Ideological Cleavages in Western Societies: Transformation of Cleavage Politics

Andrija Henjak
PhD Candidate
Department of Political Science
Central European University
Budapest
e-mail: pphhea01@phd.ceu.hu

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1. Cleavages Transformed: An Introduction

Over the last several decades the structure of political cleavages in advanced industrialized societies of Western Europe changed substantially compared to that identified in Lipset and Rokkan work (1967). This change was brought about by the process of social and economic change with deindustrialization, expansion of higher education and secularization as its most notable trends. Economic and social change produced large service and public sector which made social structure more complex by splitting middle and working classes into what Esping Anderson (1993) calls industrial and post-industrial hierarchy thus changing the nature of class cleavage. Secularization and the rise of new issues replaced religious cleavage with conflict over values and center-periphery cleavage either withered away or was institutionalized and therefore made more or less permanent feature of political system in countries like Spain or Belgium.

Social and economic change also produced new political issues which intersected or surpassed previously existing lines of political conflicts (Inglehart 1990). This made it increasingly difficult for the established parties to accommodate all social demands and allowed new parties to enter political competition through the politicization of new issues. Also, it forced established parties to adjust their positions and realign their electoral coalitions to include new social groups into their support base.

The result of these changes was a more complex political space characterized by multiple lines of political divisions. Divisions within middle and working class constituencies caused by the rise of new occupational groups and the politicization of new issues in 1980s and 1990s resulted in the split on the left between mainstream left and new left and on the right between mainstream and radical right (Kitschelt 1994, Kriesi 1998).

Social structure of advanced industrial societies is characterized by greater complexity than that of post-war industrial societies (Kriesi 1998). Increasing relevance of variables such as sector of employment, task structure, exposure to labor market risk, education and various forms of their interaction makes it increasingly difficult to analytically reduce cleavages in contemporary industrial societies to a set of few structural variables. Destructuralization of cleavages was further helped by the decline of mass organizations linked to parties and partisan encapsulation of the society through pillarization and similar arrangements. Social complexity translated into political complexity as greater social fragmentation inevitably translated into greater fragmentation of the political space.

The final outcome is that today we can hardly speak of cleavages in the sense Lipset and Rokkan did and in terms of the definition proposed by Bartolini and Mair (1990). While we still have some level of structural foundation of modern political divisions, the usefulness of variables such as class or religion to explain their shape is at best only marginal. Whereas cleavages in modern societies do have some degree of stability and structural foundation (see Werfhorst and de Graaf 2004, Kitschelt and Rehm 2004, Iversen and Soskice 2001), they achieve greatest visibility as ideological or issue cleavages.

The rise of new issues is by and large a trend that is common to all advanced industrial countries (Inglehart 1990, Duch and Taylor 2003), as is the rise of new parties on the left and right. However, the exact shape of new ideological divisions and alignment of particular parties varies across nations (Knutsen and Scarborough 1995, Kriesi 2007). The source of this variation is likely to be a combination of path dependent development of previously existing cleavages with social and economic developments linked to welfare state and deindustrialization.

Huber and Stephens (2001), Lynch (2006) and Esping Anderson (1990) show that the construction of welfare state was also an exercise in political coalition building with parties of
different ideological orientation choosing different paths by implementing policies and shaping coalitions that would enhance their electoral fortunes in the future. In part, policies used to respond to deindustrialization were also to a large extent shaped by the need of the established parties to construct viable political coalitions (see Iversen and Wren 1998). Variation in policies used to respond to social and economic shifts influenced how new political parties used new political issues to enter competition. That is why we could see significant differences between radical right in Scandinavia and continental Europe or why green parties do not exist in countries such as Norway and Denmark, or why in the Netherlands greens are very different from the European mainstream.

This paper addresses the issue of transformation of political cleavages from the model Lipset and Rokkan identified toward a more complex and multidimensional form taking place in modern postindustrial societies of Western Europe. Since I expect that structural cleavages on the one hand lost their previous simplicity while new structural divisions are a complex interaction of a number of variables, I focus here principally on ideological or value cleavages.

In order to give answers to these questions, this paper analyzes the structure of ideological divisions among mass publics and their manifestation in voting behavior. With the use of mass survey data from WVS and EVS, the paper estimates how particular issues are structuring voting behavior of mass publics in western societies and how strong those ideological divisions are in different countries.

In the first part the paper will outline the nature of new ideological cleavages and identify potential sources of variation and proceed to outline cross national differences and identify their sources. The second part of the paper includes empirical analysis that seeks to map cross-national variation in cleavage patterns and asses to what extent they correspond to stated expectations.

### 2. Causes of Cleavage Transformation

Different trajectories in political and social developments across western societies invariably caused variation in the nature and the importance of ideological cleavages. According to classic literature on political cleavages, economic left-right cleavage is present in all societies while the nature and the importance of cleavages based on religion differs from country to country depending, on the religious composition of their population (see Lipset and Rokkan 1967 and their contributors). The pattern produced by the interaction of those two cleavages varies. In some countries, cleavages based on religion and economic conflict cross-cut each other, forming an essentially two-dimensional pattern of ideological divisions. In other countries they reinforce each other, and in third group of countries center-periphery division intersects predominant economic and religious divisions (Kitschelt 2002).

