

**The Impact of Party Competition on the Individual Vote Decision:
The Case of Extreme Right Parties**

Inauguraldissertation

zur

Erlangung des Doktorgrades

der

Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Fakultät

der

Universität zu Köln

2011

vorgelegt von

Magister Artium

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Tag der Promotion: 16.12.2011

Für meine Eltern

Summary

Since the early 1980s, Western Europe has witnessed the rising success of niche parties and a simultaneous decline in the vote share of mainstream parties. While for one group of these niche parties, namely the left-libertarian and green parties, this success is commonly explained by the rise of a ‘new politics’ or ‘post-materialist’ dimension, the causes for the emergence of Extreme Right Parties (ERPs) are still disputed. The continuous electoral support for ERPs at the national, regional and local level was unexpected and has induced a great deal of scientific attention and effort to explain the different fortunes of these parties at the polls.

Previous research on the factors influencing the electoral success of ERPs has emphasized the importance of voter characteristics and party competition for the electoral fortunes of ERPs. With regard to the first, ERP voters have been found to share common policy preferences and are related to distinct socio-economic groups. With regard to party competition, scholars have pointed to the role of the electoral programmatic of ERPs as well as their mainstream competitors for the electoral support of ERPs. While existing studies come to the overall conclusion that both voter preferences and patterns of party competition *do* influence the electoral fortunes of ERPs, the question of *how* party competition influences the vote decision for an ERP is still a matter of academic dispute.

The single contributions of this dissertation contribute to the existing literature on the impact of party competition on the vote decision for an ERP by (1) focusing on the interplay between the political preferences of ERP voters and party competition, (2) applying a two-dimensional approach to the political opportunity structure of ERPs, and (3) incorporating the findings into a formal theory on how party competition influences the decision of individual voters, be they ERP voters or supporters of any other party in Western Europe.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support of many people. The author wishes to express his deepest gratitude to his supervisor Prof. Dr. André Kaiser who offered invaluable support and guidance. His expertise, understanding, and ability to motivate the author within a few minutes added considerably to the success of this project. I would also like to thank Prof. Dr. Heiner Meulemann, Dr. Simon Franzmann and Assistant Professor Ingo Rohlfing for their assistance and insightful comments they provided at all levels of this research project. My special thanks to Dr. Hermann Dülmer, Prof. Dr. Hans-Jürgen Andreß and Prof. Dr. Achim Goerres. Without their careful and patient answers and explanations to various statistical questions this thesis would not have been possible.

The author would like to convey thanks to the SOCLIFE Research Training Group at the University of Cologne for the financial support and the great research climate he has been allowed to enjoy during the last three years. My compliment goes to Hawal Shamon and Romana Careja for handling the considerable administrative work-load for me and for my colleagues. I will surely miss their invaluable assistance in the upcoming years.

Cologne, July 2011

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Chapter 1

Introduction

During the last three decades, Western Europe has witnessed the evolution and rise of a new party family: the Extreme Right. Given the overall stability and continuity of Western European party systems (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Volkens and Klingemann 2005), this would be a noteworthy phenomenon for itself. However, the emergence of Extreme Right Parties (ERPs) has raised an exceptional degree of attention among political scientists, the media and the established political parties, caused by the distinct ideology, political rhetoric and self-perception of these new actors in the electoral arena.

As the emergence of Green parties in the late 1970s and 1980s has been accompanied by an agenda of ecology-related issues (Dolezal 2010; Müller-Rommel 1998), the rise of the Extreme Right has gone hand in hand with the rise of authoritative, cultural-related issues. Members of the Extreme Right party family call for restrictive anti-immigration policies, are hostile towards cultural and religious diversity, demand harder sanctions for criminals and generally propagate a pronounced authoritative idea of man and society (Betz and Johnson 2004; Swyngedouw and Ivaldi 2001; Zaslove 2004). Since the late 1990s, this political agenda is accompanied by a distinct anti-Islamic rhetoric, which has become one of the core issues of many ERPs in Western Europe.

The example of the Austrian Freedom Party — maybe the ideal-type of an ERP — illustrates how the ideology of ERPs causes severe friction between these parties and their established political rivals. When Jörg Haider, the Freedom Party's prominent leader, established the formation of a government coalition together with the Austrian Peoples Party under Wolfgang Schüssel in 2000 — the first national government participation of an ERP in Western Europe — this resulted in harsh protests among Austrian political elites as well as among the European community of states. For several months, other national leaders shunned diplomatic contact with members of the new Austrian government. Beyond that, the remaining fourteen EU member-states openly questioned the democratic character of the Schüssel government and called the European Court of Human Rights to monitor whether or

not the legal rights of immigrants in Austria are compatible with EU legislation: an unparalleled action within the ‘European community of values.’ While the court’s report raised doubts about the democratic orientation of some of the Freedom Party’s government members, but also declared the general compatibility of Austrian immigrant legislation with European law and values, the outrage of the EU and its members shows a deep mistrust and disaffirmation of the ERP’s ideology and its political leaders among the established political elites.

This treatment of ERPs as unacceptable political ‘pariahs’ (Downs 2001; Van Spanje and Van der Brug 2007), however, is in line with the self-perception of the Extreme Right. Members of the ERP party family see themselves as the only available political alternative to the established parties, which they defame as corrupt, undemocratic and unresponsive to the political demands of their voters (Betz and Johnson 2004). In the eyes of this accentuated populist and anti-establishment rhetoric, ERPs understand themselves as ‘the only real democrats’, who take care of the political demands of ‘the common man on the streets.’

Thus, ERPs do not only differ from the established parties in their political programs; their very existence is perceived as a threat to democracy and liberal society (Hossay and Zolberg 2002). If these fears about the political impact of ERPs are not exaggerated — a question which has received only limited interest in the literature (but see Zaslove 2004) — the ‘shadows over Europe’(Schainet al. 2002) are indeed rising, as the electoral success of the Extreme Right in many countries of Western and Eastern Europe is undeniable.

While early members of the ERP family, like the French National Front and the Danish Progress Party, have been represented in their respective national parliaments since the 1980s, the electoral break-through of most Western European ERPs took place in the second half of the 1990s. Often, this break-through came as abrupt as unexpected. This overnight success is the more noteworthy, as many ERPs were newly-founded parties with only a very short electoral history (e.g. the Dutch List Pim Fortuyn) or were established but only

limitedly successful liberal or conservative parties, which transformed into very successful ERPs. One example for such a transformation is the already-mentioned Austrian Freedom Party, which steadily increased its vote share during the 1990s until it became the second largest party in the National Chamber in 1999, reaching 26.9 percent of all votes, as many as the rivaling mainstream-right Peoples Party. In the Dutch national election of 2002, the List Pim Fortuyn could gain 26 of 150 seats in the Dutch national parliament, thereby reaching the best result of a newly founded party in Dutch history. These successes are only dwarfed by the Swiss Peoples Party, a former conservative party that today many authors also classify as an ERP (Kitschelt and McGann 2005). Following this classification — and the actual referenda initiated by this party give support for this interpretation — in 2003, an ERP had indeed become the strongest party in a Western European parliament. Since 2007, the SVP holds 58 seats in the Federal Assembly and its vote share of 29 percent is the highest vote ever recorded for a single party in Switzerland.

However, these examples of very successful electoral ERPs do not stand for a European-wide development. Compared with the prominent ERPs discussed so far, many members of this party family are far less successful in electoral terms. While the political program of the Walloon National Front is very similar to its well-known French sister party, the Belgian ERP never exceeds a vote share of about one percent in national elections. The United Kingdom Independence Party and the British National Party are, besides the rather good results in the elections to the European Parliament, still without any seats in the House of Commons. ERPs in Spain, Portugal and Greece can be characterized as splinter parties, never gaining more than one or two percent of all votes. In Ireland (O'Malley 2008) and Iceland, there is no party that can be regarded as extreme right at all. A closer look at the electoral fortunes of ERPs across Western Europe therefore reveals a large amount of variation.

Table 1: Electoral support for ERPs across Western Europe

Country	ERPs	Vote share in 1980*	Vote share in 1990*	Vote share in 2000*	Vote share in 2010*
Austria	Freedom Party (since 1986 classified as ERP) Alliance for the Future of Austria	-	16.6%	26.9%	28.2%
Belgium (Flanders)	Flemish Block	1.1%	6.6%	10.1%	10.2%
Belgium (Wallonia)	National Front	-	1.0%	1.5%	1.3%
Denmark	Progress Party Danish People's Party	8.9%	6.4%	12.6%	13.9%
Finland	True Finns (former Finnish Rural Party)	9.7%	4.8%	1.0%	19.1%
France	National Front Movement for France	0.2%	9.6%	15.3%	5.5%
Germany	Republicans National Democratic Party Union of German People	0.2%	4.0%	3.3%	2.1%
Greece	National Political Union National Democratic Union National Alignment National Party Party of the Progressives	1.7%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%
Iceland	None	-	-	-	-
Ireland	None	-	-	-	-
Italy	Northern League Italian Social Movement (until 1995) National Alliance (until 2009)	6.8%	14.1%	16.3%	8.3%
Luxembourg	National Movement	-	2.3%	-	-
Netherlands	List Pim Fortuyn (until 2008) Freedom Party Centre Party Centre Democrats	0.1%	0.9%	17.0%	15.5%
Norway	Progress Party	4.5%	13.0%	14.6%	22.9%
Portugal	National Renewal Party Christian Democratic Party	0.6%	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%
Spain	National Alliance National Union	0.7%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Sweden	New Democracy	-	6.1%	0.2%	5.7%
United Kingdom	National Front British National Party United Kingdom Independence Party	0.1%	0.03%	1.5%	5.0%

*If more than one ERP has contested for votes, the column reports the sum of vote shares for all parties regarded as ERPs.

Table 1 summarizes the electoral support for ERPs across 17 countries, indicating that the variation in ERP support is mainly country-specific. Investigating the single countries, a time-trend is far less obvious. While some ERPs have been able to enhance their vote share during the 1990s, others have disappeared from the political arena as soon as they entered. Again

others have experienced decreasing levels of electoral support over the last three decades but then have been able to celebrate remarkable comebacks in the most current elections (Sweden Democrats and True Finns).

Variation in ERPs' electoral support across Western Europe therefore reveals country- as well as time-specific variation. From a comparative point of view, this raises the following questions: What has caused the rise of ERPs in Western Europe in the last three decades? Why are ERPs so successful in some countries of Western Europe, while playing no or only a very limited role for electoral competition in others? How can we explain variations in ERPs support over time? What country- and time-specific factors do influence the electoral fortunes of ERPs?

From an analytical point of view, the causal explanation(s) for these questions should include variables that differ among countries and time-points as well. Because of the relative socio-economic and political homogeneity among Western European countries, such variables are by no means obvious. All countries analyzed are stable and established democracies with comparable degrees of economic wealth. Most countries are also members of the European Union, facing comparable political and economic problems. In addition, the sought-after *explanans* should have appeared not earlier than the 1980s, the time when the first ERPs started to establish themselves as relevant political actors.

After introducing recent efforts to define the ERP party family (section 1), different explanations for the variation in ERP support among Western European countries are discussed. For analytical reasons, these explanations have been divided into two main groups. First, and because ERPs are first of all political parties that contest for votes, the variation in the political attitudes of voters across Western Europe might explain their different electoral success. These arguments are mainly interested in the political demands of ERP voters and will therefore be referred to as 'demand-side' arguments (section 2). Second, scholars have pointed to the importance of the political offers made by parties to voters (Arzheimer and

Carter 2006; Van der Brug et al. 2005; Kitschelt 1995) for the electoral fortunes of ERPs. These studies focus on the ‘supply-side’ of electoral competition and are discussed in section 3. The literature review ends with a critical evaluation of recent demand- and supply-side oriented approaches to explain the vote decision for ERPs and identifies the most important research gaps (section 4). Section 5 gives an overview on the four single papers and relates them to the identified research gaps. Finally, the theoretical arguments and findings of the single contributions are incorporated into a theory on the impact of party competition on the individual vote decision.

1. Defining the Extreme Right

An analysis of the varying levels of electoral support for ERPs demands a definition of the term ‘Extreme Right Party.’ Which parties should we regard as ERPs, and which not? What are the common characteristics of ERPs that let us speak of a distinct party family? While these questions have been discussed since the first comparative studies on ERPs in the early 1990s and many definitions on ERPs exist, a definitive answer is hard to find. This is because the different definitions provided in the literature do not only rest on different theoretical concepts but also refer to different labels of the object of analysis.

Beside the term ‘Extreme Right’(Arzheimer 2008a; Ignazi 2003a), which is also used in this dissertation, other scholars refer to the ‘Radical Right’(Kitschelt 1995; Norris 2005), the ‘Populist Radical Right’(Betz 1994; Mudde 2007) or ‘Anti-Immigrant Parties’ (Van der Brug et al. 2005). Given the diversity of labels for the same party family, it should be noted that the discussion about the adequate term is indeed often ‘a question of labels not of substance’ (Giugni and Koopmans 2007: 489). This statement could insofar be agreed upon, as the use of different labels does not result in a disagreement over the parties that should be regarded as ERPs. Prominent borderline cases, like the Italian Northern League or the Finnish True Finns, do not differ from the preferred label. However, this does not mean that there are

no differences among the theoretical concepts behind the different labels. In order to give an overview of these concepts, I will restrict myself to those that are interested in the ideology of ERPs and are concerned with the question of how ERPs are related to other parties and the organization of the political system.

In one of the first comparative studies on the Extreme Right in Western Europe, Ignazi (1992, 2003a) set up three criteria in order to identify these parties. A party is considered an ERP if: (1) it is located at the very right end of the political spectrum, (2) it has an ideal and symbolic legacy with fascism, and (3) it tries to undermine the legitimacy of democracy. Betz (1994) pointed out that the political ideology of ‘Radical Right-wing Populist Parties’ involves (1) a radical rejection of the established socio-cultural and socio-political system, (2) a strong support for individual achievement and drastic restrictions of the role of the state, and (3) a resolute refusal of individual and social equality. This ideology comes along with an (4) instrumental and populist use of public sentiments of envy, anxiety and resentment with regard to minorities and especially immigrants from non-European countries. In his seminal study on the Extreme Right in Western Europe, Kitschelt (1995) saw the growing success of ERPs as being caused by the end of industrial society. He claims that the transition to a post-industrial society has created a demand for both market-liberal issues and authoritative values from segments of the electorate in all Western European societies. ERPs have reacted to this new demand by combining economic-related market-liberal with cultural-related authoritative issues, a combination that Kitschelt describes as the ‘winning formula’ of ERPs. Carter (2005) set apart ERPs by three criteria. The Extreme Right (1) holds a combination of nationalist-xenophobic attitudes, (2) represents a conformist-racist cultural profile, and (3) demands a rejection of democracy or a reform of existing democratic institutions. Furthermore, and with regard to their political rhetoric, ERPs see politics as constituted by a boundary line dividing friends and foes — e.g. natives and immigrants — stressing the primacy of cultural homogeneity within national boundaries. In order to give a minimum definition of the

‘Populist Radical Right’, Mudde (2007) identifies nationalism as the core ideological feature of this party family, understood as a political doctrine that ‘strives for the congruence of the cultural and political unit, i.e., the nation and the state’ (ibid.: 16). Mudde argues that other political concerns of the Radical Right, e.g. xenophobia, welfare chauvinism and law and order, are subordinated to the concept of nationalism and questions the anti-system character of most ERPs.

Each of the definitions presented so far comes with its own problems and has been criticized for at least one of its criteria (Fennema 1997; Mudde 1996). Given the overall agreement among the different definitions when it comes to the question of which parties should be regarded as ERPs, this introduction does not want to contribute to this discussion. Instead, let us have a closer look at the very meaning of the terms ‘Extreme’ and ‘Right’ as they are understood by different authors. To start with, both terms are related to the ERPs’ ideology and both are relative terms. That is, a party is extreme right because it is (1) located at the ‘right’ end of the political spectrum (relative to parties to the ‘left’ of this spectrum) and (2) located ‘extreme’ to the right end of this spectrum (relative to more ‘moderate’ right parties). These considerations confront us with the question about the meanings of the term ‘right’, resp. ‘left’.

As is widely accepted in the Western European context, the left-right dichotomy describes the ideological space in which parties and voters are acting. Left-right can be interpreted as a ‘super-issue’ that absorbs all the different meanings of other issues (Flanagan and Lee 2003; Inglehart 1984; Knutsen 1998). Acting as an information shortcut, the left-right dichotomy allows voters, parties, and political scientists to reduce the theoretically unlimited number of possible issues into only one dimension of political conflict (Jessee 2010).

Reviewing the definitions presented, what about the ERPs’ political program allows us to classify these parties as ‘right’? First of all, ERPs are interested in distinct political issues, namely: immigration, law and order, traditional values and morality. These issues have in

common that they are all related to cultural, value-oriented questions. With regard to these issues, ERPs take up positions that are more extreme than the positions of other political parties, including moderate right parties: they are strictly against immigration, call for a much harsher punishment of criminals and favor very traditional value-orientations. As we have seen for the Austrian case, this extremeness of ERPs towards cultural issues might go so far that other political actors question the democratic orientation of these parties.

Since the first comparative studies in the field, some scholars have pointed out that the Extreme Right is not only interested in cultural-related issues but also in questions of the economy. The most prominent advocate of this view is Kitschelt (1995), who argues that the electoral success of ERPs does depend on the combination of cultural- and economic-related issues (Betz 1994; Kitschelt 2007; Kitschelt and McGann 2005; de Lange 2007). According to Kitschelt, ERPs are indeed extreme with regard to cultural issues, but they are also extreme in their demand for market-oriented economic policies, including less state intervention, less taxation and reduced welfare expenditures. According to this view, the cultural and economic appeal of ERPs allows us to classify these parties as ‘right-wing’.

Indeed, the market-liberal appeal of some ERPs is beyond question. This is not surprising, given that some of the most popular ERPs in Western Europe originated from former liberal parties (e.g., the Austrian Freedom Party and the Danish Progress Party). However, it has long been discussed whether market-liberal demands are also important for the voters of ERPs or if these are solely motivated by the authoritarian, cultural appeal of the Extreme Right; this is a question we will turn to in the next section.

2. The voters of ERPs

The question of which voter characteristics are related to the vote choice for an ERP has raised considerable scientific interest since the first comparative studies in the field (Arzheimer 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Arzheimer and Carter 2006, 2009; Van der Brug and

Fennema 2003, 2007; Van der Brug and Mughan 2007; Van der Brug et al. 2005; Carter 2005; Kitschelt 1995; Kitschelt and McGann 2005; Lubbers et al. 2002; Norris 2005). In order to summarize the most important findings, it is useful to separate these into two groups, depending on the main explanatory variables used. These are either the socio-economic status or the issue-preferences of ERP voters. While the findings with regard to the former are more or less non-ambiguous, the political preferences of ERP voters have been the object of scientific controversy.

To begin with the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of ERP voters, these are either rather young or rather old, middle-agers being underrepresented. Furthermore, the voters of the Extreme Right are predominately male and less educated. Concerning class and occupation status, ERPs are mainly supported by members of the working-class, the unemployed and, to a lesser extent, by members of the *petty bourgeoisie* (artisans, small shop-owners and independents).

With regard to their overall low socio-economic status, Betz (1994) speaks of a process of proletarianization of many ERP electorates during the early 1990s, mainly driven by sentiments of political disenchantment and resentment of these 'losers of modernization' (ibid.: 25). According to this popular, while somehow outdated (see Eatwell 2003), view on the motives of ERP supporters, these are often seen as being rather protest-driven, united only in their disaffirmation of economic and cultural globalization and the politicians who are made responsible for these developments.

In contrast to earlier studies emphasizing protest motives, most recent studies come to the conclusion that ERP voters share some common policy preferences, and vote for ERPs because of these parties' political programs. According to this view, the vote decision for the Extreme Right is therefore mainly policy-driven and not, or to a lesser extent, protest-motivated (Arzheimer 2008b; Van der Brug and Fennema 2003). However, the question of

which issue preferences are important for the vote decision of ERP voters has raised a great deal of academic dispute. Two positions stand out in this debate.

First, most authors argue that ERP voters are mainly motivated by issues like xenophobia, anti-immigrant sentiments, demand for tough law-and-order policies and traditional value orientations regarding morality, sexuality or emancipation of women (Arzheimer 2008a, 2008b; Arzheimer and Carter 2009; Arzheimer and Falter 2002; Van der Brug and Fennema 2003, 2007; Van der Brug and Van Spanje 2009; Giugni and Koopmans 2007). These value orientations are predominately culturally-oriented and can be seen as the counter-issues of liberal 'post-materialist' issues (Flanagan and Lee 2003; Ignazi 1992; Inglehart 1990, 1997; Inglehart and Flanagan 1987). Second, some authors have argued that ERP voters are not only driven by their authoritarian cultural values but are also motivated by the market-liberal economic platforms of many ERPs (Kitschelt 1995, 2007; Kitschelt and McGann 2005; de Lange 2007). Kitschelt sees the growing success of ERPs as being caused by the end of industrial society. He claims that the transition to a post-industrial society has created a demand for both market-liberal issues and authoritative values from segments of the electorate in all Western European societies. ERPs have reacted to this new demand by combining market-liberal economic policies with authoritative cultural issues and their electoral success depends therefore on both issue domains.

Recently, the controversy seems to have been decided in favour of a view focussing solely on the cultural policy demands of ERP voters. Using data from the European Social Survey, Arzheimer (2008b) investigates the impact of cultural and economic preferences as well as protest motives on the vote decision for an ERP. He finds that authoritative cultural attitudes — and most prominently an anti-immigrant sentiment — have the greatest impact on the vote intention for the Extreme Right. Moreover, once these cultural preferences are controlled for, neither economic preferences nor the socio-economic status of ERP voters seems to have a significant impact on their vote decision. While these findings contradict the

theoretical assumption of Kitschelt's 'winning formula' of ERPs, other scholars (Ivarsflaten 2005; Mudde 2007) come to a similar conclusion: Voters of ERPs are mainly motivated by their authoritarian cultural preferences and not by their economic preferences, which vary between economic left and right.

With regard to the initial question of the different electoral fortunes of ERPs among Western European countries, these findings point to a presumptuous interpretation: The variation in ERP support might be due to variation in the cultural preferences of voters across countries. If this is indeed the case, we should find voters in countries with strong ERPs being significantly more authoritarian and significantly more hostile towards immigrants than voters in countries with limited or no ERP support. However, we observe the very opposite.

In their report on majority attitudes towards minorities for the *European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia*, Coenders et al. (2005) point out that there are indeed large differences between the 18 European countries analysed. While not less than 50 percent of the general public shows resentment against immigrants and cultural diversity 'many of these exclusionist stances turn to be widely supported by people living in the Mediterranean countries among which Greece often comes out on top, while 'people in Nordic countries appear to disassociate themselves from these exclusionist stances more often' (ibid., summary V). These findings are also supported by a recent survey of the German *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung* (Zick et al. 2011). The authors show that prejudices towards immigrants, anti-Semitism, racism, anti-Muslim attitudes, sexism and homophobia are closely correlated with each other and can therefore be summarized into one index of group-focused enmity. Among the six surveyed Western European countries the extent of group-focused enmity is smallest in the Netherlands (15 percent of all respondents) and highest in Portugal (41 percent of all respondents).

These two studies contradict a simple conclusion for the relationship between public attitudes and ERPs' electoral success (Van der Brug and Fennema 2003). While voters in

Southern Europe are the much more culturally authoritarian than their Nordic EU neighbours, ERP support in these countries is very limited. In contrast, some of the most culturally liberal countries of Western Europe – namely the Netherlands and Denmark – are at the same time home of some of the most successful ERPs.

Let us sum up the main findings of this chapter. First, ERP voters share some common political preferences that let them vote for these parties. Second, these preferences are authoritarian and cultural-related, while ERP voters are divided among their preferences with regard to economic issues. Third, the variation in ERP support among Western European countries cannot be explained by the variation of the political preferences of voters alone. Because of this, the literature has focused on possible context factors that might influence the vote decision for an ERP, thereby providing a favorable opportunity structure for these parties.

3. The political opportunity structure of ERPs

The basic idea of all studies that refer to the ‘political opportunity structure’ of ERPs is rather simple: Extreme Right Parties, like all other parties, have to compete with other parties for votes. This competition takes place in a specific context, varying across countries and over time, which is defined by (1) the electoral strategies adopted by parties, (2) the institutional setting, and (3) the socio-economic environment.

Among these groups of explanatory variables, party competition, i.e. the political offers made by ERPs as well as by other parties to voters, are the most promising when it comes to explaining the different electoral fortunes of ERPs across Western Europe. This is because institutional structures are very stable, and can therefore not explain variation over time, while the socio-economic environment among Western European nations is rather comparable, and can therefore not explain cross-country variation in ERP support. This introduction, as well as the single papers of this dissertation, focus on the role of party

strategies in the electoral fortunes of ERPs and treat the institutional setting and socio-economic environment as control variables, thereby applying a narrow definition of the political opportunity structure of ERPs.

Before proceeding with an overview on the theoretical arguments and empirical findings on the impact of party competition on the electoral fortunes of ERPs, it is useful to begin with a short description of the political space in Western Europe, in which parties compete for votes. According to the dominant view in the literature on party competition, this space can be described by two separate dimensions — or axes — each consisting of a set of related political issues (Enyedi and Deegan-Krause 2010). On the one hand, political competition is formed through economic-related conflicts over the distribution of material resources, resulting in a distinct economic dimension of political competition with the two extremes ‘state-interventionism’ for traditional left-wing policies and ‘free-market solutions’ for traditional right-wing policies. On the other hand, since the 1970s, scholars have identified a second dimension that consists of cultural or non-economic related issues. Its new left-wing extreme may be labeled ‘liberalism’ and its new right-wing extreme ‘authoritarianism’. We have already mentioned that many ERPs combine a market-liberal with a pronounced authoritarian policy appeal.

Three questions on how this political space is related to the electoral fortunes of ERPs are discussed in the literature: (1) which of the two dimensions is important for the electoral fortunes of ERPs? (2) how is party competition on the dimensions influencing the vote decision for an ERP? and (3) how should we measure this?

With regard to the first question, there are two opposing views. On the one hand, most scholars (Akkerman 2005; Arzheimer 2008b; Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie 2005; Ignazi 2003b; Lubbers, Gijsberts, and Scheepers 2002; Norris 2005) argue that ERPs mainly contest for votes on the cultural dimension, as it is primarily along this dimension that they compete with their mainstream rivals (Arzheimer and Carter

2003). This judgment is often based on the analysis of the political preferences of ERP voters, who are mainly interested in and motivated by cultural issues (see previous section). On the other hand, some scholars have pointed to the importance of the economic dimension for ERPs electoral success (Betz 1994; Kitschelt 1995, 2007; de Lange 2007). Recently, most of the literature seems to agree on the view stressing the importance of the cultural-related dimension alone.

The second question ‘How does party competition influence the electoral fortunes of ERPs?’ is still a matter of academic dispute. Potential explanations might be divided into two groups, each relying on different theories of party competition. First, and mainly motivated by the *issue-ownership theory of voting behaviour* (Petrocik 1996; Petrocik et al. 2003), it is argued that parties ‘own’ distinct political issues, i.e., voters see these parties as the most competent to solve problems related to these issues. In the case of ERPs, immigration is often named as an issue that is owned by these parties. Voters concerned about problems occurring from immigration are therefore likely to vote for an ERP (Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Meguid 2005). While this is a pure demand-side argument, and therefore related to the motivations of voters only, it is often implicitly linked to a supply-side argument, stemming from *salience theory of party competition* (Budge 2001). Salience theory states that parties do not compete with each other on all possible issues but put greater emphasis on issues they ‘own,’ i.e., issues on which they are adjudged to have the greatest problem-solving competence. At the same time, they ignore issues occupied by rival parties. Parties’ positions thus consist of contrasting emphases placed on different policy areas. The theoretical link between this supply-side theory and the arguments made by issue-ownership theory is that parties may be forced to put emphasis on issues they do not own, thereby favoring their rivals. The reasons for that may lie in external events or in the successful electoral strategies of the issue-owners themselves. In case of ERPs, these parties would benefit in electoral terms if other parties did also pay attention to, for example, the immigration-issue. Secondly,

confrontational theory (Downs 1957) of party competition and electoral behavior sees parties taking up a range of explicit positions on each issue, ranging from fully pro to fully con. In this spatial view on the political space, voters will cast their vote for the party that is closest to their own position; while parties take up the most promising position in terms of electoral support. However, other parties will try to follow the same vote-maximizing strategy and locate themselves close to their competitors. With regard to ERPs, authors motivated by confrontational theory often put a special emphasis on the positions taken up by mainstream right parties, because these parties are the direct ‘neighbours’ of ERPs in the political space. The distinct hypotheses stemming from confrontational theory are numerous and will not be summarized here (see paper 1 for a detailed summary).

The third question concerns the data and methods used to determine parties’ positions (confrontational theory) or issue-salience (salience theory). Several methods exist for determining these, the most common being mass survey data, expert data and manifesto data. While each data source reveals its own advantages and disadvantages, in this dissertation manifesto-based data offered by the *Comparative Manifesto Project* (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006) is used to identify party policy positions as well as issue salience. The main theoretical advantage of this approach is that it allows us to easily separate different dimensions of party competition, in our case an economic, a cultural and an overall left-right dimension.

Table 2 gives an overview on previous studies on the political opportunity structure of ERPs dealing with the impact of party competition on the electoral fortunes of the Extreme Right. Please note that none of these studies tests for the impact of the economic dimension of party competition. This is either due to theoretical considerations (see above) or simply due to a lack of data, as most mass and expert surveys do not allow for the estimate of party positions on an economic dimension over a longer period of time.

Table 2: Overview of previous studies on the political opportunity structure of ERPs

Author (Year)	Countries	Time-period covered	Parties analysed (dependent variable)	Assumed dimension of party competition (theory of party competition)	Data source for party positions/issue salience
Abedi (2002)	16	1982 and 1993	Anti-political-establishment parties	Left-right (confrontational)	Expert surveys
Arzheimer (2009)	18	1980-2002	ERPs	Non-economic (salience)	CMP
Arzheimer/Carter (2003, 2006)	7	1984-2001	ERPs	Non-economic (confrontational)	CMP
Carter (2005)	15	1980-2002	ERPs	Left-right (confrontational)	Expert surveys
Kitschelt (1995)	15	1990	ERPs	Left-right (confrontational)	Expert surveys
Lubbers et al. (2002)	16	1994-1997	ERPs	Non-economic (confrontational)	Expert surveys
Meguid (2005)	17	1970-2000	ERPs	Non-economic (salience)	CMP
Norris (2005)	14	2000-2004	ERPs	Left-right (confrontational)	Expert surveys
Van der Brug et al. (2005)	10	1989, 1994, 1999	ERPs	Left-right (confrontational) Non-economic (salience)	Mass survey CMP
Veugelers/Magnan (2005)	10	1982-1995	ERPs	Left-right (confrontational)	Expert surveys

4. Identifying research gaps

Previous research has emphasized the importance of demand- and supply-side factors for the electoral fortunes of ERPs. While these studies differ greatly in terms of applied theories of electoral behavior and party competition as well as in their conceptualization of the political space in Western Europe, they come to the overall conclusion that both voter preferences and patterns of party competition influence the electoral success of ERPs. A closer look at the previous efforts on the political opportunity structure of ERPs reveals three main research gaps.

First, while there are a couple of studies interested in demand-side *or* supply-side arguments, there are only a few studies theoretically addressing the interplay between the two (but see Kitschelt 1995), and even fewer that empirically analyze their simultaneous impact on the vote decision for an ERP (Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Van der Brug et al. 2005; Lubbers et al. 2002). Even these latter studies do not address the interplay — or, technically speaking, possible interaction effects — between the political preferences of ERP voters and the political offers made by parties.

Second, while the current literature on party competition implies a two-dimensional view on the political space in Western Europe, there is not one study on ERP support incorporating measures of party policy positions on more than one dimension. In particular, the economic dimension of party competition is not considered — and the theoretical arguments for this non-inclusion are rather weak as they stem from demand-side findings only.

Third, research on ERPs and their voters is often not related to dominant theories of electoral behavior and therefore risks being isolated from the wider literature of electoral studies. This is because existing studies on ERPs often mix distinct, and sometimes contradicting, theoretical schools of party competition and electoral behavior. While this approach might be adequate to explore a new research object, after more than a decade of efforts to explain the vote decision for an ERP, these findings should now be theoretically linked to existing theories of electoral behavior.

