

5 Exploring Congruence on Left/Right and Populism Dimensions Evangelia Kartsounidou, Maria Tsigkou and Ioannis Andreadis

5.1 Introduction

After the nineteenth century, our understanding of democracy is considerably associated with the term “representative”. Since then, a wide range of theoretical and empirical research in political science is dedicated to exploring the connection between policymakers and the electorate, or in other words the function of representative democracies. The fundamental function of democratic representation is to provide a systematic connection between the policy preferences of voters and their representatives (Arnold & Franklin, 2012; Costello, Thomassen, & Rosema, 2012). Hence, the main essential of any representative democracy is the voters to feel represented, and their representatives to act in accordance with their voters’ preferences (Przeworski, Stokes & Manin, 1999).

The linkage between citizens and policy makers is conceptualised as congruence (Önnudóttir, 2014). The concept of congruence relies on the claim that policy makers should consider the expectations, needs, and wishes of the voters (Powell, 2004, p. 282). Although congruence between representatives and those who they represent is not the exclusive measure of the functioning of the democratic representation; it can be considered as a pertinent starting point (Eulau & Karps, 1977), a key element of political representation (Miller & Stokes, 1963), or an important tool to evaluate the performance of democratic representation (Karyotis, Rüdiger, & Judge, 2014). Therefore, to study the voter-candidate congruence, the scholars measure to what extent the views of representatives correspond with the preferences and orientations of the voters (Freire, Lisi, Andreadis, & Leite Viegas, 2014).

Although many studies focus on the linkage between citizens and their representatives based on the left/right dimension (e.g., Powell, 2009; Belchior, 2010; 2013), some scholars go beyond the left/right scale and use several policy issues to explore congruence of voters and elites. Scholars also use GAL/TAN dimension (Green, Alternative, Libertarian / Traditional, Authoritarian, Nationalist) examining issues like immigration or European integration dimension (Costello et al., 2012; Hooghe et al., 2002; Karyotis et al., 2014; Mattila & Raunio,

2006; Stecker & Tausendpfund, 2016). Recently, Stavrakakis et al. (2017) examined congruence of Greek voters and elites based on their positions on populism.

Populism is an interesting and ambiguous phenomenon in political science that has been studied a lot as in recent years, especially in the 21st century, many populist parties have emerged, and support for these parties has increased dramatically (Rooduijn, 2018). Populism has most often been examined from the supply-side of politics, as scholarship primarily focused on the ideology and rhetoric of populist movements, parties, and leaders. Most empirical research before the 2010s was based on qualitative approaches (e.g., Betz, 1994; Taggart, 2000; Mudde, 2007). Since then, an increasing number of studies take a quantitative approach, as they delve into the study of both the supply- and demand-side of populism by using survey items to measure populist attitudes.

This paper explores congruence at the level of the mass public and the political elites (i.e., candidate MPs). We rely on the party identification of the voters and the political competitiveness between parties and party families, as it is mainly reflected in the left/right cleavage (Sani & Sartori, 1983), economic left/right, GAL/TAN and populism.

After 2009, the Greek party system changed radically, traditional parties lost their power and new parties appeared. This caused many changes in the Greek political spectrum, affecting the linkage between political elites and the electorate. The fluctuations of the level of congruence during the previous decade reflects this rapidly changing period (Kartsounidou & Andreadis, 2020). In the elections of 2019 many previously emerged parties disappeared and new parties burst onto the Greek political scene (i.e., Greek Solution and Mera 25), which may affect the relationship between the voters and their representatives.

The following are the main research questions that this study poses:

- In which dimensions of electoral competitiveness do we observe higher levels of congruence?
- Is the L/R dimension enough to explain congruence?

- How far apart are voters and candidates in terms of their views on populist issues?

We address these questions using a many-to-many approach, as it is introduced by Golder and Stramski (2010), based on data from a candidate survey of the Comparative Candidates Study (CCS), in line with the mass survey of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). Below we describe the conceptualization of congruence, the different dimensions that we examine (i.e., the general L/R, the economic L/R, GAL/TAN, and populism), and we form our research hypotheses. In the next session, we present with more details the methods and the data, which we use in our analysis. Then, we show the findings of the analysis, and this paper ends with some conclusions and discussion.

5.2 Theoretical background

5.2.1 Conceptualising Ideological Congruence

There are different conceptualizations and dimensions of congruence. According to Powell (2004), two are the main research approaches to examine the connection of citizens and their representatives: i) ‘procedural representation’ and ii) ‘substantive representation’. The former focuses on vote-seat correspondence. Vote-seat distributions are “the most tangible and easily quantifiable evidence available about the preferences of the electorate and their reflection in the legislature” (Powell & Vanberg, 2000, p. 384). The latter focuses directly on the preferences rather than the votes of citizens.

Congruence varies greatly and significantly depending on the issue at stake (Hurley & Hill, 2003). There is evidence that it tends to be greater for ideological or highly politicised issues (Belchior, Tsatsanis, & Teixeira, 2016, p. 280). In addition, voters’ preferences tend to match more with the preferences of their representatives in important and comprehensible issues; hence, congruence is more likely to be higher for ‘salient’ issues (Wlezien & Soroka, 2007).

