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Euroscepticism and the migrant crisis

A comparative analysis of mainstream parties
and public opinion in Germany and Hungary

Bachelor's project in European Studies

Supervisor: Anna Brigevidh

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Abstract

The migrant crisis of 2015 resulted in not only 1.8 million migrants entering Europe, but also evoked xenophobic tendencies in political parties and public opinion. This is clearly seen in Hungary's response, when they put up barbwire fences. Germany chose a different strategy with Merkel's 'Willkommenspolitik'. However, the high level of migrants in both countries were bound to create a shift in society. As this was a European crisis, and the European Union lacked a common policy in managing a crisis at such scale, a rise in Euroscepticism was expected. By conducting a two-level analysis using Chapel Hill Expert Survey and Eurobarometer data, I examine the level of Euroscepticism in the mainstream parties in Germany and Hungary, the CDU and Fidesz, respectively, as well as in public opinion in said countries. Anticipating a higher level of Euroscepticism in the public than the political parties, the analysis reaches an unexpected conclusion, revealing a more positive attitude towards European integration in the public opinion in Germany and Hungary than the corresponding parties.

Sammendrag

I 2015 kom 1,8 millioner flyktninger til Europa som et resultat av flyktningkrisen. Dette innebar en økende fremmedfrykt blant den europeiske befolkningen, samt politiske partier. Et godt eksempel er Ungarn, som satte opp piggtrådgjerder langs grensen for å hindre flykningene. Samtidig viser andre medlemsland en mer positiv respons, slik som Tyskland. Med Merkels 'Willkommenspolitik' tok landet imot et stort antall flykninger. Imidlertid var det høye nivået av migranter i begge land nødt til å skape et skifte i samfunnet. Ettersom at dette var en europeisk krise, der mangelen på en felles politikk i EU var tydelig, var det forventet at euroskepsisen skulle øke i. Ved hjelp av data fra Chapel Hill Expert Survey og Eurobarometer, vil jeg utføre en analyse på to nivå, som skal undersøke graden av euroskeptisisme i følgende politiske partier, CDU i Tyskland og Fidesz i Ungarn, samt opinionen i nevnte land. I påvente av et høyere nivå av euroskeptisisme blant befolkningen enn de politiske partiene, kom analysen med en uventet konklusjon. Analysen viser at befolkningen i både Tyskland og Ungarn har en mer positiv holdning til europeisk integrasjon enn partiene som ble analysert.

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List of Abbreviations

AfD	Alternative for Germany
CDU	Christian Democratic Union
CEE	Central and Easter European
CFSP	Common foreign and security policy
CHES	Chapel Hill Expert Survey
EU	European Union
GDR	East Germany, Deutsche Demokratische Republik
H_{CDU}	Hypothesis regarding the Christian Democratic Union
H_{DE}	Hypothesis regarding the German public opinion
H_{Fidesz}	Hypothesis regarding Fidesz
H_{HU}	Hypothesis regarding the Hungarian public opinion
NSU	National Socialist Underground
PO	Public Opinion
PPs	Political Parties
RLPs	Radical left parties
RRPs	Radical right parties
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWII	World War II

1 Introduction

The drowning of 800 migrants outside of Italy is marked as the start of the 2015 migrant crisis (Šabić, 2017, p. 4), during which 1.8 million migrants entered the European Union (EU) in pursuit of stability and prosperity (Buonanno, 2017, p. 102). The flood of refugees evoked xenophobia in the population and the political environment, and as far-right parties have shown, xenophobia and Euroscepticism go hand in hand (EAVI, 2018). In light of the migrant crisis, the individuality of the member states becomes clear and illustrates how European integration has fallen short. Hungary and Germany both handled the crisis outside the sparse legal framework of the EU, but on completely opposite terms. Building barbwire fences was the chosen alternative for Hungary (Berry, Garcia-Blanco, & Moore, 2015, p. 2), while Germany stepped outside of the Dublin convention, accepting even more migrants. The opposite responses to the crisis and the large volume of migrants entering Hungary and Germany during this period warrants closer examination because it will give a broader understanding of the development of Euroscepticism.

My argument is that the level of Euroscepticism in the aftermath of the migrant crisis will differ between political parties (PPs) and public opinion (PO) in Hungary and Germany. The dominant literature, such as Krouwel & Kutiyiski (2018, p. 190) and Hooghe (2003, p. 282), shows that the public has traditionally been more Eurosceptic than the parties, especially the mainstream parties. In addition to this observation, the history of the countries lays the foundation for my expectations. Since Germany is trying to distance itself from the Holocaust, I anticipate, that the mainstream party in Germany, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) will not have an increase in Euroscepticism. On the contrary, I anticipate a rise in Euroscepticism in the German public. Hungary is still affected by the homogenous society they lived in during Soviet rule, therefore, I expect the Hungarian mainstream party, Fidesz, to be more Eurosceptic than CDU, as well as the Hungarian people being more Eurosceptic than Germans.

To evaluate my hypotheses, I conduct a case study analysis. For my analysis I use data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) to examine parties' attitudes, and Eurobarometer data to examine PO. Contrary to expectations, I find that the two PPs in question exhibit a higher level of Euroscepticism than the public. The elevated support for national and restrictive policy in CDU leads them to display a higher level of soft Euroscepticism, while Fidesz is as expected hard Eurosceptic. The public in both countries shows higher support for the EU, in general. On immigration Hungarians are more sceptic, while Germans are more nuanced in opinion, resulting in neither being considerably hard Eurosceptic.

This thesis contributes to the literature on Euroscepticism in several ways. First, the number of analyses of Euroscepticism in the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) are extremely limited (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2018, p. 15). Since Euroscepticism studies have been mainly focused on the Western states, doing a comparative study between a Western state and an Eastern state brings a unique angle to this analysis. Furthermore, some knowledge gaps in the study of Euroscepticism include clear lines in defining Euroscepticism and classificatory schema for the same purpose, seeing that Euroscepticism at the party-level is potentially different than Euroscepticism at the PO-level. By conducting a two-level analysis, I try to address this gap. Another gap, particularly from the perspective of practitioners, is the lack of studies on the impact Euroscepticism has on European politics (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2018, p.

17). By seeing the unexpected results, my thesis can lead the way for further research on how mainstream parties become more Eurosceptic than the population, which in turn can help EU politicians develop strategies to help combat Euroscepticism. In addition, my thesis contributes by providing an evaluation of where attitudes are on the EU after the migrant crisis, which is a relatively new topic in the field.

First, I will define Euroscepticism, going from broad to specific, in the context of PPs and PO. Second, I examine the migrant crisis, before moving to the historical background in Germany and Hungary, as well as their reactions to the crisis. After this, I present four hypotheses regarding my expectations for CDU and Fidesz, as well as the PO in Germany and Hungary. The PPs are analysed first. The chapter starts out with a description of CHES data before diving into the analysis and discussion. Then, I turn to PO, where the first part of the chapter explains the Eurobarometer, before proceeding to the analysis and discussion of the data. Finally, I bring all chapters together and discuss the results.

