

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS ON EU-RELEVANT REFERENDUMS

An Alternative to Representation: Preferences for Citizens As Political Decision-Makers in Germany, Sergiu GHERGHINA, Goethe University Frankfurt, ghergina@soz.uni-frankfurt.de, Brigitte GEISSEL, Goethe University Frankfurt, geissel@soz.uni-frankfurt.de

In recent decades increasing attention is dedicated in the literature to citizens' preferences for alternative models of political decision-making. Most of these studies either tried to describe these preferences or to link them with political behavior. However, it only marginally referred to who these citizens are and why they display a certain preference. To partially address this void in the literature, our paper investigates the determinants of preferences for citizens as decision-makers by using individual-level data from a survey conducted in autumn 2014 on a probability representative sample in Germany. The survey answers indicate that almost one quarter of the respondents (approximately 700) have a clear preference towards citizens as decision-makers while the rest either favor representative / expert democracy or have mixed preferences. Our paper tests the extent to which interest in politics, media consumption, civic engagement, and socio-economic status (SES) can explain the preference for citizens as decision-makers. The results indicate that low satisfaction with democracy, a heavy critique of the Parliament as the main law-making body, and high interest in politics are more likely to favor the preference for citizens as decision-makers. At the same time, the SES factors do not play a role in this preference, i.e. rich people, less educated and older do not prefer citizens as decision-makers.

Key Words: referendums, democracy, political decision-makers, political participation, Germany
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Attitudes Towards European Integration at Times of Crisis: The Case of Greece, Dimitris TSAROUHAS, Bilkent University, dimitris@bilkent.edu.tr, Georgios KARYOTIS, University of Glasgow

The pace and legitimacy of the European Integration project has, to some extent, always been held at the hands of the public, with over 45 referendums held in the past five decades in Member States. However, the Eurozone crisis and the recent 'Brexit' vote in the United Kingdom have provided new impetus for exploring how attitudes towards the EU develop. Using Greece as a case study, this paper analyses the drivers of attitudes towards European integration, focussing on how crisis dynamics affect support for further unification. The paper draws on original and pertinent survey evidence collected between 2010 and 2015 through representative telephone surveys. The analysis synthesises insights from political behaviour, crisis management and the Europeanisation theory to test a range of relevant hypotheses. Findings demonstrate that public evaluations on the causes, severity, responsibility, and responses to the Greek debt crisis are key factors of support for the EU project, alongside trust and other political values associated with authoritarianism, multiculturalism and globalisation. The discussion explores these results and their theoretical and comparative implications.

Key Words: Greece, Europeanisation, referendums, debt crisis, attitudes towards EU, EU integration
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Consequences of National Referendums for the EU's Legitimacy, Richard ROSE, University of Strathclyde Glasgow, richard.rose@strath.ac.uk

The European Union has relied for its legitimacy on the absolute value of European unity and the instrumental value of dealing effectively with interdependent problems of national security, politics and economics that no country can solve on its own. The EU's policies for the economy and immigration have produced a rise in votes for parties protesting against their government's acceptance of EU policies. There is also a rising demand for national referendums to mandate their national government to reject, in advance or to nullify after the fact, acceptance of EU policies on such issues as immigration. Since 2014 there have been national referendums in Greece, the Netherlands, Denmark, the UK, Hungary and Switzerland. Each reverses the EU definition of the competence of national governments as subsidiarity to the claims of the EU and asserts the superior authority of a national government when its citizens disagree with what is done in their name as European citizens subject to EU authority. National referendums enable people with dual citizenships to use their national citizenship to challenge EU policies adopted against their preferences. The 2016 UK referendum resolved this conflict by the UK acting legitimately by EU standards, invoking Article 50 to withdraw from the EU. However, most national referendums threaten something else: a challenge to EU legitimacy by a country that proposes to remain an EU member state. This paper will contrast older theories of how EU institutions legitimately represent states and their citizens with new challenges arising from the demand for and use of national referendums; explain why this demand is rising as an alternative to the electoral challenge of protest parties; and discuss the alternative strategies that the EU has adopted in response, and their consequences.

