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THE DOMESTIC BASIS OF SPANISH EUROPEAN POLICY AND THE 2002 PRESIDENCY

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FOREWORD

On the 1st of January 2002, Spain shall take over the presidency of the European Union for the third time in its history.

As is presented with finesse and clarity by Professor Carlos CLOSA, this presidency will not be the same as those that preceded it. The Spain of 2002 is not only, as it was in 1989 and 1995, the symbol – for herself and her partners – of a successful integration into the European Union. Spain has also become one of the major players in the European game and, over and above its initial enthusiasm, has learnt to make a balanced assessment of the advantages and cost of its membership of the common project. Such an attitude means little more than that it has joined the majority of its partners, even if one might regret that this pointed sense of the interest of each Member State is often at the expense of the “family spirit” which had prevailed before. The Spanish presidency of 2002 will thus be, in a certain manner, a presidency of maturity. It is not incidental to underline, as does Professor CLOSA, that the approach of the PSOE, which identified the national interest with the European interest, has been democratically replaced by the intergovernmental vision of the Partido Popular.

This presidency takes place during a crucial moment in the life of the Union. Spain’s partners can legitimately expect that she offers a precise outline of the contours of the big enlargement to come and that, at the same time, that she launches with efficacy and ambition the debate on the future of the Union whose orientations were stated at Laeken, during the Belgian presidency. In essence, it will be down to Spain to put in place the Convention that must give form to this debate. If we are to believe Professor CLOSA, these are not questions that impassion public opinion in Spain; neither are they priorities that immediately spring to mind for its policy-makers. But, it is after all the lot of all presidencies to reconcile the specific impulsions that they wish to make to the development of the Union with the requirements of a calendar which obliges them to go beyond their own projects and the defence of their own interests.

No-one can doubt that Spain will respond to these expectations and place all the talents of its policy-makers and its diplomacy to the service of the common interest, as the first semester of 2002 will be as decisive for the deepening of European integration as it will be for enlargement. One should also note that Spain is particularly well placed to remind us that the latter also carries with it obligations to reinforce links with the Southern Mediterranean countries.

In this spirit, Professor CLOSA’s study, which Notre Europe is honoured to publish, is a precious guide for those attempting to understand the spirit in which Spain prepares its task.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
PART I - THE DOMESTIC BASIS OF SPANISH EUROPEAN POLICY	2
1. Historical factor	2
2. Identity, perceptions and public opinion	5
2.1 National identity and European identity	5
2.2 Membership of the EU and Spanish public opinion	7
2.3 Public opinion and the EU agenda: reform and expansion	11
2.4 Accommodating a multi-level identity	12
3. The EU debate and the political parties	13
3.1 The "Europeanism" of the PSOE	15
3.2 The <i>Partido Popular</i> (PP)	23
3.3 <i>Izquierda Unida</i> : Critical Europeanism	32
3.4 The nationalist parties	33
4. Civil society: unions, business and the media	36
PART II - THE SPANISH PRESIDENCY OF 2002	38
1. The experience of earlier presidencies	38
1.1 The 1989 Presidency	38
1.2 The second Presidency: 1995	40
2. Towards the third Presidency: 2002	42
2.1 Provisional assessment of the Presidency programme	46
CONCLUSION	48
BIBLIOGRAPHY	49
ABBREVIATIONS	53

INTRODUCTION

Spain will hold the EU Presidency in 2002 for the third time since the country's accession. The international and domestic context has changed considerably since the two previous occasions, as well as the shape, rhythms and priorities of the European Union itself. The European scene is currently dominated by two issues. On the one hand, the reform of the EU planned for 2004 may represent an irrevocable step towards "Constitutionalisation", while on the other the events of September 11th have had a decisive impact on the Union's outlook.

Spain and the Spanish government have not remained untouched by either factor, which have conditioned its European policy. Nevertheless, political debate, especially concerning the future of the EU, has been scarcely audible, not to say altogether silent. This paper will seek to explain the reasons for the feebleness of domestic debate about the EU by revealing the underlying basis of Spain's European policy. This will require consideration of various dimensions including public attitudes and opinion towards Europe and, above all, the discourse of Spanish political parties. These topics form the subject of the first half of this study. The second half discusses the programme for the Presidency within the framework of an implicit comparison with the previous terms in which Spain has held office in order to discern the continuities and/or breaks that might typify a "Spanish stance".

PART I: THE DOMESTIC BASIS OF SPANISH EUROPEAN POLICY

1. Historical factors

Spain's European policy is deeply rooted in a historically constructed perception that takes Europe as a point of reference for the Spanish identity itself. An outline of Spain's modern history depicts the country's relations with Europe as the culmination of a gradual process of estrangement going back to earlier eras. Three specifically Spanish historical processes brought forth divergent cultural, social, political and economic patterns from those that may be considered central to European history (Ramírez;1996). Firstly, the *Reconquista* (reconquest) of the Iberian peninsula from the Arabs in eight centuries of wars waged by the Christian kings created a mentality in which religion became an immensely powerful agglutinating factor that was closely bound up with territorial expansion. The religious undercurrents of the reconquest inspired a spirit of chivalry that would later hinder the emergence of capitalist social structures and ideas. The Spanish perception of life and, above all, of work (seen as a divine curse), was largely incompatible with the incipient capitalism that developed among the bourgeoisie of Europe's most dynamic cities in Flanders and Italy. Finally, the American adventure provided Spain with a territorial scope that was at once distant from Europe and a perfect environment for the development of a religious and audacious mentality that was inimical to capitalism.

The combination of these three circumstances and their effects underlie Spain's persistent failure to adapt to modernity, and from the 17th century until the end of the 19th the country underwent a slow but inexorable period of decadence. Objectively, Spain's role changed from that of a world power to a minor, secondary state. More important, however, was the manner in which this development was perceived. On the one hand, foreign writers and travellers gradually (especially in the 19th century) constructed the "black legend" of Spain —a closed society ever looking back to ancient glories and resistant to modern ideas. Writers such as Burke, the Duke of Wellington and Napoleon himself (who coined the phrase "Africa begins at the Pyrenees") all contributed to this legend, which was sanctioned by Spengler's historiography (Crespo

MacLennan; 2000: 10). Although later historiography revised the notion of Spain's supposedly exceptional character, it is no less true that it also permeated the consciousness of the Spanish themselves.

Even in the early years of the 19th century, modernisers were already dubbed "Frenchified" and "Europeanisers". Although Spain's slide into irrelevance, decadence and detachment accelerated throughout the century, it was only in 1898 that this was recognised as a basic problem. It was in 1898 that Spain lost its last overseas colonies in Cuba and the Philippines to the United States, an event that was viewed as a national tragedy and provoked anxious reflection on the country's decline with Europe as the point of reference. The intellectuals of the "Generación del 98" formed into two opposing camps. Some, such as Unamuno, Ganivet and Ramiro de Maeztu held that the solution to the problems of Spain was to return precisely to the traditional values (religion, chivalry and so on) that had been relegated in favour of liberal values imported from Europe that were foreign to the spirit and essence of the Spanish soul. These writers even went so far as to propose the *Hispanisation of Europe*. The opposing camp of the "Regenerationists" led by Joaquín Costa proposed a very different alternative, rooted in the modernising efforts of the *Afrancesados*, which could be summed up in the phrase "Spain is the problem and Europe is the answer". In his work *Europeización y decadencia de España*, Costa proposed opening the country to the influence of other European countries and adopting their cultural, economic and social norms. The diagnosis of Ortega y Gasset, Spain's pre-eminent philosopher, was no different: regeneration would only be possible through Europeanisation.

This debate anticipated two attitudes which would broadly prevail throughout the 20th century. Thus, the traditionalist view held sway until the disappearance of Franco's regime, while the modernising outlook has been uppermost since. During the first third of the 20th century, historical developments in Spain ran parallel to but on the margins of events in the European mainstream, particularly the two world wars. Spain had no part in the trauma of the First World War, and the civil war ended with the triumph of fascism (which later evolved into a more conventional dictatorship) in the context of defeat for similar regimes in Italy and Germany. The Franco regime succeeded for a time in restoring Spain's traditional and historic values of religiosity, the cult of imperial greatness in America (reformulated as a rhetorical pan-Hispanicism), an

instinctive rejection of Communism (treated as a new Crusade), and distaste for the European democracies, indeed, for democracy in general (especially political parties). Franco himself defined the military uprising of 1936 as a “national Crusade” to defend core Catholic values from what he called the “bastard, French and Europeanising” doctrines of liberalism (Franco; 1975: 116). This should not, however, be understood as a sweeping rejection of all things European. Rather, the Franco regime sought to construct its own symbolic representation of the “true Europe” along the lines of its ideological conception of the “true Spain” (Jáuregui; 1999: 276). In this somewhat vague framework, Europe was conceived as the territorial context of its own substance – Christianity – and the area to be cleansed of Communist domination. Underpinned by the doctrine of economic autarchy and, above all by an international context that imposed isolation, such beliefs helped sideline Franco’s Spain from the incipient work of European unification and integration.

Paradoxically, Franco’s ideology clashed with the economic needs and constraints of the state itself, particularly after 1959 when the *Opus Dei* technocrats launched the *Economic Liberalisation Plan*. The process depended for its success on opening the economy up to its immediate neighbours in Europe, and this is one of the keys to the progressive change in the regime’s attitude towards the process of European integration and the tentative rapprochement in the early 1960s.

The response of the EU and its member States, though not uniform, was to establish a *policy of conditionality*. Membership of the club was reserved for democratic states and conditional upon respect for human rights, the rule of law and representative democracy. This doctrine enabled the democratic opposition in Spain to identify democracy with membership of the EU.

The foundations of the pro-European consensus which inspired Spain’s policy up to the mid-1990’s and still survives as an underlying reference, were thus created out of the relationship between the Franco regime and the EU in the 1960’s and 70’s. On the one hand, the elites of the Franco regime gradually moderated their ideology, influenced first by the need to break Spain’s international isolation and later by economic constraints, becoming increasingly pragmatic on European issues. On the other, the democratic opposition constructed the European reference as a symbol of democracy

and a model to aspire to. This key element in the transition to democracy imbued both public perceptions, opinion and attitudes and the thinking of the political parties. Clearly, accession was not the prime mover of political change, but it did shape the discourse, strategy and behaviour of the main players on the political stage. In short, it could be said that the myth of Europe and the need to rejoin Europe were essential to the reinvention of a democratic consciousness in Spain and to the Europeanisation of the country (Closa; 2001).

2. Identity, perceptions and public opinion

The transition to democracy that began in 1976 widened the consensus concerning the meaning of Europe and accession to the EU which had emerged among the elites of the dictatorship and the democratic opposition. This consensus itself arose out of the overlap between somewhat different positions. The Francoist elite recognised that accession was both crucial and unavoidable and therefore made a virtue out of necessity by transforming membership of the EU (and other western European institutions) into a bulwark against the possible lure of Communism. Meanwhile, the EU represented a way of understanding Europe for the opposition, based on the ideas of liberty, equality, justice and democracy. The EU (Europe) became the symbol of a great collective aspiration embodying the hope of national resurgence.

2.1 National identity and European identity

Accession to the EU had thus become a key element in the discourse of democratisation in Spain, possessing a legitimising value in itself. For this reason, Europeanism also became a central value for Spanish political culture. In contrast to the situation in the countries that joined in the 1970's, membership of the EU was never seen as merely a question of economic advantage, but rather as a necessary condition to recover national self-respect and morale (Jáuregui; 1999: 280). On the occasion of the signing of Spain's Treaty of Accession, King Juan Carlos I echoed these sentiments in his address to the representatives of the member States: *"You represent what the Spanish people understand by Europe: the principles of liberty, equality, pluralism and justice, which also rule the Spanish Constitution* (El País, June 13th, 1985).

