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Euroscepticism Among the Political Elite in Poland: Key Trends and Periodization²

Abstract

Euroscepticism has become a key aspect of contemporary European politics. While the collapse of the socialist camp triggered significant Euro-optimism, developments in Central and Eastern Europe show that Europeanization is complex and nonlinear. Poland serves as an intriguing case for this discussion. The article explores the principal trends of Euroscepticism within the Polish political elite, primarily by establishing a chronological timeline. Following this classification, it examines the prominent political figures and the key messages they articulated, which have defined Polish Euroscepticism at various times. The election of the soft Eurosceptic Karol Nawrocki in the 2025 presidential elections has renewed interest in this topic, especially regarding public opinion research.

The article analyzes secondary data to investigate the relationship between the perspectives of the Eurosceptic political elite and public Euroscepticism in Poland. The study indicates that, at first glance, the trajectories of public and party Euroscepticism may not seem remarkably consistent. However, a more in-depth analysis from a comparative perspective could generate new hypotheses and research questions.

Introduction

The collapse of the socialist regime in the 1990s resulted in significant upheaval within the European political landscape, particularly affecting Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). This period marked the re-establishment of independence for several previously overlooked states. Analyzing recent political history reveals that the trajectories of the countries within this region varied considerably (Pickles & Unwin, 2016). Notably, some nations, such as Poland, adopted a pro-Western orientation, while others, such as Slovakia, pursued more nationalist and relatively isolationist policies (Pechova, 2012; Majone, 2006). In certain instances, regional unity emerged, exemplified by the Baltic states, whereas in others, civil and ethnic conflicts

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erupted, particularly in the South Caucasus (Nitoiu, 2017). Regardless of the particular cases, a framework of privatization, westernization, and democratization was intended to be implemented across these countries. Despite Francis Fukuyama's optimistic assertion regarding the "end of history," it became evident that the political culture within these countries was neither universally applicable nor uniformly participatory (Fukuyama, 2020).

Nowadays, the region exhibits considerable political diversity. The Baltic states have successfully sustained a pro-Western and pro-European perspective. Likewise, the Central European alliance, the Visegrad Four (V4), aspired to "return home to Europe" (Schmidt, 2016). However, as of today, Hungary and Slovakia are regarded as significant examples of illiberal democracies, while the Czech Republic and Poland navigate precarious political landscapes characterized by substantial societal polarization. Indeed, the Central European region has increasingly become a focal point for intensifying Eurosceptic sentiments (Rupnik, 2023). Several factors contribute to this trend, including the legacy of the post-socialist experience, incomplete integration with Western Europe, and the efficacy of Russian hybrid warfare strategies (Castaldo & Memoli, 2024).

In 2023, the soft Eurosceptic Law and Justice party, often associated with the concept of "illiberal democracy," was defeated in the parliamentary elections in Poland, which generated a wave of Euro-optimism (Markowski, 2024). However, the outcome of the 2025 presidential elections introduced a significant shift. Rather than a pro-European liberal candidate endorsed by the ruling party winning the election, historian and conservative Karol Nawrocki, characterized by soft Eurosceptic views and an open alignment with pro-Trump sentiments, claimed victory. This unexpected development has reinvigorated interest in examining Euroscepticism within Poland, underscoring its complexity and indicating the necessity for further scholarly research on the subject.

This article delves into Euroscepticism's primary trends and characteristics among the Polish political elite. It specifically explores the variations in Euroscepticism within this elite since Poland's post-socialist transformation. The central research question that steers this study is significant: What are the key features of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland? This question is not only intriguing but also holds substantial implications for the understanding of political dynamics in Poland.

The paper employs rigorous qualitative research methods to address the central question. It utilizes a descriptive case study incorporating document analysis and a review of secondary sources. Furthermore, this desk study meticulously examines public sentiment in conjunction with the evolving landscape of the political elite within a cohesive context. To bolster the credibility of this analysis, the research draws upon Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008) theories of soft and hard Euroscepticism and Le Conte's typology of Euroscepticism (2015).

The article is organized into three main sections. First, it reviews the existing academic literature on the subject. This is followed by a comprehensive analysis of the research results

and a discussion of their implications. Finally, the article concludes with a summary of the findings.