With the arrival of advanced industrialism the advocates of newly prominent value change theory argued that it can be expected that opposition between materialist and postmaterialist values will become dominant ideological divide in western societies (Inglehart 1990, 1997, Sankiaho 1984). Value change theory argues that as western societies grow richer and as security and the absence of major threat of war begin to be taken for granted, political significance of economic and security issues will decline. As this happens, the left-right ideological division based primarily on economic issues will be eventually replaced by divisions that are predominantly based on materialist and postmaterialist value orientations. The more developed and wealthier the society is, the bigger will be the importance of value orientation as the primary source of political divisions (Inglehart 1977, 1990).
There is almost no disagreement in the literature that societal development after 1970s produced new issues and brought about new dimension of political competition. The mechanism that produces this new dimension in Inglehart hypothesis is related to trends he considers to be present in all societies equally, and more often than not independently of preexisting variations in social conditions and past developments (Inglehart 1977). The only societal conditions that really matter according to Inglehart are the level of economic development and the peacefulness of societies in question.

The value change theory therefore predicts relatively uniform, but differently timed, development of new ideological or value divisions. However, the variation in the interaction between old ideological cleavages, based on economic conflict and religion, and new ideological cleavage based on socio-cultural issues and values produces cross national variation that can not be explained only by different timing in what is seen as uniform developmental pattern.

More likely causes for cross national variation of ideological cleavages could be found in interactions between relevant historical factors, such as the historical strength of religious and other communitarian divides, and more recent political divisions related to welfare state formation and, even more recently, responses to deindustrialization. These historical factors influenced developmental path of historical cleavages and shaped the form they developed into today (see Kitschelt 2002 and Kriesi et al 2007).

The strength of religious and communitarian divisions is strongly related to the salience of modern ideological cleavages based on cultural issues or values (Kriesi et al 2007), and to their alignment with economic issue cleavages (Kitschelt 2002). Intense historical competition along cultural politics dimension increased mobilization potential of new politics issues and created conditions for the replacement of religion and related cultural issues with new politics and politics of identity issues as existing parties and voters were already accustomed to competition over cultural issues (Kriesi et al 2007). The strength of economic divisions is affected by the divisions within middle and working class and their cross class coalitions as well as the shape of political coalitions and policies pursued by main political actors during the formation of the welfare state (Wilensky 1986, Iversen and Wren 1998, Huber and Stephens 2001, Lynch 2006). Policy responses to deindustrialization and service sector growth affected how established parties managed to incorporate new social groups into their electoral coalitions and what issue niche(s) provided opportunity for successful new parties’ entrance.

Transformation of cleavages, as described here, represents a path dependent development of the historical cleavages in interaction with social and economic changes providing opportunity structure for established political parties to realign their position and new parties to enter competition. In short, it is an interaction between structure and an agency with feedback connections running in both directions, as political actors actively strive to form electoral coalitions of social groups through policy.

It should be stressed that this mechanism presupposes an important role for political parties in the development of ideological cleavages. The strength of particular political actors, the way they formed coalitions and policies they pursued, shaped the formation of ideological cleavages in the future. Therefore, variation across countries is not only caused by societal differences, but rather, it is the consequence of interaction between societal differences and the actions of political actors.

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1 One of the best examples for such development are policies of expanding welfare state services that created large left constituencies in the public sector and could be expected to be among the causes of the rise in importance of the new politics issues. Such development could also be responsible for potential division within constituencies of the left on old left workerist concerned with economic issues and new left social professional actors.
3. Ideological Cleavages: Cross-Country Differences

3.1 Configuration 1

Combining previous salience of religious and communitarian divisions with the type of political divisions conditioned by the development of the welfare state and its responses to deindustrialization we arrive to three configurations of ideological divisions in western societies (see also Kitschelt 2002). In the first configuration economic issues, welfare state and redistribution are the primary and dominant source of ideological divisions. Other issues, such as libertarian or authoritarian cultural issues, or identity politics issues values, are either subsumed into the primary division, or differences between parties on those issues are only marginal and do not have particularly high political relevance (Kitschelt 2002). This configuration of ideological cleavages can be found in countries that have liberal type of welfare regime and where religion does not play an important role in politics. Political competition in these countries is principally about economic issues such as taxation and market regulation, while values and cultural issues have lower salience. The strength of economic divisions did not change significantly over the period as it kept its dominance because of highly polarized conflict between protectionist and market based responses to deindustrialization among mainstream left and right parties. The fact that left parties in some cases, most notably New Labor, adjusted their position toward more market based solutions does not seem to be affecting salience of economic issues significantly. Recent rising prominence of sociocultural dimension, namely issues such as immigration and cultural homogeneity, mainly reinforces principal division but it does not add to the complexity of political space. Countries where this type of ideological divisions is predominant are Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Principal political actors in these countries are secular conservative and labor parties with constituencies that are divided mainly along class lines and with long history of opposition over economic issues. Although in these countries religious differences sometimes did transform themselves in communitarian divisions, they generally never generated strong self-standing political cleavage (the notable exceptions from this pattern are Northern Ireland and potentially Quebec in Canada). The role of religion in party formation was only minor or non-existent, and there are no significant parties that would predominantly compete on religion or sociocultural issues. The nature of ideological division did not change its primary economic nature, although there was a potential for dilution of predominantly class based divisions with divisions based on sector and recently more pronounced separation of middle class into sociocultural and market professionals that are more potent sources of sociocultural divisions.