In this context, the relationship between the Spanish national identity and the European identity is absolutely symbiotic. As Beneyto points out, taking a wide, representative cross-section of 20th century Spanish intellectuals, there is probably no other country in Europe that has established such a close link between its own project for national regeneration in this century and European integration, between the *Spanish identity* and the *European identity* (Beneyto; 1993: 311). This is not, however, simply a matter for the intelligentsia. Europe and the EU represent a resource or instrument for the Spanish identity, and public opinion considers the European project as a part of the national project rather than something separate (Rosa et al.; 1998: 128). The data on perceived identities published by the Eurobarometer since 1996 are significant. In the case of Spain, the number of people who consider themselves to have a dual identity has grown continuously to reach 70% of survey respondents by 2000. However, Spaniards consistently place their Spanish before their European identity, and the number of people who consider themselves to be exclusively European is similar to the low European average (6%). At the same time, the percentage of those who consider themselves to be exclusively Spanish has also fallen progressively to only 20% in 2000. In comparison to Europe as a whole, Spain is more than ten points above the average for people considering themselves to have a shared identity and more than 10 points below the average of those who feel they belong exclusively to their home country. In conclusion, identification with both Spain and Europe appears to involve no contradiction, but rather a positive association. Llamazares and Reinares's analyses of different data confirm these findings (Llamazares and Reinares; 1998). In contrast to the situation in other member States, the Spanish people do not believe that European integration or the EU present any threat in terms of language, identity or culture. Occasional conflicts have however emerged where the perception (sometimes baseless) has spread that the EU posed some kind of threat to elements that are closely associated with the national identity, such as the European Parliament's efforts to debate bullfighting or the Commission's supposed intention of "banning" the use of the letter ñ. These issues found a wide echo in the media and public opinion, demonstrating the underlying strength of national identity, even though its symbols and icons may differ from those commonly found in other member States (e.g. the currency or the flag).

2.2 Membership of the EU and Spanish public opinion

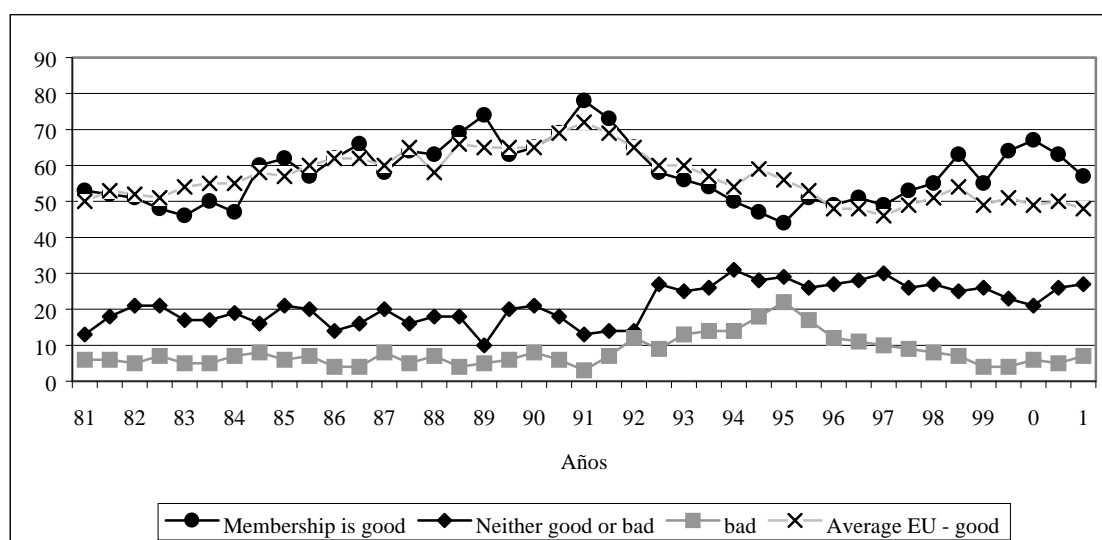
The perceptions of public opinion can be observed through the questions raised by support for or opposition to the integration process. The following two charts show the evolution of public opinion and highlight certain trends in support for membership and the perceived benefits.

Firstly, support for membership of the EU in Spain reached its apogee between 1984 and 1991. This was followed by a sharp fall with recovery beginning only in 1997. The high values seen at the end of the 1980's or the early 1990's have yet to reappear. Also, the perception that membership is neither good nor bad has gained ground since 1992. The chart also plots sentiment in the EU as a whole, revealing stronger fluctuations in Spanish opinion.

SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

(SPAIN)

1981-2001

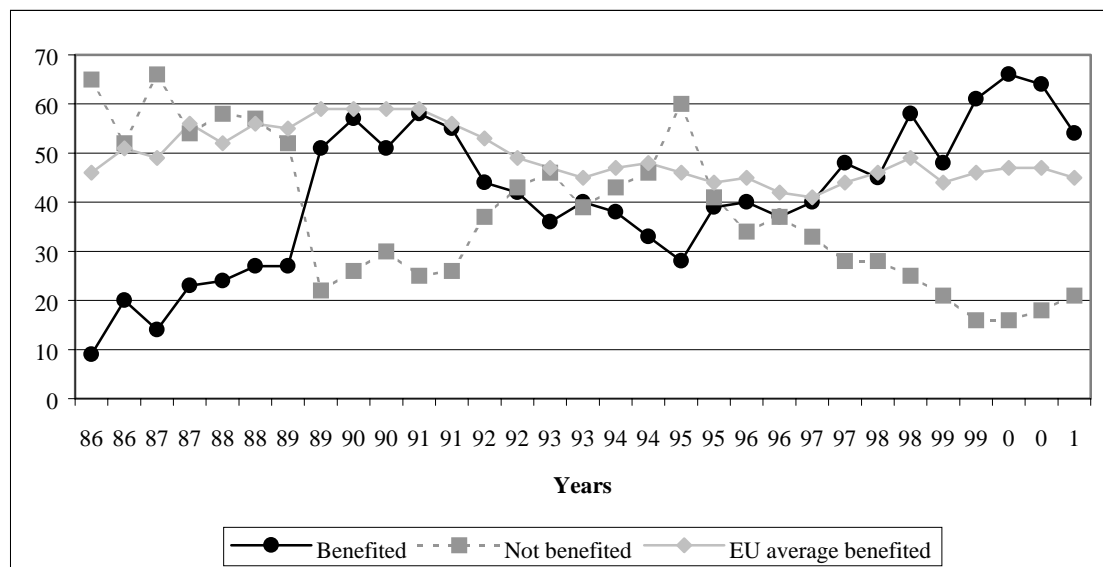


Source: Eurobarometer

This snapshot of cost/benefit evaluations reveals that the perception of membership as beneficial rose progressively until 1991 and was at its strongest between 1989 and 1991. From then until 1996, the perception that membership was not beneficial gathered strength and even exceeded positive evaluations. From 1996 until 2001, the perception of membership as something beneficial has again increased and from 1999 until the

present has reached a high point. Fluctuations in Spanish opinion are once again noticeably stronger than for the EU as a whole.

BENEFITS OF EU MEMBERSHIP (SPAIN) 1986-2001



Source: Eurobarometer

What should we make of these two charts? The first conclusion is that Spanish public opinion has gradually moved towards a more tranquil acceptance of the EU and Spain's membership, with utilitarian concerns becoming more important. Two factors may explain this small but significant change; instrumental perceptions based on an evaluation of costs have gained ground, and changes in Spain's position and its material convergence are viewed as a domestic achievement.

A utilitarian stance towards the EU and Spanish membership has gained ground. The people of Spain support the EU depending on their beliefs about how the process of European construction will affect their own country and themselves personally (Szmolka; 1999 74 and 131). This attitude was implicit in the accession negotiations themselves, with the collective imagination accepting that Spain would be willing to pay a high economic price to join the club in view of political priorities, while at the same time, giving unconditional support to the accession project (this may be the reason for the high levels of opinion that membership did not materially benefit Spain

prevailing until 1990). The discourse of political leaders also consolidated this utilitarian viewpoint. The material effort made by Spain to modernise and adapt should be compensated by the Community in the form of aid to assure not only political but also economic integration into Europe. This explains why economic cohesion is a condition of the EU's legitimacy in the perception of Spanish citizens and in the policy of its governments.

In this context, opinions concerning benefits and costs are heavily influenced by specific events and negotiations that could have a negative impact on Spanish interests. The first half of the 1990's saw various conflicts of this kind. In 1992 this was a response to the general economic and political crisis caused by the Gulf War and the rejection of the Maastricht Treaty in Denmark. In 1995, Spanish public opinion was affected by the repercussions of the negotiation of fishing rights with Morocco and a fishing dispute with Canada. Other conflicts have arisen, for example in connection with the planned reduction of the area under vines in Spain and fines for overshooting milk quotas, and these have also had an impact on public opinion, which is generally uninformed in Community issues and ignorant of European realities (Szmolka; 1999: 131). It is therefore not surprising that Spanish people tend to feel that out of all Community policies agriculture and fisheries should be set by national governments, an opinion that runs counter to the general trend. It was also during this period, with its backdrop of economic crisis, that the convergence programme came to be seen as a constraint on macroeconomic policy and, specifically, on the domestic economy. Highly visible costs thus appear to outweigh the enormous, though more obscure, benefits obtained, particularly the flow of structural funds.

The desire to achieve material equality with the EU has had paradoxical effects. Initially, accession to the EU symbolised the almost mythical success of the transition to democracy (Jáuregui; 1999), an accomplishment that was largely political. The next goal was to achieve equal standards of living. In 1992 a study by the CIS showed that Spanish people associated the EU above all with democracy, but this was closely associated with economic values such as free markets, prosperity and competition (Szmolka; 1999: 15).

Thus the EU took on an additional significance as a benchmark against which to measure Spain's progress and as a goal (Rosa et al.;1998:115-117). Political discourse and, particularly, the discourse of successive governments was instrumental in the construction of this perception. In the domestic sphere, the urge to climb to European standards of living and economic development was used to legitimise the modernising policy implemented by the successive Socialist governments from 1982 onwards through the mere appeal to Europe. This discourse linked economic efforts and sacrifices to material integration with the EU.

Such comparisons, and especially those made in terms of material standards, have made the EU into the benchmark for the success and progress of Spain, making the EU at once the cause and end of development (Rosa et al.;1998: 118). The perception of Spain's social backwardness compared to Europe had not yet disappeared by 1994 and a survey carried out in that year found that negative characteristics (e.g. low wages, corruption, a dysfunctional society, etc.) were overwhelmingly associated with Spain and positive aspects with the EU (Szmolka; 1999: 27). This is of course a passing perception, which arose at a time of particular pessimism concerning the EU in Spanish public opinion that does not reflect reality. In fact, Spain has progressively closed the gap in living standards that has marked its relations with the EU, and the country's per capita GDP has actually risen from only 69% of the EU average in 1969 to 83% in 2001.

Ironically, the upward trend in budgetary returns for Spain has not been reflected in a parallel change in opinion regarding the benefits of membership. A 1995 CIS survey revealed widespread scepticism of the effectiveness of Community policy to correct imbalances and differences between the rich and poor countries of the EU. The paradoxical result is that the rise in per capita income to average levels for the EU countries and other partial successes, such as joining EMU in the first wave, are perceived as purely Spanish achievements, and have kindled a certain national pride.

