The Party Road to Representation: Unequal Responsiveness in Party Platforms

Wouter Schakel and Brian Burgoon

Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR)
University of Amsterdam

Abstract

This paper explores a major road to substantive representation in democracies, by clarifying whether demands of rich and poor citizens get taken up in the party platforms of political parties. Doing so constitutes a substantial broadening and deepening of our understanding of substantive representation – broadening the countries, issue-areas and years that form the empirical basis for judging whether democracies manifest unequal representation; and deepening the detailed process of representation by clarifying a key mechanism connecting societal demands to policy outcomes. The paper hypothesizes that party systems in general will respond more strongly to wealthy than to poor segments of a polity. It also hypothesizes that left parties will more faithfully represent poorer and less significantly represent richer citizens than do right parties. We find substantial support for these expectations in a new dataset that combines multi-country, multi-issue-area, multi-wave survey data with data on party platforms for 36 democracies.

"The rich invariably have a considerably shorter road to travel than the poor, to say nothing of the fact that the stretch of road that the rich are spared is often the roughest and most difficult."

– Gaetano Mosca (1939, 58)

Introduction

Part of the contemporary backlash against mainstream, established elites, parties and institutions – including retreat from the democratic institutions themselves – may be provoked by a common view that nominally representative political institutions have not in practice been very representative to large parts of the public. The intuition is that parties and governments have pushed unpopular policies down the throats of citizens, while accommodating the demands of the rich. A substantial body of research empirically assessing substantive representation – the degree to which a political system takes positions and policies that reflect the preferences of the governed – has found systematic patterns of representation that bear out such intuition. Studies focused mainly on the US context (Bartels 2016; Gilens 2012; Page and Gilens 2017), but also some more recent studies focused on or comparing other political settings (Schakel, Burgoon, and Hakhverdian 2018), have found strong signs of unequal representation: the expressed policy preferences of richer voters tend to get mirrored in subsequent actual policy changes, while the preferences of poorer voters tend not to show up in subsequent policy changes.

Such portraits of unequal substantive representation, however, are incomplete in terms of both their breadth and depth, in ways that leave ambiguous the extent of the representation problem and mechanisms underlying it. In terms of *breadth*, the studies remain modest in terms of the cross-country and over-time exploration of substantive representation – with the few studies providing meaningful comparison across national settings still (by dint of data-limitations) focused on particular, limited policy areas (Bartels 2015; Peters and Ensink 2015). This makes it unclear whether the unequal responsiveness revealed to obtain in the few countries to have been studied in multi-issue terms, such as the US, applies to a broader palette of institutional settings providing in principle stronger footholds for more equal representation of the poor, for a range of political issues (from redistribution, to defense, to environmental regulation). In terms of *depth*, the focus on correlational links between actual policy changes on the one hand and policy preferences across the income spectrum on the other leaves unclear what the basis of unequal responsiveness might be. The candidate

mechanisms are many, including party-political representation of the wealthy rather than poor (Bartels 2016), or interest-group lobbying and money-in-politics by and for the wealthy, not the poor (Gilens 2012). Systematic exploration of such possibilities has been thin, however, particularly in cross-country and over-time settings, making it unclear what the basis of the responsiveness problem is and hence where to focus one's energies to reform towards improved representation.

This paper is an attempt to provide a broadening and deepening of our understanding of substantive representation by exploring the extent to which political preferences of rich and poor voters actually get reflected in subsequent party platforms on various policy areas in a wide range of democracies. Given the nominal role of political parties in promoting political representation in most democracies, exploring responsiveness in party positioning should clarify the links between opinion and policy outputs – and is an obvious place to nurture, or target political action to improve, substantive representation. Furthermore, exploring responsiveness in party positioning is possible given the existence of high-quality and systematic data to compare party platforms on a wide range of political issues over time and space – allowing investigation of representation in a broader array of countries and years than has been possible by looking at basic policy outcomes.

Focused on links between party positioning and public attitudes, the paper develops several hypotheses. The first hypothesis focuses on political responsiveness averaged across party platforms to the demands of rich and poor citizens in a polity. We hypothesize that the structural and instrumental privileges that wealthier voters command in a polity should lead to a pattern where parties on average respond more to the wants of wealthier than of poorer voters. Our second set of hypotheses move beyond the pooling of all parties and focus instead on responsiveness of particular party families. We hypothesize that left and right party families can be expected to mirror the expressed wants of some voters more than others, in line with the respective constituencies of these party families. Hence, left-oriented parties can be expected to more strongly take up or mirror the wants of poorer than of richer voters, whereas right-oriented parties can be expected to more strongly champion the wants of richer than poorer voters. Even if differences in party families don't manifest themselves in such strong contrasts, we in any event expect that any privileged representation of richer voters (poorer voters) should be more modest (stronger) among social democratic than among conservative/right parties.

We test these expectations in empirical study that matches data on individual-level public opinion to party-year data on party platforms. Drawing on a range of multi-country

survey instruments – including multiple waves of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP), Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) and Asiabarometer Survey (ABS) – we gauge support, across various points on a country-year's income spectrum, for a range of policy issues ranging from education to environmental regulation. These measures of individual-level support in a given country-issue-year can then be matched to measures of political parties' electoral platforms in that country-issue-year. To do so, we draw on the Manifesto Project Database (MPD), gauging a party platform's attention to a given issue and direction of proposed policy development. Given the reach of these two datasets, we can cover a substantial period of time, 1985 through 2015, in a substantial swath of 36 countries – a larger empirical sample than previous studies of unequal representation.

This investigation provides substantial empirical support for both sets of expectations about responsiveness in party platforms. We find in general that the average weight of public opinion tends to get taken-up or at least mirrored in party positions, averaged across parties and issues. We also find, however, that parties mirror or take-up the preferences of wealthier respondents more than those of poorer respondents. Focused on the patterns across party families, we find clear differences in the responsiveness of left-wing parties compared to more right-wing parties. Against our expectations, both left-wing and right-wing parties appear to respond or mirror more closely the preferences of wealthier than poorer respondents. But this pattern is substantially less skewed than applies to right-wing parties. As expected, hence, left-wing parties take positions that more closely mirror or respond to the preferences of poorer respondents, and less closely mirror preferences of richer respondents, than do right-wing parties. And right-wing parties appear to much more strongly mirror the wants of wealthier respondents than poorer respondents than the general average or than left-wing parties, and there is even some evidence that they not only ignore but go against the wants of poorer respondents. Altogether, the study provides substantial evidence that the party road to substantive representation is a meaningful one, but it is a winding one, with faster and easier routes for wealthier than poorer citizens.

The rest of this paper develops these claims in four steps. The first articulates some of the shortcomings in existing exploration of substantive representation, calling for a broadening and deepening of such exploration focused on party positioning. The second develops arguments about such a focus, in two sets of hypotheses. The third step lays out the empirical test of the hypotheses. And the fourth step presents and discusses the key results of such empirical testing. A final, brief section concludes.

The Need to Broaden and Deepen Study of Unequal Representation

Scholars and commentators of contemporary democratic development have been carefully studying and debating substantive representation – the extent to which policymaking and governance in nominally democratic polities are in practice responsive to the political demands of the governed.[1] Most hotly debated is the issue whether income inequalities translate into inequalities in political representation. A long tradition of Marxian and other left-wing critiques of pluralism has explored the extent to which income and wealth confer political privilege (Domhoff 1978; Ferguson 1995; Mills 1956). This tradition has recently been revived in an empirical literature that is mostly focused on the United States, with studies uncovering income biases in many parts of American politics, including policy outcomes on the national level (Gilens 2012; Gilens and Page 2014) and the state level (Rigby and Wright 2011), and roll-call votes in the Senate (Bartels 2016) and House of Representatives (Ellis 2017). Here we see that the rich get their way more than do poor or middle-class citizens in many policy areas, at least where poor and rich citizens are divided in their attitudes. Though this finding has been challenged by some (e.g. Branham, Soroka, and Wlezien 2017; Enns 2015), offering arguments in line with the pluralist perspective on politics, the evidence for unequal representation in the United States is strong and mounting.

At the same time, many important questions about the topic remain insufficiently answered. In particular, we know little about the generalizability of the dominant finding based on patterns in the United States to other polities, and about the causal mechanisms that underlie unequal representation. In other words, the current literature is limited in *breadth* and *depth*. In terms of breadth, there have been some empirical studies to take up the theme of political inequality outside of the United States (Giger, Rosset, and Bernauer 2012; Peters and Ensink 2015; Wüest and Pontusson 2018). However, the ongoing problem remains that the research designs linking survey-data to data on policy outcomes have limited degrees-of-freedom in terms of cross-national, cross-issue and over-time variation that severely hamper causal inferences about representation. For instance, an attractive strategy has been to pool many surveys within a single country, linking variation in opinions across time and issues to subsequent policy changes (Elsässer, Hense, and Schäfer 2017; Persson and Gilljam 2017; Schakel 2019). But this limits variation in policymaking and between polities – in particular beyond the United States with its distinctive institutions and historical legacies. At the same time, the most careful cross-national comparisons have focused on country-year observations

[1] We interpret responsiveness as synonymous with substantive representation, though we recognize the complexity of representation and of paths through which preferences shape policy (Urbinati and Warren 2008).

in a limited range of pairings within a given policy area that complicates control for inferential threats like endogeneity and omitted variable bias (Bartels 2015; Schakel, Burgoon, and Hakhverdian 2018). These limits in breadth make the empirical reach and robustness of apparent unequal representation very unclear, both in geographical terms and in terms of policy issues.

Existing studies tend also to have an important shortcoming in terms of *depth*. The focus on correlational links between political outcomes, on the one hand, and policy preferences across the income spectrum on the other, leaves theoretically and empirically ambiguous what the basis of unequal substantive representation might actually be. The candidate mechanisms are many, including skews in various forms of political participation (Erikson 2015), unequal access to mass media (Winters and Page 2009) and structural power over investment decisions that favor the wealthy over the poor (Lindblom 1982). The few studies focused on substantive representation to have further explored mechanisms have posited and found evidence for party-political representation of the wealthy rather than poor (Bartels 2016), descriptive representation (Butler 2014; Carnes 2013), and interest-group lobbying and money-in-politics that take place by and for the richer citizens, not their poorer counterparts (Ferguson, Jorgensen, and Chen 2016; Flavin 2015; Hacker and Pierson 2010). These studies, however, have been contained to clarification of US experience, with the cross-national studies of substantive representation articulated without any systematic attention to possible mechanisms. The result of this lack of depth with respect to identifying and empirically exploring mechanisms is that it is unclear what the basis of a given responsiveness problem actually is. This in turn makes it hard to know where to focus one's energies to reform democratic processes towards improved representation.

