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# Castilla y León –Spain in a small size; An Analyse of collective Identities and Wish for Autonomy

Roland Brandtjen

## ABSTRACT:

Spain has been known for several years for its ethnic and separatist debate. This work aims to examine the extent to which the potential for conflict in Spain as a whole can also be found on a small scale, i.e. in one of Spain's autonomous communities. The largest autonomous community in terms of area, Castilla y León, which also consists of the most provinces, was chosen for this purpose.

It is questionable whether such strong autonomy movements exist not only in Spain but also in Castilla y León. Do certain isms exist or are they just purely theoretical scientific concepts?

This paper attempts to examine and fill a scientific gap on this topic by means of an adapted quantitative survey. From 2020 and 2023, these surveys have been conducted in Castilla y León. They are analysed by descriptive statistics.

The paper concludes with a Conclusion and the bibliography.

## KEYWORDS:

Identity, Autonomy, Castilianism, Leonesism, Survey

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## Introduction

Spain has been known for several years for its ethnic and separatist debate. This work aims to examine the extent to which the potential for conflict in Spain as a whole can also be found on a small scale, i.e. in one of Spain's autonomous communities. The largest autonomous community in terms of area, Castilla y León, which also consists of the most provinces, was chosen for this purpose. It is questionable whether such strong autonomy movements exist not only in Spain but also in Castilla y León. Do certain isms exist or are they just purely theoretical scientific concepts?

Firstly, a historical outline of Spain and Castilla y León as well as the history of the development of the provinces and autonomous communities is presented. This partly explains the emergence of Spanish and therefore Castilian-Leonese pluralism. The clear representation of this pluralism is then also shown. The effect seems to be the autonomy movements and the well-known -isms. These and their current status are described.

The method includes a quantitative survey, which is analysed using descriptive statistics. These surveys were conducted in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 and their results were only taken into account for Castilla y León in this thesis. Furthermore, only the 3 questions on national or ethnic affiliation, political identity with the Spanish state and the desired degree of autonomy were analysed. The analysis only includes frequency charts and cross-tabulations. Correlations and inductive statistics are analysed in other publications.

## Castilla y León and Spain

Spain, also known as the Kingdom of Spain, is a parliamentary-democratic monarchy and, as a sovereign state, a member of many European and international organisations. According to its constitution it is a social and democratic state governed by the rule of law. (Schrötter, 2016) With its enclaves, Ceuta and Melilla, and the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain is located on 2 continents. (Central Intelligence Agency, 2023). The symbols of Spain are the flag of Spain, consisting of three horizontal stripes, red, yellow and red, the yellow one being of double width, in accordance with the provisions of Article 4.1 of the Spanish Constitution of 1978, the coat of arms, regulated by Law 33/1981, of 5 October, on the Coat of Arms of Spain, and the Marcha Granadera or Marcha Real Española, the national anthem regulated by Royal Decree 1560/1997, of 10 October. Moreover, the 1978 Constitution itself, in Article 4.2, provides for the possibility of the Autonomous Communities having their own flags and ensigns, as established by their respective Statutes, as they have in fact done. (Rivero Iglesias, 2000)

Castilla y León is, since 1983, one of these autonomous communities and consists of 9 provinces of Ávila, Burgos, León, Palencia, Salamanca, Segovia, Soria, Valladolid and Zamora. (González Clavero, 2004) Similar to Spain, it also has exclaves, but these are not in another state, but in other autonomous communities, such as Treviño enclave in the Basque Country or Sajuela and El Ternero in La Rioja. (Madoz, 1999) The Community's autonomous statute does not specify a capital city, although most of the Community's institutions, such as the regional unicameral parliament "Las Cortes de Castilla y León", are located in Valladolid. (de la Calle Velasco & Redero San Román, 2008) The Statute of

Autonomy of Castilla y León, last reformed in 2007, establishes in article six of its preliminary title the symbols of exclusive identity of the community. These are: the coat of arms, the flag, the banner and the anthem. The latter, however, has not yet been established and is thus only a de jure symbol of the autonomous community. (Jefatura del Estado, 2007) Castilla y León does not have a capital city by law, but all regional institutions, such as the parliament or the governments, are located in the city of Valladolid, the provincial capital of the province of Valladolid. (Aragón Reyes, 1997) Figure 1 shows the Map of Castilla y León next to its position in Spain and in Europe.

In order to better understand the comparison between Spain and Castilla y León, a brief historical outline of territorial developments is given first. Of course, all the history on the Iberian Peninsula is very interesting. For this paper, however, the more recent period is useful. Nevertheless, to clarify some of the results, the emergence of the respective kingdoms is mentioned. This is followed by a description of the respective cultural and identity pluralism as well as the movements towards a desired degree of autonomy.

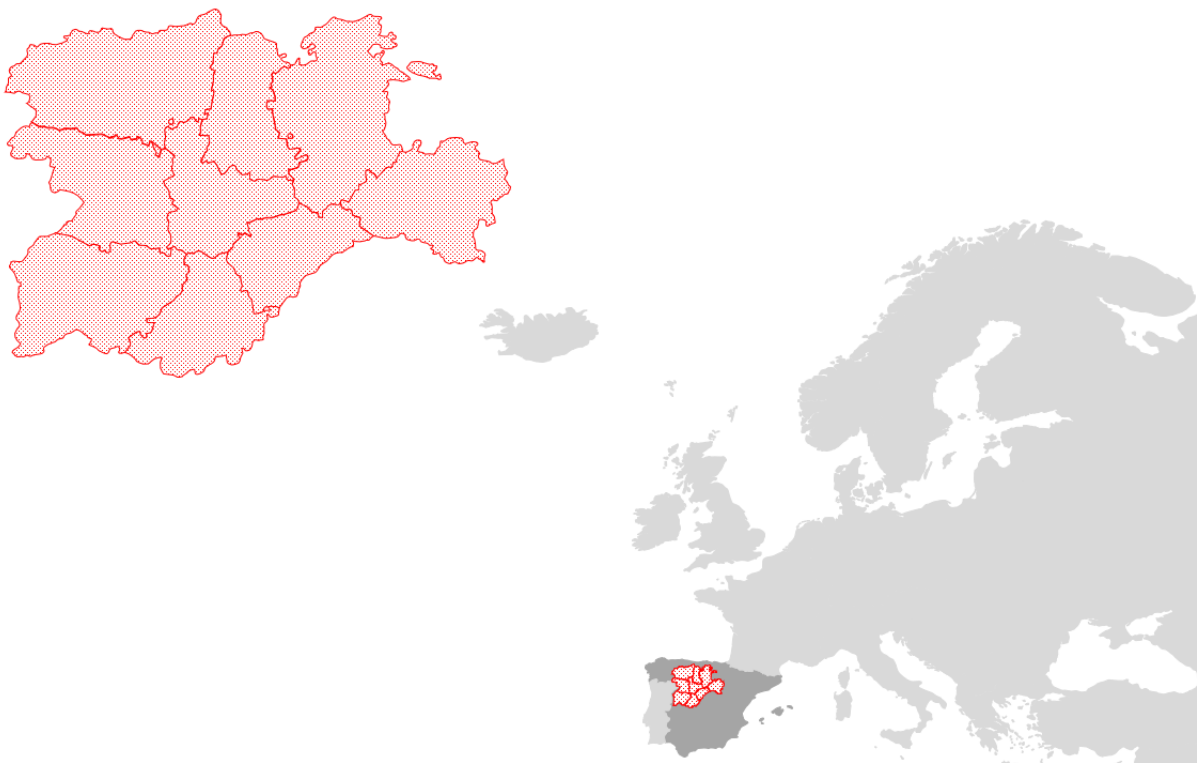


Figure 1: Map of Castilla y León next to its position in Spain and Europe. (own interpretation)

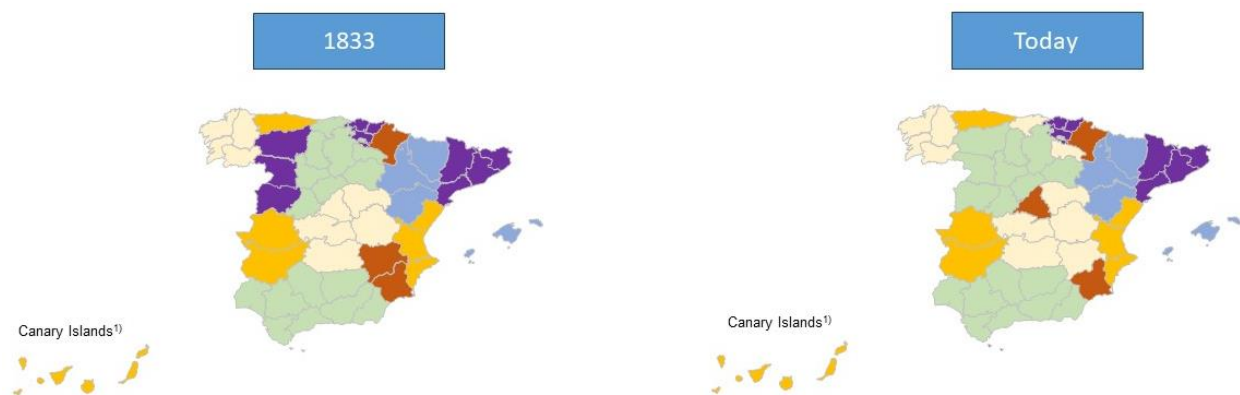
## **HISTORICAL OF TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

The history of Spain is very long and varied. From cave paintings from the Stone Age to various ancient peoples such as Iberians, Phoenicians, Romans, or Greeks, until today. However, the emergence of modern-day Spain is attributed to the end of the Middle Ages in the 15th century, with the unification and conquest of the newly vanished kingdoms of Aragón, Castilla, Granada, León, and Navarre under the Catholic Monarchs. Those kingdoms and Portugal would be referred to as Hispanic kingdoms, Hispania (Spain in Latin) therefore; and when for dynastic or conquest reasons one of them managed

to take most of Christian Spain under his sceptre, he would call himself Emperor of Spain, such as Alfonso VI and Alfonso VII of León. The Catholic Monarchs were known as Kings of Spain (or of the “Spains”). (Valdeón Baroque, *Las raíces medievales de España*, 2002) After all, the history of the Iberian Peninsula is marked by many conflicts. Most of them were conflicts between different cultural groups. Especially when there were economic or political crises, there were disputes in Spain. a good example is the time of Francoism. This still has some social effects and conflicts today. (Valdeón, Pérez, & Juliá, 2011) Spain has been divided into provinces since 1833. At that time there were 49 of them, whereas today there are 50. The Canary Islands have been divided into the Province of Gran Canaria and the Province of Tenerife. The then Secretary of State for Development (Spanish: Fomento), Javier de Burgos, proposed this division as a rationalisation that would facilitate subsequent administrative measures, allow censuses to be carried out, territorial property censuses to be carried out and allow the national market to be organised. The detail of 43 of these provinces was made by alluding to their belonging to 11 regions which were listed in alphabetical order, while the remaining 6 provinces of: Canarias, Palma de Mallorca, Navarra, Álava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya were listed independently of any region and only in the decades following the entry into force of the decree would they come to be considered at a practical level also as regions (of a uniprovincial nature in the case of Canarias, Baleares and Navarra; of a pluriprovincial nature in the case of Basque cultural grouping together the provinces of Álava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya), bringing the total number of regions to 15. (Bahamonde Magro & Martínez, 1994) With the proclamation of the Spanish Constitution of 1978, the provincial division was maintained. Compared to 1833, however, no regions were formed, but the possibility was created to form autonomous communities through voluntary federation of the provinces, assuming a common historical, cultural and/or economic character, or through uniprovincial character. (González Clavero, 2004) Figure 2 shows a comparison of the territorial organisation of Spain from 1833 to today. All provinces have been maintained in the same way. The autonomous communities differ only slightly from the regions of that time. In the case of the historical nations (i.e., those autonomous communities with a cultural or linguistic collective identity, in this case Andalucía, Aragón, the Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands, Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Galicia and the Basque Country), the Foral Community of Navarre, Extremadura and the Principality of Asturias, there is no difference between the historical regional borders and the present-day autonomous communities. New are the uniprovincial communities of Madrid, La Rioja, Cantabria, and the Region of Murcia. The latter has lost the province of Albacete compared to 1833. The autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla received in 1995 its autonomous status, meanwhile in 1833 they have been integrated into Andalucía. Castilla la Nueva lost the province of Madrid and gained the province of Albacete. The former region of León is united with the region of Castilla la Vieja in the Autonomous Community of Castilla y León.

As seen before, the Kingdom of Castilla and the Kingdom of León had existed for a long time. Both kingdoms were founded, united, and separated several times. Thus, the year 910 is considered to be the year of the foundation of the Kingdom of León and the year 1043 the year of the foundation of the Kingdom of Castilla. The latter, however, already existed in other forms of state. The last unification under the crown of Castilla took place in 1230, although both kingdoms retained their statehood. (Martín, 2004) During the Second Republic, especially in 1936, there was a great deal of regionalist activity in favour of a region of eleven provinces, and a basis for a Statute of Autonomy was even drawn up. It was advocated the formalisation of this initiative and the creation of an autonomous region. (de

Haro Honrubia, 2004) The Civil War finally put an end to the region's autonomy aspirations. After the death of the dictator Franco, regionalist, autonomist, and nationalist organisations emerged for the creation of an autonomous community of Castilla y León. At the same time, Leonist groups emerged which together formed the Movimiento Leonista, founded the General Council of the Regions of León and established the Fiesta de Las Comarcas in Valorio. In 1980 came the creation of the Regionalist Party of the Land of León PREPAL, which advocated the creation of an Autonomous Community of the Kingdom of León that would encompass the provinces of Salamanca, Zamora and León. (González Clavero, 2004) Popular and political support for the autonomy of REINO LEÓN SOLO took the form of a PREPAL-supported demonstration of 119,765 citizens from the three provinces of León on 4 and 5 January 1984. After the creation of the pre-autonomous body of Castile-León, to which the provincial government of León had contributed with its agreement of 16 April 1980, the same institution of León revoked its original agreement on 13 January 1983. The existence of contradictory agreements and the question of which was the valid one was clarified by the Constitutional Court in Judgment 89/1984 of 28 September 1984. It ruled that the change of mind was invalid not least because of the prior agreement and because of the late change of mind. At the time of the decision, various demonstrations took place in León, some of them numerous, with up to 90,000 people in favour of the León option alone. (González Clavero, 2004)



1) Please note: The scale of the Canary Islands matches the scale of the main land, the position does not.

Figure 2: Comparison of the territorial organisation of Spain - 1833 vs. today (own interpretation)

It seems clear that both the history of the development of the Spanish territory and the emergence of the present autonomous community of Castilla y León are quite turbulent. This turbulence still leads to discussions today. In order to clarify the relationship, a brief description of pluralism in Spain and Castilla y León follows.

## **PLURALISM IN SPAIN AND CASTILLA Y LEÓN**

Pluralism describes the fact that in a society a multitude of free individuals and a diversity of social forces are respected, which are in competition with each other. This competition of different and opposing interests is recognised as legitimate and considered desirable. In order not to endanger the fundamental openness of pluralistic communities, no group may impose its convictions on the other. In a pluralistic society, there will usually be no absolute centre of power; power will be distributed among various institutions. Moreover, decision-making power can only be delegated to individuals for a limited period of time. Minorities are protected and dissenting opinions have a legitimate place in a pluralistic society. (Fraenkel, 2007) Some authors consider that political accommodation to secure political and institutional stability in pluriethnic societies or polyarchies is almost impossible and is bound to result in either the break-up of the state or the consolidation of a type of hegemonic authoritarianism for the control of the state's unity. On the contrary, ethnoterritorial co-operation and agreement may not only overcome conflicts and divergence within plural polities but can also provide a deepening of democracy by means of a more effective access of civil society to political decision-making, something which in the case of Spain overlaps with its internal ethnic and cultural diversity. (Moreno L., 1993)

In the Spanish Constitution of 1978, the Spanish nation was defined as an indissoluble nation under which the individual nationalities and regions were recognised, integrated in solidarity with each other and with the right to autonomy. (Pérez Royo, 2007) Even if the fathers and mothers of this constitution had understood the terms nation and nationalities as synonyms, the Constitutional Court contradicted them in order to clarify the meaning of the Spanish nation, among other things. (Tribunal Constitucional, 2010) In scientific literature, a nation or nationality is a collective identity, which means that it is a sense of belonging to a group of people. (Brandtjen R. B., 2019; Brandtjen R. B., 2021) The Constitutional Court's definition gives greater meaning to the concept of regions. The autonomous communities that include in their Statute of Autonomy a self-recognition as "nationality" or "historical nationality", and are therefore legally recognised as such, are Andalusia, Aragon, Balearic Islands, Canary Islands, Catalonia, Valencian Community, Galicia, and Basque Country. While Asturias, Cantabria and Castilla y León are self-described by their respective Statutes of Autonomy as "historical communities", the rest except Madrid use the denominations of "historical regions" or "historical identities". All these terminologies are legally equivalent. (Pérez Royo, 2007) Figure 3 shows the graphical representation of the self-recognition of the autonomous communities in Spain.



