The Political Economics of Party Entry

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Motivation

Political economics mainly relies on two-party models

- single cleavage dimension – left-to-right (class) politics
- does it reasonably proxy post-war democratic politics?

Entry by new parties an important fact – especially with PR

- model maybe OK, if into "duopoly" of left or right families
- but not OK, if entry by Green and Radical-right parties

These take opposite sides on new political cleavage

- two poles of cultural GAL-TAN dimension (Green, Alternative, Liberal and Traditional, Authoritarian, Nationalist) – much attention in political science

Green and Radical-right parties participate in coalitions

- form governments with both Center-left and Center-right

What we do

Build a model with politics in two dimensions

- 1^{st} around traditional left-right redistributive policies
- but 2^{nd} dimension around two further policies
  green issues – regulating environmental pollution
  nationalist issues – regulating immigration

Begin with two incumbent mainstream parties

- equilibrium policies may focus on 1^{st} economic dimension and ignore interests in 2^{nd} GAL-TAN cultural dimension

Study Green or Radical-right entry

- entry to influence election outcomes *or* policy outcomes via coalitions with mainstream parties that seek a majority
- also "backlash entry" against new policy, due to mainstream-party reversal, *or* 3^{rd} party entry

Related work

Political science

- shifting issue cleavages: breakdown of traditional left-right politics (Kitschelt 1994, AbouChadi-Hix, 2021)
- increasing weight of GAL-TAN dimension: challenger parties (Hobolt and Tilley 2016, DeVries-Hobolt 2023), rise of radical right (Kitschelt 2018, Norris-Ingelhart 2019, Rydgren 2018)
- post-election coalition formation (AustenSmith-Banks 1988)

Political economics

- small literatures on party entry (Palfrey 1984, Morelli 2002), and party formation (Levy 2004)
- research on strategic policy to shape future outcomes (Persson-Svensson 1989, Alesina-Tabellini 1990, Baron 1996)

Industrial organization

- entry deterrence (Dixit 1980, Fudenberg-Tirole 1984)

Roadmap

1. **Key Patterns in Data**
2. Core Model
3. Political Equilibrium without Entry
4. Political Equilibrium with Entry
5. Back to the Data
6. Final Remarks

Party entries, party positions, and ruling coalitions

45 years of data from ParlGov

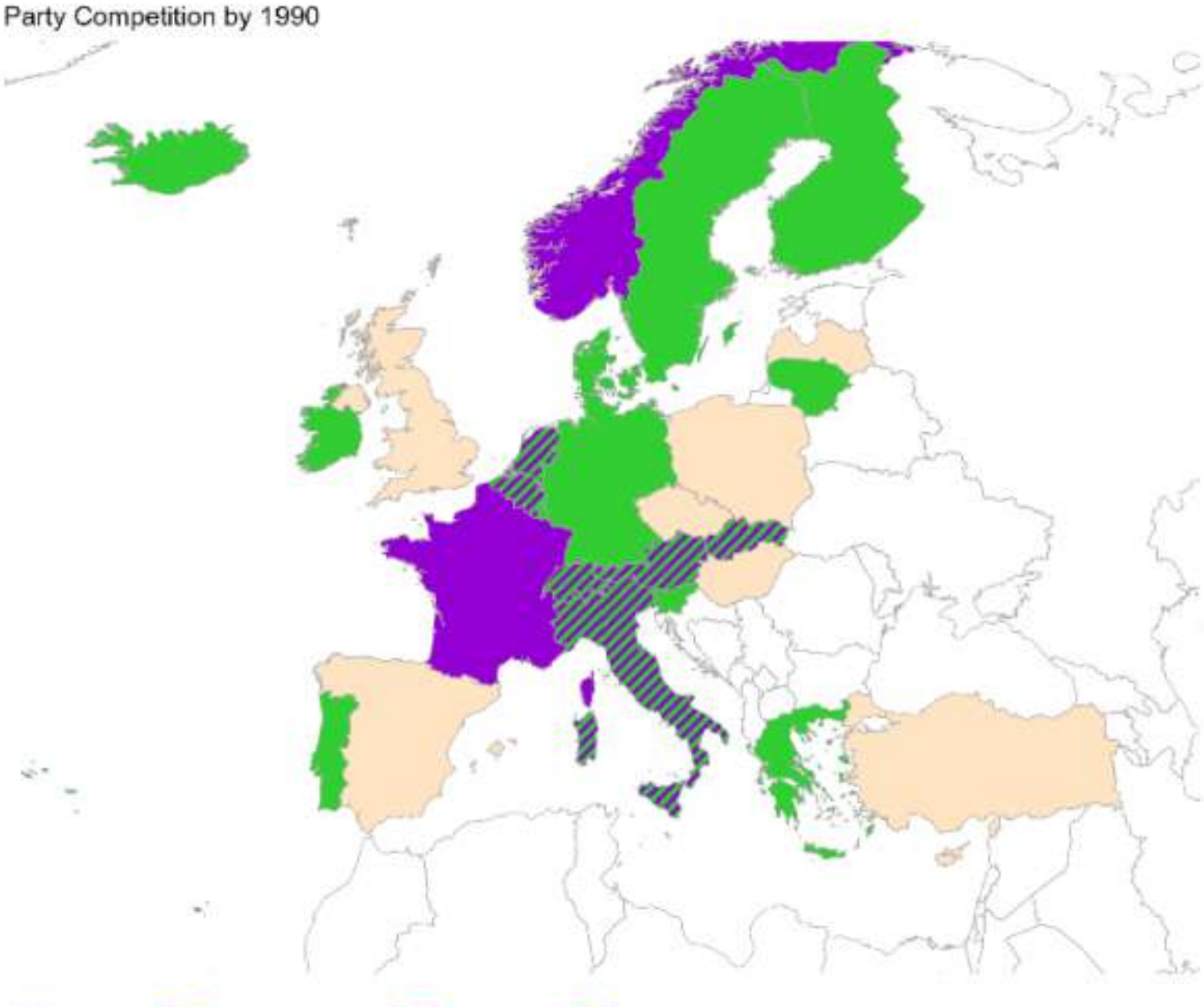
- for 31 European countries, 1980-2023
- 86 percent of seats held by center-left and center-right

Use classification of parties into four types and describe

- entry of green and radical-right parties – win at least one seat in election closest to cut-off date – Figures 1a,c,d
- party scores (-10 to $+10$) in two dimensions – weighted by average seat share of each party in family – Figure 2
- Green and Radical right in government coalitions – based on prime minister's party and coalition partner with at least one cabinet post – Figures 3a,b
- links between entry and regulation stringency – for environment (OECD) and migration (Dreher 2002) – Table 1

