

# Promising links: How parties combine policy issues with group appeals

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## Online Appendix

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## A. Coding approach for group appeals

This coding instruction is a guide to coding group appeals in election manifestos. Put simply, we examine the statements made by parties in election manifestos with regard to the mention of social groups. The relevant election manifestos (1990–2019) are processed in Excel files, which contain the coding for group objects, group categories, and group predicates in addition to the grammatical sentences, statements, issues and actor coding. The correct coding of the additional group variables is explained below.

### A.1. Definition of group appeals

Parties explain their political goals and demands in their election manifestos in a comprehensive manner. This includes concrete political contents and measures (policies), but also the mention of social groups or a combination of both. To be able to record whether specific social groups are mentioned or addressed in a statement, several additional variables have to be coded into the AUTNES framework for the analysis of election manifestos. The definition of a group appeal is based on Thau (2019, 65):

*“[...] group-based appeals [are defined] as explicit statements that link a political party to some category of people. They consist of three parts: (1) some political party (2) is associated or dissociated (3) with some group.”*

According to this definition, group appeals basically consist of three elements: (1) a political party or political actor, (2) a positive or negative association, and (3) a social group. The coding thus works quite similarly to the AUTNES issue coding of election programs. That is, a subject (usually a political party) talks about an object (a particular social group), and the relationship between the two can be positive, negative, or neutral (predicate).

**Table A.1:** Coding of group appeals

1	subject	Who is speaking?
2	object	Which group is being addressed?
3	relation	What is the relationship between subject and object?

### A.2. Assignment of group appeals to individual statements

Ideally, group appeals should not be identified directly in the statements but by carefully reading the grammatical sentences in the original election manifesto. This should include marking each sentence in which a social group is mentioned. However, to incorporate the corresponding variables into the AUTNES coding structure, it is necessary to code them at the statement level. Therefore, the exact statements that cover the social groups in terms of content are coded accordingly. Thus, it may happen that one part of the statements in a sentence is coded as a group appeal, but the other part is not.

“Austria needs a new form of agriculture because the costs of surplus production for farmers, taxpayers, and consumers have long since exceeded the limits of what is bearable” (SPÖ 1990, 23).

Based on the rules of statement formation (see AUNTES coding instructions for election manifestos), the four following statements were formed:

- SPÖ for new form of agriculture
- SPÖ against costs of surplus production for farmers
- SPÖ against costs of surplus production for taxpayers
- SPÖ against costs of surplus production for consumers

Accordingly, the first statement does not contain a group appeal, while the second, third, and fourth statements were coded as a positive appeals toward farmers, taxpayers, and consumers, respectively.

### A.3. Special coding rules

Special attention must be paid to the following points when coding group appeals:

- General supportive statements  
A positive predicate is coded for all wordings that indicate a positive stance of the party toward a specific target group—without further detailing the specific policy measure. “We stand on the side of women.”, “We support employees.”, “The middle class can rely on us.” are coded with a positive relation (+1).
- Effects of election promises  
Parties often promise certain policy measures that mainly or exclusively affect certain social groups, but without explicitly mentioning the group in question. In such cases, no group appeal is coded.  
*We want to abolish tuition fees. (SPÖ 2008: 13)*  
*We demand a significant increase in the care allowance [...]. (SPÖ 2008: 21)*
- Mentions of two groups in one statement  
In principle, exactly one social group is coded per statement. This becomes problematic if two social groups are mentioned in one statement. In most cases, however, this only happens if two groups are treated equally or if the benefits for different groups are equalized. In this case, one of the two groups mentioned always benefits, and only this group is then recorded in the coding.  
*We Greens want equality between women and men in the labor market. (Greens 2006: 12)*  
Coding: +1 women
- Hidden mentions of social groups  
In some cases, social groups are not mentioned explicitly but are “hidden” in other phrases such as adjectives or compound nouns. In such cases, a group appeal is also coded.  
*Farmer income levels must be fair and just (SPÖ 2008: 27).*  
Coding: +1 farmers

- Deterioration of the status quo

If a party calls for measures that, if introduced, would lead to a deterioration for a specific group compared to the status quo, a negative predicate is coded.