This dissertation addresses these research gaps (1) by focusing on the interplay between the political preferences of ERP voters and party competition, (2) by applying a two-dimensional approach to the political opportunity structure of ERPs, and (3) by incorporating the findings into a formal theory on how party competition influences the decision of individual voters, whether they are ERP voters or supporters of any other party in Western Europe.

5. Summary of papers

Paper 1 ‘*A Two-Dimensional Approach on the Political Opportunity Structure of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe*’(with Simon Franzmann) points to the importance of the strategies of established parties for the success — or failure — of ERPs, standing in the tradition of studies that focus on the political opportunity structure of the Extreme Right. The basic idea of these studies is that Extreme Right parties – like all other parties – have to compete with other parties for votes and their success in doing so depends greatly on the strategies of their mainstream party competitors.

While there are some frequently discussed variables of this opportunity structure of ERPs (mainstream party convergence, the position of the established right, and party system polarization), scholars disagree on the underlying dimension on which these variables should be measured. A literature review shows that three different answers to this question have been given. Some studies assume an overall left-right dimension on which party competition takes place, including all possible political issues. Others argue that ERPs only compete with their mainstream competitors on their own core themes, namely: immigration, authoritarian values and anti-multiculturalism. Therefore, they consider the position of parties on a non-economic dimension to be the most important. The third possible answer is that the economic dimension of party competition is crucial for the political opportunity structure of ERPs. As some authors argue, it is the market-liberal programmatic position of ERPs which is relevant for their voters, at least when considered alongside other, non-economic issues.

Paper 1 applies a two-dimensional view on the political opportunity structure of ERPs, and is thereby the first study simultaneously accounting for the impact of an economic and a non-economic dimension of party competition. It inspects the interplay of both dimensions and analyses their impact on ERPs’ vote share.

The empirical analysis focuses on Western Europe and on the time period from 1980 to 2003. This leads us to a dataset, which includes 116 elections in 18 party systems. The

dependent variable is the vote share of all parties considered as being members of the Extreme Right; the authors are therefore conducting a macro-analysis. While Table 1 (introduction) already indicates that not all of the included 18 party systems host an ERP, the analysis does also include those elections in which no ERP had contested (n=23) for methodological reasons, as their non-inclusion would cause a serious selection bias. The authors have therefore decided to run a Tobit instead of an OLS model.

With regard to our main independent variables on party competition, data offered by the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) has been used to identify party policy positions on each of the dimensions. The approach in calculating these on the basis of the salience-based CMP data allows to account for time- and country-specific meanings of the terms ‘left’ and ‘right’, an important theoretical advantage compared to other approaches. Each of the three independent variables (mainstream party convergence, position of the established right and party system polarization) is then measured on a left-right reference model, an economic and a non-economic dimension.

The results of the empirical analysis indicate that both dimensions of party competition are important for the political opportunity structure of ERPs. On the non-economic dimension, the convergence of the mainstream parties and a high level of party system polarization are found to increase ERPs’ vote share. Furthermore, the results signify that economic-related variables moderate the effects of the non-economic-related variables and are therefore relevant for the political opportunity structure of ERPs, a result that contradicts recent findings in the field.

Paper 2 ‘*Explaining Working-Class Support for Extreme Right Parties: A Party Competition Approach*’ incorporates the macro-findings on the political opportunity structure of ERPs — developed in paper 1 — into a multi-level model also including individual-level variables. The paper offers theoretical arguments on how party competition influences the individual

vote decision for an ERP. As in paper 1, party competition is measured on an economic and a non-economic (cultural) dimension. The main theoretical argument developed in paper 2 is that voters are able to differentiate between the offers made to them by parties on each of the two dimensions and base their vote decision on the dimension which offers the greatest possible impact in terms of expected policy outcome.

The theoretical arguments are tested by focusing on a group of ERP supporters that has received considerable scientific interest in the literature: the working-class. These voters, who have always been associated with left-wing political parties, today, show — at least in some countries — a disproportionately high support for Extreme Right parties, a development that previous studies have explained with changing political preferences of this voter group.

In contrast to this widespread view, paper 2 argues that it is not the changing political preferences of the working-class that lead them to vote for ERPs, but changes in the supply side of party competition that have caused the re-orientation of these voters towards the Extreme Right. These changes have caused working-class voters to base their vote decisions solely on their authoritarian, non-economic preferences and not — as in the past — on their still left-wing economic demands.

The theoretical assumptions on the impact of party competition are tested empirically with data from the Eurobarometer Trend File for the period from 1980 to 2002 for thirteen Western European countries. The binary dependent variable is the vote decision for an ERP (=1) or any other party (=0). As each of the 217.508 voters included is nested in one of 164 election contexts, a multi-level model has been applied to account for context-related influences and variance, i.e., varying patterns of party competition. On the individual level, the model accounts for well-established socio-economic characteristics and political attitudes of ERP voters, one of these being social class. Compared to other social strata, working-class members show a significantly higher support for ERPs. On the macro (party system level), the model includes measures of party system polarization and issue-salience, each measured on

an economic and a non-economic dimension. In addition, the unemployment rate and the number of asylum seekers have been included as control variables.

The empirical analysis reveals that party system polarization moderates the effect of the working-class dummy on the probability to vote for an ERP. In elections in which parties are more polarized among economic, rather than among non-economic issues, the positive impact of being member of the working-class on the voting decision in favor of an ERP is strongly reduced, a finding that supports the macro-findings of paper 1. If a party system is more divided on economic issues, working-class voters tend to vote on the basis of their economic preferences because, on this dimension of party competition, their votes can be expected to make the greatest difference in policy outcome. Under these considerations, working-class voters will support a party of the economic left and not an ERP. However, if parties are more divided on non-economic issues (including the Extreme Right's core issues), working-class voters will make voting decisions on the basis of their authoritarian non-material preferences, which increases the probability that they will cast their votes for an ERP.

While there is strong evidence that ERP voters do not support these parties because of their economic appeal and that economic issues are of only minor importance for the ideology of ERPs, the decline in polarization of the economic dimension of party competition nonetheless has influenced the electoral fortunes of ERPs by providing these parties with a favorable political opportunity structure to mobilize voters on their non-material core issues.

Paper 3 '*When Voters Have to Decide: Explaining Vote Choices in a Two-dimensional Political Space*' incorporates the findings of papers 1 and 2 into a formal theory on how party competition influences the individual vote decision. It is therefore not restricted to the analysis of ERP voters but could be used to analyse the vote decision for any party in Western Europe. The paper takes on a recent finding with regard to the representation of voters by

parties: citizens with a distinct combination of economic and cultural political preferences will be unable to find a party that fits both their demands at the same time, a situation that perfectly describes the case of working-class members analysed in paper 2. Confronted with this situation, these voters will therefore have to decide between a party matching their economic preferences or a party closest to them in cultural terms. Paper 3 analyses this vote decision and accounts for the impact of party competition on it. It is thereby the first study addressing this question empirically, applying formal theories of voting behaviour.

Four hypotheses are developed. Two of them—the *ranking of political issues* and the *intensity of issue preferences*—are derived from formal theories of voting behaviour and are related to the individual preferences of voters. The remaining two — the *salience* of and the *party system polarization* between the two issue-domains — account for a possible impact of the political offers made by parties.

Again, data on the positions of parties are estimated by a transformation of the CMP data. The measurement of voters' positions on the two dimensions relies on a battery of survey items offered by the World Value Study. Altogether, 28.041 voters in 16 countries could be analysed. While the focus of the paper is solely on the binary vote decision between the economic- and cultural-closest party, a multinomial logistic model is run to include all theoretical possible vote choices.

The findings point to the importance of individual preferences as well as patterns of party competition for the individual vote decision. On the individual level, the intensity of preferences towards economic and cultural issues does have an impact on the decision between the economic and cultural-closest party. Voters located close to the state-interventionist or market-liberal ends of the economic scale demonstrate a higher probability of voting for the economic-closest party, while authoritarian voters tend to favour the party closest to them in cultural terms instead. Regarding the electoral context, both the salience of issues and the party system polarization are relevant predictors of voting behaviour. If cultural

issues are of high salience, voters show a higher probability of voting for the cultural-closest party. If party competition is more polarized with regard to economic than cultural issues, voters will vote for the economic-closest party.

The results of this extended analysis, therefore, support the findings made with regard to the political opportunity structure of the Extreme Right: Party competition is crucial for the voting behaviour of individuals and thereby also for the electoral fortunes of parties. Depending on the more salient or more polarized dimension of party competition, the very same voter with constant political preferences might vote for very different parties. The relevance of these findings becomes clear if we recognize that the positions of parties in Western Europe tend to converge with regard to economic issues, but tend to diverge on the cultural dimension. At the same time, the salience of cultural issues has increased steadily during the last decades, while economic issues are less frequently addressed by political parties. In light of the theoretical arguments developed in paper 3, this means that more voters will allow their voting decision to be guided exclusively by their cultural preferences, whether they are liberal or authoritarian.

Paper 4 *'Does the Mode of Candidate Selection Affect the Representativeness of Parties?'* (with André Kaiser) investigates the relationship between the ideology of parties and their voters. The authors argue that intra-party procedures of candidate selection for national elections influence the degree of ideological congruence between parties and their respective mean-voters. In this way, paper 4 contributes to the ongoing discussion on the impact of different institutional settings on party representativeness. Furthermore, the authors differentiate between two frequently used but theoretically different concepts of representation: cross-sectional representation (at one point in time) and dynamic representation (over time).

With regard to candidate selection we distinguish between two dimensions: inclusion and centralization. While the first identifies the type of selectorate for candidate nominations (members, delegates or committees), the second captures the territorial unit in which the nomination is decided (local, regional or national). In line with the arguments made by previous studies, we hypothesize that hierarchically-centralized party structures allow national party leaders to impose their political strategies on subordinated party levels and in this way let the party offer clear policy positions to potential supporters, thereby increasing party representativeness. However, we also argue that centralization alone is theoretically insufficient to explain party representativeness and develop arguments for the role of the intra-party candidate selectorate. We hypothesize that parties with candidates nominated by delegates are the least representative in terms of voter representation, while both candidates nominated by members or party elites should increase party-voter congruence.

In order to analyze the representation of voters by parties, we have measured each group's policy stances on a left-right dimension of political preferences. We have gathered data for the policy statements of parties from the Comparative Manifesto Project; data on the preferences of voters come from several international surveys. Values for the centralization and inclusion of selection procedures have been assigned independently by three coders. Altogether, we have been able to collect data for 53 parties in nine countries for the period from 1970 to 1990.

The results point to the relevance of the inclusion dimension: Parties in which party elites decide over the nomination of candidates show slightly higher degrees of representation than parties with more inclusive selectorates. While this effect is rather limited, we theorize that an increased office-motivation of party elites compared to lower party strata in the end leads to better representation.

5. Conclusion

Each of the four single contributions to this dissertation project addresses a specific research question, relies on different data and comes to particular, while overall consistent, conclusions. This section provides a broad picture of the theoretical argumentation of the overall dissertation project. Each of the single papers contributes to this broader theory, and is referred to whenever appropriate.

Based on previous studies on the political opportunity structure of ERPs, it is argued that the political offers made by parties to voters are responsible for the vote decision for an ERP (as for any other party). These offers vary across countries and time and can therefore explain the different electoral fortunes of ERPs. This theoretical core might be split up into 14 single arguments:

- (1) Parties are not simple agents of their voters but can choose their political program rather independently of the political demands of their supporters (paper 4).
- (2) For this, they have mainly two options: They can take up positions ranging from fully pro to fully con on each single issue and they can decide to pronounce or ignore single issues (paper 2 and 3).
- (3) Voters are aware of and have full information on the political offers of parties and are able to compare these offers with their own political preferences.
- (4) Voters will vote for the party that best matches their own preferences (paper 3).
- (5) While the preferences of voters with regard to political issues are rather stable over time, the ranking of these issues is far less stable (paper 2).
- (6) While the number of political issues is theoretically infinite, both parties' programmatic and voters' preferences can be reduced to two dimensions of political conflict. One of these is related to economic issues, the other consists of cultural-related issues (paper 1, 2 and 3).

- (7) Many voters will be unable to find a party that matches their economic *and* their cultural preferences (paper 3). With regard to ERPs, this means that many voters do share their authoritarian cultural appeal, but would be better represented by other parties in terms of their economic preferences (paper 2).
- (8) These voters are confronted with the decision as to whether they should cast their vote on the basis of their cultural or economic preferences (paper 3).
- (9) This decision is influenced by the individual preferences of voters as well as by the political offers made by parties (paper 2 and 3).
- (10) With regard to individual preferences, voters with extreme economic issue preferences will vote on the basis of these. In contrast, voters with extreme cultural preferences will let their vote decision be guided by these (paper 3).
- (11) With regard to the political offers made by parties to voters, the salience of and the party system polarization among economic and cultural issues influence the vote choice. If parties stress the importance of cultural-related (economic-related) issues, voters regard these issues as more important and will therefore cast their vote on the basis of their cultural (economic) preferences. If party competition is highly polarized with regard to cultural (economic) issues, voters will have a strong incentive to vote for the party closest to them on the cultural (economic) dimension, as voting based on cultural (economic) preferences offers more distinct alternatives in outcome (paper 2 and 3).
- (12) The salience of economic issues has steadily decreased while the salience of cultural-related issues has increased until the 1980s. At the same time, parties' policy positions have converged with regard to economic but diverged with regard to cultural issues (paper 2).
- (13) Because of the changing political offers made by parties, today more voters base their vote decision on the basis of their cultural preferences than in the past. In contrast,

fewer voters will base their vote decision on the basis of their economic preferences (paper 2 and 3).

- (14) Voters with authoritarian cultural preferences will vote for a party that matches these preferences, while ignoring their economic demands. In many cases this will be a party of the Extreme Right.

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Chapter 2

A Two-Dimensional Approach on the Political Opportunity Structure of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe

(with Simon Franzmann)

Abstract

Previous studies on the electoral fortunes of Extreme Right Parties (ERPs) have pointed to the importance of variables of party competition for the success – or failure – of ERPs. These studies vary greatly when it comes to describing the political opportunity structure of the Extreme Right. Apart from their methodological differences, existing studies differ especially with regard to the assumed underlying dimension of party competition. In this article, we test the impact of three frequently discussed variables in the political opportunity structure of ERPs (mainstream party convergence, position of the established right and party system polarization) on the vote share of ERPs in Western Europe. In addition to examining previous studies in this field, we focus on the interplay between the economic and the cultural dimensions as part of the political opportunity structure. We show that a decrease in polarization with regard to economic questions is accompanied by a growing salience of ERPs' core issues, leading in the end to an increase in ERPs' vote share.

Introduction

Since the early 1980s, we have witnessed the rising success of niche parties and a decline in the vote share of mainstream parties across Europe. While for one group of these niche parties, namely the left-libertarian and green parties, this success is commonly explained by the rise of a “New Politics” or “post-materialist” dimension, the causes for the emergence of Extreme Right Parties (ERPs) are disputed. The continuous electoral support for ERPs at the national, regional and local level was unexpected and has induced a great deal of scientific attention and efforts to explain the different fortunes of these parties at the polls. In the last several years, Ignazi’s (1992) hypothesis of a silent counter-revolution against the post-materialistic left has become increasingly popular. Accordingly, Bale (2003) emphasizes that the ERPs can be seen as the “ugly sisters” of the green parties, basing their success on the rise of the New Politics dimension by opposing the new left-libertarian politics. Bornschier (2010) recently confirmed this insight by showing that New Left and New Right parties have driven the emergence of a new value conflict in Western Europe. Nevertheless, the way in which the simultaneous existence of the classical economic policy dimension and the “new” libertarian-authoritarian dimension affects ERPs’ electoral fate remains unexplored. In this article, we will explore the interplay between the economic and the cultural dimensions as part of the political opportunity structure. We will show that low polarization on economic questions is accompanied by a growing salience of ERPs’ core issues and leads in the end to an increase in ERPs’ vote share.

The literature on ERPs provides two lines of argumentation in order to explain the variance in ERPs’ electoral success across Western Europe. These are the individual characteristics and attitudes of ERP voters on the one hand and, on the other hand, context variables, which account for the special circumstances in which the act of voting takes place. As previous studies have shown, the individual characteristics that are correlated with the vote for an ERP are rather evenly distributed between Western European countries (Van der Brug

et al. 2005). Therefore, most studies find evidence that it is the time- and country-specific national context which is responsible for the different levels of ERPs' electoral support. Influenced by Herbert Kitschelt's seminal study (Kitschelt 1995), the political opportunity structure of ERPs is seen by many authors as one of the most important context variables that accounts for the varying electoral fortunes of the Extreme Right (Abedi 2002; Arzheimer 2009; Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Carter 2002, 2005; Golder 2003, 2004; Meguid 2005; Norris 2005).

While there has been no consensus up to now on the elements of party competition which belong to the political opportunity structure of ERPs (Arzheimer 2009), all studies analysing this question claim that the programmatic strategies of the established parties are crucial for the electoral success of the Extreme Right. Therefore, similarly to the analysis of niche parties undertaken by Meguid (2008), we will concentrate on the programmatic strategies of the mainstream parties to explain the electoral results of ERPs.

In order to analyse the impact of party strategies on ERPs' vote share, we have identified three frequently discussed variables from the literature: the convergence of the two mainstream parties, the position of the mainstream right party and the polarization of the party system. However, we are now faced with the next question: On which dimension of party competition should these variables be measured? Previous studies reveal three different answers to this question. Some studies assume an overall left-right dimension on which party competition takes place. Others argue that ERPs only compete with their mainstream competitors on their own core themes – namely: immigration, authoritarian values and anti-multiculturalism. Therefore, they consider the position of parties on a non-economic dimension to be the most important (Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Ignazi 2003b; Lubbers 2002; Meguid 2005). The third possible answer is that the economic dimension of party competition is crucial for the political opportunity structure of ERPs. As some authors argue (de Lange 2007; Kitschelt 1995, 2007; Kitschelt and McGann 2005), it is the market-liberal

programmatic position of ERPs which is relevant for their voters, at least when considered alongside other, non-economic issues.

This article contributes to the ongoing debate on the political opportunity structure of ERPs in two important ways. Theoretically and empirically, it analyses the simultaneous effects of two dimensions of party competition, measured on two policy scales: an economic and a non-economic one. The convergence of the two mainstream parties, the position of the mainstream right party and the polarization of the party system are measured separately for each scale. This allows us to test which dimension of party competition is relevant for the political opportunity structure of ERPs. Methodologically, it uses data from all Western European countries and elections since 1980 to measure the impact of the three variables of party competition on the different dimensions.

The article is structured as follows: The first section discusses the multi-dimensionality of the political space in Western Europe and summarizes the main arguments concerning the relationship between the political opportunity structure of ERPs and their electoral success. These arguments are summarized into three hypotheses about the impact of the different variables of party competition on the electoral results of ERPs. In the second section, we will operationalize and justify our dependent and independent variables as well as our statistical model. In section three, the proposed hypotheses will be tested empirically using data for Western Europe during the period from 1980 to 2003. We will discuss the implications of our findings in the conclusion.

2. The political opportunity structure of ERPs

The basic idea of all studies that refer to the political opportunity structure of ERPs is rather simple: Extreme Right Parties – like all other parties – have to compete with other parties for votes. This competition takes place in a specific national context which is defined by (1) the institutional setting, (2) the strategies of the competing mainstream parties, and (3) the socio-

economic environment.¹ For our analysis, we will focus on the role of party strategies in the electoral fortunes of ERPs, thereby applying a narrow definition of the political opportunity structure.

Applying a practice that is widely accepted in the Western European context, we have used the left-right dichotomy in order to analyse the ideological space in which parties are acting. Left-right can be interpreted as a “super-issue” that absorbs all the different meanings of other issues (Inglehart 1984; Kitschelt and Hellemans 1990; Knutsen 1998; Flanagan and Lee 2003). This left-right super-issue is built on issues originating from different spheres. Of course, the ideological space can be separated into more than one dimension. Sartori (1976), although analysing the mechanics of party competition within a one-dimensional heuristic, already identified at least four dimensions. Sartori argues that analysing the most salient policy dimension is both sufficient and necessary in order to reduce the complexity of identifying the central mechanisms at work in party systems. Nevertheless, it was widely uncontested that at least a socio-economic and a socio-cultural dimension define the political space, as Lipset and Rokkan (1967) detect the importance not only of the industrial revolution but also of the national revolution for structuring West European party systems. But for a long time these two different spheres have merged into one single dimension even on the individual level regarding political ideologies (cf. Knutsen 1998; Knutsen 2009).

While in the 1970s, the explanatory power of the one-dimensional left-right space was widely undisputed, this view has changed (Flanagan and Lee 2003). Kitschelt (1994) has shown in several publications how the change in the European party systems can be fruitfully analysed by referring to both an economic left-right and an authoritarian-libertarian ideological axis. In a similar manner, Marks et al. (2006) detect different patterns of party competition in Western and Eastern Europe, referring to a socio-economic left-right dimension and a GAL-TAN dimension. The latter represents non-economic green, alternative

¹ Arzheimer and Carter (2006) refer to these variables as long-term, medium-term and short-term contextual factors.

and libertarian (GAL) issues at one pole and traditional, authoritarian and nationalistic (TAN) issues at the other pole. Kriesi et al. (2006, 2008) also identify a two-dimensional policy space with a cultural and an economic dimension. Using media data, they found that the cultural dimension has transformed its meaning since the 1970s by integrating the issue of immigration (Kriesi et al. 2006: 950). Finally, in a recent special issue on the structure of political competition in Western Europe, scholars confirm the finding of a two-dimensional space (Enyedi and Deegan-Krause 2010: 417). According to this literature, we can assume that it is sufficient to model the ideological space of party competition using two such types of spheres, namely a socio-economic and a socio-cultural one. As we discuss in section three, the socio-cultural dimension in our analysis is not restricted to authoritarian and libertarian issues, but open for all non-economic issues reflecting the ideas of both Lipset and Rokkan (1967) and Flanagan and Lee (2003).

We further assume that parties can position themselves more to the left or to the right by emphasizing particular issues belonging to one of these two spheres. Sometimes these issues will be formulated confrontationally, since one party claims the opposite of that which another party is advocating. Sometimes these issues represent core issues of one party that are ignored by the others. In taking this approach, we are combining thoughts of both confrontational and salience theory (cf. Budge 2001; Franzmann and Kaiser 2006; Franzmann 2009).² Our primary aim in this article is to show that analysing party competition in a two-dimensional way deepens our understanding of party strategies compared to a one-dimensional analysis. Even though the usefulness of analysing the political space in two

² Note that our approach differs in important aspects from Meguid's (2008), although both approaches see the strategic decisions of parties as decisive. While Meguid (2008: 22-40) clearly separates left-right positions, issue-ownership and saliences from each other as strategic tools, we claim that emphasizing issues always has an effect on the positioning of a party. Hence, we do not separate these two strategic tools. Furthermore, Meguid (2008: 12-13 and 23) is sceptical about the explanatory power of sociological approaches and assumes that parties create new policy dimensions. Although we share her view of the importance of actors' behaviour in analysing party competition as well as in the activation of cleavages by parties, we do not dismiss sociological findings to the extent that she does. We assume that the evolution of "new" policy dimensions can be explained by value changes in the society (Inglehart 1984; Flanagan/Lee 2003), but for our analysis, this is an exogenous fact which parties can use strategically and is therefore part of the political opportunity structure.

dimensions is often discussed theoretically, there is a lack of empirical studies conducted in this way. Here we present a contribution intended to fill this gap by analysing the opportunity structure of ERPs.

How does the positioning of the established parties in these two dimensions affect the ERPs' vote share? In his seminal study on the Extreme Right in Western Europe, Herbert Kitschelt (1995) saw the growing success of ERPs as being caused by the end of industrial society. He claims that the transition to a post-industrial society has created a demand for both market-liberal issues and authoritative values from segments of the electorate in all Western European societies, therefore changing the demand side of party competition. ERPs have reacted to this new demand by combining market-liberal issues with authoritative issues, a combination which Kitschelt describes as the winning formula of ERPs. However, the success of this winning formula does not depend solely on the programmatic appeals adopted by the ERPs themselves, but also on the programmatic appeals adopted by their mainstream competitors. Kitschelt argues that the more the mainstream parties converge in their programmes, the less ideologically distinct from each other they become, and as a result they offer ERPs more political space (Kitschelt 2002). This leads us to our first hypothesis:

H1: The more the two mainstream parties converge, the greater the ERPs' vote share.

As we have already mentioned, Kitschelt's theoretical framework distinguishes between two dimensions of party competition, so the question emerges as to on which dimension of party competition this programmatic convergence should be measured. In a subsequent article, Kitschelt (2007: 1186) specifies that, in order to test the convergence thesis adequately, one should measure parties' positions solely on the economic dimension. While we share the view that both dimensions of party competition are equally important for analysing party competition, it should be noted that the relevance of economic-related issues

for the ERPs' electoral success is contested by most other authors in the field (Mudde 2007; Norris 2005), who claim that the non-economic dimension of party competition alone is of relevance for these parties. Many authors (Akkerman 2005; Arzheimer 2008; Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Lubbers et al. 2002; Van der Brug et al. 2005) even argue that only some distinct non-economic core issues of ERPs are important for their electorates and therefore for their electoral success "...as it is primarily along this dimension that they compete with their mainstream rivals" (Arzheimer and Carter 2003: 9). If this assumption is correct, H1 should not be tested by using parties' policy positions on the economic scale – as claimed by Kitschelt – but by analysing parties' positions on the non-material scale.

The relevance of non-economic issues alone is also advocated by Piero Ignazi (Ignazi 1992, 1995, 2003a, 2003b). Since his assumptions about the dimensionality of the political opportunity structure of ERPs can also be found in various other studies (Lubbers et al. 2002; Van der Brug et al. 2005; Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Arzheimer 2008), we will briefly summarize his thoughts. Ignazi argues that the change to post-industrial societies leads to the development of non-economic values in parts of the electorate. The demand for these new right non-material issues – he names immigration, security and national identity – is seen as a time-lagged reaction to the appearance of new left non-material issues. According to Ignazi, the mainstream right parties had serious problems when they tried to incorporate the new right issues into their party platforms in the 1980s. In contrast to their mainstream competitors, ERPs were able to take up these new issues in a more pronounced and radical way, which turned out to be more successful. However, the ERPs' radical adoption and representation of the new right's non-material issues was not sufficient for their electoral success. Equally important, according to Ignazi, was the previous failed attempt of the mainstream right parties to incorporate these new issues into their party platforms. By doing so, the mainstream right did succeed in establishing these new issues in the arena of political competition, legitimizing them in the eyes of the electorate and preparing the ground for the successful incorporation of

these issues by the ERPs. Following Ignazi (2003b), we assume that the mainstream right can legitimize the non-material core issues of the ERPs by incorporating these issues into their own programmes. This leads us to our second hypothesis:

H2: The more the mainstream right party positions itself on the right, the greater the ERPs' vote share.

It should be noted that H2 theoretically demands that we measure of the position of the mainstream right party on a non-economic dimension alone. While this argument is plausible, there are equally good reasons to expect the opposite effect (Lubbers et al. 2002). In the tradition of Downs (1957), voters will cast their vote for the party which is closest to their own position in the political space. If both the mainstream and the Extreme Right Party are positioned close to the potential voters of the latter, these voters will have the possibility of choosing between them. In other words, the political space available for the ERP shrinks when the mainstream right positions itself near to its extreme right competitor.³

One could argue, furthermore, that the radicalization of the mainstream right parties may lead to a higher degree of party system polarization. In an early publication, Ignazi (1992) states that strongly polarized party systems may be supportive for ERPs, since in these systems extreme positions – be they left or right – may also be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the electorate. While this argument is close to the argument developed in H2, the position of the mainstream right party alone is not sufficient to produce strong party system polarization, as the positions of all other parties also influence this variable. Therefore, we will measure the

³ It should be noted that it might be the case that the ERP is not the most extreme party of the right. In 75 cases for which we have data for both the position of the ERP as well as the mainstream right party, this is the case in 18 (left-right dimension), 17 (economic dimension) and 15 cases (non-economic dimension). Nearly exclusively, this scenario is given in Flanders (Vlaams Blok), Italy (Lega Nord) and Finland (True Finns). Interestingly, these ERPs are often perceived as somehow borderline-cases of ERPs.

impact of polarization independently of the position of the mainstream right party, which leads us to our third hypothesis:

H3: The more polarized a party system is, the greater the ERPs' vote share.

Finally, while the hypotheses above can be tested independently for the each of the two dimensions of party competition, we assume that the simultaneous study of both dimensions will be superior to reducing our study to one dimension. We will therefore measure our three variables of party competition (convergence of the mainstream parties, position of the mainstream right party and party system polarization) on each of the two dimensions and assume possible interaction effects between them.

Let us sum up at this point: Previous studies on the political opportunity structure of ERPs agree that the strategies of the established parties are essential for the ERPs' electoral success. However, these studies differ with regard to the assumed dimensions of party competition as well as on the question of which variables of party competition should be accounted for. While most authors state that only some non-material core issues are important for the electoral fortunes of ERPs, others – mainly following Kitschelt – claim that an economic dimension of party competition might also be of relevance for the success or failure of ERPs. What has not yet been tested is which dimension of party competition is really decisive for explaining ERPs' electoral success. We will turn to this question in the subsequent analysis.

3. Model and variable description

In this section, we will discuss our case selection, our statistical model and the operationalizations of our main independent variable as well as of our control variables. We will concentrate our analysis on Western Europe and on the time period from 1980 to 2003.

Since the rise of ERPs began in the early 1980s, we have chosen 1980 as the starting point of our analyses while the end point is defined by data availability. This leads us to a dataset which includes 17 countries and 18 party systems, as the Belgian regions of Flanders and Wallonia are treated as separate systems.⁴ Altogether, our dataset consists of 116 elections in these 18 party systems. Two Western European countries are excluded from our analysis: Malta and Switzerland. While the first is excluded for reasons of data availability, we have decided to exclude Switzerland for theoretical reasons. The prominence of direct democracy and the distinctiveness of government formation in Switzerland⁵ raise theoretical problems when this country is compared with others in terms of party competition. More than that, the Swiss case is the only party system analyzed where it is difficult to separate the dominant mainstream right party from the ERP itself, given the political history and the electoral strength of the Swiss People`s Party.

Because we are not interested in the electoral fate of a single party but in the whole vote share of the ERP party family in one country, the dependent variable is the sum of all ERPs` vote shares in a given election. Table 1 shows the parties identified as ERPs in each country. Following the definition of Mudde (2007), we see nationalism as the core ideological feature of this party family, understood as a political doctrine that “strives for the congruence of the cultural and political unit, i.e. the nation and the state, respectively” (Mudde 2007: 16).

⁴ Since 1978, no party has competed for votes in both regions of Belgium in the national elections.

⁵ The special mode of government formation in Switzerland (*Zauberformel*) ensures that the five largest parties become members of the federal government. This makes it problematic to identify two mainstream parties, since in the Swiss case, one can plausibly speak of five mainstream parties.

Table 1: Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe

Country	Extreme right parties	Vote Share in 1980*	Vote Share in 1990*	Vote Share in 2000*
Austria	Freedom Party (since 1986 classified as ERP)	-	16.6%	26.9%
Belgium (Flanders)	Flemish Block	1.1%	6.6%	10.1%
Belgium (Wallonia)	National Front	-	1.0%	1.5%
Denmark	Progress Party Danish People's Party	8.9%	6.4%	12.6%
Finland	True Finns (former Finnish Rural Party)	9.7%	4.8%	1.0%
France	National Front Movement for France	0.2%	9.6%	15.3%
Germany	Republicans National Democratic Party Union of German People	0.2%	4.0%	3.3%
Greece	National Political Union National Democratic Union National Alignment National Party Party of the Progressives	1.7%	0.1%	0.2%
Iceland	None	-	-	-
Ireland	None	-	-	-
Italy	Northern League Italian Social Movement (until 1995) National Alliance	6.8%	14.1%	16.3%
Luxembourg	National Movement	-	2.3%	-
Netherlands	Centre Party Centre Democrats List Pim Fortuyn	0.1%	0.9%	17.0%
Norway	Progress Party	4.5%	13.0%	14.6%
Portugal	National Renewal Party Christian Democratic Party	0.6%	0.6%	0.1%
Spain	National Alliance National Union	0.7%	0.1%	0.1%
Sweden	New Democracy	-	6.1%	0.2%
United Kingdom	National Front British National Party	0.1%	0.03%	1.5%

*If more than one ERP has contested for votes, the column reports the sum of vote shares for all parties regarded as ERPs.

