

The European Far Left.
An Empirical Study of the Far Left Party Family and Its Voters

By

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Abstract

This paper empirically examines the far left party family and its voters across Europe to fill a gap in the literature. It addresses the question of where far left parties and their voters occupy the ideological space on the left. The paper analyzes the choices offered by the far left party family in Western and Eastern Europe and studies to what extent far left parties match their voters' preferences. By using data from the Comparative Manifestos Project and the European Value Survey, I demonstrate that the far left party family and its voters can be clearly distinguished from the other competitors on the left in Western Europe. The demarcations are more blurred in the East with a great deal of issue overlap.

Moreover, while the same issues of the far left party family in Western Europe are important to its voters, no such overlap is present in the East. Though far left voters can be found furthest to the left on the ideological scale, their respective party family is closer to the center with the social democratic parties filling the void on the far left. Clearly the political choices offered by far left parties in the East are not effective since they do not follow their voters' preferences, which has implications for the democratic process in the region.

Parties are thought to be fundamental for democracy in Europe. They express the ideological preferences of citizens and convert them into public policy, thus representing their electorate, and they are vital for defining the choices available to their voters. When no meaningful choices are offered by parties, indifference or alienation can be the result. If there is no political entity such as parties to openly discuss, support and pursue these issues, voters have a more difficult time to develop their own far left positions. After all, it is the parties function to express and offer choices.

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1. Introduction

Parties are largely understood to form the basis of democracy (Dalton & Wattenberg 2000, p. 3). Starting with E. E. Schattschneider who concluded that “modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of political parties” (1942, p. 1), parties have come to be understood as a vital part of democratic governments, especially in Europe (Mair & Thomassen 2010; Dalton 2006). Most importantly, they express the ideological preferences of citizens and convert them into public policy (Ezrow 2010, Pennings & Keman 2002). Hence, it is self-evident “that the process of political representation in contemporary democracies requires the involvement of political parties” (Mair & Thomassen 2010, p. 23). And in reference to Europe, “parties are the primary institutions of representative democracy” (Dalton 2006, p. 127). Moreover, since most voters in Europe elect party representatives rather than individual candidates, it is parties that “define the choices available for voters” (Dalton 2006, p. 127). In order for parties to actually represent citizens, however, these choices need to be meaningful (Wessels & Schmitt 2008; Dalton 2006).

When no meaningful choices are offered by parties – either because of the lack of difference between alternatives or the differences exist but alternatives are too far away from voters’ preferences – indifference or alienation can be the result (Wessels & Schmitt 2008) and parties’ representation of citizens’ preferences is no longer guaranteed.

While there have been numerous (cross-country) studies published on the influence of the party system, institutions, electoral rules, different party and voter types on the choices available and the degree of representation¹, the present work focuses on an understudied subject within that research area. The paper examines one specific party family and its voters which have been

¹ See, for example, Duverger 1954, Downs 1957, Sartori 1976; Dalton 1985; Dalton & Wattenberg 2000; Klingemann et al 2006; Dalton 2006; Powell 2009; Ezrow 2010.

mostly neglected or ignored in the literature: the far left. It analyzes the choices offered by the far left party family in Western and Eastern Europe and studies to what extent far left parties represent their voters' preferences.

Several European countries, among them France, Germany and the Netherlands, have witnessed the rise of far left parties in recent years. In fact, a total of 19 European countries have far left parties that received votes in the most recent election, ranging from less than 1 percent in England and Switzerland to double digit results in Germany, Iceland and Moldova.² Interestingly, the phenomenon of far left parties has mainly been noted in the context of country, party-specific or regional studies. On a large scale, hardly any research has been done on European far left parties as a "family". Also, virtually nothing is known about the party voters in a cross-country perspective, especially with regards to quantitative analysis.

In the few studies published, there seems to be a consensus in the literature that far left (or communist) parties³ across Europe can be characterized by their economic policy stances. They are in opposition to capitalism and instead favor a heavily regulated economy as well as a wide ranging welfare system. Far left parties and their voters have also been connected to attitudes unfavorable to immigration. These anti-capitalist and anti-integration stances are in opposition to what the European Union represents and therefore could possibly undermine the liberal democratic bases of European countries – giving just one reason why far left parties and their voters should be studied more intensely. At the same time, research also shows that parties

² See appendix A for a detailed list.

³ Throughout the paper I will use the terms "communist" and "far left" interchangeably in order to refer to political parties on the far left of the ideological scale. This is not to purposefully confuse the reader but because "communist parties" is an ambiguous label and not always fitting. For example, the Party Manifestos Project combined far left parties in the party family category "communist parties". However, this group includes many socialist parties such as the former German Party of Democratic Socialism (now called simply "the Left") or the Socialist Workers Party of Spain and the Socialist Party in Portugal. While I would prefer to exclusively use the term "far left" instead, I will use "communist parties" in order to reference the Party Manifestos Project category.

in general have undergone a great diversification since 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union, which possibly has resulted in distinct differences between communist parties in Western and Eastern Europe that are worth examining (Bull 1995; Hough 2005, Ishiyama 1995).

While the single country studies and the descriptions of historical and regional developments are rich in detail they have one flaw: they lack empirical evidence. None of the authors cited below provides a clear answer to the question of where exactly far left parties and their voters occupy the ideological space on the left. What choices are offered by the communist party family? Are economic policy stances really a good measure for defining this party family? Furthermore, how well do far left parties and their voters match in their attitudes and policy preferences? Do parties accurately represent the electorate on the far left? What are the specific differences between Eastern and Western Europe? In addition, by considering two levels or units of analysis simultaneously – parties and their voters at a specific point in time – this study reveals more about the relationship between the two with respect to available choices and representation.

This paper tries to answer the above raised questions by empirically analyzing two existing datasets – the Comparative Manifestos Project⁴ and the European Value Survey – with respect to far left parties' policy stances, specifically concerning left-right, the economy and questions of European integration, and voter's matching attitudes in Eastern and Western Europe. While domestic economic issues dominate the discussion in the literature (Mudde 2009) and thus are the obvious choice for the analysis, I also included a variable addressing an international topic to expand the framework of the study. I expect results for economically based questions to be clearer than those on the integration process of the European Union.

⁴ The chapter on the Comparative Manifestos Project will discuss in detail why party manifestos were chosen for the analysis rather than expert surveys.

The remaining text is organized into two larger parts. Part one addresses the question of choice among far left parties. In the first section, existing comparative accounts of far left parties are critically reviewed and it is shown how they are inadequate to answer the questions. Though there is a consensus in the literature on far left parties' economic position no empirical evidence exists. I make the argument that a synchronic analysis⁵ is best suited to determine the ideology and policy stances of far left parties in Europe when used in connection with a statistical model. A synchronic analysis tests the differences on a particular topic – far left parties and their voters in the case of the present study – between countries at one point in time. Rather than looking back to when far left parties first emerged and track their changes, this paper explores the contemporary far left electorate and its relationship to the far left party family in West and East Europe.

The following section uses data from the Party Manifestos Project in order to examine the distribution of European far left parties on the left-right scale and with respect to their policy stances on planned and market economy, welfare and European integration. I find that the communist party family can be clearly distinguished from the social democrats (and the greens) on the left side of the ideological spectrum (though not always in the expected way)⁶. However, boundaries are less clear with regards to the programmatic variables themselves, thus providing evidence for a reduced choice-set. Especially in Eastern Europe the demarcation between communist and social democratic parties with respect to planned economy, market economy and welfare are blurred because both types of parties often supply similar choices to voters. This in turn has implications for the choices available to voters in that region. Faced with less

⁵ As identified by Mair and Mudde (1998).

⁶ The social democratic party family is actually further to the left than the “far” left party family in Eastern Europe.

distinguishable alternatives East European voters might feel alienated and turn away from the democratic process of elections or chose social democratic parties over communist ones.

The second part explores the conclusions drawn in the previous sections with respect to far left voters and expands on them theoretically as well as examines the degree of representation between parties and the electorate. In addition to their placement on the left-right ideological scale, it addresses why voters of far left parties might exhibit economic insecurity and opposition to a further EU integration, drawing parallels to the issues already explored in the section on the far left party family.

This is followed by the empirical analysis of far left voters in Eastern and Western Europe. They serve as the baseline in a multinomial regression model and are compared to three other groups of voters (social democratic/green, center right and far right) with respect to their self-placement on the left-right and attitudes toward the nation's economy, their personal economic situation, government involvement to reduce differences in income levels and EU integration. Overall, far left voters are clearly to the left of everyone else. However, while Western European far left voters are very distinct from their social democratic/green counterparts, the far left electorate in Eastern Europe shows no significant difference to the center left for questions on one's own household income and government involvement to reduce inequalities. Furthermore, there is a clear disconnect between far left voters and parties in the East. Since the far left electorate occupies the expected far left space on the ideological scale they are at odds with the far left party family that is found right of the social democratic party family.

I therefore conclude in the final section that the far left party family offers distinct vote choices and represents its voters in Western Europe with respect to the economy and European

integration – variables that have been identified as being a main characteristic for that particular party family and electorate. The lines between far left and center left in Eastern Europe is much more blurred, questioning the role of the far left party family. Not only are choices for voters limited but since the social democrats seem to occupy most of the space on the left of the ideological spectrum, matching attitudes of both far left and center left voters, representation of the citizens' preferences by the far left party family in the East is doubtful. This in turn has implications for the democratization process. If far left voters are faced with no or only inadequate choices and thus are not represented well, it is very likely for them to feel alienated and become indifferent to the political arena.

2. Part One – Choices Provided by the Far Left Party Family in Western and Eastern Europe

2.1. Existing Characterizations of the Far Left Party Family and their Limitations

The research on far left parties is largely underdeveloped. Most existing studies focus on just one particular party, a specific country or a region.⁷ There are, however, a few cross-country analyses that enter the “potential political minefield” (March & Mudde 2005, p. 24) of trying to define what exactly it is that characterizes the parties on the far left of the ideological spectrum. This section will critically review accounts of West and East European far left parties, summarize their common attributes and point out the limitations thereof.

With respect to far left (or communist) parties in Western Europe, authors agree on tracing their origin back to the worker’s movement of the 19th century, the resulting emergence of socialist and social democratic parties and the split from them in the 1917 Russian Revolution (Spier & Wirries 2007; Bull 1995). The initial loyalty to the Soviet Union was replaced by the idea of Eurocommunism and the support of socialism while upholding the Western democratic traditions in the mid-1970s (Waller 1989). The revolution of 1989 and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in the diversification of communist parties. While some kept their orthodox-Marxist and pro-Soviet character, others continued as reformed socialist parties or transformed into non-communist left parties.

⁷ E.g. Forlenza 2010, Bordandini & Di Virgilio 2007, Mule 2005 (on Italian communist parties), Lazar 2003 & Lazar 1998 (comparing Italian and French communist parties), Lazar 2000 (on Western communist parties), Hough & Kos 2009, Hockenos 2009, Solty 2008, Nachtwey & Spier 2007, Olsen 2007, Friedrich 2004 (on the German Left Party), Lach et al 2010 (Czech communist party), Fiserá 2009 (Slavic communist parties), Deen 2009, March 2007 (Moldova), Spirova 2008 (Bulgaria), Charalambous 2007, Dunphy & Bale 2007 (Cyprus), Buyukakinci 2005 (communist parties in Central and Eastern Europe), Magone 2005 (Portugal), Haughton & Rybar 2004, Houghton 2004 (Slovakia), Arter 2002 (Finlan and Sweden).

Therefore, today's far left parties of Western Europe present a diverse picture with many different ideological directions. Nevertheless, authors also emphasize that most of these parties have come together in the European Parliament as the "United Left" and represent the interests and grievances of leftist voters who do not see an alternative in green or social democratic parties, thus constituting its own party family (Klingemann 2006; Spier & Wirries 2007).

