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THE NATIONALIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

A triangle model, applied on the Central and Eastern European countries

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Abstract¹

The study of "party nationalization" is a young topic in the field of political party research. It investigates the regional heterogeneity of political parties. "Nationalization" stands for the homogeneity of parties' electoral support across regions, or the absence of regional differences in the party system. This article shall discuss party nationalization in the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, presenting for a first time the degree of party nationalization in 16 countries of the region.

Previous studies on Western societies have related party nationalization to the degree of financial centralization: Party nationalization was seen as a consequence of centralization of government activities. This dominating explanation may be criticized because of endogeneity problems. Both on theoretical terms and empirical terms, there is evidence that party nationalization may be the

consequence for government centralization – while the existence of regionally distinct party system (low nationalization) may lead to claims for decentralization.

Instead, the cleavage structure, and particularly ethnic cleavage, appears to be important for the regional structure of the party system. An empirical test on Central and Eastern European countries shows that indeed the ethnic structure, combined with electoral system constraints (high national thresholds) are the best predictor of the party nationalization degree.

"It's the economy, stupid." James Carville, Clinton campaign manager, 1992.

It's the ethnicity, stupid.

Elections in Western societies are often won on economic issues. In the new European democracies however, many parties attract their voters with their position on ethnic issues.² Elections in ethnically divided societies have frequently been described as "ethnic censuses", for instance in Bosnia and Herzegovina³. There were many attempts

¹ I am grateful for help on data, councils and remarks to Alex Fischer, Vello Pettai, Rein Taagepera, the comparative politics research group at the University of Tartu, and two anonymous reviewers. This article is a revised version of my presentation at the CEU Graduate Conference in Social Sciences, "The End of Transitions", 6 May 2006, in Budapest.

² I define ethnicity as a fluid perception of collective identity of a people through a social group itself or through strangers. Examples in the article will help to substantiate this definition.

³ Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES). *Ethnisierung der Politik in Bosnien-Herzegowina* (Bonn: FES,

to apply the social cleavage approach⁴ to the Central and Eastern European party systems. According to the cleavage approach, political parties consolidated among cleavages that distinguish social groups from each other: the class, the rural-urban, church-state and the centre-periphery cleavages. However, in Central and Eastern Europe, social cleavages in the Western style can hardly be seen as a basis for the formation of post-communist party systems.⁵ During half a century of

1996); International Crisis Group (ICG). *Doing Democracy A Disservice: 1998 Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Sarajevo: ICG Balkans Report N°42, 9 September 1998).

⁴ Lipset, Seymour Martin and Stein Rokkan (1967). "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments. An Introduction," in *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan (New York: Free Press, 1967). 1-64.

⁵ Scholars who translated the cleavage approach to Central and Eastern Europe include for instance Kitschelt, Herbert et al.. *Post-communist Party Systems. Competition, Representation and Inter-Party Cooperation*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Johannsen, Lars. "The foundations of state: emerging urban-rural cleavages in transitions countries." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 36(3) (2003): 291-309; Whitefield, Stephen. "Political Cleavages and Post-Communist Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002): 181-200; Zarycki, Tomasz. "Politics in the Periphery: Political Cleavages in Poland Interpreted in their Historical and International Context," *Europe-Asia Studies* 52(5) (July 2000): 851-873.

For the problems of the cleavage approach, see for instance Bielasiak, Jack. "Substance and Process in the Development of Party Systems in East Central Europe", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 30(1) (March 1997): 23-44; Miller, Arthur H., Gwyn Erb, William M. Reisinger and Vicki L. Hesli. "Emerging Party Systems in Post-Soviet Societies: Fact of Fiction?," *Journal of Politics* 62(2) (May 2000): 455-490; Elster, John, Claus

communist rule, the differences in society levelled off. However, after the end of the communist period, with the formation of new independent nation-states in some of the regions, and with the uprising of parties that tried to attract voters with nationalistic speech, ethnicity grew to an important socially defined voter basis for political parties in many Central and Eastern European countries.⁶

My article shall discuss if ethnic diversity leads to regional heterogeneity of the party system. The study of party nationalization⁷ is a young topic in the

Offe and Ulrich K. Preuss. *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); White, Stephen, Richard Rose and Ian McAllister. *How Russia Votes* (Chatham: Chatham House, 1997), 64ff. For an overview of literature, see Tucker, Joshua A. "The First Decade of Post-Communist Elections and Voting: What Have We Studied, and How Have We Studied It?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002): 271-304, 292f.

⁶ Cf. for instance Elster et al. *Institutional Design; Friedman, Eben. "Electoral System Design and Minority Representation in Slovakia and Macedonia"*, *Ethnopolitics* 4(4) (2005): 381-396.

Information on ethnic cleavages in Central and Eastern European countries can be found as well in Trifunovska, Snežana, ed.. *Minorities in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

However, studies failed to show that ethnic diversity leads to fractionalization of the party system. Some empirical results surprisingly point even in the opposed direction. Moser, Robert G. "Ethnic Diversity, Electoral Systems, and the Number of Parties in Post-communist States." (Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, August 30-September 2, 2001).

⁷Some authors prefer the notions of "district heterogeneity", Morgenstern, Scott and Richard F. Potthoff. "The components of elections: district heterogeneity, district-time effects, and volatility,"

field of political party research. Previously, research treated party systems as a national unit. However, often they are regionally heterogeneous, with important differences in electoral support across regions. This is what party nationalization studies investigate. Recent studies have measured degrees of party nationalization in Western Europe, the Americas and some Asian countries.⁸ My article

however provides new data for the post-communist democracies in Europe. In some of those countries, such as Hungary, parties exist nationwide and their support is regionally almost homogeneous (defined as perfect "nationalization" of the party system). In other cases e.g. Bosnia, many parties compete only regionally or the support varies from one region to the other (a low degree of party nationalization).

Electoral Studies 24(1) (March 2005): 17-40; "party aggregation", Chhibber, Pradeep and Ken Kollman. *The Formation of National Party Systems: Federalism and Party Competition in Canada, Great Britain, India, and the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), Allik, Mirjam. "Parteisüsteemid Föderaalriikides." (Master thesis, University of Tartu, 2006) or „party-linkage across districts“, Cox, Gary W. (1997): *Making Votes Count. Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge). 182ff., Hicken, Allen. "Stuck in the Mud: Coordination and Party System Development in Thailand and the Philippines." (Draft manuscript, forthcoming 2005)., Moenius, Johannes and Yuko Kasuya. "Measuring party linkage across districts," *Party Politics* 10 (5) (Sept. 2004): 543-564.. With the term „party nationalization“ I refer to Jones, Mark P. and Scott Mainwaring. "The Nationalization of Parties and Party Systems. An Empirical Measure and an Application to the Americas." *Party Politics* 9(2) (March 2003): 139-166, Caramani, Daniele. *The Nationalization of Politics. The Formation of National Electorates and Party Systems in Western Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) and Ishiyama, John T. "Regionalism and the nationalization of the legislative vote in post-communist Russian politics." *Communist and Post-communist Studies* 35 (June 2002): 155-168.

⁸ For Western Europe, see Caramani, *Nationalization*; North- and South America: Jones/Mainwaring, "Nationalization of Parties and Party Systems". Further studies provide punctual data for countries in other regions. For India: Chhibber/Kollman: *Formation*; Russia: Ishiyama, "Regionalism and the nationalization"; Thailand

Most frequently, variance in party nationalization has been explained through the degree of government centralization: government decentralization gives incentives for regional parties to exist, while concentration of power at the national level of government gives incentives to form national political organizations. However, researchers have not given a lot of attention to the objection that causality might go the other way round. It is both plausible and empirically frequent that regional parties wish for government decentralization, whereas national parties want to centralize the authorities.

