

Ethnic party competition in divided societies. The ethnic-nationalist dimension of elections in Central and Eastern Europe

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Why do voters in multi-ethnic contexts vote for radicalised political options? Do radical, nationalist politics reflect the political preferences of voters in such societies, or are there other explanations for the success of radical nationalists? The success of nationalist parties in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe is also driven by the ethnic context (Sikk & Bochsler, 2008; Stefanović, 2008; Bochsler, 2009). If there are strong ethnic grievances, voters in multi-ethnic places tend to cast more radical votes. This paper argues that voters are not necessarily more nationalist in multi-ethnic contexts, compared to homogeneous contexts. Instead, relying on spatial models of voting, it shows why voters in multi-ethnic contexts might rely on the nationalists as the strongest representatives of their own groups interest. Key aspects of the model are operationalised, by linking individual voters' data with aggregated data.

Introduction¹

Ethnic politics and heated elections around ethnic-nationalist issues continue preoccupying social science scholars. In Central and Eastern Europe and in the Caucasus, ethnicity is politically highly salient. Ethnic and nationalist issues are related to political struggles, but are also a recipe for voter mobilisation.

The question why ethnicity denominates political behaviour remains theoretically challenging (Chandra, 2004; Hale, 2008: chapter 3), while the degree of ethnic radicalisation of voters and parties remains almost a black hole in formal studies based on the spatial model of voting (see Rabushka & Shepsle, 1972 for a rare exception). Our theoretically inspired paper addresses the question how do voters and parties position themselves along the ethnic-nationalist dimension, and how do voters make their electoral choice on this axis?

Studying electoral competition along an ethnic-nationalist axis is more than old wine in new bottles: ethnically based electoral competition differs from other political axes, such as the economic left-right axis. The vote for radical parties cannot necessarily be explained with radical voter preferences. Rather, voters might expect that voters of the opposite ethnic group might vote for nationalists. In this situation, nationalist voting seeks to redress the balance by electing the extremists of their own group. This results in an ethnic outbidding process, where parties of different

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groups mutually radicalise. The application of spatial models of electoral competition to this domain should not become an end in itself. They explain radicalisation processes, and they show how the vicious circle of ethnic outbidding can be broken through institutions and external incentives.

Our model is tested with an empirical application on individual-level data and aggregated data from post-communist democracies. We rely on a few survey questions that measure the ethnic-nationalist dimension of voting, and we further compare the electoral competition across municipalities with a different ethnic structure.

State of research in the field

Numerous research fields in politics and international relations have underlined the importance of ethnicity and ethnic identities. Even if ethnic categories are considered to be constructed, ethnicity and ethnic heterogeneity have important consequences for stability and conflicts, economic prosperity, and society.² Likewise, ethnicity and ethnic divides – defined here mainly based on the ethnic self-identification of citizens³ – have served for the creation of political divides, being reflected in ethnically based political parties, and affecting voting behaviour (Horowitz, 1985; Birnir, 2007; Chandra, 2004, 2005; Van Cott, 2005; Norris, 2004: 209-229). When the ethnic conflict between two or more groups plays an overwhelmingly important role in political life, scholars speak of divided societies (Reilly, 2002; Grofman & Stockwell, 2003, to name a few), while in plural societies, ethnic groups co-exist, but ethnicity is not the dominating issue dimension for political decisions. Multi-ethnic parties which include ethnic minorities and the largest ethnic group in a country⁴ remain rare in divided societies, while they are stronger in plural societies, where ethnicity plays a weaker role in charting the course of politics (Nordlinger, 1972; Horowitz, 1985; Grofman & Stockwell, 2003).

Research in the field of ethnic representation in ethnically divided societies has emphasized the factors which motivate the creation and determine the success of ethnically based parties (Tronconi, 2006). The power-sharing school holds that proportional and decentralised institutions are best for divided societies, while majoritarian institutions exclude minorities from political power, leaving way for the dominance of the majority group (Sisk, 1996; Lijphart, 1968, 1994, 2004; Hartzell & Hoddie, 2003; see Andweg, 2000 for a review). In the US, research has focused particularly on the design of electoral districts and the resultant consequences for the representation of racial minorities in the US, not least because districting and the choice of the electoral system became the subject of a number of US court rulings (Gerber, Morton, & Rietz, 1998; Lublin, 1999; Scarrow, 1999;

² Among many others, see Rabushka & Shepsle (1972); Evans & Need (2002); Posner (2004); Putnam (2007); Huntington (1993). For a more reserved view, see Fearon & Laitin (2003).

³ Some authors base them on objective factors (or factors which are perceived to be objective) that help to distinguish groups of people, such as language, religion, race, or traditional habits and rites. This view is, however, contested.

⁴ Note that the term multi-ethnic parties is applied only to parties that include the main ethnic groups that make up part of the ethnic conflict (Horowitz, 1985: 299).

Richardson & Cooper, 2003, etc.).⁵ Some studies have been particularly interested in the institutional conditions that might allow for or incite the creation of a certain type of party, either those that aim for representing the interests of a certain ethnic minority (henceforth: ethnic minority parties) (Grofman & Stockwell, 2003; Lijphart, 1986; Moser, 2005; Rule & Zimmerman, 1994; Sisk & Reynolds, 1998; Bochsler, 2011), or of multi-ethnic parties which reject ethnically exclusive forms of representation (Horowitz, 1985, 1991, 2003; Reilly, 2001, 2002; Reynolds, 2006; Lardeyret, 1991).

The social cleavage model (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967) has framed questions dealing with ethnically based parties as the expression of a social conflict. If we apply the cleavage model on ethnicity, ethnic identity becomes an ascriptive characteristic of a political party, and parties can stand at either side of the ethnic divide (Enelow & Hinich, 1982). Further variation in positions – radicalisation or moderation – is not explained. Only a few studies have relied on spatial models of electoral competition in order to deal with ethnic and nationalist issues in formal models, and in order to explain radicalisation on ethnic questions. The seminal study of Rabushka and Shepsle (1972) could, unfortunately, not inspire many other scholars to follow their path. Their own investigation does not go beyond a general model, which does not allow for very accurate predictions. Further, the model assumes that in the presence of a salient ethnic conflict all voters of one ethnic group have the same political preferences, and all become extremists, which does not seem very realistic. We doubt that voter preferences are so homogeneous, and we relax the assumption that extremist positions of political actors need to reflect the voters' preferences on the ethnic-nationalist axis (see below). Others have relaxed these assumptions, but to our knowledge, they have looked only at majoritarian electoral systems (Glazer, Grofman, & Owen, 1998; McGann, Koetzle, & Grofman, 2002).