The research on (former) communist parties in Eastern Europe comes to similar conclusions. Having originated in the same historical circumstances as their Western counterparts, they also varied in their support of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and had to reinvent themselves after 1989. Just like in Western Europe, some parties continued to promote Marxist-Leninist positions while others immediately distanced themselves from their predecessors and radically transformed by embracing social-democratic policies and programs (Hough 1995). The parties who remained communist in nature soon polarized around the issue of economic reform in Eastern Europe, especially its nature and the many setbacks that the newer democracies have experienced (Ishiyama 1995).

The main difference between West and East European communist parties is twofold. First, while the former have had varying electoral success but were never part of a ruling coalition on the national level, the latter had been in office for decades and then lost their governmental importance after the revolutions in 1989, being forced into opposition and faced with competitive elections (Ishiyama 1995). Second, communist parties in Eastern Europe have combined socialist with nationalist issues. Dubbed "National Bolshevism", "National Communism" or "Strasserism" (Ishiyama 2009), parties have made use of commonalities between the otherwise paradox dimensions by stressing "the importance of the state in solving

political, economic and social problems” and by denouncing their competitors on the left as enemies of the nation state (Hough 2005, p. 6).

However, despite the variation within countries and across Europe, far left parties are typically perceived as a homogenous set of parties. Research commonly attributes them with the rejection of the socio-economic structure, values and practices of contemporary capitalism (Mudde 2009). These parties are understood as promoting alternative economic and power structures, which usually involves the redistribution of resources. Thus, far left parties are first and foremost “left” through “their identification of economic inequity as the basis of existing political and social arrangements” (March & Mudde 2005, p. 25). Today far left parties in Europe are comprised of communist, democratic socialist and social populist parties (March and Mudde 2005, March 2009). Green and new politics parties, on the other hand, are not included in the group of far left parties. Even though some of them were radical on the outset, most green and new politics parties have transformed into moderate left-wing parties, accepting capitalism and democracy (March and Mudde, p. 33).

While the characterization of the far left party family mainly via economic policy stances is in itself not contentious, it is problematic that authors seem to follow a common path where “classification becomes almost a matter of conventional wisdom, and there seems little need to spell out or explain the categorizations involved” (Mair & Mudde 1998, p. 214). None of the studies cited above provide any empirical evidence for their claims. Rather than actually providing evidence for the connection between the far left party family and economic issues in a systematic manner, the literature relies solely on descriptive accounts of the historical and regional developments of former communist parties.

Thus, the next section will briefly summarize the four main approaches to party family characterizations. I will explain why a synchronic analysis of the parties' ideology and policy stances is the best method for developing criteria of classifying parties that are based on empirical evidence before moving on to the actual analysis itself.

2.2. Defining the Far Left Party Family Empirically

According to Mair & Mudde (1998) four different approaches have been used to define party families in a European context: 1) identification in terms of shared origin and/or sociology, 2) classification by the international links parties forge across national frontiers, 3) by party policy and ideology and 4) by party labels.

The first approach, which mirrors the examples in the literature discussed above, relies on similar historical circumstances of parties. It harks back to Rokkan (1970) who grouped parties together according to four central cleavages that he had identified as having emerged from the national and industrial revolutions from the 16th century onward. Of course most importantly for the emergence and development of communist parties was the conflict between workers versus employers or owners. The crucial advantage of the shared origin/sociology approach is that it is based on “a widely shared and comprehensive theoretical model” within a broader European context (Mair & Mudde 1998, p. 215). However, its geographic limitations (the approach was mainly developed for Western Europe) might make it unsuitable outside a West European research focus and render it inadequate over time.

Nevertheless, Mair & Mudde recommend using shared origin and/or sociology of parties if one is interested in tracing the long-term development of a party family. Since the focus of this

paper is on the current state of the far left party family this approach, which traces change and development over time, would be inappropriate as a method for definition.

Two other approaches discussed but not recommended by Mair & Mudde are the use of either party labels/names or parties' association with international groups as a means of identification. Both approaches focus on the actions parties themselves take by either emphasizing the ideological self-understanding of a party or how it fits into a larger, multinational context. Despite the apparent straightforwardness, neither method guarantees a deeper understanding of a particular party family. In the case of party names/labels so many different denotations exist of communist, socialist and social democratic parties (Bull 1995; Padgett & Paterson 1991, discussion in footnote 1) that such an approach would only render unclear and ambiguous results. The same is true for the international organization approach. Here the major problem is that some parties are members of multiple international groups while others do not affiliate with an international federation at all. For example, many European communist parties are members of two far left international organizations within the European Parliament: the European Left and European United Left/Green Nordic Left.⁸

A fourth approach that Mair & Mudde do approve of and will be used in this paper is the definition of party families by party policy or ideology. It is "based on the congruence of the policies and/or ideologies that are professed or even pursued by the parties" and has the advantage of having a variety of accessible and applicable data available for quantitative cross-national analysis (Mair & Mudde 1998. p 217f.). A problem with this approach is that the usage of similar scales assumes that the same policy in one country means the same in another context. However, the party manifestos approach within this particular method has avoided that problem

⁸ See http://www.european-left.org/english/about_the_el/member_parties/ and <http://www.guengl.eu/showPage.php?ID=8876&LANG=1&GLANG=1>.

by deriving the groupings or classifications from what the parties themselves have chosen to emphasize in their party programs.

Some might argue that expert surveys are a better means to understand parties' (policy) positions than party manifestos. Especially with regards to complex inquiries, it is said that experts are well suited to "access and process diverse sources of information" (Hooghe et al 2010, p. 689). Expert surveys are considered by some to be very flexible in that access to specific source information, such as election manifestos, is not required and the costs of administering them are low. Furthermore, rather than having to work with simplified data as in the case of the Comparative Manifestos Project, expert surveys allow researchers "to design dimensions deductively" (Hooghe et al 2010, p. 689).

I still chose to use the Comparative Manifestos Project instead for several reasons. First and most importantly as mentioned above, party manifestos "directly reflect what the parties state as their position rather than what others judge it to be". Second, the reliability and validity of such variables as the left-right scores have been examined in depth and numerous authors who satisfactorily used the Comparative Manifesto Project data have produced further testimonials in favor of it (Budge & Pennings 2007, p. 125).

Moreover, different experts might use different dimension scales when placing parties and it could also be difficult for them to interpret a party's position accurately at single point in time (Benoit & Laver 2007). The selection of experts poses another problem. Sometimes too few or inappropriate experts are chosen (Hooghe et al 2010). Also, studies show that up to almost 16 percent of experts can express ideological bias when placing parties on the left-right scale (Curini 2010). Given these concerns and since I am most interested in the position from a party's point of view, data from the Comparative Manifestos Projects best fits the objective of the paper.

Its application to an empirical analysis of the far left party family will be discussed in the following chapter.

3.1. The Comparative Manifesto Project

The data contained in the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) of the Social Science Research Center Berlin⁹ provides a great source for applying a common and comprehensive “check list” with respect to the ideology and policy stances of parties in general and members in the far left party family specifically (Budge et al 2001, Klingemann et al 2006, Mair & Mudde 1998, p. 225). Every sentence in each party manifesto has been analyzed individually so that the authors were then able to estimate each party’s position on a cross-national left-right scale and a variety of programmatic variables. In addition, parties were also coded along specific party family lines to be discussed in greater detail below (Budge et al 1987).

Now according to Mair & Mudde there are still limitations and disadvantages associated with this approach. First, as with so many other methods, the CMP is skewed toward a Western European experience (Mair & Mudde 1998, p. 219). However, since this paper only focuses on countries of the European Union (including Western and Central Eastern European nations), the implications should be less dramatic. Furthermore, some might raise the concern that the CMP is also oriented toward the issues of older and bigger party families as well as toward categories that were deemed appropriate at the beginning of the 1980s when the project was initially started (Mair & Mudde 1998, p. 219). Because most of the communist parties trace their origins back to the beginning of the 19th century and the social democrats, one of the oldest party families, and since the main issues in this paper center on traditional economic policy stances, a category that

⁹ All Manifesto Project data was downloaded from: <http://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/>.

definitely was of importance when the Comparative Manifestos Project first was developed, these concerns do not affect this paper.

3.2. Data and Method

The most current CMP data set, including information on 651 parties in 51 countries from 1990 to 2010, distinguishes between a total of eleven party families: Ecology parties, (former) Communist parties, Social democratic parties, Liberal parties, Christian democratic parties, Conservative parties, Nationalist parties, Agrarian parties, Ethnic and Regional parties, Special issue parties and Electoral alliances. The party families are “based on aggregation of positions across the manifestos” (Klingemann et al 2006, p. 13) with respect to 54 standard categories as they pertain to seven different domains: external relations, freedom and democracy, political system, economy, welfare and quality of life, fabric of society and social groups as developed by Budge et al (1987). As already discussed above, the focus will be on the left-right position and the economic variables.

Returning to the initial question of this section, I am interested in seeing whether or not far left parties constitute their own distinct group with respect to the other party families but especially in comparison to social democratic and green parties in Western Europe (WE) and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). I chose the following 33 European countries (19 WE and 14 CEE) for which data of at least 2 different parties is available: Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

Twenty-four of these countries match the ones included in the European Social Survey (ESS) round 4 of 2008 to be used for the analysis of far left voters in chapter 5.¹⁰ I deleted all other election data but the most recent available¹¹ in order to get a closer match between the parties and actual voters I am analyzing, with the exception of the “European Integration” variable. While the 2009 and 2010 updates for the Parties Manifestos Project includes data on left-right positions and the economic variables, unfortunately the question on attitudes about “European Integration” seems to have been omitted. Therefore, I resorted to the somewhat older 1990-2003 dataset without the updates, having to go as far back as 1994 for the analysis of parties’ stances on European Integration. Using data from the most recent available manifestos makes sense since this present study is cross-national and not over time. There is not much use in exploring parties’ policy stances from 1990 when some of them have since dissolved or considerably changed.

Examining party groupings I used seven of the eleven original party family categories from the CMP for the initial analysis. I dropped agrarian parties, ethnic and regional parties, special issue parties and electoral alliances because they do not compete on the traditional left-right scale (Ezrow, 2010, p. 12).

3.3. Variables

The manifesto project combines several of its variables to create the following new programmatic variables which all tap into the above identified characteristics of communist/far

¹⁰ Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

¹¹ Ranging from 2001 to 2010, with the time difference between the ESS round 4 data from 2008 and the data from the Parties Manifestos Project not being greater than seven years.

left parties in Europe: left-right, planned economy, market economy, welfare and European integration.

Left-Right Policy Dimension

Left-right differences are not only the “single most important indicator of party policy” but also point to the underlying ideology “which meshes with membership of a generic ‘family’ and other distinguishing party characteristics (Budge & Klingemann 2001). The variable describing the left-right position of a party consists of the sum of categories that pertain to the right minus the sum of categories referring to the left on the ideological scale. So according to Budge et al (2001) absolute positive notions of the military, freedom and human rights, constitutionalism, political authority, free enterprise, incentives, economic orthodoxy, welfare state limitation, national way of life, traditional morality, law and order and social harmony as well as a negative stand on protectionism characterize policies on the right end, denoted with +100, of the ideological spectrum.¹²

Likewise, full scores on anti-imperialism/anti-colonialism sentiments, negative perceptions of the military as well as the support of peace, internationalism, market regulations, economic planning, protectionism, a controlled economy, nationalization, welfare state expansion, education expansion, labor groups and democracy represent the left end and -100 on the ideological scale. Of course -100 and +100 are the absolute, ideal extremes with actual parties scoring somewhere in between, depending on their ideological makeup.

¹² In general then “negative scores represent left positions and positive scores represent right positions” (Klingemann et al 2006).

Planned and Market Economy, Welfare and European Integration

Stances on a planned economy are measured with the help of three categories: positive view on market regulation, economic planning and a controlled economy. Contrary to that, party attitudes on market economy are measured in terms of positive opinions about free enterprise and economic orthodoxy. The welfare variable is constructed by combining the positive categories of social justice and welfare state expansion. Lastly, the variable that addresses party policies with respect to Europe is the difference between the positive and the negative European integration category.

