

Collusion or Representation?: The Cartel Party Theory Reexamined

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Abstract

Political discontent appears to be growing across the aging democratic world, with an increase in popular support in many nations for niche or populist parties. Although often connected to this declining support for mainstream parties and the rise of these competitors, it is unclear precisely what is contributing to this diminishing political trust across varying electorates. This dissertation suggests that political discontent may be driven by parties failing to represent voters, a possibly long standing behavior, first envisaged by Katz and Mair (1995) in the form of the cartel party theory. The cartel party theory suggests that as party systems mature, party behavior ultimately undermines representative connections with voters, with parties becoming increasingly reliant on their relationship with the state and their rivals to maintain their positions in government. If cartelistic behaviors have emerged, it is expected that parties will show broken voter-party linkages and increased collusive relationships with rival parties, thus limiting competition, while undermining representation. Furthermore, the issues that are presented to voters across elections should show signs of manipulation, meaning that parties should fail to respond to voters while coordinating to manipulate their issue positions with their rivals. These two central expectations have guided the following research, testing whether parties appear to be colluding with their rivals and disregarding voter sentiments and if the issue spaces that are presented to voters remains representative or manipulated, as suggested by the cartel party theory. Using data from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), the European Social Survey (ESS) and the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP), this work tests whether voter-party linkages appear intact across the left/right issue dimension, mul-

tidimensional issues, and party types. The findings suggest that mainstream parties are colluding with their rivals to limit inter-party competition, while presenting increasingly manipulated issue spaces to voters, suggesting that deepening discontent across advanced democracies may be connected to representative failures of parties participating in cartelistic collusion.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Changing Political Dynamics

A cursory examination of modern democratic competition suggests that politics may be changing in advanced democracies, with rising discontent and declining support for mainstream parties, signaling that political dynamics may be fundamentally changing. The rise of parties like the Alternative for Germany, the Five Star Movement in Italy, and the Sweden Democrats – just to name a few – indicate that voters are moving away from traditional mainstream parties in exchange for organizations who take more extreme party positions (Goodwin 2018), but what might be leading voters to abandon their political loyalties and vote for new parties and untested candidates?

Rising populism and niche party success across the democratic world has challenged academics to explain declining support for mainstream parties across aging democracies (Hobolt and Tilley 2016, Henley, Bengtsson, and Barr 2016, Algan et al. 2018, Goodwin 2018). Some suggest that party politics has evolved as a result of changing economic uncertainties, with the rise of populism being driven by economic insecurity and political distrust (Spruyt, Keppens, and Van Droogenbroeck 2016, Hobolt and Tilley 2016, Essletzbichler, Disslbacher and Moser, 2017, Algan et al. 2018). While others find increases in populist support tied to individual level vulnerabilities, high levels of political discontent and a negative view of governmental efficacy (Spruyt, Keppens, and Van Droogenbroeck 2016, Rooduijn, van der Brug, and de Lange 2015). One of the strongest predictors for populist support has been found to be a poor view of governmental efficacy (Spruyt, Keppens, and Van Droogenbroeck 2016), suggesting that voters are becoming disillusioned with how the government is being run by governing parties. In fact, negative views of governmental

efficacy are quite high across Europe; the European Social Survey, asked respondents in 2016 how much they believed the political system actually allowed people to influence what the government does¹ and the survey shows that over 60% of the respondents expressed that the political system had ‘little or no influence’ on the what the government did. This literature and data suggests that parties are facing a wide array of grievances from voters, signaling changing political dynamics, but none of this research is able to tell us *why* voters are so disgruntled with their stations in life and what has increased these voters’ vulnerabilities and distrust in governing institutions.

Charitably, we often discuss changing political environments, such as the growth of support for niche and populist parties, as if the growing discontent expressed by the electorate is merely a new political problem mainstream parties must navigate, but might it also be possible that parties are to blame for the problems that are facing? What if mainstream parties are losing to populist and niche party challengers and facing an increasingly discontented electorate because they have failed their constituencies for so long that their voters are finally starting to abandon them? This dissertation suggests that this increasing discontent may actually be a symptom of mainstream parties’ neglect of the interests of voters, testing the presence or absence of this dynamic relationship assumed between voters and parties will be the central focus of this dissertation.

1.2 Assumptions About Voter-Party Linkages

The fundamental role of parties in representative democracies is to represent. This may appear an obvious assertion, but the connection between parties and voters is often taken for granted.

It is assumed that role of the party is to act as a surrogate for the interest of group of individuals. This means that parties are servants of the interests of voters, which assumes that parties will be driven to maintain, if not expand, their voter base – implying that if parties fail to satisfy voters they will be punished by the electorate (Powell and Witten 1993, Anderson 2000, Kayser and Peress 2012, Soroka and Wlezien 2009). Thus meeting the demands of voters and keeping inline with their interests is expected to be of paramount importance. This constant approximating and

¹Exact question wording for all survey questions referenced in Appendix.

satisfying of voters then becomes the foundation of the voter-party linkage (Blyth and Katz 2005).

The relationship between voters and parties forms the backbone of what we assume informs the decision making of a party – when voters’ preferences change, parties will respond to these dynamic changes. Ultimately, the voter-party linkage requires these adjustments because without the close maintenance of the voters’ interests, parties risk losing their roles in government, but what if the relationship between voters and parties changes at its core, what if parties are no longer representatives of the public interest?

1.3 The Cartel Party Theory

In 1995, Katz and Mair suggested exactly this; the evolution of the party system had altered the political incentive structure so substantially that parties began forging ties to the state and with rival parties, at the cost of their relationship with voters. The theory posits that parties, working in their own self-interest, will become so challenged by the changing political dynamics as competition evolves that they will become more dependent on state and their relationship with rival parties to protect their positions of power (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009).

This relationship with the state, utilizing its resources and power to their advantage, also changes the interactions between opposing parties, allowing them to appreciate their shared goal of maintaining political power, while opening new opportunities to collude with one another (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009). This coordination suggests, most crucially for representation, that parties are no longer responding to their voters, but rather working together with their rivals to limit political competition, otherwise referred to as inter-party collusion. The implications of the emergence of the cartel system are poor for representation, because they suggest that not only should there be collusion between parties, but that voters should also be ignored. But why would voters keep voting for parties that do not represent their interests?

The primary reason parties collude is to ensure their positions in government. This is achieved by manipulating the issues presented to voters, by limiting the ability for a voter to vote switch, allowing parties to safely disregard voter preferences (Blyth and Katz 2005). Following this logic,

if all parties coordinate to ignore a new issue or to take the same position on it, voters will have no ability to change their previous vote based on this new issue. In other words, parties colluding are attempting to force voter stability by undermining representative responses to their voters – they are manipulating the issues and positions presented to them, in order to force voters to vote similarly to the previous election (Blyth and Katz 2005). When a new issue arises, yet no viable party takes a position on it, then voters will likely vote for their previous party, thus ensuring a fairly stable vote distribution among parties across election cycles. This suggests that not only should we expect colluding parties to coordinate with other parties, at the detriment of representing their constituencies, but that the issues that are presented to voters should be manipulated, as well.

In total the cartel party suggests that the natural evolution of the party system changes the incentives for parties, making representation a risk, while inter-party collusion becomes a viable alternative to satisfying voters. Thus, the somewhat counterintuitive suggestion emerges as an alternative, providing a way for parties to fail to represent, but to continue to maintain roles in government. As the previous discussion alludes to, parties could collude, but voters may catch on to this behavior, opting for parties that are may be ‘different’ when they feel as though voting for the traditional mainstream choices does not seem to influence how government actually functions. These trends away from mainstream parties, and apparent distrust of the functions of the governing institutions, may be better explained as symptoms of a populous punishing parties for their lack of representation as a function of emerging cartel conditions.

1.4 The Question of Collusion

This dissertation began from an intuition – political dynamics around many advanced democracies seem to be changing, but what could be at the heart of these alterations? Much of the rise of niche party populist support, anecdotally, appears connected to a rejection of mainstream parties and politics ‘as usual,’ signaling that voters are renouncing previous loyalty to parties for greater political uncertainty, but why? The cartel party theory presents a possible framework for understanding how parties may not be victims of volatile electorates, but may be to blame for their own losses in

power. Political dynamics seem to be changing in advanced democracies, visible in the behavior of voters and their expressed discontent with the government, but what if party politics changed years before now, what if party systems evolved in a manner that undermined representation at its core, as suggested nearly 25 years ago by Katz and Mair (1995)? The following chapters endeavor to test the possibility that parties may have been colluding for some time now, across a variety of topics and even party types.

This dissertation hopes to answer two central questions: do political parties seem to be colluding with rival parties, while ignoring voters and do these parties present manipulated issue spaces to their voters? Both of these questions are at the core of each of the three empirical chapters, while each chapter examines different issues or party types to determine whether representation appears broken across modern democracies.

The following chapter explores the theoretical underpinnings of the dissertation, exploring the cartel party theory and its reformulations. This discussion informs the typology that underlies the analysis, allowing us to determine whether party systems are colluding or remain representative. This presents 4 ideal typical conditions ranging pure collusion and pure representation, with the intermediate conditions of partial collusion/representation, and polarization/clientelism. This allows for the central negative implications of the cartel party theory to be tested – colluding parties will respond to one another, while ignoring voter preference changes on the issues.

Taking the theory one step further through, if parties are attempting to force voter stability, they will coordinate to manipulate the issue spaces that are presented to voters, by either converging on an issue or presenting a stable issue space size across elections. This implication allows us to explore to what degree cartelization has advanced and how well parties are able to coordinate their collusive behaviors.

Finally, the theoretical chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the justification for examining how mainstream party behavior influences focal parties in the system, as the primary starting point for exploring collusion in democratic systems. Relevant research indicates that party type matters in understanding representation, suggesting that mainstream parties have different incen-

tives that may make them more prone to collude (Adams et al. 2006, Meguid 2005, Wagner and Meyer 2016, Ezrow et al. 2010).

The third chapter begins the empirical analysis with presumably the most durable issue position for a party: their location on the left/right economic issue dimension. The left/right issue dimension is often thought of as being divided between opposing views on governmental involvement in the economy, with individuals on the left expressing greater support with governmental involvement in the economy and those on the right holding the opposite position (Hellwig 2008). The left-/right issue dimension is thought to form the basis for much of the competition between parties in democracies, so foundational, that it is often the only distribution of issues considered for capturing political competition (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Kitschelt 1994, Hellwig 2008, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2009). This informs that expectation that guides this chapter: party policy positions on the left/right dimension should be durable in the face of collusion because they are so foundational to parties that undermining them through collusion seems unlikely, particularly compared to more complicated multidimensional issues. Not only should parties resist collusion on these topics, but it is also expected that issues spaces should be difficult for parties to manipulate, again, because moving away from these central issues should be risky for parties.

The fourth chapter examines multidimensional issues that should induce collusion – those topics that are difficult for parties to take positions on because they may undermine their traditional voting constituencies. Multidimensional in their nature, these issues may divide voting blocs and should provide conditions under which the cartel party theory would predict parties to be particularly collusive. This is because multidimensional issues are often complex and new to parties, making failing to represent voters on these topics the most risk adverse way to deal with these new issues' salience. This chapter looks at the issues of equality, the environment and EU integration, with the expectation being that parties should be even more collusive on these topics, compared to the left/right economic dimension. Furthermore, the expectation is that parties should be particularly adept at their coordination on these issues, because presumably they should have induced collusion on these topics since they became politically relevant, compared to the left/right

dimension.

The fifth chapter explores the relationship between party type and collusive behavior, with the expectation being that niche focal parties should be more resistant to collusion, while mainstream focal parties should be drawn toward this coordination. The literature on niche parties suggests that these focal parties should have much more to lose if they fail to represent their voters and should be particularly resistant to collusion on issues that are foundational to their party platforms. The literature shows that when niche parties moderate their positions, they are often punished for these transgressions, thus they have much more to lose if they appear collusive to their constituencies (Adams et al. 2006). In total the expectation is that across all issues, but particularly foundational issues, niche parties should show less collusive tendencies than their mainstream counterparts.

In the end, the conclusions that can be drawn from these chapters are concerning for representation. The findings suggest that when it comes to inter-party collusion, across a variety of issues, data sources and cases, a trend emerges that suggests parties are indeed colluding with mainstream rival parties – when mainstream parties change their positions on the issues, focal parties respond to these changes, but when voters change, focal parties ignore these shifts. These trends hold for both for the left/right issue dimension and multidimensional issues though, as expected, multidimensional issues induce a much greater response, with the exception of the issue of EU integration. Additionally, mainstream focal parties are consistently collusive, compared to niche focal parties, but, crucially, it depends on the issue. As suggested by the niche party literature, issues that are foundational to parties appear to make them resist collusion. Additionally, when it comes to the issue of the EU, mainstream focal parties show partially collusive tendencies, but niche parties continue to be representative.

In total this suggests that changing political conditions may have altered political dynamics allowing parties, particularly mainstream parties, to coordinate their issue positions in a manner that undermines representation. No longer can we say that the central assumptions underlying representation hold – parties are not striving to represent voters, but working to protect their own interests at the cost of the voter-party relationship. This means that voters may lend their vote to

a party, but that parties are taking these votes for granted, no longer concerned with maintaining a dynamic and responsive relationship with these constituencies. These findings ultimately suggest that for the most part, parties are no longer fulfilling their representative duties to their voters.

Guided by the provocative insights outlined by Katz and Mair in 1995, this work has provided evidence for a different explanation for the trends we see across the aging democratic world – voters may be disillusioned by the government and drawn toward fringe parties because they are finally reacting to the failure of mainstream parties to represent their interests. The evidence presented in the following chapters will show that cartel expectations hold, allowing us to interpret current dynamics in a different light.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Expectations

As argued in the introduction, politics in modern democracies seems to be changing, with the emergence of widespread political discontent and niche and populist parties rising in their electoral success, though it remains unclear what might be driving these changes (Goodwin 2018). The previous chapter suggested, electorates in these aging democracies may be rejecting traditional political parties as a result of mainstream parties doing a poor job of representing voters' interests. In other words, that maybe parties have been behaving in bad faith toward their constituencies and now these voters are beginning to abandon them. Consistent with the cartel party theory's expectations, which will be explored in greater detail in this chapter, it is possible that parties have been poorly representing their constituencies because political dynamics facing them have changed, altering the political realities for parties and drawing them away from representation and toward their rival parties in the interests of party survival. But what might draw parties toward collusion with their rivals?

It is often assumed that parties, like people, are driven by their own self-interest (Katz and Mair 2009, Downs 1957). The underlying assumption being that parties desire power, which motivates them to maximize their role in government. Spatial models of representation often assume that parties, behaving rationally, will attempt to maximize their vote share by appealing to the most voters (Downs 1957). Thus suggesting that parties should behave in a manner that satisfies increasingly broad groups of voters, moving away from narrow political interests toward general appeals (Katz and Mair 1995, Mair 2000, Mair 1998). Crucially, this assumes a link between voters and parties, one that expects parties to strive to satisfy voters by representing their interests, but what if parties find a way to gain power, and keep it, that is easier than trying to please broad

swaths of a population? What if parties realize it is easier to work together than to court voters and represent their interests?

The cartel party theory suggests exactly this; parties working in their own self-interest will become less responsive to voters because they will find that the most risk adverse option is to collude with one another (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009, Blyth and Katz 2005). Undercutting democratic representation, this theory suggests that colluding parties will manipulate the issues presented to the voter in hopes of promoting voter stability in the system from election to election (Blyth and Katz 2005). This dissertation follows this theoretical suggestion: parties may no longer be responding to voters interests and representing them, rather they may be colluding in the background to manipulate the policy choices presented to the voter, in a manner that undermines the quality of representation in modern democracies. These assertions are essential for the state modern democracies and if proven true would bode poorly for electoral representation, thus it becomes centrally important to test whether these assertions may be true.

This chapter will outline the theoretical expectations that have guided the empirical chapters that follow. To begin, the cartel party theory will be introduced, including the reformulations and evolution of the discussion. This presentation will suggest that the cartel party theory gives us distinct empirical expectations about how colluding parties should behave and how this coordination undermines representation. This review of the theory will suggest that collusive party behaviors are characterized by two conditions: parties become responsive to rival parties on the issues, rather than their voters. This will lead the central typology describing conditions of party behavior: pure collusion, partial collusion/representation, pure representation, and polarization or clientelism. Though this discussion will provide the foundation for distinguishing conditions of collusion from representation, the theory also suggests that colluding parties will manipulate the issues presented to voters by either minimizing the issue space presented to voters or keeping it stable. Although party coordination and failures to represent voters should meet the conditions necessary to suggest that inter-party collusion is present, resultant issue spaces presented to voters allow us to examine the degree to which parties have perfected their abilities to coordinate with

each other over time. Together this chapter will present the theoretical foundations from which the following empirical analyses are grounded.

2.1 From Catch-all to Cartel

The cartel party theory asserts that as democracies evolve, parties will increase their dependence of the state in order to maintain their positions of power in complex political environments (Katz and Mair 1995, Blyth and Katz 2005, Katz and Mair 2009). Challenged by evolving political conditions, this theory suggests that parties, in an effort to ensure their positions in government, will alter their behavior in a manner that undermines representative connections. Ultimately, within the theory, parties will begin to coordinate with their rivals to fix the political game, rather than remaining politically responsive to their voters (Blyth and Katz 2005). The argument presents bleak picture of the state of democratic representation and if correct, these suggestions bode poorly for how modern democracies organize the representation of the public interest. But what leads to the cartel system?

2.1.1 Systemic Evolution

The cartel system, Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) argue, is the most recent development in the evolution of parties. Arguing that a series of systemic transformations had occurred over the lifespans of advancing democracies, the authors propose that the emergence of exogenous problems facing parties have shaped the relationship between society, parties and the state, moving parties from organizations resembling cadres, through the emergence of the familiar mass-party, toward Kirchheimer's catch-all party, and culminating into what Katz and Mair (1995) call the cartel party.

In the first stage of representative democracy, parties represented very narrow constituencies and functioned much like cadres or caucuses (Katz and Mair 1995, 8). The first systemic transformation of representative democracy began with the extension of suffrage, expanding the voting populous and requiring parties to make broad overtures to voters, though still to defined portions

of the population (10). The resultant mass parties were defined by their appeals to traditional class based cleavages, but as increased mobility, social conditions and the introduction of mass media altered the political landscape, parties were forced to make even more generalized policy proposals (Katz and Mair 1995, 12). From this emerged what Kirchheimer calls the “catch all party,” further altering the relationship between the state, society and parties (7). Within this system, parties functioned as brokers between the society and the state. Though, as systems evolved, organizations were forced to make ever more general appeal appeals to mass publics, often requiring increased spending to maintain voter support (Katz and Mair 2009, Blyth and Katz 2005).

Katz and Mair first suggested in 1995 that a new stage in party evolution had emerged, arguing that parties had moved away from the people and become “semi-state agencies” (19). Though met with heavy criticism when first introduced, the authors argued that rather than merely manipulating the state, such as in the catch-all party system suggests, parties, they argue, have become reliant on the state (Koole 1996, Kitschelt 2000, Katz and Mair 1995, 14 -15).

They propose three transformative problems that contribute to the increasing political complexity facing parties, which ultimately alter the incentive structures facing parties, motivating parties to become dependent on their relationships to the state, at the cost of representing voters. The first problems the authors argue is the increasing homogeneity of citizens’ experiences, which renders cleavage based appeals made by parties ineffective (Katz and Mair 2009, 758). Parties become unable to use traditional cultural issues that had divided society to ground their political appeals and gain partisan loyalty, ultimately contributing to a tenuous situation for parties in maintaining their voting coalitions.

With the spread of mass media, parties also find that campaigns have become much more expensive to run successfully (Katz and Mair 2009). Couple this problem with the decreasing loyalty of partisans and it become particularly difficult for parties to run successful campaigns (Katz and Mair 2009). Parties under these conditions, they argue, will begin to use the state to aid their campaigns, through the creation of systems of subvention, in order to create more reliable sources of funding during uncertain times with their constituencies (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and

Mair 2009).

The final problem that Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) argue contributes to movement toward cartelistic behavior being exhibited by parties hinges on the inability of parties to continue to spend to maintain voter loyalties. One of the central features of the catch-all system is that parties become brokers between the state and the people, using their relationship with the state to reward their voters through government spending (Blyth and Katz 2005, Katz and Mair 2009). This is the mechanism through which parties are able to keep voter loyalty, even as cleavage based ties are diminishing. Crucially, governmental spending is not infinite, ultimately reaching a point where parties must increase taxes or cease the profligate spending, lest they initiate a financial crisis (Katz and Mair 2009, Blyth and Katz 2005). Therefore it follows that if parties are no longer able to keep voters by meeting their demands through increased spending, then parties will be forced to change their strategies in maintaining voter loyalty.

In the end, this increased political complexity produced by these three interrelated problems, Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) argue, should induce parties to become more dependent on their relationship with the state, ultimately leading to inter-party collusion to limit party competition and manipulated issue spaces to force voter stability, an idea that will be discussed in further detail in a following section (Blyth and Katz 2005).

2.2 Collusion

One of the features of increased party proximity to the state is that parties are able to collude and coordinate with each other more easily (Katz and Mair 2009, 754). Again, realizing their shared interests of maintaining their roles in government, the authors argue, parties will begin working together to limit competition, rather than responding to voters, but what might this look like? This section will argue that the most appropriate place to look for inter-party collusion to limit competition would be to examine how a party's policy positions change over time.

Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) argue that as parties evolve, their relationships will resemble cartels. Cartels, as Blyth and Katz (2005) explain, “maximize joint profits of oligopolistic firms

through the restriction of competition. Firms are able to collude by varying either prices or quantities or both” (39). An economic cartel can emerge when firms either explicitly or tacitly begin to work together, not to maximize competition, but to minimize competition with other firms. A political cartel, Blyth and Katz argue, can emerge in a similar way, though the ‘good’ they are expected to fix is not prices nor quantities, but policy.

Parties are acutely aware that although the goal of all elections is to win and increase the scope of power that the party is able to command, and while not every year can be a success, the party will instinctively try to keep the losses to a minimum (Katz and Mair 2009, 756). The professionalization of politics has heightened the importance of attempting to keep parties in power, even if they are unable to ‘win’ in every election. These pressures, shared by all parties, are what the author argue, initiates the collusive behavior of parties (757). Parties do not need to explicitly enter into these collusive arrangements either, Katz and Mair (2009) explain:

A very important part of their shared interest is to contain the costs of losing, and in this sense to find an equilibrium that suits all of their own “private” interests. This also means cooperation, even if this cooperation need not be overt or conscious. That is, even if parties might be disinclined to rely heavily on overt deals with one another, their mutual awareness of shared interests, and their sense of all being in the same boat and relying on the same sorts of resources, means that we can conclude by hypothesizing collusion (or its functional equivalent) and cartel-like behavior.

- Katz and Mair 2009, 757

In the end, we should expect parties to collude using policy coordination, and although the behavior may be tacit or explicit, we can expect that policies should be manipulated by parties who, facing increased complexity within the political system have become reliant on the state to maintain their positions of power because representing voters becomes too difficult. If parties begin to manipulate the state to their advantage, to protect themselves and their competitors, one would expect for representative connections to deteriorate, as the theory argues. Following this

argument, it becomes clear that collusion, if cartel expectation hold, will present itself through the coordination of policy among rival parties. This coordination allows parties to protect themselves while protecting their competitors, but for the totality of the negative implications of the cartel party theory to be considered, connections to voters must also be undermined.

2.2.1 Party Behavior

This movement from catch-all to cartel systems represents the potential deterioration of the mass-party linkage, seriously undermining the quality of representation if these conditions emerge. This discussion suggests that as parties move toward the state, they will simultaneously move away from the voter and toward their rival parties. Imperatively, parties may approach the state, as previous research has indicated (Scarrow 2006, van Biezen and Kopecky 2014, van Biezen and Rashkova 2014), but for the negative implications of the theory to hold there must also be a failure to represent voters and an apparent coordination with other parties. Without these two characteristic behaviors, proximity to the state does not have the negative implications suggested by the theory, therefore it becomes paramount for to determine whether these party behaviors are truly undermining voter preferences or if they are merely new features of the catch-all configuration.

Therefore, the cartel theory's negative implications about party behavior hinge on the presence or absence of two empirical conditions: parties increasingly respond to the policy preference changes of other parties and, simultaneously, fail to respond to voter preferences. These two characteristics allow for a straightforward set of conditions defining party behavior, if cartel expectations hold. Thus, an appropriate primary test of the cartel party theory examines whether parties respond to their voters and whether parties respond to the issue positions of their competitors.

Before presenting the typology undergirding the following work, we must first define a set of terms that will become crucial to distinguishing the parties from one another. When considering the relationship between parties, rival parties and voters, we will refer to the observation party, the party that comprises the dependent variable, as the focal party. This will allow us to distinguish between the focal party (the dependent variable) and the rival parties (a predictor). This language

serves to make this delineation between party types and allows for a more straight forward discussion, that becomes muddled without it. Moving forward, we can now consider the ideal typical scenarios that the negative implications suggest.

Considering focal party responsiveness to rival parties and voters leads to four ideal typical conditions dependent on these two factors: pure collusion, partial collusion/representation, pure representation, and polarization or clientelism. Pure representation, means that focal parties respond to voters and do not respond to rival parties. In other words, focal parties determine their policy positions based on the opinions of the voters, as one would expect in a properly functioning representative democracy. Focal parties that are purely representative will adjust their positions on the issues in relation to voter preferences and will not respond to the issue positions of other parties because they will not be conspiring to limit competition or to manipulate the issues presented to voters. A focal party that is responding to voter preferences on policy should respond to voters in a representative manner, thus they should not appear to be coordinating with other parties simultaneously.

Pure collusion, on the other hand, means that focal parties work together to limit competition, while failing to respond to policy opinion changes in the electorate. The primary concern to a focal party colluding with rival parties will be the survival of the party, not the voters they are purporting to represent. This means that focal parties will be more responsive to other parties in the system, while ignoring their voters or working against their interests. Thus, pure collusion means that focal parties ignore voters or move in opposition to their opinions, while responding to other parties in the system. In short, colluding parties undermine the expectations about properly functioning democracy and representation because parties, in this understanding, are no longer attempting to maintain their role in government through representation, but rather manipulating voters through their coordination with other parties to limit political competition.

As table 2.1 shows, there are three intermediate conditions produced by issue responsiveness considerations. Partial collusion/representation occurs when a focal party is responsive to the voters, but also responsive to rival parties. Parties that are behaving in this manner are not fully

Table 2.1: Party Policy Position Left/Right Dimension Responsiveness

		Responsive to Parties?	
		Yes (Positive)	No (Negative or Null)
Response to Voters?	Yes (Positive)	Partial Collusion/Representation	Pure Representation
	No (Negative)	Pure Collusion	Polarization or Clientelism

representative of their voters, but they are also not entirely negligent of their interests. This means that focal parties, in partially collusive scenarios, may be manipulating the issue space in collusion with other parties, but still maintain some representative linkages to voters. This can be considered a deficient form of representation, and thus partially collusive or partially representative, because focal party positions are connected to rival parties, and not completely determined by their representational connections with their constituencies.

Research examining voter-party congruence has argued that connections between parties and voters is strong in modern democracies, although more recent findings suggest that issue congruence may be becoming more complex (Dalton, Farrell and McAllister 2011, Powell 2000, Adams et al. 2004, Powell 2013, Dalton 2015, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Partial collusion/representation presents a condition where congruence on the issues may appear very high, but artificially so if parties are colluding to limit the issues that are allowed into the political mainstream. Parties can appear representative, but if they are working together to manipulate the issues presented to the voter, then the implications for representation remain negative. Without considering the possibility that parties may be responding to one another, it remains possible that parties may be actively undermining representation, even though party-voter congruence appears quite high when the influence of rival parties is not considered.

Party behavior could also be characterized as polarized if focal parties fail to respond to voters, but show a strong negative relationship to rival parties in the system. This means that focal parties will be determining their policy positions, not because they are representing voters, but in attempt to distinguish themselves from the other parties in the system. Though not predicted by the cartel party theory, this condition remains possible.

Finally, clientelism is characterized by focal parties that do not appear responsive to voters or to the rival parties. In other words, clientelistic parties do not limit competition in coordination with other parties, leaving its size fluid, but these parties are also not responsive voters or representative of their interests. This condition can be considered clientelistic because, presumably, parties that are not responding to shifting public opinion as a whole must be representing such a small portion of the electorate that their issue positions would be lost in the aggregate of voters, such as activists within the party or special interest advocates. In other words, the special interest that the party is satisfying is disconnected to the issue positions of the society, but also of rival parties. If focal parties are not representing voters or colluding with rival parties, then it stands to reason that they must be representing some narrow interest group.

The cartel party theory's primary negative implications suggest that colluding parties should not only fail to respond to voters, but should be strongly connected to issues positions of rival parties in the system. This suggests that the relationship between voters and parties is broken and that parties are no longer working in the best interests of their constituencies, but using their relationships with one another to protect their positions of power. The theory suggests that collusive party behaviors should undermine the connections between voters and parties, but why would voters continue to vote for parties that no longer respond to their needs? Why would parties expect voter loyalty if they are no longer representing their voters? The following discussion will explore this counterintuitive suggestion, – that inter-party collusion should lead to voter loyalty through issue space convergence or stability – which provides a distinct set of expectations regarding issue space variability under conditions of representation or collusion. Following the implications of the cartel party theory one step further, not only should parties respond to one another, while ignoring voters, but if cartelization is advanced, they should present highly stable issue spaces or converging issue spaces in order to maximize voter stability, while, of course, further undermining representation.

2.3 Party Coordination

As the previous discussion details, pure collusion would be defined as party responsiveness to rival parties, while ignoring voter preference changes. The theory suggests that parties behave in this manner because they have begun colluding to manipulate the issues presented to voters, with the logic being that parties, faced with increased political complexities, will be drawn toward collusion because they each realize that they share a common goal: maintaining their access to power (Katz and Mair 2009). Recognizing this shared agenda, will lead parties to work together to insure simultaneously their own political positions, as well as their competitors (Katz and Mair 2009). Consequently, parties become unresponsive to their voters, exchanging their efforts to represent their constituency's interests with their participation with other parties to fix political competition (Blyth and Katz 2005).

Parties can ensure their political position if the political game does not change dramatically across elections cycles; the logic being that if parties keep the same positions, and their challengers do as well, then voters will have few opportunities to alter their voting behaviors (Blyth and Katz 2005). This creates incentives for parties to behave in a manner that ultimately undermines voters. If parties respond to changing voter sentiments or take positions on new issues, they run the risk of alienating some of their voting coalition and consequently could lose some of their vote share. Because their motivations are centered around maintaining their role in government and share of political power, taking new positions or adopting new issues runs a high political risk. The cartel party theory suggests that parties will be drawn toward the more risk adverse option of working together rather than possibly losing their political power by representing a diversifying electorate (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009).

Though the cartel party theory suggests that collusion should be defined by party responsiveness to other parties and a disregard for voter preferences, taking the implications one step further, cartelistic parties should be expected to also limit the issue options presented to voters by either keeping issue space size stable across time or decreasing its size. The following section will explain conceptual issue spaces and how this connects to advanced cartelistic behavior.

2.3.1 Issue Spaces

Issue spaces are the conceptual distance that exists between parties in a political system, traditionally envisaged as unidimensional. The space that exists on the issue dimension between the right-most party and the left-most party delimits the area of political competition. Issues that are ignored by all parties within a system are considered outside of the political mainstream because there is no party representing some of the voters' interests. In other words, an issue that resides outside of the mainstream issue space would be that issue that no party takes a position on and thus falls outside of the conceptual distance between the left-most party and the right-most party. Parties behaving purely collusively are interested in keeping the issue space either the same size or smaller from election to election. Parties may choose issue space stability with the assumption that the more consistent the battery of options provided to the voter, the more consistent the behavior of voters across elections. And conversely, parties may find this coordination difficult, making convergence another attractive option. The logic being that offering fewer choices to the voter or presenting a unified position on the topic also limits the ability for the voter to deviate from previous voting positions.

Parties have incentives to minimize the issue choices presented to their voters in order to keep the choice set manageable, particularly when facing new issues or parties entering into the system (Albright 2010, Hellwig 2008, Tavits 2008, Meguid 2005, Blyth and Katz 2005, Leeper and Slothuus 2014). Thus new issues can disrupt the current voter distributions and challenge parties to take positions on topics that may alienate some of their voters (Tavits 2008, Albright 2010, Hellwig 2008). The suggestion that parties will strive to maintain the same issue spaces between them or a limited issue space size, leads to distinct expectations about how issue spaces will be influenced by collusive party behavior.

In total, there are 5 issue space conditions, three predicted by the negative implications of the cartel party theory and two that are contrary: perfect coordination, imperfect coordination, convergence, polarization and representation. Though the preceding discussion has presented the conditions necessary in order for collusion to be present following the cartel party theory, an addi-

tional implication of this theory is that not only should we expect collusion to present itself through party responsiveness to one another and a disregard for voter preference, but we should also find evidence that parties are manipulating the choice set of issues presented to their voters. Ultimately, issue space manipulation should be indicative of developed levels of coordination and should be considered even more pronounced evidence of the emergence of the cartel party system.

2.3.2 Collusive Issue Spaces

The cartel party theory suggests that focal parties will coordinate with one another to force voter stability across elections by rigging the political game through their collusion (Blyth and Katz 2005). There are two ways that a party might manipulate the political issue space provided to voters, they can work toward perfect coordination, mimicking each other's movements across the conceptual continuum, striving for perfect 1:1 responses, or they can converge on the issues, moving increasingly close to one another, offering fewer options for voters. Both of these behaviors will be devoid of representative linkages with voters, and provide further evidence of inter-party collusion through issue space coordination.