Even if the positioning of parties and voters in the issue space seems to be a topic that relies on a quantitative and rational choice logic to a large extent, most of the existing research addresses it from a qualitative perspective, mainly in the form of country studies.⁶ Many of the findings do not look promising for countries with a party system that is organised along the ethnic divide. A number of studies have reported processes of radicalisation, linked to the expectation of increased tension along ethnic conflict lines, but the explanations of this process differ. In one part of the literature, parties which are defined on ethnic grounds, or candidates that appeal to one ethnic group only, are characterised as ethnic separatists, and such ethnically split party systems are held responsible for radicalisation.⁷ Other studies argue that in situations of intra-group party competition, when several parties compete for the votes of the same ethnic group, a process of *ethnic outbidding* results. Parties with the most radical claims regarding the ethnic issue have the best chances of getting elected. Accordingly, parties will try to adopt more radical stances than their

⁵ Bogaards (2003) offers a slightly different view, focussing on African countries.

⁶ Horowitz (1985); Chandra (2005); Gormley-Heenan (2008); Mitchell (2006); Kubo (2007).

⁷ Horowitz (1985, 2003); Reynolds (2006); Reilly (2001); Reilly (2002), etc.

competitors, and “there is no premium on moderation” (Mitchell, 1995: 773, 779-780).⁸ This, however, is questioned by recent contributions, arguing that cross-cutting cleavages and multi-dimensional ethnic conflicts allow inter-ethnic alliances, so that an ethnic outbidding process, even in the case of intra-ethnic party competition, is all but self-evident (Chandra, 2005). This goes in line with the finding that in ethnically divided societies, alliances between the radicals are possible and help to convert hawks into doves (Mitchell et al., 2006; Gormley-Heenan & Macginty, 2008).

Other studies have found radicalisation processes in two-party systems. Looking at electoral behaviour in the US South, Key (1949) has shown that majority members are reluctant to support Democratic candidates if they perceive them to be too close to the black community. This, paradoxically, leads to an effect that Democrats, despite being heavily supported by the black population, have lower chances of being elected as the share of the black minority increases. More generally, studies on racial divides in the US have observed a racial backlash effect that occurs under majoritarian voting systems and in situations with two main competitors when the conflict is polarised. They have shown that higher shares of ethnic or racial minorities might lead to electoral outcomes which are worse for the minority (Key, 1949; Keech, 1968; Glazer et al., 1998, to mention a few). In post-communist countries, similar backlash processes have been found for elections under proportional representation (PR) (Sikk & Bochler, 2008; Stefanović, 2008; Konitzer, 2008).⁹ The theoretical explanation of the racial backlash effect mainly draws, however, on the logic of two-candidate majoritarian contests: voters of the ethnic or racial majority are reluctant to vote for a candidate that is supported by the minority, and in order to avoid this, they switch to the candidate which is opposed to minority rights (Glazer et al., 1998). It is all but obvious that the same effect should also manifest itself under PR, where more than two candidates are the rule, so that nobody needs to vote for a radical candidate in order to avoid his vote being spent on a candidate that is perceived to be too close to the minority.

Hence, the dynamic around the ethnic-nationalist axis appears to offer salient theoretical puzzles. The theoretical study of radicalisation on the ethnic-nationalist axis and additional empirical evidence should not become an end in itself. Rather, it should enable us to say more about the conditions under which a radicalisation of political positions might be expected or prevented.

Spatial models of party competition in ethnically divided societies

Ethnically motivated political conflicts have so far mainly been studied with qualitative classifications of party positions. Typically, parties' stances on ethnic and nationalist issues are denominated with attributes such as (ultra-)nationalist, chauvinist, fascist, radical right (for parties that support the dominance of the titular nation), or ethno-regional, autonomist, or separatist (for parties that want to strengthen minority rights). Parties promoting a “unitary, republican citizenship, in which

⁸ See also Horowitz (1985: 291, 357-358), Reilly (2002: 156), Sisk (1996: 17), Fearon (2006: 858-859), and Brancati (2006: 858), to name a few, with similar arguments.

⁹ Barany (2001: 4) provides anecdotal evidence for similar processes under PR.

aspects have been thoroughly studied from a qualitative perspective, we expect that a quantitative approach might be helpful, in order to compare effects across countries, and in order to test hypotheses about radicalisation more systematically.

The literature on electoral competition in ethnically divided societies has identified several processes of radicalisation. We shall explain them from the perspective of a spatial model of elections, and using a robust quantitative model, formulate expectations about the conditions in which radicalisation occurs, and why. Starting from this main axis of political orientation in ethnically divided societies, we develop three inter-connected models at different levels that help to understand electoral choices, party positioning,¹⁴ and party system formation.

Proximity, directional, and discount models

For the representation of voter preferences and party positions on a quantitative issue dimension, we employ the logic of spatial models of electoral competition, as proposed by Downs (1957). Spatial models rely on the idea that voters choose their favourite party, comparing their own preferences with the parties' positions in the issue space. The models differ, however, with regard to the crucial question how the voters decide which parties they favour. As a matter of space, we restrict this discussion to a very brief overview, and a short introduction into the model that we consider to be the most appropriate for the ethnic-nationalist issue dimension. In the Downsian proximity model, the voters chose the party that is the most proximate to their own position (Downs, 1957; Davis & Hinich, 1966; Davis, Hinich, & Ordeshook, 1970, etc.). The model has also been employed for the study of the strategic positioning of political parties and the format of party systems (McGann, 2002; Grofman, 2004). Alternatively, in the *directional model*, voters positively evaluate candidates or parties which are located on the same side of the status quo. More radical parties on their side score even better than moderates (Carroll, 1972; Rabinowitz & Macdonald, 1989; Reynolds, 1974).¹⁵ Similarly, Grofman's *discounted model* (1985) considers that voters might favour a political competitor that is more radical than they are, but this is explained through a discount factor. Voters discount the promised actions by a certain factor, and expect that the policy will move only moderately from the status quo (or another, neutral point) towards the direction of the electoral promises.

¹⁴ In the spatial models, the term 'political party' is used as equivalent to any electoral list or any candidature in a single-seat district. We do not further distinguish between political parties, other electoral lists, and candidates. In single-seat districts, the candidates' position is more relevant than the party's position. Likewise, non-partisan electoral lists or candidates are subsumed under the term political party, where not explained differently.

¹⁵ This pure form of the directional model has however experienced fierce critique, because extreme positions, according to this model, maximise the appeal to voters who are located on the same side of the political spectrum. For this reason, several modifications have been made to correct for this problem, and to connect the model with the proximity model (see as well Matthews, 1979; Merrill, 1993; Iversen, 1994; Merrill & Grofman, 1999)