2 Euroscepticism

Euroscepticism was first mentioned in the British media in the mid-1980's, as a description of the Conservative's scepticism towards the EU after the implementation of the Single European Act (Leruth, Startin, & Usherwood, 2018, s. 4). Since then, the term has been widely discussed by scholars, who routinely attempt to define the phenomenon (Vasilopoulou, 2018, p. 22). The generic definition of Euroscepticism is a catch-all definition capturing all attitudes opposing integration (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2008, p. 240). However, this generic definition is too broad, which makes it difficult to measure. As a result, academics have developed multiple definitions and typologies to operationalise the phenomenon. One of the most broadly used definitions is Taggart and Szczerbiak's (2018, p. 13), which distinguishes between a principled and contingent opposition towards integration and leads to the soft/hard classification.

Taggart and Szczerbiak's (2008, p. 241) soft/hard definition was designed for conducting comparative empirical research on Euroscepticism in party politics. In their definition hard Euroscepticism is "a principled opposition to the project of European integration embodied in the EU" (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2018, p. 13). To operationalise this, the party's views on ceding or transferring power to the EU is evaluated, a strong opposition to this being hard Euroscepticism. Soft Euroscepticism is defined as "an opposition to the EU's current or future planned trajectory based on the further extension of competencies that the EU was planning to make" (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2018, p. 13). This means that there are no principal objections towards the European Project in general, nor the refusal of transferring powers to a supranational body such as the EU. To operationalise this, one can look at the party's view on new issues that require further integration, such as common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and defence.

Mainstream parties have usually abstained from opposing integration, as these parties have been in government coalitions responsible for integration. The fringe parties such as the radical right parties (RRPs) and radical left parties (RLPs) tend to be more Eurosceptic to differentiate themselves from the mainstream parties (Brigevich, 2018, p. 2). Essentially, RRP and RLP have a similar propensity to oppose integration, but for different reasons: RRP because of immigration and RLP because they are anti-capitalist. Because of the strong anti-immigration rhetoric and the more nationalistic stance of the RRP, Euroscepticism is often associated with the fear of immigration (Krouwel & Kutyski, 2018, p. 193). However, over the last two decades Euroscepticism

has become more prominent in mainstream parties across Europe. Brack and Startin (2015, p. 240) suggest that there are multiple factors that affect this development, such as public opinion becoming more hostile towards the EU, and rising support for parties opposed to further integration. Their statements show that the change in the mainstream parties does not happen in vacuum and they are influenced by other parties and the PO.

The 2014 European Parliament election underscored the rise of Euroscepticism amongst the public (Krouwel & Kutiyiski, 2018, p. 189). The mainstream parties experienced a decrease in votes, while the radical parties experienced a rise in support. Krouwel and Kutiyiski (2018, p. 190) argue that this shows the split between the public and the political elites. The elites remained much more pro-European than their voters despite the growing anti-EU sentiments across the political spectrum. Hence, when evaluating the impact of the migrant crisis, we would be wise to distinguish between Euroscepticism at the party level and at the individual level.

Much as party-level Euroscepticism can be parsed into hard and soft varieties, Euroscepticism at the individual level can be distinguished between diffuse and specific opposition towards the EU, as well as looking at views on the authority and the community as a whole (Krouwel & Kutiyiski, 2018, p. 191). By emphasizing this distinction, the generic Euroscepticism label becomes broken down to more measurable definitions, such as the hard/soft definition. It is most common for a soft Eurosceptic voter to have specific oppositions toward certain policy-areas or EU authorities, while at the same time being supportive of the EU community. However, such specific oppositions may in some cases lead to a more diffuse opposition towards the integration project. When a voter shows a diffuse opposition, it may be classified as a hard Eurosceptic voter, meaning that the voter opposes the integration project altogether.

The soft/hard definition enables the development of a more nuanced distinction of Euroscepticism. Boomgaarden et al. (2011, p. 258) argue that because of the complexity of the EU project it is essential to examine multiple dimensions of EU attitudes to add more nuance to PO-level Euroscepticism. Boomgaardens comprehensive definition of public attitudes is defined by five dimensions: performance, identity, affection, utilitarianism, and strengthening (Vasilopoulou, 2018, p. 26). By using a more nuanced definition, like Boomgaardens, we can better parse out the Eurobarometer questions that tap into the two varieties of Euroscepticism. Due to space limitations, this thesis will focus on the following three dimensions: performance, relating to evaluations of the functioning of European institutions; identity, referring to identification with the EU; and strengthening, relating to support for the future of integration, focusing on immigration policy.

3 The migrant crisis of 2015

From 2014 to 2015, the EU experienced a 546% increase in irregular border crossings (Buonanno, 2017, p. 102), predominantly from refugees fleeing from conflict, war, or persecution in their home countries (UNHCR, 2015, p. 2). Particularly, the Syrian Civil war has led to half a million displaced Syrians in only one year (UNHCR/IOM, 2015). Another reason for the flow of refugees¹, were deteriorating conditions in refugee-hosting

¹ I will be using 'migrant' and 'refugee' interchangeably. For full definitions see <https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html>

countries, such as Lebanon and Jordan. Due to poor funding of the United Nations (UN) emergency programmes, from EU countries among others, the refugee-hosting countries saw themselves experiencing a food shortage in the refugee camps (Parkes & Pauwels, 2017, p. 1). The lack of necessities in the refugee-sheltering countries led to 1.8 million refugees heading for Europe (Buonanno, 2017, p. 102). From the shores of the Middle-East and Northern-Africa, the refugees embarked on a dangerous and often lethal journey across the Mediterranean Sea (Šabić, 2017, p. 4), searching for safety and security (Popescu, 2016, p. 105). The sea route being the most widespread route into the EU led to an accumulation of refugees along the shores of the Mediterranean, especially in Italy and Greece (UNHCR, 2015, p. 3).

Italy and Greece became frontline countries of the crisis, experiencing first-hand how the EU policy on migration management or rather the lack thereof could impact society. As the EU has an underdeveloped CFSP (Dinan, 2014, p. 239), vis-à-vis its other competency areas, the main policy in handling migration flow to the EU pre-crisis was the Dublin Convention. One of the most important aspects of this convention created a great burden for the frontline countries, ordering migrants to apply for asylum in the first EU country they enter (European Parliament & Council of EU, 2013). As the news of the nearly 800 deceased at sea outside of the Italian island Lampedusa went public, the EU was forced to take actions (Šabić, 2017, p. 4). However, due to the lack of a coherent strategy for dealing with a crisis of this magnitude, it was a difficult issue to tackle. Like the Council President at the time stated "The migratory crisis we are witnessing now is testing our Union to its limits" (European Council, 2016). This was due to the uneven impact the crisis had on member states as well as diverse national responses, testing EU's core values such as solidarity and shared responsibility (Basile & Olmastroni, 2020, p. 671).

To encourage solidarity in the EU countries and ease the burden for Italy and Greece, the EU presented the refugee relocation plan (Šabić, 2017, p. 5). The Council held a majority vote, where Hungary amongst others voted against the plan. It did however receive a majority, and all EU countries were obliged to implement it. The plan said to relocate 98,255 eligible refugees from Italy and Greece to the other EU countries (Šabić, 2017, p. 5). However, the results in real life were not as successful as the plan on paper. Hungary for instance did not relocate one single refugee, while Germany received several refugees outside of the relocation plan, resulting in them being unable to relocate as many as the plan said. Seeing the variety of responses to the relocation plan and how the underdeveloped CFSP led to national responses to the crisis, one would assume that there would be a rise in Euroscepticism among parties. Amongst the public it is reasonable to think that there would be a rise in Euroscepticism due to the personal impact the crisis has on people, such as job competition between native and foreigners, and seeing foreigners as a burden on the welfare system.