Key Words: Brexit, referendums, EU integration
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The Conspicuous Absence of Local Government during the EU Referendum Campaign, Christopher HUGGINS, Keele University, c.i.huggins@keele.ac.uk

The voice of local government during the EU referendum campaign was largely absent. This is surprising given the impact of the EU on English local government. Local authorities are responsible for the implementation of 70% of EU policy. They are main beneficiary of the EU's Structural and Investment Funds. EU rules, such as on procurement and state aid, affect the delivery of local services. Local authorities are also heavily engaged at the European level, both formally through recognition in the Committee of the Regions, and informally through Brussels offices to lobby EU institutions and in transnational networking with other localities to access EU funding, influence EU policy and share policy innovation with European partners. Local government was therefore heavily invested in the outcome of the referendum, yet the local dimension to the UK's relationship with the EU was

overlooked while the campaign was dominated by discussions on national sovereignty, immigration, economic prosperity and international trade. Drawing on centralization, local leadership and local level Europeanization literatures, this paper explores why one of the most Europeanized parts of the British polity struggled to find a voice and was largely absent from the EU referendum campaign.

Key Words: local government, referendums, Brexit

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Direct Democracy, the Structure of Government and Welfare State Expansion 1930-2000, André WALTER, University of St. Gallen, andre.walter@unisg.ch

The existing literature on welfare state development holds a pessimistic view on the role of direct democracy for welfare state generosity. More specifically, the literature argues that referendums constrain the extension of social security spending while pro-welfare initiatives are mostly rejected. In contrast, I argue that the effect of initiatives on welfare state extension is conditional on the political environment. More precisely, I combine insights from the political economy literature about the structure of the government with comparative welfare state research. Using panel data on social expenditure in the Swiss cantons from 1930 to 2000, I show that initiatives constrain social spending of multiparty governments but expand social spending of single party governments. In addition, I provide case evidence from the Swiss cantons to explore the causal links between initiatives and social expenditure.

Key Words: referendums, welfare state, Switzerland, public spending

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EU Referenda: What to Learn from the Swiss Case, Eva THOMANN, Heidelberg University, eva.thomann@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de, Eva HEIDBREder, University of Dusseldorf, Isabelle STADELMANN-STEFFEN, University of Bern, Fritz SAGER, University of Bern

The recent Brexit vote has reinforced scholarly interest in the role of European Union (EU) referenda for European integration. This research note argues that Swiss experience with EU-related direct democratic votes represents a critical case for the study of EU referenda in the present era. The rich body of related research provides a useful starting point for exploring some of the most pressing questions in research on EU referenda. Therefore, this research note discusses three ways in which insights from Switzerland can contribute to this research. First, it helps us understand the circumstances under which popular votes effectively serve political and / or legitimizing purposes. Second, we derive insights on the role of campaigning, the multidimensionality and lacking predictability of the outcomes of popular votes, and propose methodological improvements. Third, we discuss the implications of popular votes for the legitimacy of EU integration as well as their mindful implementation.

Key Words: referendums, Switzerland, Brexit, European integration

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EU Referendums: What Can we Learn from the Swiss Case, Eva HEIDBREDER, Free University Berlin, Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg, eva.heidbreder@ovgu.de, Isabelle STADELMANN-STEFFEN, University of Bern, Eva THOMANN, University of Heidelberg, Fritz SAGER, University of Bern

The recent Brexit vote has reinforced scholarly interest in the role of referendums on European Union (EU) matters. This research note argues that when analysing these referendums, more systematic reference should be made to existing research on direct democracy, especially from the Swiss and US context. Therefore, this research note scrutinises the research questions raised, explanatory and methodological models commonly applied in research on EU-referendums, in order to pinpoint insights that have been missed. Offering a comparative perspective on theoretical approaches, empirical findings and methodological innovations in referendum research allows identifying more accurately scope conditions under which referendums operate in the EU. Particularly, the dynamics of referendums depend strongly on the wider democratic institutional framework. Methodological challenges for predicting polling outcomes, and the interplay between direct democracy and populist appeals also need more explicit consideration in EU referendum research.

