



Citation for published version:

Lees, C 2008, The limits of party-based Euroscepticism in Germany. in P Taggart & A Szczerbiak (eds), *Opposing Europe? The Comparative Party Politics of Euroscepticism*. vol. 1, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 16-37.

Publication date:
2008

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication](#)

University of Bath

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

2

The Limits of Party-Based Euroscepticism in Germany

Charles Lees

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Germany is not renowned for its Euroscepticism—party-based or otherwise. In fact, the Federal Republic has traditionally been considered the *Musterknabe* (model boy) of the European Union (EU). It has enjoyed a stable elite consensus around the European project, with broad cross-party agreement over the desirability of pooled political sovereignty and increased economic interdependence (Paterson 1996; Rheinhardt 1997; Peters 2001). This orthodoxy tended to be bolstered by a relatively compliant media; a permissive consensus amongst the general public; institutions and norms of governance that are analogous to the EU's; a strong manufacturing and banking sector that has benefited from the opening up of European markets; and an ingrained reluctance amongst the political class to engage in populist politics on the issue of Europe. Moreover, the German Basic Law's constitutional constraints on the use of plebiscites and referendums serve to limit the scope for extra-parliamentary mobilization around the issue.

But German unification, combined with the country's now-entrenched high levels of unemployment, has strained—although not yet broken—the cross-party consensus on Europe. On the left of the party system, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) engaged in a brief flirtation with a more 'sceptical' attitude towards Europe in the mid-1990s, whilst the communist successor Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) remains critical of many fundamental aspects of the integration process. At the same time, however, the Greens—in contrast to some Green parties elsewhere in Europe—have become very pro-European over the course of the last decade. On the right, the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP) is sometimes ambiguous about European integration (reflecting the legacy of the internal split between 'social' and 'national' liberals as well as misgivings about the pace of supply-side reforms in Europe) but the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) remains broadly pro-EU. However the Christian Democrats' Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), has resisted some elements of the integration process. As the ruling party in Bavaria, the CSU has always forged cross-party alliances at the state level in order to defend its interests and, as a result, has

also developed links with Jörg Haider's People's Party in neighbouring Austria. These moves were made under the aegis of Edmund Stoiber, the state's Minister-President and failed CDU/CSU Chancellor-Candidate in the 2002 Bundestag elections.

Nevertheless, it would be overstating the case to say that the cross-party consensus has broken down, and Germany remains one of the motors of the European integration process—as demonstrated by Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer's 2000 'Berlin Speech' and Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's endorsement of an SDP discussion paper on political union. But the consensus is under strain and, as a result, all the mainstream parties were anxious to keep 'Europe' off the agenda in the run-up to the 2002 Bundestag elections (*Der Spiegel*, 07/05/01). In this the parties were reasonably successful. Despite popular unease over perceived price rises after the introduction of euro notes and coins at the start of 2002—and the closeness of the election race—none of the mainstream parties chose to make the European single currency an issue. Even though, for historical reasons, retail price inflation is a highly sensitive theme for Germans, it became effectively a non-issue in the final month of campaigning. This was reflected in a drop in the salience of European issues as the election approached. At the start of August 2002, 9 per cent of Germans felt that euro-related price rises was the 'most important' theme in the campaign. This fell to 6 per cent a week later, then 3 per cent, before disappearing altogether from polling data by the end of the month (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 2002).

As it turned out, the September 2002 Bundestag elections were the closest in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany (Lees 2002*b*); the results of these elections are shown in Table 2.1. What is important in the context of this chapter is that well over 90 per cent of all votes cast in the 2002 elections were for political parties that, despite the differences of opinion noted above, by and large still supported the broad parameters of the pro-European orthodoxy that developed in the Federal Republic over the post-war period. Of the other 7 per cent, 4 per cent were cast for the PDS, a party that, whilst more critical of the direction of EU integration than the other mainstream parties, does not mobilize around the kind of Hard Eurosceptic agenda found elsewhere in Europe (and described elsewhere in this volume). In so far as it does exist within the German party system, any Hard Euroscepticism (defined as the outright rejection of the integration project in its current form and opposition to their country joining, or remaining in the EU) is, at present, restricted to the fringe right-wing parties, such as the Republicans, that failed to poll more than 3 per cent between them. Moreover, as is examined later in the chapter, even these fringe parties refrain from advocating outright withdrawal in their election manifestos.

So does the absence of a significant party-based Eurosceptic agenda mean that the German public are content with the long-established pro-European position of their political elites? The polling data in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 go some way to suggest that it is not necessarily the case. As Figure 2.1 demonstrates, up until the mid-1990s, public opinion towards European integration was stable at around the EU average but then fell back to about 5–10 per cent below it. This coincided

Table 2.1. 22 September 2002, Bundestag elections (second votes and seats)*

	Bundestag elections 22/09/02		Bundestag elections 27/09/98		Bundestag elections 16/10/94	
Electorate	61,432,868		60,762,751		60,452,009	
Number of votes	48,582,761		49,947,087		47,737,999	
% Turnout	79.1		82.2		79.0	
Valid votes	47,996,480		49,308,512		47,105,174	
SPD	18,488,668	38.5	20,181,269	40.9	17,140,354	36.4
CDU	14,167,561	29.5	14,004,908	28.4	16,089,354	34.2
CSU	4,315,080	9.0	3,324,480	6.7	3,427,196	7.3
Greens	4,110,355	8.6	3,303,624	6.7	3,424,315	7.3
FDP	3,538,815	7.4	3,080,955	6.2	3,258,407	6.9
PDS	1,916,702	4.0	2,515,454	5.1	2,066,176	4.4
Schill	400,476					
Rep	280,671					
NPD	215,232					
Others	562,920					

Seats (1998 totals in brackets): SPD 251 (298); CDU/CSU 248 (245); Greens 55 (47); FDP 47 (43); PDS 2 (36); (Total 603)

Sources: DPA; Bundeswahlleiter: Endgültiges Ergebnis der Bundestagswahl 2002, http://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/wahlen/bundestagswahl2002/deutsch/ergebnis2002/bund_land/wahlkreis/kr99999.htm and http://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/wahlen/bundestagswahl2002/deutsch/ergebnis2002/ergebgrafik/html/sitzgww_999.htm (data sourced on October 1 2003).

Au: This Reference is not available in the Reference list. Please provide.

with greater public awareness of the costs of German unification and a growing uneasiness at Germany's role as paymaster of the EU.

However, let us unpack the idea of support for the EU further. Figure 2.2 uses half-yearly polling data from 2000 to 2002 and tracks the attitudes of the German public towards specific aspects of EU membership. These are: (a) membership as a 'good thing'; (b) the benefits of membership; (c) trust in the European Commission; (d) support for the euro; (e) support for Common Foreign Policy; (f) support for Common Defence and Security Policy; and (g) support for the eastward enlargement of the EU. Taken in the round, the data show that overall levels of support for membership are reasonably stable and that the percentage of Germans polled who regarded EU membership as a good thing has recovered since the late 1990s. Moreover, two aspects of EU policy—support for a Common Foreign Policy and a Common Defence and Security Policy—are very popular, with between 70 and 80 per cent of those polled indicating support for these policy objectives. Nevertheless other aspects—such as the benefits of membership, trust in the Commission, and support for enlargement—are only supported by a minority of the German public.

