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A PREMIER WITHOUT PARLIAMENT: THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN THE ITALIAN SECOND REPUBLIC

Fortunato MUSELLA¹

Italy is rightly considered as an ideal type case of the presidentialization process that is changing many parliamentary democracies, with the quasi-direct election of the Prime Minister and the strengthening of his hold on both the party and the government. Yet, a stronger, premier-centred government also means depriving Parliament of many of its long entrenched prerogatives. This article analyses how the executive has gained control of the legislative function, through the expansion of decree laws and delegated legislation. Executive predominance, however, has also alienated the loyalty of the Prime Minister's majority, thus resulting in a «divided Premier». As it is often the case with the American presidential system, strong leaders may become very weak if they lack parliamentary support. A lesson Silvio Berlusconi has had to learn at his own expenses.

Key words: Italy, presidentialization, premier, parliament, legislative process.

1 INTRODUCTION

On the 16th of November, the Italian Prime Minister walked up the stairs of the Quirinale to abruptly put an end to the cabinet he had been presiding over for the past three and a half years.² Berlusconi's resignation came in the wake of a dramatic financial crisis, which had brought his popularity rate down to unprecedented lows. While already shaken by a sequel of scandals relating to the Cavaliere's turbulent sexual life, the government's credibility plummeted once it became clear that its leader had become the laughing stock of the international community. A disastrous public opinion rating was

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² An early version of this article has been presented at the XVII Annual Conference of the Hungarian Political Science Association, Central European University, Budapest, May 20–21, 2011.

thus one of the key factors in the downfall of Berlusconi, quite an ironic exit for the man who had ruled Italy for almost twenty years also thanks to his skills as a «great communicator».

Another factor, which contributed to the Prime Minister's defeat, was the weakening of his control over his party. In the fall of 2007, in a bold effort to counteract the centre-left coalition's rising consensus, Berlusconi had disbanded his personal party, *Forza Italia*, only to found a larger party incorporating his former right wing allies. At first, this move seemed to be highly successful. Also thanks to the renewed appeal of Berlusconi's *Popolo della libertà*, the centre-right coalition managed to turn the spring 2006 national elections into a virtual tie. Prodi's government hardly lasted two years and, at the ensuing elections on 13-14 April of 2008, Berlusconi carried a landslide victory. However, it took only a few months to realize that the Prime Minister's hold on the new party was quite different than the one he had enjoyed over *Forza Italia*. After a bitter internal fight conducted from his influential institutional seat as the House Speaker, Gianfranco Fini left the party he had co-founded with Berlusconi and gave birth to a new political formation. The man who had deeply innovated Italian party politics by creating an organization he could control as a personal property, suddenly woke up to the ordinary nightmare of disruptive feuds among competing factions.

A third, decisive factor in the ousting of Berlusconi was his loss of a parliamentary majority. Again, this came as a tough blow for a leader who, at the 2010 elections, had scored the largest numerical majority in the Italian republican history. The Prime Minister who had been repeatedly accused of ruthlessly controlling MPs from his camp as well as from the opposition through all sorts of corrupted practices, was eventually put out of business by a handful of «traitors». That very Parliament which had been, for so many years, subdued and marginalized by the government's encompassing legislative activity at last turned into the theatre - and the actor - of Berlusconi's epilogue.

Widespread popular discontent, lack of party discipline and parliamentary revolt, while the main factors for the Premier's dismissal, also constitute a reversal in all major trends of Italy's presidentialized regime. In fact, Italy has been considered as an ideal type case for the theoretical framework, which defines presidentialization as a *de facto* transformation of modern parliamentary democracy into a premier-centred political system. According to Poguntke and Webb,³ presidentialization refers to the emerging of the Prime Minister as a quasi-presidential leader through three distinct and converging arenas: direct access to the electoral constituency through various forms of media populism, a monocratic as well as charismatic grip upon the party organization, and – last not least – the strengthening of governmental control over the legislative process, thus transforming the cabinet office in the true centre of policy-making power. In all of these three arenas, Berlusconi had emerged as an indisputable winner, largely contributing to turning Italy's long established «integral parliamentarism» into a front-runner toward the age of presidentialization.⁴ However, on the other

³ For a theoretical framework of the process of presidentialization of politics and a collection of case studies, see Thomas Poguntke and Paul D. Webb (eds.), *The presidentialization of politics: a comparative study of modern democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁴ It is only after the rise of Silvio Berlusconi that the role of 'leader elected by people' was consolidated: "soon after the victory of centre-right coalition in 1994, Berlusconi outspokenly referred to himself as an elected Premier, a stance shared by a majority of the press. The centre-left coalition (...) was soon compelled to adjust to new rules of the game". See Mauro Calise, "Presidentialization, Italian Style" in

hand, Berlusconi's downfall demonstrates that those very factors, which contributed to his irresistible ascent, also nurtured the seeds for his demise.

In more general terms many elements of Italian politics have seemed to lead to a more presidentialized form of government. A long march of administrative reforms reinforced the executive since the eighties, accompanying the transformations of the role and functions of prime minister.⁵ No less relevant are changes affecting the electoral system, where party system bipolarization, the formation of pre-electoral instead of post-electoral coalitions, and the indication of the names of leaders within the symbols shown in each ballot, brought about a kind of informal direct election of the prime minister.⁶ As far as the legislative process is concerned, many scholars have noted a relevant shift of prerogatives from the parliament to governmental branch in the last three decades: emergency bills have become more and more numerous, thus representing a predominant part of the total legislative bills, while delegated legislation has largely expanded, especially to respond to necessities imposed by EU regulatory activities and other important structural reforms. This trend seems to remind a wider trend of deparlamentarization in contemporary old and new democracies,⁷ identified by some political scientists as the decline of the legislative assemblies.⁸

In this article, I shall analyse the evolution of the legislative process during the Berlusconi era through a number of indicators testifying to the emerging of the Prime-ministerial executive as the dominant actor, gradually expropriating both chambers of their original law-making leverage. I shall argue that, by concentrating most powers in the hands of his cabinet, the Premier ended up alienating the loyalty of his own parliamentary majority. This, in turn, fed a spiral of mutual distrust, resulting in the government's all the more frequent attempts to force parliamentary approval of its own legislation through the extreme means of a confidence vote. The cabinet could thus further strengthen its predominance, yet only at the cost of weakening its parliamentary roots.⁹

One should not be surprised that, when the Premier lost his populist appeal as well as the full control of his party, the Parliament would fight back to vindicate its foremost prerogative: sending the Prime minister home.

The presidentialization of politics. A comparative study of modern democracies, eds. Thomas Poguntke and Paul D. Webb (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 91.

⁵ Alessandro Pajno and Luisa Torchia, *La riforma del governo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2000); Annarita Criscitiello, *Il cuore dei governi. Le politiche di riforma degli esecutivi in prospettiva comparata* (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2004).

⁶ On the electoral rules introduced in the Second Republic see Roberto D'Alimonte and Stefano Bartolini, *Maggioritario finalmente? La transizione elettorale 1994–2001* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002); Carlo Fusaro, *Party System Developments and Electoral Legislation in Italy (1948–2009)*, *Bulletin of Italian Politics*, 1 (2009), 49–68.

⁷ It is the case of some post-communist countries in the last years. See the special issue on "Post Communist Parliaments: Change and Stability in the Second Decade", *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 17, 2 (2011), and in particular the introductory article by David M. Olson and Gabriella Ilonszki.

⁸ Baldwin, D. J. Nicholas, "Concluding observations: legislative weakness, scrutinising strength?," *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 10, 2–3 (2004), 295–302; Robert Elgie and John Stapleton, "Testing the Decline of Parliament Thesis: Ireland 1923–2002," *Political Studies*, 54, 3 (2006), 482.

⁹ In Italy the Premier seems 'divided', suspended between the process that assures him of a sort of direct popular legitimacy and more decree powers, and an uncertain control of his parliamentary majority. See Fortunato Musella, *Il Premier diviso. Italia tra presidenzialismo e parlamentarismo* (Milano: Università Bocconi – Egea, 2012).

2 THE GOVERNMENT LEGISLATOR: A DECREE-LAWS ANALYSIS

Legislation by means of a decree has represented the principal field of legislative expansion of the Italian government.¹⁰ In fact, as has been noted in comparative analysis, ‘probably in no other advanced industrialized democracy has government use of decree legislation processes been as marked as it has in Italy since the mid 1970s.’¹¹ A sort of «permanent use of decrees» seems to be a common feature in the Italian republican history, due the necessity to find a political solution to the difficult executive/legislative relations.¹²

The decrees escalation has been the object of widespread and repeated criticism on various grounds. The committee for the legislation of the XVI legislatures, an internal body of the Italian Parliament, has classified 24 out of 31 decree-conversion laws produced during the first year of the IV Berlusconi government as ‘heterogeneous’.¹³ Furthermore, emergency decrees have often been promulgated with no good reasons of ‘necessity and urgency’, though such principles should constitute the very premise for their existence: ‘in practice, the governments often used decree laws simply because they were not capable of getting their bills approved in Parliament quickly enough and without too many amendments’.¹⁴

Looking at the decree law procedure, the executive takes advantage of emergency bills as they become law immediately and remain in effect for sixty days before parliamentary approval, ‘allowing the government to lay down temporarily its priorities on the crowded legislative parliamentary agenda’.¹⁵ Originally, executive emergency decrees proliferated also thanks to the common practice of ‘reiterating’ them after their limited period of validity. Whenever the decrees were not converted into laws within the terms provided by the Constitution, they were issued again and were therefore maintained as a law for another two months, consequently overloading parliamentary activities through a continuous ‘mechanism of decay-reiteration’.¹⁶ Since the VI legislature (1972–1976), the number of emergency bills has been increasing constantly: ‘from 26 decrees proposed during the first legislature, which lasted five years (1948–1953), we notice more than one hundred decrees in the VI legislature, almost five hundred in the XI legislature, and almost six hundred in the XII legislature, which both lasted only two years (1992–1994 and 1994–1996)’.¹⁷

¹⁰ For an analysis of the explosion of the decree laws in Italy from the seventies see Franco Cazzola and Massimo Morisi, *L'alluvione dei decreti. Il processo legislativo tra settima e ottava legislatura* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1981); Paolo Caretti, “Il rafforzamento dell'esecutivo e la sua incidenza sulla forma di governo parlamentare,” in *Le forme di governo nei moderni ordinamenti policentrici*, ed. Giancarlo Rolla (Milano: Giuffrè, 1991); Mauro Calise, “Il governo,” in *Storia dell'Italia repubblicana*, ed. Francesco Barbagnallo (Torino: Einaudi, 1997); Fortunato Musella, “Governare senza il Parlamento? L'uso dei decreti legge nella lunga transizione Italiana (1996–2012),” *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*, 3 (2012), 457.

¹¹ Amie Kreppel and Vincent Della Sala, “Dancing Without a Lead: Legislative Decrees in Italy,” in *Executive Decree Authority*, eds. Matthew Shugart and John Carey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 175.

¹² Fortunato Musella, “Governare senza il Parlamento? L'uso dei decreti legge nella lunga transizione italiana (1996–2012),” *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*, 3 (2012b), 466.

¹³ Camera dei Deputati, *XVI Legislatura, Rapporto sull'attività svolta dal Comitato per la legislazione. Primo turno di Presidenza (26 maggio 2008–25 marzo 2009)*, 29. On this point see also Roberto Zaccaria and Enrico Albanesi, “Il decreto-legge tra teoria e prassi,” *Forum di Quaderni Costituzionali*, 2009, available at www.forumcostituzionale.it (10 October 2011).

¹⁴ Salvatore Vassallo, “Government under Berlusconi: The functioning of the core institution in Italy,” *West European Politics*, 30, 4 (2007), 698.

¹⁵ See Francesco Zucchini, “Government alternation and legislative agenda setting. Lessons from Italian Politics,” American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, 31 August–3 September, 2006, 11.

¹⁶ Andrea Simoncini (ed.), *L'emergenza infinita. La decretazione d'urgenza in Italia* (Macerata: Eum, 2006), 21.

¹⁷ Marco Lazzarin and Gustavo Pizzetti “Il decreto legge fra previsione costituzionale e prassi: la sentenza 360/1996.” Available at www.jus.unitn.it (1 October 2011).

The practice of reiterating decrees was shortly interrupted when a sentence promulgated in 1996 by the Italian Supreme Court stated that the practice of decree reiteration had altered the basic features of the Italian form of government, by removing the attribution of ordinary legislation from the Parliament. However, the main focus of the Court's intervention were reiterated bills, as the Court ruled that the reissue of decree laws reproducing the content of a lapsed decree law was unconstitutional unless there were new or unexpected circumstances to consider.

While then it may have at first appeared that the Court had removed 'one of the main tools that the government had previously used to gain leverage in legislative bargaining',¹⁸ the strong quantitative reduction in the use of emergency bills after 1996 (Table 1) – the so-called passage from the flood to the dropper¹⁹ – only concerns a decrease in reiterated bills, whereas the number of promulgated decrees appears to have remained constant over the years. Moreover, when considering the number of ordinary laws in relation to other normative sources, we can observe a significant growth in decree-laws during the years 1996–2011 (Table 1), as they constitute more than 16 % of the overall legislation.

When we combine the number of decree laws with that of delegated legislation, the other main source of governmental law making, primary legislation is 57 % of the overall normative production.

TABLE 1: LAWS, DECREE-LAWS AND LEGISLATIVE DECREES (1996–2011)

Legislature	Laws	%	Decree laws	%	Legislative decrees	%	Decree laws + Legislative decrees	%
XIII (9/5/1996 – 29/5/2001)	906	60.9	204	13.7	378	25.4	582	39.1
XIV (30/5/2001 – 27/4/2006)	686	57.6	216	18.2	288	24.2	504	42.4
XV (28/4/2006 – 28/4/2008)	112	40.9	48	17.5	114	41.6	162	59.1
XVI (29/4/2008 – 28/4/2011)	226	52.0	74	17.0	135	31.0	209	48.0
Total	1930	57.0	542	16.0	915	27.0	1457	43.0

Source: Camera dei Deputati Legislative Reports.

While quantitative evidence is impressive, an even more telling picture comes from the relevance of the arenas where emergency measures are applied. Executive decrees are used to implement the most visible commitments made during the electoral campaigns by the winning coalition, as well as major policy decisions on financial grounds or wide-ranging reforms.²⁰ It is what occurred, for example, in the case of the so-called "manovra d'estate", a decree that anticipated the financial law for 2009, or in the case of the reform of public administration launched by the Minister Brunetta. Critical issues regarding individual rights are not excluded, as was

¹⁸ Gary W. Cox, William Heller, and Matthew D. McCubbins, "Agenda power in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, 1988-2000," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 33, 2 (2008), 181.

¹⁹ Salvatore Vassallo, "Le leggi del governo. Come gli esecutivi della transizione hanno superato i veti incrociati," in *Parlamento e processo legislativo in Italia*, eds. Giliberto Capano and Marco Giuliani. (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2001).

²⁰ Francesco Marangoni, "Un uomo solo al comando? I primi otto mesi del governo Berlusconi IV," in *Politica in Italia*, eds. Gianfranco Baldini and Anna Cento Bull (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009), 159.

shown by the emergency decree regarding the ‘Case Englaro’,²¹ enacted in order to prevent the death of a woman who had been in a vegetative state for sixteen years. This was indeed such an extreme case that the President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano refused to sign it on the grounds that such a sensitive issue had to be first fully debated by Parliament.²²

Whatever the nature of their object, emergency decrees prove to be particularly problematic with respect to the relation between the executive and the parliamentary body as it reduces the opportunities for discussion and compromise to a minimum.

This is all the more the case when the government chooses to avoid whatever form of parliamentary intervention by seeking approval of a bill through a vote of confidence, the shortest way to ‘overcome dissension inside the majority as well as the opposition’s obstructionism’,²³ forcing the Parliament to pass a totally pre-defined document.²⁴ During the XVI legislature, the IV Berlusconi government went as far as calling for a vote of confidence for about a third of the procedures of decree conversion (22 out of 74). As can be noted in Table 2, the number of votes of confidence associated with the approval of decree laws is significantly higher in the first two years of the XVI legislature.²⁵

TABLE 2: VOTES OF CONFIDENCE ON DECREE LAWS FOR LEGISLATURES (1996–2011)

Legislature	Number
XIII (1996–2001)	17
XIV (2001–2006)	17
XV (2006–2008)	10
XVI (2008–2011)	27

Source: Italian Senate.

This may at first look as a paradox, as the number of decree laws approved through a confidence vote grows in spite of the sharp numerical rise of the government’s majority in Parliament. The use of decree laws thus appears as a way to reinforce the government against its own majority.²⁶

²¹ Massimo Luciani, “L’emanazione presidenziale dei decreti-legge (spunti a partire dal caso E.),” *Politica del diritto*, 3 (2009), 410.

²² Tania Groppi, “Il caso Englaro: Un viaggio alle origini dello stato di diritto e ritorno.” *Politica del diritto*, 15 (2009), 483–504; Federico Giustavo Pizzetti, “In margine ai profili costituzionali degli ultimi sviluppi del caso Englaro: limiti della legge e «progetto di vita».” *Politica del diritto*, 15 (2009): 445–482.

²³ Valerio Onida, “Il mito delle riforme costituzionali”, *Il Mulino*, 1 (2004), 23.

²⁴ Nicola Lupo, “Emendamenti, maxi-emendamenti e questione di fiducia nelle legislature del maggioritario,” in *Le regole del diritto parlamentare nella dialettica tra maggioranza e opposizione. Atti del convegno (Roma, 17 marzo 2006)*, eds. Eduardo Gianfrancesco and Nicola Lupo (Roma: Luiss University Press, 2007).

²⁵ Although this paper concentrates attention on the Berlusconi era, it is relevant to underline that the last Italian technocratic governments show the same connection between frequent use of executive decrees and votes of confidence. See Fortunato Musella, “Governare senza il Parlamento? L’uso dei decreti legge nella lunga transizione italiana (1996–2012),” *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*, 3 (2012), 471; Francesco Marangoni, ‘From Fragile Majoritarianism to the ‘technocratic Addendum’: Some Data on the Legislative Activity of the Governments of the Sixteenth Legislature,’ *Contemporary Italian Politics*, 5, 1 (2013), 71–81; Mattia Zulianiello, “When political parties decide not to govern: party strategies and the winners and losers of the Monti technocratic government,” *Contemporary Italian Politics*, 5, 3 (2013), tba.

²⁶ Giovanni Pitruzzella, (2006), “Decreto-legge e forma di governo,” in *L’emergenza infinita. La decretazione d’urgenza in Italia*, ed. Andrea Simoncini (Macerata: Eum, 2006), 71.

3 DELEGATED LEGISLATION

The analysis of government decrees needs to cover another established instrument of law making: legislative decrees. As regulated by article 76 of the Italian Constitution, the Parliament grants the Government the power to legislate for a limited time and on a specific policy issue, on the basis of a parliamentary directive establishing the subject, principles, and time of such delegation. From a procedural perspective, the legislative decree represents an act produced by the government because of the complexity of the issue and is executed on the basis of principles and time restrictions indicated by the Parliament. However, such a scheme has been contradicted in practice. In fact, the use of legislative decrees has been generalized with no reference to any standard of technical complexity. With the complicity of the Supreme Court, parliamentary guidelines have also become increasingly imprecise, thereby resulting in no effective constraints on government action.²⁷ As far as temporal limits are concerned, such directives have been so vague that the government could also correct its own legislative decrees, without the need for another law for delegation.

In spite of constitutional constraints, delegated laws have thus followed a route similar to decree laws, as they have often regarded 'subjects not sufficiently defined or not defined, or have been based on vague and fleeting principles'.²⁸ All the more frequently, delegated legislation has ended up representing a blank cheque in favour of the executive.²⁹

In particular, the number of delegated decrees has been 'blown-up' during the eleventh legislature, when, after Tangentopoli, the government becomes the actor promoting political innovation, stimulating reforms in many fields of the Italian political system.³⁰ As we can see in Table 3, the massive utilization of legislative decrees began in the nineties as a response, on one hand, to the necessity to ratify a large amount of European directives and, on the other hand, to pursue a vast number of major reform policies within the Italian political system. Therefore, it can be said that Italian transition governments have used delegated legislation to provide the most relevant elements of 'discontinuity' with respect to the First Republic,³¹ as well as a way to skip the parliamentary traps of ordinary law-making³² and realize 'the principal programmatic lines of the various governments'.³³

²⁷ Massimo Rubechi, "Gli atti 'equiparati' alla legge ordinaria." In *La costruzione giurisprudenziale delle fonti del diritto* ed. Lucia Califano (Fano: Aras edizioni, 2010).

²⁸ Nicola Lupo, *Dalla legge ai regolamenti. Lo sviluppo della potestà normativa del Governo nella disciplina delle pubbliche amministrazioni* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2003), 346.

²⁹ Paolo Caretti (ed.), *Osservatorio sulle fonti 2006. Le fonti statali: gli sviluppi di un decennio* (Torino: Giappichelli, 2007).

³⁰ Claudio De Fiore, *Trasformazioni della delega legislativa e crisi delle categorie normative* (Padova: Cedam, 2001).

³¹ Giovanni Tarli Barbieri, "La delega legislativa nei suoi più recenti sviluppi," in Corte Costituzionale, *La delega legislativa. Atti del Seminario svoltosi a Roma, Palazzo della Consulta, 24 ottobre 2008* (Milano: Giuffrè, 2009).

³² Giliberto Capano and Marco Giuliani (eds.), *Parlamento e processo legislativo in Italia* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2001); Francesco Zucchini, "Government alternation and legislative agenda setting. Lessons from Italian Politics," American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, 31 August-3 September, 2006.

³³ Pietro Milazzo, "Uno sguardo sulle prassi e le tendenze della delega legislativa nel decennio. 1996-2007," in *Osservatorio sulle fonti 2006. Le fonti statali: gli sviluppi di un decennio*, ed. Paolo Caretti (Torino: Giappichelli, 2007), 87.

TABLE 3: LEGISLATIVE DECREES (1996–2011)

Legislatures	Legislative decrees	Monthly mean
X	129	2.2
XI	97	4.1
XII	52	2.1
XIII	378	6.2
XIV	288	2.2
XV	114	4.75
XVI – first three years	135	3.75

Source: Camera dei Deputati Legislative reports.

Table 3 shows the rise in number of legislative decrees during the Second Republic. With regard to the contents of legislative decrees, the most numerous category is represented by decrees that implement European Union acts: 502 of the 1,080 decrees produced during the period from 1996 to 2011 (45 % of the total amount) belong to such category (Table 4). This is all the more important when considering the crucial role that European legislation has achieved in all matters of policy making, from financial decisions to a vast array of regulatory policies. While a residual class of legislative decrees is devoted to the implementation of the Statutes promulgated by the Special Italian Regions, the most significant group is constituted by those decrees that are based on a regular delegation from the Parliament, without any external or constitutional input, as it is the case with European legislation or regional statutes. They add up to 452 decrees, demonstrating how delegated legislation has been used for a large array of political ends, including some of the most critical political issues, as it was the case with new provisions for tax regulation in 2003 or the reform of the radio and television broadcasting system in 2004.

TABLE 4: CLASSIFICATION OF LEGISLATIVE DECREES (1996–2011)

Year	Legislative decrees deriving from a parliamentary delegation	Legislative decrees which implement EU acts	Legislative decrees which implement Regional Statutes	Total
1996*	7	14	6	27
1997	53	28	8	89
1998	55	14	10	79
1999	67	39	8	115
2000	35	32	7	74
2001	34	24	19	77
2002	15	16	6	32
2003	27	45	8	80
2004	23	33	6	62
2005	28	44	6	78
2006	35	27	11	73
2007	5	60	9	74
2008	11	25	5	41
2009	9	15	-	24
2010	20	52	11	83
2011	28	34	6	68
Total	452	502	126	1080

* From May 9th 1996, beginning of the XIII legislature. Source: Camera dei Deputati.

4 REGULATING PARLIAMENT

In light of so sharp a rise in direct governmental legislation, in the forms of decree-laws and delegated legislation, one should not be surprised that a main battlefield between government and Parliament, over the past twenty

years, is represented by the attempts by the executive to curb procedural rules giving both chambers the upper hand in setting the legislative agenda as well as through committee and floor deliberation. All of these parliamentary prerogatives have been the object of a far-reaching process of regulatory reforms starting in 1988 and culminating in the sweeping changes enacted in 1998. Key turning points are represented by new procedures of law-making tending to construct a fast lane for legislative proposals initiated by the cabinet,³⁴ and the abolition of the secret ballot, an instrument used by dissident members of Parliament to blackmail the executive. On the whole, the government's agenda setting power has been greatly increased, at least with respect to the First Republic's «integral parliamentarism», when assembly work was mainly under the control of the conference of party whips.³⁵

The changes brought about in the early years of the Second Republic, however, seem not to have been sufficient to offer the government control over its own majority. The debate on further reform of parliamentary regulation has remained one of the hot topics in the overall political confrontation, with several proposals put forward aiming to render executive action faster and more effective. At the end of the XIV legislature, the President of the Senate Marcello Pera produced a document entitled 'Main Lines for the Reform of the Regulation of the Senate of Republic',³⁶ wherein he proposed the definition of a sort of 'Statute of Government in Parliament'. In particular, new rules were suggested that would introduce relevant advantages for bills initiated by the executive. More recently, a large number of proposals were presented with the aim of strengthening the executive in the definition of the parliamentary agenda and in the deliberative process, thereby assuring its right to determine 'most of the issues dealt with in Parliament as well as to impose fixed times for the exam and the definitive approval of law proposals which take priority'.³⁷

The proposals from the *Popolo della Libertà* gave particular attention to the necessity of restructuring the legislative process. For example, the objective of the proposal Gasparri-Quagliariello is to attribute a special position to executive bills so that they would be examined and concluded necessarily within sixty days from the allocation to the competent commission. It is significant to note that the duration of sixty days is the same time provided to convert emergency decrees into laws. In this manner, all governmental legislation would in fact be assimilated to a de facto emergency decree. Moreover, it was proposed to attribute a central role in defining the parliamentary agenda to the government, so that 'from a formal point of view, it is assured more time for the executive in the ordinary law-making if compared with minority groups or single members'.³⁸

Berlusconi himself has expressly called for a drastic change in parliamentary rules in the direction of 'providing the majority with adequate procedures for the approval of its proposals'. In declaring his impatience with Parliamentary

³⁴ Massimo Luciani, "Il Parlamento negli anni Novanta," in *Storia d'Italia. Annali 17: Il Parlamento*, ed. Luciano Violante (Torino: Einaudi, 2001); see also Chiara De Micheli and Luca Verzichelli, *Il Parlamento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2004).

³⁵ Raffaella Leonardi, Robert Nanetti and Gianfranco Pasquino, "Institutionalization of Parliament and Parliamentarization of Parties in Italy," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 3, 1 (1978), 167.

³⁶ See the parliamentary document entitled "Linee direttrici per una Riforma del Regolamento del Senato della Repubblica", 10 October 2002, available at www.senato.it (10 November 2013).

³⁷ Antonio Saitta, "Sulle proposte di modifica dei regolamenti parlamentari ad inizio di XVI legislatura", Associazione dei Costituzionalisti, 2008. Available at www.associazionedeicostituzionalisti.it (10 October 2011).

³⁸ Camera dei deputati, Doc. II, n. 3, 1 Luglio 2008.

procedures, Berlusconi went so far as suggesting that individual members' votes should be abolished and party leaders be able to vote for their entire group. Such an extreme request aroused strong criticism, and the opposition of Gianfranco Fini, Berlusconi's ally and the President of the Chamber of Deputies, forced Berlusconi to backtrack.³⁹

New proposals to change parliamentary regulations derive from the difficult control of parliamentary majority by the government. Indeed, formal changes have not been sufficient to strengthen the role of the executive in the ordinary legislative process. Table 6 shows quite a low success rate both for the proposals coming from the executive and MPs. In a context marked by parties in crisis and the personalisation of politics, it is no surprise that there is growing competition between individual members of parliament that leads to a further increase in proposals of law. Between the XIII and XVI legislature, MPs were responsible for more than 90 % of the proposals put forward with a peak at 95.7 % during the 4th Berlusconi government. As we have seen, most of these proposals are destined to never become law, serving a more propagandistic or symbolic function. In fact, the monthly average of draft proposals has increased, doubling in number from the eighties to the nineties and reaching over 250 per month in the last ten years.⁴⁰ After Tangentopoli, however, only a small percentage of MPs' proposals actually passed, the figure remaining below one per cent for some legislatures.⁴¹ At the same time, the probabilities of governmental bills being translated into law reduce. For example, in the XIII legislature less than half of the proposals coming from the executive become law, while in the XV legislature only a third of the bills presented by the government was successful. During the period 1996–2010, approximately fifty per cent of the proposals were rejected (Table 6).

