

# **Class Voting in Western Europe - Do Various Class Schemas Make a Difference?**

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## Introduction and research problems

Political scientists and sociologists have in the last decades debated the salience of social class for political preference formation and voting behaviour. Some have argued that social class has become much less significant in this respect, while others have argued for the persistent significance of social class in advanced industrial democracies.<sup>1</sup>

In the discussion of class voting and preference formation in advanced industrial democracies, the class schema that is used to tap social class has been debated in recent years. The dichotomous class schema that in early studies of class voting differentiated between workers and “other classes” (as in the Alford index) has been replaced by more differentiated and sophisticated schemas. From around 1980 the dominant class schema used in sociological and voting studies has been the Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portecarero (EGP) class schema (Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portecarero 1979). The EGP class schema has first and foremost been associated with the writings of Robert Erikson and John H. Goldthorpe (Goldthorpe 1980; Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992). This schema is primarily based on a differentiated hierarchical class dimension (see below).

In recent years the EGP class schema has been challenged by a schema that is worked out by Daniel Oesch (2006a; 2006b). Oesch and others argue that this class schema taps the class structure in advanced (post) industrial societies better than the EGP schema because it incorporates changes in the class structure that has taken place in the last 30-40 years better than the EGP schema. Oesch argues that the class map has to be redrawn (away from the EGP schema) in order to integrate the “new” employment structure. The Oesch class schema includes a “horizontal” divisions based on different “work logics” (technical, organizational, interpersonal and independent) in addition to a hierarchical or vertical dimension.

Herbert Kitschelt (2013: 226-227) also argues that the EGP class framework does not account for the political preference formation and demand-side explanation of Radical Right party support. His critique of the schema is also more general. The schema places too strong emphasis on the political demands for redistributive politics. It is based on the assumption that people form political partisan preferences primarily on the bases of market income and that they vote accordingly. In order to predict partisan choice the EGP model need to be supplemented by other experiences.

The purpose of the present paper is to compare the two class schemas in relation to party choice. Which of them have the largest explanatory power with regard to party choice? Is the EGP schema outmoded and not able to explain party choice in present western democracies or do both schemas have significant explanatory power?

This will be done on the basis of the following research questions:

Do the various class schemas show significant different relationships between party choice and social class in the sense that one of the schemas tap class differences on party support that is not covered by the other schema?

Total class voting is the class differences in voting for all the parties in a party system. All social classes and all political parties are treated as separate categories on the two

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<sup>1</sup> See for example the various contributions in Clark and Lipset (2001) where several of the central scholars in the debate are discussing the issue.

variables. This paper analyses total class voting, not traditional class voting based on two dichotomous variables (leftist parties versus other parties and workers versus other classes) or overall left-right class voting (leftist parties versus parties using the EGP and Oesch class schema).<sup>2</sup> We focus much upon class voting for various party families by comparing the correlations between support for each party family and the EGP and Oesch classes.

### **The data source and the party systems**

The data source for this paper is EVS 2008 which is the fourth wave of the European Values Study. It covers all countries of Europe with a population of 100.000 or more. In this study we use the data from 18 West European countries.

Representative multi-stage or stratified random samples of the adult population of 18 years old and older were drawn. Face-to-face interviews with a standardized questionnaire were conducted in 2008-2010 (exceptions are Finland (internet panel) and Sweden (postal survey)).

The total number of respondents in the West European countries are approximately 1500 in most countries, but considerably smaller in some countries such as Iceland (808), Ireland (1013) and Norway (1090), and considerably more in Germany (2038)

The national weight variable that adjusts the socio-structural characteristic in the samples to the distribution of gender and age of the universe-populations is used consistently.

For German and Belgium data an additional country-specific weight variable is provided that includes a special weight factor for the regions of Germany (East- and West) and of Belgium (Brussels capital region, Flanders and Walloon region). This design weight corrects for the disproportional sample size of these regions in both countries.

In Table 1, the 18 countries are outlined. The table presents how they are grouped into regions of countries.

< Table 1 about here >

The grouping of the regions is done for being able to present main trends in the data material without going too much into details regarding the various countries, and it is based on the assumption that the countries within the regions have much in common that is relevant for the research problems. The most important variable in this respect in the party systems, but an important background variable is also the fact that the countries to a large extent belong to different welfare state regimes.

The classes in the EGP and Oesch schemas are coded on the basis of International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88) which is a detailed occupation variable that is available in the data set. The coding is done according to well-known coding

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<sup>2</sup> For an overview of different generations and types of class voting, see Knutsen (2007: 459-461). The study of total class voting represents a fourth generation in such studies. Examples of class voting studies within the framework of the fourth generation can be found in Evans (1999), Knutsen (2007) and Langsæther (2014).

schemas, and includes information about the respondents present or, if not working when interviewed, previous work.

In the EVS 2008 surveys the respondents were first asked the traditional question about voting intention “if there was a general election tomorrow”. If the respondents answered “Yes, I would vote”, they were asked which party they would vote for. There was then a follow-up question for those who replied that they would not vote. They were asked “Which party appeals to you most”. The number of those who indicated a specific party on this question is added to those who indicated a party on the voting intention question in the party choice variable used here. The party choice variable then aims at including as large a portion of the samples as possible, and then to increase to portion for which a partisan component is relevant. We name this variable “party choice” or “party preference” below, but it should be underscored that it is not a behavioural variable since it does not tap actual electoral voting behaviour. We would argue that vote choice in an actual election is more likely to be affected by a host of factors outside of political preference, such as short term scandals, campaign differences, or strategic voting. Asking what party they would vote for outside of campaigns might actually tap more stable political preference to a larger degree.

On country-level average 58.0% of the respondents indicate a party choice based on the question on voting intention. The average percentage increases to 68.9% when the best-liked party is included.

The parties are grouped into the party families. These are: Communist, Left Socialist, social democratic, Green, Ethnic-Regional, Agrarian, Liberal, Christian, Conservative and Radical Rightist parties. Given the research questions in this paper the Communists, ethnic-regional and agrarian parties are not analysed here. These parties are in addition few (ethnic-regional and Agrarian parties appear in 5 countries, and the Communists, which are present in 9 countries, have small support in several of these countries.<sup>3</sup>

The hypotheses that are derived below differentiate between Old Politics and New Politics parties. Old Politics cleavages are based on the central cleavages in industrial society that Lipset and Rokkan (1967) described in their famous work and pitted the Old Left coalition against the Old Right coalition. The Old Left has been associated with the working class and their organisation (social democratic parties and labour unions), while the Old Right has been coupled to business interests, employers, the upper middle class and Liberal and Conservative parties (Dalton 2008: 132-139).

We consider the Social Democrats, Liberal, Conservative and Christian parties as Old Politics parties, mainly anchored in cleavages that emerged in typical industrial societies, first and foremost the economic left-right dimension at the attitudinal or ideological level and the cleavage in the labour market at the socio-structural level (Lipset & Rokkan 1967).

The Christian parties are a borderline party family. They are anchored in Old Politics, but primarily in the religions-secular cleavage which is not examined here. We have included this party family because parties within this party family is anchored in Old Politics, they have large support, but previous research has shown that these parties to a large extent are catch all parties with a broad appeal across the various social classes (Kalyvas and Kersbergen 2010:187; von Beyme 1985: 93) and in terms of class voting these parties have fairly even

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<sup>3</sup> The grouping of the parties into party families can be obtained from the authors.

support from the various classes apart from farmers, which are their stronghold in terms of social class (Knutsen 2006: 65).

New Politics involves conflicts over new issues and values in advanced industrial societies, such as environmental quality, alternative lifestyles, minority Rights and immigration. These conflicts are frequently referred to as a conflict between the New Left and the New Right (Dalton 2008: 132-139)

The Greens, Left Socialist and Radical Rightist parties are considered as parties that are first and foremost anchored in New Politics conflict lines, related to various environmental, immigration and libertarian versus authoritarian issues and values. The parties that are grouped into the Left Socialist party family are quite diverse and some of them represent borderline cases between Old and New Politics.

### **Methodology and statistical measures**

*Class voting is bivariate.* We stick to the dominant and fruitful idea that class voting is bivariate. For most research questions about class voting, it is not controlled for prior variables in a causal sense. This is the best way to examine how class influence voting behaviour and in accordance with most works within the tradition. It is our impression that many works that are studying class voting which starts with multivariate analyses without presenting the bivariate correlations between party choice and social class comes to different conclusions because they have started the analysis by controlling for different “control variables”. It is also a matter of what social class actually means. Social class is more than occupation: Occupation is rather a proxy of the location in the social structure. People in different classes thus hold different skills and assets, such as their education and income (Kitschelt 2013; Oesch 2013: 44). Controlling for these factors means “controlling away” part of what we see as constitutive of class membership. While this could be useful in some instances and for specific research problems, like if we want to study the isolated effect of education, it would not be useful in a comparison of the class schemas total explanatory power when it comes to political preferences.

*Total and regional means:* It would be too detailed in this paper to present the data for the relationship between all parties within the various party families and each of the two class schemas. We therefore rely on mean support for the various social classes within the four regions of countries and “total mean” for all parties within the various party families across the various regions. Even though the means for all countries and regional means might cover different trends in individual countries, we find these means useful for the purpose here which is to examine main trends for the support of the various classes according to the two class schemas.<sup>4</sup> When there are large variations between parties within a party family, this is commented, and in a few cases single parties within a given party family are omitted from the calculation of the “total mean”.

It should be underscored that the concrete hypotheses that are developed, do not include regional variations, but we find it fruitful to include the regional variations for descriptive purposes.

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<sup>4</sup> A technical advantage with using regional means is that the likelihood of empty cells is small. Empty cells are a problem for correlation coefficients and multivariate analyses based on logistic methods.

*The kappa index as a measure of class voting for a party family:* The main empirical analysis in this paper analyses the relationship between the various party families (all relevant parties in the 18 countries and parties within the various regions). We want to be able to compare the strength of the relationship between party choice and social class between party families and also between the two class schemas.

The traditional analyses of class voting use a dichotomous party choice variable (socialist/non-socialist parties) and a dichotomous class variable (manual versus non-manual social classes).<sup>5</sup> The traditional measure of class voting calculates the percentage difference. The so-called Alford index is simply the percentage difference in support for the Left parties between the manual and the non-manual social classes (Alford 1964: 79-80).

Researcher on class voting from the third and fourth generation emphasize the difference between absolute and relative class voting, and suggests that log-odds ratios are a better measure of (relative) class voting. This measure, in contrast to the Alford index, is insensitive to changes in support and different sizes in the overall support for parties or party groups (Heath, Jowell and Curtice 1985; Hout, Brooks and Manza 1993; Nieuwbeerta 1995).

When the assumption of only two social classes is replaced by more classes, as in the EGP and the Oesch class schemas, the analyses become more complicated. Hout, Brooks and Manza (1995) suggest using the *kappa-index*.<sup>6</sup> The higher the value of the kappa-index, the higher is the level of class voting. The kappa-index has several desirable statistical properties. The most desirable property is that the index is based on log-odds ratios and therefore not dependent on the marginal distributions of the independent or dependent variables.

Kappa-values can be calculated for each political party and for each party family based on (regional) means. For example, it can analyze total class voting where the research question examines the class profile of individual parties and compare parties and party families in a comparative analysis (see Knutsen 2006, chap. 4): "It provides a uniform metric for comparative and historical analyses based on suitable class and voting typologies" (Hout, Brooks and Manza 1995: 814).<sup>7</sup> Several newer studies of class voting use the kappa index (Nieuwbeerta 1995; Weakliem and Heath 1999b, Knutsen 2006; Langsæther 2014).

The comparison of the correlations between the various party families with each class schema, and the comparison for the party families across the class schemas in this paper is based on the kappa-index.

### **The organization of the paper**

The paper is organised as follows.

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<sup>5</sup> The following paragraphs about the kappa-index are based on Knutsen (2007: 462-463).

<sup>6</sup> The kappa index calculates several log-odds ratios between a reference category on the class variable and each of the other classes and uses the standard deviation of these log-odds ratios as a measure of class voting.

<sup>7</sup> The kappa-index assumes a dichotomous party choice variable, and cannot be calculated when the party choice variable is a nominal-level variable based on all parties. Therefore it cannot be used as a measure of the overall correlation between social class and party choice in a multi-party system.

First, we present the two class schemas in some detail and indicate some comparative differences in the size of the various social classes according to the data material

Then we develop some main hypotheses about what to expect regarding the relative explanatory power of the two class schemas by differentiating between various party families.

Then we perform a brief correlation analysis of the relationship between party choice (including all parties in the same analysis) and the two class schemas in order to examine the comparative patterns, but first of all to compare the correlations based on the two class schemas.

We then perform more detailed separate analyses of class voting first based on the EGP class schema and then the Oesch schema by focusing on the various party families. In these sections we develop concrete hypotheses about what to expect for the relationship between each party family and social class according to the two schemas. These hypotheses are tested in the subsequent empirical analyses.

Finally we test the main hypothesis by comparing the correlations between each party family and the two class schemas.

### The Erikson-Goldthorpe class schema

The Erikson/Goldthorpe class schema was originally developed in connection with social mobility studies (Goldthorpe 1980; Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portecarero 1979; Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992)<sup>8</sup>, but it has also been used in British election studies (Heath, Jowell & Curtice 1985: chap. 2; Heath et al. 1991: chap. 5) and comparative studies of class voting in Western democracies (Knutsen 2006; Nieuwbeerta 1995). It is considered the most influential conceptualization and operationalisation of social class in European sociology (Evans 1992: 211–212).

The aim of the class schema is to differentiate positions based on the work situation (authority and autonomy) as well as market situations (including income, degree of income security, career prospects and source of income). The basic distinction in the schema is within the category of employees. The distinction between employees involved in a service relationship with their employers and those whose employment relationships are essentially regulated by a labour contract is what underlies the way different employee classes have been delineated. A “service relationship”, rather than one formulated in terms of a labour contract, is found where the employees are required to exercise *delegated authority* or *specialized knowledge and expertise* in the interest of their employing organization. Such employees must be accorded a legitimate area of autonomy and discretion, and their performance will depend on the degree of moral commitment that they feel towards the organization rather than on the efficacy of external sanctions. To a significant extent the organization must trust these employees to make decisions and to carry them through in ways consistent with the values and goals of that organization (Goldthorpe 1982; Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992: 42). It is on the basis of this fundamental distinction that the class schema is drawn up. There are various versions of the class schema. A detailed 11 schema which includes several sub-classes is the point of departure. Here we use a six-class version which is used in many other works. The classes used here are shown in Table 2.

< Table 2 about here >

The higher-level service class has positions which typically involve the exercise of authority within a wide range of discretion, and with considerable freedom of control by others. The lower-level service class comprises lower-grade professionals (typically called semi-professionals) and lower-grade administrators and officials.

Routine non-manual do non-manual work, but they do not belong to the service class. They are functionally associated with (but marginal to) the service class (Goldthorpe 1980: 40). This is a class that may be regarded as “intermediate” in the sense that it comprises positions with employment relationships that appear to take on mixed forms.

The working-class differentiates between skilled and unskilled workers. Supervisors of manual workers (foremen) and lower-grade technicians are grouped among the skilled workers.

The scheme does not comprise a single category for employers or large employers. Because there are so few large employers, EGP classifies these in the higher-level service class while small employers (with less than 10 employees) are classified as the *petit bourgeoisie* together with self-employed without employees.

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<sup>8</sup> It is also called the EGP class schema owing to the contribution of Portecarero in one of the articles referred to above.

Self-employed in the primary sector (primarily farmers and fishermen) can be classified in a separate category apart from the other petite bourgeoisie in the study of the relationship between party choice and social class, but here they are grouped together with the other petite bourgeoisie since this is also the case for the Oesch class schema.

Appendix Table 1 shows the distribution of the various EGP-classes according to countries and regional and total average sizes of the various classes. We have also calculated the regional means and mean for all countries for what can be considered as the main classes by collapsing the two levels of workers and service classes in the last part of the table. We note that the service class is larger than the working class according to the average for all countries when the two levels for each of these classes are collapsed. Only in Southern Europe is the working class larger than the service class. The service class is largest in the Nordic countries, there are small differences in the size of the routine non-manual class, and the petite bourgeoisie and the working class are largest in the Southern region. There are, however, considerable variations between the countries within each region which is not commented upon here.

**Table 2 The Erikson/Goldthorpe class schema**

Higher-level service class	Higher-grade professionals, administrators and officials, managers in large industrial establishments, large proprietors
Lower-level service class	Lower-grade professionals, administrators and officials, higher-grade technicians, managers in small industrial establishments, supervisors of non-manual employees
Routine non-manual employees	Routine non-manual employees in administration and commerce, sales personnel, other rank-and-file employees
Petite bourgeoisie	Small proprietors with and without employees, including farmers and small-holders and other self-employed in primary production
Skilled workers	Lower grade technicians, Supervisors of manual workers, skilled manual workers
Unskilled workers	Semi- and unskilled manual workers, agricultural workers and other workers in primary production

### **Daniel Oesch' class schema**

Oesch (2006a, 2006b) argues that Erikson and Goldthorpe's class schema largely reflect the occupational system that existed until the mid-1970s in industrial societies and does not incorporate important trends in the employment structure such as the growth of the service sector, welfare state expansion and the rising female participation. Oesch argues that the class map should be redrawn in order to take into consideration important shifts in the employment structure. The new class schema should not only focus on hierarchical or vertical divisions, but also horizontal divisions. The salaried middle class should not be conceptualised as a unitary group and the manual/non-manual divide should not be used as a class boundary.

An important point of departure for developing the class schema is that the joint impact of educational growth and service sector expansion has led to a gradual upgrading of the occupational structure in Western Europe.

Oesch also differentiates between hierarchical or more or less advantageous positions in the labour market but add then a horizontal dimension that takes into consideration the nature of the employee's work experience, their work roles and their insertion into the division of labour. He differentiates between three different so-called work logics within the category of employees and one such category of self-employed and employers. The three categories of employees are those who are characterised by technical work logic, organisational work logic and interpersonal work logic (Oesch 2006b: 265-270).

The technical work logic is based on that the work process is determined by technical production parameters. Scientific expertise is required for the higher grades (technical professions) and crafts and manual skills for those with lower grades (production workers).

The organisational work logic is based on management and bureaucratic division of labour. This work logic is based on a bureaucratic command structure and the primary orientation is towards the employing organisation. The higher grades have skills in coordination and control (managers) while the lower grades have clerical skills (office clerks).

The interpersonal work logic is based on service settings from face-to-face interaction with clients. Work is to a large degree outside the lines of command and orientation towards clients (patients, children, pupils and petitioners) is central. The higher grades have skills in communication (socio-cultural professionals) while the lower grades have social skills (service workers).

In addition to these three "logics" a fourth logic is added to include liberal professionals, employers and self-employed: independent work logic is based on employers (large employers and liberal professionals) and self-employed and small business owners (petite bourgeoisie).

The detailed class schema includes 17 categories based on the four types of work logic and four hierarchical levels (Oesch 2006b: 269: Table 2). However, such a detailed schema is difficult to use in surveys, and Oesch use frequently an eight category schema by collapsing the hierarchical level into two (Oesch 2006a: 122; Oesch 2013: 37-39).

These eight classes are shown in Table 3. There it is also indicated what the classes will be called in this paper. The classes are then based on two criteria, the four logics and the

hierarchical level. Below we use the notion the professional classes for the technical, managerial and socio-cultural professions although these classes also include semi-professions,<sup>9</sup> and the notion lower-skilled classes for the production workers, office clerks and service workers.

< Table 3 about here >

The grouping of the occupations in the various classes is based on the ISCO-88 and is in accordance with Oesch's own classification (Oesch 2006b: 283, Table A1).

Appendix Table 2 shows the distribution for the eight classes in the various countries according to the survey and averages for the regions and for all countries. The sizes of the categories belonging to the four logics are also calculated. According to the average figures the service workers and the production workers are the two largest groups, while the bourgeoisie and the technical profession are the two smallest. The two groups that belong to the interpersonal service logic comprise the largest group (35%), and those who belong to the independent logic is the smallest (12%), placing those who belong to the technical and organisational work logics in the middle (27%).

As to the regional variations, the petite bourgeoisie comprise a larger category in Southern Europe first and foremost because of the large portion in Greece and Italy and partly also Spain. Production workers comprise also a larger portion in Southern Europe than elsewhere and a smallest portion in the Nordic countries. In contrast, socio-cultural professions are more frequently found in the Nordic countries and less frequently found in the South.

The bourgeoisie class comprise 1-4 percent in the various countries and the number of cases is so low in many countries that the confidence interval for support for various party families is very large. N is less than 20 in five countries, and in nine countries among those who have indicated a party choice.

We have therefore decided to omit this class from our detailed analyses of support for the various party families. This class is however, included in the overall correlation analysis in the section called "Correlation analysis and explanatory power" below.

We have also considered two alternatives to omitting this class from the detailed analysis, namely to collapse this class with the petit bourgeoisie since these two classes both belong to the independent logic, or to collapse it with the managers since these two classes can be expected to have economic right-wing preferences. We decided to omit it from the analysis at this stage in order not to create mixed categories, that is, to be able to present the results for pure categories for the managers and the petit bourgeoisie.

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<sup>9</sup> Oesch sometimes use the notion "specialists" for the technical and socio-cultural professions. Here we have decided to use the notion professions consistently. For the managerial professions we also use managers.

**Table 3 Oesch 8 class schema with typical occupations within each class**

<b>Independent work logic</b>	<b>Technical work logic</b>	<b>Organisational work logic</b>	<b>Interpersonal service work logic</b>
Large employers and liberal (self-employed) professionals  Entrepreneurs Lawyers Dentists	Technical (semi)-professions  Engineers Architects IT specialists	(Associate) managers in business and public sector Managers, Managerial professions  Administrators Consultants Accountants	Socio-cultural (semi-) professions  Doctors and nurses Teachers Social workers
Petit bourgeoisie Small business owners with less than 10 employees and without any employees  Shop owners Restaurant owners Farmers	Production workers  Mechanics Carpenters Assemblers Farm workers	Office clerks  Secretaries Receptionists Mail clerks	Service workers  Waiters auxiliary nurses Home helpers Shop assistants

Source: Oesch (2006b: 269) (Table 2), Oesch (2013: 38 (Table 2.2)

The names for the four higher-level classes that are used here are: Bourgeoisie, technical professions, managers (or managerial professions), and socio-cultural professions.

### **Main hypotheses about the relative impact of the two class schemas**

Does the Oesch schema, which contains a horizontal dimension in addition to a vertical or hierarchical dimension, show stronger correlations with party choice and with specific party families than the EGP class schema which primarily taps a hierarchical dimension? This is what Oesch, Kitschelt and others who favour this class schema are arguing. The arguments in the cited works in the introduction are both related to preference formation and party choice in general and to support for the Radical Rightist (and New Left parties) in particular.

On the other hand the EGP schema is more detailed regarding the hierarchical dimension, at least compared to the eight class version of the Oesch schema. We mentioned that the 17 classes in Oesch class schema are too detailed to use in survey analyses. It is also reasonable not to have one schema that contains considerably more classes than the other since more detailed class schemas tend to boost the correlation coefficients. Now the EGP classes contain six classes and the Oesch schema 8 classes. The dice are then actually loaded slightly in favour of Oesch, who gets to divide the electorate into two more groups than EGP does.

We would formulate two main hypotheses that represent an intermediate position between those who (still) argue for the appropriateness of the EGP-class schema and those who support the Oesch schema. For the Old Politics parties we expect that the hierarchical dimension of class politics still is important although it has been weakened in the last decades. Because the EGP class schema taps this dimension better than the eight class Oesch class schema, we therefore *expect EGP to perform better than Oesch in explaining class differences in support of Social Democratic, Liberal and Conservative parties*

The horizontal divisions which are incorporated in the Oesch schema are most relevant for New Politics parties. According to Oesch's own research (Oesch 2013) there is a new Politics cleavage between the New Right and the New Left that can be formulated within his class schema. *We therefore expect Oesch to perform better than EGP in explaining class differences in support of Left Socialist, Green, and Radical Right parties*".

We refer to these hypotheses as Old Politics (OP) and New Politics (NP) below when we test them.

## **Correlations and explanatory power**

Both party choice and social class are nominal level variables. Two correlation coefficients are used to tap the correlation between party choice and social class.

Cramer's V is based on Pearson's chi-squared statistic.

Another coefficient which taps the explanatory power in logistic and multinomial logistic regression is the pseudo  $R^2$ . Nagelkerke's pseudo  $R^2$  is a frequently used measure for tapping the explanatory power in such analyses and it has been shown that the explanatory power is fairly similar to  $R^2$  in regression analyses when such measures can be compared (Knutsen 2014). In order to transform the pseudo  $R^2$  to a correlation coefficient, the square root is reported. This correlation measure is abbreviated SRN below.

In Table 4 the correlations are shown.

< Table 4 about here >

According to the Cramer's V correlation there are only small differences in the strength of correlations in most countries. Only four of the eighteen correlations differ with more than 0.02. The average for all countries is only slightly higher for the Oesch class scheme. Class voting is for both schemes largest in the Nordic countries, and the ranking of the regions is similar apart from the Islands which are ranked comparatively higher according to the Oesch schema.

The pattern is somewhat different for the SRN measure. The correlations are now higher in for class voting according to the Oesch schema in all countries. Based on the average difference for all countries the correlation for the Oesch schema is 0.048 higher than for the EGP schema which represents a 14% increase compared to the average correlation for the EGP as basis. 6 of the correlations are 0.07-0.10 higher based on the Oesch class schema. It should then be underscored that class voting according to the EGP class schema also shows fairly large degree of total class voting and that the difference between the strength of the correlations based on the two schemas is not very large.

The strength of the average regional correlations show also for SRN that class voting is strongest in the Nordic countries. The ranking of the regional are consistent across the two class schemas and the same applies to a large degree also for the ranking of the countries.

## **Patterns/direction of class voting according to party families**

### **The EGP class schema**

#### **Hypotheses**

The hypotheses for the EGP classes are based on the assumption that the schema is still relevant for the preference formation and party choice in advanced industrial democracies. The correlation analysis above indicate that there are fairly strong relationships between party choice and the EGP classes, but these correlations tell us nothing about the direction of the relationship between party choice and social class given that they tap the relationship between two nominal level variables.

### *Old Politics Parties*

The basic political conflict in typical industrial societies was related to redistribution, the size of the welfare state and control over the means of production. The conflict in the labour market was a conflict between the industrial Left, Social Democrats and Communists versus first and foremost the Liberal parties. The Conservative parties have, however, also been transformed from being supportive of the nobility and clergy to supporting capitalism, the bourgeoisie and the upper middle class, and these parties are firmly anchored to the right on the economic left-right dimension.

The social classes, on the other hand, have divergent economic interests which might incline them to vote for different kinds of parties. Goldthorpe and McKnight (2006) discuss this in an attempt to measure the classes' economic security, economic stability, and economic prospects. Based on our reading of Goldthorpe and McKnight, we suggest that the classes' might be ordered from left to right in economic terms, the following way: Unskilled workers, skilled workers, routine non-manual employees, lower service class, the higher service class, and, finally, the petite bourgeoisie.

We formulate two sets of hypotheses for the Social Democratic, Liberal and Conservative parties. One set of general hypotheses including all social classes and one more specific set, including only the employed classes, leaving out the petite bourgeoisie. The specific set is built on the insights from Goldthorpe and McKnight (2006) discussed above and include ranking of the social classes in terms of support for the Old Politics parties.

As to the Social Democrats we expect that:

*Hypothesis 1a:* The Social Democrats will gain strongest support from the two working class categories and then the intermediate class, the routine non-manual workers, and least support among the service classes and the petite bourgeoisie.

*Hypothesis 1b:* Following the hierarchical argument for the employed classes (all classes apart from the petite bourgeoisie); we expect that the Social democrats gain stronger support from the unskilled workers than from the skilled workers and smaller support from the higher-level service class than from the lower-level service class. Support will follow the following pattern for the various social classes in descending order: Unskilled workers, skilled workers, routine non-manuals, lower-level service class and finally higher-level service class.

*Hypothesis 2 a and b:* For a) the Liberal and b) the Conservative parties the pattern is expected to be exactly the opposite. Support will be strongest among the petite bourgeoisie and the service classes, and smallest among the workers and then among the routine non-manuals.

*Hypotheses 2 c and d:* For c) the Liberal and d) Conservative parties, the level of support among the employed classes will be exactly the opposite pattern as for the Social democrats: Support will be highest among the higher-level service class, then the lower-level service class, the routine non-manuals, the skilled workers and finally the unskilled workers.

*Hypothesis 3:* The Christian parties are catch all parties in terms of support from various classes, but we expect them to gain stronger support from petite bourgeoisie (which includes the farmers). Knutsen (2006: 55-56) also suggests that these parties may enjoy more support in rural parts of the population given that these are usually more conservative in cultural issues *and* usually more religious than the urban population.

### *New Politics Parties*

The Left Socialist and the Green parties are expected to get stronger support from the service class and less support from workers and employers. These parties appeal to post-materialist or libertarian values and issue positions. According to the theory of New Politics, segments of the service class will have libertarian, green and post-materialist values and consequently vote for Green or left-libertarian parties (Inglehart 1984: 32-33; 1997: 248-252). Some of the Left Socialist parties have an Old Politics origin by having been transformed from Communist parties or being economist leftist opposition to the Social democratic parties and we might expect a less clear New Politics class support compared to the Greens.

The Radical Rightist parties can be expected to gain strongest support from workers, followed by the petite bourgeoisie. They appeal to authoritarian values and anti-immigration issues. They also appeal to some traditional rightist economic issues on the economic left-right dimension. The former positions are often more frequently found among workers than among other social groups, while the second position appeals to employers and the petit bourgeoisie.

The social class base of the 'new Left' and the 'new Radical Right' can also be expressed by means of spatial dimensions. The economic left-right dimension has been supplemented by a materialist/post-materialist or authoritarian-libertarian dimension in advanced industrial societies. On this new dimension workers and people with less education tend to be located near the authoritarian pole, while the service class and those with higher education tend to be located near the libertarian pole. The New Right parties and the left-libertarian parties have firm locations at the extremes on this new dimension (Kitschelt 1994: 30-39, 149-206; 1995: 13-19).

We therefore expect that:

*Hypothesis 4:* The Greens and Left Socialist parties will gain strongest support from the service classes and least support from the petite bourgeoisie and the workers.

*Hypothesis 5:* This pattern will be more pronounced for the Greens than for the Left Socialists

*Hypothesis 6:* The Radical Right will gain strongest support from the working classes and the petite bourgeoisie and smallest support from the service classes.

We do not differentiate between the different levels within the service and working classes for the New Politics parties in our hypotheses.

### **Empirical analysis**

The average support for the various relevant party families in the various EGP-classes for the various regions and for all countries is shown in Table 5.

< Table 5 about here >

### *Old Politics Parties*

The *Social Democrats* have strongest support among the worker groups and then the routine non-manuals and considerably smaller support among the two service classes and the petite bourgeoisie according to the average figures. The regional means show very much the same pattern. The small differences for the Island countries are caused by small and somewhat deviant class support for the small Irish Labour party. Hypothesis 1a is then confirmed.

Hypothesis 1-2b is also supported although support among the difference in support among skilled and unskilled workers is small. The kappa values show that the class differences in support for the Social democrats are largest in the Nordic countries and smallest in the southern region. The levels of support in the various regions are fairly consistent with hypothesis 1-2b in all regions.

According to the overall means there are not large class differences in support for the *Liberal parties* (10-18 %), but the variations are in accordance with our expectations. Support is largest among the higher-level service class and then the petit bourgeoisie and the lower-level service class and smaller within the other classes (workers and routine non-manuals). Based on the average support for all Liberal parties, hypothesis 2a is supported although the variations in class support are relatively small.

Hypothesis 2c is also supported because support for the Liberal parties follows the expected pattern with highest support among the higher-level service class and lowest support among the unskilled workers.

However, the party that is classified as Liberal in the Portuguese case is deviant with strongest support among unskilled workers and smallest support among the lower-level service class. When the averages for all Liberal parties are calculated without the Portuguese case, Table 5 shows the same pattern and support for the two hypotheses, and the differences between the various classes' support for the Liberal becomes more distinct. This is also reflected in the kappa value which increases significantly.

In the Nordic countries class variation in support for the Liberals are generally largest in particular when one takes into account the fact that these parties have low overall support. This is reflected in the kappa index. Support follows the main pattern described above but support among the petit bourgeoisie is small. The same pattern applies to a large degree for the Central Western countries although the support among the lower-level service class is relatively small. The class support for the Liberal parties in France is smaller among workers than among the other social classes. The small differences in averages for these two parties in the Southern region reflect the pattern for the French party and the somewhat counterweighting pattern for the Portuguese case commented upon above.

As to the *Conservative parties*, support is on average largest among the higher-level service class and petit bourgeoisie and then the lower-level service class and smaller within the other classes in accordance with our expectations. Hypothesis 2b is then supported and so is hypothesis 2d. Support follows the expected pattern with descending support from higher-level service class to unskilled workers although the difference between routine non-manuals and skilled workers is small.

This pattern is very pronounced in the Nordic countries with large differences between the higher-level service class and the workers, and the kappa-value for the Nordic countries are much higher than for the other regions.. In Britain we find the same pattern but with smaller differences, while the Irish Fianna Fail seems to be a catch all party with impressive support in all social classes. In Southern Europe support for the Conservatives is largest within the higher-level service class and the petit bourgeoisie, while support among the lower-level service class is at the same level as for the other three employed classes. Differences in class support basically in the outlined direction is strongest in France and then in Spain and less pronounced in Greece and Italy where the Conservative parties seems to have a fairly even support among the various EGP classes.

Support for the *Christian Democrats* is largest among the petite bourgeoisie and very even among the other classes in accordance with hypothesis 3. The petite bourgeoisie includes farmers and other self-employed in the primary industries, and when the farmers are examined as a separate category, average support is 37% while support from the remaining petit bourgeoisie is on the same level as for the other social classes (17%). Strong support among the farmers is particularly pronounced in the Central western region where support on average is 61%.

The small Christian parties in the Nordic countries seem to have a stronger class base than in other regions with strongest support among the routine non-manuals and the service classes. Apart from this there are generally small variations between the various social classes in support for the Christian Democrats in the other regions

#### *New Politics parties*

*The Green parties* gain on average strongest support from the service classes and the routine non-manuals than from the other social classes. Support is on average stronger among the lower-level service class than among the higher level.

The kappa is again highest for the Nordic parties. A deviant pattern is that support is high among unskilled workers in these countries. This is caused first and foremost by the high level of support from unskilled workers in particular for the Finnish Greens. The Greens on the Islands do not seem to appeal to the higher-level service class but support among the lower-level service class and the routine non-manuals are larger than among the other social classes. The Greens in the Central Western countries contain some of the largest Greens parties in the data material and the main pattern is pronounced differences in class support in accordance with what was outlined above for all Green parties. There is a marked difference between the service classes and the routine non-manuals on the one hand, and the workers and the petite bourgeoisie on the other.

Hypothesis 4 is generally confirmed. However, it needs to be specified. Support is larger among the lower-level service class than among the higher level and support is also large among the routine non-manuals, a class we did not include in our hypotheses. Since this class is an intermediate class we might have expected that it would be located between the service classes and the workers, but it belongs to the classes where support for the Greens is high.

As mentioned above the *Left Socialist parties* are probably more diverse than the Greens and have different histories. Some are antecedent from Communist parties, while other are founded as New Left parties between the Communists and the Social democrats. The extent to which these parties today express New Politics concerns might also vary. These variations might still be reflected in their class support, and we cannot expect to find such clear pattern as for the Greens as indicated in hypothesis 5.

According to the average support from the various social classes is fairly similar apart from the much lower support from the petite bourgeoisie. The variations between the parties are large and do not follow regional borders. The Finnish, French and first and foremost the Irish party (Sinn Fein) gain strongest support from the worker groups, while the parties in Norway, Greece, Portugal and Spain gain strongest support from the service classes. For the other parties, class support is more even.

Kappa is highest for the Island countries (Sinn Fein) which gain much stronger support from the workers than from the service classes and the petite bourgeoisie.

We have also calculated the means for all Left Socialist parties by excluding the deviant Irish case, but this does not change the main trend for the Left Socialist parties. In contrast to the large change in kappa when the Portuguese case is omitted, kappa remains at the same level when the Irish Left Socialist party is omitted.

In sum, the part of hypothesis 4 that includes the Left Socialist parties is not clearly supported. According to the average support, support is fairly similar apart from the low support among the petit bourgeoisie.

*The Radical Rightist parties* gain strongest support from the working class categories and the petite bourgeoisie and smallest support from the service classes in accordance with our hypothesis. Support is strongest among skilled workers, not unskilled workers. This main pattern is impressively similar across the countries, confirming a basic perspective on these parties from New Politics literature<sup>10</sup>. Hypothesis 6 is then strongly confirmed.

Kappa value is highest in the Nordic countries with very pronounced differences between the working class group and the service classes.

As a preliminary conclusion to this analysis, we have found that the EGP class schema taps expectations derived from Old and New Politics theory in a meaningful way. The schema is based on hierarchy and – as Kitschelt indicates – redistributive politics, but this dimension – and then Old Politics - is still significant as the analyses of the Social democratic, Liberal and Conservative parties have shown. New Politics is sometimes considered as Old Politics turned upside down. The analyses of the Greens and Radical Rightist parties in particular have shown that party choice for these parties have distinctive and meaningful location in EGP social classes in accordance with central literature on these parties.

The kappa values are indeed largest for the New Politics parties and the Social Democrats. If we rank the party families according to the kappa based on the average support in the various party families, we get the following result (kappa in parentheses):

Greens (0.39), Radical Right (0.36), Social Democrats and Liberals (0.32),<sup>11</sup> Left Socialists and Conservatives (0.31) and finally Christian parties (0.18)

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<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., the excellent edited volume on class and the Radical Right (Rydgren 2013)

<sup>11</sup> 0.32 for the liberal parties is based on the calculation where the deviate Portuguese case is omitted.

## The Oesch class schema

### Hypotheses

A major purpose with the Oesch class schema in relation to party choice is that the large service class(es) which is central in the EGP class schema contains some important dividing lines that are necessary to explain political divisions within the service class if we use this concept from the EGP-class schema. The EGP-schema cannot explain the fact that there are large differences in political attitudes, values and party choices within the higher level social strata that is defined as the higher and lower-level service class according to EGP.

The hypotheses that we generate about differences in class support are based on the two dimensions that are incorporated in the Oesch class schema:

The vertical or hierarchical difference is expected to be found between the professional and semi-professional classes (technical, managerial and socio-cultural professions) and those with lower education and skills (production workers, office clerks and service workers). These two groups of classes are named the professional classes and the lower-skilled classes, respectively, below.

The horizontal difference – according to Oesch – is expected to be found first and foremost between the managers and the socio-cultural professions. This difference is however more complicated because the managers are expected to be the main employed class that support the economic Rightist parties while the socio-cultural professionals are expected to support post-materialist values and first and foremost support New Left parties (Oesch 2006: 276-280).

Oesch's own research has identified a New Politics conflicts between the New Left (Green and Socialist Left parties) and New Right (Radical Rightist parties) which in terms of class differences is between the socio-cultural professions who support the New Left and the production workers who support the Radical Right (Oesch 2013).

It is not easy to formulate hypotheses about the distinctive party preferences for all 8 classes (or seven if we leave out the bourgeoisie) in the schema, but on the basis of theoretical considerations and the existing literature we can identify the following hypotheses which again are formulated on the basis of Old Politics and New Politics parties' perspective:

#### *Old Politics Parties*

The Old politics redistribution conflict will first and foremost be between the three lower skilled categories and the higher skilled or professional classes and in terms of party choice we expect that this is reflected in differences in support for the Social democrats, Liberal and Conservative parties.

*Hypothesis 7:* The Social democrats will gain strongest support from the three lower hierarchical lower skilled classes.

*Hypothesis 8:* As to the lower-skilled classes, the industrial workers (production workers) have traditionally been the basis for the Left. We expect that this class in particular (and to a larger degree than the two other lower-skilled classes) will support the Social democrats, although a significant portion might have defected to the Radical Right (see below).

*Hypothesis 9:* The professional classes and the petite bourgeoisie will be most likely to support the a) Liberal and b) Conservative parties

*Hypothesis 10:* Among the professional classes it is expected that the managers will be most Rightist (supporting a) the Liberal and b) the Conservative parties) and

*Hypothesis 11:* the socio-cultural professionals will be less likely (compared to the managers) to support the a) Liberal and b) Conservative parties since a large segment is expected to be engaged in new politics and support the New Left.

*Hypothesis 12:* The technical professionals are expected to support a) the Liberal and b) the Conservative parties but might be in an intermediate position in this respect compared to the managers and the socio-cultural professions.

#### *New Politics parties*

*Hypothesis 13:* As to the New Politics conflict, we follow Oesch and expect that the socio-cultural professionals will be most likely to support New Left parties; a) Greens and b) Socialist Left.

And

*Hypothesis 14:* The production workers will support the Radical Right to a larger degree than other social classes.

*Hypothesis 15:* We also expect the petite bourgeoisie to be inclined to support the Radical Right next to the production workers.

## **Empirical analysis**

### *Old Politics parties*

Table 6 shows the average support in the various Oesch classes for the various party families based on the same procedures as for the EGP-classes. The Oesch class schema contains two dimensions and it is more complicated to describe the patterns than for the EGP-classes. We have therefore calculated some differences in percentage points to ease the description.

For the Old Politics parties we have calculated two differences to illustrate the differences. Since it is most theoretically meaningful and since our hypothesis is related to the managers versus the production workers, we have calculated the differences in support for the Social democrats for these classes. The other difference is the average support for the three lower-level and the three professional classes.

< Table 6 about here >

Support for *the Social democrats* is stronger from the three lower-level social classes than from the higher-level classes in accordance with hypothesis 7.

Support is strongest among the production and service workers and then the office clerks. Support is lower and quite similar among the professional classes and smallest among the petite bourgeoisie. Hypothesis 8 is then not clearly confirmed. Support among the service workers is at the same level as for the production workers.

The three professional classes have fairly similar average support for the Social democrats while the petit bourgeoisie are least likely to support the Social democrats. The socio-cultural professionals are not more likely to support the Social democrats than the other professional classes. It is then the hierarchical level that is most relevant for explaining variations in

support for the Social democrats, not the horizontal level, in accordance with our general hypotheses.

The difference in support between the production workers and the managers is largest in the Nordic countries and the Central Western countries and smallest in the Southern region.<sup>12</sup>

As to the differences between the professional and lower-skilled classes there are small variations according to region. It should be underscored that the differences which are in accordance with our hypothesis are fairly small in all regions.

According to the kappa values class differences are largest in the Nordic countries regarding support for the Social democrats and clearly smallest in the Southern region.

According to the average figures there are small variations in the support for *the Liberal parties*. They gain strongest support from the petite bourgeoisie and the professional classes and smallest support from the production workers and then the other two lower-skilled categories. However, support for the party that is classified as Liberal in Portugal is very deviant with 0% support among managers and 35% among production workers. When the Portuguese case is dropped from the calculations of the average support for the Liberal parties, the differences in support from the professional classes and the lower-skilled classes increase, and the support from managers is largest and support from production workers smallest. There are also somewhat larger differences in support from the lower-skilled and professional classes. Hypothesis 9a and 10a are then supported. There are small differences in average support for the Liberals between the socio-cultural professions and the technical professions so hypotheses 11a and 12a are not supported.

In the Nordic countries (Norway and Sweden in particular) and in the Island countries (that is the British Liberal party) the socio-cultural professionals are most likely to support the Liberal parties, but in the Central Western countries it is the petite bourgeoisie and managers that are most likely to support the Liberals. In contrast, support from the petite bourgeoisie in the Nordic countries and Britain is very small compared to support from other social classes.

The two calculated differences are fairly similar for the Nordic, Island and central Western regions, apart from that the differences between the managers and production workers is smaller in Britain than in the two other relevant regions. According to the kappa values, class differences are largest in the Nordic countries and in Britain.

The deviant pattern for the Southern region which only has Liberal parties in 2 countries is caused by the Portuguese case.

Support for the *Conservative parties* seems to cut across the division between professional and lower-skilled classes to a larger degree than for the Social democrats and Liberal parties. According to the average figures, support is largest among managers and petite bourgeoisie, and then among office workers and technical profession and lowest among socio-cultural professionals and production workers.

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<sup>12</sup> There are huge cross-national variations from plus 37 percentage points in Sweden to opposite patterns indicating stronger support from the managers in Iceland, Italy and Portugal.

Hypothesis 9b is then not supported, but hypothesis 10b, 11b and 12b are supported: Among the professional classes, managers are most likely to support the Conservative parties, followed by the technical specialists and finally the socio-cultural profession.

There are some regional variations, but the main patterns are fairly consistent across regions and countries. The socio-cultural professions are among the classes that are least likely to support the Conservatives in all regions. In the southern region the technical professions are for example least likely to support the Conservative parties while this class is most likely to support the Conservatives in the Island countries.

On all measures for class differences in support for the Conservatives, including the kappa index, these differences are much higher in the Nordic countries than in the other relevant regions.

We did not formulate any explicit hypothesis for the Christian parties in connection to the Oesch class schema. There are – as for the EGP class schema – small differences between the classes in support for the Christian parties. Support is – as for the EGP schema – strongest among the petite bourgeoisie and very similar among the other social classes. However, the Irish Fine Gail – which is the only Christian party in the Island countries – gains considerably larger support from the managers than from the production workers and represents a deviant case.

#### *New Politics parties*

As for the New Politics parties the hypotheses are related to the socio-cultural professions versus the production workers and we have calculated the differences in support for these two classes in Table 6.

According to the average figures, support for the *Green parties* is largest among the socio-cultural professionals and the technical professions and lowest among production workers and petite bourgeoisie. Office workers are also more inclined to support the Green parties than the service workers and managers. Hypothesis 13a is then not fully supported because the technical professions support the Greens on the same level as the socio-cultural professions according to the data.

These patterns are fairly similar across the various regions of countries. Only in the Nordic countries are the socio-cultural professions clearly more likely to support the Greens. In Southern Europe (which only has Green parties in two countries in the data material) there are some deviant differences between the various classes. The technical professions are most likely to support the Greens and the production workers are not the least likely social class to support these parties.

The difference between the socio-cultural professions and the production workers is largest in the Nordic countries and the Central western region, but the kappa value is even higher in the Southern region due to other factors than those incorporated in our hypotheses for the Greens: the high support from the technical professions and the very low support for the petite bourgeoisie.

As to *the Left Socialist parties* the socio-cultural professionals are most likely to support these parties and the petite bourgeoisie is least likely to do so. In contrast to the pattern for the Green parties, the production workers are the second most likely social class to support the Left Socialists. The other professional classes (managers and technical profession) and

lower-skill classes (Office workers and service workers) are placed in the middle with very similar average support.

The Irish Sinn Fein is a very deviant case with much stronger support from production workers than from the other classes (including the socio-cultural professionals), but when the averages are calculated without the deviant Irish case, we find the same patterns as indicated above. Support for the Left Socialists is strongest among the socio-cultural professions, smallest among the petite bourgeoisie and very similar among the other social classes. Hypothesis 13b is then clearly confirmed.

As to regional variations (apart from the deviant Irish case) the difference in support between the socio-cultural professions and the production workers is largest in the Nordic countries and then in the Southern region, while there is no difference in the Central western region. The kappa values are, however, very similar – again with the Irish case as clearly deviant.

As to the *Radical Rightist parties* support is largest among the production workers, followed by the petite bourgeoisie and the service workers and smallest among the socio-cultural professionals, placing the other three classes in a middle position (7-9 % average support). Hypothesis 14 is then supported, while hypothesis 15 is not fully supported because support for the Radical Right is at the same level among the service workers as among the petite bourgeoisie.

According to the regional averages, we find similar patterns in the Nordic countries and the Central western region with the production workers and the socio-cultural profession as the classes that are most and least likely to support the Radical Right. This difference is, however, considerably larger in the Nordic countries. The pattern for the small Radical Rightist parties in Southern Europe is somewhat deviant. Service workers are most likely to support the Radical Right and office workers are even less likely than the socio-cultural professions. The kappa values are high in all the three relevant regions indicating large class differences in support for these parties.

When we compare the kappa values for the relationship between party choice and the Oesch classes, these are indeed largest for the three New Politics party families and highest for the Radical Right (0.50), followed by the Greens (0.42) and the Left Socialists (0.31 when the deviant Irish case is excluded). The kappa values for the Old Politics parties are 0.29 for the Conservative parties, 0.28 for the Social Democrats and the Liberals (excluding the deviant Portuguese case) and finally 0.16 for the Christian Democrats.

## Testing the main hypotheses about the relative importance the two class schemas

In the section on Main hypotheses above, we formulated two hypotheses about the relative importance of the two class schemas. These hypotheses were related to the Old Politics and New Politics parties. And is repeated below

Old Political hypothesis (OP): We expect EGP to perform better than Oesch in explaining (class differences in) support of Social Democratic, Liberal and Conservative parties

New Politics hypothesis (NP): We expect Oesch to perform better than EGP in explaining (class differences in) support of Left Socialist, Green, and Radical Right parties.

To test these hypotheses, we have compared kappa values based on the mean regional and mean total support of each party family for both the EGP and Oesch's class schema. We have then calculated the difference between the two, as portrayed in Table 7. This will help us see to what degree the two schemas are able to capture class differences in party choice. We will consider any difference in kappa values larger than or equal to 0.03 as worthy of comment.

< Table 7 about here >

In total, EGP outperforms Oesch when it comes to *Social Democratic parties*, in support of hypothesis OP. This is particularly true in the Nordic countries. Oesch, on the other hand, fares better than EGP on the Islands, and there are small differences in the Central Western region.

The differences in the kappa values for the *Conservative parties* are small and should not be emphasized. However, we note that there is a difference in favour of EGP in the Nordic countries, while the Oesch classes perform better in the Island countries.

The kappa values based on the total mean indicate that EGP performs better than Oesch also when it comes to demonstrating class differences in *Liberal party* support, again supporting hypothesis OP. This pattern becomes clearer when the deviant Portuguese case is omitted. The deviant Portuguese case for the Liberal party is commented upon above. When we turn to individual regions, it is actually only for the Nordic region that EGP does better than Oesch. The differences are negligible for the Islands and the Central Western region, whereas Oesch performs substantially better in the South – but this seems to be due to the makeup of the electorate of the deviant Portuguese case.

It is worth mentioning that EGP in fact outperforms Oesch in the Nordic countries, both for Social Democratic, Liberal and Conservative parties. This is highly interesting, given that these countries have high female labour participation, large welfare states, and large service sectors. These three factors are considered to be the rationale behind Oesch's schema. According to Oesch (2006b: 263), it is the emergence of these three phenomena over the last thirty years that has changed the occupational system and thus necessitating a redrawing of the class map. As such, one would expect Oesch's schema to fare better in the Nordic countries - however, that is not the case.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> We have also calculated the correlation between the two class schemas and party choice in each individual country, and taken the difference between the two on the basis of the differences in the SRN correlations in Table 4B. These differences, implying how much better (or worse) Oesch performed than EGP, were then correlated

All in all, hypothesis OP is moderately supported by the empirical analysis, in particular for the Social Democrats and the Liberal parties.

The kappa based on the total mean of the Left Socialist parties does not show important differences between the two schemas. EGP fares better in the Central Western region and in the South, while Oesch does better in the Nordic countries. All in all, hypothesis NP is not supported for the Left Socialists.

When it comes to *the Green parties*, the total mean is slightly in favour of Oesch. This is first and foremost the case for the parties in the Southern region, but also in the Central West. Otherwise, the picture is mixed. EGP has markedly higher kappa values in the Nordic region and on the Islands. The evidence for hypothesis NP is mixed but slightly in favour of Oesch when it comes to the Green parties.

We turn now to the Radical Right. This party family is particularly interesting, given Herbert Kitschelt's (2013) comments on the relative merits of the two class schemas in this regard. As part of his more general critique of the EGP-schema, Kitschelt (2013: 224) claims that it "simply will not do to account for (...) demand-side explanation of Radical Right party support." His view on the relationship between occupation and political preference is, as he notes, similar to what Oesch proposes (Kitschelt 2013: 231).

While Kitschelt's general critique on the EGP schema's predictive and explanatory power is not supported by the material in Table 7, the empirical evidence is definitively in favour of his comments when it comes to the Radical Right. Oesch does better than EGP in total and the difference in mean kappa values is much larger than for all other party families. Oesch perform best in all regions. The difference is relatively large in the Central West and in the South, where EGP has kappa values that are, respectively, 0.23 and 0.33 lower than Oesch. The Radical Right definitely demonstrates the clearest differences between the two schemas. Hypothesis NP receives strong support here.

To expand on this, we have also run binominal logistic regressions in each country where a Radical Right party exists.<sup>14</sup> We started also in these analyses by excluding the bourgeoisie class in the analysis of the Oesch classes, but logistic regression is sensitive to empty cells, and there were additional empty cells in the relationship between the Oesch classes and party choice in Germany, Luxembourg, Greece and Italy so we had to exclude these countries.

When we examined the Nagelkerke's pseudo  $R^2$  between party choice and each of the two class schemas, the mean of the pseudo  $R^2$ s for these eight countries is 0.048 for Oesch and 0.038 for EGP. In the Netherlands and Norway, the explanatory power is 2-3 percentage points higher for the Oesch schema, in Denmark and Switzerland 1.0-1.9 percentage points higher, while the explanatory power is 1.4 percentage points higher for the EGP schema in France. In Finland, Austria and Belgium the explanatory power is fairly similar.

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with the female participation in the labour force, the size of the service sector, and the size of the welfare state. None of the correlations are significant, and the two former are negative, implying that, if anything, Oesch's schema outperforms EGP more in countries with *lower* female participation and *smaller* service sectors. However, it seems that Oesch on average outperforms EGP more in countries with larger welfare states (Pearson's  $r = 0.19$ ).

<sup>14</sup> The results of these regressions are not reported here, but can be retrieved from the authors upon request.

To summarize, Oesch performs better in demonstrating class differences in preference for the Radical Right, as measured by the kappa values, and in explaining Radical Right voting, as measured by the explanatory power. However, the differences are not dramatic, and Kitschelt's strong remarks in this regard should be moderated.

All in all, however, the evidence of hypothesis NP is mixed. It is not supported in the case of the Left Socialist parties, it receives mixed support for the Green parties, and it is strongly supported by the Radical Right parties.

## Conclusions

The purpose of this paper has been to conduct a test of the EGP and Oesch class schemas in a comparative study of 18 West European countries. We have referred to scholars who have argued that the EGP schema which is based on hierarchical dimension of social class is outmoded and that the Oesch schema will tap the preference formations and party choices in advanced industrial democracies in a much better way. The basic idea in the Oesch class schema is that the hierarchical class concept needs to be supplemented with a horizontal component or dimension which takes into consideration other interest and experiences that people develop in connection with their work.

We generated two main hypotheses about the relative impact of the two class schemas by differentiating between Old Politics and New Politics parties. We argued that there are no convincing arguments for why the horizontal divisions should be important for the Old Politics parties, and although left-right class voting has declined in recent decades we argued that the hierarchical class concept still is most relevant for the Old Politics parties. These expectations are to a large extent supported in the empirical analysis: The expected variations in support for the social democrats, liberals and conservative parties among the hierarchical dimension in the EGP schema among the employed classes are found for all these party families. The differences between the classes are not very large and there are regional variations, but the patterns are impressively consistent.

The analyses of the relationship between party choice and the Oesch classes for the Old Politics parties confirmed the hypothesis we had for these parties. The hierarchical dimension is most important, and for the social democrats and the liberal parties there are very little variation along the horizontal dimension, although there are some regional patterns that show such differences, but these differences out weight each other when the total mean is calculated. The conservative parties seem to be borderline case. There are considerable variations in the support among the professional classes and also the lower-skilled classes. These parties gain considerable larger support among managers than among socio-cultural professions, and stronger support among office workers than among production workers among the lower-skilled classes. Support among office workers is larger than among socio-cultural professions. This is reflected in the kappa values which are very similar for the two class schemas.

We find some of the same "mixed" pattern for the left socialist parties. We underscored that this party family is diverse and that there are considerable variations between the parties in class support. Support is lowest among the petit bourgeoisie according to both class schemas, As to EGP there are small differences among the other classes and the same

applied to Oesch with the exception of the socio-cultural professions where support is highest.

The conservative and left socialist parties can then be characterised as party families that are influenced by both Old and New Politics trends at least in terms of class support. These are also the two party families where the kappas for the two class schemas are similar.

The Green parties have a clear class profile according to what is expected according to New Politics theory regarding the EGP class schema. Support is highest among the service classes and the routine non-manuals than among other social classes. The reason why the Oesch schema shows a higher kappa value is that support seems to cut across the hierarchical divisions when the horizontal dimension is included. Support for the Greens is much higher among socio-cultural and technical professions than among managers and also much higher among office workers than among production workers in particular.

Finally, the radical rightist parties are perhaps the most interesting in this respect. These parties have a clear class profile according to the EGP class schema with strongest support among the two working class categories and the petit bourgeoisie and much smaller support among the service classes in particular. The reasons why the Oesch schema performs better for the radical right is that there are considerable variations in support for the radical right among the professional and lower-skilled classes: Support is considerably smaller among the socio-cultural professions than among the other professional classes and larger among production workers than among the other two lower-skilled categories

The decisively largest difference in kappa values is found for the radical right: The Oesch class schema shows a larger correlation. It should, however, be underscored that the EGP class schema also is highly relevant for the greens and the radical right. The kappas based on EGP are larger for these party families than for all the Old Politics party families.

In sum, there are several developments discussed in this paper that yield good theoretical reasons to believe that Oesch's schema captures the modern class structure better than the older EGP schema. Also, as Kitschelt proposed, Oesch certainly fares better in capturing and explaining class differences in Radical Right support. However, the warnings of Kitschelt and others that EGP is not useful in explaining political preferences and party choice anymore are empirically unfounded. The differences between the two schemas are not large, and sometimes EGP does better than Oesch – in spite of having fewer class categories. Scholars who are using the EGP classes do not need to worry. The schema is still relevant to political preference formation and party choice in modern, post-industrial societies.

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