

“Values, Ideology and Party Choice in Europe”*

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Abstract

Empirical evidence suggests that the effects of traditional vote determinants, in particular social class, religion and left/right dimension, on party choice have weakened in Western Europe. This paper explores to what extent socio-economic, libertarian-authoritarian and integration-demarkation values structure party choice in all countries of the European Union. Distinguishing between established democracies and post-communist democracies, the paper examines how the effects of those value schemas relate to the effect of the left/right dimension on party choice, how strong those effects are and how they differ across generations. The study employs the European Election Study 2009.

Introduction

The European Union is frequently portrayed as a community of values. Although this statement refers to values, such as peace and solidarity, which lay at the inception of the European integration and since then have been invoked by European elites to perpetuate the project, it does not preclude the fact that European citizens share, or are distinguished by, a wider spectrum of values. Those values manifest themselves at democratic elections in the choices European voters make at the ballot box. This article explores the effects of values on party choice in the countries of the European Union. .

Several scholars have observed a decline in the traditional determinants of party choice since the 1960s. Structural divisions in societies such as social class and religion have been slowly losing their ability to determine individual vote choices (Franklin et al. 1992, Nieuwbeerta and De Graaf 1999). In turn, issues have begun to play a more prominent role in explaining voting behaviour. As issue voting is a complex matter, requiring from voters information on the policies pursued by political parties in their country, voters take recourse to cues, which enable them to make a quasi-informed choice. One of the most important cues is the congruence of voter and party ideology, which is conceptualized as the left/right distance between a party and voter position on the left/right scale. We refer to this left/right distance as an ideological dimension. Even though left/right ideology has consistently been shown to be the strongest predictor of party choice in Western Europe, there are two reasons to expect that its effect on party choice has been reduced. First, mainstream political parties have converged on the left/right dimension (Pennings and Kemann 2003), as a result of which differences between parties on the left/right dimension are less pronounced. This makes left/right a less useful ‘cue’ to understand the differences among parties. Second, new issues, such as immigration, have become politically more salient. Even though party positions on the left/right dimension are strongly related to their positions on these new issues (van der Brug and van Spanje 2009), positions of voters on these issues are hardly structured by left/right. So, voters who want to express their views on issues such as immigration in their electoral decisions, will find left/right not a very helpful ‘cue’.

If the impact of the left/right dimension on party choice has indeed declined, at least two different, albeit not contradictory, developments may be expected to take place. These are referred to in the literature as de-alignment and re-alignment. We speak of de-alignment if patterns of party choice become unstructured and not predictable by long-term considerations. We speak of re-alignment if long-term predictors of party choice such as

left/right are replaced by other relatively stable considerations, which play a role in voters' electoral decisions. This paper focuses on the role of values, understood as long-term attitudes of voters towards various issues, play in influencing party choice in countries of the European Union. The literature on values employs either the terms 'value schemas' or value dimensions. In this paper we use the term 'schema', because the different items that measure respondents' attitudes on issues in a specific policy domain are too weakly related to speak of 'dimensions' (see below for details). The term 'schema' is used in social psychology for the description of cognitive structures (Johnston Conover and Feldman 1984, Fuchs and Klingemann 1989). A schema organises attitudes and political beliefs in a bipolar spatial metaphor (Johnston Conover and Feldman 1984: 97). This paper employs three value schemas set out in the literature – socio-economic, socio-cultural and integration-demarcation - and explores their effect on party choice from the following three angles

Firstly, the paper discusses how the effects of value schemas on party choice relate to the effect of left/right. The importance of the left/right dimension as a cue for voters is based on its ability to provide a shortcut in decision-making which party to vote for amid a plethora of issues important in contemporary politics. As long as left/right structures positions of parties and voters on the most salient issues, values cannot be expected to have much effect on party choice. However, to the extent that positions on relevant issues are weakly related with positions on the left/right dimension, these issues (and the values associated with these issues) may play a significant role in structuring voter behaviour. As a first step, this paper therefore explores how value schemas relate to the left/right dimension.

Secondly, the paper focuses on a comparison between established democracies in Western Europe and post-communist democracies of East-Central Europe. . Current literature postulates that party choice in Western Europe is increasingly structured by the integration/demarcation schema, and decreasingly by considerations related to their economic situation or life-style (Kriesi et al. 2006, Kriesi et al. 2008). The effects of value schemas in East-Central Europe are more difficult to hypothesise on. For societies in consolidating democracies, economic concerns related to market transformation and development of the economy have been visible in political life. At the same time, those societies have been preoccupied with the development of personal freedoms after the fall of communism. Equally, for the last 20 years concerns with joining the European Union have been influencing voter decisions which political party to choose. This study will thus shed light on the effects of

those value schemas for East-Central Europe and compare them to the effects in Western Europe.

Thirdly, the paper answers the question whether value schemas and left/right exert different effects on party choice across generations both in the established and the consolidating democracies of the European Union. Literature on party choice suggests that voters develop their preferences early in life and that the time and place of socialisation are crucial for the formation of those preferences. In the European context today, we might witness a stratification of the effects of value schemas and left/right ideology both across generations and across regions of Western Europe and East-Central Europe. As the level of formative security for societies has not been comparable across the former East and West, the effects of socio-economic and socio-cultural schemas may vary not only across generations within a region, but also across corresponding generations between established and consolidating democracies. In a similar vein, the impact of the integration-demarcation value schema may vary across generations. Thus, this study explores the effects of three value schemas across generations in established and post-communist democracies.

In the following, we first discuss the role of values and ideology on party choice as they have been explored so far in the relevant literature. Next, we derive hypotheses and expectations that will be tested in a research design proposed by Van der Eijk and Franklin (1996), which allows for a direct comparison of the effects of value schemas and the ideology dimension on party choice across all countries of the European Union. For this purpose, the paper will employ the European Election Study 2009. The variables necessary for our analyses were included in questionnaires in 28 political systems. Subsequently, we present our findings of a cross-regional and cross-generational comparison of the impact of value schemas and ideology dimension on party choice. We conclude by discussing the implications of our findings for party choice in the European Union.

Theoretical Expectations: Values, Ideology and Party Choice in Europe

When deciding which party to vote for, voters do not only assess which political party is ideologically closest to them, but they also make their choices based on values they hold (Campbell et al. 1960: 189). Values are cognitive structures of knowledge and beliefs guiding peoples' attitudes and behaviour regarding political issues (Campbell et al. 1960, Johnston Conover and Feldman 1983; Fuchs and Klingemann 1990). They are considered to be quite

stable, and certainly more stable than opinions on concrete issues. Values therefore constitute a stable, long-term factor underlying voting behaviour. People acquire these values relatively early in their lives, through processes of political socialisation.