Focusing on Responsiveness: Expected Unequal Representation in Party Platforms

An important place to begin such broadening and deepening of unequal representation is to explore the extent to which political preferences of rich and poor voters actually get reflected in subsequent party platforms on various policy areas. This argues in favor of combining the literature on unequal representation with the substantial literature on party responsiveness. The latter has explored many important questions, key among which is whether parties in the aggregate respond to citizens' policy preferences and priorities. Here, many studies have presented supporting evidence for such responsiveness (e.g. Adams et al. 2004; Dalton 1985; Miller et al. 1999). Subsequent studies have expanded on this by asking whether responsiveness differs by party type (Adams, Haupt, and Stoll 2009; Iversen 1994a, 1994b;

Klüver and Spoon 2016), by election type (Spoon and Klüver 2014), by dimensions of political competition (Dalton 2017; Mattila and Raunio 2012) and – to a limited extent – by citizens' characteristics (Adams and Ezrow 2009; Dolný and Baboš 2015; McEvoy 2012).

Surprisingly, however, these studies on various aspects of responsiveness have said very little about the possibility of economic-based inequality. The conceptualization of opinion has not, for instance, considered how the role of economic inequality might bring about party responsiveness. A partial, important exception is Giger, Rosset and Bernauer's study of variation in ideological congruence by income tercile (Giger, Rosset, and Bernauer 2012). But this study provides a very limited reach in time and number of countries. More importantly, its focus on left-right expert placements for party positions makes it unclear what congruence means for actual policy positions. Similarly, the focus on left-right citizen positioning introduces the real possibility that different people interpret the meaning of left and right in different ways, again blurring what congruence means for actual policy positions (Bauer et al. 2017).

We submit that an important part of political representation can involve party responsiveness on policies to wealthy and poor citizen preferences toward the same policies. Two reasons, in particular, make it important to study unequal representation at the level of political parties. The first is one that is shared with all studies of party representation, namely that parties are the primary vehicle by which popular demands are aggregated and translated into policy. Secondly, election manifestos signify political parties entering the electoral arena, and here they have a clear incentive to appeal to as many potential voters as possible. Once parties enter the parliamentary arena and in some cases the governmental arena, their actions become much less public. This is the stage in which possible backdoor lobbying takes place, where politicians may be aided or frustrated by rich individuals or interest groups in the process of designing, passing and implementing policy. Of course, these lobbying practices may not be equally present in all times and places, and one can also imagine this offering access to groups that represent the demands of the poor. Still, it is likely that, if we find evidence of unequal representation in party platforms, this will be amplified further in the policy process.[2]

This, of course, begs the question whether election promises can be expected to be biased towards the preferences of the rich. We argue that, despite different parties having

[2] One suggestive piece of evidence in support of this comes from an analysis of coalition agreements in the Netherlands by Wiemer Bolhuis (2018). Bolhuis shows that these coalition agreements have, in the past three decades, led to a lower tax burden on corporations than what was planned in the programs of the coalition parties. The opposite applies to the tax burden on labor.

different electorates and potentially different motives, the positions advanced by all parties in the aggregate can be expected to respond more strongly to the wealthy than to the poor. Simply put, the rich possess more resources that can be expected to help parties win a favorable election outcome. This is most obvious in settings where citizens with high incomes can donate money to political campaigns (Rigby and Wright 2013). Even in more encompassing, inclusive democratic systems, however, wealthier citizens participate more in politics, have more information and cognitive advantages in engaging politics, more ties to elite party networks and structural power as employers and investors (Block 1977; Carroll, Fennema, and Heemskerk 2010; Gallego 2007; Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier 2010). Whatever the balance of resources available to a given grouping of citizens, party responsiveness can take place via parties changing their previous positions and via parties being replaced or replacing other parties that hold different positions, analogous to Stimson, Mackuen and Erikson's notions of rational anticipation and electoral replacement (Stimson, Mackuen, and Erikson 1995). This means that unequal responsiveness is compatible with vote-, office- and policy-seeking motives by parties, since purely policy-seeking parties that never change their positions may be replaced by other policy-seeking parties. These considerations underlie our first hypothesis, our general expectation of income inequality of representation in party position-taking of all parties on average:

Hypothesis 1
Party platforms generally should tend to mirror more strongly the policy wants of wealthier than of poorer voters.

This first hypothesis is relevant to a general sense of how a party system can be expected to react to the wants of rich and poor citizens. But of course, such a net or bottom-line portrait paints over differences between particular parties that surely color the substantive representation in the positon-taking of parties. Our second set of hypotheses, hence, focuses on the substantive responsiveness of particular party families. We expect, in particular, that left and right party families take up the expressed demands or wants of some voters more than others, reflecting the respective constituencies of these party families. The difference between party families, and indeed between any given party in a given election cycle, is a complex matter, involving (among other dynamics) a dance of ideological development, institutional inertia and recalibration of interests. This belies attempts to pigeon-hole a given

party family. Broad and basic cleavages can be identified, however. And these matter for understanding the basic party-political road to substantive representation.

Left party and right party families can be expected to have quite different constituencies with respect to positions along the polity's income spectrum. The character and potential multi-dimensionality of left and right positioning of voters and parties in advanced democracies continues to fascinate and divide comparativists (Bakker et al. 2015; Van der Brug and Van Spanje 2009; Hooghe et al. 2010; Kriesi et al. 2008). Surviving across waves of polarization and convergence and cross-cutting cleavages and dimensionality, a number of differences should still cleave left and right parties and their representation across the socio-economic spectrum. On the economic dimension, egalitarianism and pro-state interventionism to promote economic equality remains a central dividing line between left and right (Boix 1998; Castles and Mair 1984; Korpi 1983). Left-wing voters and parties embrace interventionist government policies, both macro- and micro-economic, to regulate and humanize market economies and promote egalitariansm and wellbeing of the poor (Bobbio 1996; Fehr, Naef, and Schmidt 2006). Right-wing voters and parties, meanwhile, tend not just to reject the importance of such egalitarianism or the needs of the less-well-off, but in any event to be sceptical about the efficacy and equity of statist economic intervention. And on the more cultural and nationalist-cosmopolitan dimension, (mainstream) left-wing and right-wing parties can be expected to differ substantially on immigration, integration, cultural nationalism and status roles with respect to gender, class, ethnicity and sexuality (Burgoon 2013; Van Elsas and Van der Brug 2015; Hooghe et al. 2010; Rooduijn et al. 2017).

These differences should matter to substantive responsiveness across party families in the party spectrums of industrialized democracies. Left-oriented parties – including most obviously social-democratic, socialist, and green parties – can be expected to more strongly mirror the wants of poorer voters, indeed championing economically egalitarian goals through the policy spectrum with respect to economic, social and political policy areas. Conversely, right-oriented parties – including most obviously the liberal and the conservative party families, but also the nationalist party family – can be expected to focus more on the needs of wealthier constituents, and to champion wants of these voters again throughout the range of policy realms on which parties take stances. Even if differences in party families don't manifest themselves in strong contrasts, however, we expect that any privileged representation of richer voters (poorer voters) should be more modest (stronger) among social

democratic than among conservative/right parties. Such reasoning supports three compatible Hypotheses about left- and right-wing party families. The first is the most general:

Hypothesis 2a
Left-wing parties should have platforms that express less privileged responsiveness to richer voters (and less under-responsiveness of poorer voters) than do right-wing parties.

One can also deduce stronger versions of this hypothesis focused on starker differences in the responsiveness of left-oriented versus right-oriented parties. One might expect, in particular, that the left favors the poor *over* the rich, while the right favors the rich *over* the poor, *ceteris paribus.* If so, we have two stronger variants of our second hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2b
Left-oriented parties can be expected to more strongly take up or mirror the wants of poorer rather than of richer voters.

Hypothesis 2c
Right-oriented parties can be expected to more strongly champion the wants of richer than of poorer voters.

Many other more fine-grained hypotheses are conceivable, for instance hypotheses about particular party families or sub-families, about particular issues areas, and about possible conditions that plausibly (*ex ante*) moderate links between opinions and party positioning. But we take the above hypotheses as the major, if broad, starting points to better understand substantive representation via parties. The four hypotheses, as stated, can be operationalized in many ways, varying by conceptualizations of particular party families, of issues areas, and of positions on the income spectrum and of public opinion. We consider such nuances as (important) matters for the empirical enterprise of this study.

Data and Estimation Strategy

To analyze the hypotheses above, we match multiple datasets on citizen attitudes towards specific policies to quality data on party positions towards such policies. The combination allows us to explore a number of politicized policy issues in a substantial cross-section of countries over a substantial time period. The resulting dataset involves a large sample of

country-year-issues that provide leverage to judge both our hypotheses on party-system responsiveness and on left and right party families.

Independent variables. Citizen attitudes are gathered from several sources, the most prominent of which is the International Social Survey Program (ISSP), in particular the ISSP's repeated Role of Government modules, included in four waves so far (in 1985, 1990, 1996 and 2006).[3] These modules contain questions on various policy preferences. The most useful, repeated questions ask respondents whether they want to see more or less government spending in different areas.[4] From this, we use the questions focusing on culture and the arts, defense, education, the environment, law and order, and the welfare state. The same question battery was included in the fourth wave of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), conducted between 2011 and 2016, and the 2003 wave of the Asiabarometer. These were also added to our dataset whenever they could be matched to our dependent variable. Appendix Table 1 lists the countries and years used in the analysis.

Two points about the policy issues in the survey questions should be noted. Firstly, the CSES does not contain items on culture and the environment, so we only match the remaining four items to our dependent variable. Secondly, there is not one overarching question on spending preferences with regard to the welfare state. Instead, there are three questions that cover three core parts of the welfare state: health care, pensions and unemployment. Since the Manifesto Project Database (the basis of our outcome variables to be discussed below) only has one category covering the welfare state, and since these three parts tie in well with the content of this category, we use the unweighted mean of the three items as measures of welfare state preferences.

These repeated questions have several benefits for our exploration. They yield broad coverage spanning a relatively long period of time encompassing substantial trends in national policymaking, and spanning a range of democratic polities in North America, Europe and Asia. In addition, they address well-defined arenas of policy about which citizens can be expected to have opinions, and they are phrased in terms of changes relative to a status quo: whether respondents want more or less spending. While the nominal focus of the questions is on spending, and this is not problematic per se for our purposes, it is likely that responses to the question are not purely based on spending preferences. That is, the most likely interpretation by lay-citizens confronted with such a survey question does not involve

[3] The module was also included in the 2016 survey, but this is too recent to match to our dependent variable.
[4] The specific wording is: "Listed below are various areas of government spending. Please show whether you would like to see more or less government spending in each area. Remember that if you say 'much more', it might require a tax increase to pay for it."

complicated fiscal calculations but rather a simple judgment of whether there should be more or less policy in a certain area.[5]

To gauge preferences for more or less policy at different levels of the income distribution, we first recoded the answer categories so that strongly agreeing to an increase in spending got a score of 100; agreeing became 50; neither agreeing nor disagreeing became 0; disagreeing became -50; and strongly disagreeing became -100 (see also Wlezien and Soroka 2012). Since the precise position of low- and high-incomes is somewhat arbitrary, we focus on two different conceptions of "low versus high" income positioning: the 1st versus 5th quintiles, and the 10th versus 90th percentiles.

