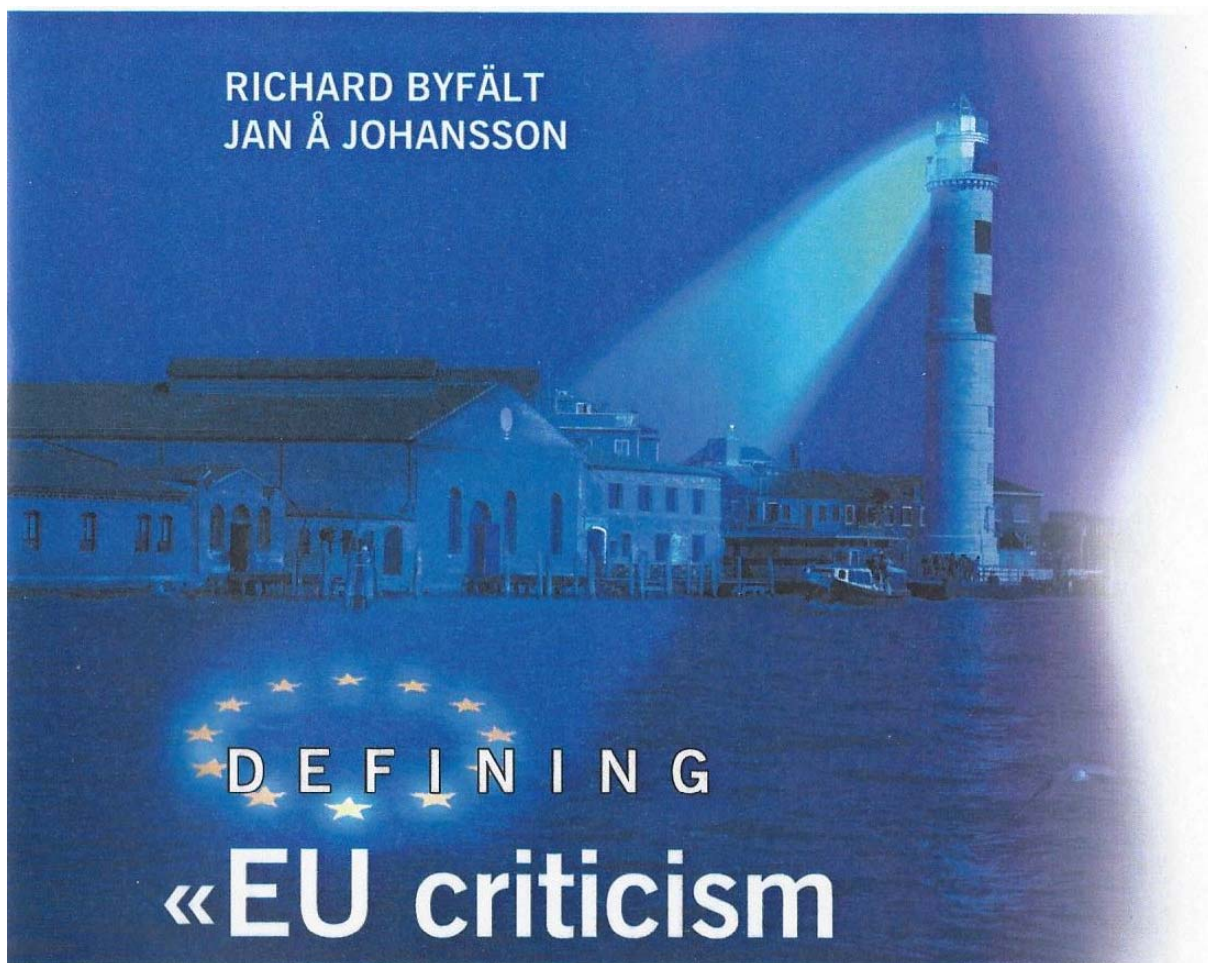


RICHARD BYFÄLT
JAN Å JOHANSSON



DEFINING
«EU criticism
EU scepticism»



œiC ORGANIZATION FOR EUROPEAN
INTERSTATE COOPERATION

Introduction

There is a lot of confusion about what terminology to use for those which are sceptical or critical towards the development of the European Union and especially the activities of many of the EU institutions. Various definitions are used, like EU criticism, EU scepticism, eurocriticism, euroscepticism, eurorealism, or euroopponents, EU withdrawalists, anti-eurofederalists, EU critics, and finally EU-reformers (the last mentioned term is also used by eurofederalists that want to “reform” the European Union into one state with one parliament and one president).

Many of the definitions above have different political traditions in each Member State. The debate about joining or not the European Union has occurred during different time periods, for example United Kingdom, Ireland, Norway and Denmark debated the membership of EEC in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Austria, Sweden and Finland had their debates mainly in the beginning of the 1990’s while in Central and Eastern Europe plus Malta and Cyprus had their debates a couple of years later. The terminology and also the arguments against joining has varied some from country to country during these debates even if many of those that has opposed that their country should join the European Union has argued that they do not wish that a “super state” should develop because then democracy and the power of the people will not work.

We will in this booklet first of all try to define and sort out the terminology as well as to explain the different backgrounds and the various political forces that can be found under the banner of some sort of “EU scepticism”. However, to use the same terminology “harmonized” across Europe, can probably not be done. But hopefully we can provide some knowledge of the various ways today’s European Union is criticized and the reasoning of those critical of it.

Secondly we will also try to give a picture of the political platforms of some of those political forces that define themselves as EU critics, EU sceptics or EU opponents. In some Member States their positions are well known, but in some Member States there is a lack of debate about how the EU institutions work and how the EU should be shaped in the future.

Richard Byfält, EUDemocrats

Jan Å Johansson, Organization for European Interstate Cooperation

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| <p>The opinions expressed in this report are not in any way the official opinions of the EUDemocrats or the think tank Organization for European Interstate Cooperation. This report merely wishes to try to begin the discussion of straightening out the terms of EU criticism and EU scepticism.</p> |
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The terms and their definitions

To complicate things further parties or movements can be except “EU critics” or “EU sceptics” also “radically EU sceptics” or “strongly EU sceptic” or “hard EU sceptics” and “soft EU sceptic”. These terms vary slightly depending on how strongly they argue their case. Those who dislike and oppose EU sceptics prefer to use more degrading terms, often describing EU sceptics as “anti-european” or “europhobes” or even “uneuropean”. How it is possible to be “anti” a continent is strange. For example just because some are against the existence of the World Bank does not mean that they are “anti-world”. EU scepticism is based on criticism of the European Union, and opposition to the political process of forming an ever more centrally governed Union (those more positive about the EU use the words “European integration”).

The terms EU critics or EU sceptics are generally preferable over eurocritics (this latter term is common in general use for example at the English Wikipedia). An EU critic is someone who is critical towards how the European Union and especially its institutions function and work today. It is also important to use EU critic or EU sceptic in order to highlight that the European Union is not representative of Europe. For example the European Parliament has used the term “European” since it renamed itself from “the Common Assembly” to the “European Parliamentary Assembly” in 1958 in spite of it at the time only consisting of members from six European countries. Eurocritic is preferable to use to describe those who criticise the euro single currency.

In short the main views of these EU critics or EU sceptics are that a more centralised European Union weakens the nation state and its elected national parliament. In some countries it of course also weakens the power of the presidency. Furthermore, they see the Union as being undemocratic (or anti-democratic) and bureaucratic. Left wing EU sceptics often take the position that the EU is also cementing capitalist or neo-liberal values such as deregulations of markets in favour of big business while at the same time undermining social welfare. Classical liberals and EU sceptics on the right side of the political spectrum criticise the bureaucracy and ever more political regulations. Some environmentalists and Green parties are of the opinion that the EU is not radical enough in environmental issues.