*Care in old age for all and millionaires are finally allowed to make their contribution. (SPÖ 2017: 10)*

Coding: -1 millionaires

- Sentence references

Parties often mention a social group or promise a measure for a certain group and refer to it in the next sentence—for example with the phrases “this” / “that” / “they” / “those”. In this case, a group appeal is coded for the corresponding statements both in the statement of the original sentence and in the doubled statements, which were formed based on the AUTNES unitizing rules.

*Physicians are the supporting pillars of the healthcare system. They need better working conditions and fair pay (Team Stronach 2013: 13).*

According to the AUTNES unitizing rules, the sentence is decomposed into the following statements:

*Team Stronach for physicians*

Coding: +1 Doctors

*Team Stronach for supporting pillars of the healthcare system*

*Team Stronach for physicians*

Coding: +1 physicians

*Team Stronach for better working conditions for physicians*

Coding: +1 physicians

*Team Stronach for fair pay for physicians*

Coding: +1 physicians

#### A.4. Examples

- *We want to eliminate the burden of boarding school costs for apprentices. (SPÖ 2008: 15)*  
Coding groups: +1 apprentices
- *The long-term unemployed should receive a job guarantee, also to ensure good pensions in old age. (SPÖ 2019: 95)*  
Coding groups: +1 long-term unemployed
- *For women who leave the workforce to raise children, special training programs should be offered to make it easier for them to return to work. (ÖVP 1990: 24)*  
Coding groups: +1 women
- *Hardly any other profession is as important to our society as our teachers. (ÖVP 2019: 30)*  
Coding groups: +1 teachers
- *Our social system has to take special account of the needs of senior citizens. (FPÖ 2008: 7)*  
Coding groups: + senior citizens
- *Families are the most important factor for the functioning of a community. (FPÖ 2017: 16)*  
Coding groups: + families
- *Rainbow families must not be disadvantaged in Austria. (Greens 2019: 51)*  
Coding groups: +1 rainbow families
- *There are still many gaps in social insurance for artists. (Greens 2019: 75)*  
Coding groups: +1 artists

## B. Dataset and data structure

**Table B.1:** Assignment of issues

Economy	economy (general), market / liberalisation / deregulation, globalisation, financial sector / banks, businesses
Education	education general, education in kindergarten, school, university and college, vocational training
Employment	job market / unemployment, employment protection, salaries / wages / earnings
Europe	EU (general), treaties / steps of integration / Euro, enlargement, participation / democracy, policies
Health	health care system, health care spending, health insurance, rights / duties of individuals
Housing	rent / housing costs, rent control, public housing, housing benefits
Immigration	immigration general, asylum, integration, citizenship
Pensions	pension system, pension increases, pension funding, retirement age
Security	combating crime, criminal prosecution, penal system, crime prevention
Taxes	taxes (general), taxes for individuals, taxes for businesses

**Table B.2:** Assignment of groups

Economy	entrepreneurs, employers, founders, self-employed, investors
Education	teachers, pupils, students, educators, instructors, apprentices, graduates, school leavers, professors, academics
Employment	workers, employees, wage earners, professionals, job-seekers, unemployed people, unemployment benefit recipients, people out of work
Europe	EU citizens, EU politicians, EU officials, EU bureaucrats, EU foreigners
Health	patients, sick people, injured people, addicts, doctors, health personnel, nurses, midwives, therapists
Housing	tenants, landlords, property owners, apartment seekers
Immigration	immigrants, migrants, foreigners, refugees, asylum seekers, migrant workers, third-country citizens, persecuted people
Pensions	pensioners, senior citizens, retirees, recipients of minimum pensions, elderly people
Security	criminals, perpetrators, sex offenders, child abusers, prisoners, drug dealers, terrorists, Islamists, extremists, crime victims, police officers, law enforcement officials, investigators
Taxes	taxpayers, taxable persons, tax evaders



