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 voter, 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. Although 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 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
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 ‘nostalgie
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. These 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 voters 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 be expressing the views of large segments of the electorate over 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 in 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 the electoral politics of the developed democracies suffers from such failures of representation.

On that issue the existing literature is divided. On the one hand, some analysts of populism argue that the policy positions taken by established political parties have contributed to its rise. 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 explaining support for radical parties suggests that an unwarranted convergence in the economic platforms of center-left and center-right parties may have increased their votes (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 position of mainstream parties without also looking at the distribution of voters’ preferences; and most focus on one point in time rather than at the movement of preferences and party positions over time – issues we address here.

The value of several related literatures is also affected by this cross-sectional bias. Although it is clear, for instance, that there are differences in the cultural values espoused by educated elites and many working people, we know little about whether those differences have increased in recent years in ways that might contribute to an evolving crisis of representation or simply reflect a longstanding divergence that has acquired 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 is more likely to be contributing to declining support for established parties if it has deepened over recent years, but by and large we do not know if it has. There is a manifest need for studies which examine how the representativeness of party systems changes over time.

On the other hand, many of the most careful studies of the representativeness of contemporary political parties are more sanguine. For the most part, they find 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, the bulk of these studies suffer from four limitations. They usually compare the positions that parties take to the positions that voters for those parties take, which leaves 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 few exceptions (Dalton 2017, 2018), they are based on comparisons between the positions of parties and voters on a general left-right spectrum. As Thomassen (2012) notes, while informative, the 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, voters may be well-represented on one issue-dimension but badly 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, and 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 breakdown of 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 about whether that is so or about the respects in which they 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 over the twenty-year period between 1990 and 2009 – the longest for which we could secure adequate data – across eight developed democracies. We are interested in how the distribution of citizens’ opinions changed over that period and whether those changes correspond to changes in party platforms. From the results, we will draw some conclusions about whether failures of representation have been serious enough to warrant the view that they may be contributing to declining support for established parties and rising support for more radical parties.

Our approach augments existing studies of representation in several ways. First, to gauge the responsiveness of electoral systems, we supplement existing studies that examine representation at a single point in time with an analysis of movement in the positions of citizens and parties over time. Second, instead of assuming that citizens and
parties are arrayed along a single left/right dimension, we analyze a two-dimensional electoral space more congruent with recent characterizations of it. Third, 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.

Finally, we contribute to an emerging literature that joins issues in comparative political economy to issues in 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 its core contentions 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 values 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 systems.

Accordingly, we will be especially attentive to the location of various occupational groups in this 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 they are reflected in the positions taken by political parties. This aspect of our analysis contributes to contemporary debates in comparative political economy.

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 most segments of the electorate, the potential for party alternation in government and whether governments have the capacities 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 of political parties reflect popular preferences within the electorate. Although only one among several pertinent factors, this
is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for effective representation. If parties do not speak for the views of voters, those views will not be represented through the electoral system.

Although we also compare the location of parties and citizens within broad sectors of the electoral space at each point in time, 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 voters 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; Bornschier 2010). 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’. 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.

Figure 2: The two-dimensional electoral space

A problematic quadrant

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 to the bottom of the south-east (SE) quadrant roughly represented by the solid line 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 citizens. Accordingly, we examine the number of citizens whose views locate them in that portion of the electoral space, their occupational backgrounds, and whether those 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, have moved left on economic issues in recent years in order to broaden their appeal to the working class; and we will explore whether that movement is significant enough to mitigate the problem of representation in the SW quadrant (Kriesi 2008: 327; Rovny 2012; Lefkofridi and Michel 2014; Harteveld 2016). 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
Thus, over time, we should see more emphasis on cultural versus 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 developments improve or erode the representativeness of party systems depends, however, 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 growth to limits of the welfare state has 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 than about cultural ones.