Literature Review

Euroscepticism, a significant element of European political discourse, has a rich historical context. The era when anti-EU or anti-European sentiments were considered marginal is now a thing of the past (Havlík & Hloušek, 2025). Key historical events, such as the Maastricht Treaty, the eastern enlargement, the failed attempt to establish a European Constitution, and the economic crisis of 2008-2009, along with recent developments like the ongoing migration crisis since 2015, the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, have all played pivotal roles in shaping this discourse. The political parties, however, are the main drivers of Euroscepticism, sparking intense debates in academic, media, and public spheres (Stojić, 2022; Tabatadze & Gigauri, 2024). Their role is crucial in understanding the dynamics of Euroscepticism in European politics.

A significant rise in party Euroscepticism characterizes the emergence of national politics within EU member states (Börzel & Risse, 2018). Across both old and new Europe, Eurosceptic parties have either achieved the status of the principal opposition force, as observed in countries such as France, Germany, and the Czech Republic, or have formed governing coalitions, exemplified by the situations in the Netherlands, Sweden, Slovakia, and Hungary (Ehin & Talving, 2021). Notably, these political elites have begun to align politically, establishing a unified Eurosceptic agenda of significant gravity (Marian & Schneider, 2022). A prominent illustration of this political collaboration can be seen in the alliance among leaders such as Geert Wilders, Marine Le Pen, Viktor Orbán, and Robert Fico. Interestingly, some researchers argue that the radicalization of political elites in these countries has led to an instrumental approach to EU membership, i.e., the EU is perceived as a means to achieve national or political goals rather than as a project of deep integration/commitment to European unity (Rovny, 2010; Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2024). Similarly, McDonnell and Werner (2019) note that resistance to the EU's political and economic structures is associated with a growing polarization between government and opposition parties, with government parties being more pro-European and the opposition being Eurosceptic.

Moreover, the scholarly consensus indicates that Euroscepticism has become a structural feature of EU politics, as evidenced by the results of lastets European Parliament (EP) elections. The rise of Eurosceptics, especially far-right ones, is noteworthy (Silva & Ferreira-Pereira, 2025). It even contributed to the formation of a transnational Eurosceptic political elite.

The literature on Euroscepticism often examines regional disparities, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The rise of party Euroscepticism in this region can be

attributed to historical experiences linked to post-communism, economic transformations, and socio-political dynamics (Styczyńska, 2024). This phenomenon varies in intensity and form across countries, although common features (increased perception of national sovereignty and anti-Brussels attitudes) are more noticeable at the regional level (Szewczyk, 2021). Although people generally support EU membership, Eurosceptic parties have mobilized voters against EU policies and integration with populist, nativist and far-right rhetoric (Treib, 2021). In the region, this trend is most relevant in the so-called Visegrad Four (Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland) (Hloušek & Kaniok, 2020).

The most prominent Eurosceptic figures in the region are Viktor Orbán and his party, Fidesz, which has been in power in Hungary for over a decade. Fidesz promotes soft Eurosceptic narratives while also advocating for the spread of Central European illiberal democracy, a phenomenon some scholars refer to as “Orbanism” (Hargitai, 2020; Bod, 2022). The Hungarian case highlights a new connection between Euroscepticism and populism. According to Fidesz, the European Union represents an oppressive elite, while the sovereign Hungarian government embodies the struggle of a beleaguered and oppressed populace (Visnovitz & Jenne, 2021; Agoston, 2024). Consequently, the Hungarian ruling elite has extended populism from the national to the European level. Also, among the Hungarian opposition, there has been the emergence of the far-right Eurosceptic party “Mi Hazánk Mozgalom” (Our Homeland Movement). This party is characterized by its strongly anti-LGBTQ, anti-immigration, anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, and pro-Russian rhetoric (Magyari & Imre, 2024).

Similar to Hungary, Slovakia has seen the rise of far-right, populist, and hard Eurosceptic parties that advocate a strict immigration policy, protection of national culture and economy, and strengthening of sovereignty (Leruth et al., 2017). Today's most influential Eurosceptic force is the leading party in the Slovak government, Robert Fico's Smer-SD (Mravcova & Havlik, 2022). The declared social democratic party, in addition to the entire cascade of anti-EU rhetoric, openly follows a pro-Russian agenda (Vilagi & Babos, 2024). Among them, it is especially worth noting the presence of the May 9, 2025, event in Moscow and the active accusations of the Zelensky government in Ukraine. It is worth noting that, according to some researchers, Robert Fico's foreign policy metamorphosis is based more on pragmatic and tactical changes than on broader ideological ones (Végh, 2018). In addition, quite a few Eurosceptic parties are actively present in the Slovak political elite, including the hardline Eurosceptic, Christian fundamentalist, and neo-Nazi party, the Slovak People's Party (ĽSNS), and the relatively less extremist Slovak National Party (SNS) (Mravcová & Havlík, 2022).