As can be noted above EU criticism and EU scepticism is found in political parties across the traditional left and right spectrum. It is significant that parties on the left like the British Labour Party, the Irish Labour party, the Social Democratic parties in Scandinavia among others opposed membership of the EEC/EU during the sixties and seventies when they were clearly on the left. In the eighties when they started to move towards the centre they also dropped their opposition to the EEC/EU. Left-wing EU sceptic parties (to the left of the Social Democratic parties) tend to criticize what they see as the neo-liberal agenda of the EU, although they often support a unification of countries (albeit under a socialist system) and the abolition of national borders.

Often two different situations influence the terminology. If a country applies for membership of the EU and a public debate coincides with an upcoming referendum there are clearly those that support membership and those that oppose it. But if a country, in a referendum, has decided to join it gets trickier. Some of those that opposed membership accept defeat, and favour staying in, while some criticize the EU as such and wants it to change, saying for example that the EU should not govern the Member States to the extent it does today, and

thirdly there are those that do not admit defeat, that want a new “in or out” referendum and of course argue for their country to leave.

EU scepticism today is not uniform within the political forces existing in the Member States of the European Union. It exists both to the right and the left and as an undercurrent in many national parties in the centre as well. EU sceptics in the European Parliament are very heterogeneous and act in different ways to express their opinions.¹

Usually there is considered to be two different types of EU sceptic thought, which differs in the extent to which its adherents reject European integration and their reasons for doing so.

“Hard EU scepticism” is the opposition to membership of, or the existence of, the European Union as a matter of principle. The Danish People’s Movement against the EU and the United Kingdom Independence Party are two examples of movements/parties that take this position.

“Soft EU scepticism” is support for the existence of, and membership of, a form of European Union, but with opposition to specific EU policies, and opposition to a federal European Union. Opinions vary about how such an EU should be modelled among these “soft EU sceptics”. But quite common is the idea that EU should be something like the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and mainly work with trade issues. Some add that it should also work with environmental issues and some want it to decide over all cross-border issues. But there are varying definitions of what constitutes a cross-border issue. Examples of “soft EU sceptics” are national parties that in the European Parliament are members of the European Conservatives and Reformists group, which includes centre-right parties such as the British Conservative Party, and the European United Left–Nordic Green Left group consisting of left-wing parties in the European Parliament. The Swedish June List, in the European Parliament 2004 to 2009, is another example. They seek continued Swedish membership of the European Union, but want the EU to change into an organisation for inter-state cooperation. Sometimes these “soft” EU sceptics are referred to as “reformists,” due to their goal of reforming or changing the EU.

Alternative names for “hard” and “soft” EU scepticism are respectively “withdrawalist or secessionist” and “reformist” EU scepticism.

Criticism against usage of the word “EU scepticism” exists among some of those that are labelled so by others. For example many on the left like the “Old Labour”-man Tony Benn tend not to use the phrase “sceptics” when referring to themselves, even though they share many of the “sceptics” criticisms of the European Union. Instead they may use phrases such as “euro-critical” or just call themselves democrats or socialists seeing their scepticism of the EU as part of their wider belief in democracy or socialism.

Some “hard” EU sceptics such as UKIP prefer to call themselves “eurorealists” rather than “sceptics”, and regard their position as pragmatic rather than "in principle". The right wing former Czech President Václav Klaus rejected the term "euroscepticism", with its negative undertones, saying in April 2012 that the expressions for a eurosceptic and his opponent should be "a Euro-realist" and someone who is "Euro-naïve" (respectively).

¹ See for example; Brack, Nathalie: Euroscepticism at the Supernational Level: The Case of the “Untidy Right” in the European Parliament, 2012

The terms eurorealism or euro-realism according to those that use them are an attempt to maintain a realistic but reformist perception of the EU and the European integration as a whole. The term “eurorealist” is more criticized and not used or accepted among all those different political forces that are anti-EU-federalist or negative towards the current development of the European Union.

Examples of “EU sceptic” positions

The Scandinavians - Norway

In Norway a majority of the citizens (for the second time) in 1994 voted down a proposal to join the European Union. But Norway has since 1994 been associated with the EU internal market through the agreement on European Economic Area (EEA). No to the EU (*Nei til EU*) is the name of the broad Norwegian No Movement; an antiracist and pan political organization which strives for Norwegian sovereignty and independence from the European Union. No to the EU wants a more limited and bilateral relationship with the EU, and is working to promote alternatives to the current EEA agreement. The basic arguments from No to EU in Norway against their country to join the EU are as follows;

“The basis of the Norwegian society is democracy. Norway has come to learn how self-governance is the wise foundation of our decentralized, elongated and scarcely populated country. As a sovereign nation, Norway can cooperate and trade with other nations. No to the EU strives to ensure a truly influential democracy, where important decisions are made with effective democratic control.”

Some of No to EU Norway’s most important policies:

- No to the EU wants to ensure democracy and Norwegian sovereignty.
- No to the EU wants to ensure continued Norwegian independence in international politics.
- No to the EU strives for fairness and equality in international trade and cooperation, and urges Norway to play an active role on the global arena in obtaining and ensuring such qualities.
- No to the EU strives for Norwegian natural resources to be administrated by Norwegian authorities and institutions.
- No to the EU promotes broad international cooperation, not restricted by the borders of Europe.

No to EU Norway’s four reasons for opposing Norway joining the EU:

1) **Democracy**. They want to defend a vibrant democracy. The EU’s democratic deficit has increased. The authority of ever new areas is being transferred from the nation states to the EU. The citizens of the union are rarely aware of what is happening behind the closed doors of Brussels. In 2009, only 43,2 percentage participated in the elections to the EU Parliament. Outside the EU, says No to EU, we have a democracy where people participate and the politicians are accountable to the voters.

2) **Solidarity**. In the World Trade Organization (WTO), the EU is pressuring poor countries into allowing the establishment of multinational companies. The EU also demands that former colonial countries enter into unfair free-trade agreements. This means that developing countries are prevented from building their own welfare system and production. The EU has

made massive cuts in its aid to Africa. The funding is diverted towards the Balkans and the Mediterranean. In return, the EU requires liberalisation and privatisation. EU's policy towards the world's poor shows that Norway should continue to remain outside the Union. Outside the EU, Norway can promote a humane trade and aid policy.²

3) **Environment.** The EU does not solve the environmental and climate challenges. The EU's desire for increased economic growth leads to centralisation and large-scale production. This results in overconsumption of resources, increased transport and pollution. The EU is too small for the major global environmental problems, and too big to handle local issues. At the climate summit in Copenhagen in 2009 the EU was put on the side line while other countries and regions controlled the debate. The environment is an important "no"-argument. Outside the EU, Norway can promote environment and development in international bodies like the United Nations, while the European Union advocates free-market policies.

4) **Freedom.** The EU often speaks with one voice in key international arenas such as the United Nations. The Lisbon Treaty means that even more of the foreign policy is coordinated. During an EU elite dinner in Brussels in 2009, the British Baroness Catherine Ashton was appointed the first foreign secretary (high representative) of the Union. Sweden has changed its voting in the United Nations since becoming an EU member. Formerly, Sweden voted as often with countries from the south as the north. As an EU member Sweden almost never votes with the south. The EU's foreign policy is increasingly uniform. This is an important argument against Norwegian membership. Outside the EU, Norway can remain an independent voice in the world.