Our measurement of attitudes across levels of income relies on survey-based measures of household income. In the ISSP in particular, these income measures are not without their problems, mainly arising from the fact that question wording is left to participating countries. Some countries ask for gross income while others ask for net income; some ask for monthly income while others ask for annual income; and some describe sources of income in the question while others do not (Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Warner 2013). This complicates comparing the same income groups across countries. For out purposes, however, this is a modest obstacle, because our hypotheses involve comparisons between rich and poor *within the same country in a standardized way*, a comparison that should not be biased by cross-country differences in the income question. We expect the measure to systematically and meaningfully capture how different income segments in a country-year perceive policy relative to one another.[6]

To gauge spending preferences across the income spread, we calculate scores at various percentiles by regressing the recoded questions on household income and its squared term (using probability weights) and taking the resulting predicted scores at the indicated points in the income distribution. This approach follows Gilens (2012, 61–62), and addresses the fact that different countries in the ISSP can have different income categorizations.

As a descriptive overview of our opinion measures, Figure 1 presents the sample means for the 10th and 90th income percentiles pooled across all sampled country-years

[5] For the sake of brevity, we will still refer to the independent variables as spending preferences in some places.
[6] Roughly one-in-six respondents have a missing value on household income. These respondents tend to be slightly less educated and less likely to be employed than non-missing counterparts. Hence, household income of these respondents is likely below average. But spending preferences of those with missing values are almost identical to the sample as a whole. So we do not expect non-response to bias our results, except attenuation bias by constraining the sample's full income variation (results available upon request).

(ordered by the 10th percentile mean).[7] This reveals, firstly, that there are clear differences in support for spending across issues. Education in particular stands out as a policy area with strong support for increased spending, while in most country-years, respondents would like to see less defense spending. Secondly, preference gaps between rich and poor are most pronounced for defense, the environment and especially the welfare state, whereas no clear differences are discernible for education, crime and culture. In light of our estimation, it should be noted that preferences are not completely collinear for the latter issues; it is simply the case that the difference between rich and poor is positive in some country-years and negative in others. Finally, two reassuring conclusions may be drawn from the figure: respondents do not mindlessly favor increased spending across the board, as judged from the variation between issues, and the preferences of low incomes are not necessarily less 'realistic' than those of high incomes, as judged by the fact the former do not systematically favor more spending than the latter.

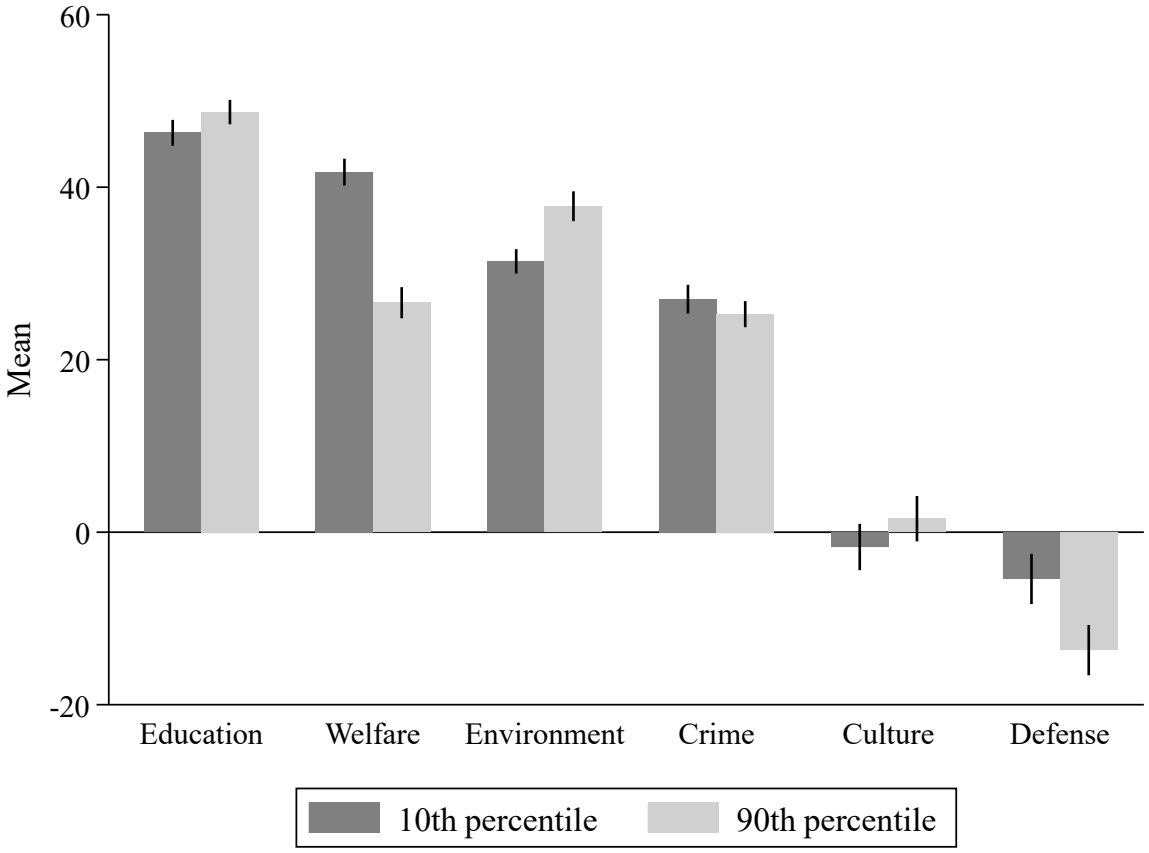

Figure 1: Mean spending preferences of low and high incomes by issue (error bars indicate one standard error above and below the mean)

[7] Following our recoding, the means can theoretically vary between -100, denoting unanimous support for much less spending, and 100, denoting unanimous support for much more spending.

Dependent variables. Our dependent variables consist of party positions on the same issues as discussed above. For this, we turn to the data of the Manifesto Project Database (MPD) (Klingemann et al. 2007). The MPD uses content analysis to code the percentage of quasi-sentences in party manifesto's devoted to a range of topics. In this case, we use the percentages devoted to the issues of culture, defense, education, the environment, law and order, and the welfare state, that closely match the independent variables.

Though some parts of party programs are retrospective, reflecting on past developments, they are mostly *prospective*, laying out the party's plans for the future (Dolezal et al. 2018; Müller 2018). Furthermore, the MPD not only records direct mentions of spending increases in each area, but also more general increases in policy activity, like the protection of natural resources under environmental policy. For both reasons, the MPD fits well with our measures of public opinion, such that we may expect a preference for increased spending in a certain area to lead to increased attention by parties in that same area.

For three of the six issues – defense, education and the welfare state – the MPD codes positive references (e.g. more spending) as well as negative references (e.g. less spending). In those cases, our dependent variable subtracts the negative references from the positive ones. For the other three areas, only positive references are recorded and our dependent variable only consists of these. Though this may seem problematic, negative references are very rare on the three issues where they are coded, so it makes little difference to our measures either way. It seems that a party which wants to cut back the welfare state, for example, does not talk a lot about cutting welfare in their program but simply does not talk about the welfare state at all (Klingemann et al. 2007).

To go from the percentages in the MPD to our main dependent variable, we first calculate the average attention devoted to each issue in each country-year, weighted by the seat share of the parties. Within each party, we use linear interpolation to estimate how relative attention shifts between elections. Next, we take the natural logarithm of this average and subtract the natural logarithm of the negative attention whenever available (adding 0.5 to both to avoid zeroes) (see Lowe et al. 2011). Though the logarithms are more difficult to interpret, they neatly transform the dependent variable into a normal distribution. The same dependent variable is also calculated separately for left-wing parties and right-wing parties. Left-wing parties are those grouped under the social democratic, socialist and ecologist party families in the MPD, while liberal and conservative parties are right-wing.

In the baseline models, the dependent variable is measured one year after the survey. The reasoning here is that, although it takes some time for parties to respond to public

opinion, responsiveness in party platforms can occur quicker than responsiveness in policy outcomes. In studies that focus on the latter, a lag of four years or more is common (e.g. Gilens 2012; Wratil 2019). As control variables, we include factors that may correlate with both the measured citizen attitudes and party positions. These include GDP per capita (measured in constant 2010 U.S. dollars), annual growth in GDP per capita, unemployment rate and dummies for both the issues and survey years. Descriptive statistics for the dependent, independent and control variables are provided in Appendix Table 2.

We consider a range of estimations to make causal inferences about general and unequal representation. The baseline models are two-level random intercept models, with country-year-issues as units and countries as clusters. We test for general representation by focusing on the median or overall opinion (in separate models). And we test for unequal representation by focusing in our baseline estimations on the roles of low- and of high-income attitudes in separate models and also combined, so as to consider their relative correlation with subsequent party positions. For all these models, further, the coefficients are ordinary least squares, with robust-cluster standard errors (clustered by country, the level 2 variable) to address remaining country-specific correlation of errors and heteroskedasticity of errors. The same setup will be used to explore differences between left- and right-wing parties. The last set of specifications focuses on important alternatives to these baseline models. These include alternative measures of unequal representation, such as direct measures of arithmetic differences between rich and poor attitudes. But the alternative models also include different specifications with respect to controls, embedding of the multi-level data, and alternative estimators. We present our findings, taking each set of estimations in turn.

Findings

Before presenting our main analysis, we should note that the preferences of citizens in general, captured by focusing the average attitudes of all respondents or attitudes of those with median incomes, do tend to correlate with party platforms on a given issue. In supplementary analysis of general representation,[8] we find that a one-standard-deviation increase in preferences leads to an increase in party attention of one third of a standard deviation ($p < 0.01$). This corroborates the findings of previous work on party representation, discussed above, that many party systems provide party responsiveness to median voter

[8] Since such general representation is not the subject of our hypotheses, we relegate the results to the supplementary appendix (Table A1).

preferences. Such patterns increase our confidence in the validity of our data and approach to explore inequalities in responsiveness.

Table 1 introduces our main results testing Hypothesis 1 – that party positions on issues will tend to be more responsive to the issue-specific wants of rich than of poor voters. The Table summarizes the baseline models with two different measurements of low and high incomes: the 10th and 90th percentiles (models 1-3) and the 1st and 5th quintile (models 4-6). The general picture emerging from both is the same: in separate models, both low incomes and high incomes have an effect on party attention, but this effect is stronger for the latter than the former. Crucially, when both are included in the same model, the effect stays significant for high incomes but disappears for low incomes. This shows a clear income bias in party representation, in line with Hypothesis 1.