With this article, I shall meet two goals. First, I shall test the common centralization hypothesis for Central and Eastern Europe. Although it might be possible that such a correlation of

and the Philippines: Kasuya, Yuko. "Party System Linkage: Explaining its Variation in the Philippine Case." (Prepared for delivery at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, August 29-September 1, 2001.) Hicken, "Stuck in the Mud"; Australia: Allik, Parteisüsteemid"; Japan: Cox, Gary. "Electoral rules and electoral coordination", *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 145-61.

centralization and party nationalization exists in the region under study, it is possible that the causality goes the other way round. A test of empirical cases in the region shall show the relation of both variables and might dismiss the validity of the centralization hypothesis for the region. Instead, secondly, I shall introduce an alternative explanation that might account for differences in party nationalization. I shall show how the regional (or non-regional) structure of social-political cleavages, particularly ethnic cleavages, may explain differing degrees of party nationalization and show how some electoral system elements support party nationalization. Namely, national legal thresholds block regional parties and lead to a high party nationalization, even in the case of a regional cleavage structure. In order to carry out quantitative tests, I use my database with electoral results from Central and Eastern European countries at the district level (in some cases even at a municipal level). This allows me to establish the degree of nationalization of the parties and party systems in this region. Quantitative correlation analyzes are completed by case discussions in order to focus on causalities of processes.

The first part of this article discusses the different concepts explaining party nationalization and the limits of those models. Then, the degrees of party nationalization for Central and Eastern European countries are calculated. This is followed by correlations and a regression model to explain party nationalization according to the formulated hypotheses, and a discussion of the problem of

endogeneity. In the last section, I conclude.

Drawing a “Triangle Model” of Party Nationalization, Decentralization and Ethnic Groups

How can the varying degree of party nationalization be explained? Most of the existing studies state that centralization of government spending leads to a high degree of party nationalization, whereas decentralization or strong federalism brings along opportunities for regional parties. However which of these variables is the origin and which is the consequence? Often, regional parties themselves demand for government decentralization. If this was a general pattern, then centralization would be the consequence rather than the cause of party nationalization. Therefore, a second explanation, based on the social cleavages underlying the party system, appears promising. The focus may be on the ethnic structure of a country. Both decentralization and the ethnic diversity are opportunities for the creation of regional parties (or the non-nationalization of party systems). While decentralization and cleavages both may be a basis for regional diversity in the party system, a third aspect could possibly limit this phenomenon: the impact of electoral systems. They may introduce constraints against regional parties and favour nationalization of the party system. With those three approaches, a new model explaining party nationalization shall be provided. In this section, I discuss those three approaches based on the centralization of government expenses, the

ethnic structure of the countries, and the electoral systems

The institutional hypothesis: Centralized state, centralized parties, or the other way round?

One explanatory model discusses party nationalization as a consequence of the centralization of state expenses. In heavily centralized states, it is argued that parties are incited to design their campaign based on national political issues.⁹ From the voters' perspective, in Westminster systems, where two parties compete for a parliamentary majority and the winning party takes on barely-restricted government power, "voters [...] focus on the outcome in national legislature".¹⁰ To them, it is less important who will win in the constituency. Instead, they want to know which of the two main parties will hold national power, and only a large party may do so. Consequently, if national politics are important, large national parties should be strengthened. Because the local or regional level of government is less important, voting for regional parties is not attractive, as they have no prospect of gaining regional power. In significantly decentralized or federalized states however, regional parties can have important positions at the provincial level.¹¹ Because of those prospects, they may find it easier to become established

and they may attract voters with a campaign on regional issues.

Although this argument has dominated, some voices do not agree with it. Caramani¹² argues that federalist institutions may "reduce the expression of regional protest in the party system by opening up institutional channels of voice". Further, the argument seems to be inspired by two-party-systems, where indeed the main national parties form the government. Does it stand for larger party systems? Regional parties may have important influence on the central government level, providing major parties with the necessary votes for an absolute majority; interestingly enough, even in the Westminster systems governments often rely on the support of regional or ethnic parties (as the British Conservatives who were until the 1980s closely allied to the Ulster Unionist party).

This leads me to a second criticism of the centralization approach: regional parties may be particularly interested in increasing the state's decentralization. The non-nationalization of the party system thus may lead to a decentralization of political institutions and may lead to the distribution of more public finances to the regional level. Furthermore, regional parties, which help governments to gain majorities, may ask to be awarded in financial decentralization (a typical case is the regional parties in the recent government in Spain¹³). Hence, there is a

⁹ Chhibber and Kollman, *Formation*.

¹⁰ Cox, *Making*, 182ff.

¹¹ Blais, André; Carty, R. K.. "The psychological impact of electoral laws: Measuring Duverger's elusive factor", *British Journal of Political Science* 21(1) (Jan. 1991): 79-93, 85.

¹² Caramani, *Nationalization*, 292.

¹³ Cf. Agranoff, Robert. *Federal Asymmetry and Intergovernmental Relations in Spain*. (Asymmetry Series. Ontario: Queens University, 2005).

problem of endogeneity, as the direction of influence may be the opposite one as previously believed. In many cases, a non-nationalized party system may lead to more autonomy, de-centralization or even secession (the most extreme form of decentralization).

The ethnic cleavage hypothesis: Party systems as a mirror of a country's ethnic structure?

What are the alternative explanations for different degrees of party nationalization? Lipset and Rokkan¹⁴ identify four major cleavages that structure politics and party competition in Western Europe. Some of those cleavages relate to territorial dimensions, particularly if we speak of the centre – periphery and the urban – rural cleavage. There are other cleavages discussed, particularly the economic cleavage of capital – labour, that do not have such a territorial dimension and may not be fixed on regional grounds. Instead, the cleavage exists inside (almost) each regional and local unit.

The cleavage approach¹⁵ works quite well for the explanation of party systems in Western democracies, and one field of scholars finds some patterns of political

cleavages in Central and Eastern European countries too,¹⁶ arguing that those divisions are related to the communist legacy of the countries. However, party politics in those countries has been shown to be less dominated by those cleavages.¹⁷ Some authors investigate party positions regarding policy fields and defined policy divisions¹⁸ that are less strongly tied to society than Western political cleavages. The ethnic cleavage is an exception, as many parties mobilise their electorate around ethnic lines.¹⁹ Some authors address it as the centre – periphery cleavage²⁰; Kitschelt et al.²¹ situate it as part of a greater cultural cleavage. We might see in many Central and Eastern European countries that voters often vote for parties of their ethnic group, or they vote according to their view about how the ethnic conflict should be resolved (radicals vs. moderates). In consequence, ethnicity and questions related to it may structure party systems.

The investigation of ethnic cleavages in order to explain party nationalization degrees may lead to promising results, as

¹⁴ Lipset/Rokkan, "Cleavage".

¹⁵ The notion of "political cleavage" is used in different ways in the literature. I employ a rather narrow definition of a "cleavage", describing a clearly defined social group, which is enduringly represented by its own political parties. I use instead the term "divisions" when speaking of conflict lines that either lack a clearly defined and stable social basis or political parties that are situated enduringly on those conflict line.

¹⁶ Kitschelt, Herbert et al., *Post-communist Party Systems*.

¹⁷ Cf. Elster et al., *Institutional Design*, 247ff.; Sitter, Nick. "Cleavages, Party Strategy and Party System Change in Europe, East and West," *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 3(3) (2002). 425-451.

¹⁸ For instance Miller et al., "Emerging Party Systems"; Marks, Gary et al. "Party Competition and European Integration in the East and West. Different Structure, Same Casualty," *Comparative Political Studies* 39(2) (March 2006): 155-175.

¹⁹ Elster et al., *Institutional Design*, 252.

²⁰ According to Lipset/Rokkan, "Cleavage", 10.

²¹ Kitschelt et al., *Post-communist*.

ethnic minorities in many of the Central and Eastern European countries are territorially settled. For this purpose, I draw on Caramani's study on Western European countries. Caramani describes the social basis for a national homogenization of party systems and voting behavior. A very important aspect of this national homogenization is the "hegemony" of the economical (left-right) cleavage, a cleavage that structures the society among social classes and holders of capital and employees, rather than on territorial characteristics. Other cleavages argues Caramani²², have gotten less important. Namely, ethno-linguistic, religious, centre-periphery, and urban-rural cleavages (the main pre-industrial cleavages) often have a strong connotation with territories. But those cleavages still persist, with varying degrees of importance. They may explain differing degrees of party nationalization among West European countries.

What Caramani observed for Western Europe seems to be even more evident for Central and Eastern European countries. On the one hand, the economic cleavage has much less and sometimes even no importance for elections.²³ On the other hand, ethno-regional conflicts have been present to a great extent in the transitional politics of those countries. Especially where ethnic groups are concentrated geographically, the ethnic cleavage thus has a territorial structure and leads to a nationally heterogeneous voting behavior.

