satisfied with the level of EU-democracy. Over the past decade, consistently fewer Britons than average in the EU have held a positive evaluation. In 2004, the difference was at ten percentage points, with 31 percent satisfied Britons. However, Britons are not distinguished when it comes to dissatisfaction with EU-democracy, a difference that is crucial for this paper, which is concerned with discerning scepticism, and not support. It is thus not with regard to the issue of EU-democracy that the UK is distinguished by a relative euroscepticism.

Neither is it regret about the distance between the EU and its citizens that motivates British euroscepticism. When polled by Eurobarometer in 1997, 11 percentage points fewer Britons than average in the EU saw it as a key priority for the EU to be closer to its citizens. That survey moreover showed that markedly fewer Britons than average wished the EU would use less attention on the economy and

more on social justice (on this question the difference from the EU-average was at 16 percentage points – and the difference from the French at 30 percentage points).

Sovereignty-based euroscepticism

With regard to the three indicators standing in for sovereignty-based euroscepticism, the British are markedly more eurosceptic than the EU-average. Britons have never supported plans to unite Western Europe, plans of an EU-government or the development towards a political union. In all these areas, and throughout their membership, Britons have been more sceptical than the EU-average – albeit scepticism in this regard has not reached the same heights as in Denmark.

Also with regard to the question of granting decision-making competency to the EU, the British are considerably more sceptical than average. The British are not positively inclined towards EU-influence in any of the 18 policy areas listed in Table 3 above, and the discrepancy from average is often considerably higher than 10 percentage points.

Finally, Britons are far more afraid than average in the EU that cooperation will involve a loss of national identity and that the UK will even disappear as a consequence of integration. 48 and 41 percent respectively feared these developments in 2001, while the EU-average was at 33 and 23 percent respectively. As mentioned above, there is a marked difference between Danes and Britons in this regard, as 23 percentage points fewer Danes than British fear for their country's existence in the EU – despite the fact that Danes are also characterised by a sovereignty-based euroscepticism.

Principled euroscepticism

Public opinion towards the EU in the United Kingdom is characterised by a relatively high level of principled euroscepticism. In all three indicators standing in for this dimension, the British are considerably more sceptical than the EU-average. 29 percent of the British considered EU-membership a 'bad thing' in 2004, while the EU-average was at 17 percent. British sceptical evaluations of membership have remained stable over time. Moreover, 41 percent of those who did not vote in the 1999 elections to the European Parliament in Britain did so because they 'are against Europe/the European Union/the construction of Europe'. The EU-average was at 25 percent.

British euroscepticism: an overview

Britain is not the number one eurosceptic member state in all regards, as often casually observed. There is, for instance, not relative scepticism towards the indicators standing in for the ideological dimension (pertaining especially to the question of EU-democracy and a social Europe). Neither is there relative scepticism on all indicators of the utilitarian dimension of euroscepticism. Britain is particularly sceptical – and strongly sceptical – on indicators of sovereignty-based euroscepticism. It is moreover the only of the three cases to be distinguished by a relatively strong principled euroscepticism. This picture is rather stable over time.

A dilemma for Plan D

On certain indicators, Danish, French and British attitudes all depart significantly from the EU-average – however, as we have seen, there are important differences among the three countries with regard to their type and level of euroscepticism. In general there is no indication that euroscepticism is weakening in the EU – only, the picture is very nuanced: Danish attitudes, for instance, have in several areas (but not all) become more EU-positive over the past years, while French attitudes have become more eurosceptic. Precisely that area where one population wishes the EU to focus, risks being that area where another population fears its influence. It will depend on the type of euroscepticism characterising a country. Two examples serve to illustrate this point.

First, this dilemma may explain how the democratisation and transparency initiatives that the EU has undertaken in recent years at one and the same time seem to have contributed to increasing scepticism in some member states and alleviating it in others. At least since the Danish rejection of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992—a choc to the European establishment—a largely ideological understanding of euroscepticism among EU-leaders has emerged and had its impact on cooperation. Indeed, reactions to the Danish no became centred on diagnosing and rectifying what was thought to be two critical deficiencies of the Union: Its ‘democratic deficit’ and its ‘information deficit’. A brief non-exhaustive list of the consequences of this understanding includes the gradual strengthening of the European Parliament to improve the EU’s democratic standing; the emergence of communication issues at the top of the Commission’s priorities; the (re)invigoration of concepts such as subsidiarity and transparency; the increasing role of the European Ombudsman; the increasing use of referenda; and even modifications of the treaty (as with the modification to the citizen clause in the Amsterdam Treaty).¹⁴ And recently, a ‘D-plan’ has been suggested as a strategy to winning the hearts of the Europeans, D standing for democracy, debate and dialogue. At the heart of these initiatives and strategies lie the rarely questioned – though as the brief examination of data above suggests: not thoroughly analysed – belief that democratic deficiencies and lack of information about the EU are the main foundation for public euroscepticism.