**Table B.3:** Data structure: Issue and group coding

Sentence	Group object	Group category	Issue category
With the employment guarantee, we want to offer every older unemployed person a job paid according to the collective agreement after one year of unemployment at the latest. (SPÖ 2017: 28)	unemployed people	employment	employment
In order to support students, we want to reintroduce student housing subsidies to create more affordable living space. (SPÖ 2019: 138)	students	education	housing
Clear rules for immigration: The Austrian economy needs foreign workers. (ÖVP 1999: 48)	foreign workers	immigration	economy
Pensioners in particular are suffering from inflation and rising prices. (ÖVP 2008: 12)	pensioners	pensions	economy
Criminal asylum seekers are deported immediately and without the possibility of appeal. (FPÖ 2006: 4)	criminal asylum seekers	security	immigration
Employment permits for foreigners are only to be issued for a limited period of time and only if there is an acute shortage of labor in the relevant profession that cannot be remedied in the medium term. (FPÖ 2006: 2)	foreigners	immigration	employment
People who are addicted to drugs need help, not prosecution. (Greens 2013: 100)	drug addicts	health	security
More educational opportunities are needed to make the transition to the working world of tomorrow easier for employees. (Greens 2019: 46)	employees	employment	education

**Table B.4:** Issues, question wording, and covered elections in public opinion data

Issue	Survey	Question wording	Elections
Economy	GfK	Promoting economic upturn	1990 – 1995
	GfK	Promoting economic upturn. Strengthening Austria as location for business	1999 – 2002
	GfK	Securing economic growth	2006 – 2008
	ICCP	Promoting economic growth	2017
Education	GfK	Improving the education system	1990 – 1999
	GfK	Improving and modernizing the school and education systems	2002
	GfK	Improving and modernizing the school and education system	2006 – 2008
	Market	Education reform	2013
	ICCP	Introducing comprehensive schools	2017
Employment	GfK	Fighting unemployment	1990
	GfK	Protecting and creating jobs	1994 – 2002
	GfK	Securing and creating jobs	2006 – 2008
	Market	New jobs	2013
	ICCP	Fighting unemployment	2017
Europe	GfK	Ensuring a rapid joining to the EC	1990
	GfK	Representing Austria’s interests in the EU	1994 – 2002
Health	GfK	Improving the hospital and health care system	1990 to 1995
	GfK	Ensuring good medical care for all Austrians	2002
	GfK	Securing decent medical care for all Austrians	2006 – 2008
	Market	Health reform	2013
Housing	GfK	Creating more affordable housing	2006 - 2008
	Market	Affordable housing	2013
	ICCP	Creating affordable housing	2017
Immigration	GfK	Coming to grips with the question of ‘foreigners’	1990
	GfK	Coming to grips with the ‘foreigners’ question	1994 – 2002
	GfK	Coming to grips with the ‘foreigners’ problem	2006 – 2008
	Market	Immigration	2013
	ICCP	Controlling immigration	2017
Pensions	GfK	Securing the pensions	1990 – 1999
	GfK	Securing the present pensions	2002
	GfK	Securing pensions	2006 – 2008
	Market	Pensions	2013
	ICCP	Fighting poverty in old age	2017
Security	GfK	Providing for law and order	1990
	GfK	Fighting crime	1994 – 1999
	GfK	Providing for law and order and less crime	2002
	GfK	Promoting domestic security and less crime	2006 – 2008
	Market	Terrorism	2013
	ICCP	Protecting Austria from terrorism	2017
	GfK	Reducing taxes	1990

