

**RESEARCH NOTE**/NOTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN

# Collective Narcissism, Populism and Political Profiles in Andalusia and Catalonia<sup>1</sup>

Narcisismo colectivo, populismo y perfiles políticos en Andalucía y Cataluña

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## ABSTRACT

This article explores the relation between populism and collective narcissism resorting to the empirical data provided by a survey conducted in Andalusia and Catalonia. Collective narcissism is the belief that the group one belongs to is exceptional and lacks the recognition it deserves. It should be expected that collective narcissism is a predictor of populism, insofar as the latter is grounded on the moralistic antagonism between the true people and its enemies. Our survey suggests that the relation between narcissism, populism and identity is complex, being mediated by contextual factors that are social and political in nature-linguistic self-identification standing out in the case of Catalonia. An additional finding is that Akkerman et al. (2014) scale fails to predict support for left-of left-wing populist parties.

**KEYWORDS:** populism, collective narcissism, Andalusia, Catalonia.

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## RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza la relación entre populismo y narcisismo colectivo a partir de los datos empíricos proporcionados por una encuesta de opinión realizada en Andalucía y Cataluña. Por narcisismo colectivo hay que entender la creencia de que el grupo al que se pertenece es excepcional y carece del reconocimiento que merece. En principio, cabría esperar que el narcisismo colectivo fuese un predictor del populismo, ya que este último se basa en la creación de un antagonismo moralista entre el pueblo auténtico y sus enemigos. Los resultados de la encuesta sugieren que la relación entre narcisismo, populismo e identidades es compleja y se encuentra mediada por factores contextuales de carácter social y político; así sucede con la identificación lingüística en Cataluña en el marco del conflicto separatista. Hallazgo adicional son las limitaciones de la escala de Akkerman *et al.* (2014) a la hora de predecir el voto por partidos populistas de izquierda.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** populismo, narcisismo colectivo, Andalucía, Cataluña.

## 1. Collective Narcissism and Political Populism

Analysing “populist demand”, that is, the attitudes and beliefs of citizens that, in theory, are linked to the speeches given by populist party leaders, has gained momentum over the last ten years (Akkerman *et al.*, 2014; Elchardus and Spruyt, 2016; Kefford *et al.*, 2021). Bar a few exceptions, however, comparative studies on demand have focused on the state — as opposed to the sub-state — level (Mazzoleni *et al.*, 2022). At the same time, it is worth highlighting that exclusionary nationalism and nativism are attributes that are often associated with populism (Mudde, 2010; Newth, 2021). Populist movements draw on the idealised description of a threatened or mistreated society or nation (“heartland”) as a tool to foster a sense of unity against the “other” (Taggart, 2004; Olivás Osuna, 2021a). Narcissistic and collective self-affirming narratives also allow the (re)construction and ontological “securitisation” of political identities (Chernobrov, 2016), which can be considered a staple of the logic of populist articulation (Laclau, 2005).

This article explores the relationship between populism and collective narcissism in Andalusia and Catalonia to ascertain whether the sub-state political and cultural identities are in any way associated with the citizens’ interpretations of the political dynamics that surround them. Over the last decade, the concept of collective narcissism has evolved from the initial suggestion by Golec de Zavala and contributors (Golec de Zavala *et al.*, 2009; Golec de Zavala and Santos, 2020; Golec de Zavala and Keenan, 2021). It expresses the belief that the group to which one belongs is exceptional but does not receive the recognition it deserves. It is a form of intra-group love that is associated with inter-group hate: the group itself is perceived as threatened and the “other” (rather than rival), as hostile. This is coupled with hypersensitivity to provocation and the conviction that the only reasonable response is aggression or retaliation. Collective narcissism differs from collective self-esteem (Crocker and Luhtanen, 1990) since the latter is a positive appreciation of the group that does not need to be associated with a lack of external recognition. Thus, collective narcissism is an inflated form of collective self-esteem.

In line with these authors, collective narcissism is a good predictor of nationalism, confrontational attitudes on the international scene and escalation in inter-group conflicts. And what about populism? Focusing on the “illiberal right”, Golec de Zavala and Keenan (2021) suggest that the appeal of populism largely lies in its defence of a vision of national identity that responds to those conditions — economic and cultural — that challenge the expectations of the members of a group about their own importance. They conclude that the populist attitudes are largely built on a substrate of collective narcissism that is fuelled with narratives that seek to generate resentments based on uniqueness and rights to certain group privileges (Golec de Zavala and Keenan, 2021). This connection seems to be backed up by the literature on populism, which has repeatedly pointed out the idealisation of society as a key element in the construction of otherness and praise of a non-empirical “people”, that would justify the exclusion of an “other” that threatens or disregards it (Berlin, 1968: 168; Müller, 2014). While populism draws an anti-pluralist picture of society, collective narcissism can use it as a basis. In the case of Spain, this dimension of the populist phenomenon is also noted in the political parties Vox and Podemos and the Catalan and Basque independence movements (Olivas Osuna, 2021b). Collective narcissism upholds the belief in the *unique* and *exceptional* quality of the group, which would logically result in the demand for the *right* to privileged treatment.

There is room to disagree with the reference to *national* collective narcissism made by Golec de Zavala and Keenan given that a populist society does not need to be based on the nation, despite it often being the case. A monist understanding of the people or political community may be a more relevant distinguishing feature of populism. Moreover, that group may exhibit traits of collective narcissism that underpin a belligerent identity that strengthens the antagonistic and moral construction of a society that is also characteristic of populism. Cichocka and Cislak (2020) suggest that collective narcissism is *equally* correlated with nationalism and populism. Nor should it be forgotten that populists consider themselves defenders under a monopoly regime of common good, as well as representatives of “the people” (Müller, 2016: 3). This moral dimension is also reflected in the use of a discourse of blame and victimisation (Vasilopoulou et al., 2014). Ultimately, the theoretical conceptualisation and empirical measurement of collective narcissism is, therefore, potentially relevant for the study of populism.

## 2. Data and Methodology

This study is based on original data collected through two telephone surveys, one in Andalusia and the other in Catalonia, conducted by the COTESA Department of Statistical Research between 5 and 25 October 2021, following a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) method. The survey was conducted based on criteria of representativeness in relation to age (persons 18 years and over) and gender, as well as the population distribution in the provinces of each of these self-governing regions. In Catalonia, the respondents chose the language in which the

interview was conducted (Olivás Osuna et al., 2022a and 2022b). They are the most populated regions in Spain and maintain historic ties due to the arrival of Andalusian immigrants in Catalonia; the ethno-linguistic division in the latter (Oller et al., 2019) allow us a better understanding of how other social structural factors are associated with populism and collective narcissism.

The surveys were expressly designed for this comparative study of social and political attitudes and psychological attributes and include more than 80 items. In most instances, the respondents are presented with a phrase and asked to rate their degree of agreement on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is *completely disagree* and 5 is *completely agree*). The questions are identical or equivalent in Andalusia and Catalonia, although some have been adapted to the specific context or to contrast mutual visions between the inhabitants of these regions. This survey is pioneering as it includes a series of topics that have never, or very rarely, been studied in these two regions.

To capture the populist demand, we have used not only the reduced scale developed by Akkerman, Mudde and Zaslove (2014), the most widely used in comparative studies (see, for example, Meléndez and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019; or Zanotti and Rama, 2020), but also an extensive array of other items associated with populism and related phenomena. Although the comparative evaluations of populism scales offer good reliability and validity, the scale developed by Akkerman et al. (2014) is not without limitations from both an operationalisation point of view (Castanho Silva et al., 2020; Wuttke et al., 2020) and conceptual standpoint, since it is based on a minimal definition of populism (De la Torre and Mazzoleni, 2019). Furthermore, this scale has shown that it does not have the same power for predicting the populist vote in Europe and abroad or between left- and right-wing groups (Rovira-Kaltwasser & Van Hauwaert, 2020; Hawkins et al., 2020). In line with other authors (Wiesehoimeier, 2019; Hamelers and de Vreese, 2020; Kefford et al., 2022), this study adopts a more multidimensional approach that helps mitigate the limitations of the scale developed by Akkerman et al. (2014) and extract a more complete image of the populist individual in these self-governing regions of Spain.

It includes questions about illiberalism, immigration, Spanish constitutional and political order, regional prejudices, language and the pandemic are added to these dimensions. Said questions are intentionally related to political frames used frequently by parties, movements and the media in Spain. Finally, scales entrenched in literature were included to measure conspiratorial thinking (Brotherton et al., 2013) and, of course, the extent of collective narcissism (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009).

Through the inclusion of the latter scale in our survey, this study aims to capture the extent to which the feeling of belonging to a group leads to victimisation and/or an additional demand for recognition. Andalusia and Catalonia are the two most populous autonomous communities and their citizens display a strong sense of identity and collective pride. On the one hand, it measures the degree of collective narcissism, enabling its correlation with different voting and/or linguistic identification profiles; on the other, it makes it possible to determine whether collective narcissism is a predictor of populism.

Table 1 shows the 6 items of the reduced version of the scale, operationalised in this study as an additive index.

### Table 1

*Collective narcissism scale, reduced version (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009)*

1. Andalusia/Catalonia deserve special treatment
2. I will never be satisfied until Andalusia/Catalonia gets the recognition it deserves
3. I insist that Andalusia/Catalonia obtains the respect that it is due
4. It really makes me anger that others criticise Andalusia/Catalonia
5. If Andalusia/Catalonia had a major say in the world, would be a much better place
6. Not many people seem to fully understand the importance of Andalusia/Catalonia

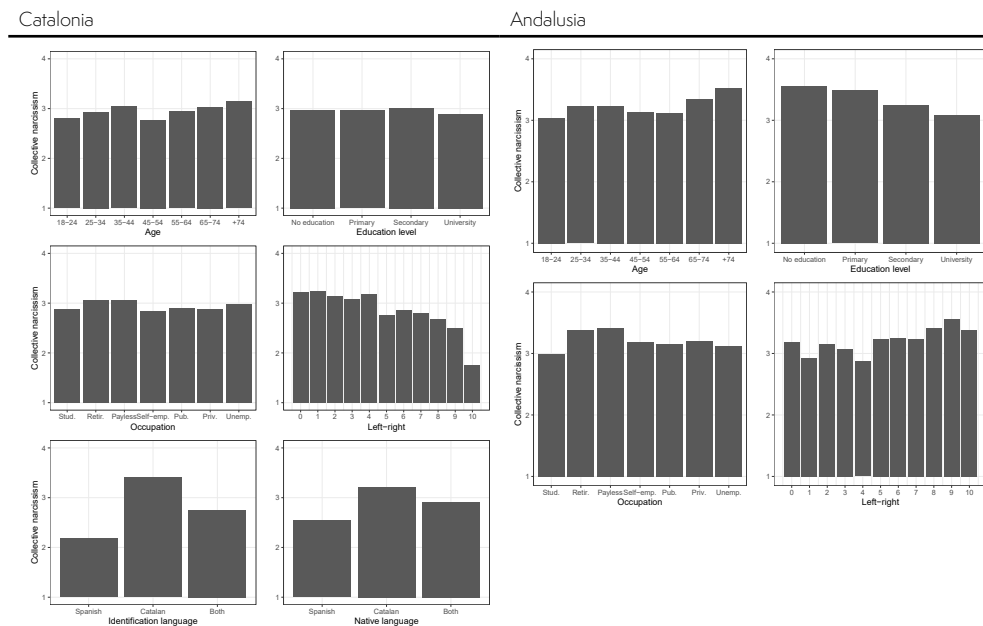
## 3. Results

While overall populist attitudes and beliefs in conspiracies are higher in Catalonia (3.82 and 2.58 on a scale of 1 to 5 compared to 3.77 and 2.45 in Andalusia), *collective narcissism* is higher among the population of Andalusia (3.44 compared to 3.12). Unlike for the first two scales, when the results of collective narcissism in Catalonia are broken down by language of identification (answer to the question: “What language do you identify most with?”), we find major differences: those who identify with Catalan have a mean score of 3.61 in collective narcissism, while those who identify with both average 2.88, and those who identify with Spanish score considerably lower (2.38). It should be clarified that more than two-thirds of the respondents whose mother tongue is Catalan claim to identify with that language (just over one-quarter identify with both Catalan and English), while only 36.5% of the respondents whose mother tongue is Spanish *also* claim to identify with it (58.2% identify with both Catalan and Spanish). Among those who consider *both* languages their mother tongue, 20.9% identify with Catalan and 76.7% with both.

The mean values for collective narcissism can be broken down in different ways, addressing different variables: age, studies, ideological self-identification, occupation and, in the case of Catalan, mother tongue (Figure 1). There appears to be a greater incidence among pensioners and unpaid workers. Beyond a slight positive association with the age of the citizens, there does not appear to be a strong correlation between the degree of collective narcissism and other socio-demographic variables. An interesting effect is observed, as narcissism is lower among those aged 45 to 64 in relation to those respondents in the age groups immediately above and below. Thus, this suggests a moderate generational difference that requires an explanation. For its part, a low level of studies is only positively correlated with a high degree of collective narcissism in the case of Andalusia, where the latter decreases as the level of education increases. Strikingly, in Catalonia, narcissism is uniform across all levels of education, peaking among those who have completed secondary education. Ideological self-location varies: in Andalusia, right-wing citizens present higher

values of collective narcissism, while in Catalonia, the most narcissistic citizens are left wing. It is therefore evident that, in both regions, the higher the age of the respondent, the greater the degree of collective narcissism, even with nuances. Finally, and as stated previously, there is significantly more collective narcissism among those Catalonians who identify with Catalan.

**Figure 1**  
*Collective narcissism in relation to socio-demographic variables*



In Andalusia, collective narcissism is a transverse phenomenon among voters of different parties (Table 4), with those who vote for Vox and PP scoring higher on this scale. Note that the degree of collective narcissism is one of the main distinctive characteristics between voters of Podemos and Adelante Andalucía. In Catalonia, however, there is a divide between those who vote for pro-independence and “pro-constitution” parties (for example, JxC=3.88, ERC=3.72; PP=1.95, Vox=1.77). This reveals a clear dissonance in terms of collective feelings and perceptions within Catalonia, as well as different degrees of narcissism among voters of the same party in different self-governing regions: among Vox voters, the highest level is seen in Andalusia and the lowest, in Catalonia. Thus, collective narcissism appears to be related to the desire for political independence in Catalonia; in Andalusia, on the other hand, it is mostly linked to cultural and social matters.

## Figure 2

Collective narcissism in Andalusia (above) and Catalonia (below), by party and according to attitudes towards independence (1- strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree)

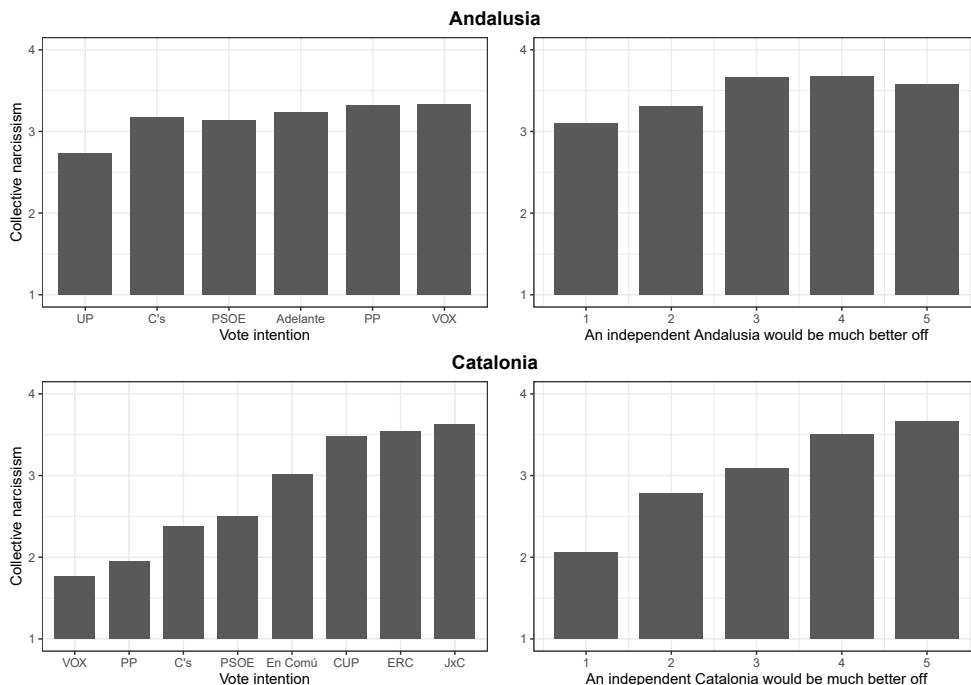


Table 2 illustrates how ethno-linguistic considerations affect social attitudes and processes of otherness in Catalonia; in Andalusia, the traditional left-right cleavage appears more decisive. Linguistic identification is decisive when experiencing, or not, a threat to identity (3.1 among those who identify with Catalan; 2.18, with Spanish), while this belief is most common among right-wing Andalusians, albeit to a lesser extent than in Catalonia (Table 4, Vox= 2.11 and PP=1.81). Moreover, many of those respondents who identify with the Spanish language have considered leaving Catalonia due to the political context (2.46 compared to 1.37 on average for those who identify with Catalan). This has more weight than the economic factor, where there is also a discrepancy across groups (1.99 among those who identify with Spanish compared to 1.47 with Catalan). In Andalusia, however, financial reasons (1.69) prevail over political grounds (1.37) as the motive for hypothetically moving away from the region.

**Table 2***Mean values by linguistic groups in Catalonia*

	Language of identification			
	TOTAL	Catalan	Spanish	Both
Indices				
Collective narcissism	3.12	3.61	2.38	2.88
Populist attitudes	3.82	3.86	3.88	3.75
Conspiracy belief	2.58	2.63	2.58	2.53
Geographical and identity question				
An independent Catalonia would fare much better	3.01	4.11	1.56	2.41
Spain needs to be decentralised to a far greater extent	3.71	4.13	2.94	3.54
My identity is threatened	2.58	3.1	2.18	2.19
Rejection of immigrants				
Immigration has adversely affected our culture	2.22	2.23	2.44	2.11
Immigrants steal our jobs	1.68	1.69	1.8	1.61
It is good that people from abroad move to Catalonia	4.19	4.11	4.31	4.23
Attitudes towards the Spanish				
It is good that people from other parts of Spain move to Catalonia	4.3	4.16	4.4	4.4
A person can feel both Catalan and Spanish at the same time	4.45	4.1	4.77	4.7
An Andalusian who moves to Catalonia is an immigrant	2.12	2.28	2.25	1.92
Victim mentality and superiority				
People from the rest of Spain look down on Catalonians	2.8	3.16	2.38	2.59
Catalonians are harder working than people from other self-governing regions in Spain	1.93	2.2	1.56	1.78
Catalonians give a lot more to the state than they receive	3.59	4.35	2.24	3.25
Linguistic polarisation				
In Catalonia, Catalan speakers have the right to be educated in Catalan	4.38	4.68	3.9	4.23
In Catalonia, Spanish speakers have the right to be educated in Spanish	3.46	3.05	4.13	3.63
Social consequences				
I have considered leaving Catalonia due to the political context	1.73	1.37	2.49	1.82
I have considered leaving Catalonia due to the economic context	1.62	1.47	1.99	1.63
N		635	220	636

Significantly, there is a stronger belief in conspiracy theories, a lower level of rejection of immigrants and also a lower degree of satisfaction with the arrival of citizens from other parts of Spain among those who primarily identify with Catalan. In Andalusia, it is the right-wing sympathisers who show greater rejection of people from abroad. For their part, it is those Catalonians who identify with this language who express a greater victim mentality. It is interesting how, in our interviews, Andalusians consider themselves to be harder working than people from other regions (2.6), and they do so to a much greater degree than the interviewed Catalonians (1.93).



In Catalonia, language acts as an internal border between “us” and “them”, as theory on populism would predict (Laclau, 2005). For example, those people in the middle ground who identify with *both* languages present fewer populist attitudes and are less likely to consider those Andalusians who work in Catalonia “immigrants” (1.92 compared to 2.28 of those who only identify with Catalan, and 2.24, only with Spanish); likewise, they express less rejection of immigration. Those interviewees with dual linguistic identity “foreignise” Andalusians who work in Catalonia to a lesser extent; Catalonians living in Andalusia are very rarely considered as “immigrants” (1.63).

Although the right to education in the mother tongue is widely acknowledged in the survey, there is a significant discrepancy between voters of different parties. Among CUP voters, for example, the difference in agreement between the statements “*In Catalonia, Catalan speakers have the right to be educated in Catalan*” and “*In Catalonia, Spanish speakers have the right to be educated in Spanish*” is 2.15 points in favour of Catalan speakers (4.89 compared to 2.65, respectively); there is also a significant difference between JxC voters (1.72); between En Comú voters (1.67); and between ERC voters (1.4). In contrast, there is less discrepancy in the recognition of language rights among those who vote for self-styled pro-constitution parties.

In our study, it also appears that ethno-nationalist dynamics affect the perception of what is considered left- and right-wing in Catalonia. For example, those who vote for CUP, a theoretically left-wing party, are most inclined to consider Andalusians immigrants (2.86); are less satisfied, after JxC voters, with the arrival of other Spaniards (4.2); and are most likely to think that the rest of Spain looks down on Catalonians (3.32). Both CUP (4.38) and ERC (4.43) voters consider that Catalonians contribute significantly more than what they receive from the state, a far cry from the opinion of those who vote for other left-wing parties such as PSC (2.6) and En Comú (3.54). Note that the responses of Vox and PP voters differ largely between the two communities: those who most uphold this statement are in Andalusia (3.81 and 3.59, respectively) and those who least, in Catalonia (1.33 and 1.52).

**Table 3**  
*Mean values by voting intention (Catalonia)*

	CUP	ERC	JxC	En Comú	PSC	Cs	PP	Vox
Indices								
Collective narcissism	3.61	3.72	3.88	3.07	2.54	2.39	1.95	1.77
Populist attitudes	4.06	3.88	3.9	4.02	3.54	3.61	3.67	3.73
Conspiracy belief	2.64	2.54	2.73	2.47	2.45	2.36	2.72	2.85
Language of identification								
Catalan	57.8%	67.2%	78.3	7%	16%	29%	5%	22.2%
Spanish	10.9%	0	12%	12.3%	25%	35.3%	36%	44.4%
Both	31.2%	32.8%	20.2%	80.7	6%	61.8%	58%	33.3%
Geographical and identity question								
An independent Catalonia would fare much better	4.41	4.29	4.45	2.51	1.48	1.65	1	1.06
Spain needs to be decentralised to a far greater extent	4.4	4.2	4.38	4	3.36	2.97	2.24	2.06
My identity is threatened	3.09	3.08	3.39	2.02	1.68	2.38	2.43	2.22
Rejection of immigrants								
Immigration has adversely affected our culture	1.62	2.25	2.32	1.46	1.9	3.21	2.84	3.35
Immigrants steal our jobs	1.31	1.54	1.76	1.14	1.5	1.97	2.06	2.56
It is good that people from abroad move to Catalonia	4.23	4.32	4.13	4.65	4.22	3.91	4.42	4.22
Attitudes towards the Spanish								
It is good that people from other parts of Spain move to Catalonia	4.2	4.31	4.15	4.68	4.39	4.47	4.58	4.61
A person can feel both Catalan and Spanish at the same time	4.14	4.1	4.03	4.85	4.83	4.74	4.94	5
An Andalusian who moves to Catalonia is an immigrant	2.68	2.06	2.38	2.21	1.81	1.68	1.68	1.67
Feeling of superiority and victim mentality								
People from the rest of Spain look down on Catalonians	3.32	3.18	3.39	2.84	2.36	2.35	1.58	2.29
Catalonians are harder working than people from other self-governing regions in Spain	1.78	2.1	2.29	1.81	1.63	2.03	1.48	1.39
Catalonians give a lot more to the state than they receive	4.38	4.43	4.65	3.54	2.6	2.38	1.52	1.33
Linguistic polarisation								
In Catalonia, Catalan speakers have the right to be educated in Catalan	4.89	4.64	4.78	4.6	4.15	3.47	3.1	4.06
In Catalonia, Spanish speakers have the right to be educated in Spanish	2.65	3.24	3.06	2.93	3.78	4.21	4.1	4.59
Social consequences								
I have considered leaving Catalonia due to the political context	1.31	1.25	1.42	1.49	2.02	2.41	3.1	2.72
I have considered leaving Catalonia due to the economic context	1.41	1.36	1.48	1.49	1.7	2.15	2.58	2.06
N	64	238	258	57	229	34	62	36

**Table 4**  
*Mean values by voting intention (Andalusia)*

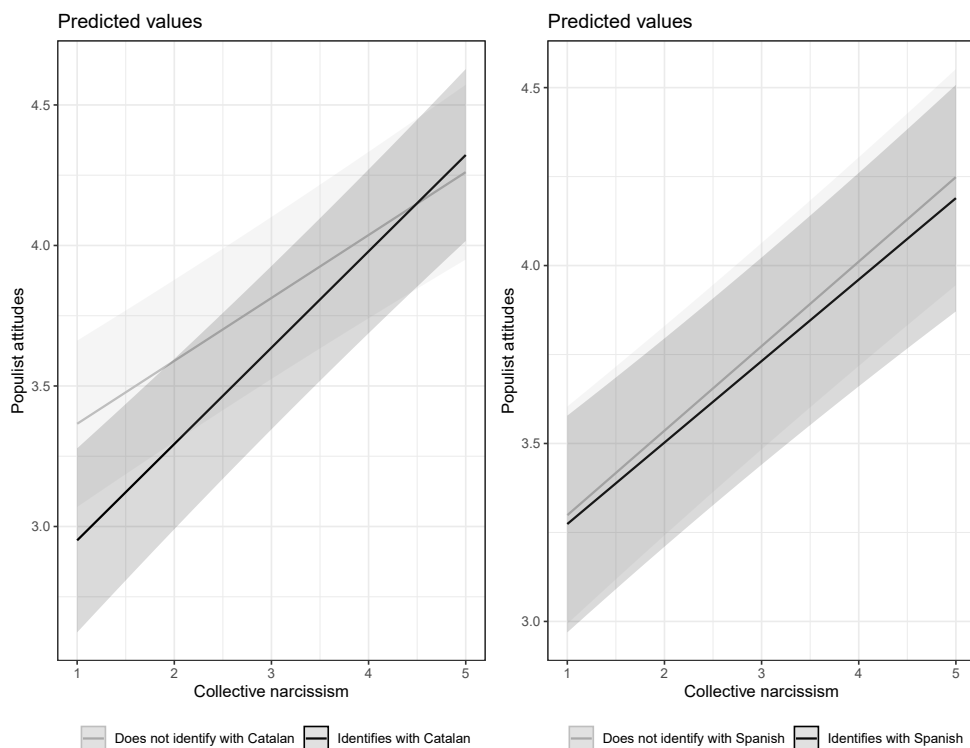
	TOTAL	Adelante Andalucía	Pode- mos	PSOE	Cs	PP	Vox
Indices							
Collective narcissism	3.44	3.43	2.88	3.37	3.31	3.55	3.59
Populist attitudes	3.77	3.63	3.69	3.57	3.82	3.82	4.14
Conspiracy belief	2.45	2.28	2.22	2.43	2.55	2.53	2.85
Geographical and identity question							
An independent Andalusia would fare much better	1.56	1.75	1.68	1.59	1.56	1.42	1.46
Spain needs to be decentralised to a far greater extent	2.3	3.07	2.94	2.51	2.6	1.93	2.27
My identity is threatened	1.82	1.61	1.75	1.76	1.79	1.81	2.11
Rejection of immigrants							
Immigration has adversely affected our culture	2.38	1.98	1.81	2.11	2.04	2.53	3.07
Immigrants steal our jobs	1.9	1.64	1.67	1.83	1.91	1.89	2.34
It is good that people from abroad move to Andalusia	4.2	4.05	4.49	4.27	4.24	4.2	3.93
Attitudes towards the Spanish							
It is good that people from other parts of Spain move to Andalusia	4.37	4.17	4.52	4.36	4.37	4.39	4.32
A person can feel both Andalusian and Spanish at the same time	4.81	4.67	4.67	4.79	4.69	4.84	4.91
A Catalan who moves to Andalusia is an immigrant	1.63	1.88	1.67	1.58	1.64	1.64	1.58
Feeling of superiority and victim mentality							
People from the rest of Spain look down on Andalusians	2.7	2.61	2.44	2.64	2.4	2.72	2.83
Andalusians are harder working than people from other self-governing regions in Spain	2.6	2.79	2.36	2.55	2.26	2.62	2.99
Andalusians give a lot more to the state than they receive	3.5	3.45	3.16	3.31	3.38	3.59	3.81
Social consequences							
I have considered leaving Andalusia due to the political context	1.37	1.43	1.61	1.27	1.46	1.27	1.27
I have considered leaving Andalusia due to the economic context	1.69	1.78	1.93	1.62	1.81	1.55	1.56
N		58	70	267	54	393	100

The relationship between collective narcissism and populism is, therefore, more complex than it may seem. In the case of Catalonia, there is a positive correlation that is clearer in the segment of the population that identifies more with Catalan than with Spanish (Figure 3). The mediating effect of the language of identification is also observed in the model that predicts support for populist parties in that region (Table 5). Populist attitudes, as measured by the scale developed by Akkerman et al. (2014), do not appear to predict votes for populist parties in these regions (selection of populist parties based on: Norris, 2020; Meijers and Zaslove, 2020; Olivas Osuna, 2021b) (Tables 5 and 6). In Catalonia, the main predictors of votes for populist parties are Catalan as the language of identification, the consideration that immigrants

adversely affect the culture, as well as support for independence and referendums as a decision instrument. The exception to this is Vox, which has a stronger correlation with negative attitudes towards immigration. There is a significant relationship between voting for ERC and the belief that “democracy has to be above the law”. Greater collective narcissism appears to be a predictor for voting for JxC, and less so for voting for Vox. Voting for JxC also appears to be associated with a stronger belief in conspiracy theories.

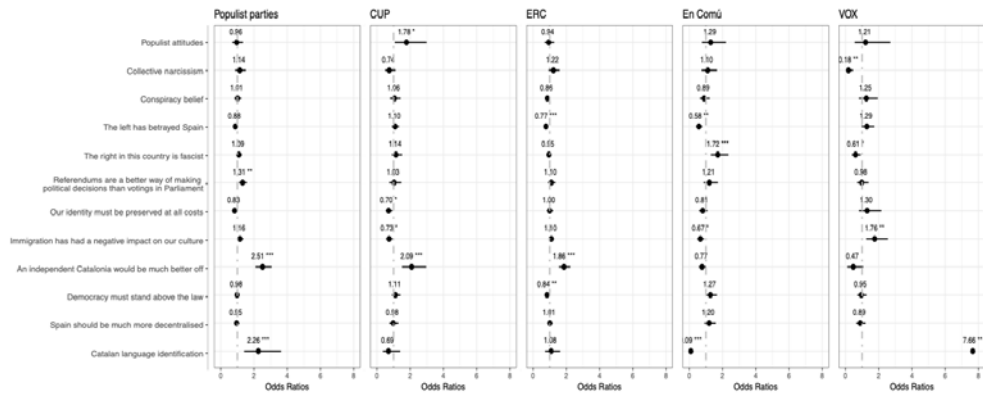
### Figure 3

Effect of interaction between language of identification, collective narcissism and populist attitudes in Catalonia



Note: Models controlling for age, gender, education level, occupation, and left-right self-placement (n=1,392). Standardized coefficients for interaction terms are beta=0.126\*\* (Catalan identification) and beta=-0.005 n.s. (Spanish identification).

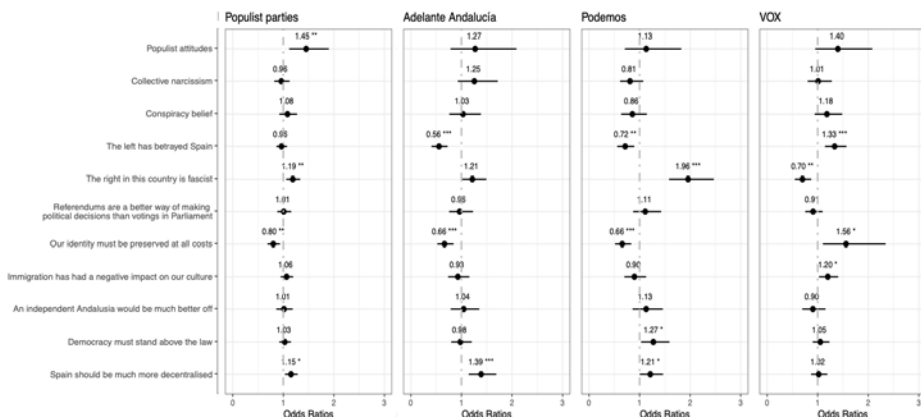
**Table 5**  
*Determining factors for voting for populist parties in Catalonia*



Note: Result of logistic regression. Model controlled by socio-demographic variables. \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$ .

In the case of Andalusia, populist attitudes are positively related with voting for a populist party, but do not predict support for any party in particular. The consideration that immigration is negative for the culture is the only factor clearly associated with voting for Vox, while the belief that “democracy has to be above the law” and demonising the right wing (“the right wing in this country is fascist”) are clearly positively correlated with voting for Unidas Podemos. The desire to further decentralise Spain also serves to predict the vote for populist left-wing parties, Adelante Andalucía and Unidas Podemos; furthermore, those who vote for these two parties score significantly lower in the need to preserve identity at all costs.

**Table 6**  
*Determining factors for voting for populist parties in Andalusia*



Note: Result of logistic regression. Model controlled by socio-demographic variables. \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$ .

## 4. Conclusions

This exploratory work serves to illustrate that the relationship between collective narcissism, populism and identity is complex. There are notable differences between the two self-governing regions of Spain in many of the factors analysed, as well as in the variables that would explain the vote for populist parties in each of the regions. Contextual factors appear to have an impact on the levels of collective narcissism and support for populist parties. This is particularly evident in the case of Catalonia, where the secessionist conflict seems to have created new internal borders and exacerbated the polarisation. In the case of Andalusia, despite the mean score for collective narcissism being higher, it does not appear to have either political roots or consequences in the region's partisan dynamics. It appears to be mostly of social and cultural nature. In Catalonia, this narcissism is very unevenly distributed, with the population that identifies exclusively with the Catalan language scoring considerably higher. Although further research would be required to confirm our exploratory findings, it appears that collective narcissism in Catalonia is a constitutive element of a process of otherness and the creation of a distinctive political identity that is based not only on social and cultural aspects, but also on an ethno-linguistic interpretation of the people and a very negative perception of the Spanish transition and democratic institutions. The data suggests two more general considerations. One is that the unique Catalan context hampers the identification of populist attitudes as a predictor for voting for populist parties, as linguistic identification and the support for independence are more important. The other is that our analysis confirms that the scale developed by Akkerman et al. (2014) has limitations when predicting left-wing populist votes in these regions. It would therefore be advisable to review and build on this instrument for measuring populism, considering the need to include questions adapted to the specific context of each case that is to be studied.

## 5. Notes

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