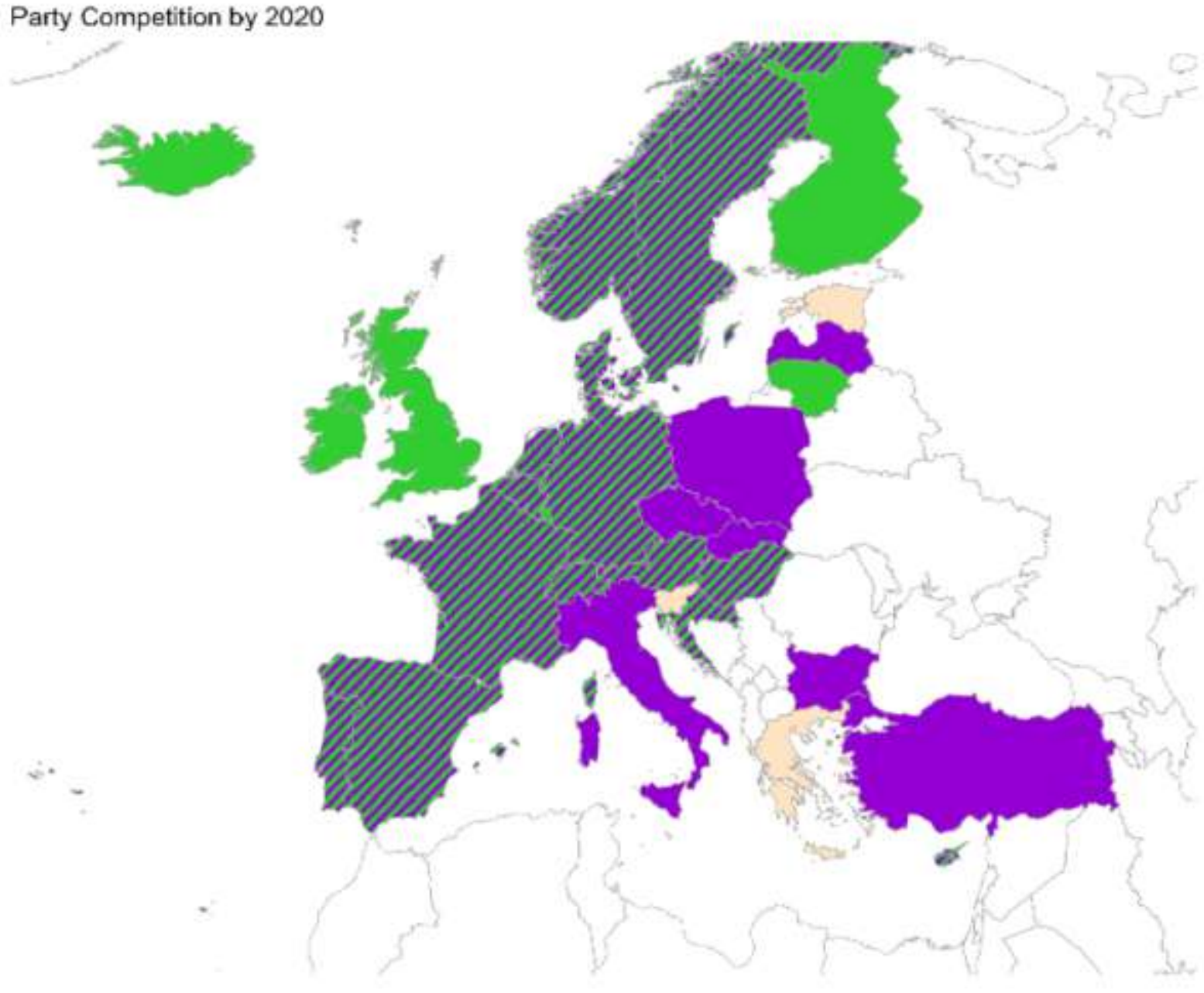
Party entry over time

At 1990



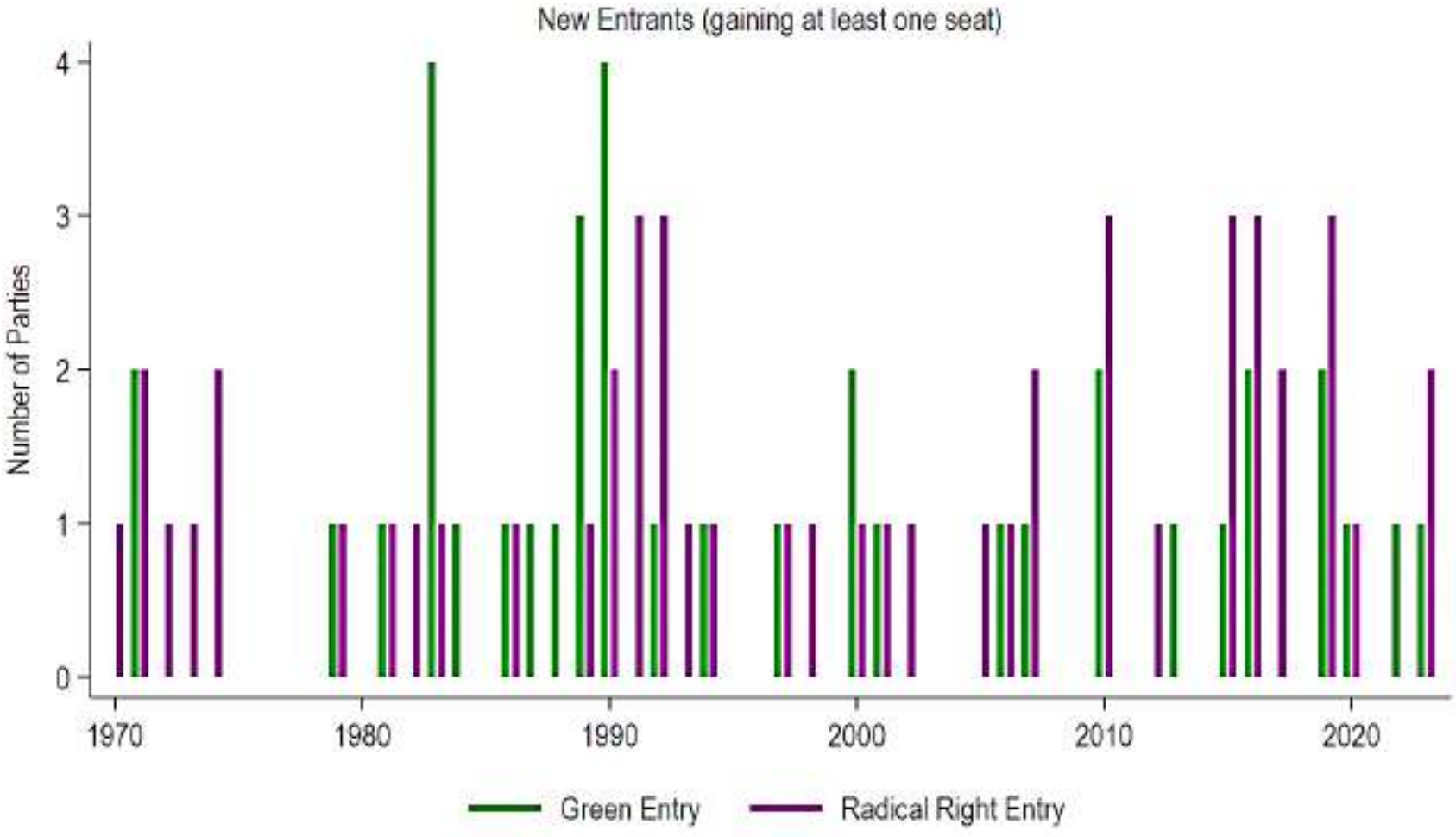
Party entry over time

At 2020

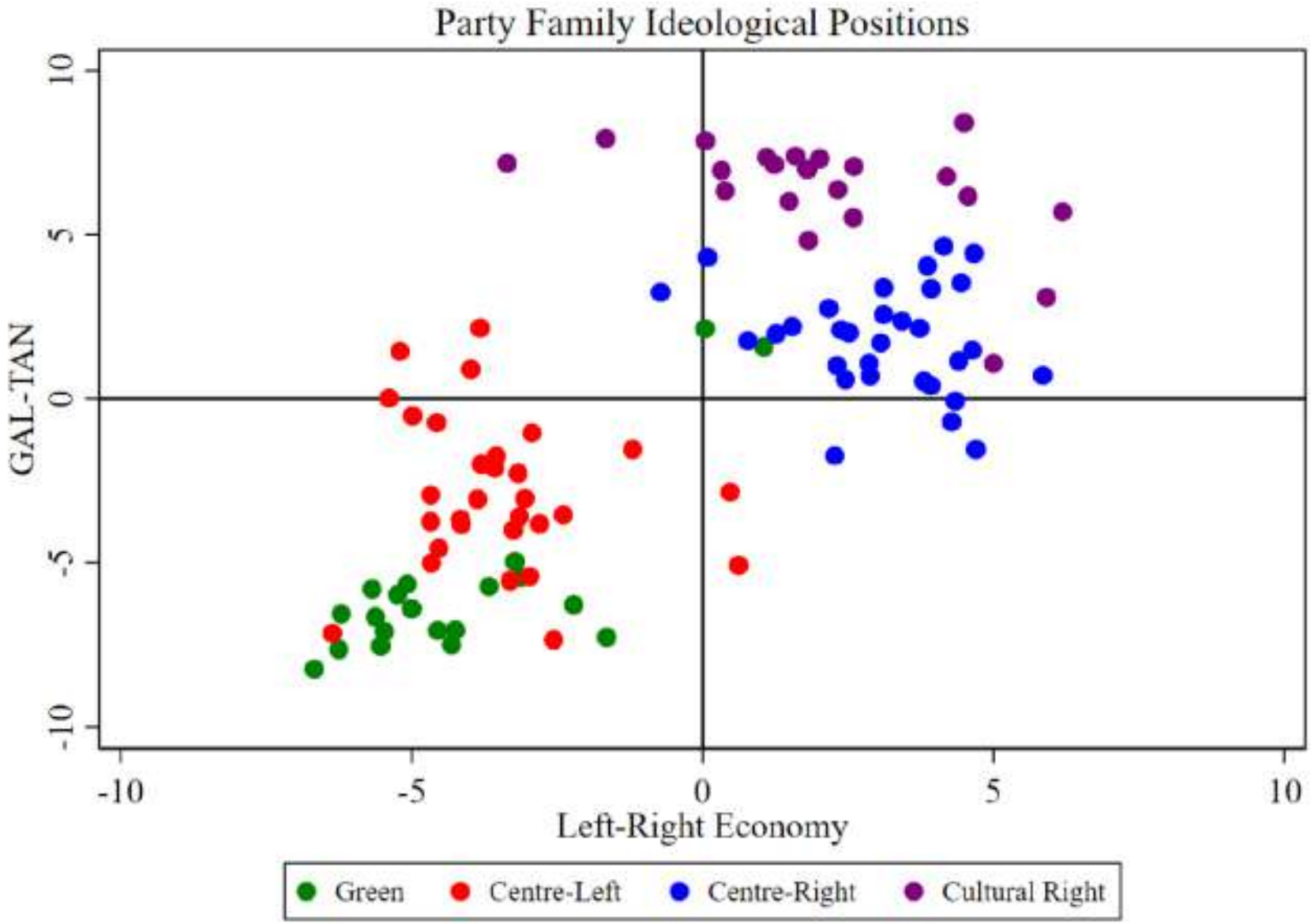


Party entry frequencies

Entries over time (election years)