Focal parties behaving in a cartelistic fashion will respond to rival parties on the issues and ignore voters, suggesting a broken system of representation and inter-party collusion. This suggestion leads to the expectation that parties that are colluding with one another should not be interested in creating a larger issue space for voters, because offering more options to voters may lead to voter instability and uncertainty, both of which are the mechanism that justify inter-party collusion in the first place. One way to avoid this instability is to attempt to artificially keep the issue space the same size. Thus, focal parties behaving collusively might attempt to precisely match responses in rival parties, whenever they change on the issues, though this will be difficult to achieve. This leads to the ideal typical expectation of issue space behavior: perfect coordination.

If parties are coordinating in an attempt to maintain the same sized issue space that divides them, then when rival parties move positively 1 point, the focal party should move 1 point positively in the same direction, as shown in table 2.2 below. This would ensure that the space between

them would stay exactly the same, even though policy positions are changing. By keeping the issue space between themselves and the other parties the exact same, focal parties will be attempting to force voters to behave exactly the same as previous elections. The expectation being that if parties offer similar issue spaces from across elections then voters will not have the ability to defect from their previous party. Although this condition would be difficult to achieve, it is theoretically possible. Additionally, the cartel party theory suggests that as party systems evolve, parties should become more collusive. Implied by this evolutionary component, parties should be working toward perfect coordination, thus response in focal parties should approach 1:1 as time passes and potentially surpass it, becoming issue space convergence. Although this condition may not present itself often, a 1:1 response would be perfected coordination, if the goal is to keep the issue space the same size. Though this response would be what parties might strive for, the theory suggests that cartelization is an evolutionary process, leading to the possibly of an intermediate condition, which we will call imperfect coordination.

Table 2.2: Issue Space Coordination

	Rival Parties Move 1 point		Resulting Issue Space
	$\beta > 1$	Convergence	Diminishing
	$\beta = 1$	Perfect Coordination	Stable
Focal Party Reaction	$1 > \beta > 0$	Imperfect Coordination	Meaningless Expansion, ignoring voters
	$\beta = 0$	Null Relationship	Meaningful Expansion, responding to voters
	$\beta < 0$	Polarization	Extreme Expansion

Imperfect coordination occurs when focal parties are unable to make the perfect 1:1 shift with their colluding counterparts, but do appear to be conspiring to do so, as indicated by their responsiveness to the rival parties in the system and their failure to respond to voters.

Before moving on to discuss imperfect coordination in detail, it is important to recognize that the issue positions that we are discussing are relational; this means that initial programmatic position of the focal party in relation to the rival parties' positions influences the issue space between parties over time, which becomes crucial for understanding how the models have been constructed in the following empirical chapters. For example, if the rival parties in the system are to the right

of the focal party, then a 1 point shift to the right by the rival parties and a simultaneous shift by 0.5¹ of the focal party to the left increases the issue space between them. This is because the focal party is making a smaller movement, by 0.5 to the right, when the other parties have moved 1 point away from the focal party. In other words, the shift from the focal party is not nearly enough to make up the movement made by the rival parties in the system, therefore the space that divides them is increasing. Conversely, if the rival parties are to the left of the focal party and they shift 1 point to the right and the focal party shifts 0.5 points again, the space will decrease between them. Considering this visually again, if the rival parties are moving toward the focal party to the right, and the focal party responds by moving 0.5 points less away from the rival parties, this will decrease the distance between them. Thus, the initial starting position changes the resulting issue space size and whether this is increasing or decreasing. In order to equalize these positions, making the conditions equivalent, change from year to year must be examined, controlling for the previous year's position. This allows for change over time, without the complicating effects of a party's starting point in relation to other parties in the political dimension to obscure the findings.

Accounting for these distortions, parties can be considered coordinating imperfectly if their response to rival parties' issue position shifts is above 0 but unable to achieve a perfect 1:1 response, while ignoring voter preference changes on the issue. This would be an underreaction to the shift in the rival parties and would result in a marginally increasing issue space size. However, because this response to rival parties by the focal party comes at the expense of not representing voters, this suggest that although the issue space is increasing these movements are not due to representation, but rather imperfect coordination. Meaningful issue space expansion requires that parties are responding to voters, to some degree. Without some connection to voters, then issue space positions of focal parties cannot be considered representative, even if the issue space is expanding. What gives issue space expansion meaning for representation is a distinct connection to voter preference changes, without this connection, it should be considered imperfect coordination between

¹This could be any figure that is not an exact 1:1 response, because that is the only way in which the relationship between the starting positions of the focal party and rival parties does not influence the resultant issue space – because it stays exactly the same size with a 1:1 shift.

colluding parties.

If focal parties are moving inline positively with rival parties in a significant fashion and ignoring changes in voter positions on the issues, this should be considered a condition of pure collusion, even though the coordination to limit the issue space is imperfect. This would be purely collusive because it meets the two central characteristics of the condition: apparent cooperation with rival parties – as shown by the positive relationship between changes in the rival party position and focal party position – and a lack of responsiveness to issue position changes of voters, indicating broken representation. The issue space would be meaningfully expanding if the shift in placement of the focal party was connected to the voters, anything else would be a feature of imperfect coordination with rival parties and indicative of collusion.

Though we have discussed perfect and imperfect coordination, the cartel party theory suggests that parties may be drawn toward another strategy in issue space manipulation: convergence. Although it might be preferred for parties to keep issue spaces stable, because this would be the most clear cut way to force voter stability, they may also choose to narrow the issue space, becoming increasingly similar on the topic and offering even fewer options to the voters. This might be an attractive possibility if an issue is particularly challenging to a political system. If parties all share nearly the same position on the topic, then voters will be forced to vote using some other issue criteria. Issue space stability should be attractive for issues that have been politically salient since before collusion began, whereas issue space convergence may be more attractive on newer issues that enter the political discourse after collusion has already become common place.

Together this means that there are three issue space conditions we expect to see if collusion is present: perfect coordination, imperfect coordination and convergence. Parties may manipulate the issue space by attempting to keep it stable over time, showing signs of imperfect or perfect coordination, or they may wish to limit the issues presented to voters broadly and may attempt to converge on the issues. Whichever approach a party takes, the implications are the same for representation: parties are manipulating the political playing field in an attempt to force voters to vote for them while failing to represent their interests. No matter which condition presents itself,

without a connection to voters, representation is clearly undermined in each of these conditions.

There are two remaining types of issue spaces that may exist that are not predicted by the cartel party theory, though only one is meaningful for representation.

2.3.3 Non-Collusive Issue Spaces

There are two types of issue spaces that are not connected to collusive behavior, both of which lead to meaningful issue space expansion: polarization and representation.

Meaningful issue space expansion can be driven by either parties or voters. If parties are increasing the size of the issue space as a response to voters moving in that direction, while ignoring the issue positions of their rivals, then clearly representation will be strong. Even if rival parties move positively and the focal party responds, if the party remains somewhat connected to the voter, then the issue space will be expanding in a meaningful fashion. Though there might be collusive tendencies shown by the relationship that may exist between rival parties and focal parties, because there remains a party-voter connection, we cannot definitively say that the issue space expansion is meaningless and a sign of imperfect coordination, rather it becomes representatively expanding in conjunction with voter preferences. There is no limitation to the issue space in this scenario because parties are clearly not coordinating with other parties. This would achieve pure representation, again, because it meets the two characteristics for this condition: parties will respond to voter preference changes, with no relationship to rival parties' issue position changes.

The greatest expansion of the issue space, not connected to voter preference changes, would be party polarization. If rival parties move positively one point and focal parties move in a significant way negatively, to any degree, the issue space will be expanding in a fashion akin to polarization. This means that parties will be making their policy position changes based off of distinguishing themselves from competing parties, not coordinating to limit issue spaces, or responding to voter preferences, thus achieving a condition of polarization.

Together, the discussion has provided clear expectations about how parties should behave if the negative implications of the cartel party theory hold and how issue space coordination should

appear if cartel conditions are evolving in modern democracies. Though focal party responsiveness to rival parties, while ignoring voters on the issues should be indicative of inter-party collusion, the cartel party theory suggests that parties should additionally manipulate the issue spaces presented to voters. If parties are interested in maintaining an issue space similar from election to election they should be expected to move together to limit the choice set presented to voters in the hope that this behavior should force voter stability. Alternatively, parties may find strategic incentives, particularly on new issues, to present an increasingly narrow issue space to voters. If parties respond to changing voter preference, their positions of power may not be guaranteed, and thus as political complexity increases, parties should be expected to behave in a cartelistic manner by responding to other parties and manipulating the issue spaces presented to voters. Finding collusive tendencies in party behavior is a first step in determining the validity of the cartel implications, while this further test regarding issue space behavior allows us to determine how well parties are able to limit the issues and promote artificial voter stability.

The previous discussion has outlined how the negative implications of the cartel party theory provide empirical predictions about party behavior and coordination. Purely collusive parties should show a disregard for voter preferences, while responding to other parties in the system and advanced levels of collusion should show increasingly perfect coordination or convergence of issue spaces. To this point, the cartel party theory has provided the foundation of expectations about collusive party behavior and how cartelization should manifest itself in issue space manipulation, but there is a final component to this discussion that has informed expectations about how collusion should present itself in advanced democracies. Although not a consideration in the cartel party theory, there is reason to believe, using relevant research, that party type should influence party proclivity to collude. The final section will suggest that mainstream parties are the most likely to collude, while niche parties have greater incentives to stay connected to their partisan voters. These differences require a discussion of the ways in which party type and voter type should change our expectations about party behavior and coordination.

2.4 Party and Voter Types

Although the original cartel party theory does not address party differences, there is reason to believe that collusion and representation may depend on party type, particularly because some studies have shown that party type matters when understanding party-voter linkages (Adams et al. 2006, Meguid 2005, Wagner and Meyer 2016, Ezrow et al. 2010).

When it comes to predicting party behavior by party type, the literature would suggest that niche parties should resist the temptation to collude with mainstream parties because they may lose their fraction of the electorate if they increase their similarity to their mainstream rivals (Adams et al. 2006). Niche parties are more responsive to their ideologically-driven constituents, while mainstream parties make adjustments toward the independent or median voter (Adams et al. 2006, Ezrow et al. 2010). These findings indicate that niche parties should be the least likely to collude, because they may be punished if they become increasingly similar to mainstream parties, because this could alienate their partisan voters. This leads to the expectation that parties should offer more durable policy choices over time in the face of change, because they need to keep a strong connection to their voters, thus not only should party type change party behavior, but it should also influence party coordination of the issue space.

Mainstream parties should be drawn toward greater responsiveness to rival parties and coordination of the issue space, compared to niche parties, and should limit the entrance of new issues into the political mainstream by either ignoring the new issue or taking the same position on it. When a new challenging issue arises, a subject that will be discussed in greater depth in chapter 3, mainstream parties have incentives to keep these issues outside of political competition. This avoids allowing an issue to become salient or voters to express their positions on the topics, often providing niche parties with complete issue ownership (Meguid 2005). Because niche parties are often champions of new issues, it should be expected that the type of party will influence how issue spaces are coordinated and how parties behave in relation to one another and their voters.

This discussion has argued that party type may influence the extent of collusion, but also touches on an important point through the relevant findings – mainstream parties cater to me-

dian or independent voters, while niche parties are more responsive to their partisans (Adams et al 2006, Ezrow et al. 2010). This suggests that voters should not be treated as a monolithic category, rather there is reason to believe that parties may pursue different strategies which may alter the type of voter they are interested in representing.

Parties often need to mobilize two groups in order to win elections, their partisan supporters and a large enough portion of independents to win, trying to satisfy both of these groups creates what Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012) call representational strain. Though parties will want to satisfy their partisan voters, particularly niche parties, these partisan voters are often more extreme on the issues than the party itself, which complicates the party's ability to appease independents, who generally hover around the middle of the left/right political issue distribution (Dalton, Farrell and McAllister 2011, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). This leads to parties being pulled in two different directions, unable to respond in a manner that does not undercut the other voting bloc. Add to this a growing contingent of the electorate becoming dealigned with parties, and courting independents becomes even more central to electoral success (Albright 2009, Dalton and Wattenburg 2000). This leads to two different models of representation possible: the partisan and the dealigned (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). This allows for another theoretical distinction between representation type, allowing for the possibility that there may be different strategies implemented by parties, neither being indicative of a preferred type of representation.

That being said, there become two types of pure representation: partisan and dealignment (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Parties may be interested in maintaining strong representational connections with their partisans if they are partisanly representative, or independents, if dealignment representation is their strategy. This means that there are two types of pure representation that may present themselves, though these conditions are not necessarily mutually exclusive, nor are either of these representative strategies comparatively deficient, rather they merely indicate possibly different strategies in representing the interests of voting coalitions.

Together this discussion of party and voter types suggests important distinctions that have guided some of the choices made in the chapters that follow. To begin, party type is considered in

two ways. First, when it comes to collusion, the expectation is that mainstream parties should be the most likely to collude, therefore all of the models included in this study examine how all parties in a country respond to the mainstream parties' positions on the issues. This allows for us to test whether mainstream parties are colluding with focal parties in the system because the literature suggests that this is the most likely place to find our first evidence of collusion. The second way that party type is considered is in differentiating focal party types. It is possible that niche parties may resist collusion with mainstream parties, while mainstream parties are expected to be highly collusive with their mainstream rivals, which will become the central question of chapter 4. It is possible that niche parties are not complicit in collusion with mainstream parties and considering differences in focal types may help to uncover different party behaviors.

Different types of representation, either dealignment or partisan, are considered in all of the chapters as well. Parties may have different strategies in representation and satisfying either of these voter groups would be sufficient to undercut the negative implications of the cartel party theory. In order to consider these different strategies in representation, all models consider the positions of the median voter in a country and the focal party's partisans.

Though party and voter types are not considered in the cartel party theory, these modifications have been made because the literature suggests that party types should shape collusive tendencies and they allow for multiple types of representation to be tested, avoiding assumptions that all parties should pursue the median voter to maximize their vote share.

2.5 Conclusion

In total, the cartel party theory suggests that the natural evolution of representative democracy leads to the deterioration of the representative quality of the system. The theory suggests, most controversially, that parties will move away from their voters and toward the state, beginning to collude with one another to maintain their positions of power. Central to this discussion is the understanding that parties are made up of people who are rational actors, working in their own self-interest and using the party as a vehicle to further their goals and maintain their political power (Katz and

Mair 2009). Katz and Mair suggest that when the changing dynamics of political competition alter incentive structures, it becomes possible that parties move away from representation and toward cartelization.

The argument that parties fail to meet the representational demands of their voters calls in to question the legitimacy of these organizations and the system as a whole, making it centrally important to representation whether the negative implications of this theory hold. Using the cartel party theory as the starting point, the previous discussion has argued that the theory suggests clear expectations about how collusive party behavior should manifest itself, and how advanced degrees of cartelization should lead to unrepresentative issue spaces presented to voters. Together these suggestions mean that under a collusive system, voters will be ignored and the issues presented to them will be manipulated and disconnected to their wants or needs. Thus empirically, I expect collusion will lead focal parties to respond to mainstream parties in the system, while simultaneously ignoring voter preferences of both partisan and median voters. While, if the system of cartelization is mature, it is expected that coordination to manipulate the issue space presented to voters will be perfectly stable, or converging. Together, this discussion has provided the theoretical foundation from which the following chapters will begin investigating whether parties across the democratic world appear to be colluding with one another or if representational connections remain strong across a diverse set of issues.

Chapter 3

Inter-Party Collusion on the Left/Right Economic Dimension

What contributes to a party's position on policy? As discussed in the previous chapters, one might assume that these positions are related to voter preference changes – when voters express an opinion on an issue parties attempt to match the changing sentiments – but what if this dynamic relationship breaks down? What if parties no longer attempt to represent voters? The cartel party theory suggests that as party systems evolve and incentive structures change, parties begin to work together to limit political competition, ultimately disregarding voter preferences. Under this theory, as parties find themselves challenged by political uncertainties they will be drawn toward the state and collusion with their rivals to protect their positions in government. In striving for political stability, parties, this theory argues, should be expected to coordinate to limit political competition and manipulate issue spaces presented to the voter, with the intention of artificially forcing voter stability from election to election. So the theory goes, uncertainty of political outcome and increasing political complexity will lead parties to increase their relationships with rival parties and coordination in policy position, disregarding the changing opinions of voters.

As the theoretical discussion in the previous chapter suggests, focal parties behaving collusively should respond to rival parties, while failing to represent voters, the likelihood of which should increase as the party system matures. Furthermore, advanced cartelization will present evidence of manipulated issue spaces, showing parties striving for stability or convergence of the issue area presented to the voter. A natural starting point for testing the presence of cartelistic collusion is the left/right ideological continuum. Often thought of as being divided across issues of government intervention in the economy (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012, Hellwig 2008), these issues make up the traditional economic divide, with those on the left supporting greater intervention in

the economy and those on the right opposing this interference. These positions are often considered the foundation of party competition, party families and cleavage structures (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Because the left/right economic continuum is central to political competition in modern democracies, this issue area should be considered first in testing the negative implications of the cartel party theory.

The chapter will proceed as follows. To begin, the hypotheses that have guided the subsequent models will be presented, each in light of the theoretical discussion in the previous chapter. Following this, the methods and data will be reviewed and finally the findings will be presented.

3.1 The Cartel Party Theory and Party Behavior

One of the most controversial aspects of the cartel party theory argues that as democracies evolve parties will begin to work together, ultimately undermining representation. Parties are thought to be the vehicle through which a voter's interests are translated into policy and representation. Representation scholarship suggests a dynamic relationship exists between parties and voters, allowing voters to access the evolving conditions within society and reward or punish parties accordingly (Powell and Witten 1993, Anderson 2000, Kayser and Peress 2012, Soroka and Wlezien 2009). Implied by this relationship, is that parties will represent voters because failing to do so will lead to a loss of votes. But, Katz and Mair (1995, 2009,) suggest as party systems evolve, the relationship between the party and the voter deteriorates, allowing parties to manipulate political competition and ultimately issue spaces in a manner that breaks down party-voter responsiveness, but without the consequence of losing voters.

But are parties beginning to work together to limit competition? Some recent scholarship suggests that parties show a responsive connection between issue positions, even among rivals (Adams and Somer-Topcu 2009, Camia and Caramani 2012, Wagner and Meyer 2016, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2016), though none of these authors consider the cartel implications of their findings. Considering the possibility that parties may be working together with their rivals, as these works suggest, the following chapters will consider whether this apparent inter-party coordination is to

the detriment of voter-party linkages. By considering these two interwoven phenomena simultaneously – representative connections between rival parties are increasing, while parties may be increasingly disregarding voter preferences – this work will be able to test the totality of the cartel party theory’s negative implications for representation, because it is not enough to show that voter-party linkages are high, while ignoring rival party influences, nor to merely examine inter-party coordination without considering whether voters remain dominant in influencing the issue positions of parties. To begin to test these possibilities in total, the following chapter will address three questions: do parties appear to be colluding with one another and disregarding voter preferences? Does the passage of time increase party proclivity to collude, as suggested by the evolutionary component of the theory? And finally, do parties appear to be coordinating their issues spaces to force voter stability?

As the previous theoretical chapter details, the cartel party theory argues that party evolution produces an environment in which parties will begin to collude with one another to minimize competition and ultimately manipulate the issues that enter the political mainstream. This discussion has provided the foundation for determining whether the negative implications of this theory hold, suggesting that collusive parties will exhibit two distinct behaviors: focal parties should be responsive to the policy positions of rival mainstream parties, while simultaneously disregarding the positions of their voters. More generally, these two features define the typology of possible party conditions, ranging from pure collusion to pure representation as presented in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Party Policy Position Left/Right Dimension Responsiveness

		Responsive to Parties?	
		Yes (Positive)	No (Negative or Null)
Response to Voters?	Yes (Positive)	Partial Collusion/Representation	Pure Representation
	No (Negative)	Pure Collusion	Polarization or Clientelism

Presented in greater detail in the previous chapter, these four conditions are pure collusion, partial collusion/representation, pure representation and polarization and clientelism. Focal parties that are behaving in a purely collusive manner should disregard partisan and median voter prefer-

ences, with the appearance of working in conjunction with other mainstream parties. A focal party could also be responsive to both parties and voters, indicating only a partial condition of collusion, since voters are not completely disregarded, yet parties appear to be functionally manipulating political competition. If focal parties respond to the changing policy positions of voters, with no relationship or a negative relationship to the position of mainstream parties they can be considered purely representative, since party positions in this condition clearly remain connected to the voter. If focal parties fail to respond to both voters and rival parties, then it is clear that approximating the positions of these groups does not influence policy positions on the left/right continuum, suggesting that party position is determined by clientelistic interests, not cartel collusion or representation. If the positions of focal parties are not related to rival parties in the system and they do not respond to movements of voters, then there must be other factors unaccounted for in these models driving these positions, such as a special interest group in society or even internal party activists. If focal parties are moving away from mainstream parties, increasing the distance between themselves and their rivals, while not responding to voters, then the condition can be considered polarized. Focal parties in this condition do not show representative connections to voters, but appear motivated to differentiate themselves from their opposition. This typology allows for the following research to have clear expectations about how inter-party collusion should present itself though focal party responsiveness to mainstream party changes on the left/right issue dimension. This typology suggests that how parties respond to one another and voters alters the type of system that is created, but underlying these behavioral changes is the deterministic suggestion made by the cartel party theory – as party systems mature they will become more akin to cartels – which provides the second set of expectations guiding this chapter.

The second question targets the evolutionary basis of the cartel theory, which justifies treating the passage of time as predictive of increased collusive behaviors. The mechanisms that drive cartel changes are grounded in the previously discussed literature on party system evolution. The cartel system, Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) suggest, is the next step in evolving party systems that is the result of parties becoming challenged by a changing electorate, the increasing complexity

and cost of running campaigns, while being unable use government spending to incentivize voter loyalty, parties adopt the strategies that define the cartel system. This leads to the foundational expectations that parties will begin to collude with one another because it is the most efficient and risk adverse way to protect their positions in government, when it becomes too difficult to achieve representation while maintaining access for parties to governing institutions. Though the specific mechanisms that Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) argue should convert the catch-all system to the cartel system include state subvention programs, limited government spending, increasingly more expensive election campaigns, and rising issue complexity, they also imply that time will bring this condition to all democracies as a function of changing environmental incentives, thus time should be in itself increase a focal party's proclivity to collude.

The final question takes the theory one step further – if cartelistic collusion is mature on these issues then we expect to see issue space convergence or stability. If voters change their position, then parties are faced with a choice: adjust to satisfy their voter or ignore them and risk losing their vote. Voters can only vote based on their opinions if there is a party that offers them a choice on this topic, if not, then the voter should continue to vote for their previous party. Parties can force voter stability (voters vote for the party they voted for in the last election) if parties offer a stable issue space, not allowing for new issues to enter into the political mainstream, or by converging on a topic, making the choices increasingly narrow for the voter (Blyth and Katz 2005). This suggests that our expectation for the third question is that colluding parties should show evidence of striving for or achieving near perfect coordination or issue space convergence, as discussed in the previous chapter. If all of the parties in the system collude to ignore changing public opinion on a topic and present a manipulated issue space to voters, then representative connections between parties and voters may be all the more broken.

This discussion provides the foundation for expectations about party collusion, but before moving on to the hypotheses, it is important to discuss the rationale behind choosing the left/right continuum as a starting point for exploring the possibilities of collusion.

3.2 Dimensions of Collusion

In the most basic sense, the left/right continuum conceptually divides electorates and parties along economic dimension, a divide often thought to form the primary basis from which political parties traditionally compete (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Kitschelt 1994, Hellwig 2008, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2009). Because economic issues are centrally important to traditional political competition and have been found to be stable over time, it is expected that these topics should be settled and parties should hold fairly durable policy positions on these economic issues (Dalton and McAllister 2015).

Though some research suggests political dynamics have increased complexity, indicating that the single left/right dimension may not be adequate in conceptualizing the totality of politics (Albright 2010, Kitschelt 1994, Marks et al. 2006, Kriesi et al. 2006). With more recent scholarship arguing that ‘new politics’ and globalization have created a multidimensional political playing field (Kitschelt 1994, Marks, Hooghe, and Nelson 2006, Wagner and Meyer 2016, Kriesi et al. 2006, Hellwig 2008). These new crosscutting issues should, using the cartel theory, be difficult for parties to approximate their voters on, and because of their multidimensional nature, increase the likelihood that parties could undercut their voting coalitions if they take definitive stances on these new issues. This means that the incentives to collude and present narrowing or stable issues spaces should be much higher on multidimensional issues, as compared to issues on the economic dimension (Blyth and Katz 2005). In other words, parties should present comparably more stable and determinate policy positions across the left/right economic divide, so much so that we would expect less collusion on these topics, compared to new multidimensional issues (which will be the focus of the next chapter). Therefore issue positions on the economic dimension, because of they are foundational to party platforms, should be comparatively stable over time (Dalton and McAllister 2015), presenting the most difficult test for the emergence of inter-party collusion.

3.3 Hypotheses

Though the overriding expectation is that left/right issues should be generally stable over time, there still remains the possibility that parties in cartelistic systems may collude on these topics, not just the more complicated crosscutting issues presented by multidimensional politics. Focal parties participating in collusive behavior, the cartel party theory argues, should be driven by their interest in keeping political competition similar from election to election. Realizing their shared goals, Katz and Mair (2009) suggest, parties will begin to conspire in order to limit competition and manipulate the issues presented to voters, becoming increasingly unresponsive to their constituencies. As discussed in the previous chapter, this type of collusive response from focal parties is expected to occur between mainstream parties, compared to niche parties. Together, these expectations leads to the first hypothesis:

H1 - Collusion: Focal parties participating in collusion will adjust their policy on the economic dimension positively in response to mainstream party movements, while ignoring voter preferences.

Conversely, in the other ideal typical scenario, focal parties remain responsive to their voters, either median or partisan, while having no relationship or a negative relationship to the mainstream parties in the system. If parties present positive responses to either voter group, and a negative or null relationship to the mainstream party positions, then representation should be deemed strong, considering changes in voter policy positions appear to be the driving forces in party policy placement on the left/right dimension. This line of logic suggests the second hypothesis:

H2 - Representation: Focal parties, maintaining representative connections to their constituents, will positively respond to changes in left/right issues in partisan voters and/or median voters, indicating that representation remains strong. Additionally, signaling party independence on the issues, a focal party's positions will not be related to left/right policy placement of the mainstream parties in the system.

Although these two hypotheses address the central motivations for this research, the cartel party theory, at its core, is an evolutionary theory. As discussed in the expectations section, the mere passage of time may increase collusive tendencies within modern democracies. If this evolutionary process is present as Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) theorize, merely the passage of time should influence whether cartelistic behavior emerges, presenting a third hypothesis:

H3 - Evolution: If cartelization is indeed occurring, focal parties in advanced democracies will become more collusive as time passes – they will increasingly respond to rival mainstream parties, while ignoring voters.

Finally, as the previous chapter argues, the theory suggests that collusion should be characterized by focal party responsiveness to other parties and broken connections between focal parties and voters (H1), while representation should show focal parties maintaining representative connections between voters, while ignoring mainstream party positions (H2), but the most advanced implications of the cartel party theory suggest that colluding parties will be incentivized to artificially manipulate the issue spaces presented to voters by promoting stability or convergence. Because the economic issue dimension should be durable and the least attractive policy space over which to collude, the expectation is that coordination on the economic issue space should not have achieved perfect coordination or convergence, but that this coordination should be increasing, although not yet perfected, leading to the fourth hypothesis:

H4 - Issue Space: The highest level of collusion should present either issue space stability or convergence. Because focal parties should find it challenging to collude on the economic issue dimension, the expectation is that issue space coordination should be imperfect, resulting in a marginally increasing issue space size, and a failure to respond to voter preferences.

Together these four hypotheses cover the major questions to be addressed in this chapter: Do parties respond to the policy placements of other parties and disregard voters, reflecting their collusion on left/right economic issues or do they remain connected to voters and representative of

their changing opinions? Do these focal party responses change over time? And finally, if they are behaving collusively, do parties appear to be manipulating the issue spaces presented to voters effectively? Answers to these questions will form a primary basis to evaluating the implications of the cartel party theory and whether party systems have evolved in such a manner that has undermined the party-voter linkages.

3.4 Data

To begin, this section will first discuss the data utilized in this chapter's models, examining party responsiveness and issue space manipulation on the left/right dimension. The individual level and party level data will be presented, followed by a brief introduction to the methods underlying the empirical results.

The data are longitudinal panel data organized by the party/year, and following this structure, variables are created that produce aggregate figures for a party's median voters and partisans. To produce this data set, individual level survey data form the basis for mean partisan and median voter issue position over time on the economic issue dimension.

Because these issues are central to political competition, policy positions should be durable, thus requiring data that covers a broad swath of time. To achieve this goal, this work uses the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), which presents individual level survey data spanning from 1987 to 2010, on a variety of nations. Though there are some particularities with this dataset, the extended period of time makes it desirable for the question at hand¹² Together these

¹ Though the ISSP does conduct an annual survey, the question used to target the economic dimension of politics was not asked each year, thus this data source does not provide time points past 2010 and the spacing of the surveys is irregular.

²The ISSP data are supplemented using the British Social Survey Data. The way the ISSP incorporated the answers for the partisanship question in the original datasets was unusable for the purposes of this study. It did not allow for partisans to be coded because it combined two answers into one:

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a supporter of any political party? If yes: Which one?
Do you think of yourself as a little closer to one political party than the others? If yes: Which one? If there were a general election tomorrow which political party do you think you would be most likely to support?

I was able to go into the BSA data and access these questions in a format that was not aggregated into a single answer. This allowed for partisanship to be determined using the BSA, though the reason the question was being

data sources will provide a wide range of cases and time periods in order to gauge party responsiveness to issues on the economic dimension, though neither is perfect, the deficiencies in each are somewhat remedied by the opposing dataset. To capture the respondent issue position on the left/right economic dimension, the ISSP has regularly asked respondents:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of these statements? It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes.

This question is available in 1987, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2000, 2006, 2009, 2010. Though not annually and not a consistent group of countries for each survey, the ISSP provides a larger window of time to examine, compared to the ESS, since these policy positions are expected to be durable for parties and voters (Dalton and McAllister 2015). The ISSP data also allows for nations outside of Europe to be examined, which is useful considering the cartel party theory should be applicable across all advanced democracies.

One of the major limitations to the ISSP data concerns the party identification question. This question was asked in each of the surveys that included the economic dimension question, but question wording differed across country. Because countries were able to determine how they wanted to ask this question, very few surveys contained exactly the same question wording, though they did follow trends in questions type³. For the entirety of the dissertation chapters contained

asked was for the ISSP surveys. For simplicity's sake, I will refer to this as generally the ISSP survey, although the data underlying the British answers comes from the BSA. . To test the robustness of the findings and add a dataset with significantly more observations, the European Social Survey (ESS) data provides a more recent perspective on the changing political dynamics in European democracies and an increased number of consistently measured observations, surveying nations every two years from 2002 to 2016.

³There were four major categories of questions types that were asked in the ISSP. The first asked respondents if there was a party that they felt close to or sympathized with. For the purposes of the present research, this indicator was labeled *party sympathy*. The second type of identification question asked respondents 'if there was an election sometime soon (with wide variety in the time periods suggested), which party the individual would vote for?' This type of question is labeled *future vote* question. Though asked much less frequently compared to the other questions, respondents were occasionally asked who they voted for in the last election instead of the partisan support indicator (*past vote*). And finally, the least common asked which party the respondent felt was the closest in policy to themselves (*closest party*). For the purposes of the following chapter, the ISSP data using the *party sympathy* question – which was the most often asked – is used. Therefore there will be countries missing that were surveyed in the ISSP because most of these asked who the respondent would vote for soon (*future vote*). Asking someone whom they sympathize with or whom they would vote for are very different ways to determine party identification and should not be treated

here, partisans in the ISSP survey are limited to countries that asked their respondents if there was a party that they sympathized with or felt close to, which most closely approximates partisanship within the provided question types⁴. This allows for the greatest comparability to the ESS data and presents a more convincing measure for partisan loyalty, compared to other types of question wording used in the ISSP.

To measure economic left-right orientations using the ESS data, respondents were asked “Using this card, please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels” with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. To determine partisanship using the ESS survey, respondents were asked whether there was a party that they felt closer to than any other party, allowing for a yes or no response. Respondents were then asked what party they felt close to. Together individuals that gave an affirmative response to there being a party that they felt close to were then coded as partisans for the party they selected. This question allows for a voter-party relationship to be targeted that should approximate partisanship in a similar fashion to that used in the ISSP data.

Partisans were determined using questions that individual respondents were asked about their declared affiliations. To determine independents within a nation the median voter is used as an approximate measure for this subsection of an electorate, following Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012). These authors argue that independents often cluster around the center of the left/right continuum and therefore can be conceptualized and measured as being similar in ideological placement as the median voter. Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012) also use the “no party” responses to characterize dealigned voters. Though this would be the most preferable way to target this segment of the population, the ISSP surveys infrequently and inconsistently presented voters with the “no party” option.

The individual level surveys are used to create two voter-level variables: median and partisan

as the same, they have been disaggregated, respecting the fact that voting for a party does not mean that voters actually sympathize or support a party. For the purpose of this research the *party sympathy* question was used.

⁴Full table of countries covered in ISSP using *party sympathy* question can be found in table A.1 in the Appendix

voters. For the partisan voter, an average value is created for each party year using the party identification question to determine the left/right position. For example, all of the respondents who selected the Labour Party in Great Britain scores were averaged, creating a mean partisan voter score for each survey year for the Labour party. Median voters are also calculated by taking the median respondent position for all the individuals in the country on the left/right question from year to year. Again, because the data structure is party/year, the average partisan and median voter is created for each party/year observation.

