

When Defection is Not an Option
The Resilience of Ethnic Minority Parties in the Face
of Strategic Voting Incentives

Geoff Allen
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Political Science, UC Santa Barbara

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1. Introduction

In their recent book, Ethan Scheiner and Robert Moser re-open the debate on the impact of social diversity on the number of parties in a state. Contrary to both the traditional sociological approach of scholars like Lipset and Rokkan (1967) and the more dominant modern approach of scholar like Cox (1997), Moser and Scheiner show that ethnic diversity has a significant impact on the number of parties in a system, and that this impact is felt at the electoral district level. This finding builds upon earlier work by Stoll (2013), Madrid (2005) and Moser (2001), all of which point to the idea that ethnic diversity seems to have an impact on the number of parties found in a state.

Moser and Scheiner argue that the impact of social diversity is parabolic: increasing the level of diversity increases the number of parties only to a given point, after which increasing diversity actually leads to a decrease in political parties (2012, 187). As they point out though, their analysis is unable to identify which group of voters is behaving differently than conventional strategic voting theories would predict. Are minority or majority voters behaving ‘irrationally’? Also, and perhaps more importantly, because of this Moser and Scheiner are unable to identify the causal mechanisms that may be driving the divergent behavior of some voters in socially heterogeneous states.

This paper will show that it is ethnic minorities that are likely the voters behaving outside the norms of strategic rationality. It will do so by investigating the success of small parties in mixed-member electoral systems in two sub-national entities: the German state of Schleswig-Holstein and the Serbian autonomous region of Vojvodina. This investigation shows, compared to non-ethnic small parties, ethnically based small parties see lesser amounts of strategic defection in the single-member district tier, despite what should be generally similar incentives

to defect amongst the parties in the sample. After this, the study will propose a few interacting causal mechanisms that may be the source of this seeming irrational behavior on the part of minority party supporters.

2 Social Heterogeneity and Strategic Voting Behavior

The argument over the impact of social heterogeneity on the party system of a state has deep roots in political science. Duverger, in what is widely seen as the seminal work in the study of the impact of electoral institutions, recognizes that diversity *can* have an impact on the number of parties to be found in a system, though he tends to argue that this impact is less important than the impact of institutional design (1951). Lipset and Rokkan posit a more robust relationship, arguing that societal cleavages and the political party systems they foment actually predate electoral systems in most cases and, as a result, these societal cleavages can be seen as the main causal mechanism for both the political party system and a state's electoral system (1967). The competing approaches of Duverger and Lipset and Rokkan have come to be labeled the institutional and sociological schools, respectively (Moser and Scheiner 2012).

Over recent decades scholars have tended to increasingly give credence to the institutional school's explanation for the party system. Scholars such as Cox (1997) made great strides in explaining the strategic incentives of Duverger's theories. Cox's M+1 theory of the number of parties in the system, as well as his explanation for when the causal mechanism of strategic defection breaks down, remain among the most influential theories of the impact of electoral institutions (1997, 97). Other early work, from Ordeshook and Shvetsova (1994), Amorim Neto and Cox (1997) and Blais and Carty (1991) all works upon similar foundations, advancing the idea that electoral institutions strongly impact the number of parties, regardless of social diversity.

One of the more influential recent works, by Clark and Golder, argues that in order to properly understand the impact of social diversity on the party system, scholars must understand that the impact is interactive (2006, 681). Building upon the earlier work of Neto and Cox (1997) and Ordeshook and Shvetsova (1994), Clark and Golder argue that the impact of social diversity is filtered by the restrictiveness of the electoral system (2006, 683). In more restrictive settings, such as first past the post plurality systems, the impact of social heterogeneity should be minimal, as the structure of the system is biased against small parties. The underlying logic is that the strategic pressures introduced by lower district magnitude settings will force voters to behave strategically, countering their potential preference for smaller, less competitive parties that might better align with their minority interests. In other words, while social heterogeneity may matter, it does so only when an electoral system is designed in such a way as to allow it to matter.

There have been a few common threads throughout the research on social heterogeneity and party systems that are particularly troublesome. The first is that the vast majority of cross-national studies have been conducted at the national level. As Jones points out, analyses of parliamentary elections need to be done at the district level because the actual, strategic calculations that voters are purported to be going through require contextual knowledge about the competitiveness of a party (2004, 75). If this knowledge is different at the local level than at the national level, a proposition that seems highly likely, it leads to an information problem that Cox identifies as one of the key explanations of why the M+1 theory fails (Cox 1997). National level studies must assume that the local context mirrors the national context, and probabilistically this seems unlikely. This weakness is well known among researchers conducting cross-national

work, as Amorim Neto and Cox (1997) as well as Clark and Golder (2006) call for further research using sub-national data.

