

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Bakalářská práce

**Analysis of British relations with the European Union
during the last three decades:
Is Britain becoming increasingly eurosceptic? Will Britain
pull out of the European Union eventually?**

Irina Kruhmalova

Plzeň 2014

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Katedra politologie a mezinárodních vztahu

Studijní program Mezinárodní teritoriální studia

Studijní obor Mezinárodní vztahy – britská a americká studia

Bakalářská práce

**Analysis of British relations with the European Union
during the last three decades:
Is Britain becoming increasingly eurosceptic? Will Britain
pull out of the European Union eventually?**

Irina Kruhmalova

Vedoucí práce:

Kumar Alok, M.A., M.B.A

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Fakulta filozofická Západočeské univerzity v Plzni

Plzeň 2014

Čestné prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucího bakalářské práce za použití pramenů a literatury uvedených v příložené bibliografii.

Plzeň, duben 2014

.....

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my honest acknowledgement to Eliza Szupryczynska, M.A., the English lector and my friend, for her time and provided information about British politics, also for her editor services.

Table of contents

1. Introduction	3
2. The Eurosceptic concept	5
2.1. Definition of the Euroscepticism	6
2.2. British Euroscepticism	9
3. The end of 1980s and 1990s in Britain - a strong political disagreement with EC	12
3.1. Margaret Thatcher's Bruges speech	13
3.2. Debates before the Maastricht Treaty	16
3.2.1. Opposition against the Political Union	16
3.2.2. Challenging the Economic and Monetary Union	18
3.3. John Major's government	20
4. Labour government: Anglo-Europe and Euroscepticism	23
4.1. Labour Party's attempt to reassert Anglo-Europeanism	24
4.2. Continuous British exceptionalism	27
5. Contemporary British Euroscepticism	30
5.1. UKIP	31
5.2. Cameron-Clegg's government	35
5.3. To stay or leave: referendum about membership of the EU	39
6. Conclusion	43
7. Bibliography	46
7.1. Printed sources	46
7.2. Internet sources	48
8. Abstract	51
9. Resumé	52
10. Appendices	53

List of abbreviations

CAP – Common Agricultural Policy

EC – European Community

ECSC – European Coal and Steel Community

EDM – Early Day Motion

EEAS – European External Action Service

EMI – Economic and Monetary Institution

EMU – Economic and Monetary Union

EP – European Parliament

ERM – European Rate Mechanism

EU – European Union

IGC – Intergovernmental Conference

LibDem – Liberal Democrat

MEP – Member of European Parliament

MP – Member of Parliament

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

SEA – Single European Act

UK – United Kingdom

UKIP – United Kingdom Independence Party

U.S. – United States

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WEU – Western European Union

1. Introduction

This bachelor thesis deals with the British political mood towards the European Union which has been labelled "*the Euroscepticism*". It is focused on the historical development and changes of this process in Great Britain and analyses the relationship between the country and the EU during the offices of different governments. The central objective is to describe the Euroscepticism, to name the main reasons for its growth and try to find an answer to the main question of this thesis: Will Britain eventually pull out of the European Union?

The Euroscepticism is a widely known political phenomenon which is characterized by a strong opposition towards the European integration process. The main source of the Euroscepticism has been the notion that integration weakens the nation state. It has become apparent that citizens have become more aware of the policy decisions being made at the EU level (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008: 5). This political movement is widespread in a number of different European countries and among different governments, but its roots stem from British political life. The thesis also deals with British exceptionalism which can be seen as a reason of the Euroscepticism.

The first part of this work examines a variety of the Euroscepticism's definitions created by different authors. Furthermore, the thesis defines what the Euroscepticism means, how it has emerged and what were the implications on the British political arena. However, it must be stated that there is no agreement on a single definition, which is why it is appropriate to choose one definition, around which this thesis will be constructed.

In the second chapter readers can find information about British Euroscepticism in the 1980s and 1990s. Legislative changes, such as Maastricht Treaty or implications of the Exchange Rate Mechanism, in the European Community caused an enormous critical wave in Britain. Conservative political leaders, M. Thatcher or J. Major, led their governments in a slightly reformed, but still traditional and conservative way and they did not support deeper integration into the European structure. It was a period called British state crisis in the European Community, but in reality it was a crisis of the Conservative party and political system in general. In this chapter readers also can find providing information about organizations in the Conservative Party during Major's government which influenced the growth of Euroscepticism. This thesis provides basic

arguments as to why they were the Eurosceptical and how this affected Britain's relationship with the EU.

The subsequent section introduces an attempt to reassert Great Britain as a hegemonic European country. The Prime Minister, T. Blair, created this political stance as he tried to initiate a building of huge coalitions, including both Western and Eastern European countries as an opposition towards deeper integration. His main goal was to construct Anglo-European hegemony with a special relationship with the U.S. However, his policy mainly concentrated on US-British relations, which led to the collapse of the idea of Anglo-European hegemony (Gifford 2008: 139–140).

The next chapter discusses the contemporary government which is described as a soft Eurosceptical governmental body. Since his earliest speeches, David Cameron has been marked as a Eurosceptical person. He was always one of those, who opposed Labour decisions and the common security, social, judiciary and foreign policies of the EU. When he came to power, he described himself as the Eurosceptic, but a practical and sensible one at the same time (Lynch 2011: 220–222). For better understanding of contemporary British policy towards the EU is quite important to name and discuss the main source of scepticism – United Kingdom Independence Party. While the UKIP does not have strength to rule the government, its stance is very influential in EP's elections and effectively appeals to British public in a period of weakened Coalition government.

Finally, the last section analyses Britain's attitude today towards the EU based on opinion polls and historical experience. This information will help us to achieve our main goal which is to predict the results of a possible referendum about Britain's membership of the EU.

This bachelor thesis is written using a case study design. According to Yin a case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer “how” and “why” questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study; (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context (Yin, 2008: 4–5). However, case studies have a lot of branches and, as such, this thesis operates using explanatory and single-case studies. Explanatory case studies provide further background information and help us to understand the logic of the

process and its development (Yin, 2008: 6). Single country descriptions of politics (or single-case studies) are used as the main method of writing. It is the best suited method, in this case, because it provides the base for the study of one issue - the analysis of one country and its political stance.

As this work illustrates the concept of Euroscepticism, it could appeal to the general public, the academic community of social scientists or students - especially those who are interested in the political life of Britain. Based on the single country description of politics (single-case study) readers can find information about Britain's difficulties with membership in the European Union. It should be noted that this thesis is based on a dichotomy of Euroscepticism, called hard vs. soft Euroscepticism, which will be described in the first chapter.

The main goal of this thesis is to answer the question of whether or not Britain will eventually pull out of the European Union and to provide the analysis of growing popularity of Euroscepticism.

2. The concept of Euroscepticism

2.1. Definition of Euroscepticism

The Euroscepticism is often described as opposition to an integrated Europe, which focuses on two interrelated processes – economic and political integration within Europe. This term is used to describe opponents of European integration related to both opportunity and principles (Forster 2002: 7). Across the European Union there has been a prominent and increasingly highlighted rise in critical attitudes towards integration. While criticism of European integration has always existed to varying extents in different states, the two decades since the debates surrounding the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty have witnessed a more widespread and vocal scepticism about the benefits of the European Union. This scepticism was evident in the 2005 referendums in France and the Netherlands that saw the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty and in the 2008 Irish referendum rejection of the Lisbon Treaty.¹

These processes can be divided by Taggart and Szczerbiak's classification of Euroscepticism – soft vs. hard. Hard Euroscepticism means opposition towards everything about EU integration, supports a complete withdrawal from membership and the development of a strong national policy. The soft version of this phenomenon is against some specific aspects of integration into the policies of the EU, policy outcomes or institutional features and seeks to reform the EU rather than abolish the entire project; it can be referred to as 'a defence of national interest' (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008: 2).

Szczerbiak and Taggart also discuss two main features of Euroscepticism. The first one is an extension of new policies resulting in a new populism or neo-fascism. In connection with this, Mair talks about modern politics and new policies, which are introduced by different points of view and represent popular democracy. Those steps are struggling with a constitutional one. While constitutional democracy needs institutional requirements for good governance, popular democracy depends only on the will of the people. This process causes the decline of party politics; parties became more dependent

¹ Torreblanca, Jose Ignacio – Leonard, Mark, eds (2013). The Continent-Wide Rise of Euroscepticism. *ECFR* [online]. May 2013 [cit. 12. 03. 2014]. Available from http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR79_EUROSCEPTICISM_BRIEF_AW.pdf, page 1-2, 4.

on different organisations and agencies, and afterwards are transformed into populist units thanks to national appeal (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008: 12-13; Mair in Gifford 2008: 8-9).

The second feature lies in the position and structure of political parties and the party system. An example of this is the situation in which certain members of the party are against the EU, but in general the party is not (Gifford 2008: 6). These tendencies can be seen as the alleged existence of a democratic deficit within the EU. Decisions are now often taken by unaccountable institutions rather than elected national governments. Citizens of different regions have recognised this and begun to use EU institutions to advance their own interests.²

Another effort to define the entire range of Eurosceptic possibilities is built on the distinction between European integration as an ideal, and the European Union as an existing set of institutions. Kopecky and Mudde describe Euroscepticism as one of four ideal types produced by intersecting orientations towards the European Union (EU optimism/pessimism) with orientations towards the idea of European integration (Europhilia /Europhobia.) This produces four ideal types; “*Eurorejects*” who oppose the ideal of integration and the reality of the EU, “*Euroenthusiasts*” who support both the EU and the ideal of ever closer union, “*Europragmatists*” who do not support integration, but view the EU as useful, and “*Eurosceptics*” who support the idea of integration, but not its realization through the current EU. While this conceptualization has the theoretical appeal of separating out Europe from the actual EU, this distinction often appears in actual political debate (Kopecky and Mudde 2002: 301–303).

Of course, there are more definitions of this phenomenon. Agnes Alexandre-Collier states: “*a Eurosceptic is someone who doubts the utility and viability of Economic and Political Union*” (Agnes Alexandre-Collier in Forster 2002: 2). She defines three important parts of Euroscepticism. First, it supposes that the critique is related to two interconnected processes – economic and political integration. Secondly, it links this critique to the transformation of the EC into the EU in 1993. Finally, it implies that

² Torreblanca, Jose Ignacio – Leonard, Mark, eds (2013). The Continent-Wide Rise of Euroscepticism. *ECFR* [online]. May 2013 [cit. 12. 03. 2014]. Available from http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR79_EUROSCEPTICISM_BRIEF_AW.pdf, p. 1.

Eurosceptics can be found only in the Conservative Party. Unfortunately, nowadays it is evident that this definition and its variables fail (Agnes Alexandre-Collier in Forster 2002: 2).

Recent research conducted by Anthony Forster argues that Euroscepticism has a multi-faceted nature, which is a key to longevity. It can be seen through different contexts, such as the questioning of involvement in European integration projects, doubts about membership of the EU community, the competence of some governmental bodies of the EC/the EU, disengagement and withdrawal. This study clearly shows that there is a strong division among sceptics (Forster 2002: 2).

A related view is that Euroscepticism is frequently based on a misunderstanding of developments within the European Union. In a study of the 2008 Irish referendum, for example, John O'Brennan highlighted Irish citizens' ignorance of the Lisbon Treaty's contents as being a significant cause of their rejection of the treaty (O'Brennan, 2009: 270). He argues that "*although the Irish remain among the most enthusiastic about EU membership, there remains a significant knowledge vacuum, with a large majority of citizens professing to know little or nothing about how decisions are made at the EU level and how EU institutions function*" (O'Brennan, 2009: 270). Therefore, according to this analysis, the lack of popular understanding of the European Union and European integration may leave space for political groups and parties to gain support by misrepresenting the development of integration.

In one study by Taggart and Szczerbiak, the findings were that Euroscepticism is frequently most likely to be adopted by protest-based parties that stand at the fringes of the existing party system and which are outside of government. In this view, Euroscepticism is part of a more general opposition to existing political systems and leadership structures and may be adopted by these protest-parties or populist-parties in order to secure electoral support. Taggart further argues that these parties are structures, which adopted the EU issue as a secondary appropriative issue to strengthen their position among the political core (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2008: 256-258).

The question has arisen: Why is this phenomenon so popular nowadays? The answer can be found in the work of Anthony Forster, in which he argues that the contemporary ability of Eurosceptics to create and afterward successfully use resources has been a

major factor in mounting an effective public campaign against the government. New technologies of the twenty-first century provide the easiest access to a range of resources and help Eurosceptics to more effectively challenge pro-European groups. Euroscepticism has, as a result, become a campaigning force, not simply a point of view. Opposition groups have begun to study all proposed EU decisions based on an analysis of policy-making, decisions and Treaty outcomes. All of these mean that Euroscepticism as a point of view and as a general attitude have become a political trend with an enormous research base (Forster 2002: 8).