²² Caramani, *Nationalization*, 31.

²³ Elster et al., *Institutional Design*; Whitefield, Stephen. "Political Cleavages".

We may thus relate low party nationalization to three conjunctual causes: 1) High ethnic fractionalization; 2) geographical concentration of ethnic minorities; and 3) a politicized ethnic conflict. The more those three characteristics apply, the less the party system will be nationalized.

As discussed earlier for the case of government centralization, the ethnic cleavage approach too has its limits in determining causality. The actions of political elites may have an impact on the social structure and social cleavages in a society²⁴ and ethnicity is not an exception to this influence. Caramani²⁵ describes national ethnicity and nation unity as a "two-way process", where one part influences the other. In a similar way, this may be stated for ethnic minorities and regional autonomy. Post-communist transformation has known three different sets of action for changes to the ethnic structure of a population, or "ethnic engineering": (1) changing the ethnic awareness of the population or a part of it; (2) inciting or forcing mass migration ("ethnic cleansing"); and (3) even genocide (cf. next section).

Triangle model with interdependent variables

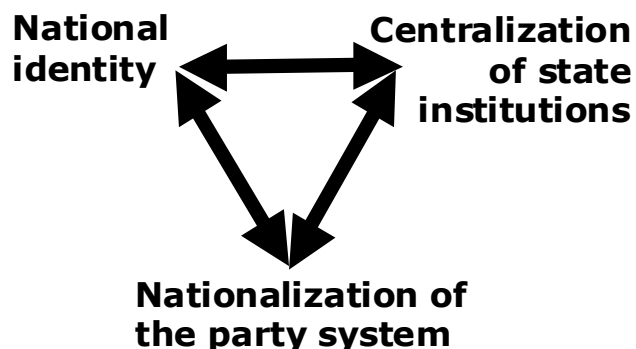
The patterns of interdependency among ethnic identification, political party

²⁴ Cf. Evans, Geoffrey and Stephen Whitefield. "Explaining the Formation of Electoral Cleavages in Post-Communist Democracies," in *Elections in Central and Eastern Europe. The First Wave*. ed. Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Ekkehard Mochmann and Kenneth Newton (Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum, 2000). 36-67.

²⁵ Caramani, *Nationalization*, 23.

nationalization, and centralization may vary from case to case, but I may suggest that processes – even if not so extreme, rapid and obvious – may be generalized in the following way:

Figure 1. Mutual interdependency of the three main variables²⁶



How electoral systems may work as constraints against regional parties

Up to this point, facilitating conditions for the formation of regional parties – and thus reasons for weak party nationalization - have been discussed. However, before testing my hypotheses empirically for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, it is important to consider a restricting condition against regional parties as well, given some of the electoral systems applied in the region. Some electoral laws have national legal thresholds, allowing only parties gaining a minimal percentage of votes to secure seats in parliament. Often, those thresholds may be a serious obstacle to regional parties (as for parties of regionally concentrated ethnic minorities), as they fail to win a sufficient amount of votes at the national level. The region in which those parties compete (or the ethnic

minority they aim to represent) may simply be smaller than the threshold needed, and thus it would be impossible to achieve electoral success without attracting non-regional voters too. It might be possible for a regional or ethnic minority party to pass the threshold, but only if it attracts all or at least a very large part of the regional or ethnic minority vote. This is often not realistic, as some of the voters prefer national parties or there might be several regional or ethnic minority parties competing with each other. In consequence, each of those regional parties (or ethnic minority parties) may fail. Such national legal thresholds often allow only national parties to win seats and discourage regional or ethnic minority parties from even competing. Thus, they work as a constraint in favour of party nationalization.²⁷

Hypotheses to test

My model contains two variables that might weaken the nationalization of political parties and one variable that might promote party nationalization. Those variables might explain differences in party nationalization degrees across countries, my variable of interest. In the empirical part, I shall thus test the following two hypotheses explaining party nationalization:

²⁶ See Appendix D for definitions.

²⁷ Cf. Bochsler, Daniel. "Les raisons pour une régionalisation des partis. Institutions contre les clivages à l'exemple des cantons suisses." (Paper presented at the Congrès des quatre pays, Lausanne, 18-19 November 2005.)

Hypothesis A: The degree of party nationalization is a consequence of the centralization or decentralization of the government, with increasing centralization pushing for a nationalization of political parties.

Hypothesis B: The degree of party nationalization is an expression of the territorial structure of ethnic identities in a country: Ethnic groups that live territorially concentrated are likely to decrease the degree of party nationalization, while in countries with territorially non-concentrated ethnic groups or in ethnic homogeneous countries, parties might be strongly nationalized.

Hypothesis C: National legal thresholds in the electoral systems work as nationalization constraints and thus do not allow for low party nationalization.

Due to the mutual influences of these factors (according to my triangle model), one has to pay attention to problems of endogeneity when testing these hypotheses.

Why explaining party nationalization for Central and Eastern European countries?

To test my hypotheses, I consider Central and Eastern European democracies as particularly fruitful, since many of them show degrees of party nationalization that are remarkably lower than in older democracies. This might be a consequence of the importance of ethnic cleavages and the absence of a clear-cut left-right dimension – a cleavage that in the West leads to a certain nationalization of politics. Furthermore, those countries

show an interesting pattern regarding the other related variables, having varying degree of ethnic heterogeneity. And, while electoral systems with nationalization constraints were rare in the world before the 1990s, countries in Central and Eastern Europe introduced them in a high number.

While party nationalization has been calculated for many countries, Central and Eastern Europe remained a blind spot for the study of this phenomenon. This is no wonder, as it required detailed regional electoral results, data that in some cases is difficult to find. This investigation is based on the author's database on elections in Central and Eastern Europe, including electoral results on the regional or local level, for elections after 1990. 16 countries in Central and Eastern Europe are included in the empirical analysis.²⁸ Before testing my hypotheses on party

²⁸ Russia and Ukraine have to be excluded, as it is not possible to establish the ethnicity of the independent candidates. Therefore, it is impossible to evaluate the ethnic structure of the party system (Moser investigates this question, Moser, Robert G.. "Ethnicity, Electoral Politics, and Minority Representation in Post-Communist States." (International Research & Exchanges Board, Project Database. <http://www.irex.org/programs/stg/research/05/moser.pdf>, 2005)). Belarus is excluded because it lacks democracy. Serbia and Montenegro are included as single entities (similar to Horowitz, Shale and Eric C. Browne. "Sources of Post-Communist Party System Consolidation. Ideology Versus Institutions." *Party Politics* 11(6) (2005): 689-706), because recently they only had direct elections to the sub-entity parliaments; the last direct elections to the Union parliament date from 1996. Kosovo however could not be included, as electoral results on the municipal level are lacking.

nationalization I shall explain the measurement of the dependent variable.

Measuring party nationalization

The variable that shall be discussed and explained in this article is the level of party nationalization in the region, which as of yet has not been calculated. The nationalization degree is established for every single party competing in elections. There are almost more different measures of party nationalization than scholars who have been carrying out studies in this field. In common, those indicators should measure to what degree party support varies across regions. All those indicators have to deal with the difficult task of providing an unbiased measure suitable for comparative research. Especially, the varying number of regional units (number of electoral districts, number of sub-national regions, etc.) taken into account for the calculation brings along major problems for the measures. Known indicators of party nationalization are sensitive to the number of the regional units, as they provide lower values for more fine-grained data.²⁹ Studies using such indicators risk being influenced by a hidden correlation between party nationalization and the number of units

²⁹ Other measures are simply unreliable, providing similar results for very different levels of party nationalization due to incomplete consideration of information. Chhibber/Kollman, *Formation* and Moenius/Kasuya, "Measuring", neutralize positive and negative deviations from the national average mutually. In result, they may indicate perfect party nationalization even if it varies widely from region to region. For an overview of known indicators and their biases and problems, see Bochsler, Daniel: "The standardized 'Gini-coefficient' to measure party nationalisation." (Working Paper. Idheap, Lausanne, 2005.).

(number of electoral districts, number of sub-national units, etc.) or other variables related to it. Interpretation of such findings may be biased and may be result just from the measurement³⁰.