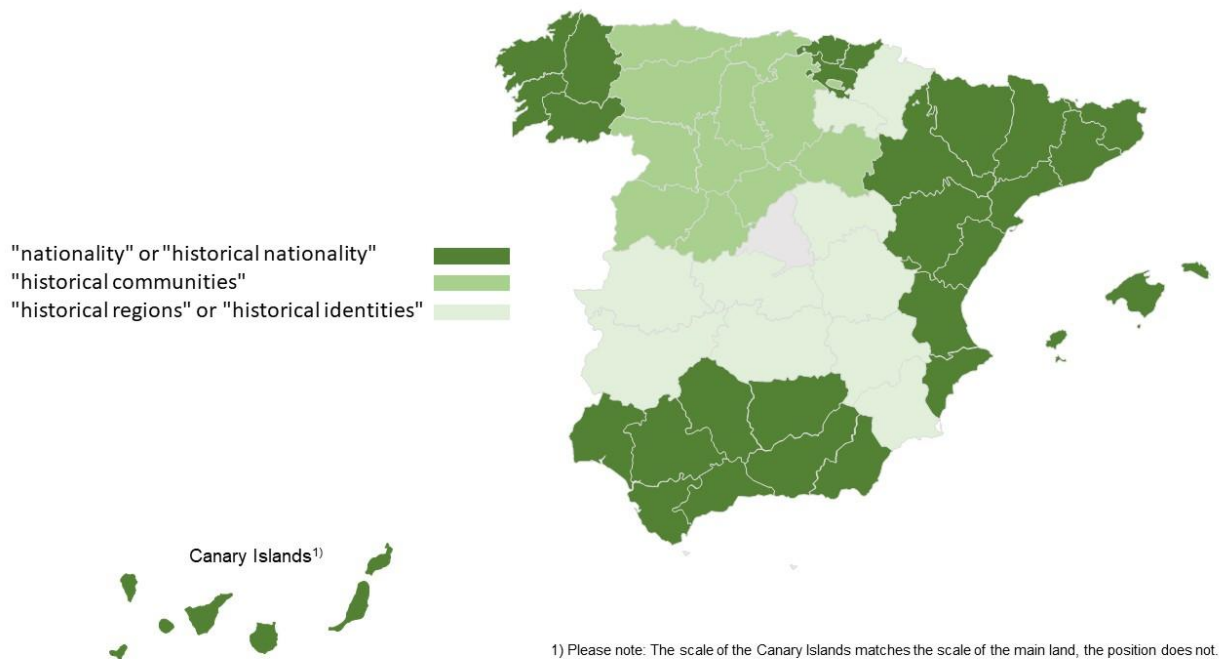


Figure 3: Overview of the self-recognitions in Spain (own interpretation)

The meaning of self-recognition as a nation or nationality is based on one's own perception as a nation. This national feeling does not exclude other national feelings per se and is based on different identification objects. An often-mentioned example is one's own language but can also be historical events or the mere desire to belong. (Brandtjen R. , 2022) In Spain, Spanish is the official language in all autonomous communities and cities. The official languages are also those indicated as such in the respective statutes. (de Haro Honrubia, 2004) After the election in July 2023, the new President of Parliament has for the first time allowed the use of the co-official languages, mainly Basque / Euskera, Galician and Catalan (both Valencian and Catalan). On the one hand, this increases cultural pluralism in the Spanish Parliament, and on the other hand, there are fears about the additional translation costs. Especially when one considers that not all languages spoken in Spain are co-official, but there are movements to change this. The communicative complexity could therefore be increased. (Pons Rodríguez, 2023; Herrera, Monrosi, & Riveiro, 2023; Lozano, 2023) Figure 4 shows the spoken language groups and their varieties in Spain. You can see the number of native speakers and the number of other speakers. In addition, there is an indication of the autonomous community in which the language has official status alongside Spanish or has been recognised in some way. Since the variants within the language family are not always very far apart, it is often postulated that the recognition of a variant as a separate language is politically driven. An example of this is Eonaviego, which has its own official orthography and is thus distinguished from Galician.

Cultural pluralism is reflected above all in the co-official languages of Spain. These are defined by the respective autonomy statutes of the autonomous communities. Currently, they are Catalan, Valencian, Galician, Basque and Aranese. (Moreno L. , 1993)The latter is effectively only spoken in the Valle de Aran (Aran valley) but is the official language of Catalonia as a whole and is often forgotten due to a very small number of speakers. The Spanish Constitution states that it must be translated into the co-official

languages in addition to the Spanish version. (Senado de España, 2022) This has not yet been done in the case of Aranese. All other languages and varieties are not co-official but are recognised in some autonomous communities. This leads to some movements towards recognition as a co-official language in some regions as it is for Asturian, or the recognition of a language variety as a language in its own right. (Álvarez Alba, 2008; Without Author, 2006)

Although only Castilian is the official language in Castilla y León, Leonese and Galician are protected languages. The latter with greater protection especially in the region of El Bierzo. (Gutiérrez Tuñón, 1989) Furthermore, in the south-west on the border with Extremadura in the province of Salamanca in the sub-district of El Rebollar, "Palra d'El Rebollar" ("Language of El Rebollar" in english) is spoken, a variant of Extremaduran and thus a sub-variant of Asturleonese. (Iglesias Ovejero, 1982; Carmona García, 2011) Its affiliation with Asturleonese leads to indirect legal recognition and protection by the legislation concerning Leonese. However, direct legal rules have not yet been enacted. (Fernández Santiago, 2010) Finally, Basque is spoken and promoted in the north-east of Castilla y León in the Treviño exclave of the province of Burgos. However, legal norms for the protection and promotion of this language have not been enacted. (Eusko Jauriaritza - Kultura Saila, 2012) One can see from the history as well as from the cultural and linguistic protection that both Spain and Castilla y León are very similar and reflect their cultural diversity. The promotion of cultural diversity is seen by opponents of this concept as a threat to unity and thus the promotion of separatism. (Brandtjen R. B., 2019; Brandtjen R. B., 2021) It is therefore important to understand what movements exist in Spain and Castilla y León.

| LANGUAGE         | VARIETY                              | NATIVE           | NON-NATIVE | TOTAL     | CO-OFFICIAL IN ...               | RECOGNIZED IN ...             |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| CATALAN          | <i>Catalan</i>                       | 2.320.000        | 3.835.000  | 6.155.000 | Catalonia & the Balearic Islands |                               |
|                  | <i>Valencian</i>                     | 1.130.000        | 1.765.000  | 2.895.000 | Valencia                         |                               |
|                  | <i>Balearic</i>                      | 487.000          | 374.232    | 861.232   |                                  |                               |
|                  | <i>Catalan of Aragon</i>             | 30.415           | 14.620     | 45.035    |                                  | Aragon                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                                      | <b>9.956.267</b> |            |           |                                  |                               |
| GALICIAN         | <i>Galician</i>                      | 1.560.000        | 1.140.000  | 2.700.000 | Galicia                          | Castilla y León               |
|                  | <i>Eonaviego / Asturian Galician</i> | 45.293           |            | 45.293    |                                  | Asturias                      |
|                  | <i>Bercian Dialect</i>               | 35.365           |            | 35.365    |                                  |                               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                                      | <b>2.780.658</b> |            |           |                                  |                               |
| BASQUE / EUSKERA |                                      | 750.000          | 434.000    | 1.184.000 | País Vasco / Euskadi & Navarra   |                               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                                      | <b>1.184.000</b> |            |           |                                  |                               |
| ASTUR-LEONESE    | <i>Asturian</i>                      | 200.000          | 647.578    | 847.578   |                                  | Asturias                      |
|                  | <i>Cantabrian</i>                    | 3.000            |            | 3.000     |                                  |                               |
|                  | <i>Extremaduran</i>                  | 200.000          |            | 200.000   |                                  | Extremadura & Castilla y León |
|                  | <i>Leonese</i>                       | 40.000           |            | 40.000    |                                  | Castilla y León               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                                      | <b>1.090.578</b> |            |           |                                  |                               |
| ARAGONESE        |                                      | 25.556           | 30.679     | 56.235    |                                  | Aragon                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                                      | <b>56.235</b>    |            |           |                                  |                               |
| OCCITAN          | <i>Aranese</i>                       | 2.765            | 7.000      | 9.765     | Catalonia                        |                               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                                      | <b>9.765</b>     |            |           |                                  |                               |
| FALA             |                                      | 7.000            |            | 7.000     |                                  | Extremadura                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                                      | <b>7000</b>      |            |           |                                  |                               |

Figure 4: Languages and their Varieties in Spain and their Recognition (Plataforma per la Llengua, 2022; Plaza, 2022; Pérez, 2017; Sánchez Prieto, 2008; Reyes, et al., 2017; Pojada, 2010)

## AUTONOMY MOVEMENTS AND -ISMS IN SPAIN AND CASTILLA Y LEÓN

Ism is a suffix meaning "take side with" or "imitation of" and is used to refer to theories, religions, social movements, or behaviour, for example. (Oxford University Press, 2023) In this paper, the -isms will refer to the social and political movements in terms of unity and distinction. In Spain, there are many -isms that refer to a nation or a region. Some of them pursue the unity of Spain, others the self-determination of their territory and third refer to both their Spanish character and their individual, which can be more protected in different ways. (Núñez Seixas & Umbach, Hijacked Heimats: national appropriations of local and regional identities in Germany and Spain, 1930-1945, 2008) A prominent one is Spanish

nationalism. Nationalism is the movement of promoting a nation. As stated before, a nation is a group of people who feel they belong. That is, nationalism is not per se something negative and ranges from the spectrum of patriotism to populist ultra-rightism. (Brandtjen R. B., 2019; Brandtjen R. B., 2021) Spanish nationalism refers to the Spanish nation and unity identified with the whole territory of the present Spanish state. It defends the Castilian (Spanish) language and the flag, coat of arms and anthem of Spain. Its birth is nowadays dated back to the Napoleonic Wars. Finally, it culminated in the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, which is why Spanish nationalism is nowadays associated with ultra-right movements and fanaticism. (Núñez Seixas, 2018) The term "peripheral nationalisms" refers to the nationalisms and regionalisms that exist in Spain and which are distinct from Spanish nationalism, in that they claim the differentiated identity of a part of Spain's territory. The most well know of these are Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalism. (Olábarri-Gortázar, 2015) In order to avoid the negative reference to the term nationalism, the respective own terms, such as Aragoneseism, will be used here regardless of the respective nationalist or regionalist character. For further clarification, here is a selection of Andalusianism, Aragoneseism, Araneseism, Asturianism, Basqueism, Canarianism, Castilianism, Cantabrianism, Catalanism, Galicianism, Leoneseism, Pan-Catalanism and Valencianism. Except for Pan-Catalanism and Vasquinism, these refer to Spanish domestic movements. Figure 5 shows the domestic movements and Figure 6 shows the transnational movements.

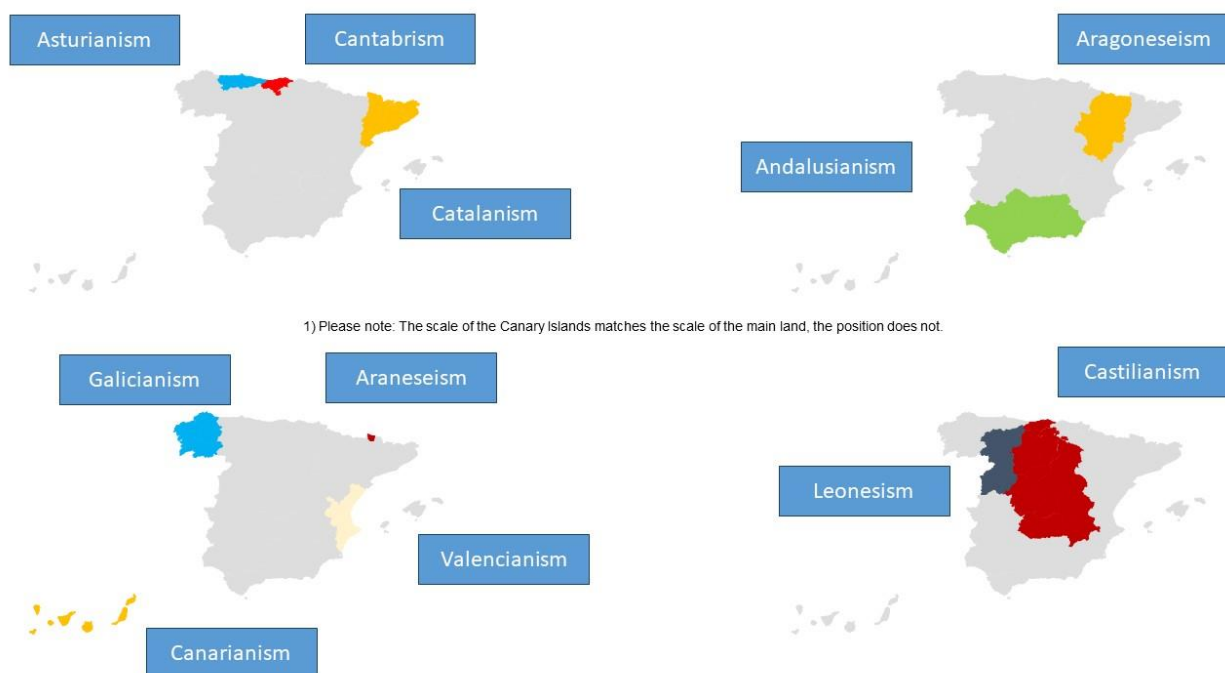


Figure 5: Spanish domestic movement (own interpretation)

As previously described, these -isms are particularly evident in the historical nationalities and historical communities. Andalusianism, Aragoneseism, Asturianism, Canarianism and Cantabrianism have the main objective of recognition as a nation, each with its own culture, history, economy, and politics. Another goal of Aragoneseism and Asturianism is to seek the promotion of their respective languages and

recognition as co-official languages, this part of the movement being far larger in Asturias. (Moreno & Delgado Cabeza, 2013; Moure Romanillo & Suárez Cortina, 1995; Forcadell Álvarez, 1998; Iglesias, 2004; Rivero, 2021) In addition to protecting its own culture, identity, history and politics, Valencianism has a particular idiosyncrasy. In it, the whole spectrum from the autonomy movement to remaining in Spanish unity with the protection of its own culture can be understood. The former has additional extremes, with some voices calling for some form of union with Catalonia in a common state, for the creation of a separate Valencian state with friendly ties to the Catalan-speaking territories, or an anti-Catalan movement with a pro-Valencian identity, Balverism. (Coller, 2006; Català Oltra, 2012; Archilés i Cardona, 2013) However, these extreme forms of Valencianism are not very common in Valencian society. Galicianism also has a wide spectrum, from regionalism to nationalism and separatism. Once again, the defence of Galician languages, identity, history, culture, and politics is the most important. This movement is somewhat more widespread in Galicia and in some cases reaches into Galician-speaking regions in Asturias and Castilla y León. (Rodríguez Polo, 2009) Aranesism is not only special because of the small size of the group. Aranesism wants to promote the Aranese language, which is a variant of the Occitan language, identity, and culture in the Aran valley, but also includes the increased rights of self-determination within Catalonia up to a free union with Catalonia. It has so far led to the creation of the Val de Aran's own parliament, its legislative powers within Catalan competences and the recognition of Aranese as a co-official language. It is thus the only place where a variant of the Occitan language has a co-official status. Furthermore, even in the event of Catalan independence, the Arantal has the right to decide on its status (remaining in Spain, link with Catalonia, etc.). (EFE, 2005; Marín, 2013; Conselh Generau d'Aran, 2015; Brandtjen R. B., 2021)

Figure 6 shows the cross-border movements, which incidentally also seem to be the best known. Catalanism and Pan-Catalanism both involve the promotion of Catalan culture, language, identity, and politics. They differ in the boundaries of the movement and some definitions. Pan-Catalanism sees a common Catalan culture united, among other things, under a Catalan language in all regions where a variant of this language is used. This includes the entire area from northern Catalonia in France, Andorra, through the eastern part of Aragon, to the southern borders of Valencia and includes the Balearic Islands and the city of Alghero in Sardinia in Italy. Just as Catalanism includes the extreme of the autonomy or independence movement of Catalonia, Pan-Catalanism also includes the independence movement of the entire Catalan cultural area. The latter has found little or no support in the other regions, also because of concerns about Catalonia's hegemonic claims. (Sánchez Badiola, 2005; de Melchor & Branchadell, 2002; Filella, 2017)

Basqueism, in a political sense, is understood to transcend the entire Basque people. Unlike Pan-Catalanism, however, Basqueism refers to a contiguous area in Spain and France called Euskal Herria or Vasconia. Areas outside Euskal Herria where the Basque language is spoken are not usually included. Unlike the other isms in Spain, Basqueism is unfortunately also known for its extreme terrorist variant. The group ETA - Euskadi Ta Askatasuna finally officially disbanded in 2018 for the good of all. Other isms also gave rise to armed militant extremism, although they were not as present or as pronounced. In the 60 years of their existence, 854 murder victims, around 3,000 injured and many kidnappings and extortions can be attributed to them. (Ochoa, 2015; Cebero Belaza, 2018; Fundación Víctimas del Terrorismo, 2020) Since it also includes the Treviño enclave, it is the first movement that also affects the territory of Castilla y León. Basqueism in principle promotes the Basque language, culture, identity

and politics, and can go as far as the desire to unite the "Basque territories" in a separate state. (Zallo, 2006) The conflict over the Treviño enclave is a territorial dispute in northern Spain between the administration of the Province of Burgos and Castile and León on the one side, and those of Álava and the Basque Country on the other, over the administration of the territory. The conflict does not only involve territorial questions, but also extends to political and language issues, as well as questions about provision of services and transport connections. The enclave holds cultural, commercial, and linguistic links with the neighbouring Álava province. The Statute of Autonomy of Castile and León requires a positive opinion from the Province of Burgos and the Autonomous Community of Castile and León for the incorporation of Treviño into Álava, as well as the approval of the Cortes Generales in the form of an organic law. The Basque government and parliament lodged a constitutional complaint against the statute in the 1980s, which was rejected by the Constitutional Court. In recent years, both the Junta de Castilla y León and the Diputación de Burgos have stressed that the enclave will continue to belong to the province of Burgos. They are opposed to the county being carved out of the province of Burgos, just as they have not renounced the possibility of Cantabria becoming a province of the Community (seventh transitional provision of the Statute of Autonomy). For the official chronicler of the city of Burgos, the enclave always belonged to Castile. (González Clavero, 2004)



Figure 6: Transnational movements (own interpretation)

