

How Political Parties' Issue Ownerships Reduce to Spatial Proximity

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ONLINE APPENDIX

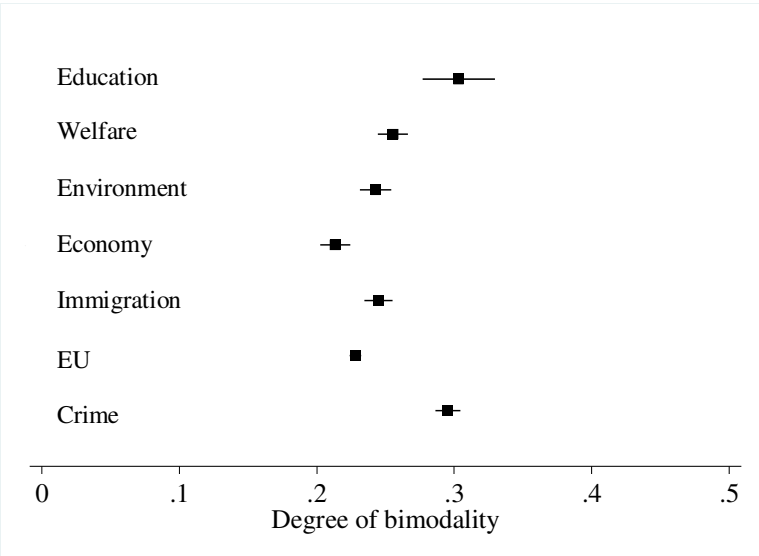
SECTION I: Additional Analysis

Table A1 Overview of Data

	Economy	Education	Environment	Law/order	Immigration	Welfare	EU	TOTAL
<i>Sweden</i>	5.7	4.7	3.3	3.7	4.3	3.4	3.9	210
<i>Norway</i>		3.6	4.0		3.9			80
<i>Denmark</i>		3.0	7.0	6.0	5.5	3.5	6.5	63
<i>Finland</i>			1.0		1.0	1.4		14
<i>France</i>		2.4		2.2	2.8	2.0	1.3	52
<i>Germany</i>	1.6		2.4		3.8	3.6	1.0	59
<i>Austria</i>	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.8	1.0	1.4	47
<i>The UK</i>		1.5	1.3	4.7	3.0		1.7	39
<i>The US</i>		5.0	5.5	8.0	1.0	8.0		54
<i>Canada</i>	2.4	1.0	3.2	2.2	1.0			48
<i>Australia</i>		6.0	8.5		6.5	1.0		44
<i>New Zealand</i>		4.5	3.3	3.8	3.8	1.0		63
TOTAL	67	133	145	112	160	97	59	773

Note. Cell entries are the average number of time points per party, while the bottom row and rightist column give the total number of OBSERVATIONS at the party level per issue and per country.

Figure A1 Average Level of Bimodality in the Voter Distribution for Each Issue



Note. The estimates are based on Table A2 in the appendix.

Table A2 The Average Level of Bimodality across Issues

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Bimodality	0.21 ^{***}	0.30 ^{***}	0.24 ^{***}	0.30 ^{***}	0.26 ^{***}	0.23 ^{***}	0.24 ^{***}
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)
Observations	47	129	126	115	93	38	164
Issues	Econ.	Edu.	Envi.	Crime	Welf.	EU	Imm.

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. The average level of bimodality across Issues is estimated through the intercepts of fixed effects regressions for each issue with countries as panels.

Table A3 The Average Median Voter Position across Issues

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Median voter position	0.54 ^{***}	0.29 ^{***}	0.38 ^{***}	0.73 ^{***}	0.28 ^{***}	0.64 ^{***}	0.60 ^{***}
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Observations	67	133	145	112	97	59	160
Issues	Econ.	Edu.	Envi.	Crime	Welf.	EU	Imm.

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. The average median voter position is estimated through the intercepts of fixed effects cross-section cross-time regressions for each issue with countries as panels.

Table A4 The likelihood that a voters names the party with issue ownership as the preferred party to handle an issue.

