

EUROSKEPTICISM LESSON

STUDENT'S VERSION

Warm Up

Definition:

Euroskepticism: Euroskepticism is an attitude of doubt, skepticism, or opposition towards the European Union, its policies, and its institutions. It is typically expressed politically through Eurosceptic parties, which oppose further integration of the European Union and some of its policies. It also includes those who advocate for the withdrawal of their respective countries from the EU, known as "Brexiters" in the UK and "Europhobes" elsewhere. Euroskepticism is often linked to skepticism of the process of European integration, distrust of the European Commission, and opposition to further enlargement of the EU. It has also been associated with populist, anti-immigration, and anti-globalization sentiment.

Task 1:

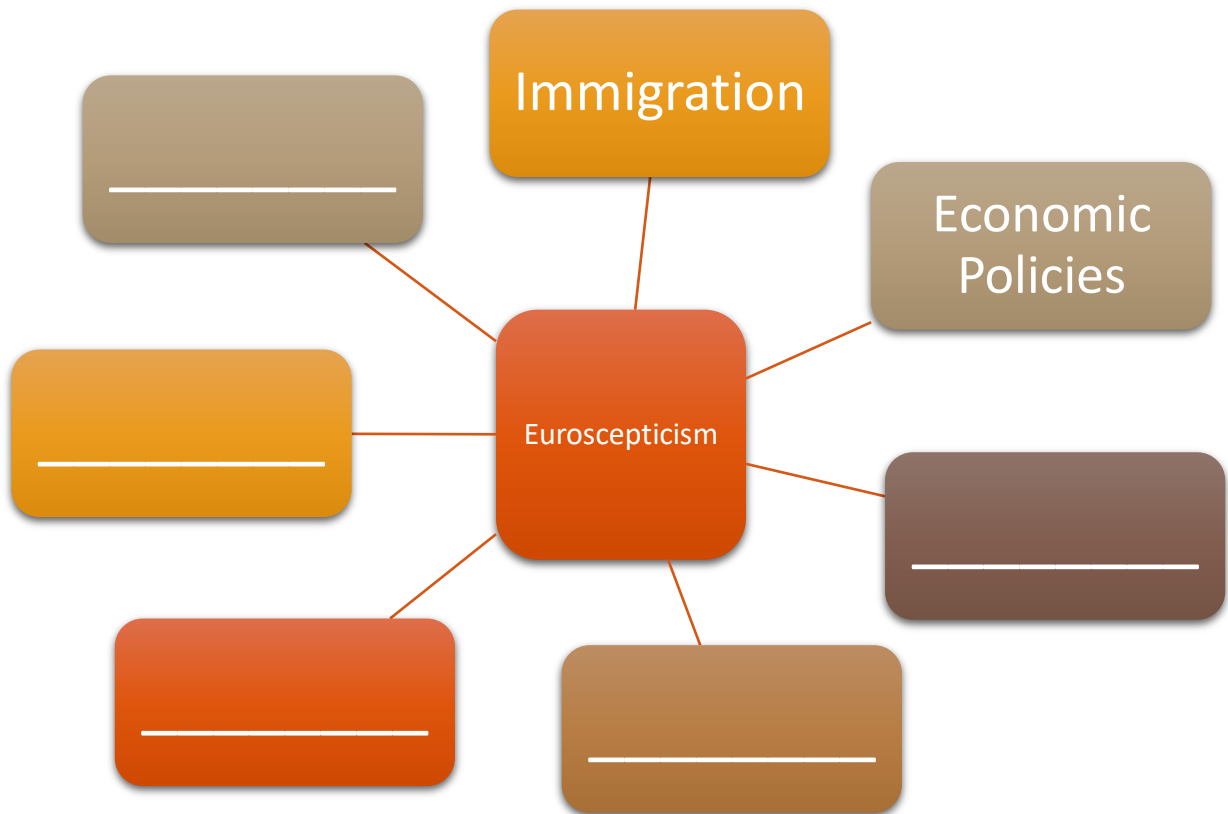
With your partner, conduct a brief search online to identify the five countries with the highest levels of Euroskepticism, and the five countries with the lowest levels of Euroskepticism. Complete the table below. You have 5 minutes for this task.

Highest Levels of Euroskepticism	Lowest Levels of Euroskepticism
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Task 2:

With your partner, brainstorm some of the possible factors driving Euroscepticism in Europe. Complete the spider diagram below with your ideas. If you have more than 5 ideas, you can add more bubbles to the diagram.

Some examples have been done for you. You have 5 minutes for this task.



Activity 1: Useful Vocabulary

Using the Internet and/or your textbook to help you, give a short definition of the following terms:

Eurosceptic:

Europhile:

Brexit:

Fiscal Union:

Schengen Zone:

Sovereignty:

Single Market:

Nationalism:

Activity 2: Reading Activity

Breaking the Union: Euroscepticism and the Future of Europe

What is Euroscepticism?

Euroscepticism is the belief that the European Union (EU) is an inefficient and undemocratic institution that has too much control over its member states and that the European project should be reconsidered, or even abandoned. It has become a major political issue in European countries, as the EU continues to expand its powers and responsibilities.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

Euroscepticism is a multi-faceted phenomenon, with a wide range of views and motivations behind it. These range from concerns about sovereignty and the loss of national identity, to worries about the cost of EU membership, to fears about the impact of the EU on jobs and wages. There are also political considerations, such as the perception that the EU is too powerful and unaccountable, or that the EU is making decisions without the consent of the people.

The rise of Euroscepticism has been driven by a range of factors, including the economic crisis of 2008, the migration crisis of 2015, and the UK's referendum on EU membership in 2016. In many countries, Euroscepticism is linked to a rise in right-wing populism, as parties such as the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and Alternative for Germany (AfD) have emerged as major political players.

