Explanations for the Growth of Euroscepticism in the Parliamentary Conservative Party.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates why the Conservative Parliamentary party became more Eurosceptic between 1992-2016. It uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in seeking to answer two main research questions. Firstly, why did MPs adopt Eurosceptic positions? Secondly, why did the party become more Eurosceptic over time? It is argued that the answer to both these questions can be explained by elite driven politics within the Conservative Party. On the first research question, MPs' positions have primarily been affected by their ideologies and their prospects of promotion. Electoral factors such as Eurosceptic constituencies and pressure from UKIP have been of less importance. In relation to the second research question, the data suggests that the party became more Eurosceptic because of both new Eurosceptic MPs entering the house and existing MPs becoming more Eurosceptic. The reason new Conservative MPs tended to be Eurosceptics was primarily that Eurosceptics dominated the talent pool of potential Conservative candidates. The selection decisions of constituency associations and the voting behaviour of the electorate had a relatively limited effect on the ideological composition of the Parliamentary party. MPs became more Eurosceptic during their Parliamentary career because of the internal politics of Parliament and developments at the EU level of government.

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List of acronyms

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BES	British Electoral Study
BRS	British Representation Study
CETA	Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement
CCHQ	Conservative Campaign Headquarters
ECB	European Central Bank
ECJ	European Court of Justice
EDM	Early Day Motion
EEA	European Economic Area
EEC	European Economic Community
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ERM	Exchange Rate Mechanism
EU	European Union
FREX	FREX refers to words which are both frequent and exclusive to each topic. Used in STM.
GAL	Green/alternative/libertarian
LDA	Latent Dirichlet Allocation
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MP	Members of Parliament
MPP	Members of Parliament Project
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NOMIS	the Office of National Statistics' Labour Force Database
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares (regression techniques)
PAB	Parliamentary Assessment Board
PCP	Parliamentary Conservative Party
PPS	Parliamentary Private Secretary
QMV	Qualified Majority Voting
SNP	Scottish National Party
STM	Structural Topic Model
TAN	Traditional/authoritarian/nationalist
UK	United Kingdom
UKIP`	United Kingdom Independence Party
VAT	Value Added Tax

Chapter 1: Introduction

David Cameron made holding a referendum on the UK's membership of the EU[1] Conservative Party policy during his Bloomberg speech in 2013. He did so largely as a result of pressure from his backbenchers and the electoral threat of UKIP. This speech came after decades of internal division over Europe within the Parliamentary Conservative Party (PCP). The PCP had become progressively more hostile towards European integration since the 1980s and particularly since the start of the Maastricht rebellions in the 1992 Parliament.

This thesis aims to offer explanations for this increased PCP Euroscepticism. The time period considered is from the 1992 general election to the Brexit referendum. Specifically the thesis will focus on two overarching questions. *Why did MPs adopt Eurosceptic positions? Why did the Parliamentary Party become more Eurosceptic over time?*

This introductory chapter is structured as follows. 1.1 briefly establishes the background of Euroscepticism in the Conservative Party. 1.2 outlines the specific focus of the thesis and the research questions the thesis seeks to answer. 1.3 provides a methodological overview of the empirical work. 1.4 briefly outlines the argument of the thesis. 1.5 provides an overview of the thesis structure and chapter guide.

[1] A full list of acronyms is available at the start of the thesis

1.1 Euroscepticism and the Conservative Party

The Conservative Party's Eurosceptic evolution is one of the most important issues in contemporary British politics. Firstly, Britain's relationship with Europe has largely been driven by the politics of the Conservative Party. It was Conservative governments which caused Britain's entry into the EU and the Conservative Party which caused Britain to start a potential exit. Secondly, divisions over Europe have had a profound impact on the Conservative Party, causing enormous difficulties of party management for all four of the UK's last Conservative Prime Ministers – Thatcher, Major, Cameron and May.

To elaborate on the first of these reasons, Britain's first application to join the EEC came under the Conservative Prime Minister Harold MacMillan in 1961. This was at the time opposed by Labour with leader Hugh Gaitskell warning of "an end to a thousand years of history". The Conservative Party continued to be pro-European under the leadership of Heath who eventually signed the UK into the EEC in 1972. The next two Conservative Prime Ministers also signed two of the most integrationist treaties in the EU history. Margaret Thatcher signed the Single European Act which helped create the Single Market and extended the use of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV). Thatcher also – albeit reluctantly - joined the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM), the first step towards possibly joining a single currency. Her successor John Major signed the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. This treaty was highly controversial for many Conservatives as it further extended the use of QMV voting, including a social chapter, enabled greater

cooperation in justice and home affairs and also created EU citizenship. Thus Britain's entry to the EU and its deepening involvement in the EU was largely the result of decisions taken by Conservative governments.

Conversely, the Conservatives are also the main actors responsible for Britain loosening its ties with the EU. After the Conservatives regained power in 2010 the Eurosceptics on the backbenches put pressure on the government to return powers to Britain and to hold a referendum on EU membership. As a result of this pressure the Cameron government undertook several anti-integrationist actions. In December 2011 Cameron vetoed a proposed EU Treaty and in July 2013 the government announced its intention to opt-out of 133 EU justice and home affairs measures. Most significantly, Cameron made holding an in/out referendum on the EU membership official party policy in the Bloomberg speech. This was the start of the process which would lead to the *leave* vote and the triggering of Article 50. The party which first applied and signed Britain into the EU become the party which started its potential exit.

Labour Party politics has also played a role in Britain's relationship with the EU, not least Harold Wilson's decision to call a referendum on EEC Membership in 1975 and Gordon Brown's stance against Britain joining the Euro. However, the Conservative Party and its internal politics has had the greatest influence on Britain's relationship with the EU. Moreover what is significant about the period since at least 2010 is that pressure from the backbenchers appears to have largely driven this process.

The European issue has also had a profound, and often adverse, effect on the Conservative Party itself. Many in the literature have compared the debates on Europe in the Conservative Party to the impact of Conservative debates about repeal of the Corn Laws in the 19th century and tariff reform in the early 20th century (Baker et al 1993: p. 420-2, Sowemimo 1996: p. 80-1). Both these disputes lead to factionalism in the party and were associated with leadership changes (Sowemimo 1996: p. 81). In the case of the Corn Laws the dispute also lead to a long period of the Conservatives being out of office (ibid).

The recent history of the Conservative Party suggests that disputes over Europe have had similar effects to the Corn Laws and tariff reform disputes. For instance the issue has been a highly influential factor in the removal and election of numerous Conservative leaders. Three Conservative Prime Ministers have resigned, albeit one of these only temporarily, because of the issue of Europe. Further, the resignation of Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe after a dispute over the ERM triggered the leadership challenge which resulted in the resignation of Margaret Thatcher. John Major resigned as party leader in 1995 to reassert his leadership after divisions caused by the Maastricht Treaty. Most recently David Cameron resigned because of the defeat of the *remain* campaign in the referendum.

Research also suggests that Europe has played a significant role in the election of several Conservative Party leaders. Cowley and Garry (1998) show how Europe was key factor in the 1990 election of John Major, who was at the time described as a "fierce Eurosceptic", over the pro-European

candidates Hurd and Heseltine. Heppell and Hill (2008, 2010) demonstrated that Europe was an important factor in the elections of William Hague in 1997 and Iain Duncan Smith in 2001. After the referendum result, analysis of the 2016 leadership election suggests that Europe was again crucial, with the *remain* candidates, May and Crabb, getting the majority of their support from *remain* MPs whilst the 3 leave candidates, Gove, Fox, and Leadsom, received most of their support from *leave* supporting MPs (Moore 2016, Jeffrey et al 2017: p.277).

Perhaps the most detrimental effect for the Conservative Party has been division and a loss of parliamentary unity. Parliamentary voting records show that Europe has caused high levels of Conservative dissent in Parliament. This was particularly the case under the governments of Heath, Major and Cameron. During the Heath government because of the small Conservative majority dissent on the Accession Bill almost resulted in the fall of the government (Sowemimo 1997: p. 32). Some MPs have gone as far as to defect from the Conservative Party over Europe. Three sitting Conservative MPs have defected to UKIP and many more former Conservative MPs have joined UKIP after leaving Parliament (Crowson 2007: p. 226). On the pro-European side at least 4 sitting Conservative MPs have defected in order to join either Labour or the Lib Dems.

The most worrying consequence of this division for the Conservative Party has however not been the loss of defecting MPs but the loss of voters. Many have argued that the splits caused by Europe during the Major premiership destroyed the Conservative Party's reputation for unity and contributed to

their landslide defeat in 1997 (Turner 2000). Evans (1998), looking at the 1997 general election, argued that Conservative disunity damaged the Conservative party by sending mixed messages to voters, with anti-European voters being more likely to think that the Conservatives were pro-European and pro-European voters thinking that the Tories were anti-European. It has also been argued that the Conservatives suffered electorally in 2001 and 2005 by being perceived as too concerned about Europe (Bartle 2002, Bara and Budge 2001: p. 598, Bale 2010).

It is clear, then, that the issue of Europe has had a substantial effect on both the internal politics and electoral fortunes of the Conservative Party. Consequences of the changing Conservative attitudes to Europe have been the UK's entrance and potential exit from the European project. As the effects of Brexit could be highly significant for the politics and economic performance of the UK, the Conservative divisions over Europe are one of the most important intra-party divisions in contemporary European history.

1.2 The focus of the thesis

This thesis focuses on the attitudes of the PCP towards Europe from the 1992 general election to the 2016 referendum. In this time the PCP is generally acknowledged to have become more Eurosceptic, as will be discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2. The thesis seeks to explain the reasons behind the party becoming more Eurosceptic.

1.2a Becoming more Eurosceptic: conversion or replacement?

There are two possible means by which a legislative group or Parliamentary party changes its stance on a major policy issue. One is a process of replacement. This process is caused by Parliamentary turnover with MPs holding one of set of ideological beliefs being replaced by new MPs with different ideological leanings. In the context of the thesis this would consist of pro-European Conservative MPs who retire being replaced by new intakes of Eurosceptics. This could also occur when a pro-European Conservative loses a seat at one election and a Eurosceptic MP wins the seat back for the Conservatives. For a process of replacement to occur future MPs with form Eurosceptic views to gain the nominations for seats from Conservative associations and finally win those seats at general elections.

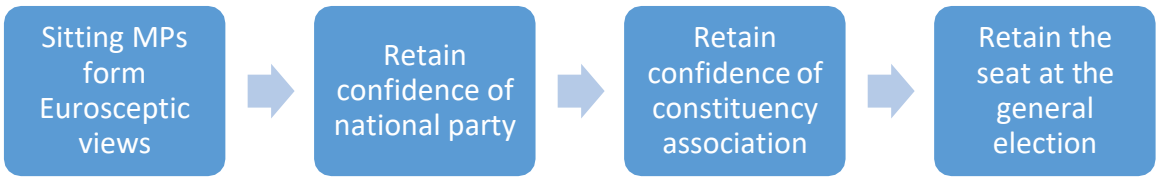
Conversion is a process whereby existing MPs change their positions whilst serving in Parliament. For such a process to change a party, two things are required. Firstly, MPs need to change their stances on an issue and secondly they need to retain their seats in Parliament. The latter involves retaining the support of the national and local party in order to stand as their party's candidate at the next general election and then winning that election. Therefore, for a process of conversion to take place the national party, the local associations and the voters have to endorse, or at least tolerate, the MP's change of stance. In the context of this thesis the process of conversion would involve individuals gaining election as Conservative MPs and then becoming more sceptical towards European integration. In order for the party to sustain the increased Euroscepticism these MPs then need to stay in

Parliament, retaining the confidence of the national party, their local association and ultimately the voters at the next general election.

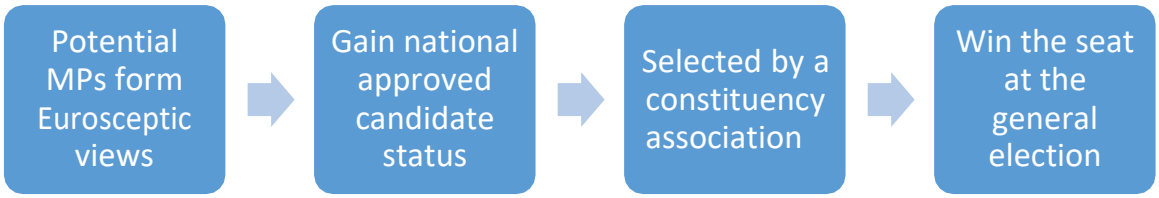
Figure 1.1 illustrates how the two process of conversion and replacement could create a more Eurosceptic PCP.

Figure 1. 1: The means by which the PCP might become more Eurosceptic

Conversion



Replacement



As Figure 1.1 shows, regardless of whether the process has been driven by conversion or replacement of MPs, the steps needed for the Parliamentary Party to become more Eurosceptic are similar. Firstly, individuals, whether current MPs, in the case of conversion, or future MPs, in the case of replacement, need to adopt Eurosceptic views (first box in each diagram). Secondly, these individuals either need to be elected to Parliament or in the case of sitting MPs need to gain re-election (the next three boxes on each diagram). This involves either gaining or keeping the support of both the national party and the local Conservative association in order to secure a seat nomination. It is these steps which inform the research questions set out in the next sub-section.

1.2b The research questions

Given the above discussion the thesis attempts to answer two main research questions:

1. *Why did MPs adopt Eurosceptic positions?*

As discussed above, the first stage in the party becoming more Eurosceptic, under either conversion or replacement, is that Conservative MPs or future Conservative MPs needed to hold Eurosceptic positions. Therefore the first research question involves investigating why MPs adopted particular positions on Europe. In addition to looking at why Conservatives adopt Eurosceptic positions, investigating this research question will also involve considering why other Conservative MPs adopt pro-European views. This includes looking at whether MPs are motivated by their own personal ideologies, the impact of office-seeking considerations or pressures from their constituents.

2. *Why did the Parliamentary Party become more Eurosceptic over time?*

The first stage of this investigation seeks to establish which of the two mechanisms mentioned above is occurring: conversion or replacement. In line with Figure 1.1 and the discussion in 1.2a, the thesis will then consider the importance of the selection process and electoral performance of Eurosceptic candidates at general elections.

1.2c The time period studied: 1992-2016

The justification for the start date of the research being the 1992 general election is that the resulting Parliament included the rebellions on the

Maastricht Treaty. A case could be made for an earlier start such as the late 1980s. Garry (1995) argues that by the late 1980s Europe had emerged as the most significant division on the Conservative benches. However, the 1992 Parliament has been chosen as the Maastricht rebellions were the first large scale rebellions on Europe since the ratification process of the 1970s. Prior to Maastricht rebellion on Europe had been relatively limited. The Single European Act (1986) for example passed through Parliament in only a few days. Opportunities for MPs to express Euroscepticism on this debate were limited as the speaker refused to allow Bill Cash's sovereignty amendment to be debated or voted on. Research by *The Times* suggests that only around 25 MPs had rebelled on European related issues by the end of 1991 (Oakley 1991).

The Brexit referendum in 2016 is a suitable end date as the victory for *leave* completely changed the nature of the European debate. Most MPs on the *remain* side had committed publicly to "respecting the result" of the referendum and therefore conceded that the Brexit process had to start. The day before the referendum 189 Conservative MPs (57% of the PCP) were publicly advocating Britain remaining in the EU, the day after the referendum this number had declined to only 2, Anna Soubry and Ken Clarke. In March 2017 Clarke was the only Conservative who voted against Article 50. The aftermath of the referendum was to provide Tory unity, albeit possibly only temporary unity, on the principle that Britain's membership of European Union would end. At the time of writing the currently emerging divisions in the PCP over the form of Brexit, often called the "soft" and "hard-

Brexit" divide in the media, are substantively different from the earlier debates about the Britain's involvement in the EU. Therefore the Brexit referendum was chosen as the end date as the referendum effectively ended, or at least adjourned, the debate within the PCP about whether the UK should be a member of the EU.

1.3 Methodological overview of the thesis

The thesis uses a mixed methods approach utilising both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The qualitative techniques help to provide greater insight into the findings from the quantitative analysis.

The quantitative aspects of the thesis fall into four main categories:

1. Analysis of bespoke datasets of MPs' positions on Europe from 1992-2016
2. Quantitative content analysis of MPs' speeches
3. Analysis of existing survey data from the BES and BRS
4. An original survey of Conservative association officers

The qualitative research used in this thesis includes interviews with elite individuals in the Conservative Party. In total 12 individuals were interviewed, 11 MPs and 1 Conservative association chairman. The interviews were given anonymously. In addition to this the thesis also uses archival research and makes use of media reports on the topics being researched.

1.4 The thesis argument: Elite Politics

The overall argument of the thesis is that the answers to the two research questions can be explained by elite individuals and the internal politics of the Parliamentary party. "Elite" here refers not those at the very top of the party, the leadership and senior officials, but to Conservative MPs, mainly backbenchers, and Conservative Parliamentary candidates. Pressure from outside Parliament from either the electorate or the Conservative Party membership has had relatively limited impact on Euroscepticism in the PCP.

In relation to the first research question it is argued that MPs' positions on Europe have been largely affected by their own ideology and their prospects for promotion in Parliament. Electoral factors were of secondary importance only.

On the second research question the data suggests that the Parliamentary party became more Eurosceptic through both conversion and replacement. On replacement it is argued that Eurosceptics were neither more likely to gain selection or win their seats in general elections than less sceptical Conservatives. Rather, the new intakes of Conservative MPs were Eurosceptic because the majority of potential Conservative candidates were Eurosceptic. The conversion process was largely the result of the internal politics of Parliament and developments in EU politics which were of high importance to MPs.

1.5 Overview of thesis structure

The thesis consists of tens chapters. Chapter 2 is the literature review. Chapters 3-5 consider the first research question "why did MPs adopt Eurosceptic positions?" Chapters 6-9 analyse the second research question "Why did the Parliamentary Party become more Eurosceptic over time?" Chapter 10 concludes the thesis.

Below a brief a summary of each chapter is provided.

Chapter 2: The literature review

The thesis aims to contribute to the literatures on the Conservative Party and legislative behaviour in the British Parliament. This chapter reviews these literatures and establishes the contribution which this makes.

Chapter 3: Policy, Office and Votes: Conservative MPs and the Brexit referendum

This chapter analyses Conservative MPs' positions in the 2016 Brexit referendum. The chapter examines the potential motivations of MPs in terms of Müller and Strøm's (1999) policy, office and votes trichotomy. It is argued that all three motivations were important but that vote-seeking was less important than either policy or office-seeking.

Chapter 4: Conservative MPs and Europe 1992-2015

The five Parliaments leading up to the referendum are considered in chapter 4. As with 3, this chapter analyses datasets of Conservative MPs' opinions on Europe. The chapter argues that MPs' positions on Europe were primarily affected by their ideology and status in Parliament.

Chapter 5: Debating Brexit: Analysis of Conservative MPs' speeches in the 2016 Brexit referendum campaign

This chapter provides a quantitative analysis of the speeches and public statements of MPs during the referendum campaign. It is argued that the evidence suggests that MPs' speeches were motivated by their own ideology and the desire to win votes in the referendum.

Chapter 6: Conversion vs Replacement: change in the Conservative Party 1992-2015

This chapter uses panel data of MPs' positions on Europe to assess whether the change in the Parliamentary party was driven by conversion or replacement of MPs. The results suggest that both processes occurred within the party.

Chapter 7: Eurosceptic candidates? The selection process and talent pool of the Conservative Party

This chapter starts the investigation of replacement by considering the role of the selection process in the party becoming more Eurosceptic. Three aspects of the process are considered: the national party (CCHQ), the local Conservative associations and the Conservative talent pool, i.e. the candidates. It is argued that the talent pool is the best explanation for why the party became more Eurosceptic, as the majority of Conservative candidates held Eurosceptic views during the time-period of this thesis.

Chapter 8: Eurosceptics at general elections

This chapter continues the investigation of replacement by considering whether Eurosceptic candidates and MPs have performed better in general elections than other Conservative candidates. The data provides little evidence of an advantage for Eurosceptic candidates. Thus, it seems that the electorate had limited effect on the ideological balance of the party.

Chapter 9: The conversion of MPs: Why MPs hardened their stance on Europe

The final empirical chapter of the thesis considers the issue of conversion, i.e. why MPs became more Eurosceptic during their time in Parliament. It is argued that MPs adopted harder Eurosceptic positions because of a combination of developments in EU and domestic politics.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

The conclusion summarises the thesis and directly answers the two research questions. It is argued that elite politics is the common theme running through the answers to the two research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter has three main purposes: it helps inform the working definition of Euroscepticism used in the thesis, it provides a brief history of the Conservative Party and Euroscepticism and it provides a broad guide to the literatures which this thesis will address. Each empirical chapter (chapters 3-9) contains a smaller literature review which specifically reviews the literature relevant for the issues discussed in that chapter.

The thesis aims to make a contribution to literatures on the Conservative Party and legislative motivations in the British Parliament. It will be argued in this chapter that the thesis makes this contribution in part by being one of the first pieces of work to provide a fine-grained analysis of MPs' behaviour on a specific issue over a long time-period.

The chapter is structured as follows. 2.2 will provide an overview of the working definition of Euroscepticism used in the thesis. 2.3 will provide a brief history of the Parliamentary Conservative Party and Euroscepticism. 2.4 will look at the literature on Euroscepticism in the Conservative Party. 2.5 will specifically consider empirical studies of MPs and grassroots members of the Conservative Party. 2.6 will consider the literature on legislative behaviour in the British Parliament. 2.7 will summarise and conclude the chapter.

2.2 Definitions and typologies of Euroscepticism

2.2a Definitions

In order for the thesis to analyse Euroscepticism it necessary to arrive at a working definition of the concept.

Most scholars suggest that the term "Euroscepticism" refers to scepticism or negative feelings towards the European Union and/or European integration. For example Flood (2002: p. 73) stated that Euroscepticism "carries the meaning of doubt and distrust on the subject of European integration", Taggart (1998) described Euroscepticism as a "touchstone of dissent" about Europe and Ray (2007: p. 155) states that: "The plain meaning of the term seems to refer to a neutral or negative attitude towards things European — presumably the European Union". Drawing on these definitions, the thesis will define Euroscepticism as a sceptical or negative feeling towards Britain's involvement in European political integration. Although there are other institutions of European political integration such as the Council of Europe, this thesis will focus almost exclusively on attitudes and behaviour towards the European Union. The rationale for this is that EU is the most important institution of political integration as its laws, at time of writing, have direct effect on the UK and membership requires relatively large scale financial transfers from the United Kingdom. Furthermore, most of the political debate within the Conservative Party has focused on the EU.

2.2b Typologies of Euroscepticism

It is important to note that Euroscepticism is not a binary concept in which people either are or are not Eurosceptic. In order to provide an accurate study of Euroscepticism it needs to be taken into account that there have been differences in MPs' intensity of Euroscepticism. Some MPs have been sceptical of aspects of the European Union such as the single currency but did not want to go as far as leaving the EU whilst other MPs have advocated complete withdrawal.

To take account of this diversity of opinion scholars have devised ways to classify different forms of Euroscepticism. The most widely used classification of Euroscepticism is the distinction between "hard" and "soft" Euroscepticism. This dichotomy was first proposed by Taggart (1998) and then further articulated by Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008). They view hard Euroscepticism as

"a principled opposition to the EU and European integration [which] therefore can be seen in parties who think that their countries should withdraw from membership, or whose policies towards the EU are tantamount to being opposed to the whole project of European integration as it is currently conceived" (ibid p. 8).

By contrast

"soft Euroscepticism is where there is not principled opposition to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number of) policy areas lead to the expression of qualified opposition to EU, or where there is a sense of 'national interest' that is currently at odds with the EU." (ibid: p.8).

Others have criticised the Szczerbiak and Taggart model and proposed alternative typologies of Euroscepticism. For example Kopecky and Mudd (2002) seek to distinguish between diffuse support for the concept of European

integration and specific support of the EU. They use this distinction to create a two-axes classification of support for the EU. On one axis is support for the concept of European integration. On the other axis is the level of optimism about the current state of the EU. This leads to four ideal type positions on Europe: "Eurorejects", who oppose the EU and the concept of European integration; "Eurosceptics", who support the general principle of European integration but are critical of the current state of the European Union; "Europragmatists", who do not necessarily support the underlying principle of European integration but are optimistic about the current state of the EU, and "Euroenthusiasts" who are both supportive of European integration and optimistic about the EU.

Weßels (2007) adopts a similar system of classification. Using polling data he establishes two-axes, one concerning identification with Europe and the other the level of contentment with the current political arrangements of the EU. From these axes he derives three types of opposition to the EU: "adamant Eurosceptics", who do not have a European identity and are critical about the performance of the EU; "Eurosceptics", who are indifferent about European identity and are critical of the EU, and "critical Europeans" who do have a European identity but are critical of the current performance of the EU.

For the purposes of the thesis the hard/soft distinction of Szczerbiak and Taggart represents the most useful framework to analyse Euroscepticism. Using this distinction will enable the analysis to differentiate between MPs who wanted Britain to have a much looser relationship with the EU and those who were critical of certain aspects of the EU but ultimately wanted Britain to

remain a member. This distinction also has the advantage of considering solely MPs' attitudes towards political integration and not taking into account their views towards European identity, as in Weßels' classification. Many Conservative Eurosceptics adopt the "Love Europe, Hate the EU" attitude, claiming to be Europeans who oppose political integration. For example Dan Hannan MEP describes himself as "a committed European. He speaks French and Spanish, has lived and worked all over Europe" (Hannan 2018). As some of the strongest opponents of European integration claim to have strong European identity, it makes sense to define Euroscepticism solely in terms of opposition to the political integration of Europe.

The distinction between hard and soft-Euroscepticism is used in the empirical chapters of this thesis which analyse MPs' political positions on the issue of European integration.

2.3 The history of Euroscepticism in the Parliamentary Conservative Party

The research literature shows that Conservative MPs have been divided, to a greater or lesser extent, on European integration since Britain's first application to the join the EEC in 1961. The general trend identified by the literature is that a party which was initially largely supportive of European integration has become progressively more sceptical.

During the 1960s and 1970s most Conservative MPs were supportive of European integration (Crowson 2007). However a notable proportion of the party during these times did have misgivings about integration. In the early 1960s around 10% of the party opposed entry into the EEC (ibid). During the

1970 Parliament, which authorised Britain's entry into the EEC through the European Communities Act 1972, nearly a third of Conservative MPs were either doubtful about, or opposed to, membership (Norton 1978).

The strong victory by the "Yes" side in the 1975 referendum rendered Euroscepticism largely irrelevant in British politics in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Scholars have considered the late 1980s as a turning point in Conservative support for European integration, as Delors' plan for a social Europe and Thatcher's increasingly negative stance towards integration produced high levels of Euroscepticism (Heppel et al 2017, Fontana and Parsons 2015). Survey research from this period suggests that the party was almost evenly split between pro- and anti-integration MPs (Garry 1995). The prevalence of Euroscepticism grew in the 1990s, and the Eurosceptics represented a majority of the party in the 1992 Parliament (Heppell 2002). After the Conservatives lost the landslide election in 1997 the literature suggests that the party became largely united in Euroscepticism with the Europhiles representing only a small minority of the party (Heppell 2008, 2009, 2010, Baker et al 1999).

This Euroscepticism was mainly a soft-Euroscepticism with only a few MPs having explicitly declared a desire to leave the EU before the 2010 general election (Cowley and Stuart 2010). For the period after the 2010 election, however, scholars have found that a hard-Eurosceptic element did emerge in the Conservative Party. Existing academic estimates state that around 25% of MPs adopted a hard-Eurosceptic position in the 2010 Parliament and around

40% of MPs endorsed *leave* in the Brexit referendum (Heppell 2013, Heppell et al 2017).

To summarise, the research suggests that the Conservative Party has become more Eurosceptic since the 1960s with the number of Eurosceptics increasing and MPs adopted harder forms of Euroscepticism. The next sections of the chapter will argue that the thesis represents a unique contribution to the literature by demonstrating that few studies have sought to provide a fine-grained analysis of Conservative MPs' behaviour over a sustained period of time.

2.4 The Conservative Party and Euroscepticism

This section of the literature review will consider the general literature on the Conservative Party and Euroscepticism. The next section will specifically consider empirical studies of Conservative MPs and grassroots members which are of particular relevance to the thesis.

As the subject of the Conservative Party and European integration has been an issue of substantial importance and longevity in British politics, it is not surprising that a large literature on this subject has emerged. One notable contribution is provided by Crowson (2007) who provides a history of the Conservative Party and European integration from 1945 to 2006. He provides a qualitative analysis of the Conservative Party's relationship with European integration, mainly through archival research. The analysis profiles the Conservative sceptic and the Conservative Europeanist positions whilst also analysing the various debates within the party over Europe.

Another book-length work is Turner's (2000) *The Tories and Europe*. In this volume he argues that the issue of European integration has transformed the politics of the Conservative Party and British politics more generally. He argues that this is one of the main reasons why the Conservative party lost so heavily to Labour in 1997. Other scholarly work has considered how the issue of Europe has affected the electoral fortunes of the Conservative Party. Some have to a greater or less extent agreed with Turner, that the Conservative approach to Europe has been electorally damaging for the party (Bale 2006, 2010, Bara and Budge 2001, Bartle 2002). Others by contrast have been less critical of the Party and argued that Euroscepticism has enabled the party to win votes (Evans and Butt 2007, Green 2011).

Other researchers have conducted empirical analyses of Conservative Party leadership elections. Most of these empirical studies have concluded that Europe was a highly significant factor affecting the results. For example Cowley and Garry (1998) found that Major was successful in 1990 as he was able to gain the support of Eurosceptic MPs when standing against the comparatively Europhile candidates of Heseltine and Hurd. Europe was also found to be a highly important issue in the leadership elections in 1997 (Heppell and Hill 2008), in 2001 (Heppell and Hill 2010) and in 2016 (Jeffrey et al 2017, Moore 2016). The only exception to this trend was the leadership election in 2005 when David Cameron was able to gain the greatest number of endorsements from Eurosceptic MPs despite running against the established Eurosceptic candidates Liam Fox and David Davis (Heppell 2009). In addition to this scholars have also focused on other aspects of Euroscepticism and the

Conservative Party such as the official party policy on Europe (Lynch 2009, Lynch and Whitakker 2013) and the effect of Europe on cabinet selection in the Conservative Party (Allen 2017).

The research analysed in this section of the literature review has mainly focused on the consequences of Conservative Euroscepticism or provided a broad analysis of Euroscepticism like the Crowson work. The next section of the literature review will consider research of more specific relevance to the thesis which has sought to empirically analyse the behaviour and attitudes of MPs and grassroots party members at a fine-grained level.

2.5 Empirical studies of MPs and grassroots members

As the thesis is primarily concerned with the Parliamentary party the research most relevant to this thesis is that concerning previous empirical studies of MPs. As the thesis also considers Parliamentary turnover this section will also review empirical studies of grassroots Conservative members. Grassroots members are considered because they are amongst the most important actors in selecting new Conservative candidates for general elections.

2.5a Empirical studies of MPs

An early empirical analysis was provided by Norton (1978) who analysed MPs' voting behaviour in the 1970 Parliament, the Parliament which passed the European Communities Act. In the 1992 Parliament, Cowley and Norton (1999) used the opportunities provided by the Maastricht rebellions in order to analyse the voting behaviour of Conservative MPs on the issue of Europe. The 1992 Parliament also produced empirical studies of other aspects of MPs'

behaviour, for example Berrington and Hague (1998) analysed MPs' positions on Europe based on EDMs and Tzelgov (2014) analysed the speech patterns of both Conservative and Labour MPs in debates on Europe. Heppell (2002) also worked on the 1992 Parliament, using a number of sources such as voting behaviour, EDMs and MPs' public comment in order to produce an ideological map of the party on three key ideological divides: Europe, economic policy and social/moral outlook. He then replicated this study for four subsequent Parliaments until 2010 (Heppell and Hill 2008, 2009, 2010, Heppell 2013). Another empirical analysis is provided by Alexandre-Collier (2018) who analysed the behaviour of new MPs in the 2016 Brexit referendum.

In addition to these studies of MPs' public behaviour, many scholars have also undertaken research concerning MPs' attitudes towards Europe. Sowemimo (1996, 1997) analysed the ideological divisions amongst Conservative MPs on Europe during the late 1980s and early 1990s using Parliamentary sources and elite interviews. He argued that Conservative divisions over Europe combined conflicts over Thatcherite economic policy and nationalism. Others have measured attitudes towards Europe using survey research. Garry (1995) undertook a survey analysis of MPs' attitudes towards issues such as Europe, economics and moral policy for the 1987 Parliament. Baker et al (1993, 1999) in the Members of Parliament Project conducted several surveys on Europe which were sent to MPs from all parties in the 1992 and 1997 Parliaments. Perhaps the most comprehensive survey research on MPs' opinions was undertaken by the British Representation Survey which surveyed MPs and

Parliamentary candidates from all parties from 1992 to 2005; these surveys included questions relating to Europe.

The thesis will build upon this existing literature in two main ways. Firstly, it considers the Parliamentary Party over a long time-period; this will enable an analysis of how the party has changed over time. Secondly, the thesis will provide fine-grained statistical analyses, to provide potential explanations for MPs' behaviour. The following paragraphs will detail how the existing literature has looked at these issues and how the thesis will build upon it.

In terms of change in the ideological composition of the Parliamentary party, most studies have either considered only a single Parliament or looked at change between only one Parliament and the subsequent Parliament. Examples of this include Baker et al (1993, 1999) who repeated their survey from the 1992 Parliament in the 1997 Parliament and found that their sample of Conservative MPs was much more Eurosceptic compared with their first survey. Norris and Lovenduski (2004) similarly found that new Conservative candidates at the 2001 election were more firmly Eurosceptic than the previous cohort of candidates. The only researcher to empirically analyse MPs behaviour across the whole of the timespan of the thesis is Heppell (2002, Heppell and Hill 2008, 2009, 2010, Heppell et al 2017). He found that the party became progressively more Eurosceptic throughout this time-period. He and his co-authors, however, spent relatively little time discussing the potential drivers of this change within the party.

This leads to the second point as to how this thesis will build upon on the existing literature, which is to provide more robust statistical analyses in order to provide potential explanations for MPs' behaviour. Many of the existing studies in the field have been largely descriptive in terms of their treatment of Eurosceptic attitudes and have often used opinions on Europe as independent variables for example in studies which have analysed leadership elections (e.g. Cowley and Garry 1998). Some studies, have, though used quantitative techniques to analyse MPs' behaviour on Europe. For example Berrington and Hague used factor analysis when analysing MPs' signing of EDMs, Heppell et al (2017) used logistic regression analysis in their study of the 2016 Brexit referendum and Tzelgov (2014) used quantitative text-as-data techniques to analyse MPs' speeches.

The statistical work in this thesis builds upon these studies in a number of ways. Firstly, the thesis will apply statistical techniques to each Parliament (1992-2015) covered in the thesis. Secondly, the analysis here allows for frontbench MPs to be included, whereas some previous statistical work for example Berrington and Hague's work relying on EDMs did not allow for this. As this thesis takes into account frontbench MPs, for each Parliament each Conservative MP is taken into account, allowing for an analysis that is both fine-grained and considers a substantial period of time. Thirdly, the thesis uses a wide variety of statistical methods such as regression analysis and text-as-data content analysis. Fourthly, the thesis puts much greater emphasis on legislative motivations, when forming the independent variables, and hence seeks to make a contribution to the legislative motivation literature.

To summarise, this thesis builds upon the current literature by taking into account change across all of the Parliaments from 1992 to 2015. The analysis in the empirical chapters uses a range of statistical devices, and this allows for each Conservative MP sitting in each Parliament to feature in the analysis. This enables the thesis to conduct a fine-grained analysis of MPs' behaviour whilst encompassing a long time-period.

2.5b Empirical studies of grassroots Conservative members

As this thesis considers Parliamentary turnover and the selection of new candidates it is important to consider existing empirical studies of Conservative Party members.

One of the earliest empirical studies of grassroots Conservatism is Whitely et al's *True Blues* (1994). The data presented in this work suggested that, as in the Parliamentary Party, there was a diversity of ideological views amongst the membership. Three main ideological strands were found in the Conservative Party, "progressivism", associated with the one-nation Tories, "individualism", associated with fiscal orthodoxy and greater deregulation, and "traditionalism" which involved authoritarian positions on issues such as abortion and the desire to protect national sovereignty. The traditionalist faction of the party was found to be the most concerned about European integration. Webb and Childs (2011), using factor analysis, also found three different ideological clusters of members. They labelled these clusters as "Traditional Conservatives", "Liberal Conservatives" and "Thatcherites". They found that all three groups were Eurosceptic but that the "Traditional Conservatives" and

the "Thatcherites" were particularly Eurosceptic. Publications produced by the *Party Members Project* have similarly shown that Conservative Party members have high levels of Euroscepticism. For example post-referendum the vast the majority of members supports Britain leaving both the Single Market and the Customs Union (Bale et al 2018: p.19-20).

There has been then much research undertaken looking at the ideological composition of the membership. However, the literature has tended not to look at how the ideology of the grassroots members affects the Parliamentary party through selection decisions. Research on the Conservative selection process has tended to focus on other issues such as the demographics of the candidates (Hill 2013) and to what extent the process can be seen as deomocratic (Alexandre-Collier 2016).

The thesis extends the existing literature on the grassroots Conservative Party by analysing whether the ideology and priorities of the grassroots members affected the Parliamentary party.

2.5c Summary

This study aims to consider both MPs' behaviour in Parliament and the effect that the wider party, particularly those involved in the selection process, had on the positions that MPs adopt. Thus the thesis is one of few studies to consider the interaction between the selection process and MPs' behaviour in the Conservative Party. Furthermore, the thesis also seeks to improve the literature by providing a fine-grained analysis of MPs' positions on Europe over a long time period.

2.6 Legislative behaviour in the British Parliament

The thesis also aims to contribute to the literature on legislative behaviour in the British Parliament and by extension the literature which has considered other Westminster parliamentary systems.

One of the defining features of Westminster systems are highly cohesive parties with low levels of dissent by MPs, enabling governments to pass their legislative agendas with relative ease. Lord Hailsham commented that this amounted to "elective dictatorship" because of the extent of executive control in the UK. As the cohesive parties are a central part of the Westminster system there has been much research seeking to explain why cohesive parties and the whipping system developed in the 19th century (Eggers and Spirling 2016, 2016, Jenkins 1996, Rush 2001, Cox and Ingram 1992, Berrington 1968). For much of the 20th century there were high levels of Parliamentary cohesion, for example there was not a single rebellious vote in the second session of the 1955 Parliament (Norton 2013). Since the 1960s however there has been an increase in dissension from the backbenches in Parliament. There has also been an increase in scholarly literature considering legislative behaviour. Several scholars sought to explain why Parliamentary dissent started to increase in the 1960s and 1970s (Norton 1978, Mellors 1978, Shwartz 1980, Franklin et al 1986).

Since the initial increase in Parliamentary dissension started in the 1960s, there was a steadily increasing rate of Parliamentary rebellions (Norton 2013). As a result of this there has been a considerable literature looking at different aspects of Parliamentary behaviour. Most notably there has been much

literature looking at MPs' voting behaviour and seeking to provide explanations for why MPs rebel against the party whip (Cowley 2002, Benedetto and Hix 2007, Kam 2009, Garner and Letki 2005). In addition to this there has been research analysing MPs' speeches (Tzelgove 2014), signing of EDMs (Childs and Withey 2004, Kellerman 2012, 2013) and "free-vote" decisions (Hibbing and Marsh 1987).

Many of these studies of Parliamentary behaviour have sought to explain how MPs have been affected by competing influences such as constituency pressures, office-seeking inducements and their personal ideological preferences. For example Benedetto and Hix (2007) argue that MPs with few rational expectations of being offered a government post are more likely to rebel and Gains and Garrett (1993) argue that the behaviour of Labour MPs in the 1960s was affected by their ideology and the political leanings of their constituency association.

The contribution which this thesis makes is to investigate whether and how these different incentives affected Conservative MPs' behaviour on the issue of Europe. This will be a significant contribution to the legislative behaviour literature for two main reasons. Firstly, the issue of European integration is a unique issue in that views on Europe are often unrelated to the traditional left-right dimension of politics (Hix and Lord 1997) and Europe also reveals a tension in the Conservative Party between nationalism and support of integrated markets (Sowemimo 1997, Hooghe et al 2002). As discussed in chapter 1, the issue of Europe has also had a profound impact on the Conservative Party and the wider politics of the UK. As a result of the rise of

anti-EU parties and the holding of referenda on integration, European integration has also become an important issue in the domestic politics of other European nations.

Secondly, the thesis is one of few works to consider Parliamentary behaviour on a single issue over a sustained time period. Many studies of Parliament have been restricted to a case study of behaviour within a single Parliament (e.g. Gains and Garrett 1993, Benedetto and Hix 2007). There have been some studies which look at behaviour over a long time-period. However these tend to focus on general patterns of behaviour such as levels of dissent (Eggers and Spirling 2016) or speechmaking (Spirling 2016, Eggers and Spirling 2014), rather than looking at a specific policy issue. Those which have considered a single issue have tended to focus only on either a single parliament or a time period of around 10 years. A good example of this is the research concerning legislative behaviour during the debates over the Corn Laws (Schonardt-Bailey 2003, McLean 1995). Very few additions to the literature have discussed a single issue over a prolonged period of time. As this study considers the behaviour of MPs over a 25-year period on a single issue, it allows for analysis of how MPs' behaviour changed as the issue evolved over time. This enables the study to take account of changing incentives for MPs both inside and outside of Parliament and how important MPs considered the different incentives to be at different points in time.

To summarise the preceding discussion, this chapter contributes to the existing literature on legislative behaviour in the British Parliament by considering a single issue over a prolonged period of time. The issue of European integration

is an interesting case-study as the debate over Europe has many unique features, and the consequences of the Europe debate have had a strong impact on British politics. The long time-period considered in this thesis allows for the study to consider the political developments on European integration and how incentives for MPs have changed over time.

2.7 Conclusion

This literature review has established the definitions of Euroscepticism which will be used in the thesis, provided a brief history of Conservative Euroscepticism and established how the thesis contributes to the both the literature on Conservative Party Euroscepticism and the literature on legislative behaviour.

Chapter 3: Policy, Office and Votes: Conservative MPs and the Brexit referendum[2]

Abstract

This chapter analyses the positions of Conservative MPs in the 2016 Brexit referendum campaign. The referendum campaign offered a unique opportunity to consider the legislative motivations of Conservative MPs as almost every MP declared a preference and frontbench MPs were free to back either side. Logistic regression analysis is used in order to consider MPs' motivations in terms of Müller and Strøm's policy, office and votes trichotomy. It is argued that all three motivations affected MPs' decision making on the EU referendum. However, vote-seeking motivations were less influential than either policy or office-seeking.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the endorsements of Conservative MPs in the 2016 Brexit referendum campaign. The referendum represents a unique moment in the time period of this thesis for three reasons. Firstly, the referendum presented MPs with a clear-cut and binary choice about their political positions. This left no room for MPs to express qualified support of or opposition to the EU. For example an MP could no longer say they would support the EU in the event of a hypothetical reform. Any MP who chose not to remain neutral had only two options: endorse *remain*[3], choosing to accept EU membership or to endorse *leave* which meant definitively rejecting EU membership.

[2] This chapter is based on Moore, L (2017) Policy, office and votes: Conservative MPs and the Brexit referendum. *Parliamentary Affairs*, **71**:1, p.1-27.
[3] The two referendum positions are referred to as *leave* and *remain* throughout this thesis.

Secondly, the referendum was a highly visible event which engaged the electorate. Traditionally Europe has been an issue of low political saliency with perhaps only a few political obsessives knowing the position of their MP on Europe. The EU referendum, by contrast, had the highest electoral turnout for any vote since 1992 and many news organisations and websites, including the BBC, published lists of which MPs were backing the two campaigns. As a result, the position of individual MPs was more visible to the public and MPs could have a greater expectation than in previous the Parliaments covered in this thesis, that they would be electorally rewarded or punished by their constituents for their stance on Europe.

Thirdly, because of internal division within the government the decision was made to suspend collective responsibility. This gave ministers the freedom to campaign on the *leave* side in the referendum without having to resign. Nevertheless, the leadership had made it clear that it would rather MPs backed *remain*.

This chapter analyses the motivations of MPs in the referendum campaign in terms of Müller and Strøm's (1999) policy, office, and votes trichotomy. It is argued that all three of these motivations affected MPs' decision making on the EU referendum, although vote-seeking was of lesser importance than either policy or office-seeking. In terms of policy-seeking motivations, endorsing the *leave* campaign was strongly associated with social conservatism. The most likely reason for this association is that Euroscepticism within the Conservative party is influenced by traditional/authoritarian/nationalist values, particularly attitudes towards sovereignty and nationalism. The effect

of office-seeking can be seen from the fact that an MP's career status was an important predictor of preferences. The overwhelming majority of frontbench MPs who had the most incentives to be loyal to the leadership chose to follow the leadership in backing *remain.* The majority of experienced backbenchers, who had already resigned, been dismissed or overlooked for government office, opposed the leadership and backed *leave.* These MPs had the least incentives for loyalty to the leadership and indeed stood to potentially gain from the prospect of a post *leave*-vote Prime Ministerial resignation. MPs representing Eurosceptic constituencies were also found to be more likely to endorse *leave,* suggesting that vote-seeking motivations also affected MPs' positions on the referendum. However, constituency opinion had a weaker effect on MPs' referendum preferences than either personal ideology or office status.

The chapter is structured as follows. 3.2 briefly considers the literature relevant to this chapter. 3.3 outlines the theory and hypotheses. Section 3.4 details the data and methods used. Section 3.5 presents the results which are discussed in section 3.6 which concludes the chapter.