Party policy positions and ideology are measured in a variety of ways across the representation literature, though party placement is most frequently determined through surveys of citizens, surveys of experts, and the coding of manifestos (Dalton Farrell and McAllister, 2011). One would assume that these measures should be somewhat interchangeable, but they in practice are not (Keman 2007). For instance, Dalton, Farrell and McAllister (2011) find, in their work examining the left/right ideological placement for each party across the spectrum, that the manifesto data “produce a substantially different” result, compared to expert and citizen surveys (118). One would assume that these sources should come to relatively similar conclusions, they are measuring the same phenomenon after all, but might there be another explanation for the discrepancies?

I suggest that it is possible that equating the perceptions of experts and citizens to the statements made by parties may be misguided, because what we assume is that each of these approaches is able to approximate ideological placement of parties at the time. The problem lies in the fact that the survey data are the *perceptions* of individuals on the placement of the party, while the manifesto data represents the party’s *promised* placement; i.e. future policy considerations. Separating these factors, reveals a possible reason for the discrepancy. Parties often make promises that they cannot keep, and positioning on the left/right continuum may change in practice. Where a party strives to be – as committed to within a manifesto – may be an ideal typical position, rather than a position achievable in reality. The underlying implication is that surveys of citizens and experts may be better approximations of policy placement in practice, while manifestos may be the pledged, although possibly unattainable, positions of the organizations.

Party manifestos, within this understanding, should be conceptualized as a commitment made to the voter, though crucially, it could also be seen as a measure of commitments made to other parties, when collusion is occurring. For the purpose of this chapter, the most appropriate way to explore the existence of collusion is through the manifesto statements provided by the parties, because if cartel mechanisms are at play, they should be evident within these documents. It would be misguided to assume that collusion would be perceived by both citizens and voters directly. If party manifestos are representations of commitment, that may or may not translate into policy after the fact, then these documents should be able to reveal whether parties are making these commitments in response to their voters or to other parties. If collusion is occurring, then parties should appear to be making commitments to one another to limit competition, without regard for the voters and their changing opinions. In contrast, if they remain connected to the voter, they should make the appropriate promises to the people, without a distinct connection to rival parties. This is not say that voters and experts should not be able to perceive collusion occurring, rather it should just take longer for these commitments to turn into explicit coordination in practice in order for it to become perceivable to experts or citizens. In the end, if parties are participating in this type of behavior, I expect it should present itself first within the party manifesto, if conceptualized as future commitments to one another.

There are two important variables derived from the Manifesto Project dataset for this chapter. First, the project determines party family, coding parties into agrarian, conservative, christian democratic, liberal, social democratic, communist, ethnic/regional, nationalist, green and special issue⁵. For the purpose of this research, ethnic/regional, nationalist, green and special issue comprise niche party status, abiding to the definition of niche parties are “defined as parties that compete primarily on a small number of non-economic issues” (Wagner 2010, Wagner and Meyer 2016). Using this, the second variable is created to capture the annual movement on the left/right dimension of the mainstream parties in a political system each year. Because the Manifesto Project codes each manifesto that is produced by parties preceding an election, the score for this manifesto

⁵Such as parties representing pensioners issues, euroscepticism, or women’s issues, just to name a few.

is applied to each year up to the year when a more recent manifesto is created. The rationale being that a given manifesto presents the official policy position of the party up to the creation of a new manifesto. The second variable from the Manifesto Project captures the economic dimension. To measure left/right policy position movement in party manifestos using the so-called RILE variable provided by the Manifesto data is utilized. This variable measures a party's left/right position presented in the manifesto ranging from -100 (left) to 100 (right). All individual survey level left/right questions have been adjusted to comparable directional interpretations. In other words, when the voter moves to the right this will be a positive adjustment, when a party moves to the right, it will be a positive adjustment.

Using the RILE score and the party family determination, I created an average mainstream party position variable. To accomplish this, all of the left/right policy scores for all the mainstream parties in a system are first aggregated. To avoid double-counting the focal party in both the outcome and the predictor, the focal party's left/right policy score is subtracted from the overall mainstream parties' aggregate, if the observation party is mainstream. In order to make scores comparable across system and year, the aggregate of all mainstream parties' positions is then divided by the number of parties in the system⁶, creating the mean left/right movement of mainstream parties in a system. As an example, consider Great Britain in 2015, the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties are coded as mainstream, while the Scottish National Party (SNP), Plaid Cymru and Green Party are considered niche. If the focal party is the SNP in 2015, then the mainstream party score will be the left/right positions of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties added together, since the SNP is not a mainstream party. The final aggregate (-35.85) is then divided by the number of mainstream parties in the system, which in this case is three, making the final figure -11.95. This creates a variable that can be considered the average position of a mainstream party in Great Britain in 2015. Conversely, if the observation party were the Conservative Party, then the scores for the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties will be aggregated and then divided by two, since the effects of the Conservative have been removed. This ultimately

⁶To adjust for the focal party again, one is subtracted from the count of mainstream parties in the system if the focal party is coded as mainstream.

creates a figure that is relational to each focal party/year.

Together all of this provides the variables needed to explore what contributes to the left/right policy position changes of parties across time, considering how the focal party's position and movement over time is influenced by the mainstream competitors' position and movement and the positions of median and partisan voters over time. These variables allow us to test the four hypotheses and therefore, determine whether collusion, as suggested by Katz and Mair, shapes party behavior.

3.5 Methods

All of the analysis within this chapter will utilize linear multilevel models⁷. Because of the nature of the dataset, the party can be considered the second level in the data, while the year comprises the first. This means that each year is nested in the party and each party is nested in the country. To avoid making assumptions about the data, the intercepts at the party and the country levels are allowed to vary randomly with unstructured covariances⁸. Although at the individual level, the basis for the partisan and median voter positions are derived from thousands of survey observations, because the data are aggregated as party/year scores, the observations are considerably smaller. Taking the most conservative approach, restricted maximum likelihood estimations (REML) have been used⁹. Although it would be helpful to have likelihood ratio tests to compare models, because

⁷ Although the dependent variable is not continuous, considering it is bound at -100 and 100, a linear regression is used because the variable appears normally distributed, with most of the values falling between the -50 and 50 range, making impossible estimates unlikely (Long, 1997). Tobit analysis was tested, but produced poor model fits (Long, 1997, Twisk and Rijmen 2009).

⁸ Random effects multilevel models were chosen for several reasons. The clearly clustered nature of the data, on both the party and the country levels makes a completely pooled approach inappropriate (Bartels 2015, Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2005, Snijders and Bosker 2002, Gelman and Hill 2007). The fixed effects model approach would consume too many of the degrees of freedom for the models, making the estimates questionable (Bartels 2015). Ultimately, the random effects models were selected because they considered the underlying dependencies within the data, while maximizing model fit (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2005, Hoffman 2015). The dependent variable has not been lagged, although this has become more common in multilevel models (Bartels 2015, Beck and Katz 2011), because the connection between voters and parties should be more dynamic than a 1 year lag would suggest. This seems too blunt, though further research may consider this approach.

⁹ Maximum likelihood estimation (MLE), correcting for serial auto correlation and heteroskedasticity using robust standard errors, produced nearly identical coefficient estimates. REML estimates are presented in the body of the text because the variance parameters should be constantly estimated using this specification, thus making the significance tests more reliable. Though the coefficient estimates were nearly identical with REML and MLE, the standard errors

of the REML specification this will not be used as a diagnostic tool for model fit, though AIC and BIC fit statistics will be presented in tables.

Because the ISSP and ESS data are unbalanced (there are an unequal number of occasions for each party), the covariance structures that would be applicable are limited (Hoffman 2015, Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2005). Although the equal spacing of the ESS surveys allows for a few more options, ultimately the most appropriate structure was determined to be exponential, because it considers the time dependency in the data, while not requiring balance or similar spacing between occasions (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2015). In accessing the fit of the models, exponential residual structure produced the best fit for the empty models and after specifications were added. Though the models were unable to be compared to the unstructured empty model, again because of the unbalanced nature of the data and the irregular spacing of occasions, comparisons to exchangeable or symmetric models found the exponential residuals were the most appropriate. As mentioned before, random intercepts for party and country were allowed to vary in these models and the covariances for these levels are unstructured, a decision that is not only theoretically grounded, but also improves model fit. Allowing the intercepts to vary with unstructured covariances, while imposing a residual structure that is exponential, allows for the level-1 residuals over time to be considered while allowing the parties to be potentially different from each other (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2015). This does not make assumptions about the covariances across party type, while recognizing that the data have inherent time dependencies.

The models in this chapter will first explore whether or not parties make adjustments to their positions on economic issues in response to voters, maintaining representative connections, or if they respond to movements in mainstream parties, indicating collusion. All of the models in this dissertation will utilize the Hoffman (2015) approach to dealing with the dependent nature of longitudinal data.

This approach targets different sources of variance in the data, allowing us to test what drives placement on the economic dimension using the nature of the data to our advantage (Hoffman

were somewhat inconsistent, indicating that the sample size is not large enough for MLE to provide constant variance estimates.

2015). As is often lamented but rarely appreciated, there are dependencies within data overtime, though these dependencies are generally treated as nuisance (Hoffman 2015). Hoffman argues that rather than treating these features as problematic, we can and should use our data to create variables to target the concepts we are interested in, separating the the variance into ‘piles’ of interest (Hoffman 2015).

When it comes to testing the true implications of the theory, it is a central concern that change be considered. The relationship between parties and voters should be dynamic over time, if voters change their positions over time, we would expect parties to adjust their positions in response. In order to capture change, while adjusting for dependancies, these models will create average values for voters and parties and mean centered change variables to determine what might be driving placement on the left/right dimension for parties. The most conclusive evidence for collusion would be finding that a party’s policy positions on the left/right dimension reflect changes in rival party positions, rather than voter preference changes. In other words, whether focal parties respond to voters when they move on the issues and change their positions in response to rival parties, provides the empirical test to determine whether the two conditions implied by the cartel party theory are indeed present.

Including mean and mean centered figures separates the variance in order to consider the dependency, but also allow us to observe whether parties are influenced by changing positions of these groups or merely the historical positions of rival parties or voters on the issue. Creating average values for each variable over the observation (or the mean partisan, median voter, or mainstream party position), tests whether the stationary position of these voters or parties influences the focal party’s position, while the mean centered change variables allow us to target the variance we are interested in – change in left/right position from year to year – to test whether focal parties have become more responsive to *changing* mainstream party position, while disregarding *changes* in voters’ positions, as the cartel party theory suggests.

Using the running example, this method allows us to partition out stationary influences of Conservative partisan’s, British median voters and Labour and Liberal Democrat parties’ positions

on the economic dimension. There should be a baseline effect of these groups; in other words, there is a general location on the economic dimension where the Conservative party most often finds their voters, median voters or the mainstream parties on these topics. By creating these mean scores and subsequently producing mean centered variables to capture left/right position change of partisan, median and other mainstream parties' positions away from their average location over time, allows us to answer two questions. First, do economic positions of the Conservative party correspond to the general economic positions of the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties, Conservative partisans, or median British voters? And second, when these groups change their position on economic issues, does the Conservative party adjust their position in accordance? This process allows for change in policy position to be targeted in the analysis, to better capture the implications of the cartel party theory. This partitioning of the variables into mean and mean centered variants will occur in all of the models, with the first two models of the chapter examining whether or not focal parties appear to be responding to mainstream parties or voters when they change their positions on the left/right issue dimension, followed by the models that test the influence of time, and finally issue space size will be considered.

In total, the theory suggests that parties should become increasingly more collusive with the evolution of the party system. The central expectation of the cartel theory is that parties, as systemic conditions evolve, will become less responsive to voters, while becoming increasingly dependent on their relationships to other parties and the state to protect themselves from competition, undermining the voter-party linkage. Thus, to test the cartel party theory we must be able to determine to whom parties respond, with the implication being that responsiveness of focal parties to mainstream parties signals collusion (H1). The implication of the evolutionary component of this systemic theory is that the mere passage of time should make parties more inclined to collusive behavior—they increasingly respond to each other as time passes (H3). In order to consider this possibility, models 3 and 4 use a time interaction mainstream party changes on the left/right dimension, allowing for us to determine whether the linear passage of time has increased focal party responsiveness to mainstream party position changes on these issues.

Finally, although the preceding models will explore whether focal parties are responsive to mainstream parties or voters and how time influences this behavior, these models are unable to tell us how the issue space is influenced by mainstream parties and voters over time. The expectation is that as parties become more adept at manipulating the issue spaces presented to voters, they will be able to achieve convergence or perfect 1 to 1 coordination on the issue(H4). If parties move in response to one another this signals collusion, but whether this expands or contracts the issue space size depends on the primary position of the focal party, as was discussed in the previous chapter. In other words, if mainstream parties move to the right and focal parties also move to the right in response, if the movement is not a perfect 1 to 1 shift, the starting position in relation to the mainstream parties' alters whether this means the issue space is expanding or contracting.

Using the running example, the Conservative party in Britain is to right, in relation to the other mainstream parties in the system, so if the other mainstream parties move to the right 1 point and the Conservative party moves to the right 0.5 point, the issue space will be contracting, because the Liberal Democrats and Labour parties will have moved a full point, making them 0.5 closer to the Conservative party. But if our focal party is the Labour party, which is to the left of the average positions of the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, then a 0.5 point shift in Labour and a 1 point shift in the mean mainstream parties would actually expand the issue space. Therefore in order to determine how the issue space is influenced by inter-party collusion we must control for previous policy positions, in order to bring all of the parties to the same 0 starting point, so we are able to see what kind of shift is produced in focal party response to mainstream party position changes. The final model (5) includes a lag of the previous left/right policy position of the focal party in order to standardize the starting positions of these parties in relation to their mainstream opposition. Including this variable removes a large portion of observations, making the ISSP models too unstable to include, but the ESS data produces a functional model. Including this lag as a control allows for us to determine whether the issue space is expanding or contracting when parties are cooperating by effectively changing the dependent variable to examine focal party change away from previous position on the economic dimension, changing the interpretation of the

dependent variable.

Together these approaches will allow us to fully explore the negative implications of the cartel theory, considering how representation might be effected by collusion, whether this behavior increases over time, and if the issue spaces presented to voters shows inter-party coordination to converge on an issue or to maintain issue space stability. The following section will detail the findings from the following models and the substantive meaning of the findings.

3.6 Results

To recap, the cartel party theory suggests that evolving conditions within advanced democracies alter incentive structures for parties, in a manner predicting inter-party collusion. Collusion occurs when parties work together to limit party competition – voters in these conditions are no longer represented when they change positions on the issues, rather parties are expected to respond to rival parties participating in collusion instead of their constituencies. This weakens the representational connections between voters and parties and potentially undermines the basis for representative democracy. To test this possibility, the influence of partisan, median voter, and mainstream parties' positions on the left/right dimension in relation to the dependent focal party are examined to determine which of these groups has the greatest influence on party positions over time and whether these behaviors meet the expectations detailed in the cartel party theory.

The results will be presented in the following order. To begin, the first models will test whether focal parties appear to be responding to mainstream parties in these systems, using the ISSP and ESS data. Following this the evolutionary component will be tested, by interacting time with mainstream party position changes. Finally, issue space manipulation will be considered, controlling for the initial positions of focal parties to determine whether inter-party coordination is presenting manipulated issue spaces to voters.

3.6.1 Focal Party Response

By separating the time variant and time invariant positions of voters and parties, party policy behavior on the left/right economic dimension uses the longitudinal dependencies within our data to our advantage to target the concept we are truly interested in: change. Political representation hinges on a basic expectation of party responsiveness to voters. Implied by the relationship between voters and their representatives is that when voters change their positions, parties should track these changes and try to reflect them in a representative manner, with research suggesting this connection remains intact (Powell 2000, Adams 2004, Dalton and McAllister 2011, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). The cartel party theory suggests that this responsive relationship is undermined by the self interest of the party to maintain power, leading parties to collude to keep their positions in government, rather than risk alienating some voters. Because parties, in the cartel party theory, are interested in limiting competition between parties, the primary negative implications of the theory suggest that colluding parties should be responsive to one another, while ignoring voter preference changes on the issues. Utilizing the methods advocated by Hoffman (2015) the following models examine to what degree a focal party's position is dictated by the *average*, or stationary, positions of voters or mainstream parties and how focal parties react when these groups *change* their positions on the issues, to test whether this dynamic relationship between parties and voters remains intact.

The first two models presented in table 3.2 consider what determines a focal party's positions on the left/right dimension. Using the ISSP data, this produces models examining 27 countries, 158 parties, which results in 356 party-year observations¹⁰.

This model shows that when partisan and median voters *change* their positions on the issue parties fail to respond to these movements, suggesting that the dynamic relationship assumed between parties and voters may be broken. Consistent with the expectations outlined in cartelistic collusion, when mainstream parties change their position on the left/right issue dimension, focal parties are

¹⁰ Full list of countries and years with LR question, party sympathy question type and manifesto data in Appendix table A.1

Table 3.2: Party Policy Position Left/Right Dimension Responsiveness

	(Model 1) ISSP: Response	(Model 2) ESS: Response
Mean Mainstream Party	18.79*** (4.547)	11.98* (5.991)
Partisan	20.06*** (3.140)	23.48*** (3.031)
Mean Median Voter	-14.19*** (4.077)	-19.72*** (5.758)
Mainstream Party Change	9.120** (3.465)	9.077*** (1.793)
Mean Partisan Change	0.965 (2.332)	0.507 (1.383)
Median Voter Change	1.638 (1.910)	-0.242 (1.917)
Constant	-66.23*** (11.82)	-42.61* (19.57)
Country Constant	2.73e-15 (8.03e-14)	30.54*** (30.25)
Party Constant	59.15 (224.3)	162.0*** (54.53)
Residuals: Exponential var(e)	277.5*** (257.2)	191.2*** (47.42)
Observations	356	874
<i>AIC</i>	2857.0	6702.6
<i>BIC</i>	2899.6	6755.1

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

predicted to respond positively to these movements. More specifically, model 1, using the ISSP data, shows that when mainstream parties change their issue positions on the left/right dimension one unit¹¹ away from their average location, focal parties are predicted to shift 9.12 points. This failure to respond to voters, while reacting to the issue positions of their rivals, presents evidence

¹¹ In this case a unit would be one response category in the question toward the most ‘right’ response. Recall, questions for the ISSP and ESS ask respondents whether they agree that the government has a responsibility to minimize income differences between individuals, someone expressing a right-leaning position would oppose this sentiment. These questions allow responses from 1 to 5 on a Likert scale, so a one unit increase would mean the respondent moved possibly from “disagree” to “strongly disagree” that the government should work to reduce income differences. The mainstream party positions have been rescaled to 5 levels as well, merely to make magnitude of coefficient estimates simple to compare.

for pure collusion using the ISSP data.

The mean positions in the model suggest that, the *average* positions of partisan voters and mainstream parties positively predict left/right positions of parties to fairly similar degrees – when mean mainstream parties are on average more right-leaning by one unit this is predicted to influence focal parties by 18.79 points and when partisans are on average one unit more right-leaning this is predicted to shift the focal party by 20.06 points. In other words, parties that have more right leaning partisans or mainstream parties, tend to be more right leaning as well, the inverse also being true. Conversely, there is a negative relationship with median voters, meaning that when the median voters in a country are on average one unit more right leaning, parties respond by being more left leaning. This means that this average location of the median voter actual moves the focal party in a negative direction, comparatively, suggesting that on the stationary level, parties are connected to their rivals and partisans, but attempt to differentiate themselves from the median position.

Although the time invariant mean position of partisan votes is predictive of focal party positions on the left/right dimension, this only shows that the stationary positions of partisans influences party behavior, and to the same degree as mainstream parties on these issues. The crucial component for representation though, is whether parties present a dynamic relationship to voter positions over time. This model clearly shows that parties are not responding to the changing positions of voters, but rather mainstream parties on the left/right dimension, suggesting that pure collusion, constant with cartel expectations, appears present using the more expansive and diverse ISSP data.

To test the robustness of these findings, model 2 uses data from the European Social Survey (ESS), covering the years from 2002 - 2016 and presents surprisingly similar findings¹². This model compares 32 countries with 253 parties, which produces 874 observations.

Presented in table 3.2, the ESS data confirms that changes in the left/right positions of mainstream parties leads to changes in the focal party. Showing a distinct failure to respond, when partisan and median voters change their preferences, focal parties appear to be only responsive to

¹² Full list of countries and years with LR question, party sympathy question type and manifesto data in Appendix table A.2

their rival competitors when it comes to dynamic issue position changes. This means that when it comes to representation, there seems to be little responsive connection between voters and parties, even on the economic dimension. Showing a remarkably similar magnitude compared to the ISSP data, the ESS model shows that when mainstream parties shift one point¹³, focal parties respond with a 9.08 point change. This shows that focal parties respond to change in mainstream parties and ignore voter preference changes on the economic dimension, which is confirmed using both data sources.

Consistent with Model 1, Model 2 shows average positions of partisans remains positively predictive of party behavior, while mean median voter positions continue to be negatively related. This means that more right-leaning average partisan positions lead to focal parties that are more right leaning, but that more right-leaning median voters leads to more left-leaning focal parties. This shows that although the dynamic relationship between voters and parties is missing, the stationary positions of partisan voters contributes to the issue positions of focal parties. Interestingly, the mean positions of mainstream parties in this model show a null relationship to predicting left-/right issue positions of focal parties, whereas they were positively predictive of left/right issue position in the previous model. Again, although these time-invariant variables are interesting in understanding the starting positions of parties, the dynamic relationship between voters and parties remain central to determining whether voter-party linkages remain intact.

The findings thus far indicate that parties do seem to be behaving in a manner consistent with cartel theory expectations if pure collusion is present – the location of focal parties on the on the economic dimension shows a dynamic relationship to mainstream rivals when they change their positions over time, but not to these changing opinions of voters. Precisely as suggested by the theory, parties appear to ignore the changing positions of voters, indicating that voter-party linkages may be undermined, while presenting an apparent relationship to rival mainstream parties in a manner indicative of inter-party collusion. Overall, the negative implications of the cartel party theory and the features of pure collusion appear present across across both data sources regarding

¹³ These variables have also been rescaled to match the 5 levels in the ESS survey question, merely for simple comparisons of magnitude.

the left/right issue dimension. The next section will examine whether the mere passage of time influences the proclivity to collude.

3.6.2 Evolution

Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) suggest that cartelization is a stage in the evolution of the party system, the step that logically follows after the conditions that made catch-all politics possible deteriorate. Implied by this logic is that the passage of time should increase the complexity of politics and thus the proclivity to collude. To test this possibility, the previous models are altered by interacting mainstream party change with a linear time variable. This allows us to determine whether time has influenced inter-party collusion in a manner suggested by the theory.

Model 3, presented in table 3.3, takes the same ISSP data and applies the time interaction. To make interpretation of this interaction a bit easier to understand, figure 3.1 shows that as time passes, mainstream party changes on the left/right dimension decrease in their influence on focal party behavior, though the negative relationship becomes statistically insignificant after 2001. This negative trajectory is contrary to the evolutionary predictions within the theory, suggesting that collusive behavior may be decreasing over time.

Conversely, the 4th model examines the ESS data using the same approach and finds that as time passes there is the expected increase in focal party response to mainstream party position changes, shown in figure 3.2. This model shows that from 2004, when the relationship becomes significant, mainstream party change alters focal party position 7.14 points, in response to a 1 unit shift. By 2016 though, this influence has increased by 5.18 points to 12.32. Contrary to model 3, this suggests that the cartel party theory may be correct in its evolutionary suggestion, but what can we make of these conflicting results?

The appeal of the ISSP data is that not only does it cover a more expansive time frame, compared to the ESS, but it also does not exclusively examine European democracies, rather the countries that participate this survey are quite diverse¹⁴. This is one possible explanation for the dis-

¹⁴ Complete country list provided in the Appendix table A.1.

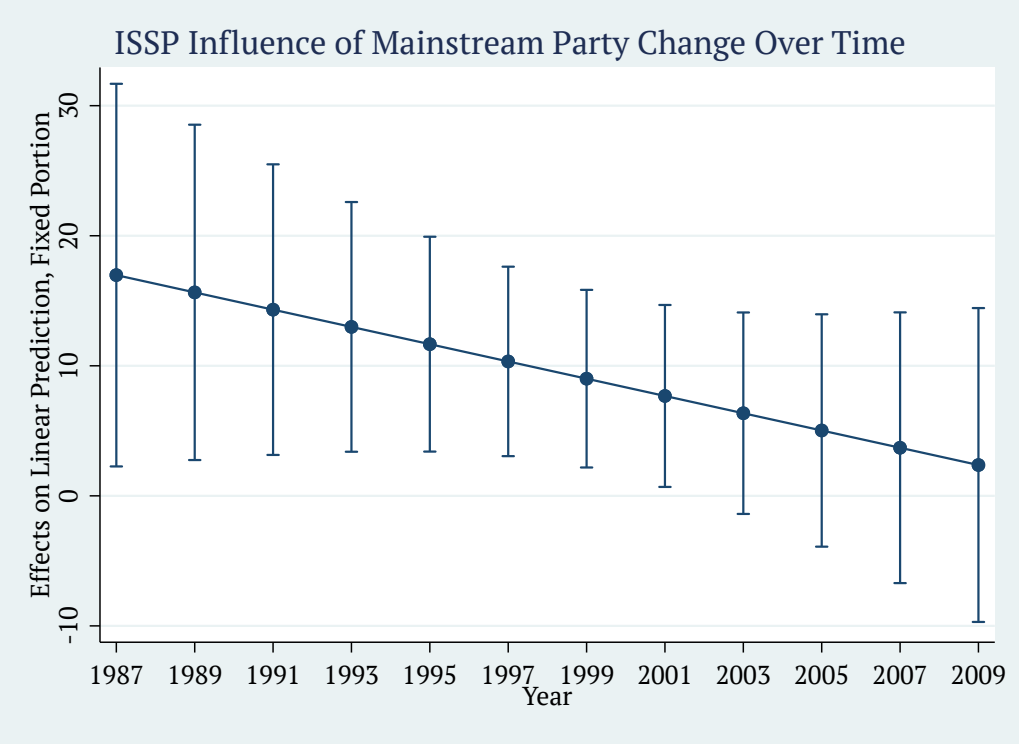


Figure 3.1: Model 3 Marginal Effects

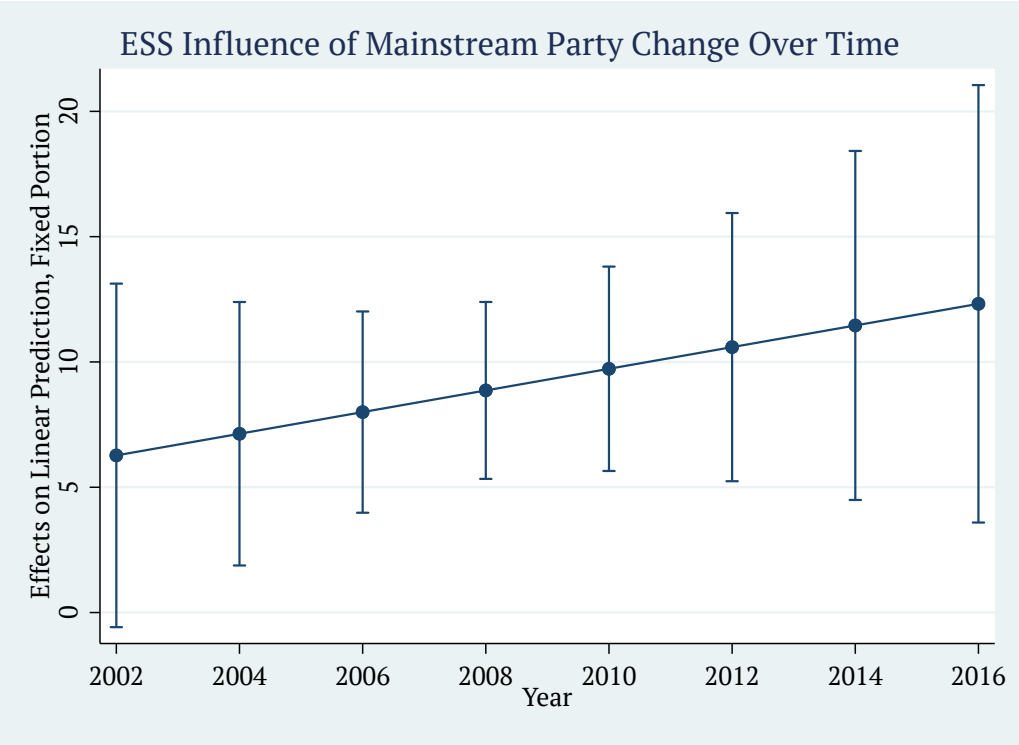


Figure 3.2: Model 4 Marginal Effects

Table 3.3: Party Policy Position Left/Right Dimension Influence of Time and Issue Spaces

	(Model 3) ISSP: Time	(Model 4) ESS: Time	(Model 5) ESS: Issue Space
Mean Mainstream Party	18.44*** (4.625)	10.95 (6.019)	0.333* (0.134)
Mean Partisan	19.47*** (3.235)	23.48*** (3.028)	0.399*** (0.0762)
Mean Median Voter	-14.52*** (4.126)	-20.32*** (5.791)	-0.369** (0.117)
Mainstream Party Change	1335.8 (1066.6)	-858.8 (1014.1)	0.407*** (0.0740)
Partisan Change	0.232 (2.362)	0.383 (1.386)	-0.0832 (0.0555)
Median Voter Change	1.749 (1.919)	-0.695 (1.934)	0.0597 (0.122)
Mainstream Party Change \times Year	-0.664 (0.533)	0.432 (0.505)	
Year	-0.148 (0.162)	-0.225 (0.139)	
Previous Position (Lag)			0.227*** (0.0479)
Constant	233.2 (327.9)	413.5 (281.1)	18.51* (8.055)
Country Constant	2.98e-13 (.)	31.76*** (31.45)	5.69e-10*** (2.72e-09)
Party Constant	60.06** (82.64)	162.9*** (53.43)	
Residuals: Exponential Constant	281.9*** (83.66)	187.8*** (46.12)	51.16*** (8.136)
Observations	356	874	420
<i>AIC</i>	2858.1	6705.0	2631.2
<i>BIC</i>	2904.6	6767.0	2675.6

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

crepancy in the findings. If you take the ISSP data and run the same model, but narrow the country selection to only Europe, to match the ESS, the results change. By removing countries such as South Korea, Turkey and Japan, the marginal effects of mainstream party position change over

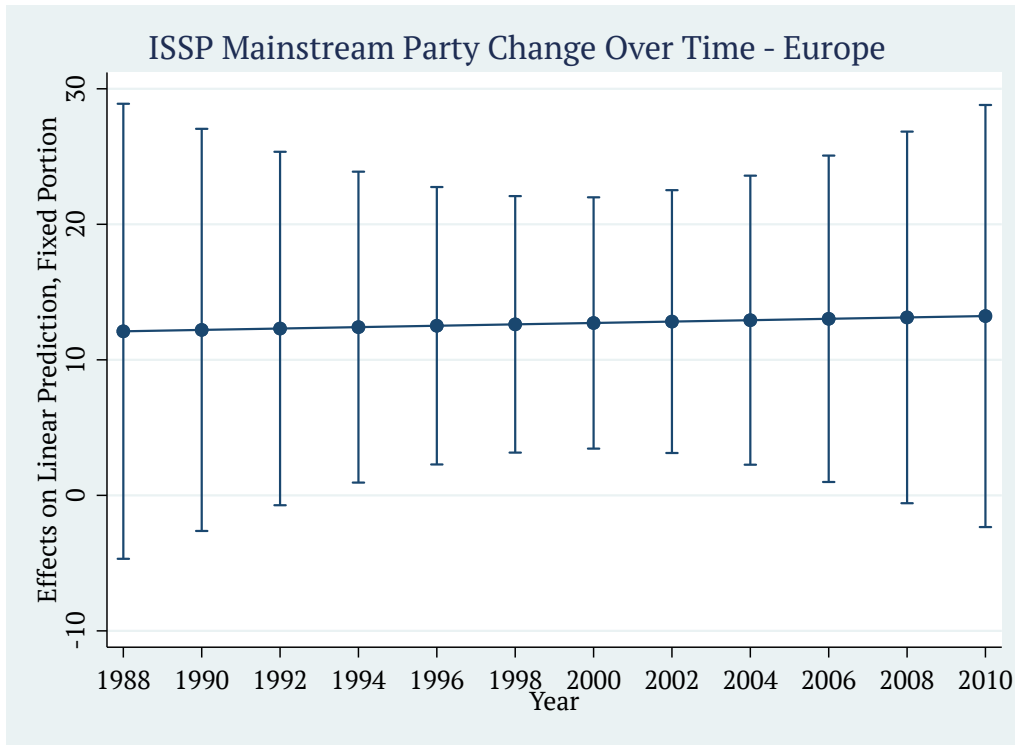


Figure 3.3: Model 3 Marginal Effects Europe

time becomes statistically significant from 1995, but falls out of significance after 2007 (again recall that the ISSP only goes to 2010). The influence is slightly increasing, as shown in figure 3.3. This suggests that the evolutionary basis of the theory may not be completely incorrect, rather the ISSP may be looking at countries at different stages in their evolution. A more precise way to explore the evolutionary component to this theory should be considered, rather than merely assuming that the passage of linear time will capture this concept. The conflicting findings, that are somewhat resolved by narrowing the case selection to Europe, which implies that the results may be dependent on where a country is on their specific democratic evolutionary path. Further research is required to confirm these possibilities, but these findings suggest that there might be more going on that is not captured by the current approach.

The following section will test the final hypothesis of this chapter concerning issue space manipulation and whether parties appear to be striving for issue space consistency or convergence regarding the economic dimension. The expectation is that because the left/right dimension should be durable and central to party foundations, coordination should be imperfect, leading to a marginally

increasing issue space size.

