Political Party Affiliation, Regional Variation and the Demographic Correlates of Euroscepticism on the Isle of Great Britain

Jared Figgins
figgins@marshall.edu

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POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION, REGIONAL VARIATION AND THE DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES OF EUROSCEPTICISM ON THE ISLE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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by

Jared Figgins

Approved by
Joshua Hagen, Ph.D., committee chairperson
James Leonard, Ph.D.
Kevin Law, Ph.D

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# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements..............................................................................................................ii
Table of Contents.............................................................................................................iii
List of Figures.....................................................................................................................v
Abstract.............................................................................................................................vi

Chapter 1
Introduction.........................................................................................................................1
What and Where is Euroscepticism.....................................................................................8

Chapter 2 Review of the Literature
Why is the UK so Eurosceptic?..........................................................................................12
Party Based Euroscepticism...............................................................................................14

Chapter 3 Methodology
3.1 Study Area and Data Collection and Analysis .........................................................24

Chapter 4 Results
4.1 Voter Preference, Regional Variation and Demographic Correlates..........................30
Greater London.................................................................................................................30
The North..........................................................................................................................34
Scotland and Wales..........................................................................................................39
Southern England and the East.......................................................................................48
The Midlands....................................................................................................................52
Regional Summary..........................................................................................................53

4.2 Local Results in Depth...............................................................................................57

Chapter 5 Conclusion.......................................................................................................66
Bibliography.....................................................................................................................71
Appendix: Letter from Institutional Research Board

.................................................................87
List of Figures

Figure 1.1 The Six Founding Members of the ECSC.........................................................3
Figure 2.1 Left-Right Political Spectrum of Select Political Parties in the UK..............17
Figure 4.1 Combined BNP and UKIP Support by Region- 2009 EU Elections............31
Figure 4.2 BNP and UKIP Support in Greater London................................................33
Figure 4.3 BNP Vote by Region.....................................................................................36
Figure 4.4 BNP and UKIP Support in Scotland..............................................................41
Figure 4.5 Correlations Matrix for Scotland.................................................................42
Figure 4.6 Correlations Matrix for Wales.....................................................................46
Figure 4.7 Knowledge of Welsh Language by Assembly Region...............................47
Figure 4.8. BNP and UKIP Support in Wales...............................................................47
Figure 4.9 UKIP Vote by Regions of the UK...............................................................49
Figure 4.10 EU Referendum Survey Results by Region.............................................51
Figure 4.11 Correlations Matrix for England...............................................................56
Figure 4.12 Local BNP and UKIP Vote Returns in 2009 EU Election.........................59
Figure 4.13 BNP and UKIP Support in Local Elections 2007-2010............................60
Abstract

Euroscepticism or opposition to the European Union has become a growing political philosophy among broad segments of Europe’s populace. This philosophy has manifested itself in some form throughout most of the European Union, but opinion polls and voter data indicate Euroscepticism is most acute within the United Kingdom and both among its general citizenry and elected officials. In the 2009 EU Parliament elections for the United Kingdom, the right-wing United Kingdom Independence Party gained its most ever seats in the Parliament while the far-right British National Party gained its first ever seats in a national election. With overtly Eurosceptic political parties gaining unprecedented support, the UK is poised to enter a new chapter of Euroscepticism. This thesis examined the spatial variation of Euroscepticism in the three constituent nations of the Isle of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales). In this analysis, several key socio-economic variables such as lack of education, unemployment rates and low population density were found to strongly correlate with Eurosceptic voting behavior whereas geographically the region identified as the most Eurosceptic was the West Midlands and the least Eurosceptic was Scotland. This work focused mainly on the 2009 EU Parliament election at both regional and local scales in England, Scotland and Wales, as well as local council elections in England from 2007 to 2010.

Key words: Euroscepticism, Euroskepticism, Great Britain, European Union, United Kingdom, political geography, British.
Chapter 1

Introduction

“Certainly we want to see Europe more united and with a greater sense of common purpose, but it must be in a way which preserves the different traditions, Parliamentary powers, and sense of pride in one's own country.” – Excerpt from Margaret Thatcher’s “Bruges speech” to the College of Europe in 1988.

Throughout modern human history, the need to transcend domestic boundaries and form supranational organizations has periodically been a unifying force among nations with cultural and linguistic differences but similar economic, military or political motivations. Historically Europe has been the center of this movement toward supranationalism and supranational organization. For example, the world’s oldest extant international organization, the Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine (CCNR), is located in Europe. Founded following the destruction of the Napoleonic Wars, the CCNR was intended to encourage European prosperity by guaranteeing security for navigation across the international borders that divide the Rhine River area. This tradition became more pronounced as European countries played key roles during the formation of supranational organizations like the United Nations and NATO.

In the wake of violent fascist movements and the ravages of two world wars during the first half of the 20th century, Europeans began searching for methods to bring about a more united Europe and end the constant quarreling among the various states. Beginning with some simple trade agreements, their efforts eventually led to the European Union (EU), a supranational organization that was renowned for its efficiency and as a model of international cooperation.
Most of the world has viewed the European Union as a great pillar of cultural and political stability with the notable exception of the current economic and political turmoil in Greece and other countries. In stark contrast to today’s peaceful and orderly European Union, historic international organizations and empires in Europe have been forged through regional and sometimes global conflict such as the Roman Empire, Ottoman Empire, the more recent Greater Germanic Reich and the Warsaw Pact. In contrast, this idea of a European democratic confederation encompassing twenty-seven countries ranging from Ireland in the west to Cyprus in the east is a relatively new and revolutionary idea in global politics.

The EU is not some spontaneous and trivial creation but one years in the making. As mentioned previously, the basic premise of the EU’s foundation was to discourage conflict and promote economic cooperation among European nations. At this time most of Europe was emerging from the deadliest conflict in human history, World War II. French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, one of the founding fathers of the EU, summed up the early idea of European integration in his 1950 declaration:

Five years, almost to the day, after the unconditional surrender of Germany, France is accomplishing the first decisive act for European construction and is associating Germany with this. Conditions in Europe are going to be entirely changed because of it. This transformation will facilitate other action which has been impossible until this day. Europe will be born from this, a Europe which is solidly united and constructed around a strong framework. It will be a Europe where the standard of living will rise by grouping together production and expanding markets, thus encouraging the lowering of prices. (Europa.eu, Schuman Declaration 1950)
Schuman’s declaration later led to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951 via the signing of the Treaty of Paris. It should be noted that coal and steel are symbolic as they were two of the main materials of warfare during this time. Schuman desired to place the production of coal and steel under a “High Authority” to regulate and promote coal and steel production of France, Germany and any other European countries that desired to join. Officially the aim of the Treaty, as stated in Article 2, was to create a common market (a group of countries imposing few or no duties on trade with one another and a common tariff on trade with other countries) for coal and steel that would promote economic expansion, lower unemployment and raise overall standards of living. Thus, the ECSC had to ensure a steady supply to the common market by ensuring equal access to the sources of production, the establishment of the lowest prices and improved working conditions. All of this cooperation had to be accompanied by growth in international trade and modernization of production. (Europa.eu, Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community)

*Figure 1.1. The Six Founders of the European Coal and Steel Community*

*The Six Founding Members of the ECSC*
The High Authority of the ECSC took office first on August 10, 1952 in Luxembourg. The Authority aimed to be an independent, supranational executive checked by a Court of Justice. There were concerns about this sort of power, leading to the creation of a Council and Common Assembly (later named European Parliament in 1962) to be created to act as a counterweight. Jean Monnet, the originator of the ECSC, was chosen as the President.

The general idea behind the ECSC was to merge the coal and steel industries of select European countries and remove any trade barriers between them and hold them accountable to an international body outside of any sort of direct national control. Thus, war would be made impossible by taking control of two of most important ingredients of armed conflict, coal and steel. However, not every democratic country in Europe opted to join the ECSC as unique situations and circumstances affected those that did not. The United Kingdom (UK), for example, was perhaps the most prominent country that decided not to join. During this time, the UK had just completed a nationalization of the coal and steel industry and the ruling Atlee Labour Government feared losing control of these valuable industries.

Based on the success of the ECSC, the member countries furthered European cooperation by signing the Treaty of Rome in 1957 which established the European Economic Community (EEC) and further established a common market. In the preamble, the signatories of the Treaty declare that they are

…determined to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, resolved to ensure the economic and social progress of their countries by common action to eliminate the barriers which divide Europe, affirming as the essential objective of their efforts the constant improvements of the living and working conditions of their peoples,
…recognizing that the removal of existing obstacles calls for concerted action in
order to guarantee steady expansion, balanced trade and fair competition;

…anxious to strengthen the unity of their economies and to ensure their
harmonious development by reducing the differences existing between the various
regions and the backwardness of the less-favored regions;

…desiring to contribute, by means of a common commercial policy, to the
progressive abolition of restrictions on international trade;

…intending to confirm the solidarity which binds Europe and the overseas
countries and desiring to ensure the development of their prosperity, in
accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

…resolved by thus pooling their resources to preserve and strengthen peace and
liberty, and calling upon the other peoples of Europe who share their ideal to join
in their efforts... (Europa.eu, Laws and Legislation, Treaty establishing the
European Economic Community, EEC Treaty - original text)

The EEC had become fully functional by 1958. Moreover, another institution, the
European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom), created at the signing of the Treaty
of Rome (1957), became fully functional at this time. The EAEC was founded with the purpose
of creating a specialized market for nuclear power in Europe, developing nuclear energy and
distributing it to its member states while selling the surplus to non-member states. These newly
formed communities had executive bodies that were referred to as commissions, as opposed to
“High Authorities.” These commissions were headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, a city that will
become the center of EU policy decisions. The reason for the change in name was the new
relationship between the executive body and the Council. Some countries had reservations over the power of the High Authority and some wished to limit it by giving more power to the Council rather than the new executive (http://www.cvce.eu/, 2012). Thus, the European Commission came into effect as the executive body of the three communities. Shortly thereafter, tensions began to erupt in the early 1960s with France seeking to limit supranational power and rejecting the membership of the United Kingdom. By 1967 however, the Merger Treaty (Treaty of Brussels) came into effect and three communities were merged into a single entity, the European Community (EC) the forerunner of the EU.

In 1970, the EU Parliament was given power over the budget of the EC. Shortly after, the EU made its first steps toward enlargement by adding Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom in 1973. By 1979, the first election for Members of European Parliament (MEPs) had occurred. Prior to this election, MEPs were chosen by the Parliaments of their nations and not direct elections by citizens. The Parliament should have been elected well before this under the Rome Treaties, however issues concerning the method of voting arose and the direct election of MEPs was delayed until 1979. The European Parliament has three places of work, Brussels, Belgium; Luxembourg; and Strasbourg, France. Luxembourg is home to the administrative offices whereas meetings of the whole Parliament take place in Strasbourg and in Brussels.

