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Kardeljeva ploščad 5  
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Študentská 2  
911 50 Trenčín, Slovakia  
[peter.csanyi4@gmail.com](mailto:peter.csanyi4@gmail.com)

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2000 Maribor, Slovenia  
[jurij.toplak@almamater.si](mailto:jurij.toplak@almamater.si)

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University of Ljubljana  
Faculty of social sciences, CAAPPI  
Kardeljeva ploščad 5  
1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia  
[simona.kukovic@fdv.uni-lj.si](mailto:simona.kukovic@fdv.uni-lj.si)

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Kardeljeva ploščad 5, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Alma Mater Europaea - European Center Maribor (AMEU-ECM)  
Gospodarska ulica 1, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia

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## LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL CHANGE: 25 YEARS OF TRANSFORMATION IN POST-COMMUNIST EUROPE

Jerzy J. WIATR<sup>1</sup>

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*The importance of political leadership results from the non-deterministic interpretation of history, based on the concept of alternative paths of change, which leave room for meaningful decision-making. The role of leaders tends to be greater in times of crises (wars, revolutions, collapse of regimes, economic crises). Twenty-five years of post-communist transformation in Eastern and Central Europe confirms the importance of the leadership factor. Differences in political background, positions in the institutional system, value orientation and relative success or failure of political leaders constitute the most important aspects of the study of leadership in the process of post-communist transformation. Comparative cross-national studies of political leadership reveals important differences between leaders from Central Europe and leaders from the former USSR, as well as from the mature democratic states. The political culture of leaders plays an important role in the development in new democracies. Predicting the future of new democracies in Central Europe one should take into account the "black scenario" in which the authoritarian leadership may spread to new countries. Nationalism and xenophobia as well as economic malaise create conditions conducive to such change. How can it be stopped and/or reversed depends largely on the activeness of democratic forces and the quality of their leaders.*

**Key words:** authoritarianism; democratic transformation; leadership; nationalism; political culture; post-communism; values.

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<sup>1</sup> Jerzy J. WIATR, has retired from the University of Warsaw in 2001 where he held the chair of political sociology. He was the rector of the European School of Law and Administration in Warsaw (2007–2013) and is now the honorary rector of this school. He was the president of the Polish Association of Political Sciences (1964–67 and 1976–79), vice-president of the International Political Science Association (1979–82) and president of Central European Political Science Association (2000–2003). He received honorary titles from Russian, Slovenian and Ukrainian universities, as well as several Polish state decorations. He served in Polish Parliament (1991–2001) and was Poland's minister of education (1996–1997). He was the director of the Polish part of the international studies on local leadership (1965–2002). His other scholarly interests include political parties, voting behavior, defense analysis and nationalism.



## 1 INTRODUCTION

“The scientific study of political leadership – wrote Glenn Page - presents a challenge to the entire discipline of political science...The challenge is to recognize the importance of political leadership, to focus scientific attention upon it, and to begin the cumulative process of conceptualization, that eventually will lead to the creation of a subdisciplinary and potentially *transdisciplinary* scientific field of global significance” (Page 1971, 1). Even forty-five years after its publication, his monumental book remains the most comprehensive analysis of the role leaders in politics. Page’s call for greater attention to be paid to the role of leaders has been only partially responded by the mainstream of political science. The relative neglect of this aspect of political life is due to the dominant influence of two traditions. The first, under the impact of legal sciences, puts the emphasis on institutions. The second, drawing from sociology and social psychology, focuses on mass political behavior. Political scientists who undertake the study of leadership do not reject these two traditions, but believe that they cannot provide a satisfactory explanation of politics without serious attention being paid to the role of the individuals who, because of their prominent place in political systems, play a particularly great role in making key political decisions.

In 1988, in the introduction to the special issue of the *International Political Science Review* devoted to political leadership, I have distinguished between the studies of leadership and the more prolific elite studies (Wiatr 1988, 91). The study of leadership focuses on selected individuals whose role in politics is considered of special importance. The elite studies concentrate on the analysis of collective characteristics of the groups of people who because of their place within a political system carry more political weight than the mass of ordinary citizens. In the present paper I concentrate on the role of leaders, while mentioning the elite studies only to explain some differences in the political context of their actions.

## 2 THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP

In the history of political thought of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the question how important in history were the “great men”, have been answered in two, radically opposed, ways. For the Hegelian tradition (followed among others by Tolstoy in his monumental *War and Peace* and by a great majority of traditional Marxists) leaders were nothing more but “etiquettes” of historical events, while for the British writer Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) they were the “heroes” whose role he elevated to that of the true makers of history (Carlyle 1907).

Such philosophical extremes can be avoided if one accepts the distinction made, more than seventy years ago, by the American philosopher Sidney Hook (1902–1989) who distinguished between the historical role of the *eventful* and *event-making* personalities. “The *eventful* man in history – wrote Hook – is any man whose actions influenced subsequent developments along the quite different course than would have been followed if these actions had not been taken. The *event-making* man is an eventful man whose actions are the consequences of outstanding capacities of intelligence, will, and character rather than of accidents of position. This distinction tries to do justice to the general belief that

a hero is great not merely in virtue of what he does but in virtue of what he is.” (Hook 1969, 154).

Hook’s distinction points to the fact that the role of individuals in shaping history depends not only on their individual characteristics, important as they are, but also on the degree to which there have been alternative courses of action created by the earlier developments. Leadership is about making decisions but only in some historical circumstances those who make decisions face truly important alternatives. Wars, revolutions, great crises offer opportunities for history-making decisions much greater than those which leaders face in more peaceful times. The often-lamented deficit of leadership in our times (at least in the stable and prosperous countries of the Northern hemisphere) is perhaps the result of the situation in which American and European leaders do not face challenges of the magnitude of those, which in the last century allowed Georges Clemenceau, Woodrow Wilson, Vladimir Lenin, Kemal Ataturk, Winston Churchill or Charles de Gaulle to make decisions which shaped the course of history.

The history of East and Central Europe in the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century offers an interesting possibility for historians and political scientists, who share the view that leaders can play an important, perhaps even crucial, role in the critical moments of history. The collapse of the communist regimes in Europe, while conditioned by the long-term developments of the past decades, has not been “inevitable” but rather resulted from decisions made by a small number of people who because of their actions initiated the process of dissolution of the communist system. The fact that the collapse of communist regimes in Europe has not been followed by similar developments in China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba indicates that objective factors, important as they were, cannot fully explain the final outcome. Leaders played a very significant role, at least in three previously communist states: the Soviet Union, Poland and Yugoslavia. Concentrating attention on these three states I do not intend to deny the importance of people who, like Vaclav Havel or Arpad Góncz, provide moral guidance for their nations and symbolized the democratic values. I only believe that for historical reasons the course of events has been decided by actions (not always intended) of leaders in the three states which, because of their past have been placed at historical cross-roads.

The first pair of event-making leaders in the last stage of the communist regime was Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin. The first, as the last leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the last (and only) president of the USSR initiated the process of political change which first opened the way for the liberation of the “satellite” countries in Central Europe and ultimately led to the collapse of the old regime in the USSR. I fully agree with the British historian Archie Brown, who believes that “the Gorbachev factor was the most crucial at all” (Brown 1966, 318). While he did not intend to preside over the collapse of the communist system and of the USSR, his decisions – both on the domestic and on the international scene – put into effect processes which changed the geopolitics of the world. While strongly criticized in Russia of today, he is generally considered one of those Nobel Peace Prize winners who fully deserved the distinction.

Boris Yeltsin shaped history in the time of the August coup (1991) when his courage and leadership played the crucial role in defeating the conservative plotters. While writing alternative histories is always risky, one has to remember that in the first hours of the coup the prospects of the communist counter-reform was seen as very likely, also in the foreign capitals. After the

collapse of the coup, Yeltsin played a crucial role in the dissolution of the USSR. During his presidency of the Russian Federation (1991–1999) weak leadership, chaotic reforms and massive corruption became the most visible symptoms of his failure (Klebnikov 2000), but the earlier role of Yeltsin at the turning point of Russian history cannot be denied.

The second formerly communist state in Europe where the role of top leaders was crucial for the course of history was Poland. She was the first communist state to have a massive movement of democratic opposition – the “Solidarity” with its close to ten million membership – and the first where political power was transferred peacefully to the former opposition as the result of the “round table” negotiations and partly free election of 1989 (Hayden 2006). While many quite important people made their impact on the process of early transition, two individuals were in the position to make crucial decisions and, therefore, to change the course of history. On the side of the communist regime it was general Wojciech Jaruzelski (1923–2014), who in 1989 held the key positions as the Chairman of the State Council and First Secretary of the ruling Polish United Workers Part, and - on the side of the opposition – the historical leader of Solidarity, Nobel Peace Prize winner of 1983, Lech Walesa. The compromise they had reached at the “round table” (1989) was possible only because they were able to curb the radical elements in their respective political camps: the communist stalwarts on one side and the anticommunist hotheads on the other (Raciborski and Wiatr 2005, 58–59). The Austrian political scientist Anton Pelinka rightly puts Jaruzelski in the category of political “heroes” (Pelinka 1999, 244) and the same can be said about Lech Walesa. None of them could have achieved the success without the collaboration with the other. Years later, both have been sharply attacked by the radical anticommunists for what had been their most important history-making act: the initiation of a peaceful process of regime change in the then communist part of Europe.

The third case is more complex and reflects the contradictory character of politics in the last years of communist Yugoslavia. From its birth, the Yugoslav communist regime functioned under the cloud of dominant personality of Jozep Broz-Tito (1890–1980), who as the general secretary of the Communist Party became the leader of the partisan army fighting against the German and Italian occupation forces and after the war held the office of president of Yugoslavia. Contemporary Serbian historian Todor Kuljić attributes Tito’s high standing in public opinion mostly to his role in the war as well as to his courageous and successful opposition to Stalin’s pressure since 1948 (Kuljić 1998, 99–100, 229–238). Tito’s death left a vacuum at the top of both the state and party structures. Since most of the wartime veteran leaders had either died before Tito or had been eliminated from the leadership, there was no obvious successor to Tito’s mantle. Instead, leaders of the constituent republics began to compete for what they perceived as national interests.

The decentralization of the Yugoslav federation and of the ruling League of Yugoslav Communists gave great power to the republican leaders. In late 1980s and early 1990s the ways of political development in the constituent republics diverged, Slovenia, under the leadership of the last chairman of the Communist League Milan Kučan, was the first to initiated the process of gradual transition from one-party rule to parliamentary democracy (Toplak and Haček 2012). In the spring of 1991, Slovenians of all political orientations united in defense of their republic against the attack launched by the Yugoslav federal army. Milan Kučan symbolized the successful defense of the Slovenian independence, was elected president of the republic and held this office for twelve years. His role as the main architect of Slovenian statehood is universally appreciated.

The other republics were not so lucky. Serbia under Slobodan Milošević moved from communist party state to ethnic nationalism with strongly expansionist policies. After having lost three military interventions (in Croatia, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo) Milošević lost power in 2000 after having tried to steal presidential election, was put on trial for war crimes at the international court in Hague where he died. In Croatia, former general and then political prisoner Franjo Tudjman became the leader of the nationalist party and held the office of president from 1990 until his death in 1999. While successful in establishing the independent state and in consolidating his authoritarian rule, he has been blamed for his treatment of ethnic minorities (particularly Serbs) and for Croatia's role in the ethnic war in neighboring Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegović, former dissident and president of the republic from 1990 until his death in October 2000, has been one of the most controversial personalities of the Yugoslav drama. While praised by his Muslim supporters, he has been also blamed for the way in which he ignored the rights of the Serbian minority and in this way contributed to the outbreak of hostilities between Serbs, Bosnians and Croats.

It would be mistaken to attribute all differences between these four republics only to the role played by their respective leaders, but I have no doubt that the ways in which they have dealt with the problems of nation-building had an important impact on the early stages of post-communist transformation. While Milan Kučan was helped by the relatively good economic situation and by ethnic homogeneity of Slovenia, the Macedonian president (and former communist leader) Kiro Gligorov presided over nation-building and democratic transition in the poorest of the Yugoslav republics and one where the ethnic composition of the population could have produced as many tensions as in Croatia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fact that during Gligorov's presidency (1990–1999) Macedonia underwent successful and orderly transformation, testifies to the importance of good leadership.

Concluding this part of analysis, I should like to stress the importance of leaders in the crucial moments of early transition from communist party regimes. While all of them acted in conditions not of their making, they have influenced events in a very important way. Sidney Hook would have called them "event-making" leaders.

### 3 LEADERS OF POST-COMMUNIST CONSOLIDATION

Once the communist parties had been removed from power countries of East and Central Europe entered the period of consolidation and reconstruction of their social and economic systems. The task ahead were more complex than those faced by democratic reformers in Southern Europe and Latin America, where market economies functioned already and whose geopolitical position linked them to the community of democratic nations. In post-communist Europe reformers faced three tasks simultaneously. They had to reconstruct (or, in most cases, to construct) democratic political structures, to abandon centralized "command economy" and to reorient their foreign policies in the new global situation that followed the end of the "cold war".

Consolidating the new system required not only the adoption of democratic constitutional rules but also creation of political parties capable of functioning in the democratic context. Reforming the economies caused temporal lowering



of the standard of living and the emergence of massive unemployment, both with dangerous political consequences. Geopolitical reorientation had different consequences for the Russian Federation and for the other post-communist states. Russia, after having lost the cold war, faced the problem of her place in new world order, dominated by the United States. After 2001, with new leader in Kremlin, Russia moved from passive acceptance of American hegemony to a new policy of rebuilding her role as an important regional power. For the other post-communist states in Europe, including former Soviet republics, the end of the cold war and the dissolution of the USSR meant the end of Soviet domination and the possibility of building strong ties with the West. Most of them eventually joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union.

In terms of political consolidation the post-communist states can be divided in three categories. The first has been composed of the Central European countries, including formerly Soviet republics of Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Moldova (all forcibly incorporated to the USSR in 1940). In all these states democratic systems have been established and transition to market economy took place. Most of them eventually joined NATO and the European Union. The second category consisted of the former Yugoslav republics (except Slovenia whose transformation put her firmly in the first category) and Albania. Prolonged ethnic conflicts, authoritarian leadership and economic malaise resulted in the delayed consolidation. When it eventually took place after the end of hostilities (1999), these countries followed the path of the first group but with still existing consequences of the delay (by 2016, most of them have not become members of the European Union and of NATO). The third category of post-communist states includes Russia and the other republics of the "old" USSR (that means those which were parts of the Soviet state prior to the Second World War). In none of them liberal democratic system has been established, with strong presidents concentrating power in their hands, mostly with plebiscitary support of the citizens. Ukraine has been a deviant case in so far that the political crisis of 2013/2014 and the forcible removal from power of president Victor Yanukovich (as the result of mass protests following his refusal to sign the treaty of association with the European Union) produced a prolonged political crisis of difficult to predict consequences.

To what extent these differences were results of different models of leadership? In most cases, the path of change has been determined more by the sociological, economic and geopolitical realities than by the decisions of leaders. In the Central European states leaders showed a remarkable ability to follow policies of democratic consolidation, economic reform and geopolitical reorientation regardless of party divisions. It is particularly interesting in the light of the fact, that in the first decade of transformation leaders came both from the ranks of the former democratic opposition (Lech Walesa and Tadeusz Mazowiecki in Poland, Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia and later in the Czech Republic, Arpad Goncz and Jozsef Antall in Hungary, Vitaukas Landsbergis in Lithuania) and from the former communist parties (Alexander Kwasniewski in Poland, Algirdas Brazauskas in Lithuania, Milan Kučan in Slovenia, Ion Iliescu in Romania, Gyula Horn in Hungary). Clearly, the political past has not been a good predictor of policy choices.

The same can be said about the second category of states. There has been no systematic difference between states where leaders came from the ranks of former opposition (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania) and those where they were former communist officials. In fact, there have been remarkable similarities between policies conducted by the former communist Milošević of

Serbia and the former dissident Tadjman in Croatia. History, more than personalities, shaped the early politics of transformation.

Russia, Ukraine and Belarus are different. Here, one can argue that the personality of top leaders left a much stronger impact than in countries of Central Europe. In Belarus, Alexander Lukashenka's victory in the presidential election of 1994 marked the end of abortive policy of democratic transformation and the consolidation of authoritarian populist regime, supported by the majority of the people and committed to the preservation of the main economic and political structures of the Soviet past. In the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin's access to power terminated the chaotic rule of Boris Yeltsin, restoration of the strong leadership in Kremlin and re-centralization of the federation. In world politics, Putin's leadership has been marked by attempt to rebuild the position of Russia as regional power, even at the cost of military confrontation with Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014). While it is difficult to predict the long-term consequences of these policies, there is no doubt that Putin's personality has left a very strong imprint on the current policies of the Russian Federation.

The importance of leadership has also been demonstrated by the history of independent Ukraine. With relatively strong constitutional position of the president, the path of Ukrainian transformation depended largely on who was the president. None of the four presidents who ruled Ukraine in the years 1991–2014 was successful in leading his country to democracy and market economy. Economic decline has been unprecedented by comparison with most of the post-communist states, corruption reached the highest echelons of the political system and deep political divisions emerged between Western and Eastern regions of the republic. The most catastrophic was the rule of Victor Yanukovich (2010–2014), which ended with mass protests and a quasi-evolutionary overthrow of the president in February 2014. His successor, Petro Poroshenko, came to power in the country split by the secession of the two Eastern provinces and weakened by the intense political struggle between moderate and radical political forces. Was the prolonged Ukrainian crisis a result of weak leadership? Unquestionably, Ukrainian leaders have been confronted with a very complex situation of the state, where historical divisions have been very deep and where there were no democratic traditions. The tragedy of Ukraine is that her leaders have been unable (or perhaps unwilling) to follow the line of democratic consolidation but also were too weak to imitate the Russian or Byelorussian pattern of successful authoritarianism. It is, therefore, clear that in the situation, where for historical reasons it is difficult to establish a consolidated liberal democracy, only strong leaders can produce a functioning alternative: a consolidated autocratic rule base on popular support.

Twenty-five years after the end of the cold war and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, most of the leaders of East and Central Europe are members of the younger generation, which reached maturity after the main tasks of post-communist consolidation, had already been fulfilled. Andrzej Duda, elected resident of Poland in 2015, was a teenager when democratic transformation began – the first top level leader who was too young to have any meaningful role in either the democratic opposition or in the reformist wing of the old regime. More or less, the same process takes place in most of the post-communist states. New leaders are the products of political education marked by experiences different from those, which had shaped the political outlook of their predecessors. They are well educated and professionally prepared for their tasks. More pragmatic in their orientation, they are mostly political professionals. In Central Europe, the majority of them, having been formed in

the democratic system, accept democracy and free market as the foundations of the new political and economic reality.

How lasting these changes are? In his classical study of democratization, Samuel P. Huntington listed five possible scenarios for the reversal of democratic transformation: authoritarian nationalism, religious fundamentalism, oligarchic authoritarianism, populist dictatorships and communal dictatorship (Huntington 1991, 293–294). He believed that the survival of new democratic regimes would depend on the quality of leadership. “For democracies to come into being – he wrote – future political elites will at a minimum have to believe that democracy is the least worse form of government for their societies and for themselves” (ibid., 316).

Political events of the last twenty-five years have not confirmed Huntington’s fears. The great majority of countries of the “third wave” of democratization remain democracies. In some (Iran after the 1979 revolution and most of the post-soviet republics after 1991) the collapse of the old regime brought the emergence of a different form of authoritarianism. Where democratic system had been established (like in Central European post-communist states), the “reverse wave” has not materialized, at least for the time being. Recently, however, political change in Hungary and since 2015 also in Poland signal a turn from liberal democracy to populist policies with strong leaders (Victor Orban in Hungary, Jaroslaw Kaczynski in Poland) combining popular economic policies with gradual demolition of the institutions of the rule of law and substituting liberal democracy with a version of “delegative democracy” to use the term coined twenty-five years ago by former president of the IPSA Guillermo O’Donnell (O’Donnell 1992).

More than twenty years ago, in a document produced jointly by a group of twenty-one scholars from several countries, we have signaled such danger (Przeworski 1995, 64). Our analysis was intended as an advice for those who were in position to make crucial decisions. From the perspective of twenty years I see even more clearly that a lot depends on the course of action taken by political leaders. They respond to the popular fears and expectations, but ultimately it is their decision that makes history. That is why knowing what their values are has more than peripheral importance for the study of post-communist transformation.

#### **4 POST-COMMUNIST LEADERS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

Fifty years ago, in 1966, Philip E. Jacob (1912–1984) initiated the comparative study of political values and policy orientations of local leaders, conducted in four countries (India, Poland, United States and Yugoslavia). The study was published in 1971 (Jacob 1971) and was at this time the only comparative study of politics carried out in the communist countries and with participation of researchers from these states. In the following twenty years, the study was replicated in several American and Polish studies. In 1990, at the international conference in Otwock (Poland) a new comparative project on “Democracy and Local Governance” (DLG) was launched based on a revised version of the methodology of the original study. This time more than thirty countries were involved, including fifteen formerly communist states (Armenia, Belarus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan). In some countries the study has been conducted two or three times over the period of ten years. National

reports were published in two volumes (Jacob, Ostrowski and Teune 1993; Jacob, Linder, Nabholz and Heierli 1999) as well as in numerous papers. The geographical size of the study, which covered four continents and involved over fifteen thousand of interviews, makes it the largest comparative study in political science.<sup>2</sup>

The data collected in the DLG project made it possible to compare leaders' values over time and across national boundaries. In terms of their respective political past the countries under study belonged to four categories: (1) old democracies with, (2) new democracies established after the collapse of an authoritarian, noncommunist dictatorship, (3) new democracies of Central Europe (including the three Baltic republics), and (4) the former Soviet republics of Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus. Comparative data analysis of revealed an interesting pattern (Wiatr 2007, 100–101). Leaders from old democracies expressed the strongest support for democratic values, followed by leaders from “post-authoritarian” states and from Central European post-communist republics – the two groups between which there were no significant differences. The weakest support for democratic values the study found among leaders from the former Soviet republics (except the three Baltic states). Longitudinal analysis conducted in Belarus and Poland showed that with the passing of time Polish leaders became more, and Belarusian leaders less democratic in their value orientations. In my interpretation of these data, I have stressed the importance of collective past political experience. The duration of the communist regime (more than twenty-five longer in the old Soviet republics than in the Central European post-communist states), the existence of lack of democratic traditions prior to the establishment of communist regime and the existence (or lack) of democratic opposition and reformist wings within the communist parties are in my opinion the most important explanatory variables.

Studying leadership on local level has its obvious limitations. We do not know to what extent values of local leaders are paralleled by those of national political leaders. The latter are beyond reach for comparative empirical research, both for practical (limited time resources) and political (reluctance to openly express their views) reasons. On the other hand, however, comparative study of local political leadership allows us to better understand the dominant climate of leadership. To what extent such climate corresponds to the national political culture is a different question. Polish data from both the surveys of local leaders and of the general public point to the existence of great differences, particularly on the social and economic issues (citizens being more egalitarian than local leaders) and on the issue of European integration (leaders being more pro-European than the general public). We need more comparative data to find whether this pattern exists in our countries as well as in Poland.

## 5 UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Twenty-five years ago optimism prevailed in the predictions of future development in the post-communist states. Tensions and setbacks were considered a passing phenomenon, which would be gone once the economic reforms produce results and democratic institutions are firmly established. One of the reasons for such optimism was the democratic orientation of the majority of political leaders, more so in Central Europe than in the former Soviet

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<sup>2</sup> Computerized data from the majority of DLG countries have been stored in the Academy of Humanistics in Pultusk (Poland).

republics. There were words of caution but the dominant view was rather optimistic.

It is less so now. The financial crisis of world economy slowed down economic growth in post-communist states. The underprivileged social strata are losing hope that future development would fundamentally change their situation, particularly because of growing economic inequality. Nationalism and xenophobia – the old vices of the region – are more visible than in the first years of transformation. The problems faced by the European Union (magnified by the results of the British referendum on leaving the Union) are seen as bringing potential dangers to the whole region. Uncertain international situation after the “Arab Spring” and the following the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation contributes to the feeling of uncertainty.

In most of the post-communist states (as well as in several Western democracies) a new category of leaders emerged. Appealing to nationalistic sentiments and cultivating the populist dreams they challenge not only the existing political powers but also the very logic of democratic transformation. While they seem to command greater support than ten years ago, they have also encounter strong opposition. The future remains uncertain but I have no doubt that its course depends on the ability of leaders to find better, more effective strategies of democratic consolidation and social change.

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# PRINCIPLED SUCCESS? DO INCLUSIVE, PRINCIPLE-GUIDED CHOICE PROCESSES IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF MIXED ELECTORAL SYSTEMS?

Johannes RAABE<sup>1</sup>

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*Paradoxically, mixed electoral systems are as often associated with the goal of achieving the best of all possible worlds in electoral system design as they are linked to a process of cumbersome bargaining without any overall normative agenda. This paper argues that it is important to investigate this distinction between mixed systems genuinely aiming for an overall principle – e.g. balancing the demands of representativeness and accountability – and mixed systems born out of compromise bargaining without any particular general goal. In order to analyse the relationship between the choice process of a mixed electoral system and its eventual performance, this paper conducts a novel case study survey gathering the data necessary to distinguish between principle-guided systems and systems resulting from self-interested horse-trading. Taking all mixed-member electoral system in the world as a sample and investigating the effect of the type of choice process on the representativeness and concentration of the party system, the empirical analysis shows that principle-guided design indeed leads to a superior performance of the electoral system – this effect, however, is largely limited to initial post-reform elections. The main lesson is that – notwithstanding the exact technical design of the electoral system – conscious, principle-focused electoral system design improves institutional efficiency.*

**Key words:** electoral systems; representation; proportionality; concentration.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The initially great hopes associated with mixed-member electoral systems have been followed by successful as well as unfortunate experiments with these electoral institutions. Mixed-member systems were hoped to strike a superior balance between proportional and majoritarian designs (Lijphart 1984; Shugart

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<sup>1</sup> Johannes RAABE, PhD, University of Kiel. Contact: jraabe@ae.uni-kiel.de.

and Wattenberg 2001). Next to successfully balancing demands and providing both proportionality (representativeness) and concentration (governability) of party systems (Shugart and Wattenberg 2001; Gallagher 2005), however, mixed-member systems have also often been found to be leading to unexpected, extreme, and ultimately undesirable outcomes (e.g. Ferrara et al. 2005; Lundberg 2009; Bochslers 2012). Explanations of varying performances of these systems are typically based on the systems' exact technical designs and/or the socio-political scope conditions under which they operate. What has been neglected is the key question of whether the mixed-member electoral systems implemented throughout the world are actually meant to achieve any sort of superior middle ground or general balance between different functional goals. Does a mixed electoral system actually aim at fulfilling the competing principles of proportional representation and concentration or has it been the compromise outcome of intense bargaining, lacking any guiding normative goal? Did parties agree on a design or was the design imposed by a self-serving government? These questions refer to the principle of representation dimension of electoral systems which asks whether the electoral system is supposed to achieve any general normative goal and which goal this is (see Raabe and Linhart 2012; Raabe 2015). Answering them will give us a basis to evaluate in how far mixed-member electoral systems really typically aim at successfully balancing competing principles of concentration and proportionality with respect to the election outcomes. The implication for the performance of mixed-member systems developed in this paper is straightforward: consciously designed mixed-member systems aiming at a good performance with respect to both proportionality and concentration should be more likely to achieve this superior balance than mixed-member systems merely functioning as strategic tools or deriving from convoluted bargaining – holding constant the specific technical design.

This paper deals with two key tasks in establishing the link between the principle of representation (or lack thereof) of an electoral system and its eventual performance: first, a comparative dataset regarding the principle of representation of mixed-member electoral systems is needed. And second, based on this dataset, the effect on electoral system performance has to be tested empirically. Fulfilling the first task, a case study survey is undertaken in order to retain reliable answers to the questions about the process of implementing a mixed-member electoral system. Contrary to the technical design of electoral systems, one must carefully look at the case study literature in order to derive information regarding the principle of representation dimension. In doing so, this paper also aims at integrating large-n and small-n analyses in the field of electoral system research. In order to deal with the second task, all elections under mixed-member electoral rules will be used to investigate whether the characteristics of the choice process affect the performance of the electoral system. The results will then not only speak to the question of whether the wide variation in mixed-member system performance can partly be explained by taking the principle of representation dimension into account, but also more broadly to the question of whether more inclusive, principle-guided design will ultimately improve the functioning of democratic institutions.