In conclusion, it should be said, that there is no clear definition of this phenomenon. There is a big diversity in characteristics but in this analysis the concept of hard and soft Euroscepticism will be used, which is the most appropriate for further analysis.

2.2. British Euroscepticism

British Euroscepticism founded this phenomenon. Many authors conducted their research and tried to give a definition, date its formation and explain its popularity and rise, but there is still no agreement between them. This is because it is a challenge to describe a phenomenon, which grows fast and spreads even faster. This thesis operates with the most prevalent current view whilst still acknowledging others.

Mark Corner argues that the birth of British Euroscepticism can be traced back to the end of World War Two, when the European community was still feeling the impact of such a brutal and unforgiving conflict. The question for Europe was how to contain Germany and let it grow strong again without growing dangerous. The best solution was to allow it to recover the European auspices. Nowhere did this have as strong an impact as in Britain. The defeat of Nazi Germany for British people had been seen as a single-handed effort with (eventually) help from the USSR and the US, plus of course considerable contingents from the Empire/Commonwealth. There is no doubt that this perception still lives on in the British psyche. (Corner 2007: 466-468). What followed can be called a 'first period', which emerged in Macmillan's government, when the UK first applied to join the EC in 1961. This period ended with a referendum in 1975 (Forster 2002: 3). Hall, for example, argues that post-imperial crisis was one of the reasons, why Euroscepticism emerged during that period. It was characterized by the declining legitimacy of the elite,

de-alignment, electoral volatility and the enormous rise of factionalism within the main political parties. It was seen as a crisis of hegemony within Britain (Hall 1979: 15–16).

However, the overwhelming majority of scientists see the rise of this phenomenon as taking off in the 1980s, especially after Margaret Thatcher's Bruges Speech, which brought the European issue back to the forefront. This second period, around which the thesis will focus, was marked by her speech and continued opposition to the Maastricht Treaty (Forster 2002: 3).

Most recently, a contemporary period began with Cameron-Clegg's government. After years of Blair's attempt to reassert Britain as a bridge between Europe and the US, Britain found itself lost. The economic crisis in 2008 showed that European Union countries' economics were underestimated. David Cameron is now trying to gain public support and that is why he uses this hot question in his agenda (Lee and Beech, eds. 2011: 218). The discussions about a possible referendum about contemporary British attitudes towards the EU are the main focus of this work.

According to Bulpitt and Buller, there are five schools of thoughts that have divided the view of Euroscepticism in Britain, explained the problematic relationship between the UK and the EU and presented a partial or misleading picture of its influence (Bulpitt and Buller in Forster 2002: 3). The first, 'behaviouralist' school "*has focused on the importance of leadership behaviour and placed emphasis on the way in which key players have viewed the world, their attitudes and values*" (Backer and Seawright in Forster 2002: 3). Such study sees the problem of membership in weak political motivation and little commitment among the general public or the elite. Their arguments lay in a membership debate in the 1960s, when the political elite was not able to gain a majority and create a stable platform with which to introduce Britain's European Policy. However, it should be said that these studies ignore significant party and institutional considerations, which led to scepticism, and also the significance of political economic issues created around European integration (Forster 2002: 4).

The second, 'party' school focuses "*on political parties as the source of the difficulties in Britain's relationship with the Europe*" (Forster 2002: 4). The author sees the problem in the attitude of the Labour or Conservative Party towards the EU. They are prepared to integrate, but their national programs or values, which they are representing, are opposite

to the position of the European Union. The main issues in question are defense, border control, citizenship and money, which are especially sensitive symbols of national sovereignty. However, reality has shown that the UK's position towards European issues has an inter-party nature, and that such opposition has been debated and carefully orchestrated (Forster 2002: 4).

The third group is called 'institutionalist'. They draw their attention to the structural explanations as "*the cause of Britain's problematic relationship with integration project*" (Forster 2002: 4). Representatives of this group, Stuart Wilks or Mark Aspinwall, state that British political structures and majoritarian electoral system are the causes of the problem. The opposition and the government in Britain should be rivals, which is why their policies and attitudes should be different and competing with each other (Wilks in Forster 2002: 4; Aspinwall 2000: 415). This mismatch leads to the formation of radical parties, such as UKIP, or extra party groups. These ideas bring an explanation about the decline of some parties and the flow of scepticism, but cannot offer explanations of British Euroscepticism relating to European policies (Usherwood in Forster 2002: 5).

The fourth group which has only recently emerged, is based on the international political economy approach. The conclusions drawn from their findings are that British economic structures are different and find themselves in opposition to European industrial models. This school is going beyond political structure and elites, and offers a new approach (Forster 2002: 5).

The fifth 'conjunctive' group offers explanations to the reader based on the interplay between domestic and international factors, such as the decline of British hegemony, the concerns of domestic policymakers, national appeal, the activities of interest groups and economic trends (Gowland and Turner 2000: 7). Some of the drawbacks of the arguments of this group are that they lack systematic explanations for the role and influence of groups on governmental policy (Forster 2002: 6).

These conventional groups have a number of weaknesses, but all are agreed that every British government, which comes into power, even if they were not Eurosceptical at the onset of their term of office, became more or less sceptical of intergovernmental structures (Forster 2002: 6). This happens because EU membership hasn't delivered the benefits, which were predicted, but has led to a loss of sovereignty as well as making the

autonomy of democratic decision-making more visible (Baimbridge, Burkitt and Whyman 2006: 402).

In spite of this classification, scepticism has had important indirect effects on British policy. Sceptics, with their strong voices, have been challenging, shaping and constructing the character of the British debate on Europe. They have effectively destabilized the political parties, effectively leading to sizeable factions in the two major parties – Conservatives and Labour, causing serious issues for both parties. Euroscepticism, with its own policy-making body, has introduced to Britain a new form of shadow government, which is now very strong and which has a strong influence on the domestic political arena (Forster 2002: 8).

Moreover, a close relationship with Europe and membership of the EU has had an impact on British business and government. It has forced them to over-concentrate on the EU, causing them to neglect relationships with other, potentially significant parts of the world. Also it has become apparent that the British government's energy was concentrated on converging European neighbor economies, rather than on national interest in other faster growing countries (Baimbridge, Burkitt and Whyman 2006: 411).

Ultimately, it should be said, that whilst Euroscepticism is a complex phenomenon, it has British roots. There are a lot of classifications, which describe reasons for its growth, the effects of this political view and which provide some important arguments about Eurosceptics. The most visible effect Euroscepticism is the changing nature of British national and foreign policy. Unfortunately, no British government can create strong opposition to this movement, because, as stated earlier, EU membership hasn't delivered the predicted benefits.

3. The end of the 1980s and 1990s in Britain - a strong political disagreement with the EC.

The governing Conservative Party, with a strong and innovative leader in Margaret Thatcher, defined the 1980s in Britain. Her political ideas were based on “... *a clear ideological, economic and political break with the Keynesian-Beveridge settlement that had placed the extension of the welfare state, full employment and state intervention at the centre of British politics*” (Gifford 2008: 84). It was a new and creative policy which was

developed to change the economic instability and to reanimate British growth and power. It was also a reaction against the Fordism initiatives that had failed to resolve the post-imperial crisis (Gifford 2008: 84, 86).

The tenure of M. Thatcher in connection with the EC and its policies can be divided into two periods. The first period was the period of European policy engagement, the most notable point of which was the signing of the Single European Act (SEA) in February 1986. After that Prime Minister Thatcher changed her opinion and moved to a sceptical position towards the European Community. She introduced her eurosceptical arguments in the Bruges speech on 20 September 1988 (Forster 2002: 63–64). The following subchapter focuses closely on this speech by analysing its main points and describing its results.

However, after Thatcher's speech, Eurosceptics raised their voices and began to actively oppose the Maastricht Treaty. There was a huge debate about the creation of Economic and Monetary Political Unions. Subchapter 3.2. will discuss the role of the opposition to both Unions and the opportunities they presented, explain the arguments of eurosceptics and highlight the most active groups during this period.

After Thatcher's resignation, the Conservative Party still remained in office. Her successor John Major was a pragmatic conservative politician, whose ideas reflected the support within the party for the Thatcherite settlement. His role was clearly to unite the various factions in the British domestic arena and develop an effective European policy. However, these hopes did not become a reality (Forster 2002: 96; Gifford 2008: 108, 111). Major's government implemented a course of action that was disastrous and created “... *a European crisis for the British state*” (Gifford 2008: 111). The subsequent subchapter discusses his personal attitude and role in the most Eurosceptical period in Britain.

3.1. Margaret Thatcher's Bruges speech

The Bruges speech was given by Margaret Thatcher at the College of Europe in September 1988. This speech started a new phase of Conservative attitude towards the EC, characterised by the move from an instrumental and pragmatic position on European integration to an ideological one. She moved from an incidental position of membership to perceiving it as a threat. During this period the first key steps were taken in the movement of the opponents of European integration from an anti-market position to a Eurosceptical one. Before the Bruges speech, opponents of integration focused their

attention on an anti-market position. Afterwards, however, the critics' position transformed into criticism of the Political and Economic Union. It was the dawning of a new era of Euroscepticism (Forster 2002: 63–65).

In Bruges, Margaret Thatcher argued that “*willing and active cooperation between independent sovereign states is the best way to build a successful European Community*”.³ She saw this process as dependent on governments and their judgment as to the value of current and future agreements. This point of view was not anti-European, but saw the process as dependent on the individual assessment by each government involved in the process (Forster 2002: 76).

However, this speech presented three main critical points toward the European Community. The first point discussed the structure of the EC which had opened negotiations about closer integration. Thatcher saw the single voice of the Community as suppressing nationalism and concentrating power in one centre. She claimed that this was a highly damaging phenomenon, which would destroy all previously achieved goals. She believed that cooperation should exist, but should be dispersed among nation states in order to gain success. The next structural problem for the British Conservatives was the possible creation of a Political Union and EMU. Thatcher told the public that there was no need to create new regulations, which would raise the cost of employment and make Europe's labour market less flexible and less competitive with foreign suppliers.⁴

The second critical point was based on the current policy problems, faced by the Community. The former Prime Minister stated that “*[i]f we cannot reform those Community policies which are patently wrong or ineffective and which are rightly causing public disquiet, than we shall not get the public support for the Community's future development*”.⁵ She believed that the Common Agricultural Policy⁶ (CAP) was far from complete, because of over-production and limited costs. The challenge facing the

³ Thatcher, Margaret (1988). The Bruges Speech. *The Telegraph* [online]. September 1988. [cit. 18. 3. 2014]. Available from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3562258/Full-text-of-Margaret-Thatchers-speech-to-the-College-of-Europe-The-Bruges-Speech.html>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Common Agricultural Policy – one of the oldest policies of the European Union, is strongly rooted in the European integration project. The CAP aimed at encouraging better productivity in the food chain, ensuring fair standard of living to the agricultural community, market stabilization and ensuring the availability of food supplies to EU consumers at reasonable price. It has been developing through all the history of EC/EU (see Appendix 1) (European Commission 2014a).

Community was to display political courage and create a stable and effective farming industry.⁷ Also, Thatcher emphasized the need to avoid protectionism and the need to encourage enterprise (Forster 2002: 77).

The third critical feature of the speech was what the EC might become. Thatcher did not accept the vision of Europe as a federation like the United States. The most fundamental and critical issue related to this vision was the creation of a Western European Union as an alternative to NATO. According to Thatcher's opinion, the WEU "... *should be developed... as a means of strengthening Europe's contribution to the common defense of the West*".⁸

Some international quarters and tabloids hailed the Bruges speech as a milestone in the development of British Euroscepticism both in terms of symbolism and objectivism. It was not something new in Britain, but these arguments moved Euroscepticism from the margins into the mainstream of British politics. This speech connected the small group of anti-marketeters with a big group of pragmatic Conservative sceptics centring around sovereignty concerns, which can be called the Eurosceptic agenda (Forster 2002: 77 – 78).

After the gaining of broader support in the Conservative Party and amongst the general public, the Bruges Group was created by the Oxford undergraduate David Robertson, in February 1989. The main goal of this group was to promote Thatcher's Bruges agenda and provide an organizational base for the ideas. The Bruges Group had a subsidiary, which was called Friends of the Bruges Group and consisted of MPs. This structure was seen as a small party within a party and its purpose was to publish reports and to gain support for Thatcher's ideas. (Forster 2002: 71; Economic Affairs 1989).