3.1 Understanding responses to the crisis

To better understand the German and Hungarian response to the migrant crisis it is imperative to consider their history post-World War II (WWII), since this will influence how both parties and the public perceives integration.

After WWII Germany was split into East Germany (GDR) and West Germany. GDR was in the Soviet bloc and was a more homogenous society, leading to xenophobic tendencies today and a more Eurosceptic viewpoint (Kohlstruck, 2018). West Germany, on the other hand, was one of the six founding members of the European Communities, and has been

an advocate for integration ever since (European Commission, 2020). This was mainly because of the first chancellor of West Germany, Konrad Adenauer, who perceived integration as the best way to overcome Germany's isolation within Europe (Schwarzer, 2018, p. 5276), as well as ensuring stability and democracy (Schwarzer, 2018, p. 5275). As a result of the European cooperation, Germany experienced a growth in their GDP, successfully completing the greatest challenge in post-war Germany, economic recovery (Schwarzer, 2018, p. 5277).

Migration is not a new concept to Germany. In October 1961, the German government engaged in a recruitment agreement with Turkey (Thelen, 2017, p. 106). Due to a shortage of labour in the German population, the country was forced to import labour from southern European states such as Italy, Greece, and Spain, and eventually Turkey (Huneke, 2011). The aftermath of the agreement is still visible today, with established Turkish neighbourhoods, due to Turks being the largest minority in Germany. Even though the Turks came in the 1960s, parts of the German population still express xenophobia and racism through violence. The first registered attacks on accommodated asylum seekers in Germany was in 1986 (Köbberling, 2018, p. 1). The attacks did not stop there, and underground radical-right terror groups emerged such as National Socialist Underground (NSU). NSU orchestrated a nail bomb attack in a Turkish neighbourhood in Cologne in 2004, injuring multiple people (Häusler, 2017). Attacks like these show that the public may not be on the same page as the parties in government.

Historically, Hungary has experience with multiculturalism, as it was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. However, after WWII and the cleansing of Hungary's Jewish and Roma populations, Hungary has become a highly homogenous state, which explains its hostility towards foreigners. Hungary became part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and because of the ethnic cleansing during the holocaust the country became ethnically homogenous, with 95% of the population being ethnic Hungarians (Hárs, 2009, p. 8). This number remained constant during the four decades² of communist rule, due to limited and state-controlled inward and outward migration (Hárs, 2009, p. 9). The Soviet-ruling in Hungary resulted in isolation from western Europe and being unable to participate in the integration process, which changed after the collapse of USSR. As a now independent small state, Hungary realised that it would be wiser to participate in the integration, rather than compete on the international political market against the EU (Agh, 1999, p. 841). Hungary made an effort to meet the EU-membership requirements, and pointed to political transformation, parties in favour of integration, as well as an 83% positive attitude of the Hungarian public (Ungváry, 2014, p. 1). This resulted in Hungary being accepted as an EU-member during the Eastern enlargement in 2004, alongside seven other CEE countries as well as Malta and Cyprus (European Commission, 2020). Despite willingly joining the EU, several CEE countries, such as Hungary, tend to oppose integration on issues concerning immigration, due to xenophobia after years of living in a homogenous society (Kelemen, 2019, p. 36).

Based on this history, we have seen two different responses to the migrant crisis from Germany and Hungary, where the major difference lies in the parties' level of xenophobia.

Despite Germany's history of being a strong advocate for an integrated EU (Schwarzer, 2018, p. 5275), the government's response to the crisis shows a sense of strong national

² From signing the Warsaw pact in 1955 to the Soviet fall in 1990

initiative. Seeing the amount of people fleeing the Syrian civil war, Germany made the decision to override an important principle of the Dublin Convention, letting a larger number of Syrian refugees into the country (Funk, 2016, p. 290). Meaning all Syrians who had applied for asylum in Germany would not be deported to their first EU country of arrival. These actions resulted in approximately 890,000 asylum seekers entering Germany during 2015 (Welt, 2016). Apart from the relocation plan, Germany received one-third of all asylum claims in the EU, helping to make it the largest receiver of refugees in the EU (Šabić, 2017, p. 8).

Hungary's crisis response is rooted in xenophobia. In addition to being strongly critical of the migrant crisis in the media, as well as putting up fences, the Hungarian government decided to amend their asylum legislation (Hanjnal, 2015, p. 33). The new legislation did, among other things, criminalise helping asylum seekers (Bertaud, Ernst, & Wigand, 2018), as well as sending refugees to Serbia, a country not recognised as a safe-third country by the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) (Hanjnal, 2015, p. 33). Their actions did not go unnoticed. In December 2015, the European Commission opened an infringement procedure against Hungary's asylum law (Bertaud, Ernst, & McPhie, 2015). Hungary did not address the raised concerns, which led the Commission to refer Hungary to the Court of Justice of the EU, because the new Hungarian law conflicted with EU law (Bertaud, Ernst, & Wigand, 2018). Hungary's actions demonstrate a national initiative which legally fights the EU law, portraying the Hungarian authority's perception of an incompetent EU and therefore illegally taking back their sovereignty.

4 Hypotheses

For my thesis I will be analysing the degree of Euroscepticism in the following two mainstream parties: Fidesz in Hungary and CDU in Germany. These parties are led by Angela Merkel (CDU) and Viktor Orbán (Fidesz); who have very different visions of Europe. I expect that the parties' responses to the migrant crisis will be shaped very much by party leadership and their level of Euroscepticism.

CDUs strong leader Merkel, creates the expectation of a low level of xenophobia and Euroscepticism in the party. She has frequently expressed herself as pro-immigration and has encouraged the German people to welcome the refugees by embarking on a 'Willkommenspolitik' (Funk, 2016, p. 290). In her 2015 speech, she encourages the German population to be an example for the rest of Europe and presents the following statement: "The world sees Germany as a land of hope and opportunity, and it really was not always that way" (Merkel, 2015, p. 4). This leads to the second reason why one might believe the CDU to not be overly Eurosceptic in terms of immigration.

Germans continue to be ashamed of the Holocaust (Rosmann, 2009, p. 21). Hence several public figures such as CDU-members, tend to avoid speaking negatively about minorities out of fear of being perceived as Nazis. Another historical factor is the EU itself, which was a peace building project to eliminate prolonged feuds between neighbouring countries, such as Germany and France (European Commission, 2020). In the aftermath of WWII, integration assisted German rehabilitation, resulting in a flourishing German society and economy (Schwarzer, 2018, p. 5274), which is why the hypothesis for CDU is as follows:

H_{CDU} The degree of Euroscepticism in CDU will remain the same as before the crisis.

The hypothesis for Fidesz is informed by Orbán. Unlike Merkel, Orbán is extremely xenophobic. He has a strong rhetoric against refugees, using his position to portray the refugees as criminals, with statements such as 'the migrants are not only pounding on the door, but they are breaking the door down on us', indicating that they are invading the country (Hanjnal, 2015, p. 32). However, it is not only Orbán's strong rhetoric that indicates a scepticism towards the crisis management. In autumn 2015, Hungary put up a barbed wire fence along its border to Serbia restricting the migrants to enter the country (Bocskor, 2018, p. 552). To defend this action Orbán proceeded to explain that Hungary was protecting its national borders as well as the outer borders of the EU, since they are a frontline country of the Schengen area (Hanjnal, 2015, p. 31).