3.6.3 Issue Space

Finally, the cartel party theory suggests that advanced cartelization should lead parties to cooperate with their rivals to limit the issues presented to voters (Blyth and Katz 2005). At its highest levels, inter-party collusion should strive for coordination that promotes issue space stability or convergence on the topic. This means that the expectation is that parties participation in collusion should strive for 1 to 1 or greater than 1 responses to changing issue positions of mainstream parties. At the most advanced levels, parties should be particularly adept at coordinating the choice set presented to voters because these issue manipulations are the mechanism through which parties are able to force voter stability – if voters are unable to vote their preference on a topic, then they will be forced to use another issue or lesser criterion to make their voting judgements. In this line of logic, parties are able to break their representative responsiveness to voters because they are able to jointly work together to leave issues unresolved or unrepresented by the major parties. In order to force voter stability across elections parties must fail to respond to changing sentiments, while offering either the same choices as before (1 to 1 stability) or fewer options (greater than 1 issue space convergence). Both of these conditions would be representative of advanced levels of coordination and are not the expectation for the left/right issue dimension because, as discussed previously, the economic dimension should be durable and parties should find it difficult to collude on these topics. Therefore, parties are not expected to be very adept at colluding on these issues and we do not expect to see perfect stability nor issue space convergence, but rather imperfect coordination. Although the previous models found that parties are showing purely collusive tendencies, there should still be imperfect coordination on this dimension, particularly compared to the multidimensional issues that are explored in the following chapter. This leads to the final hypothesis and expectation that collusive parties should have a difficult time perfectly coordinating or converging on economic issues, but should be striving for this perfection as the system of cartelization advances.

Model 5 uses the ESS data to determine the degree to which parties respond to changes in mainstream parties after controlling for the previous positions of the focal party with the inclusion of a lag variable. As argued, the initial position of the focal party in relation to the mainstream party variable changes whether or not shifts in the issue positions of mainstream parties leads to issue space expansion or convergence. Therefore, these primary positions must be controlled for. Once these previous positions are included as a lag, the dependent variable becomes change in focal party position. Model 5 standardizes the dependent variable and all predictors to a 100 point scale, making the 1 to 1 comparisons more straightforward.

The question we are interested in answering using this model though is how inter-party collusion influences the issue space size when mainstream parties shift on the economic dimension and focal parties change their positions. This model shows, again that when it comes to changes on the economic dimension, focal parties change their positions in response to movements in the mainstream parties and not in connection to changing voter sentiments. When mainstream parties shift one point to the right, focal parties are predicted to change their position 0.41 points in response. This shows that parties are colluding – they fail to respond to voters, while shifting their positions in response to mainstream parties – however, their coordination to manipulate the issue space remains imperfect. Recall, that for perfect coordination to be present, parties must be responding to a 1 point shift with a 1 point shift, which is a difficult condition to achieve. Parties may be imperfectly coordinating, leading to an increase in the issue space, but because this issue space expansion is not connected to voters, rather is a function of parties failing to perfect their coordination, the expansion becomes meaningless for representation. Parties in this scenario are including more issues in the issue space, which could lead to voter instability, thus parties are expected to try to work toward stability or convergence as systems of cartelization mature¹⁵. This means that as parties become more adept at coordination they should move to a 1 to 1 or greater than one response to one another. In line with expectations, model 5 shows imperfect coordination on the

¹⁵ In running the same model and interacting time with mainstream party changes in the left/right dimension, it appear as though parties are perfecting coordination as time moves forward. Figure A.2 in the Appendix presents the marginal effects of time on the influence of mainstream party changes on these issues in focal party response. This model suggests that as time moves forward, focal parties perfecting their coordination on the issue.

economic issue dimension, while pure collusion remains strong when it comes to changes on these issues. Parties appear to be manipulating the choice set presented to voters, and although the issue space is expanding, this widening is meaningless because it is not connected to voters. Together this model is able to confirm that focal parties are failing to respond to voters when they change on the issues, while showing a responsive connection to rival mainstream parties, presenting evidence that pure collusion, yet their coordination remains somewhat imperfect.

The remainder of the findings are not all that dissimilar to previous models, even with the inclusion of the lag variable. Average locations of partisans influences changes in the positions of focal parties, though the average location of mainstream parties becomes predictive of focal party position change in this model. When a focal party has more right-leaning mainstream parties, focal parties are expected to change their position 0.33 points to be more right leaning and if partisans are more right leaning by one point, focal parties are expected to change 0.40 points to be more right-leaning. This means that when the previous positions of the party are controlled away, the mean positions of mainstream parties is now predictive of changes in the left/right issue positions of focal parties. Again, this model finds that when median voters are more right-leaning, focal parties are predicted to alter their positions from their previous stance to be more left-leaning by 0.37 points. This means that even when considering focal party change, focal party positions changes on the left/right dimension are positively related to mainstream parties and partisans and negatively related to median voters, again suggesting important connections between mainstream party positions and focal parties, though there remains a connection to partisan voters on this level.

Together this model is able to test what contributes to focal party changes on the economic dimension and whether this is related to the issues spaces that are presented to voters. We were interested in determining in this model how advanced issue space coordination has become between colluding parties and found that although the issue space was marginally expanding, this was unconnected to voters because parties were colluding, thus this expansion is meaningless and is rather a feature of imperfect coordination.

3.7 Conclusion

The left/right economic dimension is thought to form the basis for party competition in much of the democratic world (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Kitschelt 1994, Hellwig 2008, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2009). Although criticized for its simplicity, these issues remain centrally important to political competition across modern democracies (Albright 2010, Kitschelt 1994, Marks et al. 2006, Kriesi et al. 2006). Because the economic dimension is foundational to party competition, the preceding discussion argued that party positions on these issues should be durable in the face of pressures to collude among parties. It was suggested that parties would have a difficult time colluding on issue that were central to their party programmes, and thus it was expected that this would be the strongest test for the negative implications of the cartel party theory.

The findings suggest that the left/right economic dimension may not be completely resistant to collusion, showing that focal parties appear to be responding to mainstream party changes on this dimension, while ignoring voters. This proclivity appears to be increasing over time, if you consider ESS findings in model 4. Ultimately the issue spaces appear to be manipulated by these focal parties and even though the spaces that divide these organizations is expanding, there is no connection to voter preference changes, thus it is meaningless for representation.

This chapter began with the most basic level of exploration by inquiring: do parties respond to partisan or median voter's when they change positions on the economic dimension, or are focal parties connected to rival mainstream parties on left/right issues? The first two models suggest that the dynamic relationship often assumed between parties and voters is absent on the left/right dimension, showing focal parties ignoring voter preferences changes but responding to the changing issue positions of mainstream rival parties, presenting the conditions consistent with pure collusion. Though the stationary positions of partisans is positively related to focal party position, focal parties remain unresponsive to these voters when they change their positions on the issue dimension and thus ultimately fail to dynamically represent their interests as they evolve.

The deterministic nature of the cartel party theory implies that party system evolution will inevitably present the complex conditions that make representation too difficult for parties, resulting

in the adoption of cartelistic behaviors as a function of evolving incentive structures. The evolutionary underpinnings of this theory make time a central mechanism through which this type of change should present itself. Interacting time with changes of mainstream party position on the economic dimension, the ISSP data, with a more diverse set of countries shows that as time passes this behavior decreases, but the ESS, presents a marked increase in focal party response to mainstream party change over time. These conflicting results seem to be related to the cases that underpin the data sources, with the ESS examining more advanced democracies. When the ISSP model is narrowed to only the European cases, the findings show a high magnitude response to mainstream party change that is significant from 1994 to 2007, that is marginally increasing over time. These models show that the evolutionary component of the theory may be present, but clearly a more precise way to capture the evolution within the theory would be to explore how democratic age influences the maturity of cartelistic behaviors, suggesting that further research is necessary.

Finally, this chapter takes the cartel party implications to their furthest extent, arguing that in order to force voter stability, parties must manipulate the issues presented to them. This leads to the expectation that issue space manipulation should induce parties to strive for issue space stability or convergence. Because the left/right dimension should be stable, it was expected that parties should find it difficult to collude with their rivals on these issues, thus the issue spaces presented to voters were expected to not be perfected or converging, at least not yet. Using a lag to adjust for previous positions, it is clear that focal parties are behaving purely collusively on these issues, though their responses to mainstream rivals are yet to be perfected or converging.

Together these findings appear poor for democratic representation. The economic dimension should be the most durable in the face of pressures to cartelize and collude, often forming the central tenants of mainstream party programmes, thus parties should have the most to lose if these policy positions are deviated from. To this point, the evidence seems to show that parties have been increasingly responsive to mainstream parties to the detriment of both partisan and dealignment representation. Considering whether or not parties remain connected to voters when they change on the issues, it is clear that when change occurs in left/right positions, parties do not

seem to respond to voters, but appear to be colluding with mainstream rival parties. Though issue space coordination remains imperfect, these findings suggest that as democracies evolve even the economic dimension may be able to achieve perfect coordination or produce issue convergence, seriously undermining representation in advanced democracies. As has been alluded to previously, the following chapter will examine multidimensional issues, with the expectation being that these topics should induce even greater levels of collusion, compared to the left/right economic dimension.

Chapter 4

Multidimensionality

Consistent with the negative implications of the cartel party theory, the previous chapter indicates that parties may be working together to limit competition and manipulate the issues presented to voters, while failing to represent both partisan and median voters on economic issues. The previous chapter shows that parties seem to be participating in collusion, by simultaneously responding to policy changes of other parties, while ignoring voter preference changes. Though political competition is often simplified by conceptually limiting it to economic issues on the single left/right issue dimension, political competition, particularly recently, has become increasingly more complex, with the emergence of issues that do not map nicely on this single dimension (Albright 2010, Kitschelt 1994, Marks et. al 2006). The emergence of these new multidimensional issues indicates increasing complexity and has the potential for collusion, suggesting that the cartel party theory may have important predications about party behavior and inter-party collusion regarding these emerging issues.

There are three related questions that this chapter will address: If parties appear to be working together to fix political competition on the economic dimension, might there be conditions under which parties may be even more prone to collude? Do parties collude on these issues more over time, or are collusive behaviors decreasing or staying the same? And finally, are parties also more adept at coordinating to keep issue spaces consistent on multidimensional issues?

The cartel party theory argues that parties in evolving democracies will find their positions of power challenged over time, leading them to behaviors that undermine representation and promote inter-party collusion (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009, Blyth and Katz 2005). The factors that Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) suggest should lead to cartelization of party tactics imply

that issues that fall outside of the traditional left/right economic dimension of politics should be particularly challenging to political parties. Therefore, these difficulties should make dealing with these new multidimensional issues prone to collusive behaviors. The chapter that follows begins by exploring the literature on multidimensional issues, explaining their types and why these issues are generally unable to be subsumed by the single issue dimension. Following this, the logic undergirding the expectations that collusion should be greater on multidimensional issues will be detailed and the specific hypotheses reviewed. Followed by the methods and data, and finally the chapter concludes with a discussion of the the results and conclusions.

4.1 The Cartel Party Theory and Multidimensional Issues

The argument underlying the previous chapters, and more broadly in the cartel party theory, suggests that representation is broken in modern democracies. Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) argue that democratic competition and complicated political environments alter incentive structures for parties, allowing them to see their common interest of staying in power. Once parties realize they can work together to protect their positions, the authors suggest that parties will begin colluding, ultimately undermining voter-party linkages. Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) argue parties begin to collude in response to changing political environments and increasingly complicated systems that challenge political stability. The rise of new multidimensional issues, the emergence of niche parties in importance, and the rise of partisan dealignment, all suggest the changing environmental conditions that could dramatically complicate political competition, altering party incentives and behavior (Dalton 1984, Van Biezen, Mair and Poguntke 2012, Dalton and Weldon 2007, Dalton and Wattenburg 2000, Hellwig 2008, Tavits 2008). Though these are all possible contributing factors that may lead to changes in party behaviors, the emergence of new and novel issues to the political mainstream, could clearly make representation difficult suggesting a trigger for collusive behavior in parties.

New issues, particularly those that do not map nicely into the left/right issue dimension, suggest increased complexity that could complicate political competition for parties. When new issues

arise, parties are often pressured to take positions on these topics, though it may be unclear where their voters stand on the issue. Approximating voter opinions can be difficult, costly and time consuming, and there is nothing to assure the politician or party that voter coalitions will present a united view on the topic. This is precisely the logic that suggests multidimensional issues and ‘new politics’ should be places where parties will find the most risk and thus present the highest probability of inducing collusive behavior (Kitschelt 1994, Marks, Hooghe, and Nelson 2006, Wagner and Meyer 2016, Kriesi et al. 2006, Hellwig 2008). Because these issues, from their onset, are cross-cutting to traditional political dynamics, parties should be better at coordinating their responses to these issues and thus should present more stable issue space collusion, compared to issues on the economic dimension because they have more practice in behaving this way, if collusive coordination is present (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009).

4.1.1 Multidimensional Issues

The last chapter presents evidence that parties appear to behave collusively in response to the dynamic movements of other mainstream parties on the left/right economic continuum. Although it is common to treat political competition as being captured by ideological placement across this left/right divide, a growing body of literature argues that politics can no longer be exclusively understood as unidimensional, rather new issues have emerged that do not fall neatly on the economic left/right divide (Albright 2010, Kitschelt 1994, Marks et. al 2006). As was argued in the previous chapter, issues on the economic dimension should be somewhat settled, because these positions often form the basis of party creation, cleavage structure and party family (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Kitschelt 1994, Hellwig 2008, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2009). These should be durable positions because they are foundational to party ideology, often form the justifications for party existence, and have been found to be quite stable (Dalton and McAllister 2015). Conversely, multidimensional issues, by definition do not divide the electorate into two groups, rather they may undermine these traditionally stable voting coalitions, by pulling voters in different, multidimensional directions.

To illustrate this complication, an example is in order. Consider traditionally left-leaning voters who support greater government intervention in the economy. These voters would be fairly stable voting coalitions for a left-leaning party that champions worker's rights and government involvement in economic issues. Though this group of left-leaning voters may agree on economic issues more broadly, they may not uniformly agree on an issue such as immigration. Some of these voters may support increased levels of immigration, arguing that multiculturalism is a benefit for society. Conversely, others may feel the country has already allowed too many immigrants, and that allowing more may limit the government's ability to increase or maintain current social programs, undermining the ability for the system to intervene to equalize economic experiences. It would be much more simplistic for parties to find their voters if all issues were able to be divvied up between the left/right, allowing for new issues to fall neatly into their current dichotomous understanding, but as this example illustrates, taking a new position on immigration could alienate some voters for a party on the left, at the risk of satisfying others. If immigration is a primary concern to those alienated voters, they may vote switch, undermining the voter base that previously made their voting decisions based on their left-leaning positions on economic intervention in the economy. Clearly, issues that do not fit neatly into a left/right understanding of political competition, present clear risks to political parties. That being said, parties should be acutely aware of the threats of new multidimensional issues in undermining their voting coalitions, thus making collusion with other parties an attractive alternative to representation.

There are a variety of issues that could be considered multidimensionally challenging. This chapter will consider issues of equality, the environment, and EU integration. Though some have argued that a new intersecting political dimension has emerged, described by a divide between libertarian/authoritarian or gal/tan issues (Kitschelt 1994, Marks et al. 2006), other issues also exist that do not fall neatly into this distinction, such as EU integration. To begin, the following section will discuss multidimensionality and the theoretical approaches to conceptualizing the new political dimension. The paper will then turn to a discussion of how opinions on EU integration presents even further complications, all of which will outline the justifications for believing that these issues

should not only be more complicated but should induce greater collusion from parties. Following this, the mechanisms within the cartel party theory will be reviewed and their connections and expectations regarding multidimensional issues will be explored.

4.1.2 A New Political Dimension

To review, the standard conception of the single issue dimension divides individuals and parties across a left and right, most often understood as being split between government involvement in economic issues (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Kitschelt 1994, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). So central to the theory of political competition in modern democracies, positions on the economic dimension are thought to be foundational to party origins. More recently though, some have challenged whether this single dimension maintains relevance within current political environments, or whether politics has become more complicated (Albright 2010, Kitschelt 1994). Suggesting that political competition has become multidimensional, these authors have argued that politics has increased complexity and these developments present clear expectations using the cartel party theory.

The following section will explore the theoretical interpretations of the new political dimension proposed by Kitschelt (1994) and Marks et al. (2006). This theoretical approach from Kitschelt (1994) and refined by Marks et al. (2006) suggest that issues of immigration, culture, and the environment capture some of the complicating and important issues that characterize political competition in evolving democracies.

Kitschelt (1994), challenges the traditional single dimension interpretations of issue politics, describing the left/right dimension as being divided between the two primary axiological principles: equality and liberty, capturing the divide between capitalism and communism. He proposes that intersecting this division is a new dimension of contestation that is concerned with the principle of fraternity. The challenge between conceptions of fraternity is the the degree to which individuals are divided over communitarian principles of intervention in society, with those on the libertarian side of the argument being opposed to governmental intervention, and those on the

authoritarian side promoting greater government involvement in society. The central distinction between the new dimension and the economic dimension is how one views governmental involvement and whether that applies to economic issues or social issues, or both.

Social issues can clearly cover a wide variety of topics, though the research surrounding multidimensional issues generally agrees that the new dimension covers issues of the environment, immigration and nationalism, or traditional values (Marks et al. 2006). Some nations may be more concerned with issues of immigration, while others see greater divides on the role of cultural tradition. Marks et al. (2006) divide these issues into two categories, which they call gal/tan. Gal stands for green/alternative/libertarian issues, while tan refers to traditional/authority/nationalism issues. The authors find that in Western nations, there is often a correlation between gal issues and the economic left and tan issues and the economic right (Marks et al. 2006). Though in Central and Eastern Europe, the division is not as clear, indicating that the single left/right dimension is clearly not adequate to capture political competition in these cases. This gal/tan division nicely separates multidimensional issues into two categories, which can be more or less prevalent depending on the context.

Examining research on the new dimension, Wagner and Meyer (2016) explore both economic issues, as the traditional issue dimension, but also create a composite of “cultural concerns of immigration, law and order and social liberalism,” capturing the intersecting new issue dimension described by Kitschelt (Wagner and Meyer 2016, 3). Using this approach, the authors find that party systems in Western Europe have shifted toward authoritarian approaches on the issue dimensions and that niche parties have maintained their distinctiveness by becoming more extreme on multidimensional issues. Although the authors find that parties have actually increased their emphasis on economic issues, the systemic shifts to the right on multidimensional issues, suggests possible collusion, though the authors do not interpret it in this fashion.

To explain this assertion, the cartel party theory suggests that parties should work together to limit competition and the issues presented to voters, in order to force voter stability (Blyth and Katz 2005). Finding that parties are moving together to the right, suggests tht parties are working

together, because if they move together in the same direction they may not be responding to voters, rather they may be presenting a unified position as a reflection of their cooperation with one another. Therefore the issue space may not be reflective of voter preference, but rather collusion. Without testing the responsiveness of parties to voters, as compared to responsiveness to other party positions, this only remains a possibility. This chapter will consider these multidimensional issues, with the expectation that parties should be strongly drawn toward collusion on these topics and will disregard voter preference.

Though it is suggested that there is only a single new dimension, it is also possible that this is also too simplistic. Though some have created composite scores for cultural issues (Wagner and Meyer 2016), the following work will examine each issue independently. Though the purpose of these composite scores is to distill down the issues into a clear dimension, like the economic left/right, this assumes that there is only one new intersecting dimension dividing the economic dimension. And although the Kitschelt (1994) and Marks et al. (2006) theoretical distinctions are based off of a single additional dimension, whether that is divided between libertarian/authoritarian or gal/tan issues, it seems possibly misguided to assume simplicity of a single intersecting dimension, particularly coming from a literature that challenges the simplicity of the left/right. Ultimately, an aggregate could be created, but only after it is clear that these cultural issues do function on a single unified dimension. The following work will examine how parties change their issue positions on the multidimensional issues of equality and the environment, though there is one more complicating topic that should be examined – the EU.

4.1.3 European Union

Though not traditionally considered one of the issues of this new multidimensional issue dimension, because it does not fall neatly onto the libertarian/authoritarian or gal/tan interpretations of the new dimension (Marks et al. 2006), political opinion on the EU should also be considered. EU integration is a non-economic issue that has complicated politics and may undermine political approaches that only examine the left/right issue dimension.

The cartel party theory suggests that as politics increases complexity, parties should increase their cartelistic behaviors and collude with each other to protect their positions of power (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009). Though the new issue dimension suggested by both Kitschelt (1994) and Marks et al. (2006) captures the growing political tensions between cultural traditionalism, immigration and the environment, the EU does not factor into this new dimension, though it has arguably become quite salient in European politics. Increasing diversity in positions on EU integration have been emerging the West and Central and Eastern Europe across the gal/tan and left/right issue dimensions (Marks et. al 2006). This suggests that a new additional issue dimension may be further complicating politics in Europe, one that divides the already diverse opinions of the electorate across positions on EU integration. This alludes to not only increased complexity of politics in Europe specifically, but also presents a new arena for probable political collusion.

Growing EU skepticism, particularly since the financial crisis, has challenged political parties to reevaluate their positions on the institution (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2015). Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2015) find that mainstream parties adjust their positions on the EU minimally when faced with growing skepticism from the electorate, indicating that their behavior is not connected to voters, but is more concerned with maintaining consistent positions to protect their reputations.

An alternate interpretation of Rohrschneider and Whitefield's (2015) findings suggest that parties may not be concerned with maintaining their consistency to protect their reputations, but are maintaining their consistency, in the face of voter opinion changes on the issue, as a reflection of collusion. Consistent with cartel expectations, parties that are challenged by issues or changing positions of the electorate will ignore voter positions on the topics and move inline with each other. The works of Wagner and Meyer (2016) and Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2016) are not alone in finding increasing similarity in party policy positions over time (Adams and Somer-Topcu 2009, Camia and Caramani 2012), though none of these works test the cartel implications. This chapter endeavors to do just this: test whether or not parties appear to be increasingly collusive, while disregarding voter preferences, and whether this type of behavior is more prevalent on multidimensional issues. It is expected that this collusion should be high for the duration of the data, but

should somewhat stable, if not increasing on these complex issues. Furthermore, if focal parties show collusive behaviors, it is expected that we will also find that these parties are more adept at manipulating the issue space they ultimately present to voters. The following sections will outline the distinct expectations that this discussion suggests.

4.2 Hypotheses

In total, the changing conditions suggested by the cartel party theory should lead parties to break their responsiveness to voters, while simultaneously making focal parties more responsive to their mainstream counterparts. These two conditions form the basis of the primary negative implications of the cartel party theory, forming the foundation of the theory and ideal types presented in the more in-depth theoretical discussion in chapter 2. The previous discussion of cartel expectations and multidimensional issue spaces present the foundations for the following hypotheses that will be tested in the remainder of the chapter. Though there are a variety of issues that could be considered multidimensional, for the purposes of the following chapter the environment, equality, and EU integration, which are examined individually to avoid the assumption that politics is comprised of only two issue dimensions: a new political dimension and the left/right economic dimension. Keeping these issues distinct will allow for each to be considered because it is possible that these issues are not as unified as suggested by the theoretical interpretations presented by both Kitschelt (1994) and Marks et al. (2006). Each of these issues can be outside of the single dimension independently, and could possibly divide voter bases in different ways that should be considered before aggregation.

As table 4.1 shows, looking at individual respondents from the ESS surveys from 2002 - 2016, there are very low correlations between these issues and the economic dimension, indicating their multidimensional nature. Support for caring for the environment only shows a 0.09 correlation with left-leaning economic sentiments. While, supporting equality only correlates with a left-leaning economic opinions weakly (0.14). Finally, there is nearly a perfect 0 correlation (-0.01) between the economic dimension and opinions on EU integration. All of this shows that these

issues do perform as expected in their multidimensional nature. In other words, there is little relationship between left/right positions and respondent positions on these issues, showing the complicated nature of navigating these topics for parties. Ultimately, this preliminary examination of the issues shows that the complexity suggested by the theoretical discussion preceding this holds true – these issues do not match up with the left/right issue dimension and thus should induce inter-party collusion, as suggested by the cartel party theory.

Table 4.1: ESS Left/Right and Multidimensional Issues Correlations

	Left	Environment (+)	Equality (+)	EU Integration (+)
Left	1			
Environment (+)	0.0935	1		
Equality (+)	0.1429	0.3114	1	
EU Integration (+)	- 0.0105	0.309	0.569	1

As the previous chapter argues, the economic dimension is often thought of as the foundation of political competition, which implies that party positions should be durable, because moderating these positions could be costly, if these movements were not related to changing voter sentiments. New political issues, particularly those that have multidimensional characteristics, in their very nature, present political risks to parties. Because these issues do not correlate nicely with the left/right economic dimension, they will invariably alienate some voters, thus taking a position could run the risk of losing votes and ultimately some, if not all, of the party’s political power. To avoid these pitfalls, parties have two choices if they are colluding: they can ignore the issue or they can take the same position on the issue, so that voters, will not have a party for which they can vote their preference (Blyth and Katz 2005), thus structuring the choices that are ultimately available to the electorate (Leeper and Slothuus 2014). This should, as the theory goes, force voter stability, because voter defection on this issue will not be an option.

As the previous chapter shows, parties are showing the signs of collusion, by responding to changes in rival parties, and ignoring their voters on the economic dimension. The system cartelization has not yet matured to achieve issue space stability or convergence on the economic dimension, yet parties do appear to be coordinating their positions, albeit imperfectly. Together these

findings show that there is collusion on economic issues, but what remains unresolved is whether other issues confronting parties also show collusive tendencies. As the preceding discussion argues, multidimensional issues should be more difficult for parties to deal with, and thus should be even more tempting for collusive behavior. Following the logic that because these issues do not map well on the the foundational left/right issue dimension, then parties should be drawn toward collusion on these issues. These expectations form the basis for the first hypothesis:

H1 - Greater Collusion: Focal parties will be more collusive on issues of the environment, equality, and EU integration, because of their multidimensional characteristics, compared to issues on the left/right economic dimension.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) suggest that cartelization is a natural process in the evolution of democracies. This means that parties should eventually find themselves colluding as democracies mature. Considering multidimensional issues are new to the political mainstream, parties should show high levels of collusion on these topics, because presumably parties are not learning to collude on these issues, but rather have been likely colluding on these topics since they became politically salient. In other words, the expectation is that when we look at how the pass of time influences party responsiveness, we should see parties continuing to collude, rather than becoming collusive, and because they are predicted to already be collusive on these topics, we should see them only moderately increase these behaviors. This implies the second hypothesis:

H2 - Time: Because multidimensional issues are newer than economic issues, it is expected that focal parties should already be highly collusive on these topics, though their collusive behavior should increase over time.

Although party response to one another, while disregarding voter preferences meets the characteristic requirements for pure collusion to be present, there is also reason to believe that collusion should be more advanced regarding multidimensional issues. To briefly review, parties are expected to begin to work together because they each wish to stay in power (Katz and Mair 1995,

Katz and Mair 2009). This suggests that parties will be motivated to manipulate issue spaces presented to voters, because they are interested in forcing voter loyalty (Blyth and Katz 2005). There are two ways that parties might manipulate the issue spaces presented to voters in the hopes of increasing stability at the cost of representation – they can work toward issue space consistency or they can converge on the issue, taking increasingly similar stances on the topic. These strategies suggest that focal parties should have a 1 to 1 or greater than 1 response to policy position changes of mainstream parties, if they are manipulating the issue space. Focal parties may struggle to achieve these high levels of coordination though, leading to an intermediate position of imperfect coordination, where focal parties are responsive to mainstream parties in a collusive manner, but are unable to match their movements exactly or converge on the topic.

Within the outlined expectations, not only should multidimensional issues that fall outside of the political mainstream of the single left/right dimensions induce higher levels of collusion, they also should show more consistent issue space size or convergence on the issue as time passes. In other words, parties should also be better at coordinating their collusion with each other because presumably these issue should induce collusion from the point where they become salient enough to challenge current party positions, thus parties should have more practice colluding on these topics and should consequently have a closer to 1 to 1 response to changes or a greater than 1 response, signaling the convergence of the issue area. Thus, compared to the left/right dimension, where parties have theoretically become collusive, multidimensional issues should induce collusion from the beginning. This implies that parties are not learning to collude on these issues, as they are on the economic dimension, but rather they should be advanced in their ability to collude on these topics. These expectations suggest the third hypothesis:

H3 - Issue Space: Because multidimensional issues have been challenging and attractive reasons to collude since their emergence into political competition, focal parties should have more practice colluding and should have a closer to 1 response or greater than one response, compared to coordination on the left/right dimension.

Together the three hypotheses allow for the questions guiding this chapter to be explored. Al-

though the previous chapter shows apparent collusion on left/right economic issues, it is expected that collusion should be even more pronounced on issues that fall outside of the single economic dimension of political competition. Multidimensional issues challenge parties to take positions on new and novel topics that may undermine their voting coalitions, and ultimately their role in government. These issues pose the types of risks that Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) suggest lead rationally behaving parties to move toward cartelistic behavior. As the previous discussion has outlined, multidimensional issues should be even more tempting for parties to collude over, this behavior should increase over time and parties should show even higher levels of issue space coordination. The following section will detail the methods and data used to explore these issues, followed by the results of the models.

4.3 Data

To begin, two data sources are used to approximate voter and party policy positions over time: the European Social Survey (ESS) and the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP). The multidimensional issues that will be the focus of this chapter are: equality, the environment and EU integration. Although the last chapter examines an expanded time period using the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) to track voter positions on the left/right dimension over time, there are considerably less available data covering multidimensional issues, particularly from the ISSP. To examine voter positions on these issues, this chapter uses individual level survey data from the ESS, which covers 32 countries from 2002 - 2016¹². The previous chapter requires an extended time period to test the economic dimension, considering the presumed durability of these issue positions, but for multidimensional issues this is less of a concern. These issues are more recent in developments in political competition and thus the ESS time period is adequate for these topics. To examine party policy positions over time, I use the CMP data again.

Although it would be preferable to include the concept of immigration into this work, the

¹ Unfortunately, not all of these countries cover the whole time period though.

² Complete lists of countries are provided in Appendix tables A.3, A.4, A.5.

combination of ESS and CMP data for questions of immigration produce very small and erratic models (131 data points), and thus have been omitted. The CMP has only recently started to code immigration issues, and thus the countries that are available are limited.

To capture voter positions on the environment, the ESS survey asks respondents to what degree it was “like them” to support caring for the environment and nature. Respondents were able to place themselves on a scale from 1 to 6, with 1 indicating that this was “like me”, and 6 being “not like me³⁴.” Again, although this question does not directly ask to what degree the respondent supports the government intervention in a social issue such as the environment, this does approximate where a voter might stand on issues of the environment and how important that might be to them. And consequently, this should show whether partisan voters or median voters express increasing support for caring for the environment over time and whether parties are responding in a representative manner to these changes. To examine party policy position on this issue, the CMP scores manifestos on the percentage of these documents that mentioned environmental protection issues. In theory, a party that remains responsive to their voters should incorporate more references to protecting the environment in their manifestos if their voters are becoming increasingly more supportive of these issues, and conversely, if their voters change and parties ignore this change and respond to other parties with their manifesto positions, then this should be indicative of collusion.

To capture the issue of equality the ESS survey asks respondents whether it is “like me” or “not like me” to believe it is important for people to be treated equally. For party policy positions, CMP coders look for sentences that reference positive opinions about equality, such as support for ending discrimination or lowering class barriers. Again, although not perfect matches, the content is similar and presumably, if voters are expressing an increased personal importance of equality issues in their life, this should be reflected in party manifestos of representative parties.

The final multidimensional issue to be explored is EU integration. Though not traditionally considered on the spectrum of new political issues, there is reason to believe that this issue should have multidimensional characteristics and be difficult to navigate in a similar way to the environ-

³ Multiplied by -1 to reverse directionality to match CMP responses.

⁴ Exact question wording for all questions provided in Appendix.

ment and equality. To look at public opinion on this issue, the ESS asks respondents whether they feel as though EU integration has “gone too far” or “not far enough” with a continuum of responses provided. For the party perspective, the CMP data codes manifestos for positive and negative mentions of the European Union, which have been combined to create a score for the number of positive EU mentions minus the negative EU mentions. Together these survey questions and manifesto data gauge the issues that are centrally important to capturing party responsiveness on issues that fall outside of the traditional left/right economic dimension.

The data are organized by the party/year making the voter positions on the issues not at the individual level, but at the party level. Since our interest is to determine how parties change their policy positions over the years, the dependent variable becomes party policy position, and as in previous chapters will be referred to as the focal party. To examine whether parties respond to different voter groups, the ESS survey data is used to create issue positions for partisan and median voters by party/year. Parties may be interested in satisfying either of these voter groups if they are attempting to maximize vote shares or maintain their partisan voter base, and neither of these representative strategies should be considered deficient. As discussed in the theoretical chapter, differentiating between these voter groups allows for partisan and dealignment representation to be possible (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Therefore, all models examine the median voter changes in position from year to year in each country, while also looking how the party’s partisans have behaved. To examine the possibility of cartel behavior though, how parties within the system behave needs to be measured.

Again, consistent with the previous chapter, mainstream rival parties will be used to examine the possible presence of inter-party collusion. To determine mainstream vs. niche status, niche parties are considered: special issue, regional-ethnic, green and nationalist, because of their non-economic focuses (Wagner 2010). The CMP party family coding used to create a mainstream/niche dummy variable. To capture these changes in mainstream party positions relative to the focal party, just as in the previous chapter, an aggregate of all mainstream parties is created and averaged across the number of mainstream parties in the system, to standardize the systems against one another.

