Title: ‘A values based electorate?’; How does electoral context influence the relationship between political values and voting in West European Democracies?

(work in progress)

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It has long been argued that underlying values should hold a central role in political analysis (Easton 1953). This would seem increasingly relevant in an era of de-alignment and catch-all parties in which political actors often make direct values orientated appeals to the electorate instead of relying on the social allegiances of voters (Norris and Inglehart 2004). The influence of values on individual vote choice preferences has often been subsumed within broader socio-structural or rational choice models of voting, such as party ID or spatial measures. With the expansion in appropriate data and measures available to empirical researchers, the last two decades have seen a substantial increase in the number of studies directly addressing the values-voting relationship (Schwartz 1992, Feldman 2003). This existing empirical literature has generally focused on analysing the role of values on voting in single electoral contexts. While this approach has generated many useful findings in establishing the role of values in differentiating political choice, it has not yet demonstrated the causal mechanisms which could highlight the wider significance of values to electoral choice research (Leimgruber 2011). In addition there is little work that considers the impact of political context on the values-voting relationship

This paper aims to go some way to addressing these gaps by taking a comparative, cross-national approach. Firstly, it aims to test the viability of political identity in mediating the influence of values on voter preferences by using left-right identity as mediator in a path analysis at the European wide level. Secondly it will measure the effects of contextual factors, such as party polarisation and the effective number of parties, on the values-voting relationship by comparing values models of voting in 15 West European Democracies. It is argued firstly that mediation influence of left-right highlights the complexity and variation in the values-voting relationship. Secondly, values have a greater role in influencing voter choice in countries in which the party system is more polarised. The analysis presented in this paper utilises data from the European Values Survey (1990-2008) to develop nuanced latent measures of political values, with the aim of developing models that can highlight the causal mechanisms that render values relevant to vote choice decisions. Results from Structural Equation path models will be presented.

**Introduction**

In recent years there has been a considerable expansion in the number of studies that employ values based models to explain vote choice (Van Deth and Scarborough 1994, Barnea and Schwartz 1998, Feldman 2003, Caprara et al. 2007). This is largely due to the significant improvements in the quality and depth of data that is available to empirical researchers in this field. These contributions have ranged from single N studies looking at how values shape preferences (and vice versa) in specific electoral contexts (Goren 2005, Goren and Federico 2009) to broader cross-national studies that look at the role of values in explaining the structures of political division across different cultures (Piurko et al. 2011 Aspelund et al. 2013). However, there remain large gaps in this empirical literature. One of the key gaps has been the difficulty values researchers have encountered in demonstrating the socio-political mechanisms and heuristic cues which allow voters to translate their values into meaningful preferences. This has resulted in concerns among researchers in this area that they are telling ‘just so stories’ and not demonstrating the importance of values to wider debates in electoral studies (Leimgruber 2011). The point being that, while interesting, it is not ground-breaking to consistently demonstrate that a commitment to values of Egalitarianism and Universalism tends to predict left voting and a commitment to Individualism and Traditionalism tends to predict right voting. If values have a wider contribution to make to electoral research then some thought must be given to the political heuristics and supply side party system contexts which influence the way in which voters translate their values into preferences (Vecchione et al. 2013). The lack of evidence regarding the political heuristic mechanisms raises doubts as to whether values explanations can ultimately address Converse’s (1964) scepticism regarding the ability of citizens to make logical vote decisions based on a consistent broader worldview (Zaller 1992). This is crucial because the advantage of studying the influence of values (as opposed to attitudes or ideology) is that they represent an underlying construct that organise political ideas and attitudes (Rokeach 1973Tetlock 1986). This potentially requires voters to have less information to make political decisions as they can rely on more instinctive responses to political cues (Converse 1964 Rokeach 1973). This is related to a broader perspective that argues that values can tap into the emotional drivers of political allegiance (Haidt 2011, Vecchione et al. 2013).

The second key gap in the values-voting literature is the lack of research into how political context, particularly the choices available to voters, influences the relationship between values and voting. This last point is critical because if values based explanations of political choice are to establish a more central role in electoral studies it is vital to demonstrate how they can contribute to explaining variations in political outcomes in different political contexts. This paper is part of a PhD project that attempts to address these 2 broad gaps through comparative cross-national research. The analysis draws on data from the European Values Survey (EVS) focusing on 15 Western European Countries using the 2008 and 1990 waves of the survey. It draws on a latent model of political values that has identified 5 key political values using the EVS; Traditionalism, Individualism, Authoritarianism, Conformity and Egalitarianism. The paper has 3 aims. Firstly, it aims to employ a political identities model of the values-voting relationship by using Structural Equation Path models to test if European voters sense of left-right identity acts as a mediator of the values-voting relationship (Caprara et al. 2007). Secondly, in order to look
at the role of political context the analysis tests the theory that values have a stronger effect on vote choice in countries that have a more polarised political system and a greater range of political choice (effective number of parties). Finally, the paper will use the results of this analysis to argue that values based explanations of vote choice play a key role in demonstrating how political context influences voters ability to connect their underlying principles and emotions to their political preferences.

Political and social identities remain key heuristics in vote choice decisions, not least because this is the lens through which popular political discussion takes place in the media and remains the way in which political elites position themselves (Kreisi et al. 2008 Piurko et al. 2011, Raymond 2011). The theory that is being tested in this paper is that voters can meaningfully connect their political values to their party choice through the prism of their perceived left-right identity (Aspelund et al. 2013, Caprara et al. 2007). Specifically, following from other studies, it tests the influence of subjective political identity as a mediator of the values-voting relationship (Schwartz et al 2010, Vecchione et al 2013). The heuristic mechanism through which values ultimately influence vote choice is unlikely to be direct. The assumption of a direct relationship is made by some researchers, either through theory or necessity due to data limitations (Marietta and Barker 2007, Van Deth and Scarborough 1994). But there are far more studies that assume an intermediate mechanism linking values to political action and this appears a more theoretically sound approach to analysing values and voting (Caprara et al. 2007, Goren 2005, Goren and Federico 2009).

This paper builds on previous research into values and voting by applying the complexity and analytical power of Structural Equation path modelling to test this values-political identity-voting path model in a cross-national context. It widens the scope of enquiry by then correlating these results with contextual party system factors that may be responsible for variation in the values-voting relationship; namely political polarisation and the effective number of parties. Findings from previous work at the single country level have suggested that variation in party system structure of different nations may influence which values differentiate vote choice and how strongly they do so (Barnea and Schwartz 1998, Barnea 2003). Testing this relies on assuming that voters can make informed connections between their left-right identity and political parties. Therefore it is important that the party systems are relatively stable which is why the focus is restricted to Western Europe.

The paper will proceed by briefly introducing the background to values models of voting and highlighting what they have contributed to the understanding of electoral choice. It will then proceed to presenting the results of the Structural Equation Models. The final discussion will argue that the findings demonstrate the role that values can play in highlighting contextual differentiation in the underlying structure of voter preferences. In doing so the paper will argue that there is little evidence that the relationship between values and voting for mainstream Centre Left and Centre Right parties is affected by political polarisation or the number of parties in an electoral system. However, there is evidence to support the idea that increased polarisation increases the importance of values based voting for parties that are further from the centre. The association between values and voting appears stronger for Radical Left parties and distinctively Conservative parties in more polarised countries then in less polarised countries. In addition there is evidence of substantial variation in the structure of the values-voting relationship between Christian
Democrat and Conservative electorates. These findings show that the choices electorates face produces significant variation in how voters connect their underlying values to their perceived preferences which connects with broader debates regarding the evolution, de-alignment and fragmentation of party systems in Western Europe.

**Values and voting**

The concept of values has generally been considered a central one in social science and yet has been relatively neglected in the empirical electoral research literature (Easton 1953, Van Deth and Scarborough 1994). This is an understandable oversight given the difficulties of researching such a loosely defined latent variable. There have been clear problems of operationalising values related to data, measurement and the overall utility of the concept. These are problems that must be addressed before carrying out values research that is capable of making a relevant substantive contribution (Marietta and Barker 2007). Values are often difficult to incorporate within existing theories of social action, resulting in them either being ignored or subsumed within wider explanations (Schwartz 1992). Rokeach’s (1973) plea for values to have a pivotal role in social science research has been largely unheeded in electoral research.

Values explanations for vote choice relate to the broader debates regarding de-alignment in European Electorates. As has been noted by many leading scholars of political behaviour the electorate across Western European democracies has undergone a period of profound and long lasting social de-alignment (Norris and Inglehart 2004, Dalton 2006, Kriesi et al. 2008). This has resulted in a strong challenge to the previously dominant sociological theories of voting based on social ties and political identity and a move towards explaining the vote decision as a form of rational consumer choice based on assessments of the competency characteristics and competence of the political actors (Clarke et al. 2009, Adams et al. 2011, Abney et al. 2013, Clark and Leiter 2014). This is consistent with a general trend in global electoral research towards defining the voter as a rational actor maximising their utility as consistent with various strands of classical rational choice vote theory (Downs 1957, Stokes 1963). It is also consistent with much recent sociological scholarship acknowledging the emergence of more fluid societies in Western Europe in which identities have become less fixed, more flexible and less directly connected to political behaviours (Giddens 2000, Bauman 2000).