The political situation in the Czech Republic presents a stark contrast to Slovakia. The country is governed by a five-party, pro-European coalition, which opposes the Eurosceptic forces. The main opposition force in the Czech Republic is the former government, which

Andrej Babis also represents, ANO2011. This party, which was initially created with the emblems of a big tent and centrist pro-European party, has evolved into a mildly Eurosceptic political party. ANO2011's 'pragmatic Euroscepticism' focuses mainly on cultural and political issues, such as anti-migration policies and the reduction of Brussels bureaucracy (Lorenz, Anders & Träger, 2025). However, the far-right Eurosceptic Freedom and Direct Democracy (SPD) party is also gaining strength in the Czech Republic, focusing mainly on the crisis of European identity (Csehi, 2024).

Poland represents a significant case study within the Central European context. The academic literature has identified several key findings regarding the nation's Euroscepticism. First, it has been observed that Polish Euroscepticism is predominantly instigated by the political elite rather than the general populace (Styczyńska, 2023). Second, the primary focus of this Euroscepticism centers on perceived infringements of Poland's national sovereignty and rights by the EU. Notably, during the tenure of the previous Law and Justice government, there was a noticeable disregard for decisions issued by the European Commission on various matters despite a lack of support for a withdrawal from the European Union (Cymer, 2022). Finally, Euroscepticism in Poland primarily emerges from differing liberal and illiberal political perspectives, encompassing issues such as migration, abortion, family dynamics, rights of sexual and religious minorities, and the principles of checks and balances (Styczyńska, 2024).

Results and discussion

The section is organized into two distinct components. The first component analyzes the timeline of Euroscepticism among the Polish political elite, while the second examines the corresponding results of public opinion polls. This structured approach facilitates the formulation of new assumptions.

Poland's process of Europeanization has exhibited a moderate degree of consistency. Following the dissolution of the socialist regime in the 1990s, Poland embarked on a path of political liberalization and economic privatization. This transition was significantly bolstered by the "Solidarity" movement, which became one of the largest grassroots organizations in the region (Meardi 2005; Kubow, 2013). Before examining the phenomenon of party-based Euroscepticism in Poland, it is crucial to contextualize the country's European integration, particularly concerning the political transformations that transpired after the post-socialist era. In this regard, the paper delineates four principal stages in the evolution of the Polish party's Euroscepticism.

Stage One: Pro-European Consensus (1990-2004)

Lech Wałęsa, a prominent leader of the Solidarity movement who championed pro-European ideals, won the 1990 presidential election. As a pro-Western and anti-communist figure, he actively endorsed the concept of a Polish national policy, which was vital for reconfiguring national identity and establishing a nation-state (Ziółkowski & Allain, 2005). In the first relatively free and fair elections held in 1991, no political party achieved more than 13% of the vote, resulting in a hung Sejm that lacked a definitive majority for two years (Jańczak, 2022). Nevertheless, during this period, the Polish political elite was predominantly characterized by an anti-communist and pro-European agenda.

The political crisis resulting from the parliamentary elections necessitated preparations for new elections. In 1993, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) emerged victorious, forming a governmental coalition with the agrarian Christian-Democratic Polish People's Party (PSL). Despite some critics' allegations, the government, led by the SLD, remained steadfast in its pro-European stance (Gwiazda, 2008), demonstrating the resilience of the political elite in upholding their ideals.

Subsequently, in the 1995 presidential election, pro-European candidate Aleksander Kwaśniewski defeated Lech Wałęsa, becoming the first and the last left-wing leader in Polish post-socialist political history. Notably, Kwaśniewski was re-elected for a second term in the year 2000 (Kaminski, 2018). However, in 1997, the SLD lost the election to center-right Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS). It is significant to highlight that both political parties were characterized by their pro-European agendas, and there was a notable absence of Euroscepticism among the political elite during this period (Brusis, 2020).