The Scandinavians - Denmark

The Danish People's Movement against the EU is a cross-political organisation. The organization's goal is to liberate Denmark from the EU. The organisation works for democracy, sustainable development and international cooperation. Instead of EU membership they want Denmark to join EFTA. They also want to increase Nordic cooperation and support the Council of Europe, OSCE and the UN. As long as Denmark is a Member State of EU they seek to limit the damage done by the EU and by Danish EU membership to the world at large and to Denmark.

The Danish population is divided in the EU question and Denmark has had six national referenda about EU and EU questions. The first referendum was in 1972 and there was a national majority for a yes. But for instance in Copenhagen and in Greenland there were clear no results. Faroe Islands did not participate in the referendum because the local parliament had decided that the autonomous islands should not join EEC (today EU). Greenland did not have local autonomy at that time so Greenland joined EEC as a part of Denmark. However in a local referendum in 1982 (after the establishment of home rule) a majority voted for Greenland to leave the EU, which it did.

In 1986 Denmark held a referendum about the Single Market. The result was a yes, but again the nation was divided.

²http://www.neitileu.no/var/nteu/storage/images/media/bilder/publikasjoner/div_publikasjoner/4_grunner_norsk_og_engelsk/four_reasons_solidarity/350449-1-nor-NO/four_reasons_solidarity.jpg

In June 1992 the Danes voted no to the Maastricht-treaty, but the pro-EU government launched a second referendum about the Maastricht-treaty less than a year after, but this time with four opt-outs. The People's Movement did not recommend a yes because they wanted a different form of European cooperation and not only Danish opt-outs. The second referendum on the Maastricht treaty in 1993 resulted in a narrow yes vote and EU integration continued in the direction towards a super state. The Danish opt outs are therefore important to keep Denmark out of areas of the growing EU super state.

Denmark's opt-outs are from:

- the Euro (the third phase of the European Monetary Union)
- Defence policy
- Justice and Home affairs
- EU citizenship.

Denmark also had a referendum in 1996 about the Amsterdam Treaty, which resulted in a yes, but in the year 2000 a clear majority in Denmark voted no to the euro.

The People's Movement has worked for referenda about the EU constitution and the renamed EU constitution (The Lisbon Treaty). But the Danish Government was afraid of a no vote and ratified the Lisbon treaty without referendum. However, the People's Movement points out that Ireland did vote no to the Lisbon Treaty and according to the EU treaty in existence at the time all Member States need to agree to treaty changes. The People's Movement demanded respect for the Irish no vote on the Lisbon Treaty and together with a broad range of Danish organizations they demanded that Denmark should withdraw its ratification.

The People's Movement take part in elections to the EU parliament because they are of the opinion that representation strengthen their voice in the public debate, it procures resources of knowledge and money for their work, and because their vote may tip the scales in favour of less integration and less harmful legislation. The People's Movement have been represented in the EU parliament since 1979.

The People's Movement is active in European and Nordic EU-critical movements, because they see the fight for democracy and diversity as an international rather than a national issue.

The Scandinavians - Sweden

After Sweden joined the European Union in 1995 the terms for those that supported EU membership and those that opposed it changed. Those that had opposed EU membership now call themselves "EU-critical," and were branded as such by the media. They criticise the work of many EU institutions, the increasing centralisation of political decisions to Brussels, waste of taxpayer funds and so on. Those who had supported Swedish EU membership in the 1994 referendum often defended everything the EU and its institutions were doing, excused mistakes of EU representatives, and many of them, but not all, supported Swedish euro membership in the referendum in 2003. Swedish EU supporters are sometimes called "EU huggers" but that is a more degrading and informal term. Sometimes EU critical persons are called "(EU) confederalists" contrary to EU supporters that are called "(EU) federalists".

It must be noted that the use of the term federalist has different meanings in different countries. In federal nation states like Belgium and Germany federalism is viewed differently

compared to unitary states like Sweden. A unitary state is a state governed as one single unit in which the central government is supreme. In such unitary nation states the term federalism is generally quite unpopular.

EU scepticism in United Kingdom and Ireland

In the United Kingdom there are forces from left to right that in varying ways oppose EU membership or many EU policies. In the United Kingdom and Ireland the term Eurosceptic is regularly used and is therefore used here.

The Green Party of England and Wales, rejects the term “Eurosceptic”; however it opposes the Euro and is critical of the current direction and structure of the EU.

No2EU – Yes to Democracy was a left-wing electoral alliance initiated by the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) to run in the June 2009 European Parliament elections in Great Britain. According to their press statements they stood in opposition to “the perceived xenophobic, nationalist and pro-business policies of existing euro-critical parties and the pro-EU mainstream parties”. No2EU's declared position was for a Europe of "independent, democratic states that value its public services and does not offer them to profiteers; a Europe that guarantees the rights of workers and does not put the interests of big business above that of ordinary people". This is impossible under the current EU structure, according to them.

The main policies of No2EU – Yes to Democracy were:

- Rejection of the Lisbon Treaty
- No to EU directives that privatise public services
- Defend and develop manufacturing, agriculture and fishing industries in the United Kingdom
- Repeal anti-trade union ECJ rulings and EU rules promoting social dumping
- No to racism and fascism, Yes to international solidarity of working people
- No to EU militarisation
- Repatriate democratic powers to EU Member States
- Replace unequal EU trade deals with fair trade that benefits developing nations
- Scrap EU rules designed to stop Member States from implementing independent economic policies
- Keep the United Kingdom out of the eurozone, as they perceive it to have an agenda of protecting and maintaining capitalism and the capitalist agenda.

The Irish left wing Republican party Sinn Féin opposes the current structure of the European Union and the direction it is moving in. Sinn Féin objects to the limitations and restrictions European Union membership has placed on the Republic of Ireland, as well as the European depletion of Irish sovereignty.

The most well known EU sceptic political force today is the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), that was formed in 1993 and focuses on EU-withdrawal as its primary policy. UKIP has received significant support in EU Parliament elections, especially in 2004 and 2009. Polling from May 2013 shows UKIP as favourite to win the 2014 EU Parliament elections. An interesting comparison can be made between their argument against EU membership and that of the Norwegian and Danish organizations that oppose it. UKIP wants to regain a British self-governing democracy, freeing businesses from “crushing EU regulations” and the less well off from the burden of taxes as well as ending what they call

“open border” immigration policies towards EU countries and introducing a Canadian style points system for immigrants.³

UKIP motivates its position with the following points:

1) Restore Self Government & Democracy

- *Commissioners in Brussels dictate 75% of our laws. None can be repealed by Parliament. We cannot vote for those who make these laws – we cannot remove them.*
- *EU controls Immigration, Business and Employment, Financial Services, Fishing, Farming, Law and Order, Energy and Trade. It seeks now to control Foreign Affairs and Tax.*
- *The British people must decide through an immediate referendum if we stay in the EU or to come out and claw back independent power over our national life. We do not have to be ruled by this regime to work with our European neighbours who depend on us for their markets.*
- *Abolish the EU's bureaucratic VAT and replace it with a local sales tax to support Local Government finance and to make it accountable at the ballot box.*
- *Give the public power to require binding local and national referenda on major issues.*