As a result previously dominant theories of voting rooted in cleavage theory related to class allegiance, religious identity and the historical factors underlying political competition have been increasingly challenged (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Evans 2010). Nevertheless, despite evidence of de-alignment social and political identities have continued to be used by scholars to explain trends in European electoral politics with convincing evidence that class and religious divisions remain important to voting preferences (Manza et al. 1995, Evans 1999, Raymond 2011). Much of this work has focused on the identification of new social cleavages emerging in response to rapid social and political change; such as the integration-demarcation cleavage identified by Kreisi (2008) or a focus on new attitudinal dimensions that cross-cut the traditional socially defined left-right political division (Inglehart 1971, Flanagan 1987). These theories have recently come to some prominence as part of the explanation for the increasing electoral success of anti-European and anti-Austerity parties;
with particular focus on the attitudes and values of the ‘left behinds’ or ‘losers of globalisation’ (Cole 2005, Bowyer and Vail 2011, Ford and Goodwin 2014). In an era of fluid identities it is important to reconceptualise sociological explanations of vote to take account of the underlying motivations of political preferences; the emotional and psychological drivers of voter choice (Weston 2008, Haidt 2011). One long standing way of tapping into this has been to analyse the role of values in structuring the preferences of voters (Easton 1953, Rokeach 1973, Inglehart 1971).

Recent studies by Schwartz (2010), Goren and Federico (2009) and Marietta and Barker (2007) suggest that measures of individual values may represent a vital conceptual tool for exploring the way in which voter choice behaviour has evolved in response to social realignment and party cues. However, as has been acknowledged by scholars in the area, values will continue to play a fairly marginal role in electoral research until it is possible to demonstrate their clear substantive impact on individual vote choice preferences and how this helps explain variations in political outcomes (Hug and Kriesi 2010). If values are to have a role in explaining political behaviour, then it is essential to construct realistic models of this relationship. It is therefore important to fully theorise the contextual mechanisms and processes that render values politically salient; this is an area that remains underdeveloped and many researchers have stated the need for this to be addressed (Leimgruber 2011; Aspelund et al. 2013).

Part of the reason for the relative lack of progress in exploring the heuristic mechanisms that link values to vote choice preferences is the fragmented nature of the empirical literature on values and voting. There has been a lack of a coherent research agenda in this area (Feldman 2003). Existing European cross-national research into the association between values and political behaviour has largely used either Inglehart’s postmaterialist values dimension or Schwartz’s circular conception of basic human values (Knutsen 1995, Konstantinidis 2011). It is the contention of this paper, that while both of these value theories are vital for explaining aspects of political behaviour neither are entirely appropriate for the study of vote choice. Postmaterialism has been closely associated with the development of new individual political behaviours; these behaviours are more individualistic, idiosyncratic and unconventional (Inglehart 2004). In the sphere of electoral studies Postmaterialism has been most strongly associated with explaining the development of new political parties representing new societal cleavages and issue agendas, but it has had less utility in differentiating more conventional voter choice decisions between political parties based on historical cleavage divides (Klingemann et al 1994, Van Deth and Scarborough 1994, Flanagan 1987, Datler et al 2013). A more nuanced, directly political, conception of values is required to explore the multi-faceted nature of voter choice (Feldman 2003). The Schwartz values offer this, but they are designed to provide universal explanations of behaviour and struggle to adequately account for contextual variations; specifically in terms of variation in the choices available to voters across different contexts. The Schwartz values are not specifically constructed to address issues in political research, which leads to problems regarding the substantive contribution they can make to electoral research (Leimgruber 2011). This paper therefore uses a model of European Political values drawn from the European Values Survey and outlined in the methods below. This is done in an attempt to bring together the political relevance of the values concepts used in Political Psychology studies (Feldman 1988. Mccann 1997, Goren and Federico 2009) with the

**The political identity values model**

Figure 1 (overleaf) demonstrates the basic model that this analysis is testing. The specific focus of this paper, following from previous studies, is to test the influence of subjective political identity as a viable mediator of the values-voting relationship across different electoral contexts (Schwartz *et al* 2010, Vecchione *et al* 2013). The cognitive mechanism through which values ultimately influence vote choice is unlikely to be direct. The assumption of a direct relationship is made by some researchers, either through theory or necessity due to data limitations (Marietta and Barker 2007, Van Deth and Scarborough 1994). But there are far more studies that test an intermediate mechanism linking values to political action and this appears a more theoretically sound approach to analysing values and voting (Caprara *et al*. 2007, Goren 2005, Goren and Federico 2009). This paper intends to add to this existing work regarding the structure of the values-voting relationship by introducing a comparative aspect in order to consider the role of political context in shaping the values-voting relationship. There is some existing work showing how variation in the political issue agenda of different nations influences which values influence voter choice decisions (Barnea and Schwartz 1998, Barnea 2003).

![Diagram of the overall mediation model](image.png)

**Figure 1 - Basic outline of the overall mediation model.**

There are many possible mediators of the relationship between individual values and voting. In socio-psychological studies that have focused on analysing the cognitive chain of decision making the association between values, attitudes and issues has a long academic tradition (Converse 1964, Rokeach 1973, Feldman 1988, Schwartz 1992). Within the literature focused on socialisation influences there has been an increased focus on the relationship between values and socio-political identities (Tilley 2002, Alvarez and Brehm 2002). In the context of a study that is primarily concerned with changes in political culture there is a strong case for considering the role of subjective political identity as the primary mediator of values on voter choice, particularly in the context of cross-national research.
existing body of research which addresses the association between individual values and political identity, whether represented as subjective placement on a left-right scale (Pirurko et al., 2011, Surridge 2012) or through exploring the relationship between values and party identification (Goren and Federico, 2009). In both cases there is convincing evidence of an endogenous relationship between values and political identity—the one plays a major role in constraining the other. This is consistent with recent research into the mechanisms at play in the values-voting relationship (Vecchione et al. 2013).

The definition of left-right that is being employed in this paper is that of a broad political cultural entity rather than the narrower classic conception of left-right as a materialist economic cleavage (Van Deth and Scarborough 1994, Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Political and social identities remain key decision making heuristics, not least because this is the lens through which popular political discussion takes place in the media and remains the way in which political elites position themselves (Kreisi et al. 2008 Piurko et al. 2011, Raymond 2011). The argument that is being made here is that left-right is relevant as a subjective construct embedded in political culture. The critical aspect of left-right is that it is a simple heuristic that has been used for many years by voters to identify political actors and to organise their own ideas about politics (Kriesi et al. 2008). It is not a stable construct in and of itself but it represents a historically consistent way of representing political division in Western Democracies and it has therefore endured as a meaningful variable in political analysis despite many predictions of its demise as the dominant political heuristic (Inglehart 1971, Clarke et al. 2004). The underlying content of left-right political division is subject to change over time as it becomes subverted by issues and cleavages that cross-cut this dimension (Heath et al. 1985, Surridge 2012). However, values potentially provide the underlying stabilisers of left-right identity in Western Democracies (Piurko et al 2011, Aspelund et al 2013). Even when the issue agenda evolves to incorporate complex cross-cutting problems, and attitudes, underlying values still allow voters to fit these issues into the left-right straight jacket (Jost et al 2003).

The role of context

Values are formed in specific social contexts and it has been well established that this socialisation process is vital to how individuals subsequently connect their values to behaviours and actions (Rokeach 1973, Inglehart 1971). In political decision making there is a further level of political context to take into consideration that is likely to define when and how values are relevant to voter choice. Values are only likely to become relevant in vote choice decisions if they are easily associated with the positioning of parties or the relevance of salient political issues. There has been much recent work focusing on how the nature of the choices available to specific electorates influences the vote choice preferences of individuals (Dalton and Anderson 2011, Evans et al 2013). In the context of values the important aspect to focus on is that of priming. This priming relates to the role and incentives that parties and party systems can have in appealing to voters values and rendering them relevant to their vote decision (Leimgruber 2011, Goren and Federico 2009). This can be done either directly, through specific campaigns and messaging designed to attach a party to a specific set of values among the electorate; or indirectly through a perception of a party’s political or social identity relative to one’s own. The political identities model outlined above is a way of analysing the priming mechanism from the point
of view of the heuristic process through which values influence the vote choice decision. But this alone is not enough to establish the role of values in vote choice decision making. There must be consideration given to the key role of political context in influencing this mechanism. Prior research has shown that context plays a role in explaining how voters connect their left-right identity to their political preferences (Dalton 2008). In more polarised political systems voters find it easier to identify their own left-right position with the positions of political parties.

The specific focus here is on national level political contextual factors. The analysis will be measuring the effect of Political Polarisation and Effective Number of Parties on the strength of the values-voting relationship. In general past research tends to show that polarisation has a stronger effect on vote choice than the number of parties (Lachat 2008, Dalton 2008). It would certainly be expected that values would have a stronger effect on vote choice in countries with higher levels of polarisation as both the political messaging and the perceived stakes are likely to be higher (Hellwig 2008, Dalton 2008). The expectation related to the number of parties is not as clearly linked to prior research or existing theory. However, if a greater number of party choices are available then it is likely to motivate parties to clearly differentiate themselves and activating core political values among segments of the electorate allows parties to develop a base in more competitive party systems (Sartori 1976). Therefore it is likely that values will have a stronger effect on vote choice preferences in countries in which voters are presented with a larger number of viable electoral choices. It is also likely that this effect is likely to prove more important to smaller parties that stand further from the Centre of political division than larger mainstream parties.