In his statement Orbán implies that the EU is incapable of defending itself and its borders (Huszka, 2017, p. 592). The EU's relocation plan was therefore not well received. Orbán tried to hold a national referendum to oppose the plan in 2016, but it was considered illegitimate due to poor turnout. In addition, Fidesz representatives accused the EU of using the refugee relocation plan to take away Hungary's right to determine who is prohibited or not to live in the country (Huszka, 2017, p. 592). Strong opposition to such EU policies shows inclination to fear giving up national sovereignty on certain issues such as dealing with immigrants (Huszka, 2017, p. 592). The feud between the EU and Fidesz in handling the migrant crisis would therefore most likely lead to a more Eurosceptic party in government in Hungary (Caveren & Durakçay, 2017, p. 864), resulting in following hypothesis:

H_{Fidesz} Hungary's Fidesz will be more Eurosceptic than Germany's CDU.

Unlike the political sphere, the German population is not required to be open towards minorities. Despite Merkel's attempt to encourage the public to be an example for the rest of Europe, the public can read news and make up their own mind. Incidents, such as New Year's Eve in Cologne 2016, may therefore influence the public. That night, multiple assaults were reported, where three out of four were said to be sexual assaults (Der Spiegel, 2016). The mayor of Cologne, who has been supported by CDU, held a press conference in the aftermath of the incident and stated that there was no indication that the attackers were refugees (Werthschulte, 2017). Despite said statement, the media presented a different side of the story. With the testimony from eyewitnesses and victims, der Spiegel argued that large parts of the perpetrators were North African and Arab, which indicated that it was largely a matter of refugees (Der Spiegel, 2016). Alongside multiple tabloids who continued to publish about the ethnicity of the perpetrators, RRP's saw an opportunity to get an even greater support by playing on xenophobia, as well as coming up with propaganda that put the refugees in an even worse light (Weidel, 2019).

The rising support for RRP's such as Germany's Alternative for Germany (AfD), goes hand in hand with the rise of xenophobic tendencies as well as Eurosceptic sentiments, due to RRP's strong rhetoric on said issues. A member of AfD used the incident in Cologne to criticise how the state dealt with the crisis (Weidel, 2019), whilst the party manifesto blames the EU's open borders for immigration and demands a paradigm shift (AfD, 2016, p. 57). Their strong rhetoric received some support during the migrant crisis. From 2015 to 2016 the party went from 16,300 members to 25,000, in 2019 the numbers of members were 34,700 (Statista Research Department, 2020). In addition to the rise of party members, AfD became the third largest party in the German government after the 2017 election (German Bundestag, 2021). Although not being the largest party in

government, AfD has shown its ability to pollute the political discourse in Germany and claim that there are problems relating to immigration and integration. The rise of support for AfD shows that there is a tendency for both xenophobia as well as Euroscepticism in the German public, which is why the hypothesis is as follows:

H_{DE}: The German public will be more Eurosceptic than the party in government.

Contrary to the case of the German public, the final hypothesis posits that the Hungarian people may show stronger Euroscepticism because of the political leader of the country. This is explained by the political context and media publicity the public is exposed to, such as banners hung up in Hungary with statements like "If you come to Hungary, you cannot take Hungarians' jobs" (Hanjnal, 2015, p. 32). In the case of Hungary, the public is exposed to a moral panic, influenced by a strong national feeling as well as xenophobia. Moral panic is a process where the public receives an intensive fear and anxiety triggered by news transmitted by the mass media, which in this case is mostly under Orbán's control (Simonovits, 2020, p. 158). According to Basile and Olmastroni (2020, p. 670), it is estimated that frontline countries of crisis at such scale, such as Italy and Greece, will be more positive towards solidarity measures, whilst countries farther away from the frontlines will not be as interested in solidarity measures due to the economic burden it will be on the country, like for instance Poland. However, Hungary is an anomaly to this theory because one would expect more solidarity and positivity towards EU-initiative since Hungary is a frontline country. The reason we do not see this is due to the negative attitude of the media and the president, which fuels the pre-existing xenophobia in CEE countries. The unwillingness to embrace solidarity, combined with the EU forcing solidarity in the crisis, will result in a backlash against the EU in Hungary.

Generally, Eurosceptic sentiment in PO stems from two principal causes – fear of economic insecurity and loss of identity (EAVI, 2018). Being a Catholic homogenous society, the cultural fear of immigration, especially from Arab countries, is seen as a big threat to the Hungarian identity (Simonovits, 2020, p. 156). Orbán preached to the EU saying that it would be a big mistake letting all refugees enter, since the ideological values of Europe would eventually disappear, and the Muslims would take over. The xenophobia presented by Orbán is likely mirrored in the public (Simonovits, 2020, p. 170). On the economic aspect, the fear of immigrants taking jobs from natives is seen as a big threat (Hanjnal, 2015, p. 32). In the aftermath of the 2009 eurozone crisis the Hungarian public had a hard time getting back on their feet (Magone, Laffan, & Schweiger, 2016, p. 236). In 2015 the economy was on the road to recovery, but the fear of immigrants coming and taking the Hungarians jobs as well as being a burden for the Hungarian welfare system, was seen as a real threat (Simonovits, 2020, p. 170). Since the party in government is strongly against migration, and blames the EU for poorly management, it is a reasonable expectation that the public will be Eurosceptic rather than supportive due to the expectation that they are xenophobic, and they exhibit fears on the two principal causes for Euroscepticism (EAVI, 2018). Which is why the hypothesis for the Hungarian public is as follows:

H_{HU}: The Hungarian public will be more Eurosceptic than the German public.

5 Analysing party-level Euroscepticism

I now turn to evaluating my hypotheses for PPs using the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES). CHES is one of the most recognised sources used to map European party

positioning on integration (Vasilopoulou, 2018, p. 24). Several experts are invited to evaluate party positions both on the general term of the EU, but also on specific EU policies, such as the internal market, CFSP, etc. The method of relying on expert assessment has been used by many scholars during the years. Like all methods there are some pros and cons of the CHES method. A positive aspect is the fact that negative positions on the EU are not analysed in stand-alone terms, but in the context of all possible positions that a party may take on the EU, often rated on a scale of 1-7 or 1-10. On the other hand, some questions do not present such a nuanced position of the different parties due to small scales, such as 1-3 (Vasilopoulou, 2018, p. 24). Although this is a widely used method it has received some critique from scholars, arguing that quantitative methodology, such as CHES, is not sufficient in categorising party opinion (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2018, p. 14). Despite the critique, CHES goes through extensive cross-validation processes to ensure reliability in the statistics (Vasilopoulou, 2018, p. 24). To examine the possible effect the migrant crisis has had on the parties' level of Euroscepticism, data collection was narrowed to the surveys from 2014 and 2019. This is justified by the fact that there are no surveys after 2019 and surveys before 2014 are from 2010, a time when the parties' convictions are most likely affected by the eurozone crisis from 2009.