Congruence among citizens and their representatives could be either on an ideological level or on a specific policy level. Usually, research on democratic representation focuses on attitudes and ideology because expecting detailed policy preferences from voters could be too

demanding (Lax & Phillips, 2012, p. 149). Moreover, Costello et al. (2012, p. 1228) explain that the ideology operates as a ‘shortcut’ that allows voters to identify and vote for a party even without knowing in detail its position on all issues. Thus, there is a linkage between the attitudes and policy choices of policy makers; and if this connection is strong, policy outcomes are likely to reflect voters’ preferences (Miller & Stokes, 1963).

5.2.2 Measuring congruence

Different methods have been used to position parties and candidates and to conceptualise and measure congruence. In the past congruence was typically studied by comparing the attitudes of voters with what opinion polls or panels of experts considered to be the attitudes of politicians or the positions of parties. These studies have understood congruence as a one-to-one or many-to-one relationship (see Powell, 2009). Many studies, relying on this approach, compare self-placement of voters extracted by mass surveys with positions of parties extracted by expert surveys (Powell, 2006). Although the use of experts to position political parties is not uncommon (Andreadis, 2013; Benoit & Laver, 2006; Polk et al., 2017), it may introduce a series of problems, mainly concerning the experts’ judgement (Budge, 2000).

Another common method extracts party positions from party manifestos. Klingemann (1995) was one of the first researchers who studied congruence comparing the positions of parties (extracted by Manifesto data) with the positions of their supporters (extracted from Eurobarometer survey data). The main advantage of this method is the quantity of the manifesto data, in terms of the number of parties, years and countries that it covers. On the other hand, the idea of using a party’s issue saliency to derive its issue position is not easily accepted; manifesto data tend to position the extreme parties closer to the ideological centre, comparing to survey based approaches (Gabel & Huber, 2000), let alone the low issue coverage of a manifesto in some cases.

Another method of congruence research is to use voters as the experts who will position parties. For instance, to estimate the position of the parties Dalton, Farrel and McAlister (2011) calculate the average of the answers given by all respondents of the Comparative Study

of Electoral Systems (CSES) when they were asked to place the major political parties in their country on the Left-Right scale. In this approach, the data are collected simultaneously for both citizens and parties (Dalton et al., 2011, p. 27). Although “individual citizens may have imprecise impressions about politics”, their aggregated perceptions could be “virtually identical to the Left-Right scores given by political science professors judging the same parties” (Dalton et al., 2011, p. 28).

Golder and Stramski (2010), who used the top 40% of educated respondents in each country, have used a similar approach. Golder & Stramski (2010) introduced a many-to-many approach to conceptualise congruence, re-addressing the classical voter-representative congruence. Arguably, this methodological approach measures more accurately political elites’ attitudes and preferences. Dolny and Babos (2015, p. 1278) note that in this approach, congruence reflects “the accuracy of transformation of citizens’ preferences in the legislative body as a whole in terms of the similarity between the distributions of citizens’ and representatives’ preferences”.

Finally, many recent studies follow this many-to-many approach introduced by Golder and Stramski (2010) using surveys of elected members of parliament (Belchior et al., 2016; Dolný & Baboš, 2015) or candidates (Andreadis & Stavrakakis, 2017; Costello et al., 2012; Leimgruber, Hangartner, & Leemann, 2010). Two are the most important benefits of this approach according to Andeweg (2011): i) we can measure “representatives’ positions in the same way as voters’ asking the representatives directly, in a survey, and ii) we do not need to assume that all MPs or candidates or voters share the same preference and use a single measure of central tendency for their position; “It is an empirical question whether parties or other collectivities are unified or not; it is not a question to be resolved by assumption. For less unified parties, and for parliament as a whole, using a mean or a median, results in considerable loss of information” (Andeweg, 2011, p. 41).

5.3 Congruence and different dimensions of political competitiveness

5.3.1 The Left/Right dimension

The left-right scale makes it possible to compare the policy-positions of citizens with the policy-positions of the parties or the candidates that represent them (Powell, 2009). The left-right scale is a kind of 'super' issue dimension (Marks & Steenbergen, 2002) able to capture the political issues that are relevant in a given context (Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976). It is a “unidimensional issue space” which is dominant in the literature on congruence, determining the behaviour of political parties and voters (Dolný & Baboš, 2015). In this view, party positions on the left-right summarise their general policy stances (Downs, 1957).

Many scholars interested in democratic representation, use the left-right scale to measure congruence in terms of substantive issue preferences (Freire & Belchior, 2013). “In a single-issue dimension, the position of the median is privileged because it is the only policy position that cannot be defeated by another position in a head-on vote. The further from the citizen median the legislative median is located, the larger the citizen majority that would prefer an alternative” (Powell & Vanberg, 2000, p. 385).

Although the reduction of multiple dimensions into this single one could be problematic, the left-right scale position reflects reasonably the citizens' views in the context of national political debate in most of the countries, shaping the party competition (Walgrave & Lefevere, 2013) and the vote choices of the electorate (Huber & Powell, 1994; van der Eijk, Schmitt, & Binder, 2005). The dominance of this dimension in shaping party competition in most democratic states encourages the comparison of the level and functioning of democratic representation among them (Costello et al., 2012). Many empirical studies have confirmed the importance of the left–right issue in European politics, determining voters' choices in national and European elections (Thomassen & van Ham, 2014; van der Eijk et al., 2005) while other studies report high level of agreement between voters and their representatives in this key dimension (Belchior, 2013; Costello et al., 2012; Dolný & Baboš, 2015; van der Eijk et al., 2005).