Thus, Spanish public opinion towards the EU may be summed up by noting the existence of a store of favourable attitudes founded in historical memories of the significance of Europe to the recent history of Spain coupled with an increasingly instrumental stance towards both the EU and Spain's membership, which is highly

sensitive to the economic climate and passing conflicts of interest, generally amplified by the media. It is therefore impossible to provide a fully coherent overview and interpretation of Spanish public opinion, though this is a general feature throughout the EU. The discourse of common interests and other values that bind the member States together is constantly contradicted by actions aimed at maximising national or private interests.

2.3 Public opinion and the EU agenda: reform and enlargement

This section can only begin by recognising that Spanish public opinion is but dimly aware of the issues at stake. According to recent data (Eurobarometer 55, July 2001), only 15% of respondents felt they were adequately informed, while 66%, 10 points higher than the EU average, declared that they were not interested in the expansion debate. In line with these results, enlargement is generally not cited as a priority when this question is asked (23% in 1997 and 27% in 1998), and other issues such as employment and financial transfers appear as more urgent.

Contrary to what might be thought, this does not mean that Spanish public opinion is against enlargement. In fact, approximately half of Spanish people have consistently declared themselves to be in favour since 1995 (54% in 1992, 45% in 1997 and 54% in 1998). Moreover, support for expansion in Spain is higher than the Community average and well above the average for countries that are closer to the candidates (e.g. Germany) or where the discourse has consistently favoured expansion, such as the United Kingdom.

Opinion regarding the second major issue, the future of the EU, is affected by the absence of any public debate on the issue by the Spanish political parties. It is therefore not surprising that only a quarter of respondents declared themselves to be interested in the debate, despite their interest in the European institutions. The most popular means of participating in the debate are surveys (21%) and television programmes (11%), both of which are passive opinion-creating instruments. Opinions on the future of Europe collected by the special Eurobarometer 55 survey indicate that the Spanish prefer to discuss citizens' rights, the introduction of the euro and other more general issues such

as unemployment (55%), healthcare (53%), food safety (52%) and environmental protection (43%) in this context.

2.4 Accommodating a multi-level identity

The EU has also served Spain as a means of channelling the expression of a multiple identity capable of accommodating the regional, the national and the European. Llamazares and Reinares (1997) have identified the patterns. The “European identity” is more strongly associated with the Spanish identity than with local identities. Association or identification with Europe tends to be lower in *exclusive* regional or local identities (i.e. where the subject identifies only with a given region) and when a mixed identity predominates (where the subject feels equally a member of the regional community and Spanish). The bond with the European identity is strongest among those who express: a) a mixed identity in which Spanishness predominates (i.e. equally Spanish and a member of the regional community); b) a predominantly Spanish identity (more Spanish than regional); or c) an exclusively Spanish identity. Thus, people with non-exclusive identities (Spanish and regional) are more likely to display a European identity, while a negative relationship exists between exclusive local (regional) identities and the European identity.

This should not, however, lead to the conclusion that Spanish regionalism (nationalism) is incompatible with identification at the supra-national level. In fact, the compatibility of regional and European identities is conditioned by the region in question and identification with certain political parties. The voters of the Catalan nationalist parties identify more clearly with Europe than the average for Spain. This probably means that European integration and the EU are images that strengthen the Catalan identity. On the other hand, the voters of the Galician and Canary Islands nationalist parties show below average identification. Both Galicia and the Canary Islands are autonomous regions where membership of the EU has had negative effects and/or where unresolved conflicts remain (e.g. over fishing and bananas). In these cases, the EU and Europe may be viewed as an “outside” cause of problems. Finally, the Basque nationalist parties, especially Batasuna (formerly HB) are also below the Spanish average in their identification with Europe. In their study, Llamazares and Reinares established a relationship between identification with Europe and the evaluation in each region of the

territorial structure of the Spanish state, which may explain the low level of identification with Europe in the Basque Country. People who maintain an exclusive Spanish identity are more likely to be centralist in outlook, while those who identify exclusively with their region tend to hold strong pro-independence views. Hence, identification with Europe is stronger among people who accept the current territorial make-up of the Spanish state.

We may conclude, then, that the EU has been instrumental for the expression of a multi-level identity, making identification at different institutional levels both possible and acceptable.

3. The EU debate and the political parties

The transition to democracy in Spain was based on an unwritten agreement which included, among other matters, a tacit consensus regarding accession to the EU. For a variety of reasons (explained above), virtually all of the Spanish political parties openly accepted accession, which meant that this *cleavage* had no electoral impact, contrary to the experience of other countries (the EU has been neither a primary nor a secondary issue in any of the elections held in Spain to date). Furthermore, the EU has been largely absent from political programmes with the parties taking a non-ideological stance for a long period, and it has not provoked splits or the emergence of new parties, remaining structurally neutral. In fact, the continuity of Spain's European policy has been underscored by numerous politicians. Other factors have also contributed to this phenomenon, such as the small number of parties that have governed modern Spain (only 3 between 1979 and 2001) and the long tenures of each government. A fourth factor, which is of considerable significance, is that Spain's European policy has been designed and developed both during negotiations and following the country's accession to the EU by a tightly knit group of public servants drawn from the ranks of both the PSOE and the PP. These people have created a close network of personal contacts. Thus figures such as Marín, Matutes, Oreja, Solbes and Westendorp have all served as Secretary of State for EU affairs, Minister, Permanent Representative and in the Mixed Parliamentary Commission (House of Deputies and Senate), as well as in the Commission itself. This has lent Spain's European policy a certain coherence and

continuity. Overall, Spain's European policy was thus structured as a true "policy of State" until the end of the 1990's, rather than being the result of party preferences.

This consensus, however, began to break up after the Maastricht Treaty. Izquierda Unida was the first to opt for a critical discourse, which was followed by the emergence of an increasingly nationalist discourse in the PP. In the 1993 general election the Socialists failed for the first time in 11 years (since 1982) to win an absolute majority and the change in the electoral outlook spurred competition between the parties, taking the debate into areas that had previously remained on the sidelines, such as Europe. In view of the shift in public opinion at the time, it seems likely that a strategic calculation of the potential gains to be had from adopting a harsher tone towards the EU was a factor in the development of the PP's discourse, which began to sound a more nationalist note. This gradual differentiation of party ideologies marks a turning point in what some scholars have described as a process of normalisation (Barbé, 1999; Torreblanca, 2001; Rodrigo, 1998). In short, European policy came to be seen as an extension of domestic party preferences. On this basis, the defence of the national interest in the first place and the conception of Europe and the future of the EU in the second have become electoral issues. The negotiations leading up to the IGC of 1996, Agenda 2000 and the IGC 2000, as well as the general debate in view of the 2004 elections have revealed considerable disagreement and controversy.

Simply put, certain issues defined by Spain's structural position within the EU have until very recently been implicitly or explicitly accepted by the parties within the framework of a basic consensus, but are now being reassessed. From now on, the ideological preferences of each of the political parties will influence their discourse with regard to Europe, as well as their negotiating style. Meanwhile, the remaining areas of consensus may be summarised as follows:

- a. A re-distributive conception of the EU. Spain's structural position and the absence of real convergence require effective redistribution by the EU.
- b. Rejection of any differentiated integration mechanism (enhanced co-operation, hard core, variable speed Europe) that might be *imposed* on Spain.
- c. Defence of Spain's institutional position as a major or "almost major" state.

In the following pages we shall discuss the ideological features of the main Spanish parties taking into account the consensus existing with regard to these three points. A key point here is that for the periods the parties have held power, their policy towards Europe has always been subject to government policy and, specifically, the direction of the Prime Minister. In other words, the European policy of the majority parties, the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the Conservative Party (PP) has been embodied by the party leader as both the source and synthesis of the party line. At the same time, the tradition of consensus and basic agreement among the majority of political parties with regard to the EU has tended to stifle debate. This can be seen in the minimal impact the current discussion of the future of the EU has had in the media and in the parties themselves.

3.1 The “Europeanism” of the PSOE

The Spanish Socialists’ view of the EU has been influenced and conditioned by a number of factors. In the first place, the PSOE inherited a positive vision of European integration derived from the experience of opposition to the Franco regime and linked to the idealism of Ortega y Gasset (Gillespie; 1996: 160). A further factor underlying Socialist attitudes has been the influence of the Socialist International and the German SPD, not to mention Willy Brandt’s personal authority over Felipe González. This influence was behind the PSOE’s ideological turnaround in renouncing Marxism. More specifically, the support the SPD lent the party created a perception of material assistance for Spanish needs. The third major influence on the PSOE’s European policy is realism (in combination with a certain idealism and moderation) in the treatment of European issues. This realism is the product of the successful completion of the accession negotiations and the experience of holding office during the first decade of Spain’s membership of the EU (1986-1996). Socialist discourse concerning the EU has basically been inspired by its leaders (Felipe González and his successors), as would later be the case with the PP.

3.1.1 The PSOE in government

The PSOE has characteristically entoned a federalist discourse, including proposals favourable to Spanish interests. This could be described as wrapping the national interest in a federalist discourse. The mainstay of this approach is the claim that the

contradiction between the national interest and the interest of the Community is a false dichotomy and that progress will be achieved not by pursuing relative gains but by jointly drawing on common advantages (González; 1988). This synergy between the European interest and the national interest has survived as the leitmotiv of the PSOE's discourse right through to its proposals for the future of the European Union outlined in 2001. It is an identity that has been projected both in the domestic sphere and in the EU itself.

From the domestic point of view, European integration served to legitimise and justify the programme of economic modernisation implemented from 1982 onwards. Each parcel of government policy was presented and legitimised in relation to the need to adjust Spain's political and socio-economic structures to its membership of the EU and, after 1992, to highlight the implications of that magical year, which saw the Fifth Centenary of the Discovery, the completion of the Single Market, the Barcelona Olympic Games and the World Exhibition in Seville. Modernisation and Europeanisation were thus harnessed to the PSOE's efforts to retain power as the only possible option to bring about the key changes needed to assure Spain's future (Holman; 1996).

The identity between the national and the European interest was projected beyond the borders of Spain as a highly positive attitude towards the process of integration in the form of openly federalist proposals such as those presented at the 1990 IGC in relation with citizenship and economic and social cohesion. González's good personal relations with other European leaders, particularly Kohl and Mitterrand, and his moderate Euro-optimism enabled him to make substantial gains, while avoiding a narrow focus on the defence of the national interest and simultaneously raising his profile as a statesman.

The change in circumstances that came about in the first half of the 1990's, however, was not without effect on the behaviour of the Socialist government. The economic crisis that broke out in 1992 coincided with the rise of "Euro-scepticism" unleashed by the no-vote in the Danish referendum. Meanwhile, the strict monetary policy needed to gain entry to EMU met with a lukewarm response, and for the first time the government's pro-European rhetoric appeared to lose its attractiveness and legitimising power. This period also saw the first open clashes between Spanish and Community

interests (over agriculture, fishing rights and so on). The accession of the Scandinavian countries and the possibility of expansion eastwards created a periphery syndrome in the Spanish outlook, heightening fears that the country would be sidelined. This undid the automatic identification with Europe and the EU, which had formed a part of the Spanish mindset since the 1970's.