Our considerations are based on the Gini-coefficient, which was originally used to measure inequalities in wealth distributions.³¹ Jones and Mainwaring³² applied it to political parties, measuring inequalities in vote distributions across regions. A score of 100% represents a perfectly homogeneous distribution of votes (the party gets exactly the same percentage of votes in every region), whereas low values (close to 0%) mean that the votes for each party are concentrated in a small part of the territory. Using a logarithm, I correct this indicator, making it insensitive to the number of units taken into account. I call it "standardized party nationalization score" (cf. appendix A for more information).

Party nationalization in Central and Eastern Europe

My results show that party nationalization in some of the countries under investigation scores up to 0.92 points (Hungary) – a value close to Western

³⁰ For instance: Tiemann, Guido. "The Nationalization of East European Party Systems." (Paper presented at the ECPR 3rd General Conference, Budapest, 8-10 September 2005,) 25: "Coordination across districts becomes the more complicated, the greater the number of districts is."

³¹ Gini, Corrado. *Variabilità e Mutabilità* (Bologna: Tipografia di Paolo Cuppini, 1912).

³² Jones/Mainwaring, *Nationalization*.

European countries with highly nationalized party systems - with many other cases are just below. At the lower end of the scale, one may find Macedonia (0.67 pt) or Bosnia with a spectacularly low value of approximately 0.45 points. For the calculation of those values, the most recent elections (up to the end of 2005) to the first chamber of the national parliament were considered.³³

Testing the centralization hypothesis

In order to explain the different degrees of party nationalization, I first test my centralization hypothesis (hypothesis A) before testing the ethnic cleavages and the electoral system hypotheses (hypotheses B and C). In addition to providing correlation and regression results, I shall discuss important cases in order to check for the problem of endogeneity.

Party nationalization and decentralization: Only Bosnian values fit with this explanatory approach

First, I shall test if the empirical data from this region fits with the common centralization hypothesis.³⁴ Figure 2

³³ For Albania, Hungary and Lithuania – countries with mixed electoral systems (both proportional and majority/plurality systems for the elections of the same chamber, and each voter has two votes) – the nationalization degree of the proportional votes are listed in order to be congruent with the operationalization of the national threshold variable. However, for the countries included in the calculation, there is not a major difference between the two votes regarding the party nationalization degree.

³⁴ Decentralization may be measured either by institutional institutionalization or by

shows a positive correlation of centralization of government expenses and party nationalization. Decentralized countries in Central and Eastern Europe have regional party systems; centralized countries have nationalized ones instead. However, the correlation tests do not give any information about the direction of the relationship. This may be investigated more thoroughly with case studies or more fine-grained quantitative and time-series analyzes.

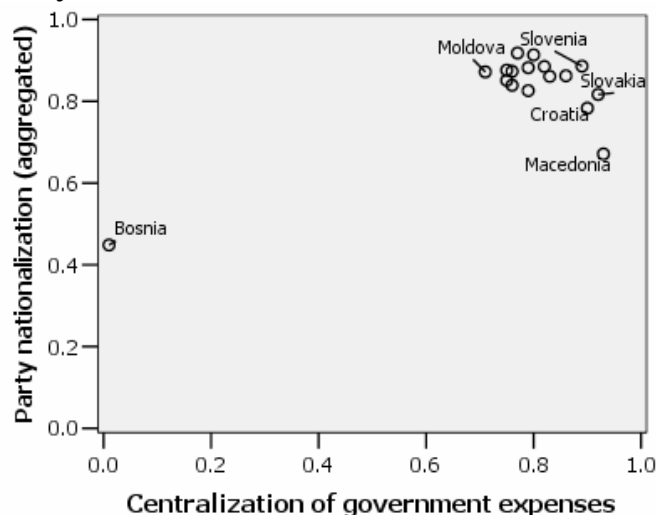


Figure 2. Centralization (share of government expenditures at the national level) and party nationalization.

Sources: own database, see Appendix C.

My data show that in the period around 2005 there was a connection between centralization and party nationalization, but this connection relied only on the Bosnian case (if the case is excluded, the correlation changes its sign!). Bosnia is both extremely decentralized and has an

decentralization of government spending. For the first method, no data with the necessary quality could be found. The considerations are based on the most recent data found on the share of government expenditures on the sub-national level (see Appendix B).

almost completely non-nationalized party system. If analysing the sequence of how party nationalization and state decentralization in Bosnia developed, we can understand the relation of both variables better. This shall be done in the following paragraph.

Bosnia's decentralization as a result of ethno-regional political parties

Bosnia underwent a drastic change in decentralization that has never – or very rarely – happened in other countries. In 1992, Bosnia did not have any significant administrative level between the municipalities and the Republic. Today's constitutional order in Bosnia accords almost all the competencies to regional entities.³⁵ This development was preceded by the political parties, and party leaders were in charge of the policies that led to this outcome. During the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1990, the Bosnian parties

were created along ethnic lines.³⁶ The most important forces were the ultra-nationalist parties of the Bosnian Serb and the Bosnian Croat minority - the SDS and HDŽ - and the SDA party, which is commonly defined as almost an ethnic party, since it was predominantly supported by Bosniaks (Muslims) but wanted to keep a common state for all ethnic groups. Those parties gained an overwhelming majority of the votes in the first multiparty elections in 1990, with voters voting strictly according ethnic lines. The Bosnian Serb's SDS and Croatian's HDŽ demanded significant autonomy or secession of regions of the country and wanted to govern those regions. They reached this goal through the means of war (1992-95), where they fought with their own armed forces, in conjunction with foreign armies. In this way, both SDS and HDŽ rushed the change of factual power of the central government. A peace accord could only be reached through acceptance of almost

³⁵ Many comparative studies exclude Bosnia and Herzegovina because of the institution of the High Representative and thus the lack of complete sovereignty of the political institutions. Mostly, they measure the outcome of the political institutions on the quality of democracy (for instance Beliaev, Michael. "Presidential Powers and Consolidation of New Postcommunist Democracies", *Comparative Political Studies* 39(3) (April 2006): 375-398) or policy results, where the High Representative's veto rights indeed make a difference. I focus on patterns of elections and the party system, which are not touched by the institution of the High Representative, so there would be no reason not to include this country into my study. On the contrary, Bosnia increases the variance among all the variables included in the study. Nevertheless, quantitative results will be checked if they rely only on the influence of the particular Bosnian case.

³⁶ Information on this subject is drawn from Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (NIOD). *Srebrenica - a 'safe' area. Reconstruction, background, consequences and analyzes of the fall of a Safe Area* (Amsterdam: NIOD, 2002, <http://www.srebrenica.nl>); Bianchini, Stefano. *Sarajevo – le radici dell'odio. Identità e destino dei popoli balcanici*. (Roma: Edizioni Associate Editrice Internazionale, 1996); ICG, *Democracy*; International Crisis Group (ICG). *Is Dayton Failing? Bosnia Four Years After The Peace Agreement* (Sarajevo: ICG Balkans Report N°80, 28 October 1999); International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY): *Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstić. Case No. IT-98-33-A. Judgement in the Appeals Chamber* (ICTY, The Hague. <http://www.icty.org>, 19 April 2004). It is not the goal of this paper to show how the conclusions on the history of Yugoslavia are drawn.

complete decentralization, bringing regional autonomy for Bosnian Serbs (with an own "entity") and Croats (through a federalization of the Muslim-Croat entity into cantons with important autonomy). Despite massive pressure from the international community, resistance and sabotage by ultra-nationalist parties hindered the central government from fulfilling even minimal competence. Indeed, "central government institutions exist largely on paper".³⁷ Initially, even the defence competencies remained at the sub-state level. There has still not been a fundamental turnover towards centralization. In those extremely federalist structures, the regionalized party system divided along ethnic lines was preserved.³⁸

Ethno-regional parties thus have transformed the state into a heavily decentralized system. Therefore, decentralization and weak party nationalization are connected. However, the causal and temporal sequence goes both as the commonly supposed centralization hypothesis suggests and the other way around. The Bosnian case does not help to illustrate the criticism on this literature. Furthermore, being a rare case of strong decentralization in Central and Eastern Europe, it is important for the study of the causality of centralization and party nationalization in this region. And since the positive correlation of centralization and party nationalization (figure 2) relies only on Bosnia, it would be the only case to support the

centralization hypothesis. But after having seen that the causality goes the other way round, I have to dismiss the validity of the centralization hypothesis for Central and Eastern Europe.

