

UNDERSTANDING THE NATIONALIZATION OF PARTY SYSTEMS IN WESTERN EUROPE

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A mis padres, a los que tanto debo y tan pocas veces se lo recuerdo...

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Abstract

This thesis is focused on the nationalization of party systems in Western Europe and combines four different approaches. Despite the literature claiming that political decentralization reduces party system nationalization, the first paper shows that this effect depends on the level of personalism that the electoral system allows. The second article shows a new effect of the nationalization of party systems. This variable is shown to be a crucial element to explain turnout differences across districts within a country. The third article of this thesis is centered on the impact of the electoral system on party system nationalization through a crucial-experimental approach based on electoral reforms in Western Europe. Finally, the last part of the thesis focuses on describing and analyzing the nationalization of political parties in Spain, paying particular attention to differences among national and subnational parties.

Resumen

Esta tesis doctoral está centrada en la nacionalización de los sistemas de partidos en Europa Occidental desde cuatro perspectivas diferentes. Una hipótesis clásica de la literatura es que la descentralización política reduce la nacionalización. En el primer artículo se muestra que el efecto de esta variable depende de que haya un grado suficiente de personalismo en el sistema electoral. En el segundo artículo se demuestra un nuevo efecto de la nacionalización de los sistemas de partidos; esta variable determina las diferencias en la participación electoral entre distritos dentro de un mismo país. El tercer artículo se aproxima al fenómeno mediante experimentos cruciales centrados en las reformas del sistema electoral en Europa Occidental a fin de estimar su efecto sobre la nacionalización. Finalmente, el último artículo analiza la nacionalización de los partidos en España y sus principales determinantes, distinguiendo particularmente entre partidos de ámbito nacional y subnacional.

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“Como enjambres copiosos de moscas que en la primaveral estación vuelan agrupadas por el establo del pastor, cuando la leche llena los tarros, en tan gran número reuniéronse en la llanura los melenudos aqueos, deseosos de acabar con los troyanos.”

La Ilíada [Canto II: 469]

“The territorial distribution of social groups is a crucial dimension of conflict, as well as of conflict solution”

Caramani [2004: 289]

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The territorial distribution of political parties has been one of the key “black boxes” of political science research. Scholars have assumed that, by definition, political parties have nationalized structures; that they compete everywhere in a polity. However, empirical evidence has demonstrated how misleading this assumption is. Countries like Spain, Switzerland or the United Kingdom present strong regional parties that compete only in particular constituencies of the nation, highlighting the fact that nationalized party systems cannot be taken for granted. Furthermore, depending on the country, party system nationalization does not always evolve in parallel. Despite the fact that countries such as Denmark or Sweden have tended to homogenize their party systems across districts in recent decades, Belgium has gone in the opposite direction by decomposing its party system, which virtually split across linguistic lines during the 1970’s and the ’80s. Thus, it seems clear that the extent to which

politics and party systems are nationalized is important for electoral democracies and cannot be dismissed as an “automatic dynamic” in party system formation. This dissertation focuses on filling this gap.

Despite the fact that party systems nationalization has only been in the research agenda for the last 15 years, this concept has a long political science tradition. Schattschneider (1960) first addressed the topic by establishing the extent to which United States’ parties have achieved nationalization in his book *The Semisovereign People: A Realist’s View of Democracy in America*, later revisited by Stokes (1975). In Europe, Rokkan’s studies about cleavages (1970) established the precedent for future studies about nationalization but, in any case, scholars did not assess the territorial dimension of politics until decades later. This necessarily raises the question about why party system nationalization has almost been completely ignored by Academy since the time of those seminal works. The answer lies in the influential approach of party system formation established by Duverger (1954). According to Duvergerian theory, first past-the-post systems under plurality rule encourage the formation of two party systems.¹ Although Duverger claimed that his argument could only be applied at the district level, he expected this tendency to be automatically transferred in a simple way to national level. He assumed that political parties’ centralization and their natural predisposition to view political problems from a national standpoint would prevail in any circumstances; thereby transferring local to national (Duverger, 1954: 288).

The most significant consequence of this theoretical assumption was that almost all the following research - aside of some remarkable exceptions (Rose and Urwin, 1975) - studied the party systems as if it were operating in a single nationwide district. However, several decades later, Duverger’s theories were revisited by Cox’s prominent research *Making Votes Count* (1997), in which district and national mechanisms were identified separately. As a consequence, Duvergerian logic was re-allocated at the local level and the creation of national party systems was conceived as a

¹ This statement is known as Duverger’s Law (1954). Duverger also developed the hypothesis that the double ballot majority system and proportional representation tend to encourage multipartism. Later, he established that this hypothesis should be considered as law (Duverger, 1986: 70-1)

different and subsequent stage. At the district level a first process coordination takes place - first among elites and then among voters - leading to a number of parties which tend to not exceed $M+1$, where M is district magnitude (Cox, 1997, 1999).² It is in the second stage when these local parties merge and forge nationwide organizations. The implication is therefore that local and national mechanisms should be disentangled because, as some scholars have remarked: “Theories that link electoral system type to party competition at the district level (...) are not sufficient; we also need to have theories that can take us from district level effects to national level outcomes” (Grofman et al., 2009: 4).

The limitation of local mechanisms in understanding party nationalization can be clearly expressed. The $M+1$ rule determines the maximum number of expected parties at the local level. However, this rule provide no clue about how many national parties should be present in a given polity because the $M+1$ rule can only predict a potential upper limit to the maximum number of national parties. If only local coordination takes place, the number of national parties would be $M+1$ multiplied by the number of districts in which the polity is divided. Of course, empirical evidence shows that the number of national parties is clearly below this critical limit and points out that a second stage of coordination takes place when local parties merge across district lines.

As Cox succinctly concluded: “We know a fair amount about district-level electoral coordination [and in parliament] but we know much less about the intermediate stage of coordination, in which potentially separate local parties and party systems merge to some degree, forming a national party system” (Cox, 1999: 160). This thesis dissertation explicitly addresses this second stage of party system formation that has been far less studied both from an empirical and theoretical perspective. So, what this thesis offers is a better understanding of the main causes and consequences of coordination of cross-district coordination or, put it in other words, the main causes and consequences of the nationalization of party systems.

² The conditions for that are perfect information and short-term instrumental rationality.

1.1. The concept and its measurement

The nationalization of party systems, also known as linkage (Cox, 1999) or party aggregation (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; 2004), has been defined as a process through which “the highly localized and territorialized politics (...) is replaced by national electoral alignments and oppositions. Peripheral and regional specificities disappear, and sectional cleavages progressively transform into nationwide functional alignments” (Caramani, 2004: 1). This process involves the formation of a national structure of party systems. In general, when the nationalization of party systems is addressed as an output, it is usually measured as a continuum conditional on “the extent to which parties compete with equal strength across various geographic units within a nation. Strongly nationalized party systems are systems where the share of each party is similar across geographic units (...), while a weakly nationalized party systems exhibit great variation in the vote share of parties across sub-national units” (Kasuya and Moenius, 2008: 126). Therefore, in highly nationalized countries each local party is a mirror of the national one. Conversely, in low nationalized countries each local party system is an isolated “island”, which is independently transferred to the national assembly. Nationalization does not necessarily entail programmatic homogeneity or a cohesive organization across territorial sub-units (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003) but involves different local candidates running for office under the umbrella of the same national organization.

Despite this definition, the literature is far from arriving at a consensus concerning the establishment of the phenomena (Merton, 1987). Party system nationalization has multiple and confusing meanings (Morgenstern and Potthoff, 2005), which rises difficulties when it is the object of research; a fact which requires further efforts in making sense of the scarce and disperse literature. Initially, the early seminal concept by Schattschneider (1960) distinguished two dimensions of the phenomena. The first one was related to the extent to which electoral change in subnational units is coherent with the national pattern and it was defined as dynamic nationalization (Morgenstern et al., 2009). The second centered on the extent to which there are an equal distribution of party vote

shares across districts, also known as static nationalization. It is this latter concept which has become the more popular in the literature (Caramani, 2000, 2004; Bochslers, 2010a) and scholars have recognized it as such: “Logically (...) the concept of party system nationalization should refer to the structure of the party system, not to whether electoral swings are similar across districts” (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003: 142). Therefore, as can be inferred from the initial definition, this dissertation deals with the “static dimension” of nationalization.

However, controversy is not only conceptual but also operational. To my knowledge, and considering only this restrictive static definition of party system nationalization (Morgenstern et al., 2009), there are over 16 different indexes based on at least four different families of statistical indicators: indices of frequencies, of variances, distributional and inflation indices (Bochslers, 2010a: 156). Each of these indices presents its own strengths and shortcomings, but in sum, it is a clear example of academic failure in establishing a common way to understand and measure the phenomena. This conceptual and empirical dispute has meant that the literature has been fragmented, and this has consequently eroded the comparability and reliability of empirical studies. In this thesis dissertation special efforts have been made in order to increase the consistency of findings and coherent measurements of party system nationalization have been used throughout all the empirical research.

In this dissertation I have used two main indices: inflation indices when the party system is the unit of analysis and a distributional coefficient when single parties are studied. The use of inflation indices can be justified for, at least, two reasons. First, and assuming that comparability is one of the main goals of the dissertation, it is necessary to choose indices which allow me to test previous empirical research and, at the same time, are used commonly enough to aid comparison. In this sense, inflation indices have become increasingly popular among those authors who deal with the incentives of party system nationalization (Cox, 1999; Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Cox and Knoll, 2003) and, as a consequence, they are perfect for such a task. And second, inflation indices require less information than others because only electoral results at the district and the national level are required. This means

that this index allows me to maximize the number of observations because it is still very difficult to obtain district level data. In a given stage of the dissertation one distributional coefficient is used. The reason for this change is that this family of indices is the only one that allows me to calculate the nationalization for single parties, so its use was required by the research question. All together, the core idea of the dissertation is preserved: to provide a clear and substantive identification of the phenomena thanks to the research of its principal consequences and determinants.

1.2. The relevance of the topic

Good reasons justify the growing interest of academics on the nationalization of party systems because, as has been pointed out, it affects both the supply and demand sides of party competition (Kasuya and Moenius, 2008). As a consequence, party system nationalization has implications for governability and political representation.

First, it has been argued that nationalization has a clear impact on the importance of local or national politics (Schattschneider, 1960; Morgenstern and Potthoff, 2005). National issues are salient in forging bonds between voters and parties in those countries where there are nationalized party systems but, on the contrary, where the party system is weakly nationalized, sub-national factors are more important in structuring voter and party relations. Consequently, as Jones and Mainwaring (2003) said: “In case of high nationalization, electoral competition follows a roughly similar pattern across country’s sub-national units. In a case of low nationalization, the parties that fare well in some sub-national units are minor electoral competitors elsewhere” (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003: 140). Those differences in nationalization necessarily affect elite strategies. Candidates, resources and campaigning undertaken by parties can be crucially conditioned by, for example, the number of constituencies in which the party compete or the presence of an electoral stronghold in a given district (Morgenstern et al., 2009).

Second, the degree of nationalization may have an impact on legislative careers and executive-legislative relations, especially regarding the formation of legislative coalitions and the relative importance of national and subnational issues at office-seeking (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003: 144). In highly nationalized party systems national issues will be more important for legislators, and the executive branch may find it easier to forge legislative coalitions: negotiations can be successfully led by a few key national leaders because all actors are oriented towards the national arena. The contrary may happen under a poorly nationalized party system. Central leadership can have more difficulties in controlling the entire party legislative support and, as a result, coalition-making can be a much harder process. Therefore, the nationalization of party systems can affect the legislative power and its relations with the executive because this territorial dimension of politics determines which arena - national or local - is the most significant for politicians and candidates.

Another issue to be considered is the effect of the nationalization of party systems in terms of public policy design and implementation. For example, one research by Lago and Lago (2009) has proved that party system nationalization has an impact on the composition of public spending. In those countries where there is a weak nationalization of party systems, several local political parties are involved in policy-making, increasing the number of veto-players and diminishing the margin of variation in public spending allocation. Other scholars have sustained that nationalization influences public transfers and subsidies to sub-national units, and fosters it in those cases where there are weakly nationalized party systems (Gibson and Calvo, 2000). The idea is that weakly nationalized party systems are more prone to allocate public policies on a territorial basis. Finally, Hicken et al. (2010) have argued that weak nationalized party systems cause policy conflicts that lead to an oversupply of pork-barrel policies and an undersupply of nationally-focused public services. Again, the underlying argument here is that weakly nationalized party systems tend to encourage a territorial public policy orientation, in comparison to those which are highly nationalized.

A final argument relates with the stability and democratization of the polity as such. Stepan (2004) claimed that in contexts of

pronounced ethnic, national or religious cleavages, the nationalization of major parties may be a key factor in preserving democratic stability because they can articulate countrywide programmatic concerns rather than being oriented towards specific territorial minorities. According to this argument, the nationalized party system acts as a “vaccine” which prevents territorial tensions. Other authors have gone further by arguing that nationalization can even prevent war or geopolitical struggles (Bochsler, 2010b). In any case, and despite the fact that previous arguments require deeper investigation, they confirm that research about party system nationalization is fundamental and necessary in order to understand the impact of territorial politics.

1.3. What we know about party system nationalization

There have been two main schools analyzing the causes of the nationalization of party systems. On the one hand there is the sociological approach, from a more European tradition, that centers on macro-structural explanations of party formation. According to this approach party system nationalization is the consequence of the territorial structure of cleavages (Rokkan, 1970) and the key element is the extent to which cleavages are able to travel equally across territories in a given country. In his book *The Nationalization of Politics* (2004), Caramani argued that the progressive replacement of territorial cleavages by nationwide alignments in most European countries has homogenized the party systems, which has changed clientelistic and territorial elites for centralized national competitive parties. As a consequence, the “cleavage configuration” is crucial in identifying differences across countries. In those polities where “functional” cleavages, which do not have a territorial character, are predominant, parties will tend to be nationalized across the whole country. On the contrary, in those countries where cleavages articulate territorial differences, such as the center-periphery one, a weakly nationalized party system is expected to emerge (Caramani, 2004, 2005). It is, therefore, the persistence of territorial minorities with political representation that introduce variation in the extent to which parties nationalize. Or in

other words, “geographically concentrated groups should (...) increase the distinctiveness of local electoral units” (Morgenstern et al., 2009: 1328) and erode party system nationalization.

The second major school centers on the institutional/ actor oriented approach, which is a more anglo-saxon oriented tradition. According to this school it is crucial to investigate those incentives provided by institutional rules that make that rational and ambitious office-seeking candidates orient themselves towards the national level. In this stream of thought three main institutional determinants have been identified. The first is the existence of a presidential system. It has been traditionally considered that presidential elections can link legislative candidates across territories because lower house candidates often want to associate themselves with national candidates in order to increase their probability of being (re)elected. (Shugart and Carey, 1992; Jones, 1994; Mainwaring and Shugart, 1997). Therefore, it has been argued that presidential systems should foster nationalized party systems thanks to presidential coattails. According to this causal mechanism, a stronger effect is expected when four conditions are fulfilled: A powerful presidency, a strong presidential election procedure, linkage in presidential and legislative election and strong legislative procedures (Cox, 1997: 190). A complementary argument for the nationalizing effect of presidential systems is that it presents an important and indivisible prize that can only be won in single national district, so it gives incentives to local candidates to coordinate themselves in order to take control of the office (Harbers, 2010).

Another classical institutional element studied has been the effect of political and economic decentralization on the nationalization of party systems (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Harbers, 2010). In those countries where there is a significant degree of centralized economic and political power, national politics should interest voters to a greater extent because the growing importance of policy-making in the national arena. On the other hand, political parties would also prefer to merge into national parties because national arena is where key policies are decided. Therefore, voters will probably abandon locally viable but nationally non-competitive parties. Those comprehensive arguments points out that countries with a high degree of political and economic centralization are

expected to have a strong nationalized party system in contrast with those that are federal. Another related argument stresses the role of regional parties in decentralized countries. Although it is not their main goal, those parties will often choose to compete in national elections because the costs are low and they may even gain an advantage in a regional contest. However, because they do not compete in everywhere in the country, they will undermine nationalization of the party system as a whole (Bracanti, 2007: 139). Therefore, whichever argument is sustained, the literature has established that political and economical decentralization are a clear institutional variable that prevents nationalization.

Finally, the electoral system and its various configurations have been considered as determinant for party system nationalization (Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003, Morgenstern et al, 2009). On the one hand, “laws implementing upper tiers require an explicit linkage of the lists or candidates wishing to pool their votes at the stipulated higher level” (Cox, 1999: 157) and provide clear incentives for party coalition across district lines. This is something similar to what happens with electoral thresholds. When this institutional arrangement is present, parties will tend to be nationalized in order to prevent them failing below the critical share of votes required. On the other hand, it has been argued that the number of districts erode the nationalization of party systems because linkage across districts should be more challenging as the number of constituencies rises, making competition more organizationally demanding throughout a polity (Nikolenyi, 2008; Morgenstern et al., 2009; Harbers, 2010). Finally, it has also been said that run-off systems should erode nationalization, because the option of competing in a second round reduces entrance costs and provides small parties with less incentives to coalesce across districts (Cox and Knoll, 2003: 6-7).

1.4. The limitations of the literature

Despite the fact that the sociological and institutional schools have been considered together in explaining the nationalization of party systems, shortcomings have been highlighted in both approaches.

On the one hand, strong criticisms have been labeled at the macro-sociological approach, which is seminal in the literature (Rokkan, 1970). As was previously explained, in his book Caramani (2004) showed that Western European countries have tended to nationalize over time due to macro-processes of modernization and nation-building. Nevertheless, the impact of territorial cleavages on the nationalization of party systems has been challenged for three reasons. Firstly, because this explanation is excessively deterministic; secondly that it only presents ex-post explanatory power; and thirdly, that there are significant cases that go against the irreversibility of this tendency towards more nationalized party systems in Western Europe. For example, Hopkin (2009) has argued that there are examples of exactly the reverse trend in countries such as Italy, Belgium, the United Kingdom or Spain. “The cleavage-centered approach does not generate any obvious explanation for these developments and Caramani dismisses disconfirming cases as exception to the inexorable trend” (Hopkin, 2009: 181).

But on the other hand, however, institutional approach it is not free of criticism. Even though one of the key arguments in this literature is that political and economic decentralization erodes the nationalization of parties (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Bracanti, 2007; Harbers, 2010), many studies have been unsuccessful in testing this argument. In Eastern and Central Europe no association was found between both variables (Bochsler, 2010b); Caramani (2004, 2005) did not match an independent effect of this variable over time, and other studies which have explicitly focused on this relation have not been able to test it (Lago and Lago, 2011). Furthermore, the decentralization argument has been also criticized from a theoretical point of view. Previous research has always considered decentralization reforms to be an exogenous variable (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Harbers, 2010) but the reverse direction may also be plausible (Hopkin, 2009, Bochsler, 2010b). In this line of argument, the nationalization of party systems may be the cause - and not the consequence - of decentralization processes. Furthermore, if parties are successful in adapting themselves to the changing institutional incentives of decentralization, they can mitigate the extent to which they are fragmented by these reforms by varying their strategies to suit the demands of local competition (Hopkin, 2003).

Another significant dispute concerns the effect the electoral systems. Generally speaking, there are strong theoretical disagreements, evidence is mixed at best, and several hypotheses remain untested. One of the key disputes concerns the effect of district magnitude. In the beginning Cox (1999) argued that district magnitude only has an effect at the local level, but that it is completely unrelated with party system nationalization. Later, he changed his mind and argued that lower district magnitudes should foster the nationalization of party systems (Cox and Knoll, 2003). The argument was that small parties are less likely to overcome the threshold of votes for achieving representation where magnitudes are small and “they thus have a much greater incentive to combine votes across districts” (Cox and Knoll, 2003: 6). However, exactly the opposite argument has been put forward by Morgenstern et al. (2009). They argued that parties will avoid spending resources competing in those districts where there is no chance of winning, a probable scenario under single-member district (SMD) plurality systems. As a consequence, more strategic withdrawal is expected when a district’s magnitude is low so party system nationalization will be weaker. In any case, the empirical evidence is as mixed as theoretical expectations. Other variables like, for example, the potential effect of the extent to which electoral laws are candidate oriented (Carey and Shugart, 1995) remain unsolved and it has been only indirectly tested (Morgenstern and Potthoff, 2005).

There is also a lack of evidence about the effect of party institutionalization. Bochsler (2010b) argued that a high inter-election volatility will make nationalization more likely because it erodes local party strongholds and, as a consequence, it means that parties’ share across districts are more similar. However, other authors have also considered that the initial weak organizational strength of political parties when they are not well-institutionalized can erode nationalization (Olson, 1998). For example, Lupu (2008) has contended that the institutionalization of party systems can be measured directly as a function of its nationalization. On the other hand, potential problems arise when single parties’ nationalization is not addressed. The literature has overwhelmingly focused on party system nationalization as a unit of observation dismissing the potential variation among parties, which can be nationalized to a different extent. Furthermore, only very few hypotheses have been

put forward in order to explain why some parties should be more nationalized than others (Morgenstern, et al., 2009: 1329). Therefore, there is the risk of an ecological fallacy if inferences and mechanisms from the whole system simply dismiss party nationalization as unit of analysis.

1.5. The contribution and structure of the dissertation

As it has been shown, important theoretical and empirical puzzles remain unsolved. The academic purpose of this thesis dissertation is to shed light on these conundrums and provide a theoretical framework that can contribute to a better understanding of the nationalization of party systems.

The dissertation centers on the nationalization of party systems in Western European countries. One of the first contributions of this research is that an original database has been built for national legislative elections in lower chambers. This database comprises three different sub-samples. The first sub-sample takes into account all national elections in Western European countries from World War II to 1996. I have calculated two inflation indices for each of those elections with constituency level data (Caramani, 2000) and combined it with secondary sources; which includes information about ethnic and religious fractionalization (Alesina et al., 2003), seats allocated in upper tiers, number of constituencies, district magnitude (Golder, 2007), personal orientation of electoral laws (Nielson, 2003) and regional power indices (Hoogue et al., 2010). I have also calculated by my own variation in turnout rates across districts, district magnitude variance and deviation in electoral competitiveness in order to deal with the potential effects of party system nationalization. The second subsample reproduces previous available information for 29 national elections from countries all around the world. The third subsample is centered on Spanish parties' nationalization in legislative elections from 1977 to 2008. It has been calculated by employing the Gini standardized distributional coefficient (Bochsler, 2010a) for all those parties with parliamentary representation within the selected period. Further

information has been added, such as; their national electoral result, their age and their mean ideological position on the left-right axis (Oñate, 1999).

This research is focused on a comparative analysis of Western European countries within a very specific period of time. It is fundamental to use a comparative method in order to identify the causes and consequences of nationalization. As Alemán and Kellam said: “Comparative nationalization interests scholars because it helps to distinguish party systems from one another in ways that have implications of governability and political representation” (Aleman and Kellam, 2008: 193). Furthermore, there are strong arguments that support the decision to choose Western European countries in the research design. The first regards comparability. This thesis partially focuses on a period analyzed by Caramani (2004,) because it establishes the basis for reproducing previous findings and clarifies theoretical expectations. However, the decision to use WWII as a point of departure introduced an important change. The period between WWII and 1996 has received little attention by Caramani due to the fact that cleavage crystallization took place during the previous century; and he then almost neglected any variation in the nationalization of party systems from the mid-20th Century onwards. At the same time, the Second World War was a struggle which affected almost all Western European countries and, at the same time, was exogenous to the party system, so it constitutes a natural point of departure. Taken together, this period can be considered as especially fruitful in providing new empirical evidence.

Another reason for choosing this sample lays in the research questions addressed during the dissertation. For example, the decentralization hypothesis seems to not empirically fit Western Europe (Lago and Lago, 2011), whilst it is nonetheless a region that exhibits increasing decentralization reforms (Hoogue and Marks, 2001). At the same time, the nationalization trend followed by countries such as the United Kingdom and Spain is not clear. Therefore, as will be shown later, the sample of countries has been empirical and theoretically driven. Finally, there is also an operational advantage in choosing Western European countries. The calculation of nationalization indices require district level data, whose scarcity has been pointed out as one of the reasons why

scholars have not paid enough attention to the phenomena (Caramani, 2004: 2). Scholars have recently started to gather new information from non-established democracies, but Western European district level data is still the most reliable and accessible. Therefore, it makes not only theoretical but also practical sense to focus on Western European countries.

This thesis has been structured as a compendium of four papers around the nationalization of party systems from different perspectives considering it both as independent - second paper - and dependent variable - first, third and fourth papers -. Each paper has followed research questions that have been driven by the limitations of the literature.

The first paper of this dissertation centers on the relation between the decentralization of a polity and its effect on the party system. The classic argument is that political and economic decentralization tend to weaken the nationalization of party systems, a proposal that has been successfully tested in some studies (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Bracanti, 2007; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Harbers, 2010). However, empirical evidence does not support this claim in many other studies, particularly in Western European countries (Lago and Lago, 2011). This suggests that causal mechanisms linking both variables are probably more sophisticated than previous theory has assumed. In the first paper decentralization hypothesis is re-thought as conditional on the electoral rules operating in the country, specifically, to the extent to which electoral law encourages personal voting (Carey and Shugart, 1995).

This interactive argument suggests that self-interested local candidates face an opportunity window to compete locally when the regional arena grows in importance compared to the national one (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; 2004), but that they will only do so depending on how effective party labels are in their chances of (re)election. In those decentralized countries where party-oriented electoral law is present, candidates will face constraints for competing alone because party labels are relevant shortcuts for constituents in an electoral contest. Therefore, candidates will still compete merged in national organizations. However, the resolution of the dilemma is different when a decentralization reform takes

place in a country with an electoral law that promotes candidate-oriented voting. Here a party label does not provide any additional opportunities to gain (re)election for local candidates so they will not face any constraint to compete oriented towards the arena were main policies are held. Therefore, under these conditions local candidates will prefer to compete locally without merging under national parties and thereby undermining the nationalization of party systems. By drawing on a broad sample of Western European countries, this paper provides robust evidence in favor of this hypothesis. In sum, the contribution of the paper is that political decentralization is not enough in eroding party system nationalization, it is also necessary to focus on electoral rules.

The second paper of the thesis dissertation reverses the causal arrow by considering the nationalization of party systems as an independent variable. In this research, a question almost ignored by the literature is addressed: Why do some countries exhibit more similar turnout rates among their constituencies than others? This question is relevant because it can have important political consequences in terms of responsiveness (Lijphart, 1997; Anduiza, 2002); potential effects in shaping public agendas and policies (Samuels and Snyder, 2001), and it can indicate the presence of partisan biases in political representation (Grofman et al., 1997: 457). This piece of research is divided into two parts. The first centers on identifying and describing the phenomena. The second explores the potential causes of turnout variation by trying to connect it with previous turnout literature (Blais, 2006) and other dynamics related with the political process. The central argument is that the homogeneity of turnout rates within a country is crucially driven by the nationalization of the party systems.

The idea is quite straightforward. When in a given country the nationalization of a party system is perfect and there is uniformity in the parties competing across constituencies, incentives for going to the polls are pretty similar wherever the district of enrolment. It is in this context where the number and/or type of parties at stake remain as a constant across districts, and fewer differences are expected to emerge. Nevertheless, as the nationalization reduces, the local party systems enhance their differences and each constituency tends to become a specific “island” isolated from the others. Under these conditions the incentives to vote are likely to

vary within country, and it is compelling to expect that the heterogeneity of turnout rates across districts will be boosted. The evidence suggests that - controlling by the impact of variation in district magnitude, the number of districts and country fractionalization - nationalization is crucial in explaining variation in turnout rates within countries. Therefore, the contribution of this paper is not only to identify a new phenomenon but it also to highlight another ignored implication of party system nationalization.

The third paper focuses on the relation between electoral systems and the nationalization of party systems. Despite the fact that many scholars have already considered its importance (Cox, 1997, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Morgenstern et al., 2009; Bochslers, 2010b), generally speaking the literature presents contradictory theoretical expectations and mixed empirical evidence at best. In order to deal with this fragmented scenario, this research presents an alternative approach that relies on what scholars have been called “crucial experiments” (Shugart, 2005). This research design is especially useful in explaining the effects of electoral rules because they can be isolated from other variables. “In cases of electoral reform (...) we have the possibility of a crucial experiment in the sense that many factors affecting the party system (or other outcomes) aside from the electoral reform can be held constant” (Shugart, 2005: 34). This approach, which has never been used on party system nationalization studies, allows to better specify the impact of electoral systems, thereby avoiding potential endogeneity or omitted relevant variable bias problems.

The main evidence of this paper highlights the fact that district magnitude, the number of constituencies and the existence of a national threshold have an effect on the extent to which a party system is nationalized. All things being equal, those countries with fewer districts, higher average magnitudes and a national threshold tend to have higher party system nationalization. However, upper tiers, run-off systems or ballot structure present mixed evidence and do not have a clear impact on the dependent variable. In any case, evidence shows that the changes in electoral rules do not strongly affect the dependent variable. This paper has a clear message: That it is essential to consider that political institutions are embedded in their own contexts and practices (Baker and McLeay, 2000) and

that electoral engineering does not present an “ultimate way” in determining the nationalization of party systems.

The last paper of my thesis changes the unit of analysis and focuses on parties’ nationalization in Spain. There are good theoretical reasons for this change in scope. On the one hand, addressing party system nationalization can involve an ecological fallacy problem: If parties are nationalized to a different extent but no attention is paid to the sources of this variation, misleading inferences can result. On the other hand, Spain has been held up as an example of the progressive de-nationalization of some party systems in Western Europe (Hopkin, 2009), which make it challenging as a case of study. This piece of research is divided into two parts. First, party system and single party nationalization are described. According to the empirical evidence, Spain is coherent with the general tendency towards more nationalized party systems in Western Europe. However, Spanish political parties display very different forms of nationalization among which are easily grouped if they are national or subnational parties.

The second part of the article centers on the sources of this variation by offering two main findings. The first focuses on the electoral results at national level, which tend to prone the nationalization of the party (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003). The second directly addresses party age (Mainwaring and Zoco, 2007), which is positively correlated with level of party nationalization but only in the case that those parties compete in all districts of Spain. On the other hand, this variable negatively affects subnational parties in some Autonomous Communities. This finding supports the idea of a trade-off with party nationalization among the two groups of parties - national and subnational -. As national parties institutionalize and establish local and territorial organizations that are powerful enough for competing with similar vote shares across districts, the nationalization of subnational parties’ is eroded.

To sum up, this dissertation presents new and rich evidence that contributes to the field of the nationalization of party systems, a vibrant and promising but understudied field, in which further empirical and theoretical research were both required and merited.

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CHAPTER 2

THE COMBINED IMPACT OF DECENTRALIZATION AND PERSONALISM ON THE NATIONALIZATION OF PARTY SYSTEMS

In this paper I address the impact of decentralization on the nationalization of party systems. The literature has argued that when a country decentralizes, candidates have greater incentives to compete locally, which reduces the nationalization of the party system. Nevertheless, the empirical results are inconclusive, particularly in Western European countries. My argument here is that the impact of decentralization on the nationalization of party systems is conditional on the extent to which electoral law encourages personal voting. The idea is that when electoral laws are candidate-centered party labels are not very relevant in politicians' (re)election, making candidates more likely to compete locally in a decentralized country and to weaken party system nationalization. Through two different indices of nationalization and statistical techniques, I test the robustness of this argument by drawing on data from national legislative elections held in 17 Western European countries. The evidence confirms the main argument as well as the de-nationalizing effect of ethnic fragmentation and district magnitude.

2.1. Introduction

The nationalization of party systems³ refers to the extent to which “politicians seeking election to the national legislature from different districts (...) run under a common party label” (Cox, 1997: 186). This process is usually conceptualized as a continuum depending on the degree to which parties are uniformly successful in winning votes across districts (Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochsler, 2010a; Harbers, 2010). Party system nationalization includes different levels of connection among local party systems in the national party system formation. In a perfectly nationalized party system, each local party system is a “clone” of the others, and each is a mirror of the national-level party system. Conversely, in an extreme de-nationalized party system each constituency has its own set of parties and they transfer into the legislature without merging themselves in national parties competing beyond the district level.

In this paper I focus on the relation between decentralization of a polity and the nationalization of its party system. The literature has argued that decentralization erodes the nationalization of a party system (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004) because candidates face incentives to compete locally. The mechanism is that the local orientation of candidates takes place because national governments reduce their control over the policies voters care about and candidates are less concerned about having a voice in national legislatures. However, the evidence does not fully support this view. While the argument has been successfully tested in some studies (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Bracanti, 2007; Harbers, 2010), the empirical evidence does not support this claim in others (Caramani, 2004; Hopkin, 2009; Bochsler, 2010b; Lago and Lago, 2011). Thus, reassessing this hypothesis is necessary in order to shed new light on this theoretical and empirical puzzle.

In this paper I suggest an alternative argument. What I propose is that the impact of decentralization on the nationalization of party systems is conditional on the extent to which electoral law

³ Also called linkage (Cox, 1999) or party aggregation (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998).

encourages personal voting (Carey and Shugart, 1995). The idea can be summarized as follows: Self-interested local candidates face an opportunity window to compete alone when the regional arena grows in importance in comparison with the national one (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; 2004). However, candidates' final decision to compete locally oriented will crucially depend on how much party labels can bring to their chances of (re)election. If a decentralized country has a very party-oriented electoral law, candidates face constraints to compete alone because party labels offer significant "shortcuts" for constituents in an electoral contest. Therefore, in such cases they will prefer to compete coordinated under a national party despite the decentralized context that they face.

On the other hand, the situation is very different when a decentralized country has an electoral law that promotes candidate-oriented voting. Here the electoral competition of local candidates under a national party label does not provide additional opportunities for them to gain (re)election and self-interested political entrepreneurs face no constraint to compete in arenas where key policies are developed. As a consequence it is in this context where candidates will prefer to compete in a local fashion, without merging in a national party, and thereby eroding party system nationalization. Hence, my claim is that it is necessary to pay attention not only to the decentralization of government but also to those electoral rules which determine the role of party labels in electoral competition.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section I present the theoretical arguments which explain the nationalization of party systems. I devote special attention to those mechanisms that relate the dependent variable with the decentralization of the country and personal orientation of electoral laws. In section three I justify the cases studied, that are based on the national legislative elections held in 17 countries of Western Europe following Caramani's (2004) work. The next section presents the dependent variable and the independent variables, as well as details on their measurement. In order to check the robustness of my findings I test two different nationalization indices proposed by Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004) and Moenius and Kasuya (2004). Section six presents the empirical evidence; while a final substantive discussion is presented in the last section.

2.2. Theoretical arguments

Decentralization is considered to be one of the most important institutional elements driving the nationalization of the party systems. Chhibber and Kollman (1998) first addressed this issue in a study of the United States and India, which was later revised with the inclusion of United Kingdom and Canada (2004). In their research they wanted to explain temporal variation in party aggregation, which: “reflects the incentives for candidates to coordinate on common party labels and voters to support parties with broader appeal outside a single electoral district” (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998: 335). Their approach focused on the incentives that political actors, namely local candidates, have to coordinate across districts over time (Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003). According to their argument when resources are centralized and the national arena fosters its importance, candidates prefer to create or join a national party and voters support them over other locally but nationally noncompetitive parties. Thus, centralization fosters the nationalization of party systems.