However, the utilisation of a left/right scale captures only specific aspects of congruence between voters and elites (Lutz, Kissau, & Rosset, 2012, p. 1), without covering attitudes, and policy positions on a variety of issue areas such as law and order, immigration or European integration (Costello et al., 2012; Hooghe, Marks, & Wilson, 2002; Kriesi et al., 2006). Hence, we should explore congruence beyond the socio-economic conflict dimension (Karyotis et al., 2014). Apart from the Left-Right dimension, also other dimensions play a significant role on electoral competitiveness and political representation. Issue dimensions like the following have been explored in the available literature: redistribution, employment, defence, law and order, participation, foreign policy, attitudes towards borders and currency, post-materialism, environmental protection, traditional vs. authoritarian values, European integration, immigration, and recently populism (Andreadis & Stavrakakis, 2017; Giger & Lefkofridi, 2014; Hooghe et al., 2002; Kriesi et al., 2006; Lutz et al., 2012; Mattila & Raunio, 2006; Stecker & Tausendpfund, 2016; Thomassen & Schmitt, 1999; Valen & Narud, 2007). Globalization, economic interdependence, European integration, and immigration have nurtured new political conflicts, cutting across existing social classes and forming the new ‘demarcation-integration’ cleavage (Kriesi 2016; Hutter & Kriesi 2019; 2021). The emergence of this cultural-identitarian conflict dimension creates a two-dimensional conflict space, weakening the significance of the distinction, strictly, between ‘left’ and ‘right’. Radical right populist parties have brought the new ‘cleavage issues’ onto their agenda, forcefully exploiting these new political potentials.

Furthermore, the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) since 1999 has included more dimensions apart from the general L/R to position the political parties taking into account different ideological aspects. Economic L/R emphasises on economic issues. In this dimension Left stands for a more active role of government in the economy while right means privatisation, lower taxes, less regulation, a leaner welfare state and in general a more reduced role of the government in the economy. The GAL/TAN dimension is more related to social aspects, such as democratic freedoms and rights. In this dimension, the discrimination is between “Libertarian” or “postmaterialist” and “Traditional” or “authoritarian” aspects. The

first group is more in favour of expanded personal freedoms (i.e., access to abortion, active euthanasia, same-sex marriage, or greater democratic participation). On the other hand, “traditionalists” or “authoritarians” usually have more conservative stances towards these issues, being more in favour of law and order, tradition, and stability. They believe that the government should be a firm moral authority on social and cultural issues.

Relying on the fact that previous studies have found differences across policy areas with some issues generating more incongruence (Holmberg, 2000; Kartsounidou & Andreadis, 2020; Mattila & Raunio, 2006; Miller & Stokes, 1963; Thomassen & Schmitt, 1999; Wessels, 1999), we hypothesize that:

H1 The level of congruence between candidates and voters will not be the same in all the sub-dimensions of L/R.

5.3.2 Populism as dimension of political competitiveness

Various theories have been developed from time to time to define populism. Both in terms of content as well as the time of their appearance, the definitions of populism are quite different from each other, with populism being a movement (Lipset, 1963; Germani, 1978), a political style, a discourse (Laclau, 2005), a political strategy (Weyland, 2001), an ideology (Mudde, 2004), a set of ideas (Hawkins & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019).

The concept of populism has taken on both positive and negative connotations. For example, in America (both the US and the rest of America) a positive view of populism has prevailed as it is considered a "progressive construction" or a construction "from below". More specifically, in the USA the word "populism" is often considered directly connected to the existence of a "left political equality". On the contrary, in Europe a negative characterization of populism prevails - expressed mainly with academics, journalists, etc. belonging to the liberal camp-, which they equate with demagoguery (Müller, 2016).

In the past, Lipset (1963) and Germani (1978) defined populism as a political movement while Weyland (2001), trying to interpret Latin America politics, argued that populism is a political strategy. This theory assumes the existence of a charismatic leader who

tries to seize power by being accessible to his/her potential voters, maintaining a direct and unmediated relationship with them.

One of the definitions that received special recognition mainly among scholars of political theory was the one developed by Ernesto Laclau. According to Laclau (2005) populism is a form of discourse, which has as "nodal point" the "people" and divides society into two opposing camps: the "people" against the "elite", the "establishment". The concept of "people" in populist discourse, however, is a construction; populist discourse does not express an already existing popular identity, but rather creates it.

Mudde (2004) defines populism as ideology. He argues that, unlike other ideologies like nationalism or socialism, populism cannot explain all social phenomena. It is a "thin-centred" ideology, which divides the social field into two groups - just like Laclau's view - which conflict with each other, the "pure people" and the "corrupt elite". Mudde's theory also states, "Politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people".

Finally, the populism approach that has gained ground in recent decades sees populism as a set of ideas. This approach (ideational approach to populism), however, goes hand in hand with two previous approaches, that of populism as ideology and that as discourse. Specifically, scholars who support this approach consider that populism is characterised by a specific discourse-rhetoric, which is common in its all forms, from political party speeches to speeches of political movements, sharing a common worldview that is a Manichean division of society into two warring groups, the "common people" against the "corrupt elite". This set of ideas, as Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2019) claim, seem to have an impact on both rhetoric and political practices of populist leaders and mobilise people to support populist actors.