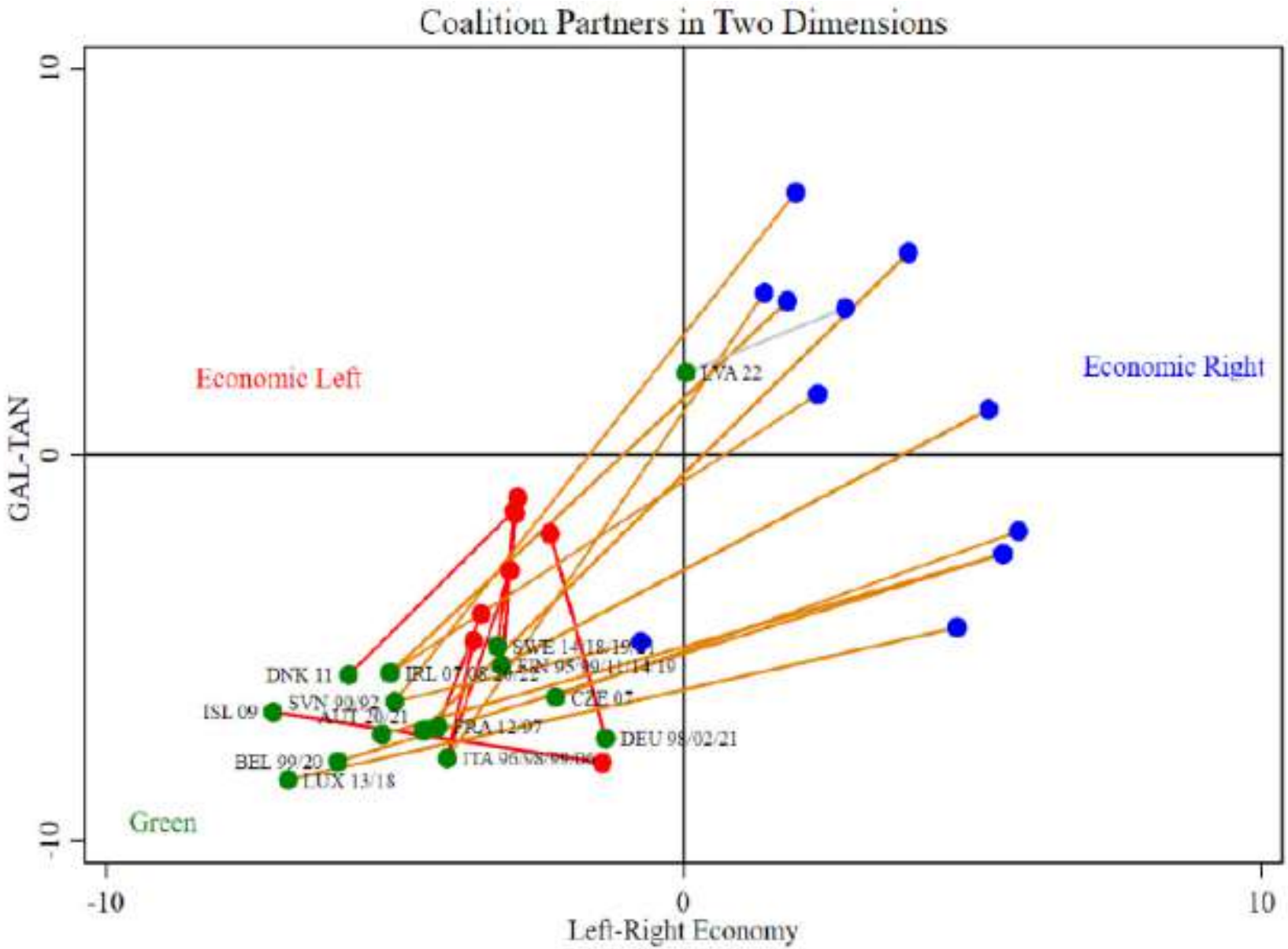


Party positions in two dimensions



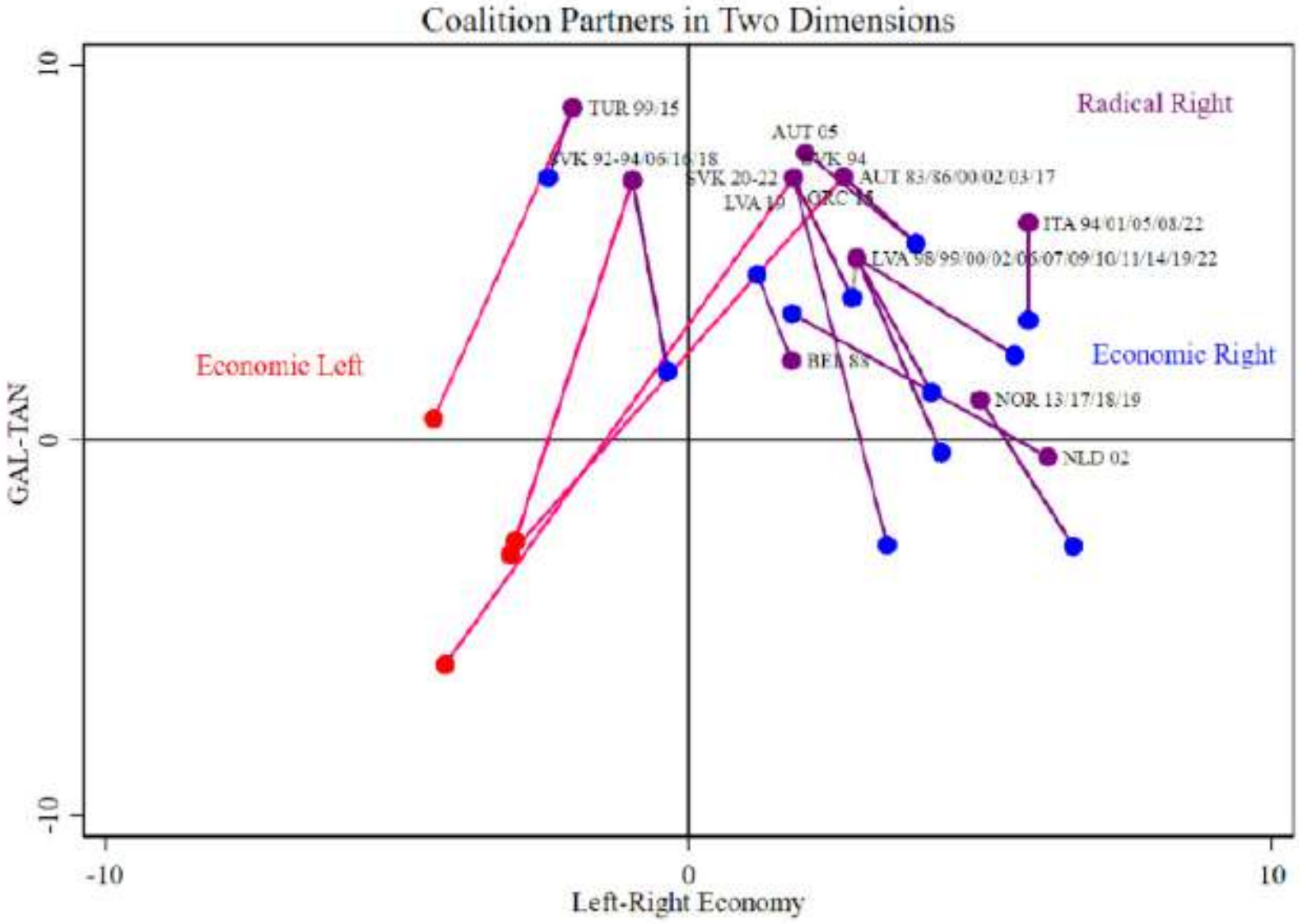
Coalition governments

Green



Coalition governments

Radical right



Policy outcomes and party entry

DiD regressions – party entry on regulation stringency

- simple static, two-way, fixed-effects estimates

	(1) Environmental Stringency	(2) Environmental Stringency	(3) Immigration Stringency	(4) Immigration Stringency
Green party present	0.026	0.025		0.015
	(0.004)	(0.004)		(0.011)
Radical Right party present		0.005	0.055	0.053
		(0.004)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Number of countries	30	30	24	24
Time period	1990-2023	1990-2023	1980-2018	1980-2018
Observations	977	977	882	882
Mean dependent variable	0.278	0.278	0.241	0.241

Roadmap

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Economic and cultural heterogeneity

One class dimension $K \in \{L, R\}$

- L left-wing, share $1 - \pi$, and R right-wing, share π
- income inequality: $y^L < y < y^R$, overall mean y

One cultural dimension $J \in \{G, T, N\}$

- G for GAL, T for TAN, N for "neutral"
- shares in K $\gamma^K < 1/2$ type G, $\tau^K < 1/2$ type T, $1 - \gamma^K - \tau^K$ type N

Easy to do desired "accounting"

- e.g., G population share, $\gamma = \pi\gamma^R + (1 - \pi)\gamma^L < 1/2$ or average income for G, $y^G = \pi\gamma^R y^R + (1 - \pi)\gamma^L y^L$

Three policy instruments

Two forms of regulation

- of environment $x^G \in [0,1]$
- of migration (or trade) $x^T \in [0,1]$
- both regulations affect cultural and economic payoffs
  each income group bears economic cost r^K
  (same for both types of regulation)
- average regulation cost $r = [\pi r^R + (1-\pi) r^L]$

One form of redistribution

- income tax $t \in [\underline{t}, \bar{t}]$ to pay uniform (lump-sum) transfers
- total tax revenue $t\left[y - r(x^G + x^T)\right]$

Policy preferences – economic domain

Total payoff for group K, J

$$W^{K,J}(t, x^G, x^T) = Y^K(t, x^G, x^T) + C^J(x^G, x^T)$$

Economic part, by type K

$$Y^K(t, x^G, x^T) = (1-t)\left[y^K - r^K(x^G + x^T)\right] + t[y - r(x^G + x^T)]$$

- we assume $y - y^R + r^R - r < 0 < y - y^L + r^L - r$, so that bliss points are $t = \underline{t}$ for all R, J and $t = \bar{t}$ for all L, J
- shapes policy conflict over t in redistributive dimension

Policy preferences – cultural domain

Cultural preferences for group J

$$C^J(x^G, x^T) = c^{J,G} x^G + c^{J,T} x^T$$