I now examine a variety of CHES questions to gauge the extent of Euroscepticism in CDU and Fidesz, both before and after the migrant crisis. As governing parties, the CDU and Fidesz have the largest proportion of vote share in their country, although Fidesz has performed much better electorally in recent elections than the CDU, increasing their vote share from 39% to 49% (Bakker, et al., 2020). The CDU, on the other hand, lost votes between 2014 and 2019, with their vote share decreasing from 34% to 27%, forcing the CDU to form a coalition government with the Social Democratic Party of Germany. Another marked difference between the two countries is that, while the CDU has firmly remained a centre-right, Christian-Democratic party, Fidesz has shifted from being in the conservative party family evolving to an RRP. As such, I expect that Fidesz will be more Eurosceptic than the CDU in 2019.

Country/Party	Year	EU Position (1-7)	EU Salience (0-10)	EU Dissent (0-10)	EU Benefit (1-3)
Germany/CDU	2014	6,38	6,92	2,92	1,08
Germany/CDU	2019	6,29	6,86	2,64	
Hungary/Fidesz	2014	2,71	6,36	2,69	1,86
Hungary/Fidesz	2019	3,07	8,13	1,63	

Table 5.1: General questions regarding European integration

To get a better idea of how the CDU and Fidesz approach the EU, we can look at several CHES variables, presented in Table 5.1. First, the EU position variable describes the overall orientation of the party leadership towards integration on a scale from 1 (strongly opposed) to 7 (strongly in favour). The second variable presents the relative salience of integration in the party's public stance on an 11-point scale, where 0 is no importance and 10 is the most important issue. The EU dissent variable presents the degree of dissent on integration on a 11-point scale, with higher values indicating more dissent. Finally, the EU benefit variable describes the position of the party leadership on whether the country has benefitted from being a member of the EU on a 3-point scale, with lower values indicating more benefit.

Table 5.1 underscores that CDU is in favour of integration, with a slight decrease from 2014 to 2019, which is present in the party's EU salience too. However, this drop in variables is so small it may be due to random error and therefore not significant. The table shows that CDU became more united on the issue on integration in 2019. In 2014, CDU believed that Germany had benefitted from EU membership, while Fidesz was neutral. Seeing the other variables, Fidesz is significantly more Eurosceptic than the CDU, with an EU position score of 2,7 in 2014 and 3,07 in 2019. Interestingly, an increase in salience of the EU for Fidesz corresponds with a more favourable position towards the EU and a decrease in dissent. This speaks against the traditional literature, which argues that salience leads to more Euroscepticism. These results potentially suggest that the migrant crisis has created a change, proposing that an increase in salience may eventually lead to less Euroscepticism³.

Country/Party	Year	Nationalism (0-10)	Immigrate Policy (0-10)	Multi- culturalism (0-10)	Ethnic Minorities (0-10)
Germany/CDU	2014	4,7	5,73	6,5	5,6
Germany/CDU	2019	5,47	6	7,05	6
Hungary/Fidesz	2014	8,79	7,84	7,85	7,43
Hungary/Fidesz	2019	9,8	9,94	8,36	8

Table 5.2: Policy Dimensions

To comprehend the parties' attitudes towards the EU during the migrant crisis, it is instructive to look at their positions on migration related issues. The first variable from table 5.2 shows whether a party is in favour of cosmopolitanism (0) or nationalism (10). CDU is positive towards cosmopolitanism but becomes more neutral and in the direction of nationalism by 2019. Meanwhile Fidesz strongly promotes nationalism and becomes even more positive in 2019.

The second variable shows the parties' position on immigration, set on an 11-point scale, where 0=liberal immigration policy and, 10=restrictive immigration policy. CDU favours a neutral policy, although its scores does increase slightly from 2014 to 2019. Fidesz presents a similar trend but on a more extreme level, reaching almost the highest score for restrictive policy on immigration in 2019. The increase in support for restrictive immigration policy may be a concrete result of the migrant crisis for both parties. For Fidesz, the conflict with the commission on the Hungarian refugee legislation, may also be a factor⁴.

For a deeper understanding of the parties' perception of immigrants and asylum seekers, looking at their preferred integration method, displayed in the multiculturalism variable, can be revealing. The variable is presented on a 11-point scale, where 0= multiculturalism, and 10= assimilation. Having scores above 5, both parties show a favour towards assimilation, Fidesz more so than CDU. The results are quite interesting as one would assume CDU to be more in favour of multiculturalism, due to Merkel's positive assumptions. At the same time as an assimilation policy could appear as damning in the international context regarding the history of ethnic purity in Nazi Germany, one would assume CDU to be less open for assimilation. Assimilation being the preferable integration strategy for both parties correlates with the results presented in

³ I encourage further research, examining if this is the case for other parties.

⁴ See Chapter 3

the ethnic minorities variable. Having a relative high score on this 11-point scale, the parties show a lower degree of support for more rights for ethnic minorities, while Fidesz is more reluctant than CDU.

To summarize the findings, we can see that the hypothesis regarding Fidesz is confirmed, as the party shows strong xenophobic tendencies and opposition towards integration. Surprisingly, despite the negative sentiments towards immigration, the party appears to be more welcoming of integration in the aftermath of the crisis. This should speak against the confirmation of the hypothesis, but despite becoming slightly less Eurosceptic the party is still more Eurosceptic than the German CDU. The hypothesis regarding CDU is however disproven, as the party shows tendencies towards a soft Euroscepticism. Surprisingly, the data shows stronger xenophobia than anticipated, as well as a rising level of nationalism in Germany. This suggests that the migrant crisis did lead to a decrease in hard Euroscepticism in Fidesz, and a rising soft Euroscepticism in CDU.

6 Analysing Euroscepticism in Public Opinion

The data for the PO chapter is collected from several Eurobarometer surveys. The general Eurobarometer survey was established by the European Commission in 1974 (European Commission, 2021). By approximately 1000 face-to-face interviews per country, the survey aims to get an insight in the public's perceptions and expectations towards the EU. Due to the longitudinal tracking of such perceptions, the results provide detailed insights in trends in the PO (European Parliament, 2021). I include Eurobarometer surveys from 2012⁵, 2015⁶ and 2019⁷. Incorporating data from years prior to 2012 runs the risk that the eurozone crisis from 2009 may have an impact on the answers. It is relevant to look at the perceptions in the year of the crisis, due to public's short term memory. The most recent data are from 2019; this is to ensure that the 2020 covid-19 health crisis would not impact the results.

Immigration is not addressed in the general survey. Therefore, the data from the special Eurobarometer survey on immigration and integration in the EU from 2018⁸ will be analysed. This type of survey is created in order to get in-depth knowledge on citizens' perceptions on specific issues related to the EU or integration (European Commission, 2021). It gives an insight to Hungarian and German perception of immigration, as well as providing the opportunity to see how the public thinks about further integration on said issue.