As Table 1 indicates, we have also decided to include those countries where no ERP exists. As Golder (2003, 2004) and Jackman and Volpert (1996) have argued, the non-inclusion of these countries would cause a serious selection bias. We will therefore run a Tobit instead of an OLS model, as proposed by these authors. In our case, a Tobit model assumes that the dependent variable is left-censored at the value of zero and therefore also allows for the inclusion of elections where no ERP has contested for votes (n=23).⁶ We will perform our analysis at the macro-level, since we are interested only in the effect of different context variables. For the study of the opportunity structure this is an adequate procedure (Abedi 2002; Carter 2005; Golder 2003; Meguid 2005).

According to our hypotheses presented above, we define three independent variables as: (1) the convergence of the two mainstream parties, (2) the position of the mainstream right party, and (3) the polarization of the party system. Each of these variables is measured separately on an economic, a non-economic and a general left-right dimension. As we have emphasized, each of the hypotheses developed in the previous section originally assumes either the economic (H1) or the non-economic dimension of party competition (H2 and H3) to be decisive. We will nonetheless test each hypothesis on each dimension. By doing so, we can also test the simultaneous impact of both dimensions.

In order to operationalize the variables of party competition, the most important data are left-right party positions. There are several methods for determining these positions, the most common being mass survey data, expert data and manifesto data. While each data source reveals its own advantages and disadvantages, expert data is seldom available for longer time periods. For the period of interest (1980 to 2003) there are a few expert surveys, but these are not comparable with one another (see Carter 2005). Furthermore, we do not know which

⁶ Using a Tobit model is theoretically appropriate only when one assumes that the variables that influence ERPs' vote share also influence the existence or non-existence of an extreme right party (Golder 2003). While we know of only one study that directly addresses this question (O'Malley 2008), we want to claim that the theoretical argumentation for a Tobit model is convincing. Alternatively, we have also estimated an OLS model without these 23 elections, as other studies have done (Abedi 2002; Carter 2005; Meguid 2005), and the results are to a large extent comparable.

issues of party competition the experts have taken into account when locating parties on a left-right-scale, and often we do not even know whether the experts have judged electoral platforms or government behaviour, or both together. In a nutshell: We have no comparable dataset for left-right party positions based on expert surveys for the period from 1980 onwards. We are confronted with similar problems when we use public opinion surveys.

Therefore, we decided to use CMP data to identify party policy positions. CMP provides a transcription of manifestos due to salience theory. Hence there is a debate how to generate positional data using the manifesto raw scores (Kim and Fording 1998; Gabel and Huber 2000; Pappi and Shikano 2004; Franzmann and Kaiser 2006). For our empirical analysis, we make use of the approach developed by Franzmann and Kaiser (2006). The most important advantage of this approach is that it allows us to account for time- and country-specific meanings of the terms “left” and “right” by identifying positional (either left or right) and non-confrontational issues of party competition.⁷

The resulting left-right scale consists of all possible CMP categories. Moreover, with this approach, it is also possible to construct our two subordinated dimensions. Party values on the economic scale are measured on the basis of all economic-related CMP categories, while all other categories have been assigned to the non-economic scale (see Table 5, Appendix). The decision to subsume all non-economic categories into in one dimension is made due to both the theoretical approach and the CMP coding procedure. The theoretical argument is, following the insight of Inglehart (1984) that left-right is a super-issue absorbing all issues and not only economic ones. It might be argued, that the "new" politics dimension is

⁷ The idea of this approach is to take all out of the raw data that is not positional. Using this approach, first confrontational and non-confrontational issues are identified. In a second step it is determined, whether a confrontational issue is left or right. Then the raw CMP scores itself are transformed. A minimal value is subtracted for each election and party system in order not to overestimate issue stances that each party in a particular country and in a particular election does. The scores of these differences will be summed up and transformed to an 11-point scale, leading us to determine party positions between 0 (leftmost) and 10 (rightmost). Using moving averages as smoothing procedure, the raw value of a manifesto before and after the particular election is used for error correction. This approach reveals not only sufficient reliability scores (Dinas and Geminins 2010), but also an high construct validity compared to voters' left-right positions in mass surveys (Franzmann and Kaiser 2006; Franzmann 2009). Data are available online: http://www.uni-potsdam.de/db/lis_regierungssystem_brd/index.php?article_id=498&clang=0.

identical with libertarian-authoritarian attitudes. However, according to the insight of political sociologists (Huber/Inglehart 1995; Knutsen 1998; Flanagan/lee 2003; Knutsen 2009), we think that also issues like environmentalism, peace, administrative efficiency, decentralization, and underprivileged demographic groups belong to the "new" politics. Hence we found no category that could be clearly excluded for theoretical reasons. This is the more true if one regards the data structure and the coding procedure. The manifesto group coded each quasi-sentence only once. Therefore the data set reveals a lot of arbitrary categories. Excluding one or more categories increases the danger of ignoring relevant issue stances. Small policy scales based on the CMP data are very likely to be biased and only the measurement of broad dimensions gives the security to generate valid results. In sum, we think that generating policy scales using manifesto data should reconsider the data structure, and the data structure suggests to include as many categories as possible.

We then measure the level of *mainstream party convergence* on a left-right scale from 0 to 10, which theoretically leads to a range of values from 0 (minimal convergence) to 10 (perfect convergence). We define as mainstream parties the two parties that have gained the largest and second largest vote shares at a given election (1st criterion). In order to test the convergence thesis (H1 and H2), we distinguish between a left and a right mainstream party. To be regarded as a left/right mainstream party, a party must comply with the 1st criterion and must be placed to the left/right of the other mainstream party on our left-right dimension over the whole period (2nd criterion). A list of the parties we have identified as being mainstream is given in the appendix (Table 3). In line with H1, we expect that higher levels of programmatic convergence will lead to higher vote shares for parties of the Extreme Right. In order to test H2, it is sufficient to concentrate on the *position of the mainstream right party* alone. As we stated above, this variable might be positively or negatively related to the ERPs' vote share. Finally, H3 assumes a legitimating function caused by high *party system polarization*. In line with this argument, we assume a positive relationship between our polarization variable and

the ERPs' vote share. We measure party system polarization using the formula first proposed by Sigelman and Yough (1978).⁸ An analysis of the correlation between the variables measuring mainstream party convergence and the ones accounting for party system polarization reveals a high empirical relationship (-0.79 for the economic, resp. -0.85 for the non-economic dimension). However, there are also cases in which increased polarization over time is accompanied by increased convergence of the mainstream parties (see for a similar finding Castles and Mair 1997). This high interdependence of two of our independent variables could technically cause a severe problem of multicollinearity. We include both variables in one model but carefully account for possible multicollinearity by using robust standard errors. As the variance inflation factor of our models never exceeds the value of 2.8 - and this highest value only when both variables are included for both dimensions simultaneously (model 5, Table 2) - the technical side of the model is unproblematic. With regards to content, polarization is distinguished from mainstream party convergence by considering all relevant parties and not only the two largest. In our multivariate analysis we expect both variables to have a positive impact of ERPs success. When the mainstream parties converge but polarization is high, this polarization must be necessarily induced by smaller parties, for instance left-libertarian ones. Hence simultaneous convergence accompanied by increasing polarization indicates a decreasing attractiveness of the mainstream parties, ERPs vote share should then increase.

As we stated initially, our definition of the political opportunity structure is restricted to variables of party competition. While we are only interested in the effects of these variables, we also have included four additional variables in our model. These are the *disproportionality of the electoral system*, the *degree of institutional federalism*, the

⁸ The formula reads: $P = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i (x_i - \bar{x})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i}$ where p_i is a party's vote share at a given election, x_i is this party's position on a given dimension, and \bar{x} is the weighted mean of the positions of all parties on this dimension. \bar{x} is calculated by multiplying the vote share by the ideological position of a party. This step is repeated for each party in the party system and finally, these values are summed up.

unemployment rate and the *share of the foreign-born population*. These four variables are well-established in the research on the political opportunity structure of ERPs and are therefore taken as control variables. We have also added country dummies in our model to control for unobserved country-specific characteristics.

The disproportionality of the electoral system is measured using the index developed by Gallagher (1991), which assigns higher values to more disproportional systems. Although other studies have used more detailed variables to define the electoral system, including electoral thresholds, district magnitudes and upper-tier percentages (Carter 2002; Golder 2003; Norris 2005), we prefer the Gallagher index because it gives an impression of the overall level of disproportionality. Since ERPs are rather small parties, we expect that they – like all other minor parties – will benefit from a more proportional electoral system.

The impact of federalism on ERPs' electoral fortunes was a subject first raised by Arzheimer and Carter (2003, 2006). On the one hand, ERPs might benefit from a federal state structure, as this may allow them to rely on additional resources when they perform well in subnational elections. ERPs might also benefit from the potentially limited accountability of political parties in consensual-oriented political systems, which might increase the political dissatisfaction of voters with regard to mainstream parties (see for this discussion: Andeweg 2001; Hakhverdian and Koop 2007; Lijphart 2001). On the other hand, these subnational elections might act as a filter for political protest. Voters may want to show their dislike of the mainstream parties' programmes by voting for an ERP, but will do so only in subnational elections, which they perceive as being of minor importance compared to the national elections analysed here. Therefore, the degree of federalism as measured by Lijphart (1999) might be positively or negatively correlated with ERPs' vote share.

In addition to these two institutional variables, we have also included two socio-economic context factors: the unemployment rate and the share of the foreign-born population. Both variables can be expected to have a positive impact on ERPs' election

results. For data on the standardized unemployment rate, we have used the dataset assembled by Armingeon et al. (2008) and for the share of the foreign-born population, data offered by the OECD.⁹

4. Results

We will now test the impact of the variables of party competition that we developed above. For our analysis, we have used data for all elections to national parliaments in Western Europe from 1980 to 2003 (n=116). Our dependent variable is the vote share of parties which we consider to belong to the Extreme Right. As we will later control for possible interaction effects between our party competition variables, we have centred all independent variables on their mean.

Altogether, we have specified eight different models. Models 1 to 5 report the main effects of our independent variables, Models 6 to 8 control for possible interaction effects between these variables. All models reported in Table 2 also include country dummies (not shown), and therefore only account for intra-country variation of the dependent variable. We have also estimated the same models without country dummies, and the main findings are not affected (see Table 4, Appendix).

Model 1 includes only the four control variables for the disproportionality of the electoral system, the degree of federalism, the unemployment rate and the rate of foreign-born population. Models 2 to 5 include our three party competition variables: the convergence between the two mainstream parties, the position of the mainstream right party and the party system polarization variable. Each model tests the impact of these variables on a different dimension of party competition: Model 2 on a left-right scale, Model 3 on an economic and Model 4 on a purely non-economic dimension. Model 5 then includes the three variables of party competition measured simultaneously on both the economic and the non-economic

⁹ We obtained our data on international migration flows from the *OECD Database on International Migration* [www.oecd.org].

dimension, which leads to six variables in this case. Finally, Models 6 to 8 control for possible interaction effects between the variables measured on the two different dimensions.

With regard to our control variables, only the share of the foreign-born population is significantly and positively correlated with the ERPs' vote share in all models, a result which supports the findings of previous studies (Knigge 1998; Lubbers et al. 2002; Golder 2003; Kessler and Freeman 2005). Following the recommendation of Golder (2003), we have also tested for a possible interaction-effect between the unemployment rate and the percentage of the foreign-born population (model 6). Such an effect could indeed be identified but in contrast to the one reported by Golder it is negative: With rising levels of unemployment the impact of the foreign-born population on the ERP's vote share decreases (see for a similar finding Arzheimer (2009)). The degree of electoral disproportionality, measured by Gallagher's index, turns out to be significant in three of the eight models. As the index uses higher values for more disproportional electoral systems, this result was rather surprising. Therefore, we have replaced this variable with another one, district magnitude, but the result remains the same: ERPs seem to be more successful in disproportional electoral systems.¹⁰

Turning to our party competition variables, Model 2 shows the results for an overall left-right dimension. Here, all three variables of party competition are significant and positively correlated with ERPs' vote share, giving support to H1, H2 and H3. ERPs are more successful if the two mainstream parties show high levels of convergence, if the mainstream right party places itself more to the right, and if the party system is highly polarized. These findings support previous studies that also used a left-right dimension to measure the variables of party competition (Abedi 2002; Carter 2005, Kitschelt 1995). Models 3 to 5 show what

¹⁰ While the impact of the disproportionality of the electoral system has been analysed extensively by different authors (Carter 2002; Golder 2003; Norris 2005), only Golder's study also analyses elections where no ERPs were present. While Golder finds evidence that ERPs actually benefit from more proportional electoral systems – the opposite of our finding – his period of analysis is from 1970-2002. Reanalysing his data, we found that the statistical significance of his (dis)proportionality variables is due to the inclusion of the elections before 1980 and turns out to be insignificant (but still positively correlated) for the period from 1980-2002.

happens if we split the left-right dimension into an economic and a non-economic dimension of party competition. Several points are striking and need further attention.

First, regarding the part-scales separately, we find significant correlations only for the non-economic dimension of party competition, while none of the economic-related variables reaches common levels of statistical significance. Up to this point, our findings support those studies that have only focused on the non-material core issues of ERPs and measured party system competition solely on a non-economic dimension (Lubbers et al. 2002; Meguid 2005; Van der Brug et al. 2005; Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Arzheimer 2009). But, as we will see later, the simultaneous analysis of the two part-scales (Model 5) reveals that indicators from both dimensions have a statistically significant effect on ERPs' vote share.

Second, Kitschelt's convergence thesis turns out to be significant only for the non-economic dimension of party competition, supporting H1. The variable which measured the convergence on an economic dimension turns out to be insignificant, and this is the case for every model where it is included. The significant test for the left-right convergence (Model 2) therefore results from the inclusion of the non-economic dimension alone. This contradicts Kitschelt's expectation (2007) that the convergence variable should only be measured, and would only have an impact, on the economic dimension.

Third, the position of the mainstream right party (H2) does not have any significant impact on the vote for ERPs, regardless of the assumed dimension of party competition. While the impact of this variable on the non-economic dimension is positive and would confirm H2, it does not reach common levels of statistical significance. However, when we include both dimensions simultaneously (Model 5), the position of the mainstream right party on the economic dimension turns out to be positively correlated with our dependent variable. This is an interesting result. It supports our approach in analyzing the two dimensions separately, because otherwise in the one-dimensional left-right model the effect is underestimated. For instance, especially liberal parties, being at the right on the economic

Table 2: Estimates of Tobit models (with country dummies)

Regressor		Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)	Model (5)	Model (6)	Model (7)	Model (8)	Model (9)
Disproportionality		.389* (.182)	.311 (.182)	.391* (.184)	.260 (.169)	.225 (.168)	0.219 (.164)	.171 (.164)	.242 (.170)	.102 (.169)
Federalism		2.269 (1.247)	1.812 (1.286)	2.566 (1.314)	.645 (1.180)	.996 (1.200)	1.323 (1.185)	1.246 (1.168)	1.019 (1.199)	1.041 (1.167)
Unemployment		-.004 (.174)	-.071 (.168)	-.032 (.177)	.0250 (.158)	-.017 (.157)	-0.182 (.173)	-.077 (.155)	-.021 (.157)	-.088 (.155)
Foreign-born population		.728** (.203)	.507* (.226)	.685** (.208)	.696** (.203)	.623** (.195)	0.356 (.232)	.628** (.189)	.645** (.199)	.644** (.189)
General Left-Right Scale	Convergence		3.407* (1.367)							
	Position Mainstream Right		2.693* (1.154)							
	Party System Polarisation		1.463* (.728)							
Economic Scale	Convergence			-.014 (1.064)		.395 (.995)	0.661 (.984)	.935 (.988)	.525 (1.022)	1.307 (1.032)
	Position Mainstream Right			1.191 (.897)		1.817* (.830)	2.12* (.828)	1.754* (.807)	1.918* (.850)	2.243** (.824)
	Party System Polarisation			-.529 (.463)		-.755 (.432)	-0.683 (.424)	-.146 (.478)	-.760 (.432)	-.200 (.473)
Non-Economic Scale	Convergence				2.725** (.762)	2.651** (.750)	2.728** (.737)	2.882** (.739)	2.612** (.752)	2.910** (.740)
	Position Mainstream Right				.724 (.665)	.673 (.658)	0.616 (.644)	.267 (.657)	.717 (.664)	.319 (.654)
	Party System Polarisation				2.544** (.590)	2.766** (.571)	2.851** (.560)	3.453** (.614)	2.744** (.571)	3.527** (.632)
Interaction Effects of both part scales	Unemployment*foreign-born pop						-.092* (.045)			
	Convergence							-.539** (.203)		
	Position Mainstream Right								.151 (.275)	
	Party System Polarisation									-.285* (.112)
Country dummies		Not displayed								
Sigma		3.613 (.264)	3.445 (.251)	3.523 (.257)	3.265 (.237)	3.099 (.225)	3.030 (.221)	3.008 (.218)	3.096 (.225)	3.008 (.219)
Log pseudo-likelihood		-262.066	-257.041	-260.006	-251.097	-246.517	-244.477	-242.996	-246.367	-243.382
N		116	116	116	116	116	116	116	116	116
Non-censored		95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95
Left-censored		21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21

scale, tend to be rather moderate or even left on the non-economic scale (Smith 1988). Hence the onedimensional left-right-position of these parties is moderate, but in fact they tend to be more extreme at least on the economic part-scale. Similar, it indicates a legitimizing effect of extreme positions by mainstream parties, but not in the way as we have assumed in hypothesis 2. It is not the policy field itself what is legitimized, but rather a mainstream party holds a position away from the ideological centre. Therefore the extreme right parties benefit from an electorate used to be confronted with more extreme positions.

Fourth, party system polarization turns out to be significantly and positively correlated with the dependent variable only on the non-economic dimension, thereby confirming H3. This effect of non-economic polarization is even stronger than the effect of the general left-right polarization, and it increases even more in a simultaneous analysis of the economic and the non-economic dimensions. Focussing separately on one dimension obviously leads to an underestimation of the impact of non-economic polarization. As we discussed above, this finding supports Ignazi's argument: Party systems that are highly polarised on non-economic issues seem to legitimize extreme positions. While Ignazi gives no explanation for the converse impact of party system polarization on the different sub-dimensions, we propose the following explanation: Voters compare the positions of parties on the two dimensions independently from each other. If the non-economic dimension is more polarized, the policy options that the different parties offer to the electorate are more distinct, and a vote decision based on this dimension would guarantee voters the greatest impact in terms of the expected policies. By contrast, a party system that is more polarized on economic issues would lead voters to make their voting decisions on basis of their economic preferences, which should disadvantage the ERPs, who do not "own" economic issues. The negative – though insignificant – coefficients of the polarization variable measured on the economic dimension are in line with this argumentation.

Fifth, although the direct effects of the economic-related variables of party competition are all non-significant, it is too early to conclude that the economic dimension of party competition is unimportant for the electoral fortunes of ERPs. It may be the case that the economic-related variables moderate the effect of the non-economic related variables, an assumption which we control for in Models 7 to 9 by adding interaction effects to our model. It turns out that both the impact of convergence between the two mainstream parties and party system polarization on the non-economic dimension are moderated by the values of the corresponding variables on the economic dimension. The coefficients for both product terms are negative: With higher values measured for these variables on the economic dimension, the effects of the corresponding variables on the non-economic dimension of the dependent variable decrease. While the coefficients in Table 2 only show the significance of the product term at one value, we have additionally calculated conditional slopes reported in Figures 1 and 2. The decreasing interaction effects indicate that in countries and cases, where convergence and polarization on economic and non-economic behave asymmetrically, our two-dimensional model works best. In cases where convergence and polarization behave symmetrically, a quasi-one dimensional structure occurs and hence the interaction effect of both dimensions provides only a low additional explanatory power.

Figure 1: Effect of the convergence on the non-economic scale for different values of the convergence on the economic scale

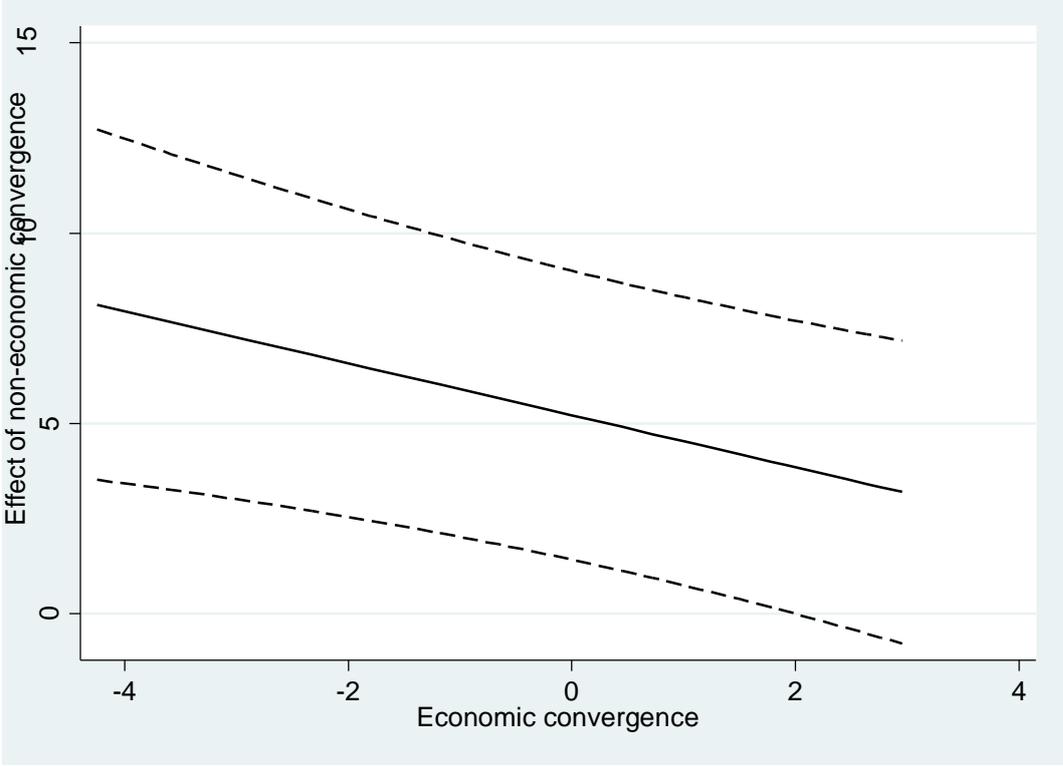
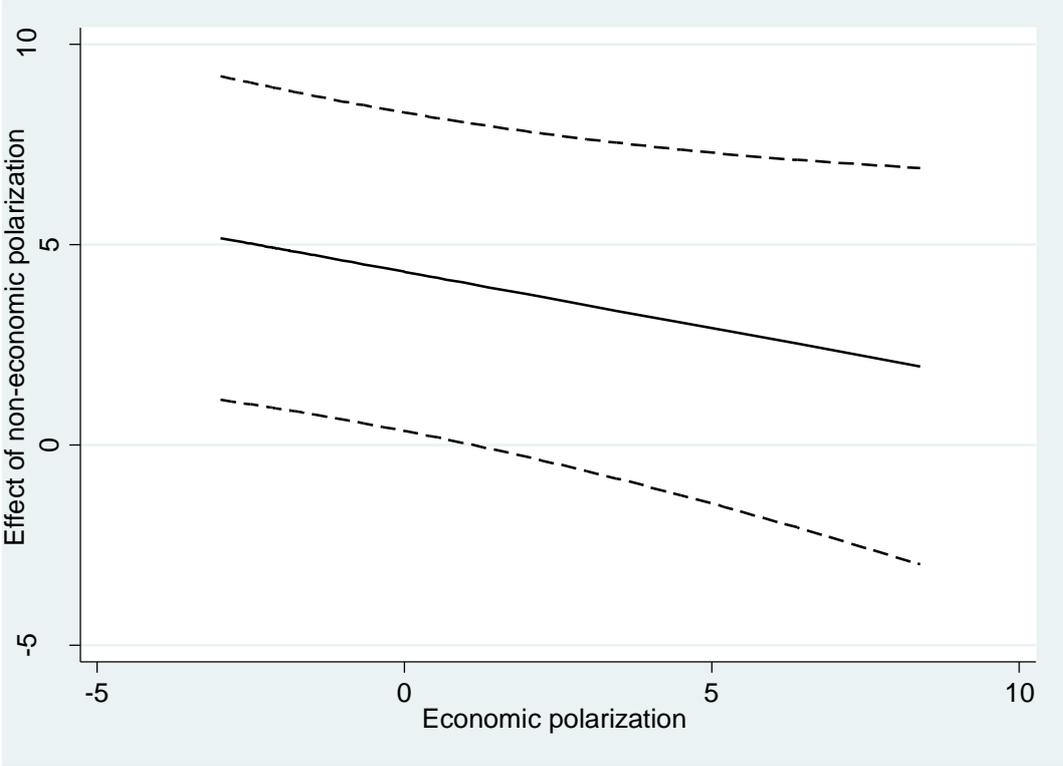


Figure 2: Effect of the polarization on the non-economic scale for different values of the polarization on the economic scale



Sixth, in light of our analysis of the two interaction effects, we conclude that the economic dimension of party competition is important for the electoral fortunes of ERPs, since it moderates the effect of the non-economic dimension. While our research design has focused solely on the party system level and therefore does not allow us to draw any conclusions for the individual level, one explanation for the identified interaction effects may be that voters are able to separate the two dimensions of party competition when they decide which party to vote for. In party systems that are highly polarized on economic issues, voters might regard these issues as more important than the non-economic core issues of ERPs, because the expected differences in outcome are greater when they base their voting decisions on economic preferences. In contrast, voters might have a greater incentive to make their voting decisions on the basis of their non-material preferences if they do not see great differences between the parties on the economic dimension. The accentuation and polarization of economic issues may therefore discredit the ERPs' appeal to non-economic issues. Focussing only on the impact of non-economic issues when analysing the political opportunity structure of ERPs, as has been done by most previous studies in the field, might therefore be a misleading approach.

5. Discussion and conclusion

Building upon the theoretical considerations of previous studies, this article has developed three hypotheses concerning the political opportunity structure of ERPs. In order to test these hypotheses, unlike previous studies, we have not only made a distinction between an economic and a non-economic dimension of party competition, but have also carefully inspected the interplay of both dimensions. Our approach allowed us to include elections in which no ERP participated, and the results of our empirical analysis indicate that both dimensions of party competition are important for the political opportunity structure of ERPs. On the non-economic dimension, the convergence of the mainstream parties and a high level

of party system polarization have been found to increase ERPs' vote share. Because we have only found effects of the economic dimension in models which simultaneously analysed factors belonging to both dimensions, our results signify that economic-related variables moderate the effects of the non-economic-related variables and are therefore important for the political opportunity structure of ERPs.

With regard to these findings, we want to address two questions. The first refers to the general analysis of party competition in a multi-dimensional policy space, while the second is more specific, referring to the opportunity structure of the ERPs.

First, our results clearly confirm that analysing only the general left-right dimension is not sufficient for understanding what happens in contemporary party systems. Only if we distinguish between an economic and a non-economic dimension are we able to determine different ways of explaining ERPs' electoral success. Analysing just one of these dimensions is also not sufficient. We clearly show that the interaction of the two dimensions is decisive. Focussing only on one dimension leads to an underestimation of their effects. We assume that this is generally true for all kinds of analyses of party competition.

Second, concerning the question of whether the economic or the non-economic dimension of party competition is the most important part of the opportunity structure for ERPs, our analysis has shown that the interplay of party strategies on the two independent policy dimensions has a significant influence on the electoral fortunes of ERPs. Like most authors, we think that the core issues of ERPs clearly belong to the non-economic sphere. But only when polarization over economic questions is low do ERPs face an opportunity structure which allows them to successfully attract voters with their core issues. Conversely, in party systems where economic issues are both highly salient and polarized, ERPs are confronted

with an unfavourable opportunity structure which impedes them from attracting voters with their issues.¹¹

Therefore, future research on ERPs should not restrict itself to the analysis of a set of core issues of ERPs, but should consider economic issues of party competition as well. While we have focused our interest on the competitors of ERPs, the question of whether and how the ERPs make use of their specific political opportunity structure – e.g., by emphasizing only issues which are confrontational for the mainstream parties – should attract closer attention.

¹¹ This consideration suggests that in Germany, the rise of the *Linkspartei* and the dominance of economic issues after reunification have prevented the German party system from developing a successful ERP at the national level, despite having a considerable share of voters within the electorate who support ERP policy positions – especially in eastern Germany and in parts of the south. The comparatively high level of post-materialist attitudes among the German electorate reveals that there is strong potential for a rise in the importance of non-economic issues for the policy agenda. Given that the German mainstream parties – Christian Democrats and Social Democrats – have narrowed the gap between their policy positions on the non-economic dimension (Franzmann 2008), we expect that with a further reduction in polarization on the economic dimension, the probability of a successful ERP will rise.

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Appendix

Table 3: List of mainstream parties

	Mainstream left party	Mainstream right party
Austria		
1983-2002	SPÖ (43320)	ÖVP (43520)
Belgium: Flanders		
1981-1999	SP (21321)	CVP (21521)
2003	SP (21321)	PVV/VLD (21421)
Belgium: Wallonia		
1981-2003	PS (21322)	PRL (21422; 21423; 21425)
Denmark		
1981-1990	SD (13320)	KF (13620)
1994-2001	SD (13320)	V (13420)
Finland		
1983-1987	SSDP (14320)	KK (14620)
1991-2003	SSDP (14320)	SK (14820)
France		
1981-1988	PS (31320)	G (31621)
1993-1997	PS (31320)	RPR (31625)
2002	PS (31320)	UMP (31626)
Germany		
1980-2002	SPD (41320)	CDU (41521)
Greece		
1981-2000	PASOK (34313)	ND (34511)
Iceland		
1983-1995	F (15810)	SSF (15620)
1999-2003	S (15328)	SSF (15620)
Ireland		
1981-2002	Labour (53320)	FF (53620)
Italy		
1983-1987	PCI, PDS (32220)	DC (32520)
1994-1996	PDS (32220)	FI (32610)
2001	PDS/DS (32220)	FI (32610)
Luxembourg		
1984-1999	LSAP (23320)	CSV (23520)
Netherlands		
1981-1994	PvdA (22320)	CDA (22521)
1998	PvdA (22320)	VVD (22420)
2002-2003	PvdA (22320)	CDA (22521)
Norway		
1981-2001	DNA (12320)	H (12610)
Portugal		
1980-2002	PSP (35311)	PSD (35313)
Spain		
1982-2000	PSOE (33320)	AP/PP (33610)
Sweden		
1982-2002	SdAP (11320)	M (11620)
United Kingdom		
1983-2005	Labour (51320)	Conservatives (51610)

Table 4: Estimates of Tobit models (without country dummies)

Regressor	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)	Model (5)	Model (6)	Model (7)	Model (8)	Model (9)	
Disproportionality	.379* (.149)	.355* (.156)	.377* (.152)	.344* (.158)	.351* (.161)	.411* (.159)	.321* (.156)	.318* (.159)	.316 (.159)	
Federalism	2.253** (.556)	2.265** (.565)	2.332** (.564)	2.153** (.548)	2.192** (.559)	2.988** (.646)	1.708** (.563)	2.050** (.553)	1.908** (.573)	
Unemployment	-.377* (.173)	-.346 (.177)	-.292 (.189)	-.312 (.181)	-.294 (.190)	-.665** (.243)	-.374* (.186)	-.342 (.189)	-.272 (.188)	
Foreign-born population	-.150 (.130)	-.102 (.133)	-.116 (.133)	-.125 (.132)	-.115 (.135)	-.604* (.243)	-.189 (.136)	-.131 (.133)	-.127 (.135)	
General Left-Right Scale	Convergence		.981 (1.042)							
	Position Mainstream Right		-.262 (.992)							
	Party System Polarisation		1.389* (.686)							
Economic Scale	Convergence			-.457 (.803)		-.511 (.876)	-.238 (.866)	.027 (.867)	-.908 (.885)	-.516 (.863)
	Position Mainstream Right			-.509 (.559)		-.164 (.576)	-.182 (.563)	.255 (.576)	-.238 (.569)	-.090 (.569)
	Party System Polarisation			.127 (.511)		-.212 (.527)	.321 (.563)	.239 (.535)	-.252 (.519)	-.093 (.524)
Non-Economic Scale	Convergence				1.311 (.923)	1.498 (1.051)	2.572* (1.122)	1.347 (1.015)	1.571 (1.032)	1.393 (1.038)
	Position Mainstream Right				.579 (.817)	.591 (.822)	.930 (.817)	.527 (.795)	.764 (.812)	.498 (.812)
	Party System Polarisation				1.445* (.739)	1.497* (.796)	2.118* (.820)	2.058* (.794)	1.411 (.784)	1.745* (.797)
Interaction Effects of both part scales	Unemployment*foreign-born pop						-.124* (.052)			
	Convergence							-.889** (.312)		
	Position Mainstream Right								-.672 (.364)	
	Party System Polarisation									-.312* (.150)
Sigma	6.742 (.499)	6.655 (.492)	6.736 (.499)	6.605 (.489)	6.589 (.489)	6.429 (.476)	6.363 (.471)	6.474 (.480)	6.493 (.482)	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-331.709	-329.373	-331.008	-329.102	-328.929	-326.121	-324.909	-327.249	-327.443	
N	116	116	116	116	116		116	116	116	
Non-censored	95	95	95	95	95		95	95	95	
Left-censored	21	21	21	21	21		21	21	21	

Table 5: Categories underlying left-right-scales

<u>Left-Right „Super-Issue“ absorbing all issues</u>			
<u>Country and time specific meanings of each issue (cf. Franzmann 2009)</u>			
<u>Categories included in Non-Economic Left-Right Scale</u>		<u>Categories included in Economic Left-Right Scale</u>	
Per101	Foreign Special Relationship: positive	Per303	Governmental and Administrative Efficiency: Positive
Per102	Foreign Special Relationship: negative	Per401	Free Enterprise
Per103	Anti-Imperialism	Per402	Incentives
Per104	Military: Positive	Per403	Market Regulation
Per105	Military: Negative	Per404	Economic Planning
Per106	Peace	Per405	Corporatism
Per107	Internationalism: Positive	Per406	Protectionism: Positive
Per108	European Community: Positive	Per407	Protectionism: Negative
Per109	Internationalism: Negative	Per408	Economic Goals
Per110	European Community: Negative	Per409	Keynesian Demand Management
Per201	Freedom and Human Rights	Per410	Productivity
Per202	Democracy	Per411	Technology and Infrastructure
Per203	Constitutionalism: Positive	Per412	Controlled Economy
Per204	Constitutionalism: Negative	Per413	Nationalization
Per301	Decentralisation	Per414	Economic Orthodoxy
Per302	Centralisation	Per415	Marxist Analysis
Per304	Political Corruption	Per416	Anti-Growth-Economy
Per305	Political Authority	Per503	Social Justice
Per501	Environmental Protection	Per504	Welfare State Expansion
Per502	Culture	Per505	Welfare State Limitation
Per506	Education Expansion	Per701	Labour Groups: Positive
Per507	Education Limitation	Per702	Labour Groups: Negative
Per601	National Way of Life: Positive	Per703	Agriculture and Farmers
Per602	National Way of Life: Negative	Per704	Middle Class and Professional Groups
Per603	Traditional Morality: Positive	Note: Category Labels according to Budge et al (2001). For each category is it determined for each country and election, whether each particular category represent a confrontational left issue or confrontational right issue or a non-confrontational issue. An overview about the time and country specific classifications is provided by Franzmann (2009).	
Per604	Traditional Morality: Negative		
Per605	Law and Order		
Per606	Social Harmony		
Per607	Multiculturalism: Positive		
Per608	Multiculturalism: Negative		
Per705	Underprivileged Minority Groups		
Per706	Non-economic Demographic Groups		

Chapter 3

Explaining Working-Class Support for Extreme Right Parties: A Party Competition Approach

Abstract

While the overrepresentation of working-class members among the electorates of extreme right parties (ERPs) in Western Europe is well documented, previous studies have usually explained this pattern as a result of this voter group's changing political preferences. In contrast to these studies, this article argues that it is not the changing political preferences of the working class that lead them to vote for ERPs, but changes in the supply side of party competition that have caused the re-orientation of these voters toward the extreme right.