So Figure 2.2 demonstrates that there is a degree of unease amongst the German public about the scope and pace of European integration. And, therefore, in a proportional electoral system like Germany's, we might expect one or more political parties would exploit this niche within the multiparty system that has been left empty by more Euro-orthodox parties. The generally buoyant levels

Limits of Party-Based Euroscepticism in Germany

19

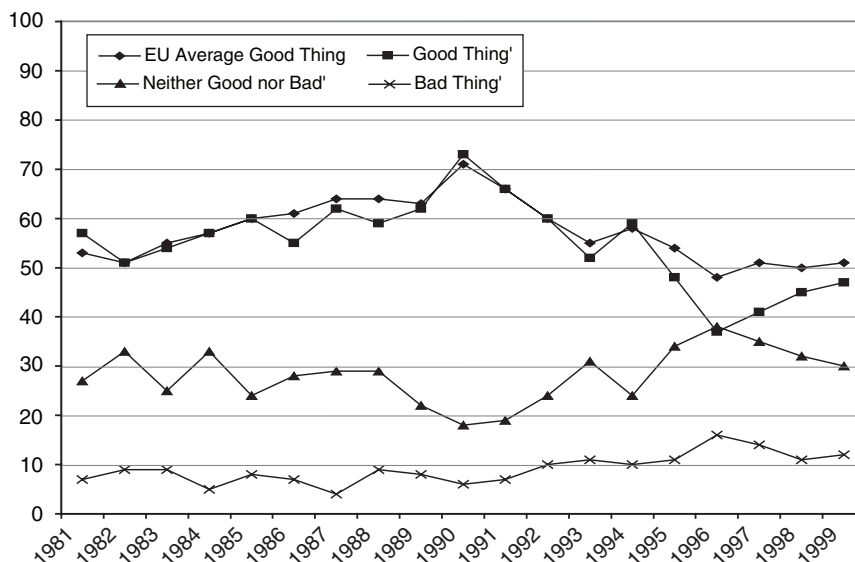


Figure 2.1. German support for EU membership—1981–99

Source: Eurobarometer 52

of support for the broad idea of European integration mean that it is unlikely that 'relevant' parties—that is, parties that might expect to have some influence over the formation and/or maintenance of governing coalitions—would opt to mobilize around a Hard Eurosceptic agenda. However, in the light of significant levels of public unease about specific issues such as enlargement, an agenda of Soft Euroscepticism (defined as contingent or qualified opposition to aspects of the integration process) would appear to be a workable option for a party seeking to profile itself on the issue of Europe (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2002: 6–7).

But this has not happened. Instead one finds a clear disjuncture between elite and popular opinion (European Commission 1996; Page and Barabas 2000). Elsewhere, I have argued that this disjuncture makes Euroscepticism the 'dark matter' of German politics (Lees 2002). That is not to say that parties, or factions within parties, have not occasionally tilted at the windmill of Euroscepticism. But these Eurosceptic turns have either been opportunistic and ad hoc in nature, or—where a more coherent critique of the European project has been developed—associated with flanking or extremist parties. Thus, up until now, German party-based Euroscepticism has been inchoate and ineffective.

Au: Lees
2002a or b?

This chapter explores these themes in more detail and is structured as follows. First, the positions of each party on Europe are set out briefly in a historical context, including those instances in which the party or a faction thereof problematized the issue of Europe as political issue, and in more depth on the basis of each parties' 2002 election manifestos (where possible with particular emphasis on those issues flagged in Figure 2.2). The analysis is sequenced on a

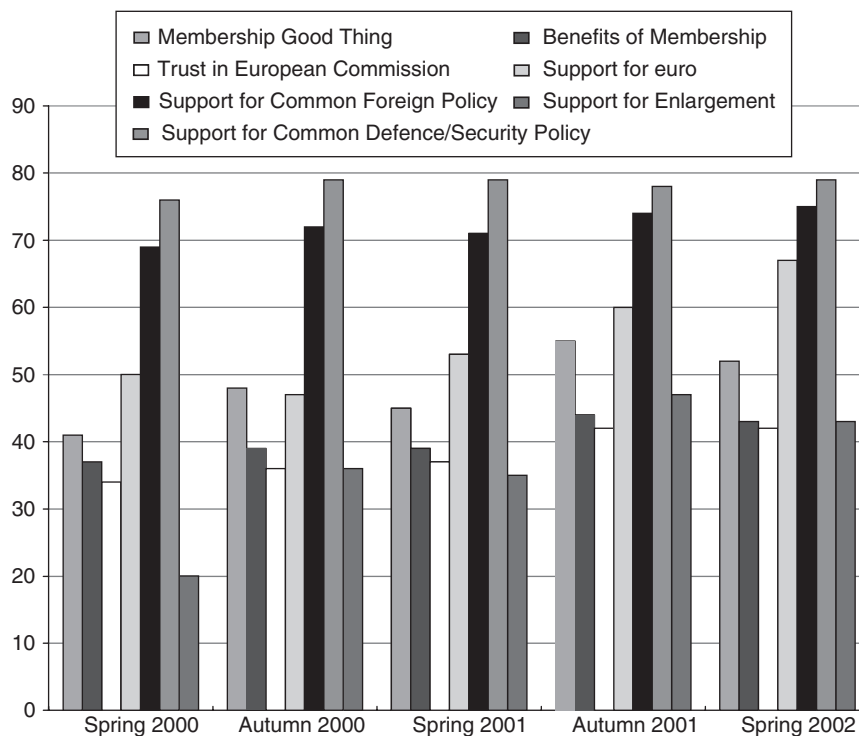


Figure 2.2. Breakdown of German support for specific aspects of EU membership—2000–02

Source: Eurobarometer 53, 54, 55, 56, 57

left-to-right basis: in other words the PDS, the Greens, the Social Democrats, the Free Democrats, the CDU/CSU, the ‘Schill Party’, the Republicans, the German People’s Union (Deutsche Volksunion—DVU), and the National Party of Germany (Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands—NPD). Finally, the chapter concludes with a review of the parties’ positions and assesses the future prospects for Eurosceptic strategies within the German party system.