Castilianism is the movement to promote and protect the Castilian language, culture, identity, and politics. The territory of Castilianism includes the present-day autonomous communities of Madrid, La Rioja, Cantabria, Castilla - La Mancha and all but 3 provinces of Castilla y León. Here, too, there are regionalism, nationalism, and independentism, although the latter has almost no support today. The language that is internationally referred to as Spanish is the Castilian language. Due to the existence and integration of other identities, there is an important difference between the terms Castilian and Spanish in Spain. Castilian culture and politics are often perceived as a hegemonic power. Castilianism tries, among other things, to clarify the Castilian culture as its own identity, different from the Spanish

culture and identity. (Orobon, 2014; Camazón Linacero, 2013; Asociación Castilla, 2023; Peña Pérez, 2005)

Leonesism is a cultural, social, and political movement of a regionalist, autonomist or sovereigntist nature that seeks the recognition of part of the territories of the former Crown of León. Reasons given for this are linguistic and historical differences with Castilla. (Alonso Sánchez-Lombas, 1977) According to Electomanía 2022, based on more than 3,000 respondents, the provinces of León, Zamora and Salamanca are the only ones that reject the current autonomous configuration. (EM-Electomanía, 2022) Figure 7 shows the results of the Individual Identification Survey on the Autonomous Community of Castilla y León. According to this, the respondents in the provinces of León, Salamanca and Zamora identify the least with the current autonomous community of Castilla y León. In addition to this survey, in recent years there have been several demonstrations for the creation of a separate Leonese autonomous community, various proposals by political actors in different bodies and the official approval of this movement in 45.8% of the municipalities in León, one in Zamora and another in Salamanca. (Giganto, 2020; másSalamanca, 2019; el Mundo, 2023; Ramos, 2007) This shows the relevance of Leonesism. This movement is strongly supported by the Castilian movements. Although they have different preferences, both movements have a common goal, the reorganisation of the autonomous communities, especially the autonomous community of Castilla y León. (ASC-Castilla, 2021)

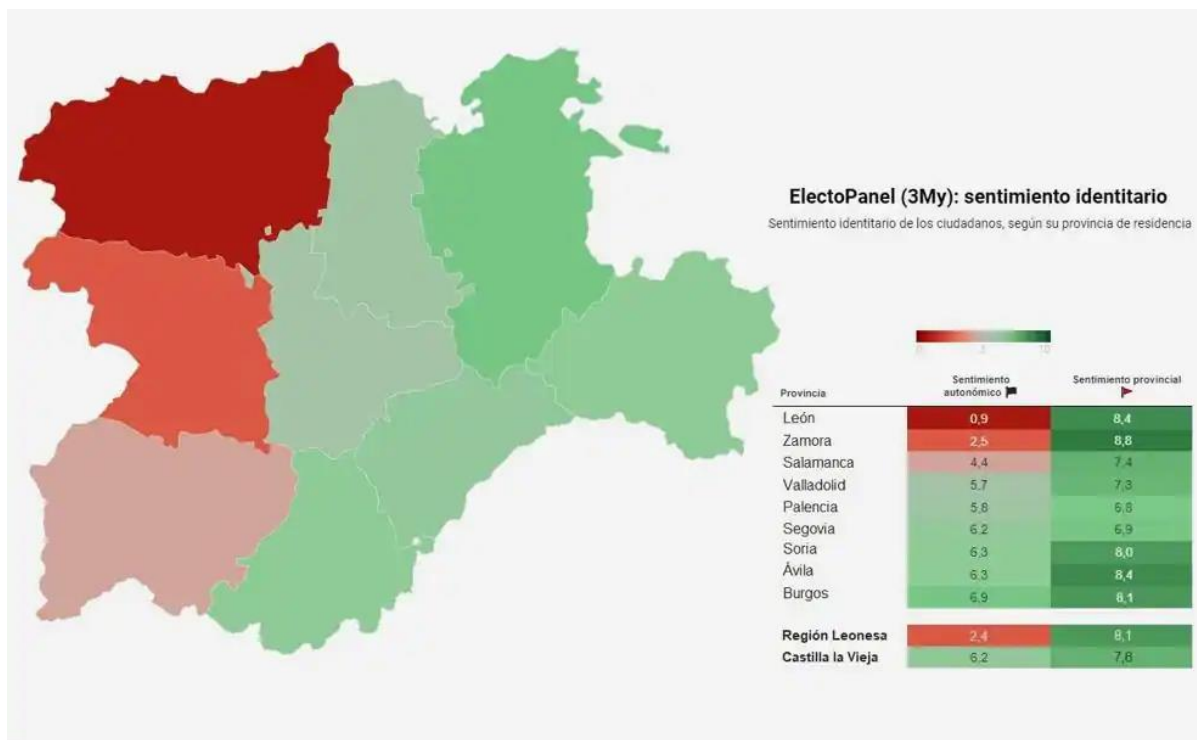


Figure 7: ElectoPanel (3My): sense of identity (EM-Electomanía, 2022)

It is important to mention that there is the peculiarity of El Bierzo. El Bierzo is an administrative region made up of 38 municipalities, formed in 1991 from the Spanish natural region of the same name in the



western third of the province of León in the autonomous community of Castile and León. It is the only legally recognised region in the Autonomous Community of Castile and León and, due to its geographical, historical, social, and economic characteristics, has its own regional council. The Regional Council of El Bierzo is the local public body responsible for the government and administration of the region of El Bierzo. Castilian is the official and most widely spoken language, but Galician and León are also spoken to a lesser extent, and their intermingling has created a Bierzo dialect with several local variants. (Cortes de Castilla y León, 2010; Cortizo Álvarez, Durany Castrillo, Fernández García, & Redondo Vega, 2012; García García, 1997) Due to its cultural, geographical and historical peculiarities, Bercianism developed in this region. (González González, 2007) Historically, El Bierzo achieved its greatest autonomy from 1822, when this region constituted its own Spanish province. (Cortes Extraordinarias, 1821) In 1833, it lost its provincial status and was mainly integrated into the province of León, but also partially (in the case of the commune of Valdeorras) into the Galician province of Orense. (García González, 1994) Bercianism is trying to achieve provincial status or, in extreme cases, the creation of a uniprovincial autonomous community. To achieve this goal, there are several political parties whose electoral successes are more likely to be found at the communal level. (Coalición El Bierzo, 2023; Revista de Aquiana, 1978)

In summary, Figure 8 shows the respective movements in Castilla y León. It shows that not only Spain as a whole seems to have a lot of national feelings and movements, but even in the autonomous community of Castilla y León these feelings and movements are a current topic.

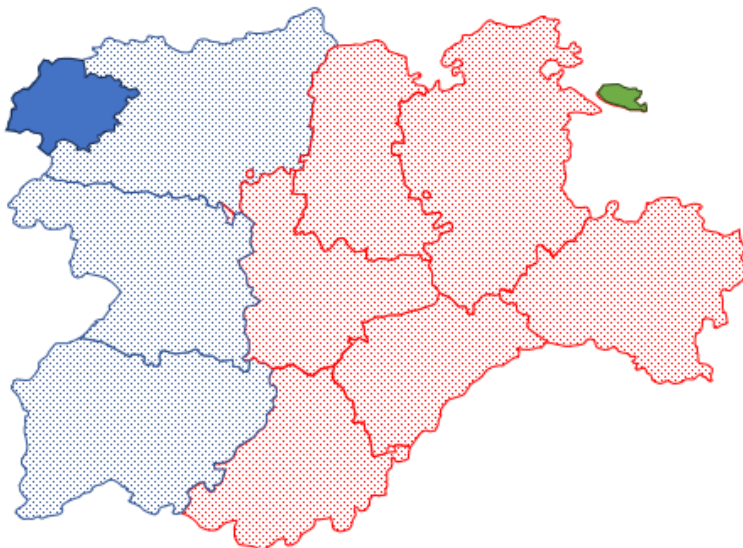


Figure 8: Representation of the movements in Castilla y León; red - Castilianism / light blue - Leoneseism / green - Basqueism / dark blue - Bercianism (own interpretation)

Basqueism (in the Treviño enclave) and Bercianism (in El Bierzo) represent a regionally limited phenomenon for Castilla y León, with rather little expression. In contrast, Leoneseism and Castilianism cover a much larger area.



Finally, the last movement of Castilian-Leonese regionalism, although very little researched, should be mentioned. Unlike the other movements, each of which seeks to promote a new organisation and defend linguistic, identitarian, cultural and historical aspects, this movement seeks to highlight the common cultural and historical identity of Castilla y León and preserve it together with the current status of a united autonomous community of the Spanish state. (Valdeón Baroque, 2004; Blanco Rodríguez, 2004; Domínguez Méndez, 2014)

## Method and participant representation

The data reported here were conducted each year since 2020 in Castilla y León. For this purpose, quantitative research was offered in the form of individualised quantitative online-based surveys in the respective languages (Castilian, Galician, Leonese, Extremaduran and Basque). By means of virtual snowball sampling, these surveys were promoted via social media of Facebook and Twitter and given to the population of the target group. For this purpose, relevant hashtags of the respective regions were set, regional media (e.g., TV CYL) were contacted and disseminated in region-related interest groups (e.g., Conceyu País Llionés).

This type of sampling serves to find participants in e.g., hard-to-reach groups of people. A person in such a group who participates in the survey gives the questionnaires to other people in their network or arranges participation in the survey. It can increase the representativeness of the results by the diffusion of the survey into the corresponding group of participants. (Salganik & Heckathorn, 2004; Atkinson & Flint, 2001)

Challenges of a virtual snowball sampling might be the community bias, the lack of definite knowledge as to whether or not the sample is an accurate reading of the target population and that the target population might not always have access to the Internet. (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Häder, 2006)

The transfer of the results to the population still needs to be clarified. Due to the subject matter and the nature of the sampling, there are more men than women among the participants. On the other hand, very few (between 1,5 and 3,5%) have indicated that they do not belong to the binary gender groups. Figure 9 shows the gender distribution of participants in the respective years.

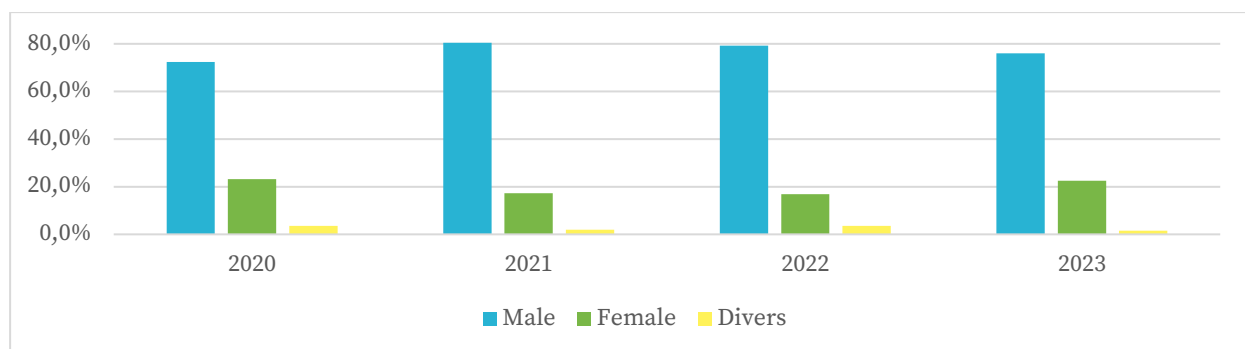


Figure 9: Gender distribution of participants in the respective years (own interpretation)

Figure 10 shows the distribution of the age groups of the participants in the respective years. The age groups are most balanced in 2023. The age groups in the younger mean are overrepresented. Children up to the age of 14 are extremely underrepresented and participants aged 60 and over account for around 6 % of participants (except in 2023).

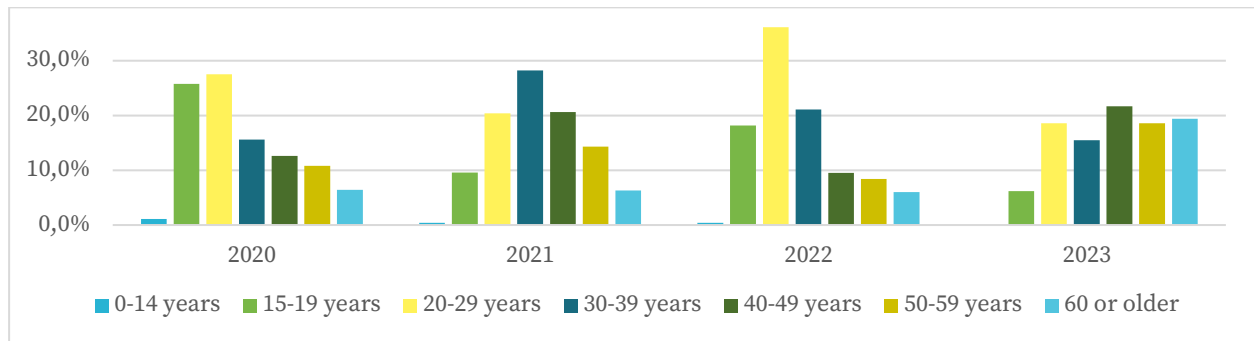


Figure 10: Share of Age Groups (own interpretation)

The distribution of the educational level of the participants can be seen in Figure 11. With a total of between 43% in 2020 and 64.3% in 2023, academics (Bachelor, Master, and PhD) are overrepresented. Participants without a degree are only represented in 2020 with 0.8%.

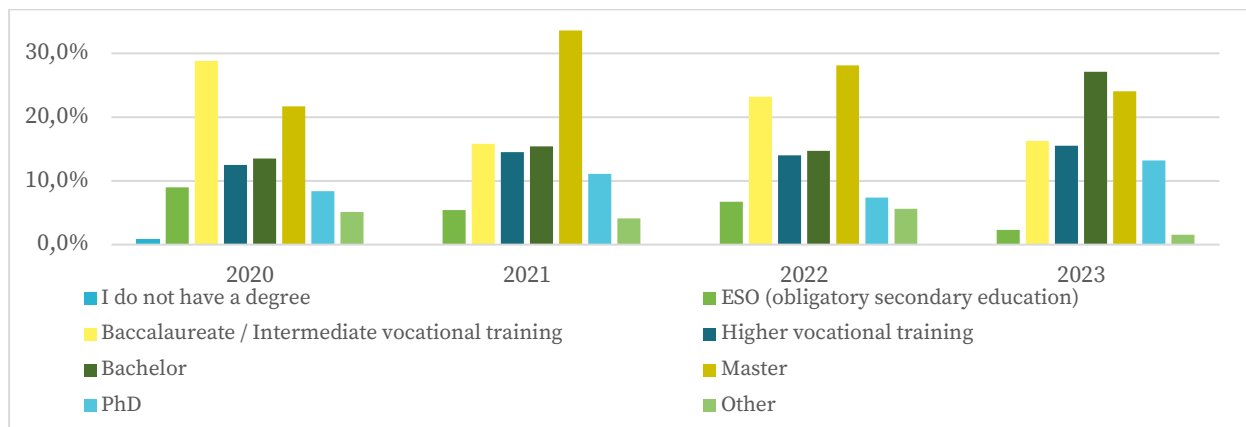


Figure 11: Distribution of educational level (own interpretation)

As can be seen in Figure 12, which shows the distribution of the participants' occupational groups, the proportion of white-collar workers is generally the largest. The proportion of unemployed participants is 6.1% on average over all years, which is between the EU unemployment rate of 5.9% and the euro area rate of 6.4%. However, the unemployment level in Spain in August 2023 is 11.6% and the unemployment rate in Castilla y León is 10.3% in 2021, 8.8% in 2022 and around 9.1% in 2023. (Alldatanow, S.L., 2023) Thus, the unemployment rates of the participants undercut the official figures except in 2023, when it exceeds the official figures by 0.3%.

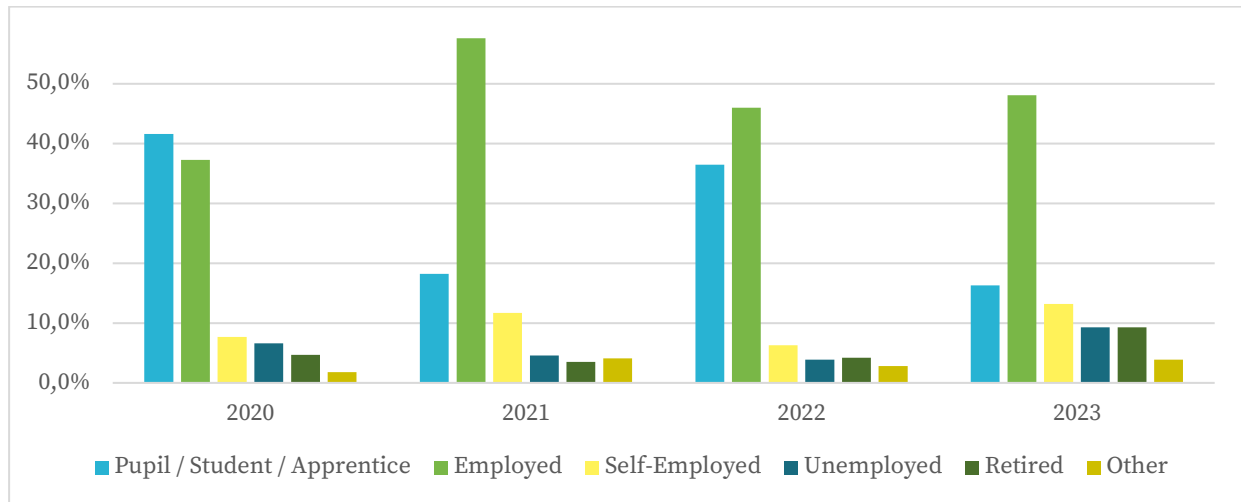


Figure 12: Distribution of professional groups (own interpretation)

The majority of participants in the survey are in the lower income group in each year. Nevertheless, the trend of the other income groups is upward over the years. Furthermore, it can be said that the share of a group is lower as income increases. This information can be found in Figure 13, which shows the distribution of the income groups of the participants.

