

Chapter 9. Elite and citizens' attitudes towards territorial organisation.

Sergio Pérez-Castaños (Universidad de Burgos)
Leonardo Sánchez-Ferrer (Universidad de Burgos)

Introduction¹

The study of ideological and political congruence among representatives and voters in Political Science stretches back more than half a century. Since the seminal works of Miller & Stokes (1963), various theories and studies have shaped a wide range of ways of dealing with the analysis of the differences between these two pillars of representative democracies. Many studies on congruence between elites and citizens have focused on ideology, particularly from the beginning of the 21st century, since when these analyses have had greater profusion (Belchior 2010; Romeijn 2020). Building on these prior studies, this chapter tests congruence between the stances of the political elite and citizens towards the territorial structure of the state (Liñeira 2014; Torcal & Mota 2014; Coller, Cordero & Echavarren 2018a; Pérez-Castaños & García-Rabadán 2019).

Since the Great Recession (2007-2010) a multitude of social movements and new political parties have mushroomed throughout the world (Rovira-Kaltwasser & Zanotti 2018). These formations are seeking to connect with people and address new demands provoked by the Recession's financial and social crisis. In this context, emerging parties, like Podemos (hereinafter, UP) or Ciudadanos in Spain, were created to link these new preferences (such as new left identities and non-nationalistic ideas respectively) with the voters demand for institutional, social, and economic change in the country. Therefore, this chapter focuses on whether there is any difference among the old mainstream political parties² and the new formations (including niche parties and the new left, among others) regarding attitudinal congruence towards territorial

organisation. This line of research has been followed by a number of authors (Belchior 2010; Hernández 2018; Costelo et al. 2020; Bakker, Jolly & Polk 2020) and they all concur that newcomer parties tend to have a stronger connection with voters and generate higher congruence levels. This chapter's second goal is to analyse changes in attitudes towards decentralisation before and after the Great Recession, and the major institutional crisis that followed in Spain. As part of this, the studies compiled in Coller, Cordero & Echavarren (2018a) allow us to check how mainstream parties have adapted to the emergence of new political contenders. The third and last objective is to assess -in a preliminary phase- if there are any differences in congruence among ideological party families (McDonnell & Werner 2018). The analysis shows, on the one hand, that the mainstream traditional parties presented lower levels of congruence in 2018 than in 2009. On the other hand, and following the evidence of the preceding literature, newcomer parties displayed higher levels of congruence than those in the mainstream, as they emerged in the context of new demands put forward by citizens and, therefore, sought to meet them. Furthermore, there are mixed differences between right-wing parties and those on the left, with the latter showing more congruence.

The chapter is structured in four parts in addition to this introduction. The next section provides a brief review of the different phases of Spanish territorial organisation over the last 40 years. Next, there is an explanation of the existing theories on the study of congruence and the theoretical bases for the analysis. The third part presents data and methodology. Finally, specific conclusions will be drawn from the analysis.

Spanish territorial organisation

According to Riker's (1964) broad definition, one condition to define the federal character of a political system is the presence of two levels of government over the same territory and population, and at least one of these levels should have an area of

action in which its autonomy is recognised. For Elazar (1990), ‘non-centralisation’ is a requisite, without which there can be no federal system. Autonomy is not guaranteed by simply consolidating certain institutions, but by providing them with material content. That is why when defining the specifically federal character of a political system, the distribution of competencies acquires enormous importance. It is not a matter of having certain institutions - such as executive, legislative or judicial branches, or capacity recognised by the Constitution -, but it is about those institutions being able to exercise these powers. One of the most delicate and controversial questions when formalising a federal system is the distribution of competencies and the implementation of those recognised. Progress in this area may close the government to citizens and, therefore, increase support for a more decentralised country.

For a number of reasons Spain is an excellent case study on how changes in the socio-political and economic context affect federal institutional design. Firstly, this is because the Spanish Constitution is open on questions relating to the distribution of powers between the Autonomous Communities and central Government. Secondly, the existing regulations leave the door open to subsequent decisions by political actors, because the competencies that each region should have are not guaranteed. This flexibility means that whenever there is a big majority in Parliament, regional political responsibilities might be either reduced or broadened, according to the will of the legislator on each occasion. This is also due to the fact that the regions have no say in the national legislative process, which leaves them without power when specific issues that affect them are debated in the national Parliament.³