2.2 THE PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

As the successors of the former ruling Socialist Unity Party of East Germany (SED), the PDS attracted opprobrium. In the past, labels such as ‘ex-Stasi’, the ‘Eastern League’, the ‘nostalgic association’, or even ‘Red Polished Fascists’ have been used to attack the party. Paradoxically, this appears to have helped the party as much as hindered them. The party’s success in entering the Bundestag following

the October 1994 elections was evidence that it had consolidated its status somewhere between that of an 'Eastern party of protest' (Lees 1995: 150–4) and an eastern catch-all party. Subsequent *Land* (regional) elections—especially their spectacular result in the October 1995 Berlin poll (where they became the biggest party in the east of the city with 36.3 per cent of the votes cast), together with their more recent participation in *Land*-level coalitions with the Social Democrats (so-called 'Red-Red' coalitions), meant that by the mid-1990s the PDS's position was relatively secure. Although the territorial dimension to the party's support gives it the potential to become a significant player at the national level, its poor showing in the 2002 Bundestag elections—in which the party polled 4 per cent (down from 5.1 per cent in 1998)—wiped out its parliamentary faction and reduced its Bundestag representation to just two directly elected members or Mitglieder des Bundestages (MDBs). This result casts doubt on the party's long-term prospects, although it still exercises influence over national politics via the second chamber (the Bundesrat), which is made up of representatives from *Land* governments.

In programmatic terms, the PDS remains opportunistic and oriented towards the East. The party sees itself as having been part of the *reform* (as opposed to opposition) movement in the former German Democratic Republic and has not explicitly rejected the aims of the former regime. It opposes what it regards as the Westernization and material and cultural dominance of capital, as represented by the 'West German' political settlement, and is in favour of decisive social change through both strong parliamentary representation and extra-parliamentary means. Therefore, it is logical that the party has developed a sustained critique of the European consensus within the Federal Republic. It has been a consistent critic of both the terms and, on occasion, the principle of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) project. More recently, attempts by the EU to forge a common position on European defence and security policy has led to the party adopting consistently 'sceptical' positions on issues such as participation by the German military in out-of-area operations, and outright opposition to the EU's stance on the Kosovo crisis and what it regards as EU backing for US action in Afghanistan.

Au: Is the expansion of EMU correct?

Perhaps inevitably, given the territorial nature of the PDS' support and political strategy, much of the party's European policy is embedded within a domestic—and primarily 'Eastern German'—political discourse. Very little space was given to European issues in the party's 2002 manifesto and those references that were included in it, by and large, dealt with the issue in a cursory and/or polemical manner rather than spelt it out in any great detail. In as far as the party's European policy proposals dealt directly with the issues flagged in Figure 2.2, they were as follows.

First, in terms of the benefits of EU membership, with the exception of a brief passage on the benefits of eastward enlargement (see below), the PDS's position was a critical one. Much was made of the EU's internationalist ideals, but what might be called 'real existing integration' was sharply criticized for being undemocratic and too pro-business (PDS 2002:8–25).

With regard to the European Commission and other EU institutions, the PDS's position was that the EU's institutional framework is fundamentally undemocratic and lacks transparency. The key reform that the party put forward was the strengthening of the European Parliament (EP), in order to give the peoples of Europe more decision-making influence (*Einflussmöglichkeiten*). In particular, the party proposed a strengthening of the EP's co-decision powers and a new right of policy initiation along the lines of that enjoyed by the Commission. The manifesto also demanded the development of the idea of a 'European citizenship' (how this is to be achieved is not specified), to operate alongside national citizenships—and the incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights into a new constitutional settlement (PDS 2002: 18–19).

Interestingly, no mention was made of the euro in the PDS's election manifesto. Paradoxically, however, for a party with such a strong Eastern German focus, the manifesto went into some depth in discussing the EU's proposed Common Foreign Policy and Common Defence and Security Policy. The document argued for strong regional cooperation, including enhancing links with the countries of the former Soviet Union, in order to offset the effects of globalization. The party naturally regarded the European left as being in the vanguard of this process, which would bring about 'a Europe of democracy and solidarity'. The document also raised the spectre of a more militaristic Europe, and argued that the EU must become a strong 'civil power', operating within established international frameworks such as the United Nations (UN). Interestingly, the party also argued that Europe must begin to challenge the USA in the areas of disarmament, environmental reform, and the introduction of an International Court of Justice (PDS 2002: 24–5).

Finally, because of eastern Germany's proximity to Poland and the Czech Republic, the eastward enlargement of the EU was regarded primarily in terms of its domestic economic and political impact. The manifesto welcomed enlargement because it was seen as representing a 'new chance for East Germany' (*Ost Deutschland*—note the terminology used here), not least because it would serve to shift the region from the edge of the EU to its centre. However, the manifesto also made it clear that the party felt that enlargement would only work for the region if matched by more public spending by Berlin and Brussels to improve infrastructure and human capital. EU's structural policy was singled out for specific criticism, with the manifesto claiming that too much emphasis had been put on the idea of Trans-European Networks at the expense of local infrastructure. In as far as the renewal of 'traditional links' with the neighbouring countries of the former Warsaw Pact were welcomed, this was entirely in the context of the possible advantages for eastern Germany. It was also balanced by warnings that eastern Germany might suffer by becoming a 'transit route' between western Germany and the new markets in the new member states (PDS 2002: 8–9).

Taken in the round, the PDS's election manifesto did not afford a particularly high level of salience to 'European' issues and, where they were mentioned, they were generally subsumed into other topics. In addition, with the exception of

the party's proposed reforms of the EU's institutional arrangements, they were not dealt with in any real detail. Moreover, the issue of the euro was ignored completely (perhaps because it was a *fait accompli*). Nevertheless, in so far as it was spelt out, the party's position was critical of key aspects of European integration including EMU. Thus, the party's position broadly conforms to that of Soft Euroscepticism.

2.3 THE GREENS

Of all the European ecology parties, the German Greens have been the most successful and the best documented.¹ Despite the short-term failure of the West German Greens to enter the Bundestag following the 1990 all-German elections, the party's continuing success has convinced most observers that they are here to stay. In the early 1990s, Raschke and Schmidt-Beck estimated their 'core' potential electorate to be around 5 per cent, with an additional 'fringe' potential electorate of around 8 per cent (of which they could count upon about a third voting Green consistently) (Bürklin and Roth 1993:163–5). Such high levels of potential support mean that the party will almost certainly continue scaling the Federal Republic's 5 per cent electoral barrier for parliamentary representation. Indeed, in the 2002 Bundestag elections the Greens actually polled 8.6 per cent of the vote (up from 6.7 per cent in 1998).

Programmatically, the Greens were originally very much what the former Social Democrat Chancellor Willy Brandt called 'the Social Democratic Party's lost children' (Markovits and Gorski 1993: 81), providing a political home for those both inside and outside the Social Democrats with left/libertarian value orientations that this party failed to cater for. However, the Greens have made the transformation decisively from an explicitly 'anti-party party' to a player within the political mainstream. This shift is reflected in the party's attitude towards European integration, especially since forming government with the Social Democrats in 1998. The stance of Green Party's Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer is now at least as pro-European as that of his predecessors. In the otherwise cordial coalition negotiations between the Greens and the Social Democrats, following the 2002 Bundestag elections, he fought hard against Gerhard Schröder to prevent 'European' issues being stripped out of his Ministry's remit and hived off to a new 'Minister for Europe' (*Die Welt*, 16/10/02).

Unlike the PDS, the Greens' 2002 election manifesto did include a specific section dedicated to the EU. Interestingly, however, this was not very long and did not go into any great detail.