3.2 Relevant literature

To briefly summarise the literature on the history of Euroscepticism in the Conservative Party (cf. 2.3 for a longer discussion), the party has been divided over Europe since the first application to join the EEC in the 1950s. Over this time the PCP has become progressively more Eurosceptic. The majority of the PCP supported European integration in the 1950-70s (Crowson 2007). The late 1980s represented a turning point in the history of the PCP as the Single European Act, Delors' plan for a "Social Europe" and Thatcher's increased

opposition to European integration produced higher levels of Euroscepticism within the PCP (Heppell et al 2017, Fontana and Parsons 2015). In the period covered in this thesis (1992-2016) the majority of Tory MPs have been Eurosceptic (cf. Heppell 2013 p. 344).

The most relevant literature specifically concerning the time analysed in this chapter is Heppell et al (2017). Their analysis of the 2016 referendum is similar to the empirical analysis conducted in this chapter. The purpose of their analysis was to place the levels of Euroscepticism at the referendum in a historical context and to test for any associations between endorsing *leave* and MPs' social background or ideological viewpoints. Their reasons for considering the latter were to examine whether the Parliamentary party was similar to the electorate in its voting patterns and to build upon analyses of earlier Parliaments by Kitzinger (1973) and Berrington and Hague (1998). Heppell et al give only brief consideration to potential legislative motivations as part of their analysis of the results (Heppell et al: p. 775). This chapter builds upon their work by framing the analysis of the referendum in terms of legislative motivations and using Müller and Strøm's policy, office and votes trichotomy to inform the selection of independent variables.

Few other authors have tried to analyse Conservative MPs' actions on Europe in terms of the policy, office and votes framework. Berrington and Hague (1998: p. 55) alluded to the idea that some MPs are policy-seeking as they found that pro-death penalty MPs are more likely to be Eurosceptic; they linked this to political psychology literature which has found associations between authoritarian attitudes on crime and attitudes towards ethnocentrism. In

terms of vote-seeking, Hanretty et al (2017) found that MPs' positions in the 2010 Parliament were responsive to constituency opinion on three policy issues, one of which was Europe. They demonstrated that constituency disapproval of the EU was linked to a higher probability of a Conservative MP adopting Eurosceptic positions on both whipped and free votes.

The wider literature on MPs' motivations is considered in the next section 3.3 which discusses the theory and hypotheses for this chapter.

3.3 Theory and hypotheses

The literatures on both the Conservative Party and legislative behaviour have informed the theory and hypotheses of the current chapter. Kam (2009) argues that there is consensus in the legislative behaviour literature around Müller and Strøm's (1999) assertion that politicians seek a combination of three aims: policy, office and votes.

In the long term these three goals are not necessarily mutually exclusive and indeed may be mutually reinforcing. Re-election and promotion to ministerial office put an MP in a better position to influence policy. In Westminster systems particularly, government control of agenda setting means that MPs are much more likely to influence policy as ministers than as backbenchers (Benedetto and Hix 2007). Moreover, Martin (2016), using data from Irish elections, argued that ministers can use their increased influence over policy to gain an electoral advantage over their co-partisans. He argued that ministers used "executive particularism" (pork-barrelling) to specifically target government spending at their own constituencies (ibid: p. 285).

However, on individual policies there may be occasions when the three aims conflict. If on a particular policy the views of either the MP herself, her constituents, or the party leadership are not aligned, the MP will have to choose to prioritise one aim over another. For instance if the party leadership and the MP hold different policy positions, the MP would either have to sacrifice her policy preferences on this particular issue in the hope of being able to influence other policy decisions in the future, or sacrifice her chances of promotion to stay true to her policy preference. The EU referendum provides a good example of potential conflict between these aims, as on the one hand there was a party leadership backing *remain* and on the other hand there was deep-seated Euroscepticism on the Conservative backbenches and in the grassroots party.

Below each of the three motivations are considered: policy, office and votes; several hypotheses emerge from this discussion and are investigated later in the chapter.

3.3a Policy-seeking

When reviewing the recent history of the Conservative party and Euroscepticism, there is a strong case that politicians have been motivated more by their own policy agendas rather than electoral demand. The evidence for this is that since at least the 1990s the European issue has been of crucial importance for Conservative Party politics but of more limited salience for the wider electorate (Bale 2006, Bartle 2002).

If policy-seeking were the main objective of Tory MPs concerning Europe, one would expect to find that ideology was highly important in predicting MPs'

positions. One of the main ideological divides in the PCP in recent times has been the social/moral policy divide which separates social conservatives from social liberals[4] (Hayton 2010). Social conservatives hold traditional/authoritarian policy positions, taking a more restrictive stance on issues such as abortion and gay rights whilst advocating tougher punishment for criminals. Social liberals by contrast have a more permissive approach to issues such as abortion and gay rights and a less punitive approach to crime and punishment.

Previous empirical studies on Conservative MPs and grassroots members have shown strong statistical associations between Euroscepticism and social conservatism (Berrington and Hague 1998: p. 55-60; Garry 1995: p. 175, Heppell 2002: p. 314, Webb and Bale 2014). Similar links between social conservatism and Euroscepticism have been found more broadly in European politics. For example Tillman (2013) found, based on European Values Survey data, that authoritarian preferences concerning child rearing are linked to Euroscepticism and Prosser (2016) argued that party positions on European integration are primarily affected by the social liberal-conservative axis of politics. Specifically on the Brexit referendum, Kaufman (2016) found strong statistical links between supporting harsher treatment of criminals and the probability of voting *leave*. The BES data he used showed that 71% of those who supported the death penalty indicated they would vote *leave*. This was a

[4] Another policy divide, not considered in this chapter, is the economic left/right divide. There is a general consensus in literature that the economic left (sometimes called wet) element of the party has declined substantially (Bale 2006; Heppell 2013) and chapter 4 (cf. 4.4b) argues that since the 2010 election the need to reduce the deficit has produced a pro- austerity consensus on the Conservative benches.

stronger predictor of voting intentions than education, income, social class or party support.

One plausible explanation for this is that positions on Europe could be related to the GAL (green/alternative/libertarian) versus TAN (tradition/authoritarian/nationalist) dimension of political contestation (Hooghe et al 2002). Parties or politicians with a TAN orientation "combine support for traditional values, opposition to immigration and defence of the national community" (*ibid*; p. 976). Hooghe et al (*ibid*) argue that Euroscepticism is often advocated by political parties with a TAN orientation as European integration is seen as a threat to the national sovereignty and community.

For Conservative MPs, a link between social conservatism and Euroscepticism could signify the importance of TAN values, particularly attitudes towards nationhood and sovereignty, as many in the literature have argued that nationalism is one of the main causes of Conservative Party Euroscepticism (Berrington and Hague 1998 p. 66-7; Turner 2000 p. 1; Crowson 2007; Webb and Childs 2011 p. 391-2).

The literature suggests, then, a strong relationship between social conservatism and Euroscepticism. Applying this specifically to the thesis generates hypothesis 1 below:

Hypothesis 1: Socially conservative MPs were more likely to endorse leave[5]

[5] Hypotheses in the format: "MP are more likely to endorse", mean that MPs are more likely to endorse this position than other MPs. In this instance social conservatives are more likely to endorse *leave* than social liberals.

3.3b Office-seeking motivations

The Westminster system, in which the party leadership controls ministerial appointments, provides strong incentives for MPs seeking a ministerial career to obey the party whip (Kam 2009). The literature has established that ministers and those MPs who still have a rational hope of climbing the ministerial ladder are less likely to rebel (Benedetto and Hix 2007, Kam 2009). This literature on rebellion is relevant because even though the EU referendum was formally unwhipped, and indeed six cabinet ministers joined *leave,* the official government position was for *remain* and the Prime Minister was seeking to persuade MPs to back *remain*. Thus, although backing *leave* did not result in an automatic dismissal, as rebelling on a whipped vote would do, the Cameron leadership was more likely to reward those who backed *remain.* Possible evidence that *remain* MPs would be rewarded can be seen from the mini reshuffle following Iain Duncan-Smith's resignation when the Prime Minister promoted only MPs who backed *remain.* Thus MPs who were climbing the ministerial ladder or who had ambitions of climbing the ladder could be expected to be more likely to back *remain* in order to satisfy Cameron.

By contrast MPs who had left office, through either dismissal or resignation, or who had been overlooked for a government post, are predicted to have been less likely to endorse *remain* as they had less reason to believe that Cameron would reward them after the referendum. Benedetto and Hix (2007) found that ex-ministers and MPs overlooked for ministerial office are the most likely to rebel as they cannot be controlled by the promise of ministerial office. Kam (2009), in his comparative study of Westminster systems similarly argued that MPs who

could no longer attain office were more likely to rebel. By the same logic MPs who have opted not to pursue a ministerial career, in order to focus on either constituency and/or select committee work, will also have been less inclined to be loyal to the leadership.

Office-seeking calculations of MPs could also have been affected by the fact that a *leave* victory in the referendum was likely to result in a Prime Ministerial resignation. Backbenchers out of favour with the leadership, i.e. those sacked or overlooked for office, had a potential incentive to endorse *leave* as a new leader may give them a better chance of gaining a government position. Conversely, for frontbenchers, all of whom were appointed by Cameron, a change of leadership would make their positions less secure. Indeed, this is what happened after the *leave* vote: the new Prime Minister, Theresa May, brought in MPs who had been out of office for a long time such as Liam Fox and David Davis and dismissed long-serving ministers from the Cameron administration such as George Osborne and Nicky Morgan.

From this discussion of office-seeking intentions it can be predicted that there will be three distinct groups within the PCP which vary in their likelihood of endorsing *leave*.

- *The frontbenchers*

The frontbenchers were defined as anyone who was minister, whip or PPS at the time of the Brexit referendum. The frontbenchers were expected to be the group most likely to back *remain*. They had incentives to endorse *remain* as

this would increase their chances of promotion under Cameron whilst a potential change of leader would threaten their position in the government.

- *Experienced backbenchers*

The term "experienced backbenchers" refers to MPs who were first elected to the House of Commons before the 2015 general election and were on the backbenches on the day of the referendum. These MPs had all been in the House of Commons long enough to have potentially been offered a frontbench position, as can be seen by the fact that a majority of the 2010 intake of MPs, as well as Robert Jenrick who was elected in a 2014 by-election, were serving in government positions at the time of the referendum. The group of experienced backbenchers included ex-ministers, those overlooked for government office and MPs who had chosen not to pursue a ministerial career. They had little office-seeking incentive to be loyal to Cameron and stood to potentially benefit from a change of leader in the event of a *leave* vote.

- *Newly elected MPs*

These MPs were elected for the first time in the 2015 general election. As these MPs were new to the Commons none of them had been offered a frontbench role by the time of the referendum. New MPs are expected to have been more likely to endorse *remain* than the more experienced backbenchers as new MPs would have had a realistic potential of being offered a government post by Cameron had the *remain* side won the referendum campaign. However, new MPs are predicted to have been more likely to endorse *leave* than frontbenchers. This is because some newly elected MPs may have had no office-seeking ambitions and

newly elected MPs who did have office-seeking motivations would be less likely to have been detrimentally affected by a change of leader than frontbench MPs.

In addition to the office seeking motivations, the difference between these 3 groups of MPs could have been reinforced by personal loyalty. An MP interviewed for this thesis stated that although "career considerations were without a shadow of a doubt a factor", the impact of personal loyalty should not be underestimated (interview 7)[6]. He argued that loyalty became a stronger factor for MPs higher up in the government as it would be difficult for an MP to look David Cameron in the eye and say "Look David, I know you helped me get elected, I know you promoted me to the Cabinet but I am going to publicly disagree with you on this" (ibid). Therefore it is possible that frontbenchers had both personal loyalty reasons as well as career reasons to endorse *remain*. Backbenchers had less reason to feel personal loyalty to Cameron and, as discussed above, could potentially gain from a change in Prime Minister.

This discussion of office-seeking motivations generates hypotheses 2a-c below:

Hypothesis 2: Office status was a strong predictor of an MP's referendum position

2a. Frontbench MPs were the most likely MPs to endorse remain

2b. Backbench MPs elected before 2015 were the most likely MPs to endorse leave

2c. Newly elected MPs were more likely to endorse leave *than frontbench MPs but less likely to endorse* leave *than long serving backbench MPs*

[6] A full list of interviews is available in appendix G.

3.3c Vote-seeking

It is reasonable to suggest that vote-seeking and re-election are a concern for many MPs as most sitting MPs put themselves forward as candidates at the next election (Matland and Studlar 2004).

There is increasing evidence in the literature that British MPs' roll-call records can affect their electoral performance (Pattie et al 1994; Kam 2009). However, the only study to specifically consider Conservative Eurosceptics concluded that the Europe issue did not affect their vote share (McAllister and Studlar 2000). McAllister and Studlar found that declared Eurosceptics had a vote-share 2.3% higher than other Conservative MPs at the 1997 election but that almost all of this difference could be accounted for by incumbency and turnout differences across constituencies.

However, of more importance than whether MPs' voting records affect their electoral vote share, is whether MPs *think* (rightly or wrongly) that voters react to their personal policy positions. Vote-seeking MPs might rationally choose their referendum position based on public opinion in their constituencies if they believed that this would affect their personal vote. Several studies have considered whether MPs vote based on public opinion in their constituencies. For instance, Baughman (2004) found that MPs representing constituencies with a high number of Catholics were more likely to take conservative positions on abortion votes. Most significantly for this study, Hanretty et al (2017) argued that MPs in the 2010 Parliament were reactive to public opinion on three issues, one of which was Europe.

If MPs were vote-seeking, then, we should expect to see Hanretty et al's results holding true for the specific case of the referendum, with MPs representing Eurosceptic constituencies being more likely to support *leave.*

Hypothesis 3: There was a positive relationship between constituency Euroscepticism and the probability of MPs' endorsing leave

It would be expected that MPs representing marginal constituencies would be more likely to follow constituency opinion, on the grounds that marginal seats can be lost on the basis of relatively small swings away from the incumbent. MPs representing safer seats have less reason to fear electoral defeat and may be less attentive therefore to constituency opinion. This discussion leads to hypothesis 4:

Hypothesis 4: The relationship between constituency Euroscepticism and referendum position was stronger for MPs who represented marginal constituencies.

3.4 Data and Methods

This chapter uses a bespoke dataset of Conservative MPs elected at the 2015 general election. Logistic regression analysis is used in order to test the hypotheses identified in section 3.3.

Sections 3.4a-3.4f below detail the variables used in the dataset; the statistical models used are explained in section 3.4g.

3.4a The dependent variable: MPs' referendum endorsements

The dependent variable is a binary variable which measures MPs' publicly declared support in the referendum campaign. MPs who publicly declared support for *leave* were coded as 1 and MPs who publicly supported *remain* were coded 0. MPs who did not declare a position were treated as missing data. As only 7 (2%) of MPs did not declare a preference, few MPs were excluded from the analysis.

Table 3.1 displays the summary statistics of MPs' referendum positions. It demonstrates that the majority of MPs did side with the Prime Minister and support *remain*. However, a substantial proportion (41%) of Conservative MPs backed *leave*.

Table 3. 1 Referendum positions of Conservative MPs

Stance	**N**	**%**
Remain	185	56
Leave	138	41
Did not declare	7	2

Sources: MPs' personal websites, BBC News (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-35616946) and TheyWorkForYou.com

3.4b Social conservatism

A "social conservatism" variable was developed in order to test hypothesis 1. To generate this variable a scale was created using a similar approach to that taken by Read and Marsh (1997 p. 278), and Heppell (2002: p. 312, 2013: p. 344-5). The scale was created based on MPs' positions on five issues:

- Same-sex marriage

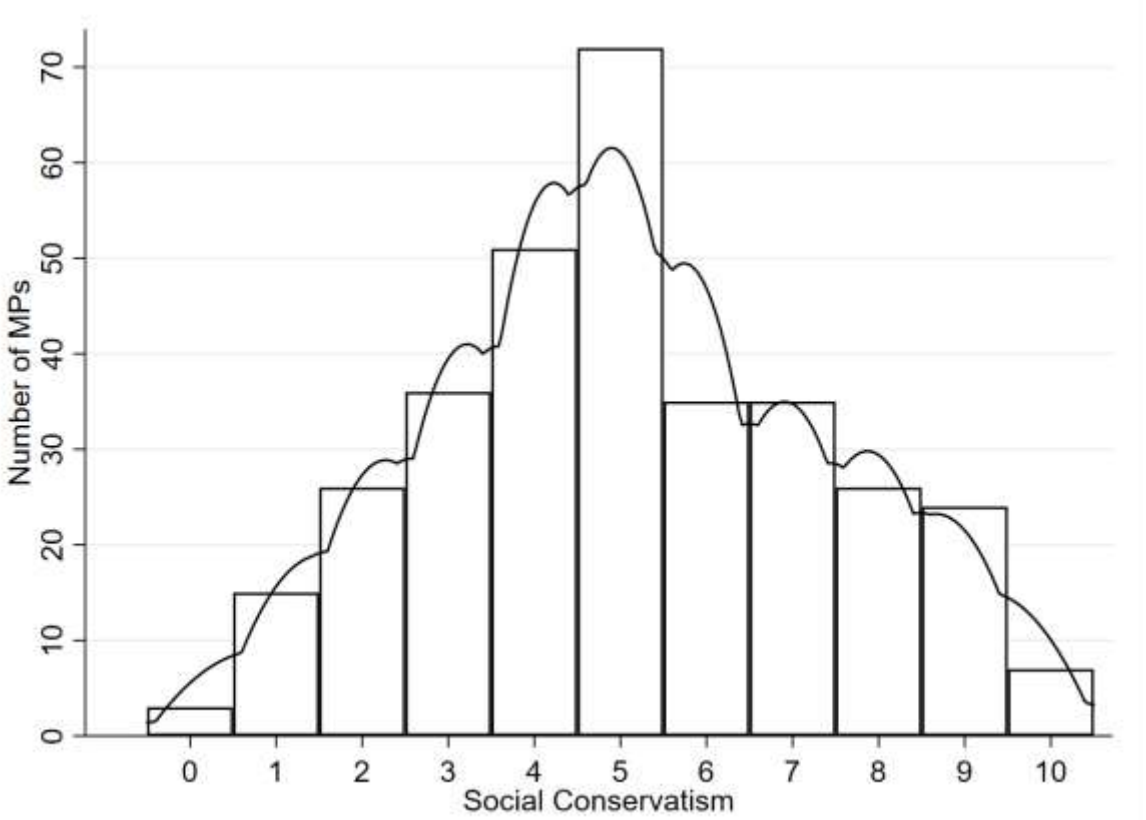
- Abortion
- Death penalty
- Three-parent embryos
- Greater use of imprisonment as opposed to community sentences

For each issue an MP was given 2 for a socially conservative stance, 0 for a socially liberal stance or 1 where either no data could be found or the MP was inconsistent on the issue. After the sum of the five issues was calculated, each MP had a score on a scale 0 to 10, with higher numbers denoting greater social conservatism. Data was gathered for each MP using a combination of their House of Commons voting record, record of signing relevant EDMs, membership of All Party Parliamentary Groups, and public comment made by the MP[7].

The resulting summary statistics of social conservatism show that Conservative MPs were spread across the range of the scale, with 3 MPs being socially liberal on all five issues and 7 MPs being socially conservative on every issue. Figure 3.1 below contains a histogram and Kernel distribution of Conservative MPs on the social conservatism scale. The variable is skewed slightly to the conservative side of the spectrum with the mean score being 5.11.

[7] The timeframe for the parliamentary activity (voting record, EDMS and APPGs) is from the MP's first election to parliament; public comment takes account of any comments made by the MP since they became a parliamentary candidate.

Figure 3. 1: Histogram and Kernel distribution of MPs on the social conservatism scale



Source: original thesis data
The social conservatism variable ranges 0 to 10 with higher values denoting stronger social conservatism. Social conservatism scores for each MP are based on their positions on five issues: abortion, gay marriage, death penalty, use of three parent embryos and greater use of imprisonment as opposed to community sentences. For each issue an MP was given 2 for a socially conservative stance, 0 for a socially liberal stance or 1 where either no data could be found or the MP was inconsistent on the issue.

3.4c Office-status

To test hypothesis 2, that office-status would affect referendum position, a categorical variable "office status" was created with three categories:

- *Experienced backbenchers (n = 125):* MPs are included in this category if they were elected before the 2015 election and were on the backbenches on the day of the referendum. This group of MPs is on the backbenches

through dismissal, resignation, or being overlooked for government positions or choosing not to pursue a ministerial career.

- *New MPs (n = 72):* These MPs were elected for the first time in 2015. At the time of the referendum they were too inexperienced to have been offered a government post.
- *Frontbenchers (n = 127):* MPs were included in this category if they were a minister, whip or PPS on the day of the referendum.

3.4d Constituency Euroscepticism

A measure of constituency Euroscepticism was used in the model to examine whether MPs' vote-seeking motivations affected their referendum positions (hypothesis 3). To measure constituency Euroscepticism, data from Hanretty et al (2017) was used. They estimated Euroscepticism in each constituency using data from the BES 2010 Combined Internet Panel Survey which asked respondents if they disapproved of the UK's EU membership. Hanretty et al (ibid) used multilevel regression and post-stratification analysis of the survey responses to obtain an EU disapproval percentage for each constituency. The mean value of this variable for Conservative constituencies was 53.6 (indicating that 53.6% of constituency residents disapproved of the EU) and the median was 54.5. Scores on the constituency Euroscepticism scale ranged from a low of 24.1 for Jane Ellison who represented Battersea in inner London to a high of 72.0 for Rebecca Harris who represented Castle Point in Essex. As the constituency Euroscepticism variable took account of numerous constituency demographic factors, such as percentage non-white, median education level and

region, no other constituency demographic variables were included in the dataset for this study.

3.4e Seat marginality

In order to test hypothesis 4, that MPs in marginal seats were more responsive to constituency Euroscepticism, two variables were added to the dataset, one dummy variable measuring whether a seat was marginal or safe and an interaction variable of marginal seats and constituency Euroscepticism. There are no firm rules about the distinction between marginal, semi-marginal and safe seats. Norris and Crewe (1994:p. 221) defined a seat as either marginal or semi-marginal if the winning party gained a majority of 14.9% or lower over the second placed party. On this basis the chapter uses the 14.9% winning margin as the threshold for coding seats as 1 in the marginal seats dummy variable. This results in 95 MPs (29%) being coded as 1, indicating that they represented marginal or semi-marginal seats, and 229 MPs (71%) being coded as 0, indicating that they represented comparatively safe seats. The interaction variable, needed to test whether MPs from marginal seats were more responsive to constituency Euroscepticism, consists of the marginal seat dummy variable multiplied by constituency Euroscepticism:

Marginal Euroscepticism = marginal seats x constituency Euroscepticism

3.4f Control variables

The dataset also includes control variables, which could also have potentially predicted which side MPs endorsed in the referendum campaign. These variables are considered below:

Age: Polling suggested that age was an important predictor of voting amongst the general public in the Brexit referendum, with older generations voting more for *leave* and younger generations voting more for *remain*. It may have been the case that opinion trends within the PCP were similar to those in the wider public.

Gender: A dummy variable was also included denoting an MP's gender (female = 1). It might be case that female MPs are less likely to be pro-*leave* as many of the most prominent figures in Conservative Euroscepticism such as John Redwood, Bill Cash and Andrew Rosindell are male.

Oxbridge educated: This dummy variable denotes whether an MP attended an Oxbridge university. Heppell et al (2017: p. 14) in their analysis of the referendum found that MPs with an Oxbridge education were less likely to endorse *leave*.

3.4g The statistical models

As the dependent variable is dichotomous, logistic regression models are used to analyse the data. The basic structure of the statistical models is:

$$\Pr(\text{leave} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3)$$

Where α = the constant, βs = the variables and Xs = the logit coefficient for each variable.

The baseline model (model 1) includes the social conservatism variable, office status variable, and Constituency Euroscepticism for all MPs in the dataset. These are the three primary variables of interest in testing for MPs' policy, office and vote-seeking intentions. The equation for this model is below:

$$\Pr(\text{leave}=1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{SocialConservatism}_1 + \beta_2 \text{OfficeStatus}_2 + \beta_3 \text{ConstituencyEuroscepticism}_3)$$

Model 2 builds on the first model by including the three control variables listed in section 3.4f. The equation of this model is below:

$$\Pr(\text{leave}=1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{SocialConservatism}_1 + \beta_2 \text{OfficeStatus}_2 + \beta_3 \text{ConstituencyEuroscepticism}_3 + \beta_4 \text{Age}_4 + \beta_5 \text{Gender}_5 + \beta_6 \text{OxbridgeEducated}_6)$$

Model 3 tests whether the effect of constituency Euroscepticism differs for marginal and safe seats. This model adds the marginal seat dummy variable and the interaction variable: marginal x constituency Euroscepticism. The equation of this model is below:

$$\Pr(\text{leave}=1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{SocialConservatism}_1 + \beta_2 \text{OfficeStatus}_2 + \beta_3 \text{ConstituencyEuroscepticism}_3 + \beta_4 \text{Age}_4 + \beta_5 \text{Gender}_5 + \beta_6 \text{OxbrideEducated}_6 + \beta_7 \text{MarginalSeat}_7 + \beta_8 \text{MarginalSeat}\times\text{ConstituencyEuroscepticism}_8)$$

3.5 Results

Table 3.2 below presents the results from the statistical analysis. The table presents the average marginal effects of the independent variables. The average marginal effects refers to the average effect of a 1 unit change in the

independent variable. For example, model 1 predicts that on average an increase of 1 on the social conservatism scale increases an MP's probability of supporting leave by 0.049, and model 2 predicts that the effect of being a frontbencher reduces the probability of supporting *leave* by 0.368 compared to an experienced backbencher.

Table 3. 2 Marginal effects on the probability of endorsing leave

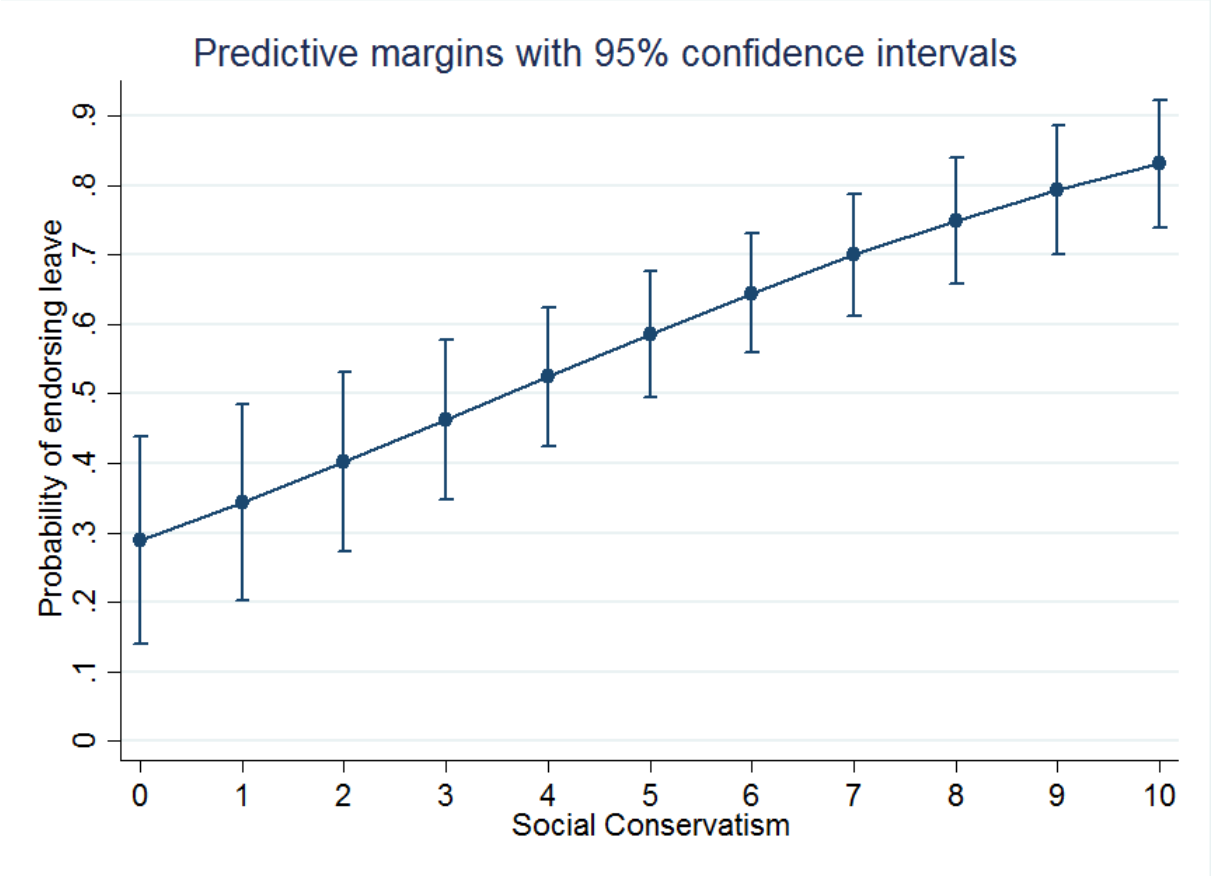
	Model 1 (Main variables)	**Model 2** (includes demographic controls)	**Model 3** (controls for constituency majority)
Social Conservatism	0.049***	0.046***	0.046***
	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Office Status Reference Category: experienced backbenchers			
Newly elected MPs	-0.146**	-0.249***	-0.238***
	(0.070)	(0.082)	(0.086)
Frontbenchers	-0.327***	-0.368***	-0.365***
	(0.058)	(0.061)	(0.061)
Constituency Euroscepticismǂ	0.076**	0.070**	0.080*
	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.042)
Age		-0.005*	-0.006*
		(0.003)	(0.003)
Gender (Female = 1)		0.008	0.005
		(0.068)	(0.067)
Oxbridge educated		-0.087	-0.094*
		(0.054)	(0.056)
Marginal constituency			0.157
			(0.407)
Marginal x Constituency Euroscepticism			-0.004
			(0.008)
N	324	319	309
Pseudo r^2	0.142	0.121	0.160
Count r^2	0.690	0.708	0.693
Adjusted Count r^2	0.275	0.311	0.274

Source: thesis original data.
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Robust standard errors in parentheses
ǂ One unit of constituency Euroscepticism = 10% disapproval of the EU e.g. a constituency with 45.6% EU disapproval is coded as 4.56

3.5a Policy-seeking

The data provides strong evidence for a link between social conservatism and the probability of an MP endorsing leave. This relationship is highly statistically significant in all of the models. In addition to being statistically significant the relationship is also substantial as the models suggest that social conservatism has a strong effect on the probability of endorsing leave. Model 1 predicts that at the most socially conservative side of the scale an experienced backbencher has an 83% probability of supporting leave compared to 28% for a similar MP at the most socially liberal end of scale. Figure 3.2 plots this relationship. These results provide strong evidence to validate hypothesis 1. This suggests that a TAN ideology amongst MPs could be motivating Euroscepticism.

Figure 3. 2 Marginal effect of social conservatism on the probability of endorsing leave



This is based on data from model 1. The probabilities shown in the graph are for a backbench MP first elected before 2015. Social conservatism is measured on a scale of 1 to 10, see section 3.4b.

3.5b Office-seeking

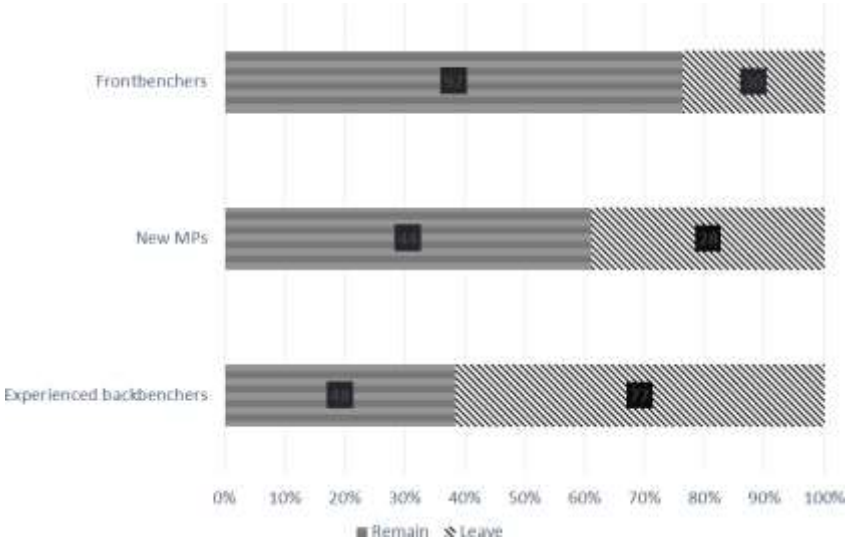
Consistent with the predictions of hypothesis 2, the results show substantial differences in referendum position between three career-status groups of MPs: experienced backbenchers, frontbenchers and new MPs.

The difference between each of these three groups is statistically significant in all of the statistical models. The marginal effects indicate that the effect of office status on referendum position is strong. Model 3 suggests that being on the frontbench reduces the probability of supporting *leave* by 0.36 and being a new MP reduces the probability by 0.24, compared to an experienced backbencher.

This suggests that the difference between being an experienced backbencher and a frontbencher is the equivalent of the effect of an 8 point difference (out of a possible 10) on the social conservatism scale and the difference between a new and experienced backbencher is the equivalent of a 5 point difference on the social conservatism scale.

The summary statistics, see Figure 3.3 below, also demonstrate the sharp differences between the three groups. The only group with a majority supporting *leave* was the experienced backbenchers, 62% of whom supported *leave*. This is in contrast to only around a quarter of frontbench MPs supporting *leave*. Newly elected MPs, as predicted in hypothesis 2c, occupy the middle group although they are slightly closer to the frontbenchers with 42% supporting *leave*.

Figure 3. 3: Referendum support by office-status



Source: Original thesis data
Numbers in the bars refer to raw number of MPs. Experienced backbenchers refers to backbench MPs elected before 2015. Pearson Chi^2 (2 degrees of freedom) = 35.1 $P < 0.001$

These findings are consistent with the discussion in section 3.3c which predicted that MPs' office-seeking incentives, or lack thereof, to support the leadership would affect their referendum positions.

3.5c Vote-seeking

The statistical analysis also provides possible evidence that vote-seeking motivations affected MPs' positions on the referendum. All three models show a positive relationship between constituency Euroscepticism and the probability of an MP endorsing *leave*. This relationship is statistically significant to the 95% level in models 1 and 2 and to the 90% level in model 3. These findings are in line with the predictions of hypothesis 3.

The data suggests that, across the range of the variable, constituency Euroscepticism could have had a strong effect on MPs' referendum stance. Model 1 predicts that a frontbench MP representing a highly Eurosceptic constituency (70% against the EU) had a probability of endorsing *leave* of 0.38, more than three times higher than the probability, 0.11, of a frontbench MP representing a highly pro-EU constituency (only 25% against the EU). The same calculation for experienced backbenchers predicts that those representing a highly Eurosceptic constituency had a 0.72 chance of supporting *leave* compared to 0.34 for those representing a highly pro-EU constituency.

There is, then, evidence to suggest that vote-seeking may have been an important factor affecting which side MPs backed in the referendum campaign. However, there are two caveats to this general finding. Firstly, the effect of the constituency Euroscepticism variable was weaker than the effect of the

variables concerning policy and office-seeking. Model 1 suggests that a standard deviation change in constituency Euroscepticism increased the probability of supporting *leave* by only 0.057, compared to a 0.113 increase in supporting *leave* for a standard deviation change in social conservatism. The effects of office-status were also substantially greater than constituency Euroscepticism as being on the frontbench reduced an MP's probability of supporting *leave* by 0.321 and being a new MP reduced the probability by 0.146 compared to experienced backbenchers.

Secondly, there is no evidence that constituency Euroscepticism had a greater effect on MPs from marginal constituencies. The effect of the interaction variable of marginality and constituency Euroscepticism in model 3 is not statistically significant. Several different thresholds for marginal constituencies were used in order to further test if an interaction could be found between constituency Euroscepticism and seat marginality[8]. None of these tests, however, produced a statistically significant result. Contrary to the predictions of hypothesis 4, this suggests that MPs representing marginal seats were not more sensitive to constituency opinion than those representing safer seats.

The lack of significance of the marginal seat variables could be the result of several different factors. It could suggest that the relationship between Constituency Euroscepticism and referendum endorsement may not have been driven by vote-seeking. It could be that MPs from Eurosceptic areas were more

[8] In the other tests 4.9%, 9.9% and 19.9% majorities were used as the thresholds for the marginal seat dummy variable.

likely to share their constituents' perceptions that their area had been adversely affected by the EU. For example MPs representing seaside towns could have shared their constituents' beliefs about the negative effect of the Common Fisheries Policy. Another possibility is that the link could exist as a result of the selection process, with Eurosceptic areas being more likely to nominate Eurosceptic candidates. Alternatively, it could be that *all* MPs were concerned about vote-seeking and that even those representing safe seats wanted to maximise their vote share. MPs from safe seats might have sought to maximise their vote share for personal pride, or they may have been worried about the possibility, however seemingly remote, of losing their seat. One MP interviewed for this thesis commented that the collapse of Scottish Labour in 2015 suggests there may not be any true safe seats in modern politics (interview 1).

In sum, the findings show a statistical link between constituency Euroscepticism and the likelihood of an MP endorsing *leave*. This gives some grounds to suggest that MPs were using their referendum endorsements for vote-seeking, but this relationship was weaker than the relationships between endorsing *leave* and office status, and between endorsing *leave* and ideology. Furthermore, there was no evidence that MPs from marginal constituencies were more sensitive to constituency opinion.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter investigated why Conservative MPs endorsed different sides in the 2016 Brexit referendum. It has been argued that all three of Müller and Strøm's (1999) aims: policy, office and votes, affected MPs' positions on the

referendum. However, vote-seeking motivations were of less importance than either policy or office-seeking motivations.

Policy-seeking motivations appear to be highly influential as there is a very strong statistical relationship between social conservatism and endorsing *leave*. A plausible explanation of this relationship is that MPs' positions on the referendum are related to the TAN/GAL dimension of politics, with TAN MPs being more likely to oppose the EU on the grounds that it threatens national sovereignty. This argument concerning the TAN/GAL political dimension and Euroscepticism is consistent with many in the literature who have argued that Conservative Euroscepticism is essentially nationalistic in nature (Crowson 2007, Turner 2000: p. 1, Berrington and Hague 1998: p.66-7).

Office-seeking motivations were also found to be of crucial importance in influencing MPs' positions on the referendum. The statistics show important differences in the referendum positions of three distinct career status groups. Frontbench MPs were predominantly loyal to the Prime Minister in supporting the *remain* campaign. By contrast, a majority of experienced backbenchers endorsed *leave*. This is consistent with the theory that those who are climbing the ministerial ladder or have a realistic prospect of gaining a frontbench role are more likely to be loyal to the leader (Benedetto and Hix 2007). Experienced backbenchers, on the other hand, have fewer incentives to be loyal, as they may already have been dismissed from, or overlooked for, ministerial office (*ibid*). The differences between these groups of MPs may also have been affected by the fact that a post *leave*-vote leadership change would represent a potential

career threat to frontbenchers but an opportunity for backbenchers out of favour with the Cameron leadership.

In terms of vote-seeking, the models show a statistical association between constituency Euroscepticism and endorsing *leave*. This may indicate that MPs were seeking to improve their personal vote by following their constituents. However, there are significant caveats to this result. Firstly, there is no evidence that MPs representing marginal constituencies were more responsive to constituency opinion as might be expected if MPs were motivated by vote-seeking. Secondly, the effect of constituency Euroscepticism is weaker than the effects of either social conservatism or office status.

It appears, then, that these results suggest that whilst vote-seeking may have been a motivation for MPs in the referendum, their personal policy preferences and career prospects had a stronger impact on their stance than constituency opinion.

There are several features of the referendum, and the issue of European integration more generally, which could explain why that the effect of vote-seeking is weak. Firstly, the issue was determined by referendum not by a Parliamentary vote. This means that MPs may have had less expectation of being electorally punished/rewarded by their constituents as the MPs were simply giving endorsements with the public ultimately determining the result of the referendum. Secondly, most constituencies were divided over Brexit. Only 82 (21%) Conservative MPs represented seats predicted to have 60% or more constituents voting the same way in the referendum, thus most MPs

would find themselves opposing at least 40% of their constituents whichever side they backed in the referendum. Thirdly, as Europe is an issue which has divided parties and is orthogonal to the left-right dimension of politics (Hix and Lord 1997) it could be that MPs did not believe that many voters would change their general election votes over Europe. A leave supporting MP interviewed for this thesis commented that he did not expect the referendum to have much effect on the general election in his constituency as the most *leave* ward in his constituency was a Labour ward where he believed that most people could not bring themselves to vote for him, and that the most *remain* ward in his constituency was also the most Conservative ward in his constituency where he believed most voters could not bring themselves to vote for Jeremy Corbyn (interview 10).

The conclusion that policy-seeking and office-seeking were more important than vote seeking may suggest that the internal politics of the Conservative Party had a greater effect on MPs' referendum positions than the wider electorate.

The next chapter of the thesis will seek to undertake a similar analysis of MPs' positions for the five Parliaments prior to the Brexit vote. This will enable it to be tested whether the findings for this chapter hold for the earlier Parliaments.

Chapter 4: Conservative MPs and Europe 1992-2015

Abstract

This chapter considers MPs' positions towards Europe in the five Parliaments from 1992-2015. During this time the PCP became progressively more Eurosceptic with the majority of MPs being classified as hard-Eurosceptic in the 2010 Parliament. MPs' positions on Europe are statistically analysed using ordered regression techniques. The results show MPs' ideology and office-status were strong predictors of positions on Europe. Ideologically, economically right-wing/dry and socially conservative MPs were more likely to be Eurosceptic. In terms of office-status, the backbenches almost always had higher levels of Euroscepticism than the frontbench. The results also provide some evidence that in the later Parliaments, particularly in 2010, constituency factors affected the position of MPs. However the effect of this was weaker than either ideology or office-status, and there is only limited evidence that the presence of UKIP affected MPs' positions. It is argued that these results suggest that the internal politics of the Conservative Party had a stronger impact on MPs' Euroscepticism than vote-seeking or pressures from outside Parliament.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses positions on European integration in the five Parliaments prior to 2015. The aims of the chapter are to measure opinion on European integration over time and to gain a greater understanding of what

is driving Euroscepticism in the PCP. To accomplish this the chapter conducts statistical analyses for each of the five Parliaments in this time period.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 4.2 provides a brief overview of the historical background and literature. 4.3 considers the theory and hypotheses which inform the statistical analysis. 4.4 details the data and methodology used. 4.5 details the extent to which Euroscepticism in the PCP has changed over this period. The statistical analyses are presented in 4.6 and the chapter is concluded in 4.7.

4.2 Historical background

This section considers the background to the Parliaments analysed in this chapter and also the previous literature on the time period under consideration.

4.2a The 1992 Parliament

The divisions over the Maastricht Treaty and the leadership problems of John Major have made the 1992 Parliament the subject of much scholarly consideration. Most of the literature has found the party was divided between a majority of MPs who wanted less integration with the EU, the Eurosceptics, and a minority of MPs who wanted more integration with the EU, often referred to as "Europhiles" (Baker et al 1993, Heppell 2002). For instance a postal survey by Baker et al (1993: p. 222) found that the majority of Conservative MPs believed that the ECJ was a threat to British liberty and that an Act of Parliament should be passed establishing the supremacy of British law over the EU. However, Baker et al also found there was a group

of backbenchers committed to deeper integration with the EU. Furthermore, they also found (ibid: p. 228) that the majority of Conservative MPs supported Single Market membership, suggesting that the Eurosceptics did not want to go as far as leaving the EU.

Studies of the 1992 Parliament which have attempted to statistically analyse the associations between Euroscepticism and other variables have had differing results. Berrington and Hague (1998) looked at attitudes towards Maastricht by analysing backbench support for Early Day Motions (EDM). They found several statistical differences between pro and anti-Maastricht MPs, for example that anti-Maastricht (i.e. Eurosceptic) MPs were more likely to be pro-death penalty and less likely to have been educated at a top public school (p.49 & 58). By contrast, Webb (1997: p. 99-104), using survey data of MPs and parliamentary candidates, found that attitudes towards economics were slightly better predictors of Conservative views on Europe than social issues.

4.2bThe opposition Parliaments

In 1997 the party suffered a landslide defeat losing over half its seats and spent the next three Parliaments in opposition. During this time the party had four different leaders (William Hague, Iain Duncan Smith, Michael Howard and David Cameron). In at least two of the leadership elections the Europe issue was influential in determining the result (interview 8, cf. Heppell and Hill 2008, 2010). Perhaps as a consequence of these leadership changes the official position of the party moved in a Eurosceptic direction; the party

opposed the ratification of every EU treaty brought before Parliament, became more hostile to the single currency and withdrew from the European People's Party.

The consensus in the literature is that the ideological composition of the Parliamentary party also became more Eurosceptic (Heppell and Hill 2008: p. 87, 2009: p. 398, Webb 2008: p. 438). Baker et al (1999: p. 174), for instance, repeated their postal survey in 1997 and received more Eurosceptic responses. Notably, 26% of their Conservative respondents supported UK withdrawal from the EU and 11% were uncommitted on the issue. This suggests that a substantial proportion of the PCP was at least open to the possibility of supporting a British departure from the EU. The British Representation Study also showed that new Conservative MPs and candidates were more Eurosceptic than in previous elections (Norris and Lovenduski 2004: p. 97).

The increased Euroscepticism of the party in opposition did not lead to disunity in Parliament, however. Rebellions on Europe were generally limited to only a few pro-European MPs who voted for more integration, although much of this unity may have come as a result of not having the responsibility of being in government (Cowley and Stuart 2010).