- we assume

$$c^{J,G} = \begin{cases} c^G & \text{if } J = G \\ 0 & \text{if } J = N \\ -k^G c^G & \text{if } J = T \end{cases} \quad c^{J,T} = \begin{cases} c^T & \text{if } J = T \\ 0 & \text{if } J = N \\ -k^T c^T & \text{if } J = G \end{cases}$$

- c^J "salience" of cultural conflict and k^J its "skew"
- bliss points are $x^G = 1$ for all G, K *iff* $c^G > r^K$ and $x^T = 1$ for all T, K *iff* $c^T > r^K$
- shape policy conflicts over x^J in GAL-TAN dimension

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Traditional parties

Two incumbent mainstream political parties

- organized along economic left-to-right dimension, label $K \in \{L, R\}$
- but party has *sub*script "K" rather than *super*script "K"

Parties offer policy platforms $\{t_K, x_K^G, x_K^T\}$ to voters

- can't commit, so platforms have to be credible *ex post*
- achieved by picking type-composition of candidates

Parties policy-motivated

- preferences reflect those of party members – assume these come from party's *loyal* voters (see below) in group K, N

$$W_K(t, x^G, x^T) = Y_K(t, x^G, x^T) + C_N(x^G, x^T)$$

Details of party preferences?

Party preferences reflect members' economic type, K

- party L prefers $\bar{t}$, and party R prefers $\underline{t}$

Cultural preferences reflect members' GAL-TAN type, N

- $C_N(x^G, x^T) = c^{K,N}x^G + c^{K,.N}x^T = 0$
- by linearity, regulatory preferences for x^J are

$$\Delta_K^G = \Delta_K^T = -(r^K + t(r - r^K)) < 0$$

- regulations impose net cost on party members
- incumbent parties oppose regulation – but may still prefer to regulate if gives enough electoral advantage

Voting behavior

Adapt well-known probabilistic-voting model

- as mentioned, (two) neutral GAL-TAN types K, N are *loyal* – i.e., always vote for party K
- (four) types G, K and T, K are *swing* voters – i.e., vote for R or L depending on offered policies and random shocks
- aggregate shock η, uniformly distributed on $[-\frac{1}{2\kappa}, \frac{1}{2\kappa}]$
  voter-specific shock ε, uniformly distributed on $[-\frac{1}{2\kappa}, \frac{1}{2\kappa}]$

Timing of political game

1. Two parties $K = L, R$ announce credible electoral platforms $\{t_K, x_K^G, x_K^T\}$ via choice of candidates
2. Voter-specific and aggregate voting shocks realized
3. Everybody votes and party platforms *cum* voting shocks pin down election outcome and realized policy $\{t, x^G, x^T\}$
4. Policies implemented and payoffs realized

