

## The Age of Political Sectarianism (#264947)

### Author(s)

This pre-registration is currently anonymous to enable blind peer-review.  
It has 3 authors.

### Pre-registered on:

2025/12/19 02:42 (PT)

### 1) Have any data been collected for this study already?

No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

### 2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?

H1a) Confirmatory factor analysis of the political sectarianism variables will yield three distinct factors with regards to the sociocultural identity: othering, aversion, moralization

H1b) Confirmatory factor analysis of the political sectarianism variables will yield three distinct factors with regards to the economic identity: othering, aversion, moralization

H2a) These factors will be positively correlated with each other indicating the existence of a latent political sectarianism variable with regards to the sociocultural identity

H2b) These factors will be positively correlated with each other indicating the existence of a latent political sectarianism variable with regards to the economic identity

H3a) The association between political sectarianism with regards to sociocultural identity and support for the erosion of democratic norms will be stronger than the association between affective polarization and support for the erosion of democratic norms.

H3b) The association between political sectarianism with regards to the economic identity and support for the erosion of democratic norms will be stronger than the association between affective polarization and support for the erosion of democratic norms

### 3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.

2) Political sectarianism will be measured using respondent self-placement on sociocultural (Q3.1) and economic (Q3.3) scales

The dependent variable for hypotheses 3a and 3b will be a eight-item index variable (Q5.1) measuring respondents' support for antidemocratic attitudes. We measure this support with questions asking respondents' level of agreement with the following statements:

- The government should be able to censor media sources that are too critical
- This country would be better off if there were only one political party
- The universal right to vote must be questioned when so many voters are poorly informed and easily misled
- Governments are justified in bending electoral rules in their favour when their opponents have also done so in the past
- The government should be able to ignore court rulings that are regarded as politically biased
- If the national parliament hinders the work of the government, it should be ignored
- The government should be able to bend the law to solve pressing social and political problems
- Parties that seek greater autonomy/independence for a particular region of the country should be banned.

### 4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?

All respondents have an equal opportunity to answer all questions in the survey. Participants are not allocated into treatment groups.

### 5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.

For hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b, confirmatory factor analysis will be used to test whether the different dimensions of political sectarianism with regards to sociocultural and economic identity factor separately, and whether they are a good global measurement of the latent construct political sectarianism.

For hypotheses 3a and 3b, ordinary least square regression will be used to test the strength of the association between political sectarianism (both with regards to sociocultural and economic identity) and a eight-item index variable (Q5.1) of support for the erosion of democratic norms on the one hand, and between affective polarization (Q3.5) and the index variable (Q5.1) of support for the erosion of democratic norms on the other.

Affective polarization will be measured as the average spread of like-dislike scores (as per Wagner, 2021) that respondents give to a question (Q3.5) rating their feelings towards their country's political party supporters.

Controls will include: age, gender, education level, political interest, religiosity, subjective social status, frequency of online and offline political discussions.

### 6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.

All respondents who answer don't know/hard to say to the questions will be excluded from the analyses. If there is a high rate of missing data on key variables, then multiple imputation will be used.

### 7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about

**exactly how the number will be determined.**

Target sample size in each country is 1500 respondents to have sufficient representativeness on key quotas for age, gender, place of residence, region and education.

**8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)**

For hypotheses 1a and 1b and 2a and 2b, these are the variables (Q3.2 and 3.4) that operationalize the three dimensions that we are hoping to confirm:

Othering: 1) When I speak about people who are [Opposite identity], I usually say "they" instead of "we"; 2) When I think of [self-reported identity] people, I think of "us"; 3) When people criticize [self-reported identity] views, it feels like a personal insult.

Aversion: 1) I struggle to be friends with somebody who is [Opposite identity]; 2) I could never marry someone who is [Opposite identity]; 3) I try not to spend time with people who are [Opposite identity].

Moralization: Being [self-reported identity] is not just a set of opinions, these are ideals I strive towards; 2) Being [self-reported identity] is more than a matter of opinion, it's a matter of right or wrong; 3) If people thought of me as [Opposite identity], I would feel ashamed.

Additional exploratory analyses will assess the relationship between political sectarianism (and its separate components) and key sociodemographic variables (age/gender/education level/political interest/religiosity) in the three countries.

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**BUNDLE**

This pre-registration is part of a bundle which includes:

#264,766 - <https://aspredicted.org/d98cv8.pdf> - Title: 'Personality traits and hostility on social media' #264,964 - <https://aspredicted.org/j45rb9.pdf> -

Title: 'Ideological congruence and support for breaching democratic norms'