4.2c The 2010 Parliament

In 2010 the Conservatives returned to power in coalition with the Liberal Democrats. During this Parliament Conservative divisions over Europe, which had been somewhat below the radar during the opposition years (ibid), became more manifest in Parliament. In October 2011 81 Conservative MPs "defied a

very heavy three-line whip" (interview 5) to support a backbench motion calling for a referendum. And in June 2012 John Baron organised a letter signed by over 100 backbench MPs calling for a referendum. Partly as a result of this pressure Cameron made holding a referendum official Conservative Party policy with the Bloomberg speech in January 2013.

The literature on the 2010 Parliament acknowledged that the debate within the party had evolved from a debate about more or less integration to an existential debate about the UK's position in the EU. Smith (2012: p. 1277) alludes to this when she quotes an anonymous Conservative MP saying that "the dividing line in the Conservative Party is now in/out". Further, the results from Heppell's analysis (2013) show that the majority of the party was Eurosceptic, although there was a split between soft-Eurosceptics, who opposed further integration but did not want to withdraw from the EU, and hard-Eurosceptics who had a principled opposition to the EU (cf. Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008, 247–8). Heppell (2013) also found that 27% of the party were in the hard-Eurosceptic group, however this is possibly an underestimate as he wrote his paper before the Bloomberg speech, after which Conservative MPs began talking more openly about which way they may vote in a referendum.

Another significant piece of literature on the 2010 Parliament is Hanretty et al (2017) who sought to measure how responsive MPs were to constituency opinion on the EU issue. They found that increased constituency disapproval of the EU, which they estimated using British Electoral Study data, was associated with a higher probability of rebelling against the whip on the EU.

4.2d Summary of the historical background and literature

The existing literature, then, suggests that the PCP become progressively more Eurosceptic in the period from 1992-2015. The debate within the party evolved from a debate about more or less integration in the 1992 Parliament to a more fundamental debate about whether Britain should leave the EU in the 2010 Parliament. The literature has identified several factors, such as support for the death penalty and constituency disapproval of the EU, which may be associated with MP Euroscepticism. These findings and the results from chapter 3 have informed the empirical investigation of this chapter. The empirical work builds upon the existing literature by systematically analysing Euroscepticism across the time-period of 1992-2015.

4.3 Theory and hypotheses

Chapter 3 argued that MPs in the referendum were motivated by policy, office and vote-seeking incentives. These motivations are also used as the basis for much of the empirical work for this chapter. In addition to this, based on the findings of the literature detailed above, it is also tested whether MPs' education background was associated with their position on Europe.

4.3a Policy-seeking motivations

In chapter 3 it was found that socially conservative MPs were much more likely to endorse *leave* in the referendum than *remain*. It was argued that this reflected the importance of TAN values - particularly sovereignty and nationalism. It is predicted that this trend would also be found in the years before the referendum campaign.

Hypothesis 1: Social conservatism was associated with Euroscepticism

The other main ideological divide in the PCP during this period, besides Europe and social conservatism, concerned economic policy. This divide separated economically right-wing MPs, sometimes called "dries", who supported a much reduced role for the state in the economy, from the more moderate "wets" who were more hesitant about reducing the role of the state (Cowley and Garry1998: p. 479).

It is predicted that economically right-wing/dry MPs would be more Eurosceptic. The rationale is that the EU could potentially be seen as an anti-free market organisation as it creates additional business regulation and social protections. Thatcher summed up this attitude in the Bruges speech by saying that: "We have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain, only to see them re-imposed at a European level". The previous literature has found correlations between Euroscepticism and being economically right-wing (Heppell 2002: p. 314, Webb 1997, Garry 1995: p. 175). Outside of Parliament it also worth noting that many economically right-wing/libertarian organisations are Eurosceptic, for example the Taxpayers Alliance, the Freedom Association and the Institute for Economic Affairs.

Hypothesis 2: Economically dry MPs were more likely to be Eurosceptic

4.3b Office-seeking motivations

The system of incentives in Westminster gives a motivation for MPs who are office-seeking to adhere to the party line. It can be expected that hard-Eurosceptics were less likely to have served on the frontbenches as the party

leadership has, throughout the period in question, advocated a softer position on Europe than many Eurosceptics would have liked. Until 2013, holding a referendum on Britain's EU membership, which many on the backbenches supported, was not the official party policy. Even after the Bloomberg speech many were dissatisfied that the leadership was initially unwilling to support the introduction of referendum legislation in the 2010 Parliament (interview 9).

Hypothesis 3: Frontbench MPs were less Eurosceptic than backbench MPs

Moreover, it can also be expected that less experienced MPs, defined in terms of years served in Parliament, would be more likely to toe the party line on Europe and therefore display lower levels of Euroscepticism than other MPs. The rationale for this is that less experienced MPs may have a greater hope of being offered a frontbench role than longer serving MPs who have already resigned or been dismissed from a frontbench position or have been permanently on the backbenches. Support for this theory comes from Benedetto and Hix (2007: p. 769) who found that more experienced backbench MPs were more likely to rebel.

Hypothesis 4: Less experienced MPs had lower levels of Euroscepticism than more experienced MPs

4.3c Vote-seeking motivations

If MPs are vote-seeking the data would be expected to show that constituency Euroscepticism correlates with MPs adopting a more Eurosceptic stance. For

the 2010 Parliament it is possible to test this as the Hanretty et al (2017) data used in the previous chapter also applies to the 2010 Parliament.

Hypothesis 5: Constituency Euroscepticism was associated with Eurosceptic MPs

For the earlier Parliaments, Hanretty et al's data cannot be applied. For these Parliaments other indices were used to test the impact of constituency factors. Specifically, the effects of constituency levels of unemployment and retired people were tested for their effect on MP Euroscepticism. Empirical studies of both polling data and regional voting data suggest that higher levels of unemployment and pensioners were associated with a higher probability of voting *leave* in the 2016 referendum (Ashcroft 2016, Becker et al 2017). Further support for the notion that levels of unemployment may affect Euroscepticism comes from Ford and Godwin (2014), who argue that UKIP's base is primarily drawn from the working class and less educated "left behind" voters who have failed to gain the benefits of globalisation.

Hypothesis 6: MPs who represented seats with higher unemployment were more likely to be Eurosceptic

Hypothesis 7: MPs who represented seats with a higher proportion of retired people were more likely to be Eurosceptic

The electoral presence of UKIP in a constituency could also have affected MPs' positions on Europe. MPs may be more likely to adopt Eurosceptic stances if UKIP has an electorally significant presence in their constituency. For the purpose of this chapter the electoral significance of UKIP is defined as the size

of the UKIP vote relative to the Conservative majority. For example UKIP gaining 5% of the vote is of greater concern to an MP with a 1% majority than to an MP with a 40% majority. In seats where UKIP had a greater electoral significance it is expected that MPs would be more likely to have adopted Eurosceptic positions in order to restrict UKIP's vote share.

Hypothesis 8: MPs who had an electorally significant presence of UKIP in their constituency were more likely to have been more Eurosceptic

4.3d Educational differences between MPs

As well as the hypotheses generated from the three motivations discussed in chapter 3, it is also predicted that educational differences between MPs might be associated with varying levels of Euroscepticism. These hypotheses have been formulated largely as a result of the previous literature on Conservative MPs.

Firstly, concerning schooling, it is hypothesised that MPs who attended fee-paying secondary schools would have been less likely to be Eurosceptic. Berrington and Hague (1998) found that MPs who were educated at the leading public schools were more likely to support the Maastricht Treaty (i.e. less likely to be Eurosceptic), and Cowley and Garry (1998: p. 484) found that state educated MPs were more likely to support Major over the relatively more pro-European candidates of Heseltine and Hurd in the 1990 leadership contest.

Hypothesis 9: MPs educated at fee-paying secondary schools were less likely to be Eurosceptic

Secondly, there may also be differences between MPs in terms of their higher education background. Heppell et al (2017: p. 14) found that Oxbridge educated MPs were less likely to have supported *leave* than MPs who either did not attend university or attended a post-1992 university. On that basis it predicted that Oxbridge educated MPs were less likely to be Eurosceptic.

Hypothesis 10: Oxbridge educated MPs were less Eurosceptic than the rest of the PCP

4.4 Data and methods

For the empirical investigation five bespoke datasets of Conservative MPs, one for each Parliament between 1992 and 2010, were created. Table 4.1 below lists the N for each dataset.

Table 4. 1: Number of MPs in each dataset

Parliament	N
1992 (Government)	331
1997 (Opposition)	163
2001 (Opposition)	166
2005 (Opposition)	198
2010 (Coalition government)	304

Source: original thesis data
Some MPs, such as Deputy Speakers, are omitted because of a lack of voting data.

4.4a The dependent variable

The dependent variable measures each MP's position on European integration. As MPs have displayed differing levels of enthusiasm or scepticism towards the EU, an ordinal dependent variable is used which measures MPs' opinion on Europe on a 1-4 scale. The dependent variable adapts the 1-4 scale used by Heppell (2013):

Euro-enthusiasts (1): These are MPs who were enthusiastic about Britain's membership of the EU and had no objection to Britain pursuing greater integration. Prominent examples in the period considered in this chapter include Ken Clarke, Sir Edward Heath and Neil Carmichael.

Uncommitted (2): These are MPs who did not take a decisive stance on European integration. MPs who displayed no position on Europe except for toeing the party-line on whipped votes or upholding the party position in their speeches were included in this category. There are two main reasons why MPs may choose to not to adopt either a Eurosceptic or Euro-enthusiast stance. Firstly, it could be that some MPs were relatively uninterested in the issue of European integration. Secondly, uncommitted MPs may have chosen to take no position on Europe because they were conflicted on the issue, perhaps because their constituency or the party leadership had a different opinion on Europe from their own. As these MPs may have been uninterested or conflicted they might be open to changing their position to either a Eurosceptic or Euro-enthusiast if they receive new information or their political circumstances change. This is the reason "uncommitted" represents the category between Euro-enthusiasts and two sceptical categories.

Soft-Eurosceptics (3): Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008: p. 8) define soft-Euroscepticism as "where there is not principled opposed to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number of) policy areas lead to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU." On the basis of this definition MPs who were sceptical of many aspects of European integration but ultimately wanted Britain to remain part of the EU were

classified as soft-Eurosceptics. Soft-Eurosceptics tended to oppose further pooling of sovereignty particularly Britain joining the single currency (cf. Heppell 2013 p. 345). An illustrative example of a soft-Eurosceptic is Nick Herbert who was actively involved in opposing the single currency as Chief Executive of Business for Sterling but also established Conservatives for Reform in Britain which campaigned on the *remain* side in the referendum.

Hard-Eurosceptics (4): Hard Eurosceptics have a principled objection to European integration in its current form (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008: p. 7). For this thesis hard-Eurosceptics are identified as MPs who either supported a fundamentally different relationship with Europe and/or were willing to consider voting *leave* in the referendum. To clarify the latter, MPs who stated that they *could* endorse *leave* in a referendum were classified as a hard-Eurosceptic even if they subsequently endorsed *remain* after the renegotiation and the start of the referendum campaign. For instance Sajid Javid, who backed *remain* in the referendum, was counted as a hard-Eurosceptic for the 2010 Parliament as he was reported as stating in 2013 that Britain had "nothing to fear" from leaving the EU (Chorley and Cohen 2013).

MPs were classified into the four categories on the basis of a process which used up to four sources of data: parliamentary divisions, public statements, EDMs and group membership. Similar methods to classify MPs have been used by Norton (1990: p. 47-9) and Heppell (2002: p. 306-9; 2013: p. 344-6). Firstly, an MPs' parliamentary divisions were taken into account. If parliamentary divisions provided sufficient data to place that MP into one of the categories the other sources of data were not used. If the MP could not be

classified on the basis of divisions, the MPs' public statements were then taken into account, if they could not be classified on the basis of their public statements, EDMs were then taken into account, and if no data was found from EDMs, the MPs' membership of party groups was then taken into account. If after this process no definitive data could be found from these sources the MP was classified as uncommitted (position 2 on the scale).

This method was used to give each MP a 1-4 score on the Europe scale for the first Parliament they served in during the time period analysed in this chapter. For each subsequent Parliament it is presumed that the MP's position on Europe was the same unless there is evidence that they changed their position. For example in the 1997 Parliament Laurence Robertson was classified as a hard-Eurosceptic (position 4 on the scale) as his election literature stated that he would vote to hold a referendum on Britain's future role in Europe. As he did not say or do anything to indicate that he had changed his mind in the subsequent Parliaments he remained classified as a 4. An example of an MP's classification that did change is Ann Widdicombe, who was classified as a soft-Eurosceptic (3 on the scale) in the 1992, 1997 and 2001 Parliaments but in the 2005 Parliament was classified as hard-Eurosceptic (4) on the grounds of having voted for Bill Cash's Supremacy Amendment in 2008.

In terms of parliamentary divisions, only free-votes and votes cast against the party whip were considered as indicative of a particular stance. Voting with the party line was not taken to be indicative of a particular stance because this is taken as the default position of MPs. An MP who is uncommitted on Europe

would probably vote with the party whip in order to avoid the consequences of rebelling, which could in extremis result in withdrawal of the whip or the government losing a confidence vote. Such an MP would have voted against an EU referendum in the October 2011 vote before it was party policy, but would have voted for an EU referendum in the July 2013 vote after it became party policy.

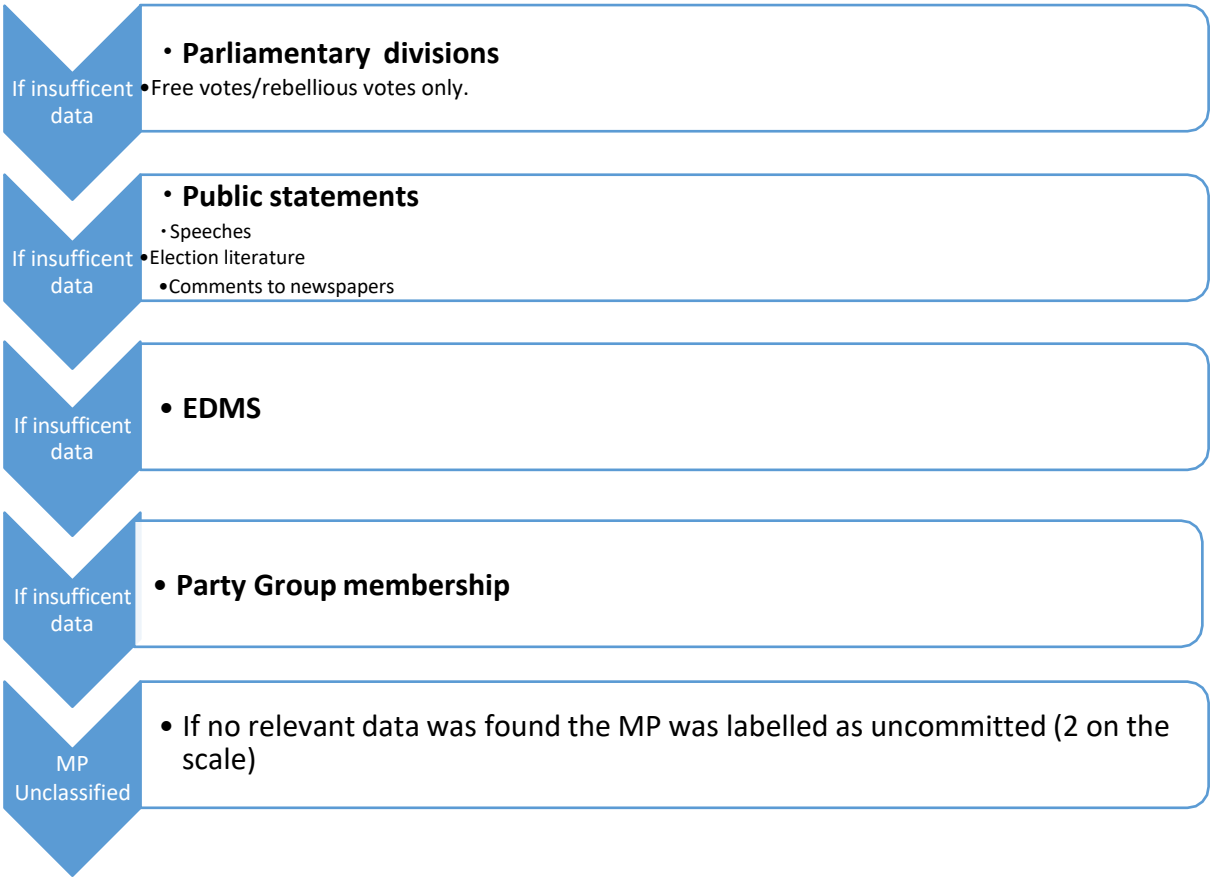
There were several key parliamentary divisions which were treated as evidence of a particular stance on Europe. For example in the 1992 Parliament MPs were classified as hard-Eurosceptic if they either voted against the Whip on the Maastricht Treaty or voted for Iain Duncan Smith's 1996 bill to enable Parliament to overturn the rulings of the European Court of Justice. Voting against the Whip on Maastricht was taken as indicative of hard-Euroscepticism because rebelling rather than just abstaining showed a high level of commitment to the Eurosceptic cause and also because the EU would have been a significantly different organisation without the Maastricht Treaty. In the 2010 Parliament MPs voting for a referendum before it became official party policy was used an indication of being a hard Eurosceptic.

Turning to the other criteria used to classify MPs, "public statements" refers to speeches made by the MPs, their election literature, and also "private" comments of MPs which were reported by the media. As with whipped votes, speeches consistent with the party line or made from the frontbench at the dispatch box were not counted as indicative of a particular stance on Europe since, as with whipped divisions, MPs may make these statements to follow the party line. Examples of EDMs which have been used as indicators of MPs'

positions include the "Future Development of the E.E.C" (174/1992-1993) and also the anti-EMU "Co-Operation in Europe" (1541/1997-1998). Party groups which were taken as indicative of a particular stance included Conservatives for Europe, on the Euro-enthusiast side of the debate, or on the Eurosceptic side of the debate the Fresh Start Group (which was taken to indicate soft-Euroscepticism).

This process of categorising MPs on Europe scale is depicted in figure 4.1 below

Figure 4. 1: The process by which MPs were classified on the Europe Scale



Using multiple sources of data (divisions, EDMS, group and comment) overcomes the shortcomings of using just one source. If there is no useful data available for an MP from a particular data source, such as EDMs, it is then possible to use the other sources to overcome this deficit. For example if there

was an MP who had never voted against the whip and rarely signed EDMs, it would still be possible to determine their ideology by looking at newspaper reports. This was particularly the case with frontbenchers. For example in the 2010 Parliament Oliver Letwin, who as a long-term frontbencher had not participated in Parliamentary activity available to backbenchers (such as signing EDMs), could still be classified as a hard-Eurosceptic as it was widely reported in the media that he was considering voting to leave the EU prior to the renegotiation (Simons 2014; Goodman 2014). Alternatively, if there was a backbench MP who was little talked about in the press and rarely voted against the whip it could still be possible to determine their ideology by looking at the EDMs they signed or their group membership.

4.4b Independent variables

Independent variables were included in the datasets to test the hypotheses discussed in 4.3. The hypotheses fall into four categories: policy, office and vote-seeking motivations and MPs' education. The variables in each category are explained below.

Policy-seeking independent variables

To test hypotheses 1 and 2 ideological variables were created to measure MPs' social conservatism and stance on economic issues. The social conservatism variable was created using a similar method to that used in chapter 3 for the analysis of the referendum campaign. For each Parliament a social conservatism scale was created which measured MPs' positions on social issues on a scale ranging from 0 to 6. Scores on scales were based on MPs'

positions on 3 issues: abortion, equal rights for homosexuals[9] and capital punishment. For each issue an MP was given 2 for a socially conservative position, 0 for a social liberally position, or 1 where no position could be determined. As with the Europe variable this is based on their voting records, public statements, signing of EDMs and group membership.

For the economic stance of MPs, data from Heppell's ideological classifications of the PCP (2002; also Heppell and Hill 2008, 2009, 2010) was used. Economically left-wing (or wet) MPs were coded as 1, economically right-wing (or dry) MPs were coded as 3 and MPs who were classed as "agnostic" were coded as 2. For the 2010 Parliament this variable was not included as the "wet" element of the party was minimal as the party had become almost completely united around the austerity agenda and the need to reduce the deficit

Office-seeking independent variables

Concerning hypothesis 3 a dummy variable was created denoting whether an MP was a member of either government or shadow frontbench team for each Parliament. An MP was given 1 on this variable if they had served as a (shadow) minister, whip or PPS at any point during the Parliament[10]. In addition to this there was also a variable measuring how many years each MP had served in Parliament, to test hypothesis 4.

[9] On equal rights for homosexuals the specific issue under consideration changed for each Parliament. In the 1992 and 1997 Parliaments this was the age of consent, for the 2001 Parliament it concerned civil partnerships, for the 2005 Parliament IVF treatment for same-sex couples, and same-sex marriage for the 2010 Parliament.

[10] The only exceptions to this were MPs who served on the frontbench before the 1997, 2001 or 2005 leadership elections but were not reappointed by the new leader. These MPs were classed as 0 in the dummy variable.

Vote-seeking independent variables

For the 2010 Parliament Hanretty et al's (2017) data was used to measure constituency Euroscepticism and thus test hypothesis 5. This is the same measure as used in the previous chapter. For the earlier Parliaments, for which Hanretty et al's data could not be applied, the constituency demographic variables unemployment rates (hypothesis 6) and proportion of retired people (hypothesis 7) in each constituency were created using data from NOMIS, the Office of National Statistics' labour force database.

The models for the 2001, 2005 and 2010 Parliaments also include an independent variable measuring the electoral impact of UKIP. This variable was generated by dividing the UKIP constituency vote share at the previous election by the Conservative majority at that election:

$$\text{UKIP impact [variable]} = \frac{UKIP\ vote\ share}{Conservative\ majority}$$

Higher values on this variable suggest greater vulnerability to UKIP with values greater than 1 indicating that UKIP's share of the vote was greater than the Conservative majority. This variable was not included for the 1997 Parliament as UKIP ran only 194 candidates and the main Eurosceptic party at the time was the Referendum Party which did not stand against some Conservatives who shared their Euroscepticism (McAlister and Studlar 2000: p. 361).

MPs' education independent variables

To test for the effect of the educational background of MPs, dummy variables were included to measure whether an MP attended a fee-paying secondary school and whether they were Oxbridge educated.

4.4c The statistical model

As the dependent variable, Euroscepticism, is ordinal, ordered logistic regression analysis was used to test for statistical associations in each Parliament. The ordered logistic regression is useful as it gives the predicted probability of MPs being in each category for each Parliament.

For each Parliament a model is constructed, which considers the effect of variables designed to test for policy, office and vote-seeking motivations, as well as the variables relating to MPs' education. These models are presented in table 4.4 below.

4.5 Trends in Euroscepticism 1992-2015

This section considers how the ideological composition of the PCP in terms of Europe changed in the period from 1992 to 2015. Table 4.2 and figure 4.2 show the change in the proportion of MPs in each category across the Parliaments covered in this chapter. The raw numbers of MPs in each category are available in Appendix A (Table 4A). The placement of MPs into these categories is the basis for the dependent variable of the statistical analysis presented in the next section 4.6.

Table 4. 2: Conservative MPs' positions on Europe 1992-2010

Classification	**Parliaments**				
	1992 **%**	*1997* **%**	*2001* **%**	*2005* **%**	*2010* %
Euro-Enthusiast	30	18	19	12	9
Uncommitted	14	8	6	9	8
Soft-Eurosceptic	32	52	57	52	27
Hard-Eurosceptic	25	21	19	28	55

Source: Original thesis data

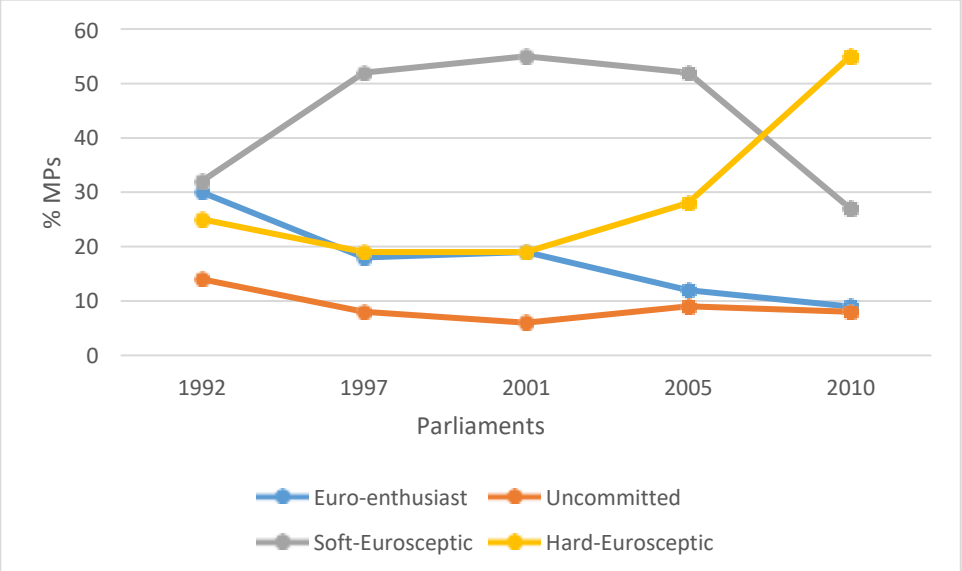
The results presented in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2 show that the party has become more Eurosceptic since 1992. In the 1992 Parliament a substantial minority of MPs, nearly a third of the party, were classified as Euro-enthusiast. This was the last Parliament for which the Euro-enthusiasts had a substantial presence in the party. Even at this time the majority (56%) of the party was Eurosceptic, including a relatively small group of 82 MPs who were classified as hard-Eurosceptics. As only 25% of the party were hard-Eurosceptics this suggests that the majority of the party was not opposed to the principle of EU membership and that the debate within the party concerned the extent of integration with the EU.

After the general election defeat in 1997 the party became much more Eurosceptic in opposition. The Euro-enthusiasts as a proportion of the party declined from 30% of the PCP in 1992 to 12% in 2005. The proportion of Eurosceptics in the party rose to 71% after the 1997 general election and progressively increased with each subsequent election. This is line in with

previous empirical studies (Heppell and Hill 2008: p. 3, Baker et al 1999: p. 179).

The results for the 2010 Parliament suggest that the debate on Europe changed significantly when the Conservatives returned to power. The Euro-enthusiasts declined to only 9% of the party with 82% of the party being classified as Eurosceptics. With the vast majority of the party being Eurosceptic, unlike the 1992 Parliament, there was now clearly widespread agreement in the party that greater integration with the Europe was undesirable. Instead the debate concerned whether Britain should leave the EU. 55% of the party was classified as hard-Eurosceptic, suggesting that a majority of the party was at least open to the possibility of supporting the UK leaving the EU.

Figure 4. 2: Percentage of MPs adopting each position 1992-2015



Source: thesis original data

This figure of 55% may seem to be too high as it is a much higher figure than Heppell's (2013, p. 347) finding of 27% and is also higher than the eventual

41% who backed *leave* in the referendum (see chapter 3). However, the criteria for being placed as a hard-Eurosceptic was to have voted for a referendum before it was party policy or to be publicly *considering* endorsing leave in the event of a possible referendum. Hence frontbench MPs who stated that they might vote to leave the EU were included as hard Eurosceptics. For instance, Oliver Letwin and Sajid Javid, who were both *remainers* in the referendum campaign, were counted as hard-Eurosceptics as they both stated during the 2010 Parliament, that they might vote *leave* in a referendum. As the referendum campaign started many frontbenchers who had previously contemplated backing *leave* choose to side with the Prime Minister in endorsing *remain*. Notably, some previous Euro-rebels also joined the *remain* side in the referendum such as Sir Roger Gale, Mark Pritchard and Dr Sarah Wollaston (the only Conservative MP to change endorsement during the referendum campaign). The large number of hard-Eurosceptics shows, then, that the majority of the Conservative Party in the 2010 Parliament was willing to at least consider supporting withdrawal from the EU.

The interviews conducted with MPs also suggest that the figure of 55% of the party being hard-Eurosceptic is not unreasonable. Several MPs commented that they believed that the majority of Conservative MPs would have endorsed *leave* had there been no pressure from the leadership (interviews 4, 7, 9 & 12). These MPs believed that *remain* was able to get the endorsement of the majority of Conservative MPs only because of their office-seeking ambitions and personal loyalty to Cameron. One MP even suggested that some of his

colleagues may have voted *leave* in the ballot box after publicly endorsing *remain* (interview 10).

Table 4.3 below displays a cross-tabulation of which side of the referendum debate MPs endorsed, according to their classification on the Europe scale in the 2010 Parliament. The results, as expected, show that the vast majority of MPs in the first three categories (Euro-enthusiast, uncommitted and soft-Eurosceptic) endorsed *remain* whilst the majority of hard-Eurosceptics supported *leave*. However, more than a third of hard-Eurosceptics backed *remain*. The majority of these MPs were frontbenchers who as discussed above considered voting *leave* but ultimately opted to back *remain*.

Table 4. 3: Cross-tabulation of MPs' referendum position by Europe scale classification in the 2010 Parliament

		2010 Parliament Europe-Scale Classification			
Referendum Position (2015 Parliament)		Euro-enthusiasts	Unclassified	Soft-Eurosceptic	Hard-Eurosceptic
	Leave	0	1 (5%)	15 (22%)	91 (63%)
	Remain	18 (100%)	19 (95%)	52 (78%)	53 (37%)

Source: Thesis original data
This table includes all Tory MPs who served in both the 2010 and 2015 Parliaments.

Overall, the party became progressively more Eurosceptic during the period from 1992-2015. The two key turning points were the 1997 election defeat after which the Euro-enthusiasts shrank as a proportion of the party, and the return to government in 2010. The results reported here support the findings of the literature (see 4.2) that the debate within the Parliamentary party

evolved from a debate over the extent of integration to a more fundamental debate over Britain's membership of the EU.

4.6 Statistical analysis of Euroscepticism

Having considered the positional trends on Europe the statistical analyses will now seek to assess the motivations of MPs that may have given rise to these trends. The results of the statistical analyses are displayed in Table 4.4 below. The table displays the average marginal effects of a 1 unit change in the independent variable on the probability of an MP being a hard-Eurosceptic. For example it is predicted that in the 2010 Parliament an increase of 1 on the social conservatism scale increases the probability of an MP being a hard-Eurosceptic by 0.047 and that being on the frontbench reduces the probability by 0.305. The ordered logistic coefficients are presented in Appendix A (Table 4B).

Below the results will be analysed in terms of policy, office and vote-seeking, and also the effect of educational differences between MPs.

Table 4. 4 Marginal effects on the probability of being a hard-Eurosceptic (Ordered logit models)

	Parliament				
	1992	**1997**	**2001**	**2005**	**2010**
Social Conservatism	0.034***	0.044***	0.042***	0.06***	0.047***
	(0.1)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Economic Issues	0.181***	0.219***	0.046*	0.23***	
	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	
Frontbench	-0.096***	-0.097**	-0.011	-0.22***	-0.305***
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Years in Parliament	-0.003	0.001	-0.005*	<0.01	-0.012***
	(<0.01)	(<0.01)	(<0.01)	(<0.01)	(<0.01)
Constituency Euroscepticism					0.006*
					(<0.01)
UKIP impact			0.011	0.02	0.004
			(0.04)	(0.03)	(<0.01)
Unemployment %	0.024	0.019	<0.001	0.02**	
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.01)	
Retired %	0.001	-0.002	0.003	<0.001	
	(<0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	
Private school	0.054	0.065	-0.007	0.090*	-0.06
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Oxbridge educated	0.024	0.016	0.025	0.09*	0.015
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)
N	309	160	147	187	280
Pseudo R2	0.15	0.19	0.06	0.17	0.11
Count R2	0.51	0.61	0.58	0.65	0.56
Adjusted Count R2	0.29	0.18	-0.02	0.25	0.02

Source: original thesis data
**** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 * p> 0.1 Robust standard errors in parentheses*

4.6a Policy-seeking

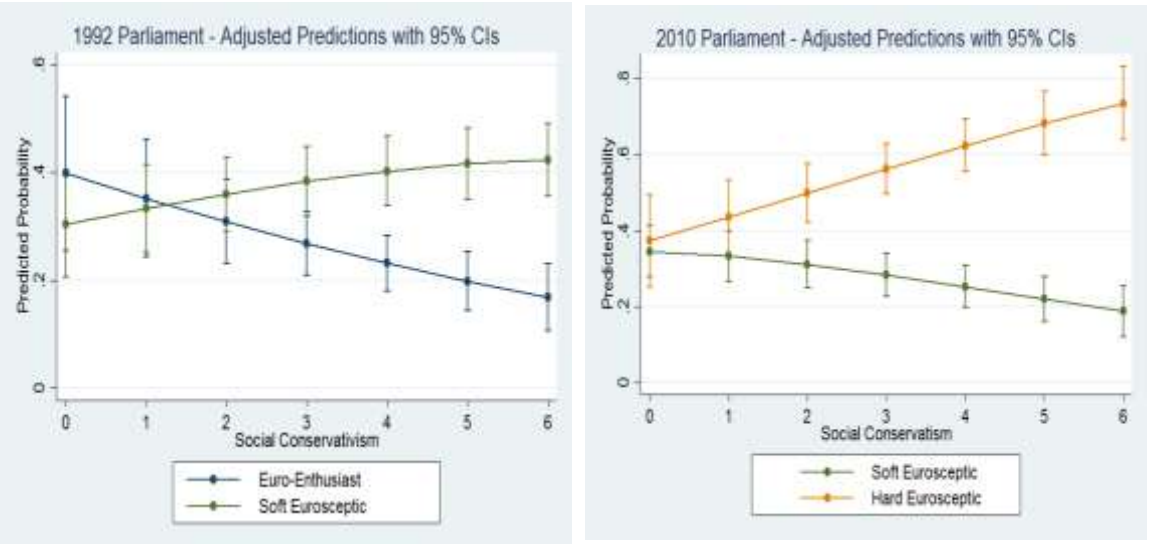
The results for every Parliament show that ideology, both in terms of economic and social issues, was a very strong predictor of Euroscepticism. Consistently the data showed that dry and socially conservative MPs were more likely to be Eurosceptic. These relationships were both statistically significant and substantively important. In the 1992 Parliament for example the marginal probability of an economically left-wing/wet MP being a Euro-enthusiast was 58% compared to only 11% for an economically right-wing/dry MP. This is consistent with hypothesis 2 that economically right-wing MPs would be more likely to be Eurosceptic.

The results were also consistent with hypothesis 1, that socially conservative MPs would be more likely to be Eurosceptic. For instance in the 2001 Parliament the most socially conservative MPs had a predicted probability of being a hard-Eurosceptic of 29%, nearly 6 times higher than the most socially liberal MP (5%) when holding all other variables at their means. Figure 4.3 shows the relationship between social conservatism and Euroscepticism in the two periods of Conservative government covered in this chapter. The left graph shows the 1992 Parliament. As the debate at that time concerned more or less integration, as discussed above, this graph shows the probabilities of an MP being either a Euro-enthusiast or a soft-Eurosceptic at different levels of social conservatism. The figure predicts that social conservatives were much more likely to be Eurosceptics. The right graph shows the 2010 Parliament. As the nature of the debate in the party had changed by this time, this graphs shows the probabilities of an MP being either a soft or hard-Eurosceptic for differing

levels of social conservatism. This plot shows that MPs at the maximum score for social conservatism were much more likely to be hard-Eurosceptic whilst at the liberal end of the scale there was no statistical difference between the probabilities.

In summary the results provide strong evidence to support hypotheses 1 and 2. This suggests that Euroscepticism was motivated both by a TAN ideology and an opposition to the EU regulations and social policy.

Figure 4. 3: The predicted probabilities of MPs' classifications in the 1992 and 2010 Parliaments by social conservatism



Source: Original thesis data
This is based on the models in Table 4.4 holding all other variables at their means. Social Conservatism measured on a 1-6 scale see 4.4b.

4.6b Office-seeking

The results show that for almost every Parliament backbench MPs have been statistically more Eurosceptic than the frontbench. The only exception to this relationship was the 2001 Parliament. There are two possible reasons for this exception. Firstly, at this time the hard-Eurosceptic faction of the party was

marginal and the party was able to unite around a soft-Eurosceptic message. Secondly, Iain Duncan Smith was less hesitant about appointing hard-Eurosceptics, for instance he appointed Bill Cash as his Shadow Attorney General.

In the 2005 Parliament a sharp distinction between the front and backbench re-emerged within the party. 45% of backbenchers were classified as hard-Eurosceptics in comparison to just 14% of frontbenchers. Interestingly, a hard-Eurosceptic interviewed for this thesis (interview 10) said that David Cameron was relaxed about backbenchers campaigning to leave the EU during the 2005 Parliament but made it clear that such MPs would not be getting promoted. It is possible that the leadership permitted stronger Eurosceptic expression on the backbenches whilst seeking to maintain unity for payroll MPs. One consequence of this in terms of office-seeking is that MPs who wanted promotion had an incentive not to advocate hard-Euroscepticism.

The schism between the front and backbenches on Europe became even more pronounced after the 2010 election. The vast majority (79%) of backbench MPs were hard-Eurosceptics compared to only a minority (40%) of frontbench MPs. As chapter 2 showed, this distinction between the front and backbench continued into the referendum campaign, with the majority of backbenchers supporting *leave* compared to only a small minority of the government payroll.

The consistent finding that the backbenches were more Eurosceptic than the frontbench supports hypothesis 3. This suggests that office-seeking can

potentially explain some variation in positions on Europe as the office-minded frontbench were more likely to side with the leadership's position.

The results are not however consistent with hypothesis 4, which predicted that less experienced MPs would be less Eurosceptic. The rationale for hypothesis 4 was that less experienced MPs would conform to the official position on Europe as they would have a stronger expectation of being offered a frontbench role than their more experienced colleagues. However, the data shows that during the two periods of Conservative government less experienced MPs were *more* likely to be Eurosceptic. Ironically, the periods of government are times in which one would expect new backbench MPs to be most loyal as the leadership was able to offer ministerial posts as opposed to just opposition spokesperson positions.

In the 1992 Parliament less experienced MPs were more likely to be Eurosceptic at the bivariate level but not when other variables were controlled in the multivariate models. In 2010 nearly two thirds of the new intake of MPs were hard-Eurosceptics compared to only a minority (45%) of the rest of the party. This difference was statistically significant even when all the other independent variables were controlled for. A plausible explanation for why new Conservative MPs were highly Eurosceptic could be that the Conservative Party talent pool, i.e. the pool of potential Conservative candidates, was becoming increasingly Eurosceptic. This is discussed further in section 7.6 of the thesis.

In sum, there has been a strong divide between the front and backbenches on European integration. This suggests that office-seeking motivations may have affected positions on Europe. However, the data did not validate hypothesis 4 as less experienced MPs were found to be more, not less, likely to be Eurosceptic.

4.6c Vote-seeking

In terms of whether constituency Euroscepticism (hypothesis 5) or constituency demographics (hypotheses 6 and 7) were associated with MP Euroscepticism, the results were mixed. The first three Parliaments provide almost no evidence that MPs were motivated by these constituency factors.

By contrast, for the 2005 Parliament there was some evidence of constituency factors being associated with MP Euroscepticism as there was a statistically significant and positive link between unemployment and the Euroscepticism of MPs (hypothesis 6). This may possibly support the idea that MPs from "left-behind" constituencies (cf. Ford and Godwin 2014) were taking a stronger stance on Europe in order to gain the votes of Eurosceptic constituents. However, as discussed in 3.5c, this relationship may potentially be the result of MPs in these areas sharing their constituents' view that their area had been detrimentally affected by the EU.

For the 2010 Parliament there was a link between constituency Euroscepticism (hypothesis 5) and the dependent variable, statistically significant at the 90% level. This is a similar finding to Hanretty et al (2017: p. 18-22) although the dependent variable used here is slightly different. The

model suggests that a standard deviation increase in constituency Euroscepticism (7.65%) was associated with a 0.04 higher probability of an MP being a hard-Eurosceptic. However, the significance of the constituency Euroscepticism variable was weaker than in the referendum campaign analysed in chapter 3. There are two possible reasons for this. Firstly, from an accountability perspective the referendum campaign is fairly clean-cut in that MPs were either *leave* or *remain* rather than "possibly *leave* depending on the results of a hypothetical future renegotiation". This means that MPs would have had more of a rational expectation that they would be held to account on their referendum stance. Secondly, as Figure 4.4 below shows, during the referendum campaign public interest in the EU rose significantly. By contrast, during the 2010 Parliament the percentage of the public viewing the EU as one of the most important issues was for much of the time in single figures including the period leading up to the 2015 general election.

Figure 4. 4: Percentage of people viewing European Integration as one of the most important issues

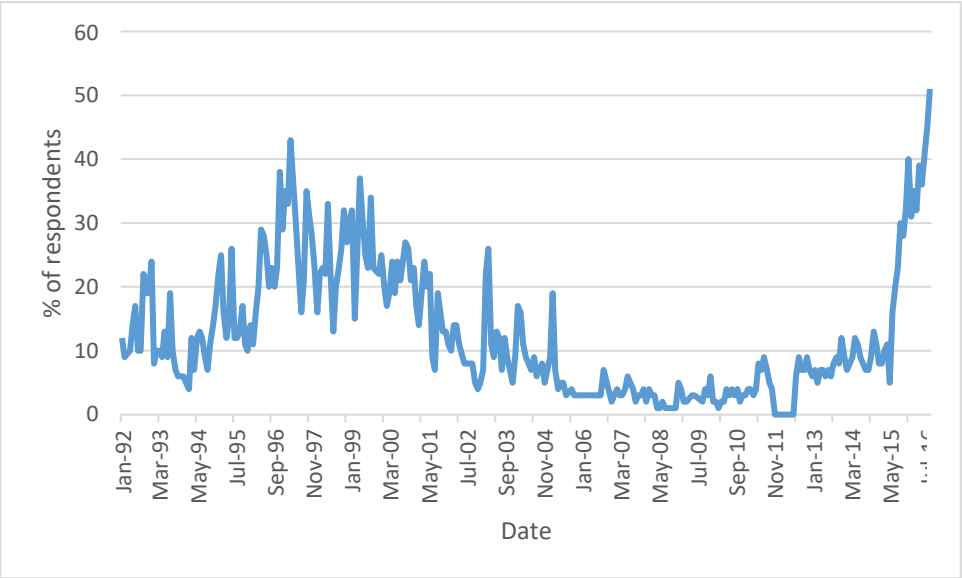


Figure is based on data from IPSOS Mori most important issue polling. Available at: https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/issues-index-2007-onwards

Further, the results provide only limited evidence to validate hypothesis 8, that the electoral threat of UKIP would be associated with MPs taking a stronger stance on Europe. For the 2001 and 2005 Parliaments there was no statistical relationship between UKIP impact and MP Euroscepticism. In the 2010 Parliament there was a strong and statistically significant relationship at the bivariate level between MP Euroscepticism and UKIP impact, however this relationship was insignificant when years served in Parliament had been controlled for. The reason for this is that the result at the bivariate level was being driven by the fact that the 2010 intake of MPs was highly Eurosceptic and also tended to have more marginal seats, thus being more vulnerable to UKIP. As the UKIP impact variable was not significant in the multivariate model, presented in table 4.4 above, there is little evidence that the presence of UKIP itself was affecting MPs' positions on Europe.

Overall, the data provides some evidence for the importance of constituency factors and vote-seeking (specifically hypotheses 6 & 5) in the 2005 and 2010 Parliaments. However, the results show little support for the theory that the electoral threat of UKIP was driving MPs positions on Europe. Furthermore, the results also suggest that vote-seeking was generally of limited importance compared to either ideology or office-status (i.e. back or frontbench).

On this basis it could argued that the internal politics of the Conservative Party had more of an effect on MPs' positions than the wider electorate. The low saliency of the EU issue to the public displayed in Figure 4.4 above could partially account for this. As MPs had little reason to believe the electorate would feel strongly enough to punish or reward them for their positions on Europe, they would feel they have more freedom to either voice their own opinions or follow the leadership line on the issue.

4.6d MPs' education background

The results show little support for hypotheses 9 and 10 concerning MPs' education. At the bivariate level the data shows that Oxbridge educated MPs were less Eurosceptic during the two periods of Conservative government. However, these results are not significant in the multivariate models because Oxbridge educated Conservatives tended to be more socially liberal and wet on economic issues. This suggests that any differences arising from MPs' educational background could be explained by underlying ideological differences between MPs. Nevertheless, an interesting finding here is that Oxbridge educated Conservatives tended to be ideologically moderate on

economics, social issues and Europe whilst the Tory right were more likely not to have had an Oxbridge education.

4.7 Conclusions

The PCP gradually became more Eurosceptic over the period of the five Parliaments analysed in this chapter. In the 1992 Parliament the party had a substantial minority of MPs who supported further integration with Europe. After the 1997 election defeat this Euro-enthusiast section of the party declined with Eurosceptics comprising the vast majority of the party. By the 2010 Parliament the majority of MPs were hard-Eurosceptics.

The results of the statistical analysis showed that the strongest predictors of MPs' position on Europe throughout this period were ideology and office status. In terms of ideology, Euroscepticism was associated with being economically right-wing and socially conservative. These associations were both highly statistically significant and substantively important. The strength of economic policy variables indicates that much Conservative Euroscepticism was motivated by a libertarian/Thatcherite opposition to EU regulations and social policy. The relationship between social conservatism and Euroscepticism suggests that Conservative Euroscepticism is also motivated by a TAN ideology particularly a commitment to British national autonomy and a reluctance to pool sovereignty to Brussels. The importance of these ideological relationships suggests that MPs' personal opinions and policy preferences were highly important in predicting stances on Europe.

Another highly significant predictor of MPs' positions was office status. In almost every Parliament the frontbench has been more pro-European than the backbenches. This is line with the expectations that the more office inclined frontbenchers would be more willing to abide by the party line on Europe than the backbenchers who were less concerned with gaining office.