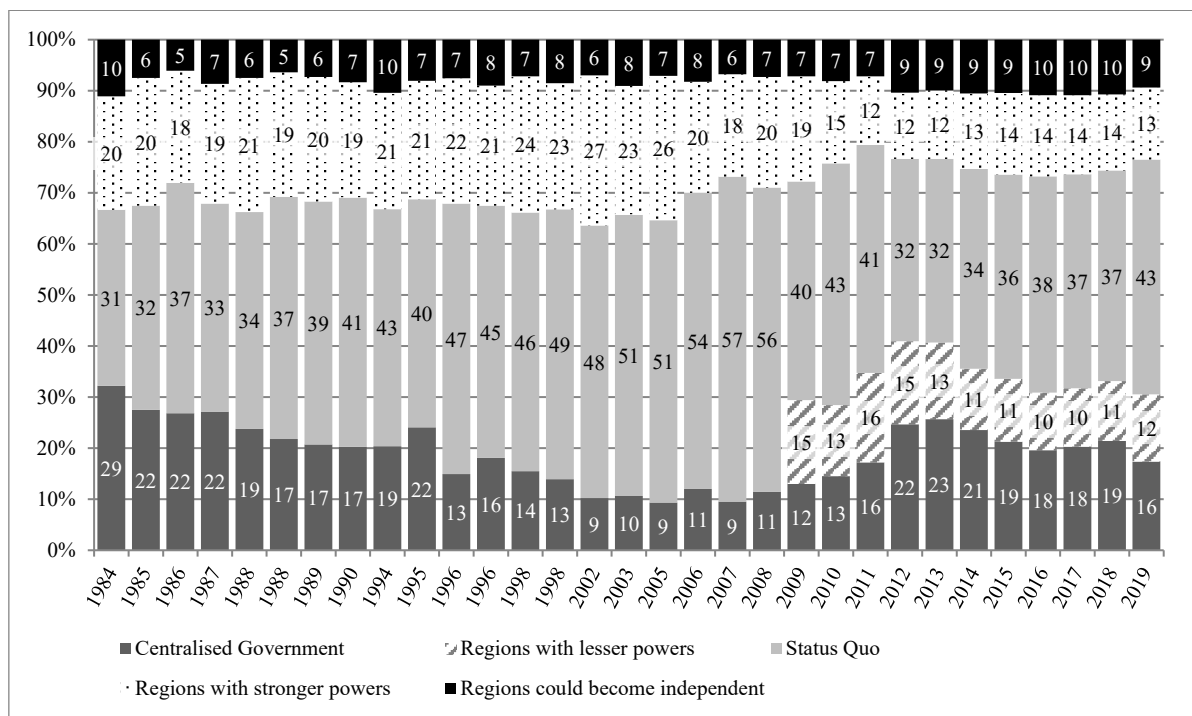
Previous research has established six distinct stages in the Spanish territorial organisation process (Novo, Pérez-Castaños & García-Rabadán 2019; Pérez-Castaños & García-Rabadán 2019), according to degrees of decentralisation. The first period (1979-

1982) is defined by the creation of the new territorial system and the approval of regional statutes that established different levels of autonomy for each region; a model that is named *asymmetric federalism* (Elazar 1990). At this stage, the devolution process began by giving at least some competences to every region. The second stage (1982-1991) coincides with the absolute majorities in the national Parliament held by the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) and is characterised by a recentralisation process, as the regulations from the centre were quite exhaustive and stopped, or even reversed, the devolution process. The third phase, from 1991 to 2000, was characterised by a ‘homogenization’ process that tended to balance the political powers enjoyed by the different regions and reduce the asymmetric nature of the territorial system. The next period corresponded with the right-wing Popular Party’s (PP hereinafter) absolute majority in Parliament (2000-2004), when the government started a new centralisation process. After this period, with the PSOE in power again, and there was a wave of legal reforms in all regions that pushed forward the devolution process (2005-2012). This process reached an end, firstly, because of the huge economic recession that led to strict central budgetary control over regional governments (2012-to date). Secondly, the economic and institutional crisis, alongside higher levels of political and institutional distrust (Torcal 2016), coincided with a surge in demand for Catalanian independence, which has created severe tensions in the territorial organisation of the state and the political situation of the country as well (Gray, 2020).⁴

What are Spaniards’ preferences regarding the territorial organisation of the state and how much do they support the *status quo*? Since 1984 citizens have been asked by the Centre for Sociological Research (CIS) about the different forms of State territorial organisation⁵ and have been offered five alternatives: 1) A country with a single central Government without autonomies; 2) A country in which the Autonomous Communities

should have less autonomy than at present since 2008-; 3) A country with Autonomous Communities, as at present; 4) A country in which the Autonomous Communities have more autonomy than at present and 5) A country in which the Autonomous Communities are recognised as having the possibility of becoming independent states. From now on, this will be referred to as the territorial question.

Figure 9.1. Evolution of positions towards the organisation of the State (%).



Source: Own elaboration with data from CIS (several studies).