The paper is structured as follows: section 2 discusses with which general goals mixed-member systems are typically associated and in how far these associations are reasonable. Section 3 then goes on to argue that a more inclusive, principle-oriented electoral system design ought to be performing successfully as the design should be more appropriate to the scope conditions and parties have a higher more commitment to the rules of the game. In section

4, the case study survey approach is introduced and the dataset with respect to the principle dimension of mixed-member electoral systems is presented. Furthermore, a first exploration looks into which factors are likely to lead to an inclusive, principle-oriented choice. Section 5 then contains the empirical analysis, assessing the link between the (lack of a) principle of representation and the performance of the electoral system along the proportionality-concentration trade-off. Finally, the conclusion maps out the implications for electoral system research and research on institutional performance in general.

## 2 MIXED ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND THEIR (LACKING) PRINCIPLE OF REPRESENTATION

The principle of representation refers to ‘the political goals of political representation concerning the aggregate nation-wide outcome of elections’ (Nohlen 1984, 86) – in other words, the principle of representation is the general normative aim for the electoral system and almost always concerned with the trade-off between proportional representation and concentration of the party system (Raabe and Linhart 2012; Raabe 2015; also see Lijphart 1991; Powell 2000; Reynolds et al. 2005, 9; Martin 2009, 182). Is the electoral system supposed to maximize (minority) representation or foster the formation of single-party or small coalition governments via concentrating the party system (Duverger 1954; Rae 1967; Taagepera and Shugart 1989; Lijphart 1994)? Or is the overall principle a balance of both goals (Raabe 2015)? Notwithstanding its technical design, it is important to ask what an electoral system is supposed to achieve in a given country – is there any genuine overall goal or is the system merely a compromise outcome?

These latter questions are especially critical for judging the performance of mixed-member electoral systems. On the one hand, it is assumed that the adoption of such systems generally signals the designers’ desire to achieve a superior balance of proportionality and concentration by mixing elements of pure (PR and majoritarian) electoral systems (Lijphart 1984; Shugart 2001a). On the other hand, it is also very common to refer to mixed-member electoral systems as typically arising from hard-nosed bargaining and being compromised, last resort solutions to the difficult challenge of electoral system design (Elklit 1992; Birch 2003, 3–27; Gallagher 2005; Benoit 2007). In light of the principle dimension of electoral systems, these two assertions hold very different implications. The former suggests that we should typically find mixed-member electoral systems that have a genuine general normative goal of reaching a successful balance of proportionality and concentration, whereas the latter implies that mixed-member systems either lack a guiding principle or be crafted simply to suit the needs of particular parties regardless of the overall functioning of the system. Raabe (2015; also see Katz 2005) puts forward that genuine principles may very well be absent for a subset of electoral systems. For mixed-member systems this implies that some of them might indeed be designed to provide a superior balance based on providing both proportional representation and party system concentration – aiming for the ‘best of both worlds’ – while others are lacking such overarching goal.

This potential variation is typically neglected in performance assessments because studies work under the problematic assumption that a similar technical design implies that systems have a common general principle of representation. The significance of general democratic values and normative considerations for the process of electoral system choice is often noted (e.g. Katz 2005, 74), but at

the same time rarely figures into comparative empirical investigations (see Scheiner 2008, 171; Renwick 2010 is an important exception in so far as four different country cases are considered). Similarly, more narrow rational choice accounts of electoral system choice usually work under the assumption of fully self-interested parties (e.g. Persson and Tabellini 2003; Benoit 2004) and thus cannot integrate a possible effect of sociotropic, altruistic considerations and general normative goals. In order to close this gap in the literature, the next section will map out what the choice context and a design based on an overall guiding principle imply for eventual electoral system performance.

### 3 CHOICE CONTEXT, PRINCIPLE, AND PERFORMANCE

Generally put, we can expect institutions designed to achieve a particular goal to be more likely to actually achieve it than similar institutions that arose from compromise bargaining or were tailored to cater to particularistic short-term needs (Elster 1995; Ginsburg et al. 2009). The widespread failure of electoral reform (Scheiner 2008; Bowler and Donovan 2013) might stem not only from misguided expectations and problematic socio-political scope conditions but already be grounded in the very process of choosing new institutional arrangements. The following argument posits that mixed electoral systems crafted in an inclusive fashion and aiming at achieving an overall balance of the principles of proportionality and concentration (detached from particularistic partisan goals) should be more likely to lead to the efficient performance on the proportionality-concentration trade-off that is often hoped for under mixed electoral rules. Next to the widely acknowledged importance of the socio-political context in terms of how it interacts with electoral rules (Ordeshook and Shvetsova 1994; Amorim Neto and Cox 1997; Morgenstern and Vázquez-D'Elía 2007; Moser and Scheiner 2012; Stoll 2013), this argument seeks to show how context already matters at the stage of choosing an electoral system. Technically similar mixed electoral systems may perform differently not only due to differences in the socio-political surroundings but also due to stark differences in how far these systems were actually designed to achieve the same ends.

There are multiple reasons to expect the principle of representation to affect electoral system performance. First, mixed systems that were devised in an inclusive fashion – considering the opinions of different opposition parties and, potentially, external experts – and based on agreement regarding the goal of a successful balance between proportionality and concentration should lead to more thorough attempts to devise technical rules that resonate well with the given socio-political scope conditions in order to achieve this general goal (see Ginsburg et al. 2009). While parties' motivations are probably always a mixed bag of self-interested and sociotropic considerations (Bowler et al. 2005; Benoit 2007, 380; Bol 2013), especially the involvement of external experts and international organizations is likely to shift the focus away from partisan considerations towards general principles (see Renwick 2010). Second, the existence of a commonly agreed upon principle of representation ought to lead to a higher level of commitment to the electoral rules by the parties that are directly affected by them (see Brennan and Hamlin 2002, 309). Third, also leading to a higher commitment to the rules of the (electoral) game, shirking and manipulation of the electoral rules will likely provoke a more fierce response by other parties and the public since these types of behaviour can directly be marked as violating a broadly agreed upon principle for the electoral system (see Renwick 2010, 240; Renwick 2011; Norris 2011; Donno 2013 in



this context). Finally, the choice of a guiding principle often emerges based on systemic failures (e.g. extreme disproportionality) of electoral systems in the past (Shugart 2001a; Martin 2009) leading to a strong determination to correct these failures with an improved design.

If the choice process is characterized by low levels of inclusiveness and if an overall principle guiding the design of the electoral system is absent, the above developments are unlikely to occur. Under these circumstances, election outcomes should be more prone to deviate from a balance towards extreme outcomes under mixed electoral rules (see Scheiner 2008, 171–172). For example, if a government imposes a mixed system solely to suit its own needs, opposition parties might withdraw from the electoral game by boycotting elections, leading to extreme election outcomes possibly also spurring public discomfort with the current institutional setup (see Chernykh 2014). Instead of a superior balance, such systems could spur the widespread exclusion of minor parties from representation, leading to similar outcomes as under majoritarian electoral rules. Similarly, hard-nosed bargaining leading to a compromise mixed system without any agreed upon principle might urge parties to seek ways of evading the balancing incentives of mixed rules and try to implicitly change how the electoral system will translate votes into seats via tampering with the rules (see Elklit 2008; Bochslers 2012).

The above argument leads to the following core hypothesis linking the principle dimension of mixed electoral systems to their performance. Further characteristics of the choice situation will be introduced explicitly in the next section and investigated concerning their role in the relationship between principle and performance in the empirical analysis.

*H<sub>1</sub>: Mixed electoral systems are more likely to successfully balance proportionality and concentration if they were devised with the overall goal (principle) of fulfilling both these demands.*

As electoral reform rarely turns out to be a full-fledged success story (Scheiner 2008; Bowler and Donovan 2013), it needs to be clarified that it would not be shocking if the presence of a principle of representation did not improve the mixed electoral system's performance. The null hypothesis thus somewhat pessimistically posits that (for better or for worse) electoral system design is such a complicated matter that even with inclusive choice situations and widely agreed upon general goals best of both worlds performance will not become more likely. The literature on self-interested partisan alterations of electoral rules would certainly suggest that designers often have great trouble to practically see through what they desire from the electoral system (e.g. Katz 2005). Uncertainty and miscalculations may not only stop 'strategic fools' (Andrews and Jackman 2005), but also hinder sociotropic designers from delivering an appropriate institutional solution. The empirical analysis will furthermore assess whether socio-political context factors as well as the technical design of the electoral system – especially the difference between mixed-member majoritarian (MMM) and mixed-member proportional (MMP) systems – are so dominant that there will be no additional effect of conscious, principle-oriented design.

*H<sub>0</sub>: The presence of a principle of representation guiding the choice process of an electoral system has no effect on the system's eventual performance.*

Before moving on to the empirical investigation of the link between principle and performance, the following section will present a method of deriving

reliable information about the choice context as well as the principle of representation of an electoral system and deliver the comparative data needed for the empirical analysis.

#### 4 COLLECTING COMPARABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRINCIPLE OF REPRESENTATION – A CASE STUDY SURVEY

The fact that the choice context and the resulting outcome with regard to an electoral system's principle of representation does seldom figure into comparative performance analyses likely stems from the difficulty to retain the respective data on a larger number of countries. Whereas there is an abundance of information about electoral systems' technical specificities and, to a lesser degree, about the socio-political scope conditions they will later operate in, the situation is starkly different for the choice context. Here, the necessary information lies within the rich case and area studies literature but is not readily available in the form of comparable values of different variables referring to choice context and principle dimension. The lack of inclusion of these results from the vast literature examining single country cases is thus a major shortcoming in comparative electoral system research.

This paper uses a case study survey to translate the information provided in case and area studies into a comparative dataset on the choice situation of mixed-member electoral systems in order to bridge the gap between – and combine the strengths of – large-n comparative and small-n, case-oriented research (see Rahat 2011; Raabe 2015).<sup>2</sup> This case study survey is based on the idea that each case or area study concerned with the choice of a mixed-member electoral system will at least implicitly cover the topics of principle-guidance and inclusiveness discussed earlier and hence may be subjected to a survey questionnaire pertaining to these topics. The methodology has been used prominently in Business and Management research (Larsson 1993; Larsson and Finkelstein 1999) and aims at making idiosyncratic case study results comparable for cross-sectional empirical analysis. Codings according to the questions introduced below were only made if there was no significant disagreement among the analyses of country experts. Furthermore, a sub-sample of codings were validated by the codings of a second researcher (similar to the approaches taken in Melton et al. 2013). A complete overview of coding decisions for all countries including notes about the specific developments as well as coding difficulties is available from the author upon request. After a thorough search of the English language literature<sup>3</sup> on 22 countries and 25 adoptions of mixed-member electoral systems overall, the case and area studies dealing with the respective electoral system choices (reforms) were used to fill out a questionnaire posing several questions about the design context and, most importantly, the principle of representation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> A further option would be to directly assess politicians' statements instead of going the indirect route via case and area studies. However, in the case of electoral reform the cheap talk problem with respect to the goals of and reasons for the reform is so pronounced (Benoit 2007, 381) that this option was dismissed as an alternative approach.

<sup>3</sup> Another desirable feature of surveying case studies is that the authors of these are typically versed in the respective native language and thus have covered the literature in that language, which is something comparative researchers seldom are able to do in a widespread fashion.

<sup>4</sup> All current and historical multi-tier electoral systems using both proportional and majoritarian formulae were considered in all countries that experienced at least a period of democracy according to the Polity IV index (Marshall et al. 2014). Due to a lack of sufficient case study material the cases of Croatia, Guinea, Madagascar, and the Seychelles could not be included into

The main question refers to the principle of representation and asks whether the mixed-member system is supposed to aim for a successful balance of proportionality and concentration as a general goal or whether such principle is absent due to self-interested behaviour and/or convoluted bargaining without principled design. The absence of a principle can also imply that designers were concerned mainly with the question of how to combine PR elections with district representation – this, however, is the case only for Bolivia's adoption of an MMP system, suggesting that the principle dimension is typically dominated by the goals of proportionality and concentration as has been expected (see Raabe 2015). No mixed-member system in the dataset was designed based on a polar principle of representation (i.e. full proportionality or concentration).<sup>5</sup>

A second core question is how inclusive the choice process has been. To answer this question a score system was used: if the government imposed the system without significant consideration of any other party or external expert (see Renwick 2010), the inclusiveness-score is zero. If at least one opposition party or group of external experts was involved in the drafting process, the score is one. If at least all parliamentary parties were involved, the score is two. The score is three if the full opposition and external experts were involved or if there was a public referendum. As outlined in section 3, we should expect mixed electoral systems with a genuine principle of representation to emerge from rather inclusive choice processes, but this is not a given. It is at least theoretically possible that a subset of parties tries to implement an electoral system aiming for the fulfilment of more general normative aims. The empirical investigation will therefore also assess the relationship between the presence of a principle and the inclusiveness of the choice process.

Further questions cover important concepts preceding or surrounding the choice of the electoral system:

- Did the previous electoral system experience systemic failure with respect to proportionality and/or concentration (i.e. a disproportional effect far larger than expected; see Shugart 2001b)?
- Was public pressure expressed more generally, directed explicitly at the electoral system, or non-existent?
- Was the electoral reform part of a wider, cohesive institutional reform (e.g. a majoritarian shift in institutional design)?
- Did the designers refer extensively to foreign examples when designing the electoral system?

#### 4.1 Data on the choice context and principles of representation

Table 1 presents the results of the case study survey and provides information regarding the choice context and the principle of representation for 25 mixed-member electoral systems. Table 1 furthermore shows which type of mixed-member system was adopted – a compensatory MMP or a parallel MMM system. Hungary and Italy – for whom the electoral system is denoted as MMP\*, both employed a system where the compensation was based on votes in the proportional tier as well as the unused votes in the majoritarian tier (positive or negative vote transfer; see Bochsler 2014). The table also includes a country's level of democracy according to the Polity IV index which ranges from minus

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the survey. This also holds for recent reforms in Russia, Thailand, and Ukraine. For these latter countries only the first adoptions of mixed-member electoral systems are covered.

<sup>5</sup> The general goal of raising or retaining democratic legitimacy is typically present for every (at least partly democratic) electoral reform and hardly suggests any particular performance of the electoral system. Therefore this aspect is not considered in the case study survey.

ten to ten and classifies a country as democratic if it receives a value of six or higher (see Marshall et al. 2014). Systemic failure is coded as missing if the previous electoral system operated under fully authoritarian, non-competitive conditions. Missing values also appear for the survey question of whether foreign examples were cited prominently during the choice process as for some cases there was no sufficient amount of case study material addressing this question. For all yes-or-no questions, the variables were obviously coded as dummy variables with the value 1 implying the answer 'yes'. For public pressure, 0 implies the absence of such pressure, 1 signals that there was general pressure for institutional reform, and 2 implies that public pressure was directed explicitly at electoral reform.

A first overview of the data shows that there exist both mixed-member systems adopted with the overall goal of achieving a successful – best of both worlds – balance of proportional representation and the concentration of the party system and mixed-member electoral systems that lack a general principle. We also see high levels of variation between countries with regard to the level of inclusiveness, public pressure, systemic failure of the previous system, and other characteristics. The adoption of mixed-member systems also frequently occurs in transition countries, or, in the cases of Mexico, Senegal, and Venezuela, under authoritarian regimes. The wave of new mixed-member systems in the 1990s is also apparent from a glance at Table 1.

Before moving to the assessment of whether the presence of an overall goal that aims at providing both proportional representation and fostering party system concentration has an effect on an electoral system's performance, we will make use of the data in Table 1 in order to explore which choice contexts seem more prone to result in principle-guided design of a mixed electoral system. This will lead to a deeper understanding of what the presence of a principle of representation as a general goal implies for the eventual performance of an electoral system.

TABLE 1: CASE STUDY SURVEY RESULTS

Country	Year of adoption	Level of democracy	Mixed-member system adopted	Balanced principle of representation	Level of inclusiveness	Systemic failure	Public pressure	Wider institutional reform	Foreign examples
Albania	1996	0	MMM	0	0	0	0	0	0
Albania	2001	5	MMP	1	2	1	0	0	0
Bolivia	1994	9	MMP	0	2	1	2	1	1
Bulgaria	1990		MMM	0	1		0	0	0
Bulgaria	2009	9	MMM	0	1	0	0	0	0
Georgia	1990	4	MMM	0	1		0	0	
Germany	1949	10	MMP	0	2	1	0	1	0
Hungary	1989	10	MMP*	0	2		0	0	1
Italy	1993	10	MMP*	0	3	1	1	0	0
Japan	1994	10	MMM	0	2	1	1	0	0
Lesotho	2002	8	MMP	1	2	1	2	0	1
Lithuania	1992	10	MMM	1	3		0	0	0
Macedonia	1998	6	MMM	1	3	1	0	0	
Mexico	1977	-3	MMM	0	1	1	0	1	0
Mongolia	2011	10	MMM	1	3	0	2	0	
Nepal	2007	6	MMM	1	1	1	1	1	
New Zealand	1993	10	MMP	1	3	1	2	0	1
Russia	1993		MMM	1	1		0	0	1
Senegal	1983	-1	MMM	0	0		2	0	
South Korea	1988	6	MMM	0	0		0	0	
Taiwan	2008	10	MMM	0	1	0	1	1	
Thailand	1997	9	MMM	1	3	0	1	1	
Ukraine	1998	7	MMM	1	2	1	0	0	1
Venezuela	1989	8	MMP	0	1	0	1	0	1
Venezuela	2009	-3	MMM	0	0	1	0	0	0

## 4.2 Characteristics of electoral system choice and the principle dimension

The first central thing to note is that there clearly is variation as regards the principle dimension and the choice context of mixed-member electoral systems – 10 out of 25 systems were adopted with a principle aiming for a superior balance of proportionality and concentration as the guiding goal. Hence, mixed systems are neither always principle-guided design solutions nor are they always the result of compromise bargaining or strategic government imposition. Therefore we are in a position to evaluate the impact of principle-guided design on electoral system performance based on the categorical information emerging from the case study survey. First, however, the survey results offer a basis for exploring how different choice situation characteristics are related to the presence of a principle of representation by using the typological setup (see Mahoney 2007) and the associated outcomes presented in Table 1. Table 2 contrasts mean values for the group of mixed-member systems with an overall goal with those for the group of mixed-member systems without a principle.

TABLE 2: THE CHOICE CONTEXT AND THE PRESENCE OF AN OVERALL GOAL OF SUCCESSFUL BALANCE

	Goal of a successful balance	Compromise or government imposition	All
Year	1998	1990	1994
Level of democracy	7.89	5.64	6.52
Level of inclusiveness	2.3	1.13	1.6
Systemic failure	.75	.6	.67
Public pressure	.8	.53	.64
Wider institutional reform	.2	.27	.24
Foreign examples	.67	.27	.41
Share of MMM systems	.7	.68	.68
N	10	15	25

Notes: the table presents means for all variables except two – for the variable ‘year’ the median value is reported instead of the mean due to the outlier of Germany (1949), and the variable ‘share of MMM systems’ is an aggregate, constant measure.

That mixed systems with a genuine principle of aiming for successful balance stem from choice processes with far higher levels of inclusiveness is as unsurprising as it is reassuring – the correlation between the two variables is  $r = .56$  and highly significant ( $p$ -value = .00). The inclusion of opposition parties as well as – potentially – external experts and foreign advisors appears to lead to the adoption of mixed-member systems guided by an overall normative goal of balancing proportionality and concentration. Furthermore, the level of democracy is higher among the adoption of principled mixed electoral systems by ca. two points. Importantly, the average polity index score in the group of mixed-member systems imposed strategically by the government or emerging from compromise bargaining is below the threshold set for a country to be deemed democratic – the correlation between the two variables, though, is only moderate ( $r = .26$ ) and not statistically significant ( $p$ -value = .23).<sup>6</sup>

It is furthermore striking that the principle-guided choice of mixed electoral systems seems to be a phenomenon of the more recent past whereas earlier systems were indeed compromise solutions without their own genuine overall goal (for example in Germany or Mexico) – the correlation between ‘year’ and the presence of a balanced principle is  $r = .34$  ( $p$ -value = .09). This, together

<sup>6</sup> The level of democracy and the level of inclusiveness of the choice situation are correlated ( $r = .68$ ;  $p$ -value = .00), thus the effect of the level of democracy on the presence of a principle of balance might run through the inclusiveness of the choice process.



with the fact that principle-guided choices are characterized by the citation of foreign examples much more strongly than those without a principle, suggests that the idea of balancing polar principles has emerged alongside the development of the initial experiments with mixed electoral rules. Especially the German MMP system is heavily cited as a positive example of a strong performance regard to both proportionality and concentration. In sum, these findings with respect to the role of past experiences with mixed-member systems resemble the trend in the academic literature where mixing principles of proportionality and concentration was initially seen as inappropriate (e.g. Nohlen 1984; Sartori 1997) but now has been established as an alternative to polar principles (e.g. Shugart and Wattenberg 2001; Ferrara et al. 2005; Raabe 2015).

A systemic failure with regard to proportionality and/or concentration as well as the existence of public pressure are both positively associated with the presence of an overarching principle (both associations, however, are not statistically significant). These associations appear sensible as a systemic failure of the old electoral system directly marks what needs to be rectified via the future design of electoral rules and as an interested public should have parties shy away from overtly self-interested, strategic behaviour. Electoral reform being part of a wider institutional reform package is a rare phenomenon and there appears to be no marked difference between groups of principle-guided mixed systems and others. None of these relationships are statistically significant in a correlation analysis.<sup>7</sup>

In order to offer a multivariate analysis of the relationship between choice situation characteristics and the emergence of a principle of representation an exact logistic regression is used. This regression model avoids the problem of bias in small sample logistic regressions and is based on conditional probabilities (Hand et al. 1994; Hirji et al. 1987; Hirji 2005). This type of model – in cases of very small sample size such as this one – works best with discrete (ideally dichotomous) explanatory variables. The analysis will thus use a ‘post 1994’ dummy that equals 1 if the year of adoption is 1995 or later, and a ‘democracy’ dummy that equals 1 if a country is considered as a democracy according to the Polity IV index (see above). Next to the seemingly central context characteristic of inclusiveness, a public pressure dummy variable is included. Further context characteristics are not considered due to the lack of evidence for their impact on the presence of an overall goal of balancing proportionality and concentration as well as problems of missing values.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The presence of a principle is only weakly (and not significantly) correlated with systematic failure ( $r = .16$ ,  $p$ -value = .53), public pressure (.16, .43), and the electoral reform being part of a wider reform package (-.08, .72).

<sup>8</sup> The variable ‘systemic failure’ was not included as those countries without competitive elections prior to the adoption of the mixed system are missing observations and render the estimation of the model impossible – the same problem prevents the inclusion of the ‘foreign example’ variable (see Table 1). The variable ‘wider institutional reform’ was not considered due to the lack of any relationship to the presence of a principle of representation (see Table 2). The same model was also run as a jack knife logistic regression within an unconditional logit specification as well as with the Penalized Maximum Likelihood Estimation method (see Firth 1993; Heinze and Schemper 2002). Both these alternative estimation approaches confirm the results of the exact logistic regression reported in Table 3 but the unconditional logit method is unable to detect significant predictors.

TABLE 3: EXACT LOGISTIC REGRESSION RESULTS

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Model 1</i> Presence of a guiding principle
Post 1994	2.38*
	(.1.19)
Democracy	.63
	(.1.76)
Level of inclusiveness	1.53**
	(.76)
Public pressure	-.64
	(.1.14)
Observations	25

Notes: As the exact logistic regression conditions out the intercept, the model includes no constant term; the table reports coefficients and standard errors in parentheses.

The exact logistic regression confirms what Table 2 has already suggested. The level of inclusiveness is the key predictor for the presence of a principle of successfully providing both proportionality and concentration. Holding the other predictors at value 1, an increase of inclusiveness from 0 (government imposition) to 3 (full opposition involvement and consultation of external experts) will boost the probability of a balanced principle by plus 78 percent. The other significant predictor is whether the mixed system was adopted after 1994 and confirms that the presence of a principle of representation has become more likely in recent decades, notwithstanding other characteristics of the choice process. The level of democracy and the extent of public pressure do not significantly affect the probability of the mixed-member system being principle-guided.

As regards the technical design of the mixed electoral systems, there is no clear connection between the presence of an overall principle and the type of mixed-member system. The share of MMM systems is almost identical in the two groups compared in Table 2 (there is virtually no correlation between the presence of a principle of representation and the adoption of an MMM system). Furthermore, the average share of single-member districts is also indistinguishably similar between the two groups (58 percent for the systems with a principle, 61 percent for those without). Only the effective threshold (the hurdle to gain representation in parliament given district magnitude and legal threshold; see Lijphart 1994) in the proportional representation tier is slightly higher in the group of systems without a guiding principle (9 percent compared to 3 percent). An overall goal of successfully balancing proportionality and concentration thus does not suggest any particular design of the mixed-member electoral system, confirming the idea that principle and technical design are two separate dimensions of electoral systems (see Raabe and Linhart 2012; Raabe 2015). As could be expected (Colomer 2005), it is the level of inclusiveness (presumably through the involvement, or lack thereof, of smaller parties) that appears to lead to the adoption of MMM systems (the correlation between the adoption of an MMM system and the level of inclusiveness is  $r = -.35$ ;  $p\text{-value} = .08$ ).

What this section has revealed regarding the link between characteristics of the choice process and the presence of a principle of representation reinforces the theoretical argument above in so far that inclusiveness and agreement as well

as relying on past experiences (foreign examples) with mixed-member electoral rules make a principled choice of an electoral system more likely. Choice contexts with these characteristics appear to be more apt to lead to focused design based on an overall normative goal that will eventually result in the electoral system performing well. New Zealand's experience is an example of such a design process – even if the reform process was more or less started without any major party desiring electoral reform, the eventual choice process involved all parties, external experts and was finally decided upon via a public referendum (Nagel 2004; Vowles 2005). The Royal Commission on the Electoral System that devised the electoral system based their choice on general principles and functional demands as opposed to narrow partisan interests (Nagel 2004, 542). The following analysis seeks to answer the key question of whether this type of principle-guided design leads to a good performance of the mixed electoral system.

## 5 EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PRINCIPLE-PERFORMANCE LINK

In order to estimate the effect of principle-guided design on performance a dataset including 103 elections under mixed-member electoral systems in 21 countries covered by the case study survey is used.<sup>9</sup> To measure performance along the proportionality-concentration trade-off, the two most widely applied indices are used: the least squares index (LSI; Gallagher 1991) measures the discrepancy between parties' vote and seat shares and offers a measure of how disproportional the election results are:

$$LSI = \sqrt{\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^N (s_i - v_i)^2}$$

where  $s_i$  is the seat share of party  $i$  and  $v_i$  is its vote share. In order to calculate the LSI, votes from the PR tier of the mixed-member systems are used. The 'effective number of parties' (ENP<sub>s</sub>; Laakso and Taagepera 1979) gives an intuitive account of how many 'hypothetical equal-sized' parties there are, how concentrated the party system is, and how likely a single-party or small coalition government becomes:

$$ENP_s = \frac{1}{\sum_i s_i^2}$$

This analysis will use the effective number of parties according to parties' seat shares in the parliament in order to consider both the mechanical and psychological effect of the electoral system as the consideration of (and expectations regarding) both figure into the choice process. Measuring proportionality and representativeness based on a comparison of vote and seat data – compared to using data on voter preferences as a basis – in this case is actually desirable since the designers of electoral reform will base their choices not on some more or less unknown set of voter preferences but on the experiences with the party system in place.

A first glance at the data (Table 4) suggests that, on average, there is no difference between the disproportionality of election outcomes under mixed systems with a principle aiming at a successful balance of proportionality and concentration compared to those mixed systems without such guiding principle.

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<sup>9</sup> Dataset and codebook are available from the author upon request. Russian elections were excluded due to the difficulty of detecting the party affiliations of many candidates.

