

One, Two, Three: Dimensionality of political spaces in multinational European democracies

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Abstract

In multinational European democracies a salient ethnonational dimension exists alongside the economic and cultural dimensions that together may or may not constitute the left-right axis of party competition. This article develops theoretical scenarios for the linkage between these three dimensions from a supply-side perspective of political competition and tests empirically in which of Europe's multinational democracies they hold. The empirical analysis draws on EPAC, an expert-survey based data set that measures political parties' positions on the three dimensions in 21 countries in 2011. Results show that where all three dimensions are linked, the ethnonational dimension stands in a quadratic relationship to the left-right axis. This applies in Belgium, France, and Italy where nationalists are right-wing, and in Bulgaria, Kosovo, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia, where nationalism is consistently linked to left-wing positioning. The political space appears to be more fragmented in the remaining ten democracies, where only two of the three dimensions are associated with each other. Our results thereby highlight the limitation of the use of a single left-right axis for the characterization of the political space in these countries.

Keywords

Multinational democracies, Ethnonational dimension, Nationalism, Party positions, Left-right axis

1. Introduction

The characterization of political actors' policy positions on a left-right continuum is widely used in everyday political discourse and in political science. Using a left-right continuum can be a simple and effective way to classify actors' ideological and policy stances, and one-dimensional conceptualisations of the political space have been used e.g. in research on coalition formation (Laver and Schofield, 1990), campaign strategies (Budge, 1994), voter-party congruence (Powell, 2000) and extremist parties (Adams *et al*, 2006).¹

However, many European democracies are multinational countries that incorporate several groups that conceive of themselves as nations on the basis of a traditional homeland territory (cf. Kymlicka, 1998: 113-119). During the 1990s, the re-territorialisation of politics in Western Europe on the one hand (e.g. Keating, 1998; Jeffery, 1997) and the break-up and democratisation of multinational states in Central and Eastern Europe on the other hand brought the importance of national *identity* and *territory* in party competition back onto the agenda. In Western Europe, ethnoregionalist parties have been pushing for devolutionary reforms, forcing electorally vulnerable mainstream parties to respond (Meguid, 2009; Sorens, 2009; Spina, 2013). In Eastern Europe, parties demanding cultural and territorial autonomy for national minorities entered the newly developing multi-party systems right from the beginning (Bernauer and Bochsler, 2011; Bugajski, 1995; Moser, 2005). In countries such as Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovakia, or Spain parties therefore do not only compete over policy solutions to societal problems, but also over whether the allocation of authority to solve these problems should be located at the central or the regional level, and over the very definition of national identity and the boundaries of the state. This is reflected in a salient *ethnonational* (author, 2012) or *territorial* (Alonso, 2012) dimension of party competition. On this dimension majority nationalist parties seeking to

dominate the state and assimilate all minorities at one end of the spectrum confront peripheral minority nationalists striving to establish their own nation state through secession at the other end. The ethnonational or territorial dimension may or may not present an independent dimension from the left-right axis of party competition, but where it does, comparative cross-national research using only left-right measures will yield an insufficient understanding of political actors' policy positions and their behaviour.

This article therefore sets out to analyze the dimensionality of political spaces in European multinational democracies to lay the basis for sound comparative cross-national research. Assuming that the political space in multinational countries can be described based on an economic, a cultural and an ethnonational dimension, it addresses the following question: Is the ethnonational dimension systematically linked to the cultural and the economic dimensions, and if so, how?

To answer this question, we develop theoretical scenarios for the linkage between these three dimensions and test empirically in which of Europe's multinational democracies they hold. The analysis draws on EPAC, our own expert-survey on Ethnonationalism in Party Competition that measures political parties' positions *on*, and the salience *of* an ethnonational, an economic, and a cultural dimension of party competition in 21 multinational democracies in 2011 (author, 2012). Besides providing valid and reliable measures of party positions on all three dimensions, the EPAC dataset has the additional advantage of including not only the multinational post-communist member states of the European Union but also Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Moldova, and Ukraine. These cases have so far often been neglected by cross-national efforts to collect data on party positions.

The empirical analysis first compares the saliency of the ethnonational dimension to the saliency

of the economic dimension of party competition in order to establish whether ethnonational issues play a relevant role in party competition in the selected countries. In addition, we explore the polarization of parties' positions to evaluate the intensity of party competition on the three dimensions. We then proceed to graphically plot and analyze pairwise correlations between dimensions by region (comparing Eastern and Western Europe) and at the level of individual countries.² Our results show that the ethnonational dimension adds complexity to the structure of party competition in many cases, since all *three* dimensions are systematically linked to each other in only eleven out of 21 countries. Where all three dimensions are systematically linked, the ethnonational dimension stands in a quadratic relationship to the left-right axis. This applies in Belgium, France, and Italy, where nationalists are right-wing, and in Bulgaria, Kosovo, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia, where nationalism is consistently linked to left-wing positioning. The political space appears to be more fragmented in the remaining 10 democracies where only two of the three dimensions on which parties compete are associated with each other. Looking at linkages between pairs of dimensions, our findings show that the ethnonational dimension is consistently linked in a quadratic way to the economic dimension in 15 out of 21 countries and to the cultural dimension in all countries but Spain.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 introduces theoretical scenarios for linkages between the ethnonational, the cultural and the economic dimensions of party competition. Section 3 discusses our measurements of party positions and Section 4 presents the empirical analysis of dimensionality. Section 5 concludes and points to avenues for future comparative studies of party competition in multinational democracies.

2. The dimensionality of the political space in multi-national democracies

The literature on voting behaviour and party competition has debated the dimensionality of the political space in contemporary democracies for some time. An important focus of the discussion has been whether a single left-right axis is sufficient to describe the structure of the political space. Whereas some maintain that a single left-right axis adequately summarizes parties' and voters' positions for research on such diverse topics as coalition formation (Laver and Schofield, 1990), campaign strategies (Budge, 1994), voter-party congruence (Powell, 2000) and extremist parties (Adams *et al*, 2006), others have argued that Western European political spaces are constituted by two independent dimensions – an economic and a cultural value dimension (e.g. Kitschelt and Rehm, 2006; Kriesi *et al*, 2006; Marks *et al*, 2006). The latter, two-dimensional conceptualization of the political space stands in the tradition of Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) seminal work who understand the structure of party systems as an outcome of historical social conflicts. According to Kriesi *et al* (2006: 923), the set of four classic cleavages that have historically structured the political space – the centre/periphery, religious, rural/urban and owner/worker cleavages – “essentially came to boil down to two: a cultural (religion) and a social-economic one (class)” in Western Europe. Marks *et al* (2006) equally conceptualize the space as two-dimensional and define the dimensions in the following way: The *economic* dimension refers to struggle over the question to which extent the state shall be involved in managing the economy. Parties on the economic left emphasize a large role for the state in managing the economy and in providing for economic equality, while on the economic right, parties prioritize a lean state and individual economic freedom. The *cultural* dimension summarizes several non-economic issues such as ecological, lifestyle and communal issues and is therefore more diverse than the economic dimension of party competition (Marks *et al*, 2006:

156-157). Parties at one end of this dimension emphasize environmental protection, individualism and libertarian values while on the other end they prioritize traditional, authoritarian, and nationalist values. Marks *et al* (2006) therefore label the end-points of this axis as “gal” and “tan” where “gal” stands for green, alternative, libertarian, and “tan” for traditional, authoritarian, and nationalist.

