

Nastawienie opinii publicznej wobec przyszłości Unii Europejskiej w Wielkiej Brytanii. Analiza na podstawie zestawienia wyników badań Eurobarometru w Wielkiej Brytanii i w Polsce

Streszczenie

Tematem badawczym niniejszej publikacji jest eurosceptycyzm w Wielkiej Brytanii, opiera się ona na badaniach Eurobarometru, które dotyczyły przyszłości Unii Europejskiej, prowadzonych na przestrzeni pięciu lat. Celem badań jest wykazanie związku pomiędzy wynikami badań Eurobarometru na temat przyszłości UE, a poglądem, że Wielka Brytania jest państwem eurosceptycznym. Głównym pytaniem badawczym jest: czy Wielka Brytania jest sceptycznie nastawiona co do przyszłości UE? Hipoteza potwierdza zadane pytanie i brzmi, że Wielka Brytania jest sceptycznie nastawiona co do przyszłości Unii Europejskiej. W artykule nie są analizowane przyczyny takich postaw. Artykuł jest jedynie próbą przedstawieniem postaw społecznych. użytą metodą badawczą była porównawcza, krytyczna analiza danych ilościowych. Z analizy wynika, że Wielka Brytania nie jest wyróżniająco się eurosceptycznym państwem. Brytyjczycy mają jednak mniej entuzjastyczne poglądy na to co obecnie dzieje się w UE i otwarcie wyrażają większe obawy w kwestii przyszłości UE.

Słowa kluczowe: Unia Europejska, Eurobarometr, eurosceptycyzm, Wielka Brytania

Abstract

The subject of this publication is the scepticism regarding the future of the European Union in the UK. The research is based on Eurobarometer surveys conducted over the period of five years. A purpose of the research is to show the relationship between the results of the Eurobarometer survey on the future of the EU, and the eurosceptic views in the UK. The main research questions is: is the UK sceptical about the future of the EU? Hypothesis of this publication is that the UK is sceptical about the future of the European Union. The reasons for such attitudes are not analysed here – the article is merely an attempt to present the societal attitudes. The research method employed is the comparative critical analysis of quantitative data. The conclusion is that Great Britain is not significantly eurosceptic. British people are, however, less enthusiastic about what is happening at present in the EU, and also are showing greater anxieties when it comes to the future of the EU.

Key words: European Union, Eurobarometer, euroscepticism, United Kingdom

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Public opinion attitudes towards the European Union and its future in the United Kingdom. Study based on the results of Eurobarometer surveys in the UK and Poland

The aim of this essay is to present public opinion attitudes towards the future of the European Union in the United Kingdom. Research is based on Eurobarometer surveys conducted over the period of five years. It is focused on the issue of the future of the European Union and euroscepticism. Data from Eurobarometer surveys conducted between 2009 and 2013 are used. The choice of this period was justified by:

- the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty by the end of 2009, which changed the wording of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community. Essentially no different from the Constitutional Treaty, it introduces changes required for adaptation and modernisation of EU structures and policies to evolving political climate and further enlargement (McCormick 2010: p. 110).
- the sixth EU enlargement: Croatia became a member of the EU on 1 July 2013. This fact can affect the attitudes of the EU citizens.

The choice of countries which are the subject of this article was determined by the difference of their experiences and perceived attitude regarding their membership in the EU. United Kingdom joined to the European Communities in the first enlargement (1973) (Rojek 2010: p. 430) and is generally seen as a eurosceptic country (Grant: WWW). In contrast, Poland is one of the most recent members of the European Union, having joined in 2004 (Jakubowski, Wojtaszczyk 2012: p. 332). Poland as a new EU Member State does not yet have an established opinion about its

membership, but it can be said that it is a relatively enthusiastic state (Jędrzejewska, Ziółkowski 2009: p. 21).