Table 1: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (unequal responsiveness)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.010***	-	-0.007	0.009***	-	-0.004
	(0.002)		(0.005)	(0.002)		(0.005)
High income preferences	-	0.013***	0.018***	-	0.012***	0.016***
		(0.002)	(0.005)		(0.002)	(0.005)
Logged GDP (t)	0.028	0.084	0.083	0.028	0.084	0.082
	(0.070)	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.070)	(0.073)	(0.072)
Growth (t)	0.003	0.003	0.002	0.003	0.002	0.001
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Unemployment (t)	-0.009	-0.006	-0.005	-0.009	-0.005	-0.004
	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.570	-0.022	-0.041	0.571	-0.035	-0.035
	(0.729)	(0.769)	(0.768)	(0.731)	(0.767)	(0.764)
N	469	469	469	469	469	469
Countries	36	36	36	36	36	36
AIC	886.29	864.88	863.63	886.57	865.84	866.59

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Figure 2 displays the marginal effects of the 10th and 90th income percentiles, corresponding to model 3 in Table 1 (P10/P90). Other variables are held at their means. This shows that preferences of low-income respondents have no independent effect on the dependent variable, while the preferences of high-income respondents *do* have a strong effect.

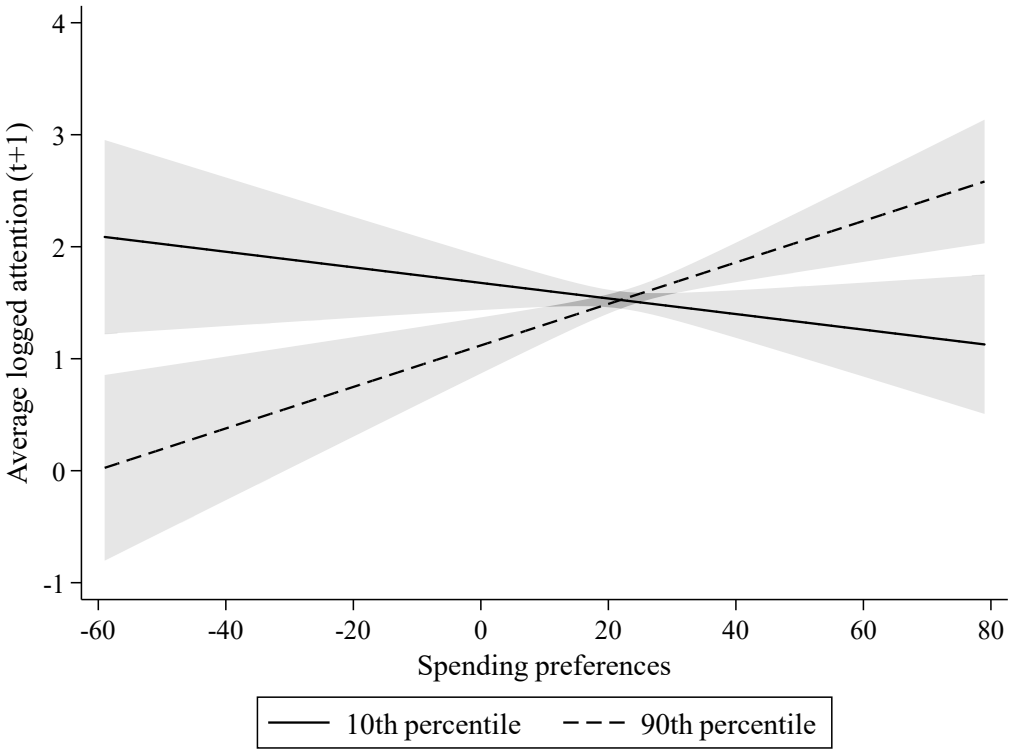

Figure 2: Predicted values of party attention by spending preferences of low and high income groups (shaded areas indicate 95% confidence intervals)

Table 2 and 3 split out the baseline models by left-wing and right-wing parties.[9] Responsiveness among left-wing parties is similar for low and high incomes, at least in the separate models. When the two predictors are included in the same models, however, a similar pattern emerges as before: the coefficient of high incomes stays positive, on the edge of statistical significance, while the coefficient of low incomes is negligible. Nevertheless, this contrasts with Table 3, which shows a larger gap between the effects of low and high incomes. The most remarkable finding here is that the effect of low income preferences is significantly negative in the combined models. This suggests that, conditional on responding

[9] There are slightly fewer observations in the models for left- and right-wing parties than in the baseline models, because, for the sake of comparability, we only include country-years where the MPD coded at least one left-wing party and at least one right-wing party.

to high income preferences, right-wing parties actively go against the preferences of low incomes. It is doubtful whether this is a substantively meaningful result. An alternative explanation is that this is an artefact of the substantial collinearity between the preferences of low and high incomes, though this does not explain why this only occurs for right-wing parties.[10] All in all, these findings provide support for Hypotheses 2a and 2c, but not 2b.

Table 2: Random intercept models of logged attention by *left-wing parties*, t+1

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.009***	-	-0.002	0.009***	-	-0.001
	(0.003)		(0.006)	(0.003)		(0.006)
High income preferences	-	0.011***	0.012*	-	0.011***	0.012*
		(0.004)	(0.007)		(0.004)	(0.007)
Logged GDP (t)	0.195**	0.234**	0.234**	0.191**	0.232**	0.232**
	(0.092)	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.092)	(0.101)	(0.100)
Growth (t)	-0.022	-0.022	-0.022	-0.022	-0.022	-0.023
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.026)
Unemployment (t)	0.002	0.005	0.005	0.003	0.005	0.005
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	-1.239	-1.676	-1.679	-1.202	-1.659	-1.657
	(0.933)	(1.041)	(1.044)	(0.932)	(1.041)	(1.035)
N	449	449	449	449	449	449
Countries	35	35	35	35	35	35
AIC	1094.41	1088.71	1090.62	1095.32	1089.05	1091.01

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

[10] The correlation between the 10th and 90th income percentiles is around 0.8-0.9, depending on the issue. Martin Gilens, dealing with the same issue, explains that "when predictors with correlated measurement errors are included simultaneously in the same equation, the coefficients for the predictors with the weakest true relationship to the outcome being measured (in my analyses, the coefficients for the lowest income level) may be unreliable and even incorrectly signed" (Gilens 2012, 253).

Table 3: Random intercept models of logged attention by *right-wing parties*, t+1

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.008**	-	-0.014**	0.008**	-	-0.010*
	(0.003)		(0.006)	(0.003)		(0.005)
High income preferences	-	0.013***	0.025***	-	0.013***	0.022***
		(0.003)	(0.006)		(0.003)	(0.005)
Logged GDP (t)	-0.092	-0.012	-0.016	-0.092	-0.012	-0.020
	(0.079)	(0.081)	(0.086)	(0.079)	(0.082)	(0.086)
Growth (t)	0.006	0.006	0.004	0.005	0.005	0.004
	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Unemployment (t)	-0.003	0.001	0.002	-0.002	0.001	0.001
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	1.369*	0.546	0.535	1.370*	0.535	0.577
	(0.792)	(0.804)	(0.857)	(0.792)	(0.817)	(0.861)
N	449	449	449	449	449	449
Countries	35	35	35	35	35	35
AIC	1112.21	1095.90	1090.54	1112.22	1095.45	1092.61

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Interestingly, there also seems to be unequal responsiveness to parties' own voters. If we regress attention by right-wing parties on the preferences of voters of right-wing parties with high incomes and the preferences of voters of right-wing parties with low incomes, the former has a stronger effect than the latter (see supplementary appendix, Table A2). The same is true among left-wing parties if we compare rich and poor left-wing voters, though the gap is again smaller than on the right (Table A3) and, in some specifications, quite far from statistical significance (Table A4).

Our next set of results addresses a number of important robustness and sensitivity checks. For reasons of brevity, some of the full results are relegated to the supplementary appendix. The first robustness check involves an alternative method to assess the relative influence of low and high incomes by simply taking the difference between the 90th and 10th percentile attitudes, *rich-minus-poor,* in a given country-topic-year. Here, more positive (more negative) values capture situations where high-income voters want more (less) spending than do low-income voters. If the rich are more influential than the poor, higher

values of *rich-minus-poor* should correlate positively with party attention. This specification is particularly useful for circumventing the problem of multicollinearity present in our data.

Table 4 summarizes results of testing this possibility for all parties (model 1), left-wing parties (model 2) and right-wing parties (model 3). All three models also control for the preferences of the median income percentile. For all parties combined, the *rich-minus-poor* variable has a strong positive effect, once again corroborating Hypothesis 1b. Strikingly, models 2 and 3 indicate that the income gap in representation is mostly driven by right-wing parties, with a coefficient that is three times as large in model 3 as in model 2. The overall picture, then, is that right-wing parties are strongly biased towards the rich, while this bias is much smaller or possibly even non-existent among left-wing parties. But since they are not biased towards the poor and hence do not cancel out the bias of the right, the overall pattern is still one where the rich come out on top.

Table 4: Random intercept models of logged party attention with preference gaps

	Model 1 (All parties)	Model 2 (Left)	Model 3 (Right)
Rich-minus-poor preferences	0.013**	0.008	0.019***
	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Median income preferences	0.010***	0.009**	0.009***
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.003)
Logged GDP (t)	0.066	0.209**	-0.075
	(0.073)	(0.099)	(0.096)
Growth (t)	-0.001	-0.035*	-0.006
	(0.013)	(0.018)	(0.019)
Unemployment (t)	-0.006	0.010	0.000
	(0.007)	(0.014)	(0.011)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.168	-1.340	1.381
	(0.777)	(1.049)	(0.981)
N	469	445	445
Countries	36	35	35
AIC	869.81	1095.02	1095.08

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Secondly, we should seriously consider the possibility of reverse causation. Perhaps what we have termed general representation reflects the adoption of existing party positions by the public, and unequal representation reflects the fact that citizens with high incomes are more attentive to signals from parties than citizens with low incomes. This does not fully account for our findings, however, since including lagged dependent variables to our baseline models does not affect the significance of the main coefficients (supplementary appendix, Table A5). Two caveats should be added to this. Firstly, we control for party attention at t-2 here. This is already strongly correlated with party attention at t+1 (0.87), and using a shorter lag would leave very little room for any other variable to have any effect.[11] Secondly, though the effects remain significant, the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable does reduce the effect sizes. This is to be expected, however. In a similar vein, controlling for government spending as a percentage of GDP in each of the six policy areas, measured at t, does not affect the main results (Table A6).

Thirdly, if the dependent variable is limited to the parties in the ruling coalition or current government, the effects stay much the same (Table A7). This is also to be expected, as these parties normally have a majority of the seats in the legislature. Interestingly, general preferences have a somewhat weaker effect on the coalition parties, which may be due to the fact that the formation of a coalition is often not up to the public, introducing an intermediate step between public opinion and party positions. Furthermore, the gap between rich and poor is slightly bigger when the analysis is limited to the coalition. However, a full exploration of the dynamics behind this process is beyond the scope of this paper.