Distribution Scores, Degree of Overlap and Difference Scores

In order to empirically test the characteristics of the communist party family as provided by the CMP, I first compare the distribution of the left-right, economic policy and European integration stances of communist parties in West and East Europe. In a second step, I calculate the degree of overlap between communist parties and their competitors on the left by using difference scores between the 25th and 75th percentile.¹³ This is done the following way: I estimate the range for the far left/communist party family on a specific variable by computing the numeric value between the 25th percentile and the 75th percentile, which serves as the baseline. I then calculate the numeric value for the left competitors (the social democratic and, in Western Europe, green party families) that matches the range of the communist party families.

¹³ That way I capture the ideological space where most of the parties in one party family can be found, discounting outliers on both ends.

The thus estimated two values can be used to generate the amount of overlap in percent between the party families.¹⁴ Finally, difference scores help to explore any cross-country variation further.

3.4. Findings

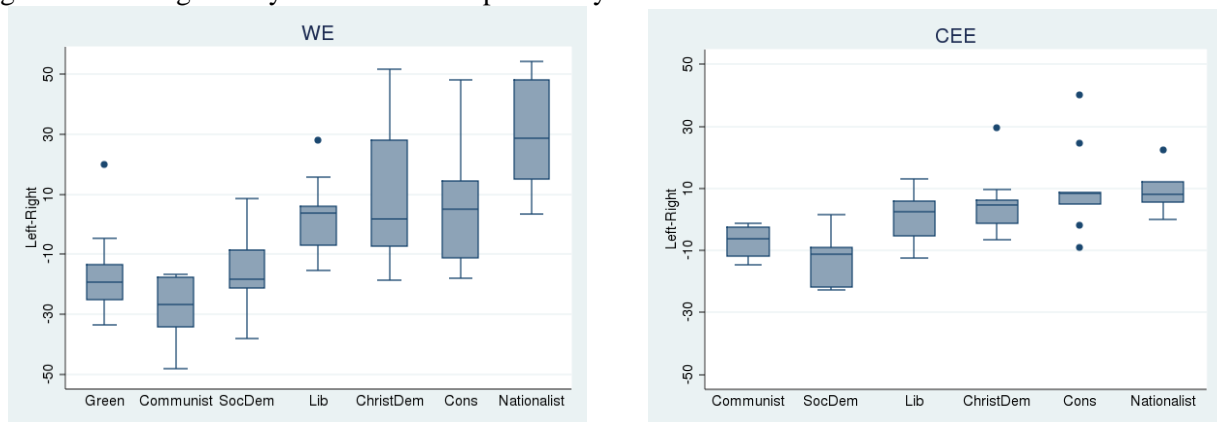
Overall, the assertions from the literature with respect to economic policy stances are confirmed by the empirical analysis: communist parties in Europe can be found on the left side of the ideological spectrum, supporting planned economy and welfare measures and being opposed to market economy. However, there are very distinct differences between East and West Europe in regards to specific programmatic variables that need to be discussed in detail.

Table 1 (see Appendix A) summarizes the distributions scores (minimum, maximum, median, 25th percentile, 75th percentile) for Western and Eastern communist parties across the left-right dimension, planned and market economy, welfare and European Integration. Beginning with the left-right positions (see also Figure 1) one can observe a clear tendency of party families from left to right with communist parties having the lowest median of -26.7 and nationalist parties exhibiting the highest median in Western Europe. On first sight, the range within each party family seems considerable and there is quite an overlap with neighboring party groups. For example, communist parties in Western Europe score from -48.0 to -16.8 on the left-right scale, overlapping with green and social democratic parties from -38.2 to -16.8 . However, if one concentrates on the distribution between the 25th and 75th percentile in each party family on the left (where most of the parties can be found and outliers are excluded), the overlap between the communist party family and the social democratic parties is only 21.8 percent, making

¹⁴ Here is an example: let us assume that the communist party family scores on the left-right dimension range from -20 (25th percentile) to -5 (75th percentile), which represents a total of 15 units on that particular scale. The party family competitor on the left (social democratic/green) has 25th and 75th percentile scores of -10 and $+10$, which matches 5 units (from -10 to -5) out of the 15. The overlap would therefore be 33.3%.

communist parties very distinct from this left competitor. The overlap between green and communist parties in Western Europe on the left-right dimension is a little bit greater with 44.2 percent but still very dissimilar.

Figure 1: Left-Right Party Position of European Party Families¹⁵



In the case of Eastern Europe (also figure 1) the difference is less pronounced and of a curious nature. Before this can be analyzed, however, it is important to note that the data set for the 14 nations in that region did not include any green parties. Logically, this means that there is less competition for the communist party family in the East compared to its Western European counterpart where green parties in addition to social democratic parties also participate in the struggle for votes. Thus, one would expect less overlap because of the fewer “contestants” on the left.

First, it is significant to report that the scores for the communist party family in the East (ranging from -14.5 to -1.3) are overall located more toward the center than in the West. Communist parties in the West are clearly “left” with the maximum score being -16.8 and thus smaller than the minimum score of the East communist party family. Even though the same

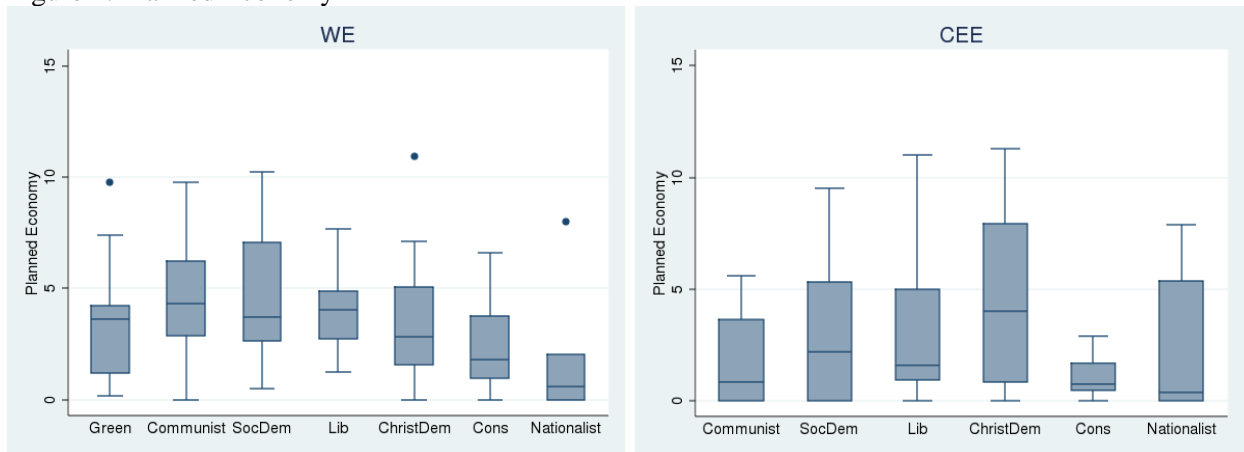
¹⁵ This boxplot and the ones to follow graphically display the distributions of the variables by showing the lower and upper adjacent values (5th and 95th percentile), the 25th and 75th percentile, the median and outside values (outliers).

general tendency of median scores increasing from the left to the right can be witnessed, communist and social democratic parties occupy somewhat more of the same space on the ideological scale. More important, however, is that these two party families exchange places on the left-right scale. The communist party group's median score of -6.3 is closer to the ideological center of zero than that of the social democratic party family (-11.0). This means that overall the social democratic party family is "more left" than the communist party family in Central and Eastern Europe. Though the overlap between the communist and social democratic parties in the East is only 29.2 percent when taking into account the 25th and 75th percentile, it does not change the fact that the numbers should be the other way around given not only the name "far left" but also the conclusions drawn in the literature already discussed. This has implications for party competition which will be discussed in detail in the next section.

The planned economy and market economy distribution scores should return diametrically opposed results with parties on the left more in favor of the former and disapproving of the latter and parties on the right exhibiting opposite sentiments¹⁶. Furthermore and according to the literature, among the left party families the communist parties should show greater policy support of a planned economy and greater policy objections to market economy than green and social democratic parties.

¹⁶ At least with respect to Liberal, Christian Democratic and Conservative Parties (the center right party family). As the analysis shows, far right parties might be not as much in favor of a market economy as their competitors on the right of the ideological spectrum due to reasons that cannot be discussed within the limits of this paper (but see, for example, Bale et al (2010), who discuss the far right's appeal to member of the working class and the unemployed with regards to their economic policies).

Figure 2: Planned Economy



While the median score for the communist party families in West Europe is the highest with respect to planned economy (figure 2) and thus in line with the expectations, this is not the case in Eastern Europe. Here, not only does the social democratic party family exhibit once again a more leftist position than the communists on the issue with a median score of 2.2 over 0.8 but the Christian Democratic party family has the highest median altogether. This means that two party families occupy the ideological space which traditionally “belongs” to the communist party family.

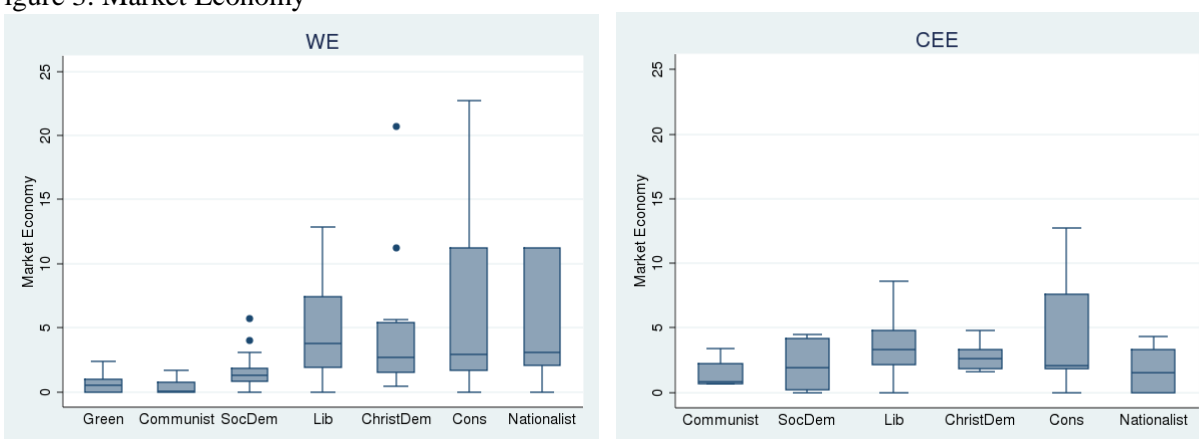
However, focusing again on the distinction between social democratic and communist parties one needs to point out that the overlap in Eastern and Western Europe is 100 percent (using the 25th and 75th percentile).¹⁷ Party policy stances on planned economy are thus not a good measure for voters to make a decision about whom to choose.

The results are completely the opposite for the market economy variable (figure 3), meaning that far left parties not only show the lowest support but there are also distinct differences between the different party families on the left at least in one of the two regions examined. In West Europe the communist party family has the lowest median (.08) as expected

¹⁷ The overlap between the communist and green party family in Western Europe is 39.4 percent.

and the overlap with the social democratic party family is 0 percent (25th to 75th percentile). Clearly, party policy stances on market economy emerge as a very good measure of distinction and offer different choices to voters. Though the communist party family in Eastern Europe also has the lowest median score (.9 compared to 1.9 of the social democratic party family), it overlaps 100 percent with the social democrats. Clearly, party opinions on market economy offer no distinct choices between communist and social democratic parties in Eastern Europe.

Figure 3: Market Economy



The welfare variable fares considerably well again in Western Europe (figure 4) in regards to a clear difference between communist and social democratic parties but especially in comparison to the East. The communist party family in Western Europe has the highest median, thus the greatest support for welfare expansions.¹⁸ However, the overlap with the social democratic party family is 65.3 percent¹⁹ (only taking the 25th to the 75th percentile into account).

