

# Euroscepticism

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Adéla Panošová, Vít Vinopal, Daniel Drábik

# Content

- What is euroscepticism?
- Euroscepticism in Czechia
- Euroscepticism in Slovakia

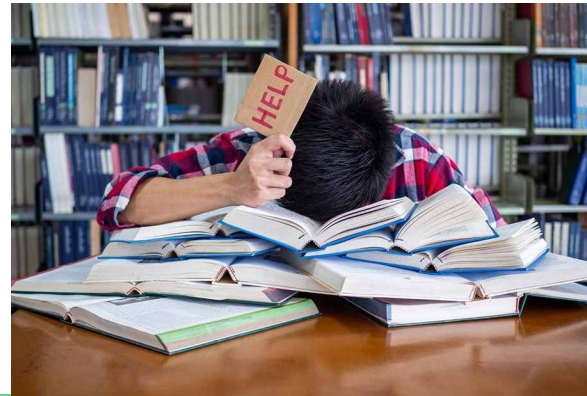
# Where did it euroscepticism come from?

- Mid 1980s United Kingdom - “Eurosceptic” MPs (post Single European act)
- Looking for ideological core - is it just a label?
  - just another form of populism, anti politics, nationalism, ...



# How do we define it?

- After being a subject of studies for decades, there is no one clear definition
- Usually used as a concept describing a political position, which criticises EU and its institutions, policies, ideas, development, ...
- Mostly adapted by political parties, taking and opposing stance on issues like European integration and immigration

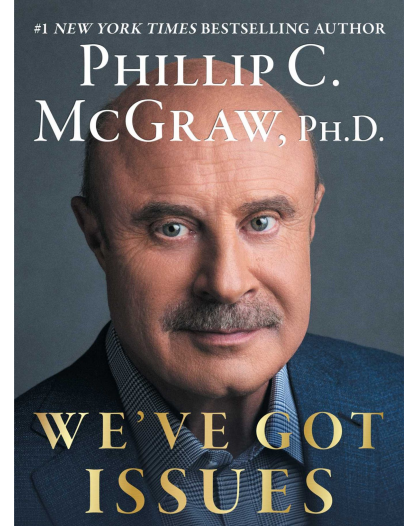


# Political parties and euroscepticism - typology

- Soft X Hard Euroscepticism
  - Soft - concern about one (or more) policies, conflict about national interest
  - Hard - against the EU as a whole and/or the concept of European integration as it is conceived, can be seen in parties who want to withdraw from membership
- Strategical (Instrumental) X Ideological (Political) Euroscepticism
  - Strategical - adapting this political stance based on public opinion polls, or to “fill a hole in the market”
  - Ideological - based on political identity, beliefs in what the national interests are etc.

# Main Issues

- Undermining of national sovereignty and the nation state
- Elitism, lack of democratic legitimacy and transparency
- Too much bureaucracy (leading to wastefulness)
- High levels of immigration encouragement
- Neoliberalism serving big businesses at the expense of working class
- Socialism redistributing hard-earned money of it's people
- ...



# Who's worried about what

- Eurosceptic right wing parties usually focus on nationalist issues
  - Immigration, national sovereignty, ...
- Eurosceptic left wing parties tend to cover economic issues
  - Exploitation of the working class, debt crisis, ...
- Questioning democratic legitimacy and criticising bureaucracy typical for populist parties, can be found across the spectrum

# Accession of the Czech Republic to the EU

- After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989
- The goal was to be a valid part of Europe, to maintain newly gained sovereignty and security
- EU = freedom and democracy
- Pros and cons were not discussed enough
- The existing members of the EU were not fully convinced