The second major problem with this literature is that many of the strongest tests of social heterogeneity and the party system has focused on presidential elections. Stoll (2013), Golder (2006) and Jones (2004) all make use of presidential election returns at the district level to show the impact of diversity on the number of parties in a state. While this approach has merits, it has serious problems. Moser and Scheiner argue that “the national winner-take-all stakes of a presidential election may be so much greater than the stakes of a legislative election as to make the two less comparable,” (2012, 189). The implication of Moser and Scheiner is that the strategic incentives in presidential elections are likely greater than in legislative elections, which would cause an overestimation of the impact of diversity on the number of parties in the system. The result is that the conclusions these studies reach, while informative, cannot be taken for granted as being representative of the more general effect of social heterogeneity on the party system.

Moser and Scheiner, taking account of these weaknesses with earlier studies, test their theory of the curvilinear relationship between social diversity and party system fragmentation on district level electoral returns for legislative elections in five countries. Their results show quite convincingly that social heterogeneity impacts the level of fragmentation in the party system, both in single member districts and proportional representation districts (2012, 193). This finding flies somewhat in the face of earlier, cross-national work. It suggests that the idea that the restrictiveness of the electoral arrangement of a country filters the impact of social heterogeneity is over-stated and perhaps only applicable to aggregate level studies.

While Moser and Scheiner's contribution cannot be overstated, it also has its weaknesses, which the scholars readily highlight. By studying fragmentation, the scholars are able to establish that the behavior of the voters in the system does not seem to be following Duvergerian predictions, but there is no way for the researchers to identify who is behaving unpredictably, nor to show why they might be doing so. Without this information, a true cause and effect relationship that explains exactly what about social diversity affects party system fragmentation cannot be determined. Moser and Scheiner propose for future research a test of strategic voting behavior that seeks to establish whether majority or minority voters are diverging from strategic incentives, though they remain skeptical of the availability of data for such a test without having to overcome the problem of the ecological fallacy (2012, 254).

3. Research Design and Method

This paper sets out to answer Moser and Scheiner's question about which group of voters is defying Duvergerian expectations. This study hypothesizes that it is minority voters that behave differently and that are less likely to defect than their peers from the social majority:

When a small party can be characterized as a communal minority/ethnic party, it should be expected that strategic defection is less likely amongst its supporters.

This hypothesis is derived from the literature on ethnic politics, ethnic conflict, and post-conflict state building, where it has generally been found that an important means of ensuring support for public goods provision, ensuring compliance with peacekeeping forces and generally ensuring ethnic peace is to bind groups with responsibilities to fellow group members (Habyarimana et. al. 2007; Lyall 2012; Horowitz 1985). These findings will be addressed further after the results, when causal mechanisms explaining the findings will be proposed.

The problems of data availability that Moser and Scheiner feared would make such a study infeasible persist (2012, 254). Without conducting a survey, which would be the ideal

source of data on this phenomenon, this study resorts to a series of assumptions about the nature of minority party supporters. First, it assumes that supporters of an ethnic minority are, by and large, members of that ethnic minority. This assumption allows the study to make some limited generalizations about ethnic voters as a distinct bloc. The second assumption is that, in mixed member electoral systems, by and large votes cast in the proportional representation tier represent first preference votes for all individuals, while votes cast in the SMD tier represent voters' strategic calculations about the viability of various parties. This allows the study to meaningfully argue that strategic voting involves defecting from one's first preference vote, their PR vote, in the SMD tier. Finally, this study assumes that the incentive to defect is similar for supporters of all parties that garner less than 15% of the vote. This cutoff point was informed by Cox's estimation that the strategic impact of the district magnitude falls off after a magnitude of roughly five, as after that point it begins to be difficult for voters to distinguish the competitiveness of a party, where a party is likely to win a seat with as little as 20% of the vote (1997). 15% represents a slightly more conservative estimation of this idea, which hopefully offsets the lack of district context that comes from assuming the 15% national vote share reflects local level realities.

The combination of these assumptions allows this study to conduct a unique test of strategic defection levels between minority voters (those assumed to be supporting ethnic minority parties) and non-minority voters, who are theoretically more influenced by ideology in their voting patterns and are hypothesized to be more prone to strategic defection; in other words, these voters are hypothesized to be following Duvergerian expectations as to strategic defection. In this study, votes cast for a party in the PR tier are used to predict the votes cast for the same party, in the same district, but in the SMD tier. In order to account for ethnic voters, the model

includes a dummy variable indicating whether a party is an ethnic party. This dummy variable is interacted with the PR vote share variable to predict the contingent impact of PR votes as a predictor of SMD votes when a party is ethnic rather than ideological in nature. If the hypothesis of this study is correct, one main hurdle must be passed. The relationship between PR vote share and SMD vote share for ethnic parties should be closer to a one to one relationship than for non-ethnic parties; this would represent that ethnic parties, and thus the voters that support them, are less susceptible to strategic incentives to defect.