This two-dimensional conceptualization does not imply that these dimensions will empirically be independent from each other across all cases or that two dimensions will always be sufficient.³ What is important from the perspective of cross-national research, however, is that even if the dimensions are empirically linked to such an extent that we can reasonably speak of a single left-right axis of party competition, the linkage will be different in post-communist democracies. Following Kitschelt (1992) the main left-right axis of party competition reflects the conflict between defenders and opponents of existing property rights and modes of distribution. Defenders of the status quo are aiming to limit political participation and stress traditional and authoritarian values. Therefore, in Western Europe, where the status quo is capitalism, “economically rightist” parties favor authoritarian values on the cultural dimension, whereas “economically leftist” parties advocate libertarian values. To the contrary, in post-communist Europe where the status quo was communism, “economically rightist” parties advocate libertarian values and “economically leftist” parties defend authoritarian values. Empirical studies subsequently confirmed Kitschelt’s hypothesis (Marks *et al*, 2006; Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012; Vachudova and Hooghe, 2009). They all show that the two constitutive dimensions of political competition in post-communist and Western Europe are aligned differently. As a consequence, the correlation of parties' stances on the economic and the cultural dimension results in a left-right axis with a reversed slope in post-communist democracies

(Marks *et al*, 2006; Rovny and Edwards, 2012).⁴ Comparative research covering both post-communist and Western European cases therefore needs to analyze party positions on the cultural and the economic dimensions, rather than on an aggregate left-right axis.

In formulating scenarios for the linkage between the cultural and the economic dimension, we therefore postulate first that these dimensions can be reduced to a single left-right axis of party competition, but that this reduction is based on a positive correlation between the two dimensions in Western Europe, and a negative correlation in post-communist countries (see table 1 for an overview of all dimensional scenarios). However, taking into account that previous research has shown that this linkage may or may not hold for both Western and post-communist cases, we additionally formulate an alternative scenario that posits the independence of these two dimensions from each other (cf. Table 1).

**** Table 1 ****

In multinational states, however, where several groups conceive of themselves as *nations* on the basis of a traditional homeland *territory* (Kymlicka, 1998: 113-119), the four historical cleavages have not “boiled down” to just two dimensions. The centre-periphery cleavage never ceased to play a role and continues to present a salient *territorial* (Alonso, 2012) or *ethnonational* (author, 2012) dimension of competition that exists alongside the economic and cultural dimensions. This dimension is constituted by parties’ positions on the status of territorially based national groups *within* the state (and, sometimes, demanding their separation *from* the state). It confronts majority nationalists seeking to dominate the state and assimilate all minorities at one end of the spectrum with peripheral minority nationalists that seek to establish their own nation state

through secession at the other extreme (author, 2012: 3). As a consequence of this additional dimension, political parties in multinational states have to navigate in a political space that may have up to three dimensions. Yet, the literature has only marginally dealt with the structure of political space in multinational countries. Therefore, it is an open question whether two independent dimensions or a single left-right axis is sufficient for the characterization of party positions in these contexts. Following the conceptualization of the cultural dimension as a *gal-tan* dimension (Marks *et al* 2006), nationalism (together with authoritarian and conservative values) stands in contrast to green, alternative and libertarian values. Both majority and minority nationalists, i.e. parties with extreme positions on the ethnonational dimension, should therefore favor authoritarian, traditional values and oppose green, alternative and libertarian ones. Therefore, the ethnonational dimension can be expected to stand in a *quadratic* relationship with the cultural dimension (cf. Table 1).

However, the literature on minority nationalism has pointed out that there is no contradiction in combining minority nationalism with progressive, liberal values and an inclusive, civic, rather than an exclusive, ethnic, conception of the community (Keating and McGarry, 2001: 6; Kymlicka, 2001). The *Scottish National Party* (Scotland, UK) and the Republican Left of Catalonia (*Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya*, Catalonia, Spain), for example, construct “their” sub-state nations in an inclusive way, seeking to attract immigrant newcomers and justifying their nation-building projects with reference to a sub-state nation that is more inclusive, democratic and progressive than the majority nation (Franco-Guillén, 2013). Furthermore, the Galician Nationalist Bloc (*Bloque Nacionalista Galego*, Galicia, Spain) and *Plaid Cymru* (Wales, UK) combine their respective sub-state nationalism with ecologist “new politics” platforms, thereby approximating the profile of green parties on the cultural dimension (Elias, 2009; van

Atta, 2003). These findings imply that the ethnonational dimension of competition should not be expected to be systematically linked to the cultural dimension, since nationalist parties can position *either* on the progressive, libertarian *or* on the conservative, authoritarian end of the cultural dimension. Contrasting the scenario of a quadratic relationship between the cultural and the ethnonational dimension, we therefore formulate an alternative scenario that postulates the independence of the two dimensions (cf. Table 1).

Two different scenarios are also plausible in case of the linkage between the ethnonational and the *economic* dimensions. The first one follows logically from the previous considerations: If (a) the cultural and the economic dimension are linked differently in Western and post-communist countries, and (b) the ethnonational dimension is indeed linked in a quadratic way to the cultural dimension, then parties with strongly nationalist positions can be expected to have “leftist economic” positions in post-communist countries and “rightist economic” positions in Western Europe. This would imply a quadratic relationship between the economic and the ethnonational dimension. However, if there is no systematic linkage between the ethnonational and the cultural dimension (the scenario of independence), then independence should also be expected for the relationship between the ethnonational and the economic dimension.

The second expectation of independence of the ethnonational from the economic dimension is further strengthened by the literature on minority nationalist parties in Western Europe. The heterogeneous positions these parties adopt on the left-right dimension have been observed by several authors (De Winter and Türsan, 1998; Gómez-Reino, 2008; Massetti, 2009; Tronconi, 2006). Hepburn (2009: 484) explains this with the status of the group the minority nationalist party seeks to represent. Parties representing economically disadvantaged ethnic groups or regions are prone to favor political regulation of the market, while parties that represent

economically advantaged ethnic groups or regions can be expected to be opposed to government interventions. Erk's (2005) analysis of Belgium adds to this the importance of historical alliances between sub-state nationalism and ideology. Whereas Flemish nationalism found its allies in Catholic trade unions, Walloon nationalism was closely linked to social democratic values. These arguments indicate that a nationalist position in itself does not imply a specific position on the economic dimension, but that the relationship between the two dimensions will be contingent on the context.

3. Data and Measurement

The empirical analysis in this paper draws on the data set on Ethnonationalism in Party Competition (EPAC) that was collected by the authors who surveyed experts between June and November 2011.⁵ Previously, the analysis of the dimensionality of political space in multinational democracies was impeded by the absence of comparative data on party positions on the ethnonational dimension. Scholars have either measured parties' stances on the single issue of decentralization (Benoit and Laver, 2006), or have subsumed nationalism under one end of the cultural, or gal-tan dimension, namely the traditional, authoritarian, nationalist (tan) end (Marks *et al*, 2006). The first method is too simplistic if the goal is to understand party competition in multinational democracies where political conflict is not over the single issue of decentralization, but over the link sought (or denied) between decentralization and nation-building. The dimension therefore has a genuine *identity*, or, as Alonso puts it, a “cultural” component (Alonso, 2012: 63) and the opposing poles are not centralization versus decentralization, but majority nationalism versus separatist minority nationalism. The second method correlates nationalism with social conservatism and authoritarianism by design, thereby

preventing an empirical exploration of the more flexible relationship between nationalism and socio-cultural values exposed above.⁶ Whereas recently, considerable progress has been made in improving the measurement of party positions by explicitly conceptualizing a territorial dimension (Alonso, 2012) and measuring Western European parties' positions on this dimension on the basis of national manifestos (Alonso, 2012) regional manifestos (Alonso, Gómez and Cabeza, 2013) or through desk research and re-analysis of case studies (Massetti, 2009), no data source has so far covered all European multinational democracies.