3.2 Configuration 2

Second configuration is characterized by the combination of dominant ideological division over redistribution and the welfare state, and somewhat less prominent division over socio-cultural and communitarian values (Kitschelt 2002). This type of ideological division can be found in countries that have socialdemocratic type of welfare state such as Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

The dominance of economic issues and the welfare state as the primary source of ideological divisions has its origin in the formation of Scandinavian universalist welfare states. Scandinavian welfare states were created by the social democratic parties, acting as

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cconcerned about new politics issues. Such development could also be responsible to the change it the base of economic cleavage from class to sectoral (between public and private sector) (Knutsen 2001).
representatives and supported by strongly unionized working class constituencies, with the support of agrarian constituencies of self-employed farmers represented by center parties. In the post-war period of further expansion of welfare state programs toward the middle classes and the self-employed, social democrats also enjoyed the support of professional middle class (Huber and Stephens 2001). The opposition to welfare state was concentrated mainly within the conservative and liberal constituencies of business professionals and high income groups.

The main ideological cleavage in such setting became a division between those who support policies aimed at the creation of universalist welfare state and those who oppose it, with significant groups (parts of the middle class and agricultural population) holding centrist, but generally supportive views of the universalist risk-sharing policies (Huber and Stephens 2001). In some countries we can also find opposition within left between those that support policies pursued by mainstream social democrats and those that thought such policies did not go far enough (such as communist and left parties in Norway, Sweden and Finland).

In contemporary period, economic conflict rotate over the size of public sector and its economic impact (Garret and Way 1999). This division causes splits between middle class and working class constituencies into protectionist public sector workers and market supportive private sector workers.

Socio-cultural ideological divisions in Scandinavian countries are somewhat less prominent and historically they have the source in the divide between the center and the periphery. Center-periphery division took the shape of conflict between urban and rural economy and between state protestant churches and nonconformist denominations concerning the nation building policies, where nonconformist protesters wanted to maintain the autonomy of their social groups against the state interference (Lipset and Rokkan 1967).

But in modern times socio-cultural divisions take a very different form. The rise of new issues brought left-libertarian and right-authoritarian positions on cultural and moral values, issues of cultural homogeneity or openness and support and opposition on environmental protection, growth and nuclear energy at the hart of this dimension (Granberg and Holmberg 1988). The change partially also happened because policies that established social-democratic welfare states and competitive export oriented economies also created large and strong public sector middle class. Public sector employees and part of the professional middle class share economically left positions and left-libertarian positions on socio-cultural and moral issues combined with pro-environmental positions (Kitschelt and Rehm 2004). Their positions are mirrored on the other side of the principal ideological divide by business professionals and industrial constituencies who hold the opposite positions. Repositioning of the large segment of the middle class has a potential to redefine essentially an economic ideological cleavage into a socio-cultural ideological cleavage over the issues such as social openness and inclusiveness (Kitschelt and Rhem 2004).

The rise of new issues and the strength of sociocultural professionals and public sector created a potential for ideological divisions within left, between old working class constituencies and sociocultural professionals over the question whether mainstream left parties should adopt new politics agenda.

Ideological divisions on the right resemble old center-periphery cleavage in the shape of differences between secular conservative or liberal on the one hand and centrist (agrarian) or religious parties on the other. Their electorates are divided over the issues of environment, immigration and the role of religion in the society. Divisions within the right are also

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2 It can be argued that one of these divisions has a religion as a source, given that, Scandinavian countries relatively recently saw the emergence and strengthening of religious christian-democratic parties. It also must be borne in mind that the issue is not the stronger role of religion vis a vis the state and greater role for it in state sponsored institutions. Since protestant dissenter denominations place a huge emphasis on the autonomy of communities from the state (Manow 2005), the division over religion is more about the preferences for autonomy of religious communities vis a vis the state and the promotion of christian morality in the society.
partially caused by the rise of new issues such as environmentalism and nuclear energy, where actors are divided in a way that resembles old economic component of center-periphery division between industry and agriculture. The second part of center-periphery cleavage is religion. But in modern period division between dissenter Protestants and national churches is replaced by the division between secular right and religious right divided over the issues of the place of religion in the society and its relationship with the state and more specifically, welfare state.

Although such divisions within left and right could account for differences within voters of right and left, it is likely that the content of predominant ideological divisions in Scandinavian countries is still economic in character. Sociocultural divisions overall can be expected to be aligned with economic divisions, while at the same time separating clearly between constituencies within, still visibly divided, left and right.

### 3.3 Configuration 3

The third configuration combines two strong but not equally significant ideological cleavages, which are also less strongly aligned with each other than in previous two cases. This configuration characterizes countries that are religiously predominantly catholic or mixed and have Christian-democratic type of the welfare regime. Principal ideological cleavage in such countries is over the new politics issues, cultural, moral and religious values, while the economic cleavage is slightly less prominent.