There has been little cross-national research that has explored the variations in the values-voting mechanism (Barnea 2003 is a rare exception). However, work at the single country level points to the potential of cross-national research by highlighting how different values underpin left-right division in different countries. Barnea and Schwartz (1998) demonstrated that it was values the opposing values of Self-Protection and Self-Actualisation which underpinned the left-right division in Israeli Politics. While a study in Italy (Caprara et al. 2007) using the same approached showed that left-right division was underpinned by the more generally expected division of Self-Transcendence and Self-Empowerment; specifically right of centre allegiances were predicted by values of Power and Achievement while left allegiances where predicted by a commitment to Universalism. The Schwartz values literature suggests that this variation between countries is driven not by differences in the values of the electorate across countries (which are claimed to be universal) but by different values being primed by the specific issue agenda and party positioning in each country. However, this variation has not been tested in a cross-national study nor has it been tested using a set of ‘political’ values as opposed to the Universal values structure laid out by Schwartz. This paper therefore attempts to make a contribution to the literature by testing if party system factors render produce a stronger effect of values on vote choice.
Research Questions and Hypothesis

Following from the discussion above the empirical analysis aims to address the following 2 questions related to the vote choice heuristic mechanism.

1. Does left-right self-placement mediate the relationship between values and voting in the European Electorate?

2. Is there variation in the mediation mechanism between different values measures?

There are many possible social and political identities that could act as potential mediators of the values-voting relationship. It is possible to conceptualise the role of religion and class as clear mediators of vote choice (Raymond 2011, Evans 2010). Equally, historic cleavage structures such as the centre-periphery conflicts or urban-rural division would also make an interesting mediator of the values-voting mechanism based on a long tradition of voting research in the sociological tradition (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). However, most of these identities are country specific to some degree and would be more appropriately used in Single N studies or small comparative studies. The great advantage of using left-right identity as a heuristic mechanism is that is carries substantial cross national cultural validity (Piurko et al. 2011 Evans 2010 Dalton 2008); at least as regard to Western European Democracies. Left-Right is the language in which politics is done, the terms in which politician’s debate and the media reports and the way in which parties identify themselves (even if they are explicitly rejecting it) and it is that universality that makes it the most appropriate heuristic mechanism to use in a comparative study of this type (Dalton 2008).

The values model that will be outlined in detail below is a 5 factor model which captures the following political values; Traditionalism, Individualism, Authoritarianism, Conformity and Egalitarianism. While representing common dimensions in the 15 countries included in the analysis, they undoubtedly represent different levels of abstraction from the political process. Individualism and Egalitarianism are ‘core’ political values that clearly map directly onto the left-right political divide in most established democracies (Feldman 1988, Mccann 1997, Feldman 2003). Authoritarianism and Conformity are slightly more abstract and are as much personal values as they are overtly ‘political’ although the measures that have utilised here have been defined as political values in previous empirical research (Alvarez and Brehm 1995, Caprara et al. 2007). Traditionalism sits somewhere in between and with the emergence of Postmaterialist values on top of existing religious and secular cleavages is likely to present a more complex and context dependent relationship with vote choice. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed in relation to these research questions.

Hypothesis 1    For party families that can be clearly be identified as on the Left or Right of the political map Left-Right will partially or fully mediate the relationship between the core political values (Individualism and Egalitarianism) and vote choice.

Hypothesis 2    In Countries that have parties that are clearly identified by their historic religious identity (Christian Democrats) then Traditionalism should be expected to be an additional core political value. Therefore, the effect of Traditionalism on the Christian Democrat vote will be fully or partially mediated by Left-Right.
Hypothesis 3 The effects of Authoritarianism and Conformity on vote choice will not be mediated by Left-Right as they are do not neatly fit within a left-right heuristic framework. (In addition, it is likely that Authoritarianism and Conformity will have a stronger relationship with votes for ‘fringe’ parties).

The third and fourth questions relates directly to political context;

3. Are there cross-national variations in the mechanisms linking values and voter choice?

4. Which macro-level national factors that influence the relationship between values and voter choice?

As outlined above it is expected that in more polarised political systems it is likely that the positioning of a party becomes clearer through its policy statements and political messaging making it easier for voters to associate their values with their political preferences. In more polarised systems parties have clearly staked out their positions and are more likely to have framed their position in a zero-sum values appeal to the electorate. Therefore, as a system becomes more polarised it is easier for voters to directly identify their values with a particular party without recourse to a mediating heuristic such as left-right identity. This connects with literature regarding the rise of values voting in the US (Goren 2005, Goren and Federico 2009).

In addition to this it should be acknowledged that the analysis in this paper involves modelling the connection between values and voting for 8 different party types and 5 different values. Therefore it is likely that patterns will vary between the values (as outlined above) and between party types. In this instance the theory is that parties who are positioned further from the Centre will be more influenced by the amount polarisation in the political system than those at the Centre. There is no argument in favour of causality being made here; polarisation is just as likely to be a function of the existence of parties that are further from the Centre as it is a causes (Sartori 1976). Instead a simple statement that parties of the Radical Left, Populist Right and the Green Party are more likely to attract ‘values’ voters in more polarised political systems. Therefore, as party polarisation increases it is also likely that values will have a stronger effect on voting for these parties.

More speculatively, based on the political psychology literature from US data it is expected that values would have a stronger impact on voting for parties of the right than of the left (Western 2007, Haidt 2011). It has been argued that this is due to the ability of right of centre parties to produce political messages and prioritise political issues that connect more deeply and more widely with voters underlying emotions. It is expected that a more polarised system clarifies the position of parties and therefore polarisation is likely to have a stronger influence on voting for Centre Right parties (Christian Democrats and Conservative party families) than the Centre Left parties (Social Democrat party family).

Finally, the logic for the expected influence of party polarisation on the values-voting relationship can be repeated for the number of parties in a political system even. This is not as consistent with previous findings related to the connection between left-right identity
and the larger of parties but as stated above it is based on a theory that more parties creates a greater incentive for parties to clearly differentiate themselves (Dalton 2008). If there are a large number of viable party alternatives then those parties will have to identify with specific sections of the electorate and therefore will be much clearer in tailoring their message to resonate directly with the values of voters.

Hypothesis 4. In countries with a higher level of political polarisation there will be a stronger relationship between values and voting.

Hypothesis 5. In countries with a higher level of polarisation there will be a stronger relationship between values and voting for mainstream parties of the right than of the left.

Hypothesis 6. In countries with a higher ENEP there will be stronger relationship between values and voting.

Hypothesis 7. In countries with a higher ENEP there will be a stronger relationship between values and voting for mainstream parties of the right than of the left.

Data and Methods

Model Outline

The analysis utilises data from the 2008 and 1990 waves of the European Values Survey (EVS). The EVS is a large scale repeated cross-national face to face survey that has carried out in 4 waves over a 27 year period (1981, 1990, 1999 and 2008). The EVS is used in this analysis because it aims to capture changing attitudes and values within the European Population. It has the widest chronological reach of any comparable Cross-National values survey (the Eurobarometer survey does not contain sufficient attitudinal indicators for this study) which makes it the most appropriate dataset for addressing research problems related to changing values structures. A previous stage of this study developed a 5 factor values model using Confirmatory Factor Analysis following the latent tradition of values measurement (Davidov et al. 2008, Billiet et al. 2011). This model was developed using the 15 Western European Democracies that were included in both the 1990 and 2008 waves of the EVS. The measurement model identified 4 core latent political values in the European Electorate (Traditionalism, Individualism, Conformity and Authoritarianism) with an additional single item indicator used as a known proxy for Egalitarianism. Each of the 4 latent factors was comprised of 3 attitudinal indicators. The definition and makeup of these factors is outlined in Box 1. These models proved to be a good fit for both the 2008 and 1990 waves of the EVS at the pooled level (see Appendix 2). In general, the measurement model also fit the data well in each of the 15 countries in the analysis. Countries where the model fitted poorly were excluded from analysis. This explains why the analysis is restricted to Western European democracies as the values model did not produce a satisfactory fit for the newer democracies of Eastern Europe. The only Western European democracy to be excluded was Malta because the sample size for Malta was smaller than other countries and it produced unreliable results. In the remaining countries samples sizes ranged from 588 (Finland 1990) to 2792 (Belgium 1990). This can be seen in Appendix 3.
The dependent variable in all the analysis below is Vote choice which is measured by respondents answer to the question of how they intend to vote at the next general election (all countries in the analysis are Parliamentary rather than Presidential systems so this question refers to parliamentary parties not candidates). This is clearly not an ideal measure of vote choice since it has no connection to the proximity of elections and is based on the perceptions of the respondent at that particular time. Issues regarding ideal vote choice have been discussed at length in the wider literature (Van der Brug, Franklin and Van der Eijk 2007). However, in this instance the analysis is limited by using broad cross-national social survey as opposed to a specific political survey. Responses were coded by party family. The assignment of a party to a party family is based it’s categorisation in the Comparative Manifesto’s Project (CMP). For example, the People’s Party in Spain is categorised as a Christian Democrat Party whereas the Moderate Party in Sweden is categorised as a Conservative party according to the criteria applied to the CMP data. On each occasion the party family measure is defined as a binary variable with 1 indicating an intention to vote for that party against 0 not intending to vote for that party. The overall Centre Right vote is made up of the combined N of the Christian Democrat and Conservative party family types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individualism Sometimes Referred to as Freedom indicators (Feldman 1988). A commitment to individual responsibility as opposed to collective state based support.</td>
<td>Opinions on Individual vs State Responsibility, whether competition is positive or negative and the state ownership of firms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarianism A commitment to hierarchical and ordered world view (Jost et al. 2003).</td>
<td>Views on attitudes to encourage in children; obedience, independence, imagination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity A commitment to rule following both in terms of the law and societal norms. (Schwartz 1992).</td>
<td>Opinions on acceptability of using soft drugs, paying to avoid tax and avoiding fares on public transport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism To vhave a positive view of a more equal society both in economic and social terms (although this measure only captures economic dimension). (Feldman 1988).</td>
<td>Single Indicator related to the desirability of equality of incomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box 1 – Definition of Values used in the model (see Appendix 1 for exact question wording of indicators)
See Table 1 below for a description of the party family data that make up the dependent variables in the analysis. For a list of countries that have been excluded from the analysis for each of the specific party family variables (for example UK contains no Christian Democrat party so is not included in the model of Christian Democrat vote as that would be acknowledging a ‘false choice) please see appendix 3. The overall N of each party family model is recorded in brackets.

