



**PhD Program
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Ph.D. THESIS

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**The causes and consequences of partisan polarisation in European
democracies**

Summary

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SUMMARY

The dissertation investigates the causes and effects of partisan polarisation in European countries. Its aim is to create a method that can be used in comparative research, to explore which are the most polarized countries in contemporary Europe, and to investigate whether partisan polarisation has positive or negative effect on democratic and economic functioning. The dissertation measures partisan polarisation by comparing the political evaluations of the winning and losing political camps in all countries. The research uses European Social Survey (ESS) data supplemented with country level data. The main results are that heightened partisan polarisation is present in the majority of East-Central European and Southern European countries, and polarisation seems a thing to be worried about. Empirical results show that polarisation contributes to less democratic political and less successful economic functioning, while it enhances electoral turnout. Empirical tests show that ideological polarisation do not have the same detrimental effect as partisan polarisation, thus ideological dividedness is not as harmful for democratic and economic functioning as dividedness based on partisan bias is.

1. MAIN CONCEPTS

Polarisation is an often used, but many times poorly defined concept of public opinion and voting behaviour researchers, of which the causes and effects are highly debated. A considerable part of these contradictions may be caused by the fact that the term ‘political polarisation’ refers to a variety of things. Here I am interested in *partisan polarisation* of the electorate, instead of *ideological* or *policy polarisation*. I use the term ‘partisan polarisation’ to indicate the level of overall (not issue-specific) political dividedness in a country, meant as the relative distance between the political evaluations of governing and opposing parties’ voters.

While partisanship and polarisation are two distinct concepts analytically, they are empirically closely related to each other, as both terms are widely used to describe animosity and dividedness across political lines. For example, describing the functioning of the *polarised* Hungarian political system, Palonen (2009) points that ‘parties or camps exist through their common opposition to one another, with a consequent normative-ideological logic: as you are the bad ones, we are the good ones’. This description is very similar to how Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes write about *partisanship* in the US: ‘the sense of partisan identity is

increasingly associated with a Manichean, ‘us against them’ view of the political world. Democrats and Republicans harbor generally negative feelings toward their opponents (...) there is sufficient animosity to make partisan affiliation relevant to inter-personal relations’ (Iyengar, Sood, & Lelkes, 2012, p. 421). Based on this, we may declare a country to be *strongly polarised in a partisan sense* if its political scene is dominated by a ‘my party right or wrong’ (Klingemann & Wattenberg, 1992, p. 131) attitude, and if partisan attachments are an influential predictor of how voters evaluate political events. In a strongly polarised country partisanship ‘shapes the way citizens see the world of politics and public affairs’ to an extent that they practically ‘tend to see what they want to see’ (Gerber & Huber, 2009, p. 423). To bring some empirical examples, recent analyses about the political polarisation of US’s voters show that Republicans and Democrats see the opposing party as more ideological, characterised by extreme ideological views, while consider their own party as more moderate. They tend to see the supporters of the other party as much more closed-minded, dishonest, immoral, lazy and unintelligent than other Americans are, and the supporters of their own party as more open-minded, honest, etc. than other Americans are. Therefore, I assume that the roots of partisan polarisation lie mainly in affect and not in ideology as Iyengar et al. (2012) suggested.

All in all, a high level of partisan polarisation in a country implies that its electorate’s political views are strongly biased based on their party preferences. In this paper I use the term ‘partisan polarisation’ to indicate the level of political dividedness in a country, while on the individual level, to indicate the level of polarization of subjects’ worldview I prefer to use the term ‘*partisan bias*’. It is important to note the difference between partisan polarization and ideological polarization: here I am not interested in ideological distance, or in the difference between two political sides in certain issues or policy aspects. Partisan polarisation is not strongly related to ideological stances or issues, but it indicates how different the political evaluations of the political sides are in general.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The literature offers a wide range of hypotheses and explanations related to political polarisation, and almost every hypothesis made about polarisation has its contradictory counterpart. To put it simply, the main theoretical question of the research is whether polarisation promotes or inhibits healthy democratic and successful economic functioning.