By contrast, the EPAC survey systematically covers all European democracies where ethnonational identities are politically mobilized and where at least some parties advocate self-determination for national minority groups on the basis of a traditional homeland territory. Whether ethnonational identities are politically mobilized was initially established on the basis of country reports provided by the Ethnic Power Relations dataset project (EPR-ETH) (Cederman *et al*, 2009, 2010). For the analysis presented in this article, we then included all parties that had gained at least 5 percent of the national vote-share and majority and minority nationalist parties if they had gained at least one seat in their national parliament in the most recent parliamentary elections (as of June 2011). Between four and ten experts per country provided estimates of party positions. The reliability and internal validity of these estimates were confirmed by the author (2012) who followed procedures suggested by Benoit and Laver (2006), Steenbergen and Marks (2007) and Curini (2010). External validity was established for Spanish parties by Alonso, Gómez and Cabeza (2013: 206–8) and for regionalist parties in Western Europe by Massetti and Schakel (2013). Unlike many previous datasets on party positions, the EPAC data set does not limit its coverage to European Union member states, but covers also the party systems of a range of former communist multinational countries for which data on party positions has so far not

been available. In total, the analysis covers 121 political parties in 15 Eastern European democracies and 40 political parties in six Western European countries (cf. Table 2).⁷

**** Table 2 ****

Previous research has shown that party positions can be measured validly on an economic and a cultural dimension of competition applying the questions of the Chapel Hill expert survey across Eastern and Western Europe (Hooghe *et al.*, 2010). We therefore applied two survey items from the Chapel Hill survey to measure party positions on these dimensions:

Economic dimension

Survey item: Parties can be classified in terms of their stance on economic issues. Parties at one end of the spectrum want government to play an active role in the economy. Parties at the other end of the spectrum emphasize a reduced economic role for government: privatization, lower taxes, less regulation, less government spending, and a leaner welfare state.⁸

Poles: State interventionism // Free market, lean state

Libertarian/authoritarian dimension

Survey item: Parties can be classified in terms of their views on democratic freedoms and rights. “Libertarian” or “post-materialist” parties favor expanded personal freedoms, for example, access to abortion, active euthanasia, same-sex marriage, or greater democratic participation. “Traditional” or “authoritarian” parties often reject these ideas; they value order, tradition, and stability, and believe that the government should be a firm moral authority on social and cultural issues.⁹

Poles: Libertarian, Post-materialist // Traditional, Authoritarian

With regard to the ethnonational dimension of competition, the EPAC survey relied on its own

conceptualization of ethnonationalism that followed Gellner's (1994: 35) definition of nationalism as an ideology that aims at congruence between the boundaries of the ethnic group and the political unit. Experts were asked to judge parties' stances on an ethnonational dimension, juxtaposing majority and minority nationalists at the extreme poles, using the following item:

Ethnonationalism

Survey item: In multinational states, parties may have different positions on the status of ethno-national groups and the nature of the state. At one end of the spectrum (0), majority nationalists seek hegemony within the current state they define as their nation-state. At the other end of the spectrum (10), minority nationalists seek to become the hegemonic majority in a new nation-state. Moderate parties of the middle ground (5) seek a common state, in which no single ethno-national group dominates over another.

Poles: Majority Nationalism/Minority Nationalism.

Additionally, we measured the *salience* of each dimension by asking experts to state how important each dimension is for each party on a scale ranging from 0 (not important at all) to 10 (extremely important). The following analyses draw on the EPAC summary data that contains mean party positions across those experts that judged the same party on the same scale.

4. Empirical analysis

To lay the basis for the analysis of the linkages between the dimensions, we first analyse whether the ethnonational dimension is indeed salient in the multinational countries we selected. We then examine to which extent party competition is polarized on the ethnonational, the economic and the cultural dimensions. Next, we explore whether the economic and the cultural dimension

retain their specific post-communist and Western European “left-right” linkage when a third, ethnonational dimension is added to the picture. Finally, we turn to analyse whether and if so, how, the ethnonational dimension is linked to the cultural and the economic dimensions of competition. For each pair of dimensions, we first analyse graphically whether and if so, how, the dimensions are linked within each region before proceeding to correlational analysis at the level of individual countries.

Figure 1 displays values for the salience of the economic and the ethnonational dimension by country with the scale ranging from 0 (not important at all) to 10 (extremely important). The salience of the cultural dimension cannot be included into this analysis because previous reliability tests of the EPAC data showed that the ratings of the experts did not converge sufficiently when judging the importance of cultural issues for each party (author, 2012, Online appendix). Salience values were calculated taking the weighted mean importance of economic and ethnonational issues of all parties covered by the EPAC survey in any given country. The seat share received in the last state-wide parliamentary elections as of June 2011 was used as a weight.¹⁰ In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Serbia ethnonational issues present the most important issues of political competition and in two other Western Balkan countries, Macedonia and Montenegro, ethnonational issues are almost as important as economic issues. In all other countries, the economic dimension is more important than the ethnonational dimension of competition but in the majority of cases, ethnonational issues still have at least intermediate importance (i.e. the aggregate salience of ethnonational issues is larger than five). In Poland, the UK, and Italy ethnonational issues have just below intermediate salience whereas France appears to be the only country where ethnonational issues have close to no importance with an aggregate salience value of 1.2. While the EPR-ETH project mentions Basques and Corsicans as politically

relevant ethnonational groups in France, which led us to include France into the analysis of multinational democracies in Europe, ethnonational issues do not appear to be salient in party competition at the state level since the minority nationalist parties representing these groups are not represented in the French parliament.

*** Figure 1 ***

Figure 2 shows the polarization of party positions on the ethnonational, the economic and the cultural dimension of party competition. We measure polarization as the difference between the lowest and the highest party score on a given dimension. The figure shows that the ethnonational dimension is not only a salient, but also a strongly contested dimension of competition in the majority of multinational countries. The ethnonational dimension presents the most polarized dimension in party competition in the United Kingdom, Macedonia, Spain, Kosovo, Belgium, Italy, Romania, Lithuania and Estonia. In a second group of countries, consisting of Ukraine, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Latvia, party positions are most polarized on the economic dimension. Finally, the cultural dimension is the most polarized one in Finland, France, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and Poland.

*** Figure 2 ***

Are party positions on the economic, cultural and ethnonational dimensions of competition systematically linked to each other? Figure 3 plots parties' positions on the economic and the cultural dimension of party competition in Eastern and Western Europe with fitted regression

lines and 95% confidence intervals. As expected by the scenario of left-right reduction, parties in Western Europe on average link state-interventionist stances with cultural libertarianism, but free-market stances with cultural conservatism, while parties in Eastern Europe link pro-state-intervention stances with cultural conservatism, but pro-free-market stances with cultural libertarianism. This is confirmed by the positive correlation of party positions on the economic and the cultural dimension in Western Europe (Pearson's $r= 0.466$, $p=0.01$, $N=40$) and the negative correlation in Eastern Europe ($r= -0.383$, $p=0.01$, $N=119$).

*** Figure 3 ***

We will now turn to exploring correlations between the dimensions for individual countries with results displayed in Figure 4.¹¹ Out of the Eastern European countries, Romania ($r=-0.922$, $p=0.01$, $N=6$), Moldova ($r=-0.874$, n.s., $N=5$), and Slovakia ($r=-0.826$, $p=0.05$, $N=7$) most clearly display the classical expectation for post-communist party systems, i.e. a strong negative correlation between the two dimensions. In Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia, Croatia, and Lithuania (Pearson's correlation coefficients below 0.2, n.s.) the economic and cultural dimensions have to be considered independent from each other. By contrast, Spain displays the strongest positive correlation, indicating that the two dimensions could indeed be reduced to one without much loss of information ($r=0.976$, $p=0.01$, $N=8$). Among the Western European countries, only party competition in Finland ($r=-0.179$, n.s., $N=7$) corresponds to the scenario of independence.

*** Figure 4 ***

We will now turn to analysing the linkages between the ethnonational dimension and the cultural dimension. The first scenario on the linkage between the ethnonational and the cultural dimension postulated a quadratic relationship. Parties with more extreme positions on the ethnonational dimension (both extreme majority and extreme minority nationalists) are expected to be more authoritarian. Figure 5 presents parties' positions on the cultural and the ethnonational dimension of party competition in post-communist and Western Europe with fitted quadratic regression lines and 95% confidence intervals. The visual impression supports the scenario of a quadratic relationship. In addition, we regressed party positions on the cultural dimension on party positions on the ethnonational dimension and compared the fit of this model to a model where we additionally included squared party positions on the ethnonational dimension. Likelihood ratio tests showed the model with the quadratic term to be superior for both post-communist and Western European countries (see Appendix B).