Key Words: referendums, Switzerland, Brexit, European integration
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Incongruence Between European, National and Regional Elections in the European Multilevel Electoral System, Arjan SCHAKEL, Maastricht University, a.schakel@maastrichtuniversity.nl

The number of countries holding elections for the European Parliament has increased from 9 in 1979 to 28 in 2014. Since the 1970s, 19 European Union member states hold or have introduced elections to a regional tier of government. The electoral transformation has been accompanied by shifts in authority. The stakes in supranational and subnational elections have increased because substantial authority has shifted from the national level to the regional and European levels. Opportunities have increased for voters to express their opinion about policies and governments across electoral arenas. But in how far represent supranational and subnational election outcomes a deviation from electoral behaviour in the national political arena? In this paper I will explore dissimilarity in the vote between European, national and regional elections. By employing various incongruence measures I explore where, when and how the European vote differs from the national and regional vote in the European regions. Dissimilarity in the vote is related to various factors which are thought to impact on congruence between electoral outcomes. Special attention will be given to electoral timing of an election vis-à-vis other elections, authority endowed to regional tiers of government, and territorial cleavages. I assess the impact of these variables by exploiting a unique dataset which contains European, national and regional election results disaggregated at the regional level for 180 regions in eight EU member states from 1979 until 2014.

Key Words: elections, European Parliament, tiers of government

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The Limited Impact of Negative Social Media Campaigning in the UK's EU Referendum, Simon USHERWOOD, University of Surrey, s.usherwood@surrey.ac.uk, Katharine WRIGHT, Newcastle University

The 2016 EU referendum was typical of such exercises in the mobilisation of a very wide range of subjects and approaches to secure a victory by both sides, often with only limited relevance to the nominal question on the ballot paper. One aspect of this was the continued use of negative campaigning – that is, ad hominem attacks on opponents – as a means of discrediting the other side and to reinforce more positive associations among one's own supporters. This paper explores how this negative campaigning approach fitted into the Twitter activity of the main groups in the referendum and the degree to which the public engaged with it. The results highlight the limited capacity for negative campaigning to work in this environment and highlights the limitations of constructing and supporting spaces for constructive debate on European integration.

Key Words: media, social media, Brexit, referendums

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Motivated Reasoning and Voter Behaviour in EU Referendums, Derek BEACH, University of Aarhus, derek@ps.au.dk, Daniel FINKE, University of Aarhus

In this paper, we argue that EU-skeptic voters are more likely to engage in *motivated reasoning* than EU-friendly voters because of stronger held underlying attitudes towards the EU. Based on evidence from studies of EU-skepticism and public opinion towards the EU, we should expect that anti-EU attitudes are affect-based, meaning that voters would hold them more strongly (Boomgarden et al. 2011). We assess the effects of stronger held attitudes on voting behavior, assessing: 1) whether motivated reasoning reinforces the relevance of issue voting and reduces the relevance of party endorsements for EU-skeptic respondents (H1), whether EU-skeptic voters are more certain about what they should vote and they make up their minds earlier because of motivated reasoning (H2), whether EU-skeptic respondents are more prone to follow frames that confirm their ideological position (H3), and whether EU-skeptic voters feel more informed because of their selective recruitment of evidence (H4). While most of the political psychology literature that has assessed motivated reasoning effects have utilized experimental data, we explore whether we find evidence of these effects in a real-world environment using survey data collected by the authors in the 2015 JHA referendum in Denmark. We find evidence that suggests that EU-skeptical voters were more susceptible to arguments that matched their underlying issue attitudes, were more certain of their vote, and overall engaged in more issue-voting. The implication of our findings is that more information provided by a referendum campaign will not necessarily convince skeptics. Indeed, it might paradoxically make them more certain that they will vote no.