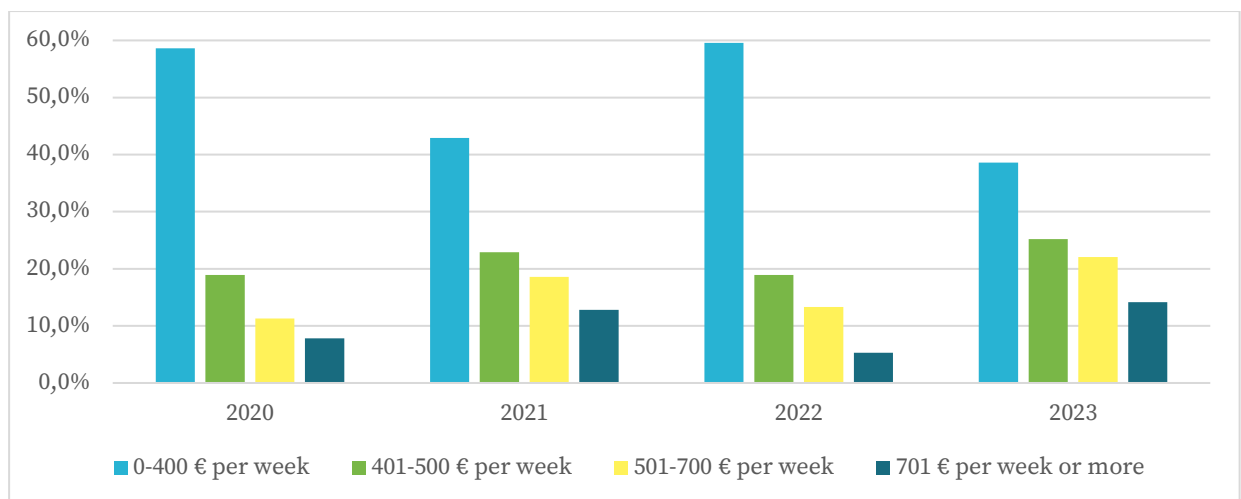


Figure 13: Distribution of income groups (own interpretation)

Figure 14, which shows the place of residence of the participants, shows that by far the majority of the participants live in the province of León. The second most represented place of residence is in the province of Valladolid. Castilla y León does not have a capital city by law, but all regional institutions, such as the parliament or the governments, are located in the city of Valladolid, the provincial capital of the province of Valladolid. (Aragón Reyes, 1997) About a quarter of the inhabitants of Castilla y León live in the province of Valladolid and only a fifth in the province of León. (INE - Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2021) Nevertheless, the proportion of Leonese participants is far greater than that of Valladolidians. The smallest share over the years is that of the inhabitants of the provinces of Ávila,

Soria and Segovia. These provinces together also have about as many inhabitants as the province of León. (INE - Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2021) Nevertheless, their inhabitants together represent fewer participants in the survey than those of the province of Valladolid.

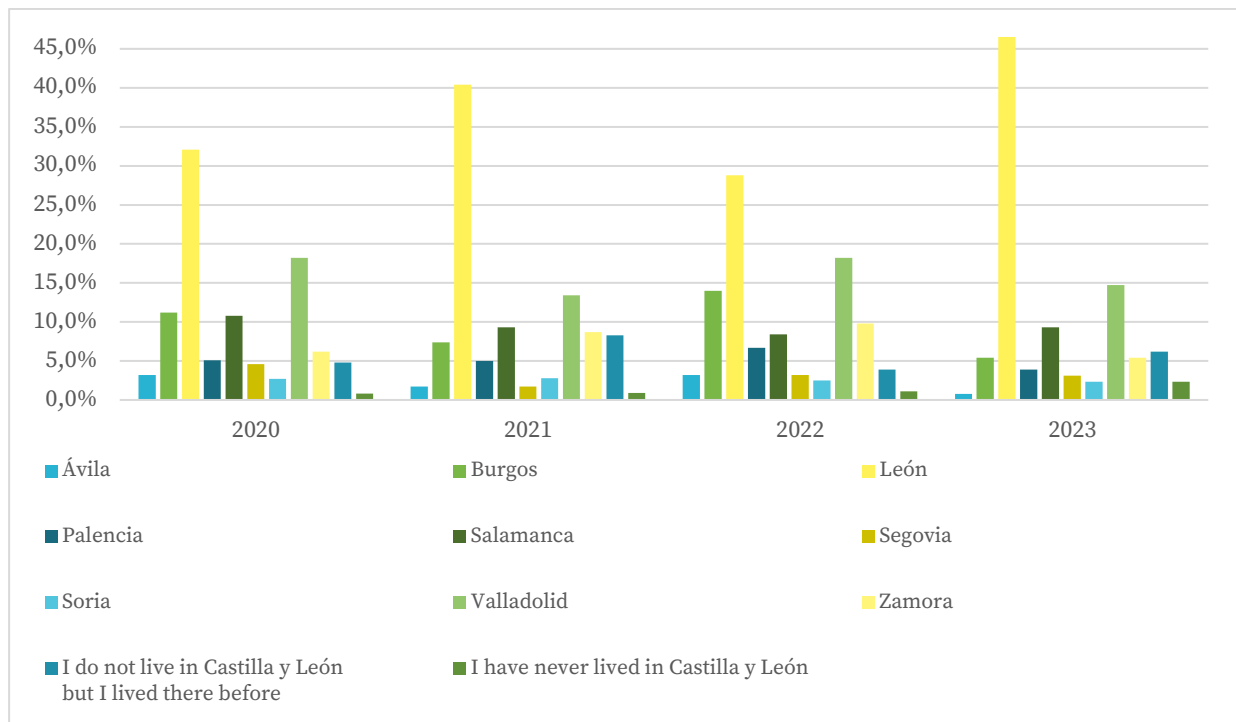


Figure 14: Regional distribution of the participants (own interpretation)

## Survey results

In order to illustrate the extent of the respective isms and their consequences, the results of the surveys since 2020 in Castilla y León are considered below. The results of the following 3 questions are analysed:

- Which is your national or ethnic feeling?
- Do you feel being part of the Spanish State?
- I am in favour of ...

### WHICH IS YOUR NATIONAL OR ETHNIC FEELING?

When asked which ethnic group or nationality you felt you belonged to, you could choose between Galician, Basque, Bercian, Leonese, Castilian, Castilian-Leonese, Spanish or Iberian. In addition, there was the option of specifying an unlisted option under "Other".

Figure 15 shows the results for this question in all years. It is striking that the results for 2020 are different from the other years. In 2020, the proportion of "Spaniards" was 42.7%, which is thus the highest expression in this year, while the proportion of those who chose Spanish was between 20.1% and 21.7%. The largest expression in other years is the proportion of those who feel they are Leonese,

between 30.9% and 45.5%. In all years, the percentages of those who feel Galician and those who feel Basque are the lowest (between 0.1% and 0.9% and 0% and 1.2% respectively).

In 2020, the Castilian-Leonese share represents the second strongest expression with 25.3%. In the following years, however, this share is always in fourth place with between 7.4% and 15.4% and thus always behind the Leonese and Castilian shares. Except in 2020, the Castilian share was in third place with between 14.9% and 21.2%. The lowest ethnic group of all the choices, "Bercian", is surprisingly strong, rising steadily each year from 0.9% in 2020 to 4.6% in 2023.

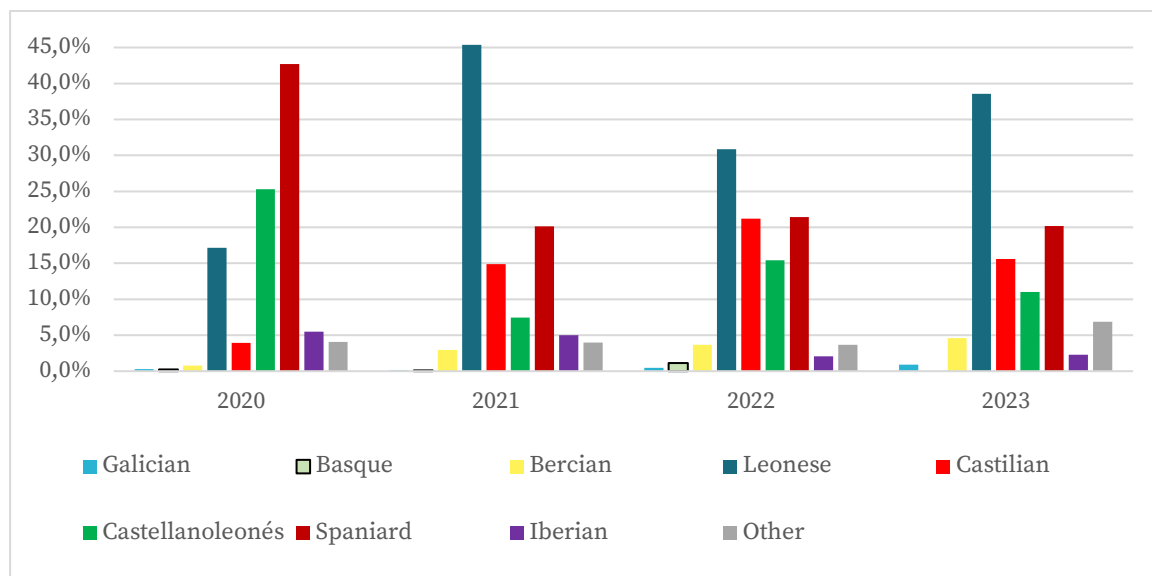


Figure 15: Which is your national or ethnic feeling? (Own interpretation)

The Galician sense of belonging is mainly found among participants living in the province of León in 2020 and 2023. Those living in the province of Zamora also have a very small share in the surveys in 2021 and 2022. Finally, there is a 0.35% share of participants living in Salamanca who identify as Galician. There are no figures for participants from other provinces.

The own identification as Basque is only found with one participant each living in the province of Burgos and in the province of Salamanca in 2022. Otherwise, there is no indication of this in any other province in any other year.

As the region of El Bierzo is in the province of León, it is not surprising that there is a strong sense of ethnic Bercian affiliation. A proportion of up to 3.1% shows a relatively strong sense of identity. 2022 also has 2 participants who are in the province of Valladolid - the unofficial main region of Castilla y León. Further information on this sense of belonging is not found in any other provinces and only among a minority who do not live or have not lived in Castilla y León.

Participants living in the province of Segovia did not identify themselves as Basque, Galician, Bercian or Leonese in any year. Leonese is represented in all other provinces, albeit to a very limited extent. Participants living in the provinces of Soria, Burgos, Palencia, and Ávila show a Leonese affiliation of a maximum of 0.35% in some years, and generally none or only 0.11%. In the provinces of León,

Salamanca, and Zamora, which were also part of the historical kingdom of León, a large proportion (up to 32.56%) of participants identify as Leonese.

The Castilian sense of belonging exists in all provinces. Only in the 2020 survey did no one from the province of Ávila and the province of Zamora indicate that they felt Castilian. In the provinces of León, Salamanca and Zamora, Castilian is a minority; in all other provinces, this sense of belonging is one of the larger proportions.

Another regional identity represented is Castilian-Leonese. Only the provinces of Segovia in 2021 and 2023, as well as the provinces of Palencia, León, and Soria in 2023, did not show any participants who felt Castilian-Leonese. In all other provinces and years, there was always a certain proportion. In the province of Valladolid, the proportion of participants with this sense of ethnic belonging was by far the highest in every year. However, this feeling appears to be lowest in the provinces of Soria and Segovia.

This data is visualised in Figure 16.

If the relative results of the surveys are cumulated over the years and sorted by size, the long-term national or ethnic affiliation of the participants per province can be recognised. Thus, the largest cumulative group of participants in the provinces of León and Zamora represents the Leonese sense of belonging, in the provinces of Segovia, Burgos and Palencia the Spanish sense of belonging and in the provinces of Salamanca, Valladolid, Soria and Ávila the Castilian sense of belonging. Figure 17 shows this graphically.

It has to be said that in some provinces the largest group decided by a very narrow margin. This includes the province of Salamanca, where the second largest identification group is the Leonese identity. In addition, this does not recognise the simultaneous feelings of belonging. Using the province of Salamanca as an example, this means that someone who feels Spanish can also feel, Leonese and/or Castilian at the same time.

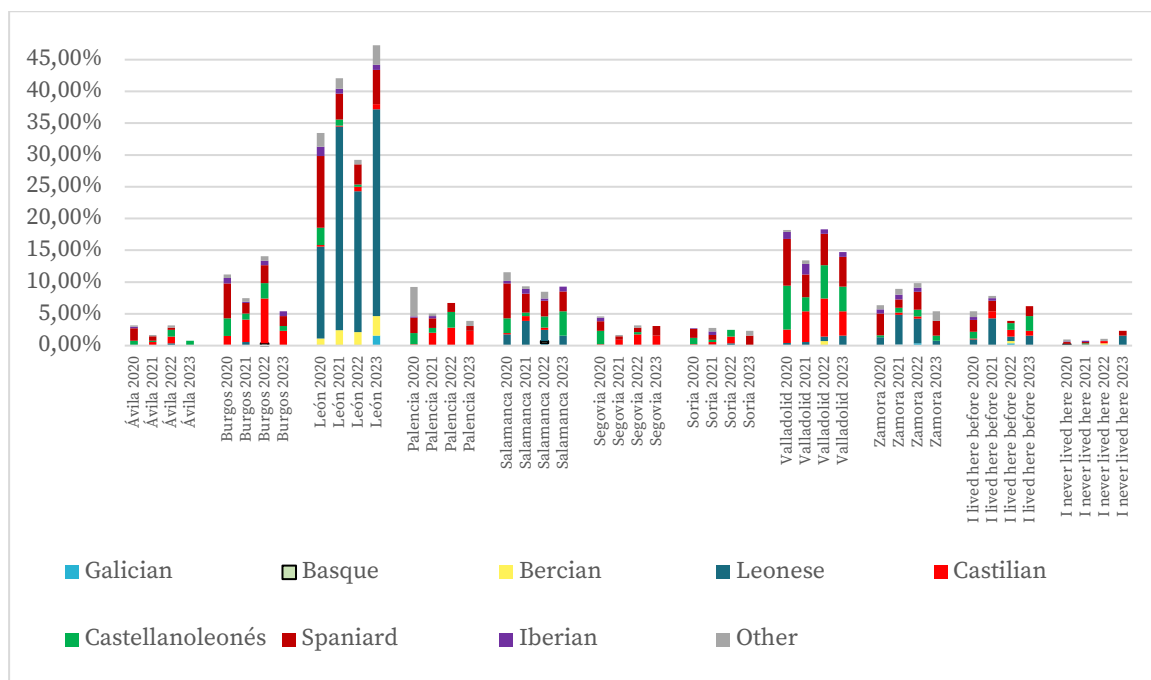


Figure 16: Crosstable of "Ethnic or national group" & "Where do you live" (Own interpretation)

In terms of gender proportions, it is again clear to see that the male participants are in the majority. Although there were not diverse participants in all years, there were small numbers in all identity groups except Basque and Galician. The reason for this is certainly the low number of participants with this feeling. With the exception of the survey in 2020, female participants are most often found with the Leonese national or ethnic identity. Only in 2020 is the female group with the Spanish identity the largest. This information is shown graphically in Figure 18.



Figure 17: Presentation of the largest cumulative results per province over the years (own interpretation) [Dark blue = Leonese / Light blue = Castilian / Green = Spaniard]

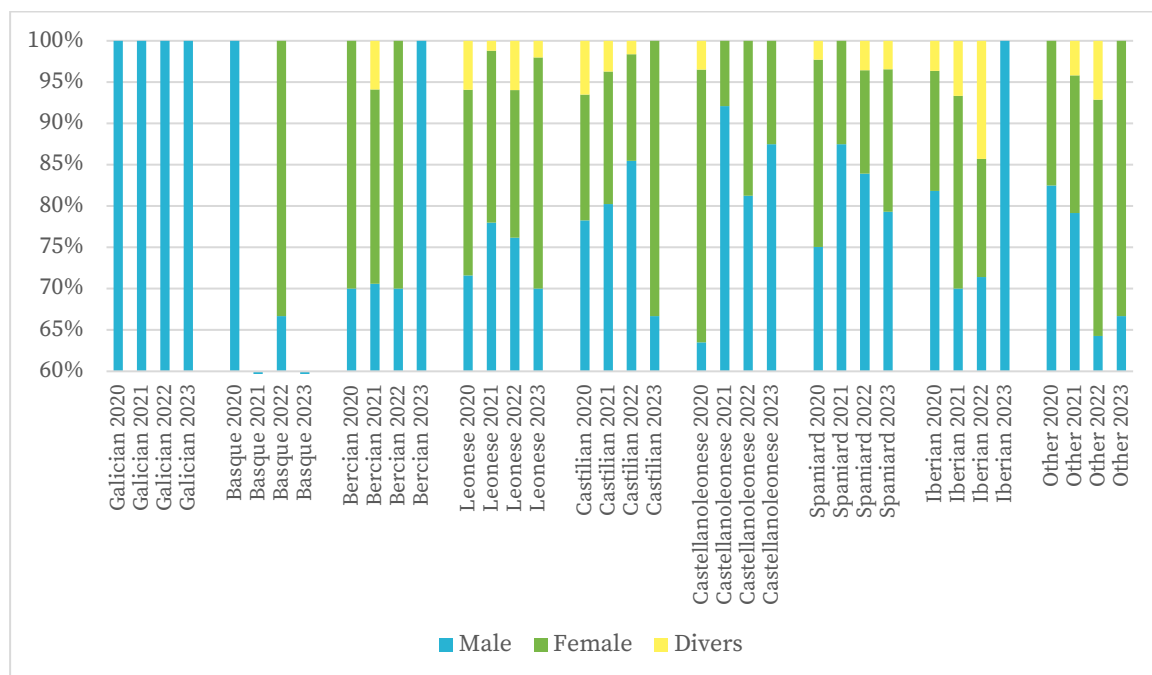


Figure 18: Cross-table of ethnic or national sense of belonging and gender (Own Interpretation)

If you look at the distribution of the age groups, as shown in Figure 19, you can see that the group of those under 15 is the least represented. This group is only represented in the 2020 and 2021 surveys and shows the Castilian-Leonese identity group as the strongest indication. The 15-19 age group, however, shows the Spanish identity in 2020 and 2023 and the Leonese identity in 2021 and 2022 as the largest identity group. The participants between 20 and 29 years of age have the Spanish identity as the largest group with a sense of belonging in 2020, while the Leonese identity is in 2021, 2022 and 2023. The same distribution also shows the age group between 50 and 59 years. The age group from 30 to 39 years, on the other hand, shows the Spanish identity as the largest proportion in 2020, the Leonese identity in 2021 and 2023 and the Castilian identity in 2022. Participants aged 40 to 49 are very similar except for the largest group in 2023. Both Leonese and Spanish are equally represented here. Among participants aged 60 or over, the largest proportion reported Spanish identity in 2020 and 2023, Leonese in 2021 and both Castilian and Castilian-Leonese in 2022.