TABLE 5: LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS AND SUCCESS RATES FOR INITIATIVE

Legislatures	Bills proposed by Government	Approved bills (%)	Bills proposed by MP's	Approved bills (%)	Total	Monthly average
I	2547	80.6	1375	18.9	3922	63
II	1667	84.4	2514	19.1	4181	72
III	1569	82.8	3688	13.0	5257	87
IV	1569	75.4	4414	17.5	5983	100
V	977	64.2	4189	5.1	5166	103
VI	1255	67.7	4597	5.9	5852	122
VII	1022	55.5	2646	3.7	3668	102
VIII	1358	55.6	3980	7.2	5338	116
IX	1287	44.1	4642	4.7	5929	124
X	1471	50.3	6920	4.6	8391	150
XI	862	27.9	4269	5.3	5131	221
XII	1143	23.0	5020	0.9	6163	257
XIII	1453	49.1	10479	2.3	11932	199
XIV	707	53.9	8637	1.7	9344	158
XV	285	32.3	5062	0.3	5347	223
XVI (2008-2010)	265	63.4	5975	0.6	6238	195

Source: De Micheli e Verzichelli 2004 for I-XIII legislatures. Senato.it for XIV-XVI.

³⁹ See *Nuove regole in Parlamento*, alt di Fini alle proposte di Berlusconi, in *Corriere della Sera*, 10 March 2009.

⁴⁰ Chiara De Micheli and Luca Verzichelli, *Il Parlamento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2004).

⁴¹ These data appear very significant, especially if one considers the process of reduction in the number of ordinary laws from the eleventh legislature until now. In fact many laws derive from the ratification of European acts or conversion of decree laws.

The failure to bring about more substantial reforms in the rules governing the relationship between the executive and the assembly is certainly among the main reason for the eventual collapse of the majoritarian experiment in the Second Republic. As can be read in a proposal from the Pdl, the reform of parliamentary rules aimed at 'changing the concrete configuration of the form of government in a more subtle and incisive way than the definition of new constitutional dispositions'.⁴² Such an aim could not, in fact, be fulfilled, while the outright pressure for new rules to subdue Parliament certainly contributed to a growing discontent within the rank and files of the government's own majority. Unable to steer its legislative agenda in Parliament with the overt and cohesive support from its majority, the government ended up relying all the more on its own direct normative power, through emergency decrees and delegated legislation. A process, which could only further alienates the Prime Minister and his cabinet circle from his parliamentary base.

5 A DIVIDED PREMIER

During the Great Depression, as a consequence of a deep economic crisis which called for renewed leadership and also thanks to the early diffusion of the radio as a revolutionary means of communication, the American government became fully «presidentialized».⁴³ That is, the presidency was reorganized, with new powers being delegated from Congress to the White House, while the President developed a personal and direct relationship with the citizens.⁴⁴ The personal president, however, also had his own Achilles heel. A stronger president inevitably meant weaker parties and this, in turn, led to further severing the connection with the legislative branch, a function which had long been the prerogative of political parties.⁴⁵ Things became all the more complicated whenever the House and/or the Senate were ruled by a different party than the one which had carried the presidential election. The other face of a stronger president often turned to be a divided government.

A similar situation seems to apply to the process of presidentialization impacting on many parliamentary democracies. Particularly in the Italian case, the transfer of power from the assembly to more and more personalized government is one of the most evident trends in the Second Republic. The use of emergency decrees and delegated legislation is peculiar for its frequency and heterogeneity: any anchorage to the principle of necessity and urgency has been lost and the government intervenes in a number of subjects through disputable techniques of law making.⁴⁶ Yet if the Premier acquires new independent instruments of action, this represents also a response to the difficult control of his majority in parliament. Due to coalition fragmentation, legislative proposals coming from the executive shows a low success rate so that one bill on two does not reach final approval. And this happens in a framework of substantial devaluation of

⁴² Camera dei deputati, Doc. II, n. 3.

⁴³ Thomas Poguntke and Paul Webb (eds.), *The presidentialization of politics: a comparative study of modern democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 6.

⁴⁴ On the presidential foundation of the American political system, see cfr. R. E. Neustadt, *Presidential power: The politics of leadership*, New York, John Wiley, 1963; A. M. Schlesinger, *The Imperial Presidency*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1973; R. Pious, *The American Presidency*, New York, Basic Books, 1979; T. J. Lowi, *The Personal President. Power Invested, Promise Unfulfilled*, Ithaca-New York, Cornell University Press, 1985; J. K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1987.

⁴⁵ Bruce Ackerman, "New Separation of Powers," *Harvard Law Review*, 113 (2000), 633–725.

⁴⁶ Vincenzo Lippolis, "Regolamenti parlamentari, forma di governo, innovazione istituzionale," in *Quaderni costituzionali*, 29, 1 (2009), 115–119.

parliamentary legislation that limited the percentage of ordinary legislation on the overall law production. So while the Premier begins to appear as an interpreter of the country majority, thanks to the creation of a direct circuit of consensus between the leader and the electorate, he seems to lose the parliamentary support to realize his political program.

As leaders become more powerful, there is also a tendency to see this as a consequence of a direct electoral mandate, stressing personal responsibility and autonomy versus other institutional actors. Nevertheless «this sense of autonomy cuts both ways: while the leader is more independent of party, the party in the legislature might also feel more independent of the leader, and therefore be prepared to rebel. And while the leader can be very powerful at times of electoral and political advantage, s/he can also be very vulnerable at times of disadvantage».⁴⁷ A tough lesson Berlusconi has had to learn at his own expenses.

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⁴⁷ Thomas Poguntke, Paul Webb, and Robin Kolodny, "The Presidentialization of Party Leadership? Evaluating Party Leadership and Party Government in the Democratic World," American Political Science Association, Seattle, 1-4 September, 2011.

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BRINGING THE 'CENTRE' CENTRE-STAGE: DEFINING THE CENTRE IN IDEOLOGICAL, ORGANISATIONAL AND POLICY TERMS

Guy BURTON¹

What is the 'centre'? Drawing across different political science literature (including political theory, electoral and party-related and public administration), the article examines the different dimensions associated with it, including ideological (i.e. as moderate, liberal and reformist), organisational (i.e. as based on the median voter and catch-all party models) and policy-related (i.e. balancing the values and principles of Christian Democracy and social democracy). Against these features, the article presents the main challenges against the centre in these dimensions (i.e. relative differences between ideologies, binary accounts of social and political organisation through social cleavages and political party development, the time-specific attributes of Christian Democracy/social democracy and the rise of neoliberalism). The article concludes with an appeal for additional and more detailed analyses of the 'centre' in order to gain greater insight into the concept.

Key words: centre, ideology, political parties, public policy.

1 INTRODUCTION

Success in politics, whether at the ballot box or in government, is generally associated with occupying the 'centre' and pursuing policies that are 'centrist'. The centre is portrayed as the mainstream, by occupying the 'middle ground' or following an agenda supported by a majority of the public. By contrast those who pursue non-centrist policies tend to be portrayed as extreme and politically beyond the pale. Beyond such rhetoric though, this suggests a spatial dimension within politics, where electoral, ideological or political advantage may be located. At the same time though, the notion of the centre has been challenged, especially where politics is perceived as a binary struggle, i.e. politics as consisting of two themes, concepts or forces which are contrary to each other and therefore adversarial. The implication of this suggests that the 'centre' is arguably more of a rhetorical tool than a

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practical or analytical one, in which the term centre is used to delineate an 'us and them' dichotomy.² The effect of this is that relational distinctions become important between different concepts and actors. Such differences are present in both quantitative and qualitative forms of analysis, where assessments are based on a 'more than' or 'less than' approach. The result is that there is arguably little evidence of a political 'centre.'

Given these differences, this article presents and analyses the general themes associated with the centre as a modern phenomenon, with particular emphasis on the experience of the global North. This is due largely to the fact that many of the ideas associated with the centre – the predominant ideological families since the Enlightenment and their implementation in public policies, the emergence and development of electoral democracy, and the formation of political parties – mostly had their start in Europe and North America.

In examining the centre, the paper not only presents the way it has been portrayed in the past, to include both those which support and reject it, it also seeks to ask if the 'centre' continues to be relevant or not. To achieve this, the paper focuses on three main areas where the notion of the 'centre' has been relevant: in terms of (1) ideology; (2) electoral competition (voters and parties); and (3) public policy. Each section considers both the evidence, which points towards the existence of a 'centre' in relation to that dimension along with the limitations and challenges associated with them. The article concludes that there is a need for greater clarification of the concept. This may be done in a number of different ways, including greater interrogation of the themes associated with the centre (e.g. whether the centre can necessarily be equated with reformism and moderation and their exact relationship) and a shift away from conceptualisation of the centre as historically and geographically bounded (especially in Europe between 1945 and 1989) to include other notions and experiences. Of particular importance is the need to recognise the power of language and the way that the 'centre' is largely associated with certain social, economic and political groups to present themselves and their objectives as inclusive, while excluding other groups and their aims as 'extreme'.

2 LOCATING THE 'CENTRE' IDEOLOGICALLY

What constitutes the 'centre' in ideological terms? Ideology is a set of ideas, views and beliefs concerning how politics, economic and society should be constructed and organised.³

In the case of centrism, there are at least two ways that it may be perceived. One draws on the historically predominant ideological forces since the Enlightenment (conservatism, liberalism, socialism). A second way is to apply the features associated with them to a less context-specific environment (left and right). A third is to consider their morphological dimension; that is, the different meanings and concepts can be applied to them.⁴ This point is significant, since it accounts for the varied way in which

² Andrew Hindmoor, *New Labour at the Centre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

³ Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Voting* (New York: HarperCollins, 1957); Roger Eatwell, "Ideologies: Approaches and Trends," in *Contemporary Political Ideologies*, eds. Roger Eatwell and Anthony Wright. 2nd reprint (London: Pinter, 1996); John Schwartzmantel, *The Age of Ideology: Political ideologies from the American revolution to post-modern times* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998).

⁴ Michael Freeden, "Ideology and Political Theory," in *The Meaning of Ideology: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Michael Freeden (London: Routledge, 2007); Michael Freeden, "Ideology and Political

different ideologies both overlap and diverge from each other with regard to particular concepts; for example, the idea of 'equality' illustrates the difference between communism (where the collective dimension is emphasised) and neo-liberalism (where the focus is on the individual and property rights).

In all three cases ideology can be portrayed visually as a spectrum (see Figure 1), along which different ideologies can be perceived, with themes and features overlapping and merging between each other (e.g. neo-liberalism and its overlap with both the liberal and conservative families and social liberalism with socialism and the liberal family). In sum then, identifying a 'centrist' ideology would mean finding the middle point on a spectrum and the features associated with it. However, in practice this is arguably harder to do than it appears.

Historically, the ideological spectrum can be distinguished between three main families since the eighteenth century: conservatism, liberalism and socialism.⁵ Conservatism has its roots in the pre-modern period and is associated with a commitment to traditional means of authority and order, along with an emphasis on continuity. This does not mean that it is opposed to all forms of change; rather its advocates are concerned with ensuring change that is 'safe'.⁶ This has resulted in at least three forms of conservatism: reactionary, revolutionary and moderate.⁷ Reactionary conservatism assumes that a preferred state of order already exists and so no form of change is necessary (i.e. the status quo); efforts are therefore directed at preventing further change. Revolutionary conservatism is more accommodating of change and recognises that owing to the constant state of flux, which exists in the world, to which conservatives must respond. As a result, revolutionary conservatives pursue forms of change which are slow and incremental and which will not damage the fabric of society. At the same time though, revolutionary conservatism has also been manifested in the form of neo-liberalism (see below), which has arguably been less incremental and more confrontational and wrenching in terms of social, political and economic activity and output. Moderate conservatism, meanwhile, adopts a more active position, especially in relation to the state (a modern concept) and society, distinguishing between different actors and their different roles and responsibilities.

Moving from status quo to change, the ideological spectrum brings us to liberalism, which owes its origins to modernity and the Enlightenment. It is more receptive to change than conservatism through its association with liberty, individuality and rationality.⁸ Liberalism was viewed as linear and progressive, meaning that its advocates believed that liberalism's advance would bring about political reform, which would ensure greater liberty and individuality over time. Such optimism was arguably reflected in historical and philosophical phenomena such as the Enlightenment and the dialectic, whereby individuals and society would advance towards a better future.

Theory," in *The Meaning of Ideology: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Michael Freeden (London: Routledge, 2007).

⁵ John Schwartzmantel, *The Age of Ideology: Political ideologies from the American revolution to post-modern times* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998); Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

⁶ Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 322.

⁷ Noël O'Sullivan, "Conservatism," in *Contemporary Political Ideologies*, eds. Roger Eatwell and Anthony Wright. 2nd reprint (London: Pinter, 1996), 54-55.

⁸ Richard Bellamy, "Liberalism," in *Contemporary Political Ideologies*, eds. Roger Eatwell and Anthony Wright. 2nd reprint (London: Pinter, 1996), 24; Michael Freeden, *The New Liberalism: An Ideology of Social Reform* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 22.

Despite this positive perspective, it is questionable whether liberalism is really as linear and progressive a force as portrayed. This becomes more apparent when the morphological dimension of liberalism and other ideologies are considered; in other words, the different and varied meanings that can be ascribed to a particular ideology. As an example of this, Freeden points to the notion of non-constraint, which is inherent in liberty.⁹ Yet the concept of non-constraint is insufficient on its own to account for liberty. More information is needed in order to establish the meaning of a notion like non-constraint and its relationship to liberty. For example, who or what is to be non-constrained? How is non-constraint to be achieved? What implications does this have on other actors? In short, to make sense of a concept like non-constraint or an ideology like liberalism, it is necessary to move beyond the surface and scratch at the deeper meanings associated with them.

By doing this, it becomes more apparent that liberalism was arguably less progressive than it initially appeared. This may be seen in the extent to which the emergence of liberalism held out the prospect for greater individual freedom, especially in relation to conservatism. But this was largely the result of social and economic changes, which benefited only a narrow section of society rather than the masses as a whole, as, illustrated by the rising case of 'classical liberalism' during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The principal social group associated with classical liberalism was the bourgeoisie. Whereas previously wealth and capital had been concentrated in a small group largely based on inheritance and the dominance of a few families, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries political power followed economic power; control of the means of production shifted away from feudal lords and towards a new social group made up of those individuals who controlled factories, industry and trade. The newly established bourgeoisie began to demand political and civil rights that were commensurate with their greater economic power, including freedom of speech and expression, freedom to organise and greater protection of property rights. It is notable that although the bourgeoisie's demands appeared universal in scope, in practice they were limited, to promote and maintain their advantage over that of other social classes, including those who were slaves, women or had no control or access to property.¹⁰ Associated with classical liberalism was the notion of negative freedom, whereby individuals were free to pursue their own interests, insofar as they did not impinge on the freedoms of others. At the same time, the commitment of the bourgeoisie to this was more ambiguous than it seemed; for instance, favouring less state intervention when their own economic interests were at stake while also supporting a stronger state to ensure sufficient protection of their property.

Given the restricted nature of classical liberalism, the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century saw the emergence of another form which challenged the classical variant and negative liberalism: 'social liberalism' and positive freedom. A process of ideological adaptation took place, whereby a growing concern with social ills prompted an evaluation of many of the central tenets of liberalism.¹¹ In contrast to

⁹ Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 63–65, Michael Freeden, "Ideology and Political Theory," in *The Meaning of Ideology: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Michael Freeden (London: Routledge, 2007).

¹⁰ See, for example, Domenico Losurdo, *Liberalism: A Counter History* (London: Verso, 2011).

¹¹ Michael Freeden, *The New Liberalism: An Ideology of Social Reform* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 247.

classical liberalism, social liberalism advocated a more proactive role towards realising greater opportunities and individuality through forms of public assistance and support. Social liberals like the Fabians therefore advocated for a greater role for public and private actors (including the state) in education, health and the economy as a means towards individual development. In short, the existence of both classical and social liberalism by the middle of the last century highlighted the variety of meanings and the resulting 'permanent and parallel features' of which contemporary liberalism constitutes.¹² As Freeden noted, 'Compared to its nineteenth-century antecedent, liberalism before 1914 had changed vastly, but the connection with the past was recognizable. It had come to stress social rather than political reform... Old Individualist notions were finally discarded in favour of a fusion of individualism and socialism'.¹³

If classical and social liberalism constituted the main variants of liberalism, the final two decades of the last century saw the rise of 'neo-liberalism'. Given the range of meaning associated with particular concepts, it is perhaps unsurprising that neo-liberalism straddles both the liberal and conservative ideological families. On one side, neo-liberalism shared some of the features of classical liberalism, including individual freedom and the removal of any constraints, which might impede this; this entailed an emphasis on the role of the market at the expense of the state. On the other side, neo-liberalism identified with the themes and concerns of contemporary conservatives, especially in the US and Britain. In particular, they advocated individualism, entrepreneurship and strengthening particular communal forms of organisation such as the family, as a means of reconstituting order and authority – a primary conservative feature – in the wake of the growing economic, social and political uncertainty of the 1970s.¹⁴

Beyond liberalism and conservatism lies socialism. Socialism rejected present structures and sought fundamental changes in social, political and economic life. Like liberalism it was linear and progressive and favoured increasing levels of equality, liberty, individuality and rationality. Socialism became tied to the interests of a new social class, which emerged as a result of the economic changes during the nineteenth century: the workers.¹⁵ As the working class expanded and gained self-awareness and demands, there were two potential outcomes. One was a 'labourist' route, where equality, liberty and individuality would be pursued within the existing frameworks; in other words the goal was to improve the conditions for workers without them taking control of the means of production. Another, more confrontational and militant approach assumed that workers would not settle for an improvement in conditions but seek direct control of the means of production, thereby moving economic and political power out of the hands of the bourgeoisie and into those of the workers and their representatives. These expectations drove many socialists and communists during the twentieth century and the pursuit of revolutions and post-revolutionary regimes, which would enable the latter to happen. However, the hopes and expectations for socialism – at

¹² Strath Bo, "Ideology and history," in *The Meaning of Ideology: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Michael Freeden (London: Routledge, 2007), 34.

¹³ Michael Freeden, *The New Liberalism: An Ideology of Social Reform* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 257.

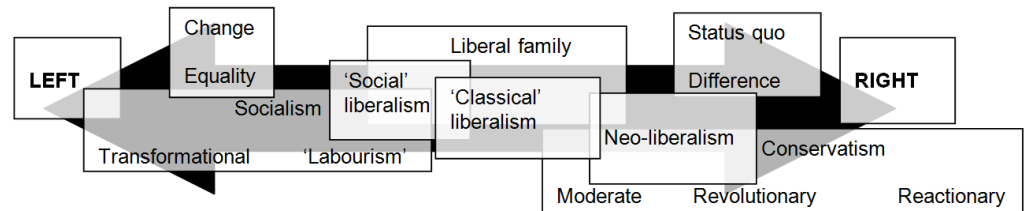
¹⁴ Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 384–405; David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁵ Joseph Femia, "Marxism and Communism," in *Contemporary Political Ideologies*, eds. Roger Eatwell and Anthony Wright. 2nd reprint (London: Pinter, 1996), 106–107, 110; John Schwartzmantel, *The Age of Ideology: Political ideologies from the American revolution to post-modern times* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998); Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

least in its state-sponsored model – were undermined by the nature of the totalitarian and repressive regimes, which emerged in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe during the twentieth century and their eventual collapse after 1989. In its place have emerged forms, which have adopted a less state-centred focus on the realisation of socialism. On one hand, social protest and opposition against the neo-liberal transformation coalesced into an anti-globalisation movement during the 1990s, leading to the formation of a diverse range of groups and organisations, which possess a wide range of objectives (e.g. the plural and diverse World Social Forum and the anti-austerity groups like Syriza in Greece following the 2008 financial crisis). On the other hand, it has given rise to more incrementally-minded reformist governments committed to social redistribution during the 2000s on the other (e.g. the Latin American ‘pink tide’ administrations).

Coinciding with the end of state socialism in 1989, Bobbio suggested a less context-specific analysis of ideology which highlighted the continuing resonance of the left-right distinction, whereby the left was associated with change and the right with the status quo.¹⁶ For the left the desire for change means that it supports redistributive measures, which may eventually realise full equality between people. By contrast, the right is comfortable with the present (neo-liberal) configuration and is therefore more able to accept inequality and less accommodating of redistribution. This is not because it supports inequality but rather because it recognises that differences exist between people. For the right the main concern is with enhancing opportunities and enabling people to realise their individual goals; the effect though contributes to differences and therefore inequality.

FIGURE 1: IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM



Given the different ways in which ideology can be portrayed – i.e. conservatism, liberalism, socialism, left-right – when portrayed visually, the centre may be located in the middle of the ideological spectrum, i.e. between socialism and conservatism, between commitment to change and commitment to the status quo, and between left and right. In short then, the centre is somewhere in relation to liberalism.

However, there are several obstacles with presenting liberalism as a centrist form of ideology. First, the relational nature associated with a spectrum presents problems with identifying a ‘centre’. This is evident through the general observation that defining ideological differences and preferences stems from adopting a ‘more than’ or ‘less than’ approach between one or more variants on the one hand and specifically in the case of liberalism through differences between classical and social liberalism. Classical liberalism is more accepting of initial differences and resulting inequality while social liberalism is more concerned with redressing these differences. The result is a contrasting approach to the role of redistribution, which is epitomised by classical liberalism’s association with negative freedom and

¹⁶ Norberto Bobbio, *Left and Right: The Significance of a Political Dimension* (Cambridge: Polity, 1996).

social liberalism's with positive freedom. The fact that liberalism may be distinguished between two main types and that the themes of one can only be understood by offsetting them against those of the other suggests that there is no clear centre – or at least one that can be articulated. Arguably, if a 'centre' did exist within liberalism it would mean those preferences in favour of change or the status quo, between equality and difference, between positive and negative freedom, and for more redistribution or less redistribution, would have to cancel each other out. In other words, an ideological centre does not – and arguably cannot – exist.

Second, the ideological spectrum presented in Figure 1 presents a narrow and 'modernist' view of Enlightenment-related ideology. This is relevant due to growing doubt regarding some of the assumptions associated with the ideologies presented above, most especially in the notion of change. Especially among change-oriented liberals and (until 1989) socialists, there has been an expectation of progress; that there would be continual advances towards greater equality, liberty and individuality. However, as Rosenau notes, the promise of progress and liberation associated with modernity largely failed during the course of the twentieth century.¹⁷ Two world wars, the rise of fascism and Nazism, state-sponsored genocide combined with various democratic reversals and repression in the global North and South, resulting in the denial of individuals' civil and political rights. From the 1960s and 1970s there began to emerge a post-modernist perspective, which rejected the overarching visions offered by the ideologies above, and the ability of them to realise their goals individually. In terms of both the social sciences and ideologies more generally, the impact of post-modernity was felt in a number of ways. One was a rejection of universal truths, especially in their supposed 'neutrality and objectivity'.¹⁸ Another was the recognition that their meanings were contested and therefore open to different and/or overlapping meanings.¹⁹ This disaggregation has implications for the notion of the 'centre' in ideological terms. In contrast to the previous period where the political ideology was confidently categorised and the centre could arguably be located spatially between different families of ideologies, in the post-modern environment this has become more difficult. The difference within and between ideologies as well as the overlap, which exists regarding different concepts and terms, makes the identification of the key features of centrism hard to define.

Third, the spectrum makes no reference to other themes or features associated with the centre, especially 'moderation'. Arguably, the centre is associated with being moderate and reformist, while those ideologies, issues and features that are further away from the centre may be deemed as more extreme or radical. But is this necessarily the case? Reformism does not always equate with moderation, just as radicalism is not always extreme. For example, social democrats ('labourists') may operate within an established political and economic system but also seek radical ends, such as the eventual transformation of the capitalist system and establishment of socialism through electoral means.²⁰ This means that they may be as radical as socialism on the spectrum, despite being located closer to the 'centre'. At

¹⁷ Pauline Marie Rosenau, *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁹ Krishan Kumar, *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 26–27, 201–204; Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1992), x-xi; Pauline Marie Rosenau, *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

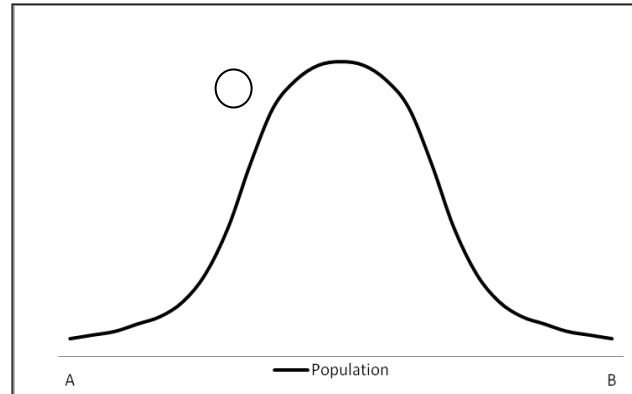
²⁰ Adam Przeworski, *Capitalism and Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

the same time, the placement of the conservative families illustrates similar challenges. Arguably 'moderate' conservatism is more radical than reactionary conservatism, since the former is pro-active in pursuing change while the latter is a static force. Similarly, can reactionary conservatism be especially radical, since it does not seek to deviate from the present set of arrangements? This lack of a clear distinction and overlap between the centrist/moderate and reformist/radical dichotomies presents difficulties when seeking to define both the nature of the centre in terms of electoral activity and public policy.

3 ORGANISING THE 'CENTRE'

Political science has shifted focus over past decades, from the study of institutions and behaviour to more economically oriented forms of analysis. Especially relevant in this regard was rational choice.²¹ Market competition was applied to elections and political organisation, with voters seeking to maximise their benefits through voting for a particular political candidate (individual or party) and parties seeing to present themselves as best placed to deliver voters those benefits. The model employed a highly stylised model of the electorate, with more voters being congregated around common positions than uncommon (or extreme) ones. The median point is located where half of the voters fall on either side of a given point (represented by a circle) along a spectrum concerning an issue (where A and B are at the margins) (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2: MEDIAN VOTER



The median point is deemed constitute the 'centre' and to date there appears to be empirical backing to support the notion. Data from the World Values Survey on voters' ideological self-placement decades does appear to support the idea of the median voter, with a majority of voters across different countries and dates tending to support a more 'centrist' position, than left or right ones.²²

For election candidates (both individuals and political parties), it therefore makes sense to adopt a stance as close as possible to the media vote and therefore ideological 'centre'. This therefore requires a type of political party

²¹ Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Voting* (New York: HarperCollins, 1957).

²² World Values Survey, *World Values Survey 1981-2008 Official Aggregate v.20090901* (World Values Survey Association. Aggregate File Producer: ASEP/JDS, Madrid, 2009). Available at www.worldvaluessurvey.org (20 July 2013).

and election strategy that is sufficiently flexible to enable this to happen, giving rise to the 'catch-all' party of the 1950s and 1960s.²³

Catch-all parties constituted an evolution in the nature of political party development. Previously political parties reflected the narrow and limited interests of their leaderships within national legislatures, leading to elite parties. Democratization and increasing suffrage meant that party elites had to appeal to wider electorates, including the newly enfranchised working class. This led to mass parties and 'catch-all parties' in Europe and North America. Catch-all parties were distinct from mass parties as a result of their emphasis on governing rather than acting a representative organisation of a particular social group (as mass parties had tended to be, usually in relation to the working class) and through the use of modern technology and media as its primary form of communication.²⁴

Catch-all parties transcended ideological categorisation, to include both left- and right-wing parties. On the left social democratic parties have constituted the primary form, contrasting with mass-based and socialist parties, which sought the transformation of social, political and economic structures and the replacement of capitalism with socialism. They pursued compromise and reform, which was evident in greater pragmatism and moderation on the one hand and more immediate and short-term material benefits for their supporters on the other.²⁵ On the right, catch-all parties included centre parties, liberals and Christian Democratic parties. While liberal parties overlap with the two strands of liberalism, centre parties have sought to bridge the space between social democrats and the bourgeoisie; one way this has been realised in Europe is through agrarian parties whose interests transcend both left and right.²⁶ But arguably the most commonly associated party type with the centre has been the Christian Democrats. During their European heyday between the Second World War and the 1970s they were distinguished by pragmatism and moderation. They were more secular than religious, reflecting their relatively greater liberalism and tolerance and lack of dependence on the Church. Their centralism was associated with their connection to workers organisations and concern with welfare issues, marking them out from more conservative parties.²⁷

The model of market competition, including the median voter and the catch-all party all point towards the idea of a 'centre' in politics. However, there are also a number of limitations. First, although voters self-identify as centrist, it is not apparent that they know what this means;²⁸ since 1989 the situation is exacerbated because the ideological differences between left and right have been less clear than previously. For example, in Europe these supposedly 'centrist' voters express negative, intolerant and illiberal views towards immigration, which suggests that the median voter's position on immigration

²³ Otto Kirchheimer, "The Catch-All Party," in *The West European Party System*, ed. Peter Mair (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

²⁴ Rod Hague, Martin Harrop and Shaun Breslin, *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*, 4th ed. (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), 132.