There are two further features of Euroscepticism, which became important after the Bruges speech. Firstly, the growing consolidation surrounding Thatcher's agenda marked a shift away from the domination of the anti-market Labour left to a rightist Eurosceptical movement. Secondly, this grouping affected the mainstream media. The weekly and weekend editions of the Times or the Telegraph gave a great deal of column space to

⁷ Thatcher, Margaret (1988). The Bruges Speech. *The Telegraph* [online]. September 1988. [cit. 18. 3. 2014]. Available from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3562258/Full-text-of-Margaret-Thatchers-speech-to-the-College-of-Europe-The-Bruges-Speech.html>.

⁸ Ibid.

Eurosceptical writers. In addition, this movement attracted academics, who began to debate and to create an analytical framework. This led to a broader support network outside Parliament, sparked an intellectual debate and created an environment in which to advance the Eurosceptical cause on a multidimensional front (Forster 2002: 72; Baker and Seawright 1998: 193–195).

To summarise, the Bruges speech united different groups of sceptics and established an intellectual agenda for opposing European integration. Thatcher became a symbol of the new movement, which is still influential in the British domestic arena. By applying Taggart's and Szczerbiak's definition, it could be said that the Conservative Party and its leader officially created the soft version of Euroscepticism in British policy.

3.2. Debates before the Maastricht Treaty

Margaret Thatcher lost her seat in 1990, and thereafter began a period of strong opposition towards the government. Her successor John Major was a pragmatic Conservative member, who tried to unite both Thatcherite Eurosceptics and European sympathisers. However, unfortunately for him, during his leadership period in both the domestic arena and in parliament a huge debate began about membership of the Political Union of the EC and also about membership of the EMU. He challenged the strong dislike and the critics within his own party and, in the 1992 elections, lost the majority of votes, which led to him having a minority government (Forster 2002: 83–84; Gifford 2008: 111, 131).

For the first time in history, Eurosceptics united their groups and created an analytical framework, actively using the media as a propaganda machine and thus, destabilizing the government and its position. They fought against the Treaty, which was partly damaging their interests. It was a period of British state crisis in the EC which later became the EU. This subchapter introduces the debates about the EMU and the Political Union, whilst working with the definition of soft versus hard Euroscepticism.

3.2.1. Opposition against the Political Union

The application of the Maastricht Treaty had one more important purpose for the Community – creating a political union, which would unite member states and create

common foreign and security policy. However, for British Eurosceptics this meant the loss of sovereignty and national identity. As Mrs. Thatcher said in her speech: “*We do not want the United States of Europe*”.⁹ It was a common opinion among both Conservative and Labour politicians.

These two kinds of opposition had practically the same arguments. The main focus of the political opposition was the situation, in which the range and power ceded to a central authority. The scrapping of national currencies led to the creation of the European Union in political terms, with common security and foreign policies, the possibility of defense capability and justice and home affairs responsibilities, whereas the traditional British agenda was only based on the implementation of the Common Market. Sceptics, who argued that the lesson from the SEA was not learned, strongly blamed Major’s government. They saw expansive Treaty language as a weapon for European federalists. Also, the Eurosceptics critique was focused on the government’s lack of attention to detail. The attack regarded the fact that the British opt-outs were not as easy as the government had suggested (Forster 2002: 93–94).

In regard to the main Eurosceptic players one of the most active and powerful opposition organizations, called The Fresh Start Group, should be mentioned. It was founded by the Conservative peer Michael Spicer and had its origins in two EDMs - after the Danish referendum in 1992 about the Maastricht Treaty and after the British withdrawal from the ERM. The group’s purpose was to oppose the Maastricht IGC with a secondary objective to secure a referendum on the treaty and the single currency. The Fresh Start Group was well organized, had access to financial resources and created a strong intellectual base. They met regularly to coordinate their opposition and drafted amendments to the EC Bill. The Fresh Start Group became a party within a party. This group brought to parliament some new ground for opposition. Firstly, their mood did not only express displeasure with the government’s activities, but also took steps to prevent legislation from being acted upon. Secondly, it was a group with independent funds, which changed the organizational face of sceptical groups in parliament (Forster 2002: 87–88, Gifford 2008: 130).

⁹ Thatcher, Margaret (1988). The Bruges Speech. *The Telegraph* [online]. September 1988. [cit. 18. 3. 2014]. Available from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3562258/Full-text-of-Margaret-Thatchers-speech-to-the-College-of-Europe-The-Bruges-Speech.html>.

One more factor, which British Eurosceptics of the Political Union wanted to reduce, was the social policy in Europe. Thatcher began this argument in her speech and gave an explanation of the effects of its implementation, namely that it was an attack on the principles of free trade.¹⁰ This argument was used once more by Cash, who argued that the original free market agenda was replaced by the will of political integration; “*they want ... to create one country*” (Gifford 2008: 133).

In conclusion, it could be said that the Maastricht Treaty was strongly opposed and this created a framework, which developed independently and worked not only with politicians, but also with the general public. However, the failure of both the Conservative and Labour parties to unite their power led to the ratification of the Treaty (Forster 2002: 104). This fact contributed to an effective oppositional agenda to the EMU.

3.2.2. Challenging the Economic and Monetary Union

The Maastricht Treaty (see Appendix 2) was seen on the European stage as the creation of a strong and effective body, which would unite and strengthen Europe and its policies. Among the articles was a series of steps to create a single currency – the Euro. Articles divided the formation of this new system into three stages. The first stage was introduced in July 1990 and required the removal of exchange controls and membership in the Exchange Rate Mechanism. The second stage began in 1994 with the creation of an Economic and Monetary Institution (EMI), which played the role of an embryonic bank. National banks were removed from political control and governments had until 1996 to decide if the majority met the convergence criteria¹¹ for membership of the Euro (see Appendix 3), and to agree about the introduction of the Euro. The third stage

¹⁰ Thatcher, Margaret (1988). The Bruges Speech. *The Telegraph* [online]. September 1988. [cit. 18. 3. 2014]. Available from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3562258/Full-text-of-Margaret-Thatchers-speech-to-the-College-of-Europe-The-Bruges-Speech.html>.

¹¹ Convergence criteria are set of macro economic entry conditions, which are designed to ensure that a Member State's economy is sufficiently prepared for adoption of the single currency and can integrate without risk into Euro zone. They are intended ensure economic convergence and were agreed by EU Member States in 1991. A euro-area candidate country must make changes to national laws and rules, notably governing its national central bank and other monetary issues, in order to make them compatible with the Treaty. (*European Commission* 2014b).

implemented the agreement and introduced the new currency. In the case of no agreement being reached, the Euro could be automatically implemented and the EMI would transform into the European Central Bank (ECB), which would produce money and set the interest rates of the Euro zone (Van Bergeijk and Berk 2001: 548–550).

For British Eurosceptics, the issue of a single currency was really problematic because of the adopting of the Maastricht convergence criteria but three factors of this Treaty assisted the sceptics. Firstly, the conditions leading to the EMU were clearly set and all of the stages required specific action from governments. According to Anthony Forster, a key argument of the opposition was that “*Britain had been deceived into joining the EC by her leaders*”, which gave Eurosceptics the opportunity to monitor development and to publicly challenge it (Forster 2002: 108).

The second factor lay in Britain opting-out of the ERM in 1992 and a near collapse of this system in 1993. The destruction of the exchange mechanism inflicted damage on Britain's economic credibility and cost £4 billion in currency reserves. The government's official position was that ERM membership was critical and that it would keep inflation under control and bring interest rates down. This position was eventually undermined and many sceptics used their power and influence to make the government policy on the Euro a target for attacks (Forster 2002: 108; Gifford 2008: 119).

The final factor, which benefited sceptics, was the commitment of both the Labour and Conservative parties to hold a referendum on the issue of the single currency. It can be said, that this was an opportunity, which helped the Eurosceptics succeed as it gave them the chance to shift the issue from the political arena to a more public one, at a time when the abolition of sterling was warmly welcomed (Forster 2002: 108–109).

This kind of opposition created a complex system of opponents, which had four main characteristics: whether they were partisan or non-partisan, anti-EMU or anti-EU. These groups worked not only in Parliament, but also outside it. It was a group at Oxford University, the so-called Young Conservatives, which worked with academics and the general public and started a campaign against the Maastricht Treaty and the EC. Also it was in the media on that Eurosceptical influence was built. As mentioned earlier, media outlets like The Sun, The Times and The Daily Telegraph continued to play a role in maintaining this trend. Both Eurosceptic positions were made up of a growing number of

think tanks, which provided intellectual support for opposing the single currency. The most notable group, which even included Mrs. Thatcher, was formed “... *to provide informed but partisan criticism of government policy*” (Forster 2002: 109 – 112; Gifford 2008: 120, 122, 125–126).

The oppositional arguments against the Economic and Monetary Union had a complex structure but were fundamentally the same. They simply had a different nature, both economically and politically. Among the most popular economic arguments was a belief that the EC/EU had not delivered the economic benefits, which it had claimed, and that the single currency was also not as profitable as expected. Sceptics also believed that the stages of accepting the Euro would not be achieved on time and that the convergence criteria were flawed. One group opposed the idea of keeping the Central Bank free from political interference and governments having the option of whether or not conditions were fulfilled whilst the other did not. Among the political arguments, Thatcher’s commitment to the loss of sovereignty and national identity should be mentioned. New predictions emerged, among which was a belief that the EMU would lead to the creation of the Political Union. In this union, independent policies of welfare improvement, employment and wealth creation, would exist (Baimbridge, Burkitt and Whyman 1999: 86–87; Forster 2002: 114–117; Gifford: 133).

Fundamentally, the issue of the single currency and the EMU united sceptics who had different views and divided it only into two groups: those who were strictly against EU-membership and the Euro, and those who supported pro-membership, but oppose currency.

3.3. John Major’s government

John Major was elected in 1990 as the leader of the Conservative party and the man to resolve the crisis created by Thatcherism. This crisis was “*evidenced by an economic recession, growing electoral unpopularity for the Conservatives and the unease within a party over European integration*” (Gifford 2008: 111). A key feature of his administration was a commitment to protect and improve public service provision and this accounted for increases in public taxes. Some of his ministers, for example Patten and Willets, tried to present the modern conservative attitude as a combination of

Thatcher's free trade radicalism and a belief in community, which was rooted in the long tradition of conservative state building (ibid: 111).

His main political slogan appealing to European integration was based on the idea of placing Britain at the "heart of Europe". A key feature of this approach was to rebuild relations and secure alliances with the European governing elite and governments, which had been alienated by Mrs. Thatcher. His advisors and Foreign Secretary actively used the strategy that was built on the idea to place British Conservatives in the mainstream of European politics. They made close contacts with German political parties, such as the Christian Democrats, and also with parties in the European parliament. Major believed that close cooperation with Germany would stop French attempts to create a monetary union. Major's economic strategy was based on continued membership of the ERM, the goal of which was to attempt to revise the Thatcher settlement (Forster 1998: 352, 357; Smith 1992: 155).

Moreover, J. Major routinely met with sceptical MPs to briefly inform them on developments and the major stumbling blocks, and to outline the government's position on the key issues. He frequently reassured them personally that he would not sign the treaty, which would undermine national sovereignty. Furthermore, the Prime Minister tried to win over the most critical politicians with the promise of posts in his government. Shortly after his personal approach and his policy designed to achieve the compromise failed, he gave the government seats to some Eurosceptics and bound them by the associated responsibility (Forster 2002: 97).

However, the ideological dominance of Thatcherism left little room for a creative political agenda. Gifford argues that this increasingly crystallized once "*the Major government became preoccupied with party unity and abandoned attempts to construct an intellectual coherent project along the lines Patten and others had envisaged*" (Gifford: 112). As mentioned earlier, opposition against the government's European policy strengthened and created a complex network of arguments and players, which effectively put Major's position under increasing pressure and proved to be a disaster that created a divide among the Conservatives, ultimately destroying the credibility of the government.

The debate surrounding the EMU forced Major's members of the Cabinet to resist negative goals and objectives such as the acceptance of the single currency, common foreign and security policy and common social policy. Despite Patten and his assistants wanting Britain to be a part of an extensive European Policy, British politics prevented the country from going in that direction. Major's government underestimated the role of the ERM in the state economy and opted out. These opt outs enabled the Prime Minister to avoid the political ramifications of the EMU and the Social Chapter without having to veto the whole Maastricht Treaty (Gifford 2008: 117; Forster 1998: 361–363).

Nevertheless, Major's policy on Anglo-American relations was strongly supported by different party blocks. The clearest evidence of this partnership and the support of American global power was the extent of British support for the First Gulf War. This war was welcomed as a re-emergence of Anglo-Saxon relations, which were characterised by seeking to regain and reassert the status of defeated nations across the Channel (Wallace 1991: 30).