If you cumulate the information from all years, the largest proportion of those under 15 years of age have a Castilian-Leonese identity. Participants aged 15 to 19 feel more Spanish, and participants aged 20 to 29 feel more Leonese. All other age groups from 30 years also cumulatively show the Leonese identity as the largest group of participants. It could possibly be concluded that the older groups are more likely to be Leonese. However, it could also mean that a greater interest in these age groups with the Leonese sense of identity is more likely to take part in such a survey. Neither conclusion is certain.

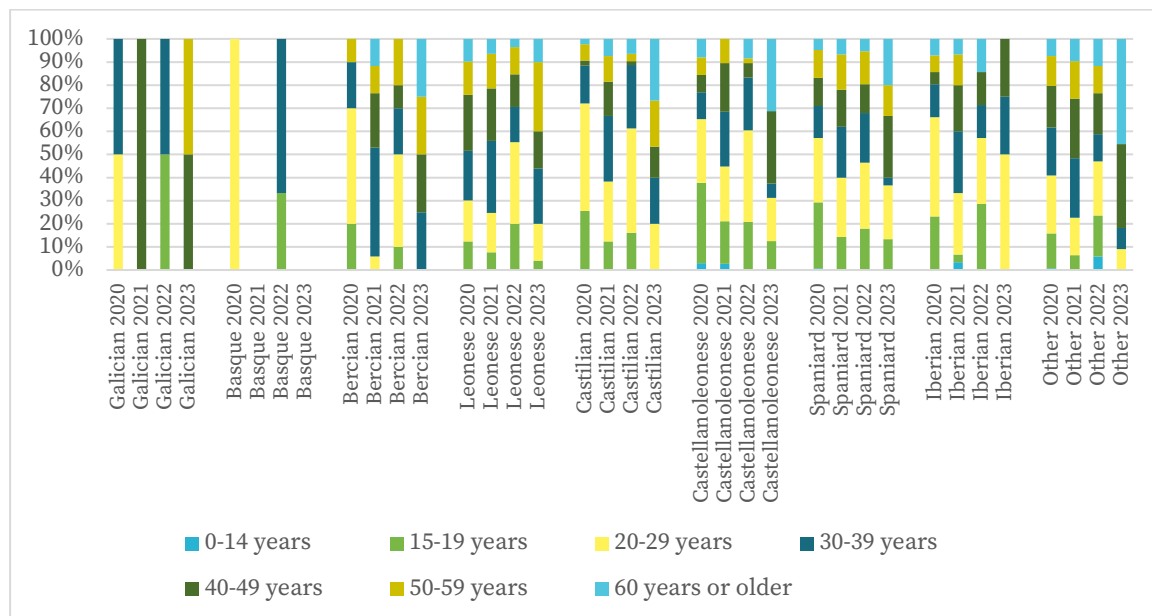


Figure 19: Crosstable of "Ethnic or national group" & "your age group" (own interpretation)

Figure 20 shows the relationship between educational level and primary sense of identity. The proportion of those without a degree is only in 2020, albeit to a very small extent, and is primarily represented with Spanish identity. Among those who reported a Galician identity, they had either higher professional education or a master's degree. Participants with a Basque identity at least the Bachillerato up to the PhD. However, both identity groups show a very small number of participants,



which reduces the significance. Among the Bercian participants, all qualifications are available, apart from the lack of a qualification. The largest group is those who have a higher professional education, a master's degree or a PhD. Participants of the Leonese identity are more likely to have a master's degree, as are those with a Castilian, Castilian-Leonese, Spanish or Iberian identity. Overall, one can say that academic degrees (Bachelor, Master and PhD) almost always make up the majority, regardless of the sense of identity.



Figure 20: Crosstable of "Ethnic or national group" & "your highest education" (Own interpretation)

If you compare the income groups with the primary sense of identity, as shown in Figure 21, you can see that a salary of up to €400 per week is most strongly represented in almost all identity groups. The Galician and Basque identity groups differ here, which can be explained by the small number of participants in this group. The distribution of income classes in the Bercian identity is similar, although to a lesser extent. All other identity groups appear to have a very similar distribution of income classes. This seems to demonstrate a very small influence of income on sense of identity.

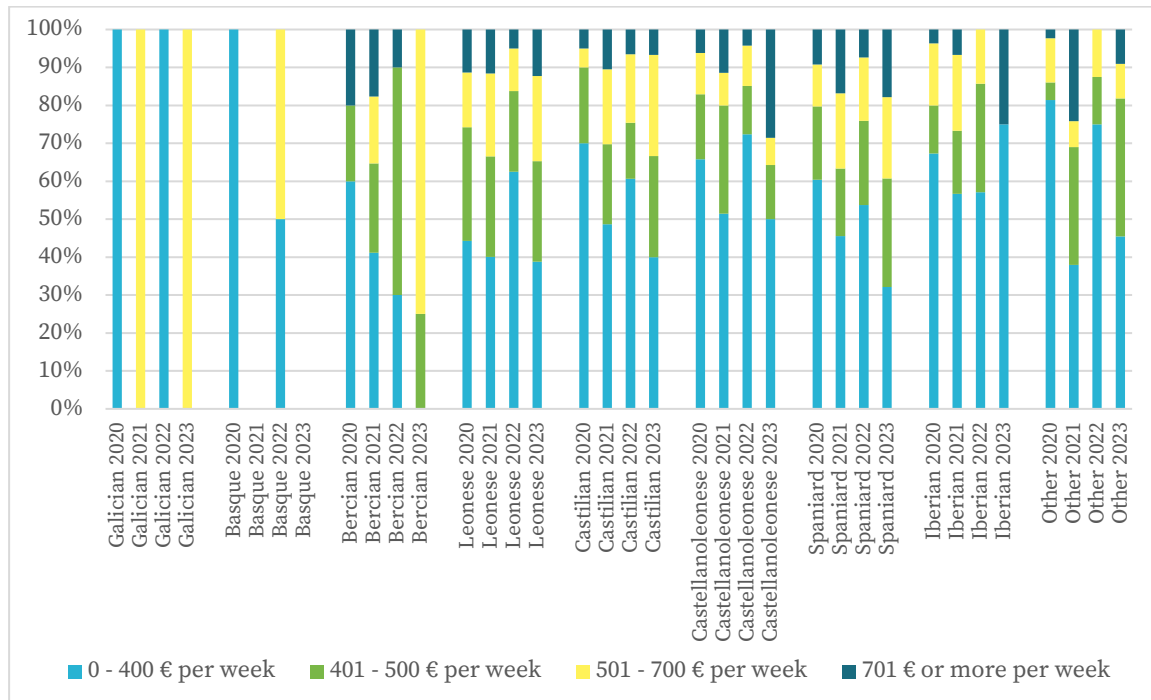


Figure 21: Crosstable "Ethnic or national group" & "Income Group" (own interpretation)

The comparison of the professional group with the sense of identity in Figure 22 also seems to confirm the previous statements. The information from the Galician and Basque identity groups appears to have little significance due to the small number of participants. The Bercian identity group also seems to have somewhat higher informative value and is somewhat based on the distributions of the other identity groups. In all groups, most participants in all years are employees. The smallest professional group is that of the unemployed, which, however, has an Iberian identity in all years and a Castilian or Leonese identity in 2023. The group of pupils, students or apprentices cannot be clearly assigned to any identity group, as they show relatively similar cumulative values in the annual comparisons. The independent participants were more likely to be of Castilian or Spanish identity. Participants who stated that they were pensioners did not appear to be clearly assignable to an identity group. Nevertheless, this is the group that is the strongest among the other identity groups. The influence of the professional group on the sense of identity also seems to be very small.

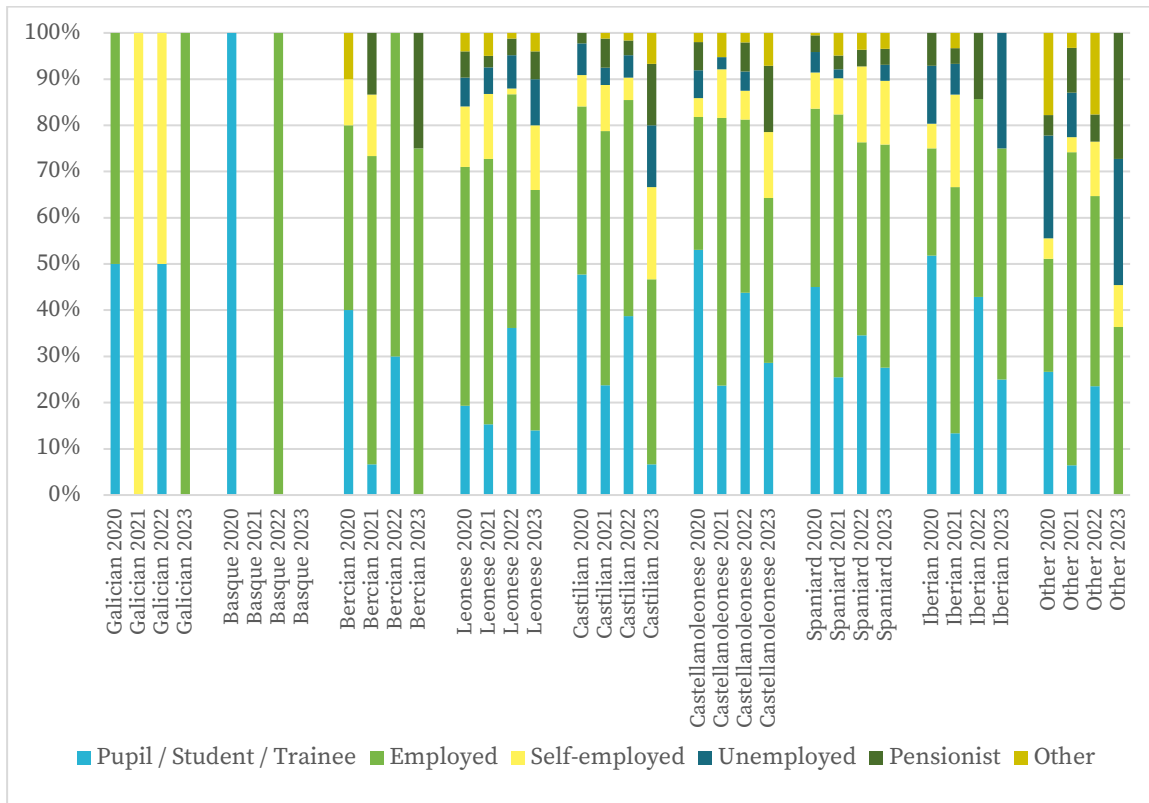


Figure 22: Crosstable "Ethnic or national group" & "Professional group" (own interpretation)

## BELONGING TO THE SPANISH STATE

The second question no longer refers to the sense of identity but rather whether one identifies with the Spanish state, i.e. the political structure and policies. Therefore, the participants were asked whether they felt like they were part of the Spanish state. Unlike the first question, this is about political identity.

The results of this can be seen in Figure 23. It can be seen that in each year at least 83.8% of the participants identify politically with the Spanish state. the highest value is 88.7% in 2021. The difference of 4.9% could be due to the decreasing number of participants. There is also another point: local elections in May 2023 and then the rescheduled parliamentary elections in July 2023. The political discussion during the formation of a new national government could also have had an influence on the result.

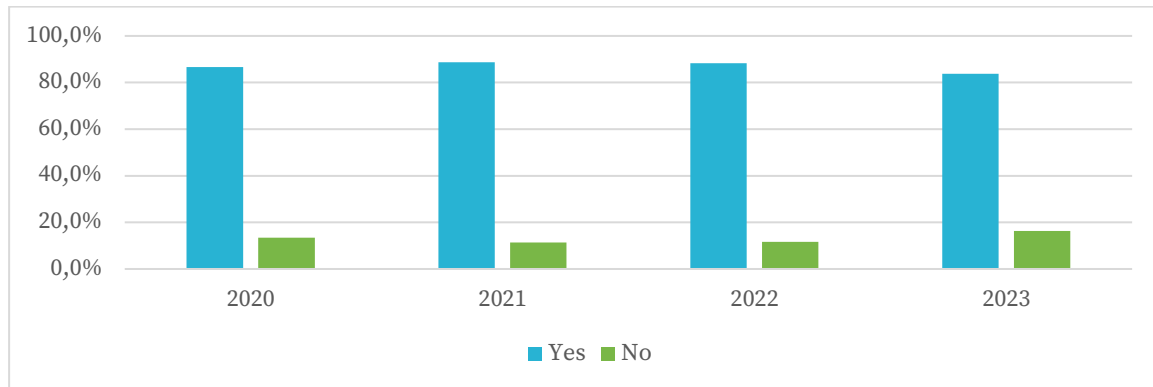


Figure 23: Do you feel being part of the Spanish State? (Own interpretation)

Even if the rejection of such a political identity is up to 16.3%, there does not seem to be a general rejection of the Spanish state.

When comparing the political identity with the national or ethnic identity in Figure 24, the significance of the Basque and Galician identity group again appears to be very low. The extremes of 100 percent denial and affirmation can be found here. Compared to the other identity groups, a 100 percent result seems very unlikely. In all others there is a general political identity with the Spanish state. In 2021, this was lowest among participants with a Bercian identity at 57.7%. Political identity over the years is greatest among participants who identify as Spanish. This shows the high degree of connection between national and ethnic identity and state structures. Castilian, Iberian and Castilian-Leonese identities also appear to have a high, if slightly lower, connection to the Spanish state. Of the major identity groups, the Leonese group has the lowest level of political identity with the Spanish state. In 2021 it is 77.2% positive, which is still very high. Since Leonese identity also includes the concept of forming its own autonomous community, the relatively lower value could be interpreted as dissatisfaction with the Spanish state. Nevertheless, this dissatisfaction would be relatively small.

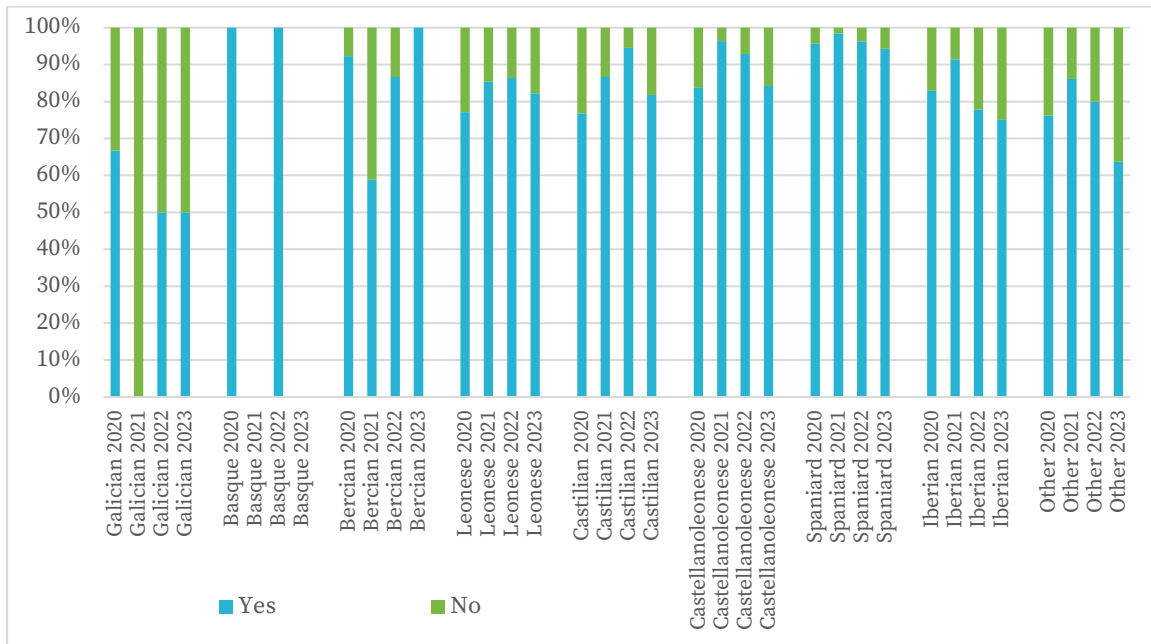


Figure 24: Crosstable "Ethnic or national group" & "Part of Spanish State" (own interpretation)

The cumulative mean values of the results over the years for political identity per province are shown in Figure 25. According to this, the highest affirmation of identity with the Spanish state is in the provinces of Ávila and Valladolid with 92.72% and 91.79% respectively. An attempt to explain this could be due to the province of Valladolid's unofficial status as the main region of Castilla y León. The relationship and integration of the institutions located there into the Spanish state could have an influence on the result.

The lowest values are not found in the provinces, but among the participants who have either lived in Castilla y León and moved away, or those who have never lived in Castilla y León. They each have the values 82.42% and 82.86%. The province of Segovia has the lowest values in Castilla y León with 85.32%. An explanation for these values is pure speculation.