In other words, the issue positions of all of the mainstream parties in the system each year are combined and then divided by the number of mainstream parties in the system, giving us an average mainstream party issue position change by party/year. In order to avoid counting the focal party in both the mainstream party issue position change and dependent variable, the focal party issue position score is removed from the average if the focal party is coded as mainstream. Together these variables produce the necessary components to be able to answer whether the parties remain connected to voters or other mainstream parties over time.

4.4 Methods

This chapter will address three issues: whether parties are more collusive on multidimensional issues, whether this changes over time, and to what degree parties are able to perfectly coordinate their behavior to limit the issue spaces presented to their voters. The multidimensional issues of the environment, equality, and EU integration each have three models. The first model endeavors to answer the first question: do these issues produce higher levels of collusion, compared to the economic dimension? The second model for each issue tests the next question: does this behavior increase, decrease or is it stable over time? And the third model answers the question: are parties able to coordinate with greater precision to limit the issue areas presented to their voters on these multidimensional issues? Each of these models should test these questions, but their specifications will be discussed before results are presented.

Each of the three model types utilizes the same approach as in the previous chapter to deal with the dependencies in longitudinal data by parsing out the variance we are interested in order to answer how parties respond to changes in voter groups and other parties (Hoffman 2015). Each model therefore includes a mean score for the partisan, median voter and mainstream parties for each focal party. Using the mean scores for partisans, median voter and mainstream party scores, party/year change scores are created, by removing the party specific mean scores of each of these groups. This means that the variables created specifically target what we are interested in testing – do parties respond to changes in voter positions on the issues or rival parties?

As has been discussed in greater detail in the preceding chapters, the size of the issue space that divides the focal party and their rival mainstream parties is directly related to the starting position of the focal party in relation to the other mainstream parties. In other words, if mainstream parties move to the right on an issue, and the focal party responds by moving with that party to the right, unless the movement is exactly 1:1, then we must control for relative location of the focal party to the mainstream party in order to be able to determine whether the resultant issue space is expanding or contracting. Using the same example from the last chapter, if mainstream parties move one point to the right, and the focal party moves 0.5 points to the right, then the resultant issue space depends on the primary location of the focal party. If the party is to the left of the mainstream parties, then the mainstream party will be moving a whole point away from the focal party, with the focal party only able to cover 0.5 of the shift, meaning that the distance between them would be increasing. Conversely, if the focal party is to the right of the mainstream party and the mainstream party moves one point to the right, and the focal party only moves 0.5 in response, then the distance between them is decreasing by 0.5, and thus contracting. The theoretical discussion details the expectation that parties will attempt to perfect their coordination and attempt to mimic changes exactly, with 1:1 response, or they will attempt to converge on the issue space. In order to adjust the models to equalize starting points, a lag has been included in the issue space models⁵. This makes the starting points zero, and only gauges how parties respond to mainstream and voters across the issues. Although including a lag removes much of the interesting variance in the indicators and diminishes the observations, it is able to achieve the centering that is required to answer this question, converting the dependent variable into a focal party change measure. This means that the variable becomes how the focal party *changes* their position in relationship to changes in the voter groups and mainstream parties away from their mean positions.

The data are longitudinal and nested, as mentioned before, meaning that the first level of the data is the year, making the party the second, which is nested in the third level, the country. This means that there are distinct levels in the data that should be considered. To account for this

⁵ The lag is two years because the ESS data is collected every two years.

hierarchical nature of the data, multilevel models are used, allowing for the intercepts for party and country to vary randomly with unstructured covariances.

The models in this chapter continue to use multilevel linear models for the issues of equality and EU integration, though the question that examines the environment uses a tobit linear model (Long 1997, Twisk and Rijmen 2009) . The dependent variable for the environment, equality and EU questions use the CMP data, which gives percentages of manifestos that reference these topics. Because this makes the dependent variable in these models a proportion, the values possible are strictly bounded between 0 and 100. Though in the previous chapter the dependent variable for the left/right economic dimension was also technically bounded in a similar manner, but treated as continuous because the data cluster around the center of the the distribution in a manner that makes impossible values less likely to be estimated. By treating bounded variables as continuous, models are able to utilize the more conservative restricted maximum likelihood estimation, and residuals are able to be structured in a manner consistent with model fit and data structure. For these reasons, the models for the EU and equality have also been treated as continuous, though technically speaking they are not⁶. The tobit estimation is used for the environmental question because this maximizes model fit, considering the bounded nature of the variable. Though tobit models were tested on the right/left, EU and equality issues, they produced poor model fits, compared to the straightforward linear approach, therefore the environmental question implements this technique, and the other models do not.

Each issue presents three different models to answer the primary questions for this chapter: Do multidimensional issues create greater collusive responses? Does this change over time? And how does this behavior influence the size of the issue space presented to the electorate? Together the following models will answer these questions in relation to the findings presented in the previous chapter.

⁶The EU question is a combination of the negative and positive comments in the manifesto, which in pure form create a -100 to 100 scale, but have been recalled to capture the percentage of positive comments about the EU minus the negative remarks. The question on equality is from 0 to 100. Though tobit analysis was conducted on these models as well, model fit was maximized using the linear mixed model with exponential residuals and restricted maximum likelihood estimation.

4.5 Results

The results will be discussed by issue, and within each of these sections the three models to test the three central questions will be presented. Each issue will first examine the degree to which parties appear to be colluding with one another, comparing these results to the previous findings in the third chapter. The second model for each issue will explore the influence of time, with the expectation being that these issues should show high levels of collusion for the duration of the data that should be either stable or somewhat increasing. Finally, for each issue the question of issue space manipulation will be explored.

4.5.1 The Environment

The first three models presented in table 4.2 consider each of the central questions regarding party behavior on the issue of the environment. The first model shows that when it comes to changes in policy positions on the environment, parties respond to the changing positions of mainstream parties, with no relationship to median or partisan voters. The dependent variable and mainstream party variables have not been rescaled and remain from 0 to 100%, representing how often the environment is mentioned in party manifestos over the years, to simplify the interpretation, voter preference positions have been rescaled to the same 100 point scale. This means that the coefficient estimates presented suggest that as partisan or median voters move one point toward viewing the environment as more important in their lives (out of 100), focal parties are predicted to show no response. Whereas when the mainstream parties increase their emphasis on environmental issues in their manifesto by one point, focal parties are predicted to respond by increasing their manifesto emphasis by 1.25 percentage points. Comparing this to the ESS model of party response in previous chapter, this response is over 6 times higher (6.17 times), meaning that when mainstream parties shift on the environment one point the focal party response is 6 times as high as their response on economic issues. Consistent with the expectations, focal parties are showing purely collusive tendencies on the issue of the environment, and these behaviors are much higher than on

the economic dimension.

Table 4.2: Party Policy Position Environment

	(Model 1) ESS: Response	(Model 2) ESS: Time	(Model 3) ESS: Issue Space
Mean Mainstream Party	1.415*** (0.352)	1.409*** (0.352)	1.274*** (0.357)
Mean Partisan	0.595*** (0.0941)	0.600*** (0.0945)	0.454*** (0.128)
Mean Median Voter	-0.243 (0.139)	-0.238 (0.139)	-0.516 (0.378)
Mainstream Party Change	1.249*** (0.141)	-105.2 (100.5)	1.586*** (0.205)
Partisan Voter Change	0.0374 (0.0313)	0.0359 (0.0312)	0.00943 (0.0460)
Median Voter Change	-0.0630 (0.0626)	-0.0609 (0.0624)	0.0505 (0.102)
Mainstream Party Change \times Year		0.0531 (0.0501)	
Year		-0.0479 (0.0310)	
Previous Position (Lag)			0.330*** (0.0865)
Constant	-57.00** (19.12)	39.82 (65.40)	-64.83** (21.58)
Country Constant	1.674 (1.863)	1.719 (1.886)	0.0245 (1.012)
Party Constant	28.55*** (3.290)	28.61*** (3.297)	14.49*** (4.171)
Residual: Exponential Constant	7.950*** (0.465)	7.894*** (0.462)	7.512*** (0.929)
Observations	861	861	420
<i>AIC</i>	4626.0	4626.0	2271.6
<i>BIC</i>	4673.6	4683.1	2316.0

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

The mean positions also show that party position is connected to partisans, but more so to mainstream parties. This means that if the average mainstream party is one point more supportive of the

environment, then focal parties are predicted to be more supportive with by 1.42 points. Compared to the positions of partisans on these issues, focal parties are only predicted to be 0.60 points more supportive of environmental issues when partisans are a full point more supportive. This means that the general location of mainstream parties hold a greater predictive influence on focal party positions on this issue, compared to the average position of partisans. This means that the stationary positions of mainstream parties are much more predictive of focal party positions than partisans, unlike the models presented in the previous chapter. This is consistent with the expectation that multidimensional issues should induce collusion when they become salient, rather than eventually becoming collusive topics, such as the economic dimension. The mean positions of mainstream parties being highly predictive of party locations signals that focal parties have considered their rivals in locating themselves on this issue on both dynamic and stationary levels. The overarching takeaway from this model though is that when it comes to dynamic representative connections, when mainstream parties change on the issue of the environment, focal parties respond, while ignoring voters on this issue, signaling purely collusive behaviors on this topic. This response is over 6 times as high as the focal party response on the left/right dimension, showing higher levels of collusion on this multidimensional issue.

The second model in table 4.2 tests the influence of time on how responsive parties are to changes in policy positions of the mainstream parties. By interacting time with this variable we are able to gauge whether there has been increase, decrease or if this behavior has stayed somewhat the same from 2002 - 2016. The model findings are nearly identical regarding mean partisan and mean mainstream party influence, as compared to the previous model, but the interaction is best described by examining the marginal effects of time on this variable and how that translates in to party behavior, which is presented in figure 4.1. This shows that as time has passed there has been an increase in focal party response to mainstream parties' change in position on the environment. In 2002 focal parties are predicted to respond to a shift in the mainstream parties' positions one unit, with a 1.03 shift in the same direction, whereas in 2016 the same shift in the mainstream parties is predicted to induce a 1.77 point shift in the focal party. These findings suggest that mainstream

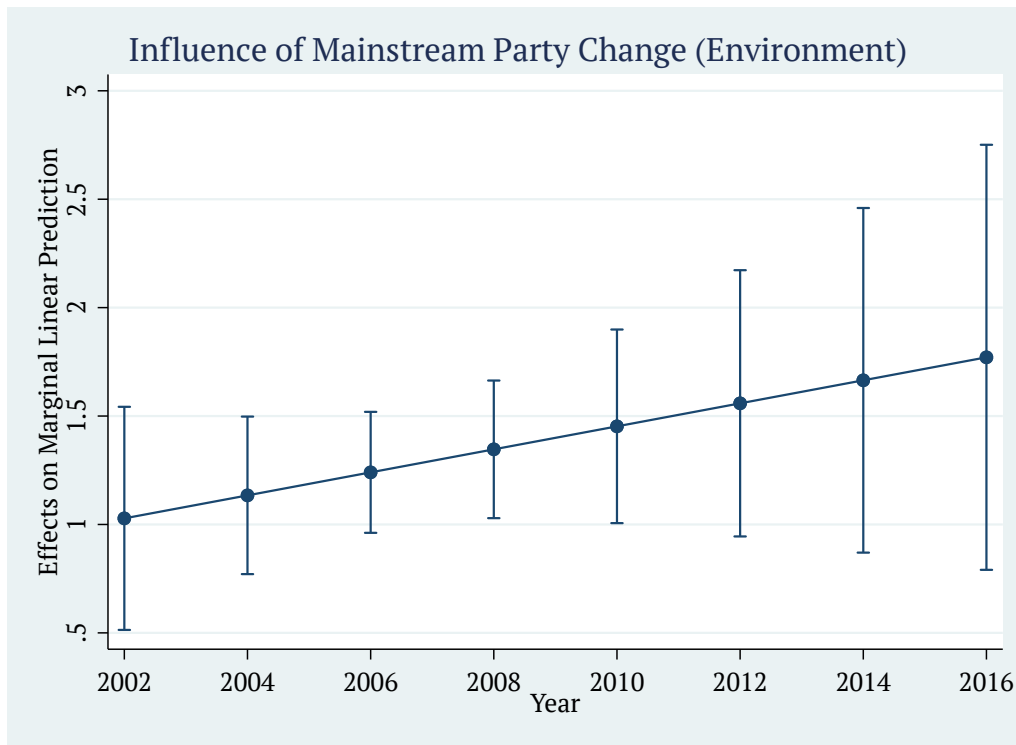


Figure 4.1: Model 2 Marginal Effects

parties have induced highly collusive responses from focal parties from the very beginning of these surveys, and their responsiveness has significantly increased over time. Again consistent with expectations, the mere passage of time has increase focal party responsiveness to mainstream party changes, though these collusive responses have been high since the beginning of the surveys.

The third model in table 4.2 shows what happens to the issue space on environmental issues when the party’s previous positions are considered using a two year lag. The inclusion of this lag changes the meaning of the dependent variable to now capture focal party change in position from their previous stance that has now been controlled for with the lag. In order to be able to easily assess whether parties are able to achieve a 1 to 1 perfect coordination, the independent variables remain rescaled to match the dependent variable.

Model 3 shows that when partisan and median voters increase the importance of the environment in their lives, focal parties are not predicted to respond. This null relationship shows that when voters move on these issues, parties do not try to accommodate these shifts. Conversely,

when mainstream parties become more supportive of environmental issues by one point, the focal party is predicted to change their position 1.59 points in response. This means, after accounting for the previous positions of the focal party in relation to the mainstream parties, that the issue space is decreasing because the parties are becoming increasingly close together, thus even fewer options are being presented to voters. This clearly shows that issue spaces are converging on this topic, which falls inline with the previously discussed expectations that parties should either move in tandem or toward each other to maintain or diminish the issue space size. Although parties may find that voter coalitions are more stable if the issue space is the exact same size across election, voter stability can also be forced if parties present a narrowing range of positions on the topic.

The mean positions of the mainstream parties and focal parties, even with the lag, continues to predict the location of the focal party, though focal party changes in position are nearly 3 times more connected to the mean mainstream parties than their partisan voters (2.83). In other words, when the mainstream parties are more supportive of the environment on average, this should induce the focal party change their positions to be more supportive of this issue, but if partisans are more supportive, this should have a marginal influence on changes in the focal party's position. Although this is convoluted sounding, this means that focal parties are more responsive in changing their positions in relation to the stationary and dynamic positions of mainstream parties, rather than either voter group. Again, this measure shows that the issue space is narrow both when it comes to change and average location of parties.

In total the first three models examining party responsiveness on the environment show that focal parties only respond to changes in policy positions of rival parties, indicative of pure collusion. Although the mean positions of partisans impact focal party positions, it is considerably less influential compared to the mean mainstream party position. As time has passed, parties have also shown greater collusion on environmental issues and an increasingly narrow issue space presented to voters. In the end, all of this shows that pure collusion seems to be present, with parties showing greater collusion on this issue, compared to the economic dimension, with increasing magnitude over time, and a diminishing issue space presented to voters.

4.5.2 Equality

The second issue that is considered looks at how parties have responded to voters and mainstream parties on the multidimensional issue of equality of opportunity. Table 4.3 presents the findings for these three models.

Model 4 examines the degree to which parties respond to changing policy positions of voters and mainstream parties and shows that when partisans and median voters change their positions to become more supportive of the importance of equality, focal parties are not predicted to respond, yet when mainstream rivals change their positions, focal parties adapt to these changes. This means that the dynamic relationship between parties and voters on the issue of equality appears undermined. When mainstream parties change their positions one point on these issues, focal parties are predicted to respond with a 0.81 point shift. Compared to the left/right dimension models, this is over 3.5 times the response magnitude (3.52 times). For representation to be strong, parties are expected to dynamically respond to voters as they evolve on the issues. This model again confirms that when voters change, focal parties are failing to respond, yet when mainstream rivals shift their positions on this issue, focal parties show a dynamic response, consistent with purely collusive expectations.

The mean positions of partisan voters are again predictive of focal party position, but similarly to the environment, the mean mainstream position is much more influential in predicting the focal party position (over twice the influence). This means that although the mean position of the partisan voter influences the position of the party, this is comparatively less influential, yet again, than changes in mainstream parties' positions and the mean position of the mainstream parties. The mean median voter, similar to the economic dimension models, presents a negative relationship to focal party position on this issue, again signaling that focal parties tend to avoid strictly moderate positions on this topic. Again, these stationary positions confirm that connections between rival parties is much more influential in determining focal party positions on issues of the environment and equality, rather than voter preferences. This confirms the expectations that these multidimensional issues produce higher levels of collusion and show that there are weak connections between

Table 4.3: Party Policy Position Equality

	(Model 4) ESS: Response	(Model 5) ESS: Time	(Model 6) ESS: Issue Space
Mean Mainstream Party	1.019*** (0.206)	0.943*** (0.210)	-2.783*** (0.574)
Mean Partisan	0.441*** (0.0529)	0.444*** (0.0527)	0.349*** (0.0604)
Mean Median Voter	-0.373** (0.114)	-0.384*** (0.115)	-0.149 (0.351)
Mainstream Party Change	0.806*** (0.114)	36.74 (55.85)	0.900*** (0.145)
Partisan Change	0.0241 (0.0219)	0.0190 (0.0220)	0.0103 (0.0372)
Median Voter Change	0.0172 (0.0264)	0.0189 (0.0265)	0.0144 (0.0321)
Mainstream Party Change \times Year		-0.0179 (0.0278)	
Year		0.234 (0.250)	
Previous Position (Lag)			-0.0149 (0.0437)
Constant	-52.78*** (11.67)	-517.6 (501.8)	151.4*** (32.95)
Country Constant	1.320 (0.928)	1.464 (1.000)	44.39*** (20.50)
Party Constant	0.000000108*** (0.000000314)	0.00000221*** (0.00000632)	6.44e-15 (.)
Residual: Exponential Constant	17.30*** (1.549)	17.08*** (1.483)	8.210*** (0.910)
Observations	861	861	420
<i>AIC</i>	4294.1	4304.0	2033.0
<i>BIC</i>	4346.4	4365.9	2077.5

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

focal party positions and voter preferences.

Model 5 considers the influence of time on how parties respond to changing issue positions on equality and shows that parties have presented fairly stable levels of collusion over time, though

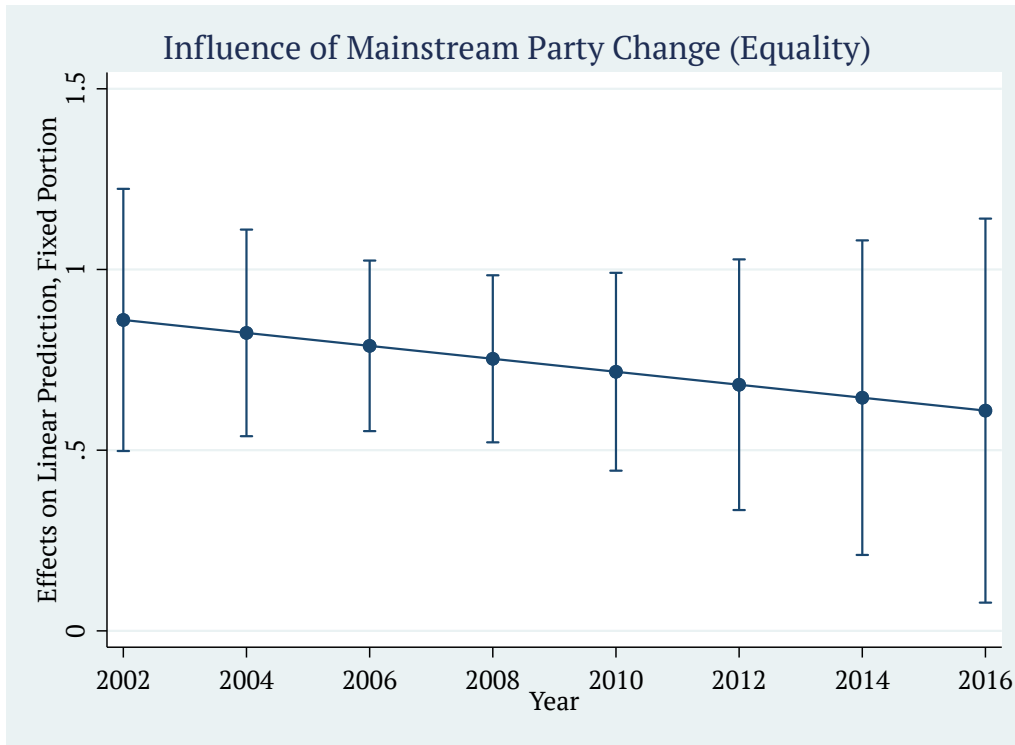


Figure 4.2: Model 5 Marginal Effects

decreasing slightly, presented visually in the marginal effects plot in figure 4.2. In 2002 parties are expected to respond to a one point shift in mainstream parties by shifting 0.86 points. In 2016 they are expected to shift 0.61 points. Though this is somewhat of a decrease over time, it is fairly marginal, with parties still showing a high level of collusion over time. As was expected, there is a high level of collusive responses presented by focal parties on this issue, presumably because it is multidimensional. It fits within the discussed expectations that this level of collusion should be somewhat stable, since this issue has induced highly collusive responses for the entirety of the surveys.

Model 6 adjusts the first model to control for the previous position of the party to evaluate whether the issue space is increasing or decreasing when parties exhibit collusive responses. This model shows that focal parties appear to be quite adept at maintaining a similar issue space, which speaks to the reason why over time we see a fairly stable level of responsiveness in model 5. When mainstream parties move one point toward supporting more equality, focal parties are expected to

move 0.90 points in the same direction. This is close a perfect 1 to 1 response, but because it is not, there is a marginal increase in the issue space size. As the previous model shows, parties are responsive to one another in similar ways as time passes. The issue space model helps to explain this consistency, since it shows that parties are approaching 1:1 responses, thus ensuring issue space stability, therefore there is little reason to increase collusive responses.

Together these findings show similar trends in party behaviors on the issue of equality compared to the environment. There is considerably higher levels of collusion on the issue of equality and the environment, compared to the economic dimension, and parties are much closer to perfect coordination on the issue of equality and converging on the issue of the environment. Time shows a somewhat stable level of responsiveness on the issue of equality, which is explained by the high level of coordination, which is able to maintain a fairly stable issue space size, thus removing any reason to increase inter-party responsiveness.

4.5.3 EU Integration

The final issue to consider is EU integration, which has become considerably more salient since the financial crisis, undermining traditional cleavage structures and further complicating political competition. The last three models examine how parties behave regarding EU integration and are presented in table 4.4.

Model 7 shows how parties respond to issue position changes of voters and mainstream parties, again while controlling for the mean positions of these groups to target the issue position change that we are interested in examining. Model 7 shows that when mainstream parties change their position one point, focal parties are predicted to respond to this change by moving 0.57 points. This is a nearly 2.5 times greater of a response compared to the economic dimension (2.48 times). Unlike the other models presented, parties do seem to be responding to partisan voters, but minimally in comparison to responsiveness to mainstream rivals. When partisan voters shift one point, the focal party response is predicted to be 0.04 points. This means that, unlike all of the other issues considered in this and the previous chapter, parties do seem to be connected slightly to voter

Table 4.4: Party Policy Position EU Integration

	(Model 7) ESS: Response	(Model 8) ESS: Time	(Model 9) ESS: Issue Space
Mean Mainstream Party	0.671*** (0.198)	0.694*** (0.199)	0.457 (0.237)
Mean Partisan	0.202*** (0.0216)	0.203*** (0.0216)	0.159*** (0.0286)
Mean Median Voter	-0.177*** (0.0362)	-0.178*** (0.0363)	-0.136* (0.0541)
Mainstream Party Change	0.576*** (0.175)	-56.13 (123.3)	0.565* (0.282)
Partisan Change	0.0384* (0.0192)	0.0378* (0.0192)	0.0212 (0.0381)
Median Voter Change	0.0124 (0.0357)	0.00392 (0.0365)	0.0619 (0.0629)
Mainstream Party Change × Year		0.0282 (0.0614)	
Year		-0.0349 (0.0347)	
Previous Postion (Lag)			0.482*** (0.0683)
Constant	-34.40*** (10.16)	34.63 (69.40)	-23.85 (12.29)
Country Constant	9.55e-09 (0.00000792)	3.73e-08* (0.000000296)	0.178 (0.313)
Party Constant	2.170 (1.000)	2.128 (1.017)	9.82e-17*** (3.38e-16)
Residual: Exponential Constant	5.905*** (1.001)	5.966*** (1.036)	7.494*** (0.653)
Observations	584	584	307
AIC	2764.6	2775.9	1535.0
BIC	2812.7	2832.7	1579.7

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

position changes and although representation is weak on this issue, it is not absent, as in the other models.

Additionally, all of the mean positions contribute to the position of the focal party, though the

relative position of the mainstream parties has the greatest influence. If the mean mainstream parties in the system are one point less supportive of EU integration, the focal party is predicted to be 0.68 points less supportive as well. Comparatively, the mean partisan being less supportive of EU integration only shifts the focal party 0.20 points. Mean median voters are also predictive of party position, though the influence is again negative. So, if median voters are less supportive of EU integration, then the focal party is predicted to be more slightly more supportive of integration by 0.18 points. In total, although focal parties do respond to changes of mean positions of partisans, this response is considerably lower than their connections to the stationary and dynamic positions of mainstream parties. The EU presents the first case thus far that supports only partial collusion/representation, with some hints that representation may not remain intact, even if the magnitude of influence is low.

Model 8 examines how time changes party behaviors, with the expectation that collusive tendencies should increase over time, or be stable and high for the duration of the data. As figure 4.3 shows, the response to changes in mainstream party positions only becomes statistically significant in 2006, where a one point shift induces a 0.49 movement in the focal party. By 2012 though, this response has increased to 0.67. Crucially, the results past 2014 are inconclusive though, showing the trend upward, but are indistinguishable from zero. There are a few possible reasons for this. First, there are fewer data points from the ESS survey in 2014 and 2016, allowing for fewer parties to be examined, which could be making these results unreliable. Alternatively, the EU has become a much more salient issue since the financial crisis in 2008, meaning that parties may be becoming more responsive to their partisans, as the significant partisan response is found this model and model 7. At this time, it is unclear what might be driving these changes, but this model shows that there is evidence for inter-party coordination from 2006 to 2012, though possible representation in more recent years. Further exploration into this issue is required to determine whether this presents an opening for continued representation.

Finally, model 9 examines how focal party behavior changes the issue spaces presented to voters, using a lag to equalize focal party starting points. Similar to model 7, when mainstream

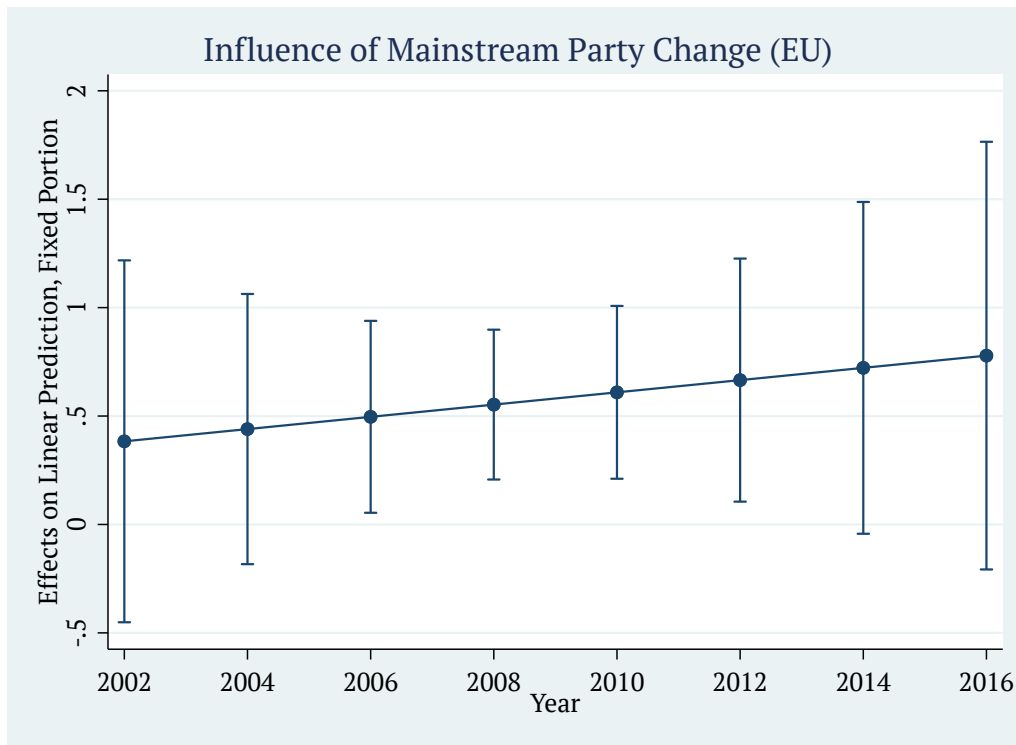


Figure 4.3: Model 8 Marginal Effects

parties change their positions on EU integration one point, the focal party is predicted to respond to these changes by changing their position 0.57 points in the same direction. This would lead to a marginal increase in the size of the issue space that is presented to the electorate, but remains a higher level of coordination than the left/right dimension in the previous chapter.

All in all, the issue of EU integration presents the first case for partial collusion/representation, with parties responding to changes in partisan voter positions, rather than ignoring voters completely. These findings should be interpreted with some caution though because focal parties still respond to changes in mainstream parties with over 14 times the magnitude, compared to changes in partisan voter positions. Additionally, the mean positions of mainstream parties are still 3 times more predictive of focal party position on EU integration, compared to the mean influence of partisans. Though the model examining time finds inconclusive results for whether parties are responding to changes in mainstream parties from 2014 forward, it may be too early yet to interpret these inconsistencies as evidence of growing representation on this single issue. The

EU integration question does show greater responsiveness to mainstream parties compared to the economic dimension, confirming the first hypothesis. Regarding the expectation that time should increase collusive behavior, it is unclear what is happening in more recent years on this issue. And finally, the issue space shows higher levels of issue space coordination, compared to the economic left/right.

4.6 Conclusion

Together these findings are fairly consistent with the expectations guiding the chapter. Issues of the environment and equality show purely collusive tendencies, with parties failing to respond to voters and moving with their mainstream counterparts. Though the response is minimal, the issue of EU integration shows a small level of partisan responsiveness to changes in these voter's preferences. Overall, the findings are alarming for representation and suggest that cartel expectations may be present as suggested by Katz and Mair (1995, 2009).

This chapter's findings show that focal parties respond with a greater magnitude to changes in mainstream parties on multidimensional issues, compared to the economic dimension. This is consistent with the assumption that these issues have been highly attractive to parties to collude over since they entered the political mainstream. The models testing this suggestion also provide evidence that these have been highly collusive topics for quite some time. The environment shows an increased prevalence of parties to collude on this issue from 2002 to 2016, while the issue of equality has produced a stable high level of collusion, yet the findings for the issue of EU integration show a trend in increased collusive responses, though the findings were inconclusive for more recent years.

Issue spaces were expanding in all cases except for the environment, which shows issue space convergence because of the very high levels of inter-party coordination on this topic. The issue space is only marginally increasing on the issue of equality, with 1 : 0.9 level of coordination. Finally, the issue space is marginally expanding on the issue of EU integration, but there remain questions about whether parties may be becoming representative on these issues more recently, or

whether the insignificant findings for more recent collusion (from 2014 - 2016) are just a reflection of limited data.

In the end, there is evidence that parties have become unresponsive to voters and appear to be working together to manipulate the issue spaces presented to voters, particularly on issues of the environment and equality. If parties are colluding with one another to protect their positions of power, then representation has been clearly undermined. The implications of the cartel party theory suggest that parties should fail to represent voters and work together to fix the policies presented to their constituencies (Blyth and Katz 2005). The evidence provided suggests that parties may be doing just this, with evidence for pure collusion being found across the left/right economic dimension, the environment, and issues of equality. Though partial collusion/representation was found for EU integration, the degree to which parties are still connected to changing partisan sentiment is minimal in comparison to the relationship they share with mainstream parties on the issue. Together these findings are alarming for representation, yet fit within the implications of the cartel party theory. Although multidimensional issues and the left/right economic dimension seem to have relatively high levels of coordination and collusion present, it is possible that party type may change collusive behavior, which will be the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Niche Parties

To this point, the preceding chapters have shown that parties appear to be colluding with one another and restricting the issue spaces presented to voters on a variety of issues. Party behaviors, thus far, have met the characteristic requirements for collusion to be present, as argued in the theoretical chapter – not only do they appear responsive to other mainstream parties, but they are also ignoring voter preferences on the economic dimension and multidimensional issues. Furthermore, the state of cartelization appears quite progressed, as focal party behavior also suggests that the issue spaces presented to voters are being manipulated. Together, these findings show that parties are not only failing to respond to voter sentiments, while coordinating with other parties, but the issues that are ultimately allowed into the political mainstream have been manipulated by party behavior in a manner that further undermines representation.

Thus, the prognosis seems grim, voter-party linkages appear broken in a manner consistent with the predications of the cartel party theory, but might there be some parties that remain responsive to voters? Could niche parties, as compared to mainstream parties, continue to keep their representative connections in the face of systemic cartelization? As was discussed in the second chapter, there is reason to believe, within the relevant literature on representation, that party type matters and that niche parties behave differently compared to their mainstream counterparts (Adams et al. 2006, Ezrow et al. 2010). Thus a final question presents itself: do niche parties may remain connected to voters in the face of broadly collusive behaviors of mainstream parties?