The ideational approach to populism differs from the others mentioned above in terms of the notion that people already have populist attitudes that are in "hypnosis" and are mobilised in cases of "moral hazard" with the help of populist actors (i.e., populist movements, populist charismatic leaders etc.) (Hawkins & Riding, 2010; Hawkins, Riding & Mudde, 2012).

The ideational approach paves the way for studying both the supply- and demand-side of populism by using survey items to measure populist attitudes.

5.3.3 Individual-level studies on populism

Recent scholarship uses survey items to measure levels of populism among individuals. Hawkins and Riding (2010) developed a battery of six Likert-scale survey items to measure the populist attitudes of US citizens. These items were included in the AmericasBarometer of 2008 conducted in 24 American countries. Four of these items, further refined by focusing on capturing the Manichean view of politics and the will of the people, were also included in the 2008 Cooperative Congressional Elections Studies (CCES) and the 2008 Utah Colleges Exit Poll (UCEP) surveys (Hawkins, Riding & Mudde, 2012). Building on these initial studies, many scholars have tested the battery of the six survey items or parts of it, with most of these studies sharing the notion that populism is a set of ideas, thus it can be measured as an attitude (Rooduijn, 2018). Akkerman et al. (2014) tested a similar set of items in the Netherlands but added further items to measure the Manichean dimension of populism as well as pluralism (three items) and anti-elitism (three items). This set of the six survey items has become an important point of reference for subsequent attempts to measure populism, as it appears to cover a relatively broad range of the latent populist attitudes information (Van Hauwaert et al. 2019).

Stanley (2011) designed a set of eight Likert-scale items to measure populist attitudes in Slovakia. These were two items about the homogeneity of the people and the elite, two about the competitive nature of political life, two about the attitudes towards democracy and two about the moral dimension of politics. Five of the eight survey items were unique while three were similar to other studies (i.e., the one referring to good vs evil, the one on democracy and the one on people's trust). Van Hauwaert and van Kessel (2018) used a set of eight Likert-scale items to measure populism in nine European countries as part of the LIVEWHAT project. Six of these items come from previous studies by Hawkins and Riding (2010) and Akkerman et al. (2014) while two of them are unique and measure European populist attitudes.

5.3.4 Elite studies on populism

Although some of the most fundamental studies of populism focus on elites in a more conceptual and qualitative way (e.g., Canovan, 1999; Mudde, 2004), some recent studies take a more quantitative approach to examine levels of populism among the elites. Using survey items to measure populist attitudes at the elite level is very useful for the evaluation of the positions of elected officials and political candidates, thereby gaining insight into the within-party differentiation of populism. In this regard, recent studies measure populist attitudes through elite surveys that ask respondents to indicate their level of agreement with a series of statements (Andreadis & Ruth-Lovell, 2019; Stavrakakis et al., 2017; Andreadis & Stavrakakis, 2017). Findings from these studies show that populist parties score higher in populism than mainstream parties, even when in power as in Greece after the 2015 national election. However, having many years of experience in government (as in Bolivia) may tame the anti-elite elements of the populist ideology of populist legislators. Relying on this evidence, we expect that:

H2 Candidates of governmental parties will have a more moderate stance towards populism comparing to their voters.

5.4 Data and Methodology

This paper uses data from the Greek post-election studies of 2019 held as mobile friendly web-based surveys (Andreadis, 2015a, 2015b), namely the Greek Candidate Survey, part of the Comparative Candidate Survey (CCS) and the Greek Voter Study, part of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). CCS and CSES are products of international coordinated efforts to collect data about the candidates who participate at each country's national elections and the voters respectively. Both surveys are conducted via common core questionnaires that are sent to the parliamentary candidates and the voters respectively in the aftermath of the national elections. The questionnaires include a variety of questions that cover a broad spectrum of politics. Matters like relationships between the candidate, the party and the voters, democracy and representation, recruitment and carrier patterns, issues and ideology and campaigning, are located on the core of the CCS questionnaire. Furthermore, the CSES

common core questionnaire includes questions about people's voting behaviour, views on democracy, representation, parties or party leaders, ideology and issues like immigrants, minorities, populism etc. The 2019 Greek election studies questionnaires were enriched with additional populist survey items in the context of the DataPopEU research project for the better study of the populist phenomenon¹².

In the analysis of the candidate survey we use the parliamentary candidates of the following parliamentary parties after the Greek national elections of July 2019: i) New Democracy (ND), ii) Coalition of Radical Left (SYRIZA), iii) Movement for Change (KINAL), iv) Greek Solution, and v) MERA 25. It is worth mentioning that the Greek Communist Party (KKE) is not included in the analysis because it has always and consistently refused to provide a list of email addresses for their candidates and the candidate MPs did not participate in the survey. Moreover, most of Communist Party candidates do not run personal campaigns, they do not have personal websites and it is arguably impossible to find their personal contact details.

In the analysis of the voter survey we have Greek citizens who were eligible to vote at the time of the Greek national elections (i.e., they were at least 17 years old -voting age in Greece since 2016) and voted for the five parties that constitute the Greek parliament after the 2019 national elections.

