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Liberal-Nationalist Theory, Political Confidence,
and Support for the Welfare State.
Evidence from Britain

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LIBERAL-NATIONALIST THEORY, POLITICAL CONFIDENCE, AND SUPPORT FOR THE WELFARE STATE.

EVIDENCE FROM BRITAIN[*]

by

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Abstract

Assumptions about a friendly side of nationalism and national identification were renewed during the last decade, as a number of political theorists advanced a sophisticated and attractive blend of nationalism and liberalism. One of their more appealing arguments was the suggestion that national identification helps secure or regain citizens' political confidence as well as their support for the welfare state. By applying a multivariate research design – using structural equation modelling – this study tests empirically those syllogisms as falsifiable scientific hypotheses. Findings show that support for the British political community does not have any effect on either political confidence nor support for the welfare state. Instead, it is British illiberal nationalism that is related to political confidence in Scotland – but not in England – but has a negative impact on support for the welfare state in England – while being irrelevant in Scotland. By contrast, support for the Scottish political community does have a positive effect on welfarism and a negative effect on confidence in British government and MPs.

LIBERAL-NATIONALIST THEORY, POLITICAL CONFIDENCE, AND SUPPORT FOR THE WELFARE STATE. EVIDENCE FROM BRITAIN

Nationalism has not had a very good intellectual reputation since World War II. Although it partially recovered through the decolonisation struggles of the 1950-60s, the positive aura was soon dissipated again by ethnic conflict in many of the new and old states. The 1990s witnessed, however, a two-fold scenario of intellectual revisiting and debate on the subject. On the one hand, a racist revival in Western Europe and, overall, civil wars in former Yugoslavia updated the worst fears about nationalism. On the other, there has been a wave of political thought making the case for a nationalism with a human face. The aim of this study is to evaluate empirically some theoretical assumptions about a hypothetical virtuous side of nationalism and national identification. Some outstanding liberal-nationalist and communitarian-liberal authors contend – either as an axiom, as a premise, or a hypothesis – the existence of a number of positive consequences of nationalism. Alleged virtues most often discursively associated with 'good nationalism' are citizens' political confidence and support for the welfare state – the latter mediated through a perception of a national 'common good' and 'national solidarity'. Unfortunately, there has been little systematic empirical evidence to either support or reject these claims, so this study tests empirically those syllogisms as conventionally falsifiable scientific hypotheses.

The attitudinal data examined come from England and Scotland, where the intellectual controversy on this subject is fairly lively. The analysis begins drawing hypotheses from the literature and differentiating the concepts of 'nationalism' and 'support for the political community'. Subsequently, a multivariate design is developed in order to test both the operationalisation of concepts – which affords the ability to control for measurement error – and the causal hypotheses. The empirical analysis tests the alleged effects of support for the political community considering first Britain and then Scotland as reference political communities. As a result, the theoretical claims are called into question. For empirical evidence is different if the political community is Britain or Scotland. Actually, support for the British political community does not show any of the predicted effects, whereas British (illiberal) nationalism has a negative association with support for the welfare state and only associates positively to political confidence in Scotland. By contrast, support for the Scottish political community does show to be positively related to support for the welfare state and negatively to political confidence.

1.   BEYOND THE VICIOUS FACE OF NATIONALISM?

Atrocities perpetrated on behalf of national identification till the end of World War II period are well-known. It is a history not only of the series of mass wars that occurred since the end of nineteenth century – in which millions of men and women would die – but also a history of genocide, mass deportation and other mass crimes committed in both wartime and peacetime. Knowledge is constantly growing regarding many other mass crimes committed on behalf of the nation or proto-national community since the Modern age (e.g. Mann 1994, 1999; Marx 2003). Nevertheless, the nationalism of the decolonisation movements of the 1950-60s, primarily addressed to an anti-imperialist emancipation struggle and with a tendency to accept – initially at least – ethno-cultural diversity, gained again many sympathies (Geertz 1973; Hobsbawm 1992; Anderson 2003). In fact, this would become an influential model for a number of minority ethno-cultural groups and nationalisms in the West.

Yet more recent developments such as the civil wars in Rwanda and Burundi, and above all the breaking-up of Yugoslavia – with their large-scale ethnic cleansing and genocide outcomes – have dramatically increased suspicions about nationalism (Hardin 1995 is particularly clear in this regard). Furthermore, liberal and leftist observers also show serious concern about xenophobia and different sorts of racist socio-political exclusion in the increasingly multiethnic post-industrial societies (e.g. Balibar & Wallerstein 1988; Stolcke 1995; Maddens *et al.* 2000; Blank *et al.* 2001), as well as about the shortcomings of citizenship in polities ruled in nationalist manners (Brubaker 1990, 1996; Kymlicka 1995; Parekh 2002).

During the 1980-90s, nonetheless, there have been different theoretical attempts to revisit nationalism, looking back for some lost communitarian or republican ethical principia compatible with liberal values and institutions. According to 'liberal-nationalists' authors – as Yael Tamir and David Miller like to qualify themselves – those communitarian values might be a necessary condition for the survival and good performance of liberal democracy as well as for the survival of the welfare state. This move can be interpreted reading between the lines of that literature. As a matter of fact, the rediscovery of community has not only occurred in normative political theorising – some of the most celebrated books of the 1990s in explanatory political science and sociology were about social trust and social capital, both concepts linked to that of cooperation (Inglehart 1990; Putnam 1993). However, some theoretical production has gone further still, seeking to rescue the community by means of nationalism and national identification.

2. THE 'LIBERAL-NATIONALIST' HYPOTHESES

The array of concerns includes the following: the decline of social cooperation; the erosion of political confidence and, apparently, political system support; quality of democracy; supranational integration and neo-liberal globalisation; and, in the case of communitarian liberals, the liberal 'blindness to difference' and the quest for collective rights for minority nations and other ethno-cultural groups. In short, their lowest common denominator seems to be a general concern about what might be perceived as a constant erosion of *national-state* community bonds, or 'liberal atomism'. However, there are two more specific common themes shared by numerous authors who sympathise with nationalism while maintaining some form of liberal stance, namely state legitimacy and welfarism – or 'distributive justice', in Tamir's (1993) words. One or various of those concerns have caused several authors to turn their attention towards some allegedly beneficent properties of nationalism or national identification. Most 'liberal-nationalists', but also other authors who would prefer not to be qualified so, contend that national identification is a necessary condition for safeguarding citizen support for their polities, and particularly, the welfare state.[1] In the sections that follow, I examine those theoretical assumptions and hypotheses and subsequently assess them empirically.

National identification and political confidence

The assumption that national identification facilitates commitment and loyalty towards the political system and to its authorities can be traced back, at the very least, to the French revolution (cf. Llobera 1994 for a previous date), and it would have a remarkable impact on almost every Western regime – be they republics or monarchies – during the second half of the 19th century. Rulers fostered national identification with the twofold aim of (1) counterbalancing the constant erosion of traditional guarantors of popular loyalty – such as dynastic legitimacy, divine ordination, historic right, or religious cohesion – and (2) transforming the former passive loyalty into more active participation in public affairs – particularly, participating through conscripted armies in mass war (Hobsbawm 1992). To this day, the intellectual association between national identification and loyalty to political

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[1] It needs to be noted, nevertheless, that not all communitarian liberals subscribe to the nationalist agenda.

institutions and authority remains. For instance, recently a team of scholars asserted that 'the state … requires the citizen to be loyal to it, to obey its rules, and, when required, to fight on its behalf. National identity is a necessary device for exacting the obedience of the citizen to the state. This does not need to be an oppressive feature, because people want to belong to the "national community" from which they derive psychological, cultural and social benefits' (Brown *et al*. 1998: 200).

The notion of loyalty to the state of course also has a second meaning, referring to the problem of states which have their national boundaries and loyalties challenged by alternative nationalisms. This is the case where minority nationalisms seek for either territorial political autonomy or, particularly, secession. Implications of this second theoretical problem in places such as Belgium, Canada, Spain and the United Kingdom have been widely studied. Instead, here I focus on the problem of political confidence.

The so-called 'crises of confidence' has been one of the major concerns of empirical political science since the mid 1970s. A growing proportion of citizens tend to feel unsatisfied with political performance and to distrust government and, overall, political elites. Some authors assert that the crisis of confidence erodes in turn support for the political system (e.g. Miller 1974; Abramson 1983; Gabriel 1995), whereas other discard such relationship, contending that despite the increasing political cynicism, citizens still support democracy (Citrin 1974; Montero et al. 1997), or even more, that they actually push for a more democratic polyarchy (Inglehart 1990; Dalton 1996). In any event, lack of confidence in political authorities is supposed to reduce consent and compliance towards public decisions (e.g. Rose 1985; Miller 1995), and hence to diminish democratic institutions performance (Pharr *et al*. 2000), and it is empirically related with protest activism and unconventional political action (Kaase 1999).

Apparently related with the decline of political confidence is the weakening of social trust. Putnam (1995) has reported a decline of social capital in the United States and some authors might posit that interpersonal trust and political confidence are two sides of the same coin (cf. Miller 1995).[2] After all, if an individual distrusts other people – one might wonder – why should she trust public authorities and institutions (cf. Putnam 1993; Hall 1999). However, recent empirical evidence shows that this direct relationship is fairly weak (Kaase

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[2] However, apparently the decline of social capital is not occurring in Britain (Hall 1999), and the very claim of a decline in the US is lively debated (Jackman & Miller 1998: 61-65).

