

Kosovo's Political Compass

Mapping Party Ideology



Democracy for Development
Demokraci për zhvillim
Demokratija za razvoj

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Executive Summary

It comes as no surprise that parties formed during a national liberation struggle do not harbour a well-defined ideology. Unfortunately, in the period after Kosovo came under international trusteeship – and the lack of self-governance has not pressured political elites to develop positions on key policy issues. As Kosovars get to govern, its political elite must adopt positions which increasingly pits politicians against each other, across and within party ranks – providing key impetus for the much-needed transformation.

Mapping party ideology is outright daunting in a post-war society still struggling to meet basic needs and consolidate its sovereignty. The paper begins by reviewing previous studies, followed by a discussion of approach and methodology. The paper then deliberates several models of the ideological spectrum, concluding with the model adapted to our purposes. The study researched the positions of main ideological profiles in the context of several western democracies. A custom-tailored questionnaire was designed and used to interview 160 senior party officials of the four main parties. Each answer corresponds to a numerical score, and the findings are presented in a plot graph. We mapped the distribution of individual beliefs within each party, and took their collective distribution as a realistic indicator where the party potentially stands.

The consistency of positions displayed by political parties is essential during transition as parties gradually transform from vehicles of revolution as they were initially set up, to running a clientelistic system of interests during the transition. If democracy continues to consolidate, some parties transform, some die out, and new ones come about – ultimately each representing a stable wider constituency which is not connected by geography, but by a set of concerns.

On the rare occasions that parties display ideological features, they amount to little more than labels. Their

aspirations growingly reflecting their preferences to join a particular pan-European party caucus, with little relation to the convictions of their members. To avoid the trap of compartmentalizing a party neatly within an ideological box, we chose to map the dispersion which illustrates comparison within and across the parties.

The research indicates that about two-thirds of party officials are leftist and conservative. There are virtually none who are conservative in terms of values and right-wing in economic principles. Of the remaining third who are open-minded in their personal values, most also believe in free-market economy. PDK, LDK and AAK generally fit the picture above, while Vetëvendosje is leftist with regard to economy, conservative on questions of identity, and liberal on personal freedoms. It clearly emanates from the research that policies do not determine party orientation, and parties internally are as diverse inside as compared to others.

The creation of the party profile is closely related with another process, that of the development of interest groups. Geographically dispersed groups need to lobby with party activists to pursue their goals. As they get to elect MPs who vocalize their priorities, we can also expect that politics in Parliament, political party headquarters and in back-dealings start represent major voting groups.

The findings presented in this report enable a better understanding of the level of like-mindedness, potentially encourage parties to develop policy positions and influence a dose of 'realignment'. As such, this paper assesses the magnitude of the required transformation that each party is to undergo. During our field-work, numerous party officials requested a copy of the questionnaire. We hope that this paper, with the fourty questions help push forward this evolutionary process of consolidation of Kosovo's political parties.

I. Introduction

Several previous studies have attempted to codify the ideological profile of political parties in Kosovo, but slotting them neatly in a box has proved futile. All previous studies have mapped the party profile as declared by the party's top brass. This does not render them useless for hierarchically subservient organizations do indeed adopt positions decided by a small number of officials. Slotting parties in particular ideological categories is a difficult task even in countries with long tradition of democracy, leave alone in a post-war society still struggling to consolidate its statehood.

In this study, we saw it adequate to complement the previous studies by mapping the distribution of influential individual opinions within each party. The collective distribution of opinions is a more realistic indicator where the party stands and what voting trends can be expected from their representatives in the legislature.

The absence of ideological identity is only to be expected considering that political parties in Kosovo were established during a liberation struggle. The parties were formed by groups which had mobilised during war or resistance, brought together by geography, occupation or family lines. Hence the assumption that parties gather an equal proportion of individuals with leftist, liberal or nationalistic leanings. Most parties were established before the country had a democratic regime and recognizable socio-economic groups which come together to defend a well-defined interest at the ballot box or at the legislature.

The evolution towards a well defined profile was further delayed for Kosovars have not governed the country for much of the post-war period. Kosovo was long run by an international trusteeship which deprived its political elite from governing – such lack of governance has spared elected politicians from having to espouse and argue over specific

policy preferences. As Kosovo is not a member of the UN yet, Kosovo's foreign policy can afford not to take a stance on issues of global importance either.

The initial hypothesis was that the average ideological coordinates within each party are almost as diverse as when compared with other parties. Pragmatic parties hover across the ideological spectrum and harbour no particular policy concerns. On occasional cases when parties exhibit some ideological label, it rather reflects the desire of its most senior echelon how it prefers to be seen from outside.

The lack of coherence does not mean that parties move across the spectrum, but it does mean that parties embrace positions that are not coherent. As Kosovo gets to govern itself, its decision-makers have to decide on difficult issues, forcing them to adopt stances towards particular questions. The more issues pile up, it becomes possible to observe if decisions are consistent over time.

Adopting clear positions is bound to bring internal differences to the open and encourage transfers across party lines. Such a series of transfers may encourage the much-needed transformation to a party scene where friendship is replaced by policy consistency as the glue that holds a party together. The more parties and individuals state their opinion, vote in Parliament, walk out and join other parties, new parties are formed, young voters decide which parties to join, some level of transformation will have taken place.

This evolution is partly hobbled by the perception of EU integration as a technical process. Numerous laws are adopted almost mechanically for 'debate is not required if advanced European countries have already taken the same decisions' as is often heard. Political impetus to show fast progress towards the EU leads to quick decisions, rendering public debate as redundant. Nevertheless, a range of issues (privatisation, headscarf, etc.) have begun to set the parties

apart from each other, as well as instigate major divisions within them.

This paper begins by reviewing previous studies, followed by a discussion of our approach and methodology. Eleven main ideological profiles are then described, which serves as useful background to place findings of our survey in a comparative context. The following section briefly describes Kosovo's main political parties. The paper then deliberates several models how ideology is portrayed in a two-dimensional spectrum, concluding with the model we felt closes to adapt to our purposes, the Alternative Nolan Chart. We then present our findings by mapping the scores of all individual respondents on to a plot graph for a party at a time, as well as a one-dimensional presentation of aggregate party scores for each question separately. Finally, a brief interpretation of results follows as well as a number of causal factors that may have contributed to this diagnosis.

Assumptions

Most political parties in Kosovo were established as part of the national liberation struggle. Sadly, most of them find it too convenient to preserve their closed culture to this day. Once the objective of independence was accomplished, desire for personal enrichment has transformed parties into mere vehicles for gaining power, entirely devoid of principles. Parties have created and maintained wide patronage and clientelistic networks to the degree that this is often the sole purpose of electoral contest.

Kosovo's short track record of democracy has managed to produce some level of democratic procedures, but it has fallen short of deepening it. Majorities in the Parliament seek sufficient numbers to railroad the opposition and major parties never seek to build consensus, regardless of the importance of the matter on the agenda. Polarisation, deadlock and political crises have become a frequent feature

and the parliamentary majority often relies on tiny parties to secure the numbers.

The criteria why individuals join a party usually range from (a) sympathies for the leader, (b) geographic proximity, (c) self-interest, (d) war-time loyalty, (e) likelihood that a party wins elections or (f) the proximity of the voter to the party and the resulting likelihood of personal benefit. As a result, like-mindedness about policy preferences ranks very low on the list of priorities. Devoid of political platforms, the likelihood of personal benefit is by far more important than the *pro forma* policies or official platforms embraced. Concurrently, preferences of the voters on major policy issues are inadequately channelled to political parties, which does not pressure parties to adopt clear platforms.

Given the gradual evolution of Kosovo's political parties, and numerous transfers, this period is the ideal stage to conduct a deeper map-out of issues to obtain a more accurate picture of opinion among the most influential individuals. With another paper and project, D4D is consistently contributing to link the agendas of membership-based groups, as nascent interest groups with political parties and individual politicians.

Until recently, politicians have largely relied on getting elected from a particular geographic area, reflecting loyalty lines along structures reliant on friendships and extended family lines. It is key however to identify features of a political culture that may instigate voters to identify like-minded politicians regardless of their geographic provenance.

The evolutionary path of Kosovo's parties to consistency is closely related to the path of the Kosovo's polity to modernity. As basic needs (roads, water, sewage) are fulfilled, the promises that rural Kosovars expect to be fulfilled are less bound by geography. Like-mindedness that young Kosovars associate are driven by one's occupation, gender, hobby

interests, ethnicity, or age-group. This paves the way for individual MPs to target voters of specific profile across Kosovo, made possible by the fact that Kosovo is a single electoral district.

Ultimately, an increasing number of elected officials realize the need to rediscover their key priorities and tie their constituencies to resulting policy choices. Parties with a set of well-defined objectives (be they ideologically consistent or not) would stand for the interest of certain groups as opposed to sporadic policies probably furthering the interests of party leaders and their clan-like networks. Parties could grow and win over new voters if they make it easier for constituencies to hold their representatives accountable to their performance on implementing these policies.

As political deliberation becomes more issue-specific, Members of Parliament can become suitable targets for membership groups to lobby. The result is MPs who account more to the voters and less to party heads, leading to a better defence of grass-root interests. By corollary, the Parliament becomes a true arena where clashing interests compete for political attention, budgets and favourable legislation. A more dynamic interaction between well-organized associations and MPs with specific niche can improve the quality and participation of policy development. Eventually, parties will become more accountable on issues and to specific voters groups and less individualist and clientelistic.

Purpose

Apart of its academic value, this mapping exercise was designed to help political parties assess their degree of coherence on key policy topics among their senior rank. A small number of individuals decide what profile is best for the party. The 'labelling' occurs solely from the above and is driven by two criteria only: (a) the naïve perception that 'right' means western, and (b) the quest to join a pan-

European parliamentary groups it decides to ascribe to.

Most parties are yet to move from prescriptive statements that at best indicate the desire where the party plans to develop in the future. The profile sought does not reflect a series of positions on issues or the voting record in the Parliament. Worse, the senior party leadership does not bother to permeate the ideological label into a meaningful police guide for lower-level officials and followers.

Whether the party can reach the destination expressed by its leadership ultimately depends on the opinions of a wider array of leaders. To this effect, it is essential to analyze the opinion of a wider circle of influential party officials and activists. The consistency of positions of political parties is essential in a transition as parties gradually transform from vehicles of realizing interest of particular groups to representing a stable voter base with a specific set of interests.

A consistent profile would contributed to party discipline too. Currently popularity comes from particular names, and each time a senior official walks out to another party, s/he takes away their fans along. If popularity emanated from party's policy, the parties would insulate themselves against the damage of transfer. An individual who has advocated say libertarian policy, can hardly join a party which may be seen unfit for his/her beliefs. While ideology would strengthen the party discipline, consistency of opinion can limit the discretion of individual leaders and would force internal party democracy.

Literature Review

The four studies reviewed below have provided an excellent starting point for D4D to build upon and move the debate forward. Each of the studies reviewed looked for consistency within the party only to find there was none. They attempted

to categorize current parties into a particular profile, but concluded that parties wobble from one position to another.

