

# **Representation Gaps: Changes in Popular Preferences and the Structure of Partisan Competition in the Developed Democracies**

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## **Abstract**

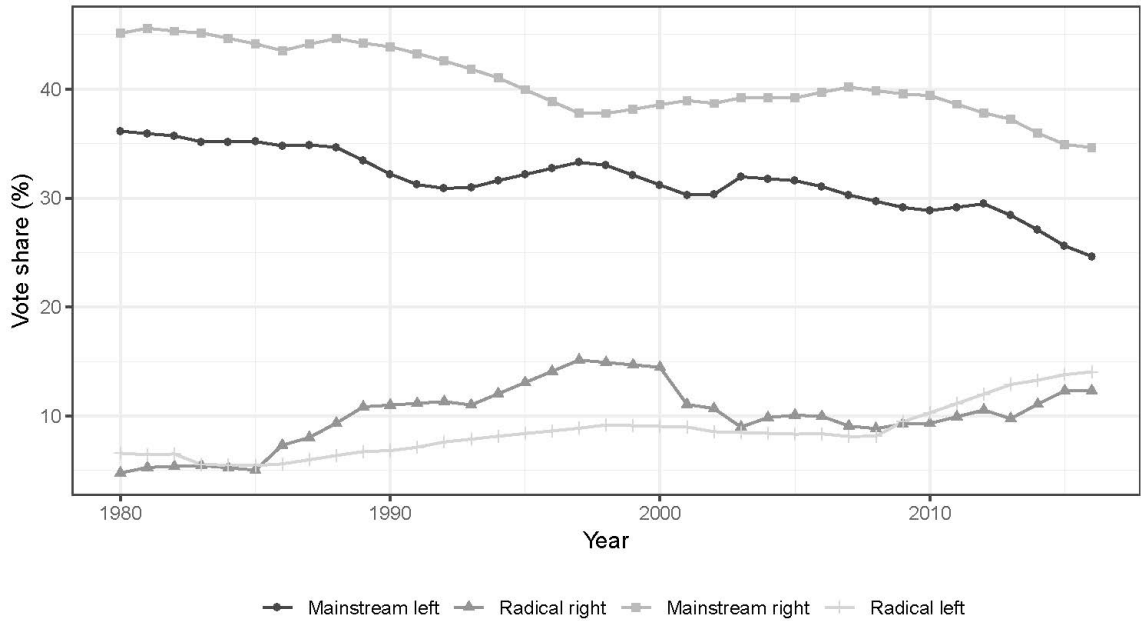
This paper examines the quality of electoral representation in western democracies, by comparing movements in the political preferences of citizens and the positions of political parties within the two-dimensional electoral space of eight countries between 1990 and 2009 with special attention to the preferences of occupational groups. This longitudinal approach focused on two issue-dimensions supplements the cross-sectional studies focused on left/right placement more common in the literature; and in contrast to its more sanguine conclusions, we find significant representation gaps. Over a period in which parties converged to the center on economic issues, the positions of most citizens moved to the left; and significant numbers remained in a quadrant of the electoral space where there are few parties. Those citizens are more likely than others to lack confidence in the legislature and less likely to vote. These representation gaps may be eroding support for mainstream parties and promoting radical alternatives.

The electoral politics of the western democracies are in turbulence as longstanding parties lose their grip on electorates and a variety of new challengers compete with them for votes. Since 1980, the share of the vote secured by mainstream center-right and center-left parties across the developed democracies has declined from about 70% to barely 50%. In many countries, new parties are attracting the electorate of older ones (see Figure 1). The Netherlands is an extreme case but far from unique: eleven parties currently secure support from more than 5% of Dutch voters, and no party secures more than 15% support. France is now led by a party that did not exist five years ago, and at the national and regional levels of many countries, governance is often based on coalitions cobbled together from parties at the center and extremes of the political spectrum.

The most striking development has been rising support for parties of the radical right and left. In 1980 those parties took barely 10% of the vote in European legislative elections. Today they command more than 20% of that vote. Moreover, many of them campaign on populist platforms posing a moral opposition between a corrupt political establishment and a virtuous ‘people’ with promises to end ‘politics as usual’ that threaten liberal democracy itself in some countries. Declining votes for established parties and rising support for radical parties are two sides of the same coin (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2018).

How are these developments to be explained? The two most prominent sets of explanations focus on the economic and cultural sources of popular discontent, and they have some purchase on the problem. The first associates discontent with the adverse effects of skill-biased technological change, outsourcing, and import competition that have fallen with special force on workers in routine jobs and declining regions (cf. Colantone and

**Figure 1: Share of parliamentary votes received by types of party 1980-2016**



*Note:* Countries included: Sweden, Netherlands, France, Italy, Germany, UK and Norway.  
*Sources:* Comparative Manifesto Project; ParlGov.

Stanig 2018; for reviews see: Golder 2016; Muis and Immerzuil 2017). These studies see declining votes for mainstream parties and increasing support for radical ones as the manifestation of an especially intense type of retrospective voting born of deep economic discontent.

The second set of explanations locates the sources of rising support for radical parties or populist candidates in an increasingly salient disconnect between the traditional values held by many voters and the cosmopolitan values expressed by many elites (cf. Inglehart and Norris 2017). Although anti-immigrant sentiments anchor the appeals of most radical right candidates, their support also flows from a general sense of ‘nostalgic

deprivation' that leaves many people dismayed at the direction of society and convinced that established parties no longer defend a traditional national culture to which they are attached (Gest *et al.* 2017). Such studies see contemporary electoral turbulence as the expression of a new identity politics.

These two types of explanations for contemporary discontent are not mutually exclusive (Gidron and Hall 2018) but they are incomplete, not least because they say little about the 'supply side' of politics beyond the observation that populist candidates must come forward if citizens are to vote for them (Guiso *et al.* 2017). In this paper, we explore the possibility that another type of factor may lie behind the decline of established parties and the rise of radical challengers, namely, failures of representation. Our intuition is that citizens may be abandoning mainstream parties and flocking to anti-establishment alternatives not only because they are dissatisfied with their economic or cultural situation but because those mainstream political parties have not been expressing the views of large segments of the electorate in recent decades. Alongside these economic and cultural explanations for contemporary electoral turbulence, we consider a complementary *political* explanation. We suspect that the crisis of contemporary electoral politics is, to some extent, a crisis of political representation.

This contention has *ex ante* plausibility because opinion surveys across the developed democracies reveal widespread distrust of politicians and political parties; and supporters of radical parties typically claim that established politicians pay little attention to their views (Foster and Frieden 2017; Spruyt *et al.* 2016). However, it is less clear whether those sentiments, which can be motivated by generalized discontent, also stem from failures of representation of the sort that arise when the positions taken by political

parties fail to reflect the preferences of large segments of the electorate. In this paper, we consider whether electoral politics in the developed democracies suffers from such failures of representation.

The existing literature is divided on that issue. On the one hand, some analysts suggest that the policy positions taken by established political parties have contributed to the rise of populism. Following the thoughtful lament of Mair (2013), Hopkin and Blyth (2018) argue that the transformation of catch-all parties into cartel parties severed their links to the electorate in terms that have made western democracies manifestly unrepresentative. However, they do not test that proposition against electoral data. A more extensive literature suggests that convergence toward the center in the economic platforms of center-left and center-right parties may have driven voters toward more radical parties (Kitschelt 1995; van der Brug *et al.* 2005; Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Rooduijn *et al.* 2016; for reviews see Mudde 2007; Kitschelt 2007; Bornschier 2018). However, most of these studies look only at the positions of mainstream parties without comparing their positions to the distribution of voters' preferences. Most also focus on one point in time rather than at the movement of preferences and party positions over time.<sup>1</sup>

This cross-sectional bias also affects the value of several related literatures. It is clear, for instance, that the cultural values espoused by educated elites and many working people differ (Oesch and Rennwald 2018). But we know little about whether those differences have increased in recent years in ways that might contribute to an evolving crisis of representation or whether the differences simply reflect a longstanding divergence that has acquired more contemporary political resonance. Much the same can be said of the important, if controversial, literature that finds changes in policy more responsive to

the views of the wealthy than of median voters (Gilens and Page 2014; cf. Elkjaer and Iversen 2018). This type of representational failure might contribute to declining support for established parties if it has deepened over recent years, but by and large we do not know whether it has. There is a need for studies that examine how the representativeness of party systems has changed over time.

On the other hand, many of the most careful studies of the representativeness of contemporary political parties conclude that party positions reflect the positions of voters relatively well (Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 2000; Dalton *et al.* 2011; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012; for a review see Adams 2012). However, most of these studies suffer from four limitations. They usually compare the positions that parties take to the positions taken by voters for those parties, leaving aside the issue of how well party systems represent non-voters. They are all cross-sectional, revealing little about whether the representativeness of party systems has changed over time. And, with a few exceptions (eg. Dalton 2017, 2018), they are based on comparisons between the positions of parties and voters on a general left-right spectrum rather than on specific issue dimensions. As Thomassen (2012) notes, these results are inherently ambiguous because the concepts of ‘left’ and ‘right’ can mean different things to different people.

That problem is especially acute if the contemporary issue space is multidimensional, as many analysts contend (Kitschelt 1994, 1995; Kriesi *et al.* 2008; Van der Brug and Van Spanje 2009; Bornschier 2010). In such contexts, citizens may be well-represented on one issue dimension but badly represented on another. Two of the scholars who have done the most to illuminate the two-dimensional issue space that characterizes most contemporary democracies write relatively favorably about the quality of

representation within it. Kriesi *et al.* (2006, 2008) emphasizes the isomorphism he finds in the dimensionality of voter preferences and party positions. Kitschelt (2004: 1) argues that “the responsiveness of political parties to citizens’ demands has increased in recent decades.” But both judgments are qualified: Kriesi (2008: 327) notes that some parts of the issue space contain many voters but no parties, and Kitschelt’s judgment is based mainly on the decline in corrupt relationships that once limited the responsiveness of parties to voters.