An unexpected result concerning office-seeking expectations, however, was that during the two periods of Conservative government less experienced MPs were actually more likely to be Eurosceptic. The prediction was that more recently elected MPs would have a stronger expectation of being offered promotion and therefore would be more willing to toe the party line on Europe. The unexpected result may have been caused by the talent pool of Conservative candidates becoming more Eurosceptic; this is investigated in chapter 7. This result notwithstanding, the importance of the division between the front and backbench suggests that office-seeking inclinations were strong predictors of MPs' positions on Europe.

There was much less evidence that vote-seeking factors were associated with MPs' positions on Europe. Before the 2005 Parliament there was little evidence that variation in constituency factors were associated with MPs' positions on Europe. In the 2005 Parliament there was evidence of a link between unemployment rates and MP Euroscepticism and in the 2010 Parliament there was evidence of an association between constituency Euroscepticism and the stance of the MP. The latter relationship was, however, less robust than in the analysis of the referendum campaign in

chapter 3. The data provided only limited evidence that the electoral presence of UKIP affected MPs' positions on Europe.

As the ideological and office-status variables had the strongest and most significant associations with Euroscepticism, this suggests that the internal politics of the party, in terms of the ideologies of MPs and their prospects of promotion, were the most important factors in predicting MPs' positions. This conclusion is similar to findings in the previous chapter on the referendum campaign. The difference between this period and referendum campaign is that constituency and electoral pressures were less important than in the referendum campaign, particularly before 2010. The polling data has shown that during this period (1992-2015) Europe was rarely considered one of the most important issues. Yet at the same time Europe was a crucial factor in the internal politics of the party and in leadership contests. This suggests the increasing Euroscepticism within the party was being driven by the Tory-right on the backbenches not by a public demand or electoral pressures from outside Parliament.

This chapter and chapter 3 have considered how MPs' positions on Europe have been affected by competing incentives. Chapter 5 seeks to add to the understanding of MPs' motivations on Europe by analysing the speech patterns of MPs in the referendum campaign.

Chapter 5 Debating Brexit: Analysis of Conservative MPs' speeches in the 2016 Brexit referendum campaign

Abstract

This chapter analyses the speeches and public statements of MPs in the months before the 2016 Brexit referendum. Statistical techniques, primarily the structural topic model (STM), are used to establish whether leave and remain supporting MPs discussed different topics in their speeches. The analysis showed multiple statistical differences between the two groups of MPs. It is argued that the speeches of MPs are affected by MPs' ideology and their electoral interests. Most significantly for this thesis it is argued that the results reinforce the findings from the earlier chapters concerning the socially conservative nature of Conservative Euroscepticism. This chapter also provides qualified support for the idea that Euroscepticism is motivated by an economically right-wing ideology.

5.1 Introduction

Statistical analysis of text and speech is a well-established method in political science for studying the ideology of political parties and legislators (e.g. Klingemann et al 2006, Diermeier et al 2012). This chapter uses such methods to analyse the speeches and public statements of MPs prior to the 2016 Brexit referendum. The Brexit debates represent an interesting area to study as there was a highly visible and clear divide between *leave* and *remain* MPs and Parliament was discussing an issue which would be determined by plebiscite rather than a Parliamentary vote. As the thesis focuses on the Conservative

Party this chapter primarily considers the results for Conservative MPs, however the speeches of non-Conservative MPs are also taken into account. There is precedent for this type of study as a similar analysis was undertaken by Tzelgov (2014) who analysed the speeches of Labour and Conservative MPs in relation to the 1992 Parliament and the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. The approach follows in this chapter a similar methodology to Tzelgov's techniques. Two principal sources of data were used - speeches made in Parliamentary debates about European integration between the 2015 general election and the Brexit referendum, and the public statements made by MPs when they declared their position on the EU referendum.

The results from the analysis find numerous statistical differences in the speech content of *leave* and *remain* MPs. It is argued that these results indicate that MPs' speeches were motivated by their own ideology and the desire to gain votes. The most interesting results for this thesis are the results relating to ideology as the data shows that *leave* MPs were highly likely to discuss socially conservative themes such as sovereignty and immigration. This provides support to the findings of the previous chapters which show that Euroscepticism is associated with social conservatism. To a lesser extent, the data also substantiates the findings from chapter 4 that Eurosceptics were more likely to be economically right-wing as *leave* MPs were more likely to discuss issues such as the cost of EU membership and the Eurozone. In terms of vote-seeking, it is found that both sides were more likely to mention the issues on which their campaigns had an electoral advantage and also advocate

changes in the procedural rules of the referendum which would benefit their campaigns.

The chapter is structured as follows: 5.2 outlines the theory and hypotheses, 5.3 details the data used, 5.4 explains and justifies the methodology, 5.5 presents the results which are then discussed in 5.6. 5.7 is the conclusion to the chapter.

5.2 Theory and hypotheses

The theory for this chapter derived from the literature concerning the Conservative Party and the literature on legislative behaviour. Adapting the theory of Müller and Strøm (1999) discussed in the previous chapters it is hypothesised that MPs' speeches will be motivated by their own ideology and the desire to achieve their electoral objectives.

5.2a Ideology

With government policy covering a wide range of areas such as defence, education and pensions, MPs do not have either the time or resources to discuss all issues equally, so they have to choose to prioritise certain issues. One of the main reasons why MPs choose to speak more about some issues than others arises from their own personal interests. For example Harriett Harman and Jess Philips tend to discuss gender equality, and some Conservative backbenchers in the words of David Cameron, "bang on about Europe" because they are most interested in those issues. The same principle could be applied to debates on the EU as European integration is a multifaceted issue affecting many policy areas. Thus politicians may have chosen to focus on certain aspects

of the EU referendum debate in accordance with their own interests. As the previous chapters have demonstrated that *leave* and *remain* had divergent ideological views, it could that these MPs had different political priorities and chose to discuss different issues.

One such ideological difference highlighted in previous chapters is that Eurosceptic MPs tend to be more socially conservative. This is line with other research which has shown that socially conservative/authoritarian attitudes were associated with voting *leave* (see section 3.3a). As *leave* MPs are more likely to be socially conservative it is predicted that they will have been more likely to discuss socially conservative concerns, principally sovereignty and immigration.

Hypothesis 1: Leave supporting MPs were more likely to discuss sovereignty than remain MPs

Hypothesis 2: Leave supporting MPs were more likely to discuss immigration

The evidence from chapter 4 also suggests that Eurosceptic MPs tended to be more economically right-wing. Opposition to EU spending and social policies have historically been an aspect of Conservative Euroscepticism (Baker et al 1993, Bale 2010). It can be hypothesised therefore that *leave* MPs might seek to discuss the cost of the EU to the UK in terms of both the UK's financial contribution and the costs of EU regulation. Concern about the cost of the EU could also have prompted *leave* MPs to discuss the Eurozone and monetary policies. There was concern amongst Eurosceptic MPs that developments in the Eurozone could require the UK to contribute towards future bailouts

(interviews 7 and 9) and that future financial regulation of the Eurozone could threaten the position of the City of London as the Eurozone offshore financial centre (Thompson 2017).

Hypothesis 3: Leave MPs were more likely to discuss the cost of the EU

Hypothesis 4: Leave MPs were more likely to discuss the Eurozone

On the remain side of the debate, by contrast, these MPs may choose to discuss more socially liberal and left-wing topics. Socially liberal concerns could include issues such as human rights, asylum policy or a more general focus on cosmopolitanism. In terms of the left-wing issues the *remainers* may seek to highlight the effect of EU funded projects in the UK and the enhanced social protection for workers in the EU.

Hypothesis 5: Remain MPs were more likely to discuss socially liberal issues

Hypothesis 6: Remain MPs were more likely to discuss left-wing issues

5.2b Electoral interests

The literature on Parliamentary speeches suggests that MPs use their speeches for electoral purposes. Eggers and Spirling (2014) found that MPs in the 19th and early 20th century who had faced opposition in their elections delivered more speeches. In a more contemporary study Kellerman (2016) argued that MPs from marginal seats asked more Parliamentary questions, to signal effort to their constituents. There is also evidence that MPs have adjusted the content of their speeches to appeal to constituents. Spirling (2016) argued that after the

Great Reform Act of 1867 Cabinet Ministers simplified the language they used in their speeches so that they could appeal to the newly enfranchised poorer and less educated electorate.

The debates on the referendum are unique in that politicians are likely to be appealing to voters for two purposes: to gain votes for their side in the referendum debate, and for their own personal re-election campaigns. This chapter will focus primarily on vote-seeking in the context of gaining votes in the referendum campaign. Chapter 3 considered whether MPs may have been trying to seek votes in the general election.

There are several reasons why for many MPs a favourable referendum outcome was actually a more important objective than the next general election. Firstly, the EU referendum was more immediate, as the next general election was not due to occur until 2020. Secondly, some MPs considered Europe to be the most important political issue, including several of the MPs interviewed for this thesis, on both sides of the referendum debate (interviews 3, 8, 9 and 12). Thirdly, as the Brexit issue was determined by plebiscite rather than a Parliamentary vote, MPs may have been less fearful that voters would hold them accountable for their decisions. They might have reasoned that in a standard Parliamentary vote an MP's vote is 1 out of 650 MPs whereas in a referendum it is 1 out of an electorate of around 35 million. This allowed MPs to make statements such as the referendum will be decided by "the people not the politicians".

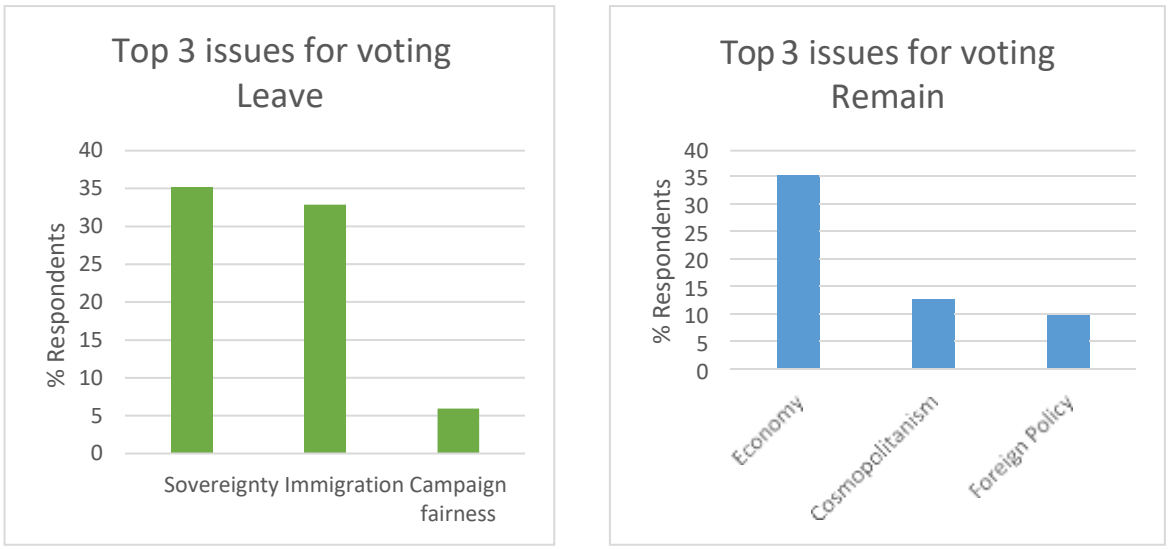
If MPs were seeking votes for their referendum campaign it would be expected that they would discuss the issues which the campaigns focused on and the issues which were most important to voters. On the *leave* side of the debate the campaigns focused primarily on sovereignty and immigration. *Vote Leave* focused more on sovereignty whilst the more UKIP-orientated *Leave.EU* focused more on immigration. The left-panel of Figure 5.1 below, which is based on the British Election Study (BES), shows that immigration and sovereignty were the most important issues for *leave* voters. The prediction that *leave* MPs would mention these topics more was stated in hypothesis 1 and 2 above as these issues aligned with the social conservatism of Conservative Eurosceptic MPs. For *leave* MPs discussing these issues could indicate either that they cared about these issues or that they were vote-seeking.

On the *remain* side, the official campaign, *Britain Stronger in Europe* primarily focused on the economy and jobs. Polling data also suggests that the economy was the most important issue for *remain* voters. Therefore *remain* MPs could be expected to stress the importance of the economy. In addition to its primary focus on the economy, the *remain* campaign also dedicated some focus to security, as its campaign slogan was "Stronger, Safer and Better-Off in". On this basis it is predicted that *remain* MPs would be more likely to discuss security, including both crime fighting measures and national defence. Figure 5.1 suggests that security issues seem to have had less effect on the public during the referendum campaign, although the "foreign policy" category mentioned by just under 10% of *remain* voters may be partly in response to national security concerns.

Hypothesis 7: Remain supporting MPs were more likely to discuss the economy

Hypothesis 8: Remain MPs were more likely to discuss national security

Figure 5. 1: Most important issues for voting in the EU referendum for voters



Source: The 2016 EU Referendum campaign wave of the 2014-2018 British Election Study Internet Panel. Version 1.6. Evans et al (2016)
Survey undertaken before referendum, responses cited here are a combination of those who had already voted by post and those who planned to vote.

In addition to the substantive issues, the desire of MPs to win the referendum may be expected to affect their likelihood to talk about procedural rules which would benefit their campaigns. It is expected that MPs would be more likely to argue in favour of rules from which their campaign stood to benefit. For instance it is predicted that *leave* MPs would be more likely to discuss the government's involvement in the campaign, as the government was officially supportive of *remain*. *Leave* MPs could be predicted to be more likely to discuss purdah, which effectively silenced the government machine during the campaign, and to protest against the government's controversial pro-*remain* leaflet campaign of April 2016. The *remain* side, on the other hand, stood to

benefit by extending the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds as younger people were generally more pro-EU.

Hypothesis 9: Leave supporting MPs were more likely to discuss purdah and the government's leaflet campaign

Hypothesis 10: Remain supporting MPs were more likely to argue for the franchise to be extended to 16 and 17 year olds

5.3 Data

This chapter uses two principal sources of data: Parliamentary speeches made between the 2015 general election and the referendum, and public statements which MPs made when they announced their referendum endorsements.

The Parliamentary speeches consist of both speeches made in debates and oral Ministerial questions on the subject of European integration[11]. Debates were chosen for inclusion if the title of the debate or set of questions referred to either the EU directly or to a policy area directly related to the EU[12]. In total, speeches from 132 debates were included in the corpus.

After records of the speeches were collected there were several stages of pre-processing such as removing words of low frequency, removing speeches that were purely procedural and stemming the words in the dataset. Once the pre-processing was complete the corpus consisted of 5641 speeches with a vocabulary of 8127 unique word-stems. Each speech was then tagged to denote

[11] This includes both House of Commons chamber and Westminster Hall debates.
[12] No records of Prime Minister Questions were included as almost all questions to the Prime Minister are simply listed as concerning "Engagements", as result of which it is difficult to obtain only the questions relating to the EU.

which MP was speaking, their party affiliation, which side of the referendum debate they endorsed and whether they were a member of government[13].

The public statements consisted of statements which many MPs released when they made their public declaration about which referendum position they were endorsing. Many MPs released a statement in late February just after the renegotiations had concluded. These statements varied in form. Many MPs made a statement on their own personal website or blog, others wrote newspaper columns outlining their positions and occasionally Tweets from MPs were used. As not every MP issued a statement the N was 241. Table 5.1 below presents the summary statistics of both the Parliamentary speeches and the public statements. The public statements of MPs were collected for Conservatives only.

Table 5. 1 Summary statistics of the speeches and statements

Attribute	**N**
Total speeches	**5641**
Conservatives speeches	3782 (67%)
Remain speeches	3880 (69%)
Leave speeches	1761 (31%)
Conservative Remain	2242 (40%)
Conservative Leave	1540 (27%)
Vocabulary (unique words)	8121
Tokens (total words)	263765
Debates	132
Public Statements	**241**
○ Leave statements	111
○ Remain statements	130

[13] Defined as any MP who was Minister, Whip or PPS at the time of speaking.

5.4 Methodology

5.4a Analysis of MPs' speeches – Structural Topic Model (STM)

The speech analysis used a text-as-data technique, specifically a text classification method, to determine which topics MPs discussed in their speeches and whether *leave/remain* MPs differed in the issues they discussed. Text classification techniques have been widely used by scholars to analyse the statements and speeches of Parliamentarians (e.g. Schondart-Bailey 2006, 2008, Grimmer et al 2010). The method used in this chapter is the structural topic model (STM) which builds on the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) (Roberts et al 2014, Blei 2003). STM has been used by political scientists for a range of purposes. For example, scholars have used the STM to analyse open-ended survey responses (Roberts et al 2014, Bauer et al 2017, Huff and Kruszewska 2016), lobbying activity on trade deals (Kim 2017) and the political content of papal encyclicals (Genovese 2015).

STM is an unsupervised method of classification in that the topics are derived by the model itself rather than decided by the researcher beforehand. The model is mixed-membership, which means that each speech is presumed to discuss multiple topics. For each speech the model calculates topic proportions, i.e. proportions of the speech dedicated to each topic. The sum of the topic proportions is 1. For example if there were only 2 topics, economics and immigration, and a speech discussed both topics equally, the topic proportions for both topics would be 0.5. Topics are distributions over words where each word has a probability of belonging to each topic (Roberts et al 2014). For each topic the model produces a list of words with the highest probability of

appearing in that topic. On the basis of these lists topics can be assigned labels. If, for instance, the words most associated with a topic are "migration"; "borders"; "welfare"; "movement", the topic might accurately be labelled by the researcher as referring to immigration. STM builds on previous topic modelling techniques by enabling document level covariates/metadata, e.g. in this chapter data about speeches such as the party of MP or their endorsement in the referendum campaign, to be incorporated into the model (ibid). This enables the relationship between document meta-data and topic prevalence to be tested. Topic prevalence refers to the proportion of a document dedicated to a particular topic (ibid).

For the analysis used in this thesis three models were run. Model 1 included all speeches made on Europe by MPs from all parties[14]. Model 2 restricted the sample to just Conservative MPs and model 3 restricted the sample to just Conservative backbenchers. The rationale for model 3 is that frontbenchers are more restricted in their speeches as they were obliged to make speeches and answer questions on behalf of their departments. The three models have only one covariate, which is the leave/remain dummy variable.

The use of the STM requires the number of topics to be specified. There is no definitive answer as to the "right" number of topics to use (ibid). In this paper we follow the criteria of Roberts et al (ibid) by assessing the appropriate number of topics based on semantic coherence and exclusivity. "Semantic coherence" refers to the extent to which the top words from each topic co-occur. This

[14] MPs who did not declare a position on the referendum were excluded from the data.

provides a measure of how internally consistent topics are (ibid; cf. Minmo et al 2011). A document or speech has higher "exclusivity" when the high probability words from that topic are not among the high probability words of another topic, so that topics can be more easily differentiated (Roberts et al 2014). To establish how many topics to include in the models we estimated several candidate models with the number of topics ranging from 5 to 50. Based on the exclusivity and semantic coherence of the different candidate models, it was decided that 25 topics would be used for models 1 and 2 and 20 topics would be used for model 3.

5.4b Analysis of MPs' public statements – word counts

The most common words used in the public statements of MPs were also analysed. As the smaller sample size of these statements hinders more robust statistical analysis, a simple list of the most common words was used to compare the statements of *leave* and *remain* MPs. For this analysis the most frequently used words were manually sorted into different topics (such as sovereignty or economics). Words were included in the analysis only if the word was used 10 or more times in the statements analysed. Furthermore, words with ambiguous meaning and verbs were excluded from the analysis. Simple comparisons of how frequently the two sets of MPs discussed each topic were then computed.

5.5 Results

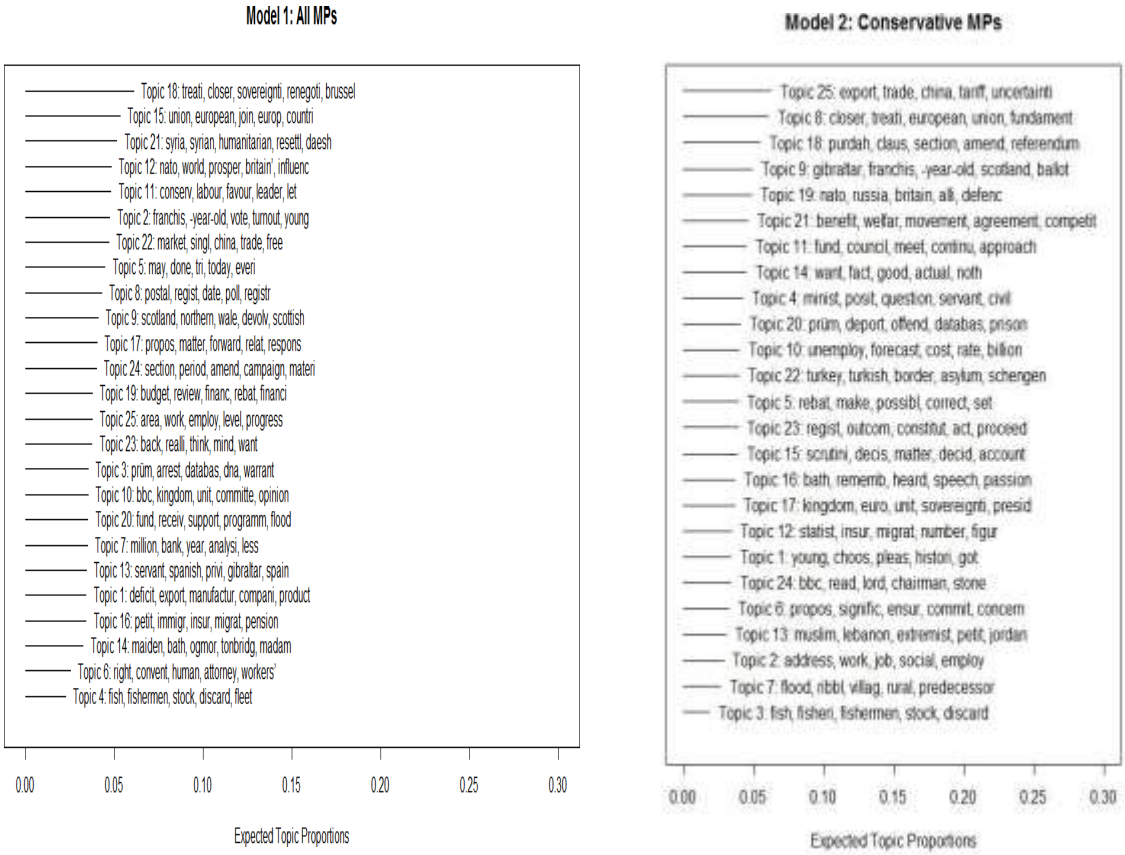
The structure of the results section is as follows. 5.5a considers the topics and most frequent words resulting from the STM models. 5.5b presents the statistical differences in the speech patterns of *leave* and *remain* MPs using these models. 5.5c presents the results from the analysis of MPs' public statements.

5.5a Topics and words

Figure 5.2 below displays the topic proportions for each model and words with highest FREX[15] scores for each topic. Based on the highest scoring FREX words each topic was given a label which was subsequently used in the analysis below. For example the top topic in Model 1 was labelled "sovereignty" as the top FREX words referred to things concerning sovereignty. The topic proportion on the x-axis in Figure 5.2 refers to the proportion of speeches dedicated to talking about that topic. For example, in Model 1 about 7% of the content of MPs' speeches was classified as discussing the "sovereignty" topic mentioned above. The topic proportions across all topics add up to 1 (or 100%).

[15] FREX refers to words which are both frequent and exclusive to each topic.

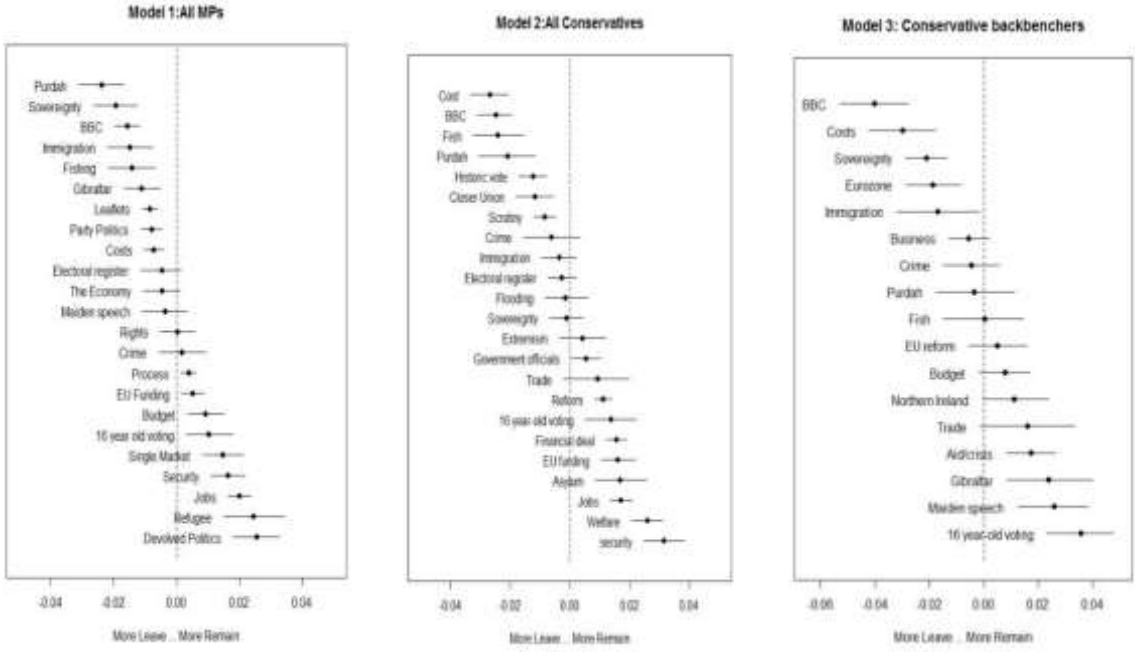
Figure 5. 2: Topic proportions from the three STM Models (FREX scores)



5.5b Differences between leave and remain speeches

Figure 5.3 below displays the differences in mean topic proportions between the speeches of *leave* and *remain* MPs. For each topic, the dots represent the difference and black lines represent the confidence intervals. For instance the left-panel, which displays the results for model 1, shows that *leave* MPs dedicated 2% more of their speeches to discussing sovereignty than did *remainers.* Whilst this may seem only a small difference, it needs to be considered in the context of there being 25 topics, resulting in an average topic proportion of 4%; thus in this context a 2% difference is sizable.

Figure 5. 3: STM models difference in topic proportions between leave and remain MPs speeches

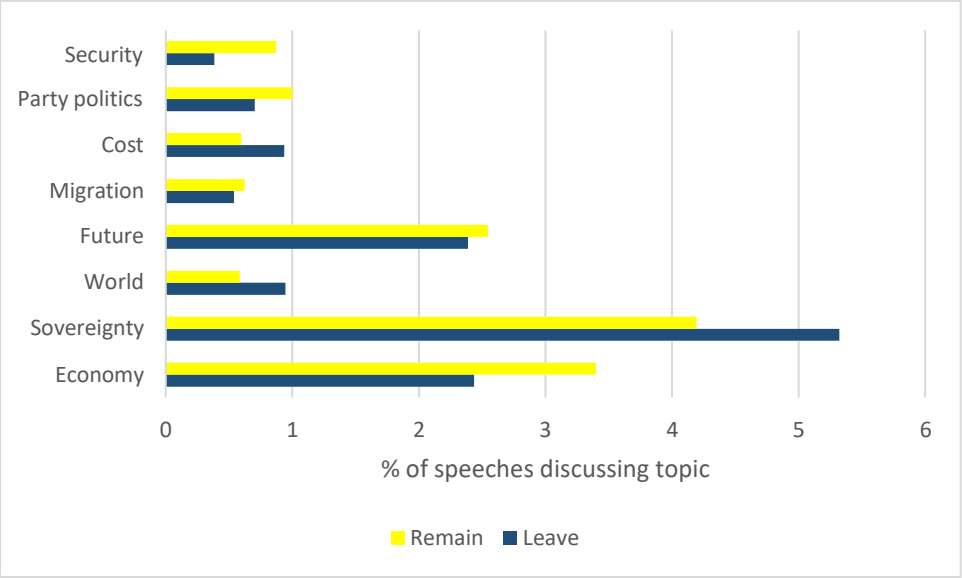


5.5c The analysis of MPs' public statements

Figure 5.4 displays the results from the analysis of the MPs' public statements. The most frequently used words were manually sorted into different categories (such as economy or sovereignty) which had been determined by the author.

The total for each category was then divided by the total number of words used by each set of MPs. For instance Figure 5.4 shows that around 5% of words in the statements by *leave* MPs were categorised in the sovereignty topic, this compares to about 4% of words in *remain* statements being classified under the sovereignty topic. Appendix B lists the words which were used for each topic.

Figure 5. 4: The topics most discussed by MPs in their public statements



The topics and the words in each topic were decided by the researcher. See appendix B (Table 5A) for the full list of words in each topic.

5.6 Discussion of results

5.6a MPs' ideology

It was predicted in section 5.2 that leave MPs were more likely to discuss socially conservative topics such as sovereignty and immigration (hypotheses 1 and 2). The results largely validate these predictions. The statistical models show strong correlations between supporting *leave* and discussing sovereignty. Model 1 shows that sovereignty was the most frequently discussed topic by *leave* MPs and that they were much more likely to discuss this topic than were

remain MPs. The data from the public statements also show that *leave* MPs dedicated a greater proportion of their statements to discussing sovereignty. An apparent exception to these results is model 2 which shows no statistical difference between MPs on the issue of sovereignty. However, model 2 also shows that *Leave* MPs are more likely to discuss the "Closer Union" topic, which includes words pertaining to the prospects of further EU integration, and this can be seen as suggesting that they were seeking to defend British sovereignty. Similar results, although less strong in their effects, occurred in relation to the immigration issue, in models 1 and 3. In sum, the results suggest that *leave* MPs were more likely to discuss socially conservative topics, the effect of this however was stronger for sovereignty than for immigration.

The data also provides evidence to suggest that *leave* MPs may have been motivated by an economically right-wing ideology. The models support hypothesis 3 as every model shows that *leave* supporting MPs were more likely to discuss the costs of membership. Words which are frequently discussed in the "costs" topics in the three models include "bililon" "million", "tax" and "vat". Similar words were also more frequently used by *leave* MPs in their public statements. These findings are similar to those of Tzelgov (2014) who found in his study of the 1992 Parliament that "fiscal policies" was the topic most likely to be discussed by Eurosceptics compared with the Europhiles. Model 3 also provides support for hypothesis 4, as *leave* MPs were more likely to discuss the Eurozone. Overall, on the *leave* side of the debate there is evidence that MPs were more likely to discuss socially conservative and right-wing issues.

By contrast, on the other side of the referendum debate there is evidence that *remain* MPs were more likely to discuss both socially liberal and left-wing issues, as predicted in hypotheses 5 and 6. For example the data shows that *remain* MPs were more likely to discuss refugees/asylum and EU funding of projects in the UK. However, these findings generally do not occur in model 3 which includes only Conservative backbenchers. This suggests that these results may be driven by the opposition parties raising these topics, and ministers, the vast majority of whom supported *remain*, having to respond to the opposition parties on these issues. This perhaps shows that these were the policy priorities of *remain* supporters in the opposition parties rather than the priorities of *remainer* Tories.

In summary, the results show that *leave* MPs were more likely to discuss socially conservative topics, such as immigration and sovereignty, and economically right-wing topics such as the cost of EU membership and the Eurozone. This is in line with hypotheses 1-4. On the other side of the debate there was evidence to suggest that *remain* MPs discussed more socially liberal and left-wing concerns such as refugees, however this was possibly driven by the progressive parties and government ministers rather than differences between Conservative backbenchers. Therefore, in relation to Conservative MPs the evidence for hypotheses 5 and 6 is less strong.

5.6b Electoral interests

Consistent with the predictions of hypotheses 7-10, the results suggest that MPs were using their speeches to further the interests of the referendum

campaigns they were endorsing in relation to both substantive and procedural issues. In terms of the substantive issues of the EU referendum, it has already been established that *leave* MPs were more likely to discuss immigration and sovereignty.

For *remain* MPs the data suggests that they were more likely to discuss topics concerning the economy. For example Models 1 and 2 show that *remainers* were more likely to talk about jobs and the analysis of MPs' public statements also shows that *remain* MPs were more likely to use words relating to the economy such as "jobs", "exports" and "investment". This provides evidence in support of hypothesis 7. There was also evidence to support hypothesis 8, as the models show that *remain* MPs were more likely to discuss security, which as mentioned above aligned with the "safer in" message of the *remain* campaign. Model 2, for instance, shows that "security" was the issue most discussed by *remainers* relative to *leave* MPs. Therefore it does seem that both sides were emphasising the issues on which their campaigns had an electoral advantage.

Regarding procedural issues, the data suggests that MPs tended to discuss proposed procedural changes that would benefit their campaigns. In line with the predictions of hypothesis 9, the *leavers* were found to talk about purdah and the government's leaflet campaign. On the *remain* side the data supports hypothesis 10 as models 1 and 3 show that *remain* MPs talked more about extending the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds.

One result relating to procedural issues that was not predicted in the hypotheses is that the *leave* MPs were more likely to discuss the BBC and the

electoral commission in relation to impartiality issues. Notably, the biggest difference between *leave* and *remain* MP in any model was found on this topic as model 3 showed that *leave* MPs dedicated 4% more of their speeches to this topic. This may suggest that *leave* MPs were concerned that influential institutions were failing in their obligation to be impartial. The BBC, in particular, has long been criticised by Eurosceptics. During the campaign, for instance, Sir Bill Cash's European Scrutiny Committee published a report which was highly critical of the BBC (House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee 2015).

To summarise, the data provides strong evidence that MPs were using Parliamentary speeches and public statements for the purposes of vote-seeking in the EU referendum. Both sides of the debate discussed the issues on which their campaign had an advantage and both sides sought changes to the electoral rules which would benefit their campaigns.

5.7 Conclusion

The results show that there were many statistical differences in the topics discussed in the speeches and public statements of *remain* and *leave* MPs. For example *leave* MPs dedicated much more of their time to speaking about topics such as sovereignty and the alleged partiality of the BBC and electoral commission.

The chapter has argued that the results can be explained by MPs ideological beliefs and their electoral interests. Concerning ideology it was argued that Eurosceptics were more likely to discuss socially conservative and economically

right-wing topics (hypotheses 1-4). There was also some evidence that *remain* MPs were more likely to discuss socially liberal and economically left-wing issues (hypotheses 5 & 6), although these results may have been driven by opposition MPs. The two main findings in terms of MPs' electoral interest were, firstly, that both sides were more likely to mention the topics for which they had an electoral advantage (hypotheses 7&8) and, secondly, that MPs were more likely to argue for procedural changes which would benefit their campaigns (hypotheses 9&10).

There is, however, a need for caution concerning the results presented in this chapter. As the chapter has used observational data, no claim can be made to have identified the causal reasons for MPs discussing the topics they did. As such the results here are open to multiple explanations. For example it is possible that the speaking patterns of *remain* MPs could also have been motivated by office-seeking MPs who wanted to show the leadership that they can be trusted to defend the government's position on the EU in Parliament.

Nevertheless, there are some important insights from this research. Most importantly, this chapter advances this thesis by strengthening the evidence for the importance of social conservatism to Conservative Euroscepticism. It has been shown in previous chapters that there has been a strong association between social conservatism and Euroscepticism. It was argued that this reflected the importance of TAN values, most notably the desire to protect British sovereignty. The results of this chapter reinforce this argument by showing that *leavers* were much more likely to mention the TAN topics of immigration and sovereignty. This is particularly the case for sovereignty, in

that this was one of the most frequently discussed topics by *leave* MPs. Part of the reason why the *leave* MPs focused on sovereignty and immigration could be for vote-seeking reasons. However, when considered along with the other evidence in the thesis, the results here provide further support to suggest that these issues motivated Conservative Euroscepticism. The other evidence in the thesis which shows a link between social conservatism and Euroscepticism includes the MP data from chapters 3 and 4 and the fact that many MPs interviewed for this thesis cited sovereignty and immigration as being part of the motivation for their Euroscepticism (interviews 4,5,8, 9 and 12).

The results may also show indications of an economically right-wing ideology affecting Conservative Euroscepticism. This can be seen by the fact that the *leave* MPs were more likely to discuss the Eurozone and the costs of EU membership. This accords with other findings in the thesis such as the data in chapter 4 which showed that being economically right-wing was highly associated with Euroscepticism and the fact that several MPs interviewed for thesis mentioned various economically based objections to the EU (interviews 5, 7 and 9).

This chapter concludes the empirical analysis of the first research question concerning why MPs adopted Eurosceptic positions. The next chapter begins the empirical investigation of why the party became more Eurosceptic over time.

Chapter 6: Conversion vs Replacement: change in the Conservative Party 1992-2015

Abstract

This chapter investigates whether the increased Euroscepticism in the PCP is driven by conversion, i.e. continuing MPs becoming more Eurosceptic, or replacement, i.e. new MPs entering the Commons. A panel dataset of every Conservative MP from 1992 to 2015 was used. Analysis of the data suggests that ***both*** *process are occurring. In terms of conversion, the figures show that although many MPs remained constant in their policy positions, a significant proportion became more hostile to the EU during their time in Parliament. A much smaller group of MPs became more pro-EU whilst serving in Parliament. On replacement, it is found that Euro-enthusiast MPs were more likely to voluntarily leave the Parliamentary party and that the vast majority of new Conservative MPs were Eurosceptic. The 2010 intake of Conservative MPs in particular consisted predominantly of hard-Eurosceptic MPs. The findings in this chapter inform the empirical investigations to be conducted in the subsequent chapters.*

6.1 Introduction

In Chapters 3-5 the thesis looked at why individual Conservative MPs formed Eurosceptic views. Chapters 6-9 focus on the second research question by considering why the party has become more Eurosceptic during the time period of this thesis. This chapter starts this empirical investigation by considering the general mechanism(s) driving this change in the Conservative Party. There

are two broad mechanisms which can drive change in a Parliamentary Party: conversion or replacement. Once the broad mechanism has been established the thesis will then more specifically investigate how this conversion and/or replacement occurred.

A process of "conversion" occurs when a number of existing MPs change their stance on an issue. In the case of this thesis conversion would involve a number of Conservative MPs becoming progressively more hostile towards European integration over the course of their Parliamentary careers. This does not necessarily mean that MPs were changing their minds, as it could be that some MPs merely became more explicit in displaying their views on the EU. The dependent variable for this chapter, as in chapter 4, considers MPs' *public* policy positions, as expressed through statements and votes, rather than their *private* thoughts on the issue. A process of "replacement", by contrast, is driven by the turnover of MPs at general elections. Applying this to the thesis, it would involve pro-Europeans leaving the party and new intakes of MPs being more Eurosceptic than their predecessors.

This chapter seeks to investigate whether conversion and/or replacement occurred through panel data of Conservative MPs from the 1992 to 2010 Parliaments. Panel data is used because it makes it possible to test the extent to which within-member change (i.e. individual MPs becoming more Eurosceptic) has affected the overall levels of Euroscepticism in the Parliamentary party. In addition, the chapter will further analyse the turnover of MPs and the statistics on how many individual MPs have changed their positions on Europe.

Based on the results from the analysis of this data, it argued that **both** processes occurred. In terms of replacement, the analysis of Parliamentary turnover suggests that the new entrants to the Commons were much more Eurosceptic than the existing Members of Parliament. This was particularly the case in the turnover that occurred at the 1997 and 2010 elections. Europhile MPs were also more likely to decide to exit the Parliamentary party. Turning to conversion, the panel data analysis suggests that within-member change can form at least part of the reason why the party became more Eurosceptic. The analysis of individual MPs' stances over time suggests that whilst most MPs remained constant in their views, a significant proportion of MPs changed their stance and of these MPs more two-thirds moved in a more sceptical direction rather than a more pro-EU direction.

The chapter is structured as follows. 6.2 considers the theory behind the chapter and how the different mechanisms of conversion and replacement work. 6.3 briefly considers previous relevant literature. 6.4 discusses the methodology. The results are presented 6.5. Finally, 6.6 concludes the chapter.

6.2 Conversion and replacement theory

6.2a Conversion

This process implies that at least some members of the group change their stance and thus the average opinion in the group changes. Applied to this chapter this would mean that some MPs changed their position on the Euroscepticism variable so that the average opinion in the Parliamentary party changed over time. This change could be brought about through members

changing their minds on Europe, perhaps as result of developments at the EU level. Since 1992 there have been significant changes in EU governance. The EU has acquired new powers and functions and it has expanded in size to include many former communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

However, MPs being reassigned a position on the Euroscepticism variable does not necessarily imply that they have changed their minds on Europe. As the Euroscepticism variable measures MPs' public position on Europe it could be that some MPs chose to become more explicit in their opinions. In particular it is likely that some Eurosceptics who were previously classed as soft-Eurosceptics might have viewed changing political circumstances as an opportunity to declare their support for a referendum on EU membership. For example Eurosceptics may have viewed the Eurozone crisis as opportunity to explicitly argue that it is best for Britain to leave the EU. In addition to this, opportunities within Parliament may also enable MPs to declare a firmer position on Europe.

6.2b Replacement

Replacement refers to a process of change which is driven by electoral turnover. Applied to this thesis a replacement process would involve those entering the House having higher levels of Euroscepticism than those who were already MPs and those who left the House, resulting in a net gain in the proportion of Eurosceptics in the Parliamentary party. The 2010 election is a particularly important election to analyse in order to consider the impact of the new intakes of MPs. In 2010 the Conservatives returned to government with 148 new MPs

who made up just under half the Parliamentary party. More new MPs joined the party at this election than in the previous three elections combined. The party would also become more Eurosceptic if pro-European MPs were to leave the House, with the result that remaining group of MPs would contain a higher proportion of Eurosceptics. The most significant election in terms of MPs leaving is the 1997 election in which the New Labour landslide meant that 197 Conservative MPs left Parliament. More Conservative MPs left at this election than at all the other elections in this period combined. Therefore investigating replacement involves considering both those who have joined and left the Parliamentary Party. Of particular importance are the 2010 and 1997 general elections.

If a process of replacement has occurred this could suggest that either Eurosceptics were more successful in getting selected as constituency candidates and/or winning their seats at general elections.

6.3 Relevant literature on replacement and conversion in the Conservative Party

There have been several papers which have looked at changing attitudes of Conservative MPs towards Europe. Webb (2008) compared Conservative MPs in the 1992 and 2005 Parliaments using BRS data. He found that as the centrist element of the party declined the party became more united around a right-wing and Eurosceptic position. Support for this view that Conservative candidates became more Eurosceptic can be found in Norris and Lovenduski (2004). They investigated MPs and candidates at the 2001 general election

using BRS data and found that new Conservative MPs and candidates were more Eurosceptic than those already in Parliament.

In addition to the BRS, another survey of MPs which considered changing attitudes towards Europe is the Members of Parliament Project (MPP). This surveyed MPs' opinions in the 1992 and 1997 Parliaments (Baker et al 1999; Cowley 2000). Using MPP data Baker et al (1999) found that the Conservative Party moved in a Eurosceptic direction after the 1997 general election. Their data suggests that in 1997 new MPs were predominantly Eurosceptic and they also found that previous cohorts of Conservative MPs were more sceptical than in their previous studies. They acknowledge however, that as their survey was not panel data, they could not discern whether the cohorts of continuing MPs became more sceptical through conversion or through pro-European MPs leaving the House (ibid).

This chapter uses panel data to attempt to overcome this methodological deficiency. There have been previous attempts to assess the importance of replacement and conversion in Parliament using panel data. Eggers and Spirling (2016) used panel data of MPs serving between 1836-1910 to investigate why Parliamentary cohesion, i.e. MPs voting in line with the party whip, increased during this period. Their findings suggest that most of the increase in cohesion was driven more by within member-change rather the effect of new MPs entering the Commons. They argue that this suggests the increased cohesion was a result of greater inducements for loyalty for existing MPs rather than the turnover of MPs. Some of the techniques used by Eggers

and Spirling have been used to inform aspects of the methodology of this paper, explained in the next section.

6.4 Methodology

6.4a The data

This chapter uses a panel data set to consider the changing attitudes of the PCP on Europe. The panel data converts the five separate datasets analysed in chapter 4 into one composite dataset. Each MP has a separate entry in the dataset for each Parliament in which they served. For example Bernard Jenkin MP, who served in every Parliament in this period has five entries (1992, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2010). In total there are 1106 entries in the dataset from 601 different MPs.

The dependent variable for the analysis is the Europe (1-4) scale which was used in chapter 4. This is an ordinal scale with MPs' positions varying from Euro-enthusiast to hard-Eurosceptic. Table 6.1 briefly recaps the different positions on the scale. More details about the dependent variable and how each MP was assigned a position on it can be found in section 4.4a.

Table 6. 1: Positions on the Europe scale dependent variable

Number	Explanation
1	*Euro-enthusiasts* These are MPs who were enthusiastic about Britain's membership of the EU and had no objection to Britain pursuing greater integration.
2	*Uncommitted* These are MPs who did not take a decisive stance on European integration. They displayed no position on Europe except for toeing the party-line
3	*Soft Eurosceptics* They are sceptical but ultimately want to remain in the EU.
4	*Hard-Eurosceptics* These MPs are potentially willing to endorse leaving the EU.

6.4b Statistical tests for conversion and replacement

The panel data was used to conduct regression analyses. The statistical analysis in this chapter was conducted using OLS rather than the ordered logit used in chapter 4. The rationale for using OLS is that this will allow for fixed effects to be controlled for in the panel data. Three regression analyses are used in order to test the relative effects of conversion and replacement.