All of these treaties and commissions would later coalesce and culminate in the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. This treaty laid the foundation for the 27 member European Union we know today. The EU has grown from a somewhat insignificant group of six Western European trade partners to one of the most power entities in the world, with nearly 500 million inhabitants and ranking first in the world in GDP measured in purchasing power parity (IMF World Economic Outlook Database, 2012).
The Maastricht Treaty established some important precedents but perhaps none more so than the creation of the Euro as the multi-national currency of the EU. It should be noted that not every EU member state adopted the Euro as its currency. Sweden (de facto opt-out of Euro usage) and the eastern EU members have not yet done so but are obliged to adopt the Euro within the near future whereas the UK and Denmark have specific opt out clauses allowing them to keep their pre-membership currencies. From 1979 until the 1993 Maastricht Treaty, the UK’s political scene was dominated by the Conservative Party under the leadership of Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and later John Major. Mrs. Thatcher was fiercely anti-Euro as was most of her party. This political climate coupled with an event known as Black Wednesday of 1992 (in which the UK lost nearly five billion dollars (3.4 billion pounds) after the government was forced to withdraw the pound sterling from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) after the government was unable to keep it above its agreed lower limit) culminated in the UK’s rejection of the Euro (Tempest, 2005). In the case of Denmark, the Danes rejected the Maastricht Treaty at first on the basis of monetary independence and other social and defense related matters. The Danes did eventually ratify the Maastricht Treaty but with several opt-out clauses notably an exemption from using the Euro.

With financial collapse ensuing throughout southern Europe, the signing of the Maastricht Treaty has forced several larger more influential EU members to make important concessions in order to save the Eurozone from possible economic ruin. With reckless spending and short sighted government policy permeating the Mediterranean member states (Greece, Italy, and Spain), more stable Northern European nations like Germany and the United Kingdom have been forced to spend unprecedented amounts of money to rescue their EU comrades from
economic depression. These events have only further spurred the causes and positions of Eurosceptic parties across Europe.

**What and Where is Euroscepticism?**

Euroscepticism is a relatively recent term. The term first appeared in an article published in *The London Times* in 1985 (Harmsen and Spiering, 2005, p. 127), as the completion of the common economic market was the main item on the EU agenda. The term became a part of everyday political discourse after Margaret Thatcher’s “Bruges speech” to the College of Europe in Brussels in 1988 (Leconte, 2010, p. 3). In this speech, Mrs. Thatcher laid out her long term vision for the EC while proclaiming, “We have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain, only to see them re-imposed at a European level with a European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels” (Gifford, 2008, p. 104). This speech was made to the pro-EU college of Europe and essentially laid out Thatcher’s view of a less centralized European Union. Although the term Euroscepticism is relatively recent, the meaning of Euroscepticism has varied over time. Opposition to European integration in 1957 mainly implied opposition to the setting up of the common market but by contrast opposition to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 amounted to hostility toward political integration (Leconte, 2010, pp. 4-5).

Theories on the causes of Euroscepticism vary substantially. One of the most often cited theories is the idea of a “democratic deficit” within the EU. This idea postulates that EU institutions lack democratic accountability when compared to the national governments of EU member states. The EU suffers from a lack of democracy and appears inaccessible to the ordinary citizen because its method of operation is so complex. Furthermore, various studies have pointed out a lack of significant elections in the EU, insufficient deliberation on EU policies as the EU is not often debated publically and there is little indication of Europe-wide debates on
the EU (De Wilde, Michailidou and Trenz, 2010, p. 10). Conversely, when viewing supranational institutions such as the World Trade Organization or the United Nations, the EU could be seen as having a democratic surplus in comparison to these institutions.

National discourse on European integration is another often referenced cause of Euroscepticism. How the EU is debated in the public arena affects the overall sentiment toward the European Union. Moreover, national narratives deeply impact views on the European Union (such studies incorporate speeches by politicians, media reporting and even more symbolic and less political portrayals of Europe, such as in literary novels, school books and art). For example, Medrano Diez (2003, p.158) theorizes that Germans are more likely to be pro-EU as a path for redemption from the brutality of World War II. It is a way to not only redeem Germany in the eyes of other Europeans but also to find a new legitimate identity in contrast to their militaristic past. Conversely, in the UK, much like Germany, the memory of World War II is still fresh, but this time for different reason. The EU is often portrayed as a threat to UK independence, just like Nazi Germany was in WWII. War language is regularly used around European summits; for example, when British Prime Ministers continue to be compared to Winston Churchill or Neville Chamberlain depending on how well they are perceived to defend British interests. Terms such as “invasion” are frequently used when discussing future EU legislation (De Wilde, Michailidou and Trenz 2010, p.7). Other authors such as Arato and Kaniok (2009, p. 57) put forth more generalist causes for Euroscepticism such as phobias on a loss of sovereignty and identity, end of the nation-state, a total sale of the economy to foreigners and fear of a loss of newly won statehood.

Whatever the case, Euroscepticism is a very dynamic term. It is compatible with any movement be it left or right that opposes European integration. The term is also quite often used
as a disparaging term by political rivals. One of the most famous Eurosceptics is Czech
President Vaclav Klaus. Instead of referring to himself as a Eurosceptic, he labels himself a
“Eurorealist” or “Eurocritic” to avoid seeming like a radical fringe politician. Within the
European Union several political parties exist with an expressly anti-EU agenda. Many of these
are parties occupying the extreme ends of the political spectrum such the far-left Communist
Party of Greece and Nigel Farage’s right-wing United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)
which gained nearly 17% of the vote in the 2009 European Parliament elections in the UK,
coming in second to the Conservatives and ahead of the Labour Party in third.

In a 2009 Eurobarometer public opinion poll on the EU, the United Kingdom came in
close to last in nearly every category of EU satisfaction with only 20% of UK respondents
believing things were going in the right direction in the EU and a mere 28% saw their country’s
membership as a good thing. In a 2009 Eurostat survey of residents of all 27 EU member
countries on levels of confidence in European Union institutions, the UK came in last with an
astonishingly low 21% of residents voicing confidence in EU institutions. The nearest country
was Latvia with 38% confidence (http://ec.europa.eu/). There tends to be no obvious spatial
consistency to EU opposition on a national level. Based on the 2009 Eurobarometer survey
support was lowest in Latvia (23%), the UK (28%), and Hungary (32%) while highest in
Luxembourg (79%), the Netherlands (72%) and Spain (71%) (Eurobarometer 71, Public opinion
in the European Union, 2009, p. 91)

Euroscepticism is not uniquely a British concept but Great Britain was and still is the
geographical heartland of this philosophy. It not only signifies an opposition to the European
Union but an opposition to all things European. Great Britain’s distinctive geography as an
island has allowed it to remain somewhat independent and residents commonly identify
themselves as the least “European” of all the European Union members. Euroscepticism takes many forms and exists in many European Nations but to reiterate, Euroscepticism largely originated within the United Kingdom and remains most intense among its residents. This thesis will explore the political mechanisms that propel Euroscepticism in Great Britain and how these mechanisms vary geographically across the island.
Chapter 2 Review of Literature

Why is the UK so Eurosceptic?

The United Kingdom is frequently cited as being the EU member state with the lowest levels of public support for continued EU membership (Anderson and Kaltenhaler, 1996, p. 184; Eurobarometer, 2009; Leconte, 2010, p. 70-71). Many theories have been formulated to explain this uniquely high level of opposition by the British public. Some theories, mostly environmentally deterministic in nature, incorporate the idea that the UK has a certain unique geography isolated from mainland Europe and a post-imperialist identity that has led to problems of modernization and international integration. Charles de Gaulle summed up this idea in a 1963 press conference explaining why he vetoed the UK application for membership to the EEC:

England in effect is insular, maritime, bound up by its trade, its markets, its food supplies, with the most varied and often the most distant countries. Her activity is essentially industrial and commercial, not agricultural. She has, in all her work, very special, very original, habits and traditions. In short, the nature, structure, circumstances peculiar to England are very different from those of other continents. How can Britain, in the way that she lives, produces, trades, be incorporated into the Common Market as it has been conceived and functions?…

It is predictable that the cohesion of all its members, which would soon be very large, very diverse, would not last for very long and that, in fact, it would seem like a colossal Atlantic community under American dependence and direction, and that is not at all what France wanted to do and is doing, which is a strictly

Chris Gifford (2008, pp. 15-16) theorizes the British problem with European integration is “explained in terms of the failure of and the continuation of institutions and policies associated with imperialism.” Gifford further postulates the British economy was too interlinked with its overseas colonies, and consequently not enough was done to build up the domestic economy. Once Britain entered a post-imperial trajectory, the country was forced to address problems of decline. As such, further European integration was seen as vital to addressing this problem. Against this backdrop, the pursuit of membership of the European Community seemed vital to the domestic economy. It represented a liberal strategy of economic modernization aimed at improving the competitiveness of the British economy by exposing it to the market forces of a European common market. Increased European integration would provide the necessary impetus to stimulate Britain’s international Fordist companies and form the basis to reinvigorate the British economy (Overbeek 1990, pp. 100-101). This problem of British modernization was fundamental to the decision by the Conservative government under Harold Macmillan to apply for membership in the early 1960s.

Lauren McLaren (2002, p. 554) expands upon this theory by suggesting support is lowest in the UK because citizens view EU membership as a threat to national identity. She argues that a resilient national identity is a formidable obstacle to European integration as it is likely to foster Eurosceptic attitudes. Hooghe and Marks (2003, p. 15) stress the impact of an “exclusive national identity” on the negative perception of Europe. In the exclusive national identity hypothesis, citizens feel attachment to their nation and not to Europe.
Drewry (2007, p. 113) theorizes that the main problem with British Euroscepticism is the challenge further European integration poses to deeply ingrained administrative cultures in the UK. He proposes that British public administration is permeated by a “traditional antipathy towards legalism in public administration and public management” (i.e., the British oppose a strong reliance on formal legal rules and procedures; more informal approach to Common Law traditions). Leconte (2010, p. 148) goes on to point out the UK has been built on an anti-legalistic model which was built in direct opposition to the French administrative model which relies on multiple administrative codes and legal rules. The unique legal model employed within Great Britain exemplifies the British fear of possible contamination of British institutions by the bureaucratic traditions of continental European countries.

**Party Based Euroscepticism in the UK**

Views of European integration are quite nuanced within the United Kingdom’s multi-party democracy. Although some politicians buck party trends and vote against party interests, the Conservative Party and the UK Independence Party are commonly accepted as the major anti-EU players in British politics whereas Labour and the Liberal Democrats are the major pro-EU parties. The Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and Labour Party are the three most prominent political parties within the politics of Great Britain while once fringe parties such as the UKIP and the British National Party (BNP) are steadily gaining prominence.

The Labour Party is traditionally the most left-wing of the three major parties and grew out of the many working class revolutionary movements of the nineteenth-century Industrial Revolution. In general the Labour Party has championed the rights of the poor and ethnic minorities. The Party first came to power in 1924 and had a very historically significant landslide victory in 1945, ousting then Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Since the event, the Labour
Party has cemented its place within British politics as the party of government from 1964 to 1970, 1974 to 1979 and 1997 to 2010. Similarly, the Liberal Democrats have occupied an important part of left-wing politics in the UK, but the roots of this party can be traced back to the seventeenth-century. The party in its current form is 25 years old but its origins lie with the Glorious Revolution power struggle between the monarchy and Parliament in the late seventeenth-century. The Liberal Democrats are descendants of the Whigs who advocated the legitimacy of Parliament over the power of the Monarchy. The Whigs became the Liberal Party in 1859 and by 1906 the Party had won a landslide election victory under the leadership of David Lloyd George who ushered in many reforms including state pensions and the national insurance system. The Party had begun to decline by the 1920s due to internal policy division. A major turning point for the Liberal Party occurred in 1981 when disgruntled Labour Party MPs left the party to form the Social Democratic Party (SDP). By 1988, the waning Liberal Party had struck an agreement with the newly formed SDP to form the Liberal Democrat Party, a center-left party.