⁵ EB 78

⁶ EB 84

⁷ EB 92

⁸ EB 469

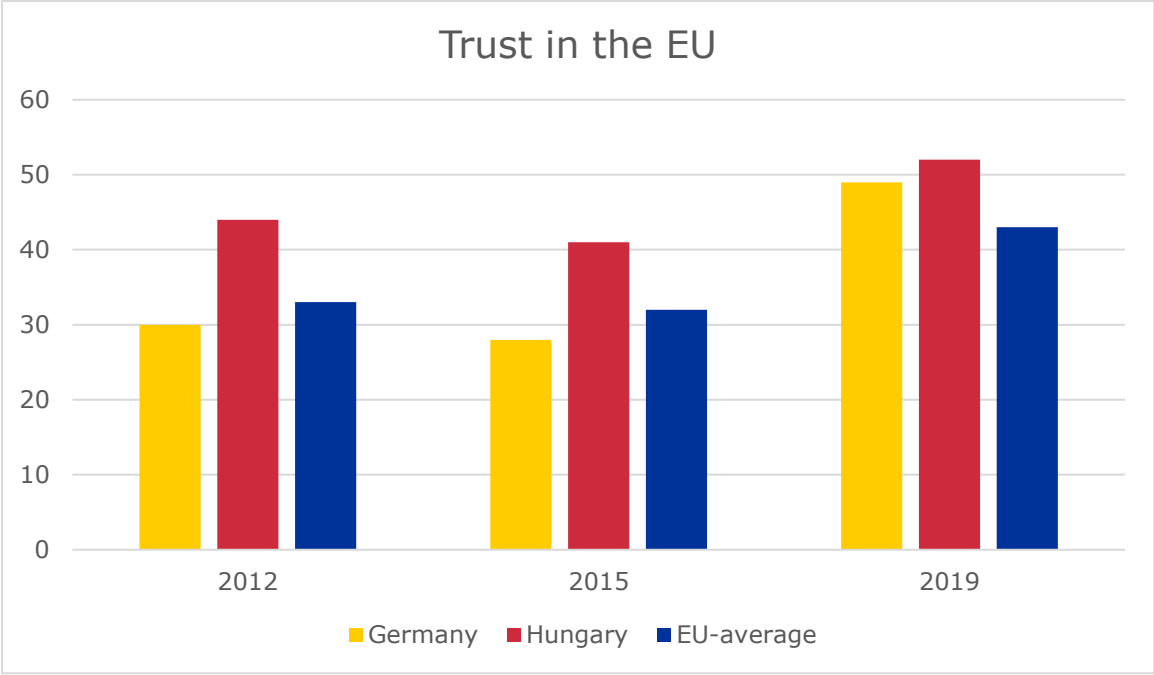


Figure 6.1: Trust in the EU in %. (EB 78, EB 84, EB 92)

Figure 6.1 shows the basic perception of the EU in PO. Hungarians have a higher trust in the EU than Germans and the EU-average, with a slight decrease in 2015 and a rise to more than 50% in 2019. Germans show the same tendencies with a lower level of trust and a steeper climb from 2015 to 2019. The findings are unexpected in Hungary, especially when looking at the negative statements of the Hungarian president. It implies that the government’s position on the EU does not correlate with the public’s position. The lower level of trust we see in Germany in 2012 and 2015 may be an aftermath of the eurozone crisis of 2009. In general, the figure shows a rising level of trust in the EU.

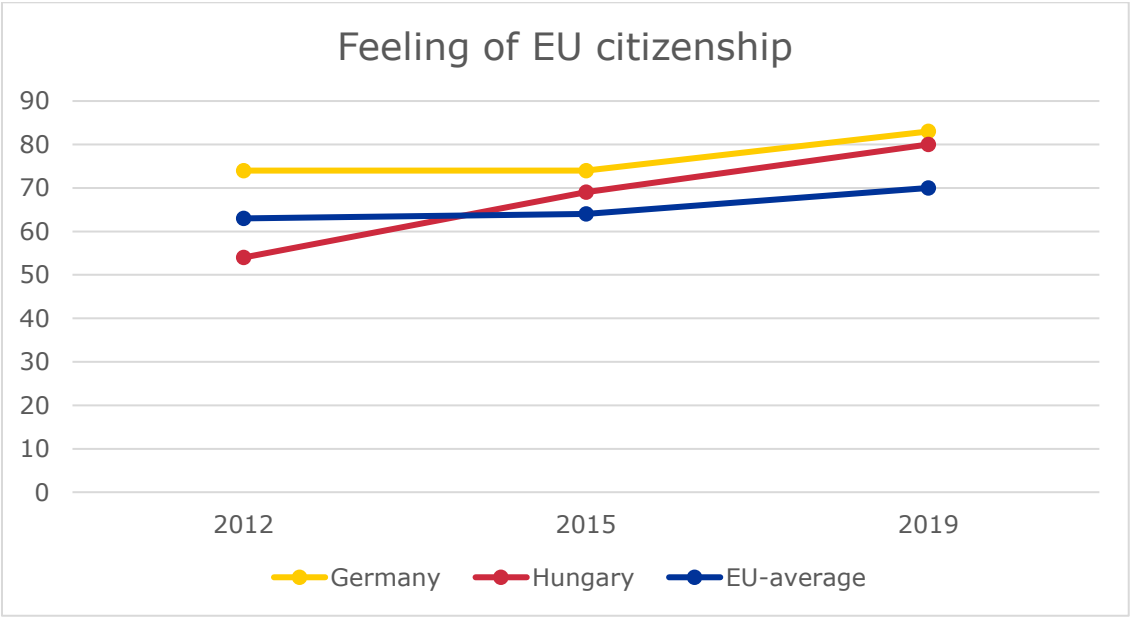


Figure 6.2: Percentage of people answering yes to the following question: You feel you are a citizen of the EU. (EB 78, EB 84, EB 92)

In addition to trust in the EU, another indicator on whether the public is Eurosceptic or not is to which degree they feel like an EU citizen. These two questions correlate because a strong feeling of citizenship often implies a positive attitude towards the EU and therefore also a higher level of trust in its institutions (Ciaglia, Fuest, & Heinemann, 2018, p. 8). Figure 6.2 illustrates that Germans have an above EU-average feeling of citizenship, most likely due to the strong position the EU has in the German society. Unexpected is the Hungarians’ strong feeling of citizenship, which rises above EU-average from 2012 to 2015, almost reaching German level in 2019. The rise may be explained by the EU ‘showing more face’ in society during these times, which makes the population understand more what EU membership means for individuals, hence a growing sense of citizenship.

	Germany	Hungary	EU-average
Too positively	20	8	12
Objectively	37	45	39
Too negatively	30	37	36
Do not know	13	10	13

Table 6.1: When matters concerning immigrants are presented in the media do you think that they are presented too positively, in an objective way or too negatively? Results in % (EB 469)

To understand the public perception in the context of the society in which they find themselves, it is informative to look at how they view the media's way of presenting issues such as immigration. Table 6.1 demonstrate that Hungarians see the media coverage as either objective or too negative. These results show that while the government is xenophobic, Hungarians, on average, are less so, and rather more sympathetic to the migrants. The Germans are more split on the questions. Firstly, this could come from the diversity of media houses in Germany, and the fact that the mainstream media tends to avoid negative sentiments of minorities due to historical reasons⁹. Secondly, the media covered Merkel’s attempt to oversell the positive effects of letting the migrants in, and when problems arose, as they were bound to do, people had a more negative reaction.

⁹ The same tendencies as CDU, see Chapter 4.