²⁵ Adam Przeworski, *Capitalism and Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver and Peter Mair, *Representative Government in Modern Europe: Institutions, Parties, and Governments*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006), 233.

²⁶ Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver and Peter Mair, *Representative Government in Modern Europe: Institutions, Parties, and Governments*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006), 241, 250–251.

²⁷ Stathis Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), 1–2.

²⁸ Oddbjorn Knutsen, "Europeans Move Towards the Center: A Comparative Study of Left-Right Self-Placement in Western Europe," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 10, 4 (1998), 292–316.

is therefore far removed from the supposed liberalism and moderation of the 'centre'.

Second, the median voter model offers a restricted view of the electorate and party organisation, in contrast to that of social cleavage. Drawing on European experience, Lipset and Rokkan identified four historical cleavages in society, which influenced the formation of political groups and parties and their policy objectives.²⁹ The first cleavage could be traced to the sixteenth century and the rise of religious and linguistic differences between peoples, the former between the establishment Catholic faith and the reformist versions associated with Protestantism (i.e. Lutherism, Calvinism, etc). The second occurred in the wake of the French revolution and the separation of Church and state, with individuals finding themselves on opposite sides over the issues. The third and fourth occurred during the nineteenth century with the emergence of material concerns associated with capital and control of the means of production as noted above; initially through the emergence of the bourgeoisie and subsequently the working class. To these four cleavages may also be added a fifth identified in the 1960s and 1970s: post-material regarding identity (e.g. gender, sexuality, race and the environment).³⁰ The impact of these cleavages led to political parties based on their commitment to the metropolitan or peripheral areas (e.g. parties based on urban or rural identification, language and religion as a result of the first cleavage), clerical and anti-clerical parties (based on the second cleavage). The third and fourth cleavages resulted in the formation of liberal parties (liberals being the vehicle of the bourgeoisie and against conservative power) and socialist and social democratic parties, which defended the working class's interests (social democracy supporting a more 'labourist' line).

Cleavages therefore gave rise to clearly definable social differences and associated political groups. This challenges the notion of a 'centre' due to their binary nature and therefore absence of consensus between different social and political groups. A consequence of this is that basing political parties being on social cleavages means that they are effectively the sum of their parts, thereby carrying over the adversarial relationship into the organisational sphere through the nature of the parties, which emerge.

Third, the catch-all party model presents a number of limitations. As the social cleavage account notes above, parties may be based on themes and features which go beyond the limited aggregative version set out in the median voter model; certain cleavages may be more salient and influence the extent to which a party may be prepared to adjust its position in order to attract support. Another criticism of catch-all parties is their relationship to others in the party system. Although catch-all parties are labelled centrist, distinctions may be drawn regarding them; this becomes evident in relation to differences between the 'centre' and the 'middle'. According to Hazan the centre constitutes a fixed point along the left-right spectrum and which holds despite differing historical and spatial contexts.³¹ A party, which occupies the centre, is one, which may be defined, in ideological terms as moderate. By contrast the middle denotes the midpoint on a spectrum, which is not ideologically fixed and may vary across different time periods and countries. A middle party is one, which is located between those between polar

²⁹ Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1967).

³⁰ Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Richard Hofferbert and Ian Budge, *Parties, Policies, and Democracy* (Oxford: Westview, 1994).

³¹ Reuven Hazan, *Centre Parties: Polarization and Competition in European Parliamentary Democracies* (London and Washington: Pinter, 1997), 23–25.

opposites and can therefore involve those of differing ideological hues. A third concern of catch-all parties is that they overlook a subsequent variant, which reduces the influence of the median voter on electoral calculations: the cartel party. In this party, leaderships have gained asymmetrical influence within the party over the membership while also being more susceptible to the influence of special interest groups who provide a growing share of political parties' finances.³² In sum then, it is questionable whether political parties really do seek to reflect the interests of the electorate and search for the median voter.

4 THE 'CENTRE' IN POLICY TERMS

Given the features associated with the 'centre', centrist public policy would be expected to be moderate, balancing a commitment to the status quo with a commitment to change and representing the views of a majority of the electorate. Drawing on the ideological spectrum in Figure 1, this suggests the dominance of liberalism, of which two main types dominated in the West: classical liberalism in the English-speaking world while in continental Europe a combination of social liberalism combined with 'moderate' and 'progressive' strands of conservatism.³³ Yet even this supposed distinction was not as stark as portrayed – at least in relation to Britain (and arguably to some extent in the US especially during the Great Society period of the 1960s) and in the decades between 1945 and the 1970s; rather, public policy could be characterised as dominated between Christian Democracy on the 'centre-right' and social democracy on the 'centre-left' during these years.

Despite ideological differences between the two approaches, there was much overlap between them; this perhaps contributed to the notion of a 'centrist' policy orientation in the period. Indeed, it could be said that this model remained in place (in Europe) regardless of whether a Christian Democrat or social democratic party was in government. This highlighted the highly pragmatic and consensual nature of public policy in the period and the extent to which it could be deemed 'moderate' since it did not challenge the fundamental structures underpinning social, political and economic relations.

Both Christian Democrats and social democrats relied on a specific historical context which consisted of economic growth and individual enrichment, along with the presence of a capitalist model of development which provided a significant role for the state and other social actors in a relatively corporatist set of arrangements. The threat of the Cold War and the US security umbrella encouraged both the centre-right and centre-left to adopt more consensual and inclusive forms of engagement and development, with the result that Christian Democrats tended to adopt more conservative stances on social issues while also supporting democratic norms and rejecting totalitarianism and social democrats rejecting revolution in favour of incremental improvements. Meanwhile, the expansion in public revenues through economic growth was used for redistribution.³⁴ Ideologically, Christian Democracy was in line with revolutionary or moderate conservatism, since it reflected a willingness to accept and engage with

³² Otto Kirchheimer, "The Catch-All Party," in *The West European Party System*, ed. Peter Mair (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

³³ Emil Kirchner, "Introduction," in *Liberal Parties in Western Europe*, ed. Emil Kirchner (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 3.

³⁴ Kees Van Kersbergen, *Social Capitalism: A study of Christian Democracy and the welfare state* (London: Routledge, 1995); Michael Gehler and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *Christian Democracy in Europe since 1945: Volume 2* (London: Routledge, 2004).

change rather than oppose it. At the same time it was more than conservatism: its commitment to institutional structures like parliament and freedom of expression meant that it shared some of the features associated with liberalism. Meanwhile, the social democrats' 'centrism' owed much to a more constrained and less radical approach to government.

From the 1960s and especially in the 1970s the context and the structures, which it had supported, began to give way. Economically, the West faced rising costs and declining production. This upset the corporatist balance between different social and political groups and both the influence and credibility of the state in the economy. In addition, this was followed from the 1980s with growing pressures through globalization, which brought both opportunities and challenges, with increased trade but also destabilizing (and in some cases debilitating) transfers of capital and finance. Socially, new challenges presented themselves; alternative post-modernist issues began to emerge, such as those related to the environment on the one hand and more liberal and less religious interpretation of identities on the other. Politically, the Cold War came to an end and socialism – both as a model to be feared (by the right) and admired (by the left) appeared to depart the scene.³⁵ Within the academy, these various developments coincided with a wider critique against modernity more generally. The post-modernists claimed that the social, economic and political problems highlighted the failure of theories and ideologies associated with grand narratives and universal truths and rejected them in favour of approaches, which were more local, relativistic and interconnected between different groups in society.³⁶ In the field of political science, analysts increasingly critiqued the hierarchical, bureaucratic and segmented forms of decision-making, recommending those which were more bottom-up, inclusive and holistic in scope.³⁷

In place of the previous overlapping model of centrist/liberal development, the period since the 1980s saw a fundamental shift. State capitalism and corporatism lost ground to a more reductive form of economic and social organization known as neo-liberalism. Whereas the previous centrist version was closer to the social liberal model, neo-liberalism combined elements of liberalism and conservatism, specifically liberalism in the economic sphere and conservatism in social policy.³⁸ This 'New Right' alliance of neo-liberals and neo-conservatives had advocates in the American and British governments and policymakers in the international financial institutions (IFIs) like the IMF and World Bank promoted a more 'hands-off' approach to development, removing the impediments and constraints imposed by a perceived bloated public sector and its replacement by more private enterprise. To this end governments and IFIs promoted liberalization, privatization and deregulation on entrepreneurs the one hand and dismantling the corporatists structures in place. At the same time they imposed tighter controls on social behaviour through legislation, reflecting the social conservatism of their social support. By undertaking these measures, governments both undermined the corporate balance between

³⁵ James Cronin et al, "Introduction: The New World of the Center-Left," in *What's Left of the Left: Democrats and Social Democrats in Challenging Times*, eds. James Cronin et al (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011); Michael Gehler and Wolfram Kaiser (eds.), *Christian Democracy in Europe since 1945: Volume 2* (London: Routledge, 2004).

³⁶ Krishnan Kumar, *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 27.

³⁷ Pauline Marie Rosenau, *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 7.

³⁸ Andrew Adonis and Tim Hames (eds.), *A Conservative Revolution? The Thatcher-Reagan Decade in Perspective* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994); Sean Hanley, "Getting the Right Right: Redefining the Centre-Right in Post-Communist Europe," in *Centre-Right Parties in Post-Communist East-Central Europe*, eds. Aleks Szczerbiak and Sean Hanley (London: Routledge, 2005).

social groups, weakening the trade unions and enhancing the power of entrepreneurs and financiers. Such disproportionally was reflected beyond the economic sphere and into the political arena, with the more privileged groups promoting their special interests to political leaders in cartel-like parties.

In time the New Right became the orthodoxy in terms of public policy. In the global North right-wing parties led the way with formerly social democratic like the Labour party in Britain, the SDP in Germany and the Socialists in France introducing similar measures at election time.³⁹ At the same time the process was a global phenomenon; in the global South governments also introduced neoliberal measures, including in Asia and especially India after 1991.⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the drive towards neoliberalisation was assisted by aid conditionality, especially by the IFIs, who demanded structural adjustment programmes, which required the liberalization of domestic economies along reductions in public spending and new fiscal constraints such as inflation targets.

By the end of the twentieth century the New Right course could arguably be portrayed as constituting the 'centre' – simply because there was no alternative to it. However, there are a number of problems associated with making such a claim. First, for neoliberalism to constitute the centre would suggest that it has been embraced by the majority. However, on one hand it was never fully accepted; indeed, the neoliberal model has been continually contested and critiqued over the past three decades, especially by those on the left. This is evident in the rise of the anti-globalisation movement in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which contributed to the development of the World Social Forum and inspired many of the leftist governments in Latin America during the 2000s. More recently, it has prompted a social backlash against the close relationship between governments and the financial sector, which have pressed for neo-liberal policies in the North both before and after the 2008-09 global financial crisis through greater austerity, giving rise to the Occupy movement since 2011. A range of criticisms has been made about neoliberalism, from its tendency to increase rather than decrease inequality, its oversight of the marginalised (especially given its emphasis on 'trickle down' as the main vehicle for increasing wealth within society), and its contribution towards the fragmentation of societal relationships, at both a corporate and individual level.

Second, neoliberalism was a radical project, which challenged the 'moderate' nature of centrist public policy. If the previous Christian Democratic/social democratic approach could be labelled 'centrist' this had much to do with the fact that it was equated with being balanced, pragmatic and consensual. In contrast, neoliberalism was a radical break with the previous set of economic and social arrangements; moreover, it was pursued to some extent with particular intensity and zeal by some of its advocates, whose world views were motivated by idealism rather than pragmatism, especially in the 1970s prior to its implementation in the following decade. In addition, in some cases – especially the global South – neoliberalism was not a collective endeavour,

³⁹ David Conradt, *The German Polity*, 7th ed. (London: Longman, 2001); Julian Le Grand and Will Bartlett, "Introduction," in *Quasi-Markets and Social Policy*, eds. Julian Le Grand and Will Bartlett (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993); Vivien Schmidt, *From State to Market? The transformation of French business and government* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁴⁰ Francine Frankel, "Introduction/Contextual Democracy: intersections of society, culture and politics in India," in *Transforming India: Social and Political Dynamics of Democracy*, ed. Francine Frankel et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Rob Jenkins, "The NDA and the politics of economic reform," in *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism*, eds. Katherine Adeney and Lawrence Sáez (London: Routledge, 2005), 173-174.

but was rather imposed on populations, which had little say in its adoption and implementation. The situation was exacerbated by the relative absence of democracy in these regions prior to the 1980s, most notably by military governments in Latin America (especially in Argentina and Chile) and in Southeast Asia.

Third, neoliberalism has come under challenge from within. This is evident in neoliberalism's shift between the 1990s and 2000s, away from a reduced role for the state and a greater concern with the presence and nature of public institutions and their impact on society. In the global South new governments rose to power which rejected unrestrained liberalization and increased the involvement of the state in industrial and social policy; in Latin America, for example, states have undertaken large-scale infrastructure projects and invested in cash conditional transfer social programmes which aim to break inter-generational poverty and enhance the education and health opportunities of mothers and children. IFIs have expressed support for such measures, reflecting a shift away from their previous advocacy for less state involvement.⁴¹ In the global North pressure for change has come from the failures of the hands-off approach of the 1990s and 2000s, when they failed to respond to the global financial crisis, which emerged after 2007. Both the deregulation and avarice of the banking sector threatened both domestic and global economies, requiring governments to inject enormous sums into the financial sector in order to prevent it from collapsing and to fund future credit lending and generation. At the same time, the failures of the model prompted a review of previous liberalization and the need for greater public security.

5 CONCLUSION: MOVING BEYOND CURRENT NOTIONS

This article has examined the nature of the 'centre', defining it in terms of ideology, its organisation in democracies (through the medium of electoral competition and the type of political parties associated with it), and its content in public policy. However, in trying to define these features, it has exposed a number of limitations associated with the concept. To a large extent, the centre is arguably defined more by what it is not as opposed to what it supports. This is reflected in a number of different ways, including the use of 'centre-left' and 'centre-right' as labels to define particular parties and the emphasis on themes associated with the centre (e.g. moderation, reformist) as opposed to its goals (i.e. whether it supports the status quo or seeks transformation of existing structures). Similar difficulties in definition are presented in the frameworks used to account for the nature of electoral competition. While the centre is a useful reference point in relation to economic theories of voting and the development of political parties which seek to appeal to the median voter associated with it, this approach overlooks other more sociological accounts of party development, namely the rise of social cleavages. In addition, difficulties with identifying a centrist form of public policy, since it appears to be entail an overlap of the more reformist elements of the left and right. Moreover, even the term 'reformist' portrays problems, since there is a tendency to equate reform with moderation and the centre as opposed to radicalism with extremism and the left and right.

⁴¹ Francisco Panizza, *Latin America after the Washington Consensus: The rise of the Left* (London: Zed Books, 2009).

That the 'centre' can be labelled in so many different ways highlights a central challenge at the heart of political analysis and discourse: that of dichotomies. While such a distinction can facilitate political analysis it may also reflect practitioners' and commentators' normative preferences to transcend the adversarial nature of politics which is hardwired into the notion of opposites. Whereas left and right is associated with radicalism, the centre is often equated with ideas of reform and moderation, suggesting rejection of conflict and greater commitment towards consensus, unity and solidarity. However, one should be wary of setting too great store in relation to these supposedly positive attributes associated with the centre. Contrary to these implicit assumptions, conflict is not entirely absent from notions of the 'centre'. This has been apparent in a number of ways. First, the centrist overlap between social democracy and Christian Democracy was largely possible because of an external security threat in the shape of the Cold War. Its demise helped hasten the already weakening elite consensus in support of this development model. Second, centrist policy has not reduced social and economic problems. Expanded welfare provision may have been popular, but it was reliant on economic growth and productivity, which neither social democrats nor Christian Democrats were capable of sustaining into the 1970s. In addition, the identification of the centre with the mainstream has wrought considerable social and economic dislocation and damage as a result of elites' consensus in favour of neoliberalism since the 1980s. Significant communities across the global North and South have suffered as a result of the public spending cuts, welfare contraction and lack of economic opportunities associated with these measures.

Yet the analytical and normative limitations associated with the 'centre' do not mean that the concept should be dismissed. Rather the need is for a more nuanced account. In particular this requires the search for more exact definition. Ideologically, this would mean locating a more distinct understanding of what the 'centre' entails both in terms of the concepts associated with it as well as the way that different groups use ideology to include or exclude others. First, given the multiplicity of meaning associated with particular terms by different ideologies, there is a need to examine more deeply the themes and features associated with the 'centre' by ending the simply association between liberalism and the centre on the one hand and by looking across the different ideological families to identify those political concepts where there is common – or at least overlapping – agreement. Second, there is a need to examine the power of language in relation to ideology and make more explicit which groups and political concepts are associated with promoting the notion of the 'centre'. To give an example of this, it is notable that contemporary neo-liberalism is portrayed by its largely elite-based advocates as 'mainstream', despite the significant social and economic dislocation that it has caused to the many. At the same time many neo-liberal supporters occupy positions in the US-based Tea Party movement, which tends to portray those who press for a more pro-active role for the state in development in a derogatory fashion and labelling them 'liberal'. In so doing, such groups both define the term 'centre' and mark those who may be included or excluded.

Organisationally, it means moving away from time-bound and geographically associated formations of social and political groups. On one hand this means looking at actors beyond social democrats and Christian Democrats in the four decades after 1945 to include others both in that period as well as since. Of particular importance is the need to examine the origins and development of the centre outside of the global North, to include other experiences in

other regions of the world. On the other hand, studying the experience of these parties since 1989 reveals much about the changing context in which they have operated and new challenges they face which may move them away from the centre or reshape our understanding of what it entails. Politically, for example, while European social democrats were relatively successful in the 1990s by adopting aspects of neoliberalism, social democrats from the global South have succeeded in the 2000s through their rejection of this approach. Meanwhile Christian Democrats have revived electorally in Europe over the past decade, although they now face new challenges, including the ideological revival of the left-right political divide, increasing secularism within the nativist population and immigration (and religiosity by such groups).⁴²

In sum then, this article makes an appeal for further and more detailed investigation of the 'centre'. Too often the term is used without due attention given to its meaning, whether as a means to build a coalition (through acceptance of the median voter model and search to build a catch-all political grouping) or as a means of accounting for difference between different views (drawing on the 'more than', 'less than' dimension associated with the ideological spectrum). As a result, the 'centre' is addressed only in passing. As this article has shown, the notion of the centre is both complex and fraught with challenge from several sides. Furthermore, only by placing the focus on the centre may it become possible for us to achieve a better and more comprehensive understanding of what is meant by the 'centre'.

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⁴² Emmanuel Gerard and Steven Van Hecke, "European Christian Democracy in the 1990s: Towards a Comparative Approach," in *Christian Democratic Parties in Europe since the End of the Cold War*, eds. Steven Van Hecke and Emmanuel Gerard (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2004), 301.

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THE PROCESSES OF ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION IN COUNTRIES OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Simona KUKOVIČ and Miro HAČEK¹

Before we can even discuss democratic consolidation, at least three minimal conditions must be fulfilled. Besides, those consolidated democracies should also fulfil several other conditions² that have not attracted such attention of scientific analyses, as have the three minimum conditions, among which Linz and Stepan specifically stress the importance of economic consolidation.³ This article analyses the processes of democratic consolidation in the former Yugoslav republics. It is clearly evident from various democratic consolidation measurements that most former Yugoslav republics have not yet reached the level of consolidated democracies; authors test the thesis that one of the reasons for that is also the unsuccessful economic consolidation.

Key words: democracy, economy, consolidation, former Yugoslavia, Slovenia.

1 DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN COUNTRIES OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Before we can even discuss democratic consolidation, at least three minimal conditions must be fulfilled. The first is the existence of a state because otherwise there can be no free elections or human rights. The second condition is that no democracy can be consolidated before the process of democratic transition has ended. A necessary but not also a sufficient prerequisite to finish the democratic transition is free, general and democratic elections. In many cases of free, general and democratic elections it became obvious that governments *de facto* lacked real decision-making power, which in spite of the institute of democratic elections

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² Linz and Stepan speak of five additional conditions for achieving a consolidated democracy, as follows: economic consolidation, the rule of law, the existence of an organised civil society, an efficient state bureaucracy and a relative autonomy of political society. See Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 2 (1996), 14–18.

³ Linz and Stepan also use the term economic society when speaking of consolidating the economic sphere. See Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 2 (1996), 15–16.

remained in the hands of the former rulers or other powers. The third condition of democratic consolidation is therefore the necessity of democratic rule. If democratically elected authorities violate the constitution, restrict human rights, interfere with the work of other independent authorities and do not govern within the limits of the rule of law, then we cannot talk of a democratic regime. It may be concluded that only democracies can be consolidated democracies.⁴ If we are to talk about a consolidated democracy, then we must also fulfil other conditions than those mentioned above. Linz and Stepan list five more interlinked prerequisites: economic consolidation, the rule of law, the existence of an organised civil society, an efficient state bureaucracy and the relative autonomy of political society.⁵

We can measure the success of democratic transition and democratic consolidation through various indexes. The most frequently used index is the Human Development Index (HDI), which is composed of various economical, social, demographic and other indicators. The precision and ability to determine any country's stage of development of the HDI is much greater than any other composite index or statistical indicator. The Human Development Index marks some of the fundamental achievements in a certain society, such as the average length of life, dissemination of knowledge, economic development and certain life standards. The Human Development Index is a more profound indicator than for example revenue per capita, because the latter is only one of the many means of human development but not also its final result.

Table 1 shows values of the HDI index in four different time periods, from 1995 to 2012. Besides the actual value of the index, it also gives two kinds of information. The first one regards the stage of development a specific country has achieved, whereas the second one shows the country's position in the world ranking. The results mentioned are entirely congruent with frequently published economic indicators – Slovenia scored best among the former socialist countries in all time periods between 1995 and 2012. In the last available period, 2012, Slovenia actually overtook three old EU Member States – Portugal, Greece and Italy – and nearly caught up with Austria. Between 1995 and 2012 all former socialist countries advanced in their world rankings, but their progress is very diverse; Slovenia for instance gained 16 places, Latvia even 48, but on the other hand, the FYR Macedonia only gained two places. The fastest advancing former socialist countries are Baltic States, which all gained between 38 and 48 places. It is also visible that all Central and Eastern European countries lowered their score from 2005 to 2012 due to the impact of world economic crisis.

⁴ See Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 2 (1996), 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*

TABLE 1: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI)* IN FORMER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES IN 1995–2012

COUNTRY	1995**	2000**	2005**	2012**	RANKING 1995***	RANKING 2012***
SLOVENIA	0.887; HD-37	0.884	0.917	0.892; VHD-21	1.	1.
CROATIA	0.759; MD-76	0.826	0.850	0.805; VHD-47	8.	9.
MONTENEGRO	-	-	-	0.791; HD-52	-	10.
BOSNIA AND SERBIA	-	-	0.803	0.735; HD-81	-	15.
FYR MACEDONIA	0.749; MD-80	0.772	0.801	0.740; HD-78	11.	14.
ROMANIA	0.767; MD-74	0.773	0.813	0.786; HD-56	7.	11.
BULGARIA	0.789; MD-67	0.795	0.824	0.784; HD-57	6.	12.
HUNGARY	0.857; HD-47	0.843	0.874	0.831; VHD-37	4.	5.
CZECH REPUBLIC	0.884; HD-39	0.857	0.891	0.873; VHD-28	2.	2.
SLOVAKIA	0.875; HD-42	0.835	0.863	0.840; VHD-35	3.	4.
POLAND	0.851; HD-52	0.845	0.870	0.821; VHD-39	5.	6.
LITHUANIA	0.750; MD-79	0.828	0.862	0.818; VHD-41	10.	7.
LATVIA	0.704; MD-92	0.812	0.855	0.814; VHD-44	12.	8.
ESTONIA	0.758; MD-77	0.833	0.860	0.846; VHD-33	9.	3.

* The Human Development Index is measured on a 0 to 1 interval, where 1 represents a fully developed country and 0 represents a completely undeveloped country.

** Countries are divided into three groups: high human development (marked HD), medium human development (MD) and low human development (LD). In 2010 there was also a fourth group added, very high human development (VHD), for the most developed countries in the world. Next to this mark we placed information about the individual countries' places in the world ranking.

*** Ranking among listed former socialist countries.

Source: Human Development Report; available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2013/> (25 June 2013).

Very similar to the Human Development Index is the Democracy Index, measured annually by an organisation called *Freedom House* and presented in a special report – *Nations in Transit*. The Democracy Index is composed of seven indicators. It includes evaluations of election systems, civil society, free media, democratic government (national and local levels), independence of the judiciary, and the spread of corruption. Every indicator is measured on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 represents the highest level of the democratic process and 7 represents the lowest level. *Nations in Transit* encompasses all former socialist countries including the successor states to the Soviet Union. These countries are divided into five groups. The highest group includes countries with the best ratings in the Democracy Index, i.e. consolidated democracies. In the 2006 Report⁶ countries assigned to this group were Slovenia, Estonia, Slovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Lithuania, Czech Republic and Bulgaria, and in 2012 all previously stated except Bulgaria.

If we compare reports of 2006 and 2012, the most noticeable characteristics are the regression of several countries in the regions in terms of their democratic consolidation, most noticeably of Bulgaria and Albania in terms of reassignment to lower groups, and regression in the grades of several other countries, most noticeably in Hungary, Slovakia, but also in Slovenia. There are also few cases of progress (Estonia, Czech Republic), but the differences between 2006 and 2012 grades are insignificant. We can also notice that all other former Yugoslav republics are listed in the second group of countries, among semi-consolidated democracies, making only small progress between 2006 and 2012. Almost all those countries received especially concerning low scores in the fields of independent media, spread of corruption and judicial framework and independence.

⁶ See Freedom House, available at <http://www.freedomhouse.org> (25 June 2013).

TABLE 2: DEMOCRACY INDEX 2006 AND 2012

	2006	2012
CONSOLIDATED DEMOCRACIES		
SLOVENIA	1.75	1.89
ESTONIA	1.96	1.93
SLOVAKIA	1.96	2.50
HUNGARY	2.00	2.86
LATVIA	2.07	2.11
POLAND	2.14	2.14
LITHUANIA	2.21	2.29
CZECH REPUBLIC	2.25	2.18
BULGARIA	2.93	-
SEMI-CONSOLIDATED DEMOCRACIES		
BULGARIA	-	3.14
ROMANIA	3.39	3.43
CROATIA	3.71	3.61
SERBIA	3.71	3.64
ALBANIA	3.79	-
FYR MACEDONIA	3.82	3.89
MONTENEGRO	3.89	3.82
TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENTS OR HYBRID REGIMES		
ALBANIA	-	4.14
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	4.07	4.36
UKRAINE	4.21	4.82
GEORGIA	4.86	4.82
MOLDOVA	4.96	4.89
SEMI-CONSOLIDATED AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES		
ARMENIA	5.14	5.43
KOSOVO	5.36	5.39
KYRGYZSTAN	5.64	-
RUSSIA	5.75	-
TAJIKISTAN	5.93	-
AZERBAIJAN	5.93	-
CONSOLIDATED AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES		
KYRGYZSTAN	-	6.00
RUSSIA	-	6.14
TAJIKISTAN	-	6.18
AZERBAIJAN	-	6.57
KAZAKHSTAN	6.39	6.54
BELARUS	6.71	6.68
UZBEKISTAN	6.82	6.93
TURKMENISTAN	6.96	6.93

Source: Freedom House, Nations in Transit; available at <http://www.freedomhouse.org> (25 June 2013).

2 THE NOTION OF ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION

The process of consolidation within the economic sphere of society is only one of the conditions leading to the consolidated democracy. Even the most economically consolidated and successful society would be but a pale reflection of democracy if it lacked the institutes of civil society or the rule of law. Linz and Stepan⁷ claim that a consolidated modern democracy requires a set of socio-political norms, institutions and arrangements in the sphere of economy – they term this set “economic society” – which is situated between the state and the market. Namely, democracy can be consolidated neither in the context of planned economy nor under the circumstances of a pure market economy.