Following Poland's accession to NATO in 1999, the center-left SLD regained power in 2001. This period also marked Poland's integration into the EU, facilitated by a popular referendum, where up to 78% of voters approved accession. The only Eurosceptic political party present then was the League of Polish Families (LPR), which opposed Poland's accession to the EU; however, its influence remained marginal (Tworzecki, 2019). Thus, this initial stage, covering the years 1990 to 2004, can be appropriately designated as the pro-European consensus, a period characterized by a lack of significant Eurosceptic sentiment and a general agreement among the political elite on the benefits of European integration.

Stage Two : The Emergence of Eurosceptic Rhetoric (2005-2014)

The 2005 parliamentary elections marked a significant shift in Polish politics. The newly formed right-wing, Christian-democratic, and conservative Law and Justice Party (PiS) secured first place, with the center-right and liberal Civic Platform (PO) coming in second. Both parties, established in 2001 following a split from the AWS, had a pro-Western agenda and shared a history with the Solidarity Movement. However, a coalition between them failed

after the 2005 elections, as PiS accused PO of excessive liberalization and deviating from traditional right-wing policies (Burdziej, 2018). Notably, in 2005, the pro-Atlantist Lech Kaczyński, leader of PiS, won the presidential election, assuming the role of commander-in-chief for a second term (Leśniczak, 2018). Tragically, he could not complete his term due to his death in a plane crash in Smolensk. Since then, these two political parties (PiS and PO) have become the primary players in the Polish political landscape.

In 2007, the PO won the parliamentary elections and continued their success by winning again in 2011. Their leader, Bronisław Komorowski, followed this, winning the presidential elections in 2010. As a result, from 2011 to 2015, PO maintained control over both the legislative and executive branches, consistently implementing pro-European policies (Cichosz & Kozierska, 2023). During this period, PiS, having consistently come in second in elections, became PO's main competitor and antagonist. The 2008-2009 economic crisis and the liberalization of the EU's migration policies, coupled with the European Commission's (EC) support for abortion rights and minority issues, drove PiS to adopt an increasingly Eurosceptic stance (Naczyk, 2022). The party's rhetorical shift towards Euroscepticism centered on themes such as criticism of EU bureaucracy and the expanding powers of the EU within the Eurozone, as well as concerns over multiculturalism. Consequently, the period from 2005 to 2014 is the beginning of Eurosceptic rhetoric in Poland.

Stage three : The Rise of Euroscepticism (2015-2021)

The political ascendance of the PiS characterizes the period from 2015 to 2022. Since 2015, this party has secured victory in two parliamentary and two presidential elections. During this time, PiS has emerged as a moderately Eurosceptic force, voicing opposition to the EU's immigration, environmental, and judicial policies. Furthermore, it has openly challenged the existing political elite within the EU (Sadurski, 2018). PiS has positioned itself as the principal defender of national interests, endorsing social conservatism through its stances on issues such as anti-abortion policies, support for traditional family values, and a focus on Christianity. Despite its soft Euroscepticism, the party asserted that it upholds Polish identity and Catholic culture, which it believes are overlooked by the current European bureaucracy. Moreover, PiS's media, judicial, abortion, and migration policies have led to conflicts with the EU, resulting in cases being escalated to the EU Court of Justice (Stanley & Cześnik, 2019). Consequently, Poland has become an unwelcome ally for the EU's political leadership.

The party has adopted a discourse of political Euroscepticism, particularly opposing the bureaucracy in Brussels and the European federalist framework. PiS has positioned itself as a champion of Polish interests, advocating for a return to the EU's foundational principles. It is

noteworthy that PiS's Euroscepticism was less focused on economic considerations (Dulak, 2021). It is important to highlight that Poland has benefited significantly from European economic integration, receiving one of the highest levels of EU funding within the CEE region.

Throughout this period, PiS's main rival has consistently been its long-time opponent, the liberal PO, which has increasingly aligned itself with pro-European ideals. PO has accused the PiS government of democratic backsliding and obstructing the European agenda. This ongoing dynamic has further intensified polarization within the Polish political elite and society.