Causal mechanisms are linked with the relative power of each electoral arena. Local candidates face two incentives to coordinate themselves and forge a national party when political and economic centralization increases because, on the one hand, voters are electorally oriented towards the arena where the key decisions that affect their lives are made. Therefore, if this arena is the national one: “Candidates (...) will have incentives to take on party labels that communicate national policy positions” (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998: 335) and influence national politics. But on the other hand, centralization also means that voters develop preferences on national politics due to its growing importance, and that they tend to support those parties which influence the national outcomes in which they are interested. As a result, they eventually prefer national to local parties (Deschouwer, 2006; Thorlakson, 2007).

A complementary argument was provided by Bracanti (2007), who contended that political decentralization is the crucial element that encourages the formation of regional parties. Politically decentralized countries have regional legislatures with decision-

making powers - that are in some cases involved in the appointment of national legislatures - which create clear incentives for the presence of regional parties in regional chambers. Initially, if those parties do not compete at the national arena, their presence does not affect the nationalization of the party system. However, they have clear incentives to compete at the national arena. First, because “the costs of participating in national elections are small for regional parties that already exist for the purpose of competing in regional elections” (Bracanti, 2007: 139). In other words, pre-existing regional parties do not face significant barriers to compete in the national arena (because of money, staff, etc.). And second, competing at national level can be a useful platform to increase the electoral chances of the party at regional level because it can be identified as being strongly committed to the defense of regional interests. Therefore, Bracanti (2007) argued that political decentralization erodes party system nationalization because it empowers the presence of regional parties in national legislatures.

Despite those compelling explanations, the empirical evidence is mixed. On the one hand, some scholars have confirmed the aforementioned arguments. For example, Harbers (2010) extended the previous hypothesis to 17 Latin American countries and showed how after political and economic decentralization, the nationalization of the party systems diminished. A similar finding was confirmed by Bracanti (2007), who partially re-addressed Chhibber and Kollman’s work (1998, 2004). On the other hand, however, other studies have not been able to provide evidence in favor of the decentralization hypothesis. In Eastern and Central Europe no association was found between decentralization and nationalization (Bochsler, 2010b). Similarly, academics who have sought to support this argument have presented inconclusive results in consolidated democracies, especially when Western Europe has been addressed. For example, Caramani (2004) was unable to identify this relation while other studies have not been able to test it successfully (Lago and Lago, 2011).

Furthermore, two key limitations regarding to the impact of decentralization have been put forward. The first refers to the potential endogenous relation between the main independent variable and the party system. Despite the fact that the literature has always assumed decentralization reforms to be an exogenous

variable (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Harbers, 2010) it could be argued that it is party competition the variable that really drives decentralization (Hopkin, 2009). This seems to have been the case in countries like the United Kingdom (Hopkin, 2009: 182) and in regions like Central and Eastern Europe, where decentralization was anticipated by a low nationalization and a strong presence of ethno-regional parties (Bochsler, 2010b). The second limitation of this argument is that it neglects the role of parties as organizations. If parties can adapt themselves to the changing institutional incentives of decentralization, this can mitigate the extent to which they are fragmented by those reforms (Hopkin, 2003).

According to the rational-institutional approach, political parties are the result of choices made by rational political actors, i.e. self-interested office-seeking politicians. Hence the formation of parties, irrespective of whether they are national or local oriented, involves the creation of an organization submitted to one main goal: The (re)election of its members.⁴ Generally speaking, four key conditions have been considered to making candidates turn to parties: The existence of a sufficient common interest; that its fulfillment requires a solution over a relatively long period; an institutional arrangement insufficient to accomplish their goals; and implicitly, an opposition which threaten their ambitions (Aldrich, 1995). The centralization argument (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004) mainly stresses the first of these conditions; the existence of a shared interest. According to this, centralization will empower the nationalization of party systems because local candidates have the common goal of influencing policies in the arena where resources are allocated - the national level - and communicate their stands on national politics to their voters.

Nevertheless, in terms of actor approach the existence of “shared interests may be necessary but are insufficient for the turn to parties” (Aldrich, 1995: 284). Or in other words, it is one of the weaker conditions for party formation and, as a consequence, the same applies to parties’ national/ local orientation. Therefore, the

⁴ Although it is the main factor, it is not the only one. Candidates also join in order to accomplish of shared goals related with solving collective action dilemmas in the provision of public goods, such as party’s reputation in the electorate (Cox and McCubbins, 1993).

causal relation that links political decentralization - the source of a shared interest towards the local arena - and nationalization should be theorized as conditional, where incentives provided by the power across arenas are a necessary but insufficient condition in changing party systems. This conditional causal link would offer an explanation for many of the mixed empirical results. Almost all the studies carried out have assumed the independent effect of this variable on the nationalization of party systems (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Bracanti, 2007; Harbers, 2010; Lago and Lago, 2011) although there are good theoretical reasons for rejecting this premise.

Given that the main incentive provided by parties to its members refers to the probability of being elected⁵ (Aldrich, 1995), party labels can be understood as signals to their respective constituents. In this sense “competition (...) makes partisan brand name valuable to candidates in solving, in significant if preliminary measure, the collective action problem of information in the electorate” (Aldrich, 1995: 290). Therefore, party labels can be said to offer informational cues to voters about candidate positions (Cox and McCubbins, 1993), in the same way as it does about the arena towards they are oriented - local or national - (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004: 73). Nevertheless, the institutional literature has assumed the importance of party labels as a constant, despite the fact that it can vary widely across polities depending on how relevant they are in electoral competition in comparison with candidates’ reputation.

In developing this argument further, two different scenarios can be drawn. In countries where “localizing” electoral rules are present “candidates and incumbents tailor their campaigns to suit local constituencies” (Shugart, 1995: 328). These rules make candidates’ personal attributes crucial in determining their (re)election - whether they run under national or local labels - and party brands are in comparison less important in altering the electoral outcome.

⁵ I will leave aside its importance in solving collective actions dilemmas in policy-making because, despite the fact that it has also an effect on a candidate’s chances, it takes place in a posterior stage to their election (Cox, 1999). Therefore, I center the argument on the interaction between candidates and voters and leave the legislators to one side.

Conversely, when electoral rules have a “nationalizing” effect, candidates are mainly oriented to the national arena, which determines their performance in the electoral race. In this context the chances of a candidate is strongly dependent on party reputation; the latter being understood as “the information that party label conveys to voter in a given electoral districts” (Carey and Shugart, 1995: 419). Therefore, while in the first case candidates’ electoral chances are highly dependent on personal attributes, in the second scenario the “party shirt” worn has its value.

In order to determine the extent to which candidate or party reputation is a crucial element, “Carey and Shugart’s (1995) codification of electoral systems in terms of their ‘incentives to cultivate personal vote’ has become a standard reference in the literature” (Morgenstern and Swindle, 2005: 152). Their approach is focused on the incentives for a personal vote at the district level, the basic arena where elites decide to coordinate themselves if they consider it as desirable. Their typology is centered on three main elements. First, a lack of party leadership control over the outcome and voting preferences on the order of the ballot list. Second, the extent to which candidates are elected on individual votes independent of co-partisans. Finally, whether one single intraparty vote is cast or multiple or intra-party votes are cast (Carey and Shugart, 1995: 417-18).⁶ This classification can identify the incentives which that each electoral system provides to personal or party oriented voting.

The main point of my argument is that the importance of party labels was a missing element in previous studies when the impact of decentralization was being addressed. The alternative argument I suggest is that the effect of political decentralization on the nationalization of party systems is not direct but conditional on the role of party brands. Or in other words, the relative importance of decentralization as a de-nationalizing incentive would depend on the extent to which electoral systems encourage candidates’

⁶ Besides these three elements, Carey and Shugart (1995) also consider the effect of the district magnitude. Nevertheless, they consider it independently because district magnitude does not describe a method of organizing voting and because it can have a different effect depending on how candidates are organizing (Carey and Shugart, 1995: 430). District magnitude can also have an impact on the key dependent variable so I prefer to treat it independently.

oriented voting. When a process of decentralization takes place and the regional arena grows in power, it creates an opportunity window for the formation of a different local party system that structures electoral competition (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Bracanti, 2007; Harbers, 2010). It is in this context where candidates face a strategic dilemma: Do I compete alone or under a national label?⁷

In answering this question, ambitious politicians do not only consider the prize of competing for the regional office but also the institutional constraints for competing locally in national elections. In those countries whose electoral rules make party labels crucial in competition, decentralization will probably not de-nationalize the party system because competing alone is electorally constrained; party labels are still valuable and indicate national policy positions to the constituents (Shugart, 1995). Furthermore, electoral systems with party lists usually correlates with strong national parties, especially in parliamentary systems (Carey and Shugart, 1995; Bochsler, 2010b), reinforcing the previous argument about the central role of statewide labels. Therefore, under these conditions the dilemma tends to be solved in favor of competing under a national label, despite decentralization. If this was not the case, (re) election could be compromised when faced with a national-oriented competitor.

In countries where electoral law encourages personal voting (Carey and Shugart, 1995) the solution to this dilemma is different. Because the personal attributes of the candidate are central in (re)election, candidates are not provided with extra utility whenever they compete under a national or a local label. Therefore, when the decentralization process takes place, candidates face little cost in moving from national to local politics and, as a consequence, in a context of growing importance of the regional arena they will be more receptive to this transference of power than in the previous scenario. In this situation party brands are no longer a constraint which could prevent the centrifugal effect of decentralization on the party system. This will make more likely that local candidates do not coordinate across district lines and reduce the nationalization of party systems.

⁷ It should be made clear that “standing alone” does not mean that candidates do not compete under a regional or a local label.

From this argument one main hypothesis is derived: The effect of decentralization on the reduction of party system nationalization is conditional on personal orientation of the electoral law. Nonetheless, it is important to keep in mind that the nationalization of party systems is focused on the extent to which local candidates compete under the same label. Therefore, a nationalized party “does not imply one that is programmatically homogeneous across sub-national units, nor does it imply a party that is highly cohesive or disciplined at the national level” (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003: 142). Decentralization can affect party discipline, campaigns or programs (Deschouwer, 2006; Hopkin, 2009; van Houten, 2009) as personal-oriented law can affect policy-making (Cox, 1987; Shugart and Carey, 1992). However, only both combined affect the probability that local candidates decide to merge in national parties.

My claim does not challenge the findings by Chhibber and Kollman. They argued: “We use data from four countries with similar electoral systems, attempting as best we can to control for electoral system effects across countries” (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004: 222). As has been noted in the literature, single-member districts under plurality rule are electoral systems that encourage personal voting (Nielson, 2003; Morgenstern and Swindle, 2005) and, therefore, it is not surprising that the centralization of government affects the aggregation of party systems because both variables operate simultaneously. Nonetheless, if the centralization process had been under an electoral system that makes national party labels as a crucial factor in electoral competition (Carey and Shugart, 1995), then the nationalization of the party systems would probably have not taken place.

2.3. Nationalization of party systems in Western Europe

In this article I have focused on explaining the nationalization of party systems in 17 countries in Western Europe by analyzing

legislative national elections in their lower chambers from World War II to 1996.⁸ There are good reasons for re-assessing this region.

First, the institutionalization of the party system can potentially influence the level of nationalization. In contexts where parties lack organizational strength and there is significant inter-election volatility, especially in the early stages of a democratic period, nationalization can be affected (Bochsler, 2010b: 813). This element is not accounted for by some studies that center on cross-national comparison (Cox and Knoll, 2003; Morgenstern et al., 2009), despite the fact that the most reasonable strategy is to choose cases with similar patterns of institutionalization (Bochsler, 2010b; Harbers, 2010). The selection of Western European countries solves this problem because all of them present similar level of institutionalization of their party systems (Caramani, 2004).

A second crucial argument is that the literature has found no clear relationship between decentralization and the nationalization of party systems in Western Europe. For example, Lago and Lago (2011) did not find robust empirical support for this argument. As the authors said as consequence of these results, “the theory connecting decentralization and party system fragmentation would not be as parsimonious as the rational choice institutionalism approach presumes (...)” (Lago and Lago, 2011: 154). Focusing on Western Europe allows me to see whether the incentives for personal voting provided by electoral laws (Carey and Shugart, 1995) are behind the flaws of the traditional decentralization argument proposed by the institutionalist approach.

Finally, Western European countries offer a perfect environment for the performance of the empirical analysis. On the one hand, it presents variation in terms of the incentives for cultivating a personal vote. In Chhibber and Kollman’s (1998, 2004) studies, this element is held as a constant since all cases present single-member district under plurality rule, and it is impossible to assess whether it can operate as an intervening variable. Addressing all Western European countries solves this problem. On the other hand, Western Europe also provides a context of rising decentralization, where

⁸ District-level data are based on Caramani’s book: *Elections in Western Europe since 1815: Electoral Results by Constituencies* (2000).

over half of the European Union members have carried out reforms of regionalization or federalization (Hoogue and Marks, 2001). Therefore, it is worth pointing out the extent to which the nationalization of party systems is sensitive to changes in the distribution of power among territorial institutions not only across countries but also over time.

The countries selected for this study are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. All national legislative elections have been included from the Second World War to 1996. The War was an exogenous element to the political system which set up a natural point of departure. Greece, Portugal and Spain are added as cases from the 1970, as the “Third Wave” of democratization began (Huntington, 1994). The only Western European country which has been excluded is The Netherlands given that coordination across districts is impossible by definition when only a single nationwide district exists.

2.4. Measurement and estimation

2.4.1. The dependent variable: The nationalization of party systems

In this research the conception of the nationalization of party systems is founded on inflation measures (Cox, 1997, 1999; Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochsler, 2010a), which are based on the comparison between party systems at national and the district level. When the nationalization of the party systems does not take place, local parties do not merge under national labels and this cause that: “The national party system would be considerably larger than the average of the local party systems” (Cox, 1999: 155). This “surplus” of parties at national level is what the literature has labeled as inflation (Cox, 1997, 1999;

Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochsler, 2010a), the reverse dynamic of the nationalization of party systems.⁹

Two different indices of inflation are used. The first is based on Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004). It is calculated as the difference between the effective number of parties¹⁰ at national level and the average number of parties competing at district level. Therefore, as *D* (deviation) becomes higher, the inflation of the national party system also increases and the party system nationalization is lower. This index has become a classic and has been extensively discussed and used in the literature (Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochsler, 2010a). It is operationalized as follows:

$$D = ENP_{nat} - ENP_{avg}$$

Where:

ENP_{nat} is the effective number of parties at national level

ENP_{avg} is the average of the number of parties at local level

The second is that proposed by Moenius and Kasuya (2004) and it is operationalized as follows:

⁹ There are four families of nationalization indices: indices of frequency, of variance, of distribution and inflation measures. I have chosen the last one for three main reasons. First, inflation indices are centered on party systems as units of analysis. Second, these indices require less information as only districts and national electoral results are required, which allows us to maximize the number of observations. Finally, inflation indices have been increasingly used in the literature and using them makes my research and findings more comparable. More details about the potentialities and shortcomings of inflation measures can be found in Bochsler (2010a: 159-160).

¹⁰ The effective number of parties is calculated as follows;

$$ENP = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2}$$

where *p* is the proportion of votes obtained by party *i* in the election (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979).

$$I_w = \left(\frac{vot_{nat} * ENP_{nat}}{\sum_{i=1}^n ENP_i * vot_i} - 1 \right) * 100$$

Where:

vot_{nat} = total number of votes cast at national level;

vot_i = number of votes cast in district i , and

ENP_i = effective number of parties in district i .

This index has the advantage of weighting the contribution of each district to party system inflation. The general measures of inflation have assumed that all districts have the same size and, as consequence, all received the same weight. However, “if districts vary markedly in terms of their number of votes, then using $1/n$ as the approximation of the relative contribution of a district to the national-level inflation may, depending on the research question, be no longer appropriate” (Moenius and Kasuya 2004: 550). Therefore, this measure is more accurate than the previous version because the calculation takes into account the size of the electorate in each district.

Both indices are highly correlated.¹¹ According to the inflation indices, as D and I_w rises, the local party systems coalesce across district lines to a lesser extent and the nationalization of the party system diminishes.

¹¹ The correlation between D and I_w is 0.9.

2.4.2. Key independent variables: The interaction of self-rule and electoral systems which encourage personal voting

In this paper I measure decentralization by employing the framework presented by Hoogue et al. (2010), which centers on regional authority. The authors focused on determining a scale of measurement for the level of authority displayed by a regional government, understanding the latter as “a coherent territorial entity situated between local and national levels with a capacity for authoritative decision making” (Hoogue et al., 2010: 4). They identified two different dimensions: The shared rule and the self rule of regional governments. Shared rule is the extent to which regional governments are involved in the administration of power in the whole nation while self rule refers to the authority exercised by a regional government over its territory and population. I consider that political decentralization is related with the autonomous power of the sub-national governments and, therefore, the self rule dimension encompasses it the best.

Self rule of a regional government (Hoogue et al., 2010: 14-22) has been measured by taking into account: a) The extent to which regional government is autonomous rather than deconcentrated. (0-3), b) the range of policies for which a regional government is responsible (0-4), c) the extent to which a regional government can independently tax its population (0-4) and d) the extent to which regional government is endowed with an independent legislature and executive (0-4). This approach solves two different problems. First, in measuring decentralization, the leading academics has focused on sub-national expenditure and revenues (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Cox and Knoll, 2003) and did not account for other dimensions of regional political power which are not necessarily related to sub-national budgets, but which can crucially affect it. On the other hand, scholars who focused on political decentralization (Bracanti, 2007; Harbers, 2010) had tended to simplify it to a dichotomous variable of regional authority,¹² and

¹² Bracanti (2007) coded political decentralization with a 1 if the regional government in a country has power over at least one political issue. Harbers (2010) coded it as 1 if a regional legislature and president are elected.

therefore details concerning the rich variation in self-government over time and across different polities are missing. This index addresses both flaws, presenting the richest approach to political decentralization that the literature has had to date.¹³

Regarding the incentives to cultivate personal voting provided by the electoral system, I follow the simplification of Carey and Shugart's index (1995) proposed by Nielson (2003). This classification presents the same three elements of the electoral law suggested by Carey and Shugart (1995): The level of candidate control over the pool, the vote and the ballot system. Furthermore, it also kept the ordinal ranking in the elements determining the candidate-centered character of the electoral law: ballot > vote > pool. However, there are two key differences. On the one hand, Nielson (2003) dichotomizes the question about the incentives for personal vote on each of the three components, whose different combinations simplify the measurement to a 9 point-rank scale. The higher the number assigned, the higher the incentives to cultivate a personal vote. On the other, he excludes the impact of the district magnitude.¹⁴ Data for Western European countries has been taken from Johnson and Wallack (2010) about candidate-orientation of electoral laws around the world and adapted to the Nielson's (2003) typology.

The interaction of self-rule and incentives to cultivate personal vote in the electoral law tests the main argument of this paper and indicates that both have to be taken into account in order to explain the nationalization of the party systems. While the power of the regional government determines the incentives for competing alone, the character of the electoral law determine the potential cost that choosing a local label can entail in determining (re)election. If in a given country regional governments have little power, there are no incentives for competing locally oriented and I expect no impact on the nationalization of party systems. If a decentralized country also has a very national oriented electoral law, candidates face significant constraints in competing alone and, again, I expect no impact on the dependent variable.

¹³ This typology begins in 1950. In the 21 elections held previously to this date, the first available code has been used..

¹⁴ More details in Nielson (2003: 477-9).

Nevertheless when the electoral law is very candidate oriented the probability of the (re)election of the candidate is not affected by the party label. In this context, office-seeking politicians will be very receptive to the incentives provided by a decentralized government structure. Thus, when a country decentralizes and its electoral law is candidate-oriented, I expect a reduction in the nationalization of its party system. Or in other words, what I expect is a positive association between the interaction term and the inflation index.

2.5. Control variables

Territorial cleavages

One of the main approaches that explain the nationalization of party systems is based on the impact of cleavages. According to this idea, the progressive nationalization of politics was driven by the erosion of pre-industrial cleavages and the increasing importance of the socio-economic one (Caramani, 2004, 2005). In order to explain the differences across countries in the nationalization of party systems, this approach focuses on the extent to which territorial cleavages play a role in national politics. “When strong cleavages with a territorial character exist, namely relying on groups that are geographically concentrated, then the party system will be less nationalized” (Sikk and Bochsler, 2008: 3). This occurs because local entrepreneurs face incentives to compete alone representing their minorities and they are ideologically incompatible with local parties from other districts (Clark and Golder, 2006; Lago and Montero, 2009). Consequently, the result is a territorially disconnected party system.

I have measured fractionalization in each country by drawing on the data available from Alesina et al. (2003). The database provides different values of ethnic, religious and linguistic fractionalization for each country, without variation over time, and displays a range between 0 and 1¹⁵. I have chosen to focus on ethnic fractionalization

¹⁵ Alesina et al. index is constructed:

as a general proxy. The higher the index is, the higher the presence of minorities who are potentially territorialized. Therefore, as the index of ethnic fractionalization rises, I expect that the inflation indices will also rise.

Seats allocated in upper tiers

One incentive for the nationalization of party systems may be to secure more legislative seats. In systems where there is a secondary electoral level - also called upper-tiers - in which unused votes from the primary electoral districts are aggregated and distributed, parties have positive incentives to compete nationally (Cox and Knoll, 2003: 7). This secondary electoral district - which can be regions, states or the whole nation - provides the chance to pool wasted votes from various districts and to convert them into representation, giving more potential vote surplus to those parties which compete in several districts (Cox, 1999: 157). All else being equal, the more seats that are allocated in the upper tier, the greater the incentives for coordination across districts.¹⁶

Although the effect of upper tiers has only been studied on a few occasions (Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Bochsler, 2010b), its relevance has been clearly established. In order to measure this variable I use the data from Golder (2007). The variable has been constructed by deducting the percentage of seats allocated in the upper tier from the total seats of the lower chamber and it ranges from 0 to 50. As the value increases, so does the number of seats allocated in the upper tier. Where the value is high, local candidates will face greater incentives to coordinate across districts because the potential gain in seats will also be greater. Hence, the inflation indices will be reduced.

$$FRACT_j = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^N s_{ij}^2$$

where s_{ij} is the proportion of group i ($i = 1 \dots N$) in country j .

¹⁶ Some national commitment requirements are usually associated with upper tiers, such as presenting candidacies in a given number of constituencies or national thresholds, a fact that reinforces the previous argument and fosters the nationalization of the party system.

The role of a strong presidency

According to the literature, presidentialism seems to make local party systems more similar to that at national level and, therefore, to increase the nationalization of the party systems (Mainwaring and Shugart, 1997; Cox, 1999; Stoll and Hicken, 2011). “Because in presidential systems, the grand prize is generally awarded in a single national district, these systems encourage the formation of national alliances between parties” (Harbers, 2010: 615). Furthermore, this effect is exacerbated when legislative and presidential elections are held simultaneously because there is greater interdependence between both elections (Stoll and Hicken, 2011).

There are no presidential democracies in Western Europe but still existing semi-presidential regimes. Semi-presidential regimes have been defined as “the situation where a popularly elected fixed-term president exists alongside a prime minister and cabinet who are responsible to the parliament” (Elgie, 1999:13). In Western Europe six countries fulfill this condition: Austria, Iceland, Finland, Ireland, France and Portugal. Despite the fact that those cases presidencies are less powerful than their homologues in Latin-America and the USA, it can be sustained the hypothesis of coattail effects. I control for semi-presidential regimes with a dichotomous variable whose values are 1 if the country is a semi-presidential regime and 0 otherwise.

District magnitude

Another institutional component that can affect the nationalization of party systems is related to the structure of the districts, or more specifically, to district magnitude. However, arguments and evidences are completely mixed regarding this variable. Cox (1999) suggested that coordination across districts is a second stage that is unrelated to district magnitude. However, later he changed his view when he affirmed that it is negatively correlated with nationalization (Cox and Knoll, 2003). Their idea is that electoral systems with small district magnitudes involves that small parties face strong incentives to join other parties in order to surpass the threshold of representation. However, other authors have argued

that single-member district systems will involve weaker nationalization because parties will avoid spending resources in those districts where they have little chance of winning (Morgenstern et al., 2009: 1327). If it were true, it would suggest the reverse hypothesis.¹⁷

Irrespective of whether a positive, a negative or non-effect hypothesis is sustained, I have decided to keep this variable as a control. In order to deal with it I employ the logarithm of the average district magnitude¹⁸ and drawn on data from Golder (2007) and Caramani (2000).

2.6. Data, methods and empirical research

In this section I present the models, their specifications and findings. The sample is based on cross-sectional data and election results from the Second World War to 1996 from 17 Western European countries. Two different techniques have been employed. First I have carried out an ordinary least square regression clustering by country in order to deal with the self-correlation of standard errors. This approach is centered on cross-national comparison and it is the same that other studies have followed (Cox and Knoll, 2003; Bochsler, 2009b). Nevertheless, this statistical approach falls short in dealing with pool data displaying time and space variation because errors correlated over time and across countries tend to show heteroscedasticity problems and conceal unit and period effects (Podestà, 2002: 10-11). Therefore, in a second stage, I have run the same models with a pooled time series cross-section analysis with random effects¹⁹; thereby avoiding the

¹⁷ Bochsler argued in favor of a similar hypothesis despite the fact that he linked the nationalizing effect of a high district magnitude mechanism with other institutional mechanisms, like PR systems, upper tiers and voting through party list (Bochsler, 2010b: 810).

¹⁸ I expect non-linear behaviour as Taagepera and Shugart found (1987) because the impact of any marginal seat in the proportionality of the electoral system will tend to be lower than the previous one.

¹⁹ A Hausman test confirmed that there is no correlation between the unobserved heterogeneity and the independent variables, crucial assumption of random-effects model.

methodological problems of previous empirical analysis. The total number of national legislative elections included in the sample is 231 in the case of Iw and 234 in D.²⁰

The peculiar case of Belgium should be highlighted due to the “disconnection” of its party system (Lijphart, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003). Since 1968, the Wallon and Flemish areas have developed independent party systems that have blurred previous coordination across linguistic lines. This situation has led to an extremely polarized national party system (Lijphart 1999: 47), presenting a dramatic variation in the nationalization of its party system in Western Europe. Therefore, all previous analysis have accounted for this variation by introducing a dummy variable for Belgium (Cox and Knoll, 2003; Lago and Lago, 2011) and I have decided to follow the same strategy in the performance of the statistical test. A summary of the statistical descriptives can be found in table 2.1. and 2.2. The first presents the means of the independent and dependent variables for each country while the second presents the summary of descriptive statistics.

(Table 2.1. about here)

(Table 2.2 about here)

Two different set of models have been specified for each dependent variable, one that takes into account the independent effect of variables, and the other that introduces the interaction term. In those including the multiplicative interaction effects, constitutive terms have also been included in order to avoid inferential errors (Brambor et al., 2005). Thus, models have been defined as follows:

²⁰ This variation is driven by the lack of information about population entitled to vote in three Danish legislative elections (1964, 1966 and 1968), that makes it impossible to calculate an Iw index for them.

$$\text{Nat}(1) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ ethnic fragmentation} + \beta_2 \text{ Belgium} + \beta_3 \text{ upper tier} + \beta_4 (\log) \text{ average magnitude} + \beta_5 \text{ semi-presidential} + \beta_6 \text{ personalism} + \beta_7 \text{ self-rule} + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{Nat}(2) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ ethnic fragmentation} + \beta_2 \text{ Belgium} + \beta_3 \text{ upper tier} + \beta_4 (\log) \text{ average magnitude} + \beta_5 \text{ semi-presidential} + \beta_6 \text{ personalism} + \beta_7 \text{ self-rule} + \beta_8 \text{ personalism} * \text{ self-rule} + \varepsilon$$

Multicollinearity problems can arise when several institutional variables are considered in the same model because they usually present an association among themselves. Although in the second model multicollinearity problem is expected due to the presence of the interaction term (Brambor et al., 2005: 70), the additive model might be equally flawed if the main independent variables are heavily correlated. However, in my sample this is not the case.²¹ Table 2.3. presents the models that test the inflation index proposed by Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004). The first two are OLS clustered by country and the other two follow the TSCS technique.

(Table 2.3. about here)

In model one R square reached 0.46 and most of the coefficients behaved in the expected way. Ethnic fractionalization, self rule, candidate-oriented electoral laws and the dummy for Belgium relates positively with the inflation index. The semi-presidential regimes dummy also shows a positive relation, contrary to the theoretical expectations. Conversely, seats allocated in the upper tier and the average magnitude display a negative coefficient. However, only the dummy of Belgium is statistically significant at a level of 5%. In model two, the interaction term is introduced. This improved the total variance explained to 53% and made some

²¹ The only two cases where correlation is higher of 0.3 are those linking the upper tier and self-government (0.32) and the correlation of personalism and the (log) average magnitude (0.34). Considering problems of multicollinearity of ethnic fragmentation and self-government, those variables only present a 0.24 positive association, which confirms that this methodological problem is not present.

coefficients statistically significant. Ethnic fragmentation and the Belgium dummy are statistically significant at a 1% level. The average of the district magnitude is negatively related with the dependent variable and it is statistically significant at a 5% level. None of the constitutive terms are statistically significant but the interaction term is at a 1% level and positively related with the inflation index.

In model three and four results are quite similar. In the additive model 35% of the total variance is explained. Only semi-presidentialism changes the coefficient from positive to negative, according to expectations. It is worth noting that the Belgium dummy and self-rule variables are statistically significant at a 5% level. This latter result is coherent with Bracanti's findings (2007), which showed that decentralization is the main variable driving denationalization rather than fractionalization. In model four the interactive term was introduced. In this case the total explained variance reached to a 54% level. Ethnic fractionalization and the Belgium dummy are statistically significant at 1% while seats in the upper tier and the interactive term at a 5% level. This means that upper tiers have a nationalizing effect while ethnic fragmentation and the combined impact of candidate oriented electoral rules and decentralization operates in the opposite direction.

In table 2.4. I test the inflation index by Moenius and Kasuya (2004). As in the previous table the first two models are OLS clustered by country, and the other two follow the TSCS technique.

(Table 2.4. about here)

In the first model the R square statistic reached a 0.43. The Belgium dummy is statistically significant at a 1% level while the ethnic fragmentation of the country and the (log) average magnitude are both statistically significant at a 5% level. All these variables behaved as in previous models. Again, self rule, personalism of electoral laws and seats in the upper tier behave in the expected way, but none of them are statistically significant. In the second model I introduced the interactive term. The total variance explained was 45% and there were no important changes; the

Belgium dummy and ethnic fractionalization is positively related and (log) district magnitude is negatively associated with inflation, all of them being statistically significant at a 1% level. Again, the constitutive terms are insignificant but the multiplicative term of both is positively related with the inflation index, and it is statistically significant at 5%.

In models three and four the TSCS technique has been applied. In model 3 variance explained were 43%. The only variables statistically significant are the Belgium dummy and ethnic fractionalization, at 1% and 5% level respectively. In model four the interactive term was introduced. In this case, ethnic fractionalization, the Belgium dummy and (log) district magnitude are statistically significant at a 1% level. While the first two variables pushed inflation, district magnitude tended to diminish it. Again, self-rule and candidate-oriented electoral laws are not statistically significant while the interactive term is at 1% level, fostering the de-nationalization of party systems.

Substantive conclusions can be drawn from the statistical analysis. With regards to controls, the particular case of Belgium is associated with a high inflation index in line with what other authors have found (Cox and Knoll, 2003; Lago and Lago, 2011). In general there is quite robust evidence that supports the impact of both ethnic fractionalization and the average magnitude on the dependent variable. When a country has territorial ethnic minorities, the nationalization of party systems is eroded because candidates prefer to compete locally-oriented (Caramani, 2004; Bochsler, 2010b). In the case of average magnitude, this variable behaves in the same way as Morgenstern et al. (2009) have argued. It seems that low districts magnitude shrinks the nationalization of party systems because parties do not allocate resources when the representation threshold is very high²².

The main hypothesis of this paper is supported by the evidence presented above. The multiplicative interaction of self-rule in a

²² This situation can also take place if non-viable candidates withdraw from competition, a scenario that was not considered by Cox and Knoll (2003) when they theorized the effect of the district magnitude in the nationalization of party systems.

given country and a personal vote-centered electoral law is positively related with the inflation index. This finding is quite robust since it is tested using two different inflation indices and complementary statistical techniques. The de-nationalizing effect of the decentralization of a country is conditional on the presence of an electoral system that encourages personal voting, as the following figures illustrate.

(Figure 2.1. and Figure 2.2. about here)

Figure 2.1. and 2.2. show the marginal effect of self-rule when the level of candidate-orientation in the electoral law increases.²³ As can be seen, the marginal effect is positive, raising the inflation of the party systems as far as the personal orientation of the electoral law increases. The illustration also points out that the effect is only statistically significant when a threshold of candidate orientation of electoral law is surpassed, which is about point 4 and 5.²⁴ A specific example can serve to make the argument clearer. Germany and Ireland both present a similar low inflation index mean over the studied period.²⁵ In the former case the self-rule of regional governments is very high, but it has a party-oriented electoral law. Conversely, Ireland has a very personal oriented electoral system with single-transferable vote (STV) but very low self-government. Therefore, in both cases nationalization is high - and the inflation index is low -. However, when the case of Italy is taken into account, there are both decentralization and personal oriented laws and, as a consequence, the combined effect of these two conditions eroded the nationalization of the Italian party system.

²³ Only the TSCS models simulation have been included.

²⁴ According to Nielson this will include all electoral systems in which individual candidates have control over their access to the ballot and those in which individual candidates can be chosen without pooling (Nielson, 2003: 478).

²⁵ See table 2.1.

2.7. Conclusions

Does the decentralization of a country affect the level of nationalization of its party system? Traditionally the literature has answered affirmatively, but the evidence is not very strong depending on the countries considered (Bochsler, 2010b, Lago and Lago, 2011). In this paper I have focused on revisiting this question in Western Europe. Through two different indices of nationalization I have shown that the effect of decentralization is conditioned on the incentives provided by the electoral law to cultivate a personal vote (Carey and Shugart, 1995). When the self-rule of regions in a given country increases, it only reduces the nationalization of the party system if the candidate-orientation of the electoral law is high.

The causal mechanism is linked to the extent that party labels are useful in competition to ambitious office-seeking candidates. In decentralized countries where electoral law is party-oriented, local candidates will prefer to compete through a national party because party brands are valuable in their constituencies. Nevertheless, if the electoral system is very candidate-oriented, labels are almost irrelevant in politicians (re)election and they will prefer to compete centered in the more powerful arena. Thus, in this context candidates will be more willing to transfer power towards the sub-national government than in the previous scenario, and they will tend to compete on their own, thereby diminishing the nationalization of the party system. Other traditional hypotheses on the determinants of nationalization have been tested. Despite the fact that seats allocated in the upper tiers proved statistically insignificant in fostering the nationalization of the party systems, district magnitude effectively strengthens it while ethnic fractionalization erodes it. Belgium, as expected, is a very particular case within Western Europe due its de-nationalization in the 1970s.