Major's position on Europe was ambiguous because his main objective was to unite the party and represent both the right and the left. He reflected the policy at the heart of Europe, sometimes compromising it with a Eurosceptical position. The adoption of an obstructivist, neo-Thatcherite approach to the EC, later to become the EU, left the government marginalized and damaged. After the withdrawal from the ERM, John Major adopted a new position, which claimed that the steps being taken by the French were wrong and that Europe was exactly what Thatcher said it was in her Bruges speech – different nation states united by active cooperation and a free trade base (Gifford 2008: 135).

To summarise, John Major was trying to create his own policy which was akin to European policy, but the fragmentation of the party and the strong voice of Eurosceptics, including supporters of Thatcher and other units, undermined his government and made his policy ineffective.

4. Labour government: Anglo-Europe and Euroscepticism

In 1997 the Conservative party comprehensively lost the election and ceded control of the UK political arena to the Labour Party. Its leader Tony Blair came to power with a programme committed not only to fundamental constitutional change in the UK but also to the institutions of transnational governance. The Labour Party spelled out its policy as a co-operative pro-European policy, which placed “social Europe” at the centre of a modernised platform (Gifford 2008: 139). Blair's leadership, along with that of his successor Gordon Brown, emphasised “*the promotion of labour market flexibility and economic reform in order to ensure the competitiveness of the European economy in an era of globalisation*” (Fella 2006: 388). Through this policy they wanted to promote strong European political structures, which would ensure that corporations and transnational companies could not cause damage to the common man. They sought to prevent Europe and its small entrepreneurs from becoming global commercial forces (ibid: 392).

The major domestic task regarding the EU was to put Britain back into the center of the European debate. However, foreign policy had not played a big role in the Labour campaign and its key idea was that “[i]t shall be a government, too, that gives this country strength and confidence in leadership both at home and abroad, particularly in respect of Europe”.¹²

Both Blair and Brown tried to change public attitude towards the European Union. They decided to use the discourse method and challenged British “otherness”, which was based on a number of factors, such as history and geography, wars, and its electoral and parliamentary system etc. Both Prime Ministers were well aware of the national story they were attempting to rewrite (Daddow 2011: 133 –134).

However, Blair's and later Brown's policy did not succeed in changing general British attitudes towards the EU. The general public, academics and politicians in all parties (even in Labour) remained sceptical about some of the implementations of the new European Union's agreements. It replaced British exceptionalism in terms of political economy and political identity and actively pursued an Anglo-European project that

¹² Blair, Tony (1997). Blair's speech at 10 Downing Street. *CNN*. 2.05.1997 [cit. 03.04.2014]. Available from <http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/9705/02/blair.speech/>.

attempted to move the direction of the European Union in a British direction rather than vice versa (Gifford 2008: 139).

The first subchapter describes the Labour party's attempt to reassert the policy of Europeanism in its government as well as giving explanations about how they decided to approach the achievement of this goal and what the results were. In the second part of this chapter, readers can find criticisms of Blair and Brown's governments and the true effect of Labour policy on society.

4.1. Labour Party's attempt to reassert Anglo-Europeanism

The Labour Party, after taking office in 1997, challenged the British way of thinking about Europe. Thatcher and later Brown created a strong division of European sceptics in political arena, public and academic spectrum. The Blair government attempted to undermine Franco-German dominance and construct an Anglo-conservative leadership based on security and economic de-regulation. Such economic strategy was built on widespread public ownership and heavy state intervention, in which EU membership would no longer be an obstacle to the implementation of party policy. This was visible from New Labour's attempts to create coalitions with right wing governments and conservative leaders such as Berlusconi and Aznar. In addition, the strategy of building coalitions both in the East and West with a principled opposition to deeper integration it was warmly welcomed. Blair thought that the European Union should concentrate on questions such as economic policy, immigration and environment, rather than creating strong governmental bodies. Curiously, by taking this position, he was actually very close to Major's attempt to see Britain in Europe on economic matters, but not as a threat to national sovereignty. For example, the Labour government resisted making the European Charter of Fundamental Rights legally binding for the UK much to the frustration of the British trade union movement as British workers would then be excluded from its social and employment rights (Daddow 2011: 1; Fella 2006: 391, 395; Gifford 2008: 139–140).

One of Blair's immediate concerns before he took office, as regards EU policy, was the immediacy of a further IGC to review the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty. His advisors and party politicians created a programme, which was called *The Future of the*

European Union, and agreed that there was a need to bolster the EU's social democratic content, to significantly extend the European Parliament, and to support strong social dimension and economic coordination in order to create employment and a European Recovery Fund for better distribution of the wealth created by a single market. However, after Blair came to power, this strategy changed. The emphasis of Labour's EU policy switched from promoting employment rights to avoiding costs to businesses and maximizing the flexibility of the labour market (Fella 2006: 392–393).

The New Labour government created a strategy, which they thought would well work even with the level of Euroscepticism in Britain. In language terms, they tried to achieve a theory of 'norm entrepreneurship'. Wodak and a collection of other authors describes this theory as discourse, which would change "*social actors constitute knowledge, situations, social role as well as identities and interpersonal relations between various interacting social groups and those who interact with them*" (De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak 1999: 157). Blair and Brown were well aware, or were made well aware by their advisors, of this discourse and used it as a weapon against the sceptics. They identified that British people were being kept in a permanent state of discursive war with the continent, in which the Eurosceptical position limited people's thoughts and actions towards Europe (Daddow 2001: 65). The first step was "*to reframe Britain's debates about Europe and the EU through a systematic revisioning of the language, imagery and points of historical references around which Britain's Europe debates occurred in the political, public and media worlds*" (ibid: 67). Also it was necessary to create an organizational platform on which to build a consensus about new norms. Blair and Brown used existing NGOs, and made speeches at universities, business organizations, think tanks and institutions of the EU to spread their messages. However, Labour politicians did not deliver upon their strategy of discourse. This defeat was determined by influential political leaders such as M. Thatcher, who did not give up and continued to fight against active European policies, but also by critical media, which delivered their Eurosceptical message to a huge number of readers (ibid: 67).

In looking at the arguments, which were used to deliver new points of view towards the EU at the end of the 1990s and before 9/11, economical and influential benefits and security framework were at the forefront. The economic benefits were named as a main resource of New Labour policy as regards the transformation of Britain into a Euro-

friendly country. Both former Prime Ministers thought that through prioritized economic possibilities arising from British industrial openness to the European technological cooperation, the country would grow economically more quickly and would become dominant among EU countries. The government supported the EU's employment rate, which was created by the single market and cost 3.5 million jobs. In his speech to the business community, Brown also used the history of growing interconnectedness with the continent as an indicator of positive European influence over Britain. However, the 'five tests' of G. Brown, which will be described in the next subchapter, and the disagreement between Blair and Brown on the question of the single currency would not deliver the predicted transformation of public opinion (Daddow 2011: 91–95).

Labour's discourse on the question of British influence in Europe had three main points. The first is that Britain would be affected by developments in Europe whether the state is in or out of the EU. Secondly, they believed that it would make it easier for Britain to reform the EU from the centre of the community rather than from the periphery. Finally, Blair thought that Britain would be in a much stronger position to take its global leadership role from an EU platform, than if they stayed outside such a potentially powerful block (Daddow 2011: 97; Williams 2009: 233–235).

The question about the European security framework was fundamental for British New Labour until 9/11. Blair represented the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), later to develop into the EC and then the EU, as a clear way forward for countries with a totalitarian and central planning past, a promoter of democracy and a servant of good values in the wider world. He declared that this structure prevented wars between old rivals and created an atmosphere of peace and prosperity. However, after 9/11, the Labour Party changed its stance and the free movement of people and goods and services was seen as a potential threat to national security, because of the EU's inability to act quickly and effectively (Daddow 2011: 103–106).

There are three factors in Blair's European success, which managed to locate Britain at the centre of (or at least very close to) decision-making in the EU. At first, he tried to normalize relations with the EU during the Amsterdam IGC of 1997 and started to promote successful European defence initiatives. However, public opinion and that of MPs limited Blair's attitude toward the single currency, so to draw up a simple balance sheet was extremely difficult. The second argument involves looking at how the

government managed the potentially explosive question of Europe as a part of its national electoral success. They managed to win the vast majority of seats in parliament from 1997 – 2007 and backbenchers¹³ were unable to restrict the government's power. Also it was necessary and visible in both Blair and Brown's government that the Labour Party was able to neutralize the issue of Europe in its manifestos and to keep down discussion about European policy during election campaigns. The third and final argument, according to Daddow, lies in moving from a consideration of public opinion on New Labour to Blair's own position in his cabinet and party. It was a success for the former Prime Minister personally but not politically (Daddow 2011: 14–15).

The Labour Party was well informed about the Eurosceptic movement and actively used descriptions about rivals of the EU to their own advantage. Blair in his speeches portrayed the sceptics as ideological opponents to the principle of supranational integration. He saw their objective as an intellectually sound, but outdated, rejection of shared sovereignty and commonly accepted rules such as majority voting. The most sceptical of them, he suggested, wanted to withdraw from the EU itself.¹⁴ In this speech, Blair described Eurosceptics using Taggart-Szczerbiak's classification and giving it a negative connotation. It should certainly be mentioned that the Labour Party faced a strong political discourse, but tried hard to break away from this.

4.2 Continuous British exceptionalism

Euroscepticism did not become the fundamental ideological issue after the defeat of the Conservative party in 1997. Tony Blair tried to create a modernised Labour party including a pro-European approach. However, long-term problems in relations with the European Union still remained and overshadowed the achievements of the Labour government (Gifford 2008: 139).

¹³ Backbencher is a Member of Parliament in the Westminster system, who does not hold governmental office. He serves in relative anonymity and votes when and how their leader tells them to (Malcolmson and Myers 2012: 126).

¹⁴ Blair, Tony (2006). Speech on Europe. *Harvard.edu*. [cit. 04. 04. 2014]. Available from http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic162932.files/Tony_Blair_Oxford_Speech_on_europe.htm.

The distinctive Labour approach towards the EU in terms of globalization had an impact on business, trade and the life of the people. Blair tried to accept European centrality to Britain's economic interests, but did not want to fully integrate without benefits for his own country. However, understanding the driving forces of the UK produces a counterargument, which describes the British economy as a mechanism dependent on financial and trading activities rather than manufacturing and production. According to this, it seems ineffective to take the British financial system deeper into European legislative and control apparatus, which would restrict the flow of money and relationships with global capital trade (Gifford 2008: 142).

Why did not this situation change? What were the problems of Labour policy related to Europe? First of all, the Labour party picked up the 'no strategy' view that Europe was mistreated by Blair and Downing Street on the one hand and Brown and the Treasury on the other. For Blair the top priorities were domestic issues, and the question of European policy was highly problematic. His personal attitude was focused on personal diplomacy with the US, and it was Brown's responsibility to negotiate with the EU. Secondly, there was a failure of leadership on the part of the Prime Minister to hold a referendum on the single currency. Blair wanted to make this step but Brown and the Treasury Board conducted five economic tests on British membership of the single currency, which were an attempt to de-politicize the issue through a rule-based approach by reducing its electoral salience. These tests included questions about the convergence of the British economy with the EU, the flexibility of business and the British workforce, possible investment into the country's economy, and the impact of the Eurozone on financial services and employment. The results of the Treasury report showed that British businesses and economy in general were prepared to accept the single currency, but the problem lay in creating a flexibility between, and sufficient convergence with, European economics. Thus, the absence of a referendum from Blair's side, later ended his effective premiership (Daddow 2011: 29; Sowemimo 1999: 357–361).

Challenging British "otherness" was a hot topic of the Labour government, which did not yield the expected results. It was an extremely difficult pill to swallow for Britons that their eldest rival France would become their best friend, or for them to accept that British geographical and historical uniqueness would become a part of European history. This fight was limited by media and cultural programs, which influenced society and openly

highlighted Euroscepticism even, for example, in the reporting of football matches by the press. In trying to impose a shared European vision, Blair and Brown met significant resistance from the British public and the wider world. New Labour's discourses on leadership were representing the shift in the political landscape of Britain. However, this landscape did not meld with public attitudes and the mixed political messages being delivered highlighted the problem, which combined progressive and traditionalist takes on the British role in the world (Daddow 2011: 114 – 117, 127, 221).

As regards the European political arena, there was also a problem in understanding British "otherness". Member states of the EU, especially France, started to challenge the British agenda of making special exceptions in order to influence the European budget. They wanted to end the British debate, while the British agenda was to change the economic structure of the EU, particularly the reshaping of the CAP and the funds allocated to it. Brown went further in his beliefs that economic reform in the EU needed to become a precondition for UK membership of the Euro. However, the majority of European politicians didn't have such changes in mind and therefore made it impossible for the British government to implement activities of this sort (Fella 2006: 389–390).