1999; Newton 1999; Newton & Norris 2000), even statistically insignificant (Mishler & Rose 2001).[3] Even so, one still might suppose that political confidence has to do with more abstract considerations about the political system, rather than with everyday interpersonal trust.

The theoretical relationship between political confidence and general support for the political system has been stated by Almond and Verba (1963) and Easton (1975). They contended that diffuse support for the political system provides a source of consent and compliance even if citizens are discontent with current institutional performance (see also Rose 1985; Taylor 1996). Since national identification makes, alongside support for the political regime, one of the basic pillars of diffuse support for a polity (Easton 1965), one could envisage an empirical relationship between national identification and political confidence as well. Nonetheless, evidence on this matter is extremely scarce. To this researcher's knowledge, the sole study evaluating empirically that hypothesis is Kornberg and Clarke's (1992), who found a rather weak statistical association between support to the political community and trusting political authorities in Canada.[4] In turn, I shall examine this question in England and Scotland. The hypothesis is, therefore, that

> *the stronger citizens' support for the political community is, the stronger their feelings of political confidence will be.*

National identification and support for the welfare state

Looking at recent developments in political theory, nevertheless, the most common themes related with a friendly face of national identification are national solidarity and social trust. The changes of the welfare state have drawn much attention in Western Europe, and a number of well-reputed authors have turned attention to national identification as a possible remedy. Welfare state and national identification seem to influence each other in a non-recursive manner. On the one hand, the state has used the welfare system to gain loyalty and a sense of national solidarity from citizens (Hobsbawm 1992; Keating 2001; McEwen 2002; Moreno & McEwen 2003). On the other, however, it is often argued that social consent towards distributive and redistributive policies has one of its stronger bases in national identification.

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[3] Newton and Norris (2000) and Pharr *et al.* (2000), however, assert that the relationship is indirect, mediated by governmental performance.

[4] Moreover, confidence in authorities and regime support related somewhat more strongly. Topf *et al.* (1989: 132-133) also offered some empirical evidence based on proxies, namely a positive bivariant relationship

Of course, it has also been expected that support could flow from a universalistic sense of justice – regardless of national borders – but this alternative seems to be less in vogue these days.

Two main arguments hold the hypothesis that national identification lends support to the welfare state. These arguments link both variables through two intermediate, compatible factors: mutual trust and a sense of national solidarity stemming from the ideas of 'common good' and 'mutual responsibility'. As a matter of fact, distributive and redistributive policies entail conflict, since some individuals or social sections must pay the costs of improving the situation of other individuals or sections. However, these policies, especially within the frame of a welfare system, often also entail a coordination problem, insofar as most individuals and sections could be made better-off – especially in the long-run – from holding together a mutual-safety system. Noticeably, though, many individuals or sections could still be tempted to escape the costs, thus leading to a problem of lack of cooperation.

As mentioned above, from the 1980s much attention has been paid to the question of social trust and subsequently to that of social capital, encompassing it (Inglehart 1990; Putnam 1993, 1995; Pahrr & Putnam 2000). Many scholars contend that, for a citizen or a social section to contribute willingly – i.e. regardless of coercive institutions – to the provision of policies addressed to help other citizens or sections, there is a need for the former to *trust* that she would be reciprocated should the time arrive in which she needed help. At the scale of a large society, that trust is unlikely to be based on direct interpersonal relations between the individuals involved. Nonetheless, according to some authors, it could be made more likely to arise from the fact they know that they share identification with and loyalty towards a common nation and its political institutions (Miller 1995; Keating 2001; Parekh 2002). Hence national identification would make mutual trust likely, which in turn would increase the likelihood of support for redistributive policies.[5]

The second general argument goes through the notions of common good – taking various meanings – and mutual responsibility. The analogy with the family that some authors put forward (Keating 2001; Miller 1996), can be a useful departure point, since it easily evokes both ideas, and it can be interpreted from either a strictly egoistic viewpoint or a less egoistic, perhaps even altruistic one. However, different meanings of the term 'common good'

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between national pride and general evaluations about the functioning of democracy in Britain and Germany.

[5] Unfortunately, the survey analysed here does not include a measure of interpersonal trust, which impedes us to evaluate this intermediate causal mechanism.

(Dahl 1989) and a couple of different understandings of the welfare state (Keating 2001) must be considered altogether.

The first two meanings of the term 'common good' as applied in relation to the welfare system are neatly individualistic and selfish. First, the common good is seen as that which is good for all the members of, or a large majority in, a society. Here the welfare state is understood – and this meaning has also been applied in the argument of social trust above – as a 'mutual insurance plan' where reciprocity is expected, and the fact that this plan exists is likely to benefit most members of the society (Keating 2001). Thus, national identification helps coordinate individuals with a latent shared egoistic interest (Hardin 1995).

Second, the welfare system can be understood as a redistributive mechanism *tout court* (Keating 2001), which only makes some sections of the society better-off, whereas many sections and single members are unlikely to directly benefit. If the individual believes that she shares a 'common interest' (Keating 2001), 'common venture', 'enterprise' or 'project' (Taylor 1996), even 'common fate' with her nation fellow-members – as nationalism often induces individuals to perceive themselves – then she can still think in egoistic rational terms that she also benefit from her fellow nationals' improvement, since she is indirectly affected by their successes and failures (Tamir 1993). Thus, the 'common good' is perceived by the selfish individual in terms of such an interdependence – some degree of improvement of her fellow-nationals may also benefit herself.

The third sense of 'common good' is no more individualistic, but organicist instead. A society or nation is seen as an entity with its own autonomous life – independent to a degree from the individuals forming it – and the common good is referred to as its well-being. Since individuals can perceive a 'sense of national interest' (Brown *et al.* 1998), now the distributive and redistributive policies are intended to keep or improve the well-being of the social organism. Selfish individuals' calculations are possible insofar as they believe – probably following a nationalist assumption – that the welfare of the organism is also good for its cells – without denying that non-strictly egoistic sacrifices are possible too.

The analogy with the family also has the connotation that national identification carries with it a feeling of 'mutual responsibility' (Keating 2001), a 'fellow-feeling and mutual concern' (Parekh 2002), or a 'sense of bonding among the people working together' (Taylor 1996). The analogy is of a limited scope, since members of the nation do not know each other personally, nor do they share most daily life experiences. However, it is assumed that from the fact of identifying with the same social unit – the nation – individuals identify

also with each other with comparable strength, and even more, they develop an affection for each other. This is indeed a much debatable assumption (Brubaker & Cooper 2000; Abizadeh 2002), but it works to rhetorically legitimate the 'distributive justice' understanding of the welfare state (Tamir 1993). However, were it true, affection for fellow-nationals would inspire a sense of moral responsibility, obligation towards them, similar to – though less intense – the feelings within a Western ideal family.

Therefore, from any of those arguments we should expect that

the stronger the individual identifies with her political community, the more supportive will be to redistributive policies.

Finally, a distinction between majority and minority community allegiances ought to be considered. In contexts in which support for the political community is challenged by a movement of people preferring an alternative political community or 'nation' – particularly if their claim is secession – the collective referent to be invoked among that people in order to foster solidarity and mutual responsibility may well be the projected or actual sub-state community rather than the state community (Brown *et al*. 1998; Keating 2001). Nonetheless, even if such conflict was absent, in the context of nested communities, one could still expect that feelings of solidarity are more likely to exist towards nested than towards nest groups (Lawler 1992). Hence one could predict the inclination to solidarity to be stronger at the regional than at the state level, especially if a strong identification with the sub-state region or 'nation' has developed. Following from this,

a stronger solidarity could be expected in the Scottish context flowing from a Scottish rather than British identification.

3. NATIONALISM, NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION AND SUPPORT FOR THE POLITICAL COMMUNITY

Before moving to examine these hypotheses, however, we need a clarification of what is meant by 'liberal-nationalism' and 'national identification' in this literature. First of all, following from Gellner (1983), it could be assumed that 'nationalism' is a 'principle of political legitimacy'. A principle that states that 'the political and the national unit should be congruent', understanding the 'national unit' as defined by ethno-cultural – e.g. religious and/or linguistic – markers. This principle gives rise to a wide array of social phenomena under the label 'nationalism', namely attitudes, doctrines, movements, and organisational patterns of the

world. Second, Gellner emphasises that the assumption of this principle has as a consequence a strong concern about the congruence in ethno-cultural traits between the rulers and the ruled. Therefore, one important dimension of nationalism as an attitude is a negative orientation towards any actor considered to be alien to the 'nation' if that actor seeks to intervene in the political realm.

Thus, when Tamir (1993) and Miller (1995) refer to something they call 'liberal nationalism' or 'nationality', they seem to be referring to a different principle. For albeit they praise a sense of belonging together, they would probably dislike that citizens mistrusted cultural minorities, foreigners and other countries while being uncritical towards their own 'nation'. Rather than to nationalism as defined by Gellner, they seem to refer to a sense of 'national identification', which other would willingly call 'patriotism' (e.g. Habermas 1989, 1996; Blank et al. 2001). As a matter of fact, the concern with identification with the political unit is not new. There have been many studies on such identification before, specially in countries where it has been called into question, challenging the very basis of those political systems. Thus, the primary concern to inquiry on this subject is about how much subjective support a political community enjoys (Easton 1965, 1975), from which consent, loyalty, compliance, even solidarity are expected to flow.