Explaining radicalisation in spatial models

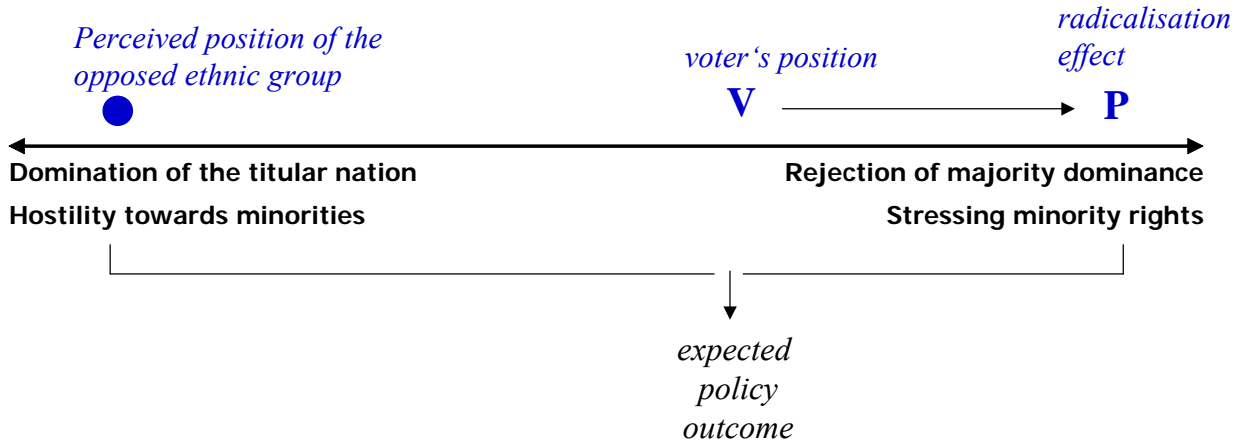
Based on the *discounted model*, we argue that voters in ethnically divided societies will prefer a candidate with more pronounced positions than their own. If voters in ethnically divided societies always selected the most proximate candidate, they would either be ill-advised, or their behaviour would not be fully rational. In divided societies, all communal groups are tied to the same policy, and they highly depend on each other. While the policy preferences of different groups vary widely, and the relationship between the groups is characterised by deep mistrust,¹⁶ political decisions will usually affect all groups. Politics in ethnically divided societies is often characterised as a zero-sum game so that any move towards the interests of one community will negatively affect others (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1972; Horowitz, 1991: 167-176; Sisk, 1996).

On the other hand, divided societies differ from ideal majoritarian democracies in that political power is never concentrated in the hands of one party or ethnic group alone. Institutional rules guarantee a power sharing between the opposed groups, and the minority is empowered through the control of municipalities or regions, or it gains power through extra-parliamentary opposition to the majority's plans. Accordingly, the policy outcomes are likely to be influenced by the representatives of several ethnic groups; elected representatives will either compromise with the opposite group, or try to out-balance its moves. Rational voters will consider this situation in their choice, and understand that parties will never fully implement their whole program, but only move the overall outcome towards their stance. Rational voters will thus try to anticipate the electoral choice of the opposite ethnic group. Among several otherwise equally preferred parties, they will select the one that will manage to move the overall outcome closest to their own preferences. Voting for a party with more radical positions than their own will help to reach this goal.¹⁷ In our model, we introduce a neutral point, which is the voters' anticipation of the electoral choice of the opposed ethnic group. With their electoral choice, they attempt to move the policy outcome away from this point.

Other factors (likeliness of inclusion into governing coalitions, international negotiations, but also avoiding zero-sum games) might contribute to a premium on moderation. We do not consider them for the present paper (we will conduct the analysis at the sub-national level, and assume that these effects are stable within a country).

¹⁶ See, among many others, Alesina and La Ferrara (2002); Putnam (2007); Bjørnskov (2007); Cheong et al. (2007). Hooghe et al. (2009) note that the lack of inter-ethnic trust is particularly relevant at the sub-national level.

¹⁷ Similarly, Kedar (2005) has shown that in political systems where the power is not concentrated within a political party, the policy outcome is a balance of the positions of the parties which hold relevant offices, and voters accordingly discount party positions.



Our idea mainly follows the Grofman discounted model,¹⁸ adding two additional parameters. The discounted model relies on the voter preferences v_i , the party position c_i , and a discount factor d , with $0 < d \leq 1$. It assumes that the neutral point is the status quo, which in the model is located in the origin. The utility of the voter to elect a certain party is noted as follows.

$$U(V, C) = -(v_i - dc_i)^2 \quad (1)$$

In our model, the discount factor d relies on the impact that voters attribute to their elected party in the political decision-making process. Different discount factors result from the relative importance of ethnic groups in different polities. Small groups have a low discount factor, which means that they expect their party only to have a minor impact on decision-making, while dominating groups have a high discount factor. In the hypothetical situation where a party might decide and implement policies as a sole political actor, the discount factor would be 1.

We amend this model through introduction of a neutral point N . As argued, N is not necessarily the status quo, as in the Grofman model, but in ethnically divided societies, where the different communities rely on each other, rather the anticipated electoral choice of the opposed ethnic group.

$$U(V, C) = -[(v_i - N) - d(c_i - N)]^2 = -(v_i - dc_i - (1 - d)N)^2 \quad (2)$$

Based on this equation, we can determine the ideal party position, thus where the utility $U(V, C)$ is maximal for our voter. This is the case if the squared term is equal to 0.

$$(v_i - dc_i - (1 - d)N) = 0 \quad (3)$$

$$\text{after transformation: } c_i = \frac{v_i}{d} - \left(\frac{1}{d} + 1\right)N \quad (4)$$

The electoral choice c_i is negatively related to the neutral point N . This means that if voters at one end of the ethnic-nationalist axis are expected to vote for extremist parties (if N becomes larger), voters at the other end of the axis will also tend to radicalise their electoral choice.