To the extent that citizens are aware of such democratisation initiatives of the EU, and perceive of them as successful, they are likely to reduce scepticism based on the critique of the EU’s democratic deficit. If this type of scepticism is not prominent in a country, the initiatives may, however, not play a particularly prominent role in diminishing euroscepticism, and perhaps even contribute to the contrary. Taking a closer look at the indicator for the variant of ideological euroscepticism, which perceives negatively of the EU’s level of democracy, in each of the three case countries, Danish perceptions of EU-democracy were relatively sceptical in the 1990s. In 1999, sceptical evaluations were shared by 60 percent of the population, which was 22 percentage points above the EU-average. Towards the middle of this decade, Danish dissatisfied figures had dropped to 40 percent, which was in line with the EU-average. In France and the United Kingdom, negative perceptions of EU-democracy have since the mid-1990s consistently been in line with the EU-average

¹⁴ It could be mentioned that another consequence of increased political awareness of euroscepticism has been that national heads of state or government use public opinion as a bargaining chip at intergovernmental conferences. This was for instance the case of British negotiators in the late stages of negotiations on the Constitutional Treaty, and more recently the understanding that led French President Jacques Chirac to succeed in taking the service directive off the EU’s imminent agenda in March 2005.

in both countries and there has not been a marked change in this particular point of scepticism. Thus, only in the case country where criticism of the EU's level of democracy was relatively strong in the mid-1990s, has there been a significant decrease in this type of scepticism. This could indicate that the EU is moving in a direction that Danes like, which to some extent at least could be due to the above-mentioned democratisation initiatives undertaken by the EU.

Democratisation and transparency initiatives have certainly not been the only item on the EU's agenda over the past decade. Indeed, perhaps the most significant event of the past decade has been Eastern Enlargement, which is the second example used by the paper to illustrate the EU's dilemma when faced with different types of euroscepticism in the member states.

There is reason to believe that Eastern Enlargement may have a bearing on the dimensions of utilitarian and ideological euroscepticism. Utilitarian quite simply because it represents a potentially very costly development (it is common knowledge that all ten new members are poorer than EU-average), and ideological since it was a very diverse and sizeable enlargement, which may impact on normative ideas about the nature of cooperation: whether, for instance, citizens value a close and homogenous union. On the contrary, as Eastern Enlargement could hardly in itself be perceived as a development furthering a full-fledged federal EU, it can be hypothesised as likely not to invoke a sovereignty-based euroscepticism. Eurobarometer figures show that amongst the 15 old member states in the EU, the French were often most strongly against Eastern Enlargement, while the Danes were frequently among the most positive: In 2002, 20 percent of Frenchmen saw EU-enlargement as a priority. The figure was 72 percent in Denmark. This supports the findings of the above case studies, as Denmark is characterised by a combination of low utilitarian euroscepticism and high sovereignty-based scepticism, and little desire for a close homogenous union, while French figures virtually produced the reverse picture, with fertile ground for as well utilitarian and ideological euroscepticism – but no sovereignty-based euroscepticism.

In the United Kingdom, public opinion has not been relatively sceptical towards Eastern Enlargement (see e.g. Eurobarometer 56, 2001). In fact, at least on the indicators employed by this paper, public opinion in the UK does not seem to have changed in either a more sceptical or more EU-supportive direction over the past five years. This may at least to some extent be explained with reference to the relative strength of principled euroscepticism in the UK. We may recall that this type of euroscepticism rejects the very idea of European integration or cooperation (or, considering the geographical status of the UK as an island, perhaps even Europe as such) and if not entirely dependent on generational change, this type of euroscepticism is, similarly to Easton's aforementioned category of diffuse attitudes, at least very rooted.

The persistency of these diverse types of euroscepticism characterising the EU's member states is a pessimistic conclusion for EU-leaders hoping to be able to rely on 'Plan Democracy, Dialogue and Debate' to bring the Union closer to Frenchmen, Danes, Britons and 22 other nationalities. Most likely, it is a win-lose dilemma. If in response to the French no to the Constitutional Treaty, politicians try to accommodate the critique of a lack of social engagement by the Union, they may succeed in making the French more content, but they are simultaneously likely to increase euroscepticism in the United Kingdom, as Britons do not share the wish for

a more social Europe and would rather be worried about the initiatives' consequence for the EU's budget (utilitarian euroscepticism) or national social policy (sovereignty-based euroscepticism). What the EU-populations want from cooperation is very different. This not only poses difficulty for Plan D. It also poses difficulty for what is perhaps today the most popular discourse among many EU-leaders seeking a way forward for the Union: the EU has to focus on producing concrete results in areas where citizens want the EU to act.¹⁵ Not surprisingly in light of the above account, however, the latest Eurobarometer survey indicated that peoples in the Union's member states want EU action in very diverse fields: In Germany, for instance, 74 percent believe unemployment to be one of the two major issues of today. A mere eight percent shares that opinion in Ireland. 32 percent in Denmark mentions terrorism. This figure is but one percent in Lithuania (Eurobarometer 64, 2005).