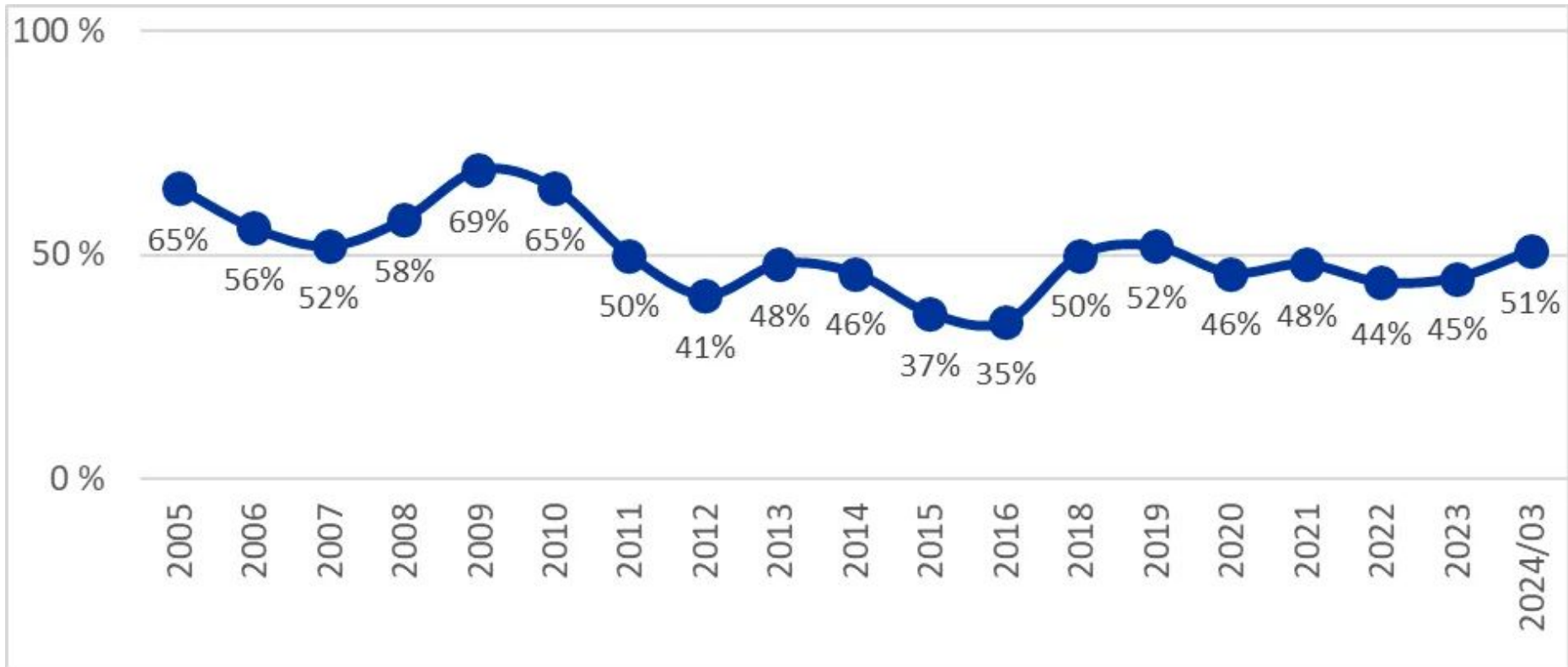


# Opinions before the accession

- After the fall of communism, Czechs were very pro-european (85 %)
- The expectations were
  - Getting lots of money from the EU grants
  - Job / studying opportunities abroad
  - Improvement the environment policies, securing the law, improvement of the bureaucracy /administration
  - Increased export opportunities
  - Improvement of the quality of living in underdeveloped regions
- The worries were
  - Migration
  - Decline of the traditional Czech agriculture
  - Organised crime

# After the accession

- In the first few years, the attitude was slightly critical, but still mainly positive (60 %)
- Very passive approach
- First significant decrease of support happened in 2016 -> migration crisis
- Connection to an EU presidency?
- Change in the narrative, more information about how does the EU work -> Brexit
- Pros: remained the same
- Cons: Too directive, has a negative impact on people's' lives, takes away our freedom of an independent choice



# ODS (Civic Democratic Party)

- More eurosceptic, though, its electorate is mainly pro-european, thinking that the party also is
- Eurosceptic documents since 2006
- Desires to “reform” the EU policies
- The party is pro-european, until the Czech Republic benefits from them
- They are against policies leading to the transfer of power from the national level to the international level
- Against a deeper connection between countries
- “Eurofederalism”
- Strong dissatisfaction with the Lisbon treaty -> transfers some parts of power
- Migration

# Václav Klaus

- Czech ex-president, ex-member of ODS
- They are trying to create one big European state, making us Europeans, not Czechs
- Got the Czech Republic to the EU, saying that it was inevitable
- EI transformed from a liberalisation process to attempts to create an European superstate
- Questions the advantages

# SPD (Freedom and Direct Democracy)

- “nationalist and democratic movement”
- EU is a threat to Czech sovereignty, EI is an attempt to create an European “superstate”
- Strongly against migration -> islamisation??
- Pro exit (referendum)
- The ideal Europe is a free commodities, services and work zone, without a free movement of people
- Against the Lisbon treaty
- Dictate of the EU

# Communists party

- Anti Euro -> loss of economic sovereignty
- Against European Commission -> not voted, not connected with people
- They want more independence
- Criticise migration policies -> economic migrants
- Against the military intervention units