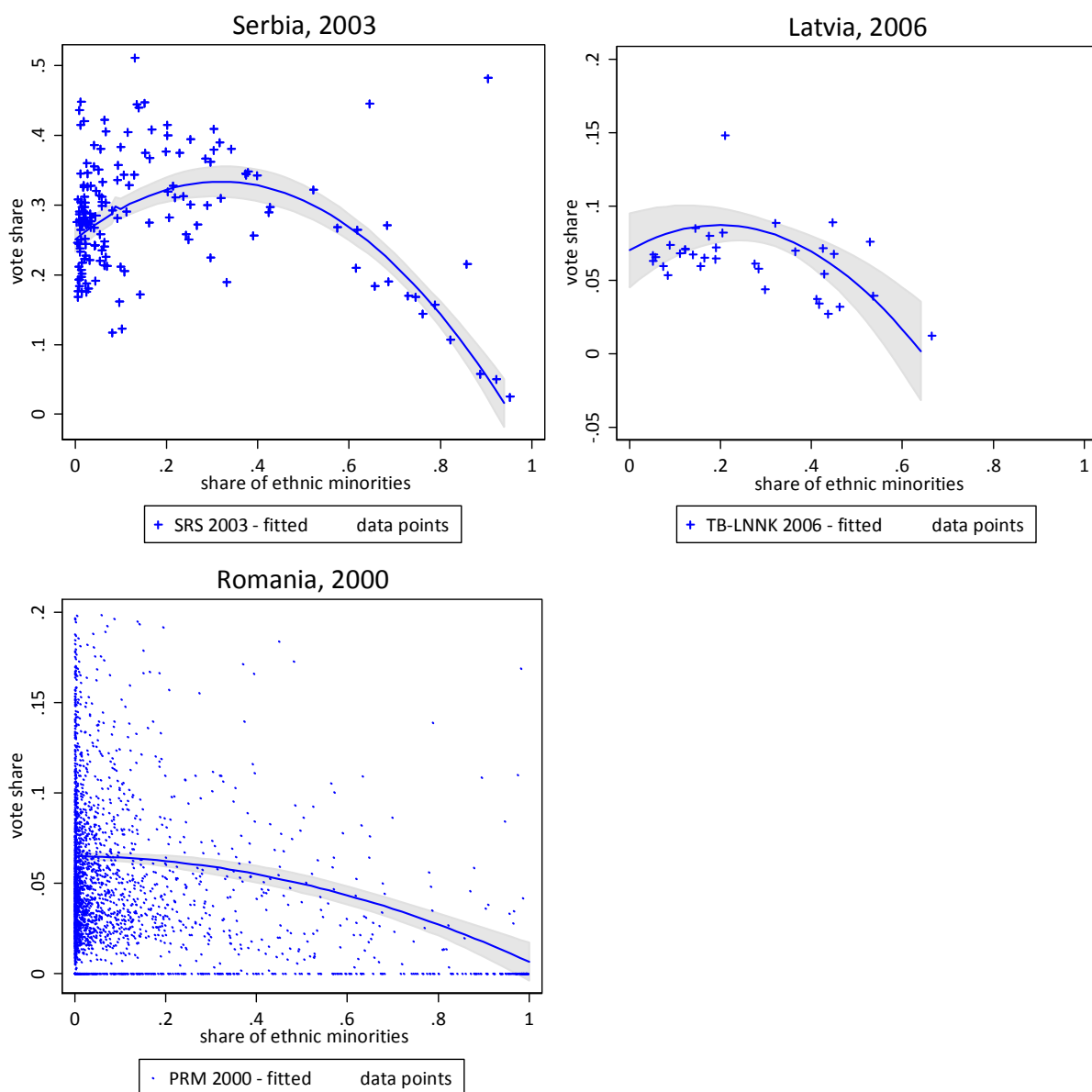
¹⁸ Variable notation according to Merrill & Grofman (1999).

In ethnically divided societies, the discount factor d is associated with the population share of the opposite ethnic group. If the opposite ethnic group is substantial in numbers, voters consider that their political opinion will substantially influence decisions, and accordingly discount the impact of their own ethnic group accordingly.

Empirical section

Empirical puzzle

Several investigations have shown that an effect of ethnic radicalisation can be found also under proportional electoral systems in multi-ethnic countries in Central and Eastern Europe. For instance, in national parliamentary elections, nationalist political parties of the titular nation (ethnic majority)



Figures 1a-1c: The curvilinear effect of the share of ethnic minorities on the vote share of nationalist parties of the ethnic majority: a) Parliamentary elections in Serbia, 2003 (Serbian Radical Party) (Bochsler, 2009), b) Parliamentary elections in Latvia, 2006 (TB-LNNK) (Sikk & Bochsler, 2008), c) local council elections in Romania, 2000 (PRM*). Models reported in the appendix. Control variables at mean.

* Data points censored at 20% vote share.

gain considerably larger vote shares in mixed-ethnic environments, compared to ethnic homogeneous environments. One way of showing this relationship is plotting the vote share of nationalist political parties against the population structure of municipalities. If members of ethnic minorities vote only rarely for nationalist political parties, then the relationship between the share of an ethnic minority and the vote share for ethno-nationalist parties of the titular nation is a curvilinear one (see figures 1a-1c) (Grofman & Handley, 1995).

Operationalisation

We further look at the question whether the election of nationalist parties in ethnically mixed municipalities is due to the radicalised preferences in mixed environments, or whether it is due to other effects – such as a discounted voting model applied by voters in multi-ethnic countries. Therefore, we are interested whether these effects emerge even if voters are not more leaning towards nationalist preferences in mixed-ethnic contexts. The operationalisation of the model with individual survey data requires, however, a couple of compromises, as ideal data are not available. We need to rely on a survey, which considers the positioning of voters on ethnic-nationalist issues. Ideally, we should also have survey data for local or regional elections, both from homogeneous and multi-ethnic environments, held simultaneously within the same country. However, as such data does not exist, to our knowledge, we look at national elections. Despite many limits, this might give us some preliminary evidence whether the expected effect might be found.

Relevant questions are hard to come by in cross-national voter surveys, and certain surveys do not contain any information about the locality or region where voters live. If relevant questions are available, it is questionable whether they focus solely on political positions related to ethnic issues, or whether they contain also other dimensions, which would bias our results.

For instance, the World Value Survey, which includes numerous countries in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Caucasus, allows respondents to express their attitude towards ethnic issues on a 10-point-scale, asking them whether they agree with the statement that "*ethnic diversity enriches life*". – While the question certainly points on a key issue of the ethnic-nationalist dimension of politics, it might not only ask people about their political opinion, but it might also contain aspects of their personal experience of ethnic diversity. Citizens living in mixed-ethnic regions, where they can experience ethnic diversity, and where ethnic diversity can potentially enrich their life, answer this question much more positively than in homogeneous areas (Figure 2). This is little astonishing, because indeed there is little objective reason why life of citizens living in ethnically homogeneous areas should be enriched by ethnic diversity.