There is, however, a striking difference in the ENP<sub>s</sub> – on average, there exists one effective party more in parliaments resulting from elections under principled mixed systems (a t-test of this difference is highly significant). Therefore there is no initial evidence that principle-guided design of mixed electoral systems leads to more balanced outcomes or even to best of both worlds like outcomes regarding the trade-off between proportionality and concentration.<sup>10</sup>

TABLE 4: PRINCIPLE AND PERFORMANCE – DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW

	<i>Goal of a successful balance</i>	<i>Compromise or government imposition</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>LSI</i>	8.78 (6.22)	8.53 (5.83)	8.55 (6.12)
<i>ENP<sub>s</sub></i>	4.01 (1.74)	2.98 (2.16)	3.24 (2.1)
<i>N</i>	26	77	103

Notes: Means with standard deviations in parentheses.

As regards disproportionality a possible explanation could be that technical rules are so dominant in determining the level of proportionality that the question of whether the mixed system features an overall normative goal does not affect eventual outcomes. One potential explanation for the striking difference in party system concentration could be that the presence of a principle signals inclusiveness of the choice process and thus that the political system is more open to smaller (new) parties and hence prone to higher levels of fragmentation. These alternative explanations will be scrutinized in further, multivariate testing.

Yet, there is a third potential explanation for the lack of a general finding in accordance with H<sub>1</sub>: the principle of representation simply might come with an expiration date as the principle dimension undergoes change over time (see Raabe and Linhart 2012; Raabe 2015). Specifically, the first post-reform election directly following the choice process could reasonably be expected to be affected strongly by this process. On the contrary, subsequent election outcomes are determined largely by the technical rules and the socio-political scope conditions such as the level of democracy. Furthermore, the effect of a principle aiming for successful performance regarding both proportionality and concentration might fade away quickly. The experiences in Albania and Lesotho hint at this potential development: after fairly successful initial post-reform elections – governing parties later adopted manipulation tactics resulting in extremely disproportional election results far away from the best of both worlds (see Elklit 2008; Bochsler 2012). The principle-effect might thus fade away as time passes since parties' commitment to the rules of the game weakens and since the initial public pressure has disappeared after a successful first election under the reformed system. Especially parties favoured by pre-reform rules might be unhappy with the more balanced results of the first post-reform election and resort to strategies of returning to election outcomes more akin to what they were used to before the reform.

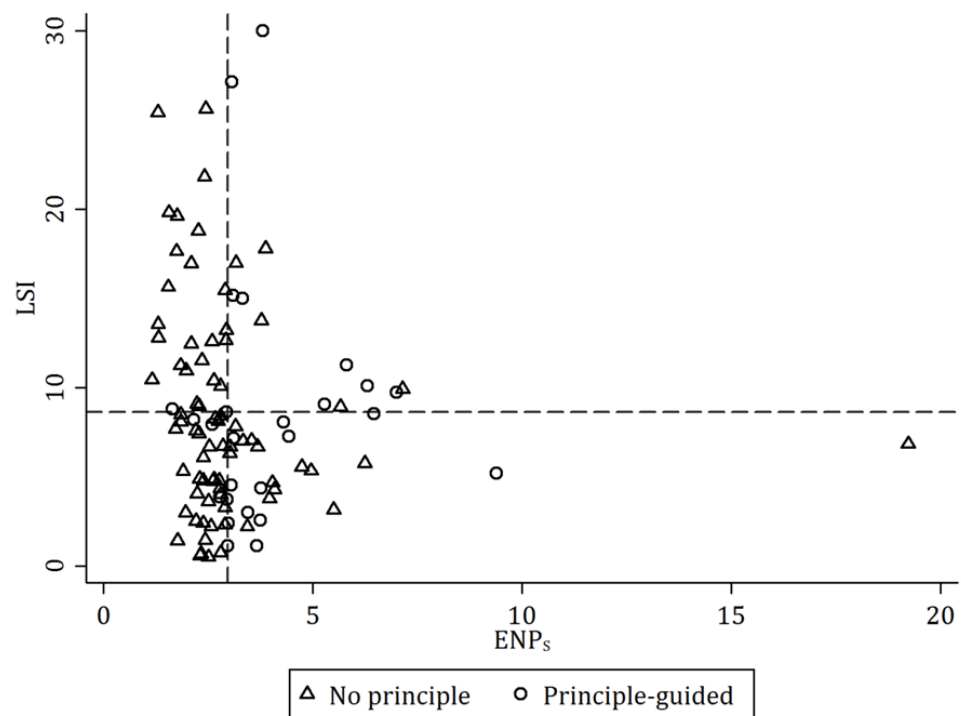
Figure 1 presents two scatterplots that cast some light on this contingency hypothesis – the cross hairs is based on the sample medians of the LSI and the ENP<sub>s</sub>.<sup>11</sup> The first scatterplot shows all elections grouped by whether they were conducted under mixed-member electoral systems that were designed based on an overarching normative goal of a successful balance. The plot first highlights that outliers might have biased the first overview presented in Table 1 and need to be accounted for in the multivariate analysis, but it also becomes apparent

<sup>10</sup> Looking at medians instead of means would lead to the exact same conclusions.

<sup>11</sup> Precisely, the median values of the 21 country means. This approach was taken in order to avoid that different countries receive different weights.

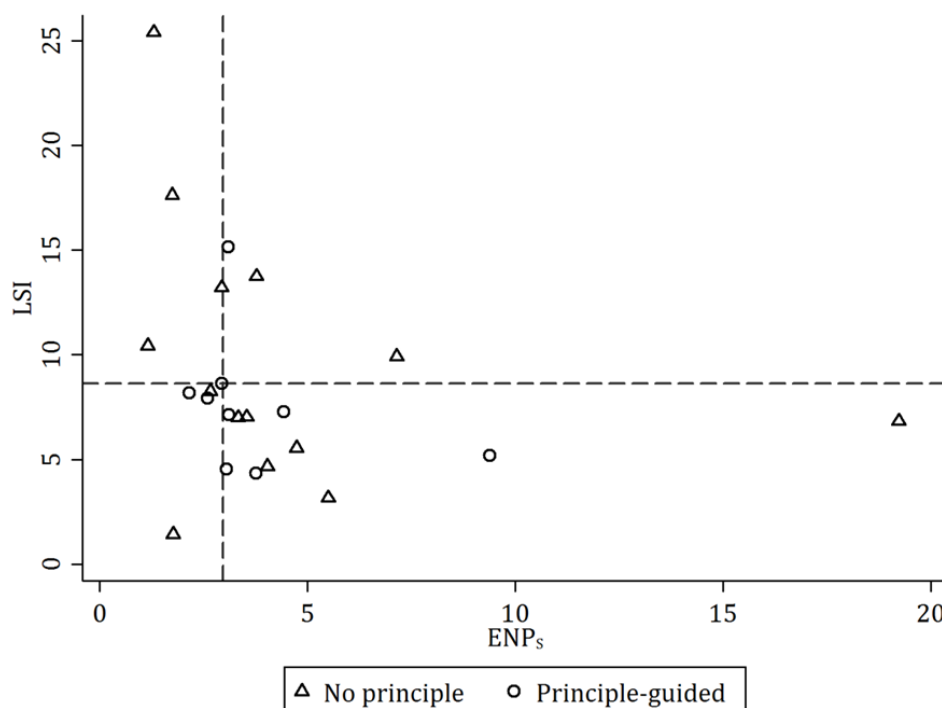
that there is no striking difference between elections under principled mixed rules and other elections. For both groups there are more balanced and more extreme outcomes, as well as outcomes that see a doubly good performance (lower-left quadrant marked by the cross hairs). While the multivariate analysis will importantly control for technical design and socio-political scope conditions, the second plot including only the first post-reform elections does suggest an impact of principled design and corroborates the idea of a short-term effect of principled-guidance. A clear majority of election outcomes under principled mixed systems are close to a balance of both dimensions or even combine good performance with respect to proportionality with high levels of concentration. This picture is markedly different for first post-reform elections in mixed systems without an overall principle – these are more often extreme in one or even both dimensions than they are balanced.<sup>12</sup> The following multivariate analysis will therefore not only assess the general positive effect of the presence of a guiding principle ( $H_1$ ), but also investigate whether there is only a short-term effect of principled design.

FIGURE 1: THE EFFECT OF PRINCIPLE ON PERFORMANCE



<sup>12</sup> The only case of a non-principle-guided system performing very well in both dimensions can probably be attributed not to a high level of coordination among parties and voters but to what was only a partial opening of political competition for the Mexican 1979 election.





The following multivariate analysis will test  $H_1$  as well as the argument and initial evidence for a short-term effect against the null-hypothesis that principle-guided design does not affect the performance of a mixed-member electoral system. In order to estimate the effect of principled design, two dummy variables are used as the dependent variables for the logit regression models (see Table 5). For the computation of these dummy variables the median values (see footnote 12) for the sample of mixed-member systems were used with the aim of avoiding the impact of outliers.<sup>13</sup> The first two models use dummy variables that aim at measuring whether election outcomes are balanced in terms of avoiding extreme outcomes (lying above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile for both the LSI and the ENP<sub>s</sub>) based on all election outcomes for the LSI and the ENP<sub>s</sub> respectively. This will help to evaluate whether the election outcomes at least are able to perform moderately well in both dimensions simultaneously. In a second step, Models 3 and 4 use a dummy variable that signals whether an election outcome is performing better than the sample median for both proportionality and concentration, indicating a doubly good, best of both worlds performance (also see Carey and Hix 2011, 593).

Next to a balanced principle dummy variable, a first post-reform election dummy variable, and the interaction term of the two, all models include control variables covering in detail the electoral system's technical design as well as the socio-political context. Technical variables include whether the system is an MMP system with a compensatory PR tier, the share of single-member districts, the mean district magnitude, and the height of the legal threshold. Socio-political variables include the level and age of democracy, the level of presidential power as a continuous proxy of regime type (see Doyle and Elgie 2015), and whether the country is politically decentralized.<sup>14</sup> The latter set of

<sup>13</sup> The substantial robustness of the results presented in Table 5 was confirmed by using means instead of medians as well as by using benchmarks based on a sample of all electoral systems.

<sup>14</sup> Further socio-political context variables (e.g. ethnic fractionalization) were included into the models at an earlier stage to see whether their inclusion would alter the estimated effects of the variables of substantial interest in this study. As this was not the case and as the inclusion of

socio-political context variables are also meant to capture between-country variation that is unrelated to electoral system principle or design since the application of a fixed effects model is problematic due to the within-country stability of electoral rules (also see Carey and Hix 2011). Reported are models with robust standard errors in order to account for serial correlation.<sup>15</sup> A very useful feature of logit models is that they take into account the interaction between variables (e.g. the level of democracy and the presence of a principle) as well as non-linear effects of variables to a considerable degree when estimating the coefficients. Hence, interactions and non-linear effects are accounted for even if they are not explicitly modelled as such (see Berry et al. 2010).

TABLE 5: LOGIT REGRESSION RESULTS

Variables	Model 1 No extremes	Model 2 No extremes	Model 3 Doubly good	Model 4 Doubly good
Guiding principle	-0.0269 (0.692)	-0.948 (0.773)	0.193 (0.781)	-1.167 (0.868)
Principle*First election		2.904* (1.558)		3.946*** (1.484)
First post-reform election	-0.447 (0.745)	-1.505 (1.049)	-0.789 (0.743)	-2.301*** (0.880)
Compensatory PR tier	0.930 (0.694)	1.021 (0.796)	2.529*** (0.837)	2.700*** (0.867)
Share of SMD seats	1.906 (3.059)	1.982 (3.789)	2.503 (2.325)	3.220 (2.552)
Mean district magnitude	0.00315* (0.00191)	0.00261 (0.00213)	0.00380* (0.00196)	0.00286 (0.00203)
Legal threshold	0.386** (0.169)	0.394** (0.182)	0.469*** (0.179)	0.469** (0.183)
Level of democracy	-0.224** (0.0935)	-0.240*** (0.0909)	-0.361*** (0.109)	-0.407*** (0.114)
Age of democracy	0.0254 (0.0181)	0.0298 (0.0193)	-0.0294 (0.0193)	-0.0185 (0.0216)
Presidential power	1.247 (1.977)	0.954 (2.107)	2.084 (2.282)	1.467 (2.143)
Political decentralization	0.951 (0.821)	0.865 (0.865)	1.120 (0.808)	1.010 (0.790)
Constant	-1.892 (2.318)	-1.594 (2.712)	-3.021 (2.103)	-2.843 (2.224)
Observations	101	101	101	101
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.27	0.30	0.31	0.35

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

H<sub>1</sub>, positing an unconditional effect of the principle variable, has to be rejected resoundingly: Not including an interaction term, the presence of a balanced principle has no significant effect on an electoral system being able to avoid extreme performance (Model 1) or on the likelihood of a doubly good, best of both worlds performance (Model 3). However, Table 5 suggests that discarding the idea of an effect of principle-guided design on performance altogether would be premature. Controlling for technical design and socio-political scope conditions, the presence of a principle aiming for a successful balance does exert the hypothesized effect as its presence leads to a lower probability of experiencing extreme outcomes (Model 2) and even makes a good performance in both dimensions more likely (Model 4) – but only for the first post-reform election. Summing the coefficients for the ‘Guiding principle’ and ‘Principle\*First election’ variables leads to positive effects in both Models 2 and

further context variables would have led to the exclusion of a substantial amount of observations due to problems of missing data, these variables were not included into the models presented in Table 5.

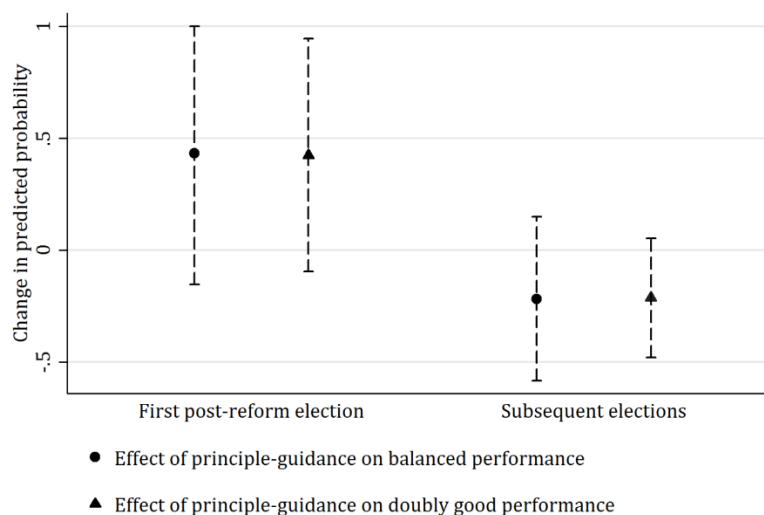
<sup>15</sup> The robustness of the results was assessed by also running the same models with jack knife robust standard errors as well as jack knife cluster robust standard errors in order to account for potential outlier-related problems, as well as random effects models. Panel-corrected standard errors could not be used due to the strongly unbalanced nature of the panel data.

4. On the contrary, after the first post-reform election the presence of a principle actually has a negative effect on the dependent variables, yet, these effects are not statistically significant.

Hence, there is a pronounced difference for first post-reform elections but no significant difference between principle-guided and other mixed systems in subsequent elections. In the long run, there is no evidence that a principle-guided choice leads to more balanced or even generally good performance. Comparing the Pseudo  $R^2$  values of Models 2 and 4 with those in Models 1 and 3 also highlights the importance of taking the contingent effect of the principle into account. The effect of principled design for first elections is striking especially when looking at the coefficients for the 'First post-reform election' dummy: these elections typically are unlikely to experience moderate, let alone all around good performances. The presence of a guiding principle – likely based on an inclusive choice process – clearly counterbalances these problems at the start.

Figure 2 visualizes the results, presenting – for the different dependent variables – the changes in predicted probabilities based on the presence of an overall guiding principle of representation. For the first post-reform election, Figure 2 shows how the marginal effect of principle-guidance is positive and as high as about 45 percentage points for both reaching moderate outcomes in both dimensions as well as doubly good performance (left-hand side of the graph). After the first post-reform election (right-hand side of the graph) these positive effects disappear and even become negative. However, for the elections following the initial post-reform election the difference between principled-guided and other systems is much smaller and far from being statistically significant (also see Table 5). Figure 2 thus reinforces the idea that there is only a short-term effect of principle-guided design. This lack of a long-term effect of principle-guidance might not necessarily stem from governing parties resorting to strategic behaviour in order to return election outcomes to pre-reform patterns. Party competition might simply become more open to smaller competitors thus increasing party system fragmentation and making higher levels of party system concentration unlikely. In consequence, the inclusiveness typically associated with a principle-guided choice process appears to be able to induce what is a short-term equilibrium that sees a successful balance of the competing goals of proportionality and concentration.

FIGURE 2: MARGINAL EFFECT OF PRINCIPLE-GUIDANCE



Notes: Dashed lines represent 95 percent confidence intervals.

Going back to Table 5, it is worth noting that the exact technical design of an electoral system evidently does matter also within the family of multi-tier mixed electoral systems as all technical variables except the share of SMD seats are significant predictors at least in some of the models. The MMP system paired with a legal threshold emerges as the best technical specification of a mixed-member system when aiming for achieving both proportional representation and party system concentration. Among the variables capturing the socio-political context only the level of democracy emerges as a significant predictor. This negative effect on the probability of both avoidance of extreme outcomes and doubly good performance is somewhat surprising but could be based on the fact that political competition is much more open in full-fledged democracies leading to a fairly high number of parties competing and winning seats in these countries' mixed-member systems. This potential explanation also highlights that avoiding extreme outcomes or aiming for both high levels of proportionality and concentration are not necessarily always the best choices on the way to a democratic political process. Overall, the presence of these sets of control variables in the models presented in Table 5 clearly emphasizes that the principle dimension of an electoral system has an impact on its performance even if controlling for technical design and socio-political context conditions.

## 6 CONCLUSION

This paper has taken a new approach – namely a case study survey – in order to use the strengths of case-oriented research in mapping out the key characteristics of electoral system choice processes for the comparative analysis of mixed electoral systems. Two key results emerge: first, there undoubtedly is variation in terms of whether mixed-member electoral systems are designed with a general goal of successfully combining proportionality and concentration in mind. More inclusive choice situations based on the knowledge of how mixed systems have worked in other countries are much more likely to lead to a mixed electoral design that genuinely aims at balancing competing normative goals. Second, the presence of a guiding principle does indeed increase the likelihood of a balanced and even best of both worlds type of performance of the electoral system in a particular country. Thus there is a link between the principle dimension of an electoral system and its performance – notwithstanding the exact technical design of the system as well as the socio-political scope conditions. Yet, this positive effect is only present for the first post-reform election, for subsequent elections principle-based electoral systems perform similar to their counterparts lacking an overarching principle.

Exploring whether what is only a short-term effect of a principle aiming for successful balance is a problem, it is worth looking at the experiences of countries with such guiding principle. Here it is critical to note that five of six countries that at some point employed a principled-guided mixed-member system later changed the electoral system to a PR system (Thailand being the exception by going back to a majoritarian block vote system). Reforms of mixed-member systems without a guiding principle have seen moves within the mixed multi-tier family towards compensatory and parallel mixed systems, to PR systems, and, in the case of Italy, to PR systems with a majority bonus. Furthermore, the principled moves to a mixed-member system in Albania and Macedonia are associated with significant increases in the Polity IV score (this also corroborates the argument that the adoption of mixed electoral systems played a central role in the democratization of Eastern Europe; see Birch et al.

2002; Birch 2003). Thus the lack of a more sustained effect of a principle of representation that aims at balance on retaining both moderate or higher levels of proportionality and concentration does not necessarily indicate that these systems take longer to fail (although they obviously did in some cases, for example in Ukraine). On the contrary, these systems may pave the way to a party system and an electoral system focusing more heavily on considerations of proportionality and representativeness, the latter being correlated with higher levels of democracy (Blais and Massicotte 1997; Colomer 2004).

What do the results imply for electoral system design? Simply put, it seems worth fostering choice processes that eventually lead up to principle-guided design. While this analysis has only shown an effect for first post-reform elections, there are more phenomena – most notably democratic legitimacy, coping with uncertainty (see Birch 2003; Sgouraki Kinsey and Shvetsova 2008), and fostering the development of a stable democracy – we might reasonably expect to be positively associated with the presence of a principle of representation. But what is most crucial and reassuring for the future of electoral system design and institutional design in general is the fact that there is a difference between strategic fools and principle-guided designers in terms of how electoral systems will eventually perform. Especially for the stage of transition from autocracy to democracy, the contingency of electoral system performance on the design process is critical to consider. Obviously, a principle-guided design process is not a sweeping panacea as the compromise choice in the German case compared with principle-guided designs in Ukraine or Thailand shows: scope conditions and the interplay of technical variables and these scope conditions are still key in explaining whether electoral reform will eventually succeed. At the same time, the principle-guided electoral reform in New Zealand is one of the very few true success stories of electoral reform in the recent past.

Future research would do well in expanding this analysis to all electoral systems – moving beyond mixed multi-tier systems and the question of whether these were designed with a successful balance of the competing principles of proportionality and concentration in mind. This analysis has suggested a theoretical argument and established an empirical link between principle and performance. What remains to be done is an in-depth study of the causal mechanism(s) leading from principle-guided design to eventual performance. For this latter task, case-oriented, qualitative research is probably well suited, underlining the importance of a continued cooperation and integration of the case-oriented and the more broadly comparative literatures in electoral system research.

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## THE QUALITY OF ELECTIONS IN AFRICAN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

Suzanne GRAHAM and Victoria GRAHAM<sup>1</sup>

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*There are six African small island developing states: the Union of the Comoros; the Republic of Guinea-Bissau; the Republic of Cabo Verde; the Republic of Mauritius; the Seychelles and the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe. Apart from Mauritius, the other five states are relatively new to democracy with several of these states only transitioning from one party states to multi-party states in the early 1990s. International and domestic observers declared the last round of elections in all ASIDS free and fair, but this reveals little of the quality of elections in these small island developing states. All six states are members of the African Union (AU) and are therefore obliged to adhere to its election principles. Therefore, this article examines the quality of elections in the ASIDS by analysing the extent to which they are free and fair using the principles of the AU's Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa. Findings reveal that despite continued logistical and other problems that persist, the election process is generally well managed and violence relatively minimal, a remarkable achievement given the volatile political histories in all save one of these small island states. Challenges appear to centre on continued inter-institutional instability in some cases, failure to adhere to constitutional amendments in others, some instances of continued harassment and a lack of financial and technical resources, all of which have to some extent impacted electoral quality.*

**Key words:** African small island developing states (ASIDS); free and fair elections; quality of democracy.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. **Suzanne GRAHAM** is a senior lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Johannesburg. Her PhD thesis focused on South Africa's voting behaviour in the United Nations between 1994 and 2008. Contact: [suzyg@uj.ac.za](mailto:suzyg@uj.ac.za). Dr. **Victoria GRAHAM** is a senior lecturer in International and Political Studies at Monash South Africa in Johannesburg. Her research interests include the quality of democracy, comparative politics and diplomacy. She holds a PhD in Political Studies at the University of Johannesburg. Contact: [victoria.graham@monash.edu](mailto:victoria.graham@monash.edu).

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Of the 52 small island developing states (SIDS) and territories,<sup>2</sup> six of those are African: the Union of the Comoros (hereafter the Comoros), the Republic of Guinea-Bissau (Guinea-Bissau),<sup>3</sup> Republic of Cabo Verde (Cabo Verde), Republic of Mauritius (Mauritius), the Seychelles and the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe (São Tomé and Príncipe).<sup>4</sup> Apart from Mauritius, the other five states are relatively new to democracy with several of these states only transitioning from one party states to multi-party states in the early 1990s. International and domestic observers declared the last round of elections in all of these African small island developing states (hereafter referred to as ASIDS) free and fair, but this reveals little of the actual quality of democracy in these small island developing states.<sup>5</sup>

According to the 2015 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), which measures the quality of governance in African countries in relation to safety and rule of law; participation and human rights; sustainable economic opportunity; and human development, the ASIDS' rankings vary quite differently from each other apart from Mauritius and Cabo Verde which rank 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Africa (54 countries) with scores of 79.9 and 74.5 out of 100 respectively. The Seychelles ranks no. 6 with a score of 70.3; São Tomé & Príncipe is ranked at 13<sup>th</sup> position and scores 59.1. The Comoros falls at 24<sup>th</sup> position in Africa and scores 51.3, whereas Guinea-Bissau ranks at number 38 with a failing score of 37.7 (IIAG 2015, 4). Freedom House (2016) ranks Mauritius, Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe as 'free', and the Comoros, Guinea-Bissau and the Seychelles as 'partly free' and all but Guinea-Bissau (which is labelled authoritarian<sup>6</sup> by the Economic Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index 2015) are considered to be electoral democracies.

An electoral democracy is defined as a multiparty political "system in which citizens, through universal suffrage, can choose and replace their leaders in regular, free, fair, and meaningful elections" (Diamond 2015, 141). It is important to acknowledge that isolating elections as supreme over other dimensions of democracy commits the so-called 'fallacy of electoralism' (see Schmitter and Karl 1991; Friedman 1999). In other words, simply because a country holds elections, this does not necessarily mean that the country

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<sup>2</sup> So identified by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Guinea-Bissau is not strictly an island. It is a small coastal country on the Western coast of Africa between Senegal to the North and Guinea to the South. However, one of Guinea-Bissau's regions is the Bijagós archipelago, comprising around 21 small populated islands among up to 67 other unpopulated islands.

<sup>4</sup> The African SIDS are located in the Southern (Mauritius), Western (Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau), Eastern (the Seychelles and the Comoros) and Central (São Tomé and Príncipe) regions of the African continent.

<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, recent small state literature would seem to suggest that small states are more likely to be democratic than large states (see Commonwealth Advisory Group 1997; Fry 2002; Srebrnik 2004; Anckar 2002; Anckar 2010). Opposing views exist though; whereas Hadenius (1992, 61-62) contends that small islands are "special" as they tend to be more democratic than bigger islands; Anckar (2002, 376) contends not "all small island states are ... knights of democracy".

<sup>6</sup> According to Freedom House (2015a) Guinea-Bissau's "political rights rating improved from 6 to 5, and its status improved from Not Free to Partly Free, because the 2014 elections—the first since a 2012 coup—were deemed free and fair by international and national observers, and the opposition was able to compete and increase its participation in government."

experiences good *quality* democracy.<sup>7</sup> One of Africa's keenest observers, Michael Chege, remarked that the continent had "overemphasised multiparty elections ... and correspondingly neglected the basic tenets of liberal governance" (Chege in Zakaria 1997, 28). It must equally be acknowledged that while some multiparty electoral systems have serious defects these nevertheless do not negate their overall democratic character (Diamond 2015, 143).

Another point to consider is that the act of holding elections does not presuppose that the elections themselves are good *quality*. Salgado (2014) notes, for example, that in Lusophone African countries where elections are regular there are also usually attempts at influencing and manipulating the vote, often through politicians offering jobs, gifts and or money in exchange for votes. Interestingly, elections and election violence emerged on the list of challenges highlighted by SIDS at a July 2015 United Nations Security Council meeting which focused on 'Issues Facing Small Island Developing States'. In Heywood's (2013, 214–215) view, the importance of elections in democracies cannot be doubted. They are a "visible manifestation of the public interest; in short, 'the public has spoken'". After all, "it is through the ability of citizens, at regular elections, to retain or dismiss their elected representatives ... that the principle of popular control is made flesh" (Beetham, Byrne, Ngan and Weir 2002, 85).

Therefore, it is important to assess the *quality* of electoral accountability in the ASIDS, that is, the extent to which the elections are free and fair. This article intends to provide a snapshot comparison of the electoral accountability of the ASIDS. It is important to note at the outset that this article cannot investigate all of the indicators deemed important in ascertaining the quality of electoral accountability, for example, the participation of women and minority rights, party financing and the campaigning-related issue of vote buying are not investigated in this article.<sup>8</sup> It is intended merely as an initial comparison for further potential research. In order to carry out this comparison, this article will utilise the principles and standards of quality free and fair elections outlined in the organisation whose common membership all ASIDS enjoy, the African Union (AU).<sup>9</sup>

## 2 PRINCIPLES GOVERNING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN THE ASIDS

According to the AU's (2004, 5) Guidelines for Electoral Observation and Monitoring Missions, Africa has experienced relative success since the mid-1990s in institutionalising electoral democracy on the continent. However, despite credible multiparty elections taking place; there are suggestions that violence and instability occurring as a result of disputed elections continue to be a challenge as does improving the integrity of the election process. Agenda 2063, a vision and action plan for the AU, adopted by member states in January 2015, at the AU's 24th Ordinary Assembly, aims for regular, transparent, free, fair and credible elections to consolidate a democratic and people-centred

<sup>7</sup> Morlino (2011, 195) defines good quality democracy as one which presents a stable institutional structure that realises the liberty and equality of citizens and that strives to satisfy citizen expectations through the legitimate and correct functioning of its institutions and mechanisms.