The niche party literature suggests that party type may influence proclivities to collude, with mainstream parties, who generally find themselves with broad bases of support, being drawn toward this behavior (Ezrow et al. 2010). Conversely niche parties, who cater to more specific

issues, ones that often reside on the fringes of political discussion, should resist these temptations (Adams et al 2006). Hoping to draw voters away from the broad issue positions taken by larger parties, niche parties find their bases for political support in focusing on issues outside of the political mainstream, finding their bases of support on distinctly non-economic issues (Wagner 2010, Wagner and Meyer 2016). This means that these parties both emphasize specific fringe topics and consequently have narrow voter bases, suggesting that these parties may have different incentive structures compared to mainstream parties. As will be discussed in greater detail below, the niche party literature suggests that these parties should be responsive to their partisan voters and should resist temptations to collude, particularly on issues that are foundational to their party programmes (Adams et al. 2006, Ezrow et al. 2010). The literature suggests that niche focal parties should resist collusion on specific issues, but do these parties remain responsive to their voters on the left/right economic dimension? Do other multidimensional issues create incentives to collude?

The current chapter will precede as follows. First, the relevant literature will be discussed, outlining the competing expectations. Second, the hypotheses will be introduced that have guided the model and data selection. Third, the data and methods will be reviewed, followed by the discussion of the findings. Together this will show the competing expectations presented by the literature on niche parties and the cartel party theory. On one side, the literature on niche parties argues that these groups should be more connected to partisan voters and avoid collusion on foundational issues (Ezrow et al. 2010, Adams et al. 2006, Meguid 2005) . While conversely, the cartel party theory suggests that party type is not necessarily relevant in understanding propensity to collude (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009, Blyth and Katz 2005). Overall, this chapter endeavors to address whether niche party status influences responsiveness of focal parties to mainstream rivals in the system, whether this influences the size of the issue space presented to voters, and finally, if issues that are foundational to the creation of the party dissuade these niche parties away from collusive tendencies. This chapter will examine these issues across both the left/right economic dimension and the multidimensional issues of equality, the environment, and EU integration.

5.1 Niche Parties and The Cartel Party Theory

Does party type matter when it comes to collusive behaviors in parties? The previous chapters have argued that it does by focusing on mainstream party positions as predictive variables. Thus far, the preceding chapters have used mainstream parties' policy positions to test whether these positions influence focal party behavior, without distinguishing between focal party types. This means that up until this point, the data show that focal parties (both mainstream and niche) respond to changes in the left/right issue dimension and multidimensional issues of mainstream rivals. It was suggested in the second chapter that niche parties are expected to behave differently than mainstream parties, with niche parties having greater incentives to stay connected to voters in the face of collusion, a point that will be argued in greater detail below. And although mainstream parties in a system were targeted as a predictor, showing that undifferentiated focal parties do appear to be colluding with mainstream rivals, what these previous models are unable to tell us is whether the type of focal party changes these behaviors. The chapter that follows does just this, partitioning out the types of focal party to test whether mainstream party positions on the left/right economic dimension and multidimensional issues produces collusive responses that changes across party types.

The previous chapters have indicated that cartel behavior may be present as envisaged by Katz and Mair (1995, 2009). Parties seem to meet the requisite conditions of collusion as outlined in the theoretical chapter – they are both responding to each other while ignoring voter preference changes. Additionally, parties seem to be manipulating the issue spaces presented to voters, further undermining representation in modern democracies. What has yet to be tested is whether the previous models were hiding intact voter-party linkages by failing to distinguish between party types. Might niche parties be representative but this relationship is hidden by the more powerful overriding tendencies of the mainstream parties in their collusion? There are two different sets of expectations, guided by the literature. On one hand, the cartel party theory does not give us any guidance on party type, but the systemic and evolutionary arguments put forth by Katz and Mair suggest that all parties should be drawn toward collusion. Conversely, the niche party literature seems to suggest that niche parties should hold durable positions on issues, particularly those that

are foundational to their political agendas. In reviewing these ideas it will become clear that there are several expectations about the influence of focal party type on collusive behaviors, even if they may be contradictory.

5.1.1 Cartel Party Theory

The cartel party theory has guided this research, therefore it is appropriate to return to the theory to consider whether it has anything to say about the possible influence of niche party status on collusive behavior. Though Katz and Mair (1995), and more recent formulations of the cartel party theory, do not address the issue of party type, this omission seems in itself instructive (Katz and Mair 2009, Blyth and Katz 2005).

The authors do not address differences in party type, it seems, because there is little reason to believe that party type would be able to alter the behaviors of parties within a system that has fully cartelized. Recall that the theory hinges on the evolutionary process through which the incentive structures change in such a fundamental way that *any* party would presumably be unable to ignore without losing their role in government. Because party competition and issue dynamics have changed so fundamentally, within the theory, parties find themselves unable to remain responsive to changing voter sentiments without the risk of losing office (Katz and Mair 2009). As the theoretical chapter details parties become challenged by evolving political dynamics leading voters to become more erratic, campaigns become more complicated, while parties are unable to use catch-all techniques of increasing social spending to satisfy their voter bases (Katz and Mair 2009). If individual politicians are rational actors, who's interests are best satisfied by their incorporation in the party, then the individual's success relies on the success of the party (Katz and Mair 2009, 756). This means that individuals, will rationally alter party behavior in a manner that promotes the survival of the party, thus if political dynamics shift fundamentally and parties can no longer rely on traditional means to satisfy voters, then parties will adopt new strategies to maintain their positions of power (Katz and Mair 2009, Blyth and Katz 2005). Thus a feature of these changing dynamics becomes inter-party collusion. In this argument the system changes at

its core and this process is out of the control of individual parties. The individuals who make up the party are interested in keeping their power and thusly the power of the party intact, this means that niche parties should feel the same pressures and be faced with the same risks if they begin to alienate any voters by responding to the changing issue positions of a diversifying population of voters. Therefore, it becomes the most risk adverse option, in this theory, to ignore voters and work with other parties to maintain their voting coalitions by limiting competition and ultimately the issues presented to voters.

The cartel party theory seems to indicate that party type should not matter when it comes to proclivity to collude because these changes are systemic and evolutionary, making them difficult, if not impossible to counteract, while influencing all players in the system similarly. But might niche parties have very different incentive structures not considered by Katz and Mair that reduces niche party proclivity to collude?

5.1.2 Niche Party Literature

The niche party literature suggests two ways in which party type may influence party behaviors. On one hand, the literature finds that mainstream parties tend to satisfy median or independent voters, while niche parties remain representatively connected to their partisans (Adams et al. 2006, Ezrow et al. 2010). Additionally, the literature suggests that parties may be punished if they deviate from their previous positions, particularly on topics foundational to their party platforms (Adams et al. 2006).

Niche parties seem more responsive to their partisan constituents, while mainstream parties have been found to make adjustments toward the independent or median voter (Ezrow et al. 2010). Furthermore, niche parties are not often swayed by general public opinion, keeping connections to their partisan voters (Adams et al. 2006). This suggests that these parties should be responsive and connected to their partisans, implying that changes in mainstream parties should have little or no influence on niche party behavior. Though niche parties should be interested in satisfying these partisan voters more generally, the literature also suggests that they should stay committed to their

positions that formed the foundation of their party's emergence into political relevance.

Niche parties generally advocate for issues that reside outside of political mainstream, championing topics that mainstream parties may be apt to ignore (Wagner 2010). Taking firm positions on niche topics may force mainstream organizations to address the issues themselves, or they may choose to let the niche parties continue their issue ownership (Meguid 2005, Budge 2015). Therefore niche parties are wedded to specific foundational issues – usually cultural issues like migration and European integration – that become central to their differentiation from mainstream rivals. The foundational nature of these issues makes them hard to deviate from because by moving away from them or altering their positions, there becomes a weak justification for the niche party to exist. For example, an ecology party such as the Greens in Great Britain would most likely lose many of their voters if they began deemphasizing or changing their positions on environmental issues. This means that niche parties are incentivized to maintain their focus on their specific topics because they may be punished for moderating their stances (Kitschelt 1989, Adams et al. 2006), or lose their justification for functioning as a different political party. Additionally, if a niche party has complete issue ownership of a topic, there becomes no incentive, even in a fully cartelized system, to change a position on the issue. This suggests that although the systemic conditions may have changed, as argued by Katz and Mair (1995, 2009), this may not be enough to make niche parties participate in collusion on all issues. Alluding to this possibility, as mentioned in the previous chapter, recent research has shown that although much of Western Europe's mainstream parties have shifted to the right ideologically, niche parties remain unresponsive to these systemic shifts (Wagner and Meyer 2016). This research suggests that niche parties may be resisting the temptation to collude on the left/right dimension in the face of mainstream coordination to move toward the right.

To review, the preceding discussion has highlighted the two opposing expectations regarding how party type may influence inter-party collusion. The cartel party theory predicts that niche focal parties and mainstream focal parties should show the same responsiveness to mainstream parties' positions and issue space manipulation over time. Conversely, the niche party literature

suggests that niche focal parties should not respond to mainstream parties' positions on the issues, attempting to stay connected to their partisan voters. Even if niche focal parties are presenting collusive tendencies on general topics, these parties, at the very least, should not collude on topics that are foundational to their party platforms. The following section will present the 3 hypotheses that this discussion outlines.

5.2 Hypotheses

Although the preceding chapters indicate that parties may be working together to manipulate the issues presented to voters, while failing to represent their interests on a variety of topics, there remains the possibility that niche focal parties may continue to be representative of the interests of voters because previous research suggests that these voter-party linkages may be more durable than the linkages between mainstream parties and their voters. Though the cartel party theory suggests that party type should have little bearing on party behavior – because the systemic alterations to the incentive structure make voter responsiveness too risky – it remains a possibility that niche parties may be comparatively less collusive.

The cartel party theory does not address party type and whether this should influence collusive tendencies, while the niche party literature argues that party type plays a central role in understanding party behavior, implying that niche parties should resist collusion, particularly on issues that are foundational to their party platforms. Together these literatures suggests three opposing hypotheses:

H1a - Niche Responsiveness: Because niche focal parties have narrow constituencies, they will be less responsive to mainstream party movement on the issues because collusion could be so costly that it outweighs the risks.

H1b - Cartel Responsiveness: Niche focal parties and mainstream focal parties should be equally as responsive to shifts in mainstream parties' positions over time, while ignoring voters, indicating collusion.

H2a - Niche Issue Space: Niche parties should be less apt to manipulate the issue spaces presented to voters because their responsiveness to their partisan voters is central to maintaining their voter loyalty.

H2b - Cartel Issue Space: Because niche focal parties are subject to the same systemic evolution that alters the incentive structures, niche focal parties will also actively work to manipulate the issue spaces presented to voters.

H3a - Niche Foundational Issue: Even if niche focal parties are drawn to collude on topics that are potentially less important to their voters, they will be particularly resistant to collusion on issues that are foundational to their party platforms.

H3b - Cartel Foundational Issue: On issues that are foundational to niche focal parties, there will be no difference in their proclivity to collude, making their behavior not meaningfully different from their mainstream rivals.

Together these opposing hypotheses have guided the following research. The next section will briefly overview the data and methods used, which will be followed by a discussion of the models' results.

5.3 Data

There are three sources of data used in this chapter. First, to capture the positions of voters across time, the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)¹ data are used, allowing for a greater period of time to be examined. In order to incorporate more recent data and multidimensional issues, the European Social Survey (ESS) is also used, covering 32 countries from 2002 - 2016. To capture the positions of parties over the years on the left/right economic dimension and multidimensional issues, the Manifesto Project data are again utilized. Together these sources capture the relevant data for examining party responsiveness and voter issue positions over time.

¹ As discussed in chapter 3, the British survey information is actually the from the British Social Attitudes Survey. See chapter 3 for detailed explanation.

To explore the left/right issue dimension, the ISSP and ESS ask respondents how much they believe the government should be involved in reducing differences in incomes². The ISSP data is only used to examine left/right issues, because the survey has not consistently asked questions that pertain to multidimensional topics until more recently. To capture these issues, the ESS survey is used.

The ESS allows for the issues of the environment, equality and EU integration to be examined³. The previous chapter argued that multidimensional issues should be more difficult for parties to respond to, making them prone to collusive behaviors. To capture the environment, respondents were asked to what degree it describes them to be caring for the environment. To examine public sentiment regarding issues of equality and how this may change over time, the ESS asked respondents how important it was to the respondent for people to be treated equally and to have equal opportunities. And finally, to gauge public opinion changes regarding the EU, respondents were asked whether they perceived EU unification as going “too far” or “not far enough”, with a scale ranging from 0 to 10. The data for each of these questions was distilled into the party/year format.

There are two voter groups that are necessary to examine to consider both dealignment and partisan representation (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). As discussed previously, mainstream focal parties are predicted to satisfy median voters, while niche focal parties are thought to satisfy partisans. Presented in more detail in the theoretical chapter, both dealignment and partisan representation are possible, neither being deficient forms of representation, but these distinctions are specifically important for the current chapter. As was argued, niche parties are predicted to remain connected to partisans, suggesting that they should achieve partisan representation, while mainstream parties are thought to satisfy median voters. It is possible that the findings presented in the previous chapters have not considered the importance of party type, and that niche focal parties may remain connected to their voters, even if mainstream parties are colluding. To capture these groups, the mean partisan for each party is produced for each year the question is asked.

² For specific wording, see the Appendix. Also greater defense of the relevancy of these questions to the topics is provided in the chapters preceding. To avoid redundancy, these will not be discussed at length again.

³ Unfortunately, the CMP data has only coded issues of immigration recently and when combined with the ESS data allowing too few data points to produce intelligible models.

This allows for partisan voters and their changes on both economic and multidimensional issues to be tracked over time. The median voter positions are created using the median voter for each country/year.

As has been argued at length previously, manifesto data is used because it is the logical starting point for which collusion may present itself. Parties should proclaim their positions in their manifestos long before the collusion that they are participating in may translated into behavior that is perceived by either individuals or experts through surveys. Therefore, this data source is the basis for determining party position on both the economic dimension and the multidimensional issues of the environment, equality and EU integration.

To determine the left/right placement of a party, the Manifesto Project provides a RILE variable, bringing together several coded topics to capture the placement of the party on the economic left/right dimension. For the environment and the issue of equality coders are asked to code these issues throughout the manifesto. These multidimensional components are gauged on a 0 to 100 scale, which represents the percentage of the manifesto that is dedicated to this specific issue. These scores change across the manifestos, and thus are able to capture the degree to which these issues become emphasized or ignored as time passes. For the EU question, the manifesto data has both negative and positive mentions of the EU coded separately. For the purposes here, these codes are combined. Although it seems unlikely that a party would say conflicting things about the EU in their manifesto, it remains possible and thus the codes have been aggregated.

To reiterate, the data are organized at the party/year level, so the dependent variable becomes the focal party position each year, as determined by the manifesto data. To consider the influence of voters over time, the median and partisan voters are considered. To test whether focal parties are responding to the behaviors of mainstream parties over time, a variable was created that captures the mean positions of all of the mainstream parties within a country each year. This means that a variable was created that aggregated all of the mainstream parties' positions on a topic, subtracting the focal party position, and then dividing the sum by the number of mainstream parties in the system – less the focal party, if the focal party is coded as mainstream. This provides a mean

mainstream party position each party/year. Niche parties are those parties that have distinctly non-economic focuses, and thus are the green, ethnic/regional, special issue, and nationalist, consistent with previous chapters (Wagner 2010). These categorizations come directly from the Manifesto Project and fit well with other sources (ParlGov database Doring and Manow 2018). So far this discussion has covered the data sources and manipulations, the following section will review the different methods used before the results can be presented.

5.4 Methods

The models presented in this chapter hope to answer three questions. First, does party type influence focal party responsiveness to mainstream parties? Second, does party type change whether or not the focal party is manipulating the issue spaces provided to voters? And finally, do niche focal parties respond to mainstream parties' position changes on issues that are foundational? The preceding discussion has suggested that there may be no difference between niche and mainstream focal parties' proclivities to collude, if the cartel party theory is correct in the assertions that these changes in democracy are rooted in fundamental systemic alterations through a deterministic evolutionary process (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009). It is also possible, using the niche party literature, that niche focal parties and mainstream focal parties satisfy different voter groups and thus assuming that all parties behave alike would be misguided (Adams et al. 2006, Ezrow et al. 2010, Wagner and Meyer 2016). Even if parties are alike and collude in similar ways, the niche party literature finally suggests that, at the very least, niche parties should continue to be responsive to their foundational party issues (Adams et al. 2006). Using these expectations, the three questions will be answered for the left/right dimensions and the multidimensional issues. The following section will review how the data are used to build models that can test these questions, with the possible conflicting expectations in mind.

The dataset created is longitudinal, making the dependencies within it serially correlated. Similar to the previous chapters, the following models will also use the Hoffman (2015) approach, separating partisan, median and mainstream party positions into mean and mean centered variables

– targeting the dynamic relationship we expect to exist between focal parties and their mainstream rivals, if parties are indeed colluding with one another.

Using this approach to the variables, the first question will be answered by building models that include the mean partisan, median voter, and mainstream party positions, to capture the historical positions of these groups. This allows for us to gauge how these stationary positions influence the overall policy positions of the focal party. To determine how responsive parties are to the voters or to the mainstream parties, the change variables for these groups is also included. This tests whether the dynamic relationship often assumed exists between focal parties and voters. Consistent with the previous chapters, this tests whether parties are ignoring voters when they change their positions, while responding to mainstream parties – the requisite conditions for collusion to be present. Finally, to test whether party type matter in how responsive the focal party is to the mainstream parties, the niche party dummy variable is interacted with mainstream party changes.

The second question – does party type matter in how a party manipulates the issue space presented to the voter – replicates this same model, but similar to previous chapters includes a lag. This lag controls for the previous position of the party, to equalize the starting points of each focal party in relation to the mainstream parties⁴. This allows for all of the party movements to have the same starting point so we are able to access whether the issue space that are being presented to voters is converging, stable or expanding. Inline with the arguments presented in previous chapters, converging and stable issue spaces that are not related to changing voter sentiments, show that parties are not only manipulating the issue spaces presented to voters, but that collusion matured.

The final question – do parties resist inter-party collusion on foundational issues? – can only be examined using the environmental question. This is because there are no straightforward niche parties that might consider equality or EU integration as foundational. This final question uses the environmental model, but disaggregates the niche parties, so that the variable becomes categorical with levels for the mainstream parties, ethnic/regional, green, nationalist, and special issue. This allows for us to compare the different niche parties within a single model, with the expectation that

⁴ For a more detailed explanation see the previous chapters.

green parties should be less collusive because this issue is foundational to their party platforms. This discussion has presented how these questions will be tested in light of the expectations, but there remains the more specific details of the models that should be reviewed.

Though a reiteration of the previous chapters, the structure of the dataset requires that the models be multilevel in nature. The year becomes the first level, the party the second, which makes the country the third, with all of these components clearly nested within each other. All of the models in the current chapter also allow for the covariances to be unstructured for the random intercepts at the party and country levels. Additionally, the data provide a relatively small number of observations, therefore we use restricted maximum likelihood (REML) specifications. As in previous chapters, the data are unbalanced, which has led to the selection for an exponential covariance structure to be applied (Hoffman 2015, Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2015)⁵.

Although the manifesto data is clearly bounded, with scores ranging from -100 to 100 for the rile question and from 0 to 100 for the multidimensional issues, these dependent variables have been treated as continuous, with one exception. The issues of equality, the EU and the left/right economic dimension have been treated as continuous because the distribution of these variables is fairly clustered around the center, appearing quite normal (Long, 1997, Twisk and Rijmen 2009). Though the variables are clearly not continuous, using a continuous model allows for more restrictive estimations to be used and covariance structures to be applied, which makes the continuous approach produce a greater model fit, compared to bounded models. The one exception where continuous models are not used is for the environmental question. As discussed in the previous chapter, these models continue to use a tobit procedure (Twisk and Rijmen 2009). The variable does not cluster around the middle, being highly skewed, thus making outcomes predicted by a continuous model nonsensical. Furthermore, the tobit model achieves better model fits, compared to continuous approaches for this question, making it the most appropriate approach.

To conclude, the models presented in this chapter hope to address whether party type matters. It is possible that it does not, which would be consistent with the cartel party theory expectations,

⁵ Again, for greater explanation please see preceding chapters.

but the niche party literature – which provided the foundational reasons for examining mainstream party change in the first place – suggests that these parties may be fundamentally different. If this is true, the previous models may be obscuring intact voter-party linkages. The following section will review the results from the left/right economic dimension models and multidimensional issues.

5.5 Results

The discussion of the results will begin with the left/right dimensions models, using the ISSP and ESS data. This will move on to examine the findings for the multidimensional issues, beginning with equality, followed by the EU and concluding with the environment. Because the issue of the environment is foundational to green party programmes, this is the only issue that allows the foundational issue hypotheses to be tested. Although it would be preferable to have more than one test, this does serve as an interesting starting point to consider whether foundational issues are particularly durable for niche parties. Each topic will present a model testing whether niche party status influences how focal parties respond to change in mainstream parties. When data are available, the issue space model will also be presented, including a lag of previous party position to determine how changes in the mainstream party position influences the movement of the focal party, and ultimately what this means for the resulting issue space that separates them.

5.5.1 Left/Right Economic Dimension

To examine an extended time frame, compared to the ESS data, the ISSP data have been used. Though the data points are not consistently spaced, they do allow for examination of a variety of unique democracies for the years from 1987 to 2010. Model 1 tests whether the niche party interaction changes the behavior of the focal party in response to mainstream party change across the left/right dimension.

Model 1, presented in table 5.1, shows that when niche party is interacted with mainstream party change, there is no significant relationship. To better understand what is happening with the

interaction term in substantive terms, it is useful to examine the marginal effects of the interaction, which are presented in Figure 5.1. This shows that if the focal party is mainstream they are expected to respond to a one unit change in the position of the mainstream parties with a 7.76 point response. The scaling for these variables is the same as the 3 chapter, with the dependent variable remaining on the -100 to 100 scale and the units of the predictor variables being recalled to 5 levels, matching the likert scale of the ISSP survey question⁶. If the focal party is characterized as niche, the findings are not statistically significant at an 0.05 level, but are quite close (0.054). Although the findings should be interpreted understanding this caution, the predicted level for the niche party response is 19.46, because the confidence interval covers a very large range (- 0.34 – 39.26). This null finding, combined with the very wide confidence interval suggests that more observations are clearly necessary to determine how niche parties are responding to mainstream parties on this dimension. What is significant about these findings though, is that they confirm the expectation that mainstream parties should be drawn toward collusion.

The remainder of the model shows remarkably similar results as in the 3 chapter. Yet again, when it comes to left/right policy positions of focal parties, it seems as though focal parties determine their position based off of the mean position of their mainstream rivals and their partisans, moving away from median voter positions. When the mean mainstream party is one unit to the right, the focal party is predicted to respond by being nearly 19 points more right leaning. Similarly, when the mean partisan is one unit more right leaning, the focal party is predicted to have a 20.2 point more right leaning stance. Interestingly, these mean positions are equally as influential in determining focal party positions, unlike the multidimensional issues considered in the previous chapter that showed a much greater influence of mean mainstream positions compared to mean partisans.

When it comes to changing their positions though, focal parties still show no significant response to either voter groups, but do show a dynamically responsive relationship to their main-

⁶ There are five levels for the mainstream party positions and for the voter positions. This is based off of the voter data being presented in a 5 level likert scale. The mainstream party positions were recalled to match, to easily compare magnitudes of influence.

Table 5.1: Party Policy Position Left/Right ESS and ISSP

	(Model 1) ISSP: Response	(Model 2) ESS: Response	(Model 3) ESS: Issue Space
Mean Mainstream Party	18.79*** (4.562)	12.48* (6.057)	0.367** (0.136)
Mean Partisan	20.21*** (3.164)	23.88*** (3.037)	0.431*** (0.0777)
Mean Median Voter	-14.11*** (4.096)	-19.49*** (5.810)	-0.376** (0.119)
Mainstream Party Change	7.764* (3.676)	8.872*** (2.111)	0.405*** (0.0831)
Partisan Change	0.867 (2.329)	0.522 (1.384)	-0.0794 (0.0558)
Median Voter Change	1.697 (1.908)	-0.241 (1.935)	0.0543 (0.122)
Niche Party	1.430 (3.201)	3.476 (2.495)	2.749* (1.225)
Niche Party × Mainstream Party Change	11.70 (10.73)	0.715 (3.873)	0.0245 (0.175)
Previous Position (Lag)			0.200*** (0.0485)
Constant	-67.10*** (12.01)	-46.10* (19.96)	16.31* (8.233)
Country Constant	1.29e-13 (.)	32.51*** (30.33)	1.64e-10 (0.000000223)
Party Constant	57.49** (80.88)	161.2*** (53.27)	
Residuals: Exponential Constant	281.1*** (82.57)	189.5*** (46.27)	51.93*** (6.909)
r_logitrl Constant	2.237*** (0.375)	2.009*** (0.303)	2.025*** (0.235)
Observations	356	874	420
AIC	2846.9	6696.4	2629.6
BIC	2893.4	6758.4	2682.1

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

stream rivals. Yet again showing evidence of collusive behaviors, but only conclusively for main-stream focal parties. Unfortunately, just as before, the ISSP data is unable to be used to test the

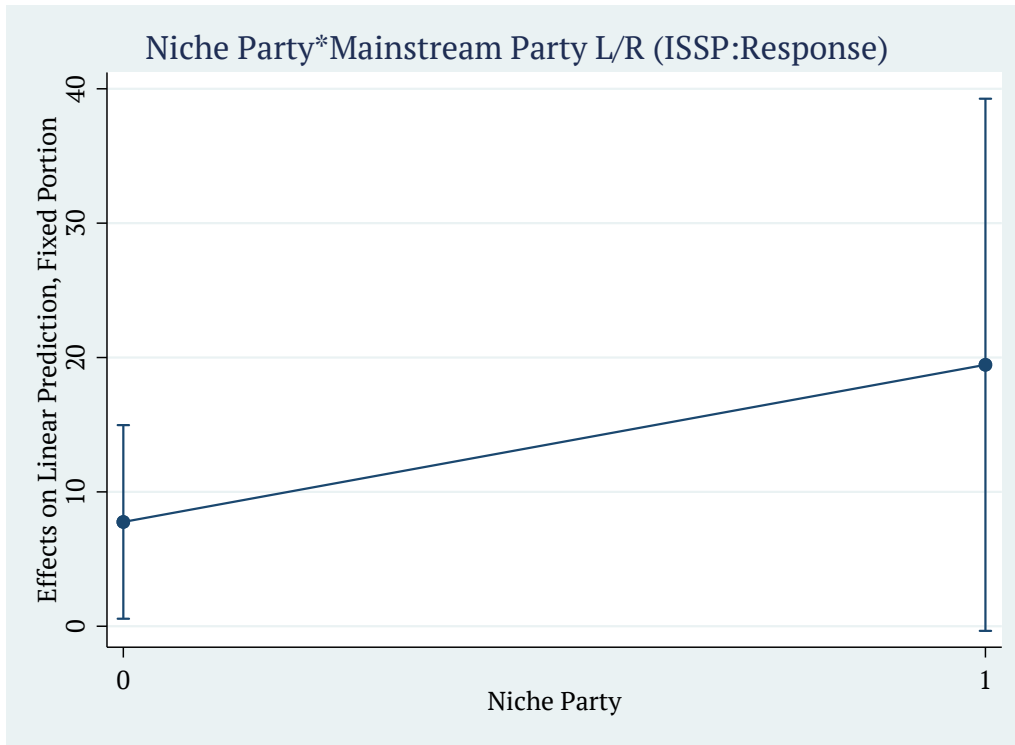


Figure 5.1: Model 1 Marginal Effects

issue space assertions because the data are so scattered across time and country, somewhat inconsistently, that when the lag is introduced, too many observations are lost to produce reliable models.

The ESS data presented in models 2 and 3, also in table 5.1, show that when niche party is interacted with mainstream party policy change, both niche and mainstream focal parties are highly responsive. The marginal effects presented in Figure 5.2 show that when mainstream parties change their position on the left/right dimension one unit, mainstream focal parties are expected to respond with a 8.87 point shift. When the focal party is niche, this is predicted to be slightly higher, at 9.59 points. This means that both party types, using the ESS data, show a response to mainstream party position changes on the economic dimension, to surprisingly similar degrees. This means that when it comes to the left/right economic dimension, it seems as though niche parties and mainstream parties show similar responses to mainstream party behaviors. There is also not response to either voter group when they change on the issues, meeting the characteristic

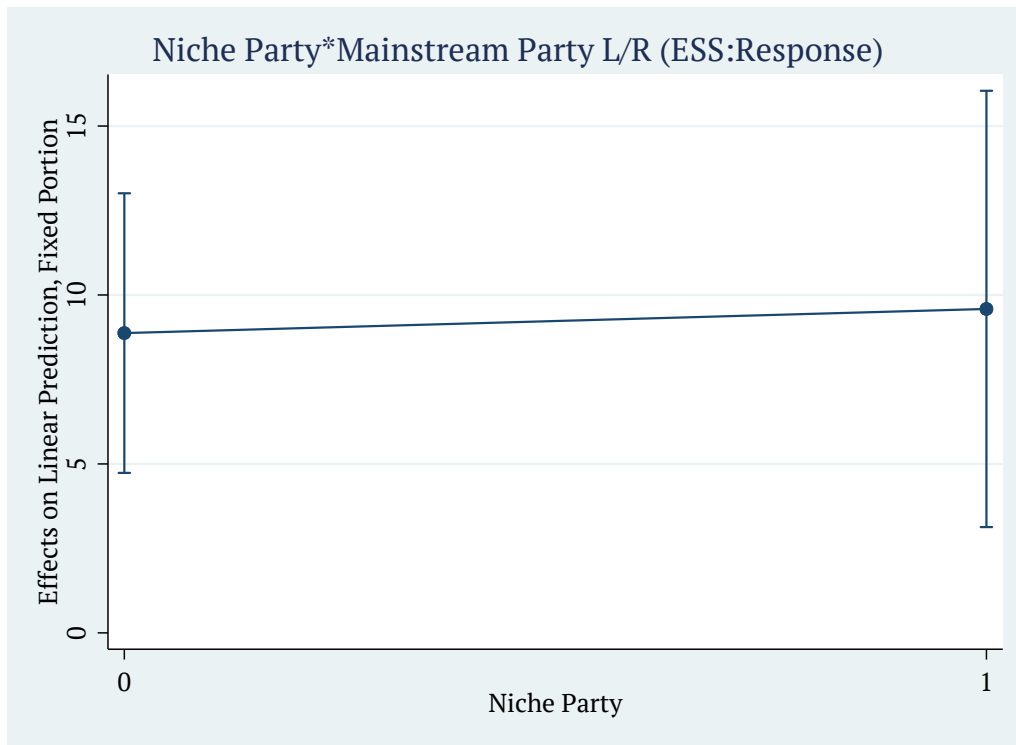


Figure 5.2: Model 2 Marginal Effects

behaviors of purely collusive cartelistic parties, as predicted by Katz and Mair (1995, 2009).

The remainder of the model, also is very similar to the findings in chapter 3 for the ESS models, with one important exception. Focal party positions are connected to the mean positions of partisans, but unlike the ESS model in chapter 3, focal parties now show a positive response to the mean positions of mainstream parties as well. This means that using this data set, there remains a connection between how focal parties determine their position on the left/right dimensions that is connected to the average location of their partisan voters and their mainstream rivals. Ultimately, this shows a stationary relationship that remains between parties and partisan voters, but that when it comes to dynamic representational responses, focal parties of both types are showing a similar level of collusion. These focal parties, both niche and mainstream, show a significant relationship between their positions on the economic dimension and changes in the mainstream parties in these systems. Taken together, models 1 and 2 present evidence that mainstream focal parties are showing consistent levels of collusion with their mainstream rivals, but the evidence for niche focal

parties is somewhat unclear. More observations are required to determine truly what is going on with niche party behavior on the left/right dimension.

Model 3 includes a lag of the dependent variable of the focal party to test whether party type changes issue space coordination. To recap, this allows for the positions of focal parties to be equalized because the starting point, in relation to the mainstream parties' positions, alters the size of the issue spaces that divide mainstream parties and focal parties. To make interpretation of the resultant issue spaces, all issue space models rescale the variables to a 100 point scale.

When it comes to the change variables, when voters change their position on the left/right dimensions there is no distinguishable response from focal parties. Similar to the previous model, when niche party is interacted with mainstream party changes on the issues, a nearly identical response is witnessed across party type. Presented in figure 5.3, when the mainstream parties in the system move one unit in their position on the economic dimension, mainstream focal parties are predicted to change their positions by moving 0.40 points. Compared to niche focal parties, which are predicted to move 0.43 points. Comparing this to the findings from chapter 3, which found the movement before party type was accounted for at 0.41. Though this still shows a marginally increasing issue space size, it implies that both niche and mainstream parties are manipulating the issue spaces presented to voters, considering both types of focal party movement in the left/right positions does not seem to be connected to voter preference changes on these issues. The mean positions remain predictive of the changing positions of parties, with median voters remaining negatively related to changes in the focal party position away from their previous locations on the left/right dimension.