Basic equilibrium conditions

Nash equilibrium in taxes and regulation

- $\left\{t_R^*, t_L^*, x_L^{*G}, x_R^{*G}, x_L^{*T}, x_R^{*T}\right\}$ maximize

$$W_R(t_R, x_R^G, x_R^T)P_R + (1 - P_R)W_R(t_L, x_L^G, x_L^T)$$

$$W_L(t_R, x_R^G, x_R^T)P_R + (1 - P_R)W_L(t_L, x_L^G, x_L^T)$$

  where P_R derived below

Only credible redistributive outcome

- parties represent either type L or R, so must have

$$t_R^* = \underline{t} \quad \text{and} \quad t_L^* = \bar{t}$$

- thus, focus on cultural/regulation policies

Swing-voter behavior

Economic/redistribution preferences

- sum over all swing voters $J = G, T$ to get

$$Z^S = (\bar{t} - \underline{t})(y - y^S)$$

- swing voters lean left (right) when their average income $y^S = \gamma y^G + \tau y^R$ below (above) average income y

Cultural/regulation preferences

- sum over J to get average swing-voter stance on x^G and x^T

$$\begin{aligned} \delta^{G,S} &= c^G(\gamma - k^G\tau) - [r^S + t(r - r^S)] \\ \delta^{T,S} &= c^T(\tau - k^T\gamma) - [r^S + t(r - r^S)], \end{aligned}$$

  r^S average regulation cost among swing voters
- collectively, swing-voters only favor regulation J if $\delta^{J,S} > 0$
- this requires 1st term on RHS positive enough – true if (i) *issue* J culturally salient (c^J large), (ii) *group* J dominant (γ or τ large), (iii) little opposition at other end (k^J small)

Win probability for R

Put the pieces together

- use assumptions on voting shocks and types to derive

$$P_R = \frac{1+\Omega}{2} + \kappa[Z^S + \sum_{J \in \{G,T\}} \delta^{J,S}[x_R^J - x_L^J]]$$

$\Omega = \frac{\pi\left(1-\gamma^R-\tau^R\right)-(1-\pi)\left(1-\gamma^L-\tau^L\right)}{\gamma+\tau}$ is R loyal-voter advantage
second term captures swing-voter policy response

A benchmark equilibrium

Party K can appeal to swing voters with $x_K^J > 0$

- this has cost: regulation against party interest ($\Delta_K^J < 0$)
- but possible benefit: higher P_K to pursue party's favored redistribution, captured by $|Z_K| = \left|\left(\bar{t} - \underline{t}\right)\left(y - y^K\right)\right|$
- benefit positive if swing voters favor regulation ($\delta^{J,S} > 0$), and larger if their vote responds more (κ high)

Proposition 1 *An equilibrium has both parties passive on both types of regulation – $x_K^{*J} = 0$ for $J \in \{G, T\}$ and $K \in \{L, R\}$ – if*

$$P_K^0 \Delta_K^J + \kappa \delta^{J,S} |Z_K| < 0 \text{ for } K \in \{L, R\} \text{ and } J \in \{G, T\}.$$

Implemented by K fielding only type K, N candidates

How interpret this benchmark?

Think of sequence of static equilibria as in **Proposition 1**

- no party has incentive to offer any type of regulation
- but voting shocks shift policies between $\{\bar{t}, 0, 0\}$ and $\{\underline{t}, 0, 0\}$ – latter outcome has probability P_R

Proposition 1 instructive in two ways

- captures well hey-days of traditional left-right politics
- shows how policy outcome may side-step groups G, T

Shocks can disrupt this equilibrium

May make incumbent parties adjust (Besley-Persson 2024)

- $\delta^{J,S}$ swing-voter regulation preferences – by issue salience
- Δ_K^J party regulation preferences – by leader takeover
- $|Z_K|$ party redistributive preferences – by class polarization

But may also sow seeds for party entry (this paper)

- e.g., green regulation becomes more salient – c^G higher
- but cross-cutting cleavage among swing-voters make parties R, L unwilling to respond – $\delta^{G,S}$ still small
- group G may have incentive to form party and enter

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Now study conditions for party entry

When does G- or T-party organize and run in election?

- first, entry by third party, which becomes third largest
- then, "backlash entry" by T-party, after entry by G-party

Timing

1. G- or T-party chooses whether to form and enter
2. Election with voting shocks gives party vote shares and seat shares in legislature
3. If no party wins majority, parties try to form government, by bargaining over policy vector $\left\{t, x^G, x^T\right\}$
4. Policy implemented and payoffs realized

Entering party preferences

New party represents type $E \in \{G, T\}$

- become loyal voters and members, with preferences:

$$W_E(t, x^G, x^T) = Y_E(t, x^G, x^T) + C_E(x^G, x^T)$$

Economic preferences

$$Y_E(t, x^G, x^T) = [y^E - r^E(x^G + x^T)](1 - t) + t[y - r(x^G + x^T)]$$

- can be basis for policy agreement, as $y^L < y^E < y^R$

Cultural preferences

$$C_E(x^G, x^T) = \begin{cases} c^G x^G - k^T c^T x^T & \text{if } E = G \\ -k^G c^G x^G + c^T x^T & \text{if } E = T, \end{cases}$$

- where new party hopes to make policy gains

Necessary condition for entry

- W_E increasing in x^E, given r^E average cost in group E

$$\delta_E = c^E - (r^E + t(r - r^E)) > 0$$

Government formation

If no party obtains a majority

- parties bargain over government formation at stage 3, in two-round, closed-rule legislative bargaining

Bargaining-game protocol

1. *Status-quo* (SQ) policy $\left\{t_0, x_0^G, x_0^T\right\}$ inherited from the past
2. Largest party in legislature, with probability 1, makes take-it-or-leave-it proposal $\left\{t_1, x_1^G, x_1^T\right\}$
3. If accepted by majority, $\left\{t_1, x_1^G, x_1^T\right\}$ becomes policy and basis for new coalition government
4. If first-round proposal rejected, second-largest party makes proposal $\left\{t_2, x_2^G, x_2^T\right\}$, with probability $1 - s_E$, while entrant E does so with probability s_E
5. If accepted by majority, $\left\{t_2, x_2^G, x_2^T\right\}$ becomes policy
6. If rejected, SQ $\left\{t_0, x_0^G, x_0^T\right\}$ becomes policy

General properties of bargaining solution

Proposition 2 and Appendix .

- suppose no party has own outright majority and let

$$t_E = \arg \max_{t \in \{\underline{t}, \bar{t}\}} \{W_E(t, 0, 0)\}$$

- if SQ is $\{t_{SQ}, 0, 0\}$, $t_{SQ} \in \{\underline{t}, \bar{t}\}$, E prefers t_E, formateur is $F \in \{R, L\}$, E's expected bargaining payoff is

$$\mathrm{E}[W_E(t, x^G, x^T)] = s_E \mathrm{E}[S_E(t_{SQ}, F)] + W_E(t_E, 0, 0)$$

- $\mathrm{E}[S_E(t, F)]$ expected surplus when makes round-2 proposal
- $S_E > 0$, *only* when $t_{SQ} = t_E$

Intuition for this expression

- E least powerful against party whose t proposal E likes best
- by rejecting proposals, E can secure payoff $W_E(t_E, 0, 0)$
- with round-2 proposal power, E can get strictly higher payoff
- higher "continuation value" improves round-1 propopsal to E

Payoffs and entry

No-entry payoff vs. *entry* payoffs, $t_{SQ} \in \{\underline{t}, \bar{t}\}$ and $F \in \{R, L\}$

$$P_R^0 W_E(\underline{t}, 0, 0) + \left(1 - P_R^0\right) W_E(\bar{t}, 0, 0)$$

$$P_{R,E} W_E(\underline{t}, 0, 0) + P_{L,E} W_E(\bar{t}, 0, 0) + (1 - P_{R,E} - P_{L,E}) \mathrm{E}[W_E(t_E, 0, 0$$
$$+ (1 - P_{R,E} - P_{L,E}) s_E \mathrm{E}[S_E(t_{SQ}, F)]$$

- $S_E > 0$ *only* if $t_{SQ} = t_E$

Electoral Disruption: If $P_{R,E} \neq P_R^0$ and $P_{L,E} \neq 1 - P_R^0$, entry alters election results and, indirectly, policy-outcome weights
Policy Surplus: If $s_E > 0$, E may directly shift policy