Finding cases on which to test this particular model represented a unique challenge. Criteria for selection included the presence of an ethnic minority party that received at least 15% of the vote; a mixed-member electoral system; at least a minimal level of democratic standards (for reference, see Golder's Minimally Democratic States dataset); and enough party system fractionalization that the ethnic minority party could be compared to meaningfully to other small parties. At the national level, this severely limited the number of viable cases. Only New Zealand, one of the cases utilized by Moser and Scheiner, fit all of the criteria. However, because of New Zealand's unique electoral arrangement, which reserves single member district seats for the Maori minority in geographical districts that overlap other, non-reserved seats, this case could not be chosen. Instead, this model will be tested on two sub-national entities which otherwise fit all of the criteria: Schleswig-Holstein, one of the German lander, and Vojvodina, an autonomous province in Serbia. The choice of sub-national entities represents the opposite problem of that identified by Moser and Scheiner in the use of presidential elections: the stakes in sub-national elections may be so low that strategic incentives are less impactful than they may be in national elections. However, as Snyder (2001) establishes, the use of sub-national entities

to test theories does not pose a threat to the internal validity of a study, as long as the causal mechanisms posited are plausible at the national level, which this study will contend they are.

In many ways, the case of Schleswig-Holstein represents a most-likely case. As Moser and Scheiner contend in the broader argument of their book, institutional and historical context matter in understanding the impact of electoral systems (2012). Germany is a long-standing democracy. The German political system, and the society it represents, have had more than 50 years of experience with the same electoral system, and thus can be reasonably expected to understand the strategic incentives of that system. In fact, research suggests that ticket splitting and other strategic voting behavior abounds in German elections, at both the national and regional level (Hermann and Pappi 2007). As such, we should expect to see plenty of strategic voting behavior in Schleswig-Holstein; the key will be to show that this behavior does not affect ethnic parties at the same rate at which it affects non-ethnic parties.

Vojvodina represents a much tougher test of the proposed model. The first problem revolves around the relatively new nature of democracy in Serbia. As many scholars have pointed out, the idea of testing theories about the individual level impact of political institutions in states where the process of democratization has either not been completed or only recently been completed is troublesome (Moser and Scheiner 2012; Duch and Palmer 2002). In these states, as Linz and Stepan note, democracy may not be “the only game in town;” the populace has not had enough time to internalize democratic processes and gain a familiarity with democratic ideals and compromises (1996, 5). One particularly troublesome point about this is that, in newly democratized states, party systems have yet to consolidate; without consolidation, the system remains largely atomized, and strategic incentives are likely not perceived by voters (Sartori 2005; Cox 1997). This all results in strategic behavior being even harder to distinguish

using the proposed model and it will thus be even more difficult to establish that supporters of ethnic minority parties behave less strategically than their non-ethnic peers. Another problem arises from the specific electoral rules employed by Vojvodina, which in its SMD tier makes use of a two-round arrangement; thus, the strategic incentives present in the first round of voting are lesser than they would be in a pure first-past-the-post system. Vojvodina it would seem represents a least likely case.

This study will make use of electoral returns for Schleswig-Holstein and Vojvodina in two consecutive elections: for Schleswig-Holstein, the 2005 and 2009 elections are used, while for Vojvodina the 2004 and 2008 elections are used. Data availability precluded using Vojvodina's most recent election results. To keep the study using contemporaneous years and avoid the potential of a changing trans-European political climate from impacting only the case of Schleswig-Holstein, matching years were used for both cases. Parties were selected for inclusion into the dataset in both regions if they received less than 15% of the vote overall in the region, as was previously discussed. In both cases, two sets of tests were conducted. In each region, the first set of tests aggregates all parties, and runs the general model for each individual election year. The second set disaggregates the parties and runs the general model individually for each party, minus the ethnic party dummy variable, which is no longer applicable.