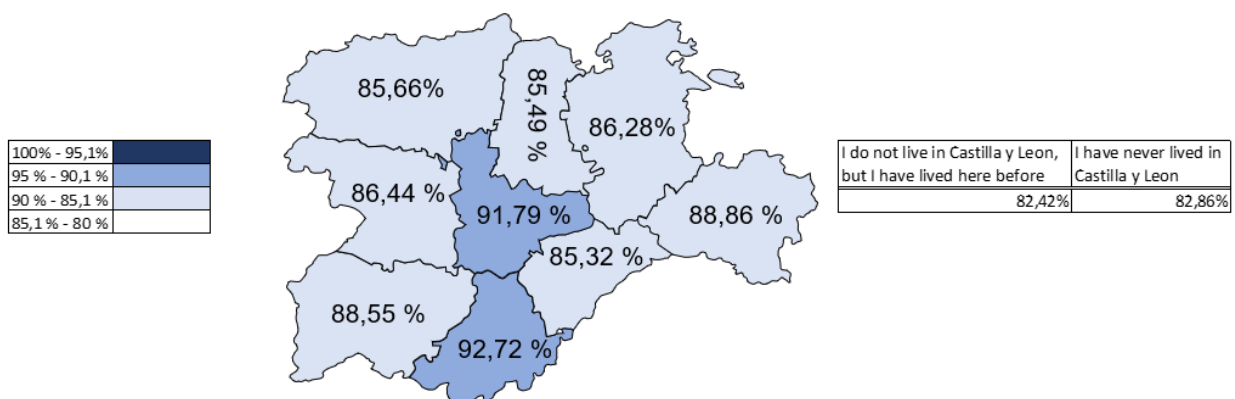


Figure 25: Average share over the years "Yes. I feel being part of the Spanish State" per province (own interpretation)

Figure 26 shows the comparison of political identity with age groups. The age group of participants under 15 is not represented at all. The distribution in 2020 and 2022 of the respective age groups who affirm such an identity are very similar to those who deny a political identity with the Spanish state. This indicates a lack of influence of age on political identity during these years. In 2021 and 2023, however, the similarity of the distributions between affirmation and denial is less. In 2021, the age group of participants over 60 years of age 100% affirmed their identification with the Spanish state. This is also the case with the age group of 15-19 year old participants in 2023. In 2021, however, the group of 20 to 29 year olds is more strongly represented in denying a political identity. In 2023, the group of people over 60 will compensate for the missing 15-19 year olds in the distribution of the negation of a political identity. Despite these differences, there does not appear to be a sufficient argument for an influence of age on identification with the Spanish state.

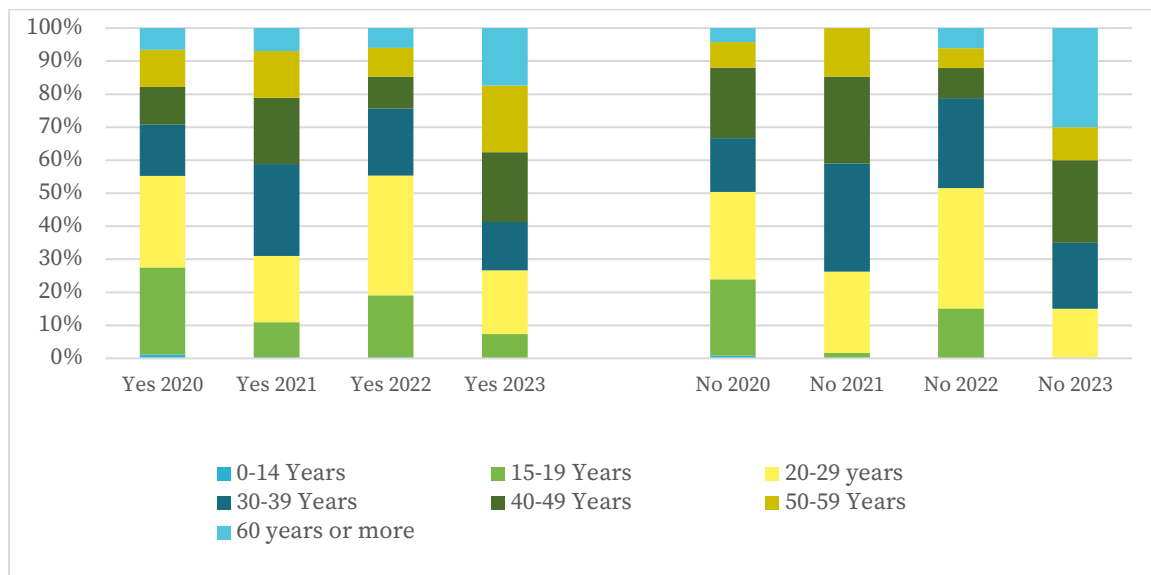


Figure 26: Crosstable "Part of the Spanish State" & "Age Groups" (own interpretation)

When looking at the gender group in relation to political identity, shown in Figure 27, the proportion of diverse participants is higher in the case of rejection than in the case of affirmation in every year. Female participants, on the other hand, always have a slightly higher proportion in the affirmation than in the denial of political identity. With the exception of 2021, when the male share in the affirmative is far greater than in the negative, the male share in both answer options is very similar. An explanation for this is pure speculation. The higher proportion of female political identity could be due to current Spanish social policies, such as the 2020 reintroduction of a Ministry of Equality, which among other things also supports women's rights. (Gobierno de España - Ministerio de Igualdad, 2023) Surprisingly, this could also be the reason for the proportion of diverse participants. Through the work of the ministry, sexual identity and gender groups are more firmly anchored as an issue in Spanish society and can therefore also highlight any grievances, which in turn can lead to possible dissatisfaction among those affected.

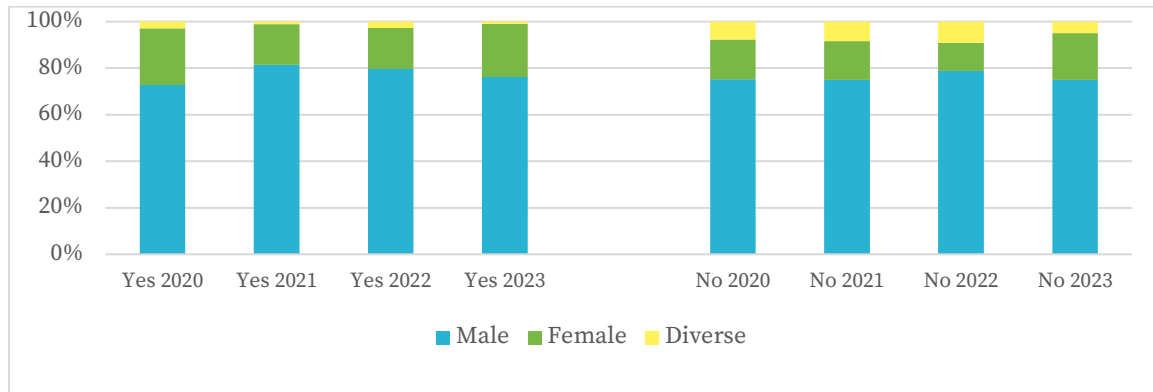


Figure 27: Crosstable "Part of the Spanish State" & "Gender Group" (own interpretation)

Figure 28 shows the cross-tabulation of the feeling of belonging to the Spanish state and the income group. The proportion of the lower income group, € 0-400 per week, is higher in each year for the denial of political identity than for the affirmation. The proportion of the other income group, on the other hand, is generally always greater when affirming political identity than when denying it. The only exceptions to this are the proportion of participants with a weekly salary of €401 to €500 per week in 2023 and the proportion of those earning €501 to €700 in 2022. Here, their proportion is greater in the negative. A lower salary therefore appears to lead to a higher probability of not identifying with the Spanish state. Here, too, the reasons appear to be purely speculative.

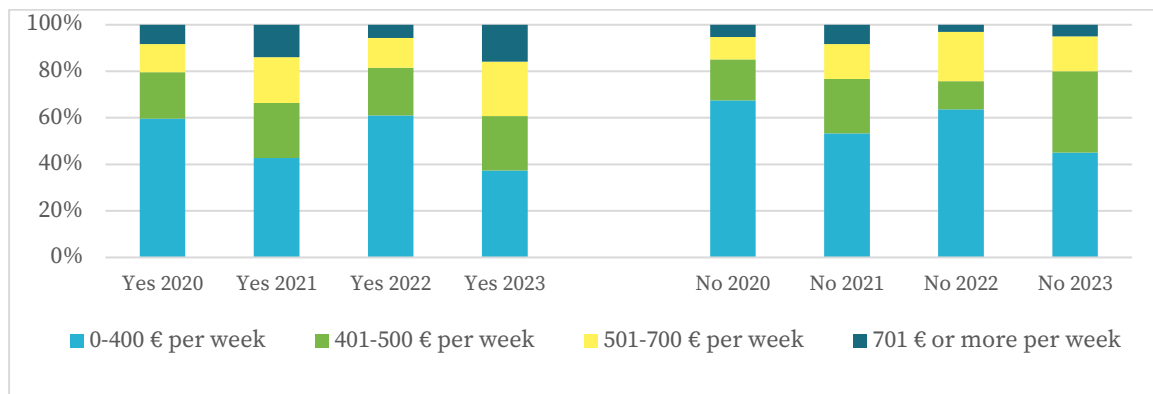


Figure 28: Crosstable "Part of the Spanish State" & "Income groups" (own interpretation)

The comparison of political identity with the level of education shows, in Figure 29, no noticeable differences in the distribution of the proportions of educational levels in the affirmation and denial of identification with the Spanish state in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, however, the proportions of ESO, Bachelor's and Master's graduates are higher in the affirmative than in the negative. In this year, on the other hand, the proportions of PhD holders and those with a higher or intermediate professional qualification show a higher negative identification with the Spanish state than an affirmative one. In 2023, these figures are exactly the other way round in all education groups compared to 2022. The

reasons for these fundamental changes in 2022 and 2023 could be the aforementioned municipal and parliamentary elections. However, these changes cannot be clearly explained by the available data.

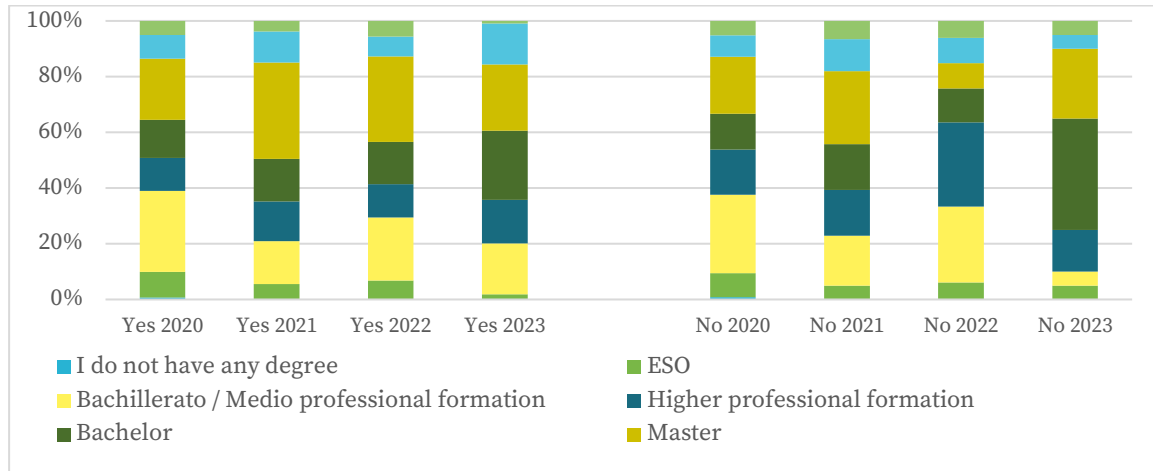


Figure 29: Crosstable "Part of the Spanish State" & "Education groups" (own interpretation)

The final comparison of political identity is with the occupational group in Figure 30. The proportions of pupils, students and trainees are quite similar in 2020 and 2021. However, their shares in the affirmation in 2022 are lower than in the rejection of this political identity. In 2023, on the other hand, the shares are lower in the rejection than in the affirmation. Salaried employees tend to have a larger share in the affirmative in the first two years and a higher share in the negative in 2022 and 2023. Interestingly, this is exactly the opposite for the self-employed; 2020 and 2021 lower and 2022 and 2023 higher share in the affirmative. Unemployed people have a higher proportion of negative responses to identification with the Spanish state in each year. This could be due to a possible projection of the professional situation on the image of the state. Pensioners show a slightly higher proportion of agreeing to identify with the Spanish state in all years except 2023. In 2023, the proportion of approval is around 7%, well behind the proportion of rejection of around 24 percent. Participants who indicated another professional group agreed with this political identity in all years except 2021.

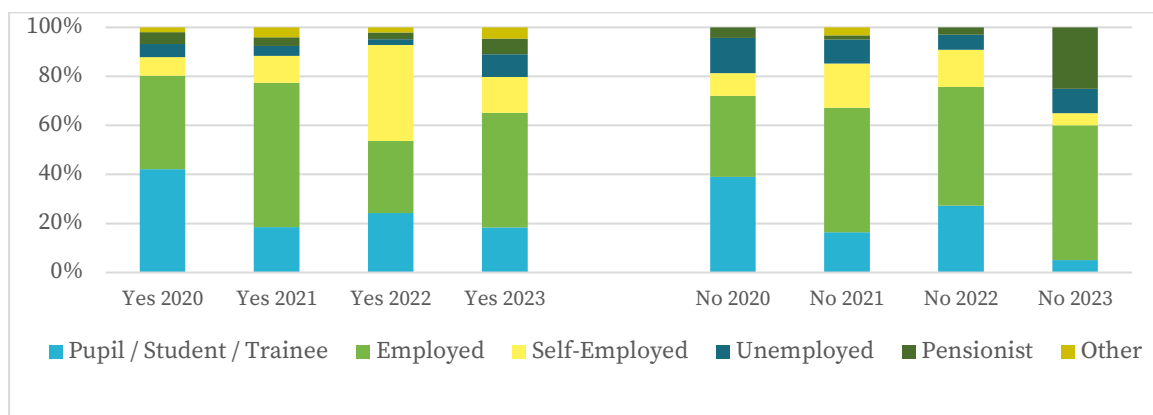


Figure 30: Crosstable "Part of the Spanish State" & "Professional group" (own interpretation)



## DESIRED DEGREE OF AUTONOMY

The third question was aimed at the desired level of autonomy of the participants. The basis for this was, on the one hand, the options from complete independence to greater integration and reduction of autonomy. Regionally, the focus was initially on the current autonomous community and the respective isms (Leonesism, Castilianism and Bercianism). The choices related to the historical region of León and the reunification of the historical region of Castilla are only available since the 2021 survey. The possible degrees of autonomy for the El Bierzo region were only added in 2022. There was no hybrid answer option for “other” alternatives in any year.

These changes in the answer options also explain the changes in the results. In 2020, the main answer at 36.9% was a desire for more autonomy for the autonomous community of Castilla y León. Close behind, preferred by 33.1% of participants, was the desire for less autonomy and more centralization. 23.1% of participants want the status quo to be maintained and the minority of around 7% favored complete independence for Castilla y León.

As the answer options were included, the participants' preferences shifted. In 2021, more autonomy for the historic region of León was the preferred choice for 42.1% of participants. The second most popular preference was again less autonomy and more centralization by 15.3% of participants. On the other hand, 11.4% preferred complete independence for the historic region of León. 7.3% wanted the status quo to be maintained. On the other hand, 6.2% of participants each preferred greater autonomy for the current autonomous community of Castilla y León and the reunified historical region of Castilla. Complete independence for Castilla y León or for the reunified Castilla was only the wish of 1.6% and 0.9% of participants respectively.

In 2022, the proportion of participants wanting more autonomy for León changed to 32.7%. The desire for less autonomy and more centralization increased slightly to 17.2% of participants. This year, 15.2% of participants, more than last year, wanted greater autonomy for Castilla y León. The proportion of those who did not want any change also grew to 10.4%. The number of those with a desire for more autonomy for a reunified Castilla increased to 10.1%. The desire for an independent León was now shared by only 6.4% of participants and that of a completely independent, reunified Castilla by 3.7%. More autonomy for the El Bierzo region was preferred by 2.7% of participants. Bringing up the rear are the desire for statehood for Castilla y León or for El Bierzo for 1.3% and 0.3% of participants respectively.

Looking at the data for 2023, the greatest preference for greater autonomy is also in favour of León for 40.8%. Unlike in previous years, 14.4% of participants favour more autonomy for Castilla y León. The desire for less autonomy and more centralisation is favoured by 12.9% of participants this time. The current status quo is the preference for 9.9%. 6.8%, on the other hand, would like to see an independent state for León. The preference for greater autonomy of a reunified Castilla reaches 6.1% of participants. More autonomy for El Bierzo is favoured by 3.8%. At the bottom of the table are statehood for a reunified Castilla and for El Bierzo with 3.0% and 2.3% respectively. Complete independence for Castilla y León in 2023 is not favoured by any of the participants.