In this context, the PSOE government adopted a new stance from 1993 onwards that was more focused on the defence of the national interest (Gillespie;1996:155) (Barbé;1999), partly because Euro-scepticism, the economic crisis and the climate of austerity, in addition to the EU's new priorities, had reduced the appeal of González's federalist discourse. This nationalist reorientation of policy was also influenced by the electoral threat posed by the conservatives. Nevertheless, González was careful to prevent this discourse from drifting towards openly nationalist policies. He believed that the trend towards a re-nationalisation of policy would in fact only increase the problems the government faced (González;1992: 21). His leadership within the party was also decisive in quietening some critical voices that had begun to demand re-negotiation of or a more flexible approach to the EMU programme. Rather than yield, González made himself into the defender of Community orthodoxy and even in the depths of the recession the government's answer was more rather than less Europe (Barbé; 1996: 12). In his speech to the European Parliament at the close of the Spanish Presidency of 1995, González made an appeal to conserve the spirit of integration and avoid the narrow view, defensive nationalism and destructive rivalries.

3.1.2 The PSOE in opposition

After losing the 1996 general election the Spanish Socialists suffered an internal crisis which ended only with the choice of Rodríguez Zapatero as Secretary General. This did not materially alter the PSOE's discourse with regard to Europe, though it did affect tactics. Against the nationalist discourse of the PP, the Socialists have emphasised their Europeanism as a distinctive feature. In 1999, the Socialist leader J. Borrell publicly declared his support for a federal Europe. The PSOE also criticised the government's stance on the 2000 IGC for its lack of ambition, and Joaquín Almunia made clear the party's preference for a wider agenda including the reorganisation of the Treaties, and

the adoption of a Charter of Basic Rights. Once again, the solution to the risk of Spain's being sidelined as a result of further expansion was "more Europe".

This change in attitude means that political disputes with the Spanish conservatives now extend to European issues and the institutional sphere of the EU. This strategy of confrontation can be discerned in two areas. On the one hand, the PSOE has fiercely criticised the government's European policy, using the issues to gain advantage in the media. One example of this is the clash with the PP government over the cash pay-outs made to the electricity utilities to compensate them for stranded costs in the transition to the deregulated market, an issue on which the PSOE successfully exploited the criticisms levied by the European Commission. On the other hand, the PSOE has clearly aligned itself with certain ideas maintained by their European counterparts that are certainly not to the taste of the PP. The Socialists declared themselves in favour of the employment model proposed by Jospin, which was very unwillingly accepted by the PP government.

A. The position of Spain: constructive influence

Following the election of Rodríguez Zapatero as Secretary General, the PSOE has abandoned the strategy of confrontation both on European and other issues. Instead, the party has sought to fill the gaps left by the PP's European policy and, especially, by the government's role in the design of the EU. Aside from Aznar's personality and his zeal for the defence of Spanish national interests, it seems obvious to the Socialists that his main weakness lies in his limited capacity to make proposals. Thus, the international affairs spokeswoman for the party, Trinidad Jiménez, jibed in an interview on the outcome of the Nice summit that the government seemed to regard Europe as an udder from which to milk funds at the expense of Spain's neighbours. In her opinion, this rather than the loss of votes in the Council, was the real reason for the country's loss of influence in Europe, and she went on to say that Spain would have a role in Europe while it contributed something to the construction of the EU, provided leadership, served as a bridge and a link between different countries and pressed for consensus and formed majorities. Aznar had failed to do this not just in Nice but at any time. This is in line with the thinking of Rodríguez Zapatero when he wrote that, *"It is not votes in the council that will make us more important, but our ability to make relevant proposals*

that are accepted by the majority. In my view, the key is to wield influence and earn respect, to know that our opinion counts” (Rodríguez Zapatero; 2000).

This criticism of Aznar’s performance and the need to make constructive proposals ties in with one of the central themes running through the Socialist discourse. The national interest of Spain and the European or EU’s interest go hand in hand. Indeed, the party’s recent manifesto on the future of Europe opens with a section that is revealingly entitled *Spain for Europe*, which states the belief that “*the national interest has never been inconsistent with the European interest, not only because Europe forms a part of our project for this country, but also because we remain convinced that the further Europe progresses the better we will be able to defend our interests*”.

Nevertheless, the PSOE has not relinquished its realism and continues to recognise that the nation state remains the stage on which it will have to implement its policies, despite any changes in its structure and competencies. Europe will not be constructed against the opposition of the states, but from within them (PSOE; 2001). Striking the same note, Rodríguez Zapatero has written that the true meaning of Europe is to construct an integrated reality in which the very diversity of its components is a cohesive element, in which plurality provides us with identity and in which different levels of power coexist and function without conflict (Rodríguez Zapatero; 2000). This is the a continuation of the familiar federalising discourse that seeks to integrate diversity and assuming the centrality of the State.

B. Proposals: The Future of Europe manifesto

Faithfully following this approach, the PSOE prepared a document entitled *The Future of Europe* in the heat of the debate arising after the Nice summit and Joschka Fischer’s speech. Though this manifesto was published before the Spanish government or the PP had issued any similar document, it was in fact one of the last contributions to the debate and has gone relatively unnoticed. The manifesto is divided into four parts: 1. *Spain for Europe*; 2. *Seeking a More Perfect Union*; 3. *Funding the European Project*; 4. *The Institutions and the Method we Need*. The first part concerns the issue of the compatibility, almost the identity, of the national interest and the European interest, which is discussed above. The two following sections outline a model for the Union

(considered below) and the fourth contains institutional proposals following the agenda set out in Declaration 23 of the Nice Treaty.

The central issues raised by the PSOE concern the Constitution of the EU and the demarcation of powers.

European Constitution. The PSOE believes the name of such a text to be a side issue, and prefers to concentrate on the definition of its legal nature. On this issue, it stays close to the orthodox view of Community law, affirming that it is essential to defend the idea of a European Constitution as a higher law guaranteed by the courts. This instrumental dimension of European Law is what has made the construction of Europe possible and it is founded on the principles of the primacy, direct effect and uniform application of the *acquis communautaire*.

As regards the form of the Constitution, the PSOE is in favour of *simplifying* the Treaties by framing a Constituent Treaty, which would set out the guiding principles and define the basic institutions of the EU in an attractive and straightforward manner. This Treaty would be drafted at a Convention, approved by the respective governments of the member States and ratified by the national parliaments. The Constitutional principles established would then be specifically developed in separate Acts.

Reform system. Any reform of the Constitution would be agreed unanimously and would come into force only after ratification by 4/5 of the member States and the European Parliament. Secondary laws could be reformed by with a 4/5 majority of member States without the need for individual ratification at the national level, but only following a co-decision procedure with the European Parliament.

Demarcation of powers. Power sharing is a matter of particular relevance to Spain for two reasons. Firstly, there is some apprehension that certain proposals for the redistribution of powers are, in reality, a smokescreen for the re-nationalisation of the policies from which Spain has handsomely benefited. Secondly, a debate on the principles underlying the mechanisms by which power is shared between the EU and the member States could spread to the issue of power sharing between regional and central government within Spain itself.

The PSOE identifies three basic criteria for power sharing, which should take place only on the general condition that it would favour the development and coherence of the Union as a whole. These are subsidiarity, in accordance with which each level would perform those functions that it could most effectively and efficiently provide in the service of the citizens; identity, which assumes respect for the powers and institutions proper to each member State; and cohesion. This principle means that all representative powers must guarantee the cohesion of the groups they represent.

These proposals contain two areas of interest. Firstly, they are far from being a mechanism for the re-nationalisation of policy and indeed have considerable *federalising* potential. The new distribution of powers between the member States and the European Union would involve a two-way relationship, in which certain powers would be returned to the nation state and others would be brought within the sphere of common policies. Secondly, the PSOE also projects this process of distribution at the sub-state, or regional level, in contrast to the position of the PP, asserting that it would have significant consequences for internal structures in the case of highly decentralised states such as Spain and Germany. This would provide an opportunity to shape the will of the people through a new dialogue between power at the centre and on the periphery. It is worth noting here that this runs counter to the traditional stance of the Socialist governments in reform processes, where it always argued that internal power sharing was an entirely domestic matter to be resolved within the framework of each country's Constitution.

These three issues, as well as other less striking points, make up the Socialist agenda for 2004. They are joined by changes and amendments to the current policy of the European Union set out in the manifesto under the section “*Seeking a More Perfect Union*” (sic). On the premise that enlargement and deepening of the Union are compatible, the PSOE identifies a body of 5 basic policies (freedom and internal security, economic and development policy, territorial and social cohesion, citizenship and a relevant globalisation policy). The party proposes progressively bringing justice and home affairs (sic) policy into the Community sphere and, most importantly, retrieving the idea of the “diplomatic solidarity clause”, which was finally written out of the Amsterdam Treaty. Under this clause, all of the member States would be required to

defend any one of their peers against a possible attack (this proposal was made by Felipe González years ago).

C. The leitmotiv of the Socialist discourse: Citizenship and cohesion

The concepts of citizenship and cohesion have been the leitmotiv of the Socialist discourse since the time of Felipe González's federalism. After the election of Rodríguez Zapatero as Secretary General, the PSOE has restructured its EU discourse around these two main ideas. The EU and European integration must be placed at the service of the citizen, and solidarity and/or cohesion must be maintained and enhanced. These recurring ideas link the features of the PSOE's ideological identity with a specific programme for the EU.

In his critique of the Nice summit, Rodríguez Zapatero again employed the rhetoric of a Europe of the citizens. The European Union must not remain a government of governments, but develop into a government of and for its citizens. This means that the roll-out of European citizenship and the extension of democracy must remain priority objectives (Rodríguez Zapatero; 2000). The PSOE's manifesto does not, however, contain specific proposals to develop the concept of citizenship, but only general remarks on the importance of enriching the concept of citizenship as a key component of cultural and democratic cohesion within the process of European integration.

In reality, the notion of European citizenship is based on the concept of cohesion. One idea that Zapatero and the PSOE have tirelessly reiterated is the confusion between cohesion as a principle and its material results. Cohesion is understood as being something more than the transfer of financial means in accordance with negotiated settlements. It is essential to rise above sterile disputes along the lines of "how much do you give and how much do you get", especially in view of the forthcoming enlargement of the European Union, and concentrate on the need to maintain cohesion. At the same time, cohesion itself is treated not as a vertical but as a horizontal policy. The concept has been ill defined from the moment the debate opened, and it has been misunderstood as the same thing as the EU's cohesion and structural funds, when what was originally intended was the cohesion of European policies in their entirety (PSOE; 2001).

The Socialists consider cohesion to be the defining feature of the European project and, indeed, of the European identity. Properly understood, the concept of cohesion illuminates and drives our identification as Europeans, and structures the “identity of identities” that represents the model for Europe’s civilisation (PSOE; 2001). Finally, cohesion provides an answer to the negative impacts of globalisation within the policies of the European Union. *“We cannot allow the citizens of the European Union to consider it one of the perpetrators of the injustices caused by economic globalisation any longer, as if it were no more than a new brand representing commercial interests.”*

Inevitably, this federalising discourse of citizenship and cohesion requires some consideration of the financial means available to make it a reality. The basic premise is that Community funding should be established on a sound, objective basis, not only to avoid endless arguments over the sums contributed by States and the budgetary returns they receive, but also to ensure that sufficient funding is actually available to maintain cohesion. The proposals put forward in the manifesto are not particularly innovative or worked out. It merely calls for a review of the European Union’s revenue and expenditures. This proposed budgetary reform would be consistent with the ambitious plan to expand the Union to 25 members and with the principle of cohesion. Should this prove impossible, which is not at all unlikely, the manifesto proposes maintaining the current system and funding expansion through contributions established in proportion to the *per capita* GDP of each member State.