4. The Cases and Data Structure

Schleswig-Holstein

Schleswig-Holstein is a German state in the north of the country, bordering Denmark that has had a historically large community of Danes. This community, which exists to this day, is represented politically by the South Schleswig Voters Federation (SSW); this is the communal minority party that will be tracked in this study. Outside of this party, there are four other parties

of interest: the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the Greens, the Left and the National Democratic Party (NPD). These parties were selected because they received less than 15% of the national vote, making them apt comparisons for a communal minority party as, generally speaking, minority groups represent at their largest roughly 15% of the population, which serves as the upper limit of the communal minority party's size. Larger parties, such as the Social Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Union, were not used as part of the analysis because, as the two largest parties in the system, they are the most likely to be the beneficiaries of strategic defection. The goal of this study is to isolate the impact of strategic defection away from parties, and thus it is logical to exclude these parties.

There are 40 constituencies found in Schleswig-Holstein. For this study, the unit of analysis is party-in-district; for each party in district, there are at most two observations, one for the 2005 election and one for the 2009 election. A party-in-district was list-wise deleted from the data if it did not run a single-member district candidate in a given district, as when this occurs we no longer have information on the potential strategic behavior of supporters of the given party. This was only a problem for the SSW and the NPD. As a result of data availability, data for the NPD is available only for the 2005 election, while data for the Left is only available for the 2009 election.

Vojvodina

Vojvodina is a somewhat more complex case than Schleswig-Holstein. First, the minority situation is decidedly different, as minority groups represent more than 30% of the population of Vojvodina. The main group is the Hungarian minority, which is represented by its communal minority party, the Alliance of Vojvidinian Hungarians. There are nine other parties being tracked in this study: Together for Vojvodina, the Democratic Party of Serbia, the Serbian

Strength Movement, the Socialist Party of Serbia/Party of United Pensioners, G17, Clean Hands Citizens Group, New Serbia, the Liberal Democratic Party, and Maja Gojkovic Citizen Group. Each of these parties received less than 15% of the overall regional vote in both the 2004 and 2008 elections, paralleling the criteria applied for selection in Schleswig-Holstein.

There are 60 constituencies in Vojvodina, but data was not available for all of the constituencies in each cycle. In a few municipalities, PR tier results were reported at the municipality level generally instead of at the individual constituency level. In these instances, these districts were eliminated from the data. Where parties did not nominate candidates in the SMD tier, the party-in-district was list-wise deleted from the data, as in Schleswig-Holstein. This was a larger problem in Vojvodina that could challenge the external validity of the findings, but the limitations of the data leave no other realistic option. Data are available for the Clean Hands Citizen Group and New Serbia only in 2004, while data for the Liberal Democratic Party and the Maja Gojkovic Citizen Group are only available for 2008.

The Data

The main dependent variable for this study is the percentage of the vote a party-in-district won in the SMD tier of the election. This variable represents the arena in which a voter would behave strategically. The main independent variable is the percentage of the vote a party-in-district won in the PR tier of the election. The PR tier vote choice is the operationalization of the true preference vote of a voter. If a party-in-district receives fewer votes in the SMD tier than in the PR tier, it indicates that voters have abandoned their true preference, their PR party choice, in favor of a strategically better alternative. The hypothesis for this study, however, is a contingent hypothesis, namely that the effect of the PR vote-share of a party on the SMD vote-share of a party depends upon whether a party is an ethnic party. As such, the focus of the study is an

interaction term between the PR vote share of a party-in-district and a dummy variable for whether the party is an ethnic party as the key independent variable. This captures the contingent nature of the hypothesis.

Three main control variables, which are directly available from the electoral returns in each region, are used in this study. The first, the number of candidates running in the SMD tier in the district, is used to deal with the potential that what is perceived to be strategic behavior among voters is actually the result of strategic behavior among candidates. This particular problem was established by Ferrarra, Herron and Nishikawa (2005), who argue that studies making use mixed member systems to study strategic voting behavior may be attributing strategic behavior wrongly to voters who vote for a different party in the SMD tier, when in reality parties and candidates are the ones behaving strategically and choosing not to run candidates in districts they feel they cannot win. Coincidentally, by list-wise deleting all cases where a party did not field a candidate in the single-member district tier, the study also lessens the impact of the problems established by these scholars. The second control is for the registered number of voters in a district. This is important as, particularly in Vojvodina, the size of districts is not uniform. Given the informational problems that arise as numbers grow, it is plausible that larger districts would feature less strategic voting than small districts, as information on the probable winners becomes more difficult to isolate. Finally, the last control accounts for the percentage turnout in the SMD tier. It is relatively well established in the literature that one option supporters of non-competitive parties have in the face of strategic pressure is to simply not vote (Cox 1997). By controlling for turnout, this study hopes to address the possibility that lower turnout could bias the result in favor of the hypothesis.

5. Results: Schleswig-Holstein

Table 1 below reports the regression analyses for the 2005 and 2009 elections in Schleswig-Holstein. As a result of potential problems that could arise in the data as a product of the complicated structure of the data, the model uses clustered standard errors. This should give a more accurate representation of the significance of the findings.