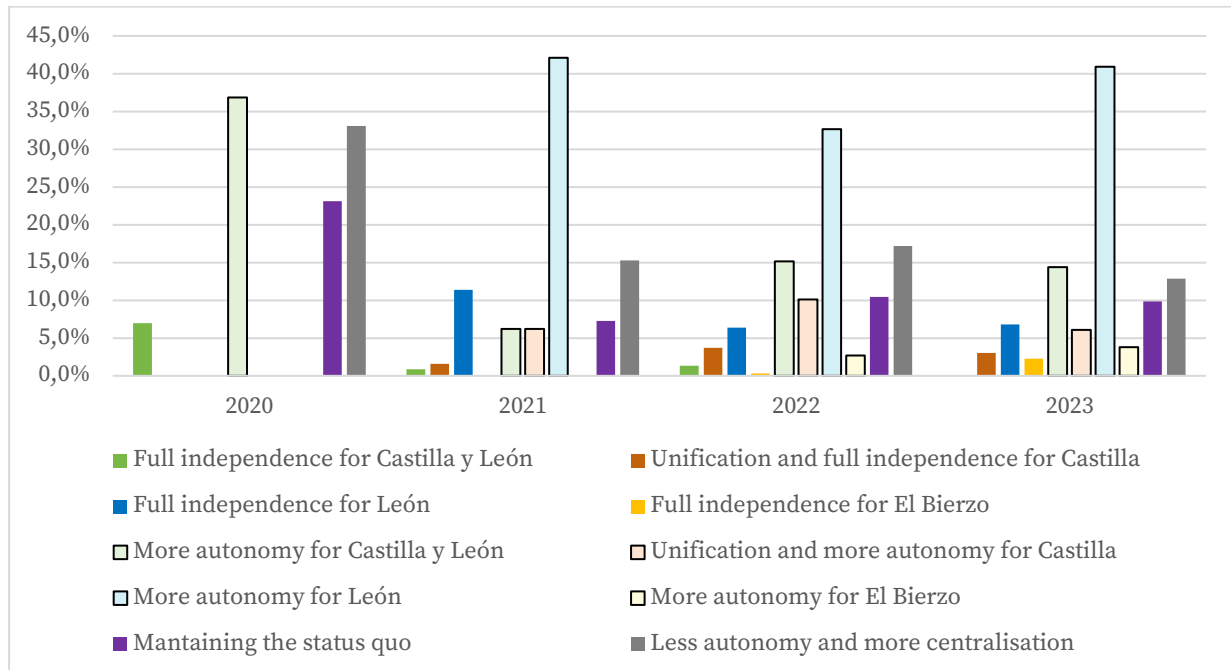


Figure 31: I am in favour of ... (own interpretation)

An explanation for this data is only partially possible. The results relating to the answers with reference to El Bierzo are certainly related to the relatively smaller size of El Bierzo compared to the regions of León and Castilla. A comparison of the desire for autonomy with the stated national or ethnic identity, as shown in Figure 32, is helpful for understanding.

Participants who identify as Galician and those who identify as Basque show a very extreme tendency. For 50 % of Galician participants, there is either a desire for independence from Castilla y León or more autonomy for the autonomous community. The latter was the wish for all Galician participants in 2021. In 2022, on the other hand, these participants wanted either statehood for El Bierzo or more autonomy for the region of León. Finally, in 2023, the preference changed to either statehood or more autonomy for the region of El Bierzo.

In 2020, all Basque participants favoured more autonomy for Castilla y León. In 2021, however, this extreme preference is for maintaining the status quo. Basque participants in 2022 opted for either less autonomy with greater centralisation or more autonomy for Castilla y León. In 2023, on the other hand, there are no participants who identify as Basque.

The results of this identity group are not very meaningful due to the small number of participants.

Another relatively small identity group is that of the Bercians. However, this group is much larger overall than the Galicians or Basques, which increases its significance. In 2020, even before the options relating to the region of El Bierzo were introduced, 20% of Bercian participants opted for less autonomy with simultaneous centralisation, 20% for more autonomy for Castilla y León and 20% for Castilian-Leonese statehood. In contrast, 40% of the participants favoured maintaining the status quo.

In 2021, with the introduction of the Leonese and Castilian response options, the preference shifted. Only 13.8% of Bercian participants still wanted less autonomy and more centralisation. Just as many

favoured more autonomy for Castilla y León. 17.2% of this group of participants favoured independence for the region of León. The majority, on the other hand, 55.2% of the Bercian participants voted in favour of greater autonomy for the historic region of León.

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In 2021, with the introduction of the Leonese and Castilian response options, the preference shifted. Only 13.8% of Bercian participants still wanted less autonomy and more centralisation. Just as many favoured more autonomy for Castilla y León. 17.2% of this group of participants favoured independence for the region of León. The majority, on the other hand, 55.2% of the Bercian participants voted in favour of greater autonomy for the historic region of León.

To summarise, a majority of participants with a Bercian identity are in favour of at least greater autonomy of current sub-regions from the current structure of the autonomous community of Castilla y León. Of course, this does not mean that such participants want to place themselves above other regions or identity groups. The latter is not asked in this research.

Similarly to the Bercian participants, the Leonese 2020 have divided themselves among the still limited choices. 41.8% of the Leonean participants wanted less autonomy and more centralisation. Around 19% of this group of participants favoured maintaining the current status quo. Relatively similar to the Bercian participants, the Leonean participants favoured more autonomy for Castilla y León with 24.5% and Castilian-Leonese statehood with 14.7%. Less autonomy with greater centralisation lost the approval of the Leonese participants in the coming years. In 2021, only 5.5% were in favour, in 2022 only 3.5% and in 2023 not a single one of the Leonese participants was in favour. Approval of the status quo behaved similarly with only around 2% in 2021. In 2022, it increased slightly to 2.4% and finally no one in 2023. Support for greater autonomy for Castilla y León also decreased over time. In 2021 it was around 2.6%, in 2022 it was around 1% and in 2023 none of the Leonese participants. In contrast to this trend, the approval of more autonomy for the region León increases over the years.

In 2021, around 69% were in favor of it, in 2022 it was 77.6% and in 2023 even 86.3% of Leonese participants supported it. The extreme form of autonomy, statehood, for the León region was preferred by 20.2% in 2021, 15.4% in 2022 and finally 11.4% in 2023 of this group of participants. Finally, 2.1% of Leonese participants voted for more autonomy for the El Bierzo region only in 2023.

Participants who identified as Castilian voted 17.4% for less autonomy and more centralization in 2020. Only 10.9% supported the current status quo and around 13% supported statehood for Castilla y León. The majority of Castilian participants, 58.7%, voted for more autonomy for the Autonomous Community of Castilla y León. Similar to the Leonese participants, the preferences of the Castilian participants changed from 2021 onwards due to the expansion of the answer options. In 2021, support for less autonomy and more centralization fell to 12.2%, in 2022 to 15.4% and finally in 2023 to 6.6% of this group of participants. 10.9% of Castilians voted for the current status quo in 2021, 11.2% in 2022 and 24.8% in 2023. The desire for more autonomy for Castilla y León changed to around 30% in 2021, to 14.9% in 2022 and finally back to 31.4% in 2023. Unlike the desire for statehood for Castilla y León,

which has declined over time; In 2021 2.7%, in 2022 only 1.2% of Castilian participants and no one in 2023. The result is somewhat surprising that Castilian participants voted for statehood for the León region with 1.4% in 2021 and 2.9% in 2022. In 2022, 2.9% also preferred more autonomy for León and 1.3% preferred more autonomy for El Bierzo. What is less surprising, however, is that the majority of Castilian participants were in favor of more autonomy for a reunified Castile in 2021 with 32.7%, in 2022 with 36.5% and in 2023 with 24.8%. Complete independence for a reunified Castile was supported by 10.9% in 2021, 14.1% in 2022 and finally 12.3%. When it comes to Castilian identity, these results also seem to indicate the existence of Castilianism. Support for the León region is not a counter-argument to this. After all, Castilianism also supports Leonism.

In 2020, 15.3% of participants who identify as Castilian-Leonese show a preference for less autonomy and less centralisation. In contrast, 25.6% of this participant group favoured the current status quo. However, the majority of 51.1% wanted more autonomy for Castilla y León this year. A minority of 8% were even in favour of complete independence for the autonomous community in question. The preferences of Castilian-Leonese respondents also shifted from 2021 onwards, with 35.5% preferring less autonomy with more centralisation in 2021, 10.8% in 2022 and finally 13.2% in 2023. The current status was favoured by 11.8% of this participant group in 2021, 12.1% in 2022 and none in 2023. In 2021, the option of more autonomy for León was added, which was favoured by 6.6% of Castilian-Leonese participants in that year, 6.8% in 2022 and 13.2% in 2023. The option of more autonomy for a reunified Castilla was favoured by 2.6% in 2021, 35.3% in 2022 and 7% in 2023. In contrast, 1.2% in 2022 and 7% in 2023 were in favour of a reunified Castilla becoming an independent state. Among those who identified themselves as Castilian-Leonese, 42.1% in 2021, 30.9% in 2022 and 59.6% in 2023 were in favour of more autonomy for Castilla y León. Complete independence for Castilla y León, on the other hand, was only favoured by 2.6% of this group of participants in 2021 and 2.8% in 2022.

Except in 2022, the majority of Castilian-Leonese participants favoured at least more autonomy for Castilla y León, which can be seen as a weak argument for the existence of Castilian-Leonese regionalism.

In 2020, 43.1% of participants with a Spanish identity wanted less autonomy and more centralisation. 23.6% of this group of participants favoured the current status, with 32.1% voting in favour of more autonomy for the autonomous community of Castilla y León. The autonomy of Castilla y León was chosen by a 1.2% minority. The latter option was not selected again in the coming years. The majority of Spaniards were in favour of less autonomy and more centralisation in 2021 (36.2%), 2022 (41.6%) and 2023 (30.9%). The current status, on the other hand, was favoured by 14.6% in 2021, 14.9% in 2022 and 27.7% in 2023. Only in 2023 were 3.6% of participants with a Spanish identity in favour of more autonomy or statehood for the region of El Bierzo. More autonomy for León was favoured by 27% of this group of participants in 2021, 19.8% in 2022 and 13.6% in 2023. The minority of 2.2% in 2021, 1.5% in 2022 and 3.6% in 2023 wanted independence for León. Slightly more popular among the Spanish participants was more autonomy for a reunified Castilla with 2.7% in 2021, 6.4% in 2022 and finally 6.8% in 2023. 17.3% in 2021, 14.9% in 2022 and 10.5% in 2023 of this group of participants voted for more autonomy for Castilla y León. Thus, the participants with a Spanish predominant identity are the ones who tend to favour less autonomy with more centralisation. However, regional strengthening through at least more autonomy is also widespread, albeit to a lesser extent.

In 2020, 26.2% of participants who identify as Iberian wanted less autonomy and more centralization. This year, 29.5% were in favor of the current status and a majority of 37.7% were in favor of more autonomy for Castilla y León. A minority of 6.6% of this group of participants wanted complete independence. The latter option only became 12.5% in 2022. Less autonomy with centralization was supported by 15.3% in 2021 and 76.7% in 2023. Support for the current status among this group of participants was 8.5% in 2021 and 29.2% in 2022. More autonomy for León was supported by 33.9% of them in 2021 and 29.2% in 2022. 15.3% wanted a Leonese independent state in 2021 and 3.4% wanted more autonomy from a reunified Castilla. With 23.7% in 2021, with 29.2% in 2022 and 2023 with 26.7% of this group of participants voted for greater autonomy for Castilla y León.

These results are certainly also due to the small number of participants who stated an Iberian identity.

Another group of participants with a small number is the group with other national or ethnic identities. In 2020, around 33.7% wanted less autonomy and more centralization. 19.3% of you voted for the current status. 32.7% wanted more autonomy for Castilla y León and 14.3% wanted their own Castile-Leonese state. Only 3.5% of this group of participants had the latter selection in 2021. With the expanded choice, those in favor of less autonomy with more centralization decreased to 7% in 2021, to 12.3% in 2022 and finally to 10.5% in 2023. The current status was supported by 12.3% in 2021, 5.3% in 2022 and 10.5% in 2023. With the introduction of the statehood option for El Bierzo, 5.3% of this group of participants voted in 2022 and 10.5% in 2023. More autonomy for León was wanted by 35.1% in 2021, 47.4% in 2022 and 30.3% in 2023. There were also supporters of a separate Leonese state with 15.8% in 2021, 17.5% in 2022 and 19.7% in 2023. On the other hand, 3.5% of participants with a different predominant identity wanted more autonomy for a reunified Castilla in 2021 and 10.5% in 2023. Likewise, in 2023, 10.5% wanted statehood for a reunified Castilla. Ultimately, 24.6% in 2021 and 12.3% in 2022 supported more autonomy for Castilla y León.

All identity groups, except the Spanish, the Iberian 2023 and the other identities 2020, show a majority of a desire for at least greater autonomy of regions. The extreme form of autonomy, statehood, is also very common. These results show that participants who identify nationally or ethnically with a subregion want more autonomy for these regions. Thus, the Bercian, Leonese and Castilian results can be seen as small evidence of the existence of Bercianism, Leonism and Castilianism in Castilla y León. The existence of a Castilian-Leonese regionalism seems also to be proven. The extent to which these movements are fought for is not answered here. Nevertheless, a connection between identification and the desired degree of autonomy seems to have been found here.

Only those participants who indicated a Spanish identity were mostly in favor of a reduction in autonomy and greater centralization.

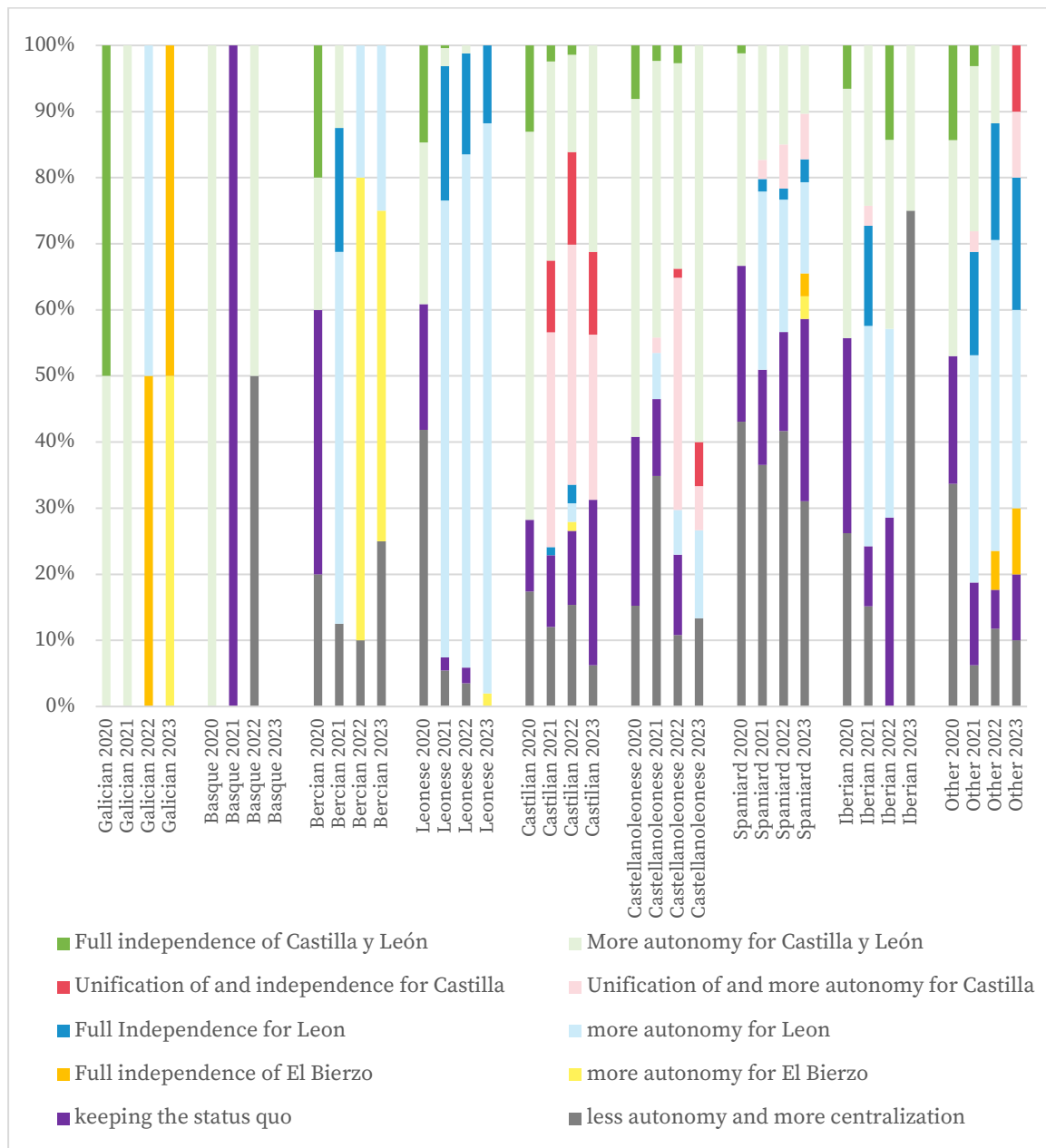


Figure 32: Crosstable "I am in Favour of..." & "Ethnic or national group" (own interpretation)

To compare the desired degree of autonomy to the respective provinces in the autonomous community, an average view over the years was used. Figure 33 shows this consideration and the highest results per province. According to this, the current status of 36.01% is mainly preferred by the participants from Segovia. The majority of participants from Burgos, however, favored the greater autonomy of a reunified Castilla with an average of 25.57%. Participants from the provinces of León, Salamanca and Zamora, as well as those who have lived or never lived in Castilla y León, mostly want greater autonomy for the historic region of León. The majority of respondents from Palencia, Valladolid, Ávila and Soria, on average, supported greater autonomy for Castilla y León. It is striking that the results of the provinces of León, Zamora and Ávila were chosen on average by at least every second participant,

in León even every third. The smallest majority lives in Palencia, at 30% on average. The average majority of results is lowest among participants who have never lived in Castilla y León.

It is very clear that the historical region of León, the provinces of León, Salamanca and Zamora, is clearly different from the other provinces in Castilla y León. Independence movements can no longer be found in the average analysis per province. One reason could be that these movements exist, but are not so prominent. The desired degrees of autonomy for the El Bierzo region in any form cannot be found either. This is clearly due to the small number of supporters and the way they are viewed. El Bierzo is a region within the province of León, but not a province and is therefore numerically included in the results for the province of León. Therefore, this cannot be shown as an average majority.