As Figure 9.1 illustrates, public support for a decentralised state gradually increased during the initial stages of development of the *estado de las autonomías*. Data collection began in 1984, two years into the second phase, and therefore citizens' attitudes cannot be traced during the first period of decentralisation. However, it is clear that up to the mid-2000s support for the existing territorial organisation steadily grew to reach a maximum of 57% of citizens in 2007. From this moment on the option regarding lesser powers to the regions was included and it seems clear that it affected the number of

supporters of the status quo. At the same time, the percentage of those who wanted more decentralisation (categories 4 and 5) remained stable at around 30% of respondents, until 2006. On the other hand, the number of supporters of a centralised state sharply decreased during this period, as they totalled 30% of respondents in 1984 and fell to less than 10% around 2007. Clearly, many citizens were reluctant to support the decentralisation process in the early stages, particularly conservatives and older people, who nevertheless became increasingly supportive of regional governments that were handling some of the most visible public services (such as health care and education). Thus, Spain's quasi-federal organisation gained popular legitimacy over its first 25 years, i.e., during the initial four phases of the territorial process.

However, the situation has changed in stages five and six. Figure 9.1 shows that the percentage of supporters of recentralisation has risen sharply since 2008, coinciding with the economic crisis and with the beginnings of 'the Catalan challenge'.⁶ In September 2012, 30% of respondents supported full state centralisation, with the figure climbing to 40% when combined with those supporting partial centralisation. In the following years the percentage of 'centralisers' slightly declined, but it has remained around 30%. As the number of those who support further decentralisation has remained basically stable during this period (around 25-30% of responses), the group that has suffered the biggest decrease are those that back the status quo. The political and economic crisis made many citizens sceptic of the *estado de las autonomías*, and consequently the support for the existing territorial model fell to just over 30%, which meant that it was the second option for citizens from 2011 to 2014 for the first time. At this moment supporters of a more centralised government grew and, as the regions were depicted as 'financial black holes' (Cuadrado-Roura & Maroto 2016), and the government sought to control their budgets more strictly. From then on, the defence of

the status quo has recovered its traditional first position among the alternatives, but at a stable modest level of 40% of the citizens.

Theory

This analysis includes a double theoretical perspective. On the one hand, it encompasses representation theories from the seminal work of Millers & Stokes (1963) on the influence of the electorate in Congress. Since then, various authors have sought to quantify the relationship between legislators or representatives and the population they represent. The authors determined that such representation can be explained totally or partially by the effectiveness in which the representatives perceived the political preferences of their constituents (Miller & Stokes 1963, p.52). On the other hand, other researchers have analysed questions relating to the study of citizens' political attitudes towards territorial organisation as one of the multiple dimensions of political culture (Almond & Verba 1963; Duchacek 1987).

The study of ideological congruence between the elite and citizens is anchored in theories of democracy (Esaiasson & Holmberg 1996). Even though it is acknowledged that pure congruence is impossible (Pierce 1999; Thomassen & van Ham 2014), there is a link connecting representatives and voters that affects the decision-making process in the public sphere (Pitkin 1967) and, therefore, this makes it an interesting element to study. The literature also establishes the existence of two 'ideal situations' that shape the opinions of citizens and representatives: the *bottom-up* approaches that argue that the evolution of public opinion determines the discourse and position of political elites; and the *top-down* dynamics that propose that it is the political elites who, through their acts and speeches, manage to change the attitudes of citizens (Jacobs & Saphiro 2002; Ezrow et al. 2011).

Are new parties more congruent with their voters than the traditional mainstream formations? This question has previously been posed by a number of academics (Belchior 2010; Hernández 2018; Costelo et al. 2020; Bakker, Jolly & Polk 2020), who have focused on ideology, political disaffection, and European issues, but not on territorial organisation. Regarding the case of Spain, over the last 40 years there have been two major political parties in the national electoral arena, the PSOE and the PP. These two, representing social democratic and conservative values respectively, have been alternating in power since 1982. However, this situation has changed in recent years, as there are now new political parties that have won some representation not only in Congress but also in regional chambers and local councils.⁷ These political parties are *Unidas Podemos* (UP), situated on the far left of the ideological spectrum, and with roots in the Communist Party, and *Ciudadanos* (Cs), which defines itself as socio-liberal and is located in the centre of the ideological spectrum (Orriols & Cordero 2016). These new parties have challenged the political hegemony of the two mainstream formations.

The new political parties, which usually have an identity connected to the new left -in the case of UP- and anti-establishment features -both in Cs and UP-, seek to facilitate higher levels of congruence between representatives and the electorate (Belchior 2010; Costelo et al. 2020). This connection is due to the emergence of these new parties, which are strongly anchored in social movements with new demands and, therefore, the newcomer political parties have tended to adopt these demands.⁸ These may have also changed the way the traditional parties behave and might have modulated their discourse in order to re-connect with the public (Hernández 2018).

The second theoretical reference in this analysis is the study of political culture. Since the seminal studies of Almond & Verba (1963), state territorial organisation has

been a key element in identifying similarities and differences in the political culture of different countries. Duchacek (1987) and Kymlicka (2016) established that there are several issues affecting territorial decentralisation. The fact that in some regions exist specific characteristics (religious, linguistic, racial, ethnic, etc.) may have caused asymmetries in political decentralisation in order to accommodate these diversities. This strongly connects with political culture studies that began to bear fruit in Spain during the 1960s; and since the 1980s have mushroomed. However, it was at the end of the 1990s when the best definitions of the political culture in Spain were found (Morán 1999). These analyses take into consideration territorial organisation of the State, denoting the moderate position of Spaniards in this respect (Jaime-Castillo 2003).