Many scholars claim that partisan attachments are useful for maintaining the political interest of voters; others argue that its opposite is true; as heightened partisan attitudes contribute strongly to voters' disenchantment and to the decline of participation. This statement appears both on an individual and on an aggregated level: since the first empirical results of Lazarsfeld and his co-authors (1968) show that partisan voters are more likely to vote, and partisan polarisation in a society mobilises voters and enhances electoral turnout (Abramowitz & Saunders, 2008). This way, the lack of partisan attitudes may be linked to the lack of interest toward politics in general, and to a moderate willingness not only to vote, but even to think, to speak, or to obtain information about politics.

Another positive effect attributed to partisan loyalties is that they stabilise political opinions, therefore contribute to political stability, while the lack of strong partisan attitudes leads to high electoral volatility and less predictable political functioning (Klingemann & Wattenberg, 1992; Rose & Mishler, 1998a, p. 230; Tóka, 2005). The main argument of these scholars is that voting decisions made without partisan loyalties may be based exclusively on electoral pledges of parties and short-term calculations, and this could easily lead to the radical transformation of the party system after a less successful economic period or after a political scandal. This way, partisan loyalties – and more explicitly, partisan bias – toward political parties seem to be necessary for stable democratic functioning.

Polarisation is also linked to a more responsive political behaviour and to a higher level of accountability. As Levendusky (2010) shows, elite polarisation makes voters' opinions more consistent inside the political camps across different policy issues. This is advantageous from the viewpoint of accountability, because the opinion of political camps becomes easier to represent. This is in line with the results of Bafumi and Shapiro (2009) too. They found that during the last three decades ideological polarisation in the US coincided with the opinion polarisation of the Republican and Democrat electorates along many policy issues. Thus, voting decisions now are based (or to say the least, linked to) more on ideological and policy choices, while formerly they have been based mainly on partisan attachments. The results of Spoon and Klüver (2015) suggest the same. By analysing voters' opinion polarisation they

found that more polarised electorates give clearer signals to their politicians about which positions are to be represented. Therefore, partisan polarisation contributes to responsiveness and accountability.

While this part of the literature stresses the importance of strong partisan attachments in the political process, ‘polarisation sceptical’ scholars draw attention to the possible dangers of heightened partisan attitudes. As Iyengar and his co-authors (2012, p. 428) conclude their research stating that ‘the increased level of affective polarization poses considerable challenges to the democratic process’ (2012, p. 428).

One of the possible negative aspects is that strong partisan dividedness contributes to adversarial politics which may lead to voters’ disillusionment and to the decline of electoral turnout (Fiorina, Abrams, & Pope, 2005). This may occur due to aggressive political advertising, to harsh negative campaigns – this kind of political communication is supposed to mobilise the most engaged part of the electorate but it is likely to intimidate less decided and less partisan voters (Ansolabehere et al., 1999).

There is a general concern also regarding the quality of political debates and opinion formation. As Körösenyi (2012, p. 301) describes, in a polarised context partisan camps see different political realities, and between these realities there may be a considerable gap, which does not offer a stable common ground to political debates. Angelusz and Tardos (2011, p. 349) raise similar concerns about polarisation claiming that a ‘black-and-white simplification’ of debates between political platforms is a threat to democratic functioning as it deteriorates some basic principles of democratic debates and opinion formation.

Polarisation can have a detrimental effect also on governmental effectiveness and on economic performance. To cite Iyengar et al. (2012, p. 428) ‘Partisan bias in perceptions of economic conditions means that voters will fail to credit opposing-party incumbents when the economy grows under their stewardship and fail to penalize in-party incumbents whose economic performance is suspect’. This view about the dangers of polarisation appears – among many others – in the arguments of Körösenyi (2013) and Tóka (2005, pp. 21–22), who stress that these consequences of polarisation undermine accountability as they give few incentives to good governance. To use Iyengar and his co-authors’ words again, ‘biased beliefs about opposing elites—that they are duplicitous, self-interested, stupid, etc.—make it improbable that elites can persuade out-party partisans’ . (2012, p. 428).