Differentiating between an economic and a cultural dimension of party competition, it is shown that both the policy options offered by parties to voters as the salience of the two issue-dimensions have changed dramatically over the last three decades. While the salience of economic issues as well as of party system polarization among these issues have declined in most Western European countries, the very opposite trend can be identified for non-economic issues, including the core issues of ERPs (e.g., immigration and law and order).

These changes on the supply side of party competition cause working-class voters to base their vote decisions solely on their authoritarian, non-economic preferences and not — as in the past — on their left-wing economic demands. The theoretical assumptions are tested empirically with data from the *Eurobarometer Trend File* for the period from 1980 to 2002. In contexts where the economic dimension is more polarized than the cultural dimension, the positive impact of being a member of the working class on the vote decision for an ERP is significantly reduced.

Introduction

Two decades of scientific research regarding extreme right parties (ERPs) and their voters have identified a set of individual characteristics and attitudes that affect the voting decisions in favor of an ERP. While already the first comparative studies in the field (Betz, 1994; Hainsworth, 1992; Kitschelt, 1995) have highlighted the role of a person's social class status for explaining the vote decision for an ERP, the disproportionately high support for ERPs among working-class members is as well-documented as its reasons are discussed (Arzheimer, 2008; de Lange, 2007; Houtman, 2003; Ivarsflaten, 2005). In short, this support raises a paradoxical question. Why do voters who have always been associated with left-wing political parties turn to the extreme right?

Different answers to this question are discussed in the literature. First, some authors argue that increasing international competition has led to changing political preferences among this voter group, which in turn has resulted in a realignment of social groups formerly opposed along economic issues. Following this argument, the high level of support for ERPs among the working class is the result of a new demand for more market-liberal policies among at least parts of this voter group. Second, some scholars point to the decreasing importance of social status for the individual vote decision *per se*, and they contend that it is more appropriate to examine the policy preferences or attitudes of these voters in order to explain their vote decisions. According to this perspective, the high levels of support for ERPs among the working class can be attributed to the high levels of anti-immigrant sentiment and political dissatisfaction among this group.

This paper examines the variation in working-class support for ERPs in Western Europe for the period from 1980 to 2002. In the first section, three theses that address reasons for this support are discussed, as they have been identified by Ivarsflaten (2005): the realignment-, the policy-, and the economic division theses. As will be shown, none of these

theses fully explain the varying support of working-class voters for ERPs satisfactorily. Either the theoretical arguments are not supported by empirical evidence (realignment thesis), or the given explanation simply shifts the *explanandum* (policy and economic division theses). After investigating possible changes in the political attitudes of working-class members during the last few decades, a party-centered explanation for the varying working-class support of ERPs is presented. It is argued that the political offers made to voters by parties have changed dramatically during the last thirty years, especially with regard to economic issues. In countries where the economic dimension of party competition has decreased in both salience and polarization, the support for ERPs among the working class is considerably higher than in countries that do not show such a trend. Accordingly, in elections with both a high salience of cultural issues and a high polarization of parties along these issues, working-class voters have strong incentives to cast their vote decisions on the basis of their authoritarian, non-economic preferences, which cause them to vote for parties of the extreme right. These theoretical assumptions are tested in the final section using a multi-level model that covers thirteen Western European countries. The findings point to a theoretical link between the rising ERP support in Western Europe and the decline of class-based voting. It is argued that both phenomena can be explained by changing patterns of party competition, thereby supporting recent studies in the latter debate.

1. Working-class Support for ERPs

According to the first comparative studies in the field (Betz, 1994; Hainsworth, 1992; Kitschelt, 1995), a person's social class has been identified as one of the key variables that explain the vote decision for an ERP. In particular, two social groups show a disproportionately high level of support for these parties: the working class and the petty bourgeoisie (artisans, small shop-owners and independents). Empirical evidence for the over-

representation of these groups among the ERPs' electorates is offered by a multiplicity of studies (Arzheimer, 2008; Arzheimer & Carter, 2006; Betz & Johnson, 2004; Ignazi, 2003a; Ivarsflaten, 2005; Kitschelt, 1995; Kitschelt & McGann 2005; Lubbers et al., 2002; Rydgren, 2004). What makes this correlation between class status and support for an ERP most interesting is the fact that ERPs receive support from both groups. While the over-representation of the petty bourgeoisie is unsurprising, as this group has always shown more support for right-wing parties, the significant level of working-class support for ERPs is rather paradoxical. Why do voters who have an economic interest in left economic policies and have thus mainly supported left-wing parties for decades now cast their votes for ERPs? What has caused this 'proletarianisation of the Extreme Right' (Betz & Johnson, 2004) and turned ERPs into 'workers' parties' (Ignazi, 2003a)?

The study by Ivarsflaten (2005) addresses precisely these questions. Reviewing previous theoretical arguments and on the basis of her empirical findings, Ivarsflaten distinguishes three explanations for the over-representation of working-class and petty bourgeoisie voters among the ERP electorates: the realignment thesis, the policy thesis and the economic division thesis. First, some authors identify a realignment of working-class and petty bourgeoisie voters along economic issues (Kitschelt, 1995; Kitschelt & McGann, 2005; de Lange, 2007). Kitschelt (1994, 1995) argues that increased international competition in some economic sectors has led to more market-liberal views among blue-collar employees working in these industries. As a result of these changing economic preferences and the authoritarian attitudes of the working class, this voter group has shifted its electoral support to ERPs. Second, some scholars argue that social class has become increasingly irrelevant to the vote decision and that research should instead consider the distinct policy preferences of ERP voters (Van der Brug et al., 2005; Van der Brug & Fennema, 2003; Van der Brug & Fennema, 2007). In this paper, I will refer to this argument as the "policy thesis." Authors advocating

this thesis come to the conclusion that the disproportionately high level support for ERPs among the working class, as well as the petty bourgeoisie, is mainly caused by the fact that both groups share distinct authoritarian, non-economic policy preferences. Third, Ivarsflaten (2005) has offered an explanation that she calls the economic division thesis. Similar to the policy thesis, she argues that working-class and petty bourgeoisie ERP voters are still divided on economic issues, but share common non-economic preferences that are addressed mainly by the extreme right, namely: anti-immigrant sentiment, strong preferences for law and order policies, negative attitudes toward the European Union, and political disillusionment.

Before we discuss the empirical evidence in support of the three theses, it should be noted that they are not as different as they may appear, but they share some common theoretical premises. First, these theses hold that increasing support for ERPs is caused by developments on the side of the voters, or the demand side of the electoral competition. It is argued that voters either have become more similar in terms of their economic preferences (realignment thesis), now base their vote decisions on policy preferences instead of their social class (policy thesis), or base their vote decisions upon non-economic instead of economic preferences (policy and economic division thesis). Second, it should be noted that all of the three theses assume that the vote decision for an ERP is guided by the voter's policy preferences. While this seems obvious for the policy and economic division theses, this is also the case for the realignment thesis offered by Kitschelt (1995). When van der Brug and Fennema state that "modern voters do not cast their votes in agreement with which social group they belong to, but in agreement with their own ideological and policy preferences" (2003: 66) this is exactly in the sense of authors favoring the realignment thesis. Their argument is not that working-class voters support a party *because* they are working-class voters, but that being a member of the working class leads to distinct economic policy preferences, which again influence the vote decision for a distinct party—in this case, an ERP.

What separates the approaches (and also the measurements) of authors advocating the policy or economic division theses from those favoring the realignment thesis is the intervening role of a person's social class in the vote decision. While advocates of the policy and economic division theses directly measure respondents' policy preferences, the realignment thesis implies that a person's social class can be seen as a proxy for his policy preferences.

Coming to the empirical evidence for the three theses and starting with the realignment thesis, most studies conclude that a realignment of former opposed social groups along economic issues is not supported by the data. Arzheimer (2008) finds no correlation between a person's market-liberal views and support for an ERP; Ivarsflaten (2005) points to the continued distinct economic preferences of working-class and petty bourgeoisie ERP voters; and Mudde (2007) questions the relevance of economic issues for both ERP voters and these parties themselves. While advocates of the realignment thesis have recently argued that ERPs have limited their former distinct market-liberal appeal in favor of a more centrist economic position (de Lange, 2007), their conclusion that this shift allows these parties to attract support from both groups seems unconvincing. Why should economic left- (or right-) leaning voters support an economically centrist party instead of a party of the economic left (or right)? In contrast, empirical evidence for the policy and economic division theses can be found in nearly all studies that use attitudinal variables to predict the vote decision for an ERP (Arzheimer, 2008; Ivarsflaten, 2005; Lubbers et al., 2002; Kessler & Freeman, 2005; Rydgren, 2008; van der Brug et al., 2005). ERP voters share distinct authoritarian, non-economic attitudes, although they are still divided on their economic preferences.

Therefore, the policy and economic division theses come to a very similar conclusion, which is that the paradox of working-class support for the extreme right can be explained by the right-wing cultural views of these voters, which they share with members of the petty bourgeoisie (Ivarsflaten, 2005). Seemingly, working-class voters no longer cast their votes on

the basis of their (left) economic preferences, but on the basis of their (right) non-economic preferences. So is the paradox solved, and does this conclusion really give a satisfactory answer to the question of why working-class voters support ERPs? I would oppose this view and argue that the answer given by advocates of the policy and economic division theses only changes the *explanandum*. The question is no longer why the working class votes for ERPs (because they share their non-economic ideology), but now, *why do people with economic left and non-economic right policy preferences decide to let their vote decisions be guided exclusively by the latter?*

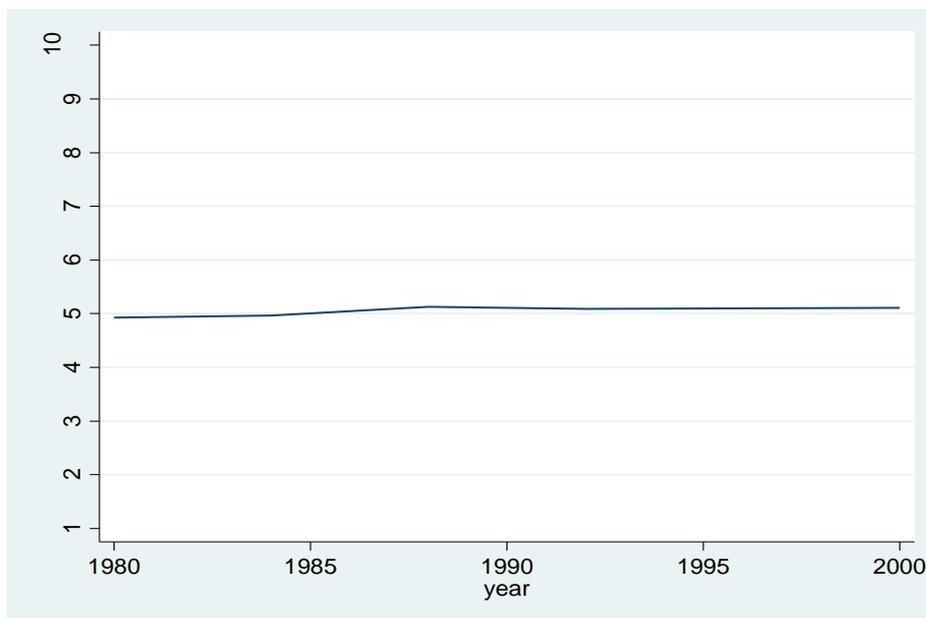
With regard to this new question, it should be noted that blue-collar workers have always favored *both* left economic and right non-economic stances. “The poorer strata everywhere are more liberal or leftist on economic issues (...). But when liberalism is defined in non-economic terms — as support for civil liberties, internationalism, etc. — the correlation is reversed. The more well-to-do are more liberal, the poorer are more intolerant” (Lipset, 1981: 92). Reviewing this initial observation, which is also supported by more recent articles (Houtman, 2003; Middendorp & Meloen, 1990), the point made by van der Brug and van Spanje (2009), that voters who combine economic left and non-economic right attitudes are not represented by any political parties in Western Europe, is as correct as it is not new. The working class has ever since combined these distinct preferences, but as decades of studies on class voting have reported (Clark & Lipset, 2001; Evans, 1999; Evans & Payne, 1999; Lipset, 1981; Przeworski & Sprague, 1986; Sartori, 1969), they have tended to ignore their right non-economic preferences in favor of their left economic demands. However, since the rise of ERPs during the 1980s, this pattern appears to have changed, at least in those countries with strong working-class support for ERPs. Today, at least parts of the working class have decided to cast their votes solely on the basis of their non-economic demands, neglecting their left-leaning material preferences.

As will be argued in the third section, the explanation for this shift lies in the changing patterns of party competition among Western European countries. Before this supply-side argument is developed in depth, the discussion first focuses upon possible changes in the political preferences of the working class.

2. The Political Preferences of the Working Class

The three theses regarding working-class support for ERPs, as discussed above, have in common the argument that some factor has changed with regard to the political preferences of this voter group. It is stated that working-class voters have become more market-liberal (realignment thesis), or that they now now guide their votes based on non-economic, rather than economic preferences (policy and economic division theses). It might also be argued that working-class voters have become more authoritarian over the last decades; therefore, they have turned their support to ERPs. The *Eurobarometer Trend File* (Schmitt et al., 2005) offers two well-known variables that might account for the political preferences of working-class members: the respondent's left-right self-placement and the materialist-postmaterialist index developed by Ronald Inglehart (1977, 1990). When we asked working-class members to locate themselves on a left-right scale from 1 (leftmost) to 10 (rightmost), we obtained the following trend (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Left-right self-placement of working-class members in Western Europe



Two findings should be noted. First, the self-reported position of working-class members has remained relatively stable in the seven countries analyzed.

¹ Second, while there are some cross-country differences (not shown), these never exceed more than 0.5 points on the ten-point scale over the whole period analyzed.

One might argue that the left-right placement of voters is far from a perfect indicator for this study's purposes, as it remains unclear what voters have in mind when they refer to labels such as "left" and "right." Some voters might regard the left-right scale as a super dimension, integrating all possible political issues, some might understand it as a purely economic scale, and yet others might think of it in terms of non-economic issues, e.g., relating to environmental protection. There are good reasons to believe that the issue is becoming even more complicated, when comparing different countries at different time points; the meanings of "left" and "right" may be country and time-specific (Enyedi & Deegan-Krause, 2010;

¹ As not all thirteen countries analysed in the final section have participated in all years since 1980, Figures 1 and 2 report mean values for only seven countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany (West), Greece, Italy and the Netherlands.

Franzmann & Kaiser, 2006; Kitschelt, 1994; Kriesi et al., 2006; Marks et al., 2006). Regardless, and while the significance of “left” and “right” to different voters remains unclear, a rightward trend is expected for this indicator of political preferences, if the argument about the working class’s changing political preferences is valid. If left-right is understood as an economic scale and working-class members have become more market-liberal—as the realignment thesis states—a right-leaning trend would be expected. Likewise, if left-right is understood as a non-economic scale and working-class members have become more authoritarian, the same would be expected as well. This is the same case if left-right is understood as a dimension including all political issues, whether they are economic or non-economic. However, this rightward trend does not occur.

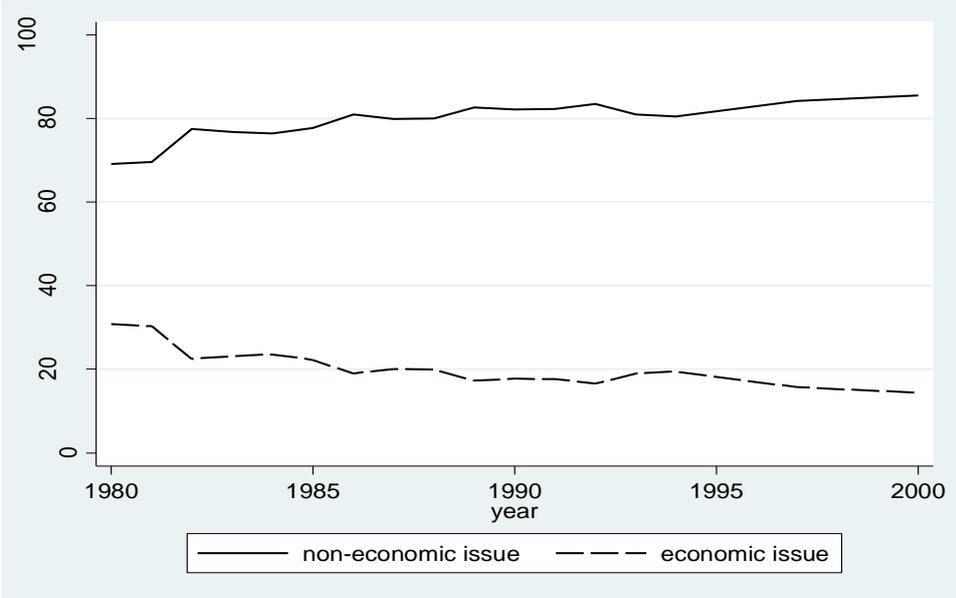
Another way to examine the political preferences of voters is through the Inglehart Index, which asks respondents to name their first and second most important goals out of four political issues: (1) maintenance of law and order, (2) giving people more say in government decisions, (3) fighting rising prices, and (4) protecting freedom of expression. The answers are then combined to construct a materialist-postmaterialist index, where (1) and (3) are seen as indicators for a materialist value orientation, and (2) and (4), for a postmaterialist value orientation.

With regard to the Inglehart Index, three things should be noted. First, the index is only weakly correlated with the left-right self-placement (Spearman’s rho: 0.161). This shows that the two indicators measure different underlying concepts. While both concepts are related to the political preferences of respondents, the left-right self-placement measures a person’s *political attitudes*, while the Inglehart Index accounts for the *ranking of political issues*. Second, as Flanagan (Inglehart & Flanagan 1987) notes, three of the four Inglehart items (1, 2 and 4) are related to non-economic issues, while only one item (3) can be seen as an indicator for economic issues. This results in an overrepresentation of non-economic

answers. Third, the index does not include an item that respondents with a strong interest in left-wing economic policies can be expected to choose, as “fighting rising prices” is usually regarded as an answer that accounts for right-wing economic preferences. This last point is especially problematic for working-class members, as these individuals can be expected to have a strong interest in left-wing economic policies, for which the index does not account.

To compensate for these shortcomings, Figure 2 presents the trend for the most important issues reported among working-class members in Western Europe. For this trend, items 1, 2 and 4 were summarized to measure non-economic value priorities (whether left or right), while item 3 accounts for (right) economic preferences. In contrast to the left-right self-placement, a common trend is obvious: the percentage of working-class members who rank economic issues as being most important has decreased significantly over the period analyzed. While about 35 percent of these voter groups assigned these issues the highest priority in 1980, only 17 percent did so at the end of the century.

Figure 2: Most important issues to working-class members in Western Europe



In conclusion, the political preferences of working-class members have remained relatively stable in terms of left and right. Given the potential problems of this scale, it can be concluded that the working-class is as liberal/authoritarian and as economic left/right as it has ever been since 1980. However, the ranking of political issues has changed significantly over the period analyzed. Many working-class members do not rank economic issues as highly as they have in the past, and today they tend to give cultural issues the highest priority.

What do these findings mean for the question regarding working-class support for ERPs? If we agree that the working class in Western Europe has remained consistently authoritarian and does still harbor a strong interest in left-oriented economic policies, but that the priorities of this voter group have changed from economic to non-economic issues, this change in priorities might have influenced the voting behavior of working-class members. If these voters still rank economic issues as being the most important, they should still have a strong incentive to vote for parties of the economic left, and not for ERPs, given their more market-liberal appeal. In contrast, if working-class members give non-economic issues the highest priority, they should support a party that matches their authoritarian preferences, which could be an extreme right party, and not a more liberal party of the economic left.

However, why have the political priorities of working-class members changed during the last couple of decades? As will be argued in the next section, the explanation for this shift toward cultural issues lies in the changing patterns of party competition among Western European party systems, or the supply side of the electoral competition.

3. Working-class Support for ERPs: A Party Competition Approach

The idea that patterns of party competition influence the voting decision for an extreme right party and can thus explain parts of the variation in support for these parties among Western European countries has already been discussed by a number of previous studies. While most

of these studies model party competition as one-dimensional, there is no consensus about the issue content of this single dimension. Some authors claim that only a set of non-economic ERP core issues are relevant because ERPs only compete among these issues with other parties (Arzheimer & Carter, 2006; Ignazi, 2003b; Lubbers et al., 2002; Meguid, 2005). Other scholars argue that party competition in Western Europe can still be described in terms of “left” and “right,” as this super dimension has mainly absorbed the relatively new issues raised by the extreme right (Abedi, 2002; Carter, 2005; Van der Brug & van Spanje, 2009). Only a few studies addressing the way party competition affects the electoral fortunes of the extreme right distinguish between the economic and cultural dimensions of party competition. Interestingly, many of these authors are also advocates of the realignment thesis discussed above (Kitschelt, 1995; Kitschelt, 2007; de Lange, 2007; Kitschelt & McGann, 2005). While these scholars state that ERPs directly compete with other parties among economic issues—an assumption that is highly questionable, as indicated in the first section—the belief that an economic dimension of party competition may nonetheless be of importance for the electoral fortunes of ERPs has recently been put forward again by more recent studies (Bornschieer, 2008; Kriesi et al., 2006; Rydgren, 2004, 2005).

This paper’s argument adheres to these latter studies and claims that it is necessary to distinguish between two dimensions of party competition in order to understand which changes have taken place in Western European party systems since the 1980s, and how these changes have contributed to the prominence of working-class voters among the ERPs’ electorates. More specifically, it is argued that the salience of the economic, class-based dimension of party competition is in decline in some Western European countries, but not — or to a lesser extent — in others. At the same time, parties’ policy positions on the economic dimension converge, which means that voters do not see great differences between the parties anymore. Parallel to the decline of the economy-related dimension of party competition, the

saliency of the cultural dimension of party competition, consisting mainly of the ERPs' core issues and their liberal counter-issues, has increased. Parties' policy positions on this new dimension have simultaneously diverged as well, offering voters more distinct policy options than before. These developments on the supply side of party competition impact the considerations under which working-class members decide for which party to vote.

The idea that the high saliency of non-material issues favors ERPs has already been put forth (Ignazi, 2003b) and empirically tested in previous studies (Arzheimer & Carter, 2006; Meguid, 2005). The positive correlation between the saliency of these issues (immigration, law and order, and anti-multiculturalism) and the electoral success of ERPs is explained by the fact that ERPs 'own' these issues and thus benefit if other parties also pay attention to them (Ignazi, 2003b). In line with this argument, it can also be assumed that the high saliency of economic issues has a negative impact on the electoral results of ERPs. This negative relationship is based on the findings of previous studies that economic issues are of no or only of minor importance for voters in favor of the extreme right (Arzheimer, 2008; Ivarsflaten, 2005), as well as for those parties themselves (Mudde, 2007). The high saliency of economic issues therefore encourages working-class voters to vote on the basis of their economic preferences, which are not in line with the economic appeal of ERPs.

In addition to this saliency-based argument, I contend that it is also necessary to account for the policy alternatives offered to voters, measured by the polarization of the party system. To clarify this point further, one might consider the following example. In a two-party system, both parties dedicate 80 percent of their appeals to economic issues, while non-economic themes are seen to be of only little relevance and are given only 20 percent by both parties. In this case, working-class voters should have a strong incentive to base their voting decisions on their left-wing economic preferences. Let us now assume that both parties offer very similar programs with regard to economic issues, which will result in a low degree of

polarization on this dimension. Both parties favor a state-interventionist approach, and both wish to expand social services and to protect state-owned industry sectors from international competition; in short: both parties are economically left-wing. In contrast, the two parties are highly polarized on the non-economic dimension: one party favors a restrictive policy toward immigrants and advocates a tough law-and-order state, while the other party advocates a multi-cultural integration approach and strongly defends citizens' rights to freedom. In this case, rational working-class voters should base their decisions on their non-material interests, even if this dimension is less salient. While voting on the basis of economic issues would not make a significant difference upon the outcome and could therefore be regarded as 'wasted', voting on the basis of non-economic preferences offers much more distinct alternatives in outcome. The arguments made thus far can be summarized into two hypotheses:

H1: In countries where economic issues are more salient than non-economic issues, working-class voters will make voting decisions based on their left-wing economic preferences. This leads them to vote for parties of the economic left and not for ERPs (and vice versa).

H2: In countries where parties are more polarized among economic than among non-economic issues, working-class voters will make voting decisions based on their left-wing economic preferences. This leads these them to vote for parties of the economic left and not for ERPs (and vice versa).

While the incentives given by the salience and the polarization of the two dimensions are theoretically the same for all voters, the discussed variables of party competition are especially important to voters of the working class. This is because these voters combine the

demand for left economic and right non-economic policies (Houtman, 2003; Kriesi, 1999; Lipset, 1981; Middendorp & Meloen, 1990). Contrary to voters with a more centrist position on one of the two dimensions, working-class voters *must* decide between these two opposite demands, as there is almost no party in Western Europe that offers a combination of both policies (Van der Brug & van Spanje 2009). If working-class voters realize that the economic dimension is in decline in terms of salience and do not see any differences between the parties on this dimension, they would have the greatest incentives to base their vote decisions on their authoritarian non-material preferences, which directly leads them to vote for ERPs.

Following this argument, the rise of the extreme right in Western Europe was not caused by changes on the demand side, but was initiated by the mainstream political parties themselves. Parts of the electorate and especially the working class have had authoritarian, anti-immigrant and anti-liberal attitudes, but these attitudes had never previously guided their vote decision, as this was prevented by the prominence of economic political issues.

4. Changing Patterns of Party Competition in Western Europe

This section gives an overview of the developments on the supply side of party competition in Western Europe during the period between 1980 and 2005.² In order to provide a broad descriptive overview of the changing patterns of party competition, time trends for the salience of economic and non-economic issues and party system polarization among these issues have been estimated for thirteen Western European countries.³

Let us first consider the salience of economic and non-economic issues. For each issue dimension, a salience measure based on the CMP dataset (Budge et al., 2001; Klingemann et

² This period was chosen because most parties regarded as ERPs have emerged—or turned into ERPs—since the early 1980s. The year 2005 indicates the last year for which party positions are reported by the CMP, the dataset used to calculate the variables of party competition.

³ As the Belgium party system is segmented into two independent parts, referring either to the French or Flemish community, the two measures of party competition have been calculated separately for each region.

al., 2006) has been constructed. For the economic dimension, all CMP categories that relate to economic issues⁴ were taken into account; for the non-economic dimension, only non-economic categories were used.⁵ The frequencies for both issue sets were taken from the CMP dataset and then multiplied for each party with this party's share of votes. Finally, these values were summed up for each single election. This procedure makes the units of the two measures of salience difficult to interpret, but they are comparable both over time and between countries.

It should be repeated that the salience of each dimension says nothing about the policy options offered to voters on this dimension. In order to account for these options, a polarization index has been constructed separately for each of the two dimensions, using the formula first proposed by Sigelman and Yough (1978).⁶ Graphs for the party system polarization and the salience of both dimensions are given in the appendix (Figures 1 and 2). As these graphs illustrate, both the salience as well as the polarization of each dimension of party competition vary over time and between countries. In order to provide a more straightforward overview for each party system, linear time trends have been calculated (see

⁴ For the salience of the economic dimension, all categories of the fourth CMP domain (economy) and categories 504 (social services expansion), 505 (social services limitation), 701 (labor groups: positive), 702 (labor groups: negative), 703 (agriculture) and 704 (middle class and professional groups) were summarized.

⁵ The following CMP categories were used for the non-economic dimension: 107 (internationalism: positive), 109 (internationalism: negative), 601 (national way of life: positive), 602 (national way of life: negative), 603 (traditional morality: positive), 604 (traditional morality: negative), 605 (law and order), 607 (multiculturalism: positive), 608 (multiculturalism: negative) and 705 (minority groups).

⁶ The polarization (P) is calculated for each dimension using the formula $P = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i (x_i - \bar{x})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i}$, where p_i is the vote share of party at a given election, x_i is the position of this party on a dimension of party competition, and \bar{x} is the weighted mean. \bar{x} is calculated by multiplying the vote share with the ideological position of a party. This step is repeated for each party in the party system. Finally, these values are added together. Please note that this measurement is independent of the number of parties. For the polarization measure used in this paper, it is necessary that party policy positions are measured spatially (on a range from 0 = extreme left to 10 = extreme right). While there are different ways of obtaining these values from the salience-based CMP dataset, only the approach proposed by Franzmann and Kaiser (2006) accounts for time and country-specific meanings of left and right—respectively, of liberal and authoritarian—and was therefore used for this paper.

Table 1). A ‘+’ indicates a positive trend, meaning that the salience or polarization of a dimension has increased. In contrast, a ‘-’ indicates a negative trend for the period analyzed. Non-significant trends (10% level) are not displayed.