The reasons for such attitudes are not analysed here – the article is merely an attempt to present the societal attitudes in both countries using the comparative method. The focus of the research is the relationship between the results of the Eurobarometer survey on the future of the EU, and the views of euroscepticism in the UK. It is therefore an objective look at the results of the surveys conducted by the Eurobarometer and also comparison of the received data compiled over several years on how these countries see the future of the European Union. This is an important issue, because it shows the citizens' perception of these countries' membership in the EU in a relatively long term. The main research questions of this publication is if the UK is sceptical about the future of the EU. Probable answer to this question and at the same time the hypothesis of this publication is that the UK is in fact sceptical about the future of the European Union. Below, in order to verify the hypothesis, we will discuss responses for the years 2009–2013 for ten selected questions posed to the respondents by the Eurobarometer.

Table 1: Answers for the years 2009–2013 to the question “Having heard about the priorities of the EU, do you think that the EU is going in the right direction or in the wrong direction to defeat the crisis and face the world new challenges?”

| Having heard about the priorities of the EU, do you think that the EU is going in the right direction or in the wrong direction to exit the crisis and face the world new challenges? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----|-------|
| | | United Kingdom | | | | | | | | | | Poland | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2009 | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2009 | | | |
| | | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | | |
| In the right direction | | 44 | 43 | 41 | 38 | - | 35 | 37 | 39 | 34 | 20 | 36,78 | 58 | 57 | 60 | 52 | - | 34 | 69 | 44 | 52 | 52 | 53,12 |
| In the wrong direction | | 32 | 38 | 41 | 40 | - | 52 | 36 | 44 | 37 | 48 | 40,89 | 19 | 22 | 23 | 19 | - | 48 | 9 | 32 | 17 | 17 | 22,89 |
| Neither the one nor the other | | 13 | 9 | 8 | 10 | - | 10 | 13 | 11 | 8 | 12 | 10,45 | 14 | 14 | 12 | 20 | - | 13 | 14 | 19 | 18 | 17 | 15,68 |
| DK | | 11 | 10 | 10 | 12 | - | 3 | 14 | 6 | 21 | 20 | 11,89 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 9 | - | 5 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 14 | 8,34 |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.

First, the answers for the years 2009–2013 to the question “Having heard about the priorities of the EU, do you think that the EU is going in the right direction or in the wrong direction to defeat the crisis and face the world new challenges?” will be described. It can be seen that over the years the idea the EU is moving in the wrong direction is expressed more often in the UK (average 40.89%) than in Poland (average 22.89%). In both countries, the idea grew and fell like sine wave – in 2009 and 2010 in the spring edition of the Eurobarometer the negative feelings were stronger than in the autumn surveys. In 2011 there was a significant increase in the number of people who noticed the wrong direction in which the EU was going. The year 2012 brought significant differences in the perception of this aspect in these two countries. In Poland during spring 2012 there was a reduction in the negative perception of the direction in which the EU followed – only 19%, but in the second half of the year it continued to gather up to 23%. Then it can be seen that in 2013 it is completely different – a share of people with the opinion that the UE was going in the wrong direction follows from 22% in spring to 19% in autumn of 2013. On the other hand, in the UK, this level was maintained at the value of 40% in 2012 and then in 2013 the decrease of the opinion that the UE was going in the wrong direction was higher than in Poland (9 percentage points). In addition, in 2009–2013 people in the UK have more often (11.89%) claimed no opinion to the issue raised in the question than in Poland (8.34%). Respondents answered that their belief is that the EU’s direction is neither good nor bad less commonly in the UK than in Poland, which may suggest a better orientation in the current political situation among the British public opinion. The number of Poles (53.12%) who think the EU is moving in the right direction was significantly higher than the number of British (36.79%), but it fluctuated, while in the UK it was gradually increasing from 20% in 2009 to 44% in 2013.

A significant increase in beliefs among the British about the good direction of change in the EU can be seen since the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty (by 24 percentage points) and a decrease in the amount of negative opinions (16 percentage points). It can be concluded that the changes made to adapt and modernise the structures of the European Union and EU policies to a changing political climate had an impact on a more positive approach of the British about direction of change in the European Union.