We can ask ourselves why a completely free market cannot coexist with a modern consolidated democracy. In recent years, all sound studies of modern policies have empirically confirmed the existence of important degrees of state interventions into the market and state ownership in all

⁷ Ibid., 21.

consolidated democracies.⁸ Theoretically speaking, there are at least three arguments in support of such empirical findings and their validity. The first one stresses that, in spite of neoliberalistic claims of market's self-sufficiency, pure market economies cannot exist without a certain degree of state regulation. Namely, the market requires legislative enforcement of contracts and obligations, protection of investments and money, regulatory standards and protection of private as well as public property. Because of all this, the state has to undertake certain actions in the market.⁹ The second argument is the fact that even the most developed markets requires certain corrections by the state if the market is to yield optimum performance.¹⁰ The last and the most important reason, which supports the market intervention and state ownership in consolidated democracy, is the public character of government priorities and policies. If a democracy fails to implement policies whose direct result is the production of public goods in the domains of education, healthcare and transportation or the creation of social security network intended to alleviate social inequalities, then democracy as such cannot exist. Therefore, were a democracy to be born in a pure market economy it would, already by its own operation, transform such an economic system from a pure market economy into a mixed-type economy or a consolidated economic sphere, i.e., something Linz and Stepan¹¹ call "economic society".

First and foremost, the consolidation of democracy requires the institutionalisation of a politically regulated market. This, in turn, demands "economic society", which, however, can only operate efficiently under the conditions of efficient state mechanisms, intended for monitoring developments in the market. A frequent objective of states that underwent a transition into a new political and economic system in the late 1980s or early 1990s has been the project of privatisation of once socially owned business enterprises. Even such a goal, whose primary aim is to reduce the share of public property, is much easier to achieve if state mechanisms are efficient and strong enough. Economic deterioration, which is caused by the inability of state to exercise its regulatory functions, significantly contributes towards the problem of economic reform and democratisation.¹²

A modern consolidated democracy can be conceived of as a notion, which comprises five mutually, interlinked arenas,¹³ whereby each of them has to adhere to its own organisational principle. Democracy is more than a form of rule – it is a system of mutual interaction.¹⁴ None of these arenas can work

⁸ See, e.g., John R. Freeman, *Democracies and Market: The Politics of Mixed Economies* (Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1989).

⁹ See Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 2 (1996), 18–24.

¹⁰ Peter Murrell, "Can Neoclassical Economics Underpin the Reform of Centrally Planned Economies?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 5, 4 (1991), 59–76.

¹¹ See Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 2 (1996), 18.

¹² In post-communist Europe, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia have been on the way (or have already achieved this stage) towards an institutionalised economic society. This, however, cannot be said of Russia and Ukraine where the power and the capability of state to operate in the market still remain negligible. The consequences of inexistence of economic society are evident everywhere – let us only look at the case of Russia, whose population is 15 times that of Hungary and which has incomparably greater raw material reserves (especially crude oil and ores), yet in 1993, it only received 3.6 billion U.S. dollars worth of foreign investments, whereas in that same period, 9 billion dollars were invested into Hungary. See Richard Rose and Christian Haefler, *New Democracies Barometer III: Learning from What is Happening. Series Studies of Public Policy*, 230 (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 1994), 32–33.

¹³ This pertains to a developed civil society, the rule of law, institutionalised economic society, an efficient and modern state bureaucracy and, last but not least, a relatively autonomous political society. See Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 2 (1996), 17.

¹⁴ Adam Przeworski et al, "What makes democracies endure?," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 39.

properly without the support of other arenas. Hence, e.g., civil society cannot exist without the rule of law that would guarantee the citizens' rights and freedoms. Furthermore, each of these interlinked arenas exercises a certain amount of influence over others. Therefore, the arena, which is of greatest importance to our contribution, also significantly affects others and we dare say that one cannot even speak of a modern consolidated democracy without economic consolidation.

3 ECONOMIC INDICATORS AND THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN COUNTRIES OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Let us ask which factors influence a certain country at a given moment so that it will achieve and maintain the status of a consolidated democracy. This question is answered by Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub and Fernando Limongi¹⁵ in a very large-scale project, which was presented for the first time in 1995 at a conference, entitled "Consolidating Third Wave Democracies" in Taiwan and published the following year in the *Journal of Democracy* magazine. The abovementioned researchers claim that these factors are democracy, state-owned assets, economic growth with moderate inflation rates, reduction of inequalities, a favourable international atmosphere and, last but not least, parliamentary institutions. Their entire research project is based on data acquired in 135 countries during the period of 1950–1994.¹⁶ In this period, they identify 224 different governments, of these 101 cases of democratic rule and 123 various cases of undemocratic rule, which are not of such importance to our contribution. During the time of their research, 50 cases of transition in the direction of democracy and 40 cases of transition in the opposite direction were recorded.

In certain intellectual and political science circles (especially in the USA) a claim has been surfacing ever since the 1950s that democracy is a cyclical phenomenon. In this context, two statements have been made, which directly refer to economic consolidation. The first one says that various forms of undemocratic rules are more suited to achieving economic development in poorer countries; and the second one maintains that, the moment a once poor country achieves a certain degree of development, the rule of democracy obtains.¹⁷ However, both the research project of the previously mentioned team of researchers and the results of our analysis indicate that these two theses do not withstand critical judgement. In their project, the research team thus claim that there is no basis for a greater probability of achieving higher economic growth rates under undemocratic forms of rule.¹⁸ 56 states with various forms of undemocratic regimes had less than 1,000 U.S. dollars of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita at the beginning of research.¹⁹ By the project's conclusion, only 18 of the countries had

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 39–55.

¹⁶ The year in which an individual state achieved independence or, alternatively, the year in which certain data was first available is considered as the year in which data gathering began.

¹⁷ See Adam Przeworski et al, "What makes democracies endure?," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 40.

¹⁸ For more on relationships between economic growth and the form of political rule see John F. Halliwell, "Empirical Linkages Between Democracy and Economic Growth," *British Journal of Political Science*, 24 (1993), 225–248.

¹⁹ Gross Domestic Product (the GDP) is the most frequently mentioned and applied economic indicator, which shows the developmental phase of a certain state. Comparative analyses most often apply the GDP per capita, expressed in market prices (current prices according to the current exchange rate) or the GDP per capita, expressed in purchasing power parity. In former socialist states, it is especially problematic to monitor the private sector, primarily as regards informal economic activities, which is therefore to a greater extent done on the basis of more or less accurate estimates provided either by central statistical offices of individual states or by international organisations. The latter is especially

managed to pass the threshold of 1,000 U.S. dollars of GDP per capita, only 6 managed to exceed the limit of 2,000 U.S. dollars of GDP per capita and only 3 had crossed the 3,000 U.S. dollars line. The other 29 countries even experienced economic setback during that same period.

As regards the data on GDP per capita during the period of 1991–2011 (Table 3) gathered in countries that were established in the territory of former Yugoslavia, it is evident that, in 1995, only Bosnia and Herzegovina was part of the group of states with less than 1,000 U.S. dollars of GDP per capita; during the period of 1991–1999, the group of states that had between 1,000 and 2,000 U.S. dollars of GDP per capita included (in addition to Bosnia and Herzegovina) Serbia, Montenegro and the FYR Macedonia. Among all six countries that were created in the ex-Yugoslav area, two groups of states can be clearly defined according to one of the key economic indicators –GDP per capita.

In the first group of countries, comprising Serbia, Montenegro, the FYR Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the influence of political and economic change, which occurred during the transition into a democratic system at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, is reflected in the reduction of GDP per capita during the 1991–1999 period, by over 68 per cent on average. Another important characteristic of this group of states is a fairly high rate of growth in GDP per capita between 1999 and 2011, namely 387 per cent in Serbia and 369 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, respectively. On the basis of these data we may conclude that, in the analysed period, the GDP per capita at first decreased quite a lot due to an exceptionally difficult phase in democratic transition and then, as the actual preconditions for the beginning of the process of democratic consolidation were met, it rose sharply, thereby in 2011 greatly exceeding the 1991 values. This fact is one of the significant indicators of a distinctive two-stage character of processes of democratic transition and consolidation in the states belonging to this group.

In the second group of countries, including only Slovenia and Croatia from the territory of ex-Yugoslavia, the influence of political and economic change that occurred in the late 1980s and the early 1990s during the transition into a democratic system did not manifest itself in a long-term decrease in the GDP per capita. The value of GDP per capita as a primary indicator of a country's economic success²⁰ was steadily increasing in Slovenia and Croatia (if the period from 1991 to 2011 is considered). Thus, between 1991 and 2011, the GDP per capita in Croatia increased by 73 per cent despite the war that took place during this period; during the same period, GDP in Slovenia increased by 64 per cent, but the outset value of Slovenian GDP per capita in 1991 was 133 per cent that of Croatia.

So, what is the position of Slovenia in the group of states of the ex-Yugoslav area, especially if we compare it to the most successful former socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe as well as with certain European Union Member States? As the Table 3 shows, Slovenian GDP per capita, expressed in current prices was much higher in all three analysed time periods, both in comparison with the most successful Central and Eastern European states and with the states created in the territory of Former

characteristic of states that were established in the territory of the former Soviet Union, therefore data from this geographical region tend to be somewhat less reliable.

²⁰ See Thomas Nowotny, *Economic Transition, Democratic Consolidation and the Integration of Central Eastern European Countries into European Structures*. NATO Economic Colloquium 1997. Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/colloq/1997/97-4-2.html> (25 June 2013).

Yugoslavia. On the other hand, in all the analysed time periods, Slovenian GDP per capita was much lower, primarily relative to Austria and Italy, whereas in 2011, Slovenian GDP per capita almost reached that of Greece. A significant advantage of Slovenian GDP, which had been equal to at least two times the GDP of former socialist states in 1991, somewhat decreased in 2011, as the closest pursuer – Czech Republic – was only 4,102 U.S. dollars short of Slovenian GDP per capita, or, in other words – the Czech Republic had only achieved 41 per cent of Slovenian GDP per capita in 1991, whereas in 2011, the respective figure was already 83 per cent.²¹

TABLE 3: GDP PER CAPITA AT CURRENT PRICES (IN U.S. DOLLARS) IN DIFFERENT TIME PERIODS

COUNTRY	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011
A.						
SLOVENIA	6,850	10,651	11,254	14,617	23,528	24,709
B.						
CROATIA	2,938	4,733	5,083	7,661	13,406	14,217
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	1,471	595	1,301	2,241	4,044	4,807
FYR MACEDONIA	1,441	2,279	1,836	2,345	3,984	4,925
SERBIA	3,898	2,294	1,440	2,614	5,277	5,579
MONTENEGRO	2,842	1,889	1,316	2,716	5,842	7,196
C.						
HUNGARY	3,292	4,411	4,714	8,243	13,553	13,919
CZECH REPUBLIC	2,783	5,600	6,059	9,343	17,499	20,607
POLAND	2,193	3,622	4,377	5,676	11,132	13,424
SLOVAKIA	2,179	3,648	3,790	6,151	13,803	17,545
D.						
AUSTRIA	22,282	30,064	26,588	31,218	45,133	49,686
ITALY	21,124	19,867	21,243	26,172	35,754	36,124
GREECE	9,784	12,231	12,742	17,356	27,088	26,251

Source: United Nations Statistic Division; available at <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=SNAA&f=grID%3a101%3bcurrID%3aUSD%3bpcFlag%3a1> (28 June 2013).

The team of researchers²² further claims that it is the economic development, which importantly affects the percentage of probability of survival of a democratic rule. Democracies that are severely underdeveloped in economic terms and have a GDP per capita of less than 1,000 dollars have thus a 12 per cent probability of being overthrown in the next twelve months. This percentage decreases to 6 per cent for democracies with a GDP per capita between 1,000 and 2,000 U.S. dollars,²³ to 3 per cent for democracies with a GDP per capita ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 U.S. dollars and to one per cent for democracies having a GDP per capita in the 4,000 to 6,000 U.S. dollars range.²⁴ Considering these observations and if we once again take a look at our data on states created in the territory of the former Yugoslavia (Table 3) we can infer that, from the aspect of economic underdevelopment, political systems in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the FYR Macedonia are the most compromised, as their economies had just below 5,000 U.S. dollars of GDP per capita in 2011, which does not take into account the effects of global economic crisis that were manifested in 2012 and 2013. Hereby, it needs to be stressed that the level of economic development is but one of many factors influencing the survival or demise of a democracy and that the abovementioned percentages of probability are by no means to be

²¹ Also, the distance to the closest pursuer within the group of former Yugoslav republics, i.e., to Croatia, decreased between 191 and 2011. In 1991, Croatia achieved only 43 per cent of Slovenian GDP per capita, whereas in 2011, it was at 58 per cent.

²² The research project undertaken by Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub and Fernando Limongi, which has already been mentioned several times. See Adam Przeworski et al, "What makes democracies endure?," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 39–55.

²³ This, in other words, means that the expected lifespan of a democracy under such conditions is 17 years.

²⁴ See Adam Przeworski et al, "What makes democracies endure?," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 39–55.

considered as absolute. Democracies in states with a GDP per capita exceeding 6,000 U.S. dollars are invincible according to the level of economic development. Never has it happened so far that a democratic system would fall in a state whose GDP per capita has been higher than 6,055 U.S. dollars,²⁵ so in this respect, Slovenian, Croatian and Montenegrin democracies are perfectly safe. Thus, proceeding from the data provided by foreign researchers and those of our own research project, we can conclude that the degree of economic development is an important (but, of course, far from being the only one) factor that influences the survival and consolidation of democracy. Or, if we summarize Martin Lipset, “the more a state is developed in economic terms, the greater is the probability of its democratic rule’s survival”.²⁶ The question why democracies tend to be more stable in economically more developed countries has been attracting extensive debates. One of the reasons also mentioned by Martin Lipset²⁷ stresses the fact that the intensity of distributive conflicts tends to be lesser in countries, which have achieved a higher degree of economic development.

One of the key economic indicators contributing towards democratic consolidation is the economic growth accompanied by a moderate inflation rate. The research team²⁸ state that, contrary to Martin Lipset’s²⁹ and Mancur Olson’s³⁰ arguments,³¹ rapid economic growth³² does not contribute towards the destabilisation of democracy. According to them, only the opposite can be true: democratic rule has a greater probability of consolidation and survival if annual GDP³³ growth is about five per cent or higher. The team of researchers further establish that negative economic growth rates are one of the most important reasons for destabilisation.

With respect to these findings, a methodological error has to be emphasised, which frequently occurs in scientific literature: authors often neglect the starting and the finishing positions of countries – i.e., their situations at the beginning and the end of a research period, respectively. It is by no means possible to equate the degree of economic growth in Slovenia, which had had a stable economic growth all the way between 1991 and 2009 when negative impacts of global economic crisis hit it, with a state in which the process of democratic transition has barely begun for whatever reason. Thus, Slovenia’s 5.3 per cent and Bosnia and Herzegovina’s 9.6 per cent of annual GDP growth in 1999 can by no means be interpreted as a sign of Bosnia and Herzegovina been twice as successful as Slovenia, because such a piece of data also requires at least the consideration of data on growth rates for the preceding years and the data on absolute values of GDP per capita in the same year, respectively. In the selected case, a rate of 5.3 per cent of annual GDP growth in Slovenia equalled just over 400 U.S. dollars per capita, whereas a rate of 9.6 per cent of annual GDP equalled

²⁵ Argentinean rate of GDP per capita in 1976 (in 1995 international dollars).

²⁶ Lipset, Martin. “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy.” *American Political Science Review*, 53, 1 (1959): 69.

²⁷ See Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1981), 27–63.

²⁸ See Adam Przeworski et al, “What makes democracies endure?,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 39–55.

²⁹ See Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1981).

³⁰ See Mancur Olson, *The economics of the wartime shortage* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1963).

³¹ In their works, these two authors warn of a greater probability that a democratic rule may become destabilised under circumstances of rapid economic growth (they define it as an annual GDP growth rate exceeding 5 per cent).

³² Rapid economic growth is also defined as exceeding a 5 per cent annual rate of increase in GDP by the group of authors whose research we refer to.

³³ Average annual GDP growth rate is an important indicator of economic trends within a national economy and tells us by how much per cent the GDP of a certain state increases in an observed year.

“only” slightly less than 100 U.S. dollars per capita. During the period between the acquisition of independence and the year 2008, only Slovenia was experiencing permanent and positive economic growth among all the countries in the territory of former Yugoslavia, whereas other states were experiencing more or less intensive rises and falls, which became more distinct especially during the 2008–2011 period, which witnessed the negative effects of global economic crisis in all six states that are successors to the former Yugoslavia.

TABLE 4: GDP GROWTH (ANNUAL)³⁴ IN FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS IN DIFFERENT TIME PERIODS (PER CENT)

COUNTRY	1993	1996	1999	2002	2005	2008	2011
A. States with a GDP beyond 6,000							
SLOVENIA	2.8	3.6	5.3	3.8	4.0	3.6	-0.2
CROATIA	8.3	5.9	-1.0	4.9	4.3	2.1	0.0
MONTENEGRO	-45.3	-27.5	-9.6	1.9	4.2	6.9	3.2
B. States with a GDP below 6,000							
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	-23.4	8.9	9.6	5.3	5.0	5.4	1.7
FYR MACEDONIA	-7.5	1.2	4.3	0.9	4.4	5.0	2.8
SERBIA	-30.5	7.8	-11.2	4.1	5.4	3.8	2.0

Source: World Bank, available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG/countries> (30 June 2013). For Bosnia and Herzegovina, Monte Negro and Croatia in 1993, see World Macroeconomic Research, available at http://kushnirs.org/macroeconomics/gdp/gdp_bosnia_herzegovina.html#t1 (27 June 2013).

States that were established in the territory of former Yugoslavia can be distributed into two groups according to the levels of GDP per capita growth (Table 3). Between 1987 and 1990, when they were still federate republics of the former Yugoslavia, all of them had negative annual GDP growth rates,³⁵ which was a direct consequence of exacerbated crisis in the then Yugoslavia plus the beginning of the end of the socialist system and the onset of democratic transition. In all the states (except Slovenia), this negative impact was even enhanced in the second measurement period (1990–1993). Slovenia was the only state from the area of former Yugoslavia that had positive annual GDP growth rates already in 1993, whereas in other states, this effect was visible only after 1996 and even later in some countries. The decade between 1990 and 2000 was also characterised by gross oscillations in economic growth rates; so in case of Montenegro, the GDP decreased by incredible 45 per cent in 1993 relative to the year before, whereas in 1995, the GDP increased by equally astounding 40 per cent over the preceding year.³⁶ The data in Table 4 allows us to confirm without any reservation the interdependence of both economic indicators – the GDP per capita and annual rates of GDP growth. Slovenia, being the only state with a relatively high GDP³⁷ per capita, had also been achieving stable positive annual GDP per capita growth rates up until the period of global economic crisis, which had only further increased the gap between Slovenia and other ex-Yugoslav countries.

³⁴ Annual percentage growth rate of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency. Aggregates are based on constant 2,000 U.S. dollars. GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources.

³⁵ See Miro Haček, *Razvojni indikatorji držav na območju bivše Jugoslavije (Development indicators of former Yugoslav Republics)*. Ljubljana: Research Team of the Centre for Political Science Research, Institute of Social Sciences, 2000a.

³⁶ See *World Macroeconomic Research*, available at http://kushnirs.org/macroeconomics/gdp/gdp_monte_negro.html (27 June 2013).

³⁷ Of course in relation to other states in the territory of former Yugoslavia and also to other Central and Eastern European states.

Surprisingly, the research team³⁸ find out that a moderate inflation rate has a greater contribution towards democratic consolidation than a very low rate of inflation.³⁹ It is necessary to mention here that these finding supports the hypothesis of Albert Hirschman made in 1981, which also claimed that “a moderate inflation rate strengthens a democracy’s stability”.⁴⁰

Data in Table 5 allow us to conclude that a majority of states from the territory of former Yugoslavia, with the exception of Serbia and Montenegro, had managed to curb inflation by 1999. In some of the states, inflation even decreased by over a hundred times over the 1993–2011 period. In Slovenia, inflation rate decreased by over 20 times during that same period, falling from 32.9 per cent in 1993 to 1.8 per cent in 2011. Characteristic of the analysed group of states were also extraordinarily high 1990–1996 inflation rates, which was undoubtedly affected by general political and economic conditions in each of the studied countries. If our findings are compared to those of the research team, a conclusion can be made that none of the post socialist states from the former Yugoslav area has exceeded a 30-per-cent annual inflation rate since 2002, a limit that the foreign research team’s research project defines as the threshold at which inflation may contribute towards the destabilisation of a democracy.⁴¹

TABLE 5: INFLATION IN FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS IN DIFFERENT TIME PERIODS (CUSTOMER PRICE INDEX; ANNUAL; PER CENT)⁴²

COUNTRY	1993	1996	1999	2002	2005	2008	2011
SLOVENIA	32.9	9.8	6.1	7.5	2.5	5.7	1.8
CROATIA	1500.0	4.3	4.0	1.7	3.3	6.1	2.3
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	na	na	na	na	na	7.4	3.7
FYR MACEDONIA	na	2.5	-1.3	2.3	0.2	8.3	3.9
SERBIA	na	95.6	42.5	19.5	16.1	12.4	11.1
MONTENEGRO	na	na	na	na	na	8.8	3.2

Source: World Bank, available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FP.CPI.TOTL.ZG/countries?page=3> (30 June 2013).

The next economic indicator that can importantly influence the (de)stabilisation and the process of democratic consolidation is the unemployment rate,⁴³ which, however, poses the biggest problems for comparative analysis due to methodological reasons. Namely, in centrally planned economies, unemployment rate was not among the officially recorded statistics. All post socialist European countries now do have employment offices, which provide information on the numbers of officially registered employment seekers, but we have found out that the official data on unemployment rates published by either national statistical bureaus or employment offices is unrealistic, which is especially the case with most of the countries in the territory of former Yugoslavia. The reason for grossly

³⁸ See Adam Przeworski et al, “What makes democracies endure?,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 39–55.

³⁹ According to the claims made by them, even higher degrees of democratic consolidation can be expected in states experiencing annual inflation rates between 6 and 30 per cent than in those with annual inflation rates below 6 per cent.

⁴⁰ Albert Hirschman, *The Social and Political Matrix of Inflation: Elaboration’s on the Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 177–202.

⁴¹ See Adam Przeworski et al, “What makes democracies endure?,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 42.

⁴² Inflation measured by the consumer price index reflects the annual percentage change in the cost to the average consumer of acquiring a basket of goods and services that may be fixed or changed at specified intervals, e.g., on a yearly basis.

⁴³ The team of researchers merely mention unemployment rate as one of the factors that influence the (de)stabilisation and the process of democratic consolidation. See Adam Przeworski et al, “What makes democracies endure?,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 35–45.

underestimated rates of actual unemployment is in part also the shortage of reasons (motivations) for registration. Namely, in these states, there are much higher unemployment rates than those official statistics record, as the latter only account for registered and active job seekers. Certainly, this problem is present in developed market economies as well, yet its scale is not as large as in states undergoing transition. In a range of transition economies, there is also the so-called grey employment market, unrecorded by official statistics, yet offering occasional employment to a multitude of officially unemployed people. Data presented in the Table 6 is official data of World Bank, collected through the application of the same methodology in all the states included, which on the one hand enables comparability, yet on the other hand, precisely due to methodology's strictness, results in a lot of missing data for individual time periods.

In comparison with some other former socialist states, Slovenian unemployment rate was somewhat high⁴⁴ throughout the entire analysed period; on the other hand, we can see that Slovenia is the only state belonging to the group of countries created in the area of former Yugoslavia that has had its unemployment rates constantly below 15 per cent for the last twenty years, as well as it is the only state that had been witnessing slowly decreasing unemployment rates after 1993, of course, with the exception of the most recent period marked by global economic crisis whose effects have been exceptionally evident through this indicator. In the remaining ex-Yugoslav states, it is still impossible to trace any explicitly positive employment trends, with some of the states still experiencing unemployment rates close to 30 per cent, even exceeding this figure. Probably, high unemployment rates have become a mainstay of these states' economic development and will only slowly decrease. Hereby, it is interesting to stress that unemployment has been one of the most salient issues in the European Union as well, becoming all the more visible in the recent years because of negative effects of global economic crisis. Therefore, unemployment rate is one of those indicators exhibiting the lowest or even inexistent differences between post socialist states and European Union Member States. In the European Union, even higher unemployment rates can be found in certain, especially southern EU Member States (Greece, Spain, Portugal, France and Italy) than are some of the values in the Table 6, whereas unemployment rates are somewhat lower in western and northern EU Member States.

TABLE 6: UNEMPLOYMENT IN FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS IN DIFFERENT TIME PERIODS (PER CENT OF TOTAL LABOUR FORCE)⁴⁵

COUNTRY	1991	1993	1996	1999	2002	2005	2008	2011
SLOVENIA	7.1	8.7	6.9	7.3	6.3	6.5	4.4	8.2
CROATIA	11.1	na	10.0	13.5	15.1	12.6	8.4	13.4
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	17.6	na	na	na	na	na	23.9	27.6
FYR MACEDONIA	na	na	na	32.4	31.9	37.3	33.8	31.4
SERBIA	na	na	na	na	na	20.8	13.6	na
MONTENEGRO	na	na	na	na	na	30.3	16.8	19.7

⁴⁴ On the one hand because of lax criteria of registering unemployment and on the other (according to the International Monetary Fund) due to too generous social benefits for those registered as unemployed. See *International Monetary Fund*, available at <http://www.imf.org/January 2001> (28 June 2013). See also Miro Haček, "Proces ekonomske konsolidacije v državah Srednje in Vzhodne Evrope (Process of Economic Consolidation in CEE)," in *Demokratski prehodi I. (Democratic Transition I.)*, eds. Danica Fink Hafner and Miro Haček (Ljubljana: Faculty of Social Sciences, 2000b), 59–77.

⁴⁵ Unemployment refers to the share of the labour force that is without work but available and seeking employment.

Source: World Bank, available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS/countries> (30 June 2013).

One of the most important economic indicators, which also describes the (un)successfulness of a national economy, are certainly the external debt stocks of a state. External debt stocks include the sum of principal debt returns repayable in foreign currency, goods or services plus interests owed to international financial institutions or other sovereign states. Table 7 shows external debt stocks as a percentage of GDP, which gives quite a realistic depiction of certain state's indebtedness and its ability to repay the borrowed funds.

The first finding evident from the data is the growth of real debt in all the countries created in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, with the only exceptions of Slovenia, the FYR Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose debts decreased somewhat in the period of 2005–2008, only to increase substantially in the following period of 2008–2011. In all the states established in the ex-Yugoslav area, real debt increased during the 1999–2011 period, with Croatia leading (119.1 per cent increase), followed by Slovenia (94.1 per cent increase) and Macedonia (57.4 per cent increase), whereas Serbia was the last (15.4 per cent increase). Slovenia and Montenegro are also the only two of all the former Yugoslav countries whose external debt stocks were less than one half of their GDP in 2001, respectively.

TABLE 7: EXTERNAL DEBT STOCKS (PER CENT OF GDP/GNI⁴⁶) IN DIFFERENT TIME PERIODS

COUNTRY	1999		2002		2005		2008		2011	
	% GNI	% GDP	% GNI	% GDP	% GNI	% GDP	% GNI	% GDP	% GNI	% GDP
SLOVENIA	na	24.1	na	27.8	na	26.7	na	22.0	na	46.9
CROATIA	na	47.0	na	53.9	na	72.1	na	85.4	na	103.0
BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA	44.4	na	44.2	na	55.9	na	51.1	na	58.8	na
FYR MACEDONIA	39.9	na	45.3	na	50.8	na	48.3	na	62.8	na
SERBIA	62.2	na	76.5	na	64.9	na	65.7	na	71.8	na
MONTENEGRO	na	na	na	na	na	na	32.7	na	45.8	na

Sources: Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia, available at <http://www.stat.si/indikatorji.asp?id=28&zacobd=1-1995> (30 June 2013); World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.DOD.DECT.CD> (30 June 2013); World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.DOD.DECT.GN.ZS> (30 June 2013); Osnovne informacije o Hrvatskoj, available at http://www.hnb.hr/statistika/h_ekonomski_indikatori.pdf (27 June 2013); Ekonomski indikatori, http://www.hnb.hr/statistika/h_ekonomski_indikatori.htm (25 June 2013).

3 CONCLUSIONS

The findings provided by our short research study perfectly match those of the research team,⁴⁷ which emphasise the importance of economic factors in democratic consolidation. Hence, we corroborate the claims made by Martin

⁴⁶ Total external debt stocks to gross national income. Total external debt is debt owed to non-residents repayable in foreign currency, goods, or services. Total external debt is the sum of public, publicly guaranteed, and private nonguaranteed long-term debt, use of the IMF credit, and short-term debt. Short-term debt includes all debt having an original maturity of one year or less and interest in arrears on long-term debt. GNI (formerly the GNP) is the sum of value added by all resident producers plus any product taxes (less subsidies) not included in the valuation of output plus net receipts of primary income (compensation of employees and property income) from abroad.