	Issue ownership	
Proximity to median voter	0.53 ^{***} (0.02)	0.54 ^{***} (0.03)
Issue importance		0.56 ^{***} (0.03)
Economy (ref.)		
Education	-0.01 (0.25)	-0.00 (0.24)
Environment	0.34 (0.25)	0.51 ^{**} (0.24)
Crime	0.06 (0.25)	0.12 (0.25)
Immigration	-0.01 (0.25)	0.09 (0.24)
Welfare	-0.01 (0.27)	0.15 (0.27)
EU	0.09 (0.36)	0.28 (0.34)
1988 (ref.)		
1990	-1.05 [*] (0.62)	-1.04 [*] (0.60)
1991	-0.82 (0.75)	-0.90 (0.70)
1992	-0.84 (0.64)	-0.87 (0.61)
1993	-1.76 ^{***} (0.65)	-1.19 [*] (0.71)
1994	-1.39 ^{**} (0.60)	-1.42 ^{**} (0.58)
1996	-1.40 ^{**} (0.60)	-1.35 ^{**} (0.58)
1998	-1.41 ^{**} (0.61)	-1.43 ^{**} (0.58)
1999	-1.60 ^{**} (0.66)	
2000	-1.13 (0.69)	-1.38 ^{**} (0.66)
2001	-1.29 ^{**} (0.62)	-1.30 ^{**} (0.60)
2002	-1.55 ^{**} (0.63)	-1.55 ^{**} (0.62)
2004	-1.42 ^{**} (0.64)	-1.34 ^{**} (0.61)
2005	-1.19 [*]	-1.41 ^{**}

	(0.62)	(0.60)
2006	-1.73***	-1.68***
	(0.66)	(0.63)
2007	-1.40**	-1.46**
	(0.62)	(0.59)
2008	-1.11*	-1.04
	(0.65)	(0.65)
2009	-1.37**	-1.44**
	(0.65)	(0.63)
2010	-1.28*	-1.20*
	(0.69)	(0.65)
2011	-0.93	-0.94
	(0.83)	(0.78)
2012	-1.25**	-1.32**
	(0.62)	(0.59)
2013	-1.47**	-1.13*
	(0.63)	(0.61)
2014	-1.42**	-1.30**
	(0.68)	(0.66)
Sweden (ref.)		
Norway	-0.68***	-0.68***
	(0.25)	(0.24)
Denmark	0.67***	0.73***
	(0.21)	(0.20)
France	0.44	-0.05
	(0.27)	(0.25)
Germany	0.93***	
	(0.31)	
Austria	0.20	-0.16
	(0.31)	(0.30)
UK	1.02***	0.65**
	(0.27)	(0.25)
US	0.63***	0.56**
	(0.23)	(0.22)
Canada	-0.23	-0.36
	(0.30)	(0.30)
Australia	0.39*	0.25
	(0.22)	(0.21)
New Zealand	0.65***	
	(0.25)	
Constant	0.96	0.85
	(0.66)	(0.64)
Observations	128229	116144

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-way). Logistic regression. Information on the MIP-variable is not available in all cases and the number of respondents therefore declines from model 1 to model 2.

Table A5 The Effect of Party Issue Emphasis and Party Position Distance on Issue Ownership

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(A) Party proximity	6.03 [*] (3.60)	4.86 (3.70)	5.03 (3.67)	-2.62 (4.57)
(B) Party emphasis		2.67 (16.09)		-87.91 (54.59)
A × B				99.05 (62.15)
Voters' issue concern		-11.51 [*] (6.40)		-10.87 [*] (6.32)
Party vote share			0.94 ^{***} (0.14)	0.85 ^{***} (0.13)
Bimodality			0.59 (5.18)	0.68 (5.44)
Constant	21.69 ^{***} (3.20)	23.23 ^{***} (3.41)	1.04 (4.70)	10.61 ^{**} (4.94)
Observations	723	670	710	670

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. ^{*} $p < 0.10$, ^{**} $p < 0.05$, ^{***} $p < 0.01$. The dependent variable is a party's issue ownership score. The measure of a party's proximity to the median voter comes from national election studies (see text). The estimation uses cross-time cross-section fixed effects with robust standard errors. The panels are countries and issues.