Lastly, following this argument, I turn to the question of legitimacy and democratic functioning. After an election in a strongly polarised context, opposing political camps may see the government as less legitimate. This favours political extremities or violent resistance

movements to be seen as legitimate tools against such an illegitimate government. Thus, the worst consequences of partisan polarisation are violent mass protests and civic wars (Iyengar et al., 2012, p. 428)

To sum up, many scholars claim that partisan attachments are useful for maintaining the political interest of voters; but others argue that its opposite is true; as heightened partisan attitudes contribute strongly to voters' disenchantment and to the decline of participation. Similarly, there is no consensus about its effect on the stability of the political system and on the governments' performance. Scholars with a 'polarisation optimistic' attitude argue that polarisation has a stabilizing effect on the political system, because it mitigates the effect of less successful governmental programs, campaigns, or political scandals on voters' party preferences.

Others, instead, blame polarisation for destabilizing the political system, through the alternation of two poles with two markedly different sets of policies. Its effect on the quality of governance and on democratic functioning is also unclear and debated. Some political scientists point out that polarisation makes it easier to be responsive for politicians, by harmonizing policy preferences of voters of the same political camp. Others argue that it may reduce governmental accountability, because a deep division between political camps simplifies political debates to an us-or-them question, which does not motivate governments to a better performance.

My hypothesis regarding democratic and economic functioning is in line with the views of some above-mentioned 'polarisation sceptical' scholars; I assume that polarisation is related to less democratic political and less effective economic functioning.

3. METHOD

A common feature of methods that approach partisan feelings and attitudes in a society is to investigate only positive attitudes toward parties. However, there are some examples which clearly show how important considering negative feelings toward unpreferred parties is (Enyedi & Todosijević, 2009; Iyengar et al., 2012; Klingemann & Wattenberg, 1992; Rose & Mishler, 1998b). As the core of political polarisation is not only a positive bias towards one's own party, but rather a combination of heightened negative feelings and evaluations toward the opposing political camp and heightened positive feelings and evaluations toward the own political camp, I measure political dividedness with the relative differences between the political opinions of the competing sides. By using the differences between the overall political evaluations of competing camps it can be shown how strong the partisan 'perceptual screen' is: how much are 'rosier' the evaluations of governing parties' voters than the evaluations of opposition parties' voters.

Comparing (but even identifying) 'political camps' or political poles in different party systems which are composed of various numbers of parties of various size and ideological position is quite challenging. I propose to use parties' winner-loser status to differentiate between political camps, classifying parties based on whether they were governing parties or opposition parties during the fieldwork period of surveys. This way, the two created poles fundamentally reflect 'who are with who' on the political scene of the given country. Comparing the political evaluation of voters based on their winner-loser status is not a novelty, there is a growing body of literature that approaches the so called winner-loser gap (Anderson & LoTempio, 2002; Anderson & Tverdova, 2001; Blais & Gélinau, 2007; Brunell & Buchler, 2012; Craig, Martinez, Gainous, & Kane, 2006; Curini, Jou, & Memoli, 2012; Howell & Justwan, 2013; Singh, Karakoç, & Blais, 2012; Singh, Lago, & Blais, 2011). In contrast to this growing scholarly attention, it is interesting that the winner-loser gap has rarely been explicitly linked to partisan polarisation. Another option to make a distinction between political camps could be to use left-right scales, but the sense of left-right classification of parties across countries and political contexts is always questionable.

Therefore, I propose to create winner-loser groups in each country, and to make an index by subjects' answers about the satisfaction of different dimensions of the political system (including satisfaction with how democracy works, satisfaction with the national government, satisfaction with the economy and satisfaction with the educational and healthcare systems). I

decided to use all these variables about political satisfaction in order to offer a more complete picture about voters' political evaluations, and to mitigate the effect of eventual country-specific associations between certain variables.¹

Instead of using the differences between the mean evaluations of winners and losers I think it is better to divide the mean of winners' ratings by the mean of losers'.² Since I think this aspect to be very important, I prefer to use the relative difference (dividing winners' evaluation by the evaluation of losers) instead of net differences.

In order to avoid reverse ecological fallacy, making an index by adding more variables is only justified if they are positively correlated in each countries in all (or almost all) of the countries (Hofstede, 1984). The five variables of political satisfaction are positively correlated in the overwhelming majority of cases: we find a significant positive relationship ($p < 0.05$) between them in 1197 cases of 1220.³ Based on this feature of the data I found it legitimate to make an index of the five variables.