*** Figure 5 ***

To assess the strength of the relationship between the ethnonational and the cultural dimension we transformed (in fact, 'folded') the original ethnonationalism variable (*ethno*) of the EPAC dataset in order to have non-nationalists on one side of the spectrum (0) and majority and minority nationalists together on the other side of the spectrum (5). Consequently, we can again employ linear correlation analyses.¹² The quadratic scenario expects that nationalism would be linked to the traditionalist, authoritarian end of the cultural dimension, whereas parties with non-nationalist stances would position themselves on the libertarian end of the spectrum. In accordance with the visual impression, the correlation between nationalism and

conservatism/authoritarianism is 0.61 ($p=0.01$, $N=121$) for Eastern European parties, and 0.494 ($p=0.01$, $N=40$) for Western European parties. Therefore, nationalism as such is correlated with the cultural dimension of competition, but since minority and majority nationalists are diametrically opposed to each other on the ethnonational dimension, the ethnonational dimension stands in a quadratic relationship to the cultural one and can thus not be reduced to the latter.

Looking again at correlations within individual countries (cf. Figure 6) reveals that some countries diverge from the overall pattern. The strongest linkage between nationalism (*ethnofold*) and the cultural dimension is given by the French case, where nationalism and authoritarianism are highly correlated ($r=0.999$, $p<0.05$, $N=3$). However, France is closely followed by Finland ($r=0.961$, $p=0.01$, $N=7$) and Belgium ($r=0.942$, $p=0.01$, $N=7$) and by Eastern European countries such as Bulgaria ($r=0.923$, $p=0.01$, $N=6$) and Romania ($r=0.916$, $p=0.05$, $N=6$). Spain ($r=-0.006$, $p=0.01$, $N=8$) is the only country where the two dimensions appear to be independent from each other, since we find both progressive and conservative nationalists. By contrast, Ukraine ($r=-0.781$, n.s., $N=4$) is the only country where the relationship between cultural values and nationalism appears to be reversed since the dimensions display a negative correlation. A closer investigation of this case shows, however, that the Ukraine is an outlier case where the relationship between the ethnonational and the cultural dimension is not quadratic, but linear; Ukrainian majority nationalists adopt more progressive positions on the cultural dimension than the Russian minority nationalists, who uphold conservative, traditional values.

*** Figure 6 ***

With regard to the relationship between the economic and the ethnonational dimension of

competition, we expected on the one hand that the linkage can be deduced from the linkage between a) the economic and the cultural and b) the cultural and the ethnonational dimension of competition, leading again to a *quadratic* scenario. On the other hand, the literature on ethnonational parties led us to expect an alternative scenario of *independence*, where there would be no clear pattern at the aggregate level since the combination of nationalism and left- or right-wing economic stances should depend on the status of the ethnonational group a given ethnonational party seeks to represent in politics, as well as historical contingencies. Figure 7 plots parties' positions on the economic and the ethnonational dimension of party competition in Eastern and Western Europe with fitted quadratic regression lines and 95% confidence intervals. The figure indicates the absence of a systematic relationship in Western Europe, but supports a quadratic association for the post-communist group of countries. As in the case of the relationship between the ethnonational and the cultural dimension, we confirmed this finding through a comparison of nested regression models, performing likelihood ratio tests (see Appendix C).

Turning again to correlational analysis using the variable *ethnofold* (measuring nationalism as such) reveals that the correlations between nationalism and the economic dimension are lower than in case of the other dimensional combinations. No clear pattern emerges with regard to the linkage between the economic and the ethnonational dimension in Western Europe ($r= 0.199$, n.s., $N=40$) which means that the scenario of *independence* receives confirmation for the Western part of the continent. However, a statistically significant negative association can be observed in Eastern Europe ($r=-0.331$, $p=0.01$, $N=119$). In post-communist Europe, parties appear to somewhat more consistently combine leftist economic stances with nationalism which indicates that all three dimensions are weakly linked to each other. In Eastern Europe, nationalist parties

appear to avoid liberal positions, be they liberal in terms of economics or in terms of societal values.

*** Figure 7 ***

However, upon closer investigation at the level of individual countries, we find patterns of variation within each region. Figure 8 shows that a strong *negative* correlation between nationalism (*ethnofold*) and parties' economic positions is only present in some post-communist countries. A “consistently post-communist” group where state-interventionist nationalists compete with market-liberal, non-nationalist parties consists of Kosovo, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Moldova, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). These countries display negative correlation coefficients between -0.303 (BiH) and -0.874 (Kosovo). By contrast, a moderately *positive* correlation, implying that parties link nationalist stances with advocacy of free markets and a lean state, can in fact be observed in the Ukraine ($r=0.674$, n.s., $N=4$), Estonia ($r=0.632$, n.s., $N=5$), Lithuania ($r=0.591$, n.s., $N=5$), and Macedonia ($r=0.42$, n.s., $N=7$). In Belgium ($r=0.578$, n.s., $N=7$), Italy ($r=0.650$, n.s., $N=7$), and France ($r=0.356$, n.s., $N=3$), we can also observe a moderately strong positive correlation. Finally, the two dimensions are independent ($r<0.2$) in Finland, Latvia, Croatia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Montenegro. Countries can therefore be divided into three groups. Nationalism is positively correlated with rightist economic stances in a first, geographically mixed group. In a second, Eastern European group nationalism is correlated with leftist economic stances. Finally, in a third, geographically mixed group nationalism and economic positions are not systematically associated.

*** Figure 8 ***

Table 3 summarizes our findings on the linkage of the three dimensions in European multinational countries. We take a moderately strong correlation between two dimensions of at least 0.3 as an indication that the two dimensions are systematically linked to each other upon classifying countries into the theoretical scenarios. The results show that all three dimensions are systematically associated with each other in Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Kosovo, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. However, in this group the post-communist countries – with the exception of the Ukraine – display a reversed left-right axis, while Belgium, France, Italy and the Ukraine display the Western European left-right axis. The ethnonational dimension stands in a quadratic relationship to the left-right axis in all of these cases, be it the post-communist or the Western European version of the left-right axis. Nationalists, no matter whether they are seeking to represent majority or minority groups, occupy conservative, traditionalist positions on the cultural dimension and state-interventionist positions on the economic dimension in the Eastern European countries, and free market positions on the economic dimension in the Western European countries.

*** Table 3 ***

5. Conclusion

This article has analysed the dimensional structure of the political space in multinational European democracies where a salient, and often highly polarised, ethnonational dimension of

competition exists alongside the economic and cultural dimensions. It has tested to what extent scenarios of dimensional linkage and independence, that were developed on the basis of arguments from the literature on party competition and territorial politics, adequately describe the empirically given structure of party competition spaces in 21 multinational European democracies.

The most important finding is that the economic, the cultural and the ethnonational dimension of party competition appear to be linked consistently only in eleven out of the 21 countries analysed, namely in Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Kosovo, Moldova Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and the Ukraine. In these countries, a single left-right axis is nonetheless not sufficient to capture the structure of the political space since the relationship between the ethnonational dimension and the left-right axis is quadratic. Even in those cases where minority and majority nationalists uphold equally conservative values and corresponding economic positions, they still diametrically oppose each other on the ethnonational dimension with the corresponding implications for their behaviour in competition. Where the dimensions are systematically linked, differences between Western and post-communist cases have to be taken into account: Nationalism tends to denote a leftist position in post-communist Europe, while carrying a rightist connotation in Western Europe. In the remaining ten cases, the structure of the political space is more fragmented as the dimensions appear to be at least partly independent from each other. Our findings therefore highlight the limitation of the use of a single left-right axis for the characterization of the political space in European multinational countries. On a more positive note, however, they also lay the basis for systematically selecting cases with a most similar or a most different structure of the political space for comparative small-N studies. For researchers working with large-N datasets, our findings provide guidance for deciding when

they need to look for indicators of parties' political stances that go beyond their location on a single left-right continuum. In addition, we show that there is no need to separate the analysis of Western from the analysis of post-communist multinational democracies as long as the different meaning of “left” and “right” is accounted for. This can be done by analysing party positions on individual dimensions, rather than on a left-right axis. The field of territorial party politics has so far focused almost exclusively on Western democracies. It can now fruitfully broaden its universe of cases and include the large group of multinational, post-communist democracies where parties representing territorially based national minorities demand territorial autonomy for minorities' homeland regions (author, 2012). Finally, this article has focused on the supply-side of party competition analysing the structure of the political space from the perspective of political parties. Future research should analyse to what extent voter perceptions of the political space in multinational democracies are also multi-dimensional.

