

The Politics of Solidarity

- Solidarity Frames and Their Significance -



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Pieter Verheyen

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The Politics of Solidarity

Solidarity Frames and Their Significance

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"In multiple ways, the word "solidarity" is patiently looking for flesh which it could become. And it won't stop seeking eagerly and passionately until it succeeds." (Bauman, 2013: 5)

Introduction

The Politics of Solidarity

Nation-states in general and European nation-states, in particular, are confronted with several new wicked problems such as climate change and viral threats. Many of these wicked problems are related to three critical socio-political transformations: welfare state retrenchment, diversification, and glocalisation. These wicked social problems and socio-political transformations have caused disagreements over what binds society together and who belongs to society. Consequently, it is fair to assume that solidarity has become predominant in current political discourses. In other words, the wicked problems that solidarity faces today make it a contested and politicised concept. Based on which grounds should we build or retain a socially cohesive society? To whom should we be solidary, and why? Which demands for solidarity should we take seriously, and why?

Recently, theorization and conceptualizations of solidarity have experienced a surge (Brunkhorst, 2005; Calhoun, 2002; Turner & Rojek, 2001).

Despite the salience of these social theories, the interest in solidarity in political science had long been limited. As Wilde (2007) claims, political theory and empirical political science had cast solidarity to "the realm of the rhetoric". However, recently some scholars have placed the politicisation of solidarity on the research agenda (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017; Boucher & Samad, 2013; Stjernø, 2005). The reason for this is, as Banting & Kymlicka (2017: 2) put it: 'the impact of sociological factors is conditioned by prevailing political discourses and identities, by the actions of political agents'. In other words, the study of the 'politicization' of social cohesion is necessary to understand how solidarity is enhanced or protected in increasingly diverse and postmodern societies.

This argument forms the starting point for this dissertation. More specifically, this dissertation focuses on political parties as active evaluators and framers of social conflicts who therefore play a part in the contestation of solidarity (Deegan-Krause & Enyedi, 2010; Riker, 1986; Tavits & Potter, 2015). These actors can conflict when each proposes a different definition of solidarity. To study the political politicization of solidarity, one should thus analyse which meaning the crucial political actors give to this concept. Therefore, this dissertation introduces the concept of solidarity frames which are rhetorical

devices that specify a particular problem definition, a causal interpretation, a moral evaluation, and a treatment recommendation.

While - theoretically speaking - a plethora of solidarity frames are possible, this dissertation presents a more deductive approach to solidarity frames based on the integrative theory and typology of solidarity developed by Thijssen (2012, 2016). More specifically, *we*¹ distinguish four solidarity frames: group-based, compassionate, exchange-based, and empathic solidarity. Each of these four solidarity frames also has an *exclusionary counterpart*, in the sense that being deserving of solidarity is a positive distinction that is not necessarily given to everyone.

The *main contribution* of this dissertation is to further the understanding of the role of solidarity in the dimensionalization of the party political sphere. More specifically, we assess the role of solidarity in three important aspects of party politics. First, we discuss the supply-side and assess the role of political parties in communicating and framing solidarity. We evaluate whether we can distinguish partisan discourses in solidarity frames more specifically. Second, we turn to the demand-side of the party political sphere and assess whether voters

¹ In single-authored chapters, 'we' refers to the author of this dissertation, who prefers a more formal and impersonal tone than a highly personal ('I'). This is of course a matter of taste. In multi-authored chapters, 'we' refers simply to all contributors.

have similar solidarity preferences as their preferred parties. More particularly, we evaluate whether the solidarity frame preferences of party electorates are congruent with those of their preferred parties and assess the impact of solidarity frame preferences on propensities to vote for specific parties. Third, we conduct an intermediary analysis that considers whether solidarity frames have a heuristic value for grassroots politicians functioning as the interface between the parties' supply and the voters' demands.

The remainder of this introductory chapter is *structured* as follows. The first section discusses solidarity as a concept and its relevance since the latter half of the 20th century. The second section looks at the dialectical processes that connect solidarity to conflict and change. The third section discusses and critiques the scarce research on the politics of solidarity and argues in favour of a discursive approach situated at the meso-level to studying the politics of solidarity. More specifically, we develop the rhetorical device of solidarity frames and propose a multi-method research design that consists of content analyses of party communication and survey analyses. Subsequently, we discuss our typology of solidarity frames, which we will use throughout this dissertation. Next, we discuss the research aims of this dissertation, where we focus on the Flemish region as a most-likely case to study solidarity frames in party political

competition. Finally, this chapter concludes with an overview of the other chapters of this dissertation.

Solidarity and its Current Relevance

Solidarity etymologically stems from the Latin *solidum* (the neuter of *solidus*, meaning "solid"), is rooted in the Roman law of obligations, more specifically the *obligatio in solidum*, which entailed that individual members of a family or a community were jointly liable to pay joint debts (Bayertz, 1999: 3). Since the 18th century, scholars have applied this idea of mutual responsibility to other fields such as morality and politics (Bayertz, 1999: 3; Brunkhorst, 2005). Most contemporary scholars understand solidarity as the cement of social bonds that holds a group, a community, or a society together (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017; Komter, Burgers, & Engbersen, 2000). To speak of solidarity, particular motivations to support certain individuals should be -implicitly or explicitly - expressed to legitimise supportive actions and attitudes (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). *Therefore, this dissertation defines solidarity as supportive attitudes and actions that are morally and rationally motivated by principles of how one should build and maintain a cohesive society.*

Historically speaking, social cohesion and solidarity have always been relevant for the different forms of social organisation, such as tribes, city-states,

and empires (Malešević, 2013: 20-54; Sloterdijk, 2004). Nevertheless, they have become much more prominent since the late 18th century. The emergence of the nation-state that formally unified individuals as equal and free citizens in a sovereign political system was accompanied by the spread of industrial capitalism and its unprecedented gap between the wealthy industrial capitalist class and the poor labour class. Class struggles and the spectre of communism brought these contradictions to the political agenda in Europe during the 19th and 20th centuries. Across the political spectrum, the idea that (wealthy) citizens have obligations to help their fellow citizens - i.e., solidarity - gained prominence (Baldwin, 1990; Bayertz, 1999: 21). Throughout the first half of the 20th century, governments across Europe installed an amalgam of *redistributive and protective social policies* that reallocate risks and benefits: personal health services, public health provision, social services, housing policies, education, and social security policies such as unemployment benefits and pensions. Such policies gained even more prominence during the reconstruction after the destructive episode of the Second World War.

Such an interpretation of solidarity as redistribution within the boundaries of the nation-state has long prevailed in political discourse, particularly in traditional social democratic discourses (Stjernø, 2005). Until the

latter half of the 20th century, most welfare states expanded social rights and welfare state provisions based on this interpretation of solidarity (Pierson, 1996). However, since the latter half of the 20th century, *the question of solidarity has received a broader interpretation* within European nation-states in line with several new wicked problems such as climate change and viral threats. As a result of this solidarity has become a kind of super-issue.

Moreover, solidarity does not only receive a broader interpretation, but it also became more salient due to *three socio-political transformations*. First, structural economic and fiscal problems - such as structural unemployment, increasing budget deficits, and low economic growth rates - have challenged the sustainability of the welfare state. According to Claus Offe (1984), the retrenchment resulted from a contradiction in the heart of the welfare states. Welfare state capitalism requires an expansion of state interventions into the market. These policies lead to growing citizen expectations that their market position will not determine their fate. These expectations motivate governments to expand social policies. However, the capacity of the welfare state to meet those expectations is limited as it needs to draw revenues from private investments in the economy to provide welfare policies. Such policies may undercut the functioning of the labour market, which in turn leads to

insufficient revenues for social policies. Put differently; state expenditures persistently tend to outrun state revenues, which leads to problems for social policies. Consequently, the national welfare state is unable "to live up to the promise" to guarantee its citizens a fate undetermined by their position on the market (Offe, 1984: 143).

In this context of crisis, neoliberal and neoconservative critiques of the welfare state have become more prevalent. The former cast intrusive welfare policies as less efficient than market policies in providing resources for citizens (e.g., Hartman, 2005). The latter are concerned about the moral hazards of extensive welfare policies, such as developing a dependency culture and the diminished social support within civil society (e.g., Murray, 1990). Inspired by such neoliberal and neoconservative critiques of the welfare state, governments across Europe have installed '*active welfare*' policies that support individuals based on work-based reciprocity (Achterberg, Van der Veen, & Raven, 2013; Mau, 2004). Proponents have defended such *individualist exchange-based policies* as benefitting society and empowering individuals to contribute to their individual and societal welfare via labor. However, some critics argue that such activation policies *erode compassion* for those who are already worse off. Instead, they cause problems for the latter, such as increased

precarity, increased income inequality, and criminalisation of the poor (e.g., Herzog, 2018; Standing, 2011; Wacquant, 2009).

Second, many European states are confronted with *increasingly diverse demands for support and recognition*. Both structural transformations within the population - such as ageing (e.g., Schumacher, Vis, & Van Kersbergen, 2013; Thijssen, 2012) – and increased demands from previously marginalised groups – such as women and LGBTQI people (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017) – have caused this diversification of demands. The most controversial issue related to diversification has been immigration from within but especially from without Europe, which might have pervasive implications for solidarity (Oosterlynck, Loopmans, Schuermans, Vandenabeele, & Zemni, 2016). Within the scope of the welfare state, discussion centres on the costs and benefits of immigration and ethnic diversity. Some believe that welfare states and economies should encourage immigration and reciprocate immigrants' economic contributions with social benefits. Others are more sceptical and perceive immigration as an additional pressure that could cause net losses for more vulnerable native citizens, as immigrants have a higher risk for poverty -which could lead to higher costs for the welfare state – and could become unfair labour-market competitors for vulnerable native citizens. In the end, these sceptics argue that

compassion for the latter should entail some form of exclusion of the former (Nannestad, 2004). More generally speaking, the discussion centres on how societies should deal with the demands emanating from increased ethnic and cultural diversity. Some claim that *empathy with* – cultural, ethnic, or religious – *differences* is a prerequisite for solidarity in contemporary societies (e.g., Taylor, 1997) and thus see immigration and increased ethnic or cultural diversity as a precondition of solidarity. Others argue that ethnic or cultural diversity threatens solidarity due to less shared understanding and beliefs. According to this line of thinking, only (forceful) *assimilation* of immigrants and their descendants into the national culture might result in a *group-based solidarity* that is strong and cohesive enough (e.g., Brubaker, 2001).

Finally, due to sub- and supranationalism, many believe that *solidarity should no longer centre on national citizens*. While one could refer here to centrifugal tendencies that have led to quasi-autonomous regional constituencies in some European countries (see Béland & Lecours, 2005; Hanschel, 2014), most authors would emphasise tendencies of globalisation. European governments and their citizens have become increasingly subject to obligations emanating from higher levels of political organisation (e.g., the EU and the WTO) (Preuss, 1999). Furthermore, they progressively have to deal with

demands that transcend the boundaries of nation-states, such as demands from developing countries to tackle the consequences of global climate change. The question arises whether solidarity should be mainly focused *on the national level or on a supranational or international level*. With regards to the EU, we find some countries to push for more national sovereignty in order to ensure a strong national identity and compassionate solidarity with their more vulnerable citizens (e.g., Brexit). Others push for more supranational mechanisms of solidarity (e.g., the European Stability Mechanism) to encourage exchange between nation-states or to deal with the distinction between relatively strong contributing (i.e., Northern) and relatively vulnerable receiving (i.e., Southern) Member States (Lubbers & Scheepers, 2010: 790; Wallaschek, 2021: 5). We also find tensions on the international level, for instance, regarding the issue of climate change. While President Trump invoked *national sovereignty and compassion with American coal miners* to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, activists and social movements have argued in favour of a *global form of solidarity* that entails a compassionate distribution of environmental benefits and burdens as well an empathic recognition of communities who experience material and cultural losses due to environmental degradation (Mohai, Pellow, & Roberts, 2009; Schlosberg, 2004).

The Dialectics of Solidarity

While the traditional redistributive interpretation of solidarity remains essential, it faces institutional challenges - such as the efficiency problems of the welfare state - and challenges in terms of demand – such as the ageing of the working population, which are in turn conditioned by the actions and demands of political agents – such as the critiques and the activation policies of neoliberal parties (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017: 2). Too often, scholars have focused on solidarity as a ‘consensual’ end state, while *the current contestation of solidarity indicates that solidarity is not an end-stage but rather a phase in a continuous dynamic political struggle.*

This dissertation follows a theoretical framework that assumes solidarity to be subject to a *dialectic*. Inspired by Hegel's (1830) concept, theorists refer to the dialectic to indicate that society is a dynamic system of continual conflicts between a beginning situation called a thesis and its negation as the antithesis. This conflict is reconciled (or, in Hegelian terms: sublated) in a synthesis, which forms the new thesis (e.g., Skoll, 2014: 4). Critics have raised objections to dialectical thinking as espousing a determinist teleology: history consists of an unchangeable course of events that leads to a predetermined ‘consensual’ or ‘harmonic’ end-stage (e.g., the Marxist end-stage of communism). Present-day

dialecticians have therefore argued for a more discrete form of teleology: while they argue that developments indeed strive to reach particular ends, they do not expect 'an unalterable and organic sequence of events to deliver it without fail' (Grant, 2010: 233) *but instead claim that history consists of various determinable paths that could reach their ends if the circumstances allow it* (Grant, 2010; Ollman, 2003; Skoll, 2014).

Thijssen (2012, 2016) posits such a dialectical theory of solidarity inspired by Durkheim and Honneth. In *De la division du travail social* (1893), Durkheim studied the shift from premodern to modern societies in terms of solidarity. He made a distinction between mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. *Mechanical solidarity* emphasises the link between the likeness of group members and social cohesion, which Durkheim deemed characteristic of primitive societies. Individuals acted as cogs in a machine, identifying themselves with the collective consciousness that compelled them to show solidarity to the other members of the community, whom all share a set of rights and duties guarded and regulated by group norms and pressure. Free-rider behaviour is a potential danger; thus, the community must punish free-riders and deviants severely and effectively to keep solidarity intact (Fararo & Doreian, 1998b; Garland, 2012). Durkheim theorized that modernization and increasing

specialization led to more differentiated societies characterized by a strong division of labour, shifting from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity. *Organic solidarity* emphasizes the complementary differences between solidary parties. Instead of group similarities and collective consciousness, exchange and interdependence form the basis of social cohesion and social integration in modern society.

Contrary to Durkheim, Thijssen (2012; 2016) understands these types of solidarity not as an ideal end-stage but rather as phases of *dialectical processes*. First, contrary to Durkheim's thesis, Thijssen claimed that mechanical solidarity was here to stay, as indicated by the renewed popularity of nationalist parties that capitalize on a national collective consciousness or by the persistent notions of belonging (Guibernau, 2013) and identity (van Oorschot, 2006) in discussions related to solidarity. However, Thijssen agrees with Durkheim that a comprehensive solidarity typology should not *a priori* rule out the existence of exchange as the underlying principle for solidarity. As mechanical solidarity is also present in contemporary societies, organic solidarity becomes an *antithesis* of mechanical solidarity in those societies where the latter is predominant and vice versa. As both types of solidarity are connected in a thesis – antithesis chain, they could be *reconciled* into a collective consciousness that posits the

relevance of (particular) complementary differences or an exchange-based society which acknowledges a shared group identity among the participants of that particular exchange process (see horizontal arrows Figure 1).

Second, Thijssen (2012; 2016) draws inspiration from Honneth to posit a *second dialectic*. Mechanical and organic solidarity - as described by Durkheim - are more correctly named *group-based and exchange-based solidarity*. While they differ in their central motivations to support individuals, both types of solidarity also act as a thesis for another dialectic. Both group-based and exchange-based solidarity draw *boundaries* between included and excluded assemblages of individuals based on an underlying structural principle: the former excludes individuals that do not belong to the ingroup (group-based solidarity). In contrast, the latter excludes individuals that do not – sufficiently – comply with the underlying principle of reciprocity (exchange-based solidarity). The *antithesis* of these structural principles are outsiders and their demands. An encounter with those excluded and their demands could lead to a call for intersubjective verification of the extant structural principles among those included. Outsiders could struggle for redistribution based on their precarity, which could lead to *compassionate solidarity* among insiders that motivates them to accommodate these outsiders as 'one of us'. Those excluded

could also struggle for recognition, which could lead to empathic solidarity among the insiders that motivate them to see those excluded as *a priori* valuable by virtue of their otherness. As both structural theses (i.e., group-based, respectively exchange-based solidarity) and their intersubjective antitheses (i.e., compassionate and empathic solidarity) are subject to an ongoing dialectical process, the effective conflictual nature of their relationship depends on the phases of the dialectical process. If an expansion of the integrative structural principle has been recently adopted, the conflictual nature of intersubjective verification will probably be more limited than when the demand for intersubjective verification arises (see vertical arrows Figure 1).

Third, the theory ultimately posits a *third dialectic* where Honneth meets Durkheim. This dialectic combines the dialectic between solidarity types opposed in terms of similarity versus difference with the dialectic between structural principle versus intersubjective verification. Group-based solidarity could appeal to *prejudices towards the otherness* of an outsider or marginalised insider, and empathy for differences might lead individuals to question *group essentialism* and identity. Similarly, exchange-based solidarity could appeal to *contempt towards precarious non-contributors*, while compassion for those who cannot contribute might cause individuals to *deem a system based on*

reciprocity unfair. However, the effective conflictual nature of their relationship depends again on the phases of the dialectical process: the dialectic can also push people to construct a group identity that is appreciative of ingroup differences or to support a system based on reciprocity if a certain commonly accepted level of equality between exchange-partners is met (see diagonal arrows Figure 1).

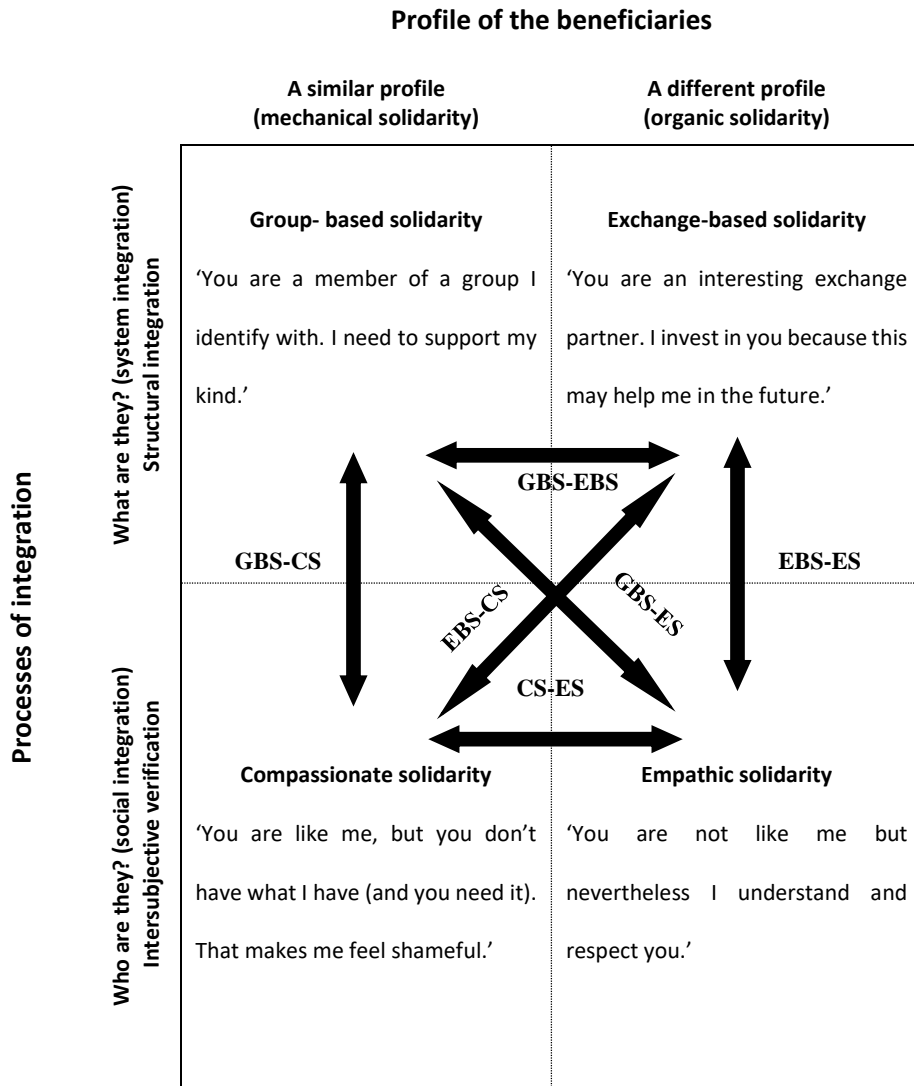


Figure 1: the four solidarity types and their dialectical relationships

Such a dialectical theory of solidarity involves a processual view in which struggles for solidarity lead to temporary end stages. While the theory mainly

focuses on the expansion of solidarity, *it does not claim that these underlying struggles necessarily lead to more inclusion or broader spheres of solidarity*. Equally important to most challenges to solidarity – such as globalisation or immigration - is the question *of who is not deserving of solidarity*. A look at the recent history of solidarity teaches us that struggles do not necessarily lead to an expansion of ingroup boundaries or an extension of the understanding of proper exchange goods. For instance, several welfare states have adopted a form of *welfare chauvinism* – i.e., stricter welfare policies for immigrants and ethnic minorities - to deal with the issues of immigration from within and without Europe (De Koster, Achterberg, & Van der Waal, 2013; Kymlicka, 2015; Van der Waal, Achterberg, Houtman, De Koster, & Manevska, 2010; Van Der Waal, De Koster, & Van Oorschot, 2013).

Moreover, we can also notice how formerly more expansive notions of solidarity become more restricted due to *backlashes*. Backlashes, in turn, could lead to a new synthesis. For instance, the welfare state crises of the latter half of the 20th century saw the emergence of neoliberal and neoconservative critiques of the welfare state, which argued that welfare policies only benefitted specific interest groups (e.g., labour unions) and led to a culture of welfare dependency (Mendes, 1998, 2003). The contradiction between the welfare

state and the neoliberal and neoconservative critiques did not lead to a full-scale retrenchment but instead gave way to an active welfare state that invokes exchange-based solidarity as a motivation to support individuals (Achterberg et al., 2013; Brown, 2006; Pierson, 1996; Vandenbroucke, 2000). Even more expansive forms of solidarity have an often exclusionary character, as individuals who perceive themselves as excluded often think of those already included as having an undeserved privilege. Their challenges intertwine with the support for these undeservingly privileged individuals or social groups (Sadin, 2017: 299- 315). Put differently; *solidarity often involves a zero-sum logic*, where affection towards the deserving group is only possible if the latter obtains comparatively less or is excluded from certain benefits (Fukuyama, 2018: 41).

Therefore, within this proposed framework of the dialectics of solidarity, we must acknowledge that *each integrative principle encompasses an exclusionary counterpart*. For group-based and exchange-based solidarity, exclusion is an integral part of solidarity that *reaffirms* the mechanism itself: group-based solidarity based on identity and community involves the (implicit) exclusion of individuals who do not belong to the ingroup, while exchange-based solidarity requires excluding individuals that do not – or insufficiently - participate in the exchange of goods (van Oorschot, 2000; Wodak, 2008). For

compassionate and empathic solidarity, exclusion requires an *active dismissal* of demands for solidarity based on the belief that such demands are illegitimate or harmful to social cohesion. Demands for more redistribution towards certain needy groups can be dismissed based on the belief that this support would facilitate their laziness or give them an unfair privilege. Demands for recognition of difference can be perceived as illegitimate, as specific differences might be deemed 'incommensurable' with what these actors perceive to be good or ethical (e.g., Bernstein, 2010; Murray, 1990; van Oorschot, 2000).

The Discursive Construction of Solidarity and Solidarity Frames

The study of solidarity as subject to dialectical processes requires a model of analysis using a *triadic dynamic structure* that evaluates micro-level attitudes and behaviours (such as demands for solidarity), macro-level structures and institutions (such as the welfare state regime), as well as meso-level discourses and actions (such as communication and policies implemented by political actors). More realistically, the research could focus on either one level of aggregation or the relationships between two levels. *Contemporary research on solidarity focuses primarily on macro-level or micro-level analyses of solidarity.* The first approach considers solidarity from an institutional or structural perspective, focusing on mechanisms and institutions as providers of solidarity.

Inspired by Esping-Andersen (1990), most research centres on welfare state regimes. Research on other types of institutional structures - such as multiculturalism policies (e.g., Banting & Kymlicka, 2013) - or institutional arrangements with a broader scope - such as risk-sharing between the EU Member States (e.g., Katsanidou, Reinl, & Eder, 2021) - have also gained prominence. Research in this domain mainly centres on studying the implementation process, cross-nationally or cross-temporally comparing policies, and assessing the effectiveness of implemented policies.

The second approach deals with solidarity at an individual level. Research on this level could focus on either behaviours or attitudes and motivations. This micro-level approach primarily centres on solidarity as support for specific groups or specific policies within national welfare states. Still, it could also focus on a smaller (e.g., support for family members) or broader (e.g., support for inhabitants of distant countries) scope (Kankaraš & Moors, 2009; Olesen, 2019). For instance, the several crises that the EU went through during the last few years have led to an increase in studies on the willingness of EU citizens to support (citizens in) other Member States (e.g., Katsanidou et al., 2021).

In contrast to these approaches, a meso-level approach is much less predominant in research on solidarity. Scholars who use a meso-level approach to solidarity generally study the role of actors in the public sphere, such as social movements and other political actors, as facilitators of solidarity at the micro or macro levels (e.g., *Solidarnosc* in Poland). Like the two previous approaches, scholars mainly focus on which welfare state policies political actors propose or implement. Many researchers have emphasised policy proposals or implementations by social and Christian democratic parties (e.g., Stjernø, 2005; Van Kersbergen, 2003) or labour unions (e.g., Durazzi, Fleckenstein, & Lee, 2018) in solidarity policies. Others have studied the policies proposed or implemented by parties on the right (e.g., Afonso & Papadopoulos, 2015; Scarbrough, 2000).

In this dissertation, we emphasise the *discursive* aspects of solidarity. Studying the dialectics of solidarity at the meso-level implies treating solidarity as a socially constructed or a 'framed' reality instead of a social fact *sui generis*. *Actors at the meso-level communicate specific motivations to support (or not support) certain groups or policies*. These actors frame solidarity or social cohesion in particular ways and simultaneously facilitate certain understandings of solidarity at the micro-level and influence the principles underlying the

institutions at the macro-level. This approach does not presuppose a particular interpretation of the concept of solidarity; instead, it understands it as a contested concept with various meanings. This dissertation, therefore, introduces the concept of solidarity frames. Solidarity frames make a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation more salient in partisan discourses. In short, they are rhetorical devices that link specific normative motivations to invoke solidarity with multiple beneficiaries.

Theoretically speaking, a plethora of solidarity frames is possible. However, this dissertation presents a more deductive approach to solidarity frames based on the integrative theory and typology of solidarity developed by Thijssen (2012, 2016). *Mechanical solidarity* consists of two dialectically related frames: *group-based solidarity* and *compassionate solidarity*. Group-based solidarity is the thesis of mechanical solidarity and originates from a universalistic identification with a collective consciousness (Thijssen, 2012). Group-based solidarity expects one to behave per societal norms and that every member gives to the group (Thijssen, 2012; 2016). This solidarity frame corresponds with ideas of belonging and identity (Guibernau, 2013; van Oorschot, 2006). Compassionate solidarity is the antithesis of mechanical

solidarity, and it originates from a person's particular experience recognizing the neediness in an encounter with another group member (Thijssen, 2012; 2016). This solidarity frame corresponds with notions of need and redistribution linked with the more typical understanding of solidarity (De Beer & Koster, 2010; Stjernø, 2005; van Oorschot, 2006).

Organic solidarity consists of exchange-based and empathic solidarity.

Exchange-based solidarity is its thesis and originates from an exchange structure between partners with complementary qualities. This frame corresponds to solidarity as reciprocity (De Beer and Koster, 2013; van Oorschot, 2006), as it posits that individuals can form a cohesive society by identifying others as valuable and trustworthy exchange partners. Empathic solidarity is the antithesis of organic solidarity, and it originates from a particularistic identification of individuals who are so different that they seem to have little to contribute and therefore suffer from misrecognition. Empathy with these ostracised individuals leads to recognising (individual) dignity and differences. By doing so, those who are already recognised extend the understanding of proper exchange goods (Thijssen, 2012; 2016). Empathic solidarity corresponds to solidarity in terms of recognition and the validation of personal (self-) development and (self-)expression (Fraser, 1995; Juul, 2010).

Regardless the differences between these mechanisms for building solidarity, they all have in common that *not everyone is equally deserving of support*. After all, being deserving of solidarity is a positive distinction that political actors do not necessarily give to everyone. Actors can perceive some groups and individuals as receiving too much support and therefore prefer to *express solidarity with those they deem (more) deserving at the expense of those they deem undeserving* (Bloemraad, Kymlicka, Lamont, & Hing, 2019). Each of the four solidarity frames, therefore, has an *exclusionary counterpart*. Political actors can frame group-based solidarity based on identity and community by excluding specific individuals or social groups as not belonging to the ingroup or exchange-based solidarity by excluding individuals as not – or insufficiently - participating in the exchange of goods (van Oorschot, 2000; Wodak, 2008). They can also dismiss the redistribution toward disadvantaged groups by framing them as unfairly privileged or responsible for their problems. Similarly, they can illegitimate demands for recognition of differences they deem 'incommensurable' with what they perceive to be good or ethical (e.g., Bernstein, 2010; Murray, 1990; van Oorschot, 2000).

The focus on solidarity frames has some limitations because we do not study policies, instruments, or behaviours from political actors that do

something tangible to support beneficiaries or keep a group together. However, such behaviours and policies can arise from multiple motivations, such as partisan self-interest. *To speak of solidarity, political actors should, to a certain extent, express particular motivations to legitimise political actions to include or exclude people (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). Furthermore, political actors also need to mobilise support to gain power.* Solidarity frames could give cues to individuals who actively look for an actor who endorses their solidarity vision. Conversely, political actors could communicate how individuals should think about solidarity. Therefore, analysing solidarity frames in political discourse is an important step in understanding the dialectics of solidarity.

Political Parties and Solidarity

Within the field of politicisation of solidarity, we see a tendency to focus on (new) social movements that could induce feelings of solidarity with a wide diversity of new beneficiaries such as immigrants or LGBT+. In contrast, this dissertation focuses on *political parties*, actors that have been largely ignored in the study of the politics of solidarity. Nevertheless, parties remain essential in the political sphere and other spheres of life: partisan ideologies still significantly shape public policy and perceptions among citizens. Therefore, they are at least as relevant - if not even more – for the politicisation of solidarity

as other actors at the meso-level. One of the core assumptions of this dissertation is that political parties are active evaluators and framers of social conflicts and thus play a part in the dialectics of solidarity (Deegan-Krause & Enyedi, 2010; Riker, 1986; Tavits & Potter, 2015).

As this dissertation applies a dialectical logic at the meso-level, it will also differ from previously existing research in two other ways. First, some scholars have studied political parties as actors who discursively construct solidarity. However, their research is mainly biased toward social and Christian democratic parties, traditionally regarded as the champions of solidarity (see Stjernø, 2005). Recent research has focused on the rising populist radical right parties, increasingly regarded as 'the new champions of solidarity' (see Lefkofridi & Michel, 2017). However, other relevant party families – such as liberals, conservatives, and greens - might not necessarily use the word "solidarity" but can deploy solidaristic reasoning and frame solidarity in a certain way. Ignoring these parties leaves out important insights into partisan solidarity discourses and the politicisation of solidarity.

Second, political parties are embedded in institutionalised forms of *electoral competition*. Each party aims to put specific problems on the agenda or simply gain votes at the expense of other parties. Political parties will often

be cross-pressured between different solidarity frames when confronted with the diversity of social challenges. Nevertheless, as ideologically consistent actors, one could expect them to use one solidarity frame as a master frame throughout their discourse that differentiates them from other parties. This differentiation leads to a *particular configuration of the political space* in which parties compete. These configurations also impact coalition-forming between parties, which is a relevant question for many – if not most – representative democracies, especially in Western Europe. As parties deal with cross-pressures such as changing electoral competition and the various challenges to solidarity, this structure of the party political sphere could change in the long term (De Vries & Hobolt, 2012; Deegan-Krause & Enyedi, 2010). Parties might either grow closer together or polarise in terms of solidarity framing. In other words, the politicisation of solidarity should also study the configuration of the party political sphere in terms of solidarity frames.

Methodology

In order to study the party political sphere based on a dialectical and discursive approach to solidarity, this dissertation proposes a *multi-method approach* based on two different methodological lines of thinking².

First and foremost, we propose a *deductive content analysis of political communication*, specifically party manifestos. By analysing party manifestos, we can assess the pervasiveness of the different solidarity frames in their discourses. Typically, party manifesto research uses the popular codebook of the Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al., 2017). As the existing coding of the manifesto project is not specific enough for our purposes, we develop our method and codebook to distinguish solidarity in parties' discourses. We use a qualitative sentence-by-sentence approach to identify solidarity frames and solidarity beneficiaries in party manifestos. While qualitative in nature, this content analysis method also enables us to conduct a quantitative analysis of these qualitative data to assess differences between discourses (Aslanidis, 2016). Therefore, we rely greatly on these solidarity frames' absolute and relative frequencies. The latter are based on the absolute number of sentences

² We conduct two or more research methods in one project. Although we aim to reaffirm the results with different methods and approaches (i.e., to find congruence in solidarity frame distinctions), we do not use these methods to triangulate one another in order to obtain a complete understanding.

with a specific solidarity frame divided by the total number of sentences with a solidarity frame in the manifesto. Based on these frequencies, we can measure the *salience* of these solidarity frames in partisan discourses. By using a few statistical measures, we are able to reliably compare the probabilities for each of the solidarity frames across parties. Furthermore, this quantification allows us to assess *oppositions* and *polarisation* between parties in terms of solidarity frames, which provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the solidarity frame conflict lines within a party system.

Afterward, we turn to *survey data* to measure *public endorsement of solidarity frames* in the third and fourth studies and *perceptions of solidarity framing by political parties* in the fifth study. Instead of assessing politicisation in terms of the salience of specific frames, we use the degree of agreement with solidarity frames among voters and the strength of the associations that politicians draw between solidarity frames and political parties to find indications of politicisation. We use a box-and-whisker-plot analysis to visually assess differences between party electorates, respectively party evaluations in terms of solidarity frames and statistical tests to evaluate their significance. Furthermore, we perform a series of regression analyses to assess the explanatory value of solidarity frame preferences for party preferences,

respectively the explanatory value of partisan and ideological biases for differences between partisan stereotypes.

Solidarity Frames, Issues, and Values

Our solidarity framework is a *new theoretical perspective* on political competition and electoral mobilisation. For years, political scientists have relied on Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) cleavage theory to understand the structure of the political sphere. This latter theory conceived modern society as divided by enduring conflicts between social groups, such as church versus state and labour versus capital (see Bartolini, 2005; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Each political party had a distinctive profile based on the social identity of its constituency. Consequently, social group affiliations and inter-group conflicts mediated voters' party affiliations. Social group characteristics also formed the basis of partisan stereotypes: voters and politicians could reliably distinguish socialist parties as secular workers' parties, liberal parties as parties for secular capitalists and self-employed individuals, and conservative parties as parties for church-goers. In short, political parties' principal role was to represent social group conflicts. At the same time, voting is simply a matter of (rationally) identifying with the interests of the ingroup and opposing those of out-groups.

However, it is well-established that these *'frozen' social bases of party affiliation have melted away*. One can no longer appropriately understand the political preferences of hyper-individualized citizens exclusively in terms of social ingroup loyalties and rational group interests (e.g., van der Brug, 2010). Furthermore, scholars also needed to determine where partisan stereotypes are now rooted. In current research on political competition and electoral mobilisation, one could distinguish two paradigms. Some scholars perceive political competition and electoral mobilisation in terms of *short-term issue-based oppositions* between political actors. Parties emphasise issues for which they are well-known and de-emphasise others. Simultaneously, voters and interest groups are active on issues that they want politicians to address. Vote choice results from a short-term congruence between parties' and voters' preferences in salient matters (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002; Stoll, 2010; van der Brug, 2004). According to this paradigm, spontaneous associations between parties and particular issues form the foundation of partisan stereotypes, rooted in the empirical reality that parties try to set the agenda by paying more attention to specific problems (De Vries & Hobolt, 2012; Green-Pedersen, 2007).

Others claim that *the preferences of parties and voters are congruent in terms of latent values*. These latent values structure the political sphere in

dimensions that enable scholars to organise information about parties' and voters' positions. Researchers have distinguished several value dimensions, such as libertarian versus authoritarian values (e.g., Hooghe & Marks, 2018), materialist versus post-materialist values (e.g., Inglehart, 2018), and equality versus inequality (e.g., Bobbio, 1996). While scholars often deem these value distinctions as opposed to the more commonly used left-right dimension, they tend to follow a left-right distinction: leftist parties as more libertarian, post-materialist, and egalitarian versus rightist parties as more authoritarian, materialist, and inegalitarian (see also Bobbio, 1996). Left-right self-identification – among politicians and voters – often is associated with multiple value dimensions (Knutsen, 1995, 2011; Middendorp, 1992). As new challenges emerge, parties integrate them into their existing (leftist or rightist) value profile, ensuring consistency in these oppositions and reducing the complexity of a multi-party system (De Vries, Hakhverdian, & Lancee, 2013; Fuchs & Klingemann, 1990; Lupton, Myers, & Thornton, 2015). Vote choice results from an alignment between parties and voters based on more durable (leftist or rightist) values, and partisan stereotypes are rooted in these partisan value differences (e.g., Hooghe & Marks, 2018; Kriesi, 2010).

Both approaches primarily have an opposite relationship to Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory. While issue ownership theory generally claims it replaces traditional cleavages (dealignment perspective), value theory often claims to supplement them (realignment perspective) (Hooghe & Marks, 2018). Therefore, most perceive both approaches as irreconcilable or at least geared to different parts of the public (van der Brug & Rekker, 2021). However, similar to Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory, both theories primarily focus on conflict, respectively the conflict in the attention for specific issues - e.g., migration versus ecology (Green-Pedersen, 2019) - and the conflict between different values - e.g., materialists versus postmaterialists (Inglehart, 2018) or socio-economic versus socio-cultural values (Kitschelt, 2004).

Research suggests that these approaches have heuristic and explanatory value: one can often distinguish parties and voters in terms of manifest issue preferences or latent value preferences, which also have explanatory power regarding party preferences. Nevertheless, they also have *limitations*. *Issue ownership focuses* on concrete and context-specific electoral campaigns yet tells us little about parties' and voters' *general positions in the political space*. Furthermore, issues are *not necessarily durable sources* for partisan

stereotypes that help voters and politicians distinguish parties. A focus on issues might therefore complicate comparative and long-term research.

Consequently, one could argue that ideological value theories are superior to understanding long-term international challenges such as globalisation (Kriesi et al., 2006) or technological change (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). However, political opponents often advocate the same values, but they *interpret the meaning of these values* – such as 'equality' and 'liberty' - *very differently* (see Dworkin, 1987). Such interpretative problems are maybe *even more pertinent for the abstract left-right dimension*. As this distinction increasingly encompasses multiple value conflicts, its meaning has become more pluralist (Freire, 2006; Knutsen, 1995). Although these various value dimensions correlate strongly for most contemporary political parties (van der Brug & van Spanje, 2009), this is not necessarily the case for all parties, as is noticed when analysing right-libertarian discourses (see Bobbio, 1997). Even politically sophisticated individuals often have incongruent positions on multiple value dimensions. Therefore, not only voters but also politicians themselves might experience difficulties understanding party competition and stereotyping themselves and others in terms of a left-right distinction (Lupton et al., 2015; Walgrave, van Erkel, Jennart, Lefevere, & Baudewyns, 2020).

Therefore, it is helpful to look for a *middle-range theory*. Both theories focus only in second-order on integration, namely as a byproduct of conflict, respectively, regarding issue attention and values. Only in the second order do these theories assert an integrative force: individuals (politicians and voters) ‘join forces’ based on either issue preferences or values. *This dissertation goes for the reverse strategy whereby individuals look for solidarity in diversity.* The solidarity frame theory is a kind of middle-range theory between issue ownership theory (Bélanger & Meguid, 2008; Petrocik, 1996) and latent ideological value theory (Kriesi et al., 2012). The solidarity frame approach does not distinguish between materialist and postmaterialist needs or socio-economic and socio-cultural issues. Instead, the solidarity frame approach differentiates four logics of building solidarity that could come into conflict but could also be complementary. Its underlying theoretical framework defines solidarity as subject to a dialectical process. While a dialectical process starts as a conflict (thesis – antithesis) between frames, notably between solidarity frames based on alternative structural or intersubjective principles, it also implies the possibility of convergence (synthesis) between solidarity frames in later phases.

Research Aims

The underlying assumption of this dissertation is that solidarity is becoming a kind of super-issue on which parties will display their programmatic urge and which structures their political conflicts based on dialectical relationships between solidarity types. Both mainstream approaches to the political sphere – i.e., issues and values - focus first on conflict. In contrast, the integrative force of conflict is offered a secondary status, respectively for conglomerates of individuals (issues) and social groups (values). *However, is it not the case that in today's times – characterised by a plethora of challenges to solidarity - everyone wants to belong, yet the problem is that we fundamentally differ about how and to whom we want to belong?* Political parties could build rhetoric that cuts across multiple issues and social groups by framing solidarity in their communication. These discourses express their programmatic (policy-seeking) urge to strengthen social cohesion in society and connect them with the interests and concerns of (potential) voters (vote-seeking).

However, the politicisation of solidarity in the party political sphere remains *underdeveloped*. Previous research on political parties and solidarity has privileged social and Christian democratic parties as traditional champions of solidarity. Current research focuses on the surging populist radical right

parties as new champions of solidarity. However, these *biases* neglect other relevant parties and ignore interparty dynamics. To a certain extent, each solidarity frame conflicts with the others. However, they could also be complementary. Whether mechanisms are deemed conflictual or complementary depends on how political parties *differentiate* themselves in terms of framing solidarity and dealing with party competition and solidarity challenges. Differentiation also entails the exclusionary counterparts of solidarity that parties could downplay or emphasise in their discourse.

Therefore, the first aim of this dissertation is *to understand distinctions in the supply-side* in terms of solidarity frames. We propose three ways to achieve this research aim. First, the dissertation takes the six solidarity frame conflict lines seriously as potentially underlying the dimensionality of the political sphere. Can we distinguish parties in terms of which solidarity frames they use? Second, the dissertation analyses how this structure of the party political sphere changes in the long term. Do we find similar conflicts over time? Finally, we also assess the prevalence of the exclusionary component of solidarity frames. Can we differentiate parties based on the prevalence of inclusionary or exclusionary frames?

The second aim of this dissertation is *to assess the demand-side of the politics of solidarity*. Parties have a two-way relationship with the public that is still relevant, despite increased volatility. On the one hand, solidarity frames connect various partisan issue statements and become information supplements for their supporters. On the other hand, to the extent that solidarity frames are common threads in the party's communication, they will become a hummable tune for their supporters. Again, we can obtain this research aim in three ways. We first assess whether solidarity frame preferences of party electorates (as aggregates of individual voters) are similar to those of their preferred parties. Second, we evaluate the congruence between parties' and voters' positions on solidarity dimensions. Finally, we test solidarity frame preferences' impact on voters' party preferences.

The final aim of this dissertation is *to further understand the link between the supply- and demand-side by assessing the heuristic value of solidarity frames for politicians*. Can individuals make meaningful distinctions between parties in terms of solidarity frames? Inspired by socio-cognitive psychology, this dissertation assesses *partisan stereotypes* rooted in real differences in solidarity framing by political parties. More specifically, we focus on local politicians who act as intermediaries between supply and demand by cueing politically inactive

citizens to stereotype parties in terms of solidarity frames and by communicating voters' solidarity preferences to their party leaders.

Case

This dissertation focuses on the case of Belgium, and more specifically, the Flemish party system that represents the majority of the Belgian population (about sixty percent). We identify Belgium and especially Flanders as a somewhat vulnerable context for the wicked problems that challenge solidarity: retrenchment, migration, and globalization. First, welfare state reforms have found their way into Belgium and Flanders, although the unions were not easily persuaded (Schmidt, 2003). Instead of -only- providing passive benefits, policy makers and experts increasingly designed social policies aimed at activation (Vandenbroucke, 2000, 2001). The institutionalisation of the active welfare state is still not going smoothly. For instance, many critics refer to the failure of Belgian employment policies to reduce the proportion of children and working-age adults living in jobless and poor households (Vandenbroucke & Vinck, 2015). Social benefits are unevenly distributed among recipients. Some speak of a Mattheus effect, with individuals in the higher-income categories benefiting from social policies such as formal childcare (Lancker & Ghysels, 2012). Another salient issue is the reintegration of long-term sick individuals in the workplace,

where critics of the active welfare state refer to the problems of work-load that are not taken into account when these individuals are activated (Van de Cauter & Braeckman, 2018). Some, therefore, argue in favour of effective minimum income protection to counter the disadvantages of a strict focus on activation (Cantillon & Van den Bosch, 2017)

Second, Belgium and Flanders have experienced an increase in attention to diversity. As is the case in many West European countries, the Flemish populace is ageing. Furthermore, previously marginalised groups – such as the LGBT+ community – have gained recognition and representation, both in politics and in the broader cultural contexts (Eeckhout & Paternotte, 2011; Kerrigan & Vanlee, 2020). For instance, Belgium became the second country to legally recognize same-sex marriages in June 2003 and legalised adoption by same-sex couples in 2006. Regarding immigration and ethnocultural diversity, the Flemish region has one of the highest foreign-born population shares in the OECD (Dancygier & Walter, 2015). Issues related to this particular topic have become increasingly salient political topics of contestation (Vangoidsenhoven & Pilet, 2015).

Third, over the last decades, the Belgian nation-state has been challenged. Centrifugal tendencies in Belgium have led to quasi-autonomous

regional constituencies (see Béland & Lecours, 2005; Hanschel, 2014). Since 1993, Belgium has been officially a federal state, consisting of three regions (i.e., the Flemish Region, the Walloon Region, and the capital region of Brussels) and three language communities (i.e., the Dutch-speaking Flemish community, the French-speaking community, and the small German-speaking community). Each language community has its own political parties, and citizens can only vote for parties and politicians from their community. Some parties have pushed for further regionalisation (i.e., confederalisation) or even total secession from the Belgian state. These centrifugal tendencies at the national level are impacted by processes of globalisation, which challenge both Belgian national and Flemish regional autonomy. Economically speaking, the Flemish region has one of the lowest shares of non-offshorable occupations in the OECD and is therefore subject to international labour competition (Dancygier & Walter, 2015). Europeanisation and internationalisation have affected policy-making and policy processes at both federal and regional levels (Beyers & Bursens, 2006). As a member of the European Monetary Union and the European Union, Belgium was affected by the euro crisis and the refugee crisis of the last few years. Among politicians and policy-makers, these problems have both

strengthened the call for more – national or regional – autonomy and more supranational or intergovernmental cooperation at the European level.

As the electoral system of the Flemish region is proportional, it is characterised by a fragmented multi-party system with a high effective number of parties. Due to the fragmented nature of the party political sphere and the problematisation of solidarity, we expect that the Flemish political system is a most-likely case to find a diversity of solidarity frames among parties and voters. We thus expect that Belgium, and especially Flanders, can be identified as a reasonably interesting case to assess whether a solidarity framework is helpful to draw meaningful distinctions between parties, whether we can distinguish voters based on conflicting solidarity frames, and whether solidarity frames have a heuristic value for individuals to distinguish political parties.

More specifically, we focus on the six main political parties within the Flemish region: the green party (Groen), the social democratic party (*sp.a*, later *Vooruit*), the Christian democratic party (*CD&V*), the liberal party (*Open VLD*), the conservative regionalist party (*N-VA*), and the populist radical right party (*Vlaams Belang*)³. In the context of the politicization solidarity, we see that

³ Recent elections also saw some other parties emerge which were not included in this analysis. Of these parties the Socialist party (PVDA-PTB) is the most interesting. While they were almost able to surpass the electoral threshold of 5% in the 2014 elections, in 2019 they obtained a sufficient number of votes for the federal and regional parliaments. As

parties that scholars traditionally associate with solidarity (Christian democrats *CD&V* and social democrats *sp. a - now: Vooruit*) have lost votes to benefit the three other parties, i.e., *Groen*, *N-VA*, and *Vlaams Belang*. During the '90s, the main fear for the traditional parties was the further expansion of the radical right *Vlaams Blok* (now: *Vlaams Belang*), which attracted more than 10% of the Flemish voters in the 'Black Sunday' national election of 1991. The electoral power of the traditional parties and the populist radical right party had massively deteriorated since the 2010s. While the three traditional parties - especially the Christian democrats - experienced rather dramatic declines in their vote shares and the vote share of the populist radical right has declined to the lowest point, *N-VA* has become the most successful party within the Flemish party system with approximately 32 % in the whole Flemish region.

Chapter Overview

This dissertation thus consists of *five chapters*, excluding the introductory chapter and the conclusion, divided into three parts. Each chapter constitutes a self-contained study comprised of an introduction, theory, a data and methods

our party manifesto analyses focus on a time period when this party was not electorally relevant, we decided to leave them out of our other analyses as well.

section, results, a discussion, and a conclusion. Inevitably, there is some overlap between the chapters and this introduction and between the chapters themselves in terms of theory and methodology. However, the preferred reading order is the chronological order.

The first two chapters focus on the *supply-side of solidarity frames*. In both chapters, we use deductive content analysis of party manifestos. However, the emphasis differs per chapter. Chapter 1 tests solidarity frame theory using a deductive content analysis of Belgian (Flemish) party manifestos in 1995 and 2014. On the one hand, we assess whether parties can be differentiated regarding the pervasiveness of different solidarity frames in their party manifestos. We mainly focus on two axes, namely a group-based versus empathic (short: GB-E) and an exchange-based versus compassionate (short: EB-C) axis. On the other hand, we test whether the current pressures of globalization and immigration have led to partisan polarization on both axes between the elections of 1995 and 2014. Chapter 2 is limited to an analysis of Flemish rightist party manifestos during the elections of 2014 and focuses on the distinction between inclusionary and exclusionary framing. More specifically, in this chapter we test whether the populist radical right *Vlaams Belang* draws the most narrow boundaries of solidarity, particularly through the

exclusion of immigrant and Muslim' others'. While we compare the discourse of the populist radical right with all mainstream rightist discourses, we specifically focus on comparing *Vlaams Belang* and their main competitors *N-VA*.

The following two chapters focus on *the demand-side*. Chapter 3 is a 'symmetric' assessment of solidarity frames. Here, the analysis assesses whether solidarity frames are a useful concept to distinguish party electorates and, afterwards, to the extent to which parties and their electorates have congruent positions. Chapter 4 is an 'asymmetric' assessment of solidarity frames. Here, the analysis explores the explanatory value of the solidarity frames on the propensity to vote for different parties. Furthermore, the analysis also evaluates whether solidarity frames complement left-right self-placement as an explanation for party preference. Both analyses use the same dataset, based on a questionnaire sent to 3485 panel members in October 2018.

Chapter 5 turns to *solidarity frames as a source of partisan stereotypes*. Therefore, this chapter discusses this particular aspect of politics. More specifically, we focus on local politicians' partisan stereotypes, as local politicians have an intermediary position that connects parties (supply) and voters (demand). This chapter thus tests whether partisan stereotypes lead to similar distinctions of parties in terms of solidarity frames as the distinctions

found in the supply-side (parties) and demand-side (voters) analysis. Furthermore, we test for partisan and ideological biases in these stereotypes. We test for partisan biases by measuring whether partisans would evaluate their party more favourably regarding preferred solidarity frames than competing parties. We test for ideological biases by evaluating whether partisan stereotypes regarding preferred solidarity frames are more favourable for ideologically close parties than ideologically distant parties.

It's All About Solidarity, Stupid! How Solidarity Frames Structure the Party Political Sphere

Abstract

Inspired by Lipset and Rokkan, political science focused on party oppositions as a derivative of historically anchored conflicts among social groups. Yet, parties are not mere social mirrors but also active interpreters of social context. In a globalized era they deploy conflicting frames on how solidarity may be preserved as recent work on populist welfare chauvinism shows. However, the role of party political agency in framing solidarity lacks an overarching framework. We therefore propose a Durkheimian model that takes the integrative pole of the conflict-integration dialectic seriously and distinguishes group-based, compassionate, exchange-based and empathic frames. We test this solidarity framework in Flanders (Belgium) because of its fragmented party system and increasing economic and cultural openness. Our content analyses of party manifestos suggest a solidarity-based deductive approach to study partisan competition is relevant because partisan differentiation along solidarity lines is growing and this evolution converges with similar inductive expert-based and issue-based findings.

Keywords: solidarity, party competition, manifesto, cleavage, framing, integration, conflict

Introduction

For years, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) have inspired political scientists to study the party political sphere in terms of structural conflicts between social groups as a consequence of distinct historical revolutions. The principal role of political parties was to give expression to these group conflicts. Yet, we argue that the predominance of neoliberal austerity and increasing ethno-cultural diversification over the past decades have made a new theoretical model to study the party political sphere necessary. This model focuses on the way parties frame how social solidarity may be preserved.

While Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory has led to fruitful cross-national comparisons of European party systems (e.g. Bartolini & Mair, 1990; Franklin, Mackie, & Valen, 2009), many scholars associate two important problems with it (Enyedi, 2005; Kriesi et al., 2012). First, in contemporary post-industrial societies group memberships are less static and more liquid than Lipset and Rokkan's perspective warrants (Bauman, 2000a; Ignazi, 2014). Self-identification is the outcome of an individual trajectory rather than a pre-given. Hence, some contend that we witness party de-alignment where frozen cleavages are melting away and the linkage between party competition and the

social structure is diminishing (e.g. Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002). Second, political parties are not passive vessels expressing pre-established social divisions but also active evaluators and framers of social conflicts (Deegan-Krause & Enyedi, 2010; Riker, 1986; Tavits & Potter, 2015). As a consequence, others argue that we are currently witnessing a process of re-alignment whereby new social conflicts either replace or become more important than old ones (e.g. Hooghe & Marks, 2018; Kitschelt, 1994).

Yet, few researchers take into account that the individualized times of today coincide with revolutions of globalization and migration, which necessitates a different view on what constitutes the contemporary basis of the cleavages (for an interesting exception, see Bornschier, 2010). In their Parsonian structural-functionalist perspective Lipset and Rokkan explicitly stress the conflict pole of the conflict-integration dialectic (1967: 5). According to this perspective solidarity is relevant, but only to those who thought the working class needed better social protection (Spicker, 2006). However, the challenges of today are different: solid group categories have melted in the air and left the individual full of agency but in a structural wasteland. Hence, the crucial conflicts of today are about the best possible way to preserve social cohesion and this means solidarity has now become everyone's concern.

Accordingly, the programmatic urge of parties that strive for political change will best be revealed in the conflicting solidarity frames they adopt to protect or enhance social cohesion. By framing and priming particular solidarities in their communication, political parties build a rhetoric which cuts across multiple issues and social groups. Yet, the role of party political agency in communicating and framing solidarity remains underdeveloped (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). While Baldwin (1990) and Stjernø (2005) have explored similar questions, they did when solidarity was still an exclusive prerogative of leftist group thinking.

Our perspective encompasses more party families, including rightist populist parties that present themselves as “new champions of solidarity” (Banting and Kymlicka, 2017). This is important because especially the solidarity frames of new(er) political parties might stimulate new party political struggle around solidarity (Hooghe and Marks, 2018). Examples hereof are the conflicts between ‘welfare chauvinists’ (Schumacher & Van Kersbergen, 2016) and cosmopolitans (Bauböck & Scholten, 2016) or those between liberal nationalists (Kymlicka, 2005) and neo-liberal multiculturalists (Žižek, 1997). However, these examples of the party politics of solidarity lack an overarching theoretical framework, not the least because the traditional cleavage theory of Lipset and

Rokkan has limited attention for the factors that 'bind individuals into collectives' (Hooghe and Marks, 2018).

We fill this lacuna by adopting a Durkheimian perspective that fully appraises the dialectical aspect of the relation between conflict and integration, but nevertheless takes the integrative component more seriously than for instance Lipset and Rokkan (Lukes, 1977). Concretely, we use a recent dialectical adaptation of Durkheim's classical distinction between mechanical and organic solidarity (Thijssen, 2012; 2016). Because mechanical solidarity is not gradually replaced by organic solidarity as was predicted by Durkheim, it makes sense to treat the different poles of mechanical and organic solidarity as fundamentally conflicting that can perfectly coexist over time.

We test this Durkheimian solidarity framework by means of a deductive content analysis of Belgian (Flemish) party manifestos in 1995 and 2014. Yet, because almost all countries will in one way or another be confronted with a solidarity - threatening context, we believe that the results of our Flemish explorations will be appropriate for most industrialized societies. Firstly, it makes sense to look at a fragmented party space in terms of the pervasiveness of different solidarity frames instead of the more traditional cleavage theory or more inductive spatial models. We find considerable variation across the two

diagonal axes of the solidarity framework: group-based - empathic (GB-E-axis) and exchange-based - compassionate (EB-C axis). Secondly, the salience of the former increases over time in terms of a growing distance between parties emphasizing group-based solidarity frames (e.g. welfare chauvinism of populist parties) and parties emphasizing empathic solidarity frames (e.g. cosmopolitanism). Thirdly, in general party positions on the latter EB-C axes are converging on the exchange-based pole (neoliberal multiculturalism) with the social-democratic party and greens as the only contenders strongly endorsing compassionate solidarity frames. Interestingly, these evolutions are largely congruent with those specified by scholars focusing on the effects of policy shifts on the structuring of the party political sphere (e.g. Adams & Somer-Topcu, 2009).

Our paper is structured as follows. First, we elaborate the Durkheimian framework in order to identify partisan solidarity frames and their evolution. Next, we discuss why the Flemish (Belgium) party system is a good test case for the framework and explain the modalities of our manifesto research. Finally, we present the results of our content analyses and discuss the implications hereof in terms of the structure of the party political sphere.

A Solidarity 'Frame'-Work

How are societies held together in modern times? In *De la division du travail social*, Durkheim (2014 [1893]) distinguished *mechanical* and *organic solidarity*.

The former emphasizes the importance of a high degree of perceived similarity among group members, who identify themselves with a *conscience collective* that compels them to support their group members. They share a set of rights and duties, guarded and regulated by group pressure and norms; just like family members care about each other because they are family. Free-rider behaviour is a potential danger for mechanical solidarity. Therefore, free-riders and deviants deserve severe and effective punishments (Fararo & Doreian, 1998a).

Durkheim theorized that modernization processes and increasing specialization led to more differentiated societies characterized by organic solidarity. Individuals are now bound together by their differences in the sense that they are often complementary and create reciprocal interdependence. The commitment to reciprocate is strengthened by contractual obligations. Ideally, mechanical solidarity is present in primitive societies; however, it also survives in modern organic societies.

Interestingly, many contemporary social scientists are reluctant to see reciprocal exchange as an integrative principle, especially when it is viewed as

capitalistic exchange. After all, the neoliberal zeitgeist of the last decades has led to welfare state retrenchment, which can hardly be seen as a manifestation of solidarity. As a consequence, neoliberalism is often defined as the negation of solidarity (e.g. Kriesi, 2015). However, Hirschmann (1977) has convincingly argued that this interpretation falsely equates a singular historical outcome (neoliberalism) with the underlying principle (the civilizing role of trade and material interests). Moreover, only by clearly differentiating group-based principles from exchange-based principles, a clear distinction is possible between their dialectical counterparts: compassionate and empathic solidarity frames. While the former stresses the importance of commonality in difference, for example when one focuses on the common nationality of individuals that are socio-economically very different. The latter implies a valuable difference in commonality, for example when one acknowledges that not all nationals have the same capabilities. In other words, while the mechanical dialectic stresses the integrative principle of in-group and outgroup bordering, the organic dialectic focuses on the integrative principle of mutual exchange which might lead to in-change, change in one's own moral sentiments.