3.2 The *Partido Popular* (PP)

The PP in its current form is the result of the aggregation of various influences. In any case, the party mainstream does not share the traumatic view of Spain’s 20th century history, and it tends to regard the years of the Franco regime more as a period of economic modernisation than isolation from Europe (Torreblanca; 2001). As a result, the PP only partly shares the mythical belief in Europe that is the common theme running through the Spanish outlook. It is not surprising then the tight defence of the nation state, and more so since Aznar won power. In a speech made at the Interparliamentary Conference of the European People’s Party in 1995, Aznar set out a vision of Europe that was close to the Gaullist notion of a “Europe des nations”. The nation state and sovereignty are (or should be) the basis for the integration process

(Bernárdez; 1995: 309). Aznar's thinking on European integration is rooted in the conviction that Spain is one of the great historic nations of Europe and that the European project must remain absolutely compatible with respect for national identities (Rodrigo; 1996: 25). In Aznar's own words, "*The Spain of the year 2000 is an old nation with no complexes, and it is ready to take its place in a globalised world*" (Aznar; 2000).

The recovery of a more nationalist discourse that concentrates on the defence of the national interest has been described as a part of the process of "normalisation" (Torreblanca; 2001) which originates from three sources. Firstly, the mood of Spanish public opinion has changed, becoming more sceptical of integration, and the rhetorical defence of the national interest may therefore provide electoral advantage. In the second place, the course of European integration during the 1990's has made the process more susceptible to nationalist reactions. Thirdly, it has ceased to be necessary to appeal to the EU to legitimise restrictive macroeconomic policies. A further point would be the gradual replacement of politicians from the Christian Democratic tradition, who tend to be more pro-European, within the government. The PP government has completed the reconstruction of a nationalist discourse that was timidly begun by the later Socialist administrations. Where the Socialists made modernisation within the EU a priority, the PP concentrated on joining the third phase of EMU as its prime objective. Its success in attaining this goal, which has been entirely ascribed to the merits of the PP's own policy and management, regardless of the efforts made by previous governments or the situation of the international economy, has strengthened Aznar's most basic intuitions. He conceives international politics as a competition in which the final results depend, exclusively, on the strength of each of the players (Rodrigo; 1998: 30).

3.2.1 Inspiration of the PP's European policy

These convictions have resulted in a certain individualism in the conduct of foreign policy, evident in the government's Atlanticism, the break with Spain's traditional allies and the projection of a economic liberalism onto the EU.

A. "Atlanticism", an alternative to Europeanism?

Though the question is rhetorical, it is true that the PP has been more inclined to take the position of the United States into account than any previous Spanish government or, indeed, many other European governments. This is the result of a gradual change in the direction of Spanish foreign policy towards alignment with other traditionally Atlanticist governments (e.g. the United Kingdom). A number of events confirm this change. In 1998, for example, Aznar was the only Continental leader publicly to support Anglo-American bombing of Iraq (shortly after a visit by the American Secretary of State to Madrid). More recently, Aznar has adopted a certain unilateralism, showing himself to be receptive to the American Strategic Defence initiative in spite of the reticence of other governments and anticipating any common position. The French sociologist Alan Touraine noted this shift (accompanied by Berlusconi), which he regards as evidence of a certain split within the EU (Touraine; 2001). One particularly revealing episode was the PP government's decision to sell the nationalised Spanish defence concern, Santa Bárbara to the American firm General Dynamics rather than its German competitor, which ironically supplies the technology for the production of tanks in Spain. Apart from the Atlanticist leanings of the government, this affair combined a shift in the traditional pattern of Spain's alliances with a liberal view of economic integration, two defining features of the PP's European policy.

B. Changing allies

The UCD and PSOE governments were close to the Franco-German partnership and assumed its initiatives and plans as their own. It is thus possible to draw a clear distinction between the PP and its predecessors in government. The UCD and PSOE administrations regarded the Franco-German pair as the embodiment of integrationist orthodoxy and, therefore, adhesion to this partnership was automatically beneficial given the fit between the European and the national interest. In contrast, the PP government has sought temporary alliances based on the coincidence of interests, ideological affinity and the personal sympathies of Aznar. The European policy of the PP governments has been marked, above all, by a series of clashes with the German administration and sympathy for Great Britain, which has traditionally represented positions that were at once opposed to integration and contrary to the interests of Spain. This positive relationship with the British government was cemented at a series of

conferences on employment held in Seville (November 1998) and Oxford (1999), which culminated with the presentation of the Anglo-Spanish *Strategy for Sustainable Development* at the Lisbon summit, which is discussed below. This coincidence with British positions has at times given the impression that Spain is moving inexorably towards the “Euro-sceptic camp”.

The list of disputes with the German government is long. It begins with the budgetary wrangle that accompanied discussion of the Agenda 2000 and continues with the Spanish government’s opposition to certain German initiatives at the IGC 2000. In this case, Spain opposed the withdrawal of the veto over enhanced co-operation, although it finally backed down, while Aznar reacted with distaste to German proposals in the area of federalism and Constitutionalism. Although the erosion of relations between Spain and Germany has been ascribed to the passivity of the Spanish government and the lack of personal sympathy between Aznar and Schröder, it is also true that the two countries have opposing interests (mainly in relation to budgetary issues) within the EU. Thus, Spain has reacted vigorously to German proposals to renationalise the CAP. The last chapter (to date) of this ongoing tussle came when Aznar presented a memorandum calling for the avoidance of “statistical convergence” as a result of the enlargement of the EU, by which the Spanish government meant an automatic improvement in per capita income due to the accession of poorer countries, since this would be detrimental to the Spanish regions. The Spanish memorandum met with a harsh response, not particularly for its contents, but because of the tactics of its presentation. It was tabled in the course of discussions on enlargement linked to the German demand for a 7-year transition period for the free movement of workers. After months of dispute, the Spanish government withdrew its demands, but not until it had provoked considerable displeasure both in Germany and among certain of its partners.

The tense relations between Spain and Germany can be summed up in one anecdotal episode. On the eve of the Hispano-German summit of September 2000, the influential German weekly *Die Zeit* published an article entitled “The difficult European” which discussed Aznar and his European policy. The article mentioned a number of episodes which had reinforced the intransigent reputation of the Spanish government (the Amsterdam summit, green taxes, negotiations on enlargement to the East), as well as giving air to certain stereotypes (delusions of grandeur) and German complaints (the

cost of Spain to the German taxpayer). Aside from its (limited) accuracy and journalistic quality, this article was intentionally provocative and had an impact on the Spanish government. It was translated by the Office of the Government Spokesman, and more than likely discussed in government circles.

C. The liberal vision of economic integration

As well as Atlanticism and the change in the traditional pattern of Spain's alliances, the third defining feature of the PP's individualism has been its projection of a liberal economic programme within the European sphere. In contrast to the federalising initiatives of the Socialist governments (citizenship and economic and social cohesion), the main contribution made by the PP administration to the integration process has been the *Strategy for Sustainable Development* initiative presented jointly with Tony Blair in the Lisbon process. These proposals are based on an eminently liberal macroeconomic model resting on three main pillars (Aznar; 2000):

- a) Progress towards a knowledge economy and society through the implementation of tailored R&D policies, structural economic reform and the completion of the single market.
- b) Modernisation of the European social model without delay. This is to be achieved through a combination of investment in human capital, measures aimed at preventing social exclusion and employment policies.
- c) Stable economic growth of around 3% per year, accompanied by the relevant economic reforms. Specifically, this would require a medium-term market deregulation programme. The development of new technologies has been hampered by excessive regulation, *dirigisme*, and the fragmented structure of national markets.

These points are a translation of the PP's liberal view of European integration. In the opinion of both Aznar and Blair, governments should avoid *dirigisme* or any attempt to interfere in the workings of the market. They should refrain from intervening in business decisions and avoid the imposition of overly strict economic and social regulations. The new role of government is rather to create the conditions for job creation by private enterprise. This vision also has institutional repercussions. National

co-ordination is considered more effective than harmonisation, and intergovernmental co-ordination than the EU's classic supra-national structure in the sphere of economic policy, which should remain under the direction of the Heads of State and/or Government in the European Council (Aznar and Blair; 2000).

3.2.2 European style and projects of the PP government

A. Style: the national interest as a priority

Against this background, the PP's European policy has been characterised by pragmatism in the absence of a constructive discourse and by its marked utilitarianism. Aznar set out his vision at the first opportunity in the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference. Reform should be guided by the principles of gradualism, a single institutional framework and common objectives (though at different speeds). The Union should provide political and financial support for those members that might be unable to achieve common objectives at the first attempt (with a view to EMU) and deadlines for implementation should be long (Aznar 1995; 173). At first sight, this discourse differs little from Community orthodoxy, though two aspects of the government's negotiating style reveal a more nationalist stance. In the first place, Aznar's identification of national priorities indicated a certain ignorance of the mechanics of the Community. Specifically, the priorities identified were a) to obtain a more precise definition of the principle of subsidiarity (traditionally regarded by Spanish governments as a British ploy to weaken the Commission, an institutional ally of Spain); b) Reform of the Union's budget (a issue that was not on the agenda of the IGC); and c) the abolition of the right of asylum for citizens of member States. The last point was presented as a key objective of the Spanish government, though it was poorly argued and negotiated, despite its merits (Closa; 1998).

Aznar has taken on an *assertive style*, which features the use of the veto in defence of Spanish interests –specifically an increase in the number of Council votes to offset the loss of one of its Commissioners. As Aznar himself made clear at the 2000 IGC, Spain aspires to representation in accordance with its demographic size and the restitution of the original balance, which has deteriorated (sic) as a result of successive enlargements. The presentation of Aznar's memorandum concerning regional policy in 2001 (discussed above) once again clearly showed the PP's focus on national priorities. The

government event went so far as to veto the German proposal for a transitional period on the free movement of labour not on grounds of substance but to force through its own proposals. Naturally, the majority of the Member States, not to mention the candidate countries, were affronted at the Spanish stance. The only reward obtained by the Spanish government was a commitment from the Commission to prepare a report on the consequences of enlargement for cohesion policy.

B. Aznar's European project and the PP

If anything characterises the PP's European policy, and above all the policy inspired by Prime Minister Aznar, it is the absence of any Europeanist discourse or appeal to European objectives either to legitimise Spanish aims or in the form of a project in its own right. IGCs have been approached pragmatically and gradually. At the 2000 Conference leading to the Nice Treaty, the Spanish government was keen to concentrate exclusively on the "loose ends" of the Amsterdam Treaty (membership of the Commission, redistribution of Council votes and the extension of qualified majority voting to new areas). It was asserted that a wider agenda of issues might affect the timetable for expansion and the Union's ability to accept new members by 2003. In fact, the Spanish government was against including any discussion of *enhanced co-operation* in the agenda, and in a letter signed jointly with Tony Blair expressed its concern that the Union ran the risk of creating second class citizens as a result of a "two-speed Europe" (Aznar and Blair; 2000). In reality, the government harboured the apprehension that enhanced co-operation could become an instrument for excluding Spain and, fundamentally, would affect structural funds and environmental policy. In the end, Aznar accepted the inclusion of this point in the Nice agenda on condition that it would not be applied to both policies. While it is true that Aznar's position merely reflects constant Spanish priorities in a changing context, it does so almost without any discourse of European scope.