In any case, additional research efforts are required. On the one hand, it is a natural step to test the interactive effect proposed in this paper in other regional areas, especially in those where the traditional hypothesis have not been satisfactorily tested - for example, Central and Eastern Europe may be a good point of departure -. On the other hand, future analyses must be more

sophisticated. As others academics have highlighted, incentives to nationalize a party system do not simply “add up” but depend on a chain of conditions (Cox and Knoll, 2003). This calls for causal models which account for the interactive effects between different elements of the political system. This approach has received little attention in the literature, with the few exceptions of Morgenstern et al., (2009) and Bochsler (2010b), who have preferred additive models.

To sum up, this study proves that the de-nationalizing effect of decentralization is conditional on the importance of party labels in local candidates’ competition. Only when party brands play a minor role in elections will the rising power of the sub-national arena effectively reduce the nationalization of party systems.

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Table 2.1. Country Means for Dependent and Independent Variables

Country	N	Iw	D	Frac.	Tier	Mg.	SP.	Pers.	Self.
Austria	16	4.65	0.09	0.11	15.56	13.46	1	4	12
Belgium	17	49.24	2.29	0.55	0	7.21	0	4	12.56
Denmark	22	6.59(a)	0.29	0.08	23.77	6.75	0	8	7.23
Finland	15	16.11	1.06	0.13	0	13.3	1	8	1.5
France	15	16.42	0.83	0.10	0	2.17	0.7	3	9.13
Germany	13	6.83	0.19	0.16	49.23	1	0	3	20.28
Greece	9	2.72	0.21	0.15	23	5.14	0	8	2.33
Iceland	16	12.63	0.53	0.07	19.31	5.27	1	1	0
Ireland	16	5.9	0.19	0.12	0	3.78	1	9	0.56
Italy	14	10.23	0.54	0.11	13.92	16.73	0	7.2	11.87
Luxem.	10	13.11	0.43	0.53	0	14.05	0	8	0
Norway	14	6.52	0.24	0.05	1.07	7.52	0	4	6.57
Portugal	9	9.57	0.42	0.04	0	12.22	1	1	3.1
Spain	7	11.37	0.55	0.41	0	6.73	0	2	15.04
Sweden	17	3.69	0.14	0.06	6.47	9.87	0	4	8.76
Switzer.	13	26.38	2.19	0.53	0	7.82	0	8	15
United King.	13	13.02	0.3	0.12	0	1	0	3	9.21

NOTE: N = number of observations, Iw = Inflation index (Moenius and Kasuya, 2004), D = Inflation index (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998), Frac. = Ethnic fractionalization (from 0 to 1), Tier = % of seats allocated in upper tiers (from 0 to 50), Mg. = Average district magnitude, SP. = Semi-presidential regimen (0-1), Pers. = Personalism (From 1 to 9), Self= self-rule (from 0 to 15). a. Observations here are reduced to 19 because the lack of information in 1964, 1966 and 1968 Danish legislative elections.

Table 2.2. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	Std. Dev.
D	0.63	5.07	0.01	0.86
Iw	13.09	114.01	0.46	16.89
Ethnic fragmentation	0.19	0.55	0.04	0.17
Belgium	0.07	0	1	0.25
Seats in upper tier	9.44	50	0	13.73
Average district mag.	7.85	20.33	1	5.23
Semi-presidentialism	0.29	0	1	0.45
Personalism	5.17	1	9	2.67
Self-rule	7.87	0	22	6.13

Table 2.3. The Inflation of Party Systems in Western Europe
Chhibber and Kollman (D)

Regression model	OLS cluster Model 1	OLS cluster Model 2	TSCS Model 3	TSCS Model 4
Constant	-0.01 (0.41)	0.51 (0.39)	-0.06 (0.29)	0.40** (0.20)
Ethnic fragmentation	1.75 (10.27)	1.85*** (0.34)	0.87 (0.82)	1.59*** (0.41)
Belgium	0.98** (0.42)	0.93*** (0.20)	1.20** (0.50)	1.05*** (0.26)
Seats in upper-tier	-0.009 (0.007)	-0.008 (0.005)	-0.01 (0.006)	-0.008** (0.004)
(log) Average magnitude	-0.05 0.06	-1.17** (0.07)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.09 (0.06)
Semi-presidentialism	0.27 (0.22)	0.40 (0.22)	-0.24 (0.26)	0.48 (0.27)
Personalism	0.03 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.04)	0.06 (0.01)	-0.04 (0.02)
Self-rule	0.02 (0.03)	-0.05 (0.04)	0.06** (0.01)	-0.02 (0.01)
Personalism* Self-rule	-	0.015*** (0.004)	-	0.01** (0.003)
R ²	0.46	0.53	0.35	0.54
Countries	17	17	17	17
N	236	236	236	236

***p<0.01; **p<0.05

Two different techniques have been performed: Ordinary least square regression with clusters by country and time-series cross-section analysis (TSTC) with random effects. B coefficients are placed above while standards errors are within brackets.

**Table 2.4. The Inflation of Party Systems in Western Europe
Moenius and Kasuya (I)**

Regression model	OLS cluster Model 1	OLS cluster Model 2	TSCS Model 3	TSCS Model 4
Constant	8.50 (5.37)	13.64** (6.20)	8.85*** (3.93)	13.87*** (3.52)
Ethnic fragmentation	23.52** (9.34)	24.49*** (6.41)	18.39** (9.30)	23.48*** (6.94)
Belgium	28.60*** (3.81)	29.83*** (1.06)	28.74*** (6.06)	29.10*** (4.18)
Seats in upper-tier	-0.15 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.19 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.07)
(log) Average magnitude	-2.16** (0.80)	-3.31*** (1.04)	-2.05 (1.37)	-2.43*** (1.01)
Semi-presidentialism	3.76 (2.81)	5.01 (2.75)	2.79 (3.89)	5.99 (3.89)
Personalism	0.09 (0.59)	-0.58 (0.67)	0.04 (0.51)	-0.86 (0.45)
Self-rule	0.23 (0.44)	-0.52 (0.69)	0.40 (0.24)	-0.48 (0.32)
Personalism* Self-rule	-	0.15** (0.06)	-	0.14*** (0.05)
R ²	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.45
Countries	17	17	17	17
N	234	234	234	234

***p<0.01; **p<0.05

Two different techniques have been performed: Ordinary least square regression with clusters by country and time-series cross-section analysis (TSTC) with random effects. B coefficients are placed above while standards errors are within brackets.

Figure 2.1. Change on Party System Inflation (D)

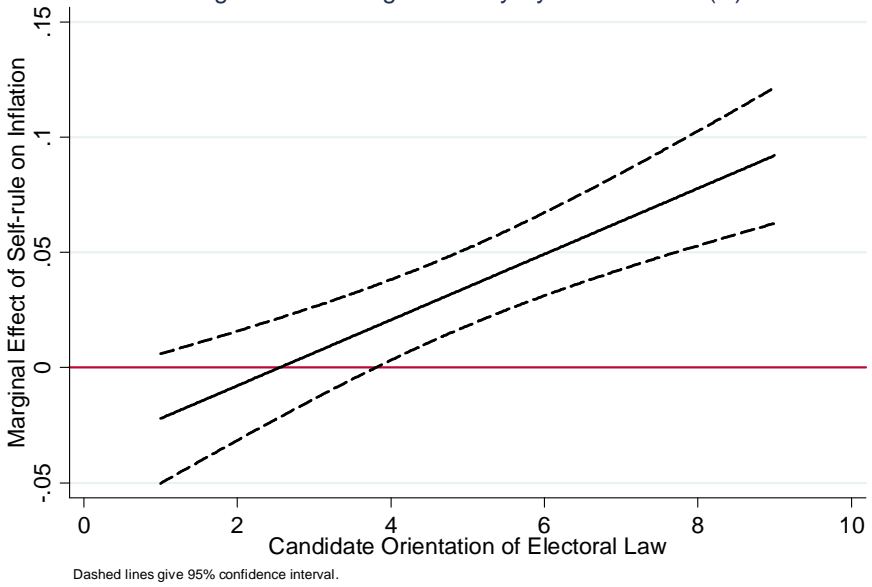
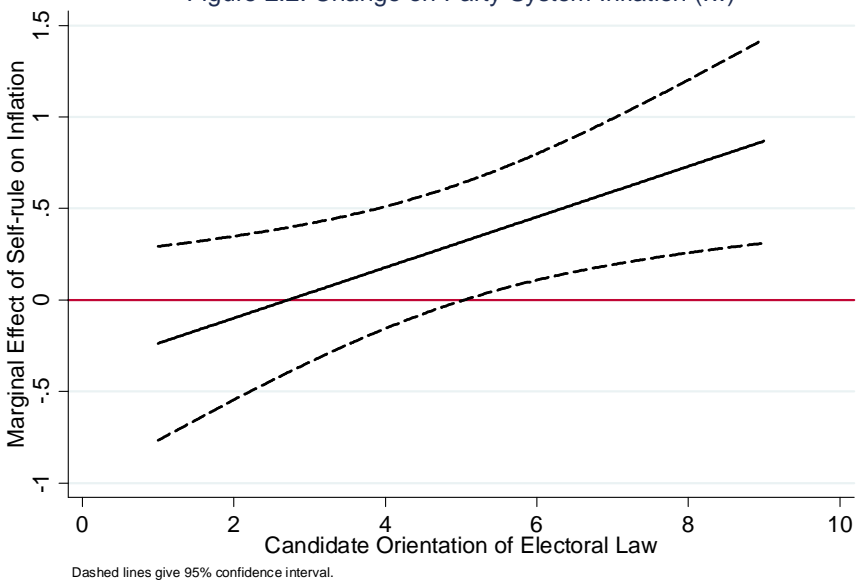


Figure 2.2. Change on Party System Inflation (Iw)



CHAPTER 3

HETEROGENEITY IN TURNOUT RATES ACROSS REGIONS AND THE NATIONALIZATION OF PARTY SYSTEMS

The literature on electoral participation has devoted little space to explaining why some countries present higher variation across districts than others. In this paper I argue that the nationalization of party systems is the key factor that drives this variation because of the impact of local party systems within a country. When nationalization of the party system is low, there are differences in the number and/or the type of local parties. This variation changes the voting incentives across districts and produces differences in turnout rates within the polity. I provide empirical evidence through two different samples of countries and nationalization indices that supports this hypothesis. This paper also considers the impact of ethno-linguistic fractionalization, district magnitude and variation in district competitiveness.

3.1. Introduction

In the 1994 Brazilian legislative election national turnout reached 47%. However, in the district of *Pará* turnout was 37% while in *Roraima* it was 64%, showing a variation of almost 30 points between the district with the highest and the lowest turnout. This situation was very different by far from that of, for example, the 1998 Danish general election. National turnout was around 86% but while the turnout in the district of *Soendre storkreds* reached 80%, in *Roskilde amtskreds* it was 88%. In this case, the difference displayed between the district with the highest and the lowest rate was only about 8 points. Why does this variation in electoral participation within country take place? Why do some countries show more similar turnout rates among their constituencies than others?

These questions have been little explored in the literature. Generally speaking, scholars dealing with turnout have focused on three different outlooks. Firstly, authors have focused on the individual incentives for going to the polls (Downs, 1957; Riker and Ordershook, 1968; Brady et al., 1995); secondly, on a combination of micro and contextual explanations of electoral participation (Anduiza, 2002; Franklin, 2004; Gallego, 2010) and thirdly on explaining the aggregate variation of turnout across countries (Powell, 1986; Jackman, 1987; Blais and Carty, 1990; Franklin, 1996; Blais and Dobrzynska, 1998; Norris, 2002; Blais, 2006). However, this latter approach has assumed a lack of turnout variation within country or, at least, its irrelevance. In this paper it is argued that these assumptions are flawed and it subsequently seeks to fill the gap in the literature by explaining the within-country dimension of turnout.

Addressing this question is relevant because it has political consequences. First, turnout is considered to be an indicator of democratic responsiveness (Lijphart, 1997) and a great disparity within a country reveals territorial inequality regarding levels of engagement with the political system (Anduiza, 2002). Second, this variation in turnout can shape the public agenda and policies, similarly to that which happens with other biases related to unequal

representation of territories (Samuels and Snyder, 2001). When internal differences in turnout rates arise, officials can have strong incentives to orient their policy-making according on their level of accountability in different districts. Finally, in terms of party competition, having lower turnout in some districts is usually linked to the partisan vote shares in those districts (Grofman et al., 1997). In this sense, the literature has proved how leftist party support tends to covariate with turnout (Pacek and Radclif, 1995; Bernhagen and Marsh, 2007); or how electoral participation enhances volatility and decreases the vote share of the incumbent candidate (Hansford and Gomez, 2010). Therefore, territorial differences in turnout are usually correlated with different electoral dynamics and potential turnout biases.

The central argument of this paper is that the homogeneity of turnout rates within a country is crucially driven by the nationalization of the party system. The nationalization of party systems, also called linkage (Cox, 1999) or party aggregation (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004) refers to “linking the members of the various local party systems into national parties” (Cox, 1999: 155). When nationalization is perfect the party systems of the local or regional level are exactly the same everywhere because parties are uniformly successful in competing in each constituency. Conversely, in a weakly nationalized country each political party tends to run candidates in only one district, and every local party system tends to be idiosyncratic. It is in this latter scenario when coordination across districts does not take place and local parties do not merge into joint national parties.

Why should the degree of nationalization determine unequal turnout across districts? When in a given country the nationalization of its party system is perfect and there is uniformity in the parties competing across constituencies, incentives for going to the polls are pretty similar wherever the district of enrolment. It is in this context where the number and/or type of parties at stake remains as a constant across districts and fewer differences are expected to appear. Nevertheless as the degree of nationalization reduces, the local party systems enhance their differences and each constituency tends to become a specific “island” isolated from the others. Under these conditions the incentives for voting are likely to vary within

country and it is expected that the heterogeneity of turnout rates across districts will be boosted.

In this paper, I both identify the phenomena and present an explanation according to the previous argument. The second section of this paper is divided into two parts. On the one hand, I set out the cross-national variation of the dependent variable and its consequences in terms of representation. On the other hand, I present a theoretical model in order to explain my dependent variable. Section three is centered on presenting the data and methods. The empirical research is based on two different datasets in order to test the reliability of the argument. The first is from a cross-sectional analysis of national legislative elections based on Cox's data (1997) and the second includes legislative elections in Western European countries from the Second World War to 1996, based on Caramani's (2004, 2005) previous work. To contrast the robustness of the argument I use two different indices of nationalization proposed by Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004) and Moenius and Kasuya (2004). Other controls are added such as the district magnitude - its average, its variation across districts and its number -, the ethno-linguistic fractionalization of the country and the deviation in the closeness of the electoral race across districts. Finally, the last section concludes.

3.2. Turnout within country in a comparative perspective

3.2.1. The variation to explain

When and why turnout rates are higher in different countries has been extensively studied from different angles (Powell, 1986; Jackman, 1987; Franklin, 1996; Blais, 2006). While some scholars have focused on the impact of the electoral system (Blais and Carty, 1990; Blais and Aarts, 2006) others have centered on disentangling the effects of different socio-economic, institutional and political factors (Blais and Dobrzynska, 1998) and the generalization of previous findings to non-Western democracies (Kostadinova, 2003;

Fornos et al., 2004). Wherever the frame of the study is, comparative literature at the macro level shares the same unit of analysis; the turnout rates at the national level.

Nevertheless, we know very little about what is going on behind the scenes of the national stage. Clearly, what is true at one level of aggregation is not necessarily true at the other (Berglund and Thomsen, 1990). Neither theoretical nor empirical reasons support the necessary congruence in levels and turnout trends between the national and other levels like the district. This idea can be easily illustrated with the following examples.

In one scenario it is possible that two countries had exactly the same turnout average at national level but very different “contributions” of each district. In figure 3.1., country X and country Z are composed of three districts each. The national turnout average is 50% but in X all districts are contributing equally, while in Z there is a range of 20 points. Therefore, despite both countries having the same national mean; the standard deviation of turnout is 10 points higher in Z than in X. Another possible scenario is that two countries have very different national turnout rates but exactly the same dispersion of their districts. In figure 3.2., country X has a national turnout rate of 70% while Z has 50%. Despite this difference in the average, districts of both countries present a range of 20. As consequence, X and Z have different means but exactly the same standard deviation in turnout rates across constituencies.

(Figure 3.1. and 3.2. about here)

These examples illustrate the presence of a bias in terms of political representation. In figure number 3.1., all the districts in country X are equally represented because all of them display the same turnout ratios. However, in country Z the representation is biased towards district A because it displays higher levels of turnout than B and C, which are 10 and 20 points below. In contrast to X, in country Z voters are unequally mobilized depending on the district. Furthermore, country Z may present a potential partisan bias if turnout differences across districts are correlated with the distribution of party voting strength i.e. parties whose electoral

support are focused on low-turnout rates districts gain cheaper seats in votes (Grofman et al.,1997: 458). On the other hand, this turnout bias cannot occur in country X assuming that, whatever it is the territorial distribution of party shares, all districts go to the polls in the same fashion. As can be seen in Figure 3.1. and 3.2., this bias of representation is independent of the national turnout reached because of the within-country nature of the unit of analysis.

Obviously the decomposition of national turnout rates can be done in terms of different units such as districts, municipalities or even polling stations. In this research I focus exclusively on the variation of turnout at the district level for two reasons. First, “most available datasets on the territorial structure of electoral results are aggregated at the level of electoral districts” (Bochsler, 2010: 156), so that cross-national comparison is easier in contrast to smaller units. Second, the district is the basic level where political forces are at play (Cox, 1997, 1999; Singer and Stephenson, 2009) and therefore it is the appropriate level for testing hypotheses that relate electoral dynamics and turnout.²⁶

Table 3.1. shows the national turnout, the standard deviation across districts and the range of the maximum and minimum value reached for the countries studied. It is worth emphasizing some points. First of all, as it has been previously said, national turnout and standard deviation across districts are empirically different components. Second, despite having lower variation than national rates, standard deviation also displays different values depending on the country. For example, while Zambia’s 1996 election presented a 12.66 standard deviation in turnout across constituencies; Brazil’s 1994 election displayed 5.71; the Czech Republic in 1992 3.57; and in the same year Denmark, only 2.06. And finally, the lower the standard deviation is, the more proximate are the turnout rates of district and national levels.²⁷

²⁶ This decision means that countries with a single nation-wide district cannot be taken into account because the district and the national level are the same.

²⁷ In fact in this sample there is a correlation of -0.5 between the national turnout and the standard deviation, when this idea is tested. Therefore, countries with high turnout rates tend to display lower variation across districts.

(Table 3.1.²⁸ about here)

Table 3.1., consequently, shows that there is an important cross-national variation in the homogeneity of turnout rates within a country. This again raises the question of why we should expect to have high homogeneity in some countries rather than others.

3.2.2. Towards an explanation

Next to no research has been done to explore the specific determinants of the homogeneity of turnout rates within country. Caramani's (2004) book *The Nationalization of Politics* appears to be the only one that addresses this topic explicitly in Western European societies. Caramani found that since the beginning of the XIX century turnout within European countries has tended to become more and more homogeneous across constituencies.

Why did this change happen? Caramani (2004) focused his explanation on the process of modernization that took place during the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century. In the initial stages of the representative institutions there were significant variations in turnout rates across districts due to the persistence of a traditional society, illiteracy or local clientelism in some districts: "Regional differences in turnout levels attest to marginal and peripheral positions of certain cultural and economic groups and, more generally, to a lower integration in the institutionalized forms of political participation" (Caramani, 2004: 77). As Western societies modernized, differences across territories tended to disappear with the progressive inclusion of those groups in the political process.

However, this suggestive approach, centered on a structural long-run explanation, is flawed. First, Caramani (2004) argues that an

²⁸ Sources are included in the appendix. This dataverse is based on Cox (1997) available turnout data at district level. This is one of the two samples used in the statistical analysis.

exogenous factor - the socioeconomic modernization - is driving the change in turnout dynamics. This supposes that as modernization progresses, within country turnout heterogeneity will disappear. However this is problematic because Western European countries have attained similar levels of modernization but still present significant differences on this dimension.²⁹ Second, “satisfactory covering law accounts require not only broad empirical uniformities but also mechanisms that cause those uniformities” (Tilly, 2001: 25) and Caramani (2004) gives no clue about why “political disconnected areas” should be present more in some countries than in others. And finally, one of the most outlandish points of this structural-based approach is its total disconnection from the very substantial literature devoted to explain cross-national differences in turnout rates.

While this broad approach is useful in portraying the general evolution of Western Europe, it fails to consider elements endogenous to the political process. In the effort of filling this gap strong arguments are pointing to the nationalization of the party systems as a crucial factor driving this neglected dimension of turnout arise.

The nationalization of party systems has been defined as a process of linkage through which “politicians seeking election to the national legislature from different districts (...) run under a common party label” (Cox, 1997: 186) and is conceptualized as a continuum depending on the degree to which parties are uniformly successful in winning votes across districts (Moenius and Kasuya, 2004). This leads to different levels of connection among local party systems in the national party system formation. In a perfectly nationalized party system, each local party system is a “clone” of the others and all of them are a mirror of the national-level party system. Conversely, in an extreme de-nationalized party system each constituency presents its own set of parties and they are transferred to the national level without merging in formations going beyond the district level.

²⁹ For example, Finland in 1995 and Norway in 1993 are very similar countries in terms of economic and social development but the former presents a variation coefficient of turnout rates of 10.85; while the latter attains only a 3.32.

My point is that this territorial dimension of the party systems determines the heterogeneity in the turnout rates across districts because it affects the (in)equality in the incentives for voting across districts. When the nationalization of the party system is perfect, local party systems are (dis)encouraging voting to the same extent in all constituencies and it is compelling to expect lower differences in turnout among them. Nevertheless, this situation changes as the nationalization of the party system is reduced. In this latter scenario, differences among the local parties arise changing the incentives across districts and fostering variation in turnout.

Incentives for voting are altered by the nationalization through two mechanisms. On the one hand, in a low nationalized country there are different number of local parties at stake depending on the district we focus on. Generally, the literature centered in the cross-national level has shown a negative relation between the number of parties at stake and turnout (Jackman, 1987; Blais and Carty, 1990; Blais and Dobrzynska, 1998; Kostadinova, 2003). Furthermore, recent research has shown that: “What is true cross-nationally is roughly speaking true within-nation. The link between the effective number of parties and turnout is not positive” (Grofman and Selb, 2011: 95). This makes it reasonable to expect that the higher the difference in the number of parties across districts, the higher the heterogeneity in turnout rates, due to the fact that constituencies with fewer parties are associated with higher levels of participation.

On the other hand, the nationalization of party systems is not only capturing differences in the number but also in the parties at stake. It is possible to have a low nationalized party system despite having the same number of parties competing everywhere if, for whatever reason, those local parties do not merge under national labels. This is more frequent in countries where there are present territorially concentrated minorities and the parties representing them are ideologically incompatible with local parties from other districts (Clark and Golder, 2006; Lago and Montero, 2009).

When the cost of mobilizing the voters of some parties is higher than others, the heterogeneity of turnout rates will be affected by the type of political formation competing. One possibility is that where territorial minorities do not feel represented by national political institutions their participation in the electoral process is less

probable, and this raises absenteeism only in the regions where they are present (Sikk and Bochsler, 2008). Another explanation is that where territorial minorities feel strongly attached to an ethno regionalist party, voters tend to be inelastic on their partisanship and easily mobilized. Because voting is linked with a “belonging feeling”, as consequence, turnout would be higher in those territories where minorities are concentrated. Both arguments, despite pushing in opposite directions, reinforce the idea that if different sets of parties compete in different territories this will mean higher heterogeneity in turnout rates within the country.

These two mechanisms are encompassed by the nationalization of the party systems in a cross-national fashion. The idea is that heterogeneity of turnout rates is affected because the differences in the number of parties and/ or the parties at stake among districts change incentives for going to polls. The concept of nationalization goes further than cleavage heterogeneity: It is centered on the effective political mobilization of diversity across constituencies. As a consequence, what my argument suggests is that variation of turnout across districts is driven by a territorial dimension endogenous to the political process. Even so, other independent variables also need to be accounted for explaining this dimension of turnout.

Regarding the electoral system, it has been argued that having a proportional representation (PR) electoral system and/ or larger districts fosters turnout (Blais, 2006). There are no electoral systems with territorial variation in the electoral rule, but this is the general case concerning the district magnitude. Very few nations in the world have the same district magnitude throughout their country³⁰ and as Monroe and Rose (2002) have pointed out, the district magnitude in PR is highly correlated with population. May this variability increase the heterogeneity in turnout rates across constituencies? Smaller countries tend to present higher turnout

³⁰ As Rose and Monroe note: “With the exception of countries that use exclusively single-member districts (e.g., plurality systems, such as in the United Kingdom, run-off systems as in France, or alternative vote systems as in Australia) or that use only a single national district (e.g., Israel), most national legislatures are elected using districts that vary in magnitude.” (Rose and Monroe, 2002: 68).

rates (Blais and Carty, 1990; Blais and Dobrzynska, 1998) because of the higher political engagement of small size communities so this argument could travel to the district level. Small districts have a lower population size which is easier to mobilize, and when that situation coexist in a country that also has big districts, homogeneity turnout rates across regions could diminish.

The presence of an electoral formula operating in a given election is correlated with the average district magnitude and the number of constituencies. In general, systems under plurality rule tend to have a higher number of districts than those working under proportional representation (PR). In particular, those countries operating under single-member district (SMD) tend to cut the polity into much smaller, less populated and homogeneous pieces: “This, in turn should increase the likelihood that a district is distinct from those around it” (Morgenstern et al., 2009: 1327). Therefore, it can be argued that because of the idiosyncratic factors in each district where election are held, the higher the number of districts, the higher the possibility of having different turnout ratios among them.

Finally, one contextual variable could have an effect: the closeness of the electoral race. When there is an uncertain outcome or very narrow expected electoral differences between the main contestants, the higher the value of each single vote cast (Downs, 1957). Therefore, the expectation is that high levels of competitiveness fosters turnout (Blais and Carty, 1990; Blais and Dobrzynska, 1998). One problem with these studies, however, is that they have measured competitiveness at the national level, while it should have been measured at the district level. In a given election there may be some constituencies where the outcome is “assured” while in others there is uncertainty about the result, which in the latter case foster higher turnout. Therefore, if a given election presents significant differences in districts’ competitiveness, this will also increase the heterogeneity in their turnout rates.

3.3. Data and methods

3.3.1. The variables of the analysis

The measurement of the dependent variable

The index used for measuring the dependent variable is the one known as the variability coefficient (Caramani, 2004). This is calculated from dividing the standard deviation by the mean, which means dividing the standard deviation of turnout rates across districts by the national turnout rate and multiplying it by 100. The ranked results for the previous countries are presented in table 3.2.

(Table 3.2. about here)

The variability coefficient (CV) is a measure of the heterogeneity in turnout ratios across districts in a given country. When it has high values, it means that there is significant deviation in turnout ratios. As this index shrinks the turnout rates across districts become more similar, until it arrives to 0, hypothetical situation where all constituencies display the same turnout levels. A glance at table 3.2. seems to show some regional patterns. The Nordic Western European countries tend to show lower variation in turnout, with the exception of Finland. On the other extreme Switzerland, Zambia, Belize or Brazil display the higher variation.

This index to calculate homogeneity in turnout rates has two drawbacks which have to be taken into account.³¹ First, this index does not have upper limits, which makes it more complicated to interpret in comparison with a standardized measure (Bochsler, 2010: 158). And second, as all the measures are based on standard deviation, it can be influenced by the number of territorial units

³¹ Bochsler (2010) reported 5 different problems deriving from using indices of variance as an indicator of nationalization of party systems. However, none of these arguments have validity when turnout is taken into account rather than partisan support. For more details, see Bochsler (2010).

existing in a given country, making cross-national comparison problematic. In fact, “It has been argued that the CV is sensitive to differences in the size of the compared samples and universes, that is, the number of regions: The values of the CV diminishes as the number of units increases” (Caramani, 2004: 62). Despite that, no statistically significant correlation has been found between the number of districts and the CV in either of the samples used in this paper.³²

The nationalization of party systems

In this research the conception of the nationalization of party systems is founded on inflation measures (Cox, 1997, 1999; Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochsler, 2010), which are based on the comparison between the party systems at the national and the district level. When nationalization of the party systems does not take place, local parties do not merge under national labels and this means that “the national party system would be considerably larger than the average of the local party systems” (Cox, 1997: 155). This “surplus” of parties at national level is what the literature has labeled as inflation (Cox, 1997, 1999; Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochsler, 2010); the reverse dynamic of nationalization of party systems.³³

In this paper two different indices of inflation³⁴ are used. The first is based on the one proposed by Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004), and is calculated as the difference between the effective number of

³² The same correlations have been performed with the logarithm of the number of districts, displaying non statistically significant results.

³³ There are four families of nationalization indices: indices of frequency, of variance, of distribution and inflation measures. I have chosen the last one for three main reasons. First, inflation indices are centered on party systems as unit of analysis. Second, those indices require less information because only electoral results at district and national level are required. And finally, inflation indices have been increasingly used in the literature and using them make more comparable my research and findings. More details about the potentialities and shortcomes of inflation measures can be found on Bochsler (2010: 159-160).

³⁴ At least another three measures of inflation have been proposed. See details in Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004), Cox (1997), Moenius and Kasuya (2004) and Kasuya and Moenius (2008).

parties³⁵ at the national level and the average of the number of parties competing at the district level. Therefore, as D (deviation) becomes higher, the inflation of the national party system also increases and the nationalization is lower. This index is a classic one and has been extensively discussed and used in the literature (Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochsler, 2010). It is operationalized as follows:

$$D = ENP_{nat} - ENP_{avg}$$

Where:

ENP_{nat} is the effective number of parties at national level

ENP_{avg} is the average number of parties at local level

The second index has been proposed by Moenius and Kasuya (2004) and it is operationalized as follows:

$$I_w = \left(\frac{vot_{nat} * ENP_{nat}}{\sum_{i=1}^n ENP_i * vot_i} - 1 \right) * 100$$

Where:

vot_{nat} = total number of votes cast at national level;

vot_i = number of votes cast in district i , and

ENP_i = effective number of parties in district i .

³⁵ The effective number of parties is calculated as follows;

$$ENP = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2}$$

where p is the proportion of votes obtained by party i in the election (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979).

This index has the advantage of weighting the contribution of each district to party system inflation. The general measures of inflation assumed that all districts are the same size and therefore all received the same weight. However, “If districts vary markedly in terms of their number of votes, then using $1/n$ as the approximation of the relative contribution of a district to the national-level inflation may, depending on the research question, be no longer appropriate” (Moenius and Kasuya 2004: 550). Therefore this measure is more accurate than the previous one. Nevertheless, this index is more data demanding than the others because it is necessary to know the size of the electorate in each district in order to calculate it, information that is usually difficult to obtain.

The two inflation indices are highly correlated.³⁶ According to the inflation indices, as D and I_w rises, the incongruence in the local party systems composing a country increases and the nationalization of the party system diminishes. It means that the higher D and I_w are, the more heterogeneity there is of local party systems within a country and, therefore, a higher variability coefficient of turnout rates would be expected.

Variation in district magnitude

Two different variables will be used in order to test the impact of the district magnitude. On the one hand the average magnitude will be kept as a control³⁷. On the other hand, the impact of the variance in the district magnitude will be estimated. This variable is calculated using a similar approach to Monroe and Rose (2002). I have labeled this variable as variation coefficient of the district magnitude (MGcv) and it is calculated by dividing the standard deviation of the district magnitude by the average magnitude.³⁸ As this variable rises the variation in the district magnitude within a given country also increases while, on the other hand, a low score indicates that there is very similar district magnitude in the whole

³⁶ The correlation between D and I_w is 0.87 in sample 1 (Cox, 1997) and 0.85 in sample 2 (Caramani, 2004).

³⁷ This variable will be introduced using the logarithm. The reason is because I expect a non-linear behaviour, as Taagepera and Shugart showed (1989).

³⁸ Data on the average district magnitude is drawn from Cox (1997), Caramani (2000) and Golder (2007).

polity. It is expected that the higher the MGcv, the higher the variation coefficient. Theoretically, the causal mechanism will be that when there is a high variation in district magnitude there will be districts that are more populated than others.

The number of districts

One methodological and one substantive argument can be provided that justifies the inclusion of this variable. As has been said, the variability coefficient can be affected by the number of units (Caramani, 2004). Therefore, if this impact is real, I expect a negative relation between the number of districts and the dependent variable. But there is also a theoretical reason for its inclusion; because of chance or the idiosyncratic nature of the districts, the number of districts in a given polity can have an impact raising the variation coefficient of turnout rates, exactly in the opposite direction of the previous hypothesis. Therefore, there are good reasons for disentangling the effect of this variable by its inclusion in the analysis. In order to improve the adjustment the logarithm of the number of districts will be employed.³⁹

The deviation of districts' competitiveness

The difference in the closeness of the electoral race also has to be considered. The theoretical expectation is that when differences in competitiveness across districts are salient, turnout heterogeneity will be greater because of the difference in mobilization across districts. This variable has been calculated in two steps. First, I determined the margin of victory between the first and the second party at stake for each district. Then, the standard deviation of this margin was calculated for each national election.⁴⁰ According to

³⁹ It is expected that the marginal impact of adding a new district will decrease as the number of constituencies at stake grows. The argument is the same as has been presented for the average magnitude.

⁴⁰ It can be argued that there is a strong association between this measure of competitiveness and the (log) number of districts / (log) average magnitude. However, the results show that there is a low correlation between these variables. In sample one, the correlation of competitiveness and (log) average magnitude is 0.28 and with (log) number of districts is only 0.09. In sample two,

this calculation, the higher is the standard deviation of closeness, the higher is the variation coefficient.

The territorial cleavages

I have measured fractionalization in each country with the data available in Alesina et al. (2003). The database provides different values of ethnic, religious and linguistic fractionalization for each country, without variation over time, displaying a range between 0 and 1.⁴¹ I have considered an index based on the sum of those indicators measuring ethnic and linguistic fragmentation as a proxy of territorially concentrated minorities.⁴² The index ranges from 0 to 2, and the higher the fractionalization is, the higher the expected variation in the coefficient of turnout rates. This variable has to be maintained as a control because the fractionalization can have an effect that is independent of the nationalization of the party system if, for example, some minorities do not support a specific regional party and instead boycott the elections (Sikk and Bochsler, 2008: 12).

3.3.2. Data

This research will deal with two independent datasets in order to maximize the reliability of inferences. The first is that used by Cox (1997) and presents as units of analysis single national legislative elections with countries from different continents.⁴³ I have chosen

the correlation between competitiveness and (log) average magnitude is 0.14; while with (log) number of districts is 0.1.

⁴¹ Alesina et al. index is constructed:

$$FRACT_j = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^N s_{ij}^2$$

where s_{ij} is the proportion of group i ($i = 1 \dots N$) in country j .

⁴² Ethnic and linguistic fractionalization indices are highly correlated among them while the religious it is not to the same extent. The correlation is 0.82 in sample 1 (Cox, 1997) and 0.84 in sample 2 (Caramani, 2004).