Table 1

	2005	2009
(Intercept)	.0341 [^] (.0216)	.0471* (.0233)
PR Vote Share	.756*** (.0721)	.6374*** (.0297)
Ethnic	-.00646 (.00549)	-.04*** (.0381)
Registered Voters	-.000000827 (.000000116)	.000000266** (.0000000875)
Turnout	-.00411 (.029)	-.0426 [^] (.0253)
Candidates per District	-.00342*** (.000949)	-.00167 [^] (.000948)
PR Vote Share*Ethnic	.405*** (.0871)	.381*** (.0417)
N	100	133
Root MSE	.00858	.01
R ²	.8752	.9019
Adjusted R ²	.8671	.8972

[^] = .1 significance, * = .05 sig, ** = .01 sig, *** = .001 sig.

The most important finding here is the difference between the PR Vote Share variable and the interaction between PR Vote Share and the Ethnic party dummy variable. While on average an increase of one percent in PR Vote Share will lead to a .756% or .6374% increase in SMD Vote Share for a party, this relationship is much closer to a one to one for ethnic parties. In 2005, for the SSW a one percent increase in PR Vote Share in a district translated to a 1.16% increase in SMD Vote Share. In 2009, that number was 1.02%. In both elections, the SSW seems to have faced little pressure from strategic defection.

The model's control variables also tell an interesting story. Turnout is consistently significant and negative, indicating that increased turnout levels negatively impact the vote shares of small parties in the SMD tier. The size of the district comes back insignificant and negative in 2005, and significant and positive in 2009, rendering substantive interpretation somewhat unhelpful. The number of candidates per district, interestingly, comes back negative and strongly significant in both 2005 and 2009. This would seem to indicate that Ferrara, Nishikawa and Herron (2005) had very legitimate concerns about the potentially confounding nature of SMD candidate proliferation. The model also achieves a relatively high adjusted R^2 value, indicating it is capturing a good proportion of the variation in our dependent variable.

These models, while interesting also have problems. First, while the fit of the model is strong, this doesn't necessarily mean that the hypothesis helps us explain more of the variation. In fact, comparing the adjusted R^2 of a model that uses only PR Vote Share as an independent variable to the model that accounts for the conditional nature of the hypothesis with the ethnic party interaction variable, there is only roughly a 5% increase in the fit of the model. This is not a substantively uninteresting change in variation, but neither should its importance be overstated. The second problem is that election specific models do not allow us to adequately address whether party specific factors may be influencing the results. In order to account for this, party specific models were run, shown in Table 2 below. It is important to note that these party specific models are pooled, including both the 2005 and 2009 results for each party (except the Left). This was done to increase the number of cases for the SSW to a level at which OLS regression could be conducted. When looking at the 2005 and 2009 results separately for the FDP and the Greens, there are no substantive differences between the election year specific models and the pooled model, and it can be expected that this holds true for the SSW as well.

Table 2

	FDP	SSW	Greens	Left
(Intercept)	.0356* (.0178)	.0702** (.0191)	-.0229 (.0193)	.0668** (.0206)
PR Vote Share	.648*** (.0394)	1.047*** (.0338)	.681*** (.0412)	.728*** (.0592)
Registered Voters	.000000187 (.000000147)	.000000225 (.000000156)	.000000148 (.000000173)	.0000000718 (.000000102)
Turnout	-.0218 (.0252)	-.0747* (.029)	.0346 (.0266)	-.0677** (.0225)
Candidates per District	-.00250** (.000862)	-.004*** (.000878)	.00123 (.000901)	-.00151^ (.000767)
N	80	26	80	40
Root MSE	.00898	.00547	.0103	.00406
R ²	.8901	.9846	.8987	.9152
Adjusted R ²	.8843	.9816	.8933	.9055

^ = .1 significance, * = .05 sig, ** = .01 sig., *** = .001 sig.

The results for the party specific models largely confirm the findings of the election specific models. While the relationship between PR Vote Share and SMD Vote Share for the SSW, the ethnic party, is just slightly greater than one to one, for all three of the more ideologically based parties the relationship is much less than one to one. Given the assumptions established earlier in the paper hold true, these findings indicate that the SSW suffers from lower levels of defection than non-ethnic parties. The Left comes the closest to matching the levels of defection found among supporters of the SSW, but it is nowhere close.

Generally, then, there is fairly strong support in these results for the hypothesis that ethnic minority parties suffer less strategic defection than other, more ideologically based parties. Both the election year specific models and the party specific models point to the same conclusion. Next, the hypothesis will be tested on the more difficult case of Vojvodina.