This particular configuration is partially related to the establishment of the christian-democratic welfare states, which, in their final form, were essentially established by christian-democratic parties, and are partially affected by the historical legacy of very strong communal and religious divisions present in some continental countries (Huber and Stephens 2001, Manow 2005).

Historically, Christian-democratic parties were ideologically supportive of egalitarianism, social solidarity and particularly supportive of the family and its role as a basic social unit. That is the reason why they supported redistributive measures, universalization of insurance against risks and income support to families for basic caring services. However, because of the strong emphasis on the family autonomy, personalism and the subsidiarity principle, christian-democratic parties were opposed to the government economic intervention and particularly government service provision as such measures were considered to be an infringement on the autonomy of independent social units, such as the family, local community or interest organization (Manow 2005, Wilensky 1986). This is the reason why most of the caring services, and some elements of social insurance, are funded by the government but administered by churches, local communities, unions, foundations or social associations.

The core constituencies of Christian democratic parties were composed of a number of social groups that were united by a strong preference for visible role of religion in public life. In terms of social groups they ranged from working class and self-employed farmers to petty bourgeoisie and segments of middle class. Their economic preferences were not always in line, but they generally supported the state support for the family and family oriented social policy. Christian democrat parties managed to weld this diverse electorate in a single coalition through the development of social programs aimed at particular social groups within their electorate and through creation of clientelistic links between parties and organized interest representing these groups (Lynch 2006, Kitschelt 2000). Electorate of social democratic parties was predominantly unionized working class with strong preferences for left economic policies and segments of secularized lower middle class linked to party through mass organizations.
Economic positions of christian-democrat and social-democrat electorate were not identical but were fairly close, and much closer than the position of the electorate of mainstream left and right parties in Scandinavian countries or Great Britain. Both groups agreed on the necessity of the establishment of comprehensive social insurance system and the need for governmental support of the economy. But they disagreed on the shape of policies that were supposed to bring that about (Huber and Stephens 2001). Social democrats, and their core constituencies of unionized workers, wanted universal system of social insurance, some amount of nationalization and direct government role in economic management, while Christian-democrats and their core constituencies supported fragmented occupational system of social insurance, corporatism and government support of private sector investment. The remaining significant social group, the secular business and upper middle classes were opposed to redistributive policies and government intervention, but they comprised a smaller part of the electorate and their political representation, secular liberal parties, were weaker than other two mainstream parties.

Relatively closer positions of major parties and their core electorate on a number of economic issues made economic dimension less salient and less competitive than in other two configurations. This relative weakness of economic dimension was helped by the division of the working class into Christian and socialist blocks, and by the strong role that corporatist interest mediation had in continental countries (Wilensky 1986). It was also helped by relative weakness of secular liberal or conservative parties and dominant position of christian-democrats in the party system.

As opposed to other two configurations, the content of left-libertarian right-authoritarian division in continental European countries belonging to Christian democratic welfare regime is dominated by sociocultural issues (Kitschelt 2002). Historically, the nature of sociocultural and communitarian division was predominantly religious, dividing catholics, protestants, nonconformist protestants and secular liberals and social democrats in different combinations. Usually the main conflict line was between secular liberal elites concerned with modernization and nation building, and Christian social groups trying to preserve the role of the church and religion in the society, and autonomy and solidarity of religious communities from state interference in their social life. Main issues at stake were control over education and regulation of some aspects of family life.

In recent couple of decades, with the rise of new politics agenda, the meaning of sociocultural cleavages has shifted to issues such as environment, multiculturalism, gender equality and immigration (Kriesi et al 2007). Christian-democratic welfare state was supporting gender division of the workforce and the traditional form of family, with women mainly employed as housewives and in domestic care (Esping Andersen 1999). However the achievement of gender equality implies an increase in the women participation on the labor market and the restructuring of the welfare state to make it more efficient in the provision of services supporting women participation. This issue could bring about the division between traditionalist who want to preserve existing welfare regime and gender division of labor and those who want to make it more open and supportive of women participation. It must be noted that the issue of women participation is also related to the broader status of women in the society and family, not just their status in the work force.

3 Kitschelt`s expectations are partially supported by Knutsen`s empirical analysis (Knutsen 1995) of the importance of different ideological cleavages for voting behavior. Knutsen found that in countries with social-democratic or liberal welfare regimes, such as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Great Britain, and, not in accordance with expectations, France, the strongest ideological division is economic while religious and materialist-postmaterialist value divisions are less prominent. On the other hand in countries with christian-democratic welfare regime and religiously predominantly catholic or mixed, such as Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and Spain, the strongest ideological divisions are religious and materialist-postmaterialist value divisions while economic divisions are slightly less prominent.
Calls for greater gender equality and the rise of alternative lifestyles brought about the question of the role of Christian morality and individual freedom in the definition of basic rights. Such issues are basically representing the continuation of the division about the role of religion in the society. Abortion and divorce are prime examples of moral issues where Christian morality comes in conflict with calls for greater individual freedom and gender equality. On the other hand, the rise of alternative lifestyles brought about the issue of acceptability and legal status of homosexuals. And most recent issue belonging to this group is the legal status of euthanasia, and potentially, the decriminalization of light drugs.