Like the Liberal Democrats, the Conservatives trace their roots to the Glorious Revolution of the seventeenth-century. Dissimilarly though, the Conservative chose to uphold the supremacy of the King during the revolution. Moreover, the Conservatives were called “Tories” at this time, an Irish Gaelic term denoting their loyalty to the King. In the early nineteenth century, members of the party began forming “conservative associations” and in 1831 the first known use of the name “Conservative” as a description of the party appeared (Merriam-Webster Online, 2013). Since then the party has primarily been known as the Conservatives but the Tory designation is still sometimes used. The Conservatives dominated British politics between World War I and World War II and have been the party of government and the
It is possible for members of all three major parties to be supporters or opponents of the EU, yet it is almost always assumed Liberal Democrats and Labour Party politicians and voters favor EU integration at higher rates than their Conservative counterparts. For example in the Labour Party’s manifesto, the official party position on the European Union is: “Our belief is that Britain is stronger in the world when the European Union is strong” (Labour Manifesto 2010, 10:4). Likewise the Liberal Democrat position is as follows: “The Liberal Democrats have a proud track record as the most consistently pro-European party in British politics. For many years, we have argued that the European Union serves both the UK national interest and the wider European interest” (Liberal Democrats Policy Consultation, Europe, 2013). Conversely, the Conservative position on Europe is more ambiguous but nonetheless promotes a Eurosceptic position: “We are committed to playing a leading role in the EU and protecting the UK's national interests, but the EU needs to reform to meet the challenges of competitiveness, a stable Eurozone and greater democratic legitimacy” (Conservatives.com, Where We Stand, Europe, 2013). Conservatism has historically displayed mixed feelings about further European integration (Stephens, 1996, p. 90). Free-trade liberalism has been a guiding principle of the modern Conservative Party and has prompted the party to engage in trade agreements with continental Europe. Yet socially, the Conservative Party has been the vanguard of traditional cultural and political values of Great Britain.
As a whole, the center-right to right-wing parties are more nationalistic and protectionist. As such, they often see further EU integration as a threat to traditional British values. These parties tend to view membership as detrimental because they fear their country’s destiny will be controlled by a supranational organization instead of UK citizens. The Conservative Party has frequently had to reconcile this dichotomy between the potential economic benefits of EU membership and a fear of the potential loss of traditional British values. During the EU’s infancy, the former position dominated and the Conservatives were eager to join the European Economic Community. Nonetheless, most within the party have always believed the party must at least take a pragmatic stance and have at least opted for a voice at the table in Brussels.

Mistrust of further EU integration by the Conservatives is often attributed to Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and her early opposition to a single European currency. Mrs. Thatcher’s view has been somewhat vindicated as she correctly predicted that a single currency could not simultaneously meet the needs of hugely differing economies such as that of Germany and Greece (countries she specifically named). She believed attempting to merge the two would lead to disaster for the smaller European nations. “It will devastate their inefficient economies,” she cautioned then pro-euro chancellor, John Major, in 1990 (Oborne,
The creation of EU citizenship was another controversial aspect of the Maastricht treaty. EU citizens have the right to free-movement; for example, a citizen of France can freely travel to UK and take up residence without any restrictions (Maastricht Treaty, Article 21). As with the opposition to the single currency, Mrs. Thatcher led this charge against EU citizenship as well by declaring a double allegiance of sorts would exist. She stated in a 1993 speech to the House of Lords: “If there was a citizenship you would all owe a duty of allegiance to the Union. There would be a duty to uphold its laws. What will happen if the allegiance to the Union comes into conflict with allegiance to our own country?” (Koslowski, 2000, p. 128). These policies are at odds with the sometimes anti-immigrant policies of the UKIP and to a lesser extent Conservatives.

In essence, Euroscepticism in the UK is typically associated with center-right to right-wing political parties like the Conservative Party and UKIP respectively. However, it should be noted that left-wing Eurosceptic parties, most notably the Green Party of England and Wales, have made strong gains in British elections. The Green Party bases much of its Euroscepticism on fear of European policy making being dominated by corporate interests whereas the Conservative Party is more concerned with a loss of traditional English values. Furthermore, it is theorized that usual Conservative Party voters may support the rapidly expanding UKIP in EU Parliament elections as a means of protesting further EU integration (Cutts, Ford and Goodwin, 2010, p. 420). UKIP’s credentials as a legitimate party of right-wing protest over Europe may make it a “polite alternative” for voters angry about rising immigration levels or elite corruption but who are repelled by the stigmatized image of the more extreme BNP which, as polling data reveal, has struggled to portray itself as a credible political choice (Cutts, Ford and Goodwin,
The UKIP was founded on 3 September 1993 at the London School of Economics by members of the Anti-Federalist League, which was founded by Dr. Alan Sked in November 1991 with the aim of fielding candidates opposed to the Maastricht Treaty in the 1992 general election. The UKIP was merely a fringe party in its early days, being overshadowed by the larger and better financed Referendum Party which became a non-factor after the 1997 General Election. The UKIP’s first success came in 1999 when it secured 7% of the vote and won its first three seats in the European Parliament. It built upon prior electoral success in 2004, winning twelve seats and pushing the Liberal Democrats into fourth place. Today the UKIP is a robust party with eleven seats in the EU Parliament, three seats in the House of Lords and 51 local councilors. The UKIP position on the EU is much sterner than that of the Labour, Liberal Democrats and Conservatives: “The British people must decide through an immediate referendum if we stay in the EU or to come out and claw back independent power over our national life. We do not have to be ruled by this regime to work with our European neighbors who depend on us for their markets” (UKIP Policies, What We Stand for, 2010, para.7). Moreover, those in the UK Independence Party, voters and MPs, are overwhelmingly assumed to be explicitly EU opponents.

Although the UKIP is seen as extreme by many, it does not occupy a far-right political position. The British National Party (BNP) however does occupy this position. The BNP is the most peripheral of all the major anti-EU parties within the UK, but it does have legitimate voter support. The BNP was formed in 1982 by John Tyndall, a co-founder of the National Front, who spent time in jail in the 1960s for inciting racial hatred. Today, the BNP is expressly anti-immigrant and anti-EU, but its new leader Nick Griffin has sought to tone down the racist
reputation and broaden its voter base (telegraph.co.uk, Factbox: British National Party, 2006).

Although the BNP is normally painted as a party for fringe voters and fascist sympathizers, the party has had some recent electoral success holding two of the UK’s EU Parliament seats and three local council seats. In its 2010 Party Manifesto, the BNP’s statement on the EU is as follows: “The BNP demands an immediate withdrawal from the European Union, which is an organization dedicated to usurping British sovereignty and to destroying our nationhood and national identity.” It is further theorized that the three previously mentioned parties and all center-right to right-wing parties across Europe share one thing in common, an opposition to “new politics” or issues that appeared on the agendas of Western Governments in the 1960s: inter-ethnic relations and immigration, gender equality, rights of sexual minorities, reproductive rights and environmental protectionism (Inglehart, 1977). The more a party holds conservative and authoritarian views of “new politics” the more likely it is to be Eurosceptical (Hooghe, Marks, and Wilson, 2002, p. 985, Kriesi, 2007, p. 94). Moreover the right is fueled by a new populism and the anguish many citizens experience in the more traditional, under-performing sectors of the economy as a consequence of rapid globalization and Europeanization (Collignon and Serrano, 2007, p. 2). Conversely, mainstream center-left to left parties tend to be more pro-Europe. Mainstream center-left to left parties are more pro-EU due to a combination of reasons but mostly, these parties tend to carry a more cosmopolitan voting base which typically favors further EU integration. Centrist ideology predisposes one to pro-Europeanism because the often consensual nature of the EU typically produces centrist outcomes (Leconte, 2010, p.108) The Labour Party and Liberal Democratic Party of the UK could be seen as more centrist than left-wing thus explaining the correlation between Labour and Liberal Democratic support and pro-EU attitude.
Interestingly the far-left is typically as Eurosceptic as the far-right. In the case of the UK, far-left parties have played a much more minor role in politics than far-right parties. Yet it is worth mentioning that parties such as the Communist Party of Britain would object to EU policy on the basis that it is neo-liberal, capitalist and undermining the European welfare state (Leconte, 2010, p.109). Furthermore Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002, p.7) categorize EU opponents as either “hard” or “soft” Eurosceptic. They additionally define hard Euroscepticism as where there is a principled opposition to the EU and European integration. Hard Eurosceptic parties believe their countries should withdraw from membership, and frequently support policies toward the EU that are tantamount to being opposed to the whole project of European integration as it is currently conceived. Hard Euroscepticism is a vital element of this thesis. Because parties that meet the hard classification seek to completely withdraw from the EU, an analysis of their voting base and spatial clusters are good metrics for assessing the geography of Euroscepticism. Soft Euroscepticism is defined as where there is NOT a principled objection 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, or where there is a sense that “national interest” is currently at odds with the EU’s trajectory. Soft Euroscepticism is of less importance in this work, because the voters composing soft Eurosceptic parties are more ambivalent on the EU issue and as such soft voters are a less definitive metric.

Cecile Leconte (2010, p. 5) notes that hard and soft Eurosceptic parties make up nearly one-fifth of the EU’s electorate and they composed over 40 percent of the electorate in the 2010 General election (BBC 2010 Election Results). Leonard Ray (2007, p. 12) finds that hard Eurosceptic parties typically tend to be right of center or far left or far right whereas soft parties tend to be left of center or right of center and overall more centrist. In UK politics, the
Conservative Party and the Green Party of England and Wales are the two best performing soft parties while the UK Independence Party and the British National Party are the two best performing hard parties as of the most recent European Parliament Elections in the UK (2009).

Additionally, past research into Euroscepticism indicates voters view “second-order elections” such as the EU Parliament Elections as less consequential (Heath et al., 1999, p. 389). Voters in general may view these second-order elections as a chance to place protest votes against the existing ruling establishment thus prompting voters to vote for smaller parties with sometimes extremist political positions. Reif and Schmitt (1980, p. 5) assert that the national elections, such as the General Election in the United Kingdom, are priority number one in European nations. These elections could be termed “first-order.” The most important distinction between the two orders is that in “first order” elections more is at stake or at least the voters and parties involved believe more is at stake. Reif and Schmitt (1980) further argue that the one defining feature of second order national elections is that less is at stake and this view is shared by the main actors in the political process, the voters, the parties and the media. Because there is less at stake, the public at-large expects reduced benefits from second-order elections thus prompting fewer people to turn out. Therefore, European Parliament elections could be viewed similarly to mid-term U.S. Congressional elections, German Landtagswahlen, British House of Commons by-elections, and local elections throughout the democratic world (Anderson and Ward, 1996, p. 447).

Ultimately, a plethora of issues have been discussed by many scholars as causes for Eurosceptic behavior. No definitive factor has yet been identified as a cause of predisposition toward Eurosceptic beliefs. This thesis will endeavor to explore a small segment of the theories
regarding this philosophy with voting behavior, geographic location, ethnicity, education and income forming the crux of the discourse.
Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Study Area and Data Collection and Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methods used to analyze the spatial and socio-economic differences in Eurosceptic voting trends throughout the Isle of Great Britain and the data sources used to perform the analysis. This chapter begins with an in-depth description of the study area, as well as the political subdivisions and voting processes within each subdivision. The introduction and explanation of voting processes is followed by the description and sources of data used and the methods employed to analyze that data. It is important to note that only the Island of Great Britain and its constituent regions were examined (England, Scotland and Wales). Euroscepticism does exist within Northern Ireland but this country was not examined because the major political parties of Great Britain are almost non-existent within the politics of Northern Ireland. In essence, an overall different political climate exists in Northern Ireland compared to the constituent countries of Great Britain, so to keep the analysis consistent, Northern Ireland was not examined.