6. Results: Vojvodina

Table 3 below presents the findings from the elections in Vojvodina in 2004 and 2008. The model is specified in exactly the same way as in the previous models for Schleswig-Holstein. The most obvious finding is that in 2004, the hypothesized relationship between ethnic parties and defection is neither significant, nor pointing in the correct direction. While this is not ideal, the context of this election in Vojvodina likely explains this outcome. There are three relevant pieces of information. The first, and most important, is that the ethnic party being tracked, the Alliance of Vojvodinian Hungarians, had not run in any previous elections. As such, it would be hard to supporters of the party to have accurate information as to the electoral viability of the party, one of the stipulations Cox identifies for when strategic voting incentives break down (1997). Second, not only was this the Alliance's first election, but they ran very few candidates in single member districts, just ten. This is a rather small number to be drawing any statistical conclusions from, as the data is more susceptible to the influence of outliers. Finally, this was arguably Serbia's first election as a full-fledged democracy. Previous elections had been held, but they were considered far from free and fair (Polity IV Country Report 2010).

Table 3

	2004	2008
(Intercept)	.214*** (.0381)	.196*** (.0429)
PR Vote Share	.231* (.0993)	.219 (.212)
Ethnic	.141 (.0901)	-.0531** (.0176)
Registered Voters	-.000000271 (.0000002901)	-.000000271 (.00000002)
Turnout	-.000825 (.000578)	-.000995^ (.00056)
Candidates per District	-.0119*** (.00194)	-.00746** (.00242)
PR Vote Share*Ethnic	-.00433 (.349)	.721** (.232)

N	193	187
Root MSE	.0506	.0493
R ²	.5798	.5641
Adjusted R ²	.5663	.5496

[^] = .1 significance, * = .05 sig, ** = .01 sig., *** = .001 sig.

It is easier to discount the 2004 election in light of the findings for the 2008 election, which mirror almost exactly those from Schleswig-Holstein. The results show that a 1 % increase in PR Vote Share generally leads to an increase in SMD Vote Share of just .219%; this result is not significant. However, as the interaction term shows, for every 1% increase in PR Vote Share for an ethnic party, there is a corresponding .94% increase in SMD Vote Share, which is significant at the .001 level. The questions about whether voters had enough background in democratic practices is likely reflected in the much lower adjusted R² values for the Vojvodina models, indicating that a large proportion of the variation is not being explained by the model.

Again, in order to better understand the relationship, the relationship is tested on each individual party. As the 2004 election results came back negative, the individual party models make use of district level returns for only the 2008 election. Table 4 reports the results of these

Table 4

	Together for Vojvodina	Alliance of Voj. Hung.	Democratic Party of Serbia	Socialist Party of Serbia	Liberal Dem. Party
(Intercept)	.108 (.0828)	.124 (.167)	.37** (.115)	.208 [^] (.119)	.131 (.165)
PR Vote Share	.224* (.0969)	.937*** (.0978)	.0195 (.119)	.414 (.259)	.365 [^] (.191)
Registered Voters	-.000000243 (.000000444)	.000000326 (.00000114)	.000000062 (.00000051)	-.000000584 (.000000551)	-.000000032 (.00000059)
Turnout	-.000954 (.00108)	-.00215 (.00194)	-.00221 (.00154)	-.000368 (.00159)	-.000899 (.00252)
Candidates per District	.00381 (.00556)	.00297 (.00959)	-.0193 (.00657)	-.0141* (.00694)	-.00339 (.00707)

N	41	18	43	44	34
Root MSE	.0402	.041	.0479	.0503	.0458
R ²	.1728	.9146	.2302	.2115	.1482
Adjusted R ²	.08086	.8884	.1492	.1306	.0307

[^] = .1 significance, * = .05 sig, ** = .01 sig., *** = .001 sig.

tests. They largely align with the findings of the full 2008 model. For non-ethnic parties, PR Vote Share was generally a poor predictor. The coefficients on PR Vote Share for all four non-ethnic parties were low, and only two were significant (though it should be noted that for the Socialist Party the result barely missed significance at the .1 level). For the ethnic party, the Alliance of Vojvodinian Hungarians, PR Vote Share was not only a strong predictor (the model carries an adjusted R² of .8884), but the relationship with SMD Vote Share is nearly one to one, indicating relatively low threat of strategic defection from the ethnic party. These findings closely mirror those of the party specific models from Schleswig-Holstein.