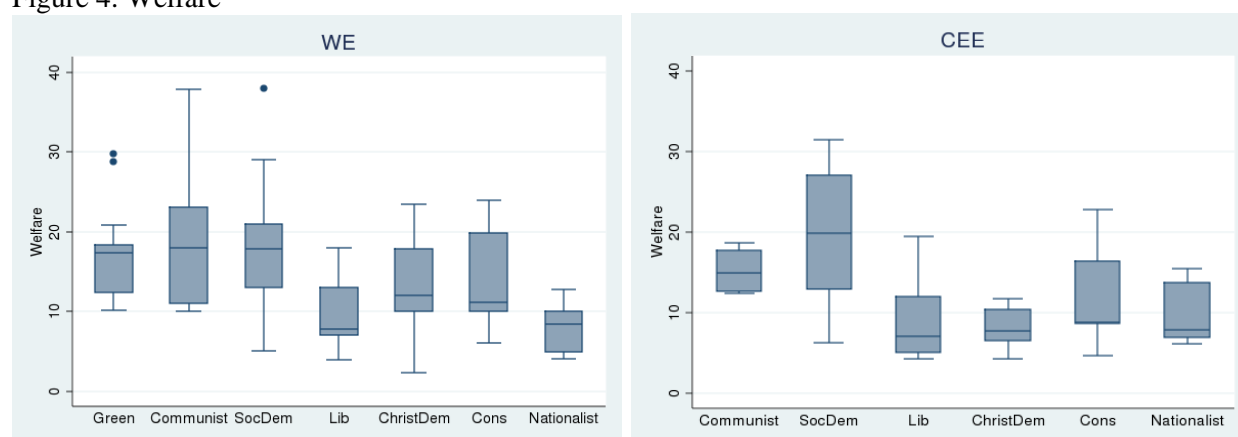
This rather considerable overlap can be viewed more favorable when comparing it to Eastern Europe because the latter provides a lot less choice in the matter. Here the matching on

¹⁸ Though only by a margin of .1.

¹⁹ Though only 48.8 percent with the green party family.

the policy scale between the communist and the social democratic party families is not only 96 percent but the latter is once more the greatest supporter of the left stances on welfare. While far left parties in Western Europe appear to exhibit their traditional role of supporting social measures in order to guarantee equality and security, these results point to less clearly defined party roles in the East. There, the social democratic party family is the biggest supporter of welfare expansion, having the highest median score (19.9), whereas the communist party family seems in favor of an extensive welfare system but less pronounced (with a median score of 14.9).

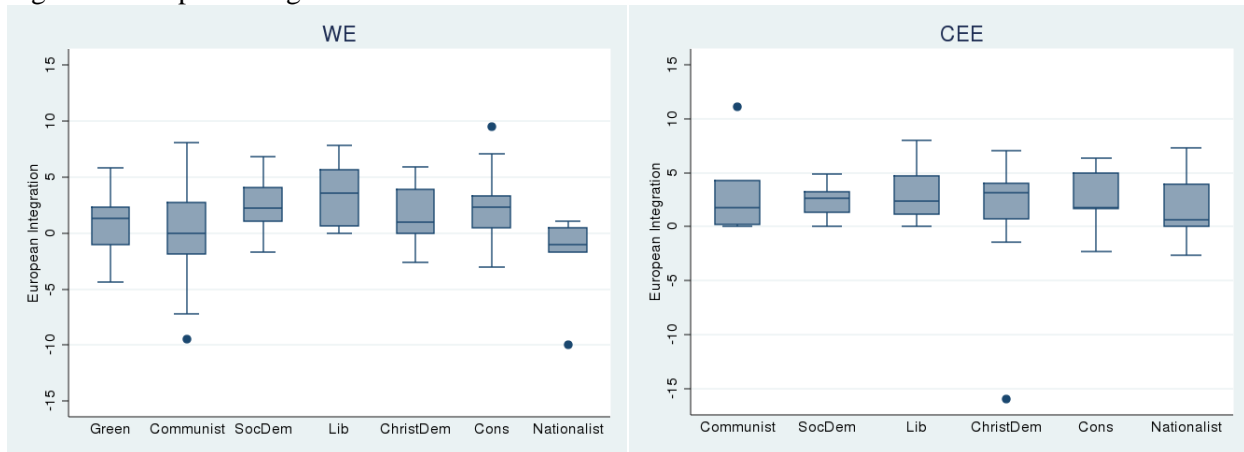
Figure 4: Welfare



The last programmatic variable, policy stances on European Integration (see figure 5), was included because the literature has suggested a clear difference between the West and East European communist party family. The latter is expected to exhibit stronger nationalist tendencies that are in opposition to a greater European Integration (see Ishiyama 2009, Hough 2005). The results do not confirm that assertion. If anything, the communist party family in Eastern Europe appears to be slightly in favor of a further EU integration with a median of +1.8 while its counterpart in the West is neutral on the issue (with a median of 0). The social democratic party families in East and West have both slightly higher median scores but the

overlap is only about 35 percent in the West and 48.8 percent in the West (considering the 25th to 75th percentile).

Figure 5: European Integration



All in all, compared to the social democratic party family, communist parties are a little less supportive of EU integration and thus distinct from their competitor on the left of the ideological spectrum. However, it needs to be noted that the national party family in East and West Europe overlaps nearly 100 percent with the communist parties, questioning the distinction between the two on this issue.

3.5. Discussion

The above findings have important implications for voters in East and West Europe. The unambiguous consensus is that democratic regimes should be characterized by political choices they offer and the effectiveness of these choices (Wessels & Schmitt 2008). With respect to the former and as is tested in this paper, it is vital that the political supply, such as parties, offers alternatives in terms of ideologically distinguishable competitors (Dahl 1971). Focusing on ideology in general, communist parties in West Europe provide voters with a clear set of choices

on the left since the overlap with the social democratic and green parties is either small or moderate (see table 1). Likewise, on all programmatic variables with the exception of planned economy, the communist party family emerges as a distinct alternative to other leftist parties. Since the difference scores on planned economy do not reveal any major variation between countries but are generally low (see Appendix), one might conclude that communist parties in general do not emphasize alternatives to a capitalist system and rather focus on the opposition to a market economy.

Table 1: Degree of Overlap between Communist and Social Democratic Parties on Policies
(less than 30% = small, 31% to 60% = medium, more than 60% = large, looking at 25th to 75th percentile)

	West Europe	East Europe
Left-Right Dimension	small	small ²⁰
Planned Economy	large	large
Market Economy	small	large
Welfare	medium	large
European Integration	medium	medium

The picture is different for Eastern Europe. First of all, even though the general ideological overlap between communist and social democratic parties is small, it needs to be emphasized that the party families have switched places on the left-right dimension. This suggests that the parties of the party family are only communist in name, not with respect to their policy stances. Furthermore, considering the 25th to the 75th percentile, those two party families have a large degree of overlap with regards to planned economy, market economy and welfare policies. It is perhaps too early to announce a complete lack of choices for voters on the left. However, it is a first sign that people in Eastern Europe might not have distinct alternatives in elections, at least with respect to economic variables so important for the left of the ideological

²⁰ But with reversed roles, as the social democratic party family is more left than the communists on the ideological scale.

dimension. Either parties that wanted to continue to promote Marxist-Leninist positions in the period of reinvention after 1989 actually embraced social-democratic policies and programs²¹ or social democratic parties increased their policy spectrum to garner the support of former communist voters. The small number of countries with communist parties might provide evidence for the dominance of the social democratic parties in the East. After all, of the fourteen CEE countries only the Czech Republic, Estonia, Moldova, Romania and Slovakia have communist parties according to the latest data from the Parties Manifestos Project.

When choice sets are not sufficiently differentiated as is the case here in regards to the economic variables, this could lead to lower turnout which in turn is consequential for the democratic character of a polity and the legitimacy of political leaders (Wessels & Schmitt 2008). After all, a large part of the citizenry in Eastern Europe still has socialistic views about the economy (Rohrschneider & Whitefield 2006). If communist and social democratic parties continue to be similar in Eastern Europe, one should question the applicability of different party families on the left or at least the implications of finding different families on the left competing. It appears that the social democrats cover all of the left positions with respect to the economy and also are most in favor of an expansion of the welfare system. Communist parties are only different in regards to European Integration. Here they seem to cater to a more conservative electorate which sets them apart from the social democrats. However, by doing so, they then overlap with the national party family. Overall, communist parties in East Europe do not offer distinct choices to their voters on issues that have been traditionally connected to the far left.

²¹ After all, “[a]nti-system parties of the left have [...] tended to moderate or to fade away. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union [...] communist parties either gave up the ghost or transformed themselves into more widely acceptable social-democratic alternatives” (Mair 2008, p. 213).

4. Part Two – Far Left Voters and the Degree of Representation by the Party Family

4.1. Voters of Far Left Parties – The Great Unknown?

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, numerous far left parties exist in differing strength throughout Western and Eastern Europe. Hence, there are people who vote for these parties. Just like there are gaps in the literature on empirically examining the far left party family, the research on voters of far left parties is almost non-existent (Neu, 2009), leaving many questions unanswered: What is the rationale behind the far left electorate? Is it a homogenous group of voters across Europe, which seems unlikely, or do different motives determine a similar electoral choice? Does the far left party accurately reflect its voters' preferences? In other words, is there a linkage between far left parties and the far left electorate?

With respect to part one I want to explore in how far the far left parties' positions on the left-right scale and support of/opposition to planned economy, market economy, welfare and further European integration mirror the preferences of their electorate. Considering the findings from the previous sections I expect a better representation of far left voters by the far left party family in the West than in the East, taking into account that the Eastern communist parties provide less specific alternatives and choices.

Finding a comprehensive definition of far left parties is difficult as the above analysis proves. Trying to discover something about voters of such parties is therefore equally challenging especially given the lack of research on that topic (Neu 2009). When it comes to the question of what motivates someone to vote for far left parties there is an absence of a comprehensive research tradition. Therefore, the starting point will be to discuss what is known about influences on political behavior in general with specific examples that pertain to the left and as derived from the discussion of the far left party family in the previous chapters. From

this I will develop the hypotheses for voting behavior of the far left electorate to be tested in a cross-national context.

Among the factors said to determine voting behavior are the social structures such as religion and class, long-term predispositions like party identification, value orientation and ideological orientation, and short-term factors represented by issues, retrospective judgment and political leaders (Thomassen 2005). The analysis presented here will focus on left-right ideological orientations, economic voting and the issue of Euroskepticism with respect to far left voters for reasons already named and as explained in the respective sections. A discussion of the dependent and independent variables will be followed by a multinomial logistic regression model that tests in how far the above named variables are suitable to distinguish between far left voters and voters of other party families.

4.2. Left-Right Ideology

Just as left-right differences are valued to be the “single most important indicator of party policy” (Budge et al 2001), the placement of the electorate on the ideological scale is thought to be very instrumental in predicting vote choice. After all, “the language of ‘left and right’ provides parties and voters with a shared policy space and students of politics with a powerful tool for evaluating elite–mass correspondence over policy” (Hellwig 2008, p. 687). Often the left-right ideology of a voter is used as one of the most important elements of party choice. Though there is research focusing on the decline in importance of left-right orientations (e.g. (Inglehart 1990; Kitschelt 1994; Kitschelt & Rehm 2005; Kriesi et al. 2006), the fact remains that placement on the left-right scale is still an adequate determinant of voters’ overall ideology

and their preferred choice of at least the party family (Klingemann 1995, Klingemann et al 2006).

With respect to the far left voters in Europe, by definition one expects them to be on the left side of the ideological scale. However, taking into account the findings from the party family analysis, there could be marked differences between East and West Europe. Whereas far left voters in the West could be to the left of their social democratic and green counterparts, the distinction between communist and social democratic voters in the East might be less clear. Should voters really align with their respective party family then Eastern communist voters will be to the right of social democratic voters. Hence, I derive the following hypotheses:

H1: Far left voters in East and West Europe place themselves on the left of the ideological scale.

H2: Far left voters in Western Europe place themselves on the left of green and social democratic voters.