Aznar has repeatedly expressed his distrust of proposals for a European "federation" and/or "Constitution", voicing doubts about their effectiveness and value to the definition of the Union's future. Instead, he has proposed a content-oriented approach. In any event, Aznar has set two clear limits to both federalism and the mooted Constitution. Without going into the meaning of the term "federalism", Aznar has cautioned that any change in the powers of the Union would require the agreement of all

concerned, since European states jealously guard their national and international identity. Thus, any federalising process would require unanimous support and any member State would therefore have a veto (Aznar; 2000). In a seminar on the subject of 'A Europe without Frontiers', held in Germany (January 19th, 2001), Aznar attacked federalism, again on the grounds that European states are jealous in their defence of the national identity. Aznar declared himself in favour of a pragmatic approach and against abstract concepts¹. On the issue the matter of a European Constitution, Aznar believes there is nothing to prevent a text that is formally a Treaty from containing Constitutional provisions. For him, this is an attractive approach with considerable scope to accommodate ideas for the simplification and consolidation of the existing Treaties (Aznar; 2000).

Unlike many European leaders, Aznar has not produced any writings reflecting on the future of Europe, though this is in consonance with his general preference for pragmatic *ad hoc* solutions. In October 2001, however, the Prime Minister did present a series of rather unsystematic ideas, which included some new thinking in anticipation of specific proposals (Aznar; 2001). Neither the moment nor the stage chosen for their presentation was ideal, however. This took place on October 8th, 2001 at the headquarters of the Commission during the sparsely attended ceremony for the award of a "*Fundación del Mérito Europeo*" prize to Viviane Reding. More importantly, these ideas were presented considerably after the publication of the PSOE's proposals and only hours after the US bombing campaign in Afghanistan had begun. This meant that they not only appeared as a late response to the manifesto of the main opposition party but were also scarcely newsworthy.

Aznar's reflections were not in fact set out in the form of a document, but comprise the text of an address which is somewhat disorganised in structure and shows clear signs of improvisation by the speaker². Starting from his familiar position of questioning the utility of formulating artificial archetypes that run the risk of damaging the existing structure of Europe, Aznar goes on to outline four substantive proposals in connection with the four individual issues included in Declaration 23 of the Nice Treaty. These

¹ *El País*, January 20th, 2001.

² Vid. *El País*, October 15th, 2001. In the text, Aznar himself mentions that he has included a reference to the future of European in his address at the request of Mrs. V. Reding.

proposals, then, concern the simplification of the Treaties, the role of national parliaments, the distribution of powers and the “Constitutionalisation” of the Charter of Basic Rights. In addition, Aznar makes an aside to mention the matter of the EU budget.

1. Simplification of the Treaties. In Aznar’s opinion, the coherence of the Community system would be enhanced if the Treaties were gradually to be Constitutionalised. He does not, however, clarify what he means by “Constitutionalisation”, though he mentions two key elements. On the one hand, the Charter of Basic Rights should be included in the Treaties in its entirety and the right of individuals to take their cases to the Court of Justice to enforce the terms of the Charter should be strengthened. At the same time, “Constitutionalisation” would entail the creation of a single legal personality for the European Union, clarifying its representation and profile on the international scene while allowing the Community institutions to function in a more uniform manner.
2. The role of the national parliaments. Aznar’s premise is that there is no democratic deficit in the Union. It is, however, necessary to adjust the traditional mechanisms of democratic accountability to the new demands of European integration. The first step to enhancing democratic legitimacy would be to frame a binding Charter concerning the action of national parliaments with regard to European Union issues. The text of this *Charter of the National Parliaments* would demarcate the system for and types of intervention in European Union affairs available to the national parliaments. It would also include a mandatory code of conduct for national parliaments and would establish minimum requirements for parliamentary control. This would serve to strengthen the role of national parliaments in circumstances where the Union was obliged to assume powers not specifically provided for in the Treaties. Thus, the approval of both national parliaments and the European Parliament would be required wherever it was deemed necessary for the Union to exercise new powers in order to achieve its aims.
3. Distribution of powers between the EU and the member States. Aznar’s basic position is that debate should centre on the manner in which the Union and its member States co-ordinate their activity in order to ensure the effective

execution and administration of Community powers rather than the distribution of powers as such. Having raised this issue, however, Aznar considers that it should be confined to the best manner of sharing power between the Union and its member States, and that any attempt to widen debate to other areas (i.e. to the regions in general and specifically the autonomous regions of Spain) would jeopardise the whole of the European Union. As for the specific power sharing system, Aznar questions whether a single one-size-fits-all menu can be created for the distribution of powers between the European Union and its member States. This is because the Union comprises states with widely differing Constitutional traditions; Europe has highly centralised states, semi-centralised states, one state of autonomous regions (Spain) and various federal states. In this light, it is clear that the system must be flexible, and all the more so considering that the European Union itself is a dynamic creation intended to pursue specific goals and ends. A rigid power sharing system might therefore prevent the Union from acquiring powers in areas where its intervention was needed, for example because of technological change or sociological developments in any of the member States.

4. Means and budget. Finally, Aznar points out that budgetary debate is inevitable, even though it is not on the agenda for 2004. This is so because financial means are not well attuned to the needs arising out of the Community's powers.

3.3 *Izquierda Unida*: Critical Europeanism

Izquierda Unida is a united left coalition formed around the PCE. In general, it has maintained a pro-European discourse, while criticising the neo-liberal profile of the EU, which it considers has hardened since the Maastricht Treaty and as a result of the EMU programme. In fact, differences in the evaluation of the Maastricht Treaty were one of the root causes of the split with *Nueva Izquierda*, a grouping which took a more positive stance towards the EU. In the opinion of *Izquierda Unida*'s former leader, Julio Anguita, monetary union signalled the end of any prospects for the creation of a democratic, social and political Europe. The EU's programme having been completed, the liberal proposals advanced by Aznar and Blair have taken over. "*The tandem formed by Aznar and Blair will continue to be a drag on the construction of a social*

Europe.” (Llamazares; 2000). The eastward enlargement of the EU is considered merely as the extension of a free trade area.

Izquierda Unida’s critique of the EU’s liberal profile has gradually converged with a nationalist outlook. This is clearly evident in the assessment of the results of Nice made by the party’s current leader, G. Llamazares. “The government has failed to achieve its objective of winning equal status with the big four, although it has moved closer. Our ability to block Council decisions has grown weaker, and our representation in the Parliament has shrunk in proportional terms. All of this represents a very poor balance for Spain’s influence in each of the three institutions forming this “magic triangle” and, in a wider sense, for Spain’s influence over the future construction of Europe. The government has failed to make sufficient capital out of Declaration 50 of the Amsterdam Treaty, which guaranteed it compensation in the form of a relatively larger say in Council decisions. Prime Minister Aznar has sacrificed our representation in the European Parliament by accepting a reduction from 64 to 50 MEPs, making Spain the country that has lost the most seats in the new distribution in proportional terms.” (Llamazares; 2000).

This nationalist interpretation of events runs counter to IU’s early Europeanism, creating a contradictory discourse. In the same article, Llamazares criticises Aznar for not taking any ideas of his own to Nice while affirming IU’s belief that the EU should be oriented towards the construction of an integrated economic and social space with sufficient resources, and the creation of a political Union capable of contributing the historical experience of Europe and its universal values to the process of globalisation. To achieve this, it will be necessary to show greater intelligence and political generosity, and to concede a larger role to the citizen.

3.4 The nationalist parties

The EU and the integration process have provided the nationalist parties (i.e. Spanish regionalists) with a new political arena which extends their structural possibilities and new rhetorical devices to reinforce and/or redefine their classic ideological positions. All of the nationalist parties coincide in their demand for the participation of stateless

nations, although they disagree over the ultimate objectives of their claims. The following discussion concerns the three historic nations of Spain: Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia.

3.4.1 Catalan nationalism: the redefinition of a project

Europe and the EU have a clearly defined role in Catalan nationalist discourse. In the first place, this discourse links up with a wider political entity which is both modern and pluralist, and this lends credibility to nationalist demands that might otherwise be regarded as merely provincial. Secondly, Europe serves as an analogy for a non-state authority. And thirdly, Catalan demands for greater territorial autonomy are reinforced by the idea of a Europe that exists over and above the configuration of its states (Laitin; 1997: 293).

The traditional goal of nationalism was to achieve independence and self-determination or, in other words, to acquire the condition of a sovereign state. The EU has, however, relativised this scenario. Thus, *“The objective of the Catalan nationalists is to advance towards the construction of the Europe of nations”* (Convergència; 2000). There are two reasons for this shift in the nationalists’ goal. The erosion of the classical attributes of statehood has relativised the perception of existing states as oppressive, and this has made the demand for independence less urgent. *Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya* now maintains that, *“the declining influence of statism (...) has opened the doors to a direct presence in Europe together with other nations, who are the best representatives of the peoples and national realities of the EU”* (Convergència; 2000).

Meanwhile, the current development of the EU has elicited a certain realism with regard to the actual prospects for the creation of an independent state within the EU. The Catalan nationalists believe that the region should be able to express itself politically within the framework of the Union, which would require a series of specific actions. Internally, it is a question of forcing the Spanish state to recognise the plurality of nations within its own borders in order to create mechanisms capable of integrating the will of minorities into the will of the state as a whole. Action in the EU arena would involve a) effective economic, social and cultural leadership; b) building links to other

European regions; and, most importantly, c) promoting the presence of Catalonia within the European institutions and defending the Catalan language.

The position of the Catalan nationalists with regard to the current European agenda reflects the usual stance of Spanish political parties: reform should bring the institutions closer to the people and, above all, enlargement should not weaken the EU or have a negative impact on less developed regions (Convergencia; 2000).

3.4.2 PNV: furthering the cause of independence

The PNV's position is more radical, since the mainstream Basque nationalists consider the concepts of nationhood and the indivisibility of the Basque people to be fundamental and non-negotiable, together with their demands for sovereignty, self-determination and independence (PNV; 2000). The party's maximum goal is independence within Europe, which has sometimes been symbolically represented in the aspiration of becoming the thirteenth star on the EU's flag. PNV leaders have on occasion set a medium-term horizon of 10 to 15 years for the realisation of these demands³.

The theoretical bases employed by the PNV in its analysis of current realities and the construction of this discourse are, to say the least, surprising. The party considers that the biggest obstacle to European construction is the "old-fashioned nationalism of the States" (sic), which prevents participation by the stateless nations. On the other hand, it is an enthusiastic supporter of subsidiarity as a mechanism to guarantee the participation of sub-state level entities. This is a catch-all logic, since subsidiarity is not based on the concept of difference and does not always or *necessarily* operate in favour of lower level entities. The PNV has criticised the Spanish government's failure to sign the 1997 Declaration of the federal states of the EU (Germany, Austria and Belgium) concerning power sharing.

The PNV has been more reticent than the Catalan nationalists to make use of the EU as a rhetorical instrument, perhaps because it is aware that it would be very difficult for the

³ Xavier Arzallus in declarations to *El País*, October 22nd 2001.

member States to accept a discourse that combines demands for independence and sovereignty within the framework of accession to the EU as a full member.

3.4.3 The BNG: a critique of the “mercantile and liberal Europe” from the periphery

Although the BNG does not oppose either European integration or the EU as such, it rejects the current model and, in particular, the Maastricht design. The party’s position criticises the current economic model as biased in favour of the trade and financial interest of the core countries. This model is seen as inappropriate to the interests of the Union’s peoples. Furthermore, Galicia’s position (in both geographical and industrial terms) is peripheral, remote and subordinate and this has meant that its basic industries, which comprise agriculture, fisheries and shipbuilding, have steadily been dismantled (BNG; 2000).