Left-Right is measured on a 10 point scale running from 1 = Left to 10 = Right. Respondents are asked to state where on this scale they place they would place themselves. In the 2008 data 2028 out of the 20017 respondents either did not know or refused to answer. In 1990 this was 3205. This will be treated as missing data in the analysis. Left-right is normally distributed in both samples, with a mean of 4.27 (SD = 3.22) in 1990 and 4.32 (3.02) in 2008. This suggests that the variable retains similar qualities at both time-points.

Table 1 – Party Family Descriptives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008 Party Family</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrat/Centre/Left</td>
<td>4070 (20006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre Right</td>
<td>4755 (20006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>1022 (14441)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist</td>
<td>738 (11324)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist (Left)</td>
<td>673 (12376)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>851 (12040)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Democrats</td>
<td>1861 (13506)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>2894 (14383)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1990 Party Family</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrat/Centre/Left</td>
<td>4224 (19202)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre Right</td>
<td>4900 (19202)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>1367 (14935)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist</td>
<td>570 (11487)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist (Left)</td>
<td>763 (9619)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>999 (17146)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Democrats</td>
<td>2783 (14350)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>2159 (10884)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stage 1 of the analysis develops a full SEM pathway model of the relationship between values and voting choice in Western Europe by pooling the data from all 15 Countries in the analysis. It introduces left-right subjective Political Identity as a mediator of the values-voting relationship (see Fig 1). This tests the key research question of whether Political Identity mediates the influence of the values measures on vote choice. Given the strength
of the relationship between values and voting that has been demonstrated in previous analysis it is unlikely that Political Identity will fully mediate values. Therefore the expectation is that the ‘priming’ role of Political Identity will be highlighted through partial mediation (and potentially confounding effects), with evidence of strong indirect effects rather than through indirect effects rendering direct effects non-significant. It is important that the models are capable of highlighting the path between values and voting, therefore a robust voting indicator will be used. Instead of modelling across the whole pooled dataset for each party family with dummy controls added for each country (not a viable strategy in a full path model as it would destroy the fit of the model), the sample for modelling the vote of each party family will be defined by the countries which include a party from that family. In other words countries in which Green parties do not exist will not be included in the Green Party pooled model. This removes the ‘false choice’ problem and should produce a more accurate measure of the voting variable. So while Centre Left and Centre Right vote are modelled across the whole pooled sample (Conservative and Christian Democrat parties are merged into a general Centre Right category to reflect the theoretical assumption that left-right is the dominant political cultural division in West European Democracies); other parties are modelled on reduced samples. While this clearly reduces the scope of comparability it increases the potential accuracy of the path model; as the primary aim of this stage of the analysis is in testing the viability and variability that exists in the mediation mechanism this was considered a necessary compromise. It removes the problem of modelling a false choice in the analysis. The aim of this analysis is to demonstrate the mechanisms through which values influence vote choice; setting the model up in this way makes it more likely it can demonstrate these pathways. The same model will then be tested on the 1990 data to highlight any changes that may have taken place in the values-voting mechanism overtime and establish whether the model is robust over different waves of the EVS.

Stage 2 of the analysis focuses on testing for contextual variation in the values-voting mechanism in a form of meta-analysis by splitting the dataset into its 15 country level component parts. Vote choice is then modelled as above at the national level in each country. Again this is not ideal as the distance between the survey and the election date varies considerably between countries (See Appendix 3 for details). Structural Equation pathways representing the political identities model are estimated for each relevant party in each country. The beta co-efficients of the effect of each value on the vote for each party are standardised with total, direct and indirect effects (via left-right identity) being reported. Measures of party polarisation and Effective Number of Parties are drawn from ParGov (Doring and Manow 2012) data for the nearest future election to each survey date. The standardised co-efficients are then graphed against the contextual measures in order to assess how these party system factors influence the strength of the values-voting relationship. This will allow an exploration of variation in the values-voting relationship and test the hypotheses related to the influence of contextual factors on the values-voting relationship. The original aim had been to use a Multi-Level hierarchical modelling approach to this analysis by introducing the contextual effects as second level indicator and therefore obtaining an overall measure of the effect. However, it was decided that combining this with the Structural Equation approach would put too much pressure on the existing model and that a maximum of 30 data points was not sufficient to produce robust findings using
this approach so the meta-analysis approach was considered more reliable and consistent with prior research in this area (Dalton 2008).

The study has proceeded on the basis that variance in the values indicators themselves is ultimately to be expected. It is taking the opposite approach to that employed in the Schwartz values literature, which is searching for Universal content in values division. The argument proposed here is that relevant political values are specific to the social context in which they were formed and are primed in specific political contexts (Datler et al. 2013). Therefore, while the failure to establish full Measurement Invariance raises challenges of comparison it is actually consistent with the overall theory of values that is being applied in this study. This is closer to Rokeach’s (1973) conception of values; that different values are developed in different ways and rendered relevant by different social and political contexts. The aim of this study is not to search for universal rules, but to demonstrate that values can measure variation. What is being tested is whether there is broad evidence that the values-voting mechanism varies according to political context. Stage 2 therefore takes a similar approach to Stage 1 but applies the same left-right mediator model to national level data in order to generate the co-efficient scores. All models are run in MPLUS using a WSLMV estimator and bootstrapping to account for the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable. The results should be read as bi-nomial logistic regressions as opposed to a multi-nominal approach, which was rejected on the basis that it risked modelling ‘false choices’ among the electorates.

Results

Stage 1 – Pooled Left-Right Mediator Model Models

Stage 1 provides the test of the political identities model of the values-voting relationship by using Left-Right self-placement as a mediating variable in a Structural Equation path model. This tests the viability of the theory that values influence the political preferences of voters through left-right operating as a choice heuristic that enables voters to associate their values preferences to a specific party. Table 2 presents the findings from the model which was run using the 2008 wave of the EVS (statistically significant findings at the <.095 level are highlighted in bold). The table shows that the overall fit of the models to the data are generally good. CFI’s are around .95 and RMSEAs are all comfortably under the 0.005 cut off point for acceptable models (Billiet et al. 2011, Brown 2006). There is some variability in the fit of the model between the larger party families and the fringe parties. The poorest fits are for the Centre party and Nationalist party models; both of which are on the borderline of acceptability. The models for Centre Right, Centre Left and the Conservative and Christian Democrat party families are all good models; the Communist and Green party models are also good. There is some confidence that these results can be considered relatively robust. There is no issue regarding the relationship between Left-Right and vote choice – it is strongly significant in 7 out of the 8 models and remains weakly significant in the 8th (Centre party). Therefore the basic test of establishing a significant relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable has been passed (Baron and Kenny 1986).
Table 2 – 2008 Mediation Model Highlighting Direct and Indirect effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of TRADIT</td>
<td>-0.217</td>
<td>0.154</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.065</td>
<td>0.272</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>-0.078</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of Tradit</td>
<td>-0.147</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.224</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>-0.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of INDIV</td>
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<td>0.398</td>
<td>0.09</td>
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<td>-0.308</td>
<td>-0.142</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>-0.145</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>-0.185</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of Indiv</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>-0.123</td>
<td>-0.078</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of AUTH</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>-0.071</td>
<td>-0.171</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.343</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>-0.079</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of AUTH</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>-0.072</td>
<td>-0.185</td>
<td>-0.094</td>
<td>-0.336</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of CONFORM</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>-0.099</td>
<td>-0.088</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of Conform</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
<td>-0.106</td>
<td>-0.076</td>
<td>-0.072</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of EGA</td>
<td>0.055</td>
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<td>-0.016</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.049</td>
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<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.018</td>
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<td>Direct effect of EGA</td>
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<td>-0.054</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>-0.184</td>
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<td>Direct effect of L/R</td>
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<td>-0.199</td>
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<td>0.431</td>
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<td>RMSEA/CFI</td>
<td>0.032/0.961</td>
<td>0.032/0.957</td>
<td>0.044/0.927</td>
<td>0.044/0.914</td>
<td>0.033/0.951</td>
<td>0.031/0.955</td>
<td>0.034/0.946</td>
<td>0.036/0.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rsquared</td>
<td>0.279</td>
<td>0.416</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.376</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.203</td>
<td>0.485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Direct Values on LR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>centre left</th>
<th>centre right</th>
<th>centre</th>
<th>nationalist</th>
<th>comm.</th>
<th>green</th>
<th>chris democ.</th>
<th>conserv.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditionalism</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>0.164</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>0.102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individualism</td>
<td>0.335</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0.342</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>0.373</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarianism</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>-0.008</td>
<td>-0.015</td>
<td>0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
<td>-0.184</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main problem regarding model fit arises in the variability of the Values measures in predicting Left-Right. As stated above, with the exception of Centre Left and Centre Right the pooled samples vary by party family as reflected in the variation in the overall N in each model. This has produced an unexpected variability in whether values measures predict
Left-Right. In the Centre Left and Centre Right model (using the whole sample) Traditionalism, Individualism and Egalitarianism have a significant direct relationship to Left-Right but Authoritarianism and Conformity do not. While this does have some implications to the overall mediation theory that is being tested here it is not altogether surprising; Individualism and Egalitarianism (the more directly ‘political values’ in the model) have a clearly defined theoretical relationship to Left-Right (Schwartz 1992, Feldman 2003, Rokeach 1973). Likewise Traditionalism can be considered to map onto the existing Left-Right political division as a long-standing societal cleavage in many Western European Democracies (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Raymond 2011). It is less clear how Authoritarianism and Conformity may interact with the left-right identity and it is likely that where there is a relationship this is defined by specific national level electoral contexts (Barnea and Schwartz 1998).