My proposition is to substitute the concept of national identification by that of 'support for the political community'. For one, referring to 'national' identification entails falling into the flaw of not specifying whether we are referring to an ethno-culturally defined 'nation' (Geertz 1973; Gellner 1983) or to a widely understood political community. To be certain, Miller (1995) seems to be clear that his 'nationality' is culturally specific (Abizadeh 2002), but one could be prone to think that this is not Tamir's case (1993). Specifically, I call 'political community' to the population collectively ruled and represented by the structures of a political system (cf. Easton 1965), which does not need to be defined ethno-culturally. Secondly, this is a useful term because of its applicability to multilevel government as it refers to real binding political structures from the local to the supra-national level, regardless of they fulfil the formal requirements of full sovereignty and are perceived as 'nations'.

In most polities, there is a 'nesting' of political communities in various territorial levels and even local councils and supranational governments need some social legitimacy. A legitimacy that, according to Easton (1975), can be conceptualised as a source of long-term support, whose main expression would be self-identification with the political community. I understand this identification as the self-recognition of its members with concepts and

symbols that represent culturally the abstract notion of such community as a whole. Yet the term 'national identification' does not always cover that political feeling. For, on the one hand, this cannot be applied to all levels of government while, on the other, the political communities of states and other levels of government can enjoy the support of their populations without being generally regarded as 'nations' (Martínez-Herrera 2002: 428-9).[6] Further, there are polities assertively defined as 'nations' that exclude, in one way or another, ethno-cultural minorities from the political realm (Brubaker 1990, 1996; see also Kymlicka 1995; Parekh 2002). Hence our primary concern ought to be about diffuse support for political communities, focusing on self-identification with the British and the Scottish political communities as its main attitudinal manifestation.

However, identification with the general denomination of a political community may be insufficient evidence of political support for it, being necessary to couple such identification with a will of collective self-government. To distinguish specifically the *political* community from other objects is not a straightforward task. Human beings tend to hold multiple identifications with various groups, especially in complex societies in which there are various social categorisation criteria (Hobsbawm 1992; Laitin 1988; Maddens *et al*. 2000). However, a sole denomination may well be used for referring to different things, so that survey respondents' identifications can be suspected of referring to rather vague denominations. For example, this can occur when some individual identifies herself with 'Scotland' *tout court*, without concretion about what exactly 'Scotland' is considered to be. Inquiry on support for the political community ought to avoid eventual confusion because of a mere nominal agreement between the government structure of a society and other economic, religious, linguistic, historical, or folkloric social sub-systems under the same name – often they correlate strongly, but this is not always the case. Hence close attention should be paid to individuals' wish of a degree of collective *self-government*, autonomy. This dimension entails the wish to retain or increase power for a specific level of government, and can be applied to different nested political communities, be they sub-state, state or supra-state.

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[6] As a case in point, despite of the term 'nation' being traditionally used for referring to England, Scotland and Wales as much as Britain, its citizens attitudes raise strong doubts about the alleged weakness of British identification, even in Scotland. However, it is plausible that the discursive and propagandistic handling of the category 'nation' may help or hinder the development of that support.

4.   METHOD, DATA AND OBSERVED VARIABLES

The analysis is conducted through a structural equation modelling of latent variables. This technique provides for the assessment of both theoretical relationships and the measurement of theoretical concepts. Concepts such as 'support for the political community', 'political confidence' and 'support for the welfare state' are indirectly observable only, and scholars have not agreed on single indicators able to optimally operationalise them yet. Thus, each of them can be better measured through various selected operational variables rather than only one. The technique for the evaluation of measurement models is known as 'confirmatory factor analysis' (CFA), which yields some important advantages as compared with exploratory factor analysis, particularly that the former allows for constraining the relationships between latent concepts and observed variables according to theoretically driven hypotheses, and that it supplies statistical tests to assess their empirical consistency. In turn, albeit bearing important resemblances to multivariate regression analysis, structural equation modelling (SEM) affords the ability to establish not only the additive relationship between independent and dependent variables, but also to specify the relationship among independent variables, thus obtaining partial correlations that reflect the unique additive contribution of each variable. Moreover, the use of latent variables enhances the control of measurement error (Bollen 1989).

The analysis falls into two sequences, firstly evaluating the measurement models, and only subsequently the full causal models (Hayduck 1996). In this study, a number of relevant items relating to the theoretical concepts were first selected from the data set and subjected to CFA to determine their dimensionality and, hence, usefulness as a basis for the analysis. After achieving satisfactory results for the measurement models, the full causal models were tested. Models were estimated using the English and Scottish Pearson correlations and standard deviations matrices (see the Appendix).[7] During the research process, alternative measurement models were compared. For each model goodness-of-fit measures were computed, which reflect how close the implied population covariance matrix predicted by the model is to the sample covariance matrix.[8] Different nested models were tested progressively

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[7] Estimations were conducted through the maximum likelihood method by means of the programme AMOS 4.0 (Arbuckle & Wothke 1999).

[8] The most basic of this measures is the chi-square test, which is particularly useful to compare nested models, since one can subtract these estimates to determine whether the difference between models is statistically significant. However, this test tends to be too extreme to evaluate overall model fit on samples with a large size, so additional fit indices are helpful (Bollen 1989; Arbuckle & Wothke 1999; Bollen & Díez-Medrano 1998).

for eventual invariance from one model to the next (see Bollen & Hoyle 1990; Bollen & Díez-Medrano 1998). After achieving satisfactory general fit results, validity and reliability of the observed variables were evaluated on the basis, respectively, of the statistical significance and magnitude of the regression coefficients (factor loadings) linking the latent factors to their indicators and the explained variances of the indicators (R^2) (Bollen 1989).

Furthermore, since two different – English and Scottish – samples were considered simultaneously, let us make some remarks about this procedure. The main advantage of performing joint analyses that estimate parameters and tests statistical hypotheses about different groups at once over doing separate analyses is that they supply with a test for the significance of *any* differences found between the groups (Arbuckle & Wothke 1999). In order to test differences in parameters between populations, the task is to impose constraints of across-samples equivalence to parameters and to test statistically the hypotheses of equivalence. Thus, parameters were constrained to be equal step by step, testing the statistical significance of eventual worsening after each modification.[9]

The data analysed are from the 1997 British General Election Study (BGES). This survey contains a richness of variables intended to measure a so-called 'British national sentiment' as well as attitudes around political confidence and support for the welfare state, and it is based on large numbers of respondents for both England and Scotland.[10] Moreover, it includes a specific standard question on Scottish identification. Now let us have an overlook on the observed variables. There is no agreement in the literature on any indicators measuring validly either 'nationalism', 'national identification' nor 'support for the political community'. The survey includes a battery of questions intended to tap 'British national sentiment' as a Likert scale (Heath *et al.* 1999), namely:

Some indices, such as the chi-square test statistic, the root mean square error (RMR) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), have a lower bound of zero, such that the closer to zero they are, the better is a model's fit. Other indices have an upper bound around one, such that the closer to one they are, the better fit is.

[9] The progression went from testing weights (lambdas) equivalence to test measurement errors variances and factors variances and covariances equivalence. When the chi-square difference between each pair of models was insignificant at level .05, the constrained model was accepted, otherwise the process was finished (Arbuckle & Wothke 1999; see Maddens *et al.* 2000 for an application).

[10] The data set includes a sampling boost for Scotland, thus making multivariate inferences for this territory statistically reliable. The number of productive interviews is 2515 in England and 882 in Scotland. Unfortunately, the sub-sample for Wales is too small as to carry out multivariate analyses (n = 182). The standard weights for each sample were applied in the production of the matrices as indicated by the CREST (1999). The data were kindly provided by the Data Archive at the University of Essex and the ECASS-TMR programme.

BLEARN. Britain has a lot to learn from other countries in running its affairs

BCITIZEN. I would rather be a citizen of Britain than of any other country in the world (reversed)

BASHAMED. There are some things about Britain today that make me ashamed to be British

BTOGETHER. The government should do everything it can to keep all parts of Britain together in a single state (reversed)

BCOOPERATE. Britain should co-operate with other countries, even if it means giving up some independence

Each question supplied closed answers of agreement on a scale ranging from one ('strongly agree') to five ('strongly disagree').[11] The answers to some items were rearranged (see the questions) so as the higher the score, the more pro British respondents express themselves.[12] As recognised by its designers (Heath et al. 1999), this question battery has some flaws in terms of both contents validity and internal reliability. First, it does not fit very accurately to Gellner's (1983) concept of nationalism, in which congruence in ethno-cultural traits between the rulers and the ruled is a crucial concern, since this is not directly expressed in any of the items, while it includes some items that do not match a non-nationalist understanding of support for the political community. Second, they reported 'a rather meagre Cronbach's alpha' and thus weak internal reliability in previous results.[13] However, here it has been sought to made the best from the available items, classifying them around the concepts of 'support for the political community' and 'nationalism'.