Fourth, we can relax some of the assumptions we made in constructing the dependent variable. One of these assumptions is that parties change their positions in a linear way in between elections. If the analysis is limited to country-years where an election took place in the year following the survey, we find the same pattern of general but unequal responsiveness, suggesting that this particular assumption is not driving our results (Table A8). This is backed up by another specification where the use of interpolation is eschewed altogether and instead the dependent variable is the average attention of parties at the next election, regardless of how many years this took place after the survey, while controlling for party attention at the time of the survey (Tables A9). Here it is important to note, however, that only the effect of high income preferences continues to have a significant effect, with the

[11] In the interest of full disclosure, using a lag at t-1 turns the main effects insignificant in some models, but this is especially true for the effect of low incomes. It is noteworthy that the effect of the *rich-minus-poor* variable survives even with party attention measured at t.

effect of low income preferences falling below conventional levels of significance. Hence, this provides even stronger support for the notion that responsiveness is unequal. Lastly, choosing not to weigh parties by their seat share produces findings in line with the baseline models (Tables A10).

Fifth, our models so far have included various macro-level control variables but no micro-level controls. However, perhaps it is not income which is the real source of influence but a related variable. Education is particularly likely to cause a spurious relationship, since this is strongly correlated with income and has previously been discussed as a source of unequal representation (Bovens and Wille 2017). Controlling for education is not as straightforward as adding the preferences of the highly educated to the baseline models, since this would produce prohibitively high levels of multicollinearity, but we can interact income and education when calculating the predicted preferences. This allows us to compare the preferences of respondents with low incomes and median education to the preferences of respondents with high incomes and median education. Doing so reproduces the findings of the baseline models, indicating that responsiveness increasing with income, even while education is held constant (Table A11).

A sixth set of alternative specifications involves alternative estimators. These include random intercept models with alternative embedding: alternative two-level models using country-topic and country-year as clusters (Tables A12-A13); and three-level models involving country, topic and year (Table A14). We also considered ordinary least squares models with country-fixed effects or with jackknifed standard errors (Tables A15-A16). All these specifications yield results in line with the baseline models.

Finally, we briefly turn our attention to subsequent steps on the 'party road' to representation. All of our previous analyses focus on the effect of public preferences on party platforms, but we acknowledge that these platforms are significant for substantive representation only insofar that they correlate with actual party behavior and, eventually, policy change. Previous research has found evidence for such a correlation (Bräuninger 2005; Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge 1994; Thomson et al. 2017). But our data afford some leverage to supplement this research with our own analysis focused on our manifesto measures and specifications. Our analysis focuses on party platforms and policy change with regard to the welfare state, first and foremost because this is the policy area with the most detailed coding of policy across time and space, in the form of the Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset (Scruggs, Jahn, and Kuitto 2017). Furthermore, even though the welfare state is only one of the six issue areas in our main analysis, it is the most encompassing in

terms of attention devoted to it in manifestos and in terms of budget size. It is also important with regard to unequal representation as the area with the largest preference gaps between rich and poor.

The full results of this analysis are again relegated to the supplementary appendix (see Tables A17-A18 and accompanying text), but our main finding is that the position of coalition parties in a given country-year is a statistically and substantively significant, positive predictor of changes in welfare generosity in the years following the election. A one standard deviation increase in the independent variable leads to an increase of around a quarter of a standard deviation in the dependent variable ($p < 0.01$).[12] We infer from these patterns that responsiveness in party manifestos is likely a meaningful step in the process of substantive representation.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to clarify a major path, or road, to substantive representation: whether individual-level preferences of the rich and poor on a range of policy areas translate into party-political stances. The reason to do so is that such clarification both broadens and deepens our understanding of the politics of unequal representation: broadening with respect to the number of country-issue-years that provide a basis for judging (key aspects) of substantive responsiveness in democratic polities; and the deepening with respect to clarifying among the most obvious and important political-institutional mechanisms of interest aggregation in democratic polities that can be expected to give rise to the more distant links between high incomes and policy change.

With this mandate, the paper hypothesized, and found substantial evidence supporting, that democracies are characterized by unequal substantive representation in party platforms. Party platforms tend to take up the direction of preferred policy on a range of issues that citizens express as their wants, but this mirroring or responsiveness is substantially and statistically much stronger with respect to the wants of richer than poorer citizens. Also in line with expectations, left and right party families differ in who they most or least represent. Against one of our hypotheses, we find that left parties, not just right parties, tend to respond more closely to wealthier than to poorer societal preferences as expressed in public opinion instruments. But left parties are much less skewed than their right party-family counterparts in such "overrepresentation" of the rich; and right parties in any event likely to

[12] This overlaps with and, hence, replicates a recent finding by Horn and Jensen (2017, 387–89).

listen much more to wealthy respondents while ignoring, or even taking positions that contradict, the wants of poorer respondents.

One qualification of these findings is that preferences of the rich and poor are strongly correlated, such that party platforms may reflect the wishes of the poor even if they are mainly, perhaps solely, written in response to demands by the rich. Indeed, this argument is often used to downplay the significance of unequal representation found in the United States (e.g. Enns 2015; Soroka and Wlezien 2008). In response, we firstly note that 'democracy by coincidence' is a poor substitute for genuine political equality from a normative point of view (Gilens 2015). Secondly, there are plenty of country-years where the rich and poor *do* disagree on many issues, and where unequal responsiveness has very real consequences for the direction of policy. In this case, the devil may be in the details, as broad survey questions such as those used in this study may conceal disagreements on specific policies within broader issue areas (Gilens 2009).

The current findings, while qualified, are major results for our understanding of substantive representation. To be sure, we need to further explore possible patterns of legislative, party-political representation, sensitive to possible moderating effects of institutions, party, and interest-group conditions, or to the vagaries of particular issue areas. We also need more evidence to clarify how this particular road to substantive representation ends. While we briefly find some suggestive evidence, focused on social policy generosity, that unequal party responsiveness yields unequal representation, fuller and more multi-issue exploration is certainly important. And we hypothesize that unequal representation via party responsiveness may be further exacerbated in subsequent stages of the policy process, a suspicion that also requires future research. Finally, we need to understand how this party-political road to representation compares and relates to alternative paths – from direct lobbying patterns to direct voting patterns that might circumvent the party political road. These important qualifications notwithstanding, however, the existing study provides consistent and solid support for the view that party-political responsiveness is a major path to substantive representation, but also a more winding and longer path for poor than for rich citizens. Knowing this can help us better navigate democratic governance, to understand how one might democratize parties in their responsiveness and functioning in political space.

References

Adams, James, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow, and Garrett Glasgow. 2004. "Understanding Change and Stability in Party Ideologies: Do Parties Respond to Public Opinion or to

Past Election Results?" *British Journal of Political Science* 34(4): 589–610.

Adams, James, and Lawrence Ezrow. 2009. "Who Do European Parties Represent? How Western European Parties Represent the Policy Preferences of Opinion Leaders." *Journal of Politics* 71(1): 206–23.

Adams, James, Andrea B. Haupt, and Heather Stoll. 2009. "What Moves Parties? The Role of Public Opinion and Global Economic Conditions in Western Europe." *Comparative Political Studies* 42(5): 611–39.

Bakker, Ryan et al. 2015. "Measuring Party Positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill Expert Survey Trend File, 1999–2010." *Party Politics* 21(1): 143–52.

Bartels, Larry M. 2015. *The Social Welfare Deficit: Public Opinion, Policy Responsiveness, and Political Inequality in Affluent Democracies*. Paper presented at the 22nd annual conference of the International Conference of Europeanists, 8-10 July 2015, Paris.

———. 2016. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bauer, Paul C., Pablo Barberá, Kathrin Ackermann, and Aaron Venetz. 2017. "Is the Left-Right Scale a Valid Measure of Ideology? Individual-Level Variation in Associations with 'Left' and 'Right' and Left-Right Self-Placement." *Political Behavior* 39(3): 553–83.

Block, Fred L. 1977. "The Ruling Class Does Not Rule: Notes on the Marxist Theory of the State." *Socialist Revolution* 33(7): 6–28.

Bobbio, Norberto. 1996. *Left and Right: The Significance of a Political Distinction*. Chicago: University of California Press.

Boix, Carles. 1998. *Political Parties, Growth and Equality: Conservative and Social Democratic Economic Strategies in the World Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bolhuis, Wimar. 2018. *Van Woord Tot Akkoord: Een Analyse van de Partijkeuzes in CPB-Doorrekeningen van Verkiezingsprogramma's En Regeerakkoorden, 1986-2017*. Leiden University: PhD Dissertation.

Bovens, Mark, and Anchrit Wille. 2017. *Diploma Democracy: The Rise of Political Meritocracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Branham, J. Alexander, Stuart N. Soroka, and Christopher Wlezien. 2017. "When Do the Rich Win?" *Political Science Quarterly* 132(1): 43–62.

Bräuninger, Thomas. 2005. "A Partisan Model of Government Expenditure." *Public Choice* 125(3/4): 409–29.

Van der Brug, Wouter, and Joost Van Spanje. 2009. “Immigration, Europe and the ‘New’ Cultural Dimension.” *European Journal of Political Research* 48(3): 309–34.

Burgoon, Brian. 2013. “Inequality and Anti-Globalization Backlash by Political Parties.” *European Union Politics* 14(3): 408–35.

Butler, Daniel M. 2014. *Representing the Advantaged: How Politicians Reinforce Inequality*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Carnes, Nicholas. 2013. *White-Collar Government: The Hidden Role of Class in Economic Policy Making*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Carroll, William K., Meindert Fennema, and Eelke M. Heemskerk. 2010. “Constituting Corporate Europe: A Study of Elite Social Organization.” *Antipode* 42(4): 811–43.

Castles, Francis G., and Peter Mair. 1984. “Left–Right Political Scales: Some ‘Expert’ Judgments.” *European Journal of Political Research* 12(1): 73–88.

Dalton, Russell J. 1985. “Political Parties and Political Representation: Party Supporters and Party Elites in Nine Nations.” *Comparative Political Studies* 18(3): 267–99.

———. 2017. “Party Representation Across Multiple Issue Dimensions.” *Party Politics* 23(6): 609–22.

Dolezal, Martin et al. 2018. “Beyond Salience and Position Taking: How Political Parties Communicate Through Their Manifestos.” *Party Politics* 24(3): 240–52.

Dolný, Branislav, and Pavol Baboš. 2015. “Voter-Representative Congruence in Europe: A Loss of Institutional Influence?” *West European Politics* 38(6): 1274–1304.

Domhoff, G. William. 1978. *The Powers That Be: Processes of Ruling-Class Domination in America*. New York: Random House.

Ellis, Christopher. 2017. *Putting Inequality in Context: Class, Public Opinion, and Representation in the United States*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Van Elsas, Erika, and Wouter Van der Brug. 2015. “The Changing Relationship Between Left-Right Ideology and Euroscepticism, 1973–2010.” *European Union Politics* 16(2): 194–215.