Endnotes

¹ For an overview on, as well as an empirical critique of one-dimensional conceptualizations, see Albright (2010).

² We analyse dimensionality first by region since previous research has shown that “left” and “right” have a different meaning in post-communist party systems due to the fact that parties in post-communist European democracies combine economically liberal (i.e. “rightist”) with culturally libertarian (i.e. “leftist”) stances, and state interventionist economic (i.e. “leftist”) with value conservative, authoritarian (i.e. “rightist”) positions (Marks *et al*, 2006; Rovny and Edwards, 2012).

³ For example Stoll (2010) draws on data from the Comparative Manifesto Project to show that Western European political spaces were three-dimensional in the 1950s; two-dimensional between the 1960s and the 1980s; one-dimensional in the 1990s; and again two-dimensional in the early 2000s. By contrast, Bornschier (2010) and Kriesi *et al* (2006, 2008, 2012) argue and show on the basis of content analysis of newspapers during electoral campaigns that the political space became two-dimensional in Western Europe during the 1990ies.

⁴ However, Rovny and Edwards (2012) and Bakker *et al* (2012) show that this does not hold to the same extent for all post-communist democracies.

⁵ The dataset is available for download from the authors' website.

⁶ A further problem with the gal/tan dimension is that its operationalization in form of the concrete question used in the expert survey does not correspond to the gal/tan concepts. The question-wording refers to the divide between libertarian and authoritarian values, but does neither mention traditionalism and nationalism, nor environmentalism and alternative lifestyle.

⁷ We additionally conducted multiple group confirmatory factor analysis using the item measuring the ethnonational dimension directly as well as four additional items theoretically expected to be related to the ethnonational dimension to establish whether it has a comparable meaning across Europe. Results (available upon request) support configural invariance when comparing between Western and post-communist party systems.

⁸ Based on question 11 from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey of 2006 (Hooghe *et al*, 2010).

⁹ Based on question 12 of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey of 2006 (Hooghe *et al*, 2010). The questionnaire was downloaded from http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php.

¹⁰ It should be noted that despite the weighting, the aggregate salience values might still slightly overestimate the real salience of the ethnonational dimension in some countries since our selection of parties is more inclusive towards majority and minority nationalist parties for which this dimension plays the most important role. As noted, we included majority and minority nationalist parties in our party selection if they gained at least one seat in the national parliament, whereas non-nationalist parties are only included if they gained at least 5% of the votes. The selected parties hold over 90% of the parliamentary seats in all but six countries. Appendix A lists the summed seat shares of the parties included in the analysis by country.

¹¹ Bakker *et al* (2012: 227-230) analyze correlations between dimensions within countries drawing on individual expert ratings. The number of cases per country then amounts to parties multiplied by experts consulted. However, if this proceeding is followed, it remains unclear to what extent the correlation coefficients pick up variance across expert judgments, rather than genuine associations between party positions. We therefore chose to analyse correlations drawing on the mean expert ratings, rather than the individual expert ratings.

¹² The transformation was achieved in the following way: $\text{ethnofold} = |\text{ethno} - 5|$.

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Table 1. Scenarios of linkage between the cultural, the economic and the ethnonational dimensions

Dimensions	Scenario		Empirical implication
Cultural and economic	Left-right reduction (linear relationship)	West	Parties combine free market positions on the economic dimension with authoritarian positions on the cultural dimension.
		East	Parties combine free market positions on the economic dimension with libertarian positions on the cultural dimension.
	Independence		Parties' stances on the economic dimension are not systematically linked to their stances on the cultural dimension.
Ethnonational and cultural	Quadratic relationship		Parties combine majority/minority nationalist positions with authoritarian positions on the cultural dimension.
	Independence		Parties' stances on the ethnonational dimension are not systematically linked to their stances on the cultural dimension.
Ethnonational and economic	Quadratic relationship	West	Parties combine majority/minority nationalist positions with free market positions on the economic dimension.
		East	Parties combine majority/minority nationalist positions with state interventionist positions on the economic dimension.
	Independence		Parties' stances on the ethnonational dimension are not systematically linked to their stances on the economic dimension.

Table 2. European multinational democracies included into the analyses

Eastern Europe	Western Europe
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH); Bulgaria; Croatia; Estonia; Kosovo; Latvia; Lithuania; Macedonia; Moldova; Montenegro; Poland; Romania; Serbia; Slovakia; Ukraine.	Belgium; Finland; France; Italy; Spain; United Kingdom.
N = 121 political parties in 15 countries	N = 40 political parties in 6 countries

Figure 1. Aggregate saliency of the economic and the ethnonational dimensions by country

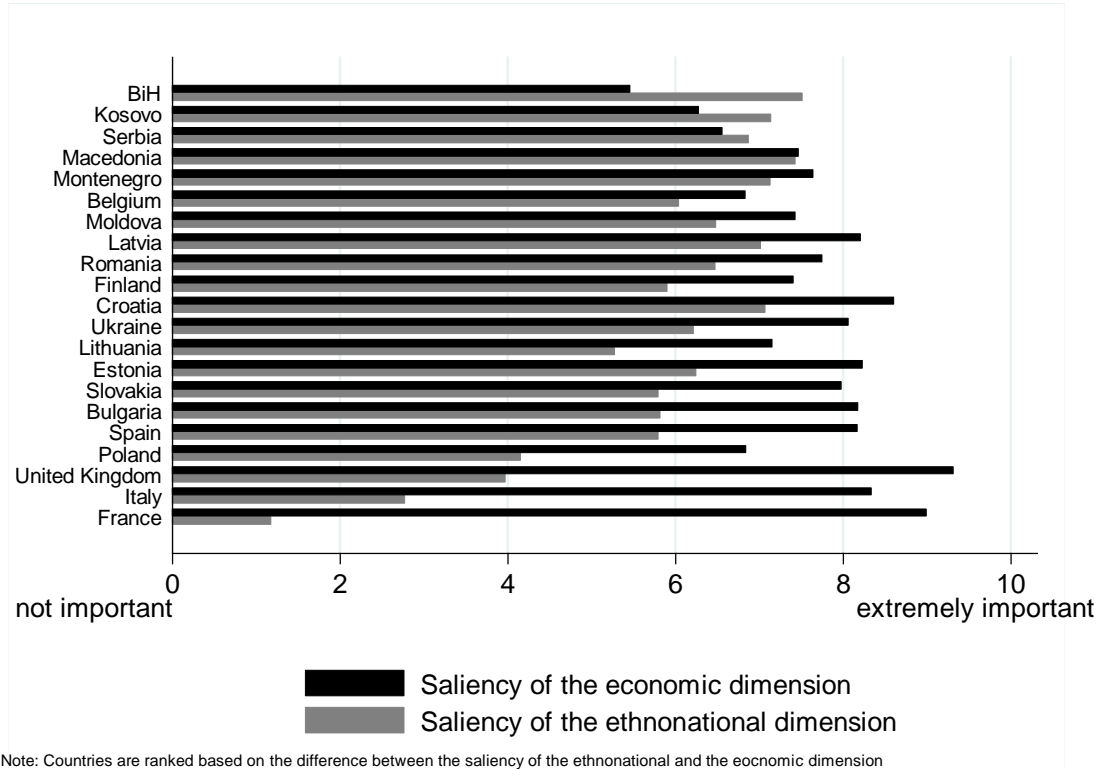


Figure 2: Polarization of party positions on the economic, cultural, and ethnonational dimensions by country