<sup>8</sup> See for example, the EU EOM 2014 report on the 2014 election in Guinea-Bissau where the offering of gifts to voters, by candidates, has been a common practice over the years.

<sup>9</sup> Mauritius joined the AU in 1968; Cabo Verde in 1975; Guinea-Bissau in 1973; Comoros in 1975; Seychelles in 1976 and São Tomé and Príncipe in 1975.

Africa. This builds on objective 'g' in the AU's Constitutive Act (2000, 5), adopted in Togo on 11 July 2000 and at which representatives from all ASIDS were present, which obligates all AU members "to promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance" in their states.

The Comoros, Mauritius, Guinea-Bissau<sup>10</sup> and São Tomé and Príncipe have all signed The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007)<sup>11</sup> which commits them, in principle at least, to *inter alia*: establishing and strengthening independent and impartial national electoral bodies responsible for the management of elections and ensuring that there is a binding code of conduct before, during and after the election period. Cabo Verde and the Seychelles have not yet signed the Charter.

The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007, 1) espouses the following in relation to elections: to entrench in the Continent a political culture of change of power based on the holding of regular, free, fair and transparent elections conducted by competent, independent and impartial national electoral bodies; ... to enhance the election observation missions in the role they play, particularly as they are an important contributory factor to ensuring the regularity, transparency and credibility of elections; ... to promote and strengthen good governance through the institutionalization of transparency, accountability and participatory democracy ...

Moreover, the Charter acknowledges the constitutionality of changes in government as vital to the security and stability of African states. It also sets out as a principle objective the promotion of "best practices in the management of elections for purposes of political stability and good governance" (African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance 2007, 3).

Similarly, the AU's<sup>12</sup> (2002) Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa emphasises the following five principles characterising democratic elections: elections are free and fair; elections take place legally under democratic constitutions; elections take place in a system which separates power and guarantees the independence of the judiciary; elections take place regularly, in accordance with Constitutional provisions; and elections are managed by objective, credible and responsible electoral institutions.

In conjunction with the principles outlined above, the AU Declaration commits AU member states to certain obligations in relation to their electoral practices, including the following:

- no individual or political party shall engage in any act that may lead to violence or deprive others of their constitutional rights and freedoms,
- in covering the electoral process, the media should maintain impartiality and refrain from broadcasting and publishing abusive language, incitement to hate, and other forms of provocative language that may lead to violence.
- every individual and political party participating in elections shall recognize the authority of the Electoral Commission or any statutory body empowered to oversee the electoral process and accordingly render full cooperation to such a Commission/Body in order to facilitate their duties.

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<sup>10</sup> Guinea-Bissau has also signed regional treaties with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and in accordance with ECOWAS' democracy protocols, Guinea-Bissau has agreed that elections must be constitutional (legal), free, fair and transparent (EU EOM, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Adopted on 30 January 2007 in Addis Ababa.

<sup>12</sup> The African Union (AU) replaced the former Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 2002.



- every citizen and political party shall accept the results of elections proclaimed to have been free and fair by the competent national bodies as provided for in the Constitution and the electoral laws and accordingly respect the final decision of the competent Electoral Authorities or, challenge the result appropriately according to the law.

In light of the above, the following indicators will be investigated, briefly, in relation to the ASIDS: free and fair elections; elections take place legally under democratic constitutions; elections take place in a system which separates power and guarantees the independence of the judiciary; elections take place regularly, in accordance with Constitutional provisions; elections are managed by objective, credible and responsible electoral institutions; there is freedom from political violence and or intimidation; there is media impartiality throughout the elections; and there is acceptance of the result by the electorate and political parties.

### 2.1 Observing the quality of elections: free, fair and credible?

As members of the AU, all ASIDS are signatories to the principles contained in the abovementioned AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa and therefore have an obligation to adhere to them. Of prime importance is the conducting of free and fair elections, or as some would refer to them “legitimate, credible or participatory elections” (ACE Project, 2013). Although the exact meanings of the concepts of ‘freedom’ and ‘fairness’ are contested in the literature, this label is nevertheless still generally accepted and widely used the world over when evaluating elections and to be regarded by observers as ‘free and fair’ remains a valuable indicator of successful elections (Graham 2015). Indeed, the United Nations regards election observation as an important tool in improving the quality of elections as it helps to boost public confidence in the honesty of the election process. Moreover, observer reports can expose weaknesses and fraud should they occur as well as espouse positive findings that enhance both the legitimacy of the election process, and by implication, the government that emerges following the results. After the elections, the recommendations made in these observation reports can also lead to positive policy changes (UN 2016).

The Electoral Integrity Project (2015), where 139 countries are scored out of 100 points and then ranked from very high to very low<sup>13</sup> according to expert perceptions of electoral integrity ranks several of the ASIDS in the following order on its Perceptions of Electoral Integrity Index (2012–2015). In Africa Mauritius does very well to place second highest (behind Benin) with 64 points and is ranked 42nd globally. São Tomé and Príncipe scores 58 points and is ranked ‘moderate’ in Africa and 57th globally; Guinea-Bissau is also ‘moderate’ with 54 points and is ranked 76th globally. Slipping further down the list and ranked as ‘flawed’ are the Comoros (49 points out of 100 and ranked 96th globally). Cabo Verde and Seychelles are not included on the index.

The 2015 legislative elections in the Comoros were declared free and fair by a host of observer missions from the African Union, the Arab League and the International Francophonie Organization (IFO) with the IFO’s head declaring that the elections had taken place in an atmosphere of “transparency, freedom and serenity” (Mmadi, 2015). Moreover, the 2016 presidential elections were also deemed free and fair. Similarly, presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau in

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<sup>13</sup> ‘Failed’ elections are defined as those which fall below 40 on any of the 100-point scales (The Electoral Integrity Project, 2015).

2014 (for the first time since a coup in 2012) were declared free and fair by several international and national observers including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Francophonie, the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), the European Union and the AU observer mission, whose head remarked on the “well organised” elections (see the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) 2014). The success of the election process prompted Freedom House to up the country’s 2015 rating from 6 to 5, and its status from Not Free to Partly Free (Freedom House 2015a).

In 2013, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Kadre Desire Ouedraogo went so far as to hail Cabo Verde as “a beacon of hope for democracy and a model judging by its successive transparent, free and fair elections” (AllAfrica.com 2013). The December 2014 Mauritian elections were considered free and transparent by the AU EOM (2014). Freedom House (2015b) scores Mauritius full points on its country report and its status is ‘free’. As noted earlier, the Seychelles ranks only five spaces behind Mauritius in the IIAG. In 2015 six international observer missions, the Commonwealth, the African Union Election Observation Mission (AU EOM), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Election Observation Mission (SEOM), the Electoral Commission Forum of SADC Countries (SADC-ECF), the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) and the regional Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) monitored the first round of the Seychelles’ presidential elections and declared them to be free and fair (Magnan and Uranie 2015). According to Freedom House (2015c), international observers deemed the 2015 national elections in São Tomé and Príncipe to be transparent, free and fair.

## 2.2 Elections take place legally under democratic constitutions

A vital step for countries moving away from authoritarian regimes or divided societies towards democracy is the building of a constitution. This is a political process aimed at addressing challenges that face modern democracies (Böckenförde, Hedling and Wahi 2011, 1–2). A constitution is a living document that contains the essential rules and political principles governing a state (Venter 2011, 8). Constitutions can change and be amended as has often been the case with the ASIDS’ constitutions outlined below. Aside from this, constitutions are used to empower states, provide stability in government, protect freedom, legitimise governments, and establish unifying goals and values (Heywood 2013, 338). Constitutions can have an impact on the quality of democracy, as they lay down the powers, roles and responsibilities of government, as well as the how the state should interact with its citizenry (International IDEA 2014).

For the purpose of this article it is also important to add that constitutions allow states to plan their futures by creating institutions and processes that will help to consolidate their democracies and this includes issues such as the integrity of their electoral processes. Article 20 of the Constitution of the Comoros from 23 December 2001, known as the Fomboni Accords, makes provision for universal suffrage and regular elections. The Constitution of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, which was adopted in 1984 and amended three times since (in 1991, 1993 and 1996) states in Part 1, article 2 that the “exercise of political power is vested in the people directly or through the democratically elected organs.” Aside from the Constitution, elections in Guinea-Bissau are also regulated by the Law on the election of the President and the Members of Parliament; the Voter

Registration Law; the EMB Law; the Law on International Observation; and the Law on Political Parties (EISA Pre-Election Assessment Mission 2014a, 5).

Formally replacing the 28 September 1992 Constitution, Cabo Verde passed into law a new Constitution on the 3 May 2010. A significant change in the new Constitution is that the President of the Republic is elected by universal suffrage, by direct and secret ballot by the citizens registered in the census as voters in the country and abroad, and according to the national legislation. In addition, Cabo Verde's new Electoral Code (passed in June 2007) creates a regulatory framework for strengthening the National Electoral Commission's transparency (Freedom House 2013a). The Constitution of Mauritius (amended in 2014) was adopted on 12 March 1968 and protects citizens' right to vote within section 44. Universal suffrage was granted to people 18 years and older in 1959. Moreover, Mauritius' Representation of the People Act (Act 14 of 1958), amended in 2005 and 2014, as well as National Assembly regulations, and the rules for the election of the National Assembly and the code of conduct for National Assembly elections set out rules and standards for the electoral process.

Within the Seychelles, the Constitution (18 June 1993, amended in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 2000); the Elections Act of 1995, amended in 2014; the Political (Registration and Regulation) Act of 1991, amended in 2014; the Public Assembly Act of 2015, and the Code of Conduct for Stakeholders of 2015 are all in place to govern elections. The Constitution of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe (of 1975 and revised in 1990) states in Article 6.2 that "political power belongs to the people who exercise it through universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage under the terms of the Constitution." Moreover, in 2014 a number of electoral changes took place including the National Assembly passing of a law to combat the common electoral practice of *banho*, or vote-buying (Freedom House 2015c).

Based on the above it is evident that at least procedurally, the ASIDS have the necessary constitutional arrangements in place, as stipulated by the AU guiding electoral framework, to facilitate democratic elections.

### 2.3 Elections take place in a system which separates power and guarantees the independence of the judiciary

Sometimes referred to as the *trias politica*, the separation of governmental powers between the executive, legislature and judiciary is fundamental to democratic governance. Having said that, it is probably more accurate to refer to the interdependent relationship, or interinstitutional or horizontal accountability, between these three branches of government as it is unlikely that a complete separation is ever possible (Hicks, Daniel, Buccus and Venter 2011, 53). Nevertheless, most democratic governments respect the independence of the judiciary as, subject only to the law, the judiciary must be able to act autonomously in "order to exercise their control over the other branches of government effectively" (Malherbe 2011, 68). A high quality democracy demands judicial independence in order to ensure civil liberties, political rights and mechanisms to curb the abuse of power. Without it, citizens' rights, dignity and equality are at risk, as is the legitimacy of government itself (O'Donnell 2005, 3). Additionally, "courts play an important role in elections" (Gloppen and Kanyongolo 2011), especially in new or young democracies, as elections test the viability of institutions which exist to ensure peaceful and fair power successions. Moreover, elections are not restricted to campaign days or

polling days and are also about the legal electoral framework in place as well as the electoral process which may involve altering electoral rules, changing (if required) constituency boundaries, and settling disputes before and after polling day.

The judiciary is independent of the executive and legislature in the Comoros and each island within the Union has its own constitution or Fundamental Law. Similarly, Article 59 of the Constitution (1984) of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau affirms the separation of powers between the legislature and executive and judiciary, which it also affirms as independent, and also confirms these organs as falling under the authority of the Constitution.

The Republic of Cabo Verde's Constitution (1992) recognises the separation of powers as well as a strong and independent judicial power. Similarly, the Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius sets out the separation of powers among Legislation (chapter V, part II), the Executive (chapter VI) and the Judicature (chapter VII). The Judiciary is independent and is tasked with the responsibility of administering justice in Mauritius which is, according to the Supreme Court of Mauritius (2016), "a vital element for the functioning of the democratic system of government in order to uphold the rule of law and afford the necessary protection for the safeguard of the fundamental rights of the citizens of Mauritius."

The Constitution of the Seychelles entrenches the separation of powers and independence of the Judiciary. However, in practice in the past this has not always been the case. Instead this institutional independence guaranteed by the Constitution has been misperceived in the past as "individual independence", according to Justice Durai Karunakaran, Acting Chief Justice in the Seychelles in September 2014 (Karunakaran 2014). Indeed, the outgoing Chief Justice in September 2014, Justice Frederick Egonda-Ntende of Uganda, who had spent five years at the judicial helm, at the request of the Seychelles' government (in Mendes, 2014) affirms this statement. Before he began his term, Egonda-Ntende relays, there was a severe lack of public confidence in the Judiciary, although since then public trust in the courts has slowly returned. Moreover, holistically there appears to be a good working relationship between the three arms of government, according to Egonda-Ntende (in Mendes, 2014).

Although the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe makes provisions for an independent judiciary, there have been reports of the judicial system being subject to political influence or manipulation.<sup>14</sup> Due to low judicial salaries judges have also reportedly accepted bribes. The National Dialogue held in March 2014 saw reform of the judiciary as one of the central areas of focus (Freedom House 2015c).

## 2.4 Regular elections in accordance with Constitutional provisions

In theory, regular, credible, elections are important for democracies as they offer stability, consistency and the opportunity for the citizenry to remove "incompetent leaders" within specific intervals (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung 2011, 13). Whether this always manifests in practice though is another matter.

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<sup>14</sup> See Seibert (2004) in reference to the 2004 corruption allegations involving the Gabinete de Gestão das Ajudas (GGA) food aid agency scandal in 2004 which saw the fall of Prime Minister Maria das Neves.

In accordance with the Constitution of the Comoros, the Union presidency rotates among the three major islands, the largest of which is Grande Comore (Ngazidja); Moheli (Mwali); and Anjouan (Nzwani).<sup>15</sup> The presidential term of office is a single non-renewable five-year term and the president is elected in two rounds. The first 'primary' is by simple majority where three candidates with the highest vote count by voters on the island concerned, that is the island whose turn it is to hold the presidency, compete in the second round. Thereafter in the second round the winner is determined by simple majority vote by voters on all three islands. Additionally, each island also elects its own president in line with its autonomous 'fundamental law'. Since independence in 1975, the Union has experienced more than 20 coup attempts, earning it the unenviable title of the "coup-coup islands", and severe tensions involving secessionist attempts by Moheli and Anjouan in the late 1990s (IRIN 2009). Although in 2001, the abovementioned new Constitution was adopted, which attempted to keep the Union intact by granting widespread autonomy to the three islands, political tensions continued. In order to complete the Union's transition to a federal democracy and as a final step in the national reconciliation process, parliamentary elections were held in 2004 (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016). In the first peaceful transfer of power in the history of the Comoros, Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi (from Anjouan) became President of the Comoros between 2006 and 2011. In May 2011, President Ikililou Dhoinine came to power as chief of state and head of government, followed in April 2016 by Azali Assoumani. Therefore, since 2006, the Comoros has experienced regular presidential and parliamentary elections. However, both Dhoinine and Assoumani's victories were marred by allegations of electoral fraud (see below).

Cabo Verde has a chief of state, the President, and head of government, the Prime Minister. The president is elected by absolute majority popular vote for a five-year term, although he/she can stand for a second term. The prime minister is nominated by the national assembly and appointed by the president. Although Cabo Verde became independent from Portugal in 1975, it existed as a one-party state for 15 years until a multiparty transition between 1990-1992 was introduced as a result of the new constitution and the country moved towards democracy. Since 1991 there have been five presidential and national assembly elections (African Elections Database 2011a). The next presidential election is set for September 2016. Therefore, since democratisation, regular presidential and legislative elections have been upheld. In April 2016, Prime Minister Correia e Silva, representing the Movement for Democracy (MPD) was sworn in as Prime Minister. Previously, since 2001, the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) had dominated island power politics.

Since independence from Portugal in 1974, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau has witnessed periods of being a one party state, a military regime, a multiparty transitional state, and a democracy. Given this political instability, it is surprising that Guinea-Bissau was able to hold three relatively peaceful, free and fair elections in 2008 and 2009 (Evans 2010). More recently, since 2012, the country had been under military leadership and as mentioned earlier in this article, from 2011 to 2016, Guinea-Bissau has not been considered an electoral democracy (Freedom House 2016). After general elections were held in April 2014 the country returned to civilian rule under newly elected President Jose Mario Vaz in June 2014. In this respect although elections have been held fairly regularly they have not been in a consolidated democratic environment. The

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<sup>15</sup> The Comoros' fourth major island, Mayotte (Maore), is seen by the Union as part of its territory but it remains governed by France.

President, who is head of state, is elected by absolute majority popular vote for a period of five years (with no limit on terms). The head of government, the prime minister, is appointed by the president and national assembly. In a rather strange turn of events President Mario Vaz appointed Bacirot Dja as Prime Minister twice. The first time was in August 2015 but Dja was in the post only 20 days before resigning as the Supreme Court ruled his appointment unconstitutional. The Court decided that the President had appointed Dja without properly consulting parliament's political parties. The second time was in May 2016, when the President having fired Prime Minister Carlos Correia earlier that month re-appointed Dja by presidential decree. Once again political opponents responded saying that the appointment was unconstitutional and protesters attacked the presidential palace with stones and burnt tyres (SABC 2016). The political situation in Guinea-Bissau is tentative.

Of all ASIDS, Mauritius is the longest running democracy since independence from Britain in 1968. Since then Mauritius has witnessed ten free and fair democratic general elections. The latest general elections were held in Mauritius in 2010 resulting in Anerood Jugnauth becoming Prime Minister and head of government. The president's role is more of a ceremonial position and has few powers in the executive.

São Tomé and Príncipe has a President who is head of state, elected by absolute majority popular vote for a five-year term and is eligible for a second term. The prime minister is head of government and is chosen by the national assembly and approved by the President. Much like Cabo Verde, since independence from Portugal in 1975 São Tomé and Príncipe has witnessed a one party state between 1975 and 1990, a multiparty transition in 1990-1991 and has been democratic since 1991 (African Elections 2011b). However, in 20 years the Republic has had 19 prime ministers and no government has lasted a full parliamentary term (even with party coalitions) (Salgado 2014). The small island state has held four regular presidential elections since 1991 (1996, 2001, 2006, 2011) with a fifth election scheduled for July 2016 and six regular multiparty legislative elections since 1991 (in 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, and 2014). President Manuel Pinto da Costa became President in September 2011. The latest Prime minister Patrice Emery Trovoada took office in November 2014.

Since 1993 the Seychelles has been considered a democracy. Prior to that and since independence from France in 1976, it has experienced periods of democracy, a de facto one party state, a one party state and a multiparty transition to democracy. In the Seychelles the President is both head of state and government and serves a five-year term and constitutionally is eligible for two more terms. Since 1993 the Seychelles has conducted five regular multiparty presidential elections and legislative elections (in 1998, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2015). The latest presidential election in December 2015 saw President James Michel win a third and final term in office with 50.15 per cent of the vote in a very close poll with Waval Ramkalawan who won 49.85 per cent of the vote. The Electoral Commission of the Seychelles confirmed the results and although an opposition party petitioned to have these results overturned, the Seychelles Constitutional Court upheld Michel's election win in a May 2016 verdict (Uranie 2016a).



## 2.5 Objective, credible and responsible electoral institutions

Electoral institutions are necessary to manage responsibly the complex and specialist skills involved in electoral activities and the term electoral management body (EMB) is the most commonly used term to describe them. An EMB is tasked with managing most, if not all, of the fundamental activities involved in the conduct of elections. Other tasks include conducting polling, counting and tabulating votes, and may also include voter registration and boundary delimitation among other duties (ACE Project 2016).

The Independent National Electoral Commission of Comoros (CENI) recently partnered with the European Centre for Electoral Support in Comoros (ECES) to run the Project to Support the Credibility and the Transparency of the Electoral Process in Comoros (PACTE Comoros). The EU funded project aims to support the organisation of elections in the Comoros and to “strengthen the skills of the electoral stakeholders” (Djaza in ECES 2015).

An independent National Electoral Commission (CNE) manages elections in Guinea-Bissau. The CNE is widely representative comprising members from each competing political party and representatives from each presidential candidate; members from the National Media Council and from the Government and the President of the Republic among others. Moreover, the CNE is responsible for overseeing every stage of the electoral process, apart from the voter registration process, which is supervised by the CNE but managed by the Office for the Technical Support to the Electoral Process (GTAPE). The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) Pre-Election Assessment Mission (2014a, 6–7) notes that the 2014 presidential and legislative electoral process could not be funded by the Republic's state budget, due to the dire economic situation facing the country, and as such the CNE had to rely on the international community for donations. More specifically the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as well as East Timor, and a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) basket fund with donations from the European Union (EU), South Africa, the United Kingdom (UK), Japan and Turkey, all came to the Republic's rescue. The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) (2014) report found that the CNE had conducted the 2014 election days with a high level of transparency and well-organised polls and in a tension-free atmosphere. Election administration officials were observed to be impartial and committed. Minor irregularities were observed by the EU EOM included some improperly sealed ballot boxes, but these were too small to affect the overall findings.

Cabo Verde's electoral process is overseen by its National Electoral Commission whose members are selected by a qualified majority of the members of the national assembly. The CNE is seen by all electoral stakeholders as an independent and competent body, according to the African Union Observer Mission (AU EOM 2016a, 3). The AU EOM to the 20 March 2016 elections found that the legal frameworks in place complied with relevant international standards, including the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The General Directorate of Support to the Electoral Process (DGAPE) assists the CNE with voter registration. Similar to the findings of the Guinea-Bissau elections, noted above, the AU EOM (2016a, 7) found that in isolated cases ballot boxes were not sealed properly. Moreover, a third of voting stations opened late due to insufficient numbers of polling staff at opening time, and the lack of some election materials, such as voting booths and ballot boxes.

Ultimately, however, the report found the elections to be transparent, peaceful, free and fair and an expression of the will of the voter population of Cabo Verde.

Mauritius has an independent EMB that oversees electoral administration. However, the EISA Pre-Election Assessment Mission Report (2014b, 4–8) recently noted that the EMB has limited decision-making powers that impact on the institution's independence in certain ways, for example, the delimitation of constituencies. In large part due to a lack of political will in Mauritius to change the status quo, constituency boundaries remain a stumbling block. Within this body are three institutions: the Electoral Commissioner's Office, the Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC), responsible for overseeing the registration of voters among other duties, and the Electoral Boundaries Commission (EBC), which is responsible for revising electoral boundaries.<sup>16</sup> The EISA Pre-Election Assessment Mission Report (2014b, 8) for the December 2014 elections noted a change "in the perception of certain stakeholders trust in the ability of the ESC to act as an effective arbiter of political contestation", with some questioning the independence of the ESC "on the basis of their seeming will to maintain the status quo in Mauritius". Conversely, the AU EOM (2014, 4) found a high level of trust by the population and election stakeholders in EMBs. Nevertheless, the AU (2014, 4) praised the three electoral bodies for their level of organisation, for example regarding election day logistics and polling centres and stations, and level of preparedness, calling them "remarkable".

The Seychelles established an independent Electoral Commission through the sixth amendment to the Constitution of Seychelles in July 2011 (SADC 2015, 4). The five-member Electoral Commission is a step forward for democracy as it effectively replaces the sole custodianship of the management and administration of the electoral process previously held by an Electoral Commissioner. According to the SADC Parliamentary Forum Election Observation Mission to the 2015 Seychelles Presidential Election (SADC 2015, 5), the new electoral commission was well-prepared to manage the elections and on the whole, candidates and political parties were satisfied with the way in which the Commission engaged with them. Civil society organisations (CSOs), however, were less satisfied with the low level of engagement between the Commission and CSOs. The AU Expert Election Observation Mission (AU EEOM) to the second round of the Presidential Election in the Republic of Seychelles 16–16 December 2015, found the election to be in accordance with the laws of the Seychelles, and conducted in a peaceful and ordered atmosphere. Although the AU EEOM (2015, 3–4) perceived the voters to be "generally free to express their choice through universal, equal and secret suffrage", they nevertheless also recommended to the Electoral Commission areas for improvement in future elections, for example, improving public education regarding new voter registration procedures, and discouraging practices that lead to illegal voting inducements.

São Tomé and Príncipe has a National Electoral Commission that oversees the electoral process. International observers deemed the 2014 national elections to be transparent, fair, and free.

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<sup>16</sup> The EISA Pre-Election Assessment Mission (2014b, 4) found that the latest revision of electoral boundaries was conducted in 1986 and therefore the 2014 elections were based on old boundaries.

## 2.6 Freedom from political violence and/or intimidation

Political intimidation and election violence undermine free and fair elections in several ways. Apart from the obvious physical and psychological damage that can result, intimidation can also cause people to stay away from the polls; in effect compromising the election results.

Since independence in 1975, the Comoros has experienced a volatile political history characterised by military coups and insurrections with the first peaceful transfer of power only taking place in 2006. Following violence and allegations of voting irregularities in the first round of the 2016 presidential elections, Azali Assoumani won the second round (Butty 2016). The AU EOM (2016b, 7) expressed serious concern that despite efforts by various stakeholders involved to introduce a code of conduct to the authorities to ward off election related conflicts between political parties and candidates, this had yet to be considered for implementation.

The people of Guinea-Bissau were congratulated in 2014 by the United States Department of State for the country's "peaceful and orderly" elections (Psaki 2014). However, Freedom House (2015a) reports that there were some instances of intimidation and, in some cases, beating up of election officials and candidates during the election period. Despite these though, voting was otherwise relatively peaceful and transparent, and there was unanimous agreement from several international bodies that the second round of the presidential elections took place "without major incidents to be recorded... which acknowledge the political parties respect for the Electoral Code of Conduct, stressing that no incident had the slightest impact on the peaceful exercise of citizenship and, therefore, on the credibility of the suffrage itself" (UNIOGBIS 2014). The report by the European Union Election Observer Mission agreed that although the 2014 election did not reflect a repeat of past electoral violence, there was tension due to the threatening of election officials, cases of bribery of officials to manipulate results and in one instance, an independent candidate, Nuno Nabiam, who caused quite a stir when he erroneously pre-empted results by announcing his win. He finally accepted the real results diffusing some tension (EU EOM, 2014).

Cabo Verde, was hailed by international observers as a 'model' of democracy when it once again conducted free and fair elections in March 2016 which brought about a peaceful transfer of power. Since 1991, Cape Verde has witnessed two peaceful changes of power between the government and opposition. Lopes (in Beck 2016), contends that in Cabo Verde "there have been no deaths as a result of political conflicts. There is no comparison with what happens on the African mainland" (Beck 2016).

"Mauritius has never developed a 'bullet' culture, adopting instead a culture of the 'ballot'" (Bunwaree and Kasenally 2005, 1). Nevertheless, elections have not always been smooth sailing. There is an absence of a code of conduct for political parties to regulate inter-party relations, and more especially no code is in place to deal with "the abusive language and violence that tends to mark election campaigning" (Bunwaree and Kasenally 2005, 5). Similarly, during the 2015 campaigning cycle, verbal provocation was at the centre of the complaints submitted to authorities by the Citizenship Democracy Watch Seychelles (CDWS) (Malbrooke and Bonnelame 2015), who also protested at some incidents of violence, and at physical acts of intimidation. Additionally, the

CDWS urged the Seychelles EMB to improve voter education in order "to empower all eligible citizens to vote free from intimidation, threats, coercion and vote buying practices." Alcohol at political rallies was also a sticking point for observers who warned against this possible trigger of electoral violence. Despite these concerns, the Seychelles' people were commended for their tolerance and maturity during the campaigning period (SADC Parliamentary Forum Election Observation Mission to the 2015 Seychelles Presidential Elections 2015).