H3: Far left voters in Eastern Europe do not place themselves on the left of social democratic voters.

4.3. Economic Voting/Economic Insecurity and the (Far) Left

The sections on the far left party family have also emphasized the importance of the economy as a measure of distinction to other party families in general and the social democratic and green parties in particular. With respect to voting behavior, economic voting comes closest to address this issue because worries about one's own or the nation's economic situation goes hand in hand with the support of greater welfare measures and the distrust of free market economy as will be explained below.

Economic voting as a theory about applied rational behavior seeks to explain voters' decision making in the light of evaluating a nation's economy (Dorussen and Palmer, 2002, p. 1). In an ideal situation, the electorate will express its preferences with respect to the handling of the economy at the ballot. Incumbent governments are evaluated on the basis of economic policy outcomes such as unemployment, inflation, growth etc. Any politician who fails to regard the public's policy goals or is incompetent in managing the economy will be "punished" by getting voted out of office. This reasoning refers directly to the responsibility hypothesis where "voters hold the government responsible for economic events" (Lewis-Beck and Paldam, 2000, p. 2).

But while the literature has demonstrated that the economy and its performance are indeed salient issues among the electorate and influence election outcomes, controversies surround "the nature of the economic-voting calculus" (Dorussen and Palmer, p. 2). Questions such as which economic policies matter most, what is more important – national economic conditions or the personal financial situation or is there variance across voter groups, political systems and electoral contexts are raised (Dorussen and Palmer; Lewis-Beck and Paldam). For the purpose of this paper I am interested in the link between the perception of economic insecurity and the electoral support of parties, specifically the implications for parties on the left of the ideological spectrum.

Aldrich et al (2002) show in their analysis that there is a direct link between changes in the economy and individual economic insecurity. In their analysis of an ANEAS study from 1999 and a World Value Survey project including 17 OECD countries from 2000, the authors show that external economic shocks induce increased feelings of economic insecurity in individuals (Aldrich et al, p. 13). Furthermore, by examining single-country studies from the United States, Canada, Mexico, Israel and the United Kingdom, Aldrich et al also establish that

the more an individual feels economic insecurity the greater will be the preference for enhanced levels of social welfare. These changes in feelings of economic security and in policy preferences in turn then affect the vote choice made by citizens (p. 21). But how exactly does economic insecurity translate into a certain party choice?

Two diametrically opposed models are proposed and discussed in the economic voting literature with respect to parties on the left. The “luxury-goods model” theorizes that voters will be more willing to support social luxuries such as health care programs, social welfare or unemployment insurances, traditionally associated with a leftist policy agenda, when the economy is doing well (Stevenson, 2002, p. 48). Conversely, in times of economic decline, fiscally conservative parties such as the Liberal, Christian Democratic and Conservative parties will profit at the ballot. The underlying assumption of this model is that “voters prefer economic conservatism during downturns and are willing to ‘buy’ more public services during economic good times” (Stevenson, p. 50).

Contrary to the luxury-goods model, the Keynesian/safety-net model hypothesizes that exact opposite. According to it, good economic performances will lead to a gain in rightist parties’ votes while left parties lose them. But in turn poor economic performances will lead to a loss for rightist parties’ votes while leftist parties see an increase in votes (Stevenson, p. 51). Even though the electoral outcome for the two models is the same, the mechanisms are different. The Keynesian model assumes voters who think that the Left will borrow money and spent it more freely than the right in times of economic troubles in order to boost demand. These assumptions are problematic since they not only require the voter to understand Keynesian demand management, but the theory has also been rejected after the economic crisis in 1970 (Stevenson, p. 51).

More logically likely and supported is the safety-net model according to Stevenson. It suggests that during economic recessions voters are more concerned with healthcare, unemployment insurance and general welfare. Thus, the electorate will vote for the Left to assure these beneficial policies especially during bad economic periods when they are needed most. Just like the luxury-goods model, the safety-net model does not require the voter to be specifically sophisticated and it makes a clear distinction between the Left and the Right in regards to the policies they pursue (Stevenson, p. 51).

Stevenson's empirical analysis of the three proposed models in eleven Western European countries and Canada reveals only little evidence for economic voting due to the aggregated economic data. Where a relationship is statistically significant, the luxury-goods model is supported (Stevenson, p. 63). Other studies, however, show evidence in favor of the safety-net hypothesis.

Huber and Inglehart (1995) survey of political scientists, political sociologists and survey researchers in 42 countries across the world, for example, revealed that parties on the left are perceived as wanting to protect the status quo in terms of government regulation and securing the welfare state (p. 85). Bohrer and Tan's 2000 study of the impact of the Maastrich Treaty criteria for entry into the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in 1992 examines the relationship between economic insecurity and a rise in left votes. Over a time period of seventeen years (1980 to 1997) unemployment steadily increased in numerous EU countries. The simultaneous rise of vote totals for leftist parties, therefore, was sparked by a voters' hope of spurring employment or at least protecting the benefits for those who were unemployed, provided that the incumbent presiding over high unemployment was not belong to a left party (Bohrer and Tan, p. 582, 588). Leftist parties were perceived as the defenders of the social welfare state.

Similarly, Kwon (2005) took partisan voting behavior into account in his study on economic insecurity across European countries. Contrary to other research, the author focuses on an individual subjective assessment of economic insecurity (in this case worry about employment) rather than relying on unemployment statistics, growth rate, inflation measure or national perceptions of economy as has been common. He finds that “previous right voters are likely to make a transition to support for left parties when they experience higher levels of economic insecurity. In demand for more social protection, there are new Left voters who make a transition upon economic insecurity” (Kwon, p. 18).

All of the above examples support a general notion of economic insecurity and the voter’s choice for a left party. Since this paper is focused on a particular party family and its voters, however, I want to explore if the relationship between economic insecurity and left vote choice is even stronger for the far left. Is there an actual difference not just between the Right and the Left in general but also between the center left/green and far left parties? Recalling again the results from the party family analysis, the overlap between communist and social democratic/green parties in the West was small. This is not true for the East, however, where I found an overlap of 100 percent with regards to market economy policy stances and 96 percent for welfare between the communist and the social democratic party families. Thus, the following hypotheses can be developed:

H4: The more an individual feels economically insecure, the more likely he or she will be to vote for a party on the left of the ideological spectrum.

H5: In Western Europe voters of far left parties will feel even more economically insecure than voters of center left/green parties.

H6: In Eastern Europe there will be no clear distinction between communist and social democratic voters with respect to economic insecurity.

4.4. Euroskepticism

In connection with economic insecurity, Euroskepticism has been identified as a second factor that might explain a person's far left vote. In addition, by examining not only the predominant national issues but also an international one, the analysis broadens its framework as it did in regards to the far left party family.

While the integration of the European Union was largely uncontested until the early 1990s, most EU member states have witnessed an often dramatic decrease in public support for European integration (De Vries and Kersbergen, 2007, p. 307).

Two main perspectives dealing with the support of the EU are the utilitarian self-interest perspective and the national identity perspective. The former asserts that support for European integration depends strongly on national economic conditions (e.g. Eichenberg and Dalton, 1993). Increases in inflation rate and unemployment and decreases in the GDP are negatively correlated with support for further EU integration. The national economic conditions then not only affect the evaluation of national but also of supranational governments – in this case the European Union (Eichenberg and Dalton, p. 528). Citizens are more likely to have positive attitudes towards the EU if they associate an economic benefit with it.

The latter national identity perspective, in turn, focuses on utilitarian reasoning and national identity as important predictors of support for the EU. The more an individual identifies with his or her nation and thus shows high levels of national identity, the less likely this person will be to favor the EU (e.g. Carey, 2002; Luedtke 2005). Likewise, attachments to closer

territorial entities or regions have the same negative effect on EU support (Carey, p. 399). More recent works, however, tend to emphasize the combined effects of economic and identity factors (Hooghe and Marks, 2005; Hooghe and Marks 2007).

Interestingly, strong anti-EU positions can be found on the fringes of the left-right spectrum (Hooghe et al, 2002; De Vries and Edwards, 2009). While the national party systems have evolved around the left-right axis, issues concerning European integration can also be linked to the left-right dimension (Hooghe et al, 2002). More specifically, combining the left-right spectrum with a scale measuring support for the EU one gets an inverted U-curve with parties in the ideological mainstream supporting the integration process and extremist parties on the left and right opposing integration (figure 2 in Hooghe et al, 2002, p. 970).

Is the rationale behind this simply that peripheral parties with weak electoral support try to restructure contestation and exploit EU integration as a controversial issue? Is it the parties' ideology that prevents the far left and the far right to support the process since EU integration has largely been a project of the center parties? Somewhat contrary to these two suggestions by Hooghe et al (2002) (see also March, 2009), De Vries and Edwards claim that Euroskepticism among extreme parties revolves around the same dimensions as discussed above: economic and cultural opposition (p. 9).

While Azmanova (2005) stipulates that European radical parties on both ends of the political spectrum embrace social protectionism, which is geared toward citizens concerned with the growing economic and social risks (p. 291), De Vries and Edwards announce different reasoning behind right- and left-wing Euroskepticism. The authors theorize that extreme right-wing parties "tap into feelings of cultural insecurity" while extreme left-wing parties "resist further integration on the basis of the neoliberal character of the project and its negative

influence on the welfare state,” focusing on economic insecurity (De Vries and Edwards, p. 9). A study of 14 Western European EU member states, utilizing individual-level and contextual data, confirms De Vries and Edward’s hypotheses (p. 19).

The policy stances on European integration – or the skepticism thereof – was the only variable in the party family analysis where there was no difference between Eastern and Western Europe. The far left party family in the East as well as the West has a medium overlap with the social democratic/green parties, supporting European integration slightly less than their competitors on the left. Hence, I conclude this final hypothesis:

H7: Far left voters in Eastern and Western Europe alike will be more skeptical about the European integration than voters of the social democratic/green party family.

5. Empirical Analysis of Far Left Voters in Europe

5.1. Data and Method

Having hypothesized that the position on the left-right dimensions and attitudes on economic insecurity as well as Euroskepticism are possible factors contributing to vote choice for a far left party in European countries, this analysis employs data at the individual level aggregated across all countries to generate a general idea about far left voters across Europe. In addition, it will also provide information about the linkage between far left parties and their voters. The empirical test will answer the questions in how far preferences of the far left electorate are represented by their party of choice.

This analysis utilizes round 4 of the European Social Survey (ESS) from 2008.²² The total number of nations in the data set is thirty.²³ Most of the countries are European but Russia,

²² The dataset and codebook were downloaded from <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>.

Ukraine, Israel and Turkey are also included. Since this study's focus is specifically on Europe I excluded all non-European nations. The following twenty-five²⁴ (15 WE and 10 CEE) countries remain: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

5.2. Variables

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable, vote choice, is defined based on the following question asked in all ESS rounds: *Which party did you vote for in that election? [Country (Question B12).*²⁵ The respondents were given a country-specific list of all eligible parties in that national election following the question. In order to make comparisons between vote choices for parties of different party families, I created a new variable with 4 categories: 1 being equal to having voted for a far left party, 2 capturing voters of social democratic and green parties, 3 constituting center right parties and, finally, 4 those who voted for a far right party.²⁶ In order to determine a party's ideology I used data from the Manifesto Project and cross-checked it with available data for far-left parties from March (2009).

²³ Belgium, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, United Kingdom, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Lithuania, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine.

²⁴ Lithuania had to be excluded in addition to the four non-European countries because the data was corrupted.

²⁵ Which followed the question: "*Some people don't vote nowadays for one reason or another. Did you vote in the last [country] national election in [month/year]?"*

²⁶ For Western Europe this generated a total of 18621 observations: Far left (category 1) N=1653; center left/green (category 2) N=7273, center right (category 3) N=9174; far right (category 4) N=521. For Eastern Europe a total of 9604 observations were thus generated: far left (category 1) N=191, center left/green (category 2) N=3010, center right (category 3) N=5946, far right (category 4) N=457.