This paper conceptualised euroscepticism as a multifaceted phenomenon, containing four distinct dimensions—utility, ideology, sovereignty-based and principled—that manifest themselves with different strengths in the member states of the European Union. Depending on what type(s) of scepticism is prevalent and prominent in a country, public reactions to events on the EU-agenda vary considerably.

As the level of principled euroscepticism is generally low, the future of euroscepticism depends very much on the direction that the EU is taking. Bringing the public in, and being close to the citizens, are prominent EU-priorities at the time of writing. But if the EU aims to continue as a unity in all regards, while being proactive and productive, its leaders may, at least in the foreseeable future, have to accept that they cannot all leave the negotiation table as a winner in the eyes of their citizens. What people want from the EU is simply very different. To their consolation, this is not some unique pathology of the Union; it is a perfectly normal – and healthy – trait of any democratic political system.

¹⁵ Recently, for instance, the Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen (Liberal Party) has called for a 'Europe of Results'; see [<http://www.stm.dk/index.asp?d=2569&n=0&o=2&s=1>].

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Annex 1: List of used Eurobarometer polls:

- 1985: Eurobarometer 23 & 24
- 1987: Eurobarometer 28
- 1988: Eurobarometer 29
- 1992: Eurobarometer 37
- 1994: Eurobarometer 41
- 1995: Eurobarometer 43 & 44
- 1996: Eurobarometer 45
- 1997: Eurobarometer 48
- 1999: Eurobarometer 51
- 2000: Eurobarometer 53
- 2001: Eurobarometer 55 & 56
- 2002: Eurobarometer 57 & 58
- 2004: Eurobarometer 61
- 2005: Eurobarometer 63 & 64
- 2005: Flash Eurobarometer 171

Annex 2: Justification of indicators

IDEOLOGY

Dissatisfaction with EU democracy: If citizens are dissatisfied with the level of democracy in the EU, this arguably points to a perception that it is important for something like the EU to be democratic. The existence and role of the EU is recognised, and preoccupations are with the way the process is undertaken. In the paper's optic, this is, if not a specifically post-materialist concern, then a particular variant of ideological euroscepticism more broadly.

EU priorities – 3 selected sub-questions: 'The EU should be closer to its citizens'; 'The EU should focus on giving more help to poor and socially excluded in the EU'; 'The EU should allocate less attention to economics and more to social justice'. Citizen responses to these poll questions are taken to indicate whether there is fertile ground in a case-country for value-based criticism of the EU-of-the-day.

Enlargement criteria – selected sub-question: 'New members should accept all that has already been decided upon in the EU'. This question indicates whether a population shares a desire for a rather close and homogenous Union, which is taken to reflect the ideological concern that cooperation should take place among countries with similar values.

UTILITY

Benefit from membership: Perceptions of general utility from EU-cooperation as well as perceptions of benefit in specific economic areas are direct indicators of utilitarian euroscepticism.

Fears connected to integration – 3 selected sub-questions: 'Richer countries will have to pay for the rest'; 'Our country will lose social benefits'; 'The EU's development will bring about a deeper economic crisis'. These indicators point to fears that the EU will become more costly.

Enlargement criteria – 2 selected sub-questions: 'New members should be able to pay their share of the EU-budget'; 'New members should not be an economic burden to existing members'. The questions indicate whether an economic rationale underpins one of the most central issues facing the integration process (enlargement).

SOVEREIGNTY

Support for supranational project – 3 selected sub-questions: 'Do you support ideas of uniting Western Europe?'; 'Do you support the creation of an EU-government responsible to the European Parliament?' and 'Do you support moves towards political union'. These questions survey attitudes towards supranational cooperation in the EU, which involves the pooling of national sovereignty in the EU-institutions.

Level of EU decision-making: This Eurobarometer question surveys attitudes towards granting the EU decision-making power in a wide number of areas. The percentage replying that decision-making should stay the exclusive competence of the nation-state is indicative of sovereignty-based euroscepticism.