⁴⁷ See Adam Przeworski et al, "What makes democracies endure?," *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 49.

Lipset⁴⁸ stating that a democratic rule has better chances at consolidating in economically more successful states. Of course, this is by no means to say that other factors, such as the setting up of democratic institutions, the rule of law, the guaranteeing of human rights and fundamental freedoms are not of key importance to democratic consolidation. Our statement refers solely to the fact that a democratic rule has a greater possibility of consolidation in an economically more successful state. It is true, though, that economic consolidation cannot be achieved without prior or at least parallel political consolidation. Democracy may even be consolidated in poor countries, yet these are faced with a need to accelerate economic development, reduce inequalities, manage inflation, not to mention the existence of democratic institutions, the guaranteeing of human rights, the rule of law, etc. The research team correctly establishes that poverty and economic stagnation are the major obstacles in the way towards democratic consolidation.

The second finding refers to the situation of economic (democratic) consolidation of the states created in the territory of the foreign common state of Yugoslavia. A democracy becomes consolidated when the rate of risk⁴⁹ decreases in proportion to its age.⁵⁰ Dahl further claims that the probability of attaining democratic consolidation is greater when democracies “operate” successfully during a given time span in political, social, economic and other terms. On the basis of our research project and other similar ones, we can confirm this claim at least from the economic aspect. Democratic rule has a greater chance of survival and consolidation in economically more successful states.⁵¹ After several years of economic progress, the risk rates diminish enough to allow us to speak of economic democracy. Hereby, the level of GDP a state achieves is not that much important for democratic consolidation as are stability, straightness and sufficient speed of economic development.

Considering all this, it seems justified to claim that the only two states from among the ex-Yugoslav countries that can be counted – though with certain reservations mentioned above – as belonging to the group of not only politically but also economically consolidated democracies are Slovenia and Croatia, whereas the remaining four countries in the territory of former Yugoslavia – Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia – have a long and difficult path still ahead of them. Namely, the secret to the resilience of a democracy is hidden in economic development – not only, as some theories claimed back in the 1960s,⁵² in various forms of undemocratic rule, but in a democracy built upon democratic institutions, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms plus the rule of law.

⁴⁸ See Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1981).

⁴⁹ The rate of risk stands for the probability that a democratic rule will transform into some other form of rule, but with undemocratic properties. This rate is higher for states that have only recently become democratic systems, for states that can be defined as economically underdeveloped, yet with existing and operational democratic institutions, etc. See Adam Przeworski et al, “What makes democracies endure?,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 35–52.

⁵⁰ Robert A. Dahl, *Transition to Democracy. Address delivered to the symposium on “Voices of Democracy”*, University of Dayton, Centre for International Studies, March 1990, available at <http://www.freedomhouse.com> (28 June 2013), 16–17.

⁵¹ See Adam Przeworski et al, “What makes democracies endure?,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7, 1 (1996), 50.

⁵² Martin Lipset, “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy,” *American Political Science Review*, 53, 1 (1959), 69–105.

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TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL PROFILES OF MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS: THE CASE OF EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES

Boštjan UDOVIČ and Marko LOVEC¹

The characteristics of the institutional organisation of Ministries for foreign affairs (MFAs) enable to reflect on the general conditions influencing the operation of the foreign ministries and on the way the institutional profiles as such influence the foreign policies of individual countries. In order to be able to establish the differences and patterns in institutional profiles of the MFAs, this article proposes to observe the vertical and horizontal concentration in their organisational structures, the role of political-mandate based leadership and the balance between the main foreign policy focus areas. In the empirical part of the article, the MFAs of the 28 European Union member states are put into comparison. The article concludes by reflecting on the empirical and theoretical implications of the proposed characteristics of the institutional profiles.

Key words: Ministries for foreign affairs, organisational structures, European Union, member states.

1 INTRODUCTION

The *conditio sine qua non* of the modern society is that things have to be done (and be changed) rapidly. The same goes for the theoretical concepts, which are in most cases a minute after their conceptualisation already outdated and have to be refigured, rebuilt or even abandoned. But this is not the case for each theoretical concept. There are some concepts in the International Relations theory, which were made recently, but they are treated as they were coming from the first stages of world civilisation. One of these concepts is the concept of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which has become an axiom of modern international relations. Despite its intriguing nature, the role of its structure, performances,² agent-structure relations³ and

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² Ana Bojinović Fenko and Boštjan Udovič. "Zaključek", in *Pax Franca, Pax Britannica, Pax Americana, Pax Sinica?: primerjalna analiza zunanje politike velikih sil in držav s hitro rastočimi gospodarstvi*, ed.

internal and external forces⁴ have not been discussed as much as it would be necessary for opening a wide debate on the role and position of Ministries of Foreign Affairs in international relations.⁵ Acknowledging this we have decided to open the Pandora box of the institution that was born in March 1626 by Cardinal Richelieu⁶ and was developing its characteristics through the whole 18th and 19th century. At the dawn of the 20th century it was formatted in a modern manner and as such served for almost 100 years.

The globalisation of world politics, which gained impetus after the dissolution of the bipolar system, cut off the classical division between political and consular diplomacy, which was part of the MFAs from the Directorate reform in 1797.⁷ Thus, instead of being formed by two parallel courses the modern MFAs are framed by smaller interdependent departments, which have three characteristics: at first they are particular and cover a specific dossier. Secondly, the field of work of these small departments in some fragments overlap with other departments, creating a fertile ground for the collaboration between them. Finally, the multitude of departments instinctively offers the possibility to the political decision-makers to hierarchise them from most to less important.⁸ The relevance of different dossiers is illustrated by their names (department, sector, directorate general) and their position in the MFAs organogrammes. And these present the framework of our debate.

We argue, and this is the main leading line of our article, that organogrammes of the national MFAs does not reflect only the structure of the MFA, but can give us more data about the relevant topics and priorities of national foreign policy.⁹ Firstly because the “substance” in organogrammes (areas of work) presents the topics, which a state has chosen as relevant for conducting its foreign policy, while the second issue tackles the hierarchisation of topics and their couplings in different wider structures (such as directorates). Thus, we do not perceive organogrammes as a pure administrative tool, but rather as a symbolical toolbox reflecting the hard-core priorities of national foreign policy. As such organogrammes can serve as a proxy for the (*ex-ante*) identification of behavioural patterns of states in the international community.

Ana Bojinović Fenko (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2011), 221–226; Derek Beach, *Analyzing foreign policy* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Ernest Petrič, *Foreign policy: from conception to diplomatic practice* (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2013).

³ Sabina Kajnc, *Razvoj evropske zunanje politike: od evropskega političnega sodelovanja do evropske varnostne in obrambne politike* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2008).

⁴ Some cases are described in Boštjan Udovič, *Ekonomska in gospodarska diplomacija* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2009); Boštjan Udovič, “Central-European Intra-Slavic Diplomacy: A comparative approach,” *Journal of Comparative Politics*, 4, 1 (2011), 31–51; Boštjan Udovič, “Je diplomacija prvenstveno (le) politična?,” *Družboslovne razprave*, 28, 69 (2012), 7–24.

⁵ More on the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a dependent or independent actor in national foreign policy see in Barry H. Steiner, “Diplomacy and international theory,” *Review of international studies*, 30, 4 (2004), 493–509.

⁶ Boštjan Udovič, “*Modern ministries of Foreign Affairs*”. Lecture held at Faculty of Social Sciences, 8th October 2013.

⁷ The introduction of consular affairs into the diplomatic apparatus was done for the first time by the Directorate during the third phase of French revolution (Vladimir Potemkin, *Zgodovina diplomacije*, 1. zvezek (Ljubljana: DZS, 1947), 340ff.

⁸ Ana Bojinović Fenko and Boštjan Udovič. “Zaključek,” in *Pax Franca, Pax Britannica, Pax Americana, Pax Sinica?: primerjalna analiza zunanje politike velikih sil in držav s hitro rastočimi gospodarstvi*, ed. Ana Bojinović Fenko (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2011), 221–226.

⁹ The priorities the MFAs set forward and the means they employ reflect the characteristics of the ministries’ institutions of representation and decision-making, influencing the importance of the individual interests in the field of foreign policy, including the importance of the interests of ministries’ bureaucrats (Donald F. Kettl and James W. Fesler, *The politics of the administrative process* (Washington: CQ, 2005)). Foreign policy goals and means also reflect the costs related with the execution of assignments with regard to the MFAs’ organizational structure (Jonathan R. Tompkins, *Organization theory and public management* (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005)).

The article is built of four inter-related parts. The first part presents a short theoretical insight in the theory on the structure of MFAs, which establishes a framework for the empirical part, presented in the second part of the article, where we elaborate particular indicators enabling us to quantify the operational variables. In the third part we present the obtained results section with two methodological tools – quantitative and qualitative, while the last part merges together the discussion in conclusions and offers some recommendations for future research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CONCENTRATION IN ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONALISED POLICY FOCUS AREAS

Modern MFAs are headed by ministers, who are supported by one or more deputy ministers, sometimes responsible for various aspects of foreign policy. Next in line of the hierarchy are political and administrative directors, also known as “general secretaries” or “cabinet chiefs”. These are followed by heads of individual organisation units, also known as “heads of directorates” and by chiefs of individual sectors/departments that are located in each of the directorates. Apart from this relatively clear line of command, there are usually various organisational units which are either partly detached from the organisational structure or combine various layers of the hierarchy. These are organs providing ministers with strategic or special administrative support, also known as “strategic councils” and “private staff”, various inter-institutional bodies, intra-institutional bodies such as the ad hoc bodies, task groups and special deputies, as well as the offices providing administrative, technical support and security.¹⁰

The number of units constituting each vertical level of command in individual MFAs varies from time to time and from country to country. The organisational structures of the MFAs with larger number of vertical levels compared to the number of horizontal units on each of the levels can be considered to be more “hierarchical” or “centralised”.¹¹ In such ministries the workflow is adequately distributed, so are the responsibilities. The employees are aware of their duties and the communication channels are well established. The decision-making process in such organisation is gradual and the line of commandment is strict and top-down, which in unstable situation offers a greater accommodation comparing to the “horizontal” structure.¹²

On the other hand, the MFAs with relatively short vertical and stronger horizontal distribution can be considered as more “horizontal” or “dispersed”. Such organisations have a large and more intensive flow of information comparing to the vertical ones, and the decision-making process is a teamwork. That is why the adopted decisions are rarely changed or

¹⁰ Ernest Petrič, *Foreign policy: from conception to diplomatic practice* (Leiden, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2013); Brian Hocking, Jan Melissen, Shaun Riordan and Paul Sharp, *Futures for Diplomacy: Integrative Diplomacy in the 21st century* (The Netherlands: Clingendael, 2012); Brian Hocking, Jan Melissen, Shaun Riordan and Paul Sharp, “Whither Foreign Ministries in a Post-Western World,” *Clingendael Policy Brief*, 20th April 2013.

¹¹ In order to make the distinction between the vertical and horizontal relations in organisational structures more straightforward, the relations between two vertical units can be treated as more “arbitrary” and relations between two horizontal units as more “deliberative”.

¹² Boštjan Udovič, “*Modern ministries of Foreign Affairs*”. Lecture held at Faculty of Social Sciences, 8th October 2013.

reversed.¹³ One of the problems in horizontal decision-making system is the abundance of communication channels, which after-effects the speed of the decision-making process. This is usually slower comparing to the vertical process. Another weakness of the horizontal process is the lack of commandment, which can in some cases lead to institutional instability, violation of authorisation and under-specialisation of available resources.¹⁴ Finally, the de-centralisation and horizontal bargaining also makes the structure as such relatively inflexible to respond to the external pressures, which may turn out to be problematic, especially in times when substantial changes in contexts take place.¹⁵

However, these two models are just theoretical models. Thus in the past the MFAs were mostly centralised and operated vertically, where each level was acquainted with its tasks and authorities. This situation started to change after the WWI, when the idea of democratisation and openness of diplomacy took the floor,¹⁶ and was reinforced after the end of WWII, when publicity was posted as *conditio sine qua non* for the development of national foreign policy and diplomacy. Such *milieu* asked for the restructuring of the MFAs' structure from the vertical one to a more deliberative, i. e. horizontal one. The post-Cold war enthusiasm strongly influenced the shaping of the MFAs towards more de-centralised, but only for a short period. At the end of the 90s it became clear that "too much democracy harm the effectiveness and efficiency of the working-process of the MFAs".¹⁷ Thus it is not surprising that Hocking et al.¹⁸ do not abandon the 'old' MFAs' structure, but argue that instead of structural reforms the MFAs should focus on substantive matters. According to them the MFAs should focus on four activities, which have to be conducted simultaneously: (a) Drive innovation in the development and management of delivery and knowledge networks, home and abroad, within and without government; (b) Influence policy through ensuring that these networks map the objectives of international strategy; (c) In a post-western world of fragmenting rule sets and contested values, serve as the GPS both to government and society as a whole; (d) Provide the 4-dimensional vision that will ensure coherence over time and across geography. All these four suggestions do not discuss the de-centralisation of the MFAs as was the trend in the 90s, but argue only that old bottles should be refilled with new wine.

In modern MFAs, the mandate of top ministry officials is bound with the political mandate of the government. Nevertheless, the scope of political leadership functions in individual MFAs that are fixed with political mandate, can vary. In some cases, a fixed number of posts in the leadership structures may be occupied by high-ranking officials, permanently employed by the MFAs. The heads of directorates, which are typically drafted from ministry officials, are often represented inside the leadership structures. In addition, political leadership structures may be supported by advisory bodies with relatively permanent composition and by general administration of the MFA. On the other hand, it is no surprise to see top political leadership of the

¹³ Vlado Dimovski, Sandra Penger, Miha Škerlavaj in Jana Žnidaršič, *Učeca se organizacija: ustvarite podjetje znanja* (Ljubljana: GV založba, 2005).

¹⁴ Jonathan R. Tompkins, *Organization theory and public management* (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005); Boštjan Udovič, "Modern ministries of Foreign Affairs". Lecture held at Faculty of Social Sciences, 8th October 2013.

¹⁵ Donald F. Kettl and James W. Fesler, *The politics of the administrative process* (Washington: CQ, 2005).

¹⁶ Vlado Benko, *Znanost o mednarodnih odnosih* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 1997).

¹⁷ Boštjan Udovič, "Modern ministries of Foreign Affairs". Lecture held at Faculty of Social Sciences, 8th October 2013.

¹⁸ Brian Hocking, Jan Melissen, Shaun Riordan and Paul Sharp, *Futures for Diplomacy: Integrative Diplomacy in the 21st century* (The Netherlands: Clingendael, 2012).

MFAs supported by their own political advisory bodies and staff (“personal cabinets”). The leadership structures that are bound with political mandates are generally more prone to the immediate political demands and pressures. More substantial role of political-mandate based leadership may either improve governance efficiency in terms of increased responsiveness or turn out to be a hindrance due to the constant changes in direction and reallocations of resources it introduces. Stronger role of the more permanent staff, on the other hand, enables a more stable and strategic employment of resources, but can also produce institutional rigidity.¹⁹

Regarding the substance covered by MFAs, there is no single logic. Taking into consideration the historical environment in which the MFA was established, it is presumable that one of its key functions would be political and security affairs. Beside political and security affairs the modern international relations pushed up also the economic affairs, which became in most of the cases a constitutive part of the modern MFA.²⁰ Although political and economic affairs are in practical terms far from unrelated, there is a clear conceptual difference between the two, with political affairs concentrated on the issue of power (“distribution”) and economic affairs concerned with the issue of efficiency (“allocation”).²¹ The conceptual difference is reflected in varying perspectives when the same issues are under question. Due to conflicting elements of the two perspectives and limited resources available to the MFAs, they cannot only be perceived as diverging, but can as well be treated as rival.²²

However the structuration of MFAs does not agglomerate only around the political and economic affairs, but includes also other determinants influencing the conduction of national foreign policy. Among them the relevance of bilateral relations as a whole (not only political and/or economic) should be mentioned, as relations with neighbouring countries and relations with countries with shared political, economic, geographical, cultural or other similarities/interests,²³ as well as various issues which are in principle of global nature, such as the general multilateral relations, especially in the framework of the universal international organisations and various global issues.²⁴ All these variables strongly influence the structuring of the national MFAs, which are organised according to the “substantive” or “geographic” line. While the “substance” lies in the political-economic pair, the geographic structure reflects the orientation of national MFAs on regional-global issues.²⁵ Nevertheless the combination of all four parameters establishes a diamond

¹⁹ Donald F. Kettl and James W. Fesler, *The politics of the administrative process* (Washington: CQ, 2005).

²⁰ Boštjan Udovič, *Ekonomska in gospodarska diplomacija* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2009); Nicholas Bayne and Stephen Woolcock, *The new economic diplomacy: decision-making and negotiation in international economic relations* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011).

²¹ Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley, *Understanding international relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

²² Donna Lee and David Hudson, “The old and new significance of political economy in diplomacy,” *Review of international studies*, 30 (2004), 343–360; Huub Ruël and Lennart Zuidema, *The Effectiveness of Commercial Diplomacy: A Survey among Dutch Embassies and Consulates* (Clingendael: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2012); Jennifer Kesteley, “Belgian Multinationals and Public-Private Partnerships in Economic Diplomacy”, *Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, forthcoming.

²³ Björn Hettne, András Inotai and Osvaldo Sunkel, ed., *Globalism and the new regionalism* (Houndmills: Macmillan Press; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

²⁴ Bojko Bučar, “Universalism and regionalism in Slovenian foreign policy,” *Teorija in praksa*, 29, 5/6, 484–490; Milan Brglez, “The importance of United Nations for the development of Slovenian foreign policy”, in *20 year of Slovenian UN membership*, ed. Božo Cerar, Marcel Koprol and Andrej Kirm (Ljubljana: Ministrstvo za zunanje zadeve in CEP, 2012), 53–55.

²⁵ Brian Hocking, Jan Melissen, Shaun Riordan and Paul Sharp, *Futures for Diplomacy: Integrative Diplomacy in the 21st century* (The Netherlands: Clingendael, 2012); Brian Hocking, Jan Melissen, Shaun Riordan and Paul Sharp, “Whither Foreign Ministries in a Post-Western World,” *Clingendael Policy Brief*, 20th April 2013.

structure, in which each MFA can elaborate its priorities according to internal and external requirements.²⁶

TABLE 1: DISTINCTIVE INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MFAs (AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS)

Concentration in organisational structure	Hierarchical (flexible)	Dispersed (specialized)
Political mandate bound leadership	Mandate-bound (responsive)	Permanent (stable)
Fields of work	Political (distributional) vs. economic (allocation-based)	Regional (particular) vs. global (universalist)

Source: Own elaboration.

3 MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE: THE CASE OF 28 EU MEMBER STATES

In this part we would like to presents the results obtained by our research on the structure of the MFAs of 28 European Union member states. The first part enlightens the methodology and data gathering, while the following subchapters analyse the structure of the 28 MFAs from different perspectives, which establish a framework for our final debate and conclusion(s).

Methodology and data gathering

The concentration in organisational structures of the MFAs of the 28 EU member states will be estimated by treating each identifiable function, post or body with a relatively autonomous stance as one individual unit. The identification of individual organisational units will be based on official organogrammes set forward by the MFAs. The relations between each two institutional units in terms of whether they are predominantly hierarchical (superior/subordinate position of the unit) or horizontal (equal position of the unit) will be established in accordance with the way the position of individual units is explained/presented in official organogrammes, obtained from official web pages of the national MFAs in October 2013. The individual units present on more vertical levels will be counted for on each of the vertical levels where it is stationed.²⁷ The indication of the concentration rate (Factor of concentration – Fc) will be based on the relation between the total number of vertical levels and total number of all units. The organisational structures of the MFAs with a relatively higher Fc will be considered as more hierarchical (as opposed to being more dispersed in case of relatively lower Fc).

The influence of politics on MFAs structure will be presented by the share of political mandate functions in relation with all individual units constituting political leadership. Thus, a (relatively) high factor of political mandate based functions (Fp) will indicate that the structure of the analysed MFA is strongly influenced by political changes, while the lower index will show that the bureaucratic system²⁸ within the MFA is quite resilient to different political shocks.²⁹

²⁶ Boštjan Udovič, "Modern ministries of Foreign Affairs". Lecture held at Faculty of Social Sciences, 8th October 2013.

²⁷ In case of major differences in the quality of data and/or criteria employed by the MFAs when putting together the organogrammes, these differences will be indicated and taken into account.

²⁸ See more in Miro Haček, *Politiki in visoki javni uslužbenci: kdo vlada?* (Ljubljana, Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2009).

²⁹ A high Fp means that the MFAs procedures and activities are under strong supervision of the current political elite, while the low level of Fp illustrates that the decision-making process within the MFAs is committed to proficiency and political changes influence it only marginally.

The relative importance of individual fields of work that preoccupies the MFAs will be assessed by identifying how the individual units fit into the four distinctive categories (where such categorisation makes sense and where enough information are available). Individual organisation units will be classified on the basis of information available in the official MFAs' organogrammes, such as the names and short descriptions. If necessary, individual units will be taken into account under more categories. Since individual organisational units (sectors/departments), operating in the framework of larger organisational units (directorates), may fit into different categories, they will be included in the general estimation. In case of overlapping categorisation of individual units, their share will be divided up between the categories in accordance with their relative relevance. Larger organisational units (directorates) will be weighted with 3:1.³⁰ Mathematical shares of organisational units in each of the four categories will reflect the relative policy orientation of the MFAs.

4 CONCENTRATION IN ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

The number of individual organisation units in the organisational structures of the MFAs of EU member states that was identified (U) ranges from 5 in case of Romania and Portugal (**) to 53 in case of Slovakia. The organisational structures of majority of the MFAs are composed of 15–31 organisation units. Relatively large differences in the number of organisation units are due to the diverging quality of the available data (see *, **). Taking the latter into account, it would be possible to argue that an average MFA of an EU member state consists of 20 to 30 organisation units, while – interestingly – the new member states (NMS) have the most branched MFAs' structure (Slovakia: U=53; The Czech Republic: U=51; Poland: U=42; Slovenia: U=31). It is interesting that MFAs of Germany and France (being the two biggest EU countries) have a 'smaller' MFAs structure than Slovakia and Czech Republic.³¹

The number of vertical levels in organisational structures of the MFAs ranges from 3 (Hungary*, Luxemburg*, Poland* and Romania**), not taking Portugal** (Uh=2) into account, to 6 in the case of France. With the number of vertical levels, data is relatively comparable due to the fact that the information of the sub-directorate/sector level does not affect the number of total hierarchical levels. The average number of hierarchical levels is four. Interestingly, the two categories that stand out from the average number of hierarchical levels are the NMS, especially smaller ones (the Czech Republic: Uh=5; Latvia: Uh=5; Slovakia: Uh=5; Slovenia: Uh=5), and some smaller North European countries (Denmark*: Uh=5; Finland: Uh=5).

The factor of concentration (Fc), indicating the balance between the number of hierarchical levels and all the organisation units incorporated in the organisational structures of the MFAs, is the lowest in case of Slovakia (Fc=0.09), meaning the organisational structure of the Slovakian MFA is the least concentrated or the most dispersed (approx. on average 10 units per each vertical level). The highest Fc is featured by Austria*, Denmark and Hungary, having all the Fc=0.33, which means that the MFA structure in these countries is concentrated and hierarchical (approx. on average 3 units

³⁰ This share is "arbitrary", based on different pre-calculations.

³¹ The U for Germany is 45, while for France 46.

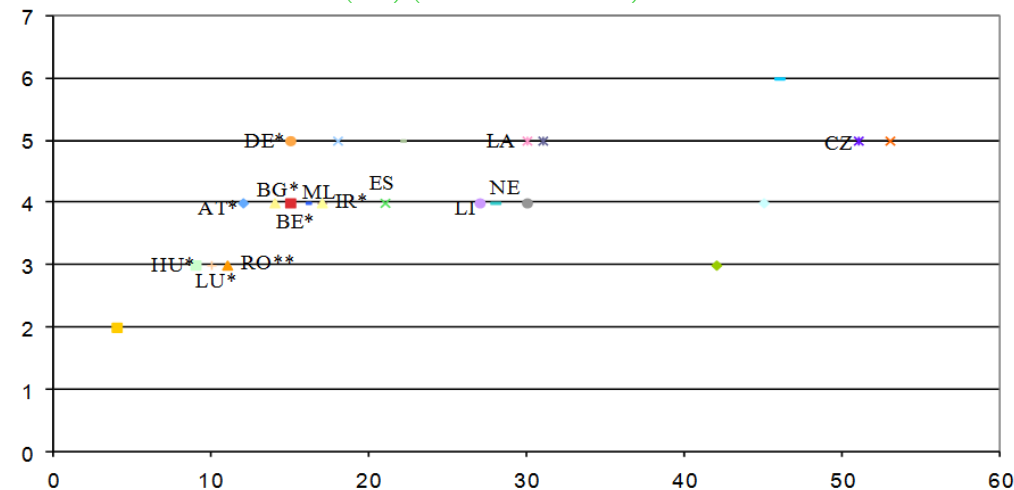
per each vertical level). The average Fc (of all examined countries) is around 0.2 (1:5) (table 2).³²

TABLE 2: THE MFAS OF THE EU MEMBER STATES: NUMBER OF ORGANISATION UNITS (U), NUMBER OF HIERARCHICAL LEVELS (UH) AND FACTOR OF CONCENTRATION (FC)

	U	Uh	Fc		U	Uh	Fc		U	Uh	Fc		U	Uh	Fc
AT*	12	4	0.33	ES	17	4	0.24	IT*	18	5	0.28	PT**	4	2	0.50
BE*	15	4	0.27	FI	22	5	0.23	LA	30	5	0.17	RO**	11	3	0.27
BG*	14	4	0.29	FR	46	6	0.13	LI	27	4	0.15	SL	53	5	0.09
CR	21	4	0.19	GE	45	4	0.09	LU*	10	3	0.30	SI	31	5	0.16
CY	-	-	-	GR	-	-	-	ML	16	4	0.25	SP	-	-	-
CZ	51	5	0.10	HU*	9	3	0.33	NE	28	4	0.14	SE	30	4	0.13
DE*	15	5	0.33	IR*	17	4	0.24	PL	42	3	0.07	UK	-	-	-

*Partial data (data on sub-directorate/sector level not available) **Partial data. Source: Own elaboration.

FIGURE 1: THE MFAS OF THE EU MEMBER STATES: NUMBER OF ORGANISATION UNITS (U) (HORIZONTAL AXIS) AND NUMBER OF HIERARCHICAL LEVELS (UH) (VERTICAL AXIS)

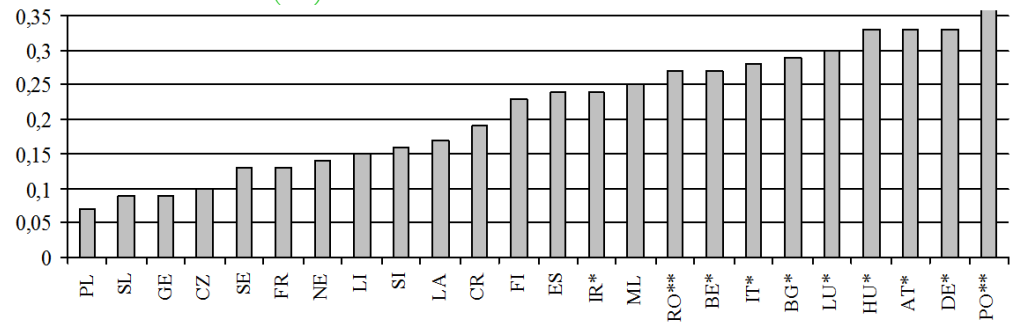


Source: Own elaboration.

However, if we analyse the MFAs with diverging data sets available separately, we can find out the most concentrated organisational structure of MFAs in Austria*, Denmark* and Hungary*, as well as in Malta, Estonia and Finland. The opposite goes for Poland, Slovakia and Germany, as well as for Ireland*, Belgium* and Italy*. We can see that the countries with more hierarchical MFAs are relatively smaller and that there is a substantial share of NMS amongst the countries with the most decentralized organisational structures (see figures 1 and 2).

³² The problem with the comparison of the relative Fc comes from the fact that the data on sub-directorate/sector level are not available for all MFAs (*) and that the MFAs, where this data are not available, feature a higher Fc.

FIGURE 2: THE MFFS OF THE EU MEMBER STATES BY FACTOR OF CONCENTRATION (FC)



Source: Own elaboration.