⁴³ Cox took an election for every polity in the 1980s qualified as “free” by “Freedom House”. If the polity had multiple elections, he chose that nearest to 1985. Further explanation available in *Making votes count* (Cox, 1997: 208).

here to closely follow the data and design of previous works to isolate the essential model for comparison (Benoit, 2002). The second dataset is based on data obtained from *Elections in Western Europe since 1815* (Caramani, 2000) and presents as unit of analysis all the national legislative elections held in 14 Western European countries from 1945 to 1996. This sample has been chosen because it was the first study that - partially - dealt with the dependent variable and it allows me to compare previous findings with my causal model.

Each dataset has both strong and weak points. The cross-sectional data has the advantage that it does not restrict the selection to a regional area - thereby increasing the generalizability of the argument - but it has the problem of small N. It is very difficult to acquire turnout and electoral result data at the district level⁴⁴ and this therefore restricts the number of observations. On the other hand, the database based on Western European countries has the advantage of a major number of observations because of its temporal variation. The period from 1945 to 1996 is long enough to provide a large set of elections, despite the fact that the three “Third wave countries” (Huntington, 1994), Spain, Portugal and Greece, only have results since the '70s. Nevertheless, it can be argued that there is a potential selection bias because only Western European countries have been selected.

Some countries have been excluded in the Western Europe dataset. One of those has been the Netherlands, which by definition is perfectly nationalized because it comprises one nationwide district. However, another two have been excluded and require further explanation: Belgium and Switzerland.

Belgium is a clear case of a total territorial disconnection of party system. Since 1968, the Wallon and the Flemish areas have developed independent party systems, blurring previous party coordination across linguistic lines. This situation has led to an extremely polarized national party system (Lijphart, 1999: 47), that

⁴⁴ Despite the fact that attempts have been undertaken in that sense (such as CLE or CLEA dataverse) many datasets do not have information about, for instance, the number of people entitled to vote, especially in African or Latin American countries.

dramatically contrasts with the nationalization of party systems in other Western European countries (Cox and Knoll, 2003). Furthermore, Belgium is also a very special case because it has compulsory voting with more rigorous enforcement than any other democratic country in the West.⁴⁵ Belgium is therefore a very particular case, especially in what concerns the dependent and the main independent variable and I have preferred to exclude it.

The other particular case is Switzerland. Initially, Powell (1982) and Jackman (1987) have argued that there is a total demobilization of the electorate because of the agreement between the parties in the share of the government. This means that to some extent national legislative elections are irrelevant in the formation of governments. Furthermore, different dynamics are operating altogether. On the one hand, referendums are common (Lijphart, 1999) and this practice usually discourages electoral participation. There are also cantons in which the vote is compulsory and, although it is weakly enforced, it creates more incentives to vote in some districts than in others. Consequently, the majority of the studies treat Switzerland as an outlier (Blais and Dobrzynska, 1998: 243). Therefore, I argue that there are strong reasons for excluding this country from the study, especially because it has high values in my dependent and main independent variable and can artificially empower my analysis.

3.4. Empirical analysis

In this section I present the statistical analysis for both datasets. The difference in the number of observations involves using different statistical techniques. The sample based on Cox's (1997) data has 29 observations, in which some countries behave as outliers. In order to find a compromise between the exclusion of these cases and the assumptions of OLS regression, a robust regression has been performed. The second sample, based on Caramani's (2000)

⁴⁵ Voters have to provide a legitimate reason for abstention, or face a fine sanction. They can be disfranchised if they have abstained from four elections within 15 years and may face greater difficulties in getting a job in the public sector.

data, has more observations as it takes into account elections over a longer period. I have tested this data through a pooled time series cross-section analysis with random effects.⁴⁶ This statistical tool allows us to control by the correlation of standard errors among units and account for the cross-sectional and over time variation in the dependent variable (Podestà, 2002). The statistical descriptives can be found in tables 3.6. and 3.7.

The impact of all the independent variables cannot be tested in the same model. On the one hand, different models have been performed for each inflation index. On the other, there is a clear association between the number of districts, its average size and the variation in the district magnitude. Electoral systems under plurality rule tend to present a greater number of districts and no variation in the district magnitude across constituencies. In contrast, PR systems tend to present a minor number of districts, higher average magnitude and (some) variation across constituencies. Therefore, a careful test is required in order to avoid multicollinearity problems.

In the case of the world sample I have decided to test each of these independent variables by separately maintaining fractionalization as control. This decision has been taken not only because of multicollinearity but also because of the low level of observations, which substantially reduces the degrees of freedom. In the Western Europe sample, there is also correlation between all the three components of constituencies, but only in the case of the number of districts and the average of the district magnitude there is a multicollinearity problem. Therefore, and also because of the higher number of observations, two of these three elements can be introduced in each model.⁴⁷

Table number 3.3. presents the various models operating with the sample of 29 countries through the OLS linear robust regression.

⁴⁶ A Hausman test confirmed that there is no correlation between the unobserved heterogeneity and the independent variables, assumption of random-effects model.

⁴⁷ The correlation between the number of districts and the average of the district magnitude is -0.76. Various Klein's tests have been run and despite there not being any multicollinearity problem with the other variables, in this particular case this assumption cannot be sustained.

The main independent variable is the inflation index based on Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004)

(Table 3.3. about here)

All the models present an F statistic statistically significant at the level of 1%. In model 1 the impact of inflation of national party system and fractionalization on the variability coefficient of turnout rates across districts is presented. The inflation is statistically significant at the 5% level, while the fractionalization within a country it is significant at the 1% level. Both operate in the expected positive direction. In the following models - 2, 3, 4 and 5 - the impact of the (log) average magnitude, the variation in the district magnitude across districts, the (log) number of constituencies and the deviation of districts, competitiveness are tested. None of these variables are statistically significant.

Table number 3.4. presents the same models but the main independent variable has been replaced by the inflation index by Moenius and Kasuya (2004). Again, OLS linear robust regression has been performed:

(Table 3.4. about here)

All the models present, again, an F statistic that is statistically significant at the level of 1%. In this case, despite the fractionalization of the country being statistically significant at 1% level, the inflation index is only significant at a level of 10%. Again, both variables have behaved in the theoretically expected direction. The first model considers only inflation and fractionalization, while all the following ones add the controls. None of the variables added are statistically significant and only in model 5 is the inflation index not within the confidence interval.

Table number 3.5. presents the models operating in the sample for the Western European countries through the time series cross-section analysis. Models 1 and 2 test the inflation index proposed by

Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004) while the third and the fourth test the index proposed by Moenius and Kasuya (2004). Alternative models have been performed for each index to avoid the multicollinearity problem associated with the correlates of the (log) average magnitude and the number of districts.

(Table 3.5. about here)

Models one and two are statistically significant at a level of 1%. In model one the inflation index is statistically significant at a 1% and behaves in the theoretically expected way, increasing the dependent variable. The variation in district magnitude is statistically significant at a 10% level but operates in the opposite way in what was expected, reducing the variation coefficient. Variation in the district competitiveness, the (log) average of the district magnitude and the fractionalization are not statistically significant. In model 2, the variable of the number of districts replace the average magnitude. The inflation index is still statistically significant at a 5% level but the variation in the district magnitude and fractionalization variable are no longer significant. In this case the (log) number of districts is statistically significant at a 5% level and shows a positive coefficient, showing that the higher the number of districts is in a given country, the higher the variation in turnout rates across districts.

In models 3 and 4 the inflation index by Moenius and Kasuya (2004) is tested. Both analyses are statistically significant at a 1% level. In model three the inflation index is statistically significant at a 5% level and behaves as expected while variation in district magnitude is statistically significant at a 10% level, but does the opposite. The (log) average magnitude, districts' competitiveness and the fractionalization statistically insignificant. In model 4 the inflation index is significant at a 5% level while the (log) number of districts is at a level of 10%. All behave coherently with the previous models. However, the deviation in district magnitude, the deviation in districts' competitiveness and fractionalization are not statically significant.

Substantive conclusions can be made according to the results of the statistical analysis. The crucial point is that the results have supported the impact that the nationalization of party system has on the homogeneity of turnout within a country. According to the previous findings the inflation index was positively related with the variability coefficient whether the index of Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004) or that Moenius and Kasuya (2004) is used. In sum, the cross-national and over time predictive power of this key factor is undeniable.

The evidence about controls is mixed. On the one hand, it is clear that the (log) average and the deviation in districts' competitiveness have no direct effect on the CV. However, the variation in district magnitude, despite the fact that it receives no statistical support in sample 1 (Cox, 1997), is negatively associated with the dependent variable in the second sample (Caramani, 2004). This result, contrary to the theoretical expectations, disappears when the (log) number of districts is added to the model. This shows that it is the (log) number of districts that is really driving the effect in CV when the negative correlation between both variables is considered.⁴⁸ The presence of a high number of districts in a polity tends to enhance variation in turnout across constituencies. As happened with the previous variable, it also behaves in the expected way but only in the sample of Western European countries. Finally, in the case of territorial fractionalization the evidence is mixed too. This variable is quite relevant in the first sample (Cox, 1997); but statistically insignificant in the second (Caramani, 2004).

I have tested the robustness of the findings by setting out various alternative specifications. First, I have replaced the variation coefficient as dependent variable by two alternatives: The standard deviation of turnout across districts and the observed standard deviation divided by the maximum standard deviation of turnout rates.⁴⁹ Results are compellingly robust as can be seen in table 3.6.

⁴⁸ Both variables are negatively correlated at a -0.5 level and statistically significant at 1%. The higher the variation in district magnitude across districts, the lower the number of districts.

⁴⁹ It can be argued that the variation coefficient in the regression is largely driven by the overall level of turnout itself because there is a strong negative correlation between national turnout and CV. This possibility will move the research question away from the within-country variation of turnout rates. The potential

and 3.7. The remarkable changes are due to the controls decreasing the level of statistical significance from 5% to 10%. Despite the change in coefficients, the main independent variables are still statistically significant at the same level than in the main models irrespective of the dependent variable taken into account.

A second robustness test has been performed using an alternative specification based on the traditional SES model. It has been proposed that low levels of turnout are usually associated with low levels of literacy rates and economic development (Brady et al., 1995; Blais and Dobrzynska, 1998), similarly to what Caramani (2004: 78) labeled as the marginal position of “certain cultural and economic groups” and their impact on increasing turnout homogeneity. I have introduced the Gini Index⁵⁰ as a proxy of unequal distribution in the resources within a country. The number of units is reduced to 87 because of the difficulty in gathering data prior to the 1970s. The models are statistically significant but the Gini index is not. The only changes take place in model 1 where the inflation index and the competitiveness variables reduce their statistical significance to a level of 10%.

3.5. Conclusions

In this paper I have focused on a neglected dimension of turnout: The extent to which there are local differences in turnout rates within a country. Through two different samples and with two different indices I have shown that the nationalization of party systems is a crucial variable in explaining the cross-national differences in this dependent variable. When there is a high national party inflation - so, low nationalization - there are important

structural dependence of the standard deviation and turnout can be removed by dividing the observed standard deviation by the maximum standard deviation, which can be easily tested. The standard deviation itself will also be maintained in order to reinforce the reliability of the analysis. Results can be found in tables 3.8. and 3.9.

⁵⁰ Gini Index is a standard measure of inequality in income distribution. Data has been taken from the UNU-WIDER website.

http://www.wider.unu.edu/home/en_GB/index/. The analysis is not present in the paper.

differences in the number of parties across districts and the heterogeneity of turnout rates also rises. The causal mechanism is linked with to the fact that the number of parties at district level affects the incentives of voters to go to the polls. When this number is different across constituencies it fosters turnout variation within a country. This research has also shown that components like the deviation in districts' competitiveness, the average district magnitude or the variance in the district magnitude have no impact in the dependent variable. Nevertheless, there is mixed evidence in favor of the leverage that the number of districts and the fractionalization of the country have on the dependent variable.

Additional efforts should be undertaken in order to assess this neglected dimension of turnout. Different elements of the political system can be tested: Are less institutionalized party systems fostering the heterogeneity? In founding elections it could be that voters behave more inconsistently because of the lack of information but, as time goes by, differences across districts tend to be narrow. Another logical step is to move forward cross-national comparative approach for bridging the individual and the district level. Are factors at district level, like the number of parties or the regional economical situation, affecting the probability of voting? Are the hypotheses put forward in the literature operating in the expected way? This approach can help to understand some of the micro-foundations of the individual decision to cast (or not) a vote. Finally, it should be tested turnout variation potential impact on other political elements. Does, for instance, heterogeneity on turnout rates affect fiscal public policies?

To conclude, heterogeneity in turnout rates across districts is a relevant but understudied topic in the literature that requires more attention from political scientists. Despite the fact that this research only partially provides a comprehensive theory, it has nonetheless consistently proven that the nationalization of the party system has powerful explanatory force.

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Table 3.1. National Turnout and Standard Deviation

Country	Year	Nat. turn.	SD.	Max.	Min.
Austria	1983	92.59	2.94	96.29	87.02
Bangladesh	1996	74.15	5.55	83.11	69.17
Barbados	1994	60.9	3.77	68.91	54.21
Belgium	1995	91.15	1.93	94.66	86.58
Belize	1993	71.59	10.21	88.34	50.79
Botswana	1994	77.6	5.69	85.58	62.24
Brazil	1994	47.96	5.71	63.06	37.58
Canada	1993	68.65	5.08	74.5	54.95
Chile	1993	83.34	3.27	86.09	75.01
Costa Rica	1994	83.84	6.54	94.75	78.25
Czech Rep.	1992	87.72	3.57	88.34	78.84
Denmark	1994	84.25	2.06	86.42	78.64
Finland	1995	68.52	7.43	71.79	40.65
France	1993	69.32	2.86	77.86	63.47
Gambia	1997	75.77	7.9	86.72	51.82
Greece	1993	79.22	5.51	87.89	63.74
Iceland	1995	87.38	1.47	90.86	86.02
Ireland	1992	68.49	3.69	75.60	59.23
Italy	1992	87.35	6.41	94.92	67.18
Jamaica	1993	66.51	5.95	82.47	57.92
Japan	1993	66.27	6.97	83.98	53.94
Norway	1993	75.85	2.78	79.02	67.91
Poland	1993	49.88	3.6	61.09	44.69
Portugal	1995	67.14	3.94	71.26	56.5
Spain	1993	76.44	5.11	83.45	62.13
Sweden	1994	86.82	1.19	89.16	84.46
Switzerland	1995	42.22	10.14	64.37	17.35
U. K.	1992	78.11	6.52	97.69	39.91
Zambia	1996	56.19	12.66	88.9	15.55

**Table 3.2. Variability Coefficient
by Country**

Country	Year	CV
Switzerland	1995	24.04
Zambia	1996	22.54
Belize	1993	14.26
Brazil	1994	11.92
Finland	1995	10.85
Japan	1993	10.54
Gambia	1997	10.43
Italy	1992	9.68
Greece	1993	9.22
Jamaica	1993	8.95
U.K.	1992	8.35
Costa Rica	1994	7.8
Ireland	1992	7.53
Bangladesh	1996	7.48
Canada	1993	7.4
Botswana	1994	7.34
Poland	1993	7.22
Spain	1993	6.72
Barbados	1994	6.19
Portugal	1995	5.87
Austria	1983	4.73
France	1993	4.61
Czech Rep.	1992	4.26
Chile	1993	3.92
Bulgaria	1994	3.75
Norway	1993	3.32
Denmark	1994	2.3
Sweden	1994	1.85
Iceland	1995	1.69

Table 3.3. The Determinants of Turnout Heterogeneity in Sample 1

CV	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Constant	3.57*** (1.01)	4.25*** (1.49)	2.94* (1.42)	3.56*** (1.34)	2.09*** (1.52)
Inflation (D)	2.6** (1.01)	2.89** (1.1)	2.47** (1.07)	2.6** (1.04)	2.35** (1.04)
(log) Average magnitude	-	-0.09 (0.12)	-	-	-
Variation district magnitude	-	-	0.36 (0.47)	-	-
(log) Number of districts	-	-	-	0.000 (0.004)	-
Variation in competitiveness	-	-	-	-	0.19 (0.13)
Fractionalization	5.77*** (1.6)	5.27*** (1.7)	6.18*** (1.68)	5.79*** (1.65)	4.47*** (1.84)
F	10.32***	6.63***	7.18***	6.56***	7.99***
N	27	27	27	27	27

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *<0.1

Robust regression. B coefficients are placed above while standards errors are within brackets.

Table 3.4. The Determinants of Turnout Heterogeneity in Sample 1

CV	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Constant	3.77*** (1.28)	3.93** (1.59)	2.98* (1.56)	3.86*** (1.36)	2.62 (1.62)
Inflation (D)	0.14* (0.08)	0.15* (0.08)	0.15* (0.09)	0.15* (0.09)	0.11 (0.09)
(log) Average magnitude	-	-0.26 (0.12)	-	-	-
Variation district magnitude	-	-	0.45 (0.47)	-	-
(log) Number of districts	-	-	-	-0.001 (0.005)	-
Variation in competitiveness	-	-	-	-	0.17 (0.14)
Fractionalization	5.27*** (1.66)	5.22** (1.77)	5.45*** (1.76)	5.23*** (1.72)	4.12** (1.94)
F	8.2***	5.34***	5.34**	5.25***	5.58***
N	27	27	27	27	27

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *<0.1

Robust regression. B coefficients are placed above while standards errors are within brackets.

Table 3.5. The Determinants of Turnout Heterogeneity in Sample 2^a

CV	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	5.31*** (1.74)	4.22*** (1.59)	4.99*** (1.77)	4.25*** (1.41)
Inflation (D)	1.47*** (0.57)	1.40** (0.56)	-	-
Inflation (Iw)	-	-	0.07** (0.02)	0.06** (0.02)
(log) Average magnitude	-0.04 (0.04)	-	- 0.03 (0.04)	-
Variation in district magnitude	-0.01* (0.006)	-0.004 (0.006)	-0.01* (0.006)	-0.005 (0.006)
(log) Number of districts	-	0.005** (0.002)	-	0.004* (0.002)
Variation in districts' competitiveness	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.03 (0.06)
Fractionalization	2.37 (6.82)	3.03 (6.17)	3.54 (6.56)	3.35 (6.55)
Wald Chi ²	12.21**	15.85***	12.08**	14.93***
R ²	0.14	0.18	0.14	0.18
Groups	14	14	14	14
N	161	161	161	161

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *<0.1

Time series cross section technique with random effects has been performed. B coefficients are placed above while standards errors are within brackets.

a. Fixed effects model has been also performed. No statistically significant changes take place which could compromise the robustness of the model.

Table 3.6. Descriptive Statistics Sample 1

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
CV	30	7.94	5.2	1.69	24.04
Inflation (D)	44	0.61	0.91	0	4.61
Inflation (Iw)	38	12.56	16.07	0	79.26
(log) Average Magnitude	40	1.55	1.4	0	5.01
Variation in District Magnitude	40	1.35	1.63	0	6.03
(log) Number of Districts	40	3.42	1.5	0	6.48
Variation in Districts' Competitiveness	36	11.58	6.57	2.02	31.83
Fractionalization	37	0.55	0.47	0.03	1.65

Table 3.7. Descriptive Statistics Sample 2

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
CV	186	5.05	3.05	0.87	16.98
Inflation (D)	196	0.4	0.36	0.001	1.64
Inflation (Iw)	194	8.94	6.94	0.46	47.78
(log) Average Magnitude	173	.68	0.44	0	1.31
Variation in District Magnitude	168	50.4	44.28	0	189.1
(log) Number of Districts	198	1.6	0.5	0.14	2.81
Variation in Districts' Competitiveness	196	10.64	4.14	5	25.44
Fractionalization	198	0.21	0.09	0.07	0.46

**Table 3.8. Test of Robustness: Standard Deviation of
Turnout Rates Divided by Maximum Standard Deviation**

SD/Max.Turn.	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	0.05*** (0.01)	0.04*** (0.01)	0.04*** (0.017)	0.04** (0.01)
Inflation (D)	0.014*** (0.005)	0.163** (0.058)	-	-
Inflation (Iw)	-	-	0.007** (0.002)	0.006** (0.002)
(log) Average magnitude	-0.004 (0.004)	-	-0.003 (0.004)	-
Variation in district magnitude	-0.002* (0.0006)	-0.004 (0.006)	-0.001* (0.0007)	-0.005 (0.006)
(log) Number of districts	-	0.005** (0.003)	-	0.004* (0.002)
Variation in districts' competitiveness	-0.002 (0.006)	-0.003 (0.006)	-0.002 (0.006)	0.003 (0.006)
Fractionalization	0.03 (0.06)	0.03 (0.06)	0.03 (0.06)	-0.03 (0.06)
Wald Chi ²	12.21**	15.85**	12.08**	14.93***
R ²	0.14	0.18	0.14	0.18
Groups	14	14	14	14
N	161	161	161	161

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *<0.1

Time series cross section technique with random effects has been performed. B coefficients are placed above while standards errors are within brackets.

a. Fixed effects model has been also performed. No statistically significant changes take place which could compromise the robustness of the model.

Table 3.9. Test of Robustness: Standard Deviation of Turnout Rates

SD	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	4.19*** (1.29)	3.49*** (1.14)	3.92*** (1.32)	3.53*** (1.21)
Inflation (D)	1.15*** (0.43)	1.10*** (0.43)	-	-
Inflation (Iw)	-	-	0.05*** (0.02)	0.05** (0.021)
(log) Average magnitude	-0.02 (0.03)	-	-0.011 (0.03)	-
Variation in district magnitude	-0.009* (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	-0.008* (0.005)	-0.005 (0.01)
(log) Number of districts	-	0.003* (0.001)	-	0.002 (0.001)
Variation in districts' competitiveness	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.18 (0.048)	-0.02 (0.04)
Fractionalization	2.29 (4.82)	2.01 (4.38)	2.41 (4.86)	2.27 (4.70)
Wald Chi ²	12.04**	15.42***	12.29**	11.5***
R ²	0.11	0.17	0.11	0.17
Groups	14	14	14	14
N	161	161	161	161

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *<0.1

Time series cross section technique with random effects has been performed. B coefficients are placed above while standards errors are within brackets.

a. Fixed effects model has been also performed. No statistically significant changes take place which could compromise the robustness of the model.

Figure 3.1.
Example of Heterogeneity in Turnout Rates

	X	Z
A	50%	60%
B	50%	50%
C	50%	40%
Nat. Average	50%	50%
SD	0%	10%

Figure 3.2.
Example of Heterogeneity in Turnout Rates

	X	Z
A	60%	60%
B	70%	50%
C	80%	40%
Nat. Average	70%	50%
SD	10%	10%

CHAPTER 4

THE EFFECT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS ON PARTY NATIONALIZATION: A CRUCIAL-EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH IN WESTERN EUROPE

Electoral systems are considered to be crucial determinants of the nationalization of party systems. Nevertheless, theory about the impact of electoral systems is unclear and empirical evidence is mixed at best. In this paper I use a “crucial experiments” research design to consider the isolated impact of electoral reforms in eleven Western European countries from World War II to 1996 in order to clarify this issue. The empirical evidence highlights a positive association of district magnitude and national thresholds with party system nationalization and a negative one with number of constituencies. On the other hand, the evidence remains mixed about upper tiers, run-off systems and ballot structure effects.

4.1. Introduction

The electoral system - especially district magnitude - is considered to be a crucial variable determining local party formation. As such, party system formation has been theorized in two independent and correlative stages. In the first stage the configuration of local party systems at district level takes place: Due to the strategic coordination of elites and voters, and assuming short-term rationality and perfect information conditions, the number of parties competing at district level tends to be $M+1$, where M is the number of seats allocated in the district (Cox, 1997). In a second and posterior stage those local party systems merge across district lines to create regional or national parties in a process which the literature has labeled nationalization of party systems.⁵¹ Nonetheless, despite the fact that in the first stage the role played by electoral systems is quite clear, it is not as obvious in the second stage. In fact, this theoretical oversight was clearly highlighted by Cox: “We know a fair amount about district-level electoral coordination [and in parliament] *but* we know much less about the intermediate stage of coordination, in which potentially separate local parties and party systems merge to some degree, forming a national party system” (Cox, 1999: 160).

In recent years the nationalization of party systems has become a topic of increasing interest among political scientists and, although it has a long tradition in the discipline (Schattschneider, 1960; Rokkan, 1970), it is only recently that scholars have started to pay attention to its determinants. A variety of studies have centered on explaining under what conditions parties decide to compete nationally dealing mainly with the impact of cleavages (Caramani, 2004, 2005), decentralization (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Bracanti, 2007; Habers, 2010; Lago and Lago, 2011) and institutions (Cox and Knoll, 2003; Morgenstern et al., 2009). Nevertheless, despite the fact that its potential importance has been widely acknowledged, the impact of electoral systems on national party formation is far from achieving a consensus. The study of the impact of electoral systems, generally speaking, has produced

⁵¹ Also called linkage (Cox, 1999) or party aggregation (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004).

contradictory theoretical expectations and mixed empirical evidence at best. As various scholars have agreed, greater efforts to clarify the issue are required: “Theories that link electoral system type to party competition at the district level (...) are not sufficient; we also need to have theories that can take us from district level effects to national level outcomes” (Grofman et al., 2009: 4).

In this paper the impact of the electoral rules on the nationalization of party systems is specifically addressed. In my understanding, the concept of party system nationalization refers to the extent to which “politicians seeking election to the national legislature from different districts (...) run under a common party label” (Cox, 1997: 186). It is usually conceptualized as a continuum that depends on the degree to which parties are uniformly successful in winning votes across districts (Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochler, 2010a; Harbers, 2010). This involves different levels of connection among local party systems in national party system formation. In a perfectly nationalized party system, each local party system is a “clone” of the others and each of them are a mirror of the national-level party system. Conversely, in an extreme de-nationalized party system each constituency presents its own set of parties, and they are transferred to the national level without merging into parties going beyond the district level.

The predominant approach in all previous studies appears to have been founded on time series cross-sectional comparative analyses, that have particularly focused on cross country and over time variation (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Jones and Mainwaring, 2003; Caramani, 2004; Morgenstern et al., 2009; Harbers, 2010). In this paper I present an alternative approach that relies on what has been called “crucial experiments” (Shugart, 2005). This research design is especially useful in explaining the effects of electoral rules because it can be isolated from other variables. “In cases of electoral reform (...) we have the possibility of a crucial experiment in the sense that many factors affecting the party system (or other outcomes) aside from the electoral reform can be held constant” (Shugart, 2005: 34). As a consequence, the impact of an electoral system on party nationalization can be better specified; thereby avoiding methodological problems of cross-sectional studies like omitted variable bias or endogeneity (Blais et al., 2011).

This piece of research deals with all electoral reforms that have taken place in Western Europe from the Second World War to 1996. I understand electoral reform to be a change in those rules “which govern the processes by which electoral preferences are articulated as votes and by which these votes are translated into distribution of governmental authority (...) among the competing political parties” (Rae, 1971:14). Changes in electoral rules hold constant potentially intervenient variables and provide variation in terms of the main components of the electoral system that have been analyzed by the literature: District magnitude, number of districts, electoral thresholds, upper tiers, electoral rules and candidates role on party lists. The research design is quite intuitive. If these elements have an impact on the nationalization of party systems, changes in the dependent variable are expected to emerge when rules are changed. As a consequence, their effects can be easily traced in the subsequent election to the electoral reform.

The evidence presented in this paper highlights the fact that elements of the electoral system such as district magnitude, the number of constituencies and national thresholds have a significant effect on the nationalization of party systems. When other factors are held constant, those countries with fewer districts, higher average magnitudes, and national thresholds, tend to have higher party nationalization. The empirical analysis has not provided conclusive evidence concerning the impact of upper tiers, run-off systems and personal voting on the dependent variable. In any case, this research highlights the fact that it is necessary to restrain the excessive optimism that institutional theorists have placed on the “thaumaturgical” powers of electoral systems because its impact on nationalization is quite limited. Electoral systems are embedded in other institutions and practices (Baker and McLeay, 2000) and, as a consequence, electoral engineering presents no magical way to determine the extent to which there are strong or weak nationalized party systems.

This paper presents the following structure. The next section presents the theoretical discussion about the impact of the electoral system on the nationalization of party systems and defines the main hypotheses of the literature. In Section 3 the dependent variable, methods and data are presented. The following section presents the measurement of the dependent variable. In section 5 electoral

reforms in Western European countries since WWII are outlined, as well as their impact on the nationalization of party systems. The last section concludes the paper and discusses the main findings.

4.2. The potential impact of electoral systems

It could be argued that the effect of the electoral system in local coordination has been overstudied, as is captured in the M+1 rule (Cox, 1997, 1999). Nevertheless, there is still a significant gap in knowledge in relation to the second stage of party coordination; a process that is also known as party system nationalization. In fact, the well-known M+1 rule only provides a generic upper bound to the number of national parties (Grofman et al., 2009). It is perfectly possible that every district in a particular country has a determined number of local parties that do not merge across territorial lines and compete alone in national legislative elections. This will involve that the number of national parties is equal to M+1 multiplied by the number of districts. However, this does not occur because local coordination theories fall short in explaining this second stage of strategic coordination. Why, then, do these local parties coalesce across districts boundaries? Why do they merge into national parties? Assuming that candidates are self-interested office seekers, only arguments that transcend district-level lines can produce a comprehensive explanation.

According to Cox (1997, 1999) the institutional incentives provided by electoral systems are linked to economies of scale that follow an underlining causal mechanism: A particular group seeks to accomplish a task that requires the help of a large number of legislative candidates and, because of that, this group seeks to induce would-be legislators from many different districts to participate in a larger organization. Following this argument, different institutional features related to the electoral system have been identified in providing incentives for the linking of local party systems.

One element of the electoral system which can foster party system nationalization is the presence of electoral laws that have an upper

tier to pool wasted or excessive votes at the district level. “Laws implementing upper tiers require an explicit legal linkage of the lists or candidates wishing to pool their votes at the stipulated higher level. Thus, they provide an obvious incentive to politicians to ally across district boundaries” (Cox, 1999: 157). Consequently, when there are a significant number of seats allocated in the upper district, there is clear potential incentive in terms of electoral gain to compete at national level. A complementary argument emerges from the impact of national legal thresholds, which exclude parties below a certain national vote share from representation in parliament (Taagepera, 1998). When a sufficiently restrictive threshold is present it fosters nationalization because parties will prefer to coalesce across districts in order to prevent themselves falling below the critical level of votes required. Therefore, both upper tiers and national thresholds respectively involve positive and negative incentives for a nationalized party system.

District magnitude has been considered to be a determinant of party system nationalization despite the fact that it is the most disputed, both from a theoretical and an empirical point of view. Initially, and because nationalization was assumed to be a second and independent stage from local coordination, no impact was expected in cross-district linkage. District magnitude was supposed to have an effect at district level, by determining the size of the local party system, but no theoretical reason was ever put forward in favor of its impact on the nationalization of party systems (Cox, 1999: 156). Later, however, Cox and Knoll (2003) argued that district magnitude should have an impact depending on the number of wasted votes generated by the electoral system. “Politicians representing minority viewpoints in low-magnitude districts may fall short of their district’s threshold of representation and end up with nothing but wasted votes. They thus have a much greater incentive to combine votes across districts” (Cox and Knoll, 2003: 3). On the other hand, when district magnitude is greater, fewer wasted votes appear and parties prefer to not coalesce across districts, simply because they can win seats with their share of the vote and have smaller amounts of wasted votes to “trade”. This means that electoral systems with high district magnitudes are expected to have low levels of party system nationalization, assuming that district magnitude also has an effect on the national outcome.

Thus academic theorists have argued for both the lack and the negative impact of district magnitude on the nationalization of party systems. However, the controversy became even more heated when Morgenstern et al. (2009) argued for exactly the opposite hypothesis. They contended that district magnitude should be positively related to party system nationalization based on its connection with proportional representation systems (PR). In polities under PR wasted vote-winning competition is costly because winning a legislative seat requires fewer votes, so that parties can easily compete everywhere. Nevertheless, the situation is reversed under single-member district (SMD) plurality: “Since a plurality is required to win a seat in SMD systems, parties may avoid spending their resources (good candidates, costs, and effort) to compete where they have little chance of winning” (Morgenstern, et al., 2009: 1327). As a result, the positive impact of district magnitude on party system nationalization operates through parties’ strategic entry, according to the Duvergerian logic.⁵² Parties will avoid competing everywhere in a polity when few or a single seat are allocated in order to prevent wasted resources and candidates.

District magnitude is also connected with the electoral rule depending on how seat allocation operates. Assuming that low district magnitude fosters the nationalization of party systems, Cox and Knoll (2003) have discriminated single-member plurality systems from run-off systems by arguing that the first rule prones nationalization to a greater extent. According to their argument, under SMD parties prefer to combine their labels rather than run for office separately. Under SMD plurality systems, the withdrawal of a nominee from a district makes it very difficult for the a party to re-enter later on in a profitable way, so they prefer to merge (Cox and Knoll, 2003: 7) because plurality systems only have one round. If a party competes when non-viable it can split vote shares among potential allies, and even lose the seat when faced with the less preferred alternative. So, in order to prevent this from happening,

⁵² This refers to “candidates and parties (who) decide whether or not to enter a race partly on the basis of their chance of winning a seat (or) seats” (Cox, 1999:149). Therefore, in this case, the Duvergerian logic operates against a nationalized party system because parties will avoid wasting resources instead of competing in a nationally oriented way.

parties prefer to merge across districts, rather than to compete alone. The situation is very different under run-off systems. Here a party can withdraw in a given district and still re-enter in a profitable way because there are two rounds. When a party wants to support a viable alternative candidate it can still compete in the first round and support him or her in the second one (Cox and Knoll, 2003). Therefore, merging party labels is not as essential as under SMD plurality systems. As a consequence, Cox and Knoll (2003) suggest that, despite the fact that the lower the district magnitude the higher the nationalization of party systems, in run-off systems it will be lower than in those under plurality rule.

The number of constituencies into which a polity is carved up is another of the potential independent variables. Three different arguments have made the point that the greater the number of districts in a country, the lower should be the level of party system nationalization. First, some authors have argued that as the number of units to coordinate increases, coordination across districts becomes more complex. Maintaining an organizational structure in a large number of districts is more demanding for a political party than it is in just a few districts, or even one nationwide district (Nikolenyi, 2008; Habers, 2010). The second argument, by Morgenstern et al. (2009), is connected with diversity across districts, party campaigning and the quality of candidates. A large number of districts increase the likelihood that any particular constituency is different from the others and, as a result, it increases the costs of coordinating campaign strategies. In fact, “more districts should yield greater variability in terms of candidate qualities, which again should increase the distinctiveness of electoral districts” (Morgenstern, et al, 2009: 1328). Therefore diversity across constituencies would operate against party system nationalization. And finally, the third argument is connected with the level of aggregation of electoral results. “Compared to data from many small units, in a few larger territorial units, electoral strongholds will not be any more as pronounced, and not necessarily as recognizable” (Bochsler, 2010a: 163). Whatever argument is considered, this hypothesis goes against Cox and Knoll (2003) because large district magnitudes usually correlate with fewer constituencies.