Table A6 The Effect of Party Issue Emphasis and Party Position Distance to the Median Voter on Issue Ownership

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Party emphasis	2.86 (15.15)	-6.68 (15.16)	-6.96 (14.81)	9.03 (14.75)	-5.63 (16.87)	-1.31 (14.20)	3.84 (14.97)
Party proximity	6.16* (3.14)	8.11** (3.20)	5.47* (3.36)	7.38** (3.08)	4.87 (3.19)	7.10** (3.42)	6.13* (3.50)
Voters' issue concern	-7.47 (12.50)	-2.92 (7.25)	-6.36 (6.85)	-5.45 (6.79)	-3.56 (6.59)	-5.56 (6.78)	-8.21 (6.65)
Constant	23.70*** (2.61)	22.03*** (2.48)	22.79*** (2.45)	20.81*** (2.65)	23.98*** (2.49)	22.28*** (2.64)	23.01*** (2.73)
Observations	706	640	628	661	676	714	613
Issue excluded	Econ.	Edu.	Envi.	Crime	Welf.	EU	Imm.

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. The dependent variable is a party's issue ownership score. The estimation uses cross-time cross-section fixed effects with robust standard errors. The panels are countries and issues.

Table A7 The Effect of Party Issue Emphasis and Party Position Distance to the Median Voter on Issue Ownership

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Party emphasis	-0.81 (18.29)	0.91 (14.36)	4.48 (17.31)	-0.38 (14.37)	0.74 (13.84)	-6.16 (12.04)	-1.25 (14.52)	-0.44 (14.05)	0.18 (14.14)	2.55 (14.03)	1.61 (15.76)	-4.08 (14.76)	-1.60 (14.05)
Party proximity	6.64* (4.07)	7.05** (3.28)	8.10** (3.42)	6.39** (3.04)	5.45* (2.92)	4.15 (2.88)	7.50** (3.11)	6.47** (3.03)	7.32** (3.12)	6.34** (3.14)	6.32* (3.30)	6.61** (3.20)	5.95** (2.80)
Voters' issue concern	-7.16 (6.88)	-6.12 (7.56)	-4.90 (6.93)	-5.42 (6.75)	-0.98 (6.51)	-14.90 (10.97)	-5.00 (6.80)	-5.40 (6.75)	-3.64 (7.01)	-4.89 (6.76)	-6.40 (6.91)	-4.70 (6.87)	-5.12 (6.79)
Constant	27.26*** (3.02)	23.60*** (2.51)	19.15*** (2.92)	22.94*** (2.37)	23.43*** (2.36)	25.17*** (2.08)	22.25*** (2.43)	22.64*** (2.39)	21.52*** (2.47)	20.68*** (2.48)	23.11*** (2.64)	21.21*** (2.57)	22.54*** (2.30)
Observations	563	693	710	759	721	714	726	773	734	719	725	729	710
Country excluded	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	France	Germany	Austria	Switzerland	UK	US	Canada	Australia	New Zealand

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. The dependent variable is a party's issue ownership score. The estimation uses cross-time cross-section fixed effects with robust standard errors. The panels are countries and issues.

Table A8 The Effect of Party Issue Emphasis and Party Position Distance to the Median Voter on Issue Ownership

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(A) Party emphasis	-58.69 (35.65)	-68.43** (32.69)	-51.06 (34.02)	-52.80* (28.87)	-61.53 (39.03)	-75.48** (31.30)	-72.02** (33.30)
(B) Party proximity	0.04 (3.68)	1.39 (3.80)	0.74 (3.92)	1.01 (3.73)	-0.59 (3.70)	-0.82 (3.79)	-3.49 (4.31)
(A) × (B)	93.43* (53.52)	96.42* (51.58)	69.15 (47.48)	94.57** (45.43)	85.05 (58.34)	113.51** (48.81)	118.41** (52.91)
Voters' issue concern	-8.36 (12.46)	-3.70 (7.19)	-6.68 (6.86)	-6.27 (6.75)	-3.49 (6.51)	-6.23 (6.73)	-8.78 (6.49)
Constant	27.83*** (2.74)	26.46*** (2.58)	25.93*** (2.86)	25.14*** (2.74)	27.64*** (2.61)	27.57*** (2.63)	29.28*** (2.81)
Observations	706	640	628	661	676	714	613
Issue excluded	Econ.	Edu.	Envi.	Crime	Welf.	EU	Imm.