For this analysis I used the first six rounds of ESS data, excluding countries which are not parts of the EU or of the Schengen area. In order to make a clear distinction between 'winners' and 'losers', I also excluded countries in those cases when fieldwork period overlapped with parliamentary elections and the cases when surveys were conducted after the parliamentary elections when the new government has not yet entered in office. In two cases I excluded the voters of those parties that left the government in fieldwork period. Neither do I include cases when the incumbent government was a technocratic one. All these exceptions are listed on Table 2 in the Appendix. The process finally resulted in 122 subjects on the level of countries (see Table 1 in the Appendix), relying on a database of more than 270 000 individual subjects from 30 countries. Data about government composition, political institutional and economic variables have been borrowed from the Comparative Political Data Set project (Armingeon et al. 2013; 2015).

¹ Instead of the index, another option could be to create a factor. To yield more easily interpretable results I decided to use the index. From a practical point of view, the index and the factor produce highly similar results, as there is a very high correlation between them ($r = 0.916$; $p < 0.0001$).

² To take an example, in 2012 the net difference between winners' and losers' ratings was 0.46 in Bulgaria and 0.41 in Finland on a 0 to 10 scale, so the net difference between winners and losers differ little, based on these values the level of partisan polarisation in Bulgaria and in Finland is very similar. However, the averages of the evaluations in the two countries are 2.85 and 6.71 respectively, and this information puts the two countries' level of partisan polarisation in a different perspective.

³ The only case where there is a significant *negative* correlation between some variables is Slovakia in the 2nd ESS round, in 2005.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Descriptive findings about the level of partisan polarisation in European countries

Apart from some interesting outlier results, when reviewing descriptive results of the new variable I found two striking characteristics. One of them is that the typical level of partisan polarisation is between 1.05 and 1.2. In the vast majority of countries (in 116 cases out of 122) winners are more satisfied than losers are, but generally not to an exaggerated extent. ANOVA tests show that out of this 116 cases the difference between the two groups is significant in 108 cases, while in three cases I found a weak but significant negative relationship between political evaluations and winning position (in Finland, sample of 2003; Belgium, sample of 2007 and Slovenia, sample of 2009).

The other important feature to be noted is the volatility of partisan polarisation within cases: however some countries' results do not differ too much by ESS rounds, in other cases – like Hungary, Greece, Spain, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Poland, and the Czech Republic – there is considerable difference between them, despite of the relatively short time span. This feature shows that even if structural factors may explain one part of the variance of partisan polarisation, there is a considerable part of its variance that may be caused by non-structural factors, for example by an economic or political crisis, or by the changing of the dominant style of political communication in a country.

Two countries certainly deserve attention for 'outlier' results. One is Slovenia in 2009 with its extremely negative winners' ratings compared to the losing camp; the other is Hungary in 2007, where polarisation is by far the strongest in the analysed period. Such an extreme level of partisan polarisation is surprising, even if scholars recurrently report very strong partisan feelings in Hungarian society (Körösenyi, 2013; Palonen, 2009; Tardos & Angelusz, 2009; Tóka, 2005), in contrast to feeling-close-to-a-party-type questions, which show a moderate or even low level of partisan feelings. These interesting cases are worthwhile to be studied in future works.

To sum up, the methodological aim of the dissertation was to create a measurement method of partisan polarisation, which is adequate for comparative research. It is designed to show how strong the partisan ‘perceptual screen’ is in a country. Across the differences between the overall political evaluations of the competing camps it measures how much ‘rosier’ are the evaluations of governing parties’ voters than that of opposition parties’ voters. The research showed that the most polarised countries in Europe are mainly the Eastern and Southern European ones, like Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, the Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus.

4.2. Individual-level findings - testing the method

First I investigated the reasons of partisan polarisation on the individual level. Based on the findings of the relevant literature I examined the possible influence of age, gender, ideological views, being politically well-informed and level of education. The analysis confirmed the correlations longest known in the literature of partisanship, which have since been supported by former works. With the newly-created methods, testing the questions with several models, I have found consistent results universal for all methods and models regarding age and interest in politics increasing political bias. The findings of the chapter are consistent with the most robust earlier findings regarding partisanship. The influence of political ideological views, however, - contradicting the assumptions and findings of the literature, which connected right-wing-conservative views to stronger bias – showed no clear pattern across European countries.