In sum, while there are reasons to suspect that western electoral systems may have become less representative in recent years, there is no consensus on whether that is so or, if it is, in what respects electoral systems may be unrepresentative. Our objective in this paper is to shed light on this issue by examining the movement of citizens and parties within a two-dimensional electoral space across eight developed democracies between 1990 and 2009 – the longest period for which we could secure adequate data and one marked by the rise of radical parties. Instead of looking only at the positions of a party’s partisans, we consider the positions taken by all adult citizens, including potential non-voters. We are interested in how the distribution of citizens’ opinions changed over that period and whether those changes correspond to changes in party platforms. Our results reveal some failures of representation serious enough to warrant the view that they could contribute to declining support for established parties and rising support for more radical parties.

Finally, we contribute to an emerging literature that joins issues in comparative political economy to electoral politics (for representative works see: Kitschelt and Rehm 2014; Beramendi *et al.* 2015; Iversen and Soskice 2015). This literature emphasizes how

socioeconomic developments, such as the transition from manufacturing to services or skill-biased technological change, alter the political preferences and solidarity of groups within the electorate, often through their effects on occupational structure (see also Wren 2013; Boix 2019; Iversen and Soskice 2019). One of the core contentions in this field is that socioeconomic changes have dissolved the bonds of material interest and cultural solidarity that once pitted a blue-collar working class against a white-collar middle class. In place of that class cleavage, many political economists now see a fissiparous electoral arena occupied by a more variegated set of occupational groups with divergent interests and views. Iversen and Soskice (2015) argue, for instance, that technological change has pushed low-skilled workers out of manufacturing into ‘outsider’ positions in dual labor markets, thereby driving a wedge between the policy preferences of skilled and unskilled manual workers (see also Rueda 2005; Palier and Thelen 2010).

Kitschelt and Rehm (2014) contend that the autonomy and social interaction associated with many jobs in the expanding service sector incline those who hold them to values that are more cosmopolitan than those held by workers in routine positions, while Wren and Rehm (2013) expect managers to hold less cosmopolitan views than socio-cultural professionals (see also Oesch and Rennwald 2018). These arguments suggest that, compared to a period when parties could speak for a few relatively coherent groups organized by social class or religion, recent economic developments have increased the representational challenges facing democratic political parties.

Accordingly, we will be especially attentive to the location of various occupational groups in the electoral space and how they move over time. We will assess whether the divisions in political preferences among occupational groups anticipated by this literature

have opened up, and to what extent their current preferences are reflected in the positions taken by political parties.

### **Analytical expectations**

Many factors go into effective democratic representation, not all of them electoral; and there are multiple ways of construing the representativeness of an electoral system (cf. Pitkin 1967; Manin 1997; Mansbridge 2003, 2009). Scholars interested in such issues enumerate a variety of concerns, including how well the ethnic or gender composition of electorates is reproduced in legislatures, whether electoral rules allow smaller parties to express the views of overlooked segments of the electorate, the potential for party alternation in government, and whether governments have the capacity to implement their mandates (for overviews, see Alonso *et al.* 2012; Bühlmann and Fivaz 2018).

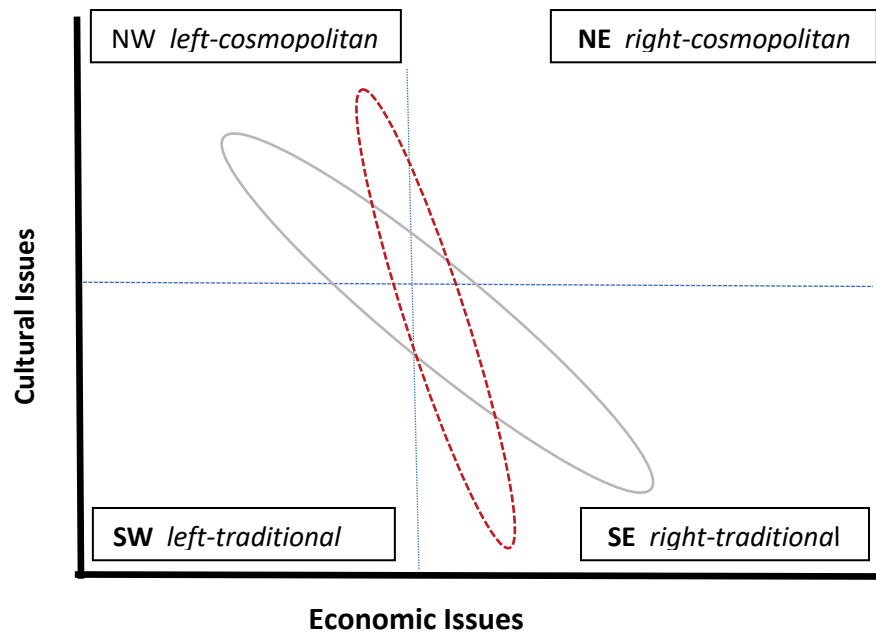
In this paper, we focus on one factor conditioning the quality of electoral representation, namely, how well the issue positions taken by political parties reflect popular preferences within the electorate. Although this is only one among several pertinent factors, it is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for effective representation. If parties do not speak for the views of citizens, those views will not be well represented through the electoral system.

We are especially interested in whether movements over time in the positions of political parties correspond to movements in the views of citizens. To some extent that posture is forced on us. As scholars of electoral representation have long noted, cross-national data placing the positions of parties on precisely the same scales as those of citizens is rare, which is why many resort to measuring the position of parties by reference

to the positions voters attribute to them (cf. Hellwig 2014). Accordingly, we assess the positions of citizens and parties on scales that are largely commensurable, but not identical, and form our principal judgments about whether parties represent the views of citizens by reference to whether the two move in tandem over time, with some reference to positioning within broad swaths of this electoral space.

In line with a large literature, we posit an electoral space characterized by two cross-cutting issue dimensions, one economic and the other largely cultural (Kitschelt 1994, 1995; Kriesi *et al.* 2006, 2008; Bornschieer 2010).<sup>2</sup> Although the weights that voters and parties assign to specific issues within these dimensions may vary across countries and time, there seems to be broad consistency in the core set of issues associated with each dimension (Kriesi 2008: 271; Häusermann and Kriesi 2015). The positions that voters and parties take on the economic dimension reflect their levels of support for income redistribution, state intervention and market competition, while their positions on the cultural dimension indicate their stances on immigration, race, gay rights and gender rights. We will term positions at one end of the cultural spectrum ‘cosmopolitan’ and those toward the other end ‘traditional’ and refer to positions along the economic spectrum as ‘left’ or ‘right’.<sup>3</sup> This yields the electoral space portrayed in Figure 2. Although there are few studies of how citizens’ positions have changed over time, the existing literature offers a number of conjectures that provide a starting-point for this inquiry.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 2: The two-dimensional electoral space**



*A quadrant problematic for representation*

Multiple studies based on manifesto data, expert surveys and media reports have found that, during the 1990s, most political parties in the western democracies positioned themselves along a diagonal running from the top of the north-west (NW) quadrant in Figure 2, which reflects left positions on economic issues and cosmopolitan positions on cultural issues, to the bottom of the south-east (SE) quadrant, which reflects right positions on economic issues and traditional positions on cultural issues. That diagonal is represented by the solid ellipse in Figure 2 (Kitschelt 1994; Kriesi *et al.* 2008; Rovny and Edwards 2012; Kurella and Rosset 2017). Few parties were located in the south-west (SW) quadrant of the electoral space. Several scholars point to the potential problem this poses for

effective representation, but the magnitude of that problem depends on how many citizens are located in this quadrant and who they are (Lefkofridi *et al.* 2014; Kurella and Rosset 2017). Van der Brug and van Spanje (2009) call for further inquiry into the socioeconomic background of those left-traditional citizens. Accordingly, we examine the number of citizens whose views locate them in that portion of the electoral space, their occupational backgrounds, and whether their numbers diminished or rose between 1990 and 2009.

### *Movement of parties*

The literature generates two expectations about the movement of parties over the course of the 1990s and early 2000s, one potentially propitious for representation and the other with more uncertain implications. Several studies suggest that some radical right parties, initially located in the SE quadrant of the electoral space, moved left on economic issues in recent years in order to broaden their appeal to the working class (Kriesi 2008: 327; Rovny 2012; Lefkofridi and Michel 2014; Harteveld 2016); and we will explore whether that movement was significant enough to mitigate the potential problem of representation in the SW quadrant. Other studies find a convergence in the economic platforms of mainstream center-left and center-right parties over this period, marked by especially large movements of the center-left toward the right, and we will look for that as well (Kitschelt 2004; Azmanova 2004; Iversen 2006; Kriesi et al. 2008).

The literature is largely silent about how parties might have moved on cultural issues; but standard spatial analysis suggests that, as party positions converge on economic issues, cultural issues should become a more important basis for partisan competition (Kitschelt 2007; Inglehart and Norris 2017). Thus, over time, we should see more emphasis

on cultural issues relative to economic issues in parties' electoral appeals; and the distance between parties on cultural issues may have become larger. The effect of these developments would be to shift the axis of party competition toward the vertical, as displayed by the dotted lines in Figure 2.

### *Movement of citizens*

Whether such movements among parties improve or erode the representativeness of party systems depends on corresponding movements among citizens. Kitschelt (2004) anticipates a parallel shift among voters, marked by a narrowing of their views on economic issues and growing divergence in their views about cultural issues. His rationale is that the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 discredited interventionist economic policies and the costs of the welfare state have reduced expectations about redistribution. At the same time, the expansion of service sector jobs conducive to cosmopolitan values may have widened the gap on cultural issues between citizens in service occupations and those in manual employment. The implication is that voters now disagree less about economic issues and more about cultural ones.