Table 2: Answers for the years 2009-2013 to the question “Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of the European Union?”

| Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of the EU? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--|
| | United Kingdom | | | | | | | | | | Poland | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2009 | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2009 | | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | |
| Very optimistic | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 11 | |
| Fairly optimistic | 41 | 37 | 35 | 39 | 34 | 41 | 37 | 43 | 46 | 58 | 58 | 57 | 61 | 60 | 59 | 62 | 63 | 62 | 65 | 62 | |
| Fairly pessimistic | 35 | 38 | 39 | 38 | 39 | 35 | 33 | 32 | 29 | 21 | 22 | 26 | 24 | 23 | 24 | 18 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 17 | |
| Very pessimistic | 13 | 16 | 17 | 13 | 17 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | |
| DK | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 11 | 9 | 10 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 8 | |
| Total optimistic | 45 | 40 | 38 | 43 | 36 | 45 | 43 | 48 | 50 | 53 | 66 | 63 | 66 | 63 | 66 | 70 | 74 | 72 | 74 | 73 | |
| Total pessimistic | 48 | 54 | 56 | 51 | 56 | 48 | 46 | 43 | 40 | 36 | 25 | 29 | 26 | 28 | 27 | 22 | 17 | 19 | 16 | 19 | |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.

Looking at the answers for the years 2009–2013 to the question “Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of the European Union?” it can be concluded that in both countries there is a gradual decline of the optimistic view on the future of the EU and similarly an increase of the pessimistic view. In Poland, there was a decrease of 10 percentage points from 73% of optimists about the future of the EU in 2009 to 63% in 2012. However, in the autumn 2013 survey this number increased again to 66%. In the UK, which in comparison to Poland was far less optimistic. There has been much more dramatic drop of the optimistic view about the future of the EU over the years, down by 17 percentage at one point, from 53% in 2009 to 36% in autumn 2011 survey. In autumn of 2013 this indicator grew to 45% in the UK. Analogously there has been an increase of the pessimistic view on the future of the EU in both countries between 2009 and 2012. In Poland, it rose from 19% to 28%, in the UK from 36% to 56% – a fifth of the respondents changed their view in this direction.. But it can be seen that in the last survey presented here there is a decrease in both countries. The share of pessimistic views fell in Poland to 25% and in the UK

to 48%. Few people shared a definitely negative attitude about the future of the EU – their number ranged from 4% to 13% in the UK, in Poland it was only 2% to 3%. There was also a significant number of very optimistic answers about the future of the EU, in both countries in a downward trend though. In the UK it fell from 12% to 4%, in Poland from 11% to 8%.

Although increasing in the positive attitudes discussed in the answer to the previous question concerning the changes in the direction the EU is going to exit the crisis, the British show a decrease in the optimistic approach in favour of a more pessimistic attitude about the future of the EU.

Next seven tables, which will be discussed here, concern the evaluation of the relevance of selected specific initiatives, i.e. how important or unimportant respondents think they are for the EU to deal with the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. The responses were based on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 means that respondents think this initiative is “not at all important” and 10 means that it is “very important”. To ease the interpretation of data in the analysis below, the responses are divided into three groups: 1 to 4 “not important”, 5 to 6 “fairly important” and 7 to 10 “important”. The result are averaged across the years. Below is a simplified version of the data table.