The BNG’s strategy is nonetheless realist. The EU is an inescapable fact and the BNG is obliged to maintain a presence in its institutions, either directly or indirectly via the Spanish state, in order to defend the interests of the Galicias. The party considers that the Committee of the Regions, which might provide some avenues of interest, is inadequate given the diversity of its members and the fact that its opinions are not binding. Substantially, then, the BNG asks for the re-negotiation of the Accession Treaty of Accession with the aim of defending the sectors affected.

4. Civil society: unions, business and the media

Other social partners aside from the political parties play only a minor role in the debate. This does not, of course, mean that they do not hold clear positions, and indeed the CEOE exerted considerable pressure during the accession negotiations to obtain better terms for the deregulation of the industrial sector. Equally, the unions (UGT and CCOO) voiced loud criticisms of the monetary adjustment programme in connection with EMU. Both the employers’ confederation and the unions agree in accepting the integration process, although they tend to interpret it in accordance with their own particular preferences either in terms of support for industry and competitiveness or in terms of the development of a “social Europe”. These social partners, as well as other

groupings such as the highly active farmers' associations, tend to mobilise in response to specific events or negotiations that affect their particular interests. This has had the effect of creating synergies between mobilisations, which are always reactive and defensive, and a discourse of protest against real or imagined grievances.

The media and in particular the press reflect the duality between Europeanism and Europeanist nationalism that permeates the political parties. Of the three national broadsheets, *El País* has traditionally adopted a pro-European line, which is close to the positions held by the Socialist party and is critical of the PP's European policy. *ABC* follows a strongly conservative editorial line and has never made any secret of its nationalist leanings, although this does not translate into out-and-out anti-Europeanism, or its support for the policies of the PP. The paper was also sharply critical of the Socialist government. The line taken by *El Mundo* towards European policy does not appear to be particularly driven by nationalism, although a certain populism has at times led the paper to adopt a highly critical tone based on the defence of the national interest. The final negotiation of the Nice Treaty may have been the high point in the volume of EU-related information in the press and other media, while the issues on the agenda (basically the debate concerning the distribution of votes) brought out common concerns that centred on the defence of Spanish "power" in the EU.

PART II: THE SPANISH PRESIDENCY OF 2002

1. The experience of earlier presidencies

The aim of this section is to clarify the context of Spain's third Presidency (2002) and describe certain recurrent themes and their links to the domestic basis of Spanish European policy. The comparison of successive presidencies held by the same country allows us to assess continuities and change in political attitudes, priorities and the underlying conception of the process of European integration. The agenda for the 2002 Presidency provides some indication of perceptions of the integration process, as well as continuities and/or changes in outlook, at the same time as permitting the identification of the national priorities included in the programme. Because Spain has held the Presidency of the EU on only two other occasions (1989 and 1995), a detailed analysis of these tenures is possible, although this circumstance reduces the depth of the cases considered, which may prevent us from reaching any definitive conclusions. An *a priori* forecast of the likely result of the Spanish Presidency would suggest that certain progress is likely with Spanish priorities such as anti-terrorist measures and, in general, the development of the third pillar as a result of recent international events.

1.1 The 1989 Presidency

The 1989 Presidency took place during the second legislature of the PSOE administration in a year of European, regional and local elections. The PSOE had held an absolute majority in the Spanish parliament since the elections of 1986, although it had lost a significant number of seats compared to 1982. Among other considerations, the Presidency provided the government with an opportunity to polish its image, which had become somewhat tarnished by the end of the legislature, and to gain electoral capital from the prestige associated with sound administration. Nevertheless, the Presidency represented a challenge for the government, because of concern among certain EU member States about the ability of a recent arrival with a tradition of bureaucratic rigidity to cope with the organisational demands inherent in tenure.

For its part, the government was determined to make the Presidency a milestone *en route* to the modernisation of democratic Spain (Barbé; 1996: 14) with effects that would go far beyond the merely organisational aspects. It also saw the Presidency as an opportunity to put the finishing touches to Spain's relations with the EU (Fernández Ordoñez; 1989). Above all, the image the government sought to project, as González himself made clear, was one of dignity and, above all, prestige (Kirchner; 1992: 105).

The foreign minister at the time, F. Fernández Ordóñez, described the mood of the 1989 Presidency as institutional and realist, while both observers and Spanish functionaries were at one in defining it as an "administrative Presidency", since no fresh initiatives were launched. Instead, it took over the agenda inherited from the preceding German Presidency, at the same time faithfully reflecting the working programme of the Commission (Solbes et al.: 1988). The big issues of the 1980s (enlargement, SEA and financial perspectives) had already been resolved and the Spanish government thus inherited the completion of the single market, the European Social Charter and the definition of the stages of Monetary Union. Certain particularly Spanish concerns were added to this legacy, such as the treatment of environmental problems specific to southern Europe and certain measures concerning the position of EU citizens (elimination of border controls, right of residence and political rights) in anticipation of later proposals regarding European citizenship.

Spanish initiatives were most clearly discernible in the external agenda and European Political Co-operation (EPC). Spain had found an instrument to widen the scope and increase the effectiveness of its foreign policy both in traditional areas of interest and in new spheres (Sabá; 1996: 187). Latin America was a priority objective, as was the Mediterranean basin (particularly negotiations with Morocco). A third area of interest was relations with the EFTA countries, where Spain hoped to obtain agreement for its proposal that participation in the single market would require sharing in the cohesion effort.

Evaluations of the results of the 1989 Presidency are uneven. While some observers felt that it surpassed expectations, especially with regard to issues related to the single market and political co-operation (Kirchner; 1992: 100), others consider that progress in priority areas was frustrating, though largely because of the limited room for manoeuvre

in key issues (Story and Grugel; 1991: 36). Specifically, some progress was made with the single market, but perhaps the most spectacular success was the adoption of the Delors Report on EMU and the first stage of preparations. The importance of this matter was underlined by the Spanish government's decision to bring the peseta into the European Monetary System just before the summit, thereby emphasising that participation in EMU was essential to Spain, even in view of the domestic costs it would involve. The Presidency was, however, obliged to refrain from forcing the issue of an intergovernmental conference (IGC) in order to avoid a direct confrontation with Margaret Thatcher, whose opposition prevented the adoption of the European Social Charter in Madrid. González himself described the agreement as possible rather than desirable. Spain also failed to make progress with its proposals concerning citizenship and obtained little of tangible value in the EPC towards Latin America, eventually making do with a declaration on the debt issue and an increase in development aid funding. From a different angle, however, the results favoured Spain's image within the EU and had an effect on the electoral prospects of the PSOE and of Felipe González (Story and Grugel; 1991: 36)

1.2 The second Presidency: 1995

The circumstances of the second Spanish Presidency were considerably different, both internally and externally. At home the Socialists, by that time in their fourth term of office, had formed a minority government with the support of the Catalan nationalists of *Convergència i Unió* (CiU). The government was trying to weather a storm of criticism from the *Partido Popular* (PP) and *Izquierda Unida* (IU) due to the discovery of a number of cases of political corruption. The Presidency thus came at a time of domestic weakness and represented a life raft for the Socialists, providing international prestige to neutralise the effects of its frailty at home (Barbé;1996:18).

Externally, Spain had consolidated its position and prestige within the Union. However, the climate had turned slightly "Euro-sceptical" due to public apprehensions over the Maastricht Treaty. This had the effect of reining in the ambitions of the EU's member States and reduced the value of the Spanish government's traditionally pro-integration rhetoric.

Because of these factors, the style of the second Presidency sounded a rather different note, despite a certain continuity. On the one hand, the government adopted a slightly more nationalist tone, at least at the symbolic level, as shown by the choice of logo (the letter “ñ” with the colours of the Spanish flag in reference to a dispute with the Commission, which had rejected the ban on the sale of computer keyboards lacking the offending letter in Spain). On the other, Spain tried hard to co-ordinate with the preceding Presidencies held by France and Germany, which had created a co-ordination mechanism (the Spanish government was only invited after the agenda had already been established).

The Spanish Presidency set four main lines of action announced in the Spanish parliament:

- The relaunch of the European economy in a socially integrated framework
- A Europe open to the world in a context of stability, security, freedom and solidarity
- A Europe open to its citizens
- The foundations for the Europe of the future: the 1996 ICG

These four areas were accompanied by a lengthy catalogue of specific proposals. The first included macroeconomic proposals and, in the main, prolonged the administration of outstanding issues in the EU (with priorities such as the definition of an employment policy launched at the European Council meeting in Essen and preparation for the third stage of EMU), but without any major new initiatives. The external agenda was set by recurring themes (relations with Eastern Europe and Asia and the definition of a new model for relations with the USA), as well as two issues vital to Spain's interests: relations with Latin America and the countries of the Mediterranean basin. Objectives in the third area were summed up in policies aimed at establishing direct contact with the citizens and strengthening the third pillar. This last was dealt with very extensively, as a traditional Spanish priority.

The results of the Presidency reflect this agenda. The European Council confirmed the timetable for EMU and chose the name “euro” for the new currency. The most visible results, however, were in the field of external relations (Grasa; 1997), taking in the

Declaration of Madrid, the Transatlantic Agenda with the USA, the Inter-regional Agreement with MERCOSUR and, last but not least, the Euro-Mediterranean Conference. This had been a Spanish priority and was based on intensive preparatory work. The Spanish commissioners, Matutes and Marín, had played a central role in obtaining funding for the Renewed Mediterranean Programmes and the approval by the Commission of the report entitled *Strengthening the Mediterranean Policy of the EU: proposals for a Euro-Mediterranean association* (Baixeras; 1996: 157). Spain had also taken care to negotiate strategic issues in advance in order to improve the chances of success at the Conference. During the German Presidency, the government had convinced the EU member States of the need to link the allocation of a fixed sum from the PHARE Programme set up for Eastern Europe to similar behaviour on the part of Mediterranean countries. Under their Presidency (first semester of 1995), the Germans had assented to the allocation of a sum equal to 70% of the financing set aside for Eastern Europe, and this agreement provided the material basis for the Euro-Mediterranean Conference.

The European Council meeting held in Madrid established a calendar for the agenda on the future of the Union. In González's opinion, there was some risk that this calendar would prove a drag on the EU and he therefore felt that the main challenge of the Presidency was to steer Europe towards the right course (González; 1995/96). The approach of the Presidency was to separate and order the outstanding tasks (a strategy that also furthered Spanish interests, naturally enough), which included the 1996 IGC, expansion negotiations, managing the impact of enlargement on the EU's policies and resources, the third phase of EMU, the re-negotiation of financial perspectives and the future of the EU. The Westendorp Report was adopted as the starting point for the Presidency and eventually served as the basis for the negotiation of the Amsterdam Treaty.

2. Towards the third Presidency: 2002

The third Spanish Presidency will take place in a new internal and external context. Internally, the government will take up the Presidency half way through its term and has not suffered any significant erosion of its electoral base, in contrast to the PSOE Presidencies. Aznar has tried hard to remove any internal obstacles. Thus, the *Partido*

Popular's 14th Congress, initially planned for January 2002, has been brought forward to December 2001 to prevent the debate regarding Aznar's successor from upstaging the Presidency⁴. For the PP and particularly for Aznar, the Presidency represents an opportunity to earn international prestige and a chance to soften the ever more widespread perception of Spain's intransigent and uncompromising attitude to the defence of its interests, which has resulted from the government's tenacious struggle to hold on to budget returns in the form of structural funds. In fact, the programme for the Presidency shows considerable continuity and is imbued with the same clearly pro-European character as those of 1989 and 1995. The stated objective is, after all, the consolidation of the agreements reached on various issues dealt with during previous Presidencies.