Several other strands of literature call these propositions about the movement of citizens into question. Scholars of political culture anticipate relatively-broad movements over these decades toward cosmopolitan values; and these might be large enough to narrow the gap between manual workers and service-sector workers on such issues (Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Bartels 2013). Conversely, much of the recent literature in comparative political economy argues that the views of different occupational groups on economic issues have become more variegated over this period, as differences of material interest

open up between skilled and unskilled manual workers or between those in ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ labor-market positions (Rueda 2005; Palier and Thelen 2010; Häusermann 2010; Iversen and Soskice 2015). This perspective might imply more conflict over economic issues than Kitschelt (2004) anticipates.

To assess these conjectures, we will examine the distance between citizens from different occupational groups on both economic and cultural issues at several points across time. More important, in keeping with our focus on representation, we will examine the number of citizens in the problematic SW quadrant and ask whether movements in the positions of citizens and parties over this period parallel each other. We are especially interested in whether the axis of conflict for both parties and citizens has shifted toward the vertical within the electoral space, reflecting more emphasis on cultural than economic issues.

#### *Cross-national variation*

Although we focus on trends common to the developed democracies, we also expect some variation across countries. In countries with electoral systems based on proportional representation, parties are more likely to speak for a broader range of issue positions than they do under majoritarian electoral systems that discourage small parties.<sup>5</sup> The economic positions of center-left and center-right parties may also converge less over time in systems of proportional representation, where competitors on both flanks constrain the movement of centrist parties (cf. Kitschelt 1994). Similarly, where PR systems accommodate radical right parties promoting traditional values, the fear of losing voters to them may keep center-

right parties from moving as far in cosmopolitan directions as they do in majoritarian systems.

We also expect some cross-national variation in the realm of citizens. Many studies show that party positions influence the views of voters (Evans and Tilley 2017). Therefore, in countries where social democratic and Green parties have historically been strong, the cosmopolitanism of those parties is likely to have promoted more cosmopolitan views on cultural issues among the electorate. We also expect citizens in countries that retain strong religious traditions to be less cosmopolitan on average than citizens in other nations and to move less strongly in cosmopolitan directions (Inglehart 1997). For similar reasons, citizens may have more divergent economic views in countries with relatively strong radical left parties. Our sample of countries is too small to generate dispositive evidence on cross-national issues, but we also investigate whether the patterns in our data conform to these conjectures.

### **Empirics -- measurement**

To measure the movement in citizens' views from 1990 to 2009, we draw data drawn from wave 2 (1990/91; about 13,000 respondents) and wave 5 (2006/09; about 19,000 respondents) of the World Values Survey (WVS) using sample weights to secure a representative sample of each national population and country weights to ensure each country is counted equally in cross-national averages.<sup>6</sup> These surveys provide the earliest available source of cross-national data adequate for constructing good measures of citizens' attitudes on both the economic and cultural dimensions. We have such measures for eight large western democracies: Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway,

Sweden, and the United States. These countries provide some variation across electoral systems, political cultures and types of political economies.

#### *Positioning citizens in the electoral space*

In these surveys, we measure citizens' views about economic issues with questions on attitudes regarding income inequality, private vs. state ownership of business, the responsibility of the government to provide for all, whether the unemployed should be forced to take a job, and whether competition is good or harmful. We measure views about cultural issues with questions about whether homosexuality and abortion are justifiable, how respondents feel about having immigrants, Muslims and people of a different race as neighbors, whether men have more of a right to work than women, whether working mothers can be good parents, and whether respect for authority is good or bad. Using these questions, we construct indices for views on economic and cultural issues by estimating a confirmatory model for multidimensional item response parameters, based on Samejima's (1969) multidimensional ordinal response model because the data are ordinal (Chalmers 2012). Given our premise that these questions tap two distinct factors, we constrain most of the variables to load onto one dimension.<sup>7</sup> Details of the estimation procedure, question wording and issue loadings are in Appendix A. In the analyses that follow, we report the position of citizens in this issue space using a metric based on standard deviations on the relevant dimension for the 1990 sample.

#### *Positioning parties in the electoral space*

To position political parties in this electoral space, we use the Comparative Manifesto Project dataset. In comparison to expert surveys, it has the advantages of covering the

entire time-period we examine as well as yielding measures based on the actual positions that parties have taken in their electoral manifestos without any biases that expert evaluations might entail. Parties generally seem to pursue the policies outlined in their manifestos (Thomson *et al.* 2017). For each dimension, we use all the clearly relevant items in the CMP dataset. We use the proportion of sentences in each manifesto devoted to specific issue positions as a measure of the emphasis parties place on each position along with a simple measure of whether they endorse that position. For comparison with attitudes, we use the manifesto in the election immediately preceding each of the time periods for which we have citizens' data.

To assess the position of parties on the left-right dimension of economic issues, we use positive references to Keynesian demand management, nationalization, welfare state expansion and labor groups to indicate left positions; and we take positive references to a free market economy, market deregulation, limitations on the welfare state and negative references to labor groups to indicate right positions. To assess the position of parties on the cosmopolitan-traditional dimension of cultural issues, we use positive references to multiculturalism and underprivileged minority groups and negative references to nationalism and traditional morality to indicate cosmopolitan views; we take negative references to multiculturalism and positive references to nationalism and traditional morality to indicate more traditional views.

To aggregate these variables into indices for each party's position on economic and cultural issues, we follow the widely-used procedure of Lowe *et al.* (2011) based on logit scores. Compared to an approach that uses additive scales, this has the advantages that only variables associated with economic or cultural issues influence the estimated

position of a party on economic or cultural issues, and the contribution each additional sentence on a topic makes to the construction of the scale is weighted by reference to how many other sentences already address that topic (details in Appendix B).

### *Occupational categories*

As noted, a substantial literature in comparative political economy attributes the movements of voters in this electoral space to economic developments that have shifted the occupational structure of the developed political economies, driving a wedge through earlier class solidarities, yielding a more fragmented political space and creating new coalitional possibilities (cf. Beramendi *et al.* 2015; Oesch and Rennwald 2018). Therefore, we are especially interested in where different occupational groups are currently located and how they have moved over time in this electoral space.

We designed categories for these occupational groups to conform as closely as possible to the influential categories of Oesch (2006) that capture features of the workplace situation likely to condition a person's views on economic and cultural issues (see Kitschelt and Rehm 2014). Limitations in the WVS data mean that we can only approximate those categories, but we do so by grouping people into seven occupational classes according to their employment: managers, professional workers, small employers, skilled service workers, low-skill service workers, skilled manual workers, and low-skill manual workers (for details see Appendix C).

## Empirical results

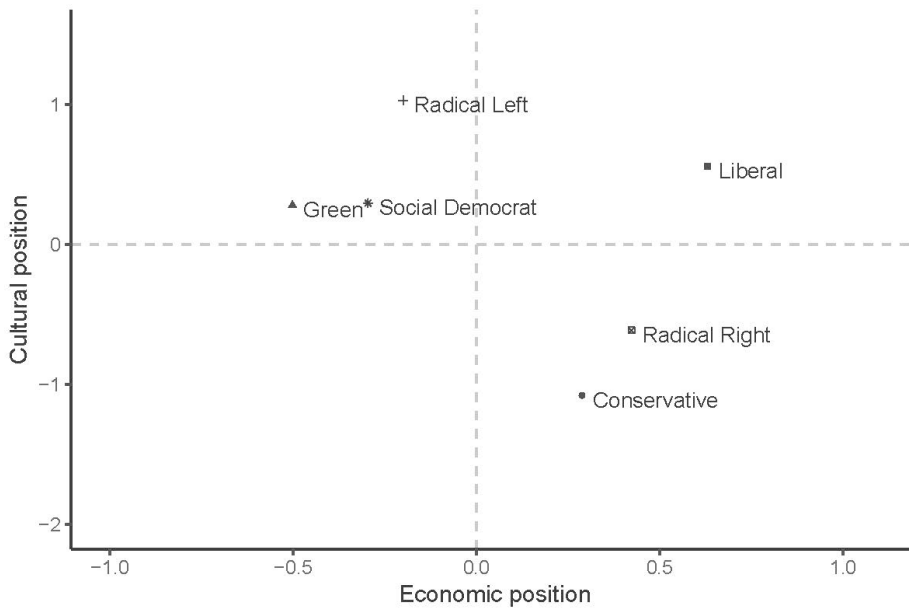
### *The positions and movement of political parties*

We turn first to the position and movement of political parties in the electoral space over the twenty years between 1990 and 2009. Our results conform to the expectations generated by the recent literature. Aggregating across our eight countries, Figure 3 shows the positioning of the principal party families in 1990 (panel a) and 2009 (panel b). The metric on the axes is scores on the two indices standardized around the 1990 mean. Panel (a) shows that in 1990 the principal party families were located along a diagonal running from the NW to the SE quadrants of the electoral space. Liberal parties were the exception; as Kriesi *et al.* (2006, 2008) have noted, they occupied a distinctive place in the NE quadrant, seeking voters who combine cosmopolitan cultural views with right-wing positions on economic issues.