Several other strands of literature call these propositions into question. Scholars of political culture anticipate relatively-broad movements over these decades toward cosmopolitan values; and these might be considerable enough to might 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 implies 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 might imply more conflict over economic issues than Kitschelt anticipates.

To assess these conjectures, we will examine the distance between voters from different occupational groups on these two dimensions, compare the standard deviation of views on each dimension, and ask whether changes in the shape of the distribution of views on each dimension reflect polarization on such issues. More important, in keeping with our focus on representation, we will examine the number of citizens in that 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.

Cross-national variation

Although we are most interested in trends common to the developed democracies, we also expect some variation across countries. In the realm of parties, there are likely to be a broader range of issue positions represented in countries with electoral systems based on proportional representation than in countries with majoritarian electoral systems that discourage small parties. There may also be more convergence over time in the economic positions of center-left and center-right in majoritarian systems than in systems of proportional representation, where the presence of competitors on both flanks constrains the movement of center parties (cf. Kitschelt 1994). Similarly, where PR systems
accommodate radical right parties promoting traditional values, center-right parties may not move as far in cosmopolitan directions as they do in majoritarian systems.

We also expect some cross-national variation in the realm of voters. Many studies show that the views of voters are influenced by the positions taken by parties (Evans and Tilley 2017). Therefore, in countries where social democratic and Green parties have historically been strong, all occupational groups are likely to be more cosmopolitan on cultural issues and to move more consistently in cosmopolitan directions than elsewhere. Conversely, we expect voters in countries that retain strong religious traditions to be less cosmopolitan on average than those in other nations and to move less strongly in cosmopolitan directions (Inglehart 1997). For similar reasons, in countries with radical left parties, we should see more divergent views among voters on economic issues in countries. Our sample of countries is too small to generate dispositive evidence on cross-national issues, but we ask whether the patterns in our data conform to these conjectures.

Empirics -- measurement

Since we are interested in movements in the positions of parties and citizens over an extended stretch of time, we assess the movement in citizens views from 1990 to 2009 using data drawn from waves 2 and 5 of the World Values Survey (WVS) which provides the earliest available source of cross-national data adequate for constructing good measures of citizens’ attitudes on these two dimensions. We have been able to assemble such measures for eight large western democracies: Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United States. Among western democracies, these countries provide variation across electoral systems, political cultures and types of political
economies. There are about 13,000 respondents in the 1990/91 wave of our sample and about 19,000 in the 2006/09 wave.

**Positioning citizens in the electoral space**

Following a literature indicating that the electoral space of the developed democracies has been structured since the 1980s by two broad issue-dimension, one predominantly economic and the other cultural as described above, we construct indicators for the respondents’ views on these dimensions. Their views on economic issues are characterized as more or less ‘left’ or ‘right’ based on the respondents’ attitudes to: 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 characterize their attitudes to cultural issues based on responses to questions about: whether respect for authority is good or bad, whether homosexuality and abortion are justifiable, how they feel about having immigrants, Muslims and people of a different race as neighbors, whether men have more of a right to work than women, and whether working mothers can have good parental relationships. These indicators are constructed by estimating a confirmatory model for multidimensional item response parameters, based on Samejima’s (1969) multidimensional ordinal response model because the data is ordinal (Chalmers 2012). Given our premise that these questions tap two distinct factors, we constrain most of the variables to load onto one dimension. Details of the estimation procedure, questions used 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 follow an extensive literature and use the Comparative Manifesto Project dataset. In comparison to expert surveys, it has the advantages of covering the entire time-period we examine and yields measures based on the actual positions parties have taken in their electoral manifestos without any biases that expert evaluations might entail. Manifestos appear to capture the policies that parties pursue quite well (Thomson et al. 2017). We count the proportion of sentences in each manifesto devoted to specific issue positions, thereby providing a measure of the emphasis parties place on each position as well as whether they endorse it. For this purpose, we use the manifesto in the election immediately preceding each of the time periods for which we have data on citizens’ opinions.

