The difference between the measures described below is how the ‘center’ of the party system is defined. The first two measures rely on party distances from the *weighted mean party position*, and the second two variables are based on party distances from the *mean voter position* (measured by the Eurobarometer left-right self-placement item).

There is one additional variable in column g ‘voter standard deviation Eurobarometer’, which can be used to normalize all of the party dispersion measures below to the variation in voter left-right preferences. The reasons for doing so is discussed in Ezrow (2008, *BJPS*: 487-90). The variable is calculated as the standard deviation of voter left-right self-placements in a country election year.

Equations for ‘Ezrow 2007’ variables:

Ezrow, Lawrence. 2007. “The Variance Matters: How Party Systems Represent the Preferences of Voters.” *Journal of Politics* 69(1): 182-192.

Measures employed:

*Weighted Party System Dispersion =* (column c)

*Unweighted Party System Dispersion =* (column d)

where,

\_

P*k* = the *weighted* mean of all the parties’ Left-Right ideological positions in country *k*.

P*jk* = the ideological position of party *j* in country *k*.

VS*j* = Vote share for party *j*.

n = the number of parties included in the analysis for country *k*.

Equations for the ‘Ezrow and Xezonakis’ variables:

Ezrow, Lawrence, and Georgios Xezonakis. “Citizen Satisfaction with Democracy and Parties’ Policy Offerings: A Cross-National Analysis of Twelve European Party Systems, 1976-2003”. Forthcoming, *Comparative Political Studies*.

*Weighted Average Party Extremism* =  (column e)

*Unweighted Average Party Extremism =* (column f )

where,

\_

V*k* = the mean voter Left-Right ideological self-placement in country *k*.

P*jk* = the ideological position of party *j* in country *k*.

VS*jk* = vote share for party *j* in country *k*.

n = the number of parties included in the analysis for country *k*.