Like Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe falls within the category of African states that generally experience presidential and parliamentary elections free from intimidation, violence and harassment (WPSI 2016).

## 2.7 Media impartiality throughout the elections

The political media serve as watchdogs of democratic government and as such are among the most important elements in a democracy. They exist in order to supply citizens with a full and fair account of the news and provide a wide range of political opinion thus enabling citizens to be informed and to participate in political life (Graham 2016). The link between the media and elections in particular is noted succinctly by Tidiane Dioh, Media Programme Officer with the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF), who asserts that "the role of journalists is essential for free elections and there cannot be free elections without free media and well-informed citizens" (UNESCO 2015). During election cycles, the media functions to scrutinise and discuss the successes and failures of candidates, governments, and EMBs, and to hold them to account (The Electoral Knowledge Network 2016). It is therefore imperative that the media remain impartial in their election coverage.

In the Comoros, the 2001 constitution protects freedom of speech and of the press, though self-censorship is reportedly widespread and over the years journalists have been accused of publishing 'false news' (Freedom House 2013b).

Although Guinea-Bissau's improved press freedom score in 2015 due to "a reduction in censorship and attacks on journalists in the wake of free and fair elections in April 2014" (Freedom House 2015d) is a positive step in the small state's democratisation process, several concerns were nevertheless raised about the impartiality of the media during the 2014 election. The lack of objectivity by journalists appears rooted in their dependence on means provided by the parties and candidates to cover campaign events (EISA Pre-Election Assessment Mission 2014a, 9-10). In their Election Observation Report, the EU mission singled out this lack of technical and financial resources as being the "key obstacle to an independent, ethical and impartial media" in Guinea-Bissau and noted that it resulted in limited citizens' access to information (EU EOM, 2014).<sup>17</sup>

In an effort to promote neutrality and impartiality in the public media in Cabo Verde, Electoral Law denotes that during the election campaign period media outlets are prohibited from publishing or broadcasting any kind of favourable or unfavourable pronouncements about a candidate, political party or coalition. Some of these regulations have been seen as unconstitutional by political and

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<sup>17</sup> "Covering events in exchange for financial or logistical contribution has been common practice for many years and has gradually lessened the reporters' self-initiative and the possible areas of journalistic investigation" (EU-EOM 2014).

social actors who argue that they conflict with the fundamental rights of freedom of expression, information and opinion (Salgado 2014). During the 2016 legislative elections, the African Union Election Observer Mission (2016a) welcomed “the legal steps taken to ensure the impartial election coverage by the media as well as the public media efforts to grant political parties comprehensive, fair and balanced coverage of their campaign activities.” However, concerns were raised over the lack of a level playing field as two parties did not meet the conditions of the legal provision<sup>18</sup> permitting free broadcast of parties’ campaign broadcasts, meaning that these parties were unable to use these channels to publicise their platforms to voters (AU EOM 2016a).

The Mauritian Constitution guarantees freedom of the press. During the 2014 national assembly elections, the EISA Pre-Election Assessment Mission (2014b) noted that procedurally article 1 of the Code of Conduct provided sufficiently for “equitable access to public and private media and balanced coverage of political views”. To bring this into effect, the Mauritian Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) used a formula<sup>19</sup> to allocate airtime to contesting political parties and party alliances on the basis of the number of their candidates and the number of outgoing members of Parliament from the party/party alliance. However, in practice, this formula was criticised by some as not contributing to the creation of a level playing field for small parties. Moreover, it was also reported that female candidates were portrayed in a negative light in the media (EISA Pre-Election Assessment Mission 2014b).

The Seychelles appears to be doing well in terms of providing a ‘level playing field’ for all parties during elections and ensuring that citizens are well-informed about all political views. In their observation of the 2015 Seychelles presidential elections, the SADC Mission commended the enactment of a new provision in section 97 of the Electoral Act which granted free and equal political broadcasting time to each candidate (SADC 2015). Similarly, the SADC Parliamentary Forum found significant improvement in the way the state media provided “fair, balanced and impartial coverage” of all candidates and noted the widespread use of social media especially by youths, political parties and local observer groups (Magnan and Uranie 2015).

Among the regulations of São Tomé and Príncipe’s Electoral Law that establishes the rights and duties of journalists in times of elections is Article 94 which requires radio and television stations to give equal treatment to different candidates. Article 95 provides that throughout the campaign period the airtime reserved for radio and television is shared equally by all candidates (Aranda 2011). Moreover, the media are prohibited from using expressions or images that may be libellous, or insult democratic institutions or that incite hatred, disorder, insurrection or violence.

## 2.8 Acceptance of the result by the electorate and political parties

It is apparent that having regular, credible elections is of primary importance to democracies, especially young democracies. It follows that when election

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<sup>18</sup> This provision applied only to parties that competed in at least five constituencies.

<sup>19</sup> This agreement committed the MBC to allocate half a unit of airtime per candidate to parties and alliances with not less than six candidates from the 20 constituencies on the mainland or with not less than two candidates in the constituency of Rodrigues; and an additional half a unit would be given to parties and alliances as long as their candidate was a member of the outgoing parliament.



results are accepted by the voting public, without undue contestation, it not only adds to national stability, but also strengthens the democratic process as it is evidence of trust in legitimate EMBS and institutions. However, when election results are not accepted and are challenged either indirectly through street protests and the like or directly through the court system, then trust in the electoral system is weakened and peace and security can be threatened as a result (Otaola 2014).

Regarding the Comoros, as referred to under section 2.4 of this article, Azali Assoumani took office in May 2016, after the presidential elections and “after violence and vote irregularities forced a partial re-run of the poll” (BBC News 2016). Five years previously, official election results gave 61 per cent of the vote to Ikililou Dhoinine. Opposition parties argued that the election was “marred by massive fraud, alleging that ballot boxes were stuffed, voting papers stolen and opposition observers chased away from polling stations”. Despite this, Dhoinine came to power as chief of state and head of government in May 2011, five months after gaining victory at the polls (BBC News 2016). Guinea-Bissau has had no election challenges to speak of save the brief challenge made by Nuno Nabiam noted earlier in the article under section 2.6.

As has been noted above, since 1991 democratic stability in Cabo Verde has increased since the establishment of multiparty elections. Nevertheless, there have been allegations of election fraud throughout that period too. In 2014 two election candidates for President Pires were sentenced to prison terms for election fraud during the February 2001 presidential elections. The victors of the 2016 local elections, the Movimento para a Democracia (Movement for Democracy) also claimed election fraud by the outgoing Partido Africano da Independência de Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde) (Afrol 2016). In Mauritius, over the decades, election results have generally been accepted by all candidates. Following the most recent elections in 2014 elections, the outgoing prime minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam graciously accepted defeat stating that “The electorate has made its choice, I humbly accept its decision, and I will now meet the President of the Republic to submit my resignation” (ENCA 2014). Section 2.4 of this article noted the tight presidential runoff between James Michel, incumbent, and Wavel Ramkalawan, the Seychelles National Party (SNP) leader, in December 2015. Although Ramkalawan’s petition to the Seychelles’ Constitutional Court to nullify those results was dismissed by the court, he was still insisting, in June 2016, that there had been some deficiencies and irregularities in the December elections (Uranie 2016b). São Tomé and Príncipe’s history of coups is evidence enough of the failure to acknowledge elections results.

### 3 CONCLUSION

In assessing the quality of elections in ASIDS, the following principles, as set out in the AU’s Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (2002), were discussed: elections are free and fair; elections take place legally under democratic constitutions; elections take place in a system which separates power and guarantees the independence of the judiciary; elections take place regularly, in accordance with Constitutional provisions; elections are managed by objective, credible and responsible electoral institutions; there is freedom from political violence and/or intimidation; there is media impartiality throughout the elections, and there is acceptance of the result by the electorate and political parties.



The following were key findings: in the latest rounds of legislative and/or presidential elections across the ASIDS, all have been declared free, fair and credible by a host of international, regional and domestic observers. Mauritius stands out as top of the pack with the most electoral integrity, which is understandable given its longer history as a democracy compared to the other ASIDS. Procedurally, all of the ASIDS have the necessary constitutional arrangements, bodies and laws in place to facilitate democratic elections. Cabo Verde, the Comoros, Mauritius and Guinea-Bissau have constitutionally protected separation of powers and independence of the judiciary. On paper, São Tomé and Príncipe and the Seychelles also have this in place. However, in practice, the independence of the judiciary has proven problematic for São Tomé and Príncipe and the Seychelles as judges, until very recently, have been manipulated by political parties in power in the case of the former, or have led by their individual preferences in the case of the latter. Since independence in 1968 Mauritius has witnessed ten free and fair democratic general elections. Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe and the Seychelles have conducted regular elections in accordance with their constitutions since 1991, 1991 and 1993 respectively. Having put aside its 20 year history of coups, democratic elections have been held regularly in the Comoros since 2006. Guinea-Bissau has also had regular elections, although not in a democratic environment, and regular coups since independence. A move towards a more stable, regular democratic election took place in 2014 but a trend in this is yet to be seen.

All of the ASIDS have electoral management bodies responsible for organising and conducting elections. Electoral Commissions in the Comoros and Guinea-Bissau have had to rely on international partnerships and donations in order to manage their electoral processes. The multi-member Electoral Commission in the Seychelles is a positive step forward in its democratic consolidation as it replaces the previous sole custodianship of elections by an Electoral Commissioner. As regards election violence, the ASIDS appear to have moved successfully away from the bullet in favour of the ballot which is remarkable given their extremely volatile histories. Nevertheless, some instances of intimidation and abusive language use are still reported and alcohol abuse, threats and harassment during election campaigning remain a cause for concern.

The enactment of various electoral laws that ensure media impartiality and prohibit favouritism or libellous storytelling during election cycles are positive developments across the ASIDS, although some stakeholders in Cabo Verde in particular have argued that these laws are in tension with the fundamental right to freedom of expression. Impartiality is not always guaranteed especially when a lack of financial resources makes media dependent on parties for the means to cover events as is the case in Guinea-Bissau, where a lack of journalistic objectivity is apparent. A level playing field for all parties and/or candidates appears evident in the Seychelles and São Tomé and Príncipe but criticisms have arisen in Mauritius and Cabo Verde where smaller parties have not always benefitted from free airtime allotments. Continued self-censorship of the press in the Comoros is also problematic especially as a key function of the media during elections is to provide honest and full coverage of the candidates and parties and to ensure that citizens are well informed. It also appears that electorates in the ASIDS have for the most part accepted election results. Those who oppose results tend to be competing opposition political parties and/or their candidates who allege election fraud on the part of the victor.

Using the AU principles governing democratic elections as the key indicators, it appears that the quality of elections in the ASIDS is mixed depending in large part on the length of democratic stability enjoyed by each state. Mauritius fares quite well relative to the other ASIDS but it has enjoyed a more stable democracy for a longer period. Overall, many of the procedural indicators of good quality democratic elections are present in all of the ASIDS, even within Guinea-Bissau which is not yet regarded as democratic but looks to be moving in that direction. However, in practice inter-institutional instability in some cases, failure to adhere to constitutional amendments in others, some instances of continued harassment and a lack of financial and technical resources have impacted electoral quality.

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# EXTENDING THE SPATIAL ANALOGY: HYPERSPATIAL DIAGRAMS OF PARTY COMPETITION

Sean FLEMING<sup>1</sup>

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*In his 2011 Presidential Address to the American Political Science Association, Henry E. Brady argued that spatial diagrams are fundamental to the discipline and that “elaborating and refining these spatial diagrams is an important agenda item for political science.” This article tests the limitations of spatial diagrams of party competition. It explores the use of the spatial analogy in politics, identifies the limitations of existing spatial diagrams, and shows that the geometric concept of hyperspace can be used to overcome these limitations. The central argument is that hyperspace, or space with four or more dimensions, allows us to extend the spatial analogy and to transcend the limitations of spatial diagrams. Four- and five-axis radar charts provide rough approximations of hyperspatial diagrams, and they capture important differences between parties that two- and three-dimensional diagrams obscure. The article concludes by suggesting other applications of hyperspace in political science.*

**Key words:** party competition; spatial diagrams; hyperspace; left/right; radar charts; analogy.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Donald Stokes (1963, 368) once remarked that “[t]he use of spatial ideas to interpret party competition is a universal phenomenon of modern politics.” Half a century later, spatial concepts remain ubiquitous. Both academic and popular literature on political parties is peppered with references to spaces, positions, distances, proximities, dimensions, axes, landscapes, slopes, spectra, and distributions. Spatial concepts are so pervasive that, as Benoit and Laver (2012, 195) argue, it is nearly impossible to discuss party systems without them.

Spatial concepts have produced two powerful analytical devices: spatial models

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<sup>1</sup> Sean FLEMING is a PhD candidate in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge. His research interests include political analogies, the use of diagrams in political science, and international relations theory. The author thanks Pablo Policzer and Anthony Sayers for their comments on previous versions.



and spatial diagrams. Whereas spatial models are mathematical simulations (e.g., Banks et al. 2002; Enelow and Hinich 2004; Laver and Sergenti 2011; Poole 2005), spatial diagrams are pictures or visual representations (e.g., Hinich et al. 2012, 87, 90; Kitschelt 1995, 466–467; Kollman et al. 1998, 148–150; Rabinowitz and Macdonald 1989, 100, 108). For example, Downs' (1957a, b) median voter theorem is a spatial model, but the graphs that he uses to illustrate it are spatial diagrams. Although many analyses of party competition employ both models and diagrams, they are distinct analytical devices with different applications and limitations. Most importantly, while spatial *models* have long been able to accommodate any finite number of dimensions (Davis et al. 1970; McKelvey and Schofield 1986; Poole and Rosenthal 1985), existing spatial *diagrams* can represent only three dimensions at a time. We can represent higher-dimensional spaces mathematically but not visually.

Is it possible to construct spatial diagrams of party competition with more than three dimensions? This article shows that diagrams with four or more dimensions are possible and potentially useful. The geometric concept of hyperspace, or space with four or more dimensions, can be used to extend the spatial analogy and to transcend the limitations of spatial diagrams. Although spatial diagrams are “iconic for political science in much the same way as supply-and-demand curves are for economics” (Brady 2011, 326), hyperspatial diagrams have not yet been explored. Despite all of the discussion of multidimensional party competition, our spatial diagrams can represent party competition along only two or three policy dimensions at once. Hyperspatial diagrams might be especially useful for representing Central and Eastern European party systems, in which parties often compete along multiple dimensions (Albright 2010; Bakker et al. 2012).

The article has five sections. The first section examines the limitations of the spatial analogy on which spatial diagrams depend. The second section reviews the literature on spatial diagrams and shows that scholars of party competition have increased the analytical power of their diagrams by increasing the number of dimensions from one to three. The third section shows that there are compelling reasons to consider diagrams with four or more dimensions. Two- and three-dimensional diagrams work well to represent party competition when parties' positions on the salient issues are highly correlated, but the diagrams can be misleading when party competition occurs on three or more weakly correlated sets of issues. The fourth section explains the concept of hyperspace, demonstrates that it can be used to create diagrams with any number of dimensions, and presents several examples to demonstrate how hyperspatial diagrams might be applied. Finally, the fifth section anticipates and addresses potential problems and criticisms. The article concludes by suggesting additional applications of hyperspace in political science.

## 2 THE SPATIAL ANALOGY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

Spatial language in politics was once perfectly literal, but it is now almost exclusively analogical. As Benoit and Laver (2012, 195) remind us, “the attribution of spatial characteristics to policy differences is essentially a metaphor.”<sup>2</sup> Political ideas do not literally have positions, dimensions, or

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<sup>2</sup> The idea of ‘political space’ might instead be called a ‘conceptual metaphor’ – a way of understanding one type of subject-matter in terms of another (see Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Following Gentner (1983), ‘analogy’ is used here to avoid the ambiguities and literary connotations of ‘metaphor.’

extensions; we use spatial concepts to *represent* political ideas. But as Landau (1961, 331) warned, “though figurative language can provide powerful analytical tools, it can also be the source of distortion and misrepresentation.” The limitations of the spatial analogy ultimately determine the limitations of spatial diagrams.

‘Left’ and ‘right’ are the oldest and most well known spatial concepts in politics. The terms originally denoted the locations of parties in the French legislature at the time of the French Revolution. While the royalist parties sat to the right of the speaker, the revolutionary parties sat to the left. Gaucher (1996, 243) dates the left/right division of the French legislature to the summer of 1789, but he notes that ‘left’ and ‘right’ did not enter the political lexicon until years later. Locations in the legislature gradually became associated with the policy preferences of the parties that occupied them, and, by 1819–20, the analogical meanings of the terms had become dominant – at least in France (Gaucher 1996, 249). ‘Left’ and ‘right’ began as literal descriptions of the locations of parties but have become nearly universal symbols for sets of policy preferences.

The analogical usages of spatial concepts prevail in modern political science. We employ spatial concepts to represent the policy preferences of parties and voters, not their physical attributes. For example, Boix (2007) writes that “voters eventually vote on the basis of the alternative *positions* taken by the different parties” (ibid., 501), that the industrial revolution “generated two additional *dimensions* of conflict” (ibid., 502), and that “to explain party systems we need to understand the type and *distribution* of preferences of voters, that is, the nature of the policy *space*” (ibid., 504; emphasis added). A position represents the policy preferences of a party; a dimension represents a set of correlated policy issues; a distribution represents the preferences of each voter on each set of policy issues; and a policy space represents the number of salient dimensions and the distribution of voters within a party system. Although political scientists tend to reify party positions and policy spaces, our spatial language about party competition is analogical.

Gentner’s (1983) structure-mapping theory provides a systematic way to probe the limitations of analogies. According to Gentner (1983, 156), “an analogy is an assertion that a relational structure that normally applies in one domain can be applied in another domain.” When domains, or objects of inquiry, are structurally similar – that is, when their parts stand in similar relations – it is possible to transfer knowledge and concepts from one domain to another. For example, because electrons revolve around nuclei just as planets revolve around stars, many astronomical concepts are applicable to atoms. The mathematical relationships between distance, mass, and attraction force for planets and stars consequently apply to electrons and nuclei (ibid., 159–163). The domain from which knowledge is transferred is called the *base*, and the domain to which knowledge is transferred is called the *target* (ibid., 157). The structural differences between the base domain and the target domain determine the limitations of an analogy.

The target domain of the spatial analogy is policy preferences, and the base domain is space. Policy preferences are structurally similar to space in two ways. First, both policy preferences and space comprise several independent vectors or magnitudes. The sets of issues that constitute policy preferences, like the dimensions that constitute space, are mutually independent. Just as one can move laterally without moving vertically, one can become more economically liberal without becoming more socially liberal. Second, both policy preferences and space permit graded distinctions. The differences between policy

preferences, like the differences between spatial locations, are graded rather than binary. The spatial analogy “allows one to conceive simultaneously of both radical opposition and a continuous, infinitely subdividable spectrum” (Gaucher 1996, 249). One need not be absolutely left or right, either spatially or politically. It is possible to be far-left, far-right, or anywhere in between. The spatial analogy is powerful because it provides an intuitive way to represent policy preferences as sets of independent vectors that are subject to graded distinctions.

The structural difference that limits the spatial analogy is that policy preferences, unlike space, consist of more than three vectors. Space has only three dimensions, but policy preferences consist of dozens, if not thousands, of independent issues. For example, one’s views on foreign policy, fiscal policy, monetary policy, environmental policy, and drug policy could all vary independently of each other, which seems to imply that each constitutes a distinct dimension. The apparent limitation of the spatial analogy is that the number of policy issues exceeds the number of dimensions.

However, because voters’ and parties’ preferences on some issues are highly correlated, it is unnecessary to treat each policy issue as a separate dimension (Enelow and Hinich 1984; Hinich et al. 2012; Poole and Rosenthal 1991). Benoit and Laver’s (2012, 198) example is apt: “Knowing someone’s views on legalizing abortion and marijuana makes it easier to predict their views on same-sex marriage.” It is usually unnecessary to have separate dimensions for abortion policy, drug policy, and marriage policy; a single dimension that represents social policy will almost always suffice. Nevertheless, as I explain below, the spatial analogy becomes strained when parties’ positions on the salient issues are weakly correlated. Recent empirical research suggests that parties in some systems, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, compete along several independent dimensions (Albright 2010; Bakker et al. 2012; Wheatley et al. 2012), but spatial concepts limit our visual representations of party competition to three dimensions at a time.

In short, the main limitation of the spatial analogy is that party competition sometimes has more than three dimensions. The problem is that spatial diagrams inherit the limitations of the spatial analogy. While our spatial models can accommodate any number of dimensions, our spatial diagrams are limited to three dimensions at a time.

### 3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPATIAL DIAGRAMS: FROM ONE DIMENSION TO THREE

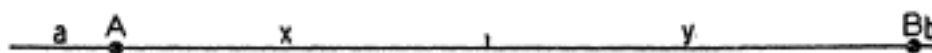
Spatial diagrams are the best-known applications of the spatial analogy. From their humble beginnings in the left/right continuum, they have become some of the most common analytical devices in political science. This section explains the logic of spatial diagrams and shows that scholars of party competition have increased the analytical power of these diagrams by increasing the number of dimensions.<sup>3</sup> Hotelling (1929) proposed a diagram with one dimension, Downs (1957a, b) added a second dimension, and Kollman et al. (1998) added a third. It appears that scholars of party competition have stretched the spatial analogy to its limits.

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<sup>3</sup> For a comprehensive review of the various ways that political scientists have used spatial diagrams, see Brady (2011).

Although the left/right continuum dates back to the nineteenth century, Hotelling (1929, 54–55) first suggests that it can be used to explain party competition. He applies the economic theory of duopolistic spatial competition to political parties. He argues that, just as firms tend to locate next to each other along a road or a railway in order to maximize their market shares, parties tend to locate next to each other along the left/right continuum in order to maximize their vote shares.

FIGURE 1: HOTELLING'S LEFT-RIGHT DIAGRAM<sup>4</sup>



Because shoppers and voters tend to choose the closest option, *ceteris paribus*, firms and political parties tend to move toward the centre to maximize the number of shoppers or voters that they are closest to (ibid., 55). The platforms of political parties converge for the same reason that retailers set up shop in adjacent buildings. Thus began both spatial diagrams and spatial models of party competition.

Downs (1957a, b) greatly increases the analytical power of Hotelling's diagram by adding a second dimension. Whereas Hotelling (1929, 45) assumes that voters are evenly distributed along the left/right continuum, Downs (1957a, 117–118; 1957b, 142–144) treats the distribution of voters as a variable. He follows Hotelling as he plots left/right policy preferences on the x-axis, but his innovation is to add a y-axis that represents the number of voters.

FIGURE 2: DOWNS' NORMAL DISTRIBUTION

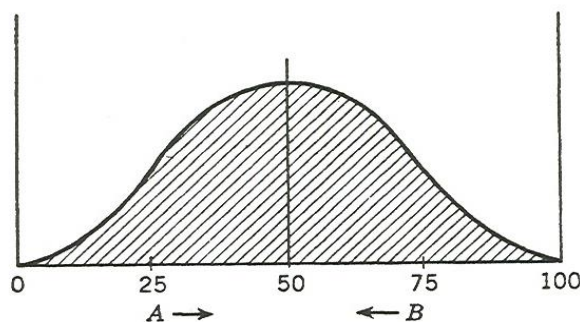
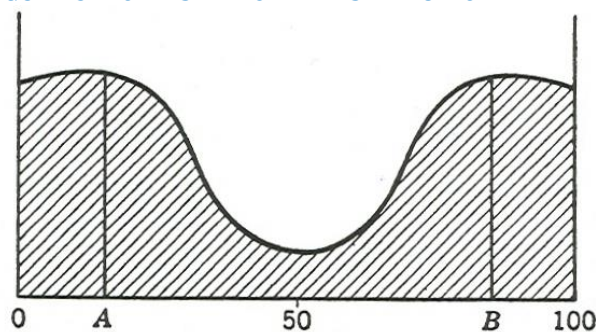


FIGURE 3: DOWNS' BIMODAL DISTRIBUTION<sup>5</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Figure 1 is from Hotelling (1929, 45).

<sup>5</sup> Figures 2 and 3 are from Downs (1957a, 118–119).

Downs argues that the distribution of voters along the continuum determines the structure of party competition. If voters are normally distributed, then the system is likely to have two parties with similar platforms (1957a, 117–118; 1957b, 143). If the distribution of voters is bimodal or multimodal, then there is likely to be a two-party or multiparty system in which the platforms of the parties diverge (1957a, 118–122; 1957b, 143–144). Downs' diagrams capture the relationship between the distribution of voters and the structure of the party system.

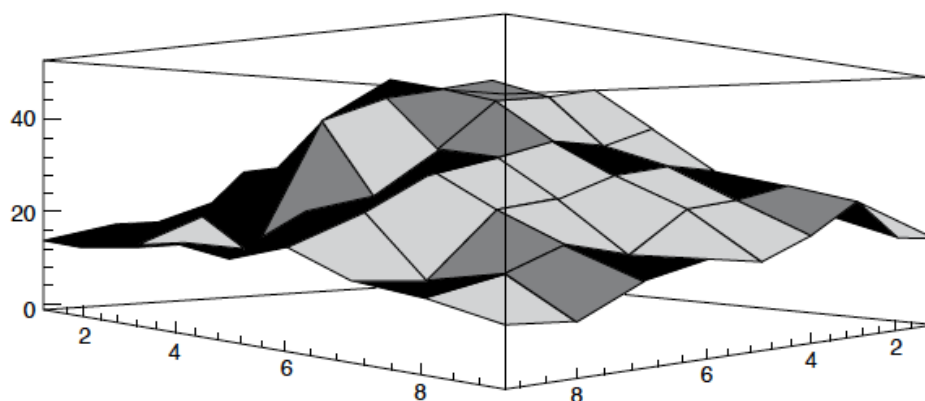
The main advantage of Downs' two-dimensional diagrams is that, unlike Hotelling's one-dimensional diagram, they can explain why parties' platforms do not always converge. For example, the platforms of the Democratic and Republican parties have diverged significantly in recent years (e.g., Fiorina 1999). Hotelling cannot explain this divergence because he assumes that voters are evenly distributed along the left/right continuum. This assumption, coupled with the assumption that parties are rational vote-seekers, implies that parties' platforms should always move toward the centre. Downs, on the other hand, can easily explain the divergence of the two parties because he treats the distribution of voters as a variable. When the distribution is bimodal, as it is in the US, Downs' diagram predicts a two-party system in which the platforms of the parties diverge. His addition of a second dimension yields an enormous analytical payoff.

Despite the improvements of Downs' diagram, it inherits one of the fundamental problems of Hotelling's. Both diagrams represent party competition along a single left/right policy dimension (Downs 1957a, 115–117; Hotelling 1929, 54–55). Since the 1960s, many studies have found that parties often compete along two or more policy dimensions simultaneously (Albright 2010; Bakker et al. 2012; Davis et al. 1970; Kitschelt 1995; Stokes 1963). For example, Enelow and Hinich (1984, 55) argue that "American politics is best characterized by two left/right dimensions representing social and economic policy" (see also Hinich et al. 2012). If voters' or parties' preferences on social policy and economic policy are weakly correlated, then it is misleading to plot both sets of policies on the same dimension. A party that appears to be centrist in Downs' or Hotelling's diagram could in fact be far left on one dimension and far right on the other, such as a classical liberal or libertarian party. Downs (1957a, 115) anticipates the problem with using one dimension to represent all policy issues, but he does not attempt to solve it.

Kollman et al. (1998) propose a three-dimensional diagram of party competition that overcomes the common problem with the diagrams of Hotelling and Downs.<sup>6</sup> Taking the spatial analogy to the extreme, they call this diagram an "electoral landscape."

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<sup>6</sup> Davis et al. (1970, 431) proposed a three-dimensional diagram almost three decades earlier, but Kollman et al.'s (1998) diagram is used here because it is more recent and more intuitive.