The datasets include variables, which enable us to estimate congruence of the preferences of voters and candidates on the left/right dimension (L/R), the economic L/R dimension and GAL/TAN, along with congruence related to populist attitudes.

¹² The DataPopEU project is a national project that aims to develop novel methods and techniques to collect, process (clean) and analyze internet and big volume data to systematically investigate the significant political patterns of populism and Euroscepticism in the Greek context. DataPopEU is funded by the Hellenic Foundation for Research & Innovation (H.F.R.I.) under the "First Call for H.F.R.I. Research Projects to support Faculty members and Researchers and the procurement of high-cost research equipment grant" (Project Number: 3572) For more information: <https://www.datapopeu.gr/>

Both in CSES and CCS there was a question asking respondents to self-position themselves on the L/R scale, where 1 stands for extreme left and 10 stands for extreme right. This way we can measure the positions of both voters and candidates as individuals. Then we can use the position of the respondents in combination with their vote choice (or the party they have stood as a candidate) to calculate the average value of the voters (or candidates) of each party. The same approach applies also to measure congruence on economic L/R and GAL/TAN.

As for populist attitudes, we use a populist attitudes index, which is constructed as the mean value of the fifteen populist attitudes items, in a scale from one to five. The items form a uni-dimensional scale and seem to work across both candidate and voter study (see Tsigkou & Andreadis, 2022). Scoring high in the populist index means that there are populist attitudes. Then we compare voters' index to the candidates' index to see how far apart they are in terms of their views on populist issues.

To measure congruence in the different dimensions, we follow the methodological approach presented by Andreadis and Stavrakakis (2017). Since our data contain the same question: to place themselves on the L/R scale, which was answered by both the voters (CSES) and candidates (CCS) using the same answer scale; we can measure the congruence between the preferences of voters and candidate MPs. We measure congruence evaluating how similar the distribution of their preferences is on the left-right issue dimension. We use the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical test (Darling, 1957) to check the hypothesis that the samples are drawn from the same distribution. The higher the value of KS statistical test, the bigger the distance between candidates and voters. Hence, a zero value in the KS statistical test indicates null distance between candidates and voters, and as a result, the maximum possible voter-candidate congruence. In addition to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistics, we visualise the empirical cumulative distributions of the data for both voters and candidates of a party on the same plots, highlighting this way the 'many to many' congruence.

5.5 Findings

In the general L/R scale (Figure 5-1), we observe a significant distance between the candidates and the voters of the left-wing party of the Coalition of Radical Left (SYRIZA) and the centre-left party of Movement for Change (KINAL). In addition, a considerable distance is observed between the candidates and voters of the left-wing party of the European Realistic Disobedience Front (MERA25). Moreover, we observe that the candidates of the left-wing parties of the study place themselves more to the left in the L/R scale compared to their voters. Moreover, the level of congruence between the candidates and the voters of the centre-right party of New Democracy (ND) appears to be slightly low. Finally, the party that exhibits a high level of congruence is the right-wing party of Greek Solution, although it is a new party in the Greek party system.

In the economic L/R scale, we notice a considerable difference in KINAL, compared to the general L/R scale which is in line with our hypothesis (H1). As ECDF Diagram shows (Figure 5-2) there is a remarkable increase in the level of congruence between the candidates and the voters of this party. An increase in congruence is also noticed between the candidates and voters of MERA25. The level of congruence between the candidates and the voters of Greek Solution remains high also in the economic L/R scale. A slight decrease in the distance between SYRIZA voters and SYRIZA candidates is observed in the economic L/R scale; however, the level of incongruence is still extremely high. On the other hand, the only party that displays an increase in the distance between candidates and voters in the economic L/R scale is ND.