However, the concern is that the variability in the relationship between the samples is quite high; Traditionalism, Individualism and Egalitarianism are significant predictors of Left-Right in all party family samples while Authoritarianism and Conformity are significant predictors in some models but not others.

As expected, there is little evidence from these models that political identity fully mediates the relationship between values and voting. However, there is some significant evidence of partial mediation and it is also clear that the mediation influence of political identity can explain important aspects of the values-voting relationship. As regards differentiating the vote between Centre Right and Centre Left (the only models on which we can make such a comparison as they are based on the same sample); what is observed is that on the 3 values that significantly predict left-right (Traditionalism, Individualism, Egalitarianism) there are both significant direct and indirect effects. Variation in the strength of these effects hints at the way in which values connect to party choice in different ways for different parties. The findings are consistent with those of previous studies; there is a significant positive relationship between Individualism and Traditionalism and the Centre Right vote and a negative one for Egalitarianism – these findings are reversed for the Centre Left vote. What this model contributes to the understanding of these relationships is the extent to which the indirect, mediated, effect adds to this overall variance compared with the direct effect (see Table 3). On the Traditionalism indicator half the variance in the Centre Right vote is accounted for by an indirect effect via left-right. While for the Centre Left, the direct effect is much stronger accounting for two thirds of the overall variance. On Egalitarianism the indirect effect of Left-Right comes close to fully mediating the relationship between values and vote for the Centre Left, while for the Centre Right the direct effect remains strong. On Individualism there is again a slight difference; with the indirect effect of Left-Right accounting for nearly 50% of the overall effect of Individualism on vote choice while the direct effect of Individualism on the Centre Right is stronger than the indirect effect.

**Hypothesis 1** For party families that can be clearly be identified as on the Left or Right of the political map Left-Right will partially or fully mediate the relationship between the core political values (Individualism and Egalitarianism) and vote choice is. **This hypothesis is proven correct.**
Splitting the Centre-Right vote into its Christian Democrat and Conservative variants further illustrates key variations in the values structure of their voters; this leads to some doubts regarding the validity of the findings on the Centre Right vote in relation to Traditionalism. The Christian Democrat model mimics the structure that is observed in the overall Centre Right model; significant direct and indirect effects but with direct influence of Traditionalism being stronger than the mediated influence. This could be expected; voters are likely able to directly associate the Christian Democrats with Traditional values without first putting this through a left-right heuristic. However, with the Conservative vote the structure of this relationship is completely different (see Fig 2). There is evidence of a confounding effect in the role of left-right on the Conservative vote. The direct relationship between Traditionalism and the Conservative vote is \(-0.041\) with a P value of \(0.079\) so therefore not shown as statistically significant in the table (though it is close to significance and substantively relevant). The indirect effect is both positive and significant at \(0.044\). Therefore Traditionalism is positively associated with Conservative voting but only when voters associate it with their right of centre preferences. If they do not then there is some evidence that the direct relationship between Traditionalism and vote choice taps into the libertarian strand in Conservative party voting. It requires identification with a right of centre position to render the relationship positive. This shows that there are competing forces on this dimension among Conservative electorates. There may be conflicting motivations among Conservative party voters that cancel each other out but are just as important. This quite neatly highlights the difficulties Conservative parties have in balancing their appeals to Traditional moral values and their appeals to Economic market liberalism. It is worth pointing out that the classification of a party as ‘Conservative’ in the Comparative Manifesto’s Project tends to be related to its commitment to neo-liberal economic policy rather than an emphasis on social conservatism. This may partly explain the somewhat counter-intuitive finding on the effect of Traditionalism on the ‘Conservative’ vote. The relationship between Traditionalism and the Christian Democrat vote is as expected. Support has been found to support the theory that Traditionalism acts as a Core Political Value on the Christian Democrat vote and is therefore at mediated by left-right identity, whereas left-right appears to confound the relationship between Traditionalism and the Conservative vote.

**Hypothesis 2**  In Countries that have parties that are clearly identified by their historic religious identity (Christian Democrats) then Traditionalism should be expected to be an additional core political value. Therefore, the effect of Traditionalism on the Christian Democrat vote will be fully or partially mediated by Left-Right. **This hypothesis is proven correct.**

### Table 3 – Percentage of total variance accounted for by Direct and Indirect effects for Centre Left and Centre Right parties in 2008 Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Centre Left</th>
<th></th>
<th>Centre Right</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Direct Variance</td>
<td>% Indirect Variance via L/R</td>
<td>% Direct Variance</td>
<td>% Indirect Variance via L/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditionalism</td>
<td>67.74</td>
<td>32.26</td>
<td>51.30</td>
<td>48.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism</td>
<td>52.61</td>
<td>47.39</td>
<td>60.55</td>
<td>39.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>25.45</td>
<td>74.55</td>
<td>54.55</td>
<td>45.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A similar effect can be observed for the influence of Authoritarianism on the Conservative vote (this is a valid observation as there is a significant relationship between Authoritarian values and left-right in the Conservative sample). In this instance there is a significant negative relationship in the direct effect between Authoritarianism and the Conservative vote but the effect is positive when mediated by left-right identity. This pattern is also found in the Nationalist party model (although the Nationalist vote mimics the Christian Democrats on the Traditionalism indicator). The fact that there is a similar structure in the relationship between Authoritarianism and voting for these two right of centre party families suggests that this is a robust finding. That when voters perceive a party as right of centre they can make an association to their Authoritarian instincts, but they are also capable of making direct appeals to Anti-Authoritarian sentiments. This may be related to their perceived stance on the role of the state.

There is evidence that the significant negative relationship between Traditionalism and the ‘Communist’ (the categorisation applies to parties perceived to be to the Left of Centre Left Social Democratic parties) vote is mediated by voters positioning themselves on the Left of the political spectrum; the indirect effect accounts for nearly all the variance in the total effect. The model for the Centre party confirms that values have contributed little to an understanding of vote choice for centre parties – in fact the model is set up in such a way as to almost make this inevitable. It is assuming left-right self-placement is central to the decision making of voters; for Centre parties by definition that is not the case. So that model is rendered largely irrelevant; doubly so by the relationship between left-right and Centre party vote being not being significant. Likewise the model of Green Party vote at the pooled level adds little to the understanding of the relationship between values and Green party. There is some evidence that, as with the Communist vote model, the effect of

Figure 2 – Diagram of Mediation Structures of voting for right of Centre party families on key values dimensions in 2008 pooled model.
Traditionalism is mediated through left-right but this is speculative as the total effect does not show a significant association with the Green Vote. With that exception the values structure of the Green vote on the other two relevant mediators (Egalitarianism and Individualism) is largely the same as for the Centre Left vote.

1990 Model

*Table 4 Overleaf* presents the final part of this stage of the analysis. The analysis was run using the 1990 wave of the EVS to test whether the values structures have remained robust over time. The first comment to make is that the values model is clearly a poor fit for the data in 1990 compared with 2008. These must be acknowledged as poor quality models as regards goodness of fit. All CFI measures are below 0.090 (itself a very generous cut off for model acceptability) while RMSEA figures are all 0.50 or higher. These models are mediocre at best. However, despite this they do show some substantively interesting findings that are consistent with the general theoretical approach.