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. The dependent variable is a party's issue ownership score. The estimation uses cross-time cross-section fixed effects with robust standard errors. The panels are countries and issues.

Table A9 The Effect of Party Issue Emphasis and Party Position Distance to the Median Voter on Issue Ownership

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
(A) Party emphasis	-74.89 (47.80)	-61.59* (31.51)	-62.05* (33.70)	-61.28* (31.22)	-51.53* (29.89)	-60.95** (29.60)	-88.14*** (30.63)	-62.74** (30.99)	-55.49* (31.27)	-55.18* (30.85)	-59.25* (33.80)	-66.03*** (31.40)	-63.99* (32.86)
(B) Party proximity	-0.60 (4.62)	0.06 (3.91)	0.93 (3.90)	-0.10 (3.56)	-0.02 (3.57)	-1.79 (3.21)	-1.42 (3.66)	-0.17 (3.54)	1.26 (3.65)	0.11 (3.60)	-0.10 (3.77)	-0.19 (3.75)	-0.58 (3.38)
(A) × (B)	109.07 (69.82)	96.62** (48.88)	105.96* (55.43)	93.97* (47.92)	80.51* (47.05)	85.59** (42.17)	133.34*** (46.81)	95.93** (47.42)	85.72* (47.84)	88.70* (46.92)	92.10* (49.25)	95.80** (48.52)	96.39* (50.76)
Voters' issue concern	-7.60 (6.85)	-6.34 (7.50)	-5.19 (6.85)	-5.96 (6.70)	-1.48 (6.41)	-16.20 (10.75)	-5.30 (6.71)	-5.94 (6.70)	-4.41 (6.96)	-5.39 (6.71)	-6.84 (6.89)	-5.40 (6.80)	-5.78 (6.76)
Constant	32.13*** (3.13)	28.25*** (2.67)	23.78*** (2.77)	27.28*** (2.49)	27.07*** (2.48)	29.15*** (2.31)	28.16*** (2.54)	27.07*** (2.49)	25.58*** (2.59)	24.87*** (2.57)	27.45*** (2.76)	25.75*** (2.67)	26.89*** (2.43)
Observations	563	693	710	759	721	714	726	773	734	719	725	729	710
Country excluded	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	France	Germany	Austria	Switzerland	UK	US	Canada	Australia	New Zealand

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. The dependent variable is a party's issue ownership score. The estimation uses cross-time cross-section fixed effects with robust standard errors. The panels are countries and issues.

Table A10 The Effect of Party Position Distance to the Median Voter and Bimodality on Issue Ownership

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(A) Party proximity	15.03 [*] (8.19)	18.39 [*] (9.33)	17.23 ^{**} (8.01)	10.10 (8.75)	16.94 ^{**} (8.05)	15.95 ^{**} (8.05)	9.82 (8.68)
(B) Bimodality	22.86 (15.21)	29.60 [*] (16.35)	29.71 ^{**} (14.45)	10.21 (17.17)	27.39 [*] (15.67)	22.58 (14.82)	6.35 (18.62)
A × B	-35.47 (25.42)	-36.94 (34.00)	-44.58 [*] (23.54)	-11.70 (28.55)	-50.23 ^{**} (23.69)	-35.12 (24.32)	-16.10 (29.92)
Party emphasis	8.88 (15.35)	-2.54 (15.27)	0.78 (15.07)	11.67 (14.98)	1.18 (17.12)	3.21 (14.41)	5.51 (15.55)
Voters' issue concern	-13.38 (12.40)	-6.21 (6.72)	-8.88 (6.50)	-9.34 (6.49)	-4.67 (6.29)	-8.43 (6.56)	-7.52 (7.07)
Constant	17.45 ^{***} (6.20)	13.22 ^{**} (5.87)	13.93 ^{**} (5.96)	17.93 ^{***} (6.29)	16.48 ^{***} (6.27)	16.34 ^{***} (6.01)	21.08 ^{***} (6.56)
Observations	667	601	589	622	641	702	582
Issue excluded	Econ.	Edu.	Envi.	Crime	Welf.	EU	Imm.