Table 1: Trends in salience and polarization for both dimensions (1980-2005)

Country	Economic dimension		Non-economic dimension		Ratio: Salience	Ratio: Polarization
	Salience	Polarization	Salience	Polarization		
Austria		-	+			
Belgium (Flanders)	-	-	+	+	-	-
Belgium (Wallonia)		-				-
Denmark	-		+	-	-	
Finland				-		
France	-	-			-	-
Germany			+	+	-	
Greece						+
Italy		+		+		
Netherlands		-	+	+		-
Norway				+		-
Portugal				-		+
Spain		+				+
Sweden		-		-		

As the table indicates, the salience of the economic dimension shows a negative trend for three countries. In these party systems, the parties pay much less attention to economic issues today than they did in the 1980s. In contrast to this development, the salience of non-economic issues has increased significantly in five of the party systems analyzed. With regard to the party system polarization, the findings are more mixed. On the economic dimension, there is a decrease in six cases, while two party systems (Italy and Spain) show higher levels of party system polarization on this dimension today than in the 1980s. Looking at the party system polarization along the non-economic dimension, a negative trend can be identified in four cases, while five party systems display increased polarization among non-economic issues.

The last two columns of the table show the trends for the ratio of the salience of economic issues compared to the salience of non-economic issues (*ratio: salience*), and for the ratio of the party system polarization among economic compared to non-economic issues (*ratio: polarization*). For these measures, the salience (polarization) of economic issues has been divided by the salience (polarization) of non-economic issues. *Ratio: salience* increases when economic issues are more frequently discussed than non-economic issues; *ratio: polarization* increases when the party system is more polarized with regard to economic issues than to non-economic issues. In addition to the advantage of offering one variable for each measure of party competition, this transformation is also necessary for theoretical reasons, and therefore only these two measures will be used for the subsequent analysis.⁷

The reason for this lies in the assumed effect of the variables of party competition on voters. It is argued that parties offer their programmatic appeal to voters on both dimensions simultaneously. On the basis of these appeals, voters then decide whether their vote decision should be based on their economic or their non-economic preferences. Voters therefore *compare* the policy offers made by parties on the two dimensions, which is why an absolute measure of salience or polarization for each dimension is inadequate for the subsequent analysis. When considering the trends for the two ratio-variables, every country with a significant trend for *ratio: salience* shows a decline of this during the period analyzed. This means that voters in these countries should have much less incentive to vote on the basis of their economic preferences today than they did during the 1980s. Three of the four party systems for which this negative trend is identified are also systems with strong ERPs (Denmark, France, and Flanders). With regard to the polarization variable, five countries

⁷ An alternative approach for dividing the economic by the non-economic measures would be to subtract them from each other. This measure is strongly correlated with the ratio-variables presented here (0.56 and 0.58, respectively). While the measures based on subtraction are much harder to interpret because of their units (especially for the salience-measure), their use does not change the empirical results presented here and in the next sections.

show a significant and negative trend. In these countries, voters should have much less incentive to base their voting decisions on their economic preferences today than they did in the 1980s. In contrast, three countries show a positive trend, which means that voters in these countries now have more reason to base their voting decisions on economic preferences than they did in the past. These countries are Greece, Portugal, and Spain, all countries with very marginal ERPs.

Although the presentation in this section was limited to a purely descriptive character, some results can already be summarized. There are relevant differences in terms of salience and of polarization between the two dimensions, and these differences vary both over time and between countries. Initially, the identified trends seem to correlate with the electoral success of ERPs. However, the aim of this paper is not to provide an explanation for the overall electoral success of ERPs, but to give an explanation for working-class support for these parties, as well as for variation in this support among different countries. Therefore, the variables of party competition must be combined with the individual characteristics of voters, including respondents' class as an independent variable. The resulting multi-level model is presented in the next two sections.

5. Data and Operationalizations of Variables

To test the hypotheses developed in the last sections, a multi-level model of voting behavior in Western Europe must be created. The time period covered is 1980 to 2002; the thirteen countries included are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden.⁸ This case selection facilitates the

⁸ Unfortunately, the *Eurobarometer Trend File* does not allow for differentiation between the Belgian regions of Flanders and Wallonia. As the two regions show quite distinct patterns of party competition (see Section Four and the respective graphs in the appendix), I have decided to delete all Belgian voters who report voting decisions for a party only contesting in the region of Wallonia. This means that the dataset used for the analysis

analysis of countries with very strong ERPs, as well as party systems with only marginal ERPs. While the inclusion of the latter comes at the cost of basing the results for these contexts on very few ERP voters, this strategy seems adequate, as the non-inclusion of these contexts may cause a severe selection bias with regard to the variables of party competition (Golder, 2003, 2004). The model features two levels.

On the first individual level, the model includes a set of individual characteristics and attitudes, which are known from previous studies to influence the vote decision for an ERP. These variables are the respondent's *sex*, *age* (recoded as four age dummies), *education* (recoded as three education dummies), and dummies for *class*, *respectively*, *employment status* (working class, unemployed, petty bourgeoisie, and retired). In addition to these socio-demographic characteristics, the individual-level model includes two politically-oriented variables: the respondent's *left-right self-placement* and the reported *satisfaction with democracy*. The dependent variable is the binary recoded vote intention for an ERP.⁹ It is coded 1 if the respondent intends to vote for such a party, and 0 if the person would vote for any other party or does not intend to vote. All individual variables are taken from the Eurobarometer Trend File: 1970-2002 (Schmitt et al., 2005). As the dependent variable is dichotomous, a logistic regression (hierarchical generalized linear model) is applied.

The second level consists of a combination of country and year (e.g., France 1981, Germany 1996, etc.) and includes the two variables of party competition developed above, in addition to a set of control variables. Altogether, there are 164 of these second-level

is limited in the Belgian case to the region of Flanders, which seems appropriate as the Flemish *Vlaams Blok* is a much more prominent example for an ERP than the relatively marginal *Front Nationale* in Wallonia.

⁹ The following parties were considered to be ERPs: Front National and Allez la France (France); Vlaams Blok, Front National and Waardig ouder Worden (Belgium); Centrum Partij and Centrum Democraten (the Netherlands); Deutsche Volkunion, Die Republikaner, Nationale Partei Deutschlands, Aktion unabhängiger Deutscher, and Freisoziale Union (Germany); Movimento Sociale Italia, Alleanza Nazionale, and Lega Nord (Italy); Fremskrittspartiet and Dansk Folkeparti (Denmark); Ethniki Politiki Enosis and Politiki Anixi (Greece); Falange Espanola y de la JONS (Spain); Partido da Democracia Crista (Portugal); Fremskrittspartiet (Norway); Soumen Masseudun Poulou und Perussuomalaiset (Finland); Ny Democracy (Sweden); and Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Austria).

contexts.¹⁰ In order to test the two hypotheses stated above, the two variables of party competition presented in the last section are included on the second level. The first variable (*saliency*) measures the ratio of the saliency of economic to non-economic issues. Again, *saliency* adopts higher values when economic issues are more frequently discussed than non-economic issues. In line with H1, I therefore expect this variable to be negatively correlated with the effect of the working-class dummy on the dependent variable. The second variable (*polarization*) accounts for the policy options available to voters. As stated previously, *polarization* adopts higher values when the party system is more polarized with regard to economic rather than non-economic issues. In line with H2, I therefore expect this variable to be negatively correlated with the effect of the working-class dummy on the dependent variable.

Additionally, the following variables were included as control variables on the second level: the standardized *unemployment rate* and the *change of this rate* compared to the previous year. Both variables were taken from the Comparative Political Data Set I: 1960-2006 (Armingeon et al., 2008). To control for the level of immigration, the share of *asylum seekers* and the *change in this rate* compared to the previous year were included as well. Both of these variables were taken from the OECD (1992, 1994, 2005). In line with the arguments made by previous studies (Arzheimer, 2009; Golder, 2003, 2004; Knigge, 1998), the unemployment and the immigration rates can be assumed to be positively correlated with the dependent variable. To control for the possible impact of the electoral system, the *disproportionality index* by Gallagher (1991) has been included.

¹⁰ For the analysis, those contexts are included in which no respondent reports a vote intention for an ERP, but where he could have voted for such a party. Countries and contexts without an ERP contesting for votes (e.g., Ireland, Luxemburg, and the United Kingdom) have been excluded. While the British National Front can clearly be regarded as a party of the extreme right, it is not coded in the *Eurobarometer Trend File*. For this reason, the United Kingdom is excluded from the analysis.

6. Results

The estimated effects of the individual and country-level variables are presented in Table 2. Due to missing data regarding the individual independent variables in the *Eurobarometer Trend File*, the number of observations at the individual level is reduced to 217,508. At the country level, missing data for the number of asylum seekers for Greece and Italy during the early 1980s reduce the number of second-level contexts to 164.

The table reports two models. Model 1 shows the estimated main effects for the individual and the second-level variables. With only two exceptions (the retired dummy and the dummy for medium education), all b-coefficients of the individual-level variables are in line with the findings of previous studies and are statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Even after controlling for other individual variables, being a member of the working class strongly increases the probability of voting for an ERP. A test for random slopes for all individual level variables shows that the slopes of only four variables (satisfaction with democracy, left-right self-placement, sex, and the dummy for higher education) turned out to be statistically significant and therefore vary between the contexts. The slopes of these variables have thus been set as random.

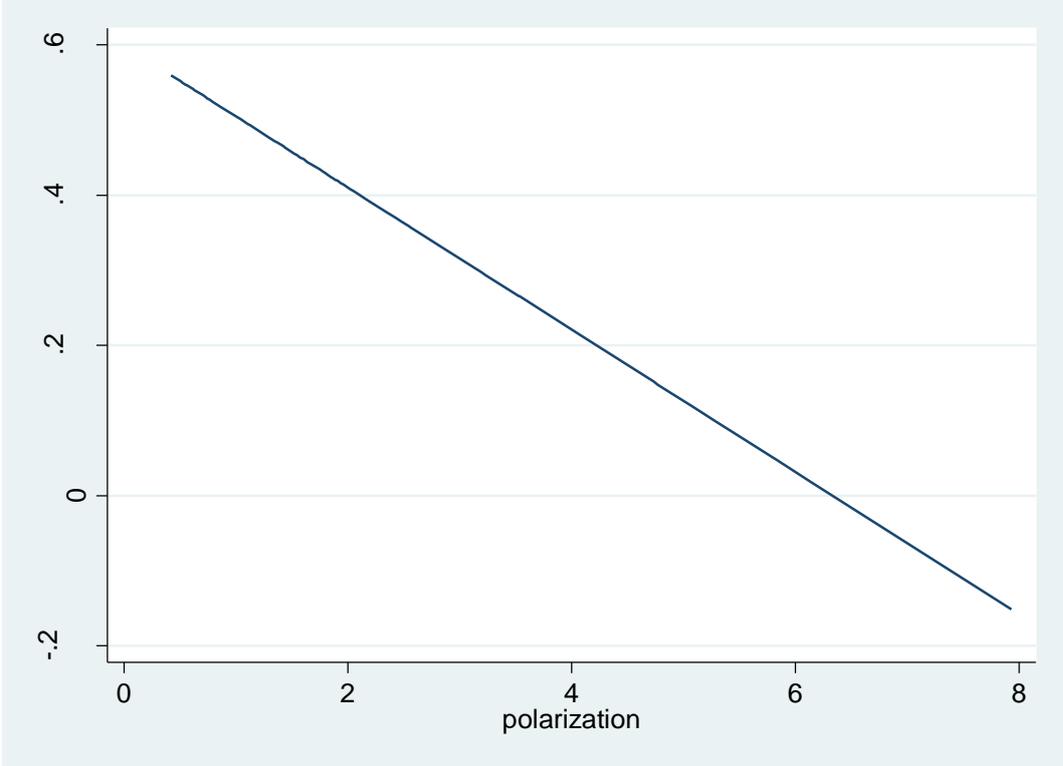
Regarding the variables of party competition, Model 1 shows that the salience of economic versus non-economic issues has a negative impact on the voting decision for an ERP. As this variable adopts higher values when the economic dimension is of greater salience than the non-economic dimension, this effect matches the predictions made in Section Three. When party competition is primarily based upon economic issues, this is unfavorable to a voter's intention to support an ERP. In contrast, the polarization of the economic versus the non-economic dimension does not turn out to be of statistical significance, at least not as a main effect for all voters.

Table 2: Results of multi-level models

	Model (1)		Model (2)	
	Coefficient	s. e.	Coefficient	s. e.
1st level variables				
Working-class	0.424 **	0.040	0.637 **	0.097
Unemployed	0.518 **	0.056	0.520 **	0.069
Petty Bourgeoisie	0.105 *	0.055	0.099 *	0.055
Retired	0.039	0.053	0.038	0.058
Satisfaction with democracy	-0.786 **	0.037	-0.788 **	0.036
Left-right self placement	0.502 **	0.021	0.502 **	0.021
Sex (male)	0.557 **	0.043	0.552 **	0.043
Age (25 to 45 years)	-0.272 **	0.043	-0.269 **	0.037
Age (46 to 64 years)	-0.482 **	0.047	-0.481 **	0.048
Age (older than 65 years)	-0.649 **	0.068	-0.648 **	0.069
Education (medium)	0.005	0.036	0.0007	0.039
Education (high)	-0.458 **	0.054	-0.455 **	0.057
2nd level variables				
Intercept (2nd level)	-4.674 **	0.626	-4.727 **	0.681
Unemployment	-0.108 *	0.042	-0.108 *	0.043
Δ Unemployment	0.084	0.122	0.081	0.117
Asylum seekers	0.042 *	0.017	0.040 *	0.016
Δ Asylum seekers	-0.012	0.023	-0.011	0.017
Disprop. of elect. sys.	-0.017	0.028	-0.017	0.029
Salience	-0.128 *	0.043	-0.1240 **	0.037
Polarization	0.001	0.080	0.029	0.084
Interaction effects				
Working-class*salience	-	-	-0.012	0.024
Working-class*polarization	-	-	-0.093 **	0.023
Variance Components				
Intercept 2nd level (u_0)	3.649 **	942.179	3.658 **	939.306
SATISDMO slope,	0.105 **	484.910	0.324 **	485.776
LRS slope,	0.046 **	887.595	0.214 **	880.690
SEX slope	0.094 **	227.469	0.304 **	225.978
EDUC_HIG slope	0.100 **	208.569	0.297 *	200.434
Number of level 1 units	217.508		217.508	
Number of level 2 units	164		164	

Model 2 accounts for possible interaction effects between the working-class dummy and the variables of party competition. As the model shows, there is a significant and negative interaction effect between the polarization variable and the working-class dummy. This means that in contexts in which parties are more polarized among economic rather than among non-economic issues, the positive impact of being member of the working class on the voting decision in favor of an ERP is strongly reduced, a finding that supports H2. Figure 3 shows the impact of this cross-level interaction effect.

Figure 3: Cross-level interaction effect between polarization and working-class dummy



The effect of being a member of the working class on the voting decision in support of an ERP is sharply reduced in contexts where parties are more polarized among economic rather than among non-economic issues. For every unit that party system polarization increases, the effect of being a member of the working class on the voting decision for an ERP is reduced by 0.093 units. Furthermore, and as Table 3 shows, the identified interaction effect is significant for all values of the polarization variable, which provides further support for H2.

If a party system is more divided on economic issues, working-class voters tend to vote on the basis of their economic preferences because, on this dimension of party competition, their votes can be expected to make the greatest difference in policy outcome. Under these considerations, working-class voters will support a party of the economic left and not an ERP. However, if parties are more divided on non-economic issues (including the

extreme right's core issues), working-class voters will making voting decisions on the basis of their authoritarian non-material preferences, which increases the probability that they will cast their votes for an ERP.

Table 3: Slopes and t-values of working-class dummy for different values of polarization

	Polarization at value	Effect of working-class on dependent variable	t-value
Polarization (minimum)	0.420	0.343**	7.729
Polarization (25% percentile)	0.868	0.302**	6.099
Polarization (mean)	2.280	0.168*	2.344
Polarization (75% percentile)	2.508	0.146*	1.932
Polarization (maximum)	7.930	-0.367*	-1.974

Discussion and Conclusion

The analysis in the previous section has clearly shown that variables of party competition explain a large part of the variance in working-class support for ERPs. In contexts where the economic dimension is more polarized than the non-economic dimension, the positive impact of being member of the working class on the voting decision for an ERP is strongly reduced. With regard to this result, Mudde's conclusion that 'it's not the economy, stupid' (2007: 119) should be read more carefully. While there is strong evidence that ERP voters do not support these parties because of their economic appeal and that economic issues are of only minor importance for the ideology of ERPs, the decline in polarization of the economic dimension of party competition nonetheless has influenced the electoral fortunes of ERPs by providing these parties with a favorable political opportunity structure to mobilize voters on their non-material core issues. However, the analysis in this paper also points out that different voter groups are affected differently by party competition variables. Future research should

therefore focus on interaction effects between party competition and the political preferences of voters, an issue that could not be addressed using the Eurobarometer data.

The results presented in this article also reveal a link between the rise of the extreme right and a phenomenon that has also attracted considerable scientific interest during the last two decades: the decline of class-based voting (Clark & Lipset, 2001; Evans, 1999). As earlier studies in this field (Przeworski & Sprague, 1986; Sartori, 1969) have assumed and more recent literature on the conditions of class voting indicates (Achterberg, 2006; Achterberg & Houtman, 2006; Elff, 2007, 2009; Evans et al., 1999), working-class voters will only make election decisions on the basis of their economic interests, if these interests are politicized by political parties. Parties can decide which issues are politicized for electoral competition, and these choices directly impact individuals' voting behaviors (Achterberg & Houtman, 2006; Crewe, 1992; Sartori, 1969). It can therefore be concluded that the decline of the economic dimension of party competition—or the decline of class-based politics—has certainly influenced two distinct phenomena: the rise of the extreme right and the decline in class-based voting.

With regard to democratic representation, two conclusions can be drawn from this article. First, voters with both economic left and non-economic right preferences are as well represented today as they were decades ago. However, while in the past, left-wing parties attracted these voters based on their economic but not on their non-economic preferences, this pattern has changed. Today, many of these voters support political parties of the extreme right, which offer representation for their authoritarian attitudes without paying attention to their economic demands. Working-class voters are therefore as well represented as they have been in the past, as there is nearly no party in Western Europe that combines left-wing economic principles with right-wing, non-material ideals. Second, this article calls into question those studies that have argued that the decline of class-based voting is mainly caused

by the fact that class differences among voters have decreased and that have thus praised this development as a victory of democratic conflict resolution (Franklin et al., 1992). If working-class voters have turned away from the political left, only to turn to the extreme right—because they no longer feel represented in economic terms by the former—this suggests that the rise of the extreme right will continue in the future. Changes in the composition of the electorate, amplified economic competition and integration in Europe strongly suggest that the decline of economic policy options will remain constant, and as this paper has shown, this trend is favorable to the electoral success of ERPs.

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Appendix

Figure 1: Salience of economic and non-economic issues in Western European party systems

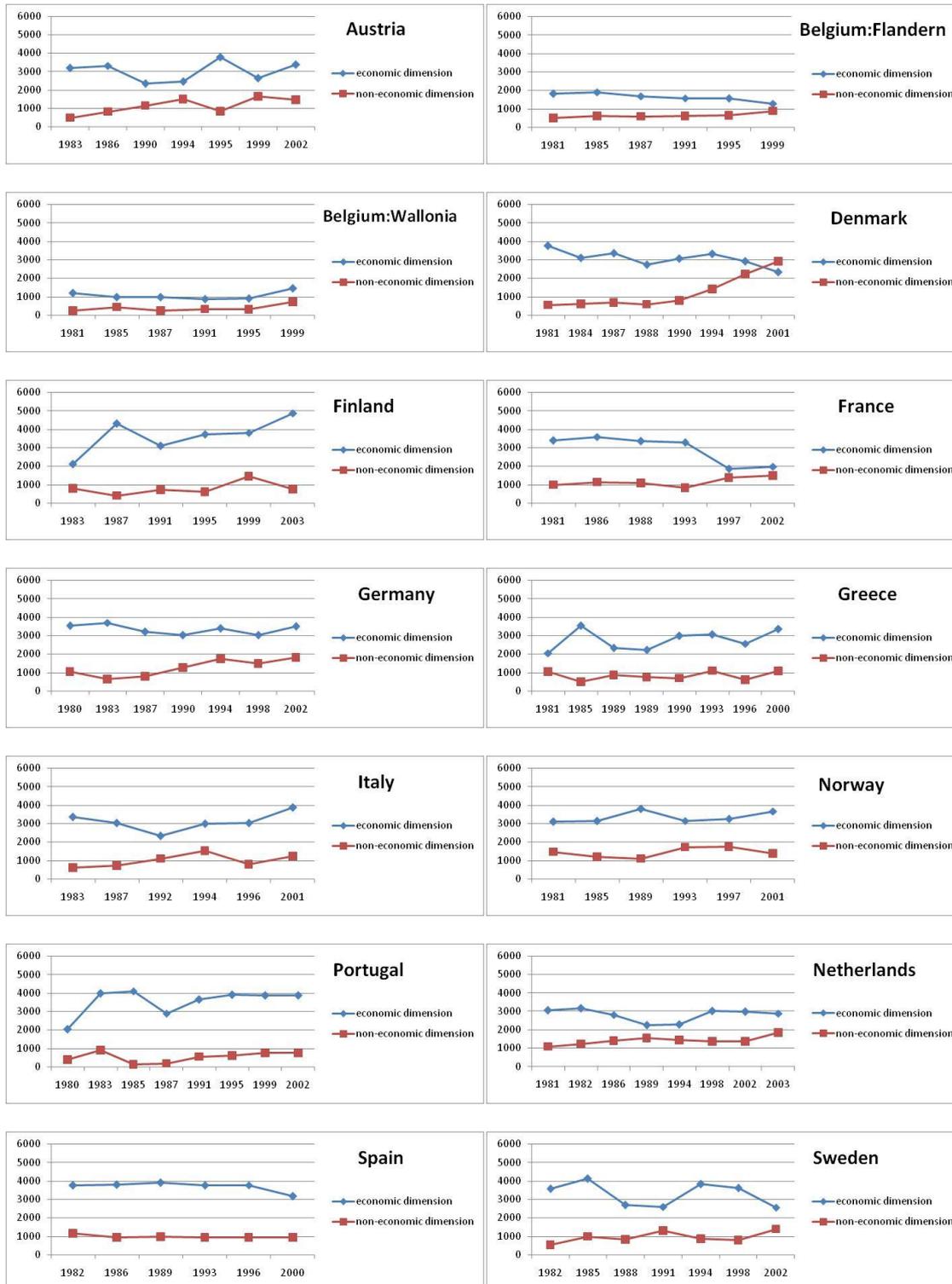
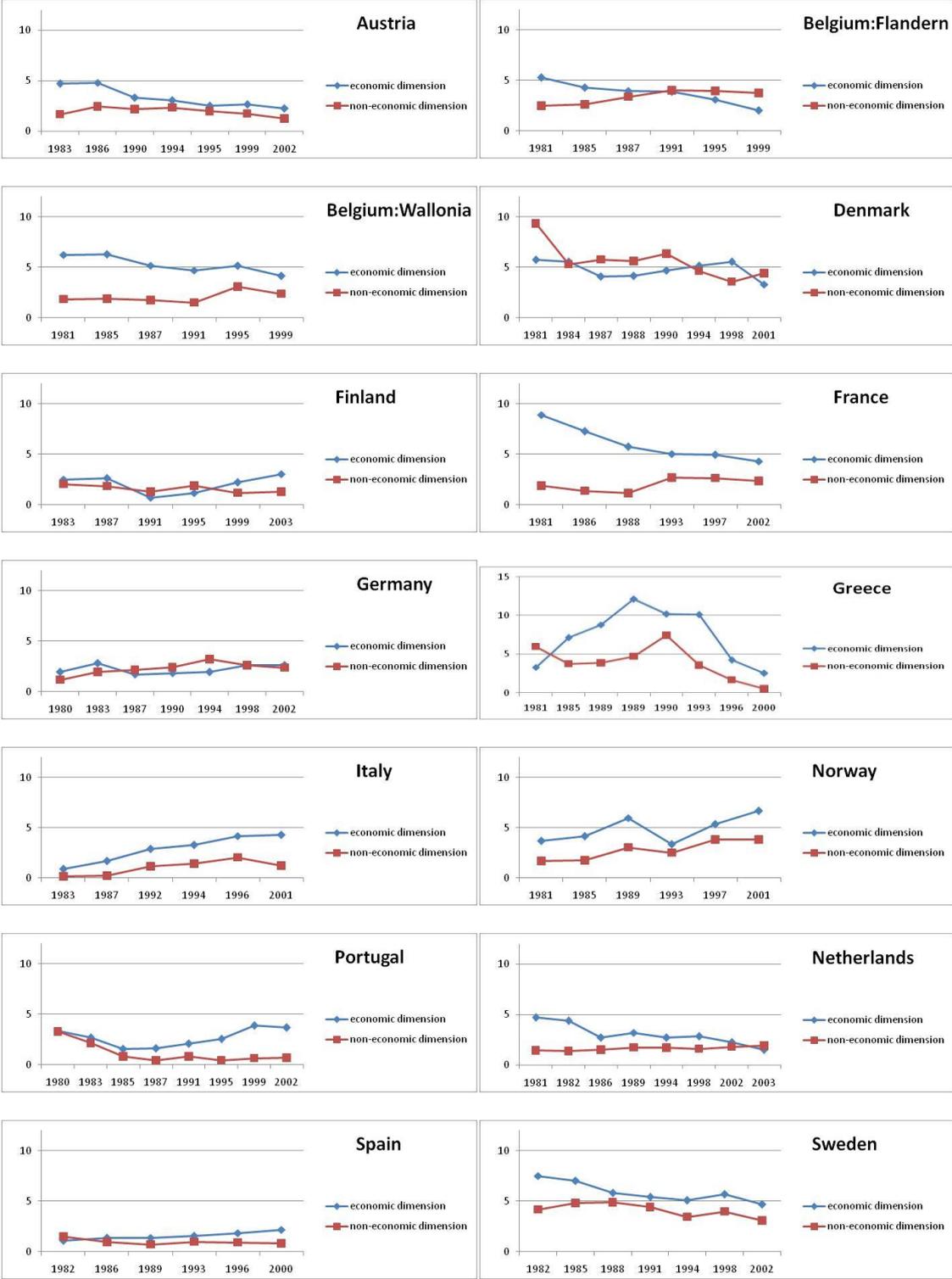


Figure 2: Party system polarization among economic and non-economic issues in Western Europe



Chapter 4

When Voters Have to Decide:

Explaining Vote Choices in a Two-dimensional Political Space

Abstract

Many voters in Western Europe are confronted with a crucial decision. As there are nearly no parties combining an economic left with a cultural right appeal or an economic right with a cultural left standing, voters with these combination of preferences have to decide between the party that matches their economic needs or the one that meets their cultural demands. This paper analyses this vote decision by applying aspects of the proximity theory to voting behaviour. The findings for 16 Western European countries suggest that both the individual preferences of voters and the overall patterns of party competition do influence this vote choice. This means that in two elections, the very same voter with constant political preferences might vote for very different political parties.

Introduction

In recent years, it has become more or less common in political science to see the political issue-space in Western Europe as being structured by two dimensions (for a recent overview, see Enyedi and Deegan-Krause, 2010). On the one hand, political competition is formed through economic-related conflicts over the distribution of material resources, resulting in a distinct economic dimension of political competition with the two extremes: ‘state-interventionism’ for the old left-wing policies, and ‘free-market solutions’ for the old right-wing policies. On the other hand, scholars have identified a second dimension that consists of cultural or noneconomic issues. Although the precise content of this second dimension is defined rather diverse, its new left-wing extreme may be labelled ‘liberalism’, and its new right-wing policies ‘authoritarianism’. Theoretically, therefore, parties and voters in Western Europe can position themselves everywhere between these four extremes.

At the same time, Western European parties seem to be somewhat reserved with regard to position themselves in this potential space. Although many parties demonstrate a combination of state-interventionism and liberalism or of free-market solutions and authoritarianism, Van der Brug and Van Spanje have recently argued that ‘there are hardly any parties that are left-wing on socio-economic issues and right-wing on cultural issues, or vice versa’ (2009: 328). Therefore, it is often impossible for voters with these distinct combinations of preferences to find a party that simultaneously fits both their economic and cultural demands. These voters will have to make an important decision: Should they vote for the party that fits their economic preferences, or should they vote for the party that comes closest to their cultural perspectives?

This paper analyses this crucial decision with which many voters in Western Europe are faced. It is structured as follows: After summarizing recent findings on the political situation in Western Europe, it was discovered that parties and voters are located empirically

on an economic and a cultural scale. This mapping supports the assumption that voters with a distinct combination of preferences will have difficulty finding a party that matches both their economic and cultural demands and will therefore have to decide between economic and cultural preferences. After analysing this issue more deeply by applying insights from the proximity theory of voting behaviour (Downs, 1957; Enelow and Hinich, 1982, 1984, 1990), several hypotheses on the individual and contextual factors that might influence this decision were formulated. It is assumed that both the individual characteristics of voters as well as the political context in which this decision is made are of importance. The hypotheses were tested empirically for 16 Western European countries.

It was determined that voters with extreme preferences with regard to economic issues tend to choose the party that is closest to them in the economic dimension, while voters with extreme cultural positions tend to vote for the party closest to them in the cultural dimension. However, voters with extreme market-oriented *and* liberal views show a higher probability to cast their vote for the party that fits their economic preferences, while voters with extreme state-interventionist *and* authoritarian preferences tend to vote for party that fits their cultural preferences. Furthermore, the political offers made by parties to voters play an important role in the decision: If parties focus more on cultural issues, voters tend to vote for the party closest to them in cultural preferences. Conversely, if parties focus on economic issues, the incentive for voters to vote for the party closest to them in economic preferences increases significantly.

1. The Political Space in Western Europe

Fifty years ago, the well-known ‘frozen-party thesis’ by Lipset and Rokkan (1967) stated that the party systems of the 1960s were structured according to the same basic political conflicts since the 1920s. Although this classic study on party competition identifies four distinct lines

of political conflict, it also shows that the dominant cleavage among Western European party systems is the economic-related class conflict; this conflict has basically absorbed the other three. Party competition was therefore seen as one-dimensional, usually described in terms of 'left' and 'right'.

Since the time of Lipset and Rokkan's influential study, at least two phenomena have pointed to a fundamental change in the patterns of party competition in Western Europe. The first one was the emergence of green parties during the 1980s, accompanied and driven by the rise of self-expressing and ecological-oriented issues. A decade later, the emergence of parties of the extreme right, advocating anti-immigrant sentiments and law-and-order solutions, again signalled to political scientists that the party systems of Western Europe are anything but frozen.

Consequently, scholars agree that traditional political conflicts – and the former dominant economic and class-based conflict – have lost much of their political importance (Crewe, 1983; Dalton et al., 1984; Franklin et al., 1992; Kriesi et al., 2006) and are increasingly replaced by relatively new cultural-related issues primarily concerned with ecology, cultural diversity, nationalism and immigration (Evans, 1999; Inglehart, 1990; Kitschelt, 1994, 1995; Knutsen, 1989; Kriesi, 1998; Manza and Brooks, 1999; Marks et al., 2006). With regard to the voters, this trend is accompanied by a higher ranking of cultural-related issues, compared to that of the traditional economic-related issues (Flanagan and Lee, 2003; Inglehart, 2008, 1997, 1984; Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987).

However, traditional economic issues are not completely replaced by these 'new politics' (Franklin et al., 1992) or 'new value' (Inglehart, 1990) issues. This is because parties do have incentive to incorporate the latter into existing lines of political conflict to attract both new cultural-oriented voters as well as their traditional economic-oriented supporters (Beck, 1982; Castles and Mair, 1984). Therefore, while the increasing importance of cultural issues

for political competition is undisputed, the relationship between these new issues and the traditional economic conflict is still discussed.

The two positions in this discussion might be summarized as a one- versus two-dimensional view on the political situation in Western Europe. As the majority of the literature suggests, the political space in Western Europe is – for most countries – two-dimensional (Bornschieer, 2010; Enyedi and Deegan-Krause, 2010; Hooghe et al., 2002; Kitschelt, 1994, 1995; Knutsen, 1989; Kriesi, 2010; Kriesi et al., 2006; Marks et al., 2006; Warwick, 2002). Parties and voters' positions on the economic and cultural dimensions are independent of each other; therefore, it is adequate and necessary to analyse political competition in a two-dimensional way. In contrast to this view, some authors argue that the new cultural issues have basically been absorbed and integrated into the traditional economic dimension, which results again in a one-dimensional political space, even if the meaning of this single dimension might have changed (Iversen, 1994; Van der Brug and Van Spanje, 2009). Empirically, however, it is only appropriate to speak of a one-dimensional space if parties and voters' positions on the economic and cultural axes are highly correlated with each other; therefore, we are able to predict where both actors stand on cultural issues if we know their position on the economic axis.