Similarly, neither being politically well-informed and more educated have a clear effect on the level of bias. The level of bias is positively correlated with both education and being well-informed, however, the influence of these factors disappears in multiple regression analysis. Moreover, in some models the effect turns into a *significant negative* one. Interestingly, this negative relationship is just what is found on an aggregated level: in countries with higher levels of education, political interest, and higher average levels of political awareness, the level of partisan polarisation is more moderate. These findings offer some room for optimism contradicting the conclusions of a relatively new body of literature arguing that democratic functioning can not be improved across informing voters and raising the level of education (Achen & Bartels, 2016; Shani, 2006). As opposed to this concerns, my findings show that although those with higher levels of interest, education and knowledge were indeed more biased than less educated and politically less aware voters were, in itself neither being

informed nor the level of education increased bias. The main factor instead is political interest, which absorbs the effect of awareness and education levels.

This chapter's findings may be the least surprising, but they are still important, as individual level analysis confirmed the longest known correlations of partisanship literature. This way, they underpin the adequacy of the methodological innovation. In line with findings of public opinion research, I found that partisan bias increases with age and being more interested in politics. These results show that the method used here and traditional methods of measuring partisanship detect similar social phenomena.

4.3. Country-level findings - what increases polarisation?

In chapter 8, I investigated the role that political and economic features might have on the level of partisan polarisation. That is, what makes a country's political community polarised? My hypotheses were that majoritarian democracies are more polarised in a partisan sense than consensual ones are; poorer countries are more polarised than wealthier ones; a worse economic performance leads to higher levels of polarisation; less democratic countries are more polarised than more democratic ones are; ideologically polarised ones are polarised in a partisan sense also, and where (in a sense measured by conventional measurement methods) voters are more partisan or ideologically more divided, partisan polarisation is also stronger.

According to the findings, majoritarian democracies are indeed more strongly polarised in a partisan sense. Among the institutional features I examined, low level of fractionalization clearly increases polarisation, that is, if political competition involves only few relevant parties. This result definitely contradicts to the assumption of Downs (1957) who theorized a reversed relationship between political polarisation and bipartisan competition. He supposed that bipartisan competition makes it unlikely that political camps become polarised.

A reversed link between partisan polarisation and the quality of democratic functioning is also clear, as poorly-performing democracies are obviously more polarised. On the other hand, economic development and the ideological polarisation of voters have no significant effect. Thus, contradicting to a relevant part of the theoretical literature, all other features held constant, ideological polarisation measured on a left-right scale does not have an effect on the level of partisan polarisation.

The effect of economic growth, however, is significant in all models and it is negative, therefore, the effect of a downturn clearly polarises the opinions of the competing political camps.

4.4. Country-level findings – the effect of polarisation on political and economic functioning

In the last two chapters of my dissertation I examine the effects of partisan polarisation. My main hypothesis was that the effect of partisan polarisation is harmful for both political and economic functioning, contributing to poorer democratic functioning and weaker economic results. The analysis supports both hypotheses.

Having in mind also the findings about the reasons of polarisation, it seems that the quality of democracy and partisan polarisation are strongly interrelated, forming a vicious circle: worse democratic functioning might cause polarisation, and strong partisan divisions may lead to weaker democratic functioning. On the other hand, polarisation has an effect on democratic functioning that can be evaluated positively from a normative point of view: presumably, across raising the level of interest in politics, it contributes to higher levels of electoral turnout even when controlling for several other factors. To sum up, when discussing the possible positive and negative effects of polarisation on democratic functioning, my findings clearly support the viewpoint of the ‘sceptical side’. However, more optimistic views about the role of polarisation are right when pointing to its role in maintaining interest in politics and fostering participation.

Findings regarding economic functioning, if possible, are even clearer: having analysed the causes and effects I have found that partisan polarisation is clearly related to worse economic results in all dimensions of economic performance I examined. In multi-variable models polarisation had a significant effect on both economic growth and unemployment rate even controlling for several other important variables.