Table 3: Answers for the years 2010–2013 to the question “How important or not you think they are in order for the EU to defeat the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade to increase the support for research and development policies and turn inventions into products”

| For each of the following initiatives, please tell me how important or not you think they are in order for the EU to exit the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To increase the support for research and development policies and turn inventions into products | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | United Kingdom | | | | | | | | Poland | | | | | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring |
| 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | - | 4 | - | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 |
| 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | - | 3 | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 3 |
| 3 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | - | 7 | - | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 4 |
| 4 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | - | 4 | - | 7 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 | - | 4 | - | 3 |
| 5 | 18 | 15 | 18 | 19 | - | 17 | - | 17 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 15 | - | 14 | - | 18 |
| 6 | 13 | 11 | 12 | 11 | - | 12 | - | 14 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 12 | - | 11 | - | 12 |
| 7 | 17 | 12 | 17 | 15 | - | 13 | - | 18 | 17 | 17 | 18 | 17 | - | 16 | - | 14 |
| 8 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 9 | - | 15 | - | 13 | 21 | 21 | 18 | 17 | - | 17 | - | 14 |
| 9 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 5 | - | 5 | - | 4 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 6 | - | 10 | - | 7 |
| 10 | 15 | 18 | 13 | 16 | - | 14 | - | 12 | 14 | 15 | 15 | 17 | - | 16 | - | 15 |
| DK | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | - | 6 | - | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 8 | - | 7 | - | 9 |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.

The first issue raised in this group of questions is a statement that the EU should increase the support for research and development policies and turn inventions into products. This question was not asked in every Eurobarometer survey. It was asked six times – in the spring of 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 and in autumn 2012 and 2013 – it was not in the survey in 2009. From the obtained results it can be concluded that in this case there are no significant differences between the UK and Poland. Respondents in both countries responded more or less the same way over the years, or similarly saw the importance of this issue. But at the same time the Polish, in comparison to the British, declared their support for research and development policies and turning inventions into products more eagerly. Average rating as important in the UK is 47.7%, whereas in Poland 57.8%. Hence, number of answers “fairly important” in the UK is higher than in Poland – accordingly 29.5% and 25.8%. More responses assigning no relevance to this aspect was also in the UK – an average number over the years was 16.5%, while in Poland it was 9.7%.

The increase of support for research and development policies in both countries suggests that it is an important issue for their societies. About three quarters of respondents in both countries have recognised this issue for at least fairly important.

Table 4: Answers for the years 2010–2013 to the question “For each of the following initiatives, please tell me how important or not you think they are for the EU to defeat the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To enhance the quality and appeal of EU’s higher education system”.

| For each of the following initiatives, please tell me how important or not you think they are in order for the EU to exit the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To enhance the quality and appeal of EU’s higher education system. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | United Kingdom | | | | | | | | Poland | | | | | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring |
| 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | - | 2 | - | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | - | 0 | - | 1 |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 0 | - | 2 |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | - | 3 | - | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 2 |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 5 | - | 4 | - | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | - | 3 | - | 4 |
| 5 | 11 | 12 | 12 | 13 | - | 13 | - | 16 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 13 | - | 13 | - | 14 |
| 6 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 9 | - | 9 | - | 12 | 12 | 11 | 14 | 13 | - | 10 | - | 10 |
| 7 | 16 | 14 | 17 | 18 | - | 14 | - | 16 | 15 | 19 | 19 | 18 | - | 16 | - | 13 |
| 8 | 20 | 18 | 17 | 13 | - | 18 | - | 16 | 20 | 20 | 17 | 15 | - | 17 | - | 16 |
| 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 6 | - | 9 | - | 6 | 13 | 10 | 10 | 7 | - | 11 | - | 11 |
| 10 | 19 | 20 | 16 | 19 | - | 20 | - | 13 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 20 | - | 22 | - | 19 |
| DK | 6 | 7 | 7 | 8 | - | 6 | - | 7 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 7 | - | 6 | - | 8 |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.

Next table refers to the perceived importance of enhancing the quality and appeal of the EU's higher education system. Over the years 24.5% of respondents from Poland consider the issue as fairly important, and 62.3% as very important. In the UK, accordingly, these values are 22.8% and 58.3%. Significantly more people in the UK (12%) consider this issue as not important than in Poland (7.3%). What is more, the trend in both countries to assess enhancing the quality and appeal of the EU's higher education system as unimportant is similarly low. The most noticeable difference between Poland and the UK can be seen at the extremes of the assessment. Poland lowest score (1) average over the years is only 0.3% of individuals whereas in the UK it is 2.5%. Interestingly, at extremely high values there is no difference. An average of 17.8% of both Poles and British see enhancing the quality and appeal of the EU's higher education system as extremely important (10).