The biggest critic of the Labour government's European policy, Robin Cook, used a powerful rhetoric against Blair-Brown's line on Europe. He suggested that the EU's unpopularity lay in its apparent alignment with the negative impulses of globalization such as the erosion of job security and the effect on quality of life. Furthermore, the UK government did not help itself by blocking progressive and popular measures that would improve the lot of workers in both Britain and the EU. Moreover, Cook opposed the tendency of Blair's government to pass nationalist rhetoric when dealing with the EU in order to gain cheap popularity at home. He saw those steps as extremely ineffective and argued that this was only "*a good press game at home*" (ibid: 396–397).

Eurobarometer, an opinion poll team and journal published annually since 1973, has published opinion polls about different countries' attitude to European affairs. During Blair's period in office, Britain was shown as one of the most sceptical members of the EU and according to both regional polling and analyses, it was a pattern created many years ago. Openly critical attitudes towards the EU were more than twice as high in Britain compared with the average of the other 27 member states. This showed that,

despite Blair's best efforts, there was no real improvement in the relations between UK and European Union (Daddow 2011: 18–19).

All of this led to a broad disillusionment with Labour policy, which finished its short, but successful period of popularity and support among the people and ran the risk of turning the public once again against the European project. The Labour Party left a big hole in the question of Europe and now it is the challenge of the contemporary government to construct the necessary legislative framework and define relations with the EU.

5. Contemporary British Euroscepticism

The contemporary British political arena, especially the groups in it, is discussing the EU issue on a regular basis and it is at the forefront of British contemporary politics. Media outlets, academics and, in some ways, the government pay a great deal of attention to the possible in-out referendum and the rising popularity of extremist parties. The populist, single issue party UKIP is now playing a big role in the public domain and defines changes in attitude towards the EU. The growing scepticism in parliament and the changing stance of the government show the impact that this political party has had. However, the electoral system and the lack of financial resources has hindered UKIP's attempts to gain seats in the House of Commons and thus directly influence Britain's European policy.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that the contemporary government is composed of two different parties, which, as a result of their coalition, have been forced to change their stances. The Conservative Party seems to be a soft Eurosceptic body, the leader of which describes himself as a pragmatic and sensible Eurosceptic. He emphasized his attitude in a speech, which discussed the challenges Britain faces as regards Europe and appealed to the EU about the need for reforms. On the other hand, their partners, the Liberal Democrats, have constantly been pro-European and oppose discussions about reforms, especially the possibility of a referendum about membership (Lynch 2011: 222).¹⁵

¹⁵ Watt, Nicolas (2013a). David Cameron challenges Nick Clegg over EU referendum. *The Guardian*. 30. 06. 2013 [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/jun/30/david-cameron-nick-clegg-eu-referendum>.

The British Conservative Party today is more likely to be Eurosceptical. This is directly related to how they see Britain's foreign policy and its place in the world. Given their lack of sympathy for the EU, they are compelled to steer Britain into the American sphere of influence. This is why their emphasis lies in NATO as the main defence structure of the EU and their "special relationship" or "Atlanticism" has played too key a part in British diplomatic history, to the detriment of maintaining a close engagement in European matters. However, the US and other significant players in the world game want to see Britain as a part of the EU. This controversial situation appeals to the contemporary government and complicates its policy and attitude towards the European Union (Beech 2011: 353).

In this chapter, the issue of England possibly quitting the EU is discussed, which according to opinion polls seems entirely possible. When discussing this issue, it is important to consider the circumstances which have led to the contemporary rise in Euroscepticism and the scenario of possible withdrawal.

5.1 UKIP

The United Kingdom Independence Party is a right-wing populist party, which was founded in 1993 as a reaction to Europe's federalist project of creating an even closer political and economic union made possible by the Maastricht Treaty¹⁶. However, the party roots can be dated back to the Bruges speech, which led to the creation of the Bruges group and a highly diffused opposition to European integration. From the outset, the party was a part of the Anti-federalist League, but their leader, Alan Sked, and his small group of followers launched a new structure with new policies, a new logo and new aims. The main aim was "*to put pressure on the British government of the day by not taking up any European Parliament seats it might win*" (Usherwood 2010: 5–6). However, the party performance in the 1994 EP elections (see Appendix 4) was weak, because of the small amount of media coverage it had received and the small number of MPs joining it (ibid: 6).

¹⁶ PressTV (2013). *UK Independence Party & policies; an overview*. 08. 05. 2013. [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.presstv.com/detail/2013/05/08/302487/ukip/>.

The situation changed in 1999 (see Appendix 4), when the UK changed its electoral system for European parliament's elections from first-past-the-post single member districts to multi-districts elected by proportional representation. UKIP won 3 seats in the European Parliament and their representatives joined the new Europe of Democracies and Diversities (EDD) group. The then leader of the party, Michael Holmes, gave a speech in the EP, which ended up sounding distinctly pro-integrationist. Party members challenged his leadership and passed a vote of no confidence in September 1999. However, this did not resolve the situation and disputes continued resulting in a weakened party at the General Elections in 2001. This comprehensive defeat was also the result of the European Union not being a major part of the political debate engaged in by other parties (Usherwood 2010: 9; PressTV 2013).

During Labour's tenure in office, UKIP was limited by the determination of the government to retain its populist credentials and adapt the European issue to both British public opinion and contemporary European developments. Britain's relationship with the EU was articulated in terms of 'red lines', opt outs and negative negotiating positions pursued in defence of the national interest. Brown attempted to assert its populism by appealing to British nationalism and challenging the significant problem of legitimating his European policy as any further engagement with the integration process focused on Eurosceptic mobilisation. This left no space for UKIP's activities and until the 2009 election party it became an outsider in the General and EP elections (Gifford 2008: 145–146).

The first change in party stance was seen in the 2004 EP elections (see Appendix 4), when the party began to contest local elections on the basis of environment and libertarian values. Moreover, it began to invest more effort into developing policies beyond EU withdrawal. This was characterised by the development of an immigration and asylum policy. Some leaders, such as, Clifford and Kilroy-Silk, helped to manage the party's media image. The recruitment of these famous figures to UKIP aroused massive media interest and gave the party the image of mistrusting the metropolitan, politically-correct elites (Usherwood 2010: 9–10).

Nigel Farage became the party leader in 2006 and continued the party reforms. He gained even more success in the 2009 EP election (see Appendix 4), when the party won 13

seats and came second to the Conservatives in terms of votes won.¹⁷ The new MEPs have teamed up with other Eurosceptics and formed a strong group in the European Parliament entitled the Europe of Freedom and Democracy, which is calling for withdrawal from the EU.¹⁸

In a little over a month the European Parliament's elections will be held. For the purpose of this election, UKIP has published two versions of its *Manifesto 2014*, which represents the party's electoral campaign both for the EP and local elections. Most notably among the concerns of their home affairs' document are immigration, which they claim is out of control, environment, planning, housing, public health and social care, security and crime, and unemployment. Considering those points, it can be implied that UKIP's program appeals to "*common sense policies, which will make people's lives easier and the government will do what is needed, but no more*".¹⁹ Their main priorities are to bring power back to the people through binding local referendums when people demand them, and also to government closer to the people in means of enterprise, attracting jobs and regenerating town centres. UKIP believes that their party could use the money given to EU to rebuild the debt-ridden British economy.²⁰

Their European program, also called *Manifesto 2014*, has a slightly different nature. In this document, the main emphasis lies in the prediction that if voters choose UKIP, the party would actively and effectively negotiate an immediate withdrawal from the EU. Their arguments challenge the policies and arguments of traditional and influential British parties²¹ who have stated that UK withdrawal from the EU will cost Britain too much. The manifesto calls for a re-imagination of the real economic and trade situation with the EU, which only damages Britain and takes jobs and money from the state. UKIP also argues that the fuel and energy economic sector of Britain is under threat from

¹⁷ PressTV (2013). *UK Independence Party & policies; an overview*. 08. 05. 2013. [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.presstv.com/detail/2013/05/08/302487/ukip/>.

¹⁸ BBC (2009). *UKIP forms new Eurosceptic group*. 01. 07. 2009 [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8129312.stm>.

¹⁹ UKIP (2014b). *Manifesto 2014: Open-door immigration is crippling local services in the UK* [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/themes/5308a93901925b5b09000002/attachments/original/1397750311/localmanifesto2014.pdf?1397750311>, p. 2–4, 9.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 8.

²¹ Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and Labour Party

European laws and restrictions. According to this document, independence will bring many positive effects and make the country wealthier and stronger both economically and nationally.²²

The European Parliament elections in May 2014 may define the future of the party. A YouGov opinion poll (see Appendix 5), however, has predicted that the support of UKIP will grow enormously and that the party will win second place in elections, substantially damaging the Conservatives and LibDems. This change shows a public concern about the European Union, which has not delivered upon the predicted potential economic growth. People want to have jobs, high wages and new houses whilst also taking social benefits from the state in the form of better free education and health care. However, EU bodies and UK governing parties could not deliver these goods for people. In such situations, voters turn to populist parties, which sometimes appear more effective than traditional ones.²³

Unfortunately, the party's biggest weakness is their failure to secure a geographical base from which they might take seats in the Commons. Their traditional strength has its foundations in the South-West, driven by fishermen, farmers and the elderly, but the party has not been focused enough, and in the case of a tightly focused campaign, not enough money would be brought back. In addition, there is a continuing problem relating to policy, which they cannot deliver without set mechanisms. The party is still in the process of creating these mechanisms, so their program is seen as an ideological, rather than a genuine one (Usherwood 2010: 15).

The United Kingdom Independence Party demonstrates the uniqueness of the British party system in that it has been created and is based on a single issue – withdrawal from the EU. The first-past-the-post system will not bring UKIP to power and severely restricts its abilities in the domestic political arena. However, the European Parliament's

²² UKIP (2014a). *Manifesto 2014: Create an earthquake* [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/themes/5308a93901925b5b09000002/attachments/original/1398167812/EuroManifestoMarch.pdf?1398167812>.

²³ Kellner, Peter (2014). European elections: UKIP closes in on first place. *University of Cambridge*. 16. 01. 2014 [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://cambridge.yougov.com/news/2014/01/16/european-elections-ukip-closes-first-place/>.

proportional system gives space for UKIP to influence British opinion on the European Union and to challenge the traditional parties' policies. The growing popularity of this party demonstrates the strong dislike of the EU among the British public and predicts a negative result in the membership referendum, if one were to be arranged.

5.2 Cameron-Clegg's government

The contemporary government was formed in 2010 after the General Election, in which the Conservative Party won first place with more than 35%, which was not enough to take control of the House of Commons in a majority. The third party with 23% was the Liberal Democrats, who agreed to form a coalition government with the Conservatives. The hottest question facing the Coalition was to create a united vision regarding the European Union. Therefore, to encourage better governance, a leadership discussion began and a common manifesto was created, in which both parties tempered their enthusiasm and reached common ground to allow them to lead the government (Lynch 2011: 218, 221).

The Conservative party, especially its leader David Cameron, gave a pledge to a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. If Lisbon had not been ratified by all Member States when the Conservatives entered office, they would have withdrawn their ratification, held a referendum on the treaty and led the campaign for a 'No' vote. On the subject of ratification, the Conservatives promised to change this policy. It was a promise for action in the domestic arena and in the EU to prevent the further strengthening of the Union and address concerns about Lisbon. Their agenda was directed to a referendum lock, a full opt-out from the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and greater protection against EU invasion into the UK's criminal justice system. The party believed that the exemptions negotiated by Labour were insufficient, and the repatriation of social and employment policy has been a long-standing demand of the Conservatives (Charter 2012: 70–71; Lynch 2011: 219–220).

On the other hand, the Liberal Democrats had a different view and agenda towards the EU, because they saw themselves as a much more pro-European party. The party believed that it was in Britain's long-term interest to join the single currency, subject to approval in a referendum. In the final leadership debate about the economic situation in

Greece, Clegg denied that the LibDems advocated entry to the Euro. However, they committed themselves to a 2005 manifesto related to an “in-out” referendum the next time Britain negotiates its relationship with the EU. This stance has changed since the Lisbon Treaty, when the party lacked consistency and argued that a referendum is not required (Lynch 2011: 220).

In victory, however, both parties required repatriation pledges during the negotiations which would help to create a single policy towards the EU. The Coalition *Programme for Government* developed the right balance between constructive engagement with the EU to deal with issues, which are affecting the society and national sovereignty and the familiar stance that Britain should play a leading role in an enlarged Union (Charter 2012: 71).