Yet, just like Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory, Durkheim's early solidarity theory has drawn criticisms for its functionalism and structural focus: solidarity is a *fait social*, closely linked to macro-sociological indicators such as collective identity, division of labour and prevalence of either punitive or contractual law. In this respect, it makes sense to integrate some micro-sociological elements in Durkheim's macro-sociological framework and to treat solidarity as a socially constructed or a 'framed' reality instead of a *social fact sui generis*. Moreover, because we will identify these frames in the manifestoes of political parties, solidarity generally takes the form of a behavioural intention, primarily in terms of policy proposals aiming at social change but sometimes also in terms of the strengthening of social capital at the grassroots level. In other research, one sometimes makes a rigorous distinction between such forms of political solidarity and social solidarity (e.g. Scholz, 2008), for instance to study 'crowding-out' effects (Van Oorschot & Arts, 2005). However, given that ultimately party manifestoes also tend to 'politicize' social solidarity, in the sense that social cohesion is formulated as a policy goal, the distinction is less meaningful here.

In order to specify different *solidarity frames*, we rely on the integrative typology of Thijssen (2012), who tries to bridge the gap between Durkheim's

structural solidarity theory and contemporary intersubjective approaches such as Honneth's recognition theory (1996). Thijssen argues that each of Durkheim's two solidarity types involves a *dialectical process* linking universal structural principles (forces of system integration) with particular intersubjective orientations (forces of social integration). Consequently, this typology explicitly scrutinizes the subjective impact of structural principles, such as collective identity and division of labour, on rational reflections and emotive reactions such as compassion and empathy. While Lipset and Rokkan's Parsonian cleavage framework (1967) mainly focused on in-group allegiance and especially how this generates conflict with particular outgroups, Thijssen's Durkheimian solidarity framework stresses 1) the integrative power of similarity as well as difference and 2) processes whereby these integrative principles are evaluated in terms of marginal individuals.

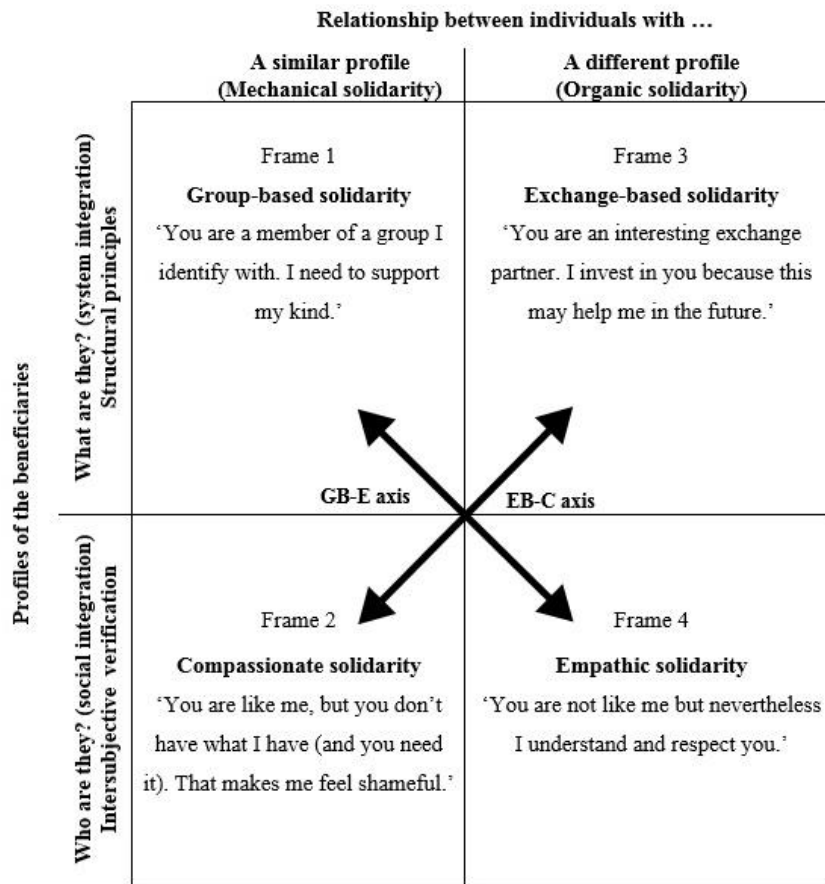


Figure 1: the four solidarity frames (found in Thijssen, 2012; 2016) and the diagonal interrelations (added).

The mechanical dialectic relies on an evaluation of the structural principle of the similarity of group members (group-based thesis) in terms of group members situated in the fringes (compassionate antithesis). The organic dialectic relies on the evaluation of the structural principle of the civilizing role

of exchange between partners with complementary qualities (exchange-based thesis), in terms of individuals who are so different that they seem to have little to contribute (empathic antithesis). Due to the challenges of migration and globalization, advanced capitalist democracies are increasingly confronted with marginalized individuals with questionable qualities. Hence, evaluations of mechanical and organic solidarity have become more frequent and more urgent. In such circumstances, political parties tend to fall back on some kind of solidarity master frame that can be more inclusive or exclusive.

Welfare chauvinism (e.g. De Koster et al., 2013; Kitschelt & McGann, 1995) is an example of a frame that involves a mechanical exclusive synthesis in the sense that the system of social protection is reserved exclusively for those who belong to the in-group. Crucial is that the in-group derives its meaning from the negation of a certain outgroup. For example, the welfare state takes care of the rights for those that are not allochtones. Hence, allochtones are not only those on the outside, they define who is in: *their* pain is not *ours*, because they are fundamentally different from us, the in-group. On the other hand, both Kymlicka's *liberal nationalism* (2015) and Rorty's *liberal compassion* (1989) are examples of mechanical inclusive syntheses which involve a dialectical process of coming to see other beings as "one of us" and "requires a re-description of

what we ourselves are like (our commonality)” (Rorty, 1989: xvi). Hereby the in-group gets its meaning from a dynamic identification process that accommodates the unfamiliar. Again, the trigger is to cope with the unpleasant encounter of the neediness of an outgroup member who is situated in the fringes of the in-group. In sum, while exclusive mechanical syntheses frame solidarity as a structural group-based principle, inclusive mechanical syntheses are framing solidarity as feelings of compassion.

Neoliberal multiculturalism (Bauböck and Scholten, 2016) is an example of a frame that involves an organic exclusive synthesis which reserves the exchange system (trade) to those who are able to market themselves and to create meaningful inputs now or in the future. The proper exchange partners are defined by what a passive bystander does not contribute. *Cosmopolitanism* (Archibugi, 2008) and *workshop democracy* à la Sennett (2012) can on the other hand be seen as examples of organic inclusive syntheses which involve a process of coming to see other beings as a priori valuable by virtue of their otherness and by adapting and extending the understanding of what are proper exchange goods. Hereby, the exchange partner is redefined in terms of a more universal category. In sum, while exclusive organic syntheses frame solidarity as a

structural exchange-based principle, inclusive organic syntheses are inclined to frame solidarity as feelings of intersubjective empathy.

It seems logical that inclusive evaluations stand in a natural political conflict with exclusive evaluations. In this sense both the mechanical and organic dialectic internally harbour some conflict potential. Nevertheless, probably the most intense party political conflicts can be found across the diagonals because these solidarity frames are opposing in terms of both the principles of structural versus social integration and the principles of homophily versus heterophily (see Figure 1). On the one hand, group-based solidarity is based on a *structural* principle of *similarity* between the members of the group (*they are members of my group*), while empathic solidarity centres on the *intersubjective* valuation of *difference* (*that person is different from who I am*). On the other hand, exchange-based solidarity is built on the idea that society is a system that is organized around people with complementary differences that are in a relationship of serial reciprocity and interdependence (*they are my exchange-partners*), while compassionate solidarity follows from the encounter with people in a marginalized position and the intersubjective verification of these people as equals (*that person should be in an equal position as I am*). These diametrical oppositions are depicted by the diagonal arrows in Figure .

Hence, in line with Lipset and Rokkan who derive a two dimensional space from Parsons AGIL-scheme, we expect that political parties can be ordered within a two-dimensional space generated by the two diagonals of “the double dichotomy” (1967: 10). While one axis is grounded in the opposition of frames that stress the structural principle of similarity of group members and frames that stress that everybody’s contribution is valuable even if they are completely different from us (group-based – empathy axis, in short GB-E axis), the other is centred on the opposition between frames that stress the structural principle of the utility of complementary differences and frames that stress the compassion with those that are dependent and vulnerable (exchange-based – compassionate axis, in short EB-C axis).

H1: Parties can be differentiated in terms of the pervasiveness of different solidarity frames in their party manifestos based on two axes, namely a GB-E and an EB-C axis.

Obviously, parties will often be cross-pressured between different solidarity frames. Yet, we expect the way parties deal with such cross-pressures depends on the same national (e.g. changing electoral competition) and international factors (e.g. neo-liberal austerity and growing ethnic and cultural diversity) that scholars have distinguished in studying the effect of policy shifts

on the structure of the party political sphere (De Vries & Hobolt, 2012; Deegan-Krause & Enyedi, 2010). More specifically, we expect that the current pressures of globalization and immigration might lead to partisan polarization on both GB-E and EB-C axes. Firstly, in a globalizing context of neoliberal austerity, we expect that the economic and financial challenges motivate parties to polarize on the EB-C axis. On the one hand, leftist parties (social democrats and greens) will assert a compassionate solidarity frame, as they wish to distance themselves from austerity measures while simultaneously remaining responsive to each other (Adams and Somer-Topcu, 2009; van der Brug and van Spanje, 2009; Tavits and Potter, 2015; De Vries and Solaz, 2019). On the other hand, all other parties will find exchange-based solidarity frames attractive to win votes and remain responsive to shifts from ideologically close and relevant rivals (Adams and Somer-Topcu, 2009). Consequently, this will make most non-leftist parties less distinctive from each other on the EB-C axis. However, in a context of increasing ethnic and cultural diversity, all parties and especially parties on the right will have an incentive to polarize on the GB-E axis. In these circumstances, the radical right populist parties have an incentive to assert a group-based solidarity frame. This puts other parties, and especially parties on the right, under pressure to either adopt a similarly group-based solidarity

frame or to affirm the opposite, namely an empathic solidarity frame (Schumacher and Van Kersbergen, 2016; Kriesi et al, 2012).

H2: in a globalizing context of neoliberal austerity the polarization on the EB-C axis will increase, due to 2a) the insistence of the leftist parties (social democrats and greens) on compassionate (C-) frames and 2b) the attractiveness of the exchange-based (EB-)frames for all other parties.

H3: in a context of growing ethnic and cultural diversity the polarization on the GB-E axis will increase, due to 3a) the insistence of radical-right populist parties (Vlaams Blok/Belang) on group-based (GB-) frames and 3b) the other parties either following or affirming the opposite empathic (E-) frames.

Cases, data and methods

We conduct a deductive content analysis of party manifestos, which are invaluable for mapping parties within a multidimensional space (see Franzmann & Kaiser, 2006). Although most voters do not read party manifestos, parties use them to provide narratives and defences of policy choices (Smith & Smith, 2000) that are not so different from messages in other media (Hofferbert & Budge, 1992). By analysing their manifestos, we can assess the pervasiveness of the different solidarity frames. The case in question is Flanders (Belgium), which has

a fragmented multi-party system with a high effective number of parties. As parties (re)shape their master frames when responding to strategic pressures resulting from 1) major changes in the sizes of their constituencies and government coalitions and 2) the occurrence of (inter)national challenges (De Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Deegan-Krause and Enyedi, 2010), we assume that between 1995 and 2014 Flanders has seen important changes in both respects:

- 1) The federal election of 1995 was all about the fear for the further expansion of the radical right *Vlaams Blok*, which was able to attract more than 10% of the Flemish voters in the preceding 'Black Sunday' national election of 1991. Nevertheless, the electoral expansion of the radical right was largely contained by the *cordon sanitaire* (Pauwels, 2011). Consequently, the coalition Christian and social-democrats could consolidate its governing coalition. The election of 2014 was all about the question whether the Flemish nationalist party N-VA could further drain the electorate of *Vlaams Belang* (successor of *Vlaams Blok*) which lost 11 seats in the Flemish elections of 2009. The electoral power of the traditional parties has massively deteriorated and they rightly feared that N-VA would become *incontournable* in a new Flemish coalition.

- 2) The two main international structural challenges for advanced capitalist democracies occurring over the last two decades are globalization and migration (Beramendi, Häusermann, Kitschelt, & Kriesi, 2015). Belgium, and especially Flanders, can be identified as a fairly vulnerable context in both respects because over the last decades it has become a context with a) one of the lowest shares of non-offshorable occupations and b) with one of the highest shares of foreign born population in the OECD (Dancygier & Walter, 2015).

Typically, party manifesto research uses the popular codebook of the Manifesto Project, which provides codes for “Civic Mindedness” or for referents such as “Underprivileged Minority Groups” (Lehmann et al., 2017). Unfortunately, the existing coding of the manifesto project is not specific enough for our purposes, for the kind of sentences they refer to are still rather heterogeneous and do not differentiate various solidarity frames. Therefore, we develop our own method and codebook to distinguish solidarity in parties’ discourses. Because one “cannot escape the interpretive nature of any study of ideology” (Gerring, 1998, pp. 297-298) we primarily use a qualitative sentence-by-sentence approach to identify the solidarity frames. A dictionary based automated coding, whereby a computer allocates text units to an *a priori* or a

posteriori defined coding scheme, proved not to be feasible due to fact that solidarity frames cannot be linked unambiguously to a concise set of (combinations of) substantives, adjectives, adverbs and verbs (dissimilar from Laver, Benoit, and Garry (2003), who claimed feasibility). Only about 30% of our qualitatively deduced corpus of sentences were recuperated in an automated coding procedure based on a list of keywords using *Yoshikoder*. Nevertheless, the intersection proved to be useful for triangulation purposes and to find extra sentences with solidarity frames that were initially overlooked (see appendix).

In order to recognize a solidarity frame, a codebook with generic word combinations was used as reference. We ensure the reliability of the findings by regularly discussing the content and the validity of the coded sentences. In case of disagreement the authors reconsidered their theoretical assumptions and the codebook. This more reflexive, intersubjective and incremental procedure is regularly used in qualitative content analysis and is often used to increase the validity of the coding procedure.

In line with Thijssen's typology (see Figure 1), group-based solidarity frames either refer to a certain (desired) commonality and a sense of togetherness (due to common interests and goals, shared values and norms, or common rights and duties) or to the fact that a perceived outgroup is

fundamentally different from the in-group. Secondly, we code *compassionate solidarity* if a party claims that a referent experiences risks, is a victim, or is marginalized and thus deserves help. Thirdly, we code *exchange-based solidarity* if a party refers to the usefulness of ‘exchange partners’ in terms of actual or future contributions or willingness to contribute. These exchange partners are rewarded or stimulated but can also be demanded to contribute more in order to receive support. Finally, we code *empathic solidarity* when a party refers to diversity, being different or having a unique (set of) characteristic(s) as something to be respected and taken into account. Sentences praising the diversity of a larger in-group (e.g. the nation) are also coded as manifestations of empathic solidarity, as such utterances show that “we” are characterized by heterogeneity instead of homogeneity.

In Table 1, we provide more examples for each solidarity frame. To illustrate the relevance of our solidarity frames, these example sentences link with different policy domains, such as labour market policies, migration and asylum, and education. However, we cannot deny that there is an elective affinity between frames and policy domains: both group-based and empathic frames are often used with regards to identity issues, while both compassionate

and exchange-based frames are predominantly used with regards to redistributive issues.

Group-based solidarity	Exchange-based solidarity
<p>A country where a deal is a deal, a country where people feel at home.</p> <p>Only this separation can guarantee that the Flemish can take their place as free people in Europe and the world.</p> <p>A solidary and responsible EU must above all be a project of shared ownership, in which all citizens can participate in order to let the cooperation grow from the bottom-up.</p>	<p>Migrants who have been working in Belgium for some time, are eligible for a residence permit of indefinite duration.</p> <p>Pupils who opt for vocational education must feel that society needs them, more than is the case today.</p> <p>Stronger social protection, a higher pension and higher disability benefits give entrepreneurs more freedom to take risks and invest.</p>
Compassionate solidarity	Empathic solidarity
<p>This means that childcare must be accessible for children from a disadvantaged background, for children of parents who do not work part-time, for children of single parents, or for children with disabilities.</p> <p>For full-time equivalent gross wages that are lower than the reference wage, we lower the employer's contribution by a fixed amount per percent that the wage is below the median.</p> <p>The chronically ill who face an accumulation of worries, will suffer financially after some time; even those who have an average income.</p>	<p>People decide for themselves how they live and with who they live, either in traditional or new forms of cohabitation.</p> <p>So that children get to know each other's background, and that understanding takes the place of ignorance.</p> <p>This sharply contrasts with the original goal of adult education (...): the multifaceted development of every adult (emancipatory work).</p>

Table 1 examples of coded sentences

In the initial phase of the coding process, we coded entire party manifestos (i.e. those of the Flemish elections of 2014)⁴. In a second phase, we drew both random and stratified samples (per chapter) from these coded manifestos (n= ±1000 sentences) and again calculated relative frequencies for each solidarity frame. We then tested whether sample proportions are

⁴ We collected the party manifestos from the corpus of the Comparative Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al., 2017) and from the websites of the political parties themselves.

significantly different from population proportions using z-tests. We drew six samples for each party⁵ and calculated the percentages for 9x30 categories of solidarity frames. Ultimately, only 12% of these scores were significantly different from the corresponding population proportions. Furthermore, we found no significant difference between proportions based on random sampling and those based on stratified sampling. We therefore decided to rely on random samples of approximately 1000 sentences for the manifestos of 1995. In appendix, the reader can find a list of the coded party manifestos, the number of sentences per sample and per population, and the number of sentences.

We assess the prevalence of solidarity frames within a party system and how they form the dimensions of this party system. Therefore, we rely to a great extent on their relative frequencies which are based on the absolute number of sentences with a specific solidarity frame divided by the total number of sentences with a solidarity frame in the manifesto. In this respect it is important to stress that the N-value in the denominator is not always equal. Hence, absolute frequencies are important too. For instance, if we found that party X used 22 sentences with a compassionate solidarity frame while in total 117

⁵ Party manifesto of *Vlaams Belang* was too small to sample (865 sentences).

sentences contained one of the four solidarity frames, then the probability for compassionate solidarity would be 22/117 or 18.8%. In order to reliably compare the probabilities for each of the solidarity frames across parties and to assess the dimensions of solidarity within the Flemish party system, we calculate inter-party standardized probabilities (ISP) per solidarity mode to assess the distance between parties. For instance, if the probability of finding a solidarity frame in the manifesto of party X equals 18.8% its corresponding ISP would be equal to: $(18.8 - \text{mean percentage for compassionate solidarity across all parties}) / \text{standard deviation of the percentages for compassionate solidarity across all parties}$).

Finally, we test our assumption that the two most important oppositions underlying the dimensionality of the party system are the GB-E and EB-C axes. In order to assign party scores on these dimensions, we subtract the ISP's of empathic from those of group-based solidarity and those of compassionate from exchange-based. However, this approach assumes orthogonality of the dimensions, which might not be the case (see Marks & Steenbergen, 2002 for a discussion and examples). In order to assess whether the Flemish party landscape can be organized in terms of two orthogonal solidarity dimensions that each reflect two diametrically opposed solidarity frames, we compare the

plot resulting from our deductive approach with that of purely explorative correspondence analysis (see Beh, 2004). This method shares similarities with principal component analysis as it inductively infers underlying dimensions and positions of objects on these dimensions and displays them in a two-dimensional space. While the correspondence analysis uses the complete two-way contingency table with all ISP's and let the data "speak for itself", it provides little support in the assignment of meaning to the underlying dimensions which is essentially left to the creativity of the researcher (see Greenacre, 1984 for a discussion on this topic). In that sense the inductive correspondence approach complements our deductive approach. Hence, a similar relative positioning of the parties in both the deductive plot and the inductive correspondence plot confirms our theoretical assumptions regarding the meaning of the dimensions.

Results

In this section, we discuss the results of our content analysis of Flemish party manifestos. First, we go deeper into the kind of solidarity frames parties tend to use based on a qualitative content analysis. Moreover, we investigate whether the prevalence of certain frames has changed overtime, notably between 1995 and 2014. Second, in order to test the robustness of our qualitative findings we compare these results with a quantitative content analysis. Finally, we provide

overview plots of the Flemish party competition in terms of the two diagonal axes.

Comparative Qualitative Analysis: Differential Manifestation of Solidarity Frames

Firstly, both in 1995 and in 2014, solidarity is predominantly framed in group-based terms in the party manifestos of the radical rightist (*Vlaams Blok/Vlaams Belang*) and the nationalist parties (*Volksunie/N-VA*). Both parties stress the merits of belonging to an in-group: either by referring to the need for commonality; by focusing on commonly shared values, interests and norms; by downplaying internal differences; and by explicitly denouncing any commonality with certain out-groups. This is illustrated in the following quotation: “we find *solidarity*⁶ and *involvement* in groups with which we can identify ourselves, in which we feel 'at home', find security and recognition” (N-VA, 2014, p. 34; emphasis added). Qua referent the in-group typically is the Flemish community, while the out-group generally refers to migrants or

⁶ Translated from Dutch: Verbondenheid en betrokkenheid vinden we ook bij groepen waarmee we ons kunnen identificeren, waarin we ons 'thuis' voelen, geborgenheid en erkenning vinden.

Muslims for the radical right and to French-speaking Belgians or Walloons in case of the Flemish-nationalists.

Other parties use the group-based frame as well but generally refer to other in-groups such as the European community. Furthermore, when they mention migrants or Walloons they are not treated as an outgroup but rather as people that could belong to the (Flemish) in-group. However, the liberal party *Open VLD* sometimes claims that people who do not agree with the core values of society do not belong in that given society, encroaching on terrain of the radical rightist and the conservative nationalist parties.

Secondly, solidarity is often framed as compassion in the manifestos of social democratic, green and Christian democratic parties. However, in 2014 this compassionate frame can be linked more exclusively to the party manifesto of the social democrat party. The compassionate frame is often invoked by references to the worsening living conditions of the most vulnerable people and to a commitment to help them. A nice illustration of this frame is the following quotation from the Flemish social democrats (*SP*): “In the fight against lack of occupancy and slums, the municipalities must be able to count on even more support from the Flemish government: ranging from subsidies to the right of

pre-emption, claiming and expropriation in favour of the most vulnerable families” (SP, 1995)⁷.

Compassionate solidarity typically refers to a wide range of people or groups. For instance, the social democratic claim that “many people find it difficult to find their way in this complicated society, encompassing older people, people with a disability, single-parent families, single people, migrants, children that suffer the consequences of pollution and asylum seekers that need humanitarian care” (SP, 1995).

Despite this leftist dominance in compassionate framing, other parties also commit themselves to alleviating living conditions of the poor and weak. However, typically they often focus on referents that are held less responsible for their condition and are higher on the deservingness ladder (van Oorschot, 2006) such as people with a disability. For instance, the liberal party *VLD* claims that “policies for people with a disability should focus on the integration of the disabled”(VLD, 1995, p. 11).

⁷ Page number unknown. We have used a cvs-file that contained the whole party manifesto (found in the database of Manifesto Project).

Thirdly, solidarity is predominantly framed in an exchange-based fashion in the manifestos of the liberal party. However, this seems to be less the case in the most recent manifestos. The Flemish nationalists and Christian democrats have a strong commitment to this solidarity frame in 2014 as well. Broadly speaking, they are in favour of a more active society with more people who contribute. As stated by Flemish nationalists in their 2014 manifesto, social welfare “is only possible if we *encourage* and *reward* the people who create prosperity through work and entrepreneurship, *instead of discouraging and punishing them*”(N-VA, 2014, p.4, emphasis added). In positive terms, they wish to support those who are active and to revalue contributors, such as entrepreneurs or teachers. In negative terms, we find that especially the unemployed are perceived as people that should reciprocate and contribute more. Activation would benefit society as a whole, but also the unemployed themselves. In other party manifestos, exchange-based frames do not constitute a core element and often refer to different referents than the typical occupational groups. For instance, some parties invoke exchange-based solidarity positively with migrants, whose skills or knowledge can be useful, or negatively with “polluters”, who should pay for polluting the environment, akin to contractual obligations found in Durkheim’s organic solidarity.

Finally, solidarity is prevalently framed in an empathic way among green and social democratic parties in 1995 and to lesser extent Christian democratic party. In 2014, the greens and social democrats still use this solidarity frame, yet they are now overtaken by the liberal party *Open VLD*. These parties perceive individual or inter-group diversity in a positive way, as something that should blossom through acceptance, tolerance and (mutual) accommodation. Illustrative in this respect is this claim by the Greens: “We want a colourful society in which everyone can be himself” (1995, p. 6). The right to be different is manifested in statements supporting the unicity of certain groups or individuals such as LGBT+, the elderly and people with a disability. However, also other referents such as the young are empathically framed, as exemplified in the liberal support for the unique talents and interests of pupils expressed in their 2014 manifesto (Open VLD, 2014, p. 21) and in the Green’s claim to let them be themselves and to let them be young (Groen, 2014, p. 222). Empathic solidarity is uncommon in radical rightist party manifestos; a rare example is their appeal for respect towards people with a disability.

Comparative Quantitative Analysis: Differences in Relative Frequencies of Codes

Our qualitative analysis provides a few indicative answers regarding our research questions. First of all, different parties frame solidarity differently. Secondly, some shifts seem to have occurred between 1995 and 2014: an empathic turn in case of the liberal party and an exchange-based turn in case of the Flemish nationalist and the Christian democratic party. We test whether we can validate these findings quantitatively. Furthermore, we will establish whether it makes sense to treat some solidarity frames as complementary categories, notably those on the diagonals of Figure 1.

We show the absolute and relative frequencies of the sentences containing a particular solidarity frame, in terms of all the sentences as well as their relative frequencies compared to the total number of sentences with a solidarity frame per party manifesto. We cannot but notice that statements rarely contain a solidarity frame: on average, about 15 percent of all sentences within a party manifesto have a solidarity frame. We coded often relatively more sentences as containing a solidarity frame in shorter party manifestos, such as party manifesto of *Vlaams Belang* in 2014, than in larger party manifestos, such as the extraordinarily long party manifesto of *Groen* in 2014.

The results in Tables 2 and 3 indicate four conclusions. First of all, during both elections, one can differentiate parties in terms of pervasive solidarity frames. Nevertheless, between both elections three general shifts have occurred. In 1995, we find that group-based solidarity pervades Flemish nationalists and radical rightists discourse; the compassionate solidarity pervades Christian democratic discourse; exchange-based solidarity is pervades liberal discourse; and empathic solidarity pervades green and social democratic discourses. In 2014, we see that exchange-based solidarity frames have become more popular across the party landscape, as the conservative Flemish nationalist *N-VA* and the Christian-democratic *CD&V* are now in an equal position as the liberal party *Open VLD*. Furthermore, both the social democratic party *sp.a* and the green party *Groen* have become much more focused on compassionate solidarity and obtained a lower score for empathic solidarity. Finally, group-based solidarity pervades the radical rightist *Vlaams Belang* significantly more than for any other party, except for the conservative nationalists *N-VA*.

Secondly, we can conclude that both in 1995 and in 2014, solidarity frame proportions are related. On the one hand, the relative proportions of group-based solidarity respectively exchange-based solidarity are largely

inversely proportional to the relative frequencies for compassionate respectively empathic solidarity, which corresponds with the diagonal arrows in Figure 1. However, we must also conclude that the GB-E axis has become more salient than the EB-C axis between 1995 and 2014. While the standard deviations of both group-based and empathic solidarity have become larger in 2014, the same cannot be said about exchange-based or compassionate solidarity. In fact, the standard deviation for exchange-based solidarity has decreased between 1995 and 2014. An analysis of the correlations in Table 4 shows that between 1995 and 2014 the negative correlation on GB-E and EB-C axes has increased yet has become significantly higher in absolute terms on the former than on the latter.

Solidarity frames	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev
Group-based	25 (23.15%)	39 (30.71%)*	6 (13.95%)	9 (11.39%)°	10 (5.81%) °	10 (5.68%) °
Compassionate	44 (40.74%)	33 (25.98%) °	11 (25.58%) °	44(55.70%)*	82 (47.67%)	82 (46.59%)
Exchange-based	24 (22.22%) °	31 (24.41%) °	18 (41.86%)*	19 (24.05%) °	31 (18.02%) °	28 (15.91%) °
Empathic	15 (13.89%) °	24 (18.90%)	8 (18.60%)	7 (8.84%)°	49 (28.49%)*	56 (31.82%)*
Total solidarity frames	108 (13.15%)	127 (12.49%)	43 (13.96%)	79 (12.17%)	172 (33.66%)	176 (15.60%)
Sentences in party manifesto	821	1017	308	649	511	1128

Relative frequencies per solidarity frame are based on the relative proportion of particular solidarity frame within the total number of sentences with a solidarity frame in the party manifesto. Relative frequencies of total solidarity frames are based on the relative proportion of solidarity frames within the total number of sentences in a party manifesto *= 2 standard deviations higher than minimum; °= 2 standard deviations lower than maximum

Table 2: solidarity frames per party during the elections of 1995

Solidarity frames	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen
Group-based	68 (40.48%)*	104 (22.03%)	14 (5.51%)°	42 (4.68%)°	53 (3.90%)°	34 (2.07%)°
Compassionate	41 (24.40%)°	145 (30.72%)°	78 (30.71%)°	339 (37.75%)	703 (51.73%)*	799 (48.54%)*
Exchange-based	48 (28.57%)	143 (30.30%)*	79 (31.10%)*	284 (31.63%)*	356 (26.20%)°	407 (24.73%)°
Empathic	11 (6.55%)°	80 (16.95%)	83 (32.68%)*	233 (25.95%)*	247 (18.18%)	406 (24.67%)*
Total solidarity frames	168 (19.42%)	472 (16.43%)	254 (19.63%)	898 (11.17%)	1359 (16.97%)	1646 (12.03%)
Sentences in party manifesto	865	2873	1294	8039	8008	13686

Relative frequencies per solidarity frame are based on the relative proportion of particular solidarity frame within the total number of sentences with a solidarity frame in the party manifesto. Relative frequencies of total solidarity frames are based on the relative proportion of solidarity frames within the total number of sentences in a party manifesto *= 2 standard deviations higher than minimum; °= 2 standard deviations lower than maximum

Table 3 solidarity frames per party during the elections of 2014

	1995	2014
Group-based and compassionate solidarity	-0,63	-0,75
Group-based and exchange-based solidarity	0,22	0,16
Group-based and empathic solidarity	-0,49	-0,84
Compassionate and exchange-based solidarity	-0,65	-0,69
Compassionate and empathic solidarity	0,00	0,28
Exchange-based and empathic solidarity	-0,41	0,24

Table 4: Correlations between solidarity frames per election year

Comparative Plot Analysis: Comparing Deductive and Inductive Approaches

The negative correlations between relative frequencies for group-based and empathic solidarity on the one hand and between relative frequencies for exchange-based and compassionate solidarity on the other hand somewhat support our theoretical assumptions. Hence, it is sensible to depict the party competition in the Flemish party system in terms of the diagonal relationships in Figure 1. In order to visualize the parties' positions within this two – dimensional space, we rely on the inter-party standardized probabilities (ISPs). We subtract the ISPs for compassionate solidarity from the ISPs for exchange-based solidarity to obtain the position on one axis: positive scores indicate preference for exchange-based solidarity, negative scores a preference for compassionate solidarity and null scores no preference. Similarly, we reconstruct the other dimension of solidarity by subtracting the ISP for empathic

solidarity from the ISP for group-based solidarity: positive scores indicate preference for group-based solidarity, negative scores a preference for empathic solidarity and null scores no preference.

As argued in the methodological section, we recognize that this approach a priori determines the meaning of the orthogonal dimensions in terms of the diagonals of our typology. To test the validity of these assumptions, we compare the deductive solidarity plots with a purely exploratory plot based on a correspondence analysis of the ISPs.

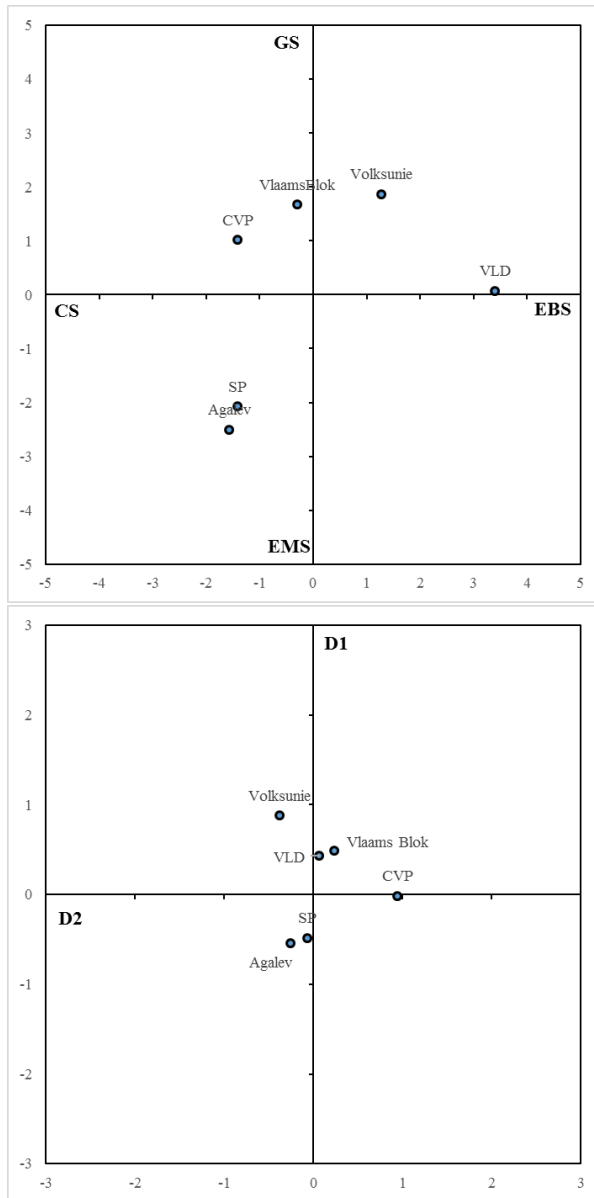


Figure 2: dimensions of solidarity in Flemish region (1995); based on ISP (left) and correspondence plots (right). Vlaams Blok = radical rightist; Volksunie=nationalist; VLD=liberal; CVP=Christian democrat; SP=social democrat; Agalev=green.

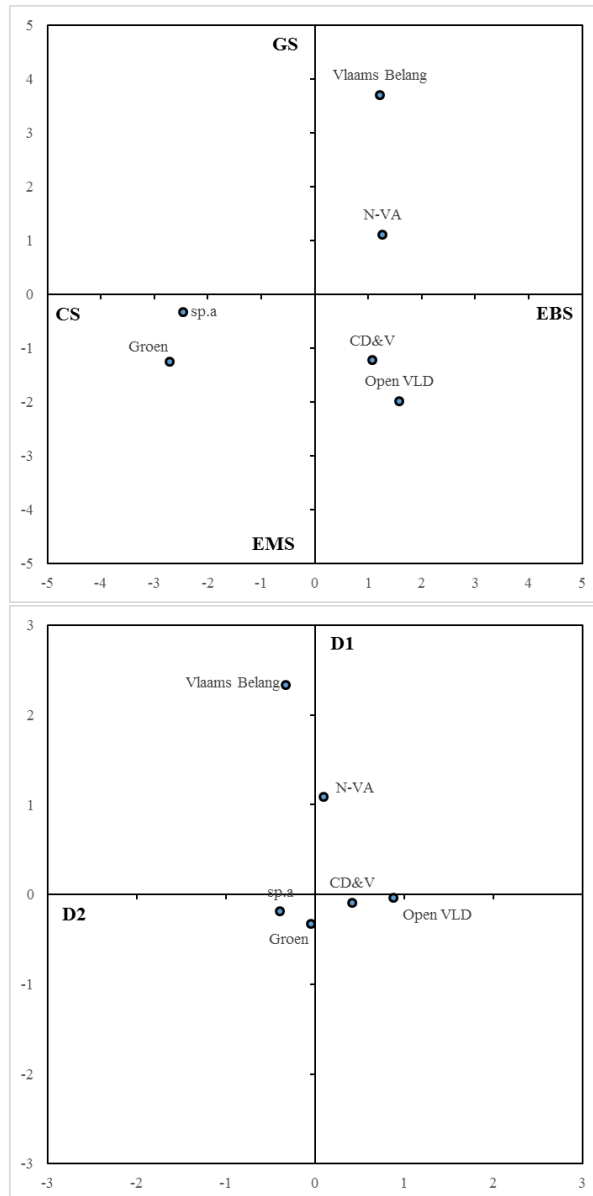


Figure 3: dimensions of solidarity in the Flemish region (2014); based on ISP (left) and correspondence plots (right)
 Vlaams Belang = radical rightist; N-VA=nationalist; Open VLD=liberal; CD&V=Christian democrat; sp.a=social democrat;
 Groen=green.

The deductive plot for the manifestos of 1995 (see left pane of Figure 2) depicts a party system that is relatively fragmented on the two dimensions of solidarity, with outspoken parties found on either side of the dimension. We effectively can speak of two dimensions on which party contestation within the Flemish region takes place (a group-based/empathic solidarity axis and an exchange-based/compassionate solidarity axis). A comparison with the exploratory correspondence plot (right pane) nuances the conclusions of the confirmatory plot by indicating that there is no perfect orthogonality and that the strongly exchange-based position of the liberal *VLD* is not as outspoken as inferred by the ISP plot. The overall structure of the party landscape, however, remains largely the same.

The deductive plot for the manifestos of 2014 (left pane of Figure 3) shows that a double polarization has occurred in the Flemish party landscape between 1995 and 2014. Firstly, the leftist parties *sp.a* and *Groen* position themselves as mainly compassionate contenders, while the other parties position themselves on the exchange-based pole of the axis, which confirms hypothesis 2a. Secondly, the rightist parties are spread out on the GB-E axis, with *Vlaams Belang* as the main contender on the group-based pole and *Open VLD* as the main contender on the empathic pole. The deductive plot shows that

the distances on both axes are not equal, with a more pronounced polarization on the GB-E axis. A comparison with the correspondence plot (right pane) indicates that we make a valid inference regarding the dimensions and the overall positioning of parties on these dimensions, although the correspondence plot shows more convergence on the exchange-based and compassionate dimension than the ISP plot does. Due to the negative correlation between compassionate and group-based solidarity and the convergence on the exchange-based/compassionate axis, the Flemish party landscape is mainly divided into group-based solidarity parties versus parties with other frames of solidarity (see Figure 3).

Robustness Check

As we explicitly focused on solidarity frames that are applicable across different groups of beneficiaries (solidarity referents), it is possible that we ignored the existence of correlations between solidarity frames and specific solidarity referents. Therefore, we conducted a robustness check of our results by eliminating all the sentences with particular solidarity referents and comparing these results with the original results. For this test, we chose i) migrants and ii) health-related groups (the elderly, sick, people with disabilities and patients) for all parties, and iii) the Flemish people as referents specifically for the Flemish

nationalist parties. We conducted two extra analyses: a chi-square test for differences in distribution and a comparison of ISPs for differences in positions. Although a chi-square test shows some significant differences between the distributions before and after elimination, the ISPs indicate that the party positions remain the same.

Discussion and Conclusion

Globalization, individualization and migration are simultaneously challenging social solidarity between different people and groups. Hence, many argue that it is of utmost importance to consolidate social solidarity. There is, however, little consensus on the ways to reach this. Recent social theory argues that most strategies put either identity, exchange, compassion or empathy forward. In this respect solidarity is becoming a kind of super issue on which parties will display their programmatic urge and which structures their political conflicts.

Still, the role of party political agency in communicating and framing solidarity remains underdeveloped. To an important extent this lacuna may be explained by the tendency to look at the political sphere in terms of structural conflicts among social groups. After all, Lipset and Rokkan explicitly focused on the conflict pole of the pole of the conflict-integration dialectic (1967: 5). Hereby, integration was only of secondary importance, a by-product of

identifying with some social groups and opposing others. Yet, in contemporary liquid modernity the 'frozen' social group basis is melting away. As a consequence political parties may focus more on what binds people than on what divides them. We therefore focused on the part political party's play in framing social solidarity by systematically linking those frames to distinctive Durkheimian integrative principles, which cut across issues and groups. First, we expected that it makes sense to study the structure of the party political sphere based on the solidarity frames they use in their party manifestos. Obviously, parties will often be cross-pressured between different solidarity frames. Yet, we expected that the way parties deal with such cross-pressures will depend on the same national (e.g. changing electoral competition) and international factors (e.g. neo-liberal austerity and growing ethno-cultural diversity) scholars have distinguished in studying the effect of policy shifts on the structure of the party political sphere.

Based on our findings for Flanders (Belgium), we first of all confirmed that solidarity frames are indeed useful markers of distinctive partisan discourses and ideologies: group-based solidarity is mainly championed by radical rightist and nationalist parties; compassionate solidarity is strongly advocated by greens and social and Christian democrats; exchange-based

solidarity is defended by liberals, Christian democrats and conservative nationalists; and empathic solidarity is promoted by the greens, liberals and to lesser extent social and Christian democrats. Hence, we can conclude that solidarity is no longer a prerogative of the left, in the sense that also parties on the right adopt solidarity frames that are obviously distinct from leftist frames.

With regards to partisan political oppositions we furthermore established that group-based frames generally do not go together with empathic frames and exchange-based frames with compassionate frames (downward and upward diagonal of our typology). Those who value difference are less inclined to seek for assimilation, and vice versa; those who have compassion with the weak are less inclined to see reciprocity as a fundamental principle of society, and vice versa. Our findings correspond to some extent with the results of expert-surveys and party-elite surveys (see Kriesi, 2010) as the inverse elective affinities between exchange-based and compassionate solidarity reflects to a certain degree the social-economic cleavage and the socio-cultural cleavage reflects the inverse elective affinities between group-based and empathic solidarity. Given that our deductive approach is fundamentally different, this finding points at the concurrent validity of the underlying dimensionality.

Furthermore, between 1995 and 2014 the polarization on both diagonals has become bigger. In other words, the opposition between parties emphasizing solidarity as group homogeneity and as recognition of difference is spatially more polarizing within the Flemish party system of 2014 than that of 1995. Also the opposition of parties emphasizing compassionate and exchange-based solidarity is still important, albeit less pronounced than for the GB-E axis. While the last opposition is more similar to the classical gulf, which divides socialists (*equality*) and liberalists (*liberty*), the former opposition revolves around the gulf which divides those supporting either a bridging or a bonding form of the French revolutionary creed: *fraternity*. While the political struggle around compassionate and exchange-based solidarity underlying the socio-economic cleavage has become more technical (see also Mouffe, 2005), the choice between either bonding with those who are similar or bridging the gulf with those who are different has become the most pressing question within contemporary democracies.

Further research should confirm whether this trend persists. Firstly, we explicitly focused on solidarity frames that are applicable across different groups of beneficiaries (solidarity referents), while there might be a strong correlation between solidarity frames and specific solidarity referents. Future

research could shed more light on the relation of frame-based and referent-based approaches. Nevertheless, given that a robustness test whereby we removed sentences that explicitly referred to the Flemish as an in-group did not significantly alter the dimensionality findings provides some support for the usefulness of solidarity frames across referents.

Secondly, our study focused on party manifestos and did not take other forms of party communication into account. Future research should establish to what extent our findings are also relevant with regards to speeches, communiqués, and interviews in media as well as social media posts. Yet Hofferbert and Budge (1992) have noticed important similarities and consistencies in the messages of political parties across media.

Thirdly, further research should assess whether our findings are confirmed in other settings with a less fragmented party system. Do we find a similar configuration in systems without a radical right party? Do we find more polarized party positions in a bipolar system? Moreover, it would be interesting to see whether the same oppositions can be found in different welfare state systems.

Fourthly, while we relied on a top-down deductive analysis of party communication (the supply-side of the politics of solidarity), it would be

interesting to assess whether a bottom-up analysis of public preferences (the demand-side of the politics of solidarity) would give similar results (see De Vries & Marks, 2012). Furthermore, we could use either an inductive or a deductive bottom-up approach. In the latter case one can assess whether the dominant solidarity frames in the manifestos are also endorsed by their own party electorates and to what extent they have an effect on their electoral choice.

Finally, our research focused on the solidarity frames used in party manifestos during election time. However, political actors may be less inclined to use solidarity frames in policy making processes. Also in this respect it would be interesting to ascertain whether parties institutionalize these solidarity frames when drafting laws or making coalition agreements.

In sum, while further research is definitely necessary, our analyses have nevertheless established that it makes sense to use solidarity frames as a fundamental heuristic to understand partisan competition. It makes sense to study the party political landscape from a deductive sociological point of view as Lipset and Rokkan (1967) demonstrated more than fifty years ago, but maybe without adopting their structuralist focus on conflicting social groups. In the end, however, our configurations do not look very different from those of the

more popular inductive approaches, which indicates that we are looking at the same political reality.

Drawing the Boundaries of Solidarity: What Distinguishes the Radical From the Mainstream Right?

Abstract

Political parties use solidarity frames that communicate their take on social integration and cohesion. In doing so, they set boundaries of solidarity that (implicitly) exclude certain people. The literature primarily associates exclusionary strategies with the populist radical right (PRR). This contribution investigates whether this is the case and explicitly asks whether it is unique to PRR or rather is characteristic of parties on the right per se. Our analyses suggest that, while they share particular concerns, the PRR differs from the mainstream right in their emphasis on exclusion and *whom* they exclude. The PRR is more strict in drawing the boundaries of solidarity than the mainstream right. We study exclusionary solidarity frames by Flemish parties during the elections of 2014 when the mainstream nationalist/regionalist party *N-VA* attracted a substantive share of votes from the PRR party. While *N-VA* is more exclusive than its mainstream competitors, it significantly uses less exclusionary frames than the PRR. We support our hypothesis that the PRR draws the most narrow boundaries of solidarity, particularly by excluding immigrant and Muslim ‘others’.

Keywords: boundaries; solidarity frames; radical right populists; mainstream right; exclusion; Flemish region; party competition

Introduction Increased individualisation, immigration, and globalisation contribute to surging demands for solidarity in postmodern democracies. Indeed, the question 'For whom should we care and why?' occupies a central place in contemporary politics (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017: 1; Boucher & Samad, 2013: 197). Recent work argues that discourses of political parties play a crucial role in answering this question (Hall, 2017: 205 - 206; Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022: 1-2). While everyone agrees we need solidarity, parties differ about how and with whom to foster it, which is paradoxical because it involves both consensuses on the goal of improving social integration and conflict between those preferring different social integration mechanisms (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022: 3-5).

Though many regard solidarity as the glue that holds society together, its exclusive potential is not often studied in academia. Being deserving of solidarity is a positive distinction not given to everyone. Even the good Samaritan cannot extend solidarity to everyone simply due to limited available resources. More fundamentally, however, many people believe that some groups and individuals receive too much support and instead prefer to invest in those they deem (more) deserving (Bloemraad et al., 2019: 74).

Many are "unsure about their good fortune, unclear about their identity, uncertain about their position on the included side of the line" due to the perceived scarcity of resources and the uniqueness of their identity (Young, 2003: 399). The juxtaposition between deserving and undeserving is moral and comes with deontological implications. We see any support for undeserving people as unfair and may experience disdain, contempt or even disgust or hatred towards those deemed such (Hochschild, 2016: 135-151). *Vice versa*, those who perceive themselves as excluded often think of those included as having an undeserved privilege (Sadin, 2017: 299- 315). The challenges of those who deserve solidarity intertwine with the support for the undeserving. Solidarity often involves a zero-sum logic, where affection towards the former is possible only if the latter obtains comparatively less (Fukuyama, 2018: 41).

Entrepreneurial parties often claim their place as 'champions of solidarity' by casting certain groups as immoral, line-cutters, or (undeservingly) privileged (De Vries & Hobolt, 2020: 4-5; Hochschild, 2016: 220; Rodrik, 2018: 12). They frame these groups as part of the problem: *their* access to specific legal, political or socio-economic privileges constrains solidarity with the deserving (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2014: 117; Rydgren, 2007). While exclusionary frames are universal, scholars mainly associate such strategies with nativism,

which characterises the populist radical right (PRR). The PRR's core ideology combines the belief that the nation-state should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native ingroup (nationalism and nativism) with the belief that authority should be respected and strict rules should be followed (authoritarianism) and with the expression of the will of the people is hampered by a "corrupt elite" (populism) (Mudde, 2007: 11-30). However, politicians and voters on the mainstream right have espoused sometimes similar views. Despite these similarities, the PRR has been more outspoken advocates of these core ideological elements, especially nativism.

In many Western democracies, a right turn has occurred. The PRR and mainstream right have become dominant (de Lange, 2012: 907; Ignazi, 1992: 6). They criticise left-wing views on social integration and aim to preserve solidarity based on ingroup loyalty, respect for authority, and reciprocity among hardworking citizens (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009: 1030; Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022: 9-14; Van Kersbergen & Kremer, 2008: 71). Mainstream right and PRR often compete for votes of the same (ideologically right-wing) population. Therefore, we investigate *how* and *whom* right-wing parties exclude. Indeed, they share many values and advocate for restrictive positions on issues such as immigration and integration. Nevertheless, we expect the

nativist and vote-seeking PRR to draw its boundaries more narrow than the neo-liberal and office-oriented mainstream right parties. Specifically, we hypothesize that the PRR emphasizes exclusion, especially of foreign (racialized) ‘others’ (Akkerman, de Lange, & Rooduijn, 2016: 7-9; De Vries & Hobolt, 2020: 4-5).

In this contribution, we start by theorizing the distinction between inclusionary and exclusionary solidarity frames. Then, we elaborate on how parties construct the boundaries of solidarity. Subsequently, we discuss solidarity on the right and conjure specific hypotheses on the expected differences between the PRR and mainstream right parties. We test these expectations by studying Flemish right party manifestos for the 2014 elections when PRR *Vlaams Belang* lost many votes to conservative Flemish nationalists N-VA.

Inclusionary and Exclusionary Solidarity Frames

Recent literature suggests solidarity is fundamental to contemporary politics (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017: 1; Boucher & Samad, 2013: 197). Some scholars studied how discourses of political parties play a crucial role in fulfilling citizens' need for solidarity (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017: 25-27; Hall, 2017: 214-219; Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022: 1-2). Most studies start from the premise that

everyone values the same abstract goal, i.e., enhancing or protecting solidarity. Yet, one can frame the social integration mechanisms (i.e., the mechanisms to foster solidarity) in distinctive ways. Solidarity frames promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation for the problem of solidarity (cf. Entman, 1993). Most parties adopt one solidarity frame as a master frame that cuts across multiple issues. Still, they can also use other solidarity frames to discuss specific aspects of the problem of solidarity (Snow & Benford, 1988; Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022).

We follow a taxonomy of solidarity frames along two axes that dialectically relate Durkheimian structures of solidarity to Honnethian struggles for recognition (Thijssen, 2012: 459). Durkheim distinguished mechanical solidarity (based on similarities) from organic solidarity (based on differences) (Durkheim, 2014 [1893]). Mechanical solidarity is the synthesis of group-based solidarity, which emphasises group member homogeneity, and compassionate solidarity, which induces compassion for those who ought to have a similar social position. On the other hand, organic solidarity refers to the synthesis of exchange-based solidarity, which emphasises reciprocity between individuals, and empathic solidarity, which entails feeling empathy for people's otherness (Thijssen, 2012).

Despite substantive differences between partisan solidarity frames, they all draw symbolic boundaries that limit solidarity to certain people they deem deserving (Lamont & Molnár, 2002: 168). For instance, one can claim individuals with disabilities deserve more solidarity than those without because they are more vulnerable due to causes beyond their control. Framing a particular group as deserving does not necessarily imply others are undeserving, as long as parties frame them as deserving for other reasons. To continue the previous example: among people without disabilities, workers might deserve more solidarity than unemployed people because they contribute to everyone's welfare (van Oorschot, 2006: 31).

However, a party could also frame certain groups negatively, i.e., as undeserving - even as part of the problem of solidarity (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2014: 117). Framing groups negatively fosters a sense of solidarity among those not deemed undeserving. They can simultaneously frame parties solidary with 'undeserving' groups as false champions of solidarity (Hochschild, 2016: 220). A recent study by Thijssen and Verheyen distinguishes four mechanisms underlying solidarity (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020 : 3-5). Yet, it fails to acknowledge that solidarity frames exclude either implicitly or explicitly. That is, each inclusionary mechanism comes with an exclusionary implication. We

argue that each inclusionary mechanism encompasses an exclusionary counterpart. This contribution aims to account for how solidarity frames differentially entail mechanisms of exclusion, starting from the four types of solidarity frames identified by Thijssen and Verheyen (see Figure 1).

First, parties can include or exclude some groups to *reaffirm structural principles of solidarity*. Both group-based and exchange-based solidarity draw boundaries between included and excluded assemblages of individuals. Group-based solidarity involves excluding individuals rendered undeserving because they do not belong to the ingroup. The explicit negation of these individuals reaffirms the existence of an ingroup. The logic of exchange-based solidarity requires excluding individuals that do not – or insufficiently - comply with the underlying principle of reciprocity. The negation of these individuals indicates the presence of valuable complementary differences between people (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020: 3-5). Both frames create or reaffirm boundaries that distinguish the deserving (i.e., the ingroup or the contributors) from the undeserving (i.e., the outgroup, or the free-riders).

The taxonomy, summarized in Figure 1, assumes that these boundaries of group-based and exchange-based solidarity are subject to struggles for recognition (Honneth, 1996; Thijssen, 2012). An encounter with individuals

outside the boundaries of solidarity confronts people with their position inside. Encountering people in precarity could cause some to feel compassion. By accommodating them as 'one of us', compassionate solidarity leads to expanding ingroup boundaries. An encounter could also cause some to feel empathic towards ostracised individuals and respect them as valuable for their unique qualities. While both expand the boundaries of solidarity, their logic fundamentally differs: the former stresses commonality regardless of differences, while the latter implies a valuable difference despite potential commonality (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022: 3).

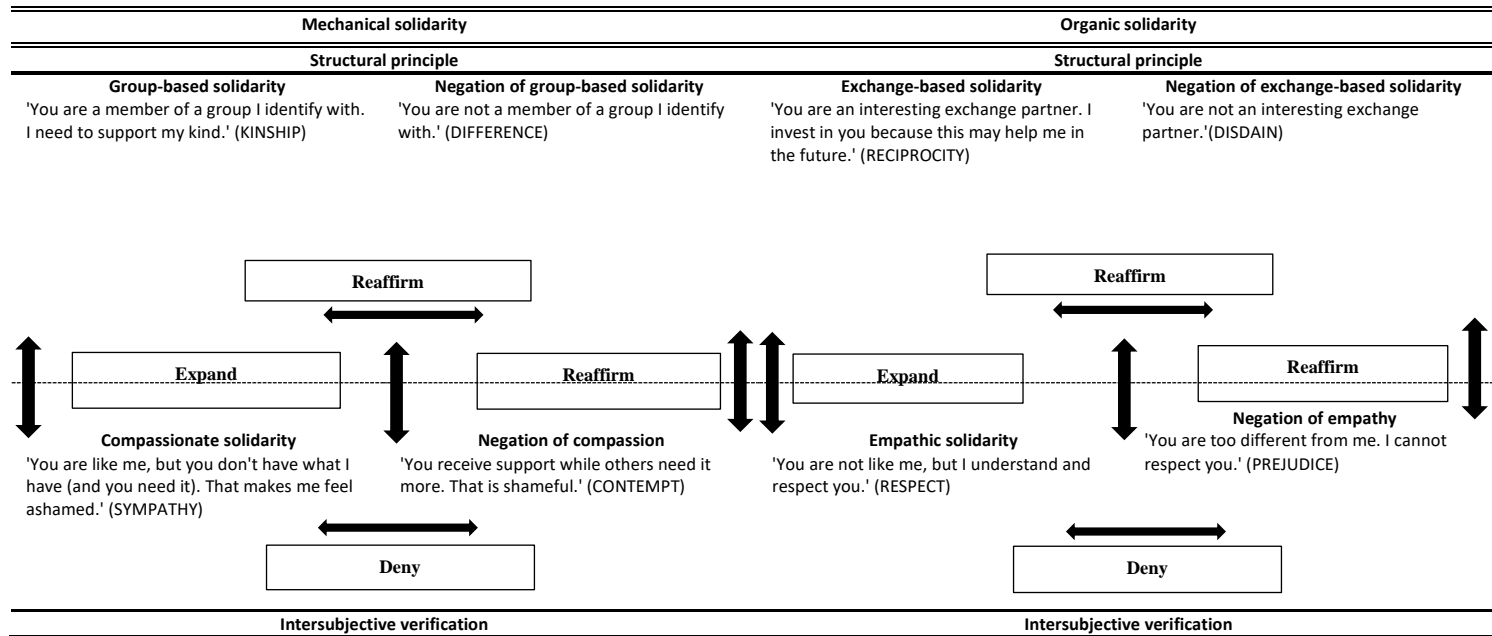


Figure 1: Typology of inclusionary and exclusionary solidarity frames and their relationships inspired by Thijssen and Verheyen (2020)

Yet, one can also *dismiss* compassion or empathy after an encounter (see Figure 1). The negation of compassionate solidarity is based upon the idea that improving the living conditions of particular individuals would facilitate their laziness or give them an unfair privilege compared to other (more) needy individuals, which invokes feelings of contempt (Hochschild, 2016: 135-151; van Oorschot, 2006: 25). Similarly, the negation of empathic solidarity invokes disdain or prejudice towards someone's otherness (cf. Goffman, 1963: 3). Both types of negation reaffirm existing boundaries, yet due to different rationales. While the first discourages support based on the other being too similar to individuals in decent social positions, the latter dismisses support for individuals due to their otherness being impossible to respect.

Drawing Boundaries between Deserving and Undeserving People

By integrating the solidarity framework with work on boundary-drawing, we differentiate discursive strategies on three levels. First, political parties include and exclude to a different extent. Some parties propagate an (almost) universal deservingness, motivated to frame many as (evenly) deserving. Others, however, will explicitly demarcate undeserving groups and individuals and, *in extremis*, only communicate negative attitudes with few or no references to any worthy group (e.g., Laclau, 2005: 93-95).

Some boundaries are also more *salient* than others. Certain boundaries are closer to a party's core ideology. For instance, leftists demarcate higher from lower classes (Dunphy & Bale, 2011: 490). A party could also increase the salience of boundaries for strategic reasons. For example, in increasing ethnic and cultural diversity, parties are cross-pressured to either negate group-based solidarity with immigrants or foster compassionate or empathic solidarity with these individuals. Other boundaries (e.g., an exchange-based distinction between employed and unemployed individuals) might fade into the background (Horn, Kevins, Jensen, & van Kersbergen, 2020: 5).

Finally, boundaries differ in terms of *conditionality* (Alba, 2005: 21-22). Instead of framing individuals as thoroughly undeserving, a party can provide nuance and deem these individuals worthy under certain conditions. For instance, one can refuse all support for Muslims due to their perceived cultural incommensurability. However, others can accept Muslims on certain conditions (e.g., 'moderate' Muslims), which others (e.g., 'radicals') fail to meet. The first constructs two more or less homogeneous blocs (i.e., natives and Muslims). The second constructs an arguably more nuanced boundary that differentiates between Muslims themselves.