2) Rebuild Prosperity

- *By leaving the EU we save over £45m a day plus £60bn a year due to EU trade barriers, business regulation, waste, fraud, administration costs and the destruction of our fishing industry.*
- *According to Open Europe EU business regulations cost over £20bn a year. Abolish those determined not essential by a commission appointed by Parliament.*
- *Take 4.5 million of low incomes out of tax altogether with a simple, flat rate income tax. With a threshold set at minimum wage.*
- *Financial services yield £61bn in tax revenues or 12% of the UK total. Exclude the City from EU controls.*
- *UK national debt is to reach over £1.4 trillion by the end of the parliament. This is unacceptable.*
- *UK national debt will exceed £1.4 trillion by the end of this Parliament by which time Osborne's cuts will not even equal our EU contributions. Public spending is increasing and the Coalition's cuts do not scratch the surface of Labour's deficit. We must cut down Government if we are to return to a sound economy.*
- *EU 'renewable' energy rules will double electricity bills by 2020. Global warming is not proven - wind power is futile. Scrap all green taxes, wind turbine subsidies and adopt nuclear power to free us from dependence on fossil fuels and foreign oil and gas.*
- *Quangos cost us £60bn each year – at least half the cost of the NHS. Bring them under Parliament's control and cut the cost substantially.*
- *Cut taxes on small businesses and abolish the tax on work – Employers' National Insurance.*
- *Make real and rigorous cuts in foreign aid and replace with free trade.*

3 Protect Our Borders & Defend Our Country

- *The tide of mass EU immigration has pushed down wages and restricted job opportunities. Only by leaving the EU can we regain control of our borders.*
- *Freeze permanent immigration for 5 years. Immigrants must be fluent in English, have minimum education levels and show they can financially support themselves.*

³ Introducing a Canada style point system for immigrants is also the policy of the German anti-euro party *Alternative für Deutschland*, founded in 2013.

- *Bring in a points based visa system and time limited work permits.*
- *The State must defend its peoples. Keep our nuclear deterrent and make increased defence spending a clear priority, even in these difficult times, to underpin Britain's global role.*

4 Safeguards Against Crime

(...)

- *Scrap the European Arrest Warrant.*

(...)

“UKIP is a patriotic party that believes in putting Britain first. To shore up the collapsing Euro the EU is now seeking to pull away the props of our national economy - control of taxation and spending. Only UKIP will give the power to the British people to regain self-government.” – UKIP.org (May 2013).

EU scepticism among European political parties

Among the European political parties there are those that are negative to the developing centralisation of the political process and decisions to the European Union. There is a small party, the EUDemocrats, which gathers EU critical parties, persons and movements. Their members take a mixed position, with some being “hard” and some “soft” in their EU scepticism.

The political programme of the EUDemocrats is as follows:

“Political programme of the EU Democrats

The EU Democrats (EUD) is an alliance of national parties, movements and parliamentarians across Europe that believe decisions must be made as close to the citizens as possible. Our members and allies are against further centralization of power in Brussels and work for the devolution of power from the EU to national and regional parliaments. Transparency, subsidiarity, democracy and diversity are the four main principles of the EUD - values that we all share. Consequently, EUD takes a strong stand against all forms of racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia.

The development of the European Union is a matter of great concern to us. The European Union erodes European democracy in two ways: first, the ever-increasing transfer of power to Brussels widens the gap between citizens and the elites. This transfer makes it more difficult for citizens to control their governments. Secondly, the treaties of the European Union are written to widen the power of Brussels and big corporations at the expense of decision making in democratically elected bodies.

The EUD believes that decisions regarding the balance of power between market and democratically elected institutions should be decided in national parliaments according to results from national elections, and not by treaties interpreted by a small number of judges in the European Court in Luxemburg. This is a fundamental, undemocratic flaw in the basic construction of the Union.

The EUD consists of members, movements and member parties from a broad political and regional spectrum, from Scandinavia to the Balkans and the Iberian Peninsula. Our members have the necessary integrity to say: Stop! The European Union is heading in the wrong direction with its ever-increasing centralization of power in Brussels. The EUD strategy is to

unite critical forces that embrace our ideological foundation in a political struggle against the federalization of Europe.

On the whole, the three big political families (Christian Democrats, Socialists and Liberals) share a federalist agenda that controls the European Parliament. They are silent, however, about their long term goal of creating a United States of Europe. They know that such a development has no support among the citizens of the European states.

The daily work of the EU Democrats involves the following activities:

- *Arguing in favour of political independence for the member states and their nationally elected institutions.*
- *Monitoring the implementation of the EU Constitutional Treaty (the Lisbon Treaty) in the European Union and highlighting its problems in relation to the political independence of the member states.*
- *Working against new initiatives from the European institutions aiming at controlling more policy areas.*
- *Working against the development of a European Union Foreign Service that will undermine the member states foreign, security and defence policy.*
- *Working against the expansion of the euro zone. The EUD believes that a common currency for Europe is harmful, both from a democratic and an economic point of view. Viewed the economic development since the introduction of the euro, our position has proven to be correct.*
- *Working for transparency and reforms aimed at total openness in all EU institutions.*

EUDemocrats vision about future cooperation in Europe:

Our common goal is to diminish the power of EU institutions and to create a Europe with peaceful cooperation amongst sovereign States. Within this overall strategy, there are many alternative specific approaches:

- 1.) For some members, the above described goal can only be achieved if their countries leave the European Union.*
- 2.) Other members would prefer to change the present European Union into something similar to the European Free Trade Association.*
- 3.) Yet, others might have the opinion that the European Union is not only a common market but also an opportunity to cooperate in other fields such as environmental policy.*

The EU Democrats find no contradictions between critical movements and "withdrawalists" since we all agree on a fundamental issue in present day politics: To stop the development of the United States of Europe! We must work together to stop the erosion of democracy, improve transparency, openness and national sovereignty.

Our future tasks

The EUD has a role to play in the politics of Europe: We have developed information campaigns on the Lisbon Treaty in the first and second referendums and we will continue with our campaigns in the coming referendums on the EURO in Sweden and Denmark, as well as the Edinburgh agreement. We also believe that Icelandic voters are in need of EU information in the event a referendum takes place. Providing information in Iceland is one of our top priorities at this time. Furthermore, EU critical political forces around Europe need a contact in Brussels that can provide actual information on EU affairs.

The failure of the euro is an essential subject on which we can provide information, especially in countries such as Ireland, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Poland and Estonia.

The EUD must also fight for the rule of transparency within the EU institutions. Transparency, for example, in the disclosure of information must be the rule, not the exception, and it should also be applied to the EU budget.

What EU criticism and EU scepticism is about – definition of the political line

Above can be read the positions of various EU-critical political forces and we will here below try to summarize the typical EU-critical political positions.

In general EU critics question whether increased trade and free movement in Europe really require all the current EU institutions with their accompanying bureaucracy and never ending expansion of costs. In general EU-critical/EU sceptic political forces are against a development of the European Union towards a federal state – the United States of Europe. For example a federal EU state is seen not to be compatible with representative democracy. The European Union has a very unclear structure of governance today were it is hard to hold politicians to account if something goes wrong. To give the European Parliament the highest representative power of all parliaments would not work either according to the EU critical camp. Turnout in the European Parliament elections is the lowest of all elections (compared with local, regional or national elections and referendums in each one of the Member States).

Voters are focused on the actions of national governments and the elections to the national parliament (with a few exceptions for presidential elections in some countries). A centralist federal political power is criticised for not having sufficient insight and knowledge of the problems in all regions of its domain. For example in the United States of America there has existed, ever since the founding of the republic, an on-going debate about the power of the federal state versus the powers of the fifty constituent political entities (states). Eventually this debate was settled by military conflict, when the south left the union and created the Confederate States of America from 1861 to 1865, when it was military forced to capitulate.

Well aware of the word federalist (or the “f-word” as Margret Thatcher actually said) not being popular everywhere, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso in his 2012 State of the Union speech (yet one of the inventions that has been copied from United States of America) said that he wants the European Union to become a “federation of nation states”. However, in substance it is a federal state he wants. But in line with Barroso’s “Orwellian 1984 language” he calls it a federation of nation states because it sounds better.