Zulfaj, Jeton and Mulliqi, Brikena. 15 Apr 2008. Political Parties in Kosova: Profile and Ideology. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. http://www.fes-prishtina.org/pdf/final_draft_en.pdf

“Political Parties in Kosova: Profile and Ideology” is a report compiled by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) in 2009, addressing the lack of clearly defined political ideologies among the existing parties in Kosovo. In an attempt to identify ideological preferences, this report creates a profile for six political parties, determined by responses to a series of in-depth interview questions. Five of the six political parties profiled are labelled as “Centre-right”, with the exception being the Reformist Party (ORA), labelled “Centre-left.” However, the authors of the report noted that, “political parties in Kosovo jump now and then into the left and into the right...for the purpose of vote maximization.”¹ The FES report challenges political parties to better identify their ideologies and to create programs correspondent to these profiles.

Gündogan, Ercan. August 2009. Some Observations on the Empirical Research for the Political and Ideological Orientation of the Youth Between 18 and 24 Ages in Kosovo. ISES Universum. <http://www.universum-ks.org/repository/docs/Observations%20on%20Kosovo%20Youth.pdf>

This report presents the opinion of youth in Kosovo as measured by a questionnaire measuring political and ideological preferences. General questions were asked, e.g. “Does the state or citizen come first?”. The questionnaire also asked to define one’s political thought? with the possible answers of Liberal, Conservative, Religious, Nationalist, Fascist, Republican, Socialist, Communist, Anarchist, and

Other. Unfortunately, the questions included in this study are often vague, and there is no analysis of the relation between answers regarding political ideologies and answers regarding party preferences. Instead, the analysis is presented as two separate conclusions: the ideological attitudes of youth (social democratic, secularist, and republican) and the party alignment of youth (polarized between PDK and LDK).²

Hofmeister, Wilhelm and Grabow, Karston. April 2013. Political Parties: Functions and Organisation in Democratic Societies. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_34067-1522-1-30.pdf?130417190943

“Political Parties: Function and Organisation in Democratic States” is a report published by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Pristina in 2013. It provides an in-depth analysis of the structures, classifications, and purpose of existing political parties worldwide. With regard to Kosovo, “party and ideology do not co-exist,” the report concludes. “Political parties in Kosovo were developed with the lack of ideology debate ... all political parties in Kosovo were constantly transformed from one current to the other, as right as much as left.”³

Shaipi, Kushtrim and Maliqi, Agon. May 2008-2009. Party Analysis Reports. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Shaipi’s collection series of Party Analysis Reports, introduced the issue-by-issue approach to conducting ideological research in Kosovo. Shaipi conducts a methodology analysis of secondary data (media clippings, mission statements, etc.) with interviews on an issue-based level. The rationale behind this methodology is that political parties do not prepare answers to specific issue questions, but rather to overall ideological profiling questions. The first report focused on pensions, healthcare and privatisation, the second on values, religion, state, and individuality, and the third on privatisation, fiscal policies and development.

Methodology

Original methodology was developed to map out ideology, by surveying the opinion of forty senior officials of each of the four major parties. The questionnaire did not explicitly ask about ideological leanings, but it posed forty key questions on a range of issues. Each answer corresponds to a consistent scoring system which is then presented in a plot graph.

To ensure that the questionnaire can serve as a reliable tool for the task, D4D first identified main political ideologies around the world, and conducted in-depth research about the opinions they espouse. Typical views on a wide range of issues (such as taxation, abortion, welfare, etc.) were meticulously examined in various contexts of western democracies as a useful comparison to develop a Kosovo-specific study tool.

Each ideology was ranked along a scale according to the ideology's position on the issue. The code was in turn used to design our questionnaire. These general topics and questions were combined with research on issues related to Kosovo, and this was used as baseline to create a Kosovo-specific map.

For every question, a number of multiple-choice answers were presented. Questions (as well as the answer set) were then adapted to fit Kosovo's context. A numeric value was assigned to each possible answer, from -10 (most leftist or conservative) to +10 (right or liberal).

The survey of forty questions and an extensive range of possible answer to each question was our guide to place Kosovar party activists on the ideological spectrum. D4D then conducted interviews with 40 senior officials from each of the four main parties. Answers were collected and plotted graphically, based on the average numeric value of their results. The sum of each respondent's answers resulted in an aggregate score, which was also plotted graphically. This presentation enabled us to define their specific political

ideology for each issue, for each respondent overall, and for the party as a whole.

The questionnaire was tested and discussed with over 30 experienced analysts as was the weight of each question. Since not all questions are of equal importance, the weight was also widely discussed with numerous political analysts, commentators, party activists, and the weight presented below reflects the average of what most thought was appropriate. The answers to each question contributed to measure a respondent's coordinates along each of the two axes, economic (horizontal axis) and political/social (vertical axis). Below is an overview of issues measured and the weight that each has towards the overall count and for both dimensions.

	Questions	Economy	Values
1	Regulation of trade	8	0
2	Customs duties	7.5	0
3	Private vs. public	6	4
4	Subsidies	6	2.5
5	Agricultural subsidies	4	2
6	Value added tax	7	0
7	Uniform or progressive tax	4.5	4.5
8	Foreign investment and aid	6	2.5
9	Labour unions	4	4
10	Minimum wage	4	4
11	Maternity leave	4	4
12	Vacation and national holidays	5	2
13	Role of the International community	0	5
14	Size of public administration	4	3.5
15	Level of public spending	4	3.5

16	Legality and costs for abortion	1	4.5
17	LGBT	0	6
18	Civil society	0	6
19	Multi-ethnicity	0.5	4
20	Preferential treatment of minorities	0	5
21	Ethnic relations	0.5	5
22	European integration	3.5	5
23	Immigration	2	4
24	Environment	5.5	3
25	Teaching about religion	1	4
26	Globalisation	5	3
27	Social assistance	5	2.5
28	Private vs. public health provision	4	2
29	Public spending on health care	3.5	2
30	Pensions	4	6
31	Religion vs. state	2	5
32	Drugs	3.5	4
33	Gambling and betting	3	4
34	Prostitution	3.5	5
35	Individual vs. Collective Interest	3	6
36	Culture & Tradition	1.5	5
37	Family values	0	5.5
38	Privatisation	5	5
39	Excise	3.5	2
40	Job Creation	5.5	3

Whenever a respondent could not pick one of the existing possibilities, the surveyor sought a detailed qualitative answer which the team would later deliberate what score to assign to.

II. Description of Main Ideological Profiles

In order to develop an accurate tool, we have conducted in-depth research about the positions embraced by various ideological groupings from western liberal democracies. To make it easier for readers who may not know the fine differences between the various profiles, in this section, we describe briefly the main ideological profiles. We present short descriptions of the following ideologies: *Socialist*, *Left*, *Centre-left*, *Centre-right*, *Right*, *Social Democrat*, *Liberal*, *Authoritarian*, *Nationalist*, *Libertarian*, *Authoritarian*, and *Conservative*. Depending on the knowledge of the reader, this section may serve as key orientation (for less advanced readers), for comparison purposes (for more advanced readers), or simply as refreshing background information.

Socialist

Socialism is a political and economic theory with the belief that the means of production, distribution, and exchange should be owned or regulated by a community as a whole.⁴ This challenges the social structure created through capitalism, in which higher classes exercise greater control over the industry than lower classes. To ensure the success of this collectivist system of living, socialists advocate for strong government intervention and regulation as it is the government's responsibility to oversee the equal distribution of goods and services throughout society. In effect, socialists support that the state is the primary stakeholder of ownership as it is better suited to offer services to all citizens equally.⁵

In modern times, European socialists generally tend to favour policies of social democracy rather than anarchism or communism, although the term "socialism" encompasses a wide range of political ideologies.⁶ The common factor of all socialist ideologies is the shared view of the state's role in the

economic system. Socialists also tend to prioritise public welfare and social justice, identifying more strongly with the political left than the political right.⁷

Examples of modern socialist parties are the Party of European Socialists (PES), the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D)⁸, the Socialist Left Party of Norway (SV), and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE).⁹

Left

The political left, or “left-wing ideology,” is a range on the left/right ideological spectrum. It represents an array of political views that share the support of social equality versus social hierarchy¹⁰ and that value personal freedom over economic freedom.¹¹ Leftists support equality before the law and tend to prioritise tolerance for diverse religions and races, diplomatic foreign policy, and globalization.

Left-wing political parties are often further classified under subcategories such as “liberal,” “democratic,” and “communist.” In terms of personal freedoms, left-wing parties advocate for greater social justice, often accomplished through government implementation regarding the rights of minority groups such as women, homosexuals, and ethnic minorities. Leftists stand in opposition to right-wing political parties, which prioritise more traditional values and less government intervention.¹² In terms of the economy, leftists oppose market forces. Instead, they support public ownership, controlled economy, and appeal to working class. Examples of modern, left wing political parties include communist parties, Labour Parties, Social Democrats, New Left parties, and Green parties.¹³

The political Centre Left is a subcategory of the Left. Also referred to as the Moderate Left, its views encompass a slightly more conservative position on social issues and

economic issues than the views of the extreme left-wing. On the political spectrum, Centre Left favours progressive change over the continuation of tradition; however, they are less concerned with change than the far left.¹⁴ They are more open to the market economy. Examples of Centre Left parties include Social Democrat parties, Green parties, and Italy's Democratic Party (PD).¹⁵

Social Democrat

Social Democracy is a political and economic ideology that advocates for a gradual, peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism, using established political processes throughout the transition.¹⁶ Social Democrats support mixed market economies (similar to the views of Centrists); they see no conflict arising between capitalism and free market economy.¹⁷

Social Democrats emphasize the importance of social equality in a society, but also allow for private ownership. They support a welfare state with free market values; this is often known as “welfare capitalism.”¹⁸ In terms of personal freedoms, Social Democrats are connected with trade union and labour movements, advocating for collective bargaining and worker's rights.¹⁹ Examples of modern Social Democrat parties include the Australian Labour Party, the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SDP), and the New Zealand Labour Party.²⁰

Liberal

Liberalism is a political ideology that emphasises the rights and freedoms of the individual, often with those rights and freedoms guaranteed through government institutions.²¹ Liberal ideas are associated with progressivism: advancing change within the pre-existing social system. This stands in opposition to conservatism, which advocates for a return to traditional social values.

