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Four essays in political economy : civil wars, democratic regression, taiwanese economic and political preferences

Erwan Le Quellec

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THÈSE PRÉSENTÉE POUR OBTENIR LE GRADE DE
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SPÉCIALITÉ SCIENCES ÉCONOMIQUES

Par **Erwan Le Quellec**

Quatre Essais d'Économie Politique :
Guerres civiles, Régression Démocratique,
Préférences Économiques et Politiques Taiwanaïses

Sous la direction de : **M. Matthieu CLÉMENT** et **M. Éric ROUGIER**

Thèse soutenue le 18 décembre 2023

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Titre : Quatre Essais d'Économie Politique : Guerres civiles, Régression Démocratique, Préférences Économiques et Politiques Taïwanaises

Résumé : Cette thèse s'inscrit dans le domaine de l'économie politique et se compose de quatre essais abordant différentes questions de recherche dans ce domaine. Les deux premiers chapitres adoptent une perspective macroéconomique. Le premier chapitre examine l'impact des rivalités interétatiques sur l'occurrence des guerres civiles, en distinguant les effets des rivaux directs et indirects et en démontrant leur importance respective dans l'explication de ces conflits. Le deuxième chapitre s'intéresse au processus de régression démocratique, c'est-à-dire aux changements de régime opposés à la démocratisation, qui conduisent à des situations moins démocratiques ou plus autocratiques. Après avoir fourni un large aperçu historique de la dynamique et des formes de régression démocratique dans le monde, nous proposons une nouvelle approche pour identifier et classer ces régressions démocratiques. Dans les chapitres 3 et 4, notre analyse se concentre sur les préférences économiques et politiques de la population taïwanaise au niveau microéconomique. Dans le chapitre 3, nous étudions la demande de populisme à Taïwan en relation avec les préférences individuelles concernant le statut politique de Taïwan par rapport à la Chine continentale. Notre objectif est d'évaluer l'influence potentielle de ces préférences sur le développement des attitudes populistes et d'identifier celles qui ont le plus d'effet. Dans le quatrième chapitre, nous examinons les croyances néolibérales et les préférences politiques de la classe moyenne taïwanaise. Nous cherchons à savoir si l'appartenance à la classe moyenne est un facteur prédictif des attitudes néolibérales et si ces préférences économiques sont homogènes au sein de la classe moyenne taïwanaise.

Mots clefs : Guerres civiles ; Régression Démocratique ; Taïwan ; Relations transdétroit ; Populisme ; Classe Moyenne ; Néolibéralisme.

Title : Four Essays in Political Economy : Civil Wars, Democratic Regression, Taiwanese Economic and Political Preferences

Abstract : This thesis falls in the field of political economy and consists of four essays addressing different research questions in this area. The first two chapters ADOPT a macroeconomic perspective. The first chapter examines the impact of interstate rivalries on the occurrence of civil wars, distinguishing between the effects of direct and indirect rivals and demonstrating their respective importance in explaining these conflicts. The second chapter looks at the process of democratic regression, the regime changes opposite to democratization, leading to less democratic or more autocratic situations. After providing a broad historical account of the dynamics and forms of democratic regression around the world, we propose a new approach to identify and classify these democratic regressions. In Chapters 3 and 4, our analysis focuses on the economic and political preferences of the Taiwanese population at the micro level. In Chapter 3, we study the demand for populism in Taiwan in relation to individual preferences regarding Taiwan's political status relative to mainland China. Our aim is to assess the potential influence of these preferences on the development of populist attitudes and to identify those that have the greatest effect. In the fourth chapter, we examine neoliberal beliefs and political preferences among the Taiwanese middle class. We investigate whether middle-class membership is a predictor of neoliberal attitudes, and whether these economic preferences are homogeneous within the Taiwanese middle class.

Keywords : Civil Wars ; Democratic Regression ; Taiwan ; Cross-Strait Relations ; Populism ; Middle Class ; Neoliberalism.

L'Université de Bordeaux n'entend donner aucune approbation ni improbation aux opinions émises dans cette thèse. Ces opinions doivent être considérées comme propres à leur auteur.

– Remerciements –

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1. This chapter is a joint work with Mahdi FAWAZ (associate professor at Sorbonne Paris Nord University) and has been accepted for publication in the journal Defense and Peace Economics DOI : <https://doi.org/10.1080/10242694.2022.2129350>

Mahdi FAWAZ : Investigation, Methodology, Data curation, Software, Formal analysis, Writing
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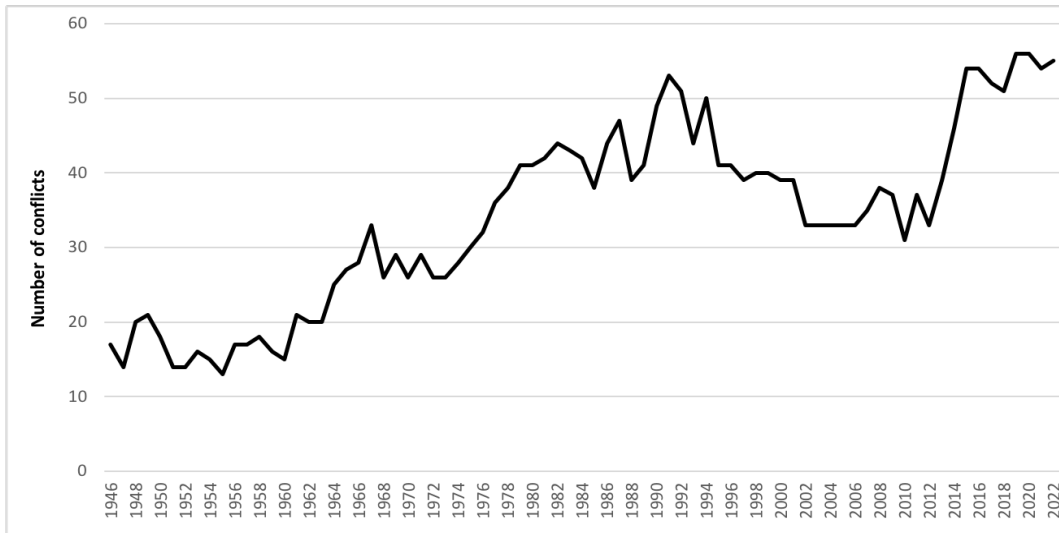
Chapter 0

General Introduction

This thesis falls within the field of political economy, which is defined by [Weingast & Wittman \(2006 : p.3\)](#) as “*the methodology of economics applied to the analysis of political behaviour and institutions*”. As such, this thesis focuses on the study of different aspects of individual behaviour, the global environment and political institutions through four distinct research questions, adopting a multidisciplinary approach and a large set of quantitative approaches and techniques.

Chapter 1 of this thesis is part of the realm of conflict economics. The economics of conflict examines the factors that contribute to the emergence, intensity, and duration of conflicts, as well as the elements that influence their outcomes and the repercussions they have on the involved parties (for a review, see [Braddon & Hartley \(2011\)](#)). Thoroughly examining and comprehending these matters is particularly critical, as demonstrated by [Figure 1](#), especially since the prevalence of armed conflicts involving at least one state government is becoming a more prominent phenomenon in our modern societies. As depicted in [Figure 1](#), the number of armed conflicts has steadily increased since 1946, reflecting the growing number of states in the global system, which inherently raises the probability of conflicts. This trend reached its first peak with over 50 conflicts at the end of the Cold War in 1991. While there was initially a decline in conflicts following the fall of the Berlin Wall, we are now witnessing a resurgence of such incidents since the 2010s, reaching a peak with a record of 56 conflicts reported worldwide in 2019 (see [Figure 1](#)).

FIGURE 1 – The evolution of the number of armed conflicts (1946 :2022)



Reading notes : The number of conflicts per year is calculated based on UCDP’s definition of a state-based armed conflict, which is as follows : “*a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year*” (Pettersson, 2023 : p.1).

Source : Author’s own calculations based on the data from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Version 23.1).

Concurrently with this trend, the distinction between interstate and intrastate conflicts is becoming increasingly blurred. Many researchers have noted a decrease in interstate conflicts since the end of World War II, while civil wars have increased. This can be partially explained by the growing involvement of foreign governments in supporting armed groups in rival countries (Salehyan et al., 2011). In fact, researchers in international relations have extensively studied the origins, course, and consequences of interstate rivalries (Colaresi et al., 2008 ; Diehl & Goertz, 2000 ; R. J. Leng, 2000 ; Vasquez, 2004) These rivalries, which pit two states against each other, are characterized by mutual perceptions or anticipation of hostility, based on mistrust and a history of past militarized conflict (Maoz & Mor, 2002) and more generally when their behaviour threatens the interests of the other. Various strategies are employed to manage them, including the formation of alliances (trying to prevent or force a rival by forming alliances with third parties), arms races, and direct confrontation. Nevertheless, indirect confrontation is one of the least explored rivalry management strategies. Indeed, various constraints, including legal, economic, and related to the risk of nuclear escalation, limit direct military intervention between states (Mumford,

2013; Salehyan, 2010; Stiglitz & Bilmes, 2008). Therefore, rivals may opt for indirect confrontation aimed at weakening another state, such as financing armed groups in rival countries, an approach known as the ‘subversion strategy’. Another strategy involves using coercive threats to disrupt an enemy state’s internal sovereignty over a part of its territory (M. Lee, 2018). These strategies, although not always resulting in the overthrow of the rival government, can weaken the enemy state’s capacity, reducing the opportunity cost of rebellion for actors and increasing the risk of civil war (Besley & Persson, 2011).

Considering this trend, which involves a shift from interstate conflicts to intrastate conflicts, the primary focus of the first chapter will be to investigate the effect of rivalries on the likelihood of civil wars. International conflicts and enduring rivalries have become a significant area of study in the field of international politics (Diehl & Goertz, 2000; Maoz & Mor, 2002; R. J. Leng, 2000; Vasquez, 2004), most studies examine only direct enmities or affinities. Thus, various studies assert that nations facing interstate rivalries are more likely to experience civil wars (M. Lee, 2018; Uzonyi, 2018; Toukan, 2019; Bak et al., 2020), while the findings are inconclusive regarding the utility of allies (Boutton, 2014; Sullivan & Karreth, 2015). Nevertheless, the effect of indirect rivalries on the risk of civil war is not explored. We contend that neglecting these relationships can oversimplify the intricate interactions between states and introduce bias into the analysis.

In **Chapter 1**, we establish a new dataset on state rivalries, encompassing both direct and indirect relationships. We utilize a methodology grounded in Social Network Analysis (Wasserman & Faust, 1994) to assess these interactions across 154 countries from 1970 to 2015, demonstrating their significance in explaining civil wars. Our study distinguishes two types of indirect rivals that can influence the risk of civil war for a focal state : the ‘allies of rivals’ and the ‘rivals of allies’. After controlling for spatial distances between rival countries and commonly used control variables in conflict analysis (Hegre & Sambanis, 2006), we employ a logit model to demonstrate that : 1) the number of rivals (both direct and indirect) exerts a positive and significant effect on the risk of civil war ; 2) decreasing levels of a state’s military capacity compared to its rivals (both direct and indirect) also influence the probability of internal conflict. These results remain stable, whether we aggregate direct and indirect rivals or distinguish the effects of direct and indirect rivals.

The robustness of our findings is assessed in two ways. First, we employ a random forest algorithm to rank the importance of our independent variables in explaining the onset of civil wars. We demonstrate that the international context - direct and indirect rivalry relationships - holds greater importance than traditional variables considered in conflict analysis, such as ethnic or religious polarization indices, to explain the outbreak of civil war. Second, we test the explanatory power of our dataset using Kaplan-Meier estimation to explain the duration of civil wars. We show that civil wars in which the military capacity of the rivals is greater than that of the focal country tend to have a longer duration than the opposite scenario.

The **Chapter 2** of this thesis is dedicated to the study of regime change. A regime change involves a shift in the formal and informal institutions that regulate how to assign and exercise political authority in a country (Eckstein & Gurr, 1975). Regime change can be categorized into two distinct phenomena. The first is democratization, characterized as “*movement towards an outcome*” (Whitehead, 2002 : p.32), that is, democracy. The second, which will be the focal point of this chapter, is its antipode, autocratization, a process of regime change opposite to democratization.

Academic scrutiny has been predominantly directed towards the democratization process during the so-called third wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991), spanning from the mid-1970s to the early 1990s, and encompassing Latin America, portions of Asia, the communist world, and sub-Saharan Africa. Scholars have examined the “global resurgence of democracy” (Diamond & Plattner, 1991) by investigating their causes (Diamond et al., 1989), their modalities (Huntington, 1991), and the challenges of consolidation (Haggard & Kaufman, 1994 ; Linz & Stepan, 1996). This also encompasses the increase in what is commonly referred to as hybrid regimes (Diamond, 2002 ; Schedler, 2013) - regimes in the grey zone (Carothers, 2002) between democracy and autocracy which combine democratic and authoritarian traits - and issues concerning the quality of democratic governance (G. O' Donnell et al., 2004).

Faced with the strength of the third wave of democratization, Fukuyama (1989) prophesied the “end of history”. Unfortunately, this optimism was premature ; today, political scientists

have warned about the growing number of regime changes toward autocracy since the end of the Cold War (e.g. [Diamond, 2002](#); [Diamond, 2008](#); [Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2019](#)). Thus, the focus of the regime change debate has shifted from the transitions in the third wave of democratization to the process opposed to democratization. This process is not a recent development. It has historical precedent, as both the first and second reverse waves of regime changes occurred during the periods of 1922–1942 and 1958–1975, respectively ([Huntington, 1991](#)). Moreover, it has been the subject of scholarly examination for a considerable duration, with researchers exploring this phenomenon since the pioneering study conducted by [Linz & Stepan \(1978\)](#) on democratic breakdown.

However, there are several obstacles to the accumulation of knowledge about regime change towards autocracy. First, there are limited long-term, cross-regional studies on this phenomenon (for an exception see [Tomini \(2017\)](#)); researchers focusing mainly on small regional samples (e.g. [Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011](#); [Fish, 2001](#); [Mainwaring & Pérez-Liñán, 2014](#)). Second, there is some confusion regarding what should and should not be considered empirical evidence of this process. There is no clear common understanding of what constitutes regime change as opposed to democratisation and the different forms it can take. ([Cassani & Tomini, 2019](#)). Third, the contemporary process of autocratization has evolved, especially within democracies, making it more challenging to apprehend and identify empirically. Nowadays, it tends to erode slowly and discreetly, often concealed behind legal devices, unlike earlier manifestations which were more abrupt and obvious. Military coups and election-day fraud are on the decline, giving way to tactics like opposition harassment and undermining of horizontal accountability ([Bermeo, 2016](#)). [Mechkova et al. \(2017\)](#) have shown that between 2006 and 2016, the autocratization process primarily targeted aspects such as media freedom and civil society space while maintaining a democratic facade by preserving multiparty institutions. Additionally, [Coppedge \(2017\)](#) identified ‘executive aggrandizement’¹ as a key contemporary model of autocratization, alongside what he describes as the more ‘classic’ path based on intensified repression. In summary, the absence of a universally agreed-upon definition and typology, rooted in a comprehensive dataset of

1. The term ‘executive aggrandizement’ refers to elected leaders progressively weakening the checks and balances on executive power by implementing a series of institutional reforms that limit the opposition’s ability to challenge executive decisions ([Bermeo, 2016](#)).

historical cases, as well as the elusive nature of the contemporary autocratization process, contributes to the divergent interpretations among researchers regarding the significance of this phenomenon.

In **Chapter 2**, we address these gaps using Varieties of Democracy project dataset (Coppedge et al. 2020b) which covers the period from 1900 to 2019. First, we provide a definition of autocratization, as any move away from democracy, leading to less democratic or more autocratic situations. This comprehensive approach encompasses a wide range of regime shifts toward autocracy, from democratic erosion (Plattner, 2014) to autocratic hardening (Walker, 2016), including democratic overthrows (Huntington, 1991). For the purposes of this study, we refer to them as democratic regression, because from a semantic point of view, it encompasses all political regime changes that share a direction towards autocracy, whatever the initial level of democracy. To empirically identify these democratic regressions, we rely on the approach of Lührmann & Lindberg (2019), defining episodes of democratic regression as a substantial change in a composite index of democracy over a continuous period. Using this method, we identify 166 episodes of democratic regression over the period 1900-2019. Second, we provide a global historical account of the dynamics and forms of episodes of democratic regression spells around the world. We show that a third reverse wave seems to be underway since the end of the Cold War, with notable shifts in the regions affected by this phenomenon and the types of regimes impacted. Third, we classify these episodes of democratic regression based on a comprehensive list of attributes drawn from the literature in political sciences. We have identified and measured thirteen attributes of democracy, encompassing both procedural requirements (*de jure*) and substantive elements (*de facto*). These attributes are then grouped into four distinct sets of requisites for democracy : the minimalist set, the polyarchic set, the maximalist set and the broad context set, which correspond to different conceptions identified in the political science literature, ranging from the least to the most stringent. Lastly, we employ a mixed clustering procedure on the thirteen identified attributes to categorize these 166 episodes of democratic regression into distinct and internally homogeneous categories based on their patterns of democracy attribute deterioration. This process reveals four distinct “modes” of democratic regression : democratic crumbling, electoral capture, autocratic worsening,

and radical autocratization. These modes represent four unique and specific ways in which democratic regression has occurred over the extended period from 1900 to the present day.

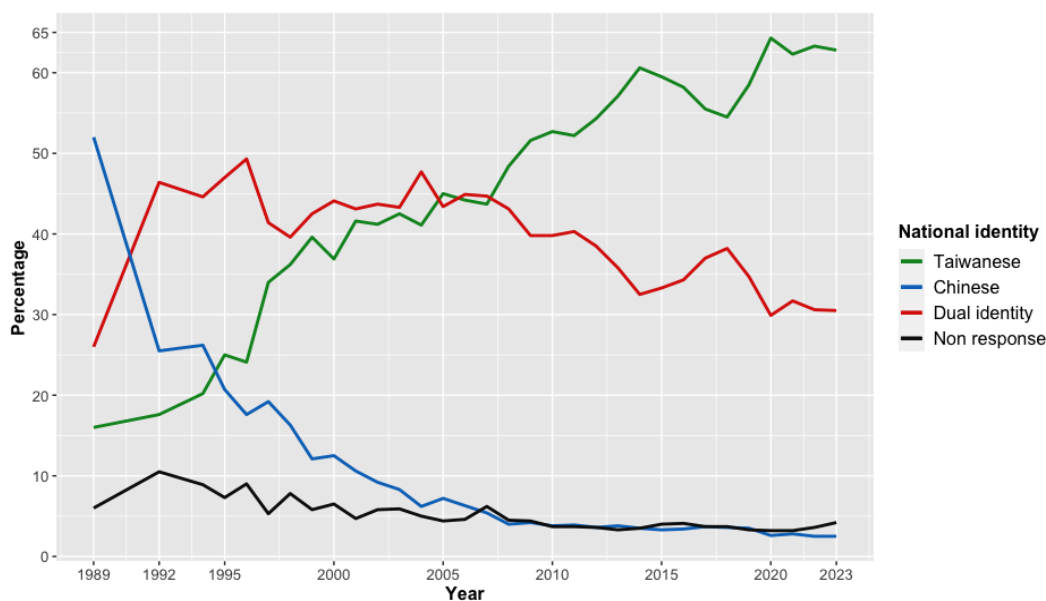
The last two chapters of the thesis delve into the microeconomic analysis of economic and political preferences among the Taiwanese population. Taiwan serves as a particularly compelling case study due to the unique combination of political, geopolitical, social, and economic factors that set it apart. These final chapters will specifically focus on two pivotal phenomena that have triggered significant changes in Taiwan's political and economic landscapes : the rise of Taiwanese national identity, explored in **Chapter 3**, and the establishment of strong economic connections with mainland China ([Muyard, 2012b](#)), analysed in **Chapter 4**.

To provide context for the emergence of Taiwanese national identity, we employ two commonly used sets of questions to assess and analyze its evolution. The first set concerns respondents' self-identification as Chinese, Taiwanese, or both (dual identity). The second set pertains to preferences regarding Taiwan's political status in relation to mainland China, commonly known as the *tongdu* issue. For the independence-unification debate, there are six possible response categories : (1) Independence as soon as possible ; (2) Status quo now and independence later ; (3) Status quo indefinitely ; (4) Status quo now and decision later ; (5) Status quo now and unification later ; and (6) Unification as soon as possible. [Figure 2](#) reports the evolution of public opinion on self-identification from 1989 to 2023 and [Figure 3](#) displays the trends in Mainland–Taiwan relations from 1994 to 2023.²

From [Figure 2](#), we can observe a consistent rise in self-identification as Taiwanese throughout the democratic era. In 1989, a few years after the abolition of martial law, the most common response was a Chinese identity, with 52% of respondents identifying as Chinese.

2. It is essential to exercise caution when interpreting the significance of these results due to the evolving connotations associated with different responses to these questions. For instance, at the end of the 1980s, many respondents might have associated the term 'unification' with unification under the Republic of China (ROC), whereas today the common interpretation shifted to mean unification with the People's Republic of China (PRC). Additionally, the potential overrepresentation of certain ethnic groups in the composition of certain statistical samples can also influence the results. For more detailed information on this matter, please refer to [Muyard \(2012a\)](#).

FIGURE 2 – Public opinion on self-identification as Taiwanese, Chinese or both



Reading notes : The lines indicate the proportion of respondents identifying themselves as Taiwanese, Chinese, or both, along with non-responses.

Data is not available for 1990 and 1991. Pertaining to the year 2023, these are the results obtained in June.

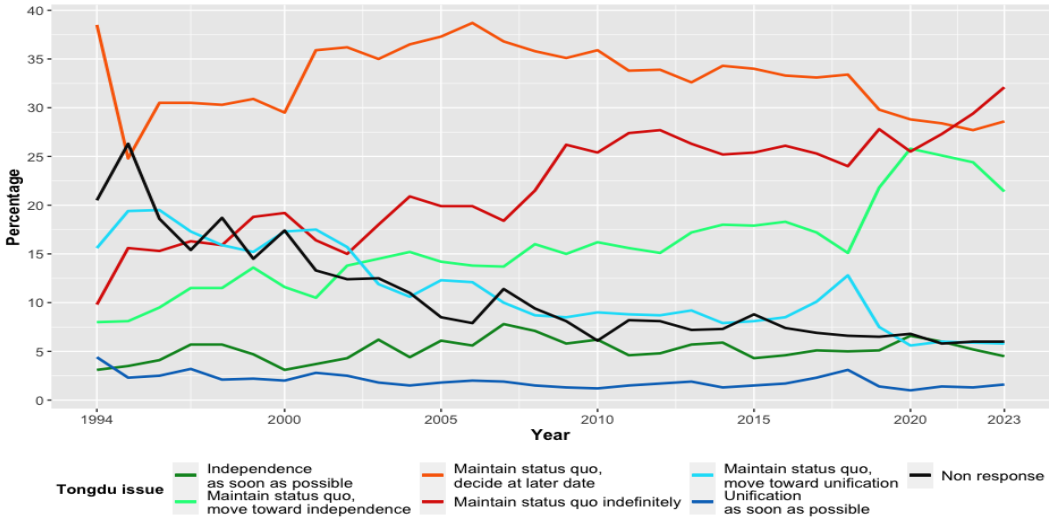
Source : Author’s own elaboration based on data from the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University.

However, this proportion rapidly decreased by half three years later and has continued to decline, now standing at less than 5%. From the early 1990s to the mid-2000s, dual identity was the prevailing trend. Nevertheless, it shifted towards Taiwanese identity after the pro-Chinese Kuomintang (KMT) returned to power in 2008, reaching a first peak of around 61% in 2014 during the Sunflower Movement and another in 2020 at almost 65% after Tsai Ing-wen’s re-election as President. It’s worth noting that the steady increase in Taiwanese self-identification since the late 2000s has coincided with a decline in dual identity, whereas previously, it came at the expense of Chinese identity.

Figure 3, illustrating the evolution of public opinion on the *tongdu* issue, corroborates the findings highlighted in Figure 2 concerning self-identification with national identity. Notably, the decline in support for reunification, regardless of the time horizon considered, was around 20% until the early 2000s and barely 10% today, with only 1.5% favouring immediate reunification in 2023, showing a similar scale of decline as the support for

Chinese identity. Conversely, while Taiwanese identity has steadily and consistently grown since the 1990s, support for independence, especially future independence, has seen a slower increase. In 1994, only 11% supported independence, whatever the time horizon, while this figure has risen to 26% in 2023, with less than 5% advocating for immediate independence in 2023. However, the option of future independence gained momentum with the return of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) to power in 2016, before experiencing a decline since 2020, possibly in response to escalating military threats from the People’s Republic of China (PRC) against Taiwan.

FIGURE 3 – Public opinion on the independence-unification issue



Reading notes : The lines show the proportion of respondents supporting one of the six options on the unification versus independence debate, along with non-responses. Pertaining to the year 2023, these are the results obtained in June. Source : Author’s own elaboration based on data from the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University.

The favoured choice among respondents over time has been the status quo, reflecting strong support for the existing division between Taipei and Beijing under current circumstances. This preference has increased by 10% over the years, rising from just under 50% in 1994 to over 60% in 2023. Notably, the temporary status quo, which was the most preferred option throughout the period until 2021, was surpassed by the indefinite status quo. This result is not neutral : the former suggests a desire to keep all possibilities on the table, including unification or independence, while the latter indicates a preference for maintaining a clear

separation between the PRC and Taiwan, favouring *de facto* independence rather than *de jure*. However, it should be noted that this response may also include individuals who fear the prospect of war, though it could also involve supporters of the Republic of China (ROC) (Muyard, 2012a).

The evolution of public opinion regarding national identity can be attributed to various factors. One of these, widely underscored by researchers (C.-L. Lin, 2012; Muyard, 2012b), is the process of democratization that began in 1987 with the abolition of martial law (1949-1987), ending nearly 40 years of suppression under the KMT one-party rule. This milestone allowed for the free political expression of the people's political will and national identity, in stark contrast to the nationalism imported from China by the KMT after 1945 and imposed as part of its nation-building project (Fell, 2018a). Additionally, the military threats from the PRC significantly influenced this transformation, and more broadly, the rejection of the political and economic system in the PRC (C.-L. Lin, 2012). Moreover, Chiang Ching-Kuo, as the President of the KMT and Taiwan, implemented a series of measures in November 1987, aimed at normalizing relations between the two sides of the strait. Paradoxically, these measures reinforced the sense of belonging to Taiwan and contributed to strengthening Taiwanese identity. The resumption of exchanges and contacts with the mainland allowed Taiwanese, whether originally from the mainland or Taiwan, to become aware of the differences between Chinese and Taiwanese societies, primarily due to the mainland's lower socio-economic development and the erasure of traditional culture during the Cultural Revolution. More generally, the growing interactions between Taiwanese and Chinese, have reinforced the significant disparities in their respective societies and identities, underlining the clear distinctions in sociopolitical, historical and cultural references (H. Chang, 1991; Niquet, 2022). In other words, increasing exchanges between Taiwanese and Chinese confirm their differences, leading to a desire for political separation. What's more, as we shall see, the fact that economic integration primarily benefits a minority of Taiwanese, and the deepening of cross-strait free trade may have adverse effects, potentially boosting electoral support for the DPP over the KMT and working against China's objectives (Muyard, 2012b). Furthermore, the shift in the demographic balance, where mainlanders represented almost 25% of the island's population in the early 1950s, while mainlanders

and their descendants now constitute only 14% of the total population in 2021, further accentuating this trend.

Chapter 3 explores the link between Mainland–Taiwan relations and a phenomenon that has garnered increased attention in academic research since the 1990s (Rovira Kaltwasser et al., 2017), driven by its real-world significance : populism. Populism is not a recent phenomenon, its roots can be traced back to the nineteenth century, with instances such as the US People’s Party in the United States, the Russian *narodniki* movement and Boulangism in France. Nineteenth-century populists shared common features, including direct appeals to the virtuous ‘people’, a rejection of the establishment, a belief in a more people-centric democracy, and a strong sense of native pride (Eatwell & Goodwin, 2018; Rovira Kaltwasser et al., 2017). Throughout most of the 20th century, populism was predominantly observed in Latin America.³ especially during the phase known as ‘classical populism’ in the 1940s and 1950s. This period saw the emergence of populist leaders such as Juan Domingo Perón (1946-1955) in Argentina and Getúlio Vargas (1930-1945, 1951-1954) in Brazil. These leaders rose to prominence in response to the economic hardships following the Great Depression of the 1930s, which triggered a crisis of political legitimacy (Drake, 1978; de la Torre & Arnson, 2013; K. M. Roberts, 2008). Since the 1990s, there has been a resurgence of populism, primarily in two regions of the world. First, in Latin America, following the transition from military regimes to democratic ones in the 1980s. This resurgence featured ‘neo-populist’ leaders like Fujimori in Peru (1990-2000) and Menem in Argentina (1989-1999) (Rovira Kaltwasser et al., 2017), who implemented neoliberal reforms rather than left-wing social reforms, in contrast to the wave of ‘classic populism’ (K. M. Roberts, 1995; Weyland, 2001). Subsequently, in the 2000s, a new wave of populism emerged, led by radical left-wing leaders such as Rafael Correa (2007-2017) in Ecuador or Hugo Chávez in Venezuela (1999-2013). The second region significantly impacted by populism is Europe. Since the 1990s, right-wing populist parties have emerged

3. With a few exceptions, such as Poujadism in France in the 1950s, led by Pierre Poujade, who founded the Union de Défense des Commerçants et Artisans (UDCA) to protect the interests of small businesses and capitalize on anti-establishment sentiment (Priester, 2007). One of its members, Jean-Marie Le Pen, founded the National Front in the 1970s, becoming an emblematic figure of right-wing populism in Europe (Rydgren, 2005). We can also mention the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) of Andreas Papandreou in Greece in the late 1970s (Mouzelis, 1978).

in Europe. Reacting to the European austerity measures and neoliberal policies, left-wing populism also gained ground in the 2010s with parties like SYRIZA in Greece and the Dutch Socialist Party.

Asia is not exempt from this phenomenon, with figures like Joseph Estrada in the Philippines (1998-2001), Thaksin Shinawatra in Thailand (2001-2006), and Prabowo Subianto in Indonesia (Hellmann, 2017). In Taiwan, the debate over independence and unification is an important issue in the political arena and shapes the Taiwanese political landscape, with the pan-Green coalition advocating independence and led by the DPP on one side, and the pan-Blue coalition favouring unification and led by the KMT on the other (Norris, 2004; Fell, 2018a). The Mainland–Taiwan relations have been the catalyst for two waves of supply-side populism (the actors who employ populism). The first wave was led by Chen Shui-bian, who became the first democratically elected non-KMT President (2000-2008). Initially, he employed populist anti-privilege rhetoric during his first term, but he shifted towards a nationalist stance based on Taiwanese identity to ensure his re-election for a second term (Matsumoto, 2009). The second wave of populism was triggered by the economic integration with mainland China and the implementation of the Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement (CSSTA). This led to the emergence of two new political forces, the White Force (WP) and the New Power Party (NPP), characterized by anti-Chinese rhetoric (C.-E. Wu & Chu, 2021). In a more recent development, Han Kuo-yu of the KMT party has also emerged in this populism landscape, but contrary to the political leaders and movements mentioned earlier he has a pro-Chinese stance, which places him on the opposite end of the political spectrum (Yen, 2021).

In this doctoral work, we conceive populism through an ideational approach (Mudde, 2004; Mudde, 2007; Mudde, 2017; K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018), defines it as an ideology or set of ideas, and more specifically following Mudde's ideational definition of populism (Mudde, 2004 : p.543; Mudde, 2007 : p.23; Mudde, 2017 : p.30). From this perspective, populism consists of a collection of ideas with a limited scope and ambition characterised by a Manichean division between the 'good people' and the 'evil elite', emphasizing the primacy of popular sovereignty, whereby the virtuous general will of the people stands in contrast to the moral corruption of elite actors (Mudde, 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

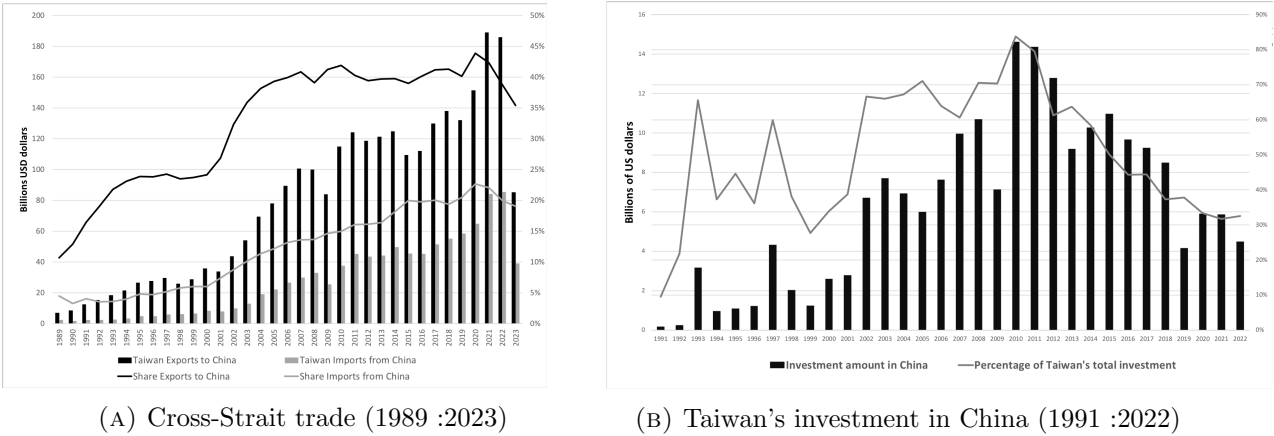
In **Chapter 3**, we analyse the demand side of populism i.e. cultivation of populist beliefs or attitudes in the Taiwanese population. For that purpose, we use a cross-sectional dataset that combines data from the 2016 and 2020 waves from the Taiwan Election and Democratization Study (TEDS) project. We conceptualize populism as a latent higher-order construct composed of two distinct and non-compensatory lower-order dimensions, specifically anti-elitist attitudes and general support for popular sovereignty. This chapter serves a dual purpose. Firstly, we aim to investigate whether the conventional determinants (socio-demographic characteristics, political aptitudes and policy preferences) that explain the cultivation of populist attitudes in Western and Latin America are also relevant in the Taiwanese context. Indeed, the empirical study of populist attitudes in Asia has been largely overlooked ([Rovira Kaltwasser et al., 2017](#)), particularly among the Taiwanese population (for an exception see [Yen, 2021](#)). Secondly, we seek to determine whether the unique geopolitical factor of Taiwan, individual preferences regarding independence and unification, shape the development of populist attitudes, and if so, which preferences exert the most substantial impact. Inspired by the multidimensional method of [Niou \(2005\)](#) based on conditional preferences, we identify seven orientations on the cross-strait relationship, as well as three positions for those who have no preference for this issue (passivists, rationalists and incoherent individuals). Each preference will be characterized according to its socio-demographic and economic profile, its attitudes towards mainland China, and its views on major political and societal issues.

Using logit and tobit estimations, this study reveals several significant findings. First, Taiwanese populists exhibit a diverse sociodemographic profile. They tend to experience economic insecurity, have low self-perceived political competence, and are more likely to express dissatisfaction with democracy. This dissatisfaction appears to be primarily rooted in political frustration, and they typically lean towards right-wing economic and cultural preferences. Second, we identify and categorize three preference groups related to the cross-strait relationship, which have the highest potential for populist attitudes. These groups include ‘weak populists’, who are most supportive of independence, ‘moderate populists’ comprising inconsistent individuals and those with the second-strongest preference for unification, and ‘strong populists’, made up exclusively of individuals who most strongly

support the solution of unification. Put differently, our findings indicate that populist attitudes are located on the extreme preferences of the unification-independence spectrum, as well as those who maintain inconsistent stances on this issue.

In **Chapter 4**,⁴ we examine the implications of the second phenomenon, namely the deepening economic integration between the regions on both sides of the Taiwan Strait (Muyard, 2012b). To illustrate the development of economic relations between Taiwan and China, we will refer to **Figures 4**. **Figure 4a** depicts the evolution of trade exchanges between Taiwan and China since 1989 and **Figure 4b** shows Taiwan’s investment to China since 1991.

FIGURE 4 – Economic relations between Taiwan and China



Reading notes : The investment data extend up to November 2022, while those regarding trade go up to July 2023. The data covers mainland China, including Hong Kong and Macau.

Source : Author’s own calculations based on the data from the Bureau of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Economic Affairs, ROC for trade and from Department of Investment Review, Ministry of Economic Affairs, ROC for investment.

Officially, trade and investment ties with mainland China were prohibited until 1992, when the “Act Governing Relations Between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area” was adopted to regulate relations between Taiwan and China (P.-S. Lee & Chu, 2016).⁵ Initially, the outflow of Taiwanese capital to China was driven by factors

4. This thesis does not delve into the paradoxical evolution of the increasing economic integration between Taiwan and China, along with the rising Taiwanese identity, the desire for independence, and the resulting economic-to-political spillover effect. For a thorough examination of this subject, please refer to Muyard (2012b).

5. However, even before this decree came into effect, economic relations between Taiwan and mainland China were established indirectly, often routed through Hong Kong or conducted via shell companies registered in third countries like the British Virgin Islands or the British Cayman Islands (Tung, 2008).

such as intensifying global competition and domestic economic conditions (rising labour costs, stricter environmental standards, and currency appreciation). Over the past 30 years, the development of cross-strait economic links has been primarily market-driven by Taiwanese businesspeople (*Taishang*) and closely enmeshed in the process of globalization. Since the early 1990s, China has become the top destination for Taiwanese investments, particularly following the PRC's economic reform and opening policy in the late 1980s. In the 1980s, this trend was predominantly observed in traditional labour-intensive small and medium-sized enterprises (such as textiles, plastics, and toys). However, in the 2000s, it shifted towards larger corporations operating in capital-intensive industries especially in computing, electronics, and optics (P.-S. Lee & Chu, 2016; Muyard, 2012b; Niquet, 2022). China has served as a production platform for re-exporting to global markets, mainly the developed and emerging economies, illustrating a division of labour between Taiwan and China based on complementarity, which can be summarized by the expression “made by Taiwan but made *in* China” (Tung, 2006).⁶

During the administration of Lee Teng-hui (1992-2000), concerns emerged regarding China's potential influence on Taiwan's security due to economic dependency. In response to these concerns, restrictive policies were implemented. These policies included the “southbound” policy in 1993, aimed at encouraging *Taishang* to invest in Southeast Asia rather than in China and also strengthen Taiwan's links with these countries. Another policy was the “Go Slow, Be Patient” policy⁷ in 1995, which aimed to limit Taiwanese investments in mainland China (Copper, 2010). Throughout Chen Shui-bian's term of office (2000-2008) under the aegis of the DPP, cross-strait economic interactions intensified - challenging the prevailing perception of the DPP as a party opposed to economic exchanges with China (Muyard, 2012b) - under pressure from the business sector, there was a gradual liberalization of

6. For example, in 2010, 70% of Taiwan's exports to China consisted of intermediate and processing goods (Rosen & Wang, 2011). As a result, the relationship between Beijing and Taipei can be described as one of co-dependence on export markets (notably the United States, other advanced economies and emerging markets) rather than Taiwan's dependence on China. Indeed, while Taiwan is closely linked to China - its exports to China are processed and re-exported to other end markets - Taiwan's GDP has followed similar trends to those of US GDP since the late 1990s (Muyard, 2012b).

7. Lee Teng-hui's “Go Slow, Be Patient” foreign policy aimed to restrict Taiwanese investment in China to amounts not exceeding 50 \$US million. It also sought to impose stricter regulations on the financial involvement of Taiwanese companies in Chinese infrastructure projects and investments in the high-tech sector in China.

economic regulations. The “Go Slow, Be Patient” policy was officially abandoned in 2001, and economic exchanges increased after both China and Taiwan’s accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2000 and 2001, respectively (Fell, 2018d ; T.-K. Leng, 2016). By the end of Chen’s term, exports to China accounted for 40% of all Taiwanese exports (see Figure 4a) and outward investment to China accounted for 70% of Taiwan’s total foreign direct investment (see Figure 4b). During Ma Ying-jeou’s presidency (2008-2016), institutional relations were normalised. This normalization included the establishment of the “three direct links” (air, sea, and postal), and in 2010, the signing of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), which further opened up the service sectors on both sides, promoting increased cross-strait exchanges.

Since the return to power of the pro-independence DPP party under President Tsai Ing-wen (2016-), there has been a desire to reduce Taiwan’s dependence on an exclusive economic partnership with China. This shift is exemplified by the introduction of the “New Southbound Policy” in 2016, which seeks to strengthen economic ties with the countries of ASEAN, South Asia and the Pacific region. Furthermore, the backdrop of the intensifying Sino-American rivalry has accelerated this trend, with the United States pressuring Taiwanese companies to relocate to strategic industries like semiconductors (Fell, 2018d ; Niquet, 2022). Starting in the 2010s, we have witnessed a reduction in Taiwanese investment in China and a plateauing of trade (see Figures 4). This trend is not solely due to the political choices mentioned earlier ; it is also influenced by broader macroeconomic changes in China. These changes have led to the gradual erosion of the traditional division of labour between Taiwan and China. Factors include China’s slowing GDP growth, rising labour costs, the appreciation of the Yuan and labour shortages in coastal areas, which have prompted *Taishang* to either shut down their factories or relocate to South East Asia to reduce labour costs. More generally, China has repositioned itself in the global supply chain, moving away from being the “world’s factory” and transitioning to an economy driven by knowledge and innovation. As a result, the economies of Taiwan and China are increasingly in competition and have become less complementary (P.-S. Lee & Chu, 2016).⁸

8. In six of Taiwan’s top ten export sectors - smartphones, cars, ships, petrochemicals, oil refining and steel - Taiwan has been surpassed by China. Furthermore, China now produces 65% of the materials used

Furthermore, the heightened economic interactions across the Taiwan Strait have had adverse effects on Taiwan's economy. These consequences include a rise in unemployment, the outflow of wealth and consumption towards China (where *Taishang* and skilled professionals live and spend their income), diminishing wages in Taiwan, and a reduction in domestic investments. This economic dynamic has also contributed to a widening income disparity among different segments of society. It has created winners of globalization (middle and upper classes, professionals, managers, and industrialists linked to China's manufacturing industry) and losers (primarily lower and middle-income wage earners with fewer qualifications) as a result of the economic liberalization between Taiwan and China (P.-S. Lee & Chu, 2016; Muyard, 2012b).

The deepening of economic integration also faced significant opposition from civil society, epitomized by the Sunflower Movement in 2014. This protest movement, which reached its climax between 18 March and 10 April 2014, involved the occupation of Taiwan's Legislative Yuan (parliament) by approximately 300 students, who opposed the adoption of the CSSTA signed in 2013 between Taipei and Beijing. These mass protests were driven by various factors, including the lack of transparency in the negotiation of the CSSTA, which had taken place in closed-door meetings between members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the KMT. Additionally, these protests were motivated by concerns regarding Taiwan's sovereignty and identity, alongside the negative economic consequences we previously discussed (Fell, 2018d; P.-S. Lee & Chu, 2016; T.-K. Leng, 2016).

More specifically, the Sunflower Movement has sparked academic interest in its causes, its effects on Taiwan's democratic system and its impact on economic relations between Beijing and Taipei (I. Chen & Wang, 2014; B. Jones, 2015). In terms of the triggering factors, four divergent and opposing elements have been identified : anti-Chinese Taiwanese nationalism, leftist stances against free trade, calls for democratic reforms, and the pursuit of generational justice (Tseng, 2014). The last element underscores that the substantial student participation in this movement can be attributed to a sense of deprivation resulting from issues such as rising unemployment, increasing real estate prices, declining wages, and

in the production of the goods it sells worldwide, compared with just 40% in the mid-1990s. The increase in domestic supply has therefore come at the expense of Taiwanese industries (P.-S. Lee & Chu, 2016).

diminishing opportunities for social mobility based on education and merit (Tseng, 2014). Therefore, the response to the CSSTA reflects uncertainty about the future generated by neoliberalism policies (Tseng, 2014; Wang, 2017).

From this perspective, **Chapter 4** examines the spread of neoliberal ideology among the Taiwanese middle class. Our aim is to investigate whether middle class membership is a predictor of neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences and whether such economic preferences are homogenous within the Taiwanese middle class. The empirical investigations carried out in this chapter rely on the seventh wave of the World Values Survey (WVS), which was conducted in 2019 in Taiwan (Haerpfer et al., 2022). The neoliberal ideology remained confidential until the 1970s.⁹ It gained significant prominence during that decade, becoming the dominant economic orthodoxy (Harvey, 2005) both politically and academically.¹⁰ Gradually it influenced various aspects of political thought and everyday life. Thus, neoliberalism is a multifaceted construct comprised of a collection of axioms (Bettache & Chiu, 2019). As a political economy construct, its axioms assert that the natural market forces of supply and demand lead to an optimal allocation of resources within society. It emphasizes the need to preserve a *night-watchman state*, meaning minimal state involvement in the economy, as excessive intervention is seen as a disruptor of these natural market forces (Beattie et al., 2019; Taylor-Gooby & Leruth, 2018). As a psychological construct, neoliberalism's axioms instil in individuals values of

9. The concept of neoliberalism was introduced by Hans Honneger in 1925, in his book "*Trends of Economic Ideas*", emphasizing the importance of competition and entrepreneurship while critiquing the emergence of socialist variants of liberalism (Plehwe, 2009). The establishment of the core economic principles of neoliberalism can be traced back to 1947 with the think tank of the Mont P lerin Society (MPS), an organization that played a significant role in promoting the growth and dissemination of neoliberal ideas.

10. It first spread to the academic field, with the Bank of Sweden Prizes in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel awarded to Hayek in 1974 and Friedman in 1976. Then, it began to influence public policy at the state level, starting in 1978 when Deng Xiaoping led the policy of reform and opening up (G ng  k if ng), leading to the shift from Maoism (state ownership and central planning) to "socialism with Chinese characteristics". In 1979, the appointment of Paul Volcker as Chairman of the US Federal Reserve in July 1979 marked a change in the monetary policy of the United States. The principles of the New Deal were abandoned in favour of a monetarist monetary policy; as advocated by the theories and research of Milton Friedman (Friedman & Schwartz, 1962) and his quantity theory of money, with the primary objective of controlling inflation (regardless of its impact on employment). The election of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister of Great Britain in May 1979 and Ronald Reagan as President of the United States in 1980, resulted in the political application of neoliberal ideology.

individualism, meritocracy, personal freedom and responsibility, support for inequality and a naturalistic perspective (Bettache & Chiu, 2019).

In **Chapter 4**, we encountered a significant challenge in defining the middle class. Indeed, the middle class is not truly a well-defined scientific concept, but rather a convenient political construct (Clément & Rougier, 2015). Four approaches in the social science literature are commonly used (economic, sociological, subjective, managerial), but they have all limitations (Melber, 2016; Salama, 2014; Sosnaud et al., 2013). To address these limitations, we adopted a multidimensional and sequential approach proposed by Bonnefond et al. (2015). First, we delineated the perimeter of the Taiwanese middle-income group based on a monetary interval. Second, we used information about employment and education to identify different segments within this middle-income group by employing factor analysis and clustering methods. This refined approach leads to the identification of four active middle-class groups : self-employed and farmers, manual and service employees, intermediate service workers, and managerial professionals. Additionally, we identified a group of retirees and inactive individuals, as well as an ‘idiosyncratic group’ with unique socioeconomic characteristics distinct from the established groups mentioned above.

Through ordered logistic regression and after accounting for factors that influence neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences, our results indicate differences in neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences within different segments of the middle class in Taiwan. We find that among the middle-income segments, all active groups tend to support increased private ownership in businesses compared to the poor. Retirees and inactive individuals, share preferences with the poor for greater government involvement in business ownership. The self-employed and farmers, who are the most supportive of limited government control in the economic sphere among middle-income groups, are also the least likely to favour increased government involvement in services and welfare, even more so than the rich. Manual workers and service workers, in the middle-income segment, exhibit a distinct inclination to view competition as potentially harmful. Unlike other middle-income groups, they do not consider government taxation of the rich and subsidies for the poor as essential components of democracy. In conclusion, the managerial group exhibits less concern about income equality compared to the other middle-income groups.

Chapter 1

Indirect Rivalries and Civil Wars :

Empirical Evidence ¹

1. This chapter is a joint work with Mahdi FAWAZ (associate professor at Sorbonne Paris Nord University) and has been accepted for publication in the journal Defense and Peace Economics DOI : <https://doi.org/10.1080/10242694.2022.2129350>

Mahdi FAWAZ : Investigation, Methodology, Data curation, Software, Formal analysis, Writing

Erwan LE QUELLEC : Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Data curation, Software, Formal analysis.

1.1 Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing body of research on the impact of direct state relations (rivalries and alliances) on the likelihood of civil war. While it is well accepted that the phenomenon of rivalries increases the risk of civil war in the countries concerned (Rooney, 2018; Uzonyi, 2018; Toukan, 2019; Bak et al., 2020; Fawaz, 2021), there are conflicting results on the usefulness of allies (Boutton, 2014; Sullivan & Karreth, 2015). However, there is no empirical work analysing the impact of indirect (or second-order) relationships on the risk of civil war. Understanding the role of indirect rivalries can help implement policies to contain or end violence. Our study distinguishes between two indirect rivals that can influence the risk of civil war for a focal state : ‘allies of rivals’ and ‘rivals of allies’.

Interest in the role of the international context in explaining civil wars is recent. Seminal studies in conflict analysis have mainly focused on analysing local country characteristics to understand conflict dynamics. However, a new branch of the literature has attempted to integrate a regional and global dimension to explain internal conflict dynamics. Related work shows the effect of international policies on internal political development. In particular, these studies argue that countries facing interstate rivalries are more likely to experience civil wars (M. Lee, 2018; Uzonyi, 2018; Toukan, 2019; Bak et al., 2020).

A vast literature has been devoted to the concept of interstate rivalries (Diehl & Goertz, 2000; Vasquez, 2004). While it is commonly accepted that two states are rivals (or potential rivals) when their behaviour threatens the interests of the other. Pioneering empirical studies have analysed rivalry in terms of the intensity of interstate warfare based on a well-defined threshold of human casualties (Akcinaroglu & Radziszewski, 2005). The problem with these works is that it does not capture the entire period of rivalry but only their most extreme manifestation (Goertz & Diehl, 1993). Moreover, less intense interstate wars can be excluded from the analysis (Thompson, 2001). By considering more complex forms of interstate tension (diplomatic tension or threat of force), some works have developed more complex measures of rivalry (Goertz et al., 2016). Recent empirical

studies associated with the analysis of civil wars generally consider these different forms of rivalry (Toukan, 2019; Rooney, 2018; Uzonyi, 2018).

In contrast, indirect rivalry relationships are not taken into account. The omission of these relationships can lead to a simplification of complex interstate relations and bias the analysis. In particular, ‘allies of rivals’ and ‘rivals of allies’ are considered indirect rivals. In his *Art of War*, Sun Tzu (2007[1078] : p.141) already emphasized this aspect : “*Examine the question of [the enemy’s] alliances and see to it that they are broken and dislocated. If an enemy has allies, the problem is severe and the enemy’s position strong; if he has none, the problem is minor and his position weak*” [text in square brackets added by the authors]. Indeed, alliances between states reflect strategic visions and common interests within an anarchic international system. Allies, therefore, develop a system of mutual support for defensive and offensive purposes to survive in a competitive international environment, as no state can ensure its security in the face of external threats (Wolfers, 1962). In this sense, in the context of foreign interference, indirect rivals can also participate in the weakening of the focal state and the risk of civil war.

From this perspective, this article aims to study the role of direct and indirect rivalries, controlling for spatial distances between rival countries, on the occurrence of civil wars, in 154 countries, over the period 1970-2015. By combining several cross-sectional data sets, this study makes two main contributions. First, we construct an alternative measure of indirect rivalries that relies on *Social Networks Analysis* (SNA) approach and methodology (Wasserman & Faust, 1994), in line with political scientists who use this approach to study international processes and phenomena (König et al., 2017). As a first step, we rely on the rivalry database of Goertz et al. (2016) to define the direct (first-order) rivalry network. We then use this information to derive direct friendship and indirect (second-order) rivalry relationships, i.e. ‘allies of rivals’ and ‘rivals of allies’. Second, we construct a measure of the balance of power between countries and their rivals.

More precisely, we address two hypotheses on the role of direct and indirect rivalries in the occurrence of civil wars. First, the more direct and indirect rivals a country has, the more likely it will experience civil war. Second, the lower a country’s military capacity

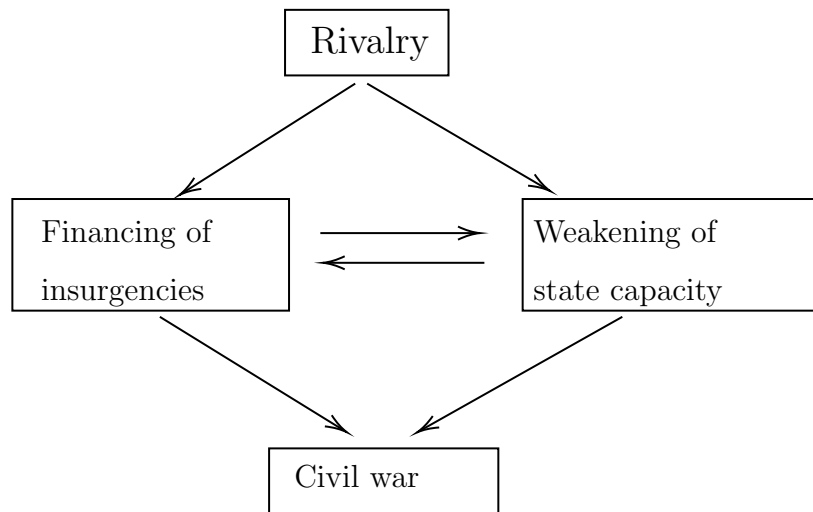
relative (balance of power) to its direct and indirect rivals, the greater the risk of civil war. We will confirm our two hypotheses using a logit model. For the robustness of our results, we use the random forest algorithm, a particularly well-suited algorithm for predicting rare events such as civil wars, and a Kaplan-Meier estimate of the duration of civil wars.

The rest of the article is structured as follows. [Section 1.2](#) presents the theoretical framework and the hypotheses. [Section 1.3](#) details our empirical strategy for measuring direct and indirect rivalry measures. [Section 1.4](#) presents our empirical methodology and the data used. [Section 1.5](#) presents the main findings. In [Section 1.6](#), we test the robustness of our results. Finally, [Section 1.7](#) concludes.

1.2 Theory

Since the end of the Second World War, the decline of interstate wars has gone hand in hand with an increase in the number of civil wars. Various authors have suggested a causal link between these two trends. According to [Salehyan et al. \(2011\)](#), this could be explained by the increasing involvement of foreign governments in supporting armed groups in rival countries. Indeed, there are several constraints to direct confrontation between states identified in the literature. Constraints on direct military intervention may be legal ([Salehyan, 2010](#)), economic ([Stiglitz & Bilmes, 2008](#)) or related to the risk of nuclear escalation ([Mumford, 2013](#)). We note two mechanisms by which rivals attempt to weaken another state (see [Figure 1.1](#)).

FIGURE 1.1 – Rivalry and civil war : transmission channels



The first is financing armed groups between rival countries or the ‘subversion strategy’ (M. Lee, 2018). It is considered one of the main perverse effects of rivalries (Balch-Lindsay et al., 2008).² This strategy has the advantage of circumventing legal constraints and limiting the costs of the conflict (D. Hawkins et al., 2006). Moreover, it disrupts the internal sovereignty of the target state, which can lead to large-scale violence (Salehyan et al., 2011). However, this strategy does not always lead to violence. It sometimes manifests itself more insidiously, notably by competing with or replacing the administrative apparatus of the state; for example, by maintaining parallel local security or taxation institutions (Staniland, 2012). The second strategy is coercive, with the hostile state issuing threats to degrade or defeat a state’s internal sovereignty over part of its territory (M. Lee, 2018). If the expected or actual benefits of administering a given area are lower than the expected costs of coercive threats to the target state, the latter will thus leave part of its territory wholly or partially ungoverned. These coercive threats against the target state can be military, although economic and/or diplomatic threats are preferred instruments (Jeong, 2021).

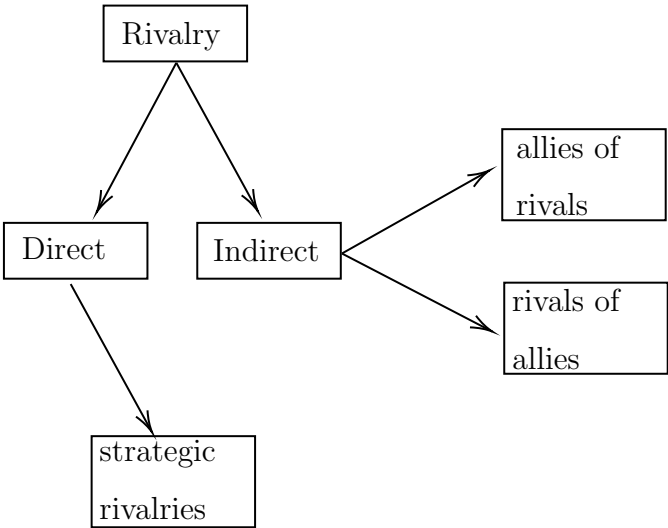
While these strategies do not always result in the overthrow of the rival government, they can help weaken the enemy’s state capacity. This weakening can reduce the opportunity

2. This strategy consists of sponsoring an armed group in the rival country and providing it with the necessary goods and services (financial, military, logistical, training, advice).

cost of rebellion for agents, as their income from productive activities is reduced, and by extension, to the outbreak of civil war (Besley & Persson, 2011). Indeed, in this situation, if the ‘victim’ state fails to ‘buy off the opposition’, i.e. to deter rebellion by improving the quality of institutions or by agreeing to distribute some resources to dissatisfied groups, it may engage in repression to deal with domestic dissidents (Silve & Verdier, 2018; Uzonyi, 2018). This phenomenon leads the government into a civil war (Lindemann & Wimmer, 2018). Thus, rivalries change policymakers’ choices at the international level and the local level.

In an anarchic international system, states are often seen as rational entities motivated only by survival (Wolfers, 1962). They are therefore sovereign and differ only in their respective military capabilities. Since states are suspicious of each other, they see each other as potential threats : “*The international system is [...] a brutal arena where states look for opportunities to take advantage of each other, and [...] have little reason to trust each other*“ (Mearsheimer, 1995 : p.9). Thus, states may enter into rivalry in the presence of conflicting interests in the appropriation of a resource (territory or oil) or hegemonic struggles. This rivalry can take the form of economic and diplomatic sanctions or, more harshly, armed confrontation. Our study argues that indirect rivals can influence the risk of civil war for a focal state. In particular, we distinguish two types of indirect rivalry : ‘allies of rivals’ and ‘rivals of allies’ (see Figure 1.2).

FIGURE 1.2 – Characterization of the forms of rivalry



For that, we see international relations as ‘a set of interconnected networks’ and we employ *SNA* methodology to measure direct and indirect relations of friendship and rivalry. We will first construct a social network of rivalry. A “*social network consists of a fine set or sets of actors [in court case, states] and the relation or relations [in court case, ‘is the rival of’] defined of them*” [text in square brackets added by the authors] (Wasserman & Faust, 1994 : p.20). The rule ‘is the rival of’ stipulates that state i is a strategic rival of j , in the sense of Goertz et al. (2016) and j is a strategic rival of i . In other words, we construct a symmetric relational network (also called a one-mode network) with the binary rule : ‘is the rival of’ to define direct rivalry ties in the international system. In this study, we will represent our networks by matrices.

Moreover, states that share common enemies have a similar perception of international politics. Therefore, from the network of direct rivalries, we deduce a network of direct alliances, where states with common enemies have an interest in forming an alliance. Indeed, in the context of an anarchic international system, actors may be encouraged to form alliances at the international level, as no state is able to ensure its security on the basis of individual power alone (Gowa, 1999). In the next section, we will deduce indirect rivalry relations from these two networks.

On the one hand, for a given country, the rival of an ally can be considered a rival. The latter may seek to destabilise the focal state to counterbalance the hostile alliance it faces or if it feels it is a potential target of that alliance. On the other hand, a rival’s ally can also be considered a rival of a given country. Indeed, this ally of the rival has every interest in weakening the focal state to preserve its alliance. Thus, indirect rivals may contribute to the financing of insurgencies or the implementation of economic and diplomatic sanctions alongside direct rivals. Our hypothesis regarding the effect of direct and indirect rivalries on the risk of civil war is as follows :

Hypothesis 1 : The more direct and indirect rivals a country has, the more likely it is to experience civil war.

The existing studies on the effect of direct rivalries on the risk of civil war do not consider the balance of power between rivals. In particular, a country with a sufficiently high

military capacity vis-à-vis an armed group is better able to contain the perverse effect of rivalries than a militarily weak country.

Silve & Verdier's (2018) theoretical model shows that, for a country with high levels of military capacity (police, intelligence), deterrence (or even repression) appears to be more effective than redistribution. In general, when the level of state capacity in a country is high, the opportunity cost of conflict becomes higher for the armed group. Thus, under these conditions, the objective of rivals might be to reduce the opportunity cost of rebellion by providing the necessary military assistance to the armed group. One might therefore expect that the lower the military capacity of the focal country relative to its rivals (direct and indirect), the higher the risk of civil war for the latter.

Hypothesis 2 : The lower a country's military capacity relative to its direct and indirect rivals, the greater the risk of civil war for that country.

1.3 Measuring Rivalries

As discussed earlier, the principle of rivalry can be considered in two stages according to Figure 1.2 : direct rivalries and indirect rivalries that can lead to a possible anticipation of hostile actions. In this subsection, we detail the construction of our direct and indirect rivalry matrices.

1.3.1 Measurement of Direct Rivalries

We consider two states as direct rivals if they are strategic rivals. Data on strategic rivalries are taken from Goertz et al. (2016) and are available until 2015. Goertz et al. (2016) consider a broad set of interactions between states to define rivalries, including diplomatic relations, intergovernmental ties, interstate wars and their possible resolutions.³

We consider as rivals the country dyads with a score strictly lower than 0.5, that is those responding to the criteria 'severe rivalry' and 'lesser rivalry' (see Goertz et al., 2016). In the

3. More specifically, Goertz et al. (2016) propose an index of rivalry between countries defined as follows : 0 – severe rivalry ; 0.25 – lesser rivalry ; 0.5 – negative peace ; 0.75 – warm peace ; and 1 – security community.

‘severe rivalry’ category, states actually see each other as rivals and competitors (Colaresi et al., 2008). This is the highest level of rivalry. The existing rivalries between India and Pakistan since 1947 illustrate this first category. On the other hand, the category ‘lesser rivalry’ contains rivalries of lesser intensity, such as Colombia and Venezuela in the years 1900-1982.

Thus, we obtain a matrix of direct rivalries, RD_t ($n \times n$), where the rows and columns represent the n states recognised in the international system during the year t . The entries in this matrix rd_{ij} are 1 when state i and j are direct rivals in year t , and 0 otherwise. Note that the matrix RD_t is symmetrical ($rd_{ij} = rd_{ji} \forall i, j \in RD_t$) and the cells on the diagonal take the value 0 (an actor cannot be in competition with itself).

1.3.2 Measurement of Indirect Rivalries

To measure indirect rivalries, we proceed in two steps :

- 1) We construct the first order alliance matrix defined by AD_t ;
- 2) We construct the second order (indirect) rivalry matrix defined by RI_t . The entries of this matrix ri_{ij} are 1 if j is the rival of an ally of i (RA_t) and/or if j is the ally of a rival of i (AR_t); and 0 otherwise.

Alliance of the 1st Order As discussed in the literature review, states facing common threats have an interest in forming an alliance (Gowa, 1999). To identify these states, we use the previous direct rivalry matrix (RD_t) such that $AD_t = RD_t \times RD_t$.⁴ In this case, each entry in the ad_{ij} matrix indicates the number of common rivals between i and j and the diagonal indicates the total number of rivals for state i (matrix AD_t^1 - Table 1.1b). Since we are interested in whether there is at least one common rival between i and j , we normalise the diagonal to 0 and we assign the value 1 to the entries of the matrix $ad_{ij}^1 \geq 1$ (matrix AD_t^2 - Table 1.1c). In addition, we ensure that the links in the matrix are balanced (matrix AD_t^3 - Table 1.1d). Indeed, in our alliance matrix, the rival of my rival can also be my rival. This is known as an imbalanced relationship. We correct for this bias in the AD_t^3

4. Another way of modelling this form of alliance is from alliance pacts (e.g. military alliances), especially non-aggression pacts (Leeds, 2003). Since the behaviour of supposedly rational agents reveals their preferences, the choice to establish alliance pacts assumes that states face common threats.

matrix by doing the following calculation : $AD_t^3 = AD_t^2 - RD_t$. Finally, we normalise the AD_t^3 matrix so as to obtain an AD_t^4 matrix whose entries ad_{ij}^4 are equal to 1 if states i and j are allied during the year t , and 0 otherwise (matrix AD_t^4 - Table 1.1e).

TABLE 1.1 – Hypothetical case of first-order rivalries and alliances between five states

(A) RD_t	(B) $AD_t^1 = RD_t \times RD_t$																																																																								
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">RD_t</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">A</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">B</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">C</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">D</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">E</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">A</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">B</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">C</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">D</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">E</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	RD_t	A	B	C	D	E	A	0	0	0	0	1	B	0	0	0	0	1	C	0	0	0	1	0	D	0	0	1	0	1	E	1	1	0	1	0	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">AD_t^1</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">A</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">B</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">C</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">D</th> <th style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">E</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">A</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">B</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">C</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">D</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">E</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0</td><td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	AD_t^1	A	B	C	D	E	A	1	1	0	1	0	B	1	1	0	1	0	C	0	0	1	0	1	D	1	1	0	2	0	E	0	0	1	0	3
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Reading notes : Example 1 - A and B are not rivals (matrix a); A and B have one rival in common (matrix b); A and B have at least one rival in common (matrix c); A and B have at least one rival in common and are not rivals (matrix d); A and B are allies (matrix e).

Rivalry of the 2nd Order On the one hand, we define the rivals of the allies by a matrix multiplication of the form $RA_t = AD_t^4 \times RD_t$. The entries of this first ra_{ij} matrix indicate

the number of times j is a rival of one of the allies of i (matrix RA_t^1 - Table 1.2a). Note that this matrix ($n \times n$) is not symmetric because it is the product of two different matrices. Subsequently, we assign the value 1 to the entries of the matrix ra_{ij} when j is the rival of at least one ally of i , and 0 for the diagonal (matrix RA_t^2 - Table 1.2b). We make sure that the links in our RA_t matrix are well balanced. In particular, j can be the rival of an ally of i while being in alliance with i . Therefore, we consider for country i only the *rivals of allies* with whom i has no alliances (matrix RA_t^3 - Table 1.2c) using the following calculation : $RA_t^3 = RA_t^2 - AD_t^4$. The final matrix (matrix RA_t^4 - Table 1.2d) is 1 if j is the rival of i 's ally in year t and 0 otherwise.

On the other hand, we define the *allies of the rivals* by a matrix multiplication of the form $AR_t = RD_t \times AD_t$. The entries of this first matrix ar_{ij} indicate the number of times j is an ally of one of i 's rivals (matrix AR_t^1 - Table 1.2e). As in the previous case, our AR_t^3 matrix (Table 1.2g) allows to control for the cases, where the allies of the rivals of i are in alliances with i , from the calculation $AR_t^3 = AR_t^2 - AD_t^4$. The final matrix (matrix AR_t^4 - Table 1.2h) is 1 if j is the ally of the rival of i during the year t and 0 otherwise.⁵ Thus, the entries of our matrix of indirect rivalries (RI_t) are 1 if j is the rival of an ally of i (RA_t^4) and/or if j is the ally of a rival of i (AR_t^4) during the year t ; and 0 otherwise.⁶

5. Note in passing that the matrix of allies of rivals is the transpose of the matrix of rivals of allies, such that $AR_t^4 = (RA_t^4)^T$.

6. More generally, Table A1.1 in Appendix A summarises all the rivalry links obtained from the matrix calculations. For all the triads (country dyads per year) that make up our sample, we obtain 59,272 rivalry links (out of 1,211,712 links). Of these, 1.3% and 81.5% respectively were direct and indirect rivalries only. There are also 17.2% of both direct and indirect rivalry links.

TABLE 1.2 – Hypothetical case of rivalries of the 2nd order between five states

(A) $RA_t^1 = AD_t^4 \times RD_t$

RA_t^1	A	B	C	D	E
A	0	0	1	0	2
B	0	0	1	0	2
C	1	1	0	1	0
D	0	0	0	0	2
E	0	0	0	1	0

(C) $RA_t^3 = RA_t^2 - AD_t^4$

RA_t^3	A	B	C	D	E
A	0	-1	1	-1	1
B	-1	0	1	-1	1
C	1	1	0	1	-1
D	-1	-1	0	0	1
E	0	0	-1	1	0

(E) $AR_t^1 = RD_t \times AD_t^4$

AR_t^1	A	B	C	D	E
A	0	0	1	0	0
B	0	0	1	0	0
C	1	1	0	0	0
D	0	0	1	0	1
E	2	2	0	2	0

(G) $AR_t^3 = AR_t^2 - AD_t^4$

AR_t^3	A	B	C	D	E
A	0	-1	1	-1	0
B	-1	0	1	-1	0
C	1	1	0	0	-1
D	-1	-1	1	0	1
E	1	1	-1	1	0

(B) if $ra_{ij}^1 \geq 1$ then $ra_{ij}^1 = 1$

RA_t^2	A	B	C	D	E
A	0	0	1	0	1
B	0	0	1	0	1
C	1	1	0	1	0
D	0	0	0	0	1
E	0	0	0	1	0

(D) if $ra_{ij}^3 < 0$ then $ra_{ij}^3 = 0$

RA_t^4	A	B	C	D	E
A	0	0	1	0	1
B	0	0	1	0	1
C	1	1	0	1	0
D	0	0	0	0	1
E	0	0	0	1	0

(F) if $ar_{ij}^1 \geq 1$ then $ar_{ij}^1 = 1$

AR_t^2	A	B	C	D	E
A	0	0	1	0	0
B	0	0	1	0	0
C	1	1	0	0	0
D	0	0	1	0	1
E	1	1	0	1	0

(H) if $ar_{ij}^3 < 0$ then $ar_{ij}^3 = 0$

AR_t^4	A	B	C	D	E
A	0	0	1	0	0
B	0	0	1	0	0
C	1	1	0	0	0
D	0	0	1	0	1
E	1	1	0	1	0

Reading notes : Example 1 : E is the rival of two allies of A (matrix a) ; E is the rival of at least one ally of A (matrix b) ; E is the rival of at least one ally of A ; and E and A are not allied (matrix c) ; E is therefore the rival of an ally of A (matrix d). Example 2 : C is an ally of a rival of A (matrix e) ; C is an ally of at least one rival of A (matrix f) ; C is an ally of at least one rival of A ; and C and A are not allied (matrix g) ; C is therefore an ally of a rival of A (matrix h).

To illustrate our point, we propose in [Table 1.3](#) an example limited to five countries : Iran, USA, UK, Cuba and Russia. The rivalry and alliance links observed for these countries in 2012 from the calculations made show that Iran faced one direct rival (USA) and one indirect rival (UK) in 2012, making a total of two rivals. Similarly, the UK faced one direct rival in 2012 (Russia) and two indirect rivals (Iran and Cuba).

TABLE 1.3 – Example of a rivalry link

Rivalry matrix					
	IRN	USA	UK	CUB	RUS
IRN	–	1	0	0	0
USA	1	–	0	1	1
UK	0	0	–	0	1
CUB	0	1	0	–	0
RUS	0	1	1	0	–

Alliance Matrix					
	IRN	USA	UK	CUB	RUS
IRN	–	0	0	1	1
USA	0	–	1	0	0
UK	0	1	–	0	0
CUB	1	0	0	–	1
RUS	1	0	0	1	–

Indirect rivalry matrix					
	IRN	USA	UK	CUB	RUS
IRN	–	0	1	0	0
USA	0	–	0	0	0
UK	1	0	–	1	0
CUB	0	0	1	–	0
RUS	0	0	0	0	–

total rivalries matrix					
	IRN	USA	UK	CUB	RUS
IRN	–	1	1	0	0
USA	1	–	0	1	1
UK	1	0	–	1	1
CUB	0	1	1	–	0
RUS	0	1	1	0	–

We then calculate the variable number of rivals defined as the sum of direct and indirect rivals per country/year.⁷ Furthermore, we consider the possibility that the spatial distance between rivals can greatly affect the probability of civil war to occur due to the rivalry. To this end, we include a spatial weighting for rivalry ties based on data on minimum distances between countries, as provided by *Cshapes* database ([Weidmann et al., 2010](#)). In this sense, the more distant the rivals are, the lower the weighting factor (*row-standardized*

7. When two countries are in both direct and indirect rivalry in a year t , we consider them only as direct rivals.

spatial weights matrix). This weighting factor applied to the variable number of rivals is given by the following equation :

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \omega_{ij}^{std} = 1 - \frac{\omega_{ij}}{\sum_{j=1}^N \omega_{ij}} \quad \text{if} \quad \sum_{j=1}^N \omega_{ij} \neq 0 \quad \text{and} \quad j \geq 2 \\ 1 \quad \text{otherwise} \end{array} \right. \quad (1.1)$$

where ω_{ij} is the spatial distance (in km) between country i and its rivals $j \in [1; \dots; N]$. When a state has only one rival or only contiguous rivals, ω_{ij}^{std} is naturally 1. In addition to the spatial distance between rivals, we decompose our variable number of rivals according to three geographical levels. In particular, we consider global, regional and contiguous rivalries in our econometric analysis.⁸ To identify contiguous countries, we use the data from the *Correlates of War (Direct Contiguity Data)*. Similarly, we consider the UCDP/PRIO classification to determine which countries belong to the same region. The aim is to place particular emphasis on forms of regional and contiguous rivalries where foreign interference is more likely to occur (M. Lee, 2018). For example, during the 1980s and 1990s, Iran and Iraq each supported armed groups on both sides in their territorial dispute over the ‘Khalij-e Fars’ (in Farsi) or ‘Chatt-el-Arab’ (in Arabic). Similarly, the support of the Pakistani authorities for the rebels in Kashmir and Jammu engaged in an extremely costly war for India is consistent with this (J. Roberts, 2009).

To illustrate our point, let us consider the case of the Syrian civil war that began on 15 March 2011 (Table 1.4). In its first phase, the conflict was limited to a set of peaceful grievances, but it quickly saw the formation of an armed group determined to overthrow the power in place. Although initially less armed than the Syrian regime, the rebels seized part of the territory until the Syrian government’s allies decided to enter the conflict (the Lebanese, Iraqi and Afghan Shiite armed groups, and the Iranian and Russian governments). The rebels’ initial success can be partly explained by the military and financial support they received from several foreign states hostile to the Syrian government. Syria faced three strategic rivals in 2012 (Goertz et al., 2016), namely the United States, Israel and Turkey, who have been actively involved in the Syrian conflict. Moreover, not all other actors

8. For example, Russia and the US are considered global, not regional, rivals. The Republic of Cuba and the USA are regional rivals. Finally, Lebanon and Israel are contiguous rivals.

involved in supporting the rebels are direct rivals, some of them are indirect. For example, the UK and Yemen are allies of the rival, being respectively an ally of the US and Israel (they have common threats). Indirect rivalry relations also include rivals of allies, such as India and Afghanistan, which are strategic rivals of Syria's Pakistani ally. Specifically, according to our matrix in 2012, Syria had 15 rivals, of which 3 were direct rivals and 12 indirect rivals. If we break down these rivals according to geographical perimeters previously mentioned, 4 were regional rivals and 2 were contiguous. Another example was the US-led war in Iraq in 2003. Many of the countries that took part in this war alongside the US were not in direct rivalry with Iraq (Poland, South Korea, Italy, Georgia, the Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, and Portugal).

TABLE 1.4 – Syria's rivals in 2012

	Direct rivalries	Indirect rivalries
All rivals	USA; Israel; Turkey	Colombia; Guyana; UK; Georgia; Egypt; Yemen; Afghanistan; South Korea; Japan; India; Vietnam; Phi- lippines
Regional rivals	Israel; Turkey	Egypt; Yemen
Contiguous rivals	Israel; Turkey	

Source : Authors's own elaboration.

1.3.3 Measuring the Balance of Power between Rivals

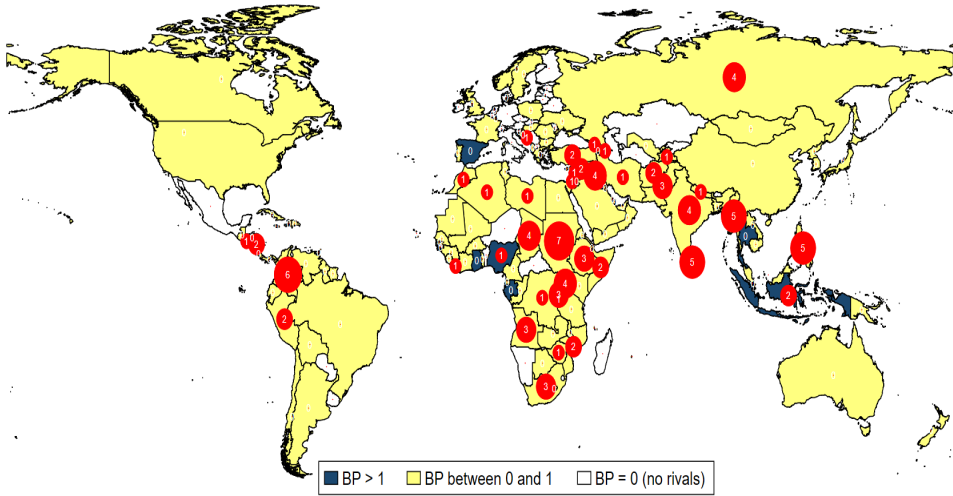
The balance of power between a country i and its rivals $j \in [1; \dots; N]$ (direct and indirect) is given by the ratio of i 's military capability, denoted as $CINC_{it}^{std}$, to that of its rivals as :

$$BP_{it} = \frac{CINC_{it}^{std}}{\sum_{j=1}^N CINC_{jt}^{std} \times \omega_{ij}^{std}} \quad (1.2)$$

Our CINC variable (*Composite Index of National Capability*) comes from *Correlates of War* database and the data is available until 2015.⁹ It is an index of military power calculated from various parameters including military expenditure and the size of the army.

When $BP_{it} = 0$, it means that the country has no rivals. On the other hand, if the BP score is less than 1 (respectively greater than 1), then country i 's military capacity is lower (respectively higher) than that of the rivals. In this situation (when $BP < 1$), the latter could offer armed groups sufficient military assistance to put country i in difficulty and thus encourage the outbreak of a civil war. Figure 1.3 below illustrates our point. It shows the number of known civil war outbreaks per country between 1970 and 2015 as a function of the BP score (on average per country).

FIGURE 1.3 – Balance of power between the focal state and its rivals between 1970 and 2015.



Reading notes : Between 1970 and 2015, 92 outbreaks of civil war took place in countries with an BP between 0 and 1, i.e. with a military capacity lower than that of their rivals.

Source : Authors's own elaboration.

9. Since the scores are quite disparate across countries, we standardise our observations using the *min-max* (OECD, 2008) such as $CINC_{it}^{std} = \frac{CINC_{it} - \text{Min}(CINC_{jt})}{\text{Max}(CINC_{jt}) - \text{Min}(CINC_{jt})}$ with $j \in [1; \dots; N]$. Thus, we obtain an index between 0 and 1. The higher the index, the greater the country's military capability. When a country's score is 1, it means that it has the highest military capability in the sample (over the period t). This approach is favoured by many databases for the construction of indices (e.g. Africa Regional Integration Index, Human Development Index, Doing Business Index, KOF Index of Globalization and Economic Freedom of the World Index).

We observe that countries that never had rivals (e.g. Jamaica, Mexico, Switzerland, Estonia, Finland and Comoros), and therefore a BP of 0, have never experienced civil wars. In contrast, the highest proportion of civil wars (92/96) is observed in countries with a BP score below 1 (on average between 1970 and 2015). For these countries, the military capacity of rivals is much higher. An example is Nicaragua. With a much lower military capacity than its rivals (BP = 0.49), notably the US, Nicaragua has experienced two outbreaks of civil war. Indeed, as part of its dispute with the Sandinista government, the US did not directly invade Nicaragua but rather delegated conflict activity to the Nicaraguan Contras by funding them (Salehyan et al., 2011). Similarly, we can cite the case of Colombia. With a BP equal to 0.47, Colombia has experienced 6 outbreaks of civil war against the FARC, supported by Ecuador and Venezuela (Salehyan et al., 2011). Finally, South Africa pursued a policy of external support for armed groups in many anti-apartheid countries between 1970 and 1980, including Mozambique (BP = 0.02) and Zimbabwe (BP = 0.03), both of which experienced civil wars (Minter, 1994). In the same vein, many countries that are militarily weak relative to their rivals (BP < 1) have experienced various civil wars (Afghanistan, Rwanda and Chad).

1.4 Data and Empirical Strategy

We are interested in the effect of the presence of direct and indirect rivals of a given country on its likelihood of experiencing civil war. We mobilise three sets of variables : measures of civil wars ; measures of rivalries developed in the previous section ; and control variables commonly used in civil war analysis. Our data is available in panel form over the period 1970-2015 and our unit of analysis is the country/year pair.

1.4.1 Dependent Variable

In our empirical analysis, we are interested in the onset of civil war. This variable is coded as a binary variable : a dummy equal to 1 for the first year of civil war, 0 for each year of peace and missing values from the second to the last year of civil war in order to limit reverse causality problems (Bazzi & Blattman, 2014 ; Bosker & Ree, 2014). Our dependent

variable is taken from the database UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict with 1000 death/year threshold.¹⁰ It includes civil wars involving a government and an armed group.

1.4.2 Control Variables

There are different control variables commonly used in conflict analysis (Hegre & Sambanis, 2006). These are GDP/capita (World Bank), population size (World Bank), measures of ethnic and religious polarisation (Reynal-Querol, 2014), a measure of rough terrain (Fearon & Laitin, 2003), the level of democratisation using the variable *Xpolity* (Vreeland, 2008), a measure of oil rent as a % of GDP (World Bank) and a measure of the number of allies per country that we construct. All these data are annual and are available over our study period, i.e. from 1970 to 2015. The descriptive statistics associated with our variables are presented in Table B1.1 (Appendix B). At the global level, and in the middle of the Cold War, the United States faced 41 interstate rivals in 1987, of which 25 were indirect rivals. At the regional and contiguous level, China has the highest number of rivalries with respectively 12 rivals until 1972 and 7 rivals until 1987, mainly direct.

1.4.3 Empirical Strategy

We formalise our different specifications using a logit model as in previous work in this field (Bosker & Ree, 2014; Toukan, 2019).¹¹ We estimate the following equation :

$$Conflict_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Nb.riv_{it-1} + \beta_2 Nb.allies_{it-1} + \beta_k X_{it} + \epsilon_{it} \quad (1.3)$$

where the binary variable $Conflict_{it}$ is a measure of civil war outbreak in country i on year t ; $Nb.riv_{it-1}$ is the number of rivals in country i on year $t-1$; $Nb.allies_{it-1}$ is the number of allies of country i also on year $t-1$; X_{it} the local (observable) characteristics and ϵ_{it} is

10. In addition, to test the robustness of our results, we estimate the regressions in Table 1.7, 1.8, 1.9 with a categorical dependent variable, defined as follows : 0 if no civil war ; 1 if between 25 and 999 deaths/year ; 2 if more than 1000 deaths/year. Results are available on request.

11. We also used an OLS model for most of the estimates. The main interest of this strategy for our study framework is the conservation of a maximum number of observations when including country-fixed effects. However, the significance of our independent variables of interest only varies significantly compared to the use of a logit model. These results are not presented in the chapter, but are available upon request.

the error term. Our (robust) standard deviations are clustered at the country level. We lag our independent (time-varying) variables by one year. Finally, we include in each regression a correction for temporal auto-correlation using the method of [Carter & Signorino \(2010\)](#) which consists of introducing the number of years since the last conflict occurrence as well as the square and cube of this number.¹² Given our theoretical predictions, we expect to have a positive β_1 . The econometric results are presented in the next section.

1.5 Results

[Table 1.5](#) presents the average marginal effects of each of the variables studied on the probability of experiencing a civil war.¹³ As discussed in [section 1.3](#), we distinguish between different rivalry perimeters, namely global (specifications 1 and 2), regional (specifications 3 and 4) and contiguous (specifications 5 and 6) rivalries.

Our independent variable of interest, number of rivals, which indicates the number of all (direct and indirect) rivals per country/year, is positively correlated with the risk of civil wars across specifications (hypothesis 1). If we consider the regressions without control variables, we can observe at the global level (specification (1)) that the more rivals a country has, the higher its probability of civil war outbreak increases with a rate of 0.05 percentage points per additional rival, *all things being equal*. This rate is higher when we restrict our analysis to regional (specification (3)) and contiguous (specification (5)) rivalries with 0.23 percentage points and 0.62 percentage points respectively. Thus, as the scope of rivalries narrows, the marginal effect of the variable increases. The same observation can be made for regressions with control variables, although the level of significance is naturally lower, especially at the global level (specification (4)).

12. We also use the method of [Beck et al. \(1998\)](#), which consists of introducing the number of years since the last conflict occurrence and the associated cubic splines, calculated from the BTSCS algorithm on STATA. The results remain unchanged.

13. The command margins, *dxdy* in STATA allows us to obtain directly the average effect of the variable studied on the probability of civil war.

TABLE 1.5 – Number of rivals and civil wars between 1970 and 2015

	All rivals		Regional rivals		Contiguous rivals	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
nb. Riv _{t-1}	0.000582** (0.000261)	0.000526* (0.000302)	0.00231*** (0.000561)	0.000650 (0.000775)	0.00620*** (0.00113)	0.00437** (0.00173)
nb. Allies _{t-1}	-0.000327 (0.000472)	-0.000699 (0.000485)	0.000526 (0.000755)	0.00149 (0.00107)	-0.00129 (0.00194)	-0.00559 (0.00373)
ln GDPp _{c,t-1}		-0.00346* (0.00189)		-0.00280 (0.00188)		-0.00293 (0.00205)
ln Pop		0.00398*** (0.00122)		0.00269** (0.00131)		0.00257** (0.00130)
xpolity _{t-1}		0.000812* (0.000473)		0.000872* (0.000485)		0.000800 (0.000487)
ethnic Pol.		0.000205** (0.0000844)		0.000238*** (0.0000875)		0.000234*** (0.0000876)
rel. Pol.		0.000170** (0.0000716)		0.000165** (0.0000688)		0.000165** (0.0000691)
ln mountainous		0.00377*** (0.00141)		0.00388*** (0.00138)		0.00416*** (0.00141)
oil _{t-1}		0.000395** (0.000165)		0.000338** (0.000166)		0.000392** (0.000173)
<i>N</i>	6219	4305	6219	4305	6219	4305
control variables	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>

Reading notes : Robust standard errors in parentheses with ***, ** and * respectively denoting significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels. All regressions are performed with corrections for temporal autocorrelation.

We can therefore argue that the presence of interstate rivals (direct and indirect) at the global, regional and contiguous levels affects the probability of civil wars. This first result from our alternative measure of rivalries is consistent with the literature. Taking only direct rivalries into account, recent studies on the issue confirm this result ([Uzonyi, 2018](#); [M. Lee, 2018](#)).

As we can see in this [Table 1.5](#), the results associated with the usual control variables in conflict analysis are in line with the literature ([Fauconnet et al., 2018](#); [Toukan, 2019](#)). The significance of our control variables (GDP/capita; population; ethnic and religious polarisation; rugged terrain and oil rent) is generally stable across the regressions. GDP/capita, which is a good proxy for opportunity costs, is significantly and negatively correlated with the risk of civil wars. Increased income reduces the likelihood of civil wars by discouraging participation in rebel activities. We observe in our [Table 1.5](#) that the oil rent variable (% GDP) is associated with a higher level of civil war across all specifications. By using locally disaggregated data, recent studies allow us to confirm this result and to better understand the mechanisms that link the presence of natural resources to the risks of civil wars (see [N. Berman et al., 2017](#) or [Sanchez de la Sierra, 2020](#)).

Population size naturally has a significant and positive effect on the probability of civil war. This result is in line with previous studies. Since the dependent variable is based on an absolute number of victims, the threshold of 1000 deaths is mechanically more likely to be reached when a country is highly populated. The same is true for the measure of rugged terrain (mountain, jungle and forest), which is significant at the 1% threshold. Geographical characteristics are important for the organisation of armed rebellion.

The measure of ethnic polarisation has a positive and significant effect (at least at the 5% threshold) on the outbreak of civil war. Ethnic nationalism is generally considered to be a real source of intra-group cohesion and by extension of intergroup civil war. The same result can also be observed for the religious polarisation measure. This result is in line with a recent study by [Kuol \(2020\)](#) on the case of Sudan.

The level of democracy also favours the risk of civil wars as shown by the positive coefficient (and significant at specification (2) and (4)) associated with this variable. To our knowledge,

there is no definitive consensus on the effect of democracy on the risk of civil war and the results are often contradictory in the literature (Magni Berton & Panel, 2018). Finally, the coefficient on the number of allies seems to have an overall negative effect on the probability of civil war, although it is not stable. Theoretically, assistance from a third state can have advantages for the regime in place, especially in terms of military capacity (Taydas & Peksen, 2012). However, there is no consensus on the effectiveness of pro-government interventions in the empirical literature (Boutton, 2014). The result associated with our alliance matrix therefore converges to the same conclusion as previous work using alternative measures of alliances.

In the rest of our analysis, we propose to decompose the variable number of rivals according to the type of rivals, i.e. direct and indirect rivals, in order to better assess its effect. However, unlike previous estimates, we do not include the contiguous level as this area is mainly composed of direct rivals.¹⁴ Table 1.6 presents the results obtained. We can thus see that the more a country has direct rivals, the greater its risk of civil war, particularly at the regional level, with a level of significance at least at the 5% threshold. With regard to our independent variable of interest, the number of indirect rivals, we can also observe a positive and significant effect on the probability of civil war (except for estimate (4)). This first result is in agreement with our theoretical predictions and demonstrates the need to integrate a measure of indirect rivalries in the analysis of civil wars.

14. Thus, about 89% of contiguous rivalries are of the direct type, while only 11% are of the indirect type.

TABLE 1.6 – Direct rivalries, indirect rivalries and civil wars between 1970 and 2015

	All rivals		Regional rivals	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
nb. direct riv _{t-1}	0.00266** (0.00116)	0.00520** (0.00224)	0.00428*** (0.00145)	0.00700** (0.00289)
nb. indirect riv _{t-1}	0.000676** (0.000304)	0.000792* (0.000453)	0.00209** (0.000963)	0.00165 (0.00147)
nb. allies _{t-1}	-0.00105* (0.000611)	-0.00200** (0.000981)	-0.000315 (0.000944)	-0.00118 (0.00167)
<i>N</i>	6219	4305	6219	4305
control variables	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>

Reading notes : Robust standard errors in parentheses with ***, ** and * respectively denoting significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels. All regressions are performed with corrections for temporal autocorrelation.

For all of the above estimates, we have favoured the use of random effects in order to retain a maximum number of observations. Indeed, the inclusion of country-fixed effects in logit models excludes countries that have not experienced civil wars (or have always experienced civil wars), which considerably reduces our sample size. In general, while the introduction of country-fixed effects is generally advocated for impact analysis, there is no consensus on the use of fixed or random effects in the analysis of the occurrence of civil wars (see [Oneal & Russett, 2001](#)). However, in [Table 1.7](#) we propose estimates with country-fixed effects in order to identify the internal dynamics of each country (*the within effect*).

TABLE 1.7 – Direct rivalries, indirect rivalries and civil wars between 1970 and 2015 – with Country FE

	All rivals			Regional rivals			Contiguous rivals			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
nb. riv _{t-1}	0.00490*** (0.00175)	0.00594*** (0.00229)			0.0157*** (0.00482)	0.0237*** (0.00689)			0.0246** (0.0110)	0.0414*** (0.0143)
nb. direct riv _{t-1}			0.00229 (0.00708)	0.0342** (0.0148)			0.0116 (0.00985)	0.0492*** (0.0162)		
nb. indirect riv _{t-1}			0.00508*** (0.00180)	0.00348 (0.00278)			0.0173*** (0.00569)	0.0170** (0.00692)		
nb. allies _{t-1}	-0.00529* (0.00294)	-0.00643 (0.00541)	-0.00485 (0.00328)	-0.00883 (0.00569)	-0.00552 (0.00482)	-0.0134* (0.00780)	-0.00508 (0.00488)	-0.0169** (0.00837)	-0.0274** (0.0124)	-0.0195 (0.0235)
<i>N</i>	1426	898	1426	898	1426	898	1426	898	1426	898
control variables	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>

Reading notes : Robust standard errors in parentheses with ***, ** and * respectively denoting significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels.

All regressions are performed with corrections for temporal autocorrelation.

We then notice that our previous results persist with or without taking into account the control variables, although the number of observations is considerably reduced. More precisely, the variable number of rivals is significant and positive on all specifications ((1), (2), (5), (6), (9) and (10)). Also, compared to [Table 1.5](#), it can be observed that the inclusion of country-fixed effects increases the marginal effect of the variable. Thus, at the contiguous level, the more rivals a country has, the more its probability of civil war increases at a rate of 4.14 percentage points per additional rival, all else being equal. The last result is obtained after controlling for the control variables.

At the disaggregated level, the results associated with the number of direct and indirect rivals are also satisfactory ((3), (4), (7) and (8)). There are also larger marginal effects than those observed in [Table 1.6](#). However, a major criticism can be made here based on the question of the endogeneity of the dependent variable on the number of direct rivals. Indeed, the evolution over time of the number of direct rivals may be due to military/diplomatic changes related to the civil war. In contrast, the variable relating to the number of indirect rivals is more exogenous in that it is exclusively linked to the evolution of military/diplomatic relations between rivals and their allies or between allies and rivals. Finally, the coefficient associated with the number of allies is negative and stable throughout the regressions.

As mentioned in previous section, the balance of power (between focal and rival countries) is an important indicator to take into account in the analysis (hypothesis 2). To test this result empirically, we modify our indicator BP in order to obtain a measure of the intensity of the threat that a state faces. This indicator is given by :

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{ll} BP'_{it} = 1 - \frac{CINC_{it}^{std}}{\sum_{j=1}^N CINC_{jt}^{std} \times \omega_{ij}^{std}} & \text{if } CINC_{it}^{std} < \sum_{j=1}^N CINC_{jt}^{std} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{array} \right. \quad (1.4)$$

The variable $CINC_{it}^{std}$ corresponds to the military capacity of state i and $CINC_{jt}^{std}$ to the military capacity of the i 's rivals with $j \in [1 ; \dots ; N]$. The use of this indicator (BP'_{it}),

ranging from 0 to 1, is more appropriate for the interpretation of the estimated coefficient.¹⁵ The higher the score, the lower the military capability of country i compared to its rivals. States whose military capacity is equal to or greater than their rivals naturally have a score of 0. Similarly, countries with no rivals have a score of 0. The associated descriptive statistics are presented in [Table B1.2 \(Appendix B\)](#). It can thus be seen at the global, regional and contiguous level that in at least 50 % of cases, the strength ratio between a country and its direct and indirect rivals is equal to 0 (either no rivals or focal country stronger than rivals).

To this end, we estimate the following equation :

$$Conflict_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 BP'_{it-1} + \beta_2 CINC_{kt}^{std} + \beta_k X_{it} + \alpha_i + \epsilon_{it} \quad (1.5)$$

where the binary variable $Conflict_{it}$ is a measure of the outbreak of civil war ; BP'_{it-1} is an indicator of the balance of power between country i and its rivals ; $CINC_{kt}^{std}$ is a measure of the military capability of i 's allies with $k \in [1; \dots; N]$; X_{it} s the local characteristics (observables) ; α_i is a control for country fixed effects and ϵ_{it} is an error term. As in the previous analysis, we lag our time-varying independent variables by one year and include a correction for temporal autocorrelation. We present our results in [Table 1.8](#).

15. The BP indicator presented above essentially allowed us to represent in [Figure 1.3](#) the number of civil wars observed between 1970 and 2015 according to different situations : no rivals ($BP=0$) ; focal country weaker than rivals ($BP \in]0;1[$) and focal country stronger than rivals ($BP \geq 1$). However, this indicator is not suitable for our econometric analysis, as it complicates the interpretation of our results. The indicator BP' is more appropriate.

TABLE 1.8 – Balance of power between the focal state and rivals and civil wars between 1970 and 2015

	All rivals			Regional rivals			Contiguous rivals					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
BP'_{t-1}	0.0215*** (0.0049)	0.0723** (0.0319)	0.0159** (0.0063)	0.0735** (0.0367)	0.0097** (0.0039)	0.0547* (0.0315)	0.0088* (0.0052)	0.0306 (0.0441)	0.0133*** (0.0040)	0.0558 (0.0377)	0.0084 (0.0052)	0.0251 (0.0576)
$CINC^{Allies}_{t-1}$	-0.0025 (0.0021)	0.0084 (0.0155)	-0.0030 (0.0032)	-0.0109 (0.0229)	-0.0029 (0.0063)	-0.0261 (0.0370)	-0.0059 (0.0107)	-0.0341 (0.0455)	0.0017 (0.0060)	0.0234 (0.0405)	-0.0250 (0.0229)	-0.0287 (0.0966)
N	6219	1426	4305	898	6219	1426	4305	898	6219	1426	4305	898
Control var.	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>
Country FE	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>

Reading notes : Robust standard errors in parentheses with ***, ** and * respectively denoting significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels.

All regressions are performed with corrections for temporal autocorrelation.

We can see that the balance of power between a given country and its rivals positively and significantly influences the risk of civil war. Thus, controlling for local variables and country fixed effects at the global level (specification (4)), we look at the effect of the balance of power between the focal state and its rivals (BP'_{it}) on the outbreak of civil wars. We then find that the coefficient of the variable BP' is significant at the 5% level. Thus, the weaker a country is relative to its global rivals, the higher its probability of civil war. This positive and significant relationship is stable across all equations at the global level, but also across estimates at the regional and contiguous levels. Thus, decreasing levels of the military capacity of the focal state relative to rivals favour the recurrence of civil wars for the focal state. In contrast, as can be seen, the military capability of the focal state's allies has no significant effect on its probability of civil war, although the sign of the associated coefficient is negative. This result is in line with our previous results on the utility of allies. The [Appendix C](#) contains a number of robustness checks, all confirming our baseline results.¹⁶

In [Table 1.9](#), we propose estimates at the disaggregated level, distinguishing in particular between direct and indirect rivals. Our results suggest that the balance of power between a state and its indirect rivals has a greater influence on the probability of civil war than that with direct rivals. This result is stable for all our equations at the global level. At the regional level, we observe a significant and positive effect for our variable BP'_{direct} , but this result is obtained without country-fixed effects.

16. The BP' indicator is a measure of the intensity of the security challenge faced by a state. When a state has no rivals or is stronger than its rivals, this indicator naturally takes the value of 0. Thus, in order to distinguish between the latter two cases, we propose in [Appendix C](#) an alternative measure of strength. This is an ordinal variable equal to 1 if a country has no rivals; 2 if $\sum_{j=1}^N CINC_{jt}^{std} \times \omega_{ij}^{std} < CINC_{it}^{std}$ and 3 if $\sum_{j=1}^N CINC_{jt}^{std} \times \omega_{ij}^{std} > CINC_{it}^{std}$. For ease of interpretation, however, we include dummies for each category. The results show that compared to category 1 (no rivals), categories 2 and 3 have a positive and significant effect on the probability of civil wars. The results are presented in [Table C1.1](#) ([Appendix C](#) Sensitivity Analysis).

TABLE 1.9 – Balance of power between the focal state and rivals (direct and indirect rivalries) and civil wars between 1970 and 2015

	All rivals				Regional rivals					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
BP' direct $_{t-1}$	0.00379 (0.00593)	0.0255 (0.0420)	0.00422 (0.00724)	0.0525 (0.0529)		0.00898** (0.00424)	-0.00699 (0.0351)	0.0126** (0.00583)	0.00894 (0.0458)	
BP' indirect $_{t-1}$	0.0164*** (0.00555)	0.0595** (0.0280)	0.0154*** (0.00590)	0.0592* (0.0325)	0.0724** (0.0304)	0.00266 (0.00433)	0.0997*** (0.0295)	0.000107 (0.00500)	0.0773** (0.0372)	0.0790** (0.0364)
CINC $_{t-1}^{Allies}$	-0.00296 (0.00223)	0.00361 (0.0161)	-0.00427 (0.00356)	-0.0184 (0.0239)	-0.00930 (0.0213)	-0.00371 (0.00699)	-0.0351 (0.0399)	-0.00935 (0.0117)	-0.0499 (0.0464)	-0.0465 (0.0449)
<i>N</i>	6219	1426	4305	898	898	6219	1426	4305	898	898
control variables	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>
Country FE	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>

Reading notes : Robust standard errors in parentheses with ***, ** and * respectively denoting significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels.

All regressions are performed with corrections for temporal autocorrelation.

In general, it should be noted that there is a non-negligible correlation between our variables BP' *direct* and BP' *indirect*, at both global and regional levels (0.74 and 0.55 at global and regional levels respectively). To this end, we propose to remove the direct BP' from our analysis in equations (5) and (10) to correct for this, while controlling for local variables and country-fixed effects at the global and regional level. The associated results confirm the importance of our measure of the balance of power between a country and its indirect rivals in the analysis of civil wars.¹⁷

1.6 Robustness Tests

In this section, we test the robustness of our results by performing two tasks. First, we rank the importance of our independent variables in explaining the outbreak of the civil war, using the random forest algorithm. Second, we test the explanatory power of our dataset, using a Kaplan-Meier estimate to explain the duration of civil wars.

1.6.1 Algorithm of Random Forests and Hierarchization of the Determinants of Civil Wars

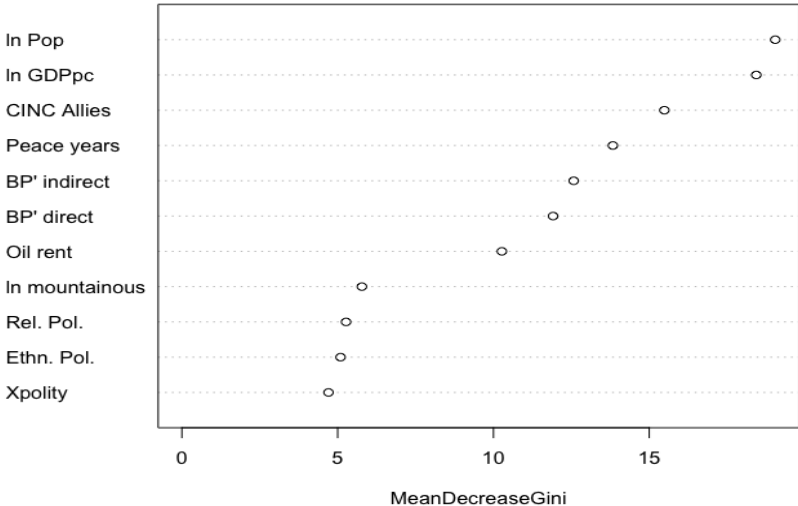
To confirm the importance of our independent variables of interest, we propose a hierarchy of civil war determinants based on the random forest algorithm. This algorithm is particularly well suited to predicting rare events, especially for the case of civil wars (Muchlinski et al., 2015). Also, unlike linear regressions, this algorithm allows capturing non-linear interactions between exogenous and endogenous variables (Muchlinski et al., 2015). Figure D1 in Appendix D provides a comparison of our binary classifiers : the logistic regressions of Table 1.6 – estimate (2) and Table 1.9 – estimate (3) and the corresponding random forest algorithm. From the AUC scores (*Area Under the Curve*), we observe that the

17. Although the previous analysis demonstrates the importance of our balance of power measures, a criticism can be made. In particular, within our measure, the same weight is attributed to all rivals regardless of their power. The existing heterogeneity is therefore not taken into account. Table C1.2 illustrates our point (Appendix C Sensitivity Analysis). While in the first situation, all rivals have the same military capability, this is clearly not the case in the second situation. In the latter case, rival 1 with a military capacity of 37 is undervalued. The descriptive statistics associated with this new measure are presented in Table C1.3 (Appendix C Sensitivity Analysis). The results obtained with this new measure are presented in Table C1.4 (Appendix C Sensitivity Analysis).

predictive performances of the algorithms are approximately equal to those of the logistic regressions.¹⁸

Figure 1.4 illustrates the contribution of each independent variable to explaining the outbreak of civil war. The higher the coefficient, the greater the contribution of the independent variable to the model studied. We find that the most important exogenous variables in explaining the outbreak of civil wars are the domestic variables. More specifically, these are the level of national wealth per capita and the size of the population. This result is consistent with the findings of previous work using the random forest algorithm. On the one hand, Muchlinski et al. (2015) consider the standard of living (GDP/capita) as the most important variable to explain the outbreak of civil wars; while for Toukan (2019) it is the size of the population. Moreover, we can also notice that the contribution of our independent variables of interest, $BP' direct_{t-1}$ and $BP' indirect_{t-1}$ are close to the previous variables. Thus, this result demonstrates that the role of the international context in explaining civil wars is more important than the variables traditionally considered in conflict analysis, such as ethnic or religious polarisation indices.

FIGURE 1.4 – Variable importance for random forest



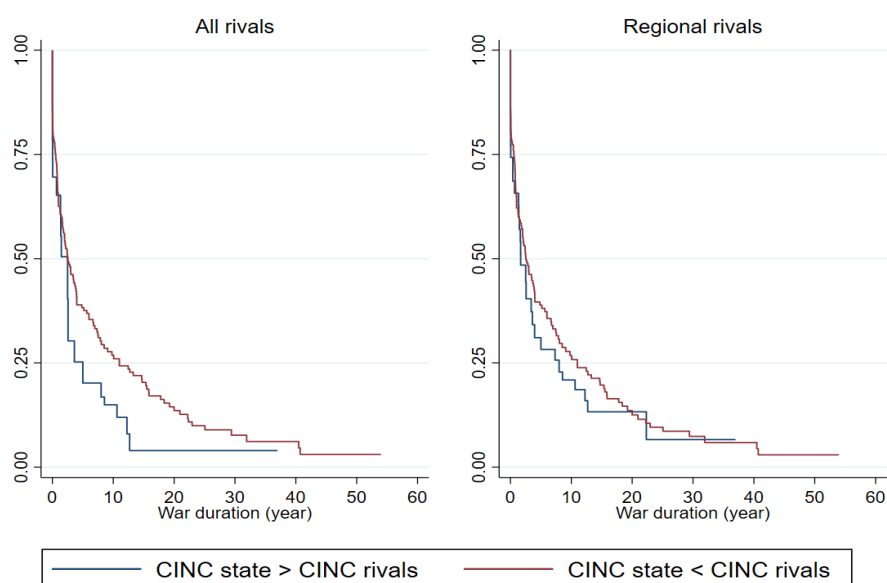
Source : Authors’s own elaboration.

18. Generally speaking, the higher the ROC curve (*Receiver Operating Characteristic*) is drawn to the left, the better the quality of the associated classifier.

1.6.2 Rivalry and Duration of Civil Wars

Figure 1.5 complements our previous result based on the Kaplan-Meier estimate for the duration of civil wars.¹⁹ This is a non-parametric estimate of the probability that the conflict will continue beyond a specific time. Thus, we can see that 25% of civil wars in which the military capacity of the rivals at the global level is greater than that of the focal country last more than 10 years, while this proportion is much lower in the opposite case. At the regional level, the same observation can be made, although the gap is smaller. The civil wars associated with the Cold War provide good examples. During this period, the social fractures introduced by the bipolar confrontation had an important role in the international positioning of many insurgencies. Examples include the civil wars in Angola (1975-2002), Ethiopia (1974-1991), Mozambique (1977-1992), El Salvador (1979-1992), and Burma (since 1948), among others. By receiving foreign support, the rebels gradually adapt to the government's military strategies and manage to develop a certain form of invulnerability. That's why [Bapatn \(2005\)](#) shows that in the long run, rebel groups have less incentive to negotiate with the government.

FIGURE 1.5 – Kaplan-Meier survival estimates



Source : Authors's own elaboration.

19. The data on the duration of civil wars comes from [Lujala et al. \(2007\)](#).

1.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, we demonstrate that taking indirect rivalries into account in the measurement of interstate rivalries contributes to the understanding of the phenomenon of civil wars. In this perspective, allies develop mutual assistance for offensive purposes. In order to limit the problems linked to information asymmetries and ‘commitment problem’, The economic literature emphasises the importance of a third party to ensure implementation and compliance (McBride & Skaperdas, 2014) between rival parties. Although it is very often supranational bodies that occupy this role of ‘third party’ to the conflict, some countries can also position themselves as mediators to contain information asymmetries between rival countries.

In particular, this mechanism may be made possible if two rival states, although not having a direct affinity, have a significant structural affinity. Indeed, the existence of a rivalry between two parties inherently indicates the absence of a direct affinity between them, i.e. a military and/or commercial alliance or similar political strategies. In contrast, structural affinity between states reflects an affinity in terms of similarity of ties with other states in the international system (Signorino & Ritter, 1999). For example, two states have a similar structural trade affinity if they import and export proportionally to the same countries, despite having no trade relations. By extension, different import and export choices to third countries indicate the absence of a structural trade affinity between states. In this sense, when two rival countries simultaneously have a structural trade affinity with a third country, the third country can act as a mediator between the rivals. One might therefore expect forms of rivalry between countries with structural affinity to be less intense than between rival countries without structural affinity, particularly in terms of the financing of insurgencies. To test this hypothesis, *SNA* tools are suited to the study of interstate relations.

Specifically, the metric of structural equivalence resulting from the *SNA* (Lorrain & White, 1971) makes it possible to study this type of affinity by identifying, for example, the actors who have similar economic links ‘to’ and ‘from’ other actors in the network (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

1.8 Appendix

Appendix A. Cross-Tabulation of Direct and Indirect Rivalries Observed Between Country Dyads

Table A1.1 - Cross-tabulation of direct and indirect rivalries observed between country dyads over the period 1970 - 2015

	$AR_t^4 = 0$ and $RA_t^4 = 0$	$AR_t^4 = 1$ and $RA_t^4 = 0$; or $AR_t^4 = 0$ and $RA_t^4 = 1$	$AR_t^4 = 1$ and $RA_t^4 = 1$	Total
$RD_t = 0$	-	0	48318	48318 (81,5%)
$RD_t = 1$	774	4364	5816	10954 (18,5%)
Total	774 (1,3%)	4364 (7,3%)	54134 (91,4%)	59272 (100%)

Appendix B. Descriptive Statistics

Table B1.1 - Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	P25	P50	P75
Conflict onset	6373	.01	.12	0	1	0	0	0
ln GDPpc	6047	7.57	1.64	4.05	11.69	6.22	7.38	8.8
ln Pop	6528	9.12	1.55	4.78	14.13	8.12	9.09	10.1
Xpolity	5905	1.57	4.87	-6	7	-3	3	7
Ethn. Pol.	5300	53.23	23.02	1.67	98.24	37.02	57.88	69.33
Rel. Pol.	5300	48.63	35.24	.12	100	12.19	51.61	83.55
ln mountainous (%)	6249	2.05	1.42	0	4.42	.69	2.28	3.21
Oil	6036	4.39	10.75	0	88.87	0	.01	1.77
<i>All rivals</i>								
Nbr. of rivals	6535	6.02	9.13	0	41	0	1	10
Nbr. of allies	6535	2.73	4.97	0	32	0	0	3
Nbr. of direct rivals	6535	1.25	1.96	0	15.73	0	1	2
Nbr. of indirect rivals	6535	4.76	7.89	0	33.03	0	0	8
<i>Regional rivals</i>								
Nbr. of rivals	6535	1.85	2.36	0	12	0	1	3
Nbr. of allies	6535	1.08	1.7	0	10	0	0	2
Nbr. of direct rivals	6535	.94	1.25	0	10.12	0	.93	1
Nbr. of indirect rivals	6535	.91	1.6	0	10	0	0	1
<i>Contiguous rivals</i>								
Nbr. rivaux	6535	.86	1.16	0	7	0	0	1
Nbr. of allies	6535	.31	.7	0	6	0	0	0
Nbr. of direct rivals	6535	.77	1.03	0	6	0	0	1
Nbr. of indirect rivals	6535	.09	.31	0	3	0	0	0

Table B1.2 - Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	P25	P50	P75
<i>All rivals</i>								
BP'	6535	.42	.46	0	1	0	0	.97
BP' direct	6535	.33	.41	0	1	0	0	.79
BP' indirect	6535	.34	.45	0	1	0	0	.94
<i>CINC</i> ^{allies}	6535	.34	.67	0	3.37	0	0	.17
<i>Regional rivals</i>								
BP'	6535	.35	.42	0	1	0	0	.86
BP' direct	6535	.27	.38	0	1	0	0	.67
BP' indirect	6535	.2	.36	0	1	0	0	.2
<i>CINC</i> ^{allies}	6535	.08	.21	0	1.61	0	0	.03
<i>Contiguous rivals</i>								
BP'	6535	.24	.36	0	1	0	0	.58
BP' direct	6535	.22	.35	0	1	0	0	.5
BP' indirect	6535	.03	.16	0	1	0	0	0
<i>CINC</i> ^{allies}	6535	.04	.19	0	1.72	0	0	0

Appendix C. Sensitivity Analysis

Table C1.1 - Balance of power between the focal state and rivals (ordinal variable) and civil wars between 1970 and 2015

	All rivals			Regional rivals			Contiguous rivals					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Cat2 _{t-1}	0.0273*** (0.0082)	0.119*** (0.0405)	0.0192** (0.009)	0.141*** (0.0499)	0.0327*** (0.0068)	0.136*** (0.0377)	0.0225** (0.0087)	0.168*** (0.053)	0.0227*** (0.0055)	0.121*** (0.0424)	0.0116* (0.0062)	0.148*** (0.060)
Cat3 _{t-1}	0.0297*** (0.006)	0.087*** (0.033)	0.0176** (0.007)	0.0973** (0.044)	0.0259*** (0.006)	0.0878*** (0.033)	0.0167** (0.007)	0.0855* (0.048)	0.0219*** (0.005)	0.0927** (0.041)	0.0093 (0.005)	0.0953 (0.063)
CINC ^{Allies} _{t-1}	-0.0014 (0.0019)	0.0195 (0.0161)	-0.0009 (0.0032)	0.0112 (0.0263)	-0.003 (0.0062)	-0.0114 (0.0376)	-0.0033 (0.0106)	-0.034 (0.0455)	-0.0008 (0.0056)	0.0194 (0.0409)	-0.0280 (0.0262)	-0.0372 (0.116)
<i>N</i>	6219	1426	4099	812	6219	1426	4099	812	6219	1426	4099	812
Contr. var.	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>
Country FE	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>

Reading notes : Robust standard errors in parentheses with ***, **, * and * respectively denoting significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels.

All regressions are performed with corrections for temporal autocorrelation.

Table C1.2 - Hypothetical cases of military capabilities

	$CINC_{riv1}$	$CINC_{riv2}$	$CINC_{riv3}$	$CINC_{riv4}$	Total
first case	10	10	10	10	40
second case	37	1	1	1	40

In order to take into account the existing heterogeneity in the military capability of rivals, we propose to use the indicator (1.6), where all military capabilities are squared.

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} BP_{it}^{hetero} = 1 - \frac{(CINC_{it}^{std})^2}{\sum_{j=1}^N (CINC_{jt}^{std})^2 \times \omega_{ij}^{std}} \quad \text{if } (CINC_{it}^{std})^2 < \sum_{j=1}^N (CINC_{jt}^{std})^2 \\ 0 \quad \text{otherwise} \end{array} \right. \quad (1.6)$$

The descriptive statistics associated with this new measure are presented in Table [Table C1.3](#) below. The results obtained with this new measure are presented in [Table C1.4](#). All regressions are performed with corrections for temporal autocorrelation. We note that our previous results persist. The measure of the ratio of power between a country and its indirect rivals does have a positive and significant effect on the occurrence of civil wars. This result is globally stable across all specifications.

Table C1.3 - Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	P25	P50	P75
<i>All rivals</i>								
BP ^{hetero} direct	6535	.37	.45	0	1	0	0	.94
BP ^{hetero} indirect	6535	.35	.47	0	1	0	0	.99
<i>Regional rivals</i>								
BP ^{hetero} direct	6535	.31	.43	0	1	0	0	.85
BP ^{hetero} indirect	6535	.22	.4	0	1	0	0	.09
<i>Contiguous rivals</i>								
BP ^{hetero} direct	6535	.26	.4	0	1	0	0	.66
BP ^{hetero} indirect	6535	.04	.18	0	1	0	0	0

Table C1.4 - Heterogeneous power relations between focal and rival states (direct and indirect rivals) and civil wars between 1970 and 2015

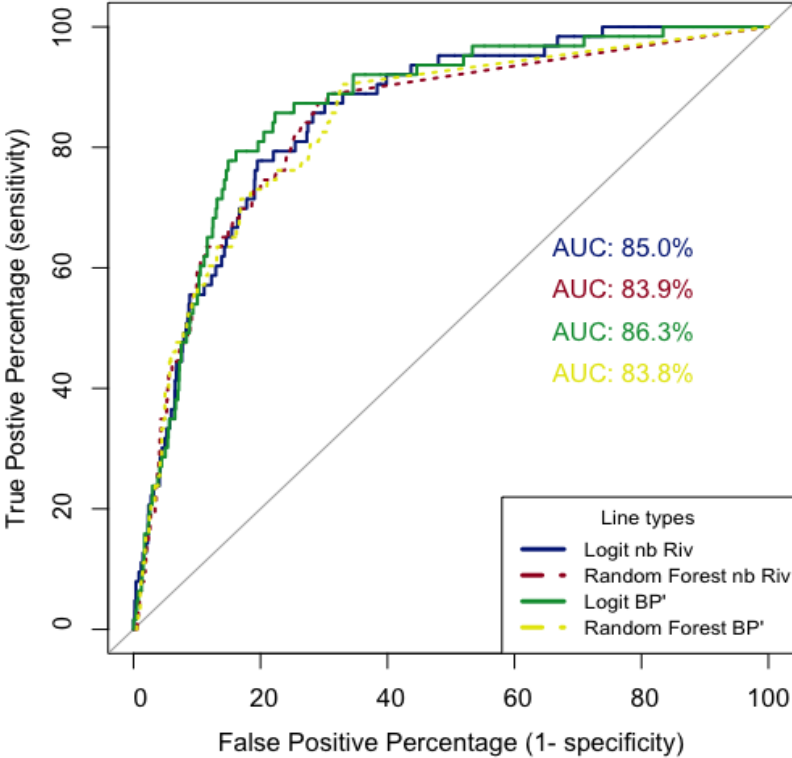
	All rivals					Regional rivals				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
$BP^{hetero} \text{ direct}_{t-1}$	0.00522 (0.00548)	0.0343 (0.0341)	0.00236 (0.00655)	0.0328 (0.0486)		0.00707* (0.00374)	-0.0199 (0.0318)	0.00987* (0.00506)	-0.0196 (0.0430)	
$BP^{hetero} \text{ indirect}_{t-1}$	0.0138** (0.00550)	0.0529** (0.0242)	0.0149*** (0.00553)	0.0663** (0.0300)	0.0725*** (0.0284)	0.00405 (0.00375)	0.0894*** (0.0276)	0.000855 (0.00448)	0.0703** (0.0345)	0.0662** (0.0324)
$CINC_{t-1}^{Allies}$	-0.00225 (0.00215)	0.00714 (0.0157)	-0.00271 (0.00355)	-0.00826 (0.0235)	-0.00105 (0.0204)	-0.00400 (0.00669)	-0.0184 (0.0397)	-0.00895 (0.0116)	-0.0268 (0.0479)	-0.0356 (0.0455)
N	6219	1426	4305	898	898	6219	1426	4305	898	898
control variables	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>
Country FE	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>

Reading notes : Robust standard errors in parentheses with ***, ** and * respectively denoting significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% levels.

All regressions are performed with corrections for temporal autocorrelation.

Appendix D. Comparing ROC Curves

Figure D1 - Comparing ROC Curves



Source : Authors's own elaboration.

Chapter 2

**What are the Main Modes of Regime
Change Opposed to Democratization? A
Historical and Comparative Analysis of
Patterns of Decline of Democratic
Attributes**

2.1 Introduction

The literature on political changes¹ has been plethoric during the second part of the 20th century. After having been focused on authoritarian regimes between the 1930s and the 1960s, it massively oriented its focus on democratic transitions from the 1970s to the 1990s, as the “third wave of democratization” (Huntington, 1991) took place in Latin America, Southern Europe, Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Since the early 2000s, the literature on autocratization has regained attention as a “third reverse wave” seems to be underway. Indeed, many political regimes in developed and developing countries have permanently or transitionary drifted away from democracy since the end of the Cold War. The forms taken by these instances of autocratization - the processes of regime change opposite to democratization - have been highly diverse, with the most recent case being the illiberal democracies of Orbán’s Hungary and Modi’s India. They look also very distinctive from the autocratic regimes that were observed around World War II and were analysed between the 1920s and 1970s. Indeed, the contemporary process of autocratization has changed, particularly within democracies, becoming more challenging to detect empirically as it now tends to erode slowly and discreetly, often masked by legal mechanisms, in contrast to the more abrupt and conspicuous manifestations of the past (Bermeo, 2016; Coppedge, 2017; Mechkova et al., 2017).

While the re-emergence of autocratization since the 1990s has had detrimental effects on affected populations, the existing literature on this trend has been notably fragmented and incomplete. Long-run and cross-regional evidence of this reverse trend has so far been scarce.² While the wave of autocratization had been widely studied in the interwar and post-World War II (Linz & Stepan, 1978; Bermeo, 2003), comprehensive knowledge of the shape and intensity of the current reverse trend and how it relates or contrasts with past instances of autocratization is lacking. Existing empirical studies of the “third reverse wave” have essentially focused on small-N regional samples, like the former communist region (e.g. Fish, 2001), Latin America (e.g. Mainwaring & Pérez-Liñán, 2014) or Africa

1. Regime change is a transformation in the formal and informal institutions that regulate how to assign and exercise political authority in a country (Eckstein & Gurr, 1975).

2. For an exception, see Tomini, 2017.

(e.g. [Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011](#)). So far and to the best of our knowledge, there has been no empirical analysis of the patterns of autocratization based on a comprehensive set of countries over a very long period. Equally, there has been no tentative typology based on such a comprehensive data set before the present study.

In addition, there has been confusion in the literature about what should be considered empirical evidence of the autocratization process, whatever the period observed. There is notably no clear and comparative understanding of what the processes of regime change opposite to democratization are made of and of the diversity of their forms. For instance, the autocratization processes that are currently striking Russia and Turkey are not necessarily comparable in their making and in their incidence. Nor has the potential heterogeneity of the historical forms taken by these moves been mapped to date. The characteristics of the autocratization cases that happened during the Cold War or after independence are significantly distinct from those featured by the democratic regressions observed today in Turkey or Hungary. The lack of a common definition and typology based on a sufficiently large sample of historical episodes explains why researchers tend to disagree as to the real significance of this phenomenon today ([Cassani & Tomini, 2019](#)). While some scholars contend that the world has never been as democratic ([Mechkova et al., 2017](#)), developed ([Runciman, 2018](#)) and emancipated ([Norris, 2017](#)) as it is today, others claim that a genuine decline of democracy is currently occurring globally ([Diamond, 2002](#); [Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2019](#)).

In order to fill this gap, this study proposes a new approach to identifying and classifying episodes of autocratization and more generally of political regime moves away from democracy. These episodes represent continuous periods marked by a significant decline in democratic features within a regime, regardless of the initial level of democracy. In this study, we refer to them as episodes of democratic regression. The existing empirical evidence ([Sartori, 1987](#); [Collier & Adcock, 1999](#)) generally assesses autocratization or democratic regression episodes by comparing a limited set of qualitative and quantitative attributes of one country's political regime at the beginning and the end of the spell. The most common classifications in the literature focus on the criteria of duration and/or intensity of regime changes and distinguish rapid and sudden regime collapses from slower and gradual ones

(G. O' Donnell, 1992; Schmitter, 1994; Schedler, 1998). The main limitation of this approach is that it says nothing about how the process of democratic regression unfolds in practice and how they substantially differ across countries and periods. As a first attempt to address this weakness, Bermeo (2016) develops a classification contrasting the characteristics of contemporary democratic regression episodes (damaging electoral institutions through promissory coups, executive power aggrandizement or strategic manipulation of elections) from those of past ones (classic coups, executive coups, and blatant electoral fraud on election day). Nevertheless, his classification is not exhaustive and is based on a limited sample of countries with democratic regimes.

In this chapter, episodes of democratic regression are first identified over a large set of countries and over the long term and described and classified according to the specific way the process occurs in each episode. We build on the approach of Lührmann & Lindberg (2019) defining autocratization or democratic regression episodes as a substantial change on a composite index of democracy during a continuous time spell. Based on this widely accepted approach, we first identify a sample of episodes of autocratization or move away from democracy from a large set of world countries over the period 1900-2019. Based on this, we can show that autocratization episodes are scattered over the whole period and that their pattern changed after the end of the Cold War, both in terms of the regions affected and of the regimes affected by this phenomenon. Then, these episodes, and the changes constitutive of them, are compared and classified over a comprehensive set of attributes of democratic regimes. From different disciplinary literatures, we draw a comprehensive set of thirteen attributes of democracy that are observed in all the sample's individual episodes. The selected set of attributes covers both procedural (*de jure*) and substantive (*de facto*) requirements of democracy and covers the whole range of formal definitions of a democratic regime found in the literature, from the minimalist to the maximalist. A mixed method of classification is then applied to the thirteen selected variables to classify the individual autocratization episodes in our sample into distinctive and internally homogenous groups.³

3. Our mixed-method uses hierarchical ascendant classification, with the relevant partition consolidating through k-means analysis.

Our cluster analysis allows identifying four distinctive clusters of autocratization modes over a long period (from 1900 to 2019), that is four distinct sets of episodes featuring similar vectors of democracy attributes deterioration :⁴ the “**democratic crumbling**” mode corresponding to a slow and incremental erosion of a political system’s democratic quality, essentially in the dimensions of electoral process and the political rights and balances ; the “**electoral capture**” mode consisting of significant and radical regressions in two main dimensions of the elective process, the appointment of the ruler by-elections and the effective freedom and fairness of election ; the “**autocratic worsening**” mode taking the form of a long spell of progressive regression of all dimensions of political rights and civil liberties and of substantial deteriorations of political competition and of judicial and legislative constraints on the executive ; the “**radical autocratization**” mode groups the most sudden and deepest episodes of democratic regression through total control of electoral process and repression of individual political rights and liberties.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows. [Section 2.2](#) elaborates on our conceptual framework for the comparative analysis of democratic regression episodes. The comprehensive list of democratic attributes is showcased in [Section 2.3](#). Data, variables and empirical strategy are described in [Section 2.4](#). [Section 2.5](#) presents the main findings. Finally, [Section 2.6](#) concludes.

2.2 What is Democracy’s Regression ? Our Conceptual Framework

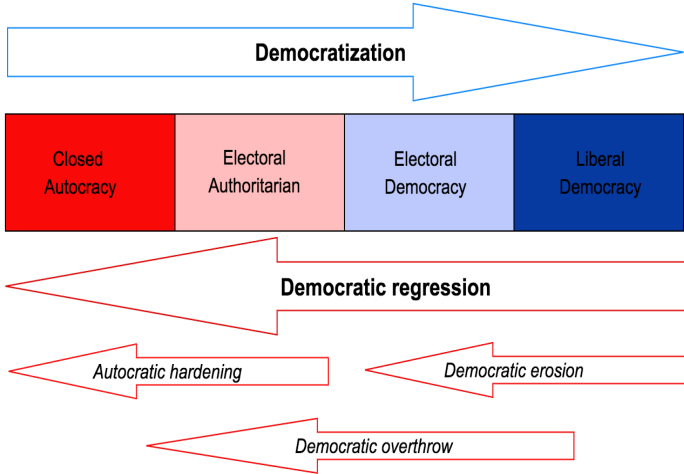
The literature on political regime changes away from democracy is fragmented. This is primarily due to conceptual disagreements over the definition of autocratisation and the many distinct forms that this process can take ([Cassani & Stepan, 2018](#)). Scholars notably disagree on what should or should not be considered empirical evidence of this process. Should it be limited to the transition from democracy to autocracy, as the classical literature does ([Linz & Stepan, 1978](#)) or should it be extended to any shift involving hybrid regimes or even to the episodes of loss of democratic qualities in autocracies ([Cassani & Stepan, 2018](#)). The concept of democracy’s regression used in this study has the great

4. To avoid forced assignment, our analysis allows for a fifth group including episodes that defy classification in clearly established categories, that is where singular could be identified from our data.

virtue of covering all the forms of political regime change opposed to democratization that have been studied in this field of research to date.

In this chapter, we adopt a comprehensive approach and use the term democracy’s regression to refer to any move away from democracy, leading to less democratic or more autocratic situations. We claim that this term has validity whatever its initial level of democracy. This concept therefore potentially covers different subtypes of regime change, from the mere democracy’s erosion (Plattner, 2014), i.e. the weakening of democratic qualities in democratic regimes to democratic overthrow (Huntington, 1991), i.e. the collapse of a democratic regime to an authoritarian one, or else autocratic hardening (Walker, 2016), that is the weakening of some democratic qualities in autocratic regimes (see Figure 2.1).

FIGURE 2.1 – Conceptualisation of episodes of democratization and autocratization and their subtypes



Reading notes : The democratic regressions (democratization) are indicated in red (blue). The subtypes of democratic regression are in italics. The regime typology is based on the Regimes of the World (RoW) typology (Lührmann et al., 2018).
Source : Author’s own elaboration.

We prefer this term to “autocratization”, commonly used in this field for various reasons. First, there is conceptual confusion about what is “autocratization”. While some such as Cassani & Stepan (2018 : p.692) define it positively as “a process of regime change towards autocracy that makes politics increasingly exclusive and monopolistic, and political power increasingly repressive and arbitrary”, others like Lührmann & Lindberg, (2019 :

p.1099) have proposed a negative definition of autocratization as “*a move away from [full] democracy*”. Secondly, whatever its definition, the term tends to exclude all the changes that do not turn democratic regimes into full autocracies. This is notably the case of the illiberal shifts of democratic regimes that have been pervasive in the last two decades over the world. Instead, we use the term “democratic regression” as an overarching concept Collier et al. (2010) that can lead to the turn of democracy into autocracy but also to the deterioration of democratic characteristics in an autocracy or a democracy. Lastly, we believe this term is more consistent with the assumption of hybrid regimes that was put forward in the 2000s after the “*unprecedented growth in the number of regimes that are neither clearly democratic nor conventionally authoritarian*” (Diamond, 2002 : p.25) that accompanied the Cold War’s end. Likewise, Karl (1995) introduced the term ‘hybrid regime’ to describe those regimes that contain both democratic and authoritarian forms of government, as they lie in a “grey zone” between fully democratic regimes on the one hand and closed authoritarian regimes on the other (Carothers, 2002).

2.3 From Definitions to the List of Attributes of Democracy

2.3.1 Minimalist and Maximalist Definitions of Democracy

Any conceptualization of democracy has to start with a clear understanding of “*what a democracy is ... and is not*” (Schmitter & Karl, 1991 : p.76). However, democracy is a contested and complex concept for which there is no single, universally accepted definition in political science (Collier & Adcock, 1999). All the definitions of democracy can in fact be placed on a continuum ranging from a minimalist or ‘thin’ approach to a maximalist or ‘thick’ approach.

The minimalist or ‘thin’ approach deliberately focuses on the smallest possible number of attributes. It is rooted in the Schumpeterian (Schumpeter, 1974[1942]) definition of democracy as a regime in which political representatives compete for the vote of the people.⁵

5. Schumpeter (1974[1942] : p.269) defines the democratic method as an “*institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote*”. Przeworski et al. (2000) have refined and expanded the Schumpeterian approach by emphasizing on government, defining democracy as “*a regime in which those who govern are*

Nonetheless, for [Schumpeter \(1974\[1942\]\)](#) a country can be classified as a democracy provided there is genuine electoral competition for the main political offices, even if the election has moderate defects like lack of competitiveness and inclusiveness ([Møller & Skaaning, 2011](#)). Consistently, a second critical criterion was added to the minimalist definition of contestation and competition, saying that if an election is to be competitive, it must be multiparty, free and fair.⁶ For an election to be competitive, voters must have at least two choices. Still, the condition of a multiparty election is not sufficient, as illustrated by [Kendall-Taylor & Frantz \(2015\)](#)'s observation that more than 80% of dictatorships regularly allowed multiparty elections. This led [Przeworski et al. \(2000 : p.16\)](#) to specify that “*contestation occurs when there exists an opposition that has some chance of winning office as a consequence of elections*”. In other words, the election is fully competitive if it is free, i.e. opposition parties are allowed to campaign on an equal footing, and fair, i.e. there is no fraud or intimidation giving unreasonable advantage to some groups or parties or constraining the voter's choice ([Elklit & Svensson, 1997](#)). For example, although several candidates were allowed to run for Russia's 2018 presidential election, the election was not free since Vladimir Putin's victory was guaranteed by the opposition's limited capacity to effectively compete. In a nutshell, for the minimalist definition, the mere holding of free and fair elections where the electorate has a choice between different political platforms competing on an equal footing qualifies a regime as democratic.

The minimalist conception privileges elections over other dimensions (the essence of democracy in this approach lies in the people's ability to replace one government with another regularly). However, an election cannot be fully democratic if significant portions of the population cannot freely participate without adequate guarantees of political liberties, as underlined by [Dahl \(1971 ; 1989 ; 1998\)](#).⁷ Most reference works ([Collier & Levitsky, 1997 ; Diamond et al., 1989 ; Møller & Skaaning, 2011](#)) are close to the definitional framework

selected through contested election” [boldface added by the author] ([Przeworski et al., 2000 : p.15](#)). In this study, we refer to this dimension as the “elected officials' requirement”.

6. Free election means the right and the opportunity to choose one thing over another. Fair election means an impartial election, that is no people (or group) has an unreasonable advantage, and oppositions are able to campaign on a relatively even footing ([Elklit & Svensson, 1997](#)).

7. Advocates of Schumpeterian views argue that the relationship between democracy and civil liberties should be treated as an empirical fact rather than a definitional feature of democracy ([Boix et al., 2013 ; Przeworski et al., 2000](#)).

developed by Robert Dahl, which looks more restrictive than the minimal standards of democracy enumerated by the thin definition and based on observational traits rather than on theoretical conditions. As Dahl sees democracy as an ideal system without empirical references, he prefers using the term “*polyarchy*” to describe the countries meeting the empirical requirements of a democracy (Dahl 1971 ; 1989 ; 1998). These requirements are listed in the box below.⁸

Dahl’s polyarchies (1971 ; 1989 ; 1998)

These requirements are the six “institutional guarantees” of a polyarchy (Dahl, 1998 : p.85) that permit public opposition and establish citizens rights to participate in politics :

1- Elected officials : Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in officials elected by citizens.

Thus modern, large-scale democratic governments are representative.

2- Free, fair, and frequent elections : Elected officials are chosen in frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.

3- Freedom of expression : Citizens have a right to express themselves without danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined, including criticism of officials, the government, the regime, the socioeconomic order, and the prevailing ideology.

4- Access to alternative sources of information : Citizens have a right to seek out alternative and independent sources of information from other citizens, experts, newspapers, magazines, books, telecommunications, and the like. Moreover, alternative sources of information actually exist that are not under the control of the government or any other single political group attempting to influence public political beliefs and attitudes, and these alternative sources are effectively protected by law.

5- Associational autonomy : To achieve their various rights, including those required for the effective operation of democratic political institutions, citizens also have a right to form relatively independent associations or organizations, including independent political parties and interest groups.

6- Inclusive citizenship : No adult permanently residing in the country and subject to its laws can be denied the rights that are available to others and are necessary to the five political institutions just listed.

8. Initially, Dahl, 1971 had eight requirements to define a polyarchy. To the six previously cited in Dahl (1998 : p.85), he added “eligibility for public office” and “institutions to make government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference”. The first requirement is excluded because eligibility and suffrage tend to go hand in hand (Coppedge & Reinicke, 1990) and because several of the aspects of “freedom of organization” (like running in elections) capture much of the eligibility criteria. The last criterion is also dropped because it is instead a rough approximation (a proxy) of all the other institutional requirements taken together, and not the least by the mechanism of free, fair, and regular multiparty elections (Teorell et al., 2016).

Robert Dahl adds the procedural requirement of inclusiveness, which is not part of the minimalist definition and refers to the normative ideal of popular sovereignty. Indeed, without genuine inclusiveness, an election may exclude significant portions of the population from the struggle for power or the promotion and defence of their interests. The existence of any *de jure* restriction on participation in polls and on running for office based on class, education, ethnicity, gender or religion may exclude significant portions of the population from the struggle for power and from the promotion and defence of group interests.⁹ In our analysis, we define inclusiveness as the right for all adult members of a given country to be political citizens by freely voting and being elected. They are “*political citizens*” (G. O' Donnell, 2001 : p.15). To make effective political competitiveness and people political inclusiveness of all adults, the existence of political liberties is required. To quote Diamond : “*democracy requires not only free, fair, and competitive elections, but also the freedoms that make them truly meaningful*” (Diamond, 2000 : p.21). Dahl's concept of polyarchy encompasses such components of political liberties as individual freedom to vote and stand for election, freedom to express and publish dissenting opinions, availability of alternative sources of information and freedom to form and join organizations which are *de facto* conditions.

Because they focus excessively on the electoral process, the two previous conceptions have been criticized for the “fallacy of electoralism” (Karl, 1995 : p.79). Because elections occur only periodically, they are not sufficient for securing democracy between two successive polls (Karl, 1995 ; Schmitter & Karl, 1991).¹⁰ Empirical evidence has accumulated since the 1980s that many countries have competitive elections while failing to respect civil and political liberties (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Excessive focus on elections may also create a “curse of low expectations” through which undemocratic leaders are encouraged to

9. Based on this attribute, researchers question whether the United States was fully democratic before the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which allowed African Americans to fully exercise their right to vote (Graziella & Dimico, 2011).

10. Karl (1975 : p.78) reminds us that : “*however central to democracy, elections occur intermittently and only allow citizens to choose between the highly aggregated alternatives offered by political parties, which can, especially in the early stages of a democratic transition, proliferate in a bewildering variety*”. In other words, because election occurs periodically, they are not sufficient to secure democracy in between elections (Karl, 1995 ; Schmitter & Karl, 1991).

continue doing the bare minimum since they are perceived positively by the international community for holding elections, be they flawed (Klaas, 2019 : p.81).

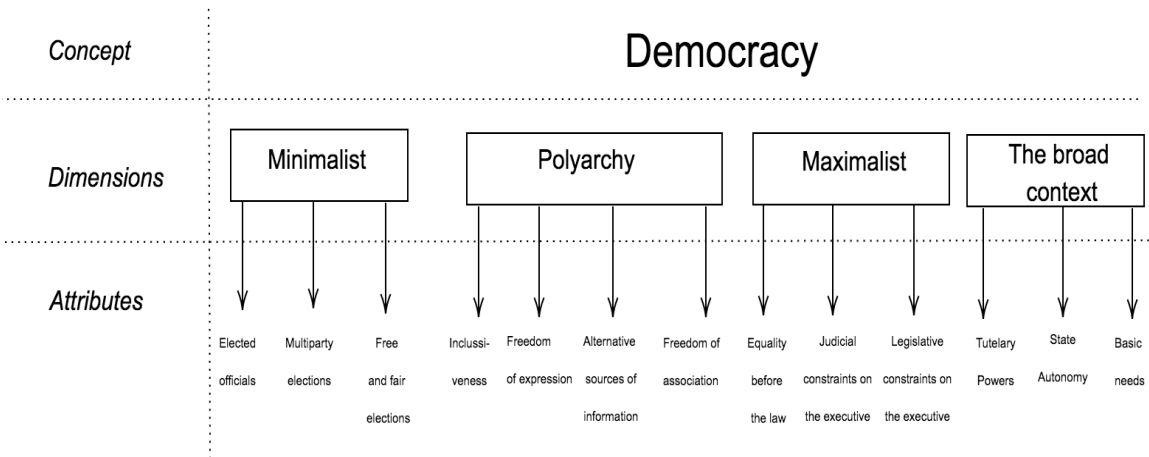
Although they generally agree that the attributes put forward by Schumpeter and Dahl shall constitute the core of the concept of democracy, a majority of scholars have come to judge Schumpeter's and Dahl's definitions too minimalist (Held, 2006) and push for maximalist definitions that prove more consistent with the experience of contemporary liberal democracies (Diamond, 2015). In addition to meeting the criteria of a polyarchy, liberal democracies must first respect the rule of law, that is the legal system in which publicly known, unambiguous and equally applied laws are designed and enforced to defend the political and civil rights of the entire population (G. O' Donnell, 2001). In such systems, all public and private officials and individuals are submitted to legally established controls of their actions, in other words, no one is *de legibus solutus* [free from laws, not bound by laws]. As is customary in this field of research, the rule of law is divided into two subcomponents : horizontal accountability and fundamental civil rights. Horizontal accountability results from the division of powers and requires judicial and legislative constraints on the executive. The exercise of power by the executive is thus limited and its responsiveness and accountability are guaranteed at all times, not just periodically, through elections (Merkel, 2004). Fundamental civil rights protect individuals against acts of the legislature or executive or any "tyranny of the majority" (De Tocqueville (1992[1835-1840] : p.310) infringing on their individual freedom (Linz & Stepan, 1996). They include personal liberties (e.g. freedom of religion, freedom of foreign and domestic movement), security (e.g. against unlawful arrest, exile, terror, torture), economic rights (e.g. private property and entrepreneurship), but also equal treatment before the law.

2.3.2 Our Working List of Democracy Attributes

The three definitions found in the literature can be conveniently articulated on a logical scale, with the most demanding definitions encompassing the least ones. Figure 2.2 shows that at one extreme, the minimalist definition incorporates exclusively *de jure* procedural criteria relating to the democracy's political method through elections ; the Dahl's multi-attributes definition of democracy as a polyarchy (Dahl, 1971 ; Dahl, 1989 ; Dahl, 1998)

which stands between the minimalist and maximalist definitions has become a major reference point in the political science literature on democracy as it corrects the electoral bias of the minimalist approach by merging a set of attributes that guarantee and support democracy between elections. At the other extreme, the maximalist definition complements the *de jure* attributes relating to the electoral method and the sum of political civil rights and liberties that consolidate democracy with a set of substantive (*de facto*) attributes. For the maximalist view, the presence of democratic institutions is a necessary but insufficient condition to fully characterize a political system as democratic. The latter has to be judged based on such substantive outcomes as the degree of achievement of public good, the representation of citizens' preferences and the improvement of political participation (Munck & Verkuilen, 2002). Put together, all the *de jure* and *de facto* attributes reported in Figure 2.2 take part in our working definition in this chapter.

FIGURE 2.2 – Conceptual framework



Source : Author’s own elaboration

Last but not least, we added a fourth definitional component “broad context” which not strictly speaking an attribute but is treated as such in our study. This context groups additional conditions not consubstantial to political institutions, yet contributing to the effectiveness of the core attributes detailed above. First, effective governance requires that elected representatives are those who govern. This condition requires the absence of tutelary powers, that is actors such as the military or religious authority that are non-elected and not subject to democratic accountability that might hold (final) decision-making power in

specific policy areas (Diamond, 2002; Merkel, 2004; Schedler, 2002; Schmitter & Karl, 1991).¹¹

The condition of effective governance also requires state autonomy, that is, independence of the national state from the influence of other states in the conduct of its domestic and foreign policy.¹² Lastly, various authors have argued that functional democracies require political equality, primarily through equal distribution of resources and access to education, health and decent living conditions (S. Berman, 2006; Dahl, 1989; Diamond & Morlino, 2004). Not only is access to health, education or decent work a necessary condition for a decent living, but it also ensures that individuals are physically and mentally able to participate in the political process and fully exercise their civil and political rights (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 1999). The greater the inequality in a society, the more disproportionate the elites' influence on disempowered people. This issue is highly political. A minimum level of welfare and basic education is a fundamental condition for effective participation (Diamond & Morlino, 2004). However, it is also a means to reduce the political advantage of the wealthy (Beetham, 2004). Since social and economic inequalities can translate into political domination (Dahl, 2006), the equal distribution of resources (tangible and intangible) across all socio-economic categories needs to be considered as another necessary condition for the effectiveness of democracy.

2.4 Data, Measurement and Method

We carry out our study using data from the Institute for Varieties of Democracy project - The V-Dem dataset Version 10 (Coppedge et al. 2020b). Our dataset is based on country-year observations and covers all years from 1900 to 2019 for a total number of 14,554

11. While this can be taken for granted in old democracies, it is not the case in younger democracies such as Latin America and Asia. In some of these countries, the military still has reserved policy domains, especially in foreign policy and national security, which severely limits the authority of elected officials. In this case, elections are meaningless because : *“they do not generate, or they cease to generate, some of the basic consequences they are supposed to bring about”* (G. O' Donnell, 2001 : p.14). Another example is given by Iran, where both the president and parliament are elected by the people, while the Supreme Leader holds effective power over significant aspects of national policy.

12. By referring to formally sovereign nation-states, Dahl and other contemporary theorists of democracy generally take this condition for granted. Nonetheless, with the emergence of blocs, alliances, spheres of influence or “neocolonial” arrangements, the autonomy of certain “nation-states” is actually only limited (Schmitter & Karl, 1991).

observations. It is an unbalanced panel of 182 countries, as countries enter and leave the sample at different periods. The average number of years per country is 80, with a minimum of 9 years and a maximum of 120 years.

The first step of our study is to identify episodes of democratic regression, i.e. periods associated with a substantial decline in democratic regime attributes. We could identify 166 episodes of democratic regression in 100 countries between 1900 and 2019.¹³ We present our method of constructing this sample of episodes in [Subsection 2.4.1](#). In the second step, we perform a multidimensional classification of these episodes based on the pattern of deterioration of democratic attributes that best characterize each of them. The review of the literature of [Subsection 2.3.2](#) enabled us to select thirteen attributes of democracy for which initial and final levels as well as variations could be computed over each episode of democratic regression. Additional information about the episodes is brought to the analysis by additional variables not used in the classification. These additional variables allow us to link our results to the typology proposed in [Subsection 2.5.3](#) and to dialogue with the existing literature that inspired this typology. The active and the additional variables will be presented in [Subsection 2.4.2](#). Finally, the classification methodology will be presented in the [Subsection 2.4.3](#).

2.4.1 Identifying Democratic Regression Episodes

We proceed in two steps to identify episodes of democratic regression and democratization. In the first step, we identify potential episodes. Then, we exclude episodes that involve only a minor change in a second step. Before presenting our results for these two steps, we introduce the index on which these episodes are calculated.

We use the Liberal democracy index (*v2x_libdem*) to identify episodes of democratic regression and democratization. This index combines two indices : the Electoral Democracy Index (*v2x_polyarchy*) and the Liberal Component Index (*v2x_liberal*). The Electoral Democracy Index is rooted in Dahl’s conceptualization and measures whether regimes meet the requirements of a “polyarchy” ([Coppedge et al. 2020a](#)). The Liberal Component Index

13. This result is consistent with the literature. For example, [Pelke & Croissant \(2021\)](#) identified 165 episodes in 100 countries from 1900 to 2019 with the same index.

is rooted in the liberal principle of democracy which ensures the constitutional protection of civil liberties, the strength of the rule of law, an independent judiciary, and effective checks and balances that, together, limit the exercise of executive power (Coppedge et al. 2020a). The Liberal democracy index operates on a continuous spectrum ranging from 0 to 1, where higher values signify a greater degree of democracy.

First Step : Identification of Potential Episodes of Democratic Regression and Democratization

Based on the methodology of Lührmann & Lindberg (2019) a potential episode of democratic regression (democratization) episode starts with a decrease (increase) of 0.01 from year t to year $t-1$ in the Liberal democracy index ($v2x_libdem$). This relatively low threshold (1% on the continuous scale from 0 to 1) makes it possible to finely identify the beginning of episodes of progressive democratic regression (democratization). Moreover, this threshold is not all that low, since 69% of all V-Dem country-year observations from 1900 to 2019 (10,048 out of the 14,554) had an annual change in the Liberal democracy index $\in] -0.01 : 0.01[$.¹⁴ Therefore, the regime change below this threshold can be equated with noise.¹⁵

Episodes of democratic regression (democratization) end when there is no further decrease (increase) of 0.01 or more from one year to the next over four years, or if the index increases (decreases) by 0.01 points or more in any of these years. There were respectively 1,073 and 1,197 potential episodes of democratic regression and democratization between 1900 and 2019. Once the starting point of an episode of change is identified, we follow it as long as

14. The positive change higher than 0,01 captures 2 738 country years, about 19% of our sample. The median positive change is 0.023 while the mean is 0.042, which suggests that the distribution is skewed to the right by a few large positive changes. The negative change lower than -0,01 captures 1 768 country-year, about 12%. The median negative change is -0.02 while the mean is -0.038, which suggests that the distribution is skewed to the left by a few large negative changes.

15. Due to the methodology in the construction of the indicator, minor differences from one year to the next can therefore be recorded without indicating a real change. Indeed, the variables used in the formula for the two V-DEM aggregated indicators use a Bayesian item response theory measurement model to aggregate country year estimates along with highest-posterior densities for each variable, from a set of country-expert ratings. There is therefore a certain amount of measurement error associated with each score for each country (Coppedge et al., 2020a). Moreover, as we have pointed out, this index is the result of the aggregation of two indices with more than 40 and 25 components for the $v2x_polyarchy$ and $v2x_liberal$ respectively. Thus, in order to achieve a change of 0.01 on the Liberal democracy index, there must be a general agreement among the coders.

there is a continuous decline (increase) of the index. Like [Lührmann & Lindberg \(2019\)](#), we allow up to four years of temporary stagnation (no further decline (increase) of 0.01 points on the index) to reflect the concept of a slow-moving process, that may advance intermittently under the guidance of a cautious autocrat, for example.

Second Step : Detecting Manifest Episodes of Democratic Regression and Democratization

In the second step, we compute the overall magnitude of change during each episode by calculating the difference between the score of Liberal democracy index (*v2x_libdem*) in the year before each potential episode's inception and the score at the end of it. We code as a manifest episode of democratic regression (democratization) any episode that records a change of at least - (+) 0.1 (10% of the full scale from 0 to 1) on the index. This threshold avoids measurement errors by excluding minor changes and is low enough to capture gradual regime changes.

2.4.2 Measuring Changes of the Thirteen Attributes of Democracy

[Table A2.1](#) in the [Appendix A](#) contains further information on the variables we use in our study for measuring the thirteen attributes selected by the literature review. For each of these thirteen attributes, we also measure the score difference between the year prior to the episode and the year ending the episode. A positive change thus reflects a deterioration of the index. From this simple computation, we obtain a “profile” of democratic regression for each episode of democratic regression that is present in our sample, that is, a mapping of the changes on all thirteen attributes. Summary statistics and correlations are presented in [Table A2.2](#) and [A2.3](#) in the [Appendix A](#) respectively.

Active Variables

Minimalist attributes : This conception has two critical criteria. The first is the appointment of the ruler by-elections, what we call elected officials (*v2x_elecoff*). The second is the competitiveness of an election that we measure through two distinct attributes : if the elections are multiparty (*v2elmulpar*) and if they are free and fair (*v2x_elfrefair*).

Polyarchy attributes : In addition to the attributes of the minimalist definition, the first requirement of polyarchy definition is the right for citizens to participate in elections and run for office. We combine the variables universal suffrage (*v2x suffr*) and candidate restriction (*v2x v2elrstrct*) into a single variable to add more variance. Indeed, these two variables have a strongly leptokurtic and right-shifted distribution, indicating more frequent high values. The inclusiveness variable is the sum of the variables of universal suffrage and candidate restriction scores. The other sub-dimensions are the Dahliann political liberties, namely freedom of expression (*v2x freexp*), freedom of association (*v2x frassoc thick*) and alternative sources of information (*v2xme altinf*).

Maximalist attributes : In addition to the attributes of the Polyarchy definition, an additional set of requirements is required that ensure the rule of law. The first attribute is horizontal accountability which requires that all public and private agents are subject to appropriate and legally established controls on the legality of their actions. We measure this sub-dimension with two attributes : the judicial (*v2x jucon*) and legislative constraints on the executive (*v2xlg legcon*). The second sub-dimension is the fundamental civil rights, which we measure through equality before the law and individual liberty (*v2xcl rol*).

As for the **Broad context attributes**, the first requirement is the effective governing power that we measure by two attributes. The first one is the absence of tutelary powers i.e. elected officials are subject to unelected authority. The second one is the state autonomy in the conduct of its domestic and foreign policy. We measure state autonomy with the help of the variables domestic autonomy (*v2sv domaut ord*) and international autonomy (*v2sv inlaut ord*). We combine these two variables into a single variable for the same reasons as those mentioned above for the variables universal suffrage and candidate restriction. Thus, the state autonomy variable is the sum of the scores of the variables of domestic and international autonomy. The second concept in this dimension is the political equality that we measure by the equal distribution of resources (*v2xreg eqdr*) in society.

Additional Variables not used in the classification analysis

Lastly, additional variables are introduced in post-classification analyses to test important predictions of the literature on democratic regression. In the political science literature, the modes of regime change are most commonly characterized in terms of their duration and intensity. G. O' Donnell (1992), Schedler (1998) or Schmitter (1994) distinguish for example the rapid and sudden regime collapses from the slow and gradual ones. We test the relevance of these categories through three metrics (duration, intensity and pace) applied to each episode of democratic regression in our sample.¹⁶ We first compute the **duration** of an episode of democratic regression by subtracting the inception year from the final year of the demographic regression spell. We then compute the **intensity** of the decline by measuring the total reduction of the *Liberal democracy index* (LDI) over each episode of democratic regression. Then, the pace of democratic decline is gauged by the **average depletion rate** (ADR) i.e. the average speed at which the LDI index declines during an episode of democratic regression in terms of year-on-year changes. In Bermeo (2016)'s own classification, the proportion of rapid and radical regime changes has tended to decline since the end of the Cold War in favour of the gradual changes. We also test this proposition with the dummy variable **Third Reverse Wave**, which takes 1 if an episode of democratic regression ends after 1991, and 0 otherwise.¹⁷

2.4.3 Classification Methodology

In the second stage, a mixed classification method was implemented based on the 13 selected active variables to classify the 166 episodes of democratic regression into homogenous and meaningful clusters. Our mixed classification procedure consists of performing hierarchical cluster analysis, consolidated by k-means iterations, to increase the inter-cluster variance while minimizing the intra-cluster variance. We also conduct tests for assessing the clustering tendency (whether a given data set contains meaningful clusters) - the Hopkin statistic to

16. These categories were not empirically tested by the authors; see Lührmann & Lindberg (2019) for a recent empirical test.

17. We will justify the delimitation between these two periods in Subsection 2.5.1.

know if the dataset is uniformly distributed.¹⁸ The relevant number of clusters is derived from the analysis of the dendrogram and also (i) the improvement of the between-to-within variance ratio from one given partition to another, (ii) the impact of k-means consolidation on that ratio, (iii) and several indexes measuring the quality of partitions (Davies–Bouldin index, Dunn index, Calinski-Harabasz, index and Silhouette index). These operational criteria suggest classifying into four groups.

The main disadvantage of clustering methods is that they force each individual into one or other identified clusters. Thus, in order to avoid classification errors, we decided to define ex-post an additional cluster, the ‘idiosyncratic’ cluster. This cluster groups episodes of democratic regression whose position in the initial multidimensional scatter of points is close to the barycentre.¹⁹ These episodes have original modes of democratic regressions that are both (i) different from the ‘regularities’ established for the other episodes and (ii) primarily different from one another. In other words, the ‘idiosyncratic’ cluster includes episodes in which there is an original deterioration in the attributes of democracy, that is, episodes that defy classification in clearly established categories.

2.5 Results

From the analysis of our 166 episodes of democratic regression, [Subsection 2.5.1](#) first draws a series of global and regional trends from a historical perspective. We show notably that a “third reverse wave” seems to be underway since the end of the Cold War. In [Subsection 2.5.2](#), we will categorize these democratic regression episodes using two mainstream approaches from the political science literature : based on the quality and quantity of regime change associated with a process of autocratization ([Collier & Adcock, 1999](#) ; [Sartori, 1987](#)). Then, the results of our classification analysis are presented and commented in [2.5.3](#). This

18. The null hypothesis of the Hopkins statistical test is that the data set is uniformly distributed (i.e. there are no significant clusters). We find that the data set is highly clusterable. Indeed, we reject the null hypothesis with a value of $H=0.76$, without the ‘idiosyncratic’ group observations ($H=0.74$ with the ‘idiosyncratic’ cluster observations).

19. More precisely, if the standardized Euclidean distance between these countries and the barycentre is below half the median distance with a percentage of confidence of 95% (based on 100 bootstrap replications with replacement of the initial sample). We based on the method developed by [Rougier & Combarnous \(2017\)](#).

classification allows us to identify the main patterns of regime change away from democracy over a long period.

2.5.1 Global and Regional Trends of Democratic Regression

Democratic regression is a type of political regime change with high relevance over the period under study. The black line in [Figure 2.3a](#) ([2.3b](#)) plots the absolute number of countries (the share of the global population) affected by episodes of democratic regression over the period 1900-2019 (1960-2018). The green line in [Figures 2.3](#) represents the episodes of democratic regression that have started in democracies, i.e. the number of democratic erosion or democratic overthrow each year, according to the terminology presented in [Figure 2.1](#). The grey line depicts the episodes of democratization (encompassing democratic erosions, democratic overthrows and autocratic consolidations)

To build this typology and distinguish these three regime change subtypes towards autocracy presented in [Figure 2.1](#) (democratic erosions, democratic overthrows, and autocratic consolidations), we rely on the regimes of each country at the beginning and the end of the episodes of democratic regression. We base this analysis on the V-DEM RoW categorical data ([Lührmann et al., 2018](#)), which distinguishes four regime categories : closed autocracy, electoral autocracy, electoral democracy, and liberal democracy. In **closed autocracies**, there are no multiparty elections for the chief executive or the legislature or there is no meaningful, de facto competition in elections. In **electoral autocracies**, there are de jure multiparty elections for the chief executive and the legislature, but elections are not fully free and fair, and a minimum level of Dahlian's liberties and rights is not reached. In **electoral democracies**, countries not only hold de facto free and fair and multiparty elections, but they also achieve a sufficient level of Dahlian's liberties and rights. Lastly, in addition to the prerogatives of electoral democracy, **liberal democracies** guarantee the rule of law, the effective legislative and judicial oversight of the executive and the protection of individual liberties. This typology is widely accepted and used in the literature ([Diamond, 2002](#); [Schedler, 2013](#)).

We also report Huntington's waves in [Figures 2.3](#).²⁰ [Huntington, 1991](#) identified three waves of democratization and two reverse waves in the modern world : a first long wave of democratization (1826-1926), followed by a first reverse wave (1922-1942) ; a second, shorter wave of democratization (1943-1962), followed by reflux (1958-1975) and the third wave of democratization (1974-1990²¹).

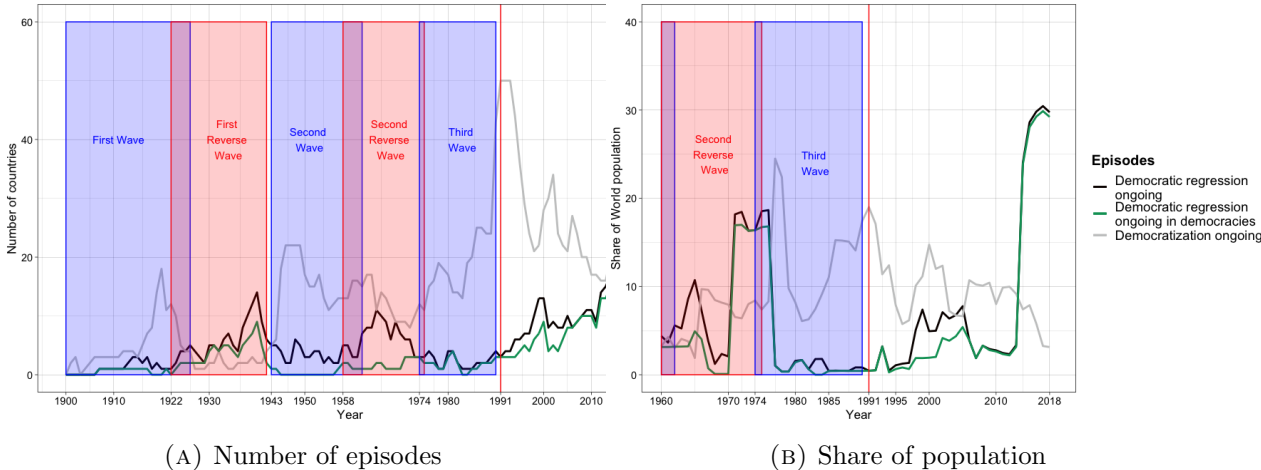
A noticeable fact emerges from [Figure 2.3a](#) : from 2015 onwards, the number of countries that were affected by episodes of democratic regression has become higher than the number of countries experiencing episodes of democratization. This pattern had not happened since 1942 (in 2014 with the population-weighted measure in [Figure 2.3b](#), which had not happened since 2005). Like other authors ([Diamond, 2008](#) ; [Diamond, 2015](#) ; [Levitsky & Way, 2015](#) ; [Lührmann & Lindberg, 2019](#) ; [Merkel, 2010](#) ; [Mechkova et al., 2017](#) ; [Plattner, 2014](#) ; [Schmitter, 2015](#)), we confirm that there is a new “reverse wave” of regime change that we date back to 1991. We delineate these two periods by a vertical red line in [Figures 2.3](#). More, from this date onwards, the number of countries affected annually by an episode of democratization has started to decrease, while the number of countries affected by an episode of democratic regression increased continuously, with this pattern being remarkably stable over time. This study refers to the initial period as the pre-third reverse wave and the latter as the early stage of the third reverse wave. Among the 166 episodes of democratic regression that took place in 100 countries between 1900 and 2019, 92 took place during the pre-third reverse wave long period (1900-1990) while 74 took place during the short third reverse wave (1991-2019). To find the list of episodes of democratic regression, please

20. A wave of democratization “*is a group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction during that period of time*” ([Huntington, 2001 : p.15](#)). These waves have two significant characteristics. First, a democratic wave is not homogeneous. In other words, not all transitions to democracy and liberalization occur during democratic waves (and vice versa in a reverse wave). However, during a (reverse) wave, the outcome must be positive because transitions to democracy (autocracy) prevail. In addition, he notes that “*history is also not unidirectional*” ([Huntington, 2001 : p.15](#)). Thus, each wave of democratization has to be followed by a reverse wave, where some - but not all - of the countries that had made a democratic transition reverted to undemocratic rule. In other words, for a wave of democracy to count, it must be followed by a phase of recovery, reflux or failure. This is the second characteristic of the waves, their imminent extinction. Democracy is therefore cyclical ([Kurzman, 1998](#)).

21. Huntington did not give an end date for the third wave (his book was published in 1991). The political science literature extensively debates the possible end of the third wave and the emergence of a potential fourth or reverse third wave of democratization since 1990. Nevertheless, it is also widely accepted that there are three waves in the modern world ([Boix, 2011](#) ; [Kurzman, 1998](#) ; [Markoff, 1996](#)), although there are criticisms of the dates of these waves ([Doorenspleet, 2005](#) ; [Mc Faull, 2002](#)).

refer to the respective tables in [Appendix B : Table B2.1](#) for the pre-third reverse wave era (1900-1990) and [Table B2.2](#) for the third reverse wave era (1991-2019).

FIGURE 2.3 – Episodes of democratic regression and democratization from 1900 to 2019



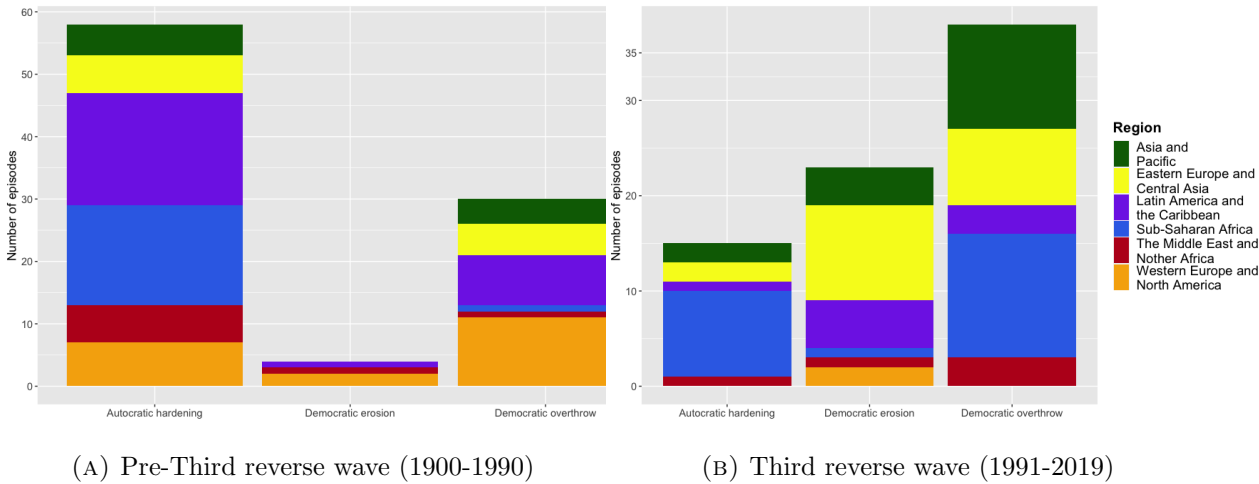
Source : Author’s own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset ([Coppedge et al. 2020b](#)). Population data are based on the [World Bank \(2019\)](#), available from 1960 to 2018.

Because democracy is about people’s rights and aspirations, we also report in [Figure 2.3b](#) the share of the population affected by an episode of democratic regression or democratization. We can observe that 1991 represents an even more significant pivotal moment when considering the percentage of the global population affected by either a decline or an enhancement of democratic attributes in their country. For instance, during this time, the proportion of people affected by a democratization episode fell from 19% in 1991 to 12% in 2001. In 2018, less than 5% of the world’s population lived in increasingly democratic regimes, a lower bound last reached in 1965. By contrast, 30% of the world’s population - 2.2 billion people – were living in nations with declining democratic attributes in 2018. More worrying and specific to the third reverse wave, out of the 17 countries currently affected by democratic regression, 7 were democracies in 2019. Indeed, among the G20 countries, four countries are experiencing a deterioration in their democratic quality (Brazil, India, the United States, and Turkey).

[Figures 2.4](#) illustrates the cases of regional declines in democratic attributes distributed according to the three forms of regime change towards autocracy previously highlighted by

Figure 2.1 during the pre-third reverse wave and the third reverse wave. Based on Figures 2.4 we can see that the forms taken by democratic regressions have varied substantially over time, as did the regions involved. In order to deepen our analysis, we also report in the Appendix B the cumulative number of episodes of loss of democratic qualities by region in Figures B2.1 and by subtypes of democratic regression in Figures B2.2. More specifically, while the episodes of democratic regression that happened during the pre-third reverse wave were essentially taking place in autocracies, they have mostly taken place in democracies during the third reverse wave, yet without leading, in most cases, to a full shift from democracy to autocracy. This result is not surprising, as the share of democratic countries is close to a historical high (Lührmann & Lindberg, 2019). The second factor explains the first ; the more democracies there are, the greater the probability of democratic decline.

FIGURE 2.4 – Democratic regression by subtypes and region



Reading notes : The units of analysis are the 166 cases of democratic regression in our sample. There are 92 cases of democratic regression in the pre-third reverse wave (1900-1990). There are 74 cases in the third reverse wave (1991-2019). Each bar reports the raw number of cases of the corresponding form of democratic regression, with its distribution (in percentage) by region. The six-region classification is based on the politico-geographic (see Teorell et al. 2018).
Source : Author’s own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2020b).

Based on Figure 2.4a, we can also note that during the pre-third reverse wave, democratic regressions that happened were mainly in autocratic regimes (autocratic hardening), which occurred mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa, under a pattern of regime change away from

democracy common to the countries of this region. In Latin America, where numerous democratic transitions occurred between the late 1970s and 1980s (G. O' Donnell & Schmitter, 1986), several instances of autocratic consolidation and democratic overthrows were also detected. However, it's worth noting that the prevalence of the autocratic hardening pattern in Latin America was not as pronounced as it was in Sub-Saharan Africa. Democratic overthrows were the second most prevalent form of regime change towards autocracy, during the pre-third reverse wave. They took place mainly in Western Europe and North America. It is also interesting to note (see Figures 2.4 and Figures B2.1) that the ranking of regions most affected by democratic regression episodes changes between these two periods. Thus, While Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Western Europe-North America were the most affected regions during the pre-third wave period, Eastern Europe-Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region faced greater challenges during the third reverse wave of democratic regression.

Since the end of the Cold War, one of the major trends has been the steady decline of the autocratic hardening subtype (see Figure B2.2.a), which was the most common subtype during the pre-reverse third wave. The democratic erosion subtype remained a rare form of democratic regression at the beginning of the third reverse wave. This trend has been completely reversed since the beginning of the 21st century (see Figure B2.2.b). The regions of the world most affected by this form of democratic regression are Eastern Europe and Central Asia, followed by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Finally, we can note that the most common democratic regression since the end of the Cold War is the transition from democracy to autocracy (democratic overthrow). This subtype of regime change occurs in order of importance in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Asia-Pacific region, and Eastern Europe-Central Asia.

2.5.2 Description of the Sample of Democratic Regression Episodes : How Much Qualitative and Quantitative Change ?

Quality and quantity are two alternative approaches to conceptualizing changes in political regimes²² (Collier & Adcock, 1999 ; Sartori, 1987). For the qualitative approach, a regime is either a democracy or it isn't. There is a fundamental separation between democracy and autocracy.²³ In our analysis, this translates into a democracy becoming an autocracy, that is, a liberal democracy or an electoral democracy becoming an electoral autocracy or a closed autocracy. In that case, the regime change is labelled as **radical**, otherwise, the democratic regression is **moderate**.²⁴ For the quantitative approach, "democracy is always a matter of degree" and treating it dichotomously is a "flawed" practice (Bollen & Jackman, 1989 : p.612-618). Therefore, regimes differ in their degree of democracy or autocracy. Three types of democratic regression are considered in this quantitative approach : (i) A change of regime leading to a closed autocracy is referred to as **full regime change**, (ii) A regime change that does not result in a closed autocracy is termed **partial regime change**, (iii) A democratic regression without a change in regime is labelled **minor regime change**.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 classify the 74 cases of democratic regression in the third reverse wave and the 92 cases in the pre-third reverse wave, respectively, according to the change in quality or quantity of that process. By articulating changes on the scales of quality and quantity, we are able to identify ten types of democratic regression in our sample. These ten types take various intensities with six forms corresponding to regime changes and four forms without regime change (only a drop in score within a political regime).²⁵

22. Much of the debate about the choice of level of measurement in the democracy literature has been about the choice between dichotomous (i.e. "in kind") and continuous measurement (i.e. "in degree"). For a review of this debate, see Collier & Adcock (1999).

23. Sartori (1987 : p.184) argues that treating the distinction between democracy and nondemocracy in graded terms is an analytically "stultifying" exercise in "degreeism", which misses the basic fact that political systems are "bounded wholes".

24. When a Liberal democracy (Electoral autocracy) becomes an Electoral democracy (closed autocracy) or when there are no regime changes.

25. These ten independent forms of democratic regression have in common that they move towards more autocracy : The 6 forms of regime transitions are the following : (1) Liberal democracy → Electoral Democracy ; (2) Liberal democracy → Electoral Autocracy ; (3) Liberal democracy → Closed Autocracy ; (4) Electoral democracy → Electoral Autocracy ; (5) Electoral democracy → Closed Autocracy ; (6) Electoral Autocracy → Closed Autocracy - and the 4 forms of transitions within regimes are the following :

Drawing from the information presented in [Tables 2.1](#) and [2.2](#), we can say that the forms of democratic regression have changed between these two periods. In the post-1990s period, the most frequent pattern of regime change was a transition from electoral democracy to electoral autocracy (42% of cases), in sharp contrast with the pre-1990s period, where the shift from an electoral to a closed autocracy was the most frequent (41% of the regime changes during this period). In the contemporary period and based on the qualitative approach, we observe an equal number of radical and moderate forms, in contrast to the first period, where moderate regime changes are more numerous. In the quantitative approach, full forms are by far the most frequent during the pre-90s (68% of the quantitative regime changes during this period), while they are the least frequent after this period. During the past 90's period and from the quantitative approach, partial and minor forms are the most common and roughly equally prevalent.

Second, in [Table 2.2](#)'s empty cells show that regimes do not shift from a liberal democracy to an electoral autocracy or to a closed autocracy in our sample. In other words, regime changes taking place in liberal democracies did not lead to autocracy in the third reverse wave. Additionally, liberal democracies exhibit the lowest proportion of regime changes within our sample, regardless of the period under consideration. They are involved in only 7% of the 166 episodes of democratic regression, which suggests their greater stability compared to other regimes. However, it is worrying to note that episodes of democratic regression in liberal democracies have been increasing since 2010. Furthermore, it's interesting to note that most contemporary democratic regressions (1991-2019) begin in the grey zone ([Carothers, 2002](#)). Indeed, during this period, 94% of democratic regression episodes start in either electoral democracies or electoral autocracies (with more than three-quarters occurring in electoral democracies), compared with 87% in the previous period.

Now that we know better what the different episodes of democratic regression identified since 1900 look like in terms of their intensity of change, we may be interested in investigating how they compare together in terms of change of their internal *de jure* and *de facto* characteristics. Only a multidimensional classification analysis allows doing this.

(7) Liberal democracy⁺ → Liberal democracy⁻; (8) Electoral democracy⁺ → Electoral democracy⁻; (9) Electoral Autocracy⁺ → Electoral Autocracy⁻; (9) Closed Autocracy⁺ → Closed Autocracy⁻.

TABLE 2.1 – Democratic regression episodes during the pre-third reverse wave by quantity and quality (1900 :1990)

Kind of democratic regression		Quality	
		Moderate	Radical
Quantity	<i>Full</i>	<p><u>Electoral Autocracy → Closed Autocracy (38) :</u> Albania (1945), Argentina (1956), Bangladesh (1976), Belgium (1915), Belgium (1940), Benin (1965), Brazil (1965), Bulgaria (1945), Burkina Faso (1967), Burma/Myanmar (1963), Chile (1928), Cuba (1953), Democratic Republic of the Congo (1970), Ecuador (1972), Greece (1940), Greece (1967), Guatemala (1955), Hungary (1919), Hungary (1945), Iraq (1963), Italy (1926), Lesotho (1971), Malta (1934), Nigeria (1984), Panama (1969), Peru (1949), Peru (1969), Philippines (1972), Portugal (1927), Republic of the Congo (1969), Seychelles (1977), Sierra Leone (1968), Somalia (1970), Sudan (1990), Syria (1959), Turkey (1960), Uganda (1967), Venezuela (1950)</p>	<p><u>Liberal Democracy → Closed Autocracy (3) :</u> Denmark (1944), Netherlands (1941), Norway (1942)</p> <p><u>Electoral Democracy → Closed Autocracy (22) :</u> Argentina (1967), Argentina (1977), Austria (1935), Chile (1974), Czech Republic (1940), Estonia (1935), Fiji (1987), France (1941), Germany (1934), Ghana (1982), Indonesia (1966), Latvia (1935), Lithuania (1928), Luxembourg (1941), Malta (1959), Poland (1931), Spain (1940), Suriname (1981), Turkey (1981), Uruguay (1921), Uruguay (1933), Uruguay (1974)</p>
	<i>Partial</i>	<p><u>Liberal Democracy → Electoral Democracy (1) :</u> Australia (1917)</p>	<p><u>Liberal Democracy → Electoral Autocracy (0) :</u></p> <p><u>Electoral Democracy → Electoral Autocracy (4) :</u> Argentina (1931), Finland (1940), India (1976), Sri Lanka (1982)</p>
	<i>Minor</i>	<p><u>Liberal Democracy → Liberal Democracy (1) :</u> France (1965)</p> <p><u>Electoral Democracy → Electoral Democracy (2) :</u> Suriname (1990), Turkey (1972)</p> <p><u>Electoral Autocracy → Electoral Autocracy (14) :</u> Argentina (1943), Argentina (1962), Burkina Faso (1980), Colombia (1949), Costa Rica (1917), Costa Rica (1948), Ecuador (1963), Ghana (1966), Ghana (1972), Malta (1930), Peru (1920), Peru (1962), Philippines (1942), Republic of Vietnam (1963)</p> <p><u>Closed Autocracy → Closed Autocracy (7) :</u> Czech Republic (1953), Kuwait (1976), Kuwait (1986), Libya (1970), Nigeria (1967), Romania (1949), Zanzibar (1964)</p>	

Reading notes : The number of cases recorded for each form of democratic regression is indicated in parentheses. The year in parentheses associated with each country indicates the year in which the democratic regression episode ends.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2020b).

TABLE 2.2 – Democratic regression episodes during the third reverse wave by quantity and quality (1991 :2019)

Kind of democratic regression		Quality	
		Moderate	Radical
Quantity	<i>Full</i>	<p><u>Electoral Autocracy → Closed Autocracy (5) :</u> Haiti (2005), Nepal (2002), Pakistan (1999), Republic of the Congo (1998), Yemen (2019)</p>	<p><u>Liberal Democracy → Closed Autocracy (0) :</u></p> <p><u>Electoral Democracy → Closed Autocracy (7) :</u> Fiji (2000), Fiji (2007), Libya (2019), Niger (2010), Peru (1993), Thailand (2006), Thailand (2014)</p>
	<i>Partial</i>	<p><u>Liberal Democracy → Electoral Democracy (2) :</u> Hungary (2015), Poland (2017)</p>	<p><u>Liberal Democracy → Electoral Autocracy (0) :</u></p> <p><u>Electoral Democracy → Electoral Autocracy (30) :</u> Armenia (1999), Bangladesh (2006), Belarus (2000), Benin (2019), Burkina Faso (2015), Burkina Faso (2019), Comoros (2019), Hungary (2018), Madagascar (2002), Malawi (2000), Maldives (2017), Mali (2012), Namibia (1994), Nepal (2012), Nicaragua (2019), Niger (1996), Niger (2019), North Macedonia (2000), North Macedonia (2014), Palestine/West Bank (2010), Philippines (2005), Philippines (2019), Serbia (2019), Solomon Islands (2000), Solomon Islands (2005), Turkey (2019), Ukraine (2000), Ukraine (2012), Venezuela (2005), Zambia (2017)</p>
	<i>Minor</i>	<p><u>Liberal Democracy → Liberal Democracy (4) :</u> Austria (2018), South Korea (2008), Taiwan (2010), United States of America (2019)</p> <p><u>Electoral Democracy → Electoral Democracy (16) :</u> Bolivia (2013), Brazil (2019), Bulgaria (2019), Croatia (2019), Ecuador (2015), Estonia (1991), India (2019), Lesotho (2017), Moldova (2002), Moldova (2018), Mongolia (2018), Romania (2019), Russia (1993), Suriname (2019), Turkey (2011), Vanuatu (1992)</p> <p><u>Electoral Autocracy → Electoral Autocracy (10) :</u> Azerbaijan (1994), Burundi (2019), Central African Republic (2003), Comoros (1999), Guinea-Bissau (2003), Ivory Coast (1999), Madagascar (2009), Mauritania (2017), Russia (2005), The Gambia (1994)</p> <p><u>Closed Autocracy → Closed Autocracy (0) :</u></p>	

Reading notes : The number of cases recorded for each form of democratic regression is indicated in parentheses. The year in parentheses associated with each country indicates the year in which the episode ends.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2020b).

2.5.3 The Four Patterns of Democratic Regression Since 1900

Now, we implement a multidimensional classification analysis on the thirteen attributes of political change gathered for each democratic regression episode of our sample. This analysis allows us to go significantly beyond the mere intensity of change that was used in the previous section to find heterogeneities and similarities within our long-term sample. Indeed, with our classification analysis, we are able to map correspondences and dissimilarities between the changes in the thirteen different dimensions of a democratic regime and finally identify four different patterns of democratic regression. These four statistically distinct and internally consistent patterns emerged from the multidimensional classification analysis, conducted on a large sample of historical democratic regression episodes. [Table 4.5](#) shows the compared means of clusters' active and illustrative variables. The clusters and their composition are reported in [Table B2.3](#) in [Appendix B](#). For clarity, the four patterns identified from our analysis of the data have been ordered by the magnitude and pace of the regression episodes.

The first pattern is labelled “**democratic crumbling**” as it corresponds to a slow and gradual erosion of a political system’s “democratic quality” in the electoral process and political rights and balances attributes. Most of the episodes fitting this pattern have occurred during the third reverse wave, particularly in the last decade of our sample (61% of the episodes began after 2010) and Eastern European and Central Asian countries are overrepresented in this cluster. A good example is India during Modi’s first term, from 2014 to 2019, which remained an electoral democracy despite attacks against the liberty of expression, notably with the disappearance of prominent public intellectuals or abusive arrests ([Ganguly, 2020](#)). Interestingly, this group features the most prominent cases of modern illiberal democracies ([Zakaria, 1997](#)) of the last two decades, i.e. the governments of Jarosław Kaczyński in Poland, Viktor Orbán in Hungary, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan or Venezuela under Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro. All these episodes have in common to have undermined fundamental civil liberties and the rule of law, albeit to different degrees ([Luo & Przeworski, 2019](#)). Lastly, 78% of the episodes in this cluster took place in political

regimes qualified as “hybrid” (either electoral democracy or autocracy), at the beginning of the episode.

More than half of these regressions would be described as minor on the scale of intensity used in [Subsection 2.5.2](#), i.e. they consisted of a move away from democracy without a change of political regime. Nonetheless, upon closer examination of the most affected attributes, they might constitute genuine and crucial democratic setbacks that will be hard to reverse in the future. Indeed, nearly 40% of the episodes included in this cluster are cases of transition from an electoral democracy to an electoral autocracy. Still, behind this general pattern of transition, democratic regressions in this cluster actually followed a large variety of sub-patterns : in 44% of the cases, they correspond to episodes of “democratic erosion”, in 41% of the cases, they correspond to “democratic overthrows” and in 15% of the cases they look like “autocratic hardening” episodes.

Looking into details, it appears that the way in which the process of anti-democratic regression occurs in this cluster is highly modern. Indeed, it involves various techniques, such as the aggrandizement of the executive or the strategic manipulation of elections ([Bermeo, 2016](#)), that are geared at the deterioration of electoral institutions (formal and informal) and have been commonly used across the world since the end of the Cold War. To take one example, executive aggrandizement is a process by which elected executives progressively weaken the constraints of accountability and punishment by eroding accountability norms through a series of institutional changes, without formally abolishing key democratic institutions, thereby limiting the opposition’s ability to challenge executive decisions ([Coppedge, 2017](#)). This technique of deterioration is commonly used by the individual regimes in this cluster. For example, after the victory of Viktor Orbán (2010-today), for the second time after 1998 and his Fidesz party in the 2010 parliamentary elections, undertook numerous institutional changes in the Hungarian political system that profoundly affected the very foundations of the rule of law in Hungary. One of the most significant reforms that Fidesz has undertaken is the new Fundamental Law enacted in 2012, which has affected the separation of powers and the civil rights of minorities ([Gomez & Leunig, 2021](#)).

TABLE 2.3 – Active and illustrative variables : compared cluster means (standard errors)

	All	Democratic crumbling (n=54)	Electoral capture (n=46)	Autocratic worsening (n=25)	Radical autocratization (n=32)	Idiosyncratic (n=9)
Active Variables^a						
Elected Officials	0.49 (0.43)	0.05*** (0.15)	0.72*** (0.26)	0.48 (0.49)	0.90*** (0.23)	0.56 (0.34)
Multiparty elections	0.23 (0.68)	0.02*** (0.31)	0.13 (0.54)	1.12*** (1.13)	0.09 (0.39)	0.00*** (0.00)
Free and Fair	0.38 (0.27)	0.12*** (0.14)	0.52*** (0.18)	0.32 (0.16)	0.68*** (0.20)	0.37 (0.16)
Inclusiveness	-0.01 (0.19)	-0.02 (0.24)	0.02 (0.10)	-0.04 (0.32)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.06 (0.17)
Freedom of expression	0.24 (0.22)	0.13*** (0.12)	0.07*** (0.11)	0.41*** (0.15)	0.52*** (0.14)	0.34* (0.13)
Alternative sources of information	0.20 (0.22)	0.11*** (0.12)	0.01*** (0.08)	0.35*** (0.12)	0.50*** (0.18)	0.22 (0.11)
Freedom of association thick	0.24 (0.22)	0.08*** (0.08)	0.15*** (0.14)	0.36*** (0.17)	0.54*** (0.17)	0.27 (0.14)
Equality before the law and individual liberty	0.17 (0.18)	0.08*** (0.09)	0.07*** (0.10)	0.28*** (0.15)	0.38*** (0.19)	0.21 (0.08)
Judicial constraints on the executive	0.17 (0.19)	0.11** (0.13)	0.03*** (0.07)	0.37*** (0.18)	0.32*** (0.19)	0.12 (0.11)
Legislative constraints on the executive	0.13 (0.18)	0.15 (0.15)	0.18*** (0.09)	0.38*** (0.21)	0.08* (0.10)	0.09 (0.15)
Tutelary Powers	0.08 (0.35)	0.02 (0.24)	0.00* (0.23)	0.09 (0.58)	0.29*** (0.40)	0.09 (0.14)
State autonomy	0.25 (1.02)	0.00** (0.48)	0.04* (0.39)	0.24 (0.93)	1.13*** (1.76)	-0.22 (0.67)
Basic needs	0.00 (0.10)	0.01 (0.08)	0.00 (0.06)	-0.07* (0.17)	0.06** (0.10)	-0.01 (0.04)
Illustrative Variables						
Third Reverse Wave ^b	0.45 (0.50)	0.78*** (0.42)	0.46 (0.50)	0.32 (0.48)	0.03*** (0.18)	0.22 (0.44)
Magnitude ^a	0.22 (0.12)	0.16*** (0.06)	0.19* (0.08)	0.22 (0.10)	0.36*** (0.14)	0.17* (0.05)
ADR ^a	8.68 (7.41)	5.17*** (4.00)	11.88** (9.51)	5.35*** (4.31)	12.58** (7.09)	8.80 (5.41)
Duration ^a	4.11 (2.86)	4.69 (2.69)	2.57*** (1.85)	6.64*** (3.64)	3.75 (2.21)	2.89 (2.20)

Table 2.3 Active and illustrative variables : compared cluster means (standard errors)

	All	Democratic crumbling (n=54)	Electoral capture (n=46)	Autocratic worsening (n=25)	Radical autocratization (n=32)	Idiosyncratic (n=9)
Region^b						
Asia and Pacific	15.66%	16.67%	21.74%	8%	12.5%	11.11%
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	18.67%	33.33%**	4.35%**	28%	12.5%	0%
Latin America and the Caribbean	21.08%	12.96%	19.57%	28%	25%	44.44%
The Middle East and Northern Africa	7.85%	5.56%	13.04%	8%	6.25%	0%
Sub-Saharan Africa	23.49%	22.22%	34.78%**	24%	6.25%**	33.33%
Western Europe and North America	13.25%	9.26%	6.52%	4%	37.5%***	11.11%
Quality^b						
Moderate	60.24%	59.26%	67.39%	68%	37.5%**	88.89%
Radical	39.76%	40.74%	32.61%	32%	62.50%**	11.11%
Quantity^b						
Full	45.18%	3.70%***	45.65%	68%	93.75%***	55.56%
Partial	22.29%	44.44%***	17.39%	16%	3.13%**	0%
Minor	32.53%	51.86%***	36.96%	16%	3.13%***	44.44%
Subtypes^b						
Democratic erosion	15.66%	44.44%***	4.35%	0%	0%**	0%
Democratic overthrow	39.76%	40.74%	32.61%	32%	62.50%**	11.11%*
Autocratic hardening	44.58%	14.81%***	63.04%**	68%**	37.5%	88.89%**

Reading note : Shaded (bold) cells denote the values that are statistically significantly higher (lower) in the cluster than in the rest of the sample (i.e. excluding the group concerned). ^aANOVA test. ^bPearson's Chi-squared test.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2020b).

Similarly, in Ecuador, President Rafael Correa (2007-2017), in his desire to lead a “citizens’ revolution”, convinced the newly elected Constitutional Assembly in 2007 to grant him legislative functions and permanently suspend the Congress. Cases of strategic harassment and manipulation are also found across the episodes classified in this first cluster, i.e. the set of actions aimed at tilting the electoral playing field to favour incumbents. One good example of this practice is keeping opposition candidates off the ballot, like in the Philippines when President Estrada (1998-2001) and his son were arrested on TV in 2001 because they challenged President Arroyo’s legitimacy.²⁶ Less common forms of democratic

26. We rely on data from the NELDA (National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy) project. To identify cases of strategic manipulations, we use the disqualification of the opposition leader from running and contesting the elections (*nelda13*) and opposition harassment (*nelda15*).

regression could be observed across the episodes of this cluster after the end of the Cold War like manipulating the electoral process through outright fraud on election day (Bermeo, 2016). One example is Russia where allegations of significant vote fraud were made by Western monitors, notably for the legislative and executive elections of 2003 and 2004 respectively.²⁷

The second pattern generated by the multidimensional cluster analysis is labelled “**electoral capture**” as it consists of significant and radical regressions in two main attributes of the elective process : the appointment of the ruler by-elections and the effective freedom and fairness of this election. Interestingly, the mean value for the two other dimensions of the electoral process, namely multiparty elections and an inclusive electoral body, is not significantly different in this group than in the other ones, preserving some semblance of democracy. Likewise, and more importantly, this pattern does not imply massive regressions in terms of political and civil rights. The group’s average scores of restrictions in the freedom of association or equality before the law and individual liberty are significantly lower than those observed in the “democratic crumbling” cluster and in the two other clusters. Paradoxically enough, attacks on the freedom of expression and diversity of information and erosion of judicial and legislative constraints on the executive are also lower in this group than in the three other ones. In most cases, democratic regressions akin to electoral capture take place in autocracies and, to a lesser extent, they lead to the transition from a democracy to an autocracy. One-third of this cluster is made of Sub-Saharan African countries and, to a lesser extent, of Asian and the Pacific and Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Although only some aspects of the electoral process are affected by the pattern of autocratic electoral capture, the regression on these dimensions generally has high intensity and tends to be very sudden. In line with Bermeo (2016)’s typology, the “electoral capture” cluster essentially groups together two varieties of coups d’état. The first one consists of the classic coup d’état and used to be the most prominent form during the Cold War, accounting for

27. In order to determine cases of electoral fraud, we rely on data from the NELDA (National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy) project. We cross-reference the presence of Western observers (*nelda46*) with allegations of electoral fraud by any Western observer (*nelda47*). Any significant manipulation that undermines the credibility of the electoral process is considered fraud. For more details, see Hyde & Marinov (2021).

60%²⁸ of observations in this cluster. Classic Coups are illegal attempts to oust a sitting executive either by state elites or the military, like the coup led in 1996 by General Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara (1996-1999) who overthrew the first democratically elected president of Niger Mahamane Ousmane (1993-1996). Also present in this group is the second type of coup, called the “promising coup”. It has been the most prominent since the end of the Cold War. In a promising coup, coup-makers present the ouster of an elected government as a defence of democratic legality and make promises to restore it as soon as possible by holding elections. For example, part of this subgroup is the promising coup perpetuated in 2006 against the elected interim government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra by the Royal Thai Army. Led by General Sonthi Boonyaratglin and organized as the Council for Democratic Reform (CDR), the new leaders issued a statement two days after the coup outlining the reasons for their seizure of power and pledging to restore a democratic government within a year. We can also cite the cases of Fiji (1987), Madagascar (2006), Mali (2012), Niger (1996), and Pakistan (1999) which are included in this subgroup too.²⁹

Lastly, we find in this cluster a third variety of coups, called the executive coups, albeit this variety has been less commonly observed since the end of the Cold War. We talk of self-coups or autogolpes when the head of the executive freely suspends the constitution to seize power at once. These coups are less frequently observed in this cluster than the other two types of coups, although we can note the cases of Haiti (1999) and Ecuador (1969).³⁰ Lastly, it is not surprising that contemporary and past coup processes fall into the same category. As [Cassani & Tomini \(2019\)](#) emphasize, the distinction between promissory and

28. To obtain this result, we used the “Coups d’état events, 1946–2021” dataset by [Marshall & Marshall \(2022\)](#) from the Centre for Systemic Peace (2022). In this cluster, we counted episodes of democratic regression that were successful coups d’état (*SCOUP1*) as well as other events not considered as classic coups d’état in this database in order to get as close as possible to [Bermeo \(2016\)](#)’s definition of a classic coup d’état : if the ruling executive is ousted by foreign forces (*FOROUTEX*) or by rebel forces (*REBOUTEX*).

29. In order to determine the cases of provisional coup d’état, we rely on the list compiled by [Bermeo \(2016\)](#). It compiles all coups that occurred in democratic countries from 1946 to 2014. Furthermore, it classifies them as promising or unpromising, depending on whether the coup leaders promised elections and an eventual return to democracy in the official statement following the takeover.

30. To determine the case of ‘self-coups’, we rely on the dataset “Coups d’état events, 1946–2021” by [Marshall & Marshall \(2022\)](#) from the Centre for Systemic Peace (2022). In particular, we use the variable *AGCOUP*, which indicates the subversion of the constitutional order by a ruling executive (usually elected) to impose the autocratic rule.

classic coups is more about the goal than the modes of democratic regression, especially because promissory coups rarely lead to new elections (Bermeo, 2016).

We have labelled the third pattern “**autocratic worsening**” because it generally takes the form of a long spell of progressive regression of all political rights and civil liberties, substantial deterioration of the political competition through multiparty elections and of the scope and effectiveness of judicial and legislative constraints on the executive (highest sample average). As most countries concerned by this pattern are classified as autocratic at the beginning of the process, these regime changes thus commonly take the form of an autocratic hardening. More specifically, they feature progressive regressions from an electoral autocracy to a closed and durably encysted autocracy. Indeed, most of the episodes of regime change falling in this group are full and thus constitute transitions to a closed autocracy. This cluster echoes studies claiming that authoritarianism also deepens in countries that are already undemocratic (Walker, 2016).

Nonetheless, most of these episodes actually occurred before the third reverse wave in Eastern Europe-Central Asia and Latin America-Caribbean. Drift away from democracy occurs mainly in this group through coups, many of which are classic coups. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo with the second coup d'état of General Sese Seko Mobutu (1965-1997) in 1965. We can also mention Panama in 1968, when the National Guard, led by Major Boris Martínez, overthrew president-elect Arnulfo Arias Madrid, who had only been in office for eleven days. Alternatively, in the 1969 Somali coup by far-left military officers of the Supreme Revolutionary Council led by Siad Barre (1961-1991). This coup deposed President Sheikh Mukhtar Mohamed Hussein (1967-1969) and led to Barre's twenty-one-year military and authoritarian rule. We can also find autogolpes in this group, albeit less numerous than the previous one. In Peru, for example, during a constitutional crisis in 1992, President Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) dissolved the Peruvian Congress and the Peruvian judiciary and assumed full legislative and judicial powers, this self-coup is known as Fujimorazo. We can also mention such episodes in the modern period in Belarus (2000), Burundi (2012), the Republic of Congo (1969) and Turkey (2012), although they mainly took the form of executive coups.

The fourth pattern has been labelled “**radical autocratization**” and certainly corresponds to the worst possible scenario in our sample. Indeed, not only does the incumbent ruler take, far more than for the electoral capture pattern, exclusive and total control of the electoral process by forbidding making elective appointment of the executive either unconstitutional or mechanical ; but it also represses, far more than for the “autocratic worsening” pattern, all individual political rights and liberties regarding information access and diversity, collective action through organizations. This pattern also groups together the most sudden episodes of democratic regression and those with the highest magnitude of regression. Nonetheless, the average duration of autocratic episodes is lower for this pattern than for the “autocratic worsening” one. Interestingly, these episodes essentially take place in democratic regimes and lead, in this case, to a full transition from democracy to autocracy (i.e. democratic overthrow). In Argentina, for example, the military junta (1976-1983) took power as part of the national reorganization process (“*Proceso de Reorganización Nacional*”). However, generally speaking, whether they occur in a democracy or an autocracy, episodes of democratic regressions falling in this group led almost exclusively to the establishment of a closed autocracy (i.e. full form).

Noteworthy, such radical and full forms of regression took place almost exclusively before the third reverse wave, and especially before the Second World War (we find that 53% of the episodes ended before 1946) and took the form of classic coups d'état (Bermeo, 2016), sometimes led by a foreign power, like the invasions during World War II in the European democracies (Belgium, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway or the Czech Republic). Therefore, this pattern is also the one with the highest prevalence of tutelary powers dominating the state and government and of lack of autonomy with respect to foreign powers. One can find also classic coups led by the military to oust an incumbent executive, like in Sudan, where Omar Al-Bashir replaced an electoral autocracy with one of the worst closed dictatorships in Africa. We also find cases of executive coups or autogolpes in this group, such as the dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines (1965-1986) or in Armenia under Levon Ter-Petrossian (1991-1998).

The main disadvantage of clustering methods is that they will return clusters even if the data does not contain any clusters. To avoid forcing each observation into a cluster

and minimize classification errors, we decided to define ex-post an additional cluster, the ‘idiosyncratic’ cluster. This cluster groups together countries whose position in the initial multidimensional scatter of points is close to the barycentre. These episodes have original modes of democratic regressions that are both (i) different from the ‘regularities’ established for the other episodes and (ii) mostly different from one another. In other words, the ‘idiosyncratic’ cluster comprises episodes where there is a unique decline in democratic attributes, that is, episodes that defy classification in clearly established categories. We can nevertheless establish a pattern for this cluster, as most episodes falling into it are very close to the “autocratic hardening” pattern.

2.6 Discussion and Conclusion

The present article studies the process of regime change opposite to democratization that has been occurring since 1900 and has raised renewed scholarly interest since the mid-2000s when a growing number of democratic countries started suffering from political changes opposite to democracy. The literature on democratic regressions is fragmented and scattered, mainly due to conceptual confusion about what a process opposite to democratization really is beyond the apparent multiplicity of the forms it has taken since 1900, which manifests by a disagreement on the real importance of the phenomenon. More, systematic historical cross-country studies are lacking on this question.

This chapter tries to fill this literature gap by investigating democratic regressions over the long run and for a very large number of countries, developed and undeveloped, democratic and undemocratic. Indeed, we adopt an overarching concept of democratic regression, including any move toward less democratic traits within any regime and conceptualizing them as episodes with a start and end date that we track in data. The results are based on a sample of democratic regression episodes identified during the period 1900-2019. Then, the first step of our analysis consisted of documenting empirically the trend of the decline of democracy during the third reverse wave of democratic regression, dating back to 1991. We also show the singularity of this recent trend, compared to the previous trend of democratic regression that took place before 1991. One of the main conclusions is that the current reverse wave takes place mostly in democracies - leading most of the time

to a shift from democracy to autocracy - while the episodes that took place before the Cold War concerned mostly autocracies. Next, the second step of our empirical analysis consisted of applying multidimensional statistical analysis techniques to the sample of democratic regression episodes, each individual episode is described by a vector of the time changes of thirteen indicators of democratic attributes. These attributes make the political method or are necessary for its functioning and we grouped them into four dimensions for clarity : minimalist, polyarchy, maximalist and the broad context.

Then, on this basis, a cluster analysis has been conducted to produce a data-driven typology of democratic regression episodes. Four clusters are generated by the analysis. A fifth cluster, grouping ‘idiosyncratic’ modes of democratic regression, has been generated by our methodology in order to avoid forcing assignment to one of the four groups generated by the analysis. We find that the majority of democratic regression episodes during the third reverse wave (in particular during the last decade) can be qualified as democratic crumbling, as they are characterized by slow and incremental erosion of the “democratic quality” of the political system in the electoral process and of the political rights and balances attributes. It corresponds notably to the most recent and publicized democratic setbacks in democratic countries that have not (yet) led to a complete breakdown, as in Brazil, Hungary or India. We also identify a cluster of democratic regression episodes, labelled radical autocratization, that are more sudden and of a higher magnitude than the other types, and which is observed almost exclusively in the period before the Cold War. It is characterized by the exclusive and total control of the electoral process, but also by the repression of individual political rights and freedoms. In contrast, the last two modes are not characteristic of any particular sub-period, but more of a type of regime. The first mode is labelled autocratic worsening and takes place in authoritarian regimes through a slow degradation of all attributes of democracy. The second one is labelled electoral capture and takes the form of coups, which is a radical and rapid degradation in the appointment of rules and the fairness of elections and happens almost exclusively in hybrid regimes.

Furthermore, our results suggest that the framework proposed in this study outperforms, in our opinion, previous attempts to classify this phenomenon. Indeed, in addition to being

silent on how this process takes place, they can lead to simplifying statements on the trends of this phenomenon. For instance, classifying by the duration and/or intensity of democratic regressions (G. O' Donnell, 1992; Schmitter, 1994; Schedler, 1998) may lead to inappropriate groupings. We observed that the democratic crumbling and autocratic worsening clusters, despite having similar durations and paces of democratic decline (ADR), exhibit distinct patterns of democratic decay. The same applies to studies of regime change, depending on the type of regime at the beginning and end of the autocratisation process, i.e. based on the quality or quantity of change (Collier & Adcock, 1999; Sartori, 1987). We found that the electoral capture and autocratic worsening clusters were not characterized by a specific type of regime change in terms of quality or quantity. Furthermore, this mainstream typology categorizes the democratic regression in Serbia and Turkey, both concluding in 2019, as cases of partial regime changes, with transitions from electoral democracies to electoral autocracies. However, the dynamics that led to these outcomes are significantly different. For Serbia, it involved a gradual and incremental erosion of the electoral process, primarily affecting dimensions such as the electoral process and political rights and balances (democratic crumbling). In contrast, for Turkey, it entailed a prolonged period of progressive regression across all dimensions of political rights and civil liberties (autocratic worsening). Therefore, the common term 'illiberal' used to describe these two regimes encompasses highly distinct situations of deterioration of democratic traits. This underscores the importance of researchers moving beyond static pre-established categories of political regimes, as proposed by Lührmann et al. (2018), and focusing on the dynamics of deterioration (or improvement) of democratic attributes.

In conclusion, we have only focused on the institutional consequences of this phenomenon. A complementary analysis could be to look at the consequences of this process on the local political context of the country. For this, we could look at the political settlements. It might be interesting to ask whether the concentration of government power (dispersed or concentrated) or the social foundation (the size of the group(s) is co-opted or the size of the group that potentially threatens the country's top leadership) significantly affects the way in which a process of democratic regression occurs. Newly available datasets, such as The Political Settlements Dataset, could be mobilised for this purpose.

Appendix

Appendix A. Additional Information

Table A2.1 - Additional information on V-DEM variables

Criteria	Indices	Meaning	Sub-dimensions	Scale
Minimalist definition	Elected officials (<i>v2x_elecoff</i>)	Is the chief executive and legislature appointed through popular elections?	This index attempts to measure : - Whether the chief executive is elected, either directly elected through popular elections or indirectly through a popularly elected legislature that then appoints the chief executive - Whether the legislature, in presidential systems with a directly elected president that is also chief executive, is directly or indirectly elected.	Interval, from low to high (0-1)
	Clean elections index (<i>v2xel_frefair</i>)	To what extent are elections free and fair?	The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators : - Election Management Body autonomy/capacity - Election voter registry/buying - Election other voting irregularities/government intimidation - Non-state electoral violence - Election free and fair	Interval, from low to high (0-1)
	Elections multiparty* (<i>v2elmulpar_ord</i>)	Was this national election multiparty?	It is a categorical variable of 5 modalities : - 0 : No-party or single-party and there is no meaningful competition - 1 : No-party or single-party but multiple candidates from the same party and/or independents contest legislative seats or the presidency. - 2 : At least one real opposition party is allowed to contest, but competition is highly constrained (legally or informally) - 3 : Elections are multiparty in principle but either one main opposition party is prevented (<i>de jure</i> or <i>de facto</i>) from contesting - 4 : Elections are multiparty	Categorical from low to high (0-4)
	Lexical index (<i>e_lexical index</i>)	What is the lexical index of democracy in the country?	It is a categorical variable of 7 modalities : - 0 : No elections - 1 : No party or one-party elections - 2 : Multiparty elections for legislature - 3 : Multiparty elections for legislature and executive - 4 : Minimally competitive elections - 5 : Male or female suffrage - 6 : Universal suffrage	Categorical from low to high (0-6)
Polyarchy definition	Share of population with suffrage (<i>v2x_suffr</i>)	What share of adult citizens as defined by statute has the legal right to vote in national elections?	The scores reflect <i>de jure</i> provisions of suffrage extension in percentage of the adult population. It covers only legal <i>de jure</i> restrictions, not restrictions that may be operative in practice <i>de facto</i> (as restrictions based on age, residence, having been convicted for a crime, or being legally incompetent). Universal suffrage is coded as 100%. Universal male suffrage only is coded as 50%. Years before electoral provisions are introduced are scored 0%. If qualifying criteria other than gender apply such as income, region, race, ethnicity, and religion estimates have been calculated by combining information on the restrictions with different kinds of statistical information on population size, age distribution, wealth distribution, size of ethnic groups...	Interval, from low to high (0-1)

Criteria	Indices	Meaning	Sub-dimensions	Scale
Polyarchy definition	Candidate restriction by ethnicity, race, religion, or language (<i>v2elrstrct</i>)	Is the eligibility of candidates for national legislative office (when elected) formally restricted (by constitution or statute) by ethnicity, race, religion, or language?	0 : Yes, there are such statutory restrictions. 1 : No, there are no such restrictions or the candidates are not elected	Dummy (0/1).
	Freedom of expression (<i>v2x_freexp</i>)	To what extent does the government respect press and media freedom, the freedom of ordinary people to discuss political matters at home and in the public sphere, as well as the freedom of academic and cultural expression?	The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators : - Print and broadcast censorship effort - Harassment of journalists - Media self-censorship - Freedom of discussion for men/women - Freedom of academic and cultural expression	Interval, from low to high (0-1)
	Alternative sources of information (<i>v2xme_altinf</i>)	To what extent is the media (a) unbiased in their coverage or lack of coverage of the opposition, (b) allowed to be critical of the regime, and (c) representative of a wide array of political perspectives?	The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators : - Media bias - Print and broadcast media critical/perspectives	Interval, from low to high (0-1)
	Freedom of association thick (<i>v2x_frassoc thick</i>)	To what extent are parties, including opposition parties, allowed to form and to participate in elections, and to what extent are civil society organizations able to form and to operate freely?	The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators : - Party ban - Barriers to parties - Opposition parties autonomy - Elections multiparty - Civil society organizations entry and exit/ repression	Interval, from low to high (0-1)
Maximalist definition	Equality before the law and individual liberty (<i>v2xclrol</i>)	To what extent are laws transparent and rigorously enforced and public administration impartial, and to what extent do citizens enjoy access to justice, secure property rights, freedom from forced labour, freedom of movement, physical integrity rights, and freedom of religion?	The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators : - Rigorous and impartial public administration - Transparent laws with predictable enforcement - Access to justice for men/women - Property rights for men/women - Freedom from torture/political killings/from forced labour for men/women - Freedom of religion/foreign movement/domestic movement for men/women	Interval, from low to high (0-1)
	Judicial constraints on the executive (<i>v2x_jucon</i>)	To what extent does the executive respect the constitution and comply with court rulings, and to what extent is the judiciary able to act in an independent fashion?	The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators : - Executive respects constitution - Compliance with judiciary/high court - High/lower court independence	Interval, from low to high (0-1).
	Legislative constraints on the executive (<i>v2xlg_legcon</i>)	To what extent are the legislature and government agencies e.g. comptroller general, general prosecutor, or ombudsman capable of questioning, investigating, and exercising oversight over the executive?	The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators : - Legislature questions officials in practice - Executive oversight - Legislature investigates in practice/opposition parties	Interval, from low to high (0-1).

Criteria	Indices	Meaning	Sub-dimensions	Scale
The broad context	HOS control over (<i>v2exctlhs</i>) HOG control over (<i>v2exctlhg</i>)	In practice, from which of the following bodies must the head of state (HOS) and/ or Head of Government (HOG) customarily seek approval prior to making important decisions on domestic policy?	For more details on the creation of the variable to measure tutelary powers see the Technical Appendix 2.1 .	
	Domestic autonomy (<i>v2svdomaut</i>)	Is the state autonomous from the control of other states with respect to the conduct of domestic policy?	It is a categorical variable of 3 modalities : 0 : Non-autonomous. National-level authority is exercised by an external power, either by law or in practice. 1 : Semi-autonomous. An external political actor directly constrains the ability of domestic actors to rule, decides who can or cannot rule through formal rules or informal understandings, or precludes certain policies through explicit treaty provisions or well-understood rules of the game from which the subject state cannot withdraw 2 : Autonomous. Domestic political actors exercise political authority free of the direct control of external political actors.	Categorical from low to high (0-2).
	International autonomy (<i>v2svinlaut</i>)	Is the state autonomous from the control of other states with respect to the conduct of its foreign policy?	It is a categorical variable of 3 modalities : 0 : Non-autonomous. Foreign policy is controlled by an external power, either <i>de facto</i> or <i>de jure</i> . 1 : Semi-autonomous. An external political actor directly constrains the ability of domestic actors to pursue an independent foreign policy course in some important areas. 2 : Autonomous. Domestic political actors exercise foreign policy free of the direct control of external political actors.	Categorical from low to high (0-2).
	Basic needs are met equally (<i>v2xeg_eqdr</i>)	How equal is the distribution of resources?	This component measures the extent to which resources - both tangible and intangible - are distributed in society. An equal distribution of resources supports egalitarian democracy in two ways. First, lower poverty rates and the distribution of goods and services such as food, water, housing, education and healthcare ensure that all individuals are capable of participating in politics and government. In short, basic needs must be met in order for individuals to effectively exercise their rights and freedoms. Second, high levels of resource inequality undermine the ability of poorer populations to participate meaningfully. This principle also implies that social or economic inequalities can translate into political inequalities. Thus, it is necessary to include not only measures of poverty and the distribution of goods and services, but also the levels of inequality in these distributions, and the proportion of the population who are not eligible for social service	Interval, from low to high (0-1).

Reading notes : Slash in particular in the column “Sub-dimensions” signal two different indices. For example in the clean election index sub-dimensions : the “Election Management Body autonomy/capacity” indicator is shaped by two distinct and different indexes : the election management body autonomy and the election management body capacity. We are gathering it due to constraints on space. *The variable *v2elmulpar_ord* requires that a country holds elections. It, therefore, has the disadvantage of excluding partially (before the first elections were held) or completely (countries that never held elections). For those countries where information on multiparty elections is missing, we use the variable *e_lexical_index* to complete our database (6 % of our observations have missing data on the variable *v2elmulpar*). We coded 0 observations with a score of 0 and 1 on the *e_lexical_index* variable and 4 observations with a score of 4 or 6 on the *e_lexical_index* variable (we do not have the other scores of the *e_lexical_index* variable). Note that the information on the *e_lexical_index* variable is available from 1900 to 2017. For the two missing years (2018 and 2019), we report the 2017 value for six observations : Qatar [2017 :2019] ; Saudi Arabia [2017 :2019] ; South Sudan [2017 :2019].

Technical Appendix 2.1 - Methodology for constructing the tutelary powers variable

First, we have identified if the Head of the executive (HOS) or the HOG (Head of government) is the chief of the executive (does the head of state have more relative power than the head of government).

The V-Dem variable *v2ex hosw* identifies if the HOS ($v2ex\ hosw = 1$) or HOG ($v2ex\ hosw = 0$) is the chief executive or if the HOS and HOG share the power ($v2ex\ hosw \in]0; 1[$).

In the first case, we add the relative importance of foreign powers (*v2exctlhs 1*), a ruling party in a one-party system (*v2exctlhs 2*), a royal council (*v2exctlhs 3*), the army (*v2exctlhs 4*), a religious body (*v2exctlhs 5*), a tribal or ethnic council (*v2exctlhs 6*) on the domestic policy of the head of state.

In the second case, we add the relative importance of foreign powers (*v2exctlhg 1*), a ruling party in a one-party system (*v2exctlhg 2*), a royal council (*v2exctlhg 3*), the army (*v2exctlhg 4*), a religious body (*v2exctlhg 6*), a tribal or ethnic council (*v2exctlhg 7*) on the domestic policy of the head of government.

In the third case we add the relative importance of foreign powers (*v2exctlhs 1* ; *v2exctlhg 1*), a ruling party in a one-party system (*v2exctlhs 2* ; *v2exctlhg 2*), a royal council (*v2exctlhs 3* ; *v2exctlhg 3*), the army (*v2exctlhs 4* ; *v2exctlhg 4*), a religious body (*v2exctlhs 5* ; *v2exctlhg 6*), a tribal or ethnic council (*v2exctlhs 6* ; *v2exctlhg 7*) on the domestic policy of the head of government and the head of state (depending on the relative importance of the two chiefs of the executive ; *v2ex hosw*).

Table A2.2 - Data summary statistics

Variables	Obs	Mean	Std	Min	Max	P25	P50	P75	Skewness	Kurtosis (Pearson moments)
Elected officials	14 554	0.66	Overall : 0.45 between : 0.29 within : 0.35	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	-0.72	1.60
Multiparty elections	14 554	2.83	Overall : 1.49 between : 1.06 within : 1.08	0.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	-0.86	2.18
Free and fair	14 554	0.44	Overall : 0.34 between : 0.26 within : 0.21	0.00	0.99	0.11	0.38	0.77	0.22	1.58
Universal suffrage	14 554	0.81	Overall : 0.34 between : 0.19 within : 0.28	0.00	1.00	0.50	1.00	1.00	-1.39	3.31
Candidate restriction	14 554	0.91	Overall : 0.29 between : 0.26 within : 0.17	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-2.78	8.72
Inclusiveness	14 554	1.71	Overall : 0.45 between : 0.33 within : 0.33	0.00	2.00	1.50	2.00	2.00	-1.46	4.47
Freedom of expression	14 554	0.53	Overall : 0.31 between : 0.23 within : 0.21	0.01	0.99	0.24	0.53	0.83	-0.08	1.58
Alternatives source of information	14 554	0.51	Overall : 0.32 between : 0.24 within : 0.21	0.01	0.97	0.20	0.54	0.82	-0.18	1.54
Freedom of association thick	14 554	0.51	Overall : 0.32 between : 0.25 within : 0.21	0.01	0.96	0.17	0.55	0.84	-0.18	1.48
Equality before the law	14 554	0.55	Overall : 0.30 between : 0.24 within : 0.18	0.00	0.99	0.28	0.57	0.85	-0.14	1.69
Judicial constraints on the executive	14 554	0.53	Overall : 0.30 between : 0.27 within : 0.14	0.01	0.99	0.25	0.56	0.80	-0.12	1.69
Legislative constraints on the executive	14 554	0.47	Overall : 0.30 between : 0.25 within : 0.18	0.02	0.99	0.17	0.46	0.77	0.08	1.57
Tutelary powers	14 554	1.92	Overall : 0.53 between : 0.44 within : 0.31	0.00	2.6	1.6	2	2.37	-0.77	3.28
Domestic autonomy	14 554	1.72	Overall : 0.58 between : 0.36 within : 0.47	0.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	-1.94	5.56
International autonomy	14 554	1.66	Overall : 0.65 between : 0.39 within : 0.54	0.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	-1.66	4.37
State autonomy	14 554	3.37	Overall : 1.19 between : 0.73 within : 0.97	0.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	-1.82	5.06
Basic needs	14 554	0.49	Overall : 0.30 between : 0.25 within : 0.17	0.01	0.99	0.21	0.46	0.76	0.09	1.64
<i>Liberal democracy index</i> (V2X_libdem)	14 554	0.29	Overall : 0.26 between : 0.20 within : 0.16	0.00	0.89	0.08	0.18	0.49	0.84	2.30

Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset (Coppedge et al., 2020b).

Table A2.3 - Simple correlations between active variables

	Elected officials	Multiparty elections	Free and fair	Inclusive - ness	Freedom of expression	Alternative source of information	Freedom of association	Equality before the law	Judicial constraints on the executive	Legislative constraints on the executive	Tutelary Powers	State Autonomy	Basic needs
Elected officials	1.00												
Multiparty elections	0.41	1.00											
Free and fair	0.51	0.58	1.00										
Inclusiveness	0.35	0.26	0.23	1.00									
Freedom of expression	0.52	0.70	0.79	0.27	1.00								
Alternative source of information	0.52	0.74	0.74	0.24	0.92	1.00							
Freedom of association	0.55	0.79	0.80	0.27	0.83	0.92	1.00						
Equality before the law	0.48	0.65	0.80	0.29	0.90	0.81	0.85	1.00					
Judicial constraints on the executive	0.35	0.56	0.78	0.19	0.79	0.73	0.76	0.81	1.00				
Legislative constraints on the executive	0.40	0.62	0.76	0.22	0.81	0.79	0.79	0.77	0.77	1.00			
Tutelary Powers	0.30	0.38	0.53	0.15	0.50	0.47	0.50	0.52	0.45	0.49	1.00		
State Autonomy	0.39	0.24	0.17	0.37	0.26	0.24	0.23	0.32	0.15	0.22	0.26	1.00	
Basic needs	0.31	0.28	0.57	0.39	0.47	0.35	0.41	0.63	0.49	0.47	0.40	0.27	1.00

Reading note : All correlations are significant correlation at the 5% level. The horizontal and vertical lines separate the different dimensions of democracy that we have identified.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2020b).

Appendix B. Additional Results

Table B2.1 - Episodes of democratic regression during the pre-third reverse wave era (1900 :1990)

Country name	Begin	End	LDI before	LDI After	Regime status before	Regime status after	Average depletion rate (ADR)
Albania	1936	1945	0.144	0.037	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	1.2
Argentina	1929	1931	0.389	0.107	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	14.1
Argentina	1942	1943	0.223	0.101	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	12.1
Argentina	1951	1956	0.24	0.083	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	3.1
Argentina	1961	1962	0.312	0.16	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	15.2
Argentina	1965	1967	0.406	0.082	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	16.2
Argentina	1974	1977	0.335	0.048	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	9.6
Australia	1906	1917	0.72	0.607	Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy	1
Austria	1929	1935	0.563	0.093	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	7.8
Bangladesh	1974	1976	0.202	0.101	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	5.1
Belgium	1913	1915	0.439	0.154	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	14.3
Belgium	1938	1940	0.438	0.155	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	30.1
Benin	1964	1965	0.628	0.111	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	13.3
Brazil	1963	1965	0.298	0.077	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	11.1
Bulgaria	1943	1945	0.147	0.046	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	5.1
Burkina Faso	1964	1967	0.246	0.12	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	4.2
Burkina Faso	1979	1980	0.237	0.12	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	11.7
Burma/Myanmar	1961	1963	0.301	0.017	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	14.2
Chile	1923	1928	0.232	0.096	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	2.7
Chile	1972	1974	0.548	0.038	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	25.5
Colombia	1945	1949	0.207	0.059	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.7
Costa Rica	1916	1917	0.234	0.127	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	10.7
Costa Rica	1947	1948	0.242	0.132	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	11
Cuba	1950	1953	0.312	0.127	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	6.2
Czech Republic	1937	1940	0.598	0.014	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	19.5
Czech Republic	1947	1953	0.149	0.028	Closed Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	2
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1962	1970	0.172	0.036	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	1.7
Denmark	1939	1944	0.758	0.173	Liberal Democracy	Closed Autocracy	11.7
Ecuador	1962	1963	0.201	0.058	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	14.3
Ecuador	1969	1972	0.199	0.074	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	4.2
Estonia	1928	1935	0.631	0.156	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	6.8
Fiji	1986	1987	0.46	0.149	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	31.1
Finland	1936	1940	0.531	0.429	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.55
France	1935	1941	0.479	0.067	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	6.9
France	1964	1965	0.649	0.499	Liberal Democracy	Liberal Democracy	15
Germany	1931	1934	0.472	0.021	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	15
Ghana	1960	1966	0.258	0.102	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.6
Ghana	1971	1972	0.296	0.101	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	19.5
Ghana	1980	1982	0.404	0.079	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	16.3
Greece	1932	1940	0.28	0.035	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	3.1
Greece	1965	1967	0.345	0.066	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	14
Guatemala	1949	1955	0.243	0.057	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	3.1
Hungary	1918	1919	0.255	0.142	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	11.3
Hungary	1937	1945	2.253	0.073	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	2.3

Table B2.1 - Episodes of democratic regression during the pre-third reverse wave era
(1900 :1990)

Country name	Begin	End	LDI before	LDI After	Regime status before	Regime status after	Average depletion rate (ADR)
India	1970	1976	0.526	0.27	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	4.3
Indonesia	1956	1966	0.353	0.079	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	2.7
Iraq	1957	1963	0.187	0.064	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	2.1
Italy	1921	1926	0.296	0.04	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	5.1
Kuwait	1975	1976	0.277	0.134	Closed Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	14.3
Kuwait	1985	1986	0.264	0.129	Closed Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	13.5
Latvia	1933	1935	0.607	0.146	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	23.1
Lesotho	1968	1971	0.247	0.1	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	4.9
Libya	1968	1970	0.146	0.032	Closed Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	5.7
Lithuania	1923	1928	0.437	0.125	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	6.2
Luxembourg	1938	1941	0.535	0.071	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	15.5
Malta	1929	1930	0.306	0.165	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	14.1
Malta	1933	1934	0.312	0.167	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	14.5
Malta	1957	1959	0.468	0.174	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	14.7
Netherlands	1932	1941	0.663	0.132	Liberal Democracy	Closed Autocracy	5.9
Nigeria	1963	1967	0.188	0.073	Closed Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	2.9
Nigeria	1982	1984	0.26	0.094	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	8.3
Norway	1936	1942	0.654	0.092	Liberal Democracy	Closed Autocracy	9.4
Panama	1964	1969	0.221	0.06	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	3.2
Peru	1912	1920	0.187	0.066	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	1.5
Peru	1947	1949	0.265	0.038	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	11.4
Peru	1961	1962	0.275	0.152	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	12.3
Peru	1967	1969	0.348	0.036	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	15.6
Philippines	1938	1942	0.188	0.04	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.7
Philippines	1968	1972	0.282	0.037	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	6.1
Poland	1922	1931	0.526	0.209	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	3.5
Portugal	1925	1927	0.183	0.072	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	5.6
Republic of the Congo	1961	1969	0.183	0.028	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	1.9
Republic of Vietnam	1962	1963	0.177	0.074	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	10.3
Romania	1936	1949	0.158	0.031	Closed Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	1
Seychelles	1976	1977	0.223	0.09	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	13.3
Sierra Leone	1966	1968	0.187	0.074	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	5.7
Somalia	1968	1970	0.24	0.026	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	10.7
Spain	1935	1940	0.384	0.051	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	6.7
Sri Lanka	1976	1982	0.49	0.235	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	4.3
Sudan	1988	1990	0.167	0.013	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	7.7
Suriname	1979	1981	0.654	0.136	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	25.9
Suriname	1989	1990	0.531	0.206	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	32.5
Syria	1957	1959	0.205	0.058	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	7.4
Turkey	1954	1960	0.258	0.095	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	2.7
Turkey	1970	1972	0.402	0.272	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	6.5
Turkey	1979	1981	0.416	0.054	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	18.1
Uganda	1963	1967	0.239	0.101	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	3.5
Uruguay	1920	1921	0.434	0.289	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	14.5
Uruguay	1930	1933	0.473	0.241	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	7.7
Uruguay	1967	1974	0.665	0.043	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	8.9
Venezuela	1947	1950	0.187	0.056	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	4.4
Zanzibar	1963	1964	0.174	0.029	Closed Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	14.5

Table B2.2 - Episodes of democratic regression during the third reverse wave era
(1991 :2019)

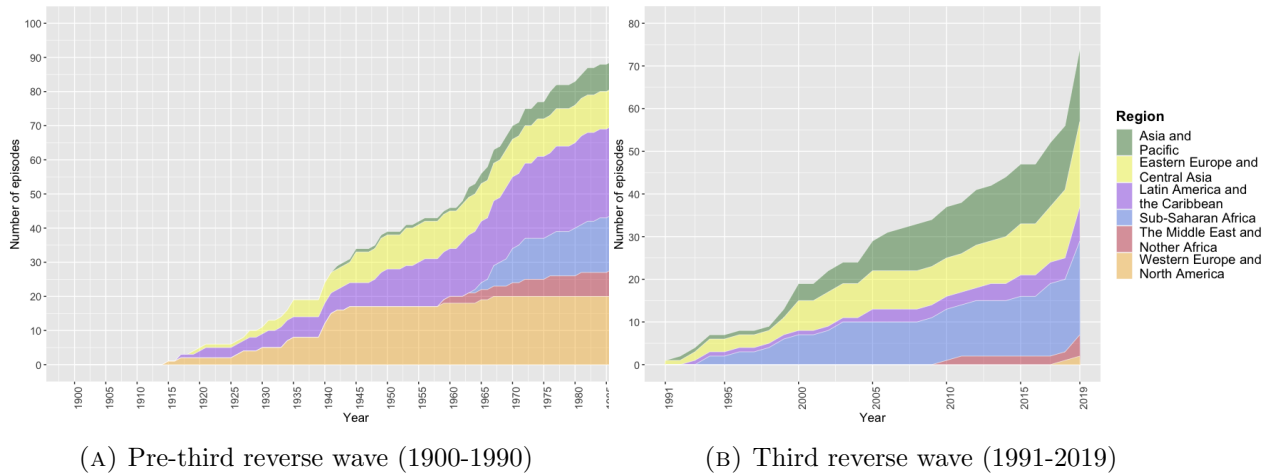
country_name	Begin	End	LDI before	LDI After	Regime (RoW) status before	Regime status (RoW) after	Average depletion rate (ADR)
Armenia	1991	1999	0.377	0.216	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.0
Austria	2011	2018	0.809	0.709	Liberal Democracy	Liberal Democracy	1.4
Azerbaijan	1993	1994	0.202	0.085	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	11.7
Bangladesh	2001	2006	0.283	0.114	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.4
Belarus	1993	2000	0.455	0.100	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	5.1
Benin	2017	2019	0.628	0.461	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	8.4
Bolivia	2005	2013	0.518	0.381	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	1.7
Brazil	2013	2019	0.790	0.508	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	4.7
Bulgaria	2015	2019	0.628	0.488	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	3.5
Burkina Faso	2014	2015	0.451	0.341	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	11,0
Burkina Faso	2016	2019	0.585	0.273	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	10.4
Burundi	2008	2019	0.211	0.047	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	1.4
Central African Republic	1998	2003	0.255	0.103	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.0
Comoros	1998	1999	0.235	0.108	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	12.7
Comoros	2014	2019	0.378	0.180	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	4.0
Croatia	2015	2019	0.686	0.545	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	3.5
Ecuador	2003	2015	0.526	0.292	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	2.0
Estonia	1990	1991	0.679	0.222	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	45.7
Fiji	1999	2000	0.453	0.166	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	28.7
Fiji	2005	2007	0.463	0.116	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	17.4
Guinea-Bissau	2002	2003	0.237	0.113	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	12.4
Haiti	1999	2005	0.301	0.091	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	3.5
Hungary	2009	2015	0.760	0.476	Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy	4.7
Hungary	2016	2018	0.512	0.385	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	6.4
India	2013	2019	0.568	0.364	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	3.4
Ivory Coast	1996	1999	0.269	0.153	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.9
Lesotho	2014	2017	0.478	0.369	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	3.6
Libya	2013	2019	0.307	0.156	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	2.5
Madagascar	1994	2002	0.405	0.241	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.1
Madagascar	2003	2009	0.294	0.088	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.4
Malawi	1995	2000	0.467	0.348	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.4
Maldives	2010	2017	0.449	0.145	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	4.3
Mali	2011	2012	0.477	0.183	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	29.4
Mauritania	2012	2017	0.260	0.133	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.5
Moldova	1999	2002	0.464	0.341	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	4.1
Moldova	2011	2018	0.626	0.407	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	3.1
Mongolia	2011	2018	0.607	0.495	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	1.6
Namibia	1993	1994	0.481	0.338	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	14.3
Nepal	1994	2002	0.324	0.149	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	2.2
Nepal	2011	2012	0.454	0.203	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	25.1
Nicaragua	2005	2019	0.419	0.058	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.6
Niger	1994	1996	0.426	0.210	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	10.8
Niger	2008	2010	0.434	0.172	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	13.1
Niger	2015	2019	0.493	0.344	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.7
North Macedonia	1999	2000	0.474	0.350	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	12.4
North Macedonia	2006	2014	0.499	0.273	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.8

Table B2.2 - Episodes of democratic regression during the third reverse wave era
(1991 :2019)

country_name	Begin	End	LDI before	LDI After	Regime (RoW) status before	Regime status (RoW) after	Average depletion rate (ADR)
Pakistan	1998	1999	0.231	0.092	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	13.9
Palestine/West Bank	2006	2010	0.341	0.138	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	5.1
Peru	1984	1993	0.486	0.102	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	4.3
Philippines	2000	2005	0.455	0.33	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.5
Philippines	2015	2019	0.469	0.286	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	4.6
Poland	2014	2017	0.824	0.566	Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy	8.6
Republic of the Congo	1993	1998	0.291	0.070	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	4.4
Romania	2016	2019	0.595	0.434	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	5.4
Russia	1992	1993	0.328	0.167	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	16.1
Russia	1997	2005	0.325	0.133	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	2.4
Serbia	2011	2019	0.537	0.254	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.5
Solomon Islands	1998	2000	0.395	0.152	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	12.2
Solomon Islands	2004	2005	0.405	0.189	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	21.6
South Korea	2007	2008	0.785	0.658	Liberal Democracy	Liberal Democracy	12.7
Suriname	2016	2019	0.676	0.550	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	4.2
Taiwan	2002	2010	0.720	0.619	Liberal Democracy	Liberal Democracy	1.3
Thailand	2002	2006	0.414	0.189	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	11.3
Thailand	2004	2014	0.426	0.121	Electoral Democracy	Closed Autocracy	15.3
The Gambia	1991	1994	0.351	0.083	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	8.9
Turkey	2006	2011	0.550	0.393	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	3.1
Turkey	2012	2019	0.408	0.101	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.9
Ukraine	1997	2000	0.355	0.223	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	4.4
Ukraine	2007	2012	0.438	0.283	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	3.1
United States of America	2014	2019	0.837	0.7	Liberal Democracy	Liberal Democracy	2.7
Vanuatu	1987	1992	0.605	0.498	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Democracy	2.1
Venezuela	1997	2005	0.623	0.188	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	5.4
Yemen	2014	2019	0.151	0.042	Electoral Autocracy	Closed Autocracy	2.2
Zambia	2012	2017	0.459	0.246	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Autocracy	4.3

Reading note : The ADR (Average depletion rate) measures the average speed at which democratic characteristics decline during an episode of democratic regression, in terms of year-on-year changes, based on the LDI. We report the values of this metric as a percentage of 1 (the highest possible LDI score). For example, in an episode of democratic regression that lasts 2 years, if we have a decrease in the first year of 0.1 and then 0.02 on the LDI index, this corresponds to an average depletion rate of 6. Higher values indicate a radical change in regime, while lower values indicate a more gradual change. The regime typology is based on the Regimes on the World (RoW), V2X_regime (Lührmann et al. 2018). Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2020b).

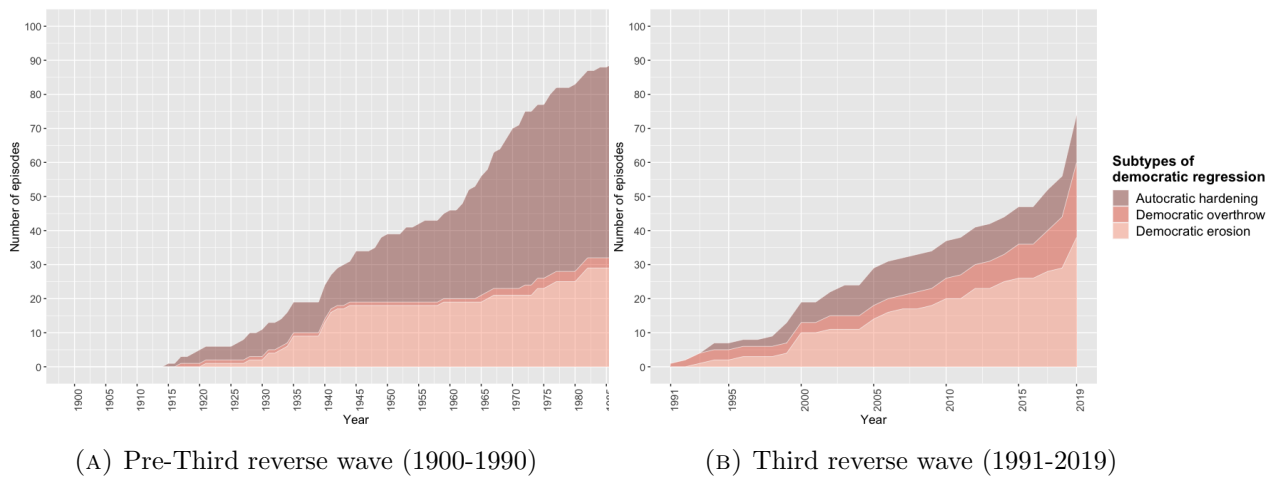
Figure B2.1 - Cumulative number of democratic regression episodes by region



Reading notes : The units of analysis are the 166 cases of democratic regression in our sample. There are 92 cases of democratic regression in the Pre-Third reverse wave period (1900-1990). There are 74 cases in the third reverse wave (1991-2019). The aggregate area represents the cumulative number of democratic regression episodes. The sub-areas highlight regional trends. The six-region classification is based on the politico-geographic (see [Teorell et al. 2018](#)).

Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset ([Coppedge et al. 2020b](#)).

Figure B2.2 - Subtypes of democratic regression



Reading notes : The units of analysis are the 166 cases of democratic regression in our sample. There are 92 cases of democratic regression in the pre-third reverse wave (1900-1990). There are 74 cases in the third reverse wave (1991-2019). The aggregate area represents the cumulative number of episodes per subtype of democratic regression. The sub-areas highlight regional trends. The regime typology is based on the Regimes of the World (RoW) classification ([Lührmann et al. 2018](#)).

Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset ([Coppedge et al. 2020b](#)).

Table B2.3 - Classification of episodes of democratic regressions in their cluster

Democratic crumbling (n=54)					
Armenia (1999) ED →EA	Australia (1917) LD →ED	Austria (2018) LD →LD	Azerbaijan (1994) EA →EA	Benin (2019) ED →EA	Bolivia (2013) ED →ED
Brazil (2019) ED →ED	Bulgaria (2019) ED →ED	Burkina Faso (2015) ED →EA	Comoros (2019) ED →EA	Costa Rica (1948) EA →EA	Croatia (2019) ED →ED
Ecuador (2015) ED →ED	Finland (1940) ED →EA	France (1965) LD →LD	Hungary (2015) LD →ED	Hungary (2018) LD →ED	India (1976) ED →EA
India (2019) ED →ED	Lesotho (2017) ED →ED	Libya (1970) CA →CA	Madagascar (2002) ED →EA	Malawi (2000) ED →EA	Maldives (2017) ED →EA
Mauritania (2017) EA →EA	Moldova (2002) ED →ED	Moldova (2018) ED →ED	Mongolia (2018) ED →ED	Namibia (1994) ED →EA	Niger (2019) ED →EA
Nigeria (1967) CA →CA	North Macedonia (2000) ED →EA	North Macedonia (2014) ED →EA	Peru (1920) EA →EA	Philippines (2005) ED →EA	Philippines (2019) ED →EA
Poland (2017) LD →ED	Romania (2019) ED→ED	Russia (1993) ED →ED	Russia (2005) EA →EA	Serbia (2019) ED →EA	South Korea (2008) LD →LD
Sri Lanka (1982) ED →EA	Suriname (2019) EA →EA	Taiwan (2010) LD →LD	Turkey (1972) ED →ED	Turkey (2011) ED →ED	Uganda (1967) EA →CA
Ukraine (2000) ED →EA	Ukraine (2012) ED →EA	United States of America (2019) LD →LD	Uruguay (1921) ED →CA	Vanuatu (1992) ED →ED	Zambia (2017) ED →EA
Electoral capture (n=46)					
Argentina (1956) ED →CA	Argentina (1962) EA →EA	Bangladesh (1976) EA →CA	Bangladesh (2006) ED →EA	Benin (1965) ED →CA	Burkina Faso (1967) EA →CA
Burkina Faso (1980) EA →EA	Burkina Faso (2019) ED →EA	Central African Re- public (2003) EA →EA	Chile (1928) EA →CA	Comoros (1999) EA →EA	Costa Rica (1917) EA →EA
Ecuador (1963) EA →EA	Ecuador (1972) EA →CA	Estonia (1991) ED →ED	Fiji (1987) ED →CA	Fiji (2000) ED →CA	Ghana (1966) EA →EA
Guinea-Bissau (2003) EA →EA	Haiti (2005) EA →CA	Ivory Coast (1999) EA →EA	Kuwait (1976) CA →CA	Kuwait (1986) CA →CA	Lesotho (1971) EA →CA
Libya (2019) ED →CA	Lithuania (1928) ED →CA	Madagascar (2009) EA →EA	Mali (2012) ED →EA	Malta (1930) EA →EA	Malta (1934) EA →CA
Malta (1959) ED →CA	Nepal (2012) ED →EA	Niger (1996) ED →EA	Niger (2010) ED →CA	Nigeria (1984) EA →CA	Pakistan (1999) EA →CA
Palestine/West Bank (2010) ED →EA	Peru (1962) EA →EA	Republic of Vietnam (1963) EA →EA	Sierra Leone (1968) EA →CA	Solomon Islands (2000) ED →EA	Solomon Islands (2005) ED →EA
Suriname (1990) ED →ED	Thailand (2006) ED →CA	Turkey (1960) EA →CA	Yemen (2019) EA →CA		

Table B2.3 - Classification of episodes of democratic regressions in their cluster

Autocratic worsening (n=25)					
Albania (1945) EA →CA	Belarus (2000) ED →EA	Brazil (1965) EA →CA	Bulgaria (1945) EA →CA	Burundi (2019) EA →EA	Czech Republic (1953) CA →CA
Democratic Republic of the Congo (1970) EA →CA	Guatemala (1955) EA →CA	Hungary (1919) EA →CA	Indonesia (1966) ED →CA	Iraq (1963) EA →CA	Italy (1926) EA →CA
Nicaragua (2019) ED →EA	Panama (1969) EA →CA	Peru (1949) EA →CA	Peru (1993) ED →CA	Poland (1931) ED →CA	Republic of the Congo (1969) EA →CA
Republic of the Congo (1998) EA →CA	Romania (1949) CA →CA	Somalia (1970) EA →CA	Thailand (2014) ED →CA	Turkey (2019) ED →EA	Venezuela (2005) ED →EA
Zanzibar (1964) CA →CA					
Radical autocratization (n=32)					
Argentina (1931) ED →EA	Argentina (1967) ED →CA	Argentina (1977) ED →CA	Austria (1935) ED →CA	Belgium (1915) EA →CA	Belgium (1940) EA →CA
Burma/Myanmar (1963) EA →CA	Chile (1974) ED →CA	Czech Republic (1940) ED →CA	Denmark (1944) LD →CA	Estonia (1935) ED →CA	Fiji (2007) ED →CA
France (1941) ED →CA	Germany (1934) ED →CA	Ghana (1982) ED →CA	Greece (1940) EA →CA	Greece (1967) EA →CA	Hungary (1945) EA →CA
Latvia (1935) ED →CA	Luxembourg (1941) ED →CA	Netherlands (1941) LD →CA	Norway (1942) LD →CA	Peru (1969) EA →CA	Philippines (1942) EA →EA
Philippines (1972) EA →CA	Spain (1940) ED →CA	Sudan (1990) EA →CA	Suriname (1981) ED →CA	Syria (1959) EA →CA	Turkey (1981) ED →CA
Uruguay (1974) ED →CA	Venezuela (1950) EA →CA				
Idiosyncratic (n=9)					
Argentina (1943) EA →EA	Colombia (1949) EA →EA	Cuba (1953) EA →CA	Ghana (1972) EA →EA	Nepal (2002) EA →CA	Portugal (1927) EA →CA
Seychelles (1977) EA →CA	The Gambia (1994) EA →EA	Uruguay (1933) ED →CA			

Reading note : The date in parentheses corresponds to the end date of a democratic regression episode.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-DEM) dataset (Coppedge et al. 2020b).

Chapter 3

Where and Who are the Populists in Taiwan? A Microeconomic Study of Populist Attitudes Based on Cross-Strait Individual Preferences

3.1 Introduction

Whether in Latin America with political figures such as Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Donald Trump in North America, or in Western Europe with Marine Le Pen in France, VOX in Spain, as well as in Central and Eastern Europe with Viktor Orbán in Hungary or the Austrian Freedom Party in Austria, the presence of populist politicians has grown steadily in recent times. Parallel to the rise of these populist political forces, academic interest in populism has been consistently increasing since the 1990s, following an initial boom in the 1950s. Between 1990 and 2010, some 1,200 books published in English addressed this phenomenon, with no indication that this upward trend will abate in the years ahead ([Rovira Kaltwasser et al., 2017](#)). This academic interest is a response to the escalating rise of populism in the world since the early 1990s, with the emergence of a new wave of populists in Europe, characterized by radical right-wing populist forces, as well as in Latin America with “neo-populists” (a combination of populist appeals and liberal economic policies), such as Menem in Argentina (1989-1999), Fujimori in Peru (1990-2000) or Salinas in Mexico (1988-1994).

Most studies of populism focus on the West (e.g. [Akkerman et al., 2014](#); [Schulz et al., 2018](#), [Vehrkamp & Wratil, 2017](#)) - particularly in Western Europe, which is the region of the world that has received the most academic attention - or Latin America, the two regions most affected by this phenomenon since the 1990s ([Rovira Kaltwasser et al., 2017](#)). In Western countries, it mostly takes the form of exclusionary (rightist) populism, defining the people on the basis of nativism and criticizing elites for prioritizing the interests of ethnic minorities over those of the native minority.¹ In Latin America, it mostly takes the form of inclusive (leftist) populism, where the people and the elites are positioned in opposition rooted in a class-based interpretation of society ([Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013](#)).

Although academic interest in populism is global, Asia is the most neglected region ([Rovira Kaltwasser et al., 2017](#)) after the Middle East (e.g. [Hadiz, 2016](#)) and Oceania

1. There are also forms of inclusionary (leftists) populist forces in Europe, such as SYRIZA in Greece or PODEMOS in Spain, which arose in response to European austerity policies and neoliberal policies in the wake of the Great Recession.

(e.g. [Moffitt, 2017](#)). For [Hellmann \(2017\)](#) there is no ideological space for the formation of this phenomenon in East Asia. Indeed, the left-right political divide in East Asia is not structured by Marxist class theory, which prevents the emergence of an inclusive populism. Furthermore, East Asian societies have not undergone a transition towards post-material value orientation, which limits the potential for populist politicians to portray themselves as “defenders” of traditional values and consequently prevents the emergence of an exclusionary populism ([Hellmann, 2017](#)). Nevertheless, as [Mizuno & Phongpaichit \(2009\)](#) point out, it was after the 1997 Asian crisis that the continent saw the emergence of its first generation of populist leaders,² such as Thaksin (2001-2006) in Thailand, Estrada (1998-2001) in the Philippines and more recently in India with the emergence of right-wing populism under Modi’s leadership (2014-) ([Varshney et al., 2021](#)).

We seek to fill the gap in empirical research on populism in Asia, by focusing on the case of Taiwan, which has experienced two waves of populist supply. Chen Shui-bian initiated the first wave, transitioning from a populist anti-privilege rhetoric to a nationalist one ([Matsumoto, 2009](#)). The second wave of populism was triggered by the response to economic integration with mainland China and the implementation of the Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement (CSSTA), which led to the emergence of two populist movements, in a bottom-up model, with the “White Force” (WP) and the “New Power Party” (NPP) ([C.-E. Wu & Chu, 2021](#)). More recently, Han Kuo-yu of the KMT party has emerged with pro-Chinese rhetoric, setting himself apart from the other populist leaders mentioned above ([Yen, 2021](#)). In this context of the rise of populist movements, it is relevant to analyse the socio-political dynamics and factors that contribute to the emergence and popularity of these populist leaders, especially since populist attitudes among the Taiwanese population have rarely been studied (for an exception see [Yen \(2021\)](#)). Finally, Taiwan is of particular interest because of the singularity of its political cleavage, which is not oriented towards a conventional left-right economic divide, but centred around the choice between unification with the mainland, maintaining the status quo or striving for formal political independence (also known as the *Tongdu* question). ([Norris, 2004](#); [Fell, 2018b](#)).

2. As [Panizza \(2005\)](#) points out, the breakdown of the social order and the loss of confidence in the political system’s ability to re-establish it following events such as economic crises is one of the factors leading to the emergence of populist leaders. Another historical example is Fujimori’s rise to power in Peru (1990-2000) when the country was hit by hyperinflation.

In this study, we conduct an examination of the demand side of populism at the micro level, assessing how many Taiwanese individuals share the populist set of ideas, commonly referred to as populist attitudes in the literature. We conceive populism through an ideational approach (Mudde, 2004; Mudde, 2007; Mudde, 2017; K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018). Specifically, we draw on Mudde's ideational definition of populism as a thin-centred ideology (Mudde, 2004 : p.543; Mudde, 2007 : p.23; Mudde, 2017 : p.30). This definition is described as 'minimal' by Akkerman et al. (2014 : p.1326), i.e. it contains only the necessary and sufficient conditions for the conceptual validity of populism. The major advantage of this definition is its ability to remain relevant and be sensitive to the context, regardless of the geographical region under study or the ideology to which the populist is associated, owing to its high level of abstraction. We conceptualize populism as a latent higher-order construct composed of two distinct and non-compensatory lower-order dimensions, namely anti-elitist attitudes and general support for popular sovereignty.

In this chapter, utilizing data from Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study (TEDS) project, we pursue a twofold aim. Firstly, our goal is to ascertain which of the factors traditionally identified in the empirical literature as explaining the development of populist attitudes in the Occident and Latin America are relevant for understanding the cultivation of populist ideas in Taiwan. Secondly, we investigate Taiwan's unique geopolitical factor, namely, preferences related to the cross-strait relationship's unification versus independence debate. Our aim is to evaluate their potential influence and pinpoint which preferences have the most substantial effect on the cultivation of populist attitudes. For the last point, we draw on the multidimensional method of Niou (2005), based on conditional preferences for identified seven orientations on the cross-strait relationship (the external relations between China and Taiwan) as well as three positions for those who have no preference for this issue (passivists, rationalists and incoherent individuals). Each preference will be characterized according to its socio-demographic and economic profile, its attitudes towards mainland China, and its views on major political and societal issues.

This study yields several significant findings. First, it is apparent that Taiwanese populists display diverse sociodemographic characteristics, while commonly experiencing subjective economic insecurity, low self-perceived political competence, and a widespread aversion

to the democratic system. This aversion appears to stem more from political frustration and they typically lean towards right-wing economic and cultural preferences. Second, we identify and classify three groups of preferences regarding the cross-strait relationship with the highest potential for populist attitudes. The first group, labelled “weak populists”, is made up of those who are most supportive of independence. The second group, termed “moderate populists”, comprises inconsistent individuals as well as those expressing the second-strongest preference for unification. Finally, the last group, referred to as the “strong populists”, consists exclusively of individuals who most strongly support the solution of unification.

The rest of the study is structured as follows. [Section 3.2](#) presents the ideological definition of populism and the core concept of this approach. We then describe the supply side of populism in Taiwan. [Section 3.3](#) successively presents the data used, our approach to assessing individual preferences regarding the independence-unification issue, as well as our method for measuring populist attitudes and the control variables used. [Section 3.4](#) provides a description of the preferences related to the cross-strait relationship that we have identified and the econometric results are presented in [Section 3.5](#). Finally, [Section 3.6](#) concludes.

3.2 Literature Review

As we will see in the [Subsection 3.2.1.1](#), populism is what [Gallie \(1956 : p.169\)](#) calls an “*essentially contested concept*”, i.e. a concept which is subject to multiple definitions and descriptions, but where there is no consensus on its core characteristics. The concept of populism has thus been the subject of a wide variety of approaches in the academic literature, and in this chapter, we study it from the ideological approach ([Mudde, 2004](#); [Mudde, 2007](#); [Mudde, 2017](#); [K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018](#)). In [Subsection 3.2.1.2](#), we present the core concepts associated with this approach. To conclude, In the [Subsection 3.2.2](#), we describe the supply side of populism in Taiwan, i.e. the Taiwanese actors who employ populist ideas.³

3. It is one of the main advantages of the populist ideological approach to study both the demand and supply of populist ideas ([Mudde, 2017](#); [Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017](#)).

3.2.1 What is Populism ?

3.2.1.1 Populism as a Political Ideology

Populism is a contested concept, partly because of its diverse manifestations across various regions worldwide. It's also a multidisciplinary concept, with applications in fields such as criminology, history, economics, education, political science, and sociology (Mudde, 2017). Different conceptual approaches to populism exist within the academic field, each with its own understanding and empirical analysis methods.

There are four main approaches to populism in political science : the ideational approach (Mudde, 2004 ; Mudde, 2007 ; Mudde, 2017 ; K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018) defines it as an ideology or set of ideas (Mudde, 2004 ; Mudde, 2007 ; Mudde, 2017), the politico-strategic approach (Weyland, 2001 ; K. M. Roberts, 1995)⁴ considers it as a strategy of mass mobilization employed by a leader who seeks to govern or govern with the direct and unmediated support of his supporters. On the other hand, the performative or cultural approach⁵ characterizes it as a repertoire and performative style embodied by leaders to rally the masses. (Ostiguy, 2009 ; Ostiguy, 2017), and the economic approach views it as a

4. As defined by Weyland (2001 : p.12) a strategy is “*the methods and instruments of winning and exercising power*”. This approach focuses on the mobilization and expressive aspects of populism, capable of establishing a direct and unmediated relationship between the leader and followers, for example, through discourses and performances. In this approach, Weyland (2001 : p.14) defines populism “*as a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, institutionalized support for large numbers of mostly unorganized followers*”. Nevertheless, the overemphasis on leadership limits the applicability of this concept in examining established political parties or grassroots social movements that employ populist rhetoric (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017) or populist movements that operate without charismatic figures, as the Tea Party (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018). Additionally, the political-strategic approach fails to provide a comprehensive understanding of why ordinary individuals may, in certain circumstances, wholeheartedly embrace populism (K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018).

5. The cultural approach considers populism predominantly as a folkloric style of politics, which leaders and parties use to mobilize certain segments of the electorate (Ostiguy, 2017). This approach is hence focused on performative looking at the style of leadership, including brazen language, disruptive behaviours, demonstrative gestures, and an overall posture of defiance toward established institutions. Populism here is characterized by closeness and transgressive provocations that manifest the improper (Bucy et al., 2009). For example, Ostiguy defines populism as the “*flaunting of the low*”, referring to an antagonistic, uninhibited and coarse style adopted by personalistic leaders (Ostiguy, 2017 : p.74). The concern with this definition is that it overlooks populist leaders who may not exhibit improper behaviour and can instead demonstrate cultural sophistication, such as Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018).

type of irresponsible politics where politicians in power maximize their popularity through unsustainable expenditure via active state intervention (Dornbusch & Edwards, 1991).⁶

In this chapter, we follow an ideational approach. Recently, there has been a conceptual convergence in research at the micro or mass level, to study populism as an ideology, even though some authors are sometimes reluctant to use the term ideology.⁷ Some scholars prefer a “worldview” (K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018 : p.5), a “discursive frame” (Aslanidis, 2016 : p.304), a type of political “discourse” (Laclau, 1977 : p.8), a “discourse” (Moffitt, 2016 : p.28) or a “language” (Kazin, 1995 : p.14). Whatever the qualifier used, the authors adopting the ideational approach consider populism as a set of ideas about “the people” and “the elite” and that politics is about respecting the sovereignty of the people. In this study, we will use the ideational definition of Mudde, who considered populism as a “thin-centred ideology” (Mudde, 2004 : p.543 ; Mudde, 2007 : p.23 ; Mudde, 2017 : p.30).

McRae (1969) made the initial endeavour to define populism as an ideology, while Mudde (Mudde 2004 ; Mudde 2007 ; Mudde 2017) has played a prominent role in contemporary scholarship by significantly contributing to the conceptualization of populism within the ideological framework, particularly through his research on Western right-wing populist parties. For him, populism is “*a thin-centred ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people*” (Mudde, 2004 : p.543 ; Mudde, 2007 : p.23 ; Mudde, 2017 : p.30). In other words, like other ideologies,⁸ populism is based on a fundamental opposition between the people and the elite. The essence of populism is a distinction between the homogeneous *pure* people and the homogeneous *corrupt* elite or, in Manichean terms, between the *good* people and the *evil* elite (K. A. Hawkins, 2009). The main advantage of

6. For Dornbusch & Edwards (1991 : p.9) populism in an economic approach “*emphasizes growth and income distribution and deemphasizes the risk of inflation and deficit finance*”. This economic definition has two major problems, according to Rovira Kaltwasser et al. (2017). The first is that it does not provide a clear definition for conceptualizing populism, but only describes its presumed economic consequences. The second is that this definition can only include leftist or inclusive types of populism.

7. An ideology is “*a body of normative and normative-related ideas about the nature of man and society as well as the organization and purposes of society*” (Sainsbury, 1980 : p.8).

8. For example, socialism defines its opposition in terms of class (e.g. Marx & Engels, 1977[1848]), while nationalism defines its opposition in terms of the nation (e.g. Taguieff, 1995). However, in the case of populism, the opposition is grounded on morality.

the minimal definition is that it can be applied to a large number of cases (high extension) from a small number of dimensions (low intention) (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

This definition is related to the work of Freeden (Freeden, 1996; Freeden, 1998) who conceives populism as a ‘thin-centred ideology’. Thin-centred ideologies do not have the same level of intellectual refinement as thick or full ideologies. They have “*a restricted core attached to a narrower range of political concepts*” (Freeden, 1998 : p.750). Thus, thin ideologies entail a core of normative ideas about how society should be organized, but they do not offer a wide range of solutions to major political institutional or socio-economic issues and are “*moralistic rather than programmatic*” (Mudde, 2004 : p.544). In the case of populism, this thin ideology is about the main division in society (between “the pure people” and “the corrupt elite”), while also asserting that politics must prioritize the preservation of popular sovereignty (“the general will of the people”), regardless of the consequences.

The attachment of populism to other ideologies (or sometimes even its assimilation) such as thick ideologies like conservatism, liberalism, and socialism, or thin ideologies like fascism, ecologism, feminism, and nationalism, is crucial for the promotion of political projects.⁹ Populism is an ‘empty-heart’ (Taggart, 2000 : p.4) it rarely exists on its own (Akkerman et al., 2014). In fact, because populism as a thin ideology is formed by a small network of core ideas, it “*lacks the capacity to put forward a wide-ranging and coherent programme for the solution to crucial political questions*” (Stanley, 2008 : p.95). Moreover, by combining populism with other ideologies, populist leaders can adapt and develop their discourse according to their own context, to offer answers to the political issues that modern societies generate; populism is highly context-dependent (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser (2013). Indeed, Taggart (2000 : p.5) underlined the “chameleonic” nature of populism. In the sense that it appears in different places and times, but adapts to its environment, with attributes that resonate with ‘the heartland’ (Taggart, 2000 : p.93).¹⁰

9. A notable exception is the Italian Five Star Movement (M5S), that not seem to have a stable host ideology (Mosca & Tronconi, 2019).

10. For Taggart (2000), populism has an idealised view of the state of society that once existed. This state is called the heartland and its inhabitants are the people. A heartland is a place “*in which, in the populist imagination, a virtuous and unified population resides*” (Taggart, 2000 : p.95). According to the author, whenever populists refer to the people, they call for the return of the heartland.

Put differently, all populism appeals share the moral distinction between “the pure people” and “the corrupt elite” - with an unshared understanding of these terms - and that politics is about respecting popular sovereignty, but it does not offer a broad menu of solutions to major political institutional or socio-economic issues. The content varies according to the context, which is why populist parties can be found across the entire political spectrum, ranging from the left (inclusionary populism) to the right (exclusionary populism) political spectrum.

3.2.1.2 The Three Core Concepts of Populism

As we have seen from the ideological approach, populism is a set of ideas, limited in ambition and scope, characterised by an antagonistic relationship between the people and the elite, as well as by the primacy of popular sovereignty, whereby the virtuous general will of the people is opposed to the moral corruption of elite actors. According to this approach, the people, the elite and the general will are the core concepts of populism (Mudde, 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

The People

Although the people is seen as the ‘core’ attribute of the concept of populism - being both the opposite of one attribute (the elite) and the expression of another (the general will) (Mudde, 2017), it remains criticised for its vagueness. For example, for Laclau (1977), the people (like the elite) is an “empty signifier”, i.e. it does not really refer to a really existing group, it has no real content at all. To better understand this point, we can rely on the notion of ‘heartland’, which is an alternative term first introduced by Taggart (1996). The ‘heartland’ is a place “in which, in the populist imagination, a virtuous and unified population resides” (Taggart, 1996 : p.95). To put it another way, the concept of ‘people’ is an idealized conception and construction of the community (the ‘heartland’) by the populists.

It is therefore difficult to give a comprehensive definition of what the people is, as it may be different for each case of populism, depending on the key characteristics of the communities targeted by the populists. The literature identifies three different meanings

of the people to which individual populists refer (Canovan, 1999 ; Kriesi, 1999 ; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017 ; Mény & Surel, 2000).

One of these is cultural, with an understanding of the people as “a nation” (Kriesi, 1999 : p.362) or as “our people” (Canovan, 1999 : p.5). In this conception, the people refer to the national community, defined in civic or ethnic terms, as in national populism (see e.g. Taguieff, 1995). The underlying objective is to distinguish the people from those who do not belong to the national community (such as foreigners or immigrants or other minorities). The second conception is economic, with a distinction between the “ordinary people” against the privileged, highly educated, cosmopolitan elite (Canovan, 1999 : p.5). It refers to “the people as a class” (Kriesi, 1999 : p.362), as in the case of social populism (see e.g. March, 2011) which combines socio-economic statutes with specific cultural traditions and popular values. While the previous understanding of people was inclusive, this one is divisive, as it distinguishes those who do not belong to “our people”. The last conception is political, referred to as “the people as sovereign” (Kriesi, 1999 : p.362) or as the “united people” (Canovan, 1999 : p.5). It refers to ideas developed during the American and French revolutions calling for the establishment of “a government of the people, by the people and for the people” - in the words of the US President Abraham Lincoln.

While the first two conceptions characterize right-wing and left-wing populism respectively, the third can be either left-wing or right-wing. In its manifestations, the people is defined by a combination of these secondary characteristics (political power, socioeconomic status, and nationality). It is rare to find cases in which only one of these features is mentioned (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). Whatever the meaning of the people, it is viewed as a homogeneous group - the people largely share the same interests and have the same features - forming a social unity or community and described as inherently good (Canovan, 2002).

The Elite

The concept of *the elite* derives its definition from the people, who is its “nemesis” (Mudde, 2004 : p.544). However, it is not always defined *ex negativo* (Mudde, 2017). The definition of the elite can be based on the same criteria of the people as ethnic populism, or not like xenophobic populism (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). The key distinction between the people and elite is the morality. The elite is portrayed as “corrupt” and “exploitative” (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008 : p.4), as “anti-popular” and “immoral” (Jansen, 2011 : p.84) or as “evil” and “conspiring” (K. A. Hawkins, 2009 : p.1042). It is viewed as a homogeneous group which acts against the “general will” of the people.

Many populist actors may use a wide variety of ideologies, as secondary criteria for identifying the elite, in a way similar to the meaning of the people, in economic, national or political terms; where different types of elites may be targeted on the basis of power (Mudde, 2004). This is thus people with a position in politics (parties, government, ministers...), economics¹¹ (bankers, multinationals, trade unions, capitalists...), culture (media, journalists), intellectuals (researchers, writers, universities) or legal elites (courts, administration, civil service). The more diffuse the anti-elitism (directed against a general and universal elite group, such as all political parties) the more fervent and radical it is (Jagers & Walgrave, 2018).

The General Will

By invoking the general will, many populists share Rousseau’s critique of representative government (Mudde, 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017) and are in favour of Rousseau’s republican utopia of self-government (i.e. the citizens are able to both make the laws and execute them). Therefore, many populist leaders support the implementation of direct democratic mechanisms, so that popular sovereignty can be exercised without

11. Identifying the elite with economic power allows the populist leader to justify his or her lack of political success because of an elite that may have lost political power, but holds economic power and is sabotaging it. This is rhetoric used in particular by post-communist Eastern Europe during the 1990s and contemporary left-wing populist presidents in Latin America as Chávez in Venezuela (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

reservation.¹² Populism can be seen as pro-democracy, giving a voice to the unrepresented. However, since the people is seen as pure and homogeneous and the general will is absolute, it can legitimise authoritarianism and illiberal attacks on anyone who threatens this homogeneity (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

In short, populists claim they are the voice of *the people* (*vox populi*) and that politicians must follow the general will of the people. Their policies are based on the notion of ‘common sense’ (Ridge, 1973) i.e. they are the result of the honest and logical priorities of the people (anyone opposed to common sense is identified as part of the corrupt elite), while the elite is the voice of ‘special interests’ of powerful minorities (Mudde, 2004).

3.2.2 The Supply Side of Populism in Taiwan

In order to depict the supply side of populism in Taiwan, we will adopt a chronological perspective. Indeed, we can distinguish two waves of supply-side populism in Taiwan. The first wave is embodied by Chen Shui-bian, the DPP’s running mate, the first democratically elected non-Kuomintang (KMT) president (2000-2008). This was a historical moment, marking the first alternation of executive power after almost 55 years of uninterrupted KMT political domination. The rise of populism was fostered by a variety of factors, such as dissatisfaction with Taiwan’s international status, disagreements over national identity, ethnic tensions and concerns about money-driven politics and corruption. These elements contributed to Chen-Shui-bian’s success and marked a turning point in Taiwan’s political history (Matsumoto, 2009).

Chen Shui-bian ran for president in 2000 with populist anti-privilege appeals, focusing on the problem of “black and gold” i.e. cash-dominated politics, gangster politics and political corruption - and blaming the KMT for making it flourish (Matsumoto, 2009). In fact, as argued by Panizza (2005), the discrediting of political parties, through allegations of corruption or malfeasance, encourages the emergence of populist leaders. His populist rhetoric consisted of opposing the “privileged” and the “corrupt” KMT elites, who acted

12. Indeed, representative democracy is seen as an aristocratic form of power, where citizens are passive entities who are periodically mobilised to choose their representatives. Populist leaders favour institutional mechanisms that allow the general will to be answered by forms of direct democracy such as referendums or even plebiscites (Mudde, 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

against the interests of the “ordinary people” (Rigger, 2001). In addition, he developed a direct and quasi-personal relationship with his followers, bypassing existing intermediary institutions. After his accession to the presidency, this populist strategy continued, as he described himself as “the people’s president” and presented his government as “the people’s government” (Matsumoto, 2009). To secure his re-election in the 2004 presidential election, Chen maintained his populist strategy but made a shift from anti-privilege rhetoric to nationalist populism based on Taiwanese identity.¹³

This strategy was evident in the 2004 referendum¹⁴ initiated by President Chen, which was held on the day of the presidential election. He strongly supported the referendum, using nationalist rhetoric such as “If you love Taiwan, support the referendum!” (Matsumoto, 2009). Chen’s emphasis on Taiwanese identity played a significant role in his electoral victory and continued throughout his second term, especially in response to corruption scandals involving his staff and family members, which forced him to adopt political positions closer to the “deep green” electorate. He abandoned the “Four Noes and One Without” policy,¹⁵ a commitment he had made in his 2000 inaugural speech concerning the political status of Taiwan, to promote the “Four Imperatives and One Non-issue”¹⁶ in 2007. Moreover, in 2006, Chen officially announced that the Guidelines for National Unification would “cease to apply” and that the National Unification would “cease to function”¹⁷

13. The reason for this shift was Chen’s inability to deliver on his election promises, notably that of liquidating KMT assets in the absence of a majority in the Legislative Yuan, as well as growing pressure from the People’s Republic of China (PRC). In addition, the agreement between the two main opposition parties in the pan-Blue coalition, the KMT and the PFP, to field a single running mate in the 2004 presidential election, also influenced this change of strategy (Matsumoto, 2009).

14. The referendum concerned the strengthening of Taiwan’s military defence capabilities and the opening of negotiations with the PRC. However, this initiative was strongly criticized by the international community, notably Japan and the United States, as well as by China, which perceived it as a challenge to the “one China” principle. In addition, the pan-Blue coalition declared the referendum illegal and dangerous.

15. It’s a political pledge made by Chen Shui-bian that as long as the PRC did not use military force against Taiwan, its administration would not : 1) declare independence ; 2) change the national title ; 3) push for the inclusion of the so-called “state-to-state” relations in the Constitution ; 4) promote a referendum on unification or independence. The “One Without” is that the abolition of the National Reunification Council or the National Reunification Guidelines will not be an issue.

16. The “Four Imperatives and One Non-issue” policy mentions that it is imperative for Taiwan : 1) to be independent ; 2) to rectify its name ; 3) to create a new constitution ; 4) to develop. The “non-issue” is that there is no leftist or rightist policy in Taiwan, but only the issue of independence versus reunification.

17. The “Guidelines for National Unification” are a set of political principles laid down by the “National Unification Council”, an advisory body to the government of the Republic of China, and adopted in 1991 by the Executive Yuan Council. The guidelines set out a three-stage process for the gradual unification

([Matsumoto, 2009](#)). His Taiwanese nationalism also manifested itself by reassessment of symbols associated with Chiang Kai-shek's regime, the designation of the pan-Blue coalition as the "internal enemy inside" and the PRC as the "external enemy" ([Matsumoto, 2009](#)). [Hellmann \(2017\)](#) notes, however, that Chen's populist strategy is questionable, as he does not define the elite as a homogeneous group, here he refers to a particular group, the KMT, which acts against the interests of the people.

After the second political transition and the KMT's return to power during President Ma's term (2008-2016), a second wave of populism emerged. These movements were formed to express dissatisfaction with the KMT's policies, which prioritised economic development over social justice and environmental management. Furthermore, the policy of "economic diplomacy"¹⁸ and closer economic integration with China through the signing of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) in 2010, had economic and political consequences, leading to discontent among the population, particularly among younger generations who faced high unemployment and underemployment rates ([T.-H. Lin, 2015](#) [C.-E. Wu & Chu, 2021](#)). These factors were the catalysts for the rise of populism, and the specific trigger for the emergence of anti-establishment movements was the signing of the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) in 2013 between Taipei and Beijing. The CSSTA faced strong opposition from civil society due to concerns over its potential negative economic effects, risks to Taiwan's sovereignty and identity, increased economic dependence on mainland China, and lack of transparency in the negotiation process ([F.-Y. Chen & Yen, 2017](#)).

These concerns gave rise to the "Sunflower Movement", a social and political movement that led to the emergence of two anti-establishment forces led by political outsiders : the "White Force" (WP) movement led by Ko Wen-je, and the New Power Party (NPP), collectively created by prominent figures of the Sunflower Student Movement (Huang Kuo-chang,

of mainland China and Taiwan : reciprocal exchanges, mutual trust and cooperation and negotiation of unification ([Fell, 2018b](#)).

18. "Economic diplomacy" is a term used to describe the policy of détente and reconciliation with the mainland during Ma's presidency. There was a significant move towards closer ties with the mainland, as the Ma government accepted the 1992 consensus (specifically the "One China, Two Interpretations" policy) and committed to maintaining the status quo. This was evident through the signing of four agreements in November 2008 to facilitate direct air and sea links between Beijing and Taipei, as well as the adoption of a law in 2010 allowing Chinese students to study at Taiwanese universities ([Fell, 2018b](#)).

Freddy Lim, Hung Tzu-yung, and Hsu Yung-ming). These new populist movements adopted a bottom-up model of populism, organized by autonomous civil society organizations to voice their opposition to the ruling elite (C.-E. Wu & Chu, 2021).

These two political forces create a binary opposition between a corrupt elite and the pure masses, adopting a Manichean view of society and targeting the corrupt and inept elites while maintaining independence from major political parties. Ideologically, they can be characterized as progressive populists, as they espouse progressive and post-materialist social values and support liberal democratic principles (C.-E. Wu & Chu, 2021). Ko Wen-je gained popularity through his independent candidacy in the 2014 mayoral election, focusing on anti-Chinese rhetoric and left-wing populist ideas. He later founded the Taiwan People's Party in 2019 as an alternative to established political coalitions and is expected to run for president in 2024 (Yen, 2021). The NPP, in addition to its opposition to closer ties with the mainland, also advocates for direct democracy and played a significant role in reforming the rules governing referendums in Taiwan (C.-E. Wu & Chu, 2021). During the 2020 general elections, the NPP experienced a decline, which can be attributed to its focus on cross-strait relations, which lost relevance in the absence of ongoing negotiations (C.-E. Wu & Chu, 2021).

Contrary to the previously mentioned populist leaders, a new figure has recently emerged in the political landscape, Han Kuo-yu, who stands on the opposite side of the political spectrum. Despite being marginalized within the KMT for many years, Han Kuo-yu made a remarkable comeback by winning the mayoralty of Kaohsiung in the 2018 municipal elections and securing the second position in the 2020 presidential election. His campaign slogan, "Export Goods, Bring People In, Making Taiwan Rich," reflected his combination of left-wing populist ideas and pro-Chinese rhetoric. Notably, he advocated for stronger economic and trade ties with mainland China, aiming to enhance the living standards of the Taiwanese people (Yen, 2021).

3.3 Methodology and Variable Design

We present the data used in [Subsection 3.3.1](#). [Subsection 3.3.2](#) is devoted to the methodology used to assess individual preferences for relations between mainland China and Taiwan. After presenting the measures traditionally used in the literature in [Subsection 3.3.2.1](#) and their limitations, we will detail the methodology we will adopt in this study to assess these preferences in [Subsection 3.3.2.2](#). Our method is inspired by the method of [Niou \(2005\)](#) based on conditional preferences for independence or unification. In [Subsection 3.3.3](#), we describe our measure of populist attitudes using the ideational approach ([Mudde, 2004](#); [Mudde, 2007](#); [Mudde, 2017](#); [K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018](#)). In this chapter, we conceive populism as a higher-order latent construct with two distinct and non-compensatory lower-order dimensions : anti-elitism sentiments and general support for popular sovereignty. The control variables are presented in [Subsection 3.3.4](#).

3.3.1 Data

In this chapter, we utilize data from the Taiwan Election and Democratization Study (TEDS) project.¹⁹ The TEDS project gathers individual-level data on Taiwanese political preferences, including voting behaviour, democratic values, perceptions of elected officials' competence, as well as contextual information on economic and political issues such as the cross-strait relationship. We employ a cross-sectional dataset that combines data from the 2016 and 2020 waves, which coincide with the Presidential and Legislative Elections and include relevant variables for assessing populist attitudes.

Our initial sample consists of 3,370 individuals (n=1,690 for the 2016 wave and n=1,680 for the 2020 wave). However, we exclude individuals with missing values on key variables of interest, namely individual preferences regarding the independence-unification issue and items measuring populist attitudes. Thus, our final analysis is based on a sample of 2,256 individuals (n=1,235 for the 2016 wave and n=1,321 for the 2020 wave).

19. For more precision see their website http://teds.nccu.edu.tw/teds_plan/

3.3.2 Measuring Individual Preferences on the Cross-Strait Issue

3.3.2.1 How to Measure Individual Preferences on the Cross-Strait Relationship?

In this subsection, we introduce the two most commonly used questions, which we refer to as the standard measures, for assessing individual preferences on the independence-unification issue. We will also present their limitations, which will justify the method we will use to measure preferences on the *Tongdu* question in [Subsection 3.3.2.2](#).

The first question is quantitative, which we will refer to as the standard quantitative measure. It requires respondents to self-assess their preference on a numerical scale, ranging from 0 for immediate independence to 10 for immediate unification. The midpoint (5) represents those who favour the status quo option. However, the midpoint is also a catch-all score, as it includes individuals with diverse perspectives, including those who are neutral, undecided, indifferent or have limited knowledge of the issue ([Converse & Pierce, 1986](#); [Lambert, 1983](#); [Ogmundson, 1979](#)). In our sample, almost half the respondents in our sample (around 48%) opted for the midpoint.

The second question is qualitative, which we will refer to as the standard qualitative measure. Under the standard qualitative measure, respondents express their preferences according to six answer possibilities : independence now, unification now, independence later, unification later, decision later, or status quo indefinitely. The aim of this question design is to distinguish between individuals who prefer independence and those who prefer unification, considering their different time horizon preferences within these categories, without specifying the reasons behind them. It also seeks to take into account the considerations of individuals with a preference for the status quo. However, the main challenge of this approach is interpreting the responses to form a continuous spectrum from independence to unification, particularly for ordering the status quo responses. Additionally, some individuals may hide their true preferences by selecting the status quo option ([Y.-H. Chu, 2004](#)), which may result in individuals with opposing views on national identity choosing the same response. It is also likely that respondents have a different understanding over

time of the different response options (Fell, 2018c; Muyard, 2012b).²⁰ Almost half the respondents in our sample (around 50%) were in favour of both status quo options.

In summary, standard methods share the common perspective of treating preferences as a one-dimensional spectrum between independence and unification, with the status quo representing the centrist option. The difference between these two measures, beyond their form (qualitative or quantitative), lies in the disaggregation and interpretation of the status quo (Niou, 2005). A particularly frustrating aspect of these two measures is that most of the people questioned chose the intermediate category - the midpoint 5 option (standard quantitative) or the status quo option (standard qualitative) - due to the inherent limitations of these two questions that we have previously highlighted.

That why's, to evaluate individual preferences regarding the independence-unification issue among Taiwanese people, we employ the method proposed by Niou (2005) (see also Y.-H. Chu, 2004; Shen & Finch, 2008; Wu 1992), which differs from commonly used standard measures. This method relaxes the unidimensional assumption by measuring individuals' conditional preferences on both the dimension of independence and that of unification. Thus, unlike standard unidimensional approaches, positions on this issue cannot be summed up as being either for or against Taiwan's independence. This measurement goes further by seeking to understand under what conditions respondents would accept or abandon the solution of independence or unification. In other words, this conditional method assumes that individuals' orientations on this question depend on (are conditioned by) the costs associated with achieving either objective. Using the conditional preference method, we will demonstrate to a large proportion of the respondents, that independence and unification are not mutually exclusive alternatives but depend on the conditions under which these two solutions can be achieved. Furthermore, we will be able to identify and differentiate various positions for individuals who do not express preferences on this issue.

3.3.2.2 Operationalization of Individual Preferences on the Cross-Strait Relationship

To measure the conditional preferences of Taiwanese on the relationship with mainland China, we mobilise four questions, which are in the [Box 1](#) below :

20. For more in-depth information on this matter, please refer to footnote 2 in the introduction.

Box 1 : Items to measure preferences on the cross-strait relationship

- 1a) Some people say, “If Taiwan could still maintain peaceful relations with the PRC after declaring independence, then Taiwan should establish a new, independent country”.
- 1b) Some people say, “Even if PRC decides to attack Taiwan after Taiwan declares independence, Taiwan should still become a new country”.
- 2a) Some people say, “If the economic, social, and political conditions were about the same in both mainland China and Taiwan, then the two sides should unify”.
- 2b) Some people say, “Even if the gap between the economic, social, and political conditions in mainland China and Taiwan is quite large, the two sides should still unify”.

Source : Author’s own elaboration based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Answers were measured on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly agree) to 4 (Strongly disagree), with an additional “other” category. It should be noted that preferences regarding Mainland–Taiwan relations are assessed in a multidimensional manner : one dimension measures independence from a conflict perspective (questions 1), and another measures unification from an economic perspective (questions 2). Additionally, the best (worst) scenario on each of these dimensions - unification or independence - is addressed in question marked a (b).

We begin by conducting a cross-analysis of the conditional preferences of the Taiwanese according to the scenarios (best and worst case) on each of the dimensions. The results for our entire sample (waves 2016 and 2020) are available in [Table 3.1](#) and [Table 3.2](#) for the independence and unification dimensions, respectively.²¹ For more details, we have also reported the analysis for each wave and each dimension in [Appendix A](#) (see [Tables A3.1](#) to [A3.4](#)).

21. We group the answers “agree (disagree)” and “strongly agree (disagree)” in the category agree (disagree).

TABLE 3.1 – Conditional preferences on independence

Independence if no war	Independence even if war			
	Agree	Disagree	Other*	Total
Agree	56.84	38.94	4.22	63.98
Disagree	19.88	77.79	2.33	31.87
Other*	16.04	33.02	50.94	4.15
Total	43.37	51.08	5.55	100

TABLE 3.2 – Conditional preferences on unification

Unification if compatible	Unification even if not compatible			
	Agree	Disagree	Other*	Total
Agree	27.93	68.53	3.54	28.71
Disagree	2.56	96.07	1.37	65.74
Other*	4.93	37.32	57.75	5.55
Total	9.97	84.91	5.12	100

Reading notes : N=2556. *The “other” category includes the following response options : It depends ; No opinion ; Don’t know ; Refuse to answer.

Light grey cells indicate respondents who support independence even under unfavourable conditions (Table 3.1) or those who do not support unification at all (Table 3.2). Medium grey cells are respondents who support independence (Table 3.1) or unification only under favourable conditions (Table 3.2). The dark grey cells indicate support for unification (Table 3.2) even under unfavourable conditions (Table 3.2) or those who do not support independence at all (Table 3.1). Bold and italicised cells indicate inconsistent and passivist positions, respectively.

Source : Author’s own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

These first cross-tabulations allow us to categorize the Taiwanese into three categories, plus two in each dimension (unification and independence) : (1) those who support independence (unification) even under unfavourable conditions ; (2) those who support independence (unification) only under favourable conditions ; (3) those who do not support independence (unification) at all. We indicate the preferences on the independence-unification issue using colour codes in the tables. The lighter (darker) the cell, the more respondents support the independence (unification) of mainland China. The other two groups are those who have no particular position on this issue. The bold text in each table indicates illogical positions on the relationship with China (incoherent individuals). For example, in Table 3.1, we can see that among those who do not support independence even if the island can have peaceful relations with its neighbour, there are about 20% who want independence even if

it leads to war. The italicized text in the tables indicates passivists, those who hold no opinion on either question, answering “other” to at least one of the hypothetical questions.

Regarding the dimension of independence ([Table 3.1](#)), we find that 64% of the population in our sample is in favour of independence under favourable conditions, of which about 57% would also support it even in case of war and 39% only if the conditions are favourable. On the other hand, among those who are not in favour of independence under favourable conditions, three-quarters of them are also not in favour when conditions are unfavourable. More generally, based on [Tables A3.1](#) and [A3.2](#) in the [Appendix A](#), we can observe that the proportion of people who want independence (under favourable or unfavourable conditions) has increased between the two survey waves. This increase is particularly striking for independence under unfavourable conditions, which increased by 8 percentage points between 2016 and 2020. It should be noted that the preference for independence over unification is a long-term trend on the island.

For the unification dimension ([Table 3.2](#)), about 29% of the respondents are in favour of unification if the two shores are economically and politically compatible and only 10% if they are not compatible. Furthermore, of those who reject unification under favourable conditions, almost all also reject it under incompatible economic conditions. As with the previous dimension, and on the basis of [Tables A3.3](#) and [A3.4](#) in the [Appendix A](#), we can see that the share of individuals wishing unification (under favourable or unfavourable conditions) has decreased between these two periods, by about 3 percentage points, for these two hypothetical cases.

Finally, we carry out a cross-analysis of conditional preferences for independence and unification, and the results are reported in [Table 3.3](#). This analysis allows us to identify the percentage of respondents who could accept either independence or unification with or without conditions. Note that for this second cross-analysis, we do not include individuals who have incoherent answers for the unification dimension (n=40) and for the independence dimension (n=152) or those who do not have a clear position (n=297) on one of the two dimensions.

TABLE 3.3 – Conditional Preferences on Independence and Unification

Supporting independence	Supporting unification			Total
	Unconditionally	Conditionally	Not supporting	
Unconditionally	6.87	13.40 (3)	79.73 (1)	43.67
Conditionally	7.88 (5)	28.25 (=ratio)	63.87 (2)	28.24
Not supporting	13.43 (7)	29.43 (6)	57.14 (4)	28.09
Total	8.99	22.10	68.91	100

Reading notes : N=2068.

Dark green cell indicates respondents who belong to the ethnic Taiwan nationalism group. **Light green cells** indicate respondents who belong to the civic Taiwan nationalism group. White cell indicates respondents who belong to the centre group. **Light blue cells** indicate respondents who belong to the ROC Chinese nationalism group. **Dark blue cell** indicates respondents who belong to the greater Chinese nationalism. **Bold cell** indicates individuals with inconsistent positions. **Medium grey cell** indicates the rationalist group.

Source : Author’s own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

For more details, we have also reported the conditional preferences for each wave in the [Appendix A](#) (see [Tables A3.5](#) and [A3.6](#)). Note that between the two waves, there is a strengthening of the most extreme positions on this issue. Indeed, we can see from [Tables A3.5](#) and [A3.6](#) in the [Appendix A](#) that the proportion of respondents who support unconditional unification and independence has increased, although the proportion has increased more rapidly for those who support unconditional independence. At the same time, those who conditionally support unification or independence have decreased.

More generally, [Table 3.3](#) reveals that a significant proportion of individuals in our sample ((2), (3), (5), (6), (ratio)) are willing to accept at least one of the two solutions (independence or unification) conditionally, depending on the circumstances. This result highlights that the unidimensional measures discussed in the previous [Subsection 3.3.2.1](#) do not adequately capture respondents’ preferences. The *Tongdu* question is perceived differently by respondents, with some viewing it as a “simple” choice independent of

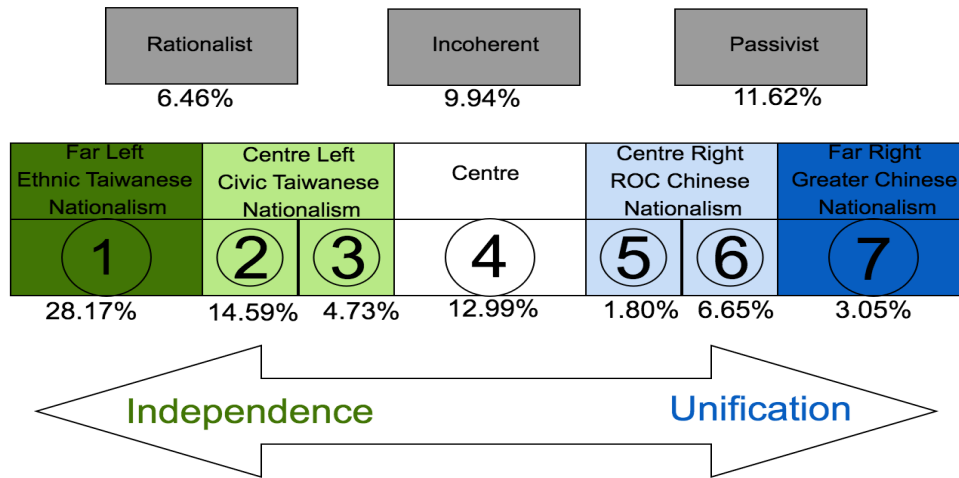
circumstances (①, ④, ⑦), while others qualify it, as their preferences are conditioned, by factors such as China's military threat and economic prospects in mainland China.

From [Tables 3.1, 3.2](#) and [3.3, 3.2](#), we can identify seven orientations on the cross-strait relationship, as well as three positions for those who have no preference for this issue.²² Among the latter, we distinguish the rationalists who are open to both possibilities (unification and independence) under their respective favourable conditions and therefore, contrary to the seven orientations, do not hold a firm position (unconditionally support or do not support) on at least one of the two solutions (see [Table 3.1](#)). Then we have the incoherent individuals who, as their name indicates, hold illogical positions on the unification or independence dimension or on the cross-referenced responses to these two dimensions (indicated in bold text [Tables 3.1, 3.2](#) and [3.3](#)). The final group are the passivists, who have no opinion on either of the two dimensions (indicated in italics text in [Tables 3.1](#) and [3.2](#)).

In addition, based on Fell's framework ([Fell, 2006](#) ; [Fell, 2018c](#)), we group these seven positions into five forms of nationalism. These five forms of nationalism have existed in Taiwan since the 1990s and can be represented as a spectrum comprising a left, a right, and a centre. We summarize this framework in [Figure 3.1](#) as well as the proportions associated with each of these positions.

22. Note that the interpretations of these preferences are different from those proposed by [Niou, 2005](#).

FIGURE 3.1 – Conceptual framework on individual preferences on cross-strait issue



Reading notes : Percentage figures indicate the proportion of individuals in our sample (n=2556) associated with each preference.

Source : Author's own elaboration.

On the far left, we have Taiwanese ethnic nationalism, which consists of individuals who unconditionally advocate for independence and do not support unification (①). Moving towards the centre-left, we find Taiwanese civic nationalism, where individuals conditionally support independence (if there is no war) and do not support unification (②). Additionally, some individuals in this category unconditionally support independence but may consider unification under favourable conditions (③). In the centre, we have those who do not express support for either unification or independence (④). Shifting towards the centre-right, we encounter Chinese Nationalism of the ROC, which includes individuals who unconditionally support unification and may consider independence under favourable conditions (⑤). This group also comprises individuals who do not support independence and prefer unification if specific social, political, and economic conditions are met (⑥). Finally, on the far right, we have Greater China nationalism, which consists of individuals who unconditionally support unification and do not support independence (⑦).

3.3.3 Measuring Populism as an Attitude

In line with most studies that measure populist attitudes at the micro or mass level (e.g. Akkerman et al., 2014; Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Mohrenberg et al., 2021; Schulz et al., 2018), we follow the ideational approach (Mudde, 2004; Mudde, 2007; Mudde, 2017; K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018). This approach conceptualises and measures populism as a set of attitudes or perceptions that individuals have about politics and society. From this approach, our concept measurement follows a definition of populism as a “thin-centred ideology” (Mudde, 2004 : p.543; Mudde, 2007 : p.23; Mudde, 2017 : p.30). We thus include only items and more general components or dimensions which unequivocally constitute essential elements of populism.

There is a growing consensus that populism is a multidimensional construct or latent trait. This means that it is possible to identify clearly distinct dimensions. Nevertheless, there are still disagreements in the empirical literature about the number and denomination of these dimensions (Quinlan & Tinney, 2019).²³

In this chapter, we conceptualize populism at the mass level as a latent higher-order construct composed of two distinct lower-order dimensions : anti-elitism which is a set of ideas according to which a powerful and corrupt minority acts against the interests of the people and general support of the idea of popular sovereignty²⁴ which highlights the significance of direct democracy and the “will of the people”, advocating that they should be consulted in major political decisions.

23. Some researchers have suggested that anti-pluralist attitudes are a component of populism (Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Castanho Silva et al., 2022). Anti-pluralism supports the belief that politics boils down to a confrontation between good, represented by the people, and evil, embodied by the elites, while disregarding any other meaningful cleavages. Anti-pluralist attitudes are measured in two ways : through a focus on the significance of one’s own national group (Oliver & Rahn, 2016) or by dividing individuals into categories of good and evil (Castanho Silva et al., 2018). The selection of the elements and therefore the components of populism is limited to the information that can be mobilized in the questionnaire.

24. It should be noted that this dimension is part of a broader component of populism, namely people-centrism. People-centrism is a romanticized view of common people and the belief that fulfilling the will of the people is the sole objective of democratic politics. In this chapter, we only evaluate the political aspect of this dimension. Other studies place greater importance on this romanticized vision of ordinary individuals (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Oliver & Rahn, 2016), while others integrate both aspects (Schulz et al., 2018). For example, this romantic vision, referred to as the “homogeneity of the people” by some authors (e.g. Schulz et al., 2018), is assessed using items such as “Ordinary people have good moral character and are honest” (see Schulz et al., 2018). As mentioned in the previous note, the choice of items is limited by the information available in the questionnaire.

Note that the “and” is important, because populism is conceived and operationalized as a multidimensional construct with non-compensatory concept components. In this respect, the dimensions are seen as jointly necessary and populist attitudes are located at the intersection of two types of discourse : anti-establishment views and demand for unrestricted popular sovereignty.²⁵

It is important to emphasize that, although researchers theoretically agree on the conceptualization of populist attitudes as a latent trait with non-compensatory dimensions, few studies consider this property when empirically operationalizing this attitudinal syndrome (Wuttke et al., 2020 ; for an exception see Mohrenberg et al. (2021)). They sometimes propose unidimensional measures of this set of ideas (Akkerman et al., 2014 ; Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016 ; Hobolt et al., 2016) or they construct composite scores of populist attitudes, derived from data-driven approaches such as factor analysis, where concept components are viewed as partly interchangeable (Castanho Silva et al., 2018 ; Schulz et al., 2018). Both methods can assign a high populist score to an individual who, for example, does not exhibit anti-elitist attitudes but compensates with high scores in other dimensions (Wuttke et al., 2020). The consequence is a mismatch between the theoretical structure of the concept and its mathematical structure (Goertz, 2006 : p.125).

To measure populist attitudes, we use individual responses to a series of questions that are reported in [Box 2](#) below. The pool of items included a reverse-worded item (a higher degree of agreement with the item indicates a lower presence of the latent trait) in order to avoid acquiescence bias (McClendon, 1991).

25. The relationship between the concept attributes can range from non-compensatory (high scores of all components constitute necessary conditions) to fully interchangeable (one dimension can compensate for the low score of another one). It depends on the theoretical propositions toward the essence of the concept (for further details on this point, in the populism field, see [Wuttke et al. \(2020\)](#)).

Box 2 : Items to measure populist attitudes

People centrism :

Most politicians do not care about the people

Most politicians are trustworthy*

How widespread do you think corruption such as bribe-taking is among politicians in Taiwan ?

People like me don't have any say about what the government does

Popular sovereignty :

The people, and not politicians, should make our most important policy decisions

Poor people should have a greater voice in politics

Reading notes : *Asterisks indicate reverse coded item.

Source : Author's own elaboration based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

To select the most relevant items, we use factor analysis techniques and we control two psychometric properties : internal coherence and cross-time validity. Internal consistency refers to the extent to which the selected items fit into the dimension for which they have been theorized (Castanho Silva et al., 2020). To access internal coherence, we first conduct an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using the promax rotation method for dimensionality reduction, i.e. to determine the number of dimensions present in our data set and also to select the most relevant items. In the second step, to test the robustness of the factor structure put forward by the EFA, we conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Populist attitudes were modelled as a latent higher-order construct composed of two distinct lower-order dimensions, namely anti-elitist attitudes and preference for popular sovereignty.²⁶ In a third step, based on the CFA model obtained in the previous stage, an invariance analysis is performed using a confirmatory multiple-group factorial analysis (MGCFAs) (Jöreskog, 2018). This analysis ensures that the factorial structure of the latent construct remains consistent across these two distinct time points, as our sample data is derived from different waves (χ^2 diff=3.668, df=5, p-value=0.5982).

26. The model fits the data well : root mean square error of approximation= 0.051 ; standardized root-mean-square residual=0.029 ; comparative fit index=0.987 ; tucker-Lewis index=0.968.

Building upon the second-order factor CFA model, we calculate a synthetic anti-elitism and popular sovereignty score for each observation and rescale it to a range from 0 to 1. Then, we construct two measures of this higher-order construct : a continuous measure and a binary measure.

For the binary quantifier (*populism_binary*), we use the Sartorian concept structure (Sartori, 1970). Operationalizing Sartori’s strategy raises the issue of selecting a threshold for each component, given the absence of an objective criterion. To address this, we employed two distinct thresholds : the median (50th percentile) and the corresponding 75th percentile for each dimension. Thus, populists are individuals who adhere to each dimension of populist attitudes more strongly than half of their fellow citizens (binary populism 50th), or who adhere to each dimension of populist attitudes more strongly than 75% of their fellow citizens (binary populism 75th); otherwise, they are considered non-populists.

For the continuous quantifier, we employed left-censored variables, taking into account the two previously mentioned thresholds (50th and 75th percentiles). Furthermore, to align with our theoretical proposition of populist attitudes as a latent trait with non-compensatory dimensions, we applied the correction method proposed by Mohrenberg et al. (2021), using a geometric mean. The equations used for the respective 50th and 75th percentile thresholds are as follows :

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Populism continuous}_i^{50th} = (AE_i \times SOV_i)^{\frac{1}{2}} \text{ if } \text{binary}_i^{50th} = 1 \\ 0 \text{ otherwise} \end{array} \right. \quad (3.1)$$

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Populism continuous}_i^{75th} = (AE_i \times SOV_i)^{\frac{1}{2}} \text{ if } \text{binary}_i^{75th} = 1 \\ 0 \text{ otherwise} \end{array} \right. \quad (3.2)$$

The descriptive statistics associated with these variables are available in [Table B3.1](#) in [Appendix B](#).

3.3.4 Control Variables

In our analyses, we use five subsets of control variables. Among the control variables, some have missing values which have been treated.²⁷ The descriptive statistics associated with the control variables are available in [Table B3.2](#) in [Appendix B](#).

The first subset captures the **socio-demographic profile** of respondents, namely *gender* (0=male), *generations* and *ethnic identity*. In the Taiwanese context, it is more relevant to study generational differences than classically used variables such as age and age squared. Indeed, generations are key factors in the formation of preferences about Taiwan's relations with mainland China and, more generally, changes in identity, based on the social and political experiences specific to each generation ([Wakabayashi, 2006](#)). We have identified six *generations*, based on the study of [Liu & Li \(2017\)](#) : first and second generations (born before 1953), third generation (born between 1954 and 1968) [=reference category], fourth generation (born between 1969 and 1978), fifth generation (born between 1979 and 1988) and sixth generation (born between 1989 and 1993). Respondent's *ethnic identity* is based on his or her father's ethnic origin, either Minnan [=reference category], Hakka, mainland, aboriginal or other (other countries, recent foreign immigrant).

The second subset assesses **attitudes towards mainland China**, which we measure through business relationships or study experiences in China (*China tie*) and *national identification* i.e. whether respondents perceive themselves as Taiwanese [=reference category], Chinese or both (dual identity).

The third subset is the **socio-economic profile** of respondents, which we measure with *income*, *educational attainment*, *institutional sector*, *subjective social class membership* and *economic well-being change*. We consider *income* level (monthly household income) as a numerical variable, although it is initially a categorical variable with 10 response options. The original *education* variables are recoded into a single categorical variable with three categories : primary education [=reference category], secondary education and

27. For missing values of control variables, we used expectation maximization for quantitative variables, a widely recommended practice ([Dockendorff et al., 2012](#)) and the k-nearest neighbours algorithm for qualitative variables.

tertiary education. The *institutional sector* is divided into four categories : public sector [=reference category], private sector, outsider and inactive (student, disabled or unable to work, retired). The purpose of the outsider category is to assess economic insecurity based on the respondent's occupational status. *Subjective class membership* is divided into four categories : lower [=reference category], lower middle, middle and upper middle or upper. The *economic well-being change* variable measures the respondent's perception of changes in their own household's economic situation over the past year. A proxy of income insecurity based on current income. It should be noted that the difference between these two indicators of economic insecurity lies not only in their conceptualization (occupation or income-based) but also in the fact that the first indicator of economic deprivation is objective, whereas the second is subjective.

The fourth subset assesses the **political aptitude** of the respondent, which we evaluate through their *interest in politics*, *internal efficacy* (higher values indicate self-perceived political competence), *general knowledge* (higher values correspond to a lower level of knowledge) and *satisfaction with the functioning of democracy*.

The fifth subset aims to characterize the different subtypes of populism (inclusionary or exclusionary populism). To assess **policy preferences**, we examine the *economic positioning* (the highest values indicate a liberal position), *authoritarian* and *right-wing preferences* (higher values indicate culturally conservative positions).

3.4 Characterization of Individual Preferences on the Cross-Strait Issue

The objective of this section is to characterize the seven positions regarding the *Tongdu* issue and those who have no particular orientation on this issue (rationalists, incoherent individuals and passivists), that we have identified in the [Subsection 3.3.2.2](#). To do so, in [Table 3.4](#), we compare the distributions of the control variables we presented in [Subsection 3.3.4](#), which describe the socio-demographic and economic profile and the attitudes towards mainland China of the respondents, to give a precise description of each position. We also involve the standard qualitative and quantitative variables discussed in [Subsection 3.3.2](#).

Additionally, we include illustrative variables (which will not be used in the regressions) that describe respondents' views on major political or societal issues or events, as well as their political preferences.

According to [Table 3.4](#), ethnic Taiwanese nationalism (①), shows a clear preference for independence, based on standard qualitative and quantitative variables. This confirms Fell's observations ([Fell, 2006](#); [Fell, 2018c](#)) regarding this group's support for immediate *de jure* independence of the island. Approximately 65% of the members on the far left of the nationalist spectrum express support for independence, regardless of the temporal horizon. Hence, it is not surprising to find that it is more politically inclined towards parties within the pan-Green coalition. It is noteworthy that two-thirds of this set reject or deny the existence of the 1992 consensus, and that they overwhelmingly have a positive perception of the demonstrations in Hong Kong against the extradition bill. As described by Fell ([Fell, 2006](#); [Fell, 2018c](#)) and confirmed by [Table 3.4](#), individuals in group ① primarily identify themselves as Taiwanese. What's more, as well as being opposed to political rapprochement with the continent, they also view economic integration negatively. It is also worth noting the strong attachment of this group to democracy.

Additionally, far-left nationalists place importance on elements such as ancestry, birth and residency in the country, nationality, respect for traditions, and language proficiency as components of Taiwanese identity, along with the institutional specificity of the island. Moreover, as Fell ([Fell, 2006](#); [Fell, 2018c](#)) and our study point out, they are particularly interested in institutional issues, such as the establishment of a new constitution, and show greater concern than average, regarding defence and diplomacy matters, national identity, and social issues. On the other hand, they are less concerned about economic, environmental, educational, or health-related issues. This group is more predominant among younger generations (and conversely, underrepresented among the older ones). This result is not surprising, given that the generations after 1979 witnessed international setbacks in the 70s, as well as a progressive political liberalization. These international and domestic events have delegitimized the foundations of the KMT's nation-building project, reinforced by social and economic changes and have prevented the new generation from clinging to an "imagined Chinese community" ([R.-I. Chen, 2021](#)).

TABLE 3.4 – Characterisation of individual preferences on the cross-strait relationship based on illustrative variables

	Whole sample (n=2556)	① (28.17%)	② (14.59%)	③ (4.73%)	Centre (④) (12.99%)	⑤ (1.80%)	⑥ (6.65%)	⑦ (3.05%)	Rationalist (6.46%)	Incoherents (9.94%)	Passivists (11.62%)
Generations^a											
1 st & 2 nd generation (born before 1953)	14.08%	11.53%**	8.04%***	16.53%	10.24%**	17.39%	20.00%**	30.77%***	10.31%	9.84%**	28.62%***
3 rd generation (born 1954-1968)	28.68%	24.86%***	22.79%***	26.45%	30.12%	39.13%	35.85%***	38.46%**	39.39%***	26.77%	31.99%
4 th generation (born 1969-1978)	22.18%	19.86%**	21.72%	22.31%	28.92%***	32.61%	28.24%**	16.67%	22.42%	22.40%	16.83%**
5 th generation (born 1979-1988)	18.86%	22.22%***	23.86%***	25.62%**	16.26%	4.35%***	10.00%***	7.69%***	18.79%	22.04%	12.12%***
6 th generation (born after 1989)	16.20%	21.53%***	23.59%***	9.09%**	14.46%	6.52%	5.88%***	6.41%**	9.09%***	18.90%	10.44%***
Gender^a											
Female	46.64%	46.67%	52.82%***	38.02%**	48.80%	58.70%	31.76%***	38.46%	44.24%	44.09	52.19%
Ethnic identity^a											
Minnan	73.12%	79.17%***	75.34%	82.65%***	69.58%	65.22%	55.88%***	55.13%***	70.91%	70.87%	74.75%
Hakka	13.34%	12.50%	13.40%	10.74%	15.66%	15.22%	16.47%	14.10%	15.15%	14.17%	9.76%*
Mainlander	10.37%	5.55%	8.04%	4.13%**	12.95%	13.04%	25.88%***	20.51%***	12.12%	11.02%	11.11%
Aboriginal	1.37%	1.25%	1.88%	0.83%	0.60%	4.35%	0.59%	6.41%***	1.21%	0.79%	1.35%
Other	1.80%	1.53%	1.34%	1.65%	1.21%	2.17%	1.18%	3.85%**	0.61%	3.15%	3.03%
China tie^a											
Has business relations or study experience in China	15.53%	18.47%**	17.16%	11.57%	17.17%	19.57%	17.65%	17.95%	19.39%	13.39%	15.49%
National identity^a											
Taiwanese	63.81%	84.86%***	70.78%***	75.21%***	53.01%***	36.96%***	26.47%***	24.36%***	55.94%***	62.99%	53.54%***
Both	31.14%	13.47%***	27.08%**	23.97%**	40.66%***	52.17%***	63.53%***	56.41%***	43.03%***	32.28%	35.35%*
Chinese	3.91%	1.11%***	1.34%***	0.83%**	4.82%	10.87%***	10.00%***	19.23%***	3.03%	4.72%	5.39%
Income^b	4.72	4.63	5.05***	4.98	5.11**	3.61***	5.66***	4.59	4.92	4.47	3.76***
Education^a											
Primary education	21.64%	20.83%	14.75%***	25.62%	14.16%***	34.78%***	15.29%***	33.33%***	27.27%**	20.87%	35.02%***
Secondary education	42.76%	41.39%	41.55%	46.28%	43.67%	47.83%	44.71%	43.59%	45.46%	44.49%	40.07%
Tertiary education	35.60%	37.78%	43.70%***	28.10%**	42.17%***	17.39%***	40.00%	23.08%**	27.27%**	34.64%	24.91%***
Institutional sector^a											
Public sector	9.04%	7.64%	9.92%	4.96%	12.65%***	4.34%	10.59%	6.41%	7.27%	12.99%***	7.07%
Private sector	52.54%	53.33%	56.30%	62.81%***	55.12%	36.96%***	46.47%	42.31%**	57.58%	52.36%	44.78%***
Outsider	20.97%	22.78%	18.77%	15.70%	18.37%	32.61%**	18.23%	19.23%	22.42%	18.90%	25.59%***
Inactive	17.45%	16.25%	15.01%	16.53%	13.86%*	26.09%	24.71%***	32.05%***	12.73%	15.75%	22.56%***
Occupation^a											
Higher service	13.03%	11.11%*	13.94%	16.53%	18.68%***	2.17%**	17.06%	10.26%	13.33%	11.41%	10.10%
Lower service	9.78%	10.97%	13.40%***	9.92%	10.84%	4.34%	9.41%	3.84%**	9.70%	7.48%	5.72%**
Routine clerical /sales	17.88%	18.19%	21.45%**	12.40%	20.18%	8.70%	14.12%	11.54%	21.21%	21.26%	12.80%**
Skilled manual	9.58%	9.45%	8.85%	11.57%	8.13%	13.04%	5.88%	7.69%	11.52%	12.99%*	9.76%
Unskilled manual	9.43%	9.31%	6.70%**	15.70%***	8.43%	13.04%	9.41%	10.26%	9.09%	11.42%	9.43%
Farmers	1.88%	1.94%	1.88%	1.65%	1.51%	0.00%	1.18%	5.13%*	0.00%*	0.79%	4.04%***
Subjective social class^a											
Lower class	8.53%	9.17%	6.17%**	4.13%**	8.13%	6.52%	7.06%	17.95%***	7.88%	9.06%	10.77%
Lower middle	28.25%	32.36%***	27.61%	33.06%	24.40%	32.61%	28.24%	17.95%***	28.48%	27.95%	23.57%**
Middle	55.48%	51.25%***	58.98%	56.20%	59.64%	58.70%	55.29%	50.00%	56.97%	54.72%	57.24%
Upper middle and upper class	7.74%	7.22%	7.23%	6.61%	7.83%	2.17%	9.41%	14.10%***	6.67%	8.26%	8.42%

Table 3.4 - Characterisation of individual preferences on the cross-strait relationship based on illustrative variables

	Whole sample (n=2556)	① (28.17%)	② (14.59%)	③ (4.73%)	Centre (12.99%) (④)	⑤ (1.80%)	⑥ (6.65%)	⑦ (3.05%)	Rationalist (6.46%)	Incoherents (9.94%)	Passivists (11.62%)
Standard quantitative^a											
(Independence [0] to Unification [10])											
0	13.77%	28.75%***	9.38%***	17.36%	4.82%***	2.17%**	2.35%***	1.28%**	2.42%***	15.35%	8.08%**
1	1.92%	4.17%***	1.61%	2.48%	0.30%***	0.00%	0.90%**	0.00%	1.21%	1.57%	1.01%
2	5.83%	10.83%***	6.97%	8.26%	2.41%	2.17%	0.39%***	2.56%	3.03%***	4.72%	2.02%***
3	8.53%	13.33%***	9.38%	9.09%	6.02%*	2.17%	1.76%***	1.28%**	5.45%	9.45%	6.06%
4	6.22%	7.64%*	10.19%***	6.61%	6.02%	0.00%	4.71%	1.28%**	3.64%	6.34%	3.37%**
5	47.69%	29.58%***	55.76%***	42.98%	66.27%***	39.13%	54.71%*	24.36%***	66.67%***	48.43%	54.88%***
6	4.46%	1.67%***	1.88%	5.78%	5.12%	6.52%	13.53%***	19.23%***	7.27%***	3.15%	3.37%*
7	2.70%	0.69%***	1.34%***	1.65%	2.71%	8.70%***	8.82%***	14.10%***	3.64%	1.97%	2.36%
8	2.23%	1.39%*	0.54%***	2.48%	1.51%	10.87%***	4.71%*	8.97%***	3.03%	2.76%	1.68%
9	0.63%	0.14%*	0.00%	0.00%	0.30%	8.70%***	1.18%	3.85%***	0.61%	1.18%	0.34%
10	3.01%	0.70%***	1.07%***	2.48%	1.51%	19.57%***	6.47%***	21.79%***	1.21%	4.72%	3.03%
non-responses	3.01%	1.11%***	1.88%	0.83%	3.01%	0.00%	1.18%	1.28%	1.82%	1.57%	13.80%***
Standard qualitative^a											
Immediate independence	7.28%	15.83%***	3.75%***	9.92%	0.90%***	2.17%	0.39%***	2.56%	1.21%***	7.09%	6.40%
Immediate Unification	1.10%	0.14%***	0.27%	0.83%	0.60%	8.70%***	3.53%***	11.54%***	0.00%	0.79%	0.67%
Maintain the status quo, decide either unification or independence in the future	32.43%	29.69%***	35.39%	32.23%	40.06%***	32.61%	47.06%***	16.67%***	54.54%***	29.92%	34.34%
Maintain the status quo forever	18.31%	11.11%***	19.04%	10.74%***	35.54%***	8.70%	11.76%***	16.67%	12.73%*	16.54%	28.96%***
Maintain the status quo, move toward independence in the future	29.93%	50.42%***	38.87%***	36.36%	15.96%***	6.52%***	4.12%***	2.56%***	14.55%***	31.49%	14.81%***
Maintain the status quo, move toward unification in the future	9.74%	1.53%***	2.41%***	9.09%	6.33%***	41.30%***	32.35%***	50.00%***	14.55%***	13.78%***	8.42%
non-responses	1.21%	0.28%	0.27%*	0.83%	0.60%	0.00%	0.59%	0.00%	2.42%	0.39%	6.40%***
Most important political problem facing Taiwan today^a											
Economic and finance issues	34.55%	29.44%***	38.34%*	37.19%	38.25%	36.96%	35.88%	30.77%	39.39%	35.83%	33.00%
Cross-strait relationship	23.55%	22.08%	24.93%	23.97%	23.49%	17.39%	34.71%***	29.49%	23.03%	25.98%	16.50%***
Other Political issues (environment, health, education, retirement)	5.87%	4.31%***	5.90%	5.79%	9.94%***	4.35%	5.88%	6.41%	5.45%	3.94%	7.07%
National defence, diplomacy and international issues	4.97%	7.50%***	4.29%	5.79%	2.71%***	4.35%	2.35%	10.26%*	3.03%	5.12%	3.03%
Domestic policy (corruption, government capability, political affairs)	4.58%	5.56%	4.02%	3.31%	3.31%	8.70%	2.94%	2.56%	4.24%	5.12%	5.39%
Institutional issues (constitutional system, reform, democracy)	4.19%	7.22%***	4.02%	4.96%	2.41%	0.00%	0.39%***	1.28%	3.64%	3.15%	3.37%
Societal values	2.86%	4.73%***	2.95%	3.31%	1.51%	6.52%	1.18%	1.28%	2.42%	2.36%	1.01%***
National and ethnic identity	2.39%	3.33%*	2.14%	2.48%	1.20%	0.00%	2.35%	0.00%	3.03%	2.36%	2.36%
Security and justice	1.92%	2.22%	2.95%	1.65%	1.20%	2.17%	0.00%*	2.56%	0.00%*	1.97%	2.69%
Churchillian democracy question^a											
Democracy is preferable to any other kind of regime	53.05%	63.47%***	57.91%***	49.59%	46.99%***	34.78%***	39.41%***	29.49%***	45.45%***	54.72%	49.49%
In some circumstances, a dictatorship can be preferable to a democratic system	26.56%	18.75%***	31.10%	28.93%	31.33%***	30.43%	34.71%***	42.31%***	32.73%*	23.23%	23.57%
For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of regime we have	19.13%	17.36%	10.19%***	21.49%	21.08%	32.61%***	24.12%	25.64%	20.61%	21.26%	22.22%

Table 3.4 - Characterisation of individual preferences on the cross-strait relationship based on illustrative variables

	Whole sample (n=2556)	① (28.17%)	② (14.59%)	③ (4.73%)	Centre (12.99%) (4)	⑤ (1.80%)	⑥ (6.65%)	⑦ (3.05%)	Rationalist (6.46%)	Incoherents (9.94%)	Passivists (11.62%)
What makes Taiwanese identity^{b, e}											
To have our country's ancestry	2.44	2.57***	2.29***	2.66***	2.30***	2.48	2.32**	2.57	2.30***	2.54**	2.43
To have been born in our country	2.76	2.87***	2.71	2.85**	2.65***	2.82	2.63**	2.70	2.70	2.78	2.70
To be able to speak our languages(i.e. Chinese, Taiwanese, Hakka, or aboriginal language)	2.76	2.82***	2.67	2.82	2.69	3.00**	2.60**	2.80	2.69	2.73	2.68
To be our country's dominant religion ^e	2.25	2.23	2.12***	2.49***	2.30	2.13	2.18	2.29	2.20	2.35	2.29
To respect our country's political institutions and laws ^c	2.26	2.32***	2.28	2.12***	2.23	2.22	2.19	2.21	2.29	2.20	2.24
To have lived in our country for most of one's life ^c	2.80	2.86*	2.84	2.76	2.78	2.78	2.81	2.68*	2.68*	2.81	2.72
To feel our country's nationality ^c	3.20	3.32***	3.21	3.16	3.10**	3.22	3.05**	3.09	3.30**	3.13	3.14
To follow our country's customs and traditions ^d	2.81	2.89***	2.76	2.90	2.73*	2.74	2.76	2.67	2.82	2.87	2.74
Viewpoint on major events^e											
In response to the massive protests against the Hong Kong Extradition Bill that began last summer, do you consider that? ^{a, d}	75.78%	90.18%***	82.07%**	85.51%**	68.07%**	43.48%***	54.93%***	25.58%***	73.53%	76.32%	63.51%***
That as Hong Kong people's fight for democracy	18.24%	6.55%***	13.59%*	13.04%	23.49%*	47.83%***	38.03%***	74.42%***	23.53%	21.05%	16.22%
That as a violation of social order	1.96	1.73***	2.02	1.92	2.10**	2.09	2.18***	2.11	2.04	1.97	1.99
After 2008, the cross-strait economic interactions have intensified As a result of this, do you think Taiwan's economy has gotten better, worse or is about the same? ^{b, c}	1.64	1.85***	1.63	1.69	1.45***	1.43	1.24***	1.24***	1.56	1.66	1.57
After 2016, the cross-strait economic interactions have alienated. As a result of this, do you think Taiwan's economy has gotten better, or worse or is it about the same? ^{b, d}	1.88	1.89	1.95***	1.94	1.90	1.78	1.88	1.72**	1.90	1.84	1.85
Thinking about your own economic situation As a result of the intensification of cross-strait interactions, do you think it has gotten better, worse, or stayed about the same? ^b											
Regarding the issue of cross-strait negotiation, which do you agree with? ^{a, e}											
Continue using the 1992 Consensus	30.40%	15.97%***	26.01**	23.14**	40.96%***	56.52%***	54.12%***	66.67%***	44.85%***	30.71	26.60%
Reject the 1992 Consensus	33.57%	42.36%***	41.09%**	43.80%***	31.33%	23.91%	21.76%***	17.95%***	26.67%**	35.04%	16.16%***
There is no 1992 Consensus	17.72%	27.64%***	16.35%	23.14%	12.05%***	4.35%**	10.00%***	6.41%***	13.33%	16.93%	12.12%***
Both support	1.13%	0.42%***	1.34%	0.83%	2.11%*	0.00%	0.59%	1.28%	1.21%	3.15%***	0.34%
Both don't support	1.96%	2.22%*	2.14%	0.83%	1.51%	4.35%	1.76%	1.28%	1.82%	2.36%*	1.68%
Political closeness^d											
Pan-Green	36.03%	57.05%***	39.41%	41.32%	20.18%	13.04%***	13.53%***	10.26%***	24.24%***	35.43%	25.59%
Pan-Blue	24.65%	8.61%***	23.59%	17.35%*	34.04%***	60.90%***	52.35%***	65.38%***	29.09%	26.77%	20.88%
Third Force	9.08%	10.28%	11.80%*	14.88%*	9.34%	4.35%	5.53%***	2.56%**	7.88%	9.84%	5.72%**
Independent	30.24%	23.61%***	25.20%**	26.45%	36.45%***	21.74%	30.59%	21.79%	30.79%	27.95%	47.81%

Reading notes : Shaded (bold) cells denote the values that are statistically significantly higher (lower) in the cluster than in the rest of the sample (i.e. excluding the group concerned). Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%** and 10%*. ^aPearson's Chi-squared test. ^bANOVA test. ^cCalculation only for the 2016 wave. ^dCalculation only for the 2020 wave. ^eNon-responses are present for these variables
Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020)(?).

In the category of centre-left nationalism, we have grouped individuals who support independence under favourable conditions and reject unification ((2)), along with those who conditionally support unification and unconditionally support independence ((3)). Fell (Fell, 2006 ; Fell, 2018c) describes civic Taiwanese nationalism as consisting of individuals who consider Taiwan to be *de facto* independent and, therefore, do not advocate for a formal declaration of independence. Furthermore, he presents this form of nationalism as being opposed to unification. However, the inclusion of group (3) partially contradicts this view, as they support unification under favourable economic conditions. Nevertheless, we argue that including this group enriches the analysis of preferences on the *Tongdu* issue, especially considering that the proportion of individuals holding this position is negligible.

Moreover, our results highlight that these two groups exhibit homogeneous preferences and similar levels of importance concerning national identity, which is the primary determinant of Taiwanese nationalism according to Fell (Fell, 2006 ; Fell, 2018c). These conclusions also apply to the rejection of the 1992 Consensus and the mainland's control of Hong Kong. The identity appeal of the centre-left group is Taiwanese-centred, and it aligns closely with what Hsiao (2016 : p.510) refers to as "*independence by nature*". This term entails seeing Taiwan as their homeland and naturally believing that Taiwan is an independent nation, distinct from China. Hsiao (2016) highlights that this perspective is especially prevalent among the younger generations, which our findings corroborate. However, it should be noted that the minority segment within the centre-left group ((3)), which supports unification under favourable conditions, is underrepresented in the millennial generation (born after 1989). Indeed, this generation has been the most targeted by Taiwanisation, supported by the State through educational and linguistic policies (R.-l. Chen, 2021).

Nevertheless, these two groups differ in several respects. Firstly, the minority group ((3)) attaches more importance to the symbols of Taiwanese identity, while the majority group ((2)) assigns them less importance. The predominant group's findings on this point confirm what Fell (Fell, 2006 ; Fell, 2018c) points out about civic Taiwanese nationalism, that the Taiwanese identity view of this type of nationalism can be summed up by Lee Teng-hui's 1998 call for the 'New Taiwanese', according to which all islanders are Taiwanese as long

as they identify with Taiwan and work hard for it.²⁸ It should also be noted that these two groups have different socio-demographic and economic characteristics.

Centre nationalists (④) are distinguished by their rejection of both independence and unification. They embody a dual identity, both Chinese and Taiwanese, as highlighted by Fell's work (Fell, 2006; Fell, 2018c) and our own results. Interestingly, three-quarters of these individuals favour maintaining the status quo, the highest frequency among the various preferences studied. This is also evident in the standard quantitative variable, where around two-thirds of them are at the median level. Furthermore, they are more likely than the other groups to support the maintenance of the 1992 consensus.

Group (④) is mainly composed of individuals from the fourth generation, who witnessed the student social movements in favour of Congressional reform. It's also worth pointing out that their concerns are more focused on other societal issues (and less on the question of defence and diplomacy), and that they attach little importance to symbols of Taiwanese identity. They display a negative attitude towards the movement to challenge the amendment of the Hong Kong Extradition Bill and they do not appear particularly attached to the democratic system. After the passivists, this is the group with the largest proportion of independents. They are over-represented in the public sector and higher service occupations, and have higher levels of education. What's more, their income exceeds the national average.

We have grouped together in centre-right nationalism, individuals who support unification under favourable conditions and do not support independence (⑥), as well as those who unconditionally support unification and conditionally support independence (⑤). Similar to centre-left nationalism, the minority group (⑤) expands the framework of centre-right nationalism as defined by Fell (Fell, 2006; Fell, 2018c), as Chinese nationalists in the ROC are assumed to oppose independence because they advocate loyalty to the ROC rather than Taiwan. The political figures to whom this group refers are ROC Chinese nationalists such as Chiang Ching-kuo. Furthermore, as can be seen from the standard qualitative variable, around half of the individuals favour unification at any point in the future in

28. Lee Teng-hui defined the concept of the 'New Taiwanese' as follows: "No matter if you came 400 or 500 years ago, or 40 or 50 years ago from the mainland, or if an aboriginal, we are all Taiwanese, so long as we all work hard for Taiwan and the ROC, then we are New Taiwanese".

these two groups. For the majority group ((6)), this type of nationalism is particularly prevalent among the older generations, which explains their preference for the island's status, since these older generations were subjected to the KMT's nation-building project, namely the KMT Chinese nationalism.²⁹ Both groups predominantly identify themselves as having a dual identity, with an overabundance of individuals identifying as Chinese (and an under-representation of those identifying as Taiwanese). Compared with the rest of the Taiwanese population, the two ROC Chinese nationalism groups are less attached to democracy. Centre-right nationalists also have a negative perception of the demonstrations in Hong Kong and overwhelmingly support the 1992 consensus and more precisely the One China different interpretations according to [Fell \(2018c\)](#).

Furthermore, for the majority group ((6)), there is an over-representation of the mainland ethnic group and of men, while the Minnan ethnicity is underrepresented. As [Fell \(Fell, 2006; Fell, 2018c\)](#) points out, they oppose the adoption of a new constitution, a position shared by the majority group ((6)), for whom the island's institutional issues are not a major concern, unlike relations between Taiwan and China. Indeed, the predominant group ((6)) of ROC Chinese nationalism places significant importance on economic relations with China, which they consider essential for Taiwan's economic stability. Similarly, this group ((6)) attaches little importance to symbols of Taiwanese identity such as ancestry, place of birth, language and nationality. The main difference between the two centre-right groups lies in their socio-economic characteristics, with the majority group ((6)) having a higher level of education and income than the minority group ((5)). In particular, the minority group ((5)) is over-represented among non-standard workers and those with primary education.

Far-right nationalism ((7)) clearly shows a preference for unification, with around 60% of individuals in this group declaring themselves to be in favour of unification, whatever the timeframe. Furthermore, this group shows a marked over-representation in favour of rapid unification with the continent and also represents the highest proportion of individuals in favour of this option. These findings are consistent with [Fell's \(Fell, 2006;](#)

29. The narrative of the KMT Chinese nationalism asserted that the ROC was the legitimate government of all China, with a sacred mission to unify the country by taking back the mainland, while emphasizing the importance of Taiwanese Chinese identity over other local or foreign national identities ([Fell, 2018a](#)).

Fell, 2018c) description of Greater Chinese nationalism, which advocates rapid unification with mainland China in line with the National Unification Guidelines, detailing a three-stage process for gradual unification. Fell (Fell, 2006; Fell, 2018c) also points out that this nationalism is pro-CCP, and our results confirm their strong adherence to the mainland political model and their support for closer economic ties. We can also note their negative view of the Hong Kong protests. Furthermore, this nationalist group exhibits similar political preferences to those of the centre-right nationalism, although the proportion in favour of pan-Blue coalition parties is more significant, while the disfavour towards pan-Green coalition parties is more pronounced.

This form of nationalism (⑦) is particularly prevalent among generations born before 1968 (and less common among younger generations) due to the dissemination of the KMT's nation-building project, as previously mentioned for centre-right nationalism. According to Fell (Fell, 2006; Fell, 2018c), far-right nationalism includes positive political appeals to the PRC and symbols of Chinese identity such as Chiang Kai-shek. As a result, this group has an over-representation of individuals identifying as Chinese, although the majority of them also declare a dual identity. Additionally, as emphasized by Fell (Fell, 2006; Fell, 2018c), this nationalism is supportive of the "one country, two systems" principle, and our results show that two-thirds of individuals in this group support the 1992 consensus. Finally, it is noteworthy that Greater Chinese nationalists have higher and lower levels of education and are overrepresented among those identifying with the lower-middle and upper-middle classes.

The rationalist group, which supports both independence and unification under favourable conditions, can be assimilated to the 'wait-and-see' category on the basis of their preference as expressed by the standard qualitative variable, although there is an over-represented preference for long-term unification. Moreover, according to the standard quantitative variable, this group has the highest proportion of respondents opting for the midpoint. This wait-and-see attitude is reflected in their dual national identity, and in their support for the continuation of the 1992 consensus. They are less likely than other groups to support pan-Green parties. This result can be explained by the DPP's radical positions on the independence versus unification debate (except Chen and Tsai's presidential campaigns

in 2000 and 2016, respectively), which involve economic risks and potential conflicts that contrast with the conservative attitude of this group.

In terms of their socio-demographic, economic and political characteristics, we observe considerable heterogeneity, although the following features stand out. There is an over-representation of third-generation individuals, who experienced Taiwan's economic boom under the developmental state, which could explain their propensity to prefer an authoritarian regime. Finally, we find that this group is over-represented among primary education levels (and under-represented among higher education levels) and attaches great importance to nationality as a constitutive element of Taiwanese identity, while placing less importance on ancestry and time spent on the island.

Among the various preferences we have identified on the *Tongdu* issue, the incoherent group stands out for its lack of a clear trend, particularly with regard to the status of the island, although a certain preference for long-term unification can be noted. In terms of their socio-demographic, economic and political characteristics, there is an over-representation of individuals working in the civil service and in skilled manual jobs. This group is under-represented among the older generation (born before 1953) and considers that Taiwanese identity is based on having ancestors.

The final group we have identified is the passivists, characterized by an absence of opinion on the *Tongdu* question, which translates into a lack of interest in the subject. This indecision is reflected in both the standard qualitative and quantitative variables, with an over-representation of non-responses, particularly for the first variable mentioned. This indeterminacy is also marked by a preference for the midpoint in the standard qualitative variable and by the option "maintain the status quo forever" in the standard quantitative variable, which may be explained by a dual identity within this group. Moreover, there is an absence of dissenting opinions on the 1992 consensus, or on transgressive acts such as the demonstrations in Hong Kong. It should be noted that individuals in the passivists group are more represented in the oldest generation (born before 1953) and less present in younger generations (born after 1969). In addition, people in this group have a lower socio-economic level, reflected in a prevalence of primary education qualifications and

below-average incomes. This group thus includes people with atypical jobs or who are inactive, with an over-representation of farmers and an under-representation of people working in the private sector and in service or office jobs.

3.5 Econometric Results

In this section, we seek to identify the socio-political factors as well as preferences on the *Tongdu* issue that explain the development of populist attitudes in Taiwan. For this, we estimate the following Logit model :

$$P(Y_i^{50th/75th}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Tongdu\ pref_i + \beta_k X_i + \epsilon_i \quad (3.3)$$

and the following Tobit model :

$$Y_i^{50th/75th} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Tongdu\ pref_i + \beta_k X_i + \epsilon_i \quad (3.4)$$

Where Y_i for equation (3.3) is a binary variable indicating whether the individual is a populist or not, with a threshold at the 50th or 75th percentile. Y_i for equation (3.4) the left-censored variable at the 50th or 75th percentile threshold. *Tongdu pref_i* is the variable of interest that encompasses the seven orientations on cross-strait relations, along with three positions for individuals who express no preference on this issue (passivists, rationalists, and incoherents), as identified in [Subsection 3.3.2.2](#). X_i is the vector of control variables detailed in [section 3.3.4](#). ϵ_i is the error term. All regressions are controlled for an interaction variable between year and county, in order to control for unobservable characteristics.

In order to facilitate the reading and understanding, the results of the econometric analysis are divided into four parts. [Subsection 3.5.1](#) focuses on examining the effect of the traditional determinants that explain the cultivation of populist attitudes. [Subsection 3.5.2](#) delves into the evaluation of the effect of the positions on the *Tongdu* question on the development of populist attitudes. [Subsection 3.5.3](#) aims to assess the robustness of our results regarding

the relationship between preferences for Mainland-Taiwan relations and populist attitudes. Lastly, in [Subsection 3.5.4](#), we explore how the various dimensions of populism, political competencies and preferences exhibit heterogeneity, among populists, according to their individual preferences on cross-strait relations.

3.5.1 Effect of Traditional Determinants Shaping Populist Attitudes

[Table 3.5](#) presents estimations for the traditional determinants that shape the development of populist attitudes. We conducted regressions while controlling for the variable of interest, *tongdu*, the results of which will be discussed in [Subsection 3.5.2](#), and by an interaction variable between the year and the county. Regressions I and II are conducted with the binary dependent variable, while regressions III and IV use the continuous dependent variable. Regressions I and III employ the 50th percentile threshold, whereas regressions II and IV use the 75th percentile threshold.

In summary, the results from [Table 3.5](#) indicate that moderate populists share the socio-economic profile of globalization's losers. However, among the most radical populists, there is a greater diversity in terms of socio-economic status. It is interesting to note, however, that for the most radical populists, this is partly an ethnic story, where Hakkas are more inclined to adopt radical populist positions. Whether they are moderate or radical, populists express a strong sense of economic insecurity, a low self-perceived political competence, and a rejection of the democratic system. On this last point, it seems that this dissatisfaction is a political frustration (and not a political consciousness), as radical populists do not show a marked preference for an authoritarian regime. Finally, whether moderate or radical, populists tend to have right-wing economic and cultural preferences.

TABLE 3.5 – The effect of established factors on populist attitudes in Taiwan

	Logit estimation ^a		Tobit estimation ^b	
	Populism 50 th	Populism 75 th	Populism 50 th	Populism 75 th
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)
Generation 1 st & 2 nd (base= 4 th)	-0.0011 (0.192)	0.0276 (0.234)	0.0048 (0.069)	0.0908 (0.116)
Generation 3 rd (base= 4 th)	0.0378 (0.138)	0.0478** (0.173)	0.0734 (0.051)	0.1597* (0.086)
Generation 5 th (base= 4 th)	0.0497* (0.155)	0.0403* (0.194)	0.0935 (0.057)	0.1489 (0.096)
Generation 6 th (base= 4 th)	0.0372 (0.165)	0.0336 (0.208)	0.0723 (0.062)	0.1158 (0.104)
Gender	-0.0426** (0.104)	-0.0257 (0.130)	-0.0837** (0.038)	-0.0980 (0.064)
Hakka (base= Minnan)	0.0358 (0.149)	0.0530** (0.181)	0.0780 (0.056)	0.2158** (0.092)
Mainlander (base= Minnan)	0.0071 (0.163)	-0.0022 (0.196)	0.0150 (0.060)	-0.0157 (0.098)
Aboriginal (base= Minnan)	-0.0503 (0.449)	0.0310 (0.464)	-0.0778 (0.165)	0.1035 (0.223)
Other (base= Minnan)	0.0717 (0.353)	0.0653 (0.451)	0.1499 (0.125)	0.2808 (0.212)
China Tie	0.0122 (0.131)	-0.0066 (0.168)	0.0166 (0.048)	-0.0218 (0.083)
Both (base= Taiwanese)	0.0151 (0.112)	0.0184 (0.132)	0.0392 (0.041)	0.0741 (0.067)
Chinese (base= Taiwanese)	-0.0206 (0.262)	0.0233 (0.302)	-0.0300 (0.093)	0.0991 (0.148)
Secondary education (base= Primary)	-0.0765*** (0.135)	-0.0452** (0.165)	-0.1412*** (0.048)	-0.1746** (0.081)
Tertiary education (base= Primary)	-0.0757** (0.164)	-0.0306 (0.200)	-0.1324** (0.059)	-0.1197 (0.099)
Income	-0.0029 (0.017)	0.0000 (0.022)	-0.0053 (0.006)	0.0002 (0.011)
Lower middle (base= Lower)	-0.0281 (0.178)	-0.0243 (0.199)	-0.0371 (0.060)	-0.0883 (0.100)
Middle (base= Lower)	-0.0518 (0.175)	-0.0283 (0.195)	-0.0897 (0.059)	-0.1096 (0.097)
Upper middle (base= Lower)	-0.0419 (0.243)	-0.0423 (0.293)	-0.0751 (0.086)	-0.1569 (0.146)

Table 3.5 - The effect of established factors on populist attitudes in Taiwan

	Logit estimation ^a		Tobit estimation ^b	
	Populism 50 th	Populism 75 th	Populism 50 th	Populism 75 th
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)
Private (base= Public)	0.0436 (0.183)	0.0481* (0.242)	0.0841 (0.070)	0.2046* (0.120)
Outsider (base= Public)	0.0645* (0.206)	0.0407 (0.271)	0.1177 (0.078)	0.1756 (0.134)
Inactive (base= Public)	0.0531 (0.219)	0.0240 (0.280)	0.0947 (0.082)	0.1171 (0.140)
Economic well-being change	-0.0483*** (0.075)	-0.0352*** (0.094)	-0.0964*** (0.027)	-0.1394*** (0.046)
Political interest	-0.0161 (0.066)	-0.0069 (0.081)	-0.0314 (0.024)	-0.0273 (0.040)
Internal efficacy	-0.0342*** (0.050)	-0.0277*** (0.061)	-0.0706*** (0.018)	-0.1101*** (0.030)
General Knowledge	-0.0194* (0.058)	-0.0068 (0.071)	-0.0369* (0.021)	-0.0272 (0.036)
Satisfaction democracy	-0.0749*** (0.077)	-0.0538*** (0.092)	-0.1504*** (0.027)	-0.2226*** (0.045)
Economic position	0.0594*** (0.075)	0.0409*** (0.037)	0.1203*** (0.010)	0.1680*** (0.017)
Right-wing	0.0222*** (0.032)	0.0197*** (0.039)	0.0426*** (0.011)	0.0787*** (0.019)
Authoritarian	0.0213** (0.044)	0.0074 (0.055)	0.0410** (0.016)	0.0316 (0.027)
Other controls	YES	YES	YES	YES
N	2556	2556	2556	2556
Pseudo R ²	0.1296	0.1407	0.1133	0.1219
% Correctly classified	70.81%	82.27%		

Reading notes : ^aBinary Logit estimates (average marginal effects are reported). ^bTobit estimates (coefficients are reported). Robust standard errors are reported in brackets. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

In more detail, based on the results presented in [Table 3.5](#) with the 50th percentile variables, it can be observed that populists in Taiwan are more likely to be male, have lower education levels, and hold precarious jobs (measured by the outsider variable) (regressions I, III). However, this last point is only valid with the binary quantifier. These results are consistent with previous studies (e.g. [Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016](#) ; [Kaltwasser & Van Hauwaert, 2020](#)).

Thus, the socio-demographic profile of populists in Taiwan corresponds to the characteristics generally associated with the “losers of modernization” thesis, which suggests older men with low education and precarious employment are more susceptible to radicalization (Betz, 1994) and adopting populist attitudes (Goodhart, 2017).

However, it’s worth noting that these associations become statistically insignificant when examining the most radical populists, using the 75th percentile as a threshold (regressions, II, VI). This finding shows that populists in Taiwan display considerable heterogeneity in terms of socio-demographic and economic characteristics, which is in line with the findings of Rooduijn (2018) on populist electorates in Europe. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the Hakka ethnic minority appears to be more likely to have populist attitudes than the Minnan ethnic majority when the threshold is set at the 75th percentile, whether with the binary or continuous quantifier, *ceteris paribus*. Furthermore, we find for all estimations that economic insecurity often correlated in the literature with support for right-wing populist parties in particular (e.g. Rydgren, 2012; Spruyt et al., 2016), is a determinant of populist attitudes in Taiwan. More precisely, the subjective income-oriented conceptualization of income insecurity predicts support for populism (*economic well-being change*), rather than one based on objective professional status (*outsider*), as demonstrated also by Yen (2021) in a study also conducted in Taiwan.

In terms of political profile, we don’t have conclusive evidence of populist citizens’ political interest, as has been observed in Latin America (Kaltwasser & Van Hauwaert, 2020). The literature presents two opposing theses on this topic : on the one hand, some describe populists as attentive and politically well-informed (Van Hauwaert & Van Kessel, 2018), while others describe them as uninterested in politics (Schumacher & Rooduijn, 2013; Spruyt et al., 2016). Moreover, we observe that moderate populists generally exhibit a lower level of general knowledge, although the data on this aspect among radical populists is inconclusive. In addition, all regressions in Table 3.5 suggest that populists have on average lower internal efficacy and tend to be more dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy. These observations remain largely in line with recent findings (e.g. Rooduijn et al., 2016; Van Hauwaert & Van Kessel, 2018).

However, this dissatisfaction with democracy does not imply hostility towards democracy *per se*, preferring an authoritarian regime, at least among the most radical populists in the highest 75th percentile of our measure (regressions II, IV). Instead, they can be described as “dissatisfied democrats” who criticize the functioning of democracy and its lack of representativeness, without rejecting the democratic political system itself, as demonstrated in the study of [Vehrkamp & Wratil \(2017\)](#) on German populists. This confirms that populism and democracy are not necessarily opposed ([Rovira Kaltwasser, 2012](#)).

Finally, with regard to political preferences, whatever the threshold (50th or 75th percentile), we observe that populists tend, on average, to identify more with the right of the economic spectrum, which contradicts the findings of the literature that maintains that populist citizens tend to identify more with the left ([Kaltwasser & Van Hauwaert, 2020](#)). Furthermore, we find that populists tend to have right-wing cultural positions, one of the determinants of support for right-wing populist parties ([Van Hauwaert & Van Kessel, 2018](#)). Nevertheless, these two points warrant further examination to determine whether this is not an aggregation effect, because as pointed out by [Rovira Kaltwasser \(2012\)](#), populism is not inherently tied to left-wing or right-wing economic or cultural ideologies.

3.5.2 Effect of Preferences on *Tongdu* Issue on Populist Attitudes

[Table 3.6](#) displays the results for regressions with the variable of interest *Tongdu*. We conducted these regressions while controlling for the traditional determinants that explain the cultivation of populist attitudes, which we discussed in the previous subsection, as well as an interaction variable between the year and the county. Regressions I to II are conducted with the binary dependent variable, while regressions III to IV use the continuous dependent variable. Estimations I and III employ the 50th percentile threshold, whereas the rest of the regressions use the 75th percentile threshold. To facilitate the reading and interpretation of the results, we changed the reference category for the *Tongdu* variable. In the regressions annotated with an “a” next to the regression number, the reference category is centrists (④). In the other estimations, annotated with a “b” next to the regression number, the reference category is individuals in group ①.

TABLE 3.6 – Effect of preferences on Tongdu issue on populist attitudes

	Logit estimation ^a				Tobit estimation ^b			
	Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th		Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th	
	(Ia)	(Ib)	(IIa)	(IIb)	(IIIa)	(IIIa)	(IVa)	(IVb)
①	0.0878*** (0.162)		0.0405* (0.208)		0.1787*** (0.060)		0.1884* (0.104)	
②	0.0194 (0.179)	-0.0684** (0.151)	0.0355 (0.230)	-0.0050 (0.188)	0.0339 (0.068)	-0.1448*** (0.057)	0.1448 (0.114)	-0.0465 (0.094)
③	0.0490 (0.263)	-0.0387 (0.242)	0.0597 (0.316)	0.0192 (0.284)	0.1210 (0.098)	-0.0578 (0.090)	0.2452 (0.157)	0.0568 (0.142)
Centre ④		-0.0878*** (0.162)		-0.0405* (0.208)		-0.0878*** (0.162)		-0.1884* (0.104)
⑤	0.0764 (0.366)	-0.0113 (0.356)	0.0670 (0.446)	0.0264 (0.431)	0.1669 (0.131)	-0.0118 (0.126)	0.3095 (0.220)	0.1211 (0.212)
⑥	0.1042** (0.225)	0.0164 (0.211)	0.1009*** (0.264)	0.0604* (0.245)	0.2112** (0.082)	0.0325 (0.076)	0.3822*** (0.131)	0.1938 (0.123)
⑦	0.0937* (0.297)	0.0060 (0.287)	0.1255** (0.332)	0.0850* (0.313)	0.2099** (0.105)	0.0312 (0.100)	0.4810*** (0.162)	0.2926* (0.153)
Rationalists	0.0730* (0.218)	-0.0147 (0.199)	0.0159 (0.292)	-0.0246 (0.265)	0.1329 (0.081)	-0.0459 (0.073)	0.0580 (0.143)	-0.1304 (0.130)
Incoherents	0.1221*** (0.195)	0.0334 (0.168)	0.0929*** (0.237)	0.0524* (0.198)	0.2419*** (0.071)	0.0632 (0.060)	0.3599*** (0.118)	0.1715* (0.100)
Passivists	0.0593* (0.188)	-0.0284 (0.164)	0.0161 (0.243)	-0.0244 (0.210)	0.1146* (0.070)	-0.0641 (0.060)	0.0745 (0.121)	-0.1139 (0.105)
Constant	-0.8769 (0.583)	-0.4053 (0.579)	-2.1737*** (0.742)	-1.8256*** (0.745)	-0.3380 (0.010)	-0.1592 (0.436)	1.1530*** (0.355)	0.9646*** (0.357)
Other controls	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
N	2556	2556	2556	2556	2556	2556	2556	2556
Pseudo R ²	0.1296	0.1296	0.1407	0.1407	0.1133	0.1133	0.1219	0.1219
% Correctly classified	70.81%	70.81%	82.27%	82.27%				

Reading notes : ^aBinary Logit estimates (average marginal effects are reported). ^bTobit estimates (coefficients are reported). Robust standard errors are reported in brackets. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%** , and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

In summary, the results from Table 3.6 demonstrate that, in addition to factors traditionally identified in the literature, the geopolitical factor, namely individual preferences on the *Tongdu* question, also has an effect on the cultivation of populist attitudes in Taiwan. More specifically, individuals most inclined to develop populist attitudes are located on the extreme positions of the unification-independence spectrum, as well as among those holding

inconsistent positions on this issue. These findings remain consistent irrespective of the threshold chosen to define individuals with populist attitudes (50th or 75th percentile), and the nature of our dependent variable (binary or continuous). Furthermore, with the most stringent measure of our dependent variables (75th percentile), which can be considered reflective of the most radical populists, the four preferences can be divided into three distinct groups in terms of their propensity to develop populist attitudes. The first group, labelled ‘weak populists’ consists of those most supportive of independence (①). The second group, termed ‘moderate populists’, includes individuals with inconsistent positions and those expressing the second-strongest preference for unification (⑥). Lastly, the third group, named ‘strong populists’, exclusively comprises individuals strongly advocating for unification (⑦).

More precisely, to begin with the 50th percentile measure, among moderate populists, we observe that these four groups have a higher probability (regression Ia) or a higher score of populism (regression IIIa) compared to the centrists, all things being equal. However, we notice that the associated coefficients are quite similar among these four positions. This is further confirmed when group ① is used as the reference category, with the binary measure (regression Ib) or the continuous measure (regression IIb), where there is no significant difference between these groups.³⁰

However, when we focus on the most radical populists in our sample, using measurements based on the 75th percentile (binary or continuous), we can discern substantial differences in the coefficients associated with these four preferences. This suggests heterogeneity in the probability of being classified as populist (binary measures) or in the populism score (continuous measures) among these positions. This allows us to classify individuals into three distinct groups based on the magnitude of their coefficients.

The first set is exclusively composed of individuals from group ①, whom we could label as ‘weak populists’, as they exhibit the lowest probability or score among the four preferences

30. We exclude rationalists and passivists from our analysis. Although their coefficients are significant at the 50th percentile threshold with the continuous and binary measures (except for the rationalists with the continuous measure), they are no longer significant when our measure of populism is based on the 75th percentile threshold. This result suggests that populist attitudes are not as widespread within these two groups, especially among the most radical populists.

mentioned above. For instance, the probability of this group being classified as populists is approximately 4% higher than that of centrists (④), whereas it is at least two times higher for the three other groups we have identified, *ceteris paribus* (regression IIa). Indeed, we observe that the probabilities of these three groups being classified as populist are 5% to 8% higher than those of individuals in group ①, all things being equal (regression IIb).

The second set consists of ‘moderate populists’, composed of individuals with inconsistent positions and individuals from group ⑥, who have coefficients of relatively moderate magnitude. For example, our observations reveal that populists belonging to group ⑥ and the inconsistent group have, on average, populism scores higher than centrist (④) populists by 0.38 and 0.36, respectively, *ceteris paribus* (regression IVa). Whereas, populists from group ①, on average, exhibit a populism score that is half as significant as populists in group ⑥ and inconsistent positions, compared to centrist populists, all things being equal (regression IVa). Thus, individuals in the ‘moderate populist’ set have a probability approximately 6% higher of being classified as populists compared to those of the ‘weak populists’, all things being equal (regression IIb). However, we note that there was no significant difference between group ⑥ and group ①, when the latter is used as the reference category with the continuous measurement using the 75th percentile threshold (regression IVb).

The third set is the ‘strong populists’, made up solely of individuals in group ⑦, who have relatively higher coefficients than the ‘weak populists’ and the ‘moderate populists’. For example, we find that populists in the ‘strong populists’ group have an average populism score 0.48 units higher than that of centrist populists, all things being equal. It is around 10 units lower for ‘moderate populists’ and half as high for ‘weak populists’ (regression IVa). Similarly, we find that the probability of being classified as a populist, relative to centrists, is 12% higher for ‘strong populists’, *ceteris paribus*. It is twice as low for ‘weak populists’ and two percentage points lower for ‘moderate populists’ (regression IIa).

3.5.3 Robustness Check

To ensure the robustness of our results, our strategy is twofold. The results of this subsection are reported in [Appendix C](#). Firstly, to confirm our main finding that populist attitudes are located on the extreme positions of the unification-independence spectrum, we introduced two additional variables called *nationalist stance* and *nationalism*. The *nationalist stance* variable investigates whether it is indeed the most extreme position that fosters the emergence of populist ideologies, regardless of individuals' positions on the cross-strait relationship (left or right). In addition to the three categories with no specific orientation regarding the *Tongdu* question (passivists, rationalists, and incoherents), we incorporate two additional groups. The first group, labelled “far left or right”, comprises far-left and right nationalists (① and ⑦). The second group, termed “centre left or right”, includes centre-left and centre-right nationalists (②, ③, ⑤, ⑥). The *nationalism* variable, in addition to the three categories that don't have a particular orientation on the independence-unification debate mentioned earlier, also encompasses the five types of nationalism identified by Fell ([Fell, 2006](#); [Fell, 2018c](#)) and summarized in [Figure 3.1](#).

[Table C3.1](#) in [Appendix C](#) presents the result for the *nationalism* variable, using the same design as the *Tongdu* variable for the reference category and for the *nationalism stance* variable. Results for the *nationalism* variable confirm previous findings with the *Tongdu* variable. It should be noted, however, that the significance of the results for centre-right individuals is borne by the group ⑥; the latter represents around 79% of the members of the centre-right. The *nationalist stance* variable confirms our main finding that extreme positions on the Mainland–Taiwan spectrum favour populist ideas (except for regression (III) in [Table C3.1](#) with the binary measurement at the 75th percentile).

Secondly, we employ the *standard qualitative* and *quantitative* variables we presented in [Subsection 3.3.2.1](#), to demonstrate that our proposed approach to measuring individual preferences on the issue of independence and unification outperforms and is better suited to analysing the cultivation of populist attitudes. [Table C3.2](#) shows the results for the *standard quantitative* and *qualitative* variables. On the one hand, we note that the *standard quantitative* variable is never significant and is therefore unable to detect populist attitudes.

On the other hand, the results of the *standard qualitative* variable are not stable according to the specification or threshold of the dependent variable. However, it emerges that the category of those who immediately want unification and who are heavily over-represented in the ‘strong populists’ set (see [Table 3.4](#)) have the highest probability or score of populism.

3.5.4 Complementary Analysis

Finally, by mobilising the four positions we have identified as most likely to have populist attitudes ((1), (6) (7) and incoherent individuals), we wish to explore their heterogeneity. To this end, we mobilise three subsets of variables, namely the dimensions of populism, political competencies and preferences. On the basis of these variables, we wish to explore two aspects : (i) the differences between populists according to their individual preferences for cross-strait relations and (ii) differences among those with common preferences on cross-strait relations, between populists and non-populists. To do this, we compare the distributions of each of the above variables for each group, the results of which are presented in [Table D3.1](#) in [Appendix D](#). The first part of [Table D3.1](#) compares the distributions between each group of populists and the second between populists and non-populists with common preferences on the *Tongdu* issue. Due to the low proportion of populists in group (7), we choose to group it with group (6), as both share a preference for unification.³¹

Overall, our analysis of the differences between populist groups shows that the four preferences most likely to have populist attitudes represent the majority of populists, irrespective of the threshold chosen to measure populism. Regardless of the threshold used, we observe that far-left populists ((1)), on average, display a higher level of satisfaction with the way democracy works and with right-wing cultural positions. On the other hand, populists in favour of unification ((6); (7)) show lower levels of these two aspects than other populists. Interestingly, the fact that group (1) populists display higher right-wing cultural stances, corroborates our findings from [Subsection 3.4](#) (see [Table 3.4](#)), on the constituent elements of this group’s national identity, as well as [Fell \(2018c\)](#) observations on their inclination to discriminate against mainland or non-Taiwanese speakers. Concerning

31. Indeed, among populists, the proportion who belong to the group (7), according to the binary quantifier at the 50th (75th) percentile, is 3.88% (5.49%).

the inconsistent group, as discussed in [Subsection 3.4](#), we note significant diversity, without any common trend emerging for the two chosen thresholds.

To conclude, the comparison between populists and non-populists who share common preferences regarding cross-strait relations reveals several findings. Far-left populists (①), regardless of the chosen threshold, meet all the criteria of political competence generating populist attitudes compared to their non-populist counterparts. We reach the same conclusion for pro-unification populists (⑥; ⑦) and inconsistent individuals, except for the variables of general knowledge and political interest (except for the latter variable among inconsistent individuals at the 75th percentile threshold). Regarding political preferences, far-left populists hold more conservative economic and cultural positions than their counterparts non-populists, with a more pronounced authoritarian tendency than the latter. In the pro-unification group (⑥; ⑦), populists show stronger support for liberal policies than non-populists who favour unification. As for the inconsistent group, populists have more conservative economic and cultural positions than their non-populist counterparts.

3.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to study the demand side of populism in Taiwan. To this end, we use the data from Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study (TEDS) project from the 2016 and 2020 waves. To measure populist attitudes, we follow the ideational approach ([Mudde, 2004](#); [Mudde, 2007](#); [Mudde, 2017](#); [K. A. Hawkins et al., 2018](#)) and conceptualize populism as a latent higher-order construct with two distinct and non-compensatory lower-order dimensions : anti-elitist attitudes and general support for popular sovereignty. To identify the individual preferences regarding the cross-strait relations, we employ the multidimensional method of [Niou \(2005\)](#), based on conditional preferences. This method enabled us to identify seven orientations on the question of the *Tongdu* question and three positions for those who have no preference for this issue (the passivists, the rationalists and the incoherent).

Initially, our analysis focused on characterising the preferences we identified regarding the cross-strait relationship. We did this by describing respondents' socio-demographic and economic profiles, their views on major political and societal events, and their political preferences and attitudes towards mainland China. We also sought to validate the seven positions with preferences on this issue using Fell's (Fell, 2006 ; Fell, 2018c) theoretical framework for nationalism in Taiwan. Our results remain consistent with his observations.

Subsequently, we identified the socio-political factors and preferences on the *Tongdu* issue that explain the development of populist attitudes in Taiwan. We find that among the radical populists (with measures based on the 75th percentile), there is considerable heterogeneity in terms of their socio-demographic and economic traits, while among moderate populists (with measures based on the 50th percentile) they have the profile of globalization's losers. We observe that both moderate and radical populists exhibit lower internal efficiency, experience a sense of economic insecurity, and are more likely to express dissatisfaction with democracy, which appears to be a form of political frustration among the most radical populists. In addition, we note that populists adopt right-wing positions both economically and culturally.

Regarding preferences on the cross-strait relationship, we find that populist attitudes are at the extreme ends of the spectrum of the unification-independence debate, as well as among those holding inconsistent positions on this issue. We have classified these preferences into three groups, according to their probability of being classified as populist (binary measures) or score of populism (continuous measures). The first group, named 'weak populists', encompasses individuals who are most supportive of independence. The second group, denoted as 'moderate populists', comprises those who exhibit inconsistent opinions as well as those expressing the second-strongest preference for unification. Lastly, the third group, referred to as 'strong populists', exclusively comprises individuals who strongly advocate for the unification solution. In conclusion, significant heterogeneity emerges among populists according to their preference on the *Tongdu* question, in terms of their political competencies and preferences. Specifically, we found that populists who are the most in favour of independence tend to have higher levels of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy and right-wing cultural positions compared to other populists.

On the other hand, populists supporting unification display lower levels on these two aspects compared to other populists.

The main limitation we can identify in our study lies in our measure of populist attitudes, which remains incomplete. Indeed, we were unable to assess all the components of this ‘thin-centred’ ideology (Mudde, 2004 : p.543 ; Mudde, 2007 : p.23 ; Mudde, 2017 : p.30). Although we have satisfactorily taken into account the anti-elitist component, we have only a partial assessment of the people-centred dimension. Indeed, our measure of populist attitudes is based only on the political aspect of this component (the “will of the people”) and does not take into account the other part of this dimension, often referred to as the “homogeneity of the people” (e.g. Schulz et al., 2018). This latter sub-component refers to the romanticized view of ordinary people as intrinsically “honest” and “hard-working” (see e.g. Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016 ; Oliver & Rahn, 2016 ; Schulz et al., 2018). In addition, another dimension of populism, namely anti-pluralist attitudes, was not considered in this study. The latter refers to the belief that politics is a struggle between good (the people) and evil (the elites), and in which there are no other significant political divisions (Castanho Silva et al., 2018 ; Castanho Silva et al., 2022). As we have pointed out, our measure of populism is limited by the information available in the database.

There are numerous directions for future research. This analysis could be enriched by an analysis of the interaction effects between conventional factors in the development of populist ideas and individual preferences on the *Tongdu* issue. It would be also valuable to understand the factors that drive voters away from traditional parties, including the pan-Blue and pan-Green coalition parties and toward populist parties like the Taiwan People’s Party. The role of globalization and increased trade openness, particularly in relation to China’s growing competition, appears to be a particularly promising avenue for investigation. In fact, the empirical literature has established a link between support for far-right and nationalist parties in Europe and the influx of Chinese imports (Colantone & Stanig, 2018a ; 2018b). For this purpose, the theoretical model of political economy by Pástor & Veronesi (2021) could be insightful. Pástor & Veronesi (2021) predict that the voters who lend support to populists are those most vulnerable to the impacts of globalization, specifically, those who have a stronger aversion to inequalities and risk.

3.7 Appendix

Appendix A. Conditional Preferences on the Independence and Unification Issue Per Wave

Table A3.1 - Independence preferences 2016

Independence if no war	Independence even if war			Total
	Agree	Disagree	Other*	
Agree	53.28	42.47	4.25	62.86
Disagree	15.31	82.72	1.97	32.77
Other*	16.67	29.63	53.70	4.37
Total	39.24	55.10	5.66	100

Table A3.2 - Independence preferences 2020

Independence if no war	Independence even if war			Total
	Agree	Disagree	Other*	
Agree	60.07	35.74	4.19	65.02
Disagree	24.39	72.93	2.68	31.04
Other*	15.38	36.54	48.08	3.94
Total	47.24	47.31	5.45	100

Table A3.3 - Unification preferences 2016

Unification if compatible	Unification even if not compatible			Total
	Agree	Disagree	Other*	
Agree	25.34	72.24	2.42	30.02
Disagree	2.04	97.58	0.38	63.35
Other*	3.66	31.71	64.63	6.63
Total	9.14	85.60	5.26	100

Table A3.4 - Unification preferences 2020

Unification if compatible	Unification even if not compatible			Total
	Agree	Disagree	Other*	
Agree	30.58	64.74	4.68	27.48
Disagree	3.00	94.77	2.23	67.98
Other*	6.67	45.00	48.33	4.54
Total	10.75	84.25	5.00	100

Reading notes : N=1235 in 2016 and N=1321 in 2020. *The “other” category includes the following response options : It depends ; No opinion ; Don’t know ; Refuse to answer. Light grey cells indicate respondents who support independence even under unfavourable conditions in 2016 (Table A3.1) and in 2020 (Table A3.2) or those who do not support unification at all in 2016 (Table A3.3) and in 2020 (Table A3.4). Medium grey cells are respondents who support independence in 2016 and 2020 (respectively in Tables A3.1 and A3.2) or unification only under favourable conditions in 2016 and 2020 (respectively in Tables A3.3 and A3.4). The dark grey cells indicate support for unification even under unfavourable conditions in 2016 (Tables A3.3) and 2020 (Table A3.4) or those who do not support independence at all in 2016 (Table A3.1) and 2020 (Table A3.2). Bold and italicised cells indicate inconsistent and passivist positions respectively. Source : Author’s own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Table A3.5 - Conditional preferences 2016

Supporting independence	Supporting unification			Total
	Unconditionally	Conditionally	Not supporting	
Unconditionally	6.95	12.90 (3)	80.15 (1)	39.78
Conditionally	7.44 (5)	31.39 (=ratio)	61.17 (2)	30.50
Not supporting	11.63 (7)	33.22 (7)	55.15 (=4)	29.72
Total	8.49	24.58	66.93	100

Reading notes : N=1013.

Dark green cells indicate respondents who belong to the ethnic Taiwan nationalism group. Light green cells indicate respondents who belong to the civic Taiwan nationalism group. White cells indicate respondents who belong to the centre group. Light blue cells indicate respondents who belong to the ROC Chinese nationalism group. Dark blue cells indicate respondents who belong to the greater Chinese nationalism group. Bold cells indicate individuals with inconsistent positions. Medium grey cells indicate the rationalist group.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Table A3.6 - Conditional preferences 2020

Supporting independence	Supporting unification			Total
	Unconditionally	Conditionally	Not supporting	
Unconditionally	6.80	13.80 (3)	79.40 (1)	47.39
Conditionally	8.36 (5)	24.73 (=ratio)	66.93 (2)	26.07
Not supporting	15.36 (7)	25.36 (6)	59.29 (4)	26.54
Total	9.48	19.71	70.81	100

Reading notes : N=1055.

Dark green cells indicate respondents who belong to the ethnic Taiwan nationalism group. Light green cells indicate respondents who belong to the civic Taiwan nationalism group. White cells indicate respondents who belong to the centre group. Light blue cells indicate respondents who belong to the ROC Chinese nationalism group. Dark blue cells indicate respondents who belong to the greater Chinese nationalism group. Bold cells indicate individuals with inconsistent positions. Medium grey cells indicate the rationalist group.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Appendix B. Descriptive Statistics

Table B3.1 - Descriptive statistics for populism measures

Dependent variable	Mean	Sd	Min	Max
Anti-elitism scale	0.52	0.16	0	1
Sovereignty scale	0.55	0.15	0	1
Populism binary scale 50 th	0.35	0.48	0	1
Populism binary scale 75 th	0.18	0.39	0	1
Populism continuous scale 50 th	0.23	0.33	0	1
Populism continuous scale 75 th	0.13	0.29	0	1

Source : Author’s own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Table B3.2 - Descriptive statistics for control variables

Control variable	Variable	Coding	Mean	Sd	Min	Max
Socio - demographic profile	Gender	Dummy variable taking the value 1 if the respondent is female ; [0 otherwise]	0.47	0.50	0	1
	Generation	1= 1 st and 2 nd generations (born before 1953) (14.08%) ; 2= 3 rd generation (born 1954 :1968) (28.68%) ; 3=4 th generation (born 1969 :1978) (22.18%) ; 4=5 th generation (born 1979 :1988) (18.86%) ; 5=6 th generation (born after 1989) (16.20%)	2.95	1.30	1	5
	Ethnic identity	The following are proposed (base on father's ethnic origin) : 1=Minnan (73.12%) ; 2=Hakka (13.34%), 3=Mainlander (10.37%) ; 4=Aboriginal (1.37%) ; 5=Other (1.80%) (Aboriginal, Burmese, Indonesian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Recent foreign immigrant, Don't know)	1.46	0.86	1	5
Attitudes towards mainland China	China tie	Dummy variable taking the value 1 if the respondent has or has had business connections or study experience in China	0.16	0.36	0	1
	National identity	The coding of this variable is based on the following question : <i>In Taiwan, some people think they are Taiwanese There are also some people who think that they are Chinese. Do you consider yourself as</i> : 1=Taiwanese (64.95%) [=reference] ; 2= both (31.14%) ; 3= Chinese (3.91%)	1.39	0.56	1	3
Socio-economic profile	Income	Income level is divided into 9 categories : Level 1 (24.84%) ; Level 2 (8.61%) ; Level 3 (8.57%) ; Level 4 (7.90%) ; Level 5 (8.80%) ; Level 6 (8.22%) ; Level 7 (8.69%) ; Level 8 (9.31%) ; Level 9 (6.38%) ; Level 10 (8.69%)	4.72	3.09	1	10
	Education	The original education variables (highest level of diploma obtained) are recoded into three categories : 1=Primary education (21.64%) ; 2=Secondary education (42.76%) ; 3=Tertiary education (35.60%)	2.14	0.74	1	3
	Institutional sector	The coding of this variable is based on the following questions : Current employment status of the respondent (question S7) and the main occupation of the respondent (question S7a). 1=Public sector (9.04%) ; 2=Private Sector (53.09%) ; Outsider (20.42%) ; Inactive (17.45%)	2.46	0.88	1	4
	Subjective class membership	The coding of this variable is based on the following question : <i>If we divide social class to upper, upper middle, middle, lower middle and lower, which do you think you are ?</i> lower class (8.53%), lower middle (28.25%), middle (55.48%), upper/ upper middle (7.74%)	2.62	0.75	1	4
	Economic well-being change	The coding of this variable is based on the following question : <i>Would you say that over the past year, your own household's economic condition has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse ?</i> Numeric scale from 4 [Gotten much better] to 0 [Gotten much worse]	1.86	0.65	0	4
Political aptitude	Political interest	How interested would you say you are in politics? Numeric scale from 3 [Very interested] to 0 [Not at all interested]	1.39	0.79	0	3
	Internal efficacy	We measure the internal political effectiveness by summing the score on the following two questions : Some people say : <i>"Sometimes politics seems so complicated that a person like me cannot really understand what is going on"</i> Numeric scale from 0 [Strongly agree] to 3 [Strongly disagree]. <i>"You feel you understand the most important political issues of this country"</i> Numeric scale from 3 [Strongly agree] to 0 [Strongly disagree]	2.57	1.07	0	6
	General knowledge	We measure the general level of knowledge by combining the score on the following three questions : <i>Who is the current premier of our country ?</i> ; Dummy variable taking the value 1 if the respondent gives a wrong answer ; [0 otherwise]. <i>Who is the current premier of our country ?</i> ; Dummy variable taking the value 1 if the respondent gives a wrong answer ; [0 otherwise]. <i>What institution has the power to interpret the constitution ?</i> ; [0 otherwise]	1.14	0.94	0	3
	Satisfaction with democracy	The coding of this variable is based on the following question : <i>On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in Taiwan ?</i> Numeric scale from 3 [Very satisfied] to 0 [Very dissatisfied]	1.70	0.66	0	3
Policy preferences	Economic positions (left-right)	We measure the economic position by summing the results of the following two questions : <i>Some people say : Government officials often waste a lot of money we pay in taxes. Numeric scale from 5 [Strongly disagree] to 0 [Strongly agree].</i> <i>Some people think that the government should cut taxes even if it means spending less on social services such as health and education. Other people feel that the government should spend more on social services such as health and education even if it means raising taxes. Numeric scale from 0 [Governments should increase taxes and spend more on services] to 5 [Governments should decrease taxes and spend less on services] with 11 answer options</i>	5.83	1.69	0	10
	Authoritarian preferences	We measure the authoritarian preferences with the following question : <i>Having a strong leader in government is good for our country even if the leader bends the rules to get things done.</i> Numeric scale from 4 [Strongly agree] to 0 [Strongly disagree]	1.53	1.08	0	4
	Right-wing preferences	We measure the right-wing preferences by summing the results of the following two questions : Economic threat : <i>Some people say : Immigrants are generally good for our country's economy.</i> Numeric scale from 4 [Strongly disagree] to 0 [Strongly agree]. Cultural threat : <i>Some people say : Our country's culture is generally harmed by immigrants.</i> Numeric scale from 4 [Strongly agree] to 0 [Strongly disagree]	3.33	1.51	0	8

Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Appendix C. Additional Results

Table C3.1 - Effect of nationalism stance and nationalism variables on populist attitudes

	Logit estimation ^a				Tobit estimation ^b			
	Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th		Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th	
	Nationalism stance	Nationalism	Nationalism stance	Nationalism	Nationalism stance	Nationalism	Nationalism stance	Nationalism
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)
Generation 1 st & 2 nd (base= 4 th)	0.0007 (0.191)	-0.0001 (0.192)	0.0310 (0.232)	0.0287 (0.234)	0.0106 (0.069)	0.0065 (0.069)	0.1035 (0.116)	0.0938 (0.116)
Generation 3 rd (base= 4 th)	0.0385 (0.137)	0.0380 (0.137)	0.0493** (0.173)	0.0480** (0.173)	0.0752 (0.051)	0.0733 (0.051)	0.1667* (0.086)	0.1596* (0.086)
Generation 5 th (base= 4 th)	0.0450 (0.154)	0.0499* (0.155)	0.0361 (0.192)	0.0405* (0.194)	0.0846 (0.057)	0.0942* (0.057)	0.1341 (0.096)	0.1501 (0.097)
Generation 6 th (base= 4 th)	0.0312 (0.163)	0.0362 (0.165)	0.0276 (0.205)	0.0329 (0.207)	0.0602 (0.062)	0.0698 (0.062)	0.0959 (0.104)	0.1138 (0.104)
Gender	-0.0448** (0.103)	-0.0437** (0.104)	-0.0272* (0.129)	-0.0266 (0.130)	-0.0876** (0.038)	-0.0862** (0.038)	-0.1015 (0.064)	-0.1009 (0.064)
Hakka (base= Minnan)	0.0371 (0.149)	0.0357 (0.150)	0.0535** (0.181)	0.0528** (0.181)	0.0808 (0.056)	0.0778 (0.056)	0.2225** (0.092)	0.2166** (0.092)
Mainlander (base= Minnan)	0.0105 (0.163)	0.0072 (0.163)	0.0008 (0.195)	-0.0020 (0.195)	0.0219 (0.060)	0.0142 (0.060)	-0.0024 (0.098)	-0.0162 (0.098)
Aboriginal (base= Minnan)	-0.0503 (0.449)	-0.0522 (0.449)	0.0342 (0.469)	0.0281 (0.462)	-0.0770 (0.164)	-0.0826 (0.164)	0.1245 (0.225)	0.0957 (0.222)
Other (base= Minnan)	0.0721 (0.353)	0.0721 (0.353)	0.0658 (0.447)	0.0658 (0.452)	0.1576 (0.125)	0.1507 (0.125)	0.3136 (0.214)	0.2823 (0.213)
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China Tie	0.0118 (0.131)	0.0115 (0.131)	-0.0065 (0.169)	-0.0075 (0.169)	0.0149 (0.048)	0.0147 (0.048)	-0.0237 (0.083)	-0.0251 (0.083)
Both (base= Taiwanese)	0.0221 (0.108)	0.0151 (0.112)	0.0289* (0.128)	0.0184 (0.132)	0.0547 (0.040)	0.0391 (0.041)	0.1166* (0.065)	0.0738 (0.068)
Chinese (base= Taiwanese)	-0.0109 (0.57)	-0.0208 (0.262)	0.0427 (0.295)	0.0226 (0.303)	-0.0083 (0.092)	-0.0304 (0.093)	0.1730 (0.144)	0.0964 (0.148)
Secondary education (base= Primary)	-0.0753*** (0.135)	-0.0764*** (0.135)	-0.0439* (0.164)	-0.0450** (0.165)	-0.1396*** (0.048)	-0.1415*** (0.048)	-0.1701** (0.081)	-0.1748** (0.081)
Tertiary education (base= Primary)	-0.0739** (0.164)	-0.0761** (0.164)	-0.0295 (0.200)	-0.0308 (0.200)	-0.1301** (0.059)	-0.1345** (0.059)	-0.1158 (0.099)	-0.1225 (0.099)
Income	-0.0029 (0.017)	-0.0028 (0.017)	0.0004 (0.022)	0.0001 (0.022)	-0.0047 (0.006)	-0.0050 (0.006)	0.0015 (0.011)	0.0005 (0.011)
Lower middle (base= Lower)	-0.0285 (0.177)	-0.0279 (0.178)	-0.0271 (0.200)	-0.0243 (0.199)	-0.0382 (0.060)	-0.0362 (0.060)	-0.0989 (0.100)	-0.0878 (0.100)
Middle (base= Lower)	-0.0519 (0.175)	-0.0517 (0.175)	-0.0298 (0.196)	-0.0283 (0.195)	-0.0906 (0.059)	-0.0884 (0.059)	-0.1169 (0.098)	-0.1086 (0.097)
Upper middle (base= Lower)	-0.0426 (0.243)	-0.0417 (0.243)	-0.0410 (0.292)	-0.0420 (0.293)	-0.0754 (0.086)	-0.0741 (0.085)	-0.1563 (0.146)	-0.1556 (0.146)
Private (base= Public)	0.0436 (0.183)	0.0438 (0.183)	0.0480* (0.242)	0.0482* (0.242)	0.0850 (0.070)	0.0854 (0.070)	0.2042* (0.121)	0.2062* (0.120)
Outsider (base= Public)	0.0663* (0.206)	0.0642* (0.206)	0.0417 (0.270)	0.0403 (0.270)	0.1213 (0.078)	0.1176 (0.078)	0.1780 (0.134)	0.1750 (0.134)
Inactive (base= Public)	0.0546 (0.218)	0.0529 (0.218)	0.0251 (0.280)	0.0235 (0.280)	0.0981 (0.082)	0.0952 (0.082)	0.1198 (0.140)	0.1167 (0.140)
Economic well-being change	-0.0492*** (0.075)	-0.0482*** (0.075)	-0.0364*** (0.094)	-0.0351*** (0.094)	-0.0982*** (0.027)	-0.0961*** (0.027)	-0.1440*** (0.046)	-0.1390*** (0.046)
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Political interest	-0.0162 (0.066)	-0.0161 (0.066)	-0.0059 (0.081)	-0.0068 (0.081)	-0.0317 (0.024)	-0.0316 (0.024)	-0.0231 (0.040)	-0.0278 (0.040)
Internal efficacy	-0.0342*** (0.050)	-0.0341*** (0.050)	-0.0278*** (0.060)	-0.0276*** (0.061)	-0.0698*** (0.018)	-0.0703*** (0.018)	-0.1105*** (0.030)	-0.1094*** (0.030)
General Knowledge	-0.0191* (0.058)	-0.0192* (0.058)	-0.0062 (0.071)	-0.0068 (0.071)	-0.0363* (0.021)	-0.0366* (0.021)	-0.0244 (0.036)	-0.0272 (0.036)
Satisfaction democracy	-0.0749*** (0.076)	-0.0751*** (0.077)	-0.0561*** (0.094)	-0.0540*** (0.092)	-0.1527*** (0.027)	-0.1507*** (0.027)	-0.2305*** (0.046)	-0.2235*** (0.045)
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Economic positions	0.0593*** (0.075)	0.0593*** (0.075)	0.0409*** (0.037)	0.0407*** (0.037)	0.1201*** (0.010)	0.1199*** (0.010)	0.1674*** (0.019)	0.1675*** (0.017)
Right-wing	0.0216*** (0.032)	0.0222*** (0.032)	0.0188*** (0.038)	0.0196*** (0.038)	0.0412*** (0.011)	0.0427*** (0.011)	0.0752*** (0.019)	0.0787*** (0.019)
Authoritarian	0.0215*** (0.044)	0.0214** (0.044)	0.0080 (0.055)	0.0076 (0.055)	0.0417*** (0.016)	0.0413*** (0.016)	0.0327 (0.027)	0.0322 (0.027)

Table C3.1 - Effect of nationalism stance and nationalism variables on populist attitudes

	Logit estimation ^a				Tobit estimation ^b						
	Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th		Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th				
	Nationalism stance (I)	Nationalism (IIa)	Nationalism (IIb)	Nationalism stance (III)	Nationalism (IVa)	Nationalism (IVb)	Nationalism stance (V)	Nationalism stance (VI)	Nationalism stance (VII)	Nationalism (VIIIa)	Nationalism (VIIIb)
Far left or right (base=centre)	0.0910*** (0.158)			0.0537*** (0.203)			0.1882*** (0.059)		0.2399** (0.101)		
Centre left or right (base=centre)	0.0493* (0.158)			0.0581** (0.200)			0.1050* (0.059)		0.2375** (0.100)		
Far left (1)		-0.0878*** (0.162)			0.0407* (0.208)			0.1787*** (0.060)		0.1884* (0.104)	
Centre left (2, 3)		-0.0611** (0.139)			0.0414* (0.217)			0.0559 (0.065)		0.1675 (0.108)	-0.0209 (0.087)
Centre (4)		-0.0878*** (0.162)			-0.0407* (0.208)			-0.1787*** (0.060)		-0.1884* (0.104)	-0.0209 (0.087)
Centre right (5, 6)		0.0977** (0.208)			0.0930*** (0.249)			0.2010*** (0.076)		0.3611*** (0.124)	0.1777 (0.114)
Far right (7)		0.0935* (0.297)			0.1254** (0.332)			0.2100** (0.105)		0.4819*** (0.162)	0.2935* (0.153)
Rationalists	0.0730* (0.218)	0.0730* (0.208)	-0.0147 (0.192)	0.0164 (0.293)	0.0160 (0.292)	-0.0247 (0.265)	0.1335 (0.081)	-0.0460 (0.073)	0.0590 (0.144)	0.0579 (0.143)	-0.1305 (0.130)
Incoherents	0.1221*** (0.195)	0.1221*** (0.194)	0.0334 (0.168)	0.0939*** (0.238)	0.0630*** (0.237)	0.0523* (0.198)	0.2427*** (0.071)	0.2419*** (0.060)	0.3654*** (0.119)	0.3601*** (0.118)	0.1716* (0.100)
Passivists	0.0595* (0.188)	0.0595* (0.188)	-0.0284 (0.163)	0.0161 (0.244)	0.0163 (0.243)	-0.0244 (0.210)	0.1153* (0.070)	0.1145* (0.070)	0.0747 (0.123)	0.0747 (0.121)	-0.1137 (0.105)
Constant	-0.8448 (0.580)	-0.8698 (0.581)	-0.3982 (0.577)	-2.1275*** (0.737)	-2.1563*** (0.740)	-1.8073*** (0.743)	-0.3286 (0.109)	-0.3367 (0.100)	-1.1456*** (0.354)	-1.1489*** (0.354)	-0.9605*** (0.356)
N	2556	2556	2556	2556	2554	2554	2556	2556	2556	2556	2556
Pseudo R ²	0.1284	0.1295	0.1295	0.1382	0.1405	0.1405	0.1120	0.1130	0.1198	0.1217	0.1217
% Correctly classified	70.50%	70.70%	70.70%	82.43%	82.43%	82.43%	82.43%	82.43%	82.43%	82.43%	82.43%

Reading notes : ^aBinary Logit estimates (average marginal effects are reported). ^bTobit estimates (coefficients are reported). Robust standard errors are reported in brackets. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.
 Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Table C3.2 - Effect of standard quantitative and qualitative variables on populist attitudes

	Logit estimation ^a				Tobit estimation ^b			
	Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th		Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th	
	quantitative	qualitative	quantitative	qualitative	quantitative	qualitative	quantitative	qualitative
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VII)	(VII)	(VIII)
Generation 1 st & 2 nd (base= 4 th)	-0.0048 (0.194)	-0.0051 (0.192)	0.0241 (0.234)	0.0216 (0.237)	-0.0027 (0.070)	-0.0046 (0.070)	0.0765 (0.117)	0.0746 (0.117)
Generation 3 rd (base= 4 th)	0.351 (0.142)	0.0340 (0.139)	0.0441** (0.177)	0.0400** (0.175)	0.0682 (0.053)	0.0669 (0.052)	0.1470* (0.088)	0.1378 (0.087)
Generation 5 th (base= 4 th)	0.0594** (0.155)	0.0511* (0.154)	0.0453* (0.195)	0.0412* (0.193)	0.1129** (0.058)	0.0981* (0.057)	0.1679* (0.097)	0.1595* (0.096)
Generation 6 th (base= 4 th)	0.0336 (0.165)	0.0305 (0.164)	0.0286 (0.210)	0.0302 (0.207)	0.0662 (0.063)	0.0607 (0.062)	0.1034 (0.106)	0.1111 (0.105)
Gender	-0.0423** (0.105)	-0.0474** (0.104)	-0.0292* (0.130)	-0.0258 (0.130)	-0.0851** (0.038)	-0.0937** (0.038)	-0.1082* (0.064)	-0.0988 (0.064)
Hakka (base= Minnan)	0.0312 (0.152)	0.0277 (0.151)	0.0601** (0.181)	0.0486* (0.181)	0.0736 (0.057)	0.0667 (0.057)	0.2448*** (0.093)	0.2066** (0.092)
Mainlander (base= Minnan)	0.0084 (0.165)	0.0006 (0.166)	0.0021 (0.198)	-0.0080 (0.202)	0.0175 (0.061)	0.0009 (0.061)	0.0020 (0.099)	-0.0391 (0.100)
Aboriginal (base= Minnan)	-0.0514 (0.443)	-0.0482 (0.447)	0.0408 (0.471)	0.0399 (0.472)	-0.0798 (0.163)	-0.0644 (0.165)	0.1606 (0.228)	0.1635 (0.227)
Other (base= Minnan)	0.0747 (0.344)	0.0677 (0.340)	0.0732 (0.435)	0.0672 (0.435)	0.1544 (0.122)	0.1395 (0.122)	0.3028 (0.210)	0.2839 (0.210)
China Tie	0.0067 (0.132)	0.0116 (0.131)	-0.0168 (0.171)	-0.0110 (0.170)	0.0042 (0.049)	0.0168 (0.048)	-0.0640 (0.085)	-0.0357 (0.084)
Both (base= Taiwanese)	0.0121 (0.113)	0.0173 (0.113)	0.0224 (0.134)	0.0232 (0.135)	0.0338 (0.042)	0.0443 (0.042)	0.0852 (0.068)	0.0929 (0.068)
Chinese (base= Taiwanese)	-0.0074 (0.264)	-0.0188 (0.263)	0.0442 (0.308)	0.0225 (0.306)	-0.0031 (0.095)	-0.0031 (0.095)	0.1685 (0.151)	0.1685 (0.151)
Secondary education (base= Primary)	-0.0839*** (0.138)	-0.0786*** (0.136)	-0.0420* (0.167)	-0.0441* (0.166)	-0.1543*** (0.049)	-0.1448*** (0.048)	-0.1596* (0.083)	-0.1681** (0.081)
Tertiary education (base= Primary)	-0.0898*** (0.166)	-0.0768** (0.164)	-0.0343 (0.202)	-0.0304 (0.201)	-0.1608*** (0.060)	-0.1345** (0.060)	-0.1264 (0.101)	-0.1132 (0.099)
Income	-0.0032 (0.017)	-0.0034 (0.017)	0.0001 (0.022)	0.0000 (0.022)	-0.0057 (0.007)	-0.0062 (0.006)	0.0005 (0.011)	0.0001 (0.011)
Lower middle (base= Lower)	-0.0321 (0.181)	-0.0229 (0.179)	-0.0208 (0.205)	-0.0245 (0.204)	-0.0409 (0.061)	-0.0319 (0.061)	-0.0766 (0.100)	-0.0965 (0.101)
Middle (base= Lower)	-0.0600* (0.179)	-0.0513 (0.178)	-0.0316 (0.201)	-0.0298 (0.201)	-0.1046* (0.060)	-0.0952 (0.060)	-0.1247 (0.100)	-0.1251 (0.099)
Upper middle (base= Lower)	-0.0568 (0.246)	-0.0439 (0.245)	-0.0398 (0.295)	-0.0477 (0.300)	-0.0964 (0.088)	-0.0829 (0.087)	-0.1548 (0.148)	-0.1909 (0.147)
Private (base= Public)	0.0366 (0.183)	0.0393 (0.182)	0.0469* (0.245)	0.0405 (0.241)	0.0719 (0.071)	0.0767 (0.071)	0.2040* (0.120)	0.1768 (0.120)
Outsider (base= Public)	0.0680* (0.206)	0.0621 (0.205)	0.0430 (0.276)	0.0276 (0.272)	0.1249 (0.079)	0.1121 (0.078)	0.1908 (0.137)	0.1289 (0.134)
Inactive (base= Public)	0.0644 (0.219)	0.0561 (0.218)	0.0348 (0.284)	0.0242 (0.280)	0.1165 (0.083)	0.1037 (0.083)	0.1612 (0.142)	0.1166 (0.139)
Economic well-being change	-0.0513*** (0.076)	-0.0482*** (0.076)	-0.0361*** (0.095)	-0.0331*** (0.094)	-0.1017*** (0.027)	-0.0947*** (0.027)	-0.1450*** (0.047)	-0.1316*** (0.046)
Political interest	-0.0122 (0.066)	-0.0162 (0.066)	-0.0041 (0.082)	-0.0057 (0.082)	-0.0251 (0.024)	-0.0330 (0.024)	-0.0145 (0.041)	-0.0249 (0.040)
Internal efficacy	-0.0301*** (0.050)	-0.0327*** (0.050)	-0.0260*** (0.061)	-0.0274*** (0.061)	-0.0627*** (0.018)	0.0684*** (0.018)	0.1023*** (0.030)	0.1094*** (0.030)
General Knowledge	-0.0225** (0.059)	-0.0165 (0.058)	-0.0079 (0.072)	-0.0046 (0.071)	-0.0433** (0.022)	-0.0314 (0.021)	-0.0289 (0.036)	-0.0188 (0.036)
Satisfaction democracy	-0.0707*** (0.077)	-0.0722*** (0.076)	-0.0539*** (0.092)	-0.0517*** (0.091)	-0.1418*** (0.027)	-0.1454*** (0.027)	-0.2191*** (0.047)	-0.2133*** (0.047)
Economic position	0.0610*** (0.076)	0.0583*** (0.076)	0.0428*** (0.038)	0.0409*** (0.038)	0.1232*** (0.011)	0.1182*** (0.011)	0.1728*** (0.019)	0.1666*** (0.019)
Right-wing	0.0198*** (0.032)	0.0211*** (0.032)	0.0185*** (0.038)	0.0185*** (0.038)	0.0386*** (0.012)	0.0408*** (0.011)	0.0739*** (0.019)	0.0742*** (0.019)
Authoritarian	0.0232*** (0.045)	0.0204** (0.044)	0.0106 (0.056)	0.0081 (0.055)	0.0458*** (0.016)	0.0396*** (0.016)	0.0426 (0.027)	0.0334 (0.027)

Table C3.2 - Effect of standard quantitative and quantitative variables on populist attitudes

	Logit estimation ^a				Tobit estimation ^b			
	Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th		Populism 50 th		Populism 75 th	
	quantitative (I)	qualitative (II)	quantitative (III)	qualitative (IV)	quantitative (V)	qualitative (VII)	quantitative (VIII)	qualitative (VIII)
Standard quantitative (base=EUIF ^c)	0.0024 (0.023)		0.0031 (0.028)		0.0050 (0.008)	0.0153 (0.014)		0.0153 (0.014)
Immediate Independence (base=EUIF ^c)		0.0273 (0.198)		0.0407 (0.232)		0.0629 (0.071)		0.1667 (0.232)
Immediate unification (base=EUIF ^c)		0.2405*** (0.454)		0.2997*** (0.417)		0.3920*** (0.112)		0.8283*** (0.166)
Status quo forever (base=EUIF ^c)		0.0370 (0.134)		0.0317 (0.165)		0.0826* (0.049)		0.1541* (0.083)
Status quo independence (base=EUIF ^c)		0.0311 (0.123)		0.0282 (0.157)		0.0663 (0.046)		0.1323* (0.078)
Status quo unification (base=EUIF ^c)		0.0231 (0.175)		0.0621** (0.206)		0.0632 (0.327)		0.2632** (0.102)
Constant	-0.6238 (0.600)	-0.5635 (0.595)	-1.8471*** (0.760)	-1.1867*** (0.731)	-0.2429 (0.213)	-0.2064 (0.323)	-1.0211*** (0.363)	-0.9938*** (0.356)
N	2479	2525	2479	2525	2479	2525	2479	2525
Pseudo R ²	0.1269	0.1259	0.1378	0.1414	0.1106	0.1100	0.1207	0.1224
% Correctly classified	71.08%	71.09%	81.58%	82.09%				

Reading notes : ^aBinary Logit estimates (average marginal effects are reported). ^bTobit estimates (coefficients are reported). Robust standard errors are reported in brackets. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*. ^cEUIF = Maintain the status quo, decide either unification or independence in the future.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Appendix D. Further Analysis

Table D3.1 - An exploratory analysis of differences in policy preferences between Taiwanese populists and non-populists^a

	Heterogeneity of political and populist preferences between populists and non-populists																	
	Whole sample (n=2556)	Populist 50 th (n=890)	① 50 th (29.21%) ^b	⑥ & 7 50 th (11.12%) ^b	Incohe - 50 th rents (11.47%) ^b	Populist 75 th (n=463)	① 75 th (26.78%) ^c	⑥ & 7 75 th (14.04%) ^c	Incohe - 75 th rents (12.31%) ^c	① all (n=720)	① 50 th (36.11%) ^d	① 75 th (17.22%) ^d	⑥ & 7 All (n=248)	⑥ & 7 50 th (39.92%) ^d	⑥ & 7 75 th (26.21%) ^d	Incohe - rents all (n=254)	Incohe - rents 50 th (40.16%) ^d	Incohe - rents 75 th (22.44%) ^d
Anti-elitism scale	0.52	0.67	0.66	0.70***	0.67	0.73	0.74	0.74	0.75	0.51	0.66***	0.73***	0.55	0.70***	0.74***	0.53	0.67***	0.74***
Sovereignty scale	0.55	0.69	0.69	0.70	0.70	0.75*	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.56	0.69***	0.75***	0.56	0.70***	0.74***	0.57	0.70***	0.74***
Political interest	1.39	1.31	1.40**	1.39	1.28	1.40	1.49**	1.49	1.19	1.52	1.40***	1.40*	1.49	1.39	1.49	1.37	1.28	1.19**
Internal efficacy	2.57	2.35	2.47**	2.32	2.23	2.30	2.34	2.34	1.97**	2.75	2.47***	2.30***	2.54	2.32***	2.34*	2.51	2.23***	1.97**
General knowledge	1.14	1.23	1.27	1.06*	1.17	1.40*	1.11	1.11	1.30	1.14	1.27**	1.40***	1.05	1.06	1.11	1.16	1.17	1.30
Satisfaction with democracy	1.70	1.53	1.66***	1.32***	1.63*	1.60***	1.44	1.26**	1.51	1.82	1.66***	1.60***	1.43	1.32*	1.26**	1.76	1.63**	1.51**
Subjective deprivation	1.86	1.72	1.74	1.58*	1.73	1.71	1.55	1.55	1.61	1.85	1.74***	1.71**	1.77	1.58***	1.55**	1.83	1.73**	1.61**
Economic positions	5.83	6.46	6.44	6.34	6.39	6.68	6.61	6.61	6.74	5.79	6.44***	6.68***	5.71	6.34***	6.61***	5.89	6.39***	6.74***
Authoritarian preferences	1.53	1.64	1.69	1.67	1.62	1.75	1.57	1.57	1.47	1.55	1.69**	1.75*	1.66	1.67	1.57	1.62	1.62	1.47
Right-wing	3.33	3.63	3.85**	3.17***	3.43	4.02*	3.79	3.26**	3.54	3.46	3.85***	4.02***	3.11	3.17	3.26	3.21	3.43*	3.54**

Reading notes :^aANOVA test. Shaded (bold) cells denote the values that are statistically significantly higher (lower) in the cluster than in the rest of the sample (i.e. excluding the group concerned).

^bCalculations performed on individuals (n=890) categorized as populist on the basis of the binary populist 50th variable according to preferences on the cross-strait relationship. ^c Calculations performed on individuals (n=463) categorized as populist on the basis of the binary populist 75th variable. The percentage figures indicate the proportion of populists associated with each cross-strait preference among all populists (binary populist 50th or 75th) variable according to preferences on the cross-strait relationship.

^dCalculations performed on each preference on the cross-strait relationship between populists (binary populist 50th or 75th) and non-populists. The percentage figures represent the proportion of populists (binary populists at the 50th or 75th percentile) among each preference regarding cross-strait relations.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the TEDS project data (Presidential and Legislative Elections wave 2016 and 2020).

Chapter 4

Taiwanese Middle Class Neoliberal Belief and Policy Preferences

4.1 Introduction

According to [Kharas \(2017\)](#) estimates,¹ the global middle class exceeded 3 billion people in 2015. Since 2020, a significant milestone has been reached, with the middle class now accounting for more than half of the global population for the first time. Moreover, the global middle class can be split into two groups. On the one hand, North America and Europe are facing stagnant growth in their middle classes, even though their consumption is higher than that of the rest of the world. On the other hand, a dynamic and rapidly expanding middle class is emerging, mainly in Asia. Indeed, by the mid-2020s, the global middle class is expected to grow by a billion people, almost 90% of whom will be in Asia. By 2030, Asia will account for two-thirds of the global middle class and contribute to more than half of its demand ([Kharas, 2017](#)). As a result, the importance of the Asian middle class is set to intensify over the coming decades, shifting the centre of gravity of the global economy towards Asia. As China and India play an important role in the trend towards an increase in the size and consumption of the middle class in Asia, they have attracted considerable interest in the academic literature (e.g. [Barton et al., 2013](#); [Roy, 2018](#)).

In contrast, studies of the Taiwanese middle class have shown less interest. Moreover, the little research that has been done on this subject is usually limited to identifying and describing the different segments within the middle class (e.g. [Hsiao & So, 1999](#); [Kuan, 2006](#); [Tsai et al., 2014](#)), or to studying the relationship between social stratification and national identity (e.g. [M.-k. Chang, 2006](#)). Nevertheless, with the expansion of cross-strait (mainland China–Taiwan) trade with initiatives such as the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), a free trade agreement signed in 2010 and subsequently, the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) in 2013, which aims to liberalize service industries, has heightened interest in the economic attitudes of the Taiwanese middle class. In particular, the class politics of trade - the association between cross-strait trade policy preferences and class - has been subject to detailed examination.

1. [Kharas \(2017\)](#) considers that the middle class is composed of households with daily expenditures between 11 USD and 110 USD per person in 2011 purchasing power parity terms.

T.-H. Lin & Hu (2011) showed that members of the working class and the self-employed are against the ECFA because of concerns about possible worsening inequality, while capitalists and managers supported it due to the potential spillover effects on the Taiwanese economy. These different class preferences for economic integration with the continent through trade agreements are at the root of the “class vote” phenomenon, i.e. a political cleavage based on class. The most highly qualified classes, who benefit from this economic rapprochement, tend to be supporters of the pan-Blue coalition, which is in favour of closer economic ties with China, whereas the least qualified class groups who suffer from greater economic integration with China tend to support the pan-Green coalition for protecting their livelihoods (Wong, 2010 ; T.-H. Lin & Hu, 2011 ; T.-H. Lin, 2015).

However, in order to gain a thorough comprehension of these class cleavages in policy attitudes among Taiwanese citizens, it is crucial not only to analyse these preferences solely from the perspective of the opposition between supporters of free trade and protectionism. Indeed, as demonstrated by Tseng (2014), the Sunflower Movement, which emerged in response to the CSSTA, has four distinct ideological motivations : anti-China Taiwanese nationalism, leftist anti-free trade sentiment, demands for democratic reforms, and generational justice. This latter point underscores that this student movement is an emotional response to the future uncertainties generated by neoliberalism (Wang, 2017).

Neoliberalism is a multifaceted construct (Bettache & Chiu, 2019). As a political economy, neoliberalism aims to preserve individual freedom by establishing an efficient market with minimal government intervention. It asserts that the natural forces of global supply and demand result in an optimal distribution of resources that maximizes the well-being of individuals (Beattie et al., 2019). To achieve this, neoliberalism advocates a set of public reform policies, often referred to “D-L-P formula” : (i) deregulation (of the economy) ; (ii) liberalization (of trade and industry) ; and (iii) privatization (of state-owned enterprises) (Steger & Roy, 2010). This ideology remained confidential until the 1970s, before becoming the new economic orthodoxy at the policy and academic level (Harvey, 2005), significantly influencing Taiwan’s transition from a state-led development strategy to neoliberal reforms during its democratic transition in 1987 (Hindley et al., 2011). The spread of neoliberal economic theory over the past four decades extends beyond politicians and policymakers to

the public, exerting a psychological influence. Thus, neoliberalism is not just an economic construct but also a psychological one, shaping the world views of individuals to embrace beliefs in individualism, meritocracy, a naturalistic approach to the market and preservation of individual liberty or freedom. Additionally, it posits that economic inequality can have positive effects by fostering personal initiative and nurturing an entrepreneurial spirit focused on productivity, innovation, and wealth creation (Bettache & Chiu, 2019).

From this perspective, the purpose of this chapter is to investigate whether middle-class membership predicts neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences, and whether such economic preferences are homogeneous within the Taiwanese middle class. To do so, we adopt a two-step empirical design applied to the seventh wave of the *World Values Survey* (WVS) (Haerpfer et al., 2022). In the first step, we delimit a middle-income group on the basis of a monetary interval. In the second step, we incorporate qualitative information about employment and education to identify the different segments within the middle-income group identified in the previous step. This second stage involves factor analysis and clustering methods, applied to the middle-income stratum defined in the previous step. Using this approach, we identify and characterise four active middle class groups : self-employed and farmers, manual and service employees, intermediate service workers and managerial professionals. Additionally, we identify a group of retirees and inactive individuals, as well as an ‘idiosyncratic group’ comprising household heads with socioeconomic characteristics that are original and distinct from those of the established groups mentioned earlier.

Using ordered logistic regression and controlling for determinants influencing neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences, all active middle-income segments tend to support greater private ownership in businesses compared to the poor. While retirees and the inactive exhibit similar preferences to the poor for greater government involvement in business ownership. Self-employed and farmers, who are the most supportive of limited government control in the economic domain among middle-income groups, are also the least likely to support increased government involvement in services and welfare, even more so than the rich. Among the middle-income segment, manual workers and service workers stand out as being more inclined to see competition as harmful. With regard to neoliberal policy,

this last group differs from other middle-income groups in not considering government taxation of the rich, and subsidies for the poor as essential features of democracy. To conclude, the managerial group is less concerned about income equality compared to other middle-income groups.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows. Section 4.2 outlines the literature review. The data, variables and empirical strategy are described in Section 4.3. Section 4.4 presents the main findings while Section 4.5 concludes.

4.2 Literature Review

4.2.1 Why Does the Middle Class Matter ?

Based on the historical experience of the consolidation of the middle class in advanced countries in the 20th century, high expectations are placed on the rise of the middle class in developing countries (Landes, 1998 ; Lipset, 1960).

Theoretical literature suggests that the middle class has a positive impact on economic outcomes. Banerjee & Duflo (2008) identify three channels through which a sizable middle class can foster economic growth. First, since entrepreneurs emerge from the middle class, they contribute to heightening productivity and employment in society (see Acemoglu & Zilibotti (1997) for a formalization of this argument). Second, middle-class households engage in occupations requiring skills and experience, leading to the cultivation of work ethics and patience. These “middle-class values” promote the accumulation of human capital and savings - both essential inputs to capitalist accumulation - and boost intra-generational and intergenerational income, enhancing social mobility (Doepke & Zilibotti, 2005 ; Doepke & Zilibotti, 2008). In addition, the expansion of the middle class stimulates investment in human capital, thereby catalysing national economic growth. However, the causal relationship can also be reversed, with the accumulation of human capital (e.g. education) enabling more individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to ascend into the middle class (Alesina & Rodrik, 1994 ; Galor & Zeira, 1993). Third, the middle class is expected to stimulate local market growth (Matsuyama, 2002 ; Murphy et al.,

1989; Castellani et al., 2014). In fact, the consumption role of the middle class has been emphasized as a driver of industrialisation, as it generates higher demand for high-quality goods that typically exhibit increasing returns to scale. This encourages firms to invest in production and marketing, thus increasing income levels across the economy. Furthermore, the fall in the price of a good due to consumption by the middle class frees up resources for the higher-income classes, enabling them to consume new products, which in turn stimulates the development of a new sector (Matsuyama, 2002).

The economic literature also establishes a relationship between the middle class and institutional outcomes. Indeed, societies with a large middle class are less polarised, which allows for democratic promotion or stability (Barro, 1999; Easterly, 2001, Lipset, 1959; Loayza et al., 2012). According to Easterly (2001), the formation of a ‘middle-class consensus’² plays a decisive role in fostering the establishment of robust institutions, effective policies, and democratic governance. Moreover, the middle class significantly influences policy formulation. In line with the median voter theorem (Black, 1948), the middle class tends to align with the median point of the policies and preferences sought by the population, particularly regarding economic policies. Consequently, political decision-makers tend to respond to their preferences in order to obtain broad support.

4.2.2 Social Class and Economic Policy Preferences

In empirical studies, the main hypothesis for explaining the relationship between social class and behavioural outcomes posits that class-related factors, such as risk perception and material interests, play a decisive role. In fact, the position of an individual within a social class determines his access to economic resources and opportunities, which in turn shapes his material interests and perspectives. This hypothesis is adopted in most of the work in this field of research to explain class cleavages in policy preferences (Chan & Goldthorpe, 2007; Evans, 2000; Goldthorpe, 2000; E. O. Wright, 1997).

The theoretical and empirical literature has extensively documented the relationship between class and social spending and other related government policies. For instance,

2. The “middle-class consensus” is a situation characterized by a higher share of middle-income groups in the income distribution and ethnic homogeneity in society. For more precisions see Easterly (2001).

individuals from lower socio-economic groups tend to be more in favour of redistributive policies like welfare programs and progressive taxation, as compared to those from higher socio-economic groups (Andersen & Curtis, 2015; Derks, 2004, Svallfors, 1997). Traditional class theories explain this relationship by economic self-interest or the “economic-utilitarian” hypothesis. This thesis holds that individuals are more inclined to support government intervention when they anticipate personal gains from it (Blekesuane, 2007; Durr, 1993; Jæger, 2006; Jæger, 2013; Meltzer & Richard, 1981). “Economic-utilitarian” hypothesis is widely supported by empirical studies, which consistently demonstrate a negative relationship between income (Finseraas, 2012; Jæger, 2013) or social class (Andersen & Curtis, 2015; Joakim & Svallfors, 2013; Svallfors, 2004) and the endorsement of government intervention and associated welfare state policies. For example, Andersen & Curtis (2015) present evidence from a study across 24 democracies, indicating that, on average, working-class individuals are more supportive of government intervention to provide for the population, than managerial and professional households. In addition, self-interest might intertwine with other psychological motivations that influence public policy preferences. For instance, personal responsibility is influenced both by self-interest and by an individual’s greater willingness to accept risk (Kaltenthaler & Ceccoli, 2008).

Moreover, from the value position theory developed by Inglehart (1990), individuals tend to prioritize non-material needs once their primary needs are satisfied. Thus, the middle and upper classes are more inclined to embrace to prefer post-materialistic values such as environmental protection, personal fulfilment or political freedoms. In the context of Taiwan, Tsai et al. (2014) showed that the new middle class (which includes the managerial and professional classes) exhibited stronger preferences for increased government spending in realms such as environmental preservation and education. On the contrary, their inclination towards higher government spending on old-age pensions was comparatively lower compared to other segments of the population.

Nonetheless, various studies show that some socioeconomic groups may support policies that do not align with their economic interest. For instance, several studies show that economically disadvantaged people are less likely to support redistribution policies than economically more advantaged individuals (Fong, 2001; Gilens, 1999). Research on system

justification provides an ideological framework for comprehending anti-redistribution attitudes among disadvantaged groups (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost et al., 2004; Jost, 2019). According to this theory, people are “*motivated (often implicitly rather than explicitly) to defend, justify, and bolster aspects of the societal status quo, including existing social, economic, and political systems, institutions, and arrangements*” (Jost, 2019 : p.3). In addition, various beliefs, such as meritocracy, individualism, belief in a just world and social dominance orientation are intertwined with the system justification and explain the opposition to redistribution policies and the support for cuts in social spending (Hunt & Bullock, 2016; Bullock & Reppond, 2018).

Furthermore, configurations of welfare regimes can moderate the significance of social classes in political divides. For Esping-Andersen (1990), the type of social welfare involves distinct costs and benefits for different groups, subsequently impacting the relationship between class and policy attitudes. He identifies three different welfare regimes in the Western world : liberal, conservative and social democratic. He predicts that the class factor’s significance in “social-democratic” welfare regimes is less important (in comparison with other factors such as gender or sector-based conflict), in contrast to liberal welfare regimes, as the market constitutes the primary source of resources. Although the Taiwanese system of social protection shares common characteristics with the conservative regime (Ku, 1997), many authors (Aspalter, 2001; C. Jones, 1990; Holliday, 2000; Y.-J. Lee & Ku, 2007) are reluctant to include the Taiwanese welfare system, and more generally those of East Asian countries into one of the regime typologies of Esping-Andersen (1990). They prefer to group the welfare states of East Asia under a fourth regime because of their institutional characteristics and social protection trajectories. For Holliday (2000), East Asian countries (Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan) can be grouped into productivist welfare regimes.³

To conclude, economic and social conditions can also have an influence on public policy. Empirical findings show that public opinion is more favourable towards an expansion of government intervention in highly unequal societies (Finseraas, 2009; Joakim & Svallfors,

3. The two central features of productivist welfare regimes are “a growth-oriented state and subordination of all aspects of state policy, including social policy, to economic/industrial objectives” (Holliday, 2000 : p.709).

2013). The underlying idea is that a larger portion of the population stands to gain from government intervention in contexts of high inequality, leading to increased public support for such measures. Furthermore, Andersen & Curtis (2015) shows that as inequality increases, support for state intervention becomes more uniform across social classes. However, other studies show that rising inequality has a limited impact on preferences for redistribution policies and may even reduce support for such measures (Haggard et al., 2013). Dodson (2017) found that rising unemployment led to decreased support for greater tax progressivity among high-level professionals and managers, while manual workers and low-level professionals/managers became more supportive of this policy.

4.3 Data and Empirical Strategy

In this section, we introduce the data used in this chapter in Subsection 4.3.1. Then, we outline the multidimensional approach used to identify the middle Taiwanese classes in Subsection 4.3.2. To investigate whether middle class membership is a predictor of neoliberal attitudes and whether such economic preferences are homogenous within the Taiwanese middle class, we present the dependent variables used to measure neoliberal attitudes in Subsection 4.3.3 and the control variables in Subsection 4.3.4. Our econometric framework is detailed in Subsection 4.3.5.

4.3.1 Data

The data employed in this chapter comes from the seventh wave of the *World Values Survey* (WVS), which was conducted worldwide between 2017 and 2022 (Haerpfer et al., 2022). The WVS is an international research programme structured into 14 thematic subsections aiming to gauge public opinion on social, political, economic, religious and cultural issues. The sampling method used for the survey is either a full probability sample of the national population (aged 18 and over) or a multi-stage territorial stratified selection (depending on country-specific conditions). The main method of data collection is a face-to-face interview at the respondent's place of residence (but it can also take the form of an internet panel or a postal and telephone interview). We have restricted our

analysis to Taiwan, where interviews were conducted between March and June 2019 (wave 7). Our sample encompasses 1,217 households.

4.3.2 Identification of the Taiwanese Middle Class

An empirical study dealing with the measurement of the middle class faces the conceptual problem of how best to define it. Producing a relevant definition and identification of the middle class, as well as highlighting its heterogeneity, are crucial steps in understanding the preferences of different groups with regard to their neoliberal beliefs. The middle class is a transdisciplinary concept whose content and analytical scope are controversial (Sick, 1993). This is illustrated by the fact that there are four approaches in the social science literature to defining and identifying it.

The economic approach is based on a monetary interval based on income, consumption or wages, which distinguishes middle-class households as neither poor nor rich, focusing on the factors and consequences of their economic consolidation (Banerjee & Duflo, 2008; Easterly, 2001).⁴ The sociological approach relies on identifying objective attributes of social status (e.g. education and occupation) and places emphasis on analysing social structures and domination (Cheeseman, 2015; Cramer & Kaufman, 2011; C. Wright Mills, 1951). This approach draws on the Marxian perspective,⁵ based on the relationship between individuals and the means of production (e.g. E. O. Wright, 1997) or on a Weberian perspective (e.g. Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1992), where a set of individuals belong to a class when they “have in common a specific casual component of their life chances” (Weber [1922] 1968 : p.927). The third approach is subjective and centres around class consciousness, where individuals perceive or believe themselves to belong to the middle stratum of society,

4. Three main approaches can be distinguished in the economic literature. The first is relative and defines the middle class as the population in the middle of the distribution of a monetary indicator (see e.g. Alesina & Perotti, 1996; Castellani & Parent, 2011; Song et al., 2016). The second is an absolute approach, frequently used for cross-country comparisons. It is based on absolute intervals expressed in purchasing power parity (see e.g. Banerjee & Duflo, 2008; Castellani & Parent, 2011; Milanovic & Yitzhaki, 2002). The third approach is a mixed one, combining an absolute lower limit and a relative upper limit. (see e.g. Kanbur & Spence, 2010).

5. Note that in the case of Taiwan, the Marxist perspective is not relevant. One of the reasons for this is the insufficient development of trade unions and their manipulation by the government and political parties (M.-k. Chang, 2006). In addition, decentralized economic development, characterized by the predominance of small and medium-sized enterprises, inhibited the emergence of class consciousness (Minns & Tierney, 2003; Y.-W. Chu, 1996).

thus forming the middle class. (Mercer, 2014; Walsh et al., 2004). This approach, rooted in cultural sociology, posits that individuals' attitudes and behaviours are significantly influenced by their psychological attachment to a particular social class. The last approach is managerial and observing consumption habits, trends and the market behaviour of the middle class (Guarin & Knorringa, 2014).

Each of these approaches only provides a partial insight into the reality of the middle class. For instance, when using monetary intervals from the economic literature, we obtain heterogeneous groups within the same income bracket that exhibit distinct social profiles (Salama, 2014). Furthermore, the monetary approach can be problematic as it is not always easy to determine what level of income is associated with a specific social class category (Sosnaud et al., 2013). Sociological and managerial approaches tend to neglect the overall impact of social structures and identities (Melber, 2016).

Given such limitations, we draw on the multidimensional and sequential approach proposed by Bonnefond et al. (2015) in a study applied to urban China,⁶ adapting it to our data constraints. This approach combines economic (based on income) and sociological (mobilizing information on education and occupation) definitions of the middle class and can be decomposed into two steps.

In the first step, we use a relative economic approach to identify the perimeter of the Taiwanese middle-income group. Note that our goal is not to identify precisely the percentage of people in the middle-income set; especially as authors who use a relative economic approach do not have a common criterion (see e.g. Easterly, 2001 and Alesina & Perotti, 1996), but to identify a group of individuals situated in the middle of the income distribution. For that, we mobilised a question in which households are asked to rank themselves on a numerical income scale (including all the usual income components) from 1 (the bottom rung) to 10 (the top rung). The distribution of households based on this variable is displayed in Table 4.1. We delineate the middle-income group as households falling

6. This approach has been taken up more recently by Combarnous et al. (2019) in a study of Turkey, by Clément et al. (2020) to analyse the composition of the Brazilian middle class, but also in Clément et al. (2022) in cross-national surveys conducted in four developing countries.

exclusively into the fourth and seventh income groups. The proportion of the population belonging to the middle-income group is approximately 67% (see Table 4.1).

TABLE 4.1 – Delineation of the middle-income group

	Survey question* (%)										Author’s classification (%)		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Poor	Middle income group	Upper class
	6.90	5.59	16.93	14.38	29.17	15.86	7.97	2.22	0.49	0.49	29.42	67.38	3.20

Note : *The question is the following : “On this card is an income scale on which 1 indicates the lowest income group and 10 the highest income group in your country. We would like to know in what group your household is. Please, specify the appropriate number, counting all wages, salaries, pensions, and other incomes that come in”.

Source : Author’s own calculations based on the World Values Survey data (Haerper et al., 2022).

In the second step, we highlight the various segments composing the middle-income group identified in the previous stage, by implementing a mixed classification procedure using information on occupation and education. Before implementing the clustering methods, we identify ex-ante two groups. The first group, labelled as the ‘idiosyncratic’ group, is created to include households whose position within the clusters is not clearly defined. These households have socio-economic characteristics that are both different from the established “regularities” for other middle-income households and mostly different from one another. This preliminary work avoids forcing each individual into one of the other identified clusters. To identify these households, we employ the method developed by Rougier & Combarous (2017), which involves conducting a Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) on the classification variables (education, occupation, employment status, and institutional sector). We then select those individuals whose position in the initial multidimensional scatter of points is too close to the barycentre.⁷

The second group consists of middle-income households that are retired, inactive (students, housewives and others) or unemployed.⁸ This approach is empirically justified, as all

7. More precisely, if the standardized Euclidean distance between these individuals in the middle-income group and the barycentre is below half the median distance with a confidence level of 95% (based on 100 bootstrap replications with replacement of the initial sample). This approach is even more justified, given that one of the clustering algorithms we are using, i.e. K-means clustering, is sensitive to outliers.

8. The share of this group in the total middle-income class is 33%, with retired, inactive (students, housewives, others), and unemployed representing 46%, 42%, and 12% of the members of this group, respectively.

studies that have adopted [Bonnetfond et al., 2015](#)'s approach identify an inactive group ex-post (e.g. [Clément et al., 2020](#); [Clément et al., 2022](#); [Combarnous et al., 2019](#)).⁹

Once these two groups defined ex-ante, we explore the heterogeneity of this middle-income stratum (excluding the 'idiosyncratic' and 'retired and inactive' groups) by implementing a mixed classification procedure using four socio-economic classification categorical variables, namely : education (highest level of education completed), occupation (professional and technical, higher administrative, clerical worker, sale, service worker, skilled worker, semi-skilled worker, unskilled worker, farmers, no job), employment status (full-time, part-time, self-employed, no job) and institutional sector (government or public institution, private sector, private non-profit-organization, no job).

The procedure involves conducting an MCA on the four classification variables. The factorial coordinates on the first two principal axes obtained from the MCA are used as input for a hierarchical clustering method using Ward's aggregation criterion. This process provides an initial classification of the data. Then, the K-means method is used to refine the partition based on the cluster centres (i.e. means) obtained from the initial hierarchical clustering step. The number of clusters chosen within the middle-income class is determined by analysing the dendrogram and aiming to maximize the ratio of inter-group variance to intra-group variance (measured by the Calinski-Harabasz and Dunn indices) while minimizing the similarity index between groups (measured by the Davies-Bouldin index). Based on these criteria, in addition to the two groups we defined ex-ante, we retain four groups within the middle-income segment, namely : self-employees and farmers, manual and service employees, intermediate service workers and managerial middle class. The characterisation of these groups within the middle-income stratum is conducted in [Subsection 4.4.1](#). This is based on the classification variables and illustrative variables that describe the characteristics of the head of household, household characteristics, subjective social status and political preferences.

9. It is also important for us to highlight this cluster of inactive individuals for theoretical reasons. Existing studies based on a sociological approach analysing the Taiwanese middle class (e.g. [Hsiao & So, 1999](#); [Hsiao & Wan, 2014](#); [Tsai et al., 2014](#)) primarily focus on the working population. In other words, sociological studies do not consider the possibility of an inactive Taiwanese middle class.

4.3.3 Dependent Variables

To examine the significance of middle-class membership as a predictor of neoliberal attitudes within the Taiwanese context, we analyse two distinct subsets of variables. The first subset measures internalized neoliberal beliefs. The second subset evaluated preferences for anti-neoliberal policies and their expected outcomes, and whether these measures should be part of democracy. Responses for all dependent variables were scored on a 10-point scale ranging from 1 to 10. [Table 4.2](#) reports the descriptive statistics of the dependent variables.

To assess neoliberal beliefs, we utilize the Neoliberal Beliefs Inventory (NBI) developed by [Bay-Cheng et al. \(2015\)](#). The NBI is a psychometric tool designed to measure individuals' neoliberal beliefs within the U.S. context. Through factor analyses, the authors identified four central themes that characterize neoliberal beliefs : social inequality (i.e. belief in their existence and their implications) ; natural competition (i.e. the view that competition is fair, natural, and beneficial) ; government interference (i.e. the view that state intervention infringes upon personal freedom and meritocratic principles) and personal wherewithal (i.e. the belief that success is determined by individual attributes such as strengths and skill). The first dimension, social inequality, is not assessed in this chapter, mainly because there were no items specific to this dimension in the survey. In addition, [Bay-Cheng et al. \(2015\)](#) measured this dimension with items that centred on affirmative action policies and discrimination,¹⁰ that seem to be specific to the American case and do not seem to be relevant in the Taiwanese context. For the other dimensions, we use a single item to measure them, except for government interference. For this latter dimension, we use two separate items : the first deals with government interference in the private domain with regard to the provision of social services (*personal responsibility*), while the second pertains to government interference in the economic domain by assessing whether public companies should be favoured or whether, on the contrary, private ownership of companies should be increased (*private ownership*). Higher scores on each item mean higher levels of neoliberal belief.

10. This dimension is evaluated in the [Bay-Cheng et al., 2015](#) study with items such as : *Affirmative action is a problem because it treats people unequally; Discrimination does not exist today to such a degree that affirmative action policies are necessary.*

The second subset tests whether non-neoliberal policies should be a component of democracy. To do this, we use the following items : the relationship between democracy and the policies of taxing the rich and subsidising the poor ; the relationship between democracy and granting state aid to the unemployed ; and the relationship between democracy and income equality.

TABLE 4.2 – Descriptive statistics of dependant variables

Dimension	Sub-dimension	Question	Measure	Mean (sd)
Neoliberal beliefs	Natural competition	(A) Competition is harmful (B) Competition is good	10 point scale from 1 (close to A) to 10 (close to B)	7.64 (1.93)
	Private ownership (Government interference)	(A) Government ownership of business should be increased (B) Private ownership of business should be increased	10 point scale from 1 (close to A) to 10 (close to B)	5.79 (2.26)
	Personal responsibility (Government interference)	(A) The government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for (B) People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves	10 point scale from 1 (close to A) to 10 (close to B)	5.50 (2.43)
	Personal wherewithal	(A) Hard work doesn't generally bring success - it's more a matter of luck and connections (B) In the long run, hard work usually brings a better life	10 point scale from 1 (close to A) to 10 (close to B)	6.72 (2.45)
Anti-neoliberal policies and democracy	Governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor	(A) Not an essential characteristic of democracy (B) An essential characteristic of democracy	10 point scale from 1 (close to A) to 10 (close to B)	6.66 (2.35)
	People receive state aid for unemployment	(A) Not an essential characteristic of democracy (B) An essential characteristic of democracy	10 point scale from 1 (close to A) to 10 (close to B)	7.13 (2.16)
	The state makes people's incomes equal	(A) Not an essential characteristic of democracy (B) An essential characteristic of democracy	10 point scale from 1 (close to A) to 10 (close to B)	5.88 (2.78)

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

4.3.4 Control Variables

The aim of this chapter is to assess, through an econometric model, the relationship between social stratification and neoliberal beliefs and preferences for anti-neoliberal policies. Within the scope of our analysis, we consider control variables that are potential determinants of our dependent variables. Below, we provide descriptions of the distinct subsets of control variables, along with the corresponding descriptive statistics, in [Table 4.2](#).

Socio-demographic variables. We incorporated five variables to assess the socio-demographic characteristics of Taiwanese citizens. We first include gender (=1 if male) as empirical literature shows that women generally have a stronger preference for redistribution and equality than men ([Alesina & La Ferrara, 2005](#); [Alesina & Giuliano, 2011](#); [Corneo & Grüner, 2002](#)). Furthermore, in order to account for time-related factors that influence the levels of support for various policies,¹¹ we include age and the presence of children (=1 if the respondent has at least one child). Additionally, we include age squared into the analysis, providing an opportunity to explore potential curvilinear relationships between age and our dependent variables. We controlled the place of residence using a dummy indicating residence in a special municipality.¹²

Economic satisfaction. To gauge economic satisfaction, we employ a subjective measure wherein individuals are asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their household's financial situation on a 10-point scale, ranging from 1 (totally dissatisfied) to 10 (totally satisfied).

11. For example, theoretical (e.g. [Huber & Runkel, 2008](#)) and empirical (e.g. [Hayo & Neumeier, 2017](#); [Hayo & Neumeier, 2019](#); [Stix, 2013](#)) literature argues that time perspectives influence support for economic policies, particularly in relation to public debt, where forward-looking individuals are more likely to support fiscal consolidation. Furthermore, the theoretical literature on policy reform (see, e.g. [Persson & Tabellini, 2000](#); [Hayo & Neumeier, 2019](#)) argues that older and/or childless individuals are more likely to support short-term-oriented policies.

12. The special municipalities are a unit of administrative division that groups together the most densely populated cities that are major economic and cultural centres. They have a special administrative status compared with other administrative divisions, such as counties and ordinary cities. Currently, six cities have this status : Taipei, Taoyuan, New Taipei City, Taichung, Tainan and Kaohsiung. We prefer this variable to the more traditional urban-rural one. It is more appropriate to the context of our study, where 87% of the individuals in our sample live in urban areas.

TABLE 4.3 – Descriptive statistics of control variables

Variable	Coding	Mean	Sd	Min	Max
Gender	Dummy variable taking the value 1 if the respondent is male ; [0 otherwise]	0.49	0.50	0	1
Age	Age of respondent measured in years	48.32	16.80	18	85
Age squared	Age of respondent measured in years squared (Age^2)	2619.6	1660.7	324	7225
Children	Dummy variable taking the value 1 if the respondent has children ; [0 otherwise]	0.68	0.47	0	1
Special municipality	Dummy variable takes the value 1 if the respondent lives in a special municipality (Kaohsiung, New Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, Taipei, Taoyuan) ; [0 otherwise].	0.62	0.48	0	1
Economic satisfaction	Subjective evaluation of the individual's satisfaction with their household's financial situation on a scale of 1 (dissatisfied) to 10 (satisfied)	6.42	2.19	1	10
Political distrust	Political distrust is measured by aggregating the scores from a four-point Likert scale (Numeric scale from 3 [A great deal] to 0 [None at all]) across three political institutions : the government, political parties, and parliament	5.45	1.95	0	9
Political interest	Political interest is measured by the following question : <i>How interested would you say you are in politics ?</i> Numeric scale from 4 [Very satisfied] to 1 [Not at all interested]	2.11	0.85	1	4
Political partisanship	We distinguish between pan-Blue [=reference category] and pan-Green coalition parties, Third Force parties and independents. The following political parties are part of the pan-Blue coalition : Kuomintang (29%), Non-Partisan Solidarity Union (11%), People First Party (0.9%), New Party (0.2%), Minkuotang (0.1%), The pan-Blue coalition (5%). The following political parties are part of the pan-Green coalition : Democratic Progressive Party (20%) and the pan-Green coalition (1%). The following political parties are part of the third-force parties : New Power Party (4%), Green Party Taiwan (0.7%), Social Democratic Party (0.4%). We group together those who abstain (do not vote or blank ballot) (26%) and those who vote for another party (3%)	2.02	1.20	1	4
Locus of control	We use the following question : <i>Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them.</i> Numeric scale from 1 [None at all] to 10 [A great deal]	7.34	1.99	3	12
SDO	We use the following question to measure SDO : <i>How would you place your views on this scale ? : Numeric scale from 1 [Incomes more equal] to 10 [Larger income differences]</i>	7.22	2.23	1	10
RWA	For measuring the dimension of authoritarian aggression, we use the following question : <i>Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections.</i> Numeric scale from 4 [Very good] to 1 [Very bad] For assessing the dimension of authoritarian submission, we use the following question : <i>submission.</i> Numeric scale from 3 [Good thing] to 1 [submission]. To measure the dimension of conventionalism, we use the following four questions : <i>Abortion, Divorce, Homosexuality, Sex before marriage.</i> Numeric scale from 1 [Never justifiable] to 10 [Always justifiable]	0.55	0.17	0	1
Gender bias	To measure gender bias, we use the following five questions : <i>University is more important for a boy than for a girl ; Men make better political leaders than women do ; Men make better business executives than women do.</i> Numeric scale from 1 [Strongly disagree] to 4 [Agree strongly]. <i>Men should have more right to a job than women ; Problem if women have more income than husband</i> Numeric scale from 1 [Disagree strongly] to 5 [Strongly agree]	0.39	0.19	0	1
Left-right scale	The respondent must rank on an economic scale from 1 (left) to 10 (right)	3.96	1.85	1	10
General level of knowledge	We measure the general level of knowledge by combining the score on the following two questions : (i) <i>Countries with permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council ;</i> (ii) <i>The main issue that Amnesty International deals with.</i> Dummy variable takes the value 1 if the respondent gives a wrong answer ; [0 otherwise].	0.94	0.23	0	2

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

Political distrust. Individuals who do not trust politicians can present an inclination towards favouring the regulatory role of the market over the economy, rather than the state. For example, [Card & Hepburn \(2022\)](#), show that social trust influences neoliberal belief. Political distrust is assessed by aggregating evaluations of the degree of trust in three political institutions, namely the government, the parliament and political parties. Each of these institutions was evaluated on a four-point Likert scale. A higher overall score (ranging from 3 to 12) indicates greater distrust in political institutions.

Political Interest. We account for the respondents' level of political interest using a four-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate a greater level of political interest.

Political Partisanship. Political partisanship was assessed through a question where the respondents were asked for what party they would vote if there were a national election tomorrow. We distinguish between the parties of the pan-Blue coalition [=reference category], those of the pan-Green coalition, the parties of the Third Force and the independents (individuals with no specific political affiliation and those who don't vote).

Locus of control. The concept of locus of control reflects the belief in the individual's ability to control the events in his life or their life outcomes. The internal locus of control is when individuals attribute the results of their own actions to their work, whereas the external locus of control justifies them by external factors (such as luck or fate, social environment or economic opportunities) ([Rotter, 1966](#)). The locus of control was assessed by the following attitudinal item "*how much freedom of choice and control you feel you have over the way your life turns out*", with responses scored on an index from 1 (None at all) to 10 (A great deal). Higher scores reflect a strong internal (weak external) locus of control. Research conducted by [Beattie et al. \(2019\)](#) in Hong Kong and India, noted that, in collectivist and less individualistic cultures (in contrast to [Bay-Cheng et al. \(2015\)](#)'s findings in the US), an internal locus of control is not associated with neoliberal beliefs. The reason behind this is that, in these non-Western cultures, life outcomes depend significantly on the social position of each individual within the community, as highlighted by [Hofstede \(1980\)](#).

Social dominance orientation. Social dominance orientation (SDO) reflects the view that social hierarchies are natural and justified, aligning with the neoliberal perspective of competition in the free marketplace, where success and failure are seen as personal responsibilities (e.g. [Azevedo et al., 2019](#)).¹³ Empirical literature has shown a positive relationship between the SDO and neoliberal beliefs ([Bay-Cheng et al., 2015](#); [Beattie et al., 2019](#)). We measure this perspective using a 10-point scale, where respondents indicate their preference for income equality or larger income differences, with 1 representing “Incomes more equal” and 10 representing “Larger income differences”.

Right-wing authoritarianism. Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) is a set of social attitudes and values that promote or oppose the subordination of individual freedom and autonomy to the collective and its authority, whose broad motivational goal is attaining collective security ([Duckitt et al., 2010](#); [Jugert & Duckitt, 2009](#); [Stellmacher & Petzel, 2005](#)). RWA is a multidimensional construct comprising three distinct dimensions that represent different, but related, strategies for achieving collective security. These components are identified by Altemeyer (1981; 1996) (originally listed by [Adorno et al., 1950](#)) are : *authoritarian aggression*, *authoritarian submission* and *conventionalism*.¹⁴ The empirical literature reveals a positive association between neoliberal attitudes and RWA ([Azevedo et al., 2019](#); [Bay-Cheng et al., 2015](#)). Indeed, neoliberalism and RWA appear to be aligned regarding policies aimed at promoting the interests of marginalized groups, although their underlying motivations differ. For RWA, the objective is to defend existing political and social systems against various threats ([Duckitt & Bizumic, 2013](#)), while from a neoliberal perspective, such policies are viewed as unnecessary or as obstacles to meritocracy ([Bay-Cheng et al., 2015](#)).

13. Nonetheless, the basis of SDO, where one’s own group is inherently perceived as superior to others and deserving of a dominant status, contradicts the core principles of the neoliberal ideology. Neoliberalism promotes hierarchies that emerge from free and fair competition among individuals. ([Bay-Cheng et al., 2015](#)).

14. *Authoritarian aggression* refers to social attitudes that support the implementation of strict, tough, harsh, punitive, and coercive forms of social control. The dimension of *authoritarian submission* is the expression of attitudes that favour unquestioning, respectful, obedient, and submissive support for existing societal or group authorities and institutions. The component of *conventionalism* is described as the expression of attitudes that support traditional, conservative social norms, values, and morality.

We employ a single item to evaluate authoritarian aggression, another item to gauge authoritarian submission, and four questions to appraise conservatism (see [Table 4.3](#)). We obtained a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.81 between these six items. By conducting a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), we established an overall score for RWA, modelled as a second-order factor with three distinct sub-dimensions (authoritarian aggression, authoritarian submission and conventionalism. Authoritarian aggression). The final scores ranged from 0 to 1, with higher scores on this scale indicating a stronger adherence to RWA ideology.

Gender bias. The empirical literature shows that belief in neoliberal values is positively correlated with gender stereotypes ([Azevedo et al., 2019](#)) or negatively correlated with feminist beliefs ([Bay-Cheng et al., 2015](#)). System justification theory supports this relationship, arguing that people with stronger neoliberal beliefs are more likely to use stereotypes and other social judgements to explain and justify social and economic disparities between different groups in society ([Azevedo et al., 2019](#)); [Jost et al., 2004](#); [Jost, 2019](#)). To put it differently, the social and psychological processes that rationalize economic inequality within capitalism also extend to justifying disparities based on nationality, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation ([Azevedo et al., 2019](#)).

To assess gender bias we introduce a scale that measures *gender attitude* i.e. the belief that men are generally stronger leaders and better professionals than women ([Knechel & Mintchik, 2022](#)). We select a set of five questions (see [Table 4.3](#)), demonstrating a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.71. From these five questions, we create a measure of biased gender attitude, modelled as a single factor by conducting a CFA. The final **gender bias** score ranges between 0 and 1, with a higher score on this measure indicating a stronger bias against females.

We also control for the respondent's economic ideology, using a **left-right** self-placement scale, a common practice in this field of study (e.g. [Azevedo et al., 2019](#)). Lastly, we account for the individual's **general level of knowledge**, with higher values indicating a lower level of general knowledge. Note that control variables containing missing values

have been handled.¹⁵

4.3.5 Econometric Model

To examine whether middle-class membership is a predictor of neoliberal beliefs and policy and whether such economic preferences are homogenous within the Taiwanese middle class, we employ an ordered logistic regression model. This choice is motivated by the ordinal nature of our outcome variables (a 10-point scale ranging from 1 to 10). Thus, we estimate the following equation :

$$\text{ologit}(P(Y_i \leq K)) = \beta_0^k + \beta_1 \text{ClassMembership}_i + \beta_k X_i + \epsilon_i \quad (4.1)$$

Where $P(Y_i \leq K)$ represents the cumulative probability that the dependant variable Y for individual i takes a value less than or equal to a specific category $k = 1, \dots, K - 1$. The dependent variable Y is one of the items measuring neoliberal beliefs namely : natural competition, government interference (private ownership or personal responsibility), personal wherewithal, or preferences for anti-neoliberal policies on taxation, aid for unemployment, or income equality.

The variable ClassMembership_i for individual i encompasses the four groups of middle-income individuals identified by the mixed classification procedure, as well as the two groups of middle-income individuals, established ex-ante (the ‘idiosyncratic’ group and the ‘retired and inactive’ group). In addition, it includes ‘poor’ and ‘rich’ households (according to the monetary criterion). In short, this nominal variable distinguishes eight different groups.

X_i the vector of control variables for individual i . ϵ_i is the error term. The econometric results are presented in the [subsection 4.4.2](#).

15. For missing values of control variables, we used expectation maximization for quantitative variables, a widely recommended practice ([Dockendorff et al., 2012](#)) and the k-nearest neighbours algorithm for qualitative variables.

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Characterisation of the Taiwanese Middle Class

Exploring Heterogeneity among Income Strata

We begin by describing the similarities and distinctive features of the three groups initially identified on the basis of the income criterion ('poor', middle-income group and 'rich'), using the different sociological classification variables (education, occupation, employment status and institutional sector). The comparative distribution of these variables for the three groups is available in [Table 4.4](#). Overall, we remark that the middle-income stratum predominantly holds an intermediate position between the rich and the poor.

We observe that household heads in the middle and high-income categories generally have higher levels of education, and they exhibit similar patterns of over-representation and under-representation across different education levels compared to the poorest heads of households in our sample. We do notice, however, that the proportion of individuals with secondary or lower levels of education is higher for the middle-income group compared to the rich, while the proportion of individuals with tertiary education is higher among the rich.

With regard to occupation, Taiwan's middle-income stratum exhibits distinct patterns of job distribution compared to the poor, with both lower and higher representation in the types of positions they occupy. While the middle-income class exhibits similar job patterns to the rich compared to the rest of the sample, there are significant differences in the proportions of positions held between the two groups. In other words, the distribution of job types within the three groups is linked to income levels, as evidenced by the increasing proportion of workers in professional and technical positions, as well as higher administrative roles. It is worth noting that the Taiwanese middle-income class comprises a significantly higher proportion of professionals and technical workers (13%) and individuals in higher administrative, clerical (8%), and sales (4%) positions. It is underrepresented in unskilled worker occupations (22%), farmers (2%), and individuals who are inactive

or unemployed (33%). As a result, the Taiwanese middle class exhibits considerable employment heterogeneity, which provides further justification for the multidimensional classification we are about to undertake.

TABLE 4.4 – Characteristics of household heads belonging to poor, middle-class and rich strata

	Whole population (n=1217)	Poor (29.42%)	Middle-income group (67.38%)	Rich (3.20%)
Education				
Primary education	12.33%	26.26%***	6.83%***	0.00%**
Secondary education	36.15%	44.69%***	33.29%**	17.95%**
Technical /vocational degree	13.06%	10.34%*	14.51%**	7.69%
Bachelor degree	29.09%	16.76%**	33.66%***	46.15%**
Advanced Education	9.37%	1.96%***	11.71%***	28.21%***
Occupation				
Professional and technical	15.94%	6.70%***	18.90%***	38.46%***
Higher administrative	2.38%	0.56%**	2.68%***	12.82%***
Clerical worker	6.90%	3.91%**	8.41%**	2.56%
Sale	3.29%	0.28%***	4.51%***	5.12%***
Service Worker	14.87%	15.64%	14.88%	7.69%
Skilled worker	6.08%	5.59%	6.59%	0.00%
Semi-skilled worker	5.83%	6.98%	5.36%	5.13%
Unskilled worker	4.52%	6.98%**	3.66%*	0.00%
Farmers	3.37%	6.70%***	2.07%***	0.00%
No job (retired, inactive, unemployed)	36.81%	46.65%***	32.93%***	28.20%
Employment status				
Full-time	43.88%	33.52%***	47.56%***	61.53%**
Part-time	5.92%	6.42%	5.98%	0.00%
Self-employed	13.39%	13.41%	13.54%	10.26%
No job (retired, inactive, unemployed)	36.81%	46.65%***	32.93%***	28.20%
Institutional sector				
Government or public institution	6.98%	3.07%***	8.78%***	5.12%
Private sector	53.66%	50.00%	55.00%	58.97%
Private non profit-organization	2.55%	0.28%***	3.29%**	7.69%*
No job (retired, inactive, unemployed)	36.81%	46.65%***	32.93%***	28.20%

Note : : Pearson's Chi-squared test. Shaded (bold) cells denote the values that are statistically significantly higher (lower) in the cluster than in the rest of the middle class (i.e. excluding the cluster concerned). Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

We find that middle-income households, like the richest, hold full-time jobs. Moreover, akin to the rich and unlike the poor, middle-income heads exhibit a higher propensity to occupy positions in private non-profit organizations. Additionally, we also note an over-representation among the members of this group occupying positions in the public sector compared to the rest of the sample.

Exploring the Heterogeneity Within Taiwan's Middle-Income Stratum

We now explore the heterogeneity within the middle-income stratum. For that, as detailed in [subsection 4.3.2](#), we conducted a mixed classification by implementing a hierarchical K-means clustering of middle-income household heads based on four socio-economic variables (level of education, primary occupation, employment status and institutional sector), excluding two groups that we identified ex-ante : retired and inactive group and idiosyncratic group. The appropriate partition, i.e. the number of groups retained within the middle-income class, results from the analysis of the dendrogram and indices assessing the quality of the partition. On the basis of these criteria, we propose a classification of the middle-income segment into four homogeneous and clearly distinct groups, in addition to the two groups we have defined ex-ante. The distributions or means of the classification variables for each of the groups within the middle-income stratum are reported in [Table 4.5](#). Furthermore, to enhance the analysis of these groups, we provide additional results in [Table 4.6](#), which presents the distributions of further variables referred to as illustrative variables. These illustrative variables relate to household head characteristics (age, gender, marital status and ethnicity), household characteristics (town size, municipal type, household size), social status (subjective class membership, family savings during the past year) and political preferences. For the sake of clarity, we will present the middle-income groups based on their income levels, starting from the lowest and moving towards the highest. We will conclude this analysis by discussing the two groups that were defined ex-ante.

TABLE 4.5 – Characteristics of clusters based on active variables (classification variables), derived from the mixed classification

	Middle-income group (n=820)	Self-Employee and farmers (9.76%)	Manual and service employees (15.85%)	Intermediate service workers (23.29%)	Managerial (16.34%)	Retired & inactive (32.93%)	Idiosyncratic (1.83%)
Income							
4	21.34%	30.00%*	24.62%	20.42%	15.67%*	21.85%	0.00%*
5	43.29%	51.25%	50.77%*	43.45%	30.07%**	41.11%	46.67%
6	23.54%	11.25%**	17.69%*	23.04%	28.36%	26.67%	46.67%*
7	11.83%	7.5%	6.92%*	13.09%	20.90%**	10.37%	6.67%
Education							
Primary education	6.83%	17.50%***	0.77%***	1.05%***	0.00%***	14.44%***	0.00%
Secondary education	33.29%	68.75%***	66.92%***	12.04%***	3.73%***	33.33%	86.67%***
Technical /vocational degree	14.51%	13.75%	10.77%	21.47%**	2.99%***	18.15%**	0.00%
Bachelor degree	33.66%	0.00%***	17.69%***	56.02%**	51.49%**	27.78%***	13.33%
Advanced Education	11.71%	0.00%***	3.85%**	9.42%	41.79%**	6.30%***	0.00%
Occupation							
Professional and technical	18.90%	0.00%***	3.85%***	15.71%***	80.60%**	0.00%	80.00%***
Higher administrative	2.68%	3.75%	3.85%	4.71%	2.24%	0.00%	13.33%
Clerical worker	8.41%	0.00%***	1.54%***	26.18%**	12.68%	0.00%	0.00%
Sale	4.51%	3.75%	7.69%	12.56%**	0.00%***	0.00%	0.00%
Service worker	14.88%	48.75%***	36.92%***	17.28%*	0.75%***	0.00%	6.67%
Skilled worker	6.59%	7.50%	16.15%**	12.04%	2.99%**	0.00%	0.00%
Semi-skilled worker	5.37%	12.5%	19.23%***	4.71%**	0.00%***	0.00%	0.00%
Unskilled worker	3.66%	3.75%	10.00%**	6.81%	0.75%**	0.00%	0.00%
Farmers	2.07%	20.00%***	0.77%*	0.00%**	0.00%**	0.00%	0.00%
No job (retired, inactive, unemployed)	32.93%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Employment status							
Full-time	43.56%	7.50%**	65.38%	84.29%**	91.79%**	0.00%	100.00%**
Part-time	5.98%	5.00%	12.31%	9.95%	7.46%	0.00%	0.00%
Self-employed	13.54%	87.50%***	22.31%	5.79%***	0.74%***	0.00%	0.00%**
No job (retired, inactive, unemployed)	32.93%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Institutional sector							
Government or public institution	8.78%	0.00%***	0.00%***	7.33%**	42.54%***	0.00%	6.67%
Private sector	55.00%	100.00%***	100.00%***	90.05%***	41.04%***	0.00%	93.33%
Private non profit-organization	3.29%	0.00%**	0.00%***	2.62%*	16.42%***	0.00%	0.00%
No job (retired, inactive, unemployed)	32.93%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%

Reading notes : Pearson's Chi-squared test. Shaded (bold) cells denote the values that are statistically significantly higher (lower) in the cluster than in the rest of the middle class (i.e. excluding the cluster concerned). Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%** , and 10%*. The significance of the values is tested in the active groups by comparison with the rest of the middle class in these same groups (n=550), in order to avoid bias with the 'retired and inactive' group.
Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerper et al., 2022).

TABLE 4.6 – Characteristics of clusters based on the illustrative variables, derived from the mixed classification

	Middle-income group (n=820)	Self-Employee and farmers (9.76%)	Manual and service employees (15.85%)	Intermediate service workers (23.29%)	Managerial (16.34%)	Retired & inactive (32.93%)	Idiosyncratic (1.83%)
Head's characteristics							
Age ^a	46.20	53.43***	43.58*	37.41***	39.50***	55.13	41.27
Male	47.80%	57.50%*	60.77%**	47.12%	47.01%	38.89***	60.00
Married ^a	56.10%	80.00%***	60.00%	42.40%***	53.71%	57.78%	60.00%
Urban	88.90%	83.75	90.00%	88.48%	91.79%	88.52%	93.33%
<i>Ethnic</i>							
Hakka	10.85%	15.00%	10.77%	11.52%	13.43%	8.15%*	6.67%
Minnanese	80.12%	78.75%	76.92%	80.10%	80.59%	81.11%	93.33%
Mailander	6.83%	2.50%	7.69%	6.81%	5.97%	8.52%	0.00%
Aboriginal	1.46%	2.50%	2.31%	1.05%	0.00%	1.85%	0.00%
Others	0.73	1.25	0.00%	2.31*0%***	0.00%	0.37%	0.00%
Household Characteristics							
<i>Town size</i>							
10,000-20,000	2.80%	3.75%	2.31%	2.62%	2.24%	2.96%	6.67%
20,000-50,000	16.59%	15.00%	24.62%**	16.85%	11.19%*	14.81%	6.67%
50,000-100,000	27.80%	40.00%**	26.15%	26.70%	21.64%*	27.41%	53.33%**
100,000-500,000	51.10%	40.00%**	46.15%	49.21%	64.18%***	52.59%	33.33%
500,000 and more	1.70%	1.25%	0.77%	2.62%	0.75%	2.22%	0.00%
<i>Municipal Type</i>							
Special municipality	63.29%	56.25%	67.69%	65.44%	66.41%	61.48%	40.00%
County	32.56%	36.25%	25.38%*	32.98%	32.60%	35.19%	40.00%
City	4.15%	7.50%	6.92%*	1.57%**	2.99%	3.33%	20.00%**
Household size	3.41	3.23*	3.99**	3.68	3.31**	3.05	3.40
Subjective social status							
<i>Social class</i>							
Upper class	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Upper middle class	30.73%	26.25%	20.77%**	26.17%	44.03%***	33.33%	33.33%
Lower middle class	37.20%	31.25%	32.31%	35.08%	40.30%	41.85%*	26.67%
Working class	29.76%	37.50%	44.62%***	37.70%**	14.93%***	21.48%***	40.00%
Lower class	2.32%	5.00%	2.31%	1.05%	0.75%	3.33%	0.00%

Table 4.6 - Characteristics of clusters based on the illustrative variables, derived from the mixed classification

	Middle-income group (n=820)	Self-Employee and farmers (9.76%)	Manual and service employees (15.85%)	Intermediate service workers (23.29%)	Managerial (16.34%)	Retired & inactive (32.93%)	Idiosyncratic (1.83%)
Subjective social status							
<i>Family saving during the past year</i>							
Save money	35.85%	25.00%**	24.62%**	45.60%**	54.48%***	27.78%***	46.67%
Just get by	44.02%	55.00%**	49.23%	42.93%	28.36%***	47.04%	40.00%
Spent some savings and borrowed money	17.20%	15.00%	20.00%	10.47%**	14.18%	22.96%**	13.33%
Spent savings and borrowed money	2.93%	5.00%	6.15%**	1.05%*	2.99%	2.22%	0.00%
Political preferences							
Pan-Blue coalition	49.27%	43.75%	50.00%	45.55%	40.26%	51.11%	86.67%***
Pan-Green coalition	20.86%	35.00%***	16.92%	17.28%	19.40%	22.59%	6.67%
Third Force	8.66%	1.25%**	9.23%	12.56%***	11.94%	6.67%	0.00%
Independents	21.22%	20.00%	23.85%	24.61%	19.40%	19.63%	6.67%

Reading notes : Shaded (bold) cells denote the values that are statistically significantly higher (lower) in the cluster than in the rest of the middle class (i.e. excluding the cluster concerned). Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*. ^aFor these variables, the significance of the values is tested in the active groups by comparison with the rest of the middle class in these same groups (n=550), in order to avoid bias due to the strong proportion of elderly in the ‘retired and inactive’ group.

Source : Author’s own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

Self-Employees and farmers middle class - 9.76% of the middle-income group. This group is the most economically disadvantaged among all middle-class segments, with nearly 80% of households falling into the two lowest income levels. Household heads in this group are also less frequently found among middle-class households that are able to save. Members of this group are almost exclusively self-employed (87.5%) and mainly work in the service sector or as farmers. Another distinctive trait of this group is its level of education, with the highest proportion of heads among the middle-class segments having achieved only a secondary education level. The group is composed of the oldest members of the middle class (excluding the retired and inactive middle class). The heads of household in this group are predominantly male and tend to live in medium to large urban areas. While the vast majority of them are married, their household size is smaller compared to other middle-class groups. Our results also reveal that there is an over-representation of DPP

supporters in this segment of the middle class. This result is not surprising, as the DPP's partisan base is made up, among others, of farmers and small and medium-sized owners (Rigger, 2016).

Manual and service employees middle class - 15.85% of the middle-income group. This group is mainly made up of manual workers (skilled and unskilled) and service sector workers. Almost half of them identify with the working class and their perception of belonging to the upper middle class is less common when compared to the remaining middle-income class population. More than half of them have an income level in the fifth income category and the proportion of individuals who exceed this level is significantly lower than in other middle class groups. As a result, members of this group have a higher propensity to need to borrow money or dip into their savings and very few have the capacity to save. Nearly two-thirds of them have a secondary education, and they are underrepresented at higher education levels (bachelor's and advanced degrees). This group is predominantly composed of young males who live in small towns.

Intermediate service workers middle class - 23.29% of the middle-income group. This segment is primarily composed of household heads occupying intermediate positions in the service sector and who are predominantly full-time employees in the private sector. Furthermore, three-quarters of them have a bachelor's or technical degree. Their income is close to the overall middle-class average. They are also more inclined to save money, despite their stronger tendency to perceive themselves as working-class individuals. This group is the youngest among those we have identified in the middle class, resulting in an under-representation of married individuals. This group is finally overrepresented in the "other" ethnic category and as supporters of the Third Force parties and underrepresented in cities.

Managerial middle class - 16.85% of the middle-income group. Household heads in this group represent the most privileged segment of the middle class, as they are heavily overrepresented (underrepresented) in the highest (lowest) income levels. The majority of members of this group state that their income allows them to save, with almost half identifying themselves as upper middle class. This group primarily consists of full-time

(and to a lesser extent part-time) professionals and technicians in the public and private non-profit sectors. Their educational attainment is very high, with a large proportion holding higher education degrees (even more than those in the ‘rich’ category, see [Table 4.7](#)). Heads in this group are predominantly young, resulting in smaller household sizes compared to other members of the middle class. They exhibit a higher propensity to live in medium-sized cities and primarily reside in large urban centres, particularly in cities with populations ranging from 100,000 to 500,000, where they are disproportionately represented.

Retired and inactive middle class - 32.93% of the middle income-group. This group is exclusively composed of retired (46%), inactive (43%) and unemployed (11%) household heads. On average, members of this group have lower levels of education than middle-class households, whereas their income levels are close to that of the whole middle class. Households in this group are distinguished from the rest of the middle class by their relatively lower economic comfort and self-identification as part of the lower middle class. Hakka ethnicity is significantly lower than in other middle-class groups.¹⁶

Idiosyncratic middle class - 1.83% of the middle income-group. The idiosyncratic group is distinguished from the rest of the middle-class households by several unique characteristics. Although their level of education is mainly limited to secondary school, households in this group hold prestigious full-time jobs as professionals and technicians, while having a high level of income. They are underrepresented in the lowest income bracket and are overrepresented in the second highest. Moreover, they mainly reside in medium-sized towns and have a preference for pan-Blue parties. However, due to their low statistical weight and divergent characteristics, we cannot draw any more specific conclusions about this group.

16. Overall, we observe a multi-ethnic class stratification, which means that the possibility of accessing each middle-class segment - from the least privileged to the most privileged - is not determined by an individual’s ethnic origin. In the past, there was a class divide based on ethnicity between mainlanders and Taiwanese (Minnanese and Hakka people), with the former enjoying advantages in accessing high positions or in the field of education, as noted by [Gates \(1981\)](#). Our findings (see also [Tsai et al. \(2014\)](#)) reveal a trend towards “detrribalization” ([Cohen, 1974](#)) indicating that ethnicity is not a decisive factor in the distribution of resources.

More generally, our cluster analysis reveals that the Taiwanese middle class is fragmented. We have a pattern of bipolarization between an upper middle class characterized by full-time and high-skilled jobs and a more vulnerable middle class with low income and education levels and more unstable (self-employed) and less productive jobs. The upper middle class is composed of the managerial and idiosyncratic groups, which have high-income levels and account for about 19% of the whole middle class. We can note that in the upper component of the Taiwanese middle class (the managerial middle class), there is an over-representation of civil servants. This observation reinforces the idea already supported by other studies (see [Clément et al. \(2022\)](#)) of the importance of the public sector in promoting an affluent and educated middle class. In contrast, our cluster analysis highlights that different components of the middle stratum, with atypical occupational profiles, remain vulnerable. This is the case for self-employed workers and farmers, and to a lesser extent manual and service workers, who have relatively low levels of income and education. The share of this vulnerable middle class accounts for about 26% of the whole middle class. Between these two components, there is a subgroup of “middle” middle class household heads, consisting of the intermediate service workers group and the retirees and inactive group, characterized by average income and education levels. According to our estimates, the “middle” middle class represents 56% of the whole middle class.

4.4.2 Econometric Result

The aim of this study is to investigate whether the middle class is a predictor of neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences and whether such economic preferences are homogeneous within the Taiwanese middle class. Our variable of interest is the social stratification of the Taiwanese population. We are examining two subsets of dependent variables. The first subset pertains to internalized neoliberal beliefs, where we differentiate among three dimensions of belief : natural competition, government interference, and personal wherewithal. Each dimension is evaluated using a single item, except for the government interference dimension, where we distinguish between private ownership and personal responsibility. The second subset involves policy preferences, which include the following items : the relationship between democracy and policies regarding taxing the rich and

subsidizing the poor; the relationship between democracy and providing state aid to the unemployed; and the relationship between democracy and income equality. Ordered logistic regression models were constructed to investigate the relationships between social stratification and the two subsets of dependent variables. Note that these regressions are controlled with the potential determinants of neoliberal belief and policy preferences. We begin the analysis of our results with the stratification we obtained with the economic approach ('poor', middle-income group and 'rich'). The results are available in [Table 4.7](#). Note that the middle-income group is used as the reference category in these regressions. Then, in addition to the poor and rich categories, we include the different segments within the middle-income stratum that we identified with the multidimensional approach. The results are reported in [Table 4.8](#) for the internalized neoliberal beliefs and in [Table 4.9](#) for preferences for the policy preferences (fiscal policy, aid for unemployment, income equality). To facilitate the reading and understanding of our results, we successively use the poor group, the self-employed and farmers middle class and the managerial middle class as the reference category for each dependent variable in [Tables 4.8](#) and [4.9](#).¹⁷ In [Tables 4.8](#) and [4.9](#) we present only the results for the variable of interest. The results for the control variables are reported for neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences respectively in [Tables A4.1](#) and [A4.2](#) ([Appendix A](#)).

17. These last two groups represent respectively the least privileged and the most privileged segment within the middle class.

TABLE 4.7 – The effect of economic stratification on neoliberal beliefs and policies

	Private owner- ship	Personal res- ponsibility	Natural com- petition	Personal Whe- rewithal	Policy Tax	Policy Unem- ployment	Policy equal
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)
Poor	-0.3759*** (0.124)	-0.0780 (0.125)	0.1692 (0.127)	0.0491 (0.124)	0.0696 (0.123)	-0.0326 (0.123)	0.0039 (0.123)
Rich	1.0309*** (0.308)	-0.0196 (0.301)	0.6162** (0.303)	0.3391 (0.293)	-0.2174 (0.313)	-0.0467 (0.341)	-0.4361 (0.312)
Male	0.3433*** (0.105)	0.1198 (0.104)	0.5787*** (0.105)	0.1454 (0.104)	0.2090** (0.103)	0.0098 (0.104)	-0.0912 (0.104)
Age	0.0466** (0.019)	0.0149 (0.018)	0.0380* (0.019)	0.0585*** (0.019)	0.0575*** (0.018)	0.0011 (0.018)	0.0123 (0.018)
Age squared	-0.0004** (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0005** (0.000)	-0.0005*** (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.000)
Children	-0.0537 (0.144)	-0.2099 (0.141)	0.2159 (0.144)	0.4526*** (0.145)	0.0293 (0.145)	0.1015 (0.144)	0.1142 (0.146)
Special municipality	0.1174 (0.106)	0.0502 (0.105)	-0.0771 (0.106)	-0.0880 (0.105)	0.0527 (0.104)	-0.1646 (0.106)	-0.1400 (0.105)
Economic satisfaction	-0.0051 (0.029)	0.0994*** (0.029)	0.0229 (0.029)	0.1060*** (0.029)	-0.0565* (0.029)	-0.0606** (0.029)	-0.0685** (0.029)
Political distrust	0.0738*** (0.028)	-0.0427 (0.028)	0.0193 (0.028)	-0.0854*** (0.028)	-0.0136 (0.028)	-0.0264 (0.028)	-0.0136 (0.028)
Political interest	-0.0308 (0.065)	0.0760 (0.065)	-0.0409 (0.065)	-0.0409 (0.065)	-0.0835 (0.065)	-0.1066 (0.065)	-0.0677 (0.065)
Partisanship Pan-green	-0.1341 (0.138)	0.3325** (0.137)	-0.2401* (0.138)	-0.0078 (0.137)	0.0955 (0.136)	0.1546 (0.138)	-0.0878 (0.138)
Partisanship third force	-0.0804 (0.2056)	0.3540* (0.2014)	-0.0728 (0.1937)	-0.0105 (0.1949)	0.1547 (0.1936)	0.2678 (0.1990)	0.0410 (0.1966)
Independents	0.1222 (0.131)	0.1305 (0.130)	-0.3266** (0.136)	-0.1722 (0.133)	-0.0084 (0.132)	-0.0155 (0.132)	0.0025 (0.131)
Locus of control	-0.0454 (0.029)	0.0455 (0.029)	0.0685** (0.030)	0.0319 (0.030)	0.0706** (0.029)	0.1004*** (0.030)	0.0740** (0.030)
Social of dominance	0.0368 (0.026)	0.1117*** (0.025)	0.1194*** (0.026)	0.0123 (0.025)	0.0440* (0.025)	-0.0243 (0.025)	-0.1837*** (0.025)
Right wing authoritarianism	-1.9530*** (0.343)	-0.3668 (0.338)	0.4075 (0.344)	0.8440** (0.341)	0.1068 (0.344)	0.1163 (0.340)	1.9749*** (0.346)
Gender bias	-0.1645 (0.320)	0.3482 (0.324)	-0.9747*** (0.322)	-0.0339 (0.320)	-0.4757 (0.322)	-0.0406 (0.320)	-0.1886 (0.318)
General knowledge	0.0437 (0.165)	-0.2755* (0.161)	0.0380 (0.159)	0.3263** (0.163)	0.2351 (0.159)	-0.0977 (0.158)	-0.1513 (0.157)
Left - right	0.0030 (0.030)	0.0303 (0.030)	-0.1453*** (0.030)	-0.0936*** (0.030)	-0.1462*** (0.030)	-0.1612*** (0.030)	-0.1230*** (0.030)
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
Pseudo R-squared	0.0224	0.0143	0.0269	0.0288	0.0115	0.0122	0.0284

Reading notes : The ordered log-odds regression coefficients are reported. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%** , and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

Table 4.7 shows that the economic stratification of the population into three categories - the poor, the middle-income segment, and the rich - reveals no substantial differences in their neoliberal beliefs, preferences for neoliberal policies and their perceptions of how these policies relate to the concept of democracy. Indeed, we only find heterogeneity in their preferences for two dimensions : their opinion on the role of the private sector and the government in the management of businesses, as well as their perception of the effects of competition in the economy. More specifically, the results of regression (I) from Table 4.7 reveal that the odds of favouring an increase in private ownership of businesses over an increase in government ownership of businesses is 0.6867 (=EXP-0.3769) times lower for individuals classified as 'poor' compared to those from the middle-income group, *ceteris paribus*. Concurrently, the ordered log-odds for the 'rich' category in favour of increased private ownership of businesses is 1.0309 higher than for individuals in the middle-income group, all other things held constant. Furthermore, according to regression (III) in Table 4.7, the rich are more likely, on average, to perceive competition as advantageous compared to households located in the middle of the income distribution.

Decomposing the middle-income stratum allows us to gain a richer and more nuanced perspective of economic preferences within this category. We first examine the neoliberal beliefs of the different segments of the middle class, as presented in Table 4.8, and then their attitudes towards democracy and economic policies, as outlined in Table 4.9. Broadly speaking, these different middle-class groups exhibit heterogeneous neoliberal policy preferences and beliefs.

In terms of the belief in government interference in the private sector, as shown in regression (I) in Table 4.8, all active middle-income groups exhibit a tendency to be more inclined towards supporting a larger role of private ownership in businesses compared to the poor, all other things held constant. Moreover, the retired and inactive middle class, as indicated by regressions (II) and (III), is the group most favourable to greater government involvement in business ownership (after the poor). Regression (I) also highlights that the middle class of self-employed people and farmers holds the highest ordered log-odds in support of an increase in private ownership of businesses, with a value of 0.6483 higher than that of the

poor. However, these differences in beliefs are not statistically significant compared to other active middle-income strata, as shown in regressions (II) and (III).

TABLE 4.8 – The effect of social stratification on neoliberal beliefs

	Private ownership			Personal responsibility			Natural competition			Personal Wherewithal		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)	(IX)	(X)	(XI)	(XII)
Poor		- 0.6483*** (0.236)	- 0.5661*** (0.196)		- 0.6434*** (0.226)	0.0199 (0.197)		- 0.2496 (0.241)	0.1538 (0.191)		- 0.1290 (0.241)	0.1567 (0.191)
Self - Employee & Farmer Manual & Service	0.6483*** (0.236)		0.0823 (0.266)	0.6434*** (0.226)		0.6633** (0.258)	0.2496 (0.241)		0.4034 (0.265)	0.1290 (0.241)		0.2858 (0.269)
Inter - mediate service	0.4733*** (0.193)	-0.2411 (0.265)	-0.1589 (0.224)	0.0307 (0.191)	- 0.6127** (0.254)	0.0506 (0.223)	- 0.3905** (0.194)	- 0.6402** (0.268)	- 0.2367 (0.217)	- 0.1071 (0.192)	- 0.2361 (0.270)	0.0497 (0.218)
Manager	0.5661*** (0.196)	-0.1751 (0.252)	-0.0928 (0.199)	-0.0454 (0.172)	- 0.6888*** (0.241)	0.0255 (0.197)	- 0.2001 (0.172)	- 0.4497* (0.255)	- 0.0463 (0.188)	0.0230 (0.174)	- 0.1061 (0.258)	0.1797 (0.191)
Retired & inactive	0.1896 (0.151)	- 0.4587* (0.240)	- 0.3765* (0.197)	0.0207 (0.151)	- 0.6227*** (0.230)	0.0406 (0.196)	- 0.1692 (0.155)	- 0.4188* (0.245)	- 0.0154 (0.191)	- 0.0831 (0.150)	- 0.2121 (0.245)	0.0737 (0.190)
Idiosyn - cratic	0.4323 (0.488)	-0.2161 (0.517)	-0.1338 (0.497)	0.3287 (0.473)	-0.3147 (0.498)	0.3486 (0.483)	- 0.3466 (0.473)	- 0.5962 (0.506)	- 0.1928 (0.478)	0.2573 (0.476)	0.1283 (0.510)	0.4141 (0.484)
Rich	1.4473*** (0.330)	0.7990** (0.370)	0.8813*** (0.336)	0.0369 (0.323)	- 0.6066* (0.359)	0.0567 (0.332)	0.4420 (0.325)	0.1923 (0.369)	0.5958* (0.329)	0.2849 (0.316)	0.1559 (0.364)	0.4417 (0.320)
Other controls	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
Pseudo R- squared	0.0235	0.0235	0.0235	0.0282	0.0282	0.0282	0.0161	0.0161	0.0161	0.0293	0.0293	0.0293

Reading notes : The ordered log-odds regression coefficients are reported. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%** , and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerper et al., 2022).

Regarding the belief in personal responsibility, regression (V) indicates that the self-employed and farmers middle class, who is the most supportive of weak state control in the economic domain among middle-income groups, is also, on average, the least likely

to lean towards endorsing greater government involvement in the provision of services and social assistance, even more so than the rich, *ceteris paribus*. Additionally, based on regression (V), we can observe that all other middle-class subgroups exhibit homogeneous preferences on this dimension, with similar magnitudes in their ordered logit values, except for the idiosyncratic group, for which the coefficient is not significant. Therefore, there are no significant differences with any of the groups, as shown by regressions (IV) and (VI), whether compared to the poor or to the managerial group. The only exception to this pattern is observed for the self-employed and farmers middle class.

Concerning the dimension of competition, one group notably stands out in considering competition as particularly detrimental, i.e. the manual and service employees middle class. Based on regression (VII) and (VIII), their odds of perceiving competition as beneficial versus harmful are, respectively, 0.6767 (=EXP-0.3905) and 0.5272 (=EXP-0.6402) times lower than those of the poor and the self-employed and farmers middle class. Furthermore, based on regression (VIII), we note that the retired and inactive middle class and the intermediate service employees middle class are more likely to perceive competition as detrimental compared to the self-employed and farmers middle class. This last group is the most pro-competition after the ‘rich’ category, although there is no significant difference between these two segments (regression (VIII)). The rich group statistically differs from the managerial middle class insofar as, on average, it has a higher probability of viewing competition as beneficial. It is worth noting that all groups have homogeneous preferences regarding personal wherewithal, and as such, no significant differences appear between them.

Regarding the preferences of different groups for neoliberal economic policies and their integration into the democratic ideal (Table 4.9), we observe that only the manual and service workers middle class stands out in terms of the link between democracy and fiscal policy. In fact, their probability of considering government taxation of the rich and subsidizing the poor as essential characteristics of democracy are respectively 0.6365 (=EXP-0.4518) and 0.5836 (=EXP-0.5386) lower than the poor (regression (I)) as well as the managerial middle class (regression (III)), all other things held constant. As for social assistance for the unemployed within a democratic framework is concerned, only

the idiosyncratic middle class and the self-employed and farmers middle class stand out. In fact, for the idiosyncratic group, the ordered logit of social assistance perceived as an essential feature of democracy is 0.9161 lower than that of the self-employed and farmers groups (regression (V)).

Finally, the managerial middle class particularly differs in its perception regarding income equality implemented by the state within a democratic framework. Based on regression (IX), this group, has, on average, a lower probability of not perceiving income equality as an essential characteristic of democracy compared to the poor and all other groups of individuals in the middle-income stratum (except for the idiosyncratic middle class).

TABLE 4.9 – The effect of social stratification on preferences for neoliberal policies

	Policy Tax			Policy Unemployment			Policy income equal		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)	(IX)
Poor		0.1299 (0.228)	-0.0868 (0.192)		-0.2474 (0.233)	0.1306 (0.191)		-0.0314 (0.230)	0.4693** (0.196)
Self - Empl- yee & Farmer	-0.1299 (0.228)		-0.2167 (0.260)	0.2474 (0.233)		0.3780 (0.262)	0.0314 (0.230)		0.5006* (0.263)
Manual & Service	-0.4518** (0.1897)	-0.3219 (0.2571)	-0.5386** (0.2188)	-0.1665 (0.1928)	-0.4138 (0.2641)	-0.0358 (0.2215)	-0.0460 (0.186)	-0.0774 (0.256)	0.4232* (0.220)
Intermediate service	-0.0187 (0.174)	0.1112 (0.248)	-0.1055 (0.195)	0.1260 (0.173)	-0.1214 (0.251)	0.2566 (0.194)	-0.0732 (0.175)	-0.1045 (0.248)	0.3961** (0.200)
Manager	0.0868 (0.192)	0.2167 (0.260)		-0.1306 (0.191)	-0.3780 (0.262)		-0.4693** (0.196)	-0.5006* (0.263)	
Retired & inactive	0.0388 (0.150)	0.1687 (0.234)	-0.0480 (0.193)	0.0867 (0.151)	-0.1607 (0.239)	0.2173 (0.192)	0.1580 (0.150)	0.1267 (0.235)	0.6273*** (0.197)
Idiosyncratic	-0.0490 (0.486)	0.0809 (0.513)	-0.1357 (0.496)	-0.6687 (0.487)	-0.9161* (0.516)	-0.5381 (0.495)	0.5151 (0.469)	0.4837 (0.498)	0.9843** (0.481)
Rich	-0.2700 (0.333)	-0.1401 (0.373)	-0.3568 (0.341)	-0.0334 (0.359)	-0.2808 (0.398)	0.0972 (0.366)	-0.4998 (0.333)	-0.5311 (0.373)	-0.0305 (0.341)
Other controls	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
Pseudo R-squared	0.0130	0.0130	0.0130	0.0135	0.0135	0.0135	0.0306	0.0306	0.0306

Reading notes : The ordered log-odds regression coefficients are reported. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

4.4.2.1 Robustness Checks

To test the robustness of our results, our procedure is twofold. First, we re-estimated our regressions using an OLS model in [Appendix B. Table B4.1](#) displays the results with the stratification of the economic approach ('poor', middle-income group and 'rich'). [Table B4.2](#) shows the results for the neoliberal beliefs and [Table B4.3](#) the preferences for non-neoliberal policies. While most of our conclusions are confirmed, some associations are no longer significant.

Second, we compare the findings obtained concerning neoliberal beliefs and preferences for anti-neoliberal policies and their integration into the democratic ideal with an alternative classification. This alternative classification is rooted in a neo-Weberian sociological approach. We employ the five-category class scheme from the East Asian Middle Classes (EAMC) project developed by [Hsiao & So \(1999\)](#), which is a simplified version of [Goldthorpe \(1987\)](#) 11-category class scheme. Additional details about this alternative classification, along with the methodology and the distribution of different segments within the middle class, can be found in [Table B4.4](#) in [Appendix B. Table B4.5](#) presents a cross-tabulated comparison of the group distributions obtained from the alternative sociological classification and those identified through the multidimensional approach. We present the results of this alternative stratification for neoliberal beliefs and policies respectively in [Tables B4.6](#) and [B4.7](#) of [Appendix B](#). Although the results remain consistent between the two approaches and their corresponding groups, overall, the multidimensional method is more effective in capturing differences in neoliberal preferences than the clusters derived from the sociological perspective. In other words, the multidimensional measurement, leveraging a broader set of qualitative information (education, occupation, employment status, and institutional sector), is better suited to capture the heterogeneity within the middle-income group concerning neoliberal preferences than strict categories relying solely on employment-related information.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, our aim was to investigate whether middle class membership predicts neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences in Taiwan and whether these economic preferences are heterogeneous within the Taiwanese middle class. The main challenge we faced was to define different relevant segments within the middle class, overcoming the limitations that are associated with approaches conventionally used in the social science literature (Melber, 2016; Salama, 2014; Sosnaud et al., 2013). To achieve this, we used a sequential and multidimensional approach, using microeconomic data from the seventh wave of the World Values Survey (Haerpfer et al., 2022). Our methodology began by delineating a middle-income class, consisting of household heads in the middle of the income distribution. Subsequently, based on socioeconomic information concerning the household head, we implemented a mixed classification procedure to identify the different components of the middle-income group defined in the previous stage.

This method enabled us to identify and characterise four active middle-income groups, namely : self-employed and farmers, manual and service employees, intermediate workers in the service sector and managers. In addition, we have identified a group of retired and inactive people, as well as an ‘idiosyncratic group’ with unique socioeconomic attributes that set it apart from the established groups previously mentioned. To investigate whether belonging to these different segments within the middle-income class had an impact on neoliberal beliefs and policy preferences, we examined two subsets of variables. The first subset focused on internalized neoliberal beliefs, distinguishing among three dimensions of belief : natural competition, government interference, and personal initiative. The second subset examined economic policy preferences, specifically examining the relationship between democracy and policies related to taxing the rich, subsidizing the poor, providing state aid to the unemployed, and income equality. We ran ordered logistic regression models to explore the relationships between social stratification and these two subsets of dependent variables, controlling for the potential determinants of neoliberal beliefs and political preferences.

Overall, our results show that the stratification of the Taiwanese population based on an economic approach (the ‘poor’, the middle-income group and the ‘rich’) shows little significant difference in their economic beliefs and preferences. However, when we have a closer look at the middle class group, by a mixed classification procedure, we can discern the complexity and diversity of the households that make it up. Thus, the decomposition of the middle-income stratum reveals significant diversity in their neoliberal beliefs and economic policy preferences.

More precisely, concerning neoliberal beliefs, particularly regarding government interference in the private sector, we observe that all active middle-income groups tend to favour greater private ownership in businesses compared to the poor, although this preference remains less pronounced than that of the rich. Furthermore, regarding government interference in the private sector, the group of self-employees and farmers, which already stood out as the least supportive of public ownership in businesses within the middle-income segment, shows the least inclination to support greater government intervention in the provision of services and social assistance among all groups in society. This same segment of the middle class also exhibits stronger preferences for competition, especially compared to the group of manual and service employees, and to a lesser extent, compared to intermediate service workers, retirees and inactive. The dimension of personal wherewithal shows no significant difference among all the groups in society that we have identified. Regarding neoliberal policy preferences, the group of manual and service employees, unlike the managerial middle class and disadvantaged individuals, does not consider government taxation of the wealthy and subsidies for the poor as an essential feature of democracy. It is also observed that the idiosyncratic group is less supportive of unemployment assistance than the segment of self-employed workers and farmers. In conclusion, the managerial segment is less concerned about income equality than the other middle-income groups.

This study presents a significant limitation due to the nature of the relationships examined between an objective factor, namely belonging to a social group, and a subjective factor, namely neoliberal beliefs. This exposes us to challenges related to reverse causality, which means that our results can be interpreted in several ways. On the one hand, it is possible that individuals’ neoliberal beliefs influence their career choices or economic behaviours,

which could explain the results we observed. On the other hand, it is also plausible that belonging to certain social classes exposes individuals more to neoliberal ideas, which, in turn, influence their neoliberal beliefs. Finally, it is conceivable that there is a complex bidirectional relationship between the objective factor (belonging to a social class) and the subjective factor (neoliberal beliefs), where neoliberal beliefs may influence social class membership, and vice versa. Therefore, this study should be interpreted with caution due to the complexity of the relationships between these two factors, and further research may be necessary to better understand the exact nature of these relationships.

Furthermore, to gain a deeper understanding of neoliberal beliefs within Taiwanese society, further research is warranted. Specifically, it would be relevant to explore how individual preferences regarding political and economic integration with mainland China may influence these beliefs. If a neoliberal approach generally supports economic rapprochement, this could have implications, such as the potential for increased inequalities and heightened competition for Taiwanese businesses. Therefore, it would be interesting to ascertain whether preferences regarding the relationship with China are a more determining factor in neoliberal beliefs than membership in a social class and whether these preferences lead to variations in neoliberal beliefs within different social groups.

Appendix

Appendix A. Supplementary Results

Table A4.1 - The effect of social stratification on neoliberal beliefs

	Private ownership			Personal responsibility			Natural competition			Personal Wherewithal		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)	(IX)	(X)	(XI)	(XII)
Male	0.3211*** (0.106)	0.3211*** (0.106)	0.3211*** (0.106)	0.0961 (0.105)	0.0961 (0.105)	0.0961 (0.105)	0.5835*** (0.106)	0.5835*** (0.106)	0.5835*** (0.106)	0.1385 (0.105)	0.1385 (0.105)	0.1385 (0.105)
Age	0.0364* (0.020)	0.0364* (0.020)	0.0364* (0.020)	0.0096 (0.019)	0.0096 (0.019)	0.0096 (0.019)	0.0368* (0.019)	0.0368* (0.019)	0.0368* (0.019)	0.0573*** (0.019)	0.0573*** (0.019)	0.0573*** (0.019)
Age squared	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0004** (0.000)	-0.0004** (0.000)	-0.0004** (0.000)
Children	-0.0447 (0.146)	-0.0447 (0.146)	-0.0447 (0.146)	-0.2417* (0.143)	-0.2417* (0.143)	-0.2417* (0.143)	0.2128 (0.145)	0.2128 (0.145)	0.2128 (0.145)	0.4477*** (0.146)	0.4477*** (0.146)	0.4477*** (0.146)
Special municipality	0.1185 (0.106)	0.1185 (0.106)	0.1185 (0.106)	0.0545 (0.105)	0.0545 (0.105)	0.0545 (0.105)	-0.0705 (0.106)	-0.0705 (0.106)	-0.0705 (0.106)	-0.0831 (0.105)	-0.0831 (0.105)	-0.0831 (0.105)
Economic satisfaction	-0.0056 (0.029)	-0.0056 (0.029)	-0.0056 (0.029)	0.0969*** (0.029)	0.0969*** (0.029)	0.0969*** (0.029)	0.0208 (0.029)	0.0208 (0.029)	0.0208 (0.029)	0.1051*** (0.029)	0.1051*** (0.029)	0.1051*** (0.029)
Political distrust	0.0759*** (0.028)	0.0759*** (0.028)	0.0759*** (0.028)	-0.0429 (0.028)	-0.0429 (0.028)	-0.0429 (0.028)	0.0197 (0.028)	0.0197 (0.028)	0.0197 (0.028)	0.0843*** (0.028)	0.0843*** (0.028)	0.0843*** (0.028)
Political interest	-0.0427 (0.066)	-0.0427 (0.066)	-0.0427 (0.066)	0.0723 (0.065)	0.0723 (0.065)	0.0723 (0.065)	-0.0364 (0.066)	-0.0364 (0.066)	-0.0364 (0.066)	-0.0472 (0.065)	-0.0472 (0.065)	-0.0472 (0.065)
Partisanship	-0.1505 (0.139)	-0.1505 (0.139)	-0.1505 (0.139)	0.3170** (0.137)	0.3170** (0.137)	0.3170** (0.137)	-0.2664* (0.138)	-0.2664* (0.138)	-0.2664* (0.138)	-0.0124 (0.137)	-0.0124 (0.137)	-0.0124 (0.137)
Pan-Green	-0.0821 (0.206)	-0.0821 (0.206)	-0.0821 (0.206)	0.3841* (0.202)	0.3841* (0.202)	0.3841* (0.202)	-0.0702 (0.194)	-0.0702 (0.194)	-0.0702 (0.194)	-0.0002 (0.195)	-0.0002 (0.195)	-0.0002 (0.195)
Partisanship third force	0.1217 (0.131)	0.1217 (0.131)	0.1217 (0.131)	0.1407 (0.131)	0.1407 (0.131)	0.1407 (0.131)	-0.3285** (0.136)	-0.3285** (0.136)	-0.3285** (0.136)	-0.1745 (0.133)	-0.1745 (0.133)	-0.1745 (0.133)
Independents	-0.0447 (0.029)	-0.0447 (0.029)	-0.0447 (0.029)	0.0473 (0.030)	0.0473 (0.030)	0.0473 (0.030)	0.0686** (0.030)	0.0686** (0.030)	0.0686** (0.030)	0.0320 (0.030)	0.0320 (0.030)	0.0320 (0.030)
Locus of control	0.0357 (0.026)	0.0357 (0.026)	0.0357 (0.026)	0.1191*** (0.026)	0.1191*** (0.026)	0.1191*** (0.026)	0.1226*** (0.026)	0.1226*** (0.026)	0.1226*** (0.026)	0.0146 (0.025)	0.0146 (0.025)	0.0146 (0.025)
Social dominance	-	-	-	-0.4436	-0.4436	-0.4436	0.4314	0.4314	0.4314	0.8225**	0.8225**	0.8225**
Right wing authoritarianism	1.9506*** (0.345)	1.9506*** (0.345)	1.9506*** (0.345)	-0.4436 (0.341)	-0.4436 (0.341)	-0.4436 (0.341)	0.4314 (0.346)	0.4314 (0.346)	0.4314 (0.346)	0.8225** (0.344)	0.8225** (0.344)	0.8225** (0.344)
Gender bias	-0.1386 (0.320)	-0.1386 (0.320)	-0.1386 (0.320)	0.3379 (0.324)	0.3379 (0.324)	0.3379 (0.324)	0.9719*** (0.322)	0.9719*** (0.322)	0.9719*** (0.322)	-0.0549 (0.321)	-0.0549 (0.321)	-0.0549 (0.321)
General knowledge	0.0571 (0.165)	0.0571 (0.165)	0.0571 (0.165)	-0.2395 (0.161)	-0.2395 (0.161)	-0.2395 (0.161)	0.0596 (0.160)	0.0596 (0.160)	0.0596 (0.160)	0.3347** (0.163)	0.3347** (0.163)	0.3347** (0.163)
Left - right	0.0075 (0.030)	0.0075 (0.030)	0.0075 (0.030)	0.0331 (0.030)	0.0331 (0.030)	0.0331 (0.030)	0.1447*** (0.031)	0.1447*** (0.031)	0.1447*** (0.031)	0.0933*** (0.0303004)	0.0933*** (0.030)	0.0933*** (0.030)
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
Pseudo R-squared	0.0235	0.0235	0.0235	0.0282	0.0282	0.0282	0.0161	0.0161	0.0161	0.0293	0.0293	0.0293

Reading notes : The ordered log-odds regression coefficients are reported. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

Table A4.2 - The effect of social stratification on preferences for neoliberal policies

	Policy Tax			Policy Unemployment			Policy income equal		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)	(IX)
Male	0.2426** (0.104)	0.2426** (0.104)	0.2426** (0.104)	0.0243 (0.105)	0.0243 (0.105)	0.0243 (0.105)	-0.0825 (0.106)	-0.0825 (0.106)	-0.0825 (0.106)
Age	0.0600*** (0.019)	0.0600*** (0.019)	0.0600*** (0.019)	0.0048 (0.019)	0.0048 (0.019)	0.0048 (0.019)	0.0202 (0.019)	0.0202 (0.019)	0.0202 (0.019)
Age squared	-0.0005*** (0.000)	-0.0005*** (0.000)	-0.0005*** (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)
Children	0.0781 (0.146)	0.0781 (0.146)	0.0781 (0.146)	0.0979 (0.145)	0.0979 (0.145)	0.0979 (0.145)	0.0867 (0.147)	0.0867 (0.147)	0.0867 (0.147)
Special municipality	0.0690 (0.105)	0.0690 (0.105)	0.0690 (0.105)	-0.1663 (0.106)	-0.1663 (0.106)	-0.1663 (0.106)	-0.1320 (0.106)	-0.1320 (0.106)	-0.1320 (0.106)
Economic satisfaction	-0.0633** (0.030)	-0.0633** (0.030)	-0.0633** (0.030)	-0.0602** (0.029)	-0.0602** (0.029)	-0.0602** (0.029)	-0.0690** (0.029)	-0.0690** (0.029)	-0.0690** (0.029)
Political distrust	-0.0137 (0.028)	-0.0137 (0.028)	-0.0137 (0.028)	-0.0280 (0.028)	-0.0280 (0.028)	-0.0280 (0.028)	-0.0154 (0.028)	-0.0154 (0.028)	-0.0154 (0.028)
Political interest	-0.0753 (0.065)	-0.0753 (0.065)	-0.0753 (0.065)	-0.1027 (0.066)	-0.1027 (0.066)	-0.1027 (0.066)	-0.0732 (0.066)	-0.0732 (0.066)	-0.0732 (0.066)
Partisanship pan-green	0.0938 (0.137)	0.0938 (0.137)	0.0938 (0.137)	0.1353 (0.138)	0.1353 (0.138)	0.1353 (0.138)	-0.0800 (0.138)	-0.0800 (0.138)	-0.0800 (0.138)
Partisanship third force	0.1455 (0.194)	0.1455 (0.194)	0.1455 (0.194)	0.2632 (0.200)	0.2632 (0.200)	0.2632 (0.200)	0.0672 (0.198)	0.0672 (0.198)	0.0672 (0.198)
Independents	-0.0072 (0.132)	-0.0072 (0.132)	-0.0072 (0.132)	-0.0306 (0.132)	-0.0306 (0.132)	-0.0306 (0.132)	0.0053 (0.132)	0.0053 (0.132)	0.0053 (0.132)
Locus of control	0.0718** (0.030)	0.0718** (0.030)	0.0718** (0.030)	0.0986*** (0.030)	0.0986*** (0.0298)	0.0986*** (0.030)	0.0737** (0.030)	0.0737** (0.030)	0.0737** (0.030)
Social dominance	0.0411 (0.025)	0.0411 (0.025)	0.0411 (0.025)	-0.0202 (0.025)	-0.0202 (0.025)	-0.0202 (0.025)	-0.1796*** (0.025)	-0.1796*** (0.025)	-0.1796*** (0.025)
Right wing authoritarianism	0.2098 (0.346)	0.2098 (0.346)	0.2098 (0.346)	0.1580 (0.343)	0.1580 (0.343)	0.1580 (0.343)	1.8936*** (0.351)	1.8936*** (0.351)	1.8936*** (0.351)
Gender bias	-0.4674 (0.320)	-0.4674 (0.320)	-0.4674 (0.320)	-0.0563 (0.320)	-0.0563 (0.320)	-0.0563 (0.320)	-0.2389 (0.319)	-0.2389 (0.319)	-0.2389 (0.319)
General knowledge	0.2274 (0.159)	0.2274 (0.159)	0.2274 (0.159)	-0.0981 (0.159)	-0.0981 (0.159)	-0.0981 (0.159)	-0.1458 (0.157)	-0.1458 (0.157)	-0.1458 (0.157)
Left - right	-0.1524*** (0.031)	-0.1524*** (0.031)	-0.1524*** (0.031)	-0.1630*** (0.031)	-0.1630*** (0.031)	-0.1630*** (0.031)	-0.1263*** (0.030)	-0.1263*** (0.030)	-0.1263*** (0.030)
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
Pseudo R-squared	0.0130	0.0130	0.0130	0.0135	0.0135	0.0135	0.0306	0.0306	0.0306

Reading notes : The ordered log-odds regression coefficients are reported. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%** and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerper et al., 2022).

Appendix B. Robustness Check

OLS Estimations

Table B4.1 - The effect of economic stratification on neoliberal beliefs and policies

	Private owner- ship	Personal res- ponsibility	Natural compe- tition	Personal Whe- reewithal	Policy Tax	Policy Unem- ployment	Policy equal
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)
Poor	-0.4940*** (0.152)	-0.1695 (0.166)	0.1534 (0.131)	0.0153 (0.164)	0.0658 (0.163)	0.0098 (0.149)	-0.0251 (0.184)
Rich	1.1591*** (0.364)	-0.0751 (0.370)	0.5702* (0.313)	0.4881 (0.391)	-0.4495 (0.390)	-0.2588 (0.357)	-0.6757 (0.440)
Male	0.4000*** (0.129)	0.1793 (0.140)	0.6196*** (0.111)	0.1838 (0.138)	0.2550* (0.138)	-0.0167 (0.126)	-0.1103 (0.156)
Age	0.0708*** (0.025)	0.0079 (0.027)	0.0434** (0.021)	0.0808*** (0.026)	0.0564** (0.026)	-0.0053 (0.024)	0.0091 (0.030)
Age squared	-0.0006*** (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0004** (0.000)	-0.0006** (0.000)	-0.0005* (0.000)	0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)
Children	-0.1140 (0.181)	-0.2676 (0.198)	0.1762 (0.156)	0.5895*** (0.195)	-0.0190 (0.194)	0.0584 (0.178)	0.2131 (0.220)
Special municipality	0.1538 (0.130)	0.0125 (0.142)	-0.0557 (0.112)	-0.1037 (0.140)	0.0910 (0.140)	-0.1665 (0.128)	-0.2108 (0.158)
Economic satisfaction	-0.0147 (0.035)	0.1217*** (0.038)	0.0260 (0.030)	0.1320*** (0.037)	-0.0697* (0.037)	-0.0739** (0.034)	-0.1029** (0.042)
Political distrust	0.0870** (0.034)	-0.0591 (0.038)	0.0189 (0.030)	-0.1172*** (0.037)	-0.0169 (0.037)	-0.0331 (0.034)	-0.0178 (0.042)
Political interest	-0.0220 (0.079)	0.1081 (0.087)	-0.0575 (0.068)	-0.0356 (0.085)	-0.0993 (0.085)	-0.1079 (0.078)	-0.0932 (0.096)
Partisanship pan-Green	-0.1794 (0.169)	0.4102** (0.184)	-0.2137 (0.146)	-0.0046 (0.182)	0.1559 (0.181)	0.2625 (0.166)	-0.0929 (0.205)
Partisanship Third Force	-0.0740 (0.247)	0.5359** (0.269)	-0.0595 (0.213)	-0.0088 (0.265)	0.1559 (0.265)	0.3562 (0.242)	0.0485 (0.299)
Independents	0.1509 (0.165)	0.2062 (0.180)	-0.2856** (0.142)	-0.1688 (0.177)	0.0604 (0.176)	0.0509 (0.161)	-0.0147 (0.199)
Locus of control	-0.0523 (0.035)	0.0547 (0.039)	0.0457 (0.030)	0.0208 (0.038)	0.0663* (0.038)	0.1132*** (0.035)	0.1023** (0.043)
Social of dominance	0.0458 (0.029)	0.1320*** (0.032)	0.0909*** (0.025)	0.0123 (0.031)	0.0446 (0.031)	-0.0370 (0.028)	-0.2609*** (0.035)
Right wing authoritarianism	-2.2428*** (0.411)	-0.5590 (0.448)	0.1578 (0.354)	0.7376* (0.441)	0.0477 (0.440)	0.0523 (0.403)	2.8059*** (0.497)
Gender bias	-0.2369 (0.392)	0.4840 (0.428)	-0.8355** (0.337)	-0.0679 (0.421)	-0.4619 (0.420)	0.1043 (0.384)	-0.1188 (0.474)
General knowledge	0.1017 (0.194)	-0.3391 (0.212)	0.0487 (0.167)	0.4253** (0.209)	0.2438 (0.208)	-0.1266 (0.191)	-0.2764 (0.235)
Left - right	0.0168 (0.035)	0.0386 (0.038)	-0.0974*** (0.030)	-0.0966** (0.038)	-0.1275*** (0.037)	-0.1404*** (0.034)	-0.1534*** (0.042)
Constant	4.5299*** (0.789)	3.5612*** (0.861)	5.7046*** (0.680)	3.7354*** (0.874)	5.4828*** (0.846)	8.3799*** (0.773)	7.2334*** (0.955)
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
R-squared	0.0897	0.0573	0.0712	0.1039	0.0324	0.0382	0.1161

Reading notes : Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

Table B4.2 - The effect of social stratification on neoliberal beliefs

	Private ownership			Personal responsibility			Natural competition			Personal Wherewithal		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)	(IX)	(X)	(XI)	(XII)
Poor		- 0.8502*** (0.279)	- 0.6942*** (0.243)		- 0.8127*** (0.304)	-0.0293 (0.265)		-0.1337 (0.241)	0.0668 (0.209)		-0.1489 (0.300)	0.1344 (0.261)
Self - Employee & Farmer	0.8502*** (0.279)		0.1560 (0.320)	0.8127*** (0.304)		0.7833** (0.349)	0.1337 (0.241)		0.2006 (0.276)	0.1489 (0.300)		0.2833 (0.344)
Manual & Service	0.5058** (0.234)	-0.3444 (0.315)	-0.1884 (0.275)	0.1020 (0.255)	-0.7107** (0.343)	0.0727 (0.299)	-0.3622* (0.202)	-0.4959* (0.271)	-0.2954 (0.237)	-0.1134 (0.252)	-0.2622 (0.338)	0.0211 (0.295)
Intermediate service	0.5727*** (0.215)	-0.2775 (0.302)	-0.1215 (0.247)	-0.0173 (0.235)	-0.8300** (0.329)	-0.0466 (0.270)	-0.1629 (0.186)	-0.2967 (0.260)	-0.0961 (0.213)	0.1199 (0.231)	-0.0290 (0.325)	0.2543 (0.266)
Manager	0.6942*** (0.243)	-0.1560 (0.320)		0.0293 (0.265)	-0.7833** (0.349)		-0.0668 (0.209)	-0.2006 (0.276)		-0.1344 (0.261)	-0.2833 (0.344)	
Retired & inactive	0.2813 (0.188)	-0.5689** (0.288)	-0.4129* (0.246)	0.1305 (0.205)	-0.6822** (0.314)	0.1011 (0.269)	-0.1660 (0.162)	-0.2997 (0.248)	-0.0991 (0.212)	-0.0672 (0.202)	-0.2160 (0.309)	0.0673 (0.265)
Idiosyncratic	0.5225 (0.586)	-0.3277 (0.619)	-0.1717 (0.600)	0.4994 (0.639)	-0.3133 (0.675)	0.4700 (0.654)	-0.1827 (0.506)	-0.3164 (0.534)	-0.1158 (0.518)	0.3424 (0.630)	0.1935 (0.666)	0.4768 (0.645)
Rich	1.6790*** (0.390)	0.8289* (0.437)	0.9848** (0.402)	0.0565 (0.425)	-0.7561 (0.477)	0.0272 (0.438)	0.4186 (0.336)	0.2849 (0.377)	0.4854 (0.347)	0.4751 (0.419)	0.3262 (0.470)	0.6095 (0.432)
Male	0.3732*** (0.130)	0.3732*** (0.130)	0.3732*** (0.130)	0.1579 (0.142)	0.1579 (0.142)	0.1579 (0.142)	0.6238*** (0.112)	0.6238*** (0.112)	0.6238*** (0.112)	0.1777 (0.140)	0.1777 (0.140)	0.1777 (0.140)
Age	0.0593** (0.025)	0.0593** (0.025)	0.0593** (0.025)	0.0021 (0.027)	0.0021 (0.027)	0.0021 (0.027)	0.0405* (0.022)	0.0405* (0.022)	0.0405* (0.022)	0.0791*** (0.027)	0.0791*** (0.027)	0.0791*** (0.027)
Age squared	-0.0005* (0.000)	-0.0005* (0.000)	-0.0005* (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0004* (0.000)	-0.0004* (0.000)	-0.0004* (0.000)	-0.0006** (0.000)	-0.0006** (0.000)	-0.0006** (0.000)
Children	-0.1076 (0.183)	-0.1076 (0.183)	-0.1076 (0.183)	-0.3051 (0.199)	-0.3051 (0.199)	-0.3051 (0.199)	0.1853 (0.158)	0.1853 (0.158)	0.1853 (0.158)	0.5854*** (0.197)	0.5854*** (0.197)	0.5854*** (0.197)
Special municipality	0.1524 (0.131)	0.1524 (0.131)	0.1524 (0.131)	0.0243 (0.142)	0.0243 (0.142)	0.0243 (0.142)	-0.0472 (0.113)	-0.0472 (0.113)	-0.0472 (0.113)	-0.0973 (0.141)	-0.0973 (0.141)	-0.0973 (0.141)
Economic satisfaction	-0.0149 (0.035)	-0.0149 (0.035)	-0.0149 (0.035)	0.1203*** (0.038)	0.1203*** (0.038)	0.1203*** (0.038)	0.0226 (0.030)	0.0226 (0.030)	0.0226 (0.030)	0.1316*** (0.037)	0.1316*** (0.037)	0.1316*** (0.037)
Political distrust	0.0893*** (0.034)	0.0893*** (0.034)	0.0893*** (0.034)	-0.0584 (0.038)	-0.0584 (0.038)	-0.0584 (0.038)	0.0197 (0.030)	0.0197 (0.030)	0.0197 (0.030)	- (0.037)	- (0.037)	- (0.037)
Political interest	-0.0289 (0.080)	-0.0289 (0.080)	-0.0289 (0.080)	0.1044 (0.087)	0.1044 (0.087)	0.1044 (0.087)	-0.0562 (0.069)	-0.0562 (0.069)	-0.0562 (0.069)	-0.0432 (0.086)	-0.0432 (0.086)	-0.0432 (0.086)
Partisanship pan-Green	-0.1963 (0.170)	-0.1963 (0.170)	-0.1963 (0.170)	0.3856** (0.185)	0.3856** (0.185)	0.3856** (0.185)	-0.2313 (0.146)	-0.2313 (0.146)	-0.2313 (0.146)	-0.0104 (0.182)	-0.0104 (0.182)	-0.0104 (0.182)
Partisanship Third Force	-0.0705 (0.247)	-0.0705 (0.247)	-0.0705 (0.247)	0.5703** (0.270)	0.5703** (0.270)	0.5703** (0.270)	-0.0514 (0.213)	-0.0514 (0.213)	-0.0514 (0.213)	-0.0002 (0.266)	-0.0002 (0.266)	-0.0002 (0.266)
Independents	0.1463 (0.165)	0.1463 (0.165)	0.1463 (0.165)	0.2091 (0.180)	0.2091 (0.180)	0.2091 (0.180)	-0.2871** (0.142)	-0.2871** (0.142)	-0.2871** (0.142)	-0.1683 (0.177)	-0.1683 (0.177)	-0.1683 (0.177)
Locus of control	-0.0521 (0.035)	-0.0521 (0.035)	-0.0521 (0.035)	0.0553 (0.039)	0.0553 (0.039)	0.0553 (0.039)	0.0466 (0.031)	0.0466 (0.031)	0.0466 (0.031)	0.0205 (0.038)	0.0205 (0.038)	0.0205 (0.038)
Social dominance	0.0456 (0.029)	0.0456 (0.029)	0.0456 (0.029)	0.1381*** (0.032)	0.1381*** (0.032)	0.1381*** (0.032)	0.0919*** (0.025)	0.0919*** (0.025)	0.0919*** (0.025)	0.0143 (0.031)	0.0143 (0.031)	0.0143 (0.031)
Right wing authoritarianism	- 2.2431*** (0.413)	- 2.2431*** (0.413)	- 2.2431*** (0.413)	-0.6228 (0.451)	-0.6228 (0.451)	-0.6228 (0.451)	0.1843 (0.356)	0.1843 (0.356)	0.1843 (0.356)	0.7273 (0.444)	0.7273 (0.444)	0.7273 (0.444)
Gender bias	-0.2152 (0.392)	-0.2152 (0.392)	-0.2152 (0.392)	0.4622 (0.428)	0.4622 (0.428)	0.4622 (0.428)	-0.8344** (0.338)	-0.8344** (0.338)	-0.8344** (0.338)	-0.0844 (0.422)	-0.0844 (0.422)	-0.0844 (0.422)
General knowledge	0.1301 (0.195)	0.1301 (0.195)	0.1301 (0.195)	-0.2988 (0.213)	-0.2988 (0.213)	-0.2988 (0.213)	0.0612 (0.168)	0.0612 (0.168)	0.0612 (0.168)	0.4417** (0.210)	0.4417** (0.210)	0.4417** (0.210)
Left - right	0.0221 (0.035)	0.0221 (0.035)	0.0221 (0.035)	0.0438 (0.038)	0.0438 (0.038)	0.0438 (0.038)	0.0966*** (0.030)	0.0966*** (0.030)	0.0966*** (0.030)	-0.0958** (0.038)	-0.0958** (0.038)	-0.0958** (0.038)
Constant	4.1853*** (0.785)	5.0354*** (0.841)	4.8795*** (0.821)	3.5453*** (0.856)	4.3579*** (0.918)	3.5746*** (0.895)	5.8925*** (0.677)	6.0262*** (0.726)	5.8257*** (0.708)	3.7674*** (0.844)	3.9163*** (0.905)	3.6330*** (0.883)
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
R-squared	0.0938	0.0938	0.0938	0.0630	0.0630	0.0630	0.0741	0.0741	0.0741	0.1055	0.1055	0.1055

Reading notes : Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerper et al., 2022).

Table B4.3 - The effect of social stratification on preferences for neoliberal policies

	Policy Tax			Policy Unemployment			Policy income equal		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)	(IX)
Poor		0.1485 (0.299)	-0.1355 (0.260)		-0.2282 (0.273)	0.1204 (0.238)		-0.0472 (0.337)	0.7046** (0.293)
Self - Employee & farmer	-0.1485 (0.299)		-0.2839 (0.343)	0.2282 (0.273)		0.3485 (0.314)	0.0472 (0.337)		0.7519* (0.386)
Manual & Service	-0.5522** (0.251)	-0.4037 (0.337)	-0.6876** (0.294)	-0.2963 (0.229)	-0.5245* (0.308)	-0.1760 (0.269)	-0.0164 (0.282)	-0.0636 (0.380)	0.6882** (0.331)
Intermediate service	0.0080 (0.231)	0.1564 (0.323)	-0.1275 (0.265)	0.1040 (0.211)	-0.1242 (0.296)	0.2243 (0.242)	-0.1001 (0.260)	-0.1473 (0.364)	0.6046** (0.298)
Manager	0.1355 (0.260)	0.2839 (0.343)		-0.1204 (0.238)	-0.3485 (0.314)		-0.7046** (0.293)	-0.7519* (0.386)	
Retired & inactive	0.0760 (0.201)	0.2244 (0.308)	-0.0595 (0.264)	0.0541 (0.184)	-0.1741 (0.282)	0.1744 (0.241)	0.2898 (0.227)	0.2426 (0.347)	0.9945*** (0.297)
Idiosyncratic	0.0183 (0.628)	0.1667 (0.663)	-0.1172 (0.643)	-0.8463 (0.574)	-1.0745* (0.607)	-0.7260 (0.588)	0.7641 (0.707)	0.7168 (0.747)	1.4687** (0.724)
Rich	-0.4929 (0.417)	-0.3444 (0.469)	-0.6283 (0.431)	-0.2820 (0.382)	-0.5102 (0.429)	-0.1617 (0.394)	-0.7326 (0.470)	-0.7798 (0.528)	-0.0279 (0.485)
Male	0.2991** (0.139)	0.2991** (0.139)	0.2991** (0.139)	0.0052 (0.127)	0.0052 (0.127)	0.0052 (0.127)	-0.0977 (0.157)	-0.0977 (0.157)	-0.0977 (0.157)
Age	0.0610** (0.027)	0.0610** (0.027)	0.0610** (0.027)	-0.0015 (0.025)	-0.0015 (0.025)	-0.0015 (0.025)	0.0232 (0.030)	0.0232 (0.030)	0.0232 (0.030)
Age squared	-0.0005** (0.000)	-0.0005** (0.000)	-0.0005** (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)
Children	0.0320 (0.196)	0.0320 (0.196)	0.0320 (0.196)	0.0634 (0.179)	0.0634 (0.179)	0.0634 (0.179)	0.1502 (0.221)	0.1502 (0.221)	0.1502 (0.221)
Special municipality	0.1076 (0.140)	0.1076 (0.140)	0.1076 (0.140)	-0.1628 (0.128)	-0.1628 (0.128)	-0.1628 (0.128)	-0.1956 (0.158)	-0.1956 (0.158)	-0.1956 (0.158)
Economic satisfaction	-0.0779** (0.037)	-0.0779** (0.037)	-0.0779** (0.037)	-0.0748** (0.034)	-0.0748** (0.034)	-0.0748** (0.034)	-0.1015** (0.042)	-0.1015** (0.042)	-0.1015** (0.042)
Political distrust	-0.0168 (0.037)	-0.0168 (0.037)	-0.0168 (0.037)	-0.0330 (0.034)	-0.0330 (0.034)	-0.0330 (0.034)	-0.0200 (0.042)	-0.0200 (0.042)	-0.0200 (0.042)
Political interest	-0.0907 (0.085)	-0.0907 (0.085)	-0.0907 (0.085)	-0.1037 (0.078)	-0.1037 (0.078)	-0.1037 (0.078)	-0.0963 (0.096)	-0.0963 (0.096)	-0.0963 (0.096)
Partisanship	0.1510 (0.182)	0.1510 (0.182)	0.1510 (0.182)	0.2330 (0.166)	0.2330 (0.166)	0.2330 (0.166)	-0.0825 (0.205)	-0.0825 (0.205)	-0.0825 (0.205)
pan-Green	0.1537 (0.265)	0.1537 (0.265)	0.1537 (0.265)	0.3454 (0.242)	0.3454 (0.242)	0.3454 (0.242)	0.0808 (0.298)	0.0808 (0.298)	0.0808 (0.298)
Third Force	0.0660 (0.177)	0.0660 (0.177)	0.0660 (0.177)	0.0315 (0.162)	0.0315 (0.162)	0.0315 (0.162)	-0.0033 (0.199)	-0.0033 (0.199)	-0.0033 (0.199)
Independents	0.0660 (0.177)	0.0660 (0.177)	0.0660 (0.177)	0.0315 (0.162)	0.0315 (0.162)	0.0315 (0.162)	-0.0033 (0.199)	-0.0033 (0.199)	-0.0033 (0.199)
Locus of control	0.0684* (0.038)	0.0684* (0.038)	0.0684* (0.038)	0.1124*** (0.035)	0.1124*** (0.035)	0.1124*** (0.035)	0.1013** (0.043)	0.1013** (0.043)	0.1013** (0.043)
Social dominance	0.0416 (0.031)	0.0416 (0.031)	0.0416 (0.031)	-0.0341 (0.029)	-0.0341 (0.029)	-0.0341 (0.029)	-0.2524*** (0.035)	-0.2524*** (0.035)	-0.2524*** (0.035)
Right wing authoritarianism	0.1554 (0.443)	0.1554 (0.443)	0.1554 (0.443)	0.1098 (0.405)	0.1098 (0.405)	0.1098 (0.405)	2.7061*** (0.499)	2.7061*** (0.499)	2.7061*** (0.499)
Gender bias	-0.4596 (0.420)	-0.4596 (0.420)	-0.4596 (0.420)	0.0908 (0.384)	0.0908 (0.384)	0.0908 (0.384)	-0.2018 (0.473)	-0.2018 (0.473)	-0.2018 (0.473)
General knowledge	0.2244 (0.209)	0.2244 (0.209)	0.2244 (0.209)	-0.1237 (0.191)	-0.1237 (0.191)	-0.1237 (0.191)	-0.2727 (0.235)	-0.2727 (0.235)	-0.2727 (0.235)
Left - right	-0.1338*** (0.038)	-0.1338*** (0.038)	-0.1338*** (0.038)	-0.1419*** (0.034)	-0.1419*** (0.034)	-0.1419*** (0.034)	-0.1567*** (0.042)	-0.1567*** (0.042)	-0.1567*** (0.042)
Constant	5.4257*** (0.841)	5.2772*** (0.901)	5.5612*** (0.879)	8.2935*** (0.769)	8.5216*** (0.825)	8.1731*** (0.804)	7.0971*** (0.947)	7.1444*** (1.015)	6.3925*** (0.991)
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
R-squared	0.0384	0.0384	0.0384	0.0435	0.0435	0.0435	0.1255	0.1255	0.1255

Reading notes : Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerper et al., 2022).

Alternative Sociological Stratification

Table B4.4 - Methodology and distribution of the alternative sociological stratification variable

Goldthorpe original scheme	The revised Goldthorpe scheme by Hsia and So (1999)	Our classification*	%
I- Higher-grade professionals II- Lower-grade professionals	Capitalist (employers hire 20 or more employees in I or II) New middle class (the rest of class I and II)	Professional or technical and higher administrative who are self-employed Professional or technical and higher administrative who are not self-employed	18.90%
IVa- Small employers with employee IVb- Small employers without employee	Old middle class= IVa + IVb	Clerical or sales or service who are self - employed	13.54%
IIIa- Routine non-manual employees IIIb- Personal service workers	Marginal middle class= IIIa + IIIb	Clerical or Sales or Service who are not self-employed	20.24%
V- Technicians and supervisors VIa- Skilled workers VIIa- Semi/ non-skilled workers	Working class= V + VIa + VIIa	Skilled or semi-skilled or unskilled worker	13.54%
IVc- farmers VIIb- Agricultural workers	Farmers/ farm labor= IVc + VIIb	Farm worker and Farm owner	0.85%

Reading notes : Our classification is based on question 281 of the WVS for the variable occupation and question 279 for the employment status. All categories do not add up to 100% as we are basing our calculations on our middle-income stratum sample (n=820). Inactive people represent 32.93% of the respondents in our sample.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data ([Haerpfer et al., 2022](#)).

Table B4.5 - Comparison of group distribution between alternative sociological classification and multidimensional approach

	Middle-income group (n=820)	Self-Employee and farmer (9.68%)	Manual and service employees (15.85%) %	Intermediate service workers (23.29%)	Managerial (16.34%)	Retired & inactive (32.93%)	Idiosyncratic (1.83%)
Old middle class	13.54% (0.40)	63.06%*** (0.48)	26.13% (0.30)	9.91%*** (0.44)	0.90%*** (0.09)	0.00% (0.00)	0.00%** (0.00)
Working class ^a	14.39% (0.41)	8.47%** (0.28)	49.15%*** (0.49)	38.14% (0.50)	4.24%*** (0.20)	0.00% (0.00)	0.00%** (0.00)
Marginal middle class	20.24% (0.46)	0.00%*** (0.00)	24.09% (0.48)	64.47%*** (0.43)	10.84%*** (0.31)	0.00 (0.00)	0.60%*** (0.08)
New middle class	18.90% (0.45)	0.00%*** (0.00)	1.94%*** (0.39)	18.06%*** (0.14)	70.97%*** (0.46)	0.00% (0.00)	9.03%*** (0.29)
Retired & inactive	32.93% (0.00)	0.00% (0.00)	0.00% (0.00)	0.00% (0.00)	0.00% (0.00)	100.00% (0.00)	0.00% (0.00)

Reading notes : Shaded (bold) cells denote the values that are statistically significantly higher (lower) in the cluster than in the rest of the middle class (i.e. excluding the cluster concerned). Adjusted standardised residuals of Chi2 for categorical variables ($p < 0.05$) and independent samples t-test for continuous variables ($p < 0.10$). ^aWe modified [Hsiao & So \(1999\)](#) design by combining the working class and the agricultural workforce into one category, due to the small sample size of the latter.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data ([Haerpfer et al., 2022](#)).

Table B4.6 - The effect of social stratification based on a sociological approach on neoliberal beliefs (Ordinal logistic regression estimation)

	Private ownership			Personal responsibility			Natural competition			Personal Wherewithal		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)	(IX)	(X)	(XI)	(XII)
Poor		- 0.6854*** (0.207)	- 0.6737*** (0.188)		-0.3709* (0.205)	-0.1523 (0.186)		-0.1753 (0.209)	0.1607 (0.184)		-0.0440 (0.214)	0.2169 (0.183)
Old middle class	0.6854*** (0.207)		0.0117 (0.228)	0.3709* (0.205)		0.2186 (0.226)	0.1753 (0.209)		0.3359 (0.226)	0.0440 (0.214)		0.2609 (0.234)
Marginal middle class	0.2942 (0.18)	-0.3913* (0.228)	-0.3796* (0.199)	0.0018 (0.180)	-0.3691 (0.225)	-0.1505 (0.197)	-0.1686 (0.180)	-0.3438 (0.228)	-0.0079 (0.192)	0.1120 (0.179)	0.0680 (0.235)	
Working class	0.4384** (0.203)	-0.2471 (0.244)	-0.2354 (0.226)	-0.0400 (0.197)	-0.4109* (0.238)	-0.1923 (0.217)	-0.4796** (0.198)	- 0.6548*** (0.243)	-0.3189 (0.214)	-0.0619 (0.197)	-0.1059 (0.248)	0.1550 (0.215)
New middle class	0.6737*** (0.188)	-0.0117 (0.228)		0.1523 (0.186)	-0.2186 (0.226)		-0.1607 (0.184)	-0.3359 (0.226)		-0.2169 (0.183)	-0.2609 (0.234)	
Retired & inactive	0.1884 (0.151)	-0.4970** (0.211)	-0.4853** (0.191)	0.0333 (0.152)	-0.3376 (0.208)	-0.1190 (0.187)	-0.1606 (0.155)	-0.3359 (0.213)	0.0001 (0.186)	-0.0825 (0.151)	-0.1265 (0.217)	0.1344 (0.184)
Rich	1.4584*** (0.331)	0.7729** (0.349)	0.7846** (0.333)	0.0644 (0.322)	-0.3065 (0.343)	-0.0879 (0.327)	0.4515 (0.325)	0.2762 (0.346)	0.6121* (0.326)	0.2821 (0.316)	0.2381 (0.343)	0.4990 (0.317)
Male	0.3026*** (0.108)	0.3026*** (0.108)	0.3026*** (0.108)	0.1132 (0.107)	0.1132 (0.107)	0.1132 (0.107)	0.6077*** (0.109)	0.6077*** (0.109)	0.6077*** (0.109)	0.1543 (0.107)	0.1543 (0.107)	0.1543 (0.107)
Age	0.0320 (0.020)	0.0320 (0.020)	0.0320 (0.020)	0.0091 (0.020)	0.0091 (0.020)	0.0091 (0.020)	0.0366* (0.021)	0.0366* (0.021)	0.0366* (0.021)	0.0608*** (0.020)	0.0608*** (0.020)	0.0608*** (0.020)
Age squared	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0001 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0003 (0.000)	-0.0005** (0.000)	-0.0005** (0.000)	-0.0005** (0.000)
Children	-0.0410 (0.146)	-0.0410 (0.146)	-0.0410 (0.146)	-0.2145 (0.144)	-0.2145 (0.144)	-0.2145 (0.144)	0.2009 (0.146)	0.2009 (0.146)	0.2009 (0.146)	0.4358*** (0.147)	0.4358*** (0.147)	0.4358*** (0.147)
Special municipality	0.1173 (0.106)	0.1173 (0.106)	0.1173 (0.106)	0.0499 (0.105)	0.0499 (0.105)	0.0499 (0.105)	-0.0897 (0.106)	-0.0897 (0.106)	-0.0897 (0.106)	-0.0943 (0.105)	-0.0943 (0.105)	-0.0943 (0.105)
Economic satisfaction	-0.0073 (0.029)	-0.0073 (0.029)	-0.0073 (0.029)	0.0960*** (0.029)	0.0960*** (0.029)	0.0960*** (0.029)	0.0197 (0.029)	0.0197 (0.029)	0.0197 (0.029)	0.1087*** (0.029)	0.1087*** (0.029)	0.1087*** (0.029)
Political distrust	0.0724** (0.028)	0.0724** (0.028)	0.0724** (0.028)	-0.0463 (0.028)	-0.0463 (0.028)	-0.0463 (0.028)	0.0132 (0.028)	0.0132 (0.028)	0.0132 (0.028)	- 0.0843*** (0.028)	- 0.0843*** (0.028)	- 0.0843*** (0.028)
Political interest	-0.0418 (0.066)	-0.0418 (0.066)	-0.0418 (0.066)	0.0781 (0.065)	0.0781 (0.065)	0.0781 (0.065)	-0.0267 (0.066)	-0.0267 (0.066)	-0.0267 (0.066)	-0.0408 (0.065)	-0.0408 (0.065)	-0.0408 (0.065)
Partisanship pan-Green	-0.1604 (0.139)	-0.1604 (0.139)	-0.1604 (0.139)	0.3214** (0.138)	0.3214** (0.138)	0.3214** (0.138)	-0.2459* (0.138)	-0.2459* (0.138)	-0.2459* (0.138)	-0.0004 (0.137)	-0.0004 (0.137)	-0.0004 (0.137)
Partisanship Third Force	-0.0903 (0.206)	-0.0903 (0.206)	-0.0903 (0.206)	0.3580* (0.201)	0.3580* (0.201)	0.3580* (0.201)	-0.0619 (0.194)	-0.0619 (0.194)	-0.0619 (0.194)	0.0056 (0.196)	0.0056 (0.196)	0.0056 (0.196)
Independents	0.1267 (0.131)	0.1267 (0.131)	0.1267 (0.131)	0.1370 (0.130)	0.1370 (0.130)	0.1370 (0.130)	-0.3158** (0.136)	-0.3158** (0.136)	-0.3158** (0.136)	-0.1764 (0.133)	-0.1764 (0.133)	-0.1764 (0.133)
Locus of control	-0.0446 (0.029)	-0.0446 (0.029)	-0.0446 (0.029)	0.0465 (0.029)	0.0465 (0.029)	0.0465 (0.029)	0.0701** (0.030)	0.0701** (0.030)	0.0701** (0.030)	0.0312 (0.030)	0.0312 (0.030)	0.0312 (0.030)
Social dominance	0.0339 (0.026)	0.0339 (0.026)	0.0339 (0.026)	0.1124*** (0.026)	0.1124*** (0.026)	0.1124*** (0.026)	0.1200*** (0.026)	0.1200*** (0.026)	0.1200*** (0.026)	0.0145 (0.025)	0.0145 (0.025)	0.0145 (0.025)
Right wing authoritarianism	- 1.9491*** (0.343)	- 1.9491*** (0.343)	- 1.9491*** (0.343)	-0.3606 (0.339)	-0.3606 (0.339)	-0.3606 (0.339)	0.4266 (0.345)	0.4266 (0.345)	0.4266 (0.345)	0.8329** (0.341)	0.8329** (0.341)	0.8329** (0.341)
Gender bias	-0.1352 (0.320)	-0.1352 (0.320)	-0.1352 (0.320)	0.3625 (0.324)	0.3625 (0.324)	0.3625 (0.324)	- 0.9216*** (0.323)	- 0.9216*** (0.323)	- 0.9216*** (0.323)	-0.0481 (0.321)	-0.0481 (0.321)	-0.0481 (0.321)
General knowledge	0.0576 (0.165)	0.0576 (0.165)	0.0576 (0.165)	-0.2611 (0.162)	-0.2611 (0.162)	-0.2611 (0.162)	0.0557 (0.160)	0.0557 (0.160)	0.0557 (0.160)	0.3334** (0.163)	0.3334** (0.163)	0.3334** (0.163)
Left - right	0.0095 (0.030)	0.0095 (0.030)	0.0095 (0.030)	0.0318 (0.030)	0.0318 (0.030)	0.0318 (0.030)	- 0.1475*** (0.031)	- 0.1475*** (0.031)	- 0.1475*** (0.031)	- 0.0937*** (0.030)	- 0.0937*** (0.030)	- 0.0937*** (0.030)
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
Pseudo R-squared	0.0243	0.0243	0.0243	0.0151	0.0151	0.0151	0.0285	0.0285	0.0285	0.0295	0.0295	0.0295

Reading notes : The ordered log-odds regression coefficients are reported. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%***, and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

Table B4.7 - The effect of social stratification based on a sociological approach on preferences for neoliberal policies (Ordinal logistic regression estimation)

	Policy Tax			Policy Unemployment			Policy income equal		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)	(VII)	(VIII)	(IX)
Poor		0.2516 (0.205)	-0.1045 (0.184)		-0.0670 (0.204)	0.1029 (0.184)		0.2120 (0.203)	0.2253 (0.187)
Old middle class	-0.2516 (0.205)		-0.3561 (0.228)	0.0670 (0.204)		0.1699 (0.226)	-0.2120 (0.203)		0.0132 (0.227)
Marginal middle class	-0.4581** (0.179)	-0.2065 (0.227)	-0.5626*** (0.195)	-0.1173 (0.180)	-0.1843 (0.227)	-0.0144 (0.197)	-0.1494 (0.179)	0.0626 (0.226)	0.0758 (0.199)
Working class	0.1658 (0.200)	0.4174* (0.244)	0.0613 (0.221)	0.1925 (0.199)	0.1255 (0.243)	0.2954 (0.221)	0.1328 (0.198)	0.3448 (0.240)	0.3581 (0.221)
New middle class	0.1045 (0.184)	0.3561 (0.228)		-0.1029 (0.184)	-0.1699 (0.226)		-0.2253 (0.187)	-0.0132 (0.227)	
Retired & inactive	0.0109 (0.150)	0.2625 (0.210)	-0.0936 (0.187)	0.0737 (0.151)	0.0068 (0.210)	0.1767 (0.187)	0.1596 (0.151)	0.3716* (0.208)	0.3848** (0.189)
Rich	-0.2950 (0.333)	-0.0434 (0.356)	-0.3995 (0.338)	-0.0332 (0.358)	-0.1001 (0.379)	0.0698 (0.363)	-0.4772 (0.332)	-0.2652 (0.354)	-0.2520 (0.337)
Male	0.1594 (0.106)	0.1594 (0.106)	0.1594 (0.106)	-0.0184 (0.107)	-0.0184 (0.107)	-0.0184 (0.107)	-0.0930 (0.108)	-0.0930 (0.108)	-0.0930 (0.108)
Age	0.0564*** (0.020)	0.0564*** (0.020)	0.0564*** (0.020)	0.0031 (0.020)	0.0031 (0.020)	0.0031 (0.020)	0.0204 (0.020)	0.0204 (0.020)	0.0204 (0.020)
Age squared	-0.0005*** (0.000)	-0.0005*** (0.000)	-0.0005*** (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)	-0.0002 (0.000)
Children	0.0536 (0.147)	0.0536 (0.147)	0.0536 (0.147)	0.0860 (0.147)	0.0860 (0.147)	0.0860 (0.147)	0.1127 (0.149)	0.1127 (0.149)	0.1127 (0.149)
Special municipality	0.0620 (0.105)	0.0620 (0.105)	0.0620 (0.105)	-0.1630 (0.106)	-0.1630 (0.106)	-0.1630 (0.106)	-0.1327 (0.105)	-0.1327 (0.105)	-0.1327 (0.105)
Economic satisfaction	-0.0575* (0.029)	-0.0575* (0.029)	-0.0575* (0.029)	-0.0584** (0.029)	-0.0584** (0.029)	-0.0584** (0.029)	-0.0671** (0.029)	-0.0671** (0.029)	-0.0671** (0.029)
Political distrust	-0.0156 (0.0283)	-0.0156 (0.0283)	-0.0156 (0.0283)	-0.0267 (0.0283)	-0.0267 (0.0283)	-0.0267 (0.0283)	-0.0138 (0.0282)	-0.0138 (0.0282)	-0.0138 (0.0282)
Political interest	-0.0886 (0.065)	-0.0886 (0.065)	-0.0886 (0.065)	-0.1114* (0.066)	-0.1114* (0.066)	-0.1114* (0.066)	-0.0666 (0.066)	-0.0666 (0.066)	-0.0666 (0.066)
Partisanship pan-Green	0.0656 (0.137)	0.0656 (0.137)	0.0656 (0.137)	0.1413 (0.138)	0.1413 (0.138)	0.1413 (0.138)	-0.0912 (0.138)	-0.0912 (0.138)	-0.0912 (0.138)
Partisanship Third Force	0.1305 (0.194)	0.1305 (0.194)	0.1305 (0.194)	0.2635 (0.200)	0.2635 (0.200)	0.2635 (0.200)	0.0325 (0.197)	0.0325 (0.197)	0.0325 (0.197)
Independents	-0.0230 (0.131)	-0.0230 (0.131)	-0.0230 (0.131)	-0.0268 (0.132)	-0.0268 (0.132)	-0.0268 (0.132)	-0.0092 (0.132)	-0.0092 (0.132)	-0.0092 (0.132)
Locus of control	0.0699** (0.030)	0.0699** (0.030)	0.0699** (0.030)	0.0986*** (0.030)	0.0986*** (0.030)	0.0986*** (0.030)	0.0729** (0.030)	0.0729** (0.030)	0.0729** (0.030)
Social dominance	0.0440* (0.025)	0.0440* (0.025)	0.0440* (0.025)	-0.0216 (0.025)	-0.0216 (0.025)	-0.0216 (0.025)	-0.1809*** (0.025)	-0.1809*** (0.025)	-0.1809*** (0.025)
Right wing authoritarianism	0.1108 (0.344)	0.1108 (0.344)	0.1108 (0.344)	0.0834 (0.342)	0.0834 (0.342)	0.0834 (0.342)	1.9422*** (0.348)	1.9422*** (0.348)	1.9422*** (0.348)
Gender bias	-0.4983 (0.324)	-0.4983 (0.324)	-0.4983 (0.324)	-0.0655 (0.321)	-0.0655 (0.321)	-0.0655 (0.321)	-0.2288 (0.320)	-0.2288 (0.320)	-0.2288 (0.320)
General knowledge	0.2217 (0.158)	0.2217 (0.158)	0.2217 (0.158)	-0.1064 (0.159)	-0.1064 (0.159)	-0.1064 (0.159)	-0.1730 (0.157)	-0.1730 (0.157)	-0.1730 (0.157)
Left - right	-0.1470*** (0.030)	-0.1470*** (0.030)	-0.1470*** (0.030)	-0.1625*** (0.030)	-0.1625*** (0.030)	-0.1625*** (0.030)	-0.1273*** (0.030)	-0.1273*** (0.030)	-0.1273*** (0.030)
N	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217	1,217
Pseudo R-squared	0.0141	0.0141	0.0141	0.0128	0.0128	0.0128	0.0298	0.0298	0.0298

Reading notes : The ordered log-odds regression coefficients are reported. Level of statistical significance : 1%***, 5%** , and 10%*.

Source : Author's own calculations based on the *World Values Survey* data (Haerpfer et al., 2022).

General Conclusion

This doctoral thesis consists of four essays in political economy, employing a multidisciplinary approach and utilizing a diverse array of quantitative methods. I will now summarize the main conclusions of these chapters, highlight gaps, and suggest avenues for future research.

In the **Chapter 1** of our dissertation, we examine the impact of the international context on the outbreak of civil wars, with a particular focus on interstate rivalries (Diehl & Goertz, 2000; Vasquez, 2004). The primary empirical contribution of this chapter lies in our approach, which goes beyond the analysis of direct rivalries, a common approach in the empirical literature for explaining the occurrence of civil wars (e.g. Bak et al., 2020; Rooney, 2018; Uzonyi, 2018; Toukan, 2019). We also consider indirect rivalries, i.e. relations between ‘allies of rivals’ and ‘rivals of allies’. To achieve this, we used the Social Network Analysis methodology (Wasserman & Faust, 1994) to measure these first-order (direct) and second-order (indirect) relationships. After controlling for spatial distances between rival countries, we demonstrate that 1) the presence of direct and indirect rivals exerts a positive and significant effect on the risk of civil war; 2) decreasing levels of the military capacity of one state relative to its rivals (direct and indirect) also influence the probability of internal conflict. We confirm the significance of our indicators by using, on the one hand, the random forest algorithm, a machine learning method using decision trees and on the other hand, the Kaplan-Meier estimate for the duration of the civil wars.

The findings from **Chapter 1** could benefit from several extensions and improvements. We have identified two main limitations in our approach to modelling international relations. First, our analysis is rooted in the realist paradigm, as we derive information about

the global network of alliances and indirect international relations by focusing solely on international rivalries (Goertz et al., 2016). However, we have overlooked the inclusion of “liberal ties”. In fact, the liberal paradigm for friendship relationships encompasses elements that represent common affinities and values, such as joint democracy, trade, and participation in international governmental organizations (Keohane & Martin, 1995; Russett & Oneal, 2001). Thus, states that are economically and politically interdependent (and thus amicable) are less likely to take advantage of each other. Similarly, indirect rivalry relationships can be influenced by structural affinity, i.e. a similarity in the links that rivals have with other states in the international system (Signorino & Ritter, 1999), whether these relationships are political or economic. In fact, the literature emphasises the importance of a third party to mitigate the risks of escalation between rival parties (McBride & Skaperdas, 2014). More generally, liberal affinities tend to foster stable perceptions and prevent opportunism and exploitation (Russett & Oneal, 2001). Hence, it would be pertinent to investigate whether these liberal affinities in direct rivalries, along with economic and political structural affinities in the case of indirect rivalries, reduce the likelihood of civil war compared to situations where these liberal ties are absent. Second, we have assumed that alliances and second-order relationships were balanced. However, some degree of imbalance does exist in international politics (Maoz et al., 2007), particularly in the Middle East, which has shown a greater susceptibility to imbalanced relations (Maoz & San Akca, 2018). An imbalanced relationship is when a first-order relationship of a particular type contradicts the logical outcome of a second-order relationship (e.g. the enemy of my enemy is my enemy, the ally of my ally is my enemy). It would be relevant to investigate whether states experiencing such imbalanced relationships have an effect on the occurrence of civil wars.

Chapter 2 delves into the subject of democratic regression, which is the process of regime change opposite to democratization. Leveraging long-term data from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project, we have identified 166 episodes of democratic regression in 100 countries spanning the years 1900 and 2019. These episodes correspond to continuous periods marked by a significant decline in democratic features within a regime, regardless of the initial level of democracy. The first contribution of this chapter is to provide a

global historical account of the dynamics and forms of democratic regression spells around the world. We demonstrate that the patterns have changed since the end of the Cold War, both in terms of the regions across the world and the types of regimes affected by this phenomenon. The second contribution is the identification of four different ‘modes’ of democratic regression, which are four different and specific patterns of deterioration of democratic attributes that occurred over the long period between 1900 and today. Specifically, we have identified the “democratic crumbling” which involves a gradual and incremental erosion of a political system’s democratic quality, primarily affecting dimensions like the electoral process and political rights and balances. The “electoral capture” where significant and radical regressions occur in two crucial dimensions of the electoral process—namely, the appointment of rulers through elections and the actual freedom and fairness of the electoral process. The “autocratic worsening” is characterized by a sustained period of progressive regression across all dimensions of political rights and civil liberties. It also involves substantial deteriorations in political competition and the weakening of judicial and legislative constraints on the executive branch. The “radical autocratization” encompasses the most abrupt and deepest episodes of democratic regression, marked by complete control of the electoral process and severe repression of individual political rights and liberties.

The results obtained in **Chapter 2** call for further research, and a path for future research has emerged, with the collaboration of E. Rougier. Similar to the approach taken in the recent study by [Funke et al. \(2020\)](#) which evaluated the effects of populist regimes on various economic and social outcomes, we will employ the event study method to assess how different patterns of democratic regression impact a limited set of economic outcomes (changes in GDP per capita, inequality, educational attainment, social stability, and macroeconomic stability) as well as policy-related outcomes (social rights, liberalization, and state control over the economy). We will utilize the synthetic control method ([Abadie et al., 2015](#)) that builds counterfactual countries to assess the impact of various modalities (regression of electoral processes or/and of political liberties) and intensities of change away from democracy. By combining information on democratic regressions and the parallel economic policies conducted by governments, we will also assess whether democratic

regression patterns that preserve markets are more favourable to economic progress than others.

The final two chapters of the thesis explore the microeconomic examination of economic and political preferences within the Taiwanese population. In **Chapter 3**, we study the demand side of populism in Taiwan. For that purpose, we use the data from Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study (TEDS) project from the 2016 and 2020 waves. To measure populist attitudes, we draw on Mudde's ideational definition of populism as a thin-centred ideology (Mudde, 2004; Mudde, 2007; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017) and conceptualize populism as a latent higher-order construct with two distinct and non-lower-order dimensions : anti-elitist attitudes and general support for popular sovereignty. The first objective of this chapter is to describe the socio-demographic and political profile of Taiwanese populist citizens. We observe that radical populists display considerable diversity in terms of their socio-demographic and economic characteristics. In contrast, moderate populists tend to have the profile of globalization's losers. Both moderate and radical populists exhibit lower internal efficiency, experience economic insecurity, and are more prone to express dissatisfaction with democracy, which may be a manifestation of political frustration among the most radical populists. Furthermore, populists tend to adopt right-wing positions in both economic and cultural preferences. The second objective of this chapter is to investigate whether individual preferences regarding independence and unification, have an effect on the development of populist attitudes. If there is an effect, we aim to discern which preferences have the most substantial effect on the development of populist attitudes. We find that populist attitudes are at the extreme ends of the spectrum of the unification-independence debate, as well as among those holding inconsistent positions on this issue. We have categorized these preferences into three groups based on their capacity to foster the formation of populist attitudes. The first group, labelled "weak populists", is made up of those who are most supportive of independence. The second group, termed "moderate populists", comprises inconsistent individuals as well as those expressing the second-strongest preference for unification. Finally, the last group, referred to as the "strong populists", consists exclusively of individuals who most strongly support the solution of unification.

The primary limitation of our study relates to our measurement of populist attitudes, which is incomplete. While we successfully addressed the anti-elitist aspect, we only partially assessed the people-centrism dimension. Our measure of populist attitudes focuses solely on the political aspect (the demand for popular sovereignty) of the people-centrism dimension and does not encompass the “homogeneity of the people” (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Oliver & Rahn, 2016 Schulz et al., 2018), a sub-component emphasizing a romanticized view of ordinary people as inherently ‘honest’ and ‘hard-working’. Additionally, we did not consider the dimension of anti-pluralist attitudes, which involves the belief that politics is a struggle between the ‘good’ (the people) and the ‘evil’ (the elites), with no other significant political divisions (Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Castanho Silva et al., 2022).

In **Chapter 4**, we examine neoliberal beliefs and political preferences among the Taiwanese middle class. This chapter has two main contributions. First, we propose a typology of the Taiwanese middle class. To do so, and based on the data of the seventh wave of the World Values Survey, we draw on the multidimensional and sequential approach of Bonnefond et al. (2015) (see also Combarrous et al., 2019, Clément et al., 2020; Clément et al., 2022). Using this methodology, we identify and characterise four active middle class components : self-employed and farmers, manual and service employees, intermediate service workers and managerial professionals. Additionally, we identify a group of retirees and inactive individuals, as well as an ‘idiosyncratic’ group. Second, we investigate whether middle class membership is a predictor of neoliberal attitudes and whether such economic preferences are homogenous within the Taiwanese middle class. We find that all active middle-income groups tend to favour more private ownership in businesses compared to the poor. Retirees and inactive individuals share similar preferences with the poor for increased government involvement in business ownership. Self-employed individuals and farmers, who strongly support limited government control in the economy among middle-income groups, are also the least likely to support increased government involvement in services and welfare, even more so than the rich. Among middle-income groups, manual workers and service workers are notably more inclined to view competition as detrimental. In terms of neoliberal policy, this latter group differs from other middle-income groups by not considering government taxation of the rich and subsidies for the poor as essential features of democracy. In

conclusion, the managerial group is less concerned about income equality compared to other middle-income groups.

This study has a significant limitation due to the nature of the relationships examined between belonging to a social group and holding neoliberal beliefs. This opens up the possibility of reverse causality, where it's unclear whether neoliberal beliefs influence career choices or if social class membership exposes individuals to neoliberal ideas, shaping their beliefs. There might be a complex, bidirectional relationship between social class and neoliberal beliefs, where each can influence the other. Consequently, caution is needed when interpreting the results, and further research may be required to fully grasp the nature of these relationships.

Lastly, it's worth noting that the two research themes of the last two chapters are interconnected and offer potential avenues for further research. An interesting area could involve a microeconomic analysis to investigate the impact of neoliberal beliefs on populist sentiments or voting for a populist leader. Indeed, the resurgence of income inequality, similar to levels observed in the early twentieth century in several Western countries ([Piketty, 2015](#)), can be attributed to neoliberal policies, which have exacerbated wealth disparities, contributed to non-inclusive economic growth and heightened economic insecurity among the working and middle classes ([Müllery, 2013](#)). The discontent with neoliberalism is considered a driving factor behind the rising appeal of populist leaders or attitudes. The rise of populism, exemplified by events such as the election of Donald Trump in the United States and the Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom, is often linked to widespread dissatisfaction with neoliberal policies (e.g. [Bettache & Chiu, 2019](#); [A. O' Donnell, 2018](#)). [Hartwich & Becker \(2019\)](#) showed in Germany and the United Kingdom that the increasing prominence of neoliberalism in public discourse intensifies feelings of alienation, perceived threat, injustice, and despair. These heightened emotions contribute to higher levels of anti-elitism, which is a component of populism. Conversely, in the United States, adherence to neoliberal beliefs appears to be aligned with populism. For example, [Panno et al. \(2019\)](#) identified an association between a neoliberal belief (aversion to wealth redistribution) and support for the populist figure of Donald Trump. Thus, the relationship between neoliberal beliefs and populism merits future examination.

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