In terms of the benefits of EU membership, the Greens' manifesto made it clear that the party regarded EU membership as a good thing. In terms of benefits the Greens saw the EU as the platform from which the party's long-standing ideological objectives—international peace and cooperation, social justice, environmental protection and development, and the protection of the 'European social

model'—could be achieved. Nevertheless, the Greens were critical of the EU's lack of democratic accountability and transparency, as well as its failure to allow Turkey to join the accession countries (see below) (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen 2002: 83–6).

With regard to the European Commission and other EU institutions, the Greens argued for a 'Europe of democracy and solidarity' (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen 2002: 83) and regarded the EP as being the most appropriate vehicle for achieving this. In this sense they were very close to the position adopted by the PDS. The Greens' manifesto argued that the EP's powers should be enhanced, and include the right to elect the Commission President. In addition, it was argued that there should be a new EU Constitution, which should be voted on in a Europe-wide referendum (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen 2002: 84).

No mention was made of the euro in the Greens' manifesto but, again like the PDS, the Greens took a highly idealistic stance towards the EU's proposed Common Foreign Policy and Common Defence and Security Policy. Like the PDS, the Greens argued against the militarization of the EU and for a strategy of civil power. Moreover, the manifesto stated that in order to reduce the influence of the member states' national interests, the EP and Commission should assume primary responsibility for these policy areas. The manifesto argued that the creation of a European Rapid Reaction Force should not be seen as the first step to the creation of a 'European Superpower' (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen 2002: 85).

Finally, on the topic of the eastward enlargement of the EU, the Greens regarded this as an historic opportunity to overcome the division of Europe. The manifesto argued for a quick conclusion and ratification of the enlargement treaty, with the aim of allowing voters in the accession countries to take part in the 2004 EP elections. Moreover, the Greens argued that Turkey should be given some kind of 'perspective' on integration (*Integrationsperspektive*) as soon as its human- and minority-rights record allowed (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen 2002: 85).

To sum up, the Greens' position on Europe was qualitatively different from that of the PDS. Although the concerns it raised about the democratic deficit and the potential for militarism were similar ones, it accepted in principle the key policy areas associated with the European integration process, such as EMU. In addition, even where similarities existed between the two parties' positions, they were different in terms of tone and discourse. This raises the issue of the importance of discourse in adding nuance and meaning to policy positions, which is discussed further in the conclusion.

2.4 THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The SDP is, along with the CDU, one of the Federal Republic's two *Volksparteien* ('people's party' or catch-all party). The party's origins can be found in the failed revolutionary fervour of 1848. The party first came to power at the end of the First World War, and played a major role in a number of coalition governments during the Weimar era before being suppressed under the Nazis. Following the

defeat of Hitler in 1945, the party was able to remobilize, initially under the aegis of all the occupying powers. However, in the Soviet zones it was forcibly merged with the German Communist Party (KPD) in 1946. Thereafter, the SDP was a party exclusively of the Federal Republic. At this time the party remained in many respects a Marxist-inspired party of the non-communists left. However, it slowly came to terms with the post-war settlement, the division of Germany, and the 'social market economy', culminating in the Bad Godesberg conference of 1959, where the party adopted a new draft of policies. The party has enjoyed two periods in government: first, between 1966 and 1982 (in coalition first with the Christian Democrats and then the Free Democrats), and second, since 1998 (in coalition with the Greens).

Programmatically, the Social Democrats' acceptance of the Federal Republic's political economy has meant an acceptance of the European orthodoxy as well. However, this was a gradual process and in the early years the party remained relatively hostile to the European integration process. As Haas observes, this was especially pronounced with regard to the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty ratification process, in which 'every aspect of the Treaty was subjected to bitter criticism', with particular opprobrium reserved for the 'dictatorial and capitalist-dominated High Authority' (Haas 1958: 131). In addition, the party feared that European integration would set back what was still its goal of a unified and neutral Germany (Haas 1958: 131–8). However, from 1955 onwards the party's position became increasingly pro-European and, during the 1970s, two Social Democrat Chancellors—Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt—oversaw Germany's rise to become the undisputed core country within the European Communities. This was underlined by the German mark's position as the anchor currency in the European Monetary System.

Despite the SDP's historical acceptance of the European project, it did once more flirt with a Eurosceptical policy position in the run-up to the March 1996 state elections in Baden-Württemberg, which took place during a period of high issue salience for the topic of EMU. The party was encouraged by opinion poll data that showed that as much as 80 per cent of the population harboured doubts about the stability of the European currency (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15/11/95), and attempted to mobilize around this discontent during the election campaign in the state. The state party's candidate for Minister-President, Dieter Spöri—in a strategy encouraged by the party's national leadership—questioned the timing and scope of the EMU process. He argued for a delay of at least five years and, in the meantime, a reintroduction of narrow currency fluctuation margins within the European Monetary System. Furthermore, Spöri cast doubt on the advisability of going ahead with EMU without the UK being on board (*Südwest-Presse*, 11/01/96).

Many observers believed that the state party would benefit from making EMU a campaign issue but, in the event, Spöri's criticisms of the process failed to make a positive impact. In the *Land* elections, the party's share of the vote dropped from 29.5 per cent to 25.1 per cent. Analyses of the elections indicate that voters regarded the party's stance on EMU as inconsistent and opportunistic, and only

the far right Republican party, which had consistently opposed EMU, benefited from raising it as an issue (Rheinhardt 1997).

The Social Democrats' position on Europe can be described as one of enlightened self-interest—summed up in the phrase 'we belong to Europe and Europe belongs to us. . . [but] . . . Germany remains our homeland' (SPD 2002: 14). By and large, the party's manifesto position was an intergovernmentalist one, with the exception of its support for enhancing the power of the EP (see below). However, even this can be interpreted in 'national interest' terms, given that Germany returns the most members of European Parliament (MEPs) to the EP.

In terms of the benefits of EU membership, much was made of the European project as a vehicle for mutual security and cooperation, but this was balanced by a discourse of national interest(s) and the 'weight' of Germany's 'voice'. Crucially, the EU was portrayed in the manifesto as a counterweight to (or constraint upon) globalization—in the Jospin/Lafontaine tradition, rather than the Blairite vision of using the EU in order to adapt to globalization. In particular, much was made of the need to preserve the European Social Model at the European level (SPD 2002: 11–17).

The Social Democrats' attitude towards the European Commission and other EU institutions was that they must be 'democratically legitimate and politically efficient'. Two (interconnected) areas were flagged in the manifesto. First, the need to establish a European Constitution—including the incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the redrawing of competencies between different levels of governance—and, second, the enhancement of the powers of the EP, to include the election of the Commission President (SPD 2002: 16–17).

Unlike the PDS and the Greens, the Social Democrats did address the issue of the euro briefly, arguing that 'the Euro strengthens Europe and enhances the stability of world financial system, from which all domestic economies profit'. At the same time, however, this was balanced by a vaguely worded passage calling for more 'consultation' between the European Central Bank (ECB), business/trade union interests (*Tarifvertragsparteien*), and member state governments. This was obviously a pointer to Germany's dissatisfaction with the rules governing the ECB's monetary policy set out in the EU's Stability Pact (SPD 2002: 15).