Another way to look at the relative concentration of the MFAs structure is to take as relevant the data dealing with organisation units positioned at the level of directorates/departments or higher. Of course such kind of perspective creates its own bias, since organisational structures typically become more extensive and diverse at lower levels of hierarchy. However, the comparison between the upper ends of hierarchies also gives us additional perspective on the segmentation of MFAs organisational structures, where in our case the highest centralisation can be found in Finland (Fc=0.44), Lithuania (Fc=0.43) and Estonia (Fc=0.43), while the most dispersed MFAs are the Polish (Fc=0.12), German (Fc=0.13), Latvian (Fc=0.24) and Irish (Fc=0.24). In comparison with the general Fc, average Fc of the upper-end is for 0.1 point higher. This can be explained by the fact that concentration typically increases when we approach the upper-end of the hierarchy.

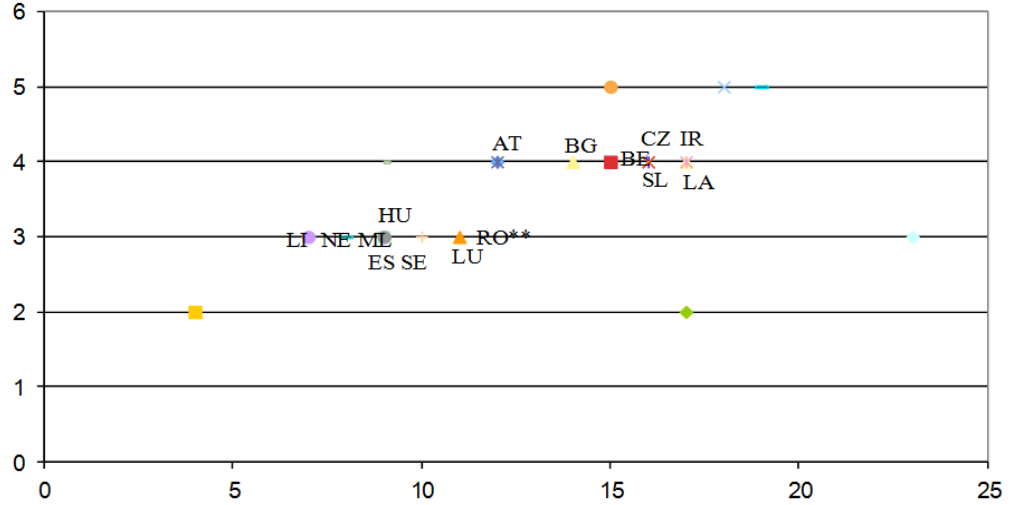
TABLE 3: THE UPPER END ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES OF THE MFAS OF EU MEMBER STATES: NUMBER OF ORGANISATION UNITS (U), NUMBER OF HIERARCHICAL LEVELS (UH) AND FACTOR OF CONCENTRATION (FC)

	U	Uh	Fc		U	Uh	Fc		U	Uh	Fc		U	Uh	Fc
AT	12	4	0.33	ES	7	3	0.43	IT	18	5	0.28	PT**	4	2	0.50
BE	15	4	0.27	FI	9	4	0.44	LA	17	4	0.24	RO**	11	3	0.27
BG	14	4	0.29	FR	19	5	0.26	LI	7	3	0.43	SL	16	4	0.25
CR	9	3	0.33	GE	23	3	0.13	LU	10	3	0.30	SI	12	4	0.33
CY	-	-	-	GR	-	-	-	ML	9	3	0.33	SP	-	-	-
CZ	16	4	0.25	HU	9	3	0.33	NE	8	3	0.38	SE	9	3	0.33
DE	15	5	0.33	IR	17	4	0.24	PL	17	2	0.12	UK	-	-	-

**Partial data. Source: Own elaboration.

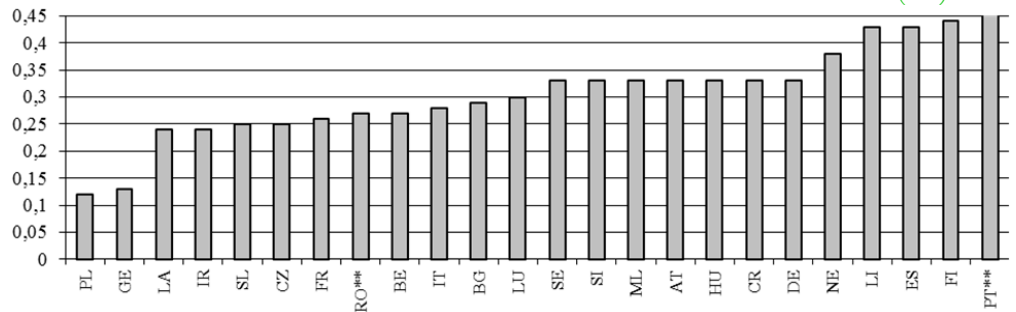
Generally speaking, the ranking of the individual MFAs in accordance with the Fc of the upper hierarchical level does not differ much from the ranking in accordance with the general Fc that takes into account all the organisation units (on which data is available), thus supporting the upper findings regarding the position of individual MFAs. Whatsoever, the most evident divergence in MFA rankings based on the two Fc can be found in cases of Lithuania (Fc=0.15/0.43), Netherlands (Fc=0.14/0.38) and Latvia (Fc=0.17/0.24). Diverging rankings demonstrate that in the Dutch and Lithuanian case the MFAs the leadership structure is much more centralised than the rest of the organisation, and that in the case of Latvia, the leadership structure is relatively dispersed (table 4 and figures 3, 4).

FIGURE 3: THE UPPER END ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES OF THE MFPS OF EU MEMBER STATES: NUMBER OF ORGANISATION UNITS (U) (HORIZONTAL AXIS) AND NUMBER OF HIERARCHICAL LEVELS (UH) (VERTICAL AXIS)



Source: Own elaboration.

FIGURE 4: THE UPPER END ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES OF THE MFAS OF EU MEMBER STATES BY FACTOR OF CONCENTRATION (FC)



Source: Own elaboration.

Political leadership structures

In an average MFA, political leadership structures account for a little more than half of all units located in the upper end of organisation hierarchy (director level or higher). The share of the organisation units, constituting the political leadership structures, in the total number of units, located at upper level of organisational structures of the MFAs, is the highest in case of Lithuania (100 %), Latvia (76 %) and Germany (61 %), meaning that in these countries, political leadership structures of the MFAs are the strongest. However, the smallest are in the case of Luxemburg (20 %), Ireland (24 %) and Estonia (29). With some exceptions, such as Lithuania and Latvia, in the MFAs of the larger EU member states, political leadership structures tempt to be stronger.

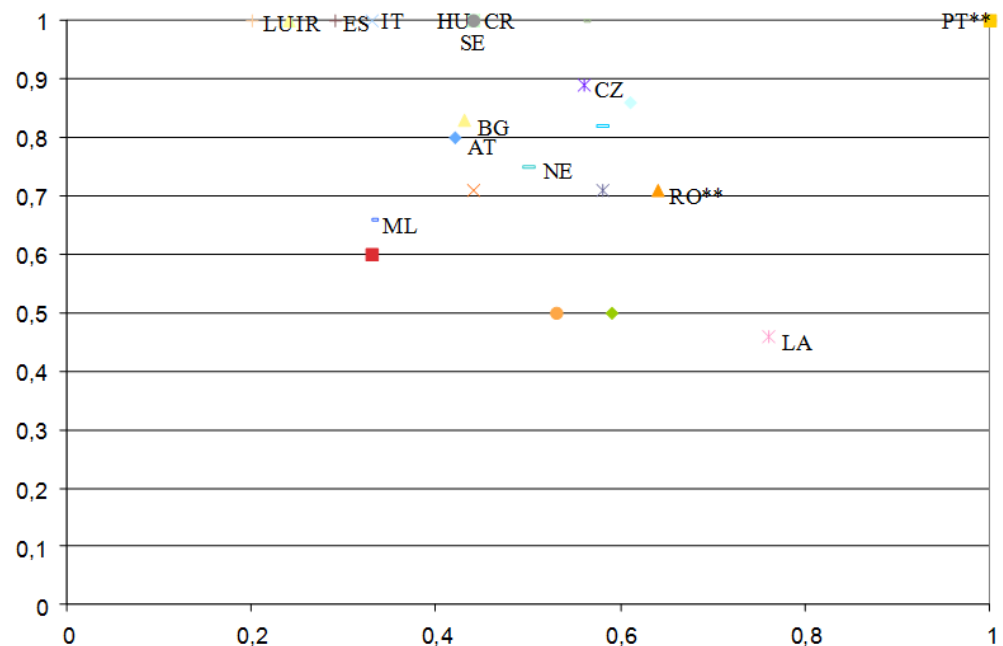
TABLE 4: THE SHARE OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POST (PL) AND THE FACTOR OF POLITICAL MANDATE BASED LEADERSHIP POSTS (FP) IN ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES OF THE MFAS OF EU MEMBER STATES

	PL	Fp		PL	Fp		PL	Fp		PL	Fp
AT	0.42	0.8	ES	0.29	1	IT	0.33	1.00	PT**	1.00	1.00
BE	0.33	0.6	FI	0.56	1	LA	0.76	0.46	RO**	0.64	0.71
BG	0.43	0.83	FR	0.58	0.82	LI	1.00	1.00	SL	0.44	0.71
CR	0.44	1	GE	0.61	0.86	LU	0.20	1.00	SI	0.58	0.71
CY	-	-	GR	-	-	ML	0.33	0.66	SP	-	-
CZ	0.56	0.89	HU	0.44	1.00	NE	0.50	0.75	SE	0.44	1.00
DE	0.53	0.5	IR	0.24	1.00	PL	0.59	0.50	UK	-	-

**Partial data. Source: Own elaboration.

In almost all MFAs, the share of political leadership posts that are bound with the political mandate is higher than 50 %. The share of posts in the political leadership structures of the MFAs (Factor of political posts–Fp) is the strongest in case of Sweden, Luxemburg, Lithuania, Italy and Cyprus, with the absolute value of Fp=1, which means that these countries bound the whole political leadership structure with a political mandate. On the other end of the spectrum are the MFAs located in Latvia (Fp=0.46), Poland (Fp=0.5) and Denmark (Fp=0.5), where the role of political leadership structures that are bound with a political mandate is weaker. The MFAs located in smaller member states are characterised by lower shares of political mandate.

FIGURE 5: THE SHARE OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POST (PL) (HORIZONTAL AXIS) AND THE FACTOR OF POLITICAL MANDATE BASED LEADERSHIP POSTS (FP) (VERTICAL AXIS) IN ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES OF THE MFAS OF 28 EU MEMBER STATES



Source: Own elaboration.

In addition, there seems to be a weak negative correlation between the relative strength of political leadership structures and posts bound with political mandates, demonstrating that to a certain extent, more extensive political leadership structures and stronger political mandate based leadership represent alternative types of organisation of leadership structures (more in table 4 and figure 5).

Policy areas in institutional focus

In large majority of the MFAs, it is possible to identify organisation units entitled to political (P), economic (E), global (G) and regional (R) affairs. The exception to this trend is a lack of individual organisation unit that would explicitly deal with economic issues, which is evident in cases of Bulgaria*, Croatia and Hungary*. It is worth noting that in two of the cases mentioned (*), data on the organisation units on the sub-directorate/sector level is not available. On the average, the relation between political and economic issues on the one hand, and between global and regional on the other, is balanced, meaning that the distribution of organisation units between the two pairs of focus areas is, mathematically speaking, almost perfect.

TABLE 5: POLICY AREAS IN FOCUS OF THE MFAS OF EU MEMBER STATES

	P	E	G	R		P	E	G	R		P	E	G	R
AT*	3	2.5	1	5.5	GE	7	4.5	19	6.5	PL	3	5.5	7.5	11
BE*	3	0.5	3.5	2	GR	-	-	-	-	PT	-	-	-	-
BG*	6	0	6	6	HU*	3	0	3	9	RO	-	-	-	-
CR	1.5	0	4.5	9	IR*	4	4	1	12	SL	5	6	9	8
CY	-	-	-	-	IT*	4	1	4	9	SI	1.5	7	7	8.5
CZ	4	5.5	11.5	5.5	LA	4	3.5	4.5	5	SP	-	-	-	-
DE*	5.5	7	5.5	3	LI	1	2	3	4	SE	4.5	6.5	8.5	2
ES	4	3.5	3.5	2	LU*	7	4	1	3	UK	-	-	-	-
FI	4	4.5	4.5	3	MT	2.5	2	3	6.5					
FR	5	5	14.5	12.5	NE	6	7	6	5.5					

*Partial data (data on sub-directorate/sector level not available)

Source: Own elaboration.

The relative institutional focus on political issues (F(E, P, G, R)) is the strongest with the MFAs of Bulgaria, Croatia and Hungary (FE=0), while the relative focus on economic issues is apparent in the MFAs of Slovenia (FE=0.82), Lithuania (FE=0.67) and Poland (FE=0.65). In the group of countries where the focus on political issues is the strongest, there is a substantial number of “southern” EU member states and in the group of countries, where economic issues are relatively more important, there is a large number of NMS located in Central and Eastern Europe.

The relative institutional focus on global issues is, as expected, the most evident in Sweden (FG=0.81), followed by Germany (FG=0.75) and, surprisingly, the Czech Republic (FG=0.68), while Irish (FG=0.08), Austrian (FG=0.15), Hungarian (FG=0.25) and Luxemburgish (FG=0.25) MFAs focus mostly on neighbouring/regional affairs. The global perspective is much more common with the “northern” EU member states, while in the group of countries with predominantly regional foreign policy focus, relatively smaller EU member states prevail.

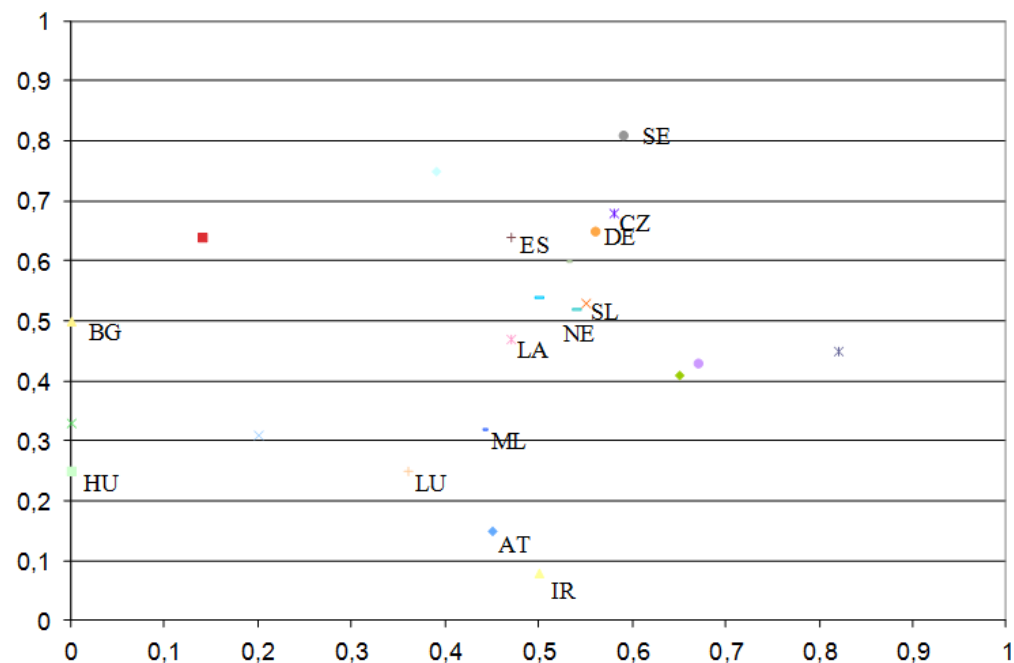
TABLE 6: THE BALANCE BETWEEN POLITICAL-ECONOMIC AND GLOBAL-REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL POLICY FOCUS OF THE MFAS OF EU MEMBER STATES

	FE	FG	ES	FE	FG	IT	FE	FG	PT	FE	FG
AT	0.45	0.15	ES	0.47	0.64	IT	0.20	0.31	PT	-	-
BE	0.14	0.64	FI	0.53	0.60	LA	0.47	0.47	RO	-	-
BG	0	0.50	FR	0.50	0.54	LI	0.67	0.43	SL	0.55	0.53
CR	0	0.33	GE	0.39	0.75	LU	0.36	0.25	SI	0.82	0.45
CY	-	-	GR	-	-	ML	0.44	0.32	SP	-	-
CZ	0.58	0.68	HU	0	0.25	NE	0.54	0.52	SE	0.59	0.81
DE	0.56	0.65	IR	0.50	0.08	PL	0.65	0.41	UK	-	-

Source: Own elaboration.

The analysis revealed also some other characteristics of the structure of the 28 national MFAs. The first is that there is a significant relation between economic- global component of national MFAs, visible *in extremis* in “northern” EU member states.³³ On the other hand the “regional-political” profile, which is in the 28 MFAs structure less apparent, prevails in smaller and “southern” EU member states. Furthermore, it can be noticed that greater divergence in political or economic focus appears with the MFAs located in NMS while, in contrast, relatively more diverging positions regarding regional or global focus appear with the MFFs located in the old member states (see tables 5, 6 and figure 6).

FIGURE 6: RELATIVE POLITICAL-ECONOMIC (HORIZONTAL AXIS) AND REGIONAL-GLOBAL (VERTICAL AXIS) INSTITUTIONAL POLICY FOCUS OF THE MFAS OF EU MEMBER STATES



Source: Own elaboration.

The MFAs with the strongest relative institutional focus on political and economic issues are located in Luxemburg (political: 47 %; economic: 27 %), Denmark (political: 26 %; economic: 33 %) and Estonia (political: 31 %;

³³ The “economic-global” institutional profile is much more apparent than the alternative “political-regional” institutional profile. The MFAs, which are strongly characterized by the “economic-global” profile, are located in Sweden (economic: 30 %; global: 40 %), the Czech Republic (economic: 21 %; global: 43 %), Germany (economic: 12 %; global: 51 %) and Slovenia (economic: 29 %; global: 29 %), i.e. in the “northern” member states and Central and East European NMS. The alternative to the “economic-global” profile would be the “regional” institutional profile, which is the most accentuated in cases of the MFAs located in Croatia (60 %), Hungary (60 %), Ireland (57 %) and Austria (46 %).

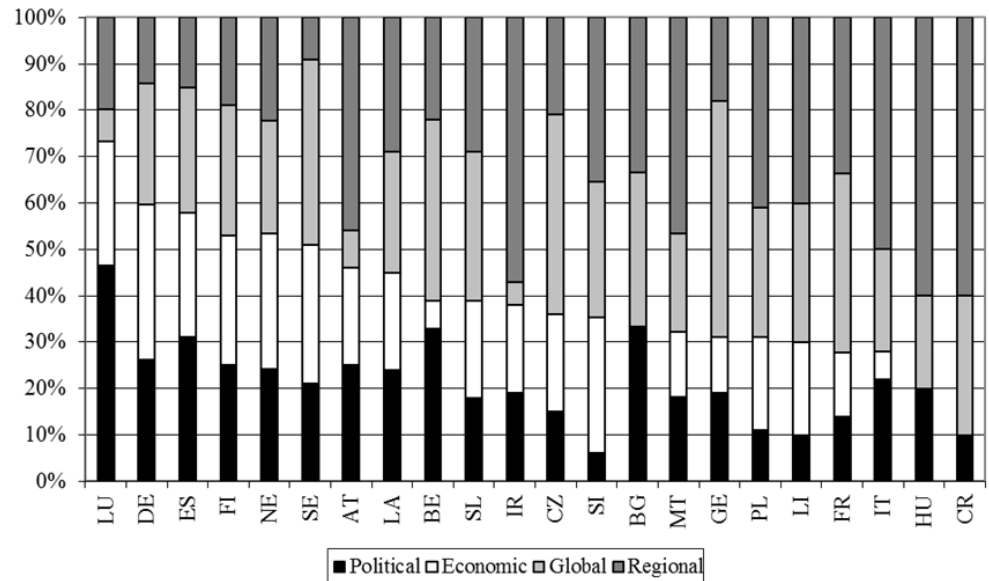
economic 27 %), while the MFAs with the strongest relative focus on global and regional issues are located in Croatia (global: 30 %; regional 60 %), Hungary (global: 20 %; regional: 60 %) and Italy (global: 22 %; regional 50 %). The MFAs with relatively stronger political-economic focus are more likely to be found in smaller and “northern” member states and the MFAs with relatively stronger global-regional focus are more likely to be found in the “southern” member states (see table 7 and figure 7).

TABLE 7: RELATIVE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, GLOBAL AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL POLICY FOCUS OF THE MFAS OF EU MEMBER STATES

	P	E	G	R		P	E	G	R		P	E	G	R
AT	0.25	0.21	0.08	0.46	GE	0.19	0.12	0.51	0.18	PL	0.11	0.20	0.28	0.41
BE	0.33	0.06	0.39	0.22	GR	-	-	-	-	PT	-	-	-	-
BG	0.33	0	0.33	0.33	HU	0.20	0	0.20	0.60	RO	-	-	-	-
CR	0.1	0	0.30	0.60	IR	0.19	0.19	0.05	0.57	SL	0.18	0.21	0.32	0.29
CY	-	-	-	-	IT	0.22	0.06	0.22	0.50	SI	0.06	0.29	0.29	0.35
CZ	0.15	0.21	0.43	0.21	LA	0.24	0.21	0.26	0.29	SP	-	-	-	-
DE	0.26	0.33	0.26	0.14	LI	0.1	0.20	0.30	0.40	SE	0.21	0.30	0.40	0.09
ES	0.31	0.27	0.27	0.15	LU	0.47	0.27	0.07	0.20	UK	-	-	-	-
FI	0.25	0.28	0.28	0.19	MT	0.18	0.14	0.21	0.46					
FR	0.14	0.14	0.39	0.34	NE	0.24	0.29	0.24	0.22					

Source: Own elaboration.

FIGURE 7: RELATIVE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, GLOBAL AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL POLICY FOCUS OF THE MFAS OF EU MEMBER STATES



5 DISCUSSION: NEW MEMBER STATES STAND OUT FROM THE COMMON TRENDS

The empirical analysis of the concentration in organisational structures of the MFAs of EU member states demonstrates that the MFAs with more extensive and decentralised organisational structures tempt to be located in larger EU member states. Such an outcome should not come as a surprise, since the bigger countries are typically more involved in larger number of international issues³⁴ and have the resources that are required for the

³⁴ Ana Bojinović Fenko and Boštjan Udovič. “Zaključek”, in *Pax Franca, Pax Britannica, Pax Americana, Pax Sinica?: primerjalna analiza zunanje politike velikih sil in držav s hitro rastočimi gospodarstvi*, ed. Ana Bojinović Fenko (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2011), 221–226.

institutional specialisation,³⁵ which is then reflected in the more dispersed organisational structure. Notable exceptions to this trend are several NMS located in Central and Eastern Europe which organisational structures also tempt to be relatively extensive and decentralised. There are several possible explanations for that observation, ranging from the socialist legacy of inflated institutional organisation to the early attempts to set up the MFAs covering all major fields in international relations after being able to establish their sovereign foreign policies for the first time.³⁶

Regarding the political leadership structures the analysis shows that the MFAs with political leadership structures that turn out to be relatively strong when compared to the whole of the top level hierarchies are typically located in bigger EU member states. One possible explanation for this correlation may lie in the fact that in order to establish efficient political control over the MFAs that are typically more extensive and decentralized, larger EU member states try to concentrate the decision-making power in the leadership structures of the MFAs. Such an explanation would support the theoretical argument that extensive and specialised organisational structures do come with a price with regard to their ability to accommodate to the changes in outside pressures.³⁷ Interestingly a similar pattern can be found among the NMS, which can be explained by the case of socialist legacy and central line of command instituted by previous regime. Once again, a notable exception to the trend of bigger and better controlled MFAs located in bigger member states is a substantial number of the MFAs characterized by stronger leadership structures located in the NMS. The reason why political leadership structures are as well stronger in NMS may also come from the constrained political control due to the larger size and complexity of the MFAs. Furthermore, it is worth noting that – to some extent – strong political leadership structures and larger share of posts that are bound with political mandate represent alternative ways of the organisation of political leadership structures.

Finally, the conducted analysis revealed also a correlation between the MFAs with a relatively strong focus on the economic and global issues. Such MFAs are more frequent in the “northern” part of Europe, while the political-regional group is present (but less significant) in the southern geographical part of Europe and among smaller EU member states. While the “global-economic” institutional profile of the “northern” EU member states can be explained by the available resources as well as by their ability to draw on the global engagement,³⁸ the “political-regional” institutional profile is more typical for the MFAs from countries with better opportunities to exploit particular characteristics they share with the other countries, such as geographical proximity, ethnical diasporas or specific issue areas. In addition to the “northern” member states, a substantial number of the MFAs characterised by “global-economic” institutional profile can be found in NMS. This unusual trend can perhaps also be explained by the early attempts of the NMS to adopt the most “progressive” foreign policy profiles.³⁹

³⁵ See Brian Hocking, Jan Melissen, Shaun Riordan and Paul Sharp, *Futures for Diplomacy: Integrative Diplomacy in the 21st century* (The Netherlands: Clingendael, 2012); Brian Hocking, Jan Melissen, Shaun Riordan and Paul Sharp, “Whither Foreign Ministries in a Post-Western World,” *Clingendael Policy Brief*, 20th April 2013.

³⁶ Dimitrij Rupel, *Skrivnost države* (Ljubljana: Delo, 1992); Milan Brglez, *ibid.*;

³⁷ Jonathan R. Tompkins, *Organization theory and public management* (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005).

³⁸ Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley, *Understanding international relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

³⁹ Milan Brglez, “The importance of United Nations for the development of Slovenian foreign policy”, in *20 year of Slovenian UN membership*, ed. Božo Cerar, Marcel Koprol and Andrej Kirn (Ljubljana: Ministrstvo za zunanje zadeve in CEP, 2012), 53–55; Brian Hocking, Jan Melissen, Shaun Riordan and

Furthermore, if the MFAs from the 'old' EU member states more typically differ with regard to the relative regional/global policy focus, in case of the MFAs from the NMS, greater divergence arises with regard to the relative political/economic focus. This empirical observation seems to support the argument that the NMS have tried to shape their foreign policy profiles from the outside in.⁴⁰

To conclude, the analysis of the empirical data demonstrates that the proposed distinctive characteristics of the organisational structures of the MFAs enable us to observe varieties in institutional profiles of the MFAs located in individual member states, which both support general theoretical arguments with regard to the organisational structure as a dependent variable and point to the potential role played by the organisational structure as an independent variable. However, in order to be able to make more detailed comparisons between the individual MFFs/variables, the quality of the data set should be further improved by crosschecking the comparability of the individual categories of data on organisational structures through structured interviews with ministry officials.

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⁴⁰ Nina Bandelj, "Negotiating neo-liberalism: free-market reform in Central and Eastern Europe," in *Globalization and transformations of local socio-economic practices*, ed. Ulrike Schuerkens (New York: Routledge, 2008), 46–74.

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STILL “EURO-PARTY SYSTEMS”? – REPRESENTATIVENESS OF POLITICAL PARTIES ON THE EU-DIMENSION IN DENMARK AND SWEDEN

Tamás POLGÁR¹

In a representative democracy it is indispensable that there is at least some degree of congruence between the opinions of voters and their parties on salient political issues. In most parliamentary democracies there is indeed a strong connection between voters and parties on the traditional Left-Right dimension, however the situation is much less clear when it comes to issues concerning European integration. In this study I gauge the extent of opinion congruence between parties and voters in Denmark and Sweden. Based on data from the 2009 European Election Survey I conclude that, despite the emergence of what some authors have labelled as an embryonic „Euro-party system”, there is only slightly higher level of congruence at EP-elections (compared to national contests). Further, I challenge two widely held assertions, namely that Eurosceptic parties generally represent their voters better on this dimension, and that voters „on average” are more Eurosceptic and polarised.

Key words: European Union; party systems, Scandinavia, opinion-congruence, Euroscepticism.

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1 INTRODUCTION²

Within comparative politics significant attention has been devoted to the „democratic chain of accountability and delegation”.³ One of the central relationships within this chain is the electoral connection, whereby voters (as principals), through free and fair elections have the possibility to indirectly hold parties and representatives (their agents) to account. Apart from the formal mechanisms that allow voters to retain well-performing representatives in office, or to „throw out the rascals”, such an electoral connection entails a degree of opinion congruence, at least on issues and policies that are deemed salient. This implies that voters need to have at least some understanding of parties’ or candidates’ positions and policy alternatives if they are to make a meaningful decision, more precisely if they are to select the party or candidate that is closest to their preferences, as the standard Downsian (rational choice) theory posits.

