

The Missing Quadrant

Left-conservative parties and voters
in Western Europe

Master thesis Political Science

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Abstract

While many voters hold economically left-wing and culturally conservative views, there are few parties in Western Europe which represent this combination of views. This paper addresses recent developments in this situation. Comparing data from 2006 with that from 2017 in nine Western European countries, this paper finds that while social democratic parties have, if anything, become more progressive, a number of radical left parties have adopted more conservative positions on the sociocultural dimension. Furthermore, radical right parties have moved substantially left on the economic dimension, making them more "left-conservative" now than they were in 2006, although few are positioned inside the left-conservative quadrant. These findings are relevant in addressing the theoretical puzzle and challenge to representative democracy.

Introduction

In contemporary Western European politics, many voters hold economically left-wing views as well culturally conservative views (Lefkofridi et al., 2014, p. 81; p. 86). However, this "left-conservative quadrant" of the political space¹ is ill-represented at the elite level. In fifteen Western European party systems, not one was found to feature a single party unequivocally in the left-conservative quadrant (Lefkofridi et al., 2014, p. 87; Hillen & Steiner, 2020). This presents a theoretical puzzle: why is there such a discrepancy between demand and supply? Moreover, it represents a challenge of representative democracy. The discrepancy implies that the large number of voters in this quadrant, mostly from working-class backgrounds, are not adequately represented by any party on both dimensions, and are forced to vote for parties with which they disagree on at least one (Lefkofridi, 2014). This lack of representation is associated with lower turnout at elections and lower trust in, and satisfaction with, representative institutions (Hillen & Steiner, 2020).

Considering both the theoretical puzzle and this practical relevance, the discrepancy between the mass level and the elite level in the left-conservative quadrant has not received the attention in the existing literature it deserves. Research into this phenomenon might additionally shed light on recent developments in Western European party systems, such as the decline of social democracy and the rise of right-wing populism, as these developments are related to parties' competition over left-conservative voters. In light of these considerations, this paper presents research addressing the following research question: To

¹ Different authors have given the quadrant different names. Lefkofridi et al. and Hillen & Steiner refer to it as

what extent have Western European parties moved toward the left-conservative quadrant of the political space and what can explain this extent? Addressing this question will contribute to our understanding of this challenge and related themes in Western European politics.

Theory

Political competition in Western Europe has long revolved around two cross-cutting dimensions: an economic dimension rooted in the class cleavage and a sociocultural dimension rooted in the state-church cleavage. While Lipset and Rokkan (1967) believed these dimensions to have frozen by the 1920s due to the extension of universal suffrage, Kriesi et al. (2008, p. 11) posit that globalisation has resulted in the gradual transformation of the political space from the 1960s onward. Both the economic and the sociocultural dimension are thought to have taken on a new meaning rooted in the distinction between "winners" and "losers" of globalisation, in which the former are in favour of integration into the international system, while the latter prefer demarcation of national boundaries. Focussing on the cultural dimension, Bornschier (2010) posits that the left adopted new universalist values in the 1960s and 1970s, after which the right responded with a "counter-potential" in the 1990s, replacing its traditional religious-ethical values with a new communitarian, cultural differentialist value system, and thus stressing new areas such as immigration and national identity.

Traditional literature on issue congruence used a single left-right dimension to conclude that the quality of representation was reasonably high (Schmitt & Thomassen, 1999; Powell, 2000; McDonald & Budge, 2005). However, more recent literature has addressed the problematic nature of such an approach by showing that while the economic and cultural dimensions correlate at the elite level, this is not the case at the mass level (Van der Brug & Van Spanje, 2009, p. 327). Malka et al. (2019, pp. 1045-1046) find that "it is more common for right-wing cultural views to be coupled with *left-wing* economic views (and vice versa)". Voters such as these are left without proper representation, forming a "blind corner" for an elite level that does not account for such positions (Thomassen, 2012, p. 24). Voters in this "left-conservative quadrant" have been described as predominantly people from working-class backgrounds (Lefkofridi et al., 2014, p. 81), conceptualised by Kriesi et al. (2008) to be the losers of globalisation on both dimensions as they are most likely to perceive globalisation as a threat to their economic interest as well as their cultural identity.

Figure 1. Schematic representation of the political space

Sociocultural dimension	Left-conservative quadrant	Right-conservative quadrant
	Left-progressive quadrant	Right-progressive quadrant
Economic dimension		

The blind corner theory has since found support in additional empirical research. The left-conservative quadrant of the political space has been found to contain more voters than any other in many Western European countries. The quadrant accounts for over a quarter of voters in Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, and more than a third in Greece (Lefkofridi et al., 2014, p. 86). Given this sizable left-conservative electorate, one would expect the supply side of representation to be similarly numerous. However, when Western European party systems are mapped in a two-dimensional space, the quadrant remains largely empty, and those parties that are found in the quadrant are relatively close to its edges; almost no party in Western Europe represents an unequivocally left-conservative position (Lefkofridi et al., 2014, p. 87; Hillen & Steiner, 2020).

As aforementioned, this discrepancy between the mass level and the elite level presents not only a theoretical puzzle, but also a challenge of contemporary political representation in Western Europe. Lefkofridi et al. (2014) find that left-conservative voters, in the absence of a party that represents their position on both dimensions, will decide their vote based on which issues they prioritise. Voters who prioritise economic issues will likely vote for left-progressive parties, while voters who attach more salience to cultural issues are more likely to vote for right-conservative parties. Nevertheless, in both cases this reflects imperfect representation and policy congruence between represented and representatives, and this has been found to have negative effects from a normatively democratic perspective. Hillen and Steiner (2020) show that left-conservative voters, due to the lack of proper representation, are less likely to turn up at elections, and have less trust in, and satisfaction with, representative institutions.

Hypotheses

These most recent findings are based on data on parties' and voters' positions in the political space from 2006 and 2009, respectively. They therefore predate important developments in Western European party systems, and politics in general, that may lead us to expect that the situation has changed since then. On the basis of these developments, a number of hypotheses can be formulated. For one thing, like students of party competition, parties might themselves have uncovered the discrepancy and viewed the left-conservative electorate as untapped potential. On the basis on this assumption, we may expect at least certain parties to have strategically moved toward the left-conservative end in an attempt to win over its numerous voters. Naturally, one would expect such a movement to be stronger the more numerous voters in the quadrant are. This leads us to the first two hypotheses:

H1: Political parties have moved toward the left-conservative end.

H2: A larger percentage of voters in the left-conservative quadrant is positively correlated with parties' movement in its direction.

Two party families in particular might intuitively be assumed to benefit from a move into the left-conservative quadrant in order to win over (or to win back) working-class voters, and this forms the theoretical basis for a number of hypotheses, in addition to the primary question to what extent there has been any movement toward the left-conservative quadrant at all. These party families are right-wing populists and social democrats.

Right-wing populist parties attract some people from blue-collar backgrounds because of their unequivocal conservative positions on immigration, but are divided on economic issues due to also receiving support from middle-class voters concerned about high tax rates and "nanny statism" (Ivarsflaten, 2005, p. 468). While early radical right parties espoused neoliberal economics, they started presenting themselves as more "welfare-friendly" as early as the 1980s (Mudde, 2007, p. 122). Right-wing populist parties maintained a "fairly centrist position on the dominant state-market axis", but regarded this dimension as a secondary priority, choosing to focus on cultural issues instead (pp. 136-137). However, recent research suggests that radical right parties have moved left on economics (Harteveld, 2016). This may have been the result of the 2008 financial crisis leading to an increase in the salience of the economic dimension, which may have led right-wing populist parties to develop a more unambiguously left-wing economic profile in order to appeal to working-class voters. While

Stockemer (2017) finds that the effect of the economic crisis on the success of the far-right has been negligible, it is a hypothesis worth testing. This leads to the third and fourth hypotheses:

H3: Right-wing populist parties have moved toward the left-conservative quadrant.

H4: The move of right-wing populist parties toward the left-conservative quadrant is positively correlated to the severity of the economic crisis in the country.

Contrary to the radical right, social democratic parties have experienced a marked downturn in recent years (Berman & Snegovaya, 2019). Two of the social democratic parties that have seen the most dramatic decline, the French PS and the Dutch PvdA, have both been shown to be positioned more progressively on the cultural dimension than their sympathisers, which Bröning (n.d.) suggests may be part of the explanation of their decline. Working-class voters, traditionally attached to social democratic parties, are now contested with radical right parties who attempt to win them over with cultural issues (Oesch & Rennwald, 2018, p. 788). After the Danish Social Democrats adopted more conservative positions of immigration and national identity and subsequently came through a general election virtually unharmed, some have suggested that a more left-conservative approach is the way forward for social democratic parties elsewhere (Kosiara-Pedersen, 2019, p. 9). However, Abou-Chadi and Wagner (2020) have questioned this strategy, finding no empirical support for its success, and saying that a more rightward on the cultural dimension may lead to a loss of support from younger, more highly educated voters.

Nevertheless, the suggestion that social democrats have at least attempted such a change of course in an attempt to win voters is a hypothesis worth testing as well. An additional hypothesis is that social democratic parties in countries in which the 2015–16 migrant crisis was more severe had a greater incentive to adopt more culturally conservative positions. A greater number of asylum applications is likely to have made the issue more salient, and social democratic parties may have thought to limit the extent of their electoral loss by adopting a position on the issue likely to have appealed to left-conservative voters. Thus, this leads to another two hypotheses:

H5: Social democratic parties have moved toward the left-conservative quadrant.

H6: The move of social democratic parties toward the left-conservative quadrant is positively correlated to the severity of the migrant crisis.

In conclusion, both right-wing populist and social democratic parties may be able to win left-conservative voters over, but both are constrained in their ability to move in that direction by the possibility of losing their current middle-class voters. A detailed outline of the methodology of this paper is discussed in the following section.

Methodology

This research takes the shape of a comparative case study of nine Western European countries. This section will outline the methodology in greater detail.