FIGURE 4: KOLLMAN, MILLER AND PAGE'S ELECTORAL LANDSCAPE<sup>7</sup>

Following Downs, Kollman et al. (1998, 147) plot the number of voters on the y-axis. The “elevation” of the landscape at a given point represents the proportion of the vote that the corresponding platform will win. Their innovation is to add a second policy dimension. Each of the horizontal axes represents a different set of policies (ibid., 148). For example, the x-axis might represent social policy, and the z-axis might represent economic policy. Whereas two-dimensional diagrams compress all policy issues into a single left/right dimension, three-dimensional diagrams can simultaneously represent two sets of policies and the distribution of voters.

Kollman et al.’s diagram can much more accurately represent systems in which party competition occurs along two independent policy dimensions. Several studies have found that two-dimensional party competition is common, especially in Europe (Albright 2010; Kitschelt 1995, 458–465; Wheatley et al. 2012). For example, in Slovakia, there is “nearly no correlation between the two dimensions at all” (Bakker et al. 2012, 229). Knowing whether a party is socially left or right is not useful to predict whether it is economically left or right. The Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU-DS), for instance, is economically far-right but socially left. If the SDKU-DS were plotted on a single left/right dimension, as in Hotelling’s or Downs’ diagram, then it would misleadingly be placed near the centre. Kollman et al.’s diagram provides a more accurate representation of the Slovakian party system because it can account for the mutual independence of the social and economic dimensions. It can therefore capture the difference between the classical liberal SDKU-DS and the centre-right Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) (see Bakker et al. 2012, 228–229). A third dimension further increases the complexity of the diagram but is often worth the cost.

The progression from Hotelling’s one-dimensional diagram to Kollman et al.’s three-dimensional diagram yields two increases in analytical power. First, Downs’ addition of a second dimension that represents vote share allows the diagram to capture the relationship between the distribution of voters and the structure of the party system. A two-dimensional diagram is necessary to represent systems in which parties’ platforms do not converge, such as the contemporary US. Second, Kollman et al.’s addition of a third dimension allows the diagram to represent systems in which there are two independent policy dimensions. A Downsian diagram with one policy dimension can accurately represent party competition in the UK or Spain, where voters’ and parties’

<sup>7</sup> Figure 4 is from Kollman et al. (1998, 148).



preferences on all of the salient issues are highly correlated, but it will not suffice for two-dimensional Slovakia or Germany (Bakker et al. 2012, 228–229; Laver and Sergenti 2011, 17–18). When party competition is multidimensional, three-dimensional diagrams are analytically superior.

#### 4 THE LIMITATIONS OF SPATIAL DIAGRAM

Diagrams of party competition with more than three dimensions are worth considering. Kollman et al.'s (1998) three-dimensional diagram can accurately represent party competition along two policy dimensions, but it encounters difficulty when the number of policy dimensions exceeds two. When there are three or more salient dimensions, Kollman et al. resort to a *ceteris paribus* assumption to make their diagram work. They plot two sets of policy issues "with all other issue positions fixed" (ibid., 148). As a result, some crucial differences between parties become obscured. For example, as Albright (2010, 702) shows, the social and economic policy dimensions cannot adequately represent nationalism. A third policy dimension is necessary to capture the differences between Europe's conservative parties and neo-nationalist parties. Both tend to be economically and socially right-wing, but conservative parties are more tolerant of immigration and European integration. Spatial diagrams have met the limitations of the spatial analogy. Even three-dimensional diagrams encounter cases of party competition that they cannot accommodate.

Spatial diagrams are even more limited than the spatial analogy on which they depend. Recall the main limitation of the spatial analogy: three-dimensional space can represent only three sets of policies. However, existing three-dimensional diagrams of party competition have only *two* policy dimensions. Unless we adopt Hotelling's (1929, 45) unsatisfactory assumption that voters are evenly distributed across each policy dimension, one dimension must be used to represent the distribution of voters. It is necessary, as Downs (1957a, 117–118) and Kollman et al. (1998, 147–148) recognize, to use the vertical dimension to represent the distribution of voters along the other dimension(s). The result is that three-dimensional diagrams can represent only two sets of policies.

Recent empirical research shows that parties in some systems compete along three or more policy dimensions. Bakker et al. (2012) use expert surveys to determine the dimensionality of party competition in the European Union, and they find that three dimensions are present in all countries: "the traditional economic left/right dimension, the social left/right dimension, and the pro-/anti-European integration dimension" (ibid., 221). In some countries, such as the UK, parties' positions on each dimension are so highly correlated that the three dimensions effectively collapse into one (ibid., 236). In others, such as Greece, Latvia, and Estonia, parties' positions on the three dimensions are so weakly correlated that they are effectively independent. Wheatley et al. (2014) also find three independent dimensions of competition in Scotland. In a broader study of advanced democracies, Albright (2010, 700) finds that, "at a generous minimum, four dimensions are required to explain a reasonable amount of variance in the policy positions of parties." There remains debate about exactly how many latent dimensions are present in each party system, but it is clear that party competition often occurs along three or more policy dimensions.

Moreover, our spatial models have already far outstripped our spatial diagrams. Davis et al. (1970) developed a spatial model that can accommodate any finite

number of dimensions nearly half a century ago, and, although lower-dimensional models suffice for most purposes (Enelow and Hinch 1984; Poole and Rosenthal 1991), spatial models are not limited to three dimensions. Heckman and Snyder (1997), for instance, estimate that roll-call voting in Congress is between six- and eight-dimensional (cf. Poole and Rosenthal 1985). However, our spatial diagrams still limit us to only three dimensions at a time. Although we can mathematically model party competition in any number of dimensions, our diagrams allow us to visualize party competition in only three dimensions.

In short, existing spatial diagrams of party competition have two limitations. First, while party competition sometimes occurs along three or more policy dimensions, existing diagrams can represent only two at a time. A two- or three-dimensional diagram will sometimes suffice but will sometimes produce significant distortions. Just as libertarian parties appear to be centrist parties in Downs' diagram, neo-nationalist parties appear to be conservative parties in Kollman et al.'s diagram. Second, although we can mathematically model party competition in any number of dimensions, existing diagrams allow us to visualize only three dimensions at a time. If diagrams with more than three dimensions are possible, then they are at least worth exploring.

## 5 HYPERSPATIAL DIAGRAMS OF PARTY COMPETITION

Despite that spatial concepts are ubiquitous in politics, political scientists have not yet explored the utility of *hyperspace*, or space with four or more dimensions. The concept of hyperspace has been employed in the natural sciences for decades, including in quantum mechanics and thermodynamics (see Piaggio 1930, 267). It is also potentially useful for creating spatial diagrams of multidimensional party competition. Hyperspatial geometric theory makes it possible to create spatial diagrams with more than three dimensions, which allows us to create  $n$ -dimensional diagrams to fit our  $n$ -dimensional data.

Talk of additional dimensions sounds fanciful, but there is nothing mysterious or metaphysical about it. Higher dimensions in the geometric sense are not parallel universes or hidden realms. In analytical or Cartesian geometry, dimensions are simply "coordinates that specify some quantity of an object or a phenomenon" (Banchoff 1990, 5). For example, a map has two or three dimensions – latitude, longitude, and sometimes altitude – each of which corresponds to a coordinate. To say that a space has  $n$  dimensions is to say that a point in that space has  $n$  coordinates (Banchoff 1990, 157–158; Eckhart 1968, 27–28; Kendall 2004, 1–2). A point in a one-dimensional space has one coordinate, ( $x$ ); a point in a two-dimensional space has two coordinates, ( $x, y$ ); a point in a three-dimensional space has three coordinates, ( $x, y, z$ ); a point in a four-dimensional space has four coordinates, ( $x, y, z, w$ ); and so on. A point in hyperspace is a point whose description requires more than three coordinates.

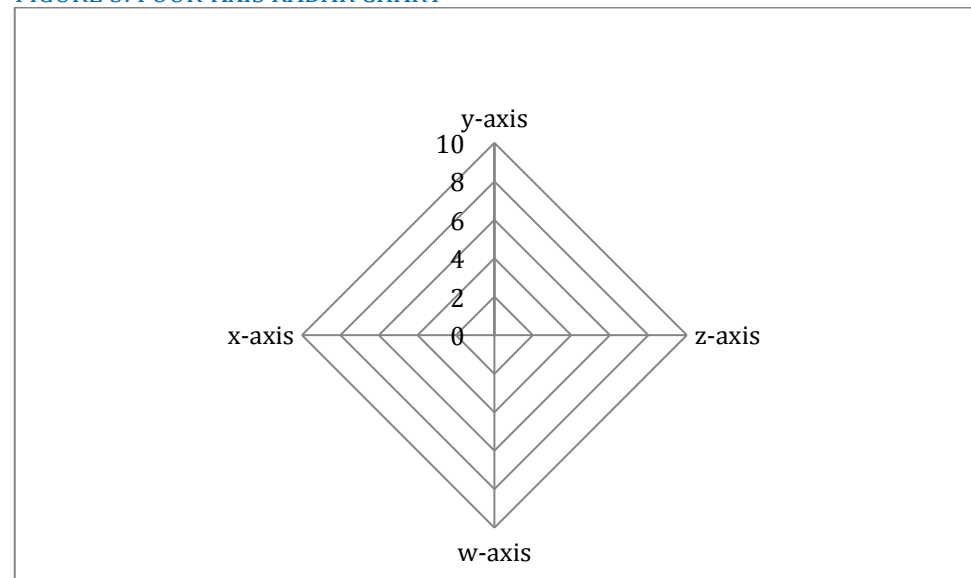
Alternatively, but consistently with the previous conception, dimensions can be conceived as degrees of freedom (e.g., Banchoff 1990, 5; Lindgren 1968, 2–4; Sommerville 1958, 7–9). For example, a chess piece has two degrees of freedom, so it moves in a two-dimensional space. It can move laterally, longitudinally, or a combination of both, but it cannot move vertically (except in 3D chess). The dimensionality of a point in space similarly corresponds to its degrees of freedom, or the number of vectors on which it can move: "A point in a line is said to have one degree of freedom, in a plane two, in a hyperplane three, and in

the hyperspatial region four" (Sommerville 1958, 7). A point in a line is one-dimensional because it can only move back and fourth along a single vector, while a point in hyperspace is four-dimensional because it can move along four vectors.<sup>8</sup> The 'coordinate' and 'degrees of freedom' interpretations of dimensions are substantially the same (Banchoff 1990, 5–7). The common idea is that dimensions represent values that can vary independently of each other, whether we call these values coordinates or degrees. Hyperspace is any space that permits more than three degrees of freedom *or* any space in which a description of a point requires more than three coordinates.

Although hyperspace does not really exist in our three-dimensional world, the concept is useful for creating diagrams. It allows us to construct spatial diagrams with as many dimensions as the data that we wish to visualize. Using the coordinate interpretation of dimensions, it is possible to create four-dimensional diagrams to match four-dimensional data. The position of each party in a system can be represented by a set of four coordinates ( $x, y, z, w$ ), each of which corresponds to a different dimension. The coordinates can then be plotted in a four-dimensional space to create a four-dimensional diagram.

Although it is impossible to accurately represent hyperspace on a two-dimensional page, a radar chart provides a good approximation.<sup>9</sup> Each axis on a radar chart represents a coordinate, and the distance from the origin on each axis represents the value of that coordinate. A set of  $n$  coordinates can be plotted on an  $n$ -axis radar chart to create an  $n$ -dimensional diagram. For example, the following radar chart (with no data) represents a four-dimensional space.

FIGURE 5: FOUR-AXIS RADAR CHART



Unlike on a line graph, the vertical and horizontal lines on each side of the origin represent *different* axes. The radar chart provides a good approximation of four-dimensional space because it permits four degrees of freedom; the

<sup>8</sup> Some geometers use 'hyperspace' to mean four-dimensional space, and others use 'hyperspace' more generally to mean  $n$ -dimensional space in which  $n > 3$ . The latter meaning will be used from now on.

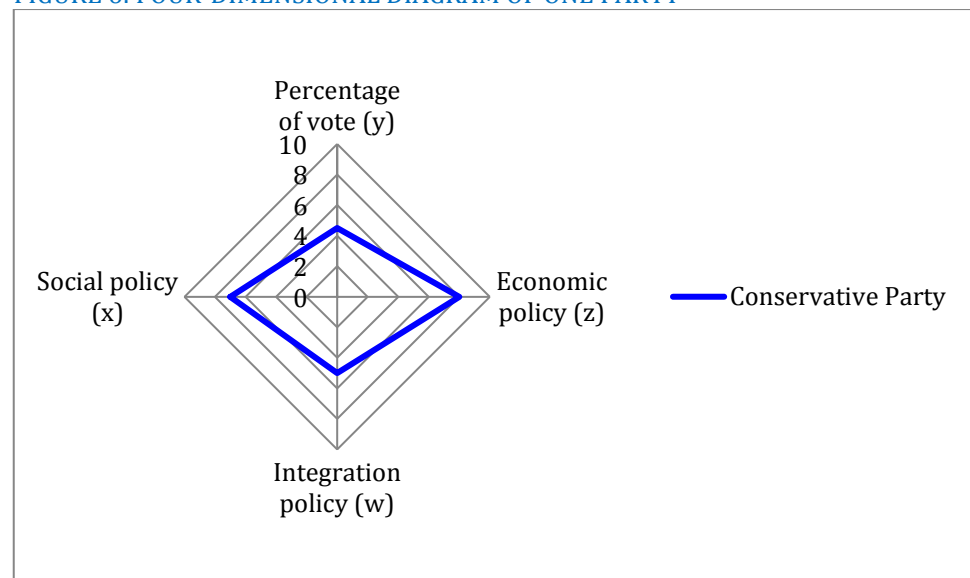
<sup>9</sup> The author has found no other works in political science that use radar charts and very few works in other social sciences that use them (Schmid et al. 2003; Shrestha 2002). The diagrams of party competition presented here were developed from scratch. The graphing function in Microsoft Excel 2008 was used to generate the radar charts from spreadsheet data.

values on each of the four axes can vary independently. However, in a strict sense, radar charts are not hyperspatial. Each dimension in hyperspace is orthogonal or perpendicular to each of the others (Sommerville 1958, 30–37), but the axes in radar charts are not. Nevertheless, radar charts provide the best illustrations of hyperspatial diagrams that two-dimensional surfaces permit.

The logic of hyperspatial diagrams is best demonstrated through examples. Consider a hypothetical country, Hyperpolis, in which party competition occurs along four dimensions. The position of each party is represented by a set of four coordinates  $(x, y, z, w)$ , each of which represents a scale from 1 to 10. The  $x$ -coordinate represents the party's position on social policy, with 1 being 'fully libertarian' and 10 being 'fully traditional.' The  $z$ -coordinate represents the party's position on economic policy, with 1 being 'command economy' and 10 being 'laissez-faire.' The  $w$ -coordinate represents the party's position on regional integration, with 1 being 'fully integrationist' and 10 being 'fully isolationist.' Finally, the  $y$ -coordinate represents the party's share of the vote given its other coordinates, with 0 being '0 percent' and 10 being '100 percent.'<sup>10</sup> A four-dimensional diagram of the party system can be created by plotting the coordinates for each party on a four-axis radar chart.

First, consider the position of a single party in the four-dimensional space. The Conservative Party of Hyperpolis is socially conservative, pro-market, centrist on integration, and supported by 45 percent of the electorate. It has the coordinates  $(7, 4.5, 8, 5)$  according to the schema above. Plotting the coordinates on the radar chart in Figure 5 produces the following diagram.

FIGURE 6: FOUR-DIMENSIONAL DIAGRAM OF ONE PARTY

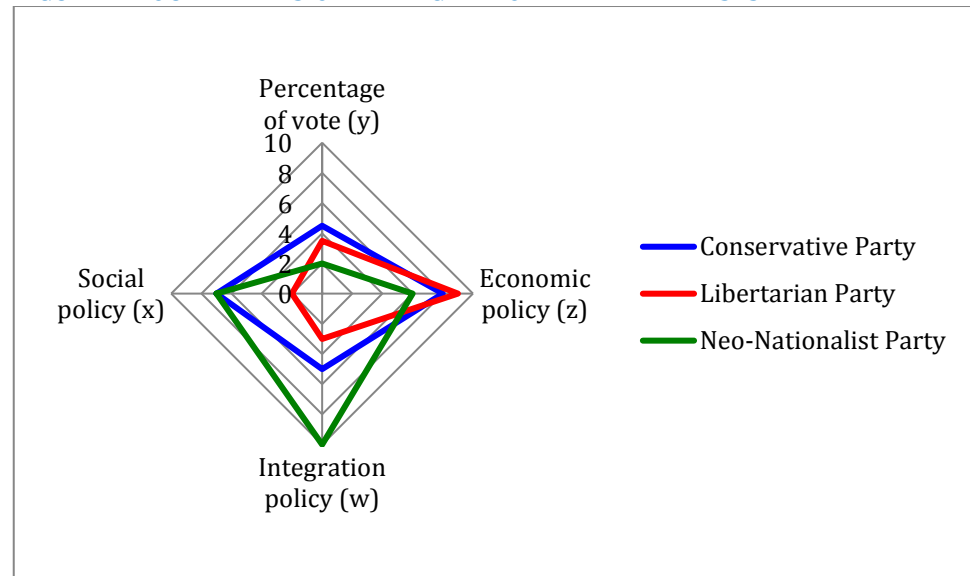


The quadrilateral represents the position of the Conservative Party, and its vertices represent the party's position on each dimension. The  $x$ -axis shows that the Conservative Party scores a 7 on the social policy scale; the  $y$ -axis shows that it wins 45 percent of the vote; the  $z$ -axis shows that it scores an 8 on the economic policy scale; and the  $w$ -axis shows that it scores a 5 on the integration policy scale. Just as a point represents the position of a party in a two- or three-dimensional diagram, a quadrilateral represents the position of a party on a four-dimensional radar chart. Four-dimensional party competition can be

<sup>10</sup> The  $y$ -axis of the radar chart, unlike the other axes, represents a scale from 0 to 10 so that the lowest value is at the origin.

visualized by plotting the coordinates for each party in a given system on the same radar chart. Suppose that the party system of Hyperpolis includes the Conservative Party (7, 4.5, 8, 5), the Libertarian Party (2, 3.5, 9, 3), and the Neo-Nationalist Party (7, 2, 6, 10). Plotting each set of coordinates on a radar chart produces the following diagram.

FIGURE 7: FOUR-DIMENSIONAL DIAGRAM OF THREE-PARTY SYSTEM



The blue quadrilateral represents the Conservative Party, the red quadrilateral represents the Libertarian Party, and the green quadrilateral represents the Neo-Nationalist party. The areas of overlap between the quadrilaterals indicate similarities between the parties.

The greater the overlap between the parties on the  $x$ -axis,  $z$ -axis, and  $w$ -axis, the more similar are their policies. The Conservative Party and the Neo-Nationalist Party are the most similar. They overlap almost completely on the  $x$ -axis and the  $z$ -axis, which indicates that their positions on social policy and economic policy are similar, but their much smaller area of overlap on the  $w$ -axis indicates that they differ significantly on integration policy. The Conservative Party and the Libertarian Party are less similar. They overlap the most on the economic axis, but they share less space on the integration axis and very little on the social axis. The Libertarian Party and the Neo-Nationalist Party differ the most. Although they share some space on the economic axis, they have hardly any overlap on the social and integration axes. The policy differences between the three 'right-wing' parties appear vividly on the four-axis radar chart.

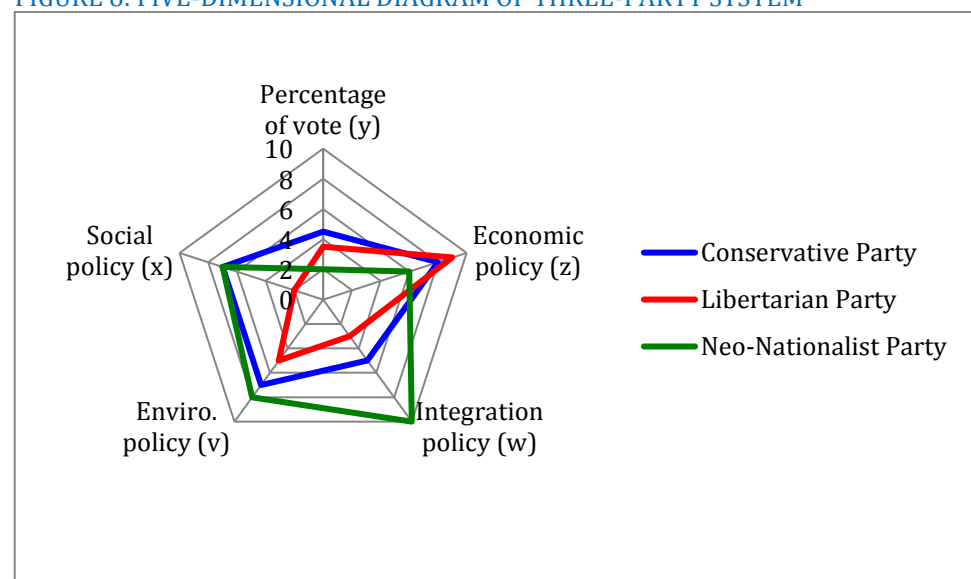
The proportion of overlap between the parties on the  $y$ -axis indicates their relative vote shares. The Conservative Party occupies more than twice as much space as the Neo-Nationalist Party, which indicates that the former receives more than twice as many votes. The much greater overlap between the Libertarian Party and the Conservative Party shows that the latter has only a slight lead. The Neo-Nationalist Party occupies much less space than either of the other two parties, which indicates that it is a distant third party. The greater the overlap between parties on the  $y$ -axis, the closer they are in terms of vote share.

Although the example of Hyperpolis is artificial, it demonstrates well how hyperspatial diagrams work. A three-party system with only a conservative party, a libertarian party, and a neo-nationalist party is especially unrealistic,

but it is also especially illustrative. A four-dimensional diagram clearly reveals differences between the types of ‘right-wing’ parties that two- and three-dimensional diagrams obscure. For example, Downsian diagrams (with one policy dimension) misrepresent libertarian parties as centrist parties. The Libertarian Party of Hyperpolis has the coordinates (2, 3.5, 9, 3), which indicates that it is socially libertarian, economically laissez-faire, and integrationist. If the policy coordinates for the Libertarian Party (2, 9, 3) were averaged to produce a single left/right coordinate ( $x$ ), then the party would be slightly left of centre ( $x = 4.7$ ). Similarly, electoral landscapes (with two policy dimensions) exaggerate the similarities between conservative and neo-nationalist parties. Although they occupy similar positions on the social and economic dimensions, conservative and neo-nationalist parties differ greatly on the integration dimension. A three-dimensional diagram with only a social dimension, an economic dimension, and a distribution dimension fails to capture the isolationism and xenophobia of neo-nationalist parties. A four-dimensional diagram illustrates just how much conservative, libertarian, and neo-nationalist parties differ.

However, the number of dimensions need not be limited to four. It is possible to construct hyperspatial diagrams with any number of dimensions. For example, suppose that Hyperpolis’s party system has an environmental policy dimension that correlates weakly with the other three. The  $v$ -coordinate represents the party’s position on environmental policy, with 1 being ‘environmentalist’ and 10 being ‘anti-environmentalist.’ The Conservative Party scores a 7, the Libertarian Party scores a 5, and the Neo-Nationalist Party scores an 8. The following diagram of Hyperpolis’s party system includes the environmental policy dimension.

FIGURE 8: FIVE-DIMENSIONAL DIAGRAM OF THREE-PARTY SYSTEM

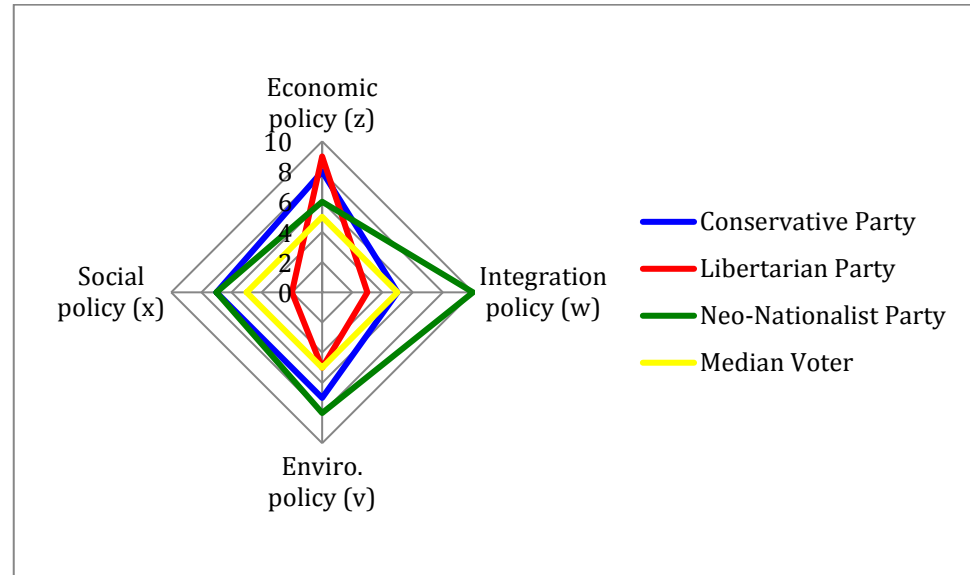


The fifth dimension captures yet another point of difference between the three parties. Although it is always possible to add another dimension, it is not always useful to do so. As Benoit and Laver (2012, 202) point out, “the ‘best’ map of any underlying reality, and the best dimensionality for this map, depends sharply on what the map is for” (see also Clarke and Primo, 2012). The appropriate number of dimensions depends on both the structure of the party system and the purpose of the diagram. Two- and three-dimensional diagrams will suffice for many purposes, but three- and four-dimensional diagrams will be better for others. Dimensions can always be added to the diagram if necessary.



There are other possible ways of using radar charts to represent party competition. Instead of using one of the axes to represent vote-share, one could add a fourth quadrilateral that represents the median voter (5, 5, 5, 5).<sup>11</sup>

FIGURE 9: FOUR-DIMENSIONAL DIAGRAM OF THREE-PARTY SYSTEM



The yellow quadrilateral represents the median voter in Hyperpolis. The more another quadrilateral overlaps with the yellow quadrilateral, the closer the corresponding party is to the median voter. The diagram allows us to see how close each party is to other parties and to the median voter on four dimensions simultaneously.

Hypothetical examples provide simple illustrations of hyperspatial diagrams. They allow us to bracket empirical questions and to focus entirely on the logic of the diagrams. Hotelling (1929), Downs (1957a, b), and Kollman et al. (1998) employ hypothetical examples for the same reason. If the logic of hyperspatial diagrams is sound, then the utility of these diagrams for analysing real party systems can then be explored.

## 6 PROBLEMS WITH HYPERSPATIAL DIAGRAMS

The exploratory nature of hyperspatial diagrams provides an easy but unsatisfying defence against criticism: that the kinks will be worked out in time or by someone else. A persuasive proposal must pre-emptively address problems and criticisms. There are at least three potential problems that ought to be addressed: (1) the complexity problem, (2) the crowding problem, and (3) the summative problem.

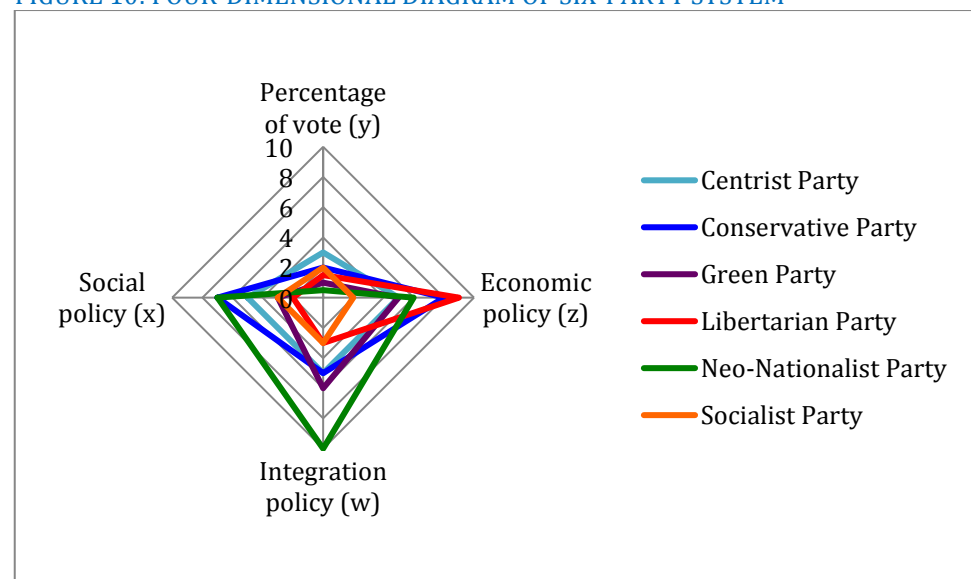
The *complexity problem* is that hyperspatial diagrams are more complex, and therefore more difficult to interpret, than their two- and three-dimensional counterparts. The complexity of a spatial diagram increases geometrically with each additional dimension. Given that the purpose of a diagram is to simplify reality, one might question whether additional dimensions are worth the cost.