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. ^{*} $p < 0.10$, ^{**} $p < 0.05$, ^{***} $p < 0.01$. The dependent variable is a party's issue ownership score. The estimation uses cross-time cross-section fixed effects with robust standard errors. The panels are countries and issues.

Table A11 The Effect of Party Position Distance to the Median Voter and Bimodality on Issue Ownership

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
(A) Party proximity	16.75* (9.82)	15.84* (9.32)	15.98* (9.47)	15.64** (7.65)	13.73* (7.58)	13.09* (7.40)	15.47** (7.76)	15.47** (7.63)	14.24* (7.75)	16.50** (8.22)	17.35** (7.88)	16.38** (7.97)	14.37** (6.86)
(B) Bimodality	24.86 (16.89)	22.35 (18.26)	22.07 (19.76)	23.44 (14.44)	20.86 (14.39)	20.63 (13.95)	20.47 (14.39)	22.97 (14.40)	16.23 (14.66)	27.41* (15.77)	28.83** (14.29)	25.44* (14.79)	21.39 (13.21)
A × B	-37.74 (26.53)	-36.59 (33.34)	-33.07 (33.82)	-37.00 (24.15)	-33.72 (23.91)	-34.34 (23.30)	-31.84 (24.01)	-35.85 (23.99)	-30.05 (24.76)	-38.68 (24.25)	-42.72* (23.85)	-38.38 (24.80)	-33.19 (21.54)
Party emphasis	4.74 (18.51)	5.85 (14.75)	8.11 (17.33)	4.70 (14.66)	5.46 (14.11)	-3.06 (11.97)	3.03 (14.76)	4.34 (14.30)	4.45 (14.35)	7.52 (14.40)	7.73 (16.09)	1.07 (15.12)	3.21 (14.43)
Voters' issue concern	-9.87 (6.75)	-9.39 (7.38)	-7.89 (6.79)	-7.90 (6.54)	-3.65 (6.06)	-12.05 (11.64)	-7.65 (6.60)	-7.92 (6.55)	-6.25 (6.73)	-7.73 (6.53)	-9.03 (6.71)	-7.22 (6.68)	-8.18 (6.32)
Constant	20.05*** (7.44)	17.60*** (6.34)	13.67** (6.60)	16.39*** (5.66)	17.62*** (5.65)	18.94*** (5.39)	16.46*** (5.74)	16.21*** (5.66)	17.23*** (5.67)	12.68** (6.28)	14.88** (5.96)	13.90** (5.95)	16.41*** (5.27)
Observations	526	654	684	720	690	684	694	734	695	680	686	690	671
Country excluded	Sweden	Norway	Den- mark	Finland	France	Germany	Austria	Switzer- land	UK	US	Canada	Austra- lia	New Zealand

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. The dependent variable is a party's issue ownership score. The estimation uses cross-time cross-section fixed effects with robust standard errors. The panels are countries and issues.

SECTION II: Measuring Issue Ownership

The issue coding of issue ownership survey questions was rather straightforward, but coding questions from different election studies is not necessarily unproblematic. First, question wording varies across countries; that is, the voter is asked to pick which party “is best at solving (or dealing with) an issue” or “will do a better job at solving an issue,” which is the standard in most countries, or to choose the party with “a good policy” in Sweden and “the party closest to own view” in Australia. These are not trivial variations and have been shown to affect which predispositions voters use to choose a party (Camp *et al.* 2014). However, the choice of the preferred party in the aggregate is also shown to be much less affected (Camp *et al.* 2014), and this is the information of interest in the current analysis.

Second, the phrasing of the issue on which to evaluate the parties differs in a few examples like unemployment, where voters are asked to evaluate parties regarding “fighting unemployment” in Germany and Denmark, “creating jobs” in Canada, and “their policy on employment” in Sweden. This may become a problem for temporal and spatial comparison insofar as the aggregate choice of party differs across these options. In most cases, however, the same presentation is used across countries. Instead of asking about an issue just by its name, voters are asked which party is best able to e.g., “lower the tax burden,” “fight crime,” or “protect the environment” (e.g., in Germany, Canada, and Denmark). In these instances, voters may be sent in a certain direction in terms of choosing a party. But since they are usually sent in the same direction across time and countries, this makes relative comparisons less of a concern and probably genuinely reflects how voters think about an issue and therefore also the preferred party; in many cases, the content reflects a widely shared goal.