First, support for the British political community was operationalised through the items BCITIZEN and BTOGETHER, which should respectively tap identification with that political community and support for its collective self-government − support for the unity of Britain vs. separatism (on a concurring appraisal of a similar International Social Survey question, see McCrone & Surridge's 1998). This construct seems to be quite free of

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[11] The battery also included the item BCRITIC 'People in Britain are too ready to criticise their country'. However, many preliminary analyses showed its low validity and reliability, and that it seriously distorted the reliability and validity of the other nationalist items.

[12] Missing cases (including the 'Don't Knows') were given the mean value of the other cases. The number of missing values in most variables of both samples is quite small, not higher than 15% (the unsurprising exception is left-right ideological identification). All the results shown draw from the weighted samples moments after missing value imputation with the means of the productive cases. Missing values were kept only in some control variables (age, gender and years studying). When introducing these controls, the few remaining missing values were deleted using the listwise procedure, in order to avoid the eventual problem of non-positive definite matrices (see Wothke 1993). However, none of those variables yielded a significant effect on the dependent factors.

[13] In 1994 four items were devised, namely BLEARN, BCITIZEN and BASHAMED along with a fourth one (BCRITIC) that has been discarded here (see fn. 11). Alpha for these four items was .35 in 1994 and .38 in 1997

'nationalist excesses' while still tapping those two compoments. Moreover, as shown below, they are the most strongly correlated from within the question-battery set. Second, in order to isolate as much as possible this construct from nationalism interference, it was accompanied into the analyses by a second construct operating as a control variable. This construct was conceived as a proxy to nationalism, composed of the three remaining items. Though they do not refer straightforwardly to ethno-cultural congruence between rulers and rulers, they are very close to nationalism, combining uncritical national pride and reluctance to any kind of 'other countries' influence on British politics.[14]

However, as said above, the consequences of support for the political community could be different if that community is a sub-state, minority nation such as Scotland. Hence I replicated the causal models substituting the British by the Scottish referent. In the context of conflict between nested political communities, however, support for every political community is not reducible, either theoretically nor operationally, to a political identification with it. For, as said above, human beings tend to hold multiple identifications with various groups, especially in complex societies in which there are various social categorisation criteria (Laitin 1988; Hobsbawm 1992; Maddens *et al.* 2000). Where there is a potential of conflict between objects of identification, support for them is better understood as a relative rather than absolute identification (Linz 1986; Moreno 1988).

Hence support for nested political communities in contest is best observed as the relative weight of every identification as opposed to the other. Survey research on Basque and Catalan nationalism has extensively used a bi-polar scale comparing the relative identification with the state and the sub-state communities (e.g. Linz 1981, 1986; Gunther *et al.* 1986; see Martínez-Herrera 2002 for the historical series), which has travelled to Scotland (Moreno 1988), and from there to Canada (Mendelsohn 2002) and to the whole United Kingdom (BGES 1997).[15] This standard question I call the 'Linz-Moreno's', after the names of its introducers in Spain and Britain, respectively. Here we have its application to the Scottish context:

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for the whole British sample. The 1997 six-item battery reached an alpha of .51. In despite of discarding one item, my own five-item alpha yields.51 as well.

[14] For other authors devising national pride as a proxy to nationalism, see Inglehart (1990) and Dogan (1994). Moreover, Hobsbawm (1991) and Heath et al. (1999) allude to an 'external dimension' of nationalism, addressed against other countries, while Blank et al. (2001), after distinguishing between 'patriotic' and 'nationalist' attitudes, found that the latter is correlated with the perception of foreigners as a threat.

[15] Since 1992 Eurobarometer has also compared European and national identifications with a quite similar wording (European Commission 1997: 55-56, B.74-B.75).

LM97. Which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself?

> 1   Scottish, not British
>
> 2   More Scottish than British
>
> 3   Equally Scottish and British
>
> 4   More British than Scottish
>
> 5   British, not Scottish

Survey research on 'political confidence' has a longer tradition than research on support for the political community, hence its measurement benefits from a comparatively wider – though still incomplete – agreement, particularly on the basis of the standard provided by the pioneering National Election Study (NES) in the United States (Abramson 1983; but see Levi & Stoker 2000). The British data set includes two items tapping trust in government and confidence in politicians:

GOVTRUST. How much do you trust British governments of any party to place the needs of the nation above the interests of their own political party?

MPsTRUST. And how much do you trust politicians of any party in Britain to tell the truth when they are in a tight corner?

Four possible answers were given for each question, ranging from 'just about always' to 'almost never', whose order was inverted so as the higher the score, the more politically confident the citizen manifests. The first item is intended to tap 'trust in government' and was first applied in Britain in 1974 (Farah *et al*. 1979) and since 1987 by the BGES. The second aims at measuring confidence in politicians as a group and has been implemented by the BGES since 1994 (Bromley *et al* 2001). None of them seems to be as much of a complete measure of support for any of both objects as the NES question battery for trust in government, but they can jointly reflect a good deal of the political confidence syndrome widely understood (cf. Dalton 1996; Newton & Norris 2000). It is worth to stress that both of them refer specifically to government and politicians at the British level.

The last theoretical construct refers to support for the welfare state. There is wide agreement that the main dimensions of that policy system are public health, public education and, at the very least, a degree of income redistribution. Thus I selected the following questions:

> Please use this card to say whether you think the government should or should not do the following things, or doesn't it matter either way?

*PRIVEDU ...*get rid of private education in Britain?

*RIDPOVERTY ...*spend more money to get rid of poverty?

*PRIVMED ...*encourage the growth of private medicine?

*MORENHS ...*put more money into the National Health Service?

*SPENDEDU ...*spend more money on education?

Five possible answers were supplied for each one, ranging from 'definitely should' to 'definitely should not'. To these items I added:

REDISTRI. Income and wealth should be redistributed towards ordinary working people?

Five possible answers were given to this, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Again, the answers to all six questions were arranged so as the higher the score, the stronger support for the welfare system is.

Finally, some control variables were included for both avoiding some eventual spurious relationships and unveiling eventual hidden, non-apparent relationships. Some basic socio-demographic variables were considered, namely: age, gender, number of years studying, and household income, all given in 1997. Missing data (including DK/NA) in the three former variables were kept. The income variable was recoded to express the respondents' household income in pounds, and in the end this was the sole socio-demographic control variable showing a significant effect on the dependent variables.[16]

Two more attitudinal and behavioural variables were also included as controls. First of all, a ten-point left-right identification scale was considered while studying support for the welfare state. Given the high number of DK/NA (30.0 % in England; 37.3 % in Scotland), these missing values were recoded as 5.22 in England and 4.98 in Scotland, in accordance with the means of the observed cases in each territory. Secondly, in the modelling of political confidence, the memory of either having voted or not for the party in government in the previous general election was included as a control, as suggested by the literature on trust in government (Citrin 1974; Farah *et al*. 1979; Gabriel, 1990; Levi & Stoker 2000). This was operationalised as a dummy that puts into the reference category all those cases having not voted conservative – for whatever reason – in the 1992 general election.

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[16] Respondents were given the value of the mid-point of their income interval, except for the bottom and top categories, with values 2,000 and 46,000. Missing values were imputed a different mean in England (20320.68) and Scotland (17398.18).

Table 1

Correlations, means, and standard deviations of the indicators of British national identification and nationalism in England and Scotland 1997.

		SCOTLAND			
ENGLAND	BLEARN	BCITIZEN	BASHAMED	BTOGETHER	BCOOPERATE
BLEARN		0,224	0,188	0,085	0,158
BCITIZEN	0,165		0,127	0,230	0,178
BASHAMED	0,169	0,162		0,122	0,075
BTOGETHER	0,101	0,285	0,078		0,013
BCOOPERATE	0,205	0,228	0,079	0,199	
ENGLAND N		2413 after listwise deletion			
Mean	2,983	4,137	2,741	3,636	3,205
Std. Deviation	1,226	1,041	1,087	1,017	1,066
SCOTLAND N		817 after listwise deletion			
Mean	2,898	4,058	2,720	3,243	3,106
Std. Deviation	1,389	0,963	1,042	1,156	1,025

Note: Entries below the diagonal refer to England; above the diagonal, to Scotland.

5. MEASUREMENT MODELS

Before testing the theoretical relationships, the validity and reliability of the measurements of the theoretical variables must be assessed. The construct measuring support for the political community is evaluated in the first place. Table 1 presents the correlations between the five items tapping British national identification and nationalism. It shows that the correlations tend to be weak in both England – the strongest one is .28 – and, particularly, in Scotland – the strongest is .23. This hardly comes as a surprise since Heath and his colleagues (1999: fn. 10) recognised that the items used in 1994 attained 'a rather meagre Cronbach's alpha.' Interestingly, moreover, the strongest correlation in both sub-samples comes out between BCITIZEN and BTOGETHER, the indicators operationalising support for the political community.