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Taxes

Table B.4 – *Continued from previous page*

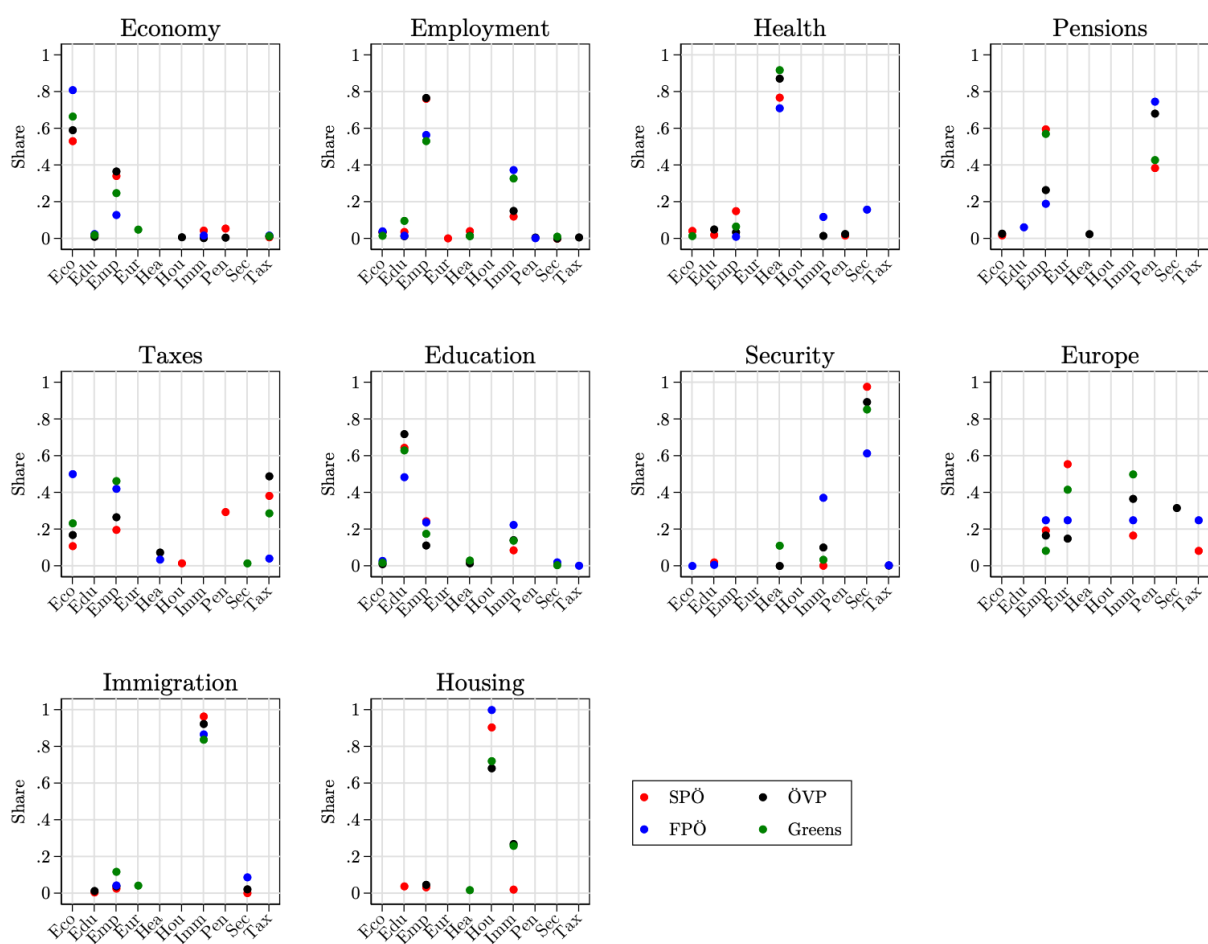
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Question wording</b>	<b>Elections</b>
	GfK	Reducing the tax burden	1994 – 1999
	GfK	Accomplishing a fair taxation system, cutting back on taxes and dues	2002
	GfK	Tax reform, cutting taxes and contributions	2006 – 2008
	Market	Cutting taxes	2013