There is a broad consensus in the literature that voters in European parliamentary democracies have a pretty good understanding of the traditional Left-Right dimension, e.g. they are able to place both themselves and the parties along this single dimension with a relatively high degree of stability. A vast body of empirical evidence has been uncovered showing that parties represent their voters quite well along the Left-Right dimension, whatever the main underlying conflict in the context of the given political system may be.⁴ In Sweden (though less so in Denmark) the explanatory power of class-based voting, and therefore the traditional economic Left-Right dimension has remained strong, even in a broader European comparison.⁵

In the case of the Member States of the European Union (EU), the problem of representation is exacerbated by the process of deepening European integration, whereby an increasing number of policy competences are being transferred to the European level. On the one hand, this would lead us to assume that the relevance of the EU-level in the eyes of the voters would correspondingly increase. Furthermore, in line with the parallel significant expansion of the competences of the European Parliament (EP), one would assume that this too would increase the stakes for political parties, which field candidates at the EP-elections every five years.⁶ Since the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are elected directly by the citizens of the EU, to an overwhelming extent from among the candidates of the same political parties that also contest national elections, we could expect that it is in the best interest of both the voters and the political parties that they

² This paper was written as part of a larger research project on the Europeanisation of the Scandinavian countries, which forms the basis of my doctoral dissertation at the Corvinus University of Budapest. I am especially grateful to Zsófia Papp (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), as well as Professors Gabriella Ilonszki (Corvinus University) and Janne Haaland Matlary (University of Oslo) for their helpful comments on an earlier draft. As always, any errors that remain in the text are entirely my own.

³ Arthur Lupia, „Delegation and its Perils,” in *Delegation and Accountability in West European Parliamentary Democracies*, eds. Torbjörn Bergman, Wolfgang C. Müller and Kaare Strøm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 33–54.

⁴ Stefano Bartolini, *The Political Mobilisation of the European Left, 1860–1980: The Class Cleavage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Oddbjørn Knutsen, *Social Structure and Party Choice in Western Europe: A Comparative Longitudinal Study* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004a).

⁵ Sten Berglund and Ulf Lindström, *The Scandinavian Party System(s): A Comparative Study* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1978); Mikael Gilljam and Henrik Oscarsson, „Mapping the Nordic Party Space,” *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 19, 1 (1996), 25–43; Oddbjørn Knutsen, „Voters and Social Cleavages,” in *Nordic Politics – Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Knut Heidar (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2004b), 72–73; Sören Holmberg and Henrik Oscarsson, *Väljare: svenskt väljarbete under 50 år* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2004).

⁶ Robert Ladrech, „Party Change and Europeanisation: Elements of an Integrated Approach,” *West European Politics* 35, 3 (2012), 578–579.

provide adequate policy alternatives, and therefore represent the preferences of their constituents also on European issues.

However, reality is not quite as simple as that. For one, genuinely European issues rarely feature prominently in the political discourse of the EU's Member States (with the exception of thematic referenda, crises directly related to the EU, etc.), especially when it comes to national elections. For a number of reasons, both voters and parties attach far less importance to EP-elections than to national contests, which decide the fates of governments. Furthermore, with but a few exceptions, both the parties as well as the campaign topics are generally the same at national and European elections, and therefore the government-opposition dynamic might prevail even at EP-elections. Consequently EP-elections can more often than not be regarded as "second-order national elections".⁷ In any case, neither parties, nor their voters seem to prioritise EU-related issues, whether at EP- or national elections, and conflicts directly relating to European integration are only taken up by a small minority of parties. In other words, the EU-issue has only to a very limited extent been politicised.⁸

Several studies have concluded that opinion congruence between parties and voters on EU-related issues is rather weak (or, from a normative perspective, too weak), first of all because voters are insufficiently informed, or outright ignorant when it comes to the question of European integration (as opposed to key domestic policies), but also due to the fact that parties in most cases are strategically counter-interested in politicising the EU-issue, and therefore fail to provide adequately differentiated policy alternatives.⁹ From this perspective, it is the conscious and strategic choice of the parties (party leaderships) that they try to avoid and play down existing conflicts within the party and/or between the party and its constituents, or at least transfer these conflicts to a dimension outside the realm of party politics, by „icing”, or „compartmentalising” the EU-issue.¹⁰ Some authors regard precisely this, namely the lack of representative (trans-European) political parties on the EU-dimension, rather than the widely criticised democratic deficit as the "correct diagnosis of the European legitimacy crisis".¹¹

A further question that has been given some scholarly attention is to what extent EU-related issues, conflicts, or, according to some, cleavages¹² overlap or cut across the most salient conflict dimension (usually Left-Right).¹³ If they do not overlap, then parties will not be able to mobilise their

⁷ Simon Hix and Bjørn Høyland, *The Political System of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 147.

⁸ Robert Ladrech, "Party Change and Europeanisation: Elements of an Integrated Approach," *West European Politics* 35, 3 (2012), 583; Christoffer Green-Pedersen, "A Giant Fast Asleep? Party Incentives and the Politicisation of European Integration," *Political Studies* 60, 1 (2012), 116–117.

⁹ Cees Van der Eijk and Mark N. Franklin, "Potential for contestation European matters at national elections in Europe," in *European Integration and Political Conflict*, eds. Gary Marks and Marco Steenbergen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 39–47.

¹⁰ Nicholas Aylott, "Let's Discuss This Later: Party Responses to Euro-division in Scandinavia," *Party Politics*, 8, 4 (2002), 447, 454–457.

¹¹ Rudy Andeweg, "The Reshaping of National Party Systems," *West European Politics* 18, 3 (1995), 67.

¹² If we accept the more rigorous definition of the concept of political cleavages, then the EU-issue can at best be regarded as a „non-structural conflict”, since it only possesses limited normative and organisational elements and completely lacks an empirical one, see Stefano Bartolini and Peter Mair, *Identity, Competition and Electoral Availability: the stabilisation of European electorates 1885–1985* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Nick Sitter, *Opposing Europe: Euro-Scepticism, Opposition and Party Competition*. Brighton, Sussex European Institute. 2002. However, the question of whether or not the EU-issue qualifies as a cleavage will not be addressed in this essay.

¹³ It falls outside the scope of this paper to discuss the extent to which the EU-dimension overlaps with or cuts across the traditional cleavages. This is explored by several authors, e.g. Matthew Gabel and Simon Hix, "Defining the EU Political Space. An Empirical Study of the European Elections Manifestos, 1979–1999," *Comparative Political Studies* 35, 8 (2002), 934–964. Also see Liesbet Hooghe, Gary

electorate along the traditional cleavages.¹⁴ Most voters tend to select parties based on their positions on the Left-Right dimension, adding a further reason for the parties not being interested in politicising a new conflict-structure.¹⁵

In large part due to this, several studies dealing with the Europeanisation of parties and party systems have drawn the conclusion that, among the various elements of the political systems of the EU's Member States, it is the party systems (their structures, logic of party competition, voter behaviour) that has – at least so far – been least affected by the European integration process.¹⁶ The same author distinguishes between the direct and the indirect Europeanisation processes, emphasising that the latter ones are clearly present in the EU's members, nevertheless the overall impact of Europeanisation on party systems as such remains limited.¹⁷ Other authors have rather looked at possible impacts on other arenas, such as the organisational adaptation of parties, party-government relations, or the emergence of parties' cooperation beyond the given country's borders.¹⁸

In this study, the scope of inquiry is limited to what Ladrech¹⁹ identifies as the development of voter-party relations, in other words the structure of party competition, and indirectly the programmatic adaptation of political parties. The main question is to what extent the positions of Danish and Swedish political parties and their voters correspond to each other on issues relating to European integration.

Whereas some authors maintain that voters at EP-elections have the opportunity to vote "sincerely", and therefore they are more likely to vote for parties with policy positions closer to their own preferences,²⁰ Mattila and Raunio,²¹ based on their analysis of voter behaviour at the 2004 and 2009 EP-elections, subscribe to the line of reasoning that the distance between parties' and voters' EU-positions have increased, rather than decreased in most EU-states. Furthermore, parties tend to be more favourable towards the EU than their electorates, and despite the politicisation of the EU-issue and hence a slight weakening of the prevailing pro-EU "permissive consensus",²² they nevertheless still tend to converge more on this dimension than the more polarised voters. Consequently parties are increasingly less

Marks and Carole J. Wilson, "Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?" *Comparative Political Studies* 35, 8 (2002), 965–989.

¹⁴ Simon Hix, "Dimensions and Alignments in European Union Politics: Cognitive Constraints and Partisan Responses," *European Journal of Political Research* 35, 2 (1999), 80.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁶ Peter Mair, "The Limited Impact of Europe on National Party Systems," *West European Politics* 23, 4 (2000), 27–51.

¹⁷ Peter Mair, "Political Parties and Party Systems," in *Europeanization: New Research Agendas*, eds. Paolo Graziano and Maarten P. Vink (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 154–166.

¹⁸ See, e.g., Robert Ladrech, "Europeanization and Political Parties," *Party Politics* 8, 4 (2002), 389–403; Robert Ladrech, *Europeanization and National Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Nicholas Aylott and Magnus Blomgren, *Political Parties, Delegation and Europeanisation: A Conceptual Framework*. Paper presented at the EUSA conference, Montreal, 17–19 May 2007; Thomas Poguntke, Nicholas Aylott, Elisabeth Carter, Robert Ladrech and Kurt Richard Luther, *The Europeanization of National Political Parties. Power and organizational adaptation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).

¹⁹ Robert Ladrech, "Party Change and Europeanisation: Elements of an Integrated Approach," *West European Politics* 35, 3 (2012), 575.

²⁰ Simon Hix and Bjørn Høyland, *The Political System of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 149.

²¹ Mikko Mattila and Tapio Raunio, "Drifting Further Apart: National Parties and their Electorates on the EU Dimension," *West European Politics* 35, 3 (2012), 589–606.

²² Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks. "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus," *British Journal of Political Science* 39, 1 (2009), 1–23.

representative of their electorate, which is in effect left without real policy alternatives.²³

In contrast to the study by Mattila and Raunio,²⁴ which covers all 27 EU-members, thereby making it possible to draw robust and generalisable conclusions, in this study I only focus on the two Scandinavian EU-members. Although the results will not be readily generalisable, however this small-N, “most-similar-systems” approach will allow for a more comprehensive analysis of the contextual and country-specific underlying factors, including the specificities of the two countries’ electorates (their public opinions) and the individual political parties.

The study is structured as follows: First, I will briefly present the main characteristics of the two countries’ public opinion on European integration, as well as the parties’ positions. Then I will formulate three hypotheses concerning the opinion congruence between parties and voters, and present the data on which the hypotheses will be tested empirically. Following a detailed analysis of the data, in the final section I will conclude and discuss some possible avenues for further research.

2 PUBLIC OPINION AND PARTY POSITIONS ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

In many ways the citizens of the Nordic countries (including also Finland, and especially Norway) have traditionally been among the most “reluctant Europeans”.²⁵ Norwegian voters have rejected joining the EEC/EU on two occasions (1972 and 1994), the majority of Danish voters said no to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and then to the introduction of the Euro in 2000, whereas Sweden also opted out of the Euro-zone as a result of a referendum in 2003.²⁶

It is worth mentioning that in the majority of cases EU-related questions were put to a referendum without being a constitutional or statutory obligation. This was partly done in order to secure political legitimacy for the decisions, despite the fact that most of the referenda were only consultative in nature, i.e. only entailing a political and not a legal obligation for the respective legislatures to follow the voters’ “recommendation”. Perhaps more importantly, this particular instrument of direct democracy was seen by the political elite as a suitable means to transfer responsibility from the parliamentary parties - which were either internally divided on the issue and/or at odds with their own voters - over to the electorate.²⁷ In other words, holding referenda on these questions was, as mentioned above, a result of the incumbent governments’ or parliamentary parties’ strategies.²⁸

²³ Mikko Mattila and Tapio Raunio, “Drifting Further Apart: National Parties and their Electorates on the EU Dimension,” *West European Politics* 35, 3 (2012), 589–606.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Toivo Miljan, *The Reluctant Europeans: The Attitudes of the Nordic Countries towards European Integration* (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1977).

²⁶ Jo Saglie, “Values, Perceptions and European Integration: The Case of the Norwegian 1994 Referendum,” *European Union Politics* 1, 2 (2000), 228; Roger Buch and Kasper M. Hansen, “The Danes and Europe: From EC 1972 to Euro 2000 – Elections, Referendums and Attitudes,” *Scandinavian Political Studies* 25, 1 (2002), 14–15; Nicholas Aylott, “Lessons Learned, Lessons Forgotten: The Swedish Referendum on EMU of September 2003,” *Government and Opposition* 40, 4 (2005a), 540–541.

²⁷ Nicholas Aylott, “Let’s Discuss This Later: Party Responses to Euro-division in Scandinavia,” *Party Politics*, 8, 4 (2002), 443–446.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 447–449.

In the case of Denmark it is worth noting that the opinion of voters differed in three of six cases (1986, 1992, 2000) from the majority of the Folketing, and on two occasions (1986 and 1993) holding a referendum was not a constitutional requirement, whereas in both 1972 and 1993 the decision to let the voters decide had been made much earlier than the situation in the Folketing had become apparent. This meant in other words that, until the early 2000's, there was a clear consensus that the voters should be given the final word when deciding crucial EU-related issues (i.e. issues which potentially entail loss of national sovereignty), regardless of the formal constitutional requirements or whether the referendum is legally binding or not.²⁹

In brief, voters in both Sweden and Denmark have on several occasions failed to follow the recommendations of their parties on EU-affairs even in cases where the given party was more or less unified in its support for (or objection to) a certain question. Based on this observation alone, we could draw the conclusion that Eurosceptic sentiments are much more widespread among voters than among the pro-EU elite.

Apart from the relatively clear-cut referendum results, comparable opinion polls, such as the periodic Eurobarometer surveys also paint a picture of Danish and Swedish voters being more sceptical *vis-à-vis* several aspects of European integration than the EU-average. It is mainly due to this general reluctance that Denmark has opted out of several community policies, not just the common currency. Having said that, it is also apparent from the national and international opinion polls that the question of EU-membership per se is no longer seriously debated in Denmark, and not even in Sweden.

First of all, the salience of the EU-issue has waned considerably even in Sweden, and – apart from EU-referendum campaigns – the topic does not feature prominently at national elections as a factor that voters deem to be important for their vote.³⁰ Data in EES³¹ (see below) also confirm that voters attached marginal importance to issues that are directly related to European integration even at the 2009 EP-elections.

Equally importantly, both Eurobarometer surveys, as well as national research³² indicate that a permanent majority in both countries has at least tacitly accepted EU-membership as a given and even agrees with statements such as the country's EU-membership is „a good thing”,³³ and that it is beneficial for the country.³⁴ Furthermore, practically all of the mainstream parties, even the ones that had earlier been strongly opposed to

²⁹ See Erik Damgaard, *Folkets styre. Magt og ansvar i dansk politik* (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2003), 83; Roger Buch and Kasper M. Hansen, "The Danes and Europe: From EC 1972 to Euro 2000 – Elections, Referendums and Attitudes," *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 25, 1 (2002), 1–26. This practice has apparently changed during the last decade or so: a referendum was avoided even in the case of the Lisbon Treaty in 2008, and although the last three government platforms (i.e. both centre-left and centre-right governments) have envisaged a referendum on abandoning Denmark's four opt-outs, these have periodically been put on hold. In short, there has not been a referendum on EU-issues in Denmark in almost a decade and a half.

³⁰ Cf. SCB, *Attapartivalet 2010 - Allmännavalen (Valundersökningen)* (Stockholm: Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2011), 60.

³¹ *European Election Study 2009*, provided by GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5048 Data file Version 2.0.0. 2009.

³² Sören Holmberg, "EU alltmer accepterat," in *Svensk höst*, eds. Sören Holmberg and Lennart Weibull (Göteborg: SOM-institutet, Göteborgs universitet, 2009), 299–300.

³³ Denmark: 55 % , Sweden: 56 % , EU27: 47 % (EB 2011).

³⁴ Denmark: 70 % , Sweden: 53 % , EU27: 52 % (EB 2011).

the country's membership, have formally abandoned their policy of advocating withdrawal from the Union.³⁵

Whereas the Swedish Greens and the Left Party have for a long time been strongly opposed to Sweden's EU membership, both of them have given up this stance in the second half of the 2000s. Likewise in Denmark, the Socialist People's Party, a traditional critic of European integration, has not only accepted Denmark's membership, but has in many ways become an active supporter of a deepening integration in several policy areas.³⁶ Thus, it is only the left and the right flanks of the political spectrum – with, apart from the Danish People's Party, only modest electoral support - in both countries, which continue to officially oppose integration.

However, as a noteworthy characteristic in both countries, various parties and political movements have emerged during the past decades which explicitly advocated EU-related (EU-sceptical) policies, and only fielded candidates at EP-elections with the aim of appealing to Eurosceptic voters from the Left as well as from the Right.

The apparently emerging pro-EU consensus does not mean however that either the electorate or the parties are equally ardent supporters of the current state of the EU (e.g. community policies, such as the common currency or migration policy, institutional set-up, etc.), or especially further intentions concerning deepening integration, entailing further loss of national sovereignty. Therefore, (tacit) support of the country's EU-membership can by no means be equated with support for further integration, as the referenda in both countries on the introduction of the Euro have made abundantly clear.

Still, despite the fact that many voters (crucially within the Social Democratic base, see below) defied the official position of their parties,³⁷ 78 % of those favouring Sweden's EU-membership voted for the introduction of the Euro in 2003, and 91 % of those rejecting membership voted against.³⁸ This basically implies that the support of EU-membership and support of further integration are conceptually different, but strongly related. Perhaps even more importantly, it means that public opinion and the positions of the parties are much more complex and differentiated than a simple membership/withdrawal, or even a more/less integration dichotomy.³⁹

³⁵ Jonas Tallberg, *Europeiseringen av Sverige. Demokratirådets Rapport 2010* (Stockholm: SNS Förlag, 2010), 90–92.

³⁶ Rasmus Nielsen and Rasmus Brun Pedersen, "The Danish Left and the Constitutional/Lisbon Treaty: From Vote/Office Seekers to Policy Pragmatists," in *The Left and the European Constitution*, eds. Michael Holmes and Knut Roder (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 172–173.

³⁷ For example, at the 2003 referendum in Sweden a small majority (51 %) of the Social Democratic base voted against the official position of the party, and in line with the traditional divisions within the party, almost one in five (18 %) of the party's MPs did the same. In the case of the Centre Party, the Greens, the Liberals and the Conservatives, roughly 15–20 % of the voters disagreed with the party's official position, whereas almost a third of the Centre Party's MPs chose to disregard the newly adopted negative official stance of the party vis-à-vis the introduction of the Euro, see Nicholas Aylott, "Lessons Learned, Lessons Forgotten: The Swedish Referendum on EMU of September 2003," *Government and Opposition*, 40, 4 (2005a): 540–564; Nicholas Aylott, "De politiska partierna," in *EU och Sverige – ett sammanlänkat statsskick*, eds. Magnus Blomgren and Torbjörn Bergman (Malmö: Liber, 2005b), 61–62.

³⁸ Svante Ersson and Wide, Jessika, "Sverige och EU: Väljarnivån," in *EU och Sverige – ett sammanlänkat statsskick*, eds. Magnus Blomgren and Torbjörn Bergman (Malmö: Liber, 2005), 54.

³⁹ For instance, Eurobarometer surveys reveal that while citizens in both countries are quite supportive of the EU's efforts concerning free trade, freedom of movement and employment, the promotion of freedom and democracy, etc., they are much more sceptical when it comes to the monetary union, social rights or migration policy. A far higher share of Danes (57 %) than the EU27-average (37 %) is of the opinion that immigration should be dealt with at the national level. Swedish respondents are by far more positive towards the EU's efforts to deal with environmental challenges, including mitigation of climate change and investment in green technologies, and 61 % of them think that the EU-level should primarily focus on these issues (compared to 50 % in Denmark and 26 % EU27-average). See EB, *Standard Eurobarometer 71*. Standard Report September 2009. Brussels: European Commission.

However, in order to be able to perform an analysis of the available empirical data, this apparent real-world complexity necessarily needs to be simplified, although I will continue to refer to the above-mentioned characteristics throughout the next sections.

3 HYPOTHESES

In line with the arguments set out in the theoretical introduction, I will test the following hypotheses by analysing the available data. It has been extensively shown in the literature that EP-elections can by and large be conceptualised as „second-order national contests”, with lower turnout and lower stakes, and therefore parties tend to attach correspondingly lower significance to these. As also mentioned above, this could on the other hand facilitate a higher degree of “sincere” voting, and although EU-related issues feature strongly on the political agenda only in exceptional cases, I hypothesise that voters will tend to vote for parties that have positions closer to their own preferences on the EU-dimension. Furthermore, in Denmark (and to a lesser extent also in Sweden) the emergence of an embryonic stand-alone “European party system”⁴⁰ could be observed, where certain parties and political movements exclusively contested at EP-elections, mainly on EU-related issues.⁴¹ According to my hypothesis, these factors will enable parties to offer more policy alternatives that are more representative of the voters’ preferences, and hence the average distance between voters and parties on this dimension is expected to be lower in the case of EP-elections (compared to national ones).

H1: The position on the EU-dimension (as opposed to traditional domestic policy conflicts) plays a more important role in influencing party choice at EP-elections than at national ones, and average distance between voters and parties is smaller on the EU-dimension in the case of EP-elections.

As the literature⁴² has demonstrated, a generally pro-EU environment and the internal divisions of larger parties (pursuing catch-all as well as vote and/or office-seeking strategies,⁴³ effectively precludes most (in practice, all non-Eurosceptic) parties from politicising the EU-question, and they will be interested in transferring the issue to dimensions outside party politics (referenda, extra-parliamentary movements etc.). Therefore, these – usually larger and almost by definition more heterogeneous – parties rarely send unambiguous and principled signals on EU-issues, so as not to alienate parts of their voter base. The – usually smaller – parties with marked anti-EU profiles (and often more policy-oriented strategies), especially the ones which have been established with the explicit aim of opposing further integration, will definitely have more incentives to politicise the EU-issue, and to formulate clear (anti-EU) messages. This in turn can result in a higher degree of congruence between parties’ and voters’ positions.

2009. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm (3 October 2013), 150, 209; see also EB, *Standard Eurobarometer 73*. Full Report November 2010. Brussels: European Commission. 2010. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm (3 October 2013), 87, 95.

⁴⁰ Torben Worre, “The Danish Euro-Party System,” *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 10, 1 (1987), 86.

⁴¹ This has been hailed on normative grounds as a possible solution to the EU’s legitimacy crisis, see Rudy Andeweg, “The Reshaping of National Party Systems,” *West European Politics* 18, 3 (1995), 60, 71.

⁴² E.g. Nicholas Aylott, “Let’s Discuss This Later: Party Responses to Euro-division in Scandinavia,” *Party Politics*, 8, 4 (2002), 441–464.

⁴³ Cf. Nick Sitter, *Opposing Europe: Euro-Scepticism, Opposition and Party Competition*. Brighton, Sussex European Institute, 2002.

H2: (Smaller) Eurosceptic parties have more homogeneous voter bases and are „on average” closer to the position of their voters on the EU-dimension.

Raunio and Mattila,⁴⁴ as well as others⁴⁵ have on several occasions pointed out that mainstream parties throughout Europe, which are generally more favourable towards the EU than their electorate, have formed a strong pro-EU elite-consensus, which in essence leads to the lack of adequate policy alternatives on matters of European integration, and voters will thus lack the possibility to vote for parties that are representative of them on this dimension.

H3: Parties’ positions on the EU-dimension are more convergent than their voters’, and parties are „on average” more EU-friendly than their electorates.

These hypotheses will be tested in the case of Denmark and Sweden on the following data.

4 DATA

For the purposes of this study, I have mainly used data from the European Parliament Election Study - Voter Survey,⁴⁶ which was conducted in 2009 in all EU-member countries, and comprised of identical face-to-face and telephone interviews with roughly 1000 respondents in each country. The number of respondents in case of the various questions and positions are presented below in Tables 1 and 2. The dataset has been weighted so that the sample is representative of the two countries’ age, gender and regional composition.

In addition, for measuring the positions of the various parties’ MEP-candidates, and in a few cases of the positions of the parties themselves, I have used the European Parliament Election Study - Candidate Survey,⁴⁷ which was conducted at the same time, partly based on face-to-face interviews, as well as questionnaires sent by mail.

Voters’ positions on the EU-integration dimension are measured based on the following question of the interview (EES 2009, Q80):

„Some say European unification should be pushed further. Others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion? (0-10)”

The parties’ positions (save for a few exceptions, see Tables 1 and 2) are also estimated based on the perceptions of the voters.

„How about the (Party X)? Which number from 0 to 10, where 0 means “already gone too far” and 10 means “should be pushed further” best describes (party X)?”

⁴⁴ Mikko Mattila and Tapio Raunio, “Drifting Further Apart: National Parties and their Electorates on the EU Dimension,” *West European Politics* 35, 3 (2012), 589–606.

⁴⁵ Cees Van der Eijk and Mark N. Franklin, “Potential for contestation European matters at national elections in Europe,” in *European Integration and Political Conflict*, eds. Gary Marks and Marco Steenbergen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 32–50.

⁴⁶ *European Election Study 2009*, provided by GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5048 Data file Version 2.0.0. 2009.

⁴⁷ *European Parliament Election Study 2009, Candidate Study*. Provided by GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5048 Data file Version 2.0.0. 2009.

The same question was asked of the MEP-candidates as well.

Since the EES included a question on actual vote cast at both the 2009 EP-election as well as the preceding national election (2006 for Sweden and 2007 for Denmark), it provides an opportunity to analyse the differences between the two elections in terms of opinion congruence and the weight of the EU-position in determining party choice.⁴⁸

Before turning to the actual data analysis, one methodological caveat is in order. Like Mattila and Raunio,⁴⁹ I will also use the EES data to estimate parties' positions based on *voters' perceptions* – with all its methodological advantages and drawbacks. However, Mattila and Raunio calculate the indicators using the assessment of the *given party's electorate only*. This approach has some obvious advantages, however, as the authors acknowledge, it is conceivable that respondents are engaged in “wishful thinking” when projecting their own policy preferences on their chosen parties. Furthermore, the number of respondents, on which the averages are based, can be rather small in the case of minor parties. Therefore, in the analysis below, I will use the assessment of *all voters* to estimate parties' positions, which might yield more robust results merely as a consequence of the larger pool of respondents, and, more importantly, it will possibly help to alleviate the above-mentioned bias caused by the evaluation of own voters. Therefore, I expect to get more “objective”, if not more precise assessments for all parties. I have calculated the same indicators using Mattila and Raunio's method, and these have also yielded noteworthy results,⁵⁰ however due to space limitations I will not pursue them in this paper.

5 OPINION CONGRUENCE BETWEEN PARTIES AND VOTERS AT THE 2009 EP-ELECTION

The positions of Swedish parties and the preferences of their electorates are presented in Table 1, which highlight rather clear-cut tendencies. First of all, there is a very strong correlation (and rank-correlation) between the positions of the parties and their voters, which implies that voters are reasonably well informed about the parties' EU-preferences, and that there is strong opinion congruence between them. This finding is also corroborated by the relatively small weighted averages. With the exception of the Centre Party and the Sweden Democrats, the prevailing tendency is that parties seem to occupy more “extreme” positions compared to their constituents, whereas MEP-candidates are even clearer in their policy preferences, whether in a pro-EU or a Eurosceptic direction. The only clear exception seems to be the Sweden Democrats, where voters seem to be even more Eurosceptic (and much more united on the issue) than the otherwise quite EU-hostile official party line. The genuine “Euro-party” June List is by far the most detached from it

⁴⁸ The advantage of this method is that in practice this can be regarded as “panel data” in that we have data on the same respondents for two different elections. I am certainly aware of the obvious drawbacks of this approach, primarily that it is highly questionable whether a respondent will be able to recall with certainty his or her vote cast two or three years earlier. Furthermore, there are good theoretical and empirical reasons – which would stretch the limits of this study – to expect that positions on the EU-dimension might change over time, thus influencing the results of this particular analysis.

⁴⁹ Mikko Mattila and Tapio Raunio, “Drifting Further Apart: National Parties and their Electorates on the EU Dimension,” *West European Politics* 35, 3 (2012), 589–606.