The Coalition program rules out participation in a European Public Prosecutor system, but other legislation on criminal justice would be based on a case-by-case basis with a view to maximizing the country’s security, protecting Britain’s civil liberties and preserving the integrity of the criminal justice system. This program in general is not different from recent governments, as it still wants to play the role of defender of national interest, supporter of the Single Market and further enlargement, and interrogator of the reform of CAP and EU budget. It also wants to discuss EU social policy, criminal justice and defence proposals (Lynch 2011: 221).

In looking at the hottest questions about new policy changes, which were brought about by the Lisbon Treaty, the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) as a diplomatic service of the EU, should be discussed. The Conservatives had opposed the creation of the EEAS but now accepted it as a fact. The contemporary government wants to shape the development of this structure, and therefore respects the competence of EU member states in constructing foreign policy and works in cooperation with their diplomatic services. However it continues to provide a strong voice in areas where the EU has an agreed common position. For example, Cameron’s support for Turkish membership in the EU shows the opposition to the common view of other EU members, which is against the country’s acceptance. In terms of justice and home affairs, the Coalition government joined the EU Directive on the European Investigation Order, which they believe would help to fight cross-border crime and would make evidence collected when investigating a crime more visible. Furthermore, the new government has

signed other EU directives connected to restricting the movement between member states of terrorist finance and the sexual exploitation of children. However, some directives were not accepted because the government claimed that they were already included in the British criminal and judicial system and therefore it was not necessary to review them (Lynch 2011: 223 – 224).

While the British government is influential during European state discussions, the real power is in the hands of EU governmental bodies and other states. The clearest example of British insolvency is the adoption of Fiscal Compact. Cameron and his political proponents used a veto to stop this document becoming a part of the EU treaty, the main financial service legislation, but ultimately this attempt failed. Cameron refused to accede to Fiscal Compact, which he stated was against British national interests. In June 2012, almost a hundred Conservative MPs wrote a letter to the Prime Minister with an appeal to give a clear legal commitment to holding a referendum before 2015 (Charter 2012: 75–76).

It is important to analyze D. Cameron's speech on membership in the EU, which has opened a debate about possibly quitting and started a countrywide agenda for withdrawal. In this pronouncement he set out an agenda for EU reform and if those reforms do not start, the British government will be supportive of a withdrawal. In his speech, the Prime Minister mentioned three current challenges presented by the EU. Firstly, there are problems in the Eurozone, which are driving fundamental changes in the EU. Countries who currently use the Euro have challenged the crisis of the new currency and created a strong policy, which would help to fix it. However, countries outside the Eurozone, such as Britain, feel that this policy does not protect their interests and require certain safeguards to ensure that their access to funds or the single market is not compromised (Cameron 2013: 89, 92).

Secondly, there is a crisis related to European competitiveness with the rest of the global market as its world output is projected to fall by almost a third in the next two decades. Complex rules restricting the labour markets, brought about by this prediction, are not occurring as a natural phenomenon. Therefore, this presents the huge challenge for European leaders to overcome; the creation of a market, which will work for prosperity (ibid: 89).

Finally, there is a “*gap between the EU and its citizens, which has grown dramatically in recent years. And which represents a lack of democratic accountability and consent that is ... felt particularly acutely in Britain*” (ibid: 89). People are frustrated that decisions taken at the EU level are away from everyday concerns such as living standards or taxes. This disagreement can be seen during the mass demonstrations and strikes against some reforms produced by the EU (ibid: 89).

However, Cameron said that he personally believes that the EU is a good thing, which will be more effective for people after reforms based on five key principles. The first principle is competitiveness, which will be based on a single market which must become less bureaucratic, helping its members to compete. The second principle concerns flexibility, which would respect the diversity of member countries (Cameron 2013: 89–90). It should be “*a flexible union of free member states who share treaties and institutions and pursue together the ideal of co-operation*” (ibid 2013: 90). The third guideline is that power must be in the hands of each individual national government, and thus shared sovereignty is the wrong principle for cooperation. A united structure, he claims, cannot unite different countries with different priorities and cultures. The fourth principle is democratic accountability, which will allow national parliaments to play a more significant role. It will be their priority to look after the interests of their own country and do business between themselves. Finally, the fifth principle for reform is fairness. The EU should create the kind of policies, which do not punish some of its members and therefore do not spread discord (ibid: 90–91).

This speech was welcomed by soft Eurosceptics in Britain and in some way draws parallels with Margaret Thatcher’s speech in Bruges. By introducing his promise to hold a referendum, he energized the UKIP and Conservative hard Eurosceptics, yet challenged cabinet members, who are pro-European to whom commitment to the referendum appears as a threat to them.²⁴ His commitment activated the agenda for a referendum about membership, which is now going to be discussed.

²⁴ Watt, Nicolas (2013a). David Cameron challenges Nick Clegg over EU referendum. *The Guardian*. 30. 06. 2013 [cit. 10. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/jun/30/david-cameron-nick-clegg-eu-referendum>.

5.3 To stay or leave? Referendum about membership of the EU

Anti-EU feelings have appeared in Britain ever since the emergence of the Union. When considering the previous chapters, it is apparent that Euroscepticism has a long history in Britain and appears to focus on the protection of British national interests. However, since the 1980s this phenomenon has been steadily gaining public popularity, because of new technologies and the speed of the spread of information. The media began to use it as a strong device against the government and its British policy toward Europe by appealing to British “otherness” and the insolvency of the EU when trying to deliver goods to people.

It must be stated that these concerns are true, and this is a challenge for British leaders to either change European policy or to opt out of the EU. However, there has been a general trend of dramatic decline in British recruitment to European institutions. While the UK makes up 13 per cent of the European population, it has just 5 per cent of the jobs in the European Commission and merely 2 per cent at entry level. Therefore, to protect British interests in all areas of the EU is extremely difficult for a government with a small number of British European researchers (Charter 2012: 67).

Another problem related to the advancement of British interests is Cameron’s withdrawal in 2005 from the most influential group of in the EP, called the European People’s Party, and the establishment of a new group, the European Conservatives and Reformists, with only right-wing Czech and Polish parties and misfits from Latvia, Lithuania and Hungary. This step left the Conservative party in the margins of decision-making and left no space for lobbying British interests on the biggest European platform (Charter 2012: 68–69).

As previously discussed, Cameron, in his first speech of 2013, promised a referendum about membership in the EU for British people by 2017 at the earliest. His commitment was based on “a cool head analysis” and, most importantly, on an attempt to reform union policy towards a better free market rather than a political union. Cameron's most

likely stance would be to take Britain outside EU matters leading to the return of some power to the nation state, whilst not completely leaving the Union.²⁵

However, the party's back benchers, who are strongly Eurosceptical, have begun to challenge this idea. The first legal proposal was made by Tory back bencher Adam Afriyie, who tried to call a referendum in 2014. The Commons voted against this proposal, and the Conservative leadership expressed the concern that a referendum should only be held after attempts to renegotiate Britain's relations with the EU, which could take several years.²⁶

Subsequently, in March 2014, in a reaction to a YouGov opinion poll about preferences in the EP elections and the suggested defeat of the Conservatives, the British Prime Minister set out a new agenda for Europe and Britain's membership, presenting its results to the country in a straight in-out referendum. He made a seven-point plan about Britain's key priorities, which include: the return of power to national governments; the ability of national parliaments to work together to block unwanted European legislation; the openness of the EU market to greater free trade with North America and Asia; the returning of protection and justice policy to the UK systems, unencumbered by unnecessary interference from European institutions; the free movement to take up work, not free benefits; support for the continued enlargement of the EU with a new mechanism for the prevention of mass immigration; the termination of the concept of an "ever closer union" for Britain. Through these steps Cameron expresses his support and shares people's concerns about the EU. This ambitious agenda, he claims, would change British relations with the European Union.²⁷

Both the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats oppose Cameron's idea about the referendum. According to Ed Miliband, the current Labour leader, this commitment would jeopardize international relations and trade and would damage the British image in

²⁵ Mason, Rowena (2013b). UK not ready for EU referendum, says David Cameron. *The Guardian*. 10. 10. 2013 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/oct/10/eu-referendum-david-cameron>.

²⁶ Mason, Rowena (2013a). MPs reject early EU referendum. *The Guardian*. 22. 10. 2013 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/nov/22/mps-rejects-early-europe-referendum>.

²⁷ The Guardian (2014a). *David Cameron sets out agenda for EU reform*. 16. 03. 2014 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/16/david-cameron-eu-reform>.

Europe.²⁸ However, this party has voted in favour of a parliamentary bill that would pave the way for a referendum on Britain's EU membership by 2017.²⁹ The Liberal Democrats, the second part of the coalition government, do not have a great deal of confidence in this step. Nick Clegg, the LibDem leader, believes that Cameron's plans to renegotiate British relations with the EU are condemned to failure. He declared that pro-Europeans were always best placed to reform the Union and that the Conservative proposal would never achieve this goal and thus would never satisfy hard-line Eurosceptics.³⁰

Currently all attention is being focused on the central question of this thesis – the possibility of the UK eventually leaving the EU. The public is split down the middle about what the UK should do: leave the EU or stay. According to YouGov opinion polls (see Appendix 6) the general public's opinion is divided between those who want to remain in the EU (nearly 40 per cent) and those who want to leave it (nearly 40 per cent) over the last year. After Cameron's speech in 2013, support for an exit grew, but in the months leading up to the EP elections and with the establishment of a new agenda of reforming the European polls led to reduced this support. However, remaining in the EU would be warmly welcomed if Cameron can change relations with the Union, leading to a greater protection of British interests. In this case, the support rises more to over 50 per cent and exit is welcomed by only 20 per cent. Around half of the public feel there would be no difference in British influence around the world and no difference between how the people live regardless of whether EU membership is maintained or it decides to stand alone.³¹

²⁸ The Guardian (2014b). *Europe: ins and outs of a Labour dilemma*. 12. 03. 2014 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/12/europe-ins-and-outs-labour-dilemma-referendum-editorial>.

²⁹ Watt, Nicolas (2013b). Labour refuses to rule out EU referendum. *The Guardian*. 05. 07. 2013 [cit. 11.04.2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/jul/05/labour-refuses-rule-out-eu-referendum>.

³⁰ Watt, Nicolas (2014). PM's strategy on UK's EU membership condemned to fail - Clegg. *The Guardian*. 05. 03. 2014 [cit. 11.04.2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/05/cameron-renegotiate-uk-eu-membership-fail-clegg>.

³¹ YouGov (2014). *EU referendum* [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from http://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/dzxvvp5om/YG-Archives-Pol-Trackers-Europe-Referendum-220414.pdf.

When considering these numbers there appears to be a general public trend in favour of leaving the EU. However, it is in hands of the contemporary government and European politicians to change this trend and to dispel British disillusionment about the Union. If David Cameron wins the next general election and does not provide the promised implementations, Euroscepticism would still be high and there is a strong possibility of the UK leaving the European Union.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this bachelor thesis was to analyze British relations with the European Union over the last three decades, especially as regards the Euroscepticism within those governments. The explanatory case method was used to effectively describe the growth, popularity and influence of British Euroscepticism. Furthermore, the thesis has answered the question about the reasons for the rise of the studied phenomenon and provided useful explanations and reasons for each point discussed.

The main question relates to a possible British referendum on EU membership and a potential withdrawal in the future. Firstly, it was necessary to gather the relevant resources to address the theoretical discussion including the differing descriptions of Euroscepticism proposed by different authors. It was then necessary to choose one appropriate definition and apply it to the various British governments. In addition, it was necessary to focus on the last three decades, because the active growth and new image of Euroscepticism began in 1988 after Thatcher's Bruges speech before gaining momentum thanks to historical developments and the inability of former leaders to successfully challenge the EU issue.

The most affected government, according to this analysis, was the government of John Major, which challenged the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty and met with the strong opposition of Eurosceptics, who wanted the UK to withdraw from the European Union. Later, in 1997, he seemed to become a "lame duck"³², and his successor Tony Blair was trying to go against the grain by attempting to reassert EU-UK relations. Indeed, this became a key policy of the successive Labour governments led by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. Blair inherited a country that had benefited economically from the European's Union single market but was intensively wary of other forms of integration. He wanted to establish a closer relationship with Europe, but was unable to do this because of strong opposition from the general public and other members of the political arena, who found its values to be unacceptable. He inevitably struggled against the British feeling of "otherness" from Europe in a world of superpowers and multinational

³² "Lame duck" – in politics this term means an elected official who is approaching the end of his tenure, especially one whose successor has already been elected (The Free Dictionary 2014).

blocks. Blair did not manage to place Britain at the heart of Europe and his belief in accepting the Euro as a single currency and accepting a new constitution failed (Charter 2012: 46–47).