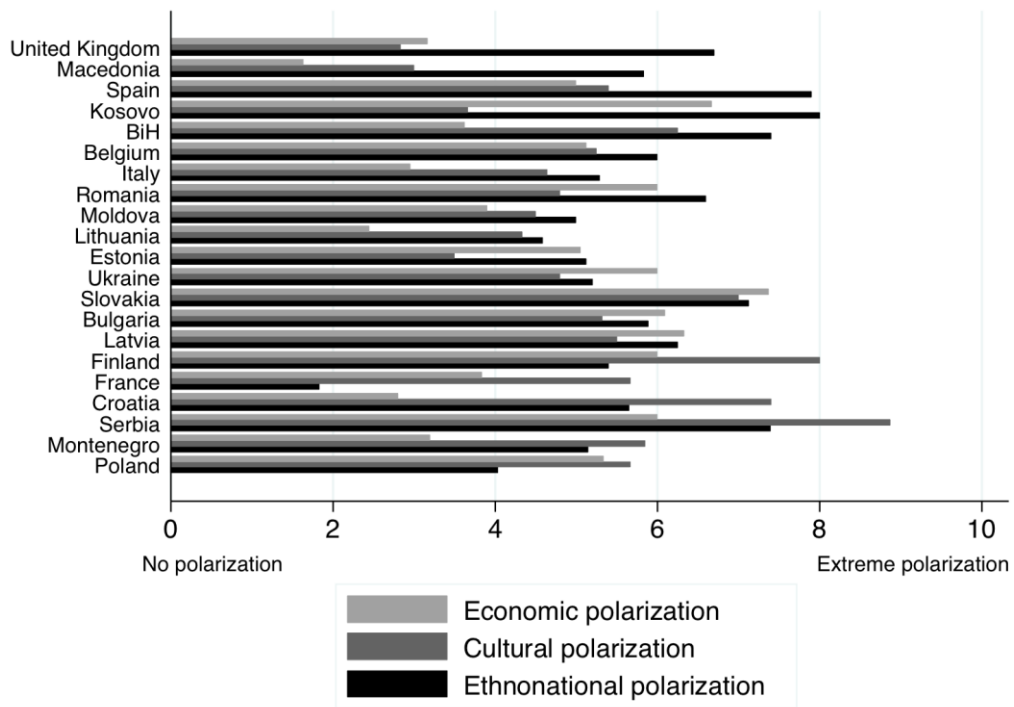


Figure 3. The left-right axis of party competition in Western and post-communist Europe

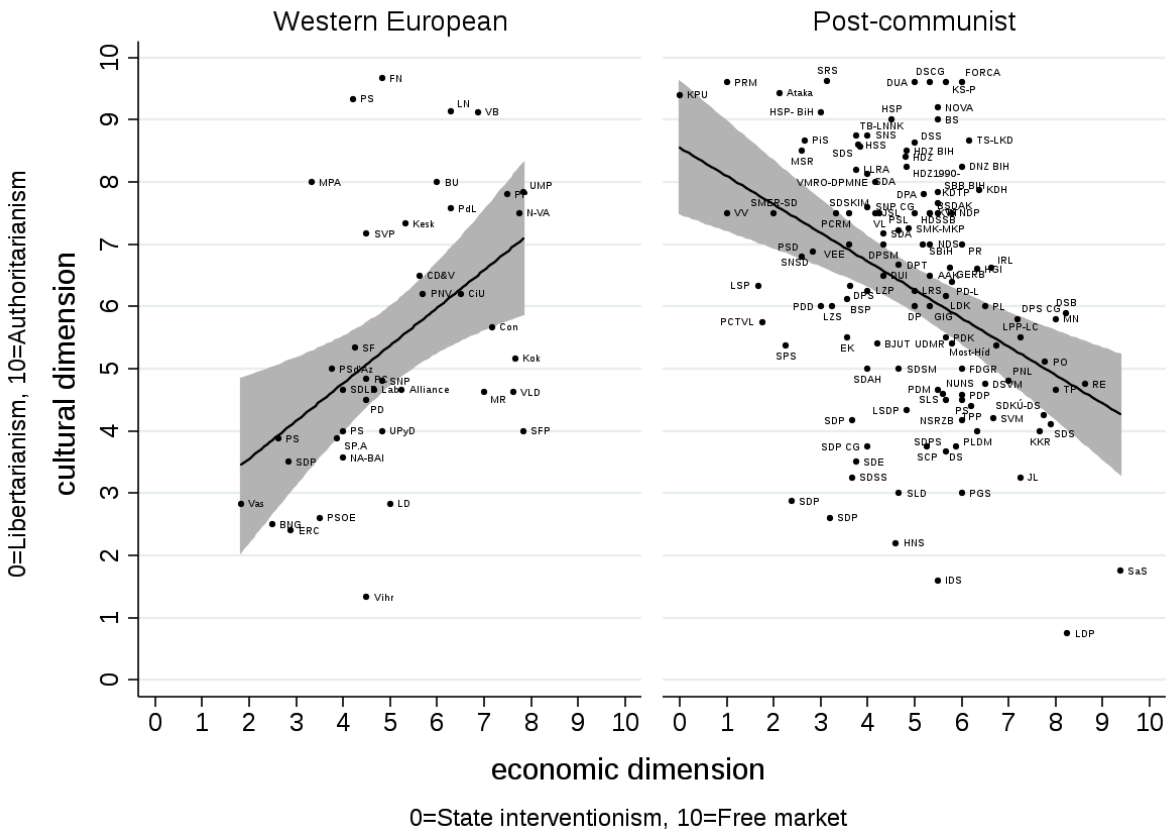


Figure 4. Correlation coefficients between the economic and the cultural dimensions by country.

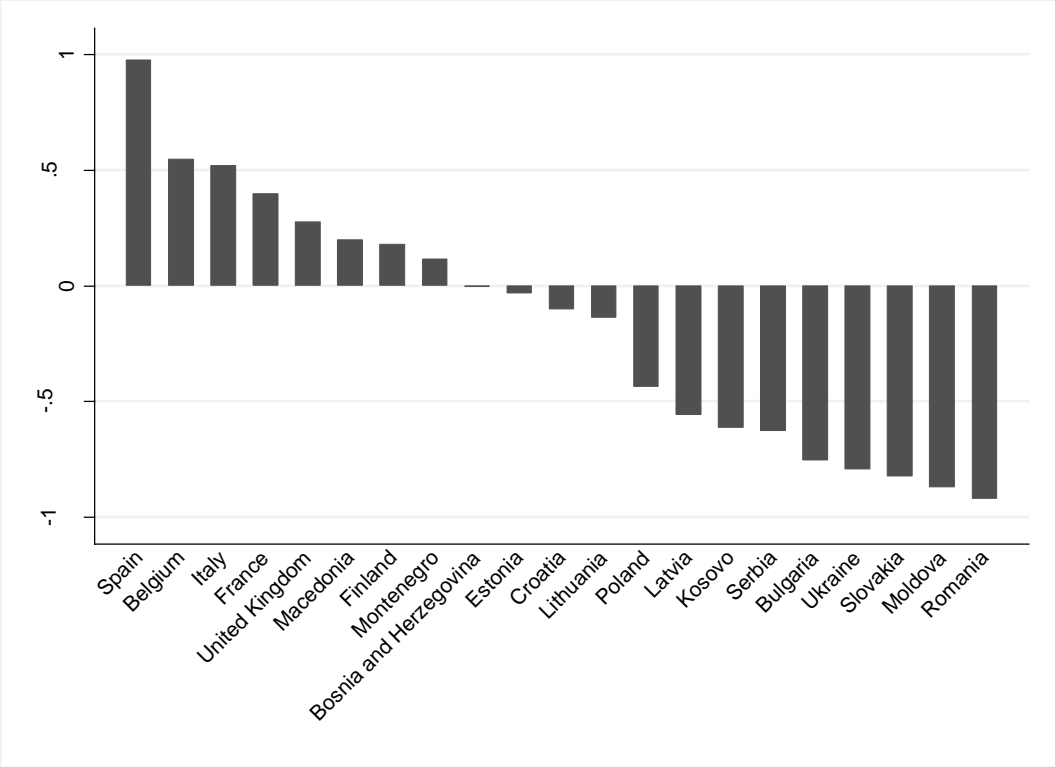


Figure 5. The ethnonational and the cultural dimension in Western and post-communist Europe