Firstly, the chapter will consider the effect of time on Euroscepticism with and without controlling for fixed effects. This involves regressing the dependent variable on the Parliament variable, which is a categorical variable denoting the Parliament which the MP was serving. This analysis shows the extent to which Euroscepticism changes in each Parliament. Running the same model controlling for fixed effects enables it to be seen how much variation is caused by between and within-member variation. If controlling for fixed effects does not significantly alter the effect of the Parliament variable this would suggest that individual MPs are becoming more Eurosceptic with each new Parliament.

This is turn would suggest a process of conversion. If controlling for fixed effects does significantly diminish the effect of the Parliament variable this would suggest that MPs are relatively constant in their stance on Europe and that increased Euroscepticism is therefore probably being driven by replacement.

Secondly, a similar regression analysis was undertaken by regressing the dependent variable against a variable measuring MPs' seniority, in terms of years served in Parliament, both with and without controlling for fixed effects. If the fixed effects model shows a positive relationship between seniority and Euroscepticism this would suggest MPs have converted to a more Eurosceptic position over time.

The third regression analysis tested if those leaving or joining the Commons were different from continuing MPs in their stances on Europe. If pro-European MPs were leaving the House and new MPs wer more Eurosceptic than their predecessors, this would indicate that a process of replacement has occurred.

6.4c Further analysis of replacement and conversion

In addition to the regression analysis outlined above the chapter will further investigate the individual processes of conversion and replacement. To investigate replacement the chapter will consider whether Euro-enthusiasts were more likely to leave the House and the summary statistics of those entering Parliament. The two most important elections to be considered are the 1997 and 2010 elections as these were the two elections in which the highest number of Conservative MPs left and entered Parliamentary respectively.

To analyse the extent of conversion, the chapter will consider the summary statistics of how many MPs changed their position on Europe. If significant numbers have become more sceptical this would suggest that there has been a conversion process occurring within the party.

6.5 Results

6.5a Statistical tests for conversion and replacement

This section of the results will conduct the panel data analysis which was explained in 6.4b above. The first stage of the empirical analysis tested the effect of the Parliament variable on MPs' Euroscepticism in both a random effects and fixed effects model. If the process of the party becoming more Eurosceptic were driven by replacement importance of each Parliament woul be expected to diminish in the fixed effects model as continuing MPs will have been relatively constant in their positions over time. If by contrast the process was driven by conversion, the fixed effects should not have much effect on the Parliament variable as continuing MPs became more sceptical during their Parliamentary careers.

The results from the analysis are displayed in Table 6.2 below. The first column presents the random effects model, the second presents the fixed effects model. The results from the random effects model show that the party became progressively more Eurosceptic over time. In the fixed effects model coefficients are still positive and statistically significant. This suggests there is evidence of conversion as within-MP variation is driving up average scores on the Europe scale. The fixed effects model does however show that the size of the Parliament

variable coefficients are diminished, suggesting that replacement could be driving some of the increase in Euroscepticism. There is however no statistical difference between the size of the Parliament variable coefficient between the two models.

Table 6. 2: Effect of each Parliament on Euroscepticism with and without fixed effects (OLS)

	Model 1 (Random effects Model)	**Model 2 (Fixed effects Model)**
Parliament (Reference category: 1992)		
1997	.232***	.185***
	(.058)	(.061)
2001	.188***	.114***
	(.059)	(.064)
2005	.364***	.271***
	(0.058)	(.065)
2010	.563***	.399***
	(0.059)	(.070)
Constant	2.621***	2.659***
	(0.050)	(0.042)
R^2	0.07	0.07
(Within)	0.06	0.06
(Between)	0.12	0.12
N	1163	1163
Groups	601	601

Source: thesis original data
Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1
Dependent variable: Europe scale (1-4) see Table 6.1

The next regression analysis tested the effect of seniority, referring to years in Parliament, on Euroscepticism. The results, displayed in Table 6.3 below, show that when the data is not treated as panel there is a strong negative relationship between seniority and Euroscepticism. This suggests that newer

recruits to the Commons are more Eurosceptic. However, when the data is treated as panel data and fixed effects are controlled for, there is a positive and highly statistically significant relationship between seniority and Euroscepticism. This indicates that as continuing MPs became more senior they were likely to become more Eurosceptic. This suggests a process of conversion.

Table 6. 3: Effect of seniority on Euroscepticism with and without fixed effects

	Model 1 (non-panel)	**Model 2 (Fixed effects Model)**
Seniority†	-0.023***	0.020***
	(0.003)	(0.004)
Constant	3.089***	2.648***
	(0.045)	(0.042)
R^2	0.04	0.04
(Within)		0.05
(Between)		0.10
N	1163	1163
Groups	601	601

Source: thesis original data
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1 Robust standard errors in parentheses
Dependent variable: Europe scale (1-4) see Table 6.1
† Measured in terms of years in Parliament

Finally, a third regression analysis was conducted through testing whether those leaving and joining the House of Commons were statistically different in their position from continuing MPs. Table 6.4 below displays these results. The data shows that joiners had higher levels of Euroscepticism and that those leaving had lower levels of Euroscepticism than continuing MPs. This suggests a process of replacement.

Table 6. 4: The Europe scale scores of those leaving and joining the House of Commons

	Europe scale (1-4)
Leaver	-0.235**
	(0.073)
Joiner	0.360***
	(0.064)
Constant	2.827***
	(0.044)
R^2	0.042
N	1163

Source: original thesis data
Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1

Overall, the statistical tests suggest that both processes, replacement and conversion, are occurring. Controlling for fixed effects suggests that MPs became more hostile to the EU during their Parliamentary careers. The data also suggests that pro-European MPs were more likely to leave the chamber and that new intakes of MPs were more Eurosceptic. The chapter will now seek to further investigate these two processes.

6.5b Analysis of replacement

Investigating Parliamentary turnover involves considering both those who are leaving the Commons and the arrival of new MPs.

MPs leaving the Commons

For a process of replacement to be occurring it would be expected that those leaving the House of Commons were more pro-European than those who continued as MPs. Table 6.5 below shows the marginal effects from logistic

regression analyses for each election, with the dependent variable being whether an MP left the House of Commons at that election. The final column in the table considers all the elections combined. The results from the final column show that MPs Euro-enthusiast were more likely to *leave* the house than either of the two categories of Eurosceptics.

Table 6. 5: Marginal effects of the Europe variable on the probability of leaving Commons (logit model)

	1997	**2001**	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**	**All elections**
Europe scale (reference category: Euro-enthusiast)						
Unclassified	0.179**	-0.005	0.032	-0.341***	0.194*	-0.014
	(0.08)	(0.15)	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.06)
Soft-Eurosceptics	-0.058	-0.183**	0.020	-0.301***	-0.206**	-0.201***
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.04)
Hard-Eurosceptics	0.028	-0.077	0.129	-0.167	-0.278***	-0.164***
	(0.07)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.04)
N	331	164	166	198	304	1163
Pseudo R^2	0.02	0.05	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.03
Count R^2	0.59	0.80	0.87	0.77	0.84	0.70

Source: original thesis data
Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1

Further investigation of those leaving the Commons showed that there was a strong relationship between a pro-European ideology and *voluntarily* leaving the Parliamentary party. This can be seen in Table 6.6 below. This table is similar to Table 6.5 but considers the likelihood of MPs standing down and controls for age. The results indicate that pro-European MPs were more likely to stand down than Eurosceptics, particularly hard-Eurosceptics, even when controlling for age. This relationship was statistically significant during the two periods of Conservative government. The most important result here is the

1997 election as this election had the highest number of MPs standing down. The statistics suggest that Euro-enthusiast MPs were 15% more likely to stand down at the 1997 general election than hard-Eurosceptics. This is the equivalent of a 9 year age difference. Pro-European MPs were also older than Eurosceptics, hence the same analysis without controlling for age produces even stronger relationships between standing down and pro-Europeanism. These results suggest, then, that pro-European MPs were more likely to opt-out of the PCP.

Table 6. 6: Marginal effect of the Europe variable on probability of standing down (logit model)

	1997	**2001**	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**	**All elections**
Europe Scale† (reference category: Euro-enthusiast)						
Unclassified	0.03	0.17	0.03	-0.10	-0.11	0.02
	(0.07)	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.04)
Soft-Eurosceptics	-0.0	-0.10	-0.03	-0.13	-0.15*	-0.09***
	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.03)
Hard-Eurosceptics	-0.15***	-0.06	0.08	-0.08	-0.18***	-0.11***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.03)
Age	0.02***	0.02***	0.01**	0.01***	0.01***	0.01***
	(<0.01)	(<0.01)	(<0.01)	(<0.01)	(<0.01)	(<0.01)
N	331	163	166	198	304	1162
Pseudo R^2	0.20	0.35	0.10	0.22	0.13	0.18
Count R^2	0.83	0.88	0.93	0.85	0.88	0.86
Adj Count R^2	0.17	0.34	0.00	0.03	0.10	0.10

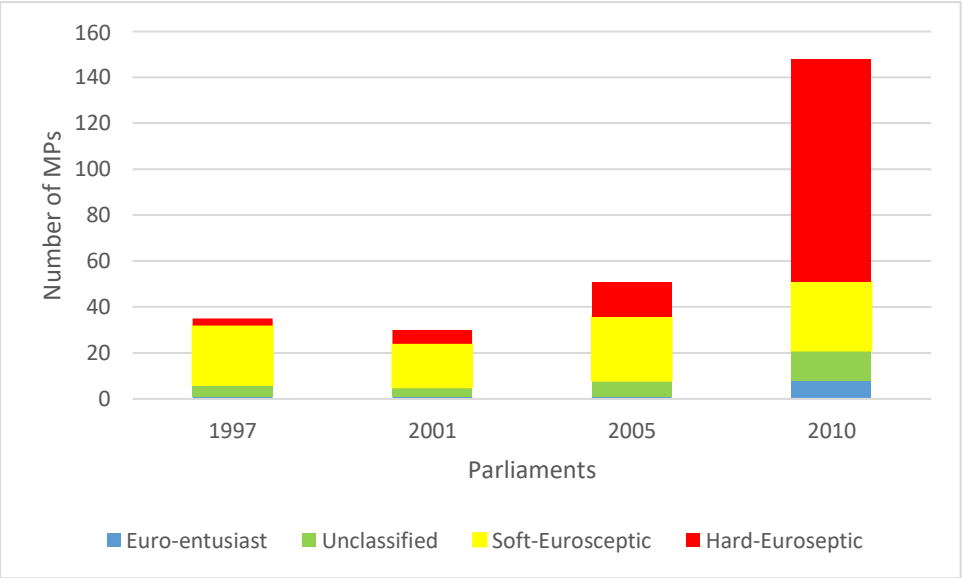
Source: original thesis data
Standing down takes account of MPs who retired from the House of Commons or defected to another political party during the Parliament preceding the general election
Standard errors in parentheses
† Europe scale measured on 1-4 scale see table 6.1
Standard errors in parentheses
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1

In summary, the results suggest that pro-Europeans were more likely to leave the party than Eurosceptics. In particular, the data suggests that a disproportionate number of pro-European MPs voluntarily opted out of the Parliamentary party. Indeed, there have been some noteworthy defections to other parties from pro-European MPs in this time including Emma Nicholson, Robert Jackson and Quentin Davis.

MPs entering the Commons

The data on MPs entering the Commons for the first time, shown in Figure 6.1 below, shows that each new intake of MPs was predominantly Eurosceptic. For example at the 1997 election 83% of the new intake of Conservative MPs were Eurosceptic compared to 57% in the previous Parliament. At the same election only one new MP (3% of the intake) was classified as a Euro-enthusiast compared to 30% of MPs in the previous Parliament. In fact, of the 264 new Conservative MPs elected between 1997 and 2010 only 11 (4%) were classified as Euro-enthusiasts in their first Parliament. This, combined with the fact that pro-European MPs were more likely to leave Parliament, resulted in the Euro-enthusiast element of the party becoming progressively diminished throughout this period.

Figure 6. 1: The positions of new entrants to the House of Commons on the Europe scale 1992-2015



Source: original thesis data
This figure shows the position of new entrants to the House of Commons in their first Parliament. The numbers are absolute number of MPs.

As Figure 6.1 shows, the biggest turnover between Parliaments was in 2010 when the Conservatives returned to government with 148 new MPs. Nearly two-thirds of these new MPs were hard-Eurosceptics. As Lynch (2015: p. 185) puts it:

> *"A new breed of Eurosceptic MP entered the House of Commons in 2010 and went further than the Conservative leadership in developing a discourse embracing democracy, liberty and free trade".*

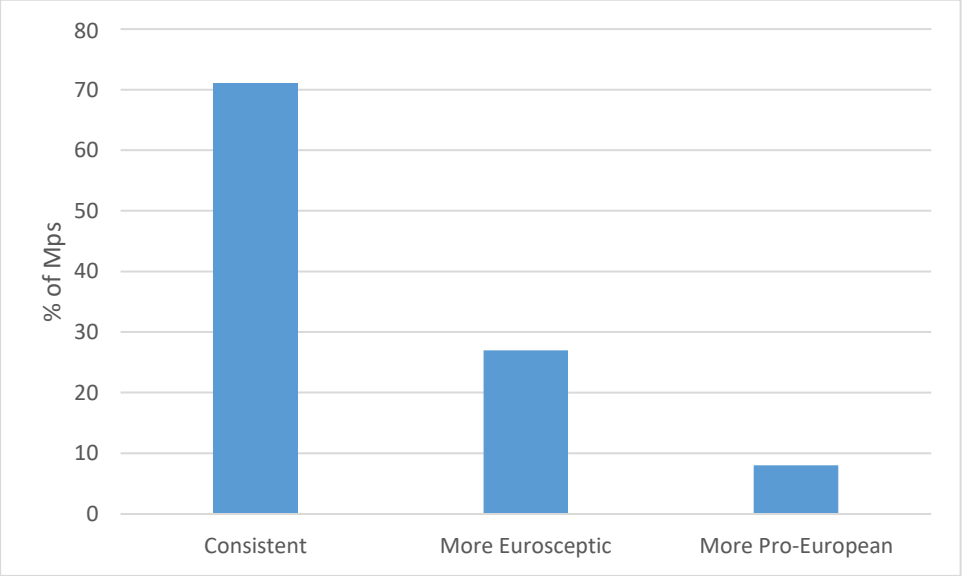
Overall, the evidence suggests that the process of replacement has occurred as both pro-European MPs have been more likely to leave the commons and those entering the Commons have been more hostile to Europe, particularly in 2010.

6.5c Analysis of conversion

The results from the statistical analysis in 6.5a showed strong evidence that a process of conversion was taking place with individual MPs becoming more Eurosceptic throughout their Parliamentary careers. In this section the extent of this conversion is considered.

Figure 6.2 below shows the percentages of MPs who changed their position on Europe. The statistics show that whilst the majority of MPs were consistent in their views throughout their career, many became more overtly hostile to the EU. The MPs who became more sceptical outnumber those who moved in a pro-European direction by more than 3 to 1.

Figure 6. 2: How MPs changed positions on Europe over time



Source: original thesis data
This figure includes MPs who served in more than 1 Parliament (n=240). The 8 MPs who changed stance in opposite directions, i.e. either becoming more Euro-sceptic before moving in a pro-European or vice-versa, were excluded from this figure.

The most notable change in a single Parliament was in 2010. Of those MPs who remained from 2005, about a quarter adopted a more Eurosceptic stance. There

is also evidence that a conversion process was occurring before 2010 as the statistics show a statistically significant pattern of MPs becoming more Eurosceptic through their careers even when 2010 is excluded from the sample[16].

To summarise, there is strong evidence of a conversion effect, most significantly in the 2010 Parliament when a quarter of continuing Conservative MPs hardened their stance on Europe.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has found evidence that the increasing Euroscepticism in the Conservative Party was driven by both conversion and replacement. The panel data results (Table 6.2) provide evidence of conversion as controlling for fixed effects showed that MPs became more Eurosceptic through their careers in Parliament. Evidence of replacement was seen through the fact that new MPs were more Eurosceptic and those who left Parliament were more pro-European than the continuing MPs.

On replacement the data showed that pro-European MPs were more likely to voluntarily leave the party even when controlling for age. Further, after 1997 very few pro-Europeans came into the party to replace these MPs, with the new intakes being predominantly Eurosceptic. The 2010 Parliament had a particularly Eurosceptic turnover with nearly two-thirds of new MPs having hard-Eurosceptic positions.

[16] Running the fixed effects model from Table 6.3 excluding the 2010 Parliament shows this. This regression is presented in the Appendix C (Table 6A).

The 2010 Parliament was also significant in terms of conversion of MPs as around a quarter of the Parliamentary party adopted more sceptical positions towards Europe. Over the course of the time-period covered in this thesis the data suggests that although most MPs remained constant in their views on Europe, of the MPs who did change position those becoming more sceptical outnumbered those becoming more pro-European by more than 3 to 1.

As the data here suggests that both replacement and conversion occurred, both these subjects will be considered in the folloiwng chapters. Replacement will be considered in chapters 7 and 8, which focus on the selection process and general elections respectively. Conversion will be the subject of chapter 9.

Chapter 7: Eurosceptic candidates? The selection process and talent pool of the Conservative Party

Abstract

This chapter investigates whether the selection process of the Conservative Party was responsible for the increased Euroscepticism of the Parliamentary party. In doing this it considers three aspects of the selection process: the national party (CCHQ), the role of constituency associations and the Conservative Party talent pool i.e. the candidates themselves. The data provides little evidence to suggest that CCHQ or the constituency associations had a major effect on the ideological composition of the party. Specifically, there is very little evidence to suggest that CCHQ tried to prioritise candidates of a particular stance on Europe. At the constituency level, whilst the selectors tended to be very Eurosceptic they also tend to prioritise other non-ideological candidate characteristics such as talent and experience. Consequently, there was not a widespread effort by associations to adopt Eurosceptic candidates. It is argued that the replacement effect in the Parliamentary party can be largely explained by Eurosceptics dominating the talent pool of potential Conservative candidates.

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter it was established that Parliamentary turnover was part of the explanation of why the Conservative Party became more Eurosceptic. This involved both pro-European MPs leaving the party and new intakes of MPs being more Eurosceptic than their predecessors. This chapter considers the reasons why new intakes of Conservative MPs were

predominantly Eurosceptic. In order to do this the chapter focuses on the selection of Parliamentary candidates. This involves considering three aspects of how Eurosceptic candidates are selected: the role of CCHQ[17], the local conservative associations and the Conservative talent pool i.e. the candidates themselves.

This chapter analyses the selection process for the entire period of this thesis, 1992-2010. A variety of different data sources and methodology is used in the analysis. This includes a quantitative analysis of selection decisions at the 2010 general election, a survey of associations officers and data from the British Representation Studies (BRS) of 1997, 2001 and 2005. In addition to this, the chapter also refers to the interviews conducted with MPs and officials involved with the selection process.

To preview the results, little evidence was found that either CCHQ or the association stage of the selection process affected the levels of Euroscepticism amongst Conservative candidates and by extension the Parliamentary party. Concerning CCHQ, there is little evidence that the central party was trying to manage the ideological composition of the candidates. This chapter largely refutes, therefore, the claim of the right of the party that CCHQ is prioritising moderate candidates. In terms of the associations, although a majority of the selectors had anti-integrationist views most assigned relatively little importance to Europe in the selection process and consequently there is little

[17] The national headquarters of the party was known as Conservative Central Office until 2004. In order to avoid uncertainty, the national headquarters are referred to as CCHQ throughout this thesis even if discussing events prior to 2004.

evidence that Eurosceptic candidates were more likely to either make the shortlist or gain the nomination than other less sceptical candidates. It is argued that the reason the majority of new Conservative MPs was Eurosceptic was that Eurosceptics dominated the Conservative Party talent pool. At each election considered, the vast majority of potential conservative candidates reported strongly anti-European views.

The chapter is structured as follows: 7.2 explains the Conservative Party selection process and briefly reviews the relevant literature. 7.3 describes the data and methodology used to empirically investigate the selection process. The chapter then considers the three main aspects of the selection process in turn: the role of CCHQ (7.4), the constituencies associations (7.5) and the talent pool of potential Conservative candidates (7.6). The chapter is then concluded in 7.7.

7.2 The Conservative Party Selection Process

There are two stages to the process of becoming a Conservative candidate in the general election. The first involves gaining the approval of the national party. This entails attending a Parliamentary Assessment Board (PAB) to gain a place on the approved candidates list. Once on the approved candidates list a candidate is free to apply to different local constituency associations[18]. At the association stage, the association officers narrow the field of candidates to a final shortlist of around four through reviewing the applications and interviewing candidates. Once the final shortlist has been chosen the candidate is then selected through either a meeting of local party members or an open

[18] There are restrictions on where certain candidates can apply. For example some first time candidates are allowed to apply only to marginal or unwinnable seats.

primary which allows all eligible voters in the constituency to participate in choosing the candidate.

Three elements of the selection process therefore require investigation to establish the extent to which they are part of the cause of the Conservative Party becoming more Eurosceptic. Firstly, the role of CCHQ needs to be investigated. It could be the case that CCHQ was either filtering out potential candidates or seeking to prioritise candidates based on their ideology. Some on the right of the party have accused the central party of trying to prioritise moderate candidates at the expense of right-wing and Eurosceptic candidates. Secondly, the association stage of the process needs to be considered to assess whether associations were choosing Eurosceptics over more pro-European candidates. In the media and in some academic writings it has been claimed that selectors were actively seeking Eurosceptic candidates in safe and marginal seats (Smith 2012; Walters 2001). Finally, the actual talent pool of candidates also has to be empirically studied. If the talent pool was predominantly Eurosceptic then the selectors at the constituency or the national level of party would have had little discretion to choose candidates on the basis of their views on Europe.

This chapter will consider how each of these three elements of the selection process affected the levels of Euroscepticism amongst Conservative MPs. In doing this the chapter will be focusing on topics which have been under researched by the British politics literature.

Whilst the issue of candidate selection has been extensively studied in the field of comparative politics (Cross 2008, Shormer 2014, McGhee et al 2014), few studies of British politics have looked at the effect of selection on the ideology of political parties. The literature on the selection process in Britain tends to look at the demography of the candidates selected (Ashe et al 2010, Evans 2008, Lamprinakou et al 2016, Norris and Lovenduski 1995, Hill 2013, McIlveen 2009) or consider the extent to which internal party selection procedures can be seen as democratic (e.g. Alexander-Collier 2016). There have been some contributions to the literature from the 1980s which have looked at ideology through considering the effect of the hard-left on the Labour Party selection process. Berrington (1982) found that constituency Labour Parties became increasingly likely to choose left-wing candidates to replace departing Labour MPs. Bochel and Denver (1983) conducted interviews with a sample of people involved in Labour Party selections and found that ideological conflict did have an effect on the selection of candidates but that selectors considered other non-ideological characteristics, such as the ability to win votes, as more important.

More contemporary articles on the effect of ideology on selection include Buttice and Milazzo (2011) who used data from the BRS 2001. They found that political parties were more likely to select extreme political candidates, measured on the left-right scale, in safe seats whilst parties were more likely to select centrists in more competitive seats. Mikulska and Scarrow (2010) also used BRS data to argue that candidates selected under more inclusive selection procedures held positions more in line with their parties' voters. In this study Mikulska and Scarrow used the position of candidates on EU membership as part of their

variable to measure the distance between candidates and voters (ibid: p. 331). The influence of Europe as an individual issue in selection was, however, not considered.

Some scholars have briefly discussed the influence of Europe on the Conservative selection process, whilst not making it the subject of their empirical investigation. For example Smith (2012: p.1289) states that many associations were highly Eurosceptic at the time of the 2010 general election. She also claims, based on off-the-record conversations, that many candidates accepted that to be selected they would have to answer the loaded question "which piece of legislation would you repeal?" with the "European Communities Act". Webb (2008: p.438) has also briefly discussed the selection process, arguing that Eurosceptic and right-wing groups in the party had tried to secure the selection of candidates who shared their ideology. Similar accounts of the selection process have also been provided by journalists (Walters 2001; White 2000).

As there have been only limited attempts to empirically investigate the effect of the selection process on ideology, particularly in relation to the issue of European integration, this chapter makes a unique contribution to the literature.

7.3 Data and methodology

This chapter uses four main data sources to investigate the three elements of the selection process explained above:

- A quantitative analysis of selection decisions at the 2010 general election

- A survey of constituency association officers
- BRS data from 1992, 1997, 2001 and 2005
- Interviews with MPs and those involved in the selection process

Each of these different data sources are outlined below. The empirical sections (7.4-7.6) of the chapter provide details about the precise methodology used.

7.3a Selection decisions at the 2010 general election

A dataset of candidates involved in selection contests for the 2010 general election was created. The purpose of the dataset was to investigate the Conservative talent pool and to assess whether Eurosceptic candidates had greater success.

The dataset was collected using media reporting of the final rounds of constituency selection contests in 2010. The *Conservative Home* website reported on the final rounds of selection contests in many constituencies and some local media also provided information about certain selection contests. For some seats however, mostly seats where Conservatives stood little chance of winning, it was possible to only to determine who won the nomination and not the other candidates in the final round.

Data was found for 623 candidates who reached a final selection round in 2010, of these 398 candidates were successful in gaining a constituency nomination for that election and 140 were elected to Parliament in 2010. To test whether Eurosceptics were more likely to get selected an entry in the dataset was created for every candidate in every seat they contested. For example if a candidate made the shortlist of four seats they had four entries in the dataset.

For each entry in the dataset characteristics of the seat were included such as how Eurosceptic the seat was[19] and the majority in 2010, and also details about the candidate, how local they were to that seat, whether they won the nomination and their position on Europe. In total this dataset contained 775 entries from 405 seats; in 151 of these seats data on all the candidates on the shortlist was found.

To measure candidates' opinions on Europe their endorsements in the 2016 Brexit referendum were used. For those candidates who were MPs at the time of the referendum the endorsement data from chapter 3 was used. For the candidates who did not become MPs the data was less easily available. Many candidates could be placed based on their affiliations to campaigning groups such as Britain Stronger in Europe, Vote Leave and Business for Britain, and for some candidates their referendum endorsements were found through searching their personal blogs and *Twitter* accounts. In total the referendum position was found for 323 candidates who were involved in the 2010 selection contests. A possible objection to this approach of measuring candidate Euroscepticism is that the referendum occurred six years after the selections in 2010. However, the data in this thesis has tended to show that most MPs are consistent over time in their views on Europe (see 6.4c, Figure 6.2 and Table 4.3). Thus it is likely that most candidates' views on Europe would have been similar in 2010 and 2016.

[19] Based on the Hanretty et al (2016) data used in chapters 3 and 4.

7.3b Survey of constituency association officers

An online survey was conducted of Conservative association officers. The survey (appendix F) asked questions seeking to establish how Eurosceptic the associations officers were, how important Europe was in the selection process and whether Eurosceptic candidates were more likely to win the nomination.

Using electoral commission data on Conservative constituency associations and the websites of the associations, the survey was sent to association officers. The survey had 154 responses, a response rate of around 17%. The small sample size yielded few respondents from certain demographics, for example there were only 31 women and 7 under 30s in the sample. However, there were some indicators to suggest that the sample may be representative. The demographics of the survey in terms of gender, age and social class were broadly in line with the research carried out by the Party Members Project (Bale et al 2018), although the Party Members Project polled all members rather than just association officers. The survey also suggests that approximately two thirds (67%) of respondents backed *leave* in the referendum and this in line with polling on how Conservative voters voted in the referendum (Ashcroft 2016). Full details of the summary statistics of the survey are available in appendix F.

7.3c The British Representation Study (BRS)

The British Representation Study was a research project which surveyed Parliamentary candidates standing in the 1992, 1997 2001 and 2005 general

elections. Each survey had several hundred Conservative respondents[20]. The surveys were useful in trying to assess the ideology of the Conservative talent pool as respondents were asked about their views on several issues, including Europe. The survey also provided data on how successful candidates were in making constituency shortlists, as a result of which it was possible to test whether Eurosceptics were more likely to be selected.

7.3d Interviews with MPs and those involved in the selection process

Finally, this chapter will also refer to the interviews conducted with MPs and people involved in the selection process. As the sample size is low, with only 12 people being interviewed, the interview data is used only to inform some areas of the discussion of the data from the above sources[21].

7.4 The role of CCHQ

As the proportion of Eurosceptic Conservative MPs has grown over the period of this thesis it might be intuitively assumed that CCHQ has been favourable to Eurosceptic candidates. However CCHQ has faced criticism from some on the right of the party for favouring moderate and pro-European candidates (Paun and Williams 2014). For example Tim Montgomerie referred to an alleged purging of the candidate list in 2011 (Montgomerie, cited in Heppell 2013) and in 2017 CCHQ received criticism from some Eurosceptics for blocking

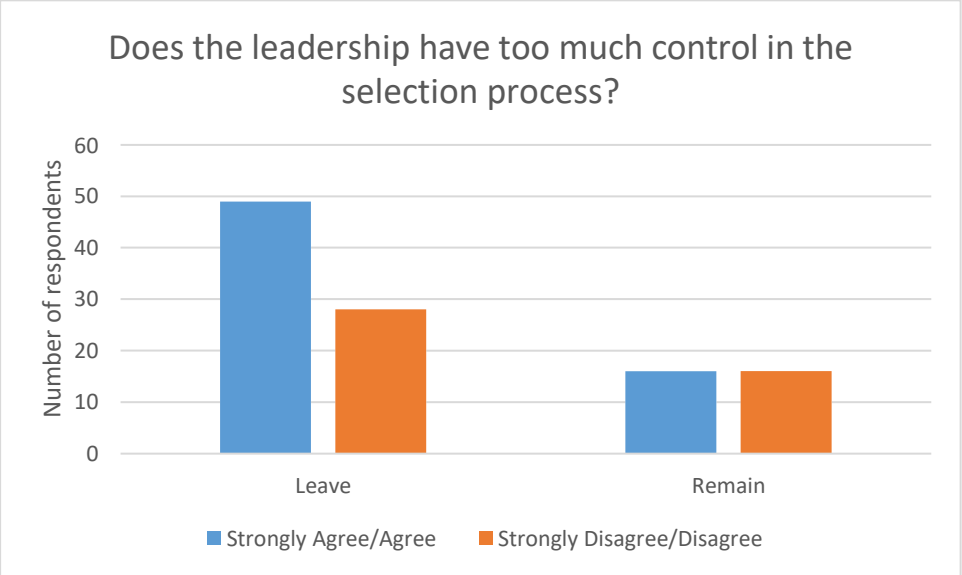
[20] 1992: 589 Conservatives, 1997: 295 Conservatives, 2001: 349 Conservatives, 2005: 242 Conservatives

[21] A list of interviews conducted can be found in Appendix G, transcripts are available on request.

Dan Hannan from making the shortlist for the Aldershot constituency (Parker et al 2017).

There was also some evidence from the data analysed for this chapter that Eurosceptics in the Conservative Party were suspicious of the national party. The survey of association officers showed that local officials who voted for Brexit were more likely to agree than disagree that the national party had too much power in the selection process. Those who voted *remain* by contrast were evenly split on the issue of whether the national party had too much power. Figure 7.1 below displays this. The difference between the two groups is statistically significant.

Figure 7. 1: Association Officers' views on Leadership Control according to vote in the referendum



Source: Thesis original data
n = 154

On the other hand, the data from the BRS suggests that the perception that CCHQ had too much power and prioritised moderates over Eurosceptics was not shared by MPs and Parliamentary candidates. In 2001 for example only

2% of Conservatives stated that they believed that the influence of the national party on selection was "too great". Further, the individuals interviewed for the thesis who have taken the PAB to become an approved candidate confirmed that the process was entirely competency based and that assessors did not ask the candidates about ideology. This suggests that CCHQ was not trying to filter out candidates based on ideology.

To empirically assess whether CCHQ had favoured certain candidates based on ideology, an analysis of the priority list (more commonly known as the "A-list") was undertaken. Candidates on the A-list had an advantage in the selection process as associations had less discretion about choosing non-A-listers for their short lists. If CCHQ were seeking fewer Eurosceptics in the party it should be the case that fewer Eurosceptics would be on the A-list. To test this, the positions of A-list[22] candidates in the referendum were compared to the rest of the Conservative candidates from 2010.

Table 7.1 below displays the summary statistics. Of the A-list candidates whose referendum position could be determined, a majority endorsed *leave* in the referendum whilst a small majority of non-prioritised candidates endorsed *remain*. Contrary to expectations therefore, the A-list actually appears to have been more Eurosceptic than the other candidates, although the difference between the two sets of candidates was not statistically significant. This was the case even though A-list candidates were more likely to become MPs and ministers, who had more office-seeking incentives to support *remain* (see 3.3a

[22] No formal list of the A-list was published, this chapter uses *Conservative Home* (2006) as its source: http://conservativehome.blogs.com/goldlist/2006/05/as_promised_thi.html.

for discussion of officer seeking intentions). As A-list candidates, were not more likely to be pro-European than other candidates the conclusion seems to be that CCHQ did not or could not prioritise pro-European candidates.

Table 7. 1: 2010 Candidates endorsements in the Brexit referendum

	Leave	**Remain**
A-list	43	42
Other Candidates	114	124

Source: thesis original data
Pearson Chi² (1 degree of freedom) = 0.2 P = 0.67

To summarise the discussion on the national party, there is little evidence that CCHQ systematically affected the ideological composition of the Parliamentary party. Contrary to the claims of those on the right, CCHQ does not appear to have prioritised moderate candidates. Most relevantly for the thesis, it seems unlikely that CCHQ was responsible for the increased Euroscepticism in the party.

7.5 The Conservative Constituency Associations

This section of the chapter considers whether Eurosceptic Conservative associations were seeking to select Eurosceptic candidates. 7.5a will consider how Eurosceptic the selectors were, 7.5b will consider how much importance they assigned to Europe in the selection process and 7.5c will investigate whether Eurosceptics were more likely to win the nomination.

7.5a How Eurosceptic were the selectors?

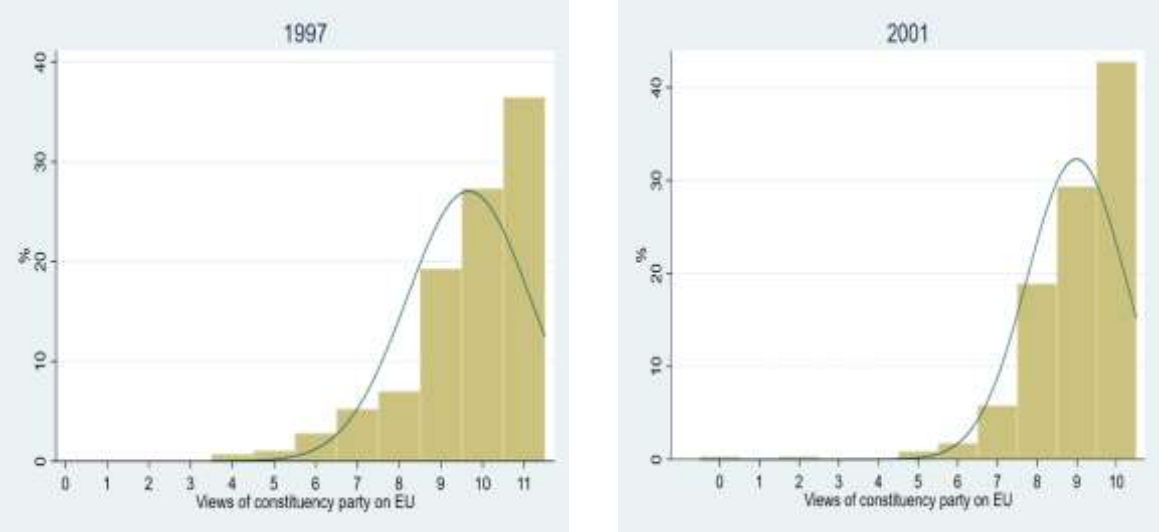
If the associations were a factor in the Parliamentary party becoming more Eurosceptic, high levels of Euroscepticism would be found amongst the

selectors i.e. the association officers and the ordinary members of the party. Previous empirical studies of Conservative Party members have found high levels of Euroscepticism. Webb and Childs (2011) for instance found that all three sections of the membership they identified (liberal, traditionalist and Thatcherite) had high levels of Euroscepticism. Research from the Party Members Project also suggests that the majority of Conservative members held Eurosceptic views on Britain's future relations with the EU (Bale et al 2018), although most members waited until after Cameron had finished his renegotiation before deciding which way to vote in the referendum (Bale et al 2016).

The data analysed in this chapter largely substantiates the previous literature, as high levels of Euroscepticism were found amongst the selectors. Data from the 1997, 2001 and 2005 BRS surveys shows that most Conservative MPs and candidates viewed their constituency parties as being highly Eurosceptic. Figure 7.2 below displays the results for the 1997 and 2001 surveys[23]. Further, the survey of association officers showed that around two-thirds supported *leave* in the referendum. Taken together, these results suggest Eurosceptic attitudes have been predominant amongst members and association officers in recent decades.

[23] The 2005 survey also showed high levels of Euroscepticism; however the wording of the question was changed and thus the results were not strictly comparable to the previous two surveys

Figure 7. 2: Constituency Associations' views on Europe (1-11 scale 1997; 0-10 scale 2001)



Source: BRS Data 1997 and 2001,
1997 n = 285; 2001 n = 344.
The figure was based on the question: "Some people feel that Britain should do all it can to unite fully with the European Union. Other people feel that Britain should do all it can to protect its independence from the European Union. Using the following scale...where would you place your constituency party?" (1997: 1 = Unite fully with the EU; 11 =Protect independence from the EU; 2001: 0 = Unite fully with the EU; 10 = Protect independence from the EU)

7.5b How important is Europe in the selection process?

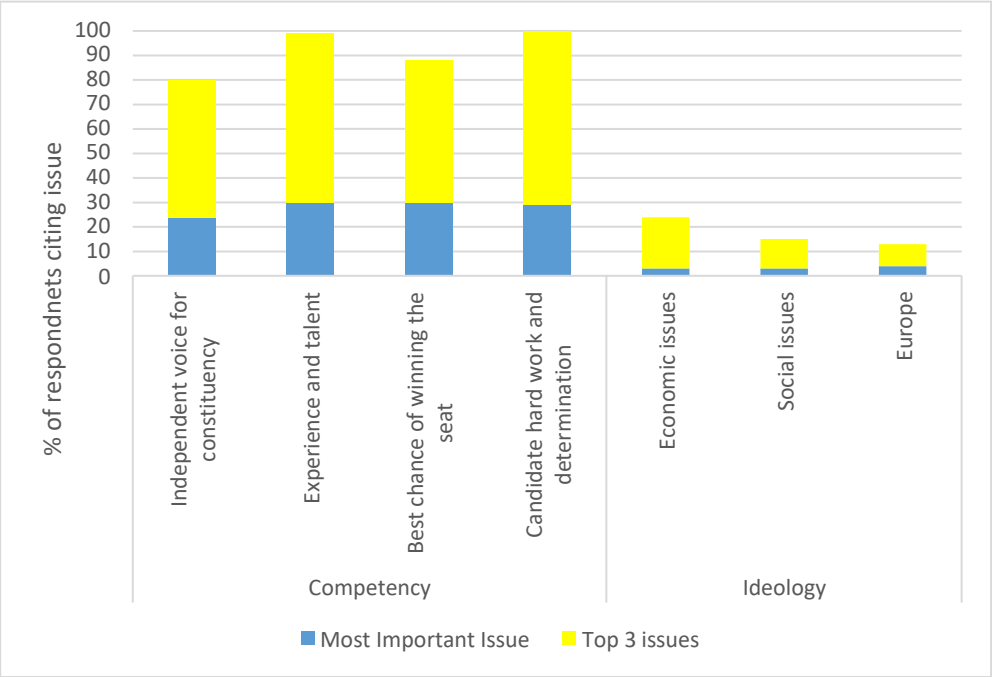
A Eurosceptic party membership does not necessarily mean that Europe will affect candidate selection, since it may be that the issue is viewed as unimportant by the selectors.

The interviews conducted for the thesis with MPs and those involved in the selection process suggest that in some constituencies the issue of Europe was of critical importance in the selection process. One constituency chairman said that "[this constituency] certainly would not have selected a non-Eurosceptic" (interview 12) and that a Europhile would not move beyond the first round of

the process. Some MPs also stated that Euroscepticism was a highly significant factor in selections in which they have been involved (interviews 3 & 5).

However, the evidence from the survey of association officers suggests that Europe was a significant factor only in a minority of constituency selections. The survey of association officers asked respondents to choose which three issues they considered to be the most important when selecting candidates. Respondents were offered a range of competency and ideological factors, including candidates' views on Europe, from which to choose. Figure 7.3 displays the results. These results suggest that Europe, and ideology more broadly, was not an important issue in candidate selection. The respondents identified candidate talent and hard work as being the most important issues in selection. Europe, by contrast, was identified as the most important issue by only 4% of respondents and only 13% identified it as one of the most important issues.

Figure 7. 3: Most important issues in selection according to association officers



Source: original thesis data
n = 154. Based on responses to the question: "Which are the most important issues when selecting a Parliamentary candidate? Please choose the 3 issues that matter most to you:" Blue bars indicate the issue respondents identified as the most important and yellow bars indicate issues respondents identified as being in the top 3 most important issues.

The survey data, then, suggests that ideological factors, including Europe, were not as important as candidate competencies. Similarly, the general consensus amongst the MPs interviewed for this thesis was that Europe was not fundamentally important to the selection process (interviews 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 & 11). For example one MP stated that he believed that Europe "was an element in all my selections… but never a big element in any of them" (interview 7).

Overall, the results suggest that in some individual constituency selections Europe may have been of high importance, however in most instances Europe was of limited importance to the selection process. In many instances candidate competencies were more important than their ideological positions.

7.5c Were Eurosceptics more likely to win the nomination?

7.5b suggested that most selectors did not consider Europe as an important factor in selection decisions. However, it could still have been the case that even if only a minority of selectors made decisions on the basis of Europe this could give Eurosceptics an advantage in the selection process. This section assesses whether Eurosceptics were more likely to be selected for the 1997-2010 general elections.

For the 1997, 2001 and 2005 elections BRS data was used to assess whether Eurosceptics were more likely to be placed on constituency shortlists. The BRS surveys asked candidates how many seats they applied for and how many final shortlists they appeared on. Appendix D details the summary statistics of these variables for these years. A dependent variable was created to measure the success of candidates in getting a place on the shortlist by dividing total number of shortlists they were on by the total number of applications they made. The maximum score on this variable was 1; with higher scores indicating that MPs were more successful in making the shortlist. Some candidates reported a higher number of shortlist placement than applications, resulting in a score above 1; these candidates were excluded from these calculations. We display how this variable was formulated this in equation form below.

$$\text{Shortlist success [variable]} = \frac{Number\ of\ times\ on\ the\ shortlist}{Number\ of\ applications}$$

Focusing on the shortlist stage of the process enables investigation of whether association officers were using their influence to filter out candidates based on the position taken by candidates on Europe. There are some issues with this

variable which make it potentially problematic. Firstly, it relies entirely on candidates' memory of how many seats they applied for. Secondly, and more fundamentally, the BRS surveyed only applicants who became candidates, hence unsuccessful applicants, who would probably have made fewer shortlists, are excluded from the data. Nevertheless, the variable provides the potential for an accurate measure of how successful candidates were at making the final shortlists.

Table 7.2 below displays a regression analysis designed to test whether Eurosceptic candidates were more successful in making the final shortlists in 1997, 2001 and 2005. The independent variable used to measure opinion on Europe was candidates' self-placement on a 1-10 scale in response to a question on European integration, higher values indicating greater hostility to integration. The models also included a dummy variable for whether a candidate had worked for the national party and also a variable measuring approval of the death penalty. The three regression models use OLS, the equation of the models is below:

$$\text{Shorlistsuccess} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Europe(1-10)}_1 + \beta_2 \text{Deathpenaltysupport}_2 + \beta_3 \text{nationalpartyoffice}_3$$

Table 7. 2: Regression of success in getting onto constituency shortlists (OLS)

	1997	2001	2005
Views on Europe (1-10)#	0.02	-0.01	0.02
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Death Penalty Support†	<-0.01	0.04***	0.02
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Held National Party office (0/1)	-0.08	0.17***	-0.02
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.10)
Intercept	0.34**	0.74***	0.39**
	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.14)
R^2	0.02	0.05	0.03
N	203	286	172

Source: BRS 1997, 2001 and 2005
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Robust standard errors in parentheses
For 1997 and 2001 this was based on the question: "Some people feel that Britain should do all it can to unite fully with the European Union. Other people feel that Britain should do all it can to protect its independence from the European Union. Using the following scale...where would you place your constituency party" (1997: 1 = Unite fully with the EU; 11 =Protect independence from the EU; 2001: 0 = Unite fully with the EU; 10 = Protect independence from the EU). For 2005 based on the question: "Some people feel that Britain should definitely get out of the EU. Other people feel that Britain should definitely stay in the EU" 0 = Unite fully with EU; 10 = Protect independence from the EU.
† Based on the question "For some crimes the death penalty is the most appropriate Sentence" 1 = Strongly disagree ; 2 = Disagree ; 3 = Neither; 4 = Agree; 5 = Agree Strongly

The consistent result from the models is that there was no relationship between position on Europe and the likelihood of getting selected. For the 1997 and 2001 elections robustness checks were carried out using different measures of Euroscepticism from the BRS surveys as alternative independent variables (reported in Appendix D). None of these tests produced a significant relationship between attitudes on Europe and success at getting on constituency shortlists. The data suggests that some non-European issues may have affected selection decisions, as candidates who had previously held

national party office and supported the death penalty were more successful. The national party office result accords with the findings in 7.5b which found that candidates' experience and competencies were generally seen as more important than their ideology. Overall, then, the results from 1997-2005 provide little evidence that the issue of Europe had an effect on which candidates progressed to the final shortlist.