As already discussed, the Manifesto Project divides parties into ecology, communist, social democratic, liberal, Christian-democratic, conservative, nationalist, agrarian, ethnic and regional and special issue parties, whereas the last three categories were eliminated. Approaching the classification of parties from the difference in understanding the economy and economic systems, communist parties make up category “1” - far left parties. Social-democratic and ecological parties are combined in category “2” of my analysis. Liberal, Christian-democratic and conservative parties were included in the third category while nationalist parties make up the fourth category of far right parties. In the case where a party’s ideology could not be clearly identified (for example the Italian Verdi e SDI (Girasole), a party which combined a green party with a socialist one for just one election) or where responses were so few that they were classified as “other”, they were omitted from the sample and excluded from the statistical analysis.

Independent Variables

The main independent variables are the three different variables/types of issues identified as possibly influencing far left vote choice. The first is the left-right position on the ideological scale, the second group comprises economic factors and the last refers to Euroskepticism.

First, as hypothesized above, placement on the left-right scale should roughly correspond with the party families’ position – at least in Western Europe. The Party Manifesto Project derives its scores from the coded categories that pertain to the right and the left on the ideological spectrum (including attitudes on the military, peace, freedom and human rights, constitutionalism, political authority, the economy, the welfare state, internationalism, the national way of life, education, democracy, law and order, social harmony etc.). I use the

following question in the ESS dataset to test hypotheses 1 through 3: “*In politics people sometimes talk of "left" and "right". Using this card, where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?*” (Question B23).

Secondly, Huber and Inglehart (1995), Bohrer and Tan (2000) and Kwon (2005) theorized and tested the notion that left votes increase with economic insecurity. Having done the most comprehensive study, Kwon conceptualizes economic insecurity across countries with individual responses to the following pair of survey questions from Eurobarometer 40: “Compared to 12 months ago, do you think the employment situation in this country now is...?” and “Compared to 12 months ago, do you think your own job situation is...? (p. 47f).²⁷

Unfortunately, no round of the ESS dataset includes the same or similar questions to directly recreate Kwon’s test. However, I argue that general questions about the state of the economy will capture economic insecurity just as well. Instead of assessing economic insecurity through unemployment, I choose attitudes concerned with the economy itself as well as personal satisfaction with income to reveal an individual’s perception of his or her financial means in the ESS round 4. The questions “*On the whole how satisfied are you with the present state of the economy in [country]?*” (Question B25)²⁸ and “*Which of the descriptions on this card comes closest to how you feel about your household’s income nowadays?*” (Question F33)²⁹ are the measures for economic insecurity. Since it has been consistently shown that national economic voting is generally stronger than personal economic voting (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2002, p. 114), I test each question separately and expect to find stronger results for the question on the economy of the respondent’s country than feelings about the overall personal household income.

²⁷ 4-point scale with possible answers of: A lot better, a little better, stay the same, a little worse, a lot worse.

²⁸ 11-point scale with 0 being “extremely dissatisfied” and 10 being “extremely satisfied”.

²⁹ 4-point scale, 1 “living comfortably on present income”, 2 “coping on present income”. 3 “finding it difficult on present income” and 4 “finding it very difficult on present income”.

As mentioned above, I not only anticipate finding left voters generally to feel more economically insecure but far left voters in particular – at least in Western Europe. In addition, the round 4 of the ESS also asks whether or not one agrees with the following statement: “*The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels.*” (Question B30).³⁰ So left voters in general should agree more with this statement than voters on the right. However, I expect more pronounced differences in Western Europe between social democrats/green and far left voters (the latter with the greater agreement) than in Eastern Europe.

Thirdly, to test for Euroskepticism according to De Vries & Edwards’ (2007) findings, I utilize the question about attitudes on European unification: “*Now thinking about the European Union, some say European unification should go further. Others say it has already gone too far. Using this card, what number on the scale best describes your position?*”³¹ As hypothesized, I expect to find a general difference between far left voters and voters of the other left parties (social democratic and green)³² but no significant difference between East and West European far left voters.

Lastly, the usual control variables age (here in years), gender (male coded 1, female coded 2) and education (in years completed) were also included. Thus the model for Eastern and Western Europe alike can be written as:

$$\text{VoteChoice (far left=baseline) } = \alpha + \beta_1(\textit{left-right}) \\ + \beta_2(\textit{satisfaction with country's economy})$$

³⁰ 5-point scale ranging from 0 “agree strongly” to 5 “disagree strongly”.

³¹ 11-point scale ranging from 0 “*unification has already gone too far*” to 10 “*unification should go further*”.

³² With the latter being in greater support of a further European integration than far left/communist voters.

$$\begin{aligned}
& + \beta_3(\textit{satisfaction with personal income}) \\
& + \beta_4(\textit{European Integration}) \\
& + \beta_5(\textit{age}) + \beta_6(\textit{education}) + \beta_7(\textit{Gender}) + \gamma_1 c_i
\end{aligned}$$

where γ denotes the fixed country (c) effects. My baseline of the dependent variable is constituted by voters of far left parties. The results from the multinomial logistic regression are displayed in table 1 (West) and 2 (East).³³

Since logit models in general are difficult to interpret because “there is no measure that exactly summarizes the impact on the response of a unit increase in a given explanatory variable, net of other predictors in the model” (DeMaris 1993, p. 1057), I chose to calculate odds ratios³⁴ for a more substantive description. An odds ratio greater than 1 indicates an increased chance of an event occurring versus the event not occurring. An odds ratio less than 1, in turn, indicates a decreased chance of an event occurring versus the event not occurring (Liao 1994). Tables with the usual coefficients can be found in the appendix.

5.3. Findings

Left-Right

The left-right positions of far left voters clearly follow the expectations of hypothesis 1 and 2. European left voters in general are to the left of the center right and far right electorate. Moreover, far left voters in Western Europe are also “more left” on the ideological scale than their social democratic and green counterparts, confirming a good match between party family

³³ Full tables including coefficients of all independent variables and country dummy variables can be found in the appendix.

³⁴ When using the command *mlogit* in STATA one calculates relative risk ratios instead of odds ratios. However, relative risk ratios resemble odds ratios given by simple logistic regressions (Hamilton 2008) and thus I will use the more familiar term in the discussion of the results.

and voters. Hypothesis 3, however, is not confirmed. Rather than social democratic voters being to the left of the communist party voters in the East (as predicted because of the party family analysis results in chapter 3), far left voters are the group most to the left compared to the other three voter categories just like in the West. All results are statistically significant at the .05 level.

In the case of Eastern Europe the findings have immediate implications. Though it is a positive sign that voters in the East align on the left-right scale just like their counterparts in the West, the ideological congruence between the communist party family and its voters is not given. While voters of communist parties place themselves far to the left, the communist party family itself is closer to the center with the social democratic party family filling the ideological space. There is clearly a mismatch between voters and parties in the East

Economic Insecurity

Results for the economic insecurity hypotheses are mixed. The general assertion that the more economically dissatisfied a voter the more likely he or she will be to vote for a party on the left of the ideological spectrum is confirmed. Voters of left parties are less satisfied with their nation's economy and have a more difficult time to live on their household's income than voters of center right and far right parties in both Western and Eastern Europe. These results are only statistically significant at the .05 level for comparing Western center right voters to far left voters with respect to personal income, however. Furthermore, there is a statistically significant difference between the voters on the left. The odds of the green/center left electorate being satisfied with the nation's economy is 1.04 (West) and 1.13 (East) times the odds of far left voters being satisfied with the nation's economy, confirming hypothesis 5 but disproving

hypothesis 6 at least with respect to this particular variable.³⁵ In terms of household income, however, only Western far left voters have a more difficult time (odds of 1.14) living on their household income compared to the center left/green electorate. The value, though, is not statistically significant for the Eastern far left electorate.

The question about government measures to reduce difference in income levels fares better. Compared to center left/green, center right and far right voters across all of Europe, the far left electorate agrees the most with government involvement in order to decrease differences in income. Furthermore, these results also hold when far left voters are compared to the center left/green voters. Specifically, the odds of the far left to support government involvement are 1.21 (West) and 1.16 (East) the odds of the green/center left electorate supporting those measures.

However, while all the values for the different party categories are statistically significant at the .05 level for Western Europe, this is only true for the comparison between far left and center right voters in the East. There is no statistically significant difference in the degree of agreement between far left voters and social democratic as well as far right voters, lending some support for hypothesis 6. Both questions on one's own household income and government involvement render no clear distinction between different groups of left voters in Eastern Europe, mirroring the large overlap of the communist and social democratic party family in regards to economic and welfare policy stances.

Euroskepticism

³⁵ I had predicted no significant difference between far left and center left voters on all accounts.

The last hypothesis in the analysis of far left voters in Europe deals with attitudes toward further European integration. I had predicted that Western and Eastern far left voters would be more skeptical of further European integration than voters of social democratic/green parties. This is confirmed. On a statistically significant level voters of social democratic and green parties are more favorable (odds of 1.07 in the West and 1.11 in the East) toward the continuous European integration process than the far left electorate, thus being consistent with the findings from the party family analysis.

While I am unable to determine whether it is social protectionism (Azmanova 2005) or feelings of cultural insecurity and the understanding of a negative influence on the welfare state (De Vries & Edwards 2009) that create these attitude, I definitely find that Euroskepticism exists on both ends of the political spectrum. There is no statistically significant difference between far left and far right voters in the East on the question of European integration. In Western Europe, far right voters are even more opposed to a continuation of the European integration process than left voters (statistically significant at the .05 level).

Control Variables

The control variable age is statistically significant for various voter categories. In Western Europe voters of far left parties are on average older than their social democratic/green and center right counterparts.³⁶ Interestingly, this observation is reversed in Eastern Europe. Here, far left voters are younger than voters of the other categories.³⁷ Gender is only significant in Western Europe with respect to far right voters. On average they tend to be more male than far

³⁶ This is also true with respect for far right voters but it fails to reach statistical significance at the .05 level.

³⁷ Statistically significant at .05 for center left/green and center-right voters.

left voters. Finally, far left voters tend to have more years of education than all other voters in Western and Eastern Europe.³⁸

Table 1: West

VARIABLES	Far Left Baseline	Center Left 2	Center Right 3	Far Right 4
Left-Right		1.615*** (0.0337)	3.715*** (0.0924)	3.829*** (0.1430)
Satisfaction w/ national economy		1.047*** (0.0177)	1.023 (0.0191)	0.953 (0.0287)
Satisfaction w/ household income		0.881*** (0.0407)	0.766*** (0.039)	0.873 (0.0736)
Gov't involvement (income)		1.215*** (0.0478)	1.499*** (0.0634)	1.144** (0.0730)
European Integration		1.067*** (0.0140)	1.005 (0.0148)	0.822*** (0.0198)
Age		1.011*** (0.0023)	1.0147*** (0.0025)	1.002 (0.0039)
Gender		1.069 (0.0701)	1.043 (0.0753)	0.698*** (0.0833)
Education		0.970*** (0.0082)	0.990 (0.0094)	0.941*** (0.0151)
Observations	17,085			

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

³⁸ Statistically significant at .05 compared to social democratic voters in the East and to social democratic/green and far right voters in the West.

Table 2: East

	(Far Left)	(Center Left)	(Center Right)	(Far Right)
VARIABLES	Baseline	2	3	4
Left-Right		1.143***	2.027***	1.975***
		(0.0536)	(0.0955)	(0.1025)
Satisfaction w/ national economy		1.127**	1.0690	0.987
		(0.0566)	(0.0541)	(0.0569)
Satisfaction w/ household income		0.918	0.888	0.893
		(0.1158)	(0.1123)	(0.1288)
Gov't involvement (income)		1.160	1.268**	1.077
		(0.1103)	(0.1211)	(0.1190)
European Integration		1.106***	1.093**	1.004
		(0.0405)	(0.0402)	(0.0421)
Age		0.986**	0.986**	0.986*
		(0.0065)	(0.0065)	(0.0073)
Gender		1.178	1.075	0.697*
		(0.2214)	(0.2030)	(0.1499)
Education		0.941*	0.922**	0.958
		(0.0305)	(0.0298)	(0.0346)
Observations	7,570			

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Country Effects

It is important to note that of all the country variables Great Britain (West) and Slovakia (East) were omitted because of collinearity, meaning that the voters of those two countries were too similar to the respective baseline nations (Belgium and Bulgaria). In the East, none of the countries have statistically significant coefficients in the model across all three voter groups compared to the far left electorate. This means that there are virtually no country effects in the East and the model does well just with the left-right and programmatic variables.