Firstly, 4 out of the 5 values significantly predict left-right self-placement in 7 out of the 8 models. Even Conformity significantly predicts left-right self-placement in the key Centre Right and Centre Left vote models. Therefore more values are relevant in these 1990 models than in 2008. It is possible to highlight that while there is not very much variation in the differences in the core relationships between Centre Right and Centre Left voting on Traditionalism, Individualism and Egalitarianism between 2008 and 1990; there is more evidence of indirect effects on the vote choice for both Conformity and Authoritarianism. On the Centre Left vote it is clear that there is a confounding effect in the relationship; there is a positive direct effect between Authoritarianism and Centre Left voting but when seen through a left-right prism it becomes a negative effect. This is logical and suggests that the positive effects that are consistently found between Authoritarianism and Centre Left voting may say more about the values of key Centre Left voting groups than of the political structure; for example that working class voters are more likely to express Authoritarian attitudes (Thorisdóttir et al. 2007). However, in general there is little evidence to suggest that the influence of Authoritarianism and Conformity is consistently mediated by left-right in either the 2008 or 1990 models; they likely represent values that transcend and cross-cut ideas of left-right identity.

*Hypothesis 3* The effects of Authoritarianism and Conformity on vote choice will not be mediated by Left-Right as they are do not neatly fit within a left-right heuristic framework. (In addition, it is likely that Authoritarianism and Conformity will have a stronger relationship with votes for ‘fringe’ parties). This hypothesis is proven partially correct.

Generally the relationships between values and voting are similar in the 1990 and 2008 models both in terms of the direction and relative strength of the direct and indirect effects. However, the Centre party values model is so completely different that it is possible that it reflects a misclassification of certain parties in the model as being ‘Centre’ parties. Nevertheless, there is some evidence of a confounding effect on Traditionalism which would be consistent with expectations; that there is significant negative effect in the direct relationship between Traditionalism and Centre party vote but when mediated by left-right this becomes positive (see fig.3). So if a Centre party is identified as right of Centre by
voters it primes their Traditional values. As this finding did not hold in the 2008 data then it must be treated with caution though it may represent some evidence of values change. Where value change is clearly in evidence is in the differences in the Conservative vote profile.

Table 4 – 1990 Mediation Model Highlighting Direct and Indirect effects

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total, direct and indirect effects</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>4224 (19201)</td>
<td>4900 (19201)</td>
<td>1367 (14935)</td>
<td>570 (11487)</td>
<td>763 (9619)</td>
<td>999 (17146)</td>
<td>2783 (14580)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of TRADIT</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
<td>0.976</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>-0.269</td>
<td>-0.173</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>0.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>-0.082</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of Tradit</td>
<td>-0.125</td>
<td>0.292</td>
<td>-0.221</td>
<td>-0.057</td>
<td>-0.128</td>
<td>-0.148</td>
<td>0.318</td>
<td>-0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of INDIV</td>
<td>-0.239</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>-0.353</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>-0.092</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.122</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct effect of Indiv</td>
<td>-0.147</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.165</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of AUTH</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>-0.255</td>
<td>-0.216</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>-0.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>-0.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of AUTH</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>-0.239</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of CONFORM</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>-0.043</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>-0.063</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>-0.101</td>
<td>-0.028</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of Conform</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.056</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
<td>-0.021</td>
<td>0.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of EGA</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
<td>-0.047</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
<td>-0.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total indirect effect via L/R</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>-0.019</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>-0.027</td>
<td>-0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of EGA</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>-0.028</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct effect of L/R</td>
<td>-0.309</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
<td>-0.112</td>
<td>0.331</td>
<td>0.367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RMSEA/CFI
- 0.053/0.876
- 0.053/0.881
- 0.062/0.848
- 0.061/0.847
- 0.056/0.863
- 0.050/0.896
- 0.050/0.893
- 0.055/0.874

R-squared
- 0.171
- 0.335
- 0.087
- 0.103
- 0.502
- 0.185
- 0.3
- 0.313

Direct Values on LR
- Traditionalism
- Individualism
- Authoritarianism
- Conformity
- Egalitarianism

In the 1990 data the positive mediated relationship between Traditionalism and the Conservative vote is much stronger than the direct effect; this produces an overall significant positive relationship (0.077) between Traditionalism and the Conservative vote.
We could speculate that this represented the start of the de-coupling of Traditionalist values from the Conservative vote as the direct effect is negative and non-significant (compared with the structure shown in fig 2.). There is some more convincing evidence backing in the relationship between Egalitarianism and the Christian Democrat vote. In the 2008 models there was evidence of a confounding effect in this relationship. The direct relationship between Egalitarianism and the Christian Democrat vote was significant and positive if small at $0.015$ but when mediated by left-right identity it became a negative relationship at $-0.023$ (see fig.3). This could hint at a relationship between those that use the Christian Democrat cue directly to their values and tap into Christian ideas regarding attitudes to wealth and those who use left-right to structure their political preferences and are thus primarily concerned with more classical political divisions.

![Diagram of Mediation Structures of voting for right for key values dimensions in 1990 pooled model with Christian Democrat comparison.](image)

In general though, the striking finding is that there is little variation in the values structure between the two models. Some relationships become clearer in the 1990 models because the overall relationship between values and voting appears stronger – but the structure of these relationships remains very similar. This suggests that there is stability over time in the relationship between values and voting that is more consistent with classic values theory (Rokeach 1973). Overall the models at the pooled level demonstrate some evidence for complexity in the relationship between values and voting; highlighting how political identity can both partially mediate and confound the relationship between values and voting. This suggests it is valid to conceive political identity as an intermediate variable in this way even if full mediation has not been established in these models. The political identity model, while presenting a complex picture of the values-voting relationship, adds to an understanding of the way in which voters can connect values to their vote preferences. In addition the surprisingly stark differences in the structure of the values-voting relationship between the Christian Democrat and Conservative party families suggests that the political context in which voters make their choices. The evidence here suggests that context is likely to have a significant influence on how easily voters can connect their values to their choices. This is explored in more detail below.
Stage 2 – Contextual Influences on the Values-Voting Relationship

The second and third stages of the analysis go beyond the pooled analysis to look at how contextual factors influence the values-voting relationship at the national level. This involved running Structural Equation Models for each country at each time point – producing up to 30 different observations. Vote for a specific party remained the dependent variable, with each relevant party being modelled at the national level. So instead of having pooled party typology it was possible to measure the influence of values on the vote for each party at the national level. The Beta Co-efficients of the relationship between each value type and vote choice by party family were then graphed against party polarisation and effective number of parties scores in order to establish if the party system context was having any influence on the values-voting relationship. Appendix 4 presents the N for each country and the number of potential voters for each party. The main issue with taking this approach to the analysis is the relatively small number of cases when the analysis moves to the country level – the cut-off point for a party to be included in the analysis was 50 but exceptions were made to this in cases where the Centre-Right vote was represented by both Conservative and Christian Democrat parties within a country as observing the variation in this structure was substantively worthwhile. The appendix also shows the categorisation of each party by party family type (the separate model results for each country are available on request). Scores for Party Polarisation and the Effective Number of Parties were taken from Polgov (2014) website. This measure of polarisation uses the Comparative Manifesto Project’s party positioning score to measure the polarisation of the party system in each country. These scores were taken from the nearest election in that country to each survey point. Table 5 shows both the polarisation score and the effective number of parties score for each country in the analysis. It also shows the date of the most recent election to each time-point.

Party Polarisation

The findings here are currently provisional and the graphs would clearly benefit from having a greater number of observations (adding the 1999 EVS wave may allow this in future iterations), which might dampen the influence that outliers are having somewhat. In general though the graphs show broad, if qualified, support for the hypothesis that party polarisation leads to a stronger influence of values on vote choice. There is also limited support for the theory that values have a stronger influence on the vote for parties that are further from the Centre in more polarised systems. Finally, as the Conservative party family exhibits the closest relationship between a stronger effect of values and polarisation than any other, there is some evidence to support the theory that polarisation leads to values having a stronger influence of right of Centre voting than left of centre voting.

As with the models in Stage 1 the clearer findings relate to the core political values in the model; Individualism, Egalitarianism and Traditionalism. In general the relationship between polarisation and the strength of values on the Centre Left vote is small to non-existent when compared across both time-points. There is evidence of a very small effect of polarisation on Individualism and Centre Left voting (See Figure 4) but it is far from conclusive. The relationship is small but polarisation does seem to produce a stronger
negative effect of Individualism in certain countries. However, not only is this very questionable as a finding in itself it is also not supported by observing an equivalent effect for Egalitarianism on Centre-Left voting. Past research consistently finds a positive association with Egalitarian values as the strongest values predictor of the Centre-Left vote. Therefore, the fact that it does not seem susceptible to any effect of polarisation would likely suggest polarisation has little effect on the relationship between values and Centre-Left voting.

**Table 5 – Party Polarisation and Effective Number of Parties for each Country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Party Polarisation</th>
<th>Number of Parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 shows some relationship between polarisation and the effect of Individualism and Egalitarianism on the overall Centre Right vote. Polarisation would appear to increase the positive association between individualism and Centre Right voting and likewise increase the negative effect of Egalitarianism. Both effects, while weak, do suggest that the strength of values on voting is more influenced by polarisation for Centre Right parties than for the Centre Left. The reasons for these relatively weak effects in the combined Centre Right graphs are explained when splitting the Centre Right parties into their constituent families. It is here that we see that polarisation has a much stronger influence on the Conservative values vote than it does on the Christian Democrat vote.
Figure 4 – Graph of Polarisation by the effects of ‘Core Political Values’ on Centre Left and Centre Right Voting

Figure 5 - Graph of Polarisation by the effects of ‘Core Political Values’ on Conservative and Christian Democrat Party voting.