Stage Four: Mainstreaming Euroscepticism (2022 - Present)

In 2022, Russia's invasion of Ukraine precipitated considerable socio-political and economic transformations throughout Europe. The enforcement of economic sanctions against Russia, combined with a substantial increase in the number of Ukrainian refugees, had a pronounced impact on the region. Furthermore, the crisis affecting farmers, intensified by green policies, contributed to a complex multi-crisis scenario in the nation.

Poland was not unaffected by these developments. Nevertheless, in 2023, its pro-European political coalitions effectively organized for the elections, such that three distinctly pro-European parties—the Civic Platform (PO), Third Way alliance, and The Left alliance—collectively garnered more votes than the ruling Law and Justice party (PiS), resulting in a governmental shift. This new administration, characterized by an ideologically diverse yet predominantly pro-European stance, committed to reversing Poland's trend of soft Euroscepticism and democratic backsliding. Its principal policy objectives included bolstering support for Ukraine and enhancing relations with the EU. However, between 2023 and 2025, President Andrzej Duda of PiS exercised his veto power to block all significant liberal initiatives (Alekseev, 2025). This action exacerbated political polarization in Poland and elevated the discourse surrounding European integration and Euroscepticism.

Concurrently, the far-right and nationalist Confederation Alliance gained prominence within the Polish political landscape. Established in 2018, this party accused the conservative PiS government of excessive allegiance to and pragmatism regarding European interests. In the context of the ongoing crises—namely COVID-19, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, farmers' protests, and migration—the Confederation Party targeted both the entire Polish political establishment and the EU (Sondel-Cedarmas, 2024). They positioned themselves utilizing right-wing populist rhetoric, asserting that they alone represent the true interests of ordinary Poles while alleging that local and European elites undermine national priorities. Recent public opinion polls suggest that their support ranges between 10% and 15% (Kocyba, 2025).

The relevance of Euroscepticism intensified following the presidential elections in May 2025, during which Karol Nawrocki, a nationalist and Eurosceptic spokesperson, ascended to the presidency of Poland with 51% of the vote. This development may indicate a potential strengthening of Eurosceptic rhetoric among the Polish political elite, particularly concerning the far-right Confederation Party. While the parliamentary majority continues to align with pro-European ideals, the presidential veto authority may impede the implementation of critical government decisions.

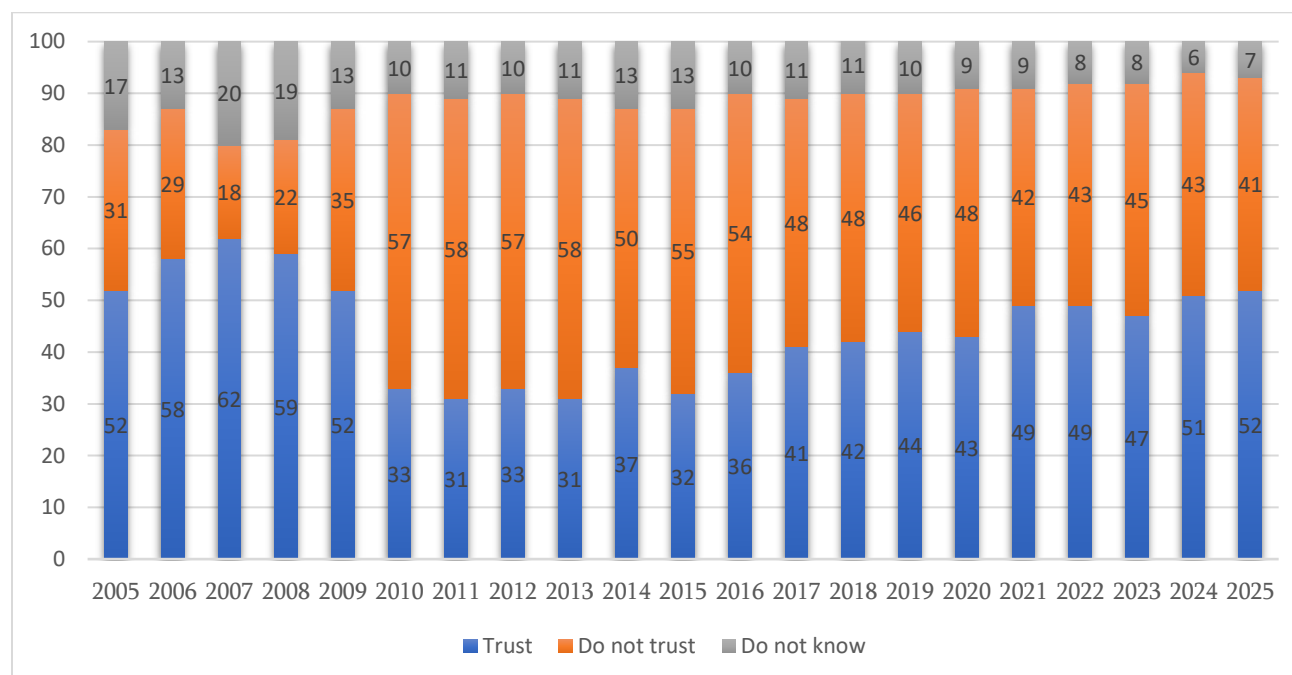
While I have already developed a classification of Polish party Euroscepticism, viewing it in the context of public opinion and its fluctuations is essential. Although several studies on this topic exist, the Eurobarometer survey is regarded as the most suitable option for our analysis. There are several reasons for this selection.