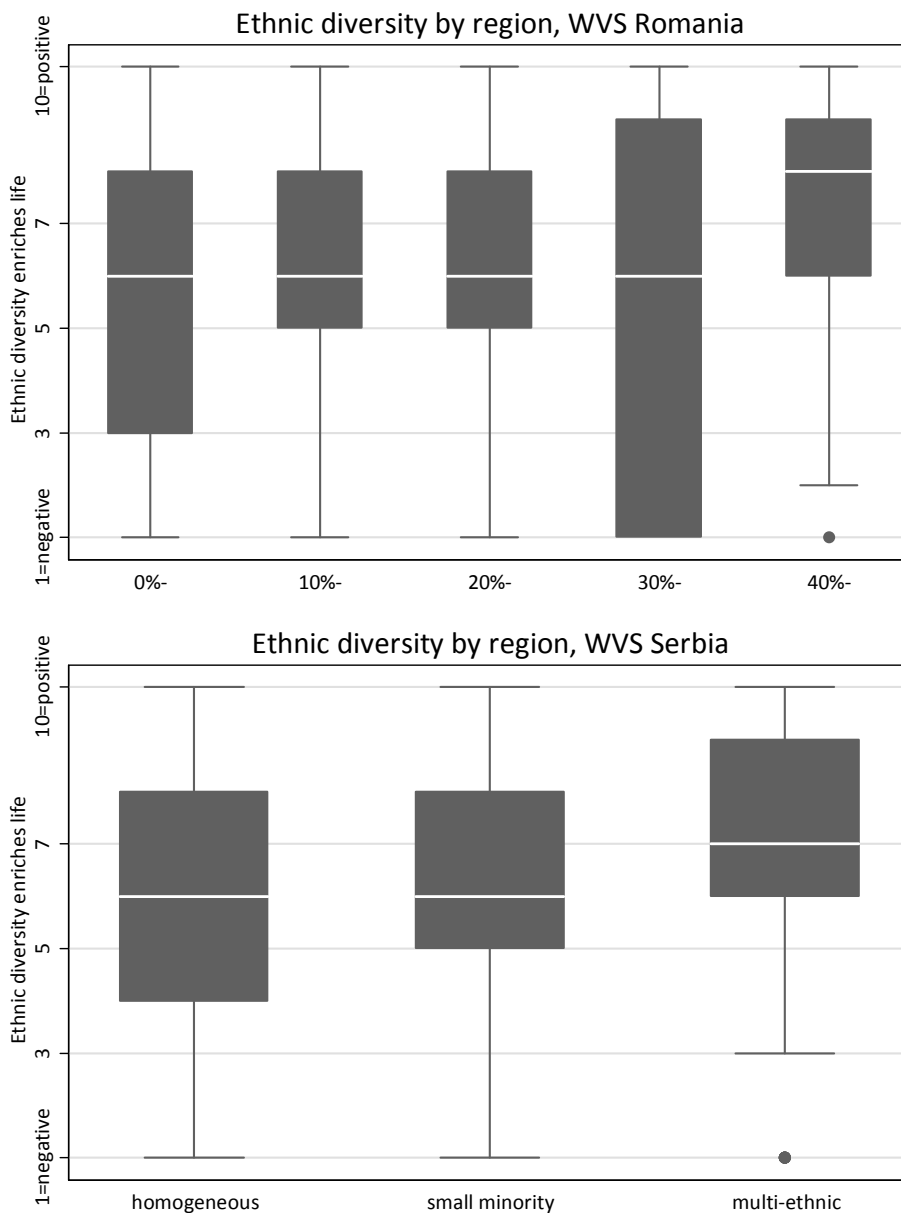


Figure 2: Attitude towards ethnic diversity by ethnic diversity in region. Only ethnic Romanian / ethnic Serbian respondents. Source World Value Survey, 2005.

Some more politically questions, relating to immigrants, are certainly relevant for studies of nationalist mobilisation in Western Europe, but immigration is no relevant issue in Central and Eastern Europe, where domestic minorities (or, in the Baltic states, those who immigrated in large numbers half a century ago) are the target of nationalists. Other surveys, again, do not provide information on the region or home municipality of respondents, so that we lack a key variable to operationalise our model.

Therefore, we aimed at gathering punctual evidence from national surveys. We could get most relevant data in a survey of 1569 adult citizens in Serbia, on "values and identities of citizens of Serbia in the context of European integration" ("Vrednosti i identiteti građana Srbije u kontekstu

evropskih integracija”).¹⁹ The survey includes information about opinions on several ethnic-nationalist issues, about the region, and about their electoral choice in the 2008 parliamentary elections, which were held simultaneously with local elections, and – in the multiethnic province Vojvodina – with regional elections.²⁰

We measure preferences on ethnic-nationalist issues based on ten questions, which reflect important aspects of this axis. Questions are linked to the different views of multi-ethnicity in Serbia, but we also include questions related to decentralisation and territorial autonomy, arguably the most important and disputed topic of minority rights in Serbia (the issue is sensitive, as it might create regions with a high share of minorities and an autonomous status) (table 1). We also include a question related to the Serbian Orthodox Church, given that the construction of the Serbian ethnic identity is based mainly on religious grounds. Hatred and war atrocities were backed by the official church, and still nationalist and racist extremists rely on the church’s support. We employ the emanating factor with the strongest *eigenvalue*, in order to define our ethnic-nationalist axis.²¹

	Factor loading (factor 1)	Uniqueness
Serbs, being the national majority in this country, should have more rights than other ethnic groups. <i>Srbi kao većinski narod u državi treba da imaju veća prava od drugih naroda.</i>	0.5305	0.6490
Serbia should be a country of all its citizens, regardless of their ethnic identity. <i>Srbiju treba urediti kao državu svih njenih građana, bez obzira na nacionalno...</i>	-0.5927	0.5099
One should not be friends with people from other ethnic groups, even if their are expressing their friendliness. <i>Ne treba se družiti sa ljudima drugih nacija, čak i kada se prikazuju kao pri...</i>	0.4693	0.6947
I appreciate that there are people from diverse ethnic and cultural identities in my country. <i>Dobro je što u mojoj zemlji postoje ljudi različitih nacija i kultura</i>	-0.6085	0.5023
Only centralised institutions guarantee stability and progress for state and society. <i>Samo centralizovana vlast može obezbediti stabilnost i napredak države i društva.</i>	0.4884	0.6395
Decentralisation brings the state closer to the people and allows him an easier life. <i>Putem decentralizacije vlast postaje bliža čoveku i olakšava mu život.</i>	-0.5151	0.5669
In Serbia, special regions should be established (e.g. Šumadija, Sandžak) ... <i>U Srbiji treba uspostaviti posebne regione (npr. Šumadija, Sandžak...) koji t...</i>	-0.3989	0.6540
The competences that were recently given to Vojvodina endanger Serbia’s sovereignty. <i>Ovlašćenja koja su nedavno data Vojvodini ugrozila su suverenitet Srbije.</i>	0.3946	0.7596
National customs and traditions should be strictly followed. <i>Treba se čvrsto držati narodnih običaja i tradicije</i>	0.1547	0.5703
The moral prescribed by the church should be followed. <i>Treba se držati onog morala kojeg propoveda naša Crkva</i>	0.1043	0.5577

Table 1: Questions included for the estimation of ethnic-nationalist axis. Each question is scaled from 1 (do not agree) to 5 (agree). Data: Cesid.

¹⁹ I am grateful to the Centre for Free Elections and Democracy Cesid for providing me access to the data. Details about the sampling not provided. Cesid selects 165 sampling locations in Serbia (without Kosovo), from where interviews are conducted.

²⁰ We could find similar survey data for Bosnia and Herzegovina, but there are only a few hundred respondents by ethnic group, so that the model is too complex for this dataset.

²¹ Only ethnic Serbian respondents included. The results are hardly affected if all respondents are included.

Although we know that in multi-ethnic environments there is a considerably larger number of voters for radical nationalist parties, respondents seem not to be more nationalist in ethnically diverse municipalities (right-hand side) than in rather homogeneous regions (left-hand side) (Figure 3). Rather, the share of non-nationalists is more frequent in multi-ethnic municipalities.