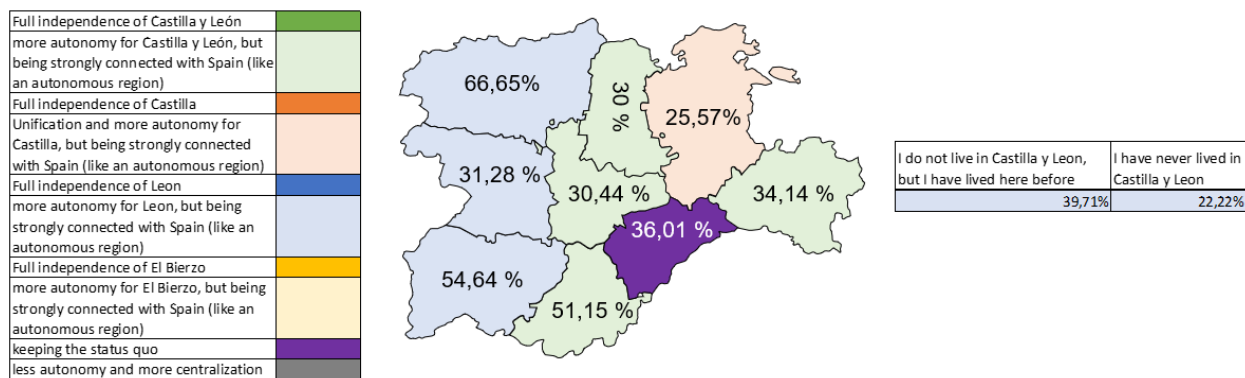


Figure 33: Highest average result over the years "I am in Favour..." per province (own interpretation)

The consideration of the desired degree of autonomy in relation to the age group can be found in Figure 34. Precisely because of the small number of participants in the 0-14 age group, the results should only be viewed with caution. In 2020, 45.5% of this group of participants preferred greater autonomy for Castilla y León. The age groups of 15–19-year-olds with 42.5% and 20-29-year-olds with 45.3% followed this opinion. All other age groups aged 30 and over preferred less autonomy and more centralization in 2020; 30-39 at 42.3%, 40-49 at 52.4%, 50-59 at 42.6% and 60 or older at 32.8%. In 2021, the age group of participants under 14 wanted less autonomy and more centralization. This opinion changed to a 100% decision for the current status in 2022. In 2023 there was no participant under the age of 14. The majority of 27.4% of 15-19-year-olds voted in 2021 either for more autonomy for Castilla y León or for more autonomy for León. In 2022, the majority was 36.6% in favour of more autonomy for León. In 2023, the majority of 37.9% were in favour of both more autonomy for León and maintaining the status quo. The majority of participants between the ages of 20 and 29 preferred more autonomy for León with around 42% in 2021, 33.9% in 2022 and 37.6% in 2023. The 30–39-year-olds, on the other hand, changed the majority of their information over the years. In 2021 and 2023 it was 50.2 and 60% for more autonomy for León. In 2022, however, the majority of 31.8% preferred reducing autonomy and more centralization. The majority of 40–49-year-olds wanted more autonomy for León in all years with 45.9% in 2021, 2022 with 44.2% and 2023 with 42.9%. Similar to the 20–29-year-olds, the majority of the 50-59-year-olds favour increasing autonomy for León in 2021 with 33.6% and in 2023 with 54.3%. In 2022, their majority shifted from 38.1% to the option with less autonomy and greater centralization. A majority of 44.4% of participants aged 60 and over voted for more autonomy for León in 2021. In 2022, however, a

majority of 30% wanted less autonomy and more centralization. Finally, in 2023, the majority of this group of participants switched to more autonomy for Castilla y León with 20.1% and with 20.1% for less autonomy and more centralization.

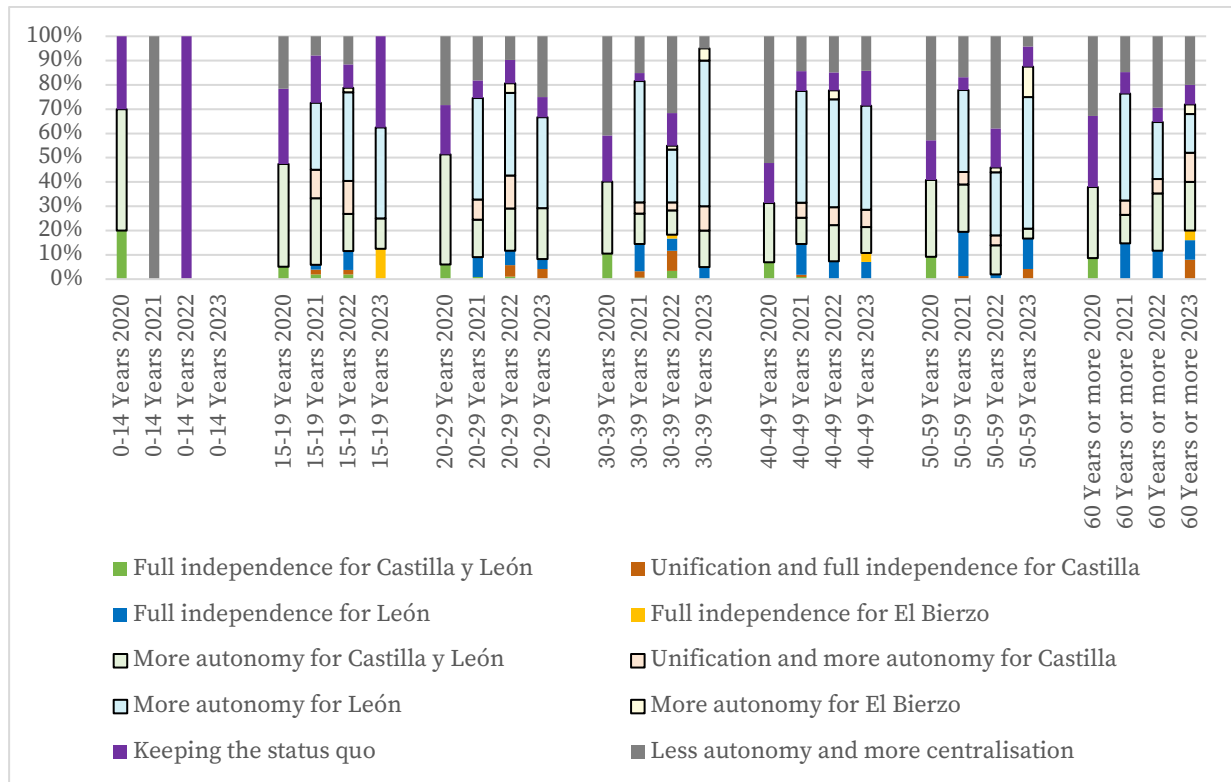


Figure 34: Crosstable "I am in favour of ..." & "Age group" (own interpretation)

When comparing the level of education with the results of the desired degree of autonomy, as shown in Figure 35, the low number of participants in the group without a degree is once again striking. Only in 2020 were there participants in this group, the majority of whom were in favour of the current status. Participants with a degree from ESO, the compulsory secondary level in Spain, were mostly in favour of more autonomy for Castilla y León in 2020 with 46.7%. With the expansion of the response options, the majority shifted in favour of more autonomy for León in 2021 with 31.5% and in 2023 with 69.6%. Only in 2022 was the majority split in favour of more autonomy for Castilla y León or for León with 20.9% each. The majority of those who have completed the Bachillerato or an intermediate vocational qualification chose more autonomy for Castilla y León in 2020 with 39.8%. In the following years, the majority shifted to more autonomy for León with 36.7% in 2021, 34.9% in 2022 and 42.9% in 2023. The majority of participants with higher vocational training wanted more autonomy for Castilla y León in 2020 with 36%. Similar to the previous group of participants, the majority shifted to more autonomy for León with 42.1% in 2021, 19.8% in 2022 and 45.2% in 2023. The distribution of bachelor's graduates is mostly similar to that of bachelor's degree holders. For the majority of bachelor's graduates, 34.8% are in favour of more



autonomy for Castilla y León in 2020, 42.5% in 2021, 39.2% in 2022 and 28.8% in 2023. Master's graduates preferred less autonomy and more centralisation in 2020 with 43.8%. After that, the majority favoured more autonomy for León, 46.9% in 2021, 40.1% in 2022 and 38.8% in 2023. PhD holders had a similar distribution of majorities as the Master's graduates. In 2020, the majority of 42.4% favoured less autonomy and more centralisation. In 2021 and 2023, on the other hand, the majority of this participant group favoured more autonomy for León with 41.9% and 53% respectively. In 2022, however, the majority of 28.4% favoured more autonomy for Castilla y León.

Once again, the possible degrees of autonomy for the region of El Bierzo are not represented by a majority due to the low number of supporters and small region. Furthermore, in all levels of education from 2021 onwards, the majority is always in favour of at least more autonomy for one of the regions mentioned.

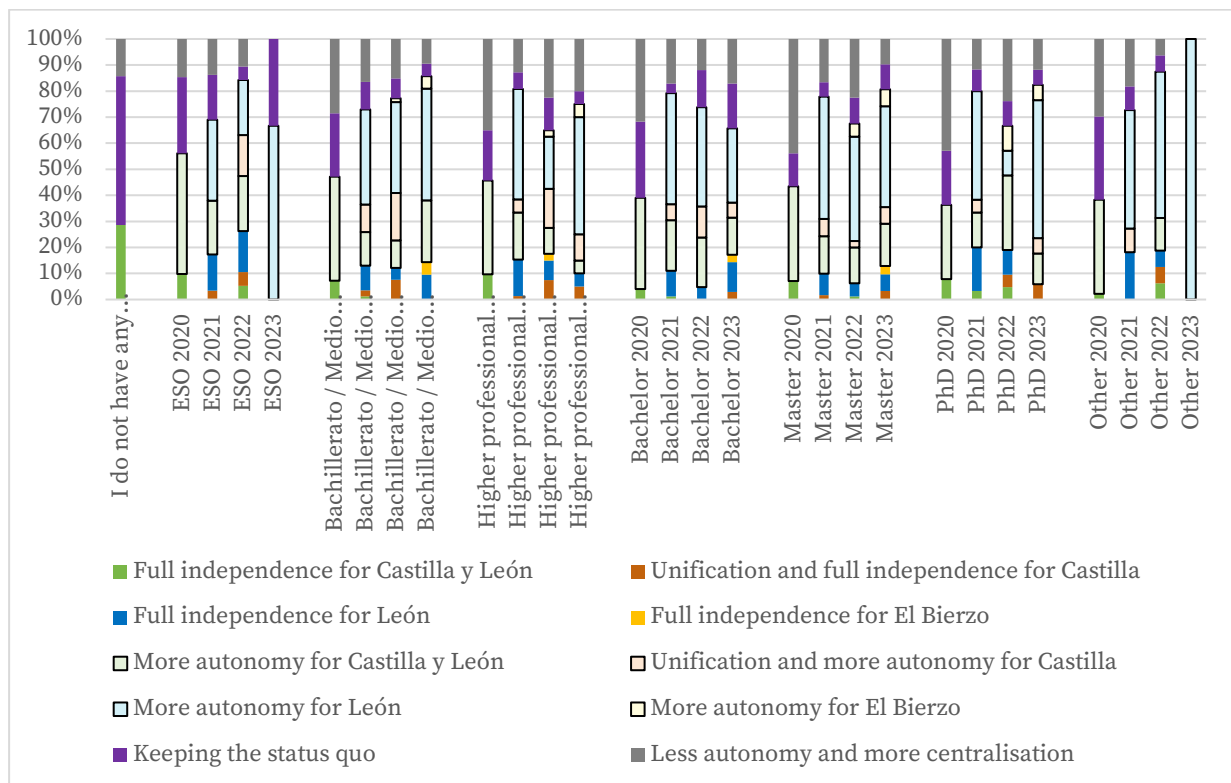


Figure 35: Crosstable "I am in Favour of ..." & "Education level" (own interpretation)

A comparison of the desired degree of autonomy with the occupational groups, as shown in Figure 36, also reveals that the majority of all participants from 2021 are in favour of a choice of at least more autonomy for a region. The majority of these surveys vote in favour of more autonomy for León. There are no surprising new results to be found in this comparison.

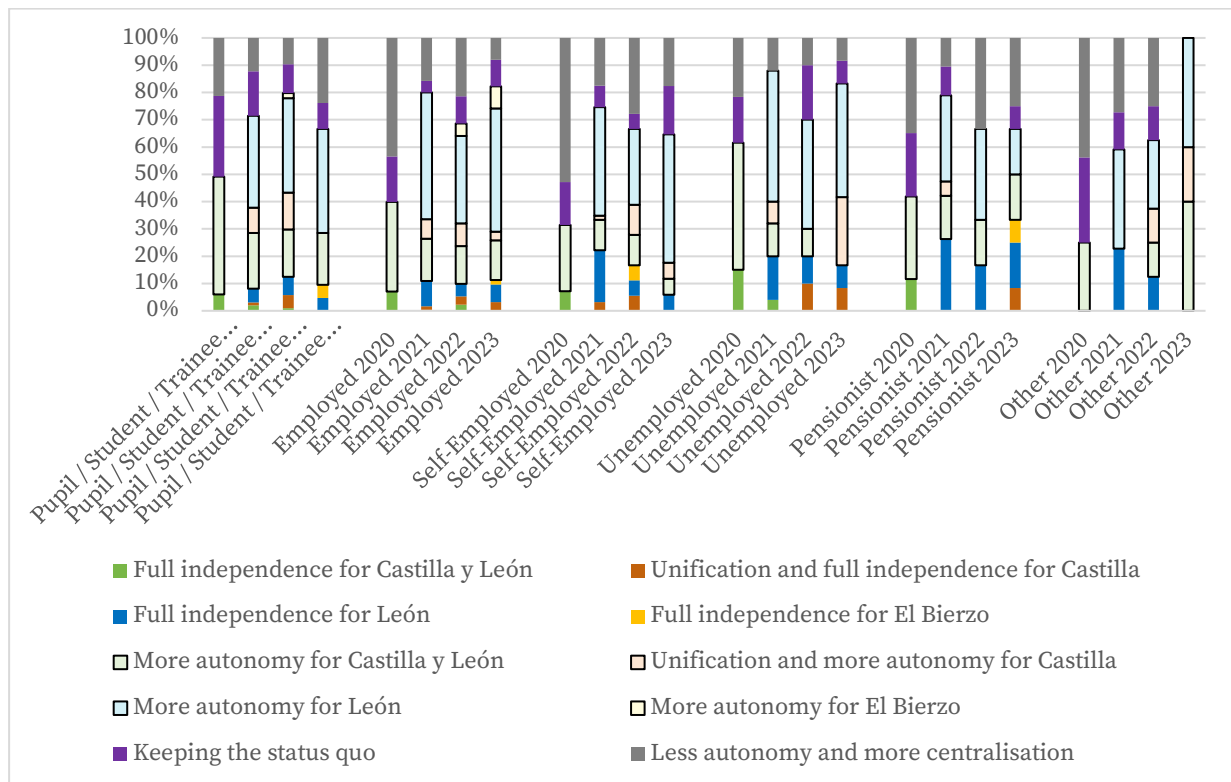


Figure 36: Crosstable "I am in Favour of ..." & "Professional group" (own interpretation)

## Summary and Conclusion

After the introduction, the Kingdom of Spain and the autonomous community of Castilla y León were presented. The historical territorial development then shows that Castilla is the historical hegemonic power of Spain and that it had already been a hegemonic power before the unification of Spain.

Therefore, there was already an autonomous region of León within Spain, which was later united with parts of Castilla. This historical pluralism of SPAIN and Castilla y León is strengthened by linguistic pluralism. In addition to Spanish (called Castilian), four other languages are spoken in Castilla y León, which are not classified as co-official, but nevertheless protected languages.

As an effect of pluralism, the respective isms, concepts for promoting identity and even the fight for more autonomy, are scientifically identified. In Castilla y León, Leonese and Castilianism are particularly worth mentioning. Due to its small regional scope, Bercianism is less researched. But Castilian-Leonese regionalism should also be mentioned here.

The surveys show that all national or ethnic identity feelings asked are present. Castilla y León then has Galicians, Basques, Bercians, Leonese, Castilian, but also Castile-Leonese as well as Spaniards and Iberians present. It should be said here that the selection of this feeling did not allow for more choice and therefore no discrimination or endorsement of other feelings can be recognized. So you can feel Bercian, Leonese and Spanish at the same time. Especially in Leon, Salamanca and Zamora, provinces of the historical region of León, host more participants with Leonese identity. Castilians or Spaniards, on the other hand, tend to live in the other provinces, which are closer to the historical region of Castilla.

Political identification with the Spanish state, on the other hand, seems to be generally very high among the participants. In comparison with national or ethnic identification, there does not appear to be any significant difference. Thus, one can support that the respective isms do not necessarily exclude membership within the Spanish state.

When asked about the desired level of autonomy, a majority was identified in each year for increased regional autonomy. With the expansion of choices from 2021, the desire for regional autonomy has shifted. The majority are in favour of Leonese autonomy. But statehood, both for Leon, for Castilla, for El Bierzo or for Castilla y León, was also chosen, albeit to a small extent. In comparison with the information on national or regional identity, one can see the clear connection between a regional identity and a higher desire for autonomy. Only those who mostly identified as Spanish were in favour of less autonomy with greater centralization. But not only the identity but also the place of residence of the participants shows a preference for more autonomy. Above all, those who lived in the historic region of León were in favour of more Leonese autonomy. Only the participants from Segovia preferred the current status quo. Further demographic comparisons do not lead to any change in the results.

Thus, this paper shows that Bercianism, Leonesism and Castilianism as well as Castilian-Leonese regionalism exist in Castilla y León. They are more an expression of greater autonomy for the respective region while at the same time majority support for the Spanish state. Leonesism appears to be the most strongly represented.

However, this paper does not examine the transferability to the entire population. Therefore, further research on this topic is necessary.

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