# Accession of the Slovakia to the EU

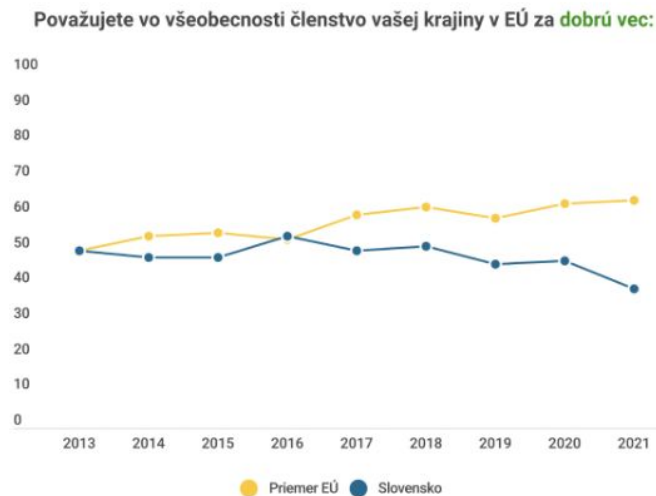
- 2004 addition along with Czechia
- referendum question: Do you agree with slovakia entering EU?
- voter turnout 51.5 % pro - 92.46 %
- Problems and reasons for entering similar to czechia
- V4
- Fico as an pro european politician
- Euro 2008



# Timeline

- Mečiar's optimism
- Mikuláš Dzurinda - 1998
  - euroscepticism is essentially taboo
- Fico - 2006
  - euroscepticism is populist, two faces of Slovakia

Autor: Barbara Zmušková | EURACTIV.sk 📅 Feb 9, 2022 (aktualizované: 📅 Feb 11, 2022)



# People's party

- right wing populist
- program is oddly similar to Franco's regime in Spain
- Exit EU and NATO
- big topic is migration
- Hnutie Republika - the Republic movement



# Slovakian nationalist party - SNS

- ultranationalist
  - national interests in EU
- right wing populist
- Ján Slota
  - takes after Klaus
  - exiting EU
  - critical towards EURO
- Andrej Danko

Lukaschenko is not a dictator, Orban is.

- Ján Slota

"And may the Lord protect us, because some aunt will come who calls herself American and even says she's Secretary of State Albright, hey, and she'll start teaching all of us Slavs what morons we are, hey? But that we're not, I think she misunderstood, and I know what I'm saying."

- Ján Slota

# SaS - freedom and solidarity

- first eurosceptics
- topics:
  - Lisbon treaty
  - european integration
- Euro realists - remained constructive
  - national interests of slovakia
  - reforms of the EU

# New SMER SD

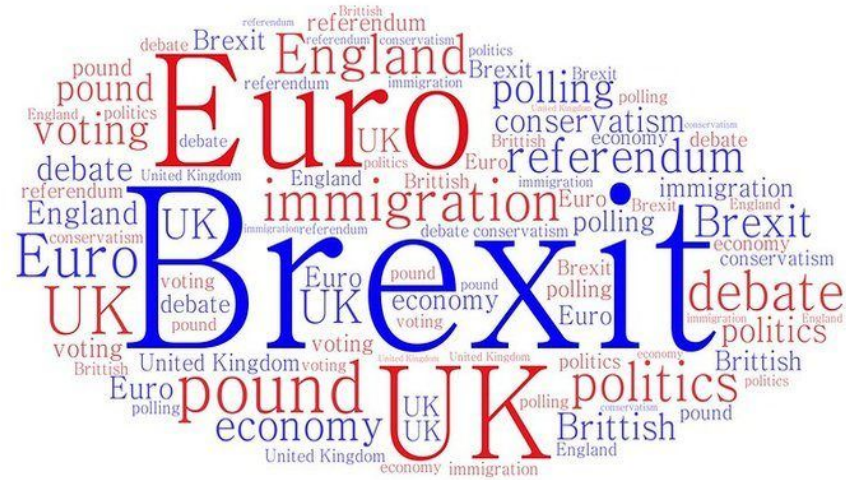
- ultranationalist populist social democratic rhetoric
- hard to asses now
  - war in ukraine
  - similar approach like Orban
- probable sanctions aimed at Slovakia
  - the rhetoric may get more aggressive

# (dis)Honorable mention - Štefan Harabin

- “European union goes against UN Charter”
- critical towards the EU
- Exit NATO
- slovakian neutrality
  
- personal quirks:
  - only tells the truth
  - Russia is not the aggressor



# QnA



Thank you for you attention!

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