Liberal theories of social justice champion modern understandings of freedom, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of assembly. To protect and safeguard these fundamental freedoms, liberals place power in the hands of the public sector; they allow for the government to enforce legislation protecting equality.²²

Economically, liberals favour a system in which the government's role is limited to providing support and services.²³ Many liberal parties support government-funded systems of welfare, health care, and job creation programs. Examples of modern liberal parties include the Democratic Alliance Party of Albania, the Liberal Forum (LiF) in Austria,²⁴ the Free Democratic Party (FDP) of Germany²⁵, and the Liberal Party (V) of Norway.²⁶

Authoritarian

An authoritarian government is a political system that opposes individual freedom of thought and action, favouring instead submission to authority. Authoritarian regimes concentrate power in the hands of a single leader (state head) or a small group of political elites. Authoritarian leaders often exercise power without regard to legal structures and seek to limit the role of opposing political parties.²⁷

In general, authoritarian regimes are associated with the extreme political right; they are often referred to as “right-wing dictatorships.” Throughout history, authoritarianism has been established with varying degrees of success; examples of past authoritarian regimes include fascist governments like Nazi Germany and Spain under Franco, as well as absolute monarchies such as Louis XIV's France and Russia under Peter the Great.²⁸

Studies have shown that economic growth occurs in both authoritarian and democratic governments.²⁹ However, because authoritarians seek to eradicate personal freedoms,

the economy does not develop in the same way that a free market economy would. Instead, the centralized government dictates all economic decisions. Today, authoritarian regimes exist in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Syria.³⁰

Nationalist

Nationalism believes that each nationality should form a state, and that citizens should be identified along national lines.³¹ The social structure espoused by this ideology is that of *nation states*, or political states made up of citizens sharing cultural heritage.³²

Nationalist movements stem from ultra-conservative political parties, aligning them more closely with the political right than the left. Historically, nationalist movements have played roles in the formation of states such as Germany and Italy, and nationalism has characterized influential modern ideologies like Pan-Arabism. Today, the rise of modern nationalist parties is closely correlated to modern immigration concerns and to the process of “Europeanisation,” or integration into the European Union.³³

Nationalistic parties play on the fears of foreign culture infringing upon local culture, gaining support through xenophobic voters. Apart from their anti-immigration position and their stance on European integration, nationalists do not harbour specific, distinguishing policies; however, they tend to vote along conservative lines.³⁴

Today, nationalist governments are predominantly found in Asia and the Middle East, although European nationalist parties also exert political influence,³⁵ and have staged a come-back in the 2014 European elections. Examples in Europe include the UK Scottish National Party, the Ulster Unionist Party, Italy’s National Alliance Party, and The National Front of France.³⁶

Libertarian

Libertarianism is a modern political theory, predominantly found in the United States of America. The foundation of this ideology is the prioritisation of individual liberty, whether economic, personal, or social.³⁷ This results in the belief that government intervention in citizens' lives should be limited, if not eliminated, to protect individual freedoms from the state. Libertarians do not fall directly on the left/right political spectrum, as they embrace leftist personal freedoms such as minority rights in addition to right-wing economic freedoms such as free trade and privatised health care. Policies advanced by libertarians include abolition of the minimum wage, abolition of welfare, drastic tax reductions, non-interventionist foreign policy, and legalisation of homosexual marriage.³⁸

Because libertarianism is a rather new ideology, there are few libertarian political groupings in Europe. However, the Libertarian Party of the US is the third largest political party in the United States.³⁹

Right

The political right represents an array of political views that value tradition rather than progressive change and share a belief in economic freedom. The right believes that business should not be regulated; instead, it stresses the importance of individualism and the strength of a free market economy.⁴⁰ Right-wing supporters advocate for a more aggressive foreign policy and tend to position against immigration.

Economically, the political right favours minimal trade regulation, privatised industries, and lower tax rates. In terms of personal freedoms, right-wing parties do not prioritise social justice and are opposed to the idea of government enforced non-discrimination legislation. The right stands in opposition to left-wing political parties, which

prioritise more progressive values and greater government intervention.⁴¹

In terms of the economy, right-wing parties believe in the strength of market forces. Because they advocate for a free market economy, the right often appeals to the middle to upper classes.⁴² Examples of modern, right-wing political parties include nationalist parties, Christian Democrats, classical liberals, and conservative parties.⁴³

The political Centre Right is a subcategory of the Right. Also referred to as the Moderate Right, its views encompass a slightly more liberal position on social issues and economic issues than the views of the extreme right-wing.

Conservative

Conservatism is a political and economic theory that advocates for traditional values as opposed to progressive social change. Conservative parties strongly support the individual's liberty within the economy; they champion free market systems that limit government regulations and support.⁴⁴ However, conservative parties also tend to assume more aggressive positions on national defence, foreign policy, and immigration.

In terms of personal freedoms, conservatives are right-wing; they do not prioritise social justice and their policies often benefit the middle to upper classes rather than lower classes, by rewarding those who have worked their way to higher classes in a capitalist society.⁴⁵ On certain progressive issues such as environmental policy, conservatives are beginning to advocate for change, albeit to a lesser degree than liberal parties, and conservatives remain ambiguous on the issue of EU integration.⁴⁶

Today, conservative parties are widespread in both Europe and North America. Examples include Forza Italia in Italy, the Independence Party of Iceland, and Fianna Fail of Ireland.⁴⁷

III. Brief Overview of the Party Scene

This section describes the political parties in Kosovo and instances of their identification with a particular ideological profile. Unlike the survey, this only describes instances of their explicit association with an ideological position, as usually described in statements by the leadership, in the party program, or implicitly by their attempted affiliation in pan-European party groupings.

PDK

The Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) was established on 14 May 1999. It emerged out of the political wing of the Kosovo Liberation Army and is lead by Hashim Thaçi, a former member of the KLA.⁴⁸

PDK is mostly defined as centre-right on the political spectrum, with a combination of economically liberal but socially conservative policies; for example, the advocacy for a free market and low taxes as well as a preservation of traditional values.⁴⁹ A good example is PDK's recent and determined commitment to privatizing the Post-Telecommunications of Kosovo (PTK) despite some of the opposing voices within and outside the party.

PDK has also had leanings towards the left at times. PDK has previously defined itself as social-democratic and has maintained links with the Labour Party in the UK,⁵⁰ as well as the Democratic Party in the USA.⁵¹ PDK has also exhibited close relations with the Socialist Party of Albania, though it is not certain whether they find common ground on specific party ideology. Under criticism by the Self Determination Movement (VV) for its tax policies, PDK highlights its track record of policies contributing to redistribution of wealth and the construction and renovation of over a hundred schools and roads.⁵²

PDK has exhibited traits of opposite ideologies. In one hand, they support widespread privatisation of the public enterprises which clearly belongs to the right while it maintains a large public administration which is more leftist. Similarly leftist have been the subsidies for agriculture that have grown steadily during PDK's administration.

LDK

The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) was created by a set of intellectuals in 1989,⁵³ following the rule Slobodan Milosevic who sought to reassert Serb authority over Kosovo and refused to allow it autonomy.⁵⁴ Ibrahim Rugova was a key founder and was president of the party until 2006, while LDK is now lead by Isa Mustafa.⁵⁵

LDK is mostly defined as centre-right on the political spectrum, campaigning for a combination of economic liberalism and social conservatism. This is demonstrated by LDK's membership of the European People's Party (EPP), which defines itself as 'the political family of the centre-right'.⁵⁶

It can be argued that LDK is slightly more liberal than most centre-right parties in economic terms. On the social sphere, LDK describes itself as conservative, although it remains individualistic in the area of human rights, with an emphasis on equality 'regardless of gender, age, ethnicity and religion'.⁵⁷ LDK is seen as a traditional party still controlled by the elderly who have been in politics for a long time. This is party is also viewed as being very rigid in terms of reforming from within and struggling to attract youth.

LDK strongly supports privatisation of the public enterprises, but like other parties, has not challenged the free provision of health care.

AAK

The Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) was founded in May 2000 by Ramush Haradinaj, a former KLA commander.⁵⁸ AAK was originally a coalition of five separate parties, but this changed in 2001 after the two parties opted out of the coalition leaving AAK to register as a single unified entity.⁵⁹ Haradinaj was absent after his resignation in 2005 - until his return, the president's duties were carried out by Blerim Shala, now back to the role as vice president.

AAK is also considered belonging to the centre-right. In the economic sphere they strongly supported methods of stimulating the economy such as privatisation of companies and the reduction of taxes.⁶⁰

VV

The Self-Determination Movement (VV) was established in June 2005 as a civil initiative with the aim of entering the 2010 parliamentary elections. Since 2005, Albin Kurti has lead VV, often advocating more radical processes and policies than other parties. For example, Kurti is reported to have encouraged MPs to protest rather than carry out action through parliamentary methods.⁶¹ Kurti sees representative democracy as insufficient and advocates direct democracy.⁶²

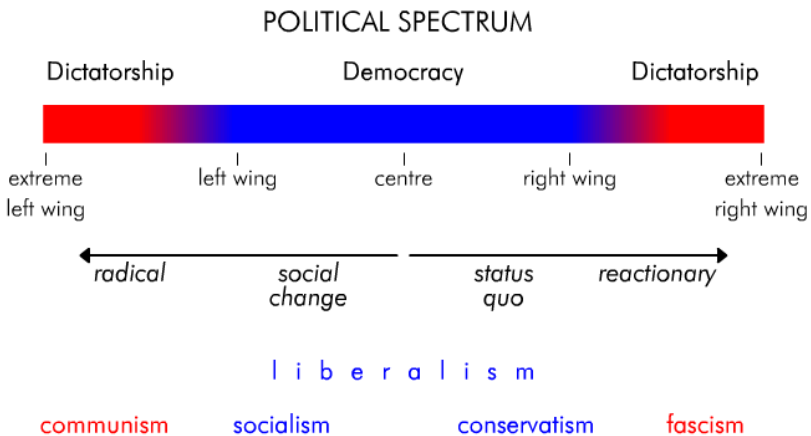
When asked how he would define his party, Kurti described VV as left or centre-left, but highlighted the fact that because of Kosovo's political system and circumstances it is difficult to assign ideologies to parties. Indeed, in terms of economic policies, VV are more leftist than the other parties in Kosovo; they advocate an economic system to create social opportunity for citizens.⁶³

VV is strongly against privatisation and for higher role of the state in the economy what puts VV in the leftist ideology. Recently VV showed interesting views on the religion issues by supporting the right of individuals to wear scarf in public schools.

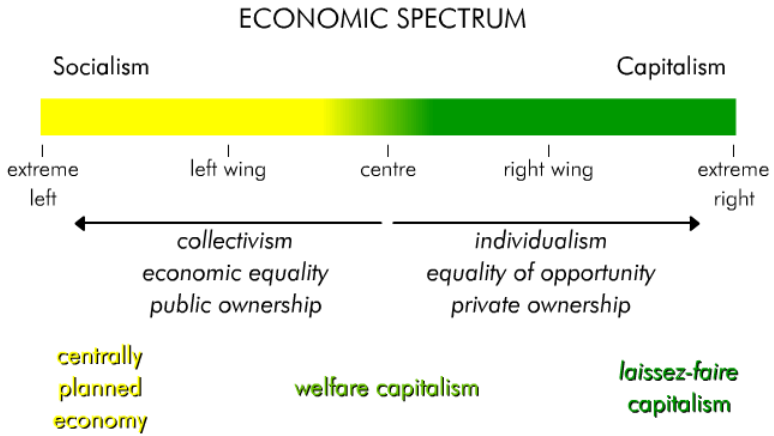
From its establishment, VV has positioned against the direct involvement of the international community in the political life in Kosovo and against preferences given to the ethnic minorities. Together with the idea of Kosovo joining Albania, VV positions sometimes are seen not only as patriotic but more as nationalist ideology.