A final element of the electoral system has also been suggested: The incentives to cultivate a personal vote provided by the electoral systems (Carey and Shugart, 1995). Some electoral systems encourage personal voting to a greater extent than others: “Systems that use single-member districts or open lists, for example, will promote personal vote seeking, whereas closed-list systems (in which district magnitude is large) will discourage such behavior” (Morgenstern and Swindle, 2005: 152). In those countries where personal voting is very relevant it can be argued that the nationalization of party systems will be lower. The causal mechanism could be that candidates orient themselves to tailor districts and this probably leads to differences in their levels of support across districts, thereby eroding party nationalization. Nevertheless, the reverse expectation may also be plausible. Personal-oriented electoral systems can have a nationalizing effect if they encourage parties to present different candidates and manifestos tailored to the specificities of each district, thereby increasing parties’ chances to win similar shares across the constituencies at stake (Deschouwer, 2006). Therefore, both reverse hypotheses are plausible.

All these features have been discussed in theoretical terms but when the empirical evidence is brought together the result is mixed. Bochsler (2010b) found no statistically significant impact of national thresholds and upper tiers on the nationalization of party systems in Eastern and Central Europe, and the research even produced coefficients in the reverse direction of what the theory predicted. On the other hand, the effect of the percentage of seats allocated in the upper tier tested by Cox and Knoll (2003) proved to have a positive and statistically significant relation to the dependent variable in their 34 countries of study. Furthermore, the district magnitude evidence is, at the very least, as confusing as in the previous case. Cox and Knoll (2003) found that the average of district magnitude is negatively related with the party system nationalization. Conversely, Morgenstern et al. (2009) found exactly the opposite results - that SMD is negatively correlated with the nationalization of party systems - showing a positive relation between both variables.⁵³ In any case, there is no dispute over the

⁵³ Morgenstern et al. (2009) have disentangled two dimensions of nationalization: a) Static/ distributional nationalization referring to the consistency of parties

evidence for run-off systems, which - in the only research in which it has been tested - tend to be less nationalized (Cox and Knoll 2003). On the other hand, only Harbers (2010) has addressed the number of constituencies finding a negative association with the dependent variable. However, none of these studies have considered together district magnitude and the number of constituencies in which the polity is split, probably because of multicollinearity problems (Morgenstern, et al., 2009; Harbers, 2010, Bochsler, 2010b). Finally, the potential effect of personal voting has only been indirectly tested by Morgenstern and Swindle (2005), showing a positive relation between incentives for personal and local voting.

As a result of the previous discussion it is quite clear that there is considerable confusion about the effect of electoral systems on nationalization because of ambiguous hypotheses and mixed or partial empirical evidence. In sum, and following the discussion above, we can distinguish between propositions with clear theoretical expectations and those which are in dispute.

On the one hand there are elements in which expectations are considerably clear:

H₁: Upper tiers: In those cases where there is an upper tier and a higher number of seats are allocated at such a level, the nationalization of party systems is expected to increase (Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003).

H₂: National thresholds: In those countries where there is a national threshold, greater nationalization of the party system is expected (Taagepera, 1998; Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Bochsler, 2010b).

H₃: Number of constituencies: The greater the number of constituencies in a given country, the lower the nationalization of the party system (Nikolenyi, 2008; Morgenstern et al., 2009, Harbers, 2010).

electoral support across districts and b) dynamic nationalization concerning the extent to which party votes across districts changes uniformly over time. I am centering my attention on the former dimension.

H₄: Electoral rule: Party systems competing under run-off systems tend to be less nationalized (Cox and Knoll, 2003).

However, there are other elements in which the effect of the electoral system on party system nationalization is not so clear.

H₅: District magnitude has three possible expectations:

H₅ (i) First, district magnitude tends to erode the nationalization of party systems (Cox and Knoll, 2003);

H₅ (ii) Second, high district magnitudes tend to prone the nationalization of the party system (Morgenstern et al., 2009) and finally;

H₅ (iii) That district magnitude is completely unrelated with the dependent variable (Cox, 1999).

H₆: About the extent to which electoral system which is candidate oriented (Carey and Shugart, 1995) there are two possible expectations;

H₆ (i) First, that nationalization of party systems can be reduced (Morgenstern and Swindle, 2005);

H₆ (ii) Second, nationalization can be fostered (Deschouwer, 2006).

4.3. Data and methods: Electoral reforms in Western Europe

When electoral reforms take place it provides scholars with the opportunity to implement designs based on “crucial experiments”. “Cases of electoral reform have provided researchers with unusual opportunities to vary the electoral system while holding much else constant” (Shugart, 2005: 35). The advantage of this design is quite straightforward: Electoral reforms are an excellent way to investigate the institutional determinants of political change because they introduce an exogenous variation in a key independent variable. Unsurprisingly this design has been employed extensively in the literature, which has focused on disentangling the mechanical and psychological effect of Duverger’s Law (Shugart, 1985; Blais et.al., 2011); the outcomes of changes in PR or SMD within mixed

member systems, in cases such as Italy (Reed, 2001) or New Zealand (Barker and McLeay, 2000); and identifying the causes of electoral reform itself in Latin American countries (Remmer, 2008). Through these “crucial experiments” scholars are able to strengthen their findings with robust empirical evidence.

A key methodological advantage of this approach is that it can deal with endogeneity problems. In many cases the causal arrow connecting political systems with institutional arrangements is unclear, and as a consequence can produce erroneous inferences. This situation can be also true in the relation between electoral systems and party system nationalization. As was outlined above, the literature has suggested that district magnitude can have a double effect. High district magnitude can push the number of local political parties at stake (Cox, 1997, 1999) but at the same time can provide fewer incentives for cross districts coordination, and thereby erode party system nationalization (Cox and Knoll, 2003).

The consequence of a weakly nationalized party system is that local parties do not merge into national ones and inflate the whole national party system, in contrast to district level. Or, to put it in other words, weak nationalization leads to an oversized national party system formed by many small parties. The potential problem of endogeneity arises from the relation of party system size to electoral rules. On the one hand, many academics have argued that PR systems and high district magnitudes - and therefore, the low number of districts - tend to prone the number of parties (Duverger, 1954; Taagepera and Shugart, 1993; Ordershook and Shvetsova, 1994; Cox, 1997). However, on the other hand, it is also true to say that parties change the electoral rules for their convenience and “increased party system fragmentation will foster weaker or more permissive electoral rules” (Remmer, 2008: 8). Thus, weakly nationalized parties can be associated with more permissive electoral rules without the actual direction of the causal arrow being known.

A research design based on “crucial experiments” can handle this problem because it can establish the “ex ante” changes which lead to variation in the independent variable. If electoral reforms antecede changes in party system nationalization, the causality direction can be appropriately specified. This study centers on the

eleven countries which have had reforms of their electoral system in Western Europe from WWII to 1996.⁵⁴ There are three key reasons to focus my attention on these countries.

First, the socio-structural stream in the literature suggests that variations in the level of nationalization are driven by the importance of territorial cleavages in a given polity (Cox and Knoll, 2003; Caramani, 2004; 2005). In those countries where “functional” cleavages, such as the socio-economic cleavage, are the most important ones, parties will tend to nationalize because their labels can “travel” across districts. On the other hand, in those countries where minorities are territorially concentrated and center-periphery cleavages, for example, are the most important, low nationalized party systems are expected to emerge. Political parties representing territorially centered groups or interests will tend not to coalesce across district lines. Following this argument, Western European countries offer a particular advantage since the process of cleavage formation and crystallization was previous to the studied period (Rokkan, 1970). “The process of the de-territorialization of cleavages (...) mainly took place before the First World War and stabilized with the full mobilization and integration of the newly enfranchised electorates (...) On the other hand, the period since the Second World War is a period of fundamental stability of territorial configurations” (Caramani, 2005: 304). Therefore, choosing Western European countries since 1945 provides guarantees that cleavage impact over time will, to a great extent, be held constant.

A second reason is related to the impact of party institutionalization. Some authors have argued that there is a negative association between the institutionalization of party systems and nationalization of the party system (Lupu, 2008; Bochsler, 2010b). This argument is linked with the idea of the weak organizational strength of political parties when they are not well-institutionalized (Olson,

⁵⁴ This research draws on: “Elections in Western Europe since 1815: Electoral results by constituency” by Danielle Caramani (2000). This restricts the scope of my research to 1996, but presents two advantages. On the one hand, it is comparable with previous research on “The nationalization of Politics” (2004), which centers on Western European nationalization. On the other hand, Caramani’s work is still a key source of data at district level, where the collection of such data stills presents a serious challenge.

1998), implying lower levels of nationalization due to the additional effort that running in all constituencies involves. By selecting Western European countries there is an advantage because we are working with old democracies (Huntington, 1994). The foundation of democracy is a relevant variable because most post-1978 party systems are much more volatile than advanced industrial democracies (Mainwaring and Zoco, 2007: 172); their party systems are not as institutionalized as in old democracies. The sample of countries, with the exception of Greece, is composed of stable post-Second World War democracies. As a consequence the potential impact of party system institutionalization can be controlled, if a positive correlation between old democracies and party system institutionalization is assumed.

Finally, a third reason is related to the effect of centralization of the government as an institutional element that drives the nationalization of party systems (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Harbers, 2010). The idea is that in those countries where the authority is heavily centralized at the national level, voters are more prone to support national political parties because policies that are designed at this level have a greater impact on their lives. In a centralized country voters have incentives to abandon local competition, whereas nationally non-competitive parties and candidates have greater incentives to merge themselves into national organizations (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; 2004). As a consequence, more nationalized party systems can be expected in those countries where the government is centralized, in contrast to those more decentralized.

In Western Europe there are hardly any cases of electoral reform that have taken place at the same time as institutional reforms that have modified regional authority so both variables can be held as independent when the experimental approach is considered. A perfect example is Belgium, which provides a clear case of the denationalization of party systems, in which decentralization reforms held in the '70s were fully independent of the changes in the electoral system studied. In summary, electoral reforms that have taken place in my sample countries since World War II are presented in the following table:

(Table 4.1. here)

As can be seen, eleven of the eighteen Western European countries have made changes in their electoral rules during the period analyzed: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Norway and Sweden. They have introduced a range of changes from one or two, like in all Nordic countries (Denmark, Norway or Iceland) to three or four (Germany or Italy). The most extreme case is France with six changes. Only those cases in which an electoral reform related to the previous hypothesis have been included. About the electoral formula the study only centers on major changes that involve changes to plurality rule, run-off systems, proportional representation and mixed-member systems.⁵⁵ Finally, I have excluded those reforms which did not entail a change of more than 5% of a given component.⁵⁶

4.4. Addressing the nationalization of party systems

There are four main families of indicators used in measuring the nationalization of party systems: Indices of frequencies, of variances, of distribution and inflation measures. In this research the conception of the nationalization of party systems is founded on inflation measures (Cox, 1997, 1999; Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; Moenius and Kasuya, 2004), which are based on the comparison between the party systems at national and district level.⁵⁷ When the

⁵⁵ This criterion is similar to that proposed by Colomer (2004: 54). The only difference has been the division of majoritarian systems between plurality and run-off. The reason is linked with hypothesis 4.

⁵⁶ The only excluded reform was in Sweden in 1995, when the country added one constituency.

⁵⁷ I have chosen this index for three main reasons. First, inflation indices center on party systems as unit of analysis. Second, those indices require less information and only electoral results by districts, and the national are required, which allows me to maximize the number of observations. And finally, inflation indices have been increasingly used in the literature and using them makes my

nationalization of party systems does not take place, local parties do not merge under national labels, and this means that “the national party system would be considerably larger than the average of the local party systems” (Cox, 1997: 155). This “surplus” of parties at the national level is what the literature has called inflation (Cox, 1997, 1999; Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Boschler, 2010a); which is the reverse dynamic of the nationalization of party systems.

In this paper I use the inflation index⁵⁸ developed by Moenius and Kasuya (2004), which is calculated on the basis of the relative proportion of the effective number of parties⁵⁹ at the national level and the average of the number of parties competing at district level. Therefore, as inflation increases, the inflation of the national party system also increases, and the level of nationalization is lower. In contrast with other inflation indices, this procedure has the advantage of weighting the contribution of each district to the party system inflation. The previous general measures of inflation assumed that all districts have the same size, and therefore they all received the same weight. However, “if districts vary markedly in terms of their number of votes, then using 1/n as the approximation of the relative contribution of a district to the national-level inflation may, depending on the research question, be no longer appropriate” (Moenius and Kasuya 2004: 550). Therefore, this measure is more accurate because it does not bias in favor of small districts. Nevertheless, it is a bit more data demanding than the others as long as it is necessary to know the size of the districts’ electorate in order to calculate it.

research and findings more comparable. More details about the potentialities and shortcomings of inflation measures can be found in Bochler (2010: 159-160).

⁵⁸ At least another three measures of inflation have been proposed. See details in Chhibber and Kollman (1998, 2004), Cox (1997), Moenius and Kasuya (2004) and Kasuya and Moenius (2008).

⁵⁹ The effective number of parties is calculated as follows;

$$ENP = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2}$$

where p is the proportion of votes obtained by party i in the election (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979)

The index is operationalized as follows:

$$I_w = \left(\frac{vot_{nat} * ENP_{nat}}{\sum_{i=1}^n ENP_i * vot_i} - 1 \right) * 100$$

Where:

vot_{nat} = total number of votes cast at national level;

vot_i = number of votes cast in district i , and

ENP_i = effective number of parties in district i .

According to the inflation index, as I_w rises, the incongruence in the local party systems composing a country increases, and the nationalization of the party system diminishes. Therefore, those reforms which prone party system nationalization should be negatively correlated with the inflation index, while those which erode nationalization should be positively related.

4.5. Electoral reforms: Empirical evidence

This section summarizes electoral reforms that have taken place in Western Europe during the analyzed period and its expected influence on party inflation according to theory. Later on, theoretical expectations are contrasted with the empirical evidence. Finally, a paired mean comparison test and a time series cross-section analysis with pooled data highlights whether or not differences are statistically significant. In table two, theoretical expectations related with inflation are displayed:

(Table 4.2. about here)⁶⁰

Two elements should be considered regarding the changes in the electoral systems. First, the expected change in inflation is ambiguous in some elements, especially regarding the effect of ballot structure and district magnitude. In these cases both positive and negative changes in inflation can be expected. On the one hand, are the expectations of Morgenstern and Swindle (2005) regarding the personal ballot effect⁶¹ and, on the other, both positive and negative hypothesis about district magnitude. Second, it is common that when a reform takes place several elements of the electoral system change at the same time. From the total considered reforms, more than half changes have affected various dimensions simultaneously, a fact which can push inflation in different directions. In seven cases (Greece, 1990; Austria, 1992; Denmark, 1953; France, 1958; Iceland, 1959; Italy 1993 and Sweden 1970) electoral reforms are incongruent affecting inflation in opposite direction, and in other four there are potentially incongruent effects (Norway 1953; France, 1986, 1988 and Sweden, 1970). However, none of them will be excluded from the empirical analysis since together they can provide evidence about the relative strength of each element in changing party system inflation.

The next two figures present those electoral reforms that modify upper tiers according to the expected effect on inflation. The red line establishes the first election in which the electoral reform operated while the black one shows the evolution of party system inflation:

(Figure 4.1. and 4.2. about here)

⁶⁰ Electoral reform in Denmark (1971) has not been included because of the lack of available data. There is no information about people who was entitled to vote by constituency, and it is impossible to calculate the inflation index in 1964, 1966 and 1968, because they were all previous to electoral reform.

⁶¹ Regarding this component, the hypothesis by Morgenstern and Swindle (2005) is the only that has been tested. Therefore, only this expectation has been included in the table. In order to learn whether each reform is supposed to increase or decrease the level of personal orientation of electoral laws, I have relied on Nielson's typology (2003).

In the case of upper tiers reforms the situation is so mixed that the hypothesis number 1 cannot be sustained. In three cases an increase in the inflation index was expected due to the reduction in the seats allocated at national level (Denmark, 1953; Iceland, 1959) and the cutting of a tier (Greece, 1989). However, only in the latter case did inflation rise. In the case of eight electoral reforms a reduction in the inflation index was expected. Of all, half evolved in the expected direction (Germany, 1953; Greece, 1990; Norway, 1985; Iceland, 1987) and the other four in the opposite direction (Austria, 1992; Italy, 1992, 1993; Sweden, 1970). There is no clear pattern concerning this variable despite the fact that it seems to have more effect when tiers are created or increased rather than when their importance is reduced. If only those cases in which the extra tier is added ex-novo are considered, then two of the three cases behave consistently with theoretical expectations (Greece, 1990; Norway, 1985).

In figure three and four only those electoral reforms concerning electoral threshold are included.

(Figure 4.3 and 4.4. about here)

In the case of the first figure, there is no coincidence with the expectations of hypothesis number 2. The reduction of the national threshold in the 1990 Greece reform did not increase inflation, as was expected. Turning to the scenario in which national threshold is added, we found that in three cases inflation behaved according to expectations (Denmark, 1953; Germany, 1953; Norway, 1985); a case in which inflation evolved in the opposite direction (Austria, 1992); and in a final case there was almost no change in inflation (Sweden, 1970). According to this evolution in party inflation, the second hypothesis clearly cannot be sustained. In any case, it seems once again that the results are more robust if the creation of national thresholds is addressed, due to the fact that it erodes inflation to a greater extent than when this element is suppressed.

The following figure represents those electoral reforms which involved a change in the number of constituencies in which a polity is divided:

(Figure 4.5. and 4.6. about here)

In this case the empirical evidence strongly supports our theoretical expectations. As can be seen in figures 4.5. and 4.6. in almost all cases party nationalization evolves as the hypothesis predicted. When the number of districts is increased (Austria 1992, Italy 1990 and Germany 1990) the linkage of parties across them is poorer, which in turn increases the inflation index. On the other hand, when the number of districts was reduced (Austria 1970, Iceland 1959 and Norway 1959), the inflation index diminished. The reform in Belgium (1995) is the only exceptional case, as it operates with the reverse trend. Nevertheless, there is quite robust evidence supporting hypothesis number three, which proposed an inverse relation between the number of districts and the nationalization of party systems. This means that the higher the number of districts in a given polity, the lower the nationalization of party systems (Nikolenyi, 2008; Morgenstern et al.,2009; Bochsler, 2010a).

In order to test hypothesis number four, in the following figures changes in the electoral rule have been considered:

(Figure 4.7. and 4.8. about here)

Only five changes have taken place during the analyzed period, three of them in France, a country that has twice changed to run-off and once to proportional representation systems (PR). In this case, the nationalization of party systems clearly behaves as was argued by Cox and Knoll (2003). When a run-off system is created, inflation of the party system increases. In 1986, when France introduced a PR system, this reduced party inflation. In the cases of Italy (1993) and Germany (1953), they changed to a mixed member system with plurality rule in the lower tier and double ballot. In any case, the former example evolved in the expected direction, while the latter evolved in the opposite. However, the key hypothesis is concerned with the effect of run-off systems, and it appears from the results that they have a positive effect on party inflation.

The next figure concerns the effect of district magnitude - which is, by far, the most disputed element in electoral systems -, and the same logic of the previous analysis has been followed. Three different hypotheses have been put forward: The non-effect of district magnitude on the nationalization of party systems (Cox, 1999), its negative relation (Cox and Knoll, 2003) and its positive one (Morgenstern et al., 2009).

(Figure 4.9. and 4.10. about here)

The empirical evidence presented in the figures overwhelmingly supports a direct relation of district magnitude with the nationalization of party systems. Looking at the eleven reforms in which district magnitude has been changed, we can see that in nine cases the inflation index behaves as Morgenstern et al (2009) suggested. When district magnitude increases, coordination across districts improves and this in turn shrinks party system inflation. On the other hand, in those cases in which district magnitude has been reduced, especially when it moves to single-member districts (France, 1958, 1988; Italy, 1993), the inflation index has increased. The only two exceptions to this general pattern are the cases of Belgium (1995) and Sweden (1970), which behaved in coherence with Cox and Knoll (2003) expectations - with the inflation indices increasing in both cases when district magnitude increased -. The result of this test means that hypothesis five can be confirmed but in the sense of an inverse (positive) effect of district magnitude on party inflation (nationalization).

Finally, the next two figures present all changes in ballot structure concerning personal voting. A more candidate oriented ballot structure can erode (Morgenstern and Swindle, 2005) or prone the nationalization of party systems. I have tested the empirical evidence assuming the former hypothesis.

(Figure 4.11. and 4.12. about here)

The empirical evidence is almost totally mixed. In five cases the changes in ballot structure favored the single candidates' role, and was expected to prone inflation. However, this only happened in the case of France (1951, 1988). In other cases the inflation index behaved in the opposite direction to that which was expected (Germany, 1953; Italy, 1956) while in a further case there were almost no variation (Sweden, 1970). If figure 4.12 is observed, a similar dynamic can be noted. In over half the cases the changes in the ballot structure caused a movement eroding party inflation (Austria, 1970; France, 1986) while in other cases it either pruned (Italy, 1992, 1993; France, 1958; Finland, 1954) or had no effect at all (Italy, 1957). In any case, the evidence cannot confirm the final hypothesis. It seems that ballot structure has no clear affect on party system inflation.

Table 4.3. presents a one-way analysis of the mean comparison test, which compares the inflation index with both the two previous and posterior elections to each electoral reform.

(Table 4.3. about here⁶²)

It is important to note that there are a low number of observations in each case of electoral reform. Nevertheless, the interesting point here is the direction of change in nationalization. Two key conclusions can be drawn from the evidence presented. First, electoral reforms have the expected sign as predicted by the hypotheses in the majority of cases. The increase in the seats allocated in the upper tiers, the creation of a national threshold, the reduction in the number of districts, the increase in district magnitude and the establishment of a mixed member system - with elements of plurality rule - erode party inflation. Or in other words, they foster the nationalization of party systems. However, electoral reforms changing to run-off systems and personal voting do not present the expected change. Second, in none of the cases are the

⁶² Electoral reforms have been grouped in order to push in the same direction, in coherence with the previous hypothesis. The idea is to avoid the possibility that electoral reforms within each feature may cancel each.

mean differences between groups statistically significant. Therefore, the evidence does not seem sufficiently robust to support the hypothesis.

(Table 4.4. about here)

In table 4.4. the same paired mean analysis has been performed with an alternative measurement of party inflation based on Chhibber and Kollman's indicator (1998, 2004). This index is calculated as the difference between the effective number of parties at national level, and the average of the number of parties competing at district level (Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003; Moenius and Kasuya, 2004; Bochslers, 2010a).⁶³ Electoral reform inflation behaves with the expected sign only in the case of the national threshold, the number of districts, the change to mixed member systems and district magnitude. In any case, none of them displays statistically significant results.

Table 4.5. presents a pooled time series cross section analysis with random effects. Through this analysis the specific impact of each component of the electoral system can be estimated, a fact that is especially relevant if several of them take place at the same time. The dependent variable is the inflation index defined by Moenius and Kasuya (2004) and the key independent variables are the main variables analyzed above.⁶⁴ The average of the district magnitude and the number of districts has been treated separately because of the problem of multicollinearity between both variables.⁶⁵ Ethnic fractionalization, the self-rule of regions in a country and a Belgium dummy have been introduced as controls.⁶⁶

⁶³ It is calculated as: $D = ENP_{nat} - ENP_{avg}$. ENP_{nat} is the effective number of parties at national level and ENP_{avg} is the average number of parties at local level.

⁶⁴ The appendix provides a description of the variables that have been operationalized.

⁶⁵ There is a correlation coefficient of -0.82 between these two variables. I have introduced the logarithm because a non-linear behavior is expected.

⁶⁶ The impact of cleavages and decentralization has been argued above. In the case of Belgium, I introduce this control because of the huge variation of this country in terms of nationalization of its party system (Cox and Knoll, 2003).

(Table 4.5. about here)

In model one almost all variables display coefficients that coincide with theoretical expectations. Personal orientation of electoral laws, self rule and ethnic fragmentation have positive coefficients; while negative thresholds, upper tiers, district magnitude and - surprisingly - run-off have negative coefficients. National threshold and district magnitude are both statically significant at a 1% and 5% level. Therefore, it is clear that national thresholds and high district magnitude tend to erode party system inflation. In model number two, the district magnitude variable has been replaced by the number of districts. The only relevant changes that take place concern the coefficient of run-off systems, which change to positive. In any case, only national thresholds are statistically significant at a 5% level.

From all the previous empirical evidence various substantive conclusions can be drawn. First, from all the features of the electoral system which can potentially affect party system nationalization, only three of them seem to have any impact: The presence of a national threshold, the number of districts and the average of the district magnitude. The evidence suggests that there are no problems of endogeneity because electoral reforms have preceded the changes in party system nationalization. Second, national threshold merits special attention. This electoral reform in almost all cases takes place at the same time of the formation of a mixed member system with upper tier. And despite the fact that both push nationalization in the same direction, only national threshold is relevant, which solves the multicollinearity problem. Third, in general, national threshold and the number of constituencies behave consistently with theoretical expectations; national threshold tends to foster party system nationalization while number of constituencies tends to erode it. It has been found that the lower the district magnitude, the lesser the party system nationalization; a finding which is in line with Morgenstern et al. (2009) expectations. In any case, the model previously illustrated showed that the effect of district magnitude is more relevant than the number of constituencies, because only the former holds in a cross-sectional model. Finally, the “crucial experiments” approach

and the various statistical analyses performed, clearly demonstrate that the role of electoral systems in determining the linkage across districts could have been overstated by previous scholars.

4.6. Conclusions and discussion

A significant amount of literature dealing with the nationalization of party systems has focused on its determinants. In general, academics have arrived at a consensus about the impact of cleavages (Caramani, 2004; Bochler, 2010a) or government decentralization (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998, 2004; Cox, 1999; Cox and Knoll, 2003). Nevertheless, agreement is far from being reached on the effect of electoral systems. Furthermore, not only the theory but also the empirical evidence is mixed about its effects. In this paper I have changed the approach from previous research by focusing on “crucial experiments” (Shugart, 2005): An analysis of electoral reforms in Western Europe from 1945 to 1996 has allowed me to estimate the relation of electoral systems and party system nationalization by keeping constant other potentially intervening variables. Through this research design, I have found that electoral systems present different levels of impact on the nationalization of party systems.

The strongest findings of this paper concern the effect of district magnitude, the number of districts and national thresholds. The theorization of district magnitude as an independent second-step process of coordination across constituencies (Cox, 1999) has been challenged by two other possible hypotheses. On the one hand, Cox and Knoll (2003) argued that those countries with higher district magnitude will have lower nationalization, because they do not have incentives to coalesce across districts due to their low risk of falling under the threshold of representation. Conversely, Morgenstern et al. (2009) argued that countries with higher district magnitude should have high party system nationalization because vote winning is costly in comparison to those systems with SMD. The evidence presented above supported this latter argument by pointing out the direct relation between average district magnitude and the nationalization of party systems.

The empirical findings provide evidence in favor of the number of districts inverse relation with the dependent variable, which is congruent with theoretical expectations (Nikolenyi, 2008; Morgenstern et al., 2009; Harbers, 2010). Parties tend to be less nationalized when a polity is split up into a lot of constituencies than those countries which are divided into fewer. Nevertheless, multivariate models suggested that the major driving force is district magnitude, which is inversely related with the number of districts. Finally, national thresholds display a clear nationalizing effect on party systems in contrast with upper tiers, which usually associate with them but do not have any clear pattern affecting the dependent variable. In the case of the personal components in electoral laws (Carey and Shugart, 1995) and upper tiers the evidence is totally mixed and none of the hypothesis can be sustained. In relation to the “substantial” reforms of electoral rules, the evidence is not surprising. The French reforms towards run-off system, as Cox and Knoll (2003) hypothesized, erodes the nationalization of party systems despite the fact that this relation should be taken with caution. There is no statistical support for this hypothesis and due the fact that run-off systems operate under SMD, it points out that district magnitude is again the leading independent variable.

In this paper it has been demonstrated that when reforms occur in a given country, changes in party system nationalization have not in all cases been immediate. This can suggest that variation in the features of the electoral system can have both long and short term effects. Duverger distinguished between the mechanical and the psychological effects of electoral systems on parties’ decisions (Duverger, 1954, 1986; Cox, 1997, 1999). Following this framework, the same logic can be applied to the different features affecting nationalization. It could be that they do not all push cross-district coordination with the same timing and that those which are more mechanically linked with political representation will prone or undermine nationalization in a more immediate way.

Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that changes concerning “the core” of the electoral system, the district magnitude and the electoral law, have a very clear mechanical effect and as a consequence a crucial impact on nationalization in the short-term. At the same time, electoral thresholds are an immediate threat for

parties if they do not surpass them; so they seem to react to them immediately. On the other hand, it is true that seats allocated in upper tiers provide a clear “prize” in competition. However this positive incentive does not seem to foster coordination process except in the medium term. Two non-exclusive arguments may be the answer. On the one hand, it could be that rationally-bounded elites consider that their parties are able to overcome thresholds without a coalition, and only when they fail in this attempt they modify their behavior. And second, because forging cross-district alliances requires time, it is plausible to think that the nationalization process is not an immediate reaction to electoral reform. In any case, it is necessary to consider that electoral systems are connected with other institutions and that routines are not always easy to isolate in an empirical analysis. This means that the effect of electoral systems should not be overestimated because, despite the fact that they directly affect exogenous incentives towards the nationalization of party systems, they still present elements that can diminish its influence, at least, in the short term.

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Table 4.1. Electoral Reforms in Western Europe since WWII to 1996^a

Country	Reform year	Districts (first tier)		Ballot	Rule/Formula	Tiers		Threshold
		Number	MG			Number	% Allocated	
Austria	1970	25 to 9	6.6 to 20.3	Preferential reduced to one candidate		Change from 2 tiers to 2-3	14% to 50%	4% national threshold
	1990	9 to 43	20.3 to 4.2					
Belgium	1995	30 to 20	7.1 to 7.5				30% to 23%	2% national threshold
Denmark	1953		4.5 to 5.8					
	1971	23 to 17	5.8 to 7.9					
Finland	1954			2 to 1 personal vote				
France	1951			Preferential vote to multiple	PR to Run-off			
	1958		5.28 to 1	Multiple to personalized				
	1986		1 to 5.79	Personalized to closed list	Run-off to PR			
	1988		5.79 to 1	Closed list to personalized	PR to Run-off			
Germany	1953			Personalized to personalized/closed list	Mixed members: SMD and PR		50% seats in upper tier	5% at district level to 5% at national level
	1990	From 248 to 328						
Greece	1989					three tiers to two (national erased)		
	1990					Two to three tiers		10-25% national threshold to 3%
Iceland	1959	28 to 8	1.46 to 6.13				21% to 18%	
	1987						From 18% to 21%	
Italy	1953			Open list to closed list				
	1956			Closed to open list				
	1992			Limitation in preferential vote			14% to 20%	
	1999	95 to 475	19.69 to 1	Open to double personalized/closed list	PR to mixed member SMD and PR		20% to 25%	
Norway	1953	29 to 20	5.17 to 7.5					
	1985					Extra nationwide tier added	Raised from 0 to 5%	Created a 4% national threshold
Sweden	1970		From 8.32 to 11.07	From closed to open list		Extra nationwide tier added	Raised from 0 to 11%	Created a 4% national threshold or 12% district

Table adapted with data available in Colomer (2006) and Golder (2007).

Table 4.2. Expected Effect of Electoral Reforms on Party System Inflation

Country	Year	H1: Upper tier	H2: Thres hold	H3: Num ber	H4: Rule	H5: District magnitude		H6: Ballot	Con gruent
						Cox and Knoll	Morg. et al.		
Austria	1970			-		+	-	-	Yes
	1992	-	-	+		-	+		No
Belgium	1995			-		+	-		Yes
Denmark	1953	+	-			+	-		No
Finland	1954							-	Yes
France	1951							+	Yes
	1958				+	-	+	-	No
	1986				-	+	-	-	Yes/No
	1988				+	-	+	+	Yes/No
Germany	1953	-	-		-			+	No
	1990			+					Yes
Greece	1989 ^a	+							Yes
	1990 ^b	-	+						No
Iceland	1959	+		-		+	-		No
	1987	-							Yes
Italy	1953							-	Yes
	1956							+	Yes
	1992	-						-	Yes
	1993			+	-	-	+	-	No
Norway	1953			-		+	-		Yes/No
	1985	-	-						Yes
Sweden	1970	-	-			+	-	+	Yes/No

a: Electoral reform affected the first 1989 election.

b. Electoral reform did not affect 1990 election but the subsequent. Therefore, the line of electoral change will be placed on 1993.

Table 4.3. Electoral System Reforms and Mean Comparisons

	Pre-reform	Post-reform	Total	t-value
Upper tier increased	7.92 (16)	7.08 (19)	7.46 (35)	0.31
National threshold increased	7.91 (11)	4.85 (12)	6.31(23)	1.06
Districts reduced	23.01 (14)	16.66 (14)	19.83 (28)	0.62
Change to Run-off rule	19.5 (3)	15.8 (6)	17.03(9)	0.57
Change to mixed member	19.88 (3)	11.29 (4)	14.97 (7)	0.76
Increase in district magnitude	19.63 (22)	16.61 (19)	18.23 (41)	0.42
Increase in personal voting	14.45 (16)	11.05 (15)	12.81 (31)	0.96

*** p<0.01; **p<0.05; * <0.1

Table 4.4. Electoral System Reforms and Mean Comparisons

	Pre-reform	Post-reform	Total	t-value
Upper tier increased	0.29 (16)	0.33 (19)	0.32 (34)	-0.34
National threshold increased	0.26 (11)	0.19 (12)	0.22 (23)	0.64
Districts reduced	1.17 (14)	0.87 (14)	1.02 (28)	0.46
Change to Run-off rule	1.04 (3)	0.83 (6)	0.93 (9)	0.62
Change to mixed member	0.97 (3)	0.61 (4)	0.76 (7)	0.83
Increase in district magnitude	0.96 (22)	0.88 (19)	0.93 (41)	0.18
Increase in personal voting	0.64 (16)	0.61 (15)	0.62 (31)	0.13

*** p<0.01; **p<0.05; * <0.1

Table 4.5. The Impact of Electoral Systems on Party System Inflation

Inflation index (I): Moenius and Kasuya (2008)	Model 1	Model 2
Constant	7.56* (4.35)	5.31 (4.35)
Ethnic fragmentation	68.07 (41.41)	48.97 (47.75)
Self-rule	0.21 (0.22)	0.009 (0.24)
Belgium	3.57 (20.24)	15.89 (23.33)
National threshold	-1.59*** (0.59)	-1.16** (0.56)
Seats in upper-tier	-0.14 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.13)
Run-off	-2.75 (5.73)	2.88 (5.19)
(log) Average magnitude	-0.65** (0.28)	-
(log) Number of districts	-	0.01 (0.02)
Personalism	0.56 (0.61)	0.06 (0.59)
R ²	0.49	0.47
Groups	11	11
N	163	163

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; * <0.1

Time-series cross-section analysis (TSCS) with random effects. B coefficients are placed above while standards errors are within brackets.

Table 4.6. Description of the Variables

Ethnic fragmentation	Fractionalization index has been adopted from Alesina et al (2003). It ranges from 1 to 0 depending on the presence of ethnic minorities
Self-rule	15 points scale considering the self-power of regional authorities in a given country (Hoogue, et al, 2010).
National thresholds	% of national share required in order to arrive to get representation. Only national thresholds have been considered. (Colomer, 2004)
Seats in upper-tier	% of seats allocated in upper tier (Golder, 2007).
Run-off systems	Electoral systems operating under run-off systems.
(log) Average magnitude	Logarithm of the average of district magnitude (Golder, 2007).
(log) Number of districts	Logarithm number of constituencies in a given country (Golder, 2007).
Personalism in electoral law	9 points-ranking scale of personal voting (adapted from Nielson,2003).