The primary metric of interest examined was electoral performance of major hard Eurosceptic parties in the most recent UK European Parliament Election held in 2009. “Major hard” is defined as parties who acquired at least one seat in the final EU Parliament election results and parties who have a clear anti-EU message. Analyzing hard parties is a better metric for describing voter preference as it is generally clear why a voter would cast a vote for the most prominent hard Eurosceptic parties; a vote for these parties most likely signifies dissatisfaction with the EU. A total of 72 Members of the European Parliament were elected from the UK using the proportional representation system (D'Hondt method; discussed later) of the EU.

The 2009 election was historic and unique in many respects. It was the first time a party
with no representation in the House of Commons gained more overall votes than a party with representation. The UKIP came in second in total votes ahead of the third place Labour Party although the two tied for seats taken in the European Parliament. Only the British National Party (BNP) and the UK Independence Party (UKIP) meet both the major and hard criteria previously discussed. Furthermore, both parties have a clear anti-EU agenda, have memberships in the tens of thousands and obtained either a local council seat or a seat in the UK’s election for the EU Parliament 2009. No other UK political party with a clear anti-EU platform meet these criteria. A further key development in this election was the strong performance of the far-right. Leading the pack was the BNP which gained its first ever seat in a national election. The BNP is the hardest of all prominent Eurosceptic parties in the UK. As such, voters who cast ballots for the BNP in the European Parliament elections were likely casting votes for immediate withdraw from the European Union. Figure 4.3 below shows BNP vote totals by region.

The performance of these two parties at the regional as well as local council level was examined. Results for the BNP and UKIP were examined at the local council level in England and Scotland (UK equivalent of U.S. county) whereas results for Wales were examined based on Welsh Assembly Constituencies. The difference among the three was due to data collection methods. Data returns for Wales were collected based upon Assembly Constituencies whereas Scotland and England’s returns were by council area. The data collection difference is a minor point but one still worth mentioning.

Performance of these parties in all 326 local government councils in England was also briefly analyzed. Elections for local councillors in England occurred in either thirds of the council every three years or the whole council every four years. The election process depends upon the council type. There are presently five different council types: two-tier “shire counties”
further subdivided into multiple districts, London Boroughs, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Authorities and two councils with unique governments of their own kind (*sui generis*: Isles of Scilly and City of London). Election results span from 2007-2010. A more longitudinal analysis dating back to the early 2000s would most certainly be a more accurate measure of the geography of Euroscepticism but for time constraint reasons this research only examined results from 2007-2010. The shire county local elections were most problematic in terms of data collection. Because these counties compile election results based on wards (a sub-level of districts), each ward vote total had to be accessed and compiled based upon districts. Since the EU Parliament election returns are based on districts only, the Shire County returns from 2009 did not adequately match the data. Thus, the previously mentioned process had to be performed to keep data comparison consistent. For example, when analyzing the shire county of West Sussex, there are seven districts composed of 71 wards. Vote returns for the BNP and UKIP in local elections had to be accessed from each of these 71 wards, which were then compiled into a final vote total for each corresponding district.

As previously mentioned, local governments hold elections in different years depending upon the type. The 27 “shire” county councils (Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, etc.) and eight other unitary authorities elected all their councillors in 2009 concurrently with the EU Parliament elections. The London region elected its council members in 2010. Councils electing members in thirds had no election in 2009 but held them in 2010. Results from the 2010 election were used in this case. Furthermore, some unitary authorities had their most recent election in 2007 or 2008 and therefore the results from these elections were used. The nine regions of England were also examined individually while Wales and Scotland are treated as comparable regional units. Regional returns from the EU Parliament election were
examined against regional demographic variables while local returns from this election were examined against local council demographic variables. The primary focus of this study was the nation of England. The nations of Scotland and Wales were examined as well but on a more subsidiary basis. England has an estimated population of 53 million, Wales 3.1 million and Scotland 5.3 million (Office for National Statistics, 2012). With this in mind, more analytical attention is applied to England as it comprises nearly 86% of the population of Great Britain.

EU Parliament voting numbers for BNP and UKIP were derived from the BBC News and their 2009 election coverage. Local levels results for this election were accessed via a detailed report provided by the House of Commons Library. Local council data were more problematic to obtain because they are not compiled in a central database. All 400 local council websites were accessed and the final vote tally of each party was divided by the total number of votes to produce a final percentage of the vote. For example, the UKIP obtained 1,000 out of 10,000 total votes in the Kent Council which translates to a 10% final vote total.

Regional analysis involves comparing final vote percentages for each party with several different demographic variables ranging from ethnicity to gross value added (the UK’s economic output measurement). These demographic data were obtained from the 2011 UK Census via the Office for National Statistics. Scotland collects census data independently from the census of England and Wales; therefore, census data for Scotland was obtained from the General Register Office for Scotland. These variables were tested using a simple correlation coefficient test (Pearson’s r). The Pearson’s correlation assumes that all variables are either interval or ratio level measurement or that all variables are approximately normally distributed. It further assumes there is a linear relationship between two variables, outliers are kept to a minimum and there is homoscedasticity of the data. The following ranges were adapted from J.P. Guildford’s
Fundamental Statistics in Psychology (1973) and his rule of thumb for interpreting correlation results used when interpreting correlation results. A positive relationship indicates an increase in both variables whereas negative variables indicate an inverse relationship with one variable increasing and the other decreasing:

If $r = +.70$ or higher Very strong positive relationship
+.40 to +.69 Strong positive relationship
+.30 to +.39 Moderate positive relationship
+.20 to +.29 weak positive relationship
+.01 to +.19 No or negligible relationship
-.01 to -.19 No or negligible relationship
-.20 to -.29 weak negative relationship
-.30 to -.39 Moderate negative relationship
-.40 to -.69 Strong negative relationship
-.70 or higher Very strong negative relationship

Other basic statistical data were obtained from the ONS and used to paint a general demographic picture of each region. These demographic data were also compared using the correlation coefficient test with the results of the 2009 EU Parliament election by local council returns in Scotland and England and by Welsh Assembly Regions. The same process was used for comparison of the 326 local government districts of England as well. This analysis was slightly more in-depth in that a paired two sample for means t-test was used to compare the variation in BNP and UKIP local level results for the EU Parliament election and the local council elections. The t-test employed assumes population data from which the sample data are drawn are normally distributed and the variances of the populations to be compared are equal.
Several maps were produced using ArcGIS 10. These maps are basic choropleth maps showing the geographic variations in voter support for the BNP and UKIP as well as other demographic variables such as language in the case of Wales or survey data on EU opinion obtained from a 2012 YouGov-Chatham House survey.
Chapter 4 Results

4.1 Voter Preference, Regional Variation and Demographic Correlates

A region by region breakdown of the combined total of the BNP and UKIP as a percentage of final vote tallies is illustrated below in Figure 4.1. The map displays the regions of England and the nations of Scotland and Wales separately. The major geographical trend of note is the split between voter apathy for Eurosceptic parties in Greater London, Scotland and Wales, and voter support for them in the rest of the English regions.

Voter preference for UKIP and BNP European Parliament candidates is highest in the West Midlands with nearly 30% of voters preferring UKIP and BNP candidates, the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, the South West, and the East sported the second highest levels with 25-28% of voters in these regions opting for Eurosceptical candidates. The North West and the South East displayed levels of 19-24%. London, Scotland, and Wales were less prone to choose Eurosceptic candidates with <18% of voters opting for the BNP and UKIP candidates.

Greater London

Demographic factors likely explain London’s lack of preference for Eurosceptic candidates. The more cosmopolitan nature of large urban areas is often times more conducive to the promotion of multi-cultural values. In the case of London, there is a significant presence of peoples of South Asian and African ancestry, as well a sizeable number of those classified as “Other White” or those who are White but not British or Irish (i.e. French, German White, etc.). Based on 2011 estimates from the Office of National Statistics, only 44.9% of London’s population is White British, the lowest proportion of any major city in the UK. Diversity
sometimes leads to pro-Labour sentiments and since the Labour Party is pro-EU, the concept of diversity and pro-EU sentiment go hand in hand. For instance, a 2012 study of British elections by Dr. Anthony Heath and Dr. Omar Khan at the University of Oxford found that 68% of ethnic minorities typically vote for Labour Party candidates (Heath and Khan, 2012).

Figure 4.1. Combined BNP and UKIP Support by Region in the 2009 EU Parliament Election

Combined BNP and UKIP Vote by Regions of the UK- 2009 UK EU Parliament Election

Data Source: BBC News
From a statistical standpoint, there is a strong positive correlation (r = 0.56, n=326, p<0.05) between the percentage of White British citizens in a local council administrative area and the combined vote total for hard Eurosceptic candidates by local council. As racial homogeneity increases, so does support for Eurosceptic parties. Furthermore, the ten lowest areas for combined BNP and UKIP support were found in London. The average White British population for these areas was 39.2% and in seven of these ten boroughs the Labour party has majority control of the local government council. The Labour Party came in a close second (21.3%) to the Conservatives (27.4%) in London while the pro-EU Liberal Democrat Party came in third with a sizeable vote percentage (13.7%). Overall, pro-EU parties were chosen by nearly 40% of the electorate, whereas soft Eurosceptic parties, such as the Tories and Green Party garnered another 40%, and hard parties (UKIP, BNP) obtained the remaining 20%. Although four out of ten Londoners may be somewhat skeptical about EU membership, they are not as supportive of the more radical hard Euroscepticism that is common in other regions England. Nonetheless, the combined vote total for both hard and soft Eurosceptic major political parties (Conservative, Green, BNP, UKIP) was high (~54%) in what is generally considered the most pro-EU region of England.

Curiously, three London boroughs showed some of the highest support for the BNP and UKIP in all of Great Britain (Figure 4.2). The Outer London borough of Havering had the single highest combined vote total for the BNP and UKIP in Great Britain with the parties recording a combined 41% of the vote. The adjoining borough of Barking and Dagenham was the single best area for BNP support in all of Great Britain at 19.44%. Likewise, the borough of Bexley, just across the River Thames, was the eighteenth best area of support for the BNP in Great Britain at 12.36%. Commonalities between the boroughs of Bexley and Havering had similar rates of
White British population at 77.2% and 83.3% respectively and were the second and most White British boroughs of London correspondingly (Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census Data). These boroughs also have similar low rates of economically active persons between the ages of 16 and 74 whom were unemployed at the time of the 2011 census, at rates of 4.4% in Bexley and 4.5% in Havering. Conversely, the borough of Barking and Dagenham is much more ethnically diverse with only 49.5% of residents being of White British ancestry. Moreover, the borough is more economically deprived than the aforementioned Bexley and Havering with 7.3% of economically active persons unemployed in 2011.

Figure 4.2. BNP and UKIP Support in Greater London
One possible explanation for BNP success in otherwise diverse but economically depressed areas lies in the fact that these diverse areas are often dominated by the Labour Party. The BNP has specifically targeted these areas to gain votes from working class White voters who have lost faith in the Labour Party (Cutts, Ford, and Goodwin, 2010, p. 434). In the case of Barking and Dagenham, the local government council has been controlled by the Labour Party in every election since 1964; thus, it has been a primary target of the BNP in both EU and local government elections.