Key Words: referendums, Brexit, Denmark, Euroscepticism, attitudes towards EU

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National Referendums Challenge the Sustainability of the EU, Richard ROSE,
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The European Union has relied for its legitimacy on institutions of representative democracy, in which a Council of nationally elected governments and nationally elected members of the European Parliament take decisions binding on EU citizens. However, at the national level there is a rise in votes for parties protesting against their government's acceptance of EU policies. There is also a rising demand for national referendums to mandate their national government to reject, in advance or nullify after the fact acceptance of EU policies on such issues as immigration. Since 2014 there have been national referendums in Greece, the Netherlands, the UK, Hungary and Switzerland. Each claims to invoke the accountability of national governments to national electorates as superior to the additional accountability of their government to multi-national EU institutions authorized by EU treaties. The 2016 UK referendum resolved this conflict by a majority voting to leave the EU. Much more widespread is the threat to EU authority posed by European Council members mandated by national referendums to reject EU policies. The paper will contrast older theories of how EU institutions represent their citizens with the new challenge to the sustainability of the EU due to the spread of the demand for and use of national referendums. It will draw on discussion in a Workshop with academics and policymakers that I am organising in January, 2017 at the Robert Schuman Centre of the European University Institute.

Key Words: referendums, Brexit, attitudes towards EU, EU integration,
Greece, Netherlands, Hungary, Switzerland
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Politicizing Perceptions: UK Citizens' Perceptions of Income and Support for UK and European Union Governance, Kathryn SIMPSON, Manchester
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Stunningly in the UK, there has been a vote to leave the European Union (23 June 2016). This marks a culmination of challenges to the UK government and its position on both the market and the EU. The rise of both the BNP and UKIP as anti-EU parties (not to exclude some of the Conservatives' own membership); the recently troubled leadership of self-identified democratic socialist, Jeremy Corbyn, as Leader of the Labour Party; and the Brexit vote have given rise to deep concerns that UK politics has veered from decades-old 'left-right politics.' The challenges appear to come from a number of sources but underpinning them are citizens' perceptions of the UK and its economic and political performance - traditional cornerstones of effective, representational, and legitimate government. Therefore, this paper investigates the politicization of UK citizens' perceptions of national inequality and the effect this has on individuals' support for both the UK and EU governments using the British Election Study (BES). I argue that individuals' perceptions of national economic performance can be partially understood as a

function of politicization. That is, in addition to individual attributes, individuals' perceptions of national economic performance are potentially shaped by parties, politicians, and the mass media which provide citizens with both relevant information - as well as ideological frames. It follows that the capacity of media or elite/party to bias individuals' perceptions of national performance would significantly reshape how we think about the role of these political intermediaries in shaping public perceptions of national performance as well as determining EU support.

Key Words: Brexit, attitudes towards EU, political parties, British Election Study, voting

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Reconciling 'Remain' and 'Leave': Northern Ireland and the EU Referendum, Mary MURPHY, University College Cork, maryc.murphy@ucc.ie

The UK referendum decision to leave the European Union (EU) in June 2016 exposes a marked political, ideological, socio-economic, demographic and geographic divisions across the UK., Scotland, Northern Ireland and London voted to Remain. Interestingly however, the unionist and nationalist communities in Northern Ireland did not vote homogeneously (as has traditionally been the case) in this referendum. Although nationalists were more likely to vote Remain, approximately one third of unionists also did. Given Northern Ireland's history of conflict, this vote demonstrates some unity of preference across the political divide. The legitimacy of Northern Ireland's vote however, is challenged by the fact that it conflicts with the overall UK wide vote. This begs questions about how to accommodate legitimate regional democratic preferences with the broader contrasting national context, and also during negotiations between the UK and the EU. For all the recent political progress in Northern Ireland, the region still remains politically vulnerable. That vulnerability may be challenged if the EU referendum result is not handled sensitively and creatively. This paper examines how political leaders and policy actors in various settings (i.e. Northern Ireland, UK, Republic of Ireland and the EU) might achieve accountability to the Northern Ireland majority while respecting the national legitimacy of the overall vote. The use of creative and constructive ambiguity, and agreement on 'special' arrangements for Northern Ireland vis-à-vis the Republic of Ireland post-Brexit may be the most effective means of securing stability and responding to the Northern Ireland majority.