Another important source of sociocultural divisions concerns the definition of community. Multiculturalism and immigration placed a strain on the traditional definition of community which is very significant in continental countries characterized by segmented societies where religious identity is very important. The formation of new bonds of social solidarity would inevitably mean the redefinition of the role of religion and the redefinition of the meaning of a community. This in the end has an impact on the positions taken regarding the inclusiveness of the society, status and integration of immigrants and the definition of citizenship.

The rise of new politics agenda and the expansion of mainly service sector in continental countries helped to bring about the division between new and old left. This division was also predominantly sociocultural in character and it is dividing old working class and trade union constituencies and new professional middle class new left constituencies. In terms of content the conflict was primarily about the importance of issues such as environmentalism, nuclear energy, economic growth and conservation, social openness and inclusiveness and gender equality. Usually, the old working class was supporting authoritarian positions, exclusive view of society and placed more emphasis on growth and redistribution, while new left professionals were holding libertarian positions, supported social inclusiveness and openness and placed more emphasis on environment and conservation. Due to the small size of the public sector most of new service professionals are employed in the service sector. Given this, it is likely that they would be less economically left than old left constituencies and their counterparts in the Scandinavian countries, making the division on the left slightly deeper.

Deindustrialization and increasing women participation in the labor market in continental countries produced large surpluses of labor force that could not be compensated by the similar rise in the service sector because of the nature of the welfare state and the production regime4 (Iversen and Wren 1998). Large structural unemployment affected unskilled young males particularly hard and in contributed to the growing significance of division between insider and outsider on the labor market. Socioeconomic insecurity of groups that had a hard time coping with socioeconomic change brought into prominence the so called new right agenda characterized by social exclusivism, welfare chauvinism and an anti-establishment appeal. This helped create radical right parties that are more exclusivist and protectionist than their Scandinavian counterparts.

All in all, in continental countries we can expect a greater range and higher salience of sociocultural issues. Economic issues are expected to be less correlated with sociocultural issue dimension than in other two configurations, and are also expected to be less salient and less diversified when it comes to positions held by mainstream left and right parties.

4 Simply stated high wage and job protection prevented the creation of low skilled private sector and budget pressures and the welfare system made it unfeasible to create large public service sector.
3.4 Summary

To summarize, we can identify three predominant patterns of ideological divisions. First is characterized by dominant economic left right division where cultural divisions are either weak or subsumed in the dominant economic division. The second pattern is characterized by dominant economic division with cultural divisions as secondary division dividing parties principally within clearly separated left and right. The third pattern is characterized by predominant cultural divisions with economic division intersecting cultural division and separating parties on the cultural left and cultural right.

The analysis of ideological cleavages will give us an idea not only about the importance of particular ideological cleavages, how particular issues are related to them and how voters of different parties are divided. It will also give us an idea about the salience and the range of particular dimensions, and whether new parties represent constituencies ideologically significantly different from constituencies represented by the established parties. Also, this type of the analysis will be able to tell us whether new parties emerged by contesting some new ideological dimension, or whether they held positions different, more likely more extreme, than positions held by the established parties on the existing ideological dimension, or both.

4. Method and Data

The empirical part of the paper gives answers to the following questions; what is the structure of political cleavages in western societies, how are individual issues related to broader ideological dimensions, how are political parties aligned on those ideological dimensions and finally, is there a variation in the nature and the importance of ideological cleavages among countries that differ with respect to the type of the welfare regime and the strength of communitarian divisions.

The empirical analysis is conducted using European Value Survey data from the third wave conducted in 1999/2000. This data set enables us to measure positions of individual voters on a number of issue dimensions in a comparative manner for a number of European countries. Countries covered by the empirical analysis are Sweden, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, France and Great Britain. Selected countries represent a fair amount of diversity which would enable us to assess the link between the characteristics of the welfare state and the strength of communal divisions.

The method used in empirical analysis is discriminant analysis. Given the nature of the dependent and independent variables discriminant analysis is the most appropriate method. Since discriminant functions are combining independent variables in a way that maximizes separation between groups, they can be taken as a relatively good approximation of ideological dimensions dividing the electorate of different parties (Klecka 1989). Also, the measure of discriminant power can give us a good measure of strength of the model and each individual dimension.

Given the fact that the total possible number of discriminant functions is one less the number of categories of the dependent variable, it is to be expected that the number of discriminant functions, as well as the number of significant discriminant functions, will be greater for countries where the number of parties is larger. Larger number is likely to be observable not only because of the number of categories of the dependent variable, but also because the structure of the party system is likely to be more complex in systems with more parties. This problem needs to be taken into account when the results are interpreted, but it is not likely that it will prevent the adequate interpretation of results and the assessment of importance of particular functions through the measure of their discriminant power.
Independent variables are measuring four issue dimensions. The first issue dimension is economic, measuring left or right economic positions, or as Kriesi and his co-authors put it protectionism versus economic openness. The second is measuring positions toward immigration, cultural openness and inclusiveness. The third is measuring libertarian or authoritarian position toward individual freedom and the fourth is measuring positions toward environmentalism as one of the core issues of new politics agenda. All independent variables are indexes formed by taking mean values of all items included in an index. All indexes are constructed so that lower values indicate redistributive and libertarian positions and higher values indicate pro-market and more authoritarian positions.