Figure 4.1. Upper tier Reforms

Increase in party system inflation expected

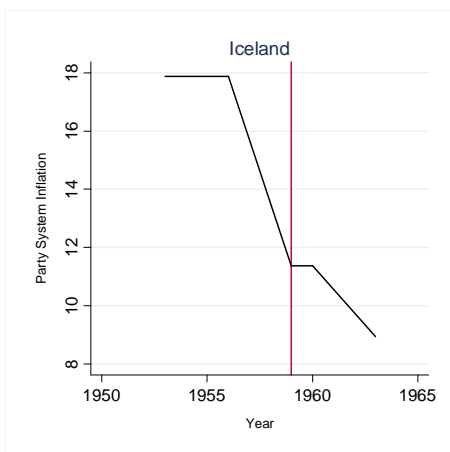
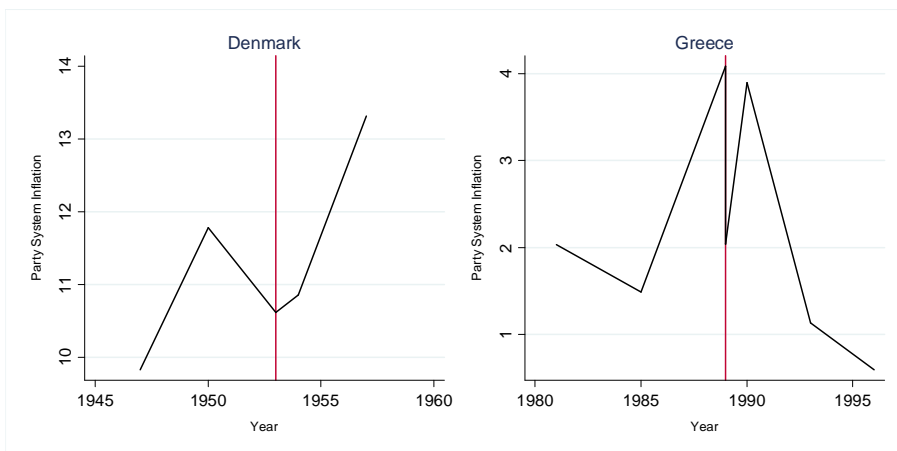
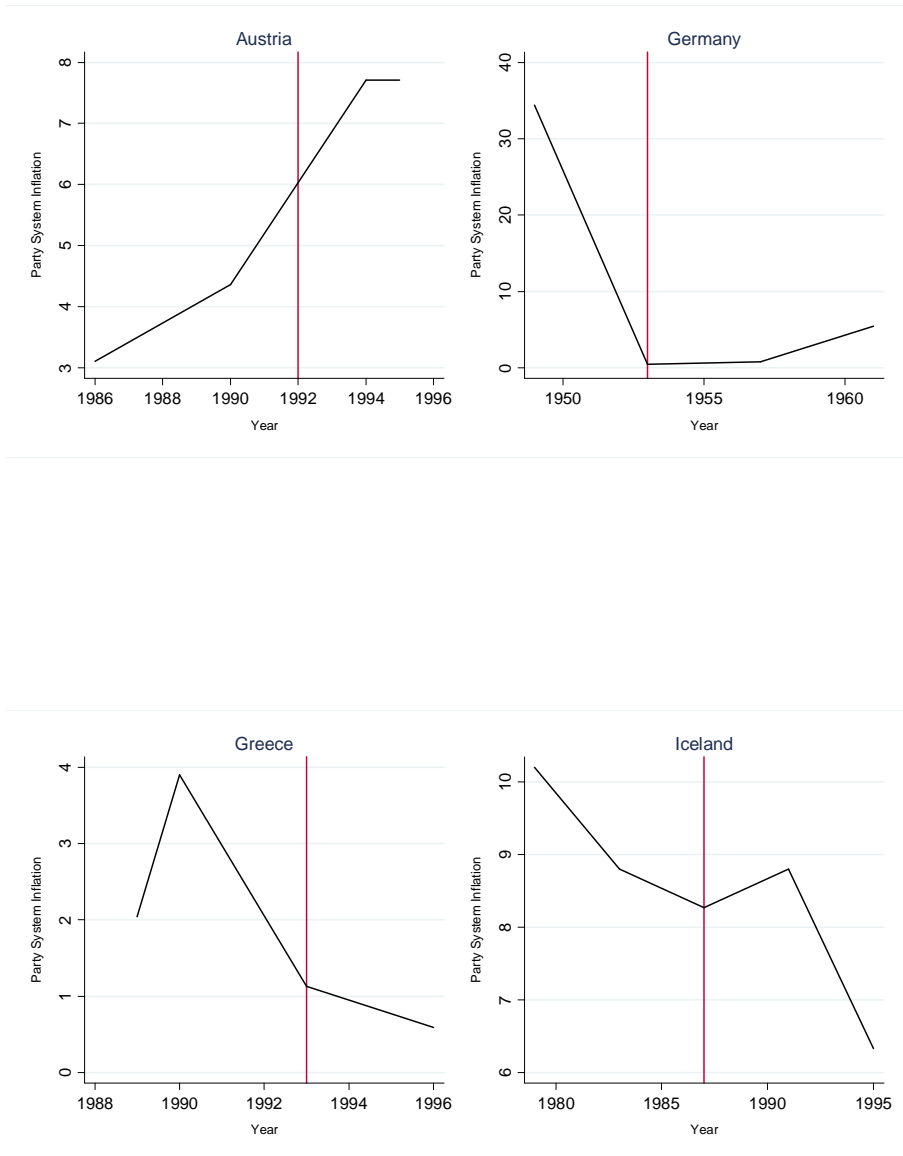


Figure 4.2. Upper tier Reforms

Reduction in party system inflation expected



Continued

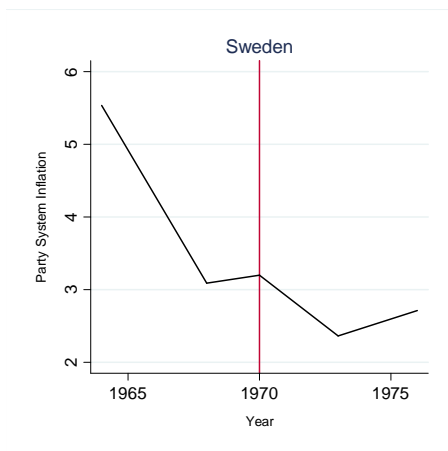
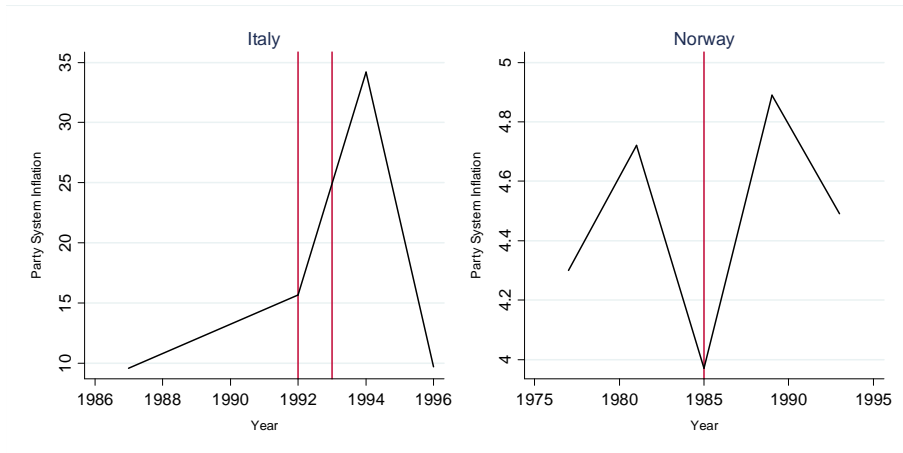


Figure 4.3. National Threshold Reforms

Increase in party system inflation expected

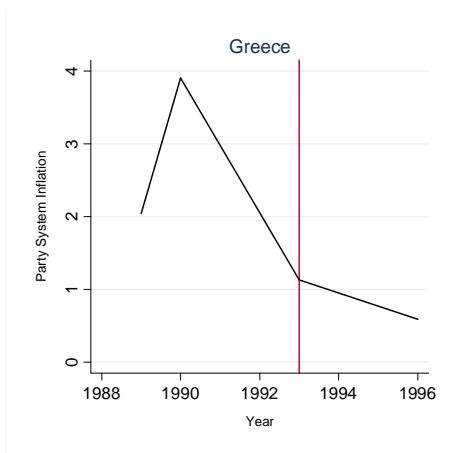
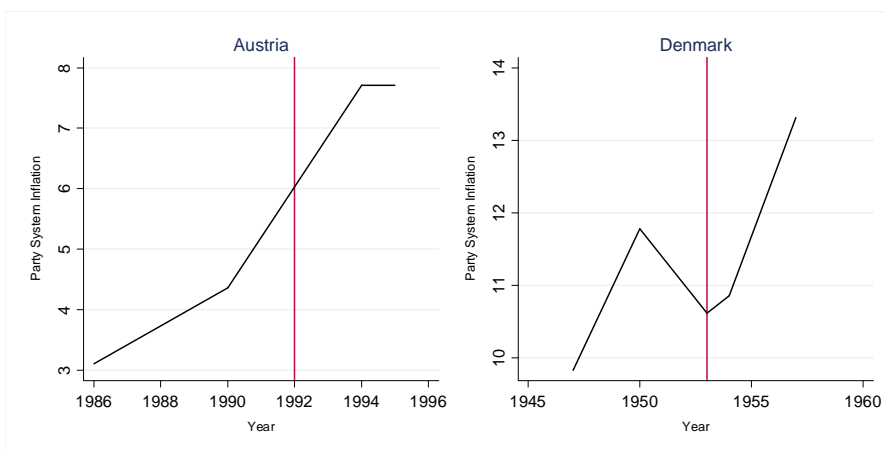


Figure 4.4. National Threshold Reforms

Reduction in party system inflation expected



Continued

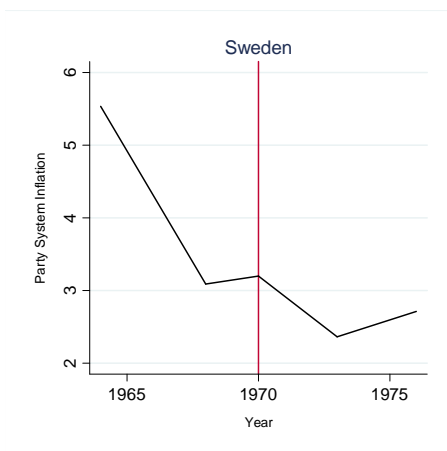
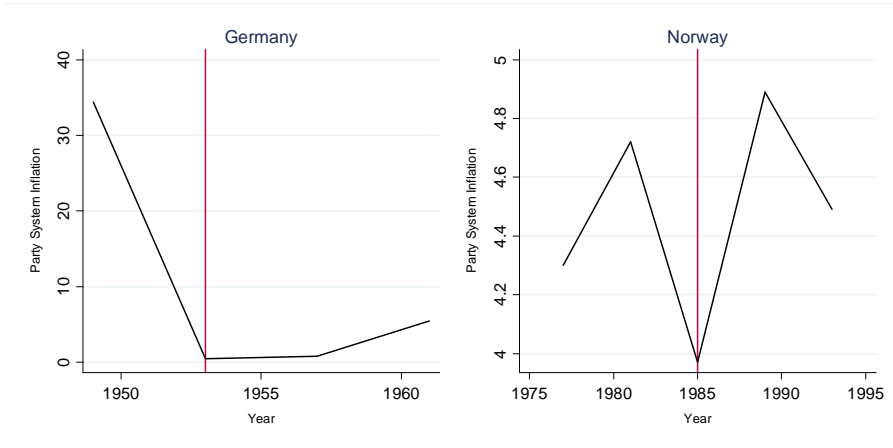


Figure 4.5. Number of Districts Reforms

Increase in party system inflation expected

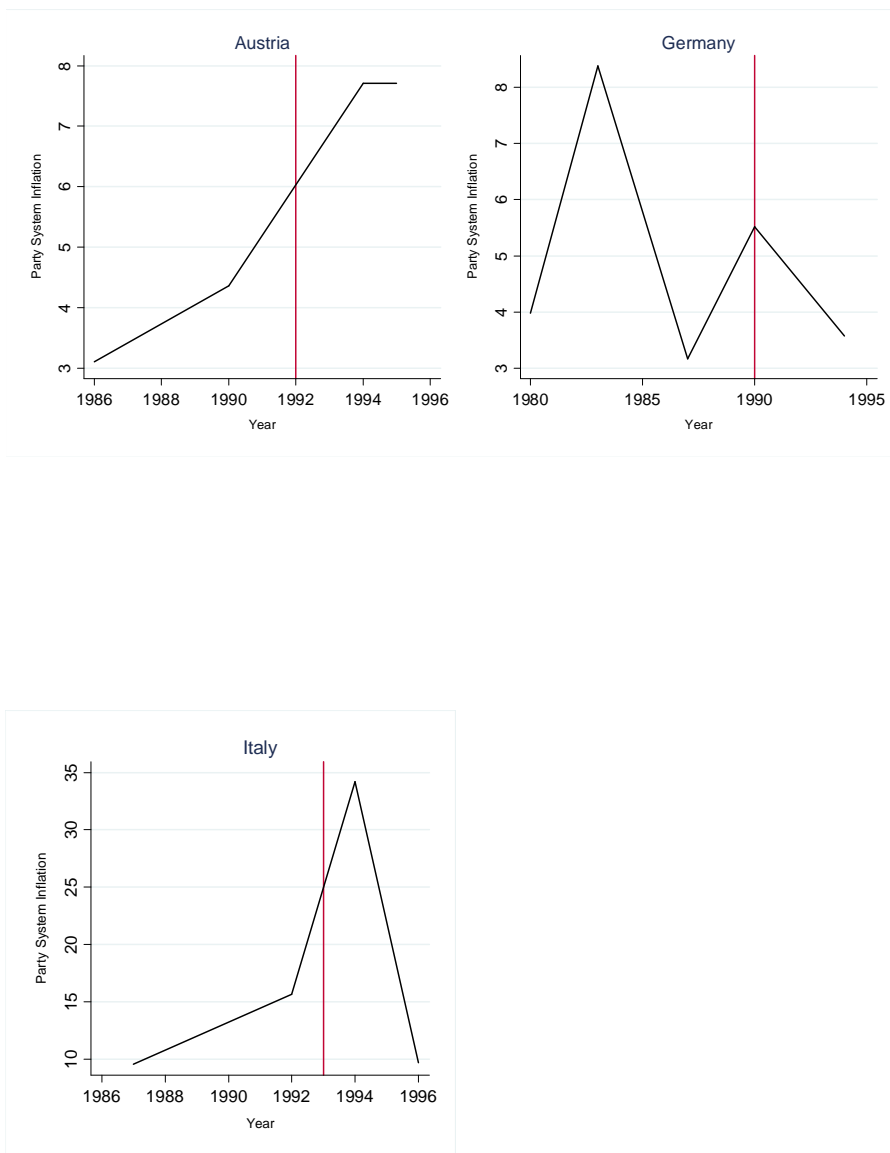


Figure 4.6. Number of Districts Reforms

Reduction in party system inflation expected

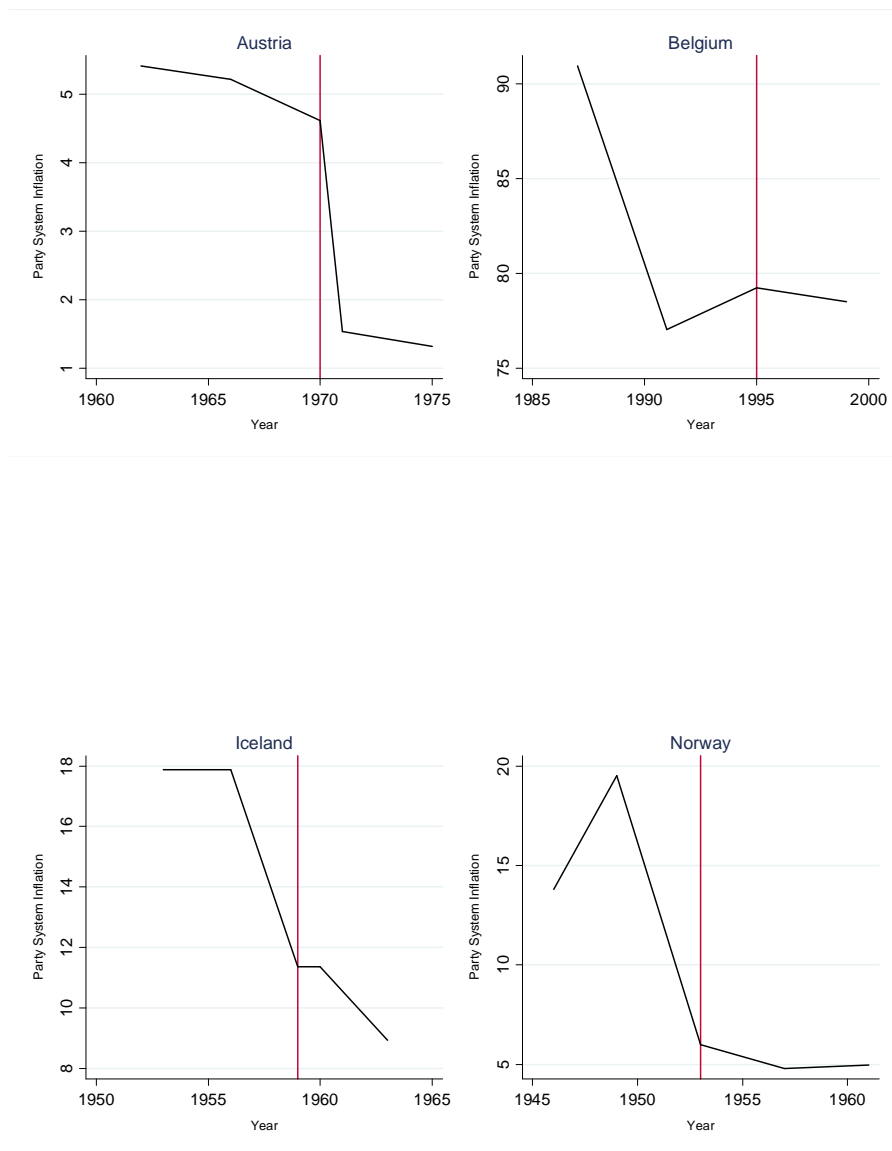


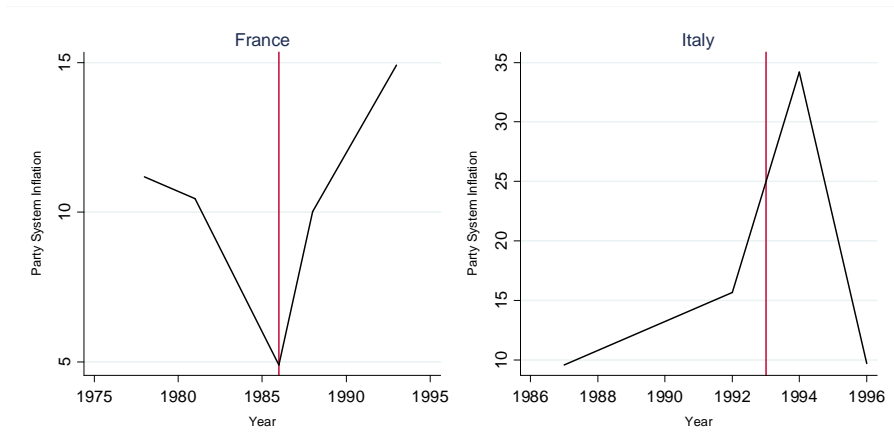
Figure 4.7. Electoral Rule Reforms

Increase in party system inflation expected



Figure 4.8. Electoral Rule Reforms

Reduction in party system inflation expected



Continued

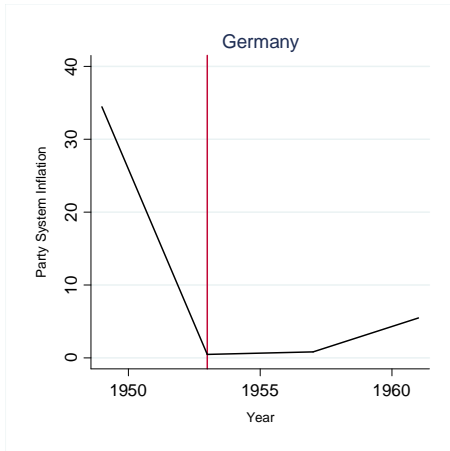
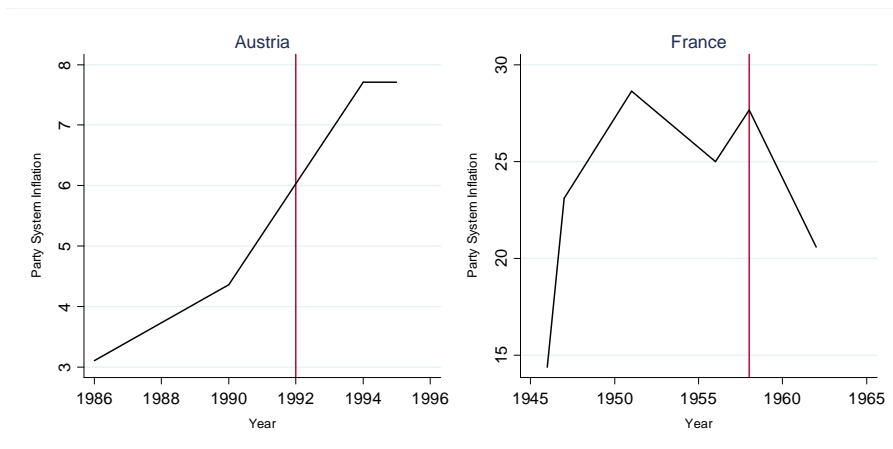


Figure 4.9. District Magnitude Reforms

Increase in party system inflation expected



Continued

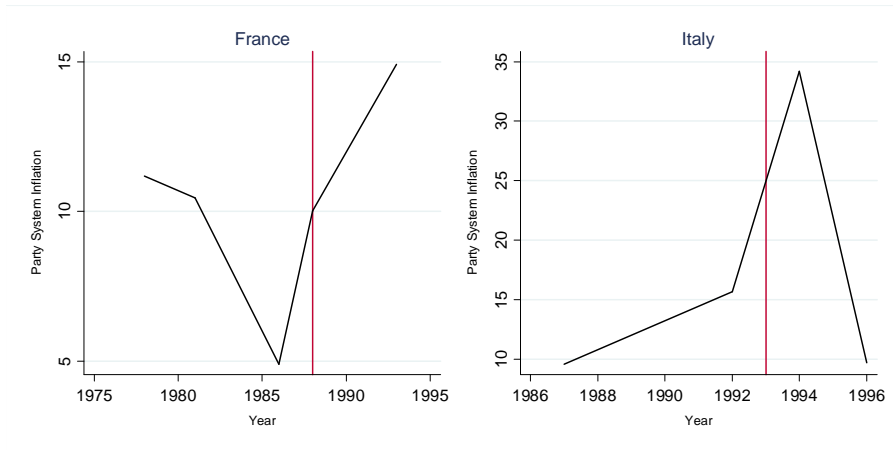
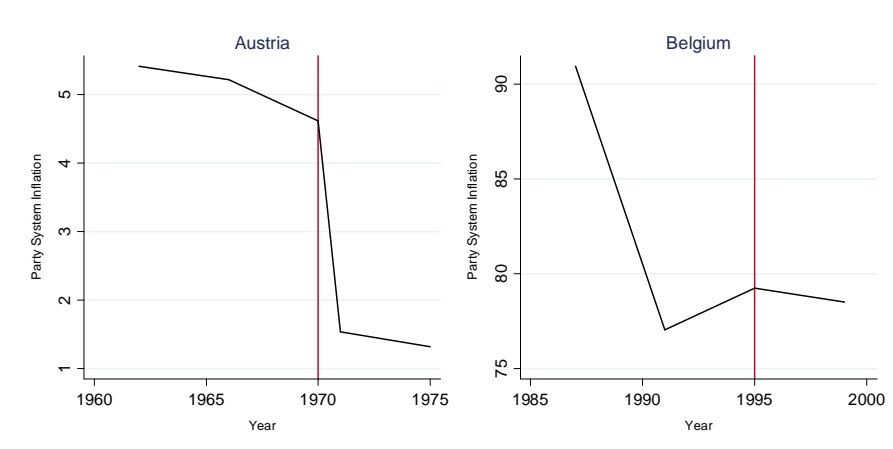
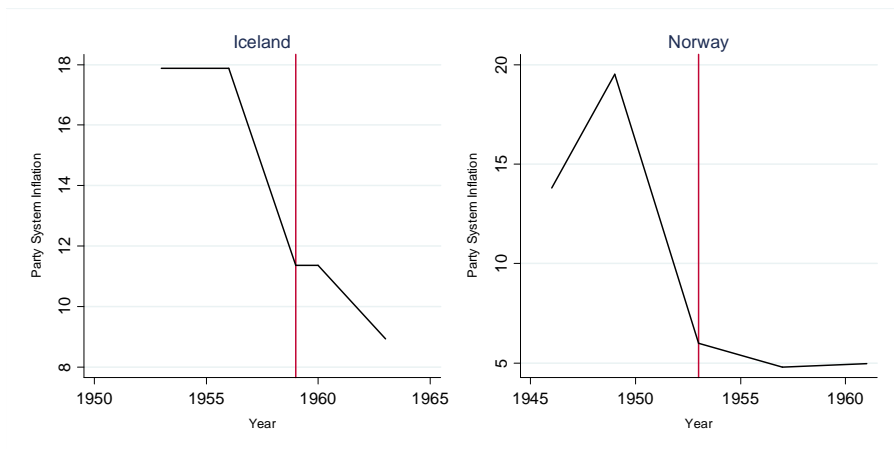
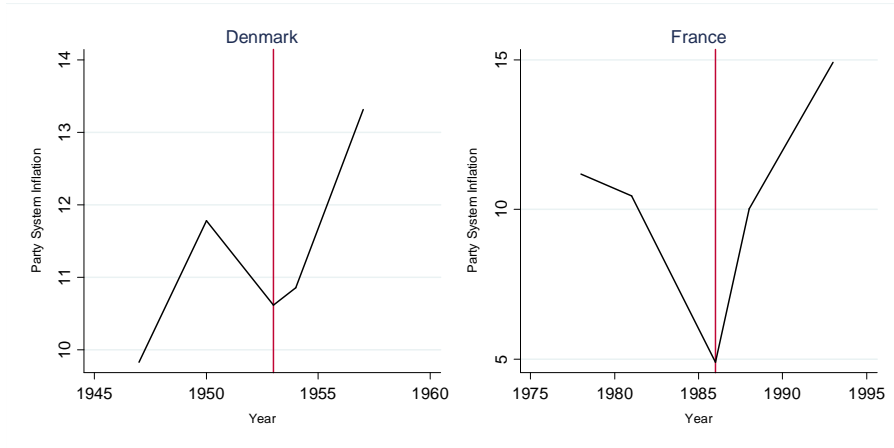


Figure 4.10. District Magnitude Reforms

Reduction in party system inflation expected



Continued



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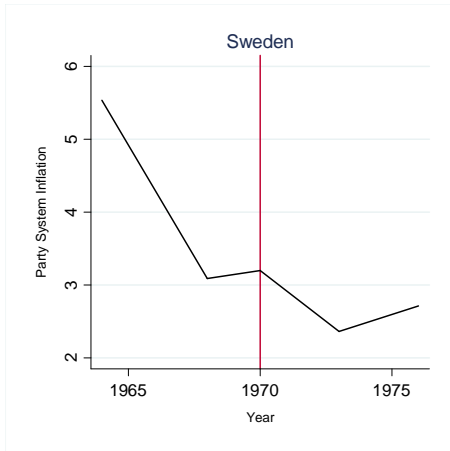
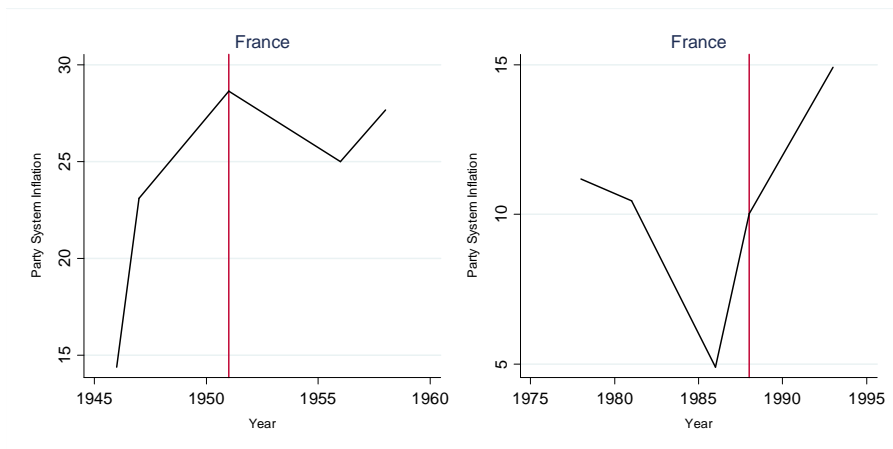


Figure 4.11. Ballot Structure Reforms

Increase in party system inflation expected



Continued

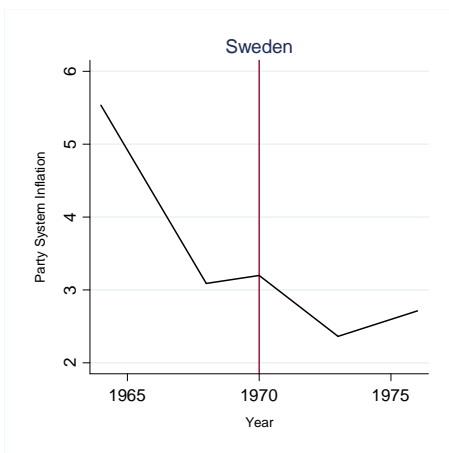
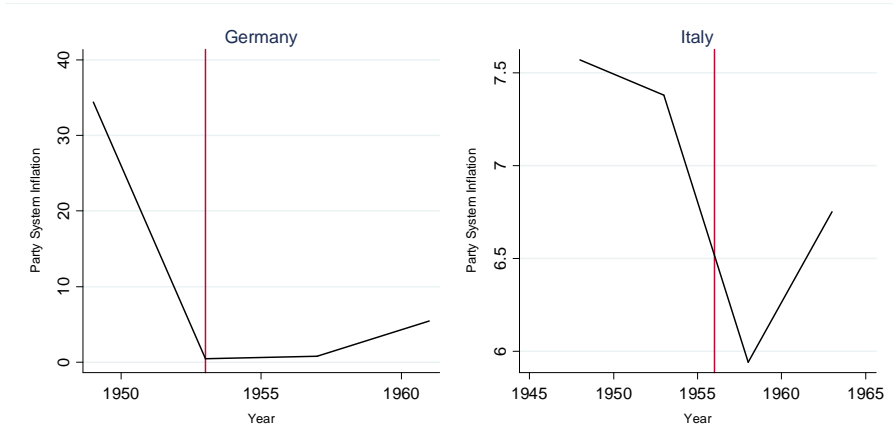
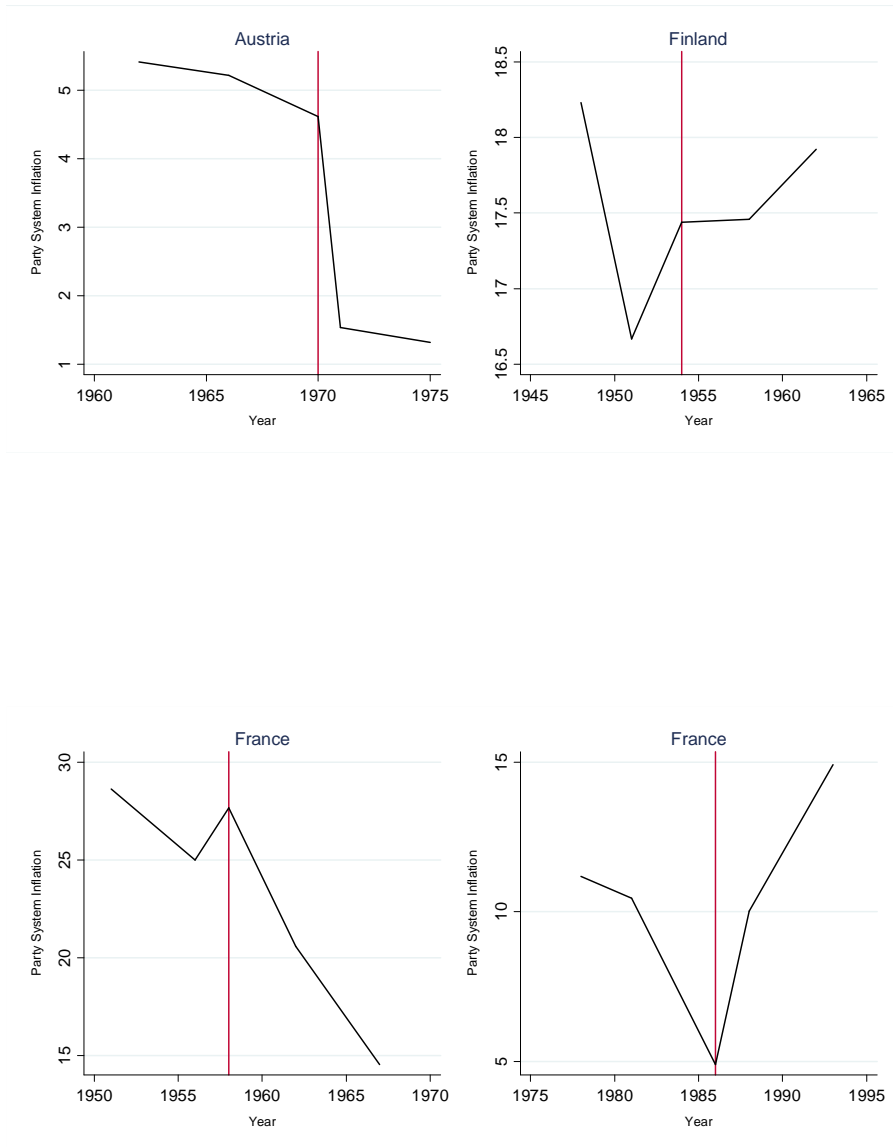
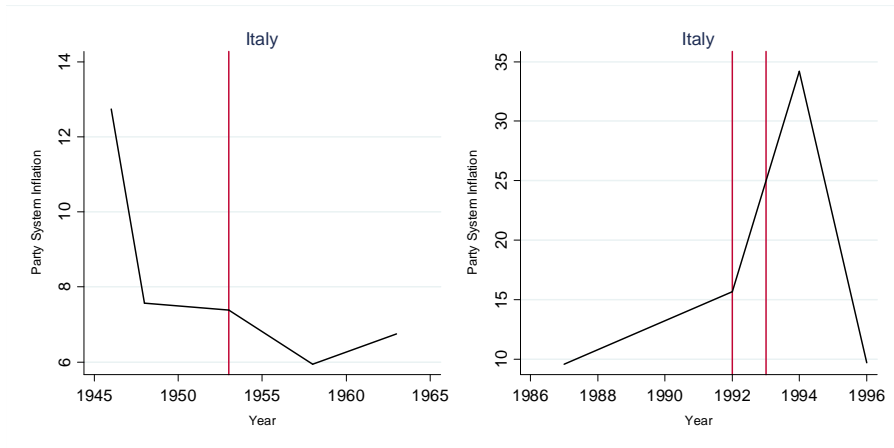


Figure 4.12. Ballot Structure Reforms

Reduction in party system inflation expected



Continued



CAPÍTULO 5

LOS DETERMINANTES DE LA NACIONALIZACIÓN DE LOS PARTIDOS EN ESPAÑA

Este estudio se centra en la nacionalización de los partidos en España entendida como la homogeneidad en los apoyos electorales que consigue un partido entre las diferentes circunscripciones de una elección nacional. En la primera parte del artículo se presenta una descripción de la evolución de la nacionalización desde 1977 hasta la actualidad y se muestra cómo el sistema de partidos español está cada vez más nacionalizado pese a la variación existente entre los partidos. En la segunda parte se busca explicar las diferencias entre partidos. El análisis indica que los votos que reciba el partido a nivel nacional se asocian positivamente con la nacionalización de los partidos. Por otro lado, la edad del partido apunta una paradoja: Solo potencia la nacionalización si el partido compite en todos los distritos mientras que para los partidos subnacionales esta variable tiene un efecto negativo. Finalmente, la polarización ideológica en el eje izquierda-derecha reduce la homogeneidad electoral de los partidos nacionales mientras que no hay evidencia robusta que apunte a una menor nacionalización en las elecciones fundacionales de 1977.