Fears connected with integration – 2 selected sub-questions: 'The EU will undermine (our country's) existence' and '(Our country's) national identity will be lost' – combined with the percentage of citizens expecting these developments to happen – tell us something about sovereignty-based euroscepticism.

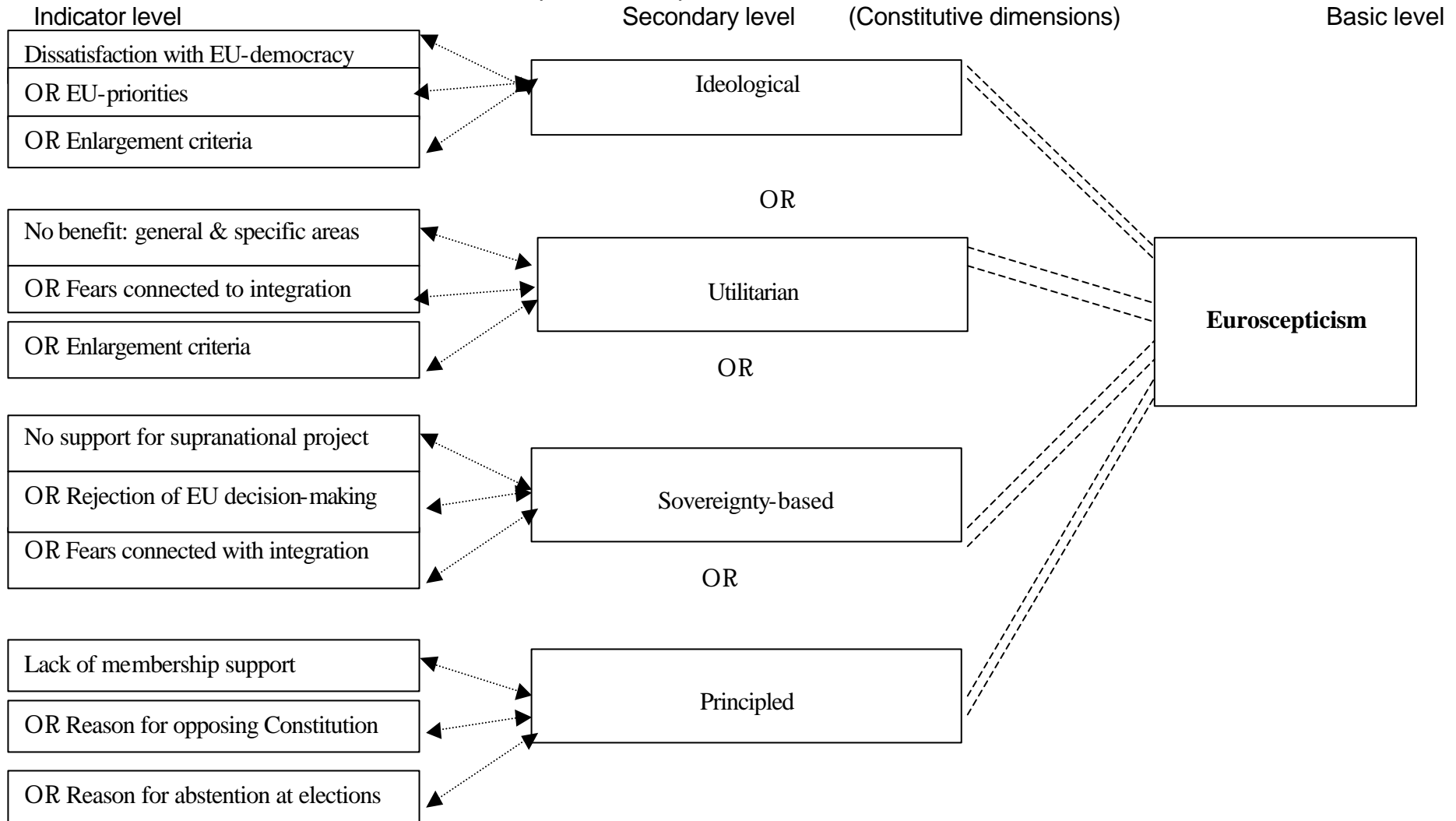
PRINCIPLED

Support for membership: Citizens thinking membership in itself is a bad thing are expected not to support the functioning and/or rationale of the EU-of-the-day.

Reason for opposing the Constitution – selected sub-question: 'I am against Europe/European construction/European integration'. This is a direct indicator of principled euroscepticism

Reason for abstention at elections to the European Parliament – selected sub-questions: 'I am against Europe/European construction/European integration'. Again a direct indicator of principled euroscepticism

Annex 3: The three-level structure of the concept of euroscepticism



Builds on Goertz 2005. Legend: Substitutability; Ontological; OR is the logical term for family resemblance