Contrary to that, almost all country dummy variables are statistically significant in the West which could be due to several factors. One possible explanation is the great difference in number of observations between the various countries. Furthermore, macro-level attributes such

as institutions and electoral laws could also be the cause of country effects. Future research will have to include multilevel factors for a better understanding of the cross-country variation.

5.4. Discussion

First of all, the findings are a confirmation for the plausibility of the chosen variables. On an aggregated cross-country level, placement on the left-right scale, economic insecurity and Euroskepticism are characteristic for voters of far left parties. This particular electorate therefore can be described as feeling economically deprived and threatened by the process of EU integration.

However, one needs to differentiate between Western and Eastern Europe. The results for far left voters in the West are largely in compliance with the hypotheses, demonstrating that far left voters are a distinct group just like their party family. Not only do they place clearly on the left of the ideological spectrum but they can also be differentiated from the center left of social democratic and green voters. Far left voters are thus less satisfied with the nation's economy and find it more difficult to live on their household's income than the center left electorate. Far left voters are also more in favor of government involvement to decrease income level differences. Finally, they are more skeptical of further European integration efforts compared to social democratic and green voters. Overall, it appears that issues important to far left voters are generally mirrored by the far left party family in the West. Though this paper cannot make any claims about the policy implementation of preferences, it provides some evidence for representation. After all, far left parties and the far left electorate can be found roughly in the same place on the left-right scale and exhibit similar attitudes toward the economy and further EU integration.

The findings for their Eastern counterparts prove to be more difficult. Though far left voters follow the general pattern of aligning with left issues compared to voters on the right, there is a lack of variation between the far and center left, similarly to what I found in regards to the party families. Both voter groups are equally dissatisfied with their household income and prefer more government involvement. Thus, the economic insecurity variables are not the best measures in describing far left voters in the East. Furthermore, the results have implications beyond the fitting of the model in terms of choices for voters and representation by parties which will be discussed below in the conclusion.

6. Conclusion

This paper set out to empirically examine the far left party family and its voters across Europe in order to fill a gap in the literature. It addresses the question of where exactly far left parties and their voters occupy the ideological space on the left. The paper also provides answers to whether or not economic policy stances and attitudes on European integration are a good measure for defining the far left party family, all the while showing the differences between Eastern and Western Europe. Furthermore, the paper analyzes the choices offered by the far left party family in Western and Eastern Europe and studied to what extent far left parties match their voters' preferences.

The analysis of data from the Comparative Manifestos Project and the European Value Survey demonstrates that the far left party family and its voters can be clearly distinguished not only from the right but also with respect to the other competitors on the left in Western Europe while the demarcations are more blurred in the East

The empirical analysis of the far left party families in Europe provides a systematic study of economic policy stances, which have been identified as key issues for far left parties. I find that the communist party family clearly positions itself on the left of the ideological spectrum with respect to its support of planned economy and an expansion of the welfare system as well as its opposition to a market economy.

However, while far left parties distinguish themselves from their social democratic and green competitors on most issues in Western Europe, a great deal of issue overlap can be witnessed for East European countries. Not only is their general position on the left-right scale reversed but the demarcation between communist and social democratic parties and their

attitudes toward planned and market economy are blurred to a considerable degree.

This then has implications for the democratic process in the region. As stated in the beginning of the paper, parties are thought to be fundamental for democracy in Europe. They not only express the ideological preferences of citizens and convert them into public policy, thus representing their electorate, but parties are also vital for defining the choices available to their voters. When no meaningful choices are offered by parties, indifference or alienation can be the result.

In the case of Eastern Europe, there is obviously a lack of difference between alternatives on the left of the ideological (political) spectrum, limiting the voters' choice-set. One result might be that communist and social democratic parties converge even more on issues until one becomes obsolete and might cease to exist – a possibility already discussed above – thus reducing the party variety on the left, as can be seen with the absence of communist parties in many countries of Eastern Europe today. Another repercussion of the lack of alternatives on the left might be a greater disconnect between voters with far left attitudes and the parties that are supposed to represent them, resulting in either indifference or alienation.

These questions were explored in the second part. I found that while the same issues of the far left party family in Western Europe are important to its voters, no such overlap is present in the East. Though far left voters can be found furthest to the left on the ideological scale, their respective party family is closer to the center with the social democratic parties filling the void on the far left. Clearly the political choices offered by far left parties in the East are not effective since they do not follow their voters' preferences.

Furthermore, voters of far left parties and voters of center left parties have similar opinions on the nation's economy and personal income as well as government involvement in

these matters. This might be the result of the obvious lack of distinct far left policy stances. If there is no political entity such as parties to openly discuss, support and pursue these issues, voters have a more difficult time to develop their own far left positions. After all, it is the parties function to express and offer choices.

An implication of the mismatch between party family and voters as well as the similarities between voters of different party families might be greater voter abstention on the far left which could not be tested for in the context of this paper, however. Should this turn out to be true, the alienation of parts of the electorate from the political process means problems for the legitimacy of governments in the East and a possible threat to democracy in the region.

Appendix A: Most Recent Election Results of Far Left Parties in Europe

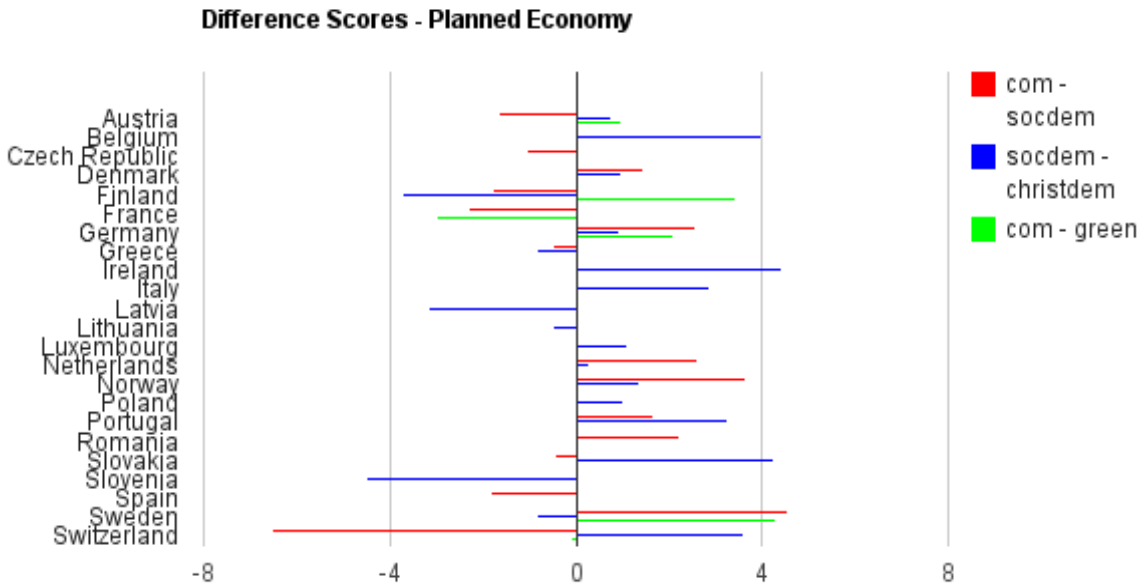
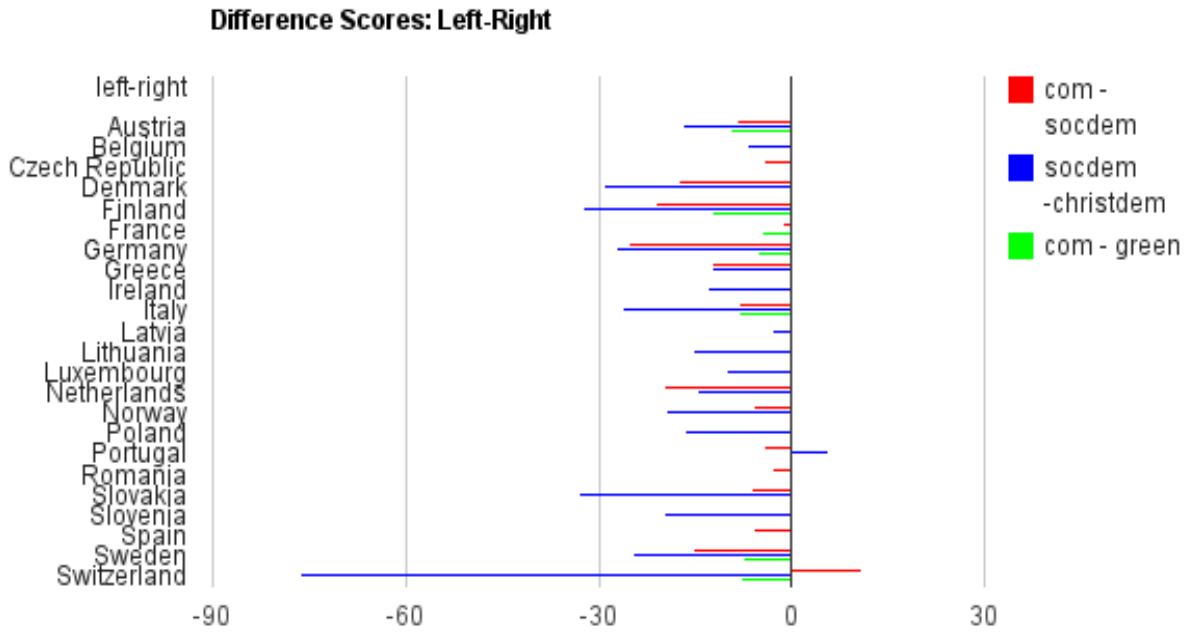
Country	Votes Received in Percent	Year	Name of Party
Austria	N/A	N/A	N/A
Belgium	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bulgaria	N/A	N/A	N/A
Croatia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Czech Republic	11.3	2010	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia
Denmark	2.2	2007	Unity List – the Red-Greens
Estonia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Finland	8.8	2007	Left Alliance
France	4.3	2007	French Communist Party
Germany	11.9	2009	The Left
Greece	7.5 / 4.6	2009	Communist Party of Greece / Coalition of the Radical Left
Hungary	N/A	N/A	N/A
Iceland	21.7	2009	Left-Green Movement
Ireland	1.2 / 1.0	2011	Socialist Party / People Before Profit Alliance
Italy	3.1	2008	Rainbow Left
Latvia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lithuania	N/A	N/A	N/A
Luxembourg	3.3	2009	The Left
Malta	N/A	N/A	N/A
Moldova	39.3	2010	Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova
Netherlands	9.9	2010	Socialist Party
Norway	6.2	2009	Socialist Left Party
Poland	N/A	N/A	N/A
Portugal	9.8 / 7.9	2009	The Left Block / Democratic Unity Coalition
Romania	N/A	N/A	N/A
Serbia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Slovakia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Slovenia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spain	3.8	2008	United Left
Sweden	5.6	2010	Left Party
Switzerland	0.7 / 0.4	2007	Labor Party of Switzerland / Solidarity
United Kingdom	0.1	2010	Respect Party