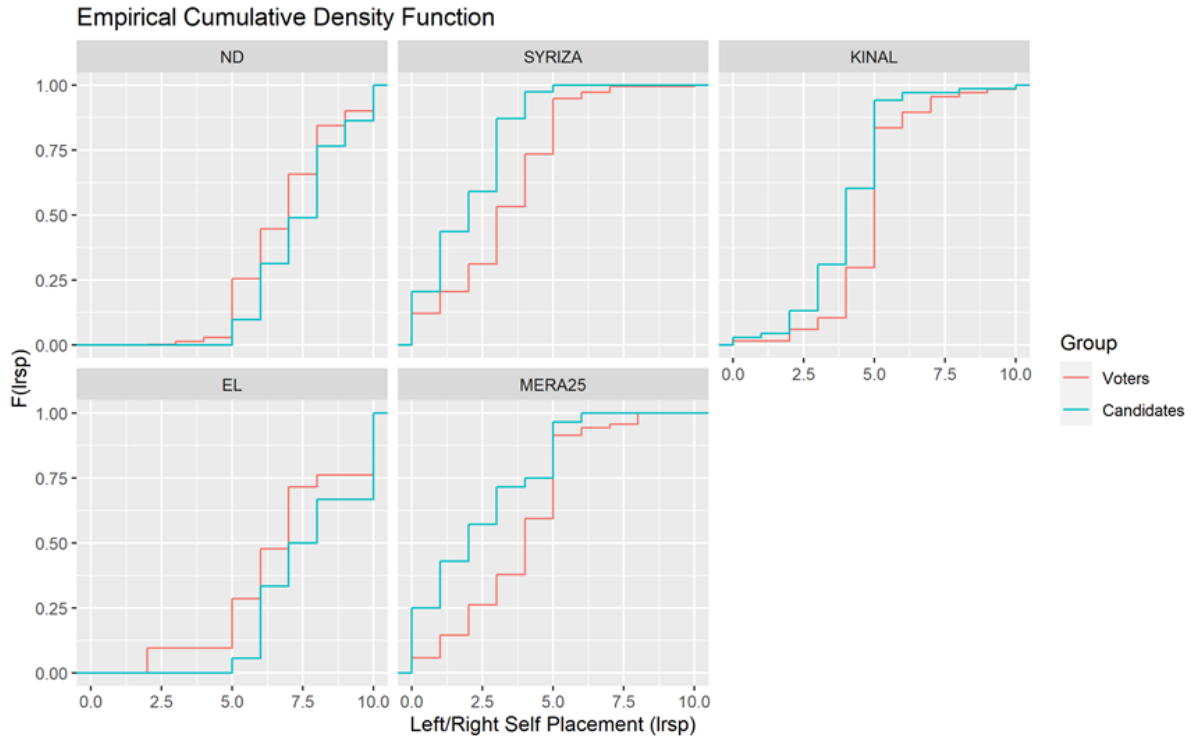


Figure 5-1 Congruence on General L/R

In the GAL/TAN scale (Figure 5-3), we observe a high level of congruence between candidates and voters of almost all the parties of the analysis. A considerable difference compared to economic L/R and general L/R in the distance between the candidates and the voters of ND, which decreases remarkably in the GAL/TAN scale. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the distance between the candidates and voters of KINAL also decreases considerably in the GAL/TAN scale, especially compared to the L/R scale but also to the economic L/R scale. The only party that still exhibits a high level of incongruence between the candidates and the voters is SYRIZA. In general, as hypothesized (H1) we observe different levels of congruence between candidates and voters in the sub-dimensions of L/R.