Case selection

The cases used in this paper are drawn from the population of Western European democracies. Case selection for this research is constrained by data availability. While the European Elections Survey covers all EU member states, the latest Chapel Hill Expert Survey only covers fourteen of those, of which five are Eastern European. The remaining nine countries are: France, Germany, Greece,

Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Excluding microstates, this group of countries constitutes a significant share of Western European countries which is well-balanced in terms of geography, history and political systems. The selection includes two countries with majoritarian electoral systems and seven with proportional systems; it includes established democracies as well as three relatively recently democratised countries; it includes majority Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and mixed countries; finally, it includes both larger and smaller countries. The selection can thus be said to be a fair sample of the population of Western European countries on the basis of which one can draw conclusions that are true of Western European party systems in general. Moreover, these differences in characteristics serve as control variables in the comparative analysis.

Figure 2. Selected cases; original work



Data collection and analysis

For the purpose of mapping the supply side of the political space, Chapel Hill Expert Survey data from 2006 and 2017 are used (Hooghe et al., 2010; Polk et al., 2017). These datasets include positions of political parties on multiple dimensions as judged by country experts. An expert survey is preferable to manifesto analysis because the latter "remain[s] tied to the exigencies of short-term electoral competition" (Mair & Mudde, 1998, p. 219), making comparison across countries and across time more difficult. Expert surveys are more reliable in that regard (p. 225). Moreover, previous research upon which this one is based has also used expert survey data, making it easier to compare these findings with theirs as well. Expert surveys from both 2006 and 2017 include expert judgement on the position of parties of the two dimensions, sociocultural and economic. Parties' positions on these dimensions are scored on a scale from 0 to 10, in which 0 is the most left-wing and 10 is the most right-wing. In order to determine whether parties moved toward the left-conservative quadrant, each party receives a score (*lc*) indicating to what extent it is left-conservative, computed using the formula shown below, in which *lrecon* refers to the party's position on the economic dimension while *galtan* refers to its position on the sociocultural dimension. The resulting score ranges from 0, indicating a position in the far right-progressive corner of the political space, to 100, indicating a position in the far left-conservative corner.

$$lc = (lrecon - 10) * -1 * galtan$$

The demand side of the political space is measured using the 2019 European Election Studies (EES) voter survey (Schmitt et al., 2019). The advantages of using this dataset are, similarly, the comparability to previous research, its comparability across countries due to its uniform nature, and the fact that all countries covered in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey are also covered in this dataset. The EES dataset includes survey data of voters and non-voters of all EU countries in relation to the European Parliament election held that year, but can also be used to map voters' position in the political space, as has been done previously. Voters are first given a position on each dimension. Their position on the economic dimension is determined using the two economy-related questions in the survey regarding state regulation and control of the economy and redistribution of wealth. Their position on the sociocultural dimension is determined using three sociocultural questions regarding same-sex marriage, civil liberties and immigration. Both of these scales range from 0, representing most left-

wing/progressive, to 10, meaning most right-wing/conservative (see Appendix). Based on these two variables, voters are assigned to the quadrant in which they are positioned. Voters with an economic score below 5 and a sociocultural score below 5 are assigned to the left-conservative quadrant, those with a sociocultural score above 5 to the left-progressive quadrant, and so on. Voters with a score of exactly 5 on either dimension are assigned to a fifth "Centre" category.

Because of the small number of questions comprising each dimension, both dimensions suffer from a low Cronbach's Alpha (0.568 for the economic dimension, 0.321 for the sociocultural dimension). However, this is the best measurement of voters' positions on ideological dimensions given the small number of issue-related questions included in the EES.

Hypotheses 1, 3 and 5 are addressed by comparing the mapping of the parties' positions based on the latest available data with that based on data from 2006. Hypothesis 2 is tested using a linear regression analysis including the size of the left-conservative voter base according to the EES data. Additional models in this analysis include control variables based on the following country characteristics: whether a country has a proportional (as opposed to majoritarian) electoral system; whether a country democratised in the third wave of democratisation; whether a country is majority Catholic; and population in millions. Hypotheses 4 and 6 are also tested using linear regression analyses. The severity of the migrant crisis, as addressed in hypothesis 4, is operationalised as the number of asylum applications in 2015 and 2016, the height of the migrant crisis, per one million inhabitants. The severity of the economic crisis, as addressed in hypothesis 6, is operationalised as the unemployment rate in 2013, when unemployment in the EU as a whole peaked. Asylum, unemployment and population statistics are all derived from Eurostat (n.d.).

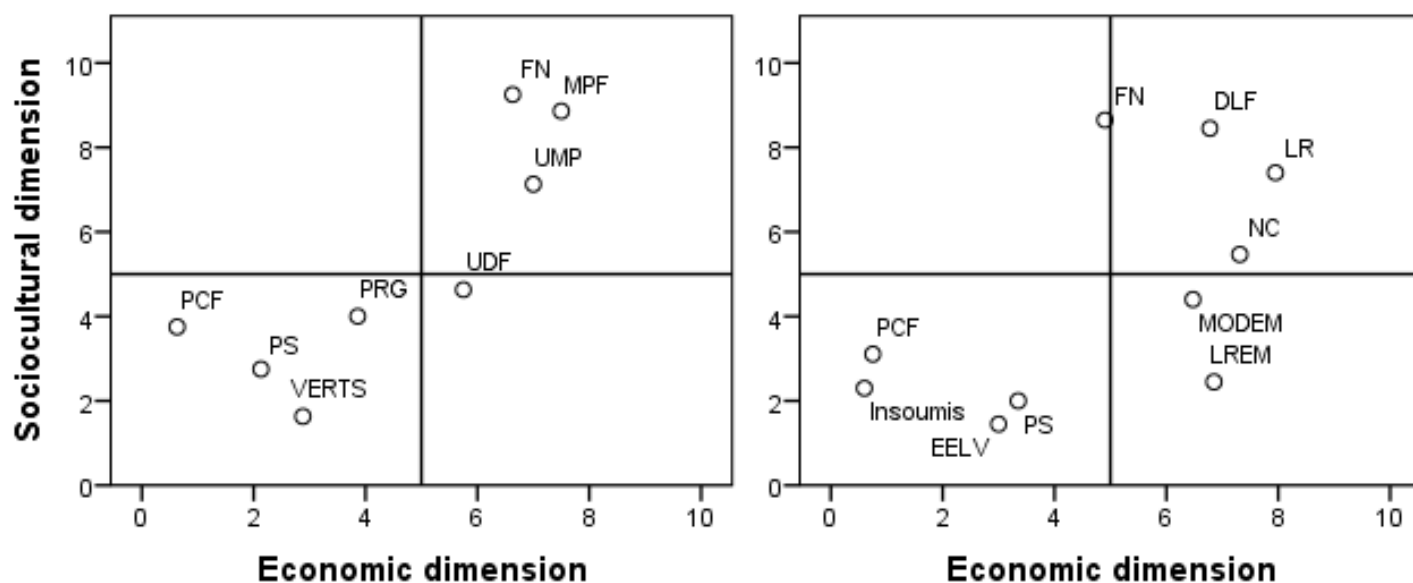
Case analyses

In this section, each of the nine country cases are discussed in turn. For each country, this discussion provides an updated mapping of parties' positions, which is compared with the situation in 2006.

France

Up to 2006, the country's party system was defined by two increasingly dominant parties: a centre-left Socialist Party (PS) and a centre-right Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) (Grunberg & Haegel, 2007, pp. 333-334). However, the 2017 presidential election saw the candidates of both the UMP's successor party, the LR, and the PS excluded from the second round, with the latter's candidate scoring as low 6.4% in the first round (Kriesi, 2018, p. 53). In the legislative elections later that year, only 14 of the country's 537 constituencies saw a runoff between the two traditional parties, compared to 391 in 2012 (Evans & Ivaldi, 2017, pp. 224-225). The parties represented in the second round of the presidential election were the far-right National Front (FN) and "The Republic on the March" (LREM), a party combining cultural progressivism with an economically reformist agenda. Thus, at least at the presidential level, it seems the primary line of conflict shifted from the traditional competition between left-progressives and right-conservatives to a competition between right-progressives and a party which, in 2006, was relatively close to the left-conservative quadrant.

Figure 3. Spatial model of French political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)



Thus, the two developments discussed in the Theory section, the decline of social democracy and the rise of right-wing populism, are clearly observable in France. Figure 2 above shows the updated placement of parties in the political space. As the figure reveals, the FN has moved left on the economics dimension, from a score of 6.6 in 2006 to a score of 4.9 in 2017, putting it in the left-conservative quadrant by the smallest possible margin. In contrast, the PS did not move further right on sociocultural issues. In fact, the party's position on this dimension moved slightly left since 2006, from 2.75 to 2.

Germany

German politics was traditionally dominated by the centre-left Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and the centre-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), as well as the much smaller Free Democratic Party (FDP). The 1980s saw the entry of the Greens, while German reunification in 1990 led East Germany's government party to rebrand itself as the PDS, and later as The Left. In 2006, no party was positioned in the left-conservative quadrant, though the SPD, with a score of 4.4 on the sociocultural dimension, was relatively close. In the 2017 federal election, the German party system changed again, both due to a new right-wing populist party, Alternative for Germany (AfD), winning representation in the Bundestag for the first time, as well as the electoral decline of the SPD (Kriesi, 2018, p. 53). These trends mirror those in France in the same year, and the general trend in Western Europe.