From a geographical perspective, these boroughs are on the periphery of Greater London and seemingly adhere to a pattern of higher levels of anti-EU voting that occurs on the periphery of the city. On the north side of the River Thames, beginning with Barking and Dagenham and continuing east to the English Channel, all local government areas are among the highest rates of combined BNP and UKIP voting in all of Great Britain (Figure 4.2). Similarly, beginning with Bexley on the south side of the River Thames and continuing east, high levels (24.71%-30.90%) of anti-EU voting are seen in all local government areas ending at the English Channel.

The North

Perhaps the most obvious spatial pattern is the strong performance of the BNP in the Midlands and the North of England (Figure 4.3). The BNP attained support from nearly 10% of voters in these areas. The BNP’s best individual regions were Yorkshire and The Humber and the North East. Here the BNP received nearly 10 and 9% of the vote respectively and gained one out of six seats allocated to Yorkshire and the Humber for the European Parliament. Yorkshire and the Humber is one of Great Britain’s least developed and least educated regions with only in
54.6% of students attaining five or more grades at the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level or equivalent including English and mathematics from 2010 to 2011, compared with 58.4% for the whole of England. Life expectancy in Yorkshire and The Humber in a three-year period from 2008 to 2010 was 77.7 for males and 81.8 years for females compared with 78.2 and 82.3 years respectively for the entire UK. These regions also have some of the highest levels of citizens with no educational qualifications (academic, vocational or skills related). The positive correlation between no qualifications by region and combined Eurosceptic party vote is very strong (r= 0.73, n=11, p<0.05). Additionally, the unemployment rate in Yorkshire and The Humber stood at 9.3% in the first quarter of 2012, higher than the UK rate of 8.1% and in April 2011, the median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees who were residents in Yorkshire and The Humber was £466, lower than the UK median of £501 (Office for National Statistics, 2012, Regional Profile, Yorkshire and the Humber).
The North West region on the other hand was unique in that its voters seemed to somewhat rebuff the advances of the far-right. It was one of only two regions along with London where the Labour Party achieved multiple seats in the final vote total. The region has two very large urban centers Liverpool and Manchester, which are a bastion for Labour Party support among the many working class voters.
Over 87% of the population of the North West live in urban areas, and the region has the second highest regional population density in the UK at 490 people per sq km (Office for National Statistics, 2011, Population and Migration, North West). The total electorate of Manchester and Liverpool stood at 333,535 and 317,947 respectively. The BNP achieved 7.1% of the 166,424 votes cast in the two largest urban areas in the region, slightly below the BNP regional total of 8%. In general the North West was one of the regions where the BNP underachieved and the Labour Party overachieved. Furthermore, the combined BNP and UKIP in Manchester was 16.1%, well below the regional combined average of 24.8%, and one of the lowest combined averages outside of London. The North West much like Yorkshire and the Humber, has below average rates of citizens currently in employment at 68% compared to 70.5% for the UK. However, the BNP did earn enough votes in the region to gain their vanguard seat. Nick Griffin, leader of the British National Party ran for an all important seat in this region and gained that seat by achieving nearly 8% of the vote using the D’Hondt voting method the EU Parliament election employs.

In the neighboring North East, the combined vote totals for the BNP and UKIP was nearly 24%. Similar to the previously analyzed regions, this region lags behind the rest of the nation in some key economic categories. For instance, household incomes in the North East are the lowest in England and the unemployment rate was 11.2%, the highest of all English regions. The median disposable weekly household income after housing costs in the North East was £327, the lowest of all English regions in the three-year period 2007/08 to 2009/10 (Office for National Statistics, 2012, Social Indicators, North East). Moreover, the North East was the second best region for BNP support at nearly 9%.
The theme of economic underdevelopment and lack of education is a recurring one when analyzing Euroscepticism. The income variable was chosen to explain regional variations in Euroscepticism on the basis of previous research that inversely correlates lower income with preference for far-right parties (Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers, 2002, p.364). To analyze why disadvantaged social groups, like less educated people and low income groups, are more likely to vote for right-wing parties, specific theories have been advanced, primarily ethnic group conflict theory, which may be considered most appropriate (Gijsberts, Hagendoorn and Scheepers, 2004, p.16). Ethnic conflict theory builds on real world conflict theories and postulates that disadvantaged citizens are more apt to vote for far right parties that claim to champion their economic interests because underprivileged citizens perceive themselves to be threatened by ethnic immigrants with whom they often have a common socio-economic status (Ivarsflaten, 2005). Historically, these far-right parties have typically promoted nationalism and the preservation of a specific way of life. These parties sometimes appeal to those who view further EU integration as a threat to important national interests (Lubbers and Scheepers, 2007, p.5).

Within the regions of England alone, there was a moderate inverse correlation ($r = -0.50$, $n=9$, $p<0.05$) between the Gross Value Added Per Capita (GVA; the 2010 UK Census measure of economic output by region) and BNP vote percentage. As GVA decreased, BNP support typically increased. These findings are consistent with previous research into Euroscepticism and preference for far-right parties. When Scotland and Wales are added to the correlation test the correlation is weaker ($r = -0.40$, $n=11$, $p<0.05$). BNP support was moderate in Wales (5.9%) compared to all other regions of England but extremely low in Scotland at 2.5% of total vote.
Scotland and Wales

A different set of political circumstances seem to cause the BNP to perform poorly in Scotland. Scotland has its own nationalist party, the Scottish National Party (SNP). Unlike the BNP, the SNP is a more moderate, center-left party with a more inclusive message. More specifically, the SNP seeks Scotland’s independence and does not base its party platform on restricting immigration or broader ethnic issues as the BNP does. Notably, the SNP can actually be considered one of the most pro-EU parties within UK politics. The main reason for the SNP’s pro-EU stance is the desire for Scotland to withdraw from the UK and become a full member of the European Union, with the Euro as its currency. The SNP was the leading party in Scotland in the 2009 European Parliament Elections. It can be assumed a vote for the SNP is a vote in favor of the EU. In fact, in terms of voter preference, Scotland is the least Eurosceptic of all regions of Great Britain. The SNP, Labour, and the Liberal Democrats, all pro-EU parties, obtained slightly over 60% of the vote total with soft and hard Eurosceptic parties attaining the majority of the remaining vote totals. The SNP’s vote share rose by 9.4% since the previous EU election of 2004, the largest increase of any single party in Great Britain.

Within Scotland, there exists an interesting cluster of Euroscepticism along the border with England (See Figure 4.4.). Interestingly, the geographical theme of border regions showing extreme levels of support or discontent for the EU seems to hold true for Scotland. This phenomenon has been noted by Cecile Leconte in her book Understanding Euroscepticism (2010, p. 84) wherein it is postulated that residents of border regions fear European integration will increase immigration and competition. Although Scotland and England are not independent of each other within the EU, it is still worth noting that the border region of northern England displayed some of the lowest levels of anti-EU voting within the 2009 elections. The border
regions phenomenon could be a result of increased competition among migrants from neighboring EU states (Leconte, 2010, p.85). Again, Wales and England are not independent of each other within the EU and form a single larger state, yet it is still a relevant geographical issue of consideration. Moreover, residents of peripheral regions may exhibit a fear of becoming marginalized as a consequence of further integration of core regions in more centrally located areas of the country into the EU, a pattern evidenced in Scotland. The remote Northern Islands of Orkney and Shetland display some of the highest levels of support for BNP and UKIP. Additionally, the remote highlands regions of mainland northern Scotland display higher rates of anti-EU voting than the mid-Scotland regions where population density is highest.
Figure 4.4. BNP and UKIP Results in Scotland
Age is moderately positively correlated with combined support for Eurosceptic parties \((r=0.35, n=32, p<0.05)\). One of the strongest indicators of support for the UKIP was percentage of the population age 50 or older that was unemployed. In council areas in Scotland with higher percentages of older unemployed residents, support for UKIP was correlated strongly \((r=0.42, n=32, p<0.05)\). Curiously, there was a strong inverse correlation \((r = -0.46, n=32, p<0.05)\) between BNP support and those age 50 or older whom are unemployed. Analysis indicates that older unemployed residents are less likely to see the BNP as a choice for improving their economic circumstances. Furthermore, the variable education plays only a slight role in combined support for Eurosceptic parties in Scotland. There is a weak positive relationship \((r=0.28, n=32, p<0.05)\) between the percentage of residents with no qualifications by council areas and combined BNP and UKIP support. However, the relationship between BNP support and no qualifications is moderate \((r=0.35, n=32, p<0.05)\). Although the relationship between no qualifications and BNP support is moderate in Scotland, it still appears to be the best indicator of support for the BNP in this region. In fact, lower levels of education appear to be the most accurate predictor of support for the far-right BNP in every region of Great Britain.

**Figure 4.5 Correlations Matrix for Scotland**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>local bnp</th>
<th>local ukip</th>
<th>EU bnp</th>
<th>EU ukip</th>
<th>Combined EU Vote</th>
<th>50+ Unemployed</th>
<th>English Born</th>
<th>No Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>local bnp</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>local ukip</td>
<td>-0.0975</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU bnp</td>
<td>0.140387</td>
<td>0.585342</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU ukip</td>
<td>-0.22612</td>
<td>-0.23537</td>
<td>-0.35689</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined EU Vote</td>
<td>-0.13753</td>
<td>0.14964</td>
<td>0.299611</td>
<td>0.762644</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+ Unemployed</td>
<td>-0.30885</td>
<td>-0.09976</td>
<td>-0.4597</td>
<td>0.417441</td>
<td>0.1202133</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Born</td>
<td>-0.21411</td>
<td>0.175393</td>
<td>-0.38414</td>
<td>0.494194</td>
<td>0.2490338</td>
<td>0.454416043</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Qualifications</td>
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<td>-0.06743</td>
<td>0.347937</td>
<td>0.043853</td>
<td>0.2767666</td>
<td>-0.08374301</td>
<td>-0.28745</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wales, much like Scotland, experienced the same nationalist political situation that seemed to preclude the BNP from making any electoral progress. The Plaid Cymru (Welsh for Party of Wales) likely precludes significant support for the BNP. Like the SNP, the Plaid Cymru is far more mainstream than the BNP, yet it still advocates nationalist policies, albeit left-wing nationalism. The Plaid Cymru maintains very close links with the Scottish National Party. MPs from both parties work as a single group within the Houses of Parliament and were involved in joint campaigning during the 2005 general election campaign. Both Plaid and the SNP are part of the European Free Alliance party in the European Parliament, a nationalist and regionalist bloc of parties.

The Plaid Cymru is also pro-EU. The party’s position on the European Union is as follows: “We are committed to an independent Wales as a full member of the European Union. We will continue to support further democratic reform of the EU. We are committed to increased representation for Wales in the EU. This includes a fair number of MEPs for Wales, a European Parliament office in Wales, a rotating European Commissioner and most importantly, a vote for Wales in the Council of Ministers” (Plaid Cymru, 2013, International Affairs, para.3). In Wales, the Plaid Cymru garnered 18.5% of the vote, third behind the Tories and Labour at 21.2 and 20.3% respectively. Furthermore, pro-EU parties (Labour, Liberal Dems, and Plaid Cymru) obtained 50% of the vote whereas soft Eurosceptic parties (Tories and Green Party) obtained roughly 27% and hard parties (UKIP, BNP and minor parties) achieved the remaining 23%.