Index measuring economic positions is composed of items measuring whether individuals should provide for themselves or the state should do it, whether the state should regulate companies more closely or it should be left to the market and whether competition is good or harmful for the society. Index measuring positions on immigration, or cultural openness and inclusiveness is measured with items asking whether employers should favor domestic workers over immigrants and whether immigrants should be allowed to settle in the country and under what conditions. Index measuring libertarian or authoritarian positions toward individual freedom is composed of issues measuring attitudes toward homosexuality, divorce, abortion and euthanasia. Positions toward environmentalism are measured with an index combining items asking respondents whether they would be willing to give part of their money or accept tax increases in order to protect the environment.

Factor analysis with individual items used in the creation of indexes shows almost identical pattern in all countries, with four easily identifiable factors (data are not shown here). Items measuring libertarian-authoritarian moral attitudes load on the first factor, items measuring environmentalism load on the second factor. Items composing economic indexes all load on the third factor, and the remaining items measuring position on immigration load on the fourth factor. The pattern is present in all countries selected for the analysis.

Most items used are measuring general orientation rather than positions on specific policy issues. To some extent this is an advantage because it can be expected to reduce the problem of variation in the significance of different issues across national contexts, and specific reference points that respondents from different countries might have. Also, questions measuring general orientations can be expected to be less sensitive to political developments of the moment. On the other hand, the downside of general questions is that they might not reflect real issues voters base their decision on, and might not reflect appeals which parties actually use in political competition.

The dependent variable is party preference measured by the question asking respondent which party she would vote for if elections were held tomorrow. For those respondents that indicated they would not vote the answer to the question which party appeals to them most was used instead. The parties with less than 30 respondents were excluded from the analysis. Parties representing some country specific interest or group, such as ethnic or regionalist parties, or Dutch protestant fundamentalist parties are also excluded from the analysis. Although these parties might have an ideological profile that is not only related to ethnic or regionalist distinctiveness, it is reasonable to presume that the principal raison d’être of these parties is in representing ethnic and regionalist interests.
5. Findings: Discussion and Conclusion

The findings from a discriminant analysis for nine countries are presented in table 1. The entries in table 1 are standardized discriminant function coefficients and Wilks Lambda’s transformed so that they indicate total discriminant power of the model and each function. Wilks lambda coefficients are transformed in such a way that the value for each function is subtracted from the value of the next function so that it represents the magnitude of Wilks Lambda value for that particular function. Higher value indicates higher discriminant power. The total model fit in this case is the sum of these transformed Wilks lambdas.

In all but one country concerned, discriminant analysis yielded two significant discriminant functions which accounted for the bulk of discriminatory power. In some countries discriminant analysis yielded third significant discriminant function but the discriminatory power of this function is very small compared to the other two, and substantively, this function discriminates only between minor parties. The third function is omitted from the presentation of results as it does not provide information that are of substantive interest here. Although the total number of functions is one less the number of categories of dependent variable, the number of significant discriminatory functions does not seem to be dependent on the number of categories of the dependent variable. The analysis shows that there is a significant variation in the content and the power of discriminant functions between countries. But before turning to general patterns for groups of countries let us first turn to individual countries.

5.1. Country Patterns

In addition to the structure of discriminant function the country data are presented in figures 1 through 8 indicating positions of parties along two (in case of Britain one) discriminant functions with the largest discriminant power. The positions of parties are indicated with group by centroids. Parties in figures 1 to 8 are indicated by the abbreviations of their party family names. The details are indicated in appendix 1.

In Austria discriminant analysis yielded two significant discriminant functions. The first function, with largest discriminant power, is clearly defined by the issue of cultural homogeneity and immigration. Alignment of parties on this function goes from the greens and liberals on the libertarian end to social democrats in the center and Christian democrats on the right and radical right on the far. The second function has only a fraction of discriminant power of the first function. Its content is primarily defined by economic issues with smaller role of sociocultural moral issues. Alignment of parties along the first dimension ranges from left to right from communists, socialists and greens on the left toward liberal, gaullists and the extreme right on the right.

In France the strongest discriminant function is in content mostly defined by issues of cultural homogeneity and, though significantly less, economic issues. The appropriate name for this dimension could be economic and cultural openness. This dimension combines economically liberal and open positions with culturally closed positions and vice versa. The second function, with significantly weaker discriminant power, is also primarily defined by cultural issues such as environmentalism and positions toward individual morality. The alignment of parties along the first dimension ranges from left to right from communists, socialist and greens on the left to liberal, gaullists and the extreme right on the right.
second dimension separates parties within left and right with greens and radical right having somewhat distinct position.

(figure 2 about here)

In **Germany** the first and the strongest function as in France and Austria is in content defined with the issue of cultural homogeneity. The difference is that the discriminant power of this function is much weaker than in France or Austria. The second dimension is defined by economic issues but its discriminant power is very weak. On the first dimension of cultural homogeneity parties are aligned from libertarian greens, toward social democrats and liberals in the center, toward more authoritarian Christian democrats and very authoritarian radical right. On the economic dimension parties are aligned from protectionist radical right and far left toward centrist social democrats and liberals and further toward economically more liberal greens and Christian democrats.