Figure 1 represents the structure of expected relationships between the indicators and their underlying dimensions. A distinction is made between support for the political community – in which we are primarily interested – and the proxy to nationalist attitudes. Two tasks are carried out next: first, an evaluation of whether both constructs can be separated from each other in order to proceed with the subsequent causal analyses. This is achieved through the comparison of nested models. Second, an appraisal of the validity and reliability of the indicators. The analysis includes a two-groups comparison, analysing England and Scotland altogether, which can shed additional light on whether the items are capturing the same underlying concepts. Actually, there are no expectations that the

measurement models of support for the political community 'travel' well from one societal context to another. For according to the literature, conflicts around political community perceptions are framed differently among the Scots and the English – sub-state self-governing is at stake among the former, whereas European supra-state integration is the prevailing issue among the latter (see Heath *et al.* 1999 for the English Euro-scepticism). Consequently, two specific models make well theoretical sense. Nonetheless, it is still interesting to realise which differences come out.

Figure 1

CFA two-factor model of support for the political community and a British nationalism proxy
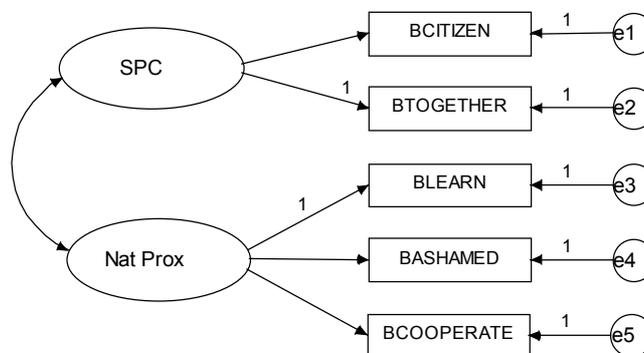
Table 2 presents the results of three nested models, testing progressively for invariance from one model to the next. As said above, models are compared on the basis of a number of goodness-of-fit indices, especially on the differences between the chi-square tests. The first model is a baseline model, which assumes independence between the five items. The one-factor model corresponds to the operational hypothesis that the items are direct measures of a single composite of support for the British community and British nationalism. The next model is the postulated two-factor model. The one-factor model attains a satisfactory fit, with a RMSEA index below the standard threshold of .05 accompanied with a close-fit p-value (P-close) well above .50. However, the introduction of a second factor improves the model fit, as the difference in the chi-square between both models is statistically significant (78.83 – 45.57 with 10 - 8 degrees of freedom). This comes out as a first indication of the adequateness of the two-factor model.

Table 2

Alternative models for support for the British political community and a British nationalism proxy in England and Scotland, 1997.

Model	df	χ²	p	GFI	AGFI	RMR	RMSEA	Pclose	AIC	MECVI	Δ₁ NFI	Δ₂ IFI	ρ₁ RFI	ρ₂ TLI
Independence	20	815,35	0,00	0,89	0,84	0,16	0,11	0,00	1012,07	0,26	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
1Factor	10	78,83	0,00	0,99	0,97	0,04	0,05	0,73	118,83	0,04	0,90	0,92	0,81	0,83
2 Factors	8	45,57	0,00	0,99	0,98	0,03	0,04	0,96	89,57	0,03	0,94	0,95	0,86	0,88

England N=2413; Scotland N= 817

Table 3

Parameter estimates for the two-factor measurement model of support for the British political community and a British nationalism proxy in England and Scotland, 1997.

	England					Scotland				
	Lambda					Lambda				
Indicators	SPC	Nat.Prox.	S.E.	Std. Coef.	R²	SPC	Nat.Prox.	S.E.	Std. Coef.	R²
BCITIZEN	1,41		0,15	0,63	0,39	2,05		0,63	0,75	0,57
BTOGETHER	1,00			0,45	0,21	1,00			0,31	0,09
BLEARN		1,00		0,40	0,16		1,00		0,52	0,27
BASHAMED		0,63	0,08	0,29	0,08		0,47	0,10	0,33	0,11
BCOOPERATE		1,04	0,11	0,48	0,23		0,45	0,10	0,32	0,10
	Covariances		Std. E.	Correl.		Covariances		Std. E.	Correl.	
SPC <---> Nat prox	0,17		0,02	0,74		0,15		0,05	0,60	

All coefficients are significant at .05 level

df =8; Chi² = 45,57; RMSEA = ,04; p-value of close fit = ,96; n= 2413 & n=817

Note: All parameters estimated without equality constraints between the English and the Scottish data.

A second indication of the convenience of the two-factor model comes from an examination of the validity and reliability of the observed variables. Table 3 includes the regression coefficients for the relationships between the latent variables and their indicators, as well as the squared multiple correlation coefficients (R^2) for each, and the covariance between the two factors. As said above, square multiple correlation coefficients indicate the reliability for each of the indicators, whilst the statistical significance and magnitude of the regression coefficients indicate their validity. Indeed, only three measurements show moderately strong validity (standardised regression coefficients = .45 or over) and reliability (R^2 = .21 or over). The factor representing the concept of support for the political community is linked with two of the three best accounted indicators.

The English and Scottish results were compared as well. Though equivalence constraints between parameters in both samples were progressively attempted as told above (Section 4), all the hypotheses of equivalence were rejected as they are significantly different.

Table 3 indicates that validity and reliability of preferences on keeping Britain's unity (BTOGETHER) and attitudes towards cooperation with other countries (BCOOPERATE) are better in England than in Scotland, while British identification (BCITIZEN) and openness to learn from other countries (BLEARN) work somehow better in Scotland. Finally, the correlation between the factors, though fairly strong in both samples, is a bit stronger in England too.[17]

Table 4

Means, standard deviations, and correlations for the indicators of support for the welfare state and political confidence in England and Scotland, 1997.

ENGLAND	SCOTLAND PRIVEDU	RIDPOVERTY	PRIVMED	MORENHS	SPENDEDU	REDISTRI	GOVTRUST	MPsTRUST
PRIVEDU		0,179	0,224	0,137	0,090	0,343	-0,032	-0,081
RIDPOVERTY	0,212		0,082	0,260	0,311	0,376	0,048	-0,034
PRIVMED	0,243	0,101		0,102	0,016	0,137	-0,010	-0,100
MORENHS	0,158	0,313	0,137		0,605	0,189	-0,046	-0,078
SPENDEDU	0,099	0,286	0,055	0,539		0,222	-0,003	-0,039
REDISTRI	0,358	0,333	0,169	0,292	0,218		-0,038	-0,071
GOVTRUST	-0,055	0,013	-0,113	-0,069	-0,012	-0,074		0,387
MPsTRUST	-0,024	-0,019	-0,098	-0,055	-0,018	-0,065	0,416	
ENGLAND								
Mean	2,480	4,442	3,271	4,662	4,610	3,513	2,251	1,665
Std. Deviation	1,179	0,835	1,239	0,693	0,735	1,112	0,698	0,642
SCOTLAND								
Mean	2,951	4,596	3,421	4,721	4,655	3,830	2,214	1,663
Std. Deviation	1,176	0,679	1,223	0,613	0,697	1,035	0,663	0,658

Note: Entries below the diagonal refer to England; above the diagonal, to Scotland.

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[17] A third argument for distinguishing between the two factors stems from a 'criterion' validity appraisal (cf. Bollen 1989; also Heath *et al*. 1999). According to the theoretical definition, support for the political community entails a preference for power being primarily placed in a correlative level of government rather than in alternative loci – either situated above, below or besides. Since the BGES asked about their constitutional preferences of territorial political organisation of both Scotland and Wales, a factor accounting for these items was related with the other two factors, yielding much stronger relationships with support for the political community than with nationalism in both England and Scotland.

Now the analysis turns to the examination of the measurement of the dependent factors. As shown in Table 4, the means and standard deviations of the variables tapping political confidence are about the same in England and Scotland, in despite of differences that could be expected given the well-know opposition to the Conservative cabinets and a previous record of low satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in Scotland (Topf *et al.* 1989). Yet support for the welfare state was on the average somewhat stronger in Scotland than in England. This might further enhance the interest to test the proposition about the influence of support for the political community on support for welfare state. But first the dependent measurement models must be examined.

Figure 2

CFA model of political confidence, generic support for the welfare state, and support for increasing spending on welfare state policies.
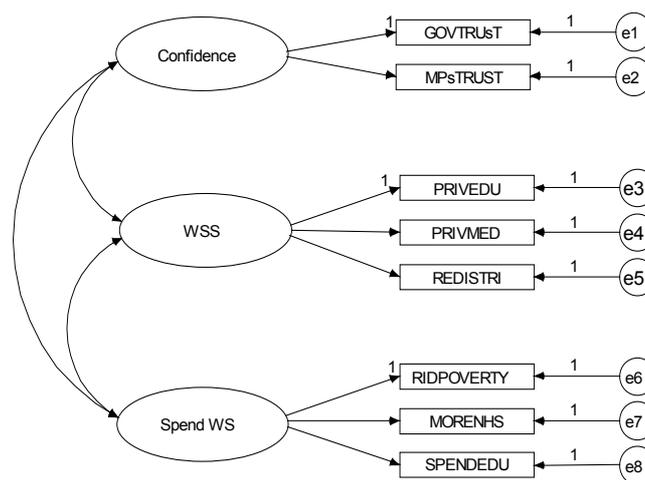
Support for the welfare state has been subdivided into two factors as presented in Figure 2, as suggested by preliminary exploratory factor analysis. One latent construct represents support for welfare policies understood in general, abstract terms while the second accounts for the more specific questions asking about support for increasing public spending on those policy fields. Table 5 presents the overall fit indices of these models, progressively modified testing for invariance from one model to the next (see Section 4). The first model is a baseline model assuming independence between the items. The first three-factor model corresponds to the hypothesis that there are no correlated measurement errors. The next model

allows two pairs of error terms to correlate.[18] The last one includes a number of equality constraints (see Section 4) in lambdas, error variances, and one correlation between error terms across England and Scotland, proving that the measurement model of general welfare state support performs much similarly in both samples, and making the model more parsimonious.