Figure 5 shows that the relationship between Individualism, Egalitarianism and the Conservative vote is actually quite strong. Polarisation clearly has the effect of
strengthening the association between positive views towards Individualism, negative views towards egalitarianism and Conservative voting. This effect is not evident for the Christian Democrat vote. In fact, on Egalitarianism the Christian Democrat vote shows some evidence of working in the opposite direction. As a system becomes more polarised the negative association between Egalitarianism and voting for Christian Democrat parties; in fact there are a couple of examples of a positive relationship between Egalitarianism and Christian Democrat voting in more polarised countries. Again, this has to be qualified by stating that the effect is small compared with the Conservative vote but it is substantively interesting and consistent with the findings at the previous stage of the analysis regarding the difference in the values-voting structure of the 2 party families. One possible explanation for this effect is that more polarised systems are perhaps more likely to have a Conservative Party within them which means the Christian Democrats are seen as more Egalitarian in comparison. Nevertheless, the overall result of these findings suggests that the hypothesis regarding the influence of polarisation on right of Centre voting is broadly correct.

**Hypothesis 5. In countries with a higher level of polarisation there will be a stronger relationship between values and voting for mainstream parties of the right than of the left. This hypothesis is proven correct.**

This is further supported when looking at the effect of polarisation on the values-voting relationship on party families that are perceived as non-mainstream and further away from the centre. For the Nationalist parties (and it should be acknowledged that the number of cases is low for this party family) there is evidence that polarisation increases the strength of the positive association with Individualism, although it should be acknowledged that it is hard to say if this is a genuine effect or the result of an outlier which shows the relationship...
as negative (see Figure 6). The finding for Egalitarianism appears more straight forward; as polarisation increases so does the negative relationship between that value dimension and the Nationalist vote. Figure 6 also shows the opposite to be the case among the Communist party models at least as regards Individualism. In more polarised countries the negative association between Individualism and the Communist vote is increased. Interestingly for the Green Party vote – there seems little impact of polarisation in the strength of values which suggests that despite the findings in Stage 1 (showing a similar pattern in the Green and Communist values-voting Structure) parties with a Green profile do not necessarily benefit from increased polarisation.

As with other values, there is no influence of polarisation on the relationship between Traditionalism and Centre Left voting. Figure 7 demonstrates that there is quite a range of co-efficients for the effect of Traditionalism on the Centre Left vote being positive in 5 countries and in general clustering around the 0 point. This suggests that Traditionalism may not act as a core political value for the Centre Left vote. In other words Traditionalism does not necessarily differentiate vote preferences for Centre Left parties from Centre Right parties in the way in which Egalitarianism and Individualism does. It may be more likely that the strength of Traditionalism on the vote is more likely to be defined by emphasis rather than differentiation. In other words, it is not a case of voters taking alternate positions on a competing values dimension but of emphasising that values more than other when making deciding who to support. In fact the only party family in which polarisation appears to have any effect on the relationship with Traditionalism is the Communist party family Polarisation appears increase the negative association between Traditionalism and voting for leftist parties. There is only a very small effect of polarisation on the effect of Traditionalism on the Christian Democrat vote which adds some support to the idea that Traditionalism is a value that is likely to be relevant to voters through emphasis not differentiation and therefore may not always map neatly onto left-right political divisions.

![Figure 7 - Graph of Polarisation by the effects of Traditionalism on party voting.](image-url)
Figure 8 shows that in general, the extent to which the effect of Authoritarianism and Conformity on vote choice is influenced by polarisation appears to defy straightforward explanation. On Authoritarianism it appears that Polarisation has an influence on the Centre Right vote. However, when the Centre Right is split into its constituent parts that relationship is entirely driven by a cluster of more polarised Countries in the Conservative graph in which the relationship between Authoritarianism and the Conservative vote is negative. It is unclear why polarisation should necessarily result in a decline in the relationship between Authoritarianism and the Conservative vote; more research is required to find out the causes of this effect. The relatively strong influence of polarisation on the relationship between Authoritarianism and Communist voting provides some further evidence that polarisation has a stronger influence on the role of values for parties that are further from the Centre. However, this finding is not repeated for Nationalist parties which would be the logical extension of that argument. For Conformity there are nearly no effects of polarisation on the strength of the values-voting relationship with 2 important exceptions. The Centre Right model exhibits no relationship for Conformity suggesting polarisation is not relevant to the strength of this relationship. But, as is shown in Figure 9, the reason for this is that the effects of Polarisation on Conservative and Christian Democrat vote are pulling against each other. In the Christian Democrat models there is some evidence that an increase in polarisation produces a stronger positive relationship between Conformity and the Christian Democrat vote. In the Conservative models the effect runs the opposite way – with an increase in polarisation decreasing the strength of the positive relationship between Conformity and the Conservative vote. This is interesting as it is the pattern that might have been expected for the influence of polarisation on Traditionalism. It is possible that Conformity acts as a differentiator of the vote between Christian Democrat and Conservative parties in more polarised systems though more research is required in order to establish this.

There is not space to go into depth regarding whether the observed effects of polarisation are derived from voters finding it easier to directly associate values with a vote preference in more polarised countries or that the effect is indirect via a heightened sense of left-right awareness in more polarised countries. However, the models included Total, direct and indirect effects (via Left-Right). What has been reported above only refers to the Total overall effect but nearly without exception where polarisation had an influence on the strength of the values-voting relationship this was being driven by the direct effect. There was little evidence of any relationship between the strength of the indirect effect (via left-right) and polarisation. Therefore, it is argued that the findings here suggest that in more polarised political systems, the stakes are higher and parties are more likely to stand on platforms that connect more strongly with the underlying emotional attachments of voters. In addition they are also more likely to attempt to criticise the broader values of their opponents. Therefore, polarisation plays an important role in allowing voters to make connections between their values and their party preferences.

Hypothesis 4. In countries with a higher level of political polarisation there will be a stronger relationship between values and voting. This hypothesis is proven partially correct.
Figure 8 - Graph of Polarisation by the effects of Authoritarianism on party voting.

Figure 9 - Graph of Polarisation by the effects of Traditionalism on Christian Democrat and Conservative voting.
Effective Number of Parties

The findings regarding the influence of the number of parties on the values-voting relationship were generally disappointing. There is very little evidence of the number of parties having an influence on the values-voting relationship. The effects for the mainstream parties of the Centre are non-existent. It might be expected that with more parties in the system the strength of the relationship between values and voting for Centre Left or Centre Right parties may decline since they would be likely to have competitors making stronger values appeals. There seems no evidence at all to support this. The number of parties simply had no effect on the relationship between values and voting for any of the Centre party models.

**Figure 10 - Graph of Number of Parties by the effects of values on Communist Voting.**

*Figure 10* shows that where the effective number of parties had the most effect on the Communist party vote. The effects are relatively weak but they show some quite interesting results in that they suggest that as number of party’s increases the relationship between Conformity and the Communist vote becomes positive. It is hard to claim that this finding is very robust given the number of outliers and it probably would not bare comment were it not for the fact that a similar (though much smaller), counter-intuitive, effect is found in the relationship between the number of parties and the Traditionalism-Communist vote relationship. The finding for Egalitarianism and the Communist vote is more predictable – as the number of parties increases the positive relationship between Egalitarianism and the Communist vote becomes stronger. It is possible that this reflects a trend of left parties picking up disenfranchised values voters from Centre Left parties. For example, the German 2008 model shows that there was no relationship between Egalitarianism, Individualism and voting for the SDP. Those core political values were no longer predictive of the vote for the
main German Centre Left party (they were predictive in the 1990 Model). In the intervening time, the SDP had moved to the Centre as part of the third wave of European Social Democracy and that had created the political space for the emergence of Die Linke that was partly made up of members of the SDP who were unhappy with it abandoning its traditional leftist values (Bowyer and Vail 2011). As might be expected there was a strong relationship between Individualism (Negative) and Egalitarianism (positive) with Die Linke’s vote. So there is some small anecdotal evidence to suggest that the number of parties may make a difference to the effect of values on vote choice but it is hard to support this with much further evidence in this analysis.

The only other relevant finding on the role of the number of parties on the values-voting relationship again comes from splitting the Centre Right into its constituent party families. Figure 11 shows that there is some evidence of the number of parties reducing the influence of Individualism on the Christian Democrat vote though this seems largely driven by 2 outliers. It is partially supported by showing an increase in the effect of Egalitarianism (and potentially a reversing of the effect from positive to negative) on the Christian Democrat vote in countries that have a greater number of parties. So there is some evidence (coupled with the polarisation finding) that increased competition makes voters see Christian Democrat parties outside of right-left core values prism. However, this is not a robust finding to any great extent as the effects are so small. Finally, there is some evidence that as the number of parties increases the effect of Traditionalism on the Conservative vote moves from positive to negative. This might be the only genuinely relevant finding of this stage of the analysis. It is possible that a greater number of parties in a system causes Conservative parties to emphasise their liberal economics rather than conservative social values particularly if there is a Christian Democrat party in the system. Therefore, with a competing Centre Right party it is possible that those parties classified as Conservative in the CMP data give more focus to underlying libertarian principles.

Figure 11 - Graph of Number of Parties by the effects of values on Conservative and Christian Democrat Party voting.
In general though the findings related to the number of parties show there is little relationship between the number of parties and the strength of the values-voting relationship. Political context would appear to influence the values-voting relationship through the political content of the party system rather than its composition.