¹Following the majority of the literature, I begin my analysis with the assumption of a political space defined by an economic- and cultural-related axis. It is then tested for parties and voters to discover whether their positions on these two axes are highly correlated (supporting the one-dimensional view) or are independent of each other (supporting the two-

¹ While this article is not intended to solve this ongoing discussion, it should be noted that the empirical results pointing to a one- or two-dimensional view on the political space do strongly depend on a number of methodological and theoretical questions: (1) the variety of issues taken into account, especially with regard to the cultural dimension, (2) the source of data (mass or expert surveys; content analysis of newspapers or party platforms (see for this point also Warwick, 2002), (3) the case selection, (4) the theories and the resulting measurements of party placements (spatial or salience theory), and (5) if parties, voters or both are analysed.

dimensional view). I expect that the political space of parties and voters is structured in different dimensions, as parties do have the incentive to structure and minimise the number of political conflicts, while we would not expect the same for voters.

2. Locating parties and voters in Western Europe

Let us start with the assumption of a political space in Western Europe that has an economic axis and a cultural axis. On the economic axis, parties and voters can position themselves between the extremes ‘state-interventionism’ (old left) and ‘free-market solutions’ (old right); the corresponding extremes for the cultural dimension are ‘liberalism’ (new left) and ‘authoritarianism’ (new right). We therefore need data for the positions of parties and voters on the economic as well as on the cultural axis.

The usual approach to locate both actors is to ask survey-respondents to locate themselves and their national parties on predefined scales, covering different issue preferences. Unfortunately, there is no cross-national dataset that asks respondents to locate themselves as well as parties on more than one issue-scale, usually a left-right-scale. The only way to obtain positions of parties and voters for more than one issue and for different Western European countries is to use different data for both actors.² In this paper, parties’ positions have been calculated using the data offered by the Comparative Manifesto Project (Budge et al., 2001; Klingemann et al., 2006), while voters’ positions have been calculated using data offered by the World Value Survey (WVS, 2009). Thus, parties’ and voters’ positions could be measured for 16 Western European countries, depending on the availability of data for one

² The use of different data for both actors may raise concerns about the comparability of the resulting positions. With regard to this important methodological question, two remarks should be made at this early stage: First, the results of the corresponding models are comparable to studies relying solely on respondents’ self- and party-placements (see endnote 12). Second, the use of respondents’ self- and party-placements to analyse the political space of both actors comes with its own difficulties, as voters might be influenced by processes of cognitive assimilation (Merrill et al., 2001) and projection (Merrill and Grofman, 1999). Using different data for voters and parties eliminates this problem.

to three time points: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and UK.

Although previous studies have consistently defined the issues considered for the economic-related scale, the cultural scale is conceptualised rather diverse (see Enyedi and Deegan-Krause, 2010: 416). This diversity is driven primarily by the inclusion or noninclusion of ecology-related issues for the cultural axis. A prominent example for the inclusion of ecological preferences is the study by Marks et al. (2006). They see party support for European integration as one-dimensional with the two extremes GAL (green, alternative and libertarian) and TAN (traditionalist, authoritarian and nationalist). Although this allows them to place both green and extreme right parties on this GAL/TAN dimension, the inclusion of green issues might be questioned. This is because in contrast to the issue-pair libertarian/authoritarian, the preferences towards green issues might not discriminate between parties. We can easily perceive a party as alternative, libertarian, authoritarian or nationalist (or not), but it is difficult to conceive of a party not being in favour of environmental protection. In the words of Stokes (1963), green issues have been transformed from positional to valence issues, at least in the Western European context. The inclusion of green issues for the cultural scale therefore raises the potential problem that, for example, an extreme right party such as the Freedom Party of Austria might appear more to the GAL end of the GAL/TAN dimension than it would appear without taking ecological issues into account. The two measurements for voters and parties presented below, therefore, do not include ecologic-related issues for the cultural dimension.

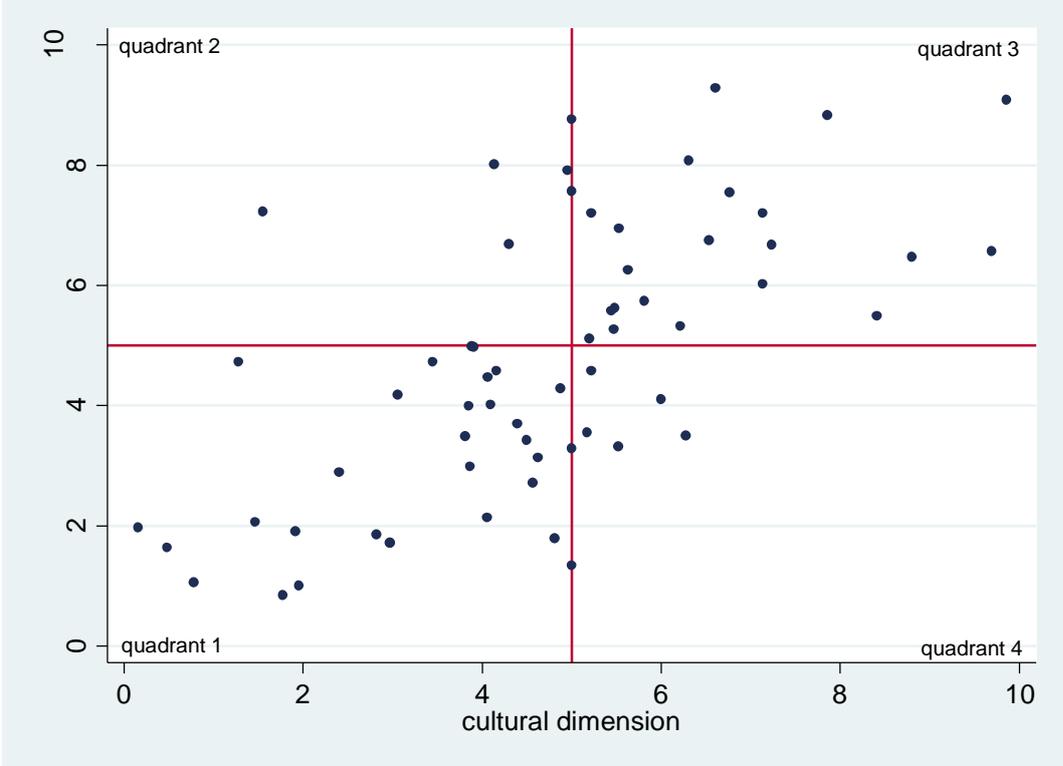
To obtain party policy positions on the two dimensions, the data offered by the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) has been used. The methods used by the CMP to map party policy positions based on election manifestos are described at length elsewhere (see Budge et al., 2001, app. 2), and I briefly review these methods here. Under the CMP

framework, policy preferences are characterized by systematic examination of party stances on policies based on content analysis of election programmes. The CMP isolates ‘quasi-sentences’ in a party’s policy programme and pairs them with 56 predefined policy categories (e.g., welfare spending, law and order, traditional morality, etc.). The percentages of each category provide the basis for estimating the policy priorities of a party. Although there are different approaches to transform these salience-based measures into party positions (Gabel and Huber, 2000; Kim and Fording, 1998; Shikano and Pappi, 2004), the approach proposed by Franzmann and Kaiser (2006) has been used for this article. This results in policy positions of parties on an economic³ and cultural⁴ scale, each ranging from 0 (maximal state-interventionist, resp. liberal) to 10 (maximal market-oriented, resp. authoritarian). Figure 1 reports the policy positions for 63 parties in 16 Western European countries in the year 2000.

³ The party positions on the economic axis have been calculated by following CMP categories: all categories of the fourth CMP domain (economy) and the categories 504 (social services expansion), 505 (social services limitation), 701 (labour groups: positive) 702 (labour groups: negative), 703 (agriculture) and 704 (middle class and professional groups).

⁴ The following CMP categories have been used for the cultural dimension: 107 (internationalism: positive), 109 (internationalism: negative), 601 (national way of life: positive), 602 (national way of life: negative), 603 (traditional morality: positive), 604 (traditional morality: negative), 605 (law and order), 607 (multiculturalism: positive), 608 (multiculturalism: negative) and 705 (minority groups).

Figure 1: Parties' positions in Western Europe in 2000



As the figure shows, parties in Western Europe are hesitant to occupy the theoretical available political space defined by the two axes. While the majority of parties combine a state-interventionist with a liberal (quadrant 1) or a market-oriented with an authoritarian (quadrant 3) policy appeal, we find only few parties in quadrants 2 (market-oriented and liberal) and 4 (state-interventionist and authoritarian). Furthermore, in contrast to the more densely occupied quadrants, the positions of parties in quadrants 2 and 4 are moderate. If we correlate the party positions on the two axes, we obtain a person's R of 0.646. While a value of 0 would represent a perfect two-dimensional space and 1 would represent a perfect one-dimensional policy space, this correlation is far away from either extreme. However, the fact remains that nearly no Western European parties can be found in quadrants 2 and 4.

Let us turn to the location of voters on the two axes. Using data offered by the World Value Survey, I have calculated an economic and cultural-related index.⁵ The economic index relies on four items, measuring respondent's attitudes towards income equality, private versus state ownership of business, job taking of the unemployed and economic competition. Confirmatory factor analysis shows that these four items indeed tab one underlying dimension.⁶ After recoding the items to a scale of 0 to 10, I have constructed an additive index to account for respondents' preferences with regard to economic issues. The cultural index is based on three single indices: an index for sexual permissiveness⁷, an index for traditional values about gender roles⁸ and an index for conformity as an educational value.⁹ Confirmatory factor analysis reveals that the three single indices indeed tab one underlying dimension.¹⁰ All single items were recoded to a scale of 0 to 10 before summing up the three single indices for the cultural index. As for the parties, this results in policy positions of voters on an economic and cultural scale, each of which ranges from 0 (state-interventionist, resp. liberal) to 10 (market-oriented, resp. authoritarian). Figure 2 reports the policy positions of voters in the 16 Western European countries in 2000. For graphical presentation, I have drawn

⁵ See for a similar operationalisation Achterberg (2006).

⁶ Confirmatory factor analysis shows that the four economic-related items could be explained by one underlying item with an Eigenvalue of 1.615 explaining 40.39% of the combined variance.

⁷ The scale for sexual permissiveness was measured by five judgements of respondents about the degree to which they think activities like 'married men/women having an affair', 'sex under the legal age of consent', 'homosexuality', 'prostitution' and 'abortion' can be justified. The index for sexual permissiveness was constructed for each respondent using at least three valid answers.

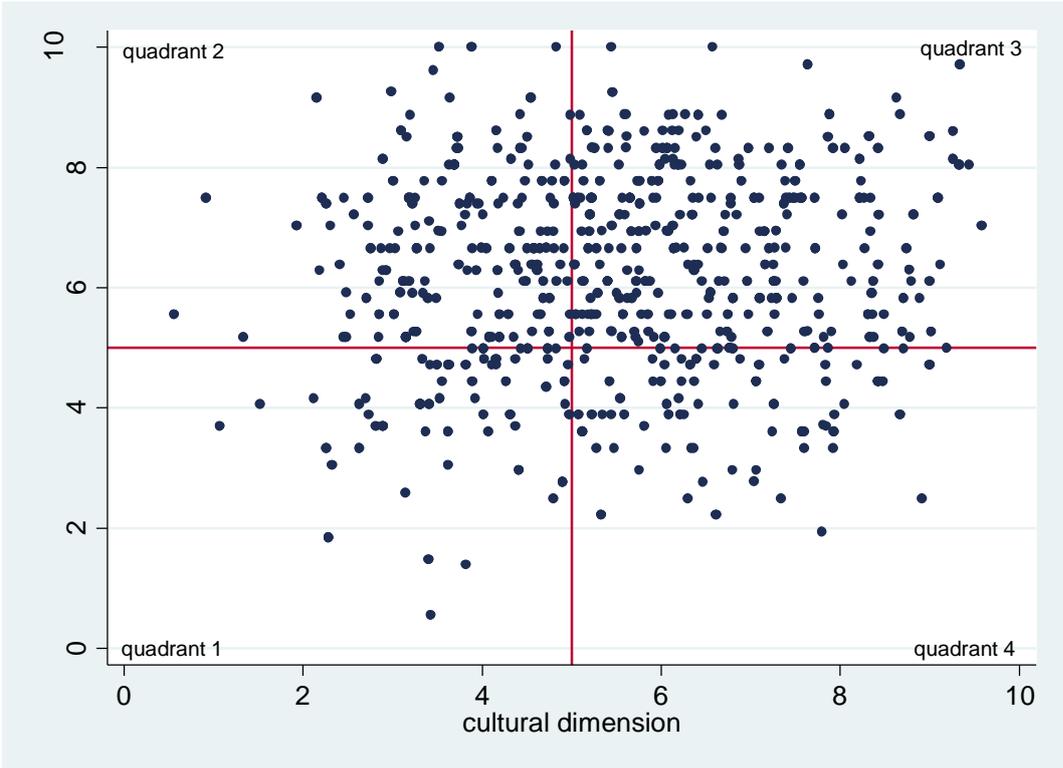
⁸ The scale for traditional values about gender roles consists of five items, mainly of the Likert-type (agree completely–disagree completely), posing that 'when jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women', 'a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work', 'a preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works', 'a job is alright, but what most women really want is a home and children' and 'being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay'. The index for traditional values about gender roles was constructed for each respondent using at least three valid answers.

⁹ The scale for conformity as an educational value consists of six items in which the respondents indicate which qualities children should be encouraged to learn at home. Three of these qualities, 'good manners', 'religious faith' and 'obedience', emphasize conformity, while the three qualities 'determination, perseverance', 'imagination' and 'independence' emphasize the opposite. The index for conformity as an educational value was constructed for each respondent using at least five valid answers.

¹⁰ Confirmatory factor analysis shows that the three single indices (sexual permissiveness, gender roles and conformity as an educational value) could be explained by one underlying item with an Eigenvalue of 1.706 explaining 56.86% of the combined variance.

a random sample of 500 respondents (out of 12.805 in the year 2000) for which values for both issues could be generated.

Figure 2: Voters' positions in Western Europe in 2000



As Figure 2 shows, voters in Western Europe are more scattered among the available political space than parties are. In the overall dataset, we find 9.92% of all voters in quadrant 1 (state-interventionist and liberal), 24.93% in quadrant 2 (market-oriented and liberal), 49.31% in quadrant 3 (market-oriented and authoritarian) and 15.31% in quadrant 4 (state-interventionist and authoritarian). The correlation of voters positions on the two scales results in a Pearson's r of 0.083. This would allow us to conclude that the political preferences of voters are indeed better described in a two-dimensional way, as the knowledge of a respondent's economic preferences does not allow us to predict his cultural preferences.

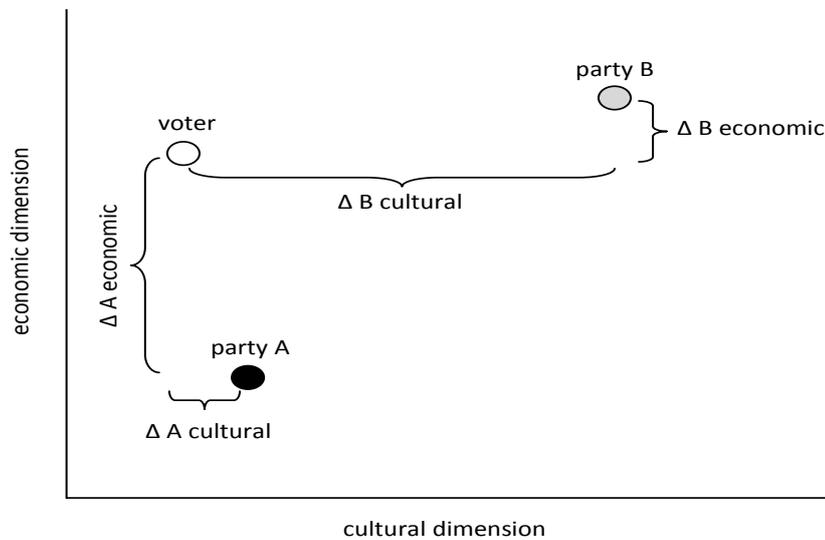
With regard to electoral representation of voters by parties, these findings support the point recently made by Van der Brug and Van Spanje (2009): Many voters in Western Europe will be unable to find a party that matches both their economic and cultural preferences, and these voters are located primarily in quadrants 2 and 4. Therefore, these voters have to decide whether they should cast their vote for the party that identifies with their cultural preferences or the one in line with their economic preferences, a problem we will now turn to in more detail.

3. Modelling the vote decision

In order to obtain deeper insight into the problem of electoral representation discussed above, we can analyse the dilemma of voters applying insights from the proximity theory of voting (Downs, 1957; Enelow and Hinich, 1984, 1990). Although this formal theory of voting has been challenged and defended continuously since its formulation by Anthony Downs (Grofman, 2004; Iversen, 1994; Rabinowitz and Macdonald, 1989), it remains the main point of reference for studies on electoral behaviour.

Whereas the assumptions of the proximity model of voting are rather restrictive (Grofman, 2004), the basic idea behind the theory is simple: Voters are able to locate themselves and their parties in a predefined policy space and can vote for the party whose position is closest to their own. The distance between voter and party is understood as a utility function: the closer the party is to the position of the voter, the greater the utility gained. Conversely, larger distances result in a loss of utility. In the two-dimensional policy space discussed above, the problem of representation could be translated into Figure 3.

Figure 3: Vote choice in a two-dimensional policy space



The figure depicts the simplest case, with one voter who has to decide between two rivaling parties. As the proximity theory assumes, this voter knows the distances between him and the two parties on each dimension ‘ ΔA economic’ and ‘ ΔA cultural’ for party A; ‘ ΔB economic’ and ‘ ΔB cultural’ for party B. Obviously, the voter in Figure 3 finds himself in an dilemma, as neither of the two parties matches his ideal position on both dimensions. While party A is close to his own position on the cultural axis, it does not match his preferences on the economic axis. Party B is close to him in economic preferences but not in cultural position. So which party should this voter vote for?

A possible approach is to assume that voters are indifferent about the utility gained or lost on each of the single dimensions as long as the overall utility is maximized. However, this approach theoretically states that political competition could be reduced to a single dimension. Although this assumption is indeed at the heart of the proximity theory (see Grofman, 2004), it could be challenged for two reasons. First, studies on value change (Flanagan and Lee, 2003; Inglehart, 2008, 1990) and advocates of issue-ownership theories of voting behaviour have concordantly shown (Petrocik, 1996; Petrocik et al., 2003; Van der

Brug, 2004), voters are indeed able and willing to rank political issues, paying more importance to one and less to others. To sum up the position of voters on different scales and calculate the mean position might therefore be misleading.¹¹ Second, as long as we follow the assumption of one-dimensionality, the issue regarding the economic- and cultural-closest party cannot be addressed and indeed is not even seen as a problem. Under the assumption of one-dimensionality, the proximity theory predicts that even voters with extreme preferences on both scales would vote for a centrist party. Let the position of the voter be 1 on the economic and 9 on the cultural scale; his preferred party would be located at 5. In contrast, in a political space with two independent dimensions, this voter might cast his vote for a party that is either far left in economic position or far right in cultural terms.

For these reasons, Table 1 shows the voting decision of respondents in a two-dimensional policy space under the assumption of two independent dimensions. For this table, voters' positions on the economic and cultural scales (taken from the WVS) have been compared with the respective party positions (based on the CMP dataset).¹² The table is based on the vote intention of voters, which explains the relatively small number of nonvoters. Given the two-dimensional political space discussed in the previous section, there are five possible choices voters can take: they could vote for the party that is (1) closest to them on both issue dimensions, (2) closest to them only on the economic dimension, or (3) closest to them only on the cultural dimension, or (4) closest to them neither on the economic nor on the cultural dimension. The final option, (5), is that they could decide to abstain from voting.

¹¹ For a discussion of this problem, see also (Grofman, 2004; Tomz and Van Houweling, 2008; Shikano, 2008).

¹² In contrast to the use of voters' self- and party placements, the use of independent data sources avoids the possibility of cognitive assimilation (Achterberg 2006) and projection (Merrill and Grofman, 1999), which can be assumed to overestimate the explained variance in proximity models of voting (Merrill, 1995).

Table 1: Vote choice depending on voters' positions

	Vote intention for the party closest on...				Respondent would not vote
	economic and cultural dimension	economic dimension	cultural dimension	none of the two dimensions	
All respondents (all quadrants)	7.14	16.05	19.54	52.07	5.20
State-oriented and liberal (quadrant 1)	9.50	15.25	15.85	53.34	6.07
Market-oriented and liberal (quadrant 2)	3.02	18.23	19.05	55.04	4.65
Market-oriented and authoritarian (quadrant 3)	9.34	14.93	21.27	49.65	4.80
State-oriented and authoritarian (quadrant 4)	5.45	16.62	17.66	53.39	6.87

Table 1 reports the distribution of the five possible choices for the overall sample and for voter groups with distinct combinations of economic and cultural preferences. In the overall sample, only 7.14% of all voters have voted for the party that is closest to them on both dimensions. However, these statistics vary sharply among voters with distinct policy preferences. While 9.5% of all voters located in quadrant 1 and 9.34% located in quadrant 3 have cast their vote for the party closest to them on both dimensions, the percentage decreases significantly for voters located in quadrants 2 (3.02%) and 4 (5.45%). The variation in the percentage of voters able to find a party closest to them on one of the two issue-scales is rather limited and ranges from 15.85% to 18.23% for the economic dimension and 17.45% to 21.27% for the cultural dimension. Also, the variation in the number of theory-noncompliant voters among the quadrants is rather limited.¹³

¹³ The fact that 52.07% of voters behave as theory-noncompliant might appear to be a large percentage. However, this value is comparable to the unexplained variance reported in other studies using formal models of

Table 1 therefore supports the argument made in the previous sections: Depending on the combination of their economic and cultural preferences, voters in Western Europe are unable to find a party that simultaneously matches both of their policy demands. Faced with this dilemma, these voters have to decide whether they most value the economic position or the cultural position. The next section develops some hypotheses on the individual and context variables that might effect this crucial decision with which approximately 40% of all voters in the 16 Western European countries analyzed are confronted.

4. Hypotheses

Although the decision of voters regarding different issue dimensions has not been addressed by previous studies using formal theories of voting behaviour, it can be assumed that this decision is influenced by the individual characteristics of voters as well as by the political context in which this decision is made.

Beginning with the individual level, we might assume that the *intensity of preferences* influences the choice between the economic or cultural closest party. Although the proximity theory understands this intensity solely as the distance between the voters' position and the positions of the contesting parties, there are two alternatives to this view. First, advocates of issue-ownership theory (Merrill 1995, Van der Brug, 2004) find strong evidence that voters are able to rank political issues with regard to their perceived importance and that this ranking influences the individual voting decision. In our case, we can expect that *voters that rank economic-related issues higher than cultural-related issues will also vote for the party that is*

voting behaviour (Merrill, 1995; Rabinowitz and Macdonald, 1989; Westholm, 1997). However, it might be argued that this high percentage of theory-noncompliant voters is caused by the noncomparability of the voters' and parties' measures, which are based on independent data sources. To address this potential problem, I have calculated an additive index for voters' and parties' positions on the two dimensions. In this constructed one-dimensional space, 30.25% of all respondents have voted for the party closest to them, while 69.75% show a vote intention that is not predicted by proximity theory. These values are comparable to these found by Warwick (2010), who reports that only one-third of all voters behave in a theory-compliant manner.

closest to them on the economic dimension, and vice versa. Second, critics of the proximity theory claim that the pure distance between a voter and his preferred party is insufficient for understanding this voter's party choice. Advocates of the directional theory of voting behaviour (Macdonald et al., 1998; Rabinowitz and Macdonald, 1989) argue that voters are primarily interested in a policy shift towards a certain direction and consequently vote for the party that they believe will change policies in their preferred way. While this assumption has been criticized for both theoretical and methodological reasons (Iversen, 1994; Merrill, 1995; Warwick, 2004), we might assume for our scenario that *voters with extreme preferences with regard to economic (resp. cultural) issues might also vote for the party closest to them on the economic (resp. cultural) dimension.*

In addition to the individual preferences of voters, the decision for the economic or cultural-closest party might be influenced by the overall patterns of party competition at a given election.¹⁴ This is the dominant theoretical view of many studies focusing on the political opportunity structure of different parties (Arzheimer and Carter, 2006; Bélanger and Meguid, 2005; Ignazi, 1992; Kitschelt, 1986, 1994, 1995; Meguid, 2005; Rydgren, 2005; Van der Brug et al., 2005). Again, there are two main contesting theories on how party competition operates, influences voters and should be measured (Budge, 2001).

First, the *salience theory* states that parties do not compete with each other on all possible issues but put greater emphasis on issues they 'own' while ignoring issues occupied by rivalling parties. Parties' positions thus consist of contrasting emphases placed on different policy areas. While the salience theory focuses exclusively on the electoral strategies of parties, the *issue-ownership theory* states that the mean salience of issues among all competing parties signals to voters which issues are of importance at a given election – and

¹⁴ Theoretically, this presumes that voters are able to locate not only themselves and their preferred party but also all other parties in the predefined policy space, an assumption that is perfectly in line with the proximity model.

which are not. Voters then cast their vote for the party that they believe has the greatest competence in solving the most salient political problems (Petrocik, 1996). In our two-dimensional policy space, this let us to assume that *voters will vote for the economic-closest party if economic issues are of high salience. In contrast, voters will vote for the cultural-closest party if cultural issues are of high salience.*

Second, *confrontational theory* of party competition sees parties taking up a range of explicit positions on each issue, ranging from fully pro to fully con (see e.g. (Downs, 1957). This view is theoretically much more in line with the proximity model of voting, as the confrontational approach directly measures parties' policy positions on different issues, not the salience of these issues. In addition to the salience-based arguments developed so far, the decision for the economic or cultural-closest party might therefore also be influenced by the policy alternatives offered to voters, measured by the polarization of the party system on the two dimensions. To clarify this point, one might consider the following example. In a two-party system, both parties dedicate 80% of their appeals to economic issues, while they view cultural issues of little relevance and dedicate only 20%. In this case, voters should have a strong incentive to base their voting decision on their economic preferences, as discussed previously. Let us now assume that both parties offer similar programs with regard to economic issues, which will result in a low degree of polarization in this dimension. Both parties favour a state-interventionist approach and can be regarded as economically left wing. In contrast, the two parties are highly polarized on the cultural dimension: one party favours a restrictive policy towards immigrants and advocates a tough law-and-order state, while the other party advocates a multicultural integration approach and strongly defends citizens' rights to freedom. In this case, rational voters should base their vote on their cultural preferences, even if this dimension is far less salient. While voting based on economic issues would not make a significant difference on the outcome and could therefore be regarded as

‘wasted’, voting based on cultural preferences offers much more distinct alternatives in outcome. More general: *If party competition is highly polarized with regard to economic (cultural) issues, voters will have a strong incentive to vote for the party closest to them on the economic (cultural) dimension.*

5. Model and data description

To test the hypotheses developed in the last section, a multinomial logistic model has been constructed. The dependent variable is the vote intention of an individual voter as reported in Table 1. As we have already discussed, there are five possible options: (1) the voter can cast his vote for the party which is closest to him on the economic *and* cultural dimension, (2) he could vote for the party closest to him only in economic terms, (3) he could vote for the party closest to him only in cultural terms, (4) he could vote for a party not closest to him on either the economic or the cultural dimension, and (5) he could decide to abstain from voting. While these options result in a possible number of 20 comparisons, the focus of this paper is on the vote decision of voters with a certain combination of preferences, especially those of market-oriented and liberal preferences and state-interventionist and authoritarian preferences. This is because these voters can be expected to have difficulty finding a party that simultaneously matches both their economic and cultural preferences and therefore are often confronted with the choice between the economic (=2) or cultural-closest party (=3). Although the decision of interest is a binary one – and could therefore also be analyzed using a logistic regression model – this would mean ignoring most of the available data, as about 2/3 of all voters choose option 1, 4 or 5. In contrast, multinomial logistic regression allows us to base our findings on all available data and respondents.¹⁵

¹⁵ The resulting logistic regression would be based on 8.126 respondents (compared to 28.041 using multinomial logistic regression). However, the findings reported are not meaningfully different between the two models.

Data for the individual preferences of voters – including the positions of voters on the economic and cultural scale – has been taken from the World Value Survey, and data for party positions and issue salience has been taken from the Comparative Manifesto Project (see section 2). The selection of countries and time points is restricted primarily by the availability of the economic and cultural measurements for the individual level, as the items used for these scales have not been requested in each of the VWS waves. Altogether, 28.041 voters in 31 election contexts [Austria (1990), Belgium/Wallonia (1990, 1999), Belgium/Flanders (1990, 1999), Denmark (1990), Finland (1990, 1996, 2000), France (1990, 2000), Germany (1990, 1997, 1999), Iceland (1990, 1999), Ireland (1990), Italy (1990, 1999), Luxembourg (1999), the Netherlands (1990, 1999), Norway (1990), Portugal (1990, 1999), Spain (1990, 1995, 2000), Sweden (1990, 1996) and the United Kingdom (1990)] could be analysed.¹⁶

Regarding the individual ranking of preferences, two dummies representing the highest ranking of economic and cultural-related issues have been constructed based on the four Inglehart-index items (the reference category being voters with mixed preferences).¹⁷ I expect that voters that rank economic issues highest will vote for the party closest to them on the economic dimension, while voters most concerned with cultural issues will vote for the cultural-closest party.

¹⁶ The Belgium regions of Flanders and Wallonia are treated as separate party systems, as there have been no parties that seek for votes in national elections in all parts of Belgium since 1978. Consequently, Belgian voters have been divided into Flemish and Walloon voters, according to their reported region of residence.

¹⁷ The Inglehart-index asks respondents to name their first and second most important goals out of four political issues: (1) maintenance of law and order, (2) giving people more say in government decisions, (3) fighting rising prices, and (4) protecting freedom of expression. The answers are then combined to construct a materialist-postmaterialist index in which (1) and (3) are seen as indicators for a materialist and (2) and (4) for a postmaterialist value orientation. As Flanagan (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987) notes, three of the four Inglehart items (1, 2 and 4) are related to cultural issues, while only one item (3) can be seen as an indicator for economic-related issues. This results in an overrepresentation of noneconomic-related answers. In addition, the index does not include an item that respondents with a strong interest in left-wing economic policies can be expected to choose, as ‘fighting rising prices’ is usually regarded as an answer that accounts for right-wing economic preferences. Aware of these shortcomings, they summed up items 1, 2 and 4 to measure cultural value priorities (be they liberal or authoritarian), while item 3 accounts for the highest ranking of (right) economic issues.

Voters' intensity towards economic and cultural issues is tapped by four dummies: state-interventionist or market-oriented for the economic dimension, resp. liberal or authoritarian for the cultural dimension. These dummies reflect the value each voter scores on the 0–10 points economic and cultural scales (see section 2). Voters are identified as state-interventionist if their economic score equals or falls below 2, and as market-oriented if it equals or exceeds 8. Voters are regarded as liberal if their cultural score equals or falls below 2, and as authoritarian if it equals or exceeds 8.¹⁸ In line with the hypotheses developed above, I expect voters that show extreme preferences with regard to economic issues (be they state-interventionist or market-oriented) to vote for the party closest to them on the economic dimension. In contrast, the extreme cultural preferences (be they liberal or authoritarian) should correlate with the decision for the cultural-closest party.

Concerning the electoral context, variables for the salience and polarization of the economic and cultural dimensions have been calculated from the CMP data. For the salience of each issue dimension, the frequencies for economic and cultural issues as given in the CMP have been multiplied for each party with this party's share of votes. Finally, these values have been summed up for each single election, which results in one measure for the salience of economic-related issues and one for the salience of cultural-related issues. I expect that the salience of economic issues does have a positive impact on the decision for the economic-closest party, while a high salience of cultural issues is positively correlated with the decision for the cultural-closest party.

¹⁸ While these values are of course arbitrary, the use of alternative boundaries of extremeness (≤ 1 and ≥ 9 or ≤ 3 and ≥ 7) does not meaningfully change the reported findings.

To account for the range of policy alternatives offered by parties to voters at a given election, two polarization measures have been constructed¹⁹ using the formula first proposed by Sigelman and Yough (1978). One measure accounts for the polarization of parties among economic issues, one for the polarization among cultural issues. The bases for both measurements are the party positions constructed for the economic and cultural scales as described in section 2. I expect that a high party-system polarization among economic issues is positively correlated with the decision for the economic-closest party, while a high polarization among cultural issues is positively correlated with the decision for the cultural-closest party.