First, the survey is conducted annually, which facilitates effective comparisons. Additionally, it is considered one of the most valid surveys, as the question posed has remained consistent from 2005 to 2025. Most importantly, this question directly measures public trust or distrust in the EU, which is particularly relevant to this article. Also, it is noteworthy to recognize that no precise instrument exists to measure public Euroscepticism. Generally, multiple questions or a combination of variables are employed to assess this sentiment. However, given the need for a long-term analysis, I focused on a single key variable: the indicator of trust in the EU, which respondents answer in the Eurobarometer survey each year.

Trust is the most commonly utilized variable for evaluating the performance of political institutions and typically reflects how public sentiment shifts in response to significant events. Another technical detail worth noting is that the Eurobarometer survey was conducted twice in some years. Therefore, the results presented in Table N1 are derived from the later survey conducted within a given year, as they offer a more comprehensive representation of public opinion for that year (see Tables N1 and N2).

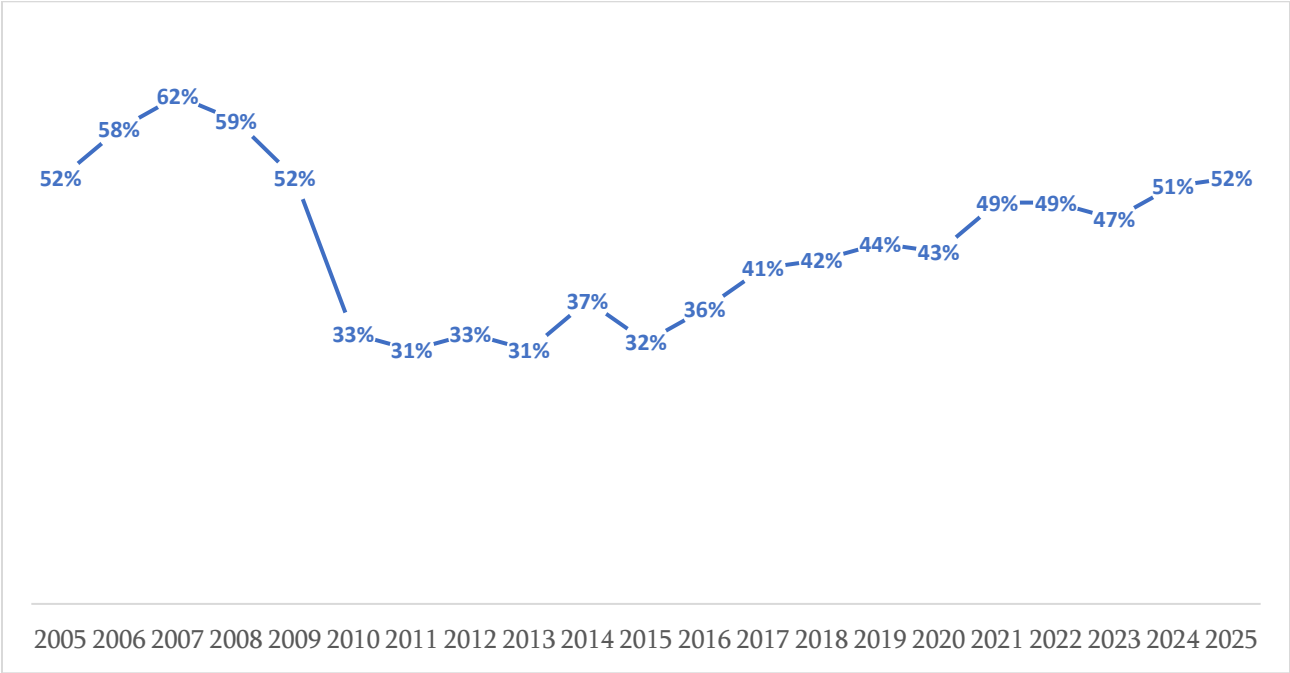
As illustrated in Table N1, between 2005 and 2025, the Eurobarometer surveyed the Polish population regarding their trust in the EU, providing three possible responses: "I trust," "I do not trust," and "I do not know." While these responses do not quantify the level of trust—such as distinguishing between "I trust a lot" and "I trust quite a bit"—they effectively capture the overall sentiment towards the institution and serve as a valuable tool for examining public Euroscepticism. It is conceivable that some respondents who selected "I trust" in a given year may still hold Eurosceptic views, although this remains speculative. In contrast, those who answered "I do not trust" can be regarded as indicators of public Euroscepticism.