This moderation has been reinforced over the years and, furthermore, has generated what might be described as a mixed national identity (Gray, 2020). Of course, this does not mean that there are fewer people identifying as Spanish, but due to the devolution process over these past 40 years, public opinion has developed a strong dual identity, with people self-identifying as both Spanish and part of their own region (Llera, Leonisio & Pérez-Castaños 2019, p. 567). In this context, there are a growing number of regional political representatives who combine both regional and national identities. This effect is even bigger in the cases of politicians acting in the Basque Country and Catalonia (Coller, Cordero & Echavarren 2018b)

Data and results

This section analyses whether there are differences in attitudes towards the territorial structure of the State among political parties. Furthermore, according to the literature (Belchior 2010; Hernández 2018; Costelo et al. 2020; Bakker, Jolly & Polk 2020), traditional parties tend to present more differences between MPs' and citizens'

positions than new parties. Additionally, thanks to the possibility of comparison through time, this chapter checks if there is consistency in congruence levels in matters concerning the territorial structure of the State. Congruence is expected to be higher in the past than today due to the Catalanian independence movement. This confrontation might have changed popular opinion regarding territorial organisation making people more in favour of recentralisation and, therefore, reducing levels of congruence as the representatives' position tend to change more slowly than those of the public (Schakel & Hakhverdian 2018, p. 460).

There are different ways of calculating congruence. Here Andeweg's (2011) proposition, which links his formula with the so-called '*Many-to-Many Relationship*' - one of the three different ways of measuring congruence stated by Golder and Stramki (2010, p. 92) - is used.⁹ This approach best adapts to the available data for this research, given that it encompasses the opinions of a body of representatives for whom specific individual information is available, as well as a body of individualised citizen preferences. This type of analysis allows us to precisely identify differences among representatives and voters, thereby helping to improve decisions made by the elite and making them more in line with citizen preferences (Arnesen & Peters 2018). Andeweg's measure of congruence is established by the following formula:

$$Congruence = \sum \min\{f_x(z), f_y(z)\}$$

where $f_x(z)$ and $f_y(z)$ are the probability distribution functions (PDFs hereinafter) for citizens and representatives respectively. In order to identify the congruence level, the minimum (min) at each point of the probability functions will be selected and added together. This process will obtain a number that is between 0 to 100. The closer the

number is to zero, the lesser congruence there exists among political elites and citizens. By contrast, the data will show more congruence as values closer to 100 are obtained.

Andeweg makes two minor changes in Golder and Stramski's (2010) method of measuring congruence, but those changes result in substantial new conditions in order to measure it. The first is that by using the PDFs and not the cumulative distributions each value in the variables compared are weighted the same, deleting any possible difference among the extremes of the scale in which our variable is measured. The second consists in the addition of the common percentage, that is, the overlap (or congruence), instead of the difference (or incongruence) among representatives and citizens. This makes the interpretation of results much more intuitive (España-Nájera & Martínez-Rosón 2020, p. 70).

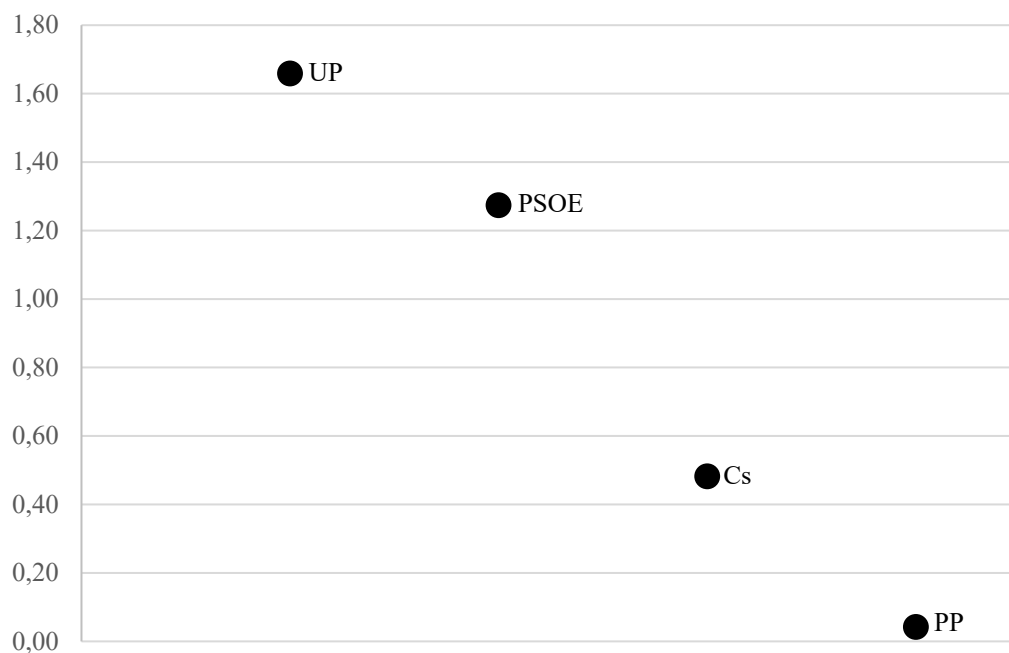
Thus, the same set of issues related to opinions and attitudes concerning the crisis (its causes, responsibility, alternatives, ideology, perceptions of Europe and, more generally, representation itself), have been applied to both citizens and parliamentary representatives. Among these issues is that of preferences for the territorial organisation of the State, which, once again, has been addressed to both groups. Data from two timeframes will be used, corresponding to the period 2009-2012 for the former and 2018-2019 for the latter.