⁵⁰ For instance that the two indicators are highly correlated (Pearson's $R = 0.95$), but that voters, without exceptions see their own parties as more pro-EU than the total electorate – which in itself is an intriguing puzzle -, furthermore in the Swedish case the average distances are larger if we only consider the assessments of the parties' own voters.

voter base (albeit possibly due to differences in measurement) and they, together with the Pirate Party (with no European agenda at that time) seem to have the most heterogeneous electorate, judging from the standard deviations. Furthermore, parties on the left of the political spectrum (including the traditionally divided Social Democrats, as well as the Greens and the Left Party who, as mentioned, have gradually shifted towards a less Eurosceptic official party stance) have considerably more heterogeneous constituencies than the generally more pro-EU parties of the right. This observation is rather plausible in light of the party political context, and especially the results of the EU-referenda, discussed in an earlier section.

TABLE 1: AVERAGE POSITIONS OF SWEDISH PARTIES AND VOTERS ON THE EU-DIMENSION

	Voters' positions			Parties' positions (based on voters' perception)		Positions of MEP-candidates**		
	Mean	Std. dev.	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	N
Moderates	6.34	2.19	123	7.10	2.37	8	2.16	16
Liberals	6.33	2.15	87	6.56	2.29	8.14	1.98	22
Social Democrats	5.36	2.68	177	5.99	2.02	6.92	2.18	13
Christian Democrats	5.26	2.09	29	5.84	2.17	6.7	2.49	23
Greens	5.15	2.85	93	4.57	2.39	3.38	2.55	16
Pirate Party	4.75	3.14	69	4.6*	0.89	4.83	2.79	6
Centre Party	4.70	2.47	44	5.94	2.12	6.73	2.31	22
Left Party	3.43	2.70	52	2.94	2.37	0.83	1.47	12
June List	3.10	3.34	15	1.06*	1.24	0.81	0.91	16
Sweden Democrats	1.20	1.72	13	1.88	2.58	1.86	2.74	14
Total (Weighted average)	5.20	2.77	724	5.51	2.24***	5.19	3.49	160

Source: Own calculations based on EES (2009) and EECS (2009).

* Data from EECS (2009) with low response rates (N=5 and N=16), therefore these figures are not directly comparable. The EES (2009) did not include a question on these two parties' positions.

** Due to the low response rate (and probably non-representative sample) these figures cannot be considered as conclusive results.

*** Without Pirate Party and June List.

The Danish data (Table 2) show very different patterns. With the exception of the Social Democrats and the Socialist People's Party all parties seem to be more Eurosceptic than their voters. This is especially noteworthy in the case of the two genuine "Euro-parties": the voters of both the June Movement and the People's Movement against the EU are apparently much less Eurosceptic than their parties, and, according to the standard deviation values, less unified in their opinion on EU-issues than the average. Otherwise opinion congruence between voters and parties seems to be fairly high. Given the very low response rate of Danish MEP-candidates, any conclusion drawn based on the last column of Table 2 must at best be taken with a pinch of salt. For one, it is apparent that the largest differences between parties and their candidates can be observed in the case of the two parties (Danish People's Party and the June Movement), where we only have data based on a single respondent.

TABLE 2: AVERAGE POSITIONS OF DANISH PARTIES AND VOTERS ON THE EU-DIMENSION

	Voters' positions			Parties' positions (based on voters' perception)		Positions of MEP-candidates**		
	Mean	Std. dev.	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	N
Social Liberals	6.76	2.02	37	6.01	2.36	9	1	3
June Movement	6.31	2.58	21	3.69	3.09	0	-	1
Conservatives	5.67	2.08	82	5.37	2.26	5.75	1.71	4
Liberal Alliance	5.62	1.34	5	5.08	2.45	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Socialist People's P.	5.56	2.15	163	5.69	2.31	5.2	0.84	5
Liberals	5.54	2.43	167	5.43	2.48	7	0	2
Social Democrats	5.35	2.51	176	6.02	1.94	8.33	1.53	3
People's Movement	4.98	3.42	54	0*	0	1	1.73	3
Danish People's P.	3.57	2.70	116	2.8	3.22	0	0	1
Total (Weighted average)	5.28	2.57	823	4.85	2.42***	5.36	n.a.	22

Source: Own calculations based on EES (2009) and EECS (2009).

* Data from EECS (2009) with low response rate (N=3), therefore these figures are not directly comparable. The EES (2009) did not include a question on this party's position. Nevertheless the 0-value for the June Movement is plausible, since they are the only "party" represented at either the national or the EU-level, who promote Denmark's immediate withdrawal from the EU.

** Due to the extremely low response rate (and non-representative sample) these figures cannot be considered as conclusive results.

*** Without People's Movement.

For the other parties, the picture is rather mixed. Among the strongly pro-EU parties, the candidates of the Social Liberals⁵¹ seem to be even more favourable towards further integration, and the same can be inferred for the Social Democrats and (to a lesser extent) the Liberals as well. In contrast, the Socialist People's Party which, as mentioned, has visibly shifted to a genuinely pro-EU stance during the last decade or so, exhibits a rather high degree of congruence between the opinions of the voters and the party. As a result, the once strongly EU-sceptic party has become one of the most EU-friendly parties considering both its official platform and its relatively homogenous voter base.

⁵¹ It is worth mentioning that, mainly for historical reasons, the Social (Radical) Liberals had until the 1990s been close to what we would label as "soft Eurosceptic". See Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart, *Opposing Europe: Party Systems and Opposition to the Union, the Euro and Europeanisation* (Opposing Europe Research Network Working Paper No. 1. 2000.); or were at least relatively split on the issue (cf. Rudy Andeweg, "The Reshaping of National Party Systems," *West European Politics* 18, 3 (1995), 66; Nick Sitter, "The Politics of Opposition and European Integration In Scandinavia: Is Euro-Scepticism a Government-Opposition Dynamic?" *West European Politics* 24, 4 (2001), 33; and recommended a 'no' to their voters at the 1986-referendum – albeit partly motivated more by government-opposition tactics in addition to mild Eurosceptic principles.

TABLE 3: DIFFERENCES AND DISTANCES BETWEEN VOTERS' AND PARTIES' POSITIONS ON THE EU-DIMENSION

Sweden	Difference between parties and voters	Difference between MEP-candidates and parties	Denmark	Difference between parties and voters	Difference between MEP-candidates and parties
Moderates	0.76	0.9	Social Liberals	-0.75	2.99
Liberals	0.23	1.58	June Movement	-2.62	-3.69**
Social Democrats	0.63	0.93	Conservatives	-0.3	0.38
Christian Democrats	0.58	0.86	Liberal Alliance	-0.54	-0.08
Greens	-0.58	-1.19	Socialist People's P.	0.13	-0.49
Pirate Party	-0.15	0.23	Liberals	-0.11	1.57
Centre Party	1.24	0.79	Social Democrats	0.67	2.31
Left Party	-0.49	-2.11	People's Movement	-4.98	1
June List	-2.04	-0.25	Danish People's P.	-0.77	-2.8**
Sweden Democrats	0.68	-0.02			
Average	0.08	0.17	Average	-1.09	0.13
Weighted average*	0.26	0.38	Weighted average*	-0.42****	0.46***
Weighted average (absolute value, i.e. "distance")	0.61	1.02	Weighted average (absolute value, i.e. "distance")	0.76****	1.64***

Source: Own calculations based on EES (2009) and EECS (2009).

*The weights are based on the N-values (Tables 1 and 2) for the respective parties, which by and large correspond to their electoral strength at the 2009 EP-elections. Thus, the relative weight of minor parties will not be exaggerated in the results.

**Especially unreliable data due to the very low (N=1) number of respondents.

*** If the two parties with extremely low response rates (Danish People's Party and June Movement) are left out of the model, the averages will be 1.43 and 1.2, respectively.

**** If the People's Movement is omitted, these values will be -0.1 and 0.46, respectively.

All in all, the average distances (absolute values of differences) between parties and voters are slightly smaller in Sweden than in Denmark. Danish voters are „on average” somewhat more pro-EU than their parties, whilst the opposite holds true for Sweden. Based on the aggregated data (i.e. the „average positions” of the voters) we can conclude that in neither country have parties more convergent positions on the EU-dimension than their voters (Table 3).

In order to formally test this hypothesis, we can use the simple regression equation also employed by Mattila and Raunio:⁵²

$$\text{Party position} = a + b (\text{voters' position}).$$

If the constant of the equation (a) is positive, and its b-coefficient smaller than 1, then we can safely conclude that the electorate is more Eurosceptic and more polarised than the parties. (This is the result that Mattila and Raunio get when analysing all EU-states.)

If we estimate the model based on the Swedish data, we arrive at a very different result:

$$a = -1.11; \quad b = 1.26 (p < 0.01); \quad \text{Beta} = 0.91;$$

that is, although the figures in Table 3 show that Swedish parties „on average” are somewhat more pro-EU than their electorate, but since they occupy more „extreme” positions in both directions, they are also more polarised. However, there is a generally very large degree of opinion congruence, also corroborated by the large Beta-coefficient.

The data yield similar results in the Danish case, too:

$$a = -1.87; \quad b = 1.28 (p < 0.01); \quad \text{Beta} = 0.59;$$

⁵² Mikko Mattila and Tapio Raunio, „Drifting Further Apart: National Parties and their Electorates on the EU Dimension,” *West European Politics* 35, 3 (2012), 599.

that is, parties are „on average” unequivocally more Eurosceptic and polarised than their constituents, whilst opinion congruence is smaller than in Sweden.

Finally, the average distance between MEP-candidates and their parties seems to be larger in the Danish case, but the very low response rate and the consequent lack of representativeness definitely warrants caution when drawing firm conclusions.

6 RELATIVE WEIGHT OF THE EU-DIMENSION: EP AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS COMPARED

The level of congruence at EP and national elections are analysed based on the „gross” (i.e. individual-level) distance between voters and parties. In other words, for each respondent the absolute value of the difference between his or her position on the EU-dimension and that of the respondent’s preferred party is calculated, and the grand average of these values are subsequently compared for the two elections. Finally, association measures will be calculated in order to gauge the relative weight of EU-positions in determining party choice.

Based on the results reported in Table 4 we can infer the following. Firstly, the average distances are relatively large, around two points (on a scale of 11). In Denmark, by far the largest differences are to be observed in the case of the anti-EU parties, as well as within the somewhat divided Social Democratic voter base. Seemingly contradicting our hypothesis, the average difference is higher, whereas the correlation is lower between voters’ and parties’ positions in the case of the EP-elections. However, if we remove the People’s Movement against The EU from the model (which can be justified on the grounds that the party’s position is estimated using a different source, thereby possibly distorting the model), congruence for the 2009 EP-election becomes slightly higher in both absolute and relative terms.

TABLE 4: ”GROSS” DISTANCES – AVERAGE DISTANCE BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL VOTERS’ AND THEIR PARTIES’ POSITIONS ON THE EU-DIMENSION

Swedish parties	EP (2009)	Riksdag (2006)	Danish parties	EP (2009)	Folketing (2007)
Sweden Democrats	1.60	1.49	Liberal Alliance	0.94	2.11
Christian Dems.	1.70	2.30	Conservatives	1.64	1.57
Liberals	1.76	1.61	Social Liberals	1.66	1.74
Moderates	1.80	2.20	Socialist People’s P.	1.67	1.94
Centre Party	1.99	2.29	Liberals	1.90	1.99
Social Democrats	2.18	2.44	Social Democrats	2.01	2.06
Left Party	2.21	2.51	Danish People’s P.	2.32	2.33
Green Party	2.30	2.10	June Movement	3.23	n.a.
Pirate Party	2.63	n.a.	People’s Movement against the EU	4.36	n.a.
June List	2.90	n.a.			
Average	2.10	2.26	Average	2.09	1.98
Pearson correlation	.338*	.286*	Average (Without People’s Movement)	1.93	-
			Pearson correlation	.194*	.253*
			Pearson correlation (without People’s Movement)	.257*	.253*

Source: Own calculations based on EES (2009). *p<0,01

This in other words can be regarded as a very modest corroboration of our first hypothesis, namely that EP-elections are to a larger extent characterised

by congruence on the EU-dimension, however, quite surprisingly, the two genuine „EU-parties”, which explicitly advocate EU-related policies, significantly „worsen” the overall performance. This is an interesting paradox given the fact that this embryonic „Euro-party system”⁵³ has emerged with the very purpose of more effectively structuring voter choice and representing voter preferences on the EU-dimension, than the traditional (national) party system. Based on the data we can cautiously conclude that this larger incongruence in the case of these two parties is caused by the fact that their voters are significantly less Eurosceptic than the parties’ perceived positions.

Though the average distances are slightly higher in Sweden than in Denmark, the difference between EP and national elections is clearly more pronounced: both the smaller average distances and the stronger correlation can be regarded as corroborating evidence for our hypothesis that voters at EP-elections vote to a larger extent for parties that are closer to their preferences on the EU-dimension. Having said that, it is worth mentioning that the June List, which – like its Danish namesake – was founded with the purpose of representing (soft) EU-sceptic voters exclusively at EP-elections, is actually the party which seems to be furthest from its voters (albeit based on an indicator which cannot be directly compared, see Table 1), mainly due to its surprisingly pro-EU voter base.

The distance between voters and the traditionally Eurosceptic Greens and the Left Party can also be said to be relatively large – perhaps due to the fact that „green” voters had not been able (or willing) to adapt to the party’s officially modified stance. In their case, however, it should be noted that the distance was somewhat smaller at the 2006 elections than at the 2009 EP-elections (for most other parties it is the other way around), which can probably be explained by the fact that the more pro-EU stance had not yet been adopted by the party, but perhaps more importantly that the party received far less votes in 2006 than in 2009, which in itself probably contributed to a more heterogeneous voter base.

In the case of the Pirate Party, as in the case of the June List, the aforementioned methodological caveat also applies. Furthermore, the fact that at the time of the 2009 EP-elections the party did not have a fully-fledged platform or programme outside the realm of intellectual property rights, the question of their stance on European integration at that time seems more or less irrelevant.

The figures are also quite clear when it comes to the traditionally strong divisions within the Social Democratic voter base. Finally, the Eurosceptic Sweden Democrats exhibit the highest level of opinion congruence, although the party was far below the threshold in 2009, and therefore their weight in the sample is correspondingly very low.

In sum, there are no dramatic differences between EP- and national elections in either Denmark or Sweden when it comes to the average distance between voters and their parties on the EU-dimension despite the existence of *sui generis* „European parties”, contesting exclusively EP-elections and with a cross-block (Eurosceptic) appeal in both countries. The data seem to indicate that it is paradoxically these parties that decrease the average level of congruence. This might imply that their voters are not only,

⁵³ Torben Worre, „The Danish Euro-Party System,” *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 10, 1 (1987), 70–95; Rudy Andeweg, „The Reshaping of National Party Systems,” *West European Politics* 18, 3 (1995), 70.

or not even primarily drawn to these parties based on their (negative) attitudes towards European integration, but perhaps as an expression of a more general dissatisfaction with the established parties.

Finally, by analysing measures of association (ANOVA, Table 5) we can establish that the relationship between positions on the EU-dimension and party choice in both Denmark and Sweden is indeed stronger in the case of EP-elections, which also seems to confirm our hypothesis. To be sure, these associations are relatively weak, especially when compared to the traditionally high-profile domestic dimensions and issues, for instance immigration policy in Denmark, social class in Sweden, and crucially the Left-Right dimension and the assessment of government performance in both countries.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, as expected, most of these traditional conflicts do lose some (but by no means a lot of) weight at EP-elections.⁵⁵

TABLE 5: RELATIVE EFFECT SIZE OF FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTY CHOICE (ANOVA)

	Denmark (Folketing, 2007)	Denmark (EP, 2009)	Sweden (Riksdag, 2006)	Sweden (EP, 2009)
EU (opinion on further integration)	.074	.090	.108	.145
Left-Right	.399	.387	.501	.479
Assessment of incumbent government's performance	.453	.404	.346	.368
Social class	.086	.069	.186	.202
Sector of employment	.037	.057	.032	.055
Size of settlement	.036	.046	.031	.069
Attitudes towards immigration	.208	.227	.105	.107
Importance of environmental protection	.052	.079	.060	.170

Source: Own calculations based on EES (2009). Entries are Eta-squared values.

In line with the general public opinion presented in Section 2 of this paper, it is worth pointing out that in Denmark it is especially attitudes towards immigration policy, whereas in Sweden it is the importance attached to the protection of the environment that apparently has an even larger weight at EP-elections than at national ones, albeit none of these can overshadow the significance of the traditional domestic issues referred to above.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of the available data we can conclude that only our first hypothesis can be sustained: the association between the position on the EU-dimension and party choice, as well as the average distance and correlation between voters' and parties' positions can be regarded as corroborating evidence for the higher relevance of the EU-dimension at EP-elections, albeit far from conclusive. This effect is more pronounced in Sweden, whereas it is quite weak in Denmark. There is no question whatsoever that traditional domestic conflicts and dimensions dominate also at EP-elections, in essence underpinning the "second-order national contest" argument.

⁵⁴ See footnote 13.

⁵⁵ While comparing Eta-squared values within countries for the same election but different variables is straightforward, comparing them within countries but between two elections is more problematic, due to the somewhat different sample: though the pool of respondents is the same, but not necessarily the same respondents voted at the two elections. Therefore, any conclusion inferred based on such an analysis must only be regarded as an indication, not robust evidence.

As far as the supposedly larger homogeneity and the greater opinion congruence between Eurosceptic parties and their electorates are concerned, the data clearly refute this hypothesis. With the exception of the Sweden Democrats, the average distance between all other traditionally Eurosceptic parties and their constituents was higher than in the case of pro-EU parties. Indeed, the largest differences were measured for some of these movements, albeit possibly caused by measurement problems. However, it is safe to conclude that the overall opinion congruence seems to be fairly high in both countries, which can be positively assessed also from a normative perspective.⁵⁶

Finally we can also reject the hypothesis that parties are „on average” more pro-EU and more concentrated on the EU-dimension than their voters, which would imply that the mainstream parties would form a pro-EU elite-consensus, basically limiting voter choice (especially for Eurosceptic voters) on this increasingly important issue dimension. What we can rather infer from the data is that Swedish parties (and especially their MEP-candidates) occupy more „extreme” positions than their voters, i.e. it is the voters who exhibit a larger degree of convergence on this dimension. Although Swedish voters „on average” are indeed more sceptical of further integration than the parties representing them, the opposite seems to be the case in Denmark, where the polarisation of voters and parties are more or less equal.

This latter assertion is puzzling, since the literature has shown that one of the main reasons why mainstream political parties consciously choose to depoliticise and play down the importance of the EU-dimension and not to play the „EU-card” is that throughout Europe they are generally more convergent (and more pro-EU) than their voters.⁵⁷ If that is the case, then we would expect Denmark and Sweden – where our results show that parties are in fact at least as polarised on the EU-dimension as their voters – to exhibit a higher degree of politicisation of the issue. Sitter’s⁵⁸ and Green-Pedersen’s⁵⁹ argument is basically that it is a function of the individual parties’ (office-and/or vote-seeking) strategies whether or not they choose to „wake up the sleeping giant”, and that those parties who would be interested in doing so are not able to. As mentioned in an earlier section, the salience of the EU-issue has remained very modest in both countries, and in order to avoid engaging in a circular argument (parties do not politicise the issue because voters are uninterested, while voters do not prioritise the issue because parties keep a low profile on it), more research would be necessary to disentangle the causal relationships and the processes at play.

In any case, the same authors⁶⁰ have also drawn the attention to the potential dangers of „waking up the giant”. In such a case, when the „dormant” (de-politicised) EU-issue is brought (in the case of the Scandinavian countries, brought back) to the centre of political discourse, this can result in the eruption of strong but currently latent anti-EU (and anti-establishment) sentiments, which could even prove to be detrimental to the

⁵⁶ Cf. Rudy Andeweg, „The Reshaping of National Party Systems,” *West European Politics* 18, 3 (1995), 67.

⁵⁷ Cees Van der Eijk and Mark N. Franklin, „Potential for contestation European matters at national elections in Europe,” in *European Integration and Political Conflict*, eds. Gary Marks and Marco Steenbergen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 41–42.

⁵⁸ Nick Sitter, *Opposing Europe: Euro-Scepticism, Opposition and Party Competition*. Brighton, Sussex European Institute, 2002.

⁵⁹ Christoffer Green-Pedersen, „A Giant Fast Asleep? Party Incentives and the Politicisation of European Integration,” *Political Studies* 60, 1 (2012), 115–130.

⁶⁰ Cees Van der Eijk and Mark N. Franklin, „Potential for contestation European matters at national elections in Europe,” in *European Integration and Political Conflict*, eds. Gary Marks and Marco Steenbergen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 49–50.

traditional established parties. In other words, it is only a matter of time and „ignition” that the latent and partly crosscutting EU-conflict leads to a political explosion.

An economic crisis is obviously a perfect candidate for such an igniting factor. Indeed, we have seen ample evidence of such processes taking place in the wake of the deep and enduring economic crisis since 2008, even though the direct impact on the Scandinavian countries has remained quite modest in a European comparison.⁶¹ Still, it should be noted that the traditionally pro-EU Swedish centre-right, and its Conservative Prime Minister, as well as his Danish counterpart (another devoted-European) have made a number of less than enthusiastic statements about further integration and their respective countries' roles within it.⁶² In addition, several conflicts directly related to the EU and its capacity and approach to dealing with the economic crisis have been present in the domestic political discourse in both countries which, together with the apparent recent drop in citizens' support of the EU⁶³ could imply that it will be quite relevant to revisit the questions raised in this study after the 2014 EP-elections.

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⁶¹ Tamás Polgár, “The Nordic View: Impact of the Economic Crisis on the Domestic Politics and EU-policies of the Nordic Countries,” in *European Futures: The Perspectives of the New Member States in the New Europe*, eds. Attila Ágh and László Vass (Budapest: Budapest College of Communication and Business, 2013), 211–267.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 227, 246.

⁶³ Holmberg, Sören, *Försvagat opinionsstöd för EU. Europapolitisk Analys* (Stockholm: Svenska Institutet för Europapolitiska Studier, 2012).

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ABSTRACTS IN SLOVENIAN LANGUAGE - POVZETKI ČLANKOV V SLOVENSKEM JEZIKU

A PREMIER WITHOUT PARLIAMENT: THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN THE ITALIAN SECOND REPUBLIC

PREDSEDNIK VLADE BREZ PARLAMENTA: ZAKONODAJNI PROCES V DRUGI ITALIJANSKI REPUBLIKI

Fortunato MUSELLA

Italija pogosto upravičeno velja za idealni primer procesa predsedništva, ki spreminja mnoge parlamentarne demokracije, s kvazi neposredno izvoljenim predsednikom vlade in njegovim vedno močnejšim vplivom tako na vlado kot tudi na parlament. Vendar pa močnejša, okoli predsednika osredotočena vlada hkrati pomeni tudi prikrajšanje mnogih dolgo zakoreninjenih pravic parlamenta. Pričujoči prispevek analizira procese, v katerih je izvršilna oblast pridobila nadzor nad zakonodajno funkcijo skozi razširitve delegirane zakonodaje in uporabe odlokov. Dominanca izvršne veje oblasti je hkrati odtujila lojalnost premierove večine, kar povzroča t. i. »razdeljenega predsednika vlade«. Ameriški predsedniški sistem je pogost primer, da lahko močni voditelji hitro postanejo zelo šibki, če nimajo parlamentarne podpore. To pa je lekcija, ki se jo je Silvio Berlusconi naučil na lastne stroške.

Ključne besede: Italija, predsedništvo, premier, parlament, zakonodajni postopek.

BRINGING THE 'CENTRE' CENTRE-STAGE': DEFINING THE CENTRE IN IDEOLOGICAL, ORGANISATIONAL AND POLICY TERMS**POJEM CENTRA: OPREDELITEV CENTRA V IDEOLOŠKEM, ORGANIZACIJSKEM IN JAVNOPOLITIČNEM SMISLU**

Guy BURTON

.....

Kaj je 'center'? S pregledom različne politološke literature (vključujoč politično teorijo, volilne študije, politične stranke in javno upravo) članek analizira različne dimenzije, ki jih povezujemo s pojmom "centra", vključujoč ideološko (zmerno, liberalno in reformistično), organizacijsko (temelječo na povprečnem volivcu in "catch all" strankarskih modelih) ter javnopolitično dimenzijo (z uravnoveženjem vrednot in načel krščanske in socialne demokracije). Izhajajoč iz navedenih dimenzij predstavlja članek temeljne izzive naproti pojmu "center" (relativne razlike med ideologijami, družbenimi in političnimi organizacijami skozi družbene prelome in razvoj političnih strank ipd.). Članek zaključuje s pozivom po dodatni in bolj poglobljeni analizi 'centra' z namenom doseči večji vpogled v sam koncept.

Ključne besede: center, ideologija, politične stranke, javna politika.

THE PROCESSES OF ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION IN COUNTRIES OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

PROCESI EKONOMSKE KONSOLIDACIJE V DRŽAVAH NEKDANJE JUGOSLAVIJE

Simona KUKOVIČ in Miro HAČEK

.....

Preden sploh lahko razpravljamo o demokratični konsolidaciji, morajo biti izpolnjeni vsaj trije temeljni minimalni pogoji. Poleg tega morajo konsolidirane demokracije izpolnjevati še nekaj dodatnih pogojev, ki nikoli niso pritegnili veliko pozornosti v znanstvenih analizah; med njimi Linz in Stepan še posebej poudarjata pomen ekonomske konsolidacije. Pričujoči prispevek analizira procese demokratične konsolidacije v nekdanjih jugoslovanskih republikah. Avtorja na podlagi več indikatorjev ugotavljata, da večina nekdanjih jugoslovanskih republik (še) ni dosegla ravni konsolidiranih demokracij; avtorja testirata tezo, da je eden od temeljnih razlogov za to tudi neuspeli proces ekonomske konsolidacije.

Ključne besede: demokracija, ekonomija, konsolidacija, nekdanja Jugoslavija, Slovenija.

TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL
PROFILES OF MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS: THE CASE OF
EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES

PROTI VZPOSTAVITVI INSTITUCIONALNIH OKVIRJEV
MINISTRSTEV ZA ZUNANJE ZADEVE: PRIMER DRŽAV ČLANIC
EVROPSKE UNIJE

Boštjan UDOVIČ in Marko LOVEC

.....

Značilnosti institucionalne organizacije ministrstev za zunanje zadeve omogočajo refleksijo splošnih pogojev, ki vplivajo tako na delovanje zunanjih ministrstev kot tudi na institucionalne profile, ki določajo zunanje politike v posameznih državah. Z namenom določitve razlik in vzorcev institucionalnih profilov ministrstev za zunanje zadeve pričujoč članek analizira vertikalno in horizontalno koncentracijo v njihovih organizacijskih strukturah, vlogo njihovih vodstev, ki temeljijo na političnem mandatu, in razmerje med temeljnimi področji zunanje politike. V empiričnem delu prispevka primerjamo ministrstva za zunanje zadeve 28 držav članic Evropske unije. Članek zaključujemo z refleksijo empiričnih in teoretskih implikacij predlaganih značilnosti institucionalnih profilov.

Ključne besede: ministrstva za zunanje zadeve, organizacijske strukture, Evropska unija, države članice.

STILL “EURO-PARTY SYSTEMS”? – REPRESENTATIVENESS OF POLITICAL PARTIES ON THE EU-DIMENSION IN DENMARK AND SWEDEN

ŠE VEDNO SISTEMI EVROPSKIH STRANK? – EU DIMENZIJA PREDSTAVNIŠTVA POLITIČNIH STRANK NA PRIMERU DANSKE IN ŠVEDSKE

Tamás POLGÁR

Eden nepogrešljivih elementov predstavniške demokracije je obstoj stopnje ujemanja med mnenji volivcev in političnimi strankami pri perečih političnih vprašanjih. V večini parlamentarnih demokracij je dejansko mogoče zaznati močno povezavo med volivci in političnimi strankami pri vprašanju tradicionalne dimenzije levo-desno; medtem pa je situacija veliko manj jasna pri vprašanjih evropske integracije. V pričujoči študiji merimo obseg ujemanja mnenj med strankami in volivci na Danskem in na Švedskem. Na podlagi podatkov iz raziskave European Election Survey iz leta 2009 lahko ugotovimo, da kljub pojavi tistega, kar nekateri avtorji imenujejo zarodek evropskega strankarskega sistema, lahko zasledimo le nekoliko višjo stopnjo ujemanja pri volitvah v evropski parlament (v primerjavi z nacionalnimi volitvami). Pod izziv postavljamo tudi pogosti trditvi - namreč trditev, da evroskeptične politične stranke pri tej dimenziji bolje predstavljajo svoje volivce, in trditev, da so volivci »povprečno« bolj evroskeptični in polarizirani.

Ključne besede: Evropska unija, strankarski sistem, Skandinavija, ujemanje mnenj, euroskepticizem.

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