The external context of the Presidency will be conditioned by the general elections due in France and Germany, the two motors of the EU. This could lessen the room for manoeuvre in negotiations, thereby hampering the Spanish Presidency. The impact of the September 11th terrorist attack on the United States has lent a new urgency to certain issues, particularly including anti-terrorist measures (which are very dear to the Spanish government) linked to the Third Pillar and common defence policy. Aznar has made this quite clear: *"The Union can and should organise its response to these new threats by taking care, at least, of two issues. Firstly, we must speed up the creation of a common space of liberty, security and justice. Secondly, I propose that the basic objectives of foreign and security tasks henceforth include the phenomenon of terrorism."* (Aznar; 2001). Obviously, the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue will also have an impact on the recovery of the Barcelona process.

Displaying a certain lack of regard for institutional niceties, the government presented the objectives of the Spanish Presidency to the press before parliament in September 2001. The government has retrieved the "more Europe" slogan discussed above and has designed a logotype that is supposed to represent a stylised bull "pushing" (or goring) a star. The twelve specific objectives of the Presidency are grouped into three main areas comprising outstanding EU issues, EU economic policy, and the second and third pillars. Overall, the programme reflects continuity with the preceding Presidencies with

⁴ *El País*, October 16th 2000.

the aim of consolidating some issues and pushing ahead with the challenges represented by the physical launch of the euro, enlargement and the preparation of the 2004 Intergovernmental Conference.

OUTSTANDING EU ISSUES

1. Enlargement. The Spanish government has repeated its absolute agreement with enlargement on a number of occasions in answer to the concerns voiced by certain Eastern European countries. The most difficult issues will need to be discussed during the Spanish Presidency. These include agriculture, regional policy and structural instruments, financial and budgetary provisions and institutions. Spain's ambitious objective is to complete the accession negotiations by the end of 2002, allowing the new member States to take part in the 2004 elections for the European Parliament. The Presidency will involve all of the candidate countries in the work leading up to the Barcelona Council meeting to be held in the spring.

2. The future of Europe. Spain's objective is to build on the results of the Belgian Presidency and make further progress with the overall debate on the EU in order to prepare the 2004 IGC. Internally, the government has moved the debate forward with two institutional initiatives for the creation of a specific parliamentary sub-committee to monitor the 2004 Intergovernmental Conference and a committee of the great and the good –the *Council for Debate on the Future of the European Union*– to drive and shape the public debate and create a forum for the participation of civil society. The practical effects of these initiatives remain to be seen.

EU ECONOMIC POLICY

3. A strong euro. This objective provides the framework for the goals of economic policy. Spain will hold the Presidency just as the euro enters circulation, completing EMU, and success will be measured by growth and stability. In reality, the context for growth and stability will depend on the economic objectives proposed by the Presidency, which are discussed below.

4. Balanced growth. The Spanish Presidency will strive to consolidate the "Lisbon model", which aims to achieve macroeconomic stability through structural reform, progress with the liberalisation of markets, deregulation and increased competition. The government proposes to press ahead with at least three types of measures aimed at underpinning commitments related to the Stability Pact, achieving better co-ordination of economic (fiscal and structural) policies, and completing and filling out the single market in practice. The latter point is key to the PP's liberalisation strategy, and the government proposes five measures to ensure the full freedom of movement for goods, services and labour:

- First, the Union must create an efficient transport system based on more ambitious Trans-European Networks.
- Second, a true single energy market is needed with Europe-wide electricity grids and gas pipelines that are properly interconnected and have the capacity to generate competition.
- Third, a single market in financial services is essential and a logical consequence of the launch of the euro.

- Fourth, labour markets must be developed on a European scale, since this will make the free movement of labour, and the freedom to establish businesses and provide services a reality throughout the European Union.
- Fifth, greater mobility between national education systems will be needed as a consequence of the above. This will mean promoting quality and centres of excellence, as well as requiring a simpler system for the recognition of degrees and other qualifications, improved language teaching, increasing exchanges of both teaching staff and students and the development of a European scientific research network.

5. Full employment. The Presidency has adopted as its own the objective (inherited from Sweden) of achieving full employment by 2010 through balanced growth. The main proposals to reach this goal are permanent training, adaptability and the creation of an administrative and fiscal environment that would favour job creation by private enterprise.

6. Social cohesion. The Presidency believes that the goal of full employment implies an improvement in job quality, which includes equal opportunities for both sexes and the disabled, as well as attention to health and safety matters. Special efforts will also be needed to extend the working lives of citizens and modernise pensions systems to guarantee their sustainability.

7. Sustainable development. The Gothenburg European Council agreed the adoption of the European Sustainable Development Strategy that emerged from the Lisbon Process. This strategy has since become the fourth plank in the raft of policy measures mentioned above. It is based on the principle that the economic, social and environmental repercussions of all policies must be taken into account in a co-ordinated manner during the decision-making process. The Barcelona European Council will examine the application of the strategy on the basis of a series of indicators to be defined by the Council and the Annual Synthesis Report that will be presented by the Commission. A further objective is to agree a common EU position for the world summit to be held in Johannesburg in August 2002.

8. Serving the citizen. This objective includes initiatives in specific policy areas that directly affect the citizen, such as education in the information society, the global environment, food safety, and the creation of an effective, safe communications and transport system.

SECOND AND THIRD PILLARS

9. More Europe worldwide. This covers initiatives in the external relations of the EU. Apart from economic issues and those related with the Community pillar (WTO trade negotiations, environmental negotiations in connection with the Kyoto Protocol, etc.), the Spanish Presidency has singled out two priorities that have traditionally been associated with Spain. These are the celebration of an EU-Latin America-Caribbean summit in Madrid, which may lead to an agreement between the EU and Chile, as well as speeding up negotiations with MERCOSUR, and the re-launch of the Euro-Mediterranean process with a summit that will be held in Valencia, circumstances permitting.

10. Common defence. The objective of the Presidency is to strengthen security and defence policy, ensuring compatibility with “specifics of transatlantic commitments”.

11. and 12. Security and freedom and European justice. Spain has played a leading role in both of these areas, seeing the EU as a wider stage for the struggle against ETA terrorism and the resolution of common problems such as immigration and organised crime. Since the Tampere summit (1999), the Spanish government has sponsored a number

of initiatives such as the European arrest warrant, the elimination of extradition proceedings and the recognition of both criminal and civil law sentences. These three initiatives are likely to be approved under the Spanish Presidency. A further objective is to create a true common policy for immigration and asylum with the aim of completing a single judicial area by 2004.

2.1 Provisional assessment of the Presidency programme

It would seem that the Presidency has been carefully prepared. One and a half years ago, the government created an Organising Committee⁵, which included the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the General Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office and the Secretary of State for the EU, assisted by 18 senior civil servants and a Support Unit. The Presidency calendar provides for 72 Council meetings (compared to 45 in 1995) and no less than 7 summit meetings. In preparation for the Presidency, all of Spain's ambassadors were recalled to Madrid for a co-ordination meeting, an unheard of initiative in Spanish foreign policy. This meeting was held on September 10th and 11th, 2001. Other events, such as the early date set for the PP Congress, provide some indication of Aznar's personal desire for a successful Presidency in order to win prestige in the EU and Spain.

Consideration of the three main lines of action included in the agenda, however, reveals a somewhat uneven picture. The initiatives and proposals related to the design of the EU that have been included in the programme for the Spanish Presidency largely reflect the administration of inherited issues in accordance with an established timetable, and do not contain any spectacular and/or new objectives.

The second group of objectives (those related to macroeconomic issues) clearly reflect the cumulative effect of the successive contributions of earlier Presidencies. The Lisbon model was decisively pushed by the Aznar government together with the Labour government of the UK under Tony Blair and is suited to the preferences of the PP. The importance of these objectives is revealed not only in the single-issue summit scheduled for the spring (this was, after all, a part of the original design) but also in the government's intention to press ahead with the institutionalisation of the Spring European Council through detailed forward planning with both the Commission (2002

⁵ Royal Decree 1470 of 4th August 2000 concerning the formation of an Organising Committee for the Spanish Presidency of the European Union.

Synthesis Report) and the Council and its preparatory groups (working groups, high level committees and COREPER). The government's desire to involve the candidate countries in the task of liberalisation also provides a clear signal. The other objectives, employment and sustainable development, were included in the EU's agenda by the Swedish Presidency and have been inherited by its successors. Spain has added its long-standing priority of economic and social cohesion to the objective of full employment, although it has stripped away the traditional territorial bias.

The salient feature of the Presidency programme are the initiatives related to the second and third pillars, and it is here that significant progress seems most likely. The Spanish government has been preparing specific political initiatives in the area of the third pillar (European arrest warrant, etc.) for some years, and these will probably be approved under its Presidency. If the Presidency is expected to maintain a balance between national interests and the role of referee, it appears at first sight that the turn of the PP government will be oriented towards the promotion of those aspects of the integration process that are close to Aznar's own preferences. These are economic liberalisation and the development of a common area of freedom, justice and security.

CONCLUSION

Spain's European policy has undergone a nationalist shift in recent years, which reflects the changing perceptions of public opinion as well as the discourse of the party in government. This has become clear on numerous occasions in the course of Community negotiations. Nevertheless, it would not appear, from the evidence, that the programme for the Spanish Presidency in 2002 contains a similar bias. Rather, the profile is one of continuity with previous Spanish Presidencies and those of Belgium and France. The events of September 11th will allow the Aznar government to include a traditional Spanish priority, the struggle against terrorism, as a fully-fledged priority of the EU and its member States. Thus, the process of European integration has once again shown its paradoxical attractions for those politicians who appear most unwilling. This is because of its ability to offer solutions to domestic problems, which has systematically been the case with Spain. It may, indeed, be that the experience of holding the Presidency will provide a mechanism for the socialisation of integrationist values and a cooling of nationalist sentiment.

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ABBREVIATIONS

SEA	Single European Act
BNG	Bloque Nacionalista Gallego (<i>Galician nationalist party</i>)
CCOO	Comisiones Obreras (<i>communist trade union</i>)
CEOE	Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales (<i>Spanish Confederation of Business Organisations</i>)
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
ECP	European Political Co-operation
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
CIS	Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (<i>State Sociological Research Centre</i>)
CiU	Convergencia i Unió (<i>Catalan nationalist party</i>)
HB	Herri Batasuna (<i>extremist Basque Nationalist Party</i>)
IU	Izquierda Unida (<i>Communist dominated United Left coalition</i>)
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
EP	European Parliament
PCE	Partido Comunista de España (<i>Spanish Communist Party</i>)
PNV	Partido Nacionalista Vasco (<i>mainstream Basque Nationalist Party</i>)
PP	Partido Popular (<i>Spanish Conservative Party</i>)
PSOE	Partido Socialista Obrero Español (<i>Spanish Socialist Party</i>)
SPD	Partido Socialdemócrata Alemán (<i>German Social Democrats</i>)
UCD	Unión de Centro Democrático (<i>former centrist party, which governed during the early years of the transition to democracy</i>)
EU	European Union
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
UGT	Unión General de Trabajadores (<i>socialist trade union</i>)

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