The first of the waves relates to CIS studies numbers 2827 and 2930, corresponding to the elected representatives and the citizenry respectively. The first, carried out in collaboration between the CIS and the Universidad Pablo de Olavide of Seville, consists of a wave of questions to 580 Congress, Senate and regional chambers' public representatives; the second study, as a result of the same collaboration agreement, has a sample of 2,478 interviews conducted with citizens.

The second set of studies includes a survey carried out on a representative sample of citizens and the population of parliamentary representatives. The survey of MPs includes people with seats in each of the 19 chambers (17 regions, plus Congress and Senate; totalling 452 representatives).¹⁰ The citizen poll includes up to 1,600 cases.

Prior to conducting the analysis about congruence it seems helpful to check in a visual way the different views towards decentralisation among political parties according to the data collected from the Manifestos Project.¹¹ Among other variables, this Project measures the support shown by parties in their manifestos for federalism or decentralisation of political or economic power. Figure 9.2 shows how the four analysed political parties score on this topic in their manifestos for the year 2016, which is the last one coded. The number of each party indicates the share of quasi-sentences related to federalism or decentralisation. A value of 1.586 for the variable means that 1.59% of quasi-sentences were coded as ‘positive mentions’ about federalism in this case.

Figure 9.2. Manifestos Scores for decentralisation (2016)



Source: Own elaboration with data from Volkens et al. (2019).

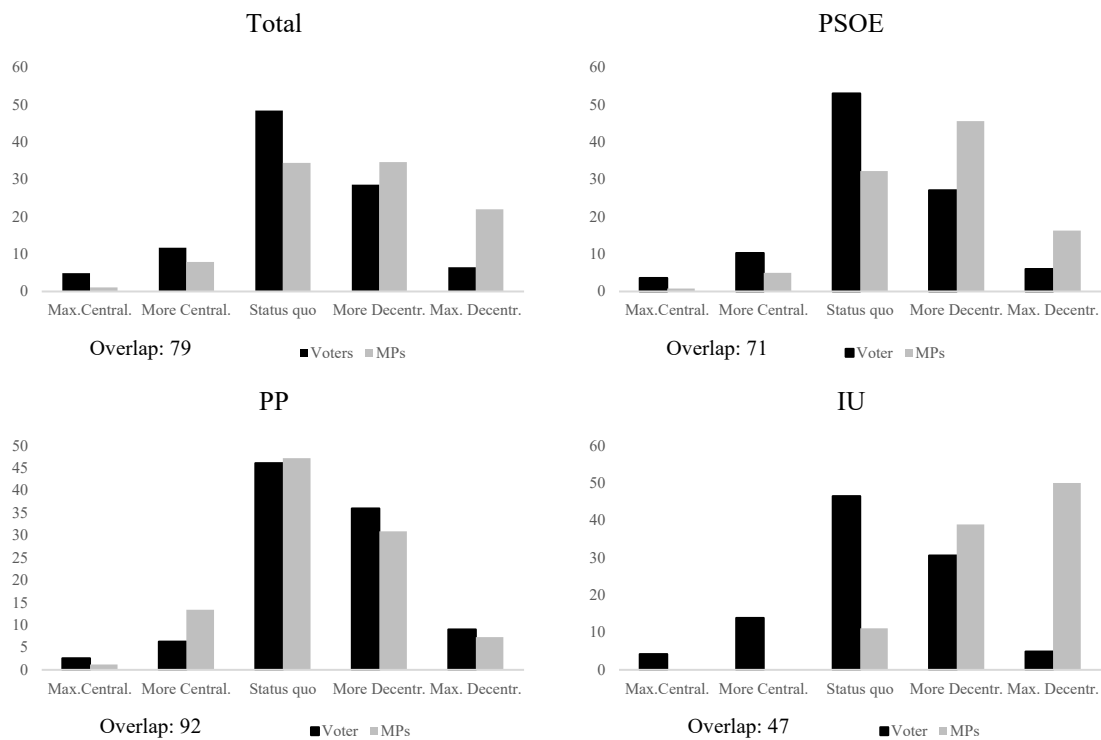
As can be seen, the data shows that this topic has, in general terms, quite a little relevance in the parties' programs. Despite this, there is a clear difference among political parties. In this case, UP is the top scorer in this category, with a little over 1.6% of the statements in its manifesto being in favour of decentralisation. The PSOE follows with almost 1.3% of its declarations giving importance to this issue in its programme. On the other hand, the Cs and PP score 0.5 and 0.02 respectively. This is a clear indicator of how much relevance both right-wing parties give to this aspect of their manifestos. Both newcomers score higher than their competitors on the ideological spectrum and, in general terms, leftist parties seem to be more prone to support higher decentralisation levels. The situation reflected in the data for the PSOE and PP, alongside the data for UP, seems to support Heller's (2002) findings about the Spanish political system; that is, that political parties with more leftist ideological positions tend to be more supportive of a decentralised state than those located on the right. Debus & Navarrete (2018) concur, as they argue that positions towards territorial decentralisation tend to be more important when people vote for traditional parties than newcomers.