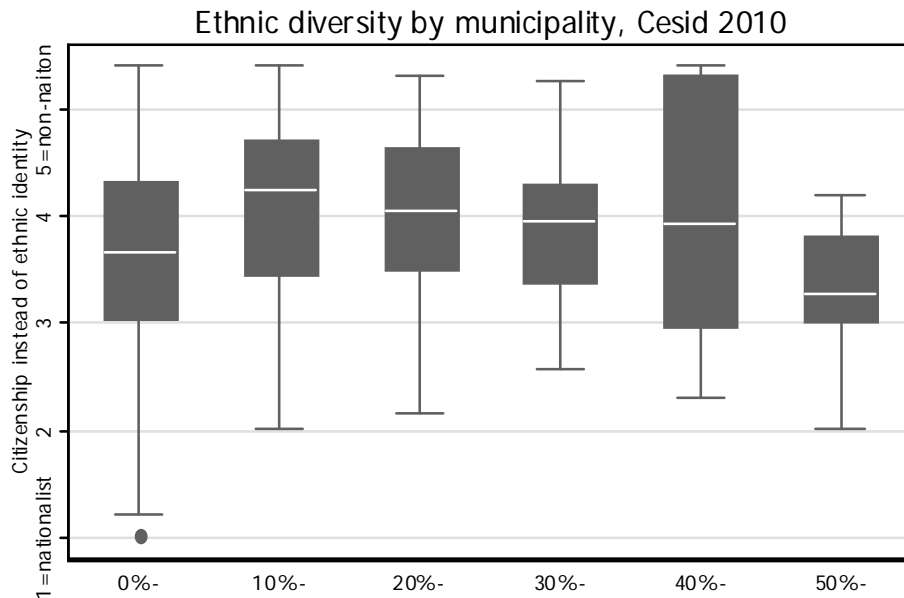


Figure 3: Distribution of the location of citizens on the ethnic-nationalist axis, by share of ethnic minorities in their municipality. Data: Cesisid.

It seems impossible to find survey data which does not only measure voters' positions on the ethnic-nationalist dimension and their ethnic group and home region, but also their perception of the party position. Therefore, we assume that different perceptions of political parties do not bias our results. For this investigation, the most important concerns with this assumption is that political parties might alter their position on ethnic diversity across regions, depending on the share of ethnic minorities. Serbia is, however, a country with heavily centralised political parties, and regional branches do not have the liberty to take autonomous positions.²² Also, differences in vote shares between national and local elections are minor in degrees {Bochsler, 2009 #5151}. And, most importantly, we can still measure whether the expectation that voters with the same preferences vote more radical if they live in ethnically diverse environments, holds.

We investigate voting behaviour using two questions as our dependent variable. From the survey that was conducted in 2010, we use a question that relates to voting behaviour in the 2008 parliamentary elections in Serbia, and one that measures voting intentions in 2010. In young democracies, the party landscape might undergo quick changes, and the party system of 2010, when

²² One expert told us, however, that the Vojvodina branch of the Democratic Party (DS) might be slightly more in favour of regional autonomy than the central office of the same party.

the survey was conducted, changed since the last elections. This mainly refers to the nationalist camp, where the DSS-NS went into opposition in 2008, and has positioned more clearly as a nationalist party; the ultra-nationalist pole, the Serbian Radicals (SRS) have split, and many of their personnel formed the more pragmatic Serbian Progress Party (SNS). Their former allies, the Socialist Party (SPS), have joined the pro-European government, and are nowadays not any more a credible representative of nationalist ideas of Greater Serbia. For each of the two dependent variables, we distinguish four party groups (and a remote category 'others').

Party groups in 2008

- DS-G17+-LDP: Pro-European, tolerant parties
- SRS: main ultra-nationalist pole
- DSS-NS: nationalist-conservative option
- SPS: Socialists; used to be allied to ultra-nationalists, JS split-off of ultra-national party, but do not stress their nationalist past

Party groups in 2010

- DS-LDP-G17+-SPO: Pro-European, tolerant parties
- SPS-JS: Socialists; ambiguous position; used to be allied to ultra-nationalists, JS split-off of ultra-national party, but reformed, do not any more stress those positions, and aim at becoming European Social Democratic party
- SNS new main nationalist-conservative party, split-off of the pragmatic part of the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radicals, aims at becoming a conservative European party, but difficult to position
- SRS-DSS-NS other nationalist and ultra-nationalist parties

Figure 4 shows the location of voters of different party groups on the ethnic-nationalist axis. We see that the positions correspond with the classification of the parties. Voters of the DS-lead party bloc tend to be the most non-nationalists, whereas SRS voters, followed by DSS-NS and SPS, lean towards the nationalist pole (in 2008). We also distinguish voters in homogeneous areas and in multi-ethnic areas, and we find the voters of nationalist parties, especially SRS and DSS-NS, tend to be closer to the non-nationalist pole in ethnically mixed environments, compared to ethnic homogeneous ones. This is in line with the expectations: In mixed-ethnic municipalities, even slightly nationalist voters might vote for nationalist parties.

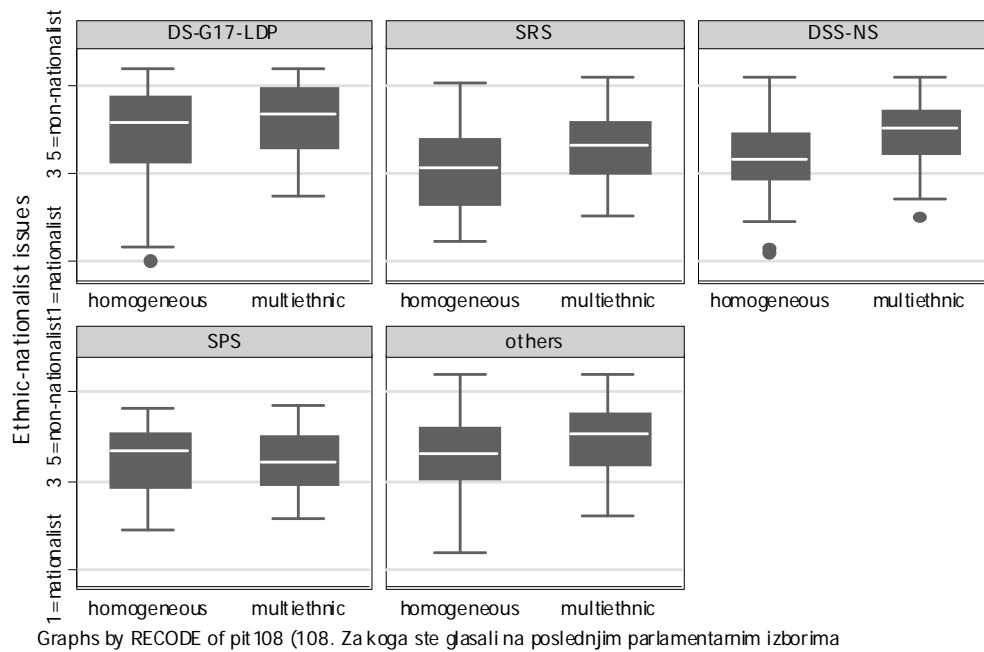


Figure 4: Distribution of the location of citizens on the ethnic-nationalist axis, by party bloc (in 2008), and by share of ethnic minorities in their municipality. Data: Cesis.