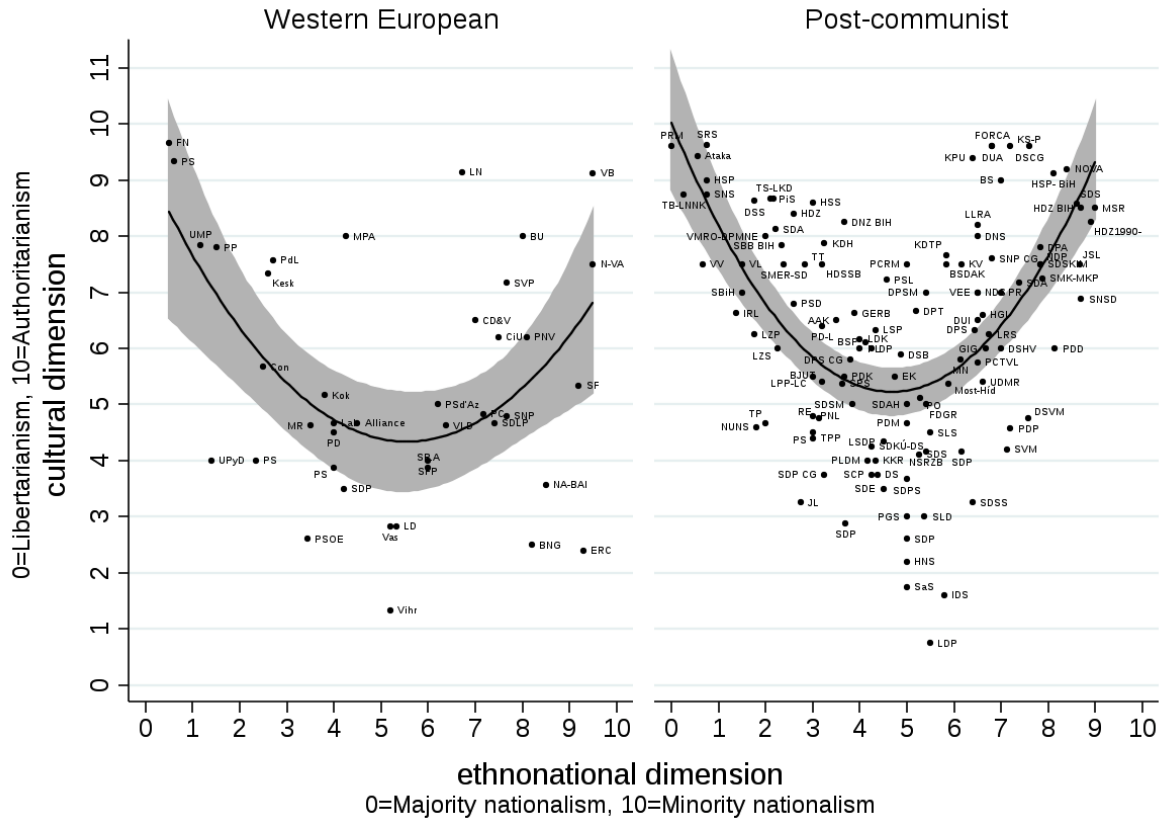


Figure 6. Correlation coefficients between nationalism (folded ethnonational dimension) and the cultural dimension by country.

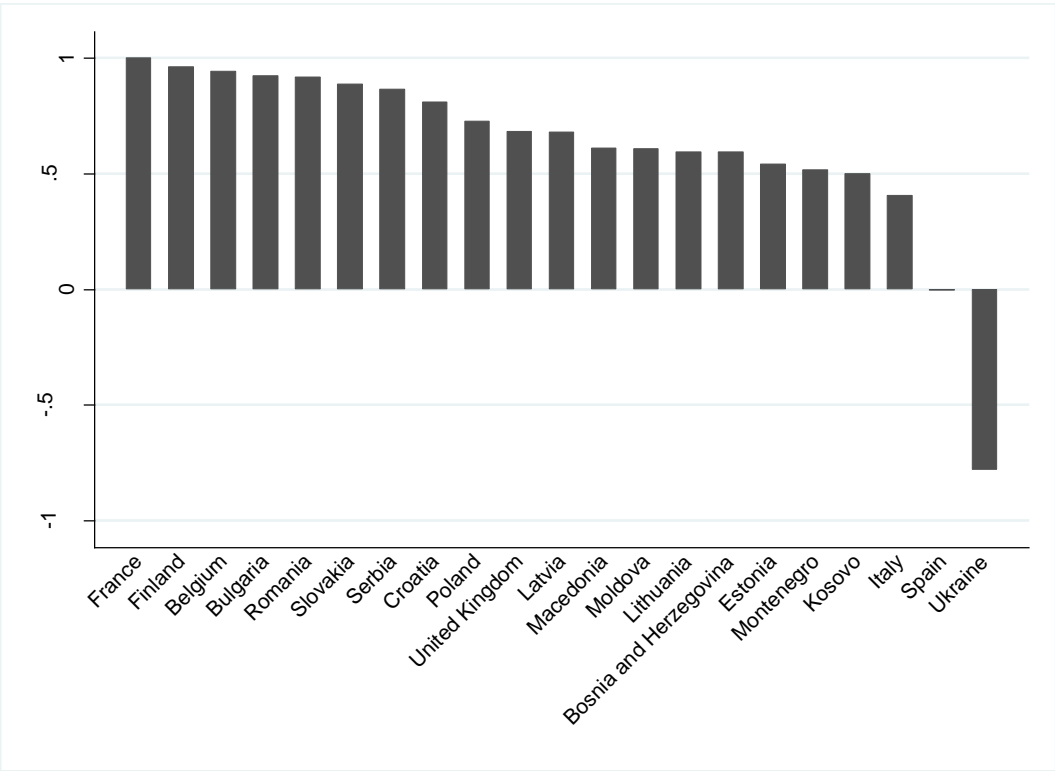


Figure 7. The ethnonational and the economic dimension in Western and post-communist Europe