The next question is whether there is any difference between mainstream political parties and the new formations regarding a congruence of attitudes towards territorial organisation. Some theories suggest that new political parties have a stronger connection with voters than established ones, making congruence higher (Belchior 2010; Hernández 2018; Costelo et al. 2020; Bakker, Jolly & Polk 2020). Therefore, this study now turns to whether this stronger connection also *links* with the decentralisation issue and how it evolves, by analysing how mainstream parties have adapted to the emergence of new political contenders.

Figures 9.3 and 9.4 show the PDF overlap of the positions of voters and MPs for 2009 and 2018. It should be noted that in the first of the analysed periods, the territorial

issue was not included, but there was a question regarding the scale of centralism and decentralisation that did not include the option of supporting the possibility of the Autonomous Communities' independence. The question itself offered a choice on a scale from 1 to 10, in which 1 represented maximum centralisation and 10 maximum decentralisation. This differs from the way this issue is currently measured, in which the scale varies from 1 to 5, with 1 being a state with just a central government, and 5 a state in which the regions could become independent. This recodification has been undertaken in order to better compare both years. The new categories represent 'Maximum Centralised State' (positions 1-2 on the former scale), 'More Centralised State' (3-4), 'Status quo' (5-6), 'More Decentralised State' (7-8), and 'Maximum Decentralised State' (9-10). The corresponding positions have been noted on the former scale.

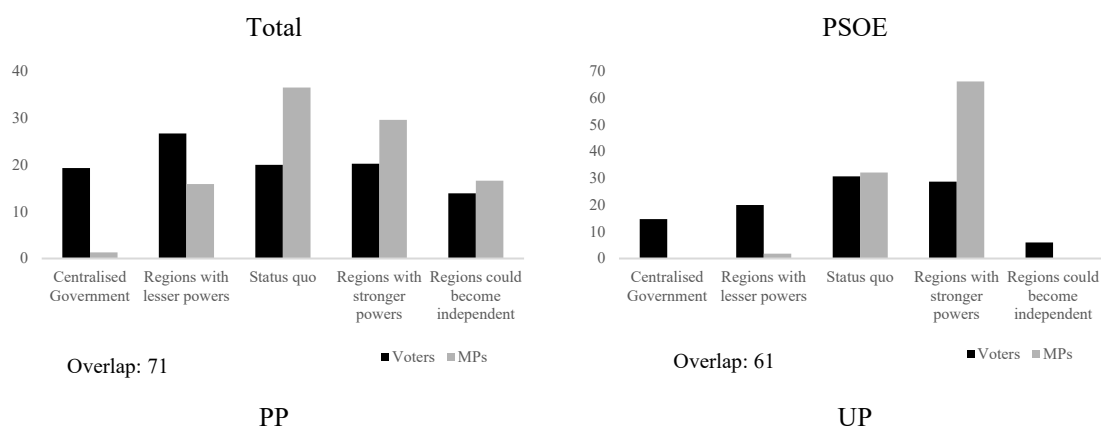
Figure 9.3. Total and Political Party Congruence and Overlap (2009)