Elsässer, Lea, Svenja Hense, and Armin Schäfer. 2017. “‘Dem Deutschen Volke’? Die Ungleiche Responsivität Des Bundestags.” *Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* 27(2): 161–80.

Enns, Peter K. 2015. “Relative Policy Support and Coincidental Representation.” *Perspectives on Politics* 13(4): 1053–64.

Erikson, Robert S. 2015. “Income Inequality and Policy Responsiveness.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 18: 11–29.

Fehr, Ernst, Michael Naef, and Klaus M. Schmidt. 2006. “Inequality Aversion, Efficiency, and Maximin Preferences in Simple Distribution Experiments: Comment.” *American Economic Review* 96(5): 1912–17.

Ferguson, Thomas. 1995. *Golden Rule: The Investment Theory of Party Competition and the Logic of Money-Driven Political Systems*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ferguson, Thomas, Paul Jorgensen, and Jie Chen. 2016. *How Money Drives US Congressional Elections*. Institute for New Economic Thinking: Working Paper No. 48.

Flavin, Patrick. 2015. “Campaign Finance Laws, Policy Outcomes, and Political Equality in the American States.” *Political Research Quarterly* 68(1): 77–88.

Gallego, Aina. 2007. “Unequal Political Participation in Europe.” *International Journal of Sociology* 37(4): 10–25.

Giger, Nathalie, Jan Rosset, and Julian Bernauer. 2012. “The Poor Political Representation of the Poor in a Comparative Perspective.” *Representation* 48(1): 47–61.

Gilens, Martin. 2009. “Preference Gaps and Inequality in Representation.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 42(2): 335–41.

———. 2012. *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

———. 2015. “The Insufficiency of ‘Democracy by Coincidence’: A Response to Peter K. Enns.” *Perspectives on Politics* 13(4): 1065–71.

Gilens, Martin, and Benjamin I. Page. 2014. “Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens.” *Perspectives on Politics* 12(3): 565–81.

Hacker, Jacob S., and Paul Pierson. 2010. *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer–and Turned Its Back on the Middle Class*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik, Jürgen H.P., and Uwe Warner. 2013. *Harmonising Demographic and Socio-Economic Variables for Cross-National Comparative Survey Research*. New York: Springer.

Hooghe, Liesbet et al. 2010. “Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning.” *European Journal of Political Research* 49(5): 687–703.

Horn, Alexander, and Carsten Jensen. 2017. “When and Why Politicians Do Not Keep Their Welfare Promises.” *European Journal of Political Research* 56(2): 381–400.

Iversen, Torben. 1994a. “Political Leadership and Representation in West European Democracies: A Test of Three Models of Voting.” *American Journal of Political*

Science 38(1): 45–74.

———. 1994b. "The Logics of Electoral Politics: Spatial, Directional, and Mobilizational Effects." *Comparative Political Studies* 27(2): 155–89.

Klingemann, Hans-Dieter et al. 2007. *Measuring Policy Preferences II: Estimates for Parties, Electors and Governments in Central and Eastern Europe, European Union and OECD 1990-2003*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Klingemann, Hans-Dieter, Richard I. Hofferbert, and Ian Budge. 1994. *Parties, Policies and Democracy*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Klüver, Heike, and Jae-Jae Spoon. 2016. "Who Responds? Voters, Parties and Issue Attention." *British Journal of Political Science* 46(3): 633–54.

Korpi, Walter. 1983. *The Democratic Class Struggle*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Kriesi, Hanspeter et al. 2008. *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lindblom, Charles E. 1982. "The Market as Prison." *Journal of Politics* 44(2): 324–36.

Lowe, Will, Kenneth Benoit, Mikhaylov Slava, and Michael Laver. 2011. "Scaling Policy Preferences from Coded Political Texts." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36(1): 123–55.

Marien, Sofie, Marc Hooghe, and Ellen Quintelier. 2010. "Inequalities in Non-Institutionalised Forms of Political Participation: A Multi-Level Analysis of 25 Countries." *Political Studies* 58(1): 187–213.

Mattila, Mikko, and Tapio Raunio. 2012. "Drifting Further Apart: National Parties and Their Electorates on the EU Dimension." *West European Politics* 35(3): 589–606.

McEvoy, Caroline. 2012. "Unequal Representation in the EU: A Multi-Level Analysis of Voter-Party Congruence in EP Elections." *Representation* 48(1): 83–99.

Miller, Warren E. et al. 1999. *Policy Representation in Western Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mills, C. Wright. 1956. *The Power Elite*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mosca, Gaetano. 1939. *The Ruling Class*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Müller, Stefan. 2018. *Prospective and Retrospective Rhetoric: A New Dimension of Party Competition and Campaign Strategies*. Paper presented at the 8th annual conference of the European Political Science Association, 21-23 June 2018, Vienna.

Page, Benjamin I., and Martin Gilens. 2017. *Democracy in America? What Has Gone Wrong and What We Can Do About It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Persson, Mikael, and Mikael Gilljam. 2017. *Who Got What They Wanted? The Opinion-Policy Link in Sweden 1956-2014*. University of Gothenburg: Unpublished Manuscript.

Peters, Yvette, and Sander J. Ensink. 2015. “Differential Responsiveness in Europe: The Effects of Preference Difference and Electoral Participation.” *West European Politics* 38(3): 577–600.

Rigby, Elizabeth, and Gerald C. Wright. 2011. “Whose Statehouse Democracy? Policy Responsiveness to Poor versus Rich Constituents in Poor versus Rich States.” In *Who Gets Represented*, eds. Peter K. Enns and Christopher Wlezien. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 189–222.

———. 2013. “Political Parties and Representation of the Poor in the American States.” *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3): 552–65.

Rooduijn, Matthijs, Brian Burgoon, Erika Van Elsas, and Herman G. Van de Werfhorst. 2017. “Radical Distinction: Support for Radical Left and Radical Right Parties in Europe.” *European Union Politics* 18(4): 536–59.

Schakel, Wouter. 2019. “Unequal Policy Responsiveness in the Netherlands.” *Socio-Economic Review*.

Schakel, Wouter, Brian Burgoon, and Armen Hakhverdian. 2018. *Real But Unequal Representation in Welfare State Reform*. Paper presented at the 76th annual conference of the Midwest Political Science Association, 5-8 April 2018, Chicago.

Scruggs, Lyle, Detlef Jahn, and Kati Kuitto. 2017. *Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset 2: Version 2017-09*. University of Connecticut and University of Greifswald.

Soroka, Stuart N., and Christopher Wlezien. 2008. “On the Limits to Inequality in Representation.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 41(2): 319–27.

Spoon, Jae-Jae, and Heike Klüver. 2014. “Do Parties Respond? How Electoral Context Influences Party Responsiveness.” *Electoral Studies* 35: 48–60.

Stimson, James, Michael B. Mackuen, and Robert S. Erikson. 1995. “Dynamic Representation.” *American Political Science Review* 89(3): 543–65.

Thomson, Robert et al. 2017. “The Fulfillment of Parties’ Election Pledges: A Comparative Study on the Impact of Power Sharing.” *American Journal of Political Science* 61(3): 527–42.

Urbinati, Nadia, and Mark E. Warren. 2008. “The Concept of Representation in Contemporary Democratic Theory.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 11(1): 387–412.

Winters, Jeffrey A., and Benjamin I. Page. 2009. “Oligarchy in the United States?” *Perspectives on Politics* 7(4): 731–51.

Wlezien, Christopher, and Stuart N. Soroka. 2012. “Political Institutions and the Opinion–Policy Link.” *West European Politics* 35(6): 1407–32.

Wratil, Christopher. 2019. “Territorial Representation and the Opinion-Policy Linkage: Evidence from the European Union.” *American Journal of Political Science* 63(1): 197–211.

Wüest, Reto, and Jonas Pontusson. 2018. *The Representation of Social Classes in European Parliaments*. University of Geneva: Unpublished Manuscript.

Appendix Table 1: Country-Years in Survey Data

	ISSP I	ISSP II	ISSP III	ISSP IV	AB	CSES 4
Australia	1986	1990	1997	2007	.	2013
Austria	1986	.	.	.	.	2013
Bulgaria	.	.	1997	.	.	2015
Canada	.	.	1996	2006	.	2011
Croatia	.	.	.	2006	.	.
Cyprus	.	.	1996	.	.	.
Czech Republic	.	.	1996	2006	.	2013
Denmark	.	.	.	2008	.	.
Finland	.	.	.	2006	.	.
France	.	.	1997	2006	.	2012
Germany	1985	1990	1996	2006	.	2013
Great Britain	1985	1990	1996	2006	.	2015
Greece	.	.	.	.	.	2013
Hungary	.	.	1996	2006	.	.
Ireland	.	.	1996	2006	.	2011
Israel	.	1991	1996	2007	.	2013
Italy	1985	1990	1996	.	.	.
Japan	.	.	1996	2006	2003	2013
Latvia	.	.	1996	2007	.	2011
Mexico	.	.	.	.	.	2012
Montenegro	.	.	.	.	.	2013
Netherlands	.	.	.	2006	.	.
New Zealand	.	.	1997	2006	.	2011
Norway	.	1990	1996	2006	.	.
Poland	.	.	1997	2008	.	.
Portugal	.	.	.	2006	.	.
Romania	.	.	.	.	.	2014
Russia	.	.	1997	2007	.	.
Serbia	.	.	.	.	.	2013
Slovenia	.	.	1995	2006	.	.
South Africa	.	.	.	2006	.	.
South Korea	.	.	.	2006	2003	.
Spain	.	.	1996	2007	.	.
Sweden	.	.	1996	2006	.	.
Switzerland	.	.	1998	2007	.	2011
United States	1985	1990	1996	2006	.	2012

Appendix Table 2: Descriptive statistics

	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.	N
Dependent variables					
Overall party attention, logged (t+1)	1.51	0.87	-0.95	3.70	469
Left party attention, logged (t+1)	1.38	1.28	-2.94	3.89	469
Right party attention, logged (t+1)	1.44	0.98	-1.59	3.77	449
Independent variables					
10^{th} percentile preferences	23.93	27.01	-64.33	81.14	469
90^{th} percentile preferences	21.15	28.11	-65.06	77.61	469
1^{st} quintile preferences	23.94	27.2	-62.11	80.96	469
5^{th} quintile preferences	20.83	28.13	-66.18	77.11	469
Rich-minus-poor preferences	-2.78	10.97	-36.28	27.78	469
Control variables					
GDP per capita, logged (t)	10.21	0.69	8.25	11.41	469
GDP growth (t)	2.65	2.12	-2.54	10.88	469
Unemployment (t)	8.13	4.70	3.10	27.47	469

Supplementary Appendix for

"The Party Road to Representation: Unequal Responsiveness in Party Platforms"

As a robustness check, model 2 in Table A1 contains the overall mean preferences for each country-year-issue as the main independent variable. This produces nearly the same effect as model 1 with median preferences.