Together these models show similar findings to those presented in chapter 3. The ISSP data in model 1 suggests that mainstream focal parties' positions on the economic dimension show policy responsiveness to mainstream parties in the system, while ignoring changing voter preferences, leaving the influence of niche party status inconclusive. The ESS models confirm cartel party expectations though; when it comes to colluding on the economic left/right, party type does not change collusive behaviors. The same conclusion as presented in chapter 3 can be drawn from the

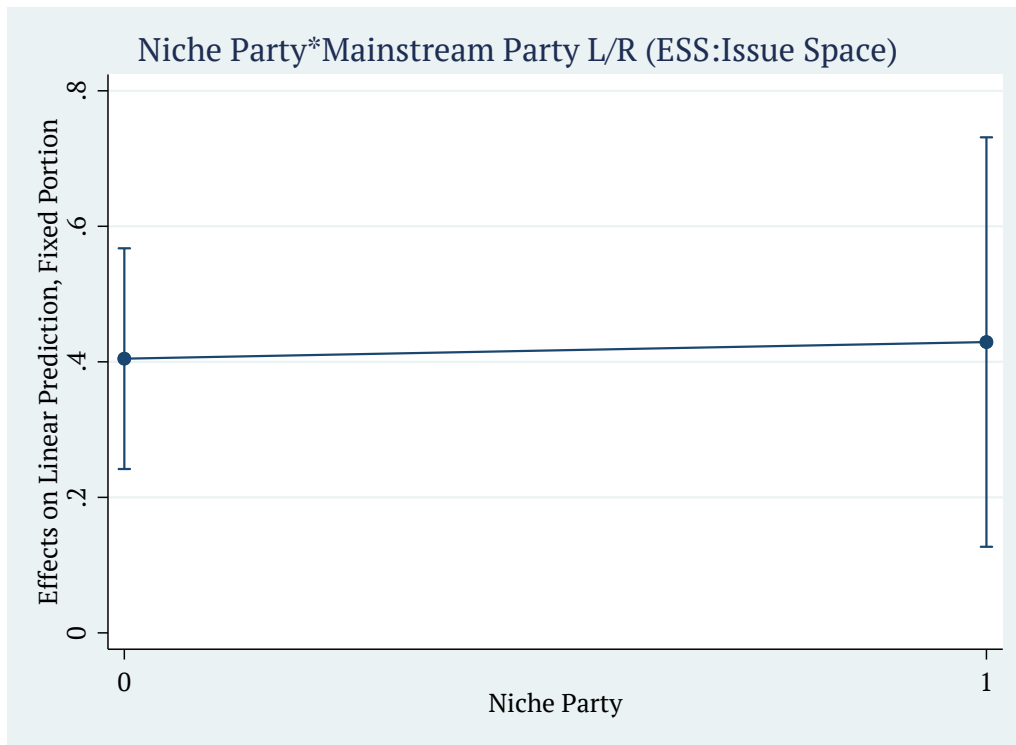


Figure 5.3: Model 3 Marginal Effects

findings about issue space manipulation – though the issues spaces remain marginally expanding, niche focal parties and mainstream focal parties show nearly identical changes in their positions in congruence with mainstream party position changes on the left/right dimension. In total, the ESS models suggest that cartel expectations hold and that the systemic conditions that alter the incentives for parties effect both niche and mainstream parties similarly on the left/right dimension, yet because the ISSP findings are inconclusive, it is clear that more data points are required to determine whether niche focal parties are indeed responding to mainstream rivals.

5.5.2 Multidimensional Issues

As was previously argued in chapter 4, multidimensional issues are predicted to be difficult for parties to navigate, due to their complexity and novelty, because they challenge political power configurations, and put parties in position that may risk losing votes. Therefore, these issues should induce collusion, but does this pressure apply equally across party type?

5.5.2.1 Equality

Model 4 in table 5.2 takes the issue of equality and finds that considering niche party status does not change the results of the model. Both niche focal parties and mainstream focal parties respond to mainstream party changes on issues of equality, while disregarding the changing sentiments of voters. When comparing the marginal effects of niche party status in figure 5.4, it is clear that the responses are nearly identical, with mainstream focal parties responding to a one point shift in mainstream party positions with a 0.8 point response, while niche focal party response is 0.84. Contrary to the niche party literature, which suggests that niche parties should be connected to partisan voters, it is clear that this not the case on the issue of equality, rather niche focal parties show a greater response to mainstream party change, compared to mainstream focal parties. This means that when it comes to comparing party types on the issue of equality, niche and mainstream parties show very similar responses to mainstream party changes on the issue, suggesting that party type does not seem to change collusive tendencies on this topic.

This model also shows that mean positions of mainstream parties dictates the positions of focal parties over twice as much as the mean positions of partisan voters. Yet again, the positions of focal parties is negatively related to median voters. This shows that the mean locations of mainstream parties influences the positions of focal parties over twice as much as partisan mean positions on the issue of equality, again suggesting that this issue has been attractive for collusion since the beginning of the data.

Model 5 controls for the previous positions of focal parties using a lag and shows in figure 5.5, that mainstream focal parties are changing positions in response to one point shifts in mainstream rivals on issues of equality with a 0.85 movement. Niche focal parties change positions as response to the same alteration with a 1.07 point shift. This means that niche parties are actually showing a greater precision in promoting issue space stability, with their closer to 1 to 1 response than mainstream focal parties. Mainstream focal parties are close to having a 1 to 1 response, but the issue space is still expanding, but because this is not connected to voter preferences, this is not meaningful for representation, merely it becomes a feature of imprecise coordination between

Table 5.2: Party Policy Position Equality ESS

	(Model 4) ESS: Response	(Model 5) ESS: Issue Space
Mean Mainstream Party	1.029*** (0.206)	-2.796*** (0.576)
Mean Partisan	0.440*** (0.0530)	0.348*** (0.0607)
Mean Median Voter	-0.373** (0.114)	-0.146 (0.353)
Mainstream Party Change	0.797*** (0.129)	0.853*** (0.163)
Partisan Change	0.0243 (0.0219)	0.0109 (0.0373)
Median Voter Change	0.0172 (0.0265)	0.0142 (0.0322)
Niche Party	-0.511 (2.463)	-1.998 (3.064)
Niche Party × Mainstream Party Change	0.0385 (0.273)	0.216 (0.340)
Previous Position (Lag)		-0.0163 (0.0439)
Constant	-53.20*** (11.67)	152.6*** (33.11)
Country Constant	1.284 (0.917)	44.58*** (20.99)
Party Constant	0.000000928 (0.000523)	1.36e-13** (1.24e-12)
Residuals: Exponential Constant	17.39*** (1.415)	8.254*** (1.690)
r_logitrl Constant	2.243*** (0.112)	1.523*** (0.430)
Observations	861	420
AIC	4298.1	2038.5
BIC	4360.0	2095.1

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

colluding parties. Contrary to the niche party literature, niche focal parties do not seem to be more resistant to collusion on the issue of equality, rather they are showing even more precise issue

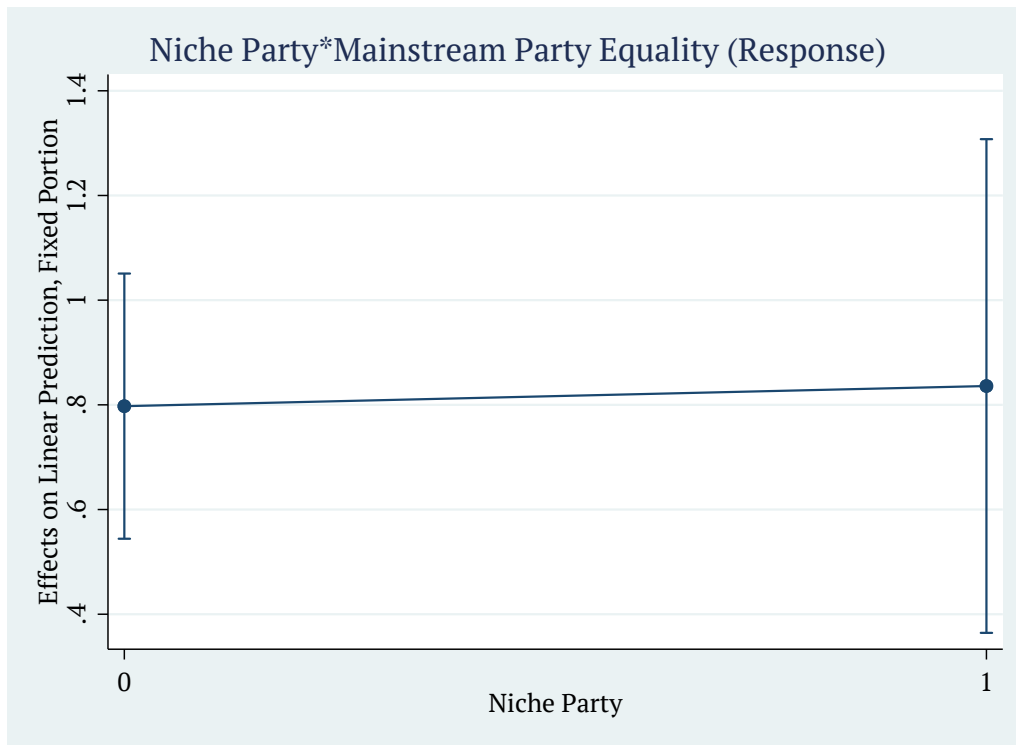


Figure 5.4: Model 4 Marginal Effects

space coordination to maintain stability or promote convergence compared to their mainstream counterparts. This means that when it comes to the issue of equality, not only is collusion high and issue space coordination mature, but niche parties appear to be just as collusive as mainstream parties, suggesting that the systemic conditions have influenced both party types equally.

Together these findings indicate that there is little difference between parties in their proclivities to collude, with these parties behaving similarly on the issues of equality and possibly the economic dimension . Considering the theoretical expectations guiding this chapter, it may appear that the niche party literature may have been incorrect asserting that party type matters, but as the following findings suggest, it may not be that clear cut.

5.5.2.2 EU integration

The previous chapter examined the issue of EU integration and found, unlike the other issues both on economic and multidimensional issues, that focal parties respond to partisan voters when they

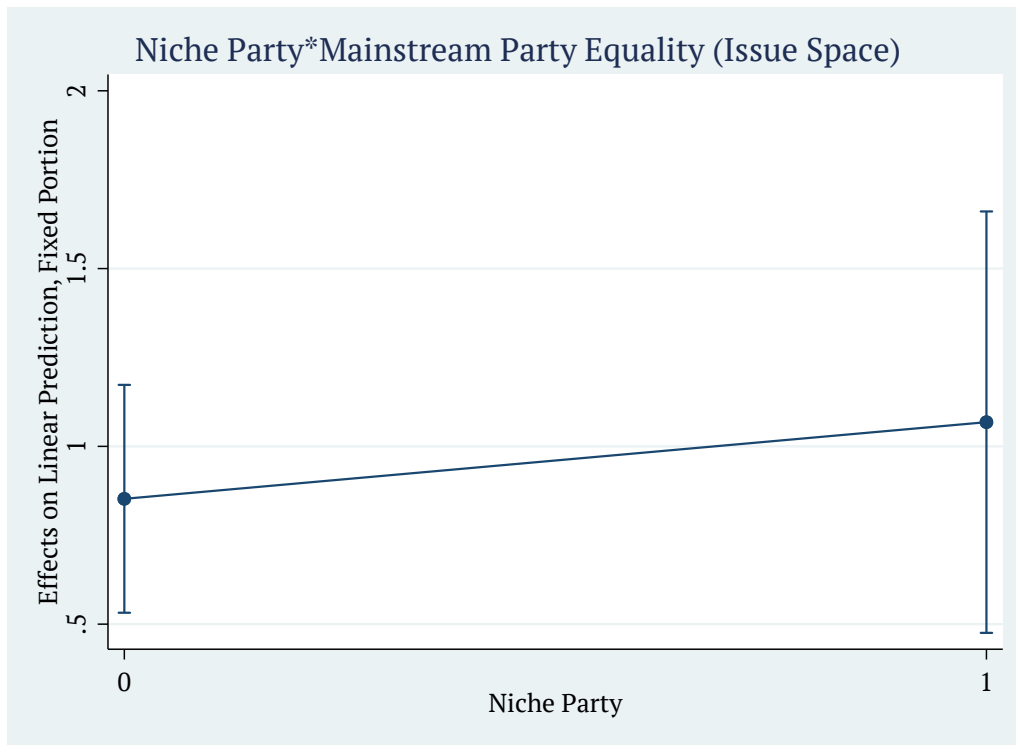


Figure 5.5: Model 5 Marginal Effects

change their positions on the topic, although the movement was 1/14th the magnitude compared to responsiveness to mainstream party changes across time. It is possible that this discrepancy may be explained by differences in party type.

Model 6 in table 5.3 tests whether party type changes collusive tendencies of focal parties. As figure 5.6 shows, mainstream focal party status produces a response to mainstream party position changes of 0.66 to a one point shift. Comparatively, niche focal parties have a response that is indistinguishable from zero⁷, indicating that mainstream focal parties show strong responses to mainstream party position changes on the issue of EU integration, while niche parties do not. This suggests that mainstream focal parties are behaving differently, compared to niche focal parties, and participating in collusion on this issue. This means, that unlike the left/right dimension and issue of equality, there does seem to be a difference between party types, one that is also inline with the expectations implied by the niche party literature. The expectations drawn from the niche

⁷ Unlike the marginal effects interpreted in model 1 that showed niche party status being quite close to statistical significance, these findings are nowhere near that range with a p-value of 0.58.

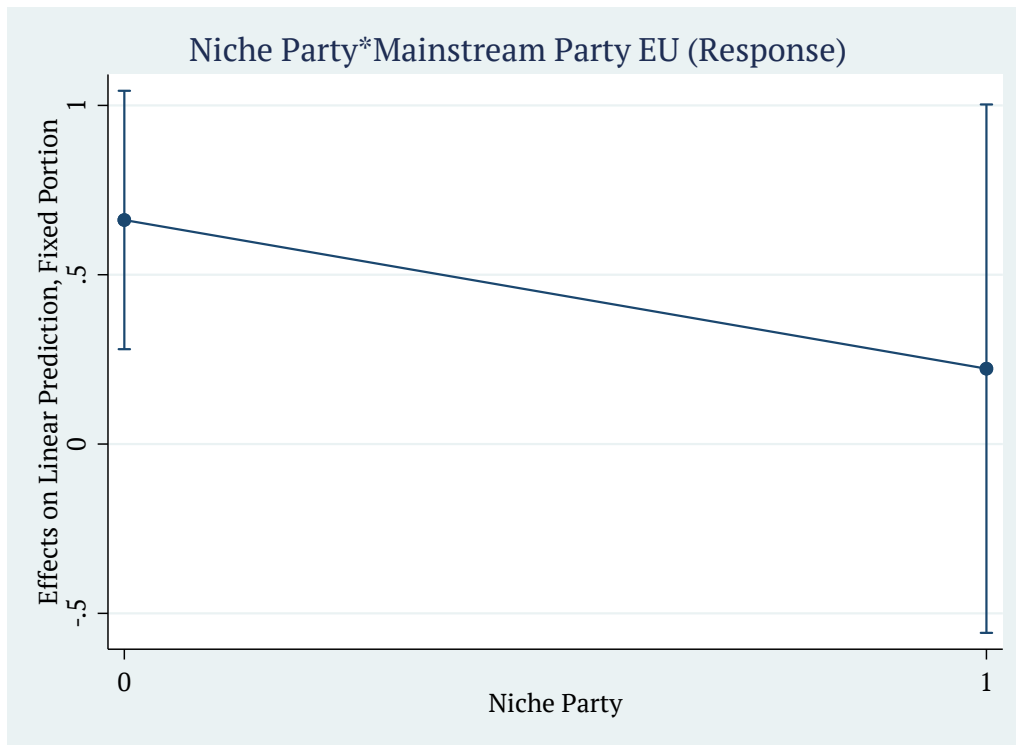


Figure 5.6: Model 6 Marginal Effects

party literature suggest that niche focal parties should be connected to their partisan bases and resist collusion, compared to mainstream parties, and although the findings have been mixed thus far, this suggests that niche focal party connections to voters may be dependent on the issues considered.

This model also shows a significant, though minimal, response to partisan issue position changes on EU integration, as in the last chapter. This shows that when partisans change their positions on the EU, parties are connected to these changes. The magnitude of this response is only 0.04 to a one point shift in focal parties in response to partisan voters, compared to a 0.57 response to mainstream party position changes. Though there appears to be a dynamic representative connection that is maintained on this issue, it is hard to look past how minimal the response is to voter changes on this topic.

The mean positions of mainstream parties is again a stronger predictor of focal party placement (0.67), while mean partisan positions (0.20) are positively related, and median voters' mean

Table 5.3: Party Policy Position EU Integration ESS

	(Model 6) ESS: Response	(Model 7) ESS: Issue Space
Mean Mainstream Party	0.703*** (0.197)	0.518* (0.238)
Mean Partisan	0.199*** (0.0215)	0.161*** (0.0287)
Mean Median Voter	-0.172*** (0.0360)	-0.129* (0.0541)
Mainstream Party Change	0.662*** (0.195)	0.607 (0.311)
Partisan Change	0.0380* (0.0192)	0.0254 (0.0382)
Median Voter Change	0.0111 (0.0358)	0.0518 (0.0630)
Niche Party	-0.661 (0.354)	-0.582 (0.400)
Niche Party × Mainstream Party Change	-0.439 (0.443)	-0.188 (0.687)
Previous Position (Lag)		0.456*** (0.0707)
Constant	-35.88*** (10.08)	-27.22* (12.35)
Country Constant	8.78e-15** (1.08e-13)	0.159 (0.304)
Party Constant	2.018 (1.084)	3.54e-15 (1.63e-11)
Residual: Exponential Constant	5.966*** (1.238)	7.507*** (0.657)
r_logitrl Constant	0.812 (0.443)	-0.695 (0.722)
Observations	584	307
AIC	2764.4	1535.7
BIC	2821.2	1587.9

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

positions are negatively predictive of focal party positions on EU integration. Together this all suggests that when it comes to focal party responsiveness on EU integration, mainstream focal parties

respond to mainstream parties in the system, while niche focal parties show no collusive responses to these changes. This suggests that party type may matter for this issue, with mainstream parties showing partially collusive tendencies and niche focal parties remaining representative of partisans. Considering niche focal parties do not respond to mainstream position changes, yet focal party changes are predicted by partisan position changes, albeit minimally, this means that niche focal parties have met the requirements to achieve partisan representation.

Model 7 considers the influence of party behaviors on the issue spaces for EU integration and whether party type changes the results. Again, mainstream focal parties show a positive change in their positions on the issue away from their previous stance in response to changes in the positions of other mainstream parties. Mainstream focal parties are predicted adjust their position in response to mainstream party position changes on the issue, with a one point shift being matched with a 0.60 point shift, shown in figure 5.7. This means that the issue space is expanding between mainstream focal parties, though this is meaningless because it is unconnected to voter preferences changes, because with the addition of the lag, the dynamic relationship between partisans and focal parties disappears. Niche party response remains statistically insignificant, which suggests that when it comes to the issue of EU integration, party type does matter and mainstream focal parties are significantly more responsive to changes in mainstream party positions on the issues, compared to niche focal parties.

The remainder of the model shows that focal parties change their positions on EU integration remains connected to mean mainstream party positions and partisan average positions, though again the magnitude of influence is significantly less for partisans, while median voter mean positions remain negatively related to the issue position changes of focal parties. The model no longer suggests that focal parties are responsive to partisan voters though, when it comes to changing focal party positions on the issue. Though this appears to be convoluted distinction, as mentioned in the previous chapter, this means that model 6 shows that focal parties' general issue position on EU integration was influenced by partisan position changes on the issue, but model 7 now shows that focal parties' change on the issue of EU integration from their previous position is not connected

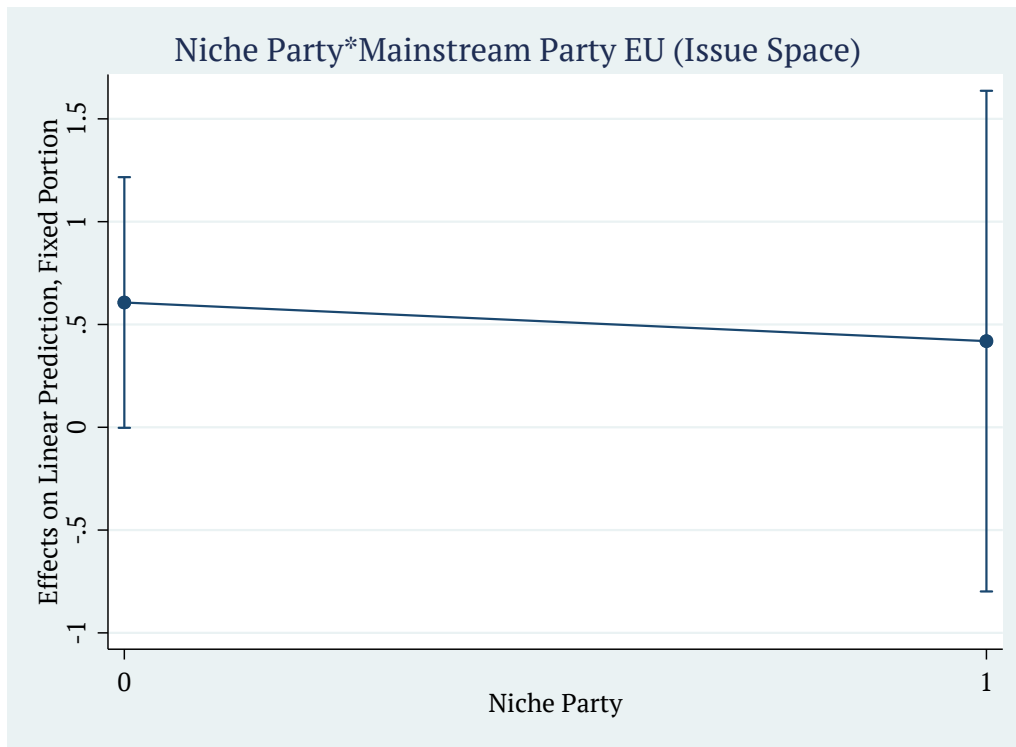


Figure 5.7: Model 7 Marginal Effects

to these shifts. Overall the takeaway should be that there is some level of representation, although small, that remains between focal party positions on the issue of EU integration, but when the lag is introduced the weak relationship disappears.

Together these models suggest that when it comes to collusive behaviors, it appears as though mainstream focal parties are colluding on EU integration, responding to the changing positions of other mainstream parties, yet unlike other issues, they are not ignoring voter preferences entirely, remaining somewhat connected to partisan voters. Niche parties, on the other hand, are not responding to mainstream party changes, while responding to partisans on the issue. This suggests that niche focal parties are achieving partisan representation, while mainstream focal parties are partially collusive/representative, keeping a weak connection to partisan voters in model 6. When considering issue spaces presented to voters, mainstream focal parties show issue space coordination with other mainstream parties in the system, while niche focal parties do not. Together this issue presents conflicting findings considering the previous models, with the issue of EU integra-

tion now providing evidence that the niche party literature was on to something by suggesting that, at least on this issue, that party type should change collusive behaviors. Although the issue of equality and the left/right issue dimension show the contrary – that niche and mainstream focal parties produce strikingly similar collusive tendencies – this may mean that the issue itself matters in predicting whether or not party type may change collusive tendencies, or possibly, that a combination of both issue and specific party family may change the tendency to collude.

5.5.2.3 Environment

The final multidimensional issue of the environment presents the first topic that is clearly a foundational for a niche party considered in this chapter. Green parties should consider environmental issues foundational to their party platforms, and thus, if the implications of the niche party literature is correct, they should resist temptations to collude over this topic. This possibility will be tested in the final model, but before this is presented, the models testing focal party response and issue space manipulation by type will be discussed.

Model 8 in table 5.4 tests whether party type influences focal party response to mainstream party position changes on environmental issues. By interacting niche party status with movements of mainstream parties' position on environmental issues, niche party status produces a greater response to these changes, compared to mainstream focal parties. As the marginal effects show in figure 5.8, when mainstream parties shift their position on the environment one point, niche focal parties are predicted to respond with a 1.55 point movement, compared to mainstream focal parties shifting 1.17 points. This means that niche focal parties show higher responses to mainstream party position changes on the issue of the environment. This is not say that mainstream focal parties are not showing highly collusive responses, but contrary to the expectations suggested by both literatures, party type does matter, just not at all in the way suggested by the niche party literature. Rather than being more resistant to collusion, niche parties are showing more pronounced responses to mainstream parties when they change on the issue of the environment in this model.

The remainder of the model is quite similar to the first model in chapter 4 without the interaction

Table 5.4: Party Policy Position Environment ESS

	(Model 8) ESS: Response	(Model 9) ESS: Issue Space
Mean Mainstream Party	1.302*** (0.372)	1.369*** (0.368)
Mean Partisan	0.557*** (0.0946)	0.444*** (0.127)
Mean Median Voter	-0.215 (0.140)	-0.572 (0.388)
Mainstream Party Change	1.173*** (0.157)	1.356*** (0.222)
Partisan Voter Change	0.0362 (0.0314)	-0.00333 (0.0449)
Median Voter Change	-0.0662 (0.0626)	0.0297 (0.0991)
Niche Party	2.111** (0.813)	1.964* (0.851)
Niche Party × Mainstream Party Change	0.377 (0.353)	1.118* (0.489)
Previous Position (Lag)		0.301*** (0.0819)
Constant	-52.11** (20.16)	-72.39** (22.33)
Country		
Constant	2.031 (2.033)	0.258 (1.065)
Party		
Constant	27.34*** (3.212)	14.91*** (3.950)
Residual: Exponential	7.931*** (0.464)	7.097*** (0.841)
Observations	861	420
AIC	4622.2	2264.3
BIC	4679.3	2316.8

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

term, showing that the mean positions of mainstream parties moves focal party position over twice as much as mean partisan positions on the issue and unlike the other models, mean median voters are not connected to focal party positions.

Model 9, presented in table 5.4, includes a lag of previous focal party position to target how

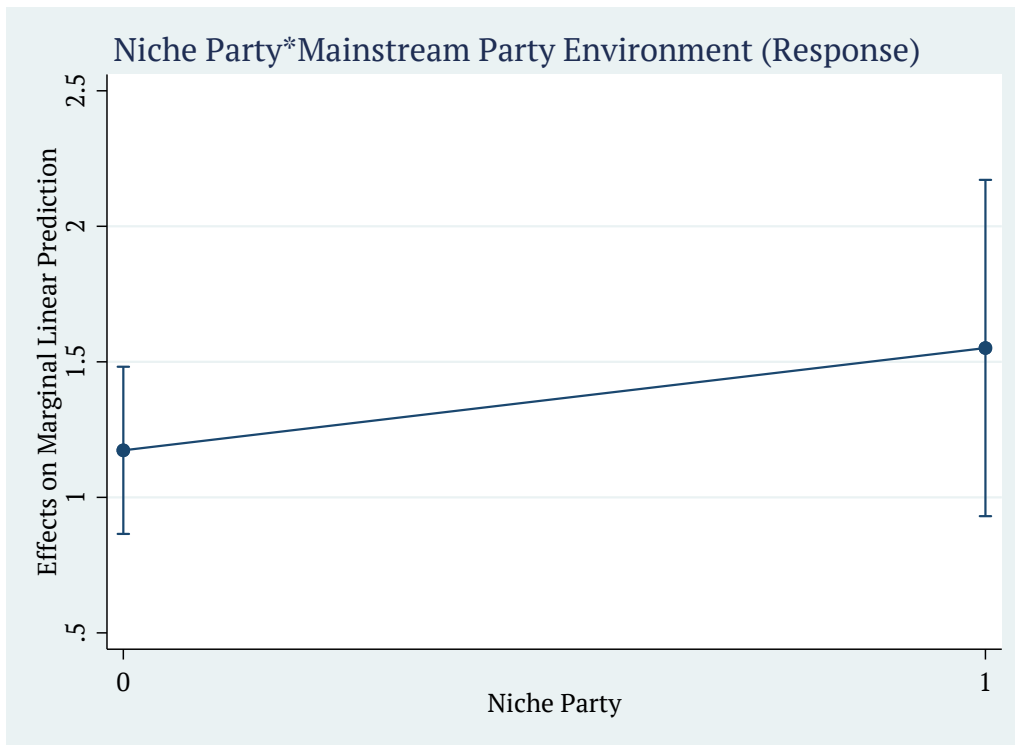


Figure 5.8: Model 8 Marginal Effects

issue spaces are influenced by party behavior and whether this is altered by party type. This interaction effect is presented in figure 5.9 and shows that both mainstream focal parties and niche focal parties are converging, making the issue space increasingly narrow. Mainstream focal parties are showing a 1.35 point response to 1 point shift in mainstream party position changes on the environment, compared to niche focal parties that are responding with 2.47 point response. Yet again, niche focal parties are showing a much higher magnitude response, narrowing the issue space even further in comparison to mainstream focal parties. This means that when it comes to the environment, mainstream focal parties are highly collusive, showing a converging issue space, but that niche focal parties change their positions in response to their mainstream rivals when they change on issues of the environment to an even greater magnitude. Again, none of these movements are related to dynamic responses to changing voter sentiments, and these positions remain only loosely connected to the stationary positions of their partisan voters. This ultimately suggests that when it comes to the issue of the environment, niche focal parties are different than

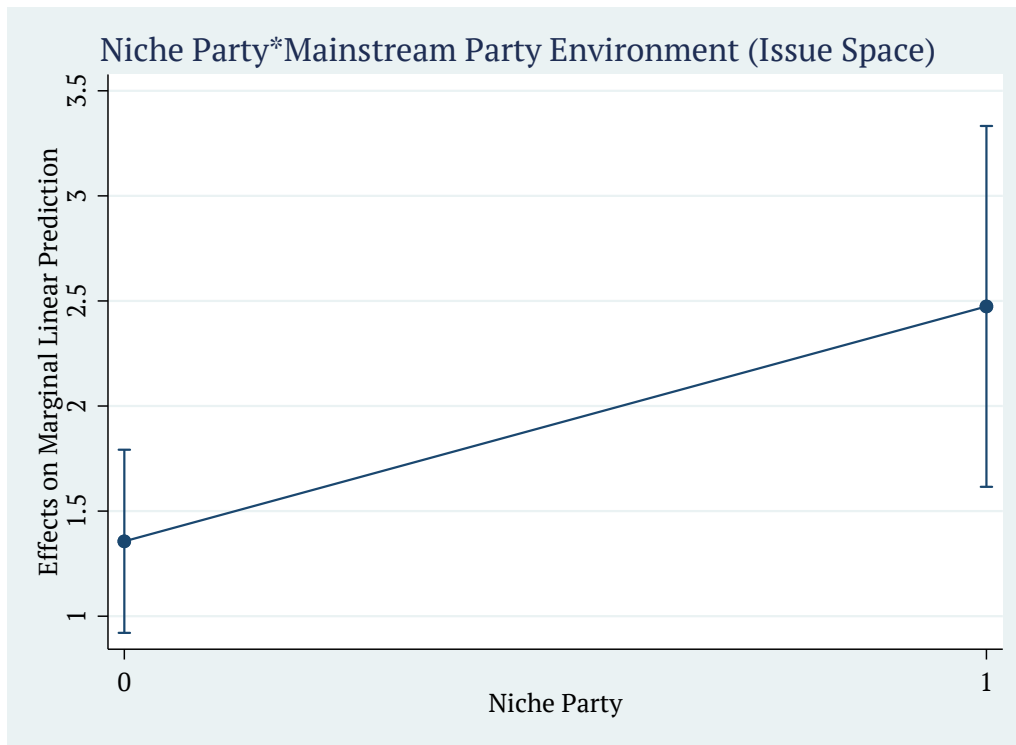


Figure 5.9: Model 9 Marginal Effects

mainstream focal parties in their collusive responses to mainstream position changes on the issue, though not at all in the direction suggested by the niche party literature.

Finally, model 10, presented in table 5.5, examines whether disaggregating niche party type uncovers a lower level of collusion among green parties on environmental issues. The niche party literature would suggest that because this issue is foundational to green party positions, these groups should resist colluding with mainstream parties on this topic. The expectation is that by not clumping all of the niche parties together into the same category, we may uncover partial evidence that green parties are ignoring mainstream party position changes on environmental issues because green parties remain connected to voters on these foundational topics. The evidence should be interpreted with some caution though because by interacting the party type with mainstream party position changes we are able to determine how these party types respond to mainstream parties, but not if the party type changes responsiveness to partisans (an issue that should be considered in further research), thus we can only access whether party type changes collusive responses to rivals.

Table 5.5: Party Policy Position Foundational Issue the Environment ESS

	(Model 10) Foundational Issue
Mean Mainstream Party	1.357*** (0.323)
Mean Partisan	0.378*** (0.0950)
Mean Median Voter	-0.115 (0.125)
Mainstream Party Change	1.173*** (0.154)
Special Issue	3.729* (1.571)
Green	6.985*** (1.533)
Nationalist	-0.520 (1.305)
Ethnic/Regional	-0.0547 (1.271)
Special Issue × Mainstream Party Change	-1.069 (0.929)
Green × Mainstream Party Change	-1.745** (0.598)
Nationalist × Mainstream Party Change	1.335* (0.520)
Ethnic/Regional × Mainstream Party Change	2.277*** (0.677)
Partisan Voter Change	0.0247 (0.0307)
Median Voter Change	-0.0644 (0.0610)
Constant	-57.70*** (17.35)
Country Constant	0.352 (1.278)
Party Constant	26.32*** (2.998)
Residuals: Exponential Constant	7.557*** (0.441)
Observations	861
<i>AIC</i>	4588.3
<i>BIC</i>	4674.0

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

When it comes to the interaction between niche party category and responsiveness to mainstream party changes on the issue, it is again best to examine the marginal effects of mainstream party change on focal party position across the party family categories. Examining the marginal effects presented in figure 5.10, mainstream focal parties are highly responsive to shifts in the other mainstream parties on environmental issues, again moving 1.17 points in response to a mainstream party shift of 1 point. Special issue and green parties show no response to mainstream party changes on this issue, while nationalist and ethnic/regional parties show strong responses to shifts in mainstream party positions. This means that when it comes to shifting in conjunction with mainstream parties on environmental issues, green parties and special issue parties resist these changes, while nationalist and ethnic/regional parties respond collusively. Comparing this to the previous model, it is clear that the niche focal party response that was found to be greater than mainstream focal party response was driven by nationalist and ethnic/regional parties. The findings in model 10 confirm the expectations that niche parties may behave differently than expected from the cartel party theory, if the issue that may induce collusion is foundational to their party platform. These findings are further confirmed by the negative interaction of green party with mainstream party change presented in table 5.5 – when mainstream parties move one point on the issue of the environment and the focal party is green, the response should be negative (- 1.75) compared to mainstream focal parties⁸. Overall, there remains no relationship between focal parties and voter preference changes on the environment, so although this shows that green parties resist collusive responses to mainstream party changes on the environment, the overarching trend is to ignore voter preferences. This model is unable to tell us whether green parties specifically respond to voters on the issue, but this should certainly be explored further in other research.