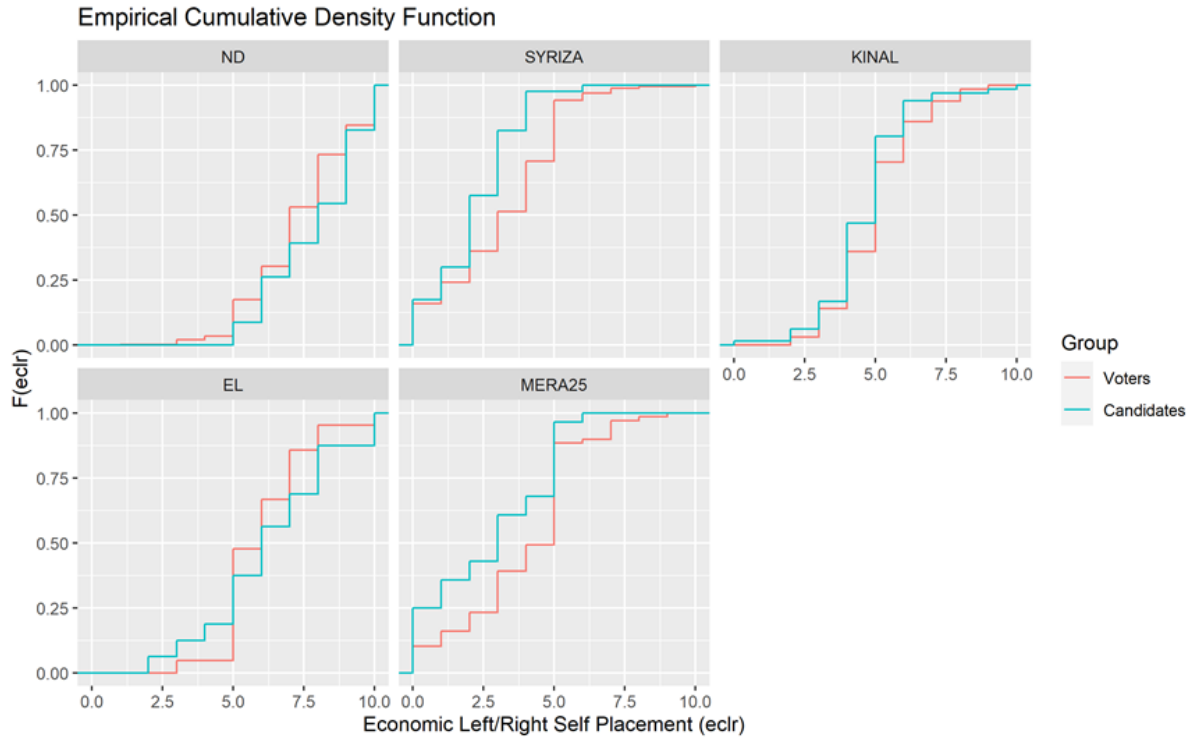


Figure 5-2 Congruence on Economic L/R

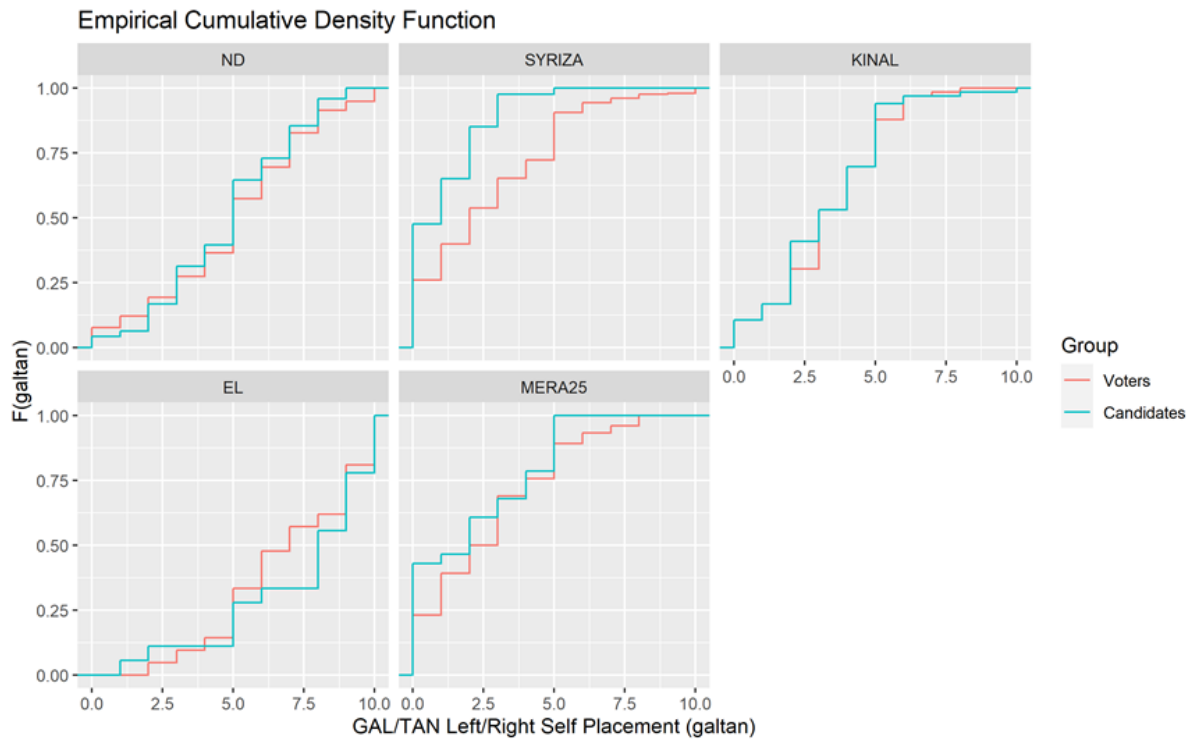


Figure 5-3 Congruence on GAL/TAN

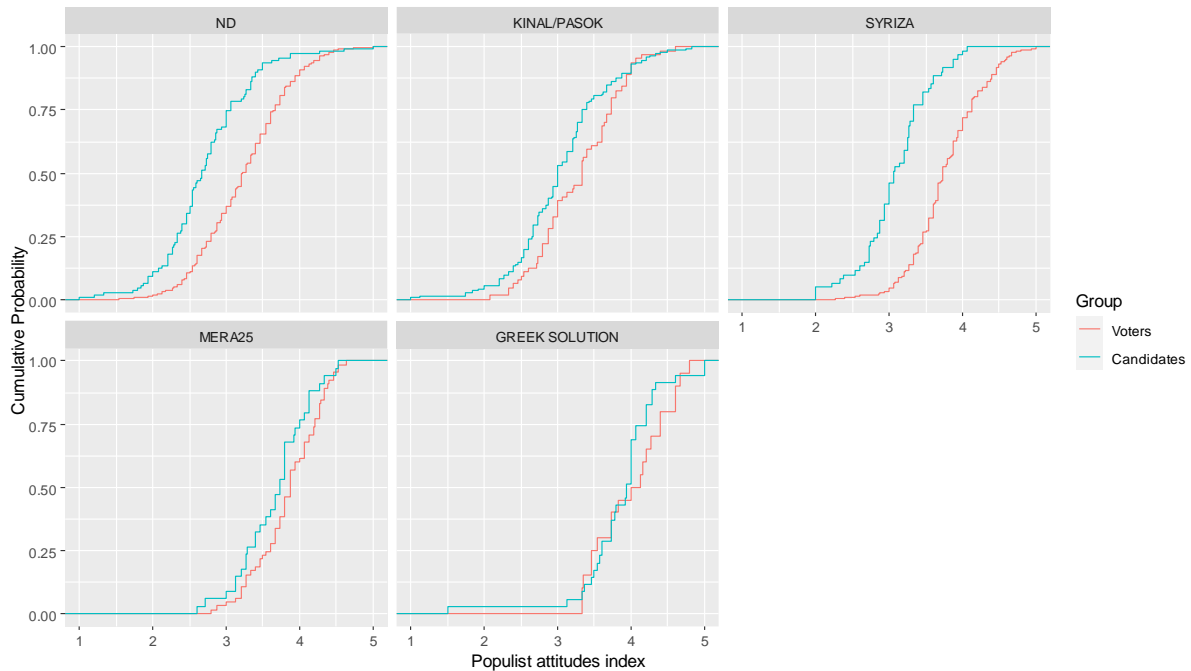


Figure 5-4 Congruence on Populism

Finally, we explore the position of each party's candidates in terms of their positions on issues related to populism and the positions of their voters to see how far they are from each other. As Figure 5-4 indicates, the empirical cumulative distribution of ND and SYRIZA voters is considerably higher than voters of these parties, suggesting that voters have significantly higher populism index values than the candidates they support. This confirms that the voters of ND, and SYRIZA score higher on populist attitudes index than the candidates they vote for. This is in line with our hypothesis (H2) that candidates of governmental parties will have a more moderate stance towards populism comparing to their voters (ND has been in power since the Greek national elections of 2019, while SYRIZA was in power from 2015 to 2019).