6. Results

Table 2 presents the results of the multinomial logistic regression model. For reasons of presentation, only the submodel comparing the vote decision for the economic-closest or cultural-closest party is shown. The full model comparing the reference-category with each of the four other outcome-categories is reported in the appendix (Table 1, app.). The reference outcome-category is the vote decision for the party closest to the voter on the cultural dimension only. Consequently, positive coefficients indicate a higher probability of voting for the economic-closest party, while negative coefficients indicate a preference for the cultural-closest party. Clustered standard errors have been used to control for the possibility of correlation between voters within the 31 different election contexts.

¹⁹ Party system polarization (P) is calculated for each dimension using the formula $P = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i (x_i - \bar{x})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i}$ where p_i is the vote share of party at a given election, x_i is the position of this party on a dimension of party competition, and \bar{x} is the weighted mean. \bar{x} is calculated by multiplying the vote share with the ideological position of a party. This step is repeated for each party in the party system. Finally, these values are summed up. Please note that this measurement is independent of the number of parties.

Table 2: Results of multinomial logistic regression

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Individual preferences	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)
Highest ranking of economic issues	.116 (.108)	.115 (.108)	.105 (.082)	.091 (.083)
Highest ranking of cultural issues	-.127 (.100)	-.126 (.100)	-.071 (.084)	-.097 (.090)
State-interventionist	.546* (.241)	.710* (.275)	.760** (.266)	.717** (.262)
Market-oriented	.566* (.221)	.550* (.219)	.547** (.197)	.566** (.196)
Liberal	.295 (.345)	.121 (.336)	.399 (.444)	.344 (.431)
Authoritarian	-1.343** (.206)	-1.324** (.207)	-1.368** (.193)	-1.407** (.189)
Market-oriented and liberal		2.672** (.868)	2.760** (.877)	2.756** (.881)
State-interventionist and authoritarian		-.949* (.432)	-1.029* (.526)	-.923* (.516)
Electoral context				
Saliency of economic issues			.001 (.001)	.001 (.001)
Saliency of cultural issues			-.001* (.001)	-.001* (.001)
Polarization among economic issues			.306* (.127)	
Polarization among cultural issues			-.120 (.086)	
More polarization among economic than among cultural issues				.673* (.275)
Constant	-.154 (.191)	-.153 (.191)	-1.725* (.655)	.199 (.344)
N	28.041	28.041	28.041	28.041
Pseudo R ² (full model)	0.0240	0.0245	0.0393	0.0378

We start with Model 1, including only the individual preferences of voters. First, and as has been hypothesized, the intensity of preferences towards economic and cultural issues does have an impact on the decision between the economic and cultural-closest party. Voters

located close to the state-interventionist or market-liberal ends of the economic scale demonstrate a higher probability of voting for the economic-closest party, while authoritarian voters tend to favour the party closest to them in cultural terms instead. All of the three dummies are significant and show the assumed direction.

¹ Only the dummy controlling for extremely liberal cultural preferences results as insignificant and is – in contrast to the theoretical expectation – positively correlated with the decision for the economic-closest party. A possible explanation for this might be that voters with extremely liberal preferences might not be as concerned with the decision between the economic or cultural-closest party as extremely authoritarian voters are. Extremely liberal voters might more easily find a party that matches both their cultural and economic preferences, given the high variation in economic policy appeals offered by cultural liberal parties (Greens and Liberals, but also Communists) in Western Europe.

Second, the ranking of political issues does not seem to have an impact on the decision between the economic or the cultural-closest party. Respondents that rank economic issues highest do not show a higher probability of voting for the economic-closest party, nor do respondents that rank cultural issues highest show a higher probability of voting for the cultural-closest party. Although the two dummies controlling for the ranking of issues do show the expected direction, they do not reach common levels of statistical significance. However, this insignificance may be due to the inappropriateness of the Inglehart-items to distinguish between economic and cultural-related issues as they have been defined in this paper. As Flanagan (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987) notes, none of the four Inglehart-items can be expected to account for voters with a strong interest in left-wing economic policies; the

¹Although the intensity of preferences is not a key variable in the proximity model but is theoretically derived from directional theory of voting behaviour, these findings support recent efforts to incorporate the two rivalling theories into one model of voting behaviour. (Dow, 1998; Iversen, 1994; Macdonald et al., 1995; Tomz and Van Houweling, 2008; Warwick, 2004).

index is therefore biased which may explain the insignificance of the related coefficients. Unfortunately, the Inglehart-items are the only survey items available to measure respondents' ranking of issues in the VWS for every wave and country.

As the graphical presentation in section 2 suggests, we can expect that voters who combine market-oriented and liberal preferences or state-interventionist and authoritarian preferences to have the biggest dilemma regarding the decision between either the economic or the cultural-closest party. Model 2 therefore includes these combinations of preferences. Please note that the two new dummies tab voters with extreme preferences towards both economic and cultural issues. Theoretically, these voters might vote for either the economic or cultural-closest party. Both dummies are significant but point to different directions: While voters who combine economically market-oriented and culturally liberal attitudes tend to support the economic-closest party, voters with extreme state-interventionist and authoritarian preferences tend to support the cultural-closest – and therefore more authoritarian – parties. How can we explain this finding?

A possible and theoretically consistent explanation would be that voters who are extreme market-oriented and liberal should be more market-liberal than they are liberal. In contrast, voters who are both extreme state-interventionist and authoritarian should be more authoritarian than they are state-interventionist. However, this explanation based on individual preferences does not seem to be supported by the data. If we compare the 0–10 scores of extreme market-oriented and liberal voters, we find means of 8.77 (economic) and 1.45 (cultural dimension). Although these voters are a bit more extreme in their economic preferences than in their cultural preferences, the difference is rather small. In contrast, state-interventionist and authoritarian voters score 1.13 (economic) and 8.62 (cultural dimension). Again, the differences in extreme are rather small, but these latter voters would be expected to vote for the economic-closest party – which is not the case, as Model 2 tells us. The

theoretical arguments made about the intensity of preferences do not explain this divergent pattern of voting behaviour, but the decision between the economic and cultural-closest party might be influenced by other individual or contextual variables that have not been accounted for in this paper.

It has been hypothesised that the vote decision of individuals might be influenced by the individual preferences of voters as well as by the overall patterns of party competition when the vote decision is made. Model 3 accounts for this possibility by including four party competition variables: the salience of economic and cultural issues and the polarization of parties among economic and cultural issues. We find that while all four coefficients of party competition point to the expected direction, only two of them pass common levels of statistical significance. Confronted with the choice between the economic or cultural-closest party, voters tend to support the cultural-closest party if cultural issues are of high salience. In contrast, if parties are highly polarized among economic issues, voters tend to support the party closest to them in economic terms. The inclusion of the party competition variables does not change the significance or direction of the variables accounting for the individual preferences of voters.

However, model diagnostics report the possibility of multicollinearity in Model 3, as the party system polarization among economic issues is highly correlated with the polarization among cultural issues (Pearson's R at 0.66). I have therefore re-estimated the model by using only one variable for the party system polarization between the two different issue dimensions. The new dummy-variable reflects the value of 1 if parties are more polarized with regard to economic issues than they are with regard to cultural issues. In this case, voters should prefer the economic-closest party, instead of the cultural-closest party. As Model 4 shows, this is indeed the case. Theoretically, voters' potential utility gain, resp. loss, increases if the policy alternatives offered by parties to voters are more distinct on the

economic dimension than they are on the cultural dimension. Rational voters should base their vote decision on the dimension that makes the greatest difference in outcome – in this case, the economic dimension. Finally, testing has been conducted for possible interaction effects between the variables of party competition and the individual preferences, but these effects do not reach common levels of statistical significance and are therefore not reported.

Conclusion

The political space in Western Europe is seen by the majority of recent studies as two-dimensional, consisting of an economic dimension and a cultural-related dimension. However, although voters are evenly distributed in this political space, parties are hesitant to occupy the diversity of theoretical available positions. Especially the combinations market-orientation/liberalism and state-interventionism/authoritarianism are occupied by few Western European parties. For voters with these combinations of political preferences, it is therefore nearly impossible to find a party that simultaneously matches both their economic and cultural demands.

Applying a proximity-oriented model of voting behaviour, the resulting crucial decision many Western European voters are confronted with has been analysed: Should they vote for the party that is closest to them in economic terms, or should they cast their vote for the party that best matches their cultural preferences? The findings of the statistical analysis allow us to conclude that this decision is influenced both by the individual characteristics of voters' and by the overall patterns of party competition. On the individual level, voters of extreme positions on the economic dimension show a higher probability of voting for the economic-closest party; voters with extreme authoritarian preferences show a higher support for the cultural-closest party. Interestingly, voters who combine extreme market-oriented with extreme liberal preferences tend to support the economic-closest party, while voters holding

the combination of state-interventionism and authoritarianism show a higher support for the cultural-closest party.

Regarding the electoral context, both the salience of issues and the party system polarization are relevant predictors of voting behaviour. If cultural issues are of high salience, voters show a higher probability of voting for the cultural-closest party. If party competition is more polarized with regard to economic than cultural issues, voters will vote for the economic-closest party. This effect of party system polarization on the individual vote decision has also been identified by a recent simulation study (Shikano, 2008).

The theoretical – and political – relevance of these findings deserves further attention. Theoretically, this means that in two elections, the very same voter with constant political preferences might vote for very different parties (see also Grofmann, 2004: 39; Van der Brug and Van Spanje, 2009), depending on the dimension of party competition more salient or polarized. To advance formal theories of voting behaviour, this context-oriented argument should receive much more interest in future research.

Politically, the importance of party system polarization becomes clear if we recognize that the positions of parties in Western Europe tend to converge with regard to economic issues (Kitschelt, 1995), but tend to diverge on the cultural dimension (Bornschieer, 2010). At the same time, the salience of cultural issues has increased steadily during the last decades, while economic issues are less frequently addressed by political parties (Kriesi et al., 2006). In light of the findings presented in this paper, this means that more voters will allow their voting decision to be guided exclusively by their cultural preferences, be they liberal or authoritarian. The declining differences between parties in economic preferences are therefore directly related to the voting decision for extreme liberal or extreme authoritarian parties and offer a supply-side argument for the continuous electoral success, especially of the latter group.

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Appendix

Table 1, app.: Results of multinomial model (complete)

Model	Vote for the party closest on both dimensions vs. vote for the cultural-closest party				Vote for the economic-closest party vs. vote for the cultural-closest party			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Individual preferences	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)	Coefficient (std. err)
Highest ranking of economic issues	-.0103 (.106)	-.013 (.106)	-.011 (.106)	-.021 (.104)	.116 (.108)	.115 (.108)	.105 (.082)	.091 (.083)
Highest ranking of cultural issues	.010 (.137)	.009 (.137)	.032 (.127)	.019 (.129)	-.127 (.100)	-.126 (.100)	-.071 (.084)	-.097 (.090)
State-interventionist	-.280 (.340)	.077 (.354)	.113 (.350)	.097 (.355)	.546* (.241)	.710* (.275)	.760** (.266)	.717** (.262)
Market-oriented	.475 (.243)	.474 (.248)	.480* (.243)	.489* (.238)	.566* (.221)	.550* (.219)	.547** (.197)	.566** (.196)
Liberal	.601 (.405)	.568 (.430)	.638 (.441)	.606 (.435)	.295 (.345)	.121 (.336)	.399 (.444)	.344 (.431)
Authoritarian	.205 (.105)	.222* (.105)	.232* (.109)	.218* (.108)	-1.343** (.206)	-1.324** (.207)	-1.368** (.193)	-1.407** (.189)
Market-oriented and liberal		1.752 (1.265)	1.798 (1.268)	1.797 (1.271)		2.672** (.868)	2.760** (.877)	2.756** (.881)
State-interventionist and authoritarian		-1.750** (.604)	-1.782** (.602)	-1.724** (.608)		-.949* (.432)	-1.029* (.526)	-.923* (.516)
Electoral context								
Saliency of economic issues			.001 (.001)	0.001 (.001)			.001 (.001)	.001 (.001)
Saliency of cultural issues			0.001 (.001)	-.001 (.001)			-.001* (.001)	-.001* (.001)
Polarization among economic issues			.159 (.124)				.306* (.127)	
Polarization among cultural issues			-.042 (.081)				-.120 (.086)	
More polarization among economic than among cultural issues				.379 (.249)				.673* (.275)
Constant	-1.185** (.142)	-1.189** (.142)	-1.73* (.655)	-1.301** (.384)	-.154 (.191)	-.153 (.191)	-1.725* (.655)	.199 (.344)

Model	Vote for a party neither close on one of the dimension vs. vote for the cultural-closest party				Vote abstention vs. vote for the cultural-closest party			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Individual preferences	Coefficient t (std. err)	Coefficient t (std. err)	Coefficient t (std. err)	Coefficient t (std. err)	Coefficient t (std. err)	Coefficient t (std. err)	Coefficient t (std. err)	Coefficient t (std. err)
Highest ranking of economic issues	.088 (.079)	.087 (.079)	.072 (.059)	.064 (.058)	-1.149 (.149)	.212 (.128)	.190 (.132)	.200 (.129)
Highest ranking of cultural issues	-.128* (.062)	-.127* (.063)	-.077 (.050)	-.084 (.051)	-.377* (.147)	-.376* (.147)	-.345* (.144)	-.338* (.145)
State-interventionist	-.149 (.137)	-.031 (.178)	-.036 (.169)	-.041 (.162)	.546* (.251)	.707* (.284)	.638* (.279)	.685* (.279)
Market-oriented	-.300 (.161)	-.317* (.159)	-.319* (.139)	-.307* (.134)	.030 (.189)	.008 (.191)	.015 (.195)	.012 (.184)
Liberal	.398 (.468)	.235 (.458)	.472 (.539)	.449 (.536)	.528 (.440)	.309 (.410)	.462 (.460)	.464 (.450)
Authoritarian	-1.149** (.147)	-1.143** (.144)	-1.229** (.144)	-1.239** (.143)	-.592** (.118)	-.579** (.115)	-.676** (.118)	-.660** (.115)
Market-oriented and liberal		2.753** (.974)	2.747** (1.010)	2.764* (1.009)		2.995** (1.150)	2.961* (1.193)	2.967* (1.186)
State-interventionist and authoritarian		-.315 (.438)	-.322 (.439)	-.268 (.426)		-.606 (.563)	-.539 (.574)	-.566 (.557)
Electoral context								
Saliency of economic issues			.001** (.000)	.001* (.001)			.001 (.001)	.001 (.001)
Saliency of cultural issues			-.001** (.000)	-.001** (.001)			-.001 (.001)	-.001 (.001)
Polarization among economic issues			.142 (.090)				-.043 (.233)	
Polarization among cultural issues			-.060 (.047)				-.077 (.122)	
More polarization among economic than among cultural issues				.496* (.207)				.201 (.543)
Constant	1.213** (.154)	1.214** (.154)	.926 (.486)	1.119** (.360)	-1.212** (.313)	-1.210** (.312)	-1.045 (1.193)	-1.487 (1.130)
N	28.041	28.041	28.041	28.041	28.041	28.041	28.041	28.041
Pseudo R ² (full model)	0.0240	0.0245	0.0393	0.0378	0.0240	0.0245	0.0393	0.0378

Chapter 5

Does the Mode of Candidate Selection Affect the Representativeness of Parties?

(with André Kaiser)

Abstract

In this article we analyze the impact of intra-party procedures of candidate selection for national elections on the representativeness of parties towards their voters. With regard to candidate selection we distinguish between two dimensions: inclusion and centralization. While the first identifies the type of selectorate for candidate nominations (members, delegates or committees), the second captures the territorial unit in which the nomination is decided (local, regional or national). The analysis based on data for 53 parties in nine western European countries for the period from 1970 to 1990 points to the relevance of the inclusion dimension. Parties in which party elites decide over the nomination of candidates show slightly higher degrees of representation than parties with more inclusive selectorates. Furthermore, we conduct our analysis separately for two frequently used but theoretically different concepts of representation: cross-sectional representation (at one point in time) and dynamic representation (over time). Our analysis shows that candidate selection procedures only matter for the first concept. The empirically inconsistent results between the two concepts are due to deficiencies in the way dynamic representation is currently operationalized.

Introduction

The representation of voter preferences by political decision makers is at the heart of studies on democratic political systems (Dahl 1971; Downs 1957; Iversen 1994; McDonald and Budge 2005; Miller and Stokes 1963; Schofield and Sened 2005; Stimson et al. 1995; Wlezien 2004). While most of the literature empirically addressing the linkage between public preferences and political output focuses on the United States, it has recently been supplemented by a growing set of cross-national studies, analyzing the impact of different institutional arrangements on the degree of representation (Adams et al. 2004; Blais and Bodet 2006; Ezrow and Adams 2009; Ezrow et al. 2010; Golder and Stramski 2010; Hobolt and Klemmensen 2008; Soroka and Wlezien 2004).

In established democracies and especially in the European context, political parties play a crucial role for the ‘opinion-policy nexus’ (Brooks 1987; 1990): ‘Citizens in Western democracies are represented *through* and *by* parties. This is inevitable’ (Sartori 1968: 471; italics in original). Therefore, party-related variables take centre stage in a set of recent studies (Adams and Somer-Topcu 2009; Adams et al. 2004; Ezrow 2007; Ezrow and Adams 2009; Ezrow et al. 2010) which focus on the relationship between party political programmes and the preference distribution in the electorate.

We wish to contribute to this discussion by analyzing the effect of intra-party modes of candidate selection on the representation of voters by political parties. With regard to selection procedures (i.e. the nomination of candidates running for elections to national parliament) we follow the analytical framework suggested by Rahat and Hazan (2001) and measure candidate selection procedures on two dimensions: inclusion and centralization. While the first identifies the type of selectorate for nominations (members, delegates or committees), the second captures the territorial unit in which the nomination is decided (local, regional or national). Distinguishing between the two dimensions is important because neither

conceptually nor empirically there is a close correlation between types of selectorates and territorial units. We analyze the separate and combined impact of both dimensions on the linkage between voters and their respective parties applying data on 53 parties from nine Western European countries for the period from 1970 to 1990.

¹ Furthermore, we distinguish between two prominent conceptualizations of representation: *cross-sectional representation* (addressing the congruence of voters' and parties' positions at one point in time) and *dynamic representation* (addressing changes in voters' and parties' positions over time). While both concepts have been frequently referred to in previous studies, until recently their relationship has received only minor interest. Our analysis reveals that both concepts cannot be used interchangeably and therefore lead to completely different results with regard to representation.

1. The State of the Art in Representation Studies

The representation of public preferences by political decision makers is one of the essential topics for normative democratic theories as well as for the empirical study of democratic political systems (Dalton et al. 2011; Lijphart 1999; Page and Shapiro 1983; Powell 2000; Wlezien 2004). Regardless of this long and continuing scientific interest in representation, empirical findings so far are rather mixed.²

Most studies addressing the congruence between public preferences and political decisions come up with the normatively desirable view that levels of representation are high in established democracies. For instance, Stimson et al. conclude in their influential study on US institutions that politicians are keen to pick up the faintest signals in their political

¹ The period of analysis is restricted by data availability.

² We do not intend to give a comprehensive literature review on representation studies. The references given in this section should therefore be taken as examples on how different authors have conceptualized and measured representation. For an extensive literature review for the United States see Burstein (2003) and Manza and Cook (2002). For an excellent overview on comparative studies in the field see the volume edited by Rosema et al. (2011).

environment: ‘Like antelope in an open field, they cock their ears and focus their full attention on the slightest sign of danger’ (Stimson et al. 1995: 559), i.e. of changing voter preferences. In contrast to this, a number of studies find that the degree of representation is considerably lower than stated by Stimson et al. (see Manza and Cook, 2002). Some scholars even argue that representation is virtually impossible, because voters do not hold clear preferences but rather ‘non-attitudes’ (Campbell et al. 1960) with regard to political issues and, therefore, politicians do not have to fear electoral consequences of non-responsive performance (Skocpol 1995).

These contrasting empirical findings are hardly surprising, considering the differences of existing studies with regard to case selection, investigation period, data sources and methodological design. Beyond these causes for disagreement, we identify four questions in order to summarize the diversity of empirical studies on representation and to relate our own analysis to the existing literature. These questions are: (1) Who represents? (2) Who is represented? (3) What is represented? and (4) What is the concept of representation?

‘Who represents?’ is concerned with the subject of representation. Possible answers range from single politicians (Miller and Stokes 1963), parties (Ezrow et al. 2010), governments or governing parties (McDonald and Budge 2005), to single institutions or whole political systems (Ezrow 2007; Stimson et al. 1995). Most studies focusing on political parties analyze the representativeness of governing parties or coalitions. More recently, scholars have addressed the representation by parties independent of their government participation (Ezrow et al. 2010). With our analyses, we wish to contribute to these latter studies.

‘Who is represented?’ asks for the object of representation. Usually, public preferences are perceived as the political preferences of voters, measured by a variety of survey items. Other indicators of public preferences, like demonstrations or the activities of organized

economic or social groups, are rarely considered. With regard to the preferences of voters, most studies follow a Downsian tradition and investigate the representation of the median voter (Blais and Bodet 2006; McDonald and Budge 2005; Powell 2009; Warwick 2010), others address the mean voter (Dalton 1985; Ezrow et al. 2010), the mean voter of single parties (Ezrow 2010), or distinguish between sub-groups of the latter, e.g. politically informed voters (Ezrow and Adams 2009). In our analysis we will focus on the relationship between single parties and these parties' mean voters.

'What is represented' asks which kind of political preferences is represented. This question is closely related to the operationalization of the dependent (political programme) and the independent (voters' preferences) variable, as whatever measure is applied for the side of political actors should be equivalent to the measure chosen for the voter side. The variety of possible answers to this question is impressive and our review does not intend to capture it in detail. However, with regard to the dependent variable four approaches seem to stand out in terms of frequency of use: (1) Fiscal output, i.e. (changes of) spending figures (Hobolt and Klemmensen 2008; Soroka and Wlezien 2004), (2) policy output, e.g. numbers of laws enacted, court rulings or roll calls (Stimson et al. 1995), (3) political rhetoric, e.g. party statements and manifestos or politicians' speeches (Golder and Stramski 2010; McDonald et al. 2004; Powell 2009), or (4) a combined measure of 1 to 3 (Stimson et al. 1995). On the side of the voters, the range of survey items used includes the left-right self-placement of respondents (Powell 2009), questions regarding the most important political problems (McDonald et al. 2004) or 'spend-more-or-less' questions (Wlezien 2004). Furthermore, each of these preferences might be related to single policies (e.g. with regard to social spending) or might be summarized into an overall index of policy preferences (which is usually referred to as a left-right scale). This point is important, because the preferences of voters might be well represented by parties with regard to distinct policy areas but less with regard to others

(Soroka and Wlezien 2004) as voters might reward policy shifts in pragmatic while punishing policy adjustments in principled issue domains (Tavits 2007). In this paper, we measure the positions of parties and their voters on a general left-right scale.

While the number of possible combinations of the answers given to the questions 1 to 3 – and, following on from that, the variety of findings with regard to the degree of representation – is already numerous, a fourth question should be taken into account: the underlying concept of representation. We believe this is an important point, which until recently has received only minor interest (but see Dalton et al. 2011). As we are interested in the degree of representation between parties and their voters measured on a single left-right dimension, there are two options to analyze this pattern: at a specific point in time and over time. We will refer to the former concept as *cross-sectional representation* and to the latter as *dynamic representation*.

The concept of cross-sectional representation conceives the representation of voters by parties as the congruence of these two groups at a specific point in time, usually on election-day. While different operationalizations of congruence have been proposed (Golder and Stramski 2010; Powell 2009), each of these rely on a measure of ideological distance between party and voter. To illustrate, let us compare the distance between two parties and their respective supporters. Let the mean position of the voters of party X be 2 and the position of the party be 3, while the mean voter of party Y is located at 2 but the party itself at 4. In terms of cross-sectional representation, party X is more representative than party Y. Studies reporting empirical evidence for this kind of linkage are numerous. For instance, Powell (2000, 2009) finds a strong correlation between the left-right positions of the median voter and the government parties, a conclusion shared by a number of other scholars investigating the ideological congruence of voters' and parties' positions at one point in time (Blais and Bodet 2006; Golder and Stramski 2010; Huber and Powell 1994; Kim and Fording 2001;

McDonald and Budge 2005; McDonald et al. 2004; Pardos-Prado and Dinas 2010; Powell 2009).

A different view on representation is given by Stimson et al. with their concept of dynamic representation, arguing that ‘representation exists when changing preferences [authors’ note: of voters] lead to changing policy acts’ (Stimson et al. 1995: 534). For this concept, the time perspective is crucial. Regarding the linkage between parties and their voters, a party should adjust its left-right position in accordance with changes in the left-right position of its voters. While the reaction-time of parties is a matter of empirical analysis (see Warwick 2010), the usual time-span assumed is the time between two consecutive elections (t_0 and t_1). The concept of dynamic representation has been very influential since its formulation by Stimson et al. and has also been applied by a set of recent studies on the linkage between voters’ preferences and parties’ policy stances (Adams and Somer-Topcu 2009; Adams et al. 2004; Ezrow 2007; Ezrow and Adams 2009; Ezrow et al. 2010).

Intuitively, the concepts of cross-sectional and dynamic representation seem to be largely compatible. If parties react to changing preferences of their voters over time they might also represent their voters well on election-day. However, the relationship between the two concepts has not been tested empirically, yet. Therefore, we will first investigate the empirical relationship between the two concepts of representation and then analyze the impact of candidate selection on the party-voter linkage for each of them. We begin with formulating our theoretical expectations.

2. Intra-party candidate selection and the representation of voters by parties

One of the major functions of political parties is to select candidates who contest in elections for public office. Within the European context of parliamentary democracy, this process of intra-party candidate selection is crucial, since the electoral chances of non-party candidates

to win seats are very limited.³ The options offered to voters are thus mainly structured by party political competition. The statutes on intra-party candidate selection are numerous and differ considerably from party to party, as well – while to a lesser extent – over time (Rahat and Hazan 2001). In order to classify the often very detailed party statutes with regard to the nomination of candidates, scholars have identified different dimensions of this process.

For our analysis, we distinguish between two dimensions of structural features of candidate selection: inclusion and centralization.⁴ The inclusion dimension captures the type of selectorate for candidates running for public office. It therefore deals with the question ‘who decides’ about the nomination of candidates and differentiates between three possible groups: party members, delegates, or committees. While party supporters would be a possible fourth group and are well known from the US context (Gallagher and Marsh 1988), the observable spectrum of inclusion in Western Europe ranges from party members (maximal inclusion) to committees, which are exclusively assigned with the task of nomination (minimal inclusion). The three distinct groups might each be located on different territorial levels, captured by the dimension of centralization. Centralization ranges from local, over regional to national. All in all, taking the possible combinations into account we come up with nine possible combinations of inclusion and centralization.

What are the theoretical expectations on the impact of inclusion and centralization on the degree of representation of voters by political parties? To our knowledge, only the study by Dalton (1985) has dealt with this question so far, analyzing the congruence of voters’ and candidates’ issue-preferences at the first election to the European Parliament in 1979. With regard to candidate selection, he distinguishes between candidates nominated locally, locally

³ There are some exceptions, e.g. Ireland. See Bolleyer and Weeks (2009).

⁴ While we agree with Norris (1997) that candidate selection might also be influenced by non-party actors, we claim that this influence is not institutionalized and therefore randomly distributed between parties. In contrast, our focus is on intra-party candidate selection procedures and our theoretical arguments capture the impact of these rather constant institutions.

with national approval, or nationally, a classification largely comparable with our dimension of centralization. While Dalton does not test for the impact of the inclusion dimension, he finds that centralized parties with candidates nominated on the national level show a higher degree of representation than decentralized parties with locally nominated candidates. He concludes that ‘centralized parties may be less open to innovation and allow less internal democracy, as critics suggest, but centralized parties display greater dyadic correspondence’ (Dalton 1985: 292), that is, a higher degree of representation. This argument leads to our first hypothesis:

H1: Parties with a national candidate selection are more representative than parties with a regionally or locally organized candidate selection.

The reason for this may lie in hierarchically-centralized party structures, which allow national party leaders to impose their political strategies on subordinated party levels and in this way let the party offer clear policy positions to potential supporters, as Dalton (1985: 294) suggests. However, an opposite effect seems also plausible, as party leaders in centralized parties might be rather independent of and therefore less responsive to the preferences of party supporters (Epstein 1980; Harmel and Janda 1982).

H2: Parties with a local candidate selection are more representative than parties with a regional or national candidate selection.

It is important to note that both arguments combine inclusion (party leaders) and centralization (national or local) effects of candidate selection procedures, while Dalton’s

analysis tests only for the impact of centralization. The reason for this is that in our view the theoretical expectations seem to call for a simultaneous effect of centralization and inclusion. In contrast to the territorial centralization of candidate selection, the theoretical arguments for an effect of the inclusion dimension are less developed. Why should candidates nominated by party leaders better represent their voters than candidates nominated by party members or delegates? While previous studies have not dealt with this pattern, a theoretical starting point is to assume different preferences and motivations of the three selectorates that affects the type of candidate they nominate.

In his seminal study on the motivations of party activists, May (1973) distinguishes between non-leaders, sub-leaders and leaders. Each group is defined by its intra-party status, which itself is defined by influence over personal and procedural decisions, ideology, campaign strategies and legislative activity. May argues that sub-leaders are the ideologically most extreme group, while both non-leaders and leaders are rather moderate. This leads to his so-called 'General Law of Curvilinear Disparity'. This is due to different motivations of the three groups - and especially between sub-leaders and leaders - with regard to their engagement in politics.

Non-leaders are the lowest strata with regard to their intra-party status. They are supporters and activists, whose engagement in party politics is usually low or only temporary (e.g. during election campaigns). While non-leaders are the group less involved into politics, they are by far the largest group within each party. Because of this, their mean political preferences are rather moderate and therefore comparable to the preferences of the median non-party voter.

In contrast to non-leaders, sub-leaders devote much of their time and personal resources for party organization and politics. However, in most cases they cannot hope of becoming paid full-time politicians; instead, their work will be voluntary for most of the time.

The reason why sub-leaders are nonetheless willing to engage in party politics is a strict policy motivation: sub-leaders want to see their extreme preferences to be translated into policies and are not willing to sacrifice these for a more moderate but maybe vote-maximizing election strategy.

Leaders have chosen politics as a profession and do therefore highly depend on their election and re-election; therefore, in the terms of Strom (1990), they are office-motivated. Because of this orientation, they have strong incentives to get their political appeal in line with the preferences of their potential voters. According to May, leaders are rather cushioned from being defeated in general elections, as they often run in safe districts or are secured by comfortable list positions. Their political careers do therefore not so much depend on their results in general elections but on their intra-party support by both moderate non-leaders and extreme sub-leaders. Leaders will therefore position themselves towards the middle of both groups. However, as the political fortunes of leaders do depend more on the support of influential sub-leaders than of less powerful non-leaders, their position will be closer to the former than to the latter.

‘May’s Law of Curvilinear Disparity’ has frequently been applied to the analysis of political parties (Kitschelt 1989; Narud and Skare 1999; Norris 1995; Scarrow et al. 2000) although it has been criticized for its theoretical presumptions (Kitschelt 1989). While the empirical findings are rather mixed and our data does not allow us to directly test for ideological attitudes of the three party sub-groups, we have decided to take May’s arguments as a theoretical starting point for the effect of the inclusion dimension of candidate selection. If May’s argument about the different preferences of non-leaders, sub-leaders and leaders has analytical value, then these differences in ideology might be translated into different preferences of the candidates who get nominated by the groups.

For this, we have to make three presumptions. First, the preferences of each group are completely homogenous (for a critique on this point see Kitschelt 1989) and determine their candidate selection. Second, each of the three sub-groups will choose the candidate whose preferences are closest to their own. Non-leaders will therefore vote for centrist candidates, sub-leaders for extreme and leaders for candidates between these two positions. The possibility, that e.g. sub-leaders might vote for a moderate candidate for reasons of vote-maximization is therefore excluded. Third, once selected, the candidate acts as an honest agent of its principal's preferences. This presumption is especially relevant for candidates selected by sub-leaders. These will therefore remain extreme, even if they now could be considered as part of the more moderate leader-group. Under these presumptions, we derive three hypotheses on the impact of the inclusion dimension of candidate selection on the degree of the representation of voters by parties. For reasons of clarity, we have replaced May's group labels by our own labels of inclusion (non-leaders = members; sub-leaders = delegates; leaders = committee). Given the listing of party groups by May (1973: 135-36) and our coding of candidate selection procedures, we trust in their equivalence.