IV. The Single-Dimensional Ideological Compass and Party Attitudes per Issue

The political spectrum has been depicted through a variety of models over time, beginning with the one-dimensional model created by the post-Revolutionary French Parliament⁶⁴, with seats arranged by “left wing” and “right wing.” We began our study from the one-dimensional left to right political spectrum, using the traditional economic and social scales.⁶⁵ Below are presented the social scale (L to R, less individual freedom to greater individual freedom) and economic scale (L to R, controlled economy to free market capitalism)⁶⁶

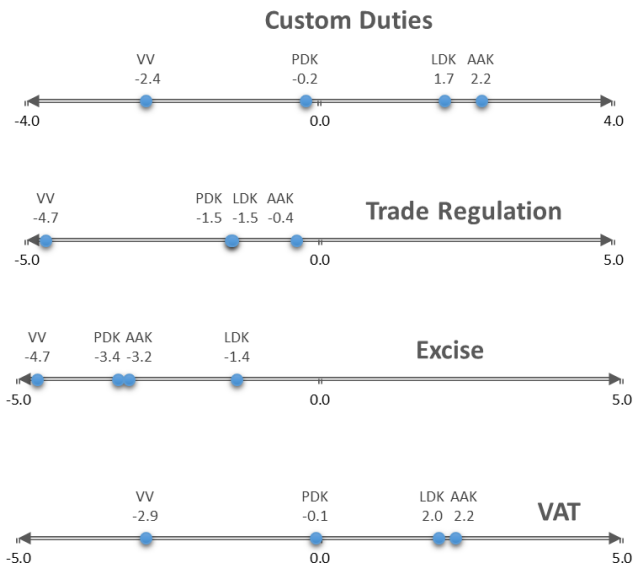


Another one-dimensional spectrum is the economic scale, taken from the same source. In essence, two-dimensional scales are a combination of these two scales. The remainder of this section compares average responses of each party by specific questions. What surprised us was that all other parties were also somewhat left side of the centre.

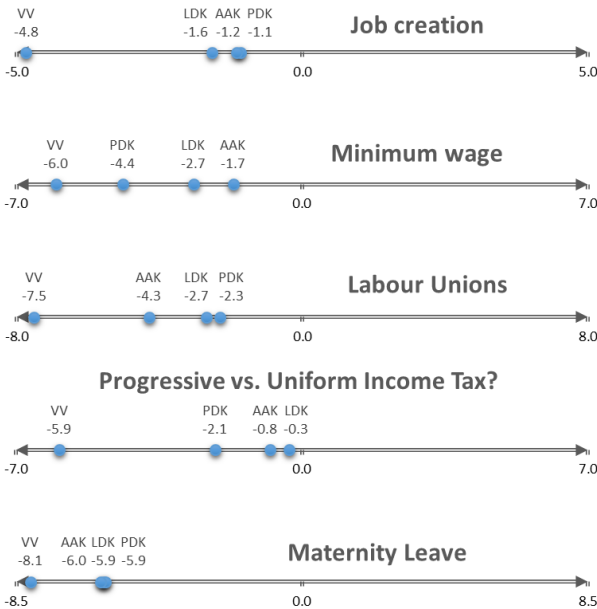


Wide Dispersion From Left to Centre

The Kosovar political scene is generally to be found left of the centre with regard to economic and fiscal priorities.



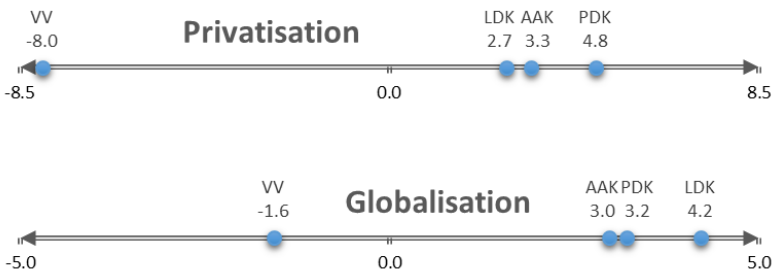
Vetëvendosje believes that customs duties and VAT should be raised to increase revenues, which would contribute to a stable economy. PDK officials believe that 10% customs duties and 16% VAT are just about right, while LDK and AAK would prefer to lower the duties at some point after Kosovo's economy stabilizes. Most VV respondents were of the opinion that “a moderate raise of the VAT will improve the economy and in turn will create a higher standard living”. Other parties were not in favour of raising the 16% VAT. PDK were in-between two “maybe” answers (right in the center), while LDK and AAK were closest to the response “raising taxes should not be considered, and additional revenues should be generated only by cutting expenses”. All parties were for raising excise duties to discourage behaviour and collect additional income, albeit with caution not to instigate smuggling as a side-effect.



With regard to job creation, most parties were just to be found just left of the centrist answer that “the private sector is primarily responsible, but the state should ensure an adequate environment”. Most VV respondents were of the opinion that the state has a much more significant responsibility. Similar responses were made when asked about the progressive tax, again with furthest on the left (with a score of 5.9 which indicates a policy preference to tax the super-rich higher as a way to combat injustices in socio-economic classes). On the minimum wage, VV favoured a minimum wage both for public and the private sector that enables one a decent life. The other three parties were more moderate and favoured that was minimal to allow subsistence. VV favours strong labour unions, AAK favours strong labour unions for the public sector and weaker for the private sector. LDK and PDK merely favour labour unions which protect the rights of the workers and safety in the workplace, and do not favour unions with strong bargaining power.

Between Economy & International

VV has shown to be most leftist on virtually all economic questions, truthful to their party platform. Vetëvendosje expressed against most forms of privatization in Kosovo.

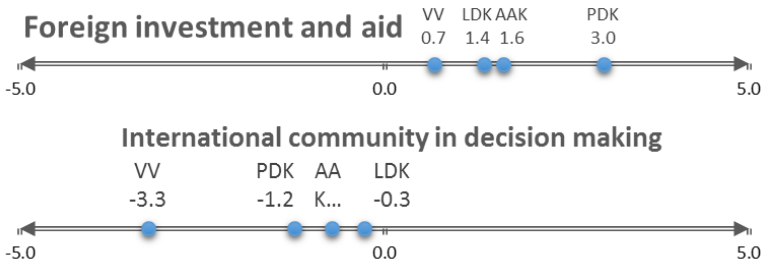


The other three parties expressed for most forms albeit LDK expressed some reservation only for some types of privatisation (namely for commercialization and liquidation). Unlike most questions in this survey, privatization has drawn comments and there are many statements that parties have made. Unfortunately, most statements have to do with the abuse and corruption related to privatization, and very few ideological differences towards privatization as a policy. Some parties supported privatization not as true belief, but as a necessity.⁶⁷ VV's officials mostly see globalization as a negative force, albeit with some positive aspects. The other three parties see it as positive that promotes diversity and openness.

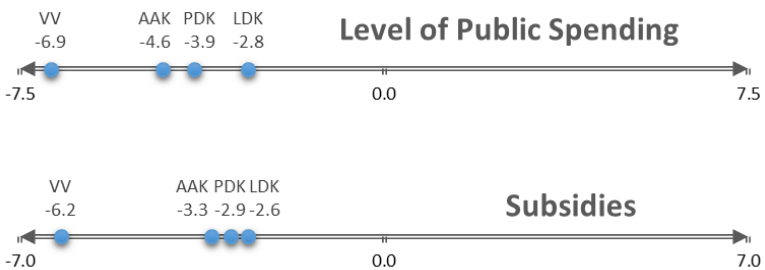
All parties expressed favourable attitudes towards foreign investment and assistance. Vetëvendosje's answer was closest to the centrist answer (which we assigned with zero – “Positively: limited assistance to key sectors is essential for Kosovo has no other access to capital). Other parties hovered closest to the answer “Positively: but only if coupled with a strong domestic economy”. All parties expressed against international involvement in domestic decision-making, albeit with some differences. Vetëvendosje was most adamant against, believing that “to create independence decisions, Kosovo's government should not be swayed by the international community”. The other three parties agree that the international community should generally not get involved actively in decision-making, although they should take part by offering examples for comparison. Like privatization, the issue of foreign involvement has been debated, which is normal in a country which until recently has been an international protectorate. Reluctance towards international involvement in domestic affairs has grown, but generally as a desire to show that Kosovo is capable to run its own affairs and to prove the maturity of the state.⁶⁸

When asked about public spending on defense, VV believed

that Kosovo should spend significantly higher on defense to foster the national pride and strength. AAK supported higher spending on defense to lead a more secure and stable country. Also PDK and LDK favoured greater spending on defense.



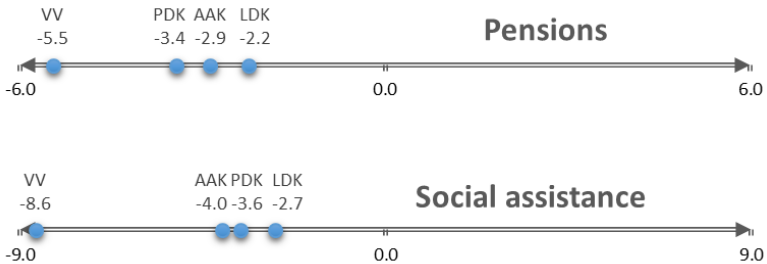
VV expressed highest support for subsidies, between moderate and high, while others expressed for subsidizing key goods. Although in this survey the two main parties showed least fervent for subsidies, PDK has increased subsidies (especially in agriculture) steadily over time, while LDK has also committed to do the same.



Leftist Leanings

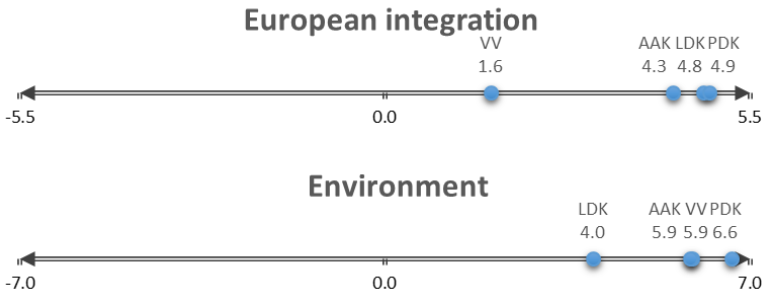
Pensions and social assistance have been one of the Vetëvendosje's hallmarks, and it is no wonder that they have a distinct opinion, favouring a more generous scheme than

others. They were split between having a single mandatory public pension scheme or allowing an additional optional private scheme alongside the mandatory public one (which is what we currently have). Other parties hovered around the second answer. VV also believed that social assistance should be raised substantially (from the current 40-80 Euros) to enable normal lives. Other parties believed that social assistance should stay at current levels for now, and increased gradually.

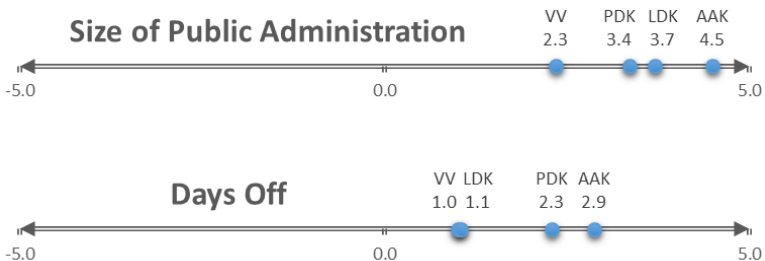


Clear Obvious Alignment

All parties are for European integration, although Vetëvendosje is more hesitant. Its score of 1.6 stands most closely to the answer “Oppose: EU integration is not a priority concern at the moment, but eventually may threaten the independence of individual countries”. The answer of the other parties (ranging between 4.3 to 4.9) is closest to the answer “Support: EU integration is not a priority concern at the moment, but eventually may result in a stronger, more stable society”.