Literature on party choice distinguishes three value schemas that conceivably structures party choice. The first value schema refers to socio-economic issues and encompasses the traditional division of attitudes towards free market and role of the state in the economy (Downs 1957). The second value schema encompasses attitudes associated with position of individuals in the society, namely greater societal and personal freedoms, including equality of women and rights for sexual minorities, greater participation in democratic structures and greater say on the job, as well as life-style issues such as good atmosphere at work (Inglehart 1977, Inglehart and Flanagan 1987, Dalton 1984). It is contrasted here with attitudes including opposition to such freedoms, support for a stronger army, and emphasis on economic and physical security such as a tough stance on crime. This value schema is labelled here libertarian-authoritarian (Inglehart and Flanagan 1987, Hooghe et al. 2002). The third value schema used in this study refers to the attitudes towards European integration and immigration (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008, Hix 1999). Although Kriesi et al. assert that the cultural schema has been transformed by the process of globalisation and structured by two additional issues such as immigration and EU unification (Kriesi et al. 2008: 13) we treat the integration-demarcation considerations as a separate value schema as it refers to a set of issues distinctive to life-style questions.

The first research question guiding our study pertains to how the effects of value schemas relate to the effect of left/right ideology on party choice in Europe (RQ1). Research suggests that the dominant left/right dimension, seen as the 'ideological super-issue' (Pierce 1999: 30), summarises diverse policy issues in the domestic arena (Marks and Steenbergen 2002: 884). However, the meaning of the left/right dimension is not fixed, but may vary across countries and over time (Gabel and Huber 2000). Similarly, the degree to which issues are structured by the left/right dimension may vary. The ideological dimension has assimilated socio-economic and socio-cultural questions (Fuchs and Klingemann 1990, Klingemann et al. 1994, Hix 1999, Kitschelt and McGann 1995), while the issue of immigration seems to be at the level of voters weakly related to the left/right dimension (van der Brug and van Spanje 2009). As the left/right dimension has assimilated a wide scope of issues, it may capture value orientations of voters towards those societal questions as well. This leads us to the expectation that the effects of value dimensions on party choice will disappear if we account for the effect of the

left/right dimension (H1a). However, facing the recent emergence of issues which are at the level of voters weakly structured by left/right, certain value orientations may not be captured by the left/right dimension. It follows that value schemas may still exert significant effect on party choice, even if we account for the effect of the left/right dimension (H1b). In the first part of the paper we examine, therefore, the effects of the value schemas on party choice and their relation to the effect of the left/right dimension in all EU countries as well as in established and consolidating democracies separately.

In a further step we explore and compare the effects of value schemas on party choice in the established democracies of Western Europe and the consolidating democracies of East-Central Europe (RQ2). Kriesi et al. (2008: 297) show that voters' positions on the integration-demarcation schema are as important as their positions regarding socio-economic issues when deciding which party to vote for. Kriesi et al. assert that the process of globalisation, which accelerated in the 1970s, has created a new division in Western societies among the 'winners' and 'losers' of globalisation. In Western Europe, issues such as EU integration and immigration have become more important for voters in their considerations which party to vote for as they have been directly affected by the loss of jobs due to delocalisation of companies and inflow of immigrants. This leads us to the expectation that in Western European countries the effect of the integration-demarcation value schema on party choice will be equally strong as the effects of the socio-economic schemas (H2a). These effects can be expected to be stronger than those of the libertarian-authoritarian schema (H2b). We are interested here in the general effect of the value dimensions on party choice in the established democracies. Yet, we recognise, in line with Kriesi et al., that the influence of a given value schema on voting choices may vary from one party to another (Kriesi et al. 2008: 289).

The existing literature teaches us about a similar heterogeneity of value schemas in consolidating democracies of East-Central Europe (Rohrshneider and Whitefield 2009, Kitschelt et al. 1992). However, hypothesising on which value schema might have the strongest effect on party choice in new democracies is difficult in the light of the existing research. Tucker (2006: 277) outlines in his analysis of economic voting in East-Central Europe that economic issues have been of great importance for the countries undergoing transition to market economies, which led to a stable pattern of mass political behaviour in the first decade after the fall of communism. Szelenyi et al. 1997 assert, in turn, that after the fall of communism the East-Central European countries are dominated by concerns with liberty,

identity and community as they struggle to establish functioning democracies (Szelenyi et al. 1997: 212). Other studies, such as Kitschelt et al. 1999 and Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2009, explore the issue dimensions dividing societies in the new democracies, without hypothesising on their impact on party choice. Furthermore, the existing literature provides us with little evidence on how voters' attitudes towards EU integration and (ethnic) minorities may influence party choice. In their study on the effects of globalisation on the political space, Kriesi et al. 2008 assert that the integration-demarkation schema has become particularly salient in countries of Western Europe as the negative sentiments regarding globalisation are particularly strong there. In turn, the importance of attitudes on EU integration and immigration in East-Central Europe remains largely unexplored in their study. Kriesi et al. merely suggest that the effect of those attitudes on party choice in consolidating democracies may be different than in Western Europe as globalisation, in particular EU integration, is perceived largely as a chance for development thanks to the EU funds and investments flowing into the region. In fact, the existing literature shows that publics in East-Central Europe are divided in their attitudes on the EU integration (Kucia 1999, Tucker, Pacek and Berinsky 2002, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2004, 2006) and perceive the accession into the EU not only as an opportunity to raise standards of living, but also as a means of strengthening democracy and market economy in their country (Cichowski 2000). In addition, de Vries and Tillman 2010 show that the EU issue voting is stronger in East-Central Europe than in Western Europe. The inconclusive empirical findings, as well as the diverging theoretical expectations which follow from the literature on post-communist countries, make it important to explore which value schema has the strongest effect on party choice in the consolidating democracies of East-Central Europe and how those effects compare to the effects in the established democracies of Western Europe.

The third research question pertains to whether three value schemas exert different effects on party choice in different generations in the established and consolidating democracies (RQ3). The importance of socio-economic and socio-cultural considerations for voters' choices at the ballot box may vary with systemic differences across countries. In countries with a significant level of economic growth and prosperity voters turn their attention towards questions which concern the way of life as well as functioning of the society and its institutions (Inglehart 1977, 1989, Flanagan 1982). This is the case in Western European countries where the level of formative security has been quite high for all generations born after WWII. Therefore, we expect that in established democracies the effect of the socio-economic schema on party

choice will be stronger among the older generations, while the effect of the authoritarian-libertarian schema will be stronger among younger generations (H3).

For the consolidating democracies of East-Central Europe the question of formative security does not yield the same expectations as in more established democracies. Communism hindered the development of a proper middle class where concerns about the way of life would arise and economic constraints permeated the society regardless of position in the communist party. Those economic concerns were still very important during the period of transformation to a market economy in the early 1990s. However, attitudes on how the country institutions should function and how the society should be organised were another concern shared by voters in countries undergoing democratic transitions. In East-Central Europe, all generations which are now eligible to vote were socialised either under communism or in the transition period when the formative security was much weaker than in Western Europe. Economic needs in those times were predominant and might have been overshadowed by the libertarian-authoritarian dimension only for the youngest generation politically socialised after 1989 (H4). Furthermore, we explore here how the effect of the integration-demarcation value schema on party choice varies across generations. We extend here the study of Kriesi et al. 2008 that does not make any assumptions on the impact of the integration-demarcation schema in various age groups. This question of the impact of value schemas on party choice is of particular importance for political systems in Europe as “generational replacement is one of the main driving forces behind social and political change” (Hooghe 2004: 331). As the young generations carrying a distinctive set of values replace older generations, this may result in political changes at the aggregate level.

Operationalisation, Data and Methods

The purpose of this paper is to compare between generations and between established and consolidating democracies in the effects of three value schemas and left the ideology dimension on party choice. We therefore need a data set which contains measures of the value schema's, and which allows for a comparative study of party choice across such countries. For this purpose we employ the European Election Study 2009, which enables us to explore differences in those effects between the established democracies of Western Europe and the consolidating democracies of East-Central Europe. We compare the determinants of the vote across 17 established democracies and 10 post-communist democracies. We include Cyprus and Malta in the group of established democracies as they have had functioning democratic systems since 1960 and 1964 respectively, which clearly set them apart from the post-

communist countries of East-Central Europe. Furthermore, we count Belgium as two political systems: Flanders and Wallonia. The total sample size amounts to 27,369 respondents, where the majority of country databases contain exactly 1000 respondents.

In order to explore which vote determinants exercise a considerable effect on party choice, we require a research design that will allow us to systematically compare voter preferences for political parties across countries of the European Union. Methodologies such as multinomial or conditional logit, which are frequently employed to analyze party choice, do not lend themselves to answer the research questions of this study. In such approaches, the dependent variable (party choice) is a nominal variable, which differs from country to country as it consists of a country-specific set of choices. In order to overcome this restraint, we create a staked data matrix with propensities to vote for political parties as the dependent variable (Tillie 1995, van der Eijk and Franklin 1996, van der Eijk 2002, van der Eijk et al. 2006). Vote propensities are measured with the question how likely it is (on a 10-point scale) that respondents will ever vote for a list of political parties in their country. Propensities to vote can be regarded as preferences because voters generally decide to vote for the party they most prefer.¹ Thus, the determinants of vote propensities are the same as the determinants of party choice. An advantage of this method is that vote propensities are comparable across countries as the electoral support of voters to political parties is measured on an identical scale. Even though the question on vote propensities is framed with reference to each particular party, the resulting party preference variable no longer refers to a specific party, but to parties in general. This enables us to consider the effects of independent variables on propensities to vote for all political parties across Europe, which translates into which factors determine which party is voted for. Furthermore, the research design based on vote propensities allows us to include individual- and party-level characteristics, which strengthens the explanatory power of our analysis.

In order to explore the effect of value schemas and ideology dimension on party choice in the established and consolidating democracies in Europe, we perform a regression analysis on a staked data matrix. This matrix is derived from a survey data matrix, in which the unit of analysis is transformed from the respondent to the respondent*party combination. In the staked data matrix, the respondent appears as many times as there are parties for which

¹ In our dataset, over 90% of the respondents would vote for the party to which they give the highest vote propensity score.

support propensities were measured. The level of analysis is effectively changed from the individual level to the individual*party level. The stacked data matrix that we use in this study consists of 159,592 respondent-party observations, which is around 5,910 per country on average. The dependent variable is the observed strength of support of the respondent involved in each respondent*party combination for the party involved in the same combination. It is measured, as it has been mentioned above, on a 10-point scale indicating how likely it is that a respondent will ever vote for a number of political parties in the country.

Since the dependent variable –the propensity to support a party- refers to different parties, the independent variables need to be transformed so that they reflect the relation between a respondent and a political party. For left/right distance this problem can easily be solved. We use the questions asking respondents to indicate how they would place themselves on a 10-point left/right scale as well as to indicate where they perceive the political parties on the left/right scale. This variable is transformed in the distance variable between each voter's own position and the position of each party on the left/right scale.² The same procedure has been followed to construct the distance between voter and party regarding position on European unification, which will serve as a control variable in our analysis. If voters prefer parties close to them in terms of left/right distance or congruence on EU issue, then the resulting measure should exert a negative effect on vote propensities i.e. the smaller the distance between voter and party, the greater the preference for the party.

In order to operationalize the value schemas, we employ several questions from the European Election Study 2009. For the socio-economic schema, we use questions on whether private enterprise is the best way to solve a country's economic problems, whether major public services and industries should be in state ownership, whether politics should abstain from intervening in the economy as well as whether income and wealth should be redistributed towards ordinary people. For the libertarian-authoritarian schema, questions are used on whether same-sex marriages should be prohibited by law, whether women should be free to decide on matters of abortion, whether women should be prepared to cut down on their paid work for the sake of their family, whether people who break the law should be given much harsher sentences than they are these days as well as whether schools must teach children to obey authority. For the integration-demarcation schema, we use questions on immigration – whether immigrants should be required to adapt to customs of the receiving country and

² If the respondent did not answer the question on the position of any particular party, we replaced the missing value with the national sample mean of the perceived party position. In this way, we lost only respondents who failed to place themselves in the left/right terms.

whether immigration in the country of respondents should be decreased significantly. We also employ here questions on EU integration, in particular whether EU membership of the country is regarded as a good or bad thing and which stance respondents have on EU unification and EU enlargement. Responses to each set of questions are on the same valence i.e. they have been recoded on the same scale so that low scores indicate left-wing attitudes and high scores indicate right-wing attitudes.³

The three value schemas represent very broad concepts which do not need a priori to reflect a single dimension, although recent literature on party choice postulates the presence of clear socio-economic, libertarian-authoritarian (Kitschelt 1995) and integration-demarcation (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008) dimensions in Western Europe. In order to analyse the dimensionality of the schemas and explore whether each set of items can be combined in a single scale both in established and consolidating democracies, a variety of techniques has been used, including exploratory principal component analysis, confirmatory factor analysis with varimax rotation and Mokken scaling.⁴ All employed techniques show that neither in established democracies nor in consolidating democracies these items form three dimensions. The socio-economic questions do not seem to form a dimension as correlations between questions on private enterprise, state ownership, the role of politics in the economy and redistribution of income and wealth are very weak.⁵ In a similar vein, items related to the libertarian-authoritarian schema do not load on one dimension. In established democracies two subscales can be distinguished, reflecting law and order in the society as well as lifestyle, while in

³ For the socio-economic schema, low scores reflect attitudes approving of state control of the economy, while high scores point to attitudes encompassing laissez-faire market economy and retrenchment of the state. For the libertarian-authoritarian schema, low scores indicate acceptance of same-sex marriages, women's right to decide on abortion and her occupation as well as less emphasis on law and order in the society, while high scores indicate the opposite. For the integration-demarcation schema, low scores indicate favourable attitudes to further EU integration and immigration, while high scores point to opposition to closer EU integration and little tolerance towards immigrants. Here, we employ the logic of Kriesi et al., who attribute left-wing attitudes to greater support towards EU integration and immigration and right-wing attitudes to opposition to both (Kriesi et al. 2006: 927).

⁴ Those techniques have been employed on three datasets – a pooled dataset consisting of all respondents from 28 political systems, a dataset combining respondents from established democracies and a dataset consisting of respondents from consolidating democracies.

⁵ Those correlations both in the pooled dataset and separate datasets for established and consolidating democracies range between 0.02 and 0.2, while some correlations have a negative value. Similarly, Cronbach's alpha is very low (0.24 for the pooled dataset, 0.24 for established democracies and 0.24 for consolidating democracies). Furthermore, both principal component analysis and confirmatory factor analysis show that no socio-economic items load on a common component or factor. In a similar vein, Mokken scaling method does not allow for creation of one scale which would contain at least two of the socio-economic items as the value of the homogeneity coefficient H is significantly smaller than 0.30 (Mokken 1971, DeVellis 2003, van Schuur 2003).

consolidating democracies only the law and order subscale emerges.⁶ Equally, items relating to immigration and EU integration do not form the expected integration-demarkation dimension.⁷ As the items do not form three distinctive value dimensions, we did not construct a separate scale for each schema, but use the items separately in the following procedure.

In order to turn value schemas into independent variables that can be used in the staked data matrix, we used an inductive procedure in which we predict the dependent variable (party support) for each party separately on the basis of a simple regression analysis using the vote propensities for this party as the dependent variable and the items chosen to represent each value schema as predictors. These regressions per party yield one predicted score (\hat{y}) for each respondent for each value schema. After these \hat{y} -hats are computed for each party separately, they are saved and used as an independent variable. They represent linear transformations of the original independent variables, which are centred on their means in order to remove country-specific differences from the analysis. Such transformed \hat{y} -hats are added to the staked data matrix as they are comparable across parties and countries. As a result of these transformations, the effects of the \hat{y} -hat variables will (almost necessarily) be positive.

The relevant literature on party choice teaches us that we should control for age, social class, education, gender (Gidengil et al. 2005), religion, approval of government and satisfaction with democracy (van der Eijk et al. 1999). Furthermore, we control for the most important problem facing the country⁸, distance between political parties and voters on European unification as well as retrospective and prospective evaluation of the economic situation in the country of respondents. Those variables, except for EU issue distance, are created using the inductive procedure where a numerical or a dummified independent variable is regressed on propensities to vote for political parties in the political system. This yields \hat{y} -hats, which after

⁶ Principal component analysis and factor analysis performed both on the combined dataset and separate datasets for established and consolidating democracies show that law-and-order subscale can be created, while other socio-cultural items do not load consistently on a common factor. The Mokken scaling shows that in established democracies both the law-and-order and lifestyle subscales can be observed (with $H=0.37$ and $H=0.36$ respectively), while in the new democracies only the former subscale exists and the attitudes on lifestyle do not seem to be structured by a common scale ($H=0.31$ for the former).

⁷ Principal component analysis and factor analysis show that all immigration and EU integration items do not load on a common dimension, but form two subscales. For the pooled database, correlations range up to 0.4, while the homogeneity coefficient H for EU integration subscale is 0.33 and for immigration subscale is 0.39. In the established democracies, homogeneity coefficient H is 0.36 for EU subscale, while it is 0.42 for immigration subscale. For new democracies, the values of the homogeneity coefficient H are 0.35 and 0.30 for both scales respectively.

⁸ At this stage, the most important problem variable is not included in our analysis as it has not been coded yet in the preliminary version of the European Election Study 2009.

having been centred, are entered as an independent variable into the stacked data matrix.⁹ Social class is created with a subjective measure of self-assessed belonging to a particular class location. Education is represented by respondents' self placement according to various levels of education specific for each country. Religion is a composite variable of religious denomination, church attendance and level of religiosity. Approval of government uses a dummy representing the level of satisfaction with the incumbent government, while satisfaction with democracy is created with questions on satisfaction with democracy in the country of the respondent in particular and in the EU in general. The most important problem variable is measured with an open-ended question regarding what respondents consider as the most pronounced problem in their country. Finally, the retrospective and prospective economic evaluation variables are constructed with questions on how voters assess the country's economy in the last year and how the country's economy will develop in the coming year respectively. In addition to the individual-level variables, we add party size as a party-level control variable. Measured in parliamentary seats, party size is meant to represent strategic considerations which voters may take into account while casting a vote at the ballot box. When two or more parties are nearly equally attractive for some voters, then those voters tend to vote for the largest of these parties because it has the best chance of achieving its policy goals.

In our study, we use ordinary least squares (OLS) regression on a pooled data matrix comprising all EU countries. We report robust standard errors for our findings, where each respondent's vote propensity scores are defined as a separate cluster. The employed procedure gives more robust standard errors.¹⁰ It is to the findings of these regression analyses that we now turn.

Findings

The following three tables show the effects of value schemas and other independent variables, created as explained above, on vote propensities. The tables contain three panels. The first presents the results of a model tested simultaneously for all 28 party systems in all EU countries. The other two present the results when distinguishing between established democracies, including Cyprus and Malta, and consolidating democracies. Table 1 shows the

⁹ In order not to lose observations at this stage, we replaced the missing data in each control variable with the mean of all responses on this respective variable.

¹⁰ We estimated our models in Stata 11, using the robust estimate of variance (Huber/White/Sandwich estimate of variance) and the 'cluster' option to adjust for the dependency among observations pertaining to the same respondent (Rogers 1993; Williams 2000).

effects of the socio-economic, libertarian-authoritarian and the integration-demarcation schemas on party choice, controlled by a set of socio-structural variables, government approval, satisfaction with democracy, retrospective and prospective economic evaluation and party size. In order to answer our research questions, we compare standardized coefficients (betas) pertaining to the variables we are primarily interested in, namely value schemas.¹¹

The first research question pertains to how the effects of value schemas on party choice relate to the effect of the left/right dimension. To answer this question, we need to compare the results of Table 1 to those in Table 3. Table 1 contains the effects of the three value schema's, all control variables, but not left/right distance. Table 3 presents the results of the full model, including the left/right distance variable.

Table 1 shows that all three value schema's exert strong effects on party choice in established as well as in consolidating democracies. Together with religion and satisfaction with the government, they are among the strongest predictors of party choice. To see what happens when we include the effect of left/right distance, we turn to Table 3 where we present the full model. The analysis presented in Table 3 (model G, H and I) clearly shows that the effects of value orientations on party choice are not fully captured by the left/right distance variable. Table 3 indicates that left/right soaks up only a small percentage of the original effects of value schemas (see Tables 1 and 2). In the model with all EU countries the left/right distance assimilates around 18 percent of the original effect of the socio-economic schema, around 17 percent of the original effect of the libertarian-authoritarian schema and around 11 percent of the original effect of the integration-demarcation schema. There are considerable differences among established democracies and consolidating democracies. In established democracies, left/right accounts for approximately 21 percent of the original effect of the socio-economic schema, around 19 percent of the original effect of the libertarian-authoritarian schema and around 14 percent of the original effect of the integration-demarcation schema. However, in post-communist countries of East-Central Europe the left/right distance variable assimilates only 11 percent of the original effect of the socio-economic schema, around 13 percent of the original effect of the libertarian-authoritarian schema and around 6 percent of the original effect of the integration-demarcation schema.

¹¹ Standardized regression coefficients can only be compared across datasets with the same distributional characteristics. Variables constructed inductively (\hat{y} variables) are defined in such a way that they are bound to end up with similar distributional characteristics. Distribution of key variables in the database with all countries taken together, the established democracies and the consolidating democracies in the staked data matrix is shown in Annex 1.

Those findings lead to three conclusions. Firstly, in established democracies the left/right dimension is structured by value schemas to a greater extent than in consolidating democracies. In turn, in post-communist countries the effects of value schemas seem to be more independent from left/right ideology . Secondly, in established democracies left/right mostly assimilates the effect of the socio-economic schema, followed by the effect of the libertarian-authoritarian schema, while in post-communist democracies the left-right dimension is more strongly related to the libertarian-authoritarian schema. It points to the fact that the ideology dimension in established democracies is at the level of voters more strongly structured by socio-economic values, while in post-communist democracies it is more strongly structured by libertarian-authoritarian values. Thirdly, the original effect of the integration-demarcation value schema is assimilated to a much weaker extent by the ideology dimension – 14 percent in established democracies and 6 percent in consolidating democracies. We may lean here towards the conclusion that in consolidating democracies attitudes towards EU integration and immigration seem to be relatively independent from voter considerations with regard to their proximity to political parties in the left/right terms. In contrast, in established democracies the ideology dimension has assimilated voter attitudes on the integration-demarcation schema to a much stronger extent.

Table 1 Regression model for the explanation of party preference – effects of value schemas

	All EU countries (Model A)			Established democracies (Model B)			Consolidating democracies (Model C)		
	B	Robust SE	Beta	B	Robust SE	Beta	B	Robust SE	Beta
Socio-economic schema	0.508	0.011	0.132*	0.500	.012	0.140*	0.561	0.023	0.122*
Libertarian- authoritarian schema	0.490	0.011	0.129*	0.466	.013	0.126*	0.548	0.020	0.135*
Integration-demarcation schema	0.470	0.011	0.128*	0.462	0.014	0.134*	0.536	0.020	0.127*
Age	0.377	0.025	0.039*	0.277	0.030	0.029*	0.617	0.041	0.062*
Gender	0.744	0.046	0.042*	0.722	0.054	0.043*	0.807	0.085	0.041*
Social Class	0.486	0.021	0.071*	0.497	0.022	0.078*	0.457	0.043	0.056*
Education	0.288	0.025	0.033*	0.266	0.029	0.031*	0.302	0.042	0.034*
Religion	0.593	0.012	0.134*	0.567	0.015	0.120*	0.614	0.020	0.156*
Government Approval	0.476	0.011	0.132*	0.435	0.014	0.123*	0.554	0.021	0.148*
Satisfaction with democracy	0.365	0.016	0.069*	0.345	0.019	0.067*	0.417	0.028	0.075*
Retrospective economic evaluation	0.336	0.021	0.049*	0.335	0.024	0.048*	0.320	0.037	0.049*
Prospective economic evaluation	0.242	0.021	0.038*	0.226	0.024	0.035*	0.254	0.033	0.042*
Party size	0.009	0.0001	0.162*	0.009	0.0001	0.183*	0.008	0.0002	0.095*
R ² -adjusted	0.243			0.254			0.227		
Number of observations	159 592			102 763			53 103		

* significant at $p < 0.01$

Table 2 Regression model for the explanation of party preference – effects of value schemas and EU issue distance

	All EU countries (Model D)			Established democracies (Model E)			Consolidating democracies (Model F)		
	B	Robust SE	Beta	B	Robust SE	Beta	B	Robust SE	Beta
Socio-economic schema	0.500	0.011	0.130*	0.491	.012	0.137*	0.556	0.023	0.120*
Libertarian-authoritarian schema	0.483	0.011	0.127*	0.459	.013	0.124*	0.542	0.020	0.134*
Integration-demarcation schema	0.419	0.011	0.114*	0.387	0.014	0.115*	0.508	0.020	0.120*
EU issue distance	-.136	.004	-.098*	-.159	0.005	-.116*	-.094	.007	-.068*
Age	0.364	0.025	0.038*	0.265	0.030	0.028*	0.602	0.041	0.060*
Gender	0.721	0.046	0.041*	0.687	0.054	0.041*	0.803	0.085	0.041*
Social Class	0.474	0.021	0.069*	0.482	0.022	0.076*	0.450	0.043	0.055*
Education	0.278	0.025	0.031*	0.247	0.029	0.028*	0.302	0.042	0.034*
Religion	0.591	0.012	0.134*	0.562	0.015	0.120*	0.613	0.020	0.156*
Government Approval	0.471	0.011	0.130*	0.432	0.014	0.122*	0.546	0.021	0.146*
Satisfaction with democracy	0.339	0.016	0.064*	0.312	0.019	0.060*	0.401	0.027	0.072*
Retrospective economic evaluation	0.337	0.021	0.049*	0.339	0.024	0.048*	0.317	0.037	0.048*
Prospective economic evaluation	0.236	0.020	0.037*	0.219	0.024	0.033*	0.250	0.033	0.042*
Party size	0.009	0.0001	0.158*	0.009	0.0001	0.177*	0.008	0.0002	0.096*
R ² -adjusted	0.252			0.266			0.231		
Number of observations	159 592			102 763			53 103		

Table 3 Full model – effects of value schemas, ideology dimension and EU issue distance

	All EU countries (Model G)			Established democracies (Model H)			Consolidating democracies (Model I)		
	b	Robust SE	Beta	B	Robust SE	Beta	B	Robust SE	Beta
LR distance	-0.329	0.003	-.257*	-0.354	0.0048	-.270*	-.278	0.006	-.227*
Socio-economic schema	0.411	0.010	0.106*	0.386	0.011	0.108*	0.499	0.021	0.108*
Libertarian-authoritarian schema	0.401	0.010	0.105*	0.373	0.012	0.101*	0.470	0.019	0.116*
Integration-demarcation schema	0.371	0.010	0.101*	0.343	0.012	0.099*	0.475	0.019	0.113*
EU issue distance	-.0856	.004	-.062*	-.102	.005	-.074*	-.054	0.007	-.039*
Age	0.281	0.023	0.029*	0.190	0.029	0.020*	0.504	0.038	0.050*
Gender	0.681	0.043	0.038*	0.363	0.050	0.038*	0.788	0.081	0.041*
Social Class	0.400	0.019	0.058*	0.405	0.020	0.063*	0.383	0.040	0.047*
Education	0.259	0.023	0.029*	0.243	0.027	0.028*	0.264	0.039	0.030*
Religion	0.499	0.011	0.113*	0.473	0.014	0.100*	0.529	0.019	0.135*
Government Approval	0.350	0.010	0.097*	0.305	0.012	0.086*	0.438	0.019	0.117*
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.298	0.014	0.056*	0.271	0.017	0.052*	0.361	0.026	0.065*
Retrospective economic evaluation	0.273	0.019	0.040*	0.271	0.022	0.039*	0.263	0.033	0.040*
Prospective economic evaluation	0.195	0.018	0.031*	0.176	0.022	0.027*	0.213	0.030	0.036*
Party size	0.008	0.0001	0.15*	0.009	0.0001	0.168*	0.007	0.0002	0.096*
R ² -adjusted	0.31			0.328			0.278		
Number of observations	159 592			102 763			53 103		

* significant at $p < 0.01$

The second research question aims to explore and compare the effects of value schemas and left/right on party choice in established democracies and consolidating democracies. In the following we compare those effects in three different stages, starting with established democracies. Table 1 presents the effects of value schemas controlled by socio-economic variables as well as government approval, satisfaction with democracy, retrospective and prospective economic evaluation. These results show that the socio-economic value schema exercises the strongest effect on party choice in established democracies, with the value of beta of .140. The effects of the integration-demarcation value schema and of the libertarian-authoritarian schema are of a very similar magnitude (.134 and .126, respectively).

Table 2 shows what happens when we add the EU issue distance variable to the analysis. Including EU distance to the model only increases the explained variance with 1 per cent, because the inclusion of this variable lowers the effect of the integration-demarcation dimension on party choice. In established democracies, the effect of the socio-economic value schema on party choice in established democracies still remains the strongest (.137), but the differences in effect sizes of the three value schema's remain minor.

This pattern emerges as well in Table 3, where the left/right distance variable has been added to the analysis. In established democracies, the explained variance increases by 7 per cent when moving from Model B to Model H. In Model H, there is hardly any difference between the effect sizes of the socio-economic the libertarian-authoritarian and the integration-demarcation value schemas. The above findings thus support the expectation that the effects of the integration-demarcation value schema would be very similar to the effect of the socio-economic value schema (H2a), but it lends little support for the hypothesis that these value schemas would have a stronger effect on party choice than the libertarian-authoritarian value schema (H2b). In comparison to left/right, the effects of all three value schemas on party choice remain moderate, but they are clearly stronger than the effect of social class, as it can be read from Table 3. The effects of all value schemas prove to be, however, comparable to the effect of religion whose value has increased in recent years (Van der Brug, Hobolt and De Vreese 2009).

In consolidating democracies of East-Central Europe, the effects of value schemas on party choice display a different pattern than the ones encountered in established democracies. As the results in Table 1 show, the libertarian-authoritarian schema has a slightly stronger effect on party choice (.135) than integration-demarcation (.127) and the socio-economic value

schemas (.122). However, like in established democracies these differences are small. After we add the effect of the EU issue distance to the analysis (in Table 2), the effect of the integration-demarcation schema is somewhat weaker, as was the case in established democracies.

When we add the effect of left/right distance to the model (in Table 3), we notice that the effect of the libertarian-authoritarian value schema remains the strongest for consolidating democracies with the value of beta of .116. Yet the effects of the integration-demarcation and the socio-economic value schemas are of a very similar magnitude (beta's of .113 and .108 respectively). As it was the case in established democracies, the effects of the three value schemas are substantially weaker than the effect of left/right distance, but they are stronger than the effect of social class as the traditional determinant of party choice. However, they are somewhat weaker than the effect of religion on party choice.

So far, we compared the effect sizes between established and consolidating democracies by looking at the tables. In Table 4 we present the results of the full dataset (including all 28 party systems, and we include a dummy variable that distinguishes the two groups of countries. Significant interactions with this dummy variable indicate that the effect is stronger or weaker in established than in consolidating democracies. Table 4 shows that the effect of the left/right distance on party choice is significantly weaker in consolidating democracies than in established democracies, which reiterates previous findings (Van der Brug, Franklin & Tóka 2008). However, the effects of all three value schemas are significantly stronger in East-Central European countries. The weaker effect of the left/right distance variable in consolidating democracies points to the fact that even 20 years after the fall of communism the left/right dimension plays a smaller role than in established democracies, mostly due to a considerable fluidity of the party systems in East-Central Europe and a lower degree of perceptual agreement among voters on left-right party locations (Van der Brug, Franklin & Tóka 2008). In turn, the stronger effects of all three value dimensions may indicate that for voters in post-communist democracies attitudes towards issues constitute a more important determinant of party choice than for voters in established democracies. It is not surprising if we recall the previous finding that in post-communist democracies the left/right dimension has assimilated voter attitudes towards issues to a much weaker extent than in established democracies.

Table 4 Regression models for the explanation of party preference – comparison of consolidating democracies to established democracies

	All EU countries		
	B	Robust SE	Beta
LR Distance	-0.355	0.0048	-0.277*
EU issue distance	-0.097	0.005	-0.070*
Socio-economic schema	0.376	0.011	0.097*
Libertarian-authoritarian schema	0.373	0.012	0.097*
Integration-demarcation schema	0.334	0.012	0.091*
Age	0.293	0.023	0.030*
Gender	0.679	0.043	0.038*
Social Class	0.396	0.019	0.057*
Education	0.257	0.023	0.029*
Religion	0.497	0.011	0.112*
Governmental Approval	0.354	0.010	0.098*
Satisfaction with democracy	0.295	0.014	0.055*
Retrospective economic evaluation	0.272	0.019	0.039*
Prospective economic evaluation	0.192	0.018	0.030*
Party size	0.008	0.0001	0.147*
Consolidating democracies (CD, dummy variable)	-0.604	0.042	-0.080*
CD*LR Distance	0.080	0.007	0.050*
CD*Socio-economic schema	0.142	0.025	0.017*
CD*Libertarian-authoritarian schema	0.105	0.022	0.014*
CD*Integration demarcation schema	0.150	0.023	0.020*
R ² -adjusted	0.312		
Number of observations	159 592		

* significant at $p < 0.01$

Finally, we turn to the third research question, which is whether the three value schemas and left/right exert different effects on party choice across various generations in established and consolidating democracies. Figures 1 and 2 summarize the proportion of explained variance R^2 from regressions for 14 generational groups of voters (defined in 5-year intervals) predicting party support by left/right distance and each of the three value schemas separately. In the first step, we turn our attention to the established democracies. The results displayed in Figure 1 confirm our hypothesis that the effect of the socio-economic schema on party choice is stronger for older generations (H3). The socio-economic schema is the most important schema influencing party choice, in terms of variance explained R^2 , for all generations born before 1960. For generations born after 1960 the effect of the socio-economic schema on

party preference is decreasing. For voters born after 1960, the libertarian-authoritarian schema as a predictor of party preference is as strong as or stronger than the socio-economic schema. For voters born after 1975 the importance of libertarian-authoritarian considerations for party choice increases considerably, only to drop dramatically for the generation born after 1990. This drop is paralleled by a slight increase in the explanatory power of the socio-economic considerations, which is perhaps due to the impact of the economic and financial crisis of that started in 2007. However, the sample size is relatively small here (only 2% of the respondents are in this age group), so that we have to be careful with the interpretation.

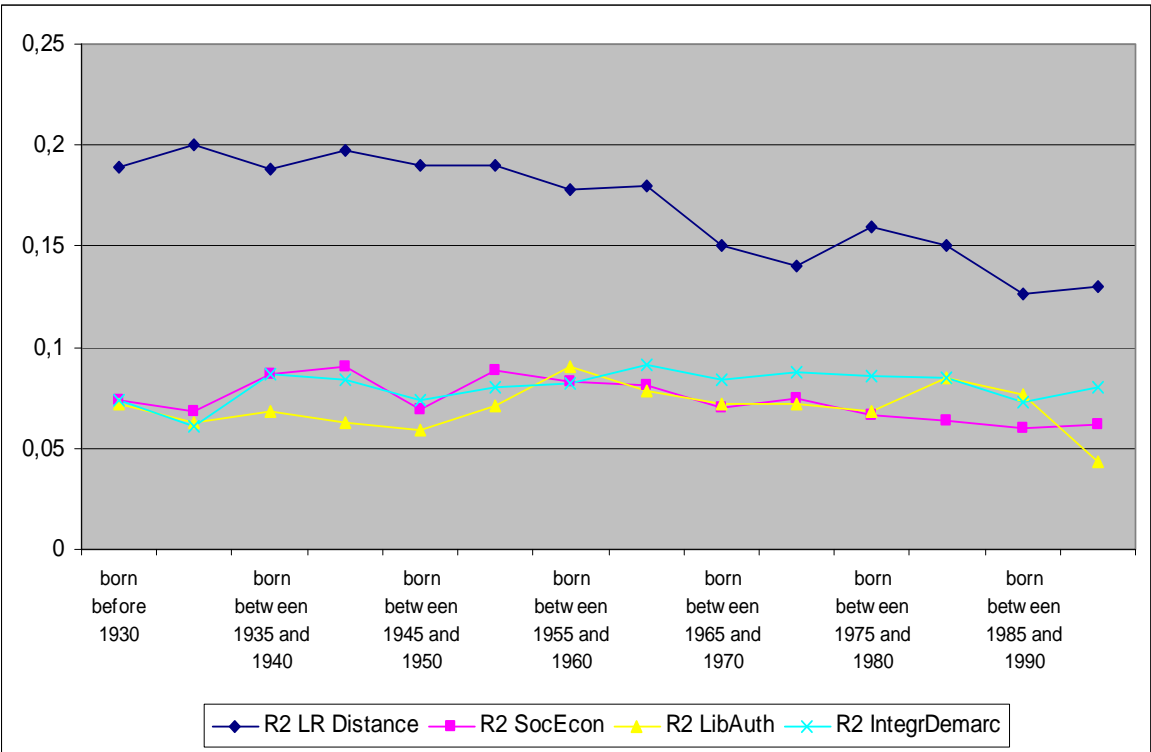


Figure 1 R²'s by generations to predict party preferences in established democracies

In spite of the bent of curves for the youngest voters, the graph unequivocally shows that the socio-economic schema plays a more important role for party choice for generations born before 1960, while for subsequent generations the importance of the libertarian-authoritarian schema increases. Those findings confirm the assumptions that for generations socialized in relative economic prosperity, which was definitely the case for generations born after 1960 in Western Europe, the effect of the libertarian-authoritarian considerations supersedes the effect of the socio-economic ones. With regard to the integration-demarcation schema, we observe its quite stable effect on party choice across various generational clusters. Just as it is the case with other value schemas, the divide between older and younger generations becomes here

visible again. For generations born before 1960, the integration-demarcation schema is a stronger predictor of party choice than the libertarian-authoritarian schema. However, those considerations still remain weaker than the socio-economic schema. In turn, for voters born after 1960, the integration-demarcation schema turns out to be, among all value schemas, the strongest predictor of party preference. Furthermore, Figure 1 confirms previous findings that ideological considerations are the most important predictor of party choice for the older generations. For younger generations, the relevance of left/right considerations for party choice declines, although this pattern of decline is not linear.

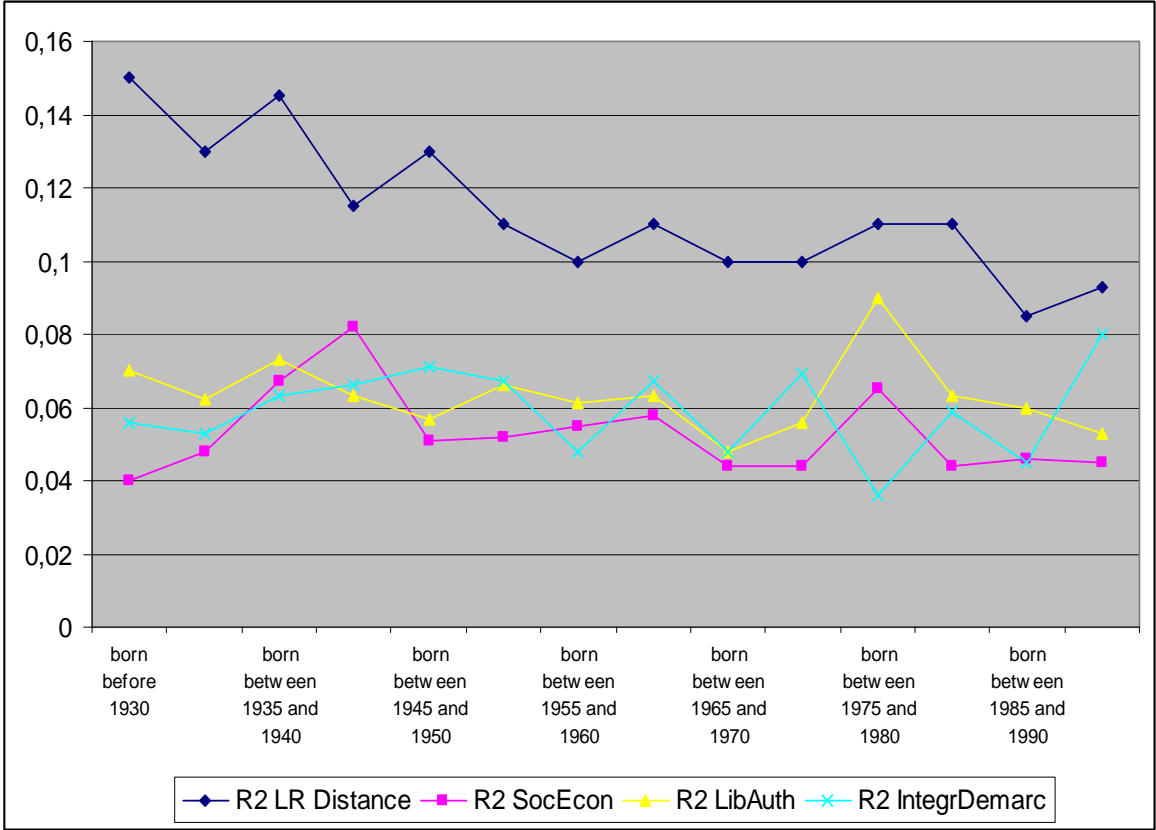


Figure 2 R²'s by generations to predict party preferences in consolidating democracies

With regard to consolidating democracies of East-Central Europe, the results displayed in Figure 2 only partially confirm our hypothesis. We expected that socio-economic considerations would be the predominant value schema predicting party choice across all generational groups, except for the youngest generation socialised after 1989, where the libertarian-authoritarian schema could overshadow other considerations (H4).