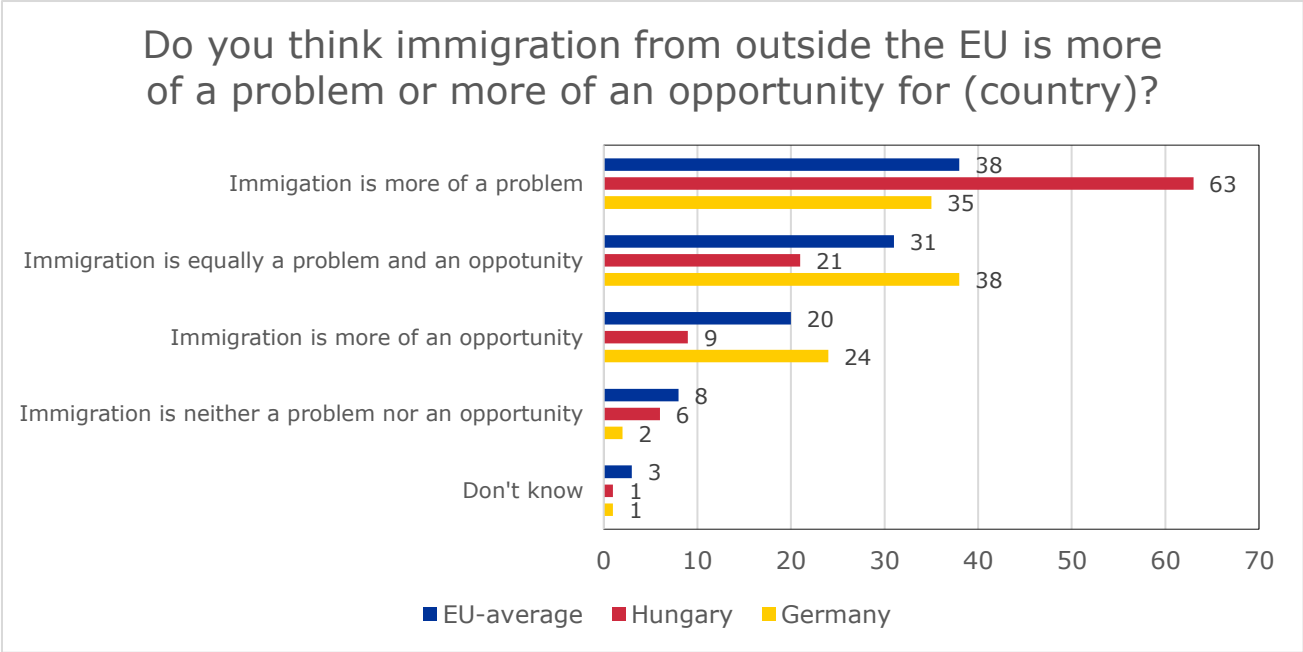


Figure 6.3: Is immigration from outside of the EU seen as a problem or an opportunity? Results in % (EB 469)

Despite problems that have arisen due to immigration, Figure 6.3 shows that Germans are nuanced on whether immigrants are a problem or an opportunity. Hungarians have a more negative viewpoint, observing that 63% see immigrants as a problem for the country. The reason for this may be because Hungary was a frontline country, and therefore flooded with migrants, which would lead to the Hungarian people feeling overwhelmed, while Germans firstly, are more used to people entering their country historically. Secondly, Germany is large, so the flood of migrants would not be as concentrated as in Hungary.

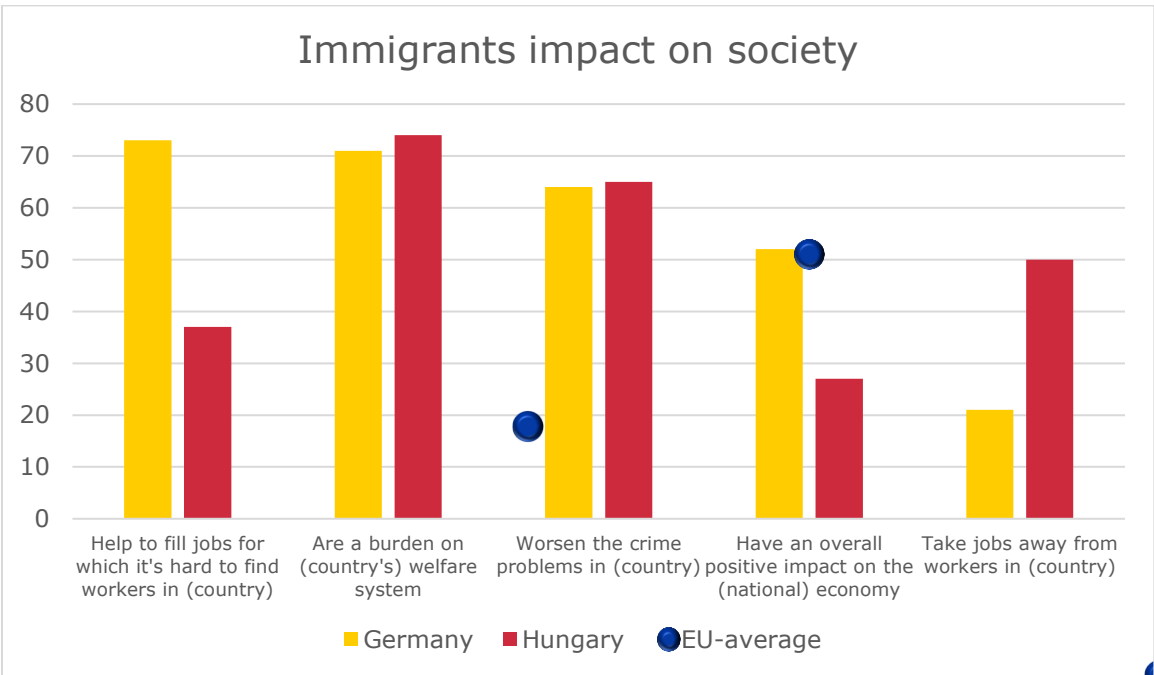


Figure 6.4: To what extent does the public agree with the statements? Results in %? (EB 469)

By looking at figure 6.4, which describes the public’s view on immigrants’ impact on society, we can get a clearer understanding to the results from the previous opportunity/problem question. The first variable shows that Germans are more accepting of immigrants taking the low status jobs, while Hungarians are more opposed to the idea. This also emerges in the last question, where Hungarians believe that refugees take jobs from locals, while Germans see it differently. This may have a historical explanation due to Germany having had immigrants in the labour sector before. It is therefore a common acceptance that Germany needs immigrants to fill jobs, while Hungarians are more likely to feel threaten by immigrant labour, especially due to Hungary’s financial woes, which may have made jobs scarcer recently.

On the second and third questions, regarding immigrants being a burden to the national welfare system and crime related problems, the results from both Germany and Hungary are quite similar and higher than the EU-average. This continues the trend of Hungarians being negative towards immigrants. However, there is a shift in the German population, resulting in a nuanced perception. Figure 6.4 demonstrates that Germans see the benefits of hosting migrants, at the same time, they recognize that this can lead to problems such as crime and be a burden on the national welfare system.

The questions regarding jobs are not the only ones where Hungarians and Germans have opposite perceptions. The fourth question, reading national economy portrays a sceptic Hungary, while Germans sees immigration as a benefit to the national economy. This is interesting as the results are as expected in Hungary. However, when looking at Germany it is peculiar that they do agree that immigrants are a burden on the welfare system but at the same time have a positive impact on the national economy. However due to them being more positive to labour immigration, both can be true at the same time.