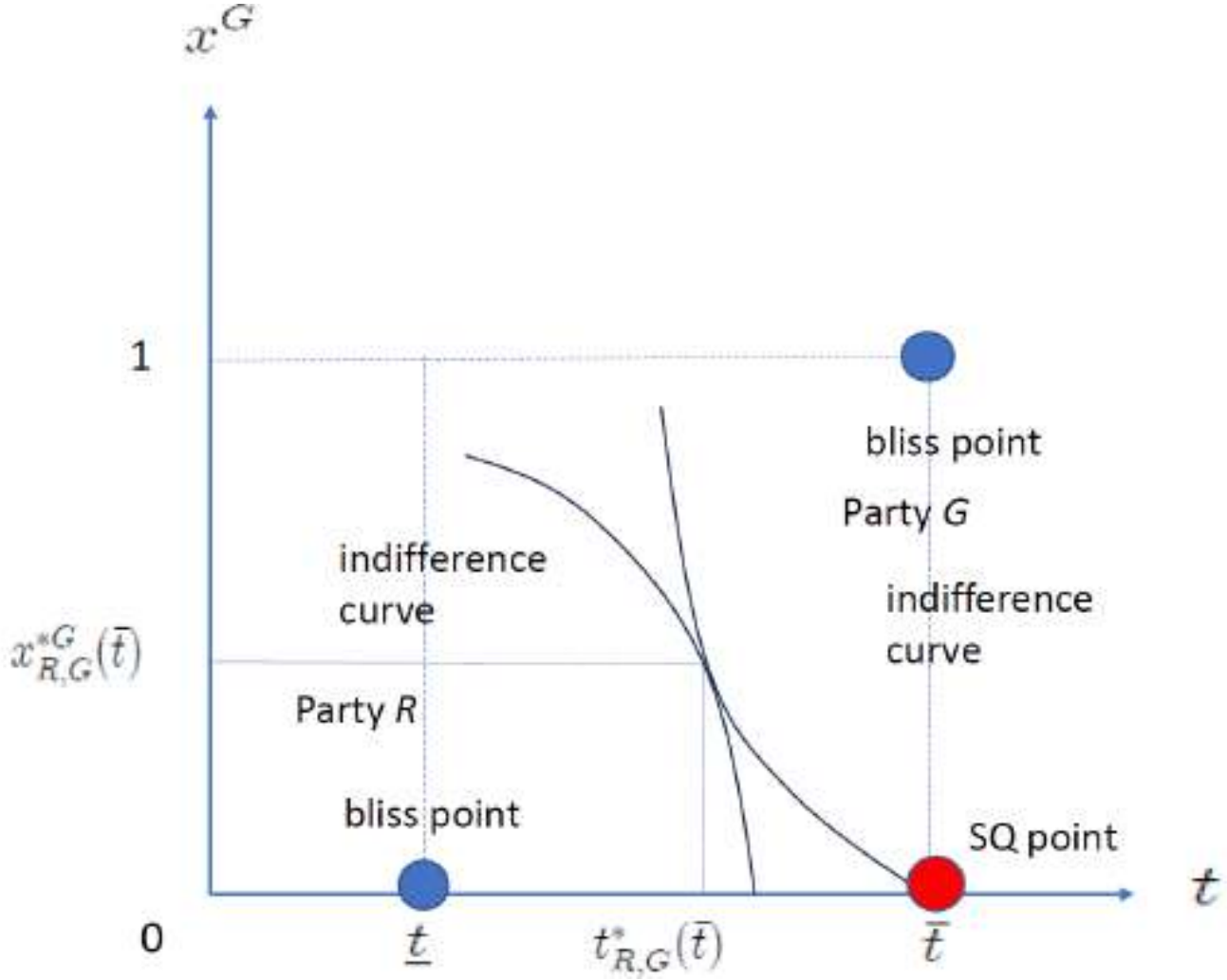
Illustrate in *specific example* of real-world interest

- $t_{SQ} = \bar{t}$, green entrant $E = G$ that leans left – prefers $t_G = \bar{t}$ to $\underline{t}$, because $y - y^G + r^G - r > 0$
- $F = L$ largest party makes round-1 proposal – if reach round 2, G bargains with R

Entry of left-leaning Green party

Bargaining – party R round-2 proposer

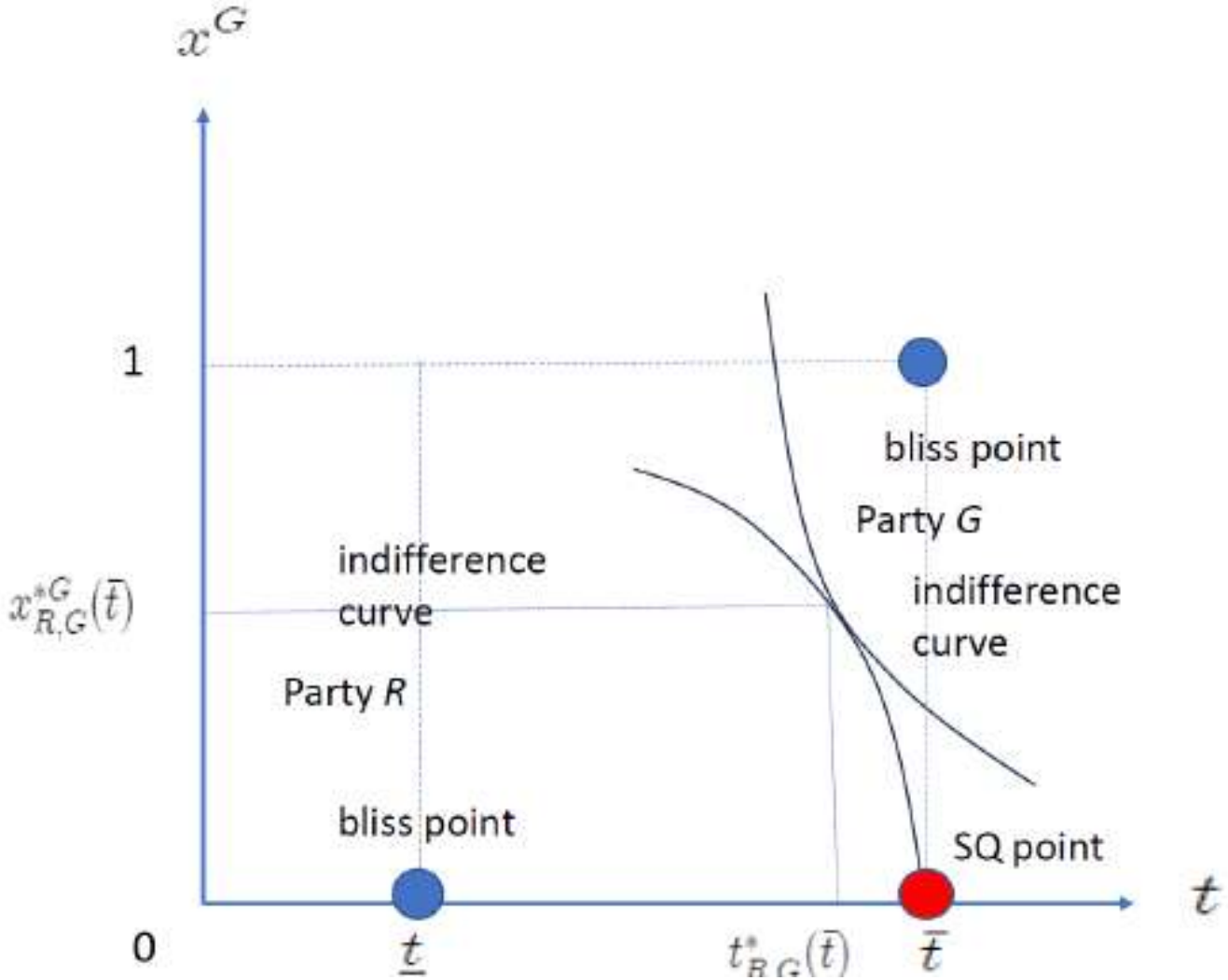
Both parties gain from policy trade: R obtains $t < t_{SQ} = \bar{t}$, by offering $x^G > 0$, but keeps G at SQ-payoff $W_G(\bar{t}, 0, 0)$