The problem is also that there is no limit as to how far the European Union can proceed in taking over political areas and political decision power from nations and regions. The will of the European Parliament today is a good example. In resolutions they have opinions on education in schools, for example language education, traffic education, IT education etcetera, this despite the fact that education policy is a Member State competence.

The European Parliament wants to meddle and take over everything

EU critics among the Members of the European Parliament⁴ often argue that the proposals on which the Parliament vote should not be subject to EU decision making in the first place. The competences of the European Union should be limited to a few specific policy areas, similar to the intent of the US federal government.

First and foremost, according to many EU critics the EU should serve to promote free trade and the creation of a true internal market. The EU could also help to coordinate the response to cross-border environmental issues within Europe, including climate change. The EU could also be allowed to coordinate research and development programmes deemed beneficial to all EU countries, such as the Galileo Project. The EU must work towards all of these goals while still respecting the sovereignty of national parliaments, national judicial systems, and national governments. Many EU sceptical and EU critical political forces probably are in agreement on this even if there are some variations in opinion.

Many EU sceptics and EU critics argue consistently against EU intrusion into policy areas controlled by Member States. A few of these areas are education, culture, criminal law and justice, policing, immigration and asylum policy, dispersion of humanitarian aid and disaster relief, forestry policy, and tourism. Some also believe that some issues are best dealt with on a global level by organizations such as the UN or WHO. Health initiatives, infectious diseases, and pandemics could be eradicated more efficiently when fought by as many nations as possible. Many EU sceptics and EU critics take the same approach toward global humanitarian aid and disaster relief.

Many EU sceptics and EU critics view the European Union as an economic organization and support the addition of Member States which could “guarantee democracy, human rights and a functioning market economy.”

No set boundaries for how far the European Union can go in taking over ALL political powers

EU critics and EU sceptics state that there are no boundaries set for how far in to the political powers of the Member States the European Union can reach. As a proof of this they refer to the federalist institutions, the European Commission and the European Parliament, not only wanting to create a federal European state, but that their ambition is that they want a European unitary state, this according to their positions before inter governmental conferences on new treaties. According to the Commission and the European Parliament more or less everything would have added-value by being addressed at EU level.

The European Economic Community had as its main task working toward realizing the four freedoms: free movement of persons, goods, capital and services. Within these four freedoms a lot of political issues can be included, similar to the commerce clause justification for federal laws in the USA. But then there is the question of the European Union as a union of values which opens the possibility for the EU to do more or less anything it wants. For example housing policy – it can be considered as a “value” that all citizens should have a roof

⁴ The political positions referred to here are based mainly on the positions of the Swedish June List when they sat in the European Parliament 2004-2009. However, their positions were also in general supported by many of the other national parties that were members of the then existing group Independence/Democracy in the European Parliament.

over their heads. As a consequence of that the European Union should decide about housing policy, social housing, construction planning etcetera. But also, for example, the European Parliament wants to meddle in education policy in spite of it being a national and regional issue in the Member States. More examples will be given below.

Members of the European Parliament (MEP) that sit in committees which are not involved in legislation within the EU have not got that much to do. With the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty MEPs gave themselves more money to employ staff because they had become even more “important and busy” politicians. These under occupied MEPs must keep themselves busy with something. That is why MEPs in their committees think hard about things that the EU could meddle in, draining the Member States of even more political power and giving the EU more power over the everyday life of the citizens in the Member States.

That the European Parliament is elected with a much lower turnout (43%) than all other elected assemblies at all different levels in all of the Member States and therefore has got a very weak political mandate and legitimacy to increase their political influence is very impolite to point out for them.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament is one example of a committee that constantly is in the process of considering how the EU should govern foreign, security, and defence policies. The committee is full of former Prime Ministers, former Ministers of Foreign Affairs etcetera. But the committee only produces statements. The approved reports in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament as a whole are always included in the agendas at the Council meetings of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. But they only stamp them as received and rarely even discuss them.

Other ideas that suddenly spring out from the committees work must be dropped due both to lack of realism and for political reasons. For example, in 2008 the Committee on Culture and Education proposed that all bloggers should be registered and controlled (the Mikko report, A6-0303/2008, on concentration and pluralism in the media in the European Union). The idea was finally abandoned in plenary.

Further, the European Commission proposed in 2010 to establish a European Union action for a European Heritage Label. The Committee on Culture and Education in the European Parliament of course got very enthusiastic about this. They are of the opinion that “the idea of a European Union Heritage Label aims to increasing the European citizens’ sense of sharing a common heritage (through knowledge of history and participation in actions supporting intercultural dialogue) and envisioning the building of the EU as a still in-progress process is a step in this direction” (the Paliadeli report A7-0311/2010). Cultural heritage labels already exist in the Member States as well as within the United Nations. The introduction of a European Union Heritage Label would have a starting cost of 650 000 euro, taken out of the EU budget for 2012 and 2013.

Also, the European Parliament sometimes tables proposals that clearly are within the domain of national issues and legislation. At the session in March 2013 a report on eliminating gender stereotypes in the EU (the Liotard report A7-0401/2012, an own initiative outside the EU legislative process) from the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality was up for vote. In paragraph 17 it was proposed: “Calls on the EU and its Member States to take concrete action on its resolution of 16 September 1997 on discrimination against women in

advertising, which called for a ban on all forms of pornography in the media and on the advertising of sex tourism.”

The last part of the quoted sentence about a ban of pornography is a legislative competence of the Member States and relates to their respective internal debates relating to freedom of expression in print. This stirred up some criticism which is unusual when the European Parliament approves their resolutions. The majority in the Parliament got cold feet and the second part of the paragraph that starts with “which called ...” was dropped. But it is interesting that the European Parliament sees itself as competent enough to give “good advice” to the Member States in this issue.

As a whole the European Parliament exerts an incredibly “know-it-all mentality”, like when they wish to regulate physical education in schools all over EU. In the Schmitt report, A6-0415/2007, on the role of sport in education, the Parliament stated in paragraph 10 “Calls on the Member States to make PE (physical education) compulsory in primary and secondary schools, and to accept the principle that the timetable should guarantee at least three PE lessons per week, while schools should be encouraged to exceed this prescribed minimum as far as possible”. Of course it is a health problem that young people do not exercise as much as they should. But it should be made clear out that the European Parliament is not the political body that has or should have the political power to organise this part of public life.

There are also many examples from the European Parliament on how they want to expand the present political framework of the EU, for example when they in a proposal from the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, stated that beekeeping should be included in the subsidies of the Common Agricultural Policy (resolution on the difficulties faced by the European beekeeping sector, B5-0410/2003, approved 9th of October 2003).

As a matter of fact, more or less all “own initiative” reports and resolutions that the European Parliament has produced over the years propose new EU legislation, new EU programs, new EU spending, new EU activities of different kinds etcetera. It is possible to interpret the resolutions from the European Parliament in a more positive manner, for example that they are just expressions of political will and that they seek the welfare of all citizens. The problem is that it is not regulated, or in any way agreement on boundaries on how far the political takeover of the EU will go. On the contrary every new treaty has led to a centralisation, or federalisation, of more political areas to the European Union.

This strong will of EU institutions to work as engines for EU centralisation of political decisions of course also goes for the European Commission. They are even more dangerous because they possess the real power as producers of proposals they somewhat control the political agenda. The bureaucracy in the Commission will never settle until their job is done. They will always find new areas that need to be regulated by the European Union and not by its Member States or the regional bodies of the Member States.

Considering the above, EU critics and EU sceptics in general are of the opinion that the power and influence of both the federalist European Parliament and the European Commission must be limited – instead the power and influence of national parliaments within the decision making process of the European Union must be enhanced.