Like the party's Green coalition partners, the Social Democrats were very positive about developing a 'European' foreign and security policy identity. However, at the same time the party's 2002 manifesto clearly states that this had to be regarded as being complementary to the transatlantic alliance with the USA, which remained 'the foundation of European security'. Unlike the Greens, the Social Democrats placed North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) at the core of Germany's foreign policy interests. In addition, the party argued for the creation of a common European border police to defend the Union against 'organized crime and illegal immigration' (SPD 2002: 15–16).

In terms of eastward enlargement of the EU, the Social Democrats, like the Greens, were positive, albeit framing this within a discourse that focussed more on tangible domestic benefits (bigger markets, more jobs). Unlike the Greens,

however, the Social Democrats' manifesto stressed the need to maintain 'sensible' transition policies such as the seven-year constraints on the free movement of labour and services between most of the EU and its new member states (SPD 2002: 16).

The Social Democrats' position towards Europe was, therefore, more pragmatic than idealistic. Much was made of national interest(s) and the domestic benefits of EU integration. As such, the party's position was qualitatively different from that of its Green coalition partners. At the same time, however, the party was defending or advocating policies/positions that were meant to become common 'Red-Green' coalition policy. So, to sum up, the party's position remained part of the pro-European consensus.

2.5 THE FREE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The FDP is the liberal party of the Federal Republic of Germany. However some observers have, on the strength of content analysis of party documents, assigned the party a position to the right of the CDU/CSU (Budge and Keman 1990). This an artefact of the history of the FDP, which was the first German liberal party to achieve a modus operandi between the two conflicting wings—social and economic/national—of German liberalism. This tension was apparent in the early years of the European integration process. For instance, although the party eventually ratified the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty, there was considerable internal disagreement over its provisions and the impact they would have on the German national interest. Moreover, in the late 1950s, the party temporarily rediscovered its misgivings about the European integration process, which it regarded as being antithetical to the goal of German unification (Haas 1958: 135).

The tension between the two wings of the Free Democrats has a territorial dimension, with the progressives better represented in the south-western *Länder* and the Hansa city-states, and the national-liberal wing strongest in the *Länder* of Hesse, Lower Saxony, and North-Rhine Westphalia (the party is still weak in the former East Germany). The North-Rhine Westphalia party, in particular, has a disproportionate impact on national politics. In the run-up to the 2002 Bundestag elections, state party boss Jürgen Möllemann raised the temperature of the campaign with a number of pro-Arab and, some argued, anti-Semitic pronouncements. In the elections, the party polled 7.4 per cent of the vote. This was up from 6.2 per cent in 1998, but nowhere near the party's stated target of 18 per cent.

Despite the dissenting voices who put the Free Democrats to the right of the Christian Democrats, most observers have regarded the party's programme as a centrist one, in keeping with the its role as the 'pivot' party in the process of coalition formation (Padgett 1993; Pappi 1994). This moderation has extended to the party's European policy, not least because under both Social Democrat and

Christian Democrat-led coalitions, the party has provided the foreign minister. The party's 'insider' status regarding Europe, combined with working within the constraints of the Chancellor's 'guidelines competences' (*Richtlinienkompetenz*) has meant that it has had a stake in maintaining the continuity of Germany's stance on European issues. However with the entry of the Greens and the Party of Democratic Socialism into the national party system during the 1980s and early 1990s, the Free Democrats' pivotal status has been reduced and the party has become part of the Christian Democrat-dominated right wing 'bloc' in a predominantly two-bloc system (Lees 2001). But as long as the Christian Democrats remain pro-European in outlook there is little sense for the Free Democrats to change their stance on Europe at the national level, although individual state parties may do so.

Au: Lees
2001a or b?

As already noted, the Free Democrats have a great deal of foreign policy competence. It is not, therefore, surprising that the party's manifesto has the longest and most detailed section on European issues (FDP 2000: 78–82).

Au: EDP 2000
not available
in the
reference list.
Please provide.

In terms of the benefits of EU membership, the Free Democrats were pro-European in tone, as would be expected from such an 'insider' party. At the same time, the 2002 manifesto was critical about some aspects of the Union—particularly the functioning of its institutions and the failure to complete some aspects of the Single Market Programme (see below). By and large the benefits of membership were framed in commercial terms.

The Free Democrats' manifesto position on European institutional arrangements was explicitly federalist. The manifesto argued that the existing institutional configuration was no longer adequate and a new constitution—setting out the division of competences between different tiers of governance—was required. The party argued that the Charter of Fundamental Rights should form the foundation of such a constitution, and that the final document should be voted on in a referendum (although it was not made clear whether this would be Europe-wide or national in nature). In addition, the party argued for more powers for the EP, particularly in the field of Justice and Home Affairs. This would be matched by an enhancement of the power of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) (FPD 2002: 79–81).

The euro was only mentioned in a substantive way in relation to the liberalization of European markets. The manifesto argued that the euro is not in itself a solution to Europe's structural problems and would only work in the context of Europe-wide supply-side reforms (FPD 2002: 81).

With regard to a Common Foreign Policy and Common Defence and Security Policy, the Free Democrats regarded the EU as the appropriate platform to build what it referred to as a 'value-oriented' (*werteorientierte*) or ethical foreign policy, but little detail was provided. Interestingly, more emphasis was placed upon defence and security policy. There were two strands to this. First, the party manifesto welcomed the creation of the Rapid Reaction Force, which was regarded as being complementary to NATO and the transatlantic alliance. Ultimately, the Rapid Reaction Force was seen as the precursor to a combined European Defence Force under a unified command structure. Second, these developments were again

seen in commercial terms, with the standardization of military equipment leading to co-ordinated Europe-wide defence-related production and research and development (FPD 2002: 80).

The Free Democrats regarded eastward enlargement as a historic opportunity to overcome the division of Europe, but argued that this had to be the catalyst for reform of EU institutions, as well as the Common Agricultural Policy and Structural funds. Finally, in keeping with the party's neo-liberal instincts, it criticized the transitional restrictions on the movement of labour and services between existing and new member states (FPD 2002: 79–80).

To sum up, the Free Democrats' position on European integration was positive and it espoused a federalist solution to the increasing complexity of European governance. The 2002 manifesto went into a marked degree of detail, arguing for more power for the EP and ECJ. At the same time, however, the document eschewed the kind of idealistic rhetoric found in the Greens' and Christian Democrats' manifestos. Rather, the party's position was a pragmatic one that stressed the opportunities presented by integration for German business and consumers. The party was clearly in favour of more commercial and personal freedom. This represented a successful synthesis of two—the economic and the social—of the three often competing ideological strands within German liberalism. It gave the party's European position a different tone from that found in the other parties' manifestos. Nevertheless, in substantive terms the party's position on European integration was firmly one of pro-European orthodoxy.