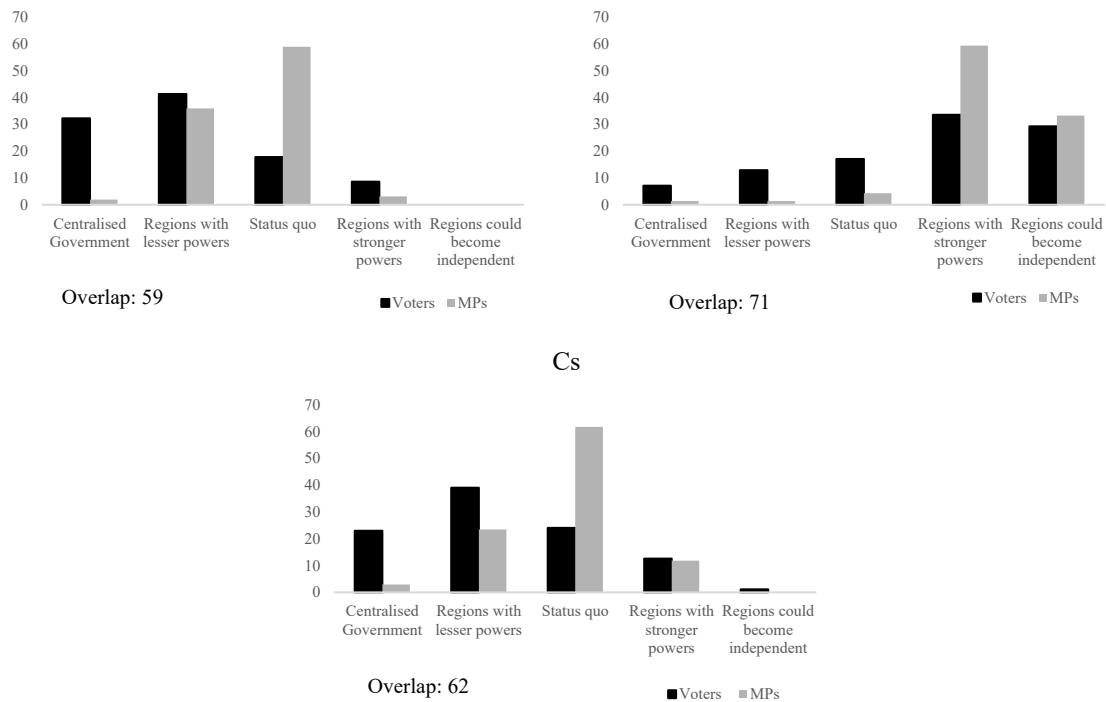


Source: Own elaboration with data from CIUPARCRI project

Figure 9.3 shows the general database's PDFs, plus those referring only to each political party with the addition of the overlap values for each PDF calculated with Andeweg's formula. Only the two main national parties, the PSOE and PP, have been included, as the other two (Podemos and Ciudadanos) had not been established at that point. Nevertheless, data was used for the *Izquierda Unida* (IU), which is a coalition led by the Communist Party, and that is now part of the UP coalition. This allowed us not only to comment on the values in each timeframe but also to analyse the evolution of the congruence of those parties. Beginning with the general data, the overlap for this year rises to 79, which means that there is almost 79% congruence among voters and MPs. This number increases to 92 in the case of the PP, showing a very strong connection between voters and representatives. On the opposite side there is the IU, with a very low level of congruence (47% of overlap). This low congruence level may be explained by the fact that there are no MPs supporting higher levels of centralisation, and the lowest score is at the centre of the scale. Finally, there is the PSOE in a position quite similar to the average, with numbers showing 71% of congruence.

Figure 9.4. Total and Political Party Congruence and Overlap (2018).





Source: Own elaboration with data from CIUPARCRI project

Figure 9.4 shows the PDF distributions for 2018. It is clear that the UP (led by the new party Podemos) has the highest congruence score; the remaining parties show lower congruence. It is notable how the PP scores well below the rest, with only around 59% of overlap between voters and MPs. The PSOE and Cs show similar values but differ in the MPs' opinions, since Cs' representatives tend to be more in favour of the status quo while the PSOE's are more supportive of a more decentralised country.

Analysis of the two previous figures shows that, although the average congruence only decreased by six points, the two mainstream parties experienced a massive loss in congruence between 2009 and 2018. In the case of the PSOE, the congruence diminishes by almost 10 points. The PP lost up to 33 points of congruence between these two years. On the other hand, data regarding the IU and UP shows that there were higher levels of congruence in 2018, with a 23 point increase. This could be the result of including different regional parties or groups in the UP coalition, as this gave great

autonomy to each regional section to argue for what they believe is most effective or important in their region (Rodríguez-Teruel, Barrio & Barberà 2016).

With these data it is possible now to move on to address the research question. We expected to find greater congruence in the new parties than in the mainstream or traditional formations. Figure 9.4 shows this is true, at least in the case of the UP. Cs, a centre-right party, scores quite close to the PSOE on this issue, but is the second highest; reinforcing the idea that new parties show higher levels of congruence than established ones. Nevertheless, it could be said that their congruence levels on the territorial issue are in some ways similar to the traditional parties. The reduction of the congruence levels from 2009 to 2018 might have been affected by the change in congruence levels in the PP regarding territorial organisation.