Table N1: 2005-2025 Data from Standard Eurobarometer from Poland on the question „How much do you trust in the EU?”



The analysis of secondary data presented in Tables N1 and N2 indicates that in the years following Poland's accession to the EU (2005-2007), the rate of distrust declined from 31% to 18%. However, this rate significantly increased from 2008 to 2009, sometimes more than double. By 2013, the trust rate had plummeted to a concerning low of 31%. Since 2014-2015, there has been a slow but steady decrease in distrust (reflective of public Euroscepticism), accompanied by a rise in the rate of trust.

Table N2: 2005-2025 Data from Standard Eurobarometer from Poland on the question „How much do you trust in the EU?”, Results show only „trust“

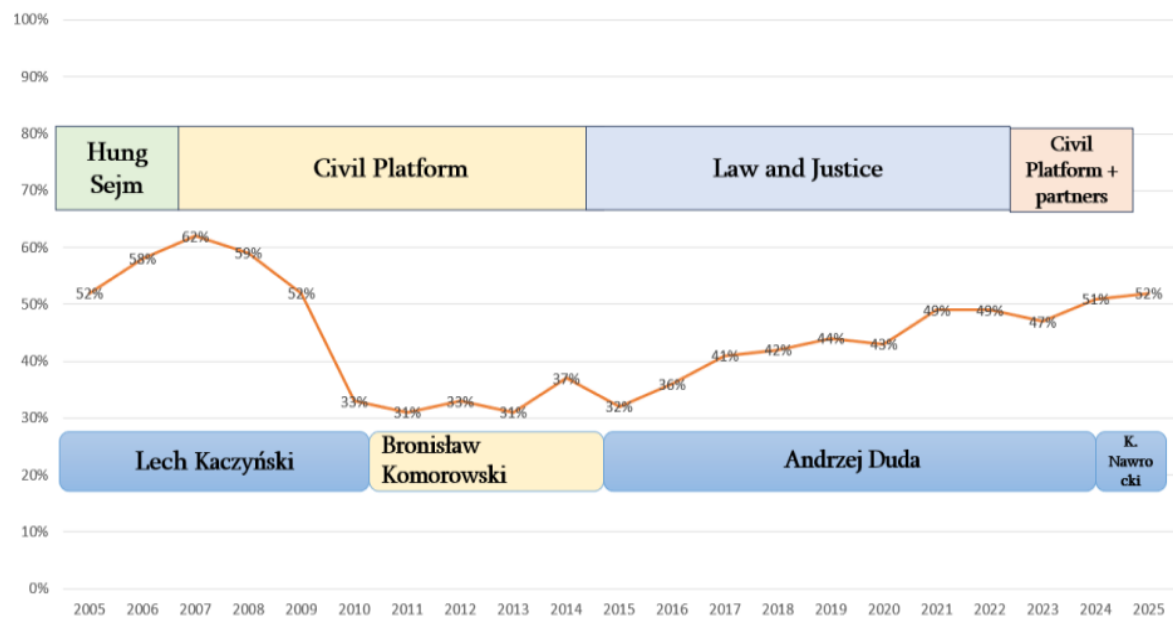


Each of these variations may offer different explanations; however, since this article connects changes in public opinion to the sentiments of the political elite, it is more fitting to associate the indicator of trust in the EU with changes in the Polish government, which has differing foreign policy views (see Table N3).