However, we also want to test the hypotheses in a multivariate model, including a further set of variables. We transform the measure of the share of ethnic minorities. The inclusion of the share of ethnic minorities would imply a linear effect of ethnic minorities, and results would be highly driven by a few respondents in minority-majority municipalities (>50% ethnic minorities). While it is fair to believe that the effect is a monotonous one, hence, more ethnic minorities lead to more radical voting behaviour, we do not think that it should be linear. Rather, the difference – once a considerable share of ethnic diversity is reached – should be rather one of degree. We chose a logarithmic transformation of the minority share (e), $e' = \ln(e+0.1)$. The variable is standardised, so that ethnic homogeneous municipalities are assigned the value 0, and those with xxx minority share (two standard deviations from 0) are assigned the value 1. As control variables, we include the level of education, age, and income. Both education and income are categorical variables with an ordinal scale. We only include citizens who declare as ethnic Serbians (xxx % of the respondents), as an inclusion of members of minorities would require further differentiation of their voting behaviour.

Given that voters make a choice between different parties, results are estimated with multinomial probit/logit.²³

Due to the complexity of interpreting the outputs of multinomial logit/probit models, we also visualise the logit results in separate graphs (Figure 5).

²³ To check for a possible violation of the assumption of independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA), repeated Hausman and Small-Hsiao tests were conducted for the multinomial logit models. The Small-Hsiao test indicates that the IIA alternative is not violated, Hausman tests, however, suggest that the assumption is violated. Therefore, we also ran multinomial probit models. Results are roughly the same under both models. Graphs were drawn based on the results of the logit models.

vote (intention)	last elections (of 2008)								current preference in elections (2010)							
	SRS		DSS-NS		SPS		others		SRS-DSS-NS		SPS-JS		SNS		others	
	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.
opinion on diversity share minority (transformed)	-.743**	.086	-.507**	.099	-.555	.104	-.371**	.066	-.711**	.095	-.400**	.105	-.396**	.077	-.251**	.067
opinion on diversity * share minority (transf.)	.808	.786	.627	.903	1.641(*)	.918	.725	.651	.611	.851	2.32*	.94	1.44*	.738	.824	.665
age (years)	.092*	.046	.104(*)	.053	.307**	.058	.059(*)	.035	.132**	.050	.203**	.056	.075(*)	.052	-.019	.035
education	-.335**	.069	-.168*	.079	-.252**	.083	-.224**	.053	-.244**	.075	-.222**	.086	-.260**	.063	-.154**	.054
income	-.017	.041	-.030	.049	.001	.040	.065*	0.29	.006	.045	-.058	.054	-.073(*)	.038	.067*	.030
_cons	2.67	.41	-1.39	.960	.503	.500	2.45	.32	1.91	.44	.454	.500	1.79	.375	1.71	.33
N	1325								1325							
Wald χ^2	203.77								168.83							
Pseudo R ²																

Table 2: Multinomial probit regression models, explaining party choice in the 2008 elections, and party preference in 2010.

Base outcome: DS-G17+-LDP (-SPO)

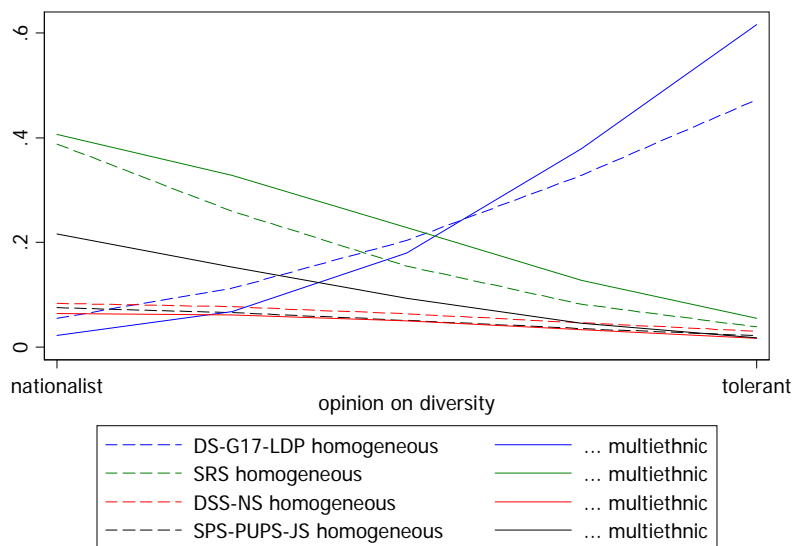
vote (intention)	last elections (of 2008)								current preference in elections (2010)							
	SRS		DSS-NS		SPS		others		SRS-DSS-NS		SPS-JS		SNS		others	
	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.	Coef.	R s.e.
opinion on diversity share minority (transformed)	-1.11**	.131	-.792**	.177	-.849**	.171	-.514**	.086	-1.17**	.159	-.608**	.179	-.575**	.113	-.358**	.088
opinion on diversity * share minority (transf.)	1.16	1.17	1.01	1.71	2.57(*)	1.46	.900	.864	1.07	1.42	3.73*	1.51	2.06(*)	1.08	1.07	.896
age (years)	.137*	.069	.172(*)	.089	.556**	.101	-.063	.044	.216**	.081	.367**	.099	.108(*)	.060	-.019	.046
education	-.482**	.105	-.210	.133	-.350**	.136	-.284**	.067	-.367**	.122	-.326*	.147	-.372**	.092	-.206**	.069
income	-.041	.063	-.076	.087	-.029	.085	.073*	.036	-.001	.074	-.129	.099	-.116*	.057	.078*	.037
_cons	4.02	.61	1.41	.83	.351	.843	3.27	.425	3.13	.725	.439	.862	2.63	.55	2.37	.43
N	1325								1325							
LR χ^2	235.81								190.22							
Pseudo R ²	.071								.054							

Table 3: Multinomial logit regression models, explaining party choice in the 2008 elections, and party preference in 2010.

Base outcome: DS-G17+-LDP (-SPO)

- In 2008, in line with our expectations, the ultra-nationalists (SRS) and their allies (SPS-JS) are stronger in multi-ethnic environments, even after controlling for the effect of ethno-nationalist voter preferences. The non-nationalist bloc around the DS is weaker among nationalist voters, especially in multi-ethnic environments, but the same is not the case for non-nationalist voters.
- In 2010, as expected, the nationalist parties are the winners in multi-ethnic environments, even after controlling for voter preferences. This time, voters in multi-ethnic municipalities are more favourable to SNS and to SPS-JS, compared to voters in homogeneous environments, whereas the non-nationalists around DS are stronger in homogeneous municipalities. The effect appears weaker and not significant for the SRS-DSS-NS parties.