Table A10 reports the questions from the national election studies used to compile the data on issue ownership. When the question asks about the [most important problem], this bracket refers

back to a preceding question where the respondent is asked to name the most important problem. The [...] refers to the issue content of the question, which typically is a single noun (e.g., crime, health, education). If a simple version of the issue content is not used, the alternative is mentioned in Table A11. If no year is recorded in Table A11, the text is used in every survey.

Reference

Camp, Kirsten, Stefaan Walgrave, Jonas Lefevere, and Anke Tresch (2015). ‘Measuring Issue Ownership. A Question Wording Experiment’, *Electoral Studies*, 42: 290-299.

TABLE A10 Questions from the National Election Studies

Text	Country	Year
Which party will do a better job at ... or which party is best at ...	USA, UK, Switzerland, NZ, Finland, Belgium, Italy	
Which party would be best at ...	France	
Which party is best able to solve [...]	Denmark	
Which party is best at dealing with [most important problem]	Austria	
Which party is best able to solve [most important problem]	Ireland	
Which party is best able to solve [most important problem]	Netherlands	
Problem solving competence: Which party is best able to solve [...]	Germany	
Which party is closest to own view on [...]	Australia	
Is there, in your opinion, any party or parties with a good policy on [...]	Sweden	
Which party has the best policy when it comes to [...]	Norway	
What is the best party dealing with [...] or best party dealing with [most important problem]	Canada	2011, 2008
What is the party closest on [most important problem]	Canada	1990, 1993, 1999, 2005
Which party could best solve that [most important problem]	Canada	2002

TABLE A11 The Issue Content of the Question. Phrases Deviating from the Standard Question

Text on unemployment	Country	Year
“Fighting unemployment”	Germany	1998
“Employment”	Sweden	
“Creating jobs”	Canada	
“Fighting unemployment”	Denmark	
Text on tax		
“Lower the tax burden”	Germany	1998
“Cutting taxes”	Canada	
“Ensure balance between tax burden and social security”	Denmark	2007
“Keep taxes from rising”	Denmark	2005
Text on crime		
“Fight crime”	Germany	1998
Text on asylum/immigration		
“Xenophobia”	Germany	2005
“Regulating the influx of immigration”	Germany	1998
“Ensure reasonable asylum and immigration policy”		
Text on education		
“Schools and education”	Sweden	
“Schools and education”	Norway	
“Ensure good teaching in primary school”	Denmark	
Text on EU		
“Norway’s relationship to the EU”	Norway	
“Take care of Denmark’s interests in the EU”	Denmark	
Text on environment		
“Protecting the environment”	Canada	
“Protect the environment”	Denmark	
Text on health		
“Improving health care”	Canada	
“Ensure proper health care”	Denmark	
Text on social security		
“Improving social welfare programmes”	Canada	
Text on elderly care		
“Ensure acceptable conditions for elderly people”	Denmark	

SECTION III: Party Positions and Party Issue Emphasis

The party positions for the seven issues are calculated based on the approach suggested by Lowe et al. (2011), which builds on the Kim–Fording approach (2002). The calculation uses the CMP data set as shown below, where “per...” refers to the issue code in the CMP data set. The calculation generates a variable where positive values denote rightwing orientation. That is anti-environment, anti-immigration, and anti-welfare positions, anti-state intervention in the economy, anti-public education, anti-EU, pro-crime punishment, pro-defense.

