



Challenging the origins of euroscepticism. a historical perspective [

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Analítica

This article challenges two orthodox views of Political Scientists concerning the roots of Euroscepticism. First, it contests that Euroscepticism originated in the UK in 1980s and was primarily advocated by British political parties and the Thatcher government. If defined as an opposition to the federalist European idea, Euroscepticism can indeed be traced back to the very beginning of the European integration process after the Second World War and can then be continuously followed up until today. Second, it questions the so-called end of the permissive consensus in the 1990s and argues that, if public opposition against the EU has indeed amplified since then, this is primarily due to the frequent organization of referenda. Third, whereas Eurosceptic political parties have gained increasing support in the European elections since the 2000s, the possibility of the European people to express their anti-European feelings has already existed since the introduction of European direct elections in 1979. Finally, the article identifies a rather paradoxical link between European elections and Euroscepticism, especially when considering the high degree of abstentions

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