For the 2010 Parliament the next stage of the selection process was investigated, namely whether Eurosceptic candidates on the final shortlist were more likely to win the selection contest. To test this the dataset of selection decisions at the 2010 general election, described in 7.3a above, was used. The dependent variable was a binary variable measuring whether the candidate won the nomination. As the dependent variable was binary, logistic regression analysis was used. Candidates' positions on the Brexit referendum were used to measure how Eurosceptic they were. The models also included a "local" (0-2) scale to account for the fact that local candidates might be preferred. Candidates were given 0 on this scale if they were not local, 1 if they had connections to the county or area near the constituency and 2 if they had links to the constituency itself. To test whether Eurosceptics were more likely to gain the nomination three different models were tested: one considering all constituencies, one limiting the sample to only safe Conservative seats and marginal seats which the Conservatives nearly won, and one considering only seats the Conservatives won. The structure of the three models is as below:

$$\Pr(\text{nomination} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{referendumendorsement}_1 + \beta_2 \text{local}_2)$$

Table 7.3 presents the average marginal effect of the variables from the three logit models. Similarly the results from the BRS data, the results here suggest no statistical relationship between being Eurosceptic and being successful in the selection process. In none of the models is the referendum position variable statistically significant and in each model the coefficient is negative, implying that *leavers* may have been less likely to win the seat. The data suggests that local candidates were much more likely to win the selection contests. Model 3 for example suggests that candidates who had strong local links to the constituency had a .52 (or 52%) higher probability of winning the selection than someone with no local links. This is in line with the other results in this chapter that non-European and non-ideological factors were often more important in the selection process.

Table 7. 3: Marginal effects on the probability of winning the nomination in 2010 (logit model)

	All seats	Safe Conservative + Marginal† seats	Conservative seats only
Referendum endorsement (leave = 1)	-0.03	-0.07	-0.06
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Local candidate (0-2)#	0.26***	0.26***	0.26***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Pseudo R^2	0.07	0.16	0.17
Count R^2	0.66	0.68	0.69
Adjust Count R^2	0.30	0.30	0.30
N	465	342	321

Source: Thesis original data
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Robust standard errors in parentheses
† Defined as a seat which the Conservatives either won or lost by less than 5%
# 0 = non local; 1 = local to county/near constituency; 2 = local to constituency

The data suggests then that Eurosceptics were not more likely to gain a place on the shortlist or win the nomination once on the shortlist. Thus it would appear that there have not been widespread efforts to prioritise Eurosceptic candidates in the selection process. Both association officers and those involved in selection meetings seemed to care more about non-ideological candidate qualities such as candidate talent, ability to win votes, and local links than they did about Europe.

Summary of 7.5

The Conservative selectorate has consistently displayed hostile attitudes towards European integration, but the data suggests that it has been a relatively unimportant issue in selection decisions. Rather, selectors tend to

place a higher importance on the competencies of candidates such as their previous experience. There is no evidence that there has been a widespread effort from constituency associations to prioritise Eurosceptic candidates although the survey data and the interview evidence suggests that in a minority of constituencies Europe was an important factor. Overall, the data has suggested that candidates with more hostile attitudes to the EU were no more likely to be shortlisted or to win the nomination than their competitors who were less hostile to Europe.

As Europe was not an issue of major importance in the majority of selections, it would appear unlikely that the Conservative associations played a large part in the explanation for the Parliamentary party becoming more Eurosceptic.

7.6 The Conservative Party talent pool

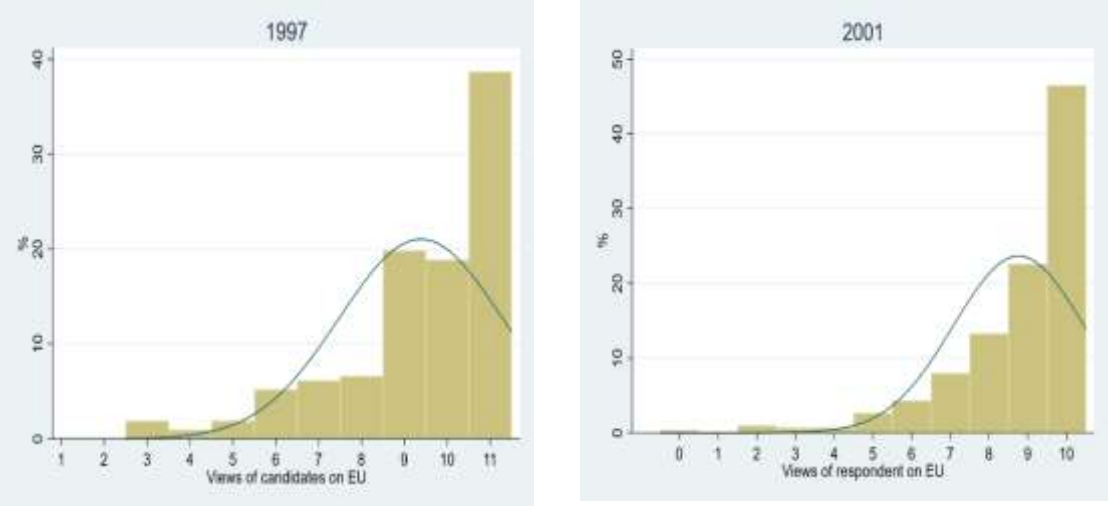
In the previous two sections this chapter has argued that neither CCHQ nor the Conservative constituency associations were responsible for creating a more Eurosceptic Parliamentary party. In this section it will be considered whether the Conservative talent pool, i.e. the candidates themselves, formed part of the explanation for the Parliamentary party becoming more Eurosceptic. If it were the case that the majority of the talent pool were highly Eurosceptic, it could be that the national party and the selectors at the constituency level had relatively little discretion when choosing candidates. Previous empirical studies of new Conservative candidates have suggested that the majority of Conservative candidates were indeed Eurosceptics at certain elections (Lynch and Whitaker 2013; Norris and Lovenduski 2004).

To consider the potential effect of the talent pool on the Parliamentary party, the attitudes of candidates who had not previously served as MPs in the 1997-2010 elections were assessed. These candidates were assessed as they represented the talent pool from which new Conservative MPs would be drawn.

The data from the 1997, 2001 and 2005 BRS surveys suggests that the majority of the Conservative talent pool did indeed have Eurosceptic attitudes. Only a small minority of Conservative candidates could be classified as Euro-enthusiasts with the vast majority of candidates holding at least soft Eurosceptic views. On the issue of the single currency for example, in 1997 88% of Conservative candidates opposed membership of the EMU compared to just 6% who supported it an this opposition increased to 95% against with only 3% supporting membership in 2001. In 1997 86% of Conservative candidates also stated that they thought the powers of the EU should be reduced.

Another indicator of high levels of Euroscepticism is that most candidates placed themselves at the anti-integration end of the 10-point scale measuring attitudes towards Europe. For 1997 and 2001 the distribution of Conservative candidates on this scale is displayed in Figure 7.4 below. Very few Conservatives placed themselves at the pro-European end of the scale with the Conservative average being 6 places higher than the Labour average. Thus, it would appear most candidates were hostile to EU integration with only a few Europhiles amongst the candidates. These results are line with the findings from chapter 6 that very few new Euro-enthusiast Tory MPs entered Parliament after the 1997 general election.

Figure 7. 4: The distribution of Conservative candidates' views on Europe (1-11 1997; 0-10 2001)



Source: BRS 1997 and 2001
1997 n = 212; 2001 n = 301
This includes only candidates who were not MPs at the time of the election.
The figure was based on the question: "Some people feel that Britain should do all it can to unite fully with the European Union. Other people feel that Britain should do all it can to protect its independence from the European Union. Using the following scale...where would you place your constituency party?" (1997: 1 = Unite fully with the EU; 11 =Protect independence from the EU; 2001: 0 = Unite fully with the EU; 10 = Protect independence from the EU)

There was also a notable proportion of hard-Eurosceptics amongst the candidates. In 1997 45% of candidates stated that they believed the government should hold a referendum on EU membership and in 2001 35% of candidates stated that they disapproved of EU membership, although only 10% backed withdrawal. For the 2005 BRS the self-placement question on Europe was changed to a more explicit question about whether Britain should leave the EU: "Some people feel that Britain should definitely get out of the EU. Other people feel that Britain should definitely stay in the EU". In response to this question 33% of candidates placed themselves at 9 or 10, i.e. the most Eurosceptic end of the 0 to 10 scale. This suggests that a notable proportion of candidates was

willing to at least contemplate leaving the EU. These figures suggest that the proportion of hard-Eurosceptic candidates was greater than the proportion of Conservative MPs holding hard-Eurosceptic views in the Parliaments preceding those elections (cf. Figure 4.1).

Analysis of the data from 2010 also suggests that a substantial proportion of Conservative candidates held hard Eurosceptic views. Of the 323 candidates for which data was available, 49% supported *leave* in the 2016 Brexit referendum. Moreover, there is good reason to suggest that the career ambitions of those who entered Parliament could have suppressed the extent of support for Brexit amongst these candidates. Table 7.4 shows the positions of the 2010 candidates measured against their status in Parliament at the time of the 2016 referendum. The table shows that the majority of the 2010 candidates who were new MPs and ministers at the time of the referendum supported *remain*. As discussed in 3.3b these MPs had the most office seeking incentives to support *remain*. The candidates in the other two groups (the non-MPs and the experienced backbenchers), by contrast, had relatively few office-seeking incentives and a majority of these candidates endorsed *leave*. Evidence to support this argument, that office-seeking suppressed support for *leave*, is provided by several MPs interviewed for this thesis who indicated that a majority of Conservative MPs would have supported Brexit in a free and anonymous vote, and that many endorsed *remain* for career reasons and loyalty to Cameron (interviews 4, 7, 9 & 11). This suggests that a majority of candidates at the 2010 election held hard-Eurosceptic views.

Table 7. 4: 2010 Candidates' referendum endorsements measured against their office-status

	Office-status† in 2016	Leave	Remain
Office-seeking incentives for supporting *remain*	New MPs (n=28)	36%	**64%**
	Frontbenchers (n=86)	26%	**74%**
Few office seeking intentions	Non-MPs (n =162)	**58%**	42%
	Experienced backbenchers (n=47)	**66%**	34%

Source: thesis original data
This includes only new candidates at the 2010 election.
Person Chi^2 (3 degrees of freedom) = 31.5 P< 0.00001
† Office status refers to status on the day of the referendum. Experienced backbenchers entered Parliament before 2015 and were on the backbenches on the day of the referendum. New MPs were elected for the first time in 2015. Frontbenchers were ministers, whips or PPS on the day of the referendum.

As well as the presence of hard-Eurosceptic candidates shown in Table 7.4, there may of course have been soft-Eurosceptic candidates. Data relating to the soft-Euroscepticism of candidates at the 2010 election was not available, but data collected earlier by Lynch and Whittaker (2013: p. 321) suggests that that the vast-majority of Conservative candidates were Eurosceptics (of varying degrees) with very few Euro-enthusiasts.

The data, then, on candidates from 1997-2010 suggests that Eurosceptics dominated the Conservative talent pool. With the majority of the talent pool holding Eurosceptic attitudes, the scope for CCHQ or the constituency associations to choose between potential candidates based on Europe was limited. This could explain why the data in section 7.4 and section 7.5 suggests that neither CCHQ nor the local constituency associations showed favouritism towards (or indeed against) Eurosceptics in the selection process. As there is no

evidence that Eurosceptics have been prioritised in selection the most logical reason for the Parliamentary party becoming more Eurosceptic was the extent of Euroscepticism in the Conservative talent pool.

Further, many of the candidates in the talent pool tended to prioritise Europe over other political issues. For example the BRS data from 1997 suggests that around a third of Conservative candidates viewed European integration as being the most important political issue and two-thirds viewed it as being one of the top three most important political issues. The attitudes of Conservative candidates towards Europe, and the Parliamentary behaviour of Conservative MPs, suggest that many elite individuals at the top of the Conservative Party have been strongly committed to the European integration issue. This is seemingly in contrast to the majority of Conservative selectors who seem to have prioritised other issues in selection.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated whether the selection process have formed part of the reason why the Conservative Parliamentary party has become more Eurosceptic. In doing this it has focused on three aspects of the process: the national party, the constituency associations and the candidates themselves. The data on CCHQ and the associations suggest that there has not been a systematic attempt to select candidates based on Europe at any stage of the process. It has been argued, rather, that the Conservative talent pool is the main reason why the Parliamentary party has become more Eurosceptic. The data shows that the Conservative talent pool has been dominated by

Eurosceptics since at least 1997. As a result of this there has been less discretion for the selectors to choose candidates based on their views on Europe.

CCHQ has often been accused by those on the right of the party of prioritising centrist and pro-European candidates. However, the evidence found in this chapter suggests that the process of gaining approval as a candidate from the CCHQ is almost entirely competency, rather than ideologically, based. Analysis of the priority list from 2010 suggested that those on the list were actually slightly more likely to be Eurosceptic than the other candidates, which is the opposite of what would be expected if the critics of CCHQ were correct. There seems to be little evidence that CCHQ has affected the ideological balance of the party on Europe.

The same conclusion was reached concerning the association stage of the process. The data suggests that the selectors, both association officers and other members, were strongly Eurosceptic but that they prioritised, other non-ideological, candidate characteristics. Perhaps as a result of this and the fact that most candidates were Eurosceptic, the data suggests that candidates' positions on Europe were not associated with success in the selection process. There were a small number of seats which did prioritise Eurosceptic candidates but the statistical evidence suggests that these seats were not of sufficient number to create a systematic advantage for Eurosceptics.

Overall, then, the ideological balance of the Parliamentary party has not been significantly affected by the role of CCHQ or the associations in the selection process but by the composition of the talent pool. Since 1997 the Conservative

Party talent pool has been predominantly Eurosceptic. Many of these candidates were also highly passionate about the EU issue, considering it as one of the most important political issues.

The existence of this Eurosceptic pool of Conservative candidates across several elections provides the most likely reason why the Parliamentary party has become more Eurosceptic. The talent pool being dominated by Eurosceptics gives the selectors little room for choice when selecting candidates based on Europe and the data suggests that in any case most selectors were more concerned about non-ideological issues.

Another factor which could also contribute to the explanation for the Eurosceptics becoming more dominant in the Parliamentary party is that voters in the general election are more likely to vote Conservative when the candidate is Eurosceptic. The next chapter of this thesis investigates this.

Chapter 8: Eurosceptics at general elections

Abstract

This chapter continues the investigation of replacement by considering whether the differing electoral performance of candidates affected the ideological balance of the party on Europe, i.e. whether the party became more Eurosceptic because the electorate was more likely to vote Conservative when their constituency candidate was a Eurosceptic. The results suggest that for most voters the issue of Europe was of little importance and very few people voted on the basis of candidates rather than parties. The analysis of electoral performance found little evidence that Eurosceptics consistently received higher vote shares or that Eurosceptic candidates were more likely to win (re-)election. On this basis it is concluded that the electorate did not form part of the explanation for the Parliamentary Party became more Eurosceptic. It is argued that the increased Euroscepticism in the Conservative Party has been elite driven rather than a response to electoral demand.

8.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates whether the differing performance of candidates at general elections affected the ideological balance of the Parliamentary party concerning Europe. Chapter 6 established that Parliamentary turnover was part of the reason why the party became more Eurosceptic in the time period covered by the thesis. It was argued that three factors related to Parliamentary turnover could affect the ideological balance of party: the ideology of the candidates themselves, the selection process and the general elections. The

empirical work in chapter 7 suggests that the selection process did not affect levels of Euroscepticism within the party and that a candidate based explanation was more plausible. This chapter turns the empirical focus towards investigating a possible general election based explanation.

In doing this the chapter will need to address the issue of the personal vote in British politics. The particular focus of this chapter will be whether a candidate's position on Europe affected their vote share. When investigating this there are two questions to be investigated:

1. Were Eurosceptic Conservatives more likely to win or retain their seats at general elections?
2. Did Conservative candidates gain or lose votes *because* of their stance on Europe?

Question (1) focuses on whether Eurosceptic candidates performed better at general elections. This question does not consider whether candidates' positions on Europe caused differences in electoral performance. There could have been many mediating variables which could have potentially caused a relationship to exist. It could be, for example, that Eurosceptics performed better than other candidates as they were more likely to represent safe Tory seats. Another possibility is that other issues such as support for the death penalty, which Eurosceptics were more likely to support, could have driven differences in electoral performance. Question (2) is a more fundamental question as to whether Euroscepticism per se provided an electoral advantage for Conservative candidates even when other factors had been controlled for.

As this thesis is concerned with the changing ideological composition of the Parliamentary Party this chapter will primarily investigate question (1). There will be also be some empirical investigation of question (2). The empirical focus of this chapter will be the five elections which took place during the time period of this thesis: 1997, 2001, 2005, 2010 and 2015. The chapter will analyse raw electoral data, data from the British Electoral Study (BES) and data from the British Representation Study (BRS).

The results suggest that whilst the majority of Conservative voters were Eurosceptics, knowledge about individual candidates was low and very few voted on the basis of their candidate's personal qualities. The data provides some evidence to suggest that Eurosceptic MPs and candidates did, in some instances, receive a higher share of the vote, but, this advantage is largely the result of other factors. Most importantly for the thesis, the data provides only limited evidence that Eurosceptic candidates were more likely to either gain or retain seats in Parliament. On this basis, it is concluded that general elections probably do not form part of the explanation for why the Parliamentary party becoming more Eurosceptic during the course of this thesis. This conclusion provides further support for the central argument of the thesis, that the increased Euroscepticism within the party is a consequence of the internal politics of the Conservative Party rather than a response to electoral demand from the wider electorate.

The chapter is structured as follows. 8.2 will outline the previous literature on the personal vote and the impact of the issue of Europe on the electoral success of the Conservative Party. 8.3 will detail the data used in this chapter. 8.4 will

consider the importance of Europe and also the impact of the personal vote between 1992 and 2015. 8.5 will consider whether Eurosceptic Conservatives received a higher share of the vote than less sceptical candidates 8.6 considers whether Eurosceptics were more likely to be elected. 8.7 concludes the chapter and discusses the implications for the thesis.

8.2 Relevant literature

8.2a The personal vote in the UK

It has traditionally been argued that elections in Britain and similar Westminster model democracies are determined on the basis of parties rather than candidates standing for office. However, research has suggested that the personal vote can have a small but significant effect on election results. Cain et al (1984: p.110) argue that the personal vote in Britain is "much weaker than that in the United States but of somewhat greater importance than is commonly believed." Empirical studies have found that candidates' electoral performance can be affected by levels of constituency service (Norton and Wood 1992; Cain et al 1987), incumbency (Norris et al 1992), and the demographic characteristics of the candidates (Fisher et al 2015; Magni and Reynolds 2018).

There have also been studies which have argued that MPs' ideological positions and record in Parliament affected their vote share. Vivian and Wagner (2012) considered the voting behaviour of Labour MPs in the 1997 and 2001 Parliaments and found that rebellious MPs gained an electoral reward in certain circumstances. Specifically, they were more likely to attract voters who were favourably inclined towards Labour but disapproved of Tony Blair's

leadership. In an earlier study of Conservative MPs, Pattie and Johnson (1994) found that MPs' voting records on issues of marked public interest such as the poll tax and capital punishment had a "small but discernible" effect on the support they received in the 1992 general election.

There is, then, evidence to suggest that a personal vote can affect candidates' electoral success in the UK. It is important not to overstate this, however, as most studies show the vote share of candidates resulting from a personal vote is only marginally affected by a few percentage points. Whilst this may be significant for candidates in marginal constituencies it is unlikely to have a major effect on the ideological balance of a Parliamentary Party, the issue being considered in this chapter.

8.2b Europe and the personal vote in the Conservative Party

There is some evidence to suggest that European integration has affected vote choice and that the Conservative Party has been more likely to gain the votes of Eurosceptic voters (Evans 2002, De Vries 2007, Evans and Butt 2007). There have however been divisions in the literature about whether the issue of Europe has been an electoral benefit for the Conservatives. Some have argued that divisions over Europe have damaged the party (Turner 2000, Evans 1998) and others have argued that the Conservative Party has appeared out of touch by focusing too much on Europe and holding extreme positions (Bartle 2002, Norris and Lovenduski 2004, Bale 2006). On the other hand there are those argue that the Conservative electoral appeal was strengthened because of their stance on Europe. Green (2005) argues that party acted rationally when in

opposition by seeking to emphasise the issues they were leading on such as Europe and law and order. Evans has consistently argued (2002; Evans and Butt 2007) that Euroscepticism has been an optimal position for Conservatives.

There has been only a limited literature looking at the effect of Europe on the personal vote of Conservative MPs. Kam (2009), using data from the 1997 BES, found that Maastricht rebels had greater name recognition amongst their constituents than other MPs. McAllister and Studlar (2000), in their study of the 1997 general election, considered whether declared Eurosceptics performed better than other Conservative candidates and also investigated the effect of the Referendum Party on the Conservative Party vote share. They found that declared Eurosceptics received a 2.3% higher vote share than non-Eurosceptics. However they argued that this was largely accounted for by incumbency, turnout differences and the social background of constituencies. Interestingly, their figures suggest that Eurosceptic Conservatives received 7.1% less vote share when facing a Referendum Party candidate whilst non-Eurosceptic Conservatives increased their vote share by 2.4% when facing a Referendum candidate. McAllister and Studlar estimate that the Conservatives lost 16 seats because of the Referendum Party and a further two seats because of UKIP (ibid). They do not however state whether this seat loss primarily affected Eurosceptic Conservatives and the effect of this on the Parliamentary Party.

This chapter will seek to contribute to the literature by analysing the other elections in the period covered by the thesis, as well as the 1997 election, and consider any possible effect of the candidates' electoral performance on the ideological balance of the PCP.

8.3 Data

This chapter uses three primary sources of data for the empirical analysis.

8.3a Raw election data

Raw election data was analysed using the datasets of Conservative MPs used in previous chapters. In addition, data from Pippa Norris' dataset of general election results was used (Norris 2017, Norris and Singleton 2010, Norris 2005). This data was used to test whether MPs who adopted a more Eurosceptic position were more likely to win re-election; the analysis considered the election results from 1997-2015.

8.3b The British Electoral Study (BES)

BES data was used to assess how important Europe was as an issue to voters in each general election and to what extent candidate specific factors affected voters. There is some inconsistency in the questions asked to respondents between surveys, as a result of which some data can be analysed only for one election. For example only in 1997 does the survey ask respondents to place their Conservative candidate's position on Europe.

8.3c The British Representation Study (BRS)

The BRS data from 1997, 2001 and 2005 was particularly useful for analysing the electoral performance of candidates who were not incumbents. The BRS data records the self-placement of candidates on Europe in addition to their vote shares and swing from the previous election.

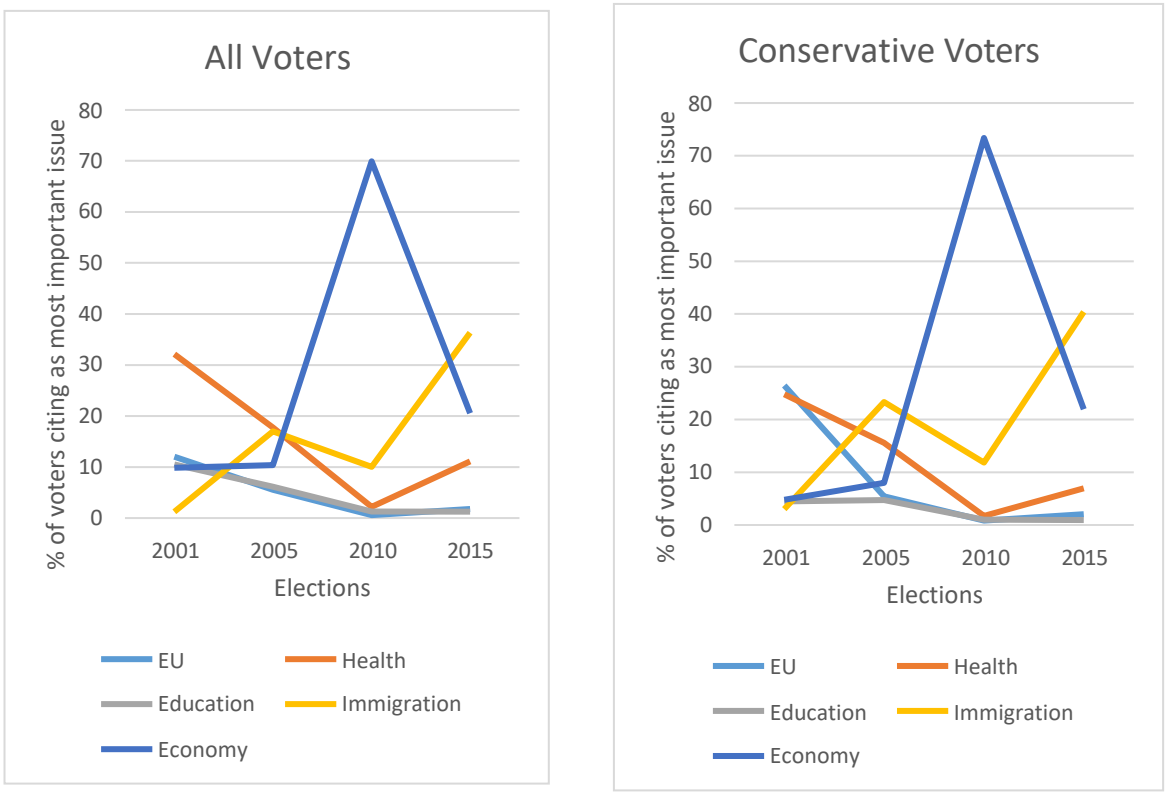
8.4 The importance of Europe and the personal vote

This section of the chapter assesses the importance of Europe and candidate specific factors for voters in general elections. If European integration is of little concern to voters and/or voters are unconcerned about individual candidates then it would be unlikely that candidates would benefit or suffer from a personal vote on account of Europe.

8.4a The importance of Europe to the electorate 1997-2015

It was argued in chapter 4 that polling suggests that Europe was a relatively low saliency issue for voters until the start of the referendum campaign in 2016 (Figure 4.4 and discussion in 4.6c). Data from the BES on the whole concurs with this finding. Figure 8.1 below shows the importance of Europe to all voters and to Conservative voters from 2001-2015. In terms of the whole electorate the data suggests that Europe was not an important issue. With the exception of 2001, only 5% or less of the population cited Europe as being the most important issue and it was below issues such as immigration, health, education and the economy in terms of importance. In the 2010 and 2015 elections fewer than 1% of the population identified Europe as being one of the most important issues. The same pattern largely holds for the Conservative voters with one exception, the 2001 general election. In 2001 the Conservatives' Eurosceptic "Save the Pound" message dominated the media coverage of their campaign (Bartle 2002). This message appears to have been heard by Conservative voters as 26% cited European integration as being the most important issue, the highest total for any issue at the 2001 election.

Figure 8. 1: Voters' most important issues at general elections



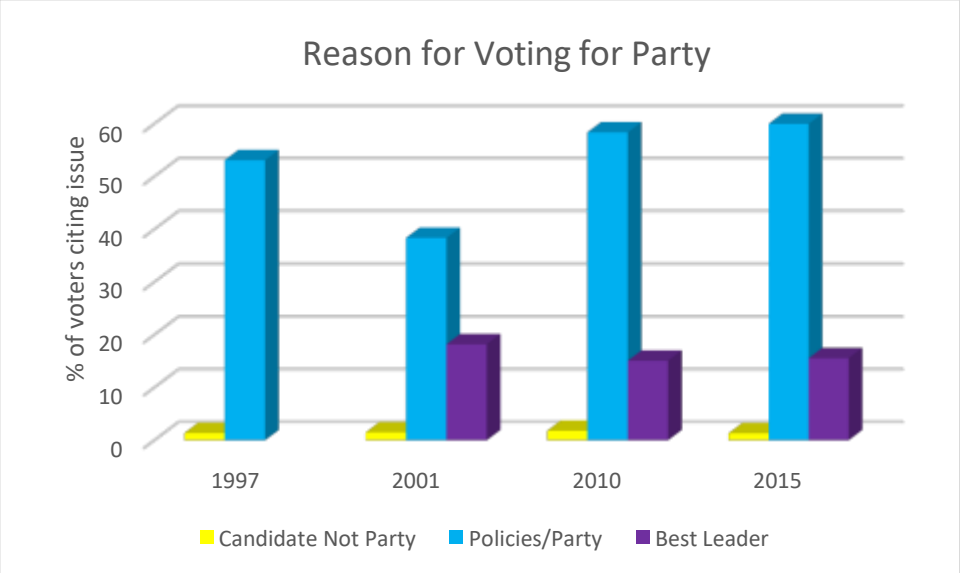
Source: BES 1997-2015

As Europe has generally been a low saliency issue it is unlikely that it would have been a decisive factor in determining the overall results of general elections. However, it is possible that in particularly close marginal constituency contests Europe had the potential to be a significant factor. In the 2001 and 2005 general elections more than 5% of the public viewed Europe as the most important issue, thus creating the potential for a decisive vote if they based their vote solely on Europe. The BES data shows that Conservative voters and respondents who stated that Europe was the most important issue were more likely than others to hold Eurosceptic views, suggesting that if there was a personal vote on Europe, Eurosceptic Conservative candidates would be best placed to benefit.

8.4b The importance of the personal vote

A consistent finding of the BES data is that voters assigned very little importance to candidates when deciding how to vote. At each election fewer than 2% of respondents stated that they made their decision on how to vote on the basis of candidates rather than parties. Other factors such as the policies of the party and the party leader were much more important for affecting how people voted. Figure 8.2 below displays this. Data from the BRS also suggests that candidates themselves are sceptical about the size of a personal vote, as 94% of candidates agreed with the statement that "most people vote for the party not the individual candidate". Only 2% of candidates disagreed strongly with this statement.

Figure 8. 2: Reasons for voting for Party (All Voters)



Source: BES 1997-2015.

As less than 2% of voters voted on the basis of candidates it would suggest that only in highly marginal seats was the personal vote likely to be an important factor. When considered alongside the fact that, as discussed in 8.4a above, only

a small percentage of the population considered the EU as the most important issue, it seems unlikely many people would have voted for a candidate based on Europe. Indeed, the BES data suggests that there was only a small proportion of the population who both voted on the basis of candidates and considered Europe to be the most important issue. In 2001 this group represented only 0.6% of the BES sample and in 2015 only one respondent (0.05%) voted on the basis of candidates and considered Europe to be the most important issue. Only in the most marginal of constituencies would this affect the result of the election and it is very unlikely therefore that this would have a major effect on the ideological composition of the Parliamentary Party.

8.5 The effect of Europe on the vote share of Conservative Candidates

In this section it is tested whether Conservative candidates received a higher or lower share of the vote based on their stance on Europe. The findings from 8.4 suggest that it is unlikely that this would be the case, however it could be that voting behaviour in practice does not conform to expectations arising from the survey data.

8.5a Conservative MPs seeking re-election

The first point of enquiry considered whether the vote-share of sitting MPs differed according to their position on Europe. If there was a relationship between position on Europe and vote-share, this would primarily affect sitting MPs as they are more visible than other candidates and the fact that they have been in Parliament, taking part in divisions and debates, suggests that they are more likely to have taken a firm stance on Europe. To test whether

Eurosceptics received a higher share of the vote, Conservative MPs' position on Europe, measured by the Europe scale used in previous chapters (see section 4.4a for details), was regressed against the dependent variable of the Conservative constituency majority at the next general election. For example MPs' positions in the 1992 Parliament were regressed against their majorities at the 1997 general election. In addition to this bivariate model, independent variables were added to control for Conservative majority at the previous election, MP's status in the House of the Commons and their position on the social conservatism scale (see 3.4b for an explanation of the social conservatism scale). The results from bivariate models are presented in Table 8.1 below, the results of the multivariate models presented in Appendix E (Table 8A). The regression analysis is an OLS regression in the format:

$$\text{Conservative majority election}_t = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{ Europe-position Parliament}_{t-1}$$

Conservative majority is measured in percentage

Table 8. 1: MPs' majorities at the general elections according to position on Europe in preceding Parliament

	1997	**2001**	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**
Europe Scale# (Reference Category: Euro-enthusiasts)					
Unclassified	-4.65	2.08	-3.81*	-4.37	-5.57
	(3.83)	(2.48)	(2.27)	(3.15)	(4.02)
Soft-Eurosceptics	0.86	1.98	0.41	-2.11	1.25
	(2.64)	(1.64)	(1.66)	(2.26)	(3.39)
Hard-Eurosceptics	0.03	-0.73	-4.01*	-4.23*	-4.91
	(2.69)	(1.99)	(2.18)	(2.49)	(3.17)
Constant	2.92	13.99***	20.51***	27.64***	29.72***
	(1.80)	(1.33)	(1.42)	(2.02)	(2.98)
R^2	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.02	0.02
N	201	145	157	163	2.69

Souce: Thesis original data
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1
Robust standard errors in parentheses
See 4.4a for details about the Europe scale

Almost all the results show no statistical differences in vote share based on MPs' position on Europe. The 2005 and 2001 elections are the only exceptions. Here, the data suggests that hard-Eurosceptic MPs received statistically lower vote-shares than Euro-enthusiasts, the opposite to what would have been predicted given that Conservative voters are more Eurosceptic. However, these statistical relationship disappear once previous vote-share is controlled for (see Table 8A in Appendix E), suggesting that Europhile MPs were in safer seats than hard-Eurosceptics. The results, then, give little reason to suggest that voters were more likely to reward Conservative MPs based on their stance on Europe.

To further test the effect of Euroscepticism the variables used to measure Euroscepticism in the 1992 and 2010 Parliaments were changed to dummy variables measuring whether an MP had rebelled on Europe. These two Parliaments were investigated further, on the grounds that during these periods of Conservative government the issue of Europe and the Conservative Party was higher on the political agenda and thus may have created more interest amongst the wider electorate. For the 1992 Parliament a dummy variable was created denoting whether an MP rebelled on the Maastricht Treaty votes. In the 2010 Parliament the dummy variable denotes whether an MP rebelled against the party whip on Europe. The basic structure of the models presented in Table 8.2 is as follows:

The bivariate models:

$\text{Majority election}_t = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{ rebelvote Parliament}_{t-1}$

The multivariate models:

$\text{Majority (\%)} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{rebelvoteParliament}_{t-1} + \beta_2 \text{MPstatus}_2 + \beta_3 \text{socialconservatism}_3 + \beta_4 \text{majoritypelection}_{t-1}$

MPs status is either: frontbench, new MP or experienced backbencher.

The results, presented in Table 8.2 below, indicate that neither the Maastricht rebels nor those who rebelled in 2010 had a statistically different vote share from other Conservative MPs.

Table 8. 2: Majority of MPs at next according to whether they rebelled on Europe

	Maastricht Rebel	Maastricht Rebel + Controls	2010 Rebel	2010 Rebel + Controls
Rebel	-0.13	-0.17	>-0.01	-1.03
	(2.95)	(2.58)	(<0.01)	(1.54)
MP status (Reference category: Experienced backbenchers)				
New MPs		3.06		-2.53
		(3.88)		(-2.11)
Frontbenchers		<0.01		-3.41*
		(1.84)		(1.90)
Social Conservatism#		0.28		-0.52
		(0.57)		(0.36)
% Majority previous election		0.71***		0.81***
		(0.7)		(0.06)
Constant	2.63	-12.95	0.36	15.63***
	(1.14)	(2.94)	(0.06)	(2.64)
R^2	<s0.01	0.35	0.01	0.50
N	201	201	268	264

Source: Thesis original data
Robust standard errors in parentheses
**** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1*
 # measured on a 0-6 scale see 4.4b

In summary, most of the results suggest that MPs' positions on Europe did not affect their vote-share at the next general election. Indeed, the results show two instances when, contrary to expectations, Eurosceptic MPs actually gained fewer votes than other MPs at the next general election. These differences however can be explained by the fact that these MPs were defending smaller Conservative majorities. Overall, the results, then, give little indication to

suggest that the electorate was either rewarding or punishing MPs for their stance on Europe.

8.5b All Conservative candidates

The empirical tests were extended to include candidates who were not already MPs when they stood for election. It may seem unlikely that voters would be aware of the policy positions of candidates who had not yet served in Parliament. Indeed, one of the Conservative MPs interviewed for the thesis expressed scepticism that voters knew much about him when he was first elected in 2005:

> *"It was nothing to do with me, nobody woke up on election day in 2005 in [my constituency] and said 'I can't stand Michael Howard and I can't stand the Conservative party but I am going to go and vote for that [MP's name] because he seems like a nice kind of chap'" (interview 10).*

To test whether this MP's point is valid in relation to the issue of European integration, data from the BRS and BES surveys was used to consider whether candidates' positions on Europe affected their vote shares. As mentioned above, the vote shares of Conservative candidates over Europe in the 1997 general election has been considered by McAllister and Studlar (2000). They found that Eurosceptic candidates did receive a higher share of the vote but that this could be largely explained by incumbency and constituency specific factors. To supplement their work, data from the 1997 BES was used to consider if voters were more likely to vote for Eurosceptics. This survey asked voters to place their Conservative candidate's view on Europe on a 1 to 10 scale. A logistic regression was performed to test whether those who placed their candidates

higher on the scale were more likely to vote Conservative[24]. The results, presented in Table 8.3 below, show no statistical relationship between voting Conservative and the perceived position of the candidate on Europe.

Table 8. 3: Marginal effects of candidate Euroscepticism on the probability of voting Conservative at the 1997 general election (logit model)

	Vote Conservative (1/0)
Candidate Euroscepticism#	0.01
	(>0.01)
Count R^2	0.68
Adjusted Count R^2	0.00
N	1597

Source: BES 1997
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1
# measured on 1-11 scale
Robust standard errors in parentheses

A similar analysis of candidates' electoral performance at the 2001 and 2005 elections was undertaken. The BES surveys for subsequent elections could not be used at these elections as they did not ask a similar question to the 1997 survey about Conservative candidates' positions on Europe. Instead BRS data was used, with MPs' self-reported views on Europe on a 0-10 scale as the independent variable to measure their position on Europe. Although responses to the BRS survey were confidential, it is likely that candidates did make their position known to constituents through their literature and campaigning. Table 8.4 below presents the results of a regression analysis concerning the correlation between candidates' positions on Europe and the change in the

[24] Bivaraviate logit: $\Pr(\text{Conservative vote} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{CandidateEuroscepticism}_1)$

Conservative constituency vote shares since the last election. The first and third column of the table present the bivariate models. In the second and fourth column of the table controls were added for constituency demographic factors such as proportion of unskilled workers, pensioners and council house tenants. The equation for the analysis is as follows:

$$\text{Con vote share election}_t - \text{Con vote share election}_{t-1} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{candidateEuroscepticism}_1 + \beta_{2\text{-}4}\text{controls}_{2\text{-}4}$$

Table 8. 4: *Change in Conservative vote and candidate position on Europe (OLS)*

	2001	**2001 with controls**	**2005**	**2005 with controls**
Candidate self-placement on Europe#	-0.02	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)	
Unskilled workers		0.42***		-0.01
		(0.12)		(0.02)
Pensioners		0.41		-0.29***
		(0.06)		(0.05)
Council house tenants		0.02		<0.01
		(0.02)		(0.02)
Intercept	1.64*	-1.69	3.19***	8.85***
	(0.84)	(1.44)	(0.66)	(1.29)
R^2	<0.01	0.10	<0.01	0.17
N	300	282	219	208

Source: BRS 2001 & 2005
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1
# measured on 0-10 scale
Robust standard errors in parentheses

The results show, as was case for the 1997 general election, no difference in the vote-share received by candidates according to their stance on Europe.

To summarise, the results concerning non-incumbent Conservative candidates suggests that there was no advantage for Eurosceptic candidates. This is line with the results from 8.5a concerning incumbent Conservative MPs and the results from 8.4 which suggested that it was unlikely that voters would be more or less likely to vote for a Conservative candidate based on the candidate's position on Europe.

8.6 Success rates in general elections

Having considered whether the issue of Europe has affected candidates' vote shares, the chapter will now consider whether Eurosceptics were more likely to gain (re-)election, and the effect this might have had on the ideological composition of the Parliamentary party.

8.6a MPs seeking re-election

First, the issue of whether Eurosceptic MPs seeking re-election were more likely to retain their seats in Parliament than their less sceptical colleagues was considered. Table 8.5 displays the success rates for MPs in gaining re-election according to their position on the Europe scale. The results provide almost no evidence to suggest that Eurosceptic MPs were more successful in gaining re-election. In fact, at several elections hard-Eurosceptics performed slightly worse than other MPs. In 1997 the majority of hard-Eurosceptics who stood for re-election lost whilst a majority of Euro-enthusiasts and soft-Eurosceptics were successful; this result was statistically significant. In the 2005 election only 11 Conservative MPs were defeated but all of these MPs were Eurosceptics, with 6 being hard-Eurosceptics.

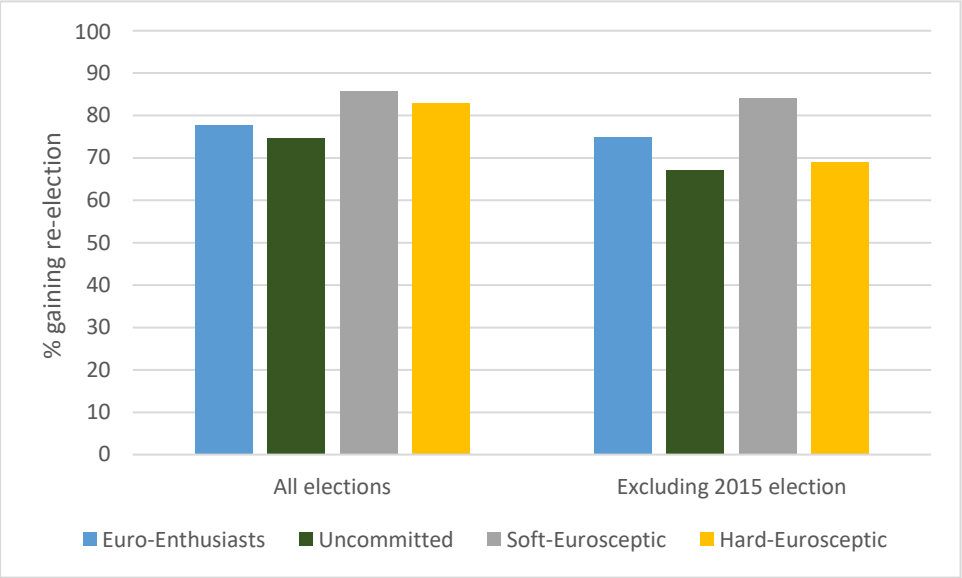
Table 8. 5: Success rate of MPs seeking re-election by positions on Europe (numbers in brackets)

Election	1997	2001	2005	2010	2015
Euro-enthusiast	57% (71)	95% (22)	100% (27)	86% (14)	100% (18)
Uncommitted	**34%** (32)	100% (8)	100% (9)	100% (15)	96% (23)
Soft-Eurosceptic	57% (87)	95% (77)	94% (88)	90% (94)	94% (71)
Hard-Eurosceptic	**43%** (74)	96% (27)	**80% (80)**	89% (44)	99% (152)

Source: original thesis data
Numbers in bold indicates that MPs in this category were statistically less successful than the Euro-enthusiast MPs who were the reference category. See 4.4a for details about the Europe scale

The overall results across all elections are displayed in Figure 8.3 below. The left-hand panel considers all elections in this period, the right-hand panel excludes the 2015 election. The rationale for the second panel is that this thesis has usually considered Parliamentary turnover before the 2015 election (cf. Chapter 6). The majority of MPs in each position on the Europe scale was successful in gaining re-election, with the success rates varying from 75% to 86%. The figures suggest that the two groups of Eurosceptic MPs (hard and soft) were slightly more successful at gaining re-election than the Euro-enthusiasts. However, this relationship is statistically significant only in relation to the soft-Eurosceptics and if the 2015 election is excluded from the analysis the hard-Eurosceptics were actually less successful in gaining re-election than the Euro-enthusiasts. There is, then little evidence that Eurosceptic MPs performed significantly better at retaining their seats in Parliament.

Figure 8. 3 Success rate of MPs seeking re-election by position on Europe



Source: original thesis data
See 4.4a for details about the Europe scale

Analysis of these success rates suggests that the differing performance of Conservative MPs seeking re-election had only a limited effect on the ideology of the Parliamentary party. Across the time-span of the thesis, if the success rate of Euro-enthusiast MPs had matched that of the two combined categories of Eurosceptics this would have resulted in only 10 extra Euro-enthusiasts retaining their seats in Parliament. This number is of limited importance in the context of the 1163 Conservatives who were elected in this time-period.

8.6b Non-incumbent candidates

As many of the new intakes of Conservative MPs were more Eurosceptic than existing MPs (cf. Chapter 6), it could be that voters were more likely to elect sceptical candidates over similar pro-European candidates. In this section it will be considered whether Eurosceptic challengers, i.e. non-incumbents, were

more successful in gaining election than pro-European Conservative challengers.

As discussed above (8.5b) the 1997 election provided the most visible distinction between candidates for voters, as some candidates were listed in national newspapers as Eurosceptics. Data from the 1997 BRS suggests, however, that candidates who were listed as "Eurosceptic" were not more likely to gain election to Parliament. Table 8.6 displays the success of Conservatives in gaining election according to whether they were listed as Eurosceptic. The results show that the success rates for the two sets of candidates were very similar. Thus it would appear that Eurosceptics were not more successful at gaining election in 1997.