It can be seen that slightly greater importance is assigned to initiatives aiming at enhancing the quality and appeal of EU's higher education system in Poland than in the UK. The British consider it to be an important initiative to exit the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade but do not think it is the most important one.

Table 5: Answers for the years 2010–2013 to the question “Each of the following initiatives, please place in order of how important or not you think they are for the EU to defeat the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To support an economy that uses less natural resources and emits less greenhouse gas”

| For each of the following initiatives, please tell me how important or not you think they are in order for the EU to exit the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To support an economy that uses less natural resources and emits less greenhouse gas. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | United Kingdom | | | | | | | | Poland | | | | | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring |
| 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 |
| 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | - | 3 | - | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | - | 3 | - | 2 |
| 5 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 10 | - | 7 | - | 12 | 11 | 9 | 11 | 10 | - | 9 | - | 11 |
| 6 | 8 | 11 | 9 | 9 | - | 7 | - | 9 | 11 | 9 | 13 | 11 | - | 7 | - | 9 |
| 7 | 16 | 12 | 14 | 18 | - | 15 | - | 19 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 19 | - | 16 | - | 12 |
| 8 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 14 | - | 20 | - | 17 | 22 | 22 | 19 | 16 | - | 18 | - | 16 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 10 | - | 12 | - | 10 | 12 | 14 | 12 | 8 | - | 12 | - | 12 |
| 10 | 20 | 24 | 23 | 23 | - | 26 | - | 18 | 17 | 19 | 19 | 23 | - | 27 | - | 26 |
| DK | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | - | 6 | - | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 7 | - | 5 | - | 8 |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.

Opinions on the matter of supporting an economy that uses less natural resources and emitting less greenhouse gases do not differ significantly in both countries. Typically, the average difference over the years is about one percentage point. Both in Poland and in the UK this issue is fairly important for about 20% of the people. 6% of respondents present no opinion on this matter. In the UK 2.42% consider it as completely non-significant (1) – this value ranges from 1 to 3 percent. In Poland, the average value is only 0.6%. When it comes to assessing this issue as very important, the average over the years 2010–2013 was similar in both countries: in Poland it was almost 68.5% and 65.67% in the UK. It should be emphasised that in both countries about 22% of respondents gave the maximum answer (10) on the scale of significance. However, in Poland some decline in the perceived importance of this issue can be observed. For example, in the spring of 2010 26% rated it at 10/10, and since autumn 2013 only 17%. In contrast, the situation the UK is that in 2009 18% rated 10/10, in 2011 it increased to 26% and then in 2013 this figure remained at 20%.

Table 6: Answers for the years 2010–2013 to the question “Each of the following initiatives, please place in order of how important or not you think they are for the EU to defeat the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade To help the EU’s industrial base to be more competitive by promoting entrepreneurship and developing new skills”

| For each of the following initiatives, please tell me how important or not you think they are in order for the EU to exit the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To help the EU’s industrial base to be more competitive by promoting entrepreneurship and developing new skills. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | United Kingdom | | | | | | | | Poland | | | | | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 |
| 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 0 | - | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 1 |
| 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 5 | - | 2 | - | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 5 | - | 3 | - | 3 |
| 5 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 9 | - | 11 | - | 12 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 10 | - | 11 | - | 12 |
| 6 | 10 | 13 | 10 | 10 | - | 12 | - | 13 | 11 | 11 | 14 | 12 | - | 11 | - | 10 |
| 7 | 20 | 15 | 18 | 19 | - | 15 | - | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 19 | - | 16 | - | 15 |
| 8 | 21 | 18 | 21 | 18 | - | 22 | - | 18 | 18 | 22 | 18 | 15 | - | 17 | - | 19 |
| 9 | 8 | 10 | 9 | 10 | - | 10 | - | 9 | 12 | 12 | 13 | 8 | - | 11 | - | 10 |
| 10 | 17 | 19 | 17 | 18 | - | 18 | - | 14 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 21 | - | 20 | - | 20 |
| DK | 7 | 7 | 7 | 8 | - | 7 | - | 7 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 7 | | 8 | - | 9 |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.