Table 5

Fit indices for the measurement models for political confidence and support for the welfare state, England and Scotland, 1997.

Model	df	χ^2	p	GFI	AGFI	RMR	RMSEA	Pclose	AIC	MECVI	Δ_1 NFI	Δ_2 IFI	ρ_1 RFI	ρ_2 TLI
Independence	56	3510,87	0,00	0,76	0,70	0,14	0,14	0,00	3542,87	1,10	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
3 Factors	34	350,26	0,00	0,97	0,94	0,04	0,05	0,11	426,26	0,13	0,90	0,91	0,84	0,85
3 Factors+error cov.	30	156,78	0,00	0,99	0,97	0,03	0,04	1,00	240,78	0,08	0,96	0,96	0,92	0,93
3 Factors+equalities	38	160,92	0,00	0,99	0,98	0,03	0,03	1,00	228,92	0,07	0,95	0,97	0,93	0,95

England N=2413; Scotland N= 817

Table 6

Parameter estimates for the measurement models for political confidence and support for the welfare state, England and Scotland, 1997

	England						Scotland					
		Lambda						Lambda				
Indicators	PC	WSS	Spend	S.E.	St.Cf.	R^2	PC	WSS	Spend	S.E.	St.Cf.	R^2
GOVTRUST	1,00				0,73	0,54	1,00				0,45	0,20
MPsTRUST	0,71			0,19	0,57	0,32	1,90 [a]			1,17	0,86	0,74
PRIVEDU		1,00			0,46	0,21		1,00			0,41	0,17
PRIVMED		0,54		0,05	0,23	0,06		0,54		0,05	0,21	0,04
REDISTRI		1,51		0,14	0,74	0,55		1,51		0,14	0,70	0,48
RIDPOVERTY			1,00		0,40	0,16			1,00		0,40	0,16
MORENHS			1,66	0,09	0,81	0,65			1,66	0,09	0,74	0,55
SPENDEDU			1,45	0,09	0,66	0,44			2,08	0,19	0,81	0,66
		Covariances		Std. E.	Correl.			Covariances		Std. E.	Correl.	
PC <---> WSS		-0,05		0,01	-0,17			-0,02 [a]		0,01	-0,15	
WSS <---> Spend		0,09		0,01	0,48			0,05		0,01	0,40	
PC <---> Spend		-0,02		0,01	-0,09			-0,01 [a]		0,01	-0,08	
e3 <---> e4		0,20		0,03	0,16			0,20		0,03	0,16	
e5 <---> e6		0,15		0,01	0,27			0,15		0,01	0,33	

Coefficients are significant at .05 level, except for those marked with (a)
df =38; Chi^2 = 160,92; RMSEA = ,03; p-value of close fit = 1,00; n= 2413 & n=817

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[18] These correlations make theoretically sense: first, approval of income redistribution (REDISTRI) and greater investment in fighting poverty (RIDPOVERTY), both having a common component of redistribution; second, the two items comparing between private and public provision of either educational (PRIVEDU) or health services (PRIVMED).

Information on validity and reliability is reported in Table 6. Both qualities are fairly good for political confidence items in both England and Scotland.[19] They also tend to be acceptable in the several measurements of welfarism. Moreover, the correlations between political confidence and welfarism are weak, and statistically non-significant in Scotland, indicating the empirical independence between both concepts, while the two dimensions of support for the welfare state show an only moderately strong association, backing the decision of differentiating support for increasing the expending in it from generic support for it. Therefore, these measurement models are accepted.[20]

6.   THE FULL MODEL: TESTING THE CAUSAL HYPOTHESES

After having established the measurement models of the theoretical concepts on the BGES dataset, the full causal model was estimated. Figure 3 represents the theoretically hypothesised relationships, according to which we should find statistically significant positive effects of support for the political community upon both political confidence and support for the welfare state, and these effects should be, at the very least, moderately strong. In addition, the model also includes a number of control variables, including the proxy to British nationalism. The inclusion of this factor as a different variable in the same model is an important specification, as it allows for differentiating the specific direct contribution of each factor, thus helping to isolate the measurement of support for the political community from the interference of nationalism. For, as said above, albeit Miller and Tamir praise a sense of belonging together, they would probably dislike feelings of mistrust towards other countries while being uncritical towards one's own. Thus, and given that both kinds of feelings often correlate – as they do in the British context – it is necessary both analytically and empirically to distinguish carefully between them. The model also includes control variables with significant effects, namely citizens self-placement on the left-right scale and household income, which are theoretically well-established predictors of support for the welfare state. During the research process age, gender, education, and Conservative voting in 1992 (only

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[19] Although one lambda falls short of being statistically significant in Scotland, it also becomes significant if the identification constraint is put on the factor variance or if one correlation between factors is fixed. It should be noticed as well that the items measuring political confidence are four-point ordinal variables. Was the Scottish sample larger, it would be preferable to use polychoric correlations. Since that is not the case, the analysis here follows the recommendations of the developers of AMOS (www.smallwaters.com/amos/faq/faqa-mfaq.html).

[20] Cronbach alphas are .62 for all the welfare state items, .51 for welfare state support proper, .64 for the increase of welfare spending, and .58 for political confidence, all of them as computed for the whole British sample.

considered for political confidence) were introduced, but they are not reported since did not attain significant effects. Finally, statistically significant correlations are allowed among independent variables, so that the partial correlations solely reflect the unique contribution of each independent variable posited by theory.

Figure 3

Theoretical model of causal effects of support for the British political community and British nationalism on political confidence and support for the welfare state, with significant control variables.
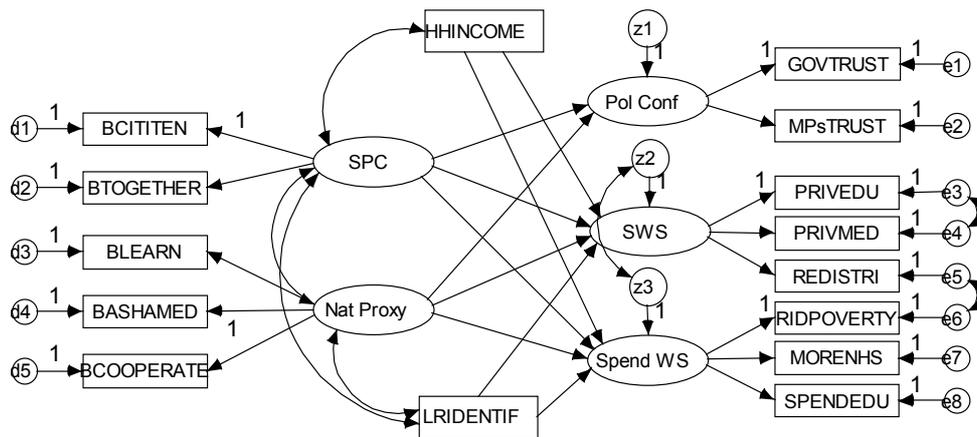

Table 7 displays the findings of a simultaneous analysis in England and Scotland. The model attains a satisfactory fit, since a RMSEA of .03 is supported with a p-value of the maximum close fit of 1.00. Upper rows in Table 7 show the significance, direction and magnitude of the observed relationships. However, none of the theoretically stated effects of support for the British political community is statistically significant either in England nor in Scotland, thus rejecting the two liberal-nationalist theoretical claims under scrutiny. In turn, though, it is worth to examine the analogous effects of the proxy of British nationalism, since this does yield significant effects on political confidence in Scotland and on support for the welfare state in England. Though the former is not significant in England – and this alone would hinder generalisation attempts – in Scotland political confidence tends to increase as British nationalist attitudes, with a moderately strong relationship.

The effect of British nationalist attitudes on support for the welfare state is far more interesting, though, since it is not only insignificant in Scotland but it is negative in England – i.e. pro welfare state attitudes tend to decrease as British nationalism increases. In addition, this effect is significant in despite of controlling the significant effects of left-right

identification and household income, which could be expected to produce a spurious association if they were not included – as it is well-known English people tend to be more nationalist as they are wealthier and more politically conservative. In other words, the negative effect of nationalism on support for the welfare state in England is independent of the effect of conservatism and wealth.

Table 7

Parameter estimates of causal effects of support for the British political community, British nationalism, and significant control variables on political confidence and support for the welfare state. England and Scotland, 1997.