In this thesis some facts were discovered about former British political leaders and most of the influential groups in the UK parliament were defined. For example, the Bruges Group is still an active Eurosceptical voice and it has been generated a number of different political figures, who are now engaged in challenging the Coalition government's stance on the European issue. The thesis then devotes a chapter to one of the most popular Eurosceptic and populist party which emerged from the Bruges Group – the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). It is important to understand the policy of this party, which is rapidly gaining popularity and influence over the contemporary government by introducing hard Euroscepticism.

The title of this thesis and its introduction created research questions which it has attempted to answer. As regards the question about the increasing rise of Euroscepticism, the thesis analyses the most recent governmental attempts to negotiate with the EC/EU and describes the main Eurosceptical concerns and how its influence has grown using the single-case study method. It must be noted that every government has tried to overcome problems connected with the intergovernmental structure, but those attempts were ultimately unsuccessful, sometimes leading to the comprehensive defeat of the party during the General Elections.

The main goal of this thesis was to provide an answer for the question about whether the UK will eventually withdraw from the EU. Thanks to quantitative research based on opinion polls this goal was successfully achieved. The tendency of the British public to treasure its "otherness" leads to the conclusion that Britain is more likely to withdraw from the Union than to stay in it. However, this research also finds one more possible solution which would consolidate the UK's membership in the EU. The general public believes that if Prime Minister Cameron is able to defend British national interests in the European political arena and create a reform, which would be adopted by the European governmental bodies, they would vote for staying in Europe.

Britain and Brussels are now actively going in opposite directions. The prospect of a new EU treaty would end the uncertain British relationship with the EU. It remains to be seen

how effective Cameron will be on the European political scene and if he will win a second term of office for his party in the 2015 General Election (Charter 2012: 79).

A further comparative study about UK-EU relations could be created based on this research. It would be interesting to analyse and compare the same facts after a set period of time, specifically after the year 2017, when a referendum on membership is predicted to happen.

Subsequently, it would be possible for the Prime Minister at that time to develop the basis of the next British policy regarding the EU by learning from the mistakes made by his predecessor.

7. Bibliography

7.1. Printed sources:

Aspinwall, Mark (2000). Structuring Europe: Powersharing Institutions and British Preferences on European Integration. *Political Studies*. **48** (3), 415-442.

Baimbridge, Mark – Burkitt, Brian – Whyman, Philip (1999). The Real Euro-sclerosis: The ECB and the Natural Rate. *New Economy*. **6** (2), 86-90.

Baimbridge, Mark – Burkitt, Brian – Whyman, Philip (2006). Alternative Relationships between Britain and the EU: New Ways Forward? *Political Quarterly*. **77** (3), 402–412.

Baker, David – Seawright, David (1998). *Britain for and Against Europe: British Politics and the Question of European Integration*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Beech, Matt (2011). British Conservatism and Foreign Policy: Traditions and Ideas Shaping Cameron's Global View. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*. **13**, 348–363.

Cameron, David (2013). I'm for a Referendum on British Membership in the EU. *Vital Speeches International*. **5** (3), 78-83.

Charter, David (2012). *Au Revoir, Europe: What if Britain left the EU?* London: Biteback Publishing Ltd.

Corner, Mark (2007). The EU and the Roots of British Euroscepticism. *Contemporary Review*. **289** (1687), 466–469.

Daddow, Oliver (2011). *New Labour and the European Union: Blair and Brown's logic of history*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

De Cillia, Rudolf – Reisigl, Martin – Wodak, Ruth (1999). The discursive construction of national identities. *Discourse & Society*. **10** (2), 149–173.

Economic Affairs (1989). The Bruges Group. **9** (6), 20.

Fella, Stephano (2006). Robin Cook, Tony Blair and New Labour's Competing Visions of Europe. *The Political Quarterly*. **77** (3), 388–401.

Forster, Anthony (1998). Britain and the Negotiation of the Maastricht Treaty: A Critique of Liberal Intergovernmentalism. *Journal of Common Market Studies*. **36** (3), 347–368.

- Forster, Anthony (2002). *Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics: Opposition to Europe in the British Conservative and Labour Parties Since 1945*. London: Routledge.
- Gifford, Chris (2008). *The Making of Eurosceptic Britain: Identity and Economy in a Post-Imperial State*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Gowland, David – Turner, Arthur S. (2000). *Reluctant Europeans: Britain and European integration, 1945-1998*. London: Longman.
- Hall, Stuart (1979). The Great Moving Right Show. *Marxism Today*. **January 1979**, 14–20.
- Kopecky, Petr – Mudde, Cas (2002). The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in Central East Europe. *European Union Politics*. **3** (3), 297–326.
- Lynch, Philip (2011). The Con-Lib Agenda for Europe. In: Lee, Simon – Beech, Matt, eds., *The Cameron-Clegg Government: Coalition Politics in an Age of Austerity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Malcolmson, Patrick – Myers, Richard (2012). *The Canadian Regime*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- O’Brennan, John (2009). Ireland Says No (Again): The 12 June 2008 Referendum on the Lisbon Treaty. *Parliamentary Affairs*. **62** (2), 258-278.
- Smith, Geoffrey (1992). Britain in the New Europe. *Foreign Affairs*. **71** (4), 155-170.
- Sowemimo, Matthew (1999). Evaluating the success of the Labour government’s European policy. *Journal of European Integration*. **21** (4), 343–368.
- Taggart, Paul – Szczerbiak, Aleks (2008). *Opposing Europe? The Comparative Party Politics of Euroscepticism, Volume 2 Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Usherwood, Simon (2010). *UKIP’s Political Strategy: Opportunist Idealism in a Fragmented Political Arena* [research paper] (Bruges: University Assosiation for Contemporary European Studies College of Europe).
- Van Bergeijk, Peter A. G. – Berk, Jan Marc (2001). European Monetary Union, the Term Structure, and the Lucas Critique. *Kyklos*. **54** (4), 547–556.

Wallace, William (1998). Pride and Prejudice. *Marxism Today*. **October 1991**, 28–31.

Williams, Shirley (2009). Britain in the European Union: A Way Forward. *Political Quarterly*. **80**, 233 – 250.

Yin, Robert K. (2008). *Case study research: Design and methods (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

7.2. Internet sources:

BBC (2009). *UKIP forms new Eurosceptic group*. 01. 07. 2009 [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8129312.stm>.

Blair, Tony (1997). Blair's speech at 10 Downing Street. *CNN*. 2.05.1997 [cit. 03. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/9705/02/blair.speech/>.

Blair, Tony (2006). Speech on Europe. *Harvard.edu* [cit. 04. 04. 2014]. Available from http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic162932.files/Tony_Blair_Oxford_Speech_on_europe.htm

European Commission (2014a). *The history of CAP*. 11. 02. 2014 [cit. 19. 03. 2014]. Available from http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-history/index_en.htm.

European Commission (2014b). *Who can join and when?* 24. 01. 2014 [cit. 18. 03. 2014]. Available from http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/adoption/who_can_join/index_en.htm.

Kellner, Peter (2014). European elections: UKIP closes in on first place. *University of Cambridge*. 16. 01. 2014 [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://cambridge.yougov.com/news/2014/01/16/european-elections-ukip-closes-first-place/>.

Mason, Rowena (2013a). MPs reject early EU referendum. *The Guardian*. 22. 10. 2013 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/nov/22/mps-rejects-early-europe-referendum>.

Mason, Rowena (2013b). UK not ready for EU referendum, says David Cameron. *The Guardian*. 10. 10. 2013 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/oct/10/eu-referendum-david-cameron>.

PressTV (2013). *UK Independence Party & policies; an overview*. 08. 05. 2013 [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.presstv.com/detail/2013/05/08/302487/ukip/>.

Schumann, Wolfgang (2014). Analysis of the Integration Process (I) - Stage 4: From the SEA to the foundation of the European Union. *Dadalos* [cit. 17. 03. 2014]. Available from http://www.dadalos-europe.org/int/grundkurs2/etappe_4.htm.

Thatcher, Margaret (1988). The Bruges Speech. *The Telegraph* [online]. September 1988 [cit. 18. 3. 2014]. Available from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3562258/Full-text-of-Margaret-Thatchers-speech-to-the-College-of-Europe-The-Bruges-Speech.html>.

The Free Dictionary (2014). *Lame Duck* [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/lame+duck>

The Guardian (2014a). *David Cameron sets out agenda for EU reform*. 16. 03. 2014 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/16/david-cameron-eu-reform>.

The Guardian (2014b). *Europe: ins and outs of a Labour dilemma*. 12. 03. 2014 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/12/europe-ins-and-outs-labour-dilemma-referendum-editorial>.

Torreblanca, Jose Ignacio – Leonard, Mark, eds (2013). The Continent-Wide Rise of Euroscepticism. *ECFR* [online]. May 2013 [cit. 12. 03. 2014]. Available from http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR79_EUROSCEPTICISM_BRIEF_AW.pdf.

UKIP (2014a). *Manifesto 2014: Create an earthquake* [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/themes/5308a93901925b5b09000002/attachments/original/1398167812/EuroManifestoMarch.pdf?1398167812>.

UKIP (2014b). *Manifesto 2014: Open-door immigration is crippling local services in the UK* [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/themes/5308a93901925b5b09000002/attachments/original/1397750311/localmanifesto2014.pdf?1397750311>.

Watt, Nicolas (2013a). David Cameron challenges Nick Clegg over EU referendum. *The Guardian*. 30. 06. 2013 [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/jun/30/david-cameron-nick-clegg-eu-referendum>.

Watt, Nicolas (2013b). Labour refuses to rule out EU referendum. *The Guardian*. 05. 07. 2013 [cit. 11.04.2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/jul/05/labour-refuses-rule-out-eu-referendum>.

Watt, Nicolas (2014). PM's strategy on UK's EU membership condemned to fail - Clegg. *The Guardian*. 05. 03. 2014 [cit. 11.04.2014]. Available from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/05/cameron-renegotiate-uk-eu-membership-fail-clegg>.

White, Michael (2013). *UKIP and the NHS*. 08. 05. 2013 [cit. 08. 04. 2014]. Available from <http://www.hsj.co.uk/opinion/michael-white-ukip-and-the-nhs/5058362.article>.

YouGov (2014). *EU referendum* [cit. 11. 04. 2014]. Available from http://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/dzxvpa5om/YG-Archives-Pol-Trackers-Europe-Referendum-220414.pdf.

8. Abstract

The subject of this bachelor thesis is the Analysis of British relations with the European Union during the last three decades. The main question posed by this work concerns whether Britain is becoming increasingly Eurosceptical and if it will eventually pull out of the Union.

The first part explains the key terms and gives general information about the phenomenon, and moreover discusses the British version of Euroscepticism in scientific terms. The practical part of the work considers different government attitudes towards the EU and tries to pinpoint the reason for the increasing popularity of Euroscepticism over the last three decades. The Conservative policy toward the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s is described here as a main resource used by contemporary Eurosceptics. However, Labour's attempt to reassert a more pro-European policy is included and the failure of this policy is discussed.

The main goal of this thesis is to provide analysis of Britain's contemporary policy towards the EU, discover how this phenomenon has developed and become so popular today, and of course discuss the possible results of a membership referendum if one is indeed held in the future.

9. Resumé

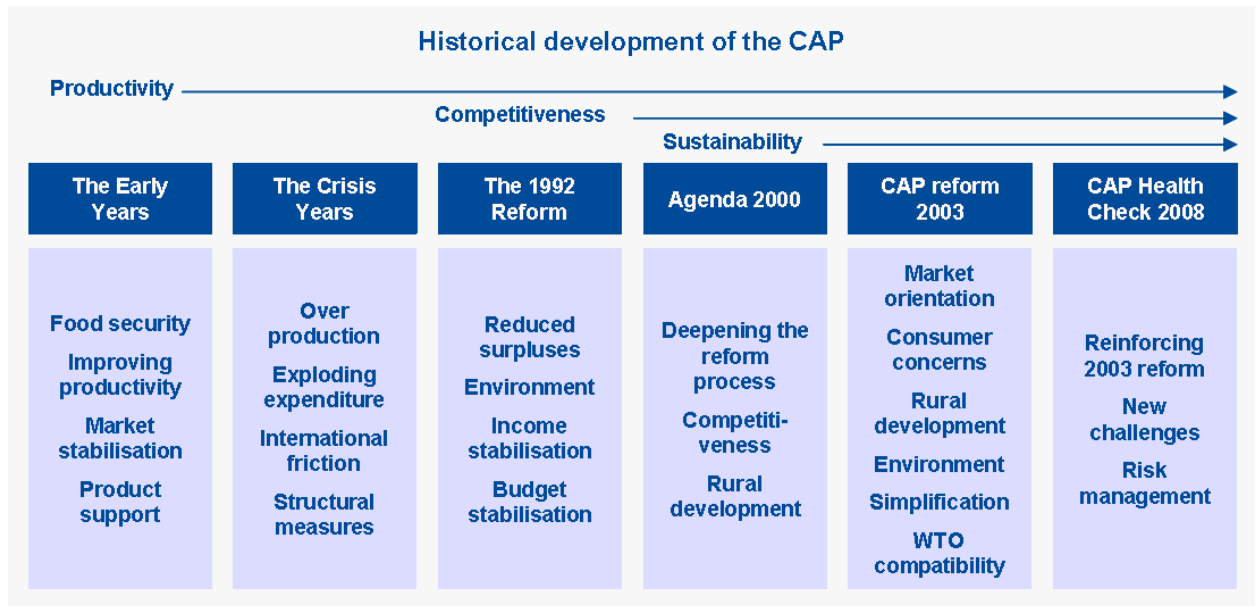
Tématem této bakalářské práce je „Analýza britských vztahů s Evropskou unií během posledních tří desetiletí“, kde centrální otázkou je, jestli se Velká Británie stává stále více euroskeptickou a zda nakonec vystoupí z Evropské unie.