This data shows that in general the British are more likely than the Polish to know how important it is to take care of the environment and understand the significance of an initiative to support an economy that uses less natural resources and emits less greenhouse gases.

Another issue concerns the assessment of the level of importance of help to the EU's industrial base to be more competitive by promoting entrepreneurship and developing new skills. In this case, the results in both states are nearly identical when comparing the averages over the period. It is hard to find the specific issue that would differentiate significantly Poland and the UK. The only thing which can be said is that in Poland the maximal assessment 10/10 is more common than in the UK, but on the other hand in the UK the rating 8/10 appears more frequently than in Poland. Overall, the results are as follows: 63.8% of people in the UK and 65.3 in Poland evaluate the issue as very important, 21.8% and 22.3% as fairly important, and 7.2 and 5.8 as not important. Approximately about 7% of the population have no opinion on this subject.

Table 7: Answers for the years 2010–2013 to the question “Each of the following initiatives, please place in order of how important or not you think they are for the EU to defeat the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To modernise labour markets, with a view to raising employment levels”

| For each of the following initiatives, please tell me how important or not you think they are in order for the EU to exit the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To modernise labour markets, with a view to raising employment levels. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--|
| | United Kingdom | | | | | | | | Poland | | | | | | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | |
| 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | |
| 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 0 | - | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | |
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 0 | - | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | |
| 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | - | 1 | - | 2 | |
| 5 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 6 | - | 6 | - | 8 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 7 | - | 5 | - | 10 | |
| 6 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 8 | - | 8 | - | 10 | 8 | 7 | 11 | 7 | - | 8 | - | 8 | |
| 7 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 15 | - | 12 | - | 22 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 12 | - | 12 | - | 9 | |
| 8 | 21 | 19 | 21 | 18 | - | 24 | - | 17 | 19 | 20 | 18 | 17 | - | 17 | - | 18 | |
| 9 | 14 | 12 | 15 | 12 | - | 14 | - | 12 | 11 | 16 | 15 | 13 | - | 15 | - | 13 | |
| 10 | 27 | 28 | 28 | 28 | - | 28 | - | 20 | 33 | 33 | 31 | 35 | - | 37 | - | 32 | |
| DK | 5 | 6 | 6 | 7 | - | 6 | - | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | - | 4 | - | 7 | |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.

In summary, the public opinion in both discussed states, one perceived eurosceptic and second perceived as euroenthusiastic, shows only small differences in relation to the issue raised in this question.

With regard to modernising labour markets, with a view to raising employment levels, there is also not much differences between average results from both countries. Both in Poland as well as in the UK about 75% respondents regard as a very important matter. This tendency grew from 2010, when in the UK it was 71%, and in Poland 72%. In both states few people regard this issue as unimportant. In the UK only 4.8%, and even less in Poland – on average 3.2 %. Both in Poland and the UK few people did not know what their opinion was in relation to the issue of modernising labour markets. On average over the course of time these numbers were 4.2% in Poland and the 6% in the UK. In every Eurobarometer conducted respondents from both states were choosing the maximal score most often when judging the importance of this issue. In the UK it was on average 26.5% of people, while in Poland it was 33.5%.

