

Organized Interests and Policy Congruence

Anne Rasmussen

Anne Binderkrantz

Heike Klüver

**Paper prepared for presentation at the workshop “Unequal Democracies”,
University of Geneva, June 25-26, 2019**

ABSTRACT: While a multitude of studies have investigated the link between opinion and policy, we have little knowledge of how and when organized interests affect this linkage. We argue that the alignment of organized interests affects policy congruence by influencing the weight decision-makers attach to citizen preferences. We test our theoretical claim drawing on a comprehensive media content analysis of 160 policy issues in Germany and Denmark. Our results show that policy is generally more likely to be congruent with public majorities whose views are supported by the bulk of the active organized interests. However, they also point out that the impact of groups on policy congruence is restricted to cases where the public supports changing the status quo. The findings underline the importance of organized interests in the study of policy representation and have important implications for understanding democratic governance.

Introduction

The idea that elected representatives in democracies should adopt decisions ‘in the interest of the represented’ (Pitkin, 1967: 209) is key to the understanding of political representation. To examine whether this ideal is fulfilled in practice, a voluminous literature has investigated the linkage between the decisions of elected representatives and the opinion of their citizens (e.g. Jennings & John, 2009; Jones et al., 2009; Lax & Phillips, 2012; Monroe 1998; Stimson et al. 1995). More recently, scholars have expanded this line of research by examining which factors affect the opinion-policy linkage (such as institutions and issue characteristics) (e.g. Rasmussen et al. 2019; Lax & Phillips, 2012) and whether there are potential inequalities in the representation of different subsets of the population (e.g. Gilens ,2012; Gilens & Page, 2014; Peters & Ensink, 2014; Reher 2018). Much less attention has been paid to how organized interests affect *the linkage* between public opinion and policy. This may seem surprising since the extent to which organized interests affect this linkage speaks to important discussions about their role in democratic governance in both the academic literature and the public debate on whether to regulate their behavior.

On the one hand, skeptical voices in both the interest group literature and the press often shed critical light on the role of organized interests in policy-making. Organized interests are portrayed as likely to distort the opinion-policy linkage by convincing decision-makers to take action countering the will of the public for the sake of satisfying special interests (e.g. Olson 1971; Schattschneider, 1960). On the other hand, pluralist voices have argued the opposite, i.e. that organized interests may serve to reinforce the linkage by giving voice to public demands for policy change (e.g. Truman, 1951; Burstein, 2003). Some have even seen organized interests as having the potential to act as a “transmission belt” facilitating that the wishes of the public are channeled to the decision-makers (Furlong and Kerwin 2005; Rasmussen et al. 2014).

This paper contributes to this important debate by examining the conditioning impact of organized interests on the likelihood that policy is congruent with public opinion. We examine *whether* and *when* preference alignment between organized interests and the public affects policy congruence. We theorize that the positions defended by interest groups can be expected to influence *the weight* decision-makers attach to citizen preferences when making policy decision on specific policy issues. In cases where groups and the public are aligned, the likelihood that the public gets the policy it prefers should generally be higher. At the same time, we do not expect interest group support to be equally beneficial for the public in all circumstances but to *matter more* when the public has an interest in changing an existing policy status quo on a policy issue. The reason is that changing the existing state of affairs on an issue is likely to be more difficult than keeping it since it involves persuading gatekeepers of existing policies to adopt changes and overcoming other crucial barriers to change (Baumgartner et al., 2009; Varone et al., 2017). All things equal, alignment between the public and interest groups should therefore make the greatest difference for whether the public gets what it wants when status quo bias must be overcome in order for policy to be consistent with its preferences.