Table 8. 6: Success of non-incumbent Conservative candidates at the 1997 general election according to their listing as a "Eurosceptic"

	Winner	**Defeated**
Sceptic	12 (11.1%)	96 (88.8%)
Non-Sceptic	9 (8.6%)	96 (91.4%)

Pearson $Chi^2 = 0.39$ $p = 0.53$
Source: BRS 1997

For the other elections in the period covered there were not similar high-profile published lists of candidates as either sceptics or non-sceptics in newspapers. Given this, for the 2001 and 2005 elections data on candidates' self-reported views to the BRS survey was used to test if Eurosceptic candidates were more likely to gain election to Parliament. Candidates' self-reported positions on Europe on a 0-10 scale were regressed against a binary dependent variable measuring whether they were successfully elected to Parliament. This analysis

was restricted to candidates who were not MPs at the time of the election. The equation for the models as follows:

$$\Pr(\text{elected} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{CandidateEuroscepticism}_1)$$

For 2005 "candidateEuroscepticism" is based on candidates' self-placements on a 1-10 scale. For 2001 this measure is also used and other models are also tested using candidates' approval of the EU and candidates' views on the single currency as alternative measures of "candidateEuroscepticism".

The results for the 2001 election, presented in the first column of Table 8.7 below, suggest that Eurosceptic candidates were not more successful in getting elected. In order to test the robustness of these findings these tests were repeated, in the second and third column, using alternative measures of candidate Euroscepticism from the 2001 BRS survey, namely their views on the single currency and a question about their approval of British membership of the EU. None of the tests showed a significant relationship between gaining election to Parliament and Euroscepticism.

The last column of Table 8.7 reports the results for the 2005 election, which in contrast to the 2001 election results, show that Eurosceptics were more successful in gaining election to Parliament. The data shows that all the candidates who were elected to Parliament were concentrated at the sceptical end of the scale (8 or higher) whilst 38% of candidates who were not elected to Parliament had less sceptical views. There are, however, some reasons to treat this result with caution. Firstly, unlike the 2001 election, there was only one measure of candidate Euroscepticism and this prevented robustness checks for this result. Secondly, the adjusted count R^2 for this regression is very small, suggesting that the model is of very little use in predicting which candidates

will gain election. Thirdly, this result needs to be considered in the wider context of the other results concerning the 2005 election, reported in this chapter, which suggest that Eurosceptic candidates did *not* gain a higher share of the vote and that Eurosceptic MPs were not more electorally successful.

Table 8. 7: Marginal effects of position on Europe on the probability of gaining election in the 2001 and 2005 elections (logit model)

	2001	2001	2001	2005
Candidate self-placement on Europe#	>-0.01			0.03*
	(0.01)			(0.01)
Disapproval of EU†		0.01		
		(0.03)		
View on single currency£			0.03	
			(0.04)	
Count R^2	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.95
Adjusted Count R^2	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
N	301	298	300	195

Source: BRS 2001 & 2005
*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1
Standard errors in parentheses
measured on 0-10 scale
† 1 = Disapprove/Strongly disapprove, 0 = Strongly approve/approve
£ Based on responses to the question: "Do you think the government should, or should not, do each of the following things, or doesn't it matter either way?" "Move towards a common European currency" (1 = Definitely Should; 2 = Probably should; 3 = neither; 4 = Probably should not; 5 = definitely should not)

Overall, the results suggest that Eurosceptics were not more likely to gain election to Parliament at either the 1997 or 2001 general elections. The results

do provide some evidence that Eurosceptics were more likely to gain election in 2005. However there are reasons to treat this last result cautiously. The result from 2005 notwithstanding, the majority of the results from across the time period of this thesis suggest that Eurosceptics were not more successful in gaining election to Parliament. This is consistent with the findings from earlier in the chapter (see 8.4b) that candidate specific factors are of little consequence in elections. As the data provides only limited evidence that Eurosceptics were more successful in gaining election to Parliament, it is very unlikely that this will have had a significant influence of the ideological composition on the Parliamentary party.

8.7 Conclusion and Discussion

The data analysed in this chapter provides little evidence that Eurosceptic candidates and MPs were more electorally successful than pro-EU MPs. For most of the period considered, the issue of Europe was of low saliency for the voters. Only amongst Conservative voters in 2001 was the issue of Europe of high importance. Moreover, very few voters reported that they voted on the basis of candidates rather than parties. As few voters believed Europe to be an important issue and as very few voted on the basis of candidates it is very unlikely that many voters based their votes on *both* Europe and candidate specific factors. And indeed, very few voters were found to be in both these categories in the surveys which enabled this to be measured.

These results about Europe and the personal vote suggest that the scope for Eurosceptic candidates to benefit relative to other candidates was minimal. As expected the majority of the results suggest no difference in the electoral

performance of Conservative candidates based on Europe. In terms of vote-share, the statistics for both incumbent Conservative MPs and new Conservative candidates suggest that Eurosceptics did not gain more votes, contrary to what would be expected if voters were more likely to vote for Eurosceptics. To directly answer question (2) from the introduction ("did candidates gain or lose votes because of their stance on Europe?"), the data provides almost no evidence that candidates either gained or lost votes because of their stance on Europe.

The analysis from the chapter also suggests a null answer to question (1), "were Eurosceptics more likely to win or retain their seats general elections?" The analysis of the success rate of MPs standing for re-election (8.6a) provides only limited evidence that Eurosceptics were more successful. Similarly, the results for Conservative candidates who were not MPs suggests that for the most part there was no advantage for Eurosceptic candidates. Only in 2005 do the results provide some evidence that Eurosceptics were more successful electorally. Overall, the data provides little systematic evidence to find that Eurosceptics had an electoral advantage and were more likely to gain (re-)election to Parliament compared to less sceptical Conservatives.

As the data provides only limited evidence that Eurosceptics were more electorally successful, the impact of this on the ideological composition of the Parliamentary will have been only marginal at most. Therefore, the idea that the electorate created a more Eurosceptic Conservative Party seems highly unlikely. This conclusion aligns with the findings from chapters 3 and 4, where it was argued that the internal politics of the Conservative Party had a greater

impact on MPs' positions on Europe than electoral demand from outside Parliament.

Considering the findings from this chapter alongside the findings from chapter 7 enables conclusions to be drawn about the possible reasons why new intakes of Conservative MPs were more Eurosceptic than existing MPs. As discussed earlier there are three reasons why this could occur: firstly the talent pool, i.e. the candidates themselves could be Eurosceptic; secondly the Conservative selectorate could be selecting Eurosceptic candidates; or thirdly voters could be more likely to vote for Eurosceptic candidates. The findings from chapters 7 and 8 suggest that the most important reason for the Euroscepticism of new MPs, is the talent pool of the potential Conservative MPs, which has been highly Eurosceptic since the 1990s. In relation to the Conservative Associations, the evidence suggests that whilst a majority of the selectors were Eurosceptics other factors such as candidate competencies were usually more important in selection decisions. Finally, it seems unlikely that the electorate had much of an effect on the ideological position of the Parliamentary Party on Europe.

These findings suggest that Europe has been largely an elite concern within the Conservative Party. There has been a large group of individuals in the Conservative Party talent pool, some of whom went on to be MPs, who were highly passionate about the European issue (see section 7.6). These MPs have played a decisive role in several leadership elections (Cowley and Garry 1998, Heppell and Hill 2008, 2010) and in the 2010 Parliament were part of the reason why Cameron decided to make an "in/out" referendum party policy. Outside of the Parliamentary Party and the talent pool, Europe has been a less

important issue. Amongst the ordinary members and activists of the Conservative Party some individuals were very concerned about Europe but most viewed other issues, such as candidate competency, as more important (section 7.5a). Finally, the general electorate, on the whole, cared very little about the issue of European integration until the start of the referendum campaign (Figure 8.1 and Figure 4.4). This suggests that the closer an individual was to the political system the more they were likely to prioritise Europe. It would appear that the Conservative obsession with Europe has been largely elite driven rather than a response to pressures from either electoral demand or grassroots Conservative activists.

This chapter concludes the investigation of the replacement of MPs. The next chapter will consider the conversion of MPs.

Chapter 9 The Conversion of MPs: Why MPs hardened their stance on Europe

Abstract

This chapter considers why some MPs converted to a more Eurosceptic stance during their time in Parliament. It uses 2010 as a case study as during this Parliament many MPs converted to a hard-Eurosceptic position. It is argued that this conversion occurred because of a combination of factors in EU and UK politics. At the EU level of politics the gradual acquisition of new EU powers during the Labour years in office and the Eurozone crisis heightened Eurosceptic hostility towards the EU. In domestic politics the decision to enter coalition government also caused discontent on the backbenches and gave the leadership fewer resources to incentivise toeing the party line on Europe. Further, procedural changes in Parliament enabled a small but determined group of Eurosceptics to place the issue of an EU referendum on the Parliamentary agenda. Once on the agenda the discontent caused by the coalition and developments in EU politics enabled this group to attract many MPs to support their cause.

9.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates why many Conservative MPs became more hard line in their Euroscepticism during the 2010 Parliament. Chapter 6 established that conversion, i.e. continuing MPs adopting a different stance, was part of the reason why the Conservative Party became more Eurosceptic. In particular it was established that many MPs became more Eurosceptic during the 2010 Parliament. During this Parliament many previously soft-Eurosceptic MPs

became harder in their Euroscepticism by advocating an in/out referendum on EU membership. Most notably, many MPs rebelled on a backbench motion calling for an EU membership referendum in October 2011 and in January 2013 over 100 backbench MPs voted to express regret that the Queen's Speech had not included plans to legislate for an/in out referendum.

As a result of these rebellions, and other actions of MPs such as making public statements, the majority of the Parliamentary party in the 2010 Parliament was classified as hard-Eurosceptics. The hard-Eurosceptic MPs consisted of some MPs who had maintained a hard-Eurosceptic approach throughout their Parliamentary careers such as Sir Bill Cash and Lawrence Robertson, new MPs holding hard-Eurosceptic positions and also around 40 MPs who adopted hard-Eurosceptic positions having previously been less sceptical in their stance. This chapter will primarily focus on explaining why this last group of MPs became more Eurosceptic in their positions.

Unlike the previous empirical chapters, the analysis here will be largely qualitative. The chapter uses a variety of sources including the interviews conducted with MPs, journalistic accounts of the events in Parliament, and MPs' speeches during the 2010 Parliament.

It will be argued that a combination of factors, both domestically and at the EU level of government, contributed towards Conservative MPs becoming more Eurosceptic. At the EU level of government many Conservatives were unhappy with the Treaty changes that occurred during the New Labour years of office, in particular the passing of the Treaty of Lisbon without a referendum being

held. The Eurozone crisis and its implications in terms of potential bailouts and for the City of London as a financial centre was also a particularly important factor in the early stages of the 2010 Parliament. Domestics politics also provided the motivation and opportunities for MPs to become more explicit in their Euroscepticism. In terms of motivation for MPs, the Conservative failure to win a majority in the 2010 election caused discontent on the backbenches and a greater willingness to rebel against the party line. The coalition also created fewer disincentives against rebelling as the government had fewer government positions to offer potentially rebellious MPs. Finally, procedural changes in the House of Commons provided the opportunity for a small but determined group of Eurosceptics to get the issue of a referendum on to the Parliamentary agenda.

To provide a theoretical framework for this analysis the chapter draws on the public policy literature and argues that Kingdon's (1984) multiple streams model provides a firm basis for understanding why MPs became harder in their Euroscepticism.

The chapter is structured as follows. 9.2 further outlines the issues which the chapter investigates. 9.3 describes the methodology and the multiple streams model which provides the theoretical framework for the analysis. Sections 9.4-9.6 explains how the situation in the 2010 Parliament relates to the three steams identified by the model. 9.7 completes the analysis by detailing how the Eurosceptics were able to use the political circumstances in Parliament to increase support for an EU referendum. Finally, 9.8 concludes the chapter.

9.2 The background to the 2010 Parliament.

It was established in chapter 6 that conversion (i.e. serving MPs changing their position on Europe) was part of the reason why the Parliamentary party became more Eurosceptic. The majority of those who changed stance adopted a more sceptical position. The biggest change in a single Parliament occurred in the 2010 Parliament. 25% of MPs who served in both the 2005 and 2010 Parliaments were classified as becoming more Eurosceptic in the 2010 Parliament, with most of these MPs changing from soft to hard-Eurosceptic. Evidence of MPs displaying a hostile stance towards Europe can be seen in the events of the 2010 Parliament. Many Conservative MPs rebelled on Europe during the 2010 Parliament and in addition to this over 100 MPs wrote to the Prime Minister requesting a referendum on EU membership. On the other hand, 10% of MPs were classed as becoming more pro-European during this Parliament, possibly suggesting that the referendum polarised the debate within the party. Overall, the data on the 2010 Parliament shows that those adopting a more sceptical position outnumbered those becoming more pro-European by more than 2 to 1.

The high proportion of MPs adopting more sceptical positions is the reason why the 2010 Parliament was chosen as a case study to consider the factors behind conversation. As discussed in earlier chapters, MPs' positions on the Europe scale refer to their public stances, rather than their private opinions on the issue. Consequently, conversion does not necessarily imply that MPs changed their minds on Europe but could indicate that MPs became more explicit in stating their position publicly.

9.3 Method and Theory

A qualitative approach is adopted in this chapter to explain why MPs changed positions on Europe. Three principal sources of information have been used. The first was material from the interviews conducted with Conservative MPs. Interviews were conducted with MPs who served in the 2010 Parliament (see Appendix G for the list of interviews). Some of these MPs were amongst the leaders of the Eurosceptics on the backbenches. The second source of data was the speeches of rebel Conservative MPs in the October 2011 debate on an EU referendum. This debate was chosen as it was the first time in which MPs debated the idea of having an in/out referendum. A qualitative analysis of these speeches was undertaken with each speech being sorted into a number of different categories depending on how many subjects were discussed in the speech. For example if an MP discussed the Eurozone crisis and immigration, the speech was added to both the immigration and the Eurozone crisis categories. In total 20 speeches and 46 interventions made by Eurosceptic Conservative MPs in this debate were analysed. The final data source was journalistic accounts of the 2010 Parliament.

The empirical analysis in this chapter, presented in 9.4 to 9.7, is informed by the multiple streams approach devised by Kingdon (1984, 1995). This is a public policy theory developed to provide a framework for understanding agenda setting. Since its initial formulation in 1984 it has become one of the most cited theories in the public policy literature (Sabatier 2007).

The model argues that a policy is likely to gain a prominent position on the political agenda if three "streams": the problems, politics and policy streams,

become aligned. The problem stream includes concerns that individuals both inside and outside the political system want to see addressed (Zaharidis 2007). Problems can include issues that occur because of events such as 9/11 or long term issues such as budget deficits or rising levels of inequality. The politics stream refers to significant developments within the political system such as an election or a significant change in national mood (Kingdon 1995). The policy stream consists of ideas that are generated by specialists in policy communities such as think tanks, civil servants, congressional staff members, academics and researchers (Zaharidas 2007; Kingdon 1984).

Agenda setting occurs, according the multiple streams model, when the three streams are "coupled" by policy entrepreneurs such as politicians or those working in think tanks. "Coupling" refers to combining a problem, a solution and a political situation in order to make a policy appear more relevant. Opportunities for the streams to be coupled are referred to as "policy windows". Policy windows can be routine, for example policy renewal, but can also be caused by non-routine events such as elections. Policy entrepreneurs use these windows to advance their policy solutions onto the agenda.

The following sections will apply the multiple streams model to the situation in the 2010 Parliament. 9.4-9.6 will apply the three steams in turn and 9.7 will discuss how the Eurosceptics were able to act as policy entrepreneurs in the resulting policy window to put the idea of having an "in/out" referendum on the political agenda. This enabled more MPs to take hard-Eurosceptic positions in the 2010 Parliament.

9.4 The problem stream: Developments at the EU level of government

In this section it will be argued that by the time of the 2010 Parliament there were several perceived problems at the EU level of government which had driven Conservative MPs to adopt harder Eurosceptic positions.

9.4a Long-terms problems: More powers for the EU

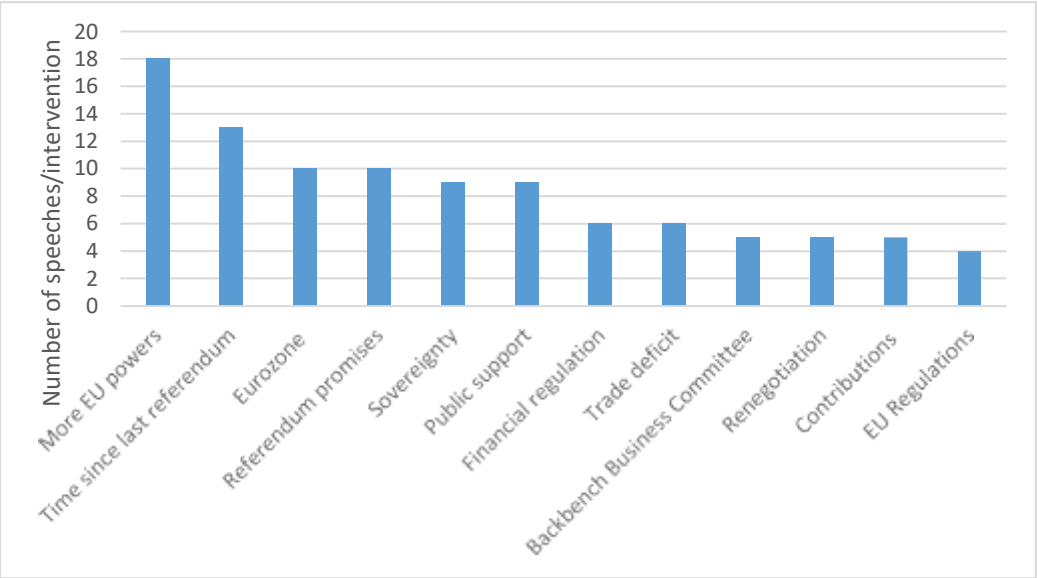
Part of the reason why the EU was seen as a problem by many Conservatives by the time of the 2010 Parliament was the perception that the EU had been progressively increasing its power since the Maastricht Treaty. During the New Labour period of office there were three treaty revisions (Nice, Amsterdam and Lisbon) which were seen as increasing the power of the European Union. In addition to this the EU expanded, mainly to the East, and the Labour government agreed a reduction in the UK rebate in 2005. These developments in EU politics caused concern about the loss of UK sovereignty. In the referendum campaign many Eurosceptics defined sovereignty as the desire to take back control of the UK's "laws, money and borders". The Labour years in office could from a Eurosceptic perspective be viewed as a loss of control over all three of these: laws were affected by new treaties and the increasing size of Acquis Communautaire, the reduction of rebate meant greater contributions to the EU and the eastwards expansion meant that reduced border controls now applied to 74 million new EU citizens.

Evidence that MPs were concerned about the growth in EU power is provided by the interviews and speech analysis. For example a leading Eurosceptic interviewed for the thesis stated that during their opposition years from 1997-

2010 the Conservative Party became "naturally more and more Eurosceptic" because Tony Blair pursued a "process of increasingly vociferous European Integration" (interview 8). Another MP commented that since 1997 there had been a "succession of further treaties all increasing the size of the Acquis Communautaire, all increasing the powers of the EU, so it got gradually, gradually worse" (interview 12).

The speech analysis of the October 2011 referendum debate suggests that these concerns were widely shared by other Eurosceptic Conservatives. Figure 9.1 below displays the results from the speech analysis. The figure shows that the most frequently discussed topic by Conservative MPs in this debate was the greater power that the EU had acquired. The gradual increase of power at the EU level of government could also potentially help explain why some Conservative MPs converted to a harder Eurosceptic position before the start of the 2010 Parliament.

Figure 9. 1 Topics discussed by Eurosceptics in their speeches and during the October 2011 debate on EU referendum



Based on authors' calculations. The text of the debate can be found at: https://hansard.Parliament.uk/Commons/2011-10-24/debates/1110247000001/NationalReferendumOnTheEuropeanUnion. Topics discussed in fewer than 4 speeches or interventions were omitted from this figure.

One particular event of significance in the EU's acquisition of greater powers was the ratification process of the Treaty of Lisbon. Cameron, who was then Leader of the Opposition, had promised a referendum on the treaty if the Conservatives came to power before ratification was complete. Cameron's failure to provide a referendum on Lisbon caused widespread suspicion of him amongst backbench Eurosceptics, despite the fact that the Treaty was already law before the 2010 general election (Shipman 2016). Figure 9.1 shows that the issue of broken referendum promises, which included MPs' comments about the Lisbon Treaty, was one of the most discussed issues by the rebels in the debate on an EU referendum. The issue of broken referendum promises was also raised by one of the MPs interviewed for this thesis. He stated that these broken promises were part of the motivation for the backbench campaign for legislation on an EU referendum in the 2010 Parliament (interview 9).

To summarise, the gradual acquisition of power by the EU and the "broken promise" over a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty created greater Euroscepticism and distrust of David Cameron on the Conservative backbenches.

9.4b The Eurozone crisis

Another significant factor affecting Conservative MPs was the Eurozone crisis. There were many reasons why the crisis strengthened the Eurosceptic cause. Firstly, there was concern that the UK may be liable for part of the bailout costs. The UK had already contributed money towards the bailout of the Republic of Ireland in 2010. Secondly, the Eurozone crisis seemed to confirm the Eurosceptic belief that the EU was a failed economic model. Many of the MPs interviewed for this thesis held substantial misgivings about the Eurozone even before the crisis and scepticism grew with the crisis and the resulting high levels of unemployment in the Southern member states (interviews 7, 9 and 12). The data from chapter 5 also showed the Eurozone was discussed much more frequently by Eurosceptics. Thirdly, the Eurozone crisis prompted the EU to consider greater harmonisation in the financial regulation of the Eurozone. There was concern that this would threaten the position of the City of London as the Euro's offshore financial centre (Thompson 2017).

Figure 9.1 shows that the Eurozone and issues directly related to the Eurozone such as the financial regulation were frequently discussed by Eurosceptic MPs in their speeches. One individual interviewed for this thesis who was heavily involved in the Eurosceptic campaign on the backbenches stated that he

believed that the Eurozone crisis, which was viewed by many as the most important issue in European politics at the start of the 2010 Parliament, was a highly important factor in gaining backbench support for a referendum (interview 9).

9.4c Summary of the problem steam

The EU's gradual pursuit of further integration, particularly the ratification process of the Treaty of Lisbon and the Eurozone crisis were perceived to be problems by the Eurosceptics, making the prospect of potential British withdrawal more appealing.

9.5 The Politics Stream: Opportunities for Eurosceptics post-2010 election

In this section it will be argued that political developments in the UK after the 2010 election created the opportunity for an EU referendum to gain a place on the agenda.

9.5a Backbench discontent over coalition

The failure of the Conservatives to win a majority in 2010 and the decision to enter a coalition caused much discontent and anger on the Conservative backbenches. Several MPs on the right of the party would have rather the party had formed a minority government and there was anger from some that there was insufficient consultation with the 1922 Committee before the coalition was formed (Smith 2015). The coalition government created two principal reasons for backbench discontent. Firstly, the fact that the Lib Dems are an economical centrist, socially liberal and pro-European party did not endear the coalition to

many on the Tory Right. Many felt disappointed that the Conservative programme for government had been watered down and were willing to rebel against policies which reflected this. One Conservative MP commented that:

> *"Don't forget we didn't have a Conservative government when I was rebelling, we had a Lib-Dem–Conservative government, so they weren't pursuing the policies which I was elected on, on all occasions" (interview 5).*

Secondly, an inevitable result of being in coalition with another party was that there were fewer government positions to use in order to incentivise loyalty (Cowley 2015). Research has shown that approximately 20% of jobs in the government went to Liberal Democrats (Andrews 2015). In chapters 3 & 4 above it was argued that office-seeking motivations were an important factor in explaining why some MPs chose not to adopt hard-Eurosceptic positions. For example some MPs were thought to have supported *remain* only for reasons of career and loyalty to the Prime Minister. The decline in the number of positions available to offer backbenchers in 2010 weakened the incentive for loyalty to the party line and may have caused some MPs to adopt harder-Eurosceptic positions. The data collected for this thesis suggests that of the 38 MPs who were classified as moving from a soft to a hard-Eurosceptic position in 2010, 9 had frontbench positions prior to the 2010 general election but were not appointed to a government post after the election. Whilst not all of these MPs may have been appointed to a frontbench role even if the Conservatives had gained a majority, the greater probability of gaining a government role may have been enough to ensure more backbenchers toed the party line on Europe.

Thus, the coalition gave backbenchers a motivation for and lack of deterrent from rebelling on issues such as Europe. Several contributors to the literature have linked rebellion over Europe, particularly the vote in October 2011, to discontent with the Liberal Democrats (Cowley and Stuart 2012; Heppell 2013).

9.5b New legislative opportunities

At the same time as the discontent caused by the coalition government provided a motivation for Eurosceptic rebellion, the *opportunity* for such a rebellion was provided by the legislative reforms in the House of Commons. In 2010 the Reform of the House of Commons Committee (also known as the Wright Committee) proposed a series of reforms to the House of Commons (Russell 2011). The purpose of the reforms was to restore the credibility of Parliament after the expenses scandal and to strengthen the power of Parliament in relation to the executive. The Committee made a series of recommendations including the proposal to create a Backbench Business Committee which would be able to schedule non-government business onto the Parliamentary agenda. The creation of this committee made it easier for backbenchers to get items onto the agenda which the party managers may rather have avoided being debated. Eurosceptics in the Commons were able to use these new opportunity structures in Parliament to put the idea of having an EU referendum on the Parliamentary agenda (cf. 9.7 below).

9.6 The Policy Stream

The policy stream consists of ideas that are generated by specialists in policy communities such as think tanks and congressional committees. In this

instance the policy community included groups of Eurosceptic MPs and also Eurosceptic think tanks outside of Parliament. A key group within Parliament was the European Research Group. It was founded in 1993 by Sir Michael Spicer and later chaired by Sir Bill Cash and Jacob Rees-Moog and has had many backbench MPs as members. Outside of Parliament the policy community would include organisations such as the Bruges Group. These groups were united in wanting either a looser relationship between the UK and the EU or UK withdrawal from the EU.

Within the Eurosceptic policy community the idea of having a referendum on European integration has been a prominent idea since the start of the Maastricht debates in the early 1990s. One of the leading Eurosceptics interviewed for this thesis stated that he believed a referendum was the only way to overcome the "collusion" of the two frontbenches over Europe (interview 8). Many of the referendum campaigns were for referenda on individual treaties such as Maastricht or the Constitutional Treaty. In addition to this the idea of having an "in/out" referendum had been growing in popularity amongst Conservative MPs for several years before the 2010 general election. At the 1997 general election several candidates such as Peter Bone and Lawrence Robertson included the proposal for an in/out referendum in their election literature. In the 2006 six Conservative MPs formed the Better Off Out group. At the time of the 2010 Parliament there was a dedicated group of backbenchers who wanted a referendum on EU membership (interview 9).

9.7 Policy Entrepreneurs: How Eurosceptic leaders increased support for a referendum

This section will outline how a small group of Eurosceptics was able to put the issue of an "in/out" EU referendum, which had become prominent in the Eurosceptic policy stream, on the agenda by bringing together the developments in the other two streams. In the 2010 Parliament a group of Eurosceptic MPs was able to act as policy entrepreneurs through a "guerrilla" backbench campaign beneath the radar of the party whips (D'Arcy 2016; interviews 5 & 9). The leaders of this campaign used to meet frequently in Committee Room R of the House of Commons to plan their strategy (interview 9). The campaign consisted of forcing divisions (votes) in the House of Commons and petitioning the Prime Minister. The leaders of the campaign were able to organise their own whipping operation in order to attract more than 100 MPs' signatures to some of their letters and also to encourage scores of MPs to defy the whip in divisions (ibid).

The campaign was able to exploit the changes in the problem and political streams described in 9.4 and 9.5 respectively. In terms of the former, the problems in the Eurozone and the feeling that European integration had gone too far created great concern about European Integration amongst Conservative backbenchers (interview 9). Commenting about the developments in the EU at that time one of the leaders of the backbench operation stated that "a variety of factors came together and we gave that concern, that voice, an element of structure in the campaign which we waged" (ibid).

On the political stream the creation of the Backbench Business Committee gave an opportunity for the backbench campaign to have a referendum motion debated on the floor of the House. Two members of the backbench campaign were able to gain seats on the committee and David Nuttall was able to successfully petition the committee to gain approval for his referendum motion to be debated (D'Arcy 2016; interview 5).

The scheduling of Parliamentary divisions on an EU referendum in October 2011 and later in January 2013 was a major factor in more MPs adopting hard-Eurosceptic positions (interview 5). Before the votes pro-referendum MPs had to be more pro-active and call for a referendum in their speeches or election literature whereas now these MPs simply had to vote in a debate. Further, the calling of the referendum vote forced pro-referendum MPs to decide whether to either for vote a referendum, abstain or vote against their conscience/policy preference. One of MPs involved in the backbench campaign commented that the divisions on Europe and the letter writing campaign were "vital parliamentary exercises in getting us to move towards where we eventually got the referendum" (ibid). The other major development in the politics stream, the forming of the coalition, contributed to greater support of the referendum motions by MPs. The coalition gave MPs greater motivation to vote for a referendum, as a means to protest the coalition, and fewer disincentives against supporting a referendum as the government had fewer positions to offer potential rebels. It is probable that these factors could have caused many MPs who had previously taken softer-Eurosceptic positions to support an "in/out" referendum.

The argument presented in this chapter suggests that the reasons MPs adopted harder positions on Europe were primarily due to the internal politics of Parliament, such as discontent with Cameron and creation of the Backbench Business Committee, and developments in EU politics which were of little interest to the public (see 8.4a). A possible objection to this argument is that the October 2011 referendum debate approved by the Backbench Business Committee was partially in response to a petition signed by 100,000 voters. However, this is a very small proportion of the population and as such would have been unlikely to have exerted much influence on MPs who were not already inclined to support a referendum on EU membership. Overall, the analysis in this chapter supports the main argument of the thesis that Euroscepticism in the Conservative has been primarily influenced by elite individuals and the internal politics of Parliamentary party.

9.8 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at why many MPs became more hostile to European integration during their time in Parliament. The 2010 Parliament was used as a case study as many MPs who had previously been classified as soft-Eurosceptics adopted hard-Eurosceptic positions.

To provide an explanation for why MPs changed their positions this chapter has used Kingdon's multiple streams as a theoretical framework. Using this model it has been argued that many MPs converted to a hard-Eurosceptic position because the leaders of the Eurosceptic cause on the backbenches were able to use changes in the problem stream (the gradual increase in EU powers and the Eurozone) and changes in the politics stream (the coalition government

and creation of the Backbench Business Committee) to further the idea of an "in/out" referendum which had become a prominent policy in the Eurosceptic policy stream.

It was these developments which allowed the leaders of the backbench Eurosceptics to act as policy-entrepreneurs and put the issue of an EU referendum on the Parliamentary agenda. Through a campaign below the radar of the whips they were able to use the Backbench Business Committee to secure a vote on having an EU referendum. Once the vote had been called the group was able to organise its own whipping campaign in order to attract MPs to vote in their favour and also take part in other Parliamentary exercises such as petitioning the Prime Minister.

The issues discussed in this chapter could have greater significance to this thesis than explaining only why long-serving MPs changed positions in the 2010 Parliament. The long-term factors discussed in this chapter, the gradual acquisition of EU powers, could potentially explain why some Conservative MPs became stronger in their Euroscepticism prior to the 2010 Parliament.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1 Overview

The research conducted in this thesis has investigated why the Parliamentary party became more Eurosceptic between 1992 and 2016. To do this the thesis has analysed two research questions:

1. Why did Conservative MPs adopted Eurosceptic positions?
2. Why did the party become more Eurosceptic over time?

Throughout the thesis the results have suggested that both these questions can be explained by elite driven politics within Parliament rather than pressures from outside Parliament. The elites driving the process were Conservative MPs and Parliamentary candidates. On the first research question, the positions MPs adopt on Europe have largely been affected by their own ideological beliefs and their status within Parliament. Electoral factors, such as Eurosceptic constituencies or a possible electoral threat from UKIP, have had relatively little impact on MPs. In terms of the second research question, the party became more Eurosceptic as result of both new Eurosceptic MPs entering the Commons and existing MPs adopting harder Eurosceptic positions. The reason the majority of new MPs were Eurosceptic was primarily due to the Eurosceptic attitudes of the elite individuals making up the Conservative Party talent pool. The evidence suggests that the selection decisions of Conservative associations and the voting behaviour of the electorate had relatively limited impact on the ideological composition of the Parliamentary party.

This concluding chapter will elaborate more fully on the answers to these two research question and summarise the argument running throughout the thesis that the reason the Parliamentary party has become Eurosceptic was due to elite driven politics within Parliament.

The chapter is structured as follows. 10.2 focuses on the first research question: *why did Conservative MPs adopt Eurosceptic positions?* 10.3 then analyses the second research question: *why did the party become more Eurosceptic over time*? 10.4 will then summarise how elite driven politics has been a large part of the explanation for both research questions. 10.5 completes the thesis by discussing how these findings inform the existing literature and the possible future research directions which emerge from this thesis.

10.2 Why did Conservative MPs adopt Eurosceptic positions?

To analyse MPs motivations on Europe the thesis uses the policy, office and votes trichotomy of Müller and Strøm (1999). To briefly summarise this approach, the empirical analysis was informed by the assumption that MPs' seek a combination of these three motivations:

- *Policy-seeking:* MPs seek to influence policy. Under this assumption MPs may adopt a position because of their ideological beliefs.
- *Office-seeking:* MPs adopt positions to seek promotion to government office.
- *Vote-seeking:* MPs adopt positions to appeal to their constituency electorates and gain re-election.

The empirical analysis in chapters 3-5 suggests that policy and office-seeking have been highly important factors affecting which positions MPs adopt on Europe. Vote-seeking was of lesser importance during this time.

10.2a Policy-seeking

The empirical analysis of MPs' behaviour suggests that ideology was a very strong predictor of MPs' positions on Europe. Positions on Europe were very strongly correlated with positions on social/moral issues and MPs' attitude towards economic issues.

In relation to social/moral issues, Euroscepticism was strongly associated with social conservatism. It is the consistent finding throughout this thesis that MPs who have opposed equal rights for homosexuals, opposed abortion and advocated tougher sentences for lawbreakers have been more likely to adopt harder Eurosceptic positions.

As discussed in 3.3a, the association between social conservatism and Euroscepticism suggests that positions on Europe are linked to the TAN/GAL dimension of politics, in that Euroscepticism is linked to the desire to protect national sovereignty and opposition to immigration. Whilst immigration is part of Conservative Euroscepticism the research in this thesis suggests that Conservative Euroscepticism is primarily motivated by sovereignty. Sovereignty is this sense is associated with the desire to prevent Brussels from interfering in UK domestic politics and policy. The sovereigntist attitude of Conservatives towards European integration is perhaps best summarised by one of the Eurosceptic MPs interviewed for this thesis who stated that the

question of Europe is fundamentally concerned with “Who governs you” (interview 8).

As Conservative Euroscepticism has been highly concerned with sovereignty this suggests that Eurosceptics have been motivated by nationalism. The sovereigntist attitude towards Europe can be considered nationalist in the sense of Gellner’s definition of nationalism as “a political principle that holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (1983: p. 1). The conclusion that Conservative Euroscepticism has been driven by nationalism is shared with many in the literature on the Conservative Party (Crowson 2007; Sowemimo 1996; Berrington and Hague 1998; Turner 2000). This finding also aligns with scholars of Euroscepticism and populism who have found that those with culturally conservative/authoritarian views are more likely to vote for Eurosceptic and populist parties (Tillman 2013: Prosser 2016; Norris and Inglehart 2018).

Nationalism, however, is not the sole ideological motivation of Conservative Euroscepticism. Positions on Europe are also related to the economic left/right divide, alternatively known as the wet/dry divide, within the Conservative Party. The consistent finding throughout this thesis is that economically right-wing MPs (dries) were more likely to hold Eurosceptic views. The link between economic issues and Europe suggests that much Euroscepticism has been motivated by opposition to EU social and spending policies. This economic opposition to the EU has its ideological foundations in the neo-liberal/libertarian opposition to government spending and regulations. The EU creates an additional layer of government with the power, however limited, to

impose taxes and new social regulations on the member states, thus some libertarians oppose the EU. As the hard-Eurosceptics tend to be socially conservative and/or economically right-wing, Euroscepticism has generally been associated with the "Tory right". By contrast the Euro-enthusiasts tend to be concentrated amongst the social-liberals and wets in the party.

It is important to note that the empirical research in this thesis has not made any causal claims about the associations between ideology and Euroscepticism. These relationships are probabilistic and not deterministic. As such there are notable exceptions to these findings including several economically dry MPs who supported Europe in order to create integrated free-markets. Sowemimo (1996; 1997) referred to this group as the "Neoliberal integrationists." Other notable exceptions include the liberal Eurosceptics Crispin Blunt and Bernard Jenkin.

These exceptions notwithstanding, the empirical analysis suggests that MPs' positions on these two ideological spectrums were strong predictors of their stances on Europe. On this basis it is concluded that policy-seeking, i.e. MPs acting in accordance with their personal ideological convictions, was a highly significant factor affecting positions on Europe.

10.2b Office-seeking

In addition to policy-seeking, office-seeking incentives were found to have been a consistent motivation for MPs.

Throughout the time period considered the leadership has adopted a softer position on Europe than many in the Parliamentary party would have liked.

As the leadership has tended to be moderate on Europe, Eurosceptics, particularly hard-Eurosceptics, have been under-represented on the frontbench. This has been most notably the case during the two periods of Conservative government.

As hard-Eurosceptic MPs were less likely to be appointed to the government this provided a disincentive for MPs to adopt Eurosceptic positions if they had ministerial ambitions. The MPs most likely to be affected by this were those who were already climbing the ministerial ladder and new MPs who had a rational hope that they may be offered a frontbench position. Long-serving backbenchers who had already resigned, been dismissed or declined the opportunity to serve on the frontbench had the fewest office-seeking incentives to abide by the party line on Europe.

These differences in office-seeking incentives have affected MPs' positions on Europe. The clearest example of this was during the Brexit referendum campaign. During the campaign, the vast majority of frontbenchers supported Cameron in endorsing *remain* whilst most experienced backbenchers endorsed *leave* (see Figure 3.3). A majority of new MPs endorsed *remain,* however this group was less pro-*remain* than the frontbenchers as a *remain* victory was of lesser importance to the careers of the newly elected MPs. The results from chapter 4 suggest that office-seeking motivations had a strong effect on MPs' positions on Europe in the Parliaments prior to the referendum.

The interviews also provided support for the importance of office-seeking as many MPs argued that the party whip had prevented significant numbers of

MPs from taking tougher stances on Europe. In particular several MPs suggested that in a free and closed ballot the majority of Conservative MPs would have back *leave* in the EU referendum. It was MPs' career ambitions and loyalty to Cameron which, they contended resulted in the majority of MPs endorsing *remain*.

The one caveat to the findings concerning office-seeking is that the results have been less clear-cut in relation to the new entrants to the Commons who have in some instances not behaved in accordance with the predictions arising from the office-seeking incentives. This was particularly the case in the 2010 Parliament when the majority of new MPs were hard-Eurosceptics. A plausible explanation for this is that the Conservative talent pool was turning increasingly Eurosceptic. Most the evidence in the thesis, however, suggests that MPs' career ambitions were of central importance to the positions they adopted on Europe.

10.2c Vote-seeking motivations

Vote-seeking motivations were found to be of less importance than either policy or office-seeking concerns. This was particularly the case during the earlier part of the time-period as the statistical analysis showed almost no evidence of a link between constituency factors and MPs' positions on Europe prior to the 2005 Parliament.

There was some evidence that electoral considerations could have had some effect on MPs' positions post-2005. The data on the 2005 Parliament suggests that there was a link between constituency unemployment and MPs' endorsing

hard-Eurosceptic positions. It could be that Conservatives in relatively deprived areas were more likely to appeal to voters with Euroscepticism as the economically right-wing message of the Conservatives would be less popular in these areas. For the 2010 and the 2015 Parliaments the data indicates that there was a statistical link between constituency Euroscepticism and MPs adopting hard-Eurosceptic positions. The analysis of MPs' Parliamentary speeches during the referendum campaign shows that both sides were raising the issues on which their campaign had an electoral advantage and this may indicate that MPs were using their speeches to win votes in the referendum.

The impact of electoral factors on MPs' position on Europe should not, however, be overstated. Although electoral factors became more important after 2005 they were still less important than either policy or office-seeking motivations. The statistics consistently showed that MPs' electoral interests were weaker predictors of their position on Europe than either their ideology or their status in Parliament, i.e. whether the MPs were on the front or backbenches. There are two other significant results to note concerning vote-seeking. Firstly, the data provides little evidence to suggest that MPs who were threatened by larger constituency UKIP vote shares were more likely to adopt Eurosceptic positions. Secondly, the data provides no evidence that MPs representing marginal constituencies were more sensitive to constituency opinion.

The most probable explanation for the relative unimportance of vote-seeking is that MPs did not believe they would face any electoral consequences on account of Europe. Indeed, polling and BES data indicates that Europe was of very low salience to the electorate until the start of the 2016 referendum campaign (cf.

Figure 4.4; 8.4a). The potential for MPs to gain votes on account of Europe was further complicated by the fact that most constituencies were divided on Europe, as a result of which many MPs would be in opposition to a significant proportion of their constituents regardless of which side they endorsed.

In summary, the thesis presents some evidence that electoral considerations may have influenced MPs in the period after 2005, but electoral factors were still less important than MPs' policy or office-seeking motivations, probably because of the low saliency of Europe, the low importance of the personal vote and the fact that most constituencies were divided over Europe.

10.2 d Summary of first research question

MPs' positions on Europe have been primarily influenced by their ideological beliefs and career incentives. There was some evidence that MPs may have been motivated by vote-seeking however this was of lesser importance than either policy or office-seeking.

The finding that MPs' positions were primarily affected by their ideological beliefs and office-seeking motivations suggests that the internal politics of the Conservative Party were more important than the wider electorate. In other words, MPs' positions on Europe were primarily affected by their personal beliefs, ideological disputes within the party and MPs' desire for higher political office. Thus it was primarily elite politics which affected MPs' positions on Europe.

10.3 Why did the Conservative Party become more Eurosceptic over time?

The thesis has argued that the party became more Eurosceptic as a result of both the conversion and replacement of MPs. As with the answer to the first research question, this process was elite driven rather than being significantly affected by those outside of Parliament.

10.3a The process of change: both replacement and conversion

In relation to conversion, whilst the majority of MPs remained constant in their positions over time, a minority of MPs became more Eurosceptic during their tenure in Parliament. The most common change amongst MPs was previously soft-Eurosceptics becoming harder in their stance by advocating a referendum or advocating that Britain fundamentally changes its relationship with the EU. This occurred most frequently in the 2010 Parliament when around a quarter of the party adopted a harder stance on Europe.

On the replacement side, the data suggests that Euro-enthusiasts were more likely to leave Parliament and that new intakes of Conservative MPs were more likely to be Eurosceptic. The reason that Euro-enthusiasts were more likely to leave was in large part because they came from the older generations many therefore retired. However, the data suggests that Euro-enthusiasts MPs were more likely to stand down even when controlling for age. By contrast, the new intakes of Conservative MPs were predominantly Eurosceptic. The most significant election for Parliamentary turnover was 2010 when over two-thirds of the new intake were classified as hard-Eurosceptics.

The next two sub-sections of the conclusion will summarise the arguments of the thesis in relation to why these two processes of conversion and replacement occurred. Both of these process were primarily driven by elite individuals, specifically MPs and Parliamentary candidates, within the Conservative Party.

10.3b Conversion

It was argued, in chapter 9, that there were several factors which contributed towards MPs adopting harder positions on Europe: concern about the consequences of increasing EU integration and treaty change, discontent with the coalition Government, and new opportunity structures in the Commons which enabled a dedicated group of backbenchers to put a referendum on the Parliamentary agenda.

These factors which contributed to MPs changing position on Europe were mainly the result of the internal politics of Parliament. Many of the MPs who adopted a harder position on Europe appear to have been motivated by discontent at the decisions by the Conservative leadership and developments at the EU level of politics which largely failed to engage the electorate. Furthermore, the means for the Eurosceptics to put the issue of a referendum on the agenda occurred because of internal changes in Parliament. Support for referendum motions was helped by the fact that as result of being in coalition, the leadership had less government patronage to use to secure the loyalty of potential rebels.

10.3c Replacement

Parliamentary turnover can make a party more Eurosceptic through one or more of three means: *the selection process,* with the selectors favouring Eurosceptic candidates, *general elections,* with voters preferring Eurosceptic candidates or the *talent pool* of candidates, with Eurosceptics making up the majority of potential candidates. This thesis argued that the reason new Conservative MPs were more Eurosceptic than their predecessors was mainly the composition of the talent pool. There was only limited evidence that Eurosceptics were more successful with either the Conservative Party selectors or the electorate.

The selection process

The thesis found little evidence that the debates around Europe affected the selection of Conservative candidates. In terms of the CCHQ stage of the selection process, little evidence was found that CCHQ was trying to ideologically control the list of candidates.

In relation to association stage of the selection, whilst the majority of the selectors had strong Eurosceptic views, they tended to prioritise other candidate attributes, such as talent and probability of winning the seat, over their stance on Europe. As a result of this the data suggests that Eurosceptics were not more successful in gaining the nomination or a place on constituency shortlists. There have been some selections where Europe was highly important and Eurosceptics were more likely to win, however the data suggests that there was not a widespread effort to select Eurosceptic candidates across all constituencies.

The general elections

The election data suggests that very few people voted on the basis of Europe and few people voted on the basis of individual candidates (cf. 8.4a & b). As expected, given the lack of public interest in Europe, there was almost no evidence that Eurosceptic candidates gained more votes and in a few elections the data suggests that hard-Eurosceptic MPs received fewer votes than pro-Europeans (cf. 8.5). The analysis of electoral turnover presents some mixed results about whether Eurosceptic MPs and candidates were more likely to succeed in gaining (re-)election (cf. 8.6). Overall, the data provides little evidence to suggest that the differing electoral performance of candidates and MPs had much of an impact on the ideological balance of the Parliamentary party on Europe.