Appendix B: Distributions Scores

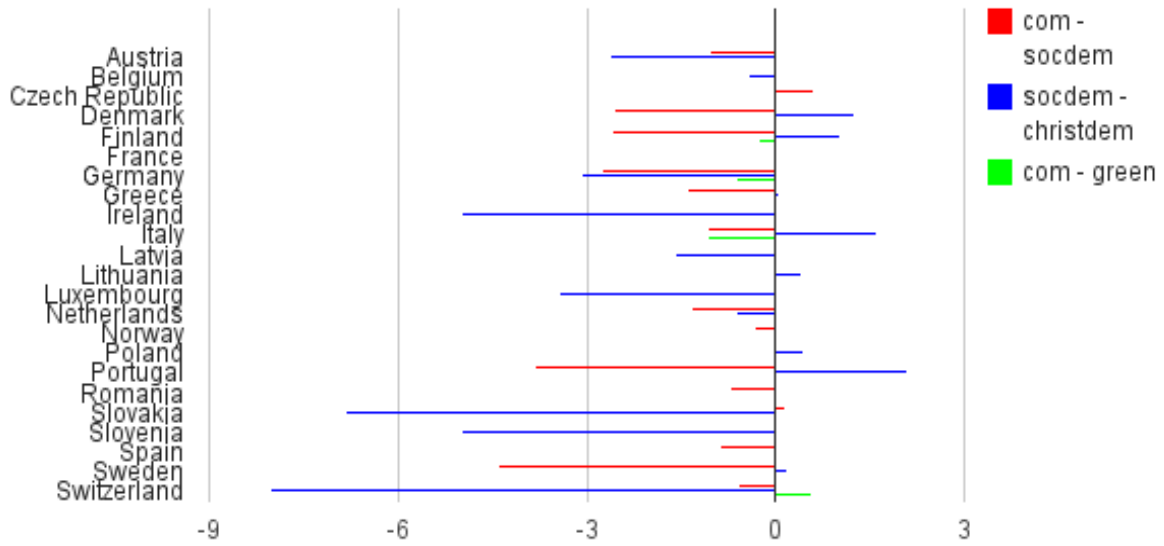
	Left-Right	Planned Economy
West	<i>min median max 25% 75%</i>	<i>min median max 25% 75%</i>
Communist	-48.0 -26.7 -16.8 -34.2 -17.7	0 4.3 9.8 2.9 6.2
Social Democratic	-38.2 -18.3 8.4 -21.3 -8.5	.5 3.7 10.2 2.6 7.1
Green	-33.5 -19.2 20.0 -25.0 -13.6	.2 3.6 9.8 1.2 4.2
East		
Communist	-14.5 -6.3 -1.3 -11.9 -2.3	0 .8 5.6 0 3.6
Social Democratic	-22.8 -11.0 1.6 -21.8 -9.1	0 2.2 9.5 0 5.3

	Market Economy	Welfare
West	<i>min median max 25% 75%</i>	<i>min median max 25% 75%</i>
Communist	0 .08 1.7 0 .7	10.0 18.0 37.8 11.0 23.1
Social Democratic	0 1.3 5.8 .8 2.6	5.0 17.9 38.0 13.0 20.9
Green	0 .5 2.4 0 1.0	10.1 17.4 29.8 12.4 18.3
East		
Communist	0.7 .9 3.4 .7 2.2	12.8 14.9 18.6 12.7 17.7
Social Democratic	0 1.9 4.5 .2 4.2	6.4 19.9 31.4 12.9 27.0
	European Integration	
West	<i>min median max 25% 75%</i>	
Communist	-9.4 0 8.1 -1.8 2.7	
Social Democratic	-1.7 2.2 6.8 1.1 4.1	
Green	-4.4 1.3 5.9 -1.0 2.3	
East		
Communist	0 1.8 11.1 .2 4.3	
Social Democratic	0 2.6 4.9 1.3 3.3	

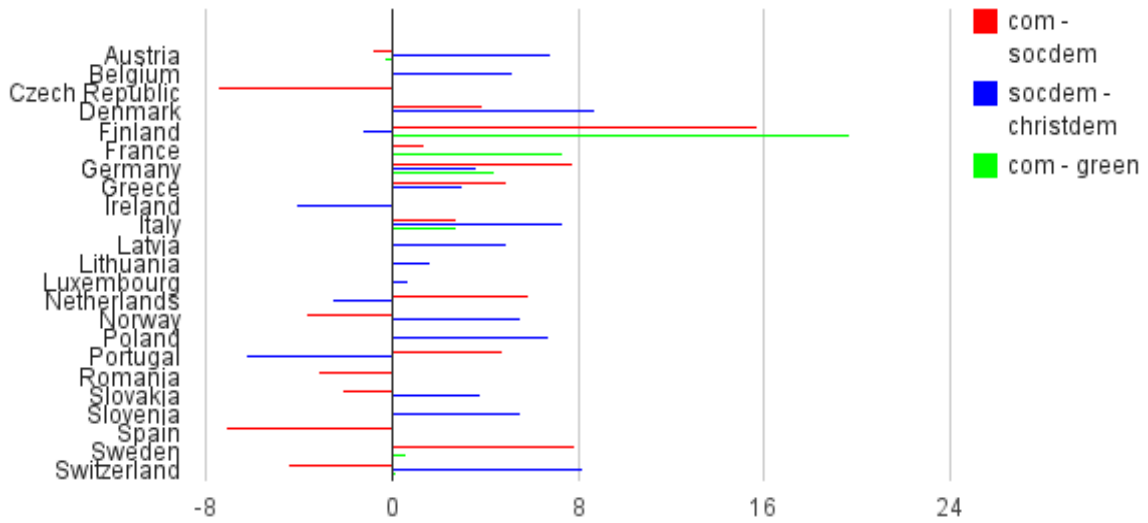
Appendix C: Difference Scores



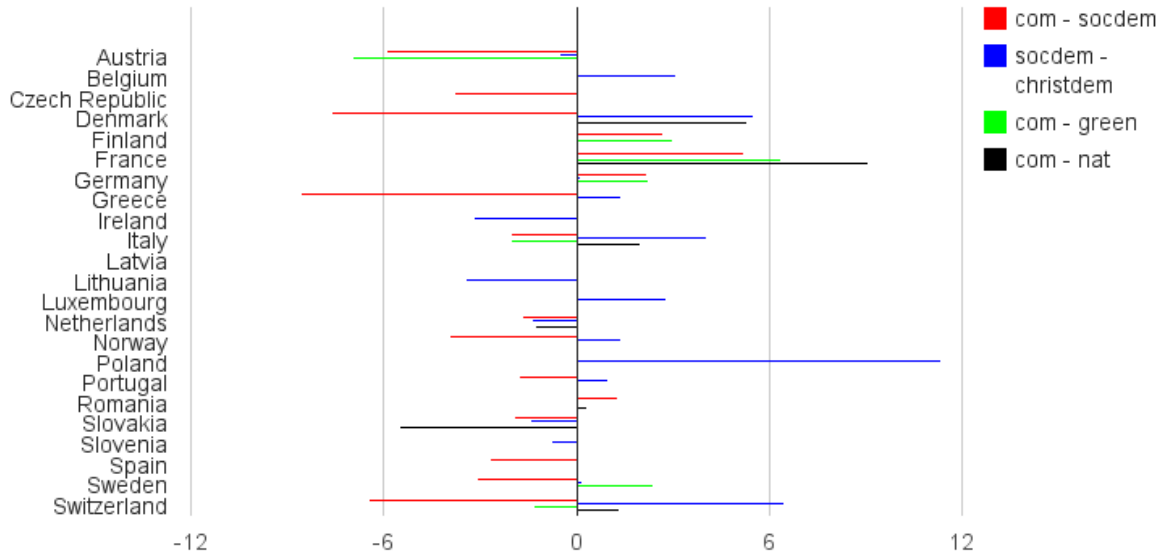
Difference Scores - Market Economy



Difference Scores - Welfare



Difference Scores - European Integration



Appendix D: Complete Tables of Multinomial Regression Outputs

West

VARIABLES	(Far Left) Baseline	(Center Left) 2	(Center Right) 3	(Far Right) 4
Left-Right		0.479*** (0.0209)	1.312*** (0.0249)	1.343*** (0.0373)
Satisfied w/ national economy		0.0457*** (0.0169)	0.0224 (0.0186)	-0.0486 (0.0302)
Satisfied w/ household income		-0.126*** (0.0461)	-0.267*** (0.0513)	-0.135 (0.0843)
Gov't involvement (income)		0.195*** (0.0394)	0.405*** (0.0423)	0.135** (0.0638)
European Integration		0.0645*** (0.0131)	0.00499 (0.0147)	-0.196*** (0.0241)
Age		0.0111*** (0.00226)	0.0146*** (0.00247)	0.00150 (0.00393)
Gender		0.0671 (0.0655)	0.0424 (0.0722)	-0.359*** (0.119)
Education		-0.0308*** (0.00851)	-0.0100 (0.00950)	-0.0604*** (0.0160)
Belgium		14.67 (840.5)	15.56 (840.5)	34.98 (1,737)
Cyprus		-6.083*** (0.525)	-4.455*** (0.527)	-4.964 (2,966)
Denmark		-4.862*** (0.516)	-5.128*** (0.524)	15.30 (1,520)
Finland		-3.874*** (0.521)	-3.788*** (0.527)	14.97 (1,520)
France		-3.358*** (0.517)	-3.307*** (0.524)	15.69 (1,520)
Germany		-3.455*** (0.514)	-3.219*** (0.519)	14.22 (1,520)
Greece		-4.249*** (0.515)	-4.866*** (0.523)	14.00 (1,520)
Ireland		13.78 (879.4)	15.95 (879.4)	15.29 (2,675)
Netherlands		-4.440*** (0.516)	-4.441*** (0.521)	15.14 (1,520)
Norway		-4.191*** (0.521)	-4.089*** (0.528)	-3.708 (2,285)
Portugal		-3.801*** (0.521)	-4.219*** (0.531)	-3.968 (2,433)
Spain		-2.569*** (0.525)	-2.521*** (0.532)	15.55 (1,520)
Sweden		-3.033*** (0.523)	-3.070*** (0.530)	-2.736 (2,220)
Switzerland		-0.820 (0.717)	-0.244 (0.724)	17.54 (1,520)
Intercept		2.674*** (0.578)	-1.784*** (0.598)	-19.91 (1,520)
Observations	17,085	17,085	17,085	17,085

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

East

	(Far Left)	(Center Left)	(Center Right)	(Far Right)
VARIABLES	Baseline	2	3	4
Left-Right		0.134*** (0.0469)	0.707*** (0.0471)	0.681*** (0.0519)
Satisfaction w/ national economy		0.119** (0.0502)	0.0667 (0.0506)	-0.0131 (0.0576)
Satisfaction w/ household income		-0.0853 (0.126)	-0.119 (0.127)	-0.113 (0.144)
Gov't involvement (income)		0.148 (0.0951)	0.238** (0.0955)	0.0745 (0.110)
European Integration		0.101*** (0.0366)	0.0894** (0.0367)	0.00366 (0.0420)
Age		-0.0144** (0.00661)	-0.0146** (0.00660)	-0.0141* (0.00738)
Gender		0.164 (0.188)	0.0723 (0.189)	-0.361* (0.215)
Education		-0.0612* (0.0324)	-0.0808** (0.0323)	-0.0428 (0.0361)
Bulgaria		-17.03 (2,253)	-17.15 (2,253)	-16.71 (2,253)
Czech Republic		-19.88 (2,253)	-20.85 (2,253)	-41.54 (4,382)
Estonia		-16.43 (2,253)	-15.16 (2,253)	-19.26 (2,253)
Croatia		-0.309 (3,363)	-0.0595 (3,363)	-1.141 (3,363)
Hungary		-15.47 (2,253)	-15.72 (2,253)	-18.74 (2,253)
Latvia		-39.15 (2,548)	-19.03 (2,253)	-19.70 (2,253)
Poland		-17.93 (2,253)	-15.73 (2,253)	-18.78 (2,253)
Romania		-0.661 (2,938)	-0.456 (2,938)	-1.994 (2,938)
Slovenia		-0.149 (3,473)	0.291 (3,473)	-0.245 (3,473)
Intercept		21.16 (2,253)	19.16 (2,253)	19.00 (2,253)
Observations	7,570	7,570	7,570	7,570

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

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