(figure 3 about here)

In the **Netherlands** the analysis yielded two significant functions. The first function is defined by a mix of issues including economic issues, cultural homogeneity and environmentalism and can be described as general left-right dimension. Parties along first dimension are aligned from green left, left socialist and social democrats on the left in that order, to centrist liberals in the center toward Christian democrats on the right and conservative liberals even further on the right. The second and much weaker dimension is defined primarily by environmental issues and it separates between environmentally sensitive parties on the left and on the right.

(figure 4 about here)

In the **Swedish** case the strongest discriminant function is defined by economic issues and secondary dimension is defined primary with the issue of cultural homogeneity. The alignment of parties on the economic dimension starts with left socialist and moves toward greens and social democrats on the left. Liberals and center party are in the center while Christian democrats and conservatives are on the right. Second dimension separates between parties within the left and right that hold different positions toward cultural openness.

(figure 5 about here)

In **Denmark**, as in Sweden, the first and the strongest discriminant function is defined primarily by economic issues. This function, also like in Sweden, separates parties along the left-right continuum from the extreme left to the extreme right. Also, as in Sweden, the second dimension separates parties within left and right on the issue of cultural homogeneity and morality.

(figure 6 about here)

**Finland** demonstrates pattern that is different from other two Scandinavian countries. The first discriminant function represents what looks as general left-right dimension and combines issues such as cultural homogeneity, economic issues and environmentalism. This dimension clearly separates parties from the left to right starting with left socialist, greens and Christian democrats on the left, to social democrats in the center and agrarians and
conservatives on the right, in that order. The second dimension combines authoritarian moral positions with left economic positions and separates parties within left and right.

(figure 7 about here)

In Great Britain analysis produced one significant function, albeit with lower discriminatory power than in most other countries. The parties aligned along this dimension range from Liberal Democrats and Labor on the left to Conservatives on the right in that order. The second function containing cultural homogeneity and environmentalism is not significant and has only marginal discriminatory power.

5.2. Cross Country Patterns

The overall discriminant power of discriminant functions measured by transformed Wilks lambda varies from 0, 301 on the high end in Denmark to 0,051 at the low end in Great Britain. The model performs quite well in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Austria, and somewhat less well in the Netherlands and France. On the other hand, in Germany and Great Britain values are less than 0,100. The strength of second discriminant function in all countries is quite weak, in some cases more than five times weaker than the first function. This and the content of primary function across countries suggest that the argument provided here has high degree of credibility.

With respect to specific cross-country patterns, the analysis confirms that in countries of continental Europe with christian-democratic welfare state, the electorate is principally divided over sociocultural issues with issue of immigration and cultural homogeneity being the most notable. Economic issues are either only one segment of the primary ideological dimension or constitute secondary ideological dimension. In the Netherlands and France, economic issues are a weaker part of the principal dimension, while in Austria and Germany; economic issues are primary element of secondary dimension. In Germany and Austria second discriminant function is distinguishing voters of economically right or centrist and socially conservative parties (christian-democrats), who are also libertarian with respect to issues such as the immigration and the environment, from voters of other right parties. On the left side of the political spectrum the second function is dividing voters of left-libertarian parties, such as greens, who are more libertarian and less economically left, from voters of other left parties, namely mainstream social-democratic voters and, where such parties exist, left-socialists or communist voters. Voters of mainstream social democratic parties, and especially voters of more radical left parties, seem to be more economically left and less libertarian than the voters of green parties.

In Scandinavian countries with social democratic welfare state, the primary, and by far the strongest ideological division is defined by economic issues. The alignment of parties along this dimension runs from left socialists and communists, to greens and social democrats and further to centrist parties and conservative or liberal right parties. Finland is partial exception from this pattern because first discriminant function also includes issues of cultural homogeneity and environmentalism.

Secondary divisions in Scandinavian countries are principally defined by issues of cultural homogeneity. In Sweden and Denmark second functions primarily separate between Christian democrat parties on the authoritarian end, conservatives in the middle and liberals on the libertarian end. On the left it distinguishes between somewhat more authoritarian social democrats and other left parties, greens and left socialist, on the more libertarian end.
In the only country of liberal welfare regime included in the analysis the only significant discriminant function is clearly economic and it separates main parties of the left and right with position of liberal democrat being to the left of labor. The positions of group centroids in all countries suggest that this difference in discriminant power is not caused by very distinctive position of small parties. The content and the discriminatory power of discriminant functions as well as the positions of parties on them seem to support the assertion that the strength and the shape of primary ideological divisions are corresponding to the type of the welfare regime. In social democratic welfare states the strongest ideological divisions are related to economic issues while sociocultural issues are mostly of secondary importance. In christian-democratic welfare states the primary ideological division is, as expected, about sociocultural issues, most notably about cultural homogeneity. Economic issues are either of secondary importance or are subsumed under the principal ideological division. In the case of liberal welfare states the only case in this analysis has a principal ideological division over economic issues while the importance of other issues is negligible.