## C. Descriptive statistics

Table C.1: Summary statistics

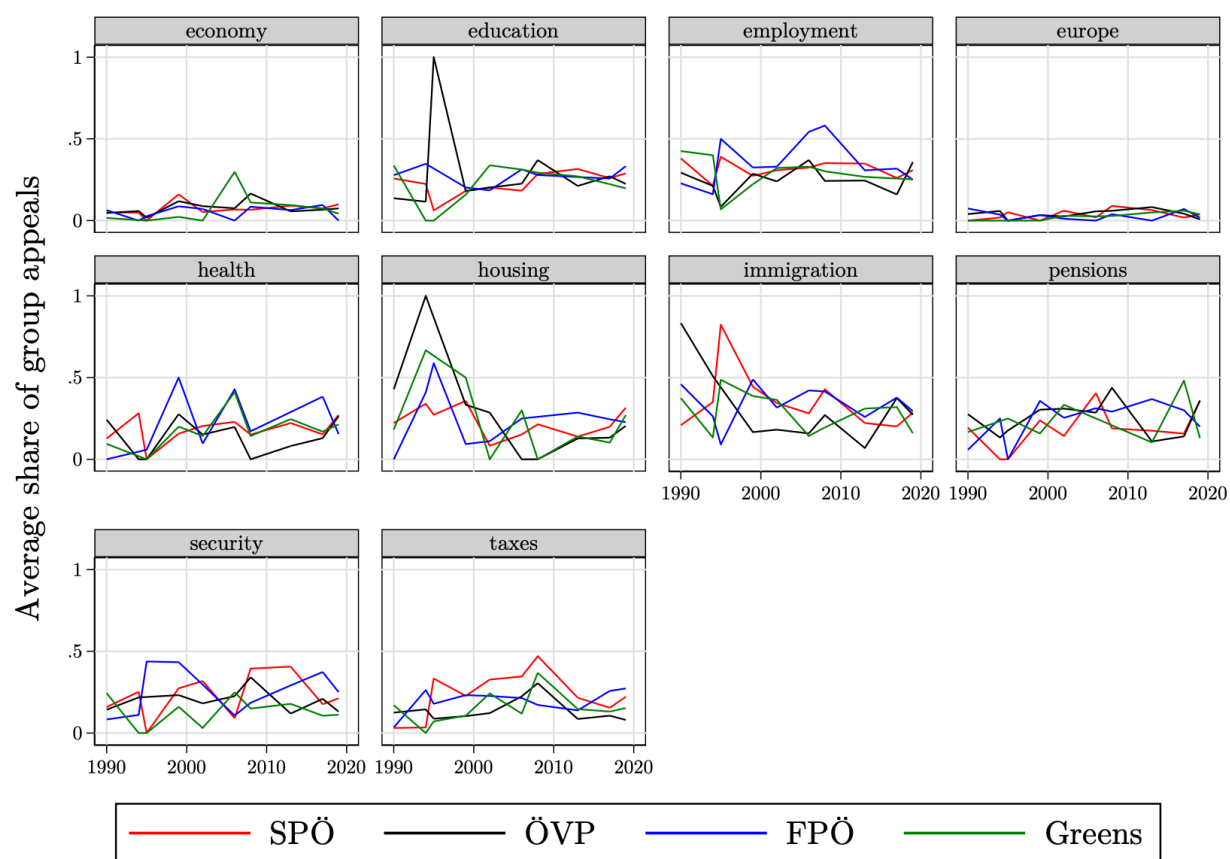
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
Share of group appeals	0.19	0.15	0	1	400
Share of related group appeals	0.09	0.12	0	1	400
Share of unrelated group appeals	0.04	0.08	0	1	400
Issue competence	0.08	0.05	0	0.45	400
Issue salience	0.09	0.04	0.02	0.21	400
Systemic salience	0.08	0.06	0.02	0.31	400

Fig. C.1: Average shares of party-issue-group combinations



Notes: The y-axis shows the average share of party-issue-group combinations on a given issue. The x-axis denotes groups.

**Fig. C.2:** Average shares of group appeals across issues, parties and elections



Notes: The y-axis shows the share of group appeals on a given issue across elections for each party.

## D. Regression models

**Table D.1:** Effect of issue competence and voter salience

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Issue competence	1.39***	(0.38)			1.24***	(0.39)
Voter salience			3.28***	(0.46)	3.57***	(0.47)
Systemic salience					-1.06***	(0.35)
Constant	-0.96***	(0.12)	-1.08***	(0.11)	-1.13***	(0.13)
Party fixed effects	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Election fixed effects	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Observations	400.00		400.00		400.00	
Log likelihood	-195.89		-194.58		-193.84	

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

**Table D.2:** Effect of issue competence and voter salience

	Model 1 (all groups)		Model 2 (related groups)		Model 3 (unrelated groups)	
Issue competence	4.04***	(1.03)	3.74***	(1.27)	4.45***	(1.47)
Voter salience	5.87***	(0.81)	4.63***	(1.18)	5.84***	(1.29)
Issue competence $\times$ Voter salience	-30.91***	(9.99)	-16.57	(13.01)	-42.88***	(15.30)
Systemic salience	-1.06***	(0.36)	-1.67***	(0.48)	1.00	(0.85)
Constant	-1.33***	(0.14)	-1.59***	(0.15)	-2.49***	(0.21)
Party fixed effects	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Election fixed effects	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Observations	400.00		400.00		400.00	
Log likelihood	-193.54		-113.48		-58.69	