Table 8: Answers for the years 2010–2013 to the question “Each of the following initiatives, please place in order of how important or not you think they are for the EU to defeat the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade To help the poor and socially excluded and enable them to play an active part in society”

| For each of the following initiatives, please tell me how important or not you think they are in order for the EU to exit the present financial and economic crisis and prepare for the next decade. To help the poor and socially excluded and enable them to play an active part in society. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | United Kingdom | | | | | | | | Poland | | | | | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | - | 1 |
| 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | - | 1 |
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 3 |
| 5 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 8 | - | 7 | - | 9 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 9 | - | 7 | - | 11 |
| 6 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 9 | - | 7 | - | 10 | 6 | 8 | 11 | 9 | - | 8 | - | 10 |
| 7 | 14 | 12 | 14 | 14 | - | 14 | - | 19 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 13 | - | 13 | - | 11 |
| 8 | 19 | 20 | 19 | 16 | - | 18 | - | 18 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 19 | - | 20 | - | 15 |
| 9 | 12 | 10 | 13 | 12 | - | 12 | - | 10 | 13 | 15 | 14 | 9 | - | 13 | - | 13 |
| 10 | 33 | 31 | 30 | 31 | - | 31 | - | 24 | 30 | 29 | 26 | 33 | - | 32 | - | 29 |
| DK | 4 | 3 | 4 | 5 | - | 5 | - | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | - | 4 | - | 5 |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.

Population of the UK and Poland in a similar extent believes that modernising the labour market is very important in order to overcome the present economic and financial crisis and prepare for the next decade. About three quarters of respondents from each of the discussed states have expressed this opinion.

The last of the discussed questions concerned the importance of help the poor and socially excluded and enable them to play an active part in society. In both states it is possible to notice that a small number of people is expressing no opinion on this issue – this percentage fluctuates within the limits of 2–5%. Both in Poland as well as in the UK about 75% of people think that this is a very relevant issue. Similarly as in the previous question a rise in this regard can be observed: in 2010 in Poland it was 68%, however in 2013 it rose to 78%. By analogy in the UK it was 71% and grew up to 78%. What is more, the situation also looks similar when we add the data from 2010–2013 years to determine the number of people who regard this issue as unimportant. In Poland it is on average 5.8%, and in the UK 4.2%, so it is very little. 15.7% in the UK and 17% in Poland consider the issue to be fairly important.

As is the case with the previous question, the opinion in UK and Poland is quite similar. About three quarters of respondents consider helping the poor and socially excluded to enable them to play an active part in society as an important initiative to exit the present financial and economic crisis.

Table 9: Answers for the years 2012–2013 to the question “Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. (OUR COUNTRY) could better face the future outside the EU”

| Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. (OUR COUNTRY) could better face the future outside the EU | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | United Kingdom | | | | Poland | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2012 | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring |
| Totally agree | 25 | 25 | 27 | - | 8 | 7 | 7 | - |
| Tend to agree | 25 | 28 | 27 | - | 25 | 33 | 36 | - |
| Tend to disagree | 26 | 22 | 25 | - | 37 | 34 | 35 | - |
| Totally disagree | 11 | 14 | 10 | - | 17 | 13 | 11 | - |
| DK | 13 | 11 | 11 | - | 13 | 13 | 11 | - |
| Total “agree” | 50 | 53 | 54 | - | 33 | 40 | 43 | - |
| Total “disagree” | 37 | 36 | 35 | - | 54 | 47 | 46 | - |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 77, 78, 79, 80.

Two more questions will be discussed below. They were posed only by the Eurobarometer in autumn 2012, 2013 and spring 2013. The first is whether the respondents believe that their country would have a better outlook for the future outside the EU, second if the EU should evolve into federation of nation states in the future.