As Table N3 illustrates, following Poland's accession to the EU, there was a notable rise in Euro-optimism, with both leading political parties—PiS and PO—backing a pro-European agenda in 2005. Nonetheless, the victory of Kaczyński in 2005 and the formation of a government by the more liberal PO in 2007 intensified political polarization. Interestingly, trust in the EU began to decline during this period, reaching its lowest point in 2011

At first glance, 2011-2015 aligned with the governance of the PO, the most pro-European and liberal governing party in Poland's recent political history. However, as shown in Table N3, distrust in the EU grew during this time. The 2008-2009 economic crisis and the eurozone crisis significantly diminished trust in the EU, highlighting the complex interplay of economic factors and political rhetoric in shaping public opinion. Additionally, PiS, having transitioned fully into the opposition, began to adopt increasingly Eurosceptic rhetoric.

Table N3: Main parties of the Polish government, presidents, and data from the Standard Eurobarometer regarding the question "How much do you trust in the EU?" Results show only "trust" (2005-2025 data).



Paradoxically, between 2015 and 2023—a period characterized by PiS's political dominance—trust in the EU increased while distrust decreased. Thus, despite the government's Euroscepticism, public Euroscepticism waned. Furthermore, this trend persisted even after PiS lost power in 2023, with public distrust remaining around 40%. Conversely, the response "I don't know" declined by 10% over the 20 years, indicating a more settled stance among the population.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of Euroscepticism is progressively on the rise among the political elite in contemporary Europe. The initial Euro-optimism that surfaced during the post-socialist transformation has considerably waned in the context of the ongoing multi-crisis. This trend is particularly marked in Central Europe, where all four states have undergone various stages of Eurosceptic rhetoric and public sentiment, with Poland serving as a prominent case study.

This study indicates that the existing academic literature on Euroscepticism primarily focuses on the perspectives of the political elite and public opinion. Research regarding Poland primarily pertains to the period of governance by the Law and Justice Party (PiS) and its subsequent consequences. Nonetheless, comprehensive analyses of the topic remain relatively limited. This paper delineates four principal stages of Polish party Euroscepticism: the pro-European consensus from 1990 to 2004, the emergence of Eurosceptic rhetoric from 2005 to

2014, the escalation of Euroscepticism from 2015 to 2021, and its further mainstreaming due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The article identifies key political actors who have disseminated Eurosceptic viewpoints at each stage, particularly emphasizing the roles of far-right and conservative parties, specifically PiS, established in 2001, and the Confederation Alliance, founded in 2018. These parties play a significant role in shaping the Eurosceptic political landscape in contemporary Poland.

Notably, their anti-EU positions frequently intersect, addressing political and cultural dimensions. Politically, these parties advocate for a reduction in the bureaucratic burden imposed by Brussels, limitations on the powers of the EC, and anti-federalism, and they position themselves as advocates for national interests. Culturally, their Euroscepticism is evident in their stances on EU policies concerning migration, abortion, and the protection of minority rights. Like other Central European states in recent years, emerging issues have surfaced within the Polish political elite, including anti-green policies and calls for a reassessment of support for Ukraine.

Another significant finding of this study is that public Euroscepticism tends to increase when pro-European parties are in power. Conversely, public sentiment generally leans toward pro-European attitudes when a government with soft Eurosceptic tendencies governs. However, the last three years present an exception to this general trend. The outcomes of the 2025 presidential elections may further challenge this understanding. This seemingly contradictory situation can be elucidated through two potential factors. First, the degree of Polish public Euroscepticism may not fluctuate by the stance of the political elite but may instead be influenced by external factors. Second, a segment of Polish society may remain perpetually dissatisfied with the domestic policies of any incumbent government, prompting support for opposing viewpoints, particularly in highly polarized political contexts.

In conclusion, this study provides a foundation for ongoing research into the evolving dynamics of Europeanization and Euroscepticism in Poland, both from the perspective of political elites and societal attitudes. Furthermore, subsequent studies could facilitate comparative analyses between Poland and other nations employing similar methodologies, yielding insights into similarities and differences and fostering the development of new hypotheses.

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