To assess the position of parties on the left-right dimension of economic issues, we take positive references to Keynesian demand management, nationalization, welfare state expansion and labor groups as indications of 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 as indications of 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 as indicators of cosmopolitan views; and we take negative references to multiculturalism and positive references to nationalism and traditional morality as indicators of 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 (cultural) issues influence the estimated position of a party on economic (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 we have 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 located and how they move in this electoral space.

We devise categories for these occupational groups designed to conform as closely as possible to the influential categories of Oesch (2006) which 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. By and large, our results conform to the expectations generated by the recent literature. Aggregating across the eight countries on which we focus, Figure 3 (panel a) shows that around 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 with cosmopolitan cultural views but right-wing positions on economic issues.

Moreover, the movement of the major party families has been much as Kitschelt (2004) predicted. Figure 3 (panel b) indicates where those parties were in the same space around 2009. 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 parties on cultural issues narrowed slightly, as conservative parties became more cosmopolitan, by 2009 parties were more likely to be
Figure 3: Position of party families in the electoral space

*Panel (a) circa 1990*

*Panel (b) circa 2009*

*Note:* The metric on the axes is standard deviations on the indices measuring party stance on economic and cultural issues with dotted lines at the means for those positions in each period.  
*Source:* CMP.
distinguished from another by their stance on cultural rather than economic issues. Liberal parties remained the exception and moved farther 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 entire period between 1990 and 2009. The results are visible in Figure 4. It confirms that the most pronounced changes among parties were the movement of social democratic 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 liberal parties continued to offer a voice to citizens whose views placed them in the NE quadrant, in the aggregate terms of party families, there were no parties in the south-west quadrant in 1990 or in 2009. Radical right parties moved closer to that quadrant, and a few national parties were just inside it (Rovny 2012; Harteveld 2016); but, for the most part, 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.
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 position on economic and cultural indices. Metric on y-axis is number of standard deviations above or below the 1990 mean of these indices in the sample. Higher scores indicate more right-wing positions on economic issues and more cosmopolitan positions on cultural issues. Source: CMP.
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 about a fifth of the electorate in these eight countries 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 the political parties.

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. 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, in both 1990 and 2009, the two occupational groups most likely to be located in the SW quadrant are skilled and low-skilled manual workers (see 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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<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1990/91</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006/09</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>1990/91</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2006/09</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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 (a) 1990/91

Panel (b) 2006-08

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. 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 voters? 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 slight narrowing of positions on the economic index (from a range of 0.67 units in 1990 to 0.62 units in 2006-09) paralleling the shift among parties. 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, shifts in the views of citizens should be mirrored, at least to some extent, by shifts in party platforms. 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 highly unrepresentative of 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 comparability over time, the axes in this Figure are placed at the 1990 means of the two indices. 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. Table 2 indicates that the mean position of citizens in these countries moved almost half a standard deviation to the left between 1990 and 2006-08.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Economic index</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Cultural index</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1990 -0.16</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.59</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006-08 -0.59</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1990 0.18</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.50</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006-08 -0.50</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>1990 -0.36</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.20</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006-08 -0.20</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1990 -0.22</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.44</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006-08 -0.44</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1990 -0.36</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.51</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006-08 -0.51</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1990 0.04</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.41</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006-08 -0.41</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1990 0.18</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.28</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006-08 -0.28</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1990 0.36</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.02</td>
<td>-0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2006-08 -0.02</td>
<td>-0.38</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full sample average</td>
<td>1990 0.0</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>2006-08 -0.40</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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 an indication that, beyond the headlines, historical shifts in views of the sort that Inglehart and Welzel (2005) anticipate 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 (Figures 5 and 6); and it 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 left of others employed in the service sector; and over the period they move closer to those of skilled and low-skilled manual workers. These findings may reflect the growth of dual labor markets which leave most low-skilled workers in precarious positions and correspondingly likely to incline toward the left on economic issues. Nevertheless, on cultural issues, manual workers remain much more traditionalist than service workers.