Our study is conducted by linking information on the opinion of organized interests with information on public opinion and detailed coding of policy outcomes on a high number of specific policy issues. We draw on in-depth media content analysis of policy debates on 160 Danish and German policy issues on which the population was polled in the period 1998-2010. The polls measure attitudes towards specific policy changes such as the introduction of a new type of tax, change of an existing traffic rule or initiation of an infrastructure project. For each issue, we systematically identify the organized interests that mobilized on the issue, their policy positions and the final policy outcome in order to determine whether group opinion affects whether policy ends up being congruent with public opinion.

In contrast to the previous studies looking at group impact on the opinion-policy linkage, we go beyond mapping the opinion of a small set of powerful groups (Lax & Phillips, 2012; Gilens, 2012) or relying on aggregated counts of interest group populations as proxies of group pressure (Gray et al., 2014; Bevan & Rasmussen, 2017; Klüver and Pickup 2019). Instead, we conduct a detailed media content analysis of *the positions* of actors involved in the debates on our policy issues. This means that rather than assuming that certain types of groups defend specific interests (see e.g. Lax & Phillips, 2012; Klüver & Pickup 2019), we explicitly measure the policy positions advocated by the organized interests in the media. Our study is thus the first to examine interest group influence on opinion-policy congruence using measures of group opinion from a comprehensive, bottom-up sample of groups that actually mobilized on policy issues in the media.

Our findings show that the policy positions voiced by organized interests in the media affect the likelihood that decision-makers translate the public's policy preferences into policy. Policy on an issue is generally more likely to be congruent with public opinion, when the public enjoys the support of the majority of the organized interests in our media sources. Yet, our results also show that the impact of groups on policy congruence is contingent on whether the public supports changing or maintaining the status quo. The public is only strengthened by group support (or weakened by group opposition) in cases where it supports policy change. In the remaining cases where it prefers keeping the existing state of affairs on an issue, group positions do not matter. Our findings underline the value of paying attention to the interplay between public opinion and organized interests in studies of collective decision-making and have important implications for our understanding of the role of organized groups in representative democracies.

The opinion-policy linkage

A voluminous literature has developed on responsiveness of governments to public opinion in the last decades. It has shown that government agendas and policy are generally responsive to the demands of their electorate (e.g. Chaqués et al., 2011; Bevan & Jennings, 2014; Gilens, 2012; Gilens & Page 2014; Jennings & John, 2009; Jones & Baumgartner, 2004; Jones et al., 2009; Peters & Ensink, 2014; Stimson, 1995). However, it has also pointed out that actual congruence between policy and the view of the majority of the public may be far from perfect, and that it may vary for different segments of the population and differ between policy issues (e.g. Brooks, 1990; Gilens 2012; Gilens & Page, 2014; Lax and Phillips 2012; Monroe 1979; 1998; Rasmussen et al 2019).

The role of organized interests has received comparatively little attention in this literature. Some studies integrate organized interests, but do not examine whether these actors affect *the linkage* between opinion and policy. As an example, Jacoby and Schneider (2001) examine government expenditures in the US states and demonstrate that not only citizen preferences, but also organized interests affect government spending (see also Schneider & Jacoby, 2006). Similarly, Gilens and Page's study (2014) of 1,779 policy issues in the US finds evidence that the net alignment of powerful organized interests affects the likelihood of policy change. Other studies cast a more critical view on the role of groups. Burstein's recent study (2014) of the effect of public opinion and organized interests on 60 US bills finds little evidence that groups influence the likelihood of policy adoption. Moreover, a recent time series analysis of the influence of media advocacy and public opinion on the dynamics of regulatory policy-making in Sweden raises doubt that any of the two have a strong individual impact (Rasmussen et al. 2018).