10. Possible Causal Mechanisms

The results from the data analysis give strong credence to the idea that it is ethnic voters, and not mainstream voters, that are strategically defecting from small parties. This answers one of the main questions posed by Moser and Scheiner (2012). However, the problem of identifying the causal mechanism driving this behavior still remains. Why are ethnic minority voters less likely to defect from their titular parties? In this section, I will posit three potential causal mechanisms that, when considered together, can help to explain why ethnic voters in particular are less likely to defect.

The first mechanism, and the most simple, is the idea that the geographic concentration of ethnic minorities is causing these voters to behave outside of strategic expectations. With few exceptions, notably the Roma, most communal minority groups are geographically concentrated.

This does not mean, necessarily, that these groups represent local majorities, but that they find the majority of their membership confined within a geographic bound. Work advocating the study of electoral system effects at the constituency level often argues that geographic concentrations like these should have a significant impact on electoral outcomes, accounting for all other things (Moser and Scheiner 2012). The geographic concentration of communal minorities is likely to have two effects. First, as political geographers such as Duffy Toft (2006) point out, a psychological attachment to an area by a group is often linked with misperceptions about group membership and the strength of the group. This is likely to lead to a misperception of the strength of the ethnic party. This lack of accurate information on party strength could contribute to less strategic defection among supporters of small communal minority parties (Horowitz, 1985). Second and more mechanical is the fact that the geographical concentration of minority voters means, in comparison to other small parties, they *are* likely more competitive, meaning there is likely less incentive for voters to defect. The impact of geographic concentration is at least tacitly included in the data tested: the two ethnic parties, the SSW and the Alliance of Vojvodinian Hungarians, only run candidates in a select few districts, in both cases less than a third of the total. It seems fair to assume that these decisions were made with reference to the relative strength of the ethnic minority in given districts. In this way, this argument about causal mechanisms is being indirectly tested in the data analysis.

The second causal explanation revolves around the policy positioning of small communal minority parties. While it is rarely discussed, a building block of the logic of strategic defection is that voters will have some policy preference that is represented by the party they choose to which they choose to defect. If a party pulls from multiple cross-cutting identity cleavages, it makes sense to believe that supporters could find some policy position to support in the policy

platform of another party. However, for small communal minorities, where the party appeals only to members of a single, relatively small societal cleavage, the voters are forced to completely abandon what they have self-identified as their primary issue preference if they defect. Mainstream parties, which almost exclusively compete on ideological issues, are not really capable of competing with small communal minority parties on communal minority issues. As such, most will have no particularly solid platform on communal minority issues. If supporters of an ethnic party are unable to find another party that adequately addresses the issue they care most about, strategic incentives could conceivably lead them to continue to support their small communal minority party if to do nothing else but to attempt to get the leaders of major parties to recognize the value of their constituency (see Cox 1997, Clough 2007, Herrmann 2012). While this could potentially be construed as long-term, instrumentally rational behavior, it is decidedly not short term rational, and does not fit firmly into theories of strategic voting behavior as they currently stand.

Finally, the most controversial causal mechanism that could be at play here is in-group policing. In-group policing among communal minorities has been studied most commonly in the literature on ethnic conflict. Fearon and Laitin (1996) argue that ethnic groups serve as informal networks of information, providing cues to members about who has defected from formal and informal group norms that allows the group to sanction those members acting outside the rules of order. This logic is found throughout the conflict resolution literature, both past in present (see Horowitz 1985 for an early example; see Lyall 2010 for a more modern example). Not only has it been studied in conflict settings, but it has also been studied in settings of public goods provision. It seems likely that even a perception that one could be sanctioned as a result of defection from the rules of order is likely to shape the behavior of a group member. The

extension of this logic to the behavior of small communal minority members is not difficult to make: fearing the sanctions that would come from a revelation that they defected from the ethnic minority party, members of ethnic minority parties are less likely to defect. A potentially damaging criticism of this causal mechanism is that in most democracies, at least the well-functioning ones, votes are anonymous in the Australian-ballot style. However, for this mechanism to be plausible there does not have to be an actual threat of sanctioning; the perception of the potential for sanctioning is likely enough to trigger a significant deviation from the behavior of supporters of ideologically based parties, especially since it likely works in conjunction with the second two mechanisms, which are more hardy.