Besides the role of partisan bias, an alternative hypothesis could be that huge differences between the evaluations of electorates/political camps stem from sharply different views about the definition of good functioning, as the findings presented here would fit also in the framework of other theories, which stress the possible role of *ideological dividedness*. According to Downs (and many others since then), strong ideological polarisation may result in ineffective governing, as with the alternation of governments policy measures continuously waver between the two extremes (1990, pp. 1003–1004). This way, democracy is effective only when the distribution of *political ideologies* is close to a normal distribution. Anyhow, this reasoning is not what I follow in my dissertation, as in multi-variate analyses ideological polarisation did not explain the variance of partisan polarisation significantly in any of the

cases. This implies that the extent of the ideological/policy differences in voters' preferences is of secondary importance in the formation of partisan polarisation. These findings give support to the assumption of the dissertation, which suggests that large differences in satisfaction between political camps can be considered as signs of bias rather than signs of deep ideological dividedness.

Moreover, the effect of partisan polarisation on both political and economic functioning is significant even if we control for ideological dividedness. Contradicting the arguments of Downs – if we accept the left-right scale as an appropriate tool for grasping the distinctions between ideological views in European societies – voters having different ideas about what a well-functioning state or economy is like does not hinder economic growth. What hinders economic growth is when a country's electorates have a strong political bias, that is, if electorates' evaluations regarding the current situation are significantly different. Although it is a widely shared view in the literature that a moderate level of partisan bias has several positive effects, and only extremely partisan attitudes are harmful, the analysis do not confirm such a link either between partisan polarisation and democratic functioning or between partisan polarisation and economic functioning. Therefore, contradicting to theories about the positive effects of partisan bias, this dissertation's results imply that the smaller the partisan bias/polarisation is in a country, the better.

To sum up, the empirical analyses provided a clear answer to the main theoretical question of my dissertation – what effect partisan polarisation has on democratic and economic functioning – heightened partisan polarisation seems to have a harmful effect on both political and economic functioning, while it also has one effect conducive to good democratic functioning: increasing participation. Thus, these results support the views of 'polarisation optimistic' researchers regarding the role of partisan polarisation in mobilizing voters, while they underpin the views of 'polarisation sceptics' with regards to the reversed links between the level of polarization and both democratic and economic performance.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Countries included in the analysis by ESS round

	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
<i>Austria</i>	*	*	*			
<i>Belgium</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Bulgaria</i>			*	*	*	*
<i>Czech Republic</i>	*	*			*	*
<i>Croatia</i>				*		
<i>Cyprus</i>			*	*		*
<i>Denmark</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Estonia</i>		*		*		*
<i>Finland</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>France</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Germany</i>		*	*	*	*	*
<i>Greece</i>	*	*			*	
<i>Hungary</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Italy</i>	*					
<i>Iceland</i>		*				*
<i>Ireland</i>	*	*		*	*	*
<i>Latvia</i>				*		
<i>Lithuania</i>					*	*
<i>Luxembourg</i>	*	*				
<i>Netherlands</i>	*	*		*		
<i>Norway</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Poland</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Portugal</i>	*		*	*	*	*
<i>Romania</i>				*		
<i>Slovakia</i>		*	*	*	*	*
<i>Slovenia</i>	*		*	*	*	*
<i>Spain</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>Sweden</i>		*	*	*	*	*
<i>Switzerland</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>United Kingdom</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*

Table 2. Countries which are present in ESS's integrated data sets but have been excluded from the analysis.

	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
<i>Parliamentary elections during fieldwork period</i>	Germany, Sweden	Italy, Portugal	Estonia, Ireland, Netherlands	Greece	Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia	Netherlands
<i>Parliamentary elections prior to the fieldwork period, new government not yet entered in office</i>		Slovenia			Netherlands	
<i>Voters of parties who left the government during fieldwork period</i>	LPF voters (Netherlands)				NC voters (France)	
<i>Technocratic government in office</i>				Czech Republic		
<i>Countries excluded from the analysis</i>		Albania, Kosovo, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Israel				
<i>Number of countries in the sample</i>	18	21	18	23	20	22

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