The few studies that go beyond looking at the individual effects of groups and opinion on policy and examine the effect of organized interests on the linkage between opinion and policy also find mixed evidence. Some studies use counts of groups as an indicator of group

pressure. As an example, Gray et al. (2004) incorporate measures of the interest group population in studies of the opinion-policy linkage. Their analysis finds a small, but positive effect of the size of the interest group community on the relationship between opinion and policy liberalism in US states in one of the two years examined. It concludes that the politics of interest representation influence public policy only at the margins (Gray et al. 2004: 419). Similarly, a new study by Bevan and Rasmussen (2017) examining the impact of the number of voluntary associations on dynamic agenda representation finds that the ability of association density to strengthen the linkage between citizen priorities and policy agendas is restricted to the early stage of the policy process. Other recent studies take a similar approach incorporating numbers of organized interests active in either policy areas (see also Klüver & Pickup 2019) or on specific issues (De Bruycker 2019; De Bruycker & Rasmussen 2019) into their opinion-policy models.

Instead of group counts, two recent US studies examine whether the alignment of groups affects the relationship between opinion and policy. In their study of 39 policy issues, Lax and Phillips find that policy congruence between the opinion majority and policy is highest if a powerful interest group supports majority opinion (Lax & Phillips, 2012). However, a study by Gilens of specific policy issues does not find evidence that the opinion of the most powerful groups affects the impact which opinion has on policy (2012). Both studies focus on the most powerful groups. While Lax and Phillips use the *mere presence* of specific types of powerful groups in state interest group populations as an indicator of group lobbying in favor/against a policy, Gilens' measure is based on the public stances of up to 43 *powerful US interest groups* on the issues.

These studies constitute an important step towards better understanding how organized interests affect the linkage between opinion and policy. However, in this paper we address two shortcomings of the existing literature. First, we focus on how groups affect *the linkage* between

opinion and policy, which very few studies incorporating organized interests have done. Second, we expand on the relatively crude indicators of groups used in existing research going beyond counts of the size of interest group populations or the opinion of a small subset of the groups expected to be the most powerful ones.

Theoretical framework: Organized interests and policy congruence

The relationship between voters and decision-makers can be conceived of as a principal-agent relationship (Powell, 2000). As principals voters delegate decision-making authority to elected representatives for a fixed period of time. Elected representatives, as agents of their voters, are supposed to act in line with the interests of their principals. Through regularly held elections, citizens can reward or punish their elected representatives based on their performance in office (Key, 1966; Fiorina, 1981; Ferejohn, 1986). Assuming that decision-makers care about reelection to enjoy the perks of office such as power, prestige and material benefits that come with governmental offices (Riker, 1962; Strøm, 1990; Strøm & Müller, 1999), they have strong incentives to pay attention to the demands of their voters. However, decision-makers are not only exposed to voters, but also subject to a wide variety of constraints (Klüver & Spoon, 2016; Nanou & Dorussen, 2013). Governments cannot enact every policy that may be favored by their constituents, but are, for example, constrained by economic and budgetary restrictions.

An important factor which might affect whether decision-makers pay attention to public opinion is the role of organized interests. Governments are regularly confronted with the policy demands of a multitude of organized interests ranging from traditional membership associations, such as business and labor associations, to citizen groups, firms and expert organizations. These groups aggregate and articulate a wide variety of societal interests, such as the interests of automobile producers, farmers or consumers, and employ a wide variety of lobbying strategies in order to achieve their policy objectives (e.g. Baumgartner et al., 2009; Binderkrantz, 2005; Giger & Klüver, 2016; Klüver, 2013; Mahoney, 2008; Witko, 2006).

Organized interests may both make it easier and harder for governments to pay attention to citizen attitudes. Hence, whereas organized interests have the potential to stimulate the opinion-policy linkage by acting as a transmission belt between voters and policy-makers in some circumstances (e.g. Furlong and Kerwin 2005), their aim may in other cases be to decrease the likelihood that policy-makers pay attention to citizen interests. Crucially, the alignment of organized interests with the public may influence the weight decision-makers attach to citizen preferences. In this way, the signal decision-makers receive about the positions of organized interests has the potential to affect the opinion-policy linkage.