2.6 THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION/CHRISTIAN SOCIAL UNION

The particular circumstances of occupied Germany in the period 1945–9 were crucial in determining the character of the CDU and its Bavarian sister party the CSU. The immediate post-war years saw a widespread rejection of narrow bourgeois conservatism, because of its failure to counter fascism in the 1930s. For the same reason, there was some recognition that confessional parties, such as the Catholic *Zentrum*, had also conspicuously failed to hold the middle ground during the period of the Weimar Republic. The two parties were, therefore, explicitly set up as broadly based 'catch-all' parties. Because of its national status, the CDU can be described as a fully fledged *Volkspartei*. However, although the CSU performs a similar role in Bavaria, in national terms it is considered to be a regional party. The two parties operate within a single parliamentary group (*Fraktion*) in the Bundestag. In 2002, the Christian Democrats polled 29.5 per cent of the votes (up from 28.4 per cent in 1998) and the CSU 9 per cent (up from 6.7 per cent).

Programmatically, the two parties have common policy principles with their sister parties which can be identified as a specific Christian-Democratic 'mix'. First, they share a broad commitment to such 'Christian' values—based on

Catholic social theory—regarding basic human rights, individual freedom, and the primacy of the family. Second, they support the liberal conception of democracy. Finally, they espouse an integrative function. This integrative function takes place both nationally, through the *Volkspartei* principle, and internationally through the processes of European integration. The two parties have, therefore, been the most pro-European of all the mainstream parties, although different factions within them have had different rationales for this position. As Haas points out, the Christian Democrats' initial enthusiasm for the European project was not just informed by the 'trptych of self-conscious anti-Nazism, Christian values and dedication to European unity as a means of redemption for past German sins'. It was also motivated by the desire to shake off some of the burden of Allied oversight of German affairs, including the abolition of the International Ruhr Authority, and to establish a free trade area in Europe. Politicians such as the party's Finance Minister Ludwig Erhard confidently—and, as it turned out, rightly expected German industry to dominate such a free trade area (Haas 1958: 127–8).

The CDU/CSU's long pro-European tradition notwithstanding, there have been instances when both parties have taken a more critical stance on Europe. For the Christian Democrats, the most recent example took place in 1996 and involved the dominant faction of the state party in Saxony. In June 1996, the European Commission declared that the decision of the Christian Democrat-governed state to grant a subsidy of DM779 million to Volkswagen, which operated a plant in the town of Mosel, was illegal under EU competition law. This prompted Minister-President Kurt Biedenkopf to issue a legal challenge to the decision (Sächsisches Staatskanzlei 1996). The issue was finally resolved but generated much resentment about a perceived encroachment on the rights of the German states. It is also interesting to note that when the terms and conditions of EMU were being ratified by the Bundesrat in 1998, Saxony was the only German state that abstained in the vote (all the others voted in favour)—indicating that the state government still resented what it regarded as interference from Brussels. In the end, however, Biedenkopf's defiance of Brussels was of limited importance because it did not involve the national party (indeed, the then Christian Democrat Chancellor Helmut Kohl put enormous pressure on Biedenkopf to back down over the dispute).

A more significant example of a coherent 'sceptic' agenda can be seen in the CSU state party in Bavaria. At the national level, the party's self-ascribed role is as a 'conservative corrective' to both the CDU's moderate wing and also, prior to the CDU/CSU-Free Democrat coalition losing power in 1998, to the influence of the liberal Free Democrats. However, the real centre of gravity within the party lies at the state level, where the CSU pushes a more aggressively 'Bavarian' and 'nationalist' agenda (Sutherland 2001: 29). This Bavarian agenda mobilizes around the state's sense of 'otherness' within the Federal Republic as well as resentment at the level of fiscal transfers between rich and poor states. Interestingly, in recent years, Minister-President Edmund Stoiber has reacted to the ongoing Europeanization of policymaking in the Federal Republic by developing a

Au: This reference is not available in the reference list. Please provide.

'Bavarian' position on some of the key areas of the European project as well. The catalyst for this development was the post-1989 transformation of Central and Eastern Europe, and was underpinned by two elements of *realpolitik*. The first was the need to stabilize the region and enhance Bavaria's 'security', in the face of possible upheaval in Central and Eastern Europe. The second element was to use the issue of enlargement to reform of the EU itself and, in particular, constrain what was regarded as Brussels interventionism. Over the course of the 1990s, this discourse developed to the point that it has been described as 'an anti-interventionist position that has come close at times to UK-style Euroscepticism' (Jeffery and Collins 1998: 91). However, in later years Stoiber moderated his state's position on these issues, in order to position himself for his bid to become German Chancellor in 2002.

The CDU/CSU is one of the historical architects of European integration. As a result, its position has been the most pro-European of the major parties. At the same time, the party has had to react to public unease about Germany's position as the paymaster of the Union and a more general sense that Germany should exert more influence within it. The tension between these two positions is clear in the Christian Democrats' 2002 manifesto (CDU 2000: 64–7).

In terms of the benefits of EU membership, the CDU/CSU manifesto made it clear that the EU was a good thing, stating that 'the unification of Europe is the most valuable legacy of the Twentieth Century'. At the same time, the manifesto argued that the Union had to be 'more fairly' financed by reforming the EU's system of structural funds and reducing the burden on German taxpayers. Germany's influence within Europe, which the parties argued has waned under the Schröder administration, was also to be enhanced. The manifesto also stressed that the German language—which, it pointed out, is the native tongue for more Europeans than any other language—should be given official status within the Union (see below) (CDU 2000: 64–6).

The CDU/CSU's position on the European institutions was more critical than was the case in the time of Helmut Kohl's leadership, and closer to the position that Stoiber had spelled out in Bavaria. The manifesto argued that in order to 'strengthen the legitimacy' of the institutions, the European Council had to share its legal and budgetary powers with the EP. Moreover, each member state's share of EP seats should more accurately reflect its population, thus increasing Germany's share. In addition, as already noted, the manifesto argued that member state budget contributions should be recalculated, based on each nation's GDP. Finally, the parties' manifesto argued for a new EU constitution, based on the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which would set out the competences of each tier of governance. The responsibilities of the EU, the document argued, 'must be clear, transparent, and *limited*' (my emphasis) (CDU 2002: 65–66).

The euro was mentioned early in the manifesto's European section, and CDU/CSU took credit for its creation and for the Stability Pact that accompanied it. In contrast to the Social Democrats, the CDU/CSU defended the Stability Pact and argued that the independence of the ECB was all-important (CDU 2002: 64).

Apart from a segment on the eastward enlargement of the EU there was very little of substantive importance in the CDU/CSU manifesto on either a Common Foreign Policy or Common Defence and Security Policy. However, the segment on enlargement struck a delicate balance between an 'idealistic' European discourse ('enlargement as an historic opportunity') and a more realist discourse of national interest. In particular, the issue of enlargement was linked to the rights of ethnic Germans in the accession countries, as well as the legacy of those Germans expelled from former German territories following the Second World War (particularly the Sudetenland, Silesia, and East Prussia). Finally, the manifesto defended the system of transitional controls on the movement of labour from accession countries put in place mainly at German behest over the past few years.