EU institutions that could be abolished

EU critics and EU sceptics want to close down institutions that they see no purpose for, except to produce documents. The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is one example. EESC is a consultative body of the EU. It is a consultative assembly composed of employers (employers' organisations), employees (trade unions) and representatives of various other interests (like farmers and consumers). The EESC budget for 2012 was almost €1.3 billion, a 1.5% increase in its budget compared to 2011.

Another EU institution which is also criticized by EU critics and EU sceptics for not really being important and that should be abolished is the Committee of the Regions (CoR). The Committee is EU's assembly of local and regional representatives that is supposed to provide sub-national authorities with a direct voice within EU's institutional framework. It has been criticized for only giving the opportunity for regional and local politicians to go to Brussels and eat fancy dinners and feel important. CoR wanted its 2010 budget of €79.66 million to rise to €91.07 million in 2011, a significant increase of 14 per cent. This was criticised by the think tank Open Europe, which complained that the institution's work overlaps with other EU institutions, duplicating work, while calling for its abolishment.

It is however just not EU critical political forces that criticize the existence of EESC and CoR. The federalist "liberal" ALDE group in the European Parliament wrote in December 2010 in their position paper on EU budget post 2013 as follows;

"As regards the question of finding some possible savings in the current budget, three recurring ideas can be identified:

- fundamentally restructuring certain parts of the EU administration, such as the Committee of Regions, in order to ensure that all parts contribute significantly to the democratic decision-making process and the transparent, smooth and efficient running of the Union;
- maintain the option of abolishing such administrative structures which do not fulfil the criteria above, such as the Economic and Social Committee and others;"

It must be noted that the ALDE group is extremely EU federalist in its views, but they have enough self-confidence to criticize what they see as bad developments within the European Union. The Christian Democrats (PPE) and the Socialists (PSE, the party, and S&D, the group in the European Parliament) are not that self-confident and always defend a system which they are heavily involved in.

Many EU critics want to shut down the EEAS (European External Action Service), the foreign service of the EU. They argue that foreign policy should be decided by Member States themselves and only partly through co-operation in the Council. Double bills are paid in order to establish EU embassies around the world, parallel to the embassies of the Member States, with enormous salaries and benefits⁵ impossible to defend, are given to a new class of EU diplomats. This does not motivate the costs of this new activity for the EU.

Ever growing EU institutions

EU sceptics and EU critics are in general of the opinion that EU institutions grow endlessly. In contrast with state, regional and local administrations, which are going through austerity

⁵ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/9169761/17-weeks-holiday-a-year-for-Ashtons-EU-bureaucrats.html>

programs, the EU institutions are never affected by cuts. They continue to grow both in good and bad times. Therefore many EU sceptics EU critics have the following opinion in addition to shutting down the EESC and CoR:

Redeploy the European Parliament translation department in Luxembourg and Brussels to the Member States respectively. It will lead to lower operation costs and better possibilities to recruit. This was initially proposed, but rejected due to sensitive documents needing secure translation, something modern IT- and encryption technology makes possible.

The euro – one step on the road to an EU super state

Many EU sceptics and EU critics have been negative towards the euro because they claim it will also lead to a common financial and fiscal policy for the European Union. The EU institutions claim it needs to take in more money in order to help those countries or regions that sink into recession - which is exactly what has happened. It can be compared with the United States of America where labour mobility is higher because people need to move between states in order to get a job and where the federal budget is much bigger in order to subsidise states that experience tough economic times. The European Union does not have enough labour mobility or a large enough federal budget to subsidise those worse off, nor would US level internal fiscal transfers be acceptable to EU citizens not on the receiving end.⁶ EU critics are also of the opinion that the European Union should not make propaganda in favour of euro membership⁷ or try to enlarge the euro zone. It is up to each country if they want to change their own currency. EU critics argue that the euro crisis response has given the EU even more authority over the Member States, among other things through the Euro Plus Pact. The euro has proven to be a very bad idea in a European Union where it is a good thing that the different Member States can have different levels of interest rates. The NAFTA agreement (North American Free Trade Agreement) acknowledges this point. Those politicians and parties that push the euro as a good idea, against economic common sense, must be replaced. One a-political economic argument against the euro presented by eurosceptics is that the euro was never a optimal currency area among other flaws in its construction and that its preservation would lead to an unwanted transfer union.

Eurobonds, the six and two packs for economic governance of EU, monitoring of Member States economy from the EU centre... the list of how the EU will take over control at the expense of Member States grows longer and longer. This has been done in response to a crisis that was caused by the EU's impossible EMU project, which was doomed from the start. For example so called Eurobonds (or "Stability bonds" in Commission newspeak) would mean that euro countries together issue debts and take loans collectively in order to finance parts of the budgets of the Member States. This would give odd consequences when those Member States that have taken care of their economies would be punished with higher interest rates, while those Member States that have not taken care of their economies get a strange reward through decreased interest rates. Eurobonds also would exaggerate the so called moral hazard dilemma. As the EU's founding treaties clearly state: every euro country is responsible for their own economies and debts.

⁶ For an overview of the US internal transfer union see

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/08/americas-fiscal-union>

⁷ EEAS procurement worth €130.000 for a Euro "roadshow" to promote the euro currency in Japan.

<http://www.onbid.org/bids/JP-Tokyo-contract-for-the-design.sq6648378.htm>

The gigantic EU waste of taxpayer funds

"Every taxed crown that not is used efficiently is like stealing from the poor."
Gustav Möller (Swedish Social Democrat) (1884-1970).

How many EU politicians think this is the right approach to the economic waste problems in the EU?

The net-paying Member States of course find it very disturbing that fraud, irregularities and waste is so common in the expenditure of EU budget. Sweden, Netherlands and the United Kingdom voted no to a recommendation to give the European Commission discharge for their handling of the EU budget for 2010 at the ECOFIN meeting (the Council meeting of the Finance Ministers of the Member States) in February 2012. But the majority of the Member States in the Council voted in favour.

Sweden was of the opinion that the inspection of the EU Court of Auditors (ECA) shows that there has been too many serious wrong doings in the effectuation of the EU budget. The Court of Auditors had identified too many faults in their inspection of the effectuation of the budget of 2010 to be able to give an audit report without a reservation. According to the ECA's inspection the faults during effectuation increased in comparison with 2009, from 3,3 % to 3,7 %. This was the 17th year in a row that the European Commission received an auditor report with a reservation, from its own fellow EU audit institution.

Once more, in the wake of the financial crisis the EU institutions, have asked for what they label as "own resources". That means they want direct income from fees or taxes from the wallets of the citizens, independently from the Member States. In light of this the auditors report is important to consider. Should citizens pay in to such a budget with so many faults in effectuation EU critics ask.

The Member States of the EU must take their full responsibility in order to secure an adequate administration of the resources distributed by the EU. The European Commission must also continue to put pressure on the Member States to handle EU funds in a proper way. For example a stricter use of sanctions or to freeze or totally terminate payments to a Member State until a correct system of handling the EU funds are set in place. It is amazing and incredible that some countries year after year are negligent with the accounts and the openness with the grants they receive but regardless and continuously they get the grants from the European Union as usual the year after.⁸

The money taxpayers pay to the EU is often not used for sensible projects. The list of EU financed projects show some ridiculous projects and it is obvious that a large part of the money is allocated in a totally wrong or inefficient way.⁹

⁸ At a 2013 meeting with the Head of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), Romanian President Traian Băsescu found it appropriate to joke about fraud, theft and waste of EU funds, saying: *"It's a pleasure to have OLAF here, but it better not ask us what we did with the money."* – quoted in the English-language Romanian daily *Nine O'Clock*, May 15th 2013.

⁹ Open Europe: Another 50 Examples of EU Waste (2010).