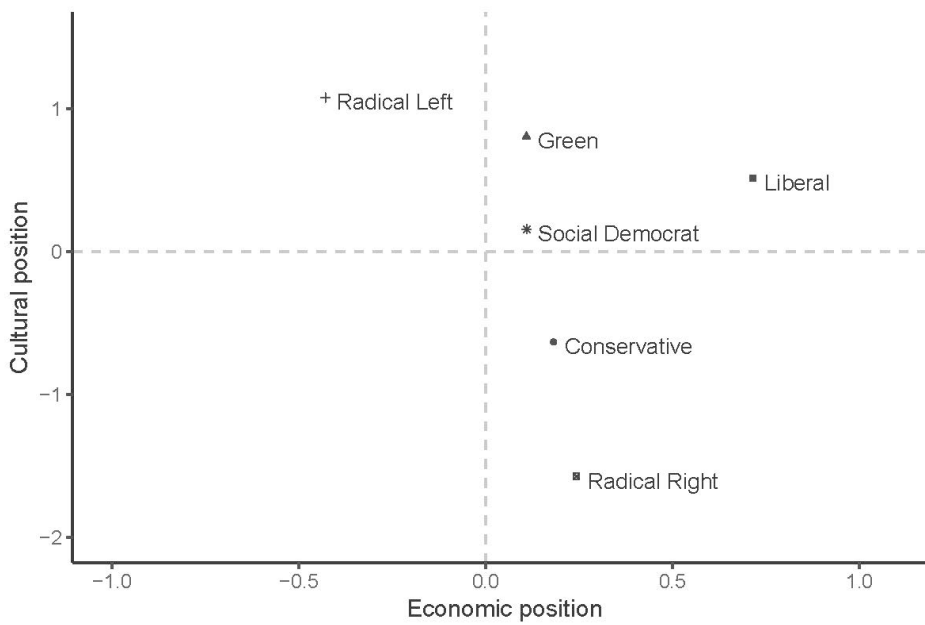
The movement of the major party families tracks Kitschelt's (2004) predictions. Panel (b) of Figure 3 indicates that, over these two decades, the mainstream social democratic and conservative parties converged toward the center on economic issues, as did green and radical right parties. As the economic distance between most parties narrowed, the distance between the parties on cultural issues also widened, as radical left parties moved toward more cosmopolitan positions, while radical right parties moved in traditionalist directions. The effect was to shift the axis of party competition toward the vertical. Although the distance between mainstream center-left and center-right on cultural issues narrowed slightly, as conservative parties became more cosmopolitan, by 2009 parties were more likely to be distinguished from one another by their stance on cultural

**Figure 3: Positions of party families in the electoral space**

**Panel (a) circa 1990**



**Panel (b) circa 2009**

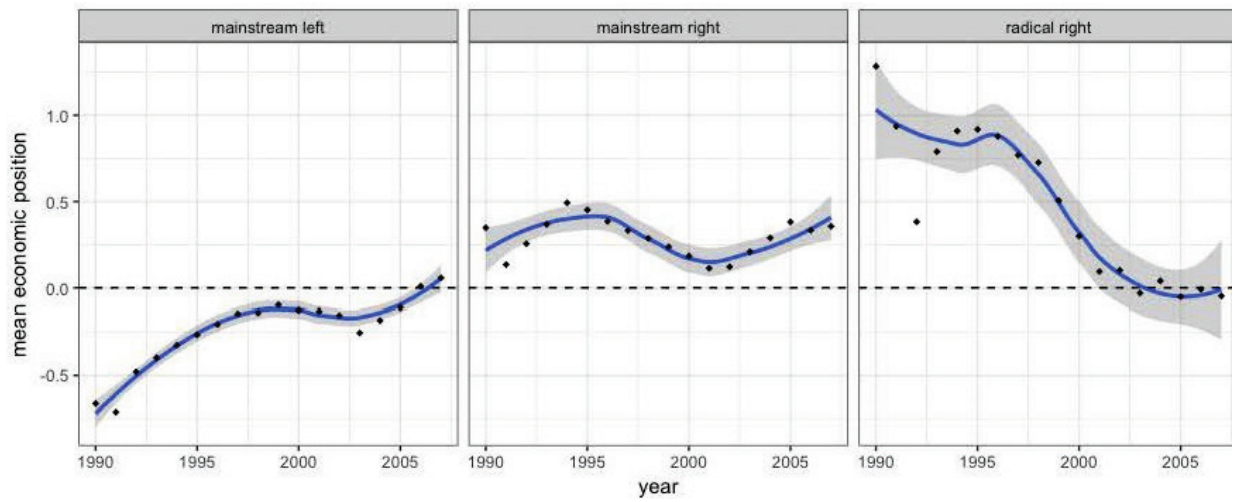


*Note:* The metric on the axes is standardized scores using the 1990 mean and standard deviation.

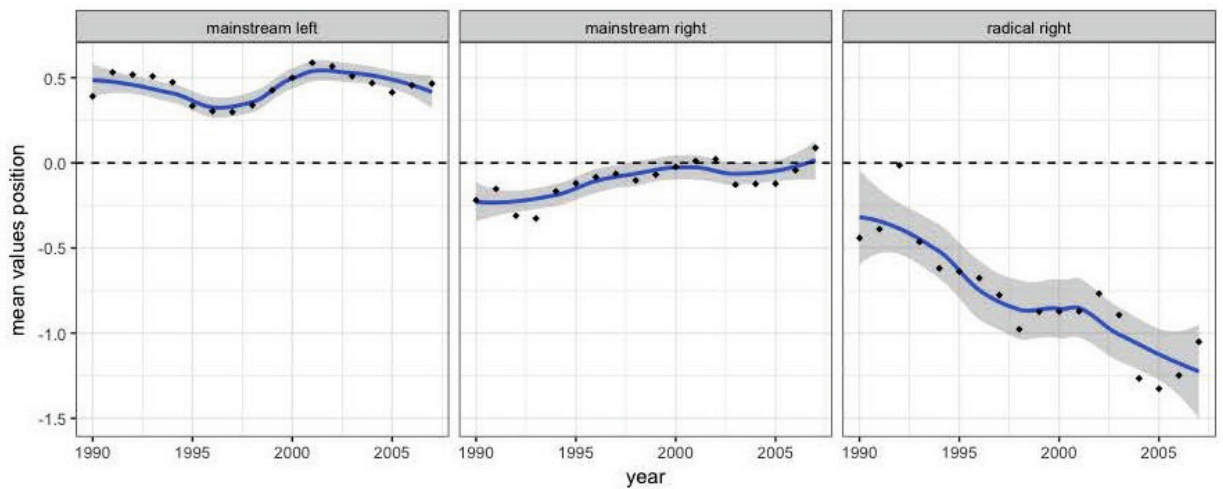
*Source:* CMP.

**Figure 4: Movement in party positions, 1990-2009**

**Panel (a) Movement on economic issues**



**Panel (b) Movement on cultural issues**



*Note:* Scatter plot and Loess smoothed curve for mean party family position on economic and cultural indices. Metric on y-axis is number of standard deviations above or below the 1990 mean in the sample. Higher scores indicate more right-wing positions on economic issues and more cosmopolitan positions on cultural issues. *Source:* CMP.

rather than economic issues. Liberal parties remained the exception; and they moved slightly right on economic issues over this period.

As a check on these results, we use the schema devised by Wagner and Meyer (2017) to group parties into the categories of mainstream left, mainstream right and radical right and examine the movement of these party families across all eight countries for the period between 1990 and 2009. The results are in Figure 4. It confirms that the most pronounced changes among parties were the movement of mainstream left parties to the right on economic issues and the movement of radical right parties toward the center on economic issues and toward the traditionalist extreme on cultural issues.

Although the liberal parties continued to offer a voice to citizens whose views placed them in the NE quadrant, on average no significant parties appeared in the SW quadrant either in 1990 or in 2009. Radical right parties moved closer to that quadrant, and in a few nations these parties were just inside it (Rovny 2012; Harteveld 2016); but political parties were largely absent from the quadrant occupied by citizens with relatively left economic and relatively traditional cultural views.

#### *The positions and movement of citizens*

Of course, whether political parties provide effective representation depends, not only on their positions, but on those of the citizens for whom they speak. Thus, we turn to analysis of citizens' views using the indices for their economic and cultural views described above, with special attention to changes in those over the course of the 1990s and early 2000s.

One of the central issues is how many citizens have relatively left views on economic issues and relatively traditional views on cultural issues that locate them in that

problematic SW quadrant of the electoral space, which was largely unoccupied by political parties over this period. Following Kurella and Rosset (2017) and Oesch and Rennwald (2018), we use the sample means of the positions taken by citizens on economic and cultural issues in each wave to set the axes dividing the electorate into four quadrants. Table 1 indicates that on average in these eight countries about a fifth of the electorate was located in the SW quadrant in 1990 and in 2009. Although our measures for the views of citizens do not correspond exactly to our measures for the positions taken by parties in the issue space, this type of broad comparison by quadrant should suffice for a rough assessment; and it suggests that about 20 percent of citizens in these western democracies have reasons for thinking that their views are not well represented by political parties.<sup>8</sup>

Who are those citizens? We address this question in Figure 5 which divides the electorate into occupational groups and places them within the electoral space based on the mean position that members of each group take on the economic and cultural indices used to assess their views. In this Figure, the axes are set at the sample means for the relevant wave and the circles reflect the relative size of each occupational group. Consistent with other studies observing that people in manual occupations are especially likely to hold relatively-left views on economic issues and relatively-traditional views on cultural issues, it is apparent that the two occupational groups most likely to be located in the SW quadrant are skilled and low-skilled manual workers, who made up 43% of the representative sample of the adult population in these eight countries in 1990/91 and 38% in 2006/09. (see Table A3 for details and Oesch and Rennwald 2018).

This longitudinal data can also be leveraged to ask questions about the representativeness of western party systems that cross-sectional analyses do not allow.