<sup>11</sup> This idea belongs to Anthony Sayers, who developed a similar diagram in an unpublished paper.

Adding dimensions involves a trade-off between accuracy and simplicity. Although a 30-dimensional diagram might provide a more accurate representation of a party system, it would probably be too complex to be interpretable. However, four- and five-dimensional diagrams provide a more modest increase in accuracy without sacrificing too much intuitiveness. For example, on the four-dimensional radar chart in Figure 7, different types of parties correspond to quadrilaterals with unique shapes and sizes. Conservative parties appear as medium-sized rhombuses that stretch rightward, libertarian parties as small kites that point rightward, green parties as medium-sized trapezoids that tilt toward the bottom-left, socialist parties as small rhombuses that stretch leftward, and neo-nationalist parties as wide, downward-pointing kites. Four- and five-dimensional diagrams capture more information than two- and three-dimensional diagrams, but they retain the heuristic or intuitive value that makes spatial diagrams so useful.

The *crowding problem* is that radar charts become difficult to interpret when they are used to represent more than four or five parties. Consider what would happen to the radar chart if Hyperpolis's party system also included the Socialist Party (3, 2, 2, 3), the Centrist Party (5, 3, 5, 5), and the Green Party (3, 1, 5, 6).

FIGURE 10: FOUR-DIMENSIONAL DIAGRAM OF SIX-PARTY SYSTEM



Increasing the scale of the diagram solves the problem to some degree; a larger diagram makes smaller differences visible. Ultimately, though, radar charts cannot escape the limitations of plotting four-dimensional data on a two-dimensional page. The diagrams inevitably become crowded when there is too much data.

The *summative problem* is that radar charts are no greater than the sum of their parts. Each axis on a radar chart conveys information about the party system, but the four axes considered separately convey no less information than all four considered together.<sup>12</sup> A four-axis radar chart contains no more information than four one-axis charts. To illustrate, consider the following diagram of Hyperpolis's party system.

<sup>12</sup> I owe this point to Anthony Sayers.

FIGURE 11: ONE FOUR-DIMENSIONAL DIAGRAM OR FOUR ONE-DIMENSIONAL DIAGRAMS?

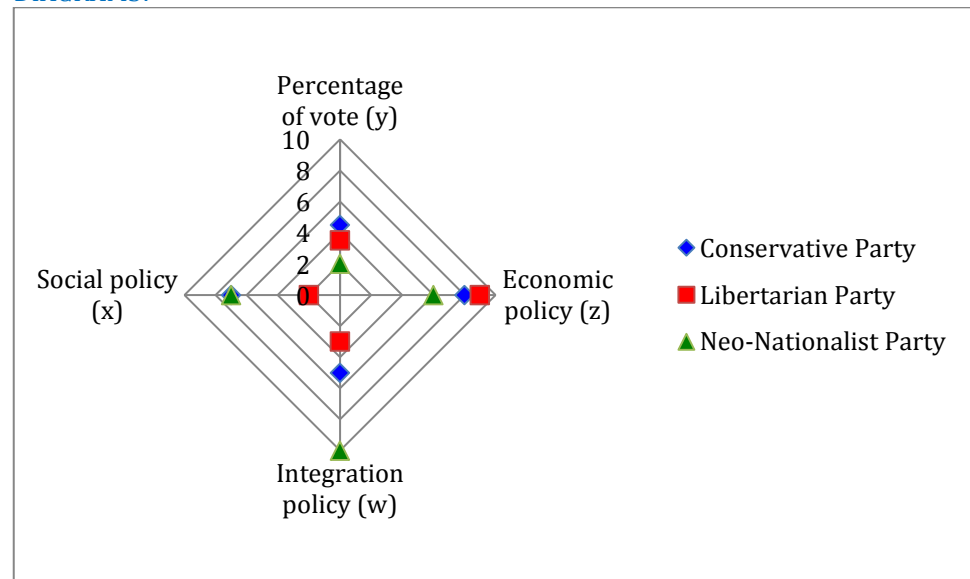


Figure 11 contains exactly the same information Figure 7; the only difference is that the points in the former are not connected. The lines that connect the vertices in Figure 7 are composed of non-existent data-points. Connecting the points on each axis of a radar chart is like connecting discrete data-points on a line graph: it makes the graph easier to interpret, but it does not add any real information. The value of radar charts is that they provide an intuitive way to visualize higher-dimensional party competition, not that they capture information that cannot be represented any other way.

The summative problem, like the crowding problem, is due to the limitations of radar charts rather than to any inherent limitation of hyperspatial diagrams. The problem arises only because radar charts are, strictly speaking, not hyperspatial. Not every axis is orthogonal to every other. In a truly hyperspatial diagram, the position of a party could be represented by a single point with  $n$  coordinates instead of by a shape with  $n$  vertices. There would be no need to interpolate non-existent data-points because there would be no need to 'connect the dots.' For example, just as a party's position in Kollman et al.'s (1998) three-dimensional diagram corresponds to a point with three coordinates and not a triangle, a party's position in a truly four-dimensional diagram would correspond to a point with four coordinates instead of a quadrilateral. Radar charts are crude representations of hyperspace, but they are the best representations that two-dimensional surfaces permit.

Computer graphics might be used to create truly hyperspatial diagrams in which each axis is orthogonal to every other. As Banchoff (1990, 11) describes, computer graphics make it "possible for us to have direct visual experience of objects that only exist in higher dimensions." While it is impossible to draw a truly four-dimensional shape on a two-dimensional page, it is possible to do so on a computer screen.<sup>13</sup> A four-dimensional digital diagram of a party system, unlike a four-axis radar chart, would not be reducible to its parts. Radar charts provide a good approximation of hyperspace, but computer graphics might be

<sup>13</sup> For a basic explanation and example of a four-dimensional computer diagram, see Oliver Knill, "The Tesseract," [http://www.math.harvard.edu/archive/21b\\_fall\\_03/4dcube/](http://www.math.harvard.edu/archive/21b_fall_03/4dcube/) (December 17, 2015).

used to create hyperspatial diagrams of party competition that are more analytically powerful. Whether hyperspatial computer graphics are useful for developing diagrams of party systems is a question for future research.

Finally, it is worth noting that hyperspatial diagrams overcome only one of the many limitations of spatial diagrams. Hyperspatial diagrams are not limited to three dimensions, but they retain all of the other limitations of their lower-dimensional counterparts: they omit time, valence issues, political institutions, and many other variables that affect party competition (Stokes 1963). Hyperspatial diagrams, like other analytical devices, have many drawbacks and blind spots.

## 7 CONCLUSION

The spatial analogy is seldom studied but fundamental to modern understandings of politics. Spatial concepts are analytically powerful, as the success of spatial modelling demonstrates, but only if they are correctly applied. It is essential for analysts of party competition to consider the limitations of the spatial analogy, since misapplying it results in distorted analyses and misleading diagrams.

The main limitation of the spatial analogy turns out to be illusory. Although, as human beings, we perceive space in only three dimensions, nothing prevents us from creating spatial diagrams with more than three dimensions. The concept of hyperspace allows us to add dimensions to our diagrams until it is no longer useful to do so or until the complexity becomes unmanageable.

While spatial models of party competition have long been able to accommodate more than three dimensions, spatial diagrams have remained trapped in our three-dimensional world. This article shows that it is possible to create spatial diagrams with four or more dimensions. Four- and five-axis radar charts capture the complexity of four- and five-dimensional party competition without sacrificing the simplicity of spatial diagrams. They can provide more accurate representations of multidimensional party competition than their two- and three-dimensional counterparts, but they remain easy to create and intuitive to interpret. At the very least, radar charts provide a novel way to visualize multidimensional party competition.

Hyperspatial diagrams are another tool that can be added to the political scientific toolbox. They need not only be used to study party competition. As Stokes (1963, 369) argues, spatial theory “can be read equally as a theory of voter choice, a theory of party positioning, and a theory of party number.” Nor is Stokes’ list exhaustive. Spatial diagrams have more recently appeared in international relations (Morrow 1986) and democratic theory (Fung 2006). This article explores only one application of hyperspace in political science. Given the pervasiveness of spatial concepts and spatial diagrams across the discipline, there may be many more applications.

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## DEMOCRACY FOR A TERRITORYLESS AND STATELESS POLITY: THE ELECTIONS OF TIBETANS-IN-EXILE

Sandeep SHARMA and Pradeep NAIR<sup>1</sup>

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*The Tibetan government's arrival at the horizon of democracy is viewed as another stone solidifying the foundation of Tibetan freedom movement. In 2011, His Holiness the Dalai Lama devolved all his political power and restricted himself to be the spiritual head only. In the wake of this development, in 2011, first direct elections were conducted for the post of Prime Minister and the Members of Parliament of Tibetan Government-in-Exile. Recently concluded elections in April-May 2016 were only second elections of this type. This short note looks into the governance structure and functioning of the Tibetan Government-in-exile and reviews the recently concluded Tibetan general elections with a view that how through these democratic political processes the exiled community has transplanted, institutionalized and democratized its government structures to establish a state-like polity in a stateless and territory-less exile. This study is based on field observation undertaken in Dharamshala. Interviews were conducted with Tibetan government officials, journalists and members of Tibetan electorate.*

**Key words:** Tibetans-in-Exile; Governance; Democracy; Elections.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Entities that have a defined territory and a permanent population, that under the control of their own government, and that engage in, or have the capacity to engage in, and form relations with such other entities (Crawford 1976). This definition of a sovereign state makes it clear that how much task of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile is left. Half a Century has passed; the dream of fully-fledged sovereign Tibetan state has been neutralized to autonomous status

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<sup>1</sup> Sandeep SHARMA Research Scholar, Department of Mass Communication and Electronic Media, School of Journalism, Mass Communication & New Media, Central University of Himachal Pradesh. Pradeep NAIR, PhD, Associate Professor & Dean, School of Journalism, Mass Communication & New Media, Central University of Himachal Pradesh. Contact: [nairdevcom@yahoo.co.in](mailto:nairdevcom@yahoo.co.in).

(Anand 2000). Political power has been decentralized to open up the new avenues for democratic system. Though the old generation has moved on but the flag of emancipation is still being held high by the new generation (Frechette 2007). These lines are being put not for sympathetically dramatizing a situation but to prepare a solid backdrop for the curiosity as to how a landless and borderless democracy functions.

After eliminated from Tibet in March 1959, the Tibetan Government-in-Exile has gone through several structural changes. At that very time, the Dalai Lama in his foreword to the constitution for Tibet drafted in 1963, made his intention clear by saying 'even prior to my departure from Tibet in March 1959, I had come to the conclusion that in the changing circumstances of the modern world, the system of governance in Tibet must be modified and amended so as to allow the elected representatives of the people to play an effective role in guiding and shaping the social and economic policies of the State. I also firmly believed that this could only be done through democratic institutions based on social and economic justice (Gyalpo 2004, 24).

## 2 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF TIBETAN-IN-EXILE

Tibetan Government in Exile (TiGE) is a form of democratic and popularly elected government. TiGE is also called with another name the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). It is headquartered at Mcleodganj in the Indian State of Himachal Pradesh. TiGE represents over 1,22,000 Tibetans living exile, perceives itself as the de jure representative of Tibetans, and is increasingly acknowledged by the international community (McConnell 2009). The CTA encompasses several government organs like Tibetan Parliament, Executive, Tibetan Judicial Commission, different departments - Religion and Culture, Home, Finance, Education, Security, Information and International Relation and Health, ministries, the post of Prime Minister and the Cabinet. It is being recognized as their sole and legitimate government by the Tibetan people and considered as the continuation of the government of autonomous Tibet. These states like functions have the provisions for health and education services for Tibetan living in India and other countries, a 'voluntary' taxation system for the entire diaspora, authority to issue passports to Tibetans and to establish quasi embassies in a number of states. With the definitive aim to gain autonomy, the CTA is also straining hard to look after overall development of Tibetan refugees. As history speaks, the CTA was established in April 29, 1959 soon after the Dalai Lama reached India. It was first stationed at Mussoorie and in May 1960, it was shifted to Mcleodganj near Dharamshala located in Himachal Pradesh.

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile (TPiE) is the unicameral and highest legislative organ of the Central Tibetan Administration. Its structure, functions and legislative procedure are typically along the similar line as can be found in the parliamentary system of other countries (Anderson 1999). Even though it remains internationally unrecognized and lacks sovereignty over territory both in Tibet and in exile, but still has a considerable degree of authority and legitimacy. TPiE consists of 44 members. The members are majorly divided on the basis of Region, Buddhist Schools and Faith. Ten members each from U-Tsand, Do-tod and Do-med represent the three traditional provinces of Tibet, while the ten members are elected, two each from four schools of the Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional Bon faith. Four members are elected by Tibetans in the west: two from Europe, one from North America and one from Canada. The TPiE is headed by a speaker, Deputy Speaker, who are elected by the

members amongst themselves. Any Tibetan who has reached the age of 25 has the right to contest election to the Parliament. The elections held every five years and any Tibetan who has reached the age of 18 is entitled to vote. Sessions of the Parliament are held twice every year, with an interval of six months between the sessions.

The Members of Parliament frequently visits to Tibetan settlements for assessment and evaluation of the conditions of the Tibetan people. On their return from such trips, they bring to the notice of administration, specific grievances and matters needing attention. The Tibetan Parliament in-Exile keeps in touch with the Local Assemblies as well.

The Prime Minister, called Sikyong in Tibetan, is the political and executive head of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. A person to this post is directly elected by Tibetan Citizens for the tenure of five year. Earlier Sikyong used to be nominated by the Dalai Lama. All the executive power was exercised by His Holiness. But in 2001, an important development happened when an amendment was made in the Charter providing provision for the direct election of the Sikyong. In the same year election was held and Samdhong Ripoche was elected with 80 per cent of votes. Another important event took place in 2011, when the Dalai Lama, with an intention to democratize Tibetan polity, devolved all his political power. Then on now, the Sikyong is the political head of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile.

The Tibetan Cabinet is called Kashag. It is the highest executive body of the Central Tibetan Administration. The seven member Kashag is headed by a popularly elected political leader known as Kalon Tripa (the chief of the council of ministers). The CTA Charter empowers Kalon Tripa to nominate his seven Kalons (ministers) though he needs to seek approval of 51 per cent members of the Parliament. The Kashag can be dissolved only after it completes five years. The Kashag has its own secretariat, headed by a cabinet secretary and it has three sub-offices: the office of Planning Commission, History Documentation and Interim Placement Section and Tibetan Policy Institute. These sub offices help Kashag to execute policy decisions. The main departments taken care of by Kashag are - Religion, Home, Education, Finance, Security, Information and International Relations, and Health.

The whole Tibetan population spread world over is organized into small settlements. The settlements are governed by the Local Assembly. Article 78(1) of the Charter of Tibetans-in-Exile has the provision for establishment of Local Assembly in a community having a population of not less than 160. The members of Tibetan Local Assembly are either nominated or elected, or both. As the article 78(2) states that each Tibetan Local Assembly may consist of elected members of the Board of Directors of the Tibetan Co-operative Societies, Regional Bhod Rangwang Denpe Legul, leaders and representatives of Tibetan Villages, or elected members of the various communities and associations. It further adds that the people in administration may not be the member of local assembly. The Tibetan Local Assembly is headed by Speaker and Deputy Speaker elected by the people and it remains in office for a tenure of three years.

These Local Assemblies, established in 38 major Tibetan Communities, are the channels through which the TPiE keeps in touch with Tibetan people. They keep an eye on the activities of their respective settlements/welfare offices. They also make law for their respective communities according to the latter's felt-need. The laws passed by the Local Assembly must be implemented by the

respective settlement/welfare office. In nutshell, it can be said that the Local Assemblies are scaled-down as replicas of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

### 3 CHARTER OF THE TIBETANS-IN-EXILE

The Charter of the Tibetan-in-Exile is known as the constitution of Tibetan Government-in-Exile. It is the supreme law governing the functions of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). The charter is a 26 pages long draft comprising 115 articles and 11 chapters. The preface of the charter says that it would help the governance structure of Tibetans-in-Exile to transform the stateless and borderless polity into a federal democratic self-governing republic and a zone of peace and will strengthen the solidarity of Tibetans, both within and outside Tibet. It will establish a democratic political system suitable for the Tibetans living in the exile. Its functions are carried out by the three pillars of democracy – Judiciary; Legislature and Executive.

Articles 19 to 35 of chapter four in the Charter were dedicated to the executive where the power of the Kashag (Cabinet) and Chief Kalon (Chief of the Council of Ministers), their elections, tenure and other modalities were discussed. Articles 36 to 61 in chapter five of the Charter define the legislature and articles 62 to 70 of chapter six talk about the judiciary. Article 3 defines the nature of Tibetan polity. It says that the Tibetan polity is based on the principle of non-violence and shall promote the freedom of individual and the welfare of the society through the dual system of government based on a federal democratic republic. Chapter one and two of the Charter having articles 1–14 define Fundamental Principles, Rights and Duties, whereas chapter three of the Charter deals with the Directive Principles of Tibetan Administration. Chapter 7 deals with the administration of Tibetan settlements, chapter 8 and 9 talks about the Tibetan Elections Commission and Tibetan Public Service Commission, whereas chapter 10 and 11 deals with the Audit Commission and amendment of the Charter.

The efforts to frame a constitutional draft started soon after the Tibetan Government-in-Exile was shifted from Mussoorie to Mcleodganj. It was on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1961, the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day, the Dalai Lama formulated a draft constitution of Tibet; he sought views from the people and their elected representatives to suggest amendments and for the improvement. Exactly after two years on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1963 His Holiness promulgated a constitution consisting of 10 chapters and 77 articles. In the late 1980s, the need was felt to review the Charter; hence a Charter Drafting Committee was set up. The committee prepared a draft based on the draft constitution of 1963, the Five Point Peace Plan of 1987, His Holiness's address to the European Parliament in 1988, and His address to the 10<sup>th</sup> ATPD in 1988, the 16<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 1989 and the Special Congress in 1990. Finally the current Charter was adopted on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1991. Amendment to the Charter, as Article 111 states, is possible only by an act passed by more than two-thirds of the total members of the Tibetan Assembly and with the assent of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in accordance with the law.

### 4 GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE ELECTION COMMISSION

Elections are very crucial for democracy. Democracy in its true sense is realized only when people are given equal right not only to elect their representatives

but also to be elected as representative (Ardley 2003). Tibetan Government-in-Exile is a form of democratic and popularly elected government. The political head of the Tibetan Government and parliamentarians are directly elected by Tibetan people. General elections for Prime Ministerial and parliamentary posts are conducted at a regular interval of five years.

Democratizing the whole process of governance was initiated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama just after his flight to India in the year 1959. Speaking to a large gathering of Tibetans in Bodh Gaya in 1960, the Dalai Lama asked them to elect their representatives through universal adult suffrage. This was the time when Tibetan-in-Exile went to the poll and in September that year the first batch of democratically elected Tibetan parliamentarians took their oath from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Since the time the efforts were channelized to realize true democracy and the Charter was reviewed, evaluated and amended several times.

An important development happened in 2011, when the Dalai Lama, devolved all his political power and confined himself to be the spiritual head only. In wake of this development, in 2011, first direct elections were conducted for the post of Prime Minister and the Member of Parliament of Tibetan Government-in-Exile. Recently concluded elections are only second such kind of elections.

Chief Tibetan Election Commission Dharamshala is the premier body, which makes all the arrangements regarding conduct of free and fair elections. The heads of the Tibetan settlements all over the world are given responsibility to carry out Chief Tibetan Election Commission's mandate. Voter registration is done at settlement level. Every Tibetan, above the age of 18 years has to voluntarily register himself with nearby settlement office and has to obtain the Green Book. The Green Book is the basic identity proof which has to be produced at the polling station while casting vote. Elections are held simultaneously for the Members of Parliament and for the post of Prime Minister in two rounds. In the first round, any Tibetan after attaining a certain age and other eligibility criteria can stand for the post of parliamentarian and Prime Minister. The Election Commission narrows down the number of candidates for the second round purely based on their performance in the first round. Elections are held again after a specific period among the short listed candidates. The highest scorer of the second round is declared winner. After elections are over, votes are counted at the related settlement and results are reported to the office of Chief Tibetan Election Commission at Dharamshala. Elections are held typically in conventional style. The elections are managed through regional and settlement offices. Settlement chief is given additional responsibility to carry out the Election Commission's mandate. Voter registration, preparing the voter list, allotment of the Green Book, setting up polling stations, availing all the related material, conducting election and counting the votes are the duties undertaken by the settlement chief.

The Election Commission is headed by the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) who is assisted by two Additional Election Commissioners (EC) appointed at the time when Tibetans-in-Exile go to polls to elect Tibetan MPs and the Sikyong. The Charter for Tibetans-in-Exile makes it clear that the term of the two additional Election Commissioners is from the Official announcement of the date for commencement of the Tibetan General Election to the declaration of the final results of the Election. The Chief Election Commissioner is appointed by a committee set up by the Supreme Justice Commissioner, The Speaker & Deputy Speaker of the TPiE and the Kalong Tripa. The committee submits the list to Parliament and appointment of the CEC is done by the Parliament

through voting. The candidate who secures maximum number of votes becomes CEC. The Additional EC is appointed by following the same procedure. CEC remains in the office for a term of five years.

The legalities of Tibetan Central Election Commission is defined in article 96 of Chapter 8 of the charter of Tibetans-in-Exile which says that this commission is an independent body constituted for the discharge of duties pertaining to the election of the members of the Tibetan Assembly, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan Assembly, the Kalons and Chief Kalon; and any other election responsibilities in regard to referendums on major issues involving the interest of Tibetan citizens.

## 5 POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING AND MEDIA USAGE

After scanning the news coverage of the Tibetan Election on different media platforms, it was clearly evident that the whole election debate was dominated by the Prime Ministerial candidates. The media coverage of election campaigning was highly skewed toward Prime Ministerial candidates. MP's elections were not given proper coverage. They were less discussed and debated as the whole attention went towards the Prime minister candidates because of the power and authority rested with the post. This phenomenon was strongly objected and criticized by the political analysts.

The candidates contesting for Prime Ministerial post needed to run their election campaign in more than thirty countries to assure their victory, because the Tibetan populace is scattered all over the world. As per the Demographic Survey of Tibetan-in-Exile, there are over 1.2 million Tibetan refugee world over and approximately 90 thousands of them are registered as voters. In the recently concluded elections, about 65 per cent of these voters participated in government formation. To cover such a wide geographical expansion and to physically reach out to every single voter, the election campaign becomes more complex both administratively and economically. Travel expenses cost high and that can easily go beyond the financial capacity of an individual candidate or the election expenditure limit put by the Election Commission. In this election Tibetan Election Commission set the maximum amount limit for campaign expenses - INR 800,000 for Prime Ministerial candidate and INR 300,000 for Member of Parliament. In such a situation, campaigning through social media becomes an obvious option for the candidates. Social media sites like Facebook and YouTube, and mobile applications like Wechat and Whatsapp were extensively used by the candidates as cost-effective communication channels to reach out to the respective voters.

Mudslinging and blame-game, though a typical feature of an election campaign, have never been found to be used in Tibetan election. But this time, the election crossed its ethical boundaries. The elections campaigns openly criticized the 'middle-way approach' of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, thus making the situation peculiar for both the voters and contestants. Some candidates stood for independent Tibet, while others supported government's 'middle-way-approach'. Whether, Tibet needs autonomous status under the sovereignty of China or it should go for the demand of complete freedom, was widely debated both offline and online. These elections were extensively covered by online Tibetan News media like The Tibetan post, Contact Magazine, The Tibetan Sun, The Tibetan express. These online portals covered the elections in a very typical fashion. A separate page was devoted to the elections. Candidates' interviews,



candidates profile, results, issues etc. were some tabs found common on all these platforms.

## 6 CONCLUSION

Historically speaking, mission freedom is not exclusive to the Tibetan people. History is full of such accounts, where the oppressed have fought bravely against their oppressors and released themselves from their shackles. Take the example of India and East-Timor. But the peculiarity exists in Tibetan case. They are fighting their war of freedom from foreign land. This is a struggle for Tibetans scattered over more than 30 countries and living the life of refugees. To provide a firm base to this sacred mission and to govern this mission from outside, they are building a structure of governance, which is truly democratic in its essence (Cunningham 2002); they are setting up the institutions of political socialization which are the catalysts of this whole process of democratization. Although this exiled polity faces enormous challenges as it has limited juridical powers, restricted economic decision-making, no police or military set-up to legally defend its citizens, even then, these recently held elections are politically and socially important as it makes room for democracy and gives right to express divergent opinion to the people of a territory-less and stateless settlement. They are democratic political procedures through which governance mechanisms were established for political and social change (Archibugi, Held and Kohler 1998).

The recently concluded general elections of Tibetans-in-Exile sparked huge interest, debate and discussion about the election procedures as the Tibetans residing all over the world exercised their democratic right to be a part of a political process. Exile Tibetans from 30 countries casted their vote to elect their political leader – the Sikyong (Prime minister) and 45 members of the 16<sup>th</sup> Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. Members of the International Network of Parliamentarians on Tibet came to Dharamshala to observe the general elections. The panel was made up of lawmakers from the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and other European nations. The messages flooded over social networking sites - WeChat, Facebook and Whatsapp had a central point of discussion that these elections to set-up a democratic political system is an effective way to send a strong message to the outer world that the Tibetans really believe in a legitimate Tibetan Government-in-Exile. People especially the Tibetan youth elected the Sikyong and members of Parliament with a great hope that they will take further steps for the welfare of Tibetans, both in Tibet and in exile and will take all the initiatives to reopen Tibet and China negotiations by making arrangements for a dialogue between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Premiere.

Different viewpoints and ideologies ranging from full independence for Tibet to an autonomous status for Tibet have made these elections an interesting battlefield and had opened a door for the Tibetan people to express whether they support independence or autonomy. These elections has made it very clear that for democracy - contrast opinions needs to be expressed and discussed in order to allow an informed public to make rational decisions about its leadership. It has provided each and every Tibetan an opportunity to experience and practice democracy in anticipation of forming a democratic government. Whether for political and diplomatic reasons, the democratic government of Tibetan-in-Exile has a legitimate existence or not, is a matter of debate, but for the people of Tibetan settlements through a democratic political

set-up they have a right to exist, to have their own points of views, and have an opportunity to take their political discourse beyond geographic boundaries.

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## IDENTITY PATTERNS IN EAST-CENTRAL EUROPE IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE<sup>1</sup>

Boglárka KOLLER<sup>2</sup>

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*Turning away from the project of the common Europe and finding new ways for collective identification is a Europe-wide trend today. An increasing majority of the EU citizens feel that the EU is mostly dealing with non-salient issues that are far away from their everyday problems. Additionally, the deadlocks in the management of the recent migration crisis and the result of the Brexit referendum also result in wide-scale scepticism in both the old and new member states. This paper discusses the current dilemmas of European identity with a special focus on the East-Central Europeans' attachments. The author builds on the constructivist and functionalist theoretical model of identity-net when explaining the dilemmas of the common identity. The following questions are raised in the paper: Is the civic component of European identity fading away in ECE countries? Do ECE citizens trust their European and national institutions? Who are "the others" for ECE citizens inside and outside its borders? Are there any commonalities and differences between ECE member-states with regard to identity formation patterns? In order to be able to answer these questions, an interdisciplinary approach is taken. The arguments presented in this paper are supported by the data of the recent opinion poll surveys.*

**Key words:** EU; European identity; differentiated integration; East-Central Europe; civic identity.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on a book chapter published by the author in 2013. Koller, Boglárka. 2013. The fading civic identity of EU nationals. With a special focus on the East-Central Europeans. In *European Futures. The perspectives of the new member states in the new Europe*, eds. Attila Ágh and László Vass, 139–171. Budapest: College of Communication and Business.