Key Words: Brexit, Northern Ireland

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Referendums in the European Union: Defective by Birth?, Francis CHENEVAL, University of Zürich, francis.cheneval@philos.uzh.ch, Mónica FERRÍN, University of Zürich and Collegio Carlo Alberto

On the basis of a combined examination of normative claims and empirical evidence this paper discusses minimal criteria for the institutional design of referendums on EU-internal issues. These criteria concern the mandatory (vs. facultative), the simultaneous (vs. serial) and binding (vs. consultative) nature of referenda. The proposed criteria are demanding, both for the member states and the

European Union, but experiences show that the EU is in fact participating actively in EU-issues referendums and member states as well as the EU need to surpass the current arbitrary use of plebiscites by governments. On a broader scale the paper contributes to the insight that it might be time to fully address the use of direct democracy at the national and EU levels.

Key Words: referendums, attitudes towards EU

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Remain or Abstain? How Did UK Environmental NGOs Engage with the Bright Side of the EU, Viviane GRAVEY, Queen's University Belfast, v.gravey@qub.ac.uk, Nathalie BERNY, Sciences Po Bordeaux

It is widely acknowledged that Environmental NGOs (ENGO) have played a key part in the development of a policy that remains greatly valued by EU citizens. The difficulties faced by British environmental NGOs in the EU referendum campaign questions however the sustainability of a policy which needs support beyond the Brussels 'bubble'. The recent EU referendum posed a quandary to the UK ENGO sector: on the one hand, it had profoundly engaged with the European Union over the last forty years – from lobbying for policy change to using EU legal remedies against pollution and habitats destruction. On the other hand, environmental NGOs, despite their large membership base, have struggled to be heard in broader societal debates. As such, the UK ENGO sector stood to lose either EU rules and governance mechanisms by abstaining from a pro-EU stance, or support from a broad swath of the British electorate if supporting *Remain*. This paper compares how different groups such as WWF UK, Friends of the Earth EWNI, RSPB and the National Trust grappled with this dilemma and chose whether and how to engage with European issues. Drawing on literature on organizational sociology and social movements, it analyses how the different groups defined their referendum strategy internally and in coordination across the ENGO sector and how they communicated on European questions with their members and the broader public. Our analysis builds on both a study of the materials produced by the different groups and a series of interviews within the ENGO sector.

Key Words: Brexit, environment, NGOs

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Remain or Abstain? How Did UK Environmental NGOs Engage with the Bright Side of the EU, Viviane GRAVEY, Queen's University Belfast, v.gravey@qub.ac.uk, Nathalie BERNY, Sciences Po Bordeaux

The recent EU referendum posed a quandary to the UK ENGO sector: on the one hand, it had profoundly engaged with the European Union over the last forty years - from lobbying for policy change to using EU legal remedies against pollution and habitats destruction. On the other hand, environmental NGOs, despite their large membership base, have struggled to be heard in broader societal debates. As such, the UK ENGO sector stood to lose either EU rules and governance mechanisms by abstaining from a pro-EU stance, or support from a broad swath of

the British electorate if supporting Remain. This paper compares how different groups such as WWF UK, Friends of the Earth EWNI, RSPB and the National Trust grappled with this dilemma and chose whether and how to engage with European issues. Drawing on literature on organizational sociology and social movements, it analyses how the different groups defined their referendum strategy internally and in coordination across the ENGO sector and how they communicated on European questions with their members and the broader public. Our analysis builds on both a study of the materials produced by the different groups and a series of interviews within the ENGO sector.