Entry of left-leaning Green party

Bargaining – party G round-2 proposer

G gets better deal, closer to its bliss point with higher x^G and t, which keeps R at SQ-payoff $W_R(\bar{t}, 0, 0)$



Entry of left-leaning Green party

Bargaining – party L round-1 proposer

Continuation value for G from round 2

- when $t_{SQ} = \bar{t} = t_G$, G proposes with probability s_G, and L is largest party

$$w_G\left(\bar{t}, L, s_G\right) = s_G S_G\left(\bar{t}, L\right) + W_E\left(\bar{t}, 0, 0\right)$$

- $w_G\left(\bar{t}, L, s_G\right)$ is strictly increasing in s_G

Equilibrium is optimal round-1 choice by party L

$$\begin{aligned} \{t^*_{L,G}(\bar{t}), x^{*G}_{L,G}(\bar{t}), x^{*T}_{L,G}(\bar{t})\} &= \arg\max\{W_L(t, x^G, x^T)\} \\ \textit{subject to } W_G(t, x^G, x^T) &\geq w_G\left(\bar{t}, L, s_G\right) \end{aligned}$$

- continuation value $w_G\left(\bar{t}, L, s_G\right)$ as participation constraint
- G better off the higher its probability to propose s_G

Entry of left-leaning Green party

General entry condition

No-entry payoff

$$P_R^0 W_G\left(\underline{t}, 0, 0\right) + \left(1 - P_R^0\right) W_G\left(\bar{t}, 0, 0\right)$$

Entry payoff

$$P_{R,G} W_G\left(\underline{t}, 0, 0\right) + P_{L,G} W_G\left(\bar{t}, 0, 0\right) + \left(1 - P_{R,G} - P_{L,G}\right) W_G\left(\bar{t}, 0, 0\right)$$
$$+ \left(1 - P_{R,G} - P_{L,G}\right) s_G \mathrm{E}\left[S_G\left(\bar{t}, F\right)\right]$$

Proposition 3 *A left-leaning Green party always enters – for low enough entry cost – if* $P_R^0 > P_{R,G}$. *For* $s_G > 0$, *it may enter even if* $P_R^0 < P_{R,G}$

Entry of left-leaning Green party

Interpretation?

If $s_G = 0$, no policy surplus just positive electoral disruption

- result says probability of own R-majority must go down with G entry – i.e., weight on least-liked tax policy falls
- then, G prefers to enter

If $s_G > 0$, policy surplus added

- entry can occur despite negtive electoral disruption

Entry of left-leaning Green party

Does Proposition 3 hold in our electoral model?

If party G enters, we assume

- all G-types become loyal voters for party G
- T-types still swing voters – never vote for G, but split vote on R or L, depending on policies and random shocks

Then, can show – **Proposition 4** in paper

- $P_R^0 > P_{R,G}$ very likely fulfilled – holds whenever new party G diminishes vote share of (both) parties R and L
- can only fail under very peculiar circumstances

Entry of Radical right?

Next, explore rise of Radical right

- in data, most such parties right-leaning on economics, and many entered after Green parties
- explore conditions for "backlash entry"

Logic similar to left-leaning G entry

- combination of electoral disruption and policy surplus, have to give positive and strong enough motive
- conditions for right-leaning T entry tend to flip around

Backlash entry of Radical-right party I

Against R-L green policy

If mainstream parties favor environment regulation

Proposition 5 *If SQ either* $\{\bar{t}, 1, 0\}$ *or* $\{\underline{t}, 1, 0\}$ *and group T leans right, only T considers entry. If R and L sometimes do not have own majority as T enters, a sufficient entry condition is* $P_{L,T} < P_L^0$. *But for high enough* s_T, *T-entry may occur even if* $P_{L,T} > P_L^0$.

Intuition

- reverses logic of **Proposition 3**
- bargaining with L, right-leaning T can extract policies that its members favor: less G-regulation $x_{L,T}^{*G} < 1$, or more T-regulation $x_{L,T}^{*T} > 0$
- T enters when probability of own-L majority falls after entry

Backlash entry of Radical-right party II

Against Green-party influence

Notation

- $D_{T,G}$ indicator R seat share $< \frac{1}{2}$ *and* $R+T$ seat share $> \frac{1}{2}$
  $P_{R,G}$ probability of own-R majority when only G runs

Proposition 6 *Suppose left-leaning G has entered and formed an $R+G$ coalition to set $\left\{t^*_{R,G}, x^{*G}_{R,G}, 0\right\}$. If $D_{T,G} = 1$ and $P_{R,G} < 1$, a right-leaning T-party enters, forms an $R+T$ coalition, and creates a green backlash from $x^{*G}_{R,G} > 0$ to $x^{*G}_{R,T} = 0$.*

Intuition

- if no T-entry – or T too small – R must form $R+G$ coalition but entry by large enough T makes $R+T$ coalition feasible
- can roll back green regulation from $x^{*G}_{R,G} > 0$ to $x^{*G}_{R,T} = 0$, even if $x^{*T}_{R,T} = 0$
- one possible outcome with four parties, but illustrates how entry may respond to past coalitions

Entry anticipation and deterrence?

Drawback of analysis so far

- incumbents R and L entirely passive to prospective entry, but anticipation could trigger different types of actions

Agree not to include new party in coalitions

- "cordon sanitaire" (France), or "exclusion of AfD" (Germany)
- when are such agreements credible ex post? – easy find cases when incumbents turned around (e.g., Sweden)

Adjust current policy to reshape future policy outcomes

- strategic forward-looking action, maybe by shifting future SQ (Persson-Svensson 1989, Alesina-Tabellini 1990, Baron 1996)

Reduce influence of future entrants

- by institutional reform: say, by cutting entrant bargaining power (lower s_E) – reduced form reflects structural rules for government formation (Diermeier et al 2003)

All exciting topics for future work

Roadmap

1. Key Patterns in Data
2. Core Model
3. Political Equilibrium without Entry
4. Political Equilibrium with Entry
5. **Back to the Data**
6. Final Remarks

Predictions of modeling

Two sets of key predictions

1. Conditions for party entry
2. Policy consequences of party entry

Model provides "theory-ahead-of measurement"

- study Green entry, absent Radical-right entry: environment and tax-policy responses (and observed coalitions) should differ by Green economic position
- backlash Radical-right entry: should give weaker environment regulation and/or stronger immigration regulation conditional on Radical-right economic position

Provisional empirical specifications

Dynamic Difference-in-difference estimates

- simple event-study specifications

$$y_{c,t} = \alpha_c + \beta_t + \lambda_c t + \phi_t E_{c,t} + \varepsilon_{c,t}$$

$y_{c,t}$ policy outcome in country c year t
α_c, β_t country, year FEs, $\lambda_c t$ (linear) country trends
$E_{c,t} = 1$ if *only* party type $E \in \{G, T\}$ present