<sup>2</sup> **Boglárka KOLLER** is the head of Department of European Studies at the National University of Public Service, Faculty of International and European Studies. Her main research areas are governance and policy-making in the EU, history and theories of integration, differentiated integration and multi-speed Europe, identity issues in the EU. She has numerous publications on European integration among which there are three books and four edited volumes. Contact: [koller.boglarka@uni-nke.hu](mailto:koller.boglarka@uni-nke.hu).

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Turning away from the project of the common Europe and finding new ways for collective identification is a Europe-wide trend today. An increasing majority of the EU citizens feel that the EU is mostly dealing with non-salient issues that are far away from their everyday problems. Additionally, the deadlocks in the management of the recent migration crisis and the result of the Brexit referendum also result in wide-scale scepticism in both the old and new member states. This paper discusses the current dilemmas of European identity with a special focus on the East-Central Europeans' attachments. The author builds on the constructivist and functionalist theoretical model of identity-net when explaining the dilemmas of the common identity. The following questions are raised in the paper: Is the civic component of European identity fading away in ECE countries? Do ECE citizens trust their European and national institutions? Who are "the others" for ECE citizens inside and outside its borders? Are there any commonalities and differences between ECE member-states with regard to identity formation patterns?

In order to be able to answer these questions, an interdisciplinary approach is taken. These themes are foremost explored through reviewing and synthesizing the major theoretical contributions of nations and nationalism discourse and identity formation theories. The current dilemmas of European identity are analyzed. The arguments presented in this paper are supported by the data of the recent Eurobarometer surveys. The author argues that the European identity in the ECE countries has recently been undergoing significant changes.

## 2 12 YEARS OF EU MEMBERSHIP

East-Central European countries became full members in the European Union in 2004.<sup>3</sup> All enlargement waves constitute a challenge to identity formation in both the old and new member states of the EU. The former 'outsiders' of the EU suddenly became 'insiders' that require a redefinition of their former attachments. Depending on the political and economic similarities of the old members and newcomers, this process could be more or less lengthy and challenging. (Örkény 2005; Koller 2014)

In the case of the ECE countries that left communism behind in 1989, with GDP per capita lagging far behind the EU average (at approx. 40%) and in the process of transforming their political, legal and institutional systems, it was likely that differentiating these countries as belonging to 'them' and not 'us' would be felt much longer after accession. Mental boundaries and stereotypes could not vanish from one day to the next. Derogations and transitional periods e.g. delaying the opening of the labour markets of the old members, contributed to maintaining the categorisation of 'otherness' within the boundaries of the EU.<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, since 2004 the Union itself has continuously been experiencing waves of crises itself (the French and Dutch 'no' vote to the Constitutional Treaty, the failure of the Lisbon Strategy and the Irish 'no' to the Lisbon Treaty,

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<sup>3</sup> Bulgaria and Romania became members in 2007, Croatia in 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Even in the case of the unified Germany, East-East divisions within one state are still prevalent. The citizens of the East are often labelled as 'Ossis' by the West.

the global financial and economic crisis, the sovereign debt crisis, migration crisis, terrorist attacks in European capitals and the economic and political turbulences caused by the Brexit etc.) (Arató and Koller 2015). While in 2009, the EU managed to overcome the ratification misery around the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in 2009, bailed-out out all the countries (Ireland, Greece, Portugal) that were most seriously affected by the crisis, launched a new development strategy – Europe 2020 – and put the establishment of a more effective economic governance at the top of the agenda, it seems that it can hardly find the solution to the migration crisis. The question of the future of the Union remained in focus, however the positions, the ECE countries have taken in resolving the crisis created deep divisions between the old and new member states.

Another major development in European integration can have a direct effect on the identity of EU citizens, namely the concept of differentiated integration. The spread of differentiated integration can have a direct effect on the self-understanding of EU nationals in ECE countries as well.

If we look at the last 12 years of EU membership of ECE countries, we can argue that there has been a significant change in the rhetoric of ECE states with respect to European integration. After joining the Community, the East-Central-European states elevated the accession-related constraints, and started to express their national interest more intensively. The shift from the adaptation to emancipation phase, i.e. the nation-states more often questioning the previously unquestioned issues within the EU, has obvious signs. Just to select some essential moments from the recent past: The Czech president Václav Klaus's Euroscepticism came to the fore when he tried to prolong the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty and emphasised the priorities of the Czech national interest over EU membership. Or we can mention the example of the Kaczyński brothers, who became symbols of fighting for Polish national interests and protecting their homeland against Brussels. We can also cite the example of the Hungarian prime minister Orbán, who in introducing the official programme of the Hungarian Presidency in January 2011 in the European Parliament steadily emphasised that he was firmly resolved to defend the '*Hungarian national interest*' at all times. The phase of "emancipation" of ECE countries gained new impetus last year when the migration crisis reached its peak in 2015. In order to demonstrate the shift in the rhetoric of the Visegrad countries, we should call some statements of prime ministers of Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic. The Czechs who strongly supported their EU membership in 2004, started to turn away from the EU. Bohuslav Sobotka stated *if United Kingdom leaves the EU, a 'Czexit' could follow as well*.<sup>5</sup> The Polish prime minister Beata Szydło made it very clear in her statement in March 2016: *"I say very clearly that I see no possibility at this time of immigrants coming to Poland"*.<sup>6</sup> With regard to migrant quotas, the Hungarian prime minister further stated: *"We cannot decide disregarding the people in case of decisions that strongly change their life and also determinate upcoming generations and the quota would reframe the ethnic, cultural and religious profile of Hungary and Europe"...."I have not decided this way against Europe, but to protect European democracy"...."The basic principle of democracy is loyalty to the nation. We, Central-Europeans know from historical experience that sooner or*

<sup>5</sup> Sobotka quoted in "Sobotka speaks out against Brexit and Czexit" Euractive 07/03/2016 <http://www.euractiv.com/section/uk-europe/news/sobotka-speaks-out-against-brexit-and-czexit/>.

<sup>6</sup> Beata Szydło quoted in "Poland slams door on refugees" Politico 3/23/16 <http://www.politico.eu/article/poland-slams-door-on-refugees-beata-szydlo/>.

*later we will lose our freedom if we do not represent the interests of our citizens"... "We do not want to divide Europe, but rather to protect our citizens"... "we do not want migrants to come to us". "Why would we want to import the problems of Western states?"*<sup>7</sup> The Slovak "third-time" prime minister, Robert Fico also took an anti-Islam stand just recently when he said *"It may look strange but sorry ... Islam has no place in Slovakia"... "The problem is not migrants coming in, he said, but "rather in them changing the face of the country."*<sup>8</sup> I can continue with other examples, but these above are all sign of the changed rethoric in ECE countries to the EU in general and to the migration crisis as well.

### 3 CIVIC, ETHNIC ... MULTIPLE IDENTITIES - THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Because the European integration started as an elite driven project in the 1950s, the role of the social and political elites in developing and running integration remained significant up until today. European elites initiated the gradual establishment of European identity in the 1970s<sup>9</sup> and since then the European Community/European Union has made great efforts to establish the legal and political framework, a common cultural policy as well as the symbols for the sake of a common identity. Beyond the structural elements as for example the citizenship of the Union<sup>10</sup> and the Charter of Fundamental Rights that became binding when the Lisbon Treaty entered into force, the European Union strived to create the symbolic elements of the common identity. The blue flag with the golden stars "representing the union of the peoples of Europe"; the anthem, Beethoven's 9th Symphony; "Europe Day" on the 9th May; and the common currency, the Euro; all symbolise a sense of belonging to the EU.

Consequently, the European identity has many constructed elements, both structural and symbolic. The question is whether a constructed identity, like the European identity, could be loaded with sufficient real content to become a strong reference point for collective self-understanding of citizens. Ethno-symbolists argue that a common ethnic past, myths, and symbols rooted in a shared history are necessary for successful nation-building, and through the popular memory these elements form the identities of individuals. Therefore, without a common ethnic past – which is the case of the Union - identity formation cannot be successful (Smith 1986; Armstrong 1982). For constructivists, who represent an opposite opinion, symbols and traditions could be young creations. In the 19th century, due to the pursuits of the nation-building elites "entirely new symbols and devices came into existence: national anthem, national flag, personification of the nation", etc. (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). There are many structures in politics and society that were first constructed by the leading elites and later became accepted and admired by the

<sup>7</sup> Viktor Orbán quoted at the official website of the Hungarian government. <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/news/decision-to-hold-referendum-not-against-europe-but-to-protect-european-democracy-says-prime-minister-orban>.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Fico quoted "Islam has no place in Slovakia" Politicio 5/26/16 <http://www.politico.eu/article/robert-fico-islam-no-place-news-slovakia-muslim-refugee/>.

<sup>9</sup> The Declaration on European Identity in 1973, the Tindemans report in 1976 and the Adonnino report in 1984 were all signs of an increased interest on the side of the EC to establish a direct link between the individuals and the Community, though it was not until the beginning of the 1990s when the concept became involved in the founding treaties of the Union.

<sup>10</sup> The Maastricht Treaty introduced the concept of "Citizenship of the Union" in 1991. Article 8 declares that "Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union". Although this Article declares that citizens have both rights and duties, the rights declared by the Treaty were very limited compared to the national citizenship concepts.



majority of the population. (Nora 1996, 119; Anderson 1991, 6). As Anderson rightly argued, the national intelligentsia had a key role in constructing the national symbols. In the 19th century, the producers of the print market, “the lexicographers, philologists, grammarians, folklorists, publicists and composers” glittered ancient histories and depicted “golden ages” of history which became available for “the consuming public” and thus the nation became an imagined community (Anderson 1991, 71–75). If construction was successful in many European nation-states, why could not be successful in the EU as well?

Nevertheless, the establishment of European identity should be looked at as not only a construct but also an outcome of socialisation process through which individuals gradually adapt and internalize new loyalties, values and symbols into their multiple attachments. As Risse rightly argues: “It is wrong to conceptualize European identity in zero-sum terms, as if an increase in European identity necessarily decreases one’s loyalty to national or other communities.” (Risse 2004, 4) Collective identities of Europeans can only be imagined in a more differentiated structure. For individuals, the immediate vicinity, the town or village where they live, the region, the county, the nation, the European Union all signify one of their geographical attachments. Nevertheless, for a long time the prevalent opinion was held that there is a certain hierarchy between these collective allegiances and national identity has a peculiar and superior place among these attachments. (Pataki 1986). Smith also argued that “national identification possesses distinct advantages over the idea of a unified European identity” (Smith 1997, 322–325).

The complex social, political and economic processes and the mass migration in the second half of the 20th century caused theorists to use multiple models to describe and interpret individuals’ collective identities. Although the majority of theorists accept the concept of multiple identities, they differ in understanding its content. The *concentric circles of identities*, the *“matryoshka of identities”* (Salazar 1998), the *“many-storey house”* (Konrád 1997) metaphors all try to show the multiple layers of the collective attachments. In the following, I will use my own model, the so called *“identity-net model”* (Koller 2006; Koller 2011) to describe the post-national, multiple identities. This model not only indicates the multiple loyalties of individuals in contemporary Europe but also refers to *functionalist* and *neofunctionalist* approaches. The identity-net model signifies the dynamic co-existence of individuals’ collective attachments and also includes the time dimension. Individuals regularly decide which aspect or junction of their identity-net they activate in their every-day lives. It can be imagined as a net made from Christmas tree lights. The lights at the junction points of the net light up alternatively. It may be that they shed more or less intense light in different time periods. It may also be that either many of them or only a few are sparkling. Applying that analogy; individuals are capable of changing their collective attachments regularly as well as their respective ranking and intensity. Namely, the European attachment should be understood as an element in EU citizens’ dynamically changing identity-net among other collective attachments (national, regional, local etc.), and it is more or less intensive in the various life situations of the individuals.

With regard to the analysis of the nature of European identity, foremost the following question should be asked: is it a culturally defined or a civic identity? Looking back on European history, we can see that national identities can be built around two poles: around the cultural and ethnic communities or around the state. The first means that national identity is defined by decent and cultural elements as common myths, symbols, language and customs, the second

signifies that belonging to the political community is linked to a certain territory and manifested in citizens' rights and duties. In current nations, both have their relevance, and we do not find any European nation to date where only one pole dominates. However, as Friedrich Meinecke, Hans Kohn and Anthony D. Smith pointed out, the two kinds of identification were not born at the same time in all European nations (Meinecke 1969; Kohn 1955; Smith 1986). There were two nation-building models in Europe: the territorial and the ethnic/cultural nations. In the territorial model, the membership in the community is linked to a certain territory; the rights and duties are determined by the legal and institutional system. All citizens living in the territory are members in the political community as well. France between 1789 and 1794 can be named as an example for this model. However, as Napoleon's conquests began, the French nation-state started to redefine itself. The territorial state's identity formation methods were extended by cultural and linguistic tools (Brubaker 1992). Eugen Weber emphasized this change in his 'Peasants into Frenchman' (Weber 1979) book and pointed out that France started to apply a wide range of cultural tools in order to form "good French citizens" from peasants. In Europe's other regions, in East-Central Europe, the birth of a universal citizenship concept was preceded by the birth of a national identity which was defined by the ethnic, cultural and linguistic boundaries of the community and not tied to a certain territory. In the following, we are going to focus on the civic pole of the EU citizens' identity in the ECE region (Koller 2004).

#### 4 IS THERE A CIVIC COMPONENT OF EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN THE COLLECTIVE ATTACHMENTS OF ECE NATIONALS?

Six or seven European citizens out of ten feel that they are also citizens of the European Union, that is – with only slight differences – the characteristic of the ECE nationals as well. The population in Bulgaria, however, is divided in this respect. This is the only member state in the ECE region where only 50 percent of the population expressed that they feel their EU citizenship in opposition to the 49 percent who do not feel themselves as EU citizens.

TABLE 1: CITIZENSHIP FEELING, 2015 (%)

Countries	Yes	No
<b>EU28</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>31</b>
LT	78	22
CZ	62	38
HR	63	37
LV	69	30
RO	65	33
BG	50	49
PL	74	23
SI	65	35
HU	67	32
EE	79	18
SK	75	25

\* Grey indicates where more citizens feel themselves as EU citizens than the EU average.  
Source: Eurobarometer 83.

When evaluating the existence of the civic pole in the European Union, and in the ECE countries, the voter turn-out at EP elections and also the level of trust in the European and national institutions could be analysed. The voter turnout

at the three EP elections in the ECE member states remained below the average of the Union in each of the three election periods which indicates the existence of less active European citizens in the region.

TABLE 2: VOTER TURNOUT AT EP ELECTIONS 2004–2014 (%)

Countries	2004	2009	2014
<b>EU 25/27/28</b>	<b>45,47</b>	<b>43,00</b>	<b>43,11</b>
HU	38,50	36,31	28,92
BG	not member	38,99	35,50
CZ	28,30	28,20	19,50
HR	not member	not member	25,24
EE	26,83	43,90	36,44
LV	41,34	53,70	30,04
LT	48,38	20,98	44,91
PL	20,87	24,53	22,70
RO	not member	27,67	32,16
SI	28,35	28,37	20,96
SK	16,97	19,64	13,00

\* The grey cells indicate where the voter turnout is lower than the EU average.

Source: European Parliament.

Further, when citizens were asked whether their voice counts in the EU, we get similar results. In EU28 39 percent of the respondents feel that their voice counts in the EU while 59 percent have an opposite opinion. Among the ECE countries, there are only in Croatia, Poland and Romania in majority those that think their voice counts in the EU. In all other ECE countries more people think the opposite. (EB 84). Thus, in the new member states there is widespread disbelief among the citizens in their ability to affect EU affairs.

In order to further evaluate the civic pole of the identity, it is worth looking at the trust in national and European institutions. With regard to the last twelve years' data, the trust in EU institutions, i.e. in the European Parliament and the European Commission was in general higher than in national ones (Koller 2014). Moreover, in each surveyed period, the number of people who trusted the EU institutions outnumbered those that distrust them. With regard to the European Parliament, the absolute majority of the surveyed people answered that they trust the EP. The opposite could be concluded on the trust in national institutions. Apparently, the trust level in the European institutions was generally higher than in national institutions, which is a sign that European citizens became parts of a bigger political community than their national one.

Nevertheless, if we would like to see how ECE countries fit into this general trend, it is worth comparing the trust level of institutions in the ECE region to the EU average by referring to the results of the latest opinion poll surveys. With the exception of Lithuania, Estonia and Hungary, the trust in national institutions is below that of the EU's average. This indicates that in new member states less citizens trust their national parliaments and national governments than in the old member states.

TABLE 3: TRUST IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS, 2015 (%)

Countries	Trust	Do not trust
<b>EU28</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>62</b>
LT	16	77
CZ	13	83
HR	19	76
LV	17	75
RO	18	77
BG	14	78
PL	17	74
SI	12	85
HU	31	65
EE	33	51
SK	28	65

TABLE 4: TRUST IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS, 2015 (%)

Countries	Trust	Do not trust
<b>EU28</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>63</b>
LT	34	58
CZ	28	66
HR	21	75
LV	25	67
RO	27	69
BG	23	67
PL	20	71
SI	18	78
HU	34	62
EE	38	49
SK	29	65

\* Grey indicates where the level of trust is lower than the EU average.  
Source: Eurobarometer 83.

When we examine the trust levels in EU institutions, we will get an opposite result.

TABLE 5: TRUST IN EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 2015 (%)

Countries	Trust	Do not trust
<b>EU28</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>
LT	65	18
CZ	41	45
HR	53	31
LV	45	34
RO	63	26
BG	56	27
PL	46	29
SI	41	50
HU	60	32
EE	50	21
SK	51	36

\* Grey indicates where the level of trust is higher than the EU average.  
Source: Eurobarometer 83.

With the exception of Czech Republic and Slovenia, the percentage of the citizens that trust the European Parliament is higher in the ECE countries than that of the EU's average. With regard to the European Parliament, we can further conclude that in Lithuania, Romania and Hungary six out of ten citizens trust the EP, while it is only four out of ten in the EU in general.

**TABLE 6: TRUST IN EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

Countries	Trust	Do not trust
<b>EU28</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>
LT	63	15
CZ	39	41
HR	49	31
LV	43	34
RO	62	25
BG	52	27
PL	46	27
SI	42	49
HU	60	30
EE	48	20
SK	46	35

\* Grey indicates where the level of trust is higher than the EU average.

Source: Eurobarometer 83.

The percentage of the citizens that trust the European Commission in most of the ECE countries higher is that of the EU's average, with only one exception: the Czech Republic.

To conclude: while there is a general distrust among the ECE citizens toward their national institutions, they tend to trust their EU equivalents more, which is a clear sign that the citizens of the ECE member states have already incorporated the "European dimension" into their identities as a civic component. At the same time, their civic identity in relation to national institutions seems to be fading away. Nevertheless, with regard to citizens' activity in the Union, we can conclude that the ECE citizens seem to be rather inactive in this region and the majority of them do not believe that their voice counts in the EU.

## **5 WHO ARE "THE OTHERS" FOR ECE CITIZENS?**

As the results of the attitude surveys show, a relative majority of EU citizens associates the Union with personal mobility, namely the freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU. This is a fundamental right of the individuals and the ECE nationals also see it as one of the main achievements of the European integration process (See EB surveys).

We form our identities in the process of comparing ourselves to "others". But defining who the "others" are for Europeans is not easy in the Union. Minorities, immigrants, foreign citizens live permanently in EU member states, therefore citizenship and allegiances to the state do not tell everything about people's identities (Bauböck 2001). Nevertheless, it needs to be emphasized that in opposition to minority issues (Brubaker 1996) that constitute essential elements in the definition of the nation, immigration for a long time was not an important issue of politics in the ECE region. Simply, because all of the

migration to the European Union has been directed towards four member states: Spain, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom and the in 2004 and 2007 joined countries were less targeted by migrants than the fifteen old member states.<sup>11</sup>

This however, significantly changed with the outbreak of the migration crisis in year of 2015. The migration crisis and the management of the crisis have been creating sharp divisions of the old and the new Member States. In this respect, the Visegrad Group could be interpreted as a “newly emancipated group” among the EU member states. In the fall of 2015 V4 countries adopted a common position in the migration crisis that was against the position represented by the European Commission and Germany; foremost its chancellor, Angela Merkel. While Merkel – along with the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, supported the quota system, and was communicating that the EU member states have to provide open arms for asylum seekers,<sup>12</sup> the V4 countries expressed their commitment to defend the external Schengen borders by any means including closing the borders and building fences at the Southern borders of Hungary in order to avoid the free flow of asylum seekers/migrants from the Balkans. In 2016, the Visegrad countries even managed to close the Western-Balkan migration route.

In their responses to the migration crisis, the Visegrad countries expressed and communicated many identity statements and often referred to the “otherness question”. First of all, they made it very clear that immigration of Muslims from the Middle East and North Africa symbolizes a new era in the mass population movements towards the EU for which the region is not prepared. The anti-Muslimism many time accompanied with the civilizational argument of Christianity that is reflected in the speeches of the ECE leaders quoted at the beginning of this paper. Second, what Timmermans highlighted, the region of ECE has “no experience with diversity”,<sup>13</sup> which is only partly right, because this region historically experienced huge waves of migration in the past. Nevertheless, Timmermans is right to say that in the context of “Western-European” inclusion of migrants in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is true that ECE has not experience in that, but just taking into account the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; this region has vast amount of experience in multilingualism, multinationalism and in sense in multiculturalism as well. Last, but not least, it should be mentioned that the “sovereignty” argument often comes up in relation to migration crisis as well, emphasizing that disregard of their EU memberships and the position of the European Commission, ECE countries would like to preserve the right to decide, who they want to let in their countries.

There has been another major change in the European integration process since the 1980s that directly affects the collective identities of EU citizens and re-interprets the concept of otherness in the community: the spread of differentiated integration. As De Neve argues, the European integration today resembles an onion, which is “a visualization of governance in Europe segmented not only by policy areas and levels of government — as has been the conventional wisdom — but also by subgroups of European states.” (De Neve 2007, 504). Thus, European integration is becoming differentiated not only by decision-making levels and various EU policies but also by several groups of

<sup>11</sup> See Eurostat statistics on immigrants.

<sup>12</sup> Merkel’s statement „wir schaffen das” became the label of this German policy.

<sup>13</sup> Frans Timmermans: *Central Europe has ‘no experience with diversity’* in Politico, 25/09/2015 <http://www.politico.eu/article/migration-news-diversity-timmermans/>.



member states; as a consequence it becomes differentiated territorially as well. (De Neve 2007; Stubb 1996; Koller 2012b) Currently the concept of differentiated integration is extensively analysed by integration theorists. (Ehlermann 1995; Stubb 1996; Stubb 1997; Kölliker 2001; Sepod 2005) Nevertheless, less has been written so far about it in the context of identity.

Differentiated integration was first introduced in the EU's primary law in the 1980s and became a widely accepted practice in the 1990s. In the 1990s, the European Union was experiencing an increasingly "non-unified" integration and there were obvious signs of shrinking legitimacy of the common Europe project. The "Big Bang enlargement" of 2004 and 2007 however marked a new era in integration and also gave an impetus to the spread of differentiation. The European Union with differing interest of 27 member states, 500 million inhabitants and a 4,2 million km<sup>2</sup> territory became an exceptionally heterogeneous polity that is hardly manageable according to the old recipes. As a consequence, the "multi-speed", "variable geometry" or "a la Carte Europe" approaches<sup>14</sup> became widely accepted and various sub-groups emerged within the EU as answers to the "oversized EU challenge" (Koller 2012a).

Differentiated integration is a boundary issue. Forming a new club and delineating its boundaries means including the joining members and excluding those who do not participate in the cooperation, therefore differentiated integration is about defining "ins" and "outs" in relation to the club. For example, Hungary is a member of the EU and the Schengen regime but to date, not yet included in the euro-zone. Similarly, Norway is not an EU member-state, but because of its membership in European Economic Area enjoys most of the advantages of the single market. Currently, knowing the results of the Brexit referendum, we can only assess the nature of the future relationship of the European Union and the United Kingdom it will probably mean a new types of DI as well.

In line with the spread of differentiated integration, the mirror of self-understanding of the Union becomes vague and uncertain. It is not so obvious to define who belongs to "us" and "they" any more. Being a member of the EU28/27, the euro-zone, Schengen Zone or part of the European Economic Area or cooperating with the EU in frames of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement all represent a different type of "club membership" and all in a way exclusionary in nature. Apparently, the value of these memberships differs to a large extent. Thus, differentiated integration can also be interpreted as forming new fragmentation lines within the Union and establishing new boundaries inside and outside the EU.

When the European citizens were asked about their opinion on 'two speed Europe',<sup>15</sup> more citizens opposed the concept than accepted in all the above

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<sup>14</sup> See Stubb (1996) on the various categories of differentiated integration.

<sup>15</sup> The Eurobarometer opinion poll surveys only asked about "two speed Europe", it is however worth noting that there are various types of it. One of the most comprehensive typology of differentiated integration comes from Stubb who defined three major forms of differentiated integration: 'Multi-speed EU can be defined as the mode of differentiated integration according to which the pursuits of common objectives is driven by a core group of member states which are both able and willing to pursue some policy areas further, the underlying assumption being that others will follow later' (1); 'Variable geometry can be defined as the mode of differentiated integration which admits to unattainable differences within the main integrative structure by allowing permanent and irreversible separation between the core of countries and lesser developed integrative units.' (2); 'A la Carte Europe, based on the culinary metaphor 'allows each member state to pick and choose as from a menu, in which policy area it would like to

indicated surveyed periods. There was however a striking difference between the old and new members in this respect. While in most of the old member states differentiated integration is not supported, the East-Central Europeans with the exception of Poland were for a 'two speed Europe'.

**TABLE 7: OPINION ON DIFFERENTIATED INTEGRATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION IN ECE COUNTRIES (%)**

Countries	2005 I.		2008 I.		2009 I.	
	For	Against	For	Against	For	Against
EU 25/27	38	42	39	40	39	42
HU	49	35	47	39	49	33
CZ	53	32	43	44	41	47
SK	47	38	42	46	47	40
PL	37	47	39	44	39	43
SI	45	48	46	43	44	44
LV	42	28	34	35	38	37
LT	44	24	44	31	39	35
EE	55	26	66	19	69	20
RO	40	23	38	30	33	39
BG	31	33	35	19	30	34

Source: Eurobarometer 63, 68, 71. \* Dark grey indicates where the support is higher than opposition.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

Twelve years of membership seem to be a suitable time to assess identity dynamics of the region. In 2004/2007 the ECE countries, the former 'outsiders' of the EU suddenly became 'insiders' of the European Union which creates challenges to collective identity formation. As it was argued there has been a significant change in the rhetoric of ECE states with respect to European integration. The ECE countries became more critical towards the EU's achievements. In terms of its structural and symbolic elements, European identity is a constructed identity with multiple layers. Nevertheless it should be also looked as an outcome of bottom-up processes. It is a question, however that European identity is culturally or a civic defined identity? In our paper we were focusing on the analysis on the civic component in the ECE region. In our analysis, it was demonstrated that there is a general distrust among the ECE citizens toward their national institutions; they tend to trust their EU equivalents more, which is a clear sign that the citizens of the ECE member states have already incorporated the "European dimension" into their identities as a civic component. At the same time, their civic identity in relation to national institutions seems to be fading away. Nevertheless, with regard to citizens' activity, especially the voter turn-out at EP election, we can conclude that the ECE citizens seem to be rather inactive in this region and the majority of them do not believe that their voice counts in the EU. It was further demonstrated that, defining "the other" has been becoming a very complex task in Europe and migration crisis created new challenges in this respect. Due to the spread of differentiated integration and the intensification of the effects of migration crisis, the self-definition of the EU itself and the definition of otherness gain new interpretations that significantly alter the way how European citizens, including ECE nationals define their European identity in the future.

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participate, whilst at the same time maintaining a minimum number of common objectives.' (3) (Stubb 1996, 287–288).

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