

UACES Scholarship Report

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Outline of project

Norway has received comparatively little attention in the expanding scholarly literature on Euroscepticism due to its non-membership of the European Union. Addressing this gap, the project carries out a comprehensive analysis of Norwegian Euroscepticism. It looks at the development of opposition towards European integration among the Norwegian population and in political parties from the 1960s up until the present day. The project aims to achieve an improved understanding of what Norwegian Euroscepticism is and its motivation.

The thesis subjects a number of the explanatory theories from the comparative and Norwegian literature on Euroscepticism to empirical testing on documentary, interview and survey data. A mixed methods research design is used to address the shortage of data available from the time period in question and for the purposes of providing both the depth and breadth that the research questions demand.

Academic achievements

During my research trip in Oslo, I conducted a survey in the Norwegian Parliament. For this survey, I achieved a response rate of 48 percent (81 of the 169 MPs responded).

Additionally, four in-depth interviews with politicians from the Progress Party, Liberal Party, Centre Party and the Labour Party were carried out, as well as two interviews with two representatives from the youth wing of the ad hoc organization "No to the EU".

Finally, the data collection for the documentary analysis was completed during the trip. Newspaper items from the newspaper *Aftenposten* covering the debate which preceded the 1994 referendum, as well as debate pages from the last decade were compiled for the research.

Use made of resources, facilities abroad

The micro fiche archive at the National Library (*Nasjonalbiblioteket*) in Oslo.

Positive and negative aspects

Overall, the trip went more or less as planned. The only unforeseen element was the extreme cold (minus 25 to minus 15°C) during the three weeks I stayed in Oslo. This made careful planning of travelling and meetings essential.

Before arriving in Oslo, all of my seven interviewees had agreed to being interviewed. However, I was unable to re-establish contact with the politician from the Christian Democratic Party, so unfortunately, I could not conduct the interview. Nevertheless, the other six interviews were successful. Combined with the survey data, the four party interviews provide valuable insight into the nuances in the Euroscepticism of the different parties. Moreover, the other two interviews enable comparison between the party elites' and the younger generation's arguments.

Having used the micro fiche archive at the National Library before, I was already familiar with the facilities and the nature of the work. However, the sheer volume of newspaper items in the 1990s period was unanticipated, as this was almost double of those found in the period prior to the 1972 referendum. Although the work was more time-consuming than expected, the archive search for the 1990s and the 2000s was completed.

The financial support from UACES and the European Commission was extremely helpful in that it enabled me to spend the time I needed in Oslo to finish my fieldwork.