**Table 1: Percentage of citizens in each quadrant in 1990/91 and 2006/09**

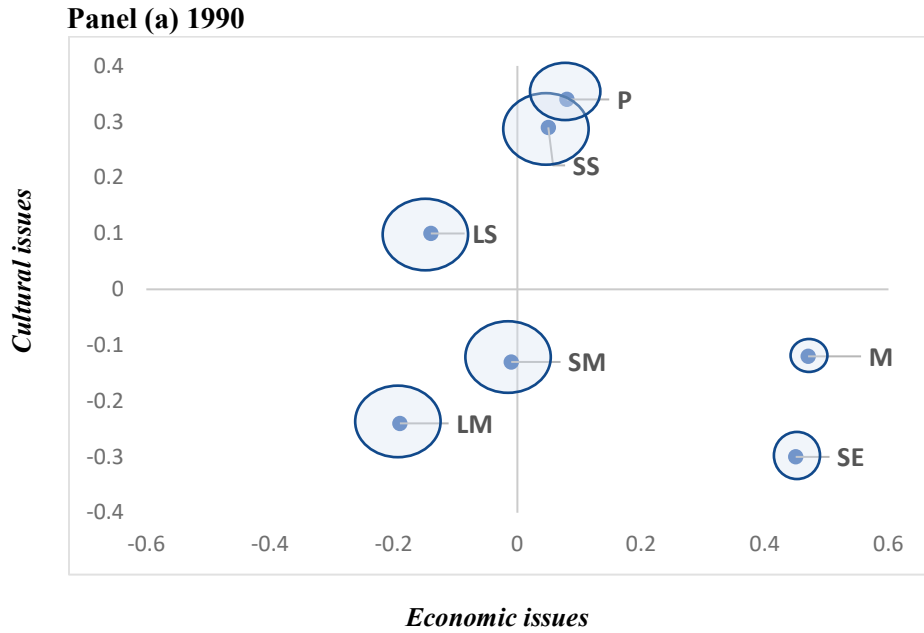
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<b>Country</b>	<b>Wave</b>	<b>Quadrant</b>			
		<b>SW</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>NE</b>
<b>France</b>	1990 /91	25	265	32	17
	2006/09	29	22	34	15
<b>Germany</b>	1990 /91	18	36	24	22
	2006/09	27	28	27	19
<b>Britain</b>	1990 /91	35	26	27	12
	2006/09	25	37	19	19
<b>Italy</b>	1990 /91	32	28	26	15
	2006/09	41	34	16	9
<b>Netherlands</b>	1990 /91	15	12	53	20
	2006/09	21	19	37	24
<b>Norway</b>	1990 /91	21	29	28	22
	2006/09	14	15	42	29
<b>Sweden</b>	1990 /91	16	25	28	32
	2006/09	8	11	39	42
<b>US</b>	1990 /91	19	48	15	19
	2006/09	26	43	17	14
<b>Sample</b>	<b>1990 /91</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>2006/09</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>

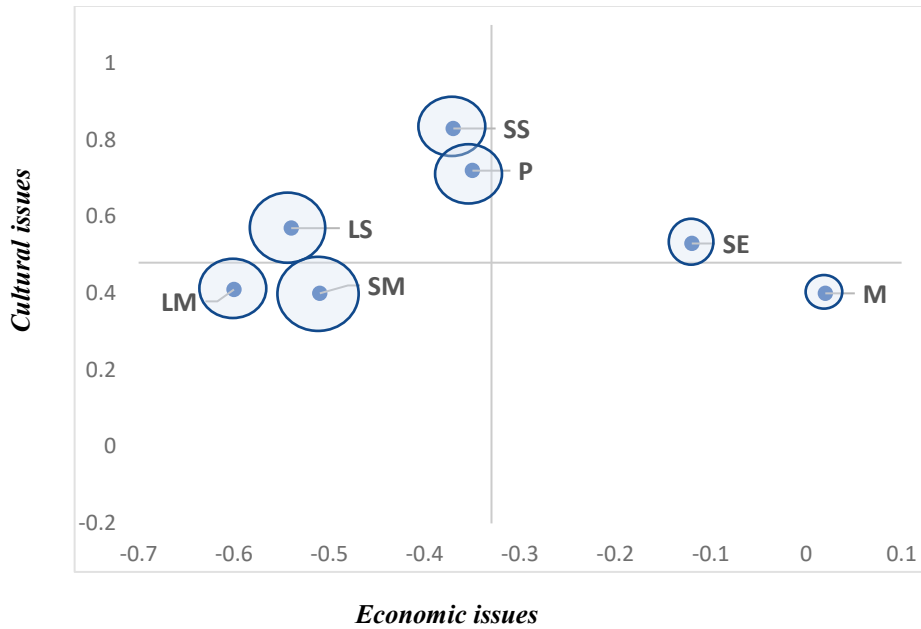
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*Note:* Axes set at means of indices for each wave. *Source:* WVS.

**Figure 5: The location of occupational groups in the electoral space in 1990/91 and 2006/09**



**Panel (b) 2006-09**



*Note:* M: managers; P: professionals; SS: skilled service workers; LS: low-skilled service workers; SE: small employers; SM: skilled manual workers; LM: low-skilled manual workers. Axes set at mean of indices for each wave. *Source:* WVS.

Does the movement in the issue positions taken by political parties observed over the 1990-2009 period correspond to movements in the political preferences of citizens? There are several facets to this question. First, we can ask whether we see a narrowing of views on economic issues and a widening of views on cultural issues comparable to the movements of parties over this period. For that purpose, we consider the range of positions taken by the various occupational groups into which we have divided the electorate. On the one hand, we find a very slight narrowing of positions on the economic index (from a range of 0.67 units in 1990 to 0.62 units in 2006-09) attributable largely to a shift in the views of small employers. On the other hand, over a period in which the distance between parties on cultural issues widened, the range of positions taken by citizens on those issues narrowed from 0.66 units in 1990 to 0.46 units in 2006-09.

Second, we can ask whether movement in party positions corresponds to movement in citizens' positions over these years. Our premise is that, if parties speak effectively for the citizenry, then, the shifts in party platforms we have described should mirror, at least to some extent, shifts in the views of citizens. This measure of representativeness is arguably the most telling one available to us; and it reveals that the changing positions of political parties in recent years have been unrepresentative of certain views within the electorate.

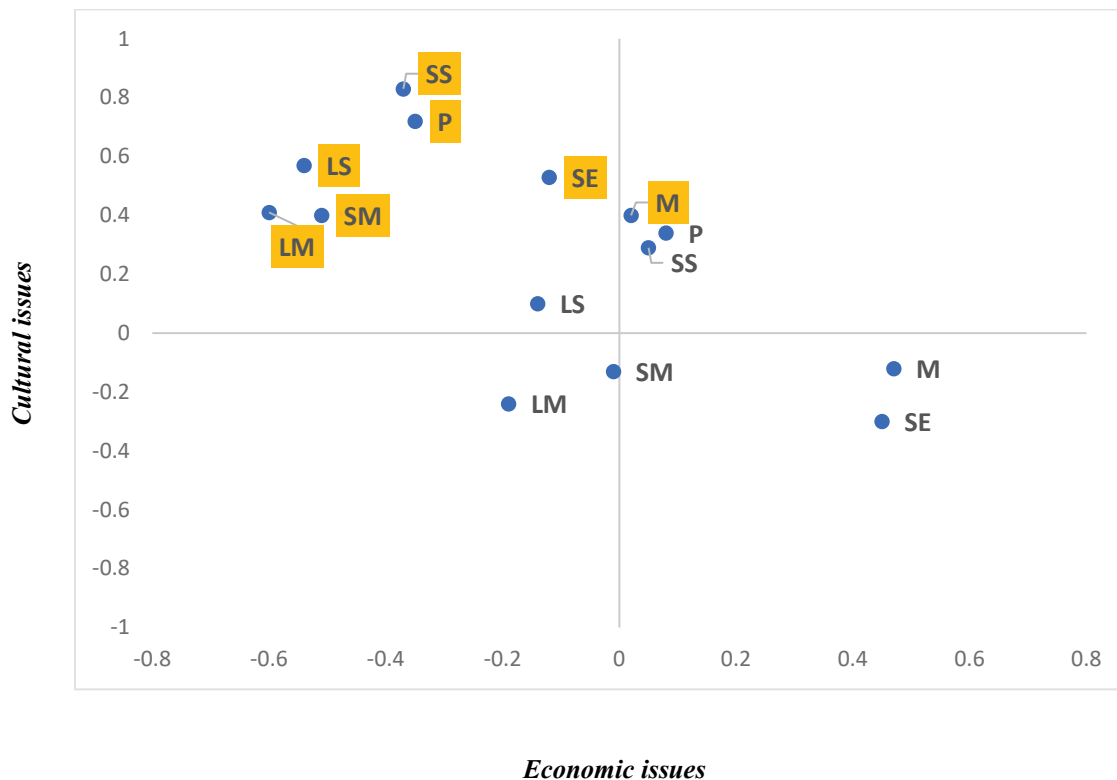
Using occupational groups as the relevant units, Figure 6 displays movements in their views within this two-dimensional electoral space between 1990 and 2006-08. For purposes of observing movement over time, we place the axes in this Figure at the 1990 means of the two indices. The positions of the groups in 2009 are labeled in boxes and

their positions in 1990 without boxes. Two striking observations emerge. First, over a period in which the platforms of most political parties converged toward the center on economic issues, including important moves to the right by social democratic and green parties, the economic views of virtually all groups in the electorate moved sharply to the left in these eight countries.<sup>9</sup> Table 2 indicates that the mean position of citizens in these countries moved almost half a standard deviation to the left between 1990 and 2006-09.<sup>10</sup>

Second, at a time when partisan conflict over cultural issues became more intense, as radical left and Green parties embraced more cosmopolitan views and radical right parties put more emphasis on traditionalist positions, it is notable that the views of all occupational groups within the electorate moved in cosmopolitan directions. To some extent, that may be an artefact of the broad terms in which we measure such views: if the analysis focused only on immigration issues, we might not see as much movement. But this is confirmation that, beyond the headlines, historical shifts in views of the sort that Inglehart and Welzel (2005) describe are taking place.