**Hypothesis 6.** In countries with a higher ENEP there will be stronger relationship between values and voting. *This hypothesis is proven incorrect.*

**Hypothesis 7.** In countries with a higher ENEP there will be a stronger relationship between values and voting for mainstream parties of the right than of the left. *This hypothesis is proven incorrect.*

**Discussion**

This paper has attempted to contribute to two gaps in the literature on values and voting. Firstly, it established a latent measure of the value-voting relationship that could be applied to the West European electorate. By doing this it established that the political identities path model could provide good insights into the complexity of this relationship. This has produced a cross-national comparison of the role of specifically political (as opposed to universal) values on vote choice. Prior work on political values has been limited to using single item indicators or proxy measures, such as using religion as a measure for Traditional values (Van Deth and Scarborough 1994, Knutsen 1995). By using a latent structural model this paper has been able to produce more robust measures of political values. In addition, as the indicators in the model allow respondents to express positive and negative views on items so it is possible to measure the role that negative values associations have on voter preferences. As values provide a way of connecting with voters underlying goals, beliefs and emotions it is likely that if a party can be identified as having an aversion to a particular terminal value (such as egalitarianism in right of centre parties) that could have as strong an influence on their voters as positively representing a value (Rokeach 1973).

This approach presents both a more realistic and a more political conception of the role of values on vote choice (Feldman 2003). It is not just about parties representing values certain voters like but they can also be identified as being against values voters do not like. While this may seem a statement of the obvious the existing cross-national empirical literature on values-voting does not acknowledge this sufficiently. Due to data limitations this complexity has been missing from previous cross-national research on the relationship between values and voting and is one of the reasons why values models of vote choice have struggled to move beyond the status of ‘just so’ stories (Hug and Kriesi 2010 Leimgruber 2011). The Schwartz values-voting literature is comprehensive and has been very effective at demonstrating commonalities (Barnea and Schwartz 1998, Caprara et al. 2007, Piurko et al. 2011, Vecchione et al. 2013) in the way in which values structure left-right preferences. However, because the Schwartz measures are not designed to be specifically political they potentially miss some of the complexity in the values-voting relationship that is caused by political competition. The measures used in this paper, though far from perfect, have been able to demonstrate a complexity which has not previously been acknowledged. That the political identities model is able to demonstrate that left-right can act as both a mediator and a confounder of values is important. This is partly because the political identity model is
able to highlight differences in the way in which values predict the vote for different party families. The persistent differences shown between Christian Democrat and Conservative party families could be of particular interest in explaining cross-national variation in other areas; such as issue agendas or the evolution of party positioning. However, the main role that the political identities model has is in demonstrating a viable mechanism through which political values are converted into vote choice preferences (Piurko et al. 2011). The findings here demonstrate the validity of that model and highlight a level of complexity in the relationship between political values and voting which starts to address the challenge of proving how values can be relevant to broader electoral studies research.

The second stage of the analysis attempted to contribute to an understanding of the role of values on voting by demonstrating how values can be influenced by the political context. It was the role of political context that was being tested following examples laid out in recent electoral choice research (Dalton and Anderson 2011). In this instance, the influence of party system polarisation and the choice sets presented to electorates was tested. The influence of the choices sets faced by voters on the values-voting relationship was found to be minimal; there is no evidence in this analysis suggesting that a greater number of parties increases the influence of values on vote choice. Polarisation on other hand was shown to impact the influence of values on voting; possibly even to the extent of reversing the direction of the effect of certain values dimensions the vote for specific party families. The findings broadly suggest that polarisation in the system makes it easier for voters to associate parties with their specific values preferences. This is particularly the case for parties that are situated further away from the political centre. There is also some evidence that polarisation has a larger influence on the values-voting relationship for parties with a right of centre profile than a left of centre profile, which would be consistent with recent findings suggesting that values play a more central role in right of centre voting (Goren and Federico 2009, Haidt 2011). Therefore, while these findings remain provisional and are some way from being conclusive, the results demonstrate how supply-side factors may impact the values-voting relationship. It is the content of political competition that matters to the values-voting relationship – not merely the structure of it.

This potentially connects with two broader debates in the electoral studies literature. In the first instance it suggests that political polarisation may make it easier for voters to connect their values to their preferences. This connects with broader research that suggests that it is the content of electoral preferences which is most important to voters, particularly when considering issues of personal identity (Dalton 2008, Evans et al. 2013). One aspect that needs to be explored in further research is whether the effects of values on vote choice are entirely driven by the politically knowledgeable or if values provide a heuristic that transcends levels of political understanding (Van Deth and Scarborough 1994 Aspelund et al. 2013). This would test whether values passed Converse’s contention that the general electorate do not connect their underlying preferences and beliefs to their political choices in a meaningful manner (Converse 1964). Finally, the finding that polarisation has a greater influence on the role of values in predicting the vote for parties away from the political centre and with a clearer profile connects with the literature on new social cleavages and de-alignment (Kriesi et al. 2008, Ford and Goodwin 2014). If mainstream parties struggle to appeal to the core values of voters then this creates opportunities for new parties to emerge that do (Bowyer and Vail 2011). These findings suggest that the appearance of new
parties that can appeal to the core values of voters present a longer term challenge to mainstream parties of the Centre.

This paper is a work in progress from a PhD project investigating the role of political context in defining the relationship between the values preferences of voters and their vote choice. The influence of values on voting remains a relatively under researched and under theorised area in electoral studies and the aim of this research is to contribute to a wider understanding of how voters convert their values preferences into vote preferences; one of the clearest gaps in the research on values and voting (Leimgruber 2011). The findings have shown the importance of mediators in influencing the way in which voters convert their values into preferences. The results demonstrate that the political identity path model can highlight the complexity of the relationship between values and voting and demonstrate the importance of political context in framing it. The contradictions and confounding effects in the models challenge some of the existing assumptions in the literature that have suggested that the political identity model has a linear causality (Schwartz et al. 2011). Values do not necessarily predict left-right and then left-right predict vote choice; the reality is more complex depending on party type and political context. There is much more to be done to develop a more coherent understanding of some of these complex relationships, to expand improve the comparative reach of the analysis and to improve the quality of the models. However, these initial findings suggest that values can contribute a great deal to an understanding of the underlying drivers of electoral choice provided that thought is given to appropriate cognitive and contextual mechanisms. They also show that values have a great deal of potential in explaining variations, rather than commonalities, in comparative electoral research.
Bibliography


Appendix 1 – EVS Variables used in the analysis

'Traditionalism' indicators

TRAD1 = (Homosexuality) Please tell me for each of the following whether you think Homosexuality can always be justified, never be justified (10 point scale running from Never Justified to Always Justified)

TRAD2 = (Abortion) Please tell me for each of the following whether you think Abortion can always be justified, never be justified (10 point scale running from Never Justified to Always Justified)

TRAD8 = (Divorce) Please tell me for each of the following whether you think Divorce can always be justified, never be justified (10 point scale running from Never Justified to Always Justified)

'Individualism' Indicators

IND1 = (Individual responsibility) How would you place your views on this scale? Individuals should take more responsibility for providing for themselves - The state should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for (Running on a 10 point scale).

IND3 = (Competition good v harmful) How would you place your views on this scale? Competition is good. It stimulates people to work hard and develop new ideas - Competition is harmful, it brings out the worst in people (Running on a 10 point scale).

IND4 = (Freedom for firms v more state control of firms) How would you place your views on this scale? The state should give more freedom to firms - The state should control firms more effectively (Running on a 10 point scale)

Conformity

CON4 = (Marajuana use) Please tell me for each of the following whether you think taking marijuana or hash can always be justified, never be justified (10 point scale running from Never Justified to Always Justified)

CON5 = (Tax avoidance) Please tell me for each of the following whether you think paying cash for services to avoid tax can always be justified, never be justified (10 point scale running from Never Justified to Always Justified)

CON6 = (Avoiding fare) Please tell me for each of the following whether you think Avoiding a fare on public transport can always be justified, never be justified (10 point scale running from Never Justified to Always Justified)

'Authoritarianism' Indicators
AUTH3 = (Obedience in Children) do you consider Obedience to be especially important in the bringing up of children? (Mentioned = 1, Not Mentioned = 2).

AUTH5 = (Independence in Children) do you consider Independence to be especially important in the bringing up of children? (Mentioned = 1, Not Mentioned = 2).

AUTH6 = (Imagination in Children) do you consider Imagination to be especially important in the bringing up of children? (Mentioned = 1, Not Mentioned = 2).

Other Indicators

EG1 = (Egalitarian indicator) How would you place your views on this scale? Incomes should be more equal – There should be greater incentives for individual efforts (Running on a 10 point scale).

Left Right Scale question = ‘Politics is often talked about in terms of Left and Right’, where would you place yourself on a 10 points scale running from 1 = Left to 10 = Right?

Vote Choice Question = ‘If there was a General Election tomorrow which political party would you vote for? (Choice of responses dependent on country of survey).
# Appendix 2 – CFA Pooled Model fit for 2008 and 1990

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**Model Fit Statistics**

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Appendix 3 – Details of Sample Sizes, Election Dates and Party Families

App table 1. Country level sample sizes and nearest election data

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App table 2. List of Countries excluded from each party family model at pooled level

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Appendix 4 – Breakdown of party information by country, party name, party type and number of cases

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