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

## E. Additional analyses

**Table E.1:** Effect of issue competence and voter salience

	Model 1 (all groups)		Model 2 (related groups)		Model 3 (unrelated groups)	
Issue competence	1.24***	(0.39)	2.22***	(0.48)	0.46	(0.42)
Voter salience	3.57***	(0.47)	3.33***	(0.65)	2.77***	(0.81)
Systemic salience	-1.06***	(0.35)	-1.67***	(0.47)	1.00	(0.85)
Constant	-1.13***	(0.13)	-1.47***	(0.13)	-2.21***	(0.16)
Party fixed effects	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Election fixed effects	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Observations	400.00		400.00		400.00	
Log likelihood	-193.84		-113.54		-58.89	

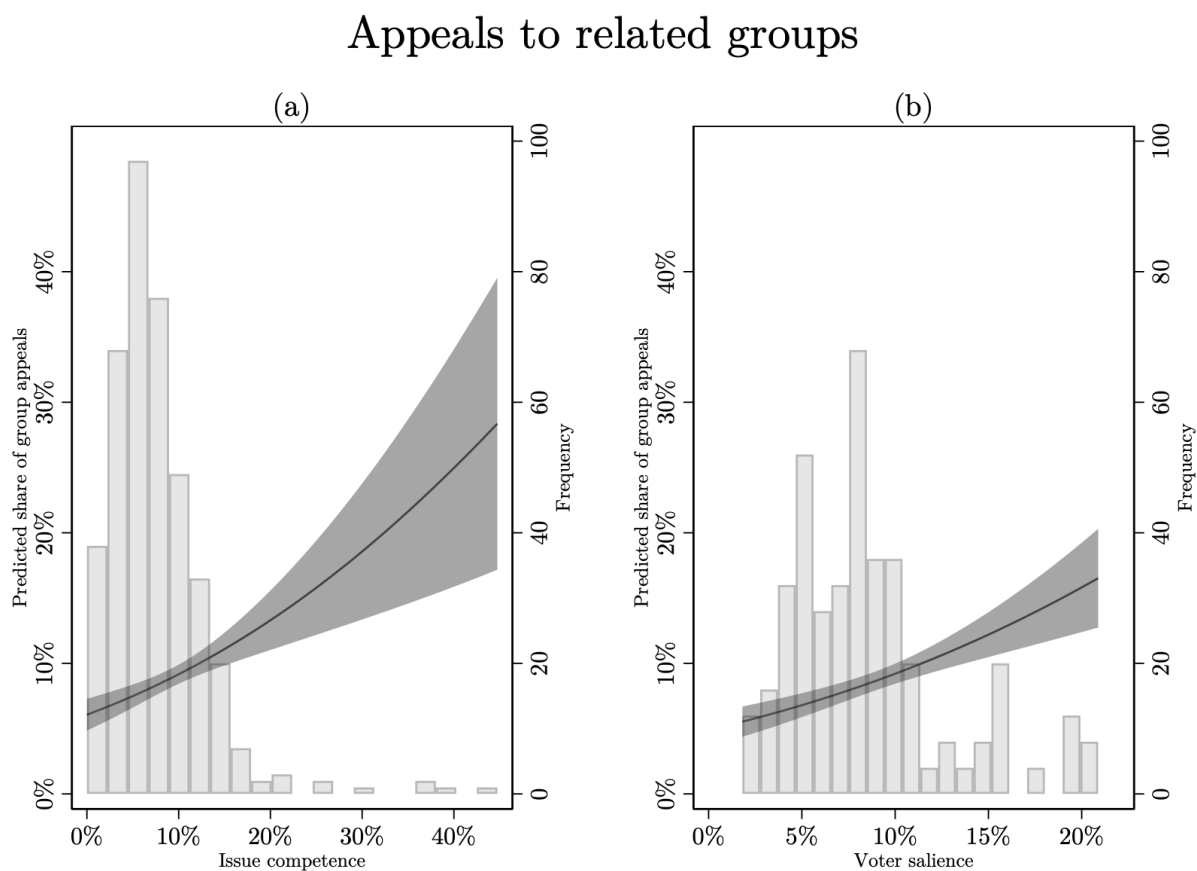
Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table E.1 presents the results for the three fractional probit regression models for all groups (Model 1), related groups (Model 2), and unrelated groups (Model 3). In Model 2 and Figure E.1, there are highly statistically significant and positive effects for both issue salience and issue competence.