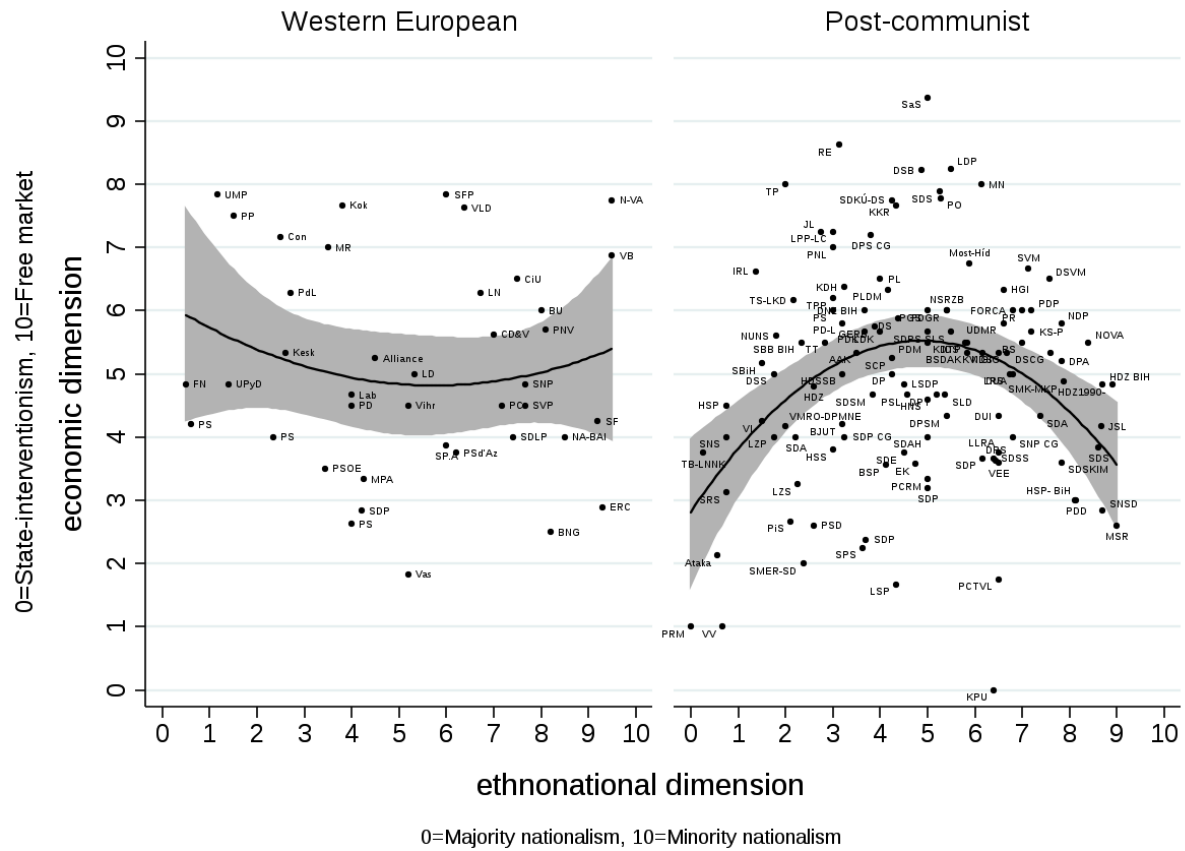


Figure 8. Correlation coefficients between nationalism (folded ethnonational dimension) and the economic dimension

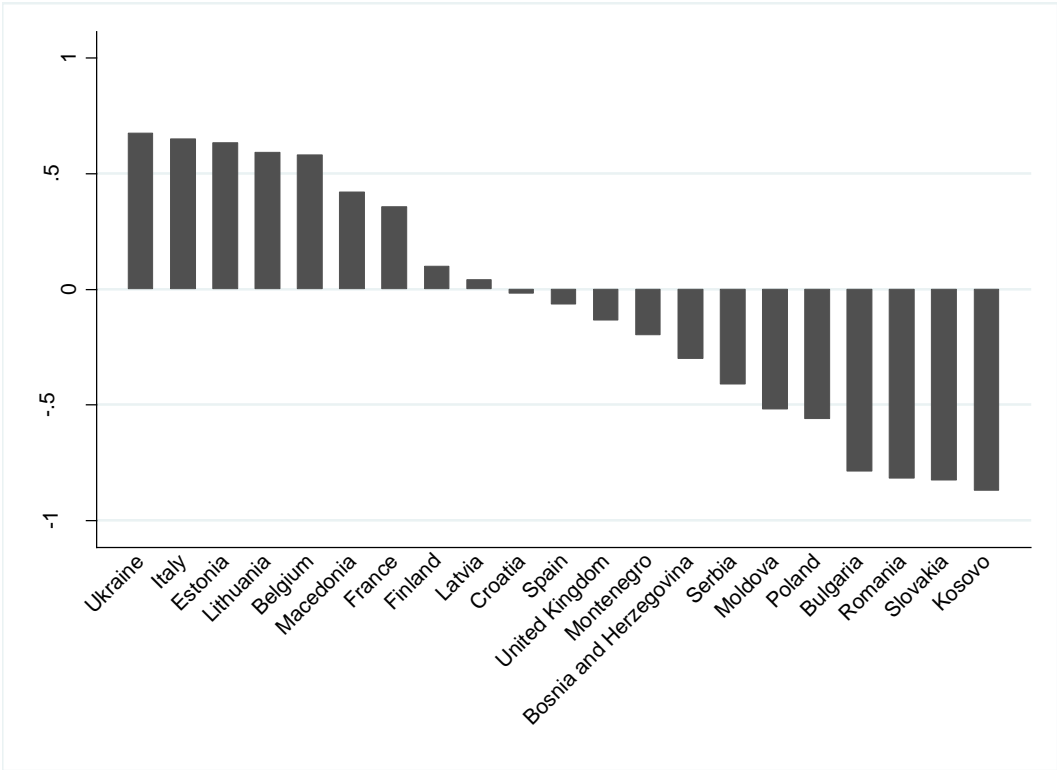


Table 3. Empirical linkages between the ethnonational, the cultural and the economic dimensions across Europe

Dimensions	Scenario		Empirical cases
Cultural and economic	Left-right reduction (linear relationship)	West	Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, UK
		East	Bulgaria, Kosovo, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine
	Independence		BiH, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro
Ethnonational and cultural	Quadratic relationship		Belgium, BiH, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine, UK
	Independence		Spain
Ethnonational and economic	Quadratic relationship	West	Belgium, Estonia, France, Italy, Macedonia, Ukraine
		East	BiH, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia
	Independence		Croatia, Finland, Latvia, Montenegro, UK, Spain

Note: Pairs of dimensions are considered to be systematically linked if Pearson's $r > 0.3$.

Appendix A. Seat shares of political parties included into the analysis by country

Country	Sum of seat shares
Serbia	78
Lithuania	80.85
Macedonia	83.74
Belgium	84.
France	86.4
Italy	89.31
Montenegro	91.33
Romania	93.71
Bulgaria	93.74
Croatia	95.42
Ukraine	95.56
Poland	96.42
Finland	96.5
Kosovo	96.63
United Kingdom	98.3
Spain	98.88
Latvia	99
Slovakia	99.97
BiH	99.99
Moldova	99.99
Estonia	100

Appendix B. OLS Regression analysis of the relationship between the ethnonational and the cultural dimension

DV = Party positions on the cultural dimension				
	Post-communist Europe		Western Europe	
	M1	M2	M1	M2
Ethnonat. position	-0.001 (0.08)	-2.052*** (0.28)	-0.131 (0.13)	-1.778*** (0.49)
Ethnonat. position squared		0.219*** (0.03)		0.16** (0.05)
Constant	6.302*** (0.44)	10.024*** (0.6)	6.127*** (0.78)	9.28*** (1.14)
Adjusted R ²	-0.008	0.323	0	0.223
N (parties)	121	121	40	40
Likelihood-ratio test				
LR chi2(1)	49.25		11.17	
	(Assumption: m1 nested in m2) Prob > chi2 = 0.0000		(Assumption: m1 nested in m2) Prob > chi2 = 0.0008	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001. Standard errors are given in parentheses.

Appendix C. OLS Regression analysis of the relationship between the ethnonational and the economic dimension

	DV = Party positions on the economic dimension			
	Post-communist Europe		Western Europe	
	M1	M2	M1	M2
Ethnonat. position	0.043 (0.07)	1.113*** (0.26)	-0.048 (0.1)	-0.467 (0.43)
Ethnonat. position squared		-0.114*** (0.03)		0.041 (0.04)
Constant	4.756*** (0.37)	2.815*** (0.58)	5.355*** (0.6)	6.157*** (1.01)
Adjusted R ²	-0.005	0.118	-0.02	-0.021
N (parties)	119 ¹	119	40	40
Likelihood-ratio test				
LR chi2(1)	16.63		1.06	
	(Assumption: m1 nested in m2) Prob > chi2 = 0.0000		(Assumption: m1 nested in m2) Prob > chi2 = 0.3031	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001. Standard errors are given in parentheses.

¹ Data for the positions on the economic dimension is missing for two parties in Bosnia and Hercegovina (ASDA, Stranka demokratske Aktivnosti and DNS, Demokratski Narodni Savez). All Bosnia experts ticked either “no answer” or “no position” for these two parties.

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