

Master Thesis Defence

The Eurosceptic Misfit - Popular Euroscepticism and Electoral Support for Eurosceptic Parties

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Overview

1. Motivation

- ▶ The phenomenon of the “Eurosceptic misfit”
- ▶ A gap in the research field

2. Methodology

- ▶ The data set
- ▶ The statistical models

3. Findings

- ▶ Eurosceptic misfit across time
- ▶ Eurosceptic misfit across regions
- ▶ Regression models

4. Conclusion

1. Motivation

The phenomenon of the “Euroseptic misfit”

- ▶ Wide gap between popular levels of Eurosepticism and the aggregate vote share received by Euroseptic parties
- ▶ First mentioned by Taggart (1998)
 - ▶ He suspected the translation of Euroseptic attitudes into Euroseptic vote was driven by national contextual factors

Motivation 1: Understanding national contextual drivers of the “Euroseptic misfit” is a puzzle-piece in understanding the political impact of Eurosepticism

A gap in the research field

- ▶ Literature on Euroscepticism mainly revolves around:
 - ▶ Categorisation of Euroscepticism
 - ▶ Determinants of Euroscepticism in individuals
- ▶ The Eurosceptic misfit has received no thorough scholarly attention outside a few mentions (e.g. Taggart & Sczerbiak, 2002; Verney, 2011)

Motivation 2: Possibility to make a contribution to an underdeveloped part of Euroscepticism literature

2. Methodology

2.1. The data set

I created my own study data set from

- ▶ National results of European Parliament elections from 1979 to 2009
- ▶ Eurobarometer data adjacent to each election round
- ▶ Euromanifesto data on the political position of parties in the European parliament elections
- ▶ This yielded a strongly unbalanced panel which had
 - ▶ 110 observations
 - ▶ 27 unique panel units
 - ▶ 7 time periods

2.2. The statistical models

► Models

- Fixed effects, random effects (and pooled OLS)

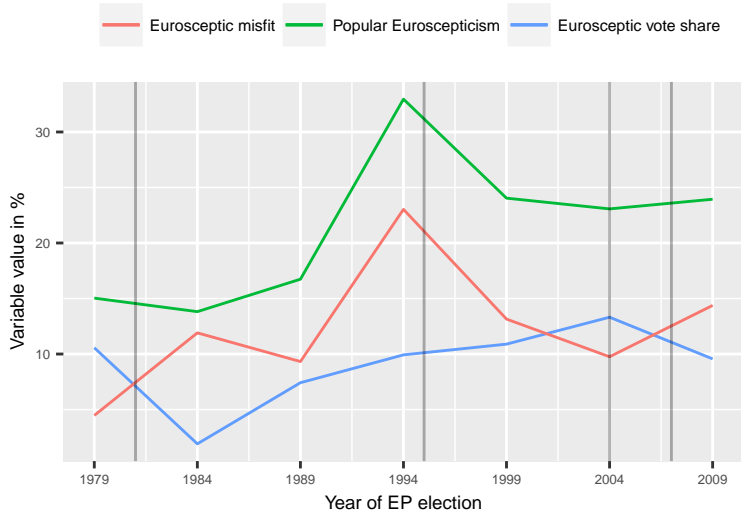
- **Dependent variable:** share of voters holding Eurosceptic attitudes - sum of the vote share which all Eurosceptic parties received jointly

► Independent variables

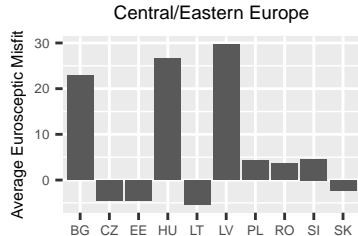
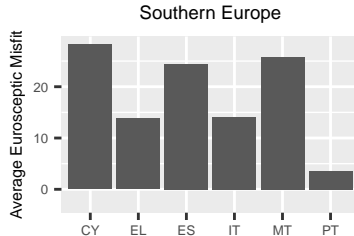
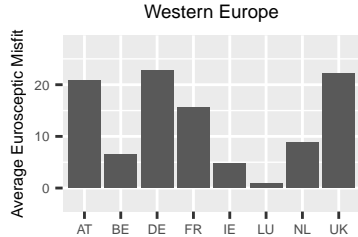
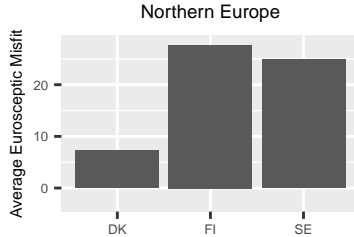
- Two measures of Eurosceptic attitudes
- Party system polarisation
- Effective number of parties
- Membership duration in the EU
- Location in Central and Eastern Europe

3. Findings

3.1. Average Eurosceptic misfit across time



3.2. Eurosceptic misfit across regions



3.3. Regression models

Table 1: Regression results

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Euroseptic Misfit	
	FE (1)	RE (2)
General Eurosepticism	0.48*** (0.10)	0.45*** (0.09)
Instrumental Eurosepticism	0.38*** (0.06)	0.43*** (0.05)
Polarisation Index	-1.52* (0.84)	-1.92** (0.74)
Effective Number of Parties	0.02 (0.12)	-0.06 (0.10)
Membership Duration	0.08 (0.08)	0.04 (0.06)
Central/Eastern European		-5.52* (3.09)
Constant		0.57

4. Conclusion

- ▶ The Eurosceptic misfit has stayed relatively constant over time, except for a spike in 1994
- ▶ Eurosceptic misfit considerably smaller in CEE countries
- ▶ Eurosceptic vote share generally fails to “catch up” with increases in popular Eurosceptic attitudes
- ▶ Higher degrees of party polarisation shrink the Eurosceptic misfit

Thank you for listening!

Please check out my Github repository for all source codes for the analysis and presentation documents:

github.com/mberneaud/EuroscepticMisfitMasterThesis

Extra: Model considerations

- ▶ Combination of pooled OLS, fixed effects and random effects models used in the thesis
 - ▶ Fixed effects to cleanly isolate causal effects (read: removing unobserved heterogeneity) to measure country-specific variation
 - ▶ Random effects to allow for inclusion of time-invariant variables (like region) and higher efficiency
 - ▶ Pooled OLS for comparison