$$\text{Environment} = \log(\text{per401} + \text{per410} + \text{per703} + 0.5) - \log(\text{per501} + \text{per416} + 0.5)$$

$$\text{Immigration} = \log(\text{per601} + \text{per608} + 0.5) - \log(\text{per602} + \text{per607} + 0.5)$$

$$\text{Welfare} = \log(\text{per505} + 0.5) - \log(\text{per503} + \text{per504} + 0.5)$$

$$\text{Economy} = \log(\text{per401} + \text{per402} + 0.5) - \log(\text{per403} + \text{per412} + \text{per413} + \text{per415} + 0.5)$$

$$\text{Education} = \log(\text{per507} + 0.5) - \log(\text{per506} + 0.5)$$

$$\text{EU} = \log(\text{per110} + 0.5) - \log(\text{per108} + 0.5)$$

$$\text{Crime} = \log(\text{per605} + 0.5)$$

Party issue emphasis is measured by summing all categories for each issue. For the EU, for example, emphasis is the sum of per110 and per108.

SECTION IV: The Median Voter

The median voter is measured on each issue by aggregating (through the median) respondents' answers to a survey question about their issue preferences in the national election studies across countries and over time.

On immigration, the median voter is typically measured on the extent to which the respondents prefer more immigrants into the country (0 = left) or less (1 = right) or the extent to which the respondent thinks that immigration is good for the country (0 = left) or bad (1 = right). On environment, the median voter is typically measured on the extent to which the respondents put environmental concerns above economic growth (0 = left) or not (1 = right). On the economy, the question typically asks about the extent to which the government should step in to ensure economic growth (0 = left) or not (1 = right). On education, the disagreement is on the extent to which private schooling is desirable (1 = right) or if the public should fund mostly primary or secondary education (0 = left). On welfare, the disagreement is on the level of equality and redistribution to the poor. On the EU, it is about the preference for more or less integration. If such positional questions are unavailable, data from the European Social Survey (ESS)ⁱ is used instead or eventually a spending preference measure. With these replacements, the ESS data covers only 2% of the data, while the spending data covers 5%. The spending measure simply asks if the respondent prefers more or less spending on a given issue, in this way aligning with the dimensionality of the position questions. The ESS data covers the issues of welfare, immigration, and the EU, and the ESS survey asks, respectively, if the government should reduce differences in income levels, if more immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe should be allowed and if European unification has gone too far.

One concern with estimating a voters' position on an issue and the median voter position is that voters might be located more to the center than their 'true position'. They lack information about

the issue and therefore by default choose the less controversial non-extreme position (Hare et al. 2015). Hence, the analysis might overestimate how close to the median voter, each voter is located. Based on the assumption that voters have or gain more knowledge about an issue if they find it important, I test in Table A12 if this applies to the analysis in this study. As knowledge questions for each issue in each election survey is not available, I include the most-important-problem indicator as a proxy for importance. I regress the proximity of a voters' position to the median voter position on the most-important-problem (MIP) variable: I generate an MIP dummy for each voter that takes the value 1 if the voter mentioned the issue of analysis as important and 0 otherwise. As expected from Hare et al. (2015), the estimation shows that voters, who find an issue important, take a position less proximate to the median voter on the issue. The effect is though extremely weak – a voter who finds the issue important is 0.006 less proximate to the median voter on the 0-1 scale than a voter who does not find the issue important – and the effect only borders conventional levels of statistical significance ($p < .08$) in a sample of more than 100.000 respondents. To account for this possible effect of issue important on the voter proximity to the median voter, I include the MIP dummy in the micro-level analysis in Table A4 and Table 3.

Table A12 The influence of how important an issue is to a voter on her location vis-à-vis the median voter.

	Proximity to median voter
Issue importance (=1)	-0.01 [*] (0.00)
Sweden (ref.)	
Norway	0.03 (0.03)
Denmark	0.02 (0.03)
France	0.08 [*] (0.04)
Austria	0.06 (0.04)
UK	0.23 ^{***} (0.04)
US	0.05 [*] (0.03)
Canada	-0.06 [*] (0.04)
Australia	0.07 ^{**} (0.03)
Constant	0.75 ^{***} (0.03)
Observations	116144

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. ^{*} $p < 0.10$, ^{**} $p < 0.05$, ^{***} $p < 0.01$ (two-way). OLS regression.

ⁱThe ESS data covers the issues of welfare, immigration, and the EU and asks, respectively, if the government should reduce differences in income levels, if more immigrants from poorer countries outside Europe should be allowed, and if European unification has gone too far.