The results shown in Figure 2 suggest, however, that the libertarian-authoritarian schema is a stronger predictor of party choice than the socio-economic schema for all generations except those born between 1940 and 1945. This shows that nowadays for nearly all generations of voters in East-Central European countries considerations of personal freedom, life style and the functioning of society are a stronger predictor of party preferences than socio-economic concerns. However, the graph confirms our hypothesis to the extent that for generations born after 1980, which were socialized in the period of transformation, the libertarian-authoritarian value schema is a much stronger predictor of party choice than socio-economic considerations. In contradistinction to established democracies, it is very difficult here to distinguish any persistent trend regarding an increase or decrease of importance of the integration-demarcation value schema for party choice across generations as its variance explained varies strongly across adjacent generational clusters. For some generations, the integration-demarcation considerations are the strongest predictor of party choice, while for the adjacent ones those considerations have a lower value of variance explained than other value schemas. This observation shows that the importance of the integration-demarcation value schema as a predictor of party choice varies strongly for every generational group, which may point to the fact that there is no generational trend at the aggregate level, but the distinct effects might be attributable mostly to individual preferences among voters. A tendency that can be, in turn, clearly distinguished across various generational groups in post-communist countries is the effect of the ideology dimension on party choice. The findings presented in Figure 2 resemble those from established democracies – for older generations left/right considerations are the most important predictor of party choice, while for younger generations their relevance declines, although not in a consistently linear manner.

Conclusion

In this paper, we analysed and compared voting patterns in 17 established democracies and 10 consolidating democracies of the European Union. The former are characterized by a respectively long experience with democratic rule, whereas the latter, 20 years after the fall of communism, are in the phase of consolidation of their democratic systems. We explored the effects of the socio-economic, libertarian-authoritarian, integration-demarcation value schemas as well as the left/right dimension on party choice. Distinguishing between established and consolidating post-communist democracies, we explored how the effects of those value schemas relate to the effect of the ideology dimension on party choice, how strong those effects are and how they differ across 14 generational clusters.

This paper shows that the socio-economic, libertarian-authoritarian and integration-demarcation value schemas constitute independent predictors of party choice. They add to the explanation of party preferences in times when the original explanatory power of traditional determinants of party choice has decreased. As issues have emerged which are weakly structured by left/right ideology, value schemas exert significant effects on party choice even if we account for the effect of left/right. The effect of left/right on party choice is to some extent a summary of the effects of values. However, the effects of values are only to a limited extent captured by the effect of left/right. Although the effects of value schemas on party choice remain moderate if we compare them to the effect of the left/right, they are stronger than the effects of structural variables, such as social class and education.

The degree to which left/right summarizes the effects of value schemas on party choice, varies across political systems. In established democracies left/right appears to be more strongly related to value schemas than in consolidating democracies, where those effects seem to be more independent from the left/right dimension. There are also systemic differences with regard to which value schemas structure the ideology dimension. In established democracies the left/right is more strongly structured by socio-economic values, while in post-communist democracies it is somewhat more strongly structured by libertarian-authoritarian values. With regard to the integration-demarcation schema, in consolidating democracies attitudes towards EU integration and immigration are relatively independent from voter considerations on the left/right dimension, while in established democracies left/right has to a certain extent assimilated those attitudes.

The effects of value schemas on party choice were remarkably similar across established and post-communist democracies, as well as between generations. The slight differences that were observed indicate that the socio-economic value schema has a somewhat stronger effect than the other two value schemas in established democracies. In consolidating democracies, the libertarian-authoritarian considerations seem to be slightly more important than the other two. This shows that, contrary to expectations, long-term economic considerations are a slightly more important predictor of party choice in Western Europe, while attitudes towards personal freedoms, condition of society, EU integration and immigration predominate in East-Central Europe. The comparison between Western and East-Central European countries demonstrates that the effects of all three value schemas are stronger in consolidating democracies. This suggests that for voters in post-communist democracies attitudes towards issues constitute a more important determinant of party choice than for voters in established democracies.

The analysis across generational clusters reveals that in established democracies the socio-economic schema is the strongest predictor of party choice among the value schemas for generations born before 1960, while for those born after 1960 the libertarian-authoritarian schema has an equally strong or stronger effect on party choice than the socio-economic schema. This shows that for voters born in times of relative economic prosperity in Western Europe, considerations regarding the way of life, personal freedoms and society have a stronger effect on party choice than economic considerations. In line with the existing literature, the integration-demarcation schema proves to be, among all value schemas, the best predictor of party preference for generations born after 1960. As attitudes towards EU integration and immigration are for younger generations of voters the most pronounced determinant of party choice, we can expect that this new cleavage, to use the term of Kriesi et al. 2008, will become increasingly politicized by political elites of established democracies or, if this process has already taken place, it will persist. In turn, in consolidating democracies, the libertarian-authoritarian value schema is the strongest predictor of party choice for all generations except for a cluster of voters born between 1940 and 1945. The role of libertarian-authoritarian considerations is particularly visible for generations born after 1975, which were socialised in the period of transformation. As the libertarian-authoritarian value schema remains the predominant explanatory factor of vote choice across generations, we do not see any immediate generational trend that could lead to the process of dealignment in consolidating democracies. Neither does the cross-generational development of the integration-demarcation value schema offer such a perspective as we have not traced any such trend at the aggregate level and solely suspect differences at the individual level. However, we have managed to show that both in established and post-communist democracies the relevance of left/right for party choice has decreased for younger generations, which suggests that other considerations, probably short-term ones, may exert an increased role in explaining which factors guide decisions of younger voters across Europe at the ballot box.

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Appendix 1

Distribution of key variables in the two sets of countries in the staked data matrix

	Established democracies		Consolidating democracies	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Vote propensity	3.25	3.45	3.024	3.45
Left-right distance	3.11	2.61	3.28	2.80
Socio-economic schema	0.00	0.96	0.00	0.749
Libertarian-authoritarian schema	0.00	0.93	0.00	0.85
Integration-demarcation schema	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.82
EU issue distance	2.96	2.49	2.85	2.47
Age	- 0.00	0.36	- 0.00	0.34
Gender	- 0.00	0.21	0.00	0.18
Social Class	0.00	0.54	0.00	0.42
Education	0.00	0.39	0.00	0.39
Religion	0.00	0.73	0.00	0.88
Government Approval	- 0.00	0.97	- 0.0 0	0.91
Satisfaction with democracy	- 0.00	0.67	0.00	0.62
Retrospective voting	- 0.00	0.50	- 0.00	0.52
Prospective voting	- 0.00	0.52	0.00	0.58
Party size	37.43	65.00	26.25	43,12