Key Words: Brexit, NGOs, environment

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Think Nationally, Vote Locally: National Issues and Voting Behaviour in Local, Regional and European Elections in Spain, Laura CABEZA PÉREZ, SOCLIFE - University of Cologne, cabeza@wiso.uni-koeln.de

The second-order election model is among the most influential conceptual frameworks for analyzing sub-national and supra-national election results. Yet, most studies focus on its aggregate predictions. According to this model, election results at any level are a by-product of the national government popularity because, instead of holding accountable sub-national or supra-national representatives, citizens presumably decide whether to vote and for whom on the grounds of the first-order *national* arena. Using data from election surveys in Spain, this article develops and tests a micro-level approach to the study of second-order effects in sub-national and supra-national elections. It is argued that in every election at local, regional or European level there are individuals that decide their vote – or whether to vote or not – on the basis of national considerations and individuals that make their decisions based on level-specific issues. Each election will show a different distribution of citizens that vote on the basis of national *versus* level-specific issues. Using a new dataset that combines data from a set of election surveys in Spain, this article analyzes (1) which individual characteristics encourage citizens to ‘think nationally’ in local, regional and European elections, and (2) whether the core assumptions of the second-order election model hold at the individual level leading to differences in terms of voting behaviour between those citizens that ‘think nationally’ and those who do not. Doing so, this research contributes to recent efforts that have already recognized the need to identify the individual mechanisms behind the second-order election model.

Key Words: elections, voting behaviour

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Watching the Gathering Storm: The EU Seen through Party Manifestos 2010 to 2015, Ruth BREEZE, University of Navarra, rbreeze@unav.es

The Brexit vote came as a shock to many observers, but can be situated within a longer-term trend of Euro-scepticism among UK politicians which appears to have been accentuated after the financial crisis of 2008. This paper uses discourse analysis supported by corpus linguistic techniques to trace patterns in the way the

EU is represented in election manifestos from the major British political parties (Conservative, Labour, LibDem, UKIP, Green, SNP and Plaid Cymru) from the 2010 and 2015 elections. In particular, an increasingly hostile attitude towards the EU is found in the Conservative manifestos, linked to a critique of the Labour party's supposed pro-EU stance. Interestingly, those references to the EU which are not critical are generally framed competitively, with frequent use of superlatives to assert the superiority of some aspect of the UK over the rest of Europe. Over the same time period, discourses on migration associated with EU countries also took on greater importance in both Labour and Conservative discourses. However, non-UK-wide parties adopted a very different discursive stance. In particular, around the years of the Scottish Referendum, the SNP developed a representation of Scotland as an "EU nation" operating on an equal footing with other EU countries, which runs in parallel with a heightened focus of discontent centring on "Westminster". The evidence from these texts sheds considerable insight into the years immediately before the EU Referendum campaign, and suggests that the tensions and divisions observed there had been intensifying dramatically during that period.

Key Words: political parties, Brexit, attitudes towards EU, Scotland
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West Meets East: The Case of the Big-Bang Enlargement and the Rise in UK Euroscepticism 2004-2016, Przemyslaw BISKUP, University of Warsaw,
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The Big-Bang Enlargement of 2004-2007 has proven to be a major source of tensions in national and EU-level politics. This paper will attempt to examine the mode of development and identify specific sources of transformation of the enlargement fatigue into a highly popular Eurosceptical stance in the United Kingdom as one of the key EU members and original advocates of the widely-open borders. Importantly, Euroscepticism in the UK is a complex phenomenon to be explained both in party-politics and national-identity terms. The paper will argue that while it is a principled and well-argued stance that has been legitimising British Euroscepticism since 1960s, it was the Big-Bang Enlargement fatigue that finally made it politically viable. The issue has become central since the 2010 and 2015 General Election campaigns, which have been decisive for the future of the UKIP as a respectable party and the fate of UK's EU referendum. The issue also played a central role in the 2016 EU referendum, and its final result in support of Brexit. The paper shall focus on the comparative manifesto and party-platform analysis of the leading UK parties: the Tories, Labour, UKIP and LibDems, to be focused on issues connected to Euroscepticism and immigration from the "new" EU countries in years 2001-2016. It will incorporate the data collected during the Warsaw University-based research project conducted in 2011-2014.

Key Words: Euroscepticism, Brexit, elections, national identity
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