Notwithstanding these aggregate shifts in the electorate's views about economic and cultural issues, the placement of occupational groups relative to one another did not change much in this issue space (see also Figure 5). This result conforms to the expectations of the comparative political economy literature about political preferences. The occupational groups with the most cosmopolitan values are, by and large, those with higher levels of education and jobs requiring social interaction, namely professionals and skilled service sector workers, followed closely by low-skill service workers (Kitschelt and Rehm 2014). However, the economic views of low-skill service workers are significantly to the

**Figure 6: The movement of occupational groups in the electoral space from 1990/91 to 2006/09**



*Note:* M: managers; P: professionals; SS: skilled service workers; LS: low-skilled service workers; SE: small employers; SM: skilled manual workers; LM: low-skilled manual workers. Axes set at mean of indices for the 1990 wave. 2006/09 wave labeled in boxes. *Source:* WVS.

left of others employed in the service sector – a finding that may reflect the growth of dual labor markets which leave low-skilled service workers in precarious positions.<sup>11</sup> On cultural issues, manual workers remain much more traditionalist than service workers.

**Table 2: Changes in the mean scores of citizens on economic and cultural indices**

		<b>Economic index</b>	<i>Change</i>	<b>Cultural index</b>	<i>Change</i>
<b>France</b>	1990	-0.13		-0.04	
	2006-09	-0.58	<b>-0.45</b>	0.48	<b>0.52</b>
<b>Germany</b>	1990	0.17		-0.09	
	2006-09	-0.38	<b>-0.55</b>	0.39	<b>0.48</b>
<b>Britain</b>	1990	-0.27		-0.21	
	2006-09	-0.18	<b>0.09</b>	0.22	<b>0.43</b>
<b>Italy</b>	1990	-0.16		-0.21	
	2006-09	-0.40	<b>-0.24</b>	-0.19	<b>0.02</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	1990	-0.31		0.56	
	2006-09	-0.47	<b>-0.16</b>	0.62	<b>0.06</b>
<b>Norway</b>	1990	0.07		0.07	
	2006-09	-0.39	<b>-0.46</b>	0.95	<b>0.88</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	1990	0.22		0.29	
	2006-09	-0.24	<b>-0.46</b>	1.31	<b>1.02</b>
<b>United States</b>	1990	0.41		-0.36	
	2006-09	-0.03	<b>-0.44</b>	0.09	<b>0.45</b>
<b>Full sample average</b>	1990	0.0	<b>-0.33</b>	0.0	<b>0.48</b>
	2006-09	-0.33		0.48	

*Note:* Negative movements in the economic index are to the left and positive movements in the cultural index are in a cosmopolitan direction. Metric is standard deviations based on 1990 sample.

*Cross-national variation*

There is some cross-national variation in these patterns which conforms broadly to our expectations. Table 2 reports the mean scores on the economic and cultural indices for 1990/91 and 2006/08 for each of the eight countries examined here. As might be expected,

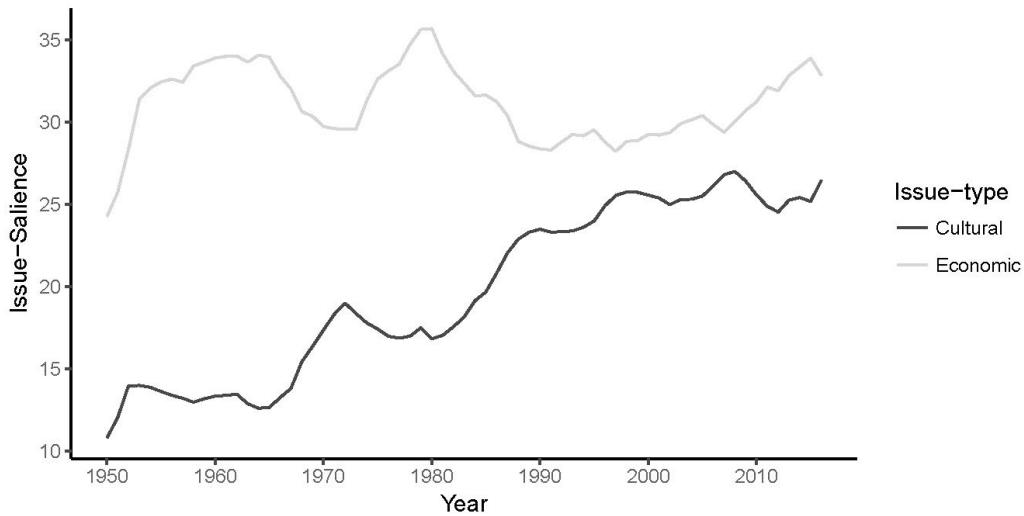
average cultural views are more cosmopolitan in the Netherlands and the two Nordic countries at the outset and end of the period, and least cosmopolitan in 2008 in the United States and Italy, two countries with strong religious traditions, although there was pronounced movement in cosmopolitan directions in the US. The shift to the left on economic views was largest in Germany, Sweden and France, countries with relatively-strong radical left parties, and absent in Britain where a centrist Labour Government followed thirteen years of neoliberal Conservative rule. However, the table confirms the general swings toward the left on economic issues and toward cosmopolitan views on cultural issues visible in Figure 6.

### **The implications for representation**

In some respects, the movements of citizens and parties over this period have favorable implications for the quality of western democracy. Judging by the position of occupational groups, the distribution of views about cultural issues among the citizenry narrowed, while the range of positions taken by political parties on such issues expanded, providing voters with considerable choice on this dimension. Moreover, the movement of radical right parties toward the center on economic issues has made them more viable voices for many manual workers with traditional cultural views. To the extent that cultural issues dominate the concerns of voters, the western party systems can be said to represent them relatively well; and Figure 7 indicates that cultural issues became increasingly salient to partisan competition over this period (Adams *et al.* 2005; Kitschelt 2007).

However, the longitudinal data bring another side of these findings to the fore. The data reveal two significant representational gaps in the electoral systems of the western

**Figure 7: The relative salience of economic and cultural issues in party platforms**



Note: Calculated from CMP data. For the construction of the categories, see appendix D.

democracies. First, as noted, at least a fifth of the electorate is still located in a quadrant of the electoral space where there are generally no political parties. Second, across two decades in which most political parties moved toward the center on economic issues, the economic views of most citizens moved significantly to the left. The occupational groups most disadvantaged by these conditions are manual workers, whose views typically place them in that problematic quadrant, and low-skill service workers whose economic preferences also moved significantly left over these years.

The political economy story behind those shifts in preferences is well-known. In these decades, when secular economic developments such as skill-biased technological change and global outsourcing adversely affected low-skilled workers, governments of all partisan hues embarked on major programs of liberalization designed to make product and

labor markets more intensely competitive. Measures to limit workplace protections and press social-benefit recipients into work rendered economic life more precarious for precisely those groups feeling the worst effects of secular economic developments (Centeno and Cohen 2012; Fill 2019). In this context, it is not surprising that the economic preferences of such groups moved to the left.

To date the only parties that have taken up the new opportunities offered by such developments are on the radical right and left. Radical left parties shifted their economic platforms farther left; and many radical right parties have edged toward that problematic SW quadrant without locating themselves centrally within it. As Oesch and Rennwald (2018) observe, social democratic parties are now engaged in a contest with radical right parties for the votes of manual workers, while the center-right competes with radical right parties for the support of small employers – contests that often turn on efforts to shift the relative salience of economic vs cultural issues (Kurella and Rosset 2017).

These two representation gaps – reflected in the paucity of parties representing citizens with left economic views and traditional cultural views and in the movement of most parties toward centrist economics over a period in which the electorate was moving left on such issues – are manifest problems. However, the challenges they pose for the functioning of representative democracy would be more extensive if they also led citizens whose political preferences were not well reflected in the party system to lose confidence in electoral democracy or to retreat from participation in it.

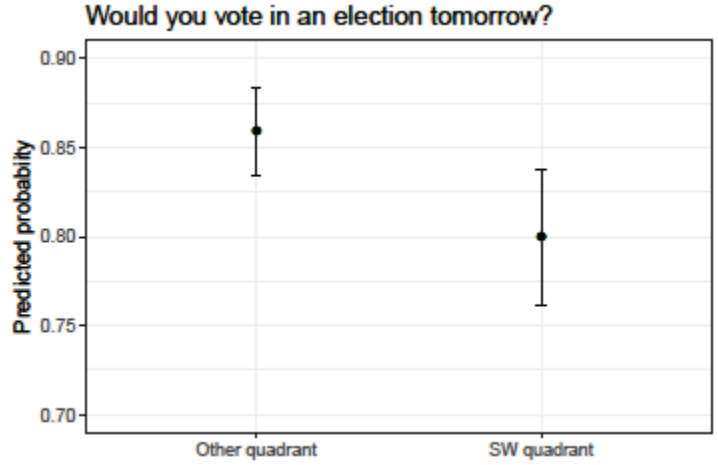
We assess the evidence for such effects, focusing on citizens whose views place them in the SW quadrant of the electoral space on the premise that they are least likely to

feel that contemporary party systems represent them well. To explore the association between a citizen's position in the electoral space and political participation, we employ a question in the 2006/09 wave of the WVS asking 'would you vote in an election tomorrow?' and estimate the relationship between responses to this question and the quadrant in which citizens' views locate them. To control for standard variables affecting turnout, we condition the estimation on the respondent's age, level of education (years of education), income decile and country fixed effects. Panel (a) of Figure 8, which displays the predicted probability of voting by quadrant when the control variables are held at their median values, indicates that citizens whose views locate them in the SW quadrant are significantly less likely to vote than citizens located in the other three quadrants (estimation results in Table A1 of Appendix E).