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 conservative 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 that saw the rapid expansion of dual labor markets in this period, and absent in Britain where a centrist Labour
Government followed thirteen years of neoliberal Conservative rule. However, the table confirms the relatively-general swings toward the left on economic issues and toward cosmopolitan views on cultural issues visible in Figure 6.

**The implications for representation**

There are some respects in which the movement of citizens and parties over this period have favorable implications for the quality of western democracy. Over a period in which the axis of partisan competition (Figure 3) shifted toward the vertical, the orientation of citizens’ views (Figure 5) did so as well. Judging by the position of occupational groups, the views of the citizenry on economic issues narrowed slightly in tandem with the positions of parties, and their views narrowed even more significantly on cultural issues. To the extent that cultural issues dominate the concerns of voters, the western party systems can be said to represent them relatively well, as they contain parties offering a wide range of positions on such issues; and Figure 7 indicates that cultural issues became increasingly salient to partisan competition over this period (Adams *et al.* 2005; Kitschelt 2007). 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.

However, the longitudinal data brings another side of these findings that to the fore. It reveals two significant representational gaps in the electoral systems of the western democracies. First, 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 to the left over these years.

The political economy story behind those shifts in preferences is well-known. These were decades in which secular economic developments such as skill-biased technological change and global outsourcing adversely affected low-skilled workers, while 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 such developments offer 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—often based on struggles to shift the relative salience of economic vs cultural issues (Kurella and Rosset 2017).

In the terms of spatial electoral analyses widely-used to diagnose representational issues, these two representation gaps are a manifest problem. However, the problems they pose for the functioning of representative democracy would be more extensive if they also lead citizens whose political preferences are not well-reflected in the party system to lose confidence in electoral democracy, to retreat from participation in it, or to turn toward parties whose respect for the canons of liberal democracy is ambiguous.

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. In order 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 it 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 (measured by years in education) and income decile and use 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 quadrants (estimation results in Table A1 of Appendix E).

Using a question that asks (on a four-point scale) how much confidence the respondent has in the nation’s legislature, we conduct a parallel estimation using an ordered probit model for the association between confidence in the legislature and the quadrant in which a citizen is located, conditioning again 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 lead to 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 parties have not, citizens in the SW quadrant (and to a lesser extent those in the NW quadrant) are much more likely to express low levels of confidence in the legislature than people in the other 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 well expressed by western party systems.
Figure 8: The relationship between position in the electoral space and the likelihood of voting and confidence in the legislature

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).
Support for radical right parties, many mounting populist appeals, may be conditioned by failures of representation in addition to other factors such as economic hardship, rising rates of immigration and cultural reactions against dominant elites (Bornschier 2017). There is a \textit{prima facie} case for this as voters for such parties often claim that established elites are not listening to their concerns, and the rhetoric of many populist candidates plays upon representational issues (van der Brug \textit{et al}. 2000, 2003; Rooduijn \textit{et al}. 2016; Berger 2017). We conduct a limited test of that conjecture by estimating a logit model on intention to vote in the 2006/09 wave of our survey that explores its relationship to placement in the electoral space. We condition the estimation...
on age, level of education and income, three variables widely associated with voting for the radical right. Since the proximity of a party to voters in the issue space should matter to the vote, we expect support for radical right parties to be strongest among citizens in the SE quadrant whose views are closest to the platforms of radical right parties. But, if representational failures also contribute to such support, we should see significant votes for radical right parties from citizens in the SW quadrant of the electoral space who have the most reason to feel that established parties are not well representing them, even when controlling for age, education and income.

The results are in Table 3 where the reference category is citizens located in the NW quadrant of the electoral space. They indicate that, while support for radical right parties is strongest among citizens in the SE quadrant, the SW quadrant is the next most significant source of support for them. This evidence is not strong enough to show that issues of representation are fueling support for such parties, since proximity on cultural issues and other features of these voters’ life situation may well play roles here, but the results are consistent with that contention.