5.1. Introducción

Durante la última década la dimensión territorial de los partidos ha entrado con fuerza en la agenda investigadora de la ciencia política. Una creciente literatura se ha centrado en investigar en qué medida los partidos compiten nacionalmente, qué explica que así lo hagan y qué consecuencias tiene para el sistema político. Todas estas cuestiones convergen en la denominada nacionalización de los sistemas de partidos.

La nacionalización⁶⁷ es un proceso de coordinación que trasciende el nivel del distrito y por el cual candidatos de diferentes circunscripciones deciden unirse para competir con las mismas siglas, formando así un partido nacional (Cox, 1997, 1999). Normalmente, el resultado empírico de esta nacionalización se mide en función de lo uniforme que son los votos que gana un partido político entre las diferentes circunscripciones (Jones y Mainwaring, 2003; Bochler, 2010a; Harbers, 2010). Ello genera dos posibles extremos. Por un lado, un sistema de partidos estará muy nacionalizado si los resultados electorales de cada partido son muy similares entre las unidades territoriales de un país mientras que, por el contrario, estará poco nacionalizado si hay gran disparidad en los apoyos, incluso con diferentes sub-sistemas de partidos en cada unidad geográfica.

El caso de España es particularmente relevante para estudiar la nacionalización del sistema de partidos dada su doble excepcionalidad. Por un lado, la presencia del cleavage nacional o centro-periferia ha popularizado el concepto de “las Españas Electorales” (Vallès, 1991; Montero, et al., 1992) para referirse a la presencia de diferentes sistemas regionales de partidos. La concentración del apoyo electoral de los partidos subnacionales en

⁶⁷ También conocida como “party aggregation” (Chhibber y Kollman, 1998) o “linkage” (Cox, 1997, 1999). Las concepciones de nación, nacionalización y su posible coincidencia o no con el Estado no son el objeto de este estudio. La discusión sobre la nacionalización del sistema de partidos omite este punto al asimilar nación a Estado desde la perspectiva anglosajona del término “nation”. En este trabajo seguiré con la misma denominación que se ha impuesto en la literatura dejando de lado la discusión teórica pendiente. Del mismo modo me referiré a partidos nacionales cuando compitan en todo el ámbito nacional y subnacionales cuando lo hagan sólo en determinados distritos.

determinadas regiones, principalmente Cataluña, País Vasco y Navarra (Linz y Montero, 1999: 96) hace de España un caso de alta regionalización en comparación con otros países de Europa Occidental.⁶⁸ Pero a su vez España se considera un caso particular por su evolución temporal. La tendencia general de Europa Occidental ha sido de creciente nacionalización de sus sistemas de partidos, en particular desde principios del siglo XX (Caramani, 2004, 2005). Sin embargo, algunos autores han replicado que “hay numerosos ejemplos de una evolución en sentido inverso en la medida en que la política territorial ha sufrido un resurgimiento continuado en países como Bélgica, Italia, España y el Reino Unido” (Hopkin, 2009: 181). Por lo tanto, no sólo es que estáticamente España sea un país regionalizado, es que además estaría des-nacionalizándose progresivamente.

Diversos autores han argumentado que la nacionalización del sistema de partidos está íntimamente ligada a su mayor institucionalización y estabilidad (Lupu, 2008; Bochslers, 2010b). Unos partidos más institucionalizados se asocian con organizaciones más amplias y homogéneas por todo el país, y por lo tanto con una mayor nacionalización. En España se ha hablado de que el sistema de partidos está institucionalizado dada su baja volatilidad electoral y su reducida fragmentación parlamentaria, que tiende a generar gobiernos de mayorías homogéneas (Montero et al, 1992). Sin embargo, la sucesión de gobiernos nacionales en minoría parlamentaria y las tensiones centrífugas de la última década podrían apuntar a una creciente des-nacionalización del sistema de partidos y, por lo tanto, en última instancia, a un cambio en esta estabilidad.

Este último extremo tendría implicaciones directas sobre diferentes elementos del sistema político. Primero, una menor nacionalización lleva aparejada unas mayores tendencias centrífugas y se asocia a reformas para la descentralización política del país (Chhibber y Kollman, 1998; Harbers, 2010). Segundo, esta situación de

⁶⁸ Esto ocurre principalmente cuando se considera la cobertura territorial de los partidos políticos, si bien es menor si se consideran medidas de homogeneidad. Esto ocurre porque los partidos regionales tienden a ser pequeños y su peso se reduce cuando se pondera según sus niveles de apoyo electoral (Caramani, 2005: 307).

desnacionalización afecta a las políticas públicas aumentando la rigidez en la composición del gasto público (Lago y Lago, 2009), una mayor territorialización del mismo y menor calidad en la provisión de bienes públicos (Hicken et al., 2008). Tercero, ello generaría que las carreras políticas de los legisladores estuvieran más orientadas hacia el medio local, dificultando la formación de coaliciones y gobiernos, con gabinetes menos estables (Jones y Mainwaring, 2003). Y finalmente, la tendencia a una baja nacionalización podría llegar a comprometer la propia estabilidad de la democracia ante la falta de partidos que apelen al electorado trascendiendo barreras étnicas, culturales o religiosas (Stepan, 2004).

Dado el interés creciente de los académicos, sus potenciales consecuencias sobre el funcionamiento político y el clásico debate sobre la “cuestión territorial” en España, resulta llamativa la ausencia de estudios que se hayan centrado en la evolución de la nacionalización de su sistemas de partidos. Tan sólo recientemente algunos autores han empezado a aproximarse a la cuestión desde una perspectiva comparada (Lago y Montero, 2011). El trabajo presentado a continuación se divide en dos partes. En la primera se hace una descripción de la nacionalización de los partidos políticos en España y su evolución desde las Elecciones Generales de 1977 hasta las de 2008. En la segunda parte, se presenta un análisis de los principales determinantes que explican esta variación en la nacionalización de partidos.

¿Ha tendido España a desnacionalizarse? ¿Ha ocurrido esto de igual manera en todos los partidos? ¿Y qué explica estas diferencias si las hubiera? En este trabajo la variable dependiente crucial es la nacionalización medida como homogeneidad en el apoyo electoral entre distritos (Bochsler, 2010a). El trabajo se estructura como sigue: En la próxima sección presento la variable dependiente y los resultados para el caso de España. A continuación se describen las posibles variables independientes para explicarla y sus hipótesis. En la sección cuatro se presenta el análisis empírico y en la última sección se concluye el estudio con algunas consideraciones sobre la nacionalización del sistema de partidos en España.

5.2. La nacionalización de los partidos en España

Este trabajo se centra en la nacionalización de los partidos entendida como la homogeneidad en la distribución territorial del apoyo electoral. Para medir la nacionalización se ha tomado como unidad territorial de referencia las circunscripciones de las Elecciones Generales para el Congreso de los Diputados⁶⁹ y se ha recurrido a los índices de dispersión basados en el coeficiente de Gini (Jones y Mainwaring, 2003; Bochsler, 2010a; Harbers, 2010). El coeficiente de Gini es una unidad de medida de la desigualdad en la distribución de la renta en una sociedad y puede ser fácilmente adaptada para medir la heterogeneidad en los apoyos electorales de un partido entre diferentes unidades geográficas. De este modo, un partido muy bien nacionalizado será aquel que tenga una distribución muy homogénea de los apoyos electorales, obteniendo resultados similares en todas las unidades geográficas. Por el contrario, uno mal nacionalizado será aquel que presente gran asimetría en la distribución territorial de sus votos.

La decisión de emplear este índice se fundamenta en que es el único que permite desagregar los resultados de la nacionalización por partidos individuales, unidad básica de este análisis. Pese al interés de la literatura en la nacionalización, la mayoría de investigaciones o bien se han centrado en la del sistema de partidos en su conjunto (Chhibber y Kollman, 1998, 2004; Cox, 1999; Cox y Knoll, 2003) o bien cuando los han tratado individualmente lo han hecho explorando sus determinantes institucionales sin tomar en consideración la posible variación entre ellos (Harbers, 2010; Bochsler, 2010b). Hasta mi conocimiento, tan sólo el artículo de Morgenstern et al. (2009) ha planteado hipótesis para explicar por qué unos partidos podrían estar más nacionalizados que otros manteniendo todo lo demás constante. Si tan solo se toma en consideración el sistema de partidos se corre el riesgo de incurrir en una falacia ecológica. Podría ser que, aunque el conjunto del sistema de partidos esté nacionalizado, unos partidos lo estén más que otros. Por lo tanto, los mecanismos operando a nivel del sistema

⁶⁹ Las circunscripciones son las 50 provincias españolas y las ciudades autónomas de Ceuta y Melilla.

podrían venir condicionados por el partido individual, dando pie a inferencias erróneas si éstos no son considerados.

En este artículo me centro en describir y explicar la variación en la nacionalización entre partidos. He recurrido al “índice de nacionalización de partidos estandarizado” (Bochsler, 2010a) ya que introduce dos correcciones sobre los anteriores (Jones y Mainwaring, 2003; Harbers, 2010). Primero, pondera por las variaciones en población entre unidades administrativas. Esto se hace para evitar que aquellas unidades administrativas pequeñas y poco pobladas en las que un partido tenga mucho apoyo electoral afecten al índice de igual que los resultados de unidades grandes y más pobladas.⁷⁰ Y segundo, corrige el efecto que puede generar variaciones en el número de unidades territoriales entre elección. El argumento estadístico es que la agregación de unidades más pequeñas tiende a hacer que las diferencias electorales entre ellas parezcan menos pronunciadas que cuando hay muchas y de menor tamaño.⁷¹

Los valores del “índice de nacionalización de partidos estandarizado” (Bochsler, 2010a) oscilan entre 1 y 0.⁷² El máximo valor significa que los partidos obtienen exactamente los mismos niveles de apoyo electoral relativo en cada uno de los distritos, con los que están perfectamente nacionalizados. Un valor cercano a cero, por el contrario, implica que los partidos tienen sus apoyos concentrados en una parte muy concreta del territorio, con lo que apenas están nacionalizados. En el gráfico 5.1. se presenta la evolución temporal de la nacionalización del sistema de partidos en España considerando únicamente a aquellos partidos que obtienen representación parlamentaria.

⁷⁰ Esto es especialmente relevante para el caso de España, donde la población y la magnitud de los distritos oscila de manera importante entre distritos. La población con derecho a voto tiene un rango que va desde alrededor de 4 millones y medio en Madrid hasta los apenas 50.000 de Melilla. De manera pareja, la magnitud de distrito varía entre los 35 escaños de Madrid y un único diputado en Ceuta o Melilla.

⁷¹ Para una discusión en profundidad sobre las medidas de nacionalización véase Caramani (2004) y Bochsler (2010a).

⁷² El cálculo del índice lo he realizado a través de la página web de Bochsler (2010a), en la que se incluye una “macro” en Excel que automatiza el proceso y que facilita su cálculo para las diferentes Elecciones Generales <http://www.bochsler.eu/pns/>.

(Gráfico 5.1. aquí)

La evidencia empírica que se observa en el gráfico 1 va precisamente en la dirección opuesta a la argumentada por el saber convencional, que sostiene que el caso español es de una desnacionalización creciente (Hopkin, 2009). Este hallazgo es coherente con la tendencia apuntada por otros índices de nacionalización para el caso de España (Lago y Montero, 2011) y con la evolución general en Europa Occidental (Caramani, 2004, 2005). De este modo se confirma que España no es un caso excepcional sino la norma. El sistema de partidos en España tiende a una nacionalización de unos diez puntos durante todo el periodo democrático, si bien con retrocesos en 1989 y 2000. En ningún caso desciende de un valor de 0,68 y alcanza su máximo nivel en 2008, con alrededor de un 0,78. Es decir, que a lo largo de los últimos 30 años los partidos políticos españoles parece que obtienen porcentajes de apoyo electoral cada vez más similares entre distritos.

Sin embargo, esta última afirmación puede ser engañosa ya que los partidos pueden nacionalizarse bien porque sus resultados son más homogéneos entre distritos o bien porque deciden competir en un mayor número de circunscripciones. Aunque la segunda es condición indispensable para la primera, se trata de causas teóricas y empíricamente diferentes. Por lo tanto, para saber distinguir si la nacionalización se debe a la homogeneidad en los resultados electorales hace falta distinguir a los partidos políticos en función de la cantidad de distritos en que compiten. Básicamente los partidos españoles se pueden clasificar en dos tipos. Por un lado, los partidos nacionales, que son aquellos que enfocan su actuación política hacia España en su conjunto y compiten en todos o la mayoría de las circunscripciones de una elección nacional. Y por el otro, los partidos subnacionales, regionales o territoriales (Llera, 2008), que se caracterizan por competir sólo en determinados territorios, generalmente ligados con la representación de minorías lingüísticas, nacionales o culturales.

La existencia de partidos subnacionales no tiene por qué erosionar la nacionalización si estos partidos se limitan a competir en las

elecciones regionales. Sin embargo, los partidos regionales terminan compitiendo al nivel nacional por al menos dos razones. Por una parte, porque para partidos dirigidos a competir en elecciones regionales los costes de involucrarse en esta arena son muy bajos dada su estructura pre-existente. Y por otra parte, porque si los partidos subnacionales compiten en las elecciones nacionales pueden mejorar sus resultados en las elecciones regionales al ser vistos como unos partidos comprometidos con la defensa de los intereses locales (Bracanti, 2007: 139). En el caso español, los partidos subnacionales o regionales tienden a involucrarse en las elecciones nacionales y, por lo tanto, hay que considerarlos de una manera diferenciada dado que estos partidos sólo compiten en algunos distritos de las Elecciones Generales.

Es de esperar que haya una nacionalización diferente en cada grupo de partidos. Por definición los partidos nacionales tenderán a estar más nacionalizados que los subnacionales y la razón es bastante intuitiva. Dado que los partidos nacionales compiten en todos los distritos siempre obtendrán un porcentaje de votos superior al cero en todas las circunscripciones. Sin embargo esto no es así en el caso de los partidos subnacionales dado que hay una gran cantidad de distritos en los que no se presentan y, por esto mismo, siempre tendrán una menor homogeneidad electoral entre circunscripciones. En la tabla 5.1. se recoge un resumen de los partidos que han obtenido alguna vez representación parlamentaria en función del porcentaje medio de distritos en los que se han presentado durante el periodo democrático.⁷³ En la tabla se aprecian las importantes diferencias en las decisiones de entrada derivadas de la importante

⁷³ Los partidos son los siguientes: Centro Democrático y Social (CDS), Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE), Unión, Progreso y Democracia (UPyD), Alianza Popular/ Partido Popular (AP/PP), Partido Comunista de España/ Izquierda Unida (PCE/IU), Unión de Centro Democrático (UCD), Fuerza Nueva (FN), Partido Socialista Popular (PSP), Partido Socialista Andaluz/ Partido Andalucista (PSA/PA), Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), Bloque Nacionalista Gallego (BNG), Convergència i Unió (CiU), Eusko Alkartasuna (EA), Euskadiko Ezquerria (EE), Herri Batasuna (HB), Iniciativa per Catalunya-Verds (ICV), Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV), Unió del Centre i Democràcia Cristiana de Catalunya (UDC), Candidatura Aragonesa Independiente de Centro/ Partido Aragonesista (CAIC/ Par), Chunta Aragonesista (Cha), Unió Valenciana (UV), Unión del Pueblo Canario (UPC), Agrupaciones Independientes de Canarias/ Coalición Canaria (AIC/CC), Nafarroa Bai (NaBai) y Unión del Pueblo Navarro (UPN).

regionalización del sistema de partidos español (Montero, et al., 1992). La comparación de las medias de los partidos nacionales y subnacionales termina de apuntalar la estrecha relación entre la decisión de competir en todos los distritos y la nacionalización del partido. Mientras que los primeros tienen una media de nacionalización del 0,77, los otros apenas alcanzan el 0,07.⁷⁴

(Tabla 5.1. por aquí)

En el gráfico 5.2. se presentan los niveles de nacionalización de los partidos que compiten en la mayoría de distritos desde 1977. Como se puede apreciar, hay diferencias notables entre ellos. El PSOE se ha caracterizado por tener unos niveles bastante altos de nacionalización durante todas las elecciones, con un leve repunte en 2004 y 2008. Por su parte, la UCD partió de una situación mucho más heterogénea en sus apoyos territoriales hasta su descomposición en 1982 si bien el CDS, su sucesor natural, nunca llegó a alcanzar sus niveles de nacionalización. El caso de AP/PP es casi una reproducción de la tendencia general del sistema. Aunque partía con unos apoyos electorales dispersos comparables a los del PCE, su nacionalización ha tendido a incrementarse a medida se convertía en un partido creíble como alternativa de gobierno. En todo caso AP/PP siempre ha estado menos nacionalizado que el PSOE y la distancia entre ambos ha vuelto a incrementarse las últimas dos elecciones generales. El PCE/IU ha seguido una trayectoria irregular aunque creciente pese a su caída en el año 2000. Los partidos de corta vida, por su parte, suelen partir con niveles de nacionalización por debajo de la media; tales fueron los casos del Partido Socialista Popular, Fuerza Nueva y UPyD. Este hecho parece apuntar que los partidos más jóvenes tienen una menor capacidad para establecer organizaciones territoriales que les permitan nacionalizarse (Olson, 1998).

(Gráfico 5. 2. por aquí)

⁷⁴ Salvo que se señale lo contrario, todas las diferencias de medias son estadísticamente significativas al 1%.

En el gráfico 5.3. y 5.4. se incluyen los niveles de nacionalización para los partidos subnacionales. En el gráfico tercero he incluido los partidos que compiten en aquellas comunidades que accedieron a la autonomía por la “vía rápida”,⁷⁵ territorios donde los partidos nacionalistas y regionalistas tienen más fuerza. De manera general se puede señalar que los partidos en Cataluña y Andalucía están más nacionalizados que los del País Vasco y Galicia. La media de los partidos catalanes es un 0,14; un 0,12 en el caso del Partido Andalucista, un 0,06 en el caso del BNG y un 0,05 en el caso de los partidos vascos.⁷⁶ De manera general, hay relativa estabilidad en sus pautas aunque con un leve descenso entre los partidos catalanes y vascos, un ligero incremento en el caso del Bloque Nacionalista Gallego y la evanescencia del PA.

(Gráfico 5.3. por aquí)

En el caso del gráfico 5.4. hay más inestabilidad por la entrada y salida de diferentes partidos regionales en el Congreso puesto que, dado su menor porcentaje de apoyos, son más propensos a no conseguir el número crítico de votos para tener representación. El más nacionalizado de todos ellos fue Unió Valenciana, con un nivel similar al de los partidos vascos del 0,06. El resto de los partidos territoriales tiene niveles comprendidos entre el 0,01 y el 0,04. El partido con más continuidad en el tiempo es AIC/CC, con presencia ininterrumpida desde 1986 y su repunte en 1993. UPN entró en una alianza con Alianza Popular desde las elecciones de 1982, así que en ese punto se lo considera como la marca de ese partido en Navarra (García-Guereta, 2001:178). Por lo demás, los partidos que están más de una legislatura en el Congreso suelen presentar pautas relativamente estables de nacionalización.

⁷⁵ La Constitución Española ha distinguido entre dos vías de acceso a la autonomía. La rápida, a través del artículo 151 y la vía lenta, a través del 143.

⁷⁶ UDC solo tiene presencia en las primeras elecciones, en las que compitió en solitario antes de aliarse con CDC en Convergencia i Unió. Euskadiko Ezquerria se integró en el Partido Socialista de Euskadi cara a los comicios de 1993 e ICV se coaligó con IU a partir de 2004.

(Gráfico 5.4. por aquí)

Las principales diferencias en la nacionalización de los partidos subnacionales vienen dadas por el número de distritos en los que estos compiten. Una correlación entre la media de nacionalización de todo el periodo y la media de distritos en los que concurren estos partidos apunta una asociación del 0,76 y estadísticamente significativa al 1%.

5.3. Los determinantes de la nacionalización

Anteriormente se ha mostrado la existencia de diferencias en la nacionalización de los partidos y en su evolución a lo largo de las elecciones. Sin embargo, España como caso de estudio presenta dos elementos a destacar en relación a la conexión entre el diseño institucional y la variable explicativa. El primero es la estabilidad en su sistema electoral. Diferentes autores han apuntado que hay elementos del sistema electoral que son determinantes en la nacionalización de los partidos políticos como la magnitud del distrito, el número de circunscripciones o la existencia de un sistema mayoritario o proporcional (Cox, 1999; Cox y Knoll, 2003; Morgenstern et al., 2009). Sin embargo, en España ninguno de estos elementos ha sufrido variaciones sustanciales desde la restauración de la democracia. Por lo tanto se puede descartar que estas variables institucionales estén detrás de los cambios en la nacionalización en España ya que una constante no puede explicar el cambio en una variable.

Sin embargo, un segundo elemento institucional que sí ha sufrido importantes variaciones ha sido la organización territorial del Estado, con una importante descentralización política a partir del nacimiento del “Estado de las Autonomías” en los 80. La literatura sobre nacionalización tiene entre sus principales argumentos la asociación positiva entre la centralización y la nacionalización del sistema de partidos (Chhibber y Kollman, 1998; Bracanti, 2007;

Harbers, 2010). Sin embargo el caso de España presenta una particular paradoja ya que esta asociación está revertida: Pese a que la centralización del estado se reduce durante los últimos 30 años, la nacionalización del sistema de partidos se ha incrementado. Por lo tanto parece que la creciente nacionalización en España ha venido condicionada no por la estructura territorial del Estado sino más bien a pesar de esta.

Para explicar la variación en la nacionalización de los partidos se han planteado cuatro hipótesis principales:

H1: En las elecciones fundacionales la nacionalización del sistema de partidos será menor a la del resto del periodo.

Las elecciones fundacionales son las primeras elecciones libres y competitivas que tienen lugar en un sistema político democrático y se caracterizan por un elevado grado de incertidumbre sobre su resultado, siendo común que se den fallos de coordinación electoral entre partidos y compitiendo partidos no viables (Lago y Martínez, 2011). Por otra parte, estas primeras elecciones se caracterizan por la ausencia de fortaleza organizativa de los partidos y pobre identificación de los votantes con los mismos (Mainwaring y Zoco, 2007). Así pues, dado que la información, coordinación y estructura organizativa de los partidos es menor en estas elecciones fundacionales, la nacionalización de los partidos podría ser también menor en comparación con el resto de elecciones (Bochsler, 2010b). Espero, por lo tanto, que en las elecciones de 1977 los partidos políticos tenga una homogeneidad en sus resultados electorales significativamente menor frente al resto de elecciones. En el análisis estadístico he introducido una variable dicotómica para estas elecciones.

H2: Cuanto más apoyo electoral reciba un partido político, más nacionalizado estará.

Pese a que diferentes autores han señalado una asociación entre los resultados del partido a nivel nacional y su nivel de nacionalización (Jones y Mainwaring, 2003), no se ha argumentado el mecanismo causal que la explica. Desde una perspectiva teórica esta asociación

podría no darse ya que partidos con pocos apoyos electorales pueden igualmente tenerlos distribuidos homogéneamente por todas las unidades territoriales (Morgenstern et al., 2009), estando así bien nacionalizados. Sin embargo, creo que hay una buena razón para esperar una asociación positiva entre ambas variables. Cuando un partido es minoritario es probable que esté poco nacionalizado puesto que sus apoyos son muy dependientes de la composición de los distritos. Sin embargo, a medida crecen sus resultados sobre el total nacional, es más probable que saque mejores resultado en los distritos donde se comporta peor y crezca la homogeneidad en sus apoyos territoriales. Es decir, que tienda a nacionalizarse mejor. Por lo tanto, espero una relación positiva entre los resultados nacionales de un partido y su nivel de nacionalización.

H3: Cuanto más edad tenga un partido más nacionalizado estará.

Un argumento clásico sobre la evolución temporal de la nacionalización es que a medida pasa el tiempo los partidos tienden a nacionalizarse mejor (Caramani, 2004, 2005). De acuerdo con esta lógica la sucesión de elecciones democráticas llevaría a unos sistemas de partidos más nacionalizados. Una variación de esta hipótesis es la que se centra en la edad de los partidos políticos. Según se ha planteado en la literatura: “Con el paso del tiempo los partidos tenderían a establecer su influencia sobre grupos estables, rutinizar sus procesos de captación electoral y construir bases estables de apoyo” (Mainwaring y Zoco, 2007: 161). Siguiendo con el argumento, la antigüedad de un partido ayudaría a la consolidación de sus bases electorales territoriales y de este modo fomentaría su nacionalización.

Aunque se ha planteado que los partidos nuevos podrían ganar apoyos electorales de manera estatal igual que los más antiguos hacerlo de modo regionalizado (Morgenstern, et al., 2009: 1329), mi argumento es que la hipótesis de la edad del partido solo debería afectar a los partidos que compiten en todos los distritos y no en los subnacionales. Esto sería así porque al crearse desde el centro y competir en todos los distritos de una elección, necesitan más tiempo para construir y expandir sus bases de apoyo electoral para que sus resultados sean homogéneos (Panbianco, 1990: 111). Por

el contrario, dado que los partidos subnacionales parten directamente de un electorado local en aquellos distritos que compiten, que además son menos que el total nacional, es de esperar que el tiempo tenga un impacto marginal sobre su nacionalización. Esta variable la he operacionalizado considerando como punto fundacional del partido la primera elección en la que consigue representación en el Congreso de los Diputados.

H4: Los partidos de ideología más extrema tienden a estar menos nacionalizados que los de ideología más moderada.

La ideología sigue ofreciendo expectativas contradictorias respecto a sus efectos sobre la nacionalización (Morgenstern, et al., 2009). Caramani (2004) argumenta que la ideología no tiene ningún efecto sobre la nacionalización de los partidos políticos ya que todos ellos, excluyendo los de representación etnoregionalista, se han nacionalizado en Europa Occidental. Sin embargo, un argumento posible es que partidos más centristas podrían estar más nacionalizados que aquellos con posiciones extremas ya que apelan a electorados más amplios y mucho menos dependientes de la composición de los distritos. Para contrastar un posible efecto de la ideología analizaré el efecto de la polarización en el eje izquierda-derecha. La expectativa teórica es que cuanto más desviado esté un partido de la media ideológica, menor sea su nacionalización.⁷⁷

Las hipótesis requieren tomar como unidad de análisis los partidos. El número total observaciones es 116 desde 1977 hasta 2008, 77 pertenecientes a partidos subnacionales y 39 a partidos nacionales a lo largo de todo el periodo.

⁷⁷ Los datos provienen del libro de Pablo Oñate “Análisis de Datos Electorales”. Para los valores de ideología a partir de 1999 he recurrido a las encuestas pre-electorales del CIS.

5.4. Análisis e interpretación

Para contrastar las hipótesis he empleado la técnica estadística llamada “time-series cross section análisis” con efectos aleatorios.⁷⁸ Este método estadístico permite considerar de manera simultánea la dimensión temporal y la diferencia entre las unidades de sección cruzada, evitando problemas de auto-correlación entre los errores estándar de las unidades (Podestà, 2002). Los grupos de referencia son los diferentes partidos políticos, para los que he realizado tres conjuntos de análisis: Uno para todos ellos, uno considerando sólo aquellos que se presentan en la mayoría de las circunscripciones (nacionales) y otro con los que se presentan en solo algunas (subnacionales). A su vez he re-estimado los modelos para cada uno de los grupos con y sin la variable de la polarización ideológica. La razón es que los datos disponibles de esta última no iban más allá de 1986 para los partidos sub-nacionales ni para aquellos partidos nacionales que no han tenido representación en más de una elección, lo que genera la pérdida de un número importante de observaciones. Para mejorar el ajuste lineal del modelo he empleado el logaritmo de los resultados al nivel nacional y de la edad del partido.⁷⁹ En la tabla 5.2. se presentan los modelos.

(Tabla 5.2. por aquí)

Los primeros dos modelos se centran en el total de partidos y ambos son significativos a un nivel del 1%, explicando hasta un 81% de la varianza total. Los coeficientes de la edad del partido y de la polarización se comportan en el sentido esperado, si bien las elecciones de 1977 lo hacen en sentido contrario. En todo caso, tan sólo la variable de los resultados electorales a nivel nacional es estadísticamente significativa en ambos modelos a un nivel del 1%.

⁷⁸ He realizado un test de Hausman para comprobar la ausencia de correlación entre la heterogeneidad no observada y las variables independientes. Esta condición se cumple para los modelos estimados.

⁷⁹ La razón es que espero una relación decreciente entre estas variables y la nacionalización. A medida pasa el tiempo y los partidos obtienen mejores resultados a nivel nacional, estas variables tienen un impacto marginal menor en la nacionalización del partido.

En los siguientes dos modelos se contrasta exclusivamente la nacionalización de los partidos que compiten en la mayoría de distritos (los partidos nacionales). Ambos modelos son estadísticamente significativos a un nivel del 1% y explican una varianza del 77% en el primer caso y un 83% para el segundo. Al igual que en el caso de todos los partidos, los resultados a nivel nacional son estadísticamente significativos al 1% y se correlacionan positivamente con la nacionalización. Sin embargo hay cambios en las demás variables. Para los partidos nacionales su edad tiene un efecto positivo y estadísticamente significativo a un 5%. Cuanto más atrás en el tiempo haya conseguido su primer escaño, más nacionalizado estará el partido político. En el segundo de los modelos se ha incorporado la variable de la polarización ideológica, que es estadísticamente significativa al 5%.⁸⁰ Acorde a estos resultados, cuanto más alejado está un partido de la media en el eje izquierda-derecha menos nacionalizado está.

El tercero de los bloques de análisis se centra en los partidos que sólo se presentan en algunos distritos (los partidos subnacionales). Ambos modelos son estadísticamente significativos al 1% y explican una varianza del 87% en el primer caso y 88% en el segundo. De nuevo, el resultado electoral está positivamente asociado con la nacionalización y es estadísticamente significativo al 1%. La antigüedad del partido también lo es al mismo nivel pero tiene un coeficiente negativo y estadísticamente significativo al 5%. Cuanto más tiempo llevan los partidos subnacionales con representación menos nacionalizados están. En todo caso, la elección fundacional de 1977 no tiene ningún efecto sobre la variable dependiente. En el siguiente modelo he introducido la polarización ideológica, lo que impide que estén las elecciones fundacionales ya que se pierden todas las observaciones de partidos subnacionales que obtuvieran representación antes de 1986.⁸¹ El análisis con esta nueva variable indica que los resultados electorales nacionales son de nuevo estadísticamente significativos al 1%

⁸⁰ Como antes se indicó, esta variable hace perder algunas observaciones. No hay datos disponibles de posición ideológica para Fuerza Nueva, Partido Socialista Popular y Unión, Progreso y Democracia.

⁸¹ Esto excluye del análisis a Unión del Pueblo Navarro, Unió del Centre i Democràcia Cristiana de Catalunya y Unión del Pueblo Canario, junto con las del resto de partidos subnacionales antes de 1986.

mientras que la edad del partido deja de serlo. La polarización ideológica tampoco es estadísticamente significativa.

En la tabla 5.3. se reproduce el análisis estadístico para los partidos subnacionales excluyendo la polarización ideológica y distinguiendo entre los que compiten en las comunidades autónomas de vía rápida y de vía lenta.

(Tabla 5.3. por aquí)

Los resultados de estos apuntan a que la nacionalización de los partidos en las Comunidades Autónomas denominadas “históricas” viene determinadas por razones diferentes a las de las otras Comunidades. Ambos modelos son estadísticamente significativos al 1%. Los resultados electorales a nivel nacional son estadísticamente significativos para los partidos que compiten en autonomías de vía lenta, aumentando su nacionalización. Por el contrario, no tienen ningún efecto en los partidos que compiten en Andalucía, Cataluña, País Vasco o Galicia. Sin embargo, para este último grupo tanto la antigüedad del partido como las elecciones fundacionales son estadísticamente significativas al 1% y 5% respectivamente. En el caso de la edad del partido se confirma que a medida pasa el tiempo, estos partidos subnacionales tienden a estar menos nacionalizados. Por otra parte, las elecciones fundacionales se comportan en el sentido esperado, ya que en 1977 estos partidos obtuvieron mayor heterogeneidad electoral entre distritos.

De todos los análisis anteriores se desprenden algunas conclusiones. En primer lugar, hay un efecto muy fuerte de los resultados a nivel nacional sobre la nacionalización del partido. Cuando los resultados electorales a dicho nivel aumentan también lo hace la homogeneidad de sus niveles de apoyo entre distritos. Esto es coherente con lo presentado por la literatura anterior en análisis comparados (Jones y Mainwaring, 2003). La dicotómica para las elecciones fundacionales de 1977 no es estadísticamente significativa en casi todos los casos, por lo que no se puede inferir que hubiera una variación relevante en la nacionalización de dichas elecciones respecto a las demás del periodo analizado. Tan sólo para los partidos subnacionales de las comunidades autónomas de

vía rápida tuvieron algún efecto, reduciendo su nivel promedio en la variable dependiente.

La evidencia sobre el efecto de la edad del partido apunta una paradoja interesante. Cuando se los considera conjuntamente esta variable no tiene ningún efecto sobre la nacionalización de los partidos. Ahora bien, esto cambia cuando se analizan independientemente los partidos nacionales y los subnacionales. En el caso de los primeros, ésta tiene un efecto positivo en la nacionalización mientras que en el de los segundos es negativo en uno de los modelos. ¿Cuál puede ser la razón? En el caso de los partidos de ámbito nacional una posible explicación se puede vincular con su progresiva expansión territorial. En las elecciones generales “el distrito electoral es la provincia. Esto obliga a los partidos a adoptar sus estrategias organizativas a las exigencias de la campaña y a tener una presencia organizativa a nivel provincial” (Méndez Lago, 2000: 94). Dado que los partidos nacionales compiten en todos los distritos de la elección, un argumento posible es que requieren tiempo para llegar a constituir sus bases organizativas y de apoyo homogéneas en todo el país.