Solidarity On the Right: Mainstream Right versus PRR parties

Exclusion is mainly associated with parties on the right, especially the PRR (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017: 26; Lefkofridi & Michel, 2017: 234). The core ideology of the latter has been defined as a combination of nativism, nationalism, authoritarianism, and populism (Mudde, 2007: 11-30). Although these elements are distinguished, they inevitably overlap because they work together to create PRR discourse. Earlier work deemed these views alien to Western democratic values for which a small potential exists (*normal pathology thesis*). However, recent work argues that politicians and voters share these key aspects of the populist radical right on the mainstream right (pathological normalcy thesis). The difference between the PRR and the mainstream right views is rather a difference in degree, i.e., radical versus moderate, than a difference in kind (Mudde, 2010: 1178-1179). Earlier research on the use of solidarity frames suggests that mainstream right parties and the PRR share the same basic concerns regarding solidarity (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022: 9-11; Van Kersbergen & Kremer, 2008: 71). Both favour solidarity with ingroup members who are morally upstanding and hardworking citizens.

However, our focus is on the discursive construction of boundaries of solidarity and the role of exclusionary solidarity frames. Regarding exclusion,

most academic literature on the PRR focuses on their nativist and nationalist component and the exclusion of 'foreigners' as a core feature of their ideology (Mudde, 2007: 26). The contemporary PRR mainly refers to Muslims as 'others' and casts their culture as incommensurable and fundamentally incompatible with native or European values (Betz & Johnson, 2004: 319; M. H. Williams, 2010: 114). While typically found among the PRR, criticism towards (radical) Islam has become prevalent among mainstream right parties' discourses as well (Kortmann, Stecker, & Weiß, 2019: 438). Both the PRR and mainstream right parties also often advocate for a form of welfare chauvinism - welfare policies that exclude immigrants from (certain) benefits (Betz, 2019: 117; Kymlicka, 2015: 7-8; Schumacher & Van Kersbergen, 2016: 309) - and more strict policies towards asylum seekers and refugees.

However, other boundaries are also relevant in right-wing discourse. Based on authoritarianism, parties on the right - especially the PRR - advocate obedience to prescriptive behaviours. They often support 'welfare producerism': 'welfare scroungers' are exempt from benefits to enhance solidarity with 'productive' and vulnerable citizens (Abts, Dalle Muelle, van Kessel, & Michel, 2021: 25; Derks, 2006: 178; Ennser-Jedenastik, 2016: 413). The right often distinguishes well-behaved citizens from 'criminals and deviants'

(Mudde, 2010: 1174). Especially PRR parties propose harsh punishments to reaffirm the social order and show solidarity with crime victims (Garland, 2012: 39-65). Based on gendered and sexual nationalism, the PRR has also often objected to recognising LGBTQI (Kováts, 2018: 528). Although some parties still exclude this group (e.g., *Fidesz* in Hungary), many European parties on the right – both PRR and mainstream – accept sexual and gender minorities to a certain extent. Some parties (e.g., Dutch PRR *PVV*) even regard their acceptance as part of national values (Spierings & Zaslove, 2015: 168-169). Finally, based on (populist) nationalism against supranational elites, parties on the right increasingly oppose global integration. While European right-wing parties advocated European economic integration, they now perceive social and political integration as a threat to national sovereignty and culture, a fear that played an essential part in the 2005 Dutch and French rejections of a European Constitution (Hobolt & Brouard, 2011: 319). As part of this, solidarity *within* the EU has also become contested due to the euro and COVID crises that make salient the distinction between contributing (i.e., Northern) and receiving (i.e., Southern) Member States (Lubbers & Scheepers, 2010: 790; Wallaschek, 2021: 5).

Competing parties on the right often draw the same boundaries of solidarity. Recent research has indicated a decrease in differences between PRR and mainstream right parties. The successes of PRR challengers have made stricter stances on several issues attractive for mainstream right parties (Van Spanje, 2010: 576). Furthermore, several PRR parties have tried to become mainstream by weeding out their most extreme voices and taking positions on issues such as welfare (Akkerman et al., 2016: 14). Therefore, coalition formation and electoral competition between mainstream right and PRR parties have become more likely.

However, we contend that PRR and mainstream right have incentives to remain distinctive regarding which solidarity frames they use and which groups they exclude. In line with the pathological normalcy thesis (Mudde, 2010), we differentiate between PRR and (moderate) mainstream right discourse. This distinction is partially derived from their different incentives and status in government. Specifically, the PRR *challenges* the political status quo, often including the mainstream right (De Vries & Hobolt, 2020: 4-5). On the other hand, the mainstream right wants to be seen as reliable, as managers and representatives in office. Taking a radically discursive approach to solidarity

entails they might not be attractive to centrist (or left-wing) voters (Van Kersbergen & Krouwel, 2008: 399).

Therefore, we analyse whether mainstream right parties and the PRR *de facto* differ in how they draw boundaries of solidarity. First, we ask whether a stronger focus on exclusionary solidarity frames is a distinctive feature of PRR parties. Many studies point out how the PRR discursively constructs 'the people' as a morally *good* and cohesive group of native citizens in opposition to (racialized) 'others'. Laclau, for example, argues that exclusion is a precondition to democracy, i.e., political actors can only conceive of the *demos* as a homogeneous totality by excluding specific individuals (Laclau, 2005: 93-95). The explicit exclusion of certain people from the scope of solidarity implies equivalence among deserving groups and fosters social cohesion among those genuinely regarded as worthy. In sum, our *populism hypothesis* assesses whether the PRR is more focused on exclusion in its discourse compared to mainstream right parties.

H1: *The PRR uses more exclusionary solidarity frames in their discourse than mainstream right parties*

Second, we ask which boundaries of solidarity are more salient than others. As nativism is the ultimate core feature of the PRR's ideology (Mudde, 2007: 26), we construct two *nativism hypotheses*. First, we expect that the negation of group-based solidarity is more prevalent in PRR discourse than the other exclusionary solidarity frames. Second, the PRR predominantly focuses on the issue of immigration and integration, which makes the exclusion of 'others' (i.e., foreigners and especially Muslim immigrants) a salient aspect of their discourse. In contrast, mainstream right parties mostly pay attention to economic competitiveness and welfare. Therefore, the negation of group-based solidarity, which disavows support for foreigners, is less prevalent in their discourse, especially compared to the negation of exchange-based solidarity towards unemployed people.

H2A: The PRR uses the negation of group-based solidarity more frequently than the negation of exchange-based solidarity

H2B: The PRR more frequently and explicitly excludes immigrants and Muslims as 'others', than it does unemployed people

Finally, we assess whether PRR parties draw stricter (i.e., less ambiguous) boundaries than mainstream right parties. While research shows that the latter has adopted more restrictive policy positions, they likely

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communicate more ambivalent boundaries to remain acceptable for centrist audiences and certain electorates (e.g., liberal entrepreneurs or ethnic minorities) (Van Kersbergen & Krouwel, 2008). Similarly, the relatively black-and-white discourse of the PRR is part of their appeal to dissatisfied voters (Rooduijn, van der Brug, & de Lange, 2016: 34). These expectations align with the pathological normalcy thesis (Mudde, 2010: 1178-1179). Extending this theorizing, we submit a *pathological normalcy hypothesis* based on the expectation that the PRR draws stricter boundaries than mainstream right parties.

H3: The PRR draws less ambiguous, i.e., more explicit, boundaries of solidarity than mainstream right parties

Method

We test these expectations by applying the solidarity framework to the four parties on the right in the Flemish region: the PRR *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish Interest), the conservative Flemish nationalists *N-VA* (New Flemish Alliance), liberals *Open VLD* (Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats), and Christian democrats *CD&V* (Christian Democratic and Flemish). During the elections of 2014, both *Vlaams Belang* and mainstream right parties *Open VLD* and *CD&V* lost a significant number of voters to *N-VA*. Therefore, these elections are an

interesting case to test our expectations that PRR and mainstream right remain distinctive in drawing boundaries of solidarity despite electoral pressures to become more similar. Therefore, we analyse their 2014 party manifestos, which are relevant documents because they present their official statements and allow comparison over time and with other parties. Fascinating is the relationship between *Vlaams Belang* and *N-VA*. Both parties advocate Flemish secession from the Belgian state. Furthermore, the right turn of *N-VA* has brought them in direct competition with *Vlaams Belang* on issues such as immigration and crime (see appendix for comparison). *N-VA* has sent mixed signals about cooperation with its PRR competitor compared to other parties on the right.

We conduct a mixed-method content analysis to assess how parties on the right draw symbolic boundaries of solidarity. The coding process follows a qualitative sentence-by-sentence approach to enable the quantitative analysis of qualitative data, as qualitative differences between discourses (Aslanidis, 2016; Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022).

We divide each statement into three quasi-sentences. We then code a maximum of three groups to which parties refer. Afterwards, we determine whether the party uses an inclusionary or exclusionary solidarity frame (see

Table 1). Parties negate group-based solidarity if they perceive individuals as not belonging to the ingroup. If they refer to individuals as privileged, not needy, or responsible for their neediness, we code this as a negation of compassionate solidarity. Parties use the negation of exchange-based solidarity when they refer to low or negative contributions from the group. Finally, we code the negation of empathetic solidarity if the party refers to individuals whose difference is perceived negatively and impossible to respect.

Inclusionary solidarity frame	Exclusionary solidarity frame
Group-based solidarity	Negation of group-based solidarity
<i>Example statement</i>	<i>Example statement</i>
The person in question must show the will to permanently link his fate with that of our community.	Courageous choices that have not been made for 25 years, partly because Flemish and French speakers have opposite visions
Exchange-based solidarity	Negation of exchange-based solidarity
<i>Example statement</i>	<i>Example statement</i>
Pupils who opt for vocational education must feel that society needs them, more than is the case today	It is necessary to examine whether prisoners who have assets or income can make a financial contribution to the costs of their detention
Compassionate solidarity	Negation of compassionate solidarity
<i>Example statement</i>	<i>Example statement</i>
This means that childcare must be accessible for children from a disadvantaged background, for children of parents who do not work part-time, for children of single parents, or children with disabilities.	Building a palace in your home country and receiving benefits here - we will happily end this
Empathic solidarity	Negation of empathic solidarity
<i>Example statement</i>	<i>Example statement</i>
This sharply contrasts with the original goal of adult education (...): the multifaceted development of every adult (emancipatory work)	Of course, religious freedom must be guaranteed, but the recognition of Islam must be withdrawn.

Table 1: operationalisation of solidarity frames with concrete examples found in party manifestos

We assess the differences and overlap between PRR and mainstream right concerning the prototypical characteristics of the PRR. We first determine the proportions of all solidarity frames to evaluate which are more prevalent. We only consider sentences with one solidarity frame (maximum three occasions per sentence) and calculate the relative weight of all solidarity frames compared to the total number of sentences comprising a solidarity frame. We evaluated the distribution of exclusionary and inclusionary solidarity frames per

quasi-sentence as a robustness check. These distributions provided a similar image as the distributions found in the results section (see appendix X). We evaluate the associations between party and solidarity frame with Chi-square and Cramer's V and test the significance of proportional differences with inter-party standardised probabilities (ISP). We calculate the latter with the formula: (percentage for a frame in party manifesto – mean percentage for frame across all parties)/standard deviation of the frame percentage across all parties).

We subsequently evaluate the ambivalence of solidarity frames. We focus on groups that Flemish right discourses typically frame as undeserving: immigrants (including asylum seekers and ethnic minorities), Muslims, LGBTQI, the European Union and the (Southern) Member States, criminals, unemployed people, and Wallonia, the southern and French-speaking region that is a net recipient of federal funding. We compare how often the parties exclude these groups. Afterwards, we calculate the ratio of exclusionary versus inclusionary frames for each group. To illustrate whether the parties ascribed similar or different qualities to the boundaries, we make qualitative references to particular statements in the party manifestos.

Results

On average, about 15 percent of all sentences within a party manifesto have a solidarity frame. We coded relatively more sentences containing a solidarity frame in shorter party manifestos, such as the party manifesto of *Vlaams Belang*, than in larger party manifestos, such as the party manifesto of *CD&V*.

We first test associations between solidarity frames on the one hand and parties on the other hand with Chi-square and Cramer's V (see Table 2). We find a strong and significant association between these variables. *Vlaams Belang* is the most exclusionary, while *Open VLD* and *CD&V* are the most inclusionary. The low percentage of exclusionary solidarity frames in the Christian democratic party manifesto is remarkable, which indicates that *CD&V* mainly differentiates various deserving individuals. We calculate ISPs to assess the significance of proportional differences (see appendix). The PRR party's proportions are two standard deviations removed from the liberal right and centre right. *N-VA* takes a middle-road strategy: their discourse does not significantly differ from the discourses of their competitors on either side. However, their discourse resembles the mainstream right rather than the PRR, explicitly emphasising an inclusionary approach (see Table 3). The party claims explicitly that "(a) society cannot survive without connectedness, involvement and cohesion" and that

such a "cohesive Flemish community is a community to which everyone belongs, people with and without a migration background" (N-VA, 2014: 34). These results help us affirm the *populism hypothesis* (H1).

Solidarity frames	<i>Vlaams Belang</i>	<i>N-VA</i>	<i>Open VLD</i>	<i>CD&V</i>
Inclusionary	104 (47.06%)°	405 (82.48%)	239 (89.85%)*	871 (95.61%)*
Exclusionary	117 (52.94%)*	86 (17.52%)	27 (10.15%)°	40 (4.39%)°
Total sentences with frame	221	491	266	911
Total sentences	865	2873	1294	8039
χ^2 : 350,272 (df = 3)				
Cramer's V: .431				

Table 2: distribution of inclusionary and exclusionary solidarity frames *= two standard deviations higher than the minimum; °= two standard deviations lower than maximum

Table 3 shows the distribution of all solidarity frames in right party manifestos. Again, we find strong and significant associations between solidarity frames and parties using Chi-square and Cramer's V. The ISPs also indicate substantial differences between parties' solidarity frames (see appendix). In terms of inclusionary solidarity frames, we find that parties on the right emphasise different social integration mechanisms. *N-VA* and *Vlaams Belang* discourses are strongly group-based and focused on the Flemish ingroup; *CD&V* is pervasively compassionate, exchange-based, and empathic; and *Open VLD* is strongly exchange-based and empathic.

However, PRR discourse is overall more focused on exclusion than their mainstream competitors. Mainstream right parties *Open VLD* and *CD&V* use the negation of exchange-based solidarity relatively more often than the negation of group-based solidarity. Although we confirm H2A, we also find that the negation of exchange-based solidarity is more commonplace in the PRR party's discourse. This emphasis is exemplified by their claims to transfer money from debtors (the Walloon Region (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 14), the EU and especially its weaker Member States (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 9-10), non-working EU civil servants (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 10), and criminals (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 26-27)) to creditors (i.e., the Flemish people) and victims (i.e., victims of crime). *N-VA*

takes a position between their PRR competitor and their mainstream competitors, with more often a negation of group-based solidarity than mainstream right parties but a more robust exchange-based profile compared to the PRR. These results affirm the first *nativism hypothesis* (H2a).

Solidarity frames	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V
Group-based	28 (12.67%)*	64 (13.03%)*	13 (4.89%)°	42 (4.61%)°
Negation of group- based	40 (18.10%)*	40 (8.15%)	1 (0.38%)°	0 (0.00%)°
Compassionate	41 (18.55%)°	145 (29.53%)	78 (29.32%)	339 (37.21%)*
Negation of compassionate	36 (16.29%)*	18 (3.67%)°	12 (4.51%)°	13 (1.43%)°
Exchange-based	24 (10.86%)°	116 (23.63%)	65 (24.44%)*	257 (28.21%)*
Negation of exchange-based	24 (10.86%)*	27 (5.50%)	14 (5.26%)	27 (2.96%)°
Empathic	11 (4.98%)°	80 (16.29%)	83 (31.20%)*	233 (25.58%)*
Negation of empathic	17 (7.69%)*	1 (0.20%)°	0 (0.00%)°	0 (0.00%)°
Total	221	491	266	911

χ^2 : 536.870 (df=21)

Cramer's V: .308

Table 3 absolute and relative frequencies per solidarity frame * = two standard deviations higher than the minimum; ° = two standard deviations lower than maximum

Table 4 summarises how often the four parties exclude specific groups and how strict they draw the boundaries that exclude them. We find that the PRR draws overall more strict boundaries than their mainstream competitors, which confirms our *pathological normalcy hypothesis* (H3). Furthermore, *Vlaams Belang* primarily advocates the exclusion of Walloons, Muslims, immigrants, the European Union and its Member States, and criminals. On the other hand, mainstream right parties CD&V and Open VLD focus more on unemployed and inactive people in the labor market. While they also exclude immigrants, they are more ambivalent towards this group than the PRR. *N-VA* again takes a position in the middle: the party focuses more on the Walloons and the EU and its Member States than the mainstream right, is equally ambivalent about immigrants as the mainstream right, and puts more emphasis on the exclusion of unemployed and inactive people than the PRR. We thus largely find support for our second *nativism hypothesis* (H2B).

First, we find that Flemish nationalists *N-VA* and *Vlaams Belang* draw a relatively strict boundary between Flemings and Walloons as homogeneous groups with opposite views, absent in other parties' discourses. Both emphasise the entrepreneurial nature of the Flemish versus the passivity of the Walloons.

For example, both complain that '(t) he Walloons have always been very comfortable with the money that automatically comes from Flanders' (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 7) and that these transfers' confirm the dependence of Wallonia and Brussels' (N-VA, 2014: 72). Both also claim that francophone immigration threatens the Flemish ingroup in the Flemish Periphery: *Vlaams Belang* portrays it as 'demographic displacement' (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 6) and *N-VA* as increased alienation of the Flemish population (N-VA, 2014: 46). Both propose abolishing language facilities for French speakers and transferring social security policies to the regions. *Vlaams Belang*, however, favours immediate independence (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 5), while *N-VA* proposes a confederation in which cooperation with and support for Wallonia is possible if Walloons take fiscal autonomy (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 73).

Second, *Open VLD* and *CD&V* are overall positive towards European integration, promoting 'a strong and self-confident European Union' (Open VLD, 2014: 53) or emphasising cooperation with the other Member States to tackle tax fraud (CD&V, 2014: 44). *Vlaams Belang* and to lesser extent *N-VA* take a more exclusionary stance. Both support recognition of diversity within Europe yet favour the thrift and zeal of Northern Member States over the expenditure of Southern Member States. While both emphasise this distinction, they draw

different conclusions. *Vlaams Belang* proposes abolishing the European Union and the eurozone and transitioning to a confederacy of north-western and thrifty Member States (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 9). *N-VA*, however, sees opportunities in European integration and the euro. Rather than abolishing the EU, they favour intra-European solidarity with needy (i.e., Southern) Member States but render this solidarity conditional. The needy Member States can only receive support if "those Member States concerned (...) first and foremost take the necessary measures themselves to restore the confidence of the financial markets" (N-VA, 2014: 83). As such, solidarity becomes "more objective, transparent and efficient" (N-VA, 2014: 83).

		<i>Vlaams Belang</i>	<i>N-VA</i>	<i>Open VLD</i>	<i>CD&V</i>
Exclusionary references	Walloons	21 (26.25%)	4 (8.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
	EU and Member States	10 (12.50%)	15 (30.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
	Immigrants	12 (15.00%)	10 (20.00%)	5 (31.30%)	2 (16.70%)
	Muslims	10 (12.50%)	1 (2.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (8.30%)
	Inactive and unemployed	1 (1.25%)	7 (14.00%)	9 (56.30%)	3 (25.00%)
	Criminals	26 (32.50%)	13 (26.00%)	2 (12.50%)	5 (41.70%)
	LGBT	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
	<i>Total</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>12</i>
Odds	Walloons	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)
	EU and Member States	5 (2)	0.75 (20)	0 (3)	0 (6)
	Immigrants	3 (4)	0.27 (37)	0.45 (11)	0.05 (38)
	Muslims	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)
	Inactive and unemployed	1 (1)	0.37 (19)	1.29 (7)	0.18 (17)
	Criminals	- (0)	13 (1)	- (0)	0.63 (8)
	LGBT	- (0)	0 (3)	- (3)	0 (2)
	<i>Total</i>	<i>11.43 (7)</i>	<i>0.59 (85)</i>	<i>0.59 (27)</i>	<i>0.14 (84)</i>

Table 4: Upper pane: negations of groups per manifesto. Lower pane: odds exclusionary to inclusionary references with number of inclusionary references to specific group between brackets

Third, all four parties prefer stricter treatment of undocumented immigrants and faster procedures for asylum seekers. *Vlaams Belang*, however, draws the most strict boundary between natives and others. They juxtapose the 'own culture' to that of others. Furthermore, they advocate limiting the number of foreigners in social housing projects (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 19), oppose positive discrimination (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 13), and propose stricter treatment of asylum seekers (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 21). The centre right, liberal right, and nationalist right are more eager to extend solidarity to asylum seekers and refugees. *N-VA* explicitly emphasises the solidarity of the Flemish with persecuted refugees (N-VA, 2014: 42). For the same reason, *Open VLD* remains "extremely vigilant against the often extreme forms of discrimination that still exist worldwide" (Open VLD, 2014: 55). *CD&V* is most inclusionary and cognisant of "the fact that refugees are people who must be treated with dignity" (CD&V, 2014: 112). Therefore, the centre right proposes to grant a protective status for unaccompanied minor refugees (CD&V, 2014: 135).

Regarding integration, the three mainstream parties are more optimistic than the PRR. Interestingly, *N-VA* emphasises group-based solidarity between 'old' and 'new' Flemings who belong together and thus deserve similar opportunities and rights. Therefore, they want to combat ethnic discrimination

(N-VA, 2014: 35). However, discrimination intertwines with the problems of criminal immigrants, who reaffirm prejudices that instill hatred among natives against innocent immigrants (N-VA, 2014: 41).

Fourth, differences between PRR and mainstream right are most pronounced for Muslims. *Vlaams Belang* frames them as the enemy and therefore negates any empathy: they propose to retract the recognition of Islam as a religion, close extremist mosques, expulse 'hate imams', and stop the new construction of mosques (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 22). The mainstream right parties are more accepting of Muslims. *CD&V* adopts a disciplinary approach that encourages Islamic civil society to take responsibility in the fight against Islamic terrorism (CD&V, 2014: 214). *N-VA* is most exclusive of the mainstream parties and withdraws solidarity from a subset of radical Muslims who belong to or support 'Syria fighters' and do not deserve their Belgian nationality and should be expelled (N-VA, 2014: 44). However, the party explicitly states that "newcomers" should not "give up their identity or give up their faith at the border" (N-VA, 2014: 44), making them more inclusionary than *Vlaams Belang* regarding Islam. Similarly, *Open VLD* advocates "strengthening the possibilities to lose the Belgian nationality, for example in the event of a conviction for terrorism (...)" (Open VLD, 2014: 56) yet also believes that "religion or ethics

classes must (...) pay attention to all cultures present in our multicultural and multireligious society" (Open VLD, 2014: 37).

Although all right parties draw boundaries between active and inactive citizens, the negation of exchange-based solidarity is more pronounced by the mainstream right than *Vlaams Belang*. Yet, the PRR emphasizes exclusion (see Table 4) and advocates bottom-up strengthening of economic innovation by imposing mandatory training on long-term unemployed (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 13). The mainstream parties use more ambivalent frames for the unemployed. *N-VA* wants to keep them out of poverty by increasing the benefits for recently unemployed people (N-VA, 2014: 7). *Open VLD* also suggests undertaking more efforts to support people who cannot find a job in the traditional job market (Open VLD, 2014: 8). Finally, CD&V emphasises that "(t)he unemployed receive benefits, but are also guided to find a new job" (CD&V, 2014: 96). However, the three mainstream parties also propose disciplinary measures: unemployed people should gradually lose benefits (CD&V, 2014: 112; N-VA, 2014: 8) or get jobs purposefully designed for activation (Open VLD, 2014: 8).

Sixth, all parties agree on a strict approach towards criminals. For *Vlaams Belang*, the more stringent course for criminals consists of the latter contributing to the victim's recovery (Vlaams Belang, 2014: 24). They also

emphasise solidarity with police and security personnel. Both *CD&V* and *N-VA* are more inclusionary as they refer to help, rehabilitation, and reintegration of criminals (CD&V, 2014: 160; N-VA, 2014: 64).

Finally, the mainstream right supports LGBTQI, who deserve compassion due to discrimination and empathy due to acceptance of sexual diversity. Both *Open VLD* and *CD&V* support adoption by same-sex couples and acceptance of transgender individuals (CD&V, 2014: 168; Open VLD, 2014: 37). Moreover, while not explicitly *homonationalist*, *N-VA* associates acceptance of LGBTQI with Flemish values (N-VA, 2014: 40). *Vlaams Belang*, on the other hand, neglects the issue.

Implications for Future Studies

This contribution supports the idea that political parties can claim their place as champions of solidarity by framing particular others as *undeserving*. Because the literature pinpoints exclusionary discursive strategies to parties on the right, we analyse similarities and differences between four parties in the Flemish region, including one PRR party. Although they often exclude the same people, the mainstream right that wants to be in office remained different in terms of discourse. We focused on the elections of 2014, when both PRR *Vlaams Belang* and mainstream right parties *Open VLD* and *CD&V* lost a significant number of

votes to the conservative party *N-VA*. The latter has the same Flemish nationalist roots as *Vlaams Belang*.

During these elections, the discourse of *Vlaams Belang* was both statistically and substantively more exclusionary which is in line with our *populism hypothesis* (H1). Furthermore, the PRR uses a more group-based discourse that is more focused on foreigners, which supports our two *nativism hypotheses* (H2a and b). Finally, the PRR boundaries are less ambivalent than those drawn by their mainstream competitors, as the former is more negative and refers to more strict policies, which is in line with our *pathological normalcy thesis* (H3).

Our findings suggest that *N-VA* has become the most successful party in the Flemish region by taking a middle road: while more exclusionary and strict than its mainstream competitors, *N-VA* largely remained a mainstream party by being less explicitly exclusive, being more focused on the unemployed, and being more ambivalent than *Vlaams Belang* in its drawing of the boundaries of solidarity. Our results thus indicate that mainstream right parties remain distinctive from PRR and can win a large share of the latter's electorate. However, we are aware that our study of one election in a fragmented multi-party system limits the reliability of our findings. How does this distinction

between the mainstream right and PRR parties play out in other - electoral - settings? Our focus on a restricted set of party manifestos may also limit the reliability of our findings as we did not analyse different forms of party communication. Nevertheless, earlier research has shown similarities and consistencies in the messages of political parties across media (Hofferbert & Budge, 1992: 155). Furthermore, our findings are compatible with earlier research on PRR parties, as we confirm that they are more radical in terms of discourse. Future research on boundaries of solidarity in other party systems and other forms of communication can highly likely start from the same expectations as our research.

Synthesising our theoretical work on solidarity with insights from studies on boundary-making and discourse provides a more thorough approach to analyse the discursive construction of the boundaries of solidarity. Not only can one differentiate between actors in terms of whom they exclude, but also why they exclude, how much they focus on exclusion versus inclusion, and how strict they draw the boundaries of solidarity. Second, our results indicate that studies of competition on the right must take the use of frames into account. While restrictive positions on immigration and unemployment of mainstream right parties make 'exclusive solidarity' certainly applicable to these parties, our

research has shown significant distinctions between mainstream right and PRR parties in terms of discourse. For instance, the mainstream right emphasises inclusive solidarity frames and more ambivalent discourses towards groups deemed undeserving, such as asylum seekers or Muslims.

Future research could also investigate the effects of framing boundaries of solidarity in a certain way. For instance, one could argue that a more strict boundary leads to more rigorous or intolerant attitudes among message recipients than a more ambivalent distinction. For instance, in the context of increasingly popular PRR parties on social media, differences in media consumption patterns might result in different preferences among citizens (Schumann, Boer, Hanke, & Liu, 2021: 931).

Second, earlier research showed that the juxtaposition of positive and negative attitudes could help actors communicate their positive attitudes more intensely. Negatively framed messages have a more substantial impact on attitude strength than positively framed messages. The effect of explicitly framing certain groups as undeserving on electoral mobilisation is an exciting addition to studying PRR success and coalition-building among parties on the right. As *N-VA* has sent mixed signals about cooperation with its PRR competitor

Vlaams Belang, they could breach the *cordon sanitaire* if both parties together win a majority of voters in the Flemish region.

The discursive strategies parties use have consequences for forming policies and the common discourses on solidarity. To measure these effects is a road for future research as well. Discursively drawn boundaries could become institutionalised into policies that lead to 'social boundaries' or objectified forms of social differences manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of material or non-material resources and social opportunities. Here, a study of policy formation, either cross-sectional or longitudinal, could make the relationship between discourses and policies more transparent. Earlier research has shown whether mainstream right parties either side with PRR parties or form coalitions with mainstream leftist and centrist parties affect welfare state reform. Such an approach could be applied to several debates related to other topics of solidarity, for instance, debates on penal reform or immigration policies.

Solidarity Frames: The Missing Link Between Parties and Voters?

Abstract

Inspired by Lipset and Rokkan, research on the dimensionality of the political sphere has focused on political conflicts as derivative of historically anchored social group conflicts. However, due to the melting of these ‘frozen’ cleavages traditional social group affiliations have been gradually replaced by issue and value preferences. However, recent work suggests that, especially in a hyper-individualized and globalized context, solidarity frames are a new and relevant instrument to dimensionalize the political sphere. Yet, although it apparently makes sense to dimensionalize the party supply in terms of four solidarity frames, it is still an open question whether the demand of voters and of electorates can also be dimensionalized in terms of solidarity frames. We therefore test whether partisan solidarity frames (supply) are congruent with those of their electorates (demand). We do this in the context of Belgium (Flanders), characterised by a fragmented party system challenged by increasing economic and cultural openness. Our analyses suggest solidarity frames are also useful to understand differences between electorates voter’s political demands.

Keywords: solidarity; dimensionality; integration; conflict; party preference

Introduction

Within political science, a core objective is to find divisions within the political sphere on which parties and voters align. The benchmark for these studies is Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory (1967), which conceived modern society as divided by enduring conflicts between social groups produced by historical revolutions: church versus state, labour versus capital, centre versus periphery, and urban versus rural (see Bartolini, 2005; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Hence, modern citizens were subjected to a so-called 'conflict – integration dialectic': because society is characterised by persistent conflict lines, around which individuals will organize and identify, they feel connected to and solidary with members of their social group and feel disconnected to the members of opposing social groups. Consequently, political parties and their electorates are embodiments of these social group conflicts, and voting is simply a matter of identifying with the ingroup and opposing outgroups.

Yet, it is well-established that social group membership has become less and less electorally relevant, as indicated by increased volatility and socio-declined structural voting (Dalton, 2014)⁸. Sociologists argue that

⁸ However, not everyone agrees on this (see Ford & Jennings, 2020; Oesch & Rennwald, 2018). Moreover, educational groups might have become more important as structural bases of identity-formation (Bornschier, Häusermann, Zollinger, & Colombo, 2021; Stubager, 2009, 2010).

individualization has created a postmodern society wherein traditional group loyalties have become less relevant and more liquid (Bauman, 2000a; Scott, 2002). In this context, political parties are no longer passive vessels of historically determined conflicts between social groups but instead have become independent political entrepreneurs that actively frame and evaluate conflicts (Enyedi, 2005; Katz & Mair, 1993).

Hence, one can no longer understand the alignment between parties and voters exclusively in terms of ingroup loyalties and interests (e.g., van der Brug, 2010). Therefore, some scholars recently argued in favour of a reversal of the conflict-integration dialectic seriously by positing ‘solidarity’ as a crucial gateway to conflict (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017; Hall, 2017; Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022). They claim that ongoing transformations challenge social groups and national political spaces as frameworks of social cohesion, which causes solidarity to become the ultimate scarce resource. In today's hyper-individualized and globalized times, we all want to belong, yet the problem is that we fundamentally differ about how and to whom we want to belong.

As social integration has become everyone's problem, political parties want to attract voters by proposing ways to solve the need for social cohesion. Accordingly, they use *solidarity* frames, which entails that they “*select some*

aspects of a perceived reality” (i.e., social cohesion) and “*make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation*” (e.g., Entman, 1993: 52). Thijssen and Verheyen identified four solidarity frames using a Durkheimian-Honnethian theoretical framework (Thijssen, 2012, 2016). Group-based solidarity frames stress structures of objective similarities between group members (e.g., national compatriots). Exchange-based solidarity frames emphasize structures of complementary differences (e.g., division of labour). Compassionate solidarity includes redistribution based on feelings of compassion with those who should have a similar position (e.g., welfare benefits). Finally, empathic solidarity frames entail recognition of differences between people based on feelings of empathy (e.g., acceptance of individual differences).

To the extent that political parties prefer different solidarity frames and stick to them across items, they create partisan conflict that now results from alternative views on the problem of integration. Thijssen and Verheyen (2022) confirmed that political parties' differences could be meaningfully interpreted in terms of a two-dimensional space based on four opposing solidarity frames. Notably, the Belgian (Flemish) parties can be defined by two contrasting

solidarity axes: a conflict between group-based and empathic solidarity frames, on the one hand, and a conflict between exchange-based and compassionate solidarity frames, on the other hand.

However, until now, solidarity frame theory only has been tested at the supply level for the party political space. It remains to be seen whether solidarity frames are also meaningful concepts for voters and whether party electorates align on the solidarity frames of their parties. Contemporary political scientists agree that the relationship between voters and parties has become bidirectional: voters and parties mutually influence each other in their position-taking (Dalton, 2014). In practice, researchers often assume symmetry and assess whether there is a match between demand-side and supply-side regarding positions and oppositions.

If solidarity frames help understand the supply of political parties, one would expect a considerable overlap with solidarity frame preferences of their electorates. Yet, this is not necessarily the case because we know voters are generally less prone to use abstract ideological reasoning (cf. Converse, 2006 [1964]). However, in the sense that solidarity frames also function as practical heuristic devices (e.g., Entman, 1993) that give insight into the relations between abstract ideological principles, it is more plausible that voters will also

use them (Schwartz, Caprara, & Vecchione, 2010; Steenbergen & Brewer, 2004; Tetlock, 1986). Nevertheless, hitherto no information is available on the linkage between the partisan supply of solidarity frames and the voters' demands. Thijssen and Verheyen (2022) imply that voters think in terms of these solidarity frames. As they did not genuinely test this, we found an empirical lacuna that we fill in this paper.

Using unique survey data for the same Belgian (Flemish) context Thijssen and Verheyen (2022) focused on in their study of the partisan supply, we find that voters distinguish among the same four solidarity frames. Voters are mainly divided on the choice between group-based and empathic solidarity. However, we also find that the other solidarity frame preferences are not necessarily conflictual. Finally, we find strong congruence between party electorates' preferences and those of their preferred parties: support for group-based and exchange-based solidarity typifies rightist electorates, while leftist electorates prefer compassionate and empathic solidarity.

From Conflict to Solidarity and Back

Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory (1967) provided a blueprint to understand the divisions within the political sphere on which parties and voters align. Lipset

and Rokkan posited a 'conflict-integration' dialectic under their theoretical framework. This dialectic entails that modern society was divided by enduring conflicts between social groups (e.g., church versus state or labour versus capital) that resulted in integration at the level of those particular social groups. Individuals belonging to a social group connected with other group members via group-affiliated associations, which in turn furthered disconnect with members of opposing social groups (see Bartolini, 2005; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). This logic underlies the constitution of different political parties that represented the interests and values of these social groups, such as the socialist party representing the labour class. Consequently, the cleavage theory is social deterministic: parties are merely expressive vessels of social group interests, and votes simply reflect the in-group loyalty of voters.

The party system founded upon group conflict resulted in a relatively static political landscape. Lipset and Rokkan attribute this mechanism to a second 'conflict-integration' dialectic: while parties are primarily a structural outcome of social conflict, this conflict subsequently also provides integration because ingroup members are fighting against a common social enemy. According to this mechanism, the partisan agency is limited, although parties always had some manoeuvring space to negotiate with other parties on behalf

of their constituents (Schumacher, De Vries, & Vis, 2013). Through these efforts, parties legitimized a nationally cohesive framework of competition and policy-making. Through negotiations, parties brought forward institutionalised forms of national solidarity, such as the welfare state (Baldwin, 1990; Bayertz, 1999: 21).

Lipset and Rokkan (1967) were fully aware that their choice to focus on a conflict-integration dialectic was somehow arbitrary, as they acknowledged to have “simply chosen to start out from the latent or manifest strains and cleavages and deal with trends toward compromise and reconciliation against the background of initial conflicts”, while they could have easily reversed the mechanism (1967: 5). However, we believe their choice is not a mere triviality but is rather a sign of the 1950s and 1960s when many people were disappointed with the stifling societal context. A conflict-integration dialectic allows one to understand how social conflicts led to stable associations between members of a particular social group and how these social groups became integrated within a larger national framework.

However, the assumptions of traditional cleavage theory have become obsolete. Social group membership has become less electorally relevant, as indicated by increased volatility and declined socio-structural voting (Dalton,

2014). This tendency reflects how modern society, structured by a logic of social in-group versus social out-group⁹, has transformed through processes of individualization into a postmodern society where group loyalties have become less relevant and more liquid (Bauman, 2000a; Scott, 2002). Local communities, classes, or religious institutions became less significant in people's self-identity, while the demands of previously marginalised groups – such as ethnic or sexual minorities – came more to the foreground (Heath, Curtice, & Elgenius, 2009; Pollack & Pickel, 2007). These tendencies of individualisation and diversification coincide with revolutions of globalization and migration, which challenge social cohesion and solidarity within the nation-state (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017; Hall, 2017). Individuals are progressively confronted with demands that transcend the boundaries of nation-states, such as those of refugees and viral threats. In sum, these developments have left individuals looking for a way to bind society together (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017).

Thijssen and Verheyen (2022) argue that this new context necessitates a different view on what constitutes the basis of conflict and alignment between parties and voters. Therefore, recent work has taken the opposite route of an

⁹ We are aware that in current times of affective polarisation (i.e., increased dislike and distrust towards those who vote for the other party) a conflict-integration dialectic might seem relevant again. However, affective polarization logic does not start from social conflicts but rather from partisanship (Iyengar, Lelkes, Levendusky, Malhotra, & Westwood, 2019).

integration-conflict dialectic: while almost everyone agrees that social solidarity should be enhanced to tackle societal problems, conflicting perspectives exist on *how* this should be done. Here, one should look at how political actors in general, and political parties in particular, deal with the problem of solidarity. Due to the developments described above, Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) assumption that political parties are passive vessels of historically determined conflicts between social groups has become untenable. Therefore, the agency of political parties should be taken seriously as they increasingly operate as political entrepreneurs that can actively frame conflict and, more importantly, frame social integration (Enyedi, 2005; Katz & Mair, 1993). By doing so, they restructure the political sphere themselves and mobilize voters on previously unimportant or non-existing integration dimensions (Green-Pedersen, 2007).

A starting point to distinguish different mechanisms of social integration can be found in the work of Durkheim (2014 [1893]), who distinguished *mechanical* and *organic solidarity*. The former emphasizes the importance of a high degree of perceived similarity among group members, similar to the in-group versus out-group logic underlying traditional cleavage theory. In-group members share a set of rights and duties, guarded and regulated by group pressure and norms. However, Durkheim argued that mechanical solidarity

would gradually be replaced by organic solidarity. In modern differentiated societies, individuals are bound together by complementary differences that facilitate reciprocal interdependence. In this respect, our plea to reverse Lipset and Rokkan's conflict-integration dialectic is clearly in line with Durkheim's theory.

Yet, Durkheim's early solidarity theory has drawn criticisms for its focus on functions and structures: solidarity is a macro-sociological fact linked with indicators such as collective identity or the division of labour. In a context where individuals have to deal with uncertainty regarding solidarity and social cohesion, it makes more sense to treat solidarity as a socially constructed or a 'framed' reality subject to struggle instead of a *social fact sui generis*. Both mechanical and organic solidarity demarcate insiders (ingroup members or useful exchange-partners) from outsiders (outgroup members and useless exchange-partners). These demarcations are subject to discussion or, in the words of Honneth (1996), 'struggles for recognition'. While some accept the exclusion of 'outsiders' from solidarity and affirm in-group membership or exchange as principles of solidarity, others might feel that those excluded from solidarity deserve support and therefore argue in favour of shifting the boundaries of solidarity.

While Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory (1967) primarily focused on social group conflict, the Durkheimian-Honnethian solidarity frame theory stresses how both similarity and difference have integrative force and how individuals evaluate solidarity in terms of marginal individuals. The framework, therefore, does not only focus on social group-based solidarity as Lipset and Rokkan did but distinguishes four solidarity frames, two of which are linked to the mechanical solidarity with equals and two of which are linked to the organic solidarity with those who are different (see Thijssen, 2012; Thijssen, 2016).

The integrative four solidarity frames become politically relevant because different political actors can endorse the same or different solidarity frames. The arrows in Figure 1 depict those 'conflict' lines. First, early Durkheim's solidarity typology inspired the two horizontal arrows, which posit a conflict between traditional mechanical solidarity and modern organic solidarity (Durkheim, 2014 [1893]). In contemporary politics, conflict can arise between parties that encourage in-group similarity and parties that draw a boundary between contributors – including individuals from outside the 'in-group' - and non-contributors – including in-group members – or natives. Similarly, conflict can arise between parties that emphasise redistribution towards 'outsiders' and parties that focus on recognising these 'outsiders'

differences. However, the relationship between mechanical and organic solidarity is certainly not only conflictual. One could prefer an in-group that posits exchange between in-group members as part of its collective consciousness or that exchange strengthens in-group identity. Similarly, compassionate redistribution and empathic recognition are not necessarily contradictory, as compassionate solidarity can support the recognition of specific needs, and empathic solidarity could result in the form of redistribution that makes 'full' recognition possible.

Secondly, the two vertical lines are inspired by Honneth (1996). Group-based solidarity can contrast with the neediness of an outgroup member situated on the fringes of the in-group and result in compassionate solidarity. Similarly, exchange-based solidarity is put under pressure when one has empathy with individuals whose otherness does not lend itself to reciprocity. Yet, the effective conflictual nature of this struggle can diminish when the boundaries of the group-based solidarity are reaffirmed or readjusted. While group-based and compassionate solidarity can become complementary when one gives a new meaning to the in-group by taking in the unfamiliar, the conflict between exchange-based and empathic solidarity diminishes when the

understanding of proper exchange goods changes as others are seen as a priori valuable by virtue of their otherness.

Last but not least, Honneth really meets Durkheim along the diagonal lines as these frames are opposed both in terms of similarity versus difference and affirmation versus struggle (see Figure 1). Inspired by Lipset and Rokkan (1967), who also focused on the axes of 'double dichotomy', one could expect these diagonal lines to be most conflictual (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022). One diagonal highlights opposition between those who mainly adopt group-based solidarity frames and those who mainly adopt empathic solidary frames. At the same time, the other emphasises the opposition between those who mainly adopt exchange-based solidarity frames and those who mainly adopt compassionate solidarity frames. Similar to the other lines, the nature of these relationships is not necessarily conflictual. Empathy for differences might lead individuals to question group essentialism, but can also push them to construct a group identity appreciative of in-group differences. Likewise, compassion for those who cannot contribute might cause individuals to deem reciprocity between unequal exchange partners unfair, yet it can also align with exchange-based solidarity if a commonly accepted level of equality between exchange partners is met.

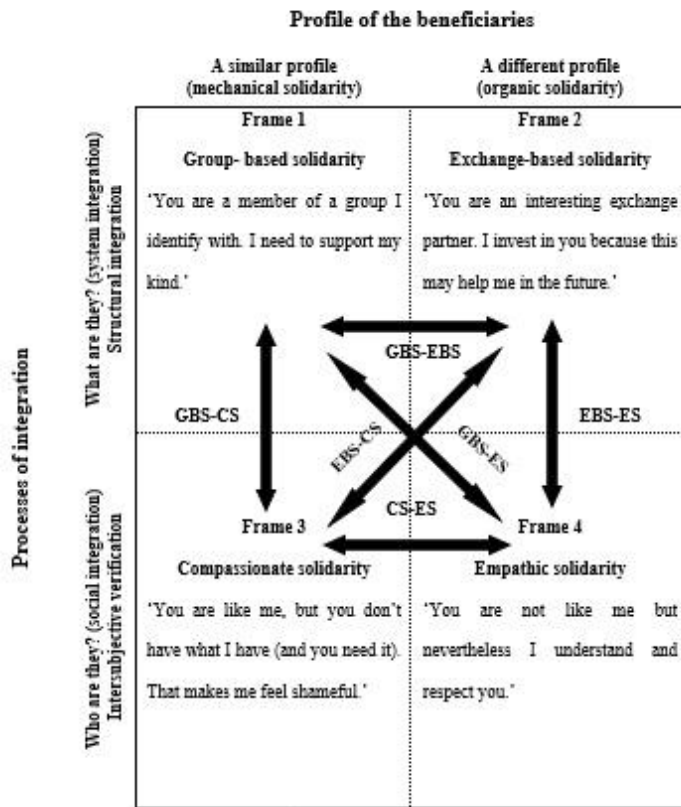


Figure 1: relations between solidarity frames, based on Thijssen (2012, 2016)

The Integration-Conflict Dialectic: From Parties to Electorates

In a context of increased political entrepreneurship of political parties, research on solidarity frames has focused on how different parties frame solidarity to express their programmatic urge to strengthen social cohesion in society (e.g., Enyedi, 2005) and connect with the interests or concerns of

(potential) voters. However, the solidarity framework has hitherto only been tested for partisan supply, notably in terms of party manifestoes. This focus on the supply-side is an important gap because the theory explicitly assumes that voters align with parties based on which solidarity frames are emphasised in their discourse. Therefore, we posit two research questions to test how solidarity frames help structure the electoral political sphere in today's hyper-individualized society.

Our first research question deals with the dimensionality of the electoral space. How do solidarity frames structure the voters' electoral political space? One could expect this to be not plausible. To the extent that solidarity frames are akin to abstract ideological reasoning, voters are less inclined to use abstract ideological reasoning (cf. Converse, 2006 [1964]). However, to the extent that frames are also practical reasoning devices (cf. Entman, 1993), it makes sense to expect that also voters can be dimensionalized along solidarity frame lines. (Schwartz et al., 2010; Steenbergen & Brewer, 2004; Tetlock, 1986). Based on the higher presented integration-conflict dialectic, we expect that voters can analytically distinguish four solidarity frames and prefer some solidarity frames over others. In other words, we test whether it makes sense to structure the

electoral political space in terms of solidarity frames that either complement one another or conflict with each other.

Inspired by the supply-side research by Thijssen and Verheyen (2022), we expect group-based versus empathic (GBS-ES) and exchange-based versus compassionate (EBS-CS) as the dimensions that distinguish voters. Of course, the solidarity frame conflict lines among the voters might still differ quantitatively or substantively from those of the parties. Yet, some scholars have already argued that globalisation and immigration increase the salience of conflict between group-based ‘welfare chauvinists’ (Schumacher & Van Kersbergen, 2016) – who follow an ingroup versus outgroup logic – and empathic ‘cosmopolitans’ (Bauböck & Scholten, 2016) – who see diversity as a given and are therefore wary of setting strict in-group boundaries.

Our second research question concerns the solidarity frame preferences of concrete party electorates. Are party electorates’ solidarity frame preferences congruent with their preferred parties? We assess first whether party electorates’ solidarity frame preferences correspond with supply-side findings. We already know that parties endorse particular solidarity frames, and parties that are ideologically akin typically endorse the same solidarity frames (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022). The radical rightist and nationalist parties mainly

endorse group-based solidarity; greens and social and Christian democrats advocate compassionate solidarity; liberals, Christian democrats, and conservative nationalists support exchange-based solidarity; and greens, liberals, and - to a lesser extent - social and Christian democrats favour empathic solidarity.

If solidarity frames are meaningful devices to dimensionalize the political space, we would expect a considerable overlap between parties' and electorates' solidarity frame preferences. As many voters tend to embrace multiple or contradictory values and principles, voters possibly do not necessarily prefer their preferred parties' solidarity frames (Sniderman & Bullock, 2004; Tetlock, 1986). Nevertheless, the overlap between the solidarity frames of parties and their electorates is plausible. Solidarity frames are engrained in various partisan statements and consequently become information supplements for voters (e.g., Petersen, Slothuus, & Togeby, 2010). Furthermore, as solidarity frames are used in parties' discourses across issues and groups, they form a hummable tune for supporters (e.g., Goren, Federico, & Kittilson, 2009). Therefore, we expect solidarity frame preferences of electorates (as aggregates of individual voters) to correspond to those of their preferred parties.

Furthermore, we assess whether parties' and electorates' positions on solidarity dimensions are congruent. Supply-side research has shown limited support for solidarity frames endorsed by ideologically opposing parties. Group-based frames generally do not go together with empathic frames, and exchange-based frames with compassionate frames. Parties on the left tend to prefer compassionate and empathic solidarity frames over group-based and exchange-based frames, while parties on the right tend to do the opposite (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022). Following the previous arguments, we expect left – and right-leaning electorates to be similarly distinctive in terms of solidarity frames.

Case, Data, and Methods

Overall, we must evaluate whether solidarity frames are helpful to distinguish party electorates. Therefore, we use survey data to measure solidarity frame endorsement among Flemish voters who act in a multiparty system with a high effective number of parties. These voters likely come into contact with a diversity of solidarity frames. Thijssen and Verheyen (2022) matched four pre-defined solidarity frames with concrete party manifesto statements. Unfortunately, generic definitions consist of scientific jargon, while the latter are very specific manifesto statements often embedded in surrounding texts.

Hence, we developed solidarity frame statements designed to study voters' solidarity frame endorsement.

Our survey items are, therefore, greatly inspired by both. They consist of basic evaluative statements more specific than generic frame definitions and more standardized than party manifesto statements. Concretely, we construct seven 7-point solidarity frame items for each solidarity frame, which encompasses both positively and negatively worded items to avoid response set problems. Table 2 shows a definition, a statement found in party manifestos, and a statement used in the survey for each solidarity frame.

Group-based solidarity	Exchange-based solidarity
<i>Generic frame definition</i>	<i>Generic frame definition</i>
Solidarity with similar group members	Solidarity with complementary exchange partners
<i>Example voter survey item</i>	<i>Example voter survey item</i>
The ideal society consists of people who have something in common.	We currently need more people who contribute to society.
<i>Example party manifesto statement</i>	<i>Example party manifesto statement</i>
The person in question must show the will to permanently link his fate with that of our community (Vlaams Belang, 2014).	Pupils who opt for vocational education must feel that society needs them, more than is the case today (Open VLD, 2014).
Compassionate solidarity	Empathic solidarity
<i>Generic frame definition</i>	<i>Generic frame definition</i>
Solidarity with needy group-members at the fringes	Solidarity with people who are different
<i>Example voter survey item</i>	<i>Example voter survey item</i>
By helping people in more difficult situations, we form a society based on solidarity.	We currently need people who have respect for others, even when they are very different from the rest.
<i>Example party manifesto statement</i>	<i>Example party manifesto statement</i>
This means that childcare must be accessible for children from a disadvantaged background, for children of parents who do not work part-time, for children of single parents, or for children with disabilities (Groen, 2014).	So that children get to know each other's background, and that understanding takes the place of ignorance (Open VLD, 2014).

Table 1: operationalisation of solidarity frames into standardised item formats. Example party manifesto statements found in 2014 Flemish party manifestos (source between brackets).

We sent the questionnaire to 3485 Flemish members of an existing panel in October 2018. Estimates are potentially biased as this panel overrepresents

highly educated and politically interested voters. However, our goal is not to provide estimates for certain social groups but rather to analyse relationships between variables - i.e., solidarity frames and party preferences - and relative orders of magnitude, which make the results less sensitive to sampling biases (see Dey, 1997; Lefevere, Seeberg, & Walgrave, 2020). Moreover, left-right self-placement scores ($\mu = 5.78$ S.E. = .067) overlap with those from a representative Flemish voter dataset of 2014 ($\mu = 5.99$ S.E. = .077) (Deschouwer, 2018).

Another sample issue relates to missing values. 1302 (90.10%) of our respondents have no missing values, yet after imputation, we retain 1434 respondents without missing values (99.24%). Analyses with both datasets lead to equivalent model estimates and model fit (see online appendix), indicating no problematic biases.

We assess to which extent party electorates endorse similar solidarity frames as their party. Therefore, we measure propensities to vote for six Flemish political parties: PRR *Vlaams Belang* ($\mu = 2.13$ S.D. = 2.52), conservative nationalist *N-VA* ($\mu = 4.68$ S.D. = 4.00), liberal *Open VLD* ($\mu = 4.44$ S.D. = 3.067), Christian democratic *CD&V* ($\mu = 4.16$ S.D. = 2.778), social democratic *sp.a* ($\mu = 4.29$ S.D. = 3.108) and environmentalist *Groen* ($\mu = 5.68$ S.D. = 3.62). To ensure

comparability with Thijssen and Verheyen (2022), we leave out left-populist *PVDA-PTB!*.

The first part of our research deals with electoral space dimensionality. To establish how solidarity frames structure the electoral political space, we first need evidence of voters distinguishing four solidarity frames. Therefore, we conduct a confirmatory factor analysis using Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2018) and assess whether we can fit a model of four solidarity frame factors. Afterwards, we need to assess conflict potentiality between these solidarity frames. We use correlation analysis and factor analyses – both exploratory and confirmatory - to measure the potential of either convergence or conflict between solidarity frames among voters.

The second part of our research concerns the solidarity frame preferences of specific party electorates. We therefore measure propensities to vote for six Flemish political parties: PRR *Vlaams Belang* ($\mu = 2.13$ S.D. = 2.52), conservative nationalist *N-VA* ($\mu = 4.68$ S.D. = 4.00), liberal *Open VLD* ($\mu = 4.44$ S.D. = 3.067), Christian democratic *CD&V* ($\mu = 4.16$ S.D. = 2.778), social democratic *sp.a* ($\mu = 4.29$ S.D. = 3.108) and environmentalist *Groen* ($\mu = 5.68$ S.D. = 3.62) ¹⁰. We then classify respondents as party electorate members if

¹⁰ To ensure comparability with Thijssen and Verheyen (2022), we leave out left-populist *PVDA-PTB*.

they have a propensity to vote for a party of at least 7 out of 10 for only one party (N= 1077). Respondents with one or more ties between parties are left out.

To assess the distinctiveness of solidarity frame preferences among party electorates, we use one-way ANOVA and a box-whisker plot analysis. Afterwards, we create plots that assess the congruence between party electorates and their preferred parties. We determine the coordinates of Flemish party electorates by calculating their average scores and intra-party standard deviations on the factors that measure conflict potentiality between solidarity frames among voters. Finally, we compare demand-side positions with supply-side positions by calculating the latter via adding or subtracting the relative number of solidarity frames found in the 2014 Flemish manifestos (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022 : 24)¹¹. We ensure comparability between the supply-side and demand-side by standardizing coordinates of both supply-side and demand-side.

¹¹ In contrast with correlations found in CFA model, the two-dimensional plots indicate relationships between the factors is different for party electorates than for voters in general: electorates' positions on CE and GBEB now seem negatively correlated, while their positions on GB-E and GBEB seem positively correlated. However, these results are consistent with previous findings (see Figure 2): party electorates having high preferences for group-based and exchange-based solidarity tend to have lower preferences for compassionate and empathic solidarity, and vice versa.

Results

First, we test whether voters distinguish between group-based, exchange-based, compassionate, and empathic solidarity frames. We conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with 4 batteries of 28 items using Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2018). Models with a good fit have CFI values greater than .95, RMSEA values of less than .06, and SRMR values of less than .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1998). As these criteria are extremely sensitive for evaluating entirely new batteries, it is no surprise that our initial model did not fit ($N = 1434$; $\chi^2 = 4420.225$, $df = 334$, $RMSEA = .091$, $SRMR = .131$, $CFI = .824$)¹². However, eliminating some items with low loadings led to a fitting factor model with four distinctive solidarity frames: group-based solidarity (3 indicators), compassionate solidarity (4 indicators; 1 error covariance), exchange-based solidarity (3 indicators), and empathic solidarity (4 indicators; 1 error covariance) ($N = 1434$; $\chi^2 = 375.346$, $df = 69$, $RMSEA = .056$, $SRMR = .050$, $CFI = .978$). This four factor model fits better than one-factor, two-factor, three-factor, or five-factor models (see appendix). In this model, all scales have indicators with factor loadings higher than .500 and have Cronbach's alpha

¹² The model was estimated using full information maximum likelihood, which is adequate because seven point items can be treated as interval measures (Carifio & Perla, 2007).

above .700 (see Table 3). As scales are reliable, we base further analyses primarily on mean scale scores.

	Group-based	Compassionate	Exchange-based	Empathic
Item 1	Q2.1	Q3.1	Q4.1	Q5.1
	The ideal society consists of people who have something in common.	The ideal society consists of people who help other people in worse situations.	The ideal society consists of individuals with skills that complement each other.	The ideal society consists of people who understand each other's individual differences.
Item 2	Q2.2	Q3.2	Q4.2	Q5.2
	We currently need more communality in society.	We currently need more help for the weak.	We currently need more people who contribute to society.	We currently need people who have respect for others, even when they are very different from the rest.
Item 3	Q2.3	Q3.3	Q4.3	Q5.3
	We form a solidarity society through common norms and values.	By helping people in more difficult situations, we form a society based on solidarity.	We form a solidarity society through individuals who work together.	By respecting everyone's individuality, we form a solidarity-based society.
Item 4	Q2.4	Q3.4	Q4.4	Q5.4
	I can agree with a policy that strengthens our community.	I can agree with a policy that gives the weaker people more support.	I do agree with a policy that gives appreciation to people who contribute.	I agree with a policy that gives people the opportunity to be themselves, even if they deviate from the rest.
Item 5	Q2.5	Q3.5	Q4.5	Q5.5
	People with different norms and values must adapt.	People who are less fortunate must take their responsibility to find a solution.	People who make little or no contribution must contribute more.	People who are different from the rest should not get (even) more respect.
Item 6	Q2.6	Q3.6	Q4.6	Q5.6
	The presence of different norms and values is a threat to our society.	The benefit of a small group of people threatens our society.	The passivity of a large group of people is a threat to our society.	The compulsion to make everyone the same threatens our society.
Item 7	Q2.7	Q3.7	Q4.7	Q5.7
	I prefer to be with people who look like me.	I prefer to give to people who are less fortunate than me.	I prefer to give to people who have contributed, even if they have it better than me.	I prefer to be with people who are different from me, no matter how different they are from me.
Cronbach's α	.773	.916	.793	.938
Mean	4.064	5.177	4.779	5.165
SD	1.429	1.297	1.247	1.478

Table 2: solidarity frame indicators. Items in bold retained after CFA. Reliability, mean, and standard deviation for scales based on items after CFA.

We now evaluate the dimensionality of the demand-side. We focus on interrelationships between all solidarity frames. Supply-side correlations suggest that group-based versus empathic solidarity frames (GBS-ES) and exchange-based versus compassionate solidarity frames (EBS-CS) have the most conflict potential. Furthermore, this analysis also suggested weak compatibility of group-based and exchange-based solidarity (GBS-EBS), respectively of compassionate and empathic solidarity (CS-ES) (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022).

Therefore, we first look at the correlations between solidarity frames to assess conflict potentiality on the demand-side. Spearman rho is most appropriate because all mean scale scores violate normality assumptions. Results indicate that relationships between solidarity frames are not necessarily conflictual (see Table 4). Positive correlation coefficients for compassionate versus empathic (CS-ES) and group-based versus exchange-based (GBS-EBS) indicate compatibility rather than conflict for Flemish citizens. The insignificant correlation between exchange-based and empathic solidarity also suggests that conflict on the organic dialectic is irrelevant for contemporary Flemish citizens. Conversely, we find conflict potential for group-based versus compassionate

solidarity (GBS-CS), group-based versus empathic solidarity (GBS-ES), and to lesser extent for exchange-based versus compassionate solidarity (EBS-CS).

Solidarity frames	Spearman rho
Group-based and compassionate	-.283 **
Group-based and exchange-based	.474 **
Group-based and empathic	-.407 **
Compassionate and exchange-based	-.112 **
Compassionate and empathic	.565 **
Exchange-based and empathic	-.007

Table 4: correlations between solidarity frame scales (Spearman rho's)

A model based on the double dichotomy (GBS-ES and EBS-CS) should not fit. Indeed, such a second-order ($N = 1434$; $\chi^2 = 1805.839$, $df = 76$, $RMSEA = .126$, $SRMR = .297$, $CFI = .876$) or first-order factor model ($N = 1434$; $\chi^2 = 1022.227$, $df = 70$, $RMSEA = .097$, $SRMR = .057$, $CFI = .932$) do not fit the data. The positive loadings of EBS-CS on both exchange-based and compassionate solidarity in both models also disprove this particular diagonal conflict as relevant.

As Table 4 also shows moderate positive associations between group-based and exchange-based solidarity (GBS-EBS), respectively compassionate and empathic solidarity (CS-ES), we should consider particular solidarity frame

preferences as complementary that can also define a dimension that differentiates those who score high on both frames from those who do not.

We conduct an exploratory factor analysis with the remaining indicators (see Table 3) to explore this idea. We use principal axis factoring as we want to find latent variables that measure solidarity frame convergence or conflict. Based on Eigenvalues, we extract one factor primarily loading on empathy, one on compassion, and one on both group-based and exchange-based solidarity (see Table 5). All factors are reliable and explain about 73 percent of the initial variance¹³. While all factors have primary loadings higher than .500, the factor loading strongly positive on empathic solidarity items also loads moderately negative on group-based solidarity items. This finding is not surprising, as the negative correlation coefficient for these two solidarity frames is almost equal in degree to both positive correlation coefficients (see Table 4).

¹³ Solutions were examined using both direct oblimin and varimax as rotation methods.

Solidarity frames	Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Group-based	Q2.1	-.165	.006	.503
	Q2.5	-.271	-.09	.751
	Q2.6	-.367	-.115	.667
Compassionate	Q3.1	.256	.763	.088
	Q3.2	.228	.828	-.089
	Q3.3	.314	.816	.004
	Q3.4	.296	.840	-.073
Exchange-based	Q4.2	.302	.113	.669
	Q4.4	.350	.059	.749
	Q4.5	.140	-.042	.603
Empathic	Q5.1	.816	.316	.092
	Q5.2	.817	.343	-.021
	Q5.3	.793	.361	-.039
	Q5.4	.830	.343	-.052

Table 5: factors and factor scores per item.

We construct a three-factor model following correlation coefficients (Table 4) and factor loadings (Table 5). As second-order factor models suffer from convergence issues, we construct a first-order factor model and free all error covariances between the same solidarity frame indicators. We obtain a model with decent fit ($N = 1434$; $\chi^2 = 269.376$, $df = 52$, $RMSEA = .054$, $SRMR = .042$, $CFI = .984$), with the majority of factor loadings higher than .450. The first factor loads positively on group-based and exchange-based solidarity (hence GBS-EBS), aggregating preferences for both structural frames. The second factor

loads positively on compassionate and empathic solidarity (hence CS-ES), aggregating preferences for both intersubjective frames. The correlation between GBS-EBS and CS-ES is significantly positive yet weak. The third factor loads positively on group-based and negatively on empathic solidarity (hence GBS-ES), representing the conflict between both frames, and is moderately and negatively associated with both GBS-EBS and CS-ES (see diagram in appendix). Voters, in general, are thus divided on a GBS-ES axis.

Now, we turn to party electorates and evaluate whether their solidarity frame preferences are the with those of their parties. First, we assess the distinctiveness of electorates in terms of mean scores. Therefore, we classified respondents as party electorate members if their propensity to vote for only one party is at least 7 out of 10 (N= 1077). Respondents with ties between parties are left out. *N-VA* (N =335) and *Groen* (N = 393) are particularly well-represented, while samples for *Vlaams Belang* (N = 57), *sp.a* (N = 98), *Open VLD* (N = 106) and *CD&V* (N = 88) are somewhat smaller¹⁴.

Box-whisker plots (Figure 2) show considerable internal heterogeneity for all party electorates yet also limited external overlap between party

¹⁴ Because the choice to classify voters with a propensity to vote for a party of at least 7 out of 10 is somehow arbitrary we additionally conducted a one-way ANOVA with electorates with a lower (6) or higher (8) propensity to vote as well. Despite differences in definition, we find similar results in rankings and overall associations (see appendix).

electorates. More importantly, the box-whisker plots indicate that the electorates favour solidarity frames most prominent in manifestoes of their preferred parties. First, we see that majority of the *Vlaams Belang* and *N-VA* electorates score significantly higher on group-based solidarity than the majority of other electorates. Second, differences between electorates are less outspoken for compassionate solidarity but remain significant: the majority of leftist (*sp.a* and *Groen*) and centrist electorates (*CD&V*) score higher than the majority of rightist electorates. Third, a large share of rightist electorates score higher on exchange-based solidarity than those on the left. Finally, we find especially the *Groen* electorate to strongly endorse empathic solidarity. The one-way ANOVA affirms significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between party electorates in solidarity frame preferences.

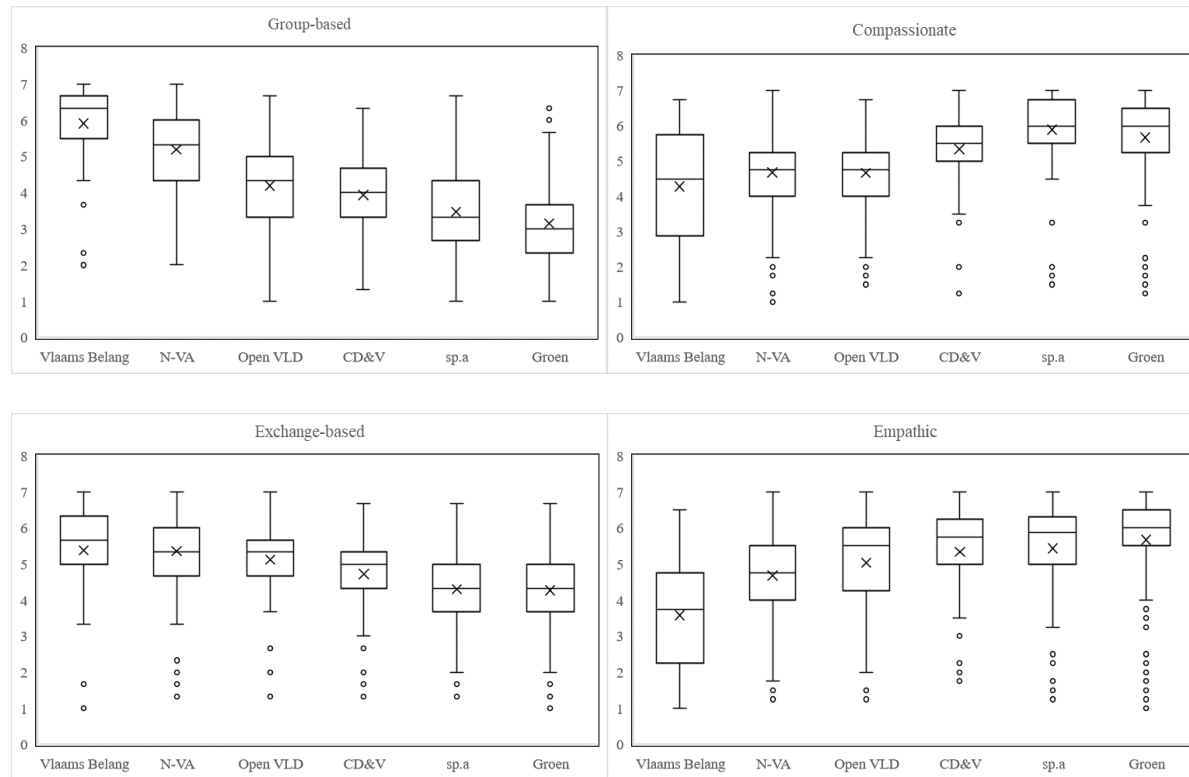


Figure 2: party electorate box-whisker plots. Y-axis: cumulative scale scores. °: outliers (>1.5 IQD) . X: mean. Group sizes: Vlaams Belang (N = 57), N-VA (N = 335), Open VLD (N = 106), CD&V (N = 88), sp.a (N = 98), and Groen (N = 393)

Subsequently, we determine which solidarity frame is most preferred for each party electorate respondent to evaluate the match between electorates and solidarity frames. After leaving out respondents with tied solidarity preferences, we assess the association between the most preferred solidarity frame and party electorate membership (see Table 6). We find a moderate but significant association (Pearson $\chi^2 = 307.333$; $df=15$; Cramer's $V = .352$). Rightist electorates generally favour group-based and exchange-based solidarity over empathic and compassionate solidarity, while leftist electorates do the opposite. An interesting exception is the liberal electorate (*Open VLD*), whose members mainly prefer empathic and exchange-based solidarity. Party electorates effectively have distinct preferences for the four solidarity frames similar to supply-side prevalences.

	<i>Vlaams Belang</i>	<i>N-VA</i>	<i>Open VLD</i>	<i>CD&V</i>	<i>sp.a</i>	<i>Groen</i>	<i>Total</i>
Group-based	25 (56,82%)	98 (33,68%)	17 (17,71%)	5 (7,35%)	2 (3,13%)	19 (7,17%)	166
Compassionate	5 (11,36%)	36 (12,37%)	9 (9,38%)	22 (32,35%)	37 (57,81%)	95 (35,85%)	204
Exchange-based	11 (25,00%)	102 (35,05%)	26 (27,08%)	9 (13,24%)	3 (4,69%)	11 (4,15%)	162
Empathic	3 (6,82%)	55 (18,90%)	44 (45,83%)	32 (47,06%)	22 (34,38%)	140 (52,83%)	296
Total	44	291	96	68	64	265	828

Table 6: contingency table with party electorate membership and most preferred solidarity frame. Column percentages between brackets

We fully resolve our second research question by assessing the congruence between electorates and parties on three two-dimensional plots¹⁵. Therefore, we determine the coordinates of Flemish party electorates by calculating their average scores and intra-party standard deviations for the three factors. We draw 95% confidence rectangles for each axis to assess overlap between party electorates. Finally, we compare demand-side positions with supply-side positions by calculating the latter via adding or subtracting the relative number of solidarity frames found in the 2014 Flemish manifestos (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022 : 24)¹⁶. We ensure comparability between the supply-side and demand-side by standardizing coordinates of both supply-side and demand-side. We subtract the mean coordinate across all parties on that axis and divide it by the inter-party standard deviation. Important to note is that supply-side positions are based on party manifestos of 2014, while demand-side data were collected in 2018 before 2019 manifestos were publicly available.

The confidence rectangles indicate that some electorates overlap on at least one axis. For instance, *Vlaams Belang* and *Open VLD* electorates largely

¹⁵ We are aware the assumption of orthogonality does not do justice to the true correlations between the three factors.

¹⁶ In contrast with correlations found in CFA model, the two-dimensional plots indicate relationships between the factors is different for party electorates than for voters in general: electorates' positions on CE and GBEB now seem negatively correlated, while their positions on GB-E and GBEB seem positively correlated. However, these results are consistent with previous findings (see Figure 2): party electorates having high preferences for group-based and exchange-based solidarity tend to have lower preferences for compassionate and empathic solidarity, and vice versa.

overlap in terms of group-based and exchange-based solidarity preferences (GBS-EBS) , but take significantly different positions on group-based versus empathic solidarity (GBS-ES). Two-dimensional plots based on solidarity frames provide a statistically meaningful way to distinguish party electorates.

Now, we assess the congruence between demand and supply. While demand-side positions are based on factor scores of preferences and supply-side data take solidarity frame prevalences into account, we find substantial overlap between supply and demand. Except for *Open VLD*, we find parties and electorates in the same plot quadrants. If we take the confidence rectangles into account, we find some parties and their electorates overlap on at least one axis while being differently positioned on the other. For instance, *Open VLD* in 2014 and their electorate in 2018 had a similar position on the conflict between group-based and empathic solidarity. However, *Open VLD* uses more compassionate and empathic solidarity frames than their electorate's preferences (see Figure 3c). Remarkably, party electorates are more strongly dispersed on the three lines than the parties.

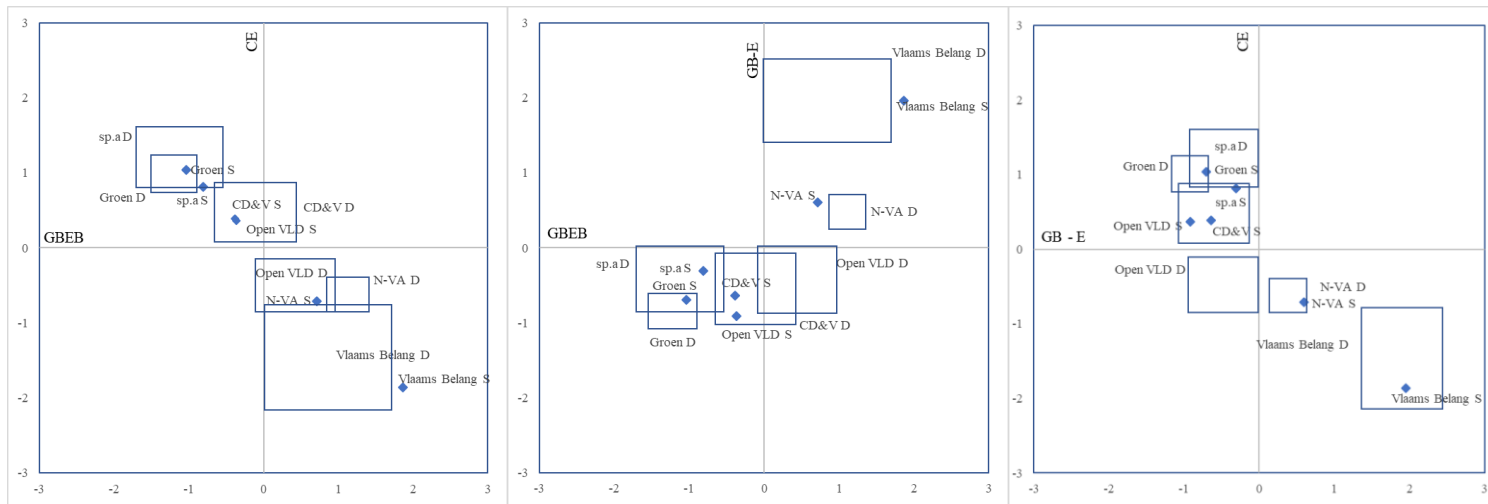


Figure 3: two-dimensional solidarity plots. CE: compassionate and empathic solidarity. GBEB: group-based and exchange-based solidarity. GB-E: group-based versus empathic solidarity. Rhombus: party manifestos 2014. Rectangles: survey data 2018.

Discussion and Conclusion

This paper adds more flesh to the solidarity framework and its underlying integration-conflict dialectic. Not only do we see that voters also distinguish four different solidarity frames, but our analysis also indicates that relationships between solidarity frames are not necessarily conflictual. The positive correlation between group-based and exchange-based solidarity frames, respectively between compassionate and empathic solidarity frames, indicates that the Durkheimian conflict between mechanical and organic solidarity is not relevant. These results correspond with - although smaller - correlations found at the supply-side (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022 : 12). Our findings are consistent with findings in research on deservingness principles (Meuleman, Roosma, & Abts, 2020). Many voters score high on both group-based and exchange-based (i.e., structural) solidarity or identity and reciprocity in terms of deservingness criteria. Additionally, many voters score either high or low on compassionate and empathic (i.e., intersubjective) solidarity. Voters who prefer one structural or intersubjective solidarity frame also tend to prefer the other.

However, our findings also correspond with recent value conflict research (see Bornschier et al., 2020), as we find conflict between group-based and empathic solidarity frames. While structural and intersubjective frames are not necessarily in conflict, we find voters divided on the choice between group-based and empathic solidarity. Similar to political parties, the choice between either bonding with those who are similar or bridging the gulf with those who are different has become a pressing question for voters. Overall, we conclude that solidarity frames are useful heuristics to understand the structure of the political sphere on both the supply-side and demand-side.

Finally, we also see that the preferences of party electorates are strongly congruent with those of their preferred parties: a higher degree of support for group-based and exchange-based solidarity is typical among rightist electorates and parties. In contrast, leftist political parties and their voters mainly advocate compassionate and empathic solidarity.

A significant limitation of our research is that we tested the solidarity framework in one fragmented multi-party system, Belgium (Flanders). While most industrialized party systems are in one way or another confronted with the problem of solidarity, the question remains how these dimensions play out in bipolar party systems, less fragmented party systems, or party systems that

lack certain party families. While the Flemish party system might have one conflict dimension between solidarity frames, others might have more. In this respect, more comparative research is warranted. Another limitation of our analysis is the over-representation of highly educated and politically interested citizens. While these biases have not been proven to be problematic, future explorations of the heuristic value of solidarity frames would benefit from a more representative sample.

Our results also raise new questions. First, as solidarity frames enable us to identify political parties and electorates meaningfully, they join issue ownership or left-right placement as useful heuristics. However, while there is ample proof that the latter are not only heuristics for scholars, it remains to be seen whether solidarity frames have some subjective heuristic value for individual voters and individual politicians themselves. Assessments of voters' ability to subjectively position parties in terms of solidarity frames (e.g., using semantic contrast pairs) can ascertain this.

Secondly, congruent positions of parties and electorates suggest that the former's solidarity framing attracts or pushes away voters. However, the explanatory value of partisan solidarity framing and voter's party preferences is mainly presumed. One could also compare the explanatory value of the

solidarity framework with that of other frameworks: issues, GAL-TAN, (post-)materialism, or deservingness of specific groups (van Oorschot, 2006). Furthermore, we need to understand the relationship between socio-structural variables (e.g., level of education) and solidarity frame preferences. Ideally, one needs reliable longitudinal data to test a causal relationship, preferably during electoral campaigns.

Finally, underlying links between party's and voter's solidarity frames remain unclear. Who is leading the dance? Do voters actively look for parties that endorse their preferred solidarity frames (e.g., Sanders, Clarke, Stewart, & Whiteley, 2008)? Or is it a matter of partisan cue-taking? If so, what does this cue-taking mean? Some studies suggest that cue-taking means people gradually adopt their preferred party's favorite solidarity frame position (e.g., Borges & Clarke, 2008). On the other hand, others show that cue-taking can mean people *adapt* their position to that of their preferred party (e.g., Chen & Luttig, 2021).

Do Solidarity Frame Preferences Explain Propensities to Vote for a Party?

Abstract

Within political science, scholars have explained party preferences mainly in terms of left-right self-placements. However, this left-right distinction has come under academic scrutiny due to interpretative problems. Recent research suggests that solidarity frames are also heuristically valuable to distinguish parties and party electorates. In this 'asymmetric' study, we explore whether solidarity frame preferences explain party preferences. Our analyses establish that solidarity frame preferences not only independently predict the propensity to vote for a party but also supplement the explanatory value of voters' left-right self-placements. For each party, we find that different solidarity frames are decisive and that the explanatory value of solidarity frames is not the same for all parties. As we conclude that a solidarity-based deductive approach is also relevant to understanding voters' demands, we discuss paths for future research to further develop the study of the politics of solidarity.

Keywords: solidarity frames, left-right, voters, party preferences, explanatory value

Introduction

Within political science, a core objective is understanding which grounds individuals choose for which party to vote. As most political parties propose extensive programs to deal with social challenges, most voters align themselves

with parties based on party positions on a 'super issue' that encompasses many - if not all – these challenges. This 'super issue' has been known as the left-right distinction (Freire, 2015; Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976; Meyer & Wagner, 2020). The meaning of the left-right distinction has proven to be flexible and adaptive to societies' transformations. Initially, the left-right distinctions corresponded with conflicts between social groups (Freire, 2008; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Nowadays, most scholars understand the left-right distinction as a conflict between values (Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976; Kriesi, 2010). The left-right distinction encompasses a multitude of value conflicts, such as libertarian versus authoritarian values (e.g., Hooghe & Marks, 2018), materialist versus post-materialist values (e.g., Inglehart, 2018), equality versus freedom (e.g., Dworkin, 1987), or equality versus inequality (e.g., Bobbio, 1996). Therefore, the left-right distinction could also be deemed a 'super-value', as a position on the left-right distinction encompasses a multitude of value preferences.

Many deem the left-right distinction still essential to understand party competition and electoral mobilization. However, the left-right distinction has come under academic scrutiny and has been criticized as becoming more and more problematic for voters to use as a heuristic. In the current political climate, a left-right dimension encompasses so many value preferences and social

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identities that it could lead to problems for individuals to interpret parties' left-right positions, even among politically sophisticated voters (Freire, 2006; Knutsen, 1995).

Are there other preferences that complement the left-right distinction and partially resolve its flaws? Recent research suggests a new perspective on party politics and voter mobilization. Citizens yearn for more social solidarity to tackle social challenges such as hyper-individualization, globalization, and increased diversity in the current period. Most political parties agree it is essential to strengthen solidarity, including parties of the populist radical right, which have been presented as the “new champions of solidarity” that rally voters behind a program of exclusionary solidarity (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017; Lefkofridi & Michel, 2017; Verheyen & Vossen, 2021). We distinguish four solidarity frames: group-based, compassionate, exchange-based, and empathic solidarity. Previous research has distinguished parties and electorates regarding solidarity frame preferences (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020; Verheyen & Thijssen, 2021). Our research found that solidarity is no longer a prerogative of the left, in that parties on the right also adopt solidarity frames that are distinct from leftist frames. As they are heuristically useful to distinguish parties and electorates, one would expect that solidarity frame preferences also predict

voters' party preferences. Furthermore, as solidarity frames posit concrete logics of building solidarity, one could also expect that they would supplement left-right self-placements as a predictor of party preference.

In this paper, we test whether an individual's propensity to vote for a particular party would depend on their solidarity frame preferences. Based on an analysis of unique survey data in the Flemish region, we find that solidarity frames significantly predict propensities to vote for a party. While left-right self-placement generally remains a stronger predictor of party preference, solidarity frames substantively supplement it as an explanatory variable. However, we also find that different solidarity frames are decisive for different parties and that the explanatory value of solidarity frames is not the same for all parties studied. The explanatory value is highest for Flemish nationalists of *N-VA*, which indicates that solidarity is no longer a prerogative of the left. Conversely, the explanatory power of solidarity frames is far more limited for radical right populists of *Vlaams Belang*, which somewhat diminishes the claim that the populist radical right parties are the new champions of solidarity.

Left-Right Self-Placement and Party Preference

Within political science, a core objective is understanding based on which grounds voters choose their preferred party during elections. Contemporary

political parties and voters are confronted with various social challenges such as immigration, global climate change, and structural unemployment. Although they might give one or a few of these challenges more attention than the others, most political parties feel compelled to speak out on most of these challenges and propose extensive programs to deal with them (Green-Pedersen, 2019; Sigelman & Buell Jr, 2004). Voters then align themselves, not with concrete issue positions of parties but rather with party positions on a ‘super issue’ that encompasses many - if not all – their answers to these challenges. This ‘super issue’ has been known as the left-right distinction (Freire, 2015; Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976; Meyer & Wagner, 2020)¹⁷.

Since its conception during the French Revolution, the division between left and right has been of fundamental importance in party competition and electoral mobilization, especially in West European party systems. The left-right distinction is used to categorize party ideologies; classify political positions of different parties; communicate between political actors, mass media, and voters; and as a heuristic to help voters understand political phenomena and

¹⁷ In the context of the United States of America, scholars tend to distinguish between ‘liberals’ and ‘conservatives’ (e.g., Converse, 1963; Haidt and Hersch, 2001). Left-right and liberal-conservative can be seen as functionally equivalent ‘super issues’ (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990: 203)

make informed and satisfying decisions for which party to vote (Freire, 2015; Green-Pedersen, 2019).

During the past decades, the meaning of the left-right distinction has proven to be flexible and adaptive to societies' transformations. Initially, the left-right distinctions corresponded with Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory (1967), which conceived modern society as divided by enduring conflicts between social groups, such as church versus state and labour versus capital (see Bartolini, 2005; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Each political party had a distinctive profile based on the social identity of its constituency. In terms of interpretation, the left-right was dependent on the major social conflicts that structured the party system. If the left-right distinction followed the labour-capital cleavage, we would have found the working-class self-identifying as leftists, while the capitalist and middle-class identified themselves with parties on the right. In other contexts, the left-right distinction might have followed the cleavage between secular and religious voters and hence have been associated with the conflict between secular (i.e., socialist and liberal) and religious (i.e., Christian) parties.

According to Inglehart and Klingemann (1976), the left-right distinction has shifted from a social group distinction to a value distinction. Associations

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between left-right self-placements and social group identities are still relevant (i.e., Freire, 2008). Nevertheless, it has become well-established that party affiliation's 'frozen' social bases have melted away (Ford & Jennings, 2020). Local communities, classes, or religious institutions have become less significant in people's self-identity (Heath et al., 2009; Pollack & Pickel, 2007). Society has entered postmodernity through processes that made group loyalties irrelevant (Bauman, 2000a; Scott, 2002). Therefore, social group characteristics have become electorally less significant, as indicated by increased volatility and decreased socio-structural voting (Dalton, 2014; van der Brug, 2010).

Nevertheless, many scholars have found that the left-right distinction remains essential to understand electoral mobilization. Instead of being interpreted as a social division, most scholars claim it should now be interpreted in terms of major value distinctions in Western democratic mass politics (Freire, 2008). Such value conflicts include libertarian versus authoritarian values (e.g., Hooghe & Marks, 2018), materialist versus post-materialist values (e.g., Inglehart, 2018), equality versus freedom (e.g., Dworkin, 1987), or equality versus inequality (e.g., Bobbio, 1996). Most scholars summarize these value distinctions on a unidimensional left-right distinction (Green-Pedersen, 2019; Huckfeldt, Levine, Morgan, & Sprague, 1999; Knutsen, 1995). As political parties

are not eager to drastically shift their value preferences, choosing parties based on leftist or rightist value preferences is claimed to be heuristically quite durable (Dalton & McAllister, 2015). When new challenges emerge, parties integrate them into their existing value profile, ensuring consistency in these oppositions (De Vries et al., 2013; Fuchs & Klingemann, 1990; Lupton et al., 2015). The left-right distinction is then not only a super-issue, but also a super-value.

Although it is quite an abstract heuristic to understand the structure of the political space, left-right self-placement has been shown to be a relatively strong predictor of party preference (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990; Van der Eijk et al., 2005). Political elites, mass media, and citizens often speak about politics in terms of left-right distinctions (Freire, 2015). By taking cues from politicians about how they should think about the party political space in terms of a left-right distinction, citizens can choose a party based on their leftist or rightist value preferences. Therefore, vote choice is primarily not dependent on specific issue preferences but rather on how voters and parties position themselves on this left-right distinction between values. Especially politically interested citizens in established electoral democratic (i.e., primarily West European) party systems with a clear left-right partisan distinction will choose parties based on their left-right self-placements (Otjes & Rekker, 2021).

However, this left-right value distinction has also come under scrutiny for two reasons. First, due to its relative nature, we have no reason to expect left-right to be everywhere and always equally important to explain party preferences. In some countries, the association between left-right self-placement and party preference is not as strong as in other countries (Van der Eijk, Schmitt, & Binder, 2005). Moreover, one cannot expect the electoral importance of left and right to be uniform over time. For instance, some observers have suggested that the ideological distinction between left and right has declined in heuristic and explanatory value after the fall of the Berlin Wall and Soviet communism (see Fukuyama, 1989; van der Brug, 2010). Structural changes in the economy have also been shown to reduce the salience of the left-right dimension for voting and party preferences (Hellwig, 2008).

More importantly, however, the heuristic and explanatory values of the left-right distinction are limited due to its (increasingly) multidimensional nature, with most researchers distinguishing an 'old' (socio-economic) and a 'new' (socio-cultural) left-right distinction. This limitation results in two interpretive problems. First, an abstract unidimensional left-right distinction encompasses many value distinctions that individuals often interpret left-right positions very differently (Bauer, Barberá, Ackermann, & Venetz, 2017; Freire,

2006; Knutsen, 1995). For instance, research suggests that older generations tend to perceive the left-right in socio-economic terms, while younger generations are inclined to interpret the left-right distinction in socio-cultural terms (Dalton, 2013: 126). Second, while the various value dimensions correlate strongly for most contemporary political parties (van der Brug & van Spanje, 2009), this is not necessarily the case for voters. Even politically sophisticated voters often have preferences on multiple incongruent challenges in terms of a unidimensional left-right distinction. Therefore, voters can experience difficulties choosing parties based on a unidimensional left-right distinction (Lupton et al., 2015; Walgrave et al., 2020).

Solidarity Frame Preferences Underlying Party Preferences

Are there other preferences that complement the left-right distinction and partially resolve its flaws? Some scholars recently pointed out that solidarity has become a crucial super-issue and super-value in contemporary politics (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). The question of solidarity underlies multiple societal challenges such as the welfare state, European integration, immigration, and environmental issues. Similarly, the question of solidarity also underlies various value conflicts. To realise liberty, equality, or loyalty in society requires the

willingness from individuals to commit to others and to mutually support each other (Kapeller & Wolkenstein, 2013).

Almost everyone agrees that social solidarity should be enhanced to tackle societal challenges such as immigration and integration or the welfare state, including the populist radical right, which a few authors have named the ‘new champions of solidarity’ (Lefkofridi & Michel, 2017). However, conflicting perspectives exist on *how* this should be done (Kapeller & Wolkenstein, 2013). We have introduced solidarity frames to study the discursive construction of solidarity at the party level. Solidarity frames make a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation more salient in partisan discourses (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020).

So far, we have applied the solidarity framework to distinguish parties and electorates in terms of solidarity frames. First, we have shown that it makes sense to categorize political parties in terms of four distinct solidarity frames. Group-based solidarity is mainly endorsed by radical rightist and nationalist parties; compassionate solidarity is strongly advocated by greens and social and Christian democrats; exchange-based solidarity is defended by liberals,

Christian democrats, and conservative nationalists; and empathic solidarity is promoted by the greens, liberals, and - to lesser extent - social and Christian democrats (Thijssen and Verheyen, 2020).

Secondly, we have also shown that the populist radical right uses a more exclusionary and stricter approach to solidarity than other parties (Verheyen and Vossen, 2021). Despite this more exclusionary profile, these new champions of solidarity also explicitly include many groups in their solidarity discourse by advocating group-based solidarity with the national in-group and exchange-based solidarity with the hard-working people. Finally, we have shown that solidarity frame preferences of party electorates are strongly congruent with those of their preferred parties: a higher degree of support for group-based and exchange-based solidarity is typical among rightist party electorates. In contrast, leftist party electorates mainly advocate compassionate and empathic solidarity (Verheyen and Thijssen, in review).

While solidarity frames also cut across multiple issues and social groups, they contrast with the abstract left-right distinction because they posit concrete logics of building solidarity that could conflict or be complementary depending on the context. This added complexity makes the solidarity framework compatible with the idea of multidimensionality and the concrete struggles that

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parties face when dealing with these problems of solidarity. Both supply-and demand-analyses suggest that relationships between solidarity frames are not necessarily conflictual. For instance, we found positive correlations between compassionate and empathic solidarity frames between group-based and exchange-based solidarity frames (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022; Verheyen & Thijssen, in review). Nevertheless, conflict is still prevalent: we found conflict between group-based and empathic solidarity frames among voters and parties. The choice between either bonding with those who are similar or bridging the gulf with those who are different has become the most pressing question in contemporary Western democracy.

However, if solidarity is the ultimate super-issue and super-value, voters should evaluate political parties' effectiveness in generating this resource by adopting a congruent solidarity frame. An individual's propensity to vote for a particular party would thus depend on their solidarity frame preferences, and we expect party preference to depend on the kind of solidarity frames voters endorse (H1). More specifically, voters with stronger preferences for group-based or exchange-based solidarity will likely vote for a party on the right (H1A). In comparison, voters with stronger preferences for compassionate and empathic solidarity will tend to vote for a party on the left (H1B). Notably, we test how

voters' solidarity frame preferences impact their propensity to vote for specific parties. We, therefore, evaluate the impact of solidarity frame preferences on party preferences of voters in general, which shifts the focus from electorates to individual voters. As parties frame solidarity differently, we expect that solidarity frame preferences have a significant discriminatory impact on someone's propensity to vote for a party (H1). More specifically, we expect that voters with stronger preferences for group-based or exchange-based solidarity frames have a higher propensity to vote for a party on the right (H1A). In comparison, those with stronger preferences for compassionate or empathic solidarity frames have stronger inclinations to vote for a party on the left.

H1: Solidarity frame preferences of voters have a significant discriminatory impact on their propensity to vote for a party.

H1A: Voters with stronger preferences for group-based or exchange-based solidarity will tend to vote for a party on the right.

H1B: Voters with stronger preferences for compassionate or empathic solidarity will tend to vote for a party on the left.

Furthermore, we assess the complementarity of solidarity frames with the left-right distinction. Left-right self-placement has many issues, mostly because it encompasses so many preferences, especially when several social challenges need to be addressed, making voting for a party more complicated. Nevertheless, left-right placement remains one of the most durable explanations for party preference, especially in countries with higher levels of party polarization on a left-right dimension (Otjes & Rekker, 2021; Van Deth & Geurts, 1989). Furthermore, many voters are socialized or cued to think in terms of left-right distinctions between parties. Compared to the left-right distinction, solidarity frames posit more concrete logics for building solidarity. Therefore, we would expect that solidarity frame preferences have an independent explanatory value for the propensity to vote for a particular party that complements left-right self-placements.

H2: Solidarity frame preferences of voters have an independent explanatory value for voters' propensity to vote for a party that complements left-right self-placements.

Traditionally, solidarity used to be an exclusive prerogative of social and Christian democrats, who favour social protection for the vulnerable (Stjernø, 2005). Yet, previous analyses have suggested that parties on the right have not been silent on solidarity either. Moreover, those parties are becoming electorally more successful (Thijssen and Verheyen, 2020). Especially the populist radical right, who present themselves as “new champions of solidarity”, is electorally surging (Banting and Kymlicka, 2017; Lefkofridi and Michel, 2017). Furthermore, as mainly radical rightist populists claim their place as “new champions of solidarity”, we expect solidarity frame preferences to have more explanatory power for radical rightist populist parties than other parties.

H3: The explanatory value of solidarity frame preferences is more substantial for the propensity to vote for a populist radical right party.

Case, Data, and Methods

In short, we wish to evaluate the explanatory value of solidarity frames for party preferences. We, therefore, turn to survey data to measure public endorsement of solidarity frames among Flemish voters, who live in a fragmented multiparty system with a high effective number of parties and are therefore highly likely to come into contact with a diversity of solidarity frames. Despite the fragmented

nature of this party system, the parties offer programs that follow a single left-right structure, with a very high correlation between socio-cultural and socio-economic positions. Citizens are, therefore, strongly cued to think in terms of a left-right distinction between parties (cf. Otjes & Rekker, 2021). Indeed, most Flemish voters tend to take congruent positions on socio-cultural and socio-economic issues, which correlate with their self-placement on an abstract left-right scale - especially among the highly educated and politically interested (Walgrave et al., 2020). Therefore, an analysis in this party system is well-suited as a least-likely case to find an additional explanatory value of solidarity frames compared to left-right self-placement.

We use survey data collected to test the heuristic value of solidarity frames among electorates (see Verheyen & Thijssen, 2021 for further details). We sent this questionnaire to an online panel of 3485 Flemish citizens in October 2018. Estimates are potentially biased because highly educated and politically interested voters are overrepresented in this panel. However, these biases are not too problematic (see also Lefevere et al., 2020). After all, we do not intend to provide estimates for particular social groups. Instead, we analyse relationships between variables - i.e., left-right self-placement, solidarity

frames, and party preferences - and relative orders of magnitude, which are less sensitive to biases in the sample composition (see Dey, 1997).

Moreover, we have two empirical indications of limited biases in terms of overall ideological positioning or strength of political affiliation. On the one hand, a comparison of our dataset with a dataset representative of the Flemish electorate in 2014 (Deschouwer, 2018) shows that the overall mean left-right self-placement scores overlap ($\mu = 5.78$ S.E.= .067 respectively $\mu = 5.99$ S.E. = .077). On the other hand, if we compare respondents with and without strong party identifications, we do not find significant differences in our OLS regression models (see online appendix).

Another sample bias issue relates to missing values. Ultimately, we reached 1445 respondents (41 % response rate). 1302 respondents had no missing values for any used variable. After imputation, we retain 1434 respondents without missing values. Confirmatory factor models based on either listwise removal or imputed data lead to equivalent models in terms of estimates and fit (see appendix Chapter 3).

In order to verify whether our measurement tools are in line with the solidarity framework, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis using Mplus

(Muthén & Muthén, 2018). Fit is assessed based on the usual rules of thumb: models with an adequate fit have CFI values greater than .95, RMSEA values of less than .06, and SRMR values of less than .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1998). This method is a susceptible instrument to evaluate entirely new batteries. In this respect, it is no surprise that our initial model did not fit the data ($N = 1434$; $\chi^2 = 4420.225$, $df = 334$, RMSEA = .091, SRMR = .131, CFI = .824)¹⁸. Nevertheless, if we eliminate 14 items and add two error covariances, we obtain a fitting four-factor model: group-based solidarity (3 indicators), compassionate solidarity (4 indicators), exchange-based solidarity (3 indicators), and empathic solidarity (4 indicators) ($N = 1434$; $\chi^2 = 375.346$, $df = 69$, RMSEA = .056, SRMR = .050, CFI = .978) (cf. Bakker et al., 2012). This four factor model fits better than purely inductive one-factor, two-factor, three-factor, or five-factor models (see appendix Chapter 3).

¹⁸ The model was estimated using full information maximum likelihood, which is adequate because seven point items can be treated as interval measures (Carifio & Perla, 2007).

Solidarity frames	Group-based	Compassionate	Exchange-based	Empathic
Survey items	Q2_1 ideal society is based on commonality	Q3_1 ideal society is based on compassion	Q4_2 we need more contributors	Q5_1 ideal society is based on respect for differences
	Q2_5 assimilate people with different norms and values	Q3_2 we need more help for the vulnerable	Q4_4 policies should appreciate contributors	Q5_2 we need more respectful individuals
	Q2_6 differences in norms and values are a threat	Q3_3 solidarity through support of vulnerable people	Q4_5 activate non-contributors	Q5_3 solidarity through respect for individual differences
		Q3_4 policies should support vulnerable people		Q5_4 policies should appreciate individual differences
Cronbach's α	.773	.916	.793	.938
Mean	4.064	5.177	4.779	5.165
SD	1.429	1.297	1.247	1.478

Table 1: solidarity frame scales: indicators, reliability, and descriptive statistics (see previous chapter)

The indicators for all frames are valid because all factor loadings are higher than .500. Furthermore, the four solidarity frames are internally consistent, as for all scales Cronbach's alpha is above .700 (see Table 1). As this means that mean scale scores are reliable, our further analyses will be primarily based on these mean scale scores.

As we assess the degree to which party electorates endorse the same solidarity frames as their party, we also measured respondents' propensities to vote for six Flemish political parties - i.e., right-wing populist *Vlaams Belang* ($\mu = 2.13$ S.D. = 2.52), conservative nationalist *N-VA* ($\mu = 4.68$ S.D. = 4.00), liberal

Open VLD ($\mu = 4.44$ S.D. = 3.067), Christian democratic *CD&V* ($\mu = 4.16$ S.D. = 2.778), social democratic *sp.a* ($\mu = 4.29$ S.D. = 3.108) and environmentalist *Groen* ($\mu = 5.68$ S.D. = 3.62). To ensure comparability with Thijssen and Verheyen (2020), we leave out the extreme left *PVDA-PTB!*.

Results

In order to assess the explanatory value of solidarity frames, we evaluate their role in explaining the party preferences of voters in general. To this end, we perform a series of simple OLS regressions with the mean scores as independent variables¹⁹. We first regress propensities to vote on the left-right self-placement as a benchmark. Model 1 is significant for all parties, reaffirming left-right self-placement as a generally good but diffuse and theory-weak predictor of party choice.

To evaluate the net explanatory value of the solidarity framework, we turn to Model 3 with both left-right self-placement and solidarity frames as independent variables. Based on this model, we learn that left-right self-placement is generally a stronger predictor of propensity to vote for a party than solidarity frames. However, the coefficients of solidarity frames generally

¹⁹ As robustness check, we conducted the OLS regression analysis also with factor scores. The explained variance and the coefficients tell a similar story (see appendix for full regression table).

remain significant, which is also illustrated by significant increases of explained variance between Model 1 and Model 3, which confirms H1. Interestingly, left-right self-placement only partially overlaps with theory-based solidarity frames as a predictor. Solidarity frames thus substantively supplement the left-right dimension, which confirms H2.

In Model 2, we replace left-right self-placement with four solidarity frames. We cannot deny that the regression model based on solidarity frames explains less variance than Model 1 based on left-right self-placement, except for *Vlaams Belang*. Nevertheless, solidarity frame preferences significantly impact voting propensities; as explained variance in our model is significantly different from the null model except for *CD&V* ($F=1.12$ $p=.345$). Comparing the coefficients teaches us that different solidarity frame conflicts are decisive for each party. For *Vlaams Belang*, only the conflict between group-based and empathic solidarity is decisive for their voters: those who favour in-group solidarity or dismiss empathic solidarity are more likely to vote for the radical right populists. For social democrats *sp.a*, the vote is positively affected by compassionate and empathic solidarity and negatively affected by group-based and exchange-based solidarity. Compared to voting for Groen, compassionate solidarity plays a more critical part in voting for *sp.a* than empathic solidarity.

Regarding *Open VLD*, the propensity to vote depends more on the opposite poles of the *EB-C* dimension, with compassionate voters having lower and exchange-based voters higher propensities to vote. Finally, environmentalist party *Groen* and conservative nationalist party *N-VA* are complete opposites on four dimensions of conflict (GB-E, EB-C, EB-E, and GB-C). While green voters strongly favour compassion and empathy with others as bases of solidarity, voters for *N-VA* prefer in-group solidarity and reciprocity with contributors. These findings confirm both H1A and H1B.

Although the explained variance for radical rightist *Vlaams Belang* is high (.201), the solidarity frames explain the propensity to vote much better for greens and nationalists (.426 respectively .438). We, therefore, must reject H3. However, the explained variance for *Vlaams Belang* is almost as high as for *sp.a* and much higher than for *CD&V*, with the latter obtaining the lowest level of explained variance (less than one percent). While these findings might be methodologically induced because it is *ipso facto* more challenging to predict centrist positions, they seem to reflect differences between voters preferring office-seeking and voters preferring policy-seeking parties.

		Vlaams Belang		N-VA		Open VLD		CD&V		sp.a		Groen	
		B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Model 1	(Constant)	1.781	.64	-2.208***	.177	1.495***	.184	3.747***	.183	8.706	.162	11.606***	.174
Left-right	Left-right	.548 ***	.077	1.203***	.028	.508***	.029	.072*	.029	-.764	.026	-1.011***	.028
Model 2	(Constant)	4.209 ***	.917	1.621***	.482	4.667***	.455	4.32***	.441	5.349	.428	6.895***	.436
Solidarity frames	Group-based	.928***	.159	1.196***	.072	.208*	.069	-.124	.066	-.638***	.064	-.983***	.066
	Compassionate	-.214	.141	-.718***	.077	-.717***	.073	-.016	.071	.577***	.068	.626***	.07
	Exchange-based	-.033	.162	.682***	.081	.421***	.077	.088	.075	-.400***	.072	-.535***	.074
	Empathic	-.43***	.144	-.25***	.077	.12	.072	.001	.070	.088***	.068	.421***	.07
Model 3	(Constant)	2.278	.979	-2.338***	.441	2.706*	.842	3.5	.472	8.144***	.415	9.841***	.42
Full model	Left-right	.381 ***	.081	.907***	.038	.462***	.041	.193***	.041	-.658	.036	-.697***	.037
	Group-based	.717 ***	.161	.545***	.067	-.132	.072	-.266***	.073	-.153*	.064	-.48***	.065
	Compassionate	-.098	.139	-.187***	.069	-.453***	.074	.095	.074	.201***	.065	.233***	.066
	Exchange-based	-.148	.159	.240	.071	.195*	.076	-.006	.077	-.078	.068	-.187***	.069
	Empathic	-.41 ***	.14	-.107	.065	.195***	.069	.033	.070	-.020	.061	.309***	.062
	R ² Model 1	.140		.560		.174		.004		.383		.487	
	R ² Model 2	.201		.438		.130		.003		.251		.426	
	R ² Model 3	.254		.596		.202		.018		.390		.542	
	N	312 ²⁰		1420 ²¹		1434		1434		1433		1418	

Table 2: OLS regressions on propensities to vote per party * p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.005

²⁰ The distribution of the variable 'propensity to vote for *Vlaams Belang*' was problematic with many outliers. The cause was the extremely high number of respondents not willing to vote for *Vlaams Belang* (N=1122), which could be the result of the 'cordon sanitaire' that hinders government participation of the right-wing populists. We therefore conducted the OLS regression a second time, leaving out those unwilling to vote for *Vlaams Belang* as missing values. Despite a lower R² for all models, the robustness check did not lead to significant differences in terms of regression coefficients (see appendix X). We depict the results of the check as they are more robust.

²¹ Standardized residuals showed some outliers (absolute value higher than 3) for N-VA, sp.a, and Groen. We therefore ignored these respondents in our regression analysis. However, results are not significantly different from models that include these respondents.

Discussion and Conclusion

In a period when the heuristic and explanatory values of the left-right distinction have come under more scrutiny, solidarity has become a crucial super-issue and super-value to understand voters' choices. Our asymmetric analyses confirm that solidarity frames are significant predictors of propensities to vote for a party. Furthermore, even if left-right self-placement generally remains a stronger predictor of party preference, solidarity frames substantively supplement the left-right self-placement as an explanatory variable. However, explained variance differs significantly across different electorates. Interestingly, the explanatory value is highest for Flemish nationalists of *N-VA*, which indicates that solidarity is no longer a prerogative of the left. However, the explanatory power of solidarity frames is far more limited for radical right populists of *Vlaams Belang*, which somewhat diminishes the claim that the populist radical right parties are the new champions of solidarity (Banting and Kymlicka, 2017). In sum, solidarity frames are useful heuristics for understanding the structure of the political sphere on both supply- and demand-side, and they have an explanatory value for the propensity that one will vote for a particular party distinct from the left-right self-placement.

A significant limitation of our research is that we tested the heuristic and explanatory value of solidarity frames in one fragmented multi-party system, the Flemish region. While most industrialized party systems will, in one way or another, be confronted with the problem of solidarity, the question remains how conflicts of solidarity play out in bipolar party systems, less fragmented party systems, or party systems that lack certain party families such as radical rightist populists. In this respect, more international comparative research is warranted. Another limitation of our analysis is the over-representation of highly educated and politically interested citizens in our sample. While these biases have not been proven to be problematic in our analysis, future explorations that verify the functionality of solidarity frames as a heuristic would benefit from a more representative sample.

Secondly, our results suggest that parties either attract or push away voters based on their solidarity framing. However, the causal link between partisan solidarity framing and voter's party preferences is mainly presumed. One needs reliable longitudinal data, preferably during the electoral campaign, to test this. Furthermore, more work is necessary on the underlying mechanisms that link party's and voter's solidarity frames. Who is leading the dance? Do voters actively look for parties that endorse their preferred solidarity frames?

Or is it a matter of partisan cue-taking? If so, what does this cue-taking mean? While some studies suggest that cue taking means that people gradually *adopt* their preferred party's favorite solidarity frame position, others show that cue taking can mean that people *adapt* their position to that of their party.

Following the previous point, one could also assess which solidarity framing strategy enhances a party's likelihood to become electorally successful. We illustrate our point by using the example of social democrats, whose decline has been met with much research and discussion (e.g., Abou-Chadi & Wagner, 2020; Kitschelt, 1994). Earlier descriptive analyses of solidarity preferences among voters and parties suggest that social democrats could make empathic solidarity more prevalent in their discourse to approximate more closely the solidarity frame preferences of their party electorate (Verheyen & Thijssen, 2021). However, it is not necessarily wise to simply adapt to those who already associate themselves with the party. Our regression models show that social democrat parties are mainly attractive among voters who favour compassionate solidarity over empathic solidarity, which suggests that being staunchly compassionate may be a more successful strategy to reach doubting voters. Future research could focus on whether changes in solidarity framing could attract more volatile voters without alienating the loyal party electorate.

Finally, we have pointed out that solidarity frames substantively supplement left-right self-placement as an explanatory variable. However, the meaning of left-right self-placement is notoriously diffuse. Future research could, therefore, also compare the explanatory value of the solidarity framework with that of other frameworks: issues (Bakker et al., 2012), GAL-TAN (Hooghe and Marks, 2018), (post-)materialism (Inglehart, 2018), moral foundations (Haidt and Graham, 2009) or deservingness of specific groups (van Oorschot, 2006).

Solidarity Frames as Partisan Stereotypes: How Local Politicians Distinguish Parties in Terms of Solidarity Frame Preferences

Abstract

Inspired by socio-cognitive research on heuristics, political scientists have used the concept of partisan stereotypes to understand how individuals make sense of the complexity of party politics. As most scholars claim that either issue or value alignments between voters and parties determine voter mobilization, current partisan stereotypes are rooted in issue ownership or value differences. While both partisan stereotypes have been helpful, they also have practical limitations. We claimed earlier that solidarity occupies a central place in contemporary politics as a super-issue and super-value nowadays. Therefore, we assume that partisan stereotypes are also rooted in differences between parties in terms of solidarity frames. Using a panel of Flemish local politicians, we find that our respondents have partisan stereotypes that correspond to extant party differences. However, we also find some significant biases in partisan stereotypes.

Keywords: solidarity, partisan stereotypes, bias, local politicians, survey

Introduction

One question in political science is how individuals efficiently and satisfyingly make sense of political complexity (Lau & Redlawsk, 2001; Petersen, 2015). For

instance, voters have to select a party that represents them on a range of increasingly complex issues. Social cognitive research suggests that individuals rely on classification processes to deal with the complexity of the world. These processes – known as stereotype formation - reduce complexity into a manageable number of categories. Inspired by this research, scholars claim that individuals use heuristics, particularly *partisan stereotypes*, to make sense of the political space (Bergan, 2013; Josefson, 2000; Rahn, 1993; Rothschild, Howat, Shafranek, & Busby, 2019). Individuals magnify some political features – such as a policy statement, an issue preference, a value preference, a social group, or a political candidate - as "essential" to classify parties (Rahn & Cramer, 1996). Partisan stereotypes correspond to a certain extent with real differences yet often exaggerate minor distinctions between parties (Bordalo, Coffman, Gennaioli, & Shleifer, 2016; Graham, Nosek, & Haidt, 2012).

Politicians themselves play a significant part in stereotype formation among voters. Their communication contains cues that evoke certain forms of classification that voters can then use to form inferences about what the party might be like compared to other parties (Arceneaux, 2008; Rahn, 1993). In order to cue these forms of classification, politicians must be aware of and make use of partisan stereotypes themselves, both for their party and other parties.

Similar to stereotype processes in general, how politicians stereotype their party might differ from how those from other parties stereotype them (see Staerklé, Clémence, & Spini, 2011; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Individuals are motivated to choose a particular party over others during elections if they believe to share certain stereotyped attributes— i.e., favourable stereotypes - with this party. On the other hand, unfavourable stereotypes decrease parties' popularity among voters (Aldrich, 1995; Clifford, 2020). While politicians can counter prevalent stereotypes in their communication, such counter-stereotypical messages could cause a looser link with a highly salient favourable characteristic (Rahn & Cramer, 1996).

Although partisan stereotypes could be sticky, they change if the political context transforms. When parties represented conflicting social groups, social group characteristics formed the basis of partisan stereotypes. While social group characteristics might retain some heuristic value in Western Europe, they have become less relevant (Dalton, 2014; van der Brug, 2010). Some claim that contemporary partisan stereotypes are now based on issue ownership. Hence, individuals also stereotype parties regarding issue preferences (Dalton, McAllister, & Wattenberg, 2000). Others argue that partisan stereotypes are mainly rooted in value differences. In other words, individuals stereotype their

party and others in terms of distinctive values, often framed as a left-right distinction (Clifford, 2020; Kriesi, 2010).

Our research suggests a new complementary perspective on party politics. Parties agree it is essential to strengthen solidarity in our current hyper-individualised times but frame the means differently (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). Our previous research has distinguished parties and electorates regarding four solidarity frames: group-based, compassionate, exchange-based, and empathic solidarity. As they are so distinctive, one would expect that solidarity frames also serve as partisan stereotypes. Here, we focus more specifically on partisan stereotypes used by local politicians who act as intermediaries that connect parties (supply) and voters (demand) and play a part in forming and communicating partisan stereotypes. Local politicians are more familiar with partisan discourses than politically less active citizens. Therefore, they can cue politically inactive citizens to stereotype parties in a certain way. On the other hand, they can communicate electoral preferences to party leaders, leading parties to either emphasize their stereotypical solidarity frames or communicate counter-stereotypical messages to increase their popularity.

This paper analyses how Flemish local politicians recognise solidarity frames as partisan stereotypes. We can conclude that partisan stereotypes correspond to earlier findings: group-based and exchange-based solidarity are stereotypically rightist, and compassionate and empathic solidarity stereotypically leftist. Furthermore, politicians see a conflict between group-based and empathic solidarity and compassionate and exchange-based solidarity. However, we also find some significant partisan and ideological biases: politicians' partisan stereotypes regarding preferred solidarity frames are more favourable for their party and ideological neighbours than other ideologically distant parties. We conclude our paper with a discussion of our findings and possibilities for future research.

Stereotypes and Their Formation

It is too costly for individuals to make choices based on all available information in complex political spaces (Lau & Redlawsk, 2001; Petersen, 2015). Therefore, an essential objective is understanding how people do this efficiently and satisfyingly. Inspired by socio-cognitive psychology, recent research has focused on mental shortcuts that individuals use when facing complex information-processing tasks (Arceneaux, 2008; Lau & Redlawsk, 2001). Inspired by this research, scholars claim that individuals use *partisan stereotypes* to

make sense of the political space (Bergan, 2013; Josefson, 2000; Rahn, 1993; Rothschild et al., 2019). We define stereotypes as cognitive schemas or theories that attribute certain traits or behaviours as essential characteristics of a group (Bordalo et al., 2016).

In their seminal article, Tversky and Kahneman (1974) identified three general-purpose heuristics most scholars use to explain the formation of stereotypes. First, individuals use the representativeness heuristic to evaluate the representativeness of a particular attribute for a group. An attribute is representative if people deem it more prevalent for one group than others (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). This attribute comes to mind first and has more weight in individuals' judgments. Stereotypes, therefore, exaggerate the relative frequency of this attribute for one group (Bordalo et al., 2016). Second, the availability heuristic helps people assess the frequency or the probability of categories or events due to the ease with which similar instances are brought to mind. Repeated experiences with particular group members could make certain traits or behaviours more readily available, which leads to stereotypes about that group (Rothbart, Fulero, Jensen, Howard, & Birrell, 1978). Finally, anchoring and adjustment refer to the phenomenon that people make estimates by starting from an initial value, which is adjusted to yield a final and

more correct answer. Individuals who evaluate a particular group may use their own characteristics or experiences with individual group members as an anchor point and make adjustments to form a more correct perspective. However, these adjustments are biased towards the initial values (i.e., the initial experiences or perceptions), which in turn leads to exaggeration and stereotypes.

Stereotypes also serve an individual's sense of connection to – or alienation from – others (Bodenhausen, Kang, & Peery, 2012). While stereotypes are often understood as evaluations of others, they are also relevant for evaluating the social category with which the individual identifies. In short, individuals stereotype both 'ingroups' (i.e., social categories with which they identify) and 'outgroups' (i.e., social categories with which they do not identify). Remarkably, members of a particular social category often have similar stereotypes about themselves as outsiders have (Blanton, Christie, & Dye, 2002; Burkley & Blanton, 2008).

The content of stereotypes is context-dependent for three reasons. First, it depends on the reference groups: members of group A can stereotype a particular attribute as more relevant for their social category than for social

category B and simultaneously as more commonplace for another social category C. Second, the accuracy of stereotypes' content depends on systemic biases towards particular groups or ignorance about how these differences come into being (i.e., intrinsic characteristics versus systemic or structural differences) (Bodenhausen et al., 2012). While stereotypes can be benign and relatively accurate, most lead to exaggerated or unjustified negative evaluations that have consequences for individuals and the social categories to which they belong, such as racist or sexist stereotypes (Lamont & Molnár, 2002). Finally, the content and salience of stereotypes can change. On the one hand, stereotypes do not remain uncontested but can be countered by those claiming a particular positive characteristic for their group or creating more accurate depictions (see Staerklé et al., 2011; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). On the other hand, social distinctions become more or less relevant over time, which causes stereotypes to change (Bordalo et al., 2016).

Partisan Stereotypes: Social Groups, Issues, and Values

Stereotype formation is also essential in politics. Individuals use partisan stereotypes to make sense of the party political space (Bergan, 2013; Clifford, 2020; Josefson, 2000; Rahn, 1993; Rothschild et al., 2019). Such stereotypes extend to individual politicians and voters (Clifford, 2020; Lee, 2020). Therefore,

they are tools for social comparison: which characteristics distinguish our party from others? Partisan stereotypes affect party preferences and voter mobilization (Aldrich, 1995). Politicians play a significant part in stereotype formation and communication. They stereotype parties by making particular distinctions more salient among voters (Arceneaux, 2008). In order to cue these forms of classification, politicians must use partisan stereotypes themselves. Similar to stereotypes in general, how politicians stereotype their party might differ from how those from other parties stereotype them (see Staerklé et al., 2011; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Politicians can also counter stereotypes in their communication. However, this is a risky endeavour. Partisan stereotypes are often sticky, making it hard to take over favourable characteristics or downplay negative ones (Clifford, 2020; Rahn & Cramer, 1996). By making a specific characteristic more salient, a party could also risk their opponent benefiting from their campaign or losing their original supporters, who perceive a looser link with a highly salient favourable characteristic (Arceneaux, 2008).

The content of partisan stereotypes has changed significantly as the political context underwent significant transformations. Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage theory (1967) conceived modern society as divided by enduring conflicts between social groups, such as labour versus capital (see Bartolini,

2005; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Political parties had a distinctive profile based on the social identity of their constituency. Social demographics thus formed the basis of partisan stereotypes: one could reliably distinguish socialist parties as a secular workers' party, liberal parties as the party for secular capitalists and self-employed individuals, and conservative parties as the party for church-goers. While partisan stereotypes based on social group characteristics still exist (see Ahler & Sood, 2018), these 'frozen' social bases have melted away (Ford & Jennings, 2020). Local communities, classes, or religious institutions have generally become less significant in political self-identity through processes that made group loyalties less relevant (Bauman, 2000b; Heath et al., 2009; Pollack & Pickel, 2007; Scott, 2002). Therefore, social group characteristics have become electorally less significant, as indicated by increased volatility and decreased socio-structural voting (Dalton, 2014; van der Brug, 2010).

As political scientists develop new approaches to understanding political competition, they also have to determine where partisan stereotypes are now rooted. Some claim that loosely structured issue alignments have replaced social group alignments (Dalton, 2013). Parties emphasise issues on which they have a good reputation and de-emphasise others. On the other hand, voters work on issues they want politicians to address. Alignment depends on how

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voters spontaneously stereotype parties' policy priorities, which is rooted in parties trying to set the agenda by paying more attention to specific problems (De Vries & Hobolt, 2012; Green-Pedersen, 2007; van der Brug, 2004). Parties can change an individual's partisan stereotypes by politicising emerging problems (e.g., COVID 19) or claiming highly salient issues (e.g., welfare policies), (Green-Pedersen, 2007).

Others claim value dimensions enable individuals to organise information about parties' positions. Here, partisan stereotypes are rooted in partisan value differences, which include libertarianism versus authoritarianism (e.g., Hooghe & Marks, 2018), materialism versus post-materialism (e.g., Inglehart, 2018), or equality versus freedom (e.g., Dworkin, 1987). However, these values are often summarized on a left-right distinction²² (Green-Pedersen, 2019; Huckfeldt et al., 1999). Conflicts between 'left' and 'right' help individuals locate themselves and others in the political space (Corbetta, Cavazza, & Roccato, 2009). As new policy issues emerge, parties integrate them into their existing profile, ensuring consistency in these oppositions and reducing the

²² In the context of the United States of America, scholars tend to distinguish between 'liberals' and 'conservatives' (e.g., Converse, 1963; Haidt and Hersch, 2001). Based on their role as partisan stereotypes, left-right and liberal-conservative can be seen as functionally equivalent heuristics (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990: 203).

complexity of a multi-party system (De Vries et al., 2013; Fuchs & Klingemann, 1990; Lupton et al., 2015).

While research suggests that these partisan stereotypes are helpful, they also have limitations. Issue ownership focuses on context-specific policy outputs yet tells individuals little about parties' positions in the political space. Parties also feel compelled to speak out on issues they might not own for various reasons, including creating a program in concordance with their values. Therefore, issue convergence and overlapping profiles are more likely than expected (Green-Pedersen, 2019; Sigelman & Buell Jr, 2004). Furthermore, research suggests that issue ownership stereotypes are short-lived, making them delicate stereotypes to distinguish parties (Stubager, 2018; Stubager & Seeberg, 2016; Tresch & Feddersen, 2019).

In contrast, value distinctions - especially when framed in terms of left and right - are much more durable distinctions between political parties. As parties are not eager to drastically shift their value preferences, linking them to particular values is heuristically relatively durable. However, there is mixed evidence that these stereotypes are prone to potential inaccuracies and interpretative problems due to partisan differences in interpreting these values (Bakker et al., 2014; Bauer et al., 2017). A striking example is the various

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meanings given to both 'equality' and 'liberty': while some actors (i.e., the right) believe these values to be incommensurable or even fundamentally contradictory, others (i.e., the left) claim them to be complementary or interchangeable (see Dworkin, 1987).

Interpretative problems are also pertinent for more abstract left-right distinctions encompassing various value preferences (Freire, 2006; Knutsen, 1995). Although various value dimensions correlate strongly for most contemporary political parties (van der Brug & van Spanje, 2009), this is not necessarily the case for all parties, as is noticed when analysing right-libertarian discourses (see Bobbio, 1997). Even politically sophisticated individuals often have incongruent positions on multiple value dimensions. Therefore, not only voters but also politicians themselves might experience difficulties stereotyping themselves and parties in terms of a left-right distinction (Lupton et al., 2015; Walgrave et al., 2020).

Solidarity Frames as Sources for Partisan Stereotypes

Can we find a complementary relevant source for partisan stereotypes? Some scholars pointed out that solidarity has become a crucial super-issue in contemporary politics (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). While almost everyone

agrees that social solidarity should be enhanced to tackle societal problems, conflicting perspectives exist on *how* this should be done. We introduced solidarity frames to study how parties discursively construct solidarity in their programs. These frames make a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation more salient in partisan discourses (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020).

In other words, solidarity frames focus on the strategic actions one can undertake to protect or stimulate a commonly valued goal (i.e., social solidarity). Therefore, solidarity frame theory follows different assumptions than issue and value approaches. The latter primarily focus on the conflict between specific issues (Green-Pedersen, 2019) or different values (Inglehart, 2018; Kriesi, 2010). In contrast, the former posits that everyone has attention to solidarity, yet individuals fundamentally differ about how and to whom they want to belong (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2022).

Solidarity frame theory posits four contrasting frames (see Figure 1). Some parties stress structures of group similarities, such as the nation-state (group-based solidarity). In contrast, others emphasise networks of complementary differences, such as labour divisions (exchange-based solidarity). Both demarcate boundaries between deserving and undeserving

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individuals. However, some claim that people who fall outside of these boundaries should be inside. Some parties propose measures to help marginalised groups, such as redistribution towards disadvantaged children (compassionate solidarity). Others advocate measures to recognise (previously) ostracised individuals, such as accepting same-sex couples (empathic solidarity).

Solidarity frames encompass a spectrum of issues that voters and politicians want to address (e.g., Petersen et al., 2010). For example, compassionate solidarity characterises social-democratic positions on topics as diverse as immigration, welfare policies, and European integration. Compared to issue and value frameworks, the solidarity framework posits that the relationship between these frames depends on the context. For instance, group-based solidarity often appeals to prejudices towards others, while empathic solidarity might lead individuals to question group essentialism. Similarly, exchange-based solidarity could appeal to contempt towards precarious non-contributors, while compassionate solidarity with those who cannot contribute might lead individuals to deem systems based on reciprocity unfair. However, these positions could form a synthesis, such as a group identity that is appreciative of particular in-group differences or a system based on reciprocity with a certain degree of equality between exchange partners. This added

complexity makes the solidarity framework compatible with parties' struggles when dealing with solidarity.

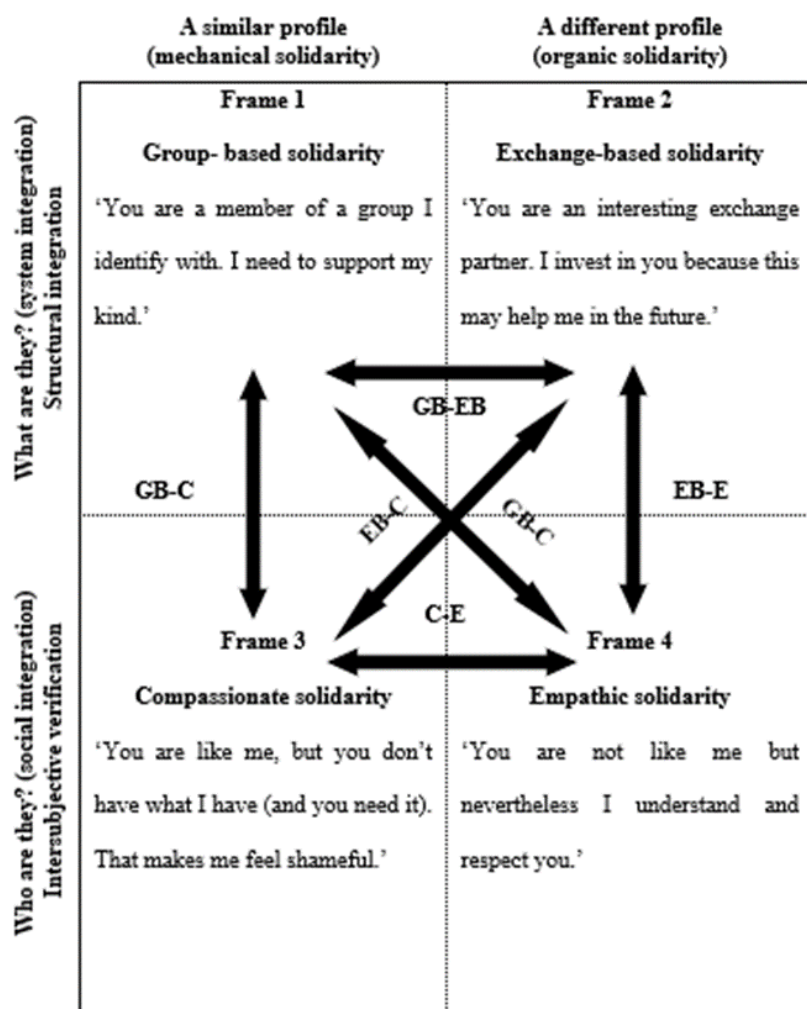


Figure 1: four solidarity frames and their relationships

Our previous analyses suggest that solidarity frames are helpful to characterise partisan discourses and electoral preferences. Although parties use multiple solidarity frames to deal with individual demands for solidarity, they tend to use a few as master frames. Group-based and exchange-based solidarity frames prevail in rightist manifestos, while compassionate and empathic solidarity are prevalent in leftist manifestos. Our research also suggests that the populist radical right has a more exclusionary and stricter approach than its mainstream right-wing competitors. Furthermore, voters of rightist parties tend to have stronger preferences for group-based and exchange-based solidarity, while leftist parties and voters have stronger preferences for compassionate and empathic solidarity frames.

Moreover, solidarity frames help to map the dimensions of the political space. Inspired by Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) 'double dichotomy', we found the diagonal lines of Figure 1 to be most conflictual. Our research suggests that group-based generally do not go together with empathic frames and exchange-based with compassionate frames, and this is also the case for voters. Therefore, the most pressing question in contemporary democracies is whether we should bond with those who are identical (group-based solidarity) or bridge the gulf with those who are different (empathic solidarity). While other

approaches have found similar indications of conflict, solidarity frame theory does not necessarily deem relationships between solidarity frames potentially conflictual but also potentially complementary. For instance, group-based solidarity correlates negatively with compassionate and empathic solidarity, which indicates a robust political disagreement about needy or ostracised outgroup members. Conversely, insignificant correlations between exchange-based and empathic solidarity imply that differences between reciprocity and respect for differences are currently no source of conflict (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020; Verheyen & Thijssen, 2021).

To test their value as partisan stereotypes, we analyse how politicians use solidarity frames to distinguish parties. More specifically, we focus on local politicians who play a part in forming and communicating partisan stereotypes as intermediaries between supply and demand. Local politicians are more familiar with partisan discourses than politically less active citizens and can therefore cue politically inactive citizens to stereotype parties. As they are closer to citizens than high-level politicians, local politicians can communicate voter preferences to their party leaders. This feedback could lead parties to either emphasize their stereotypical solidarity frames or communicate counter-stereotypical messages to increase popularity among voters.

First, we should assess whether local politicians' partisan stereotypes correspond with supply and demand distinctions. We found that group-based and exchange-based solidarity frames are significantly more prevalent on the right, while compassionate and empathic solidarity prevail on the left. We, therefore, expect that these extant distinctions are also reflected in their perceptions of other parties: local politicians will perceive rightist parties to (strongly) favour group-based and exchange-based solidarity (H1A) and leftist parties to favour compassionate and empathic solidarity (H1B). Regarding partisan self-stereotypes, we also expect that rightist politicians stereotype their party as more in favour of group-based and exchange-based solidarity than politicians of leftist parties (H1C). Similarly, we expect politicians on the left to stereotype their party as more in favour of compassionate and empathic solidarity than politicians of rightist parties (H1D).

H1A: Politicians' stereotypes of other parties distinguish parties on the right as significantly more in favour of group-based and exchange-based solidarity.

H1B: Politicians' stereotypes of other parties distinguish parties on the left as significantly more in favour of compassionate and empathic solidarity.

H1C: Politicians of rightist parties stereotype their party as significantly more in favour of group-based and exchange-based solidarity than politicians of leftist parties would do.

H1D: Politicians of leftist parties stereotype their party as significantly more in favour of compassionate and empathic solidarity than politicians of rightist parties.

Second, we evaluate whether we find a similar dimensionality of the political space based on partisan stereotypes. On the one hand, we found a two-dimensional structure of the political space in terms of solidarity frames: group-based versus empathic and exchange-based versus compassionate solidarity (see Figure 2). On the other hand, our research indicates that compassionate and empathic solidarity, respectively group-based and exchange-based solidarity, tend to go together. Therefore, we expect that stereotypes of other parties (H2A) and partisan self-stereotypes (H2B) position parties in opposition between group-based and empathic solidarity on the one hand and compassionate and exchange-based solidarity on the other hand.

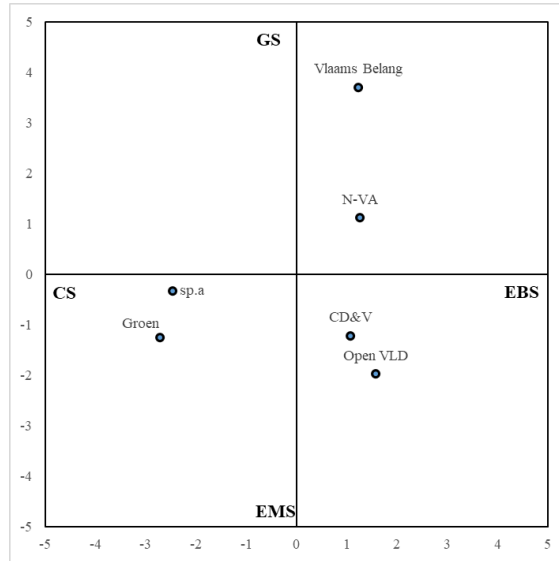


Figure 2: confirmatory plot of the Flemish party political space (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020)

H2A: Politicians' stereotypes of other parties structure the political space in line with a conflict between group-based and exchange-based solidarity versus compassionate and empathic solidarity

H2B: Politicians' partisan self-stereotypes structure the political space in line with a conflict between group-based and exchange-based solidarity versus compassionate and empathic solidarity

Although we assume that politicians use broadly similar partisan stereotypes regarding solidarity frames, partisan stereotypes might differ among politicians for two reasons. First, stereotypes might differ due to partisan

biases. Partisans would evaluate their party more favourably regarding preferred solidarity frames than competing parties (Gerber & Huber, 2010). For instance, members of a party with a relatively high discursive prevalence of empathic solidarity might perceive this frame as significantly less critical for other parties. Second, stereotypes depend on the reference group. Politicians are more often responsive to ideological neighbours and have positive relations with politicians of ideologically neighbouring parties (e.g., Adams & Somer-Topcu, 2009; L. K. Williams, 2015). Therefore, we expect that politicians deem their preferred solidarity frames to be more prevalent in discourses of parties that are ideologically close to their party.

H3: Politicians' partisan self-stereotypes evaluate their party more favourably regarding preferred solidarity frames than competing parties

H4: Politicians' partisan stereotypes regarding preferred solidarity frames are more favourable for ideologically close parties than ideologically distant parties

Case, Data, and Methods

This paper evaluates distinctions in solidarity frames as sources for partisan stereotypes. Therefore, we analyse the perceptions of solidarity framing among local politicians from the Flemish. Our case is a highly fragmented subnational

multi-party system with populist radical right *Vlaams Belang*, nationalists *N-VA*, liberals *Open VLD*, Christian democrats *CD&V*, social democrats *Vooruit*²³, and environmentalists *Groen*. Our research has found that these parties significantly differ in solidarity frames and that these distinctions overlap with differences between their party electorates.

Inspired by a newly developed questionnaire that measures voters' approval of solidarity frames, we constructed one statement per solidarity frame that was similarly worded and referred to as an ideal society (Verheyen & Thijssen, 2021). In line with earlier results, group-based and exchange-based solidarity statements contradict empathic, respectively, compassionate solidarity statements (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020; Verheyen & Thijssen, 2021). We ask the local politicians to what extent the six Flemish parties would agree with each statement on a scale from 1 (the party does not agree at all) to 7 (the party fully agrees). To compare our findings with earlier research on the Flemish region, we leave the populist leftist party *PVDA-PTB* (Labour Party) out (Thijssen & Verheyen, 2020). We obtain 24 variables to measure local politicians' partisan stereotypes. Finally, we ask our respondents how long they have been politically

²³ Formerly known as *sp.a* (Dutch: *socialistische partij.anders*; English: socialist party.different)

active to test whether senior and junior politicians use different partisan stereotypes.

Solidarity frame	Statement
Group-based solidarity	A good society is, first and foremost, a stronger community, for example, based on shared norms and values.
Compassionate solidarity	In a good society, we mainly try to give less fortunate people a better position, even if they do not actively contribute to society.
Exchange-based solidarity	In a good society, we mainly support people who make an active contribution to society.
Empathic solidarity	In a good society, we respect the individual differences between each other, even when it comes to extreme differences in terms of, for example, norms and values.

Table 1: statements used to measure partisan stereotypes regarding solidarity frames

After collecting contact details of Flemish local politicians, we invited 3,021 randomly selected politicians to participate in our online survey which we closed after two reminders. We found 618 respondents who are members of only one of the six parties investigated. 437 respondents had no missing values for any statement. 149 respondents had at least one missing value, of which 77 did not fill in any of the questions. We use imputation to diminish the number of missing values, which offers a comparative advantage in power as the sample size remains as large as possible. After imputation, we retain 541 respondents without missing values. Associations between response patterns and relevant socio-demographic and political variables only show that female respondents had significantly more often missing values than male respondents. Therefore,

we deem these missing responses as not problematic for our research (see appendix).

Table 2 depicts the sample sizes per party. While the response rate of environmentalists *Groen* and populist radical rightists *Vlaams Belang* leads to over-respectively underrepresentation (response rate of 40 respectively 18 percent), it does not differ significantly from the average response rate across parties (28 percent). However, due to the small sample size of *Vlaams Belang*, the results may be (heavily) influenced by the overall more prominent presence of leftist and centrist respondents. We, therefore, conducted the same analyses using a sampled dataset, with each party having an almost similar sample size. These analyses do not lead to significantly different findings and interpretations (see appendix).

	Full dataset	Sampled dataset
Vlaams Belang	19	19
N-VA	174	17
Open VLD	66	16
CD&V	171	15
Vooruit	43	16
Groen	68	17
Total	541	100

Table 2: sample sizes per party

We use five different methods to test our hypotheses. We visually assess the differences between party evaluations for our first set of hypotheses with a box-and-whisker-plot analysis. As our data are not normally distributed, we use a Friedman test to evaluate differences between party stereotypes used by other parties and a Kruskal-Wallis test with Bonferroni correction to assess differences between partisan self-stereotypes. For our second set of hypotheses, we evaluate how politicians perceive dimensionality in terms of solidarity frames with exploratory plots based on correspondence analysis. This method shares similarities with principal component analysis as it inductively infers underlying dimensions and positions of objects on these dimensions and displays them in a two-dimensional space (Greenacre, 1984; Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014).

For our final set of hypotheses, we evaluate the effect of party membership, partisanship, and ideological proximity on politicians' partisan stereotypes for each solidarity frame. We restructure the twenty-four solidarity frame scales (4 frames x 6 parties) into four variable groups (one for each solidarity frame) and a grouping variable of 6 categories (one category represents one party). After restructuring of the dataset, we conduct a maximum-likelihood multi-level regression in Stata as the observations are clustered per individual respondent. We evaluate the effects of party membership with five dummy variables (reference category: *CD&V*) and a dummy variable for party evaluated, with politicians evaluating their party as reference. Next, we evaluate the effects of ideological proximity on partisan stereotypes among local politicians. To evaluate ideological proximity between parties, we subtract the average ideological self-placement of one party from the average ideological self-placement of another party, with a negative score indicating a more leftist position and a positive score a more rightist position of the respondent's party²⁴. Subsequently, we construct a new model with party

²⁴ We conducted similar analyses with ideological scores for each party found in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey to the dataset and came to overall similar results (see appendix).

dyads as interaction terms in order to interpret the effect of partisanship and ideological proximity.

Results

First, we evaluate how politicians stereotype other parties. The box-and-whisker plots in Figure 3 show some internal heterogeneity and limited overlap between parties. As the scores are not normally distributed, we use a Friedman test and find support for H1A (see appendix). Perceived differences between parties regarding group-based solidarity are not outspoken yet still significant - $\chi^2 = 57.513$ (df=5), $p < .05$ – with populist radical right party *Vlaams Belang* (mean rank = 3.92) most strongly associated with this frame. Moreover, respondents perceive significant differences regarding exchange-based solidarity, $\chi^2 = 561.287$ (df=5), $p < .05$. Exchange-based solidarity is more associated with *Vlaams Belang* (mean rank=4.54) and less with leftist parties *Groen* and *Vooruit* (mean rank = 2.69).

Similarly, the results support H1B. We find significant differences regarding compassionate solidarity, $\chi^2 = 895.921$ (df=5), $p < .05$. Politicians associate this frame mostly with leftist parties *Vooruit* (mean rank= 4.94) and *Groen* (mean rank=4.58) and much less with rightist parties such as *N-VA* (mean rank=2.33). Furthermore, we find significant differences between parties

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regarding empathic solidarity, $\chi^2 = 824.934$ (df=5), $p < .05$. Politicians generally associate this frame with leftist parties such as *Groen* (mean rank = 4.48) and, to a lesser extent, with *Open VLD* (mean rank = 3.87). In contrast, they associate empathic solidarity the least with rightist parties *N-VA* (mean rank = 2.53) and *Vlaams Belang* (mean rank = 2.26).

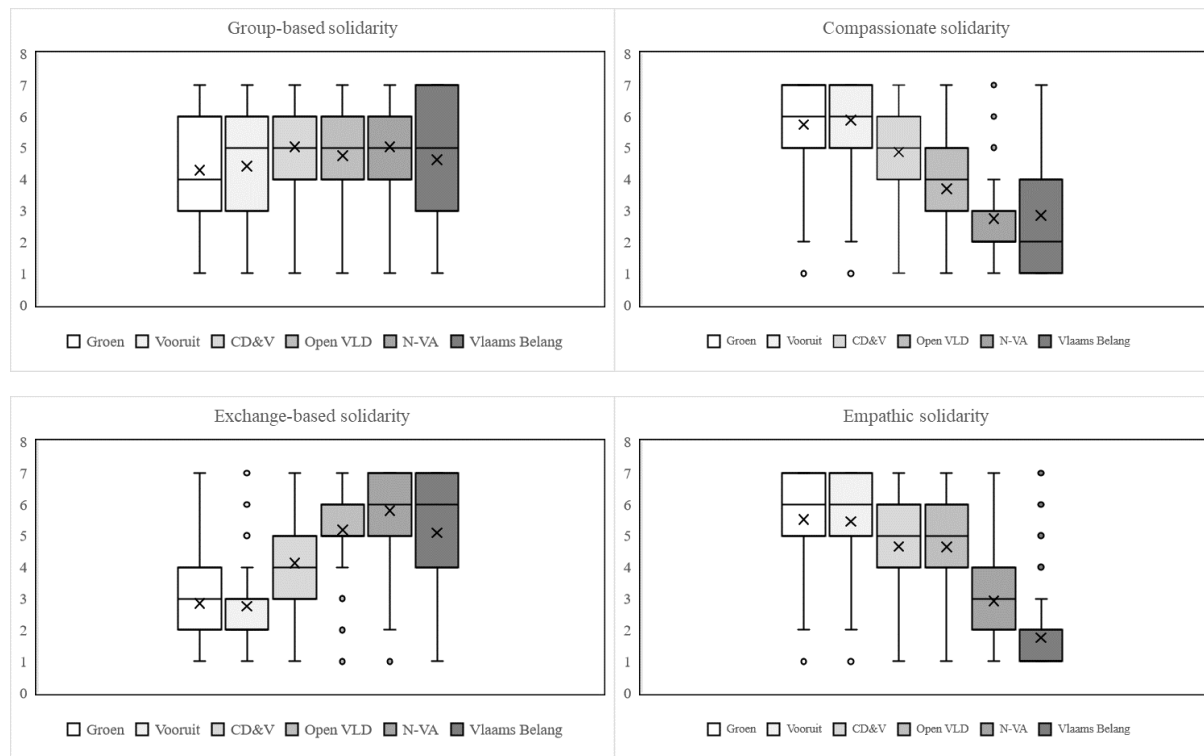


Figure 3: box-and-whisker plots based on partisan stereotypes of other parties (N=541)

Partisan self-stereotypes, visualised by the box-and-whisker plots in Figure 4, tell a similar story. We use independent samples to apply a Kruskal-Wallis test with Bonferroni-correction for pairwise comparison (see appendix for full results). Our analyses support H1C and H1D. First, differences between partisan self-stereotypes in terms of group-based solidarity are not outspoken yet significant, $H = 10.711 (5)$, $p < .05$. The average politician of *N-VA* gives their party the highest score. Second, we see significant differences between partisan self-stereotypes regarding exchange-based solidarity, $H = 199.794 (5)$, $p < .05$. Politicians of rightist parties, such as *N-VA* or *Open VLD*, give their party a significantly higher score than politicians of leftist parties. We also find significant differences in self-stereotypes regarding compassionate solidarity, $H = 170.718 (5)$, $p < .05$. Leftist party members claim a significantly higher score than rightist party members. Finally, we find significant differences between parties regarding empathic solidarity, $H = 102.122 (5)$, $p < .05$. Politicians of leftist parties such as *Groen* and, to a lesser extent, centre rightist party *Open VLD* give themselves a significantly higher score than politicians of rightist parties *N-VA* and *Vlaams Belang*.

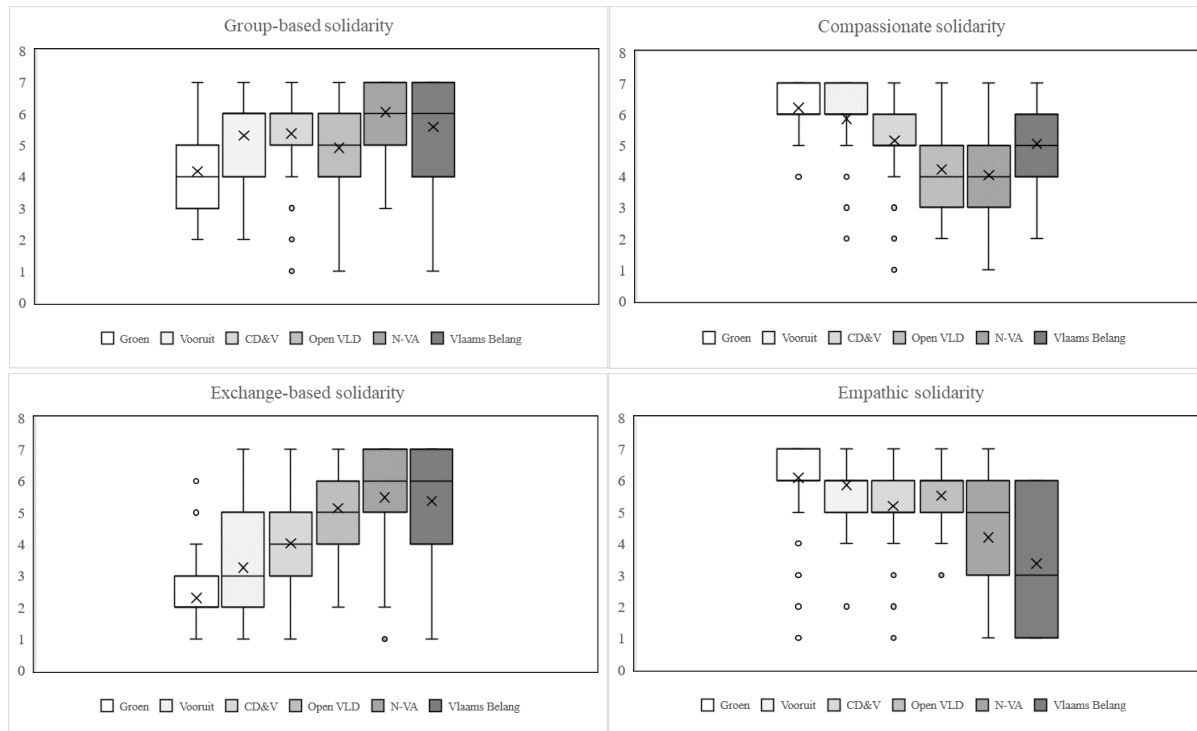


Figure 4: box-and-whisker plots based on partisan self-stereotypes

Although we find that partisan stereotypes are overall congruent with differences in solidarity framing, a comparison of the box-and-whisker plots suggests some differences between self-stereotypes and stereotypes from other parties. We conduct a Mann-Whitney U test (Table 2). Remarkably, rightist (*N-VA* and *Vlaams Belang*) and, to a lesser extent, centrist (*Open VLD* and *CD&V*) parties give themselves significantly higher scores on two frames primarily associated with the left, i.e., compassionate and empathic solidarity. For instance, the average *Vlaams Belang* politician (N=19) claims that their party somewhat agrees with compassionate solidarity, while the average Flemish politician believes that *Vlaams Belang* somewhat disagrees. Conversely, we do not find similar results for leftist parties and frames associated with rightist parties, i.e., group-based and exchange-based solidarity.

	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	Vooruit	Groen
Group-based	4033.50	20390.00***	14509.50	26320.00***	7230.50***	14576.50
Compassionate	1571.50***	15980.00***	12562.00**	26552.00***	10387.00	12641.50***
Exchange-based	4872.00	28428.50*	15394.00	30408.00	9207.50	12618.50***
Empathic	2660.00***	19032.00***	10210.00***	24240.00***	9279.00	13552.00*

Table 2: Mann-Whitney U test. U value. *p <.05 ** p<.001 ***p<.005

We now evaluate how politicians perceive dimensionality in terms of solidarity frames. As we cannot *a priori* determine how politicians perceive these dimensions, we use correspondence analysis to construct exploratory

plots. We first add individual scores for each party and solidarity frame and use a similar approach for respondents' partisan self-stereotypes. A chi-square analysis indicates significant but weak associations, with rightist parties obtaining higher values for group-based and exchange-based solidarity and leftist parties for compassionate and empathic solidarity (see Table 3 and 4).

Solidarity frames	Group-based	Compassionate	Exchange-based	Empathic	Active Margin
Vlaams Belang	2407 (2000.30)	1487 (1856.00)	2661 (1826.00)	914 (1786.60)	7469
N-VA	1844 (1620.80)	1006 (1503.90)	2128 (1479.60)	1074 (1447.70)	6052
Open VLD	2252 (2322.00)	1753 (2154.50)	2459 (2119.60)	2206 (2073.90)	8670
CD&V	1860 (1850.90)	1798 (1717.40)	1529 (1689.60)	1724 (1653.10)	6911
Vooruit	2199 (2466.00)	2924 (2288.20)	1370 (2251.20)	2715 (2202.60)	9208
Groen	2028 (2330.00)	2714 (2162.00)	1346 (2127.00)	2612 (2081.10)	8700
Active Margin	12590	11682	11493	11245	47010

$\chi^2 = 2974.087$ (df=15)***

Cramer's V = .145***

Table 3 Contingency table for partisan stereotypes. Expected values between brackets

Solidarity frames	Group-based	Compassionate	Exchange-based	Empathic	Active Margin
Vlaams Belang	106 (100.70)	96 (91.20)	102 (82.30)	64 (93.90)	368
N-VA	1051 (941)	704 (852.10)	954 (769.60)	731 (877.30)	3440
Open VLD	324 (357.30)	279 (323.50)	339 (292.20)	364 (333.10)	1306
CD&V	917 (923.50)	882 (836.20)	689 (755.30)	888 (861)	3376
Vooruit	228 (238.50)	252 (216.00)	140 (195.10)	252 (222.40)	872
Groen	284 (349)	422 (316.10)	156 (285.50)	414 (325.40)	1276
Active Margin	2910	2635	2380	2713	10638

$$\chi^2 = 307.137 \text{ (df=15) ***}$$

$$\text{Cramer's } V = .098 \text{ ***}$$

Table 4 Contingency table for partisan self-stereotypes. Expected values between brackets

We visualize solidarity frame dimensions with correspondence plots in Figure 5, both for partisan stereotypes of other parties (left pane) and partisan self-stereotypes (right pane). The first dimensions (horizontal axes) account for 94.3 respectively 91.6 percent of inertia, while the second dimensions (vertical axes) only account for 5.6 respectively 6.8 percent. In both plots, the first dimension positions group-based and exchange-based solidarity as opposed to compassionate and empathic solidarity. Moreover, it positions *Vlaams Belang*, *N-VA*, and to a lesser extent *Open VLD* as opposed to *Groen*, *Vooruit*, and to a lesser extent *CD&V*. The second dimension positions group-based and compassionate solidarity as opposed to exchange-based and empathic solidarity. Furthermore, it positions *Open VLD* and - to a lesser extent - *N-VA* as opposed to *Vlaams Belang* and - to a lesser extent - *Vooruit*, *Groen*, and *CD&V*. These results support both H2A and H2B.

However, a visual comparison suggests differences between partisan self-stereotypes and partisan stereotypes used by politicians of other parties. We draw lines to evaluate the distinctiveness of frames and parties and measure

the distance between each point and the origin. The longer the distance, the stronger the distinctiveness of that point compared to the expected values. In both plots, group-based solidarity is the least, and exchange-based solidarity is the most discriminating solidarity frame. At the same time, *Vlaams Belang* is the most distinctive and *CD&V* the least distinctive party. Nevertheless, both plots slightly differ in terms of distinctiveness. For instance, *N-VA* is slightly less distinctive in the plot based on self-stereotypes.

To assess associations between solidarity frames and parties, we inspect the angles from the lines connecting parties and solidarity frames. Acute angles indicate a positive association and obtuse angles a negative association. The more acute or obtuse the angle, the stronger the positive respectively negative association is. Both plots show that rightist parties are positively associated with group-based and exchange-based solidarity and negatively related to compassionate and empathic solidarity. In contrast, leftist parties are positively associated with compassionate and empathic solidarity and negatively associated with group-based and exchange-based solidarity. The comparatively rather empathic *Open VLD* is an exception to this rule. Nevertheless, the angle sizes in the right pane show that the positive and negative associations are comparatively less outspoken for partisan self-stereotypes.

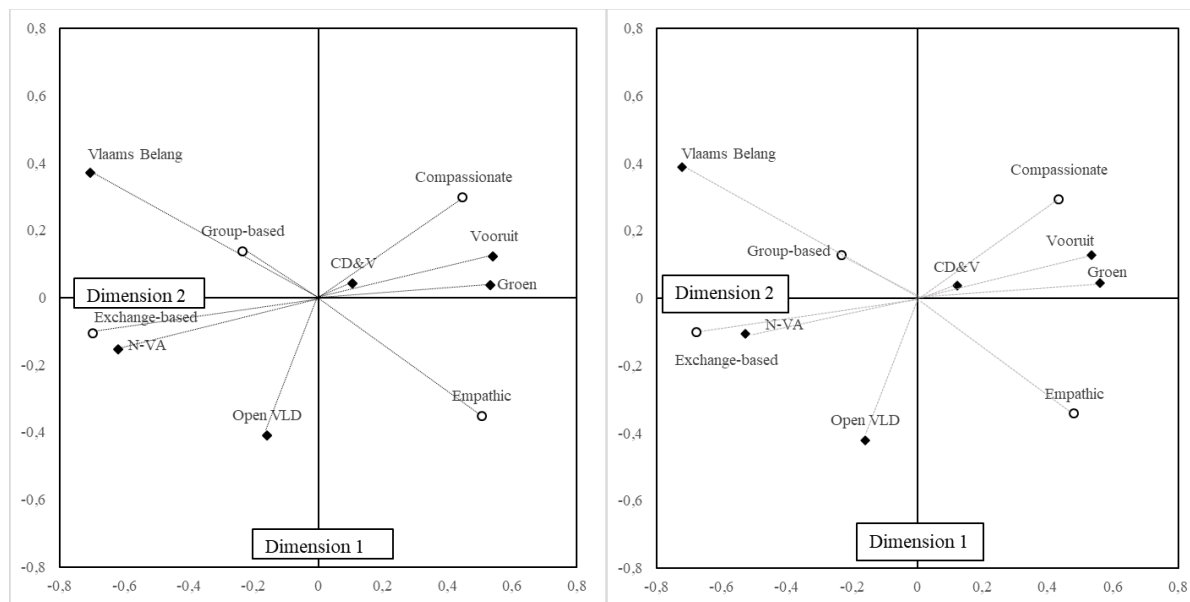


Figure 5 Plot analysis of political space. Left pane: correspondence plot based on aggregate stereotypes. Right pane: correspondence plot based on partisan self-stereotypes (rhombus: party; circle: solidarity frame).

As a check, we calculate indexed residuals by first multiplying the scores of the parties in one dimension with the scores of frames in the same dimension and then adding up the mathematical products for both dimensions. Indexed residuals indicate how much more or less than expected solidarity frames and parties are associated. The signs of indexed residuals show the deviation's direction, while the size of the indexed residual indicates its strength. The results in Tables 5 and 6 indicate that rightist parties are strongly positively associated with group-based and exchange-based solidarity, while leftist parties have more robust positive associations with compassionate and empathic solidarity. However, the index values for self-stereotypes show less outspoken deviations. For instance, aggregate results indicate that the observed value of *N*-VA is 32.31 percent lower for compassionate solidarity than expected, while self-stereotype results only indicate an observed value that is 16.46 percent lower than expected. Rightist politicians thus generally give higher scores to their party on compassionate and empathic solidarity.

Aggregate perception	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	Vooruit	Groen
index GB	21.44%	12.33%	-1.93%	-1.95%	-10.98%	-11.89%
index C	-20.55%	-32.31%	-19.24%	6.09%	27.88%	24.93%
index EB	45.04%	44.73%	15.32%	-7.97%	-39.02%	-37.42%
index E	-48.72%	-25.96%	6.51%	4.00%	23.22%	25.67%

Table 5 index values plot based on stereotypes used by other parties (left pane Figure 5)

Self-perception	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	Vooruit	Groen
index GB	16.97%	10.56%	-7.15%	-1.57%	-7.18%	-17.01%
index C	-4.70%	-16.46%	-15.62%	6.24%	19.05%	32.18%
index EB	14.61%	24.86%	14.35%	-8.12%	-26.05%	-46.63%
index E	-26.49%	-17.19%	10.24%	2.76%	12.10%	27.97%

Table 6: index values plot based on partisan self-stereotypes (right pane Figure 5)

While our findings indicate that partisan stereotypes overall correspond with differences in partisan solidarity framing, differences between aggregate partisan stereotypes and partisan self-stereotypes suggest that local politicians have a (partisan) bias when evaluating partisan solidarity framing. Therefore, we evaluate the effect of party membership and reference parties on politicians' partisan stereotypes for each solidarity frame. We first transform the dataset from wide to long format by restructuring the twenty-four solidarity frame scales (4 frames x 6 parties) into four variable groups (one for each solidarity frame) and a grouping variable of 6 categories (one for each party). Each respondent now has six rows, each row providing the scores local politicians give to a party on each solidarity frame. As observations are clustered within respondents, we conduct a maximum-likelihood multi-level regression in Stata. Due to problems of heteroskedasticity, we use robust standard errors. Furthermore, we remove outliers from the analyses.

We report the results for partisan biases in Table 7. The coefficients indicate a partisan bias regarding perceived ownership of solidarity frames. For instance, politicians of *N-VA* give their party lower scores for compassionate and empathic solidarity than other - leftist - parties. Conversely, members of *Groen* and *Vooruit* give their party higher scores on these frames compared to more

rightist parties. Similarly, *N-VA* members give their party higher scores on exchange-based solidarity, while politicians of *Groen* and *Vooruit* give lower scores to their parties. We find that partisan biases are less relevant to stereotypes regarding group-based solidarity. Nevertheless, members of *Groen* and *Open VLD* score their party significantly lower for group-based solidarity, which indicates that these politicians distance their party from such a discourse. On the other hand, members of *N-VA* score their party higher regarding group-based solidarity than other parties, which is in line with the relatively more substantial prevalence of group-based solidarity in their discourse.

Effects	Coefficients	Group-based		Compassionate		Exchange-based		Empathic	
		B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Fixed	Intercept	5.362***	.091	5.160***	.087	4.035***	.107	5.194***	.086
	Party membership (ref: CD&V)								
	Vlaams Belang	.191	.413	-.093	.318	1.311***	.358	-1.826***	.480
	N-VA	.672***	.122	-1.114***	.136	1.448***	.155	-.993***	.164
	Open VLD	-.452*	.190	-.943***	.178	1.098***	.192	.321	.175
	Vooruit	-.060	.228	.700***	.204	-.779	.290	.666***	.166
	Groen	-1.187***	.190	1.043***	.123	-1.734**	.161	.894***	.161
	Other evaluated (ref: CD&V)								
	Vlaams Belang	-.525	.549	.801*	.383	-1.871***	.381	2.528***	.652
	N-VA	-.690	.140	1.985***	.126	-1.979***	.150	1.511***	.159
	Open VLD	.395	.195	1.235***	.182	-1.304***	.173	-.311	.166
	Vooruit	.143	.258	-1.264***	.196	1.271***	.274	-.8104***	.150
	Groen	1.501***	.209	-1.605***	.142	2.172***	.150	-1.217***	.164
Random	Intercept (ID)	.241	.044	.070	.041	.187	.055	.076	.055
	Residual	2.278	.078	2.756	.076	2.830	.074	3.570	.073
	ICC	.096	.017	.025	.014	.062	.018	.021	.015
	AIC	12178.63 (14)		12607.27 (14)		12797.43 (14)		13435.86 (14)	
	Wald χ^2	334.47 (11)***		1119.76 (11)***		870.20 (11)***		862.60 (11)***	
	N (observations)	3,246		3,246		3,246		3,246	
	N (classes)	541		541		541		541	

Table 7: ML multi-level regressions with solidarity frames as DV and party membership and partisanship as IV.. * p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.005

We report the results for the full models (with dyads) in Table 8 (see appendix for full regression analyses). We add party membership, reference parties, and dyadic interaction effects in these models. Here, the reference category is a politician of *CD&V* evaluating their party, with a self-stereotype of 4.035 for exchange-based solidarity as the lowest intercept and a self-stereotype of 5.194 for empathic solidarity as the highest intercept.

The model replicates the previous finding that stereotypes have a partisan bias. First, the coefficients indicate that members of other parties give the centrist party a lower score on all four solidarity frames. Especially *Vooruit*'s and *Groen*'s stereotypes of the centrist party strongly deviate from *CD&V*'s self-stereotype. Conversely, members of *CD&V* give all parties a lower score than themselves regarding group-based solidarity, which also indicates a partisan bias. However, we also find a left-right distinction in partisan stereotyping by centrist party members.

Regarding compassionate and empathic solidarity, members of *CD&V* give their party a significantly lower score than leftist parties and a significantly higher score than rightist parties. Conversely, they position leftist parties

significantly lower and rightist parties significantly higher on exchange-based solidarity. Second, party members do not give their party significantly lower scores. All significant effects of partisan self-evaluation are positive and relatively high. Most remarkable are the partisan self-stereotypes of rightist parties. For instance, the average *Vlaams Belang* politician gives their party a score of 5.07 on compassionate solidarity, while they give the ideologically neighbouring *N-VA* only 4.39. Conversely, members of *N-VA* give their party a score of 4.05 while giving *Vlaams Belang* a score of 3.48. Based on these results, we can confirm H3.

Model	Effects	Coefficients	Group-based		Compassionate		Exchange-based		Empathic	
			B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Full	Fixed	Intercept (ID)	5.362***	.091	5.184***	.084	4.035***	.107	5.194***	.086
		Membership (ref.: CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang	-.767***	.261	-.384	.316	-.233	.365	-.547	.357
		N-VA	-.257*	.128	-.097	.116	.142	.138	-.427***	.137
		Open VLD	-.294	.165	-.539***	.149	.155	.179	-.464**	.174
		Vooruit	-.409*	.170	-.578***	.194	.035	.211	-.706***	.184
		Groen	-.386*	.167	-.595***	.153	.147	.176	-.753***	.178
		Evaluated (ref.: CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang	-1.064***	.198	-2.576***	.140	1.224***	.179	-3.532***	.114
		N-VA	-.383***	.141	-2.356***	.115	1.618***	.140	-2.202***	.126
		Open VLD	-.529***	.100	-1.676***	.115	1.166***	.122	-.680***	.101
		Vooruit	-.830***	.121	.782***	.096	-1.263***	.110	.257*	.111
		Groen	-.934***	.129	.440***	.100	-1.099***	.111	.260*	.122
		Dyads (ref.:CD&V-CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang-Vlaams Belang	2.022***	.614	2.843***	.446	.320	.445	2.253***	.692
		Vlaams Belang-N-VA	.945*	.458	1.947***	.366	-.408	.349	1.590***	.517
		Vlaams Belang- Open VLD	.208	.215	1.212***	.303	-.654	.349	.725***	.260
		Vlaams Belang-Vooruit	.265	.289	-.293	.251	.602	.309	.240	.333
		Vlaams Belang - Groen	-.317	.330	-.001	.253	.049	.302	.212	.429
		N-VA-Vlaams Belang	1.062***	.252	.965***	.200	-.651***	.240	.615***	.167
		N-VA - N-VA	1.313***	.181	1.315***	.150	-.312	.179	1.635***	.179
		N-VA - Open VLD	.071	.131	.750***	.139	-.348*	.152	.581***	.139
		N-VA - Vooruit	-.079	.163	.227	.130	-.224	.153	.597***	.163
		N-VA - Groen	-.238	.186	.653***	.136	-.525	.157	.818***	.190
		Open VLD - Vlaams Belang	-.225	.369	.657***	.253	-.444	.301	.265	.214
		Open VLD - N-VA	.234	.239	.817***	.204	-.203	.219	.588	.251
		Open VLD - Open VLD	.371	.195	1.248***	.200	-.223	.197	1.464***	.204
		Open VLD - Vooruit	.422	.225	.413*	.172	.033	.179	.452*	.200
		Open VLD - Groen	.224	.241	.498***	.180	-.027	.210	.356	.235
		Vooruit - Vlaams Belang	.064	.467	-.194	.278	.171	.365	.211	.211
		Vooruit - N-VA	.151	.355	-.207	.250	.405	.305	.411	.253
		Vooruit - Open VLD	.622	.184	.667*	.277	.183	.263	1.295***	.224
		Vooruit – Vooruit	1.179***	.219	.573***	.197	.449	.234	1.115***	.187
		Vooruit – Groen	.794***	.250	.586**	.222	.262	.243	1.233***	.215
		Groen - Vlaams Belang	1.337***	.361	.464*	.234	-.006	.266	.435*	.198
		Groen - N-VA	.876	.272	-.170	.179	.458***	.201	.106	.206
		Groen - Open VLD	.024	.203	-.016	.176	.271	.168	.959***	.199
		Groen - Vooruit	.327	.183	.300*	.145	-.369	.162	.717***	.181
		Groen - Groen	.132	.206	1.174***	.160	-.782	.166	1.446***	.204
	Random	Intercept	.269	.043	.304	.033	.401	.052	.380	.040
		Residual	2.115	.079	1.152	.043	1.545	.066	1.417	.059
ICC		.113	.018	.209	.020	.206	.023	.211	.020	
	AIC (df) Model 3	12025.9 (38)		10195.9 (38)		11208.9 (38)		10842.39 (38)		
	Wald χ^2 (df) Model 3	560.39(35)***		3340.12(35)***		1847.81(35)***		5880.47(5)***		
	N (observations)	3,246 ²⁵		3,225		3,246		3,217		
	N (classes)	541		541		541		541		
	Average n observation per cluster	6.00		6.00		6.00		5.90		

Table 8: ML multi-level regressions with solidarity frames as DV and party membership, party evaluated, and party dyads as IV (full model). * p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.005

Moreover, the coefficients in Table 8 also suggest that ideological proximity impacts partisan stereotypes. A few exceptions aside, rightist politicians give significantly higher scores for other rightist parties on most solidarity frames than centrist and leftist politicians are willing to give. This bias holds especially true for compassionate and empathic solidarity, two solidarity frames primarily associated with leftist parties. For instance, while *Vlaams Belang* and *N-VA* members give both parties a relatively high score on compassionate solidarity, members of *Groen* and *Vooruit* give low scores to both *Vlaams Belang* (2.48 respectively 1.84) and *N-VA* (2.06 respectively 2.04). Remarkably, the scores members of *Vlaams Belang* and *N-VA* give to *Groen* (5.58 respectively 6.52) and *Vooruit* (4.95 respectively 4.88) are not that different from the scores members of *Vooruit* give to *Groen* (5.63) and vice versa (5.67). We find a less pronounced ideological bias in partisan stereotypes regarding exchange-based solidarity: We find a similar but less pronounced bias regarding exchange-based solidarity. In short, ideological proximity impacts local politicians' stereotypes, especially stereotypes regarding the most outspoken parties on the right. Therefore, we confirm H4.

Discussion and Conclusion

This contribution focused on solidarity frames as a source of partisan stereotypes for local politicians. Our results show that partisan stereotypes are congruent with real differences between parties: group-based and exchange-based solidarity is stereotypically rightist, while compassionate and empathic solidarity are stereotypically leftist. Furthermore, politicians perceive the dimensions of the political space as conflicts between a structural (group-based and exchange-based) and an intersubjective pole (compassionate and empathic). These findings are based on aggregate stereotypes and partisan self-stereotypes and thus strongly support our thesis that solidarity frames are heuristically helpful.

However, we also found that rightist politicians score their parties and other rightist parties significantly higher on compassionate and empathic solidarity than leftist or centrist politicians would do. We hypothesized that leftist politicians downplay the prevalence of these frames in rightist discourses to emphasize their ownership of these solidarity frames. This difference holds especially true when leftist politicians compare their party to the populist

radical right party. Conversely, rightist politicians recognize that their party does not express compassionate and empathic solidarity to the same extent as leftist parties, yet downplay the latter's distinctiveness in terms of exchange-based solidarity. Overall, we conclude that politicians have similar partisan stereotypes regarding solidarity frames yet differ regarding the distinctiveness of parties.

A significant limitation of our research is that we tested solidarity frames as partisan stereotypes in one fragmented multi-party system. While most industrialized societies are confronted with the problem of solidarity, the question remains whether partisan stereotypes in other party systems are congruent with real existing differences. Comparative research is therefore warranted. We also found a potential interpretative problem regarding group-based solidarity. While differences between parties were still significant, politicians were less able to distinguish parties in terms of group-based solidarity compared to the other solidarity frames. This distinction raises the question of whether the statement truly captures the interpretation of group-based solidarity that is used in our content analyses of party manifestos. Future research should test whether other operationalisations lead to more outspoken distinctions between parties.

Our results also raise new questions. First, solidarity frames join issue ownership, values, and left-right placement as valuable heuristics. However, it remains unclear whether solidarity frames are more or less useful than these other heuristics. Therefore, future research should systematically compare the explanatory and heuristic value of solidarity frames and established partisan stereotypes, such as issue ownership or value preferences. Secondly, we show that rightist politicians stereotype their parties as more compassionate and empathic than leftist politicians would do. The question arises whether politicians on the right also actively communicate counter-stereotypical messages. Future research should establish to what extent parties counter stereotypes in diverse media. Finally, due to our cross-sectional design, we could not confirm whether partisan (self-)stereotypes change if parties shift their solidarity framing. To what extent do these partisan stereotypes stick? Moreover, are partisan stereotypes of highly ideological and partisan politicians more or less prone to change than those of ordinary voters? A longitudinal research design could provide some interesting answers here.

Conclusion and Discussion

Introduction

This dissertation started from the assumption that solidarity has become central to today's conflicts in the party political sphere. Most contemporary scholars understand solidarity as the cement of social bonds that holds a group, a community, or a society together (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017; Komter et al., 2000). Solidarity entails supportive actions and attitudes, which are implicitly or explicitly legitimised and motivated (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). For a long time, solidarity entailed the idea that – wealthy - citizens have obligations to help their fellow – worse off- citizens (Baldwin, 1990; Bayertz, 1999: 21). Since the latter half of the 20th century, however, the question of solidarity has received a broader interpretation in line with new *wicked social problems* such as climate change and viral threats. Solidarity has also become more salient due to *three socio-political transformations* that underlie these wicked problems: welfare state retrenchment, social diversification, and glocalisation (Beyer, 2007; Oosterlynck et al., 2016; Van Kersbergen, 2006). As a result of this, solidarity has become a kind of super-issue.

Despite the political significance of its contested nature, the interest for solidarity in political theory and empirical political science had long been very limited as scholars had cast the concept into "the realm of the rhetoric" (Wilde, 2007). Until now, those who did research solidarity mainly studied the contestation of solidarity as expressed through large-scale institutional changes in the welfare state or differences in individual attitudes and behaviours (e.g., Brunkhorst, 2005; Calhoun, 2002; Turner & Rojek, 2001). Consequently, most scholars have paid scant critical attention to the meaning of solidarity in political discourse (Van Kersbergen, 2006). However, some scholars recently have argued that the current contestation of solidarity signals that political solidarity discourse goes beyond mere rhetoric (Wilde, 2007). Moreover, they contend that the current contestation of solidarity also indicates that the meaning of solidarity is subject to a political struggle: while many argue that it is of utmost importance to consolidate social solidarity, there is little consensus on how to do this (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017: 2; Stjernø, 2005). This dissertation follows this line of reasoning and therefore proposes to study the 'politicization' of solidarity to understand how solidarity is enhanced or protected in increasingly diverse and postmodern societies.

The relatively few existing studies analysing solidarity in political discourse primarily focus on social movements that act on one or a few specific issues that affect particular groups, such as the LGBT+ and immigrants (e.g., Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). In contrast to this social movement-centric approach, this dissertation centres on *political parties*, which have been largely absent in the study of the politics of solidarity. We provide three reasons to study parties in the politics of solidarity.

First, contemporary parties appeal to different societal segments and set various policy-making agendas (Katz & Mair, 1993). Consequently, parties differ from issue-specific or group-centred social movements in dealing with broad social problems, such as the lack of social solidarity. Instead of inducing feelings of solidarity to one particular beneficiary on a few specific issues, parties invoke solidarity with various social groups across various topics. Second, parties participate in policy-making institutions, such as the multiple levels of government and parliaments (Mair, 2008). Therefore, how they give meaning to solidarity can significantly shape public policy and institutional frameworks. Third, parties take part in institutionalised forms of electoral competition, in which they differentiate themselves to convince voters. To the extent that this competition endures, it leads to *particular configurations of the party political*

space. Not only do such configurations impact coalition-forming between parties, which is a relevant question for many – if not most – parties in representative democracies (see Tavits, 2008), but they make specific interpretations of solidarity more or less salient than others among voters who try to make sense of social and political problems (Enyedi, 2005).

The main focus of this dissertation is to improve our understanding of the politicisation of solidarity by analysing partisan *solidarity frames*. We define solidarity frames as rhetorical devices that motivate people to be solidary with various beneficiaries. Our typology distinguishes four interrelated *solidarity frames* based on a theory inspired by Durkheim and Honneth (Thijssen, 2012, 2016). Each solidarity frame provides a different motivation for solidarity. Group-based solidarity frames motivate solidarity based on a structure of belonging and identity (Guibernau, 2013; van Oorschot, 2006). Compassionate solidarity frames encourage solidarity based on the need to alleviate an unequal position of group members on the fringes of the in-group, which corresponds with notions of need and redistribution (De Beer & Koster, 2010; Stjernø, 2005; van Oorschot, 2006). Exchange-based solidarity frames motivate solidarity with trustworthy individuals based on a structure of repeated exchange, which corresponds with solidarity as reciprocity (De Beer and Koster, 2013; van

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Oorschot, 2006). Finally, empathic solidarity motivates solidarity based on the recognition of differences, personal (self-) development, and (self-)expression (Fraser, 1995; Juul, 2010). However, parties can also explicitly exclude individuals from solidarity. We, therefore, acknowledge in a second order that these solidarity frames also have exclusionary counterparts that frame certain groups or individuals as undeserving of solidarity. Group-based and exchange-based solidarity frames have an exclusionary counterpart that *reaffirms* their underlying principles: specific individuals do not deserve support because they do not belong to the in-group respectively do not contribute to processes of exchange. Conversely, the exclusionary counterparts of compassionate and empathic solidarity frames *actively dismiss* individuals' demands for redistribution or recognition. These individuals do not deserve support because they are too well-off to earn redistribution respectively are too different or dangerous to deserve respect.

Inspired by the underlying Durkheimian-Honnethian theoretical framework, we deem these solidarity frames interrelated but not necessarily in conflict. The theory posits that solidarity is not an ideal end-stage but consists of phases in *continuous dialectical processes* (Thijssen, 2012, 2016). A dialectical approach perceives society as a dynamic system made up of continual conflicts

between a beginning situation called a thesis, and its negation called the antithesis, which could become reconciled (or, in Hegelian terms: sublated) in a synthesis that in turn forms the new thesis (e.g., Skoll, 2014: 4).

The Durkheimian-Honnethian theory distinguishes *three dialectical processes* of solidarity. First, the theory puts forward a dialectical relationship between Durkheim's mechanical solidarity (i.e., group-based and compassionate solidarity) and organic solidarity (i.e., exchange-based and empathic solidarity). Durkheim associated mechanical solidarity with primitive societies and organic solidarity with modern society. Conversely, the dialectical theory of solidarity claims that mechanical solidarity is also present in contemporary society. Consequently, organic solidarity becomes an antithesis of mechanical solidarity in those societies where the latter is predominant and vice versa. This relationship also impacts conflicts between parties: some parties invoke similarities between citizens as the basis of solidarity (i.e., group-based and compassionate solidarity), while others emphasise differences between individuals (i.e., exchange-based and empathic solidarity) as the source of solidarity. As mechanical and organic solidarity connect in a thesis – antithesis chain, they could synthesise into discourses that invoke a collective

consciousness among individuals with (particular) differences or a diverse society that acknowledges cooperation between structured groups.

Second, the theory draws inspiration from Honneth to posit *a second dialectic*, 'internal' to both mechanical and organic solidarity. Despite their differences, mechanical and organic solidarity are subject to a dialectic between structural principle versus intersubjective verification. Group-based and exchange-based solidarity draw *boundaries* between included and excluded individuals based on an underlying structural principle. While the former excludes individuals who do not belong to the in-group (group-based solidarity), the latter excludes individuals who do not sufficiently comply with the underlying principle of reciprocity (exchange-based solidarity). The *antithesis* of these structural principles are outsiders and their demands. Outsiders could struggle for redistribution based on their precarity, often leading to *compassionate solidarity* among insiders that motivates them to accommodate these outsiders as 'one of us'. Those excluded could also struggle for recognition, potentially leading to empathic solidarity among the insiders that motivate them to see those excluded as *a priori* valuable by virtue of their otherness. The conflict between these structural (group-based, respectively, exchange-based solidarity) and intersubjective (compassionate, respectively,

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empathic solidarity) solidarity frames could polarise over time. However, suppose an expansion of the integrative structural principle has recently occurred, the conflictual nature will probably be more limited. The previously marginalised outsiders or exchange-partners have become included in the structure of social solidarity, while other forms of exclusion remain yet invisible. Parties could reconcile the idea of collective consciousness (group-based solidarity) with the notion that (certain) group members who are worse off should receive support (compassionate solidarity). Similarly, the idea of a structure of exchange (exchange-based solidarity) could complement the concept of respecting certain individual differences within that particular system of reciprocity (empathic solidarity).

Third, the theory ultimately posits a *third dialectic* where Honneth meets Durkheim. This dialectic combines the dialectic between solidarity types opposed in terms of similarity versus difference with the dialectic between structural principle versus intersubjective verification. Parties that favour group-based solidarity could express *prejudices towards the otherness* of an outsider or marginalised insider. Empathy for differences might lead parties to question *group essentialism* and identity. Similarly, parties favouring exchange-based solidarity could express *contempt towards non-contributors who might*

be in a precarious position. At the same time, compassion for those who cannot contribute might cause parties to think *that a system based on reciprocity is unfair.* However, these relationships can become less conflictual or even complementary when parties construct a group identity that appreciates in-group differences or supports a system based on reciprocity if a certain commonly accepted level of equality between exchange partners exists.

However, dialectical solidarity struggles do not necessarily lead to more inclusion or broader spheres of solidarity. On the contrary, the synthesis sometimes results in more exclusionary and restrictive solidarity. A look at recent history teaches us that struggles do *not necessarily* expand the boundaries of solidarity. For instance, most welfare states have retrenched and have adopted a form of 'welfare chauvinism' to deal with the issues of immigration from within and without Europe (De Koster et al., 2013; Kymlicka, 2015; Van der Waal et al., 2010; Van Der Waal et al., 2013). Furthermore, formerly more expansive notions of solidarity can become more restricted due to *backlashes*. Such backlashes often come from individuals or social groups in a more advantageous position before the expansion of solidarity and feel that the previous synthesis disadvantages them (Alexander, 2019). Backlashes, in turn, could lead to a new synthesis. For instance, the welfare state crises of the

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latter half of the 20th century saw the emergence of a neoliberal critique of the welfare state, which argued that welfare policies only benefitted specific interest groups (e.g., labour unions) and led to a culture of welfare dependency (Mendes, 1998, 2003). The contradiction between the welfare state and the neoliberal critique did not cause the welfare state to completely disappear but instead gave way to an active welfare state that invokes exchange-based solidarity to motivate individuals (Achterberg et al., 2013; Pierson, 1996; Vandenbroucke, 2000).

The assumption of a dialectical relationship between solidarity types suggests that relationships between solidarity frames could start as a conflict (thesis – antithesis). Simultaneously, it implies the possibility of convergence (synthesis) between solidarity frames. In the context of party politics, the nature of the relationships between frames is dependent on how parties differentiate themselves in the context of elections, which also entails the exclusionary counterparts of solidarity that parties could downplay or emphasise in their discourse. Whether solidarity frames are deemed conflictual or complementary depends on how political parties *differentiate* themselves in terms of solidarity framing and how they deal with the political and social contexts, such as electoral competition and increased ethnic diversity. As these contexts change,

parties might shift in terms of solidarity frames, which leads to some relations between solidarity frames becoming increasingly conflictual. In contrast, others become neutral or turn into complementary relationships.

This dissertation assessed the role of solidarity frames in three essential aspects of party politics. First, this dissertation focused on the *supply-side* – i.e., the political parties that actively evaluate and frame social conflicts (Deegan-Krause & Enyedi, 2010; Riker, 1986; Tavits & Potter, 2015). More specifically, we deductively assessed whether we could find meaningful -i.e., significant – differences between partisan discourses based on solidarity frames that we drew from the Durkheimian-Honnethian theory of solidarity (Thijssen, 2012; 2016).

Second, we turned to the party political sphere's demand-side and assessed whether voters have similar solidarity preferences as their preferred parties. More particularly, we evaluated whether the solidarity frame preferences of party electorates are congruent with those of their preferred parties. As we assumed that solidarity frames are useful to make meaningful distinctions between parties, we evaluated whether there is overlap between the favourite solidarity frames of parties and those of their electorates.

Furthermore, we assessed the impact of solidarity frame preferences on propensities to vote for specific parties.

Third, this dissertation turned to an intermediary level – i.e., local politicians who are intermediaries for the parties' supply and the voters' demands. Local politicians are more familiar with partisan discourses than politically less active citizens. Therefore, we assess whether these actors can distinguish parties in terms of solidarity framing.

This dissertation consisted of five chapters. Each chapter comprised a study of solidarity frames in the Flemish region, a fragmented multi-party system that has often been described as a partocracy sensitive to the challenges to solidarity (Beyers & Bursens, 2006; Deschouwer, 2012). More specifically, we focused on the six main political parties within the Flemish region: the green party (Groen), the social democratic party (*sp.a*, later *Vooruit*), the Christian democratic party (*CD&V*), the liberal party (*Open VLD*), the conservative regionalist party (*N-VA*), and the populist radical right party (*Vlaams Belang*). Due to the fragmented nature of the party political sphere and the problematisation of solidarity, we expected that the Flemish political system is a most-likely case to find a diversity of solidarity frames among parties and voters. Thus, we anticipated that Belgium, especially Flanders, would be an

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interesting case to assess this solidarity framework in three essential aspects of party politics.

The analyses in the first two chapters focused on the supply-side and assessed whether one could distinguish specific solidarity frames in the partisan discourses by conducting deductive content analyses of party manifestos. Chapter 1 evaluated how the four solidarity frames structure party political conflict and dimensionalise the Flemish political sphere between 1995 and 2014 in terms of solidarity frame conflicts. Chapter 2 focused on the solidarity frames of rightist parties and how they use exclusionary or 'negative' forms of the solidarity frames defined in Chapter 1. The following two chapters highlighted the demand-side and analyse whether voters have similar solidarity preferences as their preferred parties based on the survey data of a citizens' panel. Chapter 3 evaluated whether there is congruence between parties' and electorates' solidarity frame preferences. We called them symmetric analyses because our analyses did not assume a causal priority of either solidarity frame preferences or party preferences. Chapter 4, on the other hand, evaluated how solidarity frame preferences impact the propensities to vote for specific parties and thus consisted of asymmetric analyses. Finally, Chapter 5 turned to local politicians - who form a link between parties (supply) and voters (demand) – and assessed

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whether solidarity frames are helpful for these intermediary actors to identify both their own and other parties. More specifically, this final chapter evaluated whether local politicians use partisan stereotypes in terms of solidarity frames, whether these partisan stereotypes are rooted in real existing differences in solidarity framing by political parties, and whether biases in these judgments exist.

This concluding section first summarises the key findings of our supply-side, demand-side, and intermediary analyses. Afterwards, we discuss the methodological and theoretical implications of our key findings for the field of political science. Most importantly, we elaborate on the validity of our solidarity frame approach. Next, we discuss the most critical limitations of this dissertation and suggest how future research can deal with them. We end this chapter with some concluding remarks, including a cautious assessment of a current challenge to solidarity and its developments, the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Findings

Supply-Side Analyses

The first aim of this dissertation was to establish whether one can distinguish distinctive solidarity frames in the partisan discourses and to what extent these solidarity frames are helpful to dimensionalise the party political space. Chapter

1 indeed establishes that *solidarity frames are valuable markers of distinctive partisan discourses and ideologies*: radical rightist *Vlaams Belang* and nationalist *N-VA* strongly champion group-based solidarity; greens and social and Christian democrats strongly advocate compassionate solidarity; liberals, Christian democrats, and conservatives prominently defend exchange-based solidarity; and the greens promote empathic solidarity, liberals *Open VLD* and to lesser extent social and Christian democrats *sp.a* (now *Vooruit*) and *CD&V*. Hence, we can conclude that solidarity is *no longer a prerogative of social movements and leftist parties*. Parties on the right also adopt solidarity frames distinct from leftist frames. We eliminated sentences from the analysed party manifestos referring to specific salient groups (such as migration-related groups or the elderly)²⁶ as a robustness check. These tests did not indicate a significant change in these relative frequencies, suggesting that these distinctions do not depend on correlations between solidarity frames and specific solidarity referents.

Second, the findings in Chapter 1 indicate that group-based frames generally do not go together with empathic frames and exchange-based frames

²⁶ See appendix for full results.

with compassionate frames. Those who value recognising (ostracised) individual differences are less inclined to seek in-group cohesion than vice versa. Similarly, those with compassion for the weak are less inclined to see reciprocity as a fundamental principle of society and vice versa. The analyses thus indicated that two conflict lines structure the Flemish party political space: a group-based versus empathic (or GB-E) axis and an exchange-based versus compassionate (or EB-C) axis. These conflict lines provide a similar view on the reality of party competition in the Flemish region as the left-right conflict dimensions of the issue theories and especially those of the value theories.

Furthermore, *differentiation* has increased on both dimensions between 1995 and 2014 but is more outspoken on the conflict between group-based and empathic solidarity. We can therefore conclude that *differentiation along solidarity lines has grown*. For parties, the choice between either bonding with those who are similar or bridging the gulf with those who are different has become the *most pressing question* within the Flemish party system.

Building on these insights, Chapter 2 highlights the importance of specific exclusionary variants of the four solidarity frames in parties' discourse on the right. Moreover, the analyses in this chapter point out that these exclusionary solidarity frames are also helpful to differentiate the four rightist

parties in the Flemish region, including the populist radical right *Vlaams Belang*. In the elections of 2014, the discourse of *Vlaams Belang* was both *statistically and substantively different from their mainstream competitors*. Notably, *Vlaams Belang* used more exclusionary frames, group-based frames, negative references to foreigners, and less ambivalent discourses towards the 'undeserving' than the mainstream right parties. The latter includes their closest competitors *N-VA*, who have grown closer to *Vlaams Belang* regarding policy preferences. These results indicate that one can *distinguish* the discourses of mainstream right parties and the populist radical right *in terms of exclusionary solidarity framing*, which is a new way of distinguishing the populist radical right from the mainstream right. As *N-VA* was able to win a large share of the populist radical right's electorate, our findings also suggest that a strongly exclusionary discourse does not always attract the latter.

Demand-Side Analyses

The second research aim of this dissertation was to assess whether the partisan solidarity frames resonate among voters. More specifically, these studies evaluate whether solidarity frame preferences among voters are congruent with those of their preferred parties and whether these preferences impact party preferences. The symmetric analyses of Chapter 3 indicate that voters also

distinguish four different solidarity frames. Furthermore, voters' solidarity frame *preferences are strongly congruent with their preferred parties*. A higher degree of support for group-based and exchange-based solidarity is typical among rightist electorates and parties. In contrast, leftist political parties and voters advocate compassionate and empathic solidarity. This finding is important because 'ideological differences' at the elite level do not necessarily resonate with the electorate.

These symmetric analyses also indicate that relationships between solidarity frames are *not necessarily conflictual*. The positive correlation between group-based and exchange-based solidarity frames, on the one hand, and between compassionate and empathic solidarity frames, on the other hand, shows that the Durkheimian conflict between mechanical and organic solidarity is currently less relevant for Flemish voters. Many voters scored either high or low on both group-based and exchange-based solidarity, which are structural principles underlying solidarity. Additionally, many voters scored either high or low on compassionate and empathic solidarity, the respective intersubjective verifications of mechanical and organic solidarity. However, the findings indicate a *conflict between group-based and empathic solidarity frames* (GB-E). While structural and intersubjective frames do not necessarily clash among

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voters, we find that voters – similar to parties – form oppositions in terms of group-based versus empathic solidarity.

Finally, the asymmetric analyses of Chapter 4 confirm that solidarity frames are *significant predictors of propensities to vote for a party*. Even if left-right self-placement generally remains a stronger predictor of inclinations to vote for a party, solidarity frames *substantively supplement left-right self-placement* as an explanatory variable. Therefore, solidarity frames seem to function as the notes of a hummable tune that appeals to voters and parties. However, the explanatory value *differs significantly across different electorates*. Interestingly, the explanatory value is highest for the Flemish nationalists of *N-VA*, indicating that solidarity is no longer a prerogative of the left. However, the explanatory power of solidarity frames is far more limited for *Vlaams Belang*, which somewhat diminishes the claim that the populist radical right parties are the new champions of solidarity for voters.

Intermediary Analyses

The final research aim of this dissertation was *to further the understanding of the linkage between the supply- and demand-side by assessing the heuristic value of solidarity frames for politicians*. Hence, Chapter 5 focuses on solidarity frames as a source for partisan stereotypes for local '*grass-roots*' politicians. The

results show that such partisan stereotypes exist and are congruent with real discursive differences between party manifestos (see Chapter 1) and voter preferences (see Chapters 3 and 4). Politicians find group-based and exchange-based solidarity stereotypically rightist, and conversely, they perceive compassionate and empathic solidarity as stereotypically leftist. These findings hold for stereotypes of other parties – i.e., politicians' stereotypes about other parties - and partisan self-stereotypes -i.e., politicians' stereotypes about their party.

Furthermore, politicians perceive the dimensions of the political space as conflicts between a structural (group-based and exchange-based) and an intersubjective pole (compassionate and empathic), with a more polarised conflict between exchange-based and compassionate solidarity. These findings hold again for stereotypes of other parties – i.e., politicians' stereotypes about other parties - and partisan self-stereotypes -i.e., politicians' stereotypes about their party. Therefore, we find strong support for the hypothesis that solidarity frames are helpful for politicians to differentiate parties from one another.

However, we also found that rightist politicians score their parties and other rightist parties significantly higher on compassionate and empathic solidarity than leftist or centrist politicians would do. These findings hold

especially true when leftist politicians compare their party to the populist radical right party. We can therefore draw a two-levelled conclusion. We note that politicians use similar stereotypes for the same parties: politicians perceive parties on the right as more favouring exchange-based and group-based solidarity. At the same time, they identify leftist parties more strongly with compassionate and empathic solidarity. However, we must reckon that *partisan and ideological biases affect* how sharply politicians draw these distinctions between parties. Politicians tend to evaluate their parties and ideologically closer parties more favourably in terms of preferred solidarity frames.

Contributions and Implications

The findings we report in these chapters have implications for political science. We first discuss this dissertation's overarching contributions before elaborating on how each study contributes to specific discussions and research domains within our discipline.

Theoretical Contribution

For one, we contribute to the theoretical study of the politics of solidarity by focusing on political parties and, more specifically, *partisan solidarity frames*. *Political parties* have been largely absent in the study of the politics of solidarity despite their continued relevance. The relatively few existing studies analysing

solidarity in political discourse mainly focus on social movements (e.g., Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). We cannot presuppose passivity from political parties. Instead, political parties play their part by actively framing social-integrative mechanisms to reach a goal on which everyone agrees, namely solidarity (Deegan-Krause & Enyedi, 2010; Riker, 1986; Tavits & Potter, 2015). More specifically, we contribute to the study of the politics of solidarity, defining solidarity frames based on a dialectical theory of solidarity. Solidarity frames are rhetorical devices that invoke motivations for solidarity with various beneficiaries. In line with Thijssen's typology, we distinguished *four solidarity frames*: group-based, compassionate, exchange-based, and empathic solidarity (Thijssen, 2012, 2016). As parties can also explicitly exclude individuals from solidarity, we acknowledge that these solidarity frames have exclusionary counterparts that frame certain groups or individuals as undeserving of solidarity.

Inspired by the underlying Durkheimian-Honnethian theoretical framework, we deem these solidarity frames interrelated but not necessarily in conflict, as the theory posits that solidarity is not an ideal end-stage but consists of phases in *continuous dialectical processes* (Thijssen, 2012, 2016). A dialectical approach perceives society as a dynamic system made up of continual conflicts

between a beginning situation called a thesis, and its negation called the antithesis, which could become reconciled (or, in Hegelian terms: sublated) in a synthesis that in turn forms the new thesis (e.g., Skoll, 2014: 4). The assumption of a dialectical relationship between solidarity frames suggests that relationships between solidarity frames could start as a conflict (thesis – antithesis). Simultaneously, it implies the possibility of convergence (synthesis) between solidarity frames. In the context of party politics, the nature of the relationships between frames is dependent on how parties differentiate themselves in the context of elections, which also entails the exclusionary counterparts of solidarity that parties could downplay or emphasise in their discourse. Whether solidarity frames are conflictual or complementary depends on how political parties *differentiate* themselves from their competitors. When new challenges arise, parties want to attract voters by remaining responsive to how their competitors respond to these challenges. In the long term, such shifts could lead to relations between solidarity frames becoming increasingly conflictual. In contrast, others might become neutral or turn into complementary relationships.

Moreover, this dissertation also contributes theoretically and conceptually to party competition and voter-party alignment studies. For years,

political scientists followed Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) cleavage theory and conceived modern society as divided by enduring conflicts between social groups, such as church versus state and labour versus capital (see Bartolini, 2005; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Social group affiliations and inter-group conflicts underlying party affiliations provided insight to reliably and efficiently distinguish parties and electorates from each other.

Contemporary political scientists argue that social in-group loyalties and in-group interests are *no longer appropriate* to understand the structure of the political sphere and alignments between parties and voters in the hyper-individualised times of today (e.g., Kitschelt, 1994; van der Brug, 2010). Some scholars perceive the party political sphere mainly in terms of *short-term issue-based oppositions*, in which parties compete to set the agenda in their favour. Agenda-setting forms the roots of spontaneous associations that voters make between their preferred issues and the competing parties, which in turn results in *short-term congruences* between parties' and voters' preferences in salient matters (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002; De Vries & Hobolt, 2012; Green-Pedersen, 2007; Stoll, 2010; van der Brug, 2004). Others claim that parties and voters align on (multiple) *latent value dimensions* that structure the political sphere. While these value distinctions remain latent, scholars often summarise them on a

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more commonly used abstract left-right distinction (see also Bobbio, 1996). Such durable left-right differences – simultaneously containing multiple value preferences – provide insight for voters to find into party positions and affiliations (Knutsen, 1995, 2011; Middendorp, 1992).

Both approaches criticise Lipset and Rokkan's sociological determinism from two irreconcilable points of view, as they have linkages to dealignment perspectives, respectively, realignment perspectives (Hooghe & Marks, 2018). Both approaches preserve the cleavage theory's conflict-integration dialectic despite these contradictory perspectives. The focus primarily lies in the conflict between social groups, between salience of specific issues, or between different values. Only in the second order do these theories focus on the integrative force of the conflict involvement: individuals (politicians and voters) 'join forces' based on in-group characteristics, issue preferences, or values.

Both theories assume that individualisation has affected what underlies the conflicts in the party political sphere and the affiliations between parties and voters: short-term issue preferences or long-term value preferences instead of social group affiliations. However, none of these approaches genuinely considers that today's individualised times are fundamentally different in other

regards. These times coincide with three critical socio-political transformations: welfare state retrenchment, diversification, and glocalisation. These developments have caused disagreements over what binds society together and who belongs. Therefore, solidarity is the ultimate scarce resource and, consequently, everyone's concern. However, the consensus on more or better social cohesion and solidarity may lead to conflict between those that emphasise different social-integrative mechanisms (see also Thijssen, Luypaert, & Verheyen, 2021).

Our contribution to the study of the structure of the political sphere is that we make a theoretical shift from a conflict-integration dialectic to an integration-conflict dialectic. Based on the dialectical theory of solidarity, we propose a solidarity frame theory that theorises six dialectical relationships between *four solidarity frames* - group-based, compassionate, exchange-based, and empathic solidarity frames. This solidarity frame theory provides common ground for issue ownership and value theory because it combines their respective strategic and affective underpinnings by focusing on the actions one can undertake to protect or stimulate social integration. In addition, a dialectical approach also assumes the potential of exclusion and backlashes. Therefore, the solidarity frame theory also recognises that each solidarity frame has an

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exclusionary counterpart in the second order. In short, we add a new perspective to the study of party competition and voter-party alignment.

Methodological Contribution

A second overarching contribution of this thesis lies in measuring solidarity frames. So far, scholarly work that measures solidarity frames has been non-existent. Interestingly, each study operationalised and measured solidarity frames in significantly different ways but came to comparable results. Chapters 1 and 2 consisted of a *deductive content analysis* of party manifestos. Typically, party manifesto research uses the popular codebook of the Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al., 2017). As the existing coding of the manifesto project was not specific enough for our purposes, we developed our method and codebook to distinguish solidarity in parties' discourses. We used a qualitative sentence-by-sentence approach to identify solidarity frames and solidarity beneficiaries in party manifestos. While qualitative in nature, this content analysis method also enabled us to conduct a quantitative analysis of differences between partisan discourses (Aslanidis, 2016). Based on these solidarity frames' absolute and relative frequencies, we found that solidarity frames are valuable markers of distinctive partisan discourses and ideologies in terms of the *salience* of solidarity frames in partisan discourses.

In Chapters 3, 4, and 5, we measured solidarity frame preferences with *survey data*. Chapters 3 and 4 used survey data to assess the degree of

agreement with solidarity frame factors among voters. In contrast, Chapter 5 assessed the strength of the associations that local politicians draw between specific solidarity frame statements – one statement per solidarity frame - and political parties. While distinctive in their own right, both approaches operationalised partisan solidarity frame distinctions not in terms of salience of certain frames to find indications of politicisation but in spatial terms. We used box-and-whisker-plot analyses to visually assess differences between preferences, respectively evaluations in terms of solidarity frames and statistical tests – including regression analyses - to evaluate the significance of these differences. We found that voters and politicians also distinguish four different solidarity frames based on these analyses. Voters and politicians on the right tend to associate themselves more strongly with group-based and exchange-based solidarity frames, while those on the left tend to associate themselves more strongly with compassionate and empathic solidarity frames.

Validity of Solidarity Framework

Our third overarching contribution to the literature on party competition and voter-party alignment is that we conducted a *validity assessment* of the solidarity frame theory. This theory does not adopt Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) structuralist focus on conflict and works with somewhat different assumptions

than the more conventional approaches to party competition and voter-party alignment, namely issue and value theories. Despite these fundamental differences in methodological approach, we reached equivalent findings across datasets regarding the conflict and the complementarity between solidarity frames. First of all, we found that group-based and empathic solidarity frames (GB-E), respectively exchange-based and compassionate solidarity frames (EB-C), are "real" and have significant conflict potential. Secondly, group-based and exchange-based solidarity frames (GB-EB), respectively compassionate and empathic solidarity frames (C-E), complement each other. The recurrence of these two patterns across datasets indicates that solidarity frames help make meaningful distinctions between parties and their voters.

To a certain extent, our findings are in line with findings of more conventional approaches to party competition and voter-party alignment. We repeatedly found that the recurring solidarity conflict lines correlate with the conflict lines found in more conventional issue-based and value-based studies. For instance, the inverse elective affinities between exchange-based and compassionate solidarity reflect, to a certain extent, the well-known social-economic left-right dimension. In contrast, the inverse elective relationships between group-based and empathic solidarity reflect the socio-cultural left-

right dimension to a certain extent. Therefore, the recurrence of the same conflict lines indicates that the solidarity frame theory also has a sort of *concurrent validity*, ultimately providing a similar view on the reality of party competition in the Flemish region as the conflict dimensions of the issue theories and especially those of the value theories.

Nonetheless, our analyses also indicate that the solidarity frame approach does not correlate perfectly with the results of more conventional approaches. In other words, solidarity frames also have a sort of *discriminant validity*. The solidarity frame approach complements the more conventional issue approaches because the same solidarity frame could be used across different policy domains, such as labour market policies, migration and asylum, and education. For instance, our robustness check in Chapter 1 assessed whether partisan solidarity frame distinctions stand after removing sentences that refer to specific (deserving or undeserving) groups often linked to certain policy domains, such as immigrants. While we can verify decreases in absolute and relative frequencies of solidarity frames, overall, they are not significant. We can conclude that solidarity frame distinctions *do not simply reflect* partisan issues or social group preferences but instead underlie several specific – if not all - issues that parties put forward in their manifesto.

On the other hand, solidarity frames complement durable value distinctions - especially when framed in terms of left and right – in terms of accuracy. For instance, the analyses of Chapter 4 show that solidarity frame preferences supplement left-right self-identification as an independent variable, with each solidarity frame having a different explanatory value for different parties. This result indicates that the latter may be correlated with the former but probably does not fully capture what motivates voters due to its vagueness.

Specific Contributions per Chapter

Besides the three overarching contributions to political science, each chapter contributes to specific discussions and research domains within the discipline.

Chapter 1 provides the fourth contribution to our field, more specifically to the discussion of the evolution of party political conflict. The results of this study indicate that between 1995 and 2014, the polarisation of both solidarity conflict lines increased. In other words, the opposition between parties emphasizing solidarity as group homogeneity and as recognition of difference is spatially more polarizing within the Flemish party system of 2014 than 1995. Also, the opposition of parties emphasising compassionate and exchange-based solidarity is still important, albeit less pronounced than for the GB-E axis. While

the last opposition is more similar to the classical gulf, which divides socialists (*equality*) and liberalists (*liberty*), the former revolves around the gulf that divides those supporting either a bridging or a bonding form of the French revolutionary creed: *fraternity*. While the political struggle around compassionate and exchange-based solidarity – which correlates with the socio-economic left-right cleavage - has become more technical (see also Mouffe, 2005), the choice between either bonding with those who are similar or bridging the gulf with those who are different has become the most pressing question within contemporary democracies.

The fifth contribution of this dissertation relates mainly to the study of the populist radical right. Chapter 2 synthesises our theoretical framework on solidarity with insights from studies on boundary-making and discourse. Doing so provides a more thorough approach to analysing the discursive construction of the boundaries of solidarity, specifically on those boundaries constructed by parties of the (populist radical) right. Not only can one differentiate between actors in terms of whom they exclude, but also why they exclude, how much they focus on exclusion versus inclusion, and how strict they draw the boundaries of solidarity. The results indicate that studies of competition on the right must consider exclusionary and inclusionary solidarity frames. While the

study shows that the mainstream right and populist radical right have grown somewhat closer regarding issues and policy positions, it also demonstrates that populist radical right discourse is statistically and substantively more exclusionary, group-based, focused on foreigners, and strict. As *N-VA* gained voters from *Vlaams Belang* while predominantly using 'inclusionary' solidarity frames, we believe that these results indicate that such *discursive differences* might play a role in explaining parties' appeal to voters. It might be the case that *many Vlaams Belang* voters wanted a discourse that juxtaposes 'negative' feelings towards 'undeserving' groups with 'positive' feelings towards 'deserving' groups as well, which *N-VA* more sufficiently provided than *Vlaams Belang*.

The sixth contribution of this dissertation relates to ideological reasoning among voters. To the extent that solidarity frames are akin to abstract ideological reasoning found in party rhetoric, we would have expected that solidarity frame statements do not necessarily resonate with voters who are less prone to ideological thinking (e.g., Converse, 2006 [1964]). The results reported in Chapter 3 nevertheless indicate that these statements enable us to make meaningful distinctions between voters. Furthermore, the preferences of party electorates are strongly congruent with those of their preferred parties: a higher

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degree of support for group-based and exchange-based solidarity is typical among rightist electorates and parties, while leftist political parties and their voters mainly advocate compassionate and empathic solidarity. These findings suggest that voters can understand more abstract forms of reasoning as well.

The seventh contribution of this dissertation is that it indicates that solidarity frames have independent value as an explanatory variable. Chapter 4 shows that solidarity frame preferences supplement left-right self-identification as an independent variable, indicating that the latter – although correlated with the former - does not fully capture what motivates voters to support one party over others.

The final contribution of this dissertation is related to the study of partisan stereotypes. Chapter 5 studied how Flemish local politicians recognise solidarity frames as partisan stereotypes. An important question in this field of research is whether partisan stereotypes are biased by partisanship and ideological preferences. Scholars perceive the latter two factors as pervasive dynamic forces that shape citizens' and politicians' perceptions of the political world (see Bartels, 2002). Our findings indicate that this is effectively the case for partisan stereotypes based on partisan solidarity frames. Politicians' partisan

stereotypes regarding preferred solidarity frames are more favourable for their party and ideological neighbours than for other ideologically distant parties. This bias holds especially true for politicians of parties on the right (*in casu* *Vlaams Belang*, *N-VA*, and to a lesser extent *Open VLD*). We, therefore, conclude that the study of partisan stereotypes must reckon that *partisan and ideological biases* – among others - *affect* how sharply politicians draw distinctions between parties.

Limitations and Implications for Future Directions

Despite this dissertation's contributions and its broader implications for the study of party competition in general, it also has some limitations. This section discusses the most critical limitations of the dissertation and describes how future research could deal with them.

Generalisability

Perhaps the most critical limitation of this contribution is its *generalisability*. We differentiate four problematic aspects of this dissertation related to generalisability. First, the dissertation focuses on a rather *abstract conflict of solidarity*, as we established how parties and voters differentiate themselves in terms of solidarity frames used across issues and groups. Theoretically, this was a sound decision, as parties appeal to different societal segments and,

therefore, invoke solidarity with various social groups across multiple topics. However, parties will also differentiate themselves in terms of solidarity frames they use to tackle particular challenges to solidarity, such as climate change or Europeanisation, and to frame specific beneficiaries of solidarity, such as immigrants and the elderly. Although eliminating all sentences with particular solidarity referents did not lead to significantly or substantially different results (Chapter 1), one could argue that the distinctions retrieved in this dissertation might not apply to specific questions of solidarity. Such differentiation between abstract and particular solidarity conflicts might depend on the beneficiaries at the centre of the discussion. Based on deservingness research, one could assume that a solidarity frame conflict is less pronounced for solidarity with the elderly than for solidarity with immigrants (Van Oorschot, 2006). Differences between abstract and particular solidarity conflicts could also depend on the specific topic of debate. Are leftist parties and voters also more inclined to use compassionate or empathic solidarity frames than those on the right when discussing climate change and other environmental problems? Therefore, future research could assess whether partisan solidarity frame distinctions hold for specific challenges of solidarity as well.

Second, generalisability is also a problem inherent to the *case selection*. All chapters tested the solidarity framework in *one fragmented multi-party system*, namely Belgium (Flanders). The Flemish region was analytically very suitable to study the role of solidarity frames due to its fragmented nature, its system of proportional representation, its long-established electoral democracy, and the relatively strong cohesion and hierarchy within parties. Such significant partisan solidarity frame distinctions and their recurrence in our supply-side, demand-side, and intermediary analyses will not necessarily hold in very different (party) systems. First, the question arises whether we find similar solidarity conflict lines in bipolar party systems, less fragmented party systems, or party systems that lack certain parties, such as a populist radical right party. Preliminary research of American (US) and Dutch party manifestos - conducted by the author in collaboration with students and colleagues -indeed suggests an impact of social or political culture and the workings of the party system on solidarity frame distinctions. The Flemish and the Dutch solidarity frame distinctions share many resemblances. Within US politics, the politics of solidarity seems to solely revolve around a conflict between marginal group members or empathy for the other. In this respect, US politics of solidarity is much more unidimensional than European politics (Thijssen et al., 2021).

Second, the relatively substantial overlap between partisan solidarity frame distinctions, voter's solidarity frame preferences, and politicians' partisan stereotypes might depend on case-specific factors, such as the Flemish region's relatively strong internal party cohesion. We might find less or no overlap in other party systems with, for instance, less internal partisan cohesion. Therefore, comparative research is warranted to confirm these findings in different settings or understand what impacts these findings.

A third problem related to the generalisability of our findings is that we primarily adopted a *cross-sectional* perspective on the party political aspects of solidarity. Excluding the longitudinal results in Chapter 1, our research design did not account for the possibility of change due to cross-sectional research designs. As the solidarity frame theory assumes dialectical processes that change the relationships between solidarity frames, the findings of this dissertation would benefit from more longitudinal research to grasp shifts in the conflict of solidarity. For instance, the current resurgence of radical right populism could be an impulse to assess whether the mainstream right parties will remain more inclusionary than the populist radical right. It could also be the case that solidarity frame preferences of voters change due to changing circumstances. Finally, the distinctions between parties could change. Parties

might adapt their solidarity frame discourse to deal with new solidarity challenges and respond to the solidarity frame discourse of parties who gain electoral power. Such circumstances could impact how voters and politicians differentiate parties in terms of solidarity frames. In sum, redoing the studies with a longitudinal research design could provide opportunities to assess the stability of preferences and differences between parties and electorates.

The final problem related to generalisability is inherent to the *data* we used. For one, the supply-side studies focused on party manifestos, which may have limited the reliability of our findings as we did not analyse different forms of party communication. While earlier research has shown similarities and consistencies in the messages of political parties across media (Hofferbert & Budge, 1992: 155), parties do not necessarily use manifestos to – directly – convince voters (Harmel, 2018). Furthermore, it could be the case that political actors may be inclined to use solidarity frames exclusively as an electoral campaigning tool. Solidarity frames in partisan discourse provide a form of moral and normative reasoning that parties could use strategically in communication to the electorate but could leave behind in intra-party contact or inter-party discussions during policy-making processes. Therefore, future research should establish whether we could replicate these findings for other

forms of public political communication – such as speeches or interviews. Similarly, studies of policy drafts or coalition agreements could provide more tangible evidence of partisan preferences regarding solidarity.

Other data problems are the – minor – biases of the survey data used for our analyses in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Most problematic is the overrepresentation of highly educated and politically interested citizens in our survey data for Chapters 3 and 4. Less problematic but probably more challenging is that politicians of *Vlaams Belang* are underrepresented in the survey data used in Chapter 5. However, our robustness tests do not indicate serious biases. Nevertheless, we believe that future demand-side and intermediary analyses of solidarity frames would benefit from strategies to guarantee more representative samples of lower educated and politically uninterested citizens on the one hand and populist radical right politicians on the other hand.

Parties and their Connections to Other Political Actors and Voters, and Institutions

A second limitation of this dissertation is our focus on electoral competition in terms of partisan solidarity frame distinctions. Such an approach is relatively conventional in political science, and it was arguably a sensible decision to

primarily focus on how parties compete with each other in terms of the solidarity frame distinctions. However, such analyses cannot explain why some solidarity frame distinctions are more prevalent than others in the party political sphere, as they largely ignore how the party political sphere is embedded in larger structures. Future research could arguably further assess how the prevalence of specific solidarity frames and the salience of particular solidarity framing distinctions in the party political sphere correlate with other actors' solidarity frames. Here, we distinguish two groups of actors significantly related to party politics.

First, future research on the politics of solidarity should consider that political parties form connections with other politically relevant actors – such as think tanks, social movements, interest groups, and political parties abroad - via regional, national, or transnational networks. Through these networks, discursive elements such as solidarity frames flow from one actor to another. Furthermore, some political parties also oppose other political actors. For instance, parties on the right also oppose labour unions and other leftist socio-political movements and organisations. Studying these associations or oppositions between parties and other political actors could evaluate how they affect partisan solidarity framing and vice versa.

Second, future research on the politics of solidarity could start from our findings in Chapter 3 and further develop how partisan solidarity framing relates to voters' attitudes, demands, and preferences. Future studies could conduct framing analyses to understand how political discourses of solidarity influence how individuals perceive the challenges of solidarity and their solutions. For instance, one could argue that a more substantial prevalence of empathic solidarity frames in social democratic discourse could lead to stronger preferences for empathic solidarity among their supporters. However, one could also analyse whether partisan solidarity frames attract certain voters while pushing away others, as voters are also confronted with challenges to solidarity in their personal lives and therefore have particular preferences and perceptions regarding solidarity and social cohesion. Following this point of contestation, we need research that assesses whether a change in solidarity framing strategy makes it more likely for parties to become electorally successful. For instance, the analyses of solidarity frame preferences among voters and parties in Chapter 3 suggest that the social democrats could make empathic solidarity more prevalent in their discourse to approximate their party electorate's solidarity frame preferences. However, our regression models in Chapter 4 – which also encompass potential voters who have not yet made up

their minds - show that social democrat parties are more attractive among voters who favour compassionate solidarity over empathic solidarity. This situation appears to be quite paradoxical for the social democrats. While being staunchly compassionate may be a more successful strategy to win over new voters, they might dissatisfy their loyal base. Framing experiments and longitudinal analyses of voter preferences would provide an opportunity to test the effect of changes in frames on voters' preferences.

Contrary to this, voters' attitudes and demands may also affect party programs or discourses during elections and day-to-day politics. After all, citizens can impact partisan solidarity frames via a feedback process of public approval, such as votes during the election or public opinion polls during the government's legislature. Here, one could study whether a lower ranking in public opinion polls would stimulate parties to change their discourse. For instance, the recent resurgence of populist radical right parties might turn their strongly group-based and exclusionary discourse contagious for mainstream parties of the right (cf. Rooduijn, De Lange, & Van der Brug, 2014; Van Spanje, 2010).

Parties and their Embedding in Institutions and Regimes

Another deserving aspect of attention in future research is the relationship between partisan solidarity framing and frameworks of solidarity institutionalised in policies and policy regimes. As parties act in governmental decision-making processes, their solidarity frames could become institutionalised into policies and regimes that impact the access to and distribution of material or non-material resources and social opportunities. For instance, the installment of multicultural policies is often rooted in empathic solidarity with ethnic and religious minorities (Banting & Kymlicka, 2017). Parties could also stabilise, change, or efface policies and institutional frameworks that invoke a particular type of solidarity. For instance, the predominance of exchange-based solidarity frames regarding welfare state issues in neoliberal and Third Way social democratic programs have certainly influenced the shift to the active welfare (or workfare) state. Here, either cross-sectional or longitudinal studies of policy formation could make the relationship between discourses and institutions more transparent.

Conversely, the solidarity principles underlying extant institutions and policies could also affect the prevalence of solidarity frames in political discourses. This institutional environment could either provide opportunities or

put obstacles to the success and prevalence of specific solidarity frames. For example, the progress of European integration during the last half of the 20th century has arguably embedded both inclusionary group-based solidarity towards Europeans in mainstream and centre(-left) discourses and its negation in (radical) right discourses. Here, research that analyses differences and changes in framing by accounting for differences and changes at the macro-level provide a way to study the meso- and macro-level dialectics.

Comparison With Other Approaches

Finally, our research shows that solidarity frames enable individuals to distinguish political parties meaningfully and explain voters' inclinations to vote for particular parties. However, another limitation of this dissertation is that it does not sufficiently assess the value of the solidarity framework in comparison with other approaches. Conventional approaches such as issues or materialism versus post-materialism are usual suspects for comparative analyses, but also less conventional approaches such as moral foundations (i.e., Haidt, Graham, & Joseph, 2009) or deservingness of specific groups (i.e., Schneider & Ingram, 1993; van Oorschot, 2006) could be a touchstone for comparative research. We distinguish two roads for future comparative research.

First, this dissertation suggested that solidarity frames enable individuals to distinguish political parties and electorates meaningfully. However, earlier research has also shown that other approaches – such as issues, deserving and undeserving groups, or values - are valuable to make distinctions between parties (e.g., Clifford, 2020; Walgrave, Lefevere, & Tresch, 2012). Future research could assess whether partisan solidarity frame distinctions are more or less outspoken than other distinctions, such as those in terms of issues and groups. One could also evaluate in which terms individuals themselves distinguish parties and which factors – e.g., the education level of the respondents - affect this choice. For instance, one could assess whether voters spontaneously use solidarity frames more or less often in their rhetoric than different approaches, such as issue ownership or left-right.

Additionally, future research could assess how solidarity frames and other elements of partisan distinctions - such as issues, values, and target groups – correlate. We have done this to a certain extent by finding that eliminating all sentences with particular solidarity referents does not lead to different results (Chapter 1) and comparing the explanatory values of solidarity frames and left-right self-placement (Chapter 4). However, we have not measured associations or correlations between all these relevant aspects of

party competition and affiliation. Future research could focus on correlations between solidarity frames and other elements in partisan discourses or individual preferences and analyse which factors influence those correlations.

Second, our results indicate that solidarity frames have an explanatory value regarding voters' inclinations to vote for particular parties. Especially the findings in Chapter 4 suggested that solidarity frames substantively supplement left-right self-placement as an explanatory variable. However, our findings indicate that solidarity frames have less explanatory power than left-right self-placement. As the latter is a variable with notoriously diffuse interpretations, it remains unclear whether solidarity frames are more or less valid than other less diffuse approaches. Therefore, future research could explicitly compare the explanatory values of the solidarity framework with that of other frameworks.

Executive Summary and an Afterthought

This dissertation started by arguing that nation-states in general and European nation-states, in particular, are confronted with several new wicked problems that constitute a challenge to solidarity. Consequently, some authors contend that this contestation of solidarity indicates that the meaning of solidarity is subject to a political struggle. Based on which grounds should we build or retain

a socially cohesive society? To whom should we be solidary, and why? Which demands for solidarity should we take seriously, and why?

The research of this dissertation started from the *assumption* that solidarity is central to today's conflicts. In other words, this thesis studied the 'politicization' of social cohesion to understand how solidarity is enhanced or protected in increasingly diverse and postmodern societies. As the current contestation of solidarity indicates that solidarity is not an end-stage but rather a phase in a continuous dynamic political struggle, this dissertation follows a Durkheimian-Honnethian theoretical framework that assumes solidarity to be subject to a *dialectic*. Moreover, we emphasised the *discursive* aspects of the contestation of solidarity. Studying the dialectics of solidarity implies treating solidarity as a socially constructed or a 'framed' reality instead of a social fact *sui generis*. Based on these assumptions, we proposed a solidarity frame theory that theorises dialectical relationships between *four solidarity frames*- group-based, compassionate, exchange-based, and empathic solidarity frames- and their exclusionary counterparts.

The *main aim* of this dissertation was to understand the role of these solidarity frames and their relationships in the dimensionalisation of the party

political sphere. More specifically, we assessed the role of *solidarity frames* in party politics with analyses of supply-side, demand-side, and intermediary levels – i.e., local politicians.

The first aim of this dissertation was *to understand distinctions in the supply-side* in terms of solidarity frames. We established that *solidarity frames* are *valuable markers* of distinctive *partisan discourses and ideologies*. First, a higher prevalence of group-based and exchange-based solidarity is typical among rightist parties, while leftist political parties advocate compassionate and empathic solidarity more strongly. Moreover, we found that inverse elective affinities between group-based and empathic solidarity frames – in terms of salience – have grown stronger between 1995 and 2014. Second, we found that one can *distinguish* the discourses from mainstream right parties and the populist radical right *in terms of exclusionary versus inclusionary solidarity frames*.

The second aim of this dissertation was to *assess the demand-side of the politics of solidarity*. First, we evaluated whether solidarity frame preferences of party electorates (as aggregates of individual voters) are similar to those of their preferred parties and whether parties and their electorates have congruent positions on the conflict lines of solidarity. Indeed, we find similar distinctions

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between solidarity frames - a higher degree of support for group-based and exchange-based solidarity among rightist electorates versus a higher degree of support for compassionate and empathic solidarity among leftist electorates. Furthermore, the results show that the choice between either bonding with those who are similar (i.e., group-based solidarity) or bridging the gulf with those who are different (i.e., empathic solidarity) has also become a pressing question for voters. Second, we tested the solidarity frame preferences' impact on voters' party preferences and found that they significantly affect inclinations to vote for specific parties, even if we took left-right self-placement into account.

The final aim of this dissertation was to further our understanding of *the link between supply- and demand-side* by assessing *the heuristic value of solidarity frames for politicians*. We found strong support for the hypothesis that solidarity frames are helpful for politicians to differentiate parties from one another. The results showed that such partisan stereotypes exist and are congruent with real discursive differences between party manifestos and differences between voter preferences. However, *partisan and ideological biases affect* how sharply politicians draw these distinctions between parties.

Politicians tend to evaluate their parties and ideologically closer parties more favourably in terms of preferred solidarity frames.

We encourage researchers to draw inspiration from this dissertation, its contributions, and its limitations to improve our understanding of solidarity and its politicisation. New challenges and wicked problems will arise, and in turn, questions of solidarity will return to the foreground. Sometimes, these new challenges might take us by surprise. When we started this dissertation, we could never have predicted to see a new challenge unfold during the latter stages of its writing process, namely the COVID-19 pandemic. Here, we briefly outline the challenge to solidarity it provides and some roads for future research.

In December 2019, an outbreak of pneumonia of unknown origin was reported in the People's Republic of China. Analyses showed the origin of a novel coronavirus related to SARS-CoV, which was consequently named severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), and the disease was baptised COVID-19. The global spread of this new virus and the thousands of deaths caused by the disease led the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare a pandemic in March 2020 (Ciotti et al., 2020). The new virus impacted everyone, especially the most vulnerable in our societies — the elderly, those

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who are immunocompromised or have underlying conditions, and the economically deprived individuals and communities (Heaton, 2020). Governments dealing with COVID-19 saw themselves forced to take drastic measures, such as lockdowns and social distancing, to keep the virus's spread and the healthcare personnel's workload manageable.

Throughout this pandemic, solidarity regularly came to the foreground of political discourse. At the start of the pandemic, governments took severe measures, and they framed those in terms of compassionate solidarity with individuals who have a high risk of illness and death on the one hand and exchange-based solidarity with the healthcare personnel on the other hand. By staying at home, citizens protected the former and reciprocated the latter's efforts. These frames resonated among the broader population during these first months of the pandemic. A spontaneous form of interpersonal solidarity arose through clapping for the healthcare personnel and became a worldwide phenomenon. These actions boosted morale, showed appreciation for frontline NHS workers, and helped citizens commit to carrying the cost for healthcare workers by staying at home (Tomasini, 2021).

During the later phases of the pandemic, these frames of 'COVID-19 solidarity' became more and more contested. Once taken in solidarity with the vulnerable and healthcare workers, the measures came under fire when infection and fatality rates dropped. Many argued that these measures were not solidary enough, for they were limited to certain people while other people's needs and demands were left out and not considered. For instance, some popular and (party) political discourses espoused empathic solidarity with young adolescents and students, who were no longer able to fully be themselves – i.e., "young and free" – due to the lockdowns and social distance rules. In other words, citizens and politicians started to question the boundaries of solidarity drawn by the COVID-19 measures (Lamont & Molnár, 2002: 168).

In November 2020, pharmaceutical companies reported the first successful clinical results of vaccine development. Since then, many governments have focused on a high vaccination rate to increase immunity to the COVID-19 disease. These developments have led to new points of contestation in terms of solidarity. Probably the most eye-catching discussion of solidarity has been the question of one's obligation to get the vaccine. A small yet significant and diverse amalgamation of individuals resists vaccination, claiming everyone deserves empathic solidarity for autonomy over their body.

Others framed mandatory vaccination as a form of group-based solidarity with the broader community and compassionate solidarity with individuals with a higher risk for infection, illness, and death.

European governments tried to reconcile both concerns to a certain extent with the mandatory use of a COVID Safe Ticket (CST) to participate in certain activities. A CST shows whether someone is vaccinated against, tested for, or recently recovered from COVID-19. Vaccination was therefore not mandatory but an option, one among others. This reconciliation attempt seems to have failed, as the former oppose it as being oppressive and discriminatory towards those against vaccination, and the latter criticise it as inefficient to increase security for the most vulnerable.

These developments raise new questions for research on solidarity and its politicisation. For instance, one could wonder whether the solidarity conflict lines on these specific questions will correspond to this dissertation's somewhat abstract and broader solidarity conflict lines. Interestingly, it seems to be the case that politicians of the (radical) right have expressed empathy with anti-vaccination individuals. In contrast, parties on the centre and the left have been more willing to support (mandatory) vaccination. Do these developments

indicate a potential change in the solidarity conflict lines between parties, or is this a particular case that has few consequences for the broader patterns of conflict between parties? Future research could also focus on the conflict between inclusion and exclusion, as various groups have also contested the boundaries of solidarity. Which individuals and social groups have been excluded from COVID-19 solidarity in political discourse, and why? Finally, it would be interesting to assess how the pandemic impacts the solidarity frame preferences of voters and politicians. Would we still find congruence between parties' and voters' solidarity frame preferences after the pandemic? How would politicians distinguish parties in terms of solidarity frame discourse regarding the pandemic?

Regardless of which question would provoke the most interest, the contestation of solidarity indicates that scholarship on the politics of solidarity remains necessary. This dissertation has taken a modest step in understanding the party political aspects of solidarity, and we encourage others to go beyond the contributions and limitations of this thesis.

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Appendix Datasets and Codebooks

It's All About Solidarity, Stupid! How Solidarity Frames Structure the Party Political Sphere

Label	Variable	Values
country	Country	1= Flemish region (2 =The Netherlands)
year	Year of election	(1 = 1994) 2 = 1995 (3 = 2012) 4 = 2014
partyfam	Party family	1 = radical rightist 2 = nationalist 3 = liberal 4 = Christian democrat 5 = social democrat 6 = Green (7 = conservative liberal) (8 = progressive liberal)
partyname	Party name (Flemish parties only)	1 = Vlaams Belang 2 = N-VA 3 = Open VLD 4 = CD&V 5 = sp.a 6 = Groen 21 = Vlaams Blok 22 = Volksunie 23 = VLD 24 = CVP 25 = SP 26 = Agalev
nr	Number of sentence	
sentence	Sentence	
g1c1	First target: main category	see codebook groups
g1c2	First target: first subcategory	
g1c3	First target: second subcategory	
sf1	Solidarity framing of first target	NOT USED
g2c1	Second target: main category	
g2c2		
g2c3	Second target: first subcategory	
	Second target: second subcategory	
sf2	Solidarity framing of second target	NOT USED
g3c1	Third target: main category	

g3c2	Third target: first subcategory	
g3c3	Third target: second subcategory	
sf3	Solidarity framing of third target	NOT USED
REC_solframe	Solidarity framing in statement	see codebook solidarity frames

Codebook groups

Coding instructions for groups

While reading the program you will notice that the parties often mention (a few) groups: groups of people, animals and certain organizations. You will find the codes for these groups below in this document.

Check if the party states a group / groups in the sentence. If this is the case, you must provide the stated group (s) according to the instructions below. You can code a maximum of 3 groups per sentence.

You should not code for a group if the mention of the group in question is part of a compound word (e.g. childcare, entrepreneurial spirit)

E.g The public broadcaster continues its efforts for subtitling, audio description and sign language to ensure accessibility for the **deaf, hard of hearing, blind** and visually impaired.

deaf, hard of hearing and blind people are the first three groups mentioned in the sentence. These three groups belong to a category, namely "People with disabilities", what

means that you must write code 1130 in the corresponding fields (G1C1, G2C1, G3C1).

100 Territorial groups

Use these codes if the party refers to (a people living) territory. If they refer to their governments / authorities, use the most appropriate code from this list and 1830.

101 Local: use this code if a neighborhood / district, village, town, province or its inhabitants are mentioned (for example: Hasselt, the people of Antwerp). This does not have to be the city or village where the party is staying.

102 Own region: Use this code as the area where the party lives or its residents are named

(Flanders, the people of Catalonia). This also applies if the party speaks about 'our region'.

103 Own country: use this code as the country where the party lives or the population are mentioned (for example Belgium, the Spaniards, the people of the United Kingdom). This also counts as the party speaks about 'our country'.

104 Own supranational region: use this code as a supranational identity in which the party lives

or its inhabitants are mentioned (Europe, the Europeans). This also applies if the party speaks about 'our continent '.

105 Global / international community: use this code if the entire world is mentioned or

attention is drawn to the international character (for example, the international community, the world, ...)

110 Other region: Use this code as a different region (or its inhabitants) than the area where the party is located. (for example: Wallonia)

111 Other country: use this code as a country (or its inhabitants) other than the country where the party is located. This also applies if the party speaks of "other countries" or "neighboring countries" or 'abroad'. (for example: France, these countries, other countries, partner countries)

112 Another supranational region: Use this code as another supranational area (or the residents)

supranational area where the party is located (for example, Asia, North America, Middle East). This also applies if the party speaks of "other continents" or "other continents".

199 Other territorial group: use this code if an area is listed that does not belong to one of

the mentioned categories. e.g. the region around the Scheldt, the countryside, own region

200 Religious groups

Use these codes if a religion and / or its followers are mentioned.

201 Non-specific: use this code as a non-specific religion, religious group (s) or religious

followers. This does not have to be the religion of the party. Important: they must

be specific. (For example, believers must be able to pray, every faith must be respected).

202 Christians: Use this code if Christians are mentioned. Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox Christians should all be coded with 202.

203 Muslims: use this code if Muslims / Islam are mentioned. Sunnis, Shiites and Sufi would all must be coded with 203.

204 Jews: use this code if Jews are mentioned.

205 Buddhists: use this code when Buddhists are mentioned.

206 Agnostics: use this code if agnostics are mentioned.

207 Atheists: use this code when atheists are mentioned.

299 Others: use this code if a religion or its followers are listed that do not belong to one of the aforementioned categories (for example, Jains, Sikhs)

300 Language and ethnic groups

Use these codes if the party refers to a language group, ethnic group or race. (For example, a Belgian party that supports a peaceful life for Kurdish people).

302 Native speakers: use this code if the party refers to 'native speakers' or "our own language" (speakers of the party's native language). **This language can be specified** (e.g. Dutch speakers) **or not** (e.g. people who speak our language)

Note : some language groups are also regional or national groups. For example: Flemings are both a language group as a regional group. Only code Flemish people as a language group when language is most relevant (for example, when the party speaks of Flemish and French speakers).

303 Foreign speakers: use this code if the party refers to people with a language other than their own language. **This language can be specified** (e.g. French speakers) **or not** (e.g. foreign speakers)

305 Illiterate people and low-literate persons: use this code if the party refers to people who are illiterate or be low literate.

312 Specific ethnicity: use this code if the party refers to ethnicity (s). Examples: Northern Africans, Kurds

Please note : some ethnic groups are also national or regional groups (eg Turks, Flemings, Scottish people or religious groups (for example, Jews). You use the ethnic code when the party talks about "real" Flemings / Scots / Jews / ...

321 Person who is white: use this code if the party explicitly refers to people who belong to the “white race” or to people who have a white skin color.

322 Person who is black: use this code if the party explicitly refers to people who belong to "the black race" or to people with a black skin color.

399 Other groups related to race and ethnicity: use this code if the party refers to people with a different skin color or ethnicity without mentioning the race or ethnicity. For example: natives and immigrants, people with a different skin color.

400 Class, income and home ownership

Only use these codes if the party refers to a class, an income group or a group with a certain status regarding home ownership.

401 Lower class: use this code if the party explicitly refers to the lower class. Synonyms: subclass

402 Middle class: use this code if the party explicitly refers to middle-class people.

403 Upper class: use this code if the party mentions people who belong to the higher (er) class.

411 Lowest-income group / lower income / poor: use this code if the party explicitly refers to referents as having low, lower, or modest income or living in (modest) poverty. This code also applies to people with fewer opportunities.

412 Middle income group: use this code as the party explicitly refers to people with an average or medium high income.

413 High income group / rich: use this code as the party refers to rich people, or people with high income. Synonyms include millionaire, billionaire, big earners, rich, wealthy people.

421 Homeowners: use this code if the party refers to people who own a house. Synonyms: homeowners, people who have a house, people who can acquire a house.

422 Tenants: use this code if the party refers to people who rent a house (tenants). Synonyms: people who rent a house.

423 Landlords: use this code if the party refers to people who rent out a house.

424 Homeless: use this code if the party refers to people who are homeless.

500 Employment-related groups

Use these codes if the party refers to people and their professional status.

510 Active: use this code if the party refers to people who are active on the labor market.

511 Employees: use this code if the party refers to employees. Synonyms: employees, staff, people who work, etc.

512 Blue collar workers: use this code if the party refers to workers.

513 White-collar workers: use this code if the party refers to white-collar workers.

514 Professionals and managers: use this code if the party refers to professionals or managers.

This subgroup consists of professional athletes, managers, academics, engineers, architects, lawyers, bankers, experts, carers, doctors, street workers. Also academic or university (knowledge) institutions fall under this.

515 Entrepreneurs and self-employed: use code if the party refers to entrepreneurs, companies, companies or self-employed. This also includes farmers and small, medium and large companies and commercial organizations.

516 Government officials: use this code if the party refers to officials
.Synonyms: bureaucrats

517 Temporary employees: use this code if the party refers to temporary or temporary employees. Sometimes the word precariat can be used in the party discourse. We consider this as a synonym for temporary employees.

518 Employers: use this code if the party refers to employers. Synonyms: people who

give work.

520 People who are inactive: use this code if the party refers to people who are not active on the job market.

521 Retired: use this code if the party refers to people who are retired.

522 Unemployed: use this code if the party refers to people who are unemployed. These people may be looking for work (job seekers).

531 Consumers: use this code if the party refers to consumers. Synonyms: customers, buyers

532 Producers: use this code if the lot refers to the producers.

560 Shareholders: use this code if the party refers to the shareholders.
340

562 Investors and investors: use this code if the party refers to investors or investors.

600 Education-related groups

Use these codes if the party refers to the educational situation or educational level of people.

601 Crèche and kindergarten pupils: use this code if the party refers to young people in a kindergarten (crèche / kindergarten).

605 Pupils: use this code if the party refers to pupils in primary or secondary education.

630 Students: use this code if the party refers to people studying at a university, a college or similar. In Belgium, the university college is also coded in this category. If it goes for a working student, code as 510 and 630.

640 Unskilled people: use this code if the party refers to people who are primarily or have not completed secondary education, people without a diploma, or unskilled / unskilled people.

641 People with a low level of education: use this code if the party refers to people who do not have finished high school, people with low qualifications or those with a low level of education.

642 Medium-educated people: use this code if the party refers to middle educated people or people who have finished high school, but not to the university or similar forms of higher education.

643 People with a high level of education: use this code if the party explicitly refers to highly educated people or people who have completed the highest level of education. In the case of Flanders, this is the case to both people with a university degree and people with a college diploma. **Not the same as students!**

650 Teachers and other educational staff: use this code if the party refers to teachers or school principals. Professors and doctoral students fall under code 514.

700 Gender and sexual identity

Use these codes if the party refers to people with a specific gender and / or gender and / or sexual preference.

701 Men: use this code if the party refers to men.

702 Women: use this code if the party refers to women.

703 People who are transgender / transsexual / gender fluid: use this code if the party refers to people who are transgender, transsexual or gender fluid.

710 Heterosexuals: use this code if the party refers to people who are heterosexual.

711 LGB: use this code if the party refers to lesbian women, gay men and / or people who are bisexual. Synonyms: two men who love each other, two women who love each other or people who are not heterosexual.

800 Age-related groups

Use these codes if the party refers to people of an age group or generation

810 Young people: use this if the party states 'young people', 'young generations', 'children' or 'youth'.

811 Unborn children and future generations: use this code if the batch of unborn children

mentions. If the party refers to future generations, you must also use this code.

812 Babies and toddlers: use this code if the batch mentions babies and toddlers (up to 3 years).

813 Young children: use this if the batch of young children (explicitly: young (er) children; implicitly: children between 4 and 6 years old)

814 Older children: use this if the party has older children (explicitly: older (er) children; implicitly: children between 6 and 12 years old)

815 Teenagers and adolescents: use this code if the party is teenagers and / or adolescents (explicitly: teenagers or adolescents; implicitly: young people between 12 and 24 years old).

820 Adults: use this code if the party mentions adults in general.

821 Middle-aged people: use this code if the batch of middle-aged people (40 - 60 years)

822 Elderly: use this code if the party uses the word 'old', 'older generations' or 'elderly' or when the party states the age of the group as older than 60.

900 Family-related groups

Use these codes if the party refers to either people with a role in a family or family types or people with a certain marital status

901 Families: use this code if the party refers to families in general.

902 Large families: use this code if the party refers to large families

903 Small families: use this code if the party refers to small families.

910 Families without children: use this code if the party refers to families without children

or childless families or individuals.

920 Children: use this code if the party refers to children. These children must be understood as a role within the family, **not as an age group or as a group at school**. Also adoptive children, foster children and orphans belong to this category. Synonym: offspring.

930 Parents: use this code if the party refers to parents. Also wish parents, adoptive parents, foster parents and step parents are included. Synonyms: "who takes the step to have children".

931 Fathers: use this code if the party refers to fathers. Wishing fathers, adoptive fathers, Foster fathers and step fathers are included.

932 Mothers: use this code if the party refers to mothers. Wish mothers, co-mothers, foster mothers, adoptive mothers and step mothers are included.

940 Grandparents: use this code if the party refers to grandparents.

941 Grandchildren: use this code if the party refers to grandchildren.

951 Married people: use this code if the party refers to people who are married.

952 Cohabiting people: use this code if the party refers to people who are officially living together.

953 People who are in a relationship: use this code if the party refers to people with a relationship

without stating whether they are married or living together. Example: partners (do not use this code when it concerns trading partners or cooperation partners).

954 People who are divorced: use this code if the party refers to people as being divorced.

955 Widowers and widows: use this code if the party refers to people as widows or widower. Widows or widowers are women or men whose spouse or wife died.

956 Singles: Use this code if the party refers to people as single or single. Single parents: first code for 956, then for 930.

999 Other family members and friends and acquaintances: use this code if the party refers to family members not mentioned above or to friends or acquaintances. For example: brothers and sisters, cousins and nieces, friends.

1000 Migration-related groups

Use these codes if the party refers to migrants or similar groups.

1010 Migrants: use this code if the party refers to migrants, without their legal status

to state. Synonyms: foreigners, foreigners, people of foreign nationality.

1011 Legal migrants: use this code if the party refers to migrants who are legal in this country

live.

1012 Illegal migrants: use this code if the party refers to migrants who are not legal in this live in the country. Synonyms: illegal immigrants, people without a residence permit

1020 Asylum seekers: use this code if the party refers to asylum seekers.

1030 Refugees: use this code if the party refers to refugees. These refugees can be mentioned as economic refugees, political refugees or otherwise.

1100 Health-related groups

Use this code if the party refers to people with disabilities or illnesses

1110 Patients: use this code if the party refers to patients, without clarifying whether they have an illness, are injured or have a disability

1120 People with a disease: use this code if the party refers to people with a disease

1130 People with disabilities: use this code if the party refers to people with a disability.

For victims: 1207

1200 Justice-related groups

Use these codes if the party refers to a group that is connected to justice, crime and / or or safety.

1201 Police officers and guards: use this code if the party refers to the police or guards.

1202 Judges: use this code if the party refers to the judges or magistrates.

1203 Criminals: use this code if the party refers to criminals. Drug dealers are among these category, drug users not (see 1301). However, if the party claims that drug users are criminals, then use both codes, with the 1301 code first

1204 Prisoners: use this code if the party refers to the prisoners.

1205 Lawyers: use this code if the party refers to lawyers

1206 Fire brigade and emergency services: use this code if the party refers to the fire brigade (paid or voluntary).

1207 Victims: use this code if the party refers to the victims of crime or accidents.

1210 Military and army: use this code if the party refers to the military or the army. Synonyms: units.

1300 Lifestyle groups

Use these codes if the party refers to a group that uses a certain lifestyle that does not belongs to religion, sexuality or gender, or health.

1301 Recreational drug users / drug addicts

1311 Recreational athletes

1312 No sporty active people

1320 Commuters

1321 Users of cars

1322 Cyclists and pedestrians

1330 Vegetarians and vegans

1331 Meat eaters

1340 Travelers and tourists

1350 Volunteers

1400 Associations

Use this code if the party refers to an association. Examples are scouting associations, sports clubs or certain non-profit organizations. If the party refers to an interest group: use 1810.

1500 Animals

Use this code if the lot refers to animals.

1800 Political groups

1810 Interest groups: use this code if the party refers to interest group (s). Examples are trade unions, environmental organizations, employer organizations.

1821 Own party: use this code if the party refers to itself. This can be explicit (Therefore sp.a wants ...), but sometimes the party will refer to itself in terms of 'us'. If the party uses a 'we' form and it is clear from the sentence that it is about the party, you code as a party (see 2000 for more explanation).

Example:

We are committed to spending 0.7 percent of gross domestic product on development cooperation.

1822 Other parties: use this code if the party refers to other parties. This can be either one specific party or either simply the reference to 'other parties'.

1830 Government and parliament: use this code if the party refers to governments and / or parliaments. CPAS or agencies also fall under this.

If a specific government: see list of specific groups

2000 Vaguely defined groups

Use this code if the party refers to a group for which it is not (entirely) clear from the context is who they are talking about. The party can refer to certain groups to use clear language (for example 'we' instead of 'the Belgians' or 'they' instead of 'the elderly'. Such vaguely defined groups are

We / we / us / our

Exception: if it is clear from the sentence that it concerns the party.

Exception: if the party uses a possessive pronoun "us" followed by a noun that clearly refers to a group. For example: if a party refers to "our country", "our region" or "our children" then you code respectively 103, 102 or 920.

They / their / them

Exception: if the party uses possessive pronouns "their" followed by a group. For example: "their country", "their region", "their children". In that case you code 111, 110, and 920 respectively.

You / your / you / you / your

Exception: if the party uses possessive pronouns your / you followed by a group.

Everyone or nobody

Some / Others

Exception: if the party uses these words as an adjective and the noun concerns a group. To code, you must use the code for the relevant group. "Some young people", "other entrepreneurs" and "some drug users" then you have to choose codes 810, 515 and 1301 respectively.

People

Exception: if a description is attached to these people, it makes clear under which category

they actually fall, you code the corresponding number, not 2000.

For example: people who are unemployed, sick people, people who undertake and work, people who go to work by bike → do not code with 2000, but with 522, 1120, 515, 511, and 1322 respectively.

Society and community

Exception: unless it is clarified what kind of community is meant. For example:

local community, Muslim community, ...

Using multiple categories

If the mentioned group belongs to more categories than one (e.g. unemployed low-educated men, elderly homosexuals, Muslim women), use the codes that apply most (maximum 3 codes).

1 if the group consists of an adjective and noun where the adjective also refers to a category, you first code the adjective and then the noun.

2 if the group consists of a noun with an additional description that also refers to a category, first code the noun and then the extra description.

3 if the group belongs to a list with specific groups (see list p. 16).

Examples of using multiple categories

Vlaams Belang argues for an adjustment of the child benefit system to the needs of the contemporary **Flemish family** .

Adjective: Flemish / Flanders (102) Substantive: family (901)

For example, an unemployed person who applies for a living wage comes. in the supervision process of art. 60 and retain social skills thanks to an asset job.

Substantive: unemployed person (522) Description: applying for a living wage = poor person or person with a low income (411)

Internees belong in specialized institutions.

List: first code interned with person with illness (1120), then code for prisoner (1204).

Don't interpret! You should only code what is in the sentence.

eg Muslims ≠ migrants (although Muslims are often migrants)

eg lower income ≠ lower class ≠ lower educated (although research has often indicated these categories are linked)

List of special groups

Muslim women (Muslima): 203 702

Interned: 1120 1204

Developing country: 411 111

Lefloner: 522 411

Local police officer / local police: 101 1201

Citizen / voter: 2000 103 (national) or 2000 104 (European)

Single-parent family: 956 930 901

Homosexual parents: 711 930

Local / provincial administration: 101 1830

Regional government / parliament: 102 1830

National / Federal Government / Parliament: 103 1830

European Commission v Parliament: 104 1830

UN: 105 1830

NATO: 104 1210

Labor migrant: 511 1010

Trade union: 1810 511

Employer organization: 1810 518

Codebook solidarity frames

Coding instructions for solidarity frames

Solidarity is a fairly complex concept. Our definition of solidarity states that solidarity indicates attitudes those people have respect to other people and therefore to the social ties between the different ones members of a group or community or society held together by solidarity. This one

Social ties are motivated by either a sense of unity within a group, a sense of compassion for those who are worse off, reciprocity between members, or recognition of and respect for respective differences of certain group members.

Coding for solidarity frames

A solidarity frame reflects the attitudes and values of the political party towards the referenced group. We distinguish four solidarity frames.

1 Group-based solidarity

A Positive

You must code a referral as group-based solidarity if a party mentions a group and if that one referral indicates that (the members of) this group is **or must take its own course** and / or will **be sailing characterized or united by certain norms and values** and / or **interests and goals** and / or **values and norms** and / or **rights and duties** and / or **an identity, community or culture** . Sometimes the party can state that this group has **yet to arise through the integration of several groups** .

B Negative

You must code a referral as non - group - oriented solidarity if a party mentions a group and if that reference indicates that this group is **not coherent** ; it **falls** into (two or more) groups which are different from each other or is described as "**individualized**" or "**incoherent** ". Furthermore, if a party **lists two (or more) groups and states that both groups have little to nothing in common have with each other** ; both groups differ from each other in terms of values and norms and / or interests and goals and / or rights and duties and / or identity and culture. The party can say the 'other' group must **adapt or stand**

alone . In this case you code both group references as non- group-oriented solidarity.

Logic

'You are a member of a group that I identify with. I have to support my kind. '

We have something in common.

We should have something in common.

Logic

We don't belong together.

We are falling apart.

'You are not a member of a group that I identify with. I don't support you. '

"We are not members of the same group because we do not have much in common. (Therefore, ...) "

Beware

If a party says that "everyone has a right" or "(all) people have a right," you need one coding referral as **empathic solidarity** (see below for an example).

If a party indicates that a group is characterized by diversity, you need such a reference coding as **empathic solidarity** .

If a party indicates that it is in the interest of one group to support or support another group reward, you should not code this body as group-oriented solidarity. You must replace the coding reference to the other group as **exchange-based solidarity** .

If a party says that one group values or needs to attach to a group that is worse off,

you may not code this body as group-oriented solidarity. Instead, you need the reference coding to the other group as **compassionate solidarity** .

Other frames of solidarity also have to do with differences. Therefore, check that you are not misinterpreting this particular sentence.

2 Compassionate solidarity

You must code a reference as compassionate solidarity if a party lists a group and if this one

referral indicates that this group is **marginalized** and / or **discriminated against or treated poorly is** and / or **is vulnerable (or has high risks)** and / or **is in a (very) bad situation** . The

The party will often state that these people must be protected and / or helped and / or an equal position like the rest of the population.

Logic

You are like me, but you do not have what I have (and you need it). That makes me embarrassed.

Something bad can happen / has happened to you. You are worse off than before / than others (and that is not good / not fair). (We must make life easier for you, therefore ...)

Something bad has happened to us. We are worse off than before / than others (and that's not good / not fair).

We are (more) sensitive to a certain risk (than others).

Beware

If the party states that **a group or its members cannot be themselves**, we code this as **empathic solidarity** (see below for more examples).

If the party declares that **a group should be rewarded for what they have already done, but they did not receive enough**, then we code this as **exchange-based solidarity**.

3 Exchange-based solidarity

A Positive

You must code a reference as exchange-oriented solidarity if a party mentions a group and if this one Reference indicates that this group **is doing, doing and / or doing something useful**. The party will often argue that this group should either be **rewarded for** past **behavior** or that it should be supported to continue that useful behavior. Sometimes the party can indicate that the group does **not receive enough and needs more support** for its contribution (do not confuse it with compassionate solidarity).

B Negative

You must code a reference to a group as a negative form exchange-based solidarity if a party calls a group and if that one referral indicates that **this group receives a lot or has received a lot, but has too little or nothing done in return or even caused damage to others** . The party could argue that this group must be punished or receive less than is currently the case or that the group in exchange for help or reward must do or give something (extra).

Logics

You are an interesting exchange partner. I invest in you because this can help me in the future.

You have done a lot for me. Now I will return the favor (so that you could continue to help me).

You have done a lot for me, but so far I have not given you anything back. That is outrageous.

We have given you a lot, but you have not given us anything back.

You get a lot while I / we haven't received anything in return.

We have given you a lot, but you have caused us damage.

If you want to get something, you first have to do something for it.

4 Empathic solidarity

You must code a reference as empathic solidarity if the party mentions a group and indicates that

this group (often 'society', but other groups are also possible) is diverse and **that this diversity**

must be respected . We also code empathic solidarity if the party refers to a group and indicates that **this group is unique and different and that this must be respected or understood** ; these people should be able to be themselves. This can refer to certain needs, characteristics, opinions, or belief choices of that group of people. The party can indicate that these people **must be able to develop themselves** the way they want. Finally, we code empathic solidarity if a party refers to "everyone" or "(all) people" and states that they have a right.

Logic

'You are not like me, but I still understand and respect you.'

"Let ... be themselves / do their own thing."

"We are all in different situations / make different choices / ..."

Everyone has the right to a decent life / ... / ...

Example of coding procedure

A simple example of the coding procedure is given by way of clarification.

First, we ensure to encode our ID number in the ID column (far left). In this example is that ID number 1. Second, the coder reads the sentences and uses the correct codes for each group that appears in these sentences. In the first sentence, the party mentions the EU and (all) citizens. This means that the first group must be coded as 104 and 1830 in G1C1 and G1C2 and the second group is given the codes 2000 and 104. In the second sentence, the party mentions people with a disability (1130) and society (2000).

Thirdly, the coder gives the correct code for the solidarity mode used in the reference of the group (s). In the first sentence, the party says that the European Union is a shared project of its citizens. This corresponds to group-oriented solidarity with the EU. In the second sentence, the party states that people with a disability cannot currently be on an equal footing, while it should be.

That is why we code this reference as compassionate solidarity.

Drawing the Boundaries of Solidarity: What Distinguishes the Radical From the Mainstream Right?

Codebook dataset

Label	Variable	Values
Country	country	1=Belgium (Flemish region) 2=The Netherlands (not used)
Year of election	year	1=1994 (not used) 2=1995 (not used) 3=2012 (not used) 4=2014
Parties on the right	rightwingparty	1=Vlaams Belang 2=N-VA 3=Open VLD 4=CD&V
Negative references to 'undeserving others'	negref	-99= Missing 1= Other countries 2= Europeans 3= Inactive/unemployed 4= LGBT 5= Muslims 6= Immigrants (incl. asylum seekers) 7= Criminals 8= Walloons 9= Non-native speakers (incl. French-speaking)
Positive references to 'undeserving others'	posref	-99= Missing 1= Other countries 2= Europeans 3= Inactive/unemployed 4= LGBT 5= Muslims 6= Immigrants (incl. asylum seekers) 7= Criminals 8= Walloons 9= Non-native speakers (incl. French-speaking)
Which inclusionary or exclusionary frame is used?	solframe_rightwing	-99= Missing 1= Group-based 2= Negation of group-based 3= Compassionate 4= Negation of compassionate 5= Exchange-based 6= Negation of exchange-based 7= Empathic 8= Negation of empathic
Inclusionary or exclusionary frame?	pos_neg	-99=Missing 1=Inclusionary frame 2=Exclusionary frame -99=Missing

Codebook solidarity frames

Coding instructions for solidarity frames

Solidarity is a fairly complex concept. Our definition of solidarity states that solidarity indicates attitudes those people have respect to other people and therefore to the social ties between the different ones members of a group or community or society held together by solidarity. This one

Social ties are motivated by either a sense of unity within a group, a sense of compassion for those who are worse off, reciprocity between members, or recognition of and respect for respective differences of certain group members.

Coding for solidarity frames

A solidarity frame reflects the attitudes and values of the political party towards the referenced group. We distinguish four solidarity frames.

1 Group-based solidarity

You must code a statement as group-based solidarity if a party mentions a group and if that one referral indicates that (the members of) this group is **or must take its own course** and / or will **be sailing characterized or united by certain norms and values** and / or **interests and goals** and / or **values and norms** and / or **rights and duties** and / or **an identity, community or culture** . Sometimes the party can state that this group has **yet to arise through the integration of several groups** .

Logic

'You are a member of a group that I identify with. I have to support my kind. '

We have something in common.

We should have something in common.

2 Negation of group-based solidarity

You must code a statement as a negation of group-based solidarity if a party mentions a group and if that reference indicates that this group is **not cohesive** ; it **falls** into (two or more) groups which are different from each other or is described as "**individualized**" or "**incohesive**". Furthermore, if a party **lists two (or more) groups and states that these groups have little to nothing in common**; both groups differ from each other in terms of values and norms and / or interests and goals and / or rights and duties and / or identity and culture. The party can say the 'other' group must **adapt or leave**. In this case you code both group references as a negation of group-based solidarity.

Logic

We don't belong together.

We are falling apart.

'You are not a member of a group that I identify with. I don't support you. '

"We are not members of the same group because we do not have much in common. (Therefore, ...) "

Beware

If a party says that "everyone has a right" or "(all) people have a right," you need to code for **empathic solidarity** (see below for an example).

If a party indicates that a group is characterized by diversity, you need to code such a reference as **empathic solidarity** .

If a party indicates that it is in the interest of one group to support or support another group reward, you should not code this as group-based solidarity. You must replace the coding reference to the other group as **exchange-based solidarity** .

If a party says that one group values or needs to attach to a group that is worse off, you may not code this as group-based solidarity. Instead, you need to code for **compassionate solidarity** .

Other frames of solidarity also deal with differences. Therefore, please check that you do not misinterpret this particular sentence.

3 Compassionate solidarity

You must code a reference as compassionate solidarity if a party refers to a group and if they indicate that this group is **marginalized** and / or **discriminated against or treated poorly** and / or **is vulnerable (or has high risks)** and / or **is in a (very) bad situation** . The party will often state that these people must be protected and / or helped and / or deserve an equal position like the rest of the population.

Logic

You are like me, but you do not have what I have (and you need it). That makes me embarrassed.

Something bad can happen / has happened to you. You are worse off than before / than others (and that is not good / not fair). (We must make life easier for you, therefore ...)

Something bad has happened to us. We are worse off than before / than others (and that's not good / not fair).

We are (more) sensitive to a certain risk (than others).

Beware

If the party states that **a group or its members cannot be themselves**, we code this as **empathic solidarity** (see below for more examples).

If the party declares that **a group should be rewarded for what they have already done, but they did not receive enough** , then we code this as **exchange-based solidarity** .

4 Negation of compassionate solidarity

You should code a reference as negation of compassionate solidarity if a party mentions a group and if this reference to this group indicates that this group is better off than the rest of the population or other groups of people (privilege)

Or

if a party mentions a group and if this reference indicates that this group lives under too good conditions

Or

if a party mentions a group and if this reference indicates that this group is worse off or living in bad conditions, but still has to take its own responsibility to get out of this deteriorating situation.

Logic

You are worse off than before/than others. However, what happened to you is your own responsibility.

You are better off than others.

You have it too good, when you really do not deserve this.

You receive support while others need it more.

5 Exchange-based solidarity

You must code a reference as exchange-based solidarity if a party mentions a group and if this one reference indicates that this group **is doing something useful** . The party will often argue that this group should either be **rewarded for past behavior** or that it should be supported to continue that useful behavior. Sometimes the party can indicate that the group does **not receive enough and needs more support** for its contribution (do not confuse it with compassionate solidarity).

Logics

You are an interesting exchange partner. I invest in you because this can help me in the future.

You have done a lot for me. Now I will return the favor (so that you could continue to help me).

You have done a lot for me, but so far I have not given you anything back. That is outrageous.

6 Negation of exchange-based solidarity

You must code a reference to a group as negation of exchange-based solidarity if a party refers to a group which indicates that **this group receives a lot or has received a lot, but has too little or nothing done in return or even caused damage to others**. The party could argue that this group must be punished or receive less than is currently the case, or that the group in exchange for help must do or give something (extra).

We have given you a lot, but you have not given us anything back.

You get a lot while I / we haven't received anything in return.

We have given you a lot, but you have caused us damage.

If you want to get something, you first have to do something for it.

7 Empathic solidarity

You must code a reference as empathic solidarity if the party mentions a group and indicates that this group (often 'society', but other groups are also possible) is diverse and **that this diversity must be respected** . We also code empathic solidarity if the party refers to a group and indicates that **this group is unique and different and that this must be respected or understood** ; these people should be able to be themselves. This can refer to certain needs, characteristics, opinions, or belief choices of that group of people. The party can indicate that these people **must be able to develop themselves** the way they want. Finally, we code empathic solidarity if a party refers to "everyone" or "(all) people" and states that everyone has a right.

Logic

'You are not like me, but I still understand and respect you.

"Let ... be themselves / do their own thing."

"We are all in different situations / make different choices / ...

Everyone has the right to a decent life / ... / ...

8 Negation of empathic solidarity

You should code a reference as a negation of empathic solidarity if one party mentions a group and if that reference indicates that this group is different from everyone else, but this difference should not be respected. This difference can refer to needs, characteristics, beliefs, opinions or anything that distinguishes them. The party could argue that this difference should not be recognized.

Logic

You're not like me, and that's a shame. I don't understand or respect you or your difference.

Solidarity Frames: The Missing Link Between Parties and Voters?

Do Solidarity Frame Preferences Explain Propensities to Vote for a Party?

Survey Questions

Label	Variable	Value labels	Use
Q16_1	In politics, people often speak in terms of "left" and "right". On a scale from 0 to 10, can you indicate whether you consider yourself left (0), center (5) or right (10)?	Left (0) Right (10)	IV regression (Ch4)
Q17_1	The following elections will take place on 26 May 2019. On a scale from 0 (certainly not) to 10 (certainly), can you indicate to what extent you would be willing to vote for this party? Vlaams Belang	Certainly not (0) Certainly (10)	DV
Q17_2	The following elections will take place on 26 May 2019. On a scale from 0 (certainly not) to 10 (certainly), can you indicate to what extent you would be willing to vote for this party? N-VA	Certainly not (0) Certainly (10)	DV
Q17_3	The following elections will take place on 26 May 2019. On a scale from 0 (certainly not) to 10 (certainly), can you indicate to what extent you would be	Certainly not (0) Certainly (10)	DV

	willing to vote for this party? Open VLD		
Q17_4	The following elections will take place on 26 May 2019. On a scale from 0 (certainly not) to 10 (certainly), can you indicate to what extent you would be willing to vote for this party? CD&V	Certainly not (0) Certainly (10)	DV
Q17_5	The following elections will take place on 26 May 2019. On a scale from 0 (certainly not) to 10 (certainly), can you indicate to what extent you would be willing to vote for this party? sp.a	Certainly not (0) Certainly (10)	DV
Q17_6	The following elections will take place on 26 May 2019. On a scale from 0 (certainly not) to 10 (certainly), can you indicate to what extent you would be willing to vote for this party? Groen	Certainly not (0) Certainly (10)	DV
Q2_1	The ideal society consists of people who have something in common.		Indicator GB
Q2_2	We currently need more communality in society.		Indicator GB
Q2_3	We form a solidarity society through common norms and values.		Indicator GB

Q2_4	I can agree with a policy that strengthens our community.	Indicator GB
Q2_5	People with different norms and values must adapt.	Indicator GB
Q2_6	The presence of different norms and values is a threat to our society.	Indicator GB
Q2_7	I prefer to be with people who look like me.	Indicator GB
Q3_1	The ideal society consists of people who help other people in worse situations.	Indicator C
Q3_2	We currently need more help for the weak.	Indicator C
Q3_3	By helping people in more difficult situations, we form a society based on solidarity.	Indicator C
Q3_4	I can agree with a policy that gives the weaker people more support.	Indicator C
Q3_5	People who are less fortunate must take their responsibility to find a solution.	Indicator C
Q3_6	The benefit of a small group of people threatens our society.	Indicator C
Q3_7	I prefer to give to people who are less fortunate than me.	Indicator C
Q4_1	The ideal society consists of individuals with skills that complement each other.	Indicator EB
Q4_2	We currently need more people who contribute to society.	Indicator EB

Q4_3	We form a solidarity society through individuals who work together.	Indicator EB
Q4_4	I do agree with a policy that gives appreciation to people who contribute.	Indicator EB
Q4_5	People who make little or no contribution must contribute more.	Indicator EB
Q4_6	The passivity of a large group of people is a threat to our society.	Indicator EB
Q4_7	I prefer to give to people who have contributed, even if they have it better than me.	Indicator EB
Q5_1	The ideal society consists of people who understand each other's individual differences.	Indicator E
Q5_2	We currently need people who have respect for others, even when they are very different from the rest.	Indicator E
Q5_3	By respecting everyone's individuality, we form a solidarity-based society.	Indicator E
Q5_4	I agree with a policy that gives people the opportunity to be themselves, even if they deviate from the rest.	Indicator E
Q5_5	People who are different from the rest should not get (even) more respect.	Indicator E

Q5_6	The compulsion to make everyone the same threatens our society.	Indicator E
Q5_7	I prefer to be with people who are different from me, no matter how different they are from me.	Indicator E

Descriptive Statistics for Variables Used						
Variable name		N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Q17_1	propensity to vote Vlaams Belang	1434	1	11	2,13	2,59
Q17_2	propensity to vote N-VA	1434	1	11	4,68	4,00
Q17_3	propensity to vote Open VLD	1434	1	11	4,43	3,07
Q17_4	propensity to vote CD&V	1434	1	11	4,16	2,78
Q17_5	propensity to vote sp.a	1434	1	11	4,28	3,11
Q17_6	propensity to vote Groen	1434	1	11	5,68	3,62
Q2_1	The ideal society consists of people who have something in common.	1434	1	7	4,18	1,60
Q2_2	We currently need more communality in society.	1434	1	7	4,61	1,48
Q2_3	We form a solidarity society through common norms and values.	1434	1	7	4,71	1,52
Q2_4	I can agree with a policy that strengthens our community.	1434	1	7	4,88	1,38
Q2_5	People with different norms and values must adapt.	1434	1	7	4,60	1,71
Q2_6	The presence of different norms and values is a threat to our society.	1434	1	7	3,41	1,86
Q2_7	I prefer to be with people who look like me.	1434	1	7	3,52	1,57
Q3_1	The ideal society consists of people who help other people in worse situations.	1434	1	7	5,24	1,45
Q3_2	We currently need more help for the weak.	1434	1	7	4,94	1,49
Q3_3	By helping people in more difficult situations, we form a society based on solidarity.	1434	1	7	5,29	1,42
Q3_4	I can agree with a policy that gives the weaker people more support.	1434	1	7	5,22	1,49

Q3_5	People who are less fortunate must take their responsibility to find a solution.	1434	1	7	4,35	1,49
Q3_6	The benefit of a small group of people threatens our society.	1434	1	7	4,47	1,88
Q3_7	I prefer to give to people who are less fortunate than me.	1434	1	7	5,09	1,43
Q4_1	The ideal society consists of individuals with skills that complement each other.	1434	1	7	5,02	1,39
Q4_2	We currently need more people who contribute to society.	1434	1	7	4,94	1,44
Q4_3	We form a solidarity society through individuals who work together.	1434	1	7	5,05	1,37
Q4_4	I do agree with a policy that gives appreciation to people who contribute.	1434	1	7	5,06	1,44
Q4_5	People who make little or no contribution must contribute more.	1434	1	7	4,33	1,60
Q4_6	The passivity of a large group of people is a threat to our society.	1434	1	7	4,71	1,68
Q4_7	I prefer to give to people who have contributed, even if they have it better than me.	1434	1	7	2,85	1,36
Q5_1	The ideal society consists of people who understand each other's individual differences.	1434	1	7	5,37	1,57
Q5_2	We currently need people who have respect for others, even when they are very different from the rest.	1434	1	7	5,14	1,66
Q5_3	By respecting everyone's individuality, we form a solidarity-based society.	1434	1	7	5,05	1,64
Q5_4	I agree with a policy that gives people the opportunity to be themselves, even if they deviate from the rest.	1434	1	7	5,08	1,62
Q5_5	People who are different from the rest should not get (even) more respect.	1434	1	7	3,97	1,68
Q5_6	The compulsion to make everyone the same threatens our society.	1434	1	7	4,71	1,73
Q5_7	I prefer to be with people who are different from me, no matter how different they are from me.	1434	1	7	3,67	1,35

Solidarity Frames as Partisan Stereotypes: How Local Politicians Distinguish Parties in Terms of Solidarity Frame Preferences

Survey Dataset and Codebook

Label	Variable	Value labels	Use
Id	ID	None	Restructuring
Province	Province	None	Check
Party	Party name on municipality website		IV partisan bias
Partij_Coded	Party_Coded		IV partisan bias
yofe	In what year did you first take the oath as a local representative?		Check
geslacht	gender	Woman (0) Man (1) Other (2)	Check
geboortejaar	In which year were you born?	None	Check
opleidingsniveau	What is your highest level of education achieved?	Primary education/no diploma (1) Secondary education not completed (2) Secondary vocational education diploma (3) Diploma of secondary technical or art education (4) Diploma of general secondary education (5) Diploma of higher non-university education (6) Diploma of university education (7) Don't know (8)	Check
inkomen	What is your household's total monthly net income?	Less than 1200 euros (1) 1200 to less than 1500 euros (2) 1500 to less than 1800 euros (3) 1800 to less than 2300 euros (4) 2300 to less than 2700 euros (5) 2700 to less than 3300 euros (6)	Check

		3300 to less than 4000 euros (7)	
		4000 to less than 4900 euros (8)	
		4900 to less than 6000 euros (9)	
		More than 6000 euros (12)	
		I don't know (10)	
		I'd rather not say (11)	
klasse	What class do you consider yourself to be?	Lower class (1) Working class (2) Lower middle class (3) Upper middle class (4) Upper class (5)	Check
religie	Do you consider yourself to belong to a certain philosophy or religion?	(Roman) Catholic (1) Protestant (2) Orthodox (3) Christian but not Catholic (4) Jewish (5) Muslim (6) Liberal humanist (7) Atheist (8) Other religion or philosophy (9) I prefer not to say (10) No religion or philosophy of life (11)	Check
religie_belang	How important is religion or philosophy in your life?	Not important at all (0) Very important (10)	Check
etniciteit	In which country were you born?	Belgium (1) Other country (2)	Check
etniciteit_ouder1	In which country were your parents born? first parent	Belgium (1) Other country (2)	Check
etniciteit_ouder2	In which country were your parents born? second parent	Belgium (1) Other country (2)	Check
partijnaam	What is the name of the party for which you are active as a local representative?	None	IV partisan bias
kartel	Is this party part of a cartel?	No (0) Yes (1)	Sampling variable

ideologie_partij	Where would you place your local party on a scale of 0 (left) to 10 (right)	Left (0) Right (10)	IV ideological bias
ideologie_kartel	Where would you place your local cartel on a scale of 0 (left) to 10 (right)	Left (0) Right (10)	IV ideological bias
relatie_CDV	Is your local party/cartel affiliated with the national party CDV?		IV partisan bias
relatie_Groen	Is your local party/cartel affiliated with the national party Green?		IV partisan bias
relatie_NVA	Is your local party/cartel affiliated with the national party NVA?		IV partisan bias
relatie_VLD	Is your local party/cartel affiliated with the national party VLD?		IV partisan bias
relatie_spa	Is your local party/cartel affiliated with national party spa?		IV partisan bias
relatie_vb	Is your local party/cartel affiliated with the national party Vlaams Belang?		IV partisan bias
relatie_andere	Is your local party/cartel affiliated with any other national party?		Sampling
relatie_geen	My local branch is not affiliated with any national party		Sampling
ideologie	Where would you place yourself on a scale of 0 (left) to 10 (right)?	Left (0) Right (10)	IV ideological bias
solidariteit1_NVA	"In a good society we respect the individual differences between each other, even when it comes to very strong differences in terms of, for example, norms and values." (N-VA)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV

solidariteit1_Groen	"In a good society we respect the individual differences between each other, even when it comes to very strong differences in terms of standards and values, for example." (Groen)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit1_spa	"In a good society we respect the individual differences between each other, even when it comes to very strong differences in terms of standards and values, for example." (Vooruit)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit1_CDV	"In a good society we respect the individual differences between each other, even when it comes to very strong differences in terms of, for example, norms and values." (CD&V)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit1_VLD	"In a good society we respect the individual differences between each other, even when it comes to very strong differences in terms of standards and values, for example." (Open VLD)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit1_vb	"In a good society we respect the individual differences between each other, even when it comes to very strong differences in terms of standards and values, for example." (Vlaams Belang)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit2_NVA	"In a good society, we mainly offer support to people who make an active contribution to society." (N-VA)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV

solidariteit2_Groen	"In a good society, we mainly offer support to people who make an active contribution to society." (Groen)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit2_spa	"In a good society, we mainly offer support to people who make an active contribution to society." (Vooruit)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit2_CDV	"In a good society, we mainly offer support to people who make an active contribution to society." (CD&V)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit2_VLD	"In a good society, we mainly offer support to people who make an active contribution to society." (Open VLD)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit2_vb	"In a good society, we mainly offer support to people who make an active contribution to society." (Vlaams Belang)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit3_NVA	"In a good society, we especially try to give people who are less fortunate a better place, even if they do not make an active contribution to society themselves." (N-VA)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit3_Groen	"In a good society, we especially try to give people who are less fortunate a better place, even if they do not make an active contribution to society themselves." (Groen)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit3_spa	"In a good society, we especially try to give people who are less	The party strongly disagrees (-3)	DV

	fortunate a better place, even if they do not make an active contribution to society themselves." (Vooruit)	The party completely agrees (3)	
solidariteit3_CDV	"In a good society, we especially try to give people who are less fortunate a better place, even if they do not make an active contribution to society themselves." (CD&V)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit3_VLD	"In a good society, we especially try to give people who are less fortunate a better place, even if they do not make an active contribution to society themselves." (Open VLD)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit3_vb	"In a good society, we especially try to give people who are less fortunate a better place, even if they do not make an active contribution to society themselves." (Vlaams Belang)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit4_NVA	"A good society is first and foremost a stronger community, for example based on shared norms and values." (N-VA)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit4_Groen	"A good society is first and foremost a stronger community, for example based on shared norms and values." (Groen)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit4_spa	"A good society is first and foremost a stronger community, for example based on shared norms and values." (Vooruit)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV

solidariteit4_CDV	"A good society is first and foremost a stronger community, for example based on shared norms and values." (CD&V)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit4_VLD	"A good society is first and foremost a stronger community, for example based on shared norms and values." (Open VLD)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV
solidariteit4_vb	"A good society is first and foremost a stronger community, for example based on shared norms and values." (Vlaams Belang)	The party strongly disagrees (-3) The party completely agrees (3)	DV

Appendix Tests and Checks

It's All About Solidarity, Stupid! How Solidarity Frames Structure the Party Political Sphere

List of Party Manifestos

Country	Year	Party	N	n	frames
Belgium (Flemish region)	1995	Vlaams Blok	821	821	124
		Volksunie	1017	1017	122
		VLD	308	308	45
		CVP	649	649	70
		SP	511	511	149
		Agalev	1128	1128	188
Belgium (Flemish region)	2014	Vlaams Belang	865	865	221
		N-VA	2873	2873	491
		Open VLD	1294	1294	255
		CD&V	8039	8039	911
		sp.a	8008	8008	1398
		Groen	13686	13686	1487

Robustness Check with Dictionary

We conducted a dictionary based text analysis of the coded sentences per solidarity mode per party in 2014. After running the dictionary (see **Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.**, we calculated the ratio of the number of counted words compared to the total number of sentences per mode. Overall, most runs offer a reasonable representation (at least 15 percent) of the coded sentences. Afterwards, we followed the same procedure for the party manifestos of 1995.

Our check shows that the relative frequencies of our word counts paint a fairly similar picture as the relative frequencies of sentences containing a solidarity frame. Indeed, the positions of the different political parties are overall similar to those shown in the results section. Some differences with our findings do occur, as in some cases the relative weight of the modes is slightly different compared to the quantified results shown earlier.

Solidarity frames	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen
Group-based	38 (65.52%)	71 (55.47%)	23 (32.39%)	52 (23.42%)	58 (18.35%)	22 (7.80%)
Compassionate	12 (20.69%)	22 (17.19%)	19 (26.76%)	36 (16.22%)	131 (41.85%)	142 (50.35%)
Exchange-based	6 (10.34%)	19 (14.84%)	11(15.49%)	53 (23.87%)	45 (14.38%)	45 (15.96%)
Empathic	2 (3.45%)	16 (12.50%)	18 (25.35%)	81 (36.49%)	79 (25.24%)	73 (25.89%)
Total solidarity frames	58	128	71	222	313	282

The percentages are based on the relative frequencies of particular solidarity frames within the total number of elements related to a solidarity frame found in the coded sentences

Group-based solidarity	Compassionate solidarity	Exchange-based solidarity	Empathic solidarity
Aangepast (adapted)	Achtergesteld (marginalized)	Aangemoedigd (encouraged)	Aanvaard (accept)
Aanpassen (adapt)	Achterstand (marginalization)	Aangetrokken (attracted)	Aanvaarden (accept)
Aanpassing (adaptation)	Achterstellen (marginalize)	Aangezet (stimulated)	Aanvaarding (acceptance)
Belang (interest)	Achterstelling (marginalization)	Aanmoedigen (attracted)	Acceptatie (acceptance)
Cultuur (culture)	Arm (poor)	Aansprakelijk (liable, responsible)	Accepteren (accept)
Eengemaakt (unified/united)	Arme (poor)	Aantrekken (attract)	Authenticiteit (authenticity)
Eengeworden (unified/united)	Armer (poorer)	Aanzetten (encourage)	Authentiek (authentic)
Eenmaking (unification)	Armere (poorer)	Actief (active)	Begrip (understanding)
Eensgezind (unanimous)	Armst (poorest)	Actieve (active)	Differentiatie (differentiation)
Eenwording (unification)	Armste (poorest)	Beloon (reward)	Differentieerde (differentiated)
Elke (every)	Behoeftig (needy)	Beloond (rewarded)	Differentieert (differentiate)
Gemeen (in common)	Behoevend (needy)	Beloont (rewards)	Divers (divers)
Gemeenschap (community)	Benadeeld (disadvantaged)	Bereid (prepared)	Diversifiëren (diversify)
Gemeenschappelijk (in common)	Bestaansonzeker (uncertain)	Bijdrage (contribution)	Diversiteit (diversity)
Gewoonte (custom)	Compassie (compassion)	Bijgedragen (contributed)	Eerbied (respect, esteem)
Groep (Group)	Discriminatie (discrimination)	Compensatie (compensated)	Eigen (own)
Identific (identif)	Discrimineren (discriminate)	Compenseer (compensate)	Eigenwaarde (self-worth)
Identiteit (identity)	Dupe (dupe)	Compenseren (compensate)	Empathie (empathy)
Inpassen (fit in)	Gediscrimineerd (discriminated)	Competent (competent)	Flexibel (flexible)
Integratie (integration)	Helpen (help)	Dienst (service)	Geaccepteerd (accepted)
Integreer (integrate)	Hulp (help)	Engagement (commitment)	Gelijkwaardig (equivalent)
Integreren (integrate)	Klap (hit; blow)	Incentive (incentive)	Jezelf (yourself)
Land (land/country)	Kwetsbaar (vulnerable)	Ingezet (deployed)	Maat (tailored)
Leden (members)	Kwetsbare (vulnerable)	Investeer (invest)	Miskend (misrecognized)
Lid (member)	Laag (low)	Inzet (effort)	Miskenning (misrecognition)
Norm (norm)	Laagst (lowest)	Motiveer (motivate)	Omgaan (deal, handle)
Onderling (mutually)	Laagste (lowest)	Nut (use/utility)	Ontmoeten (meet)
Ons (us)	Lage (low)	Nuttig (useful)	Ontmoeting (meeting)
Onze (our)	Lager (lower)	Opgeleverd (yield, delivered)	Ontplood (developed, unfold)
Passen (fit)	Lagere (lower)	Opleveren (deliver, yield)	Ontplooiën (develop, unfold)
Plaats (place)	Lijden (suffer)	Oplevert (deliver, yield)	Ontplooiing (development, unfold)
Recht (right)	Mededogen (compassion)	Potentieel (potential)	Ontwikkelen (develop)
Saam (together)	Medeleven (compassion, sympathy)	Prestatie (performance)	Pluralisme (pluralism)
Samen (together)	Minder (less)	Presteer (perform)	Pluralistisch (pluralist)
Samenleving (society)	Mindere (less)	Presteren (perform)	Pluriform (pluriform)
Stem (voice)	Minst (least)	Prikkel (stimulus)	Respect (respect, esteem)
Toebehoren (belong)	Minste (least)	Prikkelen (stimulate)	Specifiek (specific)
Waarde (value)	Moelijk (difficult/trying)	Ruil (exchange)	Unicité (unicity)
Barst (cleavage/fissure)	Moelijkker (difficult)	Stimulans (stimulus)	Uniek (unique)
Breuk (cleavage/fissure)	Moelijkst (difficult)	Stimuleer (stimulate)	Unieke (unique)
Kloof (cleavage)	Nadelig (disadvantageous)	Stimuleren (stimulate)	Variatie (diversity)
Onenig (discordant/disagreeable)	Onbeschermd (unprotected)	Terugkrijgen (recover)	Variëren (vary)
Onenigheid	Onzeker (uncertain)	Terugverdiend (recovered)	Verdraag (tolerate)
(disagreement/discord)	Slecht (bad)	Terugverdienen (to earn back)	Verdraagzaamheid (tolerance)
Onverenigbaar	Slechter (worse)	Verdienste (merit, worth)	Verscheiden (diverse)
(incompatible/irreconcilable)	Slechtst (worst)	Vergoed (reimbursed)	Verscheidenheid (diversity)
Onverenigbare	Tekort (shortage)	Waardeer (valued)	Zichzelf
(incompatible/irreconcilable)	Uitgesloten (excluded)	Waarderen (value)	(themselves/himself/herself)
Opgesplitst (split)	Uitsluiten (exclude)	Waardering (value)	
Polar (polar: e.g. polarized)	Verduren (endure)	Wederdienst (reciprocity)	
Splits (split)	Weinig (little)	Wederkerig (reciprocal)	
Splitst (split)	Zwaar (heavy, tough)	Beboet (fined)	
Tegengesteld (opposite)	Zwaarder (heavier, tougher)	Boet (fine)	
Tegenstelling (opposition)	Zwaarst (heaviest, toughest)	Boeten (fine)	
Uit (out)	Zwak (weak)	Doorschuiven (push through)	
Uiteen (split)	Zwakke (weak)	Geboet (fined)	
Verdeeld (divided/split)	Zwakken (weak)	Lasten (burden, load)	
Verdeelt (divides)	Zwakker (weaker)	Misbruik (abuse)	
Verschil (divide)	Zwakkere (weaker)	Misbruiken (abuse)	
Verwijder (expel)	Zwakkeren (weak)	Ontmoedigd (discouraged)	
Vijand (enemy)	Zwakst (weakest)	Ontmoedigen (discourage)	

Vijandig (hostile)	Zwakste (weakest) Zwaksten (weakest)	Ontmoedigt (discourages) Ontsnappen (evade, escape) Ontsnapt (evade) Opdraaien (pay) Recuperatie (recuperation) Recupereerde (recuperated) Recupereert (recuperate) Recupereren (recuperate) Straf (punishment) Teruggevorderd (recuperate) Terugvorderen (recuperate) Terugvordert (recuperate)	
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Robustness Check with Solidarity Referents

Rationale

As we explicitly focused on solidarity frames that are applicable across different groups of beneficiaries (solidarity referents), it is possible that we ignored the existence of correlations between solidarity frames and specific solidarity referents. Therefore, we conducted a robustness check of our results by eliminating all the sentences with particular solidarity referents and comparing these results with the original results. For this test, we chose i) migrants and ii) health-related groups (the elderly, sick, people with disabilities and patients) for all parties, and iii) the Flemish people as referents specifically for the Flemish nationalist parties.

Method

We subtracted the number of sentences with a solidarity frame – solidarity referent combination from the total number of sentences with a given solidarity frame to calculate the new values. Afterwards, we conducted two analyses. On the one hand, we determined whether the distributions were *significantly* different by calculating the chi-square. First, we used the following formula

$$(\text{original observed value} * \text{total } N \text{ of results after subtraction}) / (\text{original total } N)$$

to compute the expected values. For example, the expected value for N-VA after subtracting the number of sentences referring to migration-related groups is 94,18309

(= $(104 \cdot 4135) / (4566)$). Afterwards, we calculated chi-square $((\text{new observed value} - \text{expected value})^2 / \text{expected value})$. A significant result means that the relative distributions after elimination differs significantly from the relative distributions in the original tables, which indicates a correlation between a solidarity frame and a solidarity referent in at least one party manifesto.

On the other hand, we calculated the ISPs to determine whether the change in the relative distributions of solidarity frames after elimination also leads to a change regarding the positions of the Flemish parties on the solidarity dimensions.

Observed Values

Migration-related Groups

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev	
Group-based	26	34	0	8	5	7	
Compassionate	42	28	9	27	68	64	
Exchange-based	23	20	16	15	29	27	
Empathic	16	18	8	12	44	52	
Total	107	100	33	62	146	150	598

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen	
Group-based	53	90	13	33	49	34	
Compassionate	40	123	59	305	636	442	
Exchange-based	48	130	63	275	335	399	
Empathic	11	75	80	233	232	377	
Total	152	418	215	846	1252	1252	4135

The Elderly and Health-related Groups

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev	
Group-based	26	39	6	11	5	9	
Compassionate	27	31	8	20	37	79	
Exchange-based	23	21	18	15	28	28	
Empathic	14	24	8	12	41	53	
Total	90	115	40	58	111	169	583

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen	
Group-based	67	104	14	42	53	32	312
Compassionate	28	95	54	238	546	501	1462
Exchange-based	48	132	60	278	348	389	1255
Empathic	11	78	69	229	211	397	995
Total	154	409	197	787	1158	1319	4024

The Flemish

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev	
Group-based	5	16	6	11	5	9	
Compassionate	24	32	11	30	68	82	
Exchange-based	19	19	18	15	29	28	
Empathic	16	18	8	13	44	56	
Total	64	85	43	69	146	175	582

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen	
Group-based	15	58	14	42	53	32	214
Compassionate	12	83	54	238	546	501	1434
Exchange-based	48	129	60	278	348	389	1252
Empathic	10	74	69	229	211	397	990
Total	85	344	197	787	1158	1319	3890

Expected Values

Migration-related Groups

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev	
Group-based	23,665	35,498	5,461	10,012	4,551	8,192	
Compassionate	38,228	30,037	10,012	27,306	61,893	74,636	
Exchange-based	20,935	19,114	16,384	13,653	26,396	25,486	
Empathic	14,563	21,845	7,282	11,833	40,049	50,971	
Total	97,391	106,493	39,139	62,804	132,889	159,285	598

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen	
Group-based	61,581	94,183	12,678	38,035	47,997	30,791	
Compassionate	37,130	131,313	70,637	307,001	637,547	541,553	
Exchange-based	43,469	129,502	62,487	257,192	322,396	364,054	
Empathic	9,962	72,449	74,260	211,006	212,818	364,959	
Total	152,142	427,446	220,062	813,235	1220,758	1301,357	4135

The Elderly and Health-related groups

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev	
Group-based	23,072	34,607	5,324	9,761	4,437	7,986	
Compassionate	37,269	29,283	9,761	26,621	60,341	72,764	
Exchange-based	20,409	18,635	15,973	13,311	25,734	24,846	
Empathic	14,198	21,297	7,099	11,536	39,044	49,693	
Total	94,948	103,822	38,157	61,228	129,556	155,289	583

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen	
Group-based	59,928	91,655	12,338	37,014	46,709	29,964	
Compassionate	36,133	127,788	68,741	298,760	620,433	527,015	
Exchange-based	42,302	126,025	60,809	250,288	313,742	354,281	
Empathic	9,694	70,504	72,266	205,342	207,105	355,163	
Total	148,058	415,972	214,155	791,404	1187,988	1266,423	4024

The Flemish

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev	
Group-based	23,032	34,548	5,315	9,744	4,429	7,973	
Compassionate	37,205	29,233	9,744	26,575	60,237	72,639	
Exchange-based	20,374	18,603	15,945	13,288	25,689	24,804	
Empathic	14,174	21,260	7,087	11,516	38,977	49,607	
Total	94,785	103,644	38,091	61,123	129,333	155,023	582

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen	
Group-based	65,736	100,537	13,534	40,601	51,235	32,868	
Compassionate	39,635	140,171	75,403	327,711	680,557	578,086	
Exchange-based	46,402	138,238	66,702	274,543	344,145	388,613	
Empathic	10,634	77,336	79,269	225,241	227,174	389,580	
Total	148,872	395,380	190,440	760,793	1119,438	1275,077	3890

Chi-Square Tests

1995	Migration-related	Elderly and health-related	Flemish
χ^2	11,147	18,328	36,231
df	15	15	15
p	0,742	0,246	0,002

2014	Migration-related	Elderly and health-related	Flemish
χ^2	34,014	60,474	171,707
df	15	15	15
p	0,003	0,000	0,000

Original ISPs

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev
Group-based	0,860	1,798	-0,214	-0,008	-1,307	-1,129
Compassionate	0,118	-1,287	-1,620	0,655	1,049	1,085
Exchange-based	-0,208	-0,653	2,350	-0,177	-0,413	-0,898
Empathic	-1,296	-0,342	-0,669	-0,629	1,308	1,628

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen
Group-based	2,921	0,977	-0,925	-1,109	-1,188	-1,395
Compassionate	-1,488	-0,365	0,161	0,604	2,857	0,892
Exchange-based	1,007	1,484	1,491	1,625	0,953	0,920
Empathic	-2,635	-0,506	3,278	1,217	-0,380	1,380

ISPs after Elimination

Migration-related Groups

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev
Group-based	0,906	1,698	-1,080	-0,026	-0,800	-0,699
Compassionate	0,181	-1,308	-1,404	0,749	1,150	0,633
Exchange-based	-0,365	-0,507	2,200	-0,109	-0,521	-0,698
Empathic	-1,238	-0,800	0,098	-0,605	0,947	1,598

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen
Group-based	1,890	0,780	-0,509	-0,688	-0,687	-0,786
Compassionate	-0,956	-0,580	-0,820	0,221	2,003	0,131
Exchange-based	0,543	0,298	-0,623	1,018	-1,927	0,692
Empathic	-1,631	-0,530	1,452	0,457	-0,470	0,722

The Elderly and Health-Related Groups

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev
Group-based	1,012	1,470	-0,252	0,109	-1,207	-1,132
Compassionate	-0,235	-0,609	-1,462	0,314	0,173	1,819
Exchange-based	-0,057	-0,847	2,051	-0,023	-0,093	-1,031
Empathic	-1,172	-0,454	-0,572	-0,479	1,715	0,962

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen
Group-based	1,923	0,715	-0,509	-0,628	-0,679	-0,822
Compassionate	-1,311	-0,782	-0,344	-0,048	1,723	0,763
Exchange-based	-0,151	0,419	-0,518	1,993	-0,727	-1,016
Empathic	-1,712	-0,433	1,278	0,642	-0,524	0,749

The Flemish

Solidarity frames (1995)	Vlaams Blok	Volksunie	VLD	CVP	SP	Agalev
Group-based	-0,531	1,395	0,543	0,891	-1,299	-0,998
Compassionate	-0,288	-0,268	-1,917	0,529	0,953	0,991
Exchange-based	0,524	-0,342	1,960	-0,414	-0,636	-1,092
Empathic	0,134	-0,593	-1,082	-1,037	1,112	1,466

Solidarity frames (2014)	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	sp.a	Groen
Group-based	1,441	1,310	-0,314	-0,609	-0,735	-1,094
Compassionate	-1,541	-0,580	-0,265	0,007	1,630	0,750
Exchange-based	2,123	0,101	-0,649	-0,131	-0,692	-0,752
Empathic	-1,587	-0,352	1,361	0,610	-0,769	0,737

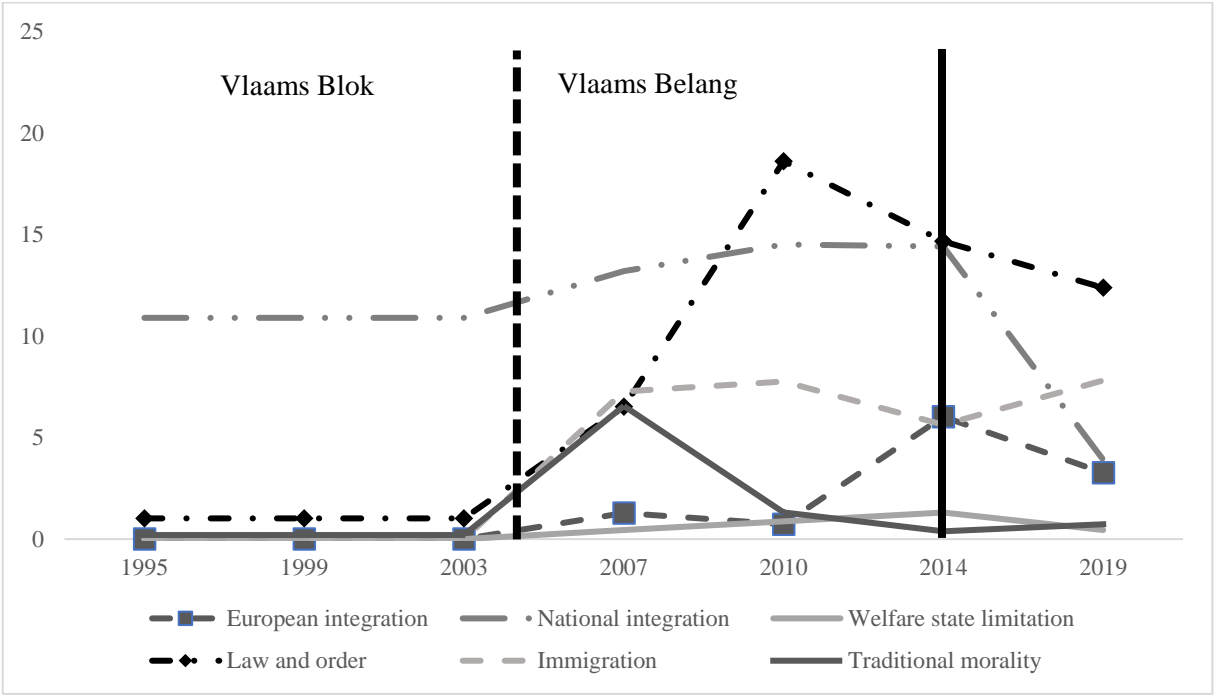
Discussion Robustness Check

In the case of the 1995 party manifestos, the elimination of sentences with the Flemish as solidarity referent caused a significant change in the distribution of the solidarity frames. The corresponding ISPs show a sudden switch in position for the radical rightist party Vlaams Blok, which is now relatively more exchange-based and empathic. Removal of sentences with either migration-related groups or the elderly and health-related groups does not lead to a significant change in the relative distribution and the positioning of the Flemish political parties.

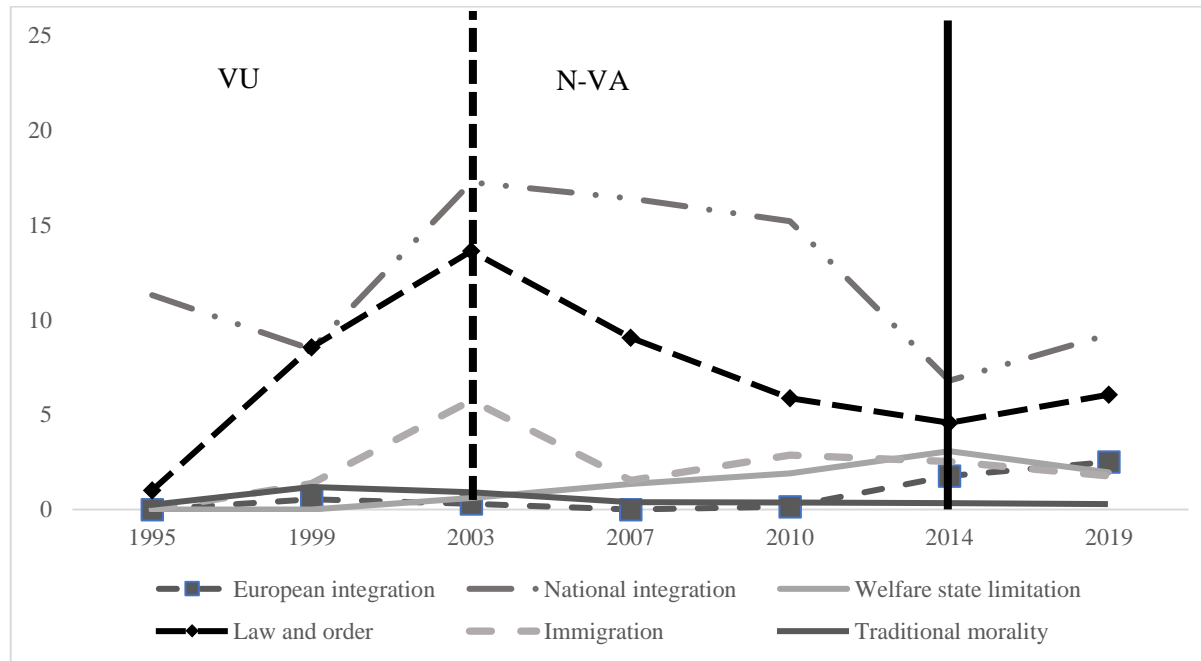
In the case of the 2014 party manifestos, taking away the sentences with either social group as solidarity referent leads to significantly different distributions of the solidarity frames across the Flemish party landscape. However, despite changes in size of the ISPs, the positions of parties remain similar to their original positions.

Drawing the Boundaries of Solidarity: What Distinguishes the Radical From the Mainstream Right?

Issue Competition Vlaams Belang and N-VA



Topic salience in party manifestos Vlaams Belang. Dashed line: establishment new party. Solid line: case analysed in Chapter 3



Topic salience in party manifestos N-VA. Dashed line: establishment new party. Solid line: case analysed in Chapter 3

The creation of the conservative *N-VA* was accompanied by a program that emphasizes the negative aspects of multiculturalism more than its centrist predecessor *Volksunie*. Although *N-VA* clearly pays less attention to the dark sides of the multicultural society than its populist radical right opponent *Vlaams Blok/Vlaams Belang*, both parties seem to broadly agree where the boundaries of solidarity are situated: between natives and newcomers, between good citizens and criminals, and between the Flemish and the Walloons. From 2010 onwards, negative positions on European integration also become more prevalent in *N-VA*'s manifestos. As of 2007, however, we observe a divergence of both parties. *N-VA* on the one hand assumes a more mainstream right profile by emphasizing decreasing welfare state expenditures. The ratio between the attention paid to the boundary between active and inactive people and that between newcomers and native Flemish people is almost 1: 1 in their party programs. *N-VA* generally also pays less attention to European integration and traditional morality than welfare state limitations. *Vlaams Belang*, on the other hand, continues to profile themselves as a challenger party centred on immigration and integration. The restrictive position on the welfare state remains a rather marginal aspect of the populist radical right discourse, as the party pays ten respectively five times more attention to their struggle against multiculturalism and European integration.

ISP

ISP	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V
Inclusionary frames	-1,6786	0,197576	0,587961	0,893065
Exclusionary frames	1,678601	-0,19758	-0,58796	-0,89306

ISP	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V
Group-based	0,954799	1,043618	-0,96467	-1,03375
Negation of group- based	1,553937	0,202687	-0,85251	-0,90412
Compassionate	-1,52082	0,132098	0,100485	1,288238
Negation of compassionate	1,698848	-0,48551	-0,34012	-0,87322
Exchange-based	-1,67048	0,282108	0,40596	0,982408
Negation of exchange-based	1,627442	-0,22263	-0,30547	-1,09934
Empathic	-1,46244	-0,32429	1,176138	0,610586
Negation of empathic	1,731521	-0,53679	-0,59736	-0,59736

Chi-Square and Cramer's V Per Quasi-Sentence

Target group 1		Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V
	Inclusionary frame	68	254	149	532
	Exclusionary frame	84	66	19	33
	Total	152	320	168	565
Chi square	216.776 (df=3)				
Cramer's V	.424				
Target group 2					
	Inclusionary frame	44	175	100	385
	Exclusionary frame	43	41	8	10
	Total	87	216	108	395
Chi square	153.551 (df=3)				
Cramer's V	.436				
Target group 3					
	Inclusionary frame	11	65	30	162
	Exclusionary frame	20	14	4	0
	Total	31	79	34	162
Chi square	102.388 (df=3)				
Cramer's V	.578				

Target group 1		Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V
	Group-based	17	46	13	27
	Negation of group-based	36	31	1	0
	Compassionate	26	84	38	213
	Negation of compassionate	26	14	7	14
	Exchange-based	18	75	43	162
	Negation of exchange-based	11	20	11	19
	Empathic	7	49	55	130
	Negation of empathic	11	1	0	0
	Total	152	320	168	565
Chi square	361.88 (df=21)				
Cramer's V	.316				
Target group 2					
	Group-based	11	26	2	26
	Negation of group-based	16	25	0	0
	Compassionate	21	73	40	151
	Negation of compassionate	12	8	4	2
	Exchange-based	7	45	23	97
	Negation of exchange-based	12	8	4	8
	Empathic	5	31	35	111
	Negation of empathic	3	0	0	0
	Total	87	216	108	395
Chi square	216.366 (df=21)				
Cramer's V	.299				
Target group 3					
	Group-based	4	6	1	10
	Negation of group-based	6	7	0	0
	Compassionate	3	30	14	64
	Negation of compassionate	5	3	2	0
	Exchange-based	2	18	12	44
	Negation of exchange-based	4	4	2	0
	Empathic	2	11	3	44
	Negation of empathic	5	0	0	0
	Total	31	79	34	162
Chi square	136.998 (df=21)				
Cramer's V	.386				

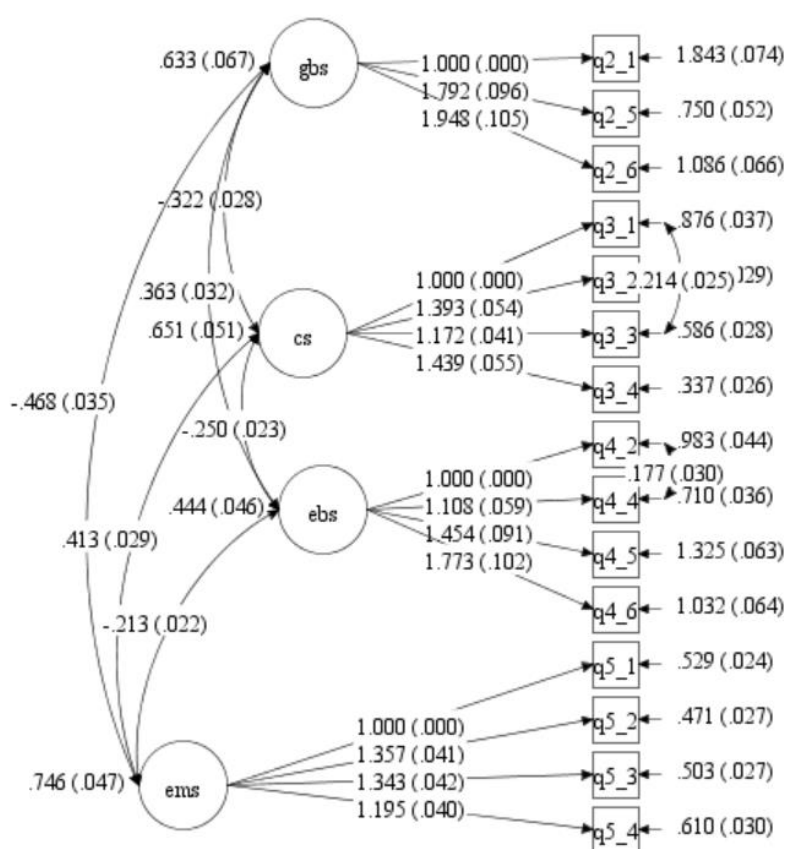
Solidarity Frames: The Missing Link Between Parties and Voters?