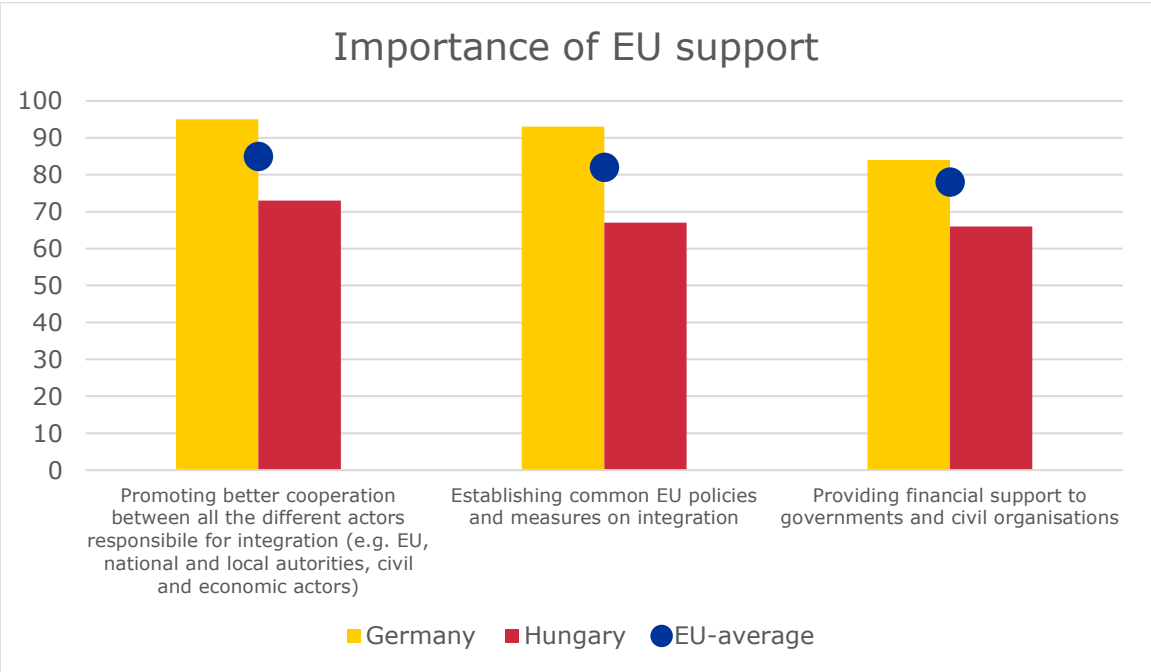


Figure 6.5: How important the public sees certain support from the EU on integration of immigrants. Results in %. (EB 469)

Seeing the negative sentiments by Hungarians and the nuanced sentiment by Germans on immigration, while keeping in mind their overall positive response on the general

Eurobarometer questions, it is instructive to look at how the public views EU support on integration of immigrants. Figure 6.5 displays that both Hungarians and Germans seem to be mostly in favour of integration support of immigrants. The Hungarian public does however show a lower support for all proposals. Germany is above the EU-average, which speaks against Euroscepticism. However, we can see that the question regarding financial support has a bit lower % than the rest, which probably comes from Germans knowing that it will be a bigger cost for Germany. The reason for Hungary's lower support may come from Hungarians being less open to cooperation, because maintaining national sovereignty is important for a significant portion of respondents. The Hungarian numbers are however above 50%, which would speak against Euroscepticism. However, since we are comparing numbers with the EU-average, the percentage of agrees by the Hungarian public is relatively low, which is why we cannot conclude with them being pro-integration, despite having numbers above 50%.

Summarizing this chapter, I expected Germans to be more Eurosceptic than CDU, and Hungarians to be more Eurosceptic than Germans. Surprisingly, the German hypothesis was disproven, as the public had a rise in trust and feeling of citizenship, as well as being more nuanced on immigration issues. The only more specific opposition the Germans show is on the economic aspect. However, due to the high support for the remaining questions, this aspect is not significant for evaluating Germans' level of Euroscepticism. This suggests that the public has a decreasing level of Euroscepticism as well as a lower level of xenophobic sentiments than anticipated. H_{HU} is confirmed, as the public shows a soft Euroscepticism towards further integration, by being less enthusiastic for EU support for integrating immigrants. However, it is important to keep in mind that despite being more Eurosceptic than the German population, Hungarians show a high level of trust in the EU as well as a rising feeling of citizenship, which speaks against hard Euroscepticism. By looking at this as well as the Hungarians perceiving the media as objective or too negative, the Hungarians seem to be less Eurosceptic than Fidesz. To conclude the public in both Hungary and Germany seem to be less Eurosceptic than the party in government.

7 Conclusion

This thesis examined the positions of mainstream parties and PO on the EU in Hungary and Germany, countries with opposite reactions to the migrant crisis. The goal was to see if the migrant crisis would lead to a greater Euroscepticism. By analysing CHES data, I show that the crisis had an impact on political discourse in both countries. We see a high level of hard Euroscepticism in Hungary's Fidesz, although it did decrease after the crisis. The party is far more Eurosceptic than German CDU, as was expected. Surprisingly, the reaction of CDU to the crises was not as predicted, and we see a rise in soft Euroscepticism in the German party. Additionally, by analysing Eurobarometer data, we see a lower level of Euroscepticism than anticipated in the German public, and the thesis reveals that the CDU is more Eurosceptic than the public. On the other hand, the results show that Hungarians are more Eurosceptic than Germans, despite Hungarians showing a lower level of Euroscepticism than anticipated. To summarise, contrary to my expectations the mainstream parties in both countries show a higher level of Euroscepticism than the public.

By conducting this analysis, I have contributed to a new field of study, as the migrant crisis is relatively new. By examining national crisis management and level of Euroscepticism, we can get an insight to how crisis affects both mainstream parties as

well as PO. Seeing the same results in two countries with opposite reactions to the crisis suggests that in order to combat Euroscepticism in the aftermath of a crisis it may be wise to look at the PPs first. However, this analysis only looks at two cases, I would suggest conducting similar analyses on other EU countries before concluding with such a statement.

Some limitations in my research can be linked to the two surveys used to conduct my analysis. The Eurobarometer survey has two main limitations. First, the special survey regarding immigration perceptions is not ideal when it comes to date, since there was no similar survey dating prior to the migrant crisis. This makes it difficult to examine if these perceptions changed due to the migrant crisis. Secondly, the Eurobarometer does not include emotional questions about integration, which we know to be one important dimension in understanding public Euroscepticism (Vasilopoulou, 2018, p. 26). I would therefore recommend incorporating data from the European Values Study survey in further research because this will give a broader understanding of the PO. For the CHES data, a limitation is that it relies on experts' perception and trust that they are correct. To ensure validity, I could have compared CHES with the Manifesto Project (Manifesto Corpus, 2021), which relies on more objective findings. However due to space limitations, I was unable to do that, but I encourage scholars who wish to look at parties' perceptions to include it in their analysis. Furthermore, I believe it would be educative for further research to look at the reasons for why we see a higher level of Euroscepticism in the parties than in the public, as well as examine if this is the case in other EU countries.

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