Mean mainstream party positions remains highly predictive of the position of mainstream parties on the issue of the environment, over 3.5 times more influential than mean partisan positions. Both special issue and green parties are predicted to be more supportive of environmental issues, compared to mainstream parties, while nationalist and ethnic/regional parties show no significant

⁸ Mainstream focal parties are the reference category in Model 10.

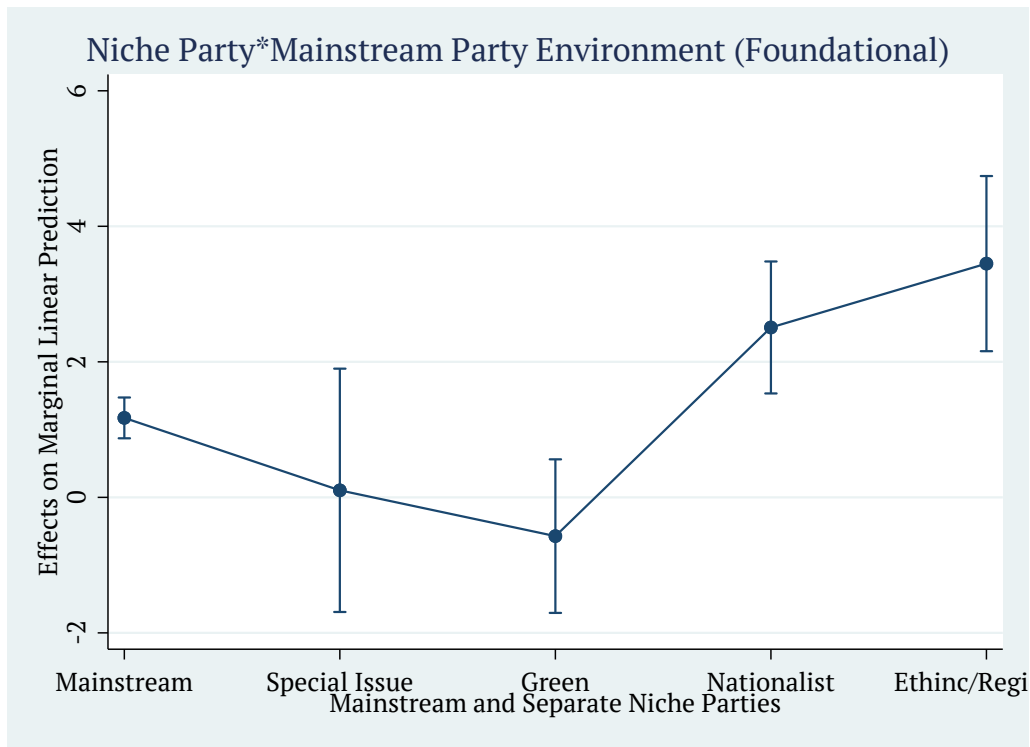


Figure 5.10: Model 10 Marginal Effects

relationship to predicting environmental positions. Interestingly, this suggests that on average, ethnic/regional and nationalist parties are not necessarily more or less supportive of environment, but when it comes to mainstream parties changing their positions on the issue, they willing to collude by responding to these movements.

In total this suggests that mainstream party change on the topic of the environment influences focal party behavior if the party is mainstream, nationalist or ethnic/regional. Green parties do not seem to be behaving collusively on this topic, as well as special issue parties. This suggests that the foundational nature of environmental issues may be influencing green party behavior that maintains representative connections with voters, though this model does not test this directly. Though only a preliminary test of this possibility, foundational issues may prove difficult for niche parties to collude with mainstream parties over, thus representation may remain intact on these issues.

5.6 Conclusion

Overall, the findings show that mainstream parties behave collusively when it comes to their interactions with rival mainstream parties. Consistent with the niche party literature suggesting that party type should lead to different party behaviors, indeed, mainstream parties are consistently drawn toward collusion. Niche parties, on the other hand, show a variety of collusive responses that seem to depend on the party and possibly the issue at hand, suggesting that there may be issues over which niche parties find collusion attractive, while other issues may be more problematic.

The economic dimension models suggest that mainstream parties are drawn toward collusion, producing high responses across both models when mainstream parties change their positions on these issues. The results for niche party responsiveness on these issues is mixed across models, with the ISSP data showing a null response to mainstream party changes, suggesting that there are too few data points to make this finding reliable. Conversely, the ESS data, shows nearly an identical response across party types, suggesting that when it comes to this issue, party type may not change collusive tendencies (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009). It is possible that niche parties do not face the same types of punishment from their voters on these issues because they are not the primary focuses of these organizations. In other words, their voters may be less concerned with moderation on the economic dimension, whereas moderation on a foundational issue might lead to a vote loss for the niche party. Overall, these models show that mainstream parties are more collusive than their niche counterparts, consistent with the niche party literature (Adams et al. 2006, Ezrow et al. 2010). Though the ESS data suggests that party type may not matter, it is clear from the multidimensional issues that niche parties do behave differently, but the issue makes crucial differences in collusive tendencies.

The first issue of equality also shows that party types behave similarly in their collusive responses on this issue. Both mainstream and niche focal parties show high responses to mainstream party changes on the issue, suggesting that when it comes to this topic niche parties experience the same systemic pressures or incentives to collude, rather than remain representative of their voters. Conversely, issue of EU integration suggests that on this very specific issue and only for niche fo-

cal parties, representation may not be broken. This issue shows that niche focal parties are failing to respond to mainstream party changes on this issue, while mainstream focal parties show high responsiveness. This means that although the previous chapter found only partial collusion for the issue of EU integration, this representative response may to be driven by the responsiveness of niche parties, while mainstream parties are participating in collusion. Further research is necessary to determine whether niche parties are what is driving this representative connection that remains on this issue.

Finally, the issue of the environment shows that niche parties are actually more collusive, both in response and issue space convergence, compared to mainstream focal parties, though by separating the niche party category, we are able to see that this exaggerated response from niche focal parties is driven by nationalists and ethnic/regional parties. Green parties and special issue parties fight the collusive tendencies of the other parties in the system for this issue, failing to respond to mainstream parties in a collusive manner. Overall, this suggests that niche parties may remain connected to voters, or at least avoid colluding with mainstream parties, but that it may depend on the specific niche party and issue. This does not directly conflict with the niche party literature, rather these findings merely suggest that treating all niche parties the same on all issues may be problematic. In the same way that the niche party literature has argued that treating all parties as monolithic could distort findings, it may also be true that different niche parties may produce conflicting responses.

In the end, the models remain indicative of collusion for mainstream focal parties, though the findings for niche party behavior seems dependent on issues and even specific niche party types. In every model, when mainstream parties change on the issues, mainstream focal parties respond, while ignoring voters preference changes. Niche focal parties and mainstream focal parties show similar response patterns to mainstream party change on the left/right dimension and the issue of equality, and show even greater responses to mainstream party change on the issue of the environment. The models testing EU integration suggests that niche focal parties achieve partisan representation, even though mainstream focal parties are partially collusive on this issue. Though

green parties and special issue parties are resistant to collusion on environmental issues, this chapter continues to show that cartel expectations hold for mainstream focal parties, because across all issues these parties remain more connected to their mainstream party rivals than voters. Though there is further research required to determine whether specific niche parties remain connected to their voters on some issues, it is clear that mainstream focal parties are participating in collusion across both multidimensional issues and the left/right economic dimension.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

At its core, the cartel party theory suggests that representation has been fundamentally undermined. Parties, no longer responding to voters, are predicted to collude with their rivals to both limit competition and manipulate the issues presented to voters in order to force voter stability (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009). Under increasingly complicated political conditions, Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) suggest that parties will have little choice but to adopt these tactics, because representation and responsiveness on the issues becomes too risky. Motivated by rational self-preservation to maintain their positions of power, parties are expected to break voter-party linkages and begin to work together (Downs 1957, Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009).

In the end, this inter-party collusion suggested by the cartel party theory has negative implications for representation, suggesting that colluding parties will work together to undermine political competition – a line of logic which presents the core expectations about inter-party collusion. As outlined in the second chapter, it is expected that parties will present two characteristics if pure collusion is present. First, parties will become unresponsive to their voters, satisfying neither median nor partisan preferences. Second, parties will begin working together, and in doing so will respond to policy positions of rival parties in attempt to limit political competition. These two conditions define collusive behavior because they signal that voter preferences are not being met and that parties are no longer attempting to differentiate themselves from their rivals. Using these characteristics, this dissertation presented a typology of conditions expected, ranging from pure collusion to pure representation. These theoretical distinctions allow us to answer the first central question: are focal parties responding to rival parties, while ignoring their voters on the issues? This first approach tests whether parties are coordinating to limit inter-party competition, taking the theory one

step further though, it was suggested that advanced cartelization should show manipulated issues spaces presented to voters.

Collusion is the most provocative assertion made by Katz and Mair (1995, 2009), but why would parties who hope to gain majorities in power work together and adopt the same policies? Because structuring the choices presented to voters minimizes the risk that voters may switch their vote. If all parties fail to respond to voter changes – no party offers a place for voters to express their preference – parties are able to avoid the perils of taking a position, one that could ultimately alienate some voters at the cost of satisfying others. The implication undergirding this argument is that the mechanism through which parties are hoping to force voter stability is through the manipulation of the issue space. It was expected that parties should strive for issue space stability or convergence if their goal was to produce artificial voter loyalty, suggesting levels of issue space coordination under highly collusive conditions as either perfectly coordinated or converging.

The purpose of this dissertation was to address these two questions: were parties colluding and how were parties coordinating their issue spaces? Though the findings have some particularities that should be discussed, two overarching conclusions emerge, suggesting that inter-party collusion and issue space coordination appear present. First, on every issue examined collusion is evident, particularly for mainstream focal party behavior, and inter-party collusion was higher on multidimensional issues. Second, issue spaces are clearly being manipulated by parties showing coordination to limit the policies presented to voters, even if the coordination was imperfect. The following discussion will first address the totality of the findings regarding collusion, followed by a review of the results regarding issue space coordination. Finally, some concerns with the research will be presented, before the implications of the findings will be discussed.

6.1 Collusion

Collusion occurs when parties behave in a manner that breaks representative connections with voters, while increasing responsiveness to rival parties; these two behaviors allow for a party to be

categorized as purely collusive, because their behaviors are no longer connected to the voters they purport to represent. Consistent with the implications for the cartel party theory, this dissertation uncovers evidence to support the emergence of cartelistic collusion.

There are three centrally important findings regarding collusion, reviewed in table 6.1, that were presented within this dissertation. First, collusion was present on each of the issues examined, and most often, this collusion was pure, with focal parties showing no dynamic response to voter preference on the issues. Second, multidimensional issues prompted highly collusive responses, compared to the economic dimension. Finally, mainstream parties were consistently purely collusive across all of the issues except EU integration.

Table 6.1: Collusion vs. Representation Findings

Collusion	Mainstream Focal Parties	Niche Focal Parties
Economic Dimension ¹	Pure Collusion	Pure Collusion
Equality ²	Pure Collusion	Pure Collusion
EU ³	Partial Collusion	Pure Representation
Environment ⁴	Pure Collusion	Pure Collusion

This dissertation tests multidimensional issues and the left/right economic dimension, with the expectation being that parties should be drawn toward collusion on these complicated topics, while positions on the economic dimension should be foundational and stable. Consistent with these expectations, this work finds that the issues of the environment and equality shows significantly higher collusive responses, compared to the left/right dimension, though pure collusive tendencies were found on the economic dimension as well. These purely collusive responses suggest that when it comes to the left/right dimension, issues of equality and the environment, focal parties are colluding with one another, showing that the dynamic relationship often assumed to exist between parties and their voters is indeed undermined.

¹ β Mainstream Party Change - Mainstream Focal Party: ISSP (7.76), ESS (8.87), Niche Focal Party: ISSP (null), ESS (9.59)

² β Mainstream Party Change - Mainstream Focal Party: (0.8), Niche Focal Party: (0.84)

³ β Mainstream Party Change - Mainstream Focal Party: (0.7), Niche Focal Party: (null)

⁴ β Mainstream Party Change - Mainstream Focal Party: (1.17), Niche Focal Party: (1.55) (null for green and special issue niche parties)

Also consistent with the expectations, mainstream focal parties show consistently collusive responses to mainstream party changes on the issues, while ignoring voter preference changes, signaling the coordination between mainstream rivals to work together in a manner that undermines representative connections to voters. Though these results in total are alarming for the state of representation, there were two minor findings that suggest the necessity of further research, but also provide opportunities for continued representation, though these connections seem dependent on the issue and the type of party.

The issue of EU integration suggests that voter preference changes are not being completely disregarded by focal parties, presenting a case of partial collusion/representation. In chapter 4 the findings show that focal parties were responding to mainstream parties primarily, but that when voters changed their positions there was a response from focal parties. Albeit the response to voters from focal parties was 1/14 the the magnitude of the shift compared to mainstream party changes on the issue, there remains a relationship with partisan voters that should be considered. The 5th chapter shows that party type may influence the response and suggests further research on this anomaly may be warranted. When party type was interacted with mainstream party change on the issue, it was clear that mainstream focal parties were showing highly collusive responses, but niche parties response was null. This suggests that if niche focal parties are not responding to mainstream party changes, but are continuing to respond to partisan voters. This alludes to the possibility, though does not directly test it within the model, that mainstream focal parties are colluding, while niche focal parties may be maintaining intact representative connections on this issue. Clearly, there is more to be studied within this relationship, suggesting that this issue may present different incentives for parties depending on their type.

The second hopeful finding for representation was presented in chapter 5, testing whether foundational issues may lead parties to resist collusive tendencies. To review, chapter 4 found that when it came to focal party collusion on the issue of the environment, pure collusion appeared strong, while increasing over time and presenting a converging issue space, all very negative findings for the state of representation. These results, though consistent with expectations under the cartel

framework, were somewhat alarming. The 5th chapter hoped to address this strongly collusive relationship by testing the possibility that niche focal parties may show diminished responses, assuming that the strong relationship was a result of highly collusive mainstream party responses. Counter to the expectations, the issue of the environment showed even *higher* responses if the focal party was niche. These findings suggested that there was a relationship being obscured by the categorization as it stood, leading to the possibility that party responsiveness may be dependent on the more specific type of niche party. Because green parties should find environmental issues foundational to their party platforms, it was argued that these specific parties should resist collusion on these topics. Consistent with these expectations, when the interaction was changed into a categorical variable, considering all of the niche party types independently, it is clear that green and special issue parties avoid collusion on the issue of the environment, consistent with foundational expectations. This means that when it comes to the issue of the environment, green and special issue parties resist collusion on this topic, though it is important to note that this model does not show that these parties are representatively connected to voters on this issue.

In total, the findings suggest that pure collusion is evident on the left/right issue dimension, issues of equality and the environment. The issue of EU integration presents partially collusive tendencies, while none of the issues show that voters are being represented, rather, for the most part, when voters evolve on issues, parties are not responding representatively to these changes, with only the two minor exceptions discussed. The most collusive party type, as was expected, are mainstream parties, showing highly collusive responses across all of the issues. Niche parties show resistance to collusion on the issue of EU integration and green and special issue parties resist these temptations on the issue of the environment. Though the findings are overwhelmingly in support of the cartel expectations regarding inter-party collusion, there remain some areas of hope for niche party behaviors on specific issues. The following section will review the findings on issue space manipulation, before moving forward to the opportunities for further research and overall implications.

6.2 Issue Spaces

The issues that are presented to voters and the positions taken on these topics should, in a robust representative democracy, be connected to voter preferences and issue salience at the time, thus allowing voters a wide array of choices, allowing them to vote for the party that best represents their interests. This means that issue spaces that are presented to voters should be fluid, adjusting over time in direct relation to the changing emphasis and saliency patterns expressed by the populous. Advanced stages of the cartelization process suggest that parties, in their attempts to force voter stability across elections, will present manipulated issues spaces that are either stable or converging (Blyth and Katz 205). These behaviors show as distinct disregard for representative connections and behavioral attempts to force voter loyalty.

When it comes to issue space coordination as a sign of advanced cartelistic behaviors, the preceding chapters were able to address this question from a variety of angles, reviewed in table 6.2. Consistent with the expectation that the left/right economic dimension should present the most difficult place for parties to collude, chapter 3 shows that issue space coordination was imperfect, meaning that although the issue space is technically expanding, this expansion is meaningless because it is disconnected from changes in voter sentiments.

Table 6.2: Issue Space Findings

	Mainstream Focal Parties	Niche Focal Parties
Economic Dimension ⁵	imperfect coordination	imperfect coordination
Equality ⁶	nearly perfect coordination	nearly perfect coordination
EU ⁷	imperfect coordination, meaningful expansion	meaningful expansion
Environment ⁸	convergence	convergence

Inline with expectations, the multidimensional issues of equality and the environment in chapter 4 show nearly perfect coordination and issue space convergence, signaling that parties are indeed manipulating the issues being presented to voters. The topic of EU integration shows the most

⁵ β Mainstream Party Change - Mainstream Focal Party: (0.4), Niche Focal Party: (0.43)

⁶ β Mainstream Party Change - Mainstream Focal Party: (0.85), Niche Focal Party: (1.07)

⁷ β Mainstream Party Change - Mainstream Focal Party: (0.66), Niche Focal Party: (null)

⁸ β Mainstream Party Change - Mainstream Focal Party: (1.35), Niche: (2.47)

promising results for maintained representation. Again, although the magnitude of the relationship for partisan responsiveness on the issue of EU integration is low, this maintained connection means that the imperfect coordination exhibited by focal parties must be considered possibly meaningful because we are unable to determine whether this expansion is connected to partisan voters or mainstream party changes. When considering the findings from chapter 5, it is clear that the issue space expansion that exists for niche parties, because it is disconnected from mainstream party change, is meaningful and thus representative. Together these findings suggest that yet again, the issue of EU integration appears to be of emerging importance in understanding maintained connection between niche focal parties and voters.

In total, there appears to be issue space manipulation, but the ability for parties to coordinate these efforts in a manner that could ensure voter stability is much more advanced on the multidimensional issues of equality and the environment. Presumably because the issues have been areas of collusion since they became politically salient, there is little room for coordination improvements on these issues. The issue space expansion connected to party positions on the left/right dimension suggest fairly imperfect coordination, alluding to the possibility that as time passes this should improve, which also presents a possible area of further inquiry. Finally, the issue of EU integration shows issue space expansion and because this is connected, albeit weakly, to partisan voter preference changes, this expansion is meaningful for representation. Together, these findings show that issue space coordination is advanced on the multidimensional issues of equality and the environment, but that EU integration shows some hope for representational issue spaces. When it comes to the left/right issue dimension, coordination is imperfect, but because this issue space expansion is unrelated to voter preferences, it is meaningless for representation. In total, it is clear the parties are manipulating the issue spaces that are presented to voters across a variety of issues. Before moving on to discuss the implications of these findings, opportunities for further research should be discussed.

6.3 Further Research

Though there are many directions this research could move forward from, one of the overarching challenges within this dissertation concern the findings regarding time, which if considered more carefully could offer greater insight into the evolutionary component suggested by the cartel party theory. As was argued previously, the most basic interpretation of the cartel party theory would suggest that as time passes, parties should become cartelistic. This is implied by the deterministic quality of the argument presented by Katz and Mair (1995, 2009), which suggests that as party systems evolve, they ultimately acquire the features that induce collusive behaviors – increased complexity, cost, and an inability to spend to maintain voter loyalties. To test the basic premise, chapters 3 and 4 considered time as an interaction, assuming that for the left/right dimension this should show an increase over time and that for the multidimensional issues this should be either stable and consistently high levels of collusion for the duration of the data. Contrary to expectations, the left/right dimension showed that, at best, the influence of time was stable. Though consistent with expectations, the issue of equality showed a stable, yet high level of collusion, while the environment showed an increase over time. The EU findings were provocative yet again, showing that the trend was increasing as time passes, but for more recent years, the findings become insignificant.

In retrospect, using a time interaction to bluntly approximate the evolution of a system was misguided. Though the passage of time, in the theory, lead to cartelization, as suggested by the authors (Katz and Mair 1995, Katz and Mair 2009). It is crucial that the starting point needs to be comparable for each of the party systems. As was discussed in chapter 3, regarding the ISSP findings, that Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) would argue that the evolutionary stage a system finds itself in would change the possibility that cartelization might emerge. It is clear now, that the stage in democratic development should be considered more carefully, rather than merely instituting a linear time variable. In other words, the maturity of the system should influence the possibility that collusion and cartelistic behaviors may emerge, suggesting that newer democracies should be unlikely places to find such democratic party evolution, though eventually it should emerge if the

evolutionary component is correct. Therefore, party systems should be coded to distinguish the ages of their democratic institutions, allowing for newer democracies to show more recent collusion, while older democracies should exhibit a longer history of this behavior. Therefore, further research should consider the stages a system is at in their democratic transitions more carefully, rather than assuming a linear relationship with the passage of time and the proclivity to cartelize. The final section will review the broad implications of these findings and final conclusions about the study.

6.4 Implications and Conclusions

This dissertation began from a mere personal observation – parties in advanced democracies seemed to be facing a discontented electorate, increasing support for niche and populist movements. Seemingly fueled by growing political distrust among voters, there appeared to be a disconnect between voter grievances and party responsiveness to these issues. The research on the growth of this populist phenomenon shows that indeed there are strong connections between economic grievances and political discontent expressed by populist voters (Spruyt, Keppens, and Van Droogenbroeck 2016, Hobolt and Tilley 2016, Essletzbichler, Disslbacher and Moser, 2017, Spruyt, Keppens, and Van Droogenbroeck 2016, Rooduijn, van der Brug, and de Lange 2015), but what is fueling these negative sentiments toward governing institutions and mainstream parties in the first place?

The cartel party theory presented the perfect framework for understanding why parties may be to blame for their declining support, arguing that these negative opinions of the government and vulnerable positions voters find themselves in might actually be fueled by the lackluster performance of parties to aid their constituencies. In other words, parties may have done a poor job of representing their voters and their voters are finally defecting. Using this theory as the central focus to explain the motivations and behaviors of parties and how incentives may have changed in a manner that has undermined representation, this dissertation asks: are parties colluding with their rivals and ignoring their voters and might this explain the negative views expressed by voters about the system?

The findings suggest broadly that voter-party linkages are not performing as the representation literature expect, once you consider the issue positions of rival parties. No longer is voter-party congruence high over time, as previous research has found (Powell 2000, Adams 2004, Dalton and McAllister 2011, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012), but parties appear to be responding to the changing issue positions of rivals, rather than voters. These collusive tendencies are higher on multidimensional issues and mainstream parties show the highest proclivity to collude. Overall, consistent with cartel expectations, mainstream parties appear to be colluding with their rivals and the issue spaces that are presented to voters seem to be manipulated and unrepresentative of the changing perspectives of voters.

Together, the findings presented in this dissertation suggest an explanation for the growing discontent we see across the aging democratic world, one that does not remove responsibility from the parties involved. The rise in political discontent and negative views of governmental efficacy, often found in the literature on rising populism (Spruyt, Keppens, and Van Droogenbroeck 2016, Rooduijn, van der Brug, and de Lange 2015), may be driven by a failure to represent that is a central feature of a cartel party system. The findings presented here suggest that parties are showing signs of collusive behavior across a variety of issues and manipulating the issue spaces presented to voters. These behaviors undermine representative connections between parties and voters, and it becomes clear why voters might increasingly believe that the political system had little influence on the behavior of government and thus begin to vote for parties that reside on the political fringes.

In the end, an alternate explanation for growing niche and populist support becomes possible. The story becomes not one about a diversifying electorate who's behavior has challenged political dynamics, but rather one that questions whether or not parties are to blame for the negative views of their performance. Further research is required, but these preliminary results suggest that representation in advanced democracies may not be as robust as previously found.

Appendix A

Appendix

Table A.1: ISSP with Party Identification Question, LR Question and Manifesto Data

Country	Years	Data Points
Australia	92, 93, 96, 06, 09	18
Germany	87, 90	8
Great Britain	85, 87, 90, 91, 93, 96, 99, 00, 06, 09, 10	39
USA	87, 90, 92, 93, 96, 99, 00, 06, 09, 10	20
Austria	2000	4
Ireland	2006	6
Norway	96, 00	14
Switzerland	87, 96, 06, 09, 10	38
Sweden	99, 00, 06, 09, 10	35
Bulgaria	92, 93, 96	11
New Zealand	92, 93, 96, 00	14
Canada	93, 96, 00, 06	18
France	96, 99, 09	16
Japan	93, 96, 00, 06, 09	23
Russia	2009	4
Finland	2010	8
Croatia	06, 09, 10	8
Korea	06, 09	4
Latvia	06, 09, 10	9
Portugal	00, 06, 09	12
Belgium	2010	8
Cyprus	2009	5
Estonia	2009	5
Iceland	2009	5
Lithuania	09, 10	10
Turkey	09, 10	7
Spain	2010	8

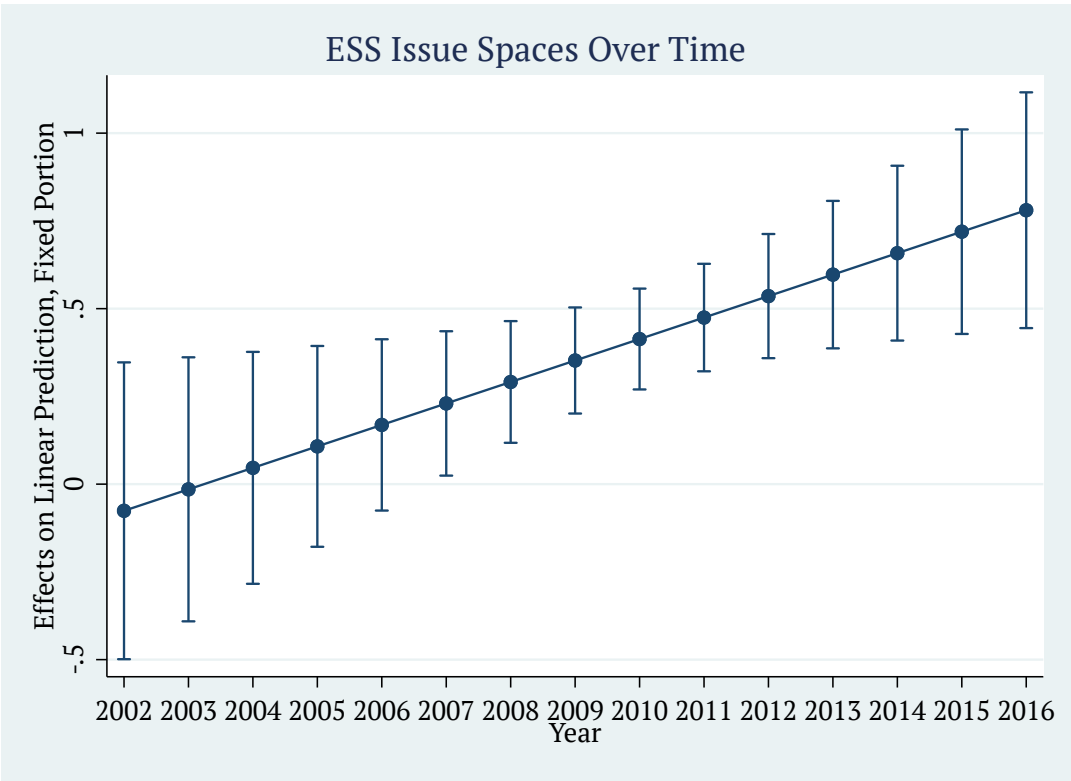


Figure A.1: Chapter 3 footnote 11

Table A.2: ESS with LR Question and Manifesto Data

Country	Years	Data Points
Germany	02 - 16	39
Great Britain	02 - 16	34
Austria	02 - 16	13
Hungary	02 - 06	13
Italy	02, 10, 12	17
Ireland	02 - 16	45
Norway	02 - 08	28
Switzerland	02 - 10	44
Sweden	02 - 14	52
Slovenia	02 - 10	32
Bulgaria	06 - 12	14
Czech Republic	02, 04, 08 - 12	25
France	02 - 16	53
Poland	02 - 10	23
Russia	06 - 10	6
Denmark	02 - 10	41
Finland	02 - 10	40
Croatia	08 - 10	4
Portugal	02 10	21
Belgium	202 -10	46
Cyprus	06 - 10	18
Estonia	04 - 14	24
Iceland	04, 12	10
Lithuania	10 - 12	13
Slovakia	04 - 12	28
Turkey	04, 06	6
Ukraine	04 - 06	9
Spain	02 - 14	62
Netherlands	02 - 12	52
Israel	02, 08 - 14	37
Luxembourg	02 - 04	10

Table A.3: ESS with Environment Question and Manifesto Data

Country	Years	Data Points
Germany	02 - 16	39
GB	02 - 14	34
Austria	02 - 06	13
Hungary	02 - 06, 10	15
Italy	12	9
Ireland	02 - 16	45
Norway	02 - 08	28
Switzerland	02 - 10	44
Sweden	02 - 14	52
Slovenia	02 - 10	32
Bulgaria	06 - 12	14
Czech Republic	02 - 04, 08 - 12	25
France	02 - 16	53
Poland	02 - 16	23
Russia	06 - 10	6
Denmark	02 - 10	41
Finland	02 - 10	40
Croatia	08 - 10	4
Portugal	02 - 10	21
Belgium	02 - 10	46
Cyprus	06 - 10	18
Estonia	04 - 14	24
Iceland	04, 12	10
Lithuania	10 - 12	13
Slovakia	04 - 12	28
Turkey	04, 08	6
Ukraine	04 - 06	9
Spain	02 - 14	62
Netherlands	02 - 12	52
Israel	02, 08 - 12	37
Greece	02 - 04,10	13
Luxembourg	04	5

Table A.4: ESS with Equality Question and Manifesto Data

Germany	02 - 16	39
GB	02 - 14	34
Austria	02 - 06	13
Hungary	02 - 06, 10	15
Italy	12	9
Ireland	02 - 16	45
Norway	02 - 08	28
Switzerland	02 - 10	44
Sweden	02 - 14	52
Slovenia	02 - 10	32
Bulgaria	06 - 12	14
Czech Republic	02 - 04, 08 - 12	25
France	02 - 16	53
Poland	02 - 16	23
Russia	06 - 10	6
Denmark	02 - 10	41
Finland	02 - 10	40
Croatia	08 - 10	4
Portugal	02 - 10	21
Belgium	02 - 10	46
Cyprus	06 - 10	18
Estonia	04 - 14	24
Iceland	04, 12	10
Lithuania	10 - 12	13
Slovakia	04 - 12	28
Turkey	04, 08	6
Ukraine	04 - 06	9
Spain	02 - 14	62
Netherlands	02 - 12	52
Israel	02, 08 - 12	37
Greece	02 - 04, 10	13
Luxembourg	04	5

Table A.5: ESS with EU Question and Manifesto Data

Country	Years	Data Points
Germany	04 - 08, 12 - 16	30
GB	04 - 08, 12 - 14	28
Austria	04 - 06	9
Hungary	04 - 06	8
Italy	12	9
Ireland	04 - 08, 12 - 16	34
Norway	04 - 08	21
Switzerland	04 - 08	26
Sweden	04 - 08, 12 - 14	37
Slovenia	04 - 08	19
Bulgaria	06 -08, 12	10
Czech Republic	04, 08, 12	14
France	04 - 08, 12 - 16	40
Poland	04 - 08	13
Russia	06 - 08	4
Denmark	04 - 08	24
Finland	04 - 08	24
Croatia	08	2
Portugal	04 - 08	13
Belgium	04 - 08	29
Cyprus	06 - 08	12
Estonia	04 - 08, 12 - 14	19
Iceland	04, 12	10
Lithuania	12	7
Slovakia	04 - 08, 12	22
Turkey	04, 08	6
Ukraine	04 - 06	9
Spain	04 - 08, 12 - 14	41
Netherlands	04 - 08, 12	35
Israel	08, 12 - 14	21
Greece	04	3
Luxembourg	04	5

Table A.6: Question Wording

Data Source	Question Wording	Concept Captured	Years Available	
ESS	Political System Allows People to have a say in what the government does		2016	
ISSP	Is it the responsibility of the government to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor	Left/right Economic Dimension	1987, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2009, 2010	1990, 1993, 1999, 2006, 2012
ESS	"Using this card, please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels "	Left/right Economic Dimension	2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, 2016	2004, 2008, 2012
Manifesto	Right/Left Measure coded by the Manifesto Project	Left/right Economic Dimension	1920-2018	
ESS	is it like you to support caring for the environment and nature	Support for Environmental Policies	2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, 2016	2004, 2008, 2012
Manifesto	"Environmental Protection preservation of natural resources countryside, forests national parks animal rights"	Support for Environmental Policies	1920-2018	
ESS	Important that people are treated equally and have equal opportunities	Support for Equality	2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, 2016	2004, 2008, 2012
Manifesto	"Equality: Postive special protections for underprivileged groups class barriers, distribution of natural resources end discrimination "	Support for Equality	1920-2018	
ESS	European Union: European unification go further or gone too far	Support for the EU	2004, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2016	2006, 2010
Manifesto	EU/Community Positive (minus) EU/Community Negative	Support for the EU	1920-2018	

Appendix B

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