The Welsh, however, display higher levels of Euroscepticism than their Scottish counterparts. Pro-EU parties seem to perform rather well in local and national elections, including the EU Parliament elections of 2009, yet opinion polls indicate that the Welsh do not support continued membership of the United Kingdom within the European Union. For instance,
in the previously mentioned Chatham House-YouGov 2012 Survey, 51% of Welsh respondents reported they would vote to leave the European Union if presented a referendum that offered the option to do so. Furthermore, the Welsh are unlike the Scottish in that the vast majority of citizens (90%) prefer to remain a part of the United Kingdom (walesonline.co.uk, 2012) whereas the independence debate in Scotland has escalated to the point of a referendum on independence to be held in 2014.

In essence, a strange dichotomy exists here; on the one hand, voters prefer to at least be represented by pro-EU parties in the EU Parliament, but on the other hand opinion polls indicate most Welsh citizens oppose the UK’s membership within the EU. To explain the contradictory nature of Welsh voters, one must examine the internal politics of Wales. Wales was granted regional devolution in 1998 by the Government of Wales Act of 1998, and the creation of a Welsh assembly occurred shortly thereafter. At this time, the Labour Party of Wales spearheaded the campaign for devolution along with the Plaid Cymru, the Liberal Democrats (Pro-EU Parties), trade unions, and several church groups. The only major party to oppose this was the Conservative Party (BBC.co.uk, Politics 97, para.5).

The politics surrounding devolution likely led to dominance of the Labour Party in Welsh politics. Every First Minister and First Secretary of Wales since devolution has come from the Labour Party. Furthermore, Labour has had a majority government in every election of the Welsh Assembly since devolution. As a consequence, the Conservatives severely impaired any future political success they might have in Wales. The devolution event, coupled with regional support for Plaid Cymru could explain why the Conservatives somewhat underperform in the EU Parliament elections in Wales. For example the Conservatives gained 21.2% against a national total of 27.8%, whereas Labour over-performed compared to the UK as a whole with 20.3% in
Wales and 15.7% in the national total. Similar to England, Welsh Assembly constituencies with higher percentages of non-White citizens had lower rates of combined BNP and UKIP support in the EU election. The correlation was much weaker here ($r = -0.26$, $n=45$, $p<0.05$), but nonetheless an inverse relationship exists between Eurosceptic support and higher numbers of minority residents. Likewise, the relationship between no qualifications and support for Eurosceptic parties was weak but nonetheless still positive ($r = 0.28$, $n=45$, $p<0.05$). The relationship between BNP support and no qualifications was again strongly positively correlated ($r = 0.52$, $n=45$, $p<0.05$). Figure 4.5 displays the combined performance of the UKIP and BNP within Wales in the 2009 EU election.

Within Wales, age seems to play much less of a role in Eurosceptic party support, especially among older populations. In England, the relationship between UKIP support and those over age 65 was very strong, while in Wales it was almost non-existent ($r = 0.08$, $n=45$, $p<0.05$). BNP support was a much stronger variable in Wales. Areas that had fewer residents of retirement age had higher rates of BNP support. The correlation was strong and inverse ($r = -0.43$, $n=45$, $p<0.05$). The correlation between support for both parties was weak and inverse ($r = -0.13$, $n=45$, $p<0.05$). As the retirement age population increased, support for Eurosceptic parties decreased. Perhaps the most unique and interesting variable in Wales was the percentage of Welsh speaking residents and support for the Eurosceptic parties. The relationship between Welsh speakers and support for Eurosceptic parties was strong and inverse ($r = -0.43$, $n=45$, $p<0.05$). Figure 4.7 below displays the spatial distribution of Welsh speakers by assembly regions of Wales. Spatially, regions closer to the coast and the northwest of Wales have higher rates of Welsh speakers. Likewise, the percentage of Eurosceptic vote is typically lower in the coastal and northwest areas. Areas along the border with England and the South of Wales have
fewer Welsh speakers and more Eurosceptic voting tendencies. This correlation is not surprising, however, given the fact that the Plaid Cymru is heavily dependent on Welsh speakers and its power base is typically the western seaboard of Wales. The Plaid Cymru is generally pro-EU; therefore, it stands to reason that areas with higher rates of Welsh speakers would in turn be areas with less Euroscepticism and vice versa.

**Figure 4.6 Correlations Matrix for Wales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NO Qualifications</th>
<th>Combined EU Vote Total</th>
<th>BNP EU Vote</th>
<th>UKIP EU Vote</th>
<th>Retirement Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKIP EU Vote</td>
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<td>0.823524226</td>
<td>0.35011674</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement Age</td>
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<td>-0.1375365</td>
<td>-0.43450712</td>
<td>0.08007702</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.7. Knowledge of Welsh Language by Assembly Region. Source: Welsh Assembly.

Knowledge of Welsh Language by Assembly Region - 2008

Figure 4.8. BNP and UKIP Support in Wales

Combined BNP and UKIP Vote Percentage by Welsh Assembly Regions - 2009 EU Parliament Election

Data Source: Telegraph.co.uk
Southern England and the East

Returning to the regions of England, an obvious lack of BNP support exists in the South East and South West. The South West interestingly is the UK’s oldest region with 19.6% of the population over the age of 65 (Office for National Statistics, 2011, Population and Migration, South West). Although there is a great deal of Euroscepticism in this region, parties with a more fascist message performed poorly. Because this is the region of the UK with highest percentage of people who can vividly remember the rise of fascism during World War II and its devastating effects on the British Isles, perhaps this factor causes a lack of support for the BNP, a party with a fascist history and message. Moreover, older members of discontented social groups who grew up before the full onslaught of European integration may also be less accepting of EU membership than those who grew up with the European Union as an accepted part of the British political arena (Cutts, Ford and Goodwin, 2012, p. 204). The correlation between age and UKIP support is statistically a strong positive correlation ($r=0.62$, $n=326$, $p<0.05$) between median age and UKIP vote percentage by council area. Conversely, the relationship between BNP support and median age is negligible ($r=-0.09$, $n=326$, $p<0.05$). Instead of supporting Eurosceptic parties with a more fascist message, South West voters instead chose to support the UKIP in higher numbers, giving it its best performance in all UK regions (22.1% of total vote) during the 2009 European Parliament Election.

According to a 2012 YouGov-Chatham House survey of 2,078 British adults age 18 to over 60, when asked the question “If there was a referendum on Britain’s membership of the European Union, how would you vote?”, only 31% of respondents in these two regions answered they would vote to remain in the EU, whereas 51% responded they would opt to leave (YouGov, 2013). The survey data indicate the South East and South West regions hold the second highest
rate of dissatisfaction in all the UK, behind only the Midlands where respondents answered the
aforementioned questions at 26% and 52% respectively. Figure 4.9 displays these results
cartographically. The South East likewise handed the UKIP its fourth best levels of support in all
Great Britain, and furthermore the UKIP was the second most favored party in the region with
18.4% of the vote behind 34% for the first place Conservatives. These two regions also had the
highest voter turnout at 39% in the South West and 38% in the South East.

Figure 4.9 UKIP Vote by Region
A similar strong UKIP performance result was seen in the East region where the Conservatives came in first with 31.2% of the vote, and the UKIP achieved 19.6% of the final vote total. The East and South East are very similar in levels of income (Gross Disposable Household Income of £16,392 and £17,610 respectively) and percentage of people over 65 (17.5% and 17.2% respectively) (Office for National Statistics, 2011, Population and Migration, South East) and turnout here was 37%, third behind the aforementioned South and South West. As such, one could assume a similar vote outcome. Curiously, the East is the fastest growing of all UK regions in terms of population. By 2021, the population is projected to increase by 10.2% (Office for National Statistics, 2012, Regional Profile, East of England). Previous research has indicated that regions that border other nation states are typically either very anti-EU or very pro-EU (Leconte, 2010). Although Great Britain is an island, and as such borders no other nations, the East’s close proximity to mainland Europe makes it a prime destination for many European Union migrants. Between 1991 and 2011, the East was consistently second only to London in rates of international migration. Nearly one third of the population growth experienced by this region will result from international migration (Office for National Statistics, 2013, Population and Migration, East of England)
Figure 4.10 EU Referendum Survey Results by Region

If there was a Referendum on UK's Membership of EU: I Would Vote to Leave EU

Legend
- 41.00%
- 41.01 - 45.00%
- 45.01 - 47.00%
- 47.01 - 51.00%
- 51.01 - 52.00%

The Midlands

Above all, when analyzing the previous regional maps of Great Britain, one region stands out from all the rest, the West Midlands. The region appears to be the most dissatisfied based on voter preference. As previously mentioned, income and education are thought to have a strong influence on support for right-wing parties. The West Midlands is notably the region with the highest proportion of people with no educational qualification in 2010 with 14% compared with 10.7% for the UK as a whole. The median disposable weekly household income after housing costs in the West Midlands was £333, one of the lowest of all regions in England within the three-year period 2007/08 to 2009/10. In the same time-frame, 25% of people (1.3 million) were in households with incomes below the poverty threshold, one of the highest percentages of all English regions (Office for National Statistics, 2012, Social Indicators, West Midlands).

Within English local councils, there is a strong positive correlation ($r=0.61, n=326, p<0.05$) between those of have no qualifications and combined UKIP and BNP support. Statistical tests indicate that localities with higher rates of citizens with no qualifications typically vote for UKIP and BNP candidates at much higher rates. The correlation is even stronger ($r=0.73, n=326, p<0.05$) when comparing only BNP support with lack of qualifications. The correlation is much weaker for the UKIP ($r=0.11, n=326, p<0.05$) indicating educational attainment plays a much smaller role in support for the party. This research reinforces previous findings correlating lack of education and support for extreme far-right parties. The BNP can be considered much further to the right of the UKIP on the political spectrum; therefore, it stands to reason that the correlation is stronger for BNP and lack of education than UKIP and lack of education. Therefore, it seems evident this region would support both the UKIP and the BNP most of all regions of England. From a geographical perspective, the West Midlands is one of
only two landlocked regions of the UK (the other being Greater London). The West Midlands’ isolated location, between economically deprived Wales to the West and the rest of England, perhaps has dealt this region an immediate economic disadvantage and has caused a sort of withdrawn outlook on EU membership.

The combined vote total for the BNP and UKIP in the West Midlands was nearly 30%. Likewise the UKIP and BNP performed relatively well in neighboring East Midlands garnering 25% of casted ballots. The East Midlands has similar rates of lack of education and poverty as the West Midlands. It has below average levels of qualifications and one of the lowest proportions of 16-year-olds remaining in education. As of 2010, the percentage of the population who qualified at level 4 or higher of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) was 27.6 %, compared with the UK average of 31.6 %. The percentage with no qualifications was 11.8 %, similar to the northern regions but lower than West Midlands (14.0 %). The proportion of 16-year-olds in post-compulsory education and government-supported training in 2009/10 was 88%, tied for lowest with Yorkshire and The Humber, of all English regions. Furthermore, the median disposable weekly household income after housing costs in the East Midlands was £342, in the three-year period 2007/08 to 2009/10, below the UK average (Office for National Statistics, 2012, Social Indicators, East Midlands).

**Regional Summary**

In essence, the UKIP vote could perhaps be viewed as the best metric for assessing mainstream Euroscepticism in Great Britain. Parties meeting this mainstream designation are those with at least one seat in the EU Parliament or House of Commons. As frequently mentioned before, the UK has an overt tradition of Euroscepticism (Aspinwall 2000, p. 416; Gifford, 2006, p. 852). The UKIP has traditionally performed better in second-order elections
such as the previously mentioned EU Parliament Election and poorly in first order elections such as the UK’s General Election. The reasons for the UKIP’s success in second-order elections are not completely understood, but some point to the fact that most European voters, as well as British voters, view the second-order elections, such as the EU Parliament Elections as less consequential (Heath 1999, p. 389; Cutts, Ford and Goodwin, 2012, p. 204). To expand upon this, turnout in the UK was only 35% in the 2009 EU Parliament elections whereas it was nearly 65% in the 2010 general elections (Electoral Commission, 2012).