<http://www.openeurope.org.uk/Content/documents/Pdfs/top50euwaste2010.pdf>

While most Member States are cutting budgets, even in areas like health care and education, the EU budget is steadily increasing. What does the European Union do with its money? EU critics ask: Is the money well spent?

Consequently the EU critics work for a vigorous reduction of the coming long term budgets (2021 and forward). The EU budget must be considerably trimmed – the membership fees from the States must be considerably lowered. The expenses of the EU budget are not spent on health care or education and are therefore not a priority in Europe at a time of economic crisis.

Cultural projects in the EU – within the range of “necessary” activities for the EU?

In what way is culture an issue for the European Union? As part of the EU as a union of values?

How much money should the European Union spend on cultural policies in a time when many of the Member States goes through very tough austerity programs and lack money for health care and education?

For example the cultural project “The European Capital of Culture” were two cities per year are designated by the European Union for a period of one calendar year during which they organises a series of cultural events with a strong European dimension. This project could very well be administrated by an independent foundation and without financial or other type of involvement by EU institutions.

Another example of an EU activity that can be questioned in comparison to other public expenses in todays crisis struck Europe is the EU programme “Europe for Citizens” (formerly Citizens for Europe). This programme is said to be designed to help bridge the gap between citizens and the European Union. The programme is said to provide the Union with instruments to promote active European citizenship, put citizens in the centre and offers them the opportunity to fully assume their responsibility as European citizens. The European Commission has determined that citizens should also be aware of their duties as citizen and become actively involved in the process of European integration, developing a sense of belonging and a European identity. The EU budget for the program during 2007 to 2013 is 235 million euros.

There have also been a number of "European Years", beginning in 1983 with the European Year of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and the Craft Industry. Many of these year themes are of course important as such. But should it be the EU's task to promote these issues?

An example, the year 2008 was declared as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. The main aim of that Year was to raise the profile of intercultural dialogue, which is aid to be essential for creating respect for cultural diversity, improving coexistence in today's diverse societies and encouraging active European citizenship. The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 had a EU budget allocation of 10 million euros.

Recent and planned European Years include:

1983 - European Year of SMEs and the Craft Industry
1984 - European Year for a People's Europe

| | |
|---|---|
| 1985 - European Year of Music | 1999 - European Year of Action to Combat Violence Against Women |
| 1986 - European Year of Road Safety | 2001 - European Year of Languages |
| 1987 - European Year of the Environment | 2003 - European Year of People with Disabilities |
| 1988 - European Year of Cinema and Television | 2004 - European Year of Education through Sport |
| 1989 - European Year of Information on Cancer | 2005 - European Year of Citizenship through Education |
| 1990 - European Year of Tourism | 2006 - European Year of Workers' Mobility |
| 1992 - European Year of Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work | 2007 - European Year of Equal Opportunities for All |
| 1993 - European Year of the Elderly and of Solidarity between Generations | 2008 - European Year of Intercultural Dialogue |
| 1994 - European Year of Nutrition and Health | 2009 - European Year of Creativity and Innovation |
| 1995 - European Year of Road Safety and Young Drivers | 2010 - European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion |
| 1996 - European Year of Lifelong Learning | 2011 - European Year of Volunteering |
| 1997 - European Year against Racism and Xenophobia | 2012 - European Year for Active Ageing |
| 1998 - European Year of Local and Regional Democracy | 2013 - European Year of Citizens |

The main reason for the existence of a “European Year” is to promote the EU itself and to increase the visibility of EU institutions. In times when activities financed by taxpayers need to be carefully scrutinized and asked whether or not they really provide “European added-value” the EU cultural activities mentioned above could be abolished or restructured and the citizens of the EU countries would not notice any difference other than there might be more resources available for healthcare and education sectors.

Opposition to a direct EU tax

The European Union needs more money for its budget, at least according to the European Commission and the vast majority of the European Parliament. Therefore, on the 29th of June 2011, the European Commission presented a formal proposal for an EU tax, misleadingly called "own resources." There are two parts of this proposal that seek to provide the European Union with a direct tax income from its citizens. First, the Commission wants to introduce a Financial Transfer Tax (FTT). This tax would be introduced independently within the European Union even if the rest of the world would not do so. The second portion proposes that the European Union would directly receive part of the VAT collected by Member States. Either way, the purpose is dangerously simple. The EU wants to bypass its Member States by receiving direct funding from the citizens.

Those in favour of increasing the EU’s “own resources” point out that the EU will not gain the right to tax citizens directly. The truth, however, is that money from the taxpayers will be specially marked for the EU budget.

Some proponents have suggested that a certain percentage of the VAT paid by consumers should be directly transferred to the European Union. Others believe that a tax on CO2 emissions should be levied, or that charges on banking and electronic communications should be directly sent to the EU treasury. The possibility of a new “climate tax” on air traffic or a new tax on the European banking sector could, according to some, help the EU to persuade Member States to send revenue directly to Brussels.

Supporters claim that the new EU tax will be “tax neutral” – that it will not increase the tax burden on citizens – but basic economics begs to differ: Any new tax – whether value-added, on air traffic, or on the banking sector – will ultimately be paid by ordinary citizens, consumers and clients.

But according to the EU critics an EU tax will only increase the burden placed on people who are already beginning to pay double bills. The European Union now opens embassies around the world, even though Member States are unwilling to close theirs. Taxpayers are forced to pay for two embassies in the same foreign country. This pattern of double structure can be seen in many parts of the EU budget, like the Security and Defence Policy which competes with the existing NATO structures.

The EU budget is riddled with waste, fraud and often yields poor results.¹⁰¹¹ An EU tax is not necessary EU critics argue, claiming that what is needed is scrutiny of the existing EU budget. Also they say that the European Union should be governed by the Member States, not vice versa. The right to directly tax citizens should belong exclusively to the Member States.

Openness and transparency – a lot of talk but little progress

Many politicians and political parties talk about openness and transparency within the EU institutions. But when it comes to actual cases the reality the excuses are numerous in favour of hiding information or obstructing access to it. For example when it comes to the finances for the political groups in the European Parliament or the allowances paid to the members of that parliament there has been genuine resistance from the previously mentioned parties to provide information to the public. Scandals in some EU institutions that have had links to representatives of the leading political parties have also been covered up.¹²

Furthermore, when the Commission handles cases of competition within their internal market remit they do not want to be open with their documentation that has been the basis for their decisions because they consistently claim they contain business secrets. It has then been impossible for the public to get answers on questions about business lobby interests involved that has distorted information or if there has been false or inaccurate information in the documents. EU competition policy has long been criticised for being too subjective and not providing firms with a chance to a fair, impartial hearing. Commission bureaucrats have the power to fine firms amounts that exceed the annual net contributions of countries such as Austria or Denmark.¹³

Therefore, in reality the EU critics have been willing to go further with transparency reforms in the EU institutions than the leading political parties that wield the political power.