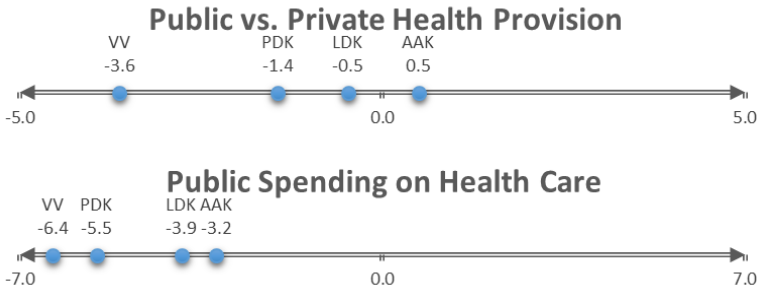


All parties favour protecting the environment, although this stands in stark contrast with current policies and the little attention paid to environmental priorities. LDK’s answer sits between the answer that “we should fund various programs and more resources for protecting the environment will eventually pay for itself” and “providing tax breaks for low polluters, and heavier fines for major polluters”. The answer range of the three other parties are one notch above and range between “lowering tax breaks for low polluters and heavier fines for major polluters” and the “need to introduce state of the art legislation and force all polluters to abide by EU standards.”

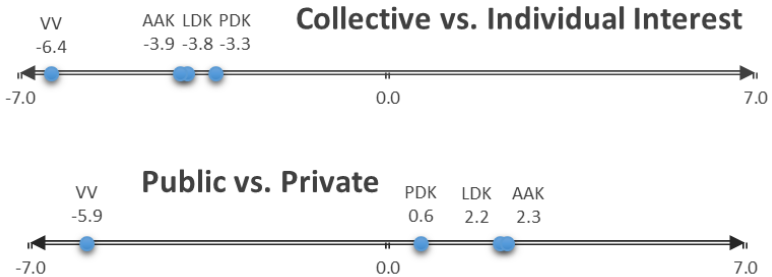


All parties seemed to agree on two issues, which are starkly at odds with reality. All parties have consistently contributed to a larg public administration (by recruiting thousands of

their fans during their sting in power). At least in this survey they show awareness and at least confidently express their disagreement to a swollen public service. VV expressed for a slight decrease of the public administration, while AAK for a more significant one. All parties believe that days off should be reduced – LDK and VV believed that off days should be reduced by one, while PDK and AAK believe they should be reduced by two days.

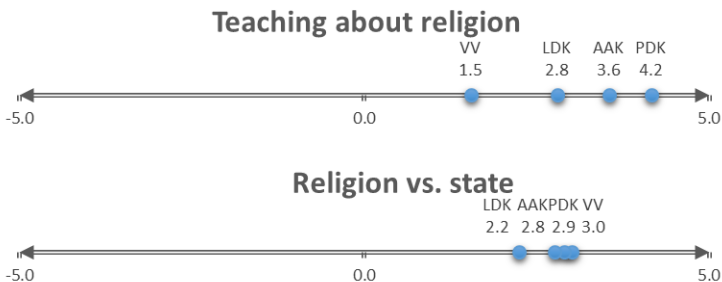


A clear obvious alignment was also with regard to greater spending for public health care. VV is of the opinion that public spending should very much increase, “the quality and access of health care services should be maximized for all citizens equally, and to accomplish this, the budget must be increased manifold.” LDK and AAK most favoured the response that “health care is one of the most important government programs in place, and needs a larger budget to ensure equal access for all”. PDK was between the two responses. With regard to the dilemma between public and private health provision, LDK and AAK were of the opinion that “every individual has a basic right to health care, and it is the government’s responsibility to provide decent service, the rich may be able to get more privately. PDK and to a greater degree, VV, favoured low-cost health care and some control of the government, with fewer people to have an incentive to seek private care.



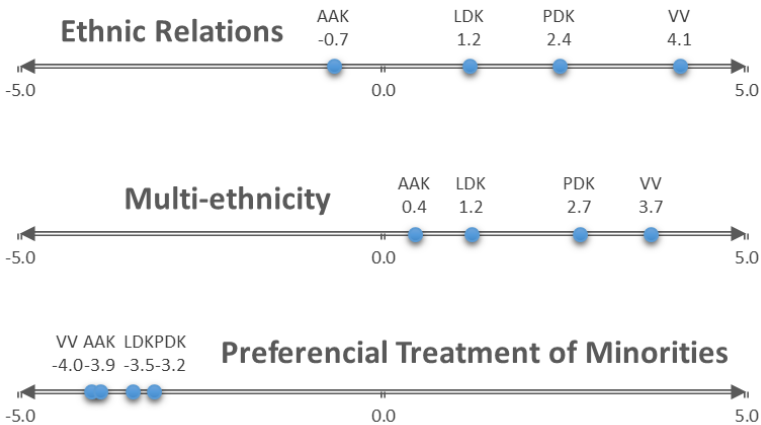
Most parties prioritized the collective interest ahead of the individual, albeit at different levels. Another question yielded more nuance on a similar dilemma. When asked which institutions serve Kosovo’s economy better, VV favoured public institutions, “to ensure that foreign institutions do not dominate the society” or “to allow goods and services to be equally distributed throughout society, lessening the impact of economic classes”. PDK sits between two answers (slightly in favour of public with a score of -1 and slightly in favour of private with a score of +1). LDK and AAK have shown a noticeable preference for the private enterprise.

Reluctance towards religious teaching also unites Kosovars of all stripes. VV favours options courses that devote equal attention to teaching about all religions, while other parties were less keen, mostly hovering around the answer that

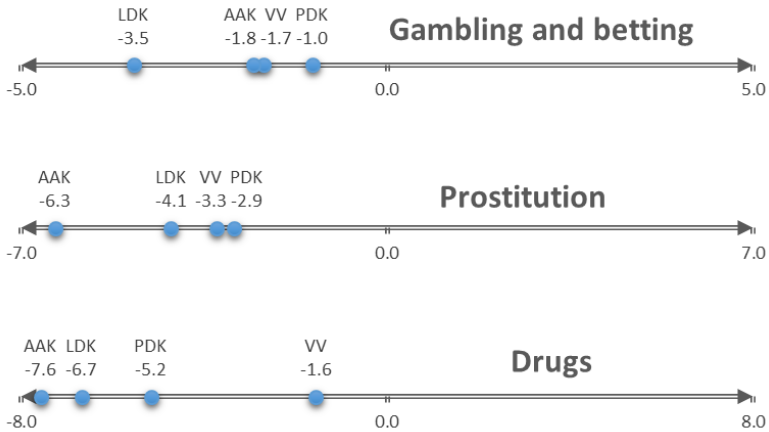


“religious education should only be part of a general education about civic values and should not be a separate course”. On another question pertaining to the dividing line between religion and the state, all parties hovered around two answers, that religious sites should lower the noise that they emit and that religious rights ought to be respected but must remain a personal matter. AAK⁶⁹ and LDK have been among the few parties to take a vocal stance against the headscarf, against religious teaching in public schools and for strict division of religion and state.⁷⁰

Inter-ethnic aspects



Whereas VV has the image of the most nationalistic party, they were most friendly to multi-ethnicity and ethnic relations. VV answers were the most liberal, showing readiness to work with a Kosovo Serb and live near one, but not marry one. AAK officials were least willing for cross-ethnic engagement, with the average response saying would not mind living near a Kosovo Serbs and maybe would work with one. LDK and PDK responses fell in-between.



VV was also least suspicious of multi-ethnicity. They expressed the belief that “multiculturalism should be defended in all forms, and minorities should not be assimilated”. AAK was most in doubt whether multi-ethnicity weakens or strengthens the Kosovar society.

All parties expressed against preferential treatment. They most embraced the answer “that giving preferential treatment to ethnic minorities is discriminatory to others. The Serbs’ responses need to be reduced to make them more equal to others.

Attitude to social Ills

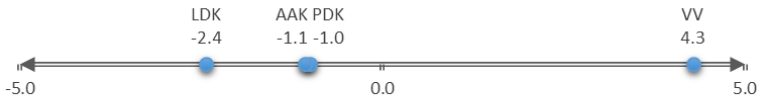
PDK and VV show the lowest levels of intolerance towards gambling, betting, prostitution and drugs. AAK and LDK were in favour of treating these three social ills as illegal and persecuting them. The opinions were harshest towards drugs, and mildest towards gambling and betting. With regard to prostitution most responses hovered around the score of -5 which meant “decriminalising it (treating as small offence) and prosecute it”.

Personal Freedoms

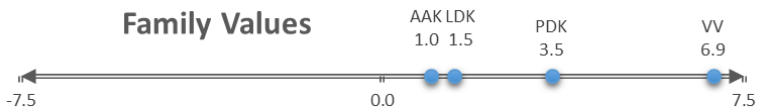
VV turns out to be the most liberal of all the parties when it comes to personal freedoms, possibly a function of the young average age of its key officials. For example, the VV answers consider that LGBT ought to be fully legal and promoted, and for a third of its officials the promotion may include a parade. Other parties preferred that LGBT rights remain unregulated and tolerated, but without promoting it making it explicitly legal.



Legality & Costs for Abortion



Family Values



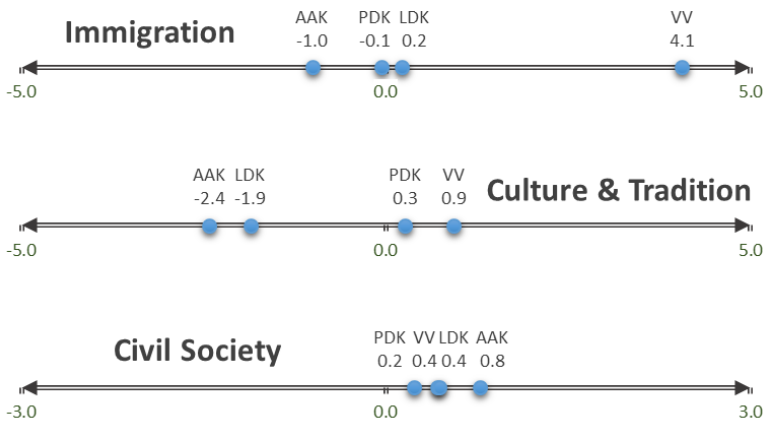
Maternity Leave



VV officials similarly believe that abortion should remain legal, although not funded from the public cofers. No parties said that abortion should be illegal, but others showed lower readiness to expend public funding for this purpose. Four indicators were measured to assess whether a respondent

was a conservative or a liberal. We asked about preferences regarding (a) number of children, (b) attitudes towards divorce, (c) attitudes about the extended family, (d) sex before marriage, and (e) women’s role in the household. VV turned out to be the most liberal of all, generally favouring small nuclear family, take no major qualms with divorce or sex before marriage, and prefer equal roles in the family. The other three parties should also be considered liberal although to a significantly lower degree.

Maternity leave has recently been lengthened which has generated some public debate. VV prefers further extending the maternity leave (to 12 months and fully paid at least for 9 months). Other parties believed that the maternity leave should be 9 months, paid by the private employer for 6 months. Overall, the public debate have expressed concerns about the falling birth rate⁷¹, while others saw it as discriminatory that the third quarter of the nine-month maternity leave is unpaid.⁷²



Kosovo does not face a challenge of immigration, in fact, it still a country that exports migrants. Nevertheless, we saw it as relevant to ask the question, although we assigned a very low weight towards the overall score. Since this is not an economic issue, it may be telling more to assess liberal attitudes, VV showed greater openness, while other parties less so, consistent with other responses on personal freedoms.

AAK and LDK favoured a greater preference for the traditional (closest to the score of -4 that “tradition must be cultivated with public funding” and “o” that “tradition and modernity should be carefully balanced”. PDK and VV showed a slight favouring of the modern.

All parties centred around the same answer set with regard to civil society, between the answer that “the role of the civil society is not very effective and there is a lot of room for improvement” (-1) and “civil society should continue to be encouraged, as it creates a more engaged community” (+1).

V. Dispersion of Responses

The table on the next page presents the standard deviation of each response, as a way to measure the dispersion of responses by issue and by party. In this way, the rate of dispersion indicates that the issue is more controversial inside the party. This should not mean that parties ought not to discuss them, quite the opposite, topics that have enjoyed greater public discussion in the past enjoy greater consensus.

Least controversial were topics such as maternity leave, custom duties, foreign investment and aid (to be found at the top of the list). These are issues where responses congregated around the same responses. Dispersion with highest deviation among respondents are in issues like prostitution, gambling & betting, and abortion. On this three questions respondents have given answers that are fairly contradictory within the group.

It is important to note that issues with low levels of dispersion have been significantly debated in the public, hence the approximation of positions. The lower half is populated with issues that have not been deliberated and around which we we can expect to have major debates in the future.

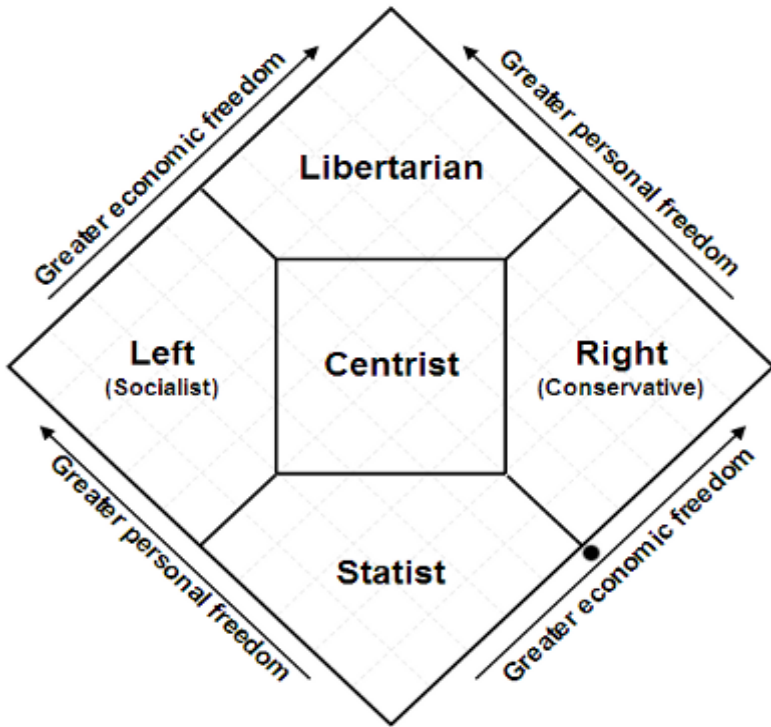
Vetëvendosje seems to have the greatest degree of homogeneity of positions, with an average standard deviation of 3.9, while the other parties hover between 5 and 5.1.

	Standard Deviation	VV	LDK	PDK	AAK	Avg
1	Custom duties	3.7	2.8	3.0	3.8	3.3
2	Maternity Leave	2.0	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.5
3	Private vs. public	3.2	5.1	1.9	4.6	3.7
4	Uniform or progressive tax	1.4	4.4	4.0	5.7	3.9
5	Level of public spending on defense	3.1	4.6	3.7	4.6	4.0
6	Public spending on health care	1.4	3.8	5.9	5.0	4.0
7	Trade regulation	2.5	5.4	3.4	5.8	4.3
8	Environment	2.2	5.0	5.9	4.1	4.3
9	Foreign investment and aid	2.7	4.7	4.4	5.5	4.3
10	Subsidise for agriculture	5.5	3.6	2.9	5.4	4.3
11	Private vs. public health provision	2.6	4.6	6.0	4.2	4.3
12	Teaching about religion	2.3	5.9	4.2	5.1	4.4
13	Preferential treatment of minorities	3.7	4.5	4.5	4.9	4.4
14	International involvement in decision making	3.2	4.2	6.4	3.8	4.4
15	Civil society	4.2	3.6	5.3	4.7	4.4
16	Labour unions	3.3	5.1	4.3	5.4	4.5
17	Size of public administration	4.2	5.0	4.2	4.9	4.5
18	Value added of tax	4.9	4.6	3.9	4.8	4.5
19	Religion vs. state	2.9	5.3	5.7	4.2	4.5
20	Drugs	4.9	4.8	5.5	3.6	4.7
21	Ethnic relations	3.4	4.2	6.2	4.9	4.7
22	European integration	4.0	4.6	5.9	4.4	4.7
23	Globalisation	5.0	4.1	5.7	4.4	4.8
24	Immigration	3.8	4.8	4.8	6.0	4.9
25	Individual vs. collective interest	3.8	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.0
26	Culture & tradition	4.1	4.9	6.5	4.4	5.0
27	Family values	2.5	5.8	5.7	6.0	5.0
28	Subsidies	3.9	5.3	4.8	6.1	5.0
29	LGBT	5.8	4.3	4.5	5.5	5.0
30	Vacation & national holidays	6.4	4.4	4.6	5.6	5.3
31	Social assistance	3.8	6.3	5.4	5.7	5.3
32	Pensions	5.0	4.6	6.5	5.1	5.3
33	Job creation	4.4	5.5	6.6	4.9	5.3
34	Minimum wage	2.4	5.9	5.8	7.9	5.5
35	Excise	5.9	5.3	6.3	4.7	5.5
36	Multi-ethnicity	7.5	5.1	4.9	5.4	5.7
37	Privatisation	2.0	6.9	7.9	6.5	5.8
38	Prostitution	5.0	7.1	6.4	5.2	5.9
39	Legality and costs for abortion	7.5	7.1	3.9	7.2	6.4
40	Gambling and betting	6.3	7.0	6.4	6.8	6.6
	Average for each party	3.9	5.0	5.1	5.1	

VI. Mapping the Parties

One of the most commonly referenced two-dimensional scaled is called the Nolan Chart⁷³, an ideological diagram created by the American politician, David Nolan. The chart divides human political opinions into two vectors: economic freedom and personal freedom, which produces a two-dimensional, Cartesian chart of political ideologies. This enables the visual depiction of views such as the Libertarian perspective (high personal and economic freedom) and the Totalitarian perspective (low personal and economic freedom). It expands the "left-right" scale, which attempted to measure politics along a one-dimensional line.

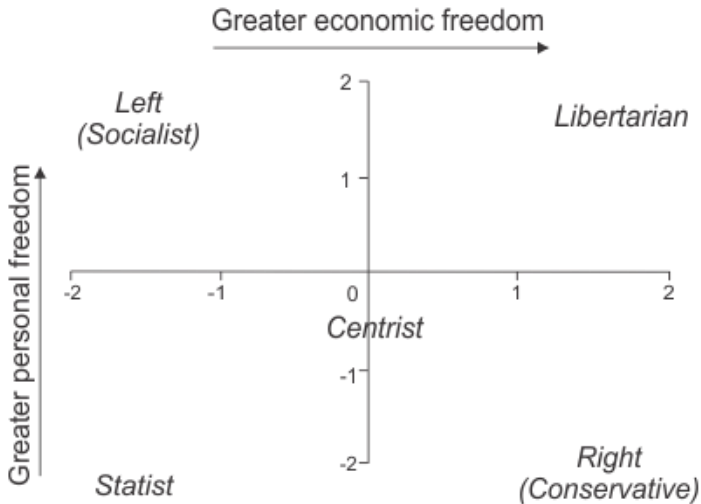
Another frequently used model is known as the Political Compass.⁷⁴ Similar to the Nolan Chart, the Political Compass model is also multi-axis, and also deals with a social and economic scale. However, the political compass rates ideologies along Left/Right and Authoritarian/Libertarian. The model is produced by a British website known as "Pace News Limited"⁷⁵ and has been used in a variety of political science studies.



Our favourite model, used for our comparative/orientation purpose, is the Alternative Nolan Chart.⁷⁶ This version of the Nolan Chart rotates the graph, so that the vectors for economic and personal freedom represent greater freedom at the top of the graph, and less freedom at the bottom. The extreme Left and extreme Right are presented on the left and right respectively, while the Libertarian ideology is at the top and the Statist ideology is at the bottom. For our purposes, we have modified a version of the Alternative Nolan Chart and designed the questionnaire accordingly.

In this section we present the findings from the survey, this time in a two-dimensional format, one party at a time. The x axis represents the questions that counted towards the

economic questions, while the y axis accounts for responses on values.



Each dot in a plot graph represents an individual respondent who was of relatively senior position in one of the four major parties. The graphs reflect the findings of 160 interviews, 40 from each party.

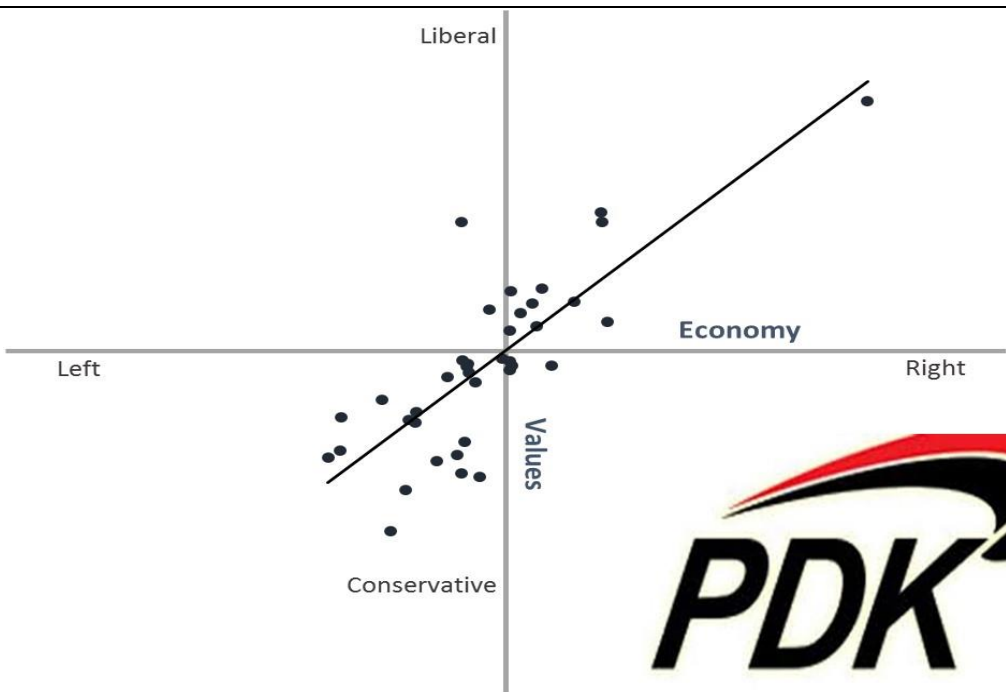
PDK

In reference to the graph on the following page, results show a fair ideological distribution straddling both lines of orientation, the economic (x axis) and the values (y axis). To draw more insight into such ideological dispersion, categories must be divided within both economic and value systems. Most PDK officials are to be found spread out alongside the ideological spectrum, to be expected from a catch-all party that is the main governing coalition partner.

On economic issues, more than half of PDK is to be found left of the centre, and less than half on the centre-right. The respondents that are associated with the left have shown a sympathy for the government's role in regulating trade and customs, and creating jobs for a healthier economy. Those that lean on the right, show support for a privatized economy that is more effective, and a fiscal policy that promotes tax reduction for a friendlier business environment. Globalization is generally seen as a positive force but in some cases especially in economy could have negative impact. Moreover, PDK respondents believe that health policies should be free or low-cost, while the state should support health care more from the budget.

In terms of key social/political values, more than half of PDK respondents exhibit conservative traits, and less than half are above the middle, exhibiting more liberal values. For instance, they believe that the rights of the LGBT community should be kept private and not promoted.

...



More conservative views from PDK are observed with regard to minority issues and prostitution. They do not believe that affirmative action for a minority quota should be instituted in government when recruiting in the public sector – all applicants should be treated equally. Meanwhile, on prostitution, most of them see it as a misdemeanour that should be penalized.

It is also important to view the dispersion of responses within the party. PDK shows the lowest dispersion on the questions at the top of the table on the next page, such as agricultural subsidies, or value added tax. The topics at the second half of the table are issues that may

Standard Deviation	PDK
Private vs. public	1.9
Subsidise for agriculture	2.9
Custom duties	3.0
Trade regulation	3.4
Level of public spending on defense	3.7
Legality and costs for abortion	3.9
Value added of tax	3.9
Maternity Leave	3.9
Uniform or progressive tax	4.0
Size of public administration	4.2
Teaching about religion	4.2
Labour unions	4.3
Foreign investment and aid	4.4
Preferential treatment of minorities	4.5
LGBT	4.5
Vacation & national holidays	4.6
Subsidies	4.8
Immigration	4.8
Multi-ethnicity	4.9
Civil society	5.3
Social assistance	5.4
Individual vs. collective interest	5.4
Drugs	5.5
Globalisation	5.7
Family values	5.7
Religion vs. state	5.7
Minimum wage	5.8
Environment	5.9
Public spending on health care	5.9
European integration	5.9
Private vs. public health provision	6.0
Ethnic relations	6.2
Excise	6.3
International involvement in decision making	6.4
Gambling and betting	6.4
Prostitution	6.4
Pensions	6.5
Culture & tradition	6.5
Job creation	6.6
Privatisation	7.9

serve as hot topics in internal party meetings, e.g. privatization, pensions, minimum wage or religion. Overall, PDK's distribution is similar to that of LDK and AAK, although more tight-knit around the center.

LDK

Overall, LDK's responses are widely dispersed although it can be concluded that there are two major profiles, conservative leftists and free-market liberals. To draw more insight into the party ideology on economic platform, LDK does not believe in extensive government role on trade regulation, and favours limited subsidies for a limited time-period. They believe in regressive fiscal policy that will ultimately lessen the tax burden on both the businesses and employees. Through a *laissez-faire* market economy that is free from government restrictions, they believe that it will eventually lead to a more effective healthcare system and potential rise of employment.

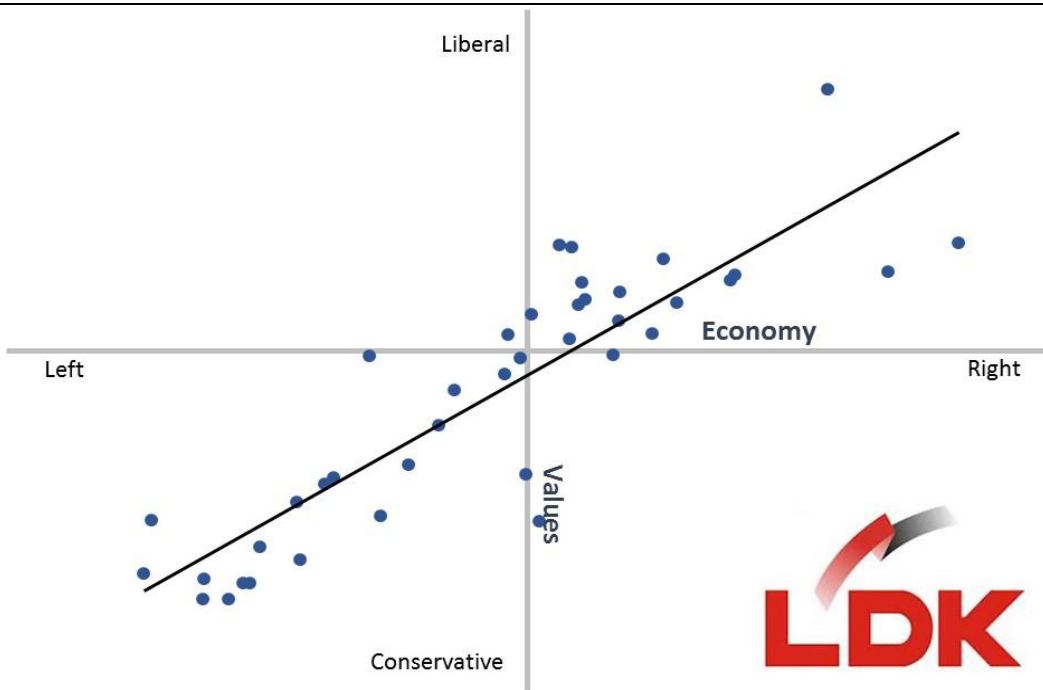
On political and social ideologies, LDK falls largely below the center and is fairly conservative. They see the international community as an asset to help Kosovo in the decision-making process by sharing experiences. They also see civil society as a contributor in policy-making but consider there is need for further improvement in this sector. Most LDK respondents expressed against abortion in principle although they see it as a legal right. They believe the rights of LGBT community should be tolerated but not legally recognised.

In reference to the graph on the following page, LDK is relatively more center-right on economic issues and conservative on social and political issues. The bottom half of the issues in LDK's table of dispersion (below) is an indication that individual values put LDK's traditional elite against a more liberal crowd (who seem to have very opposing opinions). Privatisation, social assistance and the

minimum wage are also likely to drive a wedge should these issues be discussed in a party caucus.

Standard Deviation	LDK
Custom duties	2.8
Civil society	3.6
Subsidise for agriculture	3.6
Public spending on health care	3.8
Globalisation	4.1
Maternity Leave	4.1
Ethnic relations	4.2
International involvement in decision making	4.2
LGBT	4.3
Uniform or progressive tax	4.4
Vacation & national holidays	4.4
Preferential treatment of minorities	4.5
Level of public spending on defense	4.6
European integration	4.6
Pensions	4.6
Value added of tax	4.6
Private vs. public health provision	4.6
Foreign investment and aid	4.7
Drugs	4.8
Immigration	4.8
Culture & tradition	4.9
Size of public administration	5.0
Environment	5.0
Private vs. public	5.1
Labour unions	5.1
Multi-ethnicity	5.1
Subsidies	5.3
Excise	5.3
Religion vs. state	5.3
Individual vs. collective interest	5.3
Trade regulation	5.4
Job creation	5.5
Family values	5.8
Teaching about religion	5.9
Minimum wage	5.9
Social assistance	6.3
Privatisation	6.9
Gambling and betting	7.0
Legality and costs for abortion	7.1
Prostitution	7.1

...



AAK

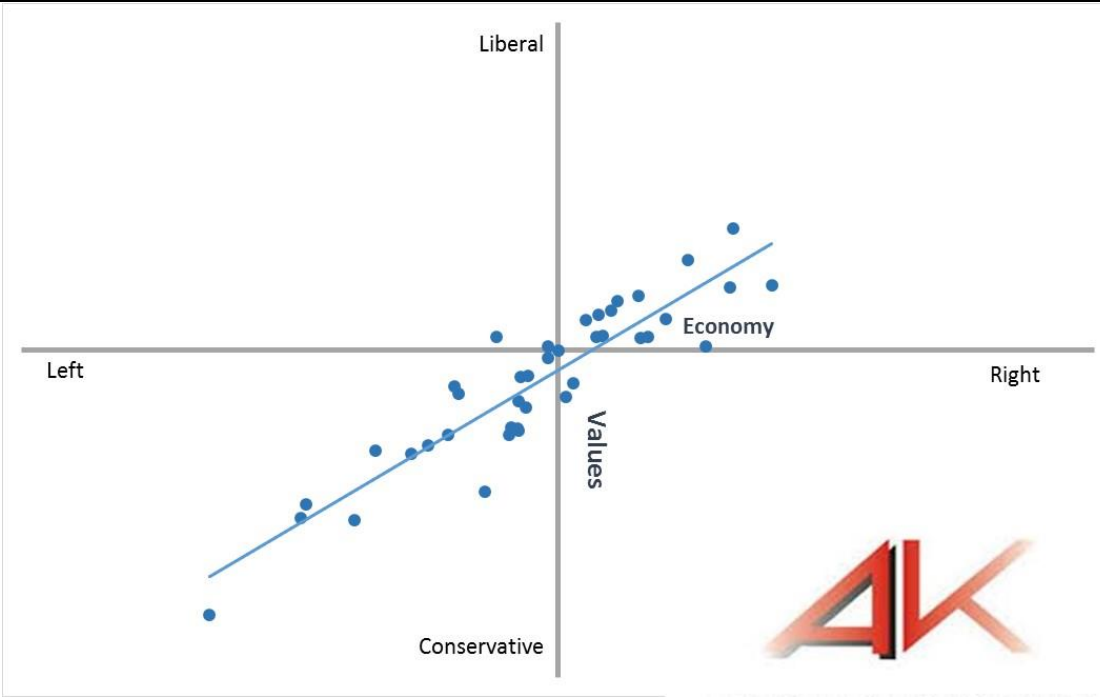
The opinions of AAK's top brass are to be found largely in the centre, similar to that of PDK and AAK, and just to the right of LDK on economic issues. There are two major groupings, one that is leftist and conservative and another which is liberal both in terms of economic beliefs and social viewpoints. AAK is also dispersed in terms of ideological preferences.

From an economic point of view, AAK stands for limited government control on trade and customs, selective subsidiary support to stimulate the economy, and a fiscal policy that is more supportive of the status quo. On health care, AAK is comparatively to the right of LDK with a strong position that private providers are more effective in healthcare.

AAK is relatively conservative on political and social issues. AAK is more positive about international support in the decision-making process due to their expertise on governance. Similar to LDK, they see civil society as a strength that should always be encouraged to remain active. Yet different from LDK, AAK is more in support of the *status quo* that minorities should be recruited through using the minority quota to give them a sense of inclusion.

On social values, they are far more conservative to the extent that they see drugs, gambling and prostitution as very negative societal issues that ought to be actively pursued.

...



The table below is illustrative of AAK's internal cohesion. AAK does not enjoy as much consensus on any topics, but neither does it have major disagreements. Its average of standard deviation is similar to that of PDK, LDK and AAK. The highest rate of internal dissent is with issues at the bottom of the table, e.g. minimum wage, gambling and betting, family values or social assistance. The least disagreement is on issues at the top of the table, although here the standard deviation is significantly higher compared to consensual issues of other parties.

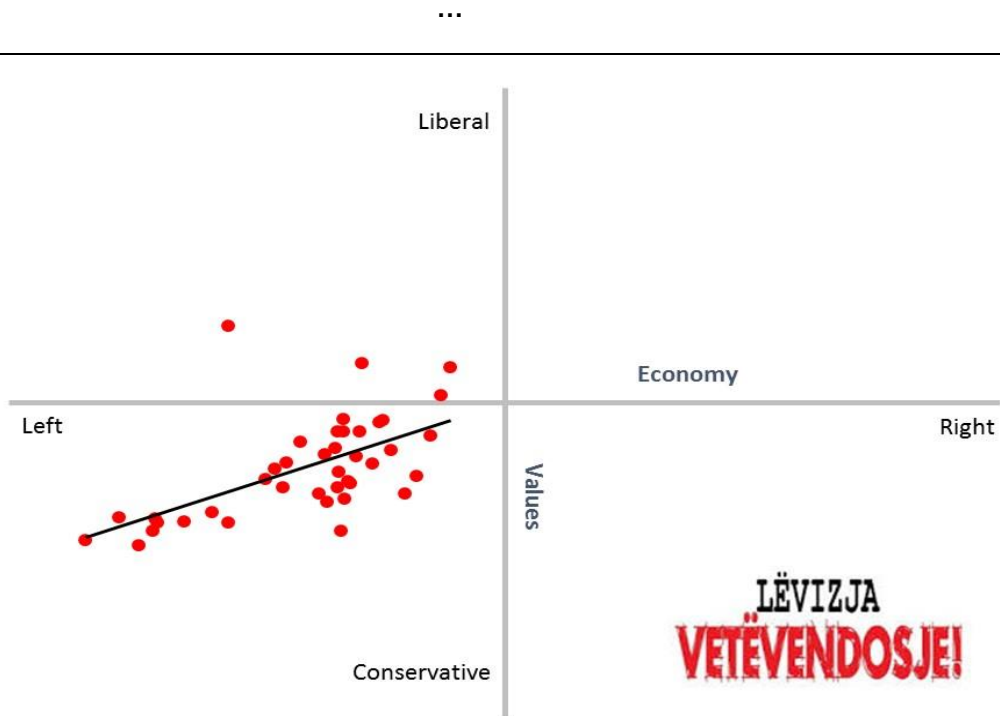
Standard Deviation	AAK
Drugs	3.6
Custom duties	3.8
International involvement in decision making	3.8
Maternity Leave	3.9
Environment	4.1
Private vs. public health provision	4.2
Religion vs. state	4.2
Globalisation	4.4
European integration	4.4
Culture & tradition	4.4
Level of public spending on defense	4.6
Private vs. public	4.6
Excise	4.7
Civil society	4.7
Value added of tax	4.8
Ethnic relations	4.9
Preferential treatment of minorities	4.9
Size of public administration	4.9
Job creation	4.9
Public spending on health care	5.0
Teaching about religion	5.1
Pensions	5.1
Prostitution	5.2
Individual vs. collective interest	5.2
Labour unions	5.4
Multi-ethnicity	5.4
Subsidise for agriculture	5.4
Foreign investment and aid	5.5
LGBT	5.5
Vacation & national holidays	5.6
Uniform or progressive tax	5.7
Social assistance	5.7
Trade regulation	5.8
Family values	6.0
Immigration	6.0
Subsidies	6.1
Privatisation	6.5
Gambling and betting	6.8
Legality and costs for abortion	7.2
Minimum wage	7.9

VV

Interviews conducted with Vetëvendosje officials and activists have shown a coherent group of individuals who subscribe to Vetëvendosje's official positions. Average results of the conducted interviews put VV in the centre left ideological mapping of political parties.

Vetëvendosje is less dispersed in its economic values than on its social and individual freedoms. They are leftist on economic issues, conservative on political views and open-minded on social ones. VV is generally against the involvement of the international community involvement in decision-making. They strongly believe that Kosovo is capable enough to govern itself without international support. They favour EU integration only if the process is more open and transparent. On drug use and prostitution they agree on penalizing them as a small offense. Overall, if compared with other political parties, public interest should be prioritized more than individual interest.

From an economic point of view, the senior officials interviewed were in favour of government role on trade regulations, agricultural subsidies, and progressive fiscal policies to challenge inequality. To Vetëvendosje, the government is an important player that can contribute to economic stability, and they show continuous opposition to the privatization process that is on-going in Kosovo. Foreign investments are necessary but only when coupled with a strong internal economy. Unions present great *interlocutors* in this process due to their legitimate concerns in bargaining on behalf of employees.



In addition, they believe that increasing the number of ethnic minorities will lead to inter-ethnic dissent and conflict in the society. VV respondents see the equality of the citizens as priority without giving preferential rights to one or to another community. Serbs should have equal rights to all communities and not to be privileged ahead of other minorities. VV respondents also answered that they are ready to work with Kosovo Serbs and have no problems living near them.

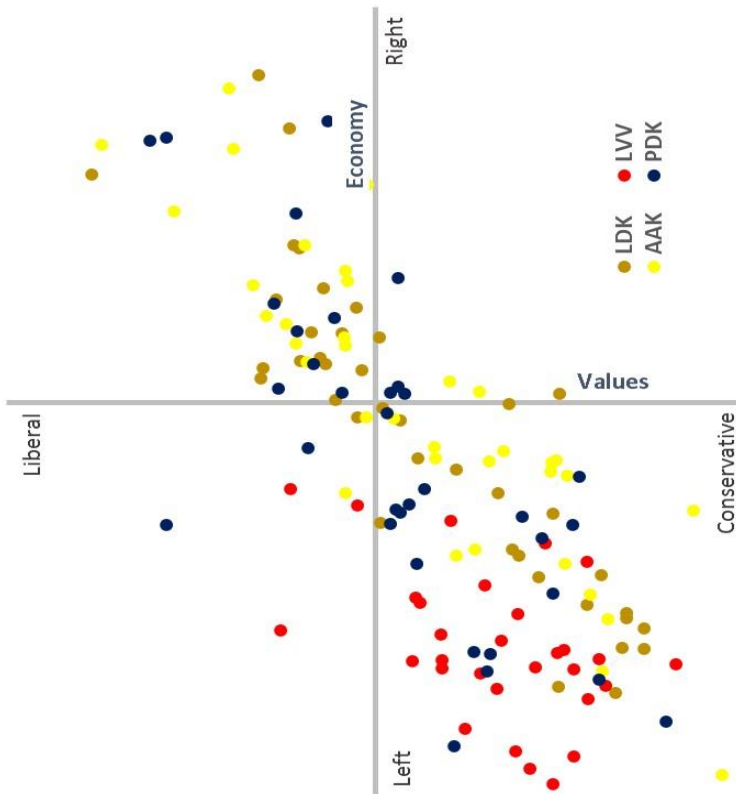
There is a significant dispersion on various issues inside the party. On the question of foreign investment and aid and uniform or progressive taxes, VV

Standard Deviation	VV
Public spending on health care	1.4
Uniform or progressive tax	1.4
Privatisation	2.0
Maternity Leave	2.0
Environment	2.2
Teaching about religion	2.3
Minimum wage	2.4
Family values	2.5
Trade regulation	2.5
Private vs. public health provision	2.6
Foreign investment and aid	2.7
Religion vs. state	2.9
Level of public spending on defense	3.1
Private vs. public	3.2
International involvement in decision making	3.2
Labour unions	3.3
Ethnic relations	3.4
Preferential treatment of minorities	3.7
Custom duties	3.7
Social assistance	3.8
Immigration	3.8
Individual vs. collective interest	3.8
Subsidies	3.9
European integration	4.0
Culture & tradition	4.1
Size of public administration	4.2
Civil society	4.2
Job creation	4.4
Drugs	4.9
Value added of tax	4.9
Prostitution	5.0
Pensions	5.0
Globalisation	5.0
Subsidise for agriculture	5.5
LGBT	5.8
Excise	5.9
Gambling and betting	6.3
Vacation & national holidays	6.4
Legality and costs for abortion	7.5
Multi-ethnicity	7.5

respondents have quite a uniform answer (very low standard deviation VV respondents). Dispersion with the highest deviation among VV respondents occurred with regard to issues such as abortion or multi-ethnicity society.

The graph below portrays all parties in one slide to enable easier comparison.

All Parties in One Place



Conclusions & Recommendations

It used to a maxim that to win elections in Kosovo it was sufficient to never state your opinion. The calculation was that with each statement, one wins more enemies than voters, hence better not to voice one's opinion. This period is gradually coming to an end.

As Kosovo gets to govern itself – it faces new situations, and subsequent rounds of elections – its elected representatives have to position. The more rounds of elections pass, the more they discover the importance of being coherent. Individual Members of Parliament as well as the party also discover that being consistent across time and issues is also important.

This trend will also be bolstered by decreasing existential threats to the state. As immediate needs of many communities are met (water supply, sewage, basic infrastructure), Kosovars will seek to satisfy more of their elevated needs. In the last years Kosovars have established tens of organizations, mothers get together to lobby jointly, as do geodets, or parents of children with disabilities. They seek MPs who are clear in their positions and support their cause. For the first time, getting their vote may matter and get one elected. But getting their vote will be difficult without clarity in positions.

This study has aimed to quantify positions, and measure the internal distribution within each party. Except the mapping out, we hope also to have contributed to inform the wider public and the party scene about what defines the right or the left. Moreover, the overall distribution also informs about where the party altogether is situated in the ideological map, the degree of internal dissent, and the level of formation of opinion that occurs among the political top brass.

The main question remains whether the current parties can evolve to occupy clear positions along the ideological

spectrum, or whether the main parties will maintain a catch-all approach, as three of them clearly do. If they do not do so, they will either manage to transform the party scene into a bipartisan system, or they may get weakened by the lack of specific appeal of newcomer parties.

If the open lists survive the onslaught (much of the political class wants to return closed lists), it will be individual Members of Parliament who target specific voter groups at their initiative. Change is then to come from within the parties who will bring these agendas to the party agenda. More politicians may continue to shift from one party to another in parallel the process of identity-building that parties will have to undergo themselves.

Overall, we attempted to create an analytical and tool which can serve as a compass how to contextualise the right and left and other ideological terminology into the Kosovo-specific societal and political environment. The left in the United States is not the same as in France, hence, it may take a specific meaning in Kosovo too. As this tool is honed over time, it can be used to track the evolution of political parties over time.

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#2: D4D Institute. March 2012. An Impression of Reform: How to Restore Trust on Elections?

#3: Malazogu, Leon, Visar Sutaj and Drilon Gashi. November 2012. Kaçanik Voters' List Audit: A Sample for Kosovo.

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