Contrary to expected, ideology does not create a cleavage in congruence levels on the territorial issue. While right-wing parties were more congruent than parties of the left in 2009, it did not hold true a decade later (Figure 9.4). In 2018, among established parties, the PSOE scores higher in congruence than the PP, which is now the less congruent party; and among the new parties, the UP scores nine points higher than Cs.

Main findings and conclusions

There is not a clear relationship between ideology and congruence regarding the territorial organisation issue. Although the Popular Party showed lower congruence levels than parties on the left, Cs scored slightly better than PSOE. It was expected that more congruence would be found among new political parties, as they seem to connect better with voters. This has proved correct, particularly in the case of UP. The results show that they have much greater levels of congruence than the mainstream parties.

The emergence of these new political parties was expected to induce more congruence among the mainstream formations. As the battle in the electoral arena becomes tougher, it is likely that the mainstream parties will adapt and try to create a stronger bond with their voters. However, to date this has not been proven correct, as numbers show how these parties have decreased their levels of congruence in favour of newcomers. Also, the analysed data shows that at the end of the first decade of the 21st century there were similar congruence levels to one decade later. Similarly, this stability in congruence levels is quite understandable among the political parties that share ideological space.

This opens up a new line of research that is also sustained by data obtained from the Manifestos Project, as it seems clear that the manifestos of the Spanish mainstream political parties stand for more decentralised versions of the regional state than that supported by their respective voters. It is noteworthy that the new ultraconservative party VOX has challenged Spain's existing territorial organisation on the grounds that it is not only a danger for unity and cohesion, but it is also inefficient, as it increases bureaucracy and public expenditure (Laudette 2019). This re-centralising discourse, combined with the economic situation and the independentist challenge in Catalonia, might generate a reinforcement of re-centralising attitudes, since there is evidence showing that the entrance of new radical parties in parliaments often trigger the legitimisation of positions that were not socially acceptable up to that point (Bischof & Wagner 2019). Therefore, a further division in attitudes towards the territorial system might be expected in the future, although this obviously exceeds the scope of this chapter.

This work lays the foundations for future research, thanks to the possibilities it offers for the study of political elites. One of the possible lines of research could relate

to the quality of democracy, by trying to replicate the studies of Golder and Stramski (2010) and identify what specific elements of the political system can alter congruence levels between voters and representatives.

On the other hand, a second line of research might assess congruence scores for different social sectors; that is, how socio-demographic elements can influence the achievement of greater or lesser congruence between citizens and political representatives. This analysis could lead to an examination of which social sectors are closest to the opinions of their representatives. Thanks to these more in-depth analyses, this type of research will be able to establish better and more developed approaches to the study of the relationship between the political elite's opinions and those of the citizens, as a way to improve the quality of representation and, therefore, of democracy.

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² We use the term 'mainstream' to refer to those political parties in which an established structure and different platforms are controlled and managed by different party peers, in line with the idea expressed by Meguid (2005, p. 647).

³ At least theoretically, there are a number of institutions with responsibilities to take into account regional stances or opinions in the national legislative process. Firstly, we have the Senate, which includes representatives appointed by the regional chambers. Secondly, there is the Conference of Presidents in which the President of each region and the head of Government debate and express established and emerging regional problems and suggestions -in fact, this Conference has only operated since 2004 and has held just six meetings-. The main effect that regions can have in the national legislative process is through political pressure, as has been shown during the COVID-19 crisis. In this

sense, bilateral meetings between regional and national Presidents have proven the most effective way to change the national government's line of action.

⁴ For a deeper analysis of key landmark dates in the development of the *Estado de las Autonomías*, see Novo Arbona, Pérez Castaños, & García Rabadán (2019) and Pérez Castaños & García Rabadán (2019).

⁵ This question has existed in different forms since the 1980s, and is translated as follows: '*I will now present some alternative formulas on the organisation of the state in Spain. Please tell me which one you prefer?*'

⁶ Since 2012, the Catalan secessionist movement has held a series of demonstrations and activities that led to an illegal independence referendum held in 2014 and later to a Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 2017, with no real legal consequences, as it was dropped by the regional government a few minutes after being declared.

⁷ Unluckily, the data collected does not capture the increase in support of the newcomer VOX, which is rooted in populist discourse and has similarities to radical right political groups across Europe.

⁸ On the one hand, the links that Podemos has with the 'Indignados' movement is clear since some of their leaders came from them (Rodríguez Teruel, Barrio & Barberà 2016). Ciudadanos, on the other hand, originated from a social platform that mostly comprised intellectuals (Rodríguez-Teruel & Barrio 2016).

⁹ The other two are referred to as '*One-to-one*' and '*Many-to-one*' relationships.

¹⁰ The survey is conducted using a combination of methods including the following: interview; online platform questionnaire; telephone or Skype interview in selected cases; and face-to-face interview.

¹¹ The Manifesto Project analyses parties' election manifestos in order to study party policy preferences. This project aims to substantively assess the role of parties at different stages of the political process, and it specifically examines the quality of programmatic representation. More information can be found at: <https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu>