

This figure uses the 2021 Manifesto Project data set to plot political parties by their election date and percent of vote secured. The elections included range from 1920 to 2021. Each dot represents one party.

This scatter plot is a great starting point to investigate how distribution of electoral power across political parties has changed over time. Most obviously, the number of parties receiving very few votes has increased over time. This trend suggests that fringe issue, minor parties have become increasingly common, possibly hinting at increasing electorate dissatisfaction with national political status quo situations. Also notable is the decrease in parties holding nearly 50% of the vote over time. Combined with the very small total number of parties holding significantly more than 50% of the vote, this trend could imply an increasing reliance on coalition governments over individual powerhouse parties, a base for future research on factors behind such a change. However, this plot’s data must be interpreted with caution due to intrinsic irregularities: most prominently, many countries lack data for the earlier stretches of this century-long period, and this irregularity is one reason for greater point density farther along the X axis.



This figure uses the 2021 Manifesto Project data set to plot political parties by their positive mentions of decentralization, in their various recorded platforms and manifestos, and percent of vote secured. Each dot represents one party. Additionally, it plots the correlation’s least squares regression line; however, this line is a poor representation of the data, due in part to the data’s low correlation and the line implying vote percentage can fall below zero.

The basic trends of the graph are fairly intuitive, including the seemingly negative relationship between positive decentralization mentions and vote percentage: decentralization is not a pivotal, universally salient issue in many countries, so parties focusing on it with many mentions are more likely to be small parties that receive fewer votes. Further, pro-decentralization parties often represent smaller bodies or regions of a country, such as Scotland and Wales in the United Kingdom. However, one notable detail is the enormous number of parties showing at least slight support of decentralization and still receiving large percentages of votes. This feature is a great starting point to further examine the process of larger parties with greater influence and smaller parties with greater issue focus competing to capture pro-decentralization voters.