Variables		England				Scotland			
Dependent	Independent	Coef.	S.E.	St.Cf.	R^2	Coef.	S.E.	St.Cf.	R^2
Pol. Conf.	Sup. PC	n.s.			0,03	n.s.			0,11
	Nat. Proxy	n.s.				0,33	0,15	0,27	
SWS	Sup. PC	n.s.			0,38	n.s.			0,26
	Nat. Proxy	-0,69	0,22	-0,40		n.s.			
	L/R. Ident.	-0,05	0,01	-0,36		-0,09	0,02	-0,27	
	H. Income	0,00	0,00	-0,28		0,00	0,00	-0,26	
Spend WS	Sup. PC	n.s.			0,09	n.s.			0,10
	Nat. Proxy	n.s.				n.s.			
	L/R. Ident.	-0,13	0,01	-0,23		-0,03	0,01	-0,17	
	H. Income	0,00	0,00	-0,10		n.s.			
Measurement Models									
BCITIZEN	Sup. PC	1,00		0,49	0,24	1,00		0,39	0,15
BTOGETHER	Sup. PC	1,23	0,11	0,59	0,35	1,30	0,23	0,60	0,36
BASHAMED	Nat. Proxy	1,00		0,32	0,10	1,00		0,39	0,15
BLEARN	Nat. Proxy	1,48	0,17	0,42	0,17	1,61	0,29	0,47	0,22
BCOOPERATE	Nat. Proxy	1,33	0,15	0,43	0,19	0,66	0,15	0,26	0,07
GOVTRUST	Pol. Conf.	1,00		0,88	0,77	1,00		0,76	0,33
MPsTRUST	Pol. Conf.	0,50	0,14	0,47	0,23	0,67	0,19	0,51	0,58
PRIVEDU	Sup. WS	1,00		0,51	0,26	1,00		0,44	0,20
PRIVMED	Sup. WS	0,63	0,06	0,31	0,09	0,47	0,11	0,20	0,04
REDISTRI	Sup. WS	1,21	0,08	0,65	0,43	1,39	0,20	0,71	0,50
RIDPOVERTY	Spend WS	1,00		0,43	0,18	1,00		0,38	0,14
MORENHS	Spend WS	1,52	0,10	0,78	0,61	1,78	0,20	0,75	0,56
SPENDEDU	Spend WS	1,39	0,08	0,68	0,46	2,19	0,25	0,81	0,65
		Covar.	S.E.	Correl.		Covar.	S.E.	Correl.	
SPC <---> Nat Proxy		0,13	0,02	0,74		0,12	0,03	0,69	
L/R Ident <---> Nat Proxy		0,18	0,03	0,30		0,19	0,04	0,30	
SPC <---> L/R Ident		0,25	0,03	0,29		0,18	0,04	0,26	
SPC <---> H .Income		-1260,5	188,3	-0,21		-1375,3	330,2	-0,26	
z2 <---> z3		0,07	0,01	0,46		0,04	0,01	0,32	
e3 <---> e4		0,13	0,03	0,11		0,19	0,05	0,15	
e5 <---> e6		0,12	0,02	0,19		0,15	0,02	0,34	

All coefficients significant at .05 level, except for those marked as 'n.s.'

df =150; Chi^2 = 684,85; RMSEA = ,03; p-value of close fit = 1,00; MECVI = 0,27; n = 2413 & 817

Therefore, with regard to support for the British political community, the liberal-nationalist arguments under scrutiny are dramatically challenged by empirical evidence. For it does not have a significant effect on either political confidence nor support for the welfare

state. Instead of that, it is a proxy to British nationalism that has some influence on those variables, but in rather peculiar manners. For it solely has an effect on political confidence in Scotland, where British national identification is contested by Scottish allegiances. And for it solely has a significant effect on support for the welfare state in England, but this effect is actually of opposition to those policy arrangements.

Figure 4

Theoretical model of causal effects of support for the Scottish political community on political confidence and support for the welfare state, with significant control variables.
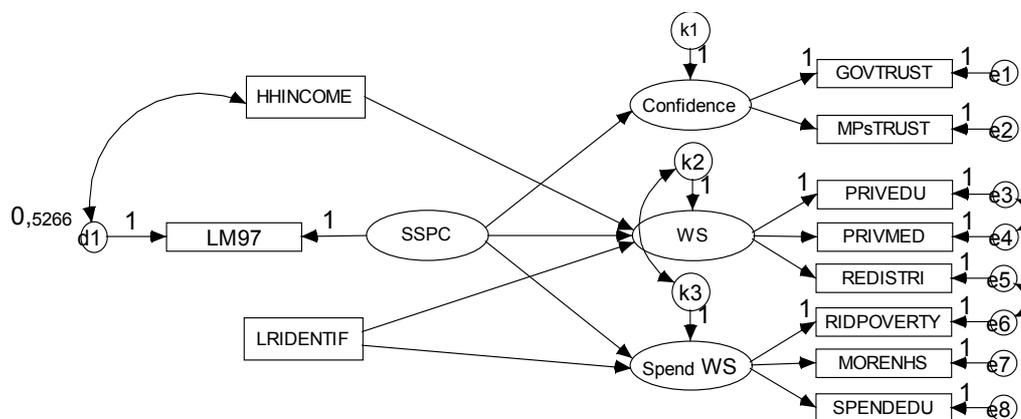
However, for theoretical reasons supplied above, the effects of support for the political community could be different if that community is a sub-state, minority nation such as Scotland. Thereby, I also ran the same causal models substituting the British by the Scottish referent, as represented by Figure 4. As said above, support for nested political communities in contest is better observed as the relative weight of every identification as opposed to the other. Thus, the standard 'Linz-Moreno' bi-polar scale is applied, which makes respondents to compare their relative identifications with the state and the sub-state political communities. Nevertheless, the situation of having a single measure for one factor poses a particular problem in CFA analysis. According to Jöreskog and Sörbom (1993: 37), when solely one observed measure is available one has either to assume that there is no measurement error or to specify a reliability value for the single measure. If we can specify a reasonable reliability value for an observed variable, then multiplying the observed variable's variance by 1 minus its reliability provides a reasonable estimate of error variance. Reliability can be drawn from a comparison of measurements of the same cases at two or more points in time. Since Linz-Moreno's question was asked in two waves of the BGES panel, the Pearson correlation of this

question at two points in time (1997 and 1999) in Scotland was estimated (.57 with n = 591). Departing from this estimate, Jöreskog and Sörbom's advice was followed subsequently, first calculating reliability (.32), and the error variance (.53) next. The error variance of the item was constrained to have this value.[21]

Table 8

Parameter estimates of causal effects of support for the Scottish political community and control variables on political confidence and support for the welfare state. Scotland, 1997.

Variables					
Dependent	*Independent*	*Coef.*	*S.E.*	*St.Cf.*	R^2
Pol. Conf.	Sup. SPC	0,13	0,05	0,22	0,05
SWS	Sup. SPC	-0,22	0,06	-0,27	0,27
	L/R. Ident.	-0,12	0,02	-0,33	
	H. Income	0,00	0,00	-0,25	
Spend WS	Sup. SPC	n.s.			0,04
	L/R. Ident.	-0,03	0,01	-0,18	
Measurement Models					
LM97	Sup. SPC	1,00		0,68	0,46
GOVTRUST	Pol. Conf.	1,00		0,57	0,32
MPsTRUST	Pol. Conf.	1,19	0,48	0,68	0,46
PRIVEDU	Sup. WS	1,00		0,47	0,22
PRIVMED	Sup. WS	0,48	0,10	0,22	0,05
REDISTRI	Sup. WS	1,25	0,17	0,67	0,45
RIDPOVERTY	Spend WS	1,00		0,38	0,14
MORENHS	Spend WS	1,76	0,19	0,74	0,55
SPENDEDU	Spend WS	2,19	0,25	0,81	0,65
		Covar.	*S.E.*	*Correl.*	
SSPC<---> H. Income		1456,1	409,8	0,18	
z2 <---> z3		0,04	0,01	0,36	
e3 <---> e4		0,18	0,05	0,14	
e5 <---> e6		0,15	0,02	0,32	

All coefficients significant at .05 level, except for those marked as 'n.s.'
df =37; Chi^2 = 104,0; RMSEA = 0,05; p-value of close fit = 0,653
n = 817

As shown in Table 8, the model attains a satisfactory overall fit. Focusing on the coefficients of the expected core relationships, some interesting contrasts with the results for support for the British political community and British nationalism are noticeable. The most important difference is that generic welfarism receives a statistically significant influence of relative support for Scottish political community – as opposed to the British one – and this

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[21] This variable is strongly correlated to preferences on territorial political organisation of Scotland, thus showing that the identification with Scotland has a meaning of support for the Scottish self-government.

effect is moderately strong – albeit weaker than that of left-right identification.[22] The negative sign indicates that as the Scots are more prone to a Scottish rather than British identification, they support more the welfare state principles. This does not come as a surprise as it is well know that the Scots' rejection towards Britain grew along with the reduction of the welfare system during the 1980s. Moreover, the effect on political confidence is significant as well, albeit with the opposite direction – the bigger the inclination towards British identification, the bigger political confidence. Yet the effect on preferences for increasing the spending on the welfare state is statistically insignificant. Therefore, Scots tend to express less confidence in British government and political elites as they are prone to hold Scottish rather than British political community allegiances. By contrast, even controlling by left-right ideology and household income, they are more inclined to back the principles leading welfare policies as they feel more Scottish than British. Thus, liberal-nationalist arguments under evaluation find some support when applied to this minority nationalism.