První část práce vysvětluje základní pojmy a přináší obecné informace o zkoumaném jevu, kromě toho se zabývá britskou verzí euroskepticismu s ohledem na vědeckou teorii. Praktická část práce se dívá na postoj různých vlád vůči Evropské unii a snaží se definovat popularitu euroskeptického směru v průběhu posledních tří desetiletí. Konzervativní strana, vládoucí koncem osmdesátých a začátkem devadesátých let, je v práci považovaná za hlavní zdroj současného euroskepticismu. Součástí této práce je taky příslib Labouristické strany o směřování Británie k více pro-evropské politice, který nebyl nakonec splněn a tento neúspěch je argumentován.

Hlavním cílem práce je poskytnout analýzu současné britské politiky vůči EU, zjistit, jak soudobý euroskepticismus vznikl, a co vedlo k jeho popularitě, a samozřejmě nastínit možné výsledky referenda o členství v EU, pokud takový krok nastane.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1. The development of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).



Resource: European Community 2014a.

Appendix 2. Structure (pillars) of Maastricht Treaty



Resource: Schumann, Wolfgang 2014.

Appendix 3. Convergence criteria

What is measured:	Price stability	Sound public finances	Sustainable public finances	Durability of convergence	Exchange rate stability
How it is measured:	Consumer price inflation rate	Government deficit as % of GDP	Government debt as % of GDP	Long-term interest rate	Deviation from a central rate
Convergence criteria:	Not more than 1.5 percentage points above the rate of the three best performing Member States	Reference value: not more than 3%	Reference value: not more than 60%	Not more than 2 percentage points above the rate of the three best performing Member States in terms of price stability	Participation in ERM II for at least 2 years without severe tensions

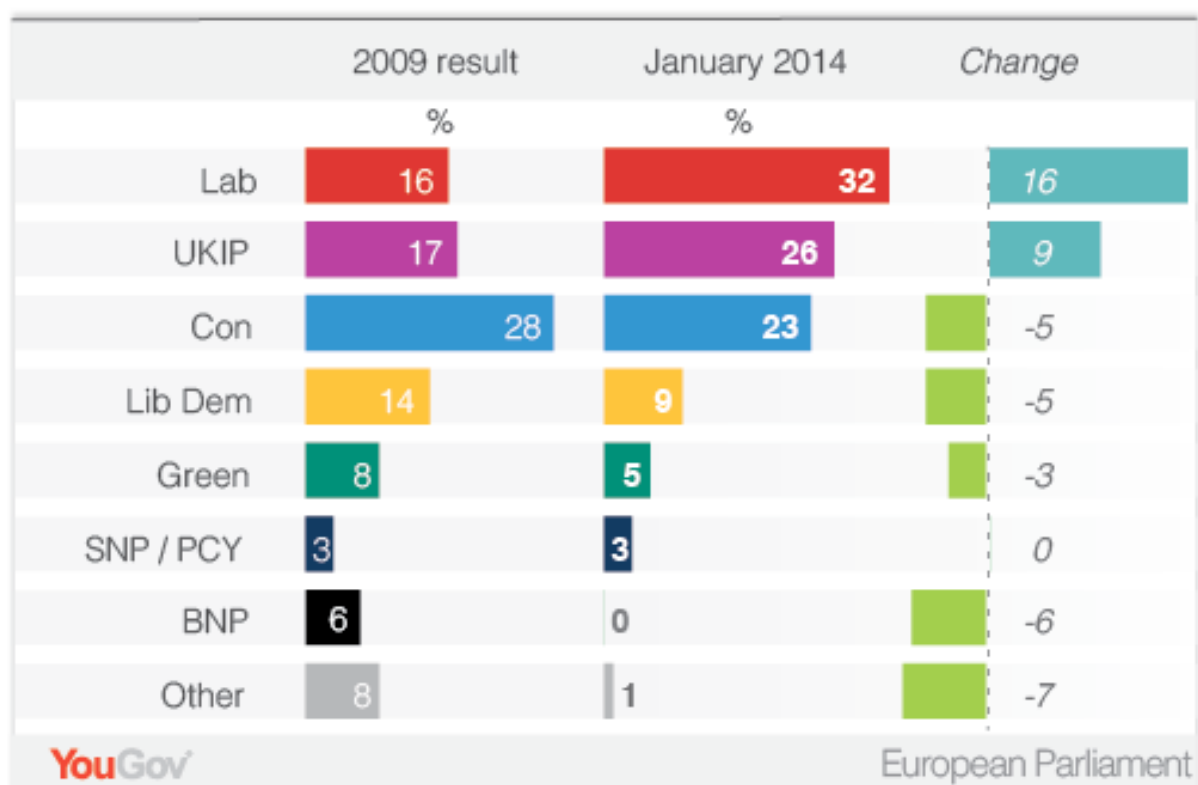
Resource: European Commission 2014b.

Appendix 4. UKIP's Electoral preferences

Election	Percent of Vote	Number of Seats
1997 General Election	0.3 (105, 722)	0
1999 EP Election	6.9 (696, 057)	3
2001 General Election	1.5 (390, 563)	0
2004 EP Election	16.1 (2, 660, 768)	12
2005 General Election	2.2 (603, 298)	0
2009 EP Election	16.5 (2, 498, 226)	13

Resource: White, Michael 2013.

Appendix 5. YouGov opinion poll about EP 2014 elections



Resource: Kellner, Peter 2014.

Appendix 6. YouGov opinion polls about EU referendum

If there was a referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union, how would you vote?

	Remain in EU	Leave EU	Wouldn't vote	Don't know
2014	%	%	%	%
April 3-4	42	37	5	16
March 27-28	42	36	5	16
March 23-24	42	36	5	17
March 9-10	41	39	5	15
February 9-10	36	39	7	18
January 12-13	33	43	5	19
2013				
December 1-9	37	43	4	16
November 10-11	39	39	5	17
October 13-14	37	42	5	15
September 15-16	39	42	4	16
August 18-19	34	46	5	15
August 4-5	35	43	5	17
July 22-23	35	45	6	15
July 7-8	36	43	5	16
June 23-24	31	45	6	18
June 9-10	35	43	5	17
May 28-29	35	43	5	17
May 12-13	34	44	4	17
May 9-10	30	47	4	19

May 7	35	46	4	16
April 21-22	35	43	5	17
April 7-8	36	43	7	14
March 25-26	33	44	5	19
February 17-18	38	41	5	15
January 24-25	37	39	5	19
January 23-24	38	40	4	18
January 20-21	37	40	6	18
January 17-18	40	34	5	20
January 10-11	36	42	4	17
January 2-3	31	46	6	16

	Remain in EU	Leave EU	Wouldn't vote	Don't know
2012	%	%	%	%
November 27-28	30	51	5	14
October 22-23	28	49	5	17
September 25-26	33	47	7	14
August 28-29	32	47	7	15
July 23-24	30	49	7	14
July 5-6	31	48	4	17
June 26-27	33	47	6	14
May 17-18	28	51	6	15
April 16-17	32	48	6	13
March 25-26	34	44	5	18
February 13-14	30	48	6	17

January 24-26	34	44	5	18
2011				
December 15-16	41	41	5	14
December 11-12	36	43	4	17
December 8-9	35	44	5	15
October 23-24	32	51	4	13
August 7-8	30	52	4	15
2010	%	%	%	%
September 8-9	33	47	5	14

Imagine the British government under David Cameron renegotiated our relationship with Europe and said that Britain's interests were now protected, and David Cameron recommended that Britain remain a member of the European Union on the new terms.

How would you then vote in a referendum on the issue?

	Remain in EU	Leave EU	Wouldn't vote	Don't know
2014	%	%	%	%
March 23-24	54	25	5	17
March 9-10	52	27	5	16
February 9-10	47	27	7	18
January 12-13	48	29	6	18
2013				
November 10-11	51	25	5	19
October 13-14	52	28	4	16
September 15-16	50	29	4	17
August 18-19	48	31	5	16

August 4-5	50	28	5	17
July 7-8	48	31	4	17
June 9-10	50	28	5	17
May 12-13	45	33	3	19
May 9-10	45	32	4	20
April 7-8	46	31	6	17
February 17-18	52	28	5	14
January 24-25	50	25	5	20
January 23-24	52	25	5	17
January 20-21	53	26	5	17
January 17-18	55	22	5	18
January 10-11	50	25	5	20
2012				
July 5-6	42	34	5	19

Would you support or oppose holding a referendum on Britain's relationship with Europe within the next few years?

	Support	Oppose	Don't know
2013	%	%	%
January 17-18	58	23	19
January 10-11	59	21	20
2012			
July 5-6	67	19	14

Do you think Britain would be better or worse off economically if we left the European Union, or would it make no difference?

	Better off	Worse off	No difference	Don't know
2014	%	%	%	%
April 6-7	29	37	18	16
February 23-24	30	37	16	18
January 26-27	32	38	12	18
2013				
December 15-16	33	34	15	18
November 24-25	33	34	16	18
October 27-28	34	34	16	17
September 29-30	32	32	18	18
September 1-2	34	33	15	18
July 21-22	32	34	17	17
June 23-24	34	33	17	17
May 19-20	34	31	15	19
April 21-22	34	30	17	18
March 17-18	35	34	16	16
March 3-4	33	35	16	16
February 3-4	30	36	15	18
January 10-11	29	34	19	18

Do you think Britain would have more or less influence in the world if we left the European Union, or would it make no difference?

	More influence	Less influence	No difference	Don't know
--	----------------	----------------	---------------	------------

2014	%	%	%	%
April 6-7	14	39	35	13
February 23-24	13	40	34	13
January 26-27	11	38	33	17
2013				
December 15-16	13	38	35	14
November 24-25	12	35	38	15
October 27-28	12	38	37	14
September 29-30	14	37	38	11
September 1-2	9	37	40	14
July 21-22	13	39	35	14
June 23-24	13	36	38	13
May 19-20	14	38	34	14
April 21-22	13	37	38	13
March 17-18	13	39	35	13
March 3-4	12	41	36	11
February 3-4	12	39	35	14
January 10-11	9	40	38	14

Do you think it would be good or bad for jobs and employment if Britain left the European Union, or would it make no difference?

	Good for jobs	Bad for Jobs	No difference	Don't know
2014	%	%	%	%
April 6-7	26	34	24	15
February 23-24	28	32	22	17

January 26-27	28	32	23	18
2013				
December 15-16	34	30	20	16
November 24-25	33	29	20	18
October 27-28	32	31	19	18
September 29-30	34	28	21	17
September 1-2	35	30	17	18
July 21-22	29	33	20	18
June 23-24	32	30	22	16
May 19-20	32	30	21	18
April 21-22	35	27	22	17
March 17-18	33	30	21	17
March 3-4	34	28	21	16
February 3-4	32	31	22	16
January 10-11	27	30	24	19

And do you think you personally would be better or worse off if we left the European Union, or would it make no difference?

	Better off	Worse off	No difference	Don't know
2014	%	%	%	%
April 6-7	22	23	40	15
February 23-24	19	21	43	17
January 26-27	19	22	43	17
2013				
December 15-16	23	20	38	18

November 24-25	22	19	41	19
October 27-28	23	19	39	18
September 29-30	21	18	42	18
September 1-2	22	19	41	18
July 21-22	21	23	38	19
June 23-24	22	21	40	17
May 19-20	22	21	38	19
April 21-22	21	17	45	17
March 17-18	25	19	38	18
March 3-4	20	21	41	19
February 3-4	21	20	42	17
January 10-11	18	20	40	22

Resource: YouGov 2014.