Listwise Missing

Syntax

```
ANALYSIS: ESTIMATOR = ML;  
  
MODEL:  
  
  GBS by Q2_1 Q2_5 Q2_6;  
  
  CS by Q3_1 Q3_2 Q3_3 Q3_4;  
  
  Q3_1 with Q3_3;  
  
  EBS by Q4_2 Q4_4 Q4_5 Q4_6;  
  
  Q4_2 with Q4_4;  
  
  EMS by Q5_1 Q5_2 Q5_3 Q5_4;
```

Model	AIC	BIC	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
Listwise	60393.574	60671.480	0.042 (0.036 0.047)	0.981	0.976	0.032



Multiple Imputation

Syntax

```
ANALYSIS: ESTIMATOR = ML;

MODEL:

GBS by Q2_1 Q2_5 Q2_6;

CS by Q3_1 Q3_2 Q3_3 Q3_4;

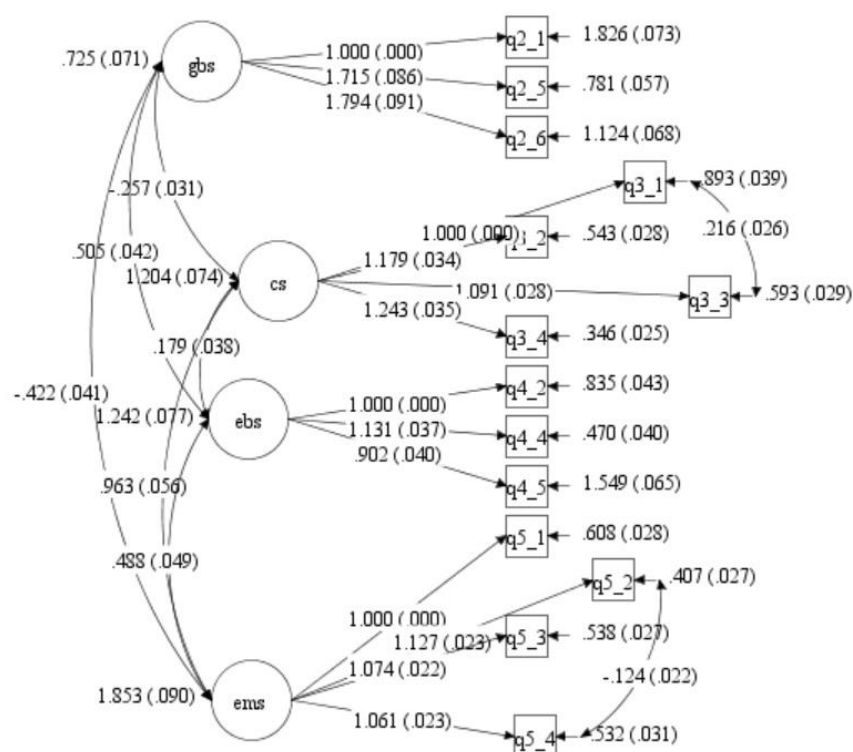
Q3_1 with Q3_3;

EBS by Q4_2 Q4_4 Q4_5;

EMS by Q5_1 Q5_2 Q5_3 Q5_4;

Q5_2 with Q5_4;
```

Model	AIC	BIC	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
Multiple imputation	61411.740	61675.151	0.056 (0.050 - 0.061)	0.978	0.971	0.050



Model Comparison (2 To 5 Factors)

2 factor model				3 factor model				4 factor model				5 factor model			
Syntax				Syntax				Syntax				Syntax			
f1 by Q2_1 Q2_2 Q2_3 Q2_4 Q2_5 Q2_6 Q2_7 Q4_1 Q4_2 Q4_3 Q4_4 Q4_5 Q4_6 Q4_7;				f1 by Q3_5 Q4_5 Q4_6 Q4_7 Q5_5;				GBS by Q2_1 Q2_5 Q2_6; CS by Q3_1 Q3_2 Q3_3 Q3_4; Q3_1 with Q3_3; EBS by Q4_2 Q4_4 Q4_5; EMS by Q5_1 Q5_2 Q5_3 Q5_4; Q5_2 with Q5_4;				GBS by Q2_1 Q2_2 Q2_3 Q2_4; Q2_1 with Q2_2; CS by Q3_1 Q3_2 Q3_3 Q3_4 Q3_7; Q3_1 with Q3_3; EXS by Q4_1 Q4_2 Q4_3 Q4_4 Q4_5 ; Q4_3 with Q4_5; EMS by Q5_1 Q5_2 Q5_3 Q5_4 Q5_6 Q5_7; NEG by Q2_5 Q2_6 Q3_5 Q4_6; Q2_5 with Q2_6;			
f2 by Q3_1 Q3_2 Q3_3 Q3_4 Q3_5 Q3_6 Q3_7 Q5_1 Q5_2 Q5_3 Q5_4 Q5_5 Q5_6 Q5_7;				f2 by Q3_1 Q3_2 Q3_3 Q3_4 Q3_7; Q3_1 with Q3_3; Q3_2 with Q3_4;				GBS with CS; GBS with EBS; GBS with EMS; CS with EBS; CS with EMS; EBS with EMS;				GBS with CS; GBS with EXS; GBS with EMS; GBS with NEG; CS with EXS; CS with EMS; CS with NEG; EXS with EMS; EXS with NEG; EMS with NEG;			
f1 with f2;				f3 by Q5_1 Q5_2 Q5_3 Q5_4 Q5_6;				f1 with f2; f2 with f3;							
RMSEA	CFI	AIC	BIC	RMSEA	CFI	AIC	BIC	RMSEA	CFI	AIC	BIC	RMSEA	CFI	AIC	BIC
0.160	0.451	138.236.706	138.684.505	0.057	0.969	67.349.009	67.612.420	0.056	0.978	61.411.740	61.675.151	0.055	0.967	75.920.961	76.247.591

One-way ANOVA checks

Group-based				Compassionate				Exchange-based				Empathic			
		Mean Difference	SE			Mean Difference	SE			Mean Difference	SE			Mean Difference	SE
Vlaams Belang	N-VA	,71638*	0,15793	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	-0,38805	0,17113	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	0,01693	0,16554	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	-1,09932*	0,2011
	Open VLD	1,71461*	0,18104		Open VLD	-0,38708	0,19618		Open VLD	0,25748	0,18976		Open VLD	-1,46553*	0,23054
	CD&V	1,97840*	0,1874		CD&V	-1,05582*	0,20308		CD&V	,65284*	0,19643		CD&V	-1,76351*	0,23864
	sp.a	2,43704*	0,18361		sp.a	-1,60522*	0,19896		sp.a	1,07740*	0,19245		sp.a	-1,86166*	0,2338
	Groen	2,76309*	0,15622		Groen	-1,38603*	0,16929		Groen	1,10700*	0,16375		Groen	-2,09338*	0,19893
N-VA	Open VLD	,99823*	0,12283	Open VLD	Open VLD	0,00096	0,13311	Open VLD	Open VLD	0,24054	0,12875	Open VLD	Open VLD	-0,36621	0,15642
	CD&V	1,26202*	0,13203		CD&V	-,66777*	0,14307		CD&V	,63591*	0,13839		CD&V	-,66419*	0,16813
	sp.a	1,72066*	0,12658		sp.a	-1,21717*	0,13717		sp.a	1,06046*	0,13268		sp.a	-,76234*	0,16119
	Groen	2,04671*	0,08196		Groen	-,99799*	0,08882		Groen	1,09007*	0,08591		Groen	-,99406*	0,10437
Open VLD	CD&V	0,26379	0,15896	CD&V	CD&V	-,66874*	0,17225	CD&V	CD&V	0,39537	0,16662	CD&V	CD&V	-0,29797	0,20242
	sp.a	,72244*	0,15446		sp.a	-1,21814*	0,16738		sp.a	,81992*	0,1619		sp.a	-0,39613	0,19669
	Groen	1,04848*	0,12063		Groen	-,99895*	0,13072		Groen	,84953*	0,12645		Groen	-,62784*	0,15362
CD&V	sp.a	0,45864	0,16187	sp.a	sp.a	-,54940*	0,17541	sp.a	sp.a	0,42455	0,16967	sp.a	sp.a	-0,09816	0,20613
	Groen	,78469*	0,12999		Groen	-0,33021	0,14086		Groen	,45416*	0,13625		Groen	-0,32987	0,16553
sp.a	Groen	0,32605	0,12445	Groen	Groen	0,21919	0,13486	Groen	Groen	0,02961	0,13045	Groen	Groen	-0,23171	0,15848

one-way ANOVA with Bonferroni correction (propensity to vote party ≥ 7) (* $p < .05$)

Group-based		Mean difference	SE	Compassionate		Mean difference	SE	Exchange-based		Mean difference	SE	Empathic		Mean difference	SE
Vlaams Belang	N-VA	,78614*	0,15825	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	-0,34724	0,17221	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	0,08324	0,16605	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	-1,05334*	0,2024
	Open VLD	1,78437*	0,18108		Open VLD	-0,34628	0,19706		Open VLD	0,32379	0,19001		Open VLD	-1,41956*	0,23161
	CD&V	2,04816*	SE+C3:C4		CD&V	-1,01502*	0,20391		CD&V	,71916*	0,19662		CD&V	-1,71753*	0,23966
	sp.a	2,50680*	0,18362		sp.a	-1,56441*	0,19983		sp.a	1,14371*	0,19267		sp.a	-1,81569*	0,23485
	Groen	2,83285*	0,15657		Groen	-1,34523*	0,17038		Groen	1,17332*	0,16429		Groen	-2,04740*	0,20025
N-VA	Open VLD	,99823*	0,12215	N-VA	Open VLD	0,00096	0,13294	N-VA	Open VLD	0,24054	0,12818	N-VA	Open VLD	-0,36621	0,15624
	CD&V	1,26202*	0,1313		CD&V	-,66777*	0,14289		CD&V	,63591*	0,13778		CD&V	-,66419*	0,16794
	sp.a	1,72066*	0,12588		sp.a	-1,21717*	0,137		sp.a	1,06046*	0,13209		sp.a	-,76234*	0,16101
	Groen	2,04671*	0,08151		Groen	-,99799*	0,0887		Groen	1,09007*	0,08553		Groen	-,99406*	0,10425
Open VLD	CD&V	0,26379	0,15808	Open VLD	CD&V	-,66874*	0,17203	Open VLD	CD&V	0,39537	0,16587	Open VLD	CD&V	-0,29797	0,20219
	sp.a	,72244*	0,15361		sp.a	-1,21814*	0,16717		sp.a	,81992*	0,16118		sp.a	-0,39613	0,19647
	Groen	1,04848*	0,11997		Groen	-,99895*	0,13056		Groen	,84953*	0,12588		Groen	-,62784*	0,15344
CD&V	sp.a	0,45864	0,16098	CD&V	sp.a	-,54940*	0,17519	CD&V	sp.a	0,42455	0,16892	CD&V	sp.a	-0,09816	0,2059
	Groen	,78469*	0,12927		Groen	-0,33021	0,14068		Groen	,45416*	0,13565		Groen	-0,32987	0,16534
sp.a	Groen	0,32605	0,12376	sp.a	Groen	0,21919	0,13469	sp.a	Groen	0,02961	0,12987	sp.a	Groen	-0,23171	0,1583

one-way ANOVA with Bonferroni correction (propensity to vote party ≥ 8) (* $p < .05$)

Group-based		Mean Difference	SE	Compassionate		Mean Difference	SE	Exchange-based		Mean Difference	SE	Empathic		Mean Difference	SE
Vlaams Belang	N-VA	,70942*	0,1571	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	-0,36621	0,17006	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	0,00957	0,16498	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	-1,07654*	0,19864
	Open VLD	1,72654*	0,17933		Open VLD	-0,31693	0,19413		Open VLD	0,28871	0,18833		Open VLD	-1,42563*	0,22675
	CD&V	1,99119*	0,18608		CD&V	-1,06188*	0,20144		CD&V	,61430*	0,19542		CD&V	-1,74406*	0,23529
	sp.a	2,41385*	0,18206		sp.a	-1,55599*	0,19709		sp.a	1,08643*	0,1912		sp.a	-1,86062*	0,23021
	Groen	2,75755*	0,1552		Groen	-1,35901*	0,16801		Groen	1,10392*	0,16299		Groen	-2,08321*	0,19624
N-VA	Open VLD	1,01712*	0,12135	N-VA	Open VLD	0,04929	0,13137	N-VA	Open VLD	0,27915	0,12744	N-VA	Open VLD	-0,34909	0,15344
	CD&V	1,28177*	0,13112		CD&V	-,69566*	0,14194		CD&V	,60474*	0,1377		CD&V	-,66752*	0,1658
	sp.a	1,70443*	0,12536		sp.a	-1,18978*	0,13571		sp.a	1,07687*	0,13165		sp.a	-,78408*	0,15851
	Groen	2,04813*	0,08157		Groen	-,99280*	0,08831		Groen	1,09435*	0,08567		Groen	-1,00667*	0,10315
Open VLD	CD&V	0,26465	0,15707	Open VLD	CD&V	-,74495*	0,17003	Open VLD	CD&V	0,32559	0,16496	Open VLD	CD&V	-0,31843	0,19861
	sp.a	,68731*	0,15229		sp.a	-1,23906*	0,16486		sp.a	,79772*	0,15994		sp.a	-0,43499	0,19257
	Groen	1,03101*	0,11888		Groen	-1,04208*	0,12869		Groen	,81520*	0,12485		Groen	-,65759*	0,15032
CD&V	sp.a	0,42266	0,16019	CD&V	sp.a	-0,49411	0,17341	CD&V	sp.a	0,47213	0,16823	CD&V	sp.a	-0,11656	0,20255
	Groen	,76636*	0,12884		Groen	-0,29713	0,13947		Groen	,48961*	0,13531		Groen	-0,33915	0,16291
sp.a	Groen	0,3437	0,12297	sp.a	Groen	0,19698	0,13312	sp.a	Groen	0,01748	0,12914	sp.a	Groen	-0,22259	0,15549

one-way ANOVA with Bonferroni correction (propensity to vote party ≥ 6) (* $p < .05$)

Rotated Factor Matrix

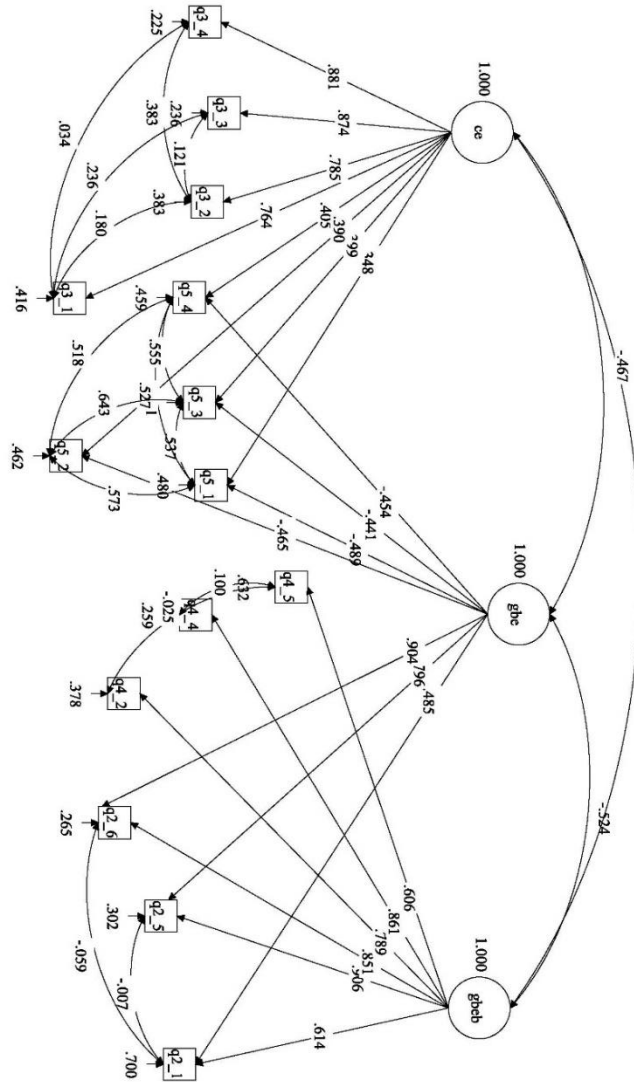
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
q2_1	-0,165	0,006	0,503
q2_5	-0,271	-0,09	0,751
q2_6	-0,367	-0,115	0,667
q3_1	0,256	0,763	0,088
q3_2	0,228	0,828	-0,089
q3_3	0,314	0,816	0,004
q3_4	0,296	0,84	-0,073
q4_2	0,302	0,113	0,669
q4_4	0,35	0,059	0,749
q4_5	0,14	-0,042	0,603
q5_1	0,816	0,316	0,092
q5_2	0,817	0,343	-0,021
q5_3	0,793	0,361	-0,039
q5_4	0,83	0,343	-0,052

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Final Model



Do Solidarity Frame Preferences Explain Propensities to Vote for a Party?

OLS regressions checks

	Vlaams Belang		N-VA		Open VLD		CD&V		sp.a		Groen	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	-.491*	.235	-1.45***	.265	.82***	.285	2.748***	.297	8.298***	.298	8.828***	.317
Left-right	.467***	.042	1.022***	.048	.637***	.051	.276***	.053	-.67***	.053	-.614***	.057
(Constant)	1.643***	.572	2.46***	.755	4.078***	.763	3.699***	.756	4.958***	.796	3.96***	.77
Group-based	.638***	.087	.94***	.114	.29***	.115	-.018	.114	-.581***	.12	-.655***	.117
Compassionate	-.177*	.089	-.584***	.117	-.645***	.118	-.197	.117	.593***	.123	.583***	.119
Exchange-based	.124	.094	.579***	.124	.487***	.125	.333**	.124	-.208	.131	-.168	.127
Empathic	-.346***	.09	-.362***	.119	-.001	.12	-.001	.119	-.002	.126	.37**	.122
(Constant)	.384	.61	-1.273	.703	1.39	.775	2.146**	.809	7.643***	.815	5.483***	.826
Left-right	.278***	.055	.825***	.063	.594***	.07	.343***	.073	-.593***	.073	-.337***	.074
Group-based	.44***	.093	.354***	.107	-.132	.118	-.262*	.123	-.159	.124	-.416***	.126
Compassionate	.019	.094	-.004	.109	-.227	.12	.044	.125	.176	.126	.346**	.128
Exchange-based	.007	.094	.231*	.109	.237*	.12	.188	.125	.042	.126	-.026	.128
Empathic	-.324***	.088	-.297***	.101	.046	.112	.027	.117	-.048	.118	.343***	.119
R ² Model 1	.216		.509		.259		.057		.261		.208	
R ² Model 2	.259		.367		.153		.026		.158		.252	
R ² Model 3	.3		.542		.272		.073		.267		.285	

OLS regressions respondents not part of electorate

	Vlaams Belang		N-VA		Open VLD		CD&V		sp.a		Groen	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	-.79***	.197	-2.018***	.247	1.827***	.241	4.209***	.234	8.829***	.195	12.521***	.212
Left-right	.497***	.03	1.168***	.037	.456***	.036	-.006	.035	-.791***	.03	-1.123***	.032
(Constant)	.946*	.446	1.824***	.623	5.012***	.565	4.581***	.541	5.401***	.506	8.191***	.544
Group-based	.672***	.068	1.177***	.095	.161***	.086	-.151	.082	-.612***	.077	-1.023***	.083
Compassionate	-.148*	.072	-.781***	.101	-.755***	.092	.075	.088	.556***	.082	.568***	.088
Exchange-based	.165*	.077	.654***	.107	.397***	.097	-.018	.093	-.476***	.087	-.705***	.093
Empathic	-.305***	.071	-.155	.099	.173	.09	-.014	.086	.12	.081	.442***	.087
(Constant)	-.109	.47	-1.73***	.593	3.293***	.588	4.025***	.579	8.257***	.483	11.602***	.502
Left-right	.25***	.041	.844***	.051	.408***	.051	.132**	.05	-.678***	.042	-.81***	.044
Group-based	.494***	.072	.579***	.092	-.128	.091	-.245**	.089	-.131	.074	-.449***	.077
Compassionate	-.023	.074	-.362***	.093	-.552***	.092	.14	.091	.219***	.076	.166*	.079
Exchange-based	.034	.078	.213*	.099	.184	.098	-.087	.096	-.122	.08	-.282***	.084
Empathic	-.254***	.07	.018	.089	.257***	.088	.013	.086	-.02	.072	.275***	.075
R ² Model 1	.219		.497		.137		0		.421		.554	
R ² Model 2	.263		.408		.119		.009		.279		.457	
R ² Model 3	.29		.536		.173		.016		.431		.599	

OLS regressions respondents part of electorate

OLS regression with outliers

	Vlaams Belang		N-VA		Open VLD		CD&V		sp.a		Groen	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	-.667***	.151	-1.876***	.185	1.495***	.184	3.747***	.183	8.68***	.162	11.140***	.180
Left-right	.483***	.024	1.135***	.029	.508***	.029	.072*	.029	-.761***	.026	-.944***	.029
(Constant)	1.168***	.353	1.92***	.491	4.667***	.455	4.32***	.441	5.330***	.429	6.791***	.451
Group-based	.662***	.053	1.136***	.074	.208*	.069	-.124	.066	-.635***	.065	-.911***	.068
Compassionate	-.158	.057	-.718***	.078	-.717***	.073	-.016	.071	.574***	.069	.575***	.072
Exchange-based	.151*	.06	.64***	.083	.421***	.077	.088	.075	-.392***	.073	-.543***	.076
Empathic	-.318***	.056	-.232***	.078	.12	.072	.001	.070	.084	.068	.428***	.071
(Constant)	.094	.373	-1.656	.462	2.706*	.842	3.5	.472	8.125***	.416	9.495***	.445
Left-right	.253***	.032	.842***	.040	.462***	.041	.193***	.041	-.658***	.036	-.636***	.039
Group-based	.475***	.057	.515***	.071	-.132	.072	-.266***	.073	-.015*	.064	-.441***	.069
Compassionate	-.013	.058	-.237***	.072	-.453***	.074	.095	.074	.198***	.065	.211***	.070
Exchange-based	.028	.061	.229***	.075	.195*	.076	-.006	.077	-.070	.068	-.232***	.073
Empathic	-.276***	.055	-.095***	.068	.195***	.069	.033	.070	-.023	.062	.324***	.066
R ² Model 1	.221		.511		.174		.004		.381		.432	
R ² Model 2	.265		.406		.130		.003		.247		.385	
R ² Model 3	.295		.545		.202		.018		.388		.482	
N	1434		1434		1434		1434		1434		1434	

Solidarity Frames as Partisan Stereotypes: How Local Politicians Distinguish Parties in Terms of Solidarity Frame Preferences

Response patterns and relevant socio-demographic and political variables

	Age (1)	Age (2)	Age (3)	Years active (1)	Years active (2)	Years active (3)	Party	Ethnicity	Gender	Education	Net income	Class	Religion
χ^2 (df)	8.199(8)	9.194(8)	1.638(3)	7.398(7)	8.845(7)	.051(2)	4.315(5)	.540(2)	8.507(2)*	9.985(6)	11.995(10)	.416(4)	8.931(9)
Cramer's V	.112	.119	.050	.107	.117	.009	.082	.029	.114*	.124	.136	.025	.117

Friedman tests

Related-Samples Friedman's Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks Summary				
	Group-based solidarity Test Statistic (df)	Compassionate solidarity Test Statistic (df)	Exchange-based solidarity Test Statistic (df)	Empathic solidarity Test Statistic (df)
N=541	57.513 (5) ***	895.921 (5)***	561.287 (5) ***	824.934 (5)***

Mean ranks	Group-based solidarity	Compassionate solidarity	Exchange-based solidarity	Empathic solidarity
Vlaams Belang	3.92	2.74	4.54	2.26
N-VA	3.27	2.33	3.78	2.53
Open VLD	3.66	3.14	4.28	3.87
CD&V	3.26	3.27	3.01	3.21
Vooruit	3.54	4.94	2.69	4.65
Groen	3.36	4.58	2.69	4.48

Pairwise comparisons				
Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic (Std. Error)	Test Statistic (Std. Error)	Test Statistic (Std. Error)	Test Statistic (Std. Error)
Vlaams Belang - N-VA	.646 (.114)***	.405 (.114)**	.760 (.114)***	.274 (.114)
Vlaams Belang - Open VLD	.262 (.114)	.403 (.114)**	.264 (.114)	1.611 (.114)***
Vlaams Belang - CD&V	.660 (.114)***	.527 (.114)***	1.531 (.114)***	.946 (.114)***
Vlaams Belang - Vooruit	.381 (.114)*	1.843 (.114)***	1.857 (.114)***	2.387 (.114)***
Vlaams Belang - Groen	.553 (.114)***	2.196 (.114)***	1.854 (.114)***	2.218 (.114)***
N-VA - Open VLD	-.384 (.114)*	-.808 (.114)***	-.495 (.114)***	-1.337 (.114)***
N-VA - CD&V	-.014 (.114)	-.932 (.114)***	-.772 (.114)***	-.673 (.114)***
N-VA - Vooruit	-.265 (.114)	-2.601 (.114)***	-1.097 (.114)***	-2.114 (.114)***
N-VA - Groen	-.093 (.114)	-2.248 (.114)***	-1.094 (.114)***	-1.945 (.114)***
Open VLD - CD&V	.398 (.114)**	.124 (.114)	1.267 (.114)***	.665 (.114)***
Open VLD - Vooruit	.119 (.114)	1.440 (.114)***	1.592 (.114)***	.776 (.114)***
Open VLD - Groen	.291 (.114)	1.793 (.114)***	1.590 (.114)***	.607 (.114)***
CD&V - Vooruit	.279 (.114)	1.316 (.114)***	.325 (.114)	1.441 (.114)***
CD&V - Groen	.107 (.114)	1.669 (.114)***	.323 (.114)	1.272 (.114)***
Vooruit - Groen	.172 (.114)	.353 (.114)*	.003 (.114)	.169 (.114)

Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Kruskal-Wallis Tests

Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test Summary				
	Group-based solidarity Test Statistic (df)	Compassionate solidarity Test Statistic (df)	Exchange-based solidarity Test Statistic (df)	Empathic solidarity Test Statistic (df)
N=541	10.711 (5)***	170.718 (5)***	199.794 (5)***	102.122 (5)***

Pairwise Comparisons of Party				
Sample 1-Sample 2	Group-based solidarity Test Statistic (Std. Error)	Compassionate solidarity Test Statistic (Std. Error)	Exchange-based solidarity Test Statistic (Std. Error)	Empathic solidarity Test Statistic (Std. Error)
Vlaams Belang-N-VA	-47.709 (36.793)	-11.807 (36.943)	-22.765 (37.257)	-49.913 (36.759)
Vlaams Belang-Open VLD	-81.405 (39.646)	-103.57 (39.807)*	-11.545 (4.146)***	-161.021 (39.609)***
Vlaams Belang-CD&V	-35.263 (36.825)	-2.433 (36.974)***	112.687 (37.289)***	-115.807 (36.791)*
Vlaams Belang-Vooruit	-32.817 (41.949)	-88.187 (42.120)***	168.838 (42.478)***	-196.984 (41.910)***
Vlaams Belang-Groen	-156.615 (39.515)***	-128.931 (39.676)***	25.458 (4.014)***	-233.146 (39.479)***
N-VA-Open VLD	-129.114 (22.014)***	-7.237 (22.103)	34.310 (22.292)	-111.108 (21.994)***
N-VA-CD&V	-82.972 (16.397)***	-113.239 (16.464)***	135.453 (16.604)***	-65.894 (16.382)***
N-VA-Vooruit	-8.526 (25.933)*	-198.994 (29.039)***	191.603 (26.261)***	-147.072 (25.909)***
N-VA-Groen	-204.324 (21.778)***	-239.738 (21.866)***	273.224 (22.053)***	-183.233 (21.758)***
Open VLD - CD&V	-46.142 (22.067)	-106.003 (22.157)	101.142 (22.345)***	-45.214 (22.047)
Open VLD-Vooruit	-48.588 (29.843)	-191.757 (29.964)	157.293 (3.220)*	-35.963 (29.816)
Open VLD-Groen	-75.209 (26.313)	-232.501 (26.420)*	238.914 (26.645)***	-72.125 (26.288)
CD&V-Vooruit	-2.446 (25.978)	-85.755 (26.084)*	56.151 (26.306)	-81.177 (26.288)*
CD&V-Groen	-121.351 (21.831)***	-126.498 (21.920)***	137.771 (22.107)	-117.338 (21.811)***
Vooruit-Groen	-123.798 (29.669)***	-4.744 (29.790)	81.620 (3.044)	-36.161 (29.642)

Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Tests with Samples

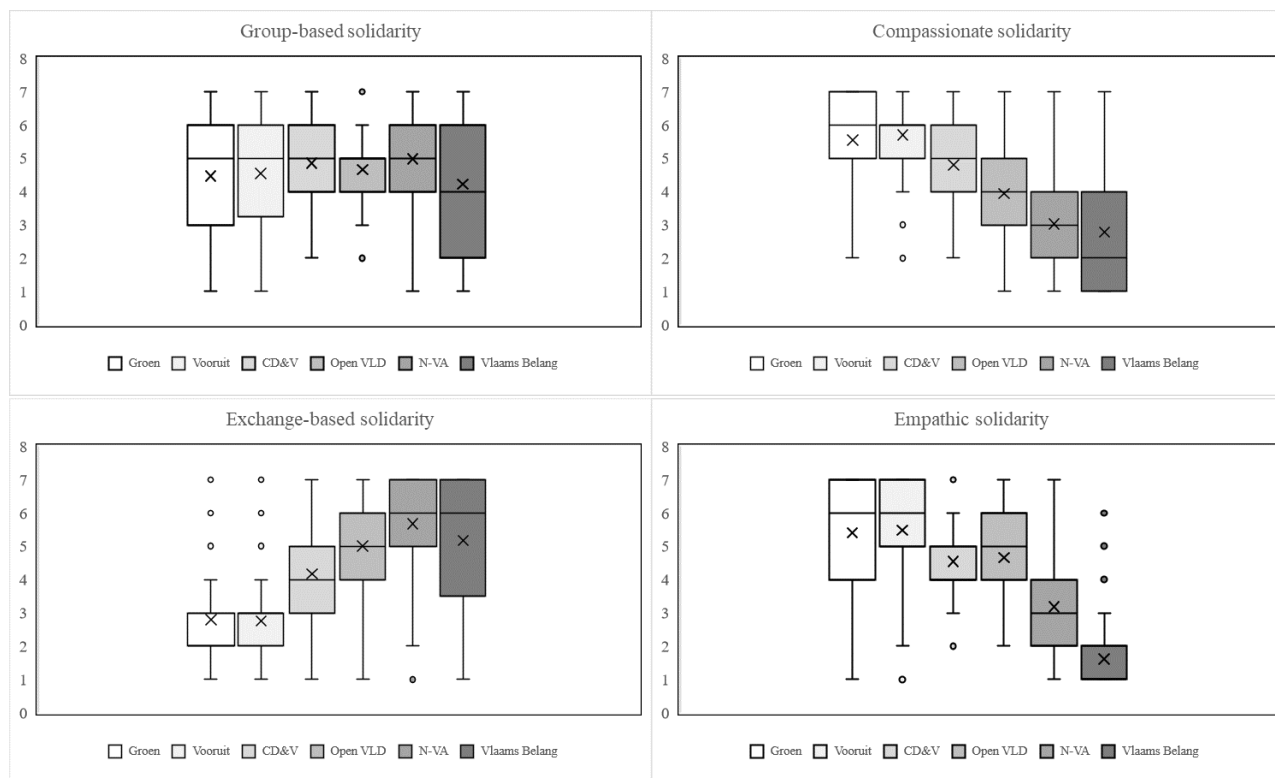
Vlaams Belang	19
N-VA	17
Open VLD	16
CD&V	15
Vooruit	16
Groen	17
Total	100

Friedman Test Samples

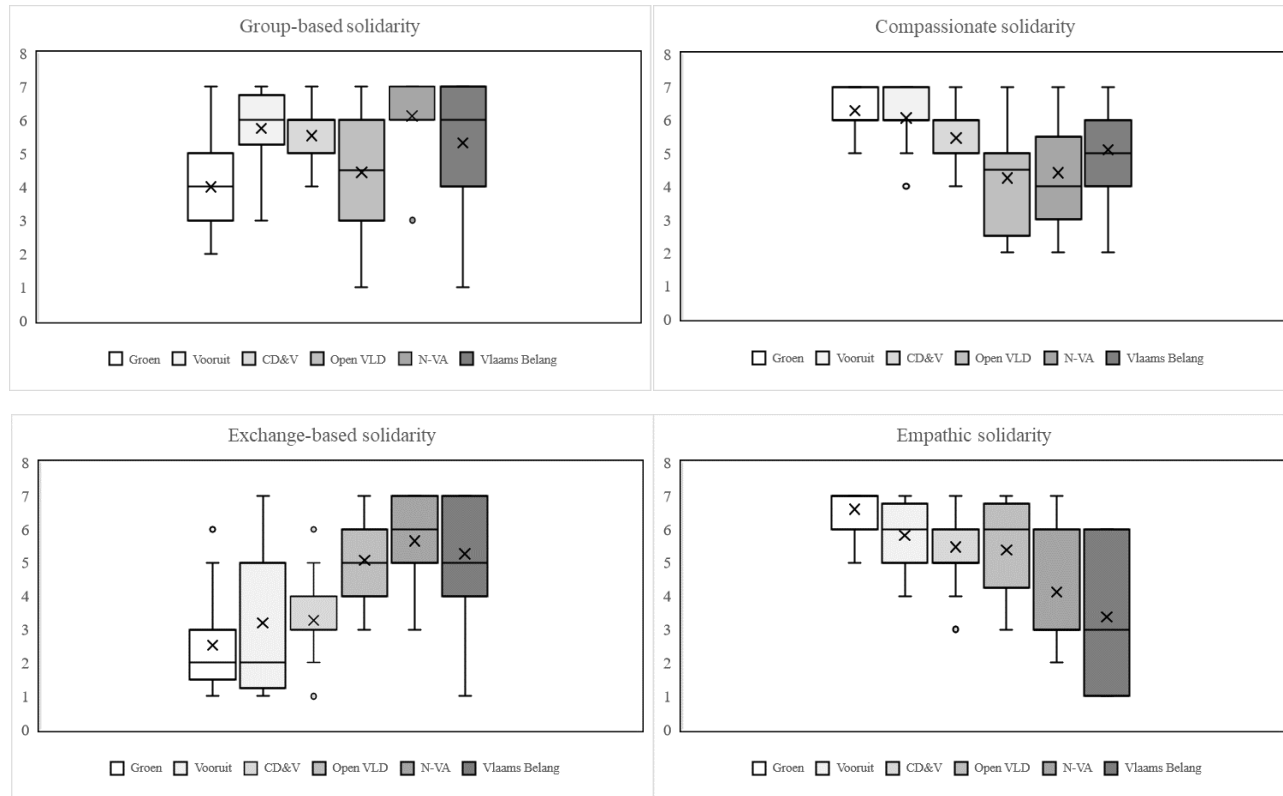
Friedman test	Group-based	Compassionate	Exchange-based	Empathic
Total N	100	100	100	100
Test Statistic	8.159	105.769	99.727	122.501
Degree Of Freedom	5	5	5	5
Asymptotic Sig.	.148	0	0	0
Mean ranks				
Vlaams Belang	3.24	2.53	3.92	2.02
N-VA	3.81	2.69	4.47	2.89
Open VLD	3.54	3.18	4.03	3.73
CD&V	3.70	3.83	3.49	3.74
Vooruit	3.41	4.48	2.57	4.35
Groen	3.31	4.30	2.54	4.29

Kruskal-Wallis Test Samples

Kruskal-Wallis test	Group-based	Compassionate	Exchange-based	Empathic
Kruskal-Wallis H	22.276	28.76	4.418	34.722
df	5	5	5	5
Asymp. Sig.	0	0	0	0



Boxplots other party samples



Boxplots own party samples

Mann-Whitney U Test Samples

	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	Vooruit	Groen
Group-based	548.50*	364.50***	644.50	437.50*	352.50***	572.50
Compassionate	248.50***	372.00***	587.00	434.50*	549.00	485.50*
Exchange-based	764.50	67.50	671.50	362.50**	662.50	627.00
Empathic	374.50***	487.50*	483.00	371.50**	618.00	452.50*

Mann-Whitney U test. U value. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .001$ *** $p < .005$

Contingency Tables Samples

Aggregate perceptions	Group-based	Compassionate	Exchange-based	Empathic	Active Margin
Vlaams Belang	342(297.60)	225 (277.30)	419 (274.10)	131 (267.90)	1117
N-VA	413 (372.70)	251 (347.40)	471 (343.30)	264 (335.60)	1399
Open VLD	391 (408.40)	331 (38.60)	420 (376.20)	391 (367.70)	1533
CD&V	412 (415.60)	408 (387.30)	354 (382.80)	386 (374.20)	1560
Vooruit	381 (413.20)	478 (385.10)	232 (38.60)	460 (372.10)	1551
Groen	371 (402.50)	460 (375.20)	232 (37.80)	448 (362.50)	1511
Active Margin	2310	2153	2128	2080	8671

$\chi^2 = 471.911 (15)^{***}$

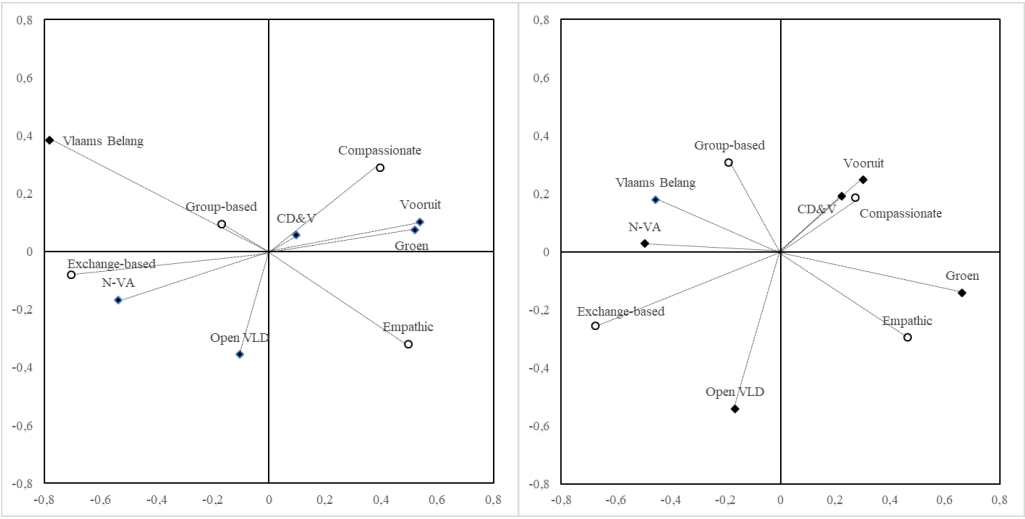
Cramer's V = .135***

Self-perceptions	Group-based	Compassionate	Exchange-based	Empathic	Active Margin
Vlaams Belang	101 (95.30)	97 (96.60)	100 (77.10)	64 (93.10)	362
N-VA	104 (9.80)	75 (92.00)	96 (73.50)	70 (88.70)	345
Open VLD	71 (8.50)	68 (81.60)	81 (65.20)	86 (78.70)	306
CD&V	83 (77.90)	82 (79.00)	49 (63.00)	82 (76.10)	296
Vooruit	92 (87.60)	97 (88.80)	51 (7.90)	93 (85.60)	333
Groen	68 (86.90)	107 (88.00)	43 (7.30)	112 (84.80)	330
Active Margin	519	526	420	507	1972

$\chi^2 = 78.777(15)^{***}$

Cramer's V = .115***

Correspondence Plots Samples



Left pane: aggregate perceptions. Right pane: self-perceptions

Index Values Samples

Aggregate perceptions	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	Vooruit	Groen
index GB	16.70%	7.41%	-1.63%	-1.13%	-8.11%	-8.06%
index C	-19.82%	-26.04%	-14.40%	5.47%	24.33%	22.77%
index EB	51.81%	39.02%	10.14%	-7.34%	-38.84%	-37.28%
index E	-51.10%	-21.27%	6.29%	3.12%	23.63%	23.58%

Self-perceptions	Vlaams Belang	N-VA	Open VLD	CD&V	Vooruit	Groen
index GB	14.00%	10.09%	-13.50%	1.66%	1.90%	-16.76%
index C	-9.14%	-13.06%	-14.61%	9.72%	12.85%	15.53%
index EB	26.08%	32.67%	25.04%	-20.05%	-26.65%	-41.05%
index E	-26.46%	-23.82%	8.29%	4.81%	6.76%	35.03%

Multilevel Regression Samples (full model)

Model	Effects		Group-based		Compassionate		Exchange-based		Empathic	
			B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Unconditional model	Fixed	Intercept (ID)	4.715***	.077	4.461***	.085	4.247***	.093	4.314***	.082
	Random	Intercept (ID)	.187	.081	.223	.130	.335	.179	.016	.120
		Residual	2.436	.187	2.963	.209	3.077	.200	3.912	.183
ICC			.071	.031	.070	.041	.098	.051	.004	.031
Model 1	Fixed	Intercept	4.867***	.202	4.367***	.112	4.122***	.128	4.267***	.171
		Party membership (ref.: CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang	-.375	.253	.528	.275	-.052	.318	.137	.281
		N-VA	.075	.271	.408	.246	.241	.239	.047	.270
		Open VLD	-.523	.297	-.104	.250	.055	.238	-.027	.267
		Vooruit	.165	.263	-.148	.159	.254	.270	-.022	.244
	Random	Groen	-.210	.257	-.210	.206	.278	.251	.125	.264
		Intercept (ID)	.127	.071	.138	.117	.321	.175	.011	.119
		Residual	2.436	.187	2.963	.209	3.056	.200	3.913	.183
			.050	.029	.045	.038	.095	.050	.003	.0303
Model 2	Fixed	Intercept (ID)	4.950***	.116	4.900***	.114	4.030***	.132	4.68***	.128
		Party judged (ref. : CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang	-.520	.271	-1.721***	.209	1.160***	.196	-2.762***	.205
		N-VA	.220	.187	-1.640*	.168	1.640***	.149	-1.340***	.185
		Open VLD	-.330***	.110	-.910***	.126	.980***	.126	.090	.144
		Vooruit	-.220	.135	.850***	.124	-1.200***	.147	.850***	.131
	Random	Groen	-.560***	.158	.770***	.131	-1.280***	.142	.967***	.172
		Intercept (ID)	.208	.081	.446	.117	.595	.164	.346	.112
		Residual	2.345	.187	1.640***	.133	1.519	.118	1.868	.226
			.080	.032	.214	.048	.281	.059	.156	.0518
Model 3	Fixed	Intercept (ID)	5.533***	.266	5.467***	.248	3.267***	.292	5.467***	.282
		Party membership (ref.: CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang	-1.112***	.358	-.677	.393	.470	.449	-.993*	.446
		N-VA	.055	.326	-.525	.367	1.20***	.376	-1.114***	.395
		Open VLD	-.721	.399	-.654	.377	1.108**	.423	-.592	.416
		Vooruit	-.471	.360	-.592	.352	.608	.441	-1.217***	.393
		Groen	-1.122***	.402	-.878*	.3535	1.145**	.420	-.702	.391
		Party judged (ref. : CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang	-1.200*	.601	-2.733***	.478	2.267***	.540	-3.533***	.567
		N-VA	-.400	.388	-2.400***	.462	2.467***	.453	-2.600***	.462
		Open VLD	-.733***	.241	-1.600***	.352	1.867***	.312	-1.333***	.295
		Vooruit	-.867***	.282	.200	.404	-.800	.436	.267	.259
		Groen	-.800***	.287	-.067	.373	-.667	.363	-5.33e-15	.314

Dyads (ref.:CD&V-CD&V)									
Random	Vlaams Belang-Vlaams Belang	2.095**	.811	3.050***	.630	-.740	.679	2.428***	.864
	Vlaams Belang-N-VA	1.189*	.521	2.242***	.557	-1.204	.542	2.074***	.676
	Vlaams Belang- Open VLD	.628*	.302	1.179***	.406	-1.446***	.447	1.439***	.370
	Vlaams Belang - Vooruit	.551	.451	.326	.465	.326	.498	.312	.405
	Vlaams Belang - Groen	-.042	.508	.435	.436	-.070	.438	.526	.513
	N-VA-Vlaams Belang	-.388	.796	1.204	.694	-1.855*	.728	.710	.605
	N-VA - N-VA	.929	.546	1.871***	.533	-1.290*	.519	2.365***	.568
	N-VA - Open VLD	-.031	.382	.835*	.420	-1.220***	.373	1.392***	.449
	N-VA - Vooruit	.043	.398	.682	.503	-.553	.523	1.027*	.445
	N-VA - Groen	-.435	.421	1.008*	.511	-.863	.480	1.471***	.510
	Open VLD - Vlaams Belang	-.488	.912	.371	.627	-1.767*	.732	.346	.780
	Open VLD - N-VA	-.100	.647	.588	.550	-1.217*	.558	1.163	.635
	Open VLD - Open VLD	.358	.369	1.038*	.459	-1.179***	.398	1.833***	.444
	Open VLD - Vooruit	.867	.427	.550	.480	-1.013	.536	-.079	.352
	Open VLD - Groen	.550	.533	.629	.466	-1.146*	.478	.125	.572
	Vooruit - Vlaams Belang	.200	.855	.046	.639	-.892	.726	.482	.624
	Vooruit - N-VA	.150	.573	-.413	.585	-.404	.644	1.225*	.554
	Vooruit - Open VLD	.858***	.284	.913	.543	-.679	.483	2.333***	.470
	Vooruit - Vooruit	1.554***	.405	.988*	.478	.113	.581	1.296***	.392
	Vooruit - Groen	1.050*	.461	1.129*	.445	-.396	.5487313	1.829***	.436
	Groen - Vlaams Belang	2.318**	.871	.910	.614	-1.325*	.621	.298	.612
	Groen - N-VA	1.341*	.659	-.071	.520	-.702	.528	.482	.576
	Groen - Open VLD	.557	.423	.071	.408	-.631	.378	1.451***	.429
	Groen - Vooruit	.867*	.387	1.329**	.484	-1.318*	.523	.910*	.363
	Groen - Groen	.388	.449	1.773***	.455	-1.217*	.486	1.824***	.429
	Intercept	.193	.076	.429	.103	.600	.162	.393	.105
	Residual	2.040	.229	1.227	.098	1.384	.120	1.540	.174
ICC		.087	.037	.259	.051	.303	.062	.203	.053
AIC (df) unconditional model		2280.977(3)		2393.829(3)		2433.452(3)		2521.157(3)	
AIC (df) Model 1		2280.265(8)		2391.196(8)		2429.892(8)		2530.476(8)	
AIC (df) Model 2		2271.801(8)		2108.487(8)		2090.402(8)		2161.288(8)	
AIC (df) Model 3		2251.392(38)		2011.393(38)		2101.712(38)		2123.989(38)	
Wald χ^2 (df) unconditional model									
Wald χ^2 (df) Model 1		10.790(5)		11.280(5)*		2.530(5)		0.660(5)	
Wald χ^2 (df) Model 2		57.290(5)***		162.720(5)***		249.300(5)***		243.010(5)***	
Wald χ^2 (df) Model 3		302.090(35)***		736.890(35)***		504.710(35)***		2490.860(35)***	
N (observations)		600		599		600		598	
N (classes)		100		100		100		100	
Average n per observation		6		6		6		6	

Model	Effects		Group-based		Compassionate		Exchange-based		Empathic	
			B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Unconditional model	Fixed	Intercept (ID)	4.759***	.034	4.425***	.034	4.269***	.035	4.310***	.035
	Random	Intercept (ID)	.221	.044	.099	.046	.149	.059	1.07E-08	.000
		Residual	2.447	.082	3.078	.085	3.180	.081	3.879	.065
Model 1	Fixed	Intercept	4.739***	.061	4.283***		4.309***	.055	4.219***	.054
		Party membership (ref.: CD&V)				.050				
	Random	Vlaams Belang	.246	.158	.571*	.246	-.248	.290	.282	.197
		N-VA	.097	.088	.551***	.077	-.201*	.086	.283***	.088
		Open VLD	-.123	.112	.074	.090	.011	.103	.059	.102
		Vooruit	.060	.121	-.348***	.115	.280*	.140	-.002	.113
		Groen	.064	.113	-.299***	.093	.076*	.110	-.129	.112
		Intercept (ID)	.213	.044	9.93E-12	.000	.129*	.056	.000	.000
		Residual	2.447	.082	3.066	.071	3.180*	.081	3.856	.065
	Fixed	Intercept (ID)	5.135***	.050	4.953***	.048	4.110***	.054	4.830***	.056
		Party judged (ref. : CD&V)								
	Random	Vlaams Belang	-.505***	.108	-2.038***	.081	.984***	.092	-3.150***	.070
		N-VA	.227***	.079	-1.800***	.066	1.568***	.069	-1.499	.077
		Open VLD	-.401***	.054	-1.188***	.059	1.053***	.059	-.065	.061
		Vooruit	-.660***	.064	.978***	.050	-1.321***	.058	.692***	.063
		Groen	-.914***	.071	.905***	.055	-1.347***	.062	.852***	.075
		Intercept (ID)	.250	.044	.393	.041	.414	.054	.379	.043
		Residual	22.697	.080	1.297	.048	1.590	.067	1.567***	.069
Model 3	Fixed	Intercept (ID)	5.362***	.091	5.184***	.084	4.035***	.107	5.194***	.086
		Party membership (ref.: CD&V)								
	Random	Vlaams Belang	-.767***	.261	-.384	.316	-.233	.365	-.547	.357
		N-VA	-.257*	.128	-.097	.116	.142	.138	-.427***	.137
		Open VLD	-.294	.165	-.539***	.149	.155	.179	-.464**	.174
		Vooruit	-.409*	.170	-.578***	.194	.035	.211	-.706***	.184
		Groen	-.386*	.167	-.595***	.153	.147	.176	-.753***	.178
		Party judged (ref. : CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang	-1.064***	.198	-2.576***	.140	1.224***	.179	-3.532***	.114
		N-VA	-.383***	.141	-2.356***	.115	1.618***	.140	-2.202***	.126
		Open VLD	-.529***	.100	-1.676***	.115	1.166***	.122	-.680***	.101
		Vooruit	-.830***	.121	.782***	.096	-1.263***	.110	.257*	.111
		Groen	-.934***	.129	.440***	.100	-1.099***	.111	.260*	.122
		Dyads (ref.:CD&V-CD&V)								
		Vlaams Belang-Vlaams Belang	2.022***	.614	2.843***	.446	.320	.445	2.253***	.692
		Vlaams Belang-N-VA	.945*	.458	1.947***	.366	-.408	.349	1.590***	.517
		Vlaams Belang- Open VLD	.208	.215	1.212***	.303	-.654	.349	.725***	.260
		Vlaams Belang-Vooruit	.265	.289	-.293	.251	.602	.309	.240	.333

	Vlaams Belang - Groen	-.317	.330	-.001	.253	.049	.302	.212	.429
	N-VA-Vlaams Belang	1.062***	.252	.965***	.200	-.651***	.240	.615***	.167
	N-VA - N-VA	1.313***	.181	1.315***	.150	-.312	.179	1.635***	.179
	N-VA - Open VLD	.071	.131	.750***	.139	-.348*	.152	.581***	.139
	N-VA - Vooruit	-.079	.163	.227	.130	-.224	.153	.597***	.163
	N-VA - Groen	-.238	.186	.653***	.136	-.525	.157	.818***	.190
	Open VLD - Vlaams Belang	-.225	.369	.657***	.253	-.444	.301	.265	.214
	Open VLD - N-VA	.234	.239	.817***	.204	-.203	.219	.588	.251
	Open VLD - Open VLD	.371	.195	1.248***	.200	-.223	.197	1.464***	.204
	Open VLD - Vooruit	.422	.225	.413*	.172	.033	.179	.452*	.200
	Open VLD - Groen	.224	.241	.498***	.180	-.027	.210	.356	.235
	Vooruit - Vlaams Belang	.064	.467	-.194	.278	.171	.365	.211	.211
	Vooruit - N-VA	.151	.355	-.207	.250	.405	.305	.411	.253
	Vooruit - Open VLD	.622	.184	.667*	.277	.183	.263	1.295***	.224
	Vooruit - Vooruit	1.179***	.219	.573***	.197	.449	.234	1.115***	.187
	Vooruit - Groen	.794***	.250	.586**	.222	.262	.243	1.233***	.215
	Groen - Vlaams Belang	1.337***	.361	.464*	.234	-.006	.266	.435*	.198
	Groen - N-VA	.876	.272	-.170	.179	.458***	.201	.106	.206
	Groen - Open VLD	.024	.203	-.016	.176	.271	.168	.959***	.199
	Groen - Vooruit	.327	.183	.300*	.145	-.369	.162	.717***	.181
	Groen - Groen	.132	.206	1.174***	.160	-.782	.166	1.446***	.204
Random	Intercept	.269	.043	.304	.033	.401	.052	.380	.040
	Residual	2.115	.079	1.152	.043	1.545	.066	1.417	.059
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	AIC (df) unconditional model	12356.69 (3)		12878.9 (3)		13107.26 (3)		13495.94 (3)	
	AIC (df) Model 1	12360.27 (8)		12781.64 (8)		13100.67 (8)		13487.16 (8)	
	AIC (df) Model 2	12162.99 (8)		10565.63 (8)		11242.78 (8)		11072.15 (8)	
	AIC (df) Model 3	12025.9 (38)		10195.9 (38)		11208.9 (38)		10842.39 (38)	
	N (observations)	3,246		3,225		3,246		3,217	
	N (classes)	541		541		541		541	

Abstract

Recently, theorization and conceptualizations of solidarity have experienced a surge, as solidarity has become increasingly problematised. The challenges that solidarity faces today make it a contested and politicised concept. Consequently, it is fair to assume that solidarity has become predominant in current political discourses. This dissertation focuses on political parties as active evaluators and framers of solidarity who come into conflict, as they propose a different understanding of solidarity. Therefore, this dissertation introduces the concept of solidarity frames: rhetorical devices that specify a particular problem definition, a causal interpretation, a moral evaluation, and a treatment recommendation. We distinguish four solidarity frames - group-based, compassionate, exchange-based, and empathic solidarity – and their exclusionary counterparts.

The main contribution of this dissertation is to further the understanding of the role of solidarity frames in the dimensionalization of the party political sphere. Based on the dialectical theory of solidarity, we propose a solidarity frame theory that theorises six dialectical relationships between the *four solidarity frames*. In addition, a dialectical approach also assumes the potential of exclusion and backlashes.

We focus on the case of Belgium, more specifically the Flemish party system, to study solidarity frames in three aspects of party politics. First, we discuss the supply-side and

assess the role of political parties in communicating and framing solidarity. We evaluate whether we can distinguish partisan discourses in solidarity frames more specifically by conducting a content analysis of party manifestos. Second, we turn to the demand-side of the party political sphere and assess whether voters have similar solidarity preferences as their preferred parties by conducting a survey. More particularly, we evaluate whether the solidarity frame preferences of party electorates are congruent with those of their preferred parties and assess the impact of solidarity frame preferences on propensities to vote for specific parties. Third, we conduct an intermediary analysis based on survey data that considers whether solidarity frames have a heuristic value for grassroots politicians functioning as the interface between the parties' supply and the voters' demands.

First, our supply-side analyses indicated a higher prevalence of group-based and exchange-based solidarity among rightist parties, while leftist political parties strongly advocate compassionate and empathic solidarity. Moreover, we found that inverse elective affinities between group-based and empathic solidarity frames – in terms of salience – have grown stronger between 1995 and 2014. Our analyses also showed that one could *distinguish* the discourses from mainstream right parties and the populist radical right *in terms of exclusionary versus inclusionary solidarity frames*: the latter are more inclined to use exclusionary solidarity frames than the former.

Second, our demand-side analyses indicated similar distinctions between solidarity frames - a higher degree of support for group-based and exchange-based solidarity

among rightist electorates versus a higher degree of support for compassionate and empathic solidarity among leftist electorates. Furthermore, the results show that the choice between either bonding with those who are similar (i.e., group-based solidarity) or bridging the gulf with those who are different (i.e., empathic solidarity) has also become a pressing question for voters. Furthermore, we found that solidarity frame preferences significantly affect inclinations to vote for specific parties, even if we took left-right self-placement into account.

Finally, our intermediary analysis found strong support for the hypothesis that solidarity frames are helpful for politicians to differentiate parties from one another. The results showed that such partisan stereotypes exist and are congruent with real discursive differences between party manifestos and differences between voter preferences. However, *partisan and ideological biases affect* how sharply politicians draw these distinctions between parties. Politicians tend to evaluate their parties and ideologically closer parties more favourably in terms of preferred solidarity frames.

In conclusion, the recurrence of these solidarity conflict lines across datasets indicates that solidarity frames help make meaningful distinctions between parties and their voters. These recurring solidarity conflict lines indicate that a solidarity frame approach leads to similar findings as more conventional issue-based and value-based studies. However, our studies also indicate that the solidarity frame approach complements the more conventional approaches to the dimensionality of party politics. By measuring

solidarity frames for the first time, this thesis enhances our understanding of the politics of solidarity and provides stepping stones for further research on this specific topic.

Author Contributions

Chapters	Contributions of authors	Status
Chapter 1: It's All About Solidarity, Stupid! How Solidarity Frames Structure the Party Political Sphere	<p>Peter Thijssen: theory development, data interpretation, drafting, and revising the manuscript</p> <p>Pieter Verheyen: theory development, data collection, data analyses and interpretation, drafting, and revising the manuscript</p>	Published British Journal of Political Science
Chapter 2: Drawing the Boundaries of Solidarity: What Distinguishes the Radical From the Mainstream Right?	<p>Pieter Verheyen: theory development, data collection, data analyses, drafting and revising the manuscript</p> <p>Job Vossen: theory development, drafting, and revising the manuscript</p>	Submitted for review Patterns of Prejudice
Chapter 3: Solidarity Frames: The Missing Link Between Parties and Voters?	<p>Pieter Verheyen: theory development, data collection, data analyses, drafting and revising the manuscript</p> <p>Peter Thijssen: theory development and revising the manuscript</p>	Submitted for review Acta Politica
Chapter 4: Do Solidarity Frame Preferences Explain Propensities to Vote for a Party?	Single-authored	Unpublished
Chapter 5: Solidarity Frames as Partisan Stereotypes: How Local Politicians Distinguish Parties in Terms of Solidarity Frame Preferences	Single-authored	Unpublished