Table A1: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (general responsiveness)

	Model 1 (P50)	Model 2 (All)
Median/overall preferences	0.010***	0.011***
	(0.002)	(0.003)
Logged GDP (t)	0.044	0.056
	(0.073)	(0.072)
Growth (t)	0.000	0.002
	(0.013)	(0.013)
Unemployment (t)	-0.009	-0.008
	(0.008)	(0.007)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.437	0.304
	(0.759)	(0.756)
N	469	469
Countries	36	36
AIC	881.08	876.83

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A2: Random intercept models of logged attention by *right-wing parties* to *right-wing voters*, t+1

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences (right)	0.010***	-	-0.001	0.010***	-	0.003
	(0.003)		(0.005)	(0.003)		(0.004)
High income preferences (right)	-	0.012***	0.013***	-	0.012***	0.010**
		(0.004)	(0.005)		(0.003)	(0.004)
Logged GDP (t)	-0.045	-0.011	-0.013	-0.024	-0.012	-0.002
	(0.098)	(0.102)	(0.101)	(0.097)	(0.103)	(0.100)
Growth (t)	0.003	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.003	0.003
	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Unemployment (t)	-0.003	-0.002	-0.002	0.000	-0.001	-0.001
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	1.238	0.911	0.927	1.028	0.893	0.799
	(1.036)	(1.074)	(1.061)	(1.030)	(1.080)	(1.048)
N	405	405	405	405	405	405
Countries	33	33	33	33	33	33
AIC	979.03	969.75	971.71	976.07	968.97	970.48

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A3: Random intercept models of logged attention by *left-wing parties* to *left-wing voters*, t+1

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences (left)	0.009**	-	0.003	0.008**	-	0.003
	(0.004)		(0.004)	(0.004)		(0.004)
High income preferences (left)	-	0.010***	0.008***	-	0.009***	0.007***
		(0.003)	(0.003)		(0.003)	(0.003)
Logged GDP (t)	0.222**	0.263**	0.264**	0.217**	0.242**	0.250**
	(0.106)	(0.109)	(0.109)	(0.106)	(0.108)	(0.107)
Growth (t)	-0.031*	-0.019	-0.021	-0.033*	-0.019	-0.022
	(0.019)	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.021)	(0.020)
Unemployment (t)	0.006	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.007	0.008
	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.014)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	-1.452	-1.996*	-1.974*	-1.429	-1.768	-1.827
	(1.109)	(1.163)	(1.159)	(1.111)	(1.145)	(1.133)
N	405	405	405	405	405	405
Countries	33	33	33	33	33	33
AIC	961.22	956.49	957.75	964.06	960.03	960.84

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

To clarify, model 1 in Table A4 regresses attention by left-wing parties on the rich-minus-poor variable *calculated among left-wing voters*, while controlling for the preferences of left-wing voters with median incomes. Model 2 does the same for right-wing parties, so it regresses attention by right-wing parties on the rich-minus-poor variable calculated among right-wing voters, while controlling for the preferences of right-wing voters with median incomes.

Table A4: Random intercept models of logged attention by *left-wing* and *right-wing parties* to their own voters, t+1, with preference gaps

	Model 1 (Left)	Model 2 (Right)
Rich-minus-poor (own voters)	0.002	0.006
	(0.003)	(0.005)
Median income preferences (own voters)	0.009***	0.011***
	(0.003)	(0.004)
Logged GDP (t)	0.248**	-0.035
	(0.106)	(0.100)
Growth (t)	-0.032*	0.003
	(0.019)	(0.020)
Unemployment (t)	0.008	-0.003
	(0.015)	(0.011)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes
Constant	-1.742	1.181
	(1.147)	(1.059)
N	405	405
Countries	33	33
AIC	961.50	974.79

Table A5: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (with lagged dependent variable, t-2)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.001	-	-0.004*	0.001	-	-0.003
	(0.001)		(0.002)	(0.001)		(0.002)
High income preferences	-	0.003**	0.006***	-	0.003***	0.005***
		(0.001)	(0.002)		(0.001)	(0.002)
Lagged dependent variable (t-2)	0.712***	0.698***	0.697***	0.711***	0.699***	0.699***
	(0.038)	(0.037)	(0.034)	(0.038)	(0.036)	(0.035)
Logged GDP (t)	-0.047	-0.027	-0.024	-0.046	-0.028	-0.026
	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.048)
Growth (t)	-0.003	-0.003	-0.002	-0.003	-0.003	-0.002
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)
Unemployment (t)	-0.006	-0.005	-0.004	-0.006	-0.005	-0.004
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.935*	0.743	0.680	0.928*	0.741	0.699
	(0.509)	(0.528)	(0.518)	(0.512)	(0.527)	(0.519)
N	463	463	463	463	463	463
Countries	35	35	35	35	35	35
AIC	512.50	509.30	508.74	512.36	509.50	510.25

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A6 contains controls for government spending as a percentage of GDP in each policy area. Spending figures were taken from the World Bank (2018a, 2018b), the OECD (2018a, 2018b) and Eurostat (2018). For culture and law and order, we used category 0802 (cultural services) and category 03 (public order and safety) of the COFOG classification, respectively. For environmental spending, we divided the total spending in 2010 US dollars by GDP in 2010 US dollars (both purchasing power parity).

Table A6: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (controlling for government spending)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.009***	-	-0.001	0.009***	-	0.001
	(0.003)		(0.005)	(0.002)		(0.004)
High income preferences	-	0.010***	0.011**	-	0.010***	0.009**
		(0.003)	(0.005)		(0.003)	(0.004)
Gov. spending (percent GDP, t)	-0.026	-0.027	-0.027	-0.026	-0.026	-0.026
	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.020)
Logged GDP (t)	-0.005	0.033	0.032	-0.003	0.023	0.026
	(0.057)	(0.056)	(0.055)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.055)
Growth (t)	0.010	0.011	0.011	0.010	0.010	0.010
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Unemployment (t)	-0.017**	-0.013*	-0.013*	-0.017*	-0.013*	-0.013*
	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	1.282**	0.809	0.811	1.265**	0.913	0.897
	(0.606)	(0.601)	(0.601)	(0.607)	(0.605)	(0.598)
N	294	294	294	294	294	294
Countries	35	35	35	35	35	35
AIC	521.01	514.30	516.24	520.92	516.19	518.04

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A7: Random intercept models of logged *coalition* party attention, t+1

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.008***	-	-0.009**	0.007***	-	-0.005
	(0.002)		(0.004)	(0.002)		(0.003)
High income preferences	-	0.011***	0.019***	-	0.011***	0.015***
		(0.003)	(0.004)		(0.003)	(0.004)
Logged GDP (t)	0.014	0.071	0.070	0.013	0.069	0.066
	(0.096)	(0.099)	(0.097)	(0.096)	(0.099)	(0.098)
Growth (t)	0.005	0.005	0.003	0.005	0.004	0.003
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Unemployment (t)	-0.022**	-0.019**	-0.018**	-0.022**	-0.018**	-0.017**
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.828	0.223	0.199	0.835	0.242	0.242
	(1.010)	(1.045)	(1.027)	(1.011)	(1.044)	(1.030)
N	469	469	469	469	469	469
Countries	36	36	36	36	36	36
AIC	1064.31	1050.80	1048.71	1064.58	1052.29	1052.49

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A8: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (limited to country-years with an election in t+1)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.006**	-	-0.020***	0.006**	-	-0.016**
	(0.003)		(0.006)	(0.003)		(0.006)
High income preferences	-	0.014***	0.032***	-	0.015***	0.029***
		(0.004)	(0.007)		(0.004)	(0.008)
Logged GDP (t)	0.010	0.103	-0.105	-0.007	0.100	-0.080
	(0.266)	(0.253)	(0.182)	(0.268)	(0.256)	(0.202)
Growth (t)	0.042	0.015	0.009	0.043	0.010	0.003
	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.030)	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.031)
Unemployment (t)	-0.040	-0.029	-0.047*	-0.042	-0.029	-0.044
	(0.038)	(0.037)	(0.026)	(0.038)	(0.037)	(0.029)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.496	-0.438	1.830	0.678	-0.402	1.544
	(3.055)	(2.894)	(2.133)	(3.068)	(2.915)	(2.351)
N	98	98	98	98	98	98
Countries	15	15	15	15	15	15
AIC	197.40	187.09	180.70	197.77	186.26	181.20

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Note: GDP, economic growth and unemployment are not included as control variables in Table A9 because doing so would produce extreme multicollinearity, without affecting the main coefficients.

Table A9: Random intercept models of logged party attention, next election (no interpolation)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.002	-	-0.004*	0.002	-	-0.003
	(0.002)		(0.003)	(0.002)		(0.003)
High income preferences	-	0.003*	0.007***	-	0.003*	0.006**
		(0.002)	(0.003)		(0.002)	(0.003)
Lagged dependent variable (t)	0.459***	0.445***	0.444***	0.460***	0.446***	0.446***
	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.060)	(0.063)	(0.062)	(0.061)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.573***	0.583***	0.573***	0.573***	0.583***	0.573***
	(0.080)	(0.076)	(0.074)	(0.080)	(0.074)	(0.074)
N	475	475	475	475	475	475
Countries	36	36	36	36	36	36
AIC	882.97	880.35	880.78	883.09	880.39	881.21

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A10: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (non-weighted dependent variable)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.013***	-	0.001	0.013***	-	0.003
	(0.003)		(0.006)	(0.003)		(0.005)
High income preferences	-	0.015***	0.014***	-	0.015***	0.012***
		(0.003)	(0.005)		(0.003)	(0.004)
Logged GDP (t)	0.095	0.135**	0.136**	0.094	0.135**	0.137**
	(0.062)	(0.063)	(0.063)	(0.062)	(0.061)	(0.062)
Growth (t)	0.009	0.005	0.006	0.009	0.004	0.005
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Unemployment (t)	0.002	0.005	0.005	0.003	0.006	0.006
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	-0.064	-0.550	-0.551	-0.065	-0.548	-0.550
	(0.630)	(0.647)	(0.646)	(0.631)	(0.639)	(0.640)
N	469	469	469	469	469	469
Countries	36	36	36	36	36	36
AIC	856.31	839.17	841.03	856.90	840.90	842.84

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A11: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (controlling for education)

	Model 1 (Income P10, educ. P50)	Model 2 (Income P90, educ. P50)	Model 3 (Combined)
Income P10, educ. P50 pref.	0.009***	-	-0.008
	(0.002)		(0.005)
Income P90, educ. P50 pref.	-	0.011***	0.018***
		(0.002)	(0.005)
Logged GDP (t)	0.031	0.067	0.062
	(0.072)	(0.073)	(0.072)
Growth (t)	0.002	0.000	-0.001
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Unemployment (t)	-0.009	-0.007	-0.007
	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.529	0.218	0.286
	(0.744)	(0.770)	(0.758)
N	469	469	469
Countries	36	36	36
AIC	886.73	870.62	869.26