The median SYRIZA voter scores higher than 3.5, meaning that they have populist attitudes in contrast to the candidates they vote for who score below this threshold. This difference can be explained by SYRIZA's four years of experience in government. Candidates of SYRIZA, after being in power, may not easily adopt anti-elite views while their voters still

have anti-elitist, populist attitudes. Indeed, as the Latin American experience shows, parties with long experience in government seem to moderate their populist attitudes (e.g., in Bolivia) (Andreadis & Ruth-Lovell, 2019). On the other hand, voters and candidates of KINAL seem to be very close in their views on populism-related issues. Finally, the distance between candidates and voters of the two emerging Greek parties (Greek Solution and MeRA25) is also relatively small, which indicates that both candidates and voters are close in their views on populism. Perhaps the voter-elite distance depends on whether the party has been in power, and if so, how long it has been since then and, importantly, how much it has renewed since the time it was in power. Candidates of parties that govern or have recently governed cannot have a negative attitude towards a group to which they belong.

5.6 Conclusion

In this paper, we have used data from Greek post-elections studies of 2019, namely the Greek candidate study and the Greek voter study, enriched with additional survey items on populist attitudes in the context of the research project DataPopEU.

The first aim of this paper was to study the level of congruence between candidate MPs and voters in Greece in 2019 in different dimensions of electoral competitiveness. Exploring congruence in the general L/R can provide us with some evidence about the distance between candidates and voters of the Greek political parties of the study. However, we observe that different patterns occurred when explored congruence in other dimensions.

ND is one of the parties that we observed a relatively high level of congruence between voters and candidates in most dimensions (i.e., in general L/R dimension, but also in the economic L/R and GAL/TAN), except for populism. On the other hand, SYRIZA presented a high level of incongruence in all dimensions, including populism. A marked distance is also observed between candidates and voters of KINAL, in the general L/R dimension. However, this distance became considerably smaller in the Economic L/R, GAL/TAN and populist dimensions in 2019.

Furthermore, the new parties that emerged in 2019, exhibit a high level of congruence. In fact, Greek Solution is the party that we observed the highest level of congruence among the parties of the analysis in all the dimensions, and especially in the economic L/R. On the other hand, MERA25 in 2019 had a considerable distance between their voters and candidates in the general L/R dimension. However, the level of congruence between candidates and voters of MERA25 increased considerably in the GAL/TAN and populism dimension.

Moreover, there is evidence that in almost all the parties, the candidates adopt an extreme position compared to voters in all dimensions except for populism. A very large proportion of voters place themselves in the centre of the left-right scale, while their representatives' preference distribution is more spread out and often two peaks emerge either to the left-of-centre or to the right-of-centre. We have observed that especially the left-wing parties have a significant distance between their candidates and voters, and the candidates place themselves more to the left of the axis, than the voters. However, in the populist dimension, voters of all the parties seem to score higher in the populist attitudes index than the candidates they vote for. Perhaps in this case, the voter-candidate distance depends on whether the party has been in power, and if so, to what extent it has been renewed since the time it was in power.

Adding more dimensions in the analysis seems to be helpful to study and understand congruence in Greece. However, economic L/R and GAL/TAN were not enough to explain congruence in SYRIZA or ND. Adding populism provided useful insights about the perspectives of both candidates and voters in terms of populist attitudes and contributed to further understanding how congruence was developed in Greece in 2019. However, it is worth mentioning that the findings in the populist dimension were more interesting in the cases that the level of populist attitudes is high. For instance, voters of ND and KINAL appear higher in the scale than the candidates they voted for, but they both are placed relatively low, meaning that neither the candidates nor the voters are populist. This was not the case in SYRIZA, where voters appear to have populist attitudes in contrast to the candidates they vote for, who do not.

In general, more light should be shed in order to fully understand how congruence is developed between voters and candidates especially of the two major parties in Greece. Maybe studying the distance between candidates and voters through new perspectives and issue dimensions (e.g., EU dimension or immigration) could help us provide a more comprehensive overview of the electoral competition in Greece.

Studying congruence in Greece, taking into account different dimensions of the electoral competition, could contribute to the comparative research on congruence in an integrated perspective in the future. Using Greece as a case study and relying on data provided by international projects and collaborations this paper aspires to be seen as a starting point to study congruence in a comparative perspective, focusing also on issues related to populism. Constituting an archive with common variables, coding, and data of all the CCS and CSES studies is an important element also for other potential studies in the future. This effort will contribute significantly to a further development of the CCS project, enhancing the comparative analysis and the collaboration among countries, which is one of the main aims of the project. We hope that this work will encourage more researchers to examine further political representation and other issues related to political science.

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