2008 elections



Election preference in 2010

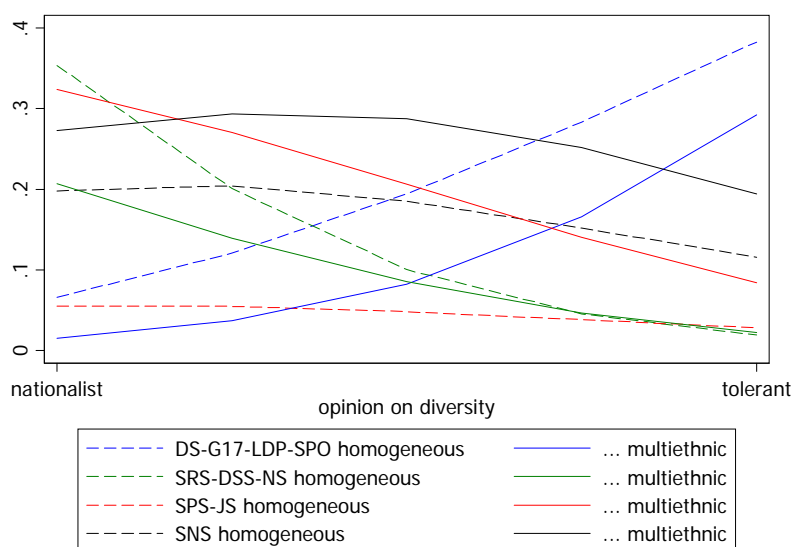


Figure 5: predicted probability for party vote in 2008 parliamentary elections in Serbia. Results of multinomial logit model (reported in table 3). Data: Cesis. Control variables for level of education, age, and income are hold at mean.

The analysis offers some preliminary results, which do not dismiss the hypotheses. However, evidence is weak. In the models looking at the past elections of 2008, the key variable, measuring the difference between in voting behaviour between municipalities of different minority shares, is statistically significant only at the low 90% level. However, effects are statistically significant in the models explaining the current electoral preference (of 2010). This gives us some initial evidence that in Serbia, the effect of ethno-nationalist radicalisation in ethnically mixed environment is not due to initial voter preferences. Rather, the effect is produced in the electoral process. Our model suggests that this might be the case, because they anticipate adversary voting behaviour of the members of the other ethnic group, and to compensate for, vote for candidates who are more radical than themselves.

(Non-)Availability of data does not only restrict our study of individual voting behaviour to one country, but also does not allow us to fully operationalise our model. We lack information about the positioning of political parties in the voters' perception (a variable usually included into discounted models of voting). Knowing that parties in Serbia are heavily centralised, we can assume that their position does not vary across regions, and keeping this in mind, it would be hard to come up with an alternative explanation, based on the voters' perception of political parties, which would need to suggest that nationalist parties are perceived less radical in multi-ethnic contexts than in homogeneous contexts. Also, we need to operationalise our model looking at national elections, instead of local or regional elections. Therefore, this paper might be accused of concept stretching. Our key argument was that in multi-ethnic environments, voters anticipate that political power will be shared with minorities. This refers to local and regional, rather than the national government (where the power sharing argument would be equally valid for the whole country, and not vary by region). However, the finding that the effect that is supposed to work at the local and regional level also travels to national elections only reinforces the potential relevance of our model.

Discussion

New ideas presented in this paper provide innovations on theoretically driven applications for spatial models of elections. The discussion over which of the different logics of spatial models (proximity, directional, or discounted) is the most appropriate one has so far mostly been driven by general considerations. Empirical applications have either relied on the most accepted proximity model or on a combination of several spatial models. Following many other empirical studies, we assume that a mix of the proximity and the directional model might explain the empirical reality best. However, as one of the first applications, we introduce theoretically motivated parameters that determine which model applies (and to what extent). And we extend Grofman's discounted model, arguing that the neutral point, against which voters are discounting party positions, is *not* the status quo.

These theoretical innovations regarding spatial models allow us to also come up with new suggestions on electoral competition and party systems in ethnically divided societies. Our approach

goes beyond a quantitative expression of the well-known effects of radicalisation. Rather, our model allows us to come up with more sophisticated predictions about ethnic radicalisation effects compared to previous studies. We can derive conditions under which the radicalisation process will manifest itself. This is also an important basis for the literature based on spatial models that discusses the possibilities of avoiding radicalisation.

Empirical data at the aggregate level suggest that a process of radicalisation, which our model expects, takes place in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe, especially in multi-ethnic environments. However, voter surveys do usually not ask appropriate questions to fully operationalise a discounted model of voting along an ethno-nationalist axis. However, we could find key question, which allow us a partial operationalisation, in a national survey that was conducted in 2010 in Serbia. It does not only allow us to measure the voters' attitudes on ethnic-nationalist issues, but also their party political preferences, and we could also link this data to the ethnic structure of their municipalities. Indeed, this data allows the preliminary conclusion that the hypothesised effect might exist. Further work, relying on better measures of voters and parties' positions on ethnic-nationalist issues, might hopefully bring more evidence on this phenomenon.

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Appendix: Aggregate data models

We analyse the vote share for nationalist political parties of ethnic majorities (dependent variable) (v), by municipality. We expect that the vote share varies with the structure of the local population.

Our model assumes first that nationalist parties do not get considerable support from ethnic minorities, or at least that this support is lower than among the ethnic majority. This would lead to the following model, where α measures the support of the majority voters, and β_1 is expected to be negative, measuring the difference in support among the minority.

$$v = \alpha + \gamma_1 \cdot \text{minority} + \varepsilon$$

However, we also expect that voters tend to vote more radical in ethnically diverse environments, and therefore, the vote share of nationalist parties *among the ethnic majority population* increases with the share of ethnic minorities. This implies that the behaviour of voters belonging to the majority ($1 - \text{minority}$) might be affected by the minority share (*minority*), so that the radicalisation effect would be captured by the following function (Grofman and Handley 1995).

$$v = \alpha + \gamma_2 \cdot (1 - \text{minority}) \cdot \text{minority} + \varepsilon$$

We transform this, as follows

$$v = \alpha + \gamma_2 \cdot (\text{minority} - \text{minority}^2) + \varepsilon$$

Combined with the previous formula, this results in the following term:

$$v = \alpha + \beta_1 \cdot \text{minority} + \beta_2 \cdot \text{minority}^2 + \varepsilon,$$

where $\beta_1 = \gamma_1 + \gamma_2$, and $\beta_2 = -\gamma_2$, so that $\gamma_1 = \beta_1 + \beta_2$.

Tests are carried out using Goodman regressions for aggregated data, including quadratic terms to measure the interaction of group and context-specific effects. As control variables, we include the size of the municipality (number of inhabitants) or the population density, as a proxy for rural areas, and in one case the unemployment rate, to capture economic effects. Municipalities are weighted by their population size, in order to avoid an overly large influence of very small municipalities.

Election	Serbia, 2003 parliamentary elections				Romania, 2000, Local councils		Latvia, 2006, parliamentary elections	
	SRS Coef.	S.E.	Ultra-nationalist bloc (SRS, SPS, SSJ) Coef.	S.E.	PRM Coef.	S.E.	TB-LNNK Coef.	S.E.
minority	.523	.071	.337	.083	-.003	.013	.173	.057
minority ²	-.821	.085	-.757	.098	-.056	.015	-.436	.078
population(log)	-.013	.006	-.042	.007	.006	.000		
unemployment rate							-.090	.146
population density (log)							.008	.004
constant	.390	.068	.840	.080	.001	.004	.041	.017
N	163		163		2951		33	
R ²	.302		.404		.125		.529	

Table A1: Goodman (OLS) regressions, in order to estimate the local support of nationalist parties. Several countries and elections.