Este fue el caso, al menos, de los dos partidos mayoritarios. La historia organizativa de ambos partidos combina la captación de organizaciones locales pre-existentes con la creación de nuevas estructuras en diferentes regiones (Méndez Lago, 2000; García-Guereta, 2001). Y aunque es indudable que se establecieron en poco tiempo⁸² sólo progresivamente han alcanzado unas bases con cierta homogeneidad en todo el territorio nacional. En el caso de AP/PP esta construcción fue mucho más lenta que el PSOE, incluso renovando sus estructuras territoriales varias veces (García-Guereta, 2000: 99, 111) lo cual, junto al hecho de que no se lo empezó a considerar un partido con vocación de gobierno hasta 1989, explica su tendencia incremental más acusada frente a un PSOE más estable en sus niveles de nacionalización.

Ahora bien, en el caso de los partidos subnacionales el efecto de la antigüedad del partido es distinto. Si solo se considera el periodo

⁸² Si por establecer entendemos la decisión estratégica de entrar a competir en el distrito se puede argumentar que la nacionalización de estos partidos fue casi perfecta desde 1982 exceptuando el caso particular de la UCD.

desde 1986 no tiene ningún efecto pero cuando se analiza la nacionalización desde 1977 la edad del partido influye negativamente en la homogeneidad de sus resultados electorales. Ello parece apuntar a que durante las primeras elecciones generales desde 1977 se produjo una progresiva territorialización de los apoyos electorales a los partidos subnacionales. Sin embargo, el análisis que distingue entre los partidos subnacionales compitiendo en autonomía de vía rápida y de vía lenta señala que sólo los primeros se ven negativamente afectados por la evolución temporal.

Contrastando ambos hallazgos, los datos permiten sostener la hipótesis de un “trade-off” entre la homogeneidad electoral de los partidos nacionales y subnacionales. Así, la paulatina igualación de los resultados entre provincias de los partidos nacionales es un proceso progresivo que alcanza un umbral máximo de nacionalización marcado por las bases de apoyo electoral de los partidos subnacionales. Sin embargo, los datos muestran que no todos los subnacionales afectan la homogeneidad electoral de los partidos nacionales en igual medida sino tan sólo de aquellos que operan en las autonomías en las que existe un fuerte cleavage regional o, lo que es lo mismo, en aquellas comunidades en las que existe un fuerte sistema de partidos regionales. A medida la competición entre los partidos nacionales se ha polarizado en los dos partidos principales y han mejorado sus resultados en estos distritos los partidos nacionales han tendido a erosionar la homogeneidad en los apoyos de los partidos subnacionales. En la tabla 5.4. se presentan las correlaciones entre la nacionalización para los principales partidos nacionales y subnacionales:⁸³

(Tabla 5.4. por aquí)

Los coeficientes de correlación se comportan de manera congruente con la hipótesis del “trade-off”. Por un lado, la correlación de los

⁸³ Dado que sólo ha habido 10 elecciones durante el periodo democrático reciente he seleccionado como partidos nacionales y subnacionales los de las comunidades autónomas de vía rápida que se han presentado en todas las elecciones. Se excluye UCD, PSP, FN, UPyD entre los nacionales y PA, HB y EA de las subnacionales.

partidos nacionales y subnacionales entre sí es positiva pero por el otro, cuando se compara ambos tipos de partidos, ésta es negativa. Ello apunta a que la creciente homogeneidad electoral de los primeros se ha dado principalmente a costa de la de la nacionalización de los partidos que compiten en sólo algunos distritos, si bien con diferentes niveles de intensidad. Para el PSOE esta relación es negativa pero sólo significativa al 10% con PNV y ERC, sin ser estadísticamente significativa con CiU. Por el contrario para AP/PP la asociación es más fuerte y estadísticamente significativa al 1% con los tres partidos subnacionales seleccionados. PCE/IU se comporta en el sentido esperado, pero sólo es estadísticamente significativa al 5% con el PNV. Así, parece que ha sido el crecimiento del Partido Popular en los distritos con sistemas de partidos regionales lo que ha espoleado de manera importante su nacionalización. La creciente homogeneidad en los apoyos electorales de los partidos nacionales estaría detrás, por lo tanto, de la erosión temporal que tiene la nacionalización de los partidos subnacionales en las Elecciones Generales. De este modo se apunta a equilibrios diferentes en la nacionalización en aquellos contextos con una importante regionalización de su sistema de partidos.

Analizado el efecto de la polarización ideológica del eje izquierda-derecha, ésta tan sólo tiene impacto en el caso de los partidos de ámbito nacional e implica que a medida un partido se aleja de la media en la escala ideológica menos nacionalizado está. Las correlaciones inferiores al 0.1 de esta variable y los resultados electorales excluyen la posibilidad de multicolinealidad entre la polarización y el tamaño del partido.⁸⁴ Que esta variable opere únicamente para los partidos nacionales concuerda con las expectativas teóricas ya que el cleavage principal en la mayoría de distritos es el socioeconómico, mientras que para los partidos subnacionales no sólo afecta su posición la mediana del eje de clase sino también su posición en el eje nacional. No he incluido el análisis sobre la polarización del eje nacional por la ausencia de

⁸⁴ Se descarta así el argumento de un posible efecto composicional que hace que los partidos más extremos en el eje sean coincidentes con los más pequeños.

datos sobre la posición en dicha escala para los diferentes partidos.⁸⁵

Sin embargo, es plausible que aquellos partidos nacionales que se aproximen más a la media de nacionalismo en las provincias de Cataluña, País Vasco y Galicia puedan competir mejor y, por lo tanto, estar más nacionalizados. Es decir, que los partidos podrían estar más nacionalizados porque adaptan mejor sus programas, candidatos y políticas a las demandas específicas de las regiones donde compiten (Deschouwer, 2006; Hopkin, 2003). Por otro lado, lo mismo podría pasar si hay un efecto espurio de de la polarización ideológica al considerarla conjuntamente con la polarización en el eje nacionalista si los partidos más alejados en el eje izquierda-derecha también lo están en el nacional. He realizado una correlación entre nacionalización, polarización ideológica y polarización del eje nacional con los datos de las elecciones generales de 2008 y no hay resultados estadísticamente significativos. En todo caso, no se presenta evidencia que permita descartar esta posibilidad.

5.5. Conclusiones

En este trabajo me he centrado en el análisis de la nacionalización del sistema de partidos y los partidos en España desde 1977 hasta 2008. El primer hallazgo de este estudio es clarificador: Lejos de ir a menos como había planteado la literatura (Hopkin, 2009), España tiene un sistema de partidos cada vez más nacionalizado. Esta evolución es coherente con lo que se ha planteado para el resto de Europa Occidental (Caramani, 2004, 2005). Por lo tocante a los partidos, se distingue fácilmente entre dos grupos. Mientras que los partidos nacionales están sobre la media o por encima presentando una tendencia general de aumento de su nacionalización, los subnacionales están muy por debajo, con una evolución mucho más variable.

⁸⁵ Hasta mi conocimiento, el CIS solo ha preguntado por el nivel de nacionalismo de los diferentes partidos en la encuesta post-electoral de 2008 (2527).

Además de detenerme en mostrar la varianza de la nacionalización entre los partidos y a lo largo del tiempo, en este trabajo se ha indagado sobre sus principales determinantes. El tamaño de un partido es el principal elemento que predice su nivel de nacionalización en coherencia con estudios anteriores en perspectiva comparada (Jones y Mainwaring, 2003; Morgenstern et al., 2009). Respecto al impacto de la edad del partido, se puede generar una falacia ecológica si no se distingue el marco de competición de los mismos. Cuando se controla según sean partidos subnacionales o nacionales se constata que a estos últimos aumentan progresivamente su nacionalización mientras que se reduce entre los subnacionales que compiten en los territorios “históricos”. La progresiva institucionalización de los partidos nacionales (Lupu, 2008; Bochslers, 2010b) junto con un “trade off” entre su nacionalización y la de los partidos subnacionales es el mecanismo causal principal del diferente impacto de esta variable. La polarización ideológica tan sólo tiene efecto sobre los partidos nacionales, cuya homogeneidad en los resultados electorales entre distritos se reduce cuanto más alejado están de la media en el eje izquierda-derecha. Por último, el carácter fundacional de las elecciones de 1977 no tiene efectos robustos sobre la nacionalización de los partidos españoles.

Futuras líneas de investigación deberían ir encaminadas a contrastar nuevas hipótesis sobre los determinantes de la nacionalización de los partidos dejando constante los factores institucionales, un campo apenas explorado. Un ejemplo podría ser la organización interna de los partidos. Es posible que en aquellos casos en que los partidos políticos que estén más internamente descentralizados sean más flexibles para adaptar sus discursos y programas a cada distrito y mitigar su heterogeneidad electoral y, estando así mejor nacionalizados. Otra posibilidad es que determinadas familias políticas estén mejor nacionalizadas que otras en función de sus orígenes. Podría ser que aquellos partidos que tengan orígenes rurales o religiosos estén menos nacionalizados que los que se basan en el cleavage socioeconómico. Finalmente, el “trade-off” del caso español entre partidos nacionales y subnacionales debería contrastarse en otros países con sistemas de partidos regionalizados a fin de obtener evidencia que pueda hacer extrapolable este argumento.

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Tabla 5.1.
Media del Porcentaje de Distritos Competidos por
Partido (1977-2008)

Partidos nacionales		Partidos subnacionales	
CDS	100	PSA/PA	15,4
PSOE	100	ERC	10,8
UPyD	100	BNG	7,7
AP/PP	99,6	CiU	7,7
PCE/IU	98,5	EA	7,7
UCD	97,4	EE	7,7
FN	94,2	HB	7,7
PSP	92,3	ICV	7,7
		PNV	7,7
		UDC	7,7
		CAIC/Par	5,8
		Cha	5,8
		UV	5,8
		UPC	3,8
		AIC/CC	3,8
		NaBai	1,9
		UPN	1,9

Tabla 5.2. La Nacionalización de los Partidos en España

Variables	Total de Partidos		Partidos nacionales		Partidos sub nacionales	
	M1	M2	M1	M2	M1	M2
Constante	0.27*** (0.03)	0.26*** (0.04)	0.57*** (0.21)	0.59*** (0.028)	0.06*** (0.007)	0.07*** (0.005)
(log) Resultado electoral	0.05*** (0.006)	0.05*** (0.007)	0.06*** (0.008)	0.066*** (0.008)	0.007*** (0.001)	0.006*** (0.001)
(log) Edad del partido	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.005** (0.002)	0.005** (0.001)	- 0.001*** (0.0003)	-0.004 (0.003)
Elecciones fundacionales	0.002 (0.011)	0.002 (0.016)	0.003 (0.01)	-0.001 (0.02)	-0.003 (0.003)	-
Polarización en el eje izq.-dcha.	-	-0.006 (0.005)	-	-0.005** (0.002)	-	-0.005 (0.008)
Wald Ch ²	58.72***	66.22***	91,81***	83.52***	461.7***	1392.1***
N	116	94	39	34	77	58
R ²	0.81	0.81	0.77	0.83	0.87	0.88

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *<0.1. Se ha empleado la técnica estadística time-series cross-section analysis. Los coeficientes b están situados arriba y los errores estándar entre paréntesis.

Tabla 5.3.
La Nacionalización de los Partidos
Subnacionales

Variables	Comunidades Autónomas	
	vía rápida	vía lenta
Constante	0.105*** (0.01)	0.04*** (0.006)
(log) Resultado electoral	0.005 (0.02)	0.009*** (0.002)
(log) Edad del partido	-0.001*** (0.0003)	0.001 (0.001)
Elecciones fundacionales	-0.006** (0.003)	-
Grupos	10	7
Wald Chi ²	29.06***	22.98***
N	54	23
R ²	0.2	0.15

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *<0.1. Se ha empleado la técnica estadística time-series cross-section analysis. Los coeficientes b están situados arriba y los errores estándar entre paréntesis.

Tabla 5.4. Correlación entre la Nacionalización de los Partidos Nacionales y Subnacionales

	PSOE	AP/PP	PCE/IU	PNV	CiU	ERC
PSOE	1	-	-	-	-	-
AP/PP	0.58*	1	-	-	-	-
PCE/IU	0.56*	0.43	1	-	-	-
PNV	-0.62*	-0.79***	-0.68**	1	-	-
CiU	-0.47	-0.85***	-0.18	0.72**	1	-
ERC	-0.60*	-0.73**	-0.50	0.85***	0.80***	1

N= 10. ***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *<0.1

Gráfico 5.1.
La Nacionalización del Sistema de Partidos en España

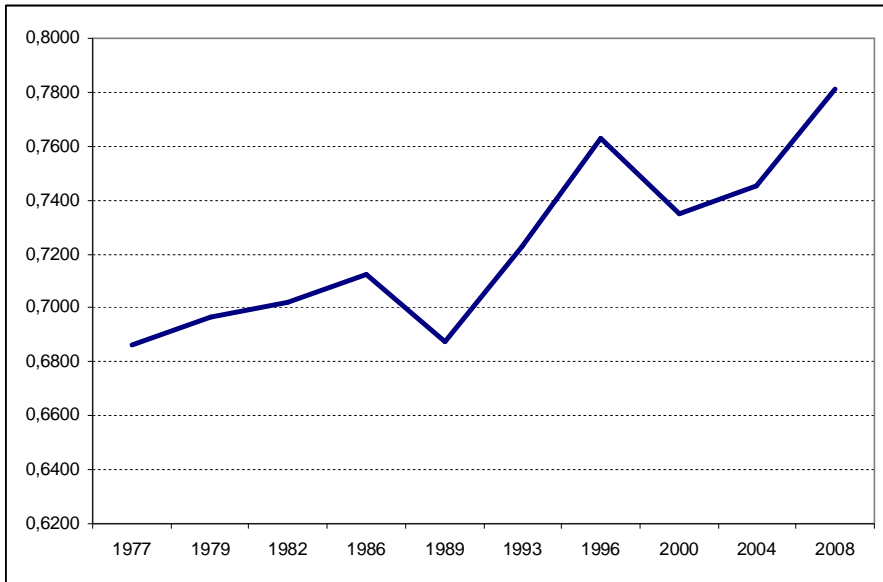


Gráfico 5.2.
La Nacionalización de los Partidos de Ámbito Nacional

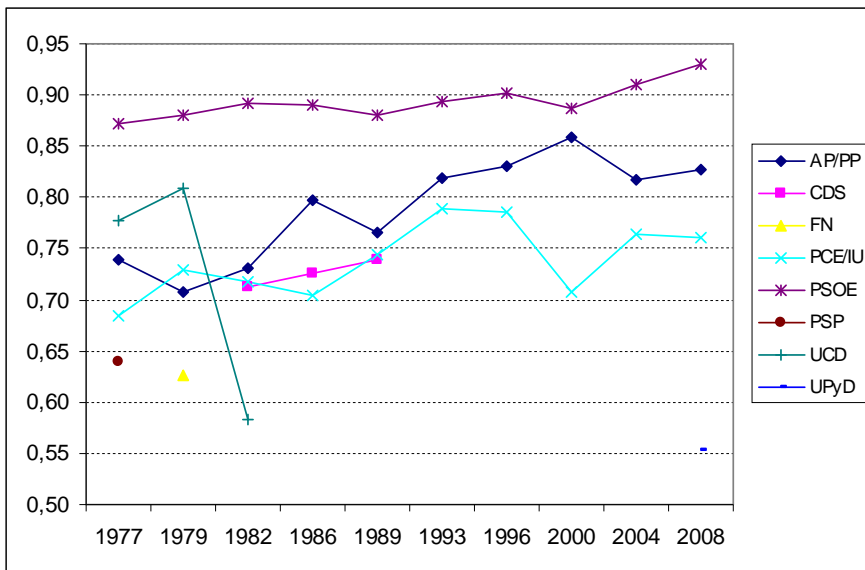


Gráfico 5.3.
La Nacionalización de los Partidos Subnacionales en
Comunidades Autónomas de Vía Rápida

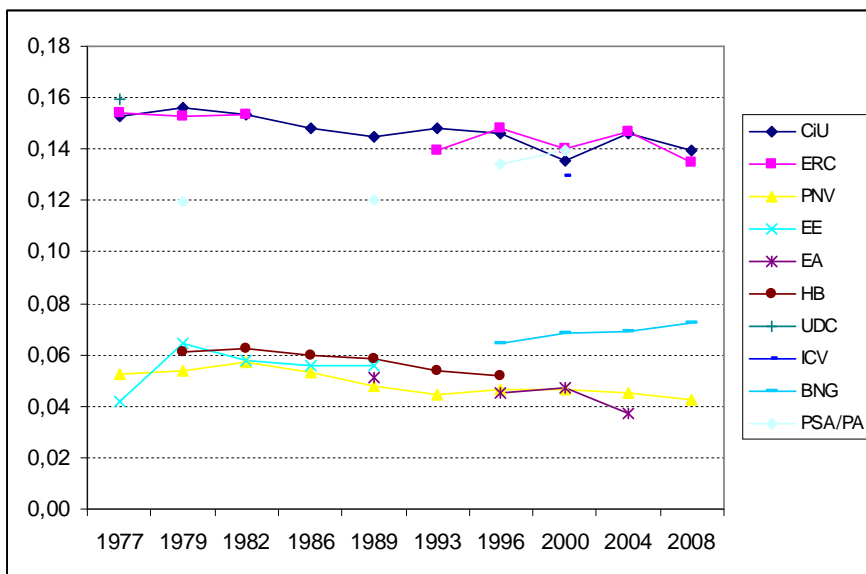
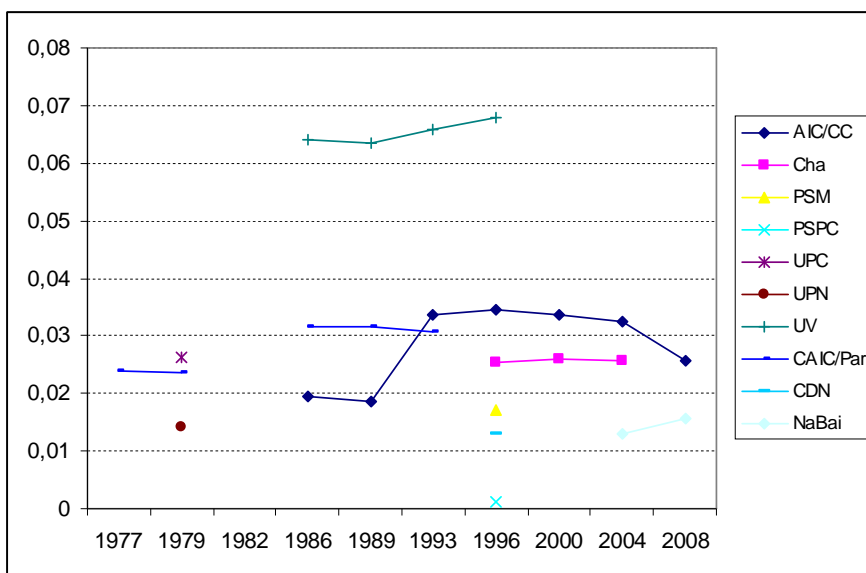


Gráfico 5.4.
La Nacionalización de los Partidos Subnacionales en
Comunidades Autónomas de Vía Lenta



CHAPTER 6

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this dissertation has been to generate a robust theoretical framework and provide new empirical evidence about the causes and consequences of the nationalization of party systems. Since this topic began to be analyzed, two main streams have been predominant. The first is the sociological approach, based on macro-process of cleavage formation and evolution, which has claimed that the progressive prevalence of non-territorial cleavages has fostered nationalization over time. This means that the presence of politically active territorial minorities is the only factor that explains why some party systems display lower levels of nationalization than others. The second is the institutional approach that considers that different settings of institutional rules prone or erode party system nationalization to a greater extent. The existence of a presidential system, political and economic decentralization or the electoral system can affect the probability that local candidates decide to coalesce across districts lines and merge into national parties. On the other hand, from the perspective of its potential effects it has been argued that party system nationalization can drive legislative and executive relations, political competition, public policies and polity stability.

Throughout this dissertation the notion of party system nationalization has been integrated in a coherent way and the causes and consequences of the territorial dimension of party systems have been addressed looking for a better specification of the concept. This approach has been rigorously followed through four different dimensions and in four cohesive papers. Does the political and economic decentralization of a country affect the nationalization of the party system? In the first paper it has been shown that this hypothesis has problems to be held in Western European context. The reply to this empirical inconsistency is an alternative explanatory mechanism which links decentralization and the personal orientation of electoral laws. Decentralization only has an

effect in eroding party system nationalization when it takes place under an electoral law that fosters the role of local candidates in political competition.

Second, the causality has been reversed in the next paper considering the effect of party system nationalization on the heterogeneity of turnout rates across districts. Politics display different levels of variation on the turnout rates across regions; while in some cases there are the same turnout rates irrespective of the district under study, in others there are huge variations. The argument is that the nationalization is main predictor of turnout heterogeneity because it determines the difference in the number and/or kind of parties at stake across districts and, as a consequence, the difference in local incentives for going to the polls.

Electoral systems have been considered to be one of the crucial determinants of party system nationalization. However, there are competing theories about how they affect it, and empirical evidence is very mixed. In the third paper of the dissertation a research design based on key experiments has been presented. A better specification of the impact of electoral system features can be established by isolating the effect of electoral reforms in Western European countries. The more robust findings are around the impact of districts and national thresholds: while a rising number of constituencies decrease nationalization; national thresholds and higher average magnitudes tend to prone it.

Finally, in the fourth paper the unit of analysis has shifted from party system nationalization to party nationalization in order to avoid potential ecological fallacy problems. The paper focuses on Spain as it is considered an exceptional country. Spain is one of the few countries in Western Europe where nationalization could tend to decrease over time and where there is a regionalized party system. In general terms, the evidence suggests that Spain has followed the same nationalizing trend as other countries, but this trend only holds for those parties competing across all districts because subnational parties, conversely, have reduced it. Other elements have also been considered, such as founding elections or parties' ideology.

These four papers form the core of the dissertation. Each piece of research can be taken as part of a common research project, with the nationalization of party systems as the common link. Previous to presenting a reflection about the shortcomings of the dissertation and future lines of research, a summary of the main contributions of each paper is presented in the following sections.

6.1. Re-addressing the decentralization hypothesis

One of the most popular hypotheses in the institutional literature is the effect of decentralization on the nationalization of party systems. According to this general idea, the more decentralized a country is, the more incentives candidates face to compete locally. Candidates and voters care about the level of government where power is located and, depending on whether it is national or local, they will tend to coalesce around it and vote for national or local parties. However, the empirical evidence for this argument is mixed. In the paper the new argument is that we need to move away from additive models and consider that the determinants of party system nationalization depend on a chain of conditions. As a consequence, the impact of decentralization on the dependent variable cannot be isolated from the electoral rules that are at play in each country.

The argument of the paper is centered on the impact of decentralization conditional on whether the electoral law of a given country encourages personal voting. The growing importance of the regional arena in contrast with the national when a decentralization process takes place opens up a window of opportunity for local candidates to compete alone. Nevertheless, the final decision will depend on how effective party labels are in providing signals to constituents. If a decentralized country has a very party-oriented electoral law, candidates will prefer to compete under national parties because it is a relevant shortcut in an electoral contest. The situation is different when a decentralized country has a candidate oriented electoral law. The party label does not offer any additional chance of winning the race, and candidates are more receptive to the

level in which key policies are handled. As a result, they will tend to compete in a locally oriented way, and thus erode the nationalization of the party system.

In this paper this idea is tested in Western Europe, one of the regions in which the decentralization hypothesis seems to not hold. Through two different nationalization indices it has been shown that the impact of decentralization is conditioned on the presence of a candidate-oriented electoral law. The interaction of both elements operates in the expected way by fostering inflation indices or, in other words, by eroding the nationalization of party systems. Other potential determinants of party system nationalization have been also considered. There was no evidence that seats allocated in upper tiers foster nationalization, whereas district magnitude and ethnic fractionalization do affect it. In general, this paper sheds light on the decentralization hypothesis and opens the field to posterior research.

6.2. A new explanandum: The within country variation in turnout rates

The literature on electoral turnout has centered on micro and macro incentives for voting and explaining cross-country variation in turnout rates. In the case of the latter approach, it has been assumed that there is no variation on turnout within each country. The second paper of this thesis is focused explicitly on this neglected dimension of turnout; namely the extent to which a country presents different turnout rates across districts. The first part of the paper centers on identifying the phenomena, by illustrating the extent to which there is variation across countries. The second part of the paper identifies the main elements that drive it; the central argument is that the crucial independent variable is the nationalization of party systems.

The causal mechanism is quite straightforward. When in a given country the nationalization of the party system is perfect and there is uniformity in the parties competing across constituencies, incentives for going to the polls are fairly similar across districts. Because there are exactly the same number and/or kind of parties

across districts, fewer differences are expected to emerge. Nevertheless, as nationalization reduces in a given country, each local party system tends to be different, becoming a specific context of electoral competition that is isolated from the others. Under these conditions incentives for voting are likely to vary within country, and it is compelling to expect that the heterogeneity of turnout rates across districts will be boosted.

In this paper two different samples with different countries have been used. Empirical evidence has confirmed the central hypothesis of the piece of research: Irrespective of the inflation index used, the evidence is robust in demonstrating that the higher the nationalization of the party system, the lower will be the within country variation of turnout. Other controls have been also considered in the analysis. Variables like district magnitude or variation in the closeness of competition across countries show no impact on the dependent variable. On the other hand, - depending on the sample - there is mixed evidence when the number of districts in a country, the variation of its magnitude and ethno-linguistic fractionalization are considered. This paper is particularly interesting in that it meets three different objectives at once. First, it addresses and identifies a new phenomenon. Second, it connects this dimension with its main explanatory variable, the nationalization of the party system. And finally, this paper opens up scope for future research around a new, but usually neglected, dependent variable.

6.3. Clarifying the explanatory power of electoral systems

The literature has assumed that the electoral system plays a role in the nationalization of party systems. Nevertheless, there has been significant disagreement about the potential impact of its various features. There is mixed - or a total lack of - empirical evidence about the impact of district magnitude, the number of constituencies, or personal voting; and contradictory theoretical expectations about the effects on nationalization. The central idea of this paper was to clarify these questions through a research design based on a series of “crucial experiments”. Focusing specifically on

electoral reforms other potential sources of nationalization can be held constant to try to disentangle its specific impact. This paper centers on Western European countries because it allows us to maximize the control of party institutionalization and cleavages.

A significant amount of evidence in the paper relates to the role of districts, and more specifically, to the average magnitude and its number. All other things being equal, those countries with fewer districts and higher district magnitude tend to have higher party system nationalization. This first finding is not surprising at all because it is coherent with the previous literature. However, the second finding clarifies a classical dispute about the issue. It has been argued that there is a positive, a negative or even no relation at all between district magnitude and party system nationalization. This finding is coherent with the idea of a strategic withdrawal of parties when the district magnitude is too small to give them a reasonable expectation of obtaining representation. Another important feature is national thresholds. Those countries with thresholds at the national level present higher nationalization because local parties coalesce in order not to fall below the minimum share required to achieve representation.

The paper shows mixed evidence about the effect of elements such as upper tiers, run-off electoral systems and ballot structure. In many cases, statistical analyses are inconclusive about the impact of the various electoral features. This paper warns scholars to restrain their excessive optimism about the potential impact of institutional settings. Electoral systems are embedded with institutions and practices and they cannot by itself magically modify party system nationalization.

6.4. Party nationalization in Spain

The fourth paper of my dissertation partially changes the approach to nationalization in two ways. On the one hand, it focuses exclusively on Spain; a country which has been considered exceptional because - conversely to the rest of Western Europe - it is very regionalized and it is presumed to have a decreasing trend of

nationalization. On the other hand, I have changed the unit of analysis from the party system as a whole to the nationalization of political parties in order to avoid potential problems of ecological fallacy if single parties are not taken into account. This change made necessary to measure the dependent variable as the homogeneity of party votes shares across districts. The paper explores the evolution of party nationalization in Spain from 1977 to the 2008 national election. The first finding is quite striking: Far from following the tendency that the literature has assigned to Spain, this country is coherent with Western Europe and displays an increasing nationalization of its party system. This has taken place despite the fact that the electoral system has suffered almost no changes during all the period analyzed and despite the fact that political decentralization pushed in the opposite direction.

Concerning the nationalization of parties it is necessary to distinguish between those parties that compete in all districts and those that compete in only a few. The determinants of their nationalization are different. Despite the fact that the parties' national results are positively related with their level of nationalization, the age of the party has a different effect depending on the kind of party. While the national parties tend to be more nationalized the elder they are, the behavior is exactly the opposite in the subnational parties - in the more regionalized Autonomous Communities -. The causal mechanism that can be argued is the progressive institutionalization of national parties, which progressively "penetrated" those constituencies where subnational parties were stronger and tended to homogenize their electoral result, raising their nationalization. This argument suggests a trade-off between both groups of parties. Finally, founding elections have no effect but ideological polarization has an effect only on national parties: those national parties that are distant from the mean voter position tend to be less nationalized.

This fourth paper presents therefore at least three relevant insights. First, it directly addresses and rejects the classic idea that Spain is suffering from erosion of the nationalization of its party system. Second, it shows that party nationalization is driven by elements that are different from those driving the nationalization of the whole system, such as decentralization or the electoral system. Finally this paper suggests that in regionalized countries such as Spain, there is

evidence of a trade-off taking place between the nationalization of national and sub-national parties.

6.5. The limits of the dissertation and future lines of research

It is clear that all research is limited in some way by the theoretical assumptions that underpin it as well as its empirical difficulties. During the development of the theoretical framework for this thesis the main problem has been to appropriately define and measure the dependent variable. From a general view, two key ideas can be said to underline the concept of nationalization: That it is related with the territorial dimension of the party system and that it connects the local level - district, regional or state - with the national level.

Nevertheless, during this dissertation two theoretical tensions have been implicitly expressed. The first concerns the origins of party nationalization. The literature based on electoral systems and its effects on party formation has a “bottom-top” approach. As it has been theorized, an initial coordination process takes place at the local level that configures the number of parties. From this moment of party formation, a second stage of coordination across district lines takes place, which eventually leads to the national party system. However, this approach departs from a very specific context and historical moment - the formation of anglo-saxon party systems in liberal democracies during the XIX century - and, as a theoretical model, it can have problems to travel to other contexts. A second approach to party system nationalization, closer to the party politics literature, is based on a “top-bottom” approach. This theoretical model suggests that parties can be founded in the center of the country from the very beginning and develop a strategy to “penetrate” or “colonize” different districts in order to become national parties. Or to put it in other words, it could be that parties progressively extend their nationalization not because the coordination of local elites but by forging their own local structures. Irrespective of the theoretical framework, the result is exactly the same in terms of the extent to which the party system is nationalized.

However, the causal mechanisms behind the process are different. If the theoretical approach is held constant it does not always allow us to properly grasp the determinants of party system nationalization. Let's take the disputed effect of district magnitude to exemplify my argument concerning party formation. If a bottom-top approach is followed, district magnitude shapes the first stage of coordination and, as a consequence, the potential coordination of the second stage. In this scenario the formation of national parties seems to depend on the primary local sources of partners at the local level. A totally different outcome is possible when a top-bottom approach is followed. When a national party is founded from the center it could be that it seeks to compete in all districts, and it is indifferent to the activities of any pre-existing local parties. Therefore, parties' entry decisions can be made irrespective of district magnitude because, whether it is viable or not, it wants to be seen as a party that is concerned with national issues. So, as can be noted, organizational and party formation theories contain an implicit tension that needs to be explicitly addressed in future research.

The second tension is not related with the causal mechanism of party nationalization as a process, but with its sources. The nationalization of parties has been conceptualized as the extent to which parties are able to obtain similar shares of electoral support across districts. On that assumption, two key original sources can be identified. On the one hand, it could be that the socio-structural and ideological composition of the districts is very similar. In this situation, and controlling for other potential sources of local variation, parties are expected to be highly nationalized because their share of electoral support will be quite similar across constituencies. However, imagine a context of significant contextual differences across districts. If parties tailor their electoral strategies, candidates and campaigns to local districts, a highly nationalized party system is also expected to emerge. Therefore, in both contexts nationalized party systems are expected to emerge, but the internal diversity of party systems is totally different and, as result, their potential effects are different as well.

This argument in fact suggests a potential equilibrium between party nationalization and internal diversity or, in other words, among "numeric" and "organizational" aspects of party systems. Party nationalization can be studied then as a function of the extent

to which parties adapt themselves to compete in different local environments. In those cases in which they are not able to do so, new entrepreneurial potential of local candidates will probably appear. Differences in the mean voter across districts or the existence of regional cleavages will foster local candidacies and affect the number of parties competing, thereby eroding party system nationalization. On the other hand, if parties successfully tailor their strategies to compete in all national districts, for example by adapting themselves in terms of candidates or programs, then parties will obtain similar shares across districts and the party will be strongly nationalized. In this sense, for instance, organizational elements concerning the autonomy of local elites in shaping electoral competition - candidates, programs and strategies - are crucial because national parties can become useful as “profitable labels”, and the new strategy can constrain local party formation and do not reduce the nationalization of the party system.

The two tensions mentioned above are theoretically driven, and both are to a great extent related with the path-dependent approach to party system formation and organization. Clearly the tensions and conundrums outlined above require further investigation. However the results of this dissertation not only highlight these theoretical gaps but also lay bare the empirical constraints that require further research. One point I wish to emphasize here is related with the measurement of the dependent variable. A significant effort has been made during this dissertation to follow the well-known inflation index as a way to measure the reverse trend of party system nationalization. An exception is made in article fourth: The particular unit of analysis imposed me a change. Nevertheless, the decision to follow inflation indices has been made in order to maximize the internal coherence of the thesis. The new empirical challenge is to test the reliability of previous findings by considering dispersion and inflation indices together, which to date remain undone.

The second empirical limitation is related to data availability. The interest of political scientists in the local level is quite recent, and in general there is a significant lack of district level data available, that is fundamental in order to calculate nationalization. In recent years a considerable effort has been made to provide constituency level results in projects like the Constituency-Level Elections Archive

(CLEA) or the Constituency Level Elections (CLE). Despite the fact that significant data collection is still required, these new sources will allow us to expand the scope of our analysis and move beyond studies based exclusively on Western or Latin American countries. In this dissertation - for theoretical and empirical reasons - the research has been based on Caramani's data in Western Europe but moving on to the new democracies is the inevitable next step.

To sum up, this dissertation has addressed the nationalization of party systems from different perspectives. Taken together, the four papers presented have sought to better specify the determinants and possible effects of nationalization addressing it both as a dependent and an independent variable; considering the party system and the single party as separate units of analysis; and focusing on across countries and over time variation. Finally, it is clear that further research in this promising field of nationalization studies is required, because many of the previous unexplored questions demand it.