For the first question most of the Britons (54%) claimed that they believed their country would benefit from being outside the EU. More specifically, 27% of people totally agreed with such statement. The same number of people tended to agree. In the next year this indicator follows to 25%, as the total number of “agree” responses fell to 50% from 54%. The situation is different among respondents in Poland. In 2012 only 7% of people strongly believed that the country would have fared better outside the EU, and 36% tended to agree. This gives a total of 43% of people who believed that it would be better outside the EU. In 2013 8% of people totally agreed and, in autumn 2013, 25% tended to agree. In both countries, a similar percentage of people had no opinion: 11% in 2012 and 13% in 2013, which is a relatively high number. The same situation is in the case of total disagreement in both countries. It rose in Poland from 11% in 2012 to 17% in 2013, in UK from 10% in autumn 2012, through 14% to 11% in autumn 2013. In the UK 37% of people do not agree with the statement that it would be better outside the EU, while in Poland it is 54%. Indexes in both countries increased during one year.

Table 10: Answers for the years 2012–2013 to the question “Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. The EU should develop further into a federation of Nation-States”

| Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. The EU should develop further into a federation of Nation-States | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | United Kingdom | | | | Poland | | | |
| | 2013 | | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2012 | |
| | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring | autumn | spring |
| Totally agree | 6 | 4 | 4 | - | 12 | 11 | 11 | - |
| Tend to agree | 21 | 22 | 20 | - | 48 | 52 | 52 | - |
| Tend to disagree | 28 | 27 | 28 | - | 14 | 14 | 15 | - |
| Totally disagree | 22 | 23 | 26 | - | 4 | 2 | 2 | - |
| DK | 23 | 24 | 22 | - | 22 | 21 | 20 | - |
| Total “agree” | 27 | 26 | 24 | - | 60 | 63 | 63 | - |
| Total “disagree” | 50 | 50 | 54 | - | 18 | 16 | 17 | - |

Source: own elaboration based on Eurobarometer 77, 78, 79, 80.

In summary, in the answers to these question the different approach of societies in both the countries under discussion to membership in the European Union can be clearly noticed. About half of the British respondents believe that the UK would be better able to cope with the current economic crisis on its own than as a member of the EU. On the other hand, the Poles believe that EU membership has helped them to overcome the current crisis in a gentler way than if Poland would be outside the EU. It is clear that the British perceive their country as strong, powerful, which options for action are somewhat limited by the EU.

The second question, concerning the EU evolving into the federation of nation states the vast majority of Polish respondents (60–63%) supported this vision while in the UK it was supported by only about a quarter of respondents. The percentage of people that did not have an opinion on this matter was also high in both countries – about one fifth of the respondents. In the UK, about half of the respondents (50–54%) totally disagreed with this concept of the future functioning of the EU. 26% of people completely disagreed and presented their opposition as strong, but in autumn 2013 this rate decreased to 22%. The situation was different in Poland, where only 18% of respondents disagreed with the creation of the EU federation, of which only 4% defined their opposition as strong. In previous year it was 2% of 17% total.

In the last question discussed in this essay, as in the case of the previous one, a marked difference can be noted in the views of respondents from the UK and Poland. Poles (about two thirds of the respondents) enthusiastically embrace the idea to develop the European Union into a federation of nation states. On the other hand, in the UK half of the respondents are opposed to such deepening of the European integration. A quarter does not have an opinion on this subject.

From the analysis conducted above on the basis of the data obtained by the Eurobarometer in the course of 2009–2013 it is only possible to draw cautious conclusions. Since the phenomenon is complicated and extensive, such a study is not exhaustive and does not give grounds for generalising conclusions, because it presents only a part of a bigger issue. It cannot be said that the UK is sceptical about the future of the EU, so the hypothesis of this essay is unconfirmed. The statement which comes to mind is that the UK does not differ from other states and is not significantly more Eurosceptic. British people are less enthusiastic about what is currently happening in the EU, which is caused primarily by their concern over the (possibly federalist) future of the Union. Simultaneously, they are declaring a desire for a referendum about their country withdrawal from the EU, which according to several surveys would probably give the positive result (Brytyjczycy

bardzo eurosceptyczni 2012). The historical experiences, geographical situation, tradition and culture of the United Kingdom is determining the fact that British people want to be more independent and to be able to decide their own fate.

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