The impact of Euroscepticism has been felt across Europe. In the UK, the 2016 referendum on EU membership saw a majority of people voting to leave the EU. In other countries, such as France and Italy, Eurosceptic parties have made gains in recent years, but have yet to translate these into major electoral success. Among the member states, opinions on and support for the EU vary widely based on the benefits and drawbacks that individual countries have experienced and on the political influence of the ruling elite.

Denmark

Since joining the European Union in 1973, Denmark has always maintained a cautionary approach to the Union and has chosen to opt out of a number of important policies and acts of greater unification introduced in the subsequent decades. Following the rejection of the Maastricht Treaty by a referendum in 1992, Denmark negotiated four opt-outs from the treaty: the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), Justice and Home Affairs (now PJCC) and the citizenship of the European Union. The Danish people accepted the treaty after the opt-outs were granted, in a second referendum held in 1993. This means that Denmark is not obligated to replace the Danish krone with the Euro, is not involved in the European Union's foreign policy on defence matters and does not contribute troops to EU missions. Denmark is also not required to participate in the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Convention, and the citizenship opt-out means Denmark does not accept the European citizenship granted by the Maastricht Treaty.

Despite a generally high level of Euroscepticism in Denmark, in recent years this has been in decline. The disastrous repercussions of Brexit and the recent security issues Europe is facing with respect to the conflict in Ukraine has encouraged Danes to think more critically about their cautious approach to EU membership. In a referendum in June 2022, Denmark voted to remove its opt-out on security and defence, opening the door to a greater level of integration in the future.

Hungary

The main source of Euroscepticism in Hungary is the country's strained relationship with the European Union. Hungary has long been a difficult partner for the EU, especially when it comes to the issue of immigration and refugee policy. Hungary has refused to accept EU-imposed refugee quotas and has been highly critical of the EU's handling of the refugee crisis. This has led to tensions between Hungary and the EU and has contributed to a feeling of distrust and alienation among many Hungarians. In addition to the refugee crisis, Hungary has also been critical of the EU's handling of the financial crisis and its austerity measures. Hungarians feel that the EU has imposed harsh economic policies on the country that have not been beneficial to its citizens. This has further contributed to a sense of Euroscepticism in the country.

Euroscepticism in Hungary's government is a growing phenomenon that is causing tensions between the nation and the European Union. The government, led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, has adopted an increasingly hostile stance towards the EU, due to its view that Brussels is encroaching upon its sovereignty and attempts to impose its will on the nation. The government has taken a number of steps to limit the power of the EU, including introducing a

new constitution that limits the authority of foreign courts and institutions. The government has also been accused of undermining the rule of law and democratic values, which has further heightened the anti-EU sentiment in the country.

Despite the prevailing negative view of the country's political elite, surprisingly, the general public in Hungary are mostly supportive of the European Union. Despite some early decline in popularity following Hungary's accession to the EU in 2004, fuelled in part by the economic crisis of 2008 and the election of Orbán's government in 2010, Euroscepticism among the general population peaked in 2012 and has steadily declined ever since. Hungary therefore maintains a delicate balance between people and regime, making the possibility of a future referendum on leaving the EU less likely than in some other countries.

Ireland

The Republic of Ireland has been a committed member of the European Union (EU) since 1973 and is now seen as one of the most pro-EU countries in the bloc. The Irish people have consistently voted in favour of the EU in referendums and Eurobarometer polls.

A key factor in Ireland's strong support for the EU is the country's commitment to the single market. This allows for the free movement of goods and services across the EU, which has been incredibly beneficial for the Irish economy. The country also benefits from other EU policies, such as the Common Agricultural Policy, which provides subsidies for Irish farmers.

In addition, the EU has been a major source of funding for Ireland. Since the 1990s, the EU has provided the country with over €30bn in structural funds to help stimulate the economy. This money has been used to improve infrastructure, create jobs, and provide support to small businesses.

Where will it lead?

The future of Euroscepticism is uncertain. The UK's departure from the EU is likely to have a major impact on the European project and could lead to further fragmentation and a weakening of the EU's authority. However, there are also signs that support for the EU could be increasing in some countries, as the economic and political benefits of EU membership become more apparent. Whatever the future holds, Euroscepticism is likely to remain an important factor in European politics.

Questions

1. List five motivations behind Euroscepticism mentioned in the text.

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____
- iv. _____
- v. _____

2. What political position is linked to Euroscepticism?

3. When was the Brexit referendum? _____

4. What are Denmark's four opt-outs?

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____
- iv. _____

5. Why are Danes thinking more favourably about the EU at the moment?

6. What is the main point of contention between Hungary and the European Union?

7. Which group of people in Hungary are the most Eurosceptical?

8. How much has Ireland received in structural funds from the EU?

Activity 2: Video Activity

Watch the video about Brexit (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzjuA0IbjAU&t=1s>) and take notes on the following sections. Use the headings below to guide your notes.

Who is Michel Barnier and why is he important?

How did Barnier build cohesion?

Transparency in the Brexit negotiations

Michel Barnier's taskforce

Group Work

You will work in a small group. Compare your notes on the video and complete any information you missed. Based on the information you have studied today and your own knowledge, discuss and complete your notes, and brainstorm some ideas on how you think Michel Barnier could improve the Brexit negotiations:

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Consolidation: Essay Task

Greece has held a referendum and has decided to leave the European Union.

Use your own knowledge and research from the Internet to write an essay discussing the following points:

- ☞ Potential reasons why the people voted to leave the EU,
- ☞ The short- and long-term effects on the Greek economy,
- ☞ Some suggestions on how to mitigate the problems that their exit from the EU will cause.

Your essay should be 500-700 words in length.