Using a question that asks (on a four-point scale) how much confidence respondents have in their nation's legislature, we create a parallel estimate using an ordered probit model for the association between confidence in the legislature and the quadrant in which a citizen is located. Once again, we condition on age, level of education and income as well as country fixed effects. The results for parallel estimations in the 1990/91 and 2006/09 waves are displayed in panel (b) of Figure 8 which reports simulations that hold the value of the control variables at their medians. In the 1990/91 wave, placement in the SW quadrant is not significantly more likely than placement in other quadrants to predict low levels of confidence in the legislature (reflected in scores of 1 or 2). But, after two decades in which the views of citizens on economic issues have moved to the left while the positions of most parties have not, citizens in the SW quadrant (and to a lesser extent those

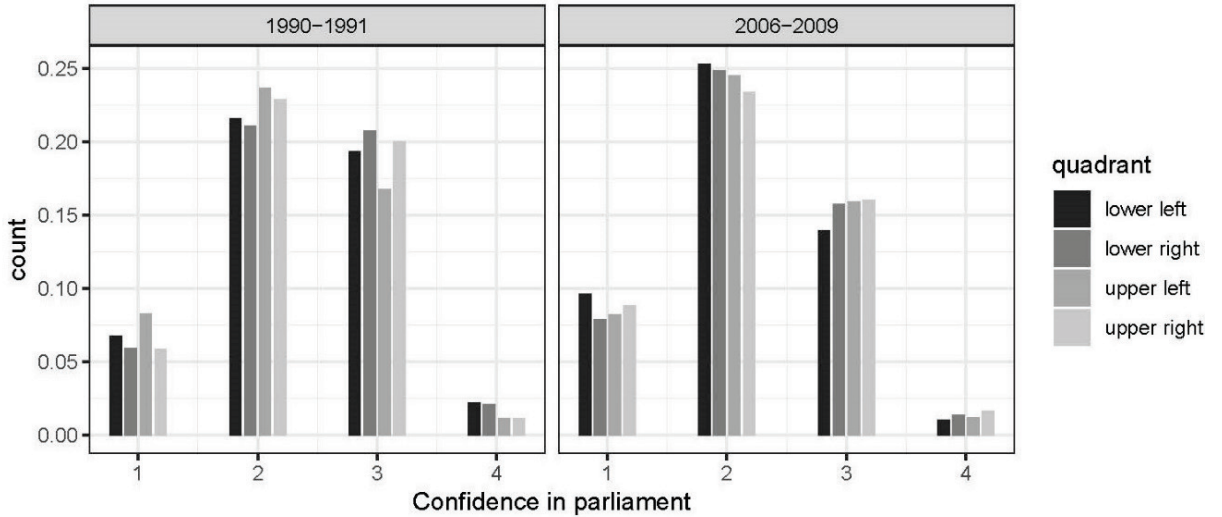
**Figure 8: The relationship between position in the electoral space and the likelihood of voting and confidence in the legislature in 2006/09**

*Panel (a) Predicted probability of voting by quadrant in the electoral space*



Note: Simulations from full estimation in Table A1. Age, income, education held at their medians.

*Panel (b) Predicted confidence in the legislature by quadrant and wave*



Note: Simulations based on Table A2. Confidence measures from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

in the NW quadrant) are much more likely to express low levels of confidence in the legislature than citizens in the other two quadrants. Across the eight nations in this study, average confidence in political parties fell by 17 percent between 1990 and 2008 (from 2.45 to 2.04 on a four-point scale) and the lowest levels of confidence were expressed by the manual workers and low-skilled service workers whose views are least expressed by the party systems. These declines in confidence may well be feeding support for populist parties, since the rhetoric of those parties plays upon representational issues and many people voting for them claim that established elites are not listening to their concerns (van der Brug *et al.* 2003; Rooduijn *et al.* 2016; Berger 2017).

## **Conclusion**

By comparing how the preferences of citizens and positions of parties have diverged over time, this study calls into question some of the more sanguine assessments of the quality of representation in the developed democracies based on cross-sectional comparisons of the left/right positions voters assign to themselves and to parties. Over two decades in which most parties converged to the center on economic issues and only a few moved in a more cosmopolitan direction on cultural issues, virtually all segments of these electorates moved to the left on economic issues and in more cosmopolitan directions on cultural issues. We also confirm that the preferences of significant portions of the western electorate locate them in the SW quadrant of the electoral space, which is largely unoccupied by political parties. We also show that manual workers make up a significant proportion of those under-represented citizens (Van der Brug and Van Spanje 2009; Lefkofridi *et al.* 2014; Kurella and Rosset 2017; Oesch and Rennwald 2018). Even when conditioning on standard predictors of confidence in politicians and political participation, we find that

citizens whose views put them in that quadrant of the electoral space are less likely than others to vote and more likely to lack confidence in legislators.

These findings raise troubling questions about the capacity of contemporary political systems to ensure that the all citizens' voices are heard by policy-makers. First, they reveal the formidable representational challenges facing contemporary political parties. The multiple occupational groups found in modern political economies have diverse political preferences spread out across all four quadrants of the electoral space. In this fragmented context, assembling viable electoral coalitions, not to mention cohesive governing coalitions, is challenging. Second, our analysis suggests that mainstream parties have not risen to these representational challenges – a fact that may well be contributing to declining support for center-left and center-right parties and to rising support for new parties often on the fringes of the political spectrum.

In some respects, the proliferation of parties now occurring in many countries may offer something of a solution to these dilemmas, since proliferation makes it easier for citizens to find organizational vehicles for their diverse views.<sup>12</sup> But that same proliferation also magnifies the problem of governmental coalition formation, shifting the representational dilemma up to the level where uneasy compromises over policy are formed. Moreover, many of the new parties being established lack durable institutional bases, portending political evanescence that threatens the stability of political systems. At the same time, some exploit these representational dilemmas to intensify dissatisfactions with politics that may threaten democracy itself (Chiaromonte and Emanuele 2018; Mounk 2018). The current problems of western democracy may be rooted not only in economic

and cultural developments but also in representational dilemmas that have been growing for decades.

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## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

### Appendix A: Locating citizens in the electoral space

To locate voters in a two-dimensional space, we estimate a confirmatory model of multidimensional item response theory parameters (Chalmers 2012). Given the ordinal nature of the data, the model is based on Samejima's (1969) multidimensional ordinal response model, which we detail below.

Let  $i = 1, \dots, n$  denote the set of respondents and let  $j = 1, \dots, J$  denote the set of questions.  $M = 1, \dots, m$  is the set of distinct latent traits on which responses are conditional (in our case  $m = 2$ ). For each  $i$ , we denote a vector of latent traits  $\theta_i = (\theta_{i1}, \theta_{i2})$ . A mapping from question  $j$  to each latent trait is given by intercept terms and a slope term. The latter is denoted as  $\alpha_j = (\alpha_1, \alpha_2)$ . For each question,  $j$ , there are  $K_j$  possible response categories and so we define the intercept terms as  $\mathbf{d}_j = (d_1, \dots, d_{K_j-1})$ .

In the graded response model, the boundary response probabilities are defined as:

$$\begin{aligned} \phi(x_{ij} \geq 0 | \theta_i, \alpha_j, d_j) &= 1 \\ \phi(x_{ij} \geq 1 | \theta_i, \alpha_j, d_j) &= \frac{1}{1 + \exp[-D(\alpha_j^T \theta_i + d_1)]} \\ \phi(x_{ij} \geq 2 | \theta_i, \alpha_j, d_j) &= \frac{1}{1 + \exp[-D(\alpha_j^T \theta_i + d_2)]} \\ &\dots \\ \phi(x_{ij} > K_j | \theta_i, \alpha_j, d_j) &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

It is helpful to define the data as a matrix of indicator variables,  $\chi$ :

$$\chi(x_{ij}) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } x_{ij} = k \\ 0 & \text{if otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Defining  $\psi$  as the collection of item parameters, the conditional likelihood of the  $J \times 1$  response vector, for observation  $i$ , is written as:

$$L_l(\mathbf{x}_i|\psi, \theta) = \prod_j \prod_k \phi(x_{ij} = k|\psi, \theta_i)^{x_{ij}}$$

Then, by Bayes' Rule, and assuming a distribution over  $\theta$ ,  $g(\theta)$ , the marginal distribution is

$$P_l(\psi|\mathbf{x}_i) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} L_l(\mathbf{x}_i|\psi, \theta)g(\theta)d\theta$$

Finally, by denoting  $X$  as the full  $n \times J$  observed data matrix, the likelihood equation can be summarised as:

$$L(\psi|X) = \prod_i \left[ \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} L_l(\mathbf{x}_i|\psi, \theta)g(\theta)d\theta \right]$$

In our case, the  $78374 \times 13$   $X$  matrix is constituted by the following set of variables:

- 1 (E035: Income inequality)
- 2 (E036: Private vs. State ownership of business)
- 3 (E037: Government responsibility to provide for all)
- 4 (E038: Unemployed should take any job or lose benefits)
- 5 (E039: Competition good or harmful)
- 6 (E018: Greater respect for authority (good or bad))
- 7 (F120: Justifiable: homosexuality)
- 8 (F118: Justifiable: abortion)
- 9 (C001: Men have more right to work than women)
- 10 (A124.05: Neighbors: Immigrants/foreign workers)
- 11 (A124.06: Neighbors: Muslims)
- 12 (A124.02: Neighbors of a different race)
- 13 (D056: Working mother can have a good parental relationship)

Given our understanding of the relationship between the questions and the two factors we assume to be present in the data (economic and values ideology), we

impose the following constraints on the slope terms:  $\alpha_{1,2} = \alpha_{2,2} = \alpha_{3,2} = \alpha_{4,2} = \alpha_{5,2} = 0$ ; and also  $\alpha_{6,1} = \alpha_{7,1} = \alpha_{8,1} = \alpha_{10,1} = \alpha_{11,1} = \alpha_{12,1} = \alpha_{13,1} = 0$ . That is, we assume that most variables load onto only one dimension.