These results partially reinforce the previously mentioned theories that voters seem to view the EU Parliament elections as less consequential. Voters tend see these elections as an opportunity to support smaller and more ideologically extreme minor parties. Under the regionalist list proportional representation system (D’Hondt Method) that the EU Parliament Elections employs, there is a greater likelihood that these votes will translate into seats for the more minor parties. The D’Hondt method does slightly favor large parties, however not nearly as much as the simple majoritarian system (first past the post). Unlike single transferable voting, it does not use a quota or formula to allocate seats or posts. Instead, these are allocated singularly and one after another. The basic premise is that a party's vote total is divided by a certain figure which increases as it wins more seats. As the divisor becomes bigger, the party's total in succeeding rounds gets smaller, allowing parties with lower initial totals to win seats. The divisor in the first round is one (it has no effect), and thereafter it is the total number of seats gained plus one (bbc.co.uk, 1999). Dissimilarly, minor parties suffer in first-order elections under the majoritarian system which severely penalizes parties that lack a geographically concentrated base of support, such as the UKIP (Cutts, Ford, and Goodwin, 2012, p. 210). The majoritarian system allocates seats to parties with a simple plurality of the vote and is employed in local
council and general elections for the House of Commons in the UK.

In an extensive study of the 2009 EU Parliament Election, researchers at the University of Manchester and the University of Nottingham found that UKIP support is concentrated among middle aged, financially insecure men with a Conservative background and is significantly higher among the skilled working classes who have been most exposed to competition from the European Common Market. UKIP supporters are also more likely than voters in general to regularly read one of Britain’s Eurosceptic right-wing “tabloid” newspapers, although such papers are also popular with supporters of the mainstream Conservative Party (Cutts, Goodwin and Ford, 2012, p. 209). In the sample data collected, it was found that the average UKIP voter was 55, seven years older than the average supporter of the other three major UK political parties. These findings were in line with support for the UKIP in South West England, as this was the oldest region and the best region for the UKIP. There is a very strong positive correlation ($r = 0.86$, $n=11$, $p<0.05$) between percentage of population age 65 or older and UKIP support by region. The southern regions of England have the highest percentages of people over the age of 65 and tend to poll as the most anti-EU in surveys, as well as being the best regions for the UKIP in the 2009 UK EU Parliament election.

Ultimately, there exists a subtle divide between BNP support in the North of England and UKIP support in the South. There is also an obvious lack of support for any sort of right-wing anti-EU parties in Scotland and overall lower levels of voter preference for anti-EU parties than anywhere else in Great Britain. In England, Euroscepticism is lowest in London, a melting pot of hundreds of cultures. It is moderately high in the East Midlands, typically fervent Labour North of England and conservative South and highest in the West Midlands and Yorkshire and the
Humber where UKIP and BNP support is deeply entrenched within the regional political structure.

**Figure 4.11 Correlations Matrix for England**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU Combined Vote Total</th>
<th>EU% of vote BNP</th>
<th>EU% of vote UKIP</th>
<th>LOCAL BNP</th>
<th>LOCAL UKIP</th>
<th>Combined Local Total</th>
<th>MEDIAN AGE</th>
<th>employed 16-64</th>
<th>White British</th>
<th>No Qualification</th>
<th>population per square hectare</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>EU% of vote BNP</td>
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<td>0.116229053</td>
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4.2 Local Results in Depth

As previously discussed, a different set of political circumstances exists within Scottish and Welsh local politics. England is a much different case however. This study examined the most recent Welsh and Scottish local government elections, 2008 and 2007 respectively, as well as English local elections that occurred from 2007 to 2010. This brief section will be focus on analysis of English local elections but disregard Welsh and Scottish local elections. It is not arbitrary but due to one basic element. The BNP and UKIP rarely achieved even one percent of the vote in all Scottish and Welsh council elections. The best result for either party was a mere 3.6% for the BNP in Swansea. Only three times did either party achieve more than 1% of the vote, all of these instances occurred in Wales. In England, there are a total of 326 local government districts. These districts elect local councils in varying years. Depending upon the type of local government (Unitary Authority, Metropolitan Borough, etc.), local councils are elected in thirds every three years or the entire council is up for election every four years.

From a statistical standpoint, there is a great deal of variation between support for Eurosceptic candidates in the EU Parliament elections and support for them in local council elections. The average combined vote for both the UKIP and BNP in local elections was nearly 6% while the average result for the national EU election was nearly 25%. These results appear to reinforce the often discussed theory that voters tend to view EU elections as less consequential. EU Parliament elections are occasionally termed second-order (Leconte, 2010; Reif and Schmitt, 1980, p. 5) and often display more extremist voting trends. A paired two sample for means t-test indicates a significant variation between the combined total for BNP and UKIP support at the national level and the local level ($t(325) = 55.25$, $p<0.001$). The reason for this variation may also be more obvious and simplistic. Perhaps voters view local councilors as inconsequential in
the European Union decision making process. Voters could potentially view EU members of Parliament as more involved in the actual politics of the European Union as opposed to local councilors who obviously hold much less sway over international relations. If the British public is highly Eurosceptic, it would stand to reason that voters would view EU elections as a more effective outlet for this frustration, as opposed to local elections where international issues are rarely at the forefront.

Another theory argues that voters sometimes see these European elections as a way to vote sincerely rather than strategically for parties that more in line with their own interests, rather than voting for larger parties that are less in line with their interests but have a greater chance of forming a government (Oppenhuis, van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996). It is probable the UKIP and BNP leadership do not seek to affect issues regarding Europe on a local level, but rather the strategy behind fielding candidates in these elections lies in the fact that if elected, councilors from these parties can gain the trust of citizens. If a citizen trusts a UKIP councilor, for example, they might be more apt to vote UKIP in the EU Parliament Elections, and if they vote for them in these elections, they might be more apt to vote for them in the General Elections.

The theory that rural voters are more prone to Euroscepticism also seems to hold true (Boy and Chiche, 2005, p. 93), especially in the EU Parliament elections. There is a strong inverse correlation ($r=-0.51$, $n=326$, $p<0.05$) between population density per hectare and combined BNP and UKIP vote totals. The correlation is much weaker in local elections ($r=-0.23$, $n=326$, $p<0.05$) but nonetheless still exists. Figures 4.12 and 4.13 below show the geographic distribution of the vote in the EU Parliament elections and local elections respectively.
Figure 4.12 Local BNP and UKIP Vote Returns in the 2009 EU Parliament Election

Combined BNP and UKIP Vote Returns by Districts of England in the 2009 EU Parliament Election

Percent Voting for BNP and UKIP
- 6.40 - 17.00
- 17.01 - 24.70
- 24.71 - 30.90
- 30.91 - 41.00

Data Source: Telegraph.co.uk
Figure 4.13 BNP and UKIP Support by District in Local Elections 2007-2010

Combined BNP and UKIP Electoral Results in Local Elections 2007-2010

Percent Voting for BNP and UKIP
- 0.00 - 3.11%
- 3.12 - 8.50%
- 8.51 - 15.00%
- 15.01 - 32.70%

Data Source: Local Council Websites
In general, areas with very high levels of Eurosceptic voting in local council elections also had very high levels in the EU election. Similar to the national EU Parliament election, the West Midlands again had the highest combined BNP and UKIP mean local vote at 7.7%. However, the difference between the local and national means was highest in this region with a 23% point difference between national and local support for the two parties and the lowest mean difference occurred in London with a 14.1% point difference. This result was interesting as the West Midlands region was the most Eurosceptic voting region and London was the least. Statistically speaking, London was the region where support for the hard Eurosceptic parties in local and national elections varied the least, whereas the West Midlands was the region where it varied most. Councils in the East, East Midlands and South East showed the second highest local mean vote at 7.3%, 6.2% and 7% respectively. The second tier of support occurred in the North East, North West, South West and Yorkshire and the Humber at 4%, 5.3%, 5.2% and 4.8% respectively. London was by far the least supportive of these two parties lending only 1.1% of the vote to them in the 2010 London local elections.

In local government elections, age was again positively correlated with Eurosceptic voting ($r=0.22$, $n=326$, $p<0.05$). Moreover, similar to national correlations, the more White British the population is, the more likely they are to vote for Eurosceptic candidates. However, the correlation was weaker in national elections ($r=0.25$, $n=326$, $p<0.05$). In no council elections did the combined UKIP and BNP support exceed the combined EU Parliament election total. The closest these two parties came to equaling their support in the EU Parliament election was 2.6% points in the district of Newcastle-under-Lyme in the West Midlands region. Based upon voting data, Newcastle-under-Lyme was the single most Eurosceptic council in all of England. Furthermore, it was the only council where the parties obtained more than one-third of
the electorate in both local and national elections.

Some anomalous areas sprouted upon the map as well. In four council areas, Breckland, Northeast Lincolnshire, North Warwickshire, and Tamworth, the BNP and UKIP had no councilors from either party on the ballot thus receiving no votes in local elections, although these councils all contributed nearly one-third of the vote total to the previously mentioned parties in the 2009 EU Parliament election. In 36 council areas, the UKIP and BNP offered no candidates on ballots in the local elections and received a combined final average of 21.5% of the vote total in the EU Parliament elections in these same areas.

Another interesting case was the district of South Lakeland in the county of Cumbria in the North West of England. Outside of London and a few other councils in the south of England, South Lakeland was one of the few areas where BNP and UKIP support was abnormally low in both local and national elections. Here, the combined total in the EU Parliament election was under 15% and the local election combined total for the parties was less than 1%. South Lakeland was one of only 25 councils where this sort of result occurred with 18 of this 25 occurring in London. South Lakeland is interesting in that it has a very old population, with 32% of the population over the age of 60 compared with the national average of 22%, (Office for National Statistics, 2011, Census Data) and is overwhelmingly White British (In June 2007, 0.7% were Mixed Race, 0.8% Asian or Asian British, 0.4% Black or Black British, and 0.6% Chinese or Other Ethnic Group. This is 2.5% altogether, compared to 11.7% nationally, Southlakeland.gov.uk). Previous findings in this work indicate ethnicity and age are strongly correlated with support for far-right and anti-EU parties. South Lakeland seems to go against these trends.

Aside from most boroughs of London, the cities of Oxford and Cambridge were two
other prominent localities that consistently supported the UKIP and BNP in much lower numbers than virtually every other council in England. These cities host world renowned institutions of higher education (University of Oxford and University of Cambridge) and are both within the top fifteen most educated regions of Great Britain with Oxford at number two and Cambridge at number thirteen. Combined support for both parties in the EU Parliament election was roughly 10% in both districts, while support in local elections was much lower at 2.7% and 0.005% respectively. The results here are not surprising, since education is strongly positively correlated ($r=0.61, n=326, p<0.05$) between those who have no qualifications and combined UKIP and BNP support.