7.   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Many hopes have been pinned on national identification since the 19th century, not only by ordinary citizens but also by political elites who have suffused their discourse with ubiquitous invocations to national feelings. During the 1990s a number of political theorists advanced a sophisticated and attractive combination of nationalism and liberalism. One of their most effective arguments was the suggestion that national identification – as a product of nationalism – helped secure or regain citizens' political confidence as well as their support for the welfare state. For they predict that citizens' support for the political community – as it seems preferable to call 'national identification' – produces both political confidence and support for welfare policies. Since these syllogisms are widely extended but never proved, this study has tested empirically them as falsifiable scientific hypotheses.

Yet the findings are too ambivalent to sustain either hypothesis, so those liberal-nationalist expectations are seriously called into question. As a matter of fact, support for the British political community does not have a significant impact on either political confidence nor support for the welfare, either in England nor in Scotland. Instead, it is British illiberal nationalism that has an impact on political confidence, but solely in Scotland. Furthermore, it

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[22] The possibility of interaction (non-additive) effects of left-right identification and Scottish identification on the dependent variables was also tested, without yielding significant relationships.

does have an impact on support for the welfare state in England, but this is negative. Even if controlling by such important variables as left-right identification and household income, citizens showing a greater reluctance towards other countries influence in British politics and a more uncritical British pride tend to be the least supportive of welfare policies. Therefore, the theory does not work in England.

Nevertheless, it was also considered the possibility that Scottish minority nationalism provided different effects. In this case, the examined liberal-nationalist hypotheses seem to be confirmed, for citizens more supportive of Scotland as opposed to Britain tend to be more cynic about British government and political elites than those with British inclinations. And for the former are also more supportive of welfarism than the latter – although left-right identification remains the main explanation for welfarism. This could be explained by the argument that feelings of solidarity are more likely to exist within nested groups (Lawler 1992). Moreover, some authors have contended that, during the 1990s, the collective referent invoked among the Scots in order to foster solidarity and mutual responsibility was Scotland rather than Britain (Brown *et al*. 1998; Keating 2001). The fact that support for welfare policies is also found among people not identifying as leftists but strongly supportive of the Scottish political community could be also due to a perception of those policies as definitional traits of Scottishness. For, during the 1990s, Scottishness was reconstructed in an anti-Conservative mode. However, was this the case, support for the welfare policies should not be expected to flow from support for the political community where this was defined otherwise.

To conclude, this study has found that some inherently appealing and theoretically attractive liberal-nationalist arguments seem to work for the Scottish political community, which is typically portrayed as *the* archetype of civic nationalism. Yet many political communities would get much more obstacles to pass the examination of nationalist civility. In addition, even for a political community such as Britain, which is not generally considered as an ethnic nation, the invoked arguments do not survive a proper empirical test. Therefore, perhaps liberal-nationalists should be more cautious in proclaiming the virtues of nationalism and national identification – or support for the political community – until they can accompany such claims with adequate evidence.

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Appendix

Correlations, means and standard deviations in England and Scotland 1997

	SCOTLAND													
ENGLAND	BLEARN	BCITIZEN	BASHAMED	BTOGETHER	BCOOPER	LM97	PRIVEDU	RIDPOVERTY	PRIVMED	MORENHS	SPENDEDU	REDISTRI	GOVTRUST	MPsTRUST
BLEARN	1,000	0,224	0,188	0,085	0,158	-0,009	-0,047	-0,045	-0,064	-0,051	-0,039	-0,078	0,099	0,059
BCITIZEN	0,165	1,000	0,127	0,230	0,178	0,001	-0,023	-0,045	-0,006	0,071	0,076	0,028	0,118	0,036
BASHAMED	0,169	0,162	1,000	0,122	0,075	0,082	-0,040	-0,046	-0,074	-0,091	-0,023	-0,086	0,143	0,102
BTOGETHER	0,101	0,285	0,078	1,000	0,013	0,278	-0,127	-0,122	-0,135	-0,054	-0,058	-0,144	0,128	0,166
BCOOPER	0,205	0,228	0,079	0,199	1,000	-0,087	-0,011	-0,036	0,001	0,002	-0,048	-0,075	-0,038	-0,054
LM97	-0,032	-0,015	0,002	-0,026	-0,125	1,000	-0,168	-0,117	-0,111	-0,064	-0,024	-0,135	0,089	0,097
PRIVEDU	-0,107	-0,070	-0,073	-0,084	-0,087	-0,005	1,000	0,179	0,224	0,137	0,090	0,343	-0,032	-0,081
RIDPOVERTY	-0,119	-0,050	-0,143	-0,069	-0,014	0,016	0,212	1,000	0,082	0,260	0,311	0,376	0,048	-0,034
PRIVMED	-0,026	-0,060	-0,072	-0,097	-0,038	-0,008	0,243	0,101	1,000	0,102	0,016	0,137	-0,010	-0,100
MORENHS	-0,040	-0,001	-0,067	-0,034	0,012	-0,015	0,158	0,313	0,137	1,000	0,605	0,189	-0,046	-0,078
SPENDEDU	-0,057	-0,041	-0,065	-0,063	-0,042	0,051	0,099	0,286	0,055	0,539	1,000	0,222	-0,003	-0,039
REDISTRI	-0,138	-0,046	-0,095	-0,030	-0,042	0,005	0,358	0,333	0,169	0,292	0,218	1,000	-0,038	-0,071
GOVTRUST	0,047	0,124	0,113	0,062	-0,026	0,015	-0,055	0,013	-0,113	-0,069	-0,012	-0,074	1,000	0,387
MPsTRUST	0,000	0,055	0,110	0,058	-0,067	-0,007	-0,024	-0,019	-0,098	-0,055	-0,018	-0,065	0,416	1,000
SEX	0,030	0,021	-0,041	0,056	0,046	0,015	-0,017	0,038	0,074	0,113	0,032	0,089	-0,003	0,036
Last birthday	0,116	0,262	-0,052	0,145	0,070	-0,015	-0,068	-0,029	0,079	-0,004	-0,129	-0,064	0,060	0,047
Years education	-0,117	-0,230	-0,049	-0,192	-0,236	0,108	-0,028	-0,002	-0,029	-0,092	-0,013	-0,114	-0,016	0,013
HHINCOME	-0,012	-0,129	0,031	-0,123	-0,114	0,059	-0,117	-0,109	-0,082	-0,110	-0,017	-0,225	-0,004	-0,013
Voted Conserv.	0,115	0,149	0,056	0,130	0,144	-0,007	-0,286	-0,204	-0,203	-0,193	-0,169	-0,306	0,086	0,083
LRIDREC	0,102	0,134	0,092	0,186	0,155	-0,025	-0,253	-0,194	-0,206	-0,176	-0,171	-0,266	0,055	0,062
ENGLAND N	2413 after listwise deletion of non-imputed missing data													
Mean	2,983	4,137	2,741	3,636	3,205	3,001	2,480	4,442	3,271	4,662	4,610	3,513	2,251	1,665
Std. Deviation	1,226	1,041	1,087	1,017	1,066	0,998	1,179	0,835	1,239	0,693	0,735	1,112	0,698	0,642
SCOTLAND N	817 after listwise deletion of non-imputed missing data													
Mean	2,898	4,058	2,720	3,243	3,106	2,270	2,951	4,596	3,421	4,721	4,655	3,830	2,214	1,663
Std. Deviation	1,389	0,963	1,042	1,156	1,025	0,993	1,176	0,679	1,223	0,613	0,697	1,035	0,663	0,658

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SEX	Lst birthd	Years ed	HHINCOME	V Cons	LRIDREC
0,025	0,189	-0,049	-0,041	0,126	0,123
0,057	0,312	-0,211	-0,200	0,109	0,101
0,024	-0,009	-0,020	-0,003	0,068	0,123
0,145	0,215	-0,091	-0,065	0,278	0,218
0,054	0,065	-0,227	-0,156	0,051	0,101
0,043	0,115	0,157	0,126	0,150	0,040
-0,021	-0,059	-0,102	-0,133	-0,296	-0,130
0,056	-0,113	-0,003	-0,059	-0,191	-0,182
0,084	0,042	-0,013	-0,051	-0,151	-0,120
0,123	0,014	-0,091	-0,105	-0,165	-0,119
0,066	-0,116	-0,001	0,015	-0,147	-0,141
0,086	-0,079	-0,170	-0,211	-0,318	-0,253
-0,019	0,082	-0,041	0,001	0,011	0,086
0,051	0,071	-0,001	0,005	0,074	0,053
1,000	0,004	0,019	-0,089	0,021	0,020
0,021	1,000	-0,288	-0,284	0,222	0,134
-0,026	-0,338	1,000	0,433	0,059	-0,042
-0,076	-0,282	0,389	1,000	0,096	-0,022
0,075	0,183	-0,005	0,119	1,000	0,289
0,012	0,141	-0,081	0,002	0,383	1,000
1,507	47,029	16,676	20364,280	0,355	5,217
0,500	17,035	2,786	12381,481	0,479	1,723
1,529	46,930	16,422	17652,671	0,177	5,019
0,499	17,221	2,574	11801,094	0,382	1,559

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Note: Entries below the diagonal refer to England; above the diagonal, to Scotland