

**A HOUSE BUT NOT A HOME: THE DETERMINANTS OF SECESSIONIST PARTY
EMERGENCE AND SUPPORT IN NORTH AMERICA AND WESTERN EUROPE**

by

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M.P.P.A., Concordia University, 2015

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES
(Political Science)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
(Vancouver)

September 2021

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A House but not a Home: The Determinants of Secessionist Party Emergence and Support in North America and Western Europe

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Abstract

While there exists a considerable amount of extant theoretical work that studies the phenomenon of substate nationalism and independence-seeking movements, empirical work on the topic remains relatively nascent. Moreover, we know little about what make secessionist parties successful and even less about what causes these parties to emerge.

This dissertation focuses on both the emergence and success of secessionist movements in Western democracies. Concerning emergence, I deploy a unique application of time-to-event modelling in order to determine what increases the likelihood of a secessionist party emerging in both subnational and national elections. To model success, I rely on time-series cross-sectional regression analyses of secessionist party vote shares from 1945 to the present day.

I argue that what influences both the emergence and subsequent support of secessionist parties differs based on the electoral arena in which the parties compete—that is, the effects of emergence/success vary based on the arena in which the party is entering/competing.

I find that secessionist parties have become increasingly successful in the contemporary era, that these parties viably compete for—and form—government, and that their success means that these parties are no longer small, peripheral parties that can be ignored.

I complement the quantitative analysis with a series of case studies that allows me to further explore how the identified mechanisms have influenced the emergence and success in Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland. In sum, the case studies show how and why secessionist parties are encouraged by the electoral system subnationally but not nationally, that the effects of immigration are idiosyncratic to the specific case, and that the central government's response to subnational demands for autonomy greatly influence the emergence and success of secessionist parties.

Lay Summary

This dissertation is composed of five chapters. The introductory chapter provides the reader with the questions motivating this research as well as the cases considered. Chapter Two demonstrates that secessionist parties have been increasingly successful in the contemporary era. Chapters Three and Four model what increases the likelihood of the emergence of secessionist parties and their success respectively. In chapters Three and Four, I argue that the influences of secessionist party emergence and success vary by electoral arena. Chapter Four further argues that there exists a strong relationship between the presence of immigrants and secessionist party support but only in regions that are home to a language that is different from the central state. Chapter Five explores the Catalan, Québécois, and Scottish cases in more detail to reinforce and contextualize the earlier regression analysis. The final chapter offers concluding remarks, notes the project's limitations, and suggested avenues for future research.

Preface

All chapters in this dissertation have been designed, written, and analyzed by me. In conducting this project, I created and maintain a unique, up-to-date dataset of electoral, sociological, and economic data in 38 regions across Western Europe and North America in both subnational and national elections.

This dataset has been used throughout this work. In Chapter Three, I use the dataset to employ time-to-event modelling. In Chapter Four, I use the dataset to conduct a time-series cross-sectional analysis of support for secessionist parties. In Chapter Five, I use the more fine-grained, case-specific data to apply the mechanism to Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland. All of this analysis was interpreted and written by me. All errors are my responsibility.

No chapters of this work have been published, submitted for publication, nor have they presented at academic conferences.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Lay Summary.....	iv
Preface	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Tables.....	xii
List of Figures	xiv
Acknowledgements	xvi
Dedication.....	xviii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Nationalism.....	4
1.2 Party Formation	8
1.3 Selection Criteria	12
1.3.1 Selecting Regions	12
1.3.2 Selecting Parties	15
1.4 Empirical Research Questions.....	16
1.4.1 Secessionist Party Emergence	16
1.4.2 Secessionist Party Support	17
1.4.3 Effects of Electoral Arenas.....	18
1.5 Structure of the Work	19
Chapter 2: The Slow Climb to Success.....	21
2.1 Regions Under Study.....	21

2.1.1	Definite Regions	21
2.1.2	Counterfactual Cases	23
2.1.3	Non-Linguistically Distinct Counterfactual Regions	24
2.1.3.1	Newfoundland & Labrador.....	24
2.1.3.2	The Azores and Madeira	25
2.1.3.3	Alaska and Texas.....	25
2.1.4	Linguistically Distinct Counterfactual Cases	27
2.1.4.1	Hawaii.....	27
2.1.4.2	Schleswig-Holstein.....	27
2.1.4.3	Valle D’Aosta	28
2.2	Dataset	28
2.3	Secessionist Party Emergence	29
2.4	Secessionist Party Support	35
2.4.1	Secessionist Party Vote Share	35
2.4.2	Secessionist Party Support by Seat Share	38
2.5	Secessionist Parties in Government.....	42
2.6	Concluding Remarks	42
	Chapter 3: Secessionist Party Emergence	44
3.1	Determinants of Emergence	45
3.1.1	Subnational Distinctiveness.....	45
3.1.2	Coordination and Mobilization.....	48
3.1.3	Demographic Strength.....	49
3.1.4	Non-Contiguity	50

3.1.5	Self-Rule.....	50
3.1.6	Electoral Systems	52
3.2	Methodology.....	53
3.3	Measures.....	55
3.3.1	Geography and Electoral Systems.....	55
3.3.2	Regional Language.....	55
3.3.3	Population.....	56
3.3.4	Autonomy	57
3.4	Secessionist Party Emergence	60
3.5	Measuring Emergence	60
3.6	Results	61
3.6.1	Subnational Party Emergence.....	61
3.6.2	National Party Emergence.....	64
3.7	Recapitulation.....	66
3.8	Discussion.....	67
Chapter 4: Secessionist Party Success		68
4.1	Structures of Success	70
4.1.1	Linguistic Distinction; Co-ordination; and Non-Contiguity	70
4.1.2	Demographic Strength.....	71
4.1.3	Self-Rule.....	72
4.1.4	Electoral Systems	73
4.1.5	Immigration: Protection of the Subnational Identity	74
4.1.6	The Economy.....	76

4.2	Methodology.....	78
4.3	Measures.....	78
4.4	Secessionist Party Success	80
4.4.1	Language & Migrant Stock	85
4.5	Conclusion.....	87
Chapter 5: The Emergence and Success of Secessionist Parties in Catalonia, Scotland, and Québec		89
5.1	Catalonia: Language, Autonomy, and the Electoral System.....	91
5.1.1	Catalan Secessionist Parties and their Entry	92
5.1.2	Language	96
5.1.2.1	The Geographic Concentration of Catalan and its Implications.....	96
5.1.2.2	Party Formation: Linguistic Defence	100
5.1.2.3	Language and Immigration.....	101
5.1.3	The Electoral System.....	104
5.1.3.1	The Electoral System as an Up-Stream Effect	104
5.1.3.2	Secessionist Party Success: The Electoral System.....	107
5.1.4	Autonomy	109
5.1.4.1	Party Formation: The Effects of Autonomy	109
5.1.4.2	Autonomy: Central-State Resistance and Secessionist Party Success	112
5.2	Scotland: Autonomy and Electoral Systems	117
5.2.1	Scottish Secessionist Parties and their Entry.....	117
5.2.2	Electoral Systems	120
5.2.2.1	National Elections: The Effects of First Past the Post.....	120

5.2.2.2	National Success: The Punishment and rewards of FPTP.....	121
5.2.2.3	Emergence: Subnational Elections and the MMP System	122
5.2.2.4	Subnational Success: The Effects of the MMP System	123
5.2.3	Autonomy	127
5.2.3.1	Party Formation: The Effects of Autonomy	127
5.2.3.2	Party Success: Autonomy.....	132
5.3	Québec	137
5.3.1	Québécois Secessionist Parties and Their Entry	139
5.3.2	Language and Immigration.....	142
5.3.2.1	Language and the Emergence of the PQ	142
5.3.3	The Electoral System.....	150
5.3.3.1	The Effects of FPTP Subnationally: Entrance & Success.....	151
5.3.3.2	The Effects of FPTP Nationally: Entrance	154
5.3.3.3	The Effects of FPTP Nationally: Success	156
5.3.4	Autonomy	159
5.3.4.1	The Effects of Autonomy: Subnational Entry	159
5.3.4.2	The Effects of Autonomy: National Entry	161
5.3.4.3	The Effects of Autonomy: Subnational Success	164
5.3.4.4	Recapitulation.....	168
5.3.4.5	Autonomy and the Success of the BQ.....	169
5.4	Conclusion.....	171
	Chapter 6: Conclusion	174
6.1	What Factors Determine the Emergence of Secessionist Parties?	174

6.2	Are the Factors that Determine the Emergence of Secessionist Parties Symmetric Across Electoral Arenas?	175
6.3	What Factors Determine the Success of Secessionist Parties?.....	176
6.4	Are the Factors that Determine the Success of Secessionist Parties Symmetric Across Electoral Arenas?.....	177
6.5	Limitations of the Project	178
6.6	Future Research	179
	References	182
	Appendices	197
	Appendix A – Selected Parties	197
	Appendix B – Success Specifications	205

List of Tables

Table 2.1 Cases, 1945-2021	22
Table 2.2 Counterfactual Cases	23
Table 2.3 Secessionist Party Emergence by Case, 1945-2021	32
Table 2.4 Secessionist Party Vote Share by Decade	38
Table 2.5 Secessionist Seat Share by Decade	39
Table 3.1 Measurements and Expected Direction with Party Emergence	59
Table 3.2 Secessionist Party Emergence by Decade	60
Table 3.3 Secessionist Party Emergence in Subnational Elections	62
Table 3.4 Secessionist Party Emergence in National Elections	65
Table 3.5 Expected and Observed Relationship	66
Table 4.1 Measures and Expected Direction with Secessionist Party Support	80
Table 4.2 Determinants of Secessionist Party Success	81
Table 4.3 Determinants of Secessionist Party Success with Interaction	86
Table 4.4 Expected and Observed Relationships	87
Table 5.1 Model Residual Fits.....	90
Table 5.2 Catalan-as-First-Language	97
Table 5.3 District Magnitudes, Catalonia and the Basque Country	107
Table 5.4 Effects of the Electoral System, Subnational Elections	107
Table 5.5 Effects of the Electoral System, National Elections.....	108
Table 5.6 Effects of the Electoral System, National Elections.....	122
Table 5.7 SNP Constituency and List Seats	125
Table 5.8 Scottish Greens' List Votes and Seats	126

Table 5.9 Polarization, Subnational Elections.....	152
Table 5.10 National Advantage Ratio	158
Table A.1 List of Parties.....	204
Table B.2 Random and Fixed Effects, National Elections	206
Table B.3 Area Specifications, Subnational Elections	207
Table B.4 Area Specifications, National Elections	208
Table B.5 Population Specifications, Subnational Elections	209
Table B.6 Interaction Specification, Subnational Elections	210

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Percentage of Regions with at Least One Secessionist Party	30
Figure 2.2 Kaplan-Meier Estimates of Secessionist Party Entry	35
Figure 2.3 Secessionist Party Vote Share, National and Subnational Elections	37
Figure 2.4 Secessionist Party Seat Share, Subnational and National Elections	41
Figure 3.1 Self-Rule in Subnational Elections	59
Figure 4.1 Migrant Stock and Change in National GDP (%).....	79
Figure 4.2 Secessionist Party Vote Share.....	80
Figure 4.3 Predicted Effects of the Regional Language and Migrant Stock Interaction.....	87
Figure 5.1 Number of Secessionist Parties in Catalan Elections.....	93
Figure 5.2 Secessionist Party Support, Subnational and National Elections	94
Figure 5.3 Secessionist Party Vote Share per Constituency, Subnational Elections.....	98
Figure 5.4 Secessionist Party Vote Share per Constituency, National Elections	99
Figure 5.5 Foreign-Born Population and Secessionist Party Support	102
Figure 5.6 Importance that Immigrants Speak Castilian/Catalan.....	103
Figure 5.7 Insufficient Autonomy	113
Figure 5.8 Support for Independence	114
Figure 5.9 Share of the Scottish Vote, National Elections	119
Figure 5.10 SNP Success, Subnational Elections.....	124
Figure 5.11 Support for Independence	133
Figure 5.12 Secessionist Party Success, Pre- and Post-Devolution	134
Figure 5.13 Secessionist Party Support, Subnational Elections	141
Figure 5.14 Demographic Factors	143

Figure 5.15 Total Number of Immigrants to Québec	147
Figure 5.16 PQ and PLQ Seat Share, 1970-2018	153
Figure 5.17 BQ and PLQ Seat Share in National Elections, 1945-2019.....	157
Figure 5.18 Support for Independence, 1988-2021	166

Acknowledgements

I owe a considerable amount of thanks to a lot of people. First, I thank my committee. The speed, efficacy, efficiency, and detailed comments that they provided have been incredible. I could not have had a more perfect committee if I tried. I want to thank Richard Johnston for supervising this project, for navigating a first-generation scholar around the labyrinth that is academia, for dealing with my endless questions, and, importantly, encouraging me to expand on the historical artefacts that other researchers left in a footnote—*history matters, dammit!* I am loath to think of the money we've spent at the Stong's Seminar Room. I want to thank Fred Cutler, whose methodological nous has been anything but risible. Fred has provided me with considerable editorial advice. He's the only acceptable West Ham fan I know. I also thank Carey Doberstein both for his excellent editorial surgery and his insight provided on the qualitative aspect of this project.

I also want to thank friends and colleagues: Isabel Chew, Josh Fawcett Weiner, Connor Fletcher, Samy Gallienne, Lilit Klein (particularly for her help with German materials, *danke*), Sarah Lachance, Antonin Lacelle-Webster, Nicholas La Monaca (for carefully explaining Italian politics and the electoral system), Dillon McGuire, Andrew Parsons, Michael Parsons, Dušan Pjevović (particularly for his help regarding materials in Serbian), John Querengesser, James Roberts, Sanda Sijerčić, Alessandro Sisti, Dominik Stecula, Bryden Streeter, Remo Taraschi, and Oliver Thomas. I owe a debt of gratitude to those who have provided with me methodological and case-specific advice, including: Maria Ackrén, Nathan Allen, Paul Allison, Marc F. Bellemare, Daniel Cetrà, Vincent Geloso, Mark Pickup, and Franciscu Sedda.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my former colleagues, Ben O'Heran, Eric Merkley, and Mackenzie Lockhart. Ben has reminded me that Mariners fans suffer alongside Tigers fans, read my baseball articles, and has been a constant source of support. Whether he knows it or not, Eric has been a role model for me and has provided me with invaluable advice and expertise. Without Mac, I am sure, I would have neither the mastery of Stata nor R to complete this project. Mac has happily dealt with my stupid questions, feigned interest in my research, and has troubleshot countless problems. I owe the three of you many, many pitchers.

The final people I would like to thank are my family. First, even if they might not have totally understood what I was doing, why I was putting myself through this project, or what

comes next, my parents have always supported in my educational pursuits. Their support, love, and guidance has been essential.

Finally, to Jocelyn McGrandle. When I started this process, Jocelyn was my partner, then my fiancée, and, finally, my wife. Her support has been invaluable and I fear I don't have enough words to demonstrate how crucial your support, help, and patience has been. So suffice it say I'll leave it at this: Thank you for joining me in this slow show.

*Pour mon père –
un fier québécois;
For my mother –
a proud Canadian*

Chapter 1: Introduction

Il y a 109 ans que la nation québécoise attend ce moment.
Le parti québécois c'est une clé, le pouvoir c'était la serrure. Vous venez de
mettre la clé dans la serrure qui nous ouvre la porte de notre avenir.¹
-Doris Lussier introducing René Lévesque at the *Parti québécois*' victory
rally, November 15, 1976

Draped by the noted Québec comedian, Doris Lussier, to his left, Camille Laurin to his right, and his ever-present cigarette pinched between his left index- and middle-fingers, a clearly emotional René Lévesque began to address the thousands of cheering partisans at the *Aréna Paul-Sauvé* in Montréal. In between thunderous cheers of "*Le Québec aux québécois*",² Lévesque began to speak, "*Je dois vous dire, franchement, qu'on l'espérait de tout notre cœur, mais on ne l'attendait pas comme ça cette année*".³ The *Parti québécois* (PQ), after winning 23 percent of the vote and seven seats in 1970 and 30 percent of the vote for six seats in 1973, had done the seemingly impossible. Winning 41 percent of the vote for 71 seats on November 15, 1976, the Lévesque-led PQ won a decisive majority and cemented what would be a significant moment in the history of not just Québec, but Canada as well.

In 1976, the secessionist movement in Québec had formally made its *entrée*. Although two separate secessionist parties competed in the 1966 provincial election, these parties aggregated into a single party by 1970: the *Parti québécois*. But the opportunity for the party to win government was effectively limited. Limited in scope by its niche appeals to independence, limited by a period of political transition between the *Parti Liberal du Québec* (PLQ) and the *Union Nationale* (UN), and limited by a majoritarian (FPTP) electoral system that did not translate votes-to-seats in a way which was proportional to votes received.

The irony regarding Lévesque's victory speech is that it took place in front of a banner displaying the party's campaign slogan: *On a besoin d'un vrai gouvernement*.⁴ The ability of the

¹ "The Québécois nation has been waiting 109 years for this moment. The *Parti québécois* is the key; power is the lock. You have just put the key in the lock that opens the door of our future".

² "Québec for Quebecers", a nationalist rallying cry.

³ "I must tell you, truthfully, we hoped for this with all our hearts but we weren't expecting it this year" (translation my own).

party to mobilize support outside the eastern, working-class section of Montréal came from the party's ability to downplay the importance of independence, instead presenting itself as a social-democratic government which differed from the political hegemony of the PLQ and UN. In response to the PQ victory, Aislin, the *Montreal Gazette's* political cartoonist, immortalized the 1976 election with a caricature of Lévesque, cigarette in hand, imploring the newspaper's Anglophone readership to take a Valium.

Secessionist movements must ultimately choose between one of two options. First, is the decision to formally enter the political arena, incurring the costs, both financial and organizational, associated with electoral competition. Alternatively, secessionist movements may choose to be extra-parliamentary *movements* such as literary/cultural groups, by organizing demonstrations or protests, or endorsing candidates that are sympathetic to the movement's broader societal project.

This project is concerned with the first variant: the decision to enter the political arena as a political party. While there exists considerable literature concerning the emergence of new parties (Cox 1997, Hug 2001, Tavits 2006), there is little work studying secessionist parties specifically. A central component of this asks and answers: *What political, sociological, and institutional factors affect the emergence of secessionist parties?*

Once secessionist parties emerge, they are at the mercy of the voters. Secessionist parties can immediately be successful (as in Greenland) or can see their success increase incrementally over time, reflecting changes in public sentiment that slowly becomes more favourable to territorial independence (as in Catalonia). Others (as in Bavaria or Québec) can become less successful over time or might never be successful, instead remaining insignificant political entities (as in Andalusia in Spain). The second aspect of this work concerns secessionist party success and asks: *What political, sociological, and institutional factors affect the success of secessionist parties?*

The central argument of this work is as follows. First, secessionist parties have become increasingly successful in the contemporary era, winning, on average, 25 percent of the vote in subnational elections and 25 percent of the regional vote in national elections. Yet there is

⁴ "We deserve a *real* government"

considerable variation in the success of secessionist parties. Successful secessionist parties can compete—and form—subnational government or can present a sizeable opposition, allowing the movement to have considerable agenda-setting power. As a result, secessionist parties are more important on the political landscape than commonly realized. Although secessionist parties vary in strength, many are no longer niche parties that the central state can ignore. Instead, the success of these parties imposes a challenge for the management of state affairs.

Second, the factors that influence the emergence of a secessionist party vary based on the electoral arena in which the party competes. Secessionist parties are incentivized to emerge in subnational elections (i.e., regional/provincial elections) because regional parliaments serve as the primary institutions in which secessionist parties can compete for government and become a forceful voice for their territorial project. I show that secessionist parties are more likely to emerge in subnational elections in regions with a distinct regional language, in larger populations, and in proportional representation (PR) electoral systems. In national elections, a distinct language is also associated with the entrance of secessionist parties, whereas regional autonomy appears to suppress entrance, and the electoral system has no effect.

Third, the success of secessionist parties is likewise affected by the electoral arena. Subnationally, these parties are more successful in regions with a distinct language, in areas with a smaller population, in PR systems, and alongside increases in the foreign-born share in the national population. Nationally, both linguistic distinction and increases in the migrant stock increase the electoral success of secessionist parties, but population and the electoral system have no effect. I argue that electoral arenas structure secessionist party support differently: subnational elections offer secessionist parties more immediate rewards than do national elections, encouraging secessionist parties to focus on subnational competition.

The quantitative study of independence movements is, for the most part, relatively recent. The scholarship has not yet standardized a methodology for study, we know little about emergence, and we know more about party predispositions (e.g., ideology) than we do about their success. It is all, to say it politely, disjointed and fairly unconnected. If we want to better understand secessionist movements, we need to understand it at the base level: what causes these parties to emerge and makes them successful?

1.1 Nationalism

Nationalism can be a difficult term to define. It can relate to the formation of the nation-state and the national consciousness (Anderson 2006 [1983]), it can refer to a “doctrine about character, interests, rights and duties of nations”, or it can be categorised as an “organised political movement, designed to further the alleged aims and interests of nations” (Seton-Watson 2019 [1977], 3). This project applies the third definition above by studying nationalism as an organised political movement which aims to further the aims of the nation ultimately by obtaining political emancipation from the state in which it is subsumed.

Seton-Watson (2019 [1977]) clearly articulates that states, nations, and nation-states are fundamentally different things and the interchangeable use of these terms leads to an obfuscation of various political and sociographic realities. States, per Seton-Watson (2019 [1977], 1), are legal and political organizations and nations are a community of people “whose members are bound together by a sense of solidarity, a common culture, a national consciousness”. The nation exists when a significant number of people consider themselves to be *of* the nation. States can exist without nations and nations can exist without states. But the presence of a nation is crucial for the desire for territorial independence. Substate nationalist movements require some form of substate identification with a geographical area that is *different* from the central state.

Subnational regions which do not differentiate themselves from the central state have little incentive to leave and to embark on their own independence project. In contrast, the distinctiveness of a nation is cultivated via a unique nation-specific historical process that leads to the formation of the (sub)national conscious—the nation is fundamentally different than the state in some way. The national conscious is activated, so to speak, as a result of different combinations of recurring forces: religion, language, social order, economic considerations, and state power (Seton-Watson 2019 [1977], 10).

This substate differentiation can culminate into nationalism which, per Anderson (2006 [1983], 3) is “the most universally legitimate value in political life of our time”. Nationalism, or nation-ness, serves as a powerful political tool for members of a respective community, be it a state, substate, or stateless peoples, to feel connected to each other. This form of connection effectively creates a latent community. This community, per Anderson, is an *imagined community*. It is *imagined* because the members of the community will never interact with all of

their fellow citizens; it is *limited* because the community has finite, encompassing borders; it is *sovereign* because the concept was derived in a historical period during the destruction of dynastic rulers; and it forms a *community* because “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 2006 [1983], 6-7).

Per Anderson, the nation arose when “three fundamental cultural concepts lost their grip on men’s mind”, that (i) a particular script (vernacular) lost its privilege as offering access to ontological truth, that (ii) society was organized via dynastic order, and that (iii) cosmology and history were indistinguishable (Anderson 2006 [1983], 36). Crucially, the marriage of capitalism and print facilitated the development of numerous national consciences. As print began to proliferate, it spread written work that was not in the standard Latin. Language-specific publications allowed for *intra*-state communication which differed *inter*-state such that it allowed for a recognition of a national community as the common vernacular separated those who belonged to the linguistic community versus those that did not. For Anderson, print capitalism unified non-Latin languages, gave a fixity to language where the words of the 12th century were not accessible to contemporaries in the 17th century, and created languages of power as well as dialects.

But if Anderson’s points apply to the formation of the *nation-state*, it applies equally to the *nation*. Minority regions can, and do, exist within the confines of the broader state. Here, linguistically distinct subregions balance the precariousness of their regional distinctiveness against a possibly encroaching central state. Québec, for example, is dedicated to the preservation and protection of the French language within a dominant English-speaking North America. The Basque Country is home to a unique indigenous language unrelated to any of the spoken languages in continental Europe. In both the Basque and Québec cases, the presence of a language which differs from the hegemonic language of the central state can serve as the basis of subnational differentiation—where members of the region can easily identify insiders and outsiders based on one’s proclivity towards the language. Thus, if Anderson’s logic that linguistic differentiation facilitated *national* inter-state difference, then so, too, does it apply to *subnational* differentiation against the national state.

The presence of regionally distinct subnational minorities can place these nations in a precarious situation. Liberal-democratic states, per Kymlicka (2001, 1) “have historically been ‘nation-building’ states in the following specific sense: they have encouraged and sometimes forced all the citizens on the territory of the state to integrate into common public institutions operating in a common language”. The presence of distinct ethnocultural minorities challenged the integrative or assimilationist efforts of the central state such that the expectation to integrate into the central state was resisted—these minority groups, instead, tried to build their own set of institutions that existed parallel to the central state. Minority rights were a defence-response to state nation-building (Kymlicka 2001).

Wimmer (2018) argues that nation-building was influenced by state capacity and the presence of a common language. The linguistic homogeneity of a *centralized* state facilitates the provision of public goods. Linguistic homogeneity also allows citizens to more easily form political alliances across ethnic, racial, and regional cleavages. Thus, “ties that bridge divides reduce the salience of ethnicity in politics, undermine support for separatism, make violent conflict and war less likely, and eventually lead citizens to identify with the nation and perceive it as a community of lived solidarity and shared political destiny” (Wimmer 2018, 1).

Yet the presence of a subnational language is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for the presence—and success—of secessionist parties. There are regions accounted for in this project that satisfy Anderson’s criteria, clearly have a national consciousness, but where no secessionist party has emerged—notably in the Aosta Valley and Schleswig-Holstein. Other regions, such as Montenegro, Northern Ireland, and Scotland see (or *saw* in the Montenegrin case) the presence of strong secessionist parties—where subnational differentiation is not conditioned upon the presence of a distinct language.

Nationalism can form as a reaction to state nation-building and the desire to maintain the ethnic minority’s unique institutions. For many, nationalism can be divided into a typology ranging from the broad and inclusive ‘civic’ form to the exclusionary ‘ethnic’ form. Some, like Ignatieff (1993), argue that only civic nationalism is compatible with liberal democracy because it strips citizenship from ethnicity and forced membership via principles of democracy and freedom. Kymlicka (2001), however, notes that the simple dichotomization of ethnic versus civic nationalism is misguided—civic forms of nationalism, such as in the United States, impose

language requirements and a particular knowledge of American history. Moreover, perceived ethnic forms of substate nationalism, ostensibly the Québécois and Catalan variants, also “accept immigrants as full members of the nation, so long as they learn the language and history of the society” (Kymlicka 2001, 244). For Kymlicka, nationalist movements need not be exclusionary blood-based enterprises, instead they can seek the integration of newcomers into the nationalist project.

That nationalist movements can be open to immigration and integrate newcomers into the subnation in a pluralist manner, and that subnational membership need not be blood-based but instead is can be based on the ability to actively participate in the host’s political processes and culture, points to Kymlicka’s (2001) broader point that substate nationalism can exist coterminous with liberalism. Birnir (2009) puts forth an argument that echoes Kymlicka, arguing that the concentration of an ethnic group, and their subsequent policy demands, does not necessarily lead to the violence or anti-state terrorism. Instead, Birnir argues that ethnic minorities can choose between forming their own political party or support an established state-wide party which takes their policy demands into account. The decision taken by the ethnic group is crucial. On the one hand, the decision to vote consistently for a state-wide party which incorporates the ethnic groups policy demands comes with a policy trade-off where the party has to moderate regional demands with national demands. The benefit, however, is that supporting a successful national party comes with access to the executive.

On the other hand, the decision to form an ethnoregionalist party imposes a limitation on the ability to participate in government. In a liberal democratic context, the consolidation of ethnic demands into an ethnoregional party need not induce violence—instead, “the best way to ensure [the ethnic group] operate peacefully is to promote their access to government” (Birnir 2009, 7). The incentive to be peaceful dissipates when there is no access to the executive. Perpetually being in opposition produces less incentives for the ethnic group to moderate their policy demands and the same is true if the ruling power refuses to engage with the ethnoregionalist party’s demands.

This leads Birnir (2009, 204-205) to develop a three-part typology for democratic development in heterogenous countries: (i) where ethnic parties are institutionally promoted through permissive electoral systems or where ethnic groups are exempt from entrance barriers;

(ii) in the event that the system does not allow for ethnic parties, the non-ethnic party represents the ethnic issue; and (iii) where ethnic parties are not viable *and* unable to access government *and* non-ethnic parties do not represent the ethnic interest. The third system, per Birnir, induces ethnic violence. The crux of Birnir's findings is that the presence of an ethnic minority—one which mobilizes into a political party—does not necessarily lead to anti-state violence. Instead, state structures reduce the probability of violence by offering the ethnic party the benefits of office.

In sum, substate nationalism is the identification of a common bond between members of a geographically-concentrated region. This community can differentiate itself from the national state, be it linguistically, geographically, or culturally. These differences can manifest into secessionist movements, where political entrepreneurs decide to enter the political arena to emancipate their territory from the central state. The key is that the region sees themselves as *different* from the national level and can react to the decisions taken by the central regarding the presence of the substate. Wimmer (2018) points to an historical process where early centralization and linguistic homogeneity limits the nationalist or secessionist threat. Although Wimmer's centralization thesis began in the 19th century, Binir (2009) argues that offering subnational minorities access to the executive can assuage the desire of the substate to emancipate, demonstrating that the state can still limit the effects of ethnic politics in the contemporary era.

1.2 Party Formation

Obtaining territorial independence is not an easy task. Some secessionist movements, as in Québec, have come close: losing an independence referendum by 1.1 percent in 1995. Others, such as Catalonia, face constitutional barriers that make independence referenda *de jure* illegal. While it is likely that demands for independence might emerge due to protests or civil disobedience, the emergence of a secessionist party serve as democratic entities that can give legitimacy to secessionist demands and articulate a desire for independence from the national government. Secessionist parties do not appear out of thin air. They face entrance barriers including financial concerns, securing access to the ballot, and issue co-optation from the major

parties. A political entrepreneur must be willing to bear these organizing costs and, as it is often the case, must have patience in order to reap an electoral payoff.

The emergence of political parties is the result of an historical evolution beginning with the liberal *régime censitaire* in the late 19th and early 20th centuries—that parties were effectively cadre- or caucus-style in pursuit of Burke’s notion of a common public interest. With enfranchisement came mass parties and the rise of parties seeing the state as ‘them’ rather than ‘us’ (Duverger 1954). Parties thereafter served as the bridge between state and society and the quantity of party members outweighed the quality of the cadre party.

Parties emerged and evolved over time due to the changing circumstances around them. They are able to manipulate the electoral system to their advantage (Boix 1999) and eventually the state itself to secure their continued success (Katz and Mair 1995; see Koole (1996) for a response). Secessionist parties exist outside the scope of regular parties. Secessionist parties emerge with the awareness that the probability of winning national level governance, that the ability to alter the electoral system, and that the ability to manipulate the state for their own survival are limited. Secessionist parties emerge to represent a specific, likely underrepresented group by taking advantage of cleavages within society (see Lipset and Rokkan 1967 and Stokes 1999 on cleavages).

Cleavages have been defined as “enduring social differences that might become politicized, or might not: differences of ethnicity, religion, language, or occupation, for example” (Amorim Neto and Cox 1997, 152) and “the criteria which divide the members of a community or subcommunity into groups, and the relevant cleavages are those which divide members into groups with important political differences at specific times and places” (Rae and Taylor 1970, 1).

How these cleavages interact with the political process can have significant impact on the emergence of parties. Amorim Neto and Cox (1997) argue that the effective number of parties are the result of an interaction between the permissiveness of the electoral system and the salience of the underlying cleavage. These cleavages come into play through the decisions made by political actors to “reduce a large number of social differences, or cleavages, to a smaller number of party-defining cleavages” (Amorim Neto and Cox 1997, 157). Reducing these cleavages is a three-step process: (i) the translation of social cleavages into partisan preferences;

(ii) the translation of partisan preferences into votes; and (iii) the translation of votes into seats. Thus, if cleavages can successfully be reduced into political gain, two likely scenarios are possible. First is the ability of an established party to incorporate cleavages into their governing coalition much like how the federal Liberal Party was able to be the party of Québec in Canada and the party of Canada in Québec (Johnston 2017).

Second is the consolidation of cleavages to seek political gain. Cleavages not being encapsulated into an established political party may allow for cleavages to emerge into their own political party—be it the emergence of parties seeking the protection of a regional language, demands for increased autonomy, or outright political independence. Rae and Taylor (1970) identified three types of cleavages: (i) trait (e.g., race or caste), (ii) optional or attitudinal (e.g., ideology), and (iii) behavioural (e.g., fractionalization or cohesion). The ability to mobilize these cleavages into a political movement depends on the degree of crystallization and fragmentation. Thus, where the cleavage is crystalized (the proportion of people that can commit to a recognizable position) and fragmented (how many pairs of people will find themselves at odds), the impetus for political mobilization is large.

These fragmented and polarized political forces have four options (Cox 1997). In his work on strategic voting, Cox (1997, see chapter 8) argues that new political forces can choose to not enter the political arena entirely, they can secure ballot nominations from an existing political party, they can blackmail existing parties to achieve future gains, or they can form a new political party. Cox focuses solely on the second option: ballot nomination. The ability of a new movement to effectively take over a party's nomination does not square well with interest-group accounts of candidate nomination where nominees are selected based on loyalty to an agreed upon ideological agenda derived from activists and interest groups (Bawn *et al.* 2012; Cohen *et al.* 2009). From this perspective, it is unlikely that a party which exhibits control, and ensures that nominees are ideologically proximate to desired outcomes, are likely to allow a new political movement that may be at odds with the party to co-opt the nomination process.

If new movements are unable to blackmail and secure ballot nominations from political parties, they can choose to not enter the arena or form their own proper party. New movements might not form into a cohesive political party if the costs of entry outweigh the benefits (Feddersen *et al.* 1990; Tavits 2006). Party entry might further be constrained by institutional

features such as ballot laws, broadcast media, inability to fundraise, electoral systems, and issue co-optation (Hirano and Snyder 2009; Mazmanian 1974; Meguid 2008; Rosenstone *et al.* 1984).

However, an ideological cleavage (e.g., the preference/opposition to independence) does not guarantee the emergence of a party representing this interest. For instance, Kalyvas (1998) shows that for the emergence of Christian Democratic parties in Western Europe, the presence of a large Catholic population was a necessary condition but not a sufficient one. Christian Democratic parties emerged in a time when Rome was hostile to liberalism and democracy, and church leaders did not want to see the emergence of Catholic lay-persons who claimed to speak for the Church. They supported a Catholic party only if an existing conservative party proved unable or unwilling to defend clerical privileges. The construction of a distinct political ideology “requires the mobilization of a permanent organization capable of representing a mobilized group” (Kalyvas 1998, 307). From this perspective, the presence of the secessionist cleavage does not guarantee emergence—it still requires the presence of an organizational capacity willing to mobilize the cleavage politically.

The decision to enter the political arena by forming a political party depends on institutional structures such as the electoral system and its barriers to entry, the benefits that the party would gain by winning office, whether the nation is a long-standing and entrenched democracy (Tavits 2006); the movement’s relationship with the existing parties (Hug 2001; Meguid 2008); and ideological space (Greenberg and Shepsle 1987; Iversen 1994a, 1994b). The entrance of new parties can be deterred if there exists a two-party equilibrium but a lack of a two-party equilibrium may allow a third party to “wreak havoc” (Greenberg and Shepsle 1987, 535).

Hug (2001) presents a theory of new party emergence. He first argues that the formation of a new party is preconditioned on a group which emerges with a specific demand. This group brings their demand to an established party. The established party can either accept or reject the group’s demand. If the established party accepts the demand, the group will likely acquiesce and disappear. If the party rejects the group’s demand, the group can decide to formally enter the arena through a political party or choose not to enter at all (Hug 2001, 44). The likelihood of accepting/rejecting the demand is a function of the strength/weakness of the potential new party as well as the credibility of their demands. New parties, however, are not inert. They can choose

to enter based on the response of the established party and how they perceive their own fortunes. If they view their electoral chances as weak, they can bluff their formation hoping to extract demands from the established party. If strong, they can reject the inclusion of their demands and form their own party regardless. New parties, then, are not wholly constrained by the actions of the established parties but both bring demands to the established parties and react to their actions.

1.3 Selection Criteria

1.3.1 Selecting Regions

The study of nationalism and substate nationalism has largely been advanced by three different means. First, theoretical accounts of nationalism have provided researchers with rich, historical accounts demonstrating the emergence of nations, nation-states, and states. Second, researchers offer a comparison of similar movements via in-depth case studies probing the similarities and differences across regions (see Bélanger *et al.* 2018; Henderson 2007; Stevenson 2006). Third, researchers engage in cross-national comparisons which allow for an understanding as to how the conditions of success for secessionist parties vary across polities.

The selection of cases and the method of study is crucial for the study of secessionist movements. Case studies generally select cases which are similar to each other, largely focusing on those that are most successful. Cross-national comparisons generally do not expand on the differences between countries as large cross-national datasets do not offer researchers the ability to offer precise treatments of each considered case. For example, the dataset used in this project aggregates election-level data across 38 regions in both national and subnational elections. Treating each region as an in-depth case for elaboration would make large comparative works unwieldy, lengthy, and difficult to follow.

While it is understandable that scholars have spent much of their time studying Catalonia, Flanders, Scotland, and Québec, recent work which compares the cross-national successes of independence movements risks overlooking individual variation and outcomes in smaller nations. The strength of secessionist parties in the Faroe Islands and, particularly, Greenland implies that the independence for these nations is seemingly inevitable. But yet, to my knowledge, there is only a limited literature (apart, of course, from domestic works) which offers

researchers a comprehensive overview of these movements' claims for independence. While it is true that these nations are small, researchers should not be myopic in their case selection—if we are to understand secessionist movements and variation between them, then the traditional and non-traditional cases deserve equal analytical treatment.

For these reasons, and to build on the comparative works done by Massetti (2009), Massetti and Schakel (2015, 2016), and Sorens (2004, 2005, 2009, 2012), this work employs a large cross-national dataset which includes secessionist party vote shares across 38 regions. But the inclusion of these regions requires some clarification and leads to the first scope question:

- *What regions might be included in a study of secessionist movements?*

Defining the term 'region' in a study of subnational independence movements can be rather difficult. On the one hand, 'region' itself is a nebulous term and can connote historical regions, once home to independence movements, but which are now fractured into different provinces/states with only vestigial memories of once-strong cultures and languages. These once strong regions became, in the contemporary era, ill-defined areas such as Bretagne, Cornwall, the French Basque Country, Moravia, and Occitania. On the other hand, 'regions', can be readily identifiable via borders which demarcate where the polity begins and ends—there is no ambiguity as to what is Corsica.

Parks and Elcock (2000) define region in this context as continuum of four points. First, definite regions or stateless nations. These are nations, such as Scotland and Wales, where “cultural factors enable them to present a strong case for the granting of a greater or lesser measure of autonomy to the nation, stimulating a nationalist movement founded on its distinctive culture” (Parks and Elcock 2000, 88). Second are contested regions, such as Bretagne, which possess regional identities—and often languages—but are not recognized by their respective state. Third are marginal regions such as Cornwall and Occitania, where “evidence of a cultural identity which corresponds with the boundaries of this region is very limited and there are conflicts of interests between its various parts, as well as rivalry among its main cities for becoming the centre of regional power” (Parks and Elcock 2000, 89). Finally, they point to functional regions which are largely economic regions within a state that possess no cultural distinction such as Western New York State.

Per Parks and Elcock (2000), regions can be definite, contested, marginal, or functional. For this project, functional and marginal regions have been excluded. Marginal regions lack borders and political institutions—there is no *Assemblée de l’Occitanie*, nor a Cornish Parliament—and, as a result, are excluded from this study because the study is focused on the emergence and success of secessionist parties who, by definition, require an electoral arena in which to compete.

To a certain extent, contested nations have been selected on a case-by-case basis. Northern Ireland, which Irish nationalists consider to be part of a united Ireland whereas unionists see as a member of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is included, but Bretagne whose administrative division is smaller than the whole of historic Bretagne is not. The regions considered in this project are those regions which comprise a portion of the larger state, maintain political institutions that offer secessionist movements the opportunity to compete electorally, and have readily identifiable borders. To paraphrase Gertrude Stein, the inclusion of a region in this study is dependent on a there being there there.

The selected cases were chosen not only because they are home to a demonstrable secessionist party (or parties) but also because there exists a significant, albeit varying, level of support for independence across regions. A 2019 poll found that nearly two-thirds of Greenlanders supported independence; 48 percent of Basque survey respondents were in favour of independence as were 26 percent of respondents in Navarre (Urain 2020); 12 percent favoured independence in a 2012 Corsican poll (up from seven percent in 1996) (Fourquet *et al.* 2012); 40 percent of Sardinians favoured independence from Italy in 2015 (Secci 2015); and in regions, such as Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland, the secessionist sentiment has manifested into referendums on independence.

Most of the regions under consideration in this work, with the exception of the Balkans and Western Australia, are located in Western Europe and North America. In so doing, secessionist movements in Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa, and many overseas dependencies have been excluded. I opt to exclude non-Western secessionist movements in order to limit the study’s generalizability to Western, democratic, and liberal democracies. On the one hand, I maintain that the findings from this work are generalizable for the emergence and success of Western

secessionist parties. On the other hand, these findings might not be generalizable to secessionist movements in Asia such as Kashmir and Khalistan/Punjab in India; Kurdistan in Iraq; Partai Aceh in Indonesia; or Ryukyu/Okinawa in Japan.

While secessionist movements in places than in free, stable democracies may be fuelled by many of the same social and economic factors, measures of their growth and success over time would require different measurements. In short, secessionist party support in free and fair elections is comparable across time and geography, whereas in other polities the measurement would require careful justification and would be resource-intensive. As a result, this work is limited to democracies, meaning it offers limited generalizable insight into secessionist movements in non-democracies such as Hong Kong and Xinjiang in China or numerous regions in Myanmar, for example.

Irridentist movements are also considered. While regions such as Northern Ireland and Republika Srpska do not, strictly speaking, wish to form their own independent state—instead preferring (re)unification with the Republic of Ireland and Serbia respectively—their goal is to ultimately secede from the state to which they belong. As a result, I consider these movements to be secessionist movements, regardless of the movement's end goal.

If there is a there there, and since the study is limited limiting to democracies, then the manifestation of the region's desire to secede from the larger state must ultimately come via political parties. A region which is distinct from the state, be it culturally, religiously, linguistically, and can identify its own people within a specific territory, may allow for the emergence of a political party to make claims to establish an independent state.

1.3.2 Selecting Parties

Political parties offer a tangible way in which to measure support for secession. Parties compete in elections, allowing researchers to build a dataset of vote and seat shares. Yet, there are a multitude of types of parties which seek office in substate regions. This, then, raises the second scope question:

- *What parties might be included in a study of secessionism?*

In their study of regionalist parties, Massetti and Schakel (2016) compare two types of parties: moderate and radical. Moderate parties are *autonomist* parties whereas radical parties

are *secessionist* parties. The primordial difference between autonomist and secessionist parties is that autonomist parties do not seek the independence of the region that they represent. This project studies only those secessionist parties that are unambiguous in their preference for independence.

I classify parties as unambiguously secessionist by studying a party's historical record, observing the party's official position towards independence either in party manifestos or the organization's official website. Ambiguous parties have been excluded from the study. However, ambiguous parties can enter the study should they change their position towards independence.⁵ I have also relied on Massetti and Schakel's dataset of secessionist party vote share. Their dataset records secessionist party vote over time such that each party forms a row vector. Each party has a dummy variable indicating whether they are autonomist or independence-seeking. I have relied on their classificatory scheme for cases that have limited information. In contrast to their dataset, my dataset aggregates secessionist party vote share such that the *election* becomes the case in lieu of each individual party. My dataset also has a longer time series, is more up-to-date, includes counter-factual regions, and includes objective socio-demographic and economic indicators such as migrant stock and economic performance.

1.4 Empirical Research Questions

1.4.1 Secessionist Party Emergence

I distinguish between emergence and success as related but distinct processes.

- RQ₁: *What factors determine the emergence of secessionist parties?*

As discussed above, there are many models of the emergence of political parties—particularly with respect to what makes entrance difficult. We know less about what influences the emergence of secessionist parties. Answering the first empirical research question will

⁵A notable example is Sardinia. Although the *Partidu Sardu* (PSd'Az) officially adopted a pro-independence position in the 1970s on paper (Hepburn 2009), they maintained a relatively ambiguous approach towards secessionism. This ambiguity towards independence led to the entrance of multiple unambiguous secessionist parties. One such party, the *Indipendentza Repùbrica de Sardigna* (iRS) was founded explicitly to “end the widespread idea that PSd'Az [...] was a pro-independence party” (personal communication with party founder).

demonstrate whether the emergence of secessionist parties is facilitated by different sociological, geographical, and political factors. Critically, emergence can happen only *once*.

1.4.2 Secessionist Party Support

Once it emerges, the secessionist party is now at the mercy of the voters. It must now attempt to become viable, appeal to voters, and become recognizable. The search for votes through campaigning is likely to be different from what structured their emergence. *Entering* the political arena can be the decision of a single political entrepreneur but the party's subsequent *success* is ultimately up to the voters.

- RQ₂: *What factors determine the success of secessionist parties?*

Support for secessionist parties remains understudied and undertheorized. Although there are studies that consider the ideological placement of secessionist parties (Massetti 2009; Massetti and Schakel 2015, 2016; Pogorelis *et al.* 2005), the importance of the centre-periphery cleavage in relation to party positioning (Alonso *et al.* 2013, 2015; Basile 2015, 2016; Meguid 2008; Zons 2015), and in terms of vote getting (Sorens 2004, 2005, 2012), the research on secessionist parties is a grab-bag of findings. Scholars have taken for granted the presence of the centre-periphery cleavage as well as the presence of secessionist parties and have largely neglected the most crucial question concerning these parties: What makes them successful?

Vote share is the simplest and most parsimonious measurement of success. Contrast a strong secessionist movement like Greenland where, since 1979, secessionist parties have averaged 63 percent of the vote to a weak movement like Bavaria where the *Bayerpartei* averaged just 3.3 percent of the vote (4.9 standard deviation) over 17 regional elections since 1949. Vote share clearly demonstrates whether voters are willing to vote for a secessionist party which, in turn, demonstrates the polity's desire for independence. I posit that the presence of a regional language, the region's geographic size, the size of the region's population, the region's political autonomy, whether the region is contiguous to the state, the electoral system, and the change in national GDP should have differing effects on secessionist party vote share. Chapters three and four operationalizes each variable and elaborates on the relationship each variable is expected to have concerning secessionist party emergence and success.

1.4.3 Effects of Electoral Arenas

- RQ₃: *Are the factors that determine the emergence of secessionist parties symmetric across electoral arenas?*
- RQ₄: *Are the factors that structure secessionist party success symmetric across electoral arenas?*

Secessionist parties can compete in subnational (regional/provincial) arenas, national arenas, or both. While most regions see secessionist parties compete in both national and subnational elections, not all regions were immediately capable of contesting subnational elections. Parties in Flanders and Scotland were restricted to national elections until the federalization/devolution of their respective states in the 1990s. Parties in other regions, such as Québec, first contested in subnational elections and eventually saw separate political parties contest national elections. Others still, such as *Ålands Framtid* (Åland Islands), only contest subnational elections.

The factors that influence the decision to emerge, and the party's subsequent success, may differ based on the electoral arena in which the party is competing. In subnational elections, secessionist parties can compete for an increased number of seats and, crucially, the ability to compete for government. National elections, in contrast, limit the extent to which the secessionist party can be influential, depending on the region's size. Smaller regions, such as the Faroe Islands and Greenland, are entitled to only two seats in the Danish national assembly. Large regions, such as Québec and Scotland, can be crucial areas of political support for state-wide parties. The emergence of viable secessionist parties in regions that elect sizeable parliamentary delegates can deprive the country-wide party of their previously consistent voting bloc. This can deny the state-wide party a parliamentary majority and the secessionist party can emerge as a large parliamentary opposition, extracting policy demands from the national government.

Taking the different electoral arenas into account is crucial for two reasons. First, it reduces the impetus to focus solely on first-order national elections. Second, minority nations live within multi-national states. Subnational and national parliaments compete and provide differing conceptions and treatments of national identity. National parliaments promote a state-wide vision of nationality at which subnational parliaments push back, defining and defending their own identity and uniqueness (Laforest and Lecours 2016).

There are six ways in which the parliaments of autonomous regions differ. First, parliamentary traditions vary across regions such that Québec has held subnational elections since 1867 whereas Scotland and Wales have only held subnational elections since 1999.⁶ Second, autonomy varies across regions such that minority regions exist in federal (e.g., Canada), decentralized (e.g., the UK), and unitary (e.g., Denmark) states. Third, parliaments in regions with a unique language have taken a considerable leadership role in protecting and promoting the use of the regional language. Fourth, subnational parliaments play a crucial role in the development, articulation, and defense of regional identities. Fifth, subnational parliaments have made clear their preferences for increased political autonomy such that most autonomous regions demand increased autonomy. Finally, subnational parliaments “speak with varying levels of consensus”, meaning that some parliaments are bitterly divided over the future of their region whereas other regions, such as Québec, “can speak with one voice as they criticize the state” (Laforest and Lecours 2016, 7).

1.5 Structure of the Work

Chapter Two begins by identifying the places and parties that are relevant to this analysis. Although most regions have at least one secessionist party, some regions look as if they *should* have a secessionist party do not. The chapter then describes the patterns and trends concerning the emergence and success of secessionist parties from 1945 the present day. I show that the number of regions in which a secessionist party has competed has increased over time with a noticeable increase beginning in the 1970s. I then show that secessionist parties are most likely to emerge in the first election in which they could compete, however secessionist movements continue to emerge in the contemporary era. This indicates that the entrance of secessionist parties is not necessarily an historic phenomenon, but can also be shaped by contemporary politics and conditions. Next, I next turn my attention to secessionist party success and demonstrate that these parties have become increasingly popular into the contemporary era in both subnational and national elections.

⁶ 1867 is the chosen date given that the Canadian state that is recognized today came into being with the British North America Act, 1867. However, regional elections were held in Québec well before 1867 with the first Parliament of Lower Canada elected in June of 1792.

Chapter Three models secessionist party emergence in subnational and national elections separately. ‘Entry’ can be an ambiguous term. A secessionist party might contest an election even though it is little more than a personal vanity project that fails to run a full slate of candidates and receives only a handful of votes. Parties might not be considered to have ‘emerged’ until they obtain at least a modicum of success—be it some percentage of the regional vote or legislative representation. This ambiguity concerning emergence leads me to employ three models of entrance: one where the secessionist party/parties first appear on the ballot; the first election in which the party/parties receive at least one percent of the popular vote; and the first election in which the party/parties win legislative representation. This allows for the differentiation between *general* entry and *viable* entry. I argue that what influences secessionist parties to emerge varies across electoral arenas—secessionist parties are encouraged to enter in subnational arenas more so than in national arenas, reflecting an upstream capacity of party entrance.

Chapter Four explores the success of secessionist parties through time-series cross-sectional modelling. I argue that, like emergence, the factors influencing secessionist party success differ based on the arena in which the party is competing. I find that in subnational elections, secessionist parties are rewarded in PR systems when compared to majoritarian/plurality electoral systems. This reward disappears in national elections, however. I also find that there exists a significant and large interaction between the presence of a regional language and migrant stock such that secessionist parties are more successful as the foreign-born share of the national population increases—but only in regions that have a distinct language. The effects of this interaction only appear in subnational elections.

Chapter Five presents three case studies: Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland. The multivariate analyses conducted in chapters three and four illuminate the extent to which different factors influence the emergence and success of secessionist parties cross-nationally. Because the dataset is so large, it is difficult to provide critical context explaining the import of specific covariates. Case studies allow for an in-depth analysis demonstrating how the identified mechanisms influenced the emergence and success of secessionist parties. They also allow for the inclusion of case-specific information that challenges the cross-national modeling and showcase the limitations of the study, and thus identifying future areas of research.

Chapter 2: The Slow Climb to Success

Secessionist parties remain an understudied phenomenon. On the one hand, substate nationalism, state nationalism, and nation-building have been subject to decades-long theoretical debate concerning their origins, interpretations, and relevance. On the other hand, empirical studies concerning secessionist parties, particularly their emergence and electoral success, remain relatively nascent.

This chapter answers three research questions. First, when have secessionist parties emerged over time? Where have these parties emerged? And how successful have these parties been? To answer these three questions, I have built a unique dataset that aggregates electoral, political, and sociodemographic data in subnational and national elections across 38 regions.

This chapter begins with a discussion on case selection and identifies both the regions in which a secessionist party emerged and regions that have not yet seen the emergence of a secessionist party, but where the possibility remains plausible. Next, I demonstrate where and when secessionist parties emerged. Finally, I show that secessionist parties have become increasingly successful in the contemporary era. These parties average 25 percent of the vote in subnational elections—and often take part in subnational government—and 25 percent of the regional vote in national elections. Secessionist parties are no longer small, niche political parties which the central state can ignore. Instead, these parties demonstrate the salience of the centre-periphery cleavage and pose a challenge for the management of state affairs.

2.1 Regions Under Study

2.1.1 Definite Regions

Table 2.1 lists the regions considered in this project: 30 regions where there currently is, or has been, a secessionist political party in the post-war era. All are *definite* regions, meaning they have identifiable borders and at least one electoral arena in which to compete (Parks and Elcock 2000). Non-definite regions such as the French Basque Country, Occitania, and Moravia have been excluded.⁷

⁷ In the Canadian context, Western Canada has equally been excluded from national elections. Weak secessionist parties have run in provincial (subnational) elections in Alberta, British Columbia (BC), Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, but the presence of a western-based Canadian secessionist party is rather nebulous. Western agitation

State	Region	Regional Language	Area (km ²)	Pop. %	Arena	Electoral System
Australia	W. Australia	N	2,642,753	8	S	AV
Belgium	Flanders	Y	13,625	57	N/S	PR
	Wallonia	Y	16,901	33	N ^a /S	PR
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Rep. Srpska	Y	25,053	36	N/S	PR
Canada	Alberta	N	661,688	8	S	FPTP
	B.C.	N	944,735	10	S	FPTP
	Manitoba	N	649,950	4	S	FPTP
	Saskatchewan	N	651,900	4	S	FPTP
	Québec	Y	1,542,056	24	N/S	FPTP
Denmark	Faroe Islands	Y	1,399	< 1	N/S	PR
	Greenland	Y	2,166,068	1	N/S	PR
Finland	Åland	Y	1,580	< 1	S	PR
France	Corsica	Y	8,722	< 1	N/S	PR
Germany	Bavaria	N	70,550	15	N/S	MMP
Italy	Bolzano	Y	7,339	< 1	N/S	PR
	Sardinia	Y	24,090	2	N/S	PR
	Sicily	Y	25,711	8	N ^a /S	PR
	Veneto	N	18,345	7	N ^a /S	PR
Serbia	Kosovo	Y	10,887	23	S	PR
Serbia and Montenegro	Montenegro	N	13,812	8	S	PR
Spain	Andalusia	N	87,268	17	N ^b /S	PR
	Basque Country	Y	7,234	5	N/S	PR
	Canary Islands	N	7,493	4	N/S	PR
	Catalonia	Y	32,108	15	N/S	PR
	Galicia	Y	29,574	6	N/S	PR
	Navarre	Y	10,391	1	N/S	PR
	UK	Northern Ireland	N	14,130	2	N/S
Scotland		N	80,007	8	N/S	MMP/FPTP
Wales		Y	20,779	4	N/S	MMP/FPTP
USA	Puerto Rico	Y	9,104	1	S	Mixed/FPTP

Table 2.1 Cases, 1945-2021

NOTE: The regional language column refers to the presence (Y) or absence (N) of a regional language. Pop% refers to the average percentage of the *national* population the region accounted for across all elections studied.

Arena refers to the level in which secessionist parties compete, either subnational (S), national (N), or both (N/S). Superscript *a* refers to cases with a limited sample of elections.

Electoral system refers to the electoral system used. Single entries are for systems where subnational and national systems are the same. In double entries (e.g., Scotland), the first system refers to subnational system and the second value refers to the national system.

(‘alienation’ in Canadian parlance) is well documented and indisputable (see Mallory 1954), but the definition of what counts as ‘western Canada’ is vexatious. To wit, British Columbia (the westernmost province) does not consider themselves an active participant in the ‘Western Exit’ (Wexit) movement.

2.1.2 Counterfactual Cases

In order to mitigate selection bias, I have identified eight counterfactual regions where a secessionist party might have been expected to emerge but has not (yet) emerged. These regions are included in Chapter Three, the emergence chapter, to examine why secessionist parties emerge. Without these counterfactual cases, the study would not be able to explain why parties emerge, only how they perform once they have emerged. This is a classic example of survivorship bias that would prevent me from understanding party emergence.

Table 2.2 presents the counterfactual cases. These are regions that are linguistically/culturally distinct from the national level and where a secessionist party has not yet emerged, although a regionalist party may be present. This subnational differentiation is the theoretical basis for the emergence of a possible secessionist movement.

State	Region	Regional Language	Elec Sys	History of Seces'm	Presence of Regionalist Party	Justification
Canada	Newfoundland	N	FPTP	N	N	1948 referendum
Germany	Schleswig-Holstein	Y	MMP	N	Y	Linguistic minority
Italy	Valle D'Aosta	Y	PR	N	Y	Linguistic minority
Portugal	Azores	N	PR	Y	N	Insurrection
	Madeira	N	PR	Y	N	Insurrection
USA	Alaska	N	FPTP	N	Y ^a	Presence of Party
	Hawaii	Y	FPTP	Y	N ^b	Previous independence/language
	Texas	N	FPTP	Y	N	Previous independence

Table 2.2 Counterfactual Cases

NOTE: ^aAt Gubernatorial level ^bPolitical organizations but no secessionist parties present.

Regional language refers the presence (Y) or absence (N) of a regional language.

Year Inc. refers to the year in which the region was incorporated into the state.

History of sec'es'm refers to history of secessionism. That is whether the region previously maintained an independence movement.

Presence of a regionalist party refers to the presence (Y) or absence (N) of a regional defense party.

Justification lists the reason as to why the region has been included as a counterfactual case.

The inclusion of counterfactual regions is not unique to this project. What is unique, however, is the inclusion of counterfactual cases in modelling secessionist party entrance. Sorens (2005) includes negative cases in his attempts to uncover the cross-national bases of secessionist party support. He overcomes the presence of zero-values by employing a Tobit regression but his inclusion of negative values extends across all elections. For example, he includes all state-level elections in the United States. This is problematic because he is assuming non-differentiated regions (say, New York or Ontario) will follow the same data-

generating process. Instead, the emergence and success of secessionist movements needs to be compared with regions that are (just as) *different* from the national state but have not (yet) seen the formation of a secessionist political party. It is no mystery that an independence movement in New York or Ontario has not emerged because these regions are not distinct from the state. It is more curious, however, why regions which are distinct from the state have not seen the emergence of secessionist parties.

2.1.3 Non-Linguistically Distinct Counterfactual Regions

2.1.3.1 Newfoundland & Labrador

Newfoundland, the last province to join Canada, has been included as a counterfactual case due to the circumstances surrounding its entrance into Canada. Newfoundland was a British Colony until it became a self-governing Dominion in 1907. By 1931, a destitute Newfoundland required financial assistance and the UK ultimately decided to suspend responsible government and assume direct responsibility of the territory's finances (Heritage Newfoundland & Labrador n.d.).

Following British management of the territory, a referendum was held in 1948 with voters being asked to choose from one of three options: responsible (independent) government, the continuation of the post-1933 Commission government, and confederation with Canada. Because no option won a majority, a second referendum was held in which 52.3 percent voted in favour of confederation versus 47.7 percent in favour of responsible government. Newfoundland became the 10th province in the Canadian federation. The results were disputed.

Newfoundland remains a Canadian province without a unique regional language—albeit it is home to a unique regional accent and culture—and, per the 2019 Canadian Election Study, maintains levels of attachment to Canada that are similar to the rest of the Canadian provinces with the exception of Québec. But given that the 1948 referenda were close and contentious, the possibility of an independence movement, seeking either independence outright or the rejection of the referendum results, remained a possibility. Newfoundlanders may have been displeased with agreeing to join Canada—but a secessionist political movement has never emerged.

2.1.3.2 The Azores and Madeira

The Carnation Revolution, which ended Salazar’s authoritarian rule and restored democracy in Portugal, presented problems for the overseas Portuguese territories of the Azores and Madeira. Both territories were colonised into the Portuguese state in the 15th century and displayed anti-colonial nationalism. Following the Carnation Revolution, the Azorean Liberation Front (FLA) and Madeira Archipelago Liberation Front (FLAM) were formed seeking to establish their respective territories as independent states—in fact, the FLAM went as far as creating a provisional government. Portugal, however, reacted quickly by granting regional self-government to both the Azores and Madeira, effectively knee-capping the secessionist movements. In fact, the Portuguese Constitution of 1976 “prohibits nationalist/regionalist parties [...]. [Which] makes it impossible to test the strength of nationalism and regionalism in Portuguese elections” (Kellas 2004, 82).

Because separatist organizations (and a provisional government) existed, even if briefly, in the Azores and Madeira following the Carnation Revolution, this demonstrates that a secessionist sentiment did indeed exist and existed without the presence of a regional language. Both the Azores and Madeira were home to nascent independence movements, both regions were provided with immediate subnational government and policy autonomy, and both regions ultimately saw the prohibition of regionalist political parties. The Portuguese state, then, recognizing political instability, acted swiftly to rectify the problem and did so successfully.

2.1.3.3 Alaska and Texas

Alaska and Texas form the final two non-linguistically distinct counterfactual cases requiring justification. Alaska officially joined the United States via a \$7.2 million sale from the Russian government and remained both a political and economic backwater until the gold rush dramatically increased the territory’s population in the late 19th century, ultimately leading to a territorial government and legislature in 1912 (Whiteside 2009, 16). Voting in favour of plebiscites endorsing statehood in 1946. Alaska became a full state in 1959.

While arguments can certainly be made that Alaskan culture is distinct from that of the 48 contiguous states, Alaska has been included as a counterfactual case due to the presence of the Alaskan Independence Party (AIP). Formed in the late 1970s, the AIP is not, strictly

speaking, an independence-seeking party. Instead, the party can be classified as a regional defense party which offers voters the possibility of a referendum on secession. The AIP argues that the 1958 plebiscite denied Alaskans the right to determine between statehood, commonwealth, status quo, or separation (Alaskan Independence Party n.d.).

Although a tertiary party in Alaskan politics, the AIP received five percent of the Gubernatorial vote in 1974, 5.5 percent in 1986, and, incredibly, 38.8 percent of the gubernatorial vote in 1990, electing Wally Hickel as Governor. It should be noted that the election of the AIP candidate as governor was likely the result of Republican dissatisfaction at the Republican nominee. Wally Hickel—the state’s former Republican governor and then current United States Secretary of the Interior—was a last-minute nominee to be the AIP’s gubernatorial candidate. Hickel—a proponent of Alaskan statehood—would re-join the Republican Party in April of 1994, six months prior to the election. The AIP would receive 19.8 percent of the Gubernatorial vote in the 1994 election. The party would never receive higher than 1.9 percent of the popular vote from 1998 onwards. The party does not compete in assembly elections.

Similarly to Alaska, Texas has been included as a counterfactual case without a distinct regional language. Like Alaska, Texas was once the possession of another country before joining the United States. Texas, a Mexican state since 1821, was largely settled by “white American Southerners who chafed against the Mexican government’s abolition of slavery in 1829 and broke away to form the Republic of Texas in 1836” (Manning 2009, 729). The Republic of Texas was an independent state prior to entry into the Union in 1845.

Without going into detail concerning the history of the American Civil War and the history of Texas throughout the 19th century, there remains, in fact, a sentiment in favour of secessionism in Texas. A 2016 poll found that 26 percent of survey respondents in Texas were in favour of secession, 59 percent opposed, and 15 were undecided (Public Policy Polling 2016, 3).

Newfoundland, the Azores/Madeira, and Alaska/Texas indicate that the inclusion of counterfactual cases need not be dependent on the presence of a regional language. Common to these regions is that secessionist parties have not emerged in the post-War order and demands for independence have largely been stifled altogether by the central state.

2.1.4 Linguistically Distinct Counterfactual Cases

2.1.4.1 Hawaii

The US Congress agreed to annex Hawaii in 1898 both because the US was undergoing a continued sense of “euphoria” following the Spanish-American war and because Hawaii was becoming increasingly important economically due to its provision of sugar (Whiteside 2009, 17). Whiteside (2009, 17) notes that “nearly all modern interpretations agree that native Hawaiians did not support the overthrow of their kingdom”. This is particularly crucial for two reasons. First, it can be reasonably expected that, among native Hawaiians, a secessionist sentiment desiring the return of the Hawaiian Monarchy existed. Second, this antipathy, or at least resistance, towards annexation might have been exacerbated by the presence of a regional language that is unlike any language spoken in the contiguous 48 states. The Hawaiian language remains co-official alongside English.

2.1.4.2 Schleswig-Holstein

Territorial transfers, the result of the Peace of Prague (1866), left a Danish-speaking minority ensconced within the German state bordering Denmark. Germany’s defeat in First World War allowed the Allies to offer neutral Denmark the ability to redraw the Danish-German border. A plebiscite was held in 1920 with 75 percent of Northern Schleswig voting for reunification with Denmark and 80 percent of voters in Central Schleswig voting for reunification with Germany. North Schleswig was returned to Denmark and Germany maintained control of Central and South Schleswig.

As a result, there remains a Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein where Low German, North Frisian, and Danish are recognized minority languages with German constituting the sole official language. While no secessionist party exists in Schleswig-Holstein, the *Sydslesvigsk Vælgerforening* (SSW, South Schleswig Voters’ Association) is a Danish/Frisian regional defense party. As a result of the Bonn-Copenhagen Declaration (1955), the SSW are not subject to electoral thresholds and do not need to receive 5 percent of the popular vote to have a member elected in the *Landtag*—the SSW won three seats with 3.3 percent of the vote in the 2017 *Landtag* election where *Die Linke* won no seats having won 3.8 percent of the popular vote.

2.1.4.3 Valle D'Aosta

Alternating between Savoy lands and French occupancy throughout the 16th-19th centuries, the Aosta Valley, under Savoyard control, was united to the Kingdom of Sardinia until unification with the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. Although briefly under French occupation in WWII, the Aosta Valley returned to Italy at the end of the war. Both Italian and French are co-official languages in the region and French is the mother-tongue of roughly 20 percent of the population (Fondation Emile Chanoux 2001).

Numerous regional defence parties compete in elections to the Regional Council of the Aosta Valley. The 2020 subnational election saw the *Union valdôtaine*, the French-minority defense party, win seven seats with 15.8 percent of the popular vote. Other defence parties, such as the *Alliance valdôtaine* (in alliance with *Edelweisse* and *Italia Viva*) won four seats; the *Vallée d'Aoste unie* coalition (comprised of *Mouv'* and *Ensemble VdA*) won three seats, *Per l'Autonomia/Pour l'autonomie* won three seats and numerous other regionalist parties competed—including the *Lega Nord Valle d'Aosta* which won the preponderance of seats (11 seats) and votes (23.9 percent). The presence of the *Lega Nord* demonstrates that both regionalist and minority-defence parties compete in the region. The *Lega*, in contrast to the *Union valdôtaine*, represents a Northern Italian form of regional defence unrelated to the defence of the French-speaking minority in the Aosta Valley.

As a whole, Alaska, the Aosta Valley, the Azores, Hawaii, Madeira, Schleswig-Holstein, Texas, and Newfoundland are counterfactual cases that differ from the central state. Why the differences between these regions and the state have not been mobilized into a secessionist movement remains under-studied comparatively. At the very least, however, it demonstrates that grievance, cultural or linguistic differences, and failed independence attempts do not guarantee the presence of secessionist movements.

2.2 Dataset

Empirical analysis throughout this project relies on a unique dataset that I have created. The Regional Independence-party, Vote, Autonomy, and Representation Dataset (or RIVARD

for short) aggregates electoral, geographic, demographic, and political data across regional and national elections from 1945 to the present day.⁸

Each election includes static variables such as the presence of a regional language, geographic area size, geographic contiguity, and (for the most part) electoral systems. Dynamic variables are also included, including population (both as a share of the national population and to the natural log), the migrant share of the national population, percent change in GDP, and a measure of self-rule. These measures are further discussed in the next chapter.

RIVARD accounts for secessionist party vote share by aggregating the vote share received by non-ambiguous secessionist parties. Secessionist parties were identified based on each party's stated position towards independence on their official website, electoral platforms, and in conjunction with the identification of regionalist and independence-seeking parties conducted by Massetti and Schakel (2016). Where applicable, vote shares were recorded from each region/state's respective statistical institute. In the event that election results could not be accounted for, I relied on Nohlen and Stöver's (2010) election handbook.

Including counterfactual regions, RIVARD accounts for 1,221 total elections. There are 587 subnational and 634 national elections when counterfactual regions and regions in which a secessionist party did not compete are included. Secessionist parties contested 246 and 251 subnational and national elections respectively.

2.3 Secessionist Party Emergence

When do secessionist parties emerge? Why do they emerge when they do? Plenty of scholarship has theorized the emergence of third- and minor-parties, but secessionist parties deserve a dedicated theoretical and empirical examination.

Secessionist party entrance can be defined three ways. First, is by observing the initial election in which secessionist parties/party appears on the ballot. The second and third definitions introduce measures of viability. The second emergence model defines emergence as the first election in which the parties/party receive at least one percent of the popular vote. The third measure defines emergence as the first election in which secessionist parties win legislative

⁸ The parties that I have selected are listed in the Appendix, see table A.1.

representation. All three of these entrance definitions are accounted for in Chapter Three. The following section accounts only for the first specification: at what point in time and in how many regions did a secessionist party first appear on the subnational/national ballot.

Figure 2.1 plots the percentage of regions where at least one secessionist party has competed in each decade from 1945-2020. The plot concerns only the factual (i.e., non-counterfactual) regions. The denominator is the total number of regions that are accounted for in subnational and national elections, 30 and 22 regions respectively. The number never reaches 100 percent due to some parties exiting the electoral arena (e.g., secessionist parties in Sicily competed in only the 1940s and 1960s).

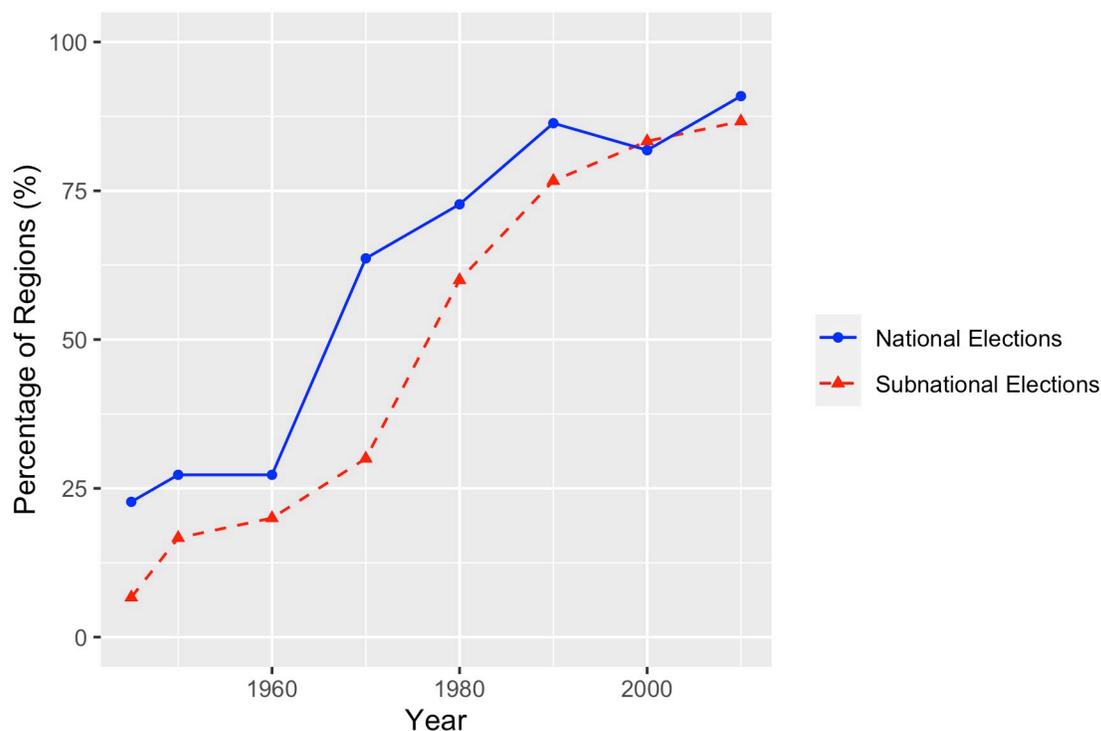


Figure 2.1 Percentage of Regions with at Least One Secessionist Party

NOTE: Figure 2.1 excludes the emergence of the WAXit Party (Western Australia) that emerged in 2021.

Figure 2.1 ends at 2010 because I have included the elections that took place in 2020 and 2021 as part of the 2010s for simplicity.

Figure 2.1 shows the number of regions which saw at least one secessionist party compete has increased over time. In national elections, the largest increase occurred in the 1970s when the number of regions increased from 27 to 63 percent. In subnational elections, the

number of regions doubled from 30 percent to 60 percent in the 1980s. By the 2010s, nearly 90 percent of the considered regions saw the competition of at least one secessionist party.

Table 2.3 shows, by region, how long it took a secessionist party (or parties) to contest regional and national elections. The first column identifies the region; the second identifies the year in which the secessionist party emerged; the third column indicates how many elections it took for the secessionist party to emerge from either the end of WWII, the restoration of democracy, or the creation of a regional parliament; the fourth column shows the share of the vote received by the party/parties in their first contested election; and the final column indicates how many secessionist parties competed in the first election.

Region	Subnational Elections				National Elections				
	Year of Entrance	Number of Elections	Vote Share at Entrance	Number of Parties	Year of Entrance	Number of Elections	Vote Share at Entrance	Number of Parties	
AUSTRALIA									
Western Australia	2021	23	0.57	1	--	--	--	--	
BELGIUM									
Flanders	1995	1	21.2	2	1958	5	2	1	
Wallonia	2004	3	2.2	2	1987	15	0.5	1	
BOSNIA & HERZOGOVINA									
Republika Srpska	1996	1	52.2	1	1996	1	54.5	1	
CANADA									
Alberta	1982	10	11.7	1	--	--	--	--	
BC	1979	12	0.04	1	--	--	--	--	
Manitoba	1986	12	0.1	1	--	--	--	--	
Saskatchewan	1982	10	3.2	1	--	--	--	--	
Québec	1966	6	8.8	2	1979	12	0.6	1	
DENMARK									
Faroe Islands	1950	3	9.8	1	1973	12	25.1	1	
Greenland	1979	1	50.5	2	1979	1	44	1	
FINLAND									
Åland	2003	17	6.5	1	--	--	--	--	
FRANCE									
Corsica	1992	2	16.8	1	2012	7	19.8	1	

Region	Subnational Elections				National Elections			
	Year of Entrance	Number of Elections	Vote Share at Entrance	Number of Parties	Year of Entrance	Number of Elections	Vote Share at Entrance	Number of Parties
GERMANY								
Bavaria	1950	1	16.4	1	1949	1	20.9	1
ITALY								
Bolzano	1983	9	2.5	1	1996	13	9.8	1
Sardinia	1979	8	3.3	1	1979	9	1.9	1
Sicily	1947	1	8.8	1	1946	1	8.8	1
Veneto	2010	9	0.6	2	2013	18	1.1	1
SERBIA (AND MONTENEGRO)								
Kosovo	2001	1	72.4	3	--	--	--	--
Montenegro	1993	1	12	1	--	--	--	--
SPAIN								
Andalusia	1986	2	0.1	1	1996	6	0.08	1
Basque Country	1980	1	16.4	1	1977	1	15	1
Canary Islands	1987	2	1.3	1	1979	2	11	1
Catalonia	1980	1	2.1	2	1977	1	1.8	2
Galicia	1981	1	6.2	1	1977	1	2	1
Navarre	1979	1	17.8	2	1979	2	8.8	1
UK								
Northern Ireland	1945	1	10.6	2	1945	1	18.8	1
Scotland	1999	1	27.3	1	1945	1	1.2	1
Wales	1999	1	30.5	1	1945	1	1.2	1
USA								
Puerto Rico	1949	1	19	1	1948	1	10.3	1

Table 2.3 Secessionist Party Emergence by Case, 1945-2021

Only secessionist parties in nine of the 30 regions compete solely in subnational elections. Secessionist parties in Andalusia, Sicily, Wallonia, and Veneto competed in only a handful of national elections. Of the 14 Spanish elections since 1977 (the restoration of democracy), the *Nación Andaluza* (Andalusia) competed in only two national elections, each time receiving less than one-percent of the vote; the Sicilian *Movimento per l'Indipendenza della Sicilia* only contested the 1946 Italian general election, winning 8.8 percent of the regional vote and four seats; Walloon secessionist parties competed in six Belgian elections, peaking at 1.9 percent of the regional vote in 2010; and Venetian secessionist parties have only competed in the

2013 Italian election, winning 1.1 percent of the regional vote. In contrast, no secessionist movement competes only in national elections.

The opportunity to compete in a subnational election is asymmetric across cases—not all regions had their own regional assembly immediately after WWII. Regions with a subnational assembly whose time-series begins in the immediate post-war era are: Åland, Alberta, Bavaria, Bolzano, British Columbia, the Faroe Islands, Manitoba, Northern Ireland, Puerto Rico, Québec, Sardinia, Saskatchewan, Sicily, and Veneto—roughly half of all cases. National elections in the Spanish cases begin in 1977 following the restoration of democracy. All regional elections in Spain began after the 1979 general election. Greenland begins in 1979 following Home Rule. Corsica, Flanders, Kosovo, Montenegro, Scotland, Wales, and Wallonia begin with decentralization and the creation of regional parliaments. Finally, observations from Republika Srpska begin with the creation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the tri-partite regionalism instituted there.

Table 2.3 shows how party emergence varies by electoral arena. In Belgium, the *Volksumie* contested their first national election in 1958, five elections after the end of WWII. The *Rassemblement wallon*, however, did not emerge in national elections until 1987, 15 elections later. With the federalization of Belgium and the creation of the Flemish and Walloon regional assemblies in 1995, two secessionist parties immediately contested the first Flemish elections, the *Volksumie* and *Vlaams Belang*, whereas a secessionist party, the *Union pour la Wallonie*, did not enter until 2004. In Flanders, secessionist movements were quick to mobilize, outpacing their Walloon counterparts.

The Canadian provinces outside Québec are more similar to Wallonia than they are to Flanders. It took multiple elections in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan until a secessionist party emerged with Alberta's being the most successful. The 11.7 percent of the vote received by the Western Canada Concept Party in Alberta was a historic high, though they were reduced to less than one-percent by the next election. Secessionist parties in BC and Manitoba were, and remain, marginal, with little public support. The Western Canada Concept Party's relative success in the 1982 Saskatchewan election was never to be matched again.

Québec is, evidently, the most visible and important Canadian region in terms of secessionist party activity. Despite the fertile ground for the movement, it still took some time

for the secessionist movement to enter the political arena. In subnational elections, two secessionist parties contested the 1966 election, winning 8.8 percent of the vote. The first national-level secessionist party competed in the 1979 Canadian election winning under one-percent of the regional vote despite the secessionist PQ governing in the province. However, the secessionist movement at the national level did not emerge with any significance until 1993 with the emergence of the *Bloc québécois* (BQ). In fact, the most successful secessionist party prior to the emergence of the BQ was the *Parti Nationaliste du Québec* which won 2.5 percent of the regional vote in the 1984 national election. Québec demonstrates that the emergence of strong secessionist movements need not happen immediately after the awakening of the nation.

The Belgian and Canadian cases demonstrate that the emergence of secessionist parties must be considered in relation to the electoral arena in which they emerge. For some regions (e.g., Flanders, Scotland, Wales), the opportunity for a secessionist party to compete subnationally was limited until devolution/federalization. For other regions (e.g., Québec), national level emergence occurred well after subnational entrance. Institutions structure the extent to which parties compete in national or subnational elections and the factors which influence the decision to contest elections in national elections might differ from the factors which structure emergence in subnational elections.

To visualize the emergence of secessionist parties over time in relation to the number of elections that have passed, Figure 2.2 plots Kaplan-Meier survival estimates of the probability of secessionist party emergence over time. Kaplan-Meier estimates are most easily understood as comparable to bivariate regressions. Typically, the plots show the relationship between the probability of failure and time. ‘Failure’ in our case refers to party emergence and time is represented as the number of elections. All cases including the cases in which a secessionist party has not emerged have been included.

Figure 2.2 indicates that the largest likelihood of emergence occurs at the first election in both regional and national elections. This is not altogether surprising given that Table 2.4 demonstrated that many regions saw the immediate entrance of a secessionist party at the first opportunity. The take-away from Figure 2.2 is that the secessionist parties commonly emerge at

the first election and then there is a decreasing increment to the probability of emergence as time goes on.⁹

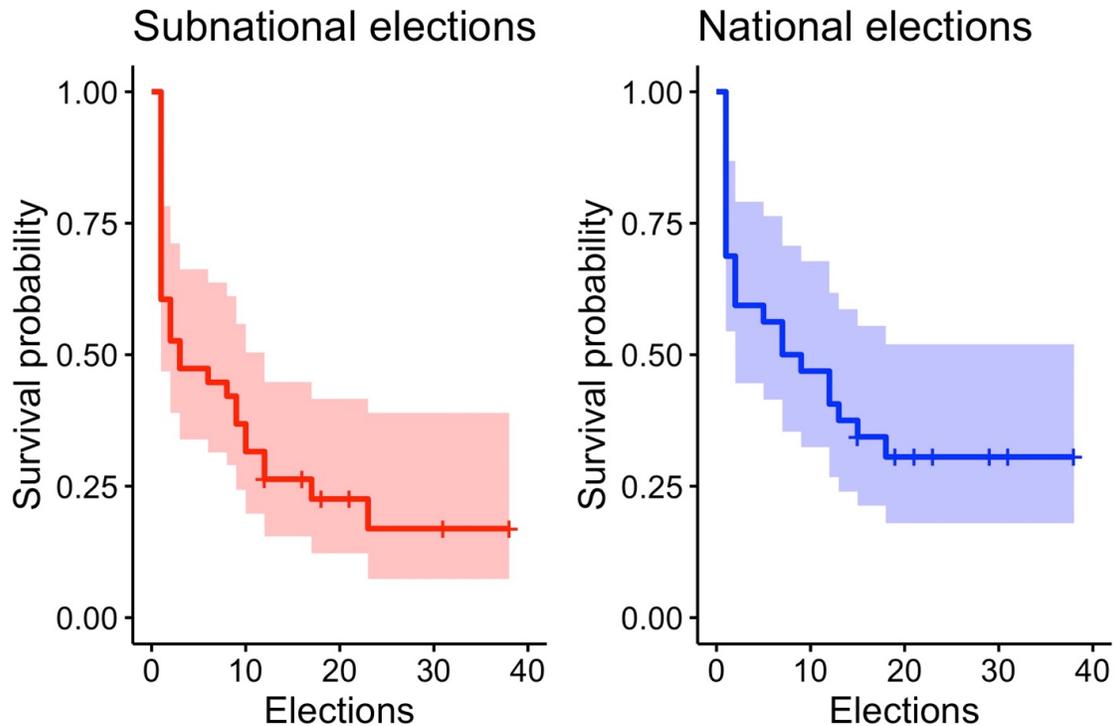


Figure 2.2 Kaplan-Meier Estimates of Secessionist Party Entry

2.4 Secessionist Party Support

2.4.1 Secessionist Party Vote Share

For secessionist parties, success can be measured in two ways: votes or seats. The vote share measure is preferred in this study. Secessionist party vote share has been used as a dependent variable by researchers to observe the effects of autonomy (Masseti and Schakel 2013), to assess the effects of globalization (Sorens 2004), and the cross-sectional determinants of secessionist party support (Sorens 2005, 2012).

⁹ An initial concern with both Figure 2.2 and Table 2.5 is the presence of the Spanish cases given secessionist parties in the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Navarre immediately contested the first possible subnational and national elections. Removing them does not much change the end result. Without them, 47 and 44 percent of all secessionist movements occur in the first election in subnational and national elections respectively.

This work opts for Sorens' all-parties-aggregated method with slight changes. Sorens' unit of analysis is strictly the *nation*. To account for unbalanced panels, he takes the mean secessionist party vote across *all elections* and regresses contemporary data on the historical mean. As a result, Sorens is not looking at the effects of elections *per se* but instead reduces his unit of analysis to the nation, particularly given that each nation forms only one row vector (see Sorens 2005, 316).

By maintaining the unbalanced nature of the panel, I am able to maintain more variation in the dependent and independent variables. Collapsing what can be a half-century of economic and electoral data into a single observation risks overlooking variation in the indicators and, crucially, misses important election-to-election variation that I expect influences the likelihood of secessionist party emergence and support.

This work uses secessionist parties' total vote shares in regions and electoral arenas. In doing so, the time-series runs from 1945 to the present day (or with the establishment of democracy or devolution), and squarely focuses the unit of analysis on the *election*. This work is not concerned with why people vote for different secessionist parties in a multiparty system (such as in Catalonia) but that people vote for secessionist parties at all.

Figure 2.3 plots the percentage of the vote received by secessionist parties in both national and subnational elections. The trend line is loess-smoothed. Figure 2.3 shows secessionist party vote shares rising steadily over the period, in both arenas. For the most part, regional vote share has outpaced national vote shares, although this trend reversed in the 1980s.¹⁰

¹⁰ The declining trend in subnational elections is explained by poor electoral results in 2019 and 2020 where secessionist parties averaged 18.2 and 15.5 percent of the vote respectively. This low average was pulled down by weak secessionist parties which contested elections in 2019 or 2020 in Alberta, British Columbia, the Canary Islands, and Veneto—all secessionist parties received less than one percent of the vote.

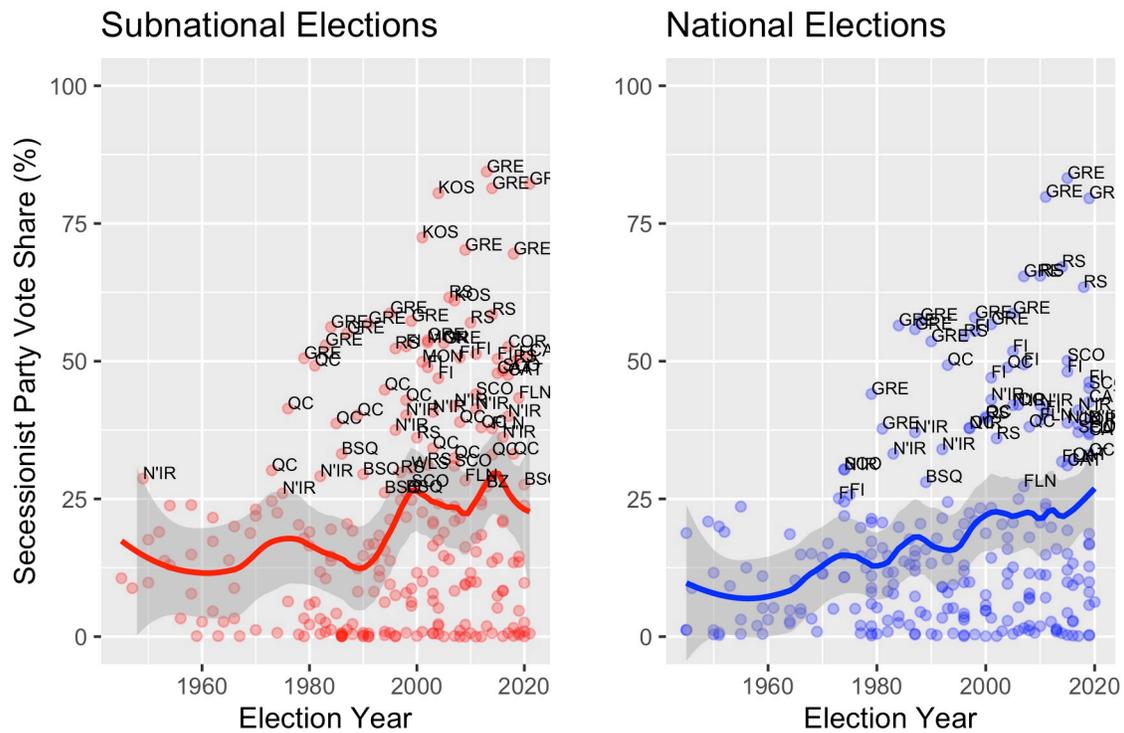


Figure 2.3 Secessionist Party Vote Share, National and Subnational Elections

Figure 2.3 further indicates that in numerous regions secessionist parties have won at least 25 percent of the vote. In these regions, secessionist parties can be dominant parties. In subnational elections, secessionist parties in the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Québec, Republika Srpska, and Scotland routinely form subnational government.

Secessionist parties have won between 10 and 25 of the vote in subnational elections at various points in time in Bavaria, Bolzano, Corsica, Galicia, Montenegro, Navarre, Puerto Rico, Sardinia, and Wales. These secessionist parties, although outside of government, can still form a considerable opposition presence, asking questions of the government and can, possibly, set the electoral agenda. Success, for secessionist parties, is relative. For some, it might be forming government. For others, it might be winning legislative representation and forcing the issue at both the subnational and national level.

Secessionist parties can also be a strong (if not unified) force in the national legislature. Secessionist movements in Catalonia, Flanders, Québec, and Scotland elect sizeable parliamentary delegations who, through their relative weight in the national assembly, can forcefully defend the interests of their region and advance their secessionist agenda. The extent to which secessionist parties in small, peripheral regions such as the Faroe Islands and Greenland

can influence the national government is limited, particularly because these small regions are generally entitled to only a handful of national legislators. In contrast, secessionist parties in larger regions, such as in Québec and Scotland, can be influential parties, possibly extracting policies from the national government in exchange for support for supply bills and confidence motions.

For ease of interpretation, Table 2.4 presents mean secessionist party vote share by decade. The 1945-1949 period saw secessionist parties receive, on average, 16 percent of the vote in subnational elections. It is important to note, however, that this period only saw three elections in which secessionist parties competed: Northern Ireland (1945, 1949) and Sicily (1947).¹¹

Decade	<u>Subnational Elections</u>	<u>National Elections</u>
	Mean Secessionist Party Vote Share (Standard Deviation)	
1945	16 (11)	10.2 (9.3)
1950	13.4 (7.7)	7.5 (7.9)
1960	9.4 (8.2)	6.9 (5.7)
1970	18.1 (15.2)	14.5 (10.1)
1980	14.9 (17.5)	16.1 (15.6)
1990	18.8 (17.7)	18 (17.5)
2000	24.3 (21.9)	20.6 (19.2)
2010	24.5 (22.2)	24.5 (22.1)
2020	44.6 (41.2)	6.3 (--)

Table 2.4 Secessionist Party Vote Share by Decade

While secessionist parties have evidently been increasing in strength over time, the 1970s saw secessionist party vote share jump from 9.49 percent in 1960 to 18.1 percent. A similar pattern is observed in secessionist parties' regional vote share in national elections. By the 1980s, secessionist party shares in subnational and national elections begin to converge.

2.4.2 Secessionist Party Support by Seat Share

Seat share, it might be argued, is a better measure of the tangible political success of secessionist parties. On the one hand, secessionist party strength is clearly indicated in

¹¹ The high mean for the immediate post-war period is largely driven by the 1949 Northern Irish election where the Nationalist Party (26.8 percent of the vote, nine elected) and the Socialist Republicans (1.9 percent, none elected) combined for 28.7 percent of the vote.

assemblies where secessionist parties capture a large number of seats, providing them the ability to form government. On the other hand, the translation of votes to seats is directly the result of the region’s electoral system.

Québec demonstrates how focusing on seat share instead of vote share risks overlooking the early support that the PQ received before ultimately forming government in 1976. The first election the PQ contested was the 1970 provincial election where the party won 23.1 percent of the vote and seven seats. They then competed in the 1973 election, increasing their vote share to 30.2 percent of the vote but *decreased* the number of seats won to only six. The PQ’s electoral breakthrough came in 1976 when the party won 41.4 percent of the vote and 71 seats. Focusing on the proportion of seats won by the PQ would both under-count their support in the early seventies and over-count their support in 1976.

Secessionist parties have seen increased success in terms of seat shares that mirrors the gains made via vote shares. Table 2.5 presents the average percent of seats won by secessionist parties in their respective regional and national elections. The percentage of seats won in national elections requires some clarification. Because the Faroe Islands and Greenland are only entitled to two seats in the Danish *Folketing*, Navarre to five in the Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*, and Corsica to four in the *Assemblée nationale*, secessionist party seat shares in these regions have not been included in the across-decades averages so as to not inflate the mean seat share. Puerto Rico is likewise excluded as they only elect one non-voting member to the US House of Representatives.¹²

Decade	Subnational Elections	National Elections
	Mean	Seat Share (Standard Deviation)
1945	16.7 (5.9)	9.2 (9.5)
1950	14.1 (7.1)	3.6 (7.0)
1960	8.1 (9.5)	3.3 (4.9)
1970	17.3 (20.5)	7.3 (6.2)
1980	13.1 (18.1)	6.4 (8.1)
1990	18.7 (19.5)	13.3 (19.5)
2000	24.7 (22.4)	18.7 (23)
2010	25.9 (23.9)	23.3 (26.1)
2020	24.2 (31.2)	--

Table 2.5 Secessionist Seat Share by Decade

¹² Which is often muddled by the reality that nationalist parties in Corsica often compete in Regionalist Lists and these lists do not differentiate vote share between non-secessionist and secessionist parties.

Adjusting for the Faroese and Greenlandic cases is crucial given that winning a single seat means that a secessionist party won 50 percent of the regional seats—something that Greenlandic secessionist parties achieved seven times and Faroese parties did five times. Similarly, Greenlandic secessionist parties won fully 100 percent of the regional seats six times and Faroese parties did so twice. Secessionist parties in Navarre have never won more than a single seat in a given national election—but even this accounts for 20 percent of regional seats.

The first data column demonstrates that the mean secessionist party seat share in subnational elections, like vote share, began its upward trend in the 1970s. Secessionist parties have been more successful in subnational elections than in national elections until mean seat share effectively converged across electoral arenas in the 2010s. The increased seat shares for secessionist parties in subnational elections in the 1970s is not mirrored in their national election results. Instead, secessionist parties did not reach 1970s level of subnational success in national elections until the 2000s.

Figure 2.4 plots seat shares in both regional and national elections. Both the smoothed subnational and national lines indicate that secessionist parties have captured an increasing proportion of legislative seats since the end of WWII. And, as demonstrated in Table 2.5, seat share in subnational elections outpaces seat share in national elections until they reverse in the contemporary era.

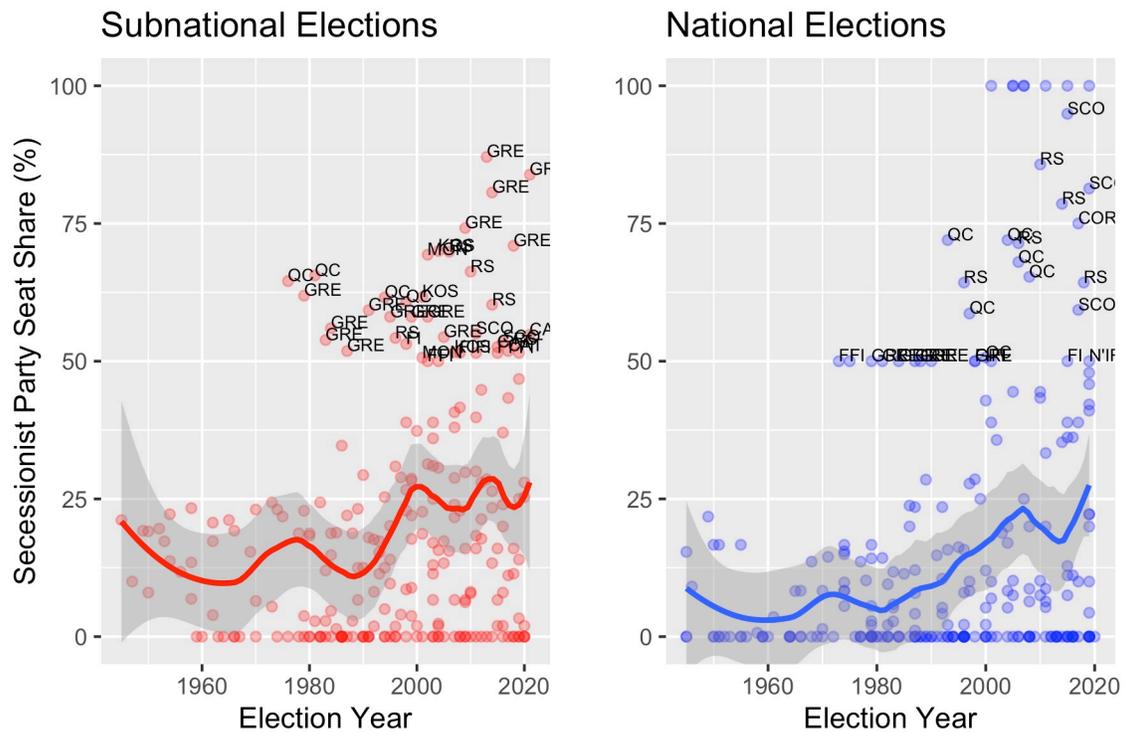


Figure 2.4 Secessionist Party Seat Share, Subnational and National Elections

NOTE: National results in Corsica, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Navarre, and Puerto Rico are excluded in the calculation of the loess-smoothed line.

The 100% share in national elections are exclusively Greenlandic shares of the Danish national assembly.

Weak competitors at the national level (with the exception of Scotland and Wales as they had no subnational electoral arena in which to compete until 1999) are simultaneously weak at the subnational level. Andalusian secessionist parties, mirroring their lack of success nationally, have never won a seat in the Parliament of Andalusia after competing in six elections. The *Bayernpartei* failed to win a seat in the Bavarian *Landtag* in every election since 1966. The Sicilian independence movement has been moribund, with parties entering and exiting subnational elections and never winning a seat from 1946 onwards. Secessionist parties have not won a seat in the Parliament of Wallonia since its establishment in 1995. Secessionist parties in the Canary Islands have competed in four subnational elections, failing to win a seat and averaging only 0.72 percent of the vote across these elections. Secessionist parties in Puerto Rico have dropped from their high of 10 seats in 1952 to six in 1958 and have never elected more than two legislators since then. In contrast, strong movements in subnational elections are strong regionally in national elections.

2.5 Secessionist Parties in Government

Subnational elections offer secessionist parties the opportunity to form government. Given that secessionist party vote share has increased over time, so too has secessionist party participation in regional government. In fact, of the 246 subnational elections in the dataset, secessionist parties have been in government following an election 79 times.¹³

Over the decades studied, three-quarters of all government inclusions have occurred from the 1990s onwards. The nine instances of government inclusion from 1945-1979 include the *Bayernpartei* in Bavaria (as coalition partners in 1954 and 1962), four times in Faroe Islands (1962, 1966, 1974, and 1978), once in Greenland (1979), Québec (1976), and Sardinia (1979). Of these cases, the Faroese, Greenlandic, and Québécois cases have remained quite strong from the 1980s to the present. A secessionist party would be, at least, a coalition partner after every Faroese election with the exception of the 1994 election. Both the secessionist *Siumut* and *Inuit Ataqatigiit* have been coalition partners in numerous Greenlandic governments from 1979 to the present day. In Québec, the *Parti québécois* and the unionist *Parti libéral du Québec* alternated terms in government from 1976 until 2018 when the non-secessionist *Coalition Avenir Québec* became the first non-PLQ/PQ party to govern in the province since 1970.

Secessionist parties have never participated in government in Åland, Alberta, Andalusia, Bolzano, British Columbia, the Canary Islands, Manitoba, Puerto Rico, Saskatchewan, Sicily, or Wallonia. Even in regions with the presence of autonomist parties (that is, regional defence parties who are non-independence-seeking), secessionist parties have participated in government (notably in the Basque Country, Catalonia, Flanders, and Navarre). Evidently, the presence of an autonomist party does not preclude the success of a secessionist party, although it might mute it.

2.6 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has deployed a new, up-to-date dataset to provide a comprehensive description of both secessionist party emergence and support in the post-war order. It demonstrates that emergence of these parties is most likely to occur at the regional level within

¹³ Being in government includes winning the election outright as a majority or minority government, as well as being a coalition partner.

the first three elections and within the first six national elections. Yet some secessionist parties took a relatively long time to emerge. For example, Québec, one of the regions with the strongest secessionist claims, did not see secessionist parties compete until 1966—and did not win office until 1976.

Independence-seeking parties have become increasingly successful in the contemporary era. That these parties average a quarter of the votes and seats in regional and national elections demonstrates that these parties are no longer tertiary, risible movements which can be ignored by the established parties. Instead, in many cases, secessionist parties have become established parties. Although they might not win the preponderance of votes, their ability to win, on average, a quarter of the votes and seats demonstrates that a sizeable portion of the voting population sympathizes with their political and ideological agenda.

Chapter 3: Secessionist Party Emergence

The decision to form a party to contest elections, to spend considerable political and financial capital to represent a subset of the national population and, by definition, a subset of an already small subnational population, is likely not one taken lightly. New parties face not only electoral constraints such as access to the ballot and electoral thresholds, but also political and social constraints such as financing, campaigning, messaging, organizing, and fielding candidates.

I take Hug's (2001) model of third-party entrance as the theoretical starting point for this chapter: that an independence-seeking movement exists, that they tried to convince an established party to adopt a pro-independence platform, and that they were rejected by said party. Once rejected, these organizers may formally enter into the political arena through a political party.

Demands for secession are, by their very nature, high-cost. René Lévesque discovered this when he tried to persuade the unionist *Parti libéral du Québec* (PLQ) to adopt a pro-independence platform. Rebuffed by PLQ leader, and Premier, Jean Lesage, Lévesque quit the PLQ to form his own party, the *Mouvement Souveraineté-Association* which would later become the *Parti québécois* (PQ). The formation of the PQ exemplifies an issue with theories of new/niche party emergence: that demands for territorial independence are too high for established parties to accept, leading frequently to the emergence of new, independence-seeking parties.

In response to the emergence of a secessionist party, established parties have to decide whether to be dismissive, accommodative, or adversarial towards the independence issue (Meguid 2008). Statewide parties can, and do, acquiesce to regional demands made by territorial *defence* parties (Amat *et al.* 2020; Pogorelis *et al.* 2005; Zons 2015) but the demands made by *secessionist* parties are unlikely to be incorporated by statewide parties, instead forcing statewide parties to engage with the issue—risking increasing its salience (Meguid 2008).

The presence of a secessionist party demonstrates that demands for territorial independence remain unmet. And while there exists considerable research that looks at new party entrance more broadly (Greenberg and Shepsle 1987; Hug 2001; Iversen 1994a, 1994b; Tavits 2006), there is very little research that specifically looks at the emergence of secessionist parties.

This chapter models secessionist party entrance via event-history analysis in both subnational and national elections separately. In subnational elections, I show that secessionist parties are likely to emerge sooner in regions with a distinct regional language, in more populous regions, and in proportional representation (PR) systems. In national elections, the presence of a distinct regional language increases the probability of a secessionist party emerging, however higher regional autonomy suppresses this and the electoral system has no effect. What influences the emergence of secessionist parties is thus sensitive to the electoral arena in which they enter.

3.1 Determinants of Emergence

3.1.1 Subnational Distinctiveness

The presence of a unique regional language, one that is distinct from the language that central state operates in, directly differentiates—and demarcates—the region from the state. As Anderson (2006 [1983]) argued, the proliferation of a *lingua franca* as states formed allowed for the rise of unique nationalisms as individual states now shared a unique language. This language was only understood by the citizens of that region and did not, unlike Latin, extend across borders.

But if Anderson’s point refers to *state* nationalism, the broader point equally applies to *substate* nationalism. That the national state does not speak the same language as the region entrenches the difference between the region and the state and provides an easily identifiable demarcation between the nation as ‘us’ and the state as ‘them’.

Wimmer (2008) identifies the extent to which linguistic homogeneity and public goods provision can assuage secessionist desires. The Swiss case, for example, demonstrates the extent to which linguistic differences can be overcome through cross-cutting national organizations and a high degree of education. The Swiss state, although home to four distinct languages, was never captured by any one linguistic group and goods provision, and career advancement, did not rely on any one given language (Wimmer 2008).

Belgium, in contrast, demonstrates the extent to which the siloing of distinct languages can have a negative effect on state formation. Uneven economic development and a preference for the French language in 19th century Belgium led to the proliferation of Flemish civil organizations and demands for increased Flemish rights. In contrast to the Swiss case, Flemish

civil organizations developed after the formation of the Belgian state in an era where the French language was prioritized resulting in two “largely autonomous, linguistically defined substates and the two language communities shared power in a much-weakened federal government” (Wimmer 2008, 65; Clough 1930 [1968]).

Wimmer contrasts good provision between Botswana and Somalia. He argues that Botswana’s stability derived from the central state’s ability to provide public goods *across* the country and not only to specific ethnic groups. This allowed for identification with the Botswanan state that cut across ethnic cleavages. In contrast, the colonial arrangements in Somalia did not ensure effective public goods provision and the hodgepodge nature of the country meant that lineage and clan-rule remained more important than the state provision of goods. Post-colonial Somalia saw financial aid used to increase the bureaucracy and military but not to facilitate goods provision, limiting the extent to which people identified with the central state.

Both the Botswanan and Swiss cases demonstrate the extent to which goods provision *across* ethnic or linguistic divides can increase identification with the central state. If, then, the central state provides public goods asymmetrically to the linguistic majority than the linguistic minority, this risks upsetting state harmony. Moreover, the effect might not be concentrated strictly on the *provision* of good but could likewise entail the costs associated with substate communication.

For the regions considered in this study that are home to a distinct regional language, the linguistic difference between the substate and the state reflects the most tangible difference. These differences are captured at the individual level. It is the *voter* that is linguistically distinct from the citizen of the central state and may use this difference to demarcate themselves from the central state. The party, then, emerges to represent the regional linguistic cleavage and serves as a way to promote independence in order to ensure the provision of public goods and to protect the presence of the regional language.

There are, to be sure, alternative indicators that measure substate differentiation, notably religion and fractionalization. Religion serves as a way in which the subnation might be different from the central state. The presence of a distinct region creates an in-group and an out-group. The subnational in-group differentiates itself from the out-group: the citizens of the central state.

Subnational citizens might be more willing to live in a state with more in-group homogeneity such that an independent state would serve to form a homogenous state, where the religious minority now becomes the majority of the state. Prominent examples include Northern Ireland (of which 41 percent identified as Roman Catholic and Protestant respectively in the 2011 census) and Bosnia and Herzegovina where the region is divided amongst Muslims, Orthodox Christians, and Roman Catholics. But religion has been excluded from this study for two reasons. The first concerns data availability. Like the number of minority language speakers, measurement of the number of religious adherents in a subnation is difficult to find across a large time series, reducing the identification of the presence of a distinct religion to a dichotomous variable—one that may very well be colinear with the presence of a regional language. Second, religion as a cleavage that structures territorial demands for independence might, instead, reflect the concerns of the 19th century. But if religion is a proxy to measure subnational difference, language achieves the same effect with greater parsimony.

Cultural or ethnic fractionalization may also serve as a useful tool in which to measure the extent to which a society is culturally or ethnically divided (see Fearon 2003). However, fractionalization indices of the sort have been excluded primarily because these indices focus on the *state* level. As such, the level of intra-Spanish fractionalization might differ from the level of intra-Catalonian fractionalization (as one might expect given the presence of the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Galicia). For my purposes, then, national-level fractionalization matters less than region-specific fractionalization. But, similar to religion, language, I argue, equally captures the extent to which fractionalization matters: that language parsimoniously encapsulates the impetus of subnational difference and it is this difference that pushed back against state building, specifically in an attempt to silo their institutions away from the central state (Kymlicka 2001).

- H_{E1} : Secessionist parties are more likely to emerge in regions with a distinct language¹⁴.

¹⁴ All hypotheses are presented as H_{En} where E refers to ‘emergence’ and n is the hypothesis’ numerical order presented.

3.1.2 Coordination and Mobilization

Because there exists little research looking at the relationship between mobilization and political party emergence, I turn to the research that looks at the importance of geographic space on social movements. This literature argues that social movements are more likely to begin in cities. Cities facilitate the relationships that make mobilization possible, but the development of these movements depends on “the nature of local power relations between political authorities and civic organization” (Nicholls 2008, 842).

Resources such as time, effort, and money are crucial for the development of social movements. Access to these resources is dispersed, often favouring privileged groups (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). But cities serve as areas in which there exists less of a co-ordination problem within concentrated social movements, as the ability to establish contact between groups and share information is reduced (Nicholls 2008). Cities serve as areas in which diverse groups with strong ties can coalesce to address specific concerns (Nagle 2013; Nicholls 2008; Pullan 2017).

I extend the social movement literature to the emergence of secessionist parties. Cities facilitate the emergence of social movements because they are smaller political units and allow for the easy geographic concentration of people seeking policy or social change. By extension, the sharing of resources, information, and campaigning is facilitated by voters in smaller geographic areas. The presence of voters, then, in small geographic areas encourages the emergence of a secessionist party precisely because voters are more reachable, making formation and emergence easier than having to appeal to a large territory which imposes large information costs and makes it difficult to build a common pan-territorial network.

Larger regions also impose a considerable barrier on secessionist party entry as there is, by definition, more terrain in which to contest a campaign. Smaller regions might impose less start-up costs on secessionist parties who do not need to travel the length of a large territory in order to mount a campaign.

- H_{E2} : Secessionist party emergence is more likely in smaller geographic (by physical territory) regions.

3.1.3 Demographic Strength

The expectations for the effect of population on secessionist party entrance is mixed. On the one hand, Sorens (2005, 2012) posits that population size signals a form of viability. This viability can be recognized by voters. Secessionist-inclined voters in larger regions might believe that their potential state can be a viable entity globally, be it through goods provision, economic success, diplomatic relations, etc. Demands for independence, for example, in Québec which accounts for roughly a quarter of Canada's population can be more viable than in regions like Greenland and the Faroe Islands which account for less than one percent of the national population. Concomitantly, it is not just that raw population, or population share, signals viability but larger populations are also provided with a larger presence in the national legislature. The Québec delegation in the House of Commons represents its share of the national population (with 78 of 338 seats), providing the region with considerable legislative representation. Greenland, in contrast, is entitled to only two seats in the national legislature, limiting the extent to which secessionist parties can influence the electoral agenda or have engage in parliamentary affairs.

In contrast, secessionist parties might be more likely to emerge in less populous regions. Alesina and colleagues (1998, 2000) have argued that smaller regions are more likely to see political independence because these regions are more open to global trade, reducing the economic costs associated with separation. If voters recognize that the costs of secession are lower, then this might likewise lead to increase demands for autonomy. From this perspective, the same theoretical process identified by Hug (2001) occurs but voters/movements/social groups are framing their demands for independence within a concept of economic feasibility, unrelated to their population-driven demands for independence.

As a result of the theoretically possible effects of large and small populations, I present a non-directional hypothesis concerning the emergence of secessionist parties in order to reflect the contrasting, but equally compelling, theoretical relationships.

- H_{E3}: Population size has an undetermined effect on party emergence in subnational elections.

3.1.4 Non-Contiguity

Regions that are unattached to the central state by land borders can be far from the locus of power and are often home to a distinct language, culture, and identity. This unique identity, removed geographically from the central state, might induce the emergence of a secessionist party, keen on protecting the non-contiguous region. The distinctiveness may well be reinforced because the region's citizens are less likely to directly interact with the central state and, socially, with its citizens. Non-contiguous peripheral regions might be reliant on their own governments for goods provision and internal migration might be lower.

Findings concerning geographic contiguity and secessionist parties are mixed. Sorens (2005) finds that they receive a higher vote share in non-contiguous nations. In contrast, Massetti and Schakel (2016) find that being an island nation has no effect on the probability of being a secessionist party. Baldacchino and Hepburn (2012) find that, in the post-WWII order, non-contiguous regions have demonstrated a preference for 'territorial empowerment' in lieu of territorial independence. Grydhøj (2016, 104) notes that "very few small island territories [...] possess powerful separatist movements" and that, while over 130 new states have emerged since WWII (33 of which were small island states), only two island states have become sovereign since 1984 (Palau and East Timor). The lack of desire for independence demonstrated by island nations might be due to state-dependent island regions outperforming sovereign island states in terms of economic performance, life expectancy, and literacy rates (McElroy and Parry 2012).

Although non-contiguous regions are home to identifiable borders and, possibly, a national consciousness that differentiates them from the central state, the island-specific literature has demonstrated that the desire for independence in these regions is limited. As a result, the following hypothesis builds on this literature and hypothesizes that:

- H_{E4}: Secessionist parties are less likely to emerge in non-contiguous nations.

3.1.5 Self-Rule

The region's level of self-rule, its law and policy-making powers, should influence the kinds of grievances and demands that can fuel the emergence of a secessionist party. Certainly, Loughlin (2007, 400) argues that states implement 'asymmetric' forms of decentralization/federalism as a way to manage intra-state differences. Asymmetric federalism

provides specific regions (e.g., the Basque Country) with more power than other areas within that same state.

Voters might desire increased self-rule but the state may be unwilling to devolve. Elites, then, might be encouraged to enter the political arena to capitalize on latent demands for increased policy autonomy. In regions where a demand for autonomy is strong, and combines with a demand for political independence, preferences and demands for increased regional autonomy can encourage the emergence of a secessionist party seeking to represent these demands. Likewise, a refusal from the central state to engage in these demands might lead to regional disgruntlement, leading to conflict over devolution or federalization.

While political elites demand or negotiate policy autonomy, voters may or may not share these preferences. There exists an identified ‘devolution paradox’ whereby citizens in regional and federal states desire increased powers for their region—and less central state intrusion—but are hesitant to allow inter-regional variation (Henderson *et al.* 2013). With that in mind, however, Henderson *et al.* (2013, 312) find that citizens in historic nations (Galicia/Catalonia and Scotland/Wales) are more likely to support regional policy control over the fields of the environment, crime, unemployment, education, and health, than were those who were more attached to their region and perceived their region to be wealthier. The ‘devolution paradox’ is less likely to occur in historic nations—with these citizens in these nations being less likely to prefer policy uniformity across the state. Schakel and Smith (2021, 14) find that citizen preferences for self-rule are positively, and strongly, related to preferences for regional reform that strength regional autonomy.

Alternatively, increased self-rule might satisfy voters’ regional demands. If the central state demonstrates sensitivity towards regional concerns and grants the region increased self-rule, then regionalist movements which demand increased policy provisions might be suppressed because the central state has anticipated their demands or has co-opted the autonomist agenda (Meguid 2008; Roeder 2009).

On the other hand, higher self-rule might induce secessionist party entrance, trapping the central state in a paradox where, once the self-rule is in operation, the regional government’s provision of public goods makes credible the administrative competency of the subnational government. Indeed, Brancati (2008) finds that regionalist parties benefit electorally from high

levels of autonomy. Following significant decentralization, statewide parties become more successful in the decentralized region in national elections but regionalist parties see their support increase in subnational elections (Meguid 2015). Massetti and Schakel (2016) find that increased levels of authority increase the likelihood of secessionist party competition in regional elections but that authority has no effect on being a secessionist party in national elections.

- H_{E5}: The relationship between autonomy and secessionist party emergence is undetermined.

3.1.6 Electoral Systems

The permeability of the electoral system directly impacts the emergence of secessionist parties. More permissive systems, those with lower thresholds for representation, facilitate the election of niche political parties as they require fewer votes to win legislative representation. These lower-threshold systems are generally PR systems. In contrast, plurality/majoritarian systems impose a high *implicit* threshold where parties require a substantial number of constituency-level votes to win legislative representation.

I expect that this this permissiveness affects secessionist party entry both due to voter and elite considerations. The willingness to vote for secessionist parties might be influenced by the electoral system such that regions with low effective thresholds encourage voters to vote for smaller, niche parties and higher threshold systems exert a depressing effect, encouraging voters to vote strategically for their second-preference (Blais 2002; Blais *et al.* 2001, 2009). This psychological effect of majoritarian systems might depress the probability of secessionist party entry because voters, realizing that the new party needs a large number of votes to be elected in even a single constituency, might be hesitant to vote for a party that might only be a marginal presence in the legislature (Duverger 1954).

At the elite level, the psychological effect might depress entrance as members of secessionist movements/organizations/groups might be hesitant to form a political party due to the decreased likelihood of electoral success. As a result, proponents of secession might be more inclined to remain political pressure groups that attempt to influence the policy positions of established parties.

To measure permissiveness, I compare non-PR systems to PR systems. Bolin (2007), Lago and Martínez (2010), and Tavits (2006) find that higher electoral thresholds are associated with a decreased probability of new party entrance. However, Bernauer and Bochsler (2001) find that the effects of threshold on the emergence of ethnic minority parties in post-Communist states is statistically insignificant. Reuchamps *et al.* (2014, 1105) find, in Belgian elections, that the introduction of a five percent threshold—specifically to mitigate the increasing fragmentation of the party system—did not “hinder the emergence of new parties”. Majoritarian systems, in contrast, which impose a high *de facto* threshold (see Lijphart 1994) discourage entry because parties are less likely to enter the political arena in circumstances that are not preferential to success (Feddersen *et al.* 1990).¹⁵

- H_{E6}: Secessionist parties are more likely to emerge in PR systems.

3.2 Methodology

Analysis in this chapter consists of a survival analysis. The survival process measures the duration of time an observation spends in a constant state until an ‘event’ occurs (Blossfeld *et al.* 2019; Box-Steffensmeier 2012; Liu 2012). Borrowing from the field of medical sciences, an event can be the occurrence of patient death in a medical trial, relapse in a study of sobriety, or, for our purposes, the entrance of a secessionist party in regional and national elections. Liu (2012, 4) describes survival models as being “designed to describe a time course from the beginning of a specific time interval to the occurrence of a particular event. Given this feature, data used for survival analysis are also referred to as time-to-event data, which consist of information about a discrete ‘jump’ in status as well as about the time passed until the occurrence of such a jump”.

¹⁵An attempt was made to measure electoral threshold. To my knowledge, no work nor dataset exists which lists the legal or effective threshold in *subnational* elections. This type of indicator would be invaluable for studies of subnational elections. I attempted to aggregate election-specific thresholds for each subnational election. On the one hand, this is a relatively straightforward task for some regions. On the other hand, ambiguity concerning whether there was or was not a threshold leads to the calculation of an effective threshold returning an indicator that combines both *legal* and *effective* thresholds. Using such a mixed indicator is problematic because in certain cases, some parties elected representatives below the effective threshold. While threshold is undoubtedly important, more research is needed which takes stock of the legal threshold employed in PR systems in historical elections.

Survival analysis includes data on both the time-to-the-event as well as the event itself. Most regions initially become eligible to have a national secessionist movement in the immediate post-war order and eligible in regional elections either with the restoration of democracy (e.g., Spain), or the creation of region-specific parliaments (e.g., Scotland/Wales; Flanders/Wallonia).

The event variable is coded as 0 for each election until the secessionist party emerges. Because time in this study is discrete (elections do not happen every year), the key measure is the number of elections until the party emerged. In Québec, for example, 1948 is the first election and a secessionist party emerged six elections later (1966). For others, notably in Spain, secessionist parties emerge at the very first regional elections in 1980.

Crucial to a proper survival analysis is the identification of the hazard rate. Golub (2008, 531) defines the *hazard* rate as “the probability that in any given point in time [that] the event of interest will occur (e.g., a war starts, a cabinet dissolves, legislation is adopted) given that it has not yet occurred” and the *baseline* hazard as the “underlying effect the passage of time has on the hazard rate once all independent variables are taken into account”. In conducting survival analyses, researchers need to choose between *parametric* models which require the specification of the baseline hazard’s shape (e.g., Gompertz, Weibull, or exponential) or *semi-parametric* models (e.g., Cox proportional hazards model) which impose no distributional form on the baseline hazard (Blossfeld *et al.* 2019; Cleves *et al.* 2010; Golub 2008).

In a review of studies focusing on decision-making within the European Union, Golub (2007, 162) finds that the misspecification of survival models has led to a “legacy of heroic assumptions and unreliable results” because researchers employed parametric models and misidentified the distribution of the baseline hazard. Cox models, specifically the proportional hazards model, allow for a more reliable treatment of the baseline hazard given that the model does not require a strong theoretical justification of the baseline hazard and that it deals with the proportional hazard assumption with more efficacy than parametric models (Golub 2008).

3.3 Measures

3.3.1 Geography and Electoral Systems

Most subnational regions are, by definition, small, but the presence of Andalusia, the Canadian provinces, Greenland, and Western Australia imposes a left-skew to the distribution. I solve this issue by taking the natural log of the geographic area. This serves to bring in the ends of the distribution. Because I expect parties to be more likely to emerge in smaller regions, logging geographic area increases the importance of moving from a small area to a medium area and reduces the weight given to larger areas. Larger areas, I argued above, have an increased coordination and information sharing problem; the largest effects, then should be between small- and medium-sized areas.

Contiguity is measured via a simple dummy variable measuring whether the region is contiguous to the central state or not. This measure is preferred to differentiating between whether or not the region is an island—strictly speaking, Northern Ireland is not an island as it shares a land border with the Republic of Ireland but Northern Ireland is clearly not contiguous to Great Britain.

Electoral systems take the form of a dummy variable comparing non-PR systems (0) to PR systems (1). The identification of PR systems is fairly straightforward. In MMP systems, vote share is recorded from the list/second-vote and not the constituency-level vote. MMP systems have subsequently been coded as PR systems. Non-PR systems include: FPTP (Canada, the UK, and the USA), SNTV (Puerto Rico), limited vote (Aosta Valley in 1949, 1945, and 1959), and AV (Australia).

3.3.2 Regional Language

Distinct regional language is defined as whether the region has a legally recognized language that differs from that of the state. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 (Chapter Two) listed the regions under study as well as the presence of a regional language. In subnational elections in which a secessionist party competed, 18 regions were classified as having a distinct regional language. The regions that are home to a distinct regional language are Åland (Swedish speaking Finns), The Basque Country/Navarre (Basque), Bolzano (German), Catalonia (Catalan), Corsica (Corsican), the Faroe Islands (Faroese), Flanders (Flemish/Dutch), Kosovo (Albanian), Galicia

(Galician), Greenland (Greenlandic), Puerto Rico (Spanish), Québec (French), Republika Srpska (Serbian), Wales (Welsh), and Wallonia (French). I operationalize the presence of a regional language through a simple dummy variable that indicates whether the region is home to distinct language.¹⁶

3.3.3 Population

Population is measured two ways. In subnational elections, I take the natural log of the region's population. Logging the value makes the distribution of the variable more normal and also imposes a limitation on the most populous regions: after a certain value, increases in population size become less important. To reiterate, the logged value of the regional population is used in subnational elections in order to test both the region's viability and coordination. I hypothesize that, subnationally, these mechanisms work specifically at the subnational level, regardless of the region's share/proportion of the national population. It is, specifically, the raw population size of the region that is most important for subnational emergence.

In national elections, population is operationalized as the region's share of the national population. The region's share of the national population measures two concepts simultaneously: the size of the population and their share of the seats in the national legislature (Sorens (2005) finds a correlation of 0.98 between the two measures). In national elections, regions with a larger share of the state's population also have larger parliamentary delegations. Larger delegations incentivize the emergence of secessionist parties because it increases the party's ability to manipulate or control the electoral agenda in ways that smaller regions, such as Greenland, cannot.

Population data was (mostly) aggregated from each region's respective statistics department. If there was no information available, I relied on EUROSTAT data for European countries and the World Bank for applicable non-European regions

¹⁶ Massetti and Schakel (2016, 64) conceptualize the presence of a regional language via an index which scores regions on a one to three scale where one point is given for each criterion: "there is an indigenous regional language that is different from the dominant (plurality) language in the state", the language is spoken by over half the region's population, and the language is not the dominant language of the state. I suspect that my dichotomous measure does not differ much from the one proposed by Massetti and Schakel particularly because no region under study has moved from the presence of a regional language to its absence.

Table 2.1 in Chapter Two listed the average cross-time regional share of the national population in national elections. Regions that account for less than one-percent of the state’s total population are: Alaska, the Aosta Valley, the Azores, Bolzano, Corsica, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Hawaii, Madeira, Navarre, Newfoundland, and Puerto Rico.

The largest proportion regions are Andalusia (17 percent of the national population); Bavaria (15 percent); Catalonia (15 percent); Flanders (57 percent); Kosovo (23 percent); Québec (24 percent); Republika Srpska (36 percent); and Wallonia (33 percent). Across all cases—counterfactual cases included—subnations account for an average of 8.6 percent of the national population. Among the non-counterfactual cases, the mean population share is 12.2 percent. Population remains generally stable over time. However, both Galicia and Québec have seen their share of the national population decline.¹⁷

3.3.4 Autonomy

Autonomy is measured via Hooghe *et al.*’s (2016) Regional Autonomy Index (RAI). The RAI has three measures of autonomy: self-rule, shared rule, and the combination of the two values. Self-rule is the “authority exercised by a regional government over those who live in the region”, whereas shared rule is “authority exercised by a regional government or its representatives in the country as a whole” (Masseti and Schakel 2016, 63). Self-rule is the sum of (i) institutional depth, a 0-3 scale measuring “the extent to which a regional government is autonomous rather than deconcentrated”; (ii) policy autonomy, a 0-4 scale measuring “the range of policies for which a regional government is responsible”; (iii) fiscal autonomy, a 0-4 scale which measures the region’s taxation power; (iv) borrowing autonomy, a 0-3 scale measuring the extent to which a region can borrow money; and (v) a 0-4 scale measuring the independence of the regional assembly and executive (Hooghe *et al.* 2016, 5-6). The self-rule scale runs from a low of zero to a high of 18.

The RAI dataset has measures for all regions for every year from 1950 to 2018. Accounting for elections in the RIVARD which predate the RAI time series requires backward

¹⁷ Galicia has declined from 7.4 percent to 5.6 percent (1981 to 2020) and Québec has declined from 28 percent to 22.6 percent (1945 to 2019).

extrapolation from the RAI dataset. For many cases, I have carried the 1950 autonomy score backwards to the elections that occurred prior to 1950. These cases include: Åland, the Aosta Valley, Bolzano, the Canary Islands, Newfoundland & Labrador, Northern Ireland, Puerto Rico, Québec, Sardinia, Schleswig-Holstein, Sicily, Wales, and Western Australia.

For other regions, determining the level of pre-1950 self-rule requires some justification. Self-rule data for the Flemish and Walloon communities begin in 1970. For 1945-1970, Belgian provincial self-rule scores have been applied to both regions. In Spain, Autonomous Communities were recognized in 1978 but RAI data for Galicia only begins in 1981. Until 1981, I have applied the RAI scores given to the Basque Country and Catalonia to Galicia.

Scores of six from the Danish *Amstkommuner* (counties) were imputed to Faroese elections prior to 1950 given that the Faroe Islands had not yet received home rule. In all of the cases, the regions' 2018 scores have been imputed for all elections which occurred after 2018.

Figure 3.1 plots the region's level of self-rule at the time of subnational elections. Regions with an accompanying asterisk are the counterfactual cases where, recall, no secessionist party emerged. Self-rule is not static across all regions. Regions such as Andalusia, the Canary Islands, Catalonia, the Faroe Islands, Flanders/Wallonia, Galicia, Navarre, Québec, Sardinia, and Sicily have seen increases over-time. Bolzano is particularly interesting given that its level of autonomy is nearly a step-function.

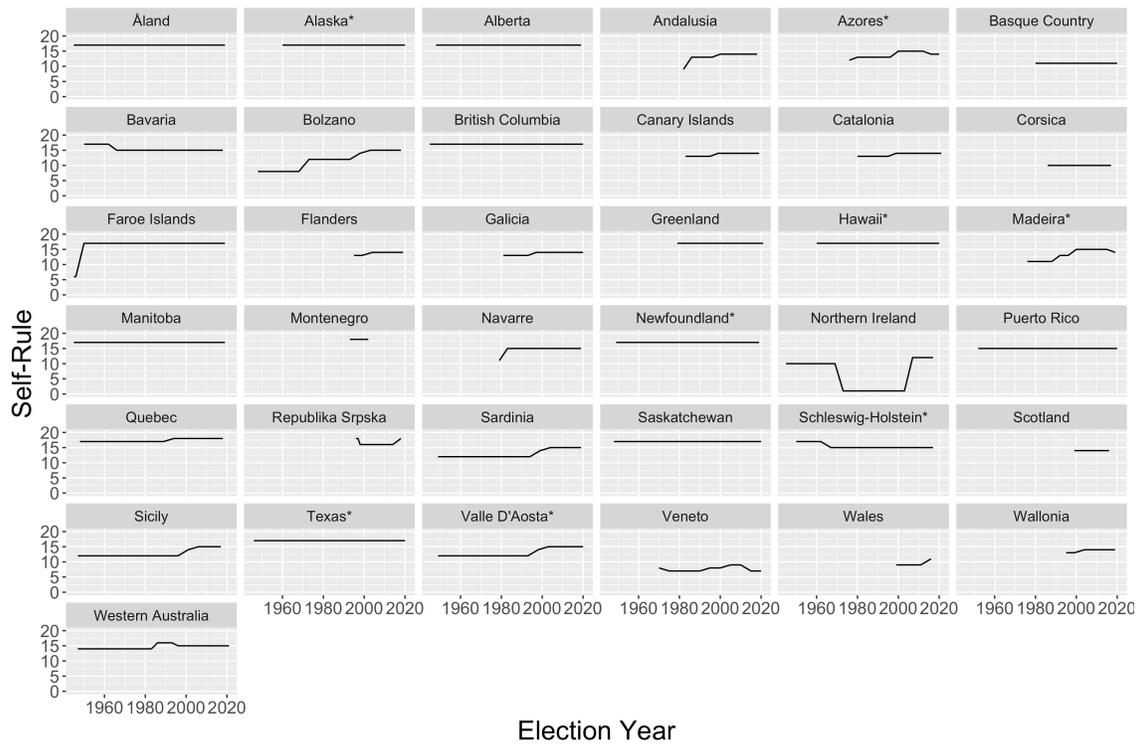


Figure 3.1 Self-Rule in Subnational Elections

Table 3.1 lists each concept, how it is operationalized, and the direction of expected influence on party emergence. Chapter Four includes measures capturing both economic and immigration. These measures were omitted from this chapter due to data collection concerns. For many emergences, particularly those that occur prior to the 1980s, data measuring economic performance and migration patterns is sparse—I have economic data for only half of the total emergences and migration data for only seven emergences.

Concept	Measurement	Hypothesized Direction
Co-ordination	Logged square kilometers	-
Non-Contiguity	Contiguous (0), Non-contiguous (1)	-
Electoral System	Non-PR (0), PR (1)	+
Linguistic Difference	Absence (0), Presence (1)	+
Population	Logged Population/% National Population	?
Self-Rule	Self-Rule (1-18)	?

Table 3.1 Measurements and Expected Direction with Party Emergence

3.4 Secessionist Party Emergence

Table 3.2 lists the number of secessionist parties that emerged in all my cases across the decades under study. Note the proliferation of parties that emerged at the subnational level in the 1980s and national level in the 1970s—these are mostly driven by the Spanish national election of 1979 and the Spanish regional elections of 1980.

Decade	<u>Subnational Elections</u> Number of Regions where a Party Emerged	<u>National Elections</u>
1945	2	5
1950	3	2
1960	1	0
1970	4	9
1980	9	1
1990	6	3
2000	3	0
2010	1	2
2020	1	--

Table 3.2 Secessionist Party Emergence by Decade

There is also a considerable increase in the number of secessionist parties in the 1990s. The six regions where secessionist parties enter in the 1990s are *Corsica Naziunale* (1992, Corsica); *Liberalni savez Crne Gore* (Montenegro, 1993); *Volksunie* and *Vlaams Belang* (Flanders, 1995); *Srpska Demokratska Stranka* (Republika Srpska, 1996); and the Scottish National Party (Scotland, 1999); and *Plaid Cymru* (Wales, 1999).

Secessionist parties continued to emerge well after the end of WWII and into the contemporary era, although slowing down at the subnational level in the 2010s. The three regions which saw the emergence of secessionist parties in subnational elections in the 2000s were Kosovo (2001), Åland (2003), and Wallonia (2004). In subnational elections in the 2010s and 2020s, only secessionist parties in Veneto (2010) and Western Australia (2021) emerge. In national elections in the 2010s, emergence occurred in Corsica (2012) and Veneto (2013).

3.5 Measuring Emergence

Determining when a political party emerges can be a difficult task. Non-competitive, leader-driven vanity projects can contest elections, fielding less than a full-slate of candidates and winning only a handful of votes. It is crucial that measuring emergence differentiates

between weak and strong emergence. To distinguish between viable and non-viable emergence, I operationalize emergence three ways.

I present three versions of the emergence measure as a dependent variable in each electoral arena. The first measurement accounts for all party emergences. Here, the dependent variable is simply whether a party emerged, regardless of vote share. While this measure accounts for the totality of the cases considered (with the exception of Kosovo for which there is no RAI data), it does not distinguish between formal entry (merely contesting elections) and effective entry (where voters are *aware* of the party and respond to it, even if minimally). The issue is exemplified in the North American case in the non-Albertan western Canadian cases and in Europe by Andalusia. Nominally secessionist parties competed in elections in British Columbia and Manitoba and emerged with 0.04 and 0.14 percent of the vote respectively, peaking at 0.86 and 0.45 percent of the vote. Andalusian secessionist parties, similarly, emerged with 0.10 percent of the vote in 1986 and never surpassed 0.2 percent.

Models 2 and 3 use measurements that apply a viability threshold. Model 2 considers secessionist parties to have ‘emerged’ in the first election in which they receive one percent of the vote. The third model defines emergence as when the secessionist party first wins a seat in the subnational or national legislature.

3.6 Results

The following sections present the Cox model of secessionist party emergence. In all models, the reported coefficients are hazard ratios and are interpreted similarly to log-odds where values higher than one indicate the influence of the independent variable on the probability of emergence is positive and values lower than one indicate a negative effect. The values below the coefficients in parentheses are p-values.

3.6.1 Subnational Party Emergence

Table 3.3 models secessionist party entrance in *subnational* elections. There are 29 total secessionist party emergences. This number decreases to 24 and 20 with the vote and seat viability thresholds respectively: making Andalusia, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Western

Australia non-emergence cases in Model 2, and including Alberta, the Canary Islands, Saskatchewan, and Wallonia as non-emergence in Model 3.¹⁸

VARIABLES	(1) Any Party Entry	(2) ≥1% Popular Vote	(3) Won a Seat
Regional Language	1.64 (0.15)	2.38** (0.04)	3.21** (0.03)
ln(Area)	1.24* (0.05)	1.09 (0.41)	1.07 (0.54)
ln(Population)	1.29** (0.01)	1.26** (0.01)	1.20* (0.06)
Self-Rule	1.01 (0.82)	1.02 (0.70)	1.00 (0.91)
Non-contiguous Region	1.32 (0.50)	1.51 (0.24)	1.44 (0.31)
PR System	5.25** (0.03)	3.53* (0.07)	3.92* (0.10)
Observations	321	354	385
Number of regions	37	37	37
Number of emergences	29	25	21
% Cases with emergence	97%	83%	70%

Table 3.3 Secessionist Party Emergence in Subnational Elections

p-values are in parentheses
Coefficients are hazards ratios
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Across all models, the coefficients maintain the same direction and, for the most part, there is little difference in the size of the coefficients. The biggest differences lie with the regional language and geographic size coefficients. Model 1 suggests that the presence of a *regional language* does not significantly affect the likelihood of a secessionist party entering the political arena. Models 2 and 3, however, demonstrate that the presence of a regional language does affect the emergence of a *viable* secessionist party such that they are nearly 2.5 to three times more likely to get to the 1 percent and one-seat thresholds in regions with a distinct regional language.

The presence of weak secessionist movements in non-linguistically distinct regions such as Alberta, the Canary Islands, and Saskatchewan demonstrates three things. First, that the

¹⁸ These cases are not excluded from the models but enter as non-emergences. They remain in the model but their value for the dependent variable equals zero, adding more truncation in the model.

presence of a regional language is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for secessionist party entry. Northern Ireland, Montenegro, and Scotland are home to successful secessionist movements despite the lack of a distinct regional language and Montenegro, in fact, obtained territorial independence from Serbia in 2006. Second, the presence of a regional language helps the movement emerge with some degree of success.

Third concerns the counterfactual cases. Model 1 demonstrates that a secessionist party is unlikely to emerge in Alaska, Azores, Madeira, Newfoundland, and Texas. In contrast, it is expected that *viable* parties would be most likely to emerge in Aosta Valley, Hawaii, and Schleswig-Holstein—regions capable of leveraging a tangible distinction between the substate and the state. However, Hawaiian-, French-, and Danish-speakers account for a small minority in Hawaii, the Aosta Valley, and Schleswig-Holstein respectively, limiting their electoral appeal and suppressing the likelihood of a secessionist party emerging.

Geographic size is significant only in model 1 indicating that larger areas are more likely to see the emergence of a secessionist party. This relationship disappears when a viability threshold is imposed in models 2 and 3, indicating that the geographic size does not facilitate successful secessionist party emergence. The insignificance of geographic size is due to the fact that some of the largest regions are classified as non-emergence cases in models 2 and 3 and are home to secessionist parties that are electorally weak (Andalusia, Western Australia, and Western Canada). The direction of the coefficients is contra the proposed hypothesis and the insignificance of the variable in models 2 and 3 leads to the rejection of the area hypothesis.

Logged *population* is significant across all three versions of party emergence in subnational elections indicating that secessionist parties are more likely to emerge in more populous regions. The coefficients decrease in strength across the models indicating that the effects of population size diminish when a viability criterion is applied.

The *electoral system* coefficient is both stable and large in every model and indicates that it has the largest effect on getting started (model 1) and remains a strong influence on receiving more than one percent of the vote and winning legislative representation. Majoritarian systems are obstacles for the emergence of secessionist parties. Their high threshold disincentivizes secessionist party entrance because it imposes considerable barriers on third-parties which makes winning office benefits and electoral rewards more difficult, disincentivizing the emergence of

new parties who might otherwise be immediately rewarded with legislative representation in PR systems that impose a low threshold.

Self-rule is statistically insignificant, indicating that regional autonomy has no effect on the emergence of secessionist parties. On the one hand, this means that secessionist parties can be expected to emerge in regions with both low- and high-autonomy. On the other hand, it also means that the devolution/decentralization may not be an effective tool for central governments trying to limit the effects of regionalism. It is important to note, however, that this finding is based mostly on cross-sectional variation. We do not have enough over-time variability to determine the effect of granting more autonomy on the emergence of these parties. The effects of autonomy will be studied in greater detail in Chapter Five, in the Catalan, Québécois, and Scottish case studies.

Geographic contiguity is statistically insignificant, indicating that secessionist parties are not more likely to emerge in non-contiguous regions. This confirms the extant research on island nationalism that finds the lack of secessionist sentiment in overseas dependencies.¹⁹

3.6.2 National Party Emergence

Table 3.4 presents the same estimations for national elections. In model 1, all cases are accounted for. Andalusia is the only region with a secessionist party that did not win at least one percent of the regional vote in national elections. In model 3, secessionist parties in Andalusia, Bolzano, Puerto Rico, Veneto, and Wallonia have never elected a representative to the national legislature.

VARIABLES	(1) Any Party Entry	(2) ≥1% Popular Vote	(3) Won a Seat
Regional Language	2.16* (0.07)	2.67* (0.05)	2.37 (0.16)
ln(Area)	1.19 (0.18)	1.17 (0.27)	1.26* (0.07)
% of National Population	1.01 (0.29)	1.01 (0.42)	1.01 (0.41)
Self-Rule	0.88**	0.88*	0.93

¹⁹ A note on the selection of island nations is required. Because the present study is limited to North America and Western Europe, British, French, and Dutch overseas territories are excluded.

VARIABLES	(1) Any Party Entry	(2) ≥1% Popular Vote	(3) Won a Seat
	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.33)
Non-contiguous Region	1.62	1.80	2.04
	(0.30)	(0.23)	(0.26)
PR System	1.36	1.14	2.23
	(0.57)	(0.80)	(0.17)
Observations	354	368	422
Number of regions	32	32	32
Number of emergences	22	21	17
% Cases with Emergence	100%	95%	77%

Table 3.4 Secessionist Party Emergence in National Elections

p-values are in parentheses
Coefficients are hazards ratios
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The patterns of secessionist party entrance in national elections are not as consistent as in subnational elections. In subnational elections, area size was significant in only model 1, regional language was significant in models 2 and 3, and population and electoral systems were significant across all three. In national elections, in contrast, no covariate is significant across all three operationalizations of party emergence, but for the covariates that are significant at least once, the direction of the effects is consistent across all three estimations

Regions with a distinct *regional language* are over twice as likely to have a secessionist party emerge in both subnational and national elections. Although the coefficient in national elections is not as statistically robust in national elections, the coefficient remains strong, positive, and consistent.

Unlike subnational elections, *self-rule* has a negative effect on the emergence of secessionist parties. This indicates that regions with higher levels of self-rule are *less likely* to see parties emerge. The effects of self-rule indicate that, in national elections, the central state can reduce the likelihood of a secessionist party appearing but it will only be successful at the margins. Model 3 demonstrates that emergence via legislative representation is unaffected by the region's autonomy.

In model 3, where emergence is limited to legislative representation, *area size* rises to significance. This positive relationship, like in subnational elections, forces the rejection of the

geographic area hypothesis, where I proposed that smaller regions would be more likely to see parties emerge.

3.7 Recapitulation

This project is concerned with two issues: secessionist party emergence and secessionist party success. On emergence, I asked two research questions: what factors determine the emergence of secessionist parties? Are the factors which determine the emergence of secessionist parties symmetric across electoral arenas?

Table 3.5 presents the hypothesized directions for each concept described above as well as the observed relationship from the Cox proportional hazards model. Columns three and four show the direction of the coefficients with asterisks indicating whether the coefficient is statistically significant.

Concept	Hypothesized Direction	Observed Relationship	
		Subnational	National
Co-ordination	-	+	+*
Non-Contiguity	-	-	-
Electoral System	+	+*	-
Linguistic Difference	+	+*	+*
Demography	?	+*	+
Self-Rule	?	+	-*

Table 3.5 Expected and Observed Relationship

The factors that determine secessionist party entrance vary by arena and, interestingly, only language is significant across both arenas. In subnational elections, secessionist parties are more likely to occur in linguistically distinct regions, in more populous regions, and in regions that use PR systems. In national elections, secessionist parties are more likely to emerge in regions with a distinct regional language but are less likely to emerge in regions with higher levels regional autonomy.

The answer to the second question, then, is an unequivocal ‘no’: The influences on secessionist party entrance are not symmetric across electoral arenas. This confirms that the objectives of these parties that animate their formation are different at the two levels.

3.8 Discussion

The most striking findings concerning secessionist party entrance in subnational and national elections are the self-rule and electoral system covariates. Self-rule has no effect on subnational elections because secessionist parties are emerging not because they want *more* policy autonomy, but because they want *total* policy autonomy. In national elections, increased self-rule reduces the incentive for secessionist parties to emerge precisely because it limits the demands the secessionist party can make of the national government in the national assembly. In contrast, the subnational assembly serves as a tool of regional defence, regardless of the underlying level of self-rule.

The effects of electoral systems are strikingly different across electoral arenas. PR systems definitively promote secessionist party entrance in *subnational* elections but offer no such advantage in *national* elections. This is because the incentives that PR systems offer subnationally dissipate nationally as majoritarian systems can offer insurgent parties electoral rewards that far exceeds the benefits provided by PR systems.

Because the patterns of secessionist party entrance differ across electoral arenas, the emergence of these parties at the national level might more broadly reflect the prior effects of the movement's subnational organizational capacities. If the cases where national competition predated—and excluded—the possibility of subnational competition, this reduces the secessionist party entrance only to areas where regions simultaneously had the opportunity to compete in subnational and national elections: Corsica, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Puerto Rico, Québec, and Republika Srpska—all of which saw a subnational party predate a national party.

Chapter 4: Secessionist Party Success

The decision to enter the political arena might reflect the party leadership's desire to represent an ignored secessionist cleavage, to own the secessionist issue, or, in some cases, as a leader-driven vanity project. But once the secessionist party emerges, the party's future success is at the hands of the voters and the reasons why voters vote for a secessionist party differ from the reasons that a party emerges.

The dearth of literature examining the success of secessionist parties is curious. On the one hand, there is research on secessionist party ideology (Massetti 2009; Massetti and Schakel 2015, 2016), on how parties manage the presence of a regional cleavage (Alonso *et al.* 2013; Basile 2013, 2016; Zons 2015), and on how changes in autonomy affect statewide and ethnoregionalist parties (Meguid 2015). On the other hand, the extant research does not distinguish between regional defence parties and secessionist parties and takes the presence and success of secessionist parties for granted. While understanding why a secessionist party adopts a certain political ideology or how established parties react to regional parties (Meguid 2008) are important for understanding secessionist parties, it leaves open the question of what makes them successful.

For these parties, 'success' is a relative term: winning government is only sometimes a feasible or desired goal. For some, success might be just winning legislative representation. For others, success might be participating in government. In Québec, where secessionist and unionist parties traded terms in office from 1970-2018, success was measured by the secessionist party's ability to form a single-party government. In Scotland, where a subnational parliament did not exist until 1999, success was a slow, incremental increase of the Scottish vote share in national elections. In Navarre (Spain), secessionist parties have averaged 14.5 percent of the vote across 11 elections. In the most recent Navarrese regional election, *Euskal Herria Bildu* (EH Bildu) won 14.5 percent of the vote and formed the fourth largest party, electing seven deputies.

Some regions, such as Catalonia, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, Flanders, Québec, and Scotland, are home to strong secessionist movements. But how secessionist parties in these regions became successful seems to vary. In Flanders, Québec, and Scotland success was incremental. In subnational elections, it took the *Parti québécois* three elections to form government, and, at the national level, secessionist parties slowly increased their vote shares over

time in both the Flemish and Scottish cases. Catalonia and the Faroe Islands saw secessionist movements increase in strength with electoral bursts: in subnational elections, the Catalan independence parties increased their vote share from 18.4 percent in 2012 to 47.8 percent in 2015. In the Faroe Islands, following the *Hin f royiski f lkaflokkurin—radikalt sj lvst yri*'s (the Faroese People's Party—Radical Self-Government) turn to secessionism in the late 1990s, secessionist parties in subnational elections increased their vote share from 15.6 percent in 1994 to 52.7 percent in 1998 and have never fallen below 46.9 since. Secessionist parties in Greenland, in contrast, have always been strong, averaging 63 percent of the vote across 14 subnational elections, having never received less than 50 percent of the vote.

The ultimate policy goal for independence-seeking parties is, unsurprisingly, territorial and political independence. While 133 new states emerged since the end of WWII following the collapse of colonial regimes, the collapse of the USSR (the 'parade of sovereignties'), and the collapse of Yugoslavia, only two regions under study in this work have achieved independence. A majority (55.5%) of Montenegrin voters in a 2006 referendum opted for political independence from Serbia & Montenegro, narrowly surpassing the required 55 percent majority. Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008 but its recognition remains disputed. All members of the G7 have recognized Kosovo's independence but, tellingly, Spain has not. Among the most prominent 'close calls', voters have twice narrowly rejected independence in Qu bec and once in Scotland.

It is undeniable that secessionist parties have been increasing in strength in both subnational and national elections since the end of WWII. Secessionist parties now receive, on average, 25 percent of the vote in subnational elections and 25 percent of the regional vote in national elections. Their subnational and national success means that statewide parties cannot take secessionist parties lightly and, instead, will likely have to incorporate regionalist demands into their policy proposals.

This chapter models secessionist party success with a time-series cross-sectional set-up. I argue that the mechanics of secessionist party support are contingent upon which arena the secessionist party is competing. In subnational elections, I find that secessionist parties are more successful in regions with a distinct language, in less populous regions, and in PR systems. In national elections, secessionist parties are more successful in larger geographic areas, in non-

contiguous regions, and alongside increasing shares of the national population. Crucially, I find that in national elections secessionist party support is positively—and strongly—related to the foreign-born share of the national population. In subnational elections, the effects of the foreign-born population are concentrated in linguistically distinct regions and this interaction has no effect in national elections. Increases in the foreign-born share of the population may serve as a threat to the region’s homogeneity and minority language—secessionist parties can leverage this perceived threat to appeal to the protection of the region’s cultural and common interests.

4.1 Structures of Success

The theoretical relationship between many of the variables that influence the emergence of secessionist parties remains the same in theorizing their influence on success. The broad-strokes of the theory will be reiterated in this chapter but for many of the following variables, the literature referred to in Chapter Three serves as the theoretical underpinning. This section briefly outlines the expected relationships and introduces two additional influences: the protection of the subnational identity and economic performance.

4.1.1 Linguistic Distinction; Co-ordination; and Non-Contiguity

The hypothesized relationships from linguistic distinction, co-ordination and mobilization, and non-contiguity to secessionist party support are unchanged from Chapter Three and use the same literature to inform the theoretical relationship. To briefly re-iterate, I argue that linguistic distinction serves as a clear demarcation between the substate and the state and comes with a built-in interest in protecting the regional language. This leads secessionist parties to be more successful in linguistically distinct regions as they prioritize the defence and management of linguistically-distinct institutions, arguing that the protection of the subnational difference can only be achieved by territorial, and thus total legislative, independence. Voters in linguistically distinct regions recognize the precariousness of their local language and are more likely to vote for a region-specific secessionist party given that the party serves to protect the language from central state encroachment through territorial independence. This is not to say that voters *only* vote for secessionist parties. In fact, national, established parties can, and do, incorporate regional linguistic demands into their platforms or governing coalitions—the Liberal

Party of Canada's incorporation of French Canada being a preeminent example. However, the extent to which established parties, or region-specific non-secessionist parties, appeal to linguistic minorities remains outside the scope of this work. Indeed, Sorens (2005, 2012) finds that the presence of a regional language has a positive effect on the vote share received by secessionist parties.

Because co-ordination and mobilization are facilitated in smaller geographic areas, I argue that this should have a positive effect on secessionist party support. Easier co-ordination, resource and information sharing, and network organization should lead to increased support for secessionist parties because it focuses political resources within a concentrated minority, therefore facilitating messaging, campaigning, and lowering the costs associated with campaigning across a large, diverse territory.

I argue that secessionist parties should be less successful in non-contiguous regions. While Sorens (2005, 2012) finds that non-contiguous regions are more likely to support secessionist movements, the research on island nationalism has demonstrated that peripheral island nations have opted for increased autonomy and have largely rejected territorial independence in favour of peripheral dependence.

Hence:

- H_{S1} : Secessionist parties are more successful in regions with a distinct language²⁰.
- H_{S2} : Secessionist parties are more successful in smaller geographic regions.
- H_{S3} : Secessionist parties are more successful in contiguous regions.

4.1.2 Demographic Strength

As in Chapter Three, I argue that population size should have a positive effect across both election types. I operationalize demographic strength in two ways: logged subnational population in subnational elections and the region's share of the national population in national elections.

²⁰ All hypotheses are presented as H_{Sn} , where S refers to 'success' and n is the hypothesis' numerical order presented.

In subnational elections, I theorize that voters are responding to their strength (or lack thereof) in numbers. Secessionist parties, subnationally, ought to be more successful subnationally as voters recognize the viability of their region as an independent state in the international economic and political system. Secessionist parties should be more successful nationally because more populous regions have a higher share of seats in the national legislature. Legislative representation should encourage success because, as in emergence, it provides the opportunity to influence the political agenda and a large, unified, parliamentary delegation can come with office benefits.

Sorens (2005) finds a positive relationship between population size and secessionist party success in terms of the percentage of the popular vote won. Similarly, Cohen (2007) argues that large populations might increase support for ethnic parties because it creates more opportunity for group discontent with the larger state. Cohen (2007, 615) also argues, in line with social movement research, that decreasing population size might reduce the “quantity of decision-making/governability burdens and, consequently, open up opportunities for resolving ethnic conflict”, therefore making the management of ethnic conflict more difficult in more populous regions.

As in secessionist party emergence, I operationalize the effects of population size two ways but expect a positive relationship. Hence:

- H_{S4}: Secessionist parties are more likely to be successful in more populous regions.

4.1.3 Self-Rule

The relationship between the level of autonomy granted to the region and its impacts on regionalist party support is, as for secessionist party entrance, potentially equivocal. Brancati (2006) finds that decentralized states mitigate ethnic conflict but encourage regionalist parties. The presence of regionalist parties encourages ethnic strife by empowering said parties to demarcate their territory/culture/nation from the central state. Meguid (2015) finds that statewide, unionist parties see an increase in vote share following significant decentralization but regionalist parties reap the electoral rewards of increased autonomy in subnational elections. In looking at post-Soviet states, Hale (2000) finds that the states that declared independence the quickest were those that were the wealthiest and maintained the most autonomy. In contrast,

Sorens (2005) finds that the level of autonomy granted to the region has no influence on secessionist party support.

The literature therefore does not paint a consistent picture to provide clear expectations for secessionist party success. On the one hand, it appears that decentralization (i.e., increased autonomy) should increase secessionist party support (Brancati 2006, 2008; Meguid 2015). On the other hand, autonomy might have no effect (Sorens 2005). Devolution might bring the government to the people and weaken a desire for independence by demonstrating the flexibility of the central government. Devolution might, in contrast, exacerbate claims for independence given that the demonstration of regional competence in governing might indicate that the region is capable of providing public goods. As with the effects of self-rule on secessionist party emergence, then, I postulate an undetermined relationship:

- H₅₅: The relationship between autonomy and secessionist party support is undetermined.

4.1.4 Electoral Systems

Unlike Chapter Three, I argue that the extant findings on the effects of electoral systems and niche party support are too mixed to present a monotonic directional hypothesis with confidence. Like the emergence hypothesis in Chapter Three, I argue that the psychological effects of majority systems might place a barrier on voters who, instead of voting for a niche party, might vote for their second-preference or the party that has best incorporated regional demands. In contrast, majoritarian systems greatly over-reward regionally-concentrated parties when they are capable of overcoming the system's high, implicit threshold. PR system, however, reduce the associated barriers with election and facilitate legislative representation—inducing voters to vote for a niche party.

Higher electoral thresholds have been associated with decreased levels of success for niche and 'third' parties. Bernauer and Bochsler (2011) find that higher thresholds are associated with decreased electoral success for ethnic defence parties in post-Communist states and March and Rommerskirchen (2015) finds that radical left parties are likewise negatively affected by higher thresholds. However, Reuchamps *et al.* (2014) note that the imposition of a five percent threshold in Belgium did not have much effect on parties, as even those parties that were initially hampered are still active and some, such as the N-VA, are thriving.

The relationship between threshold and party success should be straightforward: higher threshold systems should make it harder for secessionist parties to be successful because they need more votes to obtain legislative representation. But Huber (2012) offers a different account. He expects less success for ethnically orientated parties in PR (lower threshold) systems because majoritarian systems (high *de facto* threshold) with dispersed minority groups incentivize the group to vote cohesively for an established party.

The research on the effects of electoral systems is mixed. On the one hand, low threshold PR systems mean that voters are much less worried about wasting their vote on a small party. PR systems, then, will promote success at low levels of support, often immediately after emergence. On the other hand, high threshold FPTP systems can catapult parties from moderate support into strong parliamentary delegations, which may induce voters to jump on board with parties that move beyond the 20 per cent level in the popular vote. These two effects lead me to propose a directionally indeterminate hypothesis concerning the effects of electoral systems.

- H₅₆: The relationship between secessionist party success and the electoral system is undetermined.

4.1.5 Immigration: Protection of the Subnational Identity

The influx of migrants into the subnation can pose a challenge for secessionist parties but also create conditions that increase their appeal to nationalists in the region. An increase in the foreign-born population risks upsetting the region's homogeneity, lessening the bonds of attachment between citizens of the region. And the new voters will likely be inclined against an ethnic nationalism in the region. Secessionist parties might mobilize by appealing to nativist concerns, imploring citizens to vote for independence to protect the homeland and their collective interests. This might particularly be the case in subnational regions that are home to a distinct regional language where migrants can be encouraged, if not legally required, to integrate into the regional language in lieu of the state language.

Not only might citizens see immigrants as a threat to region's culture but immigrants also pose a threat to the secessionist movement at large given that immigrants generally have loyalties to the state over the region (Bilodeau *et al.* 2010). Banting and Soroka (2012) find, for instance, that immigrants in Québec maintain lower levels of attachment to their province of residence

than do immigrants who live outside Québec—this is particularly crucial given that subnational identification has been identified as a key determinant of support for independence.

To combat this, secessionist parties can adopt pluralist conceptions of the nation, opening the doors of citizenship to those who integrate into the nation thereby lessening the likelihood of an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ mentality, instead encouraging immigrants to engage in the nation-building and independence-seeking process. In a case study of Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland, Hepburn (2011) finds that secessionist parties have engaged in a form of civic-minded citizenship, where migrants and newcomers are encouraged to integrate into the region and join the nation-building process. Arrighi (2019) similarly points to the inclusivity of secessionist movements in that, at least in Catalonia and Scotland, secessionist elites frame citizenship via a pluralist conception stressing residence over emigrants—that people who *live in the territory*, regardless of ethnicity, can, and should, participate in the region’s politics.

Byrne (2020) finds that, in Catalonia, views towards immigration are mixed. Proponents of Catalan independence recognize Catalonia as a tolerant, heterogenous society that encourages immigrant integration into the substate, allowing for the weaving together of non-Spanish, Asian, and, particularly, North African immigrants into the secessionist fabric. But pro-independence Catalans also recognize that immigration poses a problem—that too much internal diversity might undermine cultural distinctiveness and hinder the nation-building process.

These competing policies, which favour integration or assimilation, pluralist or xenophobic immigration policies, highlights, per Kymlicka (2001, 289), the reality that “minority nationalisms are not inherently illiberal, pre-modern, or xenophobic”. Kymlicka rightly points out that an inherent tension between immigration and minority nationalism might exist but the assumption that immigration leads to a xenophobic backlash might be overstated. He concedes (2001, 289), however, that while subnations can be pluralist and favour immigrant integration, “immigrant multiculturalism and minority nationalism are not necessarily enemies, but nor are they easy allies”.

Because regionally-specific immigration data is difficult to aggregate, I rely on national-level immigration data. Under this specification, the logic described at the subnational level still holds. Increasing migrant stock at the state-level should induce support for secessionist parties as the subnation might want to separate to secure their borders and maintain regional homogeneity.

- H₈: As national migrant stock increases, so too does secessionist party support.

4.1.6 The Economy

The relationship between the threat, or success, of secessionism and the economy remains relatively undetermined. In pioneering work, Alesina and Wacziarg (1998) and Alesina *et al.* (2000) argue that smaller countries maintain a larger share of GDP consumption and are more open to trade. Thus, for Alesina and Wacziarg (307), “as the world trade regime becomes more and more open, various ethnic groups and regions will find it feasible to break away from their original countries; more generally, countries will find it less costly to split”. Echoing Alesina and colleagues, Sorens (2004) finds that globalization is positively related with secessionist vote share.

Research confirms these propositions. In a study of post-Soviet states, Hale (2000) finds that the wealthiest Soviets were those quickest to declare independence. In Québec, Blais *et al.* (1995) find that those who projected that Québec’s medium- and long-term unemployment rates would decrease in a sovereign Québec were more likely to support independence whereas economic pessimists were less likely to support independence.

In contrast to subjective evaluations of the economy, Geloso and Grier (n.d.) use a synthetic control to observe the causal effects of the election of the PQ in 1976. The synthetic control is a counterfactual model that allowed the researchers to compare the PQ’s economic performance with a hypothetical economy managed by the PLQ. They find that the election of the PQ led to marginal increases in provincial GDP immediately following their election—largely caused by increased spending in the run up to the 1980 referendum—and a subsequent decline in economic performance as the PQ increased taxes and cut spending following the 1980 defeat. Geloso and Grier presents these results in contrast to Abadie and Gardeazabal (2003) who implemented the synthetic control condition in the Basque Country and found that per capita GDP in the Basque Country was ten percentage points lower than the control condition because of regional terrorism committed by the ETA.

In Catalonia, Hierro and Queralt (2020) find no relationship between short-term unemployment and support for sovereignty but find a positive relationship with long-term unemployment. They further find that one’s employment sector is a crucial determinant of

support for independence. They argue that those who work in a sector that relies on domestic (i.e., Spanish) trade are less inclined to support secession whereas those who work in industries which rely on international trade are more likely to support secession. For secessionist movements, liberalized trade encourages the formation of new, independent states because their markets extend towards the international market.

It is theoretically conceivable that the economic considerations that matter most are those that occur *intra*-state such that the regional economy of Catalonia might be stronger than the Spanish economy. The extent to which regional economic converge (that is, whether regions' economies have become more similar) or diverge is mixed and depends on the unit of analysis. Coulombe (2000) finds that Canadian regional (i.e., provincial) economies have converged since the 1980s such that the regional economic disparities seen at the end of World War II have narrowed. Regional convergence (here measured *inter*-state) in the European Union, measured through per capita output, ceased in the 1980s but employment growth has diverged, instead preferring the EU's core regions (Button and Pentecost 1995; Martin 2001). Sala-i-Martin (1996) finds that regional economies within the US (*intra*-state), Japan (*intra*-state), and Europe (*inter*-state) have converged, albeit slowly, from the 1950s through to the 1990s.

Ideally, one would use a regional measure of economic performance to tap into either objective economic performance or subjective economic evaluations. Both measures, however, have associated data availability problems. For many regions, regional economic data is difficult to aggregate or it only exists for a short time series. In contrast, national-level economic indicators, such as GDP, are relatively easy to find for a long time series and how are housed by the state's respective economic institute or through third party organizations such as the World Bank. Both because national level economic data are easily attainable and because some research has found convergence in Canada and the EU (including the UK and Spain) indicates a possibility that regional and national economic are not so disparate.

I opt to account for economic performance via changes (from election to election) in national-level GDP. I hypothesize that secessionist parties should be less successful as the national economy improves. In contrast, a poorly performing national economy encourages secession as secessionist leaders indicate to voters that the region can perform better economically as an independent state. This is similar to the theories of Alesina and colleagues

(1998, 2000), as well as Blais *et al.* (1995), in that economic success conditions voters to be less risk-averse towards secessionism and mollifies fears about prospective economic prosperity.

- H₅₉: Positive changes in national GDP are negatively associated with support for secessionist parties.

4.2 Methodology

Because the RIVARD secessionist parties dataset consists of repeated observations (regions) over time, I conduct time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) analysis. The panels are unbalanced, as the regions have not held the same number of elections. The time unit, as in the survival analysis, is the linear count from the election in which the party emerged to the current one.

All models assume random effects. Random effects allow for cross-national variation where fixed-effects models would soak up this variation in the intercept term. Random effects allow for the interpretation of impact from non-varying variables (e.g., language, area, electoral systems) across geographic units. Fixed effects models instead control for non-varying variables but do not measure their effect on the dependent variable. Because I am interested in understanding these effects, random effects models are more appropriate. Because both subnational and national success models fail to reject the null of no serial autocorrelation in a Wooldridge test, I fit TSCS models that account for this first-order autoregressive (AR1) disturbance.²¹

The counterfactual cases, elections prior to emergence, and elections in which secessionist parties do not compete, are excluded. This chapter is only interested in the determinants of support for secessionist parties once they have emerged and begun competing.

4.3 Measures

The operationalization of linguistic difference, geographic area, non-contiguity, population size (measured as logged regional population in subnational elections and the region's share of the national population in national elections), self-rule, and the electoral system remain

²¹ The models presented Table 4.2 are presented with state fixed-effects in tables B.1 and B.2 for the interested reader.

unchanged from the previous chapter. Economic considerations were measured as the percentage change in national GDP from the previous election year to the considered election. National-level GDP was calculated from the World Bank and data aggregation, for most states, begins in 1960.

Migrant stock was taken from the United Nations’ dataset. Data are presented in five-year intervals and linear imputation was used to infer the migrant stock for the between years. I relied on data from Soroka *et al.* (2016) for data from 1960-1995. Again, data was provided in five-year intervals and linear imputation was performed.

Figure 4.1 plots these two additional variables by country (rather than region). The solid lines represent the percentage change in GDP in national elections and the dashed line represents the percentage of the national population that is foreign born. Change in GDP is volatile with a decreasing trend occurring around 2010, coinciding with the Eurozone crisis. The migrant share of the national population has been increasing over time with the exception of Bosnia and Herzegovina where the share of foreign-born population has averaged only 1.5 percent of the population over eight elections.

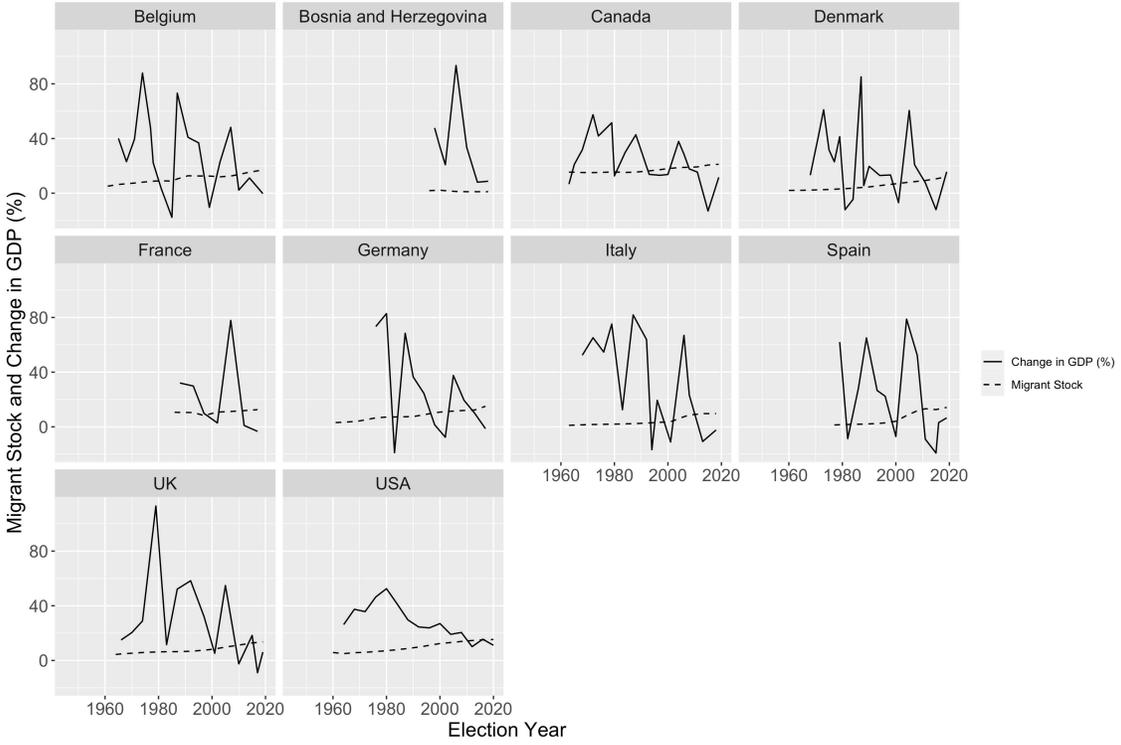


Figure 4.1 Migrant Stock and Change in National GDP (%)

Table 4.1 lists the concept, its operationalization, and the hypothesized direction with secessionist party success.

Concept	Measurement	Hypothesized Direction
Linguistic Difference	Absence (0), Presence (1)	+
Co-ordination	Logged squared kilometers	-
Non-Contiguity	Contiguous (0), Non-Contiguous (0)	-
Population	Logged Population and % Share	+
Self-Rule	Self-Rule (1-18)	?
Electoral System	Non-PR (0), PR (1)	+
Identity Protection	Share of Migrant Population	+
The Economy	National GDP	-

Table 4.1 Measures and Expected Direction with Secessionist Party Support

4.4 Secessionist Party Success

The dependent variable is the combined vote shares of secessionist parties in a given election. Figure 4.2 plots this for both subnational and national elections. In most regions, subnational and national votes mirror each other with the exceptions of Bolzano, Sardinia, and Wales, where secessionist parties are more successful in subnational than in national elections.

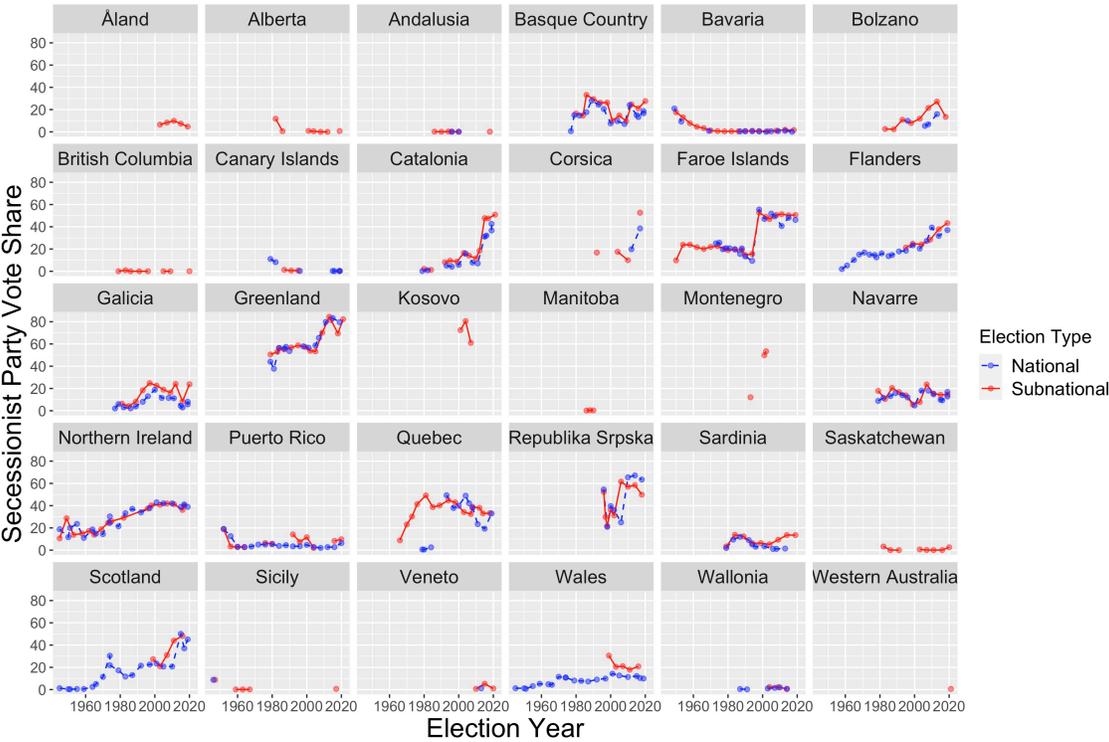


Figure 4.2 Secessionist Party Vote Share

Figure 4.2 shows that secessionist parties typically begin with low levels of support and increase in strength over time. There are, however, three exceptions. First are regions where

party emergence comes with immediate success. The Basque Country, Greenland, and Northern Ireland are the most obvious of these cases. Second are regions where secessionist parties have never been successful. Secessionist parties in Andalusia, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Wallonia have been weak in all elections they contested. Movements in Åland, Veneto, and Western Australia are too nascent to make any such judgement. Third are movements that emerged with strength but then declined: in Bavaria, the Canary Islands, Puerto Rico, and Sicily.

Table 4.2 shows the results of a TSCS estimation process that accounts for first-order autocorrelation in subnational (model 1) and national (model 2) elections. There are considerable differences between models 1 and 2. Only migrant stock is significant in both models. The population variable is significant only in subnational elections as is the electoral system variable.

VARIABLES	(1) Subnational Success	(2) National Success
Regional Language	10.18* (5.95)	9.13 (6.62)
ln(Area)	2.42 (1.61)	3.65** (1.78)
ln(Population)	-3.57* (2.02)	
Share of National Population		0.02 (0.21)
Self-Rule	0.37 (0.50)	-0.02 (0.26)
Non-Contiguous Region	1.40 (6.71)	13.31* (7.02)
PR System	17.96** (5.97)	2.50 (6.88)
Migrant Stock (%)	0.78** (0.26)	0.77** (0.29)
% Change in GDP	0.00 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Constant	8.42 (39.22)	-39.00* (20.95)
N	210	221
Number of regions	29	21
Overall R ²	0.36	0.19
Prob > Chi ²	0.00	0.03

Table 4.2 Determinants of Secessionist Party Success

Models are AR(1) corrected
Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The *regional language* coefficient is significant in only subnational elections and indicates that secessionist parties in linguistically-distinct regions receive 10 percent more votes in subnational elections than do secessionist parties in non-linguistically linguistically-distinct regions. Regions with a distinct language averaged 25.4 percent of the vote in subnational elections compared to 10.4 for non-distinct regions—15 percent higher ($t = 5.95$). In fact, the 10.4 percent average is largely driven by the Montenegrin, Northern Irish, and Scottish cases—removing these cases drops secessionist party vote share in non-distinct regions to 1.6 percent. The size and direction of the language coefficient confirms the regional language hypothesis.

There is a large positive relationship between *logged area* and secessionist party success but the effects of the variable are only significant in national elections. The size and direction of the coefficients leads to the rejection of the geographic area hypothesis as secessionist parties are rewarded in larger regions when they compete in national elections. Because the geographic area hypothesis is rejected, larger areas do not appear to be obstacles to mobilization, network formation, or information sharing for the secessionist movement. The largest cases—Greenland, Québec, and Scotland—demonstrate this fact. These large, diverse regions are some of the most successful movements. Size, however, does not guarantee success as large regions such as Andalusia and Bavaria are home to weak secessionist movements and smaller regions such as the Basque Country and the Faroe Islands are home to stronger movements.²²

The effects of *population* are mixed. In subnational elections, more populous regions, measured with logged population size, see less secessionist party support. This runs counter to both the hypothesis and Sorens' (2005, 2012) finding that more populous regions are associated

²² Logged area size might be problematic given the presence of large regions with varying levels of secessionist party support. In regions where a secessionist party competes, Greenland, Québec, and Western Australia's non-logged area size (in km²) record z-scores of 3, 1.75, and 3.8 respectively. In lieu of dropping the Greenlandic and Québec cases (which are both crucial cases and maintain a long time-series), Table B.3 in the appendix models secessionist party success *without* the inclusion of logged area. In subnational elections, dropping logged area increases the p-value associated with regional language and only slightly moves population out of significance at the $p < 0.10$ level ($p < 0.11$), electoral system and migrant stock maintain the same direction and significance. The contiguity variable, however, switches direction and the standard error increases. Table B.4 presents the results for national elections. The results are largely similar except that, when removing area, the electoral system variable switches in direction and the standard error increases, contiguity is no longer significant, but migrant stock maintains direction, strength, and significance.

with increased secessionist party success because they are more viable entities. The effects of the population coefficient might reflect, instead, a possibility that smaller regions are more successful because they are politically, economically, and geographically unimportant to the central state.²³

Alternatively, the negative population coefficient might also speak to Alesina and colleagues' (1998, 2000) argument that smaller nations are more likely to split from their respective state. Thanks to globalization, smaller nations can be rewarded from international trade and can better incubate themselves from negative economic shocks which might affect larger nations. Global economic viability makes independence less costly. Regions with smaller populations might reward secessionist parties due to their economic viability. Larger regions might be economically important to the national state, inducing a hesitance among voters unwilling to suffer negative economic consequences.

In national elections the *population* variable, measured as the region's share of the national population, is positive but insignificant indicating that success is not affected by how big is the region's share of the national population. The effects of population in both subnational and national elections leads to the rejection of the population hypothesis.

The *non-contiguity* variable indicates that secessionist parties in non-contiguous regions receive 13 percent more votes than contiguous regions in national elections. The coefficient is insignificant in subnational elections. The results of the covariate are contra both the extant literature and the hypothesized direction.

The effects of the *electoral system* are asymmetric across electoral arena such that PR systems only offer electoral rewards in subnational elections. This, I argue, is because PR systems facilitate subnational representation but FPTP systems in national elections offer larger electoral rewards than do PR systems. This finding confirms work that sees the FPTP system encouraging the regionalization of the party system (Cairns 1968; Johnston 2017). While the

²³ An alternative model was run in which logged population was replaced with raw population values. Regional language, electoral system, and migrant stock remain statistically significant and the strength of the coefficients are relatively unchanged. Although raw population is insignificant ($p < 0.23$), the coefficient maintains the same direction and demonstrates that an increase of 100,000 people is associated with a decrease in secessionist party vote share by a tenth of a percent. See Table B.5 in the appendix.

implicit threshold imposed by FPTP systems in national elections is high, the electoral rewards that a concentrated minority can extract from bloc voting can be immense. This is the situation typical for regions that have seen a secessionist party emerge. A large, concentrated, and cohesive region's electorate can elect large parliamentary delegations to the national assembly. Because electoral rewards increase when regional votes are mistranslated into seats—providing the region more seats than they might have won in PR systems—citizens are encouraged to vote for secessionist parties.

Self-rule is statistically insignificant in both subnational and national elections. On the one hand, that self-rule is not associated with secessionist party support is encouraging for secessionist parties. This means that their vote share is unlikely to suffer if the national government attempts to 'buy them off' with more regional autonomy. On the other hand, it is less encouraging for statewide parties as acquiescing to secessionist demands for increased autonomy does not weaken the secessionist parties. The effects of changes in autonomy are further elaborated in the next chapter. In looking at Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland, I argue that the interpretation of the self-rule coefficient requires some additional nuance—notably that the RAI dataset overlooks exogenous shocks and demands for autonomy, both of which I argue are crucial for the emergence and success of secessionist parties.

Change in national GDP is statistically insignificant and not greater than zero. National economic considerations are of little importance to secessionist party vote share in both subnational and national elections—secessionist parties do not capitalize on poor economies and are not penalized in strong economies.

The *migrant share* of the national population is significant and positive in both elections indicating that secessionist party success increases alongside the percentage of the national foreign-born population. Thus, as the percent of the national foreign-born population increases, so, too, does secessionist party vote share. This speaks to the protectionist nature of secessionist parties who can use increasing migrant share as a referent in which to appeal to voters. This appeal centres on the party's desire to protect the region from perceived external threats to regional homogeneity and culture.

4.4.1 Language & Migrant Stock

The effects of the increasing migrant share of the national population might be more concentrated in areas that are ethno-linguistically distinct that almost certainly face a threat to the continuance of their identify and culture. Regional language is the best measure of this distinctiveness. The increased presence of migrants who both do not speak the regional language and might, instead, opt to learn the state language in lieu of the regional language, threatens the viability of the substate language. As a result, it is possible that linguistically distinct regions are more likely to vote for secessionist parties than are non-distinct regions when the percent of the foreign-born population is high precisely. because they see the presence of newcomers as a direct threat to their linguistic and their ethnic uniqueness. Table 4.3 presents the same models as in Table 4.2 but interacts the presence of a regional language and the migrant share of the national population.

VARIABLES	(1) Subnational Success	(2) National Success
ln(Area)	3.21** (1.53)	3.68** (1.76)
ln(Population)	-4.27** (1.90)	
Share of National Population		0.03 (0.21)
Self-Rule	0.41 (0.59)	-0.03 (0.26)
Non-Contiguous Region	0.29 (6.25)	13.41* (6.93)
PR System	17.87*** (5.73)	2.37 (6.80)
% Change in GDP	0.00 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Regional Language	-4.24 (7.99)	11.26 (8.88)
Migrant Stock	-0.08 (0.42)	0.97 (0.65)
Regional Language * Migrant Stock	1.32*** (0.51)	-0.26 (0.71)
Constant	20.92 (37.19)	-40.89 (21.34)
N	210	221

VARIABLES	(1) Subnational Success	(2) National Success
Number of regions	29	21
Overall R ²	0.43	0.19
Prob > Chi ²	0.00	0.05

Table 4.3 Determinants of Secessionist Party Success with Interaction

Models are AR(1) corrected
Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The interaction term is significant only in subnational elections. In national elections, language retains its positive effect, though the interaction has inflated the standard error of the estimate. The inclusion of the interaction term in subnational elections has no effect on the already significant covariates discussed above—however, area is now significant.

Although the language-migrant interaction is significant, the individual language and migrant stock coefficients are insignificant, indicating that the effect of migrant share is only significant in regions with a distinct regional language, and distinct linguistic regions only see more successful secessionist parties when more immigrants arrive in the country.²⁴

Figure 4.3 plots the interaction between regional language and migrant share in subnational elections. Circles represent cases without a regional language and squares represent regions with a regional language. In subnational elections, secessionist party vote share increases in regions with a regional language as the share of the national foreign-born population increases. As linguistically-distinct regions are precarious in nature, often bordering a much larger linguistically homogenous state, the increased presence of migrants in the national state serves as a reminder to the subnational region of their linguistic distinctiveness. In reaction to increased state-wide immigration, secessionist parties can become increasingly xenophobic, exclusionary, and use their policy platforms to defend the region's identity—explicitly to protect regional distinctiveness against increasing numbers of immigrants. The insignificance of the interaction in national elections suggests that subnational arenas serve as the area in which secessionist movements resist the national population becoming increasingly heterogenous.

²⁴ The interaction term maintains significance when logged area is excluded in subnational elections, see Table B.6 in the appendix.

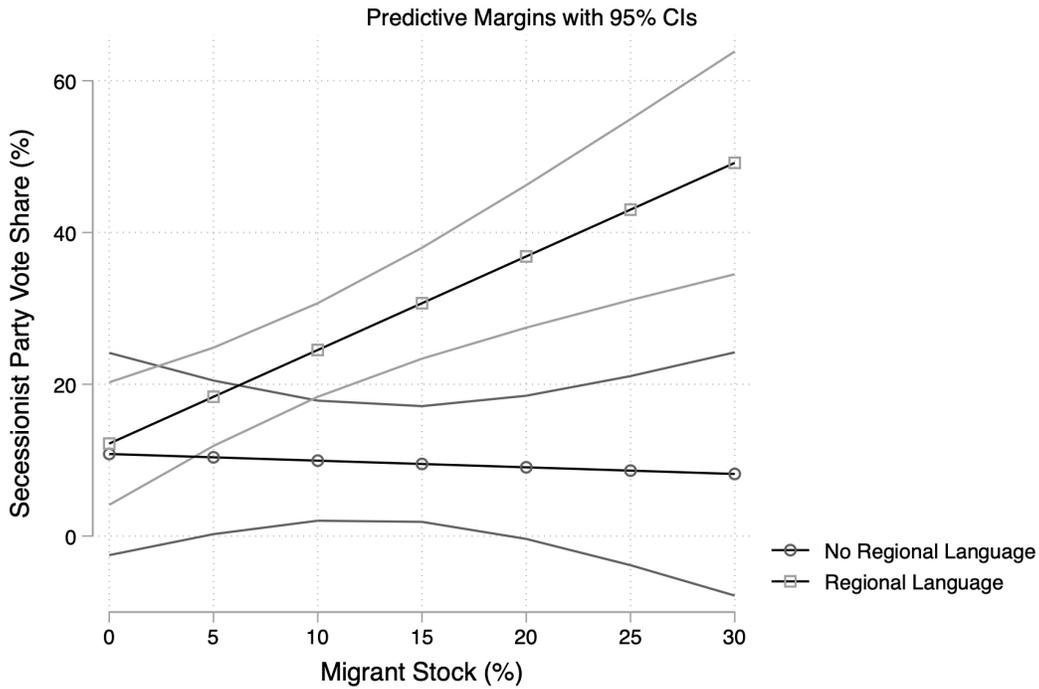


Figure 4.3 Predicted Effects of the Regional Language and Migrant Stock Interaction

4.5 Conclusion

Table 4.4 presents the hypothesized directions for each concept described above as well as the observed relationship from the TSCS model. Columns three and four show the direction of the coefficients with asterisks indicating whether the coefficient is statistically significant.

Concept	Hypothesized Direction	Observed Relationship	
		Subnational	National
Linguistic Difference	+	+*	+
Co-ordination	-	+	+*
Non-Contiguity	-	+	+*
Population	+	-*	+
Self-Rule	?	+	-
Electoral System	?	+*	+
Identity Protection	+	+*	+*
The Economy	-	None	None
Migrant * Language		+*	+

Table 4.4 Expected and Observed Relationships

Secessionist parties in Western Europe and North America have been increasingly successful since the end of WWII. I find that the determinants of this success vary by election

type. In subnational elections, secessionist parties are more successful in regions with a regional language and in PR systems. They are less successful, however, in more populous regions. In national elections, secessionist parties are more successful in geographically larger areas and in non-contiguous regions. The electoral system has no impact on secessionist party support in national elections because the electoral rewards offered by each system type differ—PR systems encourage representation, FPTP systems encourage greater electoral rewards.

In both election types, support for secessionist parties increases as the foreign-born share of the national population rises, indicating that the electoral fortunes of secessionist parties improve as the country becomes increasingly heterogenous. The effects of immigration in subnational elections are concentrated in linguistically-distinct regions where secessionist parties can appeal to voters by espousing xenophobic and protectionist immigration policies as a way in which to protect linguistic and cultural homogeneity.

Chapter 5: The Emergence and Success of Secessionist Parties in Catalonia, Scotland, and Québec

Not all regions in this work are home to a strong secessionist movement. There exists, in fact, considerable variation. Table 5.1 lists each region under study and their mean residual value in both subnational and national elections from the success models in Table 4.2 in Chapter Four. *Stronger* cases have a mean residual that is higher than zero and *weak* cases have a mean residual that is less than zero. The table shows the extent to which the mean residual values vary across the cases. Secessionist movements in Bavaria, Bolzano, and Sardinia are weak. Others such as the movements in Flanders, Scotland, and Greenland are strong. The success models have a difficult time explaining the success (or lack thereof) of secessionist parties in these regions, owing largely to the lack of dynamic indicators and because the cross-sectional nature of the modelling approach accounts for election-specific success and not over time changes, thereby overlooking the step-like increase in support observable in numerous regions in Figure 2.4 (Chapter Two) as well as decreases in support (as in Québec).

Region	Subnational Elections		National Elections	
	Mean Residual	Standard Deviation	Mean Residual	Standard Deviation
Åland	-22.0	2.5	--	--
Alberta	-6.6	4.8	--	--
Andalusia	-7.16	3.3	-7.82	1.0
Basque Country	5.3	9.7	5.5	8.2
Bavaria	-8.7	1.6	-12.7	2.1
Bolzano	-9.1	6.5	-3.2	4.7
British Columbia	-8.3	1.0	--	--
Canary Islands	-7.1	4.2	-11.1	9.6
Catalonia	3.5	15.6	-1.18	12.1
Corsica	-3.4	19.0	3.3	12.7
Faroe Islands	5.1	14.5	14.3	13.9
Flanders	11.4	7.0	10.2	5.9
Galicia	-3.2	7.3	-9.1	6.5
Greenland	17.4	10.2	16.1	11.5
Manitoba	-10.0	0.1	--	--
Montenegro	34.3	2.2	--	--
Navarre	-8.8	5.7	-1.4	5.0
Northern Ireland	26.1	4.8	19.2	8.4
Puerto Rico	5.1	3.9	-22.0	3.3
Québec	18.4	9.8	-10.9	17.4
Sardinia	-11.5	4.2	-19.8	6.2

Region	Subnational Elections		National Elections	
	Mean Residual	Standard Deviation	Mean Residual	Standard Deviation
Saskatchewan	-11.7	2.1	--	--
Scotland	28.4	6.9	14.2	9.6
Veneto	-3.6	4.1	-4.9	--
Wales	0.3	1.9	-3.2	3.6
Wallonia	-20.8	2.0	-13.7	1.7
Western Australia	-20.5	--	--	--

Table 5.1 Model Residual Fits

The findings from both Chapter Three and Four raise questions about regional autonomy. On the one hand, they indicate that the region’s level of latent autonomy has no effect on secessionist party support and only influences the emergence of secessionist parties in national elections. On the other hand, the effects of autonomy might be context-dependent and better reflect subnational *conflict* over autonomy. From this perspective, the Regional Authority Index is insensitive to *demands* for autonomy and the national level’s *response* to these demands. The central government’s rejection of a subnational claim for more autonomy can serve as a focusing event for the secessionist cause. Conflict over autonomy, then, might lead to increased success for secessionist parties even without a change in the region’s latent level of policy autonomy.

This chapter conducts an in-depth case study of three different regions: Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland. In so doing, I apply the key mechanisms identified in chapters Three and Four, language, immigration, electoral system, and regional autonomy, in order to better understand how these factors influenced—or, as the case may be—the emergence and support of secessionist parties in both subnational and national elections.

There is considerable variation between the cases regarding these four mechanisms. First, these regions vary regarding a regional language. Scotland has no distinct regional language but is home to a successful secessionist party. Québec is simultaneously home to a French-speaking majority (within Québec) and a minority (within Canada). Catalan speakers, in contrast, are a minority within their own regional borders and, unlike Québec, speak a regional language that is not a global one.

Second, there is an opportunity to observe how language interacts with immigration. On the one hand, that Francophones form the overwhelming majority in Québec makes the ‘French-fact’ a political force. Francophones have the political weight to ensure that pro-Francophone

immigrant integration can be imposed and, crucially, that they must be followed. In Catalonia, the extent to which Catalan nationalists can claim that Catalan is the language of the state, and that immigrants must integrate into the Catalan language, is stymied by the fact that the majority language is Castilian—facilitating integration into the majority language in lieu of the regional language.

Third, all three regions vary in their electoral systems. Elections in both Catalonia and Spain occur under a proportional representation (PR) system (but with different parameters in the national and subnational arenas), Québec and Canadian elections occur under a first past the post (FPTP) system, and elections in Scotland occur in a mixed member plurality (MMP) system that contrasts to the FPTP national elections. For electoral systems the leverage is not only between the cases but within two of the three.

5.1 Catalonia: Language, Autonomy, and the Electoral System

The success of the Catalan independence movement is a relatively new phenomenon. The most recent Catalan elections in 2021 saw the competition of five independence-seeking parties. The secessionist parties that won legislative representation in the Catalan Parliament won 48 percent of the vote and a majority of the seats. What, then, explains why success of these secessionist parties is so recent?

Aiding in this success is the fact that Catalonia is home to a regional language, Catalan, that is distinct from the national language, Castilian. But the effects of the Catalan regional language are mixed for both the emergence of secessionist parties and their subsequent success. While the presence of the Catalan language may have encouraged the early emergence of secessionist parties upon the restoration of democracy, it took several years for those parties to become viable. The linguistic cleavage came to the fore only in the 21st century, once the electorate had polarized around the secessionist-unionist cleavage in response to Constitutional Court rulings and other decisions by the central state related to the autonomy of Catalonia. Catalonia further illustrates how electoral systems condition both emergence and success. Although elections to the Catalan Parliament and the Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados* (*Congreso*, the Spanish lower house) both occur under proportional representation (PR) systems, the PR system imposes fewer majoritarian constraints in subnational elections than it

does in national ones. Catalonia is pressured by international migration—however, this does not explain the increased success of secessionist parties in the region. Instead, I argue that demands for autonomy—and central state responses to those demands—were essential for both the emergence and success of secessionist parties. Critically, the dramatic increases in support for secessionist parties in recent years only make sense in light of conflict over autonomy, attempts by the Spanish state to quell the secessionist threat. This case study reveals that the precise effects of autonomy are not captured in popular measures of it, like the Regional Autonomy Index (RAI), used in chapters two and three.

5.1.1 Catalan Secessionist Parties and their Entry

Secessionist parties such as the *Estat Català* and the *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC) emerged early in the 20th century, after the first World War. These parties, however, were repressed by the Franco dictatorship and secessionist movements were forced underground.

Two secessionist parties contested the 1979 Spanish general election combining for over one percent of the popular vote. The *Estat Català* was re-founded and won 0.2 percent of the Catalan vote and the *Bloc d'Esquerra d'Alliberament Nacional* (BEAN) won 1.6 percent of the Catalan vote. Neither party elected a representative to the *Congresso*.

Secessionist parties did not elect a legislator to the *Congresso* until 1993, the sixth democratic election, when the ERC won 5.1 percent of the Catalan vote and elected one representative. The ERC's success in 1993 did not strictly represent the emergence of a *new* secessionist party, instead reflecting the party's ideological change towards independence that better mirrored the party's position in pre-Franco Spain. Success was also fleeting for secessionist parties in subnational elections. The *Nacionalistes d'Esquerra* (NE) and the BEAN combined for over one percent of the vote in the first Catalan regional election of 1980. But, as in national elections, secessionist parties were unable to win legislative representation until the early 1990s when the ERC won nearly eight percent of the vote and 11 seats.

Figure 5.1 plots the number of individual secessionist parties that contested national and subnational elections. The number of secessionist parties is relatively constant, oscillating between one and two until the 2010s, when we see the collapse of the *Convergència i Unió* (CiU) and secessionist parties winning government in Catalan regional elections in 2015.

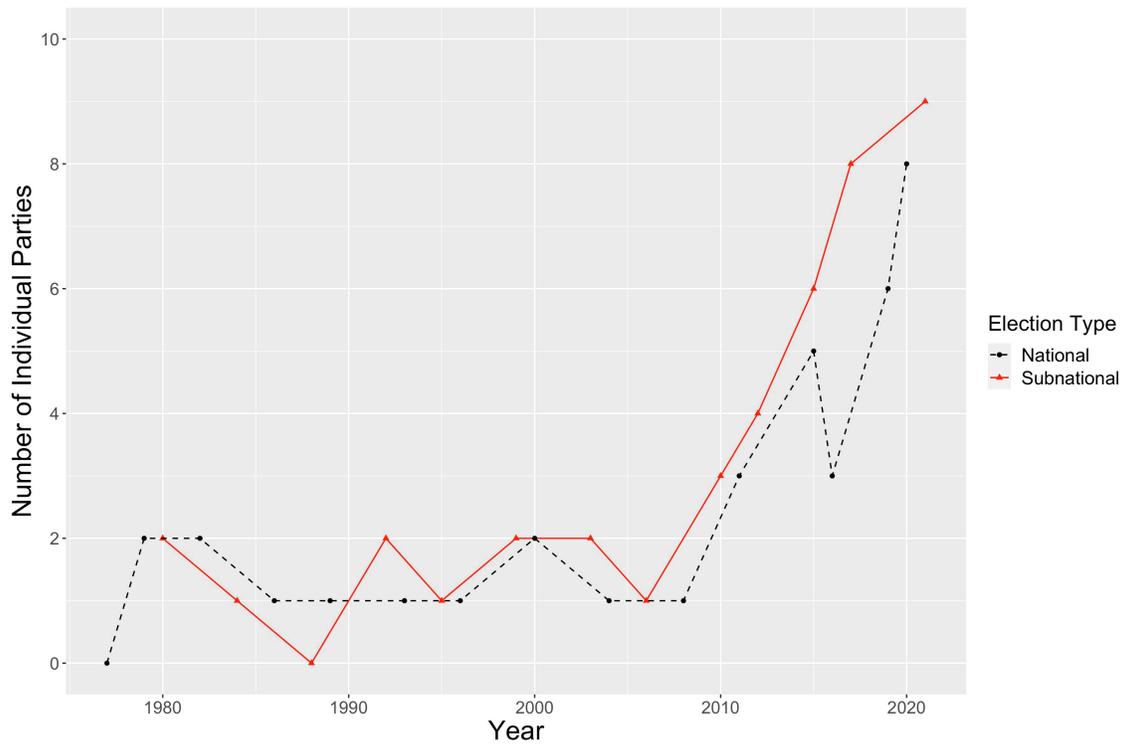


Figure 5.1 Number of Secessionist Parties in Catalan Elections

Figure 5.2 plots secessionist party/parties vote share in subnational and national elections and shows the extent to which secessionist parties' success has been a recent phenomenon. The increase in support for these parties is, I argue, due to the decisions taken by the central state that served as exogenous shocks to the Catalan system. The most significant shock came in 2010 when the Spanish Constitutional Court ruled that certain sections of a new Catalan autonomy statute were unconstitutional. The Court's ruling invalidated new fiscal and judicial powers, language that made Catalan the region's 'normal language', and language that defined Catalonia as a nation. Following this ruling, support for secessionist parties increased dramatically and coincided with increased pro-secessionist sentiment among the Catalan public (discussed below).

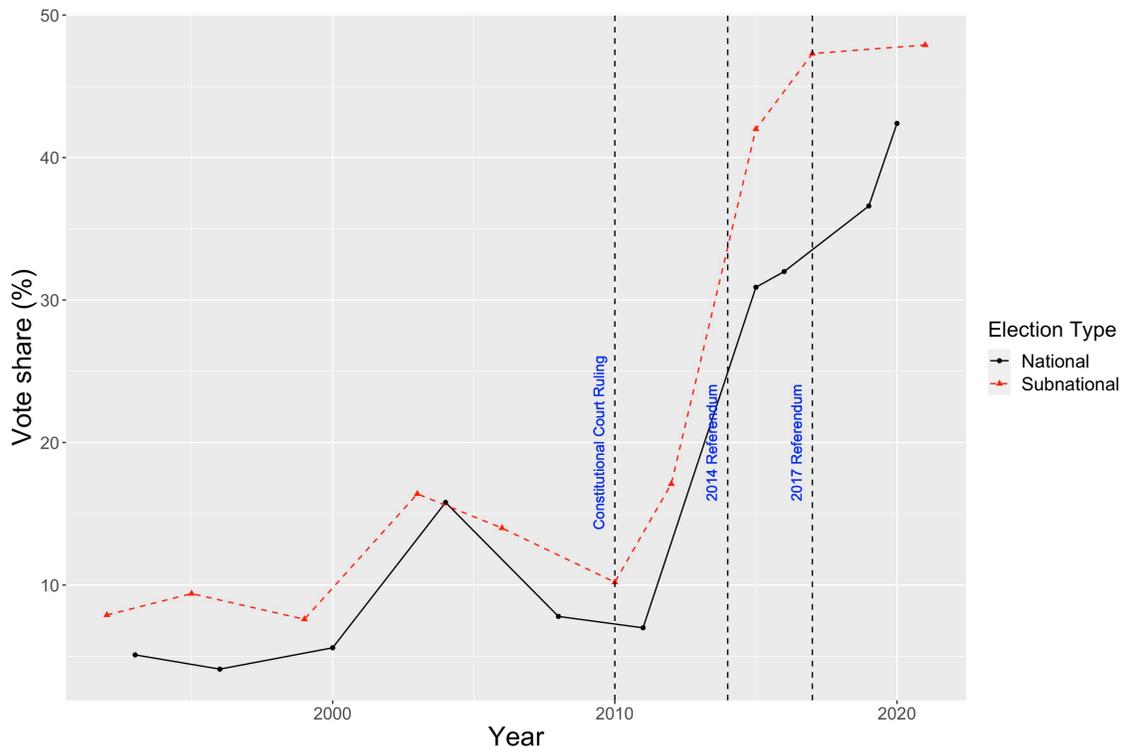


Figure 5.2 Secessionist Party Support, Subnational and National Elections

The 2012 Catalan regional election served as another a critical moment. The nationalist but non-secessionist CiU framed the campaign as one that revolved around Catalonia’s right to hold an independence referendum, promising that a referendum would be held if the CiU was returned to power (Martí 2013). Although the CiU did not win a majority in the Parliament, the ERC agreed to support Artur Mas’, the leader of the CiU, candidacy for president of the *Generalitat* (the Catalan government) if he agreed to hold a referendum on Catalan self-determination. Such a referendum was held in 2014. The 2014 referendum serves a critical juncture in the landscape of Catalan politics. Although the ‘Yes’ side ultimately won the referendum, turnout was only 41 percent. Moreover, independence referenda are illegal in Spain—the referendum essentially served as a plebiscite. The decision to hold the referendum fractured the CiU. The CiU, the careful coalition that governed uninterrupted in Catalonia from 1980-2003 and from 2010-2012, ultimately dissolved into separate pro- and anti-independence parties, the *Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya* (CDC) and the *Unió Democràtica de Catalunya* (UDC) respectively.

Following the 2014 referendum, the Mas government called for a snap election in 2015, framing the election as a *de facto* referendum on independence (Martí and Cetrà 2016). The

secessionist parties won a combined majority of the seats but not of the votes. The secessionist victory set the groundwork for the 2017 independence referendum. This referendum is the final critical juncture primarily because of the central state reaction to it—Madrid declared the referendum illegal and forcibly attempted to halt voting.

As support for independence increased, so too did support for secessionist parties leading to the proliferation of secessionist parties as demonstrated in Figure 5.1. With the increasing number of secessionist parties came the need to aggregate into electoral lists in order to prevent vote-splitting. Subnationally, for example, nine unique parties contested the 2021 Catalan subnational election but four of these parties coalesced into the CUP-G list and another four coalesced into the *Junts per Catalunya* (JxCat) list. Electoral lists are also prevalent in national elections. Of the eight secessionist parties which contested the November 2019 national election, three coalesced to form the *ERC-Sobiranistes* list, two formed *JxCat-Junts*, and three formed CUP-PR.

The formation of these lists can be difficult for two reasons. First, ideology intersects with the secessionist cleavage such that different parties represent different ends of the ideological spectrum. Where nationalist leaders, such as Carles Puigdemont, are in favour of a unified, single-party list that serves as an umbrella for all secessionist parties, ideological differences make this difficult, particularly given that parties of the left, notably CUP and the ERC, generally run independently in Catalan elections.

Second, coalescing into an electoral list is made difficult by grievances between parties. Following the dissolution of the CiU, the nationalist elements of the party split into two groups (PDeCAT and the CDC) and competed under the ‘Together for Catalonia’ list. The list was led by Carles Puigdemont in the 2017 Catalan election even though he was self-exiled in Belgium. PDeCAT owned the ‘Together for Catalonia’ trademark. Concomitantly, Puigdemont founded the CNxR to attempt to unify the PDeCAT and CDC into a single party. The PDeCAT, however, refused to both dissolve itself *and* relinquish its right to the trademark. Puigdemont’s supporters were able to secure the trademark away from the PDeCAT, allowing Puigdemont to own the trademark and now form a new version of the ‘Together for Catalonia’ list. As a result, ‘Together for Catalonia’ split from the PDeCAT and emerged as a new party (Gisbert 2020).

The ‘Together for Catalonia’ controversy, as well as the fact that secessionist parties represent competing ideologies, indicates that the formation of electoral lists is not an easy task. Petty grievances and ideological difference pose challenges for these lists, splitting the movement into various camps.

5.1.2 Language

5.1.2.1 The Geographic Concentration of Catalan and its Implications

The effects of language on secessionist party emergence in Catalonia are mixed. On the one hand, the linguistic cleavage facilitated the entrance of weak secessionist parties in the immediate post-Franco order. On the other hand, the presence of the language was not sufficient to see the immediate emergence of a *viable* secessionist party. Such a party did not emerge until the early 1990s when the ERC, the dominant Catalan party of the 1930s, adopted a pro-independence orientation following weak electoral results in the 1980s (Keating 1992; Marcet and Argelaguet 1998). The secessionist movement continued to languish until the 21st century when the electorate polarized around the unionist-secessionist cleavage. Once polarized, the linguistic cleavage further facilitated the emergence of viable secessionist parties. From this perspective, then, the linguistic cleavage was not enough to guarantee viable success. It needed a focusing event—such as the Constitutional Court ruling concerning Catalonia’s autonomy statute—to bring the issue forward, set the electoral agenda, and encourage the emergence of secessionist parties representing a specific linguistic-minority.

Unlike Québec where French speakers are both a linguistic minority (within Canada) and a majority (within Québec), Catalan-speakers are a minority both within Catalonia and Spain. Catalans also have dual loyalties such that they have historically identified as equally Catalan *and* Spanish at the expense of a primarily Catalan identity (Moreno *et al.* 1998). Catalans, like Quebecers, are cross-pressured by a subnational and national identity where those who identify with the substate over the state more likely to support independence and linguistic defence.

Catalan nationalists have fiercely defended the existence of the Catalan language from two dictators and from a contemporary central state which, at times, conflates the protection and promotion of the language with discrimination against Castilian speakers. Linguistic defence of

this language has been instrumental for the formation and emergence of secessionist parties but has had mixed effects on their electoral success.

Secessionist parties' success is limited by the minority-minority status of the language for two reasons. First, the presence of the language allows for the incorporation of the linguistic cleavage into the secessionist movement once the salience of the movement is activated. This explains why the secessionist movement was initially weak—the presence of the language was neither necessary nor sufficient for the success of the secessionist movement in post-Franco Catalonia. But the presence of the language aided the proliferation of secessionist parties once the secessionist-unionist cleavage polarized in the 21st century.

Second, Barcelona, the largest constituency in both subnational and national elections, limits secessionist party success given that Barcelona is home to the lowest number of Catalan speakers and is the constituency the most resistant to Catalan nationalism. Secessionist parties, instead, dominate the constituencies outside of Barcelona, leaving considerable room for unionist parties to win support in Barcelona.

In 2003, the Statistical Institute of Catalonia began conducting surveys on language and language use in four-year intervals. The surveys demonstrate that the Catalan language is threatened. Those who responded that Catalan was their first language accounted for 36 percent of the Catalan population in 2003, dropping to 31 percent in 2008, 2013, and 2018. In contrast, the percentage who identified their first language as Castilian, averaged across the survey waves 54 percent.

Table 5.2 demonstrates the percentage of Catalan first language respondents across the Catalan territorial areas (the third column). First language Catalan speakers account for only a quarter of total speakers in Barcelona.

Administrative Division	Province	Mean %
Barcelona	Barcelona	25.1
Comarques Gironines	Girona	47
Camp de Tarragona	Tarragona	34.8
Terres de l'Ebre	Tarragona	55
Ponent	Lleida	55
Comarques Centrals	Barcelona	51.4
Alt Pirineu i Aran	Lleida	54.9
Pendès	Barcelona	33.3

Table 5.2 Catalan-as-First-Language

Source: *Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya*

The secessionist parties in the 2015 Catalan election accounted for the majority of the votes received in all divisions with the exception of Barcelona and Camp de Tarragona, the two administrative regions that have the lowest proportion of Catalan-as-first-language speakers. This pattern held in 2017 as well, with secessionist parties failing to obtain a majority of the vote in the administrative regions of Barcelona (43 percent), Tarragona (45 percent), and Penedès (48 percent).

Figure 5.3 shows that—in subnational elections—secessionist party vote share increased slowly over time across the four provinces before increasing dramatically in 2015. Figure 5.3 indicates that secessionist parties have always been more successful outside Barcelona. The Barcelona constituency is the largest constituency in the Catalan parliament.

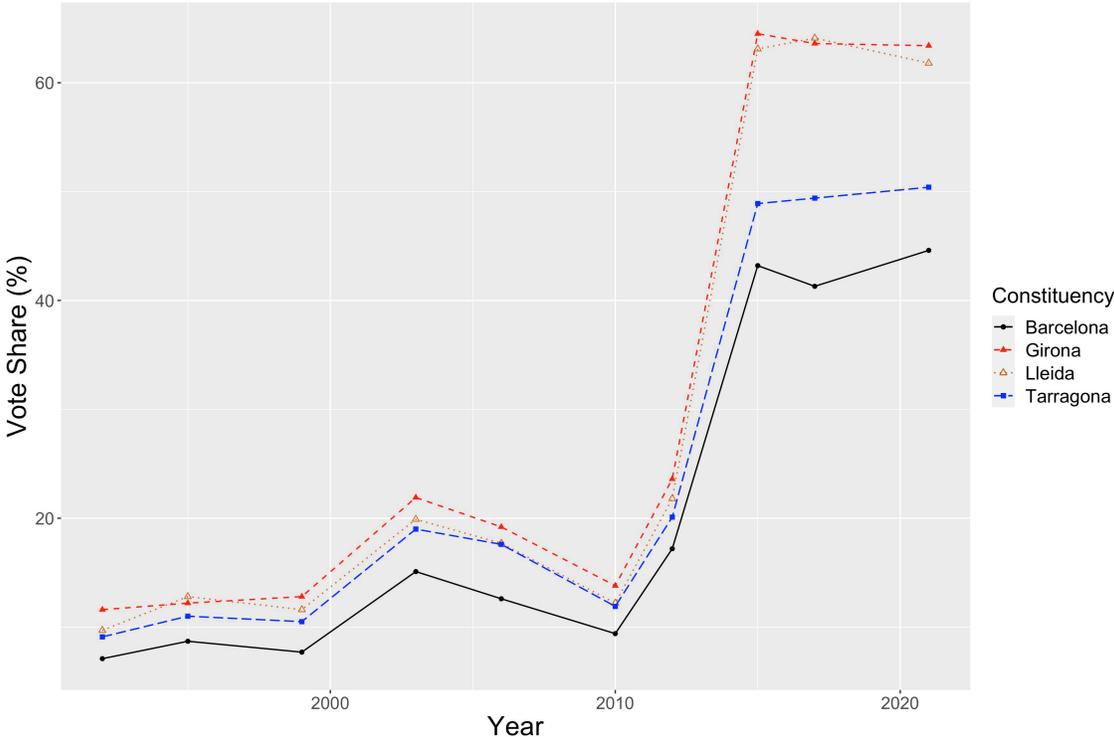


Figure 5.3 Secessionist Party Vote Share per Constituency, Subnational Elections

Figure 5.4 plots secessionist party vote and seats won across the four provinces of Catalonia in national elections since 1992. Secessionist parties have been weaker at the national level than they have been at the subnational level. Being weak in Barcelona nationally is problematic for these parties. Although the secessionist parties won only 5.7 percent more of the Barcelona vote in the 2021 regional election compared to the November 2019 national election,

secessionist parties elected 40 members to the Catalan parliament from this constituency compared to 13 in the national election.

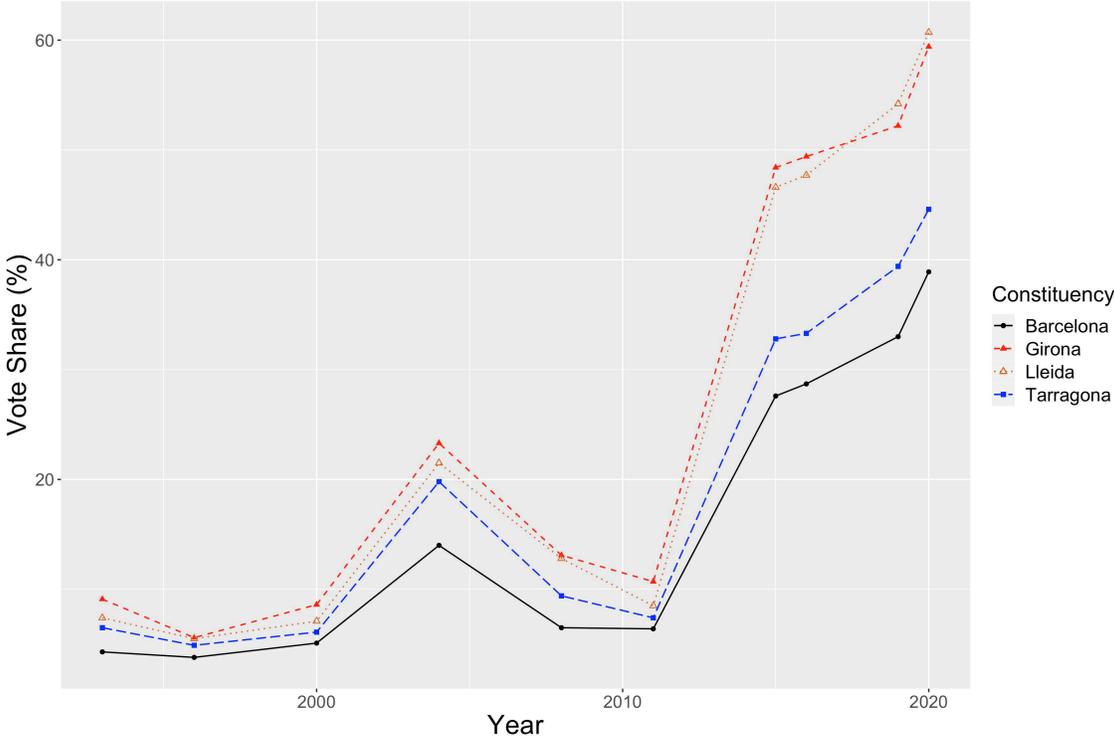


Figure 5.4 Secessionist Party Vote Share per Constituency, National Elections

Secessionist parties are weak in national elections because they are weak in Barcelona. The smaller, non-Barcelona territories, do not provide secessionist parties the same legislative boost in representation that they see in subnational elections. Secessionist party vote and seat share in Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona generally follow each other in subnational and national elections but these small provinces offer secessionist parties fewer electoral rewards in national elections.

Rodon and Guinjoan (2018) find that regions with the highest share of Catalan speakers are more likely to support independence—this is unsurprising given that the presence of the Catalan language is likely closely related to Catalan identity where Catalan identity is the strongest determinant of support for independence (Rodon and Guinjoan 2018). Next, they demonstrate that language interacts with identity such that those who are equally identity as Catalan *and* Spanish tend to support independence as the number of Catalan speakers increases. This ultimately means, then, that dual loyalty Catalans are ‘at risk’ of support independence outside Barcelona.

Catalonia demonstrates that the effects of language vary across electoral arenas. In subnational elections, secessionist parties are rewarded to a greater extent in the provinces outside Barcelona because these provinces' legislative representation increases. Secessionist parties are capable of winning an increased number of seats in Catalan-speaking provinces, essentially balancing the linguistic limitations seen in Barcelona. Nationally, secessionist parties are penalized by linguistic considerations because Barcelona is the largest Catalan province and is home to the least number of Catalan speakers where dual loyalty Catalans interact with the Catalan language in less frequency. Barcelona has returned a majority of unionist state-wide parties to the *Congresso* in every election from 1993 to the present with the PSOE-PSC (Socialist Party of Spain-Catalonia) being the predominant party in every election except 2015 and 2016.

5.1.2.2 Party Formation: Linguistic Defence

Catalan nationalists have a long history of protecting the Catalan language. Attempts to protect, defend, and promote the language have been a crucial aspect of Catalan politics throughout the 20th century. The Catalan language was prohibited by the state for the first time in the 20th century during the de Rivera dictatorship. The regime made the flying of non-Spanish flags and the speaking of non-Castilian languages illegal. The end of the de Rivera dictatorship brought with it the Second Spanish Republic, formed in 1931 and the *Generalitat* (the Catalan government) wrote an autonomy statute the same year.

Following the 1931 Spanish general elections, and the passing of the Spanish constitution, the *Generalitat* submitted an *Estatut* (autonomy statute) for the central state's consideration. The *Estatut* was subject to a regional referendum in which 99 percent, with 75 percent turnout, voted in favour. The *Estatut* was then approved by the *Cortes* in Madrid. The *Estatut*, which made Catalan the sole official language, was met with resistance from Spain. The recently passed Spanish constitution made Castilian the sole official language of the Spanish state. The *Estatut* was amended so that Catalan would be co-official alongside Castilian and all references to "sovereignty or to Catalonia as a 'nation' were eliminated" (Tortella 2017, 159).

The *Estatut* became a moot point by December 1938 when General Franco entered Catalonia and ended Catalan autonomy outright. Franco, whose Castilian nationalism stemmed

from the “fascist mystique of national unity”, believed that Spain had an historic national unity, heavily repressed Catalan nationalism (Vilar 1977, 115). The Franco regime harshly and systematically repressed the use of Catalan, prohibited the teaching of Catalan, moved pro-Catalan teachers to other regions of Spain, banned the use of Catalan first names and Castilianized Catalan last names, forbid the flying of the *Senyera* (the Catalan flag), and banned the speaking of Catalan (Friend 2012, 92). The regime also moved to Castilianize the public sector by ensuring that Castilian was the only accepted language for all legal documentation (*Generalitat de Catalunya* n.d.).

With the restoration of democracy following Franco’s death, Catalanist parties emerged to defend the region’s interests. The centre-periphery cleavage was incorporated by the regionalist non-secessionist CiU who defended and promoted the use of Catalan through legislative acts. In 1982, Catalan became the language of school instruction. Catalan was adopted as the language of communication by the *Generalitat* and the Parliament of Catalonia, and the Directorate-General for Language Policy was created, both in 1983 (*Generalitat de Catalunya* n.d.). These attempts to solidify and strengthen Catalan have been met with considerable opposition from anti-Catalan nationalists. Editorialists have referred to these attempts as “Franco in reverse” (Friend 2012, 102), Tortella (2017, 230) refers to it as “totalitarianism” and—in a striking parallel to Québec—rallies against the imposition of language laws relating to public signs and making Catalan the primary language of education.

5.1.2.3 Language and Immigration

Chapter Four demonstrated that there exists a strong and significant interaction between the migrant share of the national population and the presence of a distinct regional language, such that secessionist parties in regions with a distinct language are more successful as national-level migrant stock increases than in regions without a distinct language. I argue that the effects of immigration on the secessionist parties in Catalonia remains mixed. On the one hand, the migrant share of the Catalan population remains higher than the migrant share of the Spanish population. A large number of migrants within a linguistically-threatened region might lead to anxieties concerning the viability of the Catalan language, particularly if immigrants learn Castilian over Catalan.

On the other hand, I rely on public opinion data to demonstrate that the presence of immigrants does not explain secessionist party success for two reasons. First, Catalan views on the language-immigrant nexus now approximates Spanish public opinion. Second, the foreign-born share of the Catalan population has remained stable since 2010 while secessionist party vote share has increased considerably.

Figure 5.5 plots the percentage of the foreign-born population in both Catalonia (solid line) and Spain (dashed line). Data begin in 2000 and demonstrates that migrant shares have increased considerably in both regions, with migrants making up a larger total share of the Catalan population compared to the Spanish population (Statistical Institute of Catalonia, n.d.).

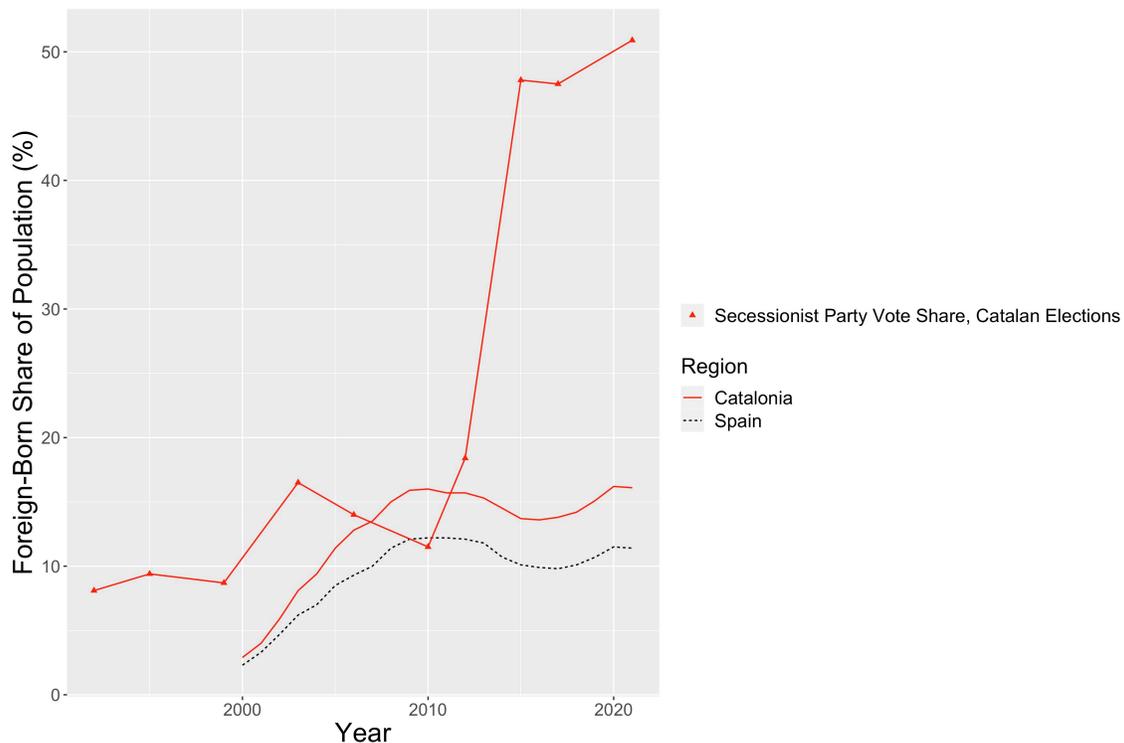


Figure 5.5 Foreign-Born Population and Secessionist Party Support

Research on the secessionist-immigration nexus in Catalonia has revealed a nuanced pattern. Secessionist parties are said to emphasize a pluralist form of integration and that Catalan identity is associated with lower levels of negative attitudes towards immigrants (Arrighi 2019; Hepburn 2011; Rodon and Franco-Guillén 2014). In contrast, proponents of independence believe that Catalan society is welcoming and pluralist but simultaneously recognize that increasing internal diversity risks undermining cultural distinctiveness (Byrne 2020). Figure 5.5 plots secessionist party vote share in regional elections and shows that secessionist parties

initially increased their vote share alongside the increase in the foreign-born population. However, the extent to which the foreign-born share of the population affected secessionist party success reflects the idiosyncrasy of the Catalan case. Rodon and Guinjoan (2018) found only a minute positive relationship between the share of the foreign-born population and support for independence. Furthermore, Catalan public opinion has become more similar to Spanish public opinion. Figure 5.6 plots data from 10 survey waves conducted by the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociologicas*. The figure plots the mean response to a question that asks respondents “when it comes to allowing a foreign person to live in Spain, how important do you think each of the following aspects should be?: Speak Spanish or the official language of this autonomous community”. The question was answered on a 10-point scale and the y-axis denotes the sample mean of the level of importance. The figure separates respondents by those who live in Catalonia and those who live in Spain.²⁵

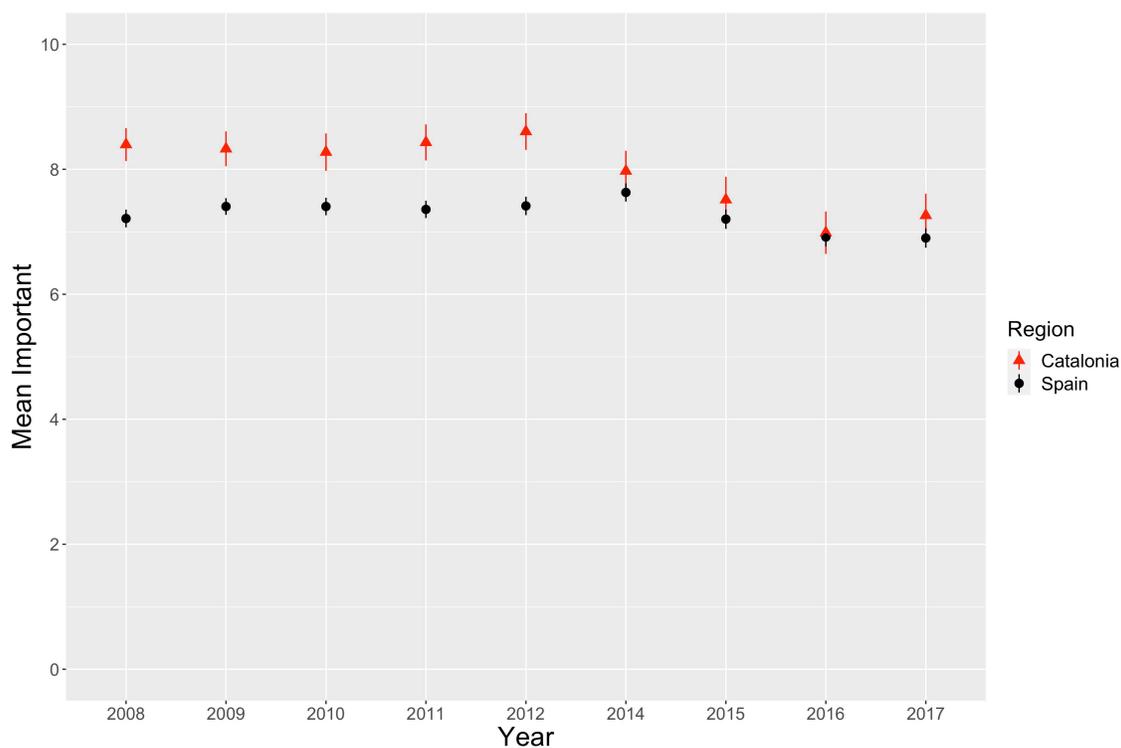


Figure 5.6 Importance that Immigrants Speak Castilian/Catalan

The mean response to this question is higher in Catalonia than in Spain across every survey wave. By 2014, the difference in means between the two regions becomes statistically

²⁵ Unfortunately, the datasets do not provide an indicator that classifies the survey respondent’s language.

insignificant, indicating that opinion regarding immigrant linguistic integration is not different between Catalan and Spanish survey respondents. This is particularly noteworthy because one might expect that Catalan respondents would, like they did from 2008-2012, be more likely to believe that immigrants should integrate into the region's distinct language. Yet this is not the case, particularly given that the mean Catalan response to the survey question has been declining since 2012 before slightly increasing in 2017.²⁶

Immigration, I argue, is not a perceptible driver of the success of the secessionist movement in Catalonia. While it is true that the presence of a sizeable foreign-born population might have led the *Generalitat* to more aggressively promote the use of Catalan, both as a way in which to ensure that the language continues intergenerationally and as a way in which to integrate newcomers into Catalan society, increased support for secessionist parties does not, in fact, track the increase in migrants and Castilian speakers.

5.1.3 The Electoral System

5.1.3.1 The Electoral System as an Up-Stream Effect

The Spanish electoral system structures the entrance and success of Catalan secessionist parties differently based on the arena in which the parties compete. In theory, the national PR system should facilitate secessionist party entrance as a result of low entry costs thanks to an electoral threshold that is easy to overcome. In practice, Spanish national elections include majoritarian elements. These elements include a small district magnitude (M) that make the *de jure* threshold misleading and squeezes out small parties from representation (Pallarés and Keating 2003). As a result, the likelihood of secessionist party entrance in national elections is reduced and parties are incentivized to organize into electoral lists.

The threshold in subnational elections is more consistent with the findings in Chapter Three and the majoritarian tendencies are lessened allowing for a more proportional translation of votes to seats. As M increases in size in subnational elections, secessionist parties are induced

²⁶ There was no survey conducted in 2013.

to emerge because the costs of entry are lower—surpassing the threshold increases the probability that a small party will win representation.

Even though the proliferation of secessionist parties subnationally outpaces that for national elections, the lower entry costs in subnational elections effectively subsidize entry in national elections; parties first form subnationally and then, once consolidated, enter the national arena.

Spain's electoral system was implemented following the death of Franco and during the transition to democracy. The PR system was introduced in the *Ley para la reforma politica* (Law for Political Reform, LRP) in 1976 and then by decree in 1977. The LRP established a bicameral legislature elected by universal suffrage with the lower chamber being elected by proportional representation. Conservatives in the *Cortes* favoured the adoption of a majoritarian system due to a belief that conservative parties would benefit the most. Suárez, the Prime Minister, was likewise in favour of a majoritarian system, believing that majoritarian distortions would work in his favour (Hopkin 2015). Oscar Alzaga, one of the contributors to the decree, “publicly accepted that they were issued the ‘assignment’ of crafting a system that could deliver a centre-right parliamentary majority with only 36-37 per cent of the vote” (Bosch 2020, 390; Sánchez-Cuenca 2020).

PR was ultimately accepted as a compromise of sorts between Suárez and the opposition. To reduce the fragmentation of the party system, the PR system incorporated majoritarian aspects including electoral districts with a small district magnitude, a small legislative chamber, and the over-representation of rural Spain. Spain's 50 provinces serve as electoral districts (plus seats provided to Cueta and Melilla) and are each apportioned two guaranteed seats with remaining seats allocated based on population. Thus the first 104 seats are guaranteed, the next 246 are apportioned based on population. Barcelona and Madrid are the largest constituencies, accounting for 32 and 37 seats respectively. The *Congresso* is, comparatively, one of smallest parliaments by magnitude among PR systems (Hopkin 2015).

Because so many constituencies have low district magnitudes, third-parties face difficulty winning legislative representation. Yet regionalist parties are immune from these effects because of the concentration of their vote. Whereas small, third-parties tend to disappear or join the

established parties, regionalist parties in the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Galicia have been a constant presence in the *Congresso*.

Low electoral thresholds should encourage secessionist parties to contest elections because they facilitate legislative representation. However, in Spain, it is not the case that constituency thresholds increase the representation of small parties. Because the *Congresso* is comprised of numerous small constituencies, the three percent threshold, which is applied within the constituency, is not enough to win representation. Whereas meeting the threshold in the largest constituencies of Madrid and Barcelona guarantees representation, this is not the case in the small, non-Barcelona constituencies. Because Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona have much smaller district magnitudes than they do in national elections, small parties—even those that meet the three percent threshold—are often excluded from legislative representation.

That Catalonia encompasses Barcelona might act as an influential factor for the emergence of secessionist parties. Winning legislative representation to the *Congresso* is, ironically, easier for secessionist parties in Barcelona—where Catalan is the minority language and nationalist sentiments are lower—because surpassing the electoral threshold is easier.

However, a large electoral district is not a necessary condition for the emergence of a secessionist party in Spain—the Basque Country illustrates this case well. Comprised of three provinces, the Basque Country accounts for only 18 seats in the *Congresso* and the largest province, Biscay, elects only eight deputies. What, then, explains secessionist party entrance in the Basque Country which lacks a large constituency akin to Barcelona?

Table 5.3 demonstrates that district magnitude in every province across both regions’ parliaments greatly increases in subnational elections. As district magnitude increases, surpassing the threshold should more directly map onto the ability to win legislative representation.

Constituency	District Magnitude	
	National	Subnational
CATALONIA		
Barcelona	32	85
Girona	6	17
Lleida	4	15
Tarragona	6	18

Constituency	District Magnitude	
	National	Subnational
BASQUE COUNTRY		
Álava	4	25
Biscay	8	25
Gipuzkoa	6	25

Table 5.3 District Magnitudes, Catalonia and the Basque Country

The emergence of secessionist parties in national elections is independent of the national-level electoral system because they are primarily encouraged at the subnational level. As the PR system facilitates representation subnationally, the decision to enter nationally reflects an already existing subnational organizational capacity, thereby making national-level party entrance an up-stream process, independent of the national-level electoral system.

5.1.3.2 Secessionist Party Success: The Electoral System

Chapter Four demonstrated that the effects of the electoral system are asymmetric across electoral arenas. Secessionist parties are more successful in PR systems in subnational elections but electoral system has no effect in national elections.

Table 5.4 demonstrates the extent to which secessionist parties are under or over-rewarded in subnational elections. The table lists the advantage ratio received by secessionist parties (Taagepera and Laakso 1980, see also Bosch (2020)). Advantage ratios are calculated by dividing seat share over vote share. Ratios higher than one imply a reward and ratios lower than one imply punishment.

Election Year	Advantage Ratio
1992	1.03
1995	1.02
1999	1.17
2003	1.04
2006	1.11
2010	1.02
2012	1.04
2015	1.27
2017	1.10
2021	1.14
MEAN	1.09

Table 5.4 Effects of the Electoral System, Subnational Elections

Table 5.4 demonstrates two important things. First, the average advantage ratio for secessionist parties is 1.09, indicating that secessionist parties are not disadvantaged in subnational elections. This is squarely in line with the findings in Chapter Four.

Second, the advantage ratio increased dramatically following the 2012 election. As independence became more important—and following the dissolution of the CiU and the proliferation of numerous secessionist parties—secessionist parties were rewarded by the electoral system that mistranslated their votes into seats in a way that was beneficial for these parties, over-rewarding their parliamentary presence.

Table 5.5 repeats the same exercise as Table 5.4 but for national elections.

Election Year	Advantage Ratio
1993	0.36
1996	0.48
2000	0.36
2004	0.91
2008	0.78
2011	0.86
2015	1.06
2016	1.06
2019	1.08
2019	0.98
MEAN	0.79

Table 5.5 Effects of the Electoral System, National Elections

In contrast to subnational elections, secessionist parties are punished in national elections. As in Table 5.4, the advantage ratio increases in elections after 2011 but the extent to which they reward secessionist parties are much lower than in national elections.

A three percent constituency-level threshold applies equally in both subnational and national elections in Catalonia. In subnational elections, this low threshold is easier to overcome because the district magnitude of all provinces increases. Crucially, the legislative weight given to Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona in the Catalan parliament increases—increasing the likelihood that surpassing the three percent threshold will be met with election to the Parliament. In national elections, Catalonia comprises three small districts and one large district. Small districts in Spain favour established statewide parties and harshly penalize third parties. And while secessionist parties do win representation outside Barcelona, the electoral rewards are smaller. The electoral

system, then, serves to punish secessionist parties in national elections but rewards them in subnational elections.

5.1.4 Autonomy

5.1.4.1 Party Formation: The Effects of Autonomy

The origins of the Parliament of Catalonia begin in the 11th century and existed until the early 18th century when, following the War of Succession, the *Nova Planta* decree of 1716 abolished Catalan governing institutions (Parliament of Catalonia 2016). Governing institutions would not be restored in Catalonia until 1914 when Prat de la Riba, the leader of regionalist and Catalanist *Lliga Regionalista* (Regionalist List), formed the *Mancomunitat*. The *Mancomunitat* served as a form of regional government with authority over transportation, culture, and education. By 1925, the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, which had initially been supported by the *Lliga*, had disbanded the *Mancomunitat*.

Following the end of the de Rivera dictatorship, a Catalan autonomy *Estatut* (statute) was agreed upon in 1932. The 1932 statute re-established the *Generalitat*, defined Catalonia as an “autonomous state within the Spanish Republic”, made Catalan the official language, and the Spanish state “retained powers in areas such as international affairs, national defense, and national finance, while the *Generalitat* had extensive powers in education and interior defense and order” (Friend 2012, 88).

By 1933, Spain fell into political turmoil. Catalan hostility towards the Spanish government increased following a controversial Supreme Court ruling favouring landowners as well as the inclusion of the *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rights, CEDA) a right-wing organization that the left saw as the precursor to fascist insurrection, in the national governing coalition. While leftist rebellion was controlled in Madrid, Lluís Companys, now the leader of the Catalanist and left-wing ERC, proclaimed the “constitution of a Spanish federal republic whose provisional government would be located in Barcelona. Catalonia would become, in his own words, ‘the indestructible redoubt of the essences of the Republic’ against the monarchical and fascist forces which wanted to betray it” (Tortella 2017, 162). In response, the Spanish central state suspended the *Estatut*, proclaimed a state of emergency, and jailed members of the *Generalitat*.

The *Generalitat* was established once more in 1936 and existed throughout the Spanish Civil War, ultimately being ended by the Franco dictatorship. The *Generalitat* would once again be re-established in 1977 following Franco's death. The *Generalitat*, however, possessed no powers and a new Catalan autonomy statute had to await the passing of the Spanish constitution in 1978.

'Nationality' became a thorny issue for Madrid as the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Galicia wanted to be recognized as historic 'nations' within Spain. Circumventing these demands and placating Spanish nationalists, the 1978 constitution divided Spain into 17 'autonomous communities' and the historic nations were assigned greater regional autonomy through the adoption of autonomy statutes (Friend 2012, 97). The 1979 Catalan *Estatut* was approved by 91 percent of voters in a referendum. Labour laws, social security, the media, public safety, and education are assigned to the Catalan government. Defence, the armed forces, international relations, immigration, the monetary system, and justice are the sole responsibility of Madrid. Catalonia is also capable of raising its own taxes "as long as it does not duplicate existing state taxation" and receives a form of equalization payment where revenue collected by the Spanish government is repaid to Catalonia (Friend 2012, 98).

The 1979 statute was amended in 2006 following approval in a referendum by 78 percent of voters. The 2006 autonomy statute introduced 'historical rights' as the foundation of self-government; introduced Catalan as the 'normal language' which would be used for education but simultaneously recognized Castilian as a co-official language and that "all persons have the right to use the two official languages and citizens of Catalonia have the right and duty to know them"; and recognized Catalonia as a nation in the preamble (*Generalitat de Catalunya* 2014).

These changes, which were agreed to by the *Congresso*, having been supported by the governing PSOE, and *Senado* (national upper chamber), were nevertheless contested by the *Partido Popular* (PP), the second largest party in the *Congresso*. The intensity to which the PSOE and the PP disagreed over the statute signified a "fundamental break with the basic features of consensus and compromise that had previously characterized the politics of national identity and territorial configuration of the Spanish state" (Martínez-Herrera and Miley 2010, 405).

Under the leadership of Mariano Rajoy, the conservative PP appealed to the Constitutional Court that 126 articles of the new statute were unconstitutional. The Constitutional Court sat for four years and, in June 2010, ruled that 14 articles were unconstitutional and 27 were subject to further review. The Constitutional Court rejected articles concerning Catalan judicial powers; some financial powers relating to local communities; language, notably that the ruling reversed “the declaration that Catalan is the ‘[normal] language’”; and rejected language defining Catalonia as a nation (Friend 2012, 106).

Following the invalidation of sections of the autonomy statute, Artur Mas, the president of the *Generalitat*, sought to negotiate a new fiscal compact (*pacte fiscal*) with Madrid. Rajoy, now Prime Minister, outright rejected Mas’ demands and counter-offered with, what Mas argued, was only a small improvement of the existing regime. In response to both the Constitutional Court’s ruling and Rajoy’s rejection of a fiscal compact, Mas called for a snap election (Martí 2013).

CiU, once the party of pragmatic nationalism, began to alter its position on the independence issue. In the early 1990s, under Jordi Pujol’s leadership, the CiU supported a resolution put forth by the ERC asserting Catalonia’s right to self-determination. Although the CiU supported it, Pujol “went around telling anxious outsiders that this did not mean that Catalans had any intention of exercising this right” (Keating 1992, 97). Two decades later, the CiU was now telling the Catalan electorate that returning the party to power would coincide with a referendum on Catalonian independence.

Although clearly in favour of Catalonia’s right-to-decide, the CiU remained intentionally ambiguous towards territorial independence. Due to the fact that the CiU was a coalition of the nationalist CDC and Christian Democratic UDC, the party leadership “avoided talking about ‘independence’ [...] and argued that they preferred to talk about Catalonia having its ‘own state’ by claiming that in the twenty-first century the world is interdependent” (Martí 2013, 510).

Following the 2012 election, the CiU was under considerable internal stress. The CiU dissolved after 36 years, having been in power in Catalonia uninterrupted from 1980-2003 and then from 2010-2015.

The 2012 election was a watershed moment for the secessionist movement in Catalonia and had far-reaching ramifications for the Catalan political system in both subnational and

national elections. The result of the Court ruling, the rejection of a new fiscal pact, and the inability of the CiU to manage their internal coalition saw the number of secessionist parties that contested subnational elections increase from four in 2012 to nine in 2021. In national elections, the number of secessionist parties increased from three in 2011 to eight in 2019.

The result of the 2012 election, which squarely put Catalonia's right to self-determination on the electoral agenda, set the stage for the following elections which saw secession versus unionism as the dominant election themes. As independence became more salient, new secessionist parties began to emerge and consolidate into electoral lists. These secessionist parties likewise reached levels of success previously unseen.

5.1.4.2 Autonomy: Central-State Resistance and Secessionist Party Success

Chapter Four demonstrated that self-rule, as captured by the Regional Authority Index, has no effect on secessionist party success. The Catalan case indicates considerable shortcomings with the Regional Authority Index's self-rule indicator and further demonstrates that the effects of autonomy are context-specific. The way in which the central state reacts to autonomy demands is crucial for the success of secessionist parties. In this section, I argue that the Constitutional Court's ruling in 2010 and the decision taken by the Rajoy government concerning the *pacte fiscal* were of considerable importance for secessionist party success.

Figure 5.7 plots the percent of Catalan *Baròmetre* respondents who replied that Catalonia possessed an 'insufficient' level of autonomy. The vertical line represents the day on which the Constitutional Court made their ruling regarding the autonomy statute.²⁷

²⁷ Catalan *Baròmetre* are periodic surveys sponsored by the *Generalitat* and the *Centre d'Estudis d'Opinió*. Three *Baròmetre* are typically conducted per year, the questions are similar in nature to questions one might find in a national election study, probing opinions related to immigration, vote intention, national politics, and media consumption to name but a few.

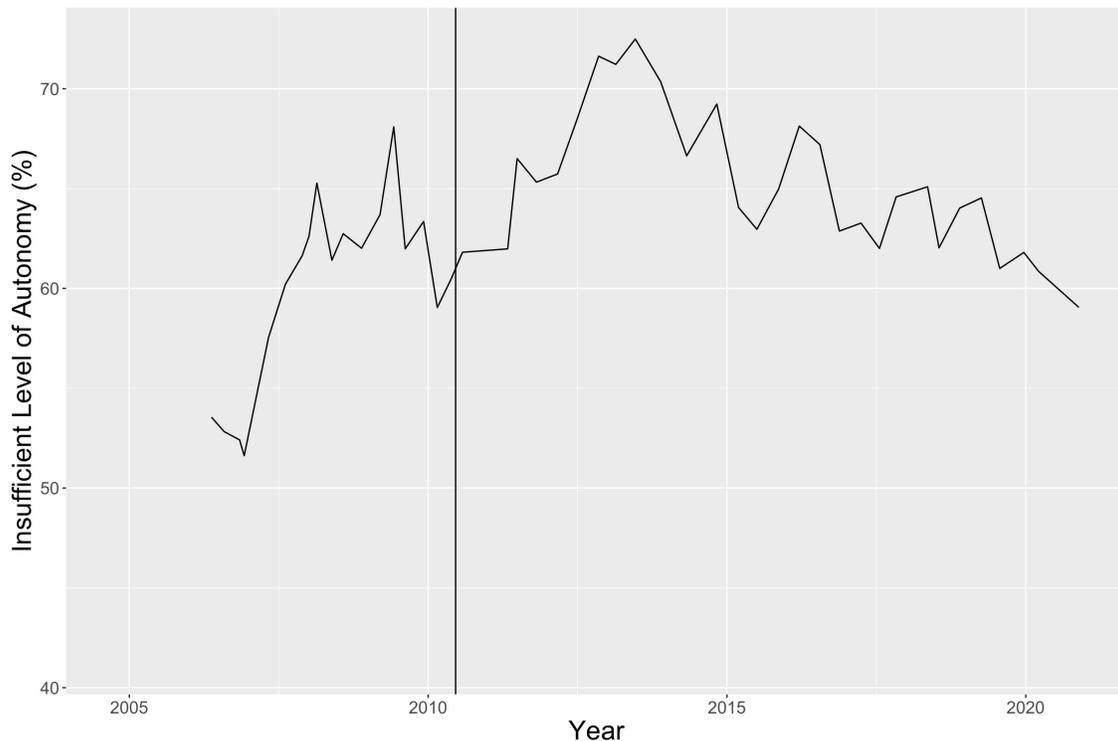


Figure 5.7 Insufficient Autonomy

The percentage of respondents responding that Catalonia has ‘insufficient’ autonomy has always been high, in fact having never fallen below 50 percent since 2006. The number of respondents who have said that the autonomy was ‘insufficient’ has increased, on average, by nearly seven percent following the Constitutional Court’s ruling ($t = 6.8$).²⁸ This is not altogether surprising, Guinjoan and Rodon (2014) find that a higher level of identification with the autonomous community is associated with support for increased decentralization and that support for decentralization is higher in historical regions (see also Moreno 2002).

Given that the Constitutional Court ruling occurred over a decade ago, public sentiment towards the perceived level of Catalan autonomy has cooled and has reverted to its pre-Court ruling level. Support for independence has, however, not reverted to its historic norm. Support for independence increased dramatically following the 2010 court ruling. Figure 5.8 plots responses to two indicators. The first asks respondents “Do you believe that Catalonia should

²⁸ The t-statistic of 6.8 is the result of difference of means test, measuring the difference in mean belief that Catalonia has an insufficient level of level of autonomy pre- and post-Court decision.

be...” and provides respondents with five options: a region of Spain; an autonomous community of Spain (*status quo*), a state in federal Spain, an independent state, do not know. The solid line plots the percentage of respondents that replied ‘an independent state’. The second measure asks respondents “More precisely, do you want Catalonia to become an independent State?” and reduces the possibly answers to ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. The solid line plots the percentage of respondents who replied ‘Yes’.

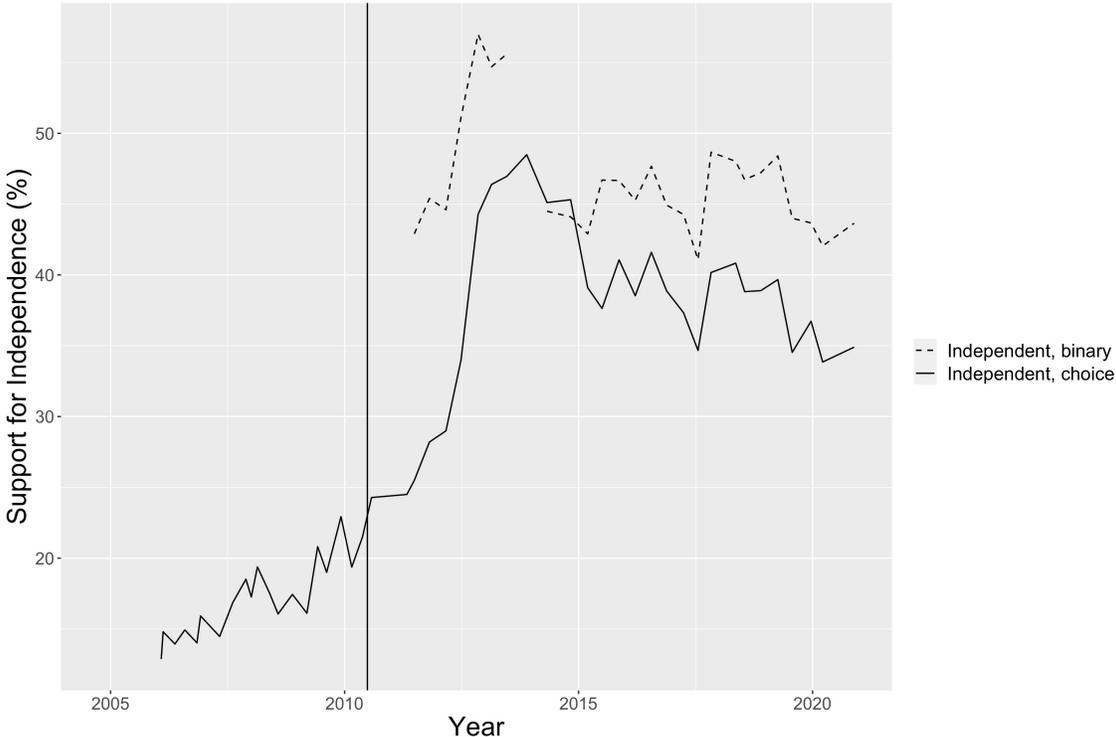


Figure 5.8 Support for Independence

The vertical line again represents the day on which the constitutional court made its ruling. The figure shows that support for territorial independence, across both measures, has increased over time and support for the first independence measure increased considerably following the Constitutional Court ruling. Yet support for the independence in the first option, where voters were provided with a list of options, has declined from its peak of 48 percent in 2013. In contrast, support for independence, when measured via the binary measure, has begun to diverge from the multi-option choice. It appears, then, that when survey respondents are provided different constitutional alternatives, support for secession decreases and vice versa. This might be beneficial for the secessionist parties if they can secure a binary referendum question.

In 2014, the *Generalitat* asked the *Cortes* for powers to hold a referendum on Catalonia's secession from Spain—a majority of MPs voted against this request. In September 2014, the Catalan Parliament agreed to hold a non-binding referendum on independence. The week the vote was to take place, the Spanish Constitutional Court ruled that the referendum was unconstitutional. Undeterred, Catalonia held the referendum which resulted in Mas' indictment by the attorney general.

Angered by the Constitutional Court's decision, Mas called for a snap election in 2015 that, he claimed, would be a *de facto* referendum on independence because independence referenda were *de jure* illegal. The nationalist parties agreed to frame the election as a *de facto* referendum and the CDC and ERC combined forces to contest the election as *Junts pel Sí* (JxSí). The secessionist parties were hoping to receive a majority of the votes and the seats which would allow them to force the issue of unilateral secession. While the secessionist parties won a majority of seats, they did not win a majority of votes. Following the election, the Catalan Parliament passed a resolution that stated that the Constitutional Court no longer had jurisdiction over Catalan laws and that the Parliament would draft a new Catalan constitution within 18 months—unsurprisingly, the Court ruled the motion invalid (Martí and Cetrà 2016).

By 2015, the CiU had disintegrated into various secessionist parties and secessionist party vote share increased dramatically in both subnational and national elections. Secessionist parties' vote shares in Catalan elections increased from 18.4 percent in 2012 to 47.8 percent in the 2015 and in national elections from seven percent in 2011 to 31 percent in the 2015 national election. If the 2012 election centred on Catalonia's right to *decide*, the subsequent elections centred around secessionism and the right to *secede*.

On October 1, 2017, Catalonia held an illegal independence referendum in which 92 percent of voters voted 'yes'. Turnout was low, only 43 percent. As the referendum approached, the Spanish government detained 14 Catalan officials and raided government ministries that were involved in organizing the referendum (BBC 2017). Following the referendum, the Catalan Parliament declared independence from Spain. In response, the Spanish government invoked Article 155 of the Spanish constitution which suspended Catalonia's autonomy and dissolved the Parliament, forcing the 2017 election. Following the invocation of Article 155, the president of

the *Generalitat*, Carles Puigdemont, and members of his Cabinet fled to Belgium after facing charges of rebellion, sedition, and the misuse of public funds (Jones 2017).

The 2017 Catalan election saw the secessionist parties equal their 2015 result with 47.8 percent of the vote. The largest unionist gain went to *Ciudadanos* (C's) who increased their vote share by 7.1 percent and won 11 more seats. The nationally-governing *Partido Popular* had been seeing support in Catalonian elections erode since 2012—falling from 13 percent of the vote in 2012 to 3.8 percent in 2021. The PP likewise lost support in Catalonia in national elections, decreasing its vote share by 8.5 percent in the 2019 April election and losing five seats, however rebounding slightly in the 2019 November election.

The rapid increase in secessionist party vote share reflects the degree to which decisions taken by the central state influenced the Catalan party system. Since 2010, the Constitutional Court declared numerous aspects of the agreed-upon autonomy statute to be unconstitutional, Madrid rejected a new fiscal compact with Catalonia, and attempts to hold an independence referendum were violently rebuffed by the central state. Yet the Regional Authority Index's self-rule scores do not reflect these changes. In fact, the RAI increases Catalan self-rule from 13 in 1995 to 14 for the 1999 election. This score of 14 remains unchanged from the 1999 election until 2018 (the last year for which there is data).

The RAI's insensitivity to changes in Catalonia's autonomy indicates a validity problem with the indicator. It is problematic that the indicator does not reflect the Constitutional Court's ruling that, by definition, limited Catalonia's autonomy. It is also worrisome that the index does not decrease the RAI score for Catalonia following the invocation of Article 155, given that Madrid (i) dissolved legislature, (ii) revoked regional autonomy, and (iii) effectively forced the president of the *Generalitat* and members of his cabinet into exile.

It is hard to argue that, at least in the Catalan case, self-rule has no effect on secessionist party support. Clearly, the 2012 election, which took place on the back of the Constitutional Court and Rajoy's decision, placed the right-to-decide on the electoral agenda. Following this election, secessionist parties burst onto the scene in both subnational and national elections. I argue that Catalan demands for sovereignty are highly conditioned on demands for increased autonomy but the Constitutional Court and Rajoy's decisions were exogenous shocks to the Catalan political system which polarized the electorate around demands for territorial

independence. Catalans have always demanded increased autonomy—but limitations to their autonomy (some of which were democratically agreed upon), forced Catalan voters to reconsider their nation's relation to the Spanish state.

5.2 Scotland: Autonomy and Electoral Systems

Scotland is unlike Catalonia and Québec in that it is home to a strong secessionist movement without the presence of a regional language. But like Catalonia, the success of the secessionist parties—notably the Scottish National Party (SNP)—has been gradual. Crucial for the success of the independence-seeking parties in Scotland has been devolution and the creation of a regional parliament in 1999.

This section is primarily concerned with the emergence and success of two secessionist parties: the Scottish National Party and the Scottish Greens. First, I look at how the electoral systems structured the emergence of the SNP and the Scottish Greens in national (FPTP) and subnational (MMP) elections. The FPTP system did not dissuade their entry, but it disadvantaged the SNP until they were able to overcome the system's high effective threshold. Subnational elections occur in an MMP system and allowed for the SNP and Scottish Greens to flourish.

Second, I look at how demands for—and implementation of—autonomy affected the emergence and success of secessionist parties in Scotland. I demonstrate that demands for autonomy were instrumental in the organization and entrance of the SNP. I then argue that devolution and the creation of a regional parliament (Holyrood) facilitated the emergence of new secessionist parties who would otherwise have been squeezed out of national elections. I further argue that devolution has been crucial for the success of the SNP as forming subnational government has allowed the SNP to demonstrate governing competence and intensify their demands for independence.

5.2.1 Scottish Secessionist Parties and their Entry

The Scottish National Party contested its first election in 1935, winning 1.1 percent of the Scottish votes. Robert McIntyre became the SNP's first MP following the Motherwell by-election in 1945. The by-election occurred during WWII and the Conservatives, Labour, Liberals, National Liberals, and Communists had an electoral truce, making the by-election a

competition between the incumbent Labour Party and the SNP. In the press release following his victory, McIntyre declared:

The issue which I put before the electors of Motherwell and Wishaw was perfectly clear—Are the Scottish people to have the power to control the affairs of Scotland through a democratic Parliament in Scotland responsible only to the Scottish people? The people of Motherwell and Wishaw have given their answer. A lead has been given to the rest of Scotland, and Whitehall has been served with a warning notice (Glasgow Herald 1945).

McIntyre's election sent a shockwave through Westminster. Numerous Scottish MPs reported feeling surprised and perturbed. Some wrote off the victory, citing Motherwell's "chequered political history", having elected a Communist MP in 1922. Others argued that McIntyre benefited from the electoral truce, gaining votes from prospective Liberal or Unionist voters; and others argued that his success was a "symptom of emotional feeling in Scotland over practical issues" (Glasgow Herald 1945). McIntyre was not re-elected in the July 1945 election.

The next electoral breakthrough for the SNP came in 1967 with Winnifred Ewing's by-election victory in Hamilton. Although the *Glasgow Herald* noted that "only a belief in the incredible allows a win for Mrs. Ewing, [...] though she is expected to beat the Conservative for second place" (Glasgow Herald 1967a). Ewing won the by-election over Labour by 1,800 votes. Ewing stated she would sit on the Opposition side and be Scotland's most 'expansive MP', asking questions of the government with a focus on "housing, emigration, employment, and the position of old-age pensioners" (Glasgow Herald 1967b). Ewing's victory, like McIntyre's, was short lived. Ewing lost her re-election bid in the 1970 general election, winning 35.1 percent of the vote, losing to Labour candidate she once defeated, though did return to various elected offices in subsequent decades.

Figure 5.9 presents the Scottish vote share received by the SNP, Labour, and Conservatives in general elections from 1945-2019. The figure shows the slow, incremental increase in support for the SNP from WWII into the contemporary era and highlights crucial moments in Scottish political history.

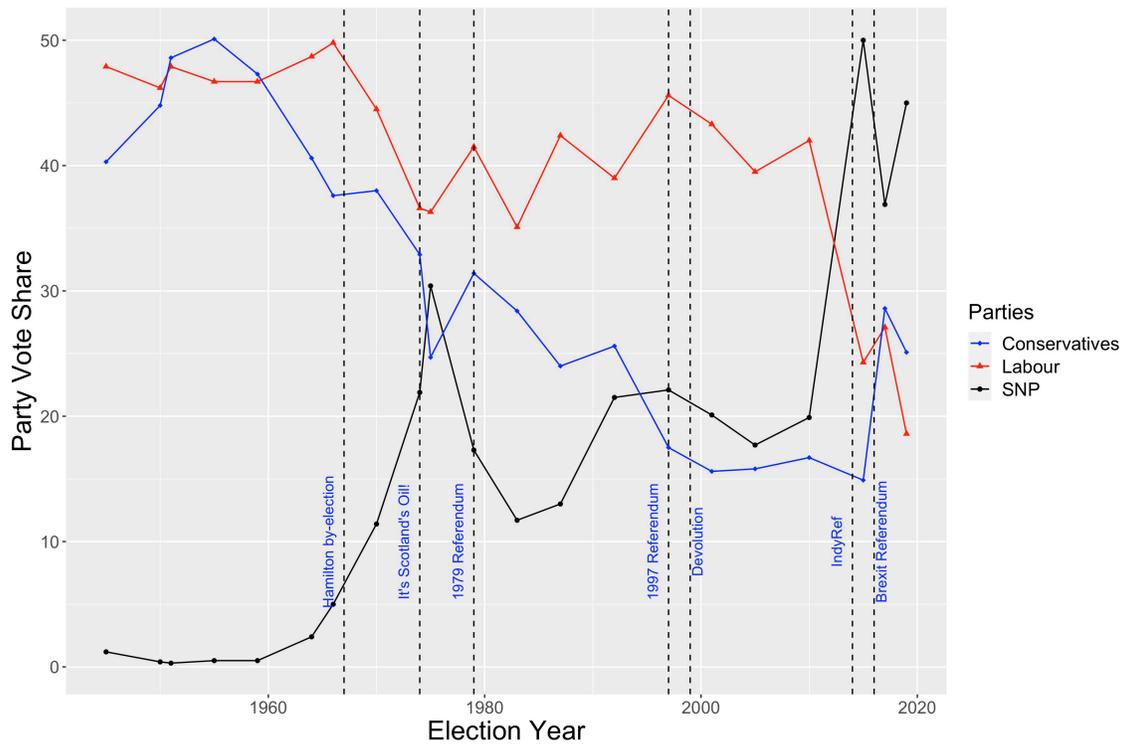


Figure 5.9 Share of the Scottish Vote, National Elections

Until the 1970s, the SNP’s success was limited to the by-election victories of McIntyre and Ewing. Ewing’s election was of considerable importance to the SNP. The SNP’s success in the 1970s was a result of the combination of the momentum of Ewing’s by-election victory with the party’s increased organizational capacity and the discovery of off-shore oil in the North Sea. This propelled the SNP to its 20th century peak, winning 22 and 30 percent of the Scottish vote in the 1974 general elections. SNP presence in Westminster forced the government’s hand, leading to the 1979 failed referendum on devolution. The SNP declined electorally following the referendum as Labour continued to incorporate the Scottish cleavage.

Devolution re-emerged on the Scottish electoral agenda in the 1990s, culminating in the successful 1997 devolution referendum and elections to the Scottish Parliament in 1999. Neither the referendum nor the 1999 election had an immediate positive impact on the SNP. However, the creation of the Scottish Parliament provided the SNP with the opportunity to form regional government, which it ultimately did in 2007. Since 2007, the party had governing by itself without interruption. So while the impacts of devolution was not immediate, the SNP’s ability to govern provided it with credibility, which then propelled their success in Westminster elections.

The Scottish Greens represent another aspect of the Scottish independence movement. The Scottish Greens formally separated from the UK Green Party in September 1989. This separation was “consistent with the Green belief in decentralisation and regional autonomy, not the result of division amongst the Greens” (Bennie 2004, 26). The Scottish Greens first contested the 1997 general election and the 1999 Scottish Parliament election. They were not immediately a pro-independence political party but adopted a pro-independence position in the lead-up to the 2014 Scottish independence referendum.

5.2.2 Electoral Systems

5.2.2.1 National Elections: The Effects of First Past the Post

Westminster elections occur under a plurality, first past the post (FPTP) system where the candidate that wins the most votes is elected to represent the constituency. Although FPTP systems impose a considerable effective threshold on political parties, making it difficult to first win a seat, the SNP emerged in 1935 and has competed in every election since.

In the party’s early years, few Scottish voters were willing to vote for a “small party whose prominent figures were poets, novelists and essayists” (Watts and David 1979, 251). Not only were the SNP’s appeals limited to a literary, romantic conception of Scottish nationalism, but the party was incapable of fielding a full slate of candidates until 1974. Their success was suppressed by an FPTP system where the Scottish electorate was polarized between Labour and the Conservatives. Early SNP success was effectively limited to by-elections in unique conditions. Finlay (2009) attributes the SNP’s 1967 by-election breakthrough in Hamilton to a combination of economic decline, changing social attitudes brought about by 1960s counter-culture, and Labour and the Conservatives’ inability to modernize their Scottish organizational capacities. Finlay further argues that both Labour and the Conservatives failed to pay proper attention to the SNP re-branding themselves as a party that was a young and dynamic political organization.

The organizational capacity-building and by-election victory in 1967 appeared to build momentum for the party—winning representation in Westminster, and breaking the Labour-Conservative Scottish duopoly was possible—and they fielded 65 candidates in the 1970 general election (up from 23 in 1966). The SNP did not viably emerge in broader terms until 1970 when

Donald Stewart won a seat in the Western Isles in a general election. Once the SNP had the organizational capacity to present a candidate, the Western Isles would consistently return an SNP MP to Westminster, with Stewart winning the seat—with outright majorities—uninterrupted from 1970 to 1987.

5.2.2.2 National Success: The Punishment and rewards of FPTP

SNP emergence/success in the 1970s therefore required them to build organizational capacity, but also break the two-party system in the context of FPTP electoral rules that presents high barriers to entry. Latent economic and political factors assisted with the latter. The discovery of oil in the North Sea allowed the SNP to argue that an independent Scotland would be economically viable and assert a nationalist claim—“It’s Scotland’s Oil!”. The SNP capitalized on the shifting climate of Scottish politics in the Glasgow Govan by-election in November of 1973, increasing their vote share from 10.3 percent in the 1970 general election to 41.5 percent and winning the by-election.

Following the 1974 election, SNP MPs faced isolation in Westminster, even in the Labour-led minority government context. The Scotland Act was passed in 1977 (discussed below), which allowed for a referendum on devolution in 1979, yet failed to be implemented by the Callaghan-led Labour government, prompting the SNP to join Thatcher’s non-confidence motion, toppling the government and forcing an election. At the time of dissolution, the SNP was weak in public opinion polls, leading Callaghan to remark that the party had acted like “turkeys voting for an early Christmas” (Lynch 2002, 153).

The 1979 election saw Margaret Thatcher win a majority government. Resistance to Thatcher’s policies would become a rallying cry for Scottish nationalists, yet Labour would be the primary electoral beneficiaries of the Conservative collapse in Scotland. The SNP’s vote share continued to climb, rising from 13 percent in 1987 to 22.1 percent in 1997, but were punished by electoral system. Table 5.6 lists the SNP’s advantage ratio, calculated by taking the SNP’s share of the seats in Westminster and dividing it by the party’s *national* vote share. Ratios under one indicate that the SNP faced a punishment and ratios over one indicate an electoral reward. Data begin in 1970, the first general election in which the SNP elected an MP.

Election Year	Advantage Ratio
1970	0.14
1974	0.55
1974	0.60
1979	0.20
1983	0.28
1987	0.36
1992	0.24
1997	0.46
2001	0.42
2005	0.62
2010	0.54
2015	1.83
2017	1.79
2019	1.89
MEAN	0.71

Table 5.6 Effects of the Electoral System, National Elections

The SNP’s advantage ratio was under one for every national election until 2015. Note that the ratio is under one even in the years in which the SNP was increasing its share of the regional vote share—the SNP was chronically unable to translate votes into commensurate seats. The very low advantage ratios for the SNP at the national level, particularly during the Thatcher years, coincide with increasing support for independence.

5.2.2.3 Emergence: Subnational Elections and the MMP System

Elections to the Scottish Parliament occur in an MMP system where the 73 seats elected by the plurality formula in single-member districts are supplemented by 56 party-list regional seats “allocated within each of the eight regions such that the overall distribution of seats in each region, both constituency and list, would reflect as closely as possible the division of vote between the parties” (Curtice 2009, 59). There is no legal threshold for representation on the list votes. The list element of the system is designed to ‘top-up’ the constituency results, “offsetting the distorted results produced by the [FPTP] system” such that a party that does well in the constituency vote is going to receive less representation from the list vote (Anderson 2016, 558). Because the electoral system favours constituency seats and because there a small number of districts for list allocation (only eight districts), the effective threshold for representation is high and the “lack of a formal threshold makes it difficult for voters to discern the relative electoral viability of the smaller parties” (Carman and Johns 2010, 382).

The MMP system was implemented for two reasons. First, following the 1997 general election, this system was essential for Labour’s ability to secure the support of the Liberal Democrats (Johnston and Pattie 2002, 585). Second, the quasi-PR system was selected for strategic reasons to create barriers to potential SNP dominance. The system assuaged fears that Holyrood would be dominated by Edinburgh and Glasgow and that the Labour party was implementing an electoral system that was beneficial to themselves (Leicester 1999; Plant 1999). The system also gave “Labour reassurance that, should the SNP ever make a breakthrough and come first in votes, they could still fail to secure an overall majority in seats” (Curtice 2009, 59).

Chapter Three demonstrated that PR systems tend to facilitate the entrance of secessionist parties subnationally. Yet in the case of the SNP, the adoption of the MMP electoral system in Holyrood was of little importance to the emergence of the SNP subnationally. While the system certainly affects the party’s success, the party was going to contest Scottish Parliament elections regardless of the electoral system. For the SNP, the party could move their mobilizational capacities down to Holyrood and try to outflank the entrance of new secessionist parties due to the party’s ownership of the independence issue. However, the MMP system induced the emergence of other secessionist parties as well as encouraged existing parties to re-think their positions on Scotland’s constitutional status.

The emergence of new, single-issue secessionist parties that compete against the SNP is rare. While the Scottish Greens have adopted a pro-independence policy, this change in constitutional preference better reflects the electoral system’s effects on success than it does emergence. The 2021 Holyrood election saw the secessionist *Alba* Party—headed by former First Minister and SNP leader Alex Salmond—emerge, but the party won only 1.7 percent of the regional vote and no seats. The SNP therefore controls the secessionist pole, limiting the emergence of secessionist challengers, despite the MMP system encouraging secessionist party entrance.

5.2.2.4 Subnational Success: The Effects of the MMP System

Much to Labour’s disappointment, the MMP system did not consolidate electoral support around Labour and, instead, the SNP capitalized on both the list and constituency vote. Figure

5.10 plots the SNP's share of both the list (solid line) and constituency vote (dashed line) in Holyrood elections.

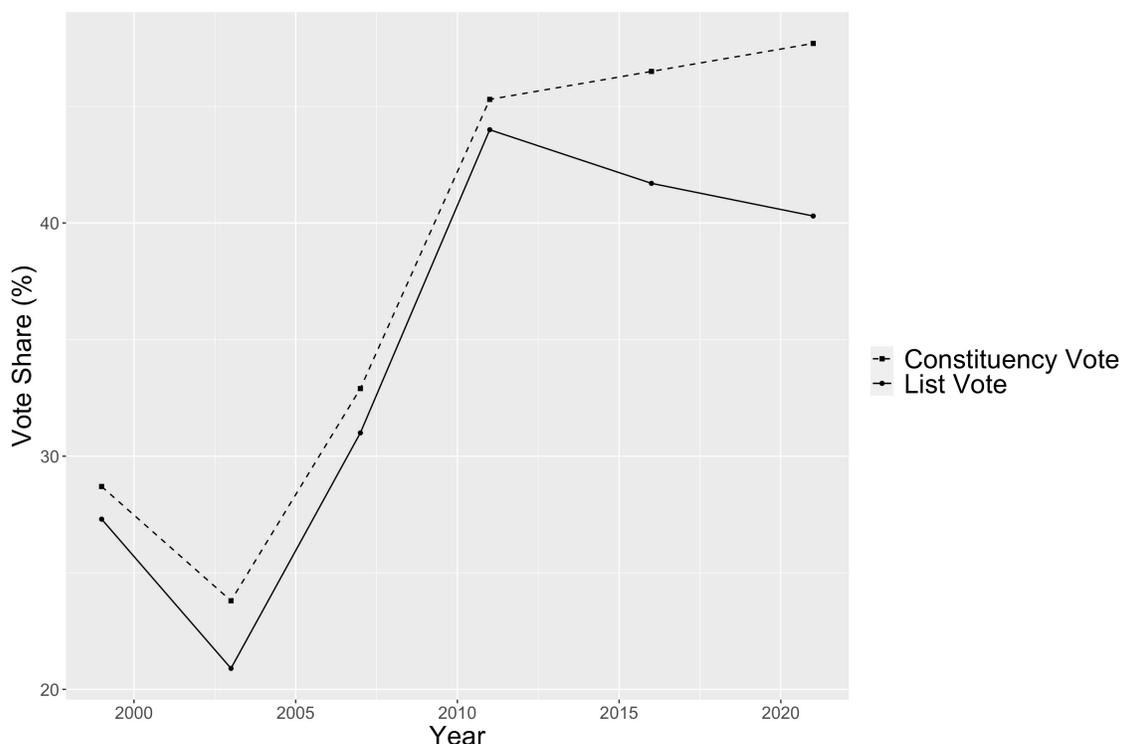


Figure 5.10 SNP Success, Subnational Elections

The MMP system introduces the possibility of ‘split-ticket’ voting where voters cast votes for separate parties in the constituent and list votes. Johnston and Pattie (2002) find that Scottish voters may split their ticket when they receive information that this is a sensible strategy. In contrast, “the more that a candidate campaigns for a constituency seat, the more likely he/she is to retain the loyalty of those who voted for his/her party in the list contest and to win over support from those whose party identity led them to give their list vote to another party” (Johnston and Pattie 2002, 598).

The system also serves to limit the possibility of majority governments, increasing the likelihood of coalitions—such as the Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition that governed the first and second parliaments. It also introduces an ambiguity regarding the election result where close, horse-race elections might not signal to the voter what is the most likely outcome. In the 2007 election, the first election in which the SNP won government, Carman and Johns (2010) found that SNP voters were both least likely to favour a coalition—instead preferring single-party

government—and least likely to split ticket vote. This results in a unified SNP base, where SNP voters are unlikely to desert their preferred party for their second preference.

The SNP has always had a higher share of the constituency vote than they had of the list vote with these shares diverging in the most recent elections. The SNP’s initially weak electoral showing in the 1999 and 2003 election saw the party greatly benefit from the list portion of the vote, having seen this trend reverse in recent elections as the party elected an increasing number of constituency representatives.

Table 5.7 demonstrates the way in which the PR aspect of the system acts as a ‘top up’ to the constituency vote. The SNP’s weak performance at the constituency level in 1999 and 2003 was balanced by a greater share of the list vote, thus providing an alternative pathway to electoral success not available in FPTP systems. By 2016 and 2021, the SNP’s dominance of the constituency votes would reduce their share of the list-elected MSPs to just four and two respectively. The PR aspect of the MMP system therefore facilitated initial representation for the SNP but their inability to win constituency votes kept the party out of government.

Year	Seats		
	Constituency	List	Total
1999	7	28	35
2003	9	18	27
2007	21	26	47#
2011	52	16	69*
2016	59	4	63#
2021	62	2	64#

Table 5.7 SNP Constituency and List Seats

#Minority government

*Majority government

The SNP’s success in the FPTP element (i.e., constituency votes), however, is what ultimately moved the party towards being able to win government. The FPTP system works similarly in subnational elections to how it does in national elections—once the threshold is passed or the appropriate distribution of support is secured, the electoral gains that FPTP systems provide can be large. The PR aspect of the system counter-balances this, however, prohibiting a majority government when the SNP dominates constituency votes.

Table 5.8 shows the extent to which the Greens benefit from the list-vote. The Greens have never elected an MSP from the constituency vote and have, at times, competed exclusively for regional votes. The PR system is particularly beneficial for the Greens as a strictly

majoritarian system would likely squeeze them out of representation in Holyrood. The eight seats won by the Greens in the 2021 election makes the Greens a crucial force in Holyrood as the survival of the SNP minority government depends on the party's support on supply and confidence motions.

Year	List Vote (%)	List Seats
1999	3.6	1
2003	6.9	7
2007	4	2
2011	4	2
2016*	6.6	6
2021	8.1	8

Table 5.8 Scottish Greens' List Votes and Seats

*denotes the first election following the adoption of a pro-independence orientation.

On the one hand, the MMP system has worked effectively to limit the possibility of an SNP majority, rewarding the party with only one majority government. On the other hand, the list aspect of the PR system serves as an inducement for secessionist parties, in fact over-rewarding the electoral success of small, third-parties like the Scottish Greens. The desire, then, to implement an electoral system that was hostile to the SNP has ultimately backfired. The SNP now controls the constituency votes and can govern comfortably with the support of the pro-independence Greens who have been successful thanks to the proportional aspect of the system.

In sum, early success for the SNP existed outside general elections, limiting the election of candidates to by-elections. Following the election of Winnifred Ewing in 1967, the SNP began to professionalize and run candidates across all ridings in Scotland. Even though the SNP saw a period of success in the early 1970s, the party was punished by the electoral system which mistranslated their votes into seats: under-rewarding their results. The SNP was only able to overcome the punishment imposed by the electoral system in the 21st century when the electoral system translated the 50 percent of the vote share received by the SNP to 95 percent of the regional seats. Initially, the FPTP system penalized the SNP. However, the SNP was able to take advantage of the electoral system's incentives in the 21st century, electing sizeable parliamentary representations that far outpaced their vote share.

Subnationally, the MMP system has not worked as expected. The SNP's constituency vote share has always outpaced their list vote share and the party has formed government

uninterrupted since 2007. The system has worked nearly as expected in its ability to limit majority governments—although the SNP won a majority government in 2011, the party fell two seats and one seat shy in 2016 and 2021 respectively. Because secessionist parties perform better in PR systems in subnational elections, parties (such as the Greens) which come to support independence can be moderately successful in the list aspect of the MMP system, electing enough MSPs to theoretically hold the balance of power in Holyrood and influence minority SNP governments.

5.2.3 Autonomy

5.2.3.1 Party Formation: The Effects of Autonomy

Understanding the emergence of Scottish secessionism requires attention to demands for autonomy and the consequences of those demands. The SNP emerged in the mid-1930s following a protracted struggle for Home Rule. The SNP, and their demands for territorial autonomy, were not immediately successful. Hampering SNP success were the major parties, notably Labour, Liberal, and the Liberal Democrats who managed to incorporate Scottish devolution into their electoral platforms.

Modern Scottish politics and the modern Scottish nationalist movement began in 1707 following the Act of Union. The Act abolished the Scottish Parliament and united Scotland with England, guaranteeing Scottish representation in Westminster and allowing Scotland to maintain control over local governance, law, and education (Esman 1977). Doubts about the Union began to fade as the economy improved, notably in the 19th century with Scotland's importance as an iron-producing region (Friend 2012). For much of the 19th century, Scotland governed itself with little intervention from Westminster until the British state began centralization with the Education Act of 1872 and the creation of the Scottish Office and the Secretary of State for Scotland in 1885. Elected local educational boards, underrepresentation in Westminster, perceptions of unfair expenditure shares, and land tenant issues constituted central grievances in Scotland in this period (Mitchison *et al.* 2002).

A pressure group, the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA) was founded in 1886 at a time when Irish Home Rule was a pressing issue (Bochel *et al.* 2000). The SHRA argued in favour of a Scottish Parliament and presented a “quasi-federal constitutional solution to the Irish

question through Home Rule all around” (Lynch 2002, 28). The SHRA’s membership included Keir Hardie (leader of the Labour Party, 1906-1908) and Ramsay MacDonald, who would eventually become Prime Minister. The organization had limited success and disbanded in the 1890s (Lynch 2002).

Following the demise of the SHRA, its Liberal members “concentrated on presenting Home Rule motions and bills in the House of Commons” from the early 1890s to WWI (Lynch 2002, 28). After WWI, the SHRA re-emerged and aimed to establish a Westminster-endorsed constitutional convention in order to develop a Home Rule bill for Scotland. The SHRA organized to endorse Scottish parliamentarians in the 1924 general election who were favourable to a constitutional convention, endorsing 34 of the 71 candidates. The Scottish National Convention was created in November 1924 following the failure of a Scottish Home Rule bill, with the aim of presenting a Home Rule bill that could gain sufficient cross-party support. (Lynch 2002). The Convention drew up a draft bill which mistakenly found its way to Labour MP, James Barr, without the SHRA’s knowledge. Barr presented the bill on the floor of the House of Commons, allowing opponents to taint the SHRA—a non-partisan organization—as being a “front for the Labour Party” (Lynch 2002, 21), and was ultimately unsuccessful.

The inability of the Association to implement Home Rule left some members opting for more direct action: a political party. The National Party of Scotland (NPS) formed as the result of the merger of the Scots National League, the Scottish National Movement, the Glasgow University Student Nationalist Association, and the SHRA (Finlay 2009, 21). As the NPS floundered electorally, unable to field a full slate of candidates nor win a seat in Westminster, and Labour became increasing centralist, the NPS was faced with internal disagreements between moderates and fundamentalists. Fundamentalists, such as CM Grieve, articulated a Scottish form of fascism, “an idealistic nationalism akin to the Celtic romantics as well as adoption of the Social Credit ideas of the Canadian West” (Lynch 2002, 37). Fundamentalists in the NPS “provided the party with an extremist image, damaging [...] its electoral efforts” (Lynch 2002, 37). NPS leadership moved to expel the fundamentalist elements to protect the party’s identity.

With the failure of the SHRA to implement Home Rule leading to the foundation of the NPS, nationalist elites had come to the belief that a dedicated political party was needed to bring

about self-government. The Scottish Party and the NPS ultimately merged in 1934 to form the Scottish National Party (SNP). The merger forced the NPS to compromise its position on independence, adopting, instead, a position favourable to Home Rule (Lynch 2002).

By the mid-1950s, the party began to slowly professionalize, building its membership and organizational capacity. In the 1960s, the SNP began to make electoral inroads in by-elections, notably with the election of Winifred Ewing in 1967. Ewing's election served as a shock to Westminster and signaled the newly credible threat of Scottish nationalism. Her election forced the government's hand. The Wilson Labour government created the Commission on the Constitution (more commonly known as the Kilbrandon Commission) in 1969 and concluded, in 1973, that "neither federalism nor independence for Scotland and Wales was feasible, but that devolved, directly-elected assemblies were a possibility" (Friend 2012, 34; Bochel *et al.* 2000; Lindsay 2009).

Reaction to the Kilbrandon Commission's report was mixed. The *Glasgow Herald* (1973) reported that the "House of Commons, at first sight, were not impressed" and that some MPs viewed the report as a £500,000 waste, having failed "its purpose to come up with a workable scheme of devolution". The *Herald* further reported that "early political reaction to the Kilbrandon report is that it leans much too far towards home rule for the Conservative and Labour parties to accept". However, the report "pleases the home-rule parties—Scottish Nationalist and Liberal—despite its outright rejection of both separatism and federalism".

The February 1974 election resulted in a hung parliament where the Wilson Labour Party formed a minority government although the Conservatives won the plurality of the seats. The SNP had, to that point, their most successful electoral showing yet, winning 21.9 percent of the Scottish vote and electing seven MPs. The Labour government published their White Paper, a direct response to the Kilbrandon Commission, in September, 1974, making a Scottish Assembly a firm Labour policy (Finlay 2002, 129). The October, 1974, election saw the SNP improve their electoral results, winning 30.4 percent of the vote and electing 11 MPs, but the party was competing against a Labour Party "seeking re-election to government in order to deliver a measure of self-government" to Scotland (Finlay 2002, 129).

The SNP's increasing success "certainly influenced Labour to support devolution" (Finlay 2002, 146). Labour introduced the Scotland Bill on November 4, 1977, which allowed

for a referendum on devolution. Ultimately in the 1979 referendum, while 52 percent of the Scottish voters voted ‘yes’, they represented only 32.9 percent of the eligible electorate, below the 40% threshold (Finlay 2002; Newell 1998).

The next stage in Scotland’s constitutional development occurred following the collapse of Conservative support in Scotland beginning in the Thatcher years. Labour’s impotence as an opposition party, and opposition towards the poll tax galvanized the Scottish wing of the Labour party, leading to the creation of Labour Action in 1988.²⁹ Labour Action, which pushed Labour to more seriously place promises for a Scottish Assembly at the forefront of their Scottish campaigns, organized to form the Constitutional Convention—an extra-parliamentary organization to debate devolution. The Convention was soon promoted by left-wing members of the SNP, Labour Home Rulers, and the Scottish wing of the Liberal Democrats (Finlay 2002).

The SNP, early supporters of the Convention, withdrew from it because independence was not considered as an option. Incidentally, and perhaps demonstrating the SNP’s political naïveté, the SNP’s withdrawal allowed Labour to “paint the SNP as uncooperative, more interested in party advantage than obtaining Home Rule and outside the emerging consensus that a convention could advance the case for a Scottish parliament” (Finlay 2002, 185). The SNP gifted Labour the opportunity to control the devolution debate going into the 1990s. By 1996, the Convention agreed that devolution ought to occur via a referendum. The referendum would have two questions, one concerning the creation of a regional parliament and another allowing Scotland to levy taxes. The SNP reluctantly supported the Convention even though the Convention did not agree to include a question on independence.

In the 1997 Scottish devolution referendum, 74 percent of voters voted ‘yes’ to the creation of a regional parliament and 63 percent voted in favour of taxation power. Holyrood would take on powers over health, education, local government, housing, economic development, the prosecution system, the courts, and the environment. Foreign affairs, defence, macro-economic policy, social security, and broadcasting remained the purview of Westminster.

²⁹ The poll tax was a “mechanism for funding local government through taxing individuals equally, largely regardless of their ability to pay” (Lynch 2002, 183).

Chapter Three demonstrated that—in national elections—higher levels of autonomy decrease the probability of a secessionist party emerging. The SNP demonstrates that the low levels of subnational autonomy can induce the emergence of a secessionist party. The SNP emerged at the national level in an era when the region had limited regional autonomy. This lack of autonomy effectively provided the party with a soapbox on which to stand, to declare their defence of the Scottish people, and proclaim their ultimate goal: independence. The Scottish example further demonstrates that when autonomy is granted, secessionist parties are unlikely to exit the electoral arena. Once Holyrood elections were established, the SNP already had organizational capacity, they could now compete in subnational elections and, potentially, win government. There was no incentive for the SNP to dissolve in the face of devolution.

The Scottish Greens also present an interesting case. The Scottish Greens have never elected a representative to Westminster and have had more success in Holyrood elections. Following devolution in 1999, the Greens' attitude towards independence slowly warmed. In 2005, the Scottish Greens officially adopted a policy in favour of holding a referendum on independence, but was ambiguous in its preference for the outcome. In agreeing to support a referendum, Scottish Green co-convenor and MSP, Shiona Baird, wrote that “We view independence as part of a process, not as an event or even as an end in itself. It is a process that will transfer power away from the remote and over-centralised state we live in at the moment into the hands of people and communities that are actually affected by the decisions” (The Scotsman 2005). By 2013, in the lead up to the 2014 independence referendum, the Greens had come to support independence (The Scotsman 2014). Party co-convenor and MSP, Patrick Harvie, argued that independence was necessary as it was “‘increasingly hard to imagine’ a Westminster government which embodies Scotland’s values” and that “Scotland has the opportunity to take control of its future and build a political culture that’s capable of change” (BBC 2013).

From Westminster’s perspective, the Scottish case demonstrates that autonomy can be a double-edged sword. Too little autonomy risks upsetting the region, catalyzing a political movement to enter the political arena by either demanding more autonomy or independence. An over-correction risks enabling small, tertiary parties to adopt pro-independence positions as a way in which to capitalize on public opinion. Crucially, increased autonomy did not see the SNP

exit the electoral arena, instead it empowered the party to become the regional flagbearer for independence.

5.2.3.2 Party Success: Autonomy

Scottish devolution, argued then Labour Shadow Scottish Secretary, George Robertson, prior to the 1997 general election, was going to “Kill [the SNP] stone dead” (Taylor 2015). Yet it has been over two decades since the 1999 Scottish devolution referendum and not only has the SNP not faded into political obscurity, it is the dominant political force in Scottish politics.

Figure 5.11 demonstrates that devolution did not kill the secessionist sentiment. Support for independence increased throughout the 1980s during the Thatcher Conservative government and soon decreased following her departure from office. The first vertical, solid, line represents the 1979 election and the subsequent Thatcher government. The second, dotted, line represents the day on which Thatcher left office, and the third, dashed, line represents the Brexit referendum. Support for Scottish independence steadily increased following the 1979 election and peaked just before Thatcher’s retirement from office. Yet the SNP was not able to take advantage of these gains electorally because Labour had come to dominate Scottish politics at the expense of the SNP (see Meguid 2008, chapter seven). The SNP began to overcome the hurdles put in place by the electoral system only in the 21st century following devolution and, crucially, following the SNP’s ascension to majority government subnationally in 2011.

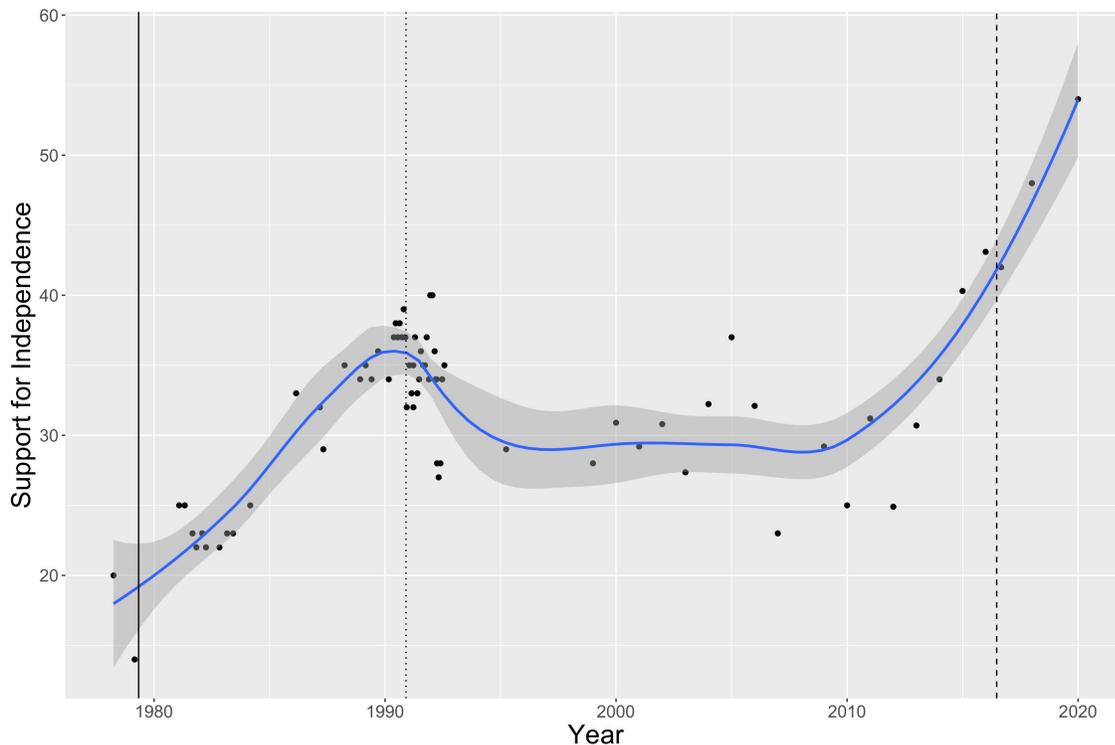


Figure 5.11 Support for Independence

NOTE: Data is comprised of 42 MORI polls from 1978-1995 and the yearly (or semi-annually in 2016) Scottish Social Attitudes Survey from 1999-2020. MORI polls from 1978-1988 ask a less than ideal question: Would you prefer a completely independent Scottish Assembly separate from England [or] a Scottish Assembly as part of Britain but with substantial power? Responses categorized as a preference for a ‘completely independent’ assembly have been categorized here as support for independence. By 1988, MORI asked respondents whether they would prefer if Scotland become independent outside or inside the European Community/Union and the Social Attitudes Survey maintains this line of questioning allowing for a stable time-series. Those who preferred Scotland be independent either inside or outside the EU have been coded as favouring Scottish independence. Trend line is loess-smoothed.

Chapter Four reported results that suggest that the underlying level of regional autonomy, as measured by the RAI, has no effect on secessionist party support. Yet there are reasons to doubt this finding when one digs deeper into the case of Scotland. The creation of a subnational assembly provided secessionist parties with the ability to move beyond oppositional politics and become a governing party. In post-devolution Scotland, the SNP’s electoral fortunes increased dramatically. The SNP “are a permanent fixture on the landscape. Not only has George Robertson’s prediction [...] been proved wrong, it has given [Scottish nationalism] a platform, a plausible strategy and the trappings, prestige and resources of office” (Hassan 2009, 10).

In contrast, research on Scottish elections have shown that the SNP’s ability to form government subnationally is not solely the result of demands for independence. Instead, Johns and colleagues (2009; 2013) argue that valence and performance politics are key drivers of the

SNP's success. The cornerstone of the SNP's success, to be sure, is secessionist inclined voters but, like the *Parti québécois* in Québec, the SNP's electoral breakthrough in 2007 reflected not national identity nor concerns for independence—but rather that the SNP convinced voters that it was a potentially capable government and a viable alternative to the Labour party (Johns *et al.* 2009). Johns *et al.* (2013) found the same results in the 2011 election: the SNP won because voters thought they would do better than their rivals.

Although the SNP might owe some of its success to valence politics, this does not negate the fact that the SNP are a secessionist party. As Pattie and Johnston (2017) showed, one-third of Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters deserted their party's position on independence in the 2014 referendum. The SNP's ultimate policy goal is territorial independence and voting for the SNP provides the party with its legislative justification to do just that.

Figure 5.12 plots vote shares for both the Scottish Greens and the SNP over time. Only the SNP's vote share in national elections has been plotted as they are the only Scottish secessionist party to have ever won representation at Westminster. The Greens' vote share both pre- and post-adoption of their pro-independence stance is plotted. In subnational elections, only the list (regional) vote is plotted. The vertical line represents the first devolution election in 1999.

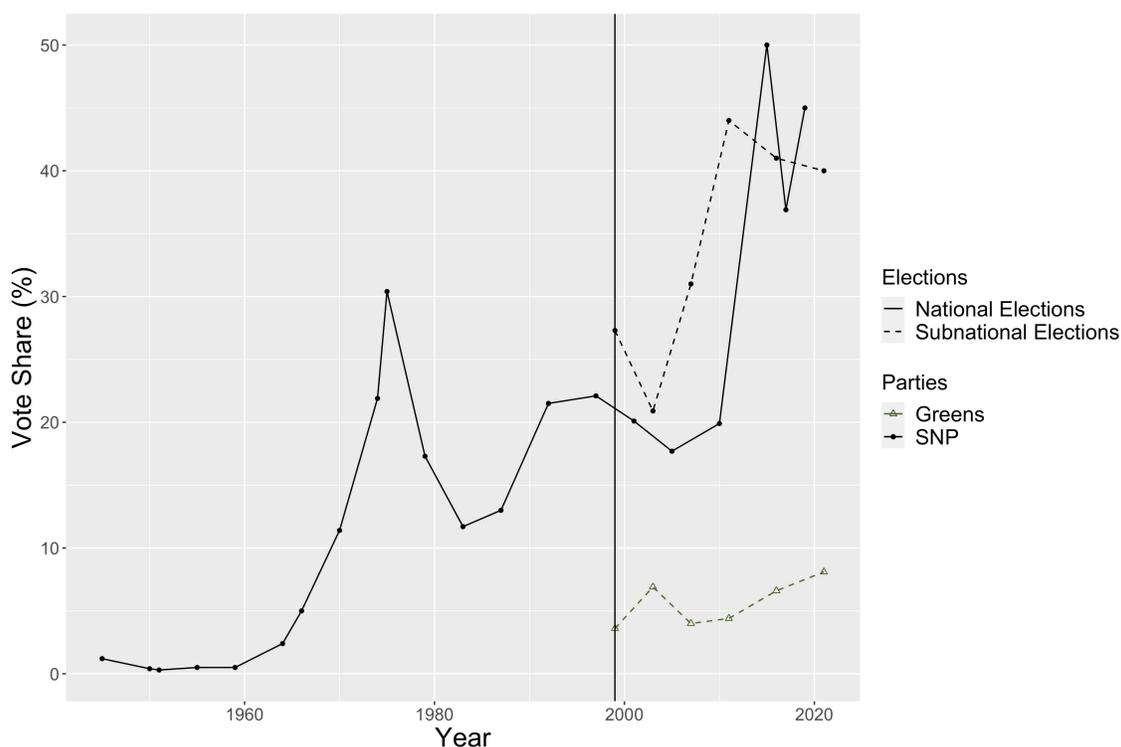


Figure 5.12 Secessionist Party Success, Pre- and Post-Devolution

Until the 21st century, the SNP's electoral high watermarks were the late 1960s, following the Hamilton by-election, and the early 1970s. Following the SNP's success in the 1974 elections, the Labour government was now of the belief that the "best way to block the SNP was to introduce a devolved government in Scotland" (Friend 2012, 35). It appears that this strategy might have initially been successful. The SNP's vote share fell after the 1974 elections, following Labour's incorporation of the devolution issue. The 1979 election saw the election of the anti-devolution Thatcher Conservatives and, for the time being, devolution was removed from the political agenda.

By the 1990s, and following Prime Minister Thatcher's immense unpopularity in Scotland, the Labour Party had once again become the champion of regional autonomy. In the 1992 general election, hoping to convince Scottish nationalists to vote for Labour, the Kinnock Labour Party promoted devolution in Scotland and "covered Scotland with billboard posters that declared 'Vote Labour and a Scottish parliament will be along in a tick'" (Lynch 1997, 177). The Tories' unwillingness to engage with devolution would cost them dearly. The 1997 election would see the Conservatives win 17.5 percent of the Scottish vote and lose all of their 11 previously elected Scottish MPs.

The 1997 Scottish devolution referendum followed the 1997 United Kingdom general election. Scottish voters cast ballots for two questions: whether Scotland should have its own Parliament and whether the Parliament should have taxation powers. Yes-Yes voters (those in favour of both the Parliament and taxation powers) were mostly concentrated among those who identified as Scottish over British and did not identify with the Conservative party (Bochel *et al.* 2000, 168; Pattie *et al.* 1999). The extent to which the devolution referendum was about independence was limited. Where 43 percent of Yes-Yes voters did so because it gave Scotland "greater say in [its] own affairs", only 16 percent of voters voted Yes-Yes because they believed it was a step towards independence (Bochel *et al.* 2000, 164).

The SNP did not find immediate success in post-devolution Scotland, decreasing their vote share from 22.1 percent in 1997 to 20.1 in 2001 and electing one less MP. Subnationally, the party was weak and formed opposition to a Labour-Liberal Democratic coalition government following the 1999 and 2003 elections. In 2007, the SNP, under the leadership of Alex Salmond, had won a minority government and has since governed uninterrupted.

The SNP's 2007 breakthrough led to the creation of the Calman Commission and the 'National Conversation' on Scottish independence. Established by an opposition Labour motion in Holyrood, the Commission found support in Westminster when the Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition government agreed to implement the Commission's recommendations for increased devolution. The Scotland Act, 2012, further devolved powers to Scotland including "stamp duty, land tax and landfill tax and new borrowing powers for the legislature. In addition, the introduction of the new Scottish rate of income tax in 2016 endows the parliament with new fiscal powers and control, albeit limited, over income tax in Scotland" (Anderson 2016, 556).

The 2011 Holyrood election saw the SNP win 69 seats, enough to form a majority government. Subnational success appeared to beget national success. The 2015 national election saw the SNP win 50 percent of the regional vote and 56 of the region's 59 seats—their best showing at Westminster since October 1974 when they elected 11 MPs. Beginning in 2015, the SNP became a dominant party in Scottish politics at Westminster, electing 35 MPs in 2017 and 48 in 2019.

Devolution was also important for third-parties in Scotland. Where the Scottish Greens were unable to win representation at Westminster, the Holyrood electoral system—particularly the list (regional) vote—was beneficial for the Greens. Although the Greens had never won more than 1.1 percent of the Scottish vote in UK general elections, the party has elected at least one legislator to Holyrood in every election. The party has also increased its share of the list vote and the number of legislators elected following a change in their constitutional preference, increasing their list vote to 6.6 percent in 2016, electing six MSPs, and then further increasing their list vote to 8.1 percent in 2021, electing eight MSPs.

Devolution has benefitted the secessionist parties and has increased their capability to mobilize their territorial demands for independence, culminating in the 2014 independence referendum. In some respects, support for the yes option in the 2014 referendum was as expected: with overwhelming support from SNP supporters. However, one-third of Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters deserted their party's official position and supported independence. And while identification with Scotland was a primary determinant of supporting independence, other factors such as evaluations of Scotland's position within the union, risk aversion, and left-wing ideological predispositions conditioned support (Pattie and Johnston 2017). That support

for independence was not just a function of national attachment and that a significant minority of non-SNP supporters voted Yes indicated that the secessionist cause “no longer appeals just to the committed nationalist community but is moving into the Scottish mainstream” (Pattie and Johnston 2017, 93).

While the unionist option won the 2014 independence referendum, Scotland’s constitutional future remains unresolved. The SNP, committed to a second independence referendum, fell one seat short of an absolutely majority in the May 2021 election. However an SNP/Green combination would result in a secessionist majority for supply and constitutional bills.

Brexit, like the Court and Madrid-imposed decisions in the Catalan case, might have served as an exogenous shock, widening the Scottish-English cleavage. Ironically, British-centric claims for increased autonomy via Brexit has possibly cemented the delineation between the Scotsman and the Englishman. Scottish preference for the EU—demonstrated both in the Brexit referendum and that independence *within* the EU has always outpaced independence *outside* the EU—might be an irreconcilable difference between the two regions where Scottish nationalist desires to maintain EU membership is now predicated on territorial independence. Evidently, Brexit served as a shock to Scottish nationalists—that the region’s autonomy is still at the mercy of England.

5.3 Québec

Québec, like Catalonia, is home to a strong secessionist movement in a context with a clear linguistic difference. In contrast to Catalonia, French-speakers in Québec are a majority-minority: the majority of the subnational population but a minority of the Canadian population. Notably, the *Parti québécois* (PQ), the most dominant secessionist party has been decreasing in strength due to multiparty competition in subnational elections.

This section is concerned with two secessionist parties: The *Parti québécois* and the *Bloc québécois* (BQ, Bloc). The PQ first contested the 1970 election and contests only subnational elections. Their period of greatest success, forming government in Québec more than once, was from the mid-1970s to the late 1990s. The PQ’s electoral success has been declining considerably since. The BQ has contested national elections since 1993, fielding candidates

exclusively in Québec. The BQ has been a constant presence in the House of Commons, often electing a sizeable parliamentary delegation.

This section investigates the effects of language, immigration, the electoral system, and autonomy on both the emergence and success of secessionist parties in Québec's subnational elections (hereafter referred to as *provincial elections*) and in national elections (hereafter referred to as *federal elections*). I argue that language was more important for the formation of the PQ than it was for the formation of the BQ. I further argue that the unionist parties (hereafter referred to as *federalist parties*) in Québec likewise promote and implement policies which protect the French language, depriving secessionist parties of issue ownership.

In provincial elections, language interacts with immigration and, unlike in Catalonia, has resulted in increasingly restrictive and xenophobic immigration and integration policies. But, much as with language, these restrictive policies have also, at times, been espoused by nationalist non-secessionist parties, reflecting that the language-immigration nexus exists both within and outside the scope of secessionist parties.

I then look at the effects of the electoral system. I argue that the electoral system acted as expected in provincial elections by limiting the PQ's initial success due to the system's high threshold. Once the system polarized around the federalist *Parti libéral du Québec* (PLQ) and the PQ, the FPTP electoral system then rewarded the PQ. The emergence of multipartism in the 21st century, partly facilitated by the system's rewarding of insurgent parties with geographically concentrated support, has come to hurt the PQ because the system stopped over-rewarding the PQ's electoral performance and has, instead, over-rewarded insurgent parties such as the *Action Démocratique du Québec* (ADQ) and the *Coalition Avenir Québec* (CAQ). Nationally, the BQ has largely benefited from the electoral system that sees the election of a sizeable Bloc delegation to the House of Commons, confirming the regional incentives in Canadian politics first identified by Cairns (1968).

The final section looks at the effects of autonomy. I argue that demands for autonomy, along with the response of the federal governments and the rest of Canada, were crucial for the emergence of both the PQ and the BQ. Autonomy is also crucial for the success of the PQ but demands for greater provincial power are made by federalist provincial political parties as well. Nationally, the BQ serves as a party seeking increased autonomy for Québec. But the way in

which statewide (i.e., Canada-wide) parties respond to and sometimes subsume these demands can have considerable ramifications for the BQ.

5.3.1 Québécois Secessionist Parties and Their Entry

The 1960s were a period of considerable change in Québec. The province liberalized, secularized, and began to disassociate itself from the conservative, Catholic, and rural government of Maurice Duplessis who ruled from 1936-1939 and then uninterrupted from 1944-1959. This period of change, dubbed the Quiet Revolution, ignited the nationalist fire.

For much of Canadian history, French-Canadians were poorer and in worse health than both English Canadians and Anglophone Quebecers. For some French-Canadians, the only way to rectify these inequalities was to push for total political independence. The first secessionist parties, the *Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale* (RIN), a left-wing party led by noted actor and intellectual Pierre Bourgault, and the right-of-centre *Ralliement national* (RN) both emerged to contest the 1966 Québec election, the sixth post-War election. Each party received over one percent of the vote and combined for 8.8 percent, electing no Members of the National Assembly (MNA).

The secessionist movement did not become viable within Québec—and a perceived threat in the rest of Canada—until René Lévesque, a well-known Cabinet minister in the *Parti libéral du Québec* (PLQ) government became the face of the movement. Lévesque was first elected to office as a PLQ MNA in 1960 and had becoming increasingly divergent from the PLQ in his views towards Québec's constitutional status. Where the PLQ was committed to a federal union with Canada albeit with increased powers for the province (the party's 1962 campaign slogan was '*maîtres chez nous!*' ('Masters of our own house!')), Lévesque came to view the union as unnecessary and problematic. Instead, Lévesque was in favour of sovereignty-*association*, a policy that would grant Québec full political autonomy but maintain an economic link with Canada.

At the Libéral (PLQ) policy convention in October, 1967, Lévesque and the PLQ reached an impasse. Lévesque and his supporters attempted to include a policy resolution in favour of the adoption of Lévesque's sovereignty-association proposal. This proposal would have asked the party delegates to vote on whether the PLQ should endorse his sovereignty-association plan. The

proposal for a secret-ballot vote was met with chants from members on the plenary floor of “*Lévesque dehors!*” (“Lévesque out!”). Lévesque, as predicted by Hug’s theory, had brought his demand of a new constitutional order to an existing party but the demands were too high for the party to accept. Lévesque subsequently quit the party founded his own political project: the *Mouvement Souveraineté-Association* (MSA).

The PQ emerged in 1968 following the merger of the MSA and the RN. Bourgault, of the RIN, avoided officially merging his party with the PQ by simply disbanding the RIN and encouraging his members to join the PQ. By 1970, the secessionist forces were united but weak, electing only seven MNAs. The PQ’s 23 percent of the vote surprised Quebecers but the party’s electoral weakness demonstrated the effects of FPTP—mistranslating votes into seats and penalizing the party’s sizeable vote share.

The lack of immediate parliamentary success for the PQ caused internal tensions that were exacerbated by the fact that Lévesque had not won a seat himself. The party was perhaps insulated from internal turmoil and external challengers thanks to the fact that its leader was not a political neophyte. Lévesque was a well-known, established, and high-profile politician who was capable of managing internal tensions, limiting their negative impact. As is often the case with new parties, a forceful, well-known leader was able to push the party through the obstacles of the years after party formation.

Figure 5.13 plots the PQ’s vote share since their emergence in 1970. The figure also indicates critical junctures in Québec’s political history since the PQ emerged. The first vertical line represents the 1980 sovereignty-association referendum. Although the ‘Yes’ (secede) side ultimately lost the referendum, the result forced the federal Liberal government to re-negotiate Canada’s constitution. The PQ saw a decline after this, owing largely to their long tenure in office, but rebounded with the failure of constitutional negotiations at Meech Lake and in the national referendum on the Charlottetown Accord (discussed in greater detail below).

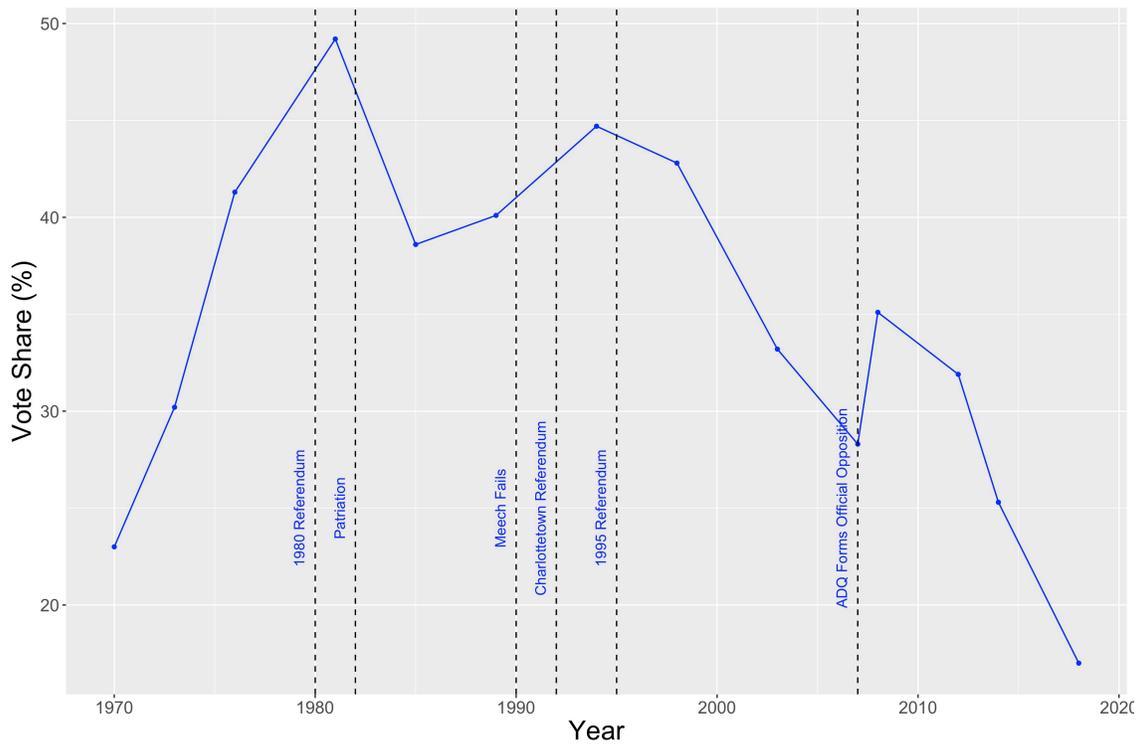


Figure 5.13 Secessionist Party Support, Subnational Elections

Figure 5.13 also shows that the PQ's vote share has declined since the 1995 referendum with a slight rebound in 2008 and the formation of a minority government in 2012. Third party success in 2007, even if fleeting, was a critical juncture and demonstrated that the stable two-party system was capable of being punctured by insurgent parties. New, insurgent secessionist parties emerged in the 21st century, directly competing against the PQ with various forms of demands for greater autonomy. *Option nationale*, formed by a former PQ MNA, contested the 2012 and 2014 elections, however the party was unsuccessful, never winning more than 1.8 percent of the vote and failed to elect an MNA. *Québec solidaire* (QS) emerged in 2007 and has slowly increased their electoral success over time, from 3.6 percent in 2007 (having elected no MNAs) to winning 16 percent of the vote and electing 10 MNAs in 2018—in fact equaling the PQ's parliamentary delegation.

At the federal level, it took some time for a viable party to emerge. The *Union populaire* contested the 1979 and 1980 federal elections, winning less than one percent of the vote, and the *Parti nationaliste du Québec* contested the 1984 federal election, winning 2.5 percent of the Québec vote, failing to elect a Member of Parliament (MP). Viable party entrance did not occur until the early 1990s when the BQ formed following the resignation of high-ranking

Conservative cabinet ministers and a handful of renegade Liberals. The Bloc was immediately successful, winning 54 seats and becoming the Official Opposition in the House of Commons in the 1993 federal election. The Bloc remains a constant presence in the House of Commons, offering a regionalist perspective in the House, demanding increased policy autonomy for the province.

5.3.2 Language and Immigration

5.3.2.1 Language and the Emergence of the PQ

The French language served as the common tool with which nationalists could differentiate themselves both from Protestant Canada and Anglophone Montreal. Michèle Lalonde's *Speak White* highlighted the linguistic tensions and Pierre Vallière's *Nègres Blancs d'Amérique* articulated a—racially insensitive—common view: French-Canadians were second-class citizens both within Québec and Canada.

Québec has accounted for, on average, 25 percent of Canada's population and the province has always been French-speaking. The upper most line of Figure 5.14 plots the percentage of census respondents in Québec that listed their mother-tongue as French from 1951-2016.

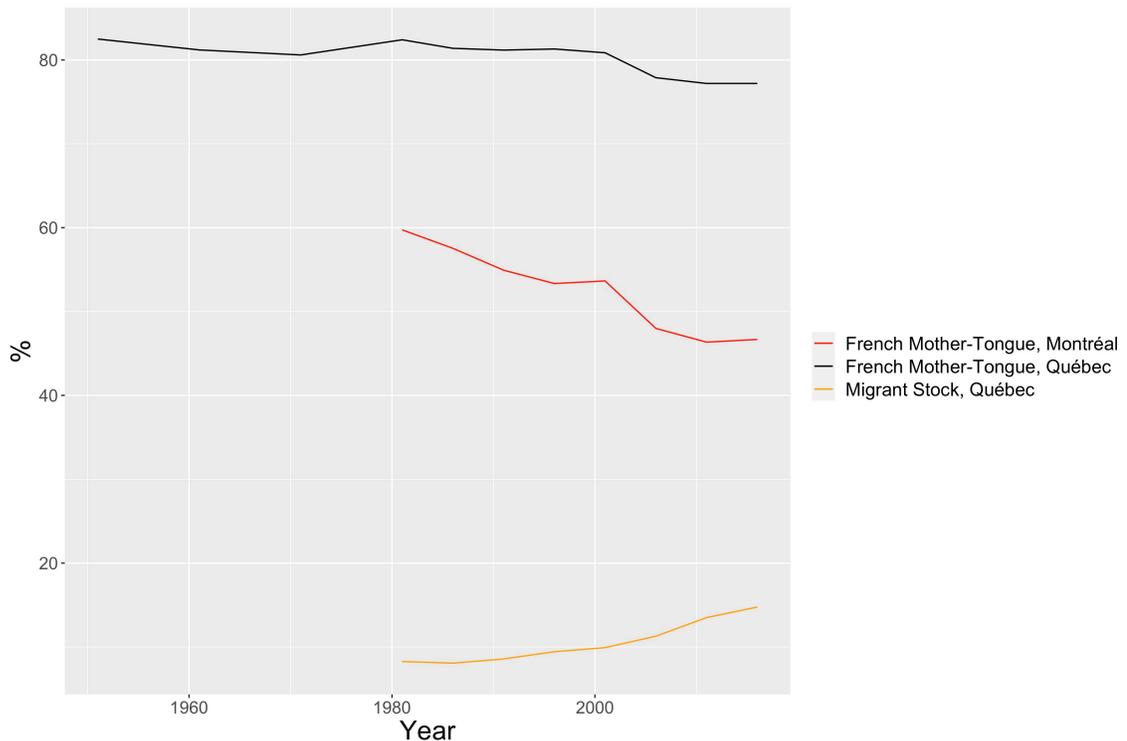


Figure 5.14 Demographic Factors

Since the 1951 census, French-as-mother-tongue speakers have averaged 80 percent of the province’s population (with a standard deviation of just 1.9). And where, since 1981, the Francophone share of the *national* population is, on average, 22.7 percent, roughly 85 percent of Canada’s francophone population lives in Québec, leaving small pockets of French communities mostly in Manitoba, New Brunswick (Canada’s only bilingual province), and Ontario.

Note, as well, the middle line which plots the percentage of French-as-mother-tongue residents on the island of Montréal. Here, French-speakers have been on the decline, largely because the city is one of three most popular cities of arrival for immigrants to Canada. For nationalists in Montréal, then, reversing linguistic decline and the Anglophone hegemony in the province’s economic and financial centre was imperative.³⁰

Those who came to lead the Quiet Revolution had grown up in post-WWII Québec, in an era of increasing Québec nationalism where the province’s slow secularization, liberalization, urbanization, and unionization served as ‘greenhouse’ for growing the region’s national consciousness (Fraser 1984).

³⁰ Only the *island* of Montréal is accounted for. The North and South shores as well as Laval are not included.

This ‘greenhouse effect’ occurred in a context of unequal economic and health outcomes. The movement’s leaders were able to leverage a correlation between language and economic fortunes to claim that only by strengthening the place of the French language in society and in the upper levels of economic activity could Francophones move toward economic equality. For much of Canadian history, French-Canadians were poorer (Geloso and Dean n.d.; Geloso 2017) and in worse health than English-Canadians (Cranfield and Inwood 2007). *Within Québec*, Francophone income lagged behind English-speaking Quebecers—particularly unilingual Anglophones. Lieberman (1970) noted that bilingual Anglophones had lower incomes than unilingual Anglophones—the bilingual Anglophone was to interact with the shop floor while upper-level management positions were largely held by unilingual Anglophones. Geloso and Dean (n.d.) find that the wage gap between unilingual-Anglophones and Francophones only began to close in the 1970s and Vaillancourt (n.d., see Table 2-2) finds that the mean income of unilingual Anglophones increased from \$4,400 in 1971 to \$10,600 where unilingual Francophones saw an increase from \$2,600 to \$8,500. Entering the political arena as an unabashed secessionist party was, for party membership and leadership, the only direct way for Québec to jointly protect the French language and reverse the economic trends.

Appeals to language were not unique to the PQ, however. The PLQ’s 1966 electoral platform promised to make French the language of employment and communication, and to ensure that all public signage gave priority to French over English (PLQ 1966, 17). While the PLQ’s 1970 platform re-affirmed the party’s commitment to making French the language of employment, the PQ’s (published in 1969) platform pushed for greater action and was explicit in the party’s goal to defend the French language: “la langue est le facteur premier d’identité, la base et l’expression de la culture d’une nation. Nous devons nous donner les motivations culturelles, économiques et sociales qui rendront à notre langue le statut auquel elle a droit. Le Québec sera le pays d’un peuple parlant français” (PQ 1969, 7).³¹ For Camille Laurin, a notable future PQ cabinet member, protecting the French language through legislation was essential both

³¹ “Language serves as the primary identification of a nation’s identity, foundations, and the expression of its culture. We want to provide the cultural, economic, and social motivations to give our language the status it deserves. Québec will be the country of a French-speaking people” (translation my own).

for the protection of the language against an Anglophone hegemony as well as “collective psychotherapy” by which French-Canadians could overcome a “pathology of defeat brought about by the Protestant dominators” (Fraser 1984, 96).

The language section of the PQ’s 1970 platform was the first section of the platform—it appears immediately after the preamble—and proposed four measures relating to French: to make French the sole language of the state, to make French the sole language of employment, to francize immigrants, and to continue the financial support of Anglophone education (PQ 1969, 8-9).

Yet despite the PQ’s overt appeals to language and *intra*-Québec economic inequality, the PQ faced difficulty winning representation outside of Montréal in the more homogenous, Francophone constituencies. Six of the party’s seven elected legislators in the 1970 election were from Montréal, as were four of the six that were elected in 1973.³² The PQ’s appeals to language and economic *rattrapage* stalled off-island where the PLQ, the remnants of Duplessis’ *Union Nationale* (UN), and the populist-conservative *Parti créditiste* were strong. In these areas voters likely felt less pressure on the language and less of the economic domination felt by francophone residents of the metropolis.

In 1973, the PLQ began to alter its linguistic policy proposals by extending linguistic integration to immigrants and expanding on the existing francization measures (PLQ 1973, 60), effectively limiting the extent to which the PQ could own the language issue. By the early 1970s, once the PLQ began to encroach on the PQ’s linguistic territory, the PQ had trouble articulating stronger language policies. And, crucially, the PLQ was in government and willing to implement linguistic policy where the PQ was relegated to being a weak Parliamentary opposition party.

For both the PLQ and PQ, protecting the French language was more than just a resistance to the Anglophone hegemony. Chapter Four indicated that there exists a strong and significant interaction between the presence of a regional language and immigration such that secessionist parties in subnational elections are more successful in regions with a distinct language as the share of the foreign-born population increases. The presence of non-French-speaking immigrants

³² Incidentally, in 1970, the PQ elected Lucien Lessard in the ‘Saguenay’ constituency which was re-named ‘René-Lévesque’ in 2001.

interacted with the dominant position of the English language, forming a Gordian knot where immigration and language were inextricably tied together. Because newcomers could choose to integrate into English instead of French, immigration served as a threat to the survival of the French language.

While the PLQ began to engage with the immigration-language nexus in 1973, the PQ had engaged with this issue since their foundational convention. For the PQ, language needed protection from both a privileged Anglophone class that was largely concentrated in Montréal and from immigrants who were under no legal obligation to integrate into the Francophone majority. Increasing numbers of non-French-speaking immigrants, who voluntarily integrated into English, risked upsetting linguistic homogeneity and, even worse, risked increasing the number of English-speaking individuals in Montréal—the primary location of immigrant arrival.

The PQ's 1970 platform had proposed to francize immigrants by ensuring that, in order to obtain Québec citizenship or a permanent visa, they had to pass a French exam within five years and place their children in French schools (PQ 1969, 8). Figure 5.15 plots the total number of people that immigrated to Québec from 1945 to 2004. The vertical line represents the PQ's ascension to government in 1976. The figure indicates three distinct waves of immigration. The first wave occurred in the 1950s where the number of immigrants reached 46,000 in 1951 and 55,000 in 1957. The second occurred during the Quiet Revolution when the number of newcomers increased from 17,000 in 1961 to 45,000 in 1967.

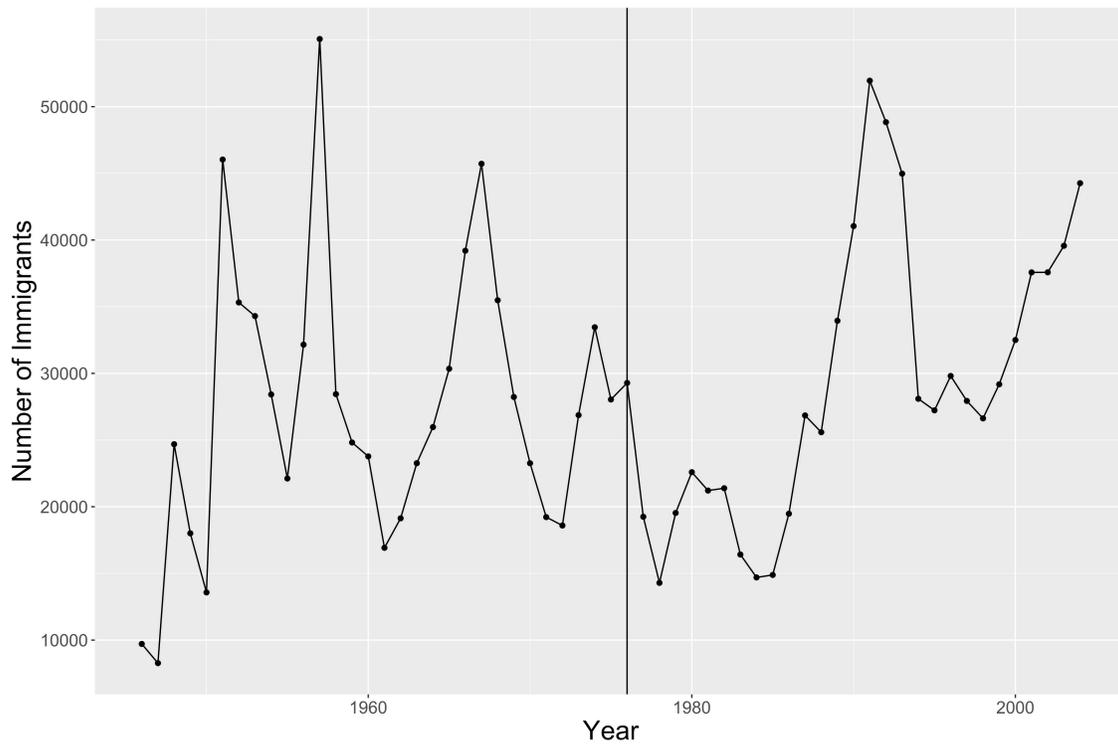


Figure 5.15 Total Number of Immigrants to Québec

The emergence of the PQ, and their 1970 election platform, coincided with a period of Québec history where the number of migrants had increased throughout the 1960s and when French-Canadians were trying to catch up economically and socially with Anglophones. Pressured, then, by the increasing number of immigrants, the PQ began to incorporate immigrant integration into their early policy platforms forcing the PLQ to respond.

By 1973, the PLQ had begun to engage with the language-immigration nexus and, sensing the threat of the PQ which had increased their vote share to 30 percent in 1973, passed Law 22 in 1974, the Official Language Act, which francized the public service, made French the language of education, and made French to the sole official language of the province—despite no mention of this in their 1973 platform.

The 1976 campaign demonstrated the extent to which Law 22 was problematic for the PLQ. Although the PQ’s 1976 platform recognized that 90 percent of immigrants integrated into French schools because of Law 22, they argued that the law did not go far enough (PQ 1976). The PQ benefited greatly from those who wanted a more restrictive language policy: among those who *rejected* independence *and* thought the law should be made more restrictive, 41 percent intended to vote for the PQ compared to 34 percent for the PLQ. Even among non-secessionist

Francophones who *supported* the Law, only a plurality (44%) intended to vote for the PLQ (Hamilton and Pinard 1978, 752).

After conducting an internal study on the viability of the PLQ's vote, party leaders found that the party could lose at least 31 ridings due to "the erosion of English and immigrant support" (Fraser 1984, 66). The belief that the PLQ had turned their back on the Anglophone community led to the possibility that Anglophones would vote for the UN who supported abolishing Law 22. But this support for the UN never materialized and, instead, the "greater fear of the PQ had apparently led many English voters to return to the Liberal fold" (Pinard and Hamilton 1978, 760).

The PQ ascended to power in November, 1976 and although language was only the fifth most important issue in the 1976 campaign (Hamilton and Pinard 1978), public reaction to Law 22 improved the PQ's electoral fortunes. The party could now build on Law 22 with a more ambitious policy to protect the French language that took form of the *Charte de la langue française* (the Charter of the French Language, *Charte*), passed in 1977.

The *Charte* greatly expanded upon Law 22: it further confirmed that French was the sole official language of the province, and, per the preamble, resolved to "faire du français la langue de l'État et de la Loi aussi bien que la langue normale et habituelle du travail, de l'enseignement, des communications, du commerce et des affaires" (Government of Quebec 1977).³³ The *Charte* francized communication with the public service (s.2); enumerated fundamental linguistic rights, including that citizens had the right to work and be served in French (s.4 and s.5); mandated that semi-private organizations such as licensing bodies and public utilities had to communicate in French (*les organismes paraboliques*; s.30); and made French the language of education (Government of Quebec 1977). The *Charte* was a considerable achievement for the PQ and remains a central component of the province's contemporary linguistic policy.

The immigration-language nexus was crucial for the emergence of the PQ. The increased presence of newcomers coupled with the threat of the French language to propel the party to articulate policy proposals that sought to integrate newcomers into the province's French

³³ "make French the language of the State and of legislation as well as the 'normal' language and language of the workplace, of teaching, of communication, of commerce, and of business" (translation my own).

majority. Although support for Law 22 remained mixed (Pinard and Hamilton 1978), support for the PQ—among *non-secessionists*—was concentrated among those who wanted the law to be made more restrictive. Although Pinard and Hamilton do not present the result of this exercise for pro-independence voters, it is not without reason to argue that these voters were likely very much in favour of making Law 22 more restrictive—that was, in fact, the crux of the *Charte*.

The strong and significant interaction between the presence of immigrants and support for secessionist parties does not guarantee support for the PQ because the PLQ had continued to engage with the language issue and has left Law 101 in place and strengthened it through Law 178. In response to a Supreme Court of Canada ruling that invalidated sections of Law 101 which made French the only legal language on public signage, the PLQ used s.33 of the Canadian constitution to amend Law 101 with Law 178. Law 178 specifically re-implemented the signage provision of Law 101 notwithstanding the sections of the constitution (specifically the Charter of Rights and Freedoms) that the Court deemed it violated.

Because the PLQ remains committed to protecting the French language—as well as keeping Law 101 in place—the party does not allow the PQ to own the language issue unilaterally. In effect, there is overlap between the *nationalists*, *federalists*, and *secessionists* in Québec. That non-secessionist parties actively protect the French language demonstrates that independence is not necessary to protect the language and culture

Moreover, the way in which the PLQ engages with the immigration issue limited the extent to which the PQ could claim to be the sole party protecting the province's culture. Following a period of heated public debate concerning a 'reasonable accommodation' crisis of immigrants in Québec society, the PLQ Premier, Jean Charest, launched the Bouchard-Taylor Commission to attempt to put to rest this 'accommodation crisis'. In contemporary Québec, the preponderance of Francophones have been found to believe that immigrants have a deleterious effect on Québec culture (Bilodeau and Turgeon 2014) and that there exists a strong relationship between nativism and support for independence (Blanchet and Medeiros 2019). But the adoption of a French-style *laïcité*, and French language competency exams—ostensibly to protect the province's language and culture—are not unique to the PQ with unionist parties likewise supporting various forms of these policies.

To conclude, Chapter Three showed that secessionist parties were more likely to emerge in regions with a distinct regional language. Québec conforms to this well. Language was crucial for the emergence of the PQ. Because the French majority population lagged behind the Anglophone minority socially and economically, a nationalist plan that defended, promoted, and protecting the French was appealing to francophone voters after the Quiet Revolution.

Yet linguistic differentiation was amplified through its interaction with immigration for the formation, emergence, and success of the PQ. For the PQ, insulating the French language also meant ensuring that immigrants learned French.

Chapter Four showed that secessionist parties are more successful in regions with a distinct language. However, the effect is not monotonic; standard politics are always at play and the way in which the PLQ engaged with the linguistic issue limited the extent to which language could sustain the success of the PQ. From their very beginning, the PLQ was aggressive in their defence of the French language. The PLQ's platforms show that the party started to mirror some of the PQ's policies and, crucially, implemented Law 22 that made French the province's sole official language.

Chapter Four further showed a strong interaction between the presence of a regional language and increasing levels of immigration. I argue that the effects of immigration on PQ success were likely muted for three reasons. First, as I argue below, the polarization along the federalist/secessionist dimension explains the success of the PQ. Second, as I argue below, the central state's reaction to Québec's demands for increased autonomy, and an era of protracted constitutional negotiation, served as a focusing event for the secessionist movement more generally. Third, non-secessionist parties in Québec engaged with the language-immigration issue. When public debates concerning immigration emerged in the 21st century, non-secessionist parties began to incorporate the issue, limiting the extent to which the PQ could be the sole owner of *both* the immigration issue *and* be the only party of linguistic defence.

5.3.3 The Electoral System

Elections in both Québec and Canada are fought under a first past the post system (FPTP) where the candidate that receives the largest share of the vote wins legislative representation. The effects of the electoral system on secessionist party entry and success are apparent in both

provincial and federal elections. In both electoral arenas, the FPTP system imposed high entrance barriers to parties without geographically concentrated support. This discouraged the entrance of secessionist parties, which almost by definition aim to appeal to a wide swath of the regional electorate. In part, this explains why it took multiple elections for a viable secessionist party to emerge in both provincial and federal elections. The high barriers associated with FPTP systems likewise discourage secessionist parties' early success—but both the PQ and BQ demonstrate that the electoral system can provide an amplifying springboard can be considerable when the early barriers are overcome.

5.3.3.1 The Effects of FPTP Subnationally: Entrance & Success

Where Chapter Three showed that secessionist parties are less likely to emerge in subnational elections in plurality/majoritarian systems, Québec demonstrates that secessionist parties can emerge in FPTP systems. Aiding the emergence of the PQ was the fact that the provincial party system was in a state of flux during the 1960s. The PLQ won 51 percent of the vote in 1960 and 56 percent in 1962. By the late 1960s, the Québec party system began to diverge from the Duvergerian expectations associated with plurality systems. The RN and RIN combined for 8.8 percent of the vote in 1966, indicating that there existed room for a secessionist party.

In 1970, both the PQ and the *Ralliement créditiste* emerged. The *Créditistes* were successful and won 11 percent of the vote and elected 12 MNAs. The PQ emerged with immediate credibility, winning 23 percent of the vote but were punished by the electoral system—electing only seven MNAs. The PQ took advantage of the destabilizing electorate but remained hampered by the electoral system.

In 1973, the electoral system again under-served the PQ's votes-to-seats but the system now began to polarize along the federalist-secessionist cleavage such that the PLQ and PQ combined for 86 percent of the vote. While the PQ was not capable of increasing their legislative representation (in fact decreasing their number of elected MNAs by one), the party increased their vote share by seven percent, winning 30 percent of the total vote. In 1976, the electoral system worked to the party's advantage with great success: the party increased their vote share by 11 percent and increased their parliamentary representation from six to 81.

The PQ, then, was initially hampered by the electoral system in 1970 and 1973 but the destabilizing multipartism that emerged in the late 1960s eventually served to help the PQ—the party positioned itself as the alternative to the PLQ and, once the electorate polarized between the PLQ and PQ, the party was then rewarded by the electoral system.

Table 5.9 lists the two-party share of the vote received by the PLQ and PQ, combined, in every election since 1970. The electorate had polarized by 1973 when the ‘national question’ became the dimension of competition. By the 1980s, these two major parties were routinely winning over 90 percent of the vote. The system began to de-polarize by 2003 with the success of the ADQ.

Election Year	Two-Party Vote Share (PQ+PLQ)
1970	68.4
1973	86.6
1976	75
1981	95.2
1985	94.6
1989	90.1
1994	89.1
1998	86.3
2003	79.2
2007	61.3
2008	77.1
2012	63.1
2014	66.8
2018	41.8

Table 5.9 Polarization, Subnational Elections

Figure 5.16 plots the seat share won by the PLQ and PQ since 1970. Because the electorate polarized around two parties, the PLQ and PQ alternated terms in office. The electoral system’s mistranslation of votes into seats over rewarded whichever party won government, resulting in consistent majority governments until 2007 when the PLQ formed the first minority government in the province in since 1878.

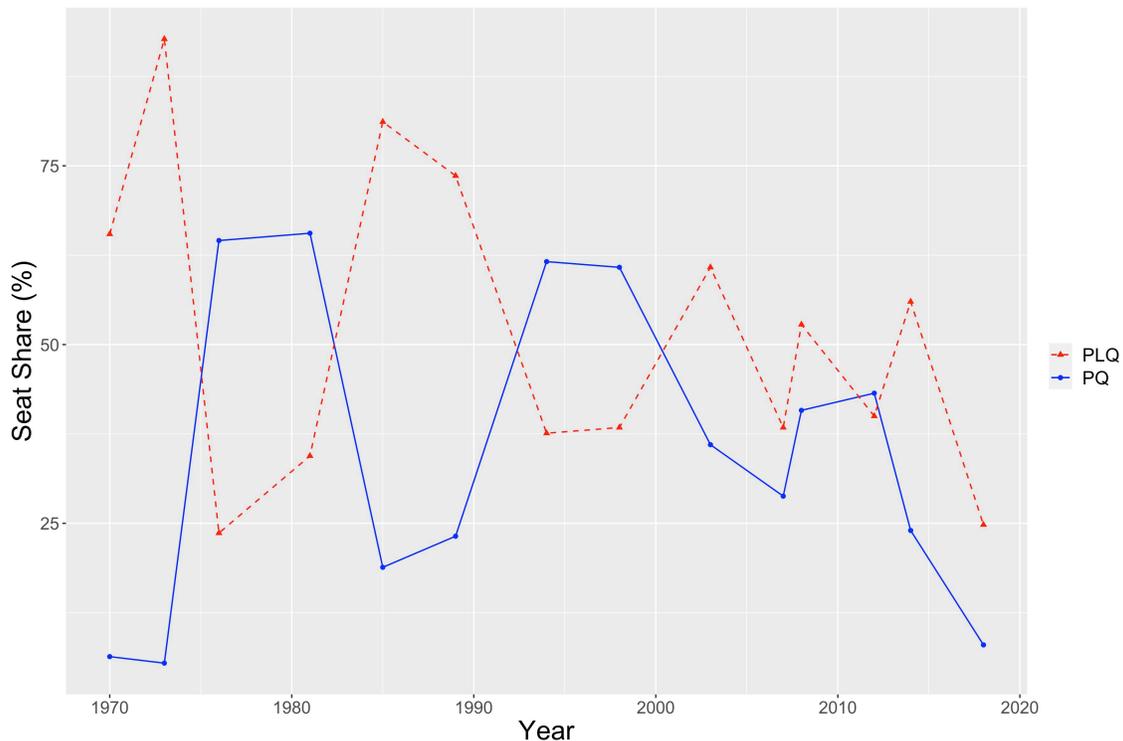


Figure 5.16 PQ and PLQ Seat Share, 1970-2018

The ADQ’s incremental success heralded another destabilized period in the Québec party system. This multipartism began to have considerable consequences for the PLQ and PQ in the 21st century. In 2007 the ADQ won 30.8 percent of the popular vote and 41 seats, forming the official opposition. The ADQ would only win seven seats in 2008 with 16.3 percent of the popular vote. Another third-party, the CAQ emerged to contest the 2012 election, winning 27 percent of the popular vote for 19 seats. Although the CAQ decreased their vote share in 2014, they increased their number of elected MNAs to 22 and, in 2018, was the first party that was neither the PLQ nor the PQ to form government since 1970.

Depolarization further limited the PQ’s success due to the geographically concentrated support of the insurgent parties. Where the PQ was initially limited in their early elections because their support was mostly concentrated in Montréal, parties that are successful *outside* of Montréal have been more immediately successful, bleeding support away from the PQ. In 2007, the ADQ benefited from a swing of 20 seats from the PLQ and 15 seats from the PQ—all of them outside the island of Montréal. In 2012, the CAQ won five seats from the PQ, nine in 2014, and 16 in 2018 for a total of 30—28 of which were won off-island. Insurgent parties can be successful by focusing their support off-island and limiting major party success to Montréal.

The success of *Québec solidaire*—the PQ’s direct challenger for the secessionist vote—mirrors the patterns of success for the early PQ. Success for QS is largely restricted to Montréal but the party has been making incremental gains off-island. Until 2018, the party had only elected MNAs in Montréal. In the 2018 elections, six of the party’s 10 MNAs were from Montréal.

Normally, geographically-concentrated support, as with the QS for example, is beneficial for parties to gain a foothold. However, geographically-concentrated support in Montréal is problematic for secessionist parties for two reasons. First, the total number Montréal seats are not enough to form government, meaning parties need to find support off-island if they wish to have a respectable parliamentary delegation. Second, the western parts of the island are dominated by the PLQ where the party routinely elects MNAs with an outright majority of the vote. This places a limit on the number of *viable* seats on the island, limiting secessionist party support to areas that are not controlled by the PLQ.

5.3.3.2 The Effects of FPTP Nationally: Entrance

Chapter Three found that the electoral system does not affect the likelihood of secessionist party entrance in national elections. Québec illustrates that the effects of the electoral system on party entrance are nuanced and contradictory. For more than a century the Québec electorate was the pivot for government, as cohesive and mobile in both seats and votes. For the Liberal Party of Canada (LPC), winning a bloc of Québec seats was a necessary and usually sufficient condition for forming government. The mistranslation of votes-to-seats facilitated Québec-as-pivot, whereas a PR system, in contrast, would not have mistranslated votes-to-seats as egregiously. By being the pivot, and returning Liberal governments with sizeable Francophone representation, Québec was incorporated into the federal government, in Cabinet, and, often, was represented by the Prime Minister.

Access to the executive served to suppress the need for a national secessionist political party. It speaks to Birnir’s (2009) argument that access to government reduces the incentives to engage in ethnic violence. Instead, the national government could make Québec a key, non-marginalized part of government, and mitigate the secessionist threat by incorporating the province’s demands and being sympathetic to their claims.

By positioning itself as the Québec party in Canada and the Canada party in Québec the Liberals won a majority government four elections out every five (Johnston 2017, 2019). When Quebec failed to act as a bloc, the Liberals almost always lost power. Occasionally Québec swung almost all the way to the Conservatives. When this happened the Conservatives would return massive, but short-lived majorities.

Even with the presence of a secessionist government in Québec, the province remained a pivot in national elections (without a secessionist party) and, in the immediate federal elections following the election of the PQ, remained loyal to the Liberals such that the Liberals won 67 and 74 of the province's seats in 1979 and 1980 respectively. The 74 seats on in 1980 put the federal Liberals half-way to the majority. With half the seats on the government side (including the Prime Minister) and a secessionist party in power provincially, a federal secessionist party was arguably unnecessary and perhaps even detrimental.

Québec-as-pivot was not unique to the LPC. The Progressive Conservatives (PC), for the first time under the leadership of a Québécois, Brian Mulroney, turned the pivot to their advantage. Mulroney's incorporation of soft-nationalists saw the Progressive Conservatives win 58 of the province's 75 seats and one of the largest majority governments in Canadian history.³⁴ Much like the Diefenbaker breakthrough in 1958, the PCs would have formed a majority government without any representation from Québec. In 1988, however, Québec was the decisive pivot—providing Mulroney with the required representation to win another (albeit reduced) majority government.

The integration of Québec nationalists suppressed the emergence of a nationalist party in the same way that the Liberals were able to incorporate French-Canada into the national government. For a prospective national secessionist movement, integrating the nationalist element limits the extent to which the nationalists can claim the central government is not taking their concerns seriously.

On the one hand, the electoral system served to reinforce Québec-as-pivot for the national government which reduced the need for a national secessionist party. On the other hand, the Bloc

³⁴ 'Soft-nationalists' refers to Québec nationalists who are either uncommitted or ambiguous towards the independence issue.

emerged in the early 1990s as the result of failed constitutional negotiations (discussed below). The implosion of Mulroney's soft-nationalist bargain meant that a national secessionist party formed as a significant parliamentary party *before* contesting their first election. In this respect, it was the result of national-level responses to provincial demands for autonomy that structured the emergence of the BQ as a parliamentary party, independent of the electoral system.

5.3.3.3 The Effects of FPTP Nationally: Success

A veritable secessionist movement did not emerge at the national level until 1993, 17 years after the PQ first won government and 23 years after the PQ first contested a provincial election. The story as to why it took 23 years for a viable secessionist party to emerge at the national level is also a story of the Liberal Party's dominance of Québec in national elections.

Figure 5.17 plots the percentage of Québec seats won by the LPC since 1945 and for the BQ since 1993. For much of the 20th century, the LPC was the dominant party in the province, electing well over 50 percent of the province's representation. This success in Québec was crucial for the LPC as winning more than 80 percent of the province's seats put the LPC roughly half-way to forming a majority government before the remaining provinces were taken into account.

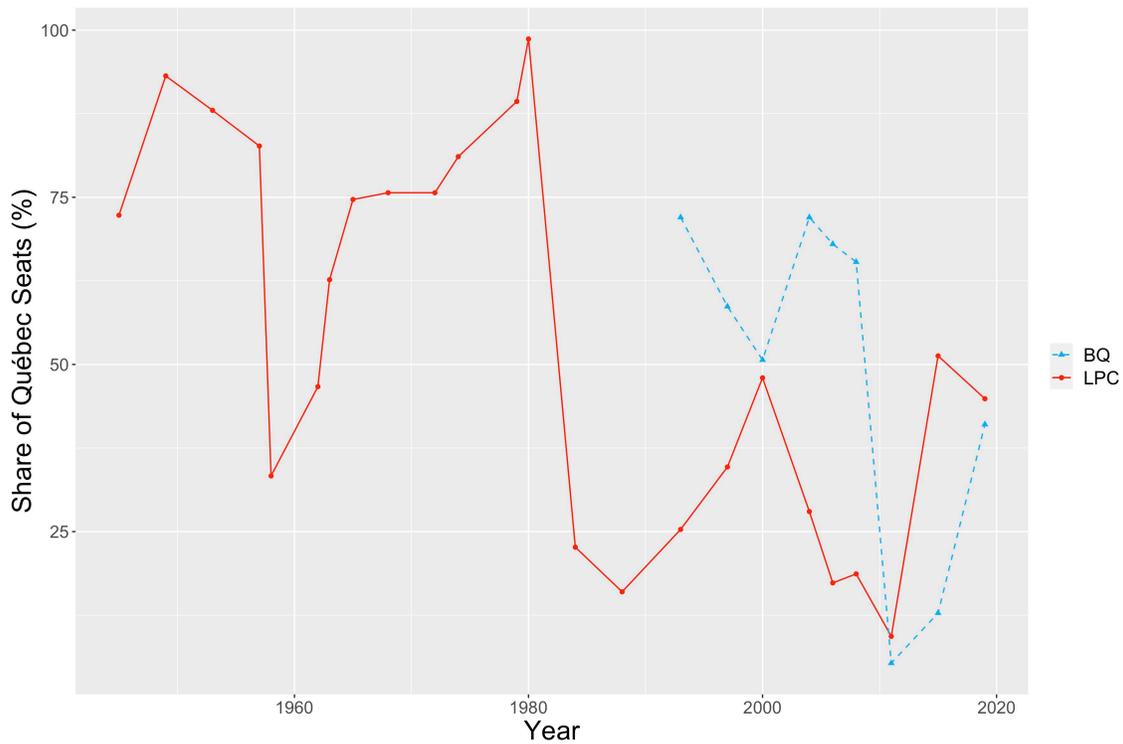


Figure 5.17 BQ and PLQ Seat Share in National Elections, 1945-2019

The 1993 election was the first election that the BQ contested. The BQ had immediate success, winning 72 percent of the province’s seats and, thanks to the presence of the Reform Party, a Western-Canadian-based conservative party that split votes with the PCs, the BQ emerged as the Official Opposition in the House of Commons.

In contrast to the PQ, the BQ was not initially hampered by the electoral system. Table 5.10 lists the BQ’s advantage ratio in each national election in which it competed. In general, a single-member district electoral system is likely not to overly disadvantage secessionist parties because their support is, almost by definition, geographically concentrated.

Election Year	<u>Advantage Ratio</u>
	BQ
1993	1.36
1997	1.37
2000	1.18
2004	1.41
2006	1.58
2008	1.59
2011	0.22
2015	0.63
2019	1.23

	<u>Advantage Ratio</u>
<u>Election Year</u>	<u>BQ</u>
MEAN	1.17

Table 5.10 National Advantage Ratio

From 1993 to 2011, the electoral system rewarded the BQ by over-rewarding their votes with seats. The 1993 election demonstrates this well. The BQ won 13.5 percent of national vote—49.3 percent of the vote in Québec—and elected 54 MPs. The key figure, of course, is the 49 percent showing in the only province where they competed: High-forties usually produces large seat majorities in the FPTP system. The Progressive Conservatives, in contrast, who ran candidates in every province, won 16 percent of the national vote but the geographical spread of their vote saw them elect only two MPs.

In 2011, the BQ began to suffer a punishment from the electoral system where the 23.4 percent of the party’s provincial vote (six percent nationally) only resulted in the election of four MPs. Both the BQ and the LPC collapsed in Québec in the 2011 election, the result of the insurgent New Democratic Party (NDP) that, for the first time in the party’s history, punctured the Québec party system, winning 43 percent of the popular vote in the province and electing 59 of the province’s 75 MPs. The decline of the BQ and LPC came at the benefit of the NDP, whose policies were ideologically proximate to Québec voters’ regarding “state interventionism, moral liberalism, political disaffection and regional alienation” (Fournier *et al.* 2013, 31). The NDP further benefited from the incorporation of soft-nationalists and the immense popularity of their leader, Jack Layton (Fournier *et al.* 2013).

Because the BQ’s electoral fortunes are entirely dependent on Québec, the party is sensitive to insurgents—such as the NDP in 2011—and the success of the Liberal Party. When the NDP or LPC threatens the Bloc’s position as the dominant party in Québec, the Bloc faces electoral setbacks and, unlike the national parties, cannot count on geographical pockets of support (e.g., Atlantic Canada for the LPC) outside the province.

Québec is consistent with the findings in Chapter Four that PR systems offer no electoral advantage compared to FPTP systems in national elections for two reasons. First, the FPTP system advantages the secessionist party to a greater degree than would a PR system. The system encourages the local-concentration of votes such that a regionally-concentrated secessionist party can be over-rewarded in a FPTP system than they would be in a PR system (Cairns 1968).

Numerous parties throughout Canadian history have taken advantage of the local concentration of support to win respectable parliamentary representation (e.g., the Progressives; Social Credit; the CCF). But the BQ benefits from local concentration more so than did the insurgent parties of the past. The BQ is over-represented in the House of Commons because the FPTP system combines with the fact that Québec is the second largest province by representation in the House of Commons. Local concentration, in a large region, then allows the BQ to elect a sizeable, often unignorable, parliamentary delegation even if they do not have the ability to form government.

Second, the PC example indicates how the electoral system can interact with the incorporation of the nationalist issue. The incorporation of a latent, semi-sovereignist, pro-increased-autonomy section of the electorate provides the party that incorporates the cleavage with a sizeable base that serves to over-reward their vote share. In contrast, once this cleavage emerges into its own proper secessionist party, the secessionist party then takes advantage of the electoral system. In this respect, one electoral system does not provide secessionist parties with more electoral success because their mechanisms are different: PR systems facilitate representation, FPTP systems provide greater electoral rewards.

5.3.4 Autonomy

5.3.4.1 The Effects of Autonomy: Subnational Entry

Chapter Three demonstrated that the effects of regional autonomy on secessionist party entrance vary by electoral arena. Autonomy has no effect on subnational entry but higher levels of autonomy suppress the likelihood of a secessionist party emerging at the national level. I argue, counter the findings in Chapter Three, that Québec's underlying level of regional autonomy was crucial for the emergence of the PQ. These findings point to problems with the Regional Authority Index's (RAI) self-rule measure. First, the cross-sectional measurement is not necessarily relevant given that people in one region do not generally compare their level of self-rule with members with regions of another country—autonomy is mostly relative within national contexts. Second, the RAI measure is not calibrated finely enough to measure regional *demands* for autonomy and national *responses* to these demands.

In face of an increasingly centralizing federal government in the post-WWII era, the Québec provincial government launched the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Constitutional

Problems (the Tremblay Commission). The Commission's concluded that Québec would benefit from greater fiscal autonomy, more equal governmental co-ordination, the principal of subsidiarity, and that the province should be in control of its constitutional jurisdictions (Government of Québec 1956). The belief that the then contemporary constitutional arrangements were under-serving Québec were a constant theme in Quiet Revolution Québec. The provincial political parties developed ardently nationalist positions towards the federal government, demanding increased autonomy.

For René Lévesque, the only way in which to overcome this impasse was through political independence—but with an economic union with the rest of Canada. Because Québec and Canada were already economically integrated, an independent Québec would, eventually, have to re-build this economic relationship. This “sovereignty-*association*” proposal allowed Lévesque to put forward a plan for independence that, on the one hand, maximized jurisdictional autonomy by assuming all policy competencies and, on the other hand, mitigated economic costs by maintaining close economic relationship with Canada (Lévesque 1968 [2016]).

Demands for greater political autonomy, beyond what the PLQ was willing to demand, were crucial for the foundation of the MSA and what would become the PQ. Although attempts had been made to patriate the Constitution, and powers such as a separate Québec Pension Plan, had been conferred to the province, for the MSA/PQ the existing constitution did not provide Québec with enough powers, nor did it recognize Québec's distinctiveness.³⁵ Moreover, even though the Canadian provinces had a relatively high degree of autonomy (Cairns 1971), the increasing role of the state in both cultural matters and provincial jurisdiction following the end of WWII made the question of autonomy more salient, which created the conditions for the PQ to argue in favour of both decreased federal involvement in provincial jurisdiction and increased provincial autonomy.

³⁵ Patriation refers to making Canada's constitution wholly 'domestic', that is: not requiring approval from Westminster for constitutional changes.

5.3.4.2 The Effects of Autonomy: National Entry

Chapter Three demonstrated that the likelihood of a secessionist party emerging in national elections is suppressed in regions that have a high level of regional autonomy. Québec aligns with this finding, but there is some nuance involved. I argue that the likelihood of a secessionist party emerging at the national level was suppressed in the 1960s and 1970s for two reasons. First, Québec incrementally increased their policy autonomy in language and immigration in the 1970s, and the federal government was willing to acquiesce to demands for increased autonomy. Second, the PQ's ability to control the secessionist pole subnationally and, at times, set the national agenda, meant that the need for a national secessionist party was suppressed.

Second, the PQ's ability to control the secessionist pole of political competition subnationally and, at times, set the national agenda on Constitutional matters meant that the need for a national-level secessionist party was suppressed. I then argue that constitutional negotiations that took place in the 1980s ultimately changed the incentives for secessionist party entry. The BQ was encouraged to emerge in national elections for three reasons. First, the failure of the federal government to increase their policy autonomy led to a belief that the province was being betrayed by the federal order. Second, there was now a presence of soft-nationalists *within* the governing party at the national level (Conservatives), meaning that the activation of the nationalist sentiment at the national level served as a powder keg. Finally, the BQ was able to emerge more easily because it was formed by disgruntled political entrepreneurs who were already elected legislators.

The first secessionist party that emerged to contest the 1979 federal election (the first federal election following the election of the PQ) had little success, winning less than one percent of the regional vote. Throughout the 1970s, nationalist elites in Québec were reluctant to run in federal elections. For nationalists, the 'national question' was best addressed at the subnational level within Québec's *Assemblée nationale*, particularly given that the Liberal Party of Canada was successful in federal elections in the province. Both the PLQ and PQ had demonstrated that they were capable of acquiring increased policy autonomy in the 1970s—particularly concerning language and immigration—indicating that the federal government was willing to engage with the demands made by the secessionist PQ instead of rejecting them

outright. The conciliatory nature of the federal government suppressed the need for a national-level secessionist party to pressure the federal government.

But the constitutional negotiations of the 1980s were altogether different from the 1970s and forced the hand of the nationalist movement. Following the defeat of the ‘Yes’ side in the 1980 sovereignty-association referendum, the Trudeau federal Liberal government agreed to constitutional reform with the ultimate goal being a patriated constitution—one where changes to the constitution could occur domestically instead of requiring the approval in the UK. Negotiations occurred in early November, 1981. Now a part of Canadian folklore, a late-night agreement was reached regarding an amending formula and the inclusion of the notwithstanding clause between the federal justice minister, Jean Chrétien, and delegates of Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Newfoundland. Lévesque was not privy to these negotiations as he had left the Ottawa Convention Centre to stay at a hotel in Hull, across the Ottawa River in Québec. Representatives of all the provinces—except Québec—were informed of the late-night developments. A stunned Lévesque did not find out that an agreement had been reached until the following morning. The episode came to be called the “Night of Long Knives”. Québec, as a result, refused to sign the new constitution (Harder and Patten 2015) and the embers of secessionist sentiment were again available to be reignited.

Attempts to gain Québec’s agreement to the repatriated Constitution continued throughout the 1980s. In general terms, the central state was responding to the demands for autonomy that animate part of the support of the secessionist movement and its political party(ies). Mulroney’s first attempt at constitutional negotiation was the Meech Lake Accord. In exchange for Québec’s agreement to sign the Constitution Act, 1982, the Accord granted Québec increased power regarding immigration, the guarantee of three Supreme Court justices from Québec, limitations on federal spending power in provincial jurisdiction, a veto, and would be constitutionally recognized as a distinct society. But tensions within the Conservatives’ soft-nationalist wing began to emerge following the release of a report from a party committee that offered a substantial number of amendments to the Accord, including a clause that suggested that the distinct society clause did not confer new powers to Québec.

The report incensed Québec nationalists. On May 21, Lucien Bouchard, the federal environment minister, tendered his resignation from the federal cabinet. His five-page letter of

resignation argued that he “could not accept the [...] committee [...], since the recommendations would make [Québec’s] five conditions devoid of all meaning” (Monahan 1991, 196). Once out of Cabinet, Bouchard formed the *Bloc québécois* (BQ) as a party to sit in the national parliament and contest national elections. Bouchard found support from a few sitting Members of Parliament from Québec; from both the Conservative and Liberal parties. The Meech Lake Accord ultimately failed (Cairns 1988), giving the autonomist project yet one more piece of evidence that increased autonomy was not possible within the Canadian Constitutional order.

Where constitutional struggle and demands for increased autonomy led to the emergence of the PQ in the late 1960s, the PQ suppressed the need for a national-level secessionist party during that period because they controlled the centre-periphery cleavage unilaterally. Because the PQ was in government, their voice was loud enough to represent the secessionist cause. Second, constitutional negotiation in the 1970s demonstrated that the federal government was not unwilling to acquiesce to certain policy demands. In contrast, the constitutional negotiations of the 1980s left Québec nationalists embittered. Crucially, the belief that Québec had twice been humiliated by the federal government was amplified by the presence of nationalists *within* the government caucus and cabinet.

The emergence of the BQ was essentially independent of subnational considerations. The BQ emerged not as the national wing of the PQ but as a different entity with shared organizational links with the PQ. Lucien Bouchard acted pre-emptively, sensing the political opportunity and a turning tide in Québec that was becoming increasingly hostile towards the federal government. The BQ’s formation as a break-away group from the LPC and PCs meant that the party had 10 MPs by the time they contested their first election—the BQ was already a viable political party before even contesting an election. The party also benefited from the fact that the PQ was not in government at the time the party was formed, allowing the BQ to take the mantle as the most powerful voice for the secessionist cause.

That it took many elections for a national-level secessionist party to emerge accords with the negative relationship between autonomy and entrance identified in Chapter Three. Reaction to the Meech Lake Accord served as an exogenous shock to the Québec political system. The refusal to *neither* recognize Québec as a distinct society *nor* increase the province’s autonomy

left nationalists bitter and now of the belief that only way Québec could obtain its desired level of policy autonomy was through independence.

In sum, the nationalist pole was effectively managed by the PQ at the subnational level and the subnational legislature provided the PQ with the ability to both set the electoral agenda and demand increased levels of policy autonomy. Once Québec's constitutional status became a national, politicized issue around which Québec twice felt humiliated, the incentive to enter a political party in national elections was too strong to resist. With growing anti-Canadian sentiment in Québec, the BQ sensed the opportunity to make its *entrée* at the national level.

5.3.4.3 The Effects of Autonomy: Subnational Success

Chapter Four demonstrated that secessionist party success is uninfluenced by the level of regional autonomy in both subnational and national elections. Québec shows why this is not necessarily the case. In contrast to Chapter Four, I argue that demands for autonomy were crucial for the success of the PQ but, more specifically, it was a *lack of change* in the province's level of regional autonomy that facilitated the support of the PQ. The federal government's inability to secure increased power for Québec in the 1980s and 1990s, although not decreasing the province's level of autonomy, left nationalists bitter and greatly increased support for independence.

Following their election in 1976, the PQ had been mobilizing for an eventual referendum on sovereignty-association. In May, 1979, following the election of the Clark minority PC government in Ottawa that seemed to offer ideal conditions where the federal government had little representation from Québec, Lévesque announced that a referendum would take place in the spring of 1980. However, as noted above, the PC government fell and the Liberal Party of Canada was returned to power before the referendum. In the lead up to the 1980 referendum, the Liberals promised to Québec the patriation of the Canadian constitution as well as a re-configuration of the federal compact.

The 'No' (unionist) side ultimately won the 1980 referendum with 60 percent of the vote (85 percent turnout) forcing the governing Liberals to deliver on those promises. But the failure to win the 1980 referendum did not hurt the PQ electorally. The 1981 Québec election saw the

re-election of the PQ, increasing their vote share by 7.9 percent, electing nine more MNAs than in 1976.

The period of constitutional frustration that culminated in the night of the long knives in 1981 ultimately left Québec outside the patriated constitution. The PQ was unable to mobilize these frustrations with the federal government to their electoral advantage. The PQ had been in government for two long terms, ruling from 1976-1985, and had lost the 1980 referendum. The combination of the referendum defeat and the constitutional impasse left Lévesque disillusioned with sovereignty project. Lévesque had come to endorse the incorporation of soft-nationalists into the Mulroney Progressive Conservatives at the federal level. For Lévesque, the ability to increase the province's autonomy from the federal government in exchange for the province's consent to the constitution served as *beau risque* ('a good risk'). The *beau risque* strategy fractured the PQ with ten members resigning from caucus, seven of which were cabinet members. Lévesque, having led the party since 1968 and having been Premier for 11 years, announced his retirement in June, 1985 (Le Devoir 1985).

The PQ suffered electorally following Lévesque's retirement. The PLQ were returned to office winning 56 percent of the vote and 81 percent of the assembly seats. But the election of the PLQ in 1985 and 1989 was not enough to suppress the secessionist threat. The PLQ, under the leadership of Robert Bourassa, was now engaged in constitutional negotiation with the Mulroney PCs. Figure 5.18 plots support for independence/sovereignty-association in Québec from 1988 to 2021 and demonstrates that support for independence increased in the late 1980s, as constitutional negotiations began to founder.

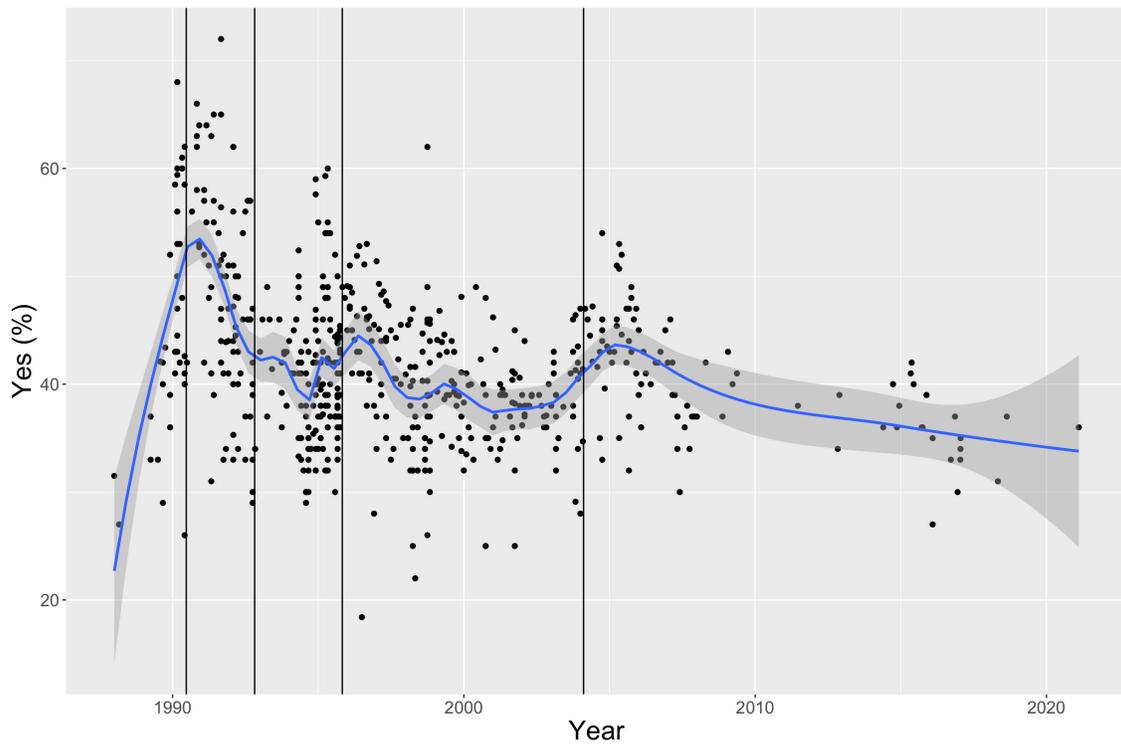


Figure 5.18 Support for Independence, 1988-2021

NOTE: Data were collected from Claire Durand’s publicly available data repository of polls measuring support for independence/sovereignty-association from 1962-2008. I have supplemented the data by adding Léger and CROP polls for the 2008-2021 period. Data are loess-smoothed.

The first vertical line in Figure 5.18 represents the day on which the Meech Lake Accord failed to receive unanimous consent in the Manitoba legislature, effectively ending the Meech Lake process. Support for independence/sovereignty-association had been increasing throughout the Meech Lake process and continued to increase following the failure of the Accord. That support for independence increased during a protracted period of constitutional struggle points to two things. The rest of Canada’s hesitance to increase Québec’s policy autonomy and recognize the province as a distinct nation demonstrates that support for independence reflects that voters are sensitive to *demands* for autonomy and whether these demands are unmet by the federal government. The failure of the Meech Lake Accord evidently did not increase the province’s autonomy but neither did it reduce it—but the increase in support for independence shows that voters reacted to the constitutional negotiations and likely felt aggrieved.

Mulroney was not yet finished with his constitutional project and drove a process that produced the Charlottetown Accord, to be subject to a national referendum, as yet another way in which to obtain Québec’s consent to the Charter of the Rights and Freedoms. Charlottetown

“proposed an increase of powers for the central government through the constitutionalization of its spending power” and also “included a ‘Canada clause’ that gave equal weight to the distinct society clause [and] the equality of provinces principle” (Gagnon 2009, 142).

A national referendum was held to approve the Charlottetown Accord in October, 1992. 54.3 percent of voters voted against the Accord with 56.7 percent of Quebecers voting against the Accord. The second vertical line in Figure 5.18 demonstrates the day on which the national referendum was held. Support for independence was on the decline compared to its post-Meech Lake peak.

The PQ leveraged constitutional frustration to their advantage. The party’s 1994 electoral platform explicitly stated that “la non ratification de l’Accord du lac Meech, qui représentait un minimum dans la foulée des revendications historiques du Québec, et le référendum de 1992 sur l’entente de Charlottetown ont consacré l’échec du fédéralisme canadien” (PQ 1994, 3).³⁶ The party further promised that, once elected, a PQ government would “dans les meilleurs délais” (‘as soon as possible’) hold a referendum on Québec independence.

In the 1994 election, the PQ benefited from a PLQ that had been in office since 1985, perhaps inducing voter fatigue with the governing party. Although the PLQ was now under the leadership of Daniel Johnson Jr., the PLQ could not escape the reality that Bourassa’s negotiations during the Charlottetown Accord had left his caucus internally divided and allowed the PQ to argue that he had been weak during the negotiations: he not only failed to defend Québec’s historical demands for autonomy but further failed to secure the minimum guarantees that were a part of the Meech Lake Accord. The PQ ultimately won the 1994 election, winning 45 percent of the vote and 61 percent of the assembly seats. Frustrated demands for autonomy were an incontrovertible influence on these electoral gains.

As their platform promised, the PQ scheduled a referendum on Québec’s independence for October, 1995. Unlike the 1980 sovereignty-association referendum, the 1995 referendum was decided on a knife’s edge with 50.5 percent of voters voting ‘No’ (unionist) and 49.4 percent of voters voting ‘Yes’, a difference of only 54,000 votes. The third vertical line in Figure 5.18

³⁶ “The failure of the Meech Lake Accord, that represented a minimum of Québec’s historic claims, and the 1992 Charlottetown Accord have confirmed the failure of Canadian federalism” (translation my own).

represents the day on which the 1995 referendum occurred. Unfortunately for those running the ‘Yes’ campaign, support for independence continued to increase *after* the day of the referendum. The thin margin of victory demonstrated that a significant portion of the Québec electorate was unsympathetic to the Canadian state. Although they lost the referendum, the PQ was returned to office in 1998 winning majority government.

5.3.4.4 Recapitulation

Subnational struggles for autonomy were crucial for the success of the PQ. At the outset, the PQ’s primary goal under René Lévesque was sovereignty-association that would have provided the province with political independence couched within an economic union within Canada. The failure of the 1980 referendum led to the patriation of the constitution—but again Québec’s demands for more recognition and regional power remained.

The failure of the Meech Lake Accord in 1990 left an indelible mark: the BQ emerged to contest national elections and support for secession increased. The BQ then leveraged both the electoral system and its regional defence of Québec to great success (discussed below). The failure of Meech compounded with the failure of the Charlottetown Accord. Following the failure of the Charlottetown Accord in 1993, the PQ was returned to office in 1994 with a large majority. In this respect, although Meech and Charlottetown did not change the latent level of Québec’s autonomy, reaction to it was enough to propel the secessionist forces.

It is, then, not entirely correct to say that autonomy has no effect on success for secessionist parties subnationally. The PQ, like the *JxSí* in the Catalan case, mobilized the failure of Mulroney government to grant the province increased autonomy to their advantage by winning government in the immediate elections following the failure of both accords.

The PQ has had two periods of great success. The first came their ascension to power in 1976 and their subsequent re-election in 1981. The second followed the failed constitutional negotiations of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The PQ won successive majority governments in 1994 and 1998 but has been declining since, having only formed government once: a minority government in 2012. Decisions by federal governments to refuse to re-open the constitutional debate, or adopt a more conciliatory approach towards Québec (Harmes 2007), reflect the extent to which secessionist party success is a reaction to decisions taken by the central state. With no

constitutional crisis, and no belief that the Québec nation has been slighted, support for the PQ is limited.

5.3.4.5 Autonomy and the Success of the BQ

The 1993 federal election would be the most successful election the BQ contested, winning nearly 50 percent of the provincial vote and electing 54 of the province's MPs. claims for greater autonomy were both directly responsible for the party's entry and its success. Provincial frustration at the federal government's failure to include Québec's signature on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and perceived English-Canadian hostility towards Québec, saw support for independence increase rapidly in the early 1990s, giving the elites that formed the BQ the incentive to capitalize on this resentment.

Lucien Bouchard, party founder and leader, had left the BQ in 1996 to become leader of the PQ and subsequently Premier of Québec. Gilles Duceppe succeeded Bouchard as permanent leader of the BQ in March, 1997. The 1997 Canadian election occurred just three months later, leaving the BQ with little time to prepare (Gagnon and Hérivault 2004). Bouchard resigned as Premier in 2001, citing his "incapacity to revive the sovereigntist flame" since taking office in 1996 and that Quebecers' had a "muted reaction to federal intrusions into [Québec's] jurisdictions [...] as a sign that his efforts seemed to have been in vain" (Gagnon and Hérivault 2004, 145).

Bouchard's belief that the secessionist flame was dwindling was not without merit. Figure 5.18 showed that support for secessionist was declining in the late 1990s. Yet the BQ remained a respectable political party, winning 40 percent of the provincial vote and 38 of the province's 75 seats in 2000.

The 2004 election would see the BQ gain considerably thanks to a national political scandal. Following the 1995 referendum, the Chrétien federal Liberals had begun a policy of promoting Canada within Québec. In 2004, Canada's Auditor General, Sheila Fraser, tabled a report that detailed considerable issues with the programme—notably that public funds were being misused by Liberal-friendly advertising agencies that provided little service for the funds received. Fraser found that more than \$100 million had been paid to these agencies. For Québec

nationalists, Fraser's report demonstrated both the corruption of the LPC and the unwanted influence of the federal government in Québec society.

The fourth vertical line in Figure 5.18 represents the day on which Fraser's report was tabled. Fraser's report, and the subsequent Gomery Inquiry, resulted in an increase in support for independence. As a result of the sponsorship scandal, the BQ matched its success in the 1993 election—winning 48.9 percent of the provincial vote and electing 54 MPs.

With the election of the Harper federal Conservatives came a more conciliatory approach towards Québec. In 2006, the Harper government signed an agreement with the government of Québec which gave the province a unique voice in UNESCO, agreed to increase federal transfers to Québec, and recognized Québec as a distinct nation within a united Canada. This conciliation towards Québec, where provincial jurisdictions were to be respected and that the federal government recognized Québec's cultural uniqueness, was a liability for the BQ (Bélanger and Nadeau 2009). Yet this conciliation did not have an adverse effect on the BQ.

In the 2008 election, the BQ attacked Harper's 'open federalism' as merely symbolic representation. The Conservatives' conciliatory approach did not ultimately provide electoral dividends. Instead, the Bloc lost only three percent of the vote compared to 2006 and elected three less MPs and remained, by a considerable margin, the most dominant party in the province with the Liberals forming the second largest block in the province having elected 14 MPs. In that regard, the conciliatory approach towards Québec did not block the BQ from being successful.

In more recent years, there has been almost no change in real autonomy and the BQ's demands for increased autonomy have remained fairly constant (notably that the province should be exempt from federal multicultural policy, that the province should be in control of telecommunications, and that the *Charte* should apply to federal institutions in the province). The BQ's success, then, has varied. The Bloc relies on multi-party fractionalization of the federalist vote between the New Democratic Party, Liberals, and the Conservatives. When the federalist vote is not fractionalized, it can reward the Liberals or, as in 2011, the NDP whose conciliatory stance towards Québec saw the party win 42.9 percent of the provincial vote and elected 59 of the province's 75 MPs. The Bloc was reduced to just four MPs, one less than the Conservatives.

In summary, the Bloc emerged in an era of protracted constitutional negotiation and capitalized on rising pro-independence sentiment in the province. On the one hand, the late emergence of a viable secessionist party illustrates the depressing effect that self-rule has on the emergence of a national-level secessionist party. The ability of both the PQ and PLQ to incrementally increase the province's autonomy and engage in constitutional negotiation stifled the need for a national party to press for increased policy autonomy.

On the other hand, what ultimately led to the emergence of the BQ was not necessarily that the province had an insufficient level of autonomy, but rather that provincial demands for autonomy went unmet from the federal government. As a result, the effects of autonomy on secessionist party emergence are not linear *per se* but instead reflect the give-and-take of constitutional negotiations, where decisions taken by the central government that are perceived to offend the subnational region risk focusing the secessionist movement, incentivizing the emergence of a secessionist party.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter took the mechanisms identified in chapters three and four and applied them to three cases: Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland. In so doing, the chapter traced the effects that these mechanisms had on the emergence and success of secessionist parties in these regions in both subnational and national elections.

Both the Catalan and Québec cases demonstrate that the presence of a regional language facilitated the emergence of secessionist parties. The protection of the French language was more important for the emergence of Québécois secessionist parties than it was in Catalonia, but the presence of the Catalan language facilitated the eventual proliferation of secessionist parties in the 21st century. The effects of language on success are mixed, particularly because the Catalan linguistic cleavage was initially controlled by the non-secessionist CiU and that policies protecting French in Québec were implemented by non-secessionist parties.

Migration also has differing effects between Catalonia and Québec. While support for secessionist parties has increased alongside the growth of the foreign-born population in Catalonia, increased migration does not explain secessionist party support nor Catalan public opinion regarding immigrant integration. In Québec, the language-immigration nexus was

apparent in the PQ's early formation. Ensuring that immigrants—and their children—integrated into the French linguistic majority was of utmost importance for the PQ. The effects of immigration on success, however, are mixed. I argued that the way in which unionist parties engaged with immigration in Québec reflects that the immigration-language nexus exists both within and outside demands for secessionism.

Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland use different electoral systems which allowed for some illumination as to how these systems affected secessionist party entry and success. The cases conform to emergence patterns identified in Chapter Three. The PR system allowed a relatively easier emergence of Catalan secessionist parties, as compared with the majoritarian Scottish and Québec cases. The plurality system in Québec, in part, explains why secessionist parties took time to emerge: the costs of entry imposed by the system were too high. In Scotland, more recently, the PR aspect of the mixed member plurality (MMP) system induces parties to change their orientation regarding constitutional issues.

The three cases likewise demonstrate why the electoral system has no effect nationally. Secessionist parties in Catalonia emerged in national elections despite the majoritarian tendencies that the national PR system imposes, reflecting, instead, an upstream effect. In both Québec and Scotland, secessionist parties emerged in spite of the FPTP system, reflecting demands for increased autonomy.

The cases further demonstrate why the electoral system has no effect on secessionist party success. In Spanish elections, the low legal threshold is misleading, instead imposing a high *de facto* threshold. In both Canada and the UK, Québec and Scottish secessionist parties demonstrate that plurality systems offer considerable rewards for geographically-concentrated minority parties.

My analysis of political autonomy in the three regions bring to light the extent to which the Regional Authority Index is insensitive to demands and changes in self-rule. On the one hand, the Québec case is in-line with the findings in Chapter Three: a high degree of self-rule can suppress the emergence of a secessionist party nationally. On the other hand, the three cases demonstrate that demands for increased autonomy and decisions taken by the central state regarding these decisions can serve as focusing events for secessionist parties, encouraging their emergence and success. Demands and constitutional negotiations might ultimately fail. These

failures might not lead to a change in the level of self-rule but represent, instead, that the central government is hesitant or unwilling to transfer increased power to the subnational region. As a result, this creates an environment in which the secessionist party can return to their constituents and argue that the differences between the substate and the state are insurmountable or, in the case of Québec and Catalonia, that they were aggrieved by the central state.

This chapter focused on four central findings from chapters three and four and added context-specific nuance. First, language was an important factor for the emergence of secessionist parties in Québec and aided in the formation of secessionist parties in Catalonia once the electorate had polarized. Second, the effects of migrant stock on secessionist party support are idiosyncratic and reflect the way in which unionist parties interact with the language-migration nexus. Third, the effects of the electoral system are most prominent in subnational elections. Finally, autonomy strongly affects secessionist party entrance and success.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This work has demonstrated that secessionist parties gained support since the end of WWII and have become important parties in the contemporary era. Secessionist parties now average 25 percent of the regional vote in both subnational and national elections. They are no longer niche, peripheral parties that the central state can ignore. Instead, their presence signals that the central state has to engage with the territorial cleavage. To be sure, not all secessionist movements are equal. Some are strong, as in Greenland, moderate, as in the Basque Country of Spain, declining (Québec), and weak (Bavaria).

This work is structured around four research questions, as is most of this concluding chapter. The chapter concludes with a discussion the study's limitations and with promising avenues for future research.

6.1 What Factors Determine the Emergence of Secessionist Parties?

Chapter Three illustrated two key findings concerning the emergence of secessionist parties. First when defined as the first election in which a secessionist party (or parties) appeared on the ballot, most parties emerged in the first possible election following WWII, the restoration of democracy, or following the creation of regional parliaments. However, failure to emerge immediately does not preclude future emergence. Secessionist parties in Québec, for example, took some time to emerge and secessionist movements in the Åland Islands, Veneto, and Western Australia are relatively new, indicating that the passage of time might not limit the emergence of new parties.

Second, the factors that determine the emergence of secessionist parties vary by the electoral arena in which the party is emerging. In subnational elections, the presence of a regional language, larger populations, and PR systems strongly encourage the emergence of viable secessionist parties. In national elections, influences on secessionist party entrance are more muted. The presence of a regional language encourages the emergence of secessionist party emergence and higher degrees of regional autonomy decrease the likelihood of secessionist party emergence across these models. Only geographic area affects secessionist party emergence when emergence is restricted to winning legislative representation.

6.2 Are the Factors that Determine the Emergence of Secessionist Parties Symmetric Across Electoral Arenas?

The factors that influence the emergence of secessionist parties differ across electoral arenas. The electoral system only affects entrance in subnational elections, as is also the case for population. The effects of regional autonomy are specific to national elections.

Chapter Five, the case studies of Catalonia, Québec, and Scotland, shows the extent to which the structures of emergence vary by arena. Catalonia and Québec illustrate how language structured secessionist party entrance. In Catalonia, language does not explain the emergence of secessionist parties but it facilitated their entrance once the electorate became polarized. In Québec, language was instrumental for the emergence of the PQ and, likewise, the presence of the French language encouraged the emergence of the BQ in 1993 although it was not the primary reason why the party emerged. Scotland, absent a regional language, shows that the presence of a regional language is not a necessary condition for secessionist party entry.

The cases further show why the effects of the electoral system are concentrated in subnational elections. The PR system's low threshold combines with an increase in district magnitude in Catalan elections, facilitating the emergence of secessionist parties. In Québec, the plurality system imposed a high threshold for entry, likely suppressing secessionist party entrance until the late-1960s. Scotland is deviant in this regard because elections to the Scottish Parliament were not instituted until 1999, when the SNP was already the sole secessionist party nationally.

In national elections, Catalonia shows why PR systems do not facilitate party emergence when compared to plurality systems. Although the national PR system has a low *de jure* threshold, the threshold is misleading and is, in fact, large *de facto*. The majoritarian tendencies of the national PR system serve to make the emergence of new parties difficult. In Québec, the high thresholds imposed by the FPTP system and the incorporation of the Québec cleavage by the LPC served to limit the emergence of the BQ. But, like Scotland, the BQ eventually emerged regardless of the threshold implied by the system.

The cases pay special attention to autonomy—a measure that was only significant in national elections in the Chapter Three analysis. All three of the cases indicated that demands for autonomy, and central state reaction to these demands, were crucial for the emergence of

secessionist parties. In Catalan subnational elections, secessionist parties proliferated with decisions taken by the central state to restrict Catalan autonomy, the PQ was formed in an era where Québec was quickly increasing its policy autonomy, and the SNP emerged explicitly to seek the creation of a regional parliament in the mid-1930s.

Why it took 23 years following the election of the PQ for a viable secessionist party to emerge at the national level in Québec best reflects the negative association between self-rule and party emergence. Both the secessionist and unionist parties' ability to increase policy autonomy subnationally limited the need for a national-level secessionist party. However, a national-level party emerged when the central state refused to acquiesce to the policy demands made by the province. The emergence of national-level secessionist parties in Catalonia, in contrast, followed an upstream effect, reflecting subnational emergence and demands for autonomy. Scotland is, again, the deviant case given that there was no assembly in which to compete until 1999.

6.3 What Factors Determine the Success of Secessionist Parties?

Subnationally, secessionist parties are more successful in regions with a distinct regional language, in PR systems, and as the migrant share of the national population increases. These parties are *less* successful in more populous regions. Self-rule, geographic contiguity, and the percentage change in the national GDP has no systematic effect on success in the cross-national regression analysis. I further found that there was a significant interaction between migrant share and the presence of a regional language such that secessionist parties in linguistically-distinct regions are more successful than parties in non-distinct regions as the migrant share of the national population increases.

Nationally, secessionist parties are more successful in larger geographic areas, in non-contiguous regions, and alongside increases in the migrant share of the national population. Unlike subnational elections, the language-migration interaction is statistically insignificant.

6.4 Are the Factors that Determine the Success of Secessionist Parties Symmetric Across Electoral Arenas?

Like emergence, the effects of secessionist party success vary based on the arena in which the parties compete. The case studies demonstrate why the mechanisms differ across electoral arenas. The presence of the French language in Québec is crucial for explaining the success of the PQ. However, the extent to which the unionist parties engage with the language issue in the province limits the PQ's ability to own the language issue. Nevertheless, the PQ's electoral clientele is overwhelmingly Francophone, bordering on being a necessary condition for voting for the party. Language does not explain national success for the BQ because the linguistic issue is equally incorporated by the LPC and, at times, by insurgent parties like the NDP, depriving the BQ of being the sole voice of the linguistic minority.

In Catalonia, the effect that language has on secessionist party success is blunted because Catalan is a minority language both within Spain and Catalonia. Subnationally, the linguistic cleavage rewards secessionist parties because the legislative representation given to the non-Barcelona constituencies increases. Nationally, the non-Barcelona provinces elect fewer legislators, making the election of secessionist parties more difficult. Barcelona, where support for secessionism is lowest—as is the number of Catalan speakers—ironically encourages the representation of secessionist parties because the low threshold acts as intended.

Secessionist parties are more successful subnationally under PR because of the system's very proportionality. The low thresholds associated with PR systems facilitate winning legislative representation. However, the proportionality that rewards legislative representation also makes it difficult for parties to form single-party government. In contrast, FPTP systems can, and do, reward parties with single-party majority governments without winning a majority of the votes. Québec demonstrates that a FPTP system might initially inhibit the growth of a secessionist party but once the party surpasses the threshold, it can reap substantial rewards that are direct result of the system's mistranslation of votes to seats.

PR systems do not offer greater rewards than plurality systems in national elections because the rewards the systems offer varies. PR systems facilitate legislative representation but the rewards of plurality systems are larger. Secessionist parties in Catalonia are encouraged to combine into electoral lists in order to maximize their electoral gains. In Canada and the UK, in

contrast, the FPTP can mistranslate votes into seats in ways that are beneficial for secessionist parties. Simply put, PR systems might make winning representation easier, but FPTP offer greater rewards for regionally-concentrated parties.

The cases also illustrate that national reactions to regional demands for increased autonomy can play a significant role in secessionist party support both subnationally and nationally. In Scotland, devolution empowered the SNP with the opportunity to win regional government and mobilize their subnational performance upstream to Westminster. In Québec, the effects of autonomy were more muted subnationally as the PLQ sought increased policy autonomy, refusing to allow the PQ to own the autonomist issue. Nationally, demands and reactions to autonomy were reflected in both the emergence and success of the BQ. In Catalonia, the central state's decision concerning Catalan autonomy directly led to the polarization of the electorate, dramatically increasing the success of secessionist parties in the region. The common theme regarding autonomy points to one key concern: scholars need to focus more on *demands* for autonomy and the central state's *reactions* to these demands in lieu of a static, institutional measurement of regional autonomy.

6.5 Limitations of the Project

While great care has been taken to properly model secessionist party entry and success, I would be remiss to not mention four primary limitations of this work. First is the employed economic indicator (national level GDP). The economic coefficient in the success models is zero, indicating no effect between economic performance and secessionist party support. The case studies, notably Québec and Scotland, indicate that secessionist parties might be influenced by political economic considerations. The nationalist movement in Québec was greatly influenced by the Francophone-Anglophone economic gap and the SNP signaled their project was economically viable through a nationalistic claim regarding oil in the North Sea. Literature on the Catalan independence movement indicates that there exists a relationship between the economy and support for secessionism (Hiero and Queralt 2020).

On the one hand, the effects of the economy might be idiosyncratic to regions. On the other hand, the effects of *national* level variables might suffer from validity concerns because the substate's *regional* economy might be more important. The collection of region-specific

economic indicators is difficult: GDP, regional unemployment, and monetary/fiscal data do not form stable, consistent time-series across the regions. However, an integration of these data might better illuminate the extent to which regional economic performance conditions secessionist party emergence and success.

The second limitation concerns the lack of dynamism for the mechanisms identified in the emergence chapter. The presence of a regional language, area size, geographic contiguity, and (generally) the electoral system are static measures. Population and self-rule are fixed and (for the most part) vary only slightly. The dynamic indicators, migrant stock and GDP, might play a role in the emergence of secessionist parties but their time series are problematic such that including migrant stock captures only 48 percent of the viable emergences. The lack of dynamism also extends to the models concerning success. Although the models are random effects and include dynamics indicators such as GDP and migrant stock, there is no disguising the fact that many of the factors in the success models account for general propensities but not dynamics.

The third limitation concerns issues surrounding regional autonomy. The endogenous possibility of self-rule remains unaddressed. While the literature treats self-rule as part of a causal process affecting the support of secessionist/regionalist parties, it is likewise possible that the presence of the party affects self-rule. The case studies demonstrate that the direction of causality between self-rule and support is mixed. There also exists measurement issues with the Regional Authority Index's (RAI) self-rule measurement. On the one hand, the cases reveal the extent to which *conflict* over regional demands for autonomy is critical for the emergence and success of secessionist parties. On the other hand, the self-rule indicator does not take this conflict into account and, instead, reflects the region's latent level of institutional power. In so doing, the RAI overlooks a key component of the centre-periphery cleavage: the *demand* for increased self-rule. As a consequence, the RAI imposes a conservative bias on the estimates.

6.6 Future Research

I have identified three future areas of research for scholars interested in secessionist parties. First, Chapter Four showed that the language-migration interaction is significant in only subnational elections. It might be because the subnational arena is the one in which regional

governments can use their legislative authority in the areas of migration (if they possess these powers). Why the effects of immigration do not condition secessionist party success in *national* elections remains unanswered.

Second, future research ought to incorporate the presence of non-secessionist regionalist parties. While some researchers, notably works done by Massetti and Schakel, do incorporate these parties, the field of study lacks a unified definition of what a ‘regionalist’ or ‘autonomist’ seeking party are. To that extent, the PLQ, in Québec, is clearly a *nationalist* party but their commitment to federalism makes it difficult to qualify the party as a *regional defence* party.

Moreover, incorporating the presence of regional defence parties would allow for the recognition of whether the presence of these parties negatively affects the emergence and success of secessionist parties. That is, regional defence parties might subsume the moderate elements of the regionalist cleavage, tempering demands for independence, stalling (or blocking) the emergence of secessionist parties. It remains to be seen if the rising success of secessionist parties has forced the exit of defence parties, forcing secessionist parties to moderate their views towards independence.

Finally, further attempts to study secessionist party emergence should include ‘multiple failures’. That is, party emergence should not begin and end with the *first* entrance. It is often the case that secessionist movements are home to multiple secessionist parties. *Why* multiple parties form and what influences these formations is crucial for the future study of secessionist movements.

To conclude, secessionist parties are no longer niche, peripheral parties that the central state can ignore. They compete for government, they form government, and their demands for independence are not likely to be ignored by the central state. But the study of secessionist movements remains disjointed. We need to better understand *what* makes secessionist parties emerge, *what* makes secessionist parties successful, and *why* this matters.

Some nations, like Québec and Scotland, are akin to Tantalus. Punished for eternity, Tantalus was forced to stand in shallow water beneath a fruit tree. When he attempted to drink, the water would recede; when he attempted to reach for the fruits, the branch would move beyond his reach. Québec waded into the waters of independence twice, each time success fell out of reach. The first time, in 1980, saw the independence movement unceremoniously lose the

referendum by a twenty percent margin (60 percent voted ‘yes’ and 40 percent voted ‘no’). The second time, in 1995, saw the sovereignist cause lose 50.58-49.42 percent—a difference of only 54,288 votes. Proponents of Scottish independence lost the 2014 referendum by ten percent, with the referendum finishing with 55 percent of voters against independence. For some nations, the opportunity to secede is very real—the issue remains convincing their fellow compatriots to go along with them.

Evidently, not all secessionist movements are cut from the same cloth, nor are they equally successful. For others, such as the Catalans, claims for independence have been harshly repressed, either by the coercive power of the state or the removal of separatist leaders from government (BBC 2019). Other nations, such as in the Basque Country and Northern Ireland—and briefly in Québec—opted for violence before transitioning towards democratic means.

Crucially, however, the increased support for secessionist parties over time ought to signal to national governments that the desire for territorial independence is legitimate and no longer housed within niche political parties, separate from mainstream political opinion.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Selected Parties

Country	Region	Official Name	Approx. English Name
Australia	Western Australia	WAXit Party	--
Belgium	Flanders	Nieuw-Vlaams Alliantie	New Flemish Alliance
		Vlaams Belang Volksunie	Flemish Importance People's Union
		VU-ID	--
		Vlaams Nationaal Verbond	Flemish National Union
Belgium	Wallonia	Union pour la Wallonie	Union for Wallonia
		Union pour la Wallonie France	Union for Wallonia France
		Rassemblement Wallon RWFRBG	Walloon Rally
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Republika Srpska	Sprska Demokratska Stranka	Serb Democratic Party
		Savez Nezavisnih Socijaldemokrata	Serb People's Party
Canada	Alberta	Alberta First	--
		Alberta Independence	
		Separation	
		Western Canada Concept	
Canada	British Columbia	Western Independence	--
Canada	Manitoba	Western Canada Concept	--

Country	Region	Official Name	Approx. English Name
Canada	Saskatchewan	Buffalo	--
		Western Canada Concept	
		Western Independence	
Canada	Québec	Bloc Québécois	Québec Bloc
		Option Nationale	National Option
		Parti nationaliste du Québec	Québec Nationalist Party
		Parti québécois	Québec Party
		Québec solidaire	Québec Solidarity
		Ralliement national	National Rally
		Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale	Rally for National Independence
Union Populaire	Popular Union		
Denmark	Faroe Islands	Loysingarflokkurin	Separatist Party
		Tooveldisflokkurin	Republican Party
		Frælsisfylkingin	Freedom Union
		Fólkaflokkurin	People's Party
		Sjálvstýri	Self-Government Party
		Framsókn	Progress
Denmark	Greenland	Siumut	Forward

Country	Region	Official Name	Approx. English Name
		Inuit Ataqatigiit	Community of the People
		Partii Inuit	Inuit Party
		Partii Naleraq	Point of Orientation
		Nunatta Qitornai	Descendants of our Country
Finland	Åland Islands	Ålands Framtid	Future of Åland
		Corsica Naziunale	National Corsican Party
France	Corsica	Union Naziunale	National Union
		Corsica Libera	Free Corsica
		<i>Various Lists</i>	
Germany	Bavaria	Bayernpartei	Bavaria Party
		Bayerische Staatspartei	Bavarian State Party
		Südtiroler Heimatbund	South Tyrolean Homeland Federation
Italy	Bolzano	Die Freiheitlichen	The Freedomites
		Union für Südtirol	Union for South Tyrol
		Süd-Tiroler Freiheit	South Tyrolean Freedom
Italy	Sicily	Movimento per l'Indipendenza della Sicilia	Movement for the Independence of Sicily
		Siciliani Liberi	Free Sicily
Italy	Veneto	Veneti Indipendenza	Independent Veneto
		Partito Nasional Veneto	National Venetian party
		Indipendenza Noi Veneto	Independence for Veneto

Country	Region	Official Name	Approx. English Name
Serbia	Kosovo	Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës	Democratic League of Kosovo
		Partia Demokratike e Kosovës	Democratic Party of Kosovo
		Lëvizja Kombëtare për Çlirimin e Kosovës	National Movement for the Liberation of Kosovo
		Partia Reformiste ORA	Reformist Party ORA
Serbia	Montenegro	Liberalni savez Crne Gore	Liberal Alliance of Montenegro
		Demokratska partija socijalista Crne Gore	Democratic Party of Socialists
Spain	Andalusia	Liberación Andaluza	Andalusian Liberation
		Frente Andaluz de Liberación	Andalusian Liberation Front
		Nación Andaluza	Andalusian Nation
Spain	Basque Country/Navarre	Eusko Abertzale Ekintza-Accion Nacionalista Vasca	Basque Nationalist Action
		Herri Batasuna	People's Union
		Eusko Alkartasuna	Basque Solidarity
		Eusko Alkartasuna-Euskal Ezkerra	Basque Solidarity-Basque Left
		Euskal Herritarrok	Basque Citizens
		Partido Nacionalista Vasco-Eusko Alkartasuna	Basque Nationalist Party-Basque Solidarity

Country	Region	Official Name	Approx. English Name
		Aralar-Zutik	--
		Aralar	--
		Euskal Herraldeetako Komunista-Partido Communsita de las Tierras Vasca	Basque Communist Party
		Amaiur	--
		Euskal Herria Bildu	Basque Country Gather
Spain	Canary Islands	Congresso Nacional de las Canarias	The National Congress of the Canaries
		Frente Popular de las Islas Canarias	Popular Front for the Canary Islands
		Ahora Canarias	Canary Islands Now
		Pueblo Canario Unido	United Canarian People
		Union del Pueblo Cario	Union of the Canarian People
		Asamblea Canaria	Canarian Assembly
		Canarias Decide	Canaries Decide
JuntsxCanarias	Together for Canaries		
Spain	Catalonia	Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya	Republican Left of Catalonia
		Nacionalistes d'Esquerra	Left Nationalists

Country	Region	Official Name	Approx. English Name
		Bloc d'Esquerra d'Alliberament Nacional	Left Block for National Liberation
		Entesa dels Nacionalistes d'Esquerra	Agreement of the Left Nationalists
		Catalunya Lliure	Free Catalonia
		Estat Catala	Catalan State
		Solidaritat Catalana per la Indipendencia	Catalan Solidarity for Independence
		Reagrupament	Realignment
		ERC-Catalunya Sí	Republican Left-Yes Catalonia
		Candidatura d'Unitat Popular	Popular Unity Candidacy
		Solidaritat Catalana per la Indipendencia	Catalan Solidary for Independence
		Junts pel Sí	Together for Yes
		Junts per Catalunya	Together for Catalonia
		Eusqueurra de Catalunya-Front Electoral Democratic	Catalan Left-Democratic Electoral Front
		Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya-Front National de Catalunya	Republican Left-Catalan National Front

Country	Region	Official Name	Approx. English Name
		Democràcia i Llibertat	Democracy and Liberty
		Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya	Democratic Convergence of Catalonia
		ERC-Sobiranistes	Republican Left-Sovereignists
Spain	Galicia	Bloque Nacional-Popular Gallego	Galician National-Popular Bloc
		Bloque Nacionalista Galego	Galician Nationalist Bloc
		Frente Popular Galega	Galician Popular Front
		Nos-Unidade Popular	We—People's Unity
		Alternativa Galega de Esquerda	Galician Left Alternative
		BNG-Nos	--
UK	Northern Ireland	Anti-Partition	Ourselves
		People's Democracy	
		Sinn Féin	
		Social Democratic and Labour Party	
		Socialist Republican	
		Nationalist	
Republican Labour			

Country	Region	Official Name	Approx. English Name
UK	Scotland	Scottish Greens	--
		Scottish National Party	
		Scottish Socialist Party	
UK	Wales	Plaid Cymru	The Party of Wales
		Cymru Annibynol	An Independent Wales
USA	Puerto Rico	Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño	Puerto Rican Independence Party
		Movimiento Unión Soveranista	Sovereign Union Movement

Table A.1 List of Parties

Appendix B – Success Specifications

VARIABLES	(1) Original Model	(2) Fixed-Effects
Regional Language	10.18* (5.95)	17.07*** (3.76)
ln(Area)	2.43 (1.62)	3.57*** (1.04)
ln(Population)	-3.57* (2.03)	-0.05 (2.05)
Self-Rule	0.38 (0.51)	-0.39 (0.51)
Non-Contiguous Region	1.40 (6.72)	2.56 (4.65)
Electoral System	17.97*** (5.98)	2.51 (8.13)
Migrant Stock	0.79*** (0.27)	1.02*** (0.30)
% Change in GDP	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Constant	8.43 (39.22)	-76.87** (31.25)
N	210	210
Number of Regions	29	29
Overall R ²	0.43	0.71
Prob > Chi ²	0.00	0.00

Table B.1 Random and Fixed Effects, Subnational Elections

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

VARIABLES	(1) Original Model	(2) Fixed Effects
Regional Language	9.13 (6.63)	3.10 (5.01)
ln(Area)	3.65** (1.79)	3.02*** (1.03)
Share of National Pop.	0.02 (0.22)	0.21 (0.27)
Self-Rule	-0.03 (0.27)	-0.03 (0.27)
Non-Contiguous Region	13.32* (7.02)	5.95 (5.19)
Electoral System	2.50 (6.88)	2.94 (14.15)
Migrant Stock	0.77*** (0.30)	1.00*** (0.31)
% Change in GDP	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)
N	221	221
Number of Regions	21	21
Overall R ²	0.36	0.63
Prob > Chi ²	0.00	0.00

Table B.2 Random and Fixed Effects, National Elections

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

VARIABLES	(1) Original Model	(2) Without logged Area
Regional Language	10.18* (5.95)	8.03 (6.30)
ln(Area)	2.43 (1.62)	
ln(Population)	-3.57* (2.03)	-3.59 (2.21)
Self-Rule	0.38 (0.51)	0.34 (0.51)
Non-Contiguous Region	1.40 (6.72)	-1.04 (7.13)
Electoral System	17.97*** (5.98)	14.29** (5.74)
Migrant Stock	0.79*** (0.27)	0.88*** (0.26)
% Change in GDP	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Constant	8.43 (39.22)	38.85 (36.16)
Observations	210	210
Number of Regions	29	29
Overall R ²	0.36	0.25
Prob > Chi ²	0.00	0.00

Table B.3 Area Specifications, Subnational Elections

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

VARIABLES	(1) Original Model	(2) Without logged area
Regional Language	9.13 (6.63)	8.49 (7.30)
ln(Area)	3.65** (1.79)	
Share of National Pop.	0.02 (0.22)	0.05 (0.23)
Self-Rule	-0.03 (0.27)	0.02 (0.27)
Non-Contiguous Region	13.32* (7.02)	11.17 (7.70)
Electoral System	2.50 (6.88)	-0.16 (7.45)
Migrant Stock	0.77*** (0.30)	0.82*** (0.30)
% Change in GDP	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)
Constant	-39.00* (20.95)	-0.04 (9.41)
N	221	221
Number of Regions	21	21
Overall R ²	0.19	0.06
Prob > Chi ²	0.03	0.09

Table B.4 Area Specifications, National Elections

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

VARIABLES	(1) Original Model	(2) Raw Population
Regional Language	10.18* (5.95)	10.91* (6.03)
ln(Area)	2.43 (1.62)	2.54 (1.65)
ln(Population)	-3.57* (2.03)	
Raw Population		-0.00 (0.00)
Self-Rule	0.38 (0.51)	0.56 (0.50)
Non-Contiguous Region	1.40 (6.72)	4.54 (6.35)
Electoral System	17.97*** (5.98)	19.79*** (6.05)
Migrant Stock	0.79*** (0.27)	0.78*** (0.27)
% Change in GDP	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Constant	8.43 (39.22)	-45.40** (22.94)
N	210	210
Number of Regions	29	29
Overall R ²	0.36	0.37
Prob > Chi ²	0.00	0.00

Table B.5 Population Specifications, Subnational Elections

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

VARIABLES	(1) Original Model	(2) Without logged Area
ln(Area)	3.22** (1.53)	
ln(Population)	-4.27** (1.91)	-4.10* (2.11)
Self-Rule	0.42 (0.50)	0.39 (0.51)
Non-Contiguous Region	0.29 (6.25)	-2.53 (6.80)
Electoral System	17.87*** (5.74)	13.46** (5.60)
% Change in GDP	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Regional Language	-4.25 (7.94)	-4.46 (8.46)
Migrant Stock	-0.09 (0.43)	0.18 (0.42)
Regional Language * Migrant Stock	1.32** (0.52)	1.08** (0.52)
Constant	20.92 (37.19)	55.94 (35.61)
N	210	210
Number of Regions	29	29
Overall R2	0.43	0.29
Prob > Chi2	0.00	0.00

Table B.6 Interaction Specification, Subnational Elections

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1