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A12: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (with country-topics as clusters)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.009***	-	-0.005	0.009***	-	-0.002
	(0.002)		(0.004)	(0.002)		(0.004)
High income preferences	-	0.012***	0.015***	-	0.011***	0.013***
		(0.002)	(0.004)		(0.002)	(0.004)
Logged GDP (t)	0.013	0.062	0.057	0.015	0.059	0.056
	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.066)	(0.068)	(0.066)	(0.067)
Growth (t)	-0.006	-0.006	-0.006	-0.007	-0.007	-0.007
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Unemployment (t)	-0.009	-0.007	-0.006	-0.009	-0.006	-0.006
	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.780	0.249	0.283	0.765	0.270	0.296
	(0.718)	(0.714)	(0.709)	(0.720)	(0.716)	(0.716)
N	469	469	469	469	469	469
Country-topics	206	206	206	206	206	206
AIC	833.79	815.93	816.27	833.59	816.99	818.65

$^{*}p < 0.10$, $^{**}p < 0.05$, $^{***}p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A13: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (with country-years as clusters)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.009***	-	-0.007	0.009***	-	-0.004
	(0.002)		(0.004)	(0.002)		(0.004)
High income preferences	-	0.012***	0.018***	-	0.012***	0.015***
		(0.002)	(0.004)		(0.002)	(0.004)
Logged GDP (t)	0.032	0.087	0.088	0.031	0.089	0.089
	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.063)	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.064)
Growth (t)	0.010	0.009	0.008	0.009	0.008	0.008
	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Unemployment (t)	-0.006	-0.003	-0.002	-0.006	-0.002	-0.001
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.434	-0.146	-0.179	0.443	-0.171	-0.187
	(0.704)	(0.711)	(0.708)	(0.702)	(0.713)	(0.712)
N	469	469	469	469	469	469
Country-years	85	85	85	85	85	85
AIC	891.97	871.53	870.14	892.12	872.29	872.89

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A14: Random intercept models of logged party attention, t+1 (with countries and years as clusters)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.010***	-	-0.007	0.010***	-	-0.004
	(0.002)		(0.006)	(0.002)		(0.005)
High income preferences	-	0.013***	0.019***	-	0.013***	0.016***
		(0.002)	(0.005)		(0.002)	(0.005)
Logged GDP (t)	0.085	0.146**	0.146**	0.084	0.144**	0.143**
	(0.057)	(0.060)	(0.061)	(0.058)	(0.061)	(0.061)
Growth (t)	0.016*	0.015*	0.015	0.017*	0.014	0.013
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Unemployment (t)	-0.014*	-0.009	-0.008	-0.014*	-0.009	-0.008
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.074	-0.616	-0.650	0.087	-0.614	-0.621
	(0.590)	(0.643)	(0.658)	(0.597)	(0.651)	(0.658)
N	469	469	469	469	469	469
Countries	36	36	36	36	36	36
Country-years	85	85	85	85	85	85
AIC	884.69	861.48	859.99	885.65	863.49	864.12

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A15: Linear regression models of logged party attention, t+1 (with country fixed effects)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.011***	-	-0.006	0.011***	-	-0.003
	(0.002)		(0.004)	(0.002)		(0.004)
High income preferences	-	0.014***	0.019***	-	0.013***	0.016***
		(0.002)	(0.004)		(0.002)	(0.004)
Logged GDP (t)	-0.176	-0.110	-0.129	-0.133	-0.125	-0.156
	(0.471)	(0.459)	(0.459)	(0.473)	(0.457)	(0.457)
Growth (t)	0.001	-0.000	-0.001	-0.000	-0.001	-0.002
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.024)
Unemployment (t)	-0.003	-0.004	-0.006	-0.002	-0.005	-0.006
	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	2.421	1.781	1.993	1.975	1.956	2.286
	(4.914)	(4.785)	(4.784)	(4.939)	(4.767)	(4.772)
N	469	469	469	469	469	469
Adjusted R^2	0.53	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.55	0.55

$^{*}p < 0.10$, $^{**}p < 0.05$, $^{***}p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Table A16: Linear regression models of logged party attention, t+1 (with jackknifed standard errors by country)

	Model 1 (P10)	Model 2 (P90)	Model 3 (P10/P90)	Model 4 (Q1)	Model 5 (Q5)	Model 6 (Q1/Q5)
Low income preferences	0.009***	-	-0.006	0.009***	-	-0.004
	(0.003)		(0.005)	(0.003)		(0.004)
High income preferences	-	0.012***	0.018***	-	0.012***	0.015***
		(0.002)	(0.004)		(0.002)	(0.003)
Logged GDP (t)	0.031	0.085	0.086	0.031	0.087	0.087
	(0.092)	(0.091)	(0.088)	(0.092)	(0.090)	(0.089)
Growth (t)	0.010	0.009	0.008	0.009	0.008	0.008
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Unemployment (t)	-0.006	-0.003	-0.002	-0.006	-0.002	-0.001
	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Issue dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	0.440	-0.128	-0.156	0.447	-0.155	-0.167
	(0.988)	(0.985)	(0.962)	(0.990)	(0.975)	(0.962)
N	469	469	469	469	469	469
Adjusted R^2	0.50	0.52	0.52	0.50	0.52	0.52

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Effects of party programs on policy

To validate the party programs as coded in the Manifesto Project Database as meaningful in the subsequent policy process, we test whether party positions predict policy outcomes. This analysis is limited to the welfare state, first and foremost because this is the policy area with the most detailed coding of policy across time and space, in the form of the Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset (CWED) (Scruggs, Jahn, and Kuitto 2017). The CWED combines several aspects of social policy – most notably replacement rates, benefit duration and waiting times – in the fields of unemployment, sickness and pensions into an overall index of welfare generosity. For most of the other policy areas, policy outcomes are only recorded as government spending in that particular area. Although spending is a meaningful and important metric, its validity as a measurement of policy is problematic (Schakel, Burgoon, and Hakhverdian 2018). Furthermore, even though the welfare state is only one of the six issue areas in our main analysis, it is the most encompassing in terms of attention devoted to it in manifestos and in terms of budget size. It is also important with regard to unequal representation as the area with the largest preference gaps between rich and poor.

In line with the notion that party manifestos are largely prospective, we estimate the effect of party positions towards welfare on *changes* in welfare generosity, while controlling for the level of generosity at the time of the election. In this analysis, observations are elections, which are nested within countries. We can link 168 elections in 21 countries to the CWED, which took place between 1972 and 2008. These 21 countries make up about 70% of the observations in our main analysis. We do not use elections that took place less than three years before the next election, simply because there was very little time to implement party platforms in those cases.

The independent variable is again constructed by subtracting the logged negative mentions regarding welfare from the logged positive mentions regarding welfare, adding 0.5 to both. This time, however, we do not take the weighted average of all parties in the legislature but the weighted average of coalition parties only, for the straightforward reason that the latter can be expected to decide on policy changes. The dependent variable is the percentage change in overall welfare generosity in the first two years following the election. To account for between-country and over-time clustering of the data, we include country dummies and we control for the year of the election in an ordinary least squares model with robust standard errors.

Table A17 shows the results of this model. The main coefficient, the welfare position of coalition parties, has a significant positive effect on the two-year change in welfare

generosity. In other words, the more coalition parties talk about expanding the welfare state in their programs, the more generosity increases following the election. A one standard deviation increase in the independent variable leads to an increase of around a quarter of a standard deviation in the dependent variable.

Table A17: Effect of party positions on two-year changes in welfare generosity

	Model 1
Welfare position	0.975***
	(0.293)
Generosity (t)	-0.509***
	(0.176)
Year (t)	-0.069***
	(0.025)
Country dummies	Yes
Constant	146.059***
	(49.646)
N	168
Countries	21
Adjusted R^2	0.25

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

This effect is robust to various other specifications, including using a multilevel model with a random intercept for countries, removing an outlier with a large increase in generosity, changing the lag between the independent and dependent variables to one or three years, using year dummies instead of a linear term, using the non-logged version of the independent variable, not weighing the coalition parties by their seat share and also using elections that took place one or two years before the next election (Table A18). It should be noted that the effect size decreases slightly in all these alternative specifications except in the first two, but this is to be expected. It is also encouraging that the effect decreases, and in some cases becomes insignificant, if the independent variable is calculated for all parties in a given country-election instead of only coalition parties.

Table A18: Effects of party positions on changes in welfare generosity

	Model 1 (Random interc.)	Model 2 (Without outlier)	Model 3 (One year lag)	Model 4 (Three year lag)
Welfare position	0.914***	0.744***	0.446**	0.889***
	(0.227)	(0.192)	(0.211)	(0.265)
Generosity (t)	-0.079**	-0.407***	-0.142	-0.855
	(0.040)	(0.149)	(0.126)	(0.182)
Year (t)	-0.089**	-0.055**	-0.066***	-0.099***
	(0.036)	(0.023)	(0.021)	(0.035)
Year dummies	No	No	No	No
Country dummies	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	178.889**	115.790**	133.532***	212.426***
	(72.008)	(44.119)	(42.085)	(67.498)
N	168	167	194	161
Countries	21	21	21	20
Adjusted R^2	-	0.22	0.09	0.35

	Model 5 (Year dummies)	Model 6 (Non-logged IV)	Model 7 (Unweighted IV)	Model 8 (All elections)
Welfare position	0.794***	0.146**	0.932***	0.854***
	(0.273)	(0.056)	(0.283)	(0.224)
Generosity (t)	-0.414***	-0.536***	-0.502***	-0.548***
	(0.151)	(0.180)	(0.176)	(0.188)
Year (t)	-	-0.076***	-0.067**	-0.090***
		(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.025)
Year dummies	Yes	No	No	No
Country dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	7.816**	162.301***	142.315***	189.211***
	(3.019)	(56.737)	(52.597)	(48.918)
N	168	168	168	199
Countries	21	21	21	21
Adjusted R^2	0.33	0.23	0.24	0.25

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

References

Eurostat. 2018. “General Government Expenditure by Function (COFOG).” https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/government-finance-statistics/data/database (November 28, 2018).

Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development. 2018a. “Environmental Protection Expenditure and Revenues.” https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EPER (November 28, 2018).

———. 2018b. “Social Expenditure - Aggregated Data.” https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=SOCX_AGG (November 28, 2018).

Schakel, Wouter, Brian Burgoon, and Armen Hakhverdian. 2018. *Real But Unequal Representation in Welfare State Reform*. Paper presented at the 76th annual conference of the Midwest Political Science Association, 5-8 April 2018, Chicago.

Scruggs, Lyle, Detlef Jahn, and Kati Kuitto. 2017. *Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset 2: Version 2017-09*. University of Connecticut and University of Greifswald.

World Bank. 2018a. “Government Expenditure on Education, Total (% of GDP).” https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS (November 28, 2018).

———. 2018b. “Military Expenditure (% of GDP).” https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ms.mil.xpnd.gd.zs (November 28, 2018).