The analysis also seems to support Kitschelt (1994) claim that there is only one predominant ideological dimension in all countries and that it varies in content between countries depending on the type of the welfare regime and the religious composition of the population. The results also support the expectation (see also Kitschelt and Rhem 2004) that the dominant dimension is intersected by less prominent ideological dimensions that divide parties at one or both ends of the primary ideological dimension.

Turning to new parties, the analysis seems to confirm that most of the new parties have electorate with a distinct ideological profile. Voters of green parties seem to be more libertarian and less economically left than the voters of mainstream social democratic parties. In the Netherlands and Germany we can observe left socialist parties emerging to the left of social democrats. In Sweden, Denmark and France parties with similar profile existed before. Voters of the extreme right parties do not differ from other parties in the same way in all countries. Voters of German radical right are quite authoritarian and supportive of redistribution. Austrian and Danish radical right parties are authoritarian as well, but they are also economically more to the right. French radical right is more similar to its Danish and Austrian counterparts. But what is common is that voters of those parties hold clearly different positions when compared to voters of mainstream liberal and conservative parties.

Apart from extreme right parties, in some countries we can find relatively recent liberal parties and in others christian-democratic parties. The voters of liberal parties, such as Liberal forum in Austria, combine strong libertarian and economically liberal position. Such position makes them distinctive from other right-wing parties. The voters of relatively newer christian-democratic parties in Denmark and Sweden combine economically right position, with conservative position on the issue of cultural homogeneity. This sets them apart from voters of secular conservative and liberal parties that are similar in terms of economic position and voters of center parties who are more moderate on most issues.

It seems that most of the new parties came into existence by offering a position that is different from the established parties on some issues, while holding very similar positions on a number of other issues. Most of these parties are catering to a small segment of the electorate. But on the other hand the number and positions of parties in some countries suggests that the entry of new parties was also possible by contesting a more extreme position on the dominant ideological division. If there was a significant group of voters holding extreme positions and mainstream parties of the left or right abandoned these voters, it would be possible that new parties with more extreme appeals were able to capture the support of these voters.
Figures and Tables

Table 1. Structure and discriminant power of discriminant functions in eight countries. Entries are Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients and Wilks Lambda’s transformed.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Austria</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Finland</th>
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<td>0.304 0.012</td>
<td>0.507 -0.236</td>
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<td>-0.024 0.219</td>
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<td>Total Wilks Lambda</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<td>0.658 -0.389</td>
<td><strong>0.924</strong> -0.239</td>
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<td>Cultural Homogeneity</td>
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<td>0.107 <strong>0.929</strong></td>
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<td>Function Wilks Lambda</td>
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<td>Total Wilks Lambda</td>
<td>0.171 0.076</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.140</td>
<td>0.250</td>
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</table>

Figure 1, Distribution of Austrian Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space

Distribution of Austrian Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space

- SD
- CD
- RR
- G
- LIB(C)
Figure 2, Distribution of French Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space

Figure 3, Distribution of German Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space
Figure 4, Distribution of Dutch Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space

Figure 5, Distribution of Swedish Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space
Figure 6, Distribution of Danish Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space

Figure 7, Distribution of Finnish Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space
Figure 8, Distribution of British Parties in Two Dimension Issue Space

Appendix 1.
Classification of parties into party families:

**SLC-socialist left and communist parties:** PCF (Communist Party-French), PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism-German), SP (Socialist Party-Dutch), SF (Socialist People Party-Danish), VP (Left Party-Swedish), VAS (Left Alliance-Finnish).

**SD-social democrat parties:** PS (Socialist Party-French), SPD (Social Democrat Party-German), SPO (Social Democrats-Austrian), PvDA (Labor-Dutch), SAP (Social Democrats-Swedish), SD (Social Democrats-Danish), SDP (Social Democrats-Finnish), Labor (Labor-UK).

**G-greens:** Verts/GE (greens, ecological generation-French), Greens (German, Austrian), GL (green left-Dutch), MP (Green Party-Swedish), VIHR (Green Alliance-Finnish).

**C-centrist:** KESK (Finnish Center-Finish), C (Center Party-Swedish), CP (Center Party-Danish).

**LIB (L)-liberals (libertarian):** RV (Radical Liberals-Danish), D66 (Dutch), UDF (Union for French Democracy-French), Liberal Democrats (British).

**LIB (C)-liberals (conservative):** Liberal forum (Austrian), FDP (German), VVD (Dutch), DL (French), FPL (Swedish), V (Danish).

**CD-Christian democrats:** OVP (Austrian Peoples Party-Austrian), CDU (Christian Democrat Union-German), CDA (Christian Democrat Appeal-Dutch), KD (Christian Democrats-Danish), KD (Christian democrats-Swedish), KD (Christian Democrats-Finnish).

**CON-conservatives:** Conservative (British), RPR (Rally for the Republic-French), KOK (National Coalition Party-Finnish), M (Conservative Party-Swedish), KF (Conservative People Party-Danish).

**RR-Radical right:** FN (National Front-French), Reepublikanner (Republicans-German), FPO (Freedom Party-Austrian), DFP (Danish People Party-Danish).
References:


