

# Situations can make you a secessionist

An age-period-cohort analysis of support for secession in Catalonia, 1991-2019

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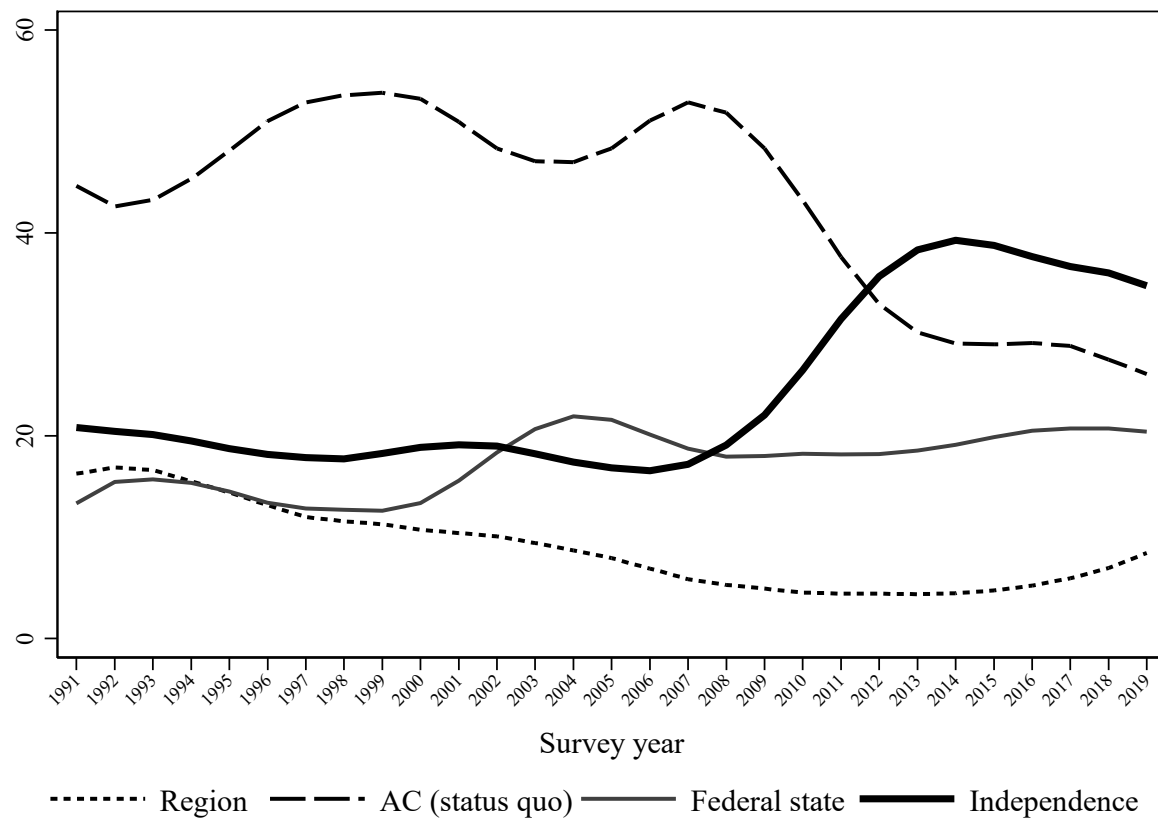
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# Research question

Catalan secessionist preferences have increased sharply since 2008



# Research question

What are the basis of that increase?

- Is it due to **cohort effects**? A gradual pattern of generational change based on a different socialization of younger cohorts
- Is it **period effects** instead? People from all age-groups changing their preferences irrespective of their generation due to contextual changes / political events
- Is it both?

# Research question

Determining the type of effects is key to understand future developments of secessionist attitudes.

*Cohort effects:*

- Gradual / sustained / stable force of change in one direction

*Period effects:*

- More volatile
- Imply that all cohorts can “change their mind” in one or the other direction

# Research question

It is also relevant because:

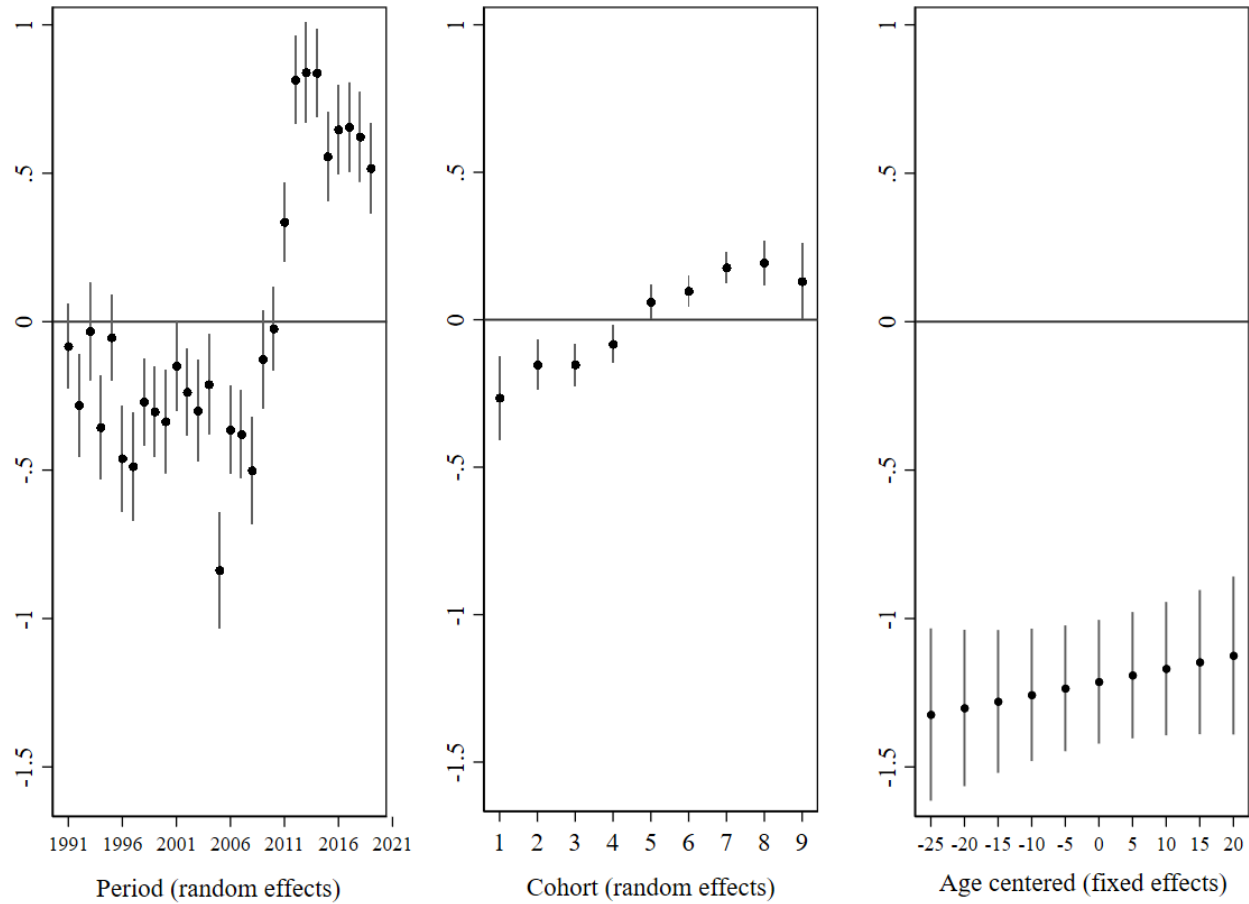
- In the literature territorial preferences are sometimes considered rather stable (e.g., cleavages)
- Can help at understanding similar attitudinal features (e.g., partisanship, ideology).

# Research question

Apply the age-period-cohort effects framework:

- Deal with an old methodological dilemma
  - Identification problem:  $C = P - A$
- Dominant statistical strategy:
  - Cross-Classified Random Effects Models (CCREM)
    - Frequentist (most usual), Bayesian (Bell & Jones 2013)
- Use of repeated cross-section surveys
  - ICPS barometer, 1991-2019
  - Territorial preferences question (dichotomized)

# Age-Period-Cohort Analysis (Frequentist)



95% Confidence intervals

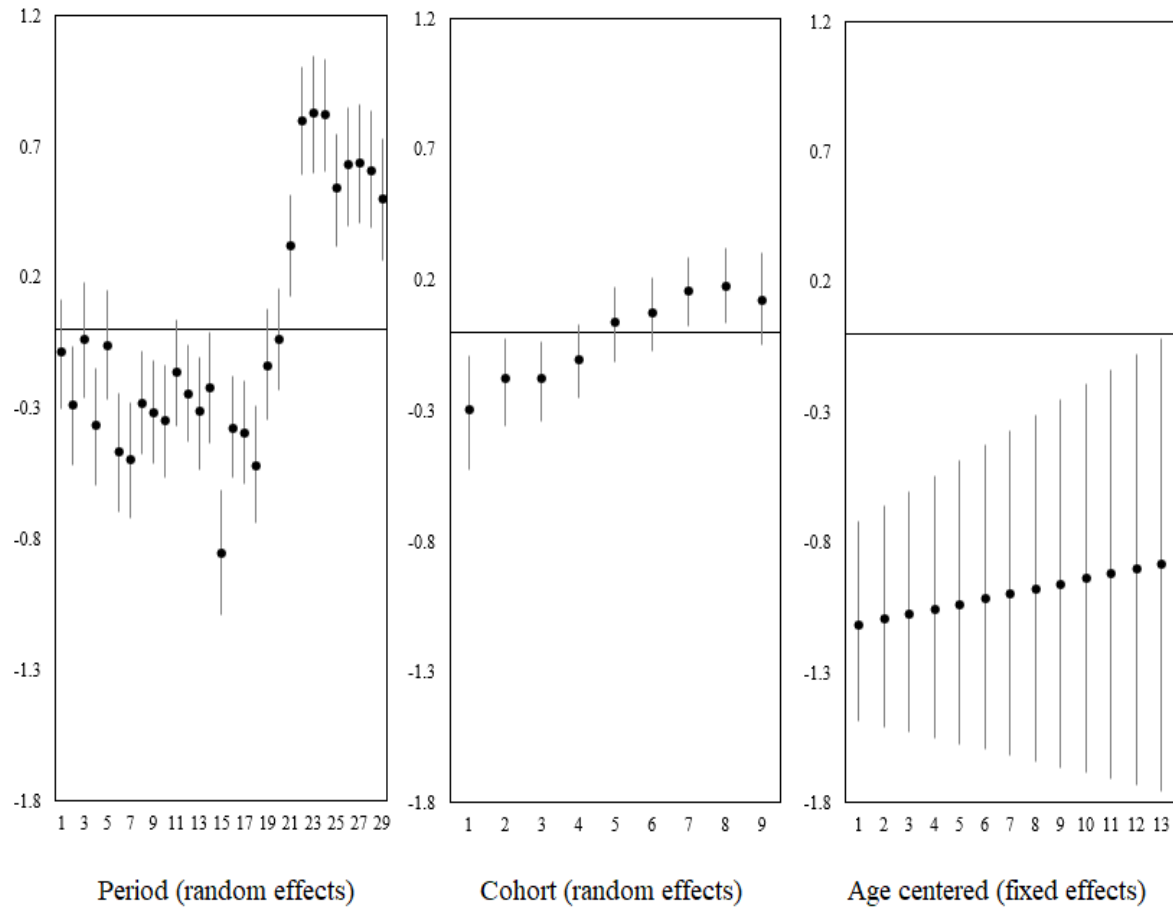


# Age-Period-Cohort Analysis (Frequentist)

CCREM results indicate:

- **Strong period effects:** events happening since 2008 made people of all age-groups more in favor of secession (aftermath of the new *Estatut* debate, Constitutional court ruling, etc.)
- **Moderate cohort effects:** certain pattern of generational change by which younger cohorts are a bit more secessionist
- No relevant **age effects**

# Age-Period-Cohort Analysis (Bayesian)

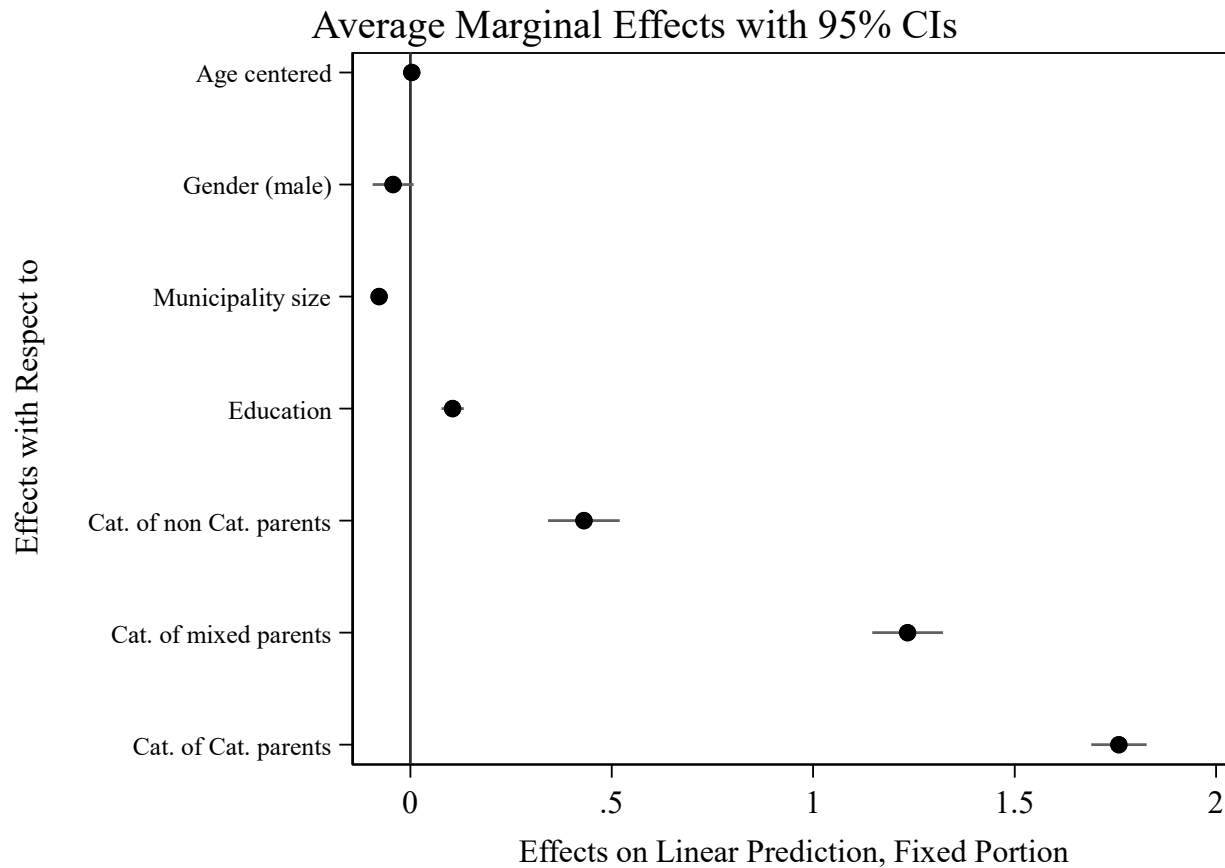


95% Credible intervals

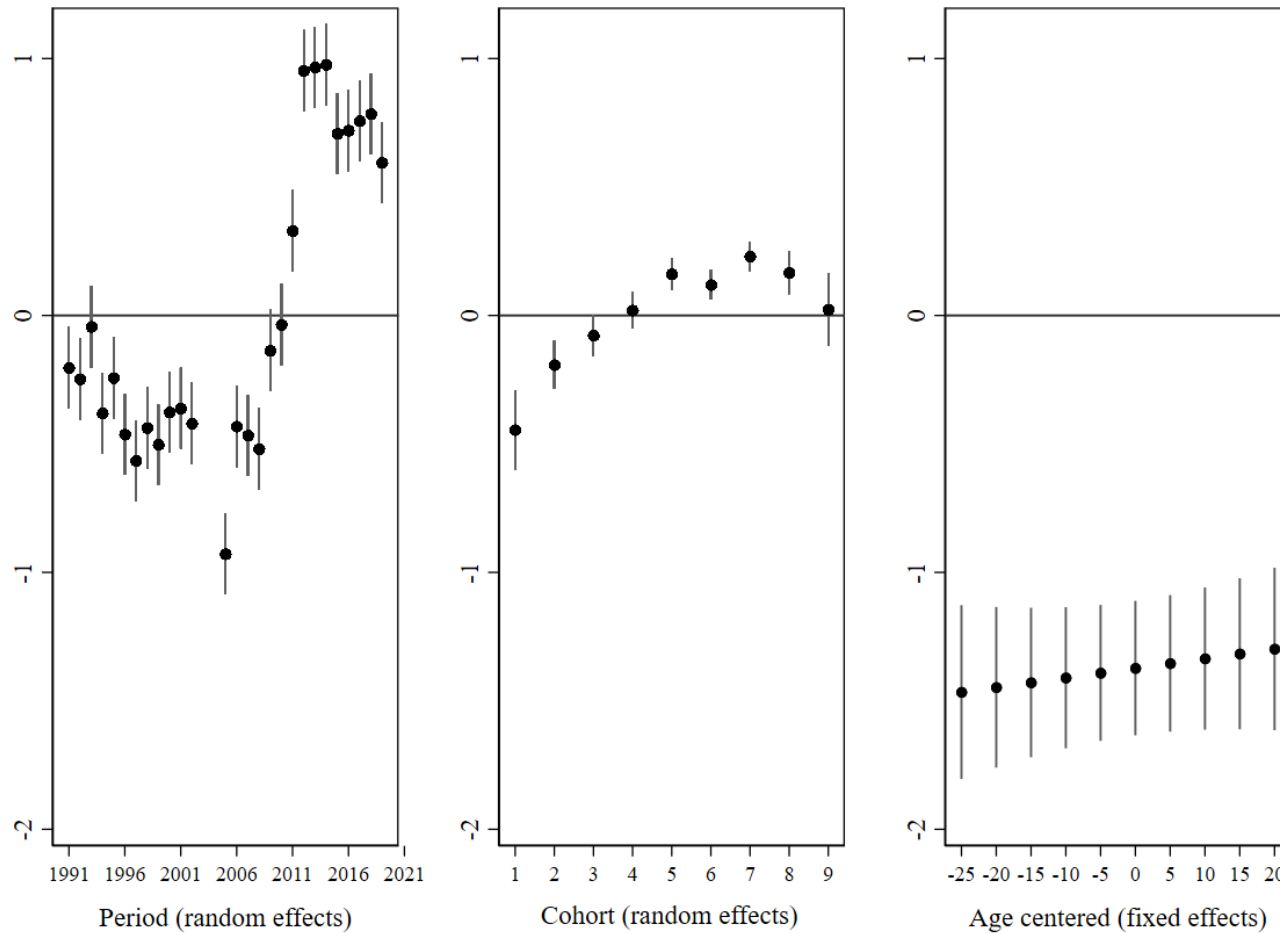
# Age-Period-Cohort Analysis (Bayesian)

Bayesian CCREM results are consistent with the frequentist model.

# Age-Period-Cohort Analysis (1<sup>st</sup> level controls)



# Age-Period-Cohort Analysis (1<sup>st</sup> level controls)

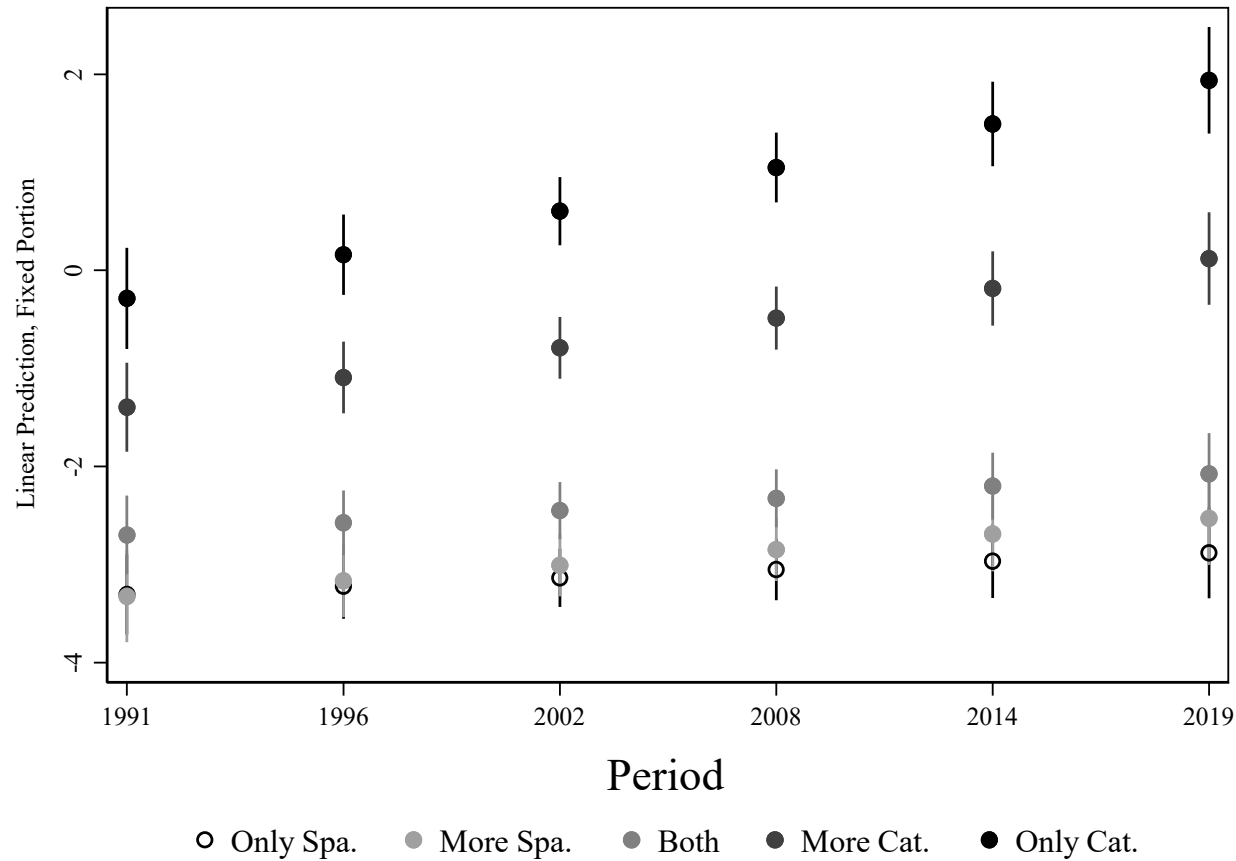


95% Confidence intervals

# Age-Period-Cohort Analysis (1<sup>st</sup> level controls)

Inclusion of key individual level controls does not modify our findings

# Heterogeneous APC trajectories (National id.)



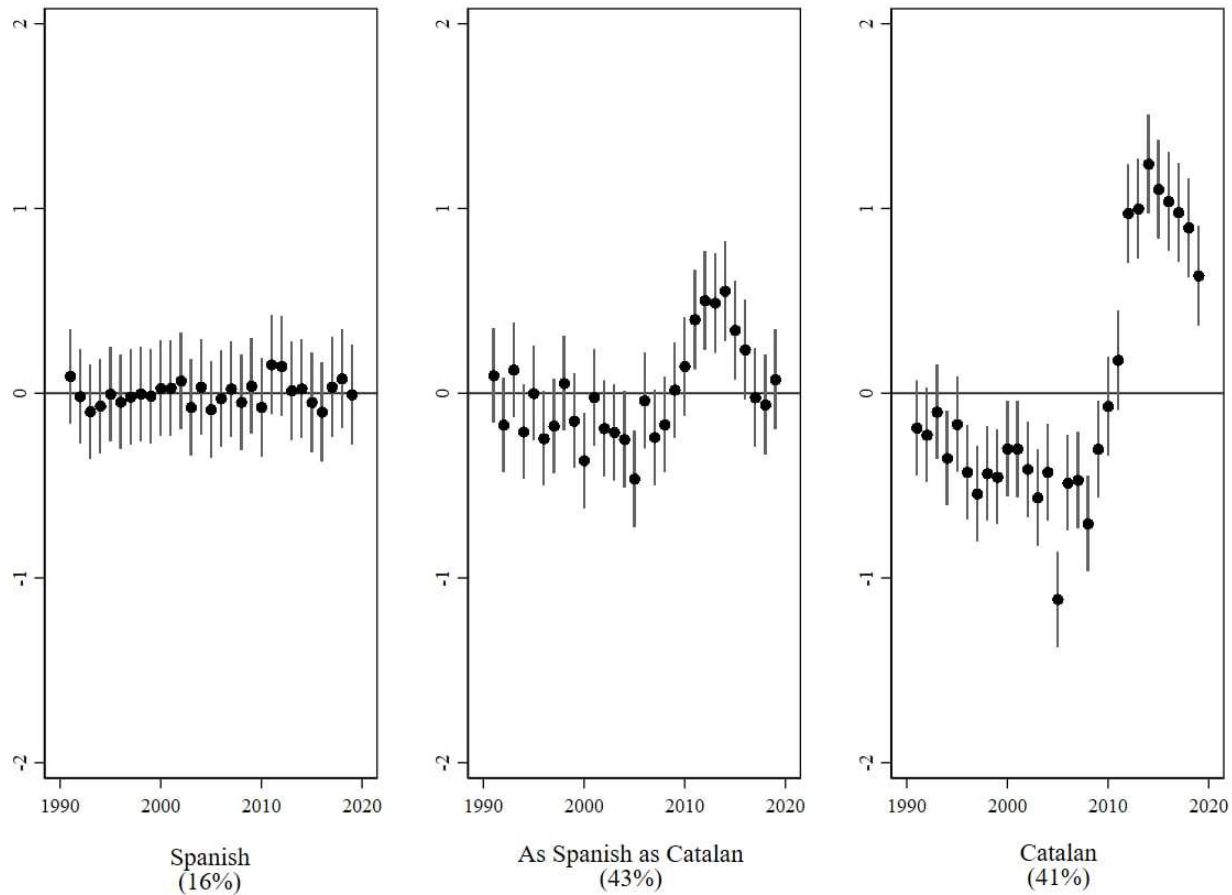
# Heterogeneous APC trajectories (National id.)

## Feeling Catalan as a national identification:

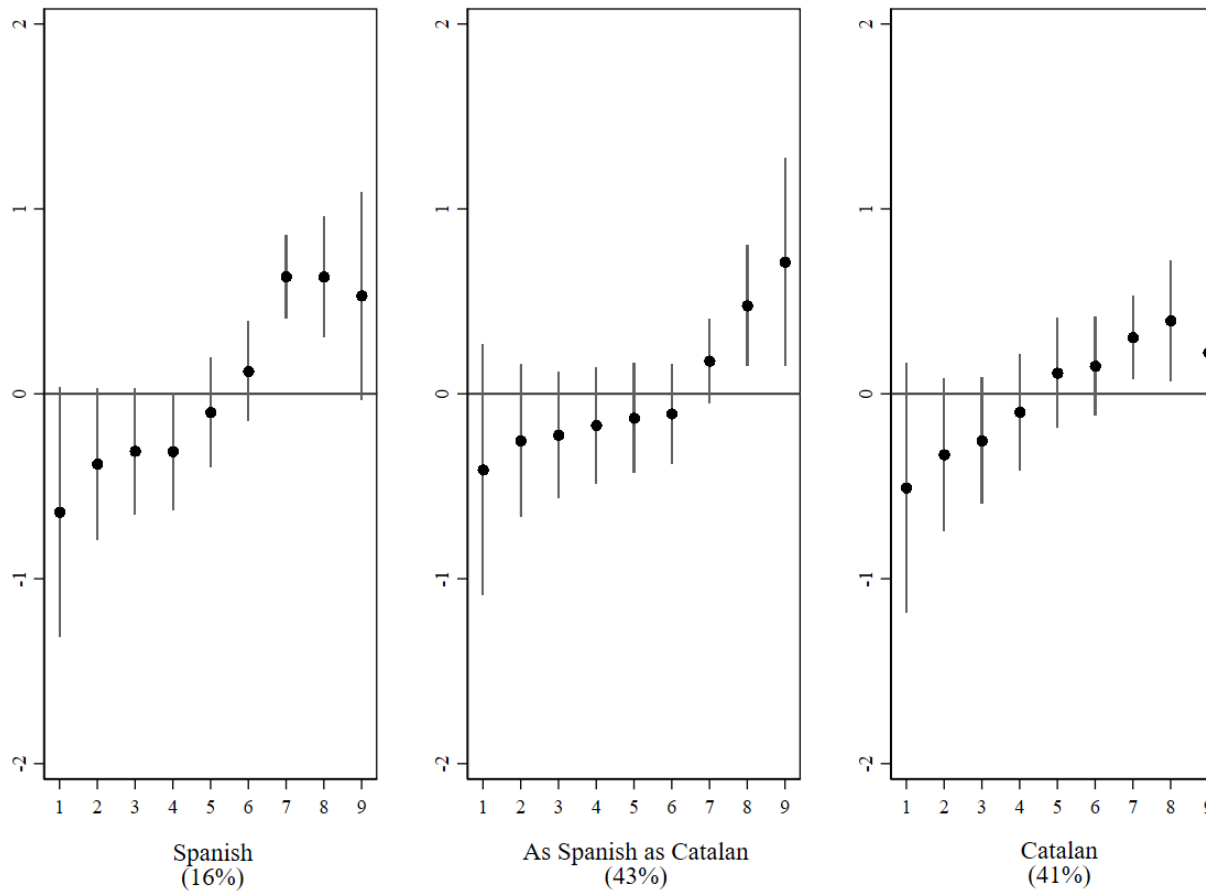
- Has increased its explanatory capacity over time
- Now, feeling more Catalan is more related with being secessionist
- Before, it was less intensely associated



# Heterogeneous trajectories (Period by Nat. ID)



# Heterogeneous trajectories (Cohort by Nat. id.)



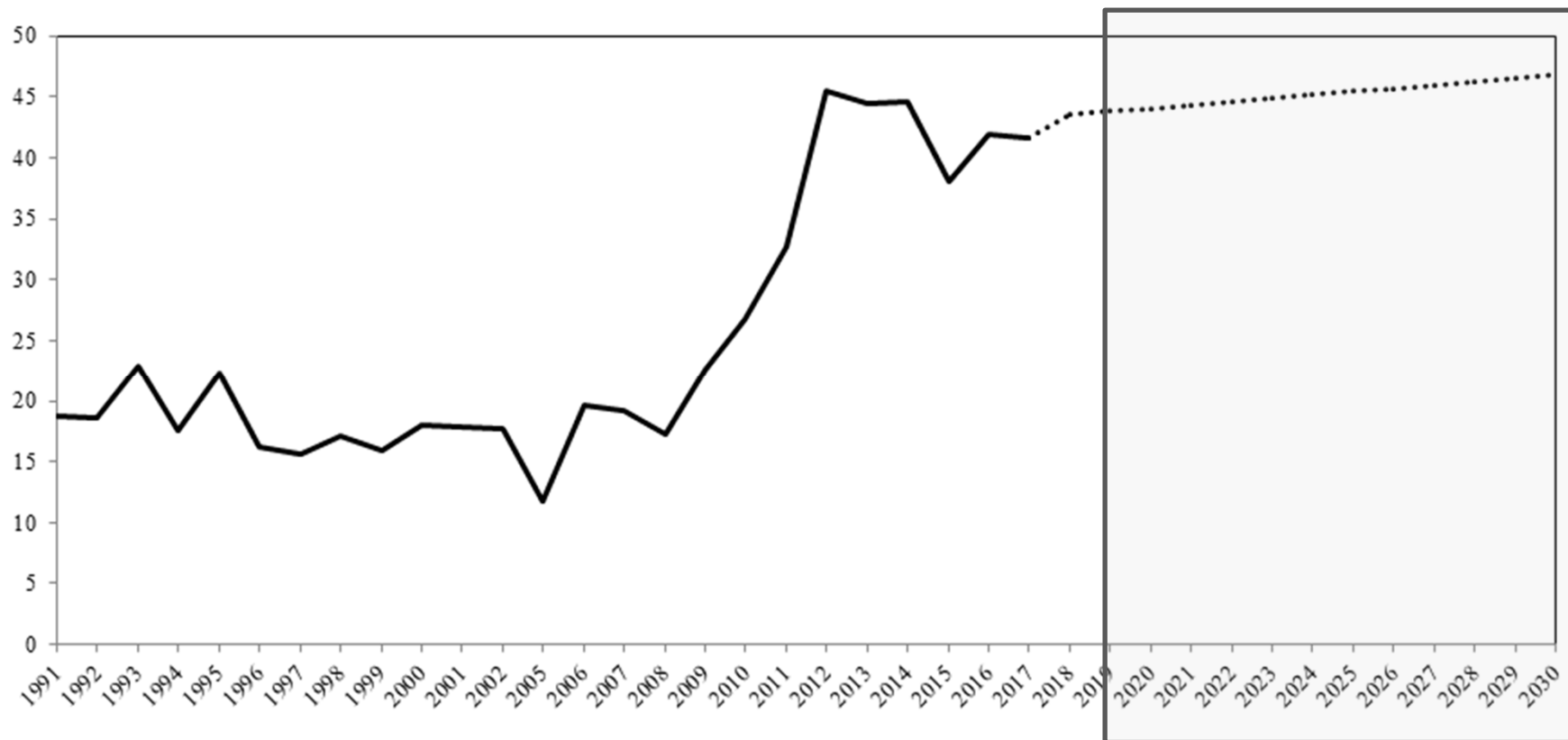
# Heterogeneous trajectories (National id.)

Replicating the model in each national identity group:

- **Period effects**
  - Get stronger the more Catalan the identity
  - Not restricted to Catalan identifiers:
    - Key role of dual identifiers (can “lean the scale”)
- **Cohort effects**
  - Similar across identity groups
  - Moderate long-term trend across groups towards more secessionism

# Forecast and Conclusions

Demographic forecast with only cohort replacement effects: **slight drift**



# Forecast and Conclusions

## Conclusions

- Preferences for secession are more malleable than expected
- Volatility linked to contextual events / period effects (our main explanation of changes) can either bring secessionism upwards or downwards in the future
- Demographic cohort replacement only provides a slight drift towards secessionism in the long run

# Forecast and Conclusions

## Conclusions

- The increase in secessionism since 2008 can be explained by a growth in support among Catalan identifiers and dual identifiers
- Recent decrease in secessionism. Possible reasons:
  - Exhaustion and recoil of the recently converted in the aftermath of the “Procés” (sense of defeat and fatalism)
  - Depletion of the reservoir of convertible identity groups and difficulty to convert new adepts

# Forecast and Conclusions

Thank you