While the in-group policing mechanism may be the most extreme mechanism, there is some empirical reason to believe that it is happening. Habyarimana et al. (2007), in studying the provision of public goods, argue shared ethnicity is a strong predictor of successful public goods provision. Where the beneficiaries of public goods are perceived to be coethnics, the authors find that behavior is generally cooperative, and that defection from the public good is less likely (Habyarimana et al. 2007, 710-712). This strategic cooperation, they find, is at least partly related to fears of potential in-group policing. They argue that “co-ethnics cooperate because they adhere to in-group reciprocity norms—norms that are plausibly supported by expectations that non-contribution will be sanctioned and by an ethnic technology, “findability,” that facilitates sanctioning among co-ethnic pairings” (2007, 724). While voting for the ethnic party is not exactly public goods provision, for ethnic minorities there is reason to believe that similar considerations may come into play. Ethnic minority parties can be seen as the provider of ethnically-targeted public goods. If politically successful, they can direct state resources to things like titular language education, promotion of cultural heritage, and other minority targeted goods.

Defection from ethnic parties thus represents a similar problem as the problems identified by Habyarimana et al. As such, the potential of group policing to prevent such defection should not be ruled out in the case of ethnic minority parties.

11. Conclusion

This study started out with two questions. Are ethnic voters more likely to defect than majority voters? If so, what drives them ethnic voters to behave in ways that defy strategic voting theories? The data analyzed here show rather strongly that it is ethnic minority voters, as supporters of ethnic minority parties, who are less likely to defect than majority voters, who vote for more ideological reasons and are more likely to defect in the face of strategic pressures. This was shown with regard to two different regions, with two different histories of democracy and different levels of ethnic and political fractionalization. Tests were conducted with pooled election models that highlighted the differential impact of ethnic parties, as well as party specific models that looked to identify parties that behaved outside of the hypothesized pathways. All tests pointed in the same direction: ethnic voters are not behaving as short term, instrumentally rational voters who defect in the face of strategic pressures.

These results lead directly into the second question. Why? What causes ethnic voters to behave differently than non-ethnic voters? Three causal mechanisms were proposed. First, geographic concentration of minority voters could be causing misperceptions, which could be leading ethnic voters to not have accurate enough information to behave strategically at the local level. Second, minority issue space monopolization by ethnic minority parties could theoretically make defection a much less preferable option by forcing those voters to effectively abandon their first order preferences for minority public goods. Finally, in-group policing mechanisms within minority groups makes defection more easily punished, as Habyarimana et al. (2007) argue. The

result of this is that coethnics are more likely to cooperate than individuals who do not identify as coethnics, for example ideologically oriented voters. These three mechanisms represent strong early explanations for what is causing the divergent behavior of ethnic.

However, both the relationship identified and the mechanisms posited require further research. While the models used strongly point to the idea that ethnic voters are the ones behaving outside of strategic expectations, these models are built heavily on assumptions of ecological inference. While it can be argued that these assumptions are valid and help to establish the generalizability and feasibility of the study, they also challenge the internal validity. Future research would ideally rely on experiments or survey research to establish the propensity of ethnic minority voters to defect as opposed to non-ethnic minority voters. This would provide a more concrete identification of the relationship and grant much greater levels of internal validity.

It is also important to recognize the limitations of these findings. These results cannot, for instance, inform researchers about why ethnic heterogeneity after a certain point seems to correlate with a decrease in parties in the system. If Moser and Scheiner's intuition is correct and this is a result of increasing numbers of multi-ethnic parties, the in-group policing mechanism identified in this study could still have much to say about why the number of parties is decreasing. A second limitation of this finding is that it assumes that there is no meaningful competition for ethnic voters in a state. While this may be a very valid assumption for smaller minorities, as group size increases it is more and more likely that coordination among the group to prevent the formation of ethnic competitor parties is less likely to happen. In the 2012 election, which lacked data for adequate controls, the ethnic vote was split as the Alliance of Vojvodinian Hungarians faced not one, but two challenger parties. Does the causal story about

the lack of short term strategic voting among ethnic voters still hold? It seems unlikely. This is an area for further research.

The causal mechanisms proposed generally require further testing. Geographical concentration's impact on the voting behavior of ethnic minorities could potentially be studied with observational data. The impact of in-group policing and issue-space monopolization, however, are likely only fruitfully studied through either qualitative research or the use of surveys or experiments. In particular, qualitative research such as interviews and ethnographic work would help to identify the level of in-group policing that is actually present among communal minority groups. Survey research could probably more fruitfully determine whether ethnic minority voters truly feel like one party has a monopoly over the ethnic issue space. Both represent ways forward in investigating why ethnic minority voters behave outside of Duvergerian expectations.

The implications of this research should not be underestimated. While the actual tests were conducted at subnational levels, the proposed mechanisms would operate at all political levels, and would be present in every type of electoral system. If the findings are accurate, they could meaningfully explain not only the persistence of ethnic minority parties in areas where they should have disappeared long ago. They could also help to explain why minority groups, such as African Americans in the United States, are so hesitant to defect from a party that has come to be identified so closely with the provision of policy for that group.

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