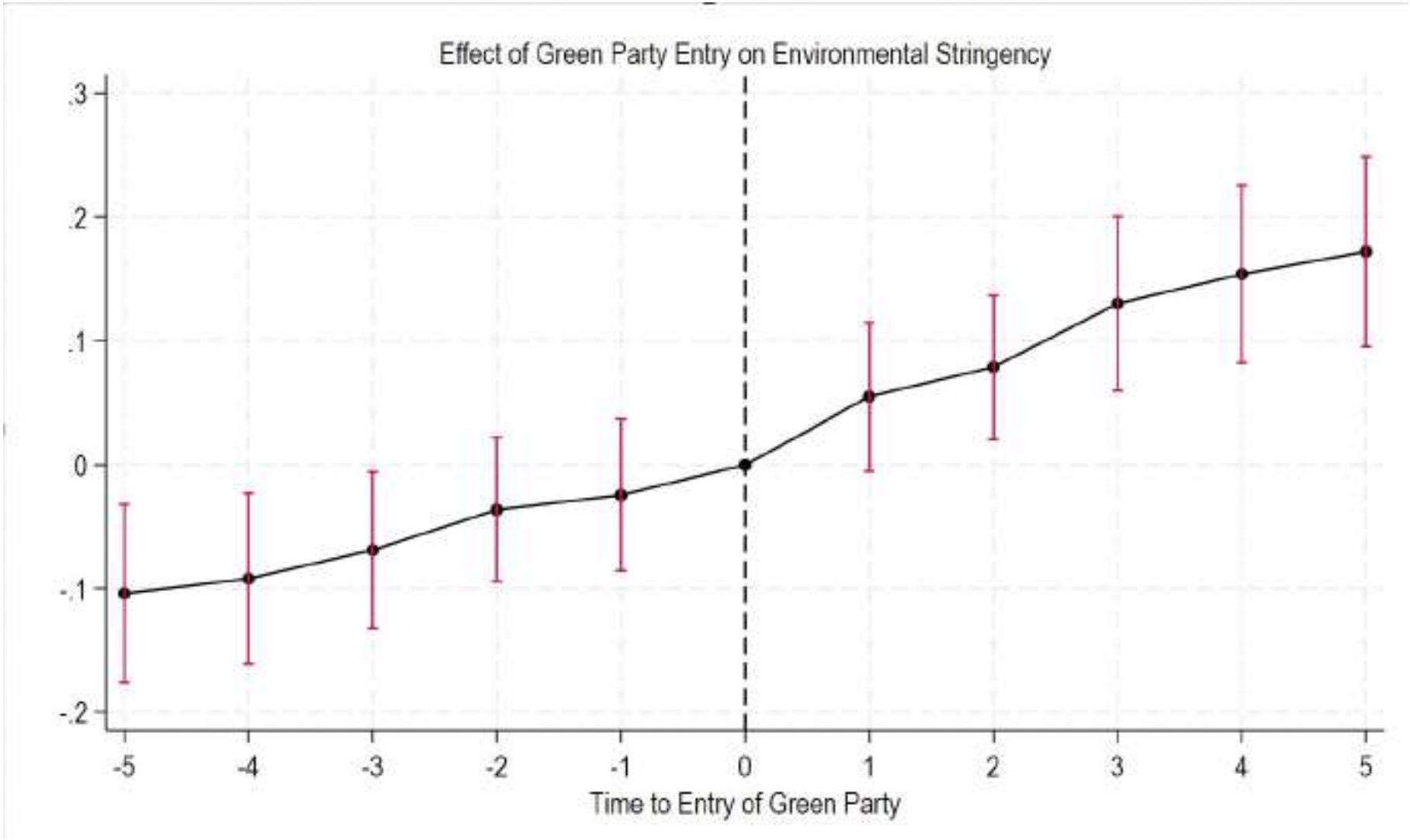
- ϕ_t reflects within-country policy shift, after entry (exit)

Use stacked design

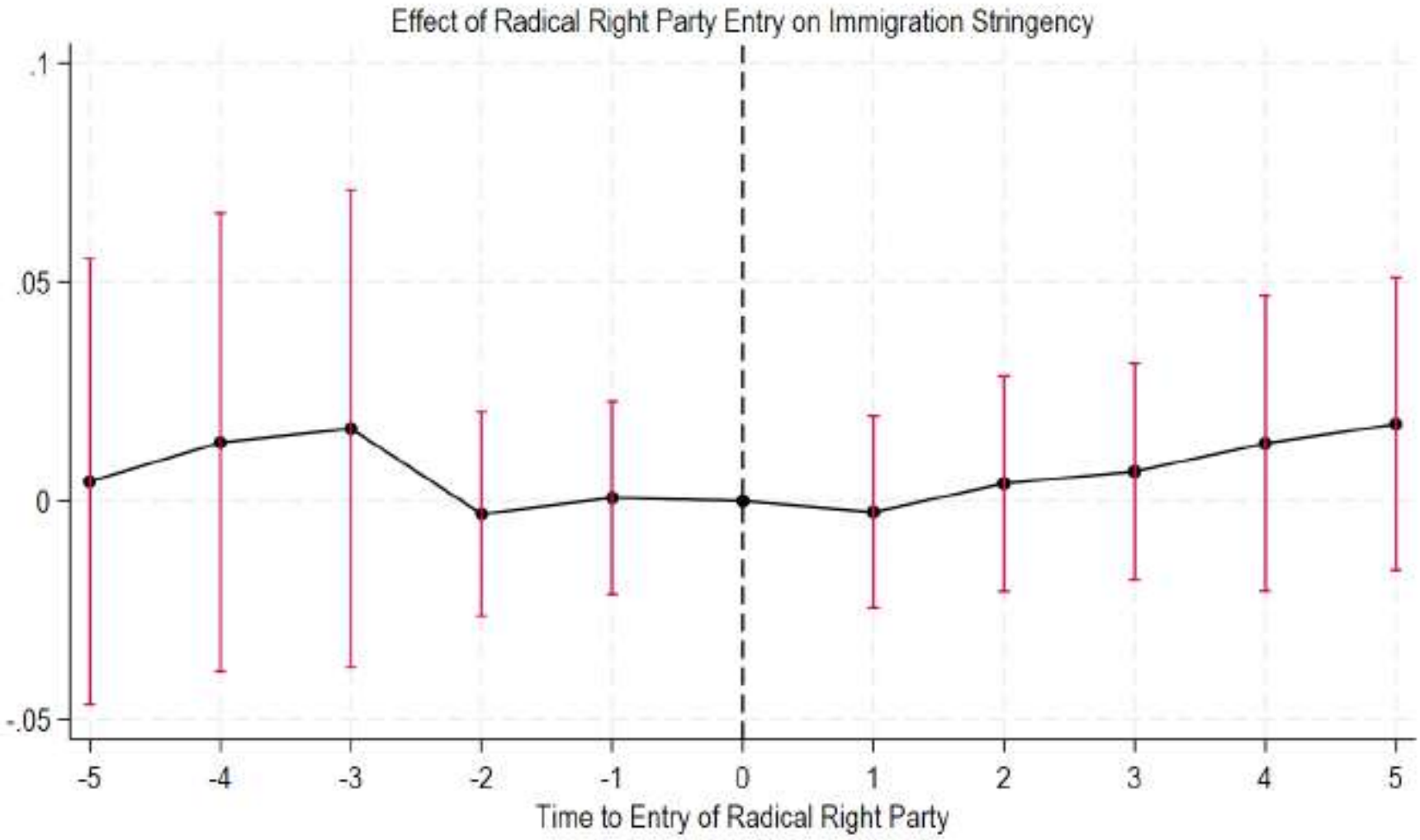
- focus on window five years before-after own entry, to get clean control groups despite repeated, staggered events

Event study: Green party entries

"Pre-trend" may reflect incumbent forward-looking behavior



Event study: Radical-right party entries



Ongoing empirical work informed by theory

How do *L*- and *R*-party vote shares relate to entry?

- appears entry by Green or Radical right is good for Center right, but bad for Center left

Do policies change when coalitions form?

- seems so, for Green and Radical-right coalitions, but also see pre-trends

Do results differ by forms of entry?

- Radical right after Green most common pattern
- look for evidence of backlash

Entry anticipation or deterrence?

- can we detect forward-looking actions

Roadmap

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Final remarks

A formal framework to study party entry

- motivated by new green and radical-right parties

Highlights drivers of party entry

- strategic-electoral, policy-seeking, and backlash motives

How can we use the framework?

- to interpret real-world events
- to guide empirical work on party entry, coalition formation, and policy change

Only very basic first step

- more theoretical and empirical research should follow