In terms of theories proposing the economically disadvantaged are more apt to vote for Eurosceptic parties, only BNP support seems to show a strong correlation. The key variable “unemployment rate age 16-64” was recorded for every local authority during the 2011 Census of England and Wales. When tested against the combined results for the BNP and UKIP in local elections, the correlation is negligible ($r=0.07, n=326, p<0.05$). BNP support shows a strong positive correlation ($r=0.40, n=326, p<0.05$) with percentage of unemployed by local authority. This reinforces previous findings that indicate disadvantaged populations might be more prone to far-right voting. Curiously however, when tested against vote returns from each local authority in the EU Parliament election, the correlation is much weaker ($r=0.12, n=326, p<0.05$). This result conflicts with past research indicating disadvantaged populations are more likely to vote for parties with a fascist message (Gijsberts, Hagendoorn and Scheepers 2004). In both local and national elections, UKIP support showed a weak inverse correlation with the percentage of unemployed residents age 16-64 by local authority in England.

From a political perspective, there is an interesting correlation between Labour Party-
BNP support and Conservative-UKIP support. There appears to be a weak positive relationship between UKIP support and Conservative party support in the EU Parliament elections. Areas with higher rates of conservative party support also have higher rates of UKIP support. The correlation was fairly weak ($r=0.24$, $n=326$, $p<0.05$) but nonetheless shows a positive correlation between support for these parties. The Conservative-UKIP correlation is in line with previous research that indicates conservative voters often support the UKIP in European elections as a method of protesting further European integration. Since the Conservative party can be seen as soft Eurosceptic, it would stand to reason that core Conservative party supporters might use the EU election as an opportunity to voice their dissatisfaction with the sometimes ambivalent Conservative stance on EU integration, and instead support the hard Eurosceptic UKIP.

However, the most unusual statistical correlation here is the relationship between Labour and BNP support. At first glance, one might not expect to find a strong correlation between support for the leading left-wing pro EU party in Great Britain and the far-right, borderline fascist BNP. Yet when analyzing local council election returns from the EU Parliament election, there exists a strong positive correlation between these parties ($r=0.48$, $n=326$, $p<0.05$). Superficially, a relationship between BNP and Labour Party support was unexpected, but from a cultural geography perspective it is not. As mentioned in the previous section on regional results, BNP support is much stronger in the north of England than the south. The Labour Party generally exceeded its national average in the north, while this region was also the highest for BNP support. The north is much more industrial and blue collar in nature than the south, thus the north has always been a stronghold for trade unions and general Labour Party support. The BNP has specifically targeted working class voters discontented with current Labour Party policies. Cutts, Ford and Goodwin (2010, p. 420) found that BNP supporters are most likely to have been
drawn from Labour Party family backgrounds.

As formerly discussed, the 2009 “shire” county elections and eight other unitary authority elections occurred concurrently with the 2009 EU Parliament election. When voters chose local councilors in these elections, they also chose members of European Parliament from their region. Therefore, the results from these elections could be said to be the most accurate comparison between the local council results and EU Parliament results. In the 27 shire counties, there were a total of 201 districts observed, while the eight unitary authorities are treated as single political entities for a grand total of 209 observations out of 326 districts for all of England (66% of local councils). In these elections, the mean vote for the national returns was 25.3%, virtually the same as the cumulative results, whereas the local elections saw a mean of 7%, one point higher than the cumulative totals.

There was less variation here between local and national results for the BNP and UKIP than when all of England is compared between local and national results (t(208) = 43.71, p<0.001 (shire county elections); t(325) = 55.25, p<0.001[all of England]), indicating voters in the shire counties selecting UKIP or BNP candidates in national elections, were more likely to do so for local council elections. However, it does not appear that there was much psychological effect or political pull associated with voting for both national Eurosceptic candidates and local Eurosceptic candidates. In other words, as evidenced by the mean vote of 7% in local elections and 25.3% in national elections, the added importance of selecting EU Parliament members concurrently with local council members does not make voters more likely to support Eurosceptic candidates.
Chapter 5 Conclusion

The findings in this study generally support past literature on the nature and geography of Euroscepticism. Euroscepticism in Great Britain generally follows a trend seen elsewhere throughout Europe. The more educated, wealthy, and urban citizens tend to view Euroscepticism as a negative philosophy whereas the more rural, older and less educated citizenry see it as a positive political force for preserving their unique British way of life. The Eurosceptic parties appear to have a so called “catch all” political effect on British politics. On the one hand, the UKIP appears to be a fine alternative for the more mainstream conservative voter in the south of England looking to express their contempt for further EU integration whereas the far-right BNP appears to have the unusual effect of siphoning off disgruntled working class voters who typically support the left leaning Labour Party in the more industrialized North.

In the future, the UKIP will be the more likely of the two parties to maintain widespread support and secure its place in the mainstream permanently. BNP rhetoric seems to be too inflammatory for the party to secure a lasting place in mainstream British politics. Putting the party’s recent successes, particularly in the north, aside, it would seem many of the party’s current supporters will switch to the UKIP. The recent economic slowdown in Britain has stemmed the tide of immigration substantially in all areas outside of London. The issue of immigration will eventually subside, and the BNP will likely lose any traction gained from this controversial topic. The geographical heartland of Eurosceptic voting will likely remain concentrated in the Midlands belt of England. This region is the most dissatisfied with EU policies, and no apparent economic opportunities appear to be heading to these regions. As such, no major demographic changes are likely to occur here, and the core Eurosceptic voting bloc in this region will remain indefinitely. Likewise, the South West is the oldest region and only
getting older. UKIP support is very high among older Brits, and this region is the most rural of all English regions. These two issues correlate very highly with Eurosceptic voting, so it does not appear the voting character of the South West will change immediately.

The northern regions of England are still very industrial. Since the Labour party is very popular among blue collar workers, it is likely Labour will remain a key player in EU elections. Pro-EU sentiment is so unpopular in the UK right now that the Labour party will eventually have to adopt some sort of Euroscepticism, presumably the soft kind. In a 2013 YouGov survey, only 43% of Labour supports replied that exiting the EU would be bad for the economy, whereas 42% said it would be good or make no difference. A slight majority of 52% of Labour voters said the government should hold a referendum on Britain’s EU membership and 34% replied they would vote to exit the EU. With this in mind, it is likely the BNP will fall in the traditionally Labour North and a new slightly anti-EU Labour government will enjoy high levels of support.

The wild card in English politics specifically remains the Conservative party. Whether or not the Conservatives choose to adopt hard Eurosceptic policies remains to be seen. In all likelihood, they will strengthen their anti-EU views in order to stop the UKIP from drawing core Conservative voters. Should this happen, BNP and UKIP support will likely die down in the Midlands regions and conservative South, and Conservative Party support will steadily increase here. It appears the current Conservative Party leadership is poised to pivot further to a hard Eurosceptic stance. Conservative Party leader and current Prime Minister David Cameron has already promised a referendum by 2017 on Britain’s continued membership, indicating the Party is already taking steps to reinvent itself as the vanguard of Eurosceptic politics in the UK.

London will likely remain pro-EU, but changes in British political culture could cause slight increases in mixed feelings on EU membership. As a whole, the cosmopolitan nature of
this region makes it likely that London will be the last English region that adopts an outright
negative view of further EU integration. When it comes to Wales and Scotland, Wales seems to
be much more in line with English views on EU membership. The Welsh likely feel
marginalized by England’s continued focus on continental Europe and will typically vote against
further EU involvement as a reminder to Westminster that they are still here and that there are
more pressing matters of attention on the isle of Great Britain. It could also be the case that the
Welsh identify more culturally with the English than the Scottish do. For this reason, the Welsh
may opt to vote similarly, to the English while the Scottish prefer a more independent voting
behavior. Furthermore, Haesly (2001, p.83) found out through detailed interviews that the
Scottish are considerably less Eurosceptic than the English since they less often have exclusive
national identity perceptions. They consider themselves Scottish, British and European, for
instance. Scotland is likely to remain pro-EU, especially if voters in the upcoming referendum
opt to secede from the United Kingdom. An independent Scotland’s potential place within the
EU could grant the country access to valuable EU funds and membership could strengthen the
SNP’s place within the politics of a newly independent Scotland.

The UK appears to be at a major crossroads. On the one hand, the nation needs to
maintain a close knit relationship with the EU for economic benefits, but the British population
at large seems to view Britain’s place on the international scene in different terms. The historical
dominance of the British Empire still resonates with many in Britain, and the UK’s increasing
marginalization within the EU by larger more powerful nations such as Germany make it
difficult to reconcile these differences. Increasing economic troubles in the Mediterranean seems
to be a major deterrent for deepening British involvement in the EU. Perhaps the less educated
and more rural, unconnected citizenry fear the EU, because they do not fully understand the
intricacies of the global economy. Neil Fligstein (2008, p.218) identifies a “Euro-clash” in which the 10% in society who are the economic elite are in favor of integration, the 30 or 40% economically weak are against and the future of integration will be decided by the extent to which the middle class can be convinced of either side to form a majority. Although the UK stands to lose by bailing out the ailing Mediterranean nations, they stand to lose even more in the broader economic picture by not aiding their fellow European brothers.

Future researchers could build upon this work substantially. As previously noted, a more longitudinal study of Great Britain would paint a much clearer picture of the evolution of spatial variations Eurosceptic voting. An analysis of media influence of Euroscepticism would help understand the nature of this philosophy in Great Britain. Furthermore, the overall psychology of Euroscepticism could be studied more so in future research. Understanding why the less educated see further European integration as negative would provide a wealth of knowledge on general mistrust of the European Union. Is the ethnic group conflict theory and perceived threats by immigrants a normal part of the more primal nature of humans or is there some more complex socio-economic issue that can be corrected by educational intervention? The immigration issue in general could be analyzed in greater detail as well. This study only briefly looked at the issue of immigration, but a more in depth study would certainly provide a better understanding of Euroscepticism, more specifically the statistical data regarding immigration from other European Union member states. Are ethnically “White British” citizens unemployed more often in areas with more EU immigrants than areas that have fewer of the latter but more of the former? Furthermore, data regarding EU funding by region or districts of England could be explored. Do regions of Great Britain receive equal access to funds and if not do regions that receive less EU funding have higher levels of Eurosceptic voting behavior? This point would likely be the most
pertinent to future researchers as it is very obvious that those benefiting most from current EU funds would ostensibly hold it in the highest regard.

Whatever the case may be, this thesis could serve as a policy reference for those seeking to understand their constituents and the issues most affecting their support or opposition for the European Union. If one were interested in how to improve views on the EU, this work could serve as a reference for targeted information campaigns on the benefits of the EU in those regions most opposed to it. Conversely, one seeking to further advance the causes of anti-EU politics could use this work to rally and further empower those in the regions identified as most Eurosceptic. In essence, this work is only a brief snapshot of the complexities of Eurosceptic opinion and geographic distribution. Hopefully, this work could help a future scholar seeking to understand how Euroscepticism manifests itself geographically and why some citizens are more prone to it than others.
Bibliography


Appendix

Letter from Institutional Research Board

Office of Research Integrity

January 16, 2013

Jared T. Figgins
25423 State Route 93
Oak Hill, OH 45656

Dear Mr. Figgins:

This letter is in response to the submitted thesis abstract titled "Political Party Affiliation and Regional Variation in Euroscepticism on the Isle of Great Britain." After assessing the abstract it has been deemed not to be human subject research and therefore exempt from oversight of the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Code of Federal Regulations (45CFR46) has set forth the criteria utilized in making this determination. Since the information in this study is an analysis of publicly available information it is not considered human subject research. If there are any changes to the abstract you provided then you would need to resubmit that information to the Office of Research Integrity for review and a determination.

I appreciate your willingness to submit the abstract for determination. Please feel free to contact the Office of Research Integrity if you have any questions regarding future protocols that may require IRB review.

Sincerely,

Bruce F. Day, PhD, CIP
Director
Office of Research Integrity