However, Model 3 and E.2 indicate that the effect of issue salience only applies to appeals to unrelated groups. In contrast, there is no statistically significant effect of issue competence.

**Fig. E.1:** Predicted share of appeals to related groups at different levels of issue salience and issue competence



Notes: Results based on Model 2 in Table A.9. Shaded areas indicate 95% confidence intervals. Bars display variable distributions.

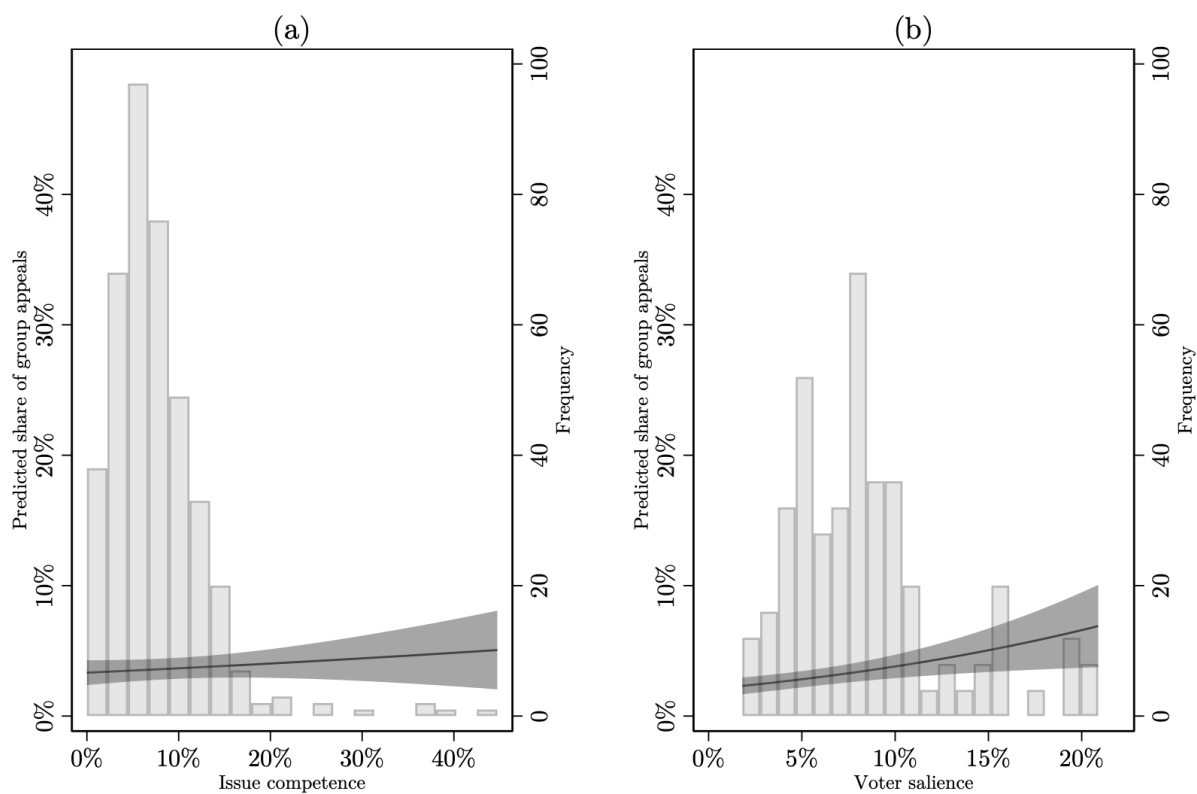
## References

Thau, Mads. 2019. How Political Parties Use Group-Based Appeals: Evidence from Britain 1964–2015. *Political Studies*, **67**(1), 63–82.



**Fig. E.2:** Predicted share of appeals to unrelated groups at different levels of issue salience and issue competence

### Appeals to unrelated groups



Notes: Results based on Model 3 in Table A.9. Shaded areas indicate 95% confidence intervals. Bars display variable distributions.