H3: Parties with a candidate selection decided by members are most representative.

H4: Parties with a candidate selection decided by delegates are least representative.

H5: Parties with a candidate selection decided by committees are more representative than parties with a candidate selection decided by delegates but less than parties with a candidate selection decided by members.

While the theoretical expectations concerning the centralization dimension are therefore mixed, with regard to the inclusion-dimension we expect parties with candidates nominated by delegates to be the least representative in terms of voter representation. Although different theoretical expectations for a combined impact of inclusion and centralization are possible, at this point we expect parties with a candidate selection decided by delegates on a local level to be the least representative. This would be in line with the empirical findings of Dalton (H1) and the theoretical expectations of May (H4). We will therefore use this combination as the reference-category and expect any other combination as being superior to it in terms of representativeness.

We close this section by noting that our hypotheses are theoretically not restricted to one of the two concepts of representation. We therefore expect an effect of the centralization and inclusion of candidate selection procedures, regardless of the applied representation concept (cross-sectional or dynamic representation). However, as has already been mentioned in the last section, the relationship between the two concepts has so far not been investigated empirically. We will turn to this point before we begin our analysis of the impact of the candidate-selection variables.

3. Data and model description

In order to analyze the representation of voters by parties, we need measures of each group's policy stances. We have decided to measure both on a left-right dimension which we interpret as a 'super-issue' absorbing all the different meanings of other issues (Flanagan and Lee 2003; Inglehart 1984; Knutsen 1989).

There are several methods for determining parties' left-right positions, the most common being mass survey, expert survey and manifesto data.⁵ While each data source reveals its own advantages and disadvantages, expert data is seldom available for longer time periods. Therefore, we decided to use data offered by the Comparative Manifesto Project (Budge, Klingemann, Volkens, Bara, et al. 2001; Klingemann, Volkens, Bara, Budge, et al. 2006) to identify parties' policy positions. CMP provides a transcription of manifestos due to salience theory. Hence, there is a debate how to generate positional data using the manifesto raw scores (Kim and Fording 1998; Gabel and Huber 2000; Pappi and Shikano 2004; Franzmann and Kaiser 2006). For our empirical analysis, we make use of the approach developed by Franzmann and Kaiser (2006). The most important advantage of this approach is that it allows us to account for time- and country-specific meanings of the terms 'left' and 'right' by identifying positional (either left or right) and non-confrontational issues of party competition.⁶ The resulting 0 (most left) to 10 (most right) left-right scale of party positions consists of all possible CMP categories.

The left-right positions of voters are mainly drawn from data offered by the Eurobarometer Trend File (Schmitt et al. 2005). While the Eurobarometer covers only member states and candidate countries of the European Union, we have supplemented this

⁵ Recently, Powell (2009) compared the three measurement approaches in order to analyse if they lead to different results regarding median voter representation by governing parties. He concludes that differences in results are not related to the use of different data sources, and reports a high correlation of party positions derived from mass surveys, expert surveys and CMP data.

⁶ The idea of this approach is to take all out of the CMP raw data that is not positional. Using this approach, first confrontational and non-confrontational issues are identified. In a second step it is determined, whether a confrontational issue is left or right. Then the raw CMP scores themselves are transformed. A minimal value is subtracted for each election and party system in order not to overestimate issue stances that each party in a particular country and in a particular election takes. The scores of these differences are summed up and transformed to a 0-10 scale, leading us to determine party positions between 0 (leftmost) and 10 (rightmost). Using moving averages as smoothing procedure, the raw value of a manifesto before and after the particular election is used for error correction. Data on party positions is available online: <http://www.vergl-polwiss.uni-koeln.de/10603.html>. For an extensive description of the approach see Franzmann and Kaiser (2006).

data by several other surveys.⁷ For each party, we have first recoded the left-right self-placement of its voters (that is, respondents reporting a vote intention for this party) to a scale from 0 (most left) to 10 (most right) and then calculated the mean left-right score of all party supporters. In order not to let our estimates being influenced by outliers, we have only included the mean left-right score of party supporters if at least 10 respondents reported a vote intention for the party. As also the CMP usually offers data only for those parties that were able to gain seats in their national parliament this results in the exclusion of most minor parties from the analysis. Altogether, we have been able to obtain the mean left-right positions of 98 parties and their respective voters in 18 countries for the period from the mid-1970s to 2002 (see Table 1, appendix). Our analysis on the relationship between different concepts and operationalizations of representation will rely on this data.

We have collected data on the intra-party procedures of candidate selection for 53 parties in nine countries.⁸ *Inclusion* reports whether members, delegates or committees decide about the nomination of candidates; *centralization* reports the territorial unit on which this decision is made (local, regional or national). In the infrequent cases in which two or more groups or territorial units are equally involved in a decision about the nomination of candidates, we have decided to code the most centralized unit and/or exclusive selectorate. However, as this rarely occurs,⁹ this coding decision does not affect our findings.

Values for both variables have been assigned independently by three coders. Because nomination procedures in parties are often very detailed, we have only included values for

⁷ In addition to the Eurobarometer data, we have used data offered by the *European Voter Project* (Thomassen 2005), the *World Value Survey* (ASEP/JDS 2009), *The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (CSES), and the *Swiss National Election Studies* (FORS 2010).

⁸ Data on intra-party candidate selection procedures and replication data for this paper is available online: <http://www.vergl-polwiss.uni-koeln.de/10586.html>.

⁹ This decision is most relevant for our coding of German parties. In Germany, candidates can win a seat either by being elected directly by the voters of their district (through the so-called *Erststimme*) or by being elected through sub-national party lists (through the so-called *Zweitstimme*). While the candidates for both forms are nominated by party delegates, the territorial unit is local for the district- and regional for the list-candidates. We have decided to code the candidate selection procedure for the list-candidates, as candidates of German minor parties rarely win district-seats.

those parties with a unanimous coding. Katz and Mair's *Data Handbook on Party Organizations in Western Democracies* (1992) and Janda's *International Comparative Political Parties Project* (1980) are the relevant data sources to which we refer. For a few cases, party authorities have been consulted to validate the findings. As these data collections mainly deal with party organizations in the period from 1970 to 1990 and as coding intra-party nomination procedures beyond that period is highly time-consuming we restrict ourselves to this period. Therefore, and in contrast to our analysis on the relationship between different representation concepts, our analysis of the impact of candidate selection procedures on the representativeness of parties will rely on only 53 parties. See Table 1 (appendix) for parties included and modes for centralization and inclusion for the period from 1970 to 1990.

While we acknowledge the debate on the impact of the electoral system on the representativeness of parties (Blais and Bodet 2006; Golder and Stramski 2010; Huber and Powell 1994; Lijphart 1999; McDonald and Budge 2005; McDonald et al. 2004; Powell 2000), we have decided not to include the design of the electoral system as a control variable. For this, we have theoretical and methodological reasons. First, the theoretical arguments with regard to the impact of the electoral systems on party representativeness focus on the congruence between the median voter and the governing parties, while we are interested in the representation of party supporters by their respective parties. Second, our – due to data limitations on the modes of candidate selection – limited period of analysis and case selection, offers only small variation with regard to the electoral system, the UK being the only country included with a single member plurality system. Third, the common operationalization of dynamic representation makes it necessary that every additional explanatory variable is modeled as an interaction effect, moderating the effect of the position of the mean voter on the respective party position (see data section). In our case, we would therefore have to test for a combined effect of (1) the mean position of party supporters, (2)

the modes of intra-party candidate selection and (3) the electoral system on the dependent variable, which would be very hard to interpret. As we see also no theoretical expectations, why the mode of intra-party candidate selection should have a different impact on party representativeness in different electoral systems, we will not include the latter as a control variable.

4. Cross-sectional and dynamic representation: choosing the dependent variable

As indicated in the first section, existing representation studies mainly refer to one of two definitions of representation. On the one hand, several studies have dealt with the convergence of voters' and parties' policy positions at one point in time, a concept we have referred to as cross-sectional representation. On the other hand, a set of recent studies explicitly refer to the concept of dynamic representation, introducing a time perspective on the voter-party linkage. While both concepts have been used to analyze the representation of voters by political parties on a left-right dimension of political competition, their empirical relationship has not been analyzed yet. In addition, studies referring to the same concept differ with regard to their operationalization of the dependent variable, i.e. the congruence between voter and party position.

A review of previous studies shows four different operationalizations of the representation of voters by political parties, one referring to the concept of dynamic, three to the concept of cross-sectional representation. We introduce each of them and show how they operationalize the relationship between a party's policy position (LRparty) and the mean position of its voters (LRvoter). Both variables are measured on a left right scale ranging from 0 (most left) to 10 (most right).

With regard to cross-sectional representation, we identify three concept operationalizations in usage (see also: Golder and Stramski 2010; Powell 2009). While each

of these is predominantly employed to measure the ideological distance between the median voter and the respective government coalition, they can be easily transformed to account for the ideological congruence between party supporters and their respective parties. The operationalization most frequently employed in representation studies takes the mean voter position (LRvoter) to calculate the distance between voters and their respective party (Powell 2009). According to this concept, representation is high when the absolute distance between mean voter and party is low.

$$\text{Cross-sectional}_1 = |\text{LRvoter} - \text{LRparty}|$$

As several scholars have noted (Achen 1978; Blais and Bodet 2006; Dalton 1985; Golder and Stramski 2010), *cross-sectional_1* does not take into account the distribution of voter positions. This might be problematic, because parties with the same position of their mean voter might well differ with regard to the distribution of their supporters' preferences. Given the same distance between the position of a party and its mean voter, a party with ideologically more homogenous supporters will be more representative than a party with more widely spread preferences of its voters. Therefore, *cross-sectional_2* takes into account the distribution of voter preferences by calculating the distance between each single voter and its respective party.

$$\text{Cross-sectional}_2 = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N |\text{LRvoter}_i - \text{LRparty}|$$

LRvoter_i is the left-right position of the ith voter of a party, LRparty is the position of the party and N is the number of voters intending to vote for this party. According to this formula,

representation is high when the average absolute difference between party supporters and party is small.

Finally, Golder and Stramski recently proposed an operationalization which they call ‘relative citizen congruence’ (2010: 96). While they acknowledge the advantage of taking the distributions of voter preferences into account, they argue that this might lead to potential problems when analyzing the ability of parties to reach congruence between their position and the one of their voters across different units of analysis. This is because while parties might be willing to adjust their own position accounting for the position of their mean supporter, they cannot influence the distribution of their voters` preferences. In terms of voter representation, *ceteris paribus* a party X with more homogenous voter preferences will therefore always be superior to a party Y with less homogenous voter preferences. To account for this, Golder and Stramski (2010: 96) propose to conceptualize congruence between voters and parties in terms of their distance relative to the dispersion of voter preferences (see for a similar approach: Achen 1978). *Cross-sectional_3* ranges from 0 (most representative) to 1 (least representative).

$$\text{Cross-sectional}_3 = 1 - \text{Var}(\text{LRvoter}) / \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N |\text{LRvoter}_i - \text{LRparty}|$$

In contrast to the concept of cross-sectional representation, dynamic representation focuses on the responsiveness of parties to changing preferences of their voters over time. Studies applying the concept of dynamic representation usually model representation as a regression function (Ezrow 2007; Ezrow and Adams 2009; Ezrow et al. 2010).

$$\text{Dynamic} = \text{LRparty}_t = c + \beta_1 \text{LRvoter}_t + e$$

Here LR_{party_t} captures the shift in a party's position from the previous to the current election and LR_{voter_t} accounts for the shift in the position of this party's mean voter in the same period. In contrast to the distance between voter's and party's position used for the three operationalizations of cross-sectional representation, the coefficient β_1 captures the degree of dynamic representation. A value of 1 would indicate that a party and its voters have shifted into the same direction with exactly the same magnitude. A negative value of β_1 would indicate a position-change in contrasting directions, which is normatively not desirable.

How do the different operationalizations of the concepts of cross-sectional and dynamic representation relate to each other empirically? To test this, we have calculated for each of the four operationalizations one value for each party in our data set. Table 1 reports the correlations between these for 98 parties in the time period from the mid-1970s to 2002 (see Table 1, appendix).

Table 1: Bivariate correlations of different operationalizations of representation

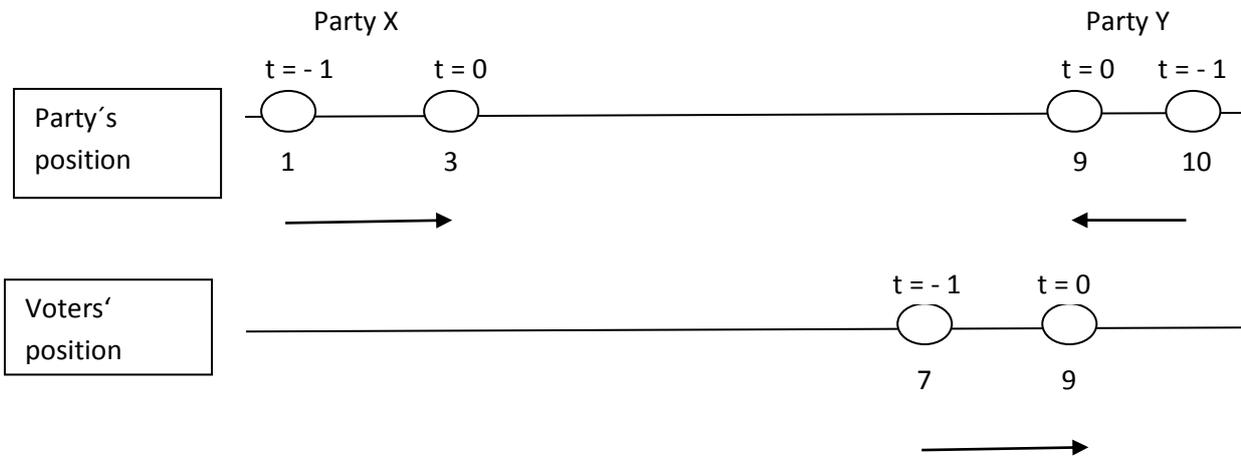
	Cross-sectional_1	Cross-sectional_2	Cross-sectional_3	Dynamic
Cross-sectional_1	1.0000			
Cross-sectional_2	0.7658	1.0000		
Cross-sectional_3	0.8386	0.7936	1.0000	
Dynamic	0.2329	0.3337	0.2382	1.0000

Notes: For the operationalization of dynamic we calculated the correlation coefficient β_1 . For the operationalizations of cross-sectional representation we calculated mean values for each party. Only parties that have contested in at least three successive elections have been included (n=98).

As the table shows, the three operationalizations of cross-sectional representation are highly correlated with each other. While we agree with Golder and Stramski (2010) who argue that the appropriate conceptualization should be guided by the author's research question, the very high correlations confirm the findings recently made by Powell (2009): The use of different operationalizations of cross-sectional representation might lead to different results, but these differences can be expected to be rather limited.

As Table 1 shows, the same cannot be said for the choice between the concept of cross-sectional representation and the concept of dynamic representation. Here, the bivariate correlations are rather low and *positive* which is theoretically surprising. Recall that the three measures of cross-sectional representation are based on distances between parties and their mean voters. Therefore, higher values indicate *less* representative parties. In contrast, the concept of dynamic representation is based on a regression coefficient which captures the impact of a shift in the position of the mean voter on the shift of the position of its party. As higher shifts in mean voter positions should be accompanied by higher shifts in party positions, here, higher values indicate *more* representative parties. The positive correlations in Table 1 between the concept of dynamic representation and the different operationalizations of cross-sectional representation indicate that parties which are responsive to changing voter preferences over time (i.e. since the last election) are less representative to their voters on election-day (and vice versa). While this might be regarded as somehow counterintuitive, Figure 1 helps explain this pattern.

Figure 1: Cross-sectional and dynamic representation



Let the parties X and Y have the same mean voter who has changed position from 7 to 9 from the foregoing (t_{-1}) to the current election (t_0). With regard to cross-sectional representation, party Y is clearly outperforming party X as it perfectly matches the mean voter's position at 9. However, and with regard to the concept of dynamic representation, party Y is completely unresponsive, as it has moved in a different direction than its voters since the last election. In contrast, party X has not only moved in the same direction as the mean voter but has done so also to the very same extent. According to the concept and operationalization of dynamic representation, it would therefore be regarded as perfectly responsive, irrespective of the high distance between the party and its mean voter position.

Of course, the example presented in Figure 1 – while supported by our data – is a ‘worst-case scenario’. In the long run, parties that are not responsive to changing preferences of their voters cannot match these voters’ preferences on election-day. Therefore, our intention is not to criticize the theoretical relevance of the concept of dynamic representation *per se* but to raise attention to the incomparability of the empirical findings of studies referring to different concepts of representation.

Aware of this, we will conduct our analysis for both concepts separately. For dynamic representation we will follow the commonly used operationalization and model representation as presented above (dynamic). For cross-sectional representation, we will follow the advice of Golder and Stramski (2010) and apply a relative measure of party and voter distance (cross-sectional_3). As we are interested in the ability of parties to produce congruence between them and their voters, we think that this is the most appropriate operationalization of cross-sectional representation.

5. Results

We start our analysis of the impact of candidate selection procedures on the representativeness of parties by applying the concept of cross-sectional representation. For this we have run three models (Table 2). Model 1 includes only variables related to the dimension of centralization. In line with the theoretical arguments and empirical findings of Dalton (1985), we have decided to use locally nominated candidates as the reference category and expect these as being the least representative group. In contrast to our theoretical expectations stated in hypotheses 1 and 2, we find no evidence for an impact of the centralization dimension of candidate selection. In terms of ideological congruence at one point in time, parties with candidates nominated on the regional or national level are neither more nor less representative than parties with locally nominated candidates. Our findings do therefore not support Dalton, who finds that parties with nationally centralized candidate selection are more representative than less centralized parties.

Model 2 tests for the impact of the inclusion dimension. Following the theoretical arguments based on ‘May’s Law’, we have used candidates nominated by delegates as the reference category and expect these as being the least representative group. Furthermore, we expect candidates nominated by members as being the most representative group, while

parties with candidates nominated by committees should lie somewhere between delegates and members. The results do only partially support our hypotheses. The most inclusive parties with regard to candidate selection do not show higher levels of party-voter congruence than those in which delegates decide over the nomination. However, committees – or in May’s words ‘party leaders’ – are slightly closer located to their mean voters and do therefore show a higher degree of cross-sectional representation. The assumed office-motivation of party leaders might therefore lead to better voter representation, which is again in line with the arguments developed by Dalton. However, it is not the territorial unit of candidate selection that matters but the inclusiveness – or in this case exclusiveness – of the selectorate.

Finally, model 3 accounts for the combined effect of the centralization and inclusion of candidates. In line with our theoretical expectations, we have used the combination of local delegates as the reference category. Three findings stand out. First and regardless of the territorial unit of candidate selection, parties in which candidates are nominated by committees are always more representative than the reference category. Second and also independent of the centralization dimension, parties with candidates nominated by members never show higher levels of representation than the combination local and delegates. Third, with regard to the group of party delegates these turn out to be more representative the more centralized the level of candidate selection. This result confirms our approach to measure candidate selection on two independent dimensions and lets us to conclude that the interplay between the centralization and inclusion of candidate selection does influence the degree of cross-sectional representation.

Table 2: Results for cross-sectional representation

	Model 1 (cross-sectional3)	Model 2 (cross-sectional3)	Model 3 (cross-sectional3)
<i>Coefficient (rob. std. err.)</i>			
Centralization			
<i>Reference: Local</i>			
Regional	-.027 (.027)		
National	-.017 (.028)		
Inclusion			
<i>Reference: Delegates</i>			
Members		.034 (.027)	
Committees		-.058* (.024)	
Centralization & Inclusion			
<i>Reference: Local & Delegates</i>			
Local & Members			-.016 (.033)
Local & Committees			-.134** (.030)
Regional & Members			.052 (.066)
Regional & Delegates			-.093* (.031)
Regional & Committees			-.116* (.045)
National & Members			-.119 (.057)
National & Delegates			-.181** (.029)
National & Committees			-.061* (.028)
Constant	.574** (.021)	.579** (.019)	.631** (.029)
R ²	0.004	0.041	0.085
F-Value	0.50	4.61*	2.92**
N	260	260	260

Notes: *p < .10, **p < .05, ***p < .01, two-tailed tests. Clustered standard errors (year) are in parentheses. The dependent variable is the distance between a party and its voters relative to the dispersion of these voters' preferences.

Our results with regard to dynamic representation are reported in Table 3. Note that the reduced number of observations compared to cross-sectional representation is caused by the need to measure positional shifts of parties rather than parties' positions.

As mentioned in the foregoing section, the common operationalization of dynamic representation models representation as the regression coefficient between the mean-centered position of a party's mean-voter position (LRvoter) and the dependent variable (party's position). This operationalization makes it necessary to include every additional independent variable as an interaction effect between itself and LRvoter. Therefore, the main effects of the variables related to centralization, inclusion or a combination of both are theoretically meaningless. For example, the significant and positive effect of candidates nominated on the national level (model 1) indicates that these parties show higher values of the dependent variable than parties with locally nominated candidates if all other independent variables take the value of 0. As the dependent variable is the party's left-right position, this means that parties with nationally nominated candidates are located 0.3 points more to the right of the 0-10 left-right scale (if LRvoter is at its mean). While this is an interesting finding in itself, it does not tell us anything about the degree of dynamic representation achieved by these parties. Applying the concept of dynamic representation, only the interaction effects in Table 3 are meaningfully interpretable.

Table 3: Results for dynamic representation

	Model 1 (dynamic)	Model 2 (dynamic)	Model 3 (dynamic)	Model 4 (dynamic)
<i>Coefficient (rob. std. err.)</i>				
LRvoter	-.050 (.082)	.109 (.179)	.008 (.177)	-.013 (.048)
Centralization				
<i>Reference: Local</i>				
Regional	.140 (.069)			
National	.300* (.130)			
Inclusion				
<i>Reference: Delegates</i>				
Members		-.119 (.078)		
Committees		-.029 (.094)		
Centralization & Inclusion				
<i>Reference: Local & Delegates</i>				
Local & Members			-.089 (.086)	
Local & Committees			-.026 (.099)	
Regional & Members			-.118 (.361)	
Regional & Delegates			.135 (.128)	
Regional & Committees			.105 (.192)	
National & Members			.398 (.189)	
National & Delegates			.469** (.078)	
National & Committees			.206 (.205)	
Interaction Effects				
Regional*LRvoter	.071 (.122)			
National*LRvoter	-.103 (.329)			
Members*LRvoter		-.210 (.174)		
Committees*LRvoter		-.109 (.224)		
Local & Members*LRvoter			-.127 (.175)	

Local & Delegates*LRvoter			-	
Local & Committees*LRvoter			-.028 (.239)	
Regional & Members*LRvoter			-.269 (.525)	
Regional & Delegates*LRvoter			.253 (.158)	
Regional & Committees*LRvoter			-.139 (.247)	
National & Members*LRvoter			.039 (.408)	
National & Delegates*LRvoter			(dropped)	
National & Committees*LRvoter			-.133 (.585)	
Constant	-.049 (.032)	.073 (.047)	-.008 (.076)	.037 (.021)
R ²	0.050	0.015	0.077	0.000
F-Value	1.21	0.99	1.14	0.09
N	208	208	208	527

Notes: *p < .10, **p < .05, ***p < .01, two-tailed tests. Clustered standard errors (year) are in parentheses. The dependent variable is the change in a party's left-right policy position.

These interaction effects are throughout insignificant and do therefore not support our hypotheses. Having in mind the low (and positive) correlations between the operationalization of dynamic representation and the different operationalizations of cross-sectional representation, this comes at little surprise.

In order to explain the wholly insignificant results for dynamic representation we have also regressed the change in a party's mean voter position (LRvoter) on the change in the position of the respective party (LRparty) without any additional independent variables and for the complete sample of 98 parties in the period from 1970 to 2002 (see Table 1, appendix).

The results are presented in Model 4. Not only is the coefficient insignificant, it is also negative. Thus, shifts in the positions of parties' mean voters are completely unrelated to shifts in party positions, a finding that contradicts recent studies applying the concept of

dynamic representation (Adams and Somer-Topcu 2009; Adams et al. 2004; Ezrow 2007; Ezrow and Adams 2009; Ezrow et al. 2010).

Conclusion

In this article we have analysed the impact of intra-party procedures of candidate selection on the representativeness of parties towards their voters. With regard to candidate selection we have distinguished between two dimensions: inclusion (members, delegates or committees) and centralization (local, regional or national). We have discussed and applied our analysis for two frequently used concepts of representation: cross-sectional (measured as the ideological congruence between voters and parties at one point in time) and dynamic representation (measured as the relationship in shifts of voters' and parties' positions over time).

Our empirical analysis for 53 parties in the period of 1970 to 1990 reveals that it is the inclusion dimension which is relevant for the degree of representativeness of parties. The less inclusive the selectorate of candidates, the better a party represents its mean voter with regard to cross-sectional representation. While this effect is rather limited, we theorize that an increased office-motivation of party elites compared to lower party strata in the end leads to better representation. Since the 1960s, many Western European parties have reformed their procedures of candidate selection (Bille 2001; LeDuc 2001; Rahat and Hazan 2001; Tan 1997). In many cases, these reforms resulted in moderate efforts to more inclusive nomination procedures (Pennings and Hazan 2001). It is not without a certain irony that these reforms aiming at more democratization of intra-party politics might in the end have made parties less responsive to the political demands of their voters.

In contrast to cross-sectional representation, we find no influence of candidate selection procedures on the degree of dynamic representation. However, our analysis of the relationship between the two concepts shows that both concepts are not only very weakly

correlated but are also contradictory. Parties that are responsive to changing preferences of their voters over time do represent their voters less well on election-day. While this finding is logically puzzling, we think it is due to the way dynamic representation is operationalized, measuring the change in parties' and voters' positions between two consecutive elections. Parties might adjust their positions over a shorter or longer period of time, depending e.g. on their government participation or external pressures. Therefore, and while we acknowledge and support recent efforts to complement existing representation concepts by a time perspective, we question the dominant operationalization of dynamic representation. We conclude that the results of studies referring to either cross-sectional or dynamic representation are not comparable and suggest that scholars pay more attention to this.

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Appendix

Table 1, appendix: List of parties and modes for inclusion and centralization

Country	Year and interelection periods	Party name (Abbr.)	Inclusion (Mode, 1970-1990)	Centralization (Mode, 1970-1990)
Austria	1995-1999; 1999-2002	Austrian People's Party (ÖVP)	-	-
		Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ)	-	-
		Green Party (former Green Alternative) (GRÜNE)	-	-
		Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ)	-	-
Belgium	1977-1978; 1978-1981; 1981-1985; 1985-1987; 1987-1991; 1991-1995; 1995-1999	Christian People's Party (CVP)	1	1
		Christian Social Party (PSC)	1	1
		Flemish Bloc (VB)	-	-
		Flemish Socialist Party (SP)	-	-
		Flemish Liberals and Democrats (former Party of Liberty and Progress) (VLD)	3	3
		Francophone Liberals (PRL)	-	-
		Francophone Socialist Party (PS)	-	-
		Live Differently -Flemish-speaking Ecologists (AGALEV)	-	-
		Peoples' Union (former Flemish Christian Peoples' Union) (VU)	3	1
		Denmark	1973-1975; 1975-1977; 1977-1979; 1979-1981; 1981-1984; 1984-1987; 1987-1988; 1988-1990; 1990-1994; 1994-1996; 1996-2001	Centre Democrats (CD)
Christian People's Party (KrF)	1			1
Conservative People's Party (KF)	1			1
Danish Communist Party (DKP)	-			-
Justice Party (RF)	-			-
Left Socialist Party (VS)	-			-
Liberals (V)	3			2
Progress Party (FP)	-			-
Radical Party (RV)	1			1
Socialist People's Party (SF)	1			1
Social Democratic Party (SD)	2	1		
France	1973-1978; 1978-1981; 1981-1986; 1986-1988;	Gaullists (includes: UNR, UDT, RPR)	-	-
		French Communist Party (PCF)	-	-

	1988-1993; 1993-1997;	Parti Socialiste, Socialist Part (PS)	-	-
	1997-2002	National Front (FN)	-	-
Germany	1976-1980; 1980-1983;	Alliance'90/The Greens (GRÜNE)	2	2
	1983-1987; 1987-1990;	Christian Democratic Union/	2	2
	1990-1994; 1994-1998;	Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU)		
	1998-2002	Free Democratic Party (FDP)	2	2
		Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS)	2	2
		Social Democratic Party (SPD)	2	2
Greece	1981-1985; 1985-1989;	Communist Party of Greece (KKE)	-	-
	1990-1993; 1993-1996;	New Democracy (ND)	-	-
	1996-2000	Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK)	-	-
Ireland	1973-1977; 1977-1981;	Fianna Fáil (FF)	2	1
	1981-1982; 1987-1989;	Fine Gael (FG)	2	1
	1989-1992; 1992-1997;	Green Party (GP)	1	1
	1997-2002	Labour Party (LAB)	2	1
		Progressive Democrats (PD)	2	1
Italy	1976-1979; 1979-1983;	Communist Party (PCI)	3	3
	1983-1987; 1987-1992;	Go Italy (FI)	-	-
	1992-1994; 1994-1996;	Italian Democratic Socialist Party (PSDI)	3	3
	1996-2001	Italian Popular Party (PPI)	3	1
		Italian Social Movement (MSI)	-	-
		Liberal Party (PLI)	3	2
		Radical Party (R)	3	2
		Republican Party (PRI)	3	2
		Socialist Party (PSI)	3	3
Luxembourg	1979-1984; 1984-1989;	Christian Social People's Party (CSV)	-	-
	1989-1994; 1994-1999	Communist Party (KPL)	-	-
		Democratic Party(former Democratic Group) (DP)	-	-

		Socialist Workers' Party (LSAP)	-	-
Netherlands	1971-1972; 1972-1977; 1977-1981; 1981-1982; 1982-1986; 1986-1989; 1989-1994; 1994-1998	Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP)	3	3
		Catholic People's Party (KVP)	3	3
		Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA)	3	1
		Christian Historical Union (CHU)	3	2
		Democrats'66 (D66)	1	3
		Green Left (GL)	1	1
		Labour Party (PvdA)	2	2
		People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD)	3	3
		Radical Political Party (PPR)	2	3
		Socialist Party (SP)	-	-
Norway	1973-1977; 1977-1981; 1985-1989; 1989-1993; 1993-1997	Centre Party (former Farmers' Party) (SP)	3	1
		Christian People's Party (KRF)	3	1
		Conservative Party (H)	3	1
		Liberal Party (V)	3	1
		Norwegian Labour Party (DNA)	3	1
		Progress Party (former Anders Lange's Party) (FRP)	3	1
		Socialist Left Party (former Socialist People's Party) (SV)	3	1
Portugal	1985-1987; 1987-1991; 1995-1999	Centre Social Democrats (CDS-PP)	-	-
		Popular Democratic Party (PSD)	-	-
		Portuguese Socialist Party (PS)	-	-
Spain	1986-1989; 1989-1993; 1993-1996; 1996-2000	Basque Nationalist Party (EAJ-PNV)	-	-
		Centre Democrats (CDS)	-	-
		Convergence and Union (CiU)	-	-
		Popular Party (former Popular Alliance (PP)	-	-
		Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE)	-	-

		United Left (former Communist Party) (IU)	-	-
Sweden	1973-1976; 1976-1979; 1979-1982; 1982-1985; 1985-1988; 1988-1991; 1991-1994; 1994-1998	Centre Party (former Agrarian Party) (CP)	2	2
		Christian Democratic Community Party (KdS)	-	-
		Left Party (former Left Communist Party) (Vp)	2	1
		Green Ecology Party (MP)	3	2
		Moderate Coalition Party (former Right Party) (M)	3	3
		Liberal People's Party (former People's Party) (FP)	2	2
		Social Democratic Labour Party (SdaP)	2	2
Switzerland	1971-1975; 1975-1979; 1987-1991; 1991-1995; 1995-1999; 1999-2003	Christian Democratic People's Party (former Conservative Peoples's Party) (CVP)	-	-
		Farmers', Traders' and Citizens' Party (BGB)	-	-
		Independents' Alliance (LdU)	-	-
		Liberal Party of Switzerland (LPS)	-	-
		Protestant People's Party (EVP)	-	-
		Radical Democratic Party (FDP)	-	-
		Social Democratic Party (SP)	-	-
United Kingdom	1979-1983; 1983-1987; 1987-1992; 1992-1997; 1997-2001; 2001-2005	Labour Party (LAB)	3	1
		Liberal Party (LDP)	1	1
		Conservative Party (CON)	3	1
		Scottish National Party (SNP)	-	-