The item parameters,  $\psi^*$ , are estimated using the Metropolis-Hastings Robbins-Monro algorithm. The scores reported represent the expected a posteriori (EAP) from the distributions  $Pr(\theta_j | \mathbf{x}_i, \psi^*)$  (that is, the score is calculated by taking the expectation over  $\theta_j$ ). Table 1 displays the factor loadings where item parameters ( $\psi^*$ ) are converted into traditional factor analysis loading metrics.

### Factor loadings from item response model

Question	Factor 1	Factor 2
Income inequality	-0.32	0.00
Private ownership	0.63	0.00
Govt responsibility	0.56	0.00
Competition good	0.61	0.00
Unemplt benefits	0.45	0.00
Neighbors – race	0.00	-0.56
Working mother	0.00	-0.32
Respect for authority	0.00	0.37
Homosexuality	0.00	0.70
Abortion	0.00	0.80
Women right to work	-0.02	0.29
Neighbors – migrants	0.00	-0.38
Neighbors – Muslims	0.00	-0.51

## WVS/EVS Questions used to construct the economic and cultural indices

### Economic Index

- E035 On this card you see a number of opposite views on various issues. How would you place your views on this scale?  
1 incomes should be made more equal...2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
10 there should be greater incentives for individual effort
- E036 1 private ownership of business and industry should be increased...2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
10 government ownership of business and industry should be increased
- E037 1 individuals should take more responsibility for providing for themselves...2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
10 the state should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for
- E038 1 people who are unemployed should have to take any job available or lose their unemployment benefits...2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 people who are unemployed should have the right to refuse a job they do not want
- E039 1 competition is good. It stimulates people to work hard and develop new ideas...2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
10 competition is harmful, it brings out the worst in people

### Cultural index

Please tell me for each of the following whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between, using this card. 1 never 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 always

F118 Abortion F120 Homosexuality

Here are changes in our way of life that might take place in the near future. Please tell me for each one, if it were to happen whether you think it would be a good thing, a bad thing, or don't you mind?

E018 Greater respect for authority 1 good 2 bad 3 don't mind

C001 When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women. 1 agree 2 disagree 3 neither

On this list are various groups of people. Could you please sort out any that you would not like to have as neighbors?

A124.02 People of a different race

A124.05 Immigrants/foreign workers

A124.06 Muslims

D056 A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work 1 agree strongly 2 agree 3 disagree 4 disagree strongly

### Confidence in the legislature

Please look at this card and tell me, for each item listed, how much confidence you have in them, is it a great deal, quite a lot, not very much or none at all?

Parliament

## Appendix B: Locating parties in the electoral space

### 1. Comparative Manifesto Project items used for locating parties in the electoral space

Economic left:

- 409: Keynesian Demand Management
- 413: Nationalization
- 504: Welfare State Expansion
- 701: Labor groups: Positive

Economic right:

- 401: Free market economy
- 403: Market Regulation
- 505: Welfare State limitation
- 702: Labor Groups: Negative

Values left:

- 602: National Way of Life: Negative (opposition to nationalism)
- 604: Traditional morality (negative)
- 607: Multiculturalism: Positive
- 705: Underprivileged minority groups (gay/immigrant/indigenous etc.)

Values right:

- 601: National Way of Life: Negative (appeals to nationalism)
- 603: Traditional morality (positive)
- 608: Multiculturalism (negative)

### 2. Procedure used for aggregating these variables into scales (following Lowe *et al.* 2011):

$$\text{econ.position} = \log \left[ \frac{\text{econ.right} + 0.5}{\text{econ.left} + 0.5} \right]$$
$$\text{values.position} = \log \left[ \frac{\text{values.right} + 0.5}{\text{values.left} + 0.5} \right]$$

## Appendix C: The construction of occupational classes (from variable X036)

<b>Our categories</b>	<b>WVS categories</b>
1 Managers	Employer/manager of establishment with 10 or more employed Supervisory Non-manual -office worker
2 Professionals	Professional worker
3 Small employer	Employer/manager of establishment with less than 10 employed Farmer: has own farm
4 Skilled Service Workers	Middle level non-manual office worker
5 Low-skill service worker	Junior level non manual
6 Skilled manual worker	Skilled manual Foreman and supervisor
7 Low-skilled manual worker	Unskilled manual Semi-skilled manual worker Agricultural worker

*Notes:* Members of the armed forces and those classified as ‘other’ were not included in the sample.

## Appendix D: Issue salience

The salience of a type of issue in party platforms is based on the share of sentences or 'quasi-sentences' that refer to the following categories grouped under 'economic' or 'cultural' issues as follows:

# variables included in cultural category

- 501: Environmental protection
- 502: Culture (state funding for arts and sport)
- 503: Equality ('concept of social justice and need for fair treatment of all')
- 601: National way of life ('general' and immigration (negative))
- 602: National way of life ('general II' and immigration (positive))
- 603: Traditional morality
- 604: Traditional morality (negative)
- 605: Law and order
- 606: Law and order (negative)
- 607: Multiculturalism
- 608: Multiculturalism (negative)

#variables included in economic category

- 401: Free Market Economy
- 402: Incentives
- 403: Market Regulation
- 404: Economic Planning
- 405: Corporatism/Mixed Economy
- 406: Protectionism
- 407: Protectionism (negative)
- 408: Economic Goals
- 409: Keynesian Demand Management
- 410: Economic Growth
- 411: Technology and Infrastructure
- 412: Controlled Economy
- 413: Nationalization
- 414: Economic Orthodoxy
- 415: Marxist Analysis
- 504: Welfare State expansion
- 505: Welfare State limitation

Countries included in Figure 6 are: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, United Kingdom.

## Appendix E: Further Results

**Table A1: Logit estimation for intention to vote**

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Turnout
Lower left quadrant	-0.421*** (0.099)
Age	0.0260*** (0.002)
Age of education	0.0785*** (0.008)
Income	0.331*** (0.046)
Constant	-1.130*** (0.235)
Country dummies?	✓
Observations	7,951
Log Likelihood	-2,917.284
Akaike Inf. Crit.	5,856.567

*Note:* \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

**Table A2: Ordered logit estimation for confidence in legislature**

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	confidence
Lower left	23.376*** (0.00004)
2006-2009	-0.005*** (0.00002)
Upper right	13.299*** (0.0001)
Lower right	19.344*** (0.00004)
Age	0.003*** (0.0004)
Age in education	0.010*** (0.001)
Income	0.032*** (0.002)
Lower left:2006-2009	-0.012*** (0.00001)
Upper right: 2006-2009	-0.007*** (0.00001)
Lower right: 2006-2009	-0.010*** (0.00001)
Country FE?	✓
Observations	27,007
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

**Table A3: Proportion of respondents in occupational groups**

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<b>Occupation</b>	<b>1990/91</b>	<b>2006/09</b>
Managers	3 %	4 %
Professionals	12	14
Small employers	7	8
Skilled service workers	18	15
Low-skilled service workers	17	20
Skilled manual workers	23	22
Low-skilled manual workers	20	16

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Note: Proportions based on total respondents in each wave for eight countries in sample when missing values for occupation are dropped.

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## Notes

Representation9

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<sup>1</sup> For one exception based on the Dutch case, see Bélanger and Aarts 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Since the electoral space of the new democracies in East Central Europe looks somewhat different, we concentrate on western democracies.

<sup>3</sup> Various terms have been used to characterize this cultural dimension, including ‘right-authoritarian’ v ‘left-libertarian’ ‘post-materialist’ v ‘materialist’ and ‘universalism’ v ‘particularism’ (Kitschelt 1997; Ingelhart 1997; Häusermann and Kriesi 2015). These reflect some variations in how this dimension has been characterized, especially in the early literature. Although there is some variation across countries and time in the issues that are most central to this dimension, recent studies usually reference the core attitudes that we include and our empirics confirm their importance. See Bornschier 2010; Stoll 2010.

<sup>4</sup> For one important paper parallel to ours that considers movements in citizens’ positions over time, see Bartels 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Countries with two-stage elections, such as France, should be an exception to this rule because they accommodate many partisan contenders in the first-stage of each election.

<sup>6</sup> For details of sampling procedure, see: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp>

<sup>7</sup> We follow Ansolabehere *et al.* (2008) and Rovny and Marks (2011) and specify *a priori* which items belong to each dimension because there is widespread agreement on the content of these two dimensions and reason for concern that factor analyses are highly sensitive to the items included in the survey. See also Lefkofridi *et al.* 2014 and Heath *et al.* 1994.

<sup>8</sup> A larger sample of 15 western democracies yields very similar proportions of citizens in each quadrant, as does the five-nation study of Kurella and Rosset (2017) which uses different questions to tap each dimension and the fifteen-nation study of Lefkofridi *et al.* (2014) which employs a different technique for establishing the quadrants.

<sup>9</sup> Further examination of the data (not reported) reveals that this movement took place before the 2008/09 recession.

<sup>10</sup> This is consistent with the finding of Rosset and Stecker (2018) that European citizens hold views on redistribution that are significantly to the left of their governments’. See also Bartels 2013.

<sup>11</sup> Against some expectations, we find convergence rather than a growing gap between the economic views of skilled and unskilled manual workers, perhaps because we use broad measures of those views (cf. Iversen and Soskice 2015; Rueda 2005).

<sup>12</sup> However, Dalton (2018: 168) finds especially large gaps between the positions of radical right parties and their voters on both economic and cultural issues.