

Political Instability in the Western World: Sketching a Research Agenda

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Recent political instability: Western Europe (and beyond?)

1. Decrease in turnout;
 2. Higher electoral volatility;
 3. Drop in trust in political parties;
 4. Drop in trust in political institutions (+ EU);
 5. Rise of «populist», «anti-establishment» parties.
- Decline of mass parties;
 - Party system change
related to trans-national processes.

Party system change

New conflicts/cleavages?

e.g. *winners vs. losers* of globalization (Kriesi et al. 2006) → radical right-wing parties;

- low SES voters (edu, urban, internet, skilled);
- *nativism*; hostility towards globalization, EU integration;
- Might also account for UKIP, Trump.

Puzzles

- New, non-RRP, *anti-establishment* parties (M5S, Podemos, Syriza) + radicalization of mainstream parties (Labour, Sanders) ;
 - Very different voters compared to RRP (edu, urban, internet, skilled, age);
 - Distinct attitudes on *economic vs. cultural* globalization;
 - Distinct attitudes on *EU integration vs. EU policy choices*
 - EU increasingly expressing policy → *conflict* (vs. old *permissive consensus*);
- More general disaffection with political parties and institutions:
 - Lower turnout, trust; higher volatility.

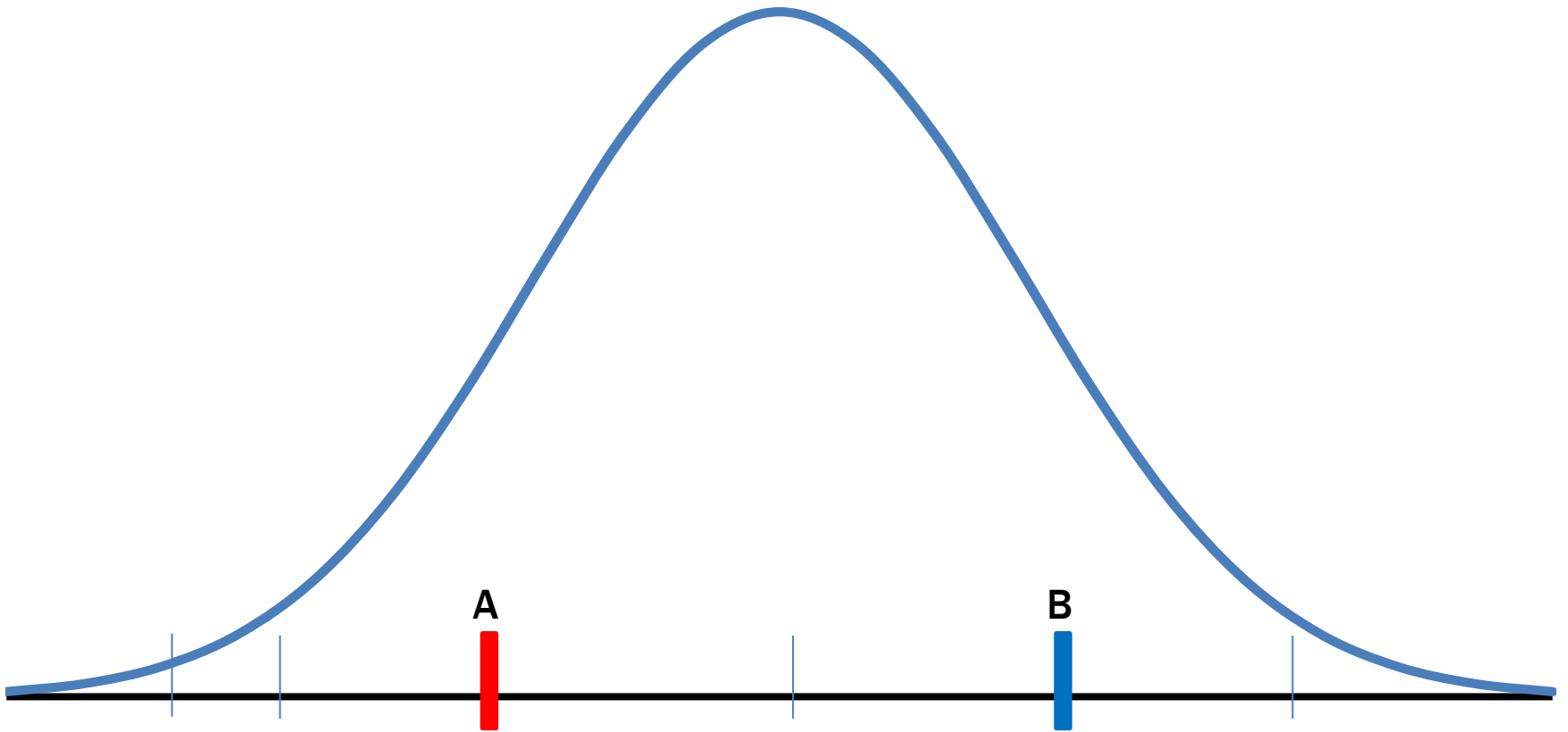
A research agenda

1. Impact of *transnational* processes on *national politics*:
 - *policy constraints*;
 - *Differential impact* on different types of parties.
2. Necessity to *disentangle* positions on...
 - *economic vs. cultural* globalization;
 - EU integration vs. EU policy direction;
3. From highly structured *ideologies* to more agile *policy bundles*;

1. Impact of transnational processes

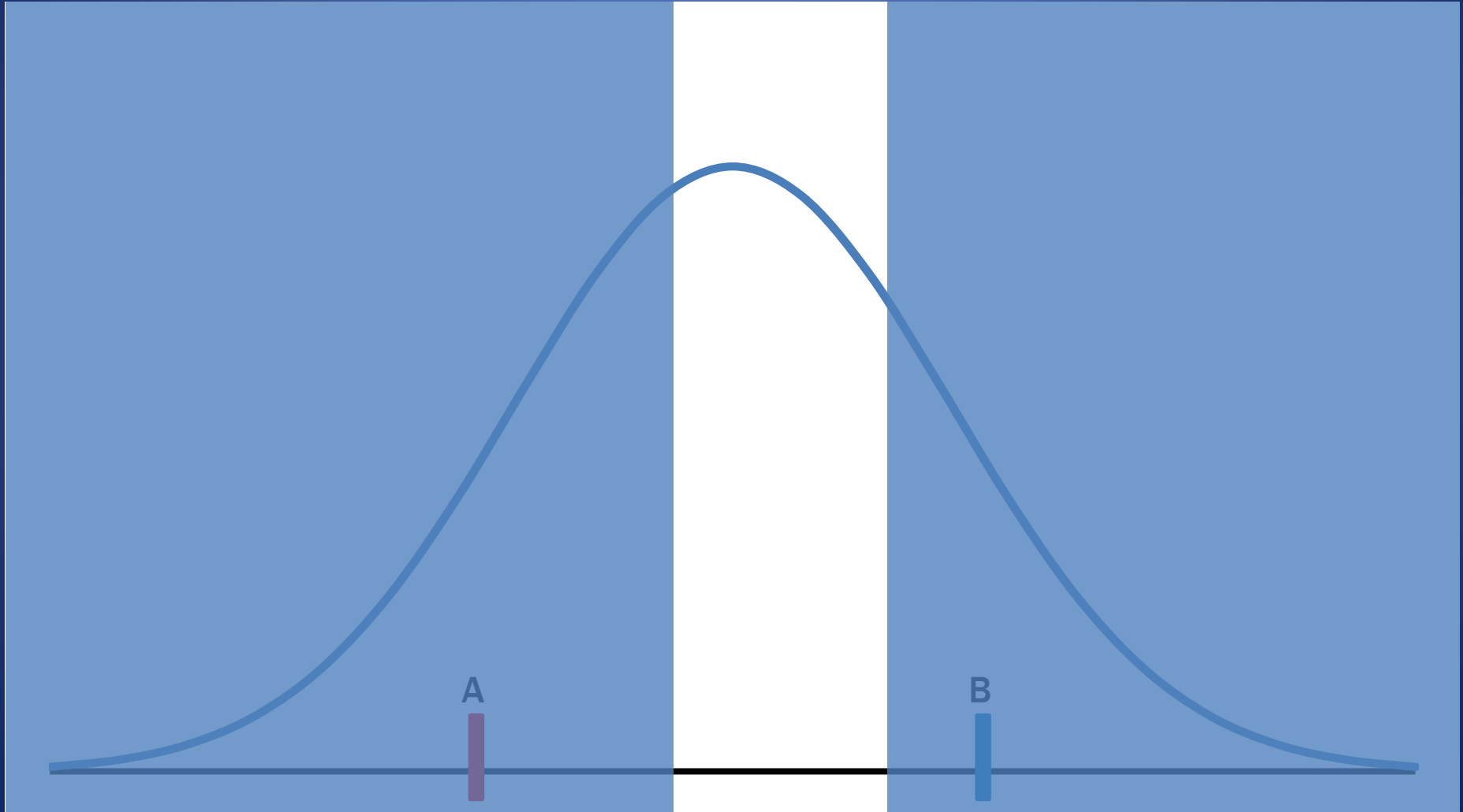
1. Economic globalization (World);
 2. EU (Europe);
 3. Euro (Eurozone).
- policy constraints in national politics (Ladrech 2002, 2009);
 - Different types:
 - direct, legally binding (*hard*);
 - indirect (*soft*), from international competition.

Any issue...

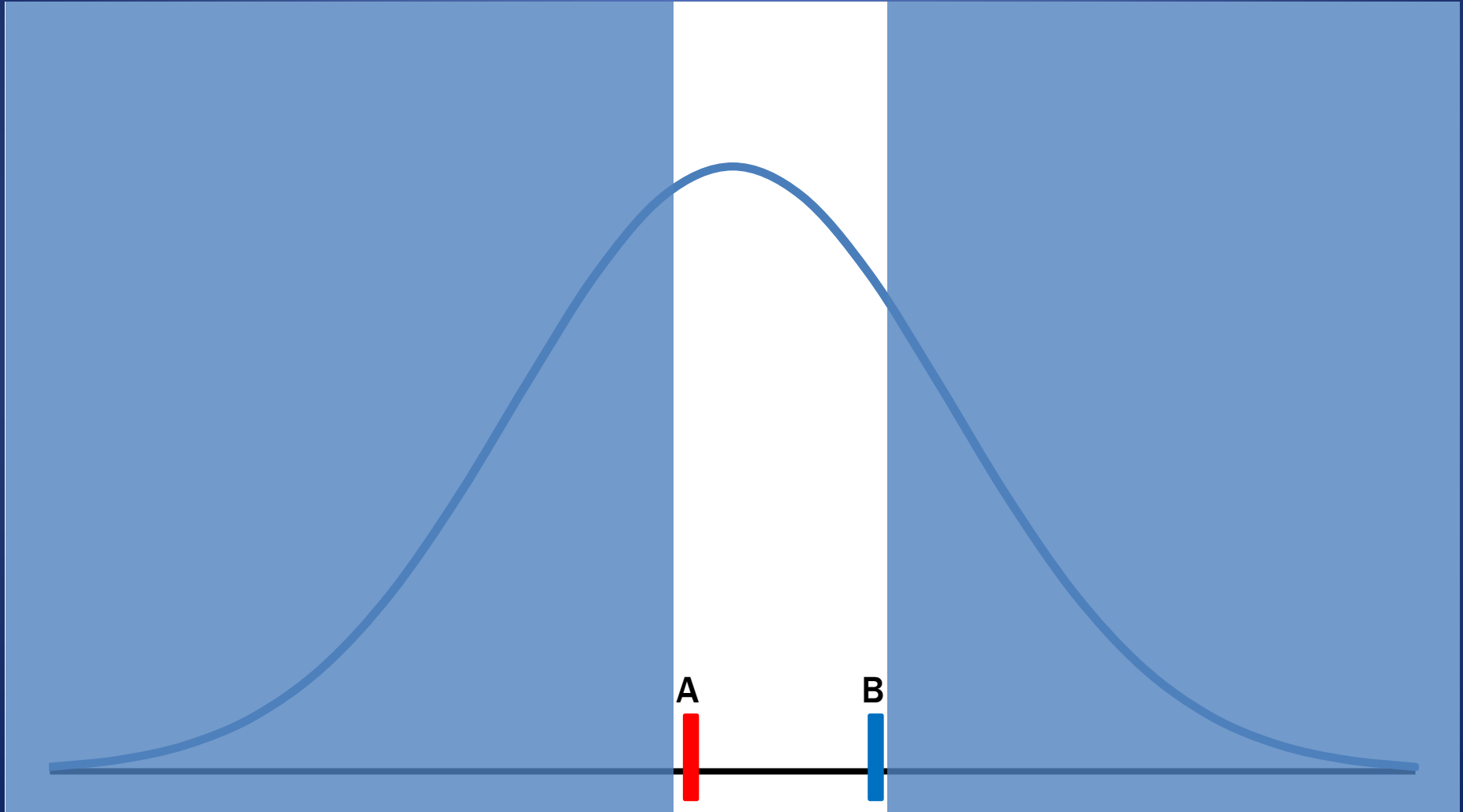


External constraint

restricts the viable policy space

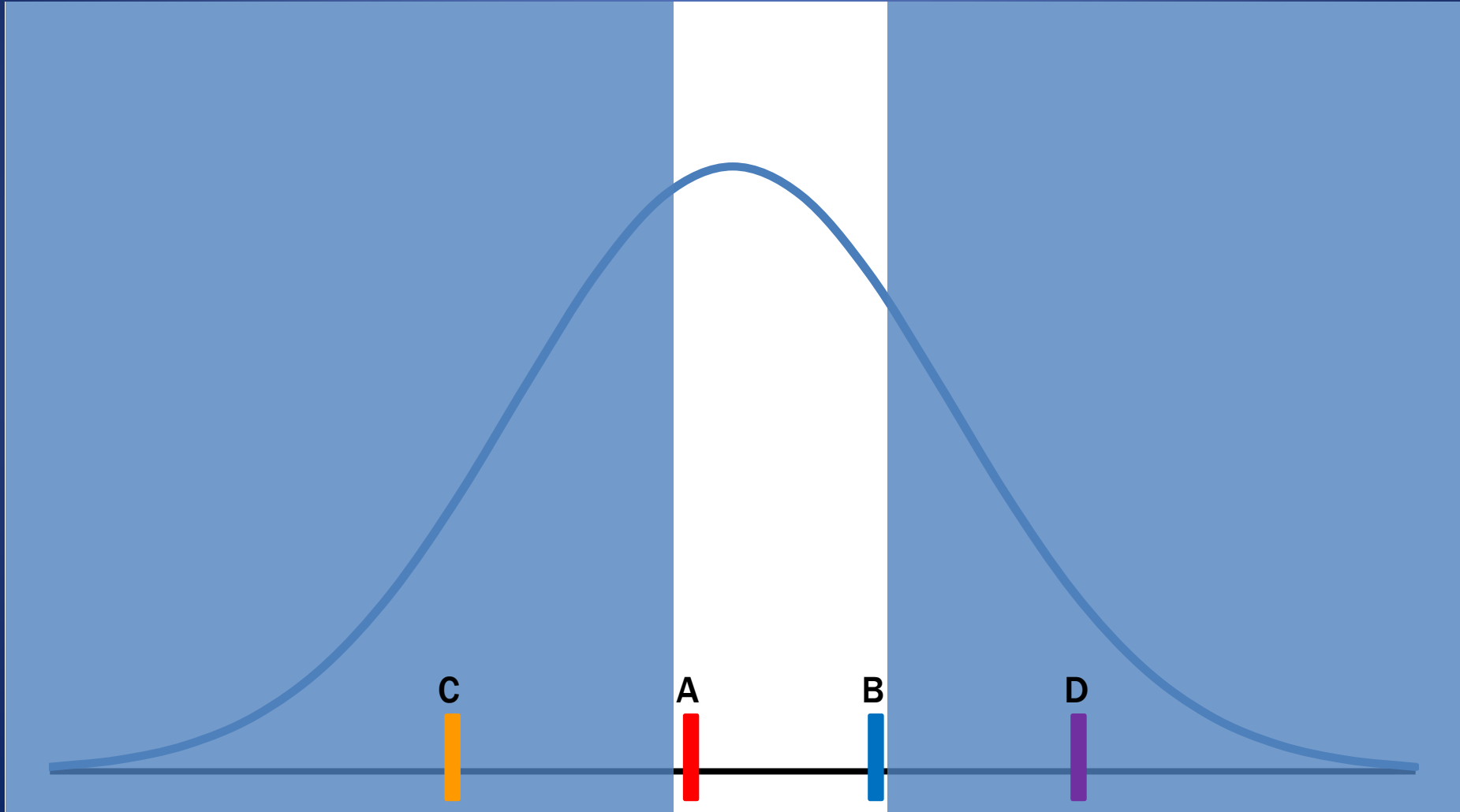


responsible (Mair 2009) parties
acceptance of constraint



Responsive, non-responsible parties

no constraint: actively exploit opportunities



Implications

- Mainstream party convergence + unchanged voter distribution
 - ⇒ many voters not well represented;
 - ⇒ lower turnout, trust.
- New parties possible on *any* side of an issue (e.g. Podemos, Syriza vs. AfD):
 - Impact of policy restrictions also conditional on the *subjective position of the country* on a given policy (e.g. austerity).

2. Disentangling dimensions of conflict

Globalization

		Economic	
		Pro	Anti
Cultural	Pro	<i>Main-stream</i>	Podemos (15-M), Syriza, Sanders (Occupy)
	Anti	New Right	RRPs

EU

		EU Integration	
		Pro	Anti
EU policy direction (e.g. austerity)	Pro	<i>Main-stream</i>	?
	Anti	Podemos (15-M), Syriza, M5S	RRPs

cf. «hard» vs. «soft» euroscepticism (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2002)

3. From structured *ideologies* to agile *policy bundles*

- Vs. highly structured ideology (cf. Converse 1964);
- Small number of electorally rewarding, *high yield* issues (De Sio and Weber 2014);
- *Silence* on other issues (cf. M5S, Podemos);
- Removal of controversial issues (cf. FN).

Issue Yield configuration: Northern League (LN) (Source: CISE 2014) Statement	% agreement (overall)	% agreement among LN supporters	LN Issue Yield	
			PRO	ANTI
Reduce spending for F-35 fighters	88	83	0.82	0.14
Change towards a sustainable model of development	87	79	0.79	0.18
Reduce income inequality	84	74	0.73	0.23
Tougher attitude with India on the Enrica Lexie case	80	98	0.98	-0.02
More restrictive immigration laws	78	95	0.95	0.02
Reduce taxes before fighting tax evasion	75	78	0.77	0.2
Italian citizenship should be given to children born in Italy (ius soli)	74	36	0.34	0.62
Foreign companies selling services via the Internet should be taxed here	74	74	0.73	0.23
EU integration is a good thing	71	41	0.39	0.57
Welfare chauvinism (Italians first)	70	93	0.93	0.03
Heterologous insemination should be allowed	68	59	0.57	0.39
Prostitution should be legalized	64	83	0.82	0.14
A universal unemployment subsidy should be introduced	59	43	0.41	0.55
Introduce civil partnerships, even for gay couples	58	38	0.36	0.61
Reduce the power of the judiciary	49	81	0.8	0.16
Companies should have more freedom to hire and fire	44	69	0.68	0.28
Founding NCD, Alfano betrayed Berlusconi	40	66	0.64	0.32
To fight tax evasion, cash transaction limits should be lowered	35	24	0.21	0.75
Soft drugs should be legalized	31	24	0.21	0.75
Renzi's institutional reforms reduce democratic participation	31	43	0.41	0.55
Italy should leave the Euro	29	76	0.75	0.21
Italy should be split into macro-regions, with right to secession	26	69	0.68	0.28
Abortion should be made more difficult	25	36	0.34	0.62

Empirical RQs

- Policy restrictions, by process/domain? (LIT)
- *policy convergence*:
 - among *parties* (CMP, CHES,....)?
 - by domain/issue; by party type!
 - not among *voters* (EES? WVS? CSES? NESs?);
- party/voter positions: *disentanglement* of dimensions (globalization, EU);
- map of *issue bundles*
(parties, voters: *original data collection*).

In short

- Impact of transnational processes as *policy constraints*;
- Disentangle different dimensions of such processes;
- From *ideology* to *policy bundles*.