**Conclusion**

By comparing how the preferences of citizens and positions of parties have moved in the electoral space 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 right on economic issues and many moved in a traditional direction on cultural issues, virtually all segments of the
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 that is largely unoccupied by political parties, and show that manual workers make up a significant proportion of those 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 for confidence in politicians and political participation, we find that citizens whose views locate them in that quadrant of the electoral space are more likely than others to lack confidence in the legislature and less likely than others to vote.

These findings raise troubling questions about the capacity of contemporary political systems to ensure that all citizens’ voices are heard and fed into policy-making. On the one hand, they reveal that the representational challenges facing contemporary political parties are formidable. The multiple occupational groups found in modern economies have diverse political preferences that are 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. On the other hand, our analysis suggests that mainstream parties have not risen effectively to these representational challenges – a fact that may well be contributing to declining support for center-left and center-right parties and rising support for new parties often on the fringes of the political spectrum.

In some respects, the proliferation of parties that is now occurring in many countries may offer something of a solution to these dilemmas, since it makes it easier for citizens to find an organizational vehicle for their views. But that proliferation also
magnifies the problem of governmental coalition formation, shifting the representational dilemma up to a level where uneasy compromises over policy are formed. Moreover, many of the new parties being established lack durable institutional bases, portending a political evanescence that threatens the stability of political systems, while other parties exploit these representational dilemmas to intensify a dissatisfaction with politics that may threaten democracy itself (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2018; Mounk 2018). In short, the current problems of western democracy are rooted, not only in economic and cultural developments, but in representational dilemmas that have been growing for some decades.
References


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 $i = 1, ..., n$ denote the set of respondents and let $j = 1, ..., J$ denote the set of questions. $M = 1, ..., m$ 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 $\alpha_j = (\alpha_{1j}, \alpha_{2j})$. For each question, $j$, there are $K_j$ possible response categories and so we define the intercept terms as $d_j = (d_{1j}, ..., d_{K_j} - 1)$.

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

$$\phi(x_{ij} \geq 0|\theta_i, \alpha_j, d_j) = 1$$

$$\phi(x_{ij} \geq 1|\theta_i, \alpha_j, d_j) = \frac{1}{1 + exp[-D(\alpha_j^T \theta_i + d_1)]}$$

$$\phi(x_{ij} \geq 2|\theta_i, \alpha_j, d_j) = \frac{1}{1 + exp[-D(\alpha_j^T \theta_i + d_2)]}$$

$$\ldots$$

$$\phi(x_{ij} \geq K_j|\theta_i, \alpha_j, d_j) = 0$$

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:
In our case, the $78374 \times 13$ 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 $Pr(\theta_i|\mathbf{x}_i, \psi^*)$ (that is, the score is calculated by taking the expectation over $\theta_i$). Table 1 displays the factor loadings where item parameters ($\psi^*$) are converted into traditional factor analysis loading metrics.

**Factor loadings from item response model**

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

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

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: Nationionalisation
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable:</th>
<th>Turnout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower left quadrant</td>
<td>−0.422*** (0.084)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.022*** (0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of education</td>
<td>0.068*** (0.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>0.407*** (0.045)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>−0.853*** (0.221)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Country FE? √

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dependent variable: confidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower left</td>
<td>23.376***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2009</td>
<td>-0.005***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper right</td>
<td>13.299***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower right</td>
<td>19.344***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.003***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age in education</td>
<td>0.010***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>0.032***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower left:2006-2009</td>
<td>-0.012***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper right: 2006-2009</td>
<td>-0.007***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower right: 2006-2009</td>
<td>-0.010***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country FE?</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>27,007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
For one exception based on the Dutch case, see Bélanger and Aarts 2006.

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

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.

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

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.

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 Health et al. 1994.

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.

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

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 those of their government. See also Bartels 2013.

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).

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