In the foreseeable future, developments in Macedonia might be a second case and reinforce the correlation that has been shown in figure 2 of centralization and party nationalization. As a result of an ethnic-territorial division of political forces and violent struggles, the parties agreed to reform the municipalities and to decentralize political power ("Ohrid agreement"). Again, the sequence of developments in Macedonia – if the Ohrid plan will be implemented – would not follow the centralization hypothesis, but be one more example of a move in the opposite direction: weak party nationalization anticipates and causes decentralization.

Regionalization of the political forces and weakening of the central state
Drawing on the Bosnian example, we might formulate a counter-hypothesis for the relationship. Instead of state centralization affecting party nationalization, on the contrary the shape of the state institutions reflects the territorial structure of political parties (or that of political organizations and movements in a broader sense). Nationally homogeneous forces will push towards a unified state with a high degree of centralization, while territorially split organizations will lead to demands for decentralization or even separatism. However, the latter idea is however related to a methodological problem. If weak nationalization of political parties

³⁷ ICG, *Dayton*, 3.

³⁸ ICG, *Democracy*.

leads to separatism, then countries disappear or split off, and interesting cases – where party nationalization indeed affected the structure of political institutions – disappear from the map. This problem is not alien to Central and Eastern Europe, as both the former Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia are cases that split off according to this pattern. The de-nationalization of the Yugoslav party system after the breakdown of the Communist party was one of the elements in the chain that lead to the dissolution of the Yugoslav federation. The XIV congress of the “League of Communists of Yugoslavia” (20-22 January 1990) marked the dissolution of the former monopoly party, followed by successor organizations at the sub-national level and competing ethno-regionalist movements, some of them with a secessionist platform. Regional parties in the Yugoslav sub-national regions preceded the dissolution of the central government; they were even the basis and driving force behind this development on the institutional level. Similarly, after the fall of communism in Czechoslovakia, a split of the party system into a Czech and a Slovak part anticipated the split of the state.³⁹

To summarize, for the group of Central and Eastern European countries, the common hypothesis about party

nationalization being a consequence of government centralization finds no empirical confirmation. To the contrary, the most prominent case of Bosnia shows a sequence in the opposite direction. Generally, I suppose that there is a strong pressure coming from territorially split political organizations towards decentralization or separatism.

Testing the ethnic cleavage and the electoral threshold hypotheses

In my theoretical framework, I discussed two more hypotheses (2 and 3) that could explain different degrees of party nationalization. I connected party nationalization to the ethnic structure of the countries and to national legal thresholds in electoral laws. This model shall be tested both on grounds of the nationalization of party families and of the party systems of the countries under study. I distinguish ethnic minority parties from others – either ethnic majority parties or non-ethnically defined parties⁴⁰ - and furthermore, among ethnic minority parties, I draw distinctions according to the structure of the reliant ethnic group: The parties of ethnic groups who live concentrated in one region and those of groups who live spread throughout the country.⁴¹ Non-ethnically defined political

³⁹ Cf. Elster et al., *Institutional Design*, 142f.; Olson, David M. “Dissolution of the state: Political parties and the 1992 election in Czechoslovakia” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 26(3) 1993: 301-314; Henderson, Karen. “Minorities and Politics in the Slovak Republic,” in *Minorities in Europe*, ed. Snežana Trifunovska (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999). 143-174, 148.

⁴⁰ A distinction of both would be very difficult in countries with non-intensive ethnic cleavages, not to say not feasible. This is why they have to be tested as a common category. However, the degree of party nationalization might be similar for both types of political parties.

⁴¹ The classification is based on country-specific analyzes of the party systems, such as country-specific reports and party labels. In cases where

parties or parties appealing to ethnic majority votes are quite nationalized.

Ethnic minority parties have a substantially lower degree of nationalization than ethnically mixed or ethnic majority parties. Particularly, parties related to territorially concentrated ethnic minorities appear as the least nationalized, gathering a nationalization degree of as few as 0.43 points. Those of non-concentrated minorities⁴² have a slightly higher nationalization degree (table 1).

When comparing these values country by country, we see that the observed pattern prevails in (almost) all the 16 countries under study. Ethnically mixed or ethnic majority parties are quite nationalized (0.75 to 0.92 points, only Bosnia below). Ethnic minority parties however are more regional. This is especially important when they represent territorially concentrated ethnic minorities. Where parties related to non-concentrated ethnic minorities groups exist, they have an

those sources were not enough, we consulted further relevant party manifests, analyzed the ethnic structure of the parties' executive board or consulted specialists for the country's party system. (Those cases as the sources are listed in Appendix C). The distinction between concentrated and non-concentrated was made using census data or qualitative descriptions of the ethnic minorities. Sources are listed in Appendix C. A more precise indicator was used by Lijphart, Arend: "Consociation and Federalism: Conceptual and Empirical Links." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 12(3) (1979): 499-515, and Allik, "Parteisüsteemid", but data is not available for the countries of my research.

⁴² The most notable cases in this smaller category are the Russian minority oriented party in Latvia and the Turkish oriented party in Bulgaria.

intermediate nationalization degree (about 0.6-0.7 points) (cf. figure 3).⁴³

The figure also shows important differences among the countries: In Bosnia and in Macedonia, ethnic majority parties or ethnically mixed parties have considerably low party nationalization degrees. Furthermore, there is considerable variation of party nationalization degrees among ethnic minority parties. Overall, there is a very significant correlation among the nationalization degree of ethnic minority parties and the population share of the relative ethnic or linguistic minority (+0.43, 99.9% significance, cases weighted by the parties' vote shares).⁴⁴ This variation may be the consequence of some minorities being small and others having a larger share of the country's population. When concentrated, small ethnic minorities live in a very small part

⁴³ The values for parties of non-concentrated ethnic minorities in the Czech Republic, in Macedonia and in Slovakia are not very significant, as only very tiny parties contribute to this result, none of them resembling more than 0.6% the national electorate.

⁴⁴ Where available, data on the population size of ethnic among citizens over 20 years old; for Latvia the data were calculated among citizens. The share of Roma population may be underestimated as census data on Roma communities appears to be biased. Milcher, Susanne and Andrey Ivanov. "The United Nations Development Programme's Vulnerability Projects: Roma and Ethnic Data" *Roma Rights Quarterly* 2/2004. Existing databases (Gurr, Ted Robert et al. *Minorities at Risk Project*. (<http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/>, 2005); Alesina, Alberto et al. "Fractionalization", *Journal of Economic Growth* 8 (2003): 155-194) of ethnic minorities appear not to be very useful for our purposes, as they are not complete for the region under study. Often they list only ethnic minorities that are in political conflict.

Type of party	Party nationalization ^a	Cumulative vote share (16 countries)
Ethnically mixed or ethnic majority ^b	0,87	1490%
Parties of non-concentrated minorities	0,65	47%
Parties of concentrated minorities	0,42	138%

Table 1. Party types and party nationalization degree in 16 Central and Eastern European democracies; average value

^a Average standardized party nationalization score, weighted with the national vote share of the parties. ^b For 28 tiny parties (altogether gathering 6.3% vote share, 21 of them count each less than 0.2% of the national vote), the type could not be defined. They are treated as ethnically mixed. Sources: own database, see Appendix C.

of a country. This gives their parties a very local character. Larger minorities however live in somewhat larger regions and thus the nationalization degree of their parties is higher. The German minority in Poland counts only 0.4% of the country's population, and most of them live in one single district. Consequently, both political parties of the Polish Germans have a very local character and a very low nationalization degree of about 0.09 points. Albanians in Macedonia are as well a territorially concentrated minority, living in the Western parts of the country. Comprising 23% of Macedonia's population, they are one of the largest ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe, which gives Albanian parties in Macedonia a higher nationalization degree, scoring from 0.34 up to 0.44 points (for different parties). So far, I have used correlation analyzes to show some of the connections among variables. On this basis, I calculate a comprehensive model explaining the party nationalization degree by country (considering all ethnic minority, majority and mixed ethnic parties) (cf. table 2).

Besides the ethnic structure, national electoral thresholds are included into the explanatory model. I consider them only if they apply for ethnic minority parties as well (Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, cf. appendix B). In five other countries, there are no such thresholds (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia), they do not apply for ethnic minority harming regional parties to get represented in the electoral districts (Slovenia).

Ethnic cleavages and political parties – causes and consequences

There is however a problem of endogeneity related to the relationship of ethnic cleavages and party nationalization (as discussed before, cf. triangle model). As in the previous section on endogeneity of the centralization hypothesis, the Bosnian example raises questions about endogeneity related to the ethnic cleavage hypothesis. Indeed, the country appears to be the most significant case in post-communist Europe that shows how political actors change the structure about

Figure 3. Party types and party nationalization by country; average values. Sources: own database, see Appendix C.

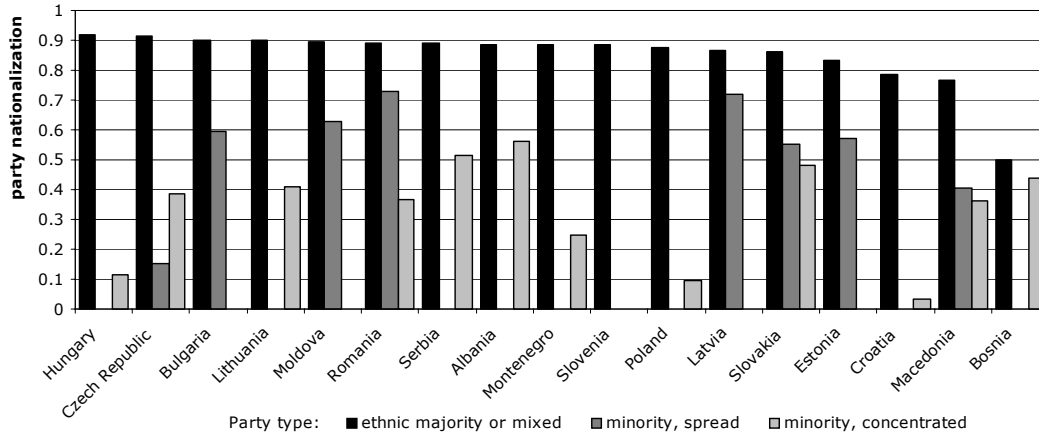


Table 2. OLS regression to explain the party nationalization degree, ethnic minority model. Independent variables were z-standardized.

	B	Std. Error
Constant	.845	.009
Population share of concentrated minorities	-.015	.015
National legal threshold in the electoral law	.043**	.010
Multiplicative term ethnic minorities * threshold.	.064**	.011
Adjusted R ² = 0.899 / N = 16		

Figure 4. (cf. data points x and ▲) shows, how the party nationalization score is related to the ethnic structure of the relative country. Not surprisingly, countries with large territorially concentrated ethnic groups have lower party nationalization

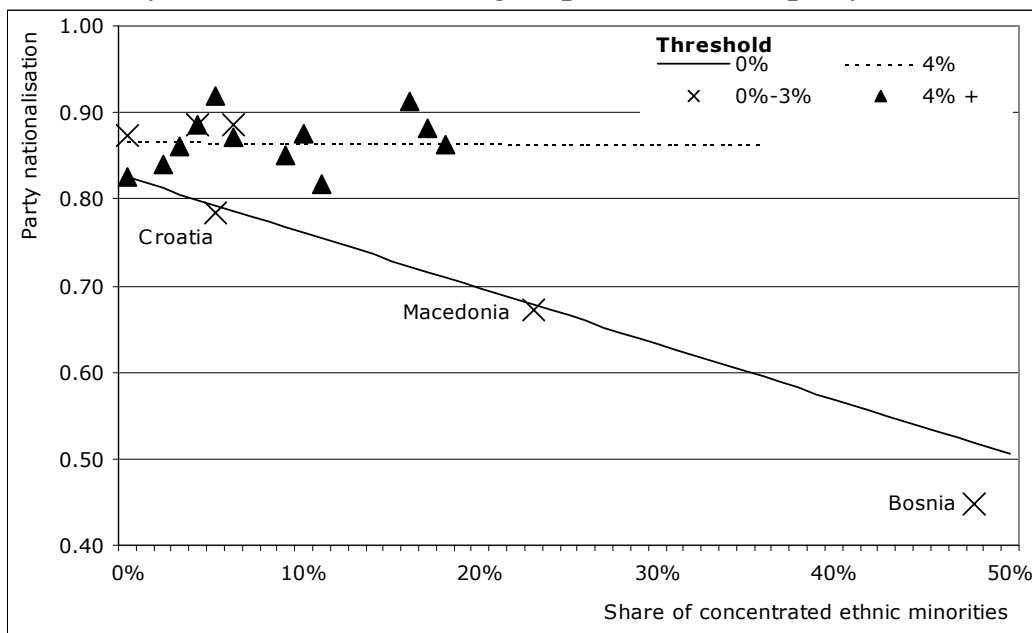


Figure 4 shows ethnic structure, national legal threshold and party nationalization: The figure shows both the calculated regression values (lines) and the empirical data points (x for countries with a low threshold, without national threshold or with exceptions for ethnic minorities, ▲ for countries with a national threshold of 4% or more). Sources: own database, see Appendix C.

The dotted line (- - -) estimates party nationalization for countries with national legal thresholds (▲) (usually those thresholds are about 4-6% of the national vote). Party nationalization is rather high, in most of the cases above 0.85 points, and does not vary with a differing share of concentrated ethnic minorities.

The second line (____) estimates party nationalization for countries without a national legal threshold. As expected, in this group of countries (marked as X), one may see that party nationalization is not only lower, but also more influenced by the ethnic structure. However, results may be heavily influenced by the Bosnian case. There, all the ethnic groups are geographically decentralized and party nationalization is low, due to three parallel ethno-regional party systems. Besides, there might be other cleavages, which follow geographic patterns. However, the ethnic cleavages appear as to be important ones for the regional structure of the party systems.¹

¹ Although the results presented on the ethnic cleavage appear conclusive, it is not plausible to predict party nationalization in perfectly in the countries under consideration, as the ethnic dimension is just one singular cleavage that may account for party nationalization. It may be one part of the puzzle, about other territorial oriented

endogeneity related to the ethnic cleavage hypothesis. Indeed, the country appears to be the most significant case in post-communist Europe that shows how political actors change the structure of ethnic cleavages. The ethnic differences dominating Bosnian politics nowadays were already recognised during the Tito regime in former Yugoslavia, but kept at a low level. Post-Tito politics reinforced and changed those divisions willingly. “In an attempt to deflect attention away from their own problems or to justify claims in terms of other republics, the party elite in the various republics began to appeal increasingly to the ethnic Regional political forces in the former Yugoslavia and ultra-nationalist ethno-regional parties provoked and raised inter-ethnic conflicts on both grounds, and politically-supported campaigns incited many citizens to join a

cleavages co-exist. The most apparent of those is the urban-rural cleavage, which is reflected in some Central and Eastern European countries through a number of declared rural parties or parties that are strongly linked to voters either in urban or rural areas. For a test of the urban-rural cleavage's impact on party nationalization, I correlated it – as measured by Whitefield (2002: 188f.) - to the party nationalization score. As only ten countries overlapped with our cases (Russia and Ukraine had to be excluded), the sample is very small for quantitative analysis, and results should be interpreted with caution. Surprisingly, a positive correlation of the importance of the urban-rural cleavage and party nationalization was reported, but it was not significant. However, a test based on the same data works for the ethnic cleavage, even almost at a 95% level of significance, despite the small number of cases, and even if the countries with most variance (Bosnia, Macedonia) were not part of the sample. The latter appears to be dominant for the explanation of differing degrees of party nationalization in Central and Eastern European countries.

religious community. Language policies introduced new linguistic differences in order to strengthen ethno-linguistic identities. Serbo-Croat, which is spoken in four of the six Yugoslavian Republics, was formerly the official language in those entities. Governments under the control of ultra-nationalist ethno-regionalist parties changed the official language of their countries.

They defined dialectic forms of this unique language as new “national languages”. Language policies in the newly independent states were aimed at emphasizing language differences through new vocabulary and discouraging the use of formerly common vocabulary. Today, citizens of the successor states overwhelmingly accept those politically imposed linguistic borders.² Furthermore, the ultra-nationalist parties, their office representatives, and armed forces changed the regional ethnic structure of the country by the means of ethnic cleansing and – in the case of East-Bosnian Srebrenica – through genocide.³

It would thus be particularly perverted to explain the low party nationalization degree in Bosnia and Herzegovina through territorial ethnic lines without mentioning

²Focussing on Bosnia and Herzegovina, this *official language* aspect is particularly interesting: The country today counts three official languages. However, two of those languages, formerly known as Serbo-Croat dialects, had not been spoken in Bosnia before the war, but rather belong to other former Yugoslav Republics. They may have been formally introduced as new official language for political reasons.

³ ICTY, *Krstić*.

that the ethnic lines are themselves a result of the implementation of ultra-nationalist party policies, changing languages, ethnicizing the society, and social division through genocide and ethnic cleansing. Political actors both reinforced the ethnic division and separated those groups territorially, forging thus a new map of ethnic cleavages in Bosnia. This example shows that questions of ethnic identity and party nationalization stand in a two-sided relationship. Ethnic lines and regional identities may be the result of policies of non-nationalized parties. On the other side, there are numerous examples showing how nationalized political parties promote a nationalization of identities. Cases according to this pattern can be found both in the history of Central and Eastern European countries and in more recent developments:

The unification of the Slovak language, previously consisting of different dialects, was a project of the movement for the independence of Slovakia in the 19th century. A nationally united language was seen as a means for the creation of a national identity, which was the basis for the separatist movement.⁴

In the Soviet Union, the communist party used centralized political institutions to impose the Russian language as countrywide standard. Even in regions with previously different languages, the

⁴ Cf. Tomkova, Zuzana. “Inclusion and exclusion in language and beyond: What to make of endangered European dialects in the field of language endangerment.” (Paper presented at the 7th Postgraduate Conference, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, 16-18 February 2006.)

spread of Russian should have facilitated communication, reduced ethnic differences (besides widespread deportation policies) and raised the national identity. Modification of languages further should help to alienate ethnic minorities from peoples outside the Soviet Union. For instance, for the Moldavian language, the Cyrillic alphabet has been imposed and new vocabulary introduced in order to differentiate the language (the Romanian dialect spoken in Moldova) from Romanian.

After regaining national independence in the 1990s, two Baltic States (Latvia and Estonia) employed policies in order to reinforce the languages of the national majorities. The countries' citizenship laws⁵ "have left large Russian minority populations outside the states' political communities".⁶ This has created an electorate that is ethnically more homogeneous than the whole population, and might be one of the reasons why minority parties were less successful. In consequence, it reduces the potential for an ethnically-based regionalization of the party system, and thus increases party nationalization. Although those examples reflect very different processes (regarding time period, intensity, popular support for those policies, respect of human rights, democratic legitimacy), they underline the pattern that nationalized political actors might – and sometimes do – harmonize

the ethnic-cultural structure of a country. This happens either through homogenization of cultural values or languages, or through the imposition of some aspects of a "Leitkultur" (core culture) to national minorities, and the same process might over the long term even further increase party nationalization. Such two-sided process dependencies are typical for social sciences, where cases consist not of laboratory experiments but where all the variables involved might have direct or indirect impacts on each other. Nevertheless, there are arguments that approve the discussion of ethnic cleavages as explanatory factors for party nationalization. We might suppose that in democratic regimes the influence of the voters' will and the voters' identity on the political parties might be more immediate than the rather long-term formation of ethnic identities. For the group of countries investigated, this argument might be, as shown, at least true for Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose ethnic composition was largely affected by civil war. However, even in this case the ethnic political players that are responsible for "ethnic engineering" had previously (in 1990) been elected, and thus there is a reason to link party nationalization to ethnic boundaries. In Bosnia, as in many other countries of the region, nationalist parties in the post-communist transition might have reinforced ethnic awareness and politicized those cleavages.⁷ However,

⁵ Applicants were for instance required to speak the language of the national majority.

⁶ Chinn, Jeff and Lise A. Truex,. "The Question of Citizenship in the Baltics", *Journal of Democracy* 7(1) (1996): 133-147.

⁷ This problem of mutual influences is not exclusive to the study of party nationalization, but rather inherent to all studies of *political cleavages* that might be both the cause and the consequence of a party system. It might be fruitful to investigate how ethnic cleavages in the society and ethnic divisions

we do not have any cases of a completely new, artificial identity created through one of the political players; we deal instead with pre-existing ethnic boundaries, and, excepting Bosnia and Croatia, there was no large-scale ethnic cleansing in the post-communist period happening in the region. The processes of homogenization (Baltic States) or reinforcement of ethnic differences (former Yugoslavia) are in harmony with some pre-existing identities or affect just some aspects of culture. The processes were partly supported by the population everywhere and were not only elite-imposed. Lastly, one may stress that the use of data on all known and measurable ethnic groups as an explanatory variable – and not only on politicized cleavages – reduces the endogeneity problem.

Conclusion and outlook

In this article, I calculated the level of party nationalization in Central and Eastern European countries and explained it through the ethnic structure of the countries under study. Most non-ethnically defined parties (or ethnic majority parties) compete nationally and have a national electorate, whereas parties of territorially concentrated minorities are particularly weakly nationalized. The study showed that party nationalization in Central and Eastern Europe widely

in the party system interact with each other. Do they mutually reinforce each other, leading to a *self-reinforcing spiral*, as it might be argued for the dissolution of former Yugoslavia? Or, does a non-correspondence of ethnic cleavages and the party system lead to pressure on each of them to reach a new, *stable, balanced situation*?

reflects the ethnic structure of those countries but electoral systems (national legal thresholds) may reinforce party nationalization. Thus, the ethnic cleavage and the electoral system hypotheses (B and C) have been approved by the empirical data. The results may be best illustrated in two countries of the region, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia. Both those countries had significant inter-ethnic tensions, and in both the ethnic cleavage is an important factor of electoral competition. Instead of one nationalized party system there are two party systems in Macedonia and even three regional party systems in Bosnia and Herzegovina, following territorial ethnic boundaries. However, we should be aware of the causality problem. To some degree, ethnic tensions may stand at the starting point of a development that leads to ethno-regional party systems. But on the other hand, to some degree the regionalization of party systems among ethnic boundaries might reinforce ethnic identities and separation and deepen the cleavages further.

Equally interesting are my negative findings concerning the centralization hypothesis (hypothesis A): There is no evidence that centralization of government expenditures in Central and Eastern Europe leads to an increase in party nationalization. Instead, the analysis of the Bosnian case (the only empirical case that contributes to the correlation of government centralization and party nationalization) shows that the ethnically-based regionalization of the Bosnian party system led to a never-before-seen degree of state decentralization. In Macedonia, a similar process should take place soon,

while in other cases (Czechoslovakia, former Yugoslavia) it did lead to separatism and dissolution instead of decentralization. The question of how particular the strong empirical relationship of the ethnic structure, electoral systems, and party nationalization is to Central and Eastern Europe shall be discussed in future research. It would be particularly interesting to test the criticism and negative empirical findings (inverted dependency) regarding the centralization hypothesis for other groups of countries.

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Appendix A. The calculation of the “standardized party nationalization score”

In the research on party nationalization, many different kinds of indicators have been used to compare the degree of party system nationalization. They all measure the territorial homogeneity of electoral support for political parties. They are based on electoral outcomes across districts (or regions, municipalities etc. – hereafter “territorial units”).

The most popular indicators include the *standard deviation* used by Caramani, the *party nationalization score* (Jones/Mainwaring), the *indicator of party aggregation* (Chhibber/Kollman) or the *inflation index* (Moenius/Kasuya). However, those indicators may be biased because of several shortcomings:¹

- Some of the indicators (indicator of party aggregation, inflation index) simply may take wrong results and under some circumstances lead to unjustified high values;
- others (standard deviation and transformations of this measure) are biased if not all the territorial units on which the indicator is calculated have the same size;
- they lead to low values for small parties (standard deviation);
- and finally, the values may diminish or rise if a large number of territorial units is taken into account (a common problem of party nationalization measures).

The *party nationalization score* “PNS” by Jones and Mainwaring performs best of the known indicators, being only biased by the number of territorial units on which the calculation is carried out. The indicator is a simple transformation of the *Gini coefficient*, a measure for inequalities across units that is most frequently used to quantify wealth heterogeneity within a society.² The Gini coefficient takes the value 0 for perfectly equal distributions (a party has exactly the same vote share across all territorial units) and the value 1 for perfectly unequal distributions (all the party’s votes are concentrated in one single point of the country). Jones and Mainwaring invert this scale for their “Party Nationalization Score” ($PNS = 1 - \text{Gini-coefficient}$). Their score is calculated in a first step for each single political party, and afterwards averaged for the whole party system. However, the larger the number of territorial units a country is divided into, the lower the values of the PNS score. Thus, if we have more detailed data for a country, its party system would seem to be more heterogeneous than if it took only larger units as a basis for the calculation. In consequence, the PNS can only be compared across countries with the same number of territorial units. This is an impractical restriction, since in some countries we have very fine-grained data and in others only data from half a dozen units. This is why I propose a standardization of the indicator by the number of territorial units, in order to transform the indicator into a comparable format. I use the number of 10 units as a standard for the comparison. I suppose (and show empirically) that the PNS indicator increases exponentially with the logarithm of the number of units taken into account. From this, I derive the following function that allows me to calculate the *standardized party nationalization score* (sPNS), based on the PNS and the number of units (unit).

¹ Caramani, *Nationalization*; Jones/Mainwaring, “Nationalization”; Chhibber, Pradeep and Ken Kollman, „Party Aggregation and the Number of Parties in India and the United States”, *American Political Science Review* 92(2) (June 1998): 329–342, 333; Moenius/Kasuya, “Measuring”; for a systematic overview, see Bochsler, “Gini-coefficient”.

² For information on the calculation of the Gini coefficient see Jones/Mainwaring, “Nationalization”, or Bochsler, “Gini-coefficient”.

$$sPNS = PNS (\log 10 / \log \text{unit})$$

The *standardized party nationalization score* is estimating what the PNS value would be if we had data from exactly 10 territorial units.

Appendix B. Data

Decentralization in Central and Eastern Europe

Partial data on decentralization of institutions in some Central and European countries may be found in the World Bank Database on Political Institutions,¹ and further in Marcou's article.² Quantitative indicators for institutional decentralization are not known to the author and not all information on institutions is easily comparable. This is why I used data on budget decentralization. For EU member states, data have been taken from the World Bank Fiscal Decentralization Indicators.³ As some values vary considerably over time, I calculated the average for the last three years contained in the 1996-2000 period. For non-EU member countries, data for the years 2000 or 2003 was found in a Council of Europe publication⁴. Where different sources contained data on the same country, they were usually congruent. In the cases of Croatia and Romania, data that appeared more solid and not out-of-date were used.

Table B1. Decentralization of government expenses

Country	Decentralization
Albania	17,6%
Bosnia	98,7%
Bulgaria	16,8%
Croatia	10,0%
Czech Republic	20,2%
Estonia	21,0%
Hungary	23,3%

¹ Beck, Thorsten et al. "New tools in comparative political economy: The Database of Political Institutions", *World Bank Economic Review* 15(1) (2001): 165-176, but they are not complete and are out of date in some cases, as described in Horváth, Tamás M., eds. *Decentralization: Experiments and Reforms*. Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2000.

² Marcou Gérard: "The State of Local and Regional Democracy in South-Eastern Europe," in *Effective democratic governance at local and regional level*, ed. The Council of Europe et al. Budapest: Open Society Institute / The Council of Europe, 2005.

³ Based on the Government Finance Statistics Manual, available on <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/decentralization/fiscalindicators.htm>.

⁴ Davey, Kenneth. "Fiscal Decentralization in South-East Europe," in: *Effective democratic governance at local and regional level*, ed. The Council of Europe et al. Budapest: Open Society Institute / The Council of Europe, 2005, and Marcou, "Local and Regional Democracy".

Latvia	23,9%
Lithuania	20,8%
Macedonia	7,0%
Moldova	29,0%
Montenegro	14,0%
Poland	24,0%
Romania	25,0%
Serbia	25,0%
Slovakia	7,9%
Slovenia	11,2%

Table B2. National thresholds in Central and Eastern Europe at the latest national legislative elections.

Country	Thres hold	Special threshold for ethnic minorities	Remarks
Albania	2.5%	Ban on ethnic minority parties.	Mixed electoral system, threshold applies for the compensatory mandates; 4% for coalitions. The legal ban is not implemented for all minority parties.
Bulgaria	4%	Ban on ethnic minority parties.	The legal ban is not implemented for all minority parties.
Czech Republic	5%	No	10% for coalitions
Estonia	5%	No	Exceptions for district candidates who gain a vote share equivalent to one parliamentary seat.
Hungary	5%	No	Mixed system, threshold applies for proportional mandates; 10% or 15% for coalitions.
Latvia	5%	No	
Lithuania	5%	No	Mixed system, threshold applies for proportional mandates.
Moldova	6%	No	12% for coalitions, 3% for independent candidates.
Montenegro	3%	No threshold for the Ulcinj district	Special district without threshold in the municipality of Ulcinj, mainly populated by Albanians. Albanians not living in Ulcinj – along with other minorities (Bosnians, Serbs, etc.) are affected by the threshold requirement.
Poland	5%	0%	8% for coalitions.
Romania	5%	No	8-10% for coalitions. 18 special mandates for ethnic minorities.
Russia	5%	No	Mixed system, threshold applies for proportional mandates
Serbia	5%	No	(After the last elections, the threshold has been removed for ethnic minorities.)

Slovakia	5%	No	
Slovenia	(4%)	No	Threshold applies only for remaining mandates, which are accorded on the national level. Two of the countries' ethnic minorities vote in special non-territorial constituencies.
Ukraine	4%	No.	Threshold applies for proportional mandates.

No legal thresholds in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia.

Source: own database.

Appendix C. Elections, electoral laws and parties in the new European democracies: Sources for my database and remarks

General sources

Population data: Alesina, "Fractionalization", and Gurr, *Minorities at Risk*.

Electoral systems:

Jovanović, Milan. *Izborni sistemi postkomunističkih država* (Beograd: Službeni list SCG/Fakultet političkih nauka/Institut za političke studije, 2004), and Shvetsova, Olga. "A survey of post-communist electoral institutions: 1990-1998," *Electoral Studies* 18(3) (Sept. 1999): 397-409.

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- Punctual information on ethnic minority members in political parties executive board: <http://www.hidra.hr/stranke/501int4.htm>.

Czech Republic

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<http://www.radio.cz/en/article/26138>.

- Electoral results: University of Essex, Project on Political Transformation and the Electoral Process in Post-Communist Europe; <http://www.essex.ac.uk/elections/>.

Estonia

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Moldova

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Montenegro

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Slovenia

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Appendix D. Interdependency of the three main variables

- **Party nationalization** \Leftrightarrow **state centralization**: A regionalization of political parties may create the demand for government decentralization, whereas national political parties may be inclined to centralize the political competencies at the national level. On the other hand, centralized political competencies may incite political parties to create more national structures, and voters to vote for national parties. Regionalized political competencies, however, may give regional parties the opportunity to form, gain substantial power, and win votes.

- **Party nationalization** \Leftrightarrow **regional "ethnic" identities**: Distinct regional identities (regionalized ethnic diversity) may be the basis for regional political parties to win a significant basis of voters, while a national identity connected strongly to the central state may make it difficult for regional movements. On the other hand, regional political movements may provide a political agenda and program aimed at creating or stressing differences in regional identities. National

political movements, however, may support a harmonization and creation of a national identity (for instance a unified language¹), as a social basis for national political unity.

State centralization \Leftrightarrow **regional "ethnic" identities**: Decentralized institutions help to raise the awareness of regional distinctiveness among citizens. First, citizens may identify with public services; second, decentralization in the education sector allows differing curricula and helps, for instance, the promotion of distinct regional use of language or distinct regional views of history. Even national public services provided by central states might be an element of national identity building processes. Centralization allows the spread of a national image, particularly, if it creates a nationwide mass media, a national education curriculum with a harmonized language, and a common view of history. Sometimes, states use violence or incite migration in order to increase ethnic homogeneity. On the other hand, distinct regional identities may be used as a political argument for government decentralization. A strong national identity may be used as an argument for the centralization of competencies.

¹ For a discussion of language policies and ethnic minorities, see Daftary, Farimah and François Grin, *Nation-Building, Ethnicity and Language Politics in Transition Countries* (Budapest: European Centre for Minority Issues, 2003).