Other areas where EU critics and EU sceptics in general want to cut or change

In general many EU critics/EU sceptics share the opinions of many of, maybe all, the points below:

¹⁰ <http://www.openeurope.org.uk/Content/documents/Pdfs/top100waste.pdf>

¹¹ <http://www.openeurope.org.uk/Content/documents/Pdfs/top50waste.pdf>

¹² Multiple examples listed in: Johansson, *Med kluven tunga*, EUDemocrats, 2007, page 132, available in Swedish at http://junilistan.se/www/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/2007-02_kluven_tunga_3.pdf

¹³ Prosecutor, judge and jury, *Economist*, February 18th 2011

http://www.economist.com/node/15545914?story_id=15545914 and

<http://openeuropeblog.blogspot.be/2010/02/eu-competition-policy-out-of-control.html>

- The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union has hardly any supporters in some Member States, and has been heavily criticized over the years. But in spite of that the CAP continues to exist and even expands, with the support of the majority in the European Parliament. Big enterprises and billionaires receive agricultural subsidies from the EU, while small farmers with small pieces of land hardly get anything. The CAP has been a gigantic income transfer from the ordinary citizen to very rich persons. The CAP must be reformed and returned to national level.
- The EU should stop its extortion of poor African countries in order to get agreement to ruthless exploitation of the fishery resources in their waters. Let the African countries develop their own fishery.
- The surveillance mentality of the EU must be counteracted and unacceptable proposals like the Data Retention Directive must be scrapped. Instead of never ending expansion in this policy area the EU must take steps back.
- Increase the tax for the EU employees. They should not be a privileged class with tax exemptions. EU should tax their employees (who only pay tax to the EU) 30%. These EU employees should act as "good Europeans" and should contribute financially to the work of the EU.
- Remake the regional policy of the European Union to direct financial support to the poorest Member States and terminate the bureaucracy with complicated applications and follow-ups, various Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund, fraud investigations and lot more. The structural and regional support from EU should not and can not be seen as a regular source of income, instead the support from EU should be connected to development. But first and last it is the task of each Member State to take responsibility for its own future.
- Stop the flying circus of the European Parliament between Brussels and Strasbourg and move the employed staff to only one single workplace (except translators as mentioned above).
- The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) of the European Union is yet another of its means of propaganda. This fund is meant to give complementary support to workers when they have lost their jobs as a result of changing global trade patterns, e.g. when a large company shuts down or a factory is moved outside the EU due to global financial and economic crisis. The EGF has a budget of 500 million euro available each year. But the fund lacks European value. The main responsibility for counteracting the effects of globalisation must be in the hands of the Member States. The money that are paid to various regions around the European Union in order to help workers to find new jobs and develop new skills gives good promotional value for the EU. But at the same time there is just a circulation of the same money as the Member State that gets this money could have paid a lower fee to the EU and then decided on its own how to prioritize in their national budget when it comes to labour market measures. The question is also if the support from the EGF provides any long term benefits after the grant is used up.
- Stop funding the heavily EU subsidized EU propaganda TV channel Euronews and minimize the budget for the EuroparlTV that broadcasts programmes from the European Parliament and at present has around 50 employees and costs around 60.000 euro per broadcasted hour.¹⁴ EuroparlTV should instead focus on web broadcasts from

¹⁴ <http://www.heise.de/newsticker/meldung/EU-Parlament-sendet-im-Internet-doch-kaum-einer-guckt-zu-203601.html>

the sessions of the Parliament and meetings of the Committees and stop its propaganda activities.¹⁵

- No to a special cultural European Heritage Label (cost: approx. 650 000 euro 2012-2013) Cultural heritage labels from both the United Nations and the Member States already exist.
- Stop the subsidies from the EU budget for export of living animals to non EU countries – for the sake of the animals.
- The losses of the pension fund of the Members of the European Parliament should not be financed by the tax payers. If this pension fund has a loss the pension payments must be lowered, they should not be financed by the EU cashbox.
- The European Parliament could be more efficient and have better working MEPs (Members of the European Parliament) if: Firstly, the voting procedures would be changed and votes be given more scheduled time. Secondly, MEPs should be allowed to take sick leave or maternity/paternity leave and let their substitutes replace them when so is urged.

You can support and like European co-operation but realise that at present time the EU institutions have taken the wrong road. The European Union should only put efforts into issues that are truly cross-border in nature, and even then a strict selection must be made of issues that the EU could be involved in deciding over.

In or out – should we stay or go

In some countries the debate whether to stay EU member or leave is very much alive, most of all in the United Kingdom. But also more moderate EU critical political forces are active in disputing the ever increasing centralisation of political power to the European Union and its institutions.

The Fresh Start Project in the British House of Commons

In the parliament of the United Kingdom there is “The Fresh Start Project” that works with MPs across party lines, along with leading 'think tanks', interest groups, Lords, MEPs and constitutional experts to:

- 1.) Examine the options for a new UK-EU relationship;
- 2.) Set out what this new relationship could look like;
- 3.) Establish a process for achieving change; and
- 4.) Build political support to make it happen.

In their “Manifesto for Change” The Fresh Start Project writes as follows:

“The status quo in the European Union is no longer an option. The Eurozone is facing up to the inevitable consequences of the financial crisis, and is moving towards fiscal and banking union. This is not a path that the British people will go down, and together with other non-Euro members of the EU, we must articulate and negotiate a new and different relationship for ourselves whilst remaining a full member of the EU.”

¹⁵ Three of the European Parliaments four information activities (Your Parliament, Your Voice and Young Europe) are not necessary for the public to be able to follow the work of the European Parliament.

Our ambition is to build on the success of the single market. We want to ensure the EU institutions protect and deepen the single market. We also want to protect British sovereignty, ensuring that the British Parliament can decide what is best for Britain. We do not share the vision of ‘ever closer union’ as set out in the EU treaties.

The UK has to tread a fine line between fighting for the best interests of Britain, while at the same time supporting our fellow Member States who wish to pursue further and deeper fiscal and political integration. This manifesto sets out the new relationship for Britain within the EU that we want our Government to achieve. Our success in the negotiation will mean a new and sustainable position for the UK within the EU.

We seek five significant revisions to the EU treaties:

- *An emergency brake for any Member State regarding future EU legislation that affects financial services.*
- *The EU should repatriate competence in the area of social and employment law to Member States. Several EU members are already finding their attempts at structural reform are hampered by inflexible EU bureaucracy, and we should work with them to negotiate change. Failing that, we should seek an opt-out for the UK from existing EU social and employment law, and an emergency brake for any Member State regarding future EU legislation that affects this area.*
- *An opt-out for the UK from all existing EU policing and criminal justice measures not already covered by the Lisbon Treaty block opt-out.*
- *A new legal safeguard for the single market to ensure that there is no discrimination against non-Eurozone member interests.*
- *The abolition of the Strasbourg seat of the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions.”*

Conclusions

The term EU critics or EU sceptics are in general to prefer over eurocritics (this latter term is in general used for example at the English Wikipedia). It is also important because it defines that the European Union is not the same thing as Europe.

EU critical is someone who is critical towards how the European Union, and especially its institutions function today. Eurocritic refers more to those who criticise the euro as single currency for the European Union, but is also used for general critique of the EU.

That goes for the term “EU sceptic” as well, but to be an “EU sceptic” shows a stronger political will to oppose the European Union as such than an “EU critic”. Eurosceptic is a more appropriate term for those that for different reasons are sceptical or oppose the euro as a single currency.

We hope that EU critic and EU sceptic can become more accepted to use. But of course it is hard, even impossible, to settle on a harmonization across all of Europe.

For example the term “Liberal” can be used by parties, movements or persons in Europe with very different political views. The same goes for the term “Social Democrat”, in general

linked to centre-left politics, which can mean different things in practical politics in different countries. But there are also exceptions from the centre-left doctrines, for example in Portugal the Social Democratic Party is a centre-right liberal conservative party, and in United Kingdom between 1981 and 1988 there existed a centrist party with the name the Social Democratic Party.

So if not even the term Social Democrat has the same meaning all over Europe the term EU critics will have difficulties to get the same meaning as well. But we at least hope we can help start a discussion on the subject.

DEFINING
«EU criticism
EU scepticism»

Richard Byfält,

EUDemocrats

www.eudemocrats.org

Jan Å Johansson,

Organization for European Interstate Cooperation

www.ooiceurope.com

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