Thus, to sum up, there was an inherent tension in the CDU/CSU's position on European issues, as spelt out in their 2002 manifesto. The manifesto made much of the benefits of European integration but balanced this with more assertive passages about the German language, Germany's representation in the EP, and the rights of ethnic Germans. However, whether this represented a new 'turn' in the parties' position on Europe or was due more to the influence of Stoiber and the CSU in this particular campaign remains to be seen. So, for the time being, the parties' position on European integration remains firmly at one with the pro-European consensus.

2.7 THE RIGHT-WING FRINGE PARTIES

At the level of national politics in Germany, there are no 'relevant' parties to the right of the CDU/CSU. This is the result of what was, and remains, a key strategic aim of the Christian Democrats who, from the Adenauer era onwards, have tried to absorb competitor parties on the political right (Klingemann and Volkens 1992: 190). As a result, although the Christian Democrats are flanked by right-wing parties, these have not posed a serious electoral threat to them at the national level of politics². Nevertheless, these right-wing fringe parties—ranging from the populist 'Schill-party' through to the extreme right-wing National Democratic Party—remain an irritant within German party politics and their positions on Europe are worthy of note.

The most moderate of the flanking parties is the Rule of Law State Offensive Party (Partei Rechtsstaatlicher Offensive, or PRO), also known as the 'Schill Party', because it emerged as a vehicle for the populist lawyer Ronald Schill. Schill came to national prominence in the late 1990s as a result of a hard-hitting campaign, based around the themes of law and order and zero tolerance of crime, in his native city-state of Hamburg. From 2000 onwards, the Schill Party made tentative moves to become a political force at the national level but failed to make any impact during the 2002 Bundestag elections. In 2003, Schill lost his post as Interior Minister in Hamburg and was expelled from his own party following a series

of political scandals. In so far as the party's current electoral programme has a position on European integration, it is subsumed into a discourse of law and order, centred on domestic politics. No mention is made of the key themes of the benefits of EU membership, EU institutions, the euro, eastward enlargement, etc. In fact, the EU is only mentioned twice in the party's programme. First, the EU is blamed for imposing an unfair quota of asylum seekers and refugees on Germany following the collapse of the former Yugoslavia (PRO 2003: 120). More constructively, however, it also argues that the EU is the appropriate forum for the resolution of the asylum issue and the agreement of a common policy between European states (PRO 2003: 13). Second, the EU is mentioned as an arena for furthering the interests of Hamburg (PRO 2003: 13). In both of these instances, the tone of the document is one of pragmatism rather than an explicitly 'pro-European' one. Beyond specific references to the EU, the idea of 'European culture' is mentioned once, but only in terms of denigrating the supposedly non-European culture of the 'criminal foreigners' that the party claims are the biggest threat to law and order in Germany (PRO 2003: 20). In addition, Eastern Europe is only mentioned once, in relation to what is seen as the region's role in the illegal traffic of refugees from the developing world (PRO 2003: 10). Taken in the round, the party's position on Europe is indistinct but it is certainly not an active supporter of the European project in the way that the Greens, Social Democrats, Free Democrats, and Christian Democrats broadly are. Nevertheless, it is not Eurosceptic either and therefore for taxonomical purposes its position on Europe is probably best classified as being (just) within the Euro-orthodox camp.

To the right of the Schill Party is the Republican Party (*Die Republikaner*). The Republican Party was founded in Munich in 1983 by ex members of the CSU, who had left the party in protest at the decision of its then leader, Franz Josef Strauß, to agree to substantial loans to the East German government. The leadership of the new party was shared between three individuals, Franz Handlos, Ekkehard Voigt, and Franz Schönhuber. The party's original programme was broadly conservative in tone and, although it argued for Germany to act more in its national interest, essentially pro-EU integration. However, during the 1980s Schönhuber gradually became ascendant within the party, the Republican's ideological profile shifted further to the right, and its position on Europe became more hostile. The party enjoyed a spate of relatively good electoral performances in the late 1980s but went into decline in the 1990s. In contrast to the Schill Party, the Republicans' 2002 federal party programme gave a high level of salience to European issues and was deeply hostile to many aspects of the integration project. The document dedicated an entire section, entitled 'Europe of Fatherlands', to the question of the EU and stated unequivocally that the party 'say(s) yes to Europe but no to this EU' (Republikaner 2002: 10). The programme went on to assert that 'Europe's strength lies in its diversity' and that therefore the EU should be no more than an alliance of sovereign states, in which national law takes precedence over the *aquis communautaire*. The 'Christian character' of Europe (*Christlichen Abendlandes*) was also put centre stage (Republikaner 2002: 10). Specific proposals included: a

Au: PRO 2003 is not available in the reference list. Please provide.

Au: Republikaner 2002 is not available in the reference list. Please provide.

referendum on continued membership, a limit on German contributions to the EU budget, the dismantling of much of the EU bureaucracy, the 'repatriation' of key policy areas such as agriculture, the blocking of eastern enlargement until the Benes and Bierut decrees are declared null and void, an absolute veto on any future Turkish membership, Germany's withdrawal from the Eurozone, and the reinstatement of the mark (Republikaner 2002: 10–11). In short, although the Republicans stopped short of advocating that Germany leave the EU in outright terms, the implications of the party's proposals meant that in practical terms that is exactly what they were proposing. As such, the Republican Party's position on Europe can be classified as being one of Hard Euroscepticism.

Also on the far right of German party politics, the DVU was founded in 1971—again in Munich—by Gerhard Frey. Frey originally intended the DVU to be a cross-party alliance of right-wing conservatives stretching from the right wing of the Christian Democrats to the more extreme right-wing National Democratic Party. Over time, however, Frey transformed the DVU into a party in its own right and moved it to a position clearly to the right of the Christian Democrats. The party's ideology is at the very least ultraconservative, with a tendency to blame what it would consider to be 'un-German' groups (such as foreigners, Jews, or left-wingers) for social problems such as unemployment. Unlike the Republicans, in the party's latest (2003) and rather vague programme, the DVU did not afford a high level of salience to the EU. Nevertheless, in the two sections of the document where it was mentioned the tone was generally hostile. In the first section, called 'defending German interests', the party castigated mainstream politicians for trying to dissolve Germany into what it saw as a multinational state (DVU 2003: 2). In addition the party argued that Foreign and Defence policy should remain a prerogative of member states alone. Finally, like the Republicans, the DVU argued for Germany's withdrawal from the usage of euro and the restoration of the mark (DVU 2003: 2). In the second section, called 'securing pensions and social provision', the party argued that German contributions to the EU should be reduced as part of a general programme of withdrawal from Germany's international financial commitments. In addition, Germany should regain control over agricultural policy and move away from what it called the 'EU mass production' model of agriculture (DVU 2003: 4–5). Thus, although the party was far less detailed in its proposals than those put forward by the Republicans, they are essentially the same in spirit in their consequences for Germany's continued membership of the EU. As a result, its stance on European integration can also be classified as one of Hard Euroscepticism.