The talent pool

The data on Conservative candidates suggests that the Conservative Party talent pool was dominated by Eurosceptics for the duration of the thesis time-period. Very few Conservative candidates were proponents of further integration with Europe. The fact that the talent pool was dominated by Eurosceptics meant that the discretion of selectors or the electorate to discriminate between candidates on account of Europe was limited, even had they wanted to.

With the analysis of selection decisions and general election results providing only limited evidence of an advantage for Eurosceptic candidates the state of talent pool is the most plausible explanation for why the party became more Eurosceptic. This talent pool explanation suggests that it was elite individuals,

i.e. Parliamentary candidates, some of whom became MPs, who were driving the process of the Parliamentary party becoming more Eurosceptic.

10.3 d Summary of second research question

The process of the Parliamentary party becoming more Eurosceptic was driven by both conversion and replacement. Elite politics is the common theme which emerges in the explanations as to why these two processes occurred.

10.4 Overall Summary: Elite Politics

The answers to the two research questions suggest that elite individuals and the internal politics of the Parliamentary party explain why Euroscepticism became more prominent. These elite individuals referred to here are not those at the very top of the party, the leadership and senior officials, but rather Conservative MPs, mainly backbenchers, and Conservative Parliamentary candidates.

The closer an individual was to the Conservative Parliamentary party the more their actions were influenced by the Europe issue. The general electorate seemed to care very little about Europe. Conservative voters were more concerned about Europe but it rarely polled as being amongst their most important political issues. In terms of the Conservative selectorate, that is the grassroots members and the association officers, there were high levels of Euroscepticism and in some associations Europe was a key factor in determining who won the nomination. However, the majority of selectors viewed other issues such as candidate talent as being more important to selection decisions. By contrast, Conservative MPs and candidates had high

levels of Euroscepticism and many of these individuals cared very deeply about Europe (see 7.6). Evidence of how strongly MPs were motivated by Europe can be seen from the fact that many MPs rebelled on the issue and that Europe was a highly important factor in several leadership elections (cf. Cowley and Garry 1998, Heppell and Hill 2008, 2010). The commitment to the Eurosceptic cause amongst MPs and candidates and the relative indifference of those further from Parliament is a large part of the explanation for why the party became more Eurosceptic.

This difference in the level of interest in the European issue explains why the replacement process, i.e. the fact that new MPs were more Eurosceptic than their predecessors, was largely elite driven. The voters and the Conservative Party selectorate tended not to base their decisions on Europe therefore they have had a relatively limited effect on the ideological balance of the party. The reason new Conservative MPs were predominantly Eurosceptic was a result of the concentration of Eurosceptics in the Conservative talent pool. Once in Parliament the behaviour of MPs was primarily affected by the internal politics of the party rather than electoral demand. The empirical analysis from chapters 3 and 4 suggests that MPs' ideology and prospects of promotion were the most significant factors affecting the positions they adopted on Europe. The internal politics of Parliament also explains why some MPs adopted harder-Eurosceptic positions during their time in Parliament. For example part of the reason for the increased Euroscepticism was discontent with Cameron's leadership over the Lisbon Treaty and coalition government.

Notwithstanding the various caveats and nuance throughout the thesis, the basic argument of the thesis can be summed up in a sentence: the increased Euroscepticism in the Parliamentary party was primarily the result of the internal politics of Parliament and the preferences of elite individuals, mainly backbench MPs and Parliamentary candidates.

10.5 Future research directions

The thesis has considered Euroscepticism in the Conservative Party from 1992 to 2016. As explained in the literature review, a key aim of this thesis was to make a contribution to both the literature on the Conservative Party and the literature on legislative behaviour in the British Parliament.

In terms of the literature on the Conservative Party, this study makes a contribution in two main ways. Firstly, it provides a fine-grained analysis of MPs' behaviour over an extended time period. As a result of the statistical methods used in the thesis, each MP serving in each Parliament is included in the analysis. Secondly, this work improves upon the existing literature by taking into account the effect of the general elections and the selection process on the position of Conservative told MPs.

Perhaps the most surprising finding on this front is that the thesis suggests that the Conservative associations and selection process had only had a marginal effect on Euroscepticism in the party. This is surprising as some people within the Conservative Party have viewed the associations as having been highly important in explaining Euroscepticism in the party. David Cameron seemed to believe that the Conservative associations were part of the

explanation for why MPs adopted Eurosceptic positions. He once MPs not to take a position on the referendum based "on what your constituency association might say" (Dominiczak et al 2016). A senior aide to Cameron also told Angela Merkel, when discussing Eurosceptics in Parliament, that some MPs were "terrified of their constituency associations" (Seldon and Snowdon 2015: p.264). The apparent divergence between Cameron's view and thesis results may arise because the thesis considers only the select process. Future research could be useful in providing a greater understanding of the impact of Conservative associations on their MPs, particularly post-selection.

The thesis makes a contribution to the legislative behaviour literature by being one of the few studies to consider MPs' behaviour on a single issue over a sustained period of time. Similar techniques to the methods used in this thesis could potentially be used to study other intra-party disputes in British politics and in similar Westminster systems. For instance the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader has created considerable tension in the party between the moderate social democrat wing of the party and the more radical leadership of Jeremy Corbyn himself. There is an interesting dynamic in this division in that the majority of MPs is sceptical of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership but he is supported by a considerable proportion of grassroots members. The *leave* victory in the Brexit referendum exacerbated these divisions with some on the radical-left supporting a hard-Brexit but with many MPs supporting either a soft-Brexit or a reversal of the decision to leave. Many Labour MPs could find themselves in a seemingly contradictory electoral situation as the majority of

Labour voters voted *remain* whilst the majority of Labour MPs represent constituencies with *leave* majorities.

An obvious research agenda to emerge from the thesis would be to research the issue of Conservative Euroscepticism in the post-referendum period. The thesis was written almost entirely about the period preceding the referendum. The referendum result fundamentally changed the dynamics of the Europe issue and public engagement with it. Europe has gone from being a fringe issue with the public to being considered one of the most salient issues. The effect of Europe can be seen in the electoral swings against the Conservatives in *remain* areas during the 2017 election (Heath and Godwin 2017: p. 351-355). The increased saliency of the Europe issue could potentially mean that the thesis' conclusions about the elite individuals and the internal politics of Parliament no longer hold for the post-referendum period.

On the other hand, the Brexit negotiations are complex and the debate has increasingly become dominated by technical jargon which many voters may not understand such as: "CETA+" "EEA-" and "full regulatory alignment". The complexity of the situation might result in elite politics continuing to be the driving force of MPs' positions on Europe. The incentives for MPs in the post-referendum period have also been complicated by the result of the 2017 general election. In the 2017 Parliament many MPs could be presented with the choice of either having to vote for a Brexit proposal they profoundly disagree with or risk bringing down a Conservative government, potentially enabling Corbyn's Labour to gain power.

The events post-referendum suggest that divisions in the Conservative Party over Europe could persist for a long time to come. These divisions could have significant consequences for the party's electoral fortunes and the UK's future relationship with the EU. This thesis makes a contribution to the political science literature by considering legislative behaviour in the Conservative Party during a crucial time for the party which culminated in the British electorate's decision to leave the EU.

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Appendix A – Additional tables from Chapter 4

Table 4A: The raw numbers of MPs' classification on the Europe Scale 1992-2015

	Parliaments				
	1992	*1997*	*2001*	*2005*	*2010*
Classification	***n***	***n***	***n***	***n***	**n**
Euro-Enthusiast	98	31	31	24	29
Unclassified	46	13	10	17	27
Soft-Eurosceptic	105	86	94	102	81
Hard-Eurosceptic	82	34	31	55	167

Table 4B: Ordered logit regression of the probability of being a hard-Eurosceptic (See table 4.4 for the equivalent marginal effects)

	Parliament				
	1992	**1997**	**2001**	**2005**	**2010**
Social Conservatism	0.22***	0.32**	0.36***	0.37***	0.23***
	(0.08)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.08)
Economic Issues	1.17***	1.58***	0.39*	1.50***	
	(0.15)	(0.26)	(0.22)	(0.28)	
Frontbench	-0.62***	-0.70*	-0.09	-1.41***	-1.52***
	(0.23)	(0.36)	(0.40)	(0.36)	(0.29)
Years in Parliament	-0.02	0.01	-0.04*	-0.01	-0.06***
	(>0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Constituency Euroscepticism					0.03*
					(0.02)

UKIP impact			0.09	0.14	0.02
			(0.30)	(0.18)	(0.06)
Unemployment %	0.16*	0.16	>0.001	0.15**	
	(0.09)	(0.17)	(0.34)	(0.06)	
Retired %	0.001	-0.02	0.03	>0.01	
	(>0.01)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.01)	
Private school	0.35	0.47	-0.06	0.57*	-0.31
	(0.24)	(0.36)	(0.36)	(0.32)	(0.26)
Oxbridge educated	0.16	0.12	0.21	0.56*	0.08
	(0.23)	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.32)	(0.27)
Cut 1	2.70	1.31	0.56	4.11	-2.10
Cut 2	3.48	1.32	0.93	4.94	-1.27
Cut 3	5.27	1.42	3.96	8.03	0.19
N	309	160	147	187	280
Pseudo R2	0.15	0.19	0.06	0.17	0.11
Count R2	0.51	0.61	0.58	0.65	0.56
Adjusted Count R2	0.29	0.18	-0.02	0.25	0.02

Robust standard errors in parentheses
**** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 * p> 0.1*

Appendix B – Additional table from Chapter 5

Table 5A: Words used for analysis of public statements.

Sovereignty	Economy	World	Future	Migration	Costs	Security	Politics
Control	Trade	World	Future	Immigration	Cost	Security	Politics
Laws	Economy	Global	Deal	Border	Million	NATO	Minister
Free	Market	India	Change	Migration	Billion	Safer	Prime
Parliament	Business	Influence	Relationship	Movement	Eurozone	Defence	Government
Decision	Jobs	Commonwealth	Reform		Money	Russia	David
Brussels	Export	China	Chance		Regulations	Terrorism	Deals
Power	Tariffs		Agreement		Taxes	Crime	
Sovereignty	Growth		Hope		VAT	Military	
Voting	Pound		Risk		Spend	Army	
Rules	Financial		Negotiation				
People	Unemployed		Switzerland				
Government	Barriers		Canada				
Political	Currency		Outside				
Policy	Investment		Norway				
Democracy	Wage		Renegotiations				
Public	Workers						
Elected	Access						
Court	Prosperity						
Independent	Companies						
Integration	Prices						
Accountability							
Westminster							
Legislation							
Commons							
Superstate							

Appendix C – Additional table from Chapter 6

Table 6A: Effect of seniority on Euroscepticism controlling for fixed effect and excluding the 2010 Parliament

	Europe variable (1-4) (Fixed effects Model)
Seniority†	0.019***
	(0.006)
Constant	2.49***
	(0.068)
R^2	0.02
(Within)	0.04
(Between)	0.04
N	859
Groups	451

Source: thesis original data

*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1 Robust standard errors in parentheses

Dependent variable: Europe scale (1-4) see Table 6.1

† Measured in terms of years in Parliament

Appendix D – Additional tables from Chapter 7

Table 7A Summary statistics of applications and final shortlist placements of Conservative candidates 1997-2005

	1997	**2001**	**2005**
Number of seats applied to (Mean)	11.2	13.8	11.8
(SD)	13.7	22.7	16.8
N	215	301	206
Number of shortlists (Mean)	2.2	2.4	3.1
(SD)	1.7	1.9	3.5
N	207	299	202
Shortlist Success* (Mean)	0.48	0.26	0.29
(SD)	0.37	0.20	0.31
N	207	198	150

Source: BRS 1997-200

This graph includes only Conservative candidates who were not MPs at the time of the election.

* This refers to the number of shortlists/applications. Observations above 1 were excluded from the data

Table 7B Regression of success in getting onto constituency shortlists (OLS)

	1997 Euro approval	1997 Sceptic	2001 Euro approval	2001 EU approval
View on Single currency (1-5)~	0.03		-0.02	
	(0.03)		(0.03)	
Listed as Eurosceptic£		0.02		
		(0.05)		
EU disapproval^				-0.04
				(0.05)
Death Penalty Support†	-0.01	-0.01	0.04***	-0.04**
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Held National Party office (0/1)	-0.08	-0.08	0.17***	0.18***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Intercept	0.38**	0.50***	0.73***	0.62***
	(0.15)	(0.07)	(0.18)	(0.06)
R^2	0.01	<0.01	0.05	0.05
N	203	203	285	285

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Source: BRS 1997 and 2001

† Based on the question "For some crimes the death penalty is the most appropriate Sentence" 1 = Strongly disagree ; 2 = Disagree ; 3 = Neither; 4 = Agree; 5 = Agree Strongly

~ Based on responses to question: "Do you think the government should, or should not, do each of the following things, or doesn't it matter either way?" "Move towards a common European currency" (1 = Definitely Should; 2 = Probably should; 3 = Doesn't matter; 4 = Probably should not; 5 = definitely should not)

^ 0/1 dummy variable, 1 = disapprove or strongly disapprove of EU membership, 0 = approve/strongly approve

£ According to Daily Mail listing as a Eurosceptic in the 1997 general election, source BRS

Appendix E – Additional tables from Chapter 8

Table 8A Differences in MPs' majorities at next general according to position on Europe (multivariate models)

	1997	2001	2005	2010	2015
Europe Scale# (Reference Category: Euro-enthusiasts)					
Unclassified	-3.91	2.56*	-0.42	-1.04	0.38
	(2.65)	(1.54)	(1.74)	(2.26)	(2.76)
Soft-Eurosceptics	2.46	1.30	0.94	-2.18	-0.91
	(1.96)	(1.27)	(1.30)	(-1.69)	(2.31)
Hard-Eurosceptics	1.32	1.04	-0.38	-0.33	-1.72
	(2.63)	(1.36)	(1.98)	(2.02)	(2.29)
Vote-share at previous election	0.72***	0.79***	0.72***	0.61***	0.86***
	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.05)
Social Conservatism#	-0.04	-0.27	-0.24	-0.08	-0.45
	(0.60)	(0.34)	(0.31)	(0.47)	(0.35)
Frontbench	0.22	0.96	1.11	2.79*	-2.31*
	(1.76)	(0.96)	(1.00)	(1.55)	(1.33)
Cons	-12.3***	4.69***	8.38***	14.6***	14.46***
	(3.02)	(1.55)	(1.86)	(2.5)	(2.88)
R^2	0.37	0.58	0.46	0.35	0.51
Adjust R^2					
N	201	144	157	163	269

*** p> 0.01 ** p> 0.05 *p> 0.1

measured on 1-6 scale see 4.4b for details

Appendix F - Summary statistics of the Survey of Association officers

Figure S1: Employment of respondents

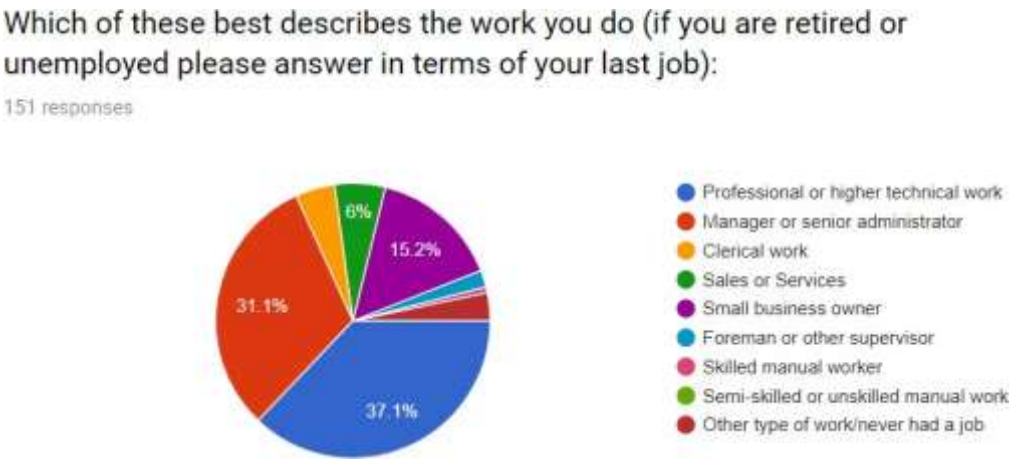


Figure S2: Education levels of respondents

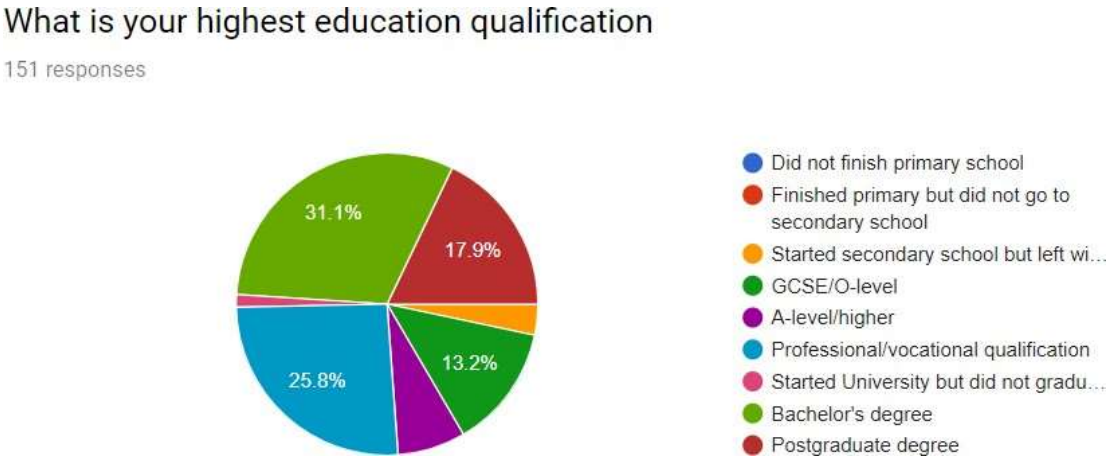


Figure S3: Age of respondents.

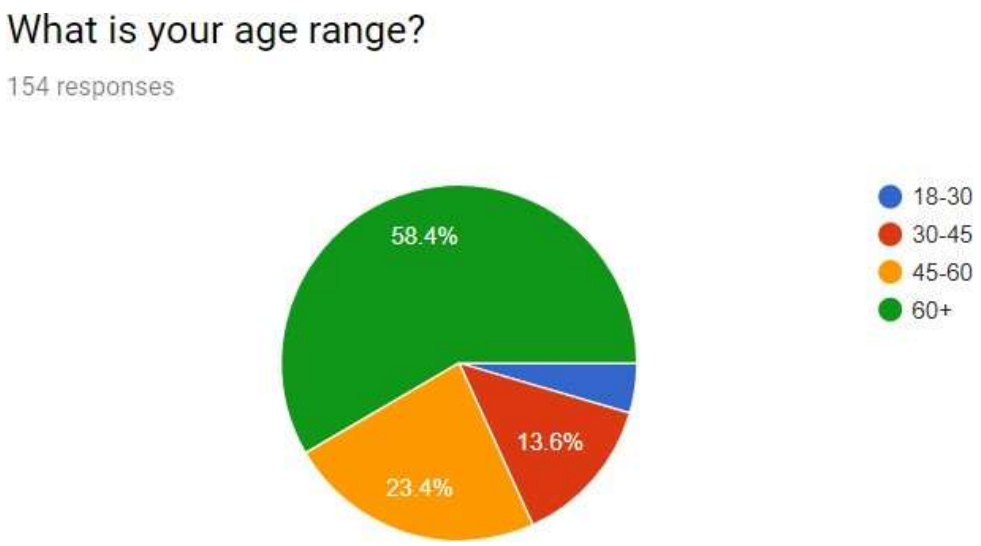


Figure S5 Role in association

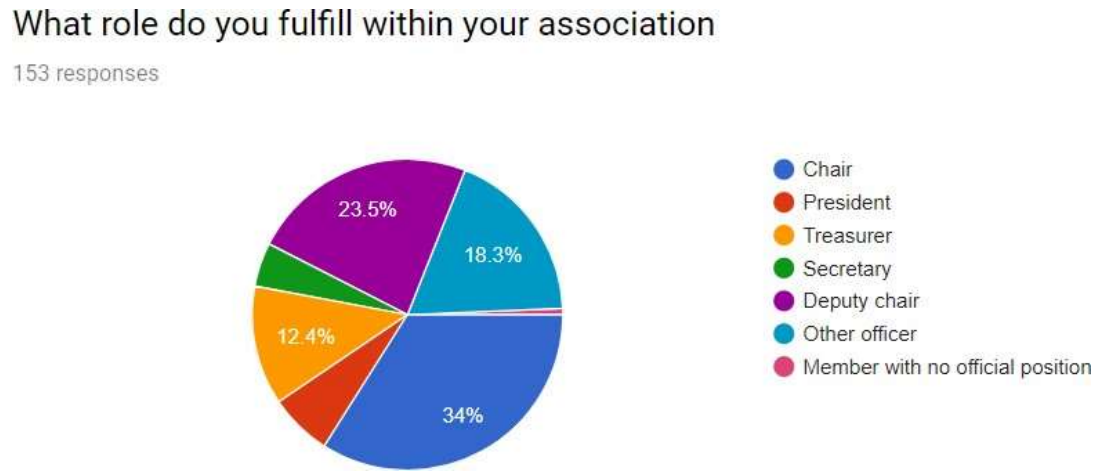


Figure S5: Gender balance of respondents

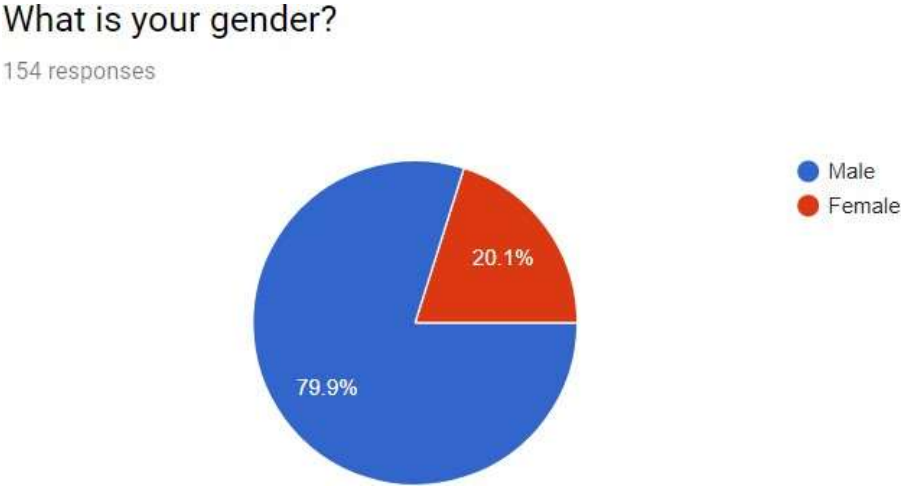
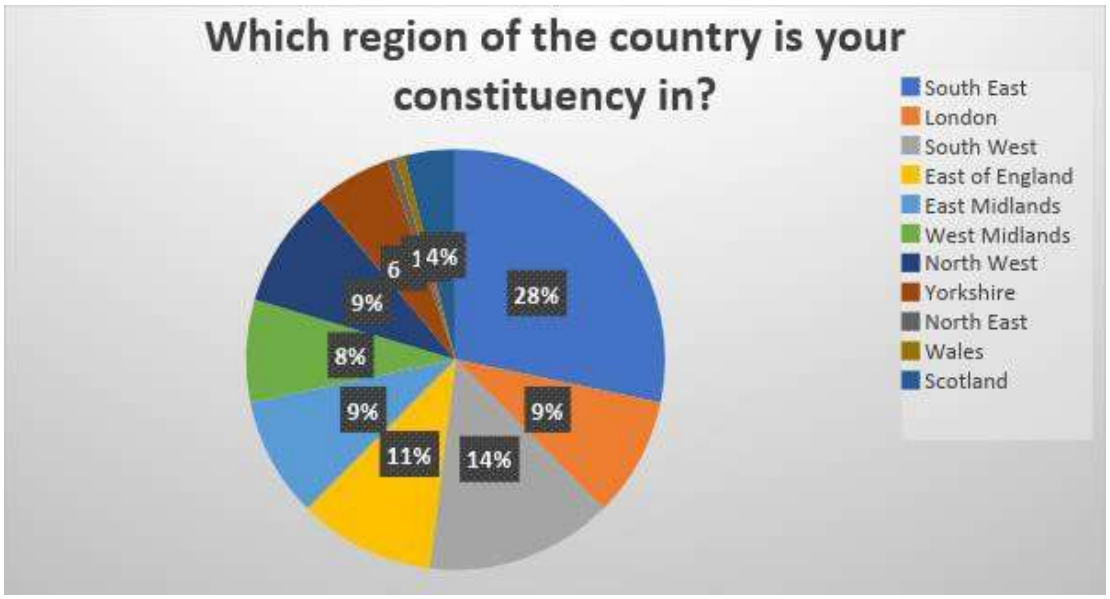
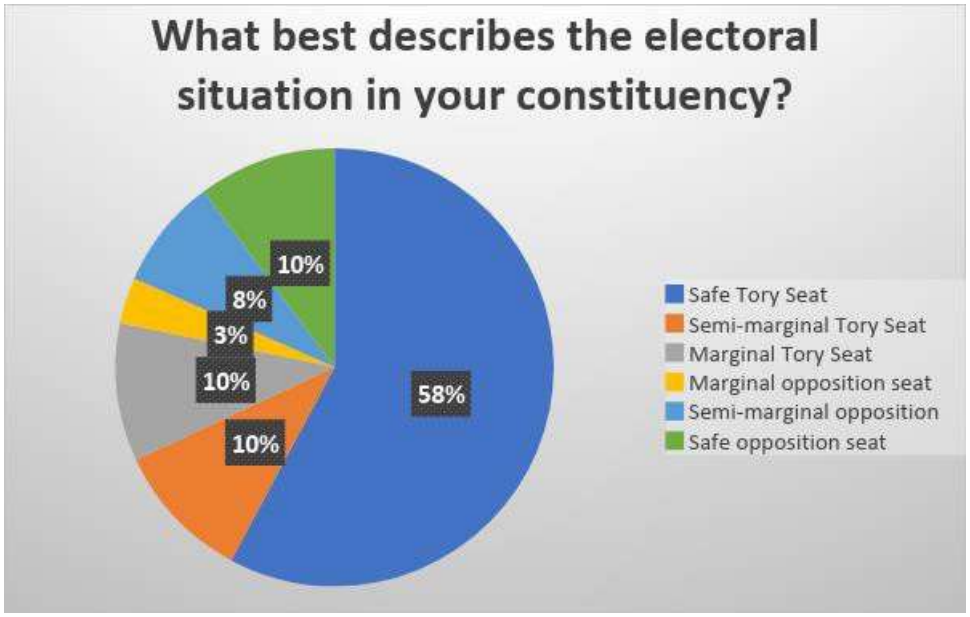


Figure S6: Regional breakdown of respondents



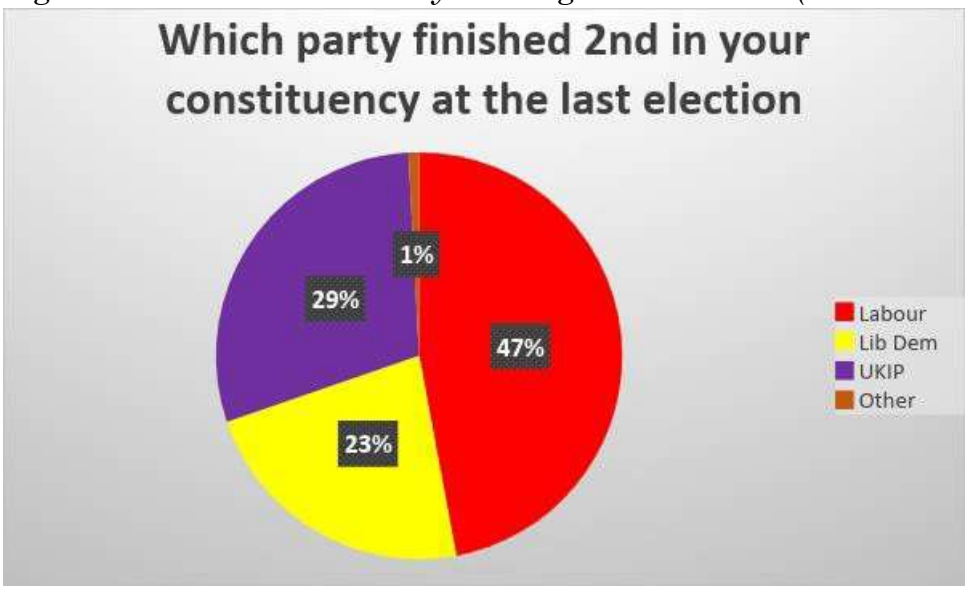
N = 152

Figure S7: Electoral situation of respondents' constituencies



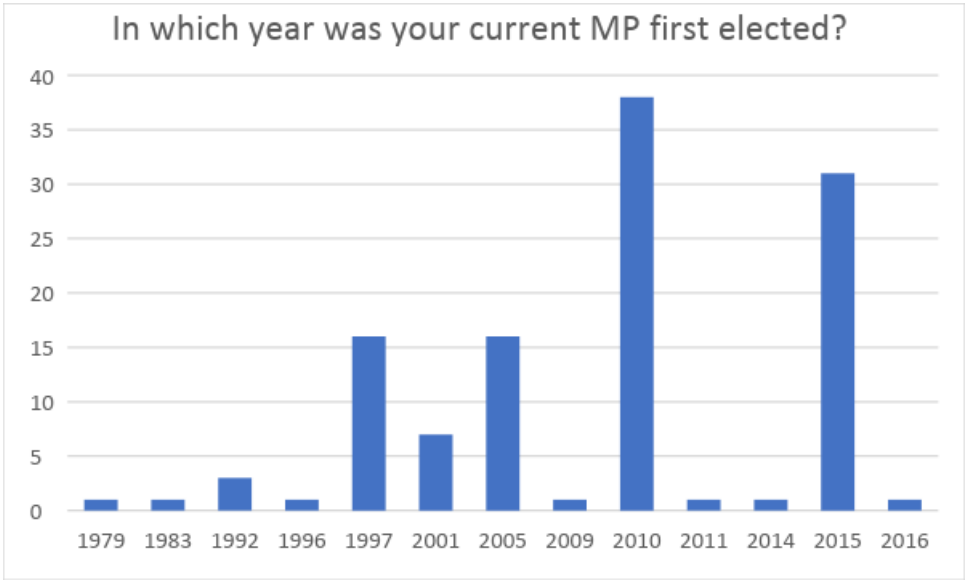
n = 147

Figure S8: Second Place Party at last general election (Conservative seats only)



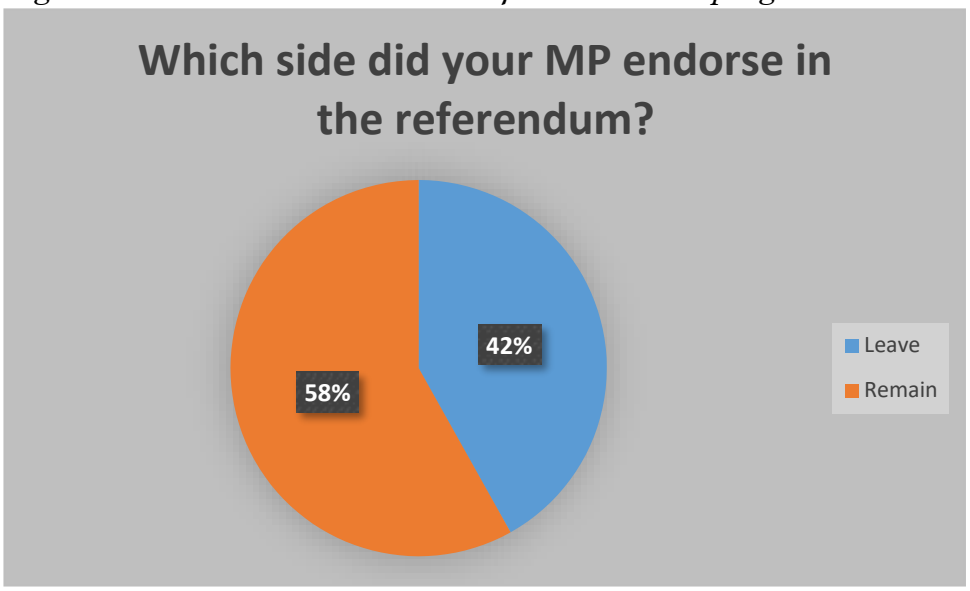
N = 118

Figure S9: Year of MP's first election



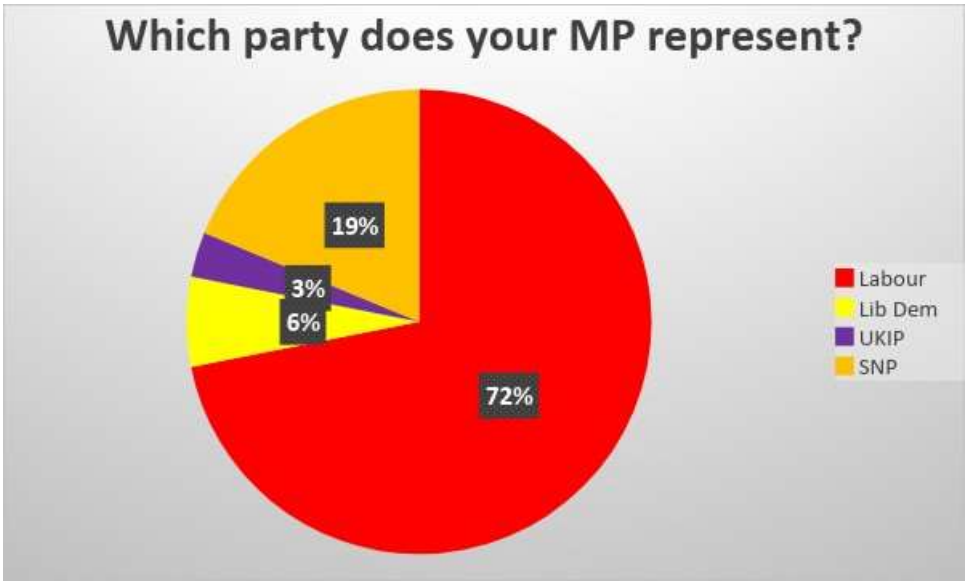
N = 118

Figure S9: MPs endorsement in referendum campaign



N = 117

Figure S10: Non Conservative constituencies MP:



N = 32

Table S1: Respondents views on Economic issues

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly
The government should be more active in redistributing wealth	9%	27%	41%	18%	5%
Ordinary people benefit from the success of big business	0%	12%	12%	59%	25%
The government should do more to prevent personal tax avoidance	1%	6%	14%	45%	33%
Welfare changes have unfairly hit vulnerable people	9%	50%	31%	8%	3%
The tax system should allow people to keep more of money they earn	1.3%	5%	11%	49%	34%

N= 154

Table S2: Total left-right views:

(1 = most left-wing response; 5 = most right-wing, range 5-25)

Mean	16.9
SD	2.4
Skew	0.22
N	150

Table S3: Respondents on social issues

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
Young people don't have enough respect for tradition	2%	15%	34%	36%	14%
People who break the law should face stiffer sentences	0	12%	30%	35%	23%
Schools should do more to teach children authority	0	14%	22%	46%	18%
The death penalty has no place in a civilised society	8%	18%	17%	28%	29%
The law should always be obeyed even if a particular law is wrong	0	16%	23%	51%	11%
Censorship of films is necessary to uphold moral standards	11%	28%	19%	34%	8%

N = 154

Table S4: Total liberal-authoritarian views:
(1 = most left-wing response; 5 = most right-wing, range 5-30)

Mean	19.8
SD	3.8
Skew	0.10
N	150

Figure S11: Respondents vote in the Brexit referendum

n= 154

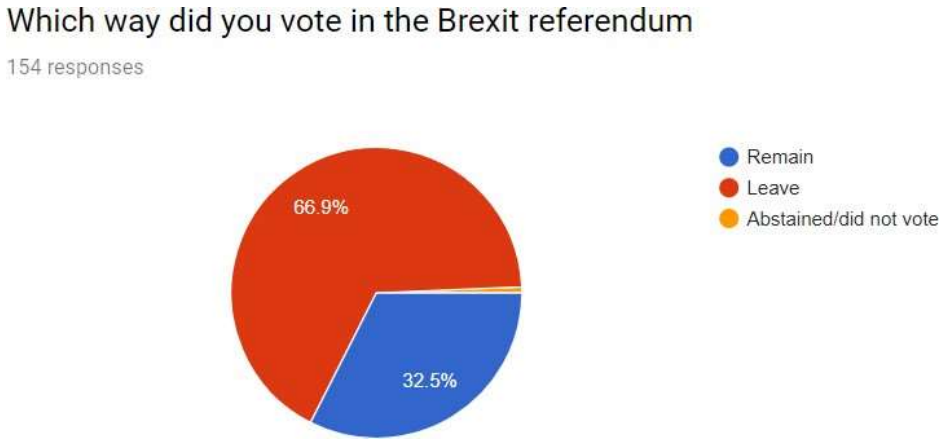
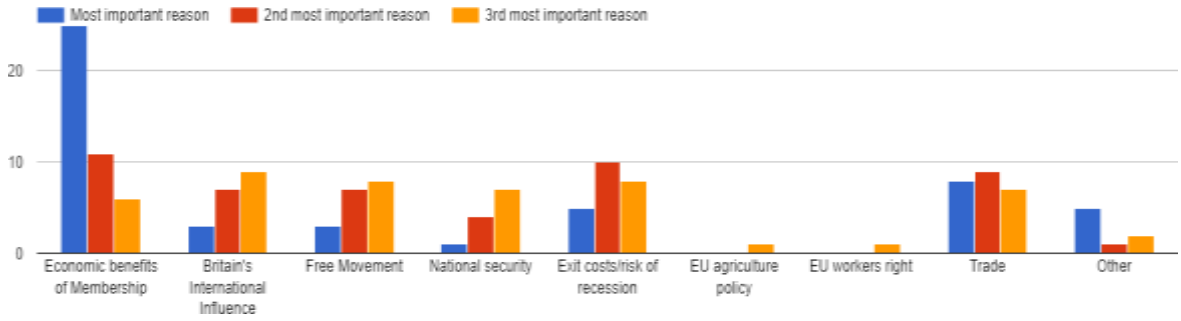


Figure S12: Respondents reasons for voting remain



S13: Respondents' reasons for voting leave

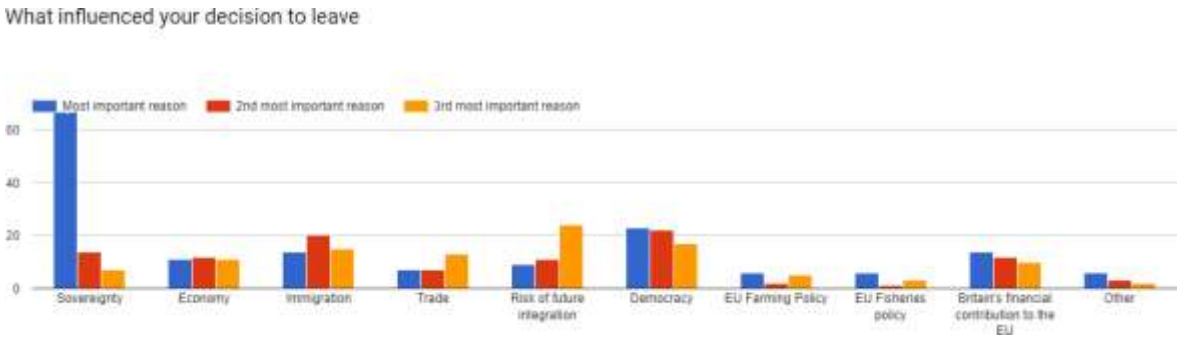


Figure S14: Respondents view on selection procedure

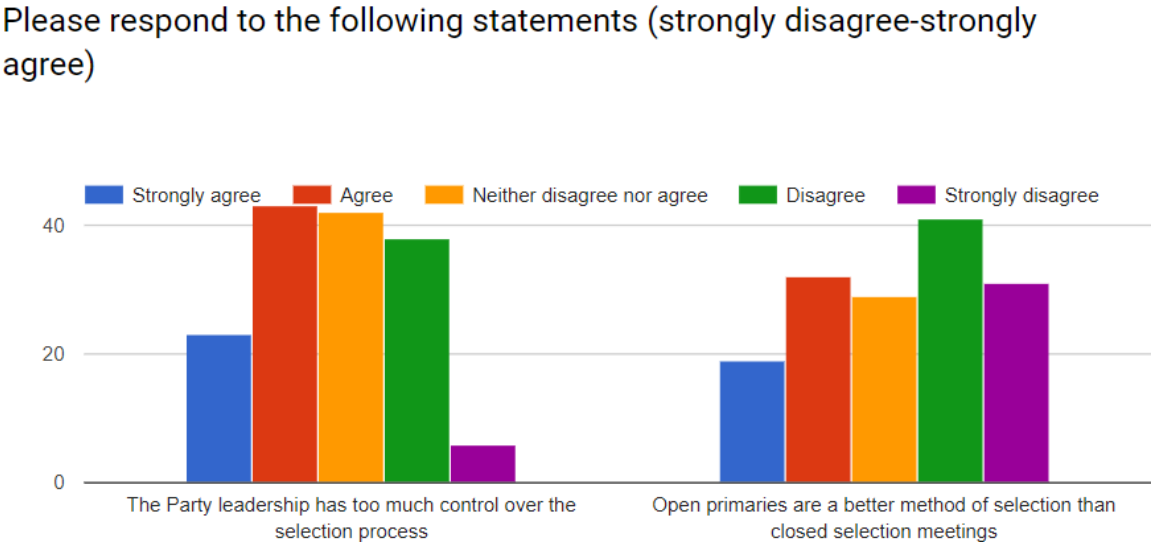


Figure S15: Respondents' views about their MP's career preferences

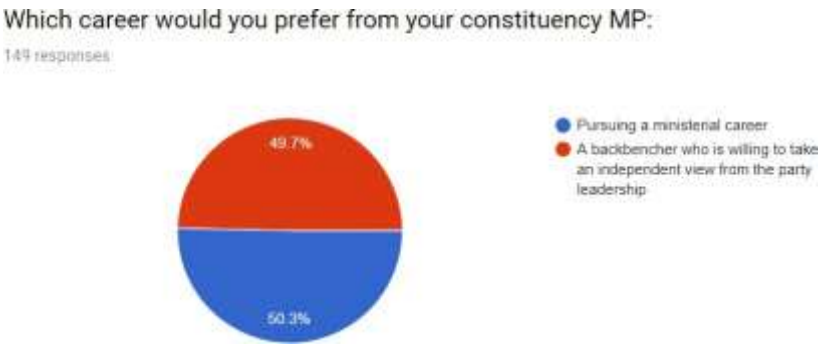
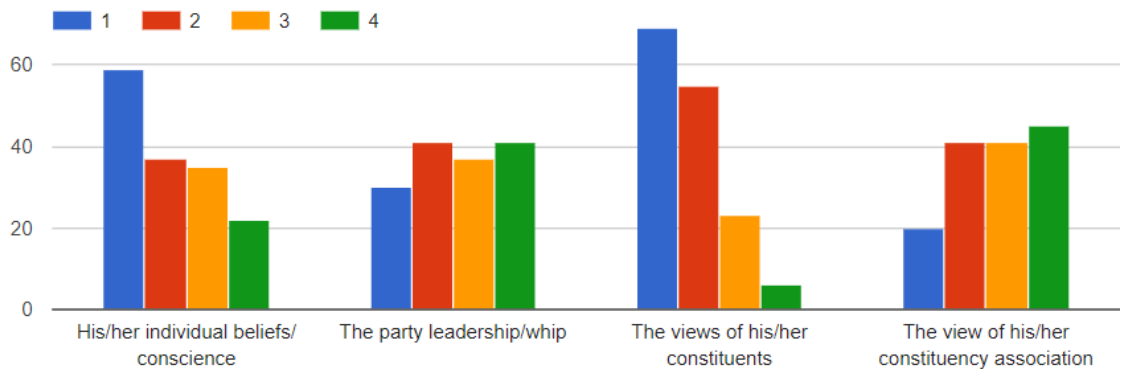


Figure S16: Respondents' views about MPs' priorities

21. Please rank the following considerations from 1-4 (1= most important, 4=least important) in terms of how much importance an MP should assign to them when making political decisions.



Appendix G - Interview list

Interview 1: *Remain* supporting MPs first elected in 2010s. House of Commons, December 2015.

Interview 2: *Leave* supporting constituency association chairman. Greater London constituency, July 2016

Interview 3: *Remain* supporting MP first elected in 2010s. House of Commons, February 2017

Interview 4: *Leave* supporting MP first elected in the 2010s. House of Commons, March 2017

Interview 5: *Leave* supporting MP first elected in 2010s. House of Commons, March 2017

Interview 6: *Remain* supporting MP first elected in 2010s. House of Commons, March 2017.

Interview 7: *Leave* supporting MP first elected in 2010s. House of Commons, March 2017.

Interview 8: *Leave* supporting MP first elected in 1980s. House of Commons, March 2017.

Interview 9: *Leave* supporting MP first elected in 2000s. House of Commons, March 2017. The MPs' research assistant who was also involved in the backbench campaign for a referendum was involved in this interview.

Interview 10: *Leave* supporting MP first elected in 2000s. House of Commons, April 2017.

Interview 11: *Remain* supporting MP first elected in 1990s. House of Commons, April 2017

Interview 12: *Leave* supporting MP first elected in 1990s. House of Commons, July 2017

Interview transcripts available on request