The media is a crucial arena for all types of interest groups when it comes to signaling their views to group supporters and policymakers. By appearing in the media, groups signal commitment to their goals vis-à-vis their supporters from which they extract resources that are essential for their survival. Although groups may in some situations prefer to stay out of the media, organized interests typically spend abundant resources on achieving media visibility and they figure prominently in the news (Binderkrantz et al., 2017; Kollman, 1998).¹ Following this, our argument is that the extent to which decision-makers pay attention to a given level of public support for policy change depends on the signal they receive from organized interests concerning the desirability of a given policy change in the media.

We argue that the alignment of groups can affect the calculation of decision-makers whether to adopt specific policy changes because they have to weigh the benefits of responding to the public against the likelihood of receiving important resources from organized interests depending on whether they support or oppose the requested policy change (e.g. Bouwen, 2004; Klüver, 2012). When public opinion does not align with the positions expressed by organized interests, decision-makers may refrain from being responsive to public opinion fearing this would lead to strong group opposition. As an example, decision-makers might avoid subjecting

firms to tighter regulation that enjoys broad popular support in the population, when that regulation is strongly opposed by the organized interests on the issue.

The role of organized interests affects the calculus of politicians through several mechanisms. First, organized interests can signal support from (important) constituencies that are more likely to care about the issue and adjust their voting behavior than the average member of the public. In many cases, groups will thus represent relatively intensely held preferences since their members and supporters care what politicians do on the issues in which they are involved. Second, politicians might discount the importance of responding to public opinion if they risk losing access to important resources that are crucial for policy development as well as reelection. Conversely, the prospects of expanding their resource base when they respond to citizen preferences on policy alternatives that also enjoy interest group support might increase their likelihood of translating citizen wishes into policy.

The resources offered by organized interests to policy-makers include technical information, campaign contributions, economic power and legitimacy (Bouwen, 2004; Broscheid and Coen, 2007; Burstein, 2014; Klüver, 2013). Organized interests can help decision-makers acquire important, specialized issue-relevant technical expertise and provide them with crucial information about the preferences of their constituencies (e.g. Austen-Smith, 1993; Hall & Deardorff, 2006; Klüver, 2013). Having access to technical information is important for decisionmakers, who are frequently confronted with a multitude of highly complex policy proposals. In addition, the need to obtain support for electoral campaigns from organized interests is another important resource that can help explain why the opinion of groups counts for decision-makers when deciding how strongly to weigh public opinion towards specific policy changes (e.g. Fellowes, 2004; Gordon, 2001; Klüver & Giger, 2016; Witko, 2006). Elections are a costly endeavour for political parties and candidates and having the support of non-state actors may for example help them print posters and flyers and produce

television and radio ads. Decision-makers may thus be more cautious in responding to public demands for policy changes in cases where the groups oppose them.

Importantly, these different types of resources may not only ensure that organized interests have an *independent* impact on what policy-makers decide but may weigh in on their decisions and affect whether policy-makers pay attention to the opinion of the public majority. The reason is that the resources groups offer decision-makers may be so important for the decision-makers that the prospects of gaining (loosing) them might increase (decrease) the likelihood that decision-makers respond to public opinion.

Summing up, our first hypothesis argues that congruence between public opinion and policy is higher when lobbying by organized interests coincides with the view of the public. For policy-makers, this setup presents a situation where the most favorable line of action is to comply with demands raised by organized interests and supported by the public. This will both increase their chances of reelection and ensure that organized interests support them with crucial resources:

- 1. The probability of policy congruence with public opinion is higher when organized interests on an issue support the public majority.*

At the same time, the benefits enjoyed by the public of being aligned with the interest group community on an issue are likely to depend on the obstacles it faces in realizing its preferred policy. Most notably, policy positions that require change from the status quo are more difficult to attain than positions that are consistent keeping the existing state of affairs with respect to a given policy. For a number of reasons, status quo bias is a persistent feature of policy-making. Experimental studies have for example shown that individuals tend to stick to the status quo and pointed to a number of possible explanations (Samuelson