Finally, at the far right of the party spectrum is the oldest of the extant far right parties, the NPD. The NPD was founded in Hanover in 1964 as result of the collapse of the ultraconservative German Reich Party. It enjoyed some prominence during the economic downturn of the mid-1960s but even then failed to scale the 5 per cent electoral hurdle in the 1965 Bundestag elections. During the 1970s and 1980s, the party operated on the fringe of the German party systems, often in alliance with the DVU. However, in the 1990s, the party underwent a process of radicalization and adopted a new strategy that included extra-parliamentary

action and developing close links with the skinhead scene and other neo-Nazi milieus. As a result, the Social Democrat–Green Federal government tried unsuccessfully to ban the party. The recent statements of the party’s position on European integration are its two manifestos for the 1999 elections to the EP and the 2002 Bundestag elections. A comparison of the two documents reveals that, with one interesting exception, the party’s position on Europe has remained consistent throughout the period in question. The key themes in both documents were hostility to the euro and to freedom of movement within the EU, both of which the NPD regarded as being against the interests of the German people (NPD 1999, 2002). The party’s 1999 European election programme also promised to stop the Agenda 2000 process and eastward enlargement (NPD 1999: 8), drastically reduce Germany’s budget contributions (NPD 1999: 11), and block any future Turkish membership of the EU (NPD 1999: 12). The interesting difference between the two documents, however, lies in the party’s changing attitude to the idea of a common European defence policy. Both documents were hostile to what the party saw as US imperialism, but whilst the 1999 programme was hostile to European defence co-operation and argued for a repatriation of defence policy (NPD 1999: 11), the 2002 document argued for a European defence alliance as a bulwark against the USA (NPD 2002: 2). This was not a particularly well thought out or detailed proposal and was most probably included to appeal to the rising tide of anti-US feeling in the Federal Republic in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War. Thus, it reveals the opportunistic nature of much of the German far right’s positions on European integration. To sum up, the party’s position on Europe is broadly consistent with that put forward by the Republicans and the DVU. It is opposed to eastward enlargement, and wants to reverse the Schengen provisions for open borders, restrict the movement of member state citizens within the Union, reduce Germany’s contributions to the budget, and withdrawal from the euro. As such, its position on European integration is to all intents and purposes one of Hard Euroscepticism.

2.8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Table 2.2 provides a typology of party positions on European integration in the Federal Republic of Germany. The ‘national’ positions of parties are in the enclosed cells. Broadly speaking, the position of the mainstream parties at the national level can be defined as ‘European Consensual’. The one exception to this is the PDS, which maintains a Soft Eurosceptic stance. However, the party’s disastrous performance in the 2002 Bundestag elections raises doubts about its future.

The national domain is dominated by the European consensus. But at the sub-national or party-faction level one can see some degree of Soft Euroscepticism beyond that of the PDS, encompassing elements of the Social Democrats’ left-wing, the ‘national-liberal’ faction within the centrist Free Democrats, parts of the

Table 2.2. A typology of party positions on European integration in the Federal Republic of Germany

'European Consensual' Greens	'Soft' Eurosceptic PDS	'Hard' Eurosceptic Republicans DVU NPD
SPD	Elements of SPD left	
FDP	National-Liberal FDP	
CDU/CSU* (PRO)**	Elements of CDU right CSU State Party	

* The CDU and CSU are members of a joint parliamentary faction in the Bundestag and are, therefore, effectively a single party at the Federal level.

** The PRO is in brackets because the lack of salience of the European issue in the party's programme mean that, for taxonomical purposes, it is classed here as being 'European consensual' by default.

CDU's right-wing, and the dominant faction in the CSU's state party organization (led by Minister-President Edmund Stoiber). Finally, a third category encompasses the three far right parties, the VDU, the NPD, and the Republican Party. This third category is less important than that of Soft Euroscepticism, because it is made up of the fringe parties of the right which, although they operate within the domain of national politics, are not represented in the Bundestag. Moreover, such is the power of the European consensus in Germany that even these parties stop short of openly advocating Germany's withdrawal from the EU (although that is the logical consequence of their positions on the key aspects of the integration project).

Returning to the 'national' parties, in so far as they have 'positions' on Europe, they are secondary to, and contingent upon, the parties' wider ideological profiles. One can see some evidence—the Christian Democrats' bullish commitment to promoting the German language for instance—that the parties have tailored manifesto statements on Europe to popular sentiment, but this is very much at the margins. Moreover, as discussed earlier, broad public support for the EU remains buoyant and has even recovered a little since the late 1990s. Consequently, none of the parties problematize the issue of Europe per se, but rather adopt a technocratic discourse and concentrate on particular aspects of European integration. Much of these aspects—such as a Common Foreign Policy and a Common Defence and Security Policy—are supported by up to eight out of ten Germans, and it is perhaps no surprise that none of the mainstream parties chose to go against the grain of popular opinion on these issues.

But where there are issues, such as trust in EU institutions and support for enlargement, that do seem to generate unease amongst the electorate, the parties' manifestos become more engaged and detailed in their analysis. Thus, despite being a long way apart on their overall attitudes to European integration, both parties of the left (the PDS and Greens) find common ground in a critique of existing institutional arrangements and all the parties argue for greater powers for

Limits of Party-Based Euroscepticism in Germany

37

the EP and—in the case of the Free Democrats—the ECJ as well. The Greens criticize the failure to encourage Turkey's bid to join the EU and the Free Democrats do not support the temporary restraints on the movement of services and labour between the EU (except Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Ireland) and accession countries. Nevertheless, by and large all the parties are broadly in favour of eastward enlargement, despite public misgivings.

To sum up, there appear to be limits to the potential impact of party-based Euroscepticism in Germany. There are many reasons for this, including the historical and institutional variables mentioned at the start of this chapter and the pragmatic acceptance that Germany has benefited from 'real existing integration'. Moreover, as already noted, there have been Eurosceptic 'turns' on the part of certain German *Länder*, but the chances of a coherent Eurosceptical agenda emerging at this level of party politics or governance is remote, not least because of the different levels of economic development between individual states and the fact that they have different economic and political agendas. To conclude, ultimately the failure of party-based Euroscepticism in Germany can be attributed to institutional constraints, the low salience of European issues in public opinion, and the fact that the political centre defines the parameters of the European debate—and, with it, the maintenance of the pro-European consensus.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Lees (2000), Scharf (1994), Markovits and Gorski (1993), Kleinert (1992), Hülsberg (1988), Bickerich (1985), Müller (1984), Papadakis (1983), and Mettke 1982.
2. There have been one or two exceptions to this rule at the *Land* level, such as in West Berlin in 1989 when the relative success of the right-wing Republican Party was mainly at the expense of support for the incumbent CDU–Free Democratic Party coalition. This led to the coalition being replaced by a SDU–Green coalition and the Free Democrats failing to scale the city's 5 per cent barrier to representation in the city state's parliament (Lees 2000).