Figure 4. Spatial model of German political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)

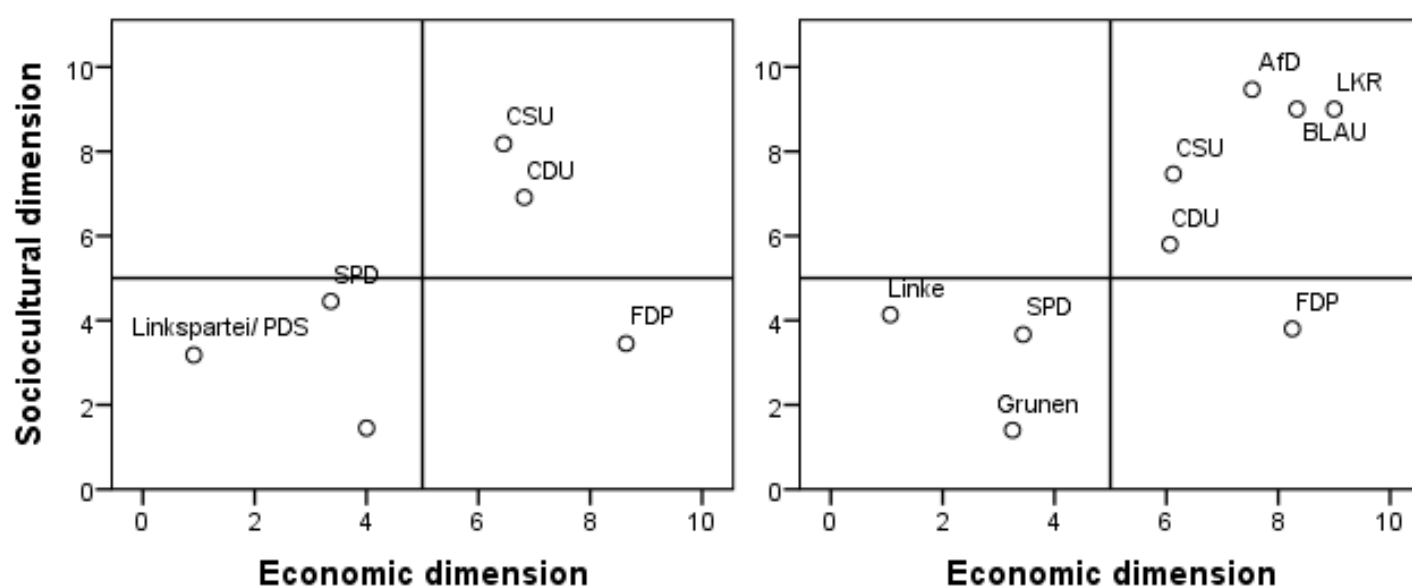
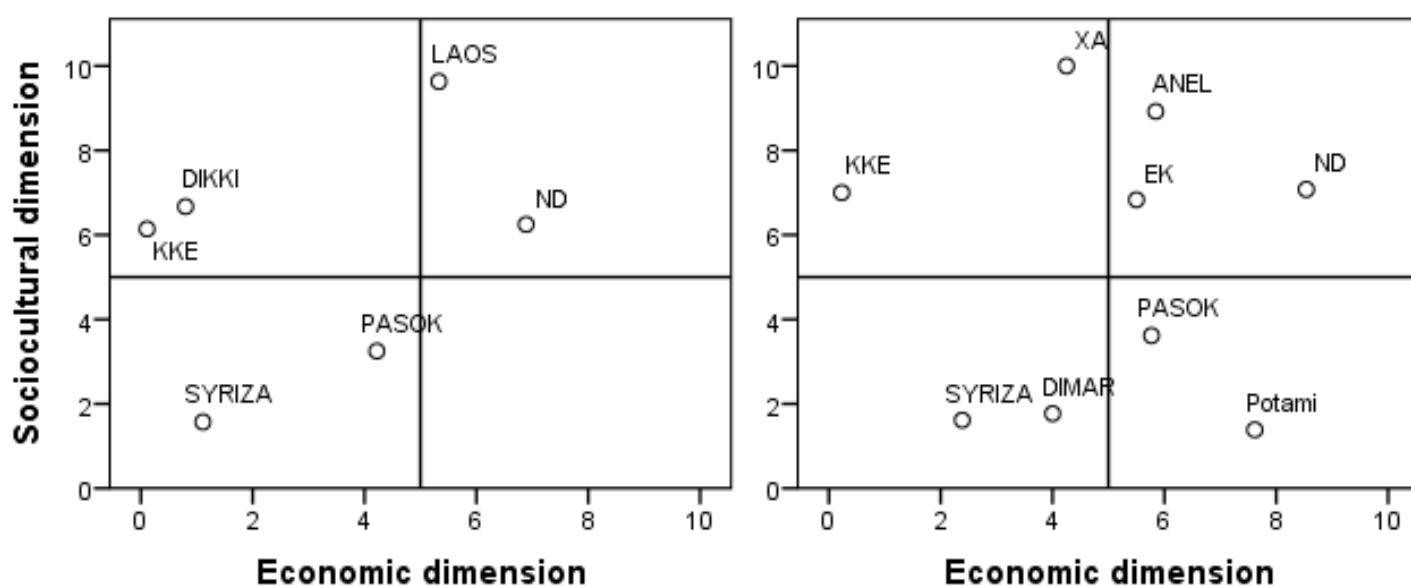


Figure 3 shows the German political landscape as of 2017. The first thing to note is that the left-conservative quadrant remains as empty as it was in 2006. The SPD has actually, much like the French PS, moved slightly away from the quadrant, to a position of 3.7 on the sociocultural dimension. However, The Left appears to have taken its place; this party moved from 3.2 to 4.1, making it slightly more culturally conservative than the SPD. The AfD, unlike the French FN, takes a quite right-wing position (7.5) on the economic dimension, placing it further from the left-conservative quadrant than the more mainstream CDU and CSU. These two parties have moved slightly to the left on economics, the CDU from 6.8 and the CSU from 6.4, both to 6.1.

Greece

Like the previous two country cases, the Greek political landscape was historically characterised by a highly stable two-party system, with the socialist PASOK on the left and the conservative New Democracy (ND) on the right. Teperoglou and Tsatsanis (2014, p. 224) note that "[i]n every national election from the 1970s until the start of the twenty-first century New Democracy and PASOK gathered well over 80% of the vote." However, this stable duopoly was critically injured in 2007 and 2009, before ultimately collapsing in 2012, with the two parties combined gathering no more than a third of the vote. Several parties filled this vacuum, most prominently the far-left SYRIZA (pp. 224-225).

Figure 5. Spatial model of Greek political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)



In 2006, before these developments, Greece had two parties positioned in the left-conservative quadrant; the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and the Democratic Social Movement (DIKKI), a split-off of PASOK, both combined a far-left economic position with a mildly culturally conservative position. While DIKKI has since descended into obscurity, Figure 4 reveals that the KKE has in fact moved further right on the sociocultural dimension, from a 6.1 to a 7. The newly electorally successful far-right Golden Dawn (XA) can also be found in the quadrant, combining an extreme position on the sociocultural dimension with a slightly left-of-centre economic position, with a score of 4.3. Meanwhile, despite its resounding defeat in 2012, PASOK has shown no movement toward the left-conservative end. In addition to remaining relatively stable on the sociocultural dimension, it has actually moved right on economics, from 4.2 to 5.8, such that it is now in the right-progressive quadrant. ND, too, has moved considerably to the right on economics, from 6.9 to 8.5.

In conclusion, Greece shows a mixed picture when it comes to the left-conservative quadrant. While there is no previous point of reference to compare it to, the XA is currently in the left-conservative quadrant, thus providing some support for the hypothesis of right-wing populist movement. However, PASOK has in fact moved away from a left-conservative positions, contradicting the hypothesis of social democratic movement. Instead, the KKE has remained there, moving slightly further right on cultural issues.

Italy

Since 1994, the Italian party system has been bipolar (Newell, 2010, p. 40), defined by two competing coalitions of parties. The centre-left coalition was initially highly fragmented, but a series of mergers ensured that the coalition would be dominated by a single social democratic party, the Democratic Party (PD), from 2007 onward (pp. 214-216). The centre-right coalition, on the other hand, was constituted by Forza Italia (FI), in addition to some smaller parties such as the Northern League (LN) (p. 35; p. 212). As of 2006, no major party was positioned in the left-conservative quadrant. Only a number of smaller culturally conservative parties had a position on the economic dimension putting them slightly in the quadrant. Among these were the UDEUR, the PP, the SVP, IdV and The Daisy (DL), all of which were part of the centre-left coalition.

The party system turmoil that has befallen other Western European countries in recent years reached Italy as well. In 2018, two developments were laid bare. First, within the centre-right coalition, LN had become the leading party, surpassing FI. LN had previously been a regionalist party advocating secession of Northern Italy, but had since transformed itself into

a right-wing populist party. Second, the relatively young Five Star Movement (M5S), a catch-all party with broad anti-establishment appeal, became the second political force in Italy, condemning the centre-left coalition to the third spot.

Figure 6. Spatial model of Italian political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)

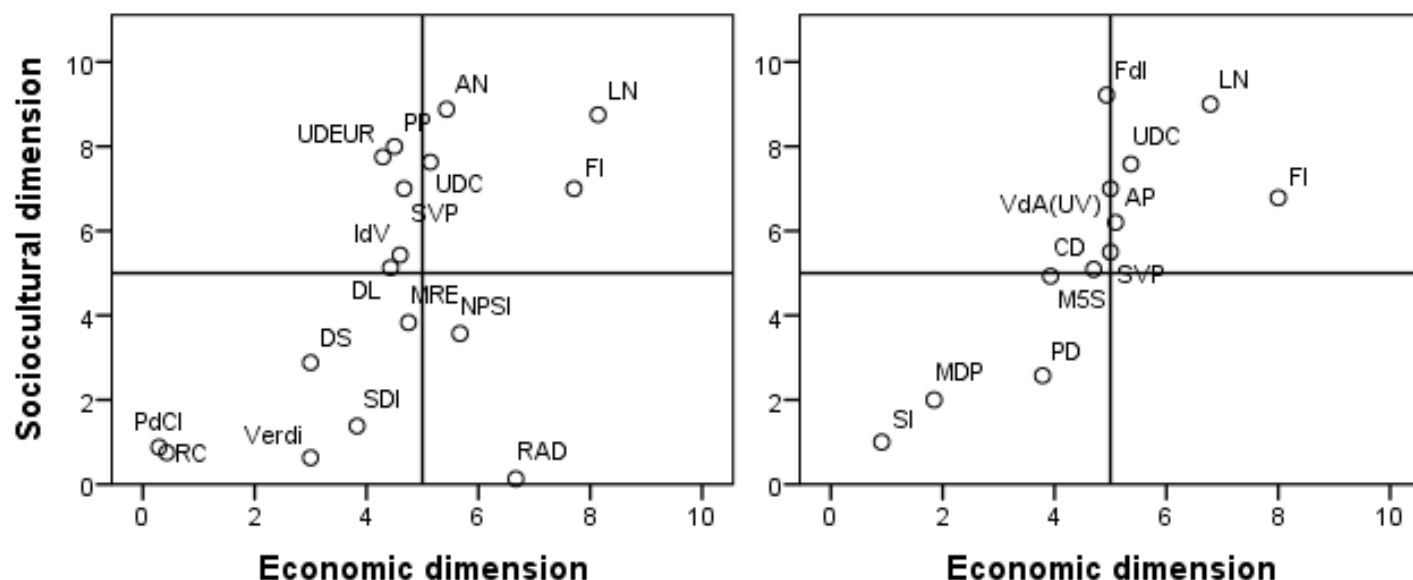


Figure 5 reveals that those parties which were previously found in the left-conservative quadrant have since either left the political scene or vacated to the quadrant's very edges. The right-wing Brothers of Italy (FdI), aside from being quite conservative, has an economic position just left of centre (4.9), while the centrist Democratic Centre – Rights and Freedom (CD) was both just left of centre on economics (4.7) and just right of centre on sociocultural issues (5.1). The regionalist VdA(UV) and SVP both have an exactly centrist economic position while being slightly conservative. The Christian democratic UDC and AP and the Five Star Movement are also close to the left-conservative quadrant.

The Northern League has moved slightly left on the economic dimension, from 8.1 to 6.8, but not enough to come close to the left-conservative quadrant. The fact that there has been some movement, however, supports the hypothesis of the right-wing populist move. Meanwhile, the Democratic Party is more culturally progressive (scoring 2.6 on the sociocultural dimension) than either of its predecessor parties, the Democrats of the Left (2.9) and Democracy is Freedom – The Daisy (5.1). Thus, as in previous cases, the fifth hypothesis appears to find little support. Another observation to note is the increasing unidimensionality of the party system.

The Netherlands

Compared to previous cases, the Netherlands has traditionally had a relatively multipolar party system. The most important parties have traditionally been the social democratic Labour Party (PvdA), the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and the right-liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy² (VVD), although the relative dominance of these parties has ebbed and waned over time, dropping to an all-time low in 2002 (Andeweg & Irwin, 2014, pp. 61-62). As of 2006, two parties could be found in the left-conservative quadrant. The ChristianUnion (CU) combined a socioculturally conservative position with an economically left-leaning position of 4.1, while the Socialist Party (SP), aside from being the most left-wing party on the economic dimension, also positioned itself slightly right-of-centre on cultural issues, with a score of 5.2.

Figure 7. Spatial model of Dutch political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)

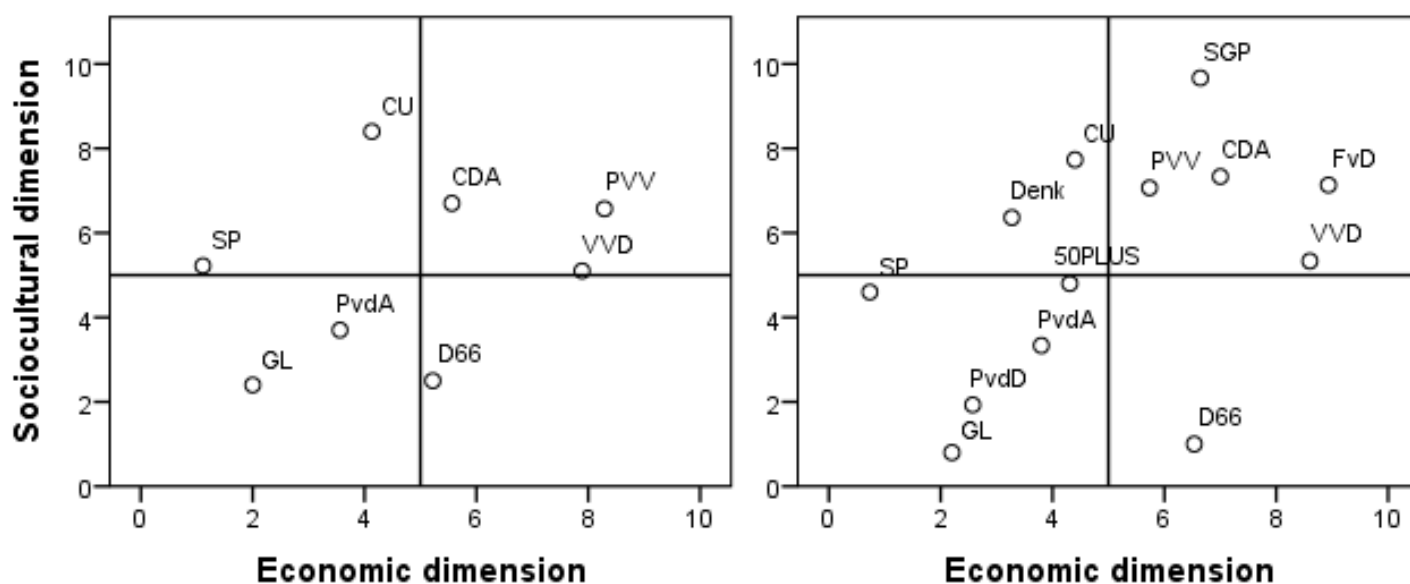


Figure 6 reveals a number of developments since then. First, the Socialist Party moved slightly to the left on sociocultural issues, to 4.6, such that it is now no longer in the left-conservative quadrant. The ChristianUnion, meanwhile, has remained relatively stable, moving to 4.4 on the economic dimension. A new party, DENK, is positioned in the left-conservative quadrant as well. The right-wing populist Freedom Party (PVV), founded in 2006, has moved considerably to the left on economics since then, from a score of 8.3 to 5.7. While this has not placed the party in the left-conservative quadrant, this movement

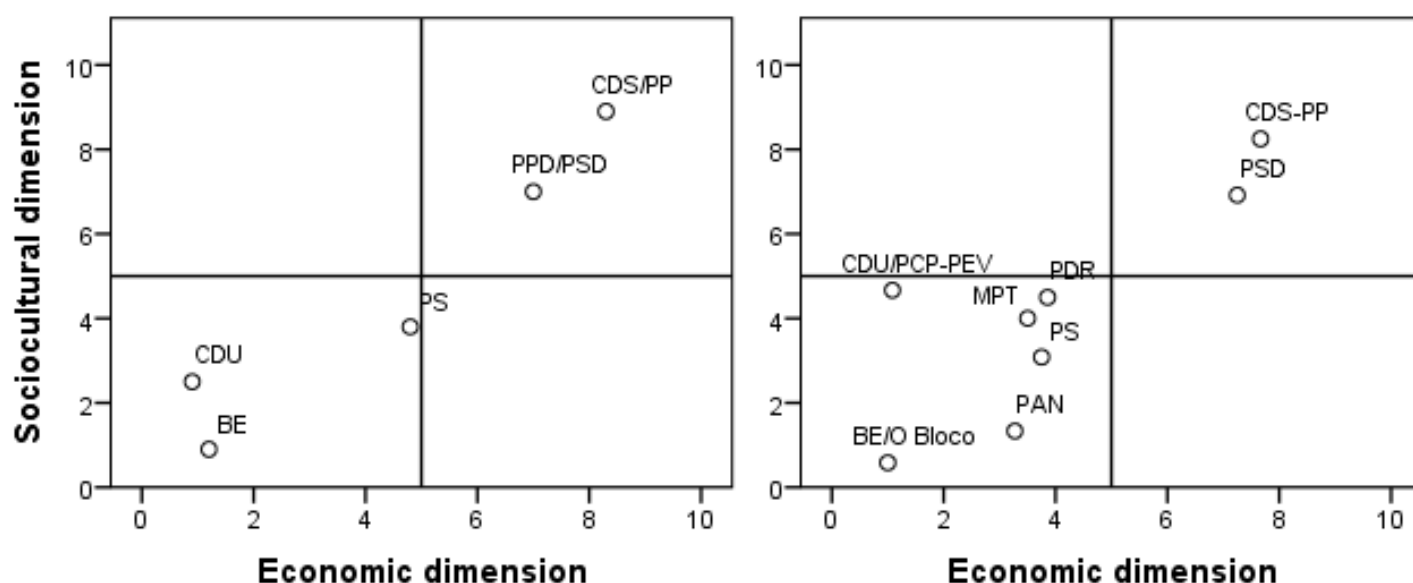
² Sometimes translated as the Liberal Party (Andeweg & Irwin, 2014, p. 72).

represents support for the hypothesis of radical right movement. On the other hand, the hypothesis of social democratic movement is not supported by these findings: the Labour Party has in fact moved slightly left on sociocultural issues, from 3.7 to 3.3.

Portugal

After its democratisation in 1974, Portugal rapidly developed a stable two-party system in which, despite using proportional representation, "[t]he general tendency [was] for the vote to concentrate on the two centrist 'catch-all' parties" (Freire, 2005, p. 81). These were the centre-left Socialist Party (PS) and the centre-right Social Democratic Party (PSD) which, contrary what its name suggests, is actually liberal conservative. In 2006, the PS held an economically centrist position while being slightly left-of-centre on the sociocultural dimension. The PSD, on the other hand, was positioned solidly in the right-conservative quadrant.

Figure 8. Spatial model of Portuguese political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)



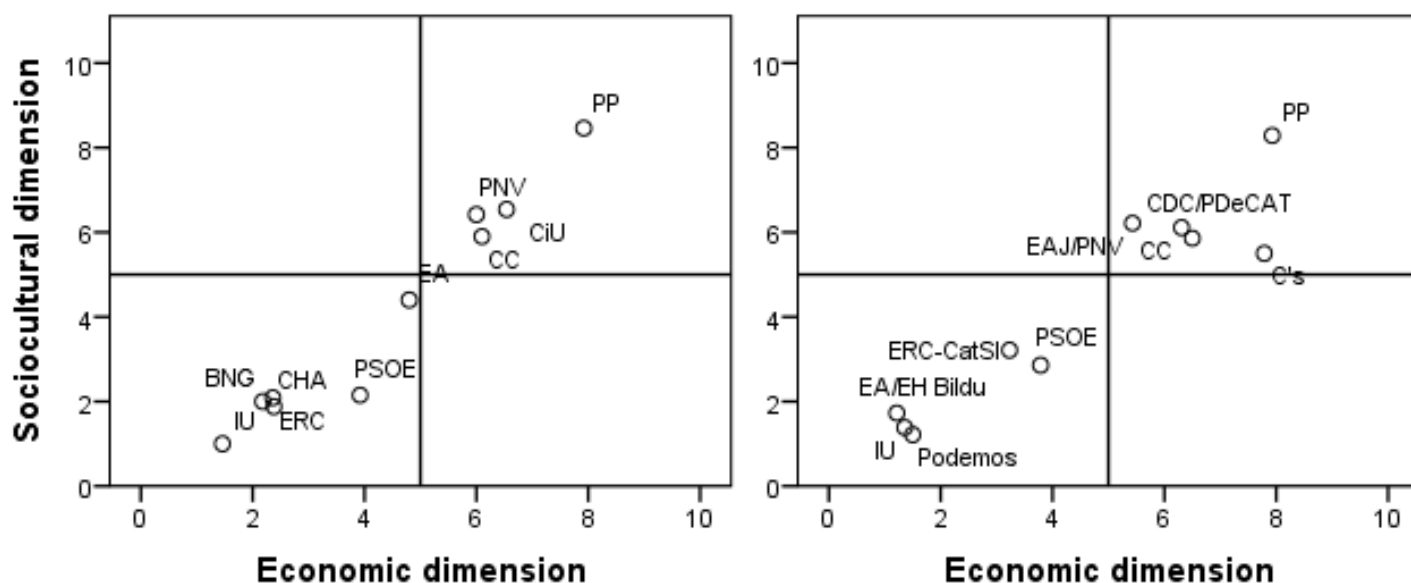
Unlike all cases previously discussed, the Portuguese party system has not seen any major changes since 2006. The Socialist Party appears unaffected by the electoral difficulties plaguing its fellow social democratic parties across the continent, having won the most recent general election in 2019. Likewise, right-wing populism has not been as electorally successful in Portugal as it is elsewhere, only entering the Assembly of the Republic in 2019 with a single seat. This stability is partly reflected in the similarity between 2006 and 2017, shown in Figure 7. In both 2006 and 2017, no party was positioned in the left-conservative quadrant. The PS has moved to the left on economics, and has also moved slightly to the left on the

sociocultural dimension, from 3.8 to 3.1. The Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU), an alliance of communists and greens, has moved considerably right on the sociocultural dimension, from 2.5 to 4.7, almost into the left-conservative quadrant. Another striking characteristic is the lack of any party in either the left-conservative or the right-progressive quadrant, with the party system rather unidimensional in nature.

Spain

Like Portugal, Spain saw the quick emergence of a relatively stable and consolidated two-party system after its re-democratisation in the 1970s, with the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) on the left and the People's Party (PP) on the right. In addition, numerous regionalist parties have had parliamentary representation over the years. Figure 8 shows that in 2006, the PP was solidly right-conservative, while the PSOE was solidly progressive on the sociocultural dimension and just left-of-centre on economics. Moreover, the political space is highly unidimensional, with parties closely following a line from the left-progressive to the right-conservative end.

Figure 9. Spatial model of Spanish political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)



In recent years, however, new parties have risen to challenge this historically stable two-party system. The most notable of these are the left-wing populist Podemos and the right-liberal Citizens (C's) since 2015, and the right-wing populist Vox since 2019; this last party is not included in the data due to the recency of its rise to prominence. The 2017 data shows no party has entered the left-conservative quadrant. The PP has remained stable on both

dimensions, and the general unidimensionality of the political space has persevered, with the exception of C's, which is significantly more to the right on the economic dimension than it is on the sociocultural dimension, although it is still positioned in the right-conservative quadrant.

Additionally, the data reveals that the PSOE, while remaining stable on the economic dimension, has moved slightly right on the sociocultural dimension. This finding supports the hypothesis of a social democratic movement toward a more left-conservative position, but also defies the trend observed in previously discussed cases, where social democratic parties have in fact become more progressive. A possible explanation for this exception is the increased salience of the "territorial issue", regarding the degree of symbolic and substantive autonomy given to peripheral regions in Spain such as Catalonia and the Basque Country. Since 2006, the PSOE has sought to moderate its previously pluralistic territorial policy (Verge, 2013, p. 328; see also Ruiz Jiménez et al., 2017), and the rise of Catalan separatism in the 2010s is likely to have forced the PSOE to espouse a more centralist rhetoric on the issue, moving it right on the sociocultural dimension. In conclusion, it is likely that this exception to the general trend can be attributed to factors specific to the case.

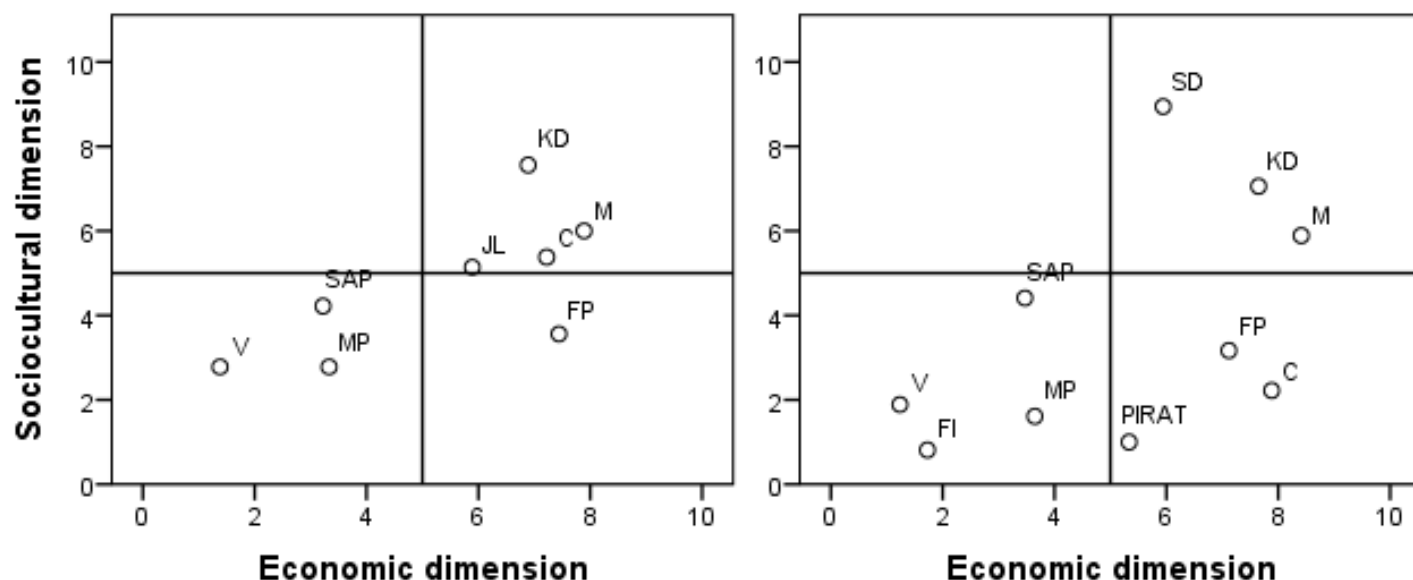
Sweden

The Swedish party system, like those of its neighbouring countries, has traditionally been dominated by a large Social Democratic Party (SAP), flanked by the smaller Left Party (V) and Green Party (MP) to its left. The right, on the other hand, is a fragmented coalition of the conservative Moderate Party (M), the Liberal People's Party (FP) and the agrarian Centre Party (C), later supplemented by the Christian Democrats (KD) (Arter, 1999, p. 143; Arter, 2012, pp. 824-825). This division of the party system in two camps is visible in the political space in 2006 depicted in Figure 9. The SAP, V and MP are all in the left-progressive quadrant, although the SAP is relatively moderate on the sociocultural dimension. The four parties in the centre-right bloc are solidly on the right on the economic dimension. The Moderate and Centre parties are just right on the sociocultural dimension, with the KD positioned to their right and the FP to their left, in the right-progressive quadrant.

While these two blocs have traditionally alternated in government, this has recently been complicated due to the rise of the right-wing populist Sweden Democrats (SD), which has kept both blocs from winning a majority in 2014, but which has been deemed too radical by either bloc to cooperate with, leading instead to a left-wing minority government with

reluctant support from the right. The political space in 2017 shows the results of these shifts in the party landscape.

Figure 10. Spatial model of Swedish political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)



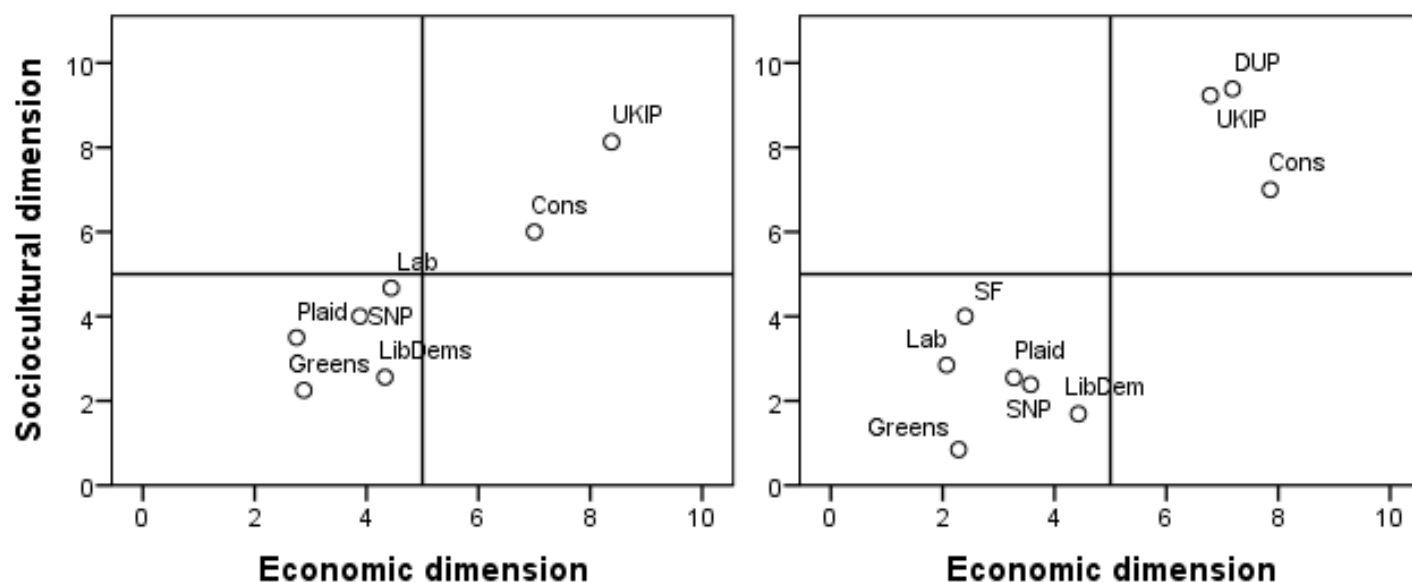
The first thing to note is that while V and the MP have moved considerably left on the sociocultural dimension, the SAP has remained stable, moving from 3.2 to 3.5 on the economic dimension, and from 4.2 to 4.4 on the sociocultural dimension. While this does not appear to be a move toward a more left-conservative position, it is not a move toward a more progressive position either. Meanwhile, the SD appears to be relatively close to the left-conservative quadrant, with a position of 5.9 on the economic dimension, but not quite in it.

The United Kingdom

Due to its majoritarian electoral system and the dominance of a single class cleavage, the United Kingdom has long had a stable two-party system, with the Labour Party (Lab) on the left and the Conservative Party (Con) on the right. From the 1970s onward, the Liberal Party became a significant third party, and in 1988 it merged with the Social Democratic Party to form the Liberal Democrats (LibDem). Additionally, several regionalist parties, such as the Scottish National Party (SNP) and Plaid Cymru (Plaid) rose in prominence around the same time (Quinn, 2013, pp. 381-382). Figure 10 shows that the political space in 2006 reflects the unidimensionality of political competition, with parties forming a line from the left-progressive quadrant to the right-conservative quadrant. The Labour Party is relatively centrist, with a position of 4.4 on the economic dimension and a position of 4.7 on the

sociocultural dimension. Meanwhile, the eurosceptic UK Independence Party (UKIP) is positioned right of the Conservatives on both dimensions. No party is positioned in the left-conservative quadrant, nor in the right-progressive quadrant.

Figure 11. Spatial model of British political parties in 2006 (left) and 2017 (right)



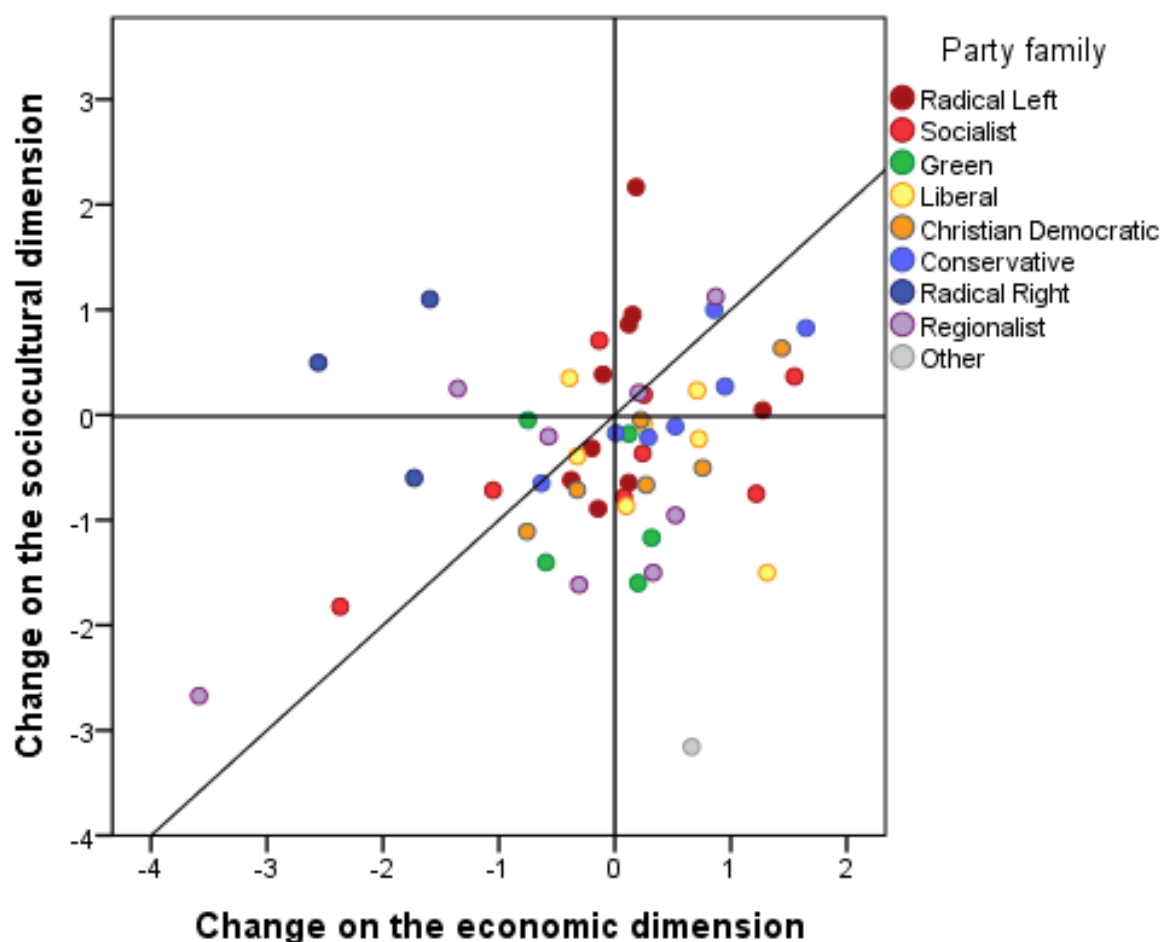
However, much of this would change as the 2010s would turn out to be an eventful decade in British politics. After a five-year coalition government between the Conservatives and the LibDems, the former won a majority government and, threatened by the electoral competition of UKIP, organised a referendum in which the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. The party subsequently contested a snap election in 2017 on the promise of delivering this result. Meanwhile, the Labour Party elected Jeremy Corbyn as its new leader in 2015, in what was seen as a significant shift to the left (Worth, 2019, pp. 94-95).

These changes are reflected in the 2017 political space. The Conservative Party has moved to the right on both dimensions, while the Labour Party has moved significantly to left on the economic dimension, to a position of 2.1, as well as on the sociocultural dimension, to a position of 2.8. Thus, the Labour Party can be said to have clearly moved in the left-progressive direction as opposed to the left-conservative direction, providing no support for the hypothesis of social democratic movement. However, UKIP has moved to the left on the economic dimension, from 8.4 to 6.8, left of the Conservatives. While not entering the left-conservative quadrant, this supports the hypothesis of right-wing populist movement.

Comparative analysis

Now that all cases have been studied individually, these findings are now brought together in a comparative analysis in an attempt to reach certain general conclusions in relation to the hypotheses. Figure 11 shows the development of all parties across the nine countries, grouped by party family as classified in the European Election Studies data. It shows the change on both dimensions between 2006 and 2017. Everything left of the diagonal line represents an increase in the left-conservative score. Parties are grouped by party family, each represented by a different colour. What this reveals is that parties have generally moved in all directions, but most parties have slightly moved away from the left-conservative end. However, there are a few parties which have moved substantially toward the left-conservative end, and there are significant differences between party families.

Figure 12. Parties' change in position in the political space between 2006 and 2017 by party family



Social democratic parties are scattered throughout the graph, but most can be found on the lower end, representing a leftward shift on the sociocultural dimension. This contradicts the hypothesis of social democratic movement toward the left-conservative end. Most Christian democratic, regionalist and green parties have also become more progressive. Most conservative parties have moved right on the economic dimension, but some have become more progressive while others have moved to a more conservative position. A number of radical right parties have moved substantially to the left on the economic dimension, which may confirm the hypothesis of radical right movement. Furthermore, radical left parties have generally remained stable on the economic dimension, but some have moved substantially right on the sociocultural dimension.

Table 1. Degree of left-conservatism by party family in 2006 and 2017

	2006	2017	Change	T-test	Cohen's d
Radical Left	27.9 (18.8)	26.9 (19.0)	-1.0	$t(8) = -0.627$ $p = 0.548$	0.21
Socialist	21.0 (6.6)	17.7 (7.5)	-3.3	$t(7) = 1.753$ $p = 0.123$	0.62
Green	13.1 (5.9)	11.5 (6.4)	-1.6	$t(4) = 2.452$ $p = 0.070$	1.10
Liberal	17.9 (12.1)	12.1 (6.8)	-5.8	$t(6) = 2.318$ $p = 0.060$	0.88
Christian Democratic	31.8 (10.1)	28.3 (8.3)	-3.5	$t(5) = 2.401$ $p = 0.062$	0.98
Conservative	20.6 (9.2)	15.1 (5.7)	-5.5	$t(6) = 1.841$ $p = 0.115$	0.70
Radical Right	24.5 (13.9)	32.3 (15.8)	+7.8	$t(2) = -9.291$ $p = 0.011$	5.36
Regionalist	22.1 (6.6)	24.1 (6.3)	+2.0	$t(7) = 0.604$ $p = 0.565$	0.21

Note: Standard errors in brackets.

These findings are mostly confirmed by Table 1, which shows the change in left-conservatism between 2006 and 2017 by party family. Left-conservatism is measured using the formula discussed in the Methodology section, with values ranging from 0 (least left-conservative) to 100 (most left-conservative). Confessional parties, agrarian/centre parties and parties without a party family affiliation are excluded because of the small number of cases. The significance of the difference is tested using a paired-samples *t*-test, although it is

important to note that this test only includes the difference among parties included in both 2006 and 2017 data. Because of this lower number of cases, these values may underestimate the significance.

Nevertheless, it is evident that most party families either remained stable or, if anything, became less left-conservative, including social democratic parties. There is only one party family of which the change has been statistically significant; radical right parties have seen their score of left-conservatism increase from 24.5 to 32.3, a rise of 7.8 points ($p = 0.011$). This makes the radical right the most left-conservative party family. The results for social democratic and radical right parties are discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

Table 2. Proportion of voters positioned in each quadrant by country

	Left- Conservative	Right- Conservative	Left- Progressive	Right- Progressive
France	21.9	26.0	23.3	9.8
Germany	13.6	23.5	25.0	17.1
Greece	25.5	24.5	18.7	9.3
Italy	20.0	31.8	21.6	10.8
Netherlands	11.0	30.3	15.4	20.3
Portugal	24.1	15.9	28.0	11.4
Spain	13.6	23.9	29.3	13.9
Sweden	16.3	29.9	18.9	13.9
United Kingdom	15.7	32.4	18.0	11.9

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% because voters who scored a 5 on either dimension or both are regarded as neutral.

Table 2 shows the proportion of voters positioned in each quadrant in all the nine countries included in this study. Proportions of left-conservative voters range from 11.0% in the Netherlands to 25.5 in Greece. Most of these proportions are very similar to those found by Lefkofridi et al. (2014) based on 2009 data, which increases the methodological validity. However, Greece, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom have significantly lower proportions of left-conservative voters than they did in 2009 according to Lefkofridi et al. This is likely a consequence of the fact that the questions used to determine voters' positions differed. If it were the consequence of actual movement of voters' positions, it would have either been observed across a larger number of countries, or across a more homogenous group of countries.

Table 3. Linear regression model of left-conservatism

	1 (max)	2 (max)	3 (change)	4 (change)
(Constant)	13.99 (11.94)	1.77 (23.56)	4.15 (9.65)	1.71 (31.03)
Left-conservative voters in 2019	1.5* (0.64)	2.09 (0.93)	0.27 (0.48)	0.38 (1.08)
Difference in left-conservative voters			-0.36 (0.31)	-0.47 (0.59)
Proportional representation		9.03 (10.70)		-1.41 (11.58)
New democracy		-3.12 (10.33)		-3.84 (10.62)
Catholic		-8.78 (8.47)		3.20 (8.17)
Population		0.01 (0.18)		0.02 (0.19)
R ²	0.45	0.69	0.19	0.36
Adj. R ²	0.38	0.19	-0.01	-1.58
N	9	9	9	9

Note: OLS-regression coefficients with standard errors in brackets. Maximum left-conservatism is the dependent variable in models 1 and 2; change in maximum left-conservatism in the dependent variable in models 3 and 4.

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

The proportion of left-conservative voters in a country positively affects the maximum left-conservative value of any party in the country. Each additional percentage point of the electorate in the left-conservative quadrant increases the maximum degree of left-conservatism of any party by 1.5 points ($p = 0.047$). This model can account for 38% of the variance of the dependent variable. On the contrary, the *change* in maximum left-conservatism from 2006 to 2017 is not affected by the proportion of voters in that quadrant ($p = 0.60$), nor by the change in the proportion of left-conservative voters from 2009 to 2019 ($p = 0.28$). The models including several country characteristics as control variables do not yield any statistically significant results. It should be noted that due to the small sample size, all models suffer from a number of influential cases, particularly Greece, which has a maximum degree of left-conservatism significantly higher than that of the other cases. Additionally, the last two models have a negative adjusted R² due the large number of independent variables and the small number of cases.

Social democracy and the radical left

The case studies have provided little support for the hypothesis that social democratic parties have moved to the right on the sociocultural dimension. On the contrary, a majority of social democratic parties became more progressive on the sociocultural dimension, some significantly so. The Italian PD is also more culturally progressive than either of its two predecessors. Among the case studies discussed in the previous section, there are only three exceptions to this cultural leftward shift. The first of these is the Swedish SAP, which barely moved at all on either dimension. The second is the Greek PASOK, which moved slightly to the right on the sociocultural dimension, but moved significantly more strongly to the right on the economic dimension, such that taken together this still represents a move away from the left-conservative end of the political space. The last exception is the Spanish PSOE, which, as discussed in the section about Spain, appears to be grounded in idiosyncratic causes.

These trends can also be observed in general statistics. Table 4 shows the average position of all social democratic parties across all nine cases on both dimensions. The last row shows the degree to which social democratic parties are left-conservative on a scale from 0 to 100. The table reveals that social democratic parties on average remained relatively stable on both dimensions, moving right on the economic dimension by 0.2 points, and left on the sociocultural dimension by 0.3 points, though neither of these movements is statistically significant. Taken together, this amounts to a small decrease in the degree of left-conservatism from 21.0 to 17.7. This change, too, is not statistically significant.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of the position of social democratic parties

	2006	2017	Change	T-test	Cohen's d
Economic dimension	3.6 (0.8)	3.8 (1.7)	+0.2	$t(7) = 0.062$ $p = 0.953$	0.02
Sociocultural dimension	3.3 (1.1)	3.0 (1.5)	-0.3	$t(7) = 1.391$ $p = 0.207$	0.49
Left-conservatism	21.0 (6.6)	17.7 (7.5)	-3.3	$t(7) = 1.753$ $p = 0.123$	0.62

Note: Standard errors in brackets.

In conclusion, both the individual case studies and the general statistics disprove the hypothesis that social democrats have moved to a more left-conservative position. In fact, they have generally moved slightly to the left on the sociocultural dimension. For this reason, the hypothesis of social democratic movement is rejected.

While social democratic parties have not moved toward a more left-conservative position, it is worth addressing radical left parties. While the left-conservative movement of these parties was not statistically significant, there are certainly a number of radical left parties which have moved considerably toward a more left-conservative position, primarily by adopting more a culturally conservative position. This includes the Portuguese CDU, whose position on the sociocultural dimension moved from 2.5 to 4.7, increasing their left-conservative score by 18.9 points on a scale from 0 to 100. In addition, the German Linke has seen its score increase by 8.0 points, and the Greek KKE, now the most left-conservative party in the data, saw score increase by 7.7 points. These, too, were primarily the result of a rightward shift on the sociocultural dimension. In conclusion, it appears that the hypothesis of social democratic movement may, in some countries, apply not to social democratic parties, but instead by radical left parties. It is possible that these parties have attempted to win over working-class voters who have felt abandoned by social democratic parties due to their progressivism.

Table 5. Linear regression model of maximum left-conservatism (1) and change in maximum conservatism (2) among social democratic parties

	1	2
(Constant)	18.88*** (1.88)	-2.49 (1.91)
Asylum applications	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
R ²	0.44	0.00
Adj. R ²	0.36	-0.17
N	9	8

Note: OLS-regression coefficients with standard errors in brackets.

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

The number of asylum applications positively affects the maximum level of left-conservatism of a social democratic party in the country, with each additional 1,000 asylum application per one million inhabitants leading to an increase of the left-conservative score by 1. This model accounts for 36.4% of the variance in maximum left-conservatism. However, it should be noted that this effect is on the edge of statistical significance ($p = 0.05$). Furthermore, as in the previous regression, the small sample size has resulted in one problematic outlier (Greece, $ZRE = 1.98$) and two problematic influential cases (France, $DFBeta = -1.14$ and Greece, $DFBeta = 1.07$). The maximum *change* in left-conservatism,

furthermore, is not close to statistical significance ($p = 0.96$). Therefore, the hypothesis that the *change* in social democratic left-conservatism is related to the severity of the migrant crisis must be discarded. For radical left parties, neither maximum left-conservatism ($p = 0.65$) nor maximum *change* in left-conservatism ($p = 0.46$) is statistically significant.

The radical right

As previously mentioned, right-wing populist parties are the only party family that has seen a statistically significant movement toward the left-conservative quadrant, and Table 4 shows that this has primarily taken place as a result of a leftward shift on the economic dimension of 0.8 points on a 10-point scale. Radical right parties have not shifted significantly on the sociocultural dimension.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of the position of right-wing populist parties

	2006	2017	Change	T-test	Cohen's d
Economic dimension	7.2 (1.3)	6.4 (1.6)	-0.8	$t(2) = 6.518$ $p = 0.023$	3.76
Sociocultural dimension	8.5 (1.2)	8.7 (1.0)	+0.2	$t(2) = -0.668$ $p = 0.573$	0.39
Left-conservatism	24.5 (13.9)	32.3 (15.8)	+7.8	$t(2) = -9.291$ $p = 0.011$	5.36

Note: Standard errors in brackets.

Many of the parties that have moved most strongly toward the left-conservative end are right-wing populist. In particular, the Italian LN (classified as a regionalist party in the data) has seen its left-conservative score increase by 12.7 points, while the French FN has seen a similar shift of 12.9 points. The British UKIP has moved by 16.5 points, and the Dutch PVV tops the list with an increase of 18.9 points. These parties make up four of the five parties with the greatest increase in their left-conservative score, the only other being the aforementioned Portuguese CDU. In conclusion, it can safely be said that the hypothesis that right-wing populist parties have moved toward the left-conservative end of the political space is supported by the findings in this paper, evidenced both by individual case studies and by the cross-national data.

Nevertheless, only two right-wing populist parties included in the data are positioned *inside* the left-conservative quadrant: the Greek XA (for which no change could be measured as it was absent from the 2006 data) and the French FN. Thus, while the radical right may have generally become more palatable for left-conservative voters, in most countries these

parties are still imperfect representatives of this electorate. With even the XA and FN only marginally left of centre on the economic dimension, no radical right party has an unambiguously left-conservative position.

Table 7. Linear regression model of maximum left-conservatism (1) and change in maximum conservatism (2) among radical right parties

	1	2
(Constant)	22.74** (4.27)	26.13* (3.48)
Unemployment	1.39** (0.32)	-1.17 (0.36)
R ²	0.79	0.88
Adj. R ²	0.74	0.76
N	7	4

Note: OLS-regression coefficients with standard errors in brackets.

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

The maximum degree of left-conservatism of radical right parties by country in 2017 is positively affected by the unemployment rate as of 2013. Each additional percentage point of unemployment in a country is associated with an increase in the left-conservative score of 1.4 ($p = 0.008$). This supports the expectation that the economic dimension is more salient in those countries more severely struck by the Great Recession, and that radical right parties in these countries therefore have a greater incentive to adopt left-wing economic views in order to win over left-conservative working-class voters. However, the association between unemployment and the *change* in maximum left-conservatism between 2006 and 2017 is not statistically significant ($p = 0.085$). As in previous regressions, the small number of cases has resulted in a number of influential cases. In conclusion, the hypothesis that unemployment is a predictor of radical right movement toward a more left-conservative position must be rejected.

Discussion

The lack of representation of left-conservative voters is a major challenge of political representation in contemporary Western Europe. Due to this absence of left-conservative parties, many voters, mainly from working-class backgrounds, feel underrepresented and are forced to vote for parties with which they disagree on either economic or sociocultural issues. This has negative effects on turnout and confidence among this group. Despite this relevance, the topic remains understudied in the literature on representation and congruence. This paper is an attempt to fill this gap by providing an updated perspective on the political space as of 2017, and comparing this to 2006. This makes it possible to see how parties have moved in the intervening period, and to test which aspects play a role in a move toward, or away from, the left-conservative quadrant.

In general, political parties have moved in all directions. However, certain trends can be observed at the party family level. Social democratic parties were hypothesised to have moved rightward on the sociocultural dimension, pressured by electoral losses and the rising salience of issues such as migration and national identity. However, almost all social democratic parties are found to have moved leftward on this dimension. This appears to provide more support to the claim of Abou-Chadi and Wagner (2020) that a socioculturally rightward shift would be electorally disadvantageous to social democratic parties. On the other hand, this paper finds that some radical left parties have seen such a rightward shift. It appears the radical left are attempting to win over these working-class voters and fill the gap left open by social democrats. Unlike social democratic parties, radical right parties *have* moved to a more left-conservative position, primarily due to a substantial leftward shift on the economic dimension. This finding supports the hypothesis that radical right parties have attempted to win over left-conservative voters by adopting more left-wing economic positions.

Overall, these findings paint a mixed picture of the left-conservative quadrant in contemporary Western Europe. The recent movement of the radical right and part of the radical left makes these parties better representatives of left-conservative voters. However, even taking this shift into account, the number of parties unequivocally economically left-wing *and* socioculturally conservative remains small. Moreover, normative questions may be raised about the fact that both these party families are populist and antiestablishment in nature. While left-conservative voters may feel more represented by their own representatives, one may question whether they will feel more represented by government policy when these

representatives are less likely to join governments, especially considering the fact that social democratic parties have generally moved away from representing left-conservative voters. The fact that the left-conservative position increasingly appears to be exclusively held by populist parties may in fact weaken this position with respect to government policy. These are questions which ought to be discussed and addressed in future research.

The proportion of voters found in the left-conservative quadrant positively affects the maximum left-conservatism of any party in a country, but not the change from 2006 to 2017. The number of asylum applications per capita positively affects the maximum left-conservatism of social democratic parties, while the unemployment rate positively affects the maximum left-conservatism of radical right parties. However, again, the change is not affected by these variables. This suggests that the recent events of which these variables are indicative—the Great Recession and the migrant crisis—have not significantly affected parties' positions with respect to left-conservative voters, contrary to what was hypothesised. Additional country characteristics related to the population and the political system have not yielded statistically significant results.

The small sample size of country cases is the greatest methodological limitation of this paper, leading to few instances of statistical significance, low explanatory capacity of models and a number of problematic outliers and influential cases. Nevertheless, the findings of this paper provide a preliminary answer of the theoretical puzzle of the left-conservative quadrant. Future research, more comprehensive in scale, could further shed light of this relevant topic of contemporary representative democracy, and may better address the effect of institutional and sociological factors.

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Appendix

Voter dimensions questions

Voters' position on the economic dimension is determined by taking the average of the following two variables. This creates a dimension in which 0 means most economically left-wing and 10 means most economically right-wing.

Q14_1 "What do you think of state regulation and control of the economy?"

Runs from 0 ("You fully favour state intervention in the economy") to 10 ("You fully oppose state intervention in the economy").

Q14_2 "What do you think of the redistribution of wealth?"

Runs from 0 ("You fully favour redistribution from the rich to the poor in <country>") to 10 ("You fully oppose redistribution from the rich to the poor in <country>").

Voters' position on the sociocultural dimension is determined by taking the average of the following three variables. Since higher values for Q14_5 represent the more socioculturally progressive position, this variable is reversed, such that 0 becomes 10 and vice versa. This creates a dimension in which 0 means most socioculturally progressive and 10 means most socioculturally conservative.

Q14_3 "What do you think of same-sex marriage?"

Runs from 0 ("You fully favour same sex marriage") to 10 ("You fully oppose same sex marriages").

Q14_4 "What do you think of civil liberties?"

Runs from 0 ("You fully support privacy rights even if they hinder efforts to combat crime") to 10 ("You fully support restricting privacy rights in order to combat crime").

Q14_5 "What do you think of immigration?"

Runs from 0 ("You fully favour a restrictive policy on immigration") to 10 ("You fully oppose a restrictive policy on immigration").

Political party abbreviations

Germany	
CDU	Christian Democratic Union of Germany
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany
FDP	Free Democratic Party
Grünen	Alliance 90/The Greens
Linkspartei/ PDS	Left Party/Party of Democratic Socialism
Linke	The Left
CSU	Christian Social Union in Bavaria
AfD	Alternative for Germany
LKR	Liberal Conservative Party
BLAU	The Blue Party
Greece	
PASOK	Panhellenic Socialist Movement
ND	New Democracy
SYRIZA	Coalition of the Radical Left
KKE	Communist Party of Greece
DIKKI	Democratic Social Movement
LAOS	Popular Orthodox Rally
ANEL	Independent Greeks
Potami	The River
DIMAR	Democratic Left
XA	Golden Dawn
EK	Union of Centrists
France	
PCF	French Communist Party
PS	Socialist Party
PRG	Left Radical Party
VERTS	Green Party
EELV	Europe Ecology – The Greens
UMP	Union for Popular Movement
LR	The Republicans
FN	National Front
MPF	Movement for France
UDF	Union for French Democracy
MODEM	Democratic Movement
NC	New Centre
LREM	The Republic on the Move
Insoumis	France Unbowed
DLF	France Arise

Italy	
DS	Democrats of the Left
RC	Communist Refoundation Party
AN	National Alliance
SDI	Italian Democratic Socialists
Verdi	Federation of Greens
LN	Northern League
RAD	Italian Radicals
UDC	Union of Christian and Centre Democrats (2006)
	Union of the Centre (2017)
FI	Forward Italy
DL	Daisy–Democracy is Freedom
SVP	South Tyrolean People's Party
IdV	Italy of Values
UDEUR	Popular–UDEUR
PP	Pensioners' Party
MRE	European Republican Movement
NPSI	New Italian Socialist Party
PdCI	Party of Italian Communists
LN	Northern League
PD	Democratic Party
CD	Democratic Centre
FdI	Brothers of Italy
M5S	Five Star Movement
VdA	Aosta Valley
SI	Italian Left
MDP	Democratic and Progressive Movement
AP	Popular Alternative
The Netherlands	
CDA	Christian Democratic Appeal
PvdA	Labour Party
VVD	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy
D66	Democrats 66
GL	Green Left
SP	Socialist Party
CU	Christian Union
PVV	Party for Freedom
SGP	Reformed Political Party
PvdD	Party for the Animals
50PLUS	50PLUS
Denk	Think
FvD	Forum for Democracy

Portugal	
CDU	Unitarian Democratic Coalition
CDU/PCP–PEV	
CDS/PP	Democratic and Social Centre/People's Party
CDS–PP	
PS	Socialist Party
PPD/PSD	Democratic People's Party/Social Democratic Party
PSD	Social Democratic Party
BE	Left Bloc
BE/O Bloco	
MPT	Earth Party
PAN	People-Animals-Nature
PDR	Democratic Republican Party
Spain	
PSOE	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party
PP	People's Party
IU	United Left
CiU	Convergence and Unity
PNV	Basque Nationalist Party
EAJ/PNV	
EA	Basque Solidarity
EA/EH BILDU	Basque Solidarity/Basque Country Unite
ERC	Republican Left of Catalonia
ERC/CatSI	
BNG	Galician Nationalist Bloc
CC	Canarian Coalition
Podemos	We Can
C's	Citizens–Party of the Citizenry
CDC/PDeCAT	Democratic Convergence of Catalonia/ Catalan European Democratic Party
Sweden	
V	Left Party
SAP	Swedish Social Democratic Party
C	Centre Party
FP	Liberal People's Party
M	Moderate Party
KD	Christian Democrats
MP	Green Party
JL	June List
SD	Sweden Democrats
PIRAT	Pirate Party
FI	Feminist Initiative

The United Kingdom	
Cons	Conservative Party
Lab	Labour Party
LibDems	Liberal Democrats
SNP	Scottish National Party
Plaid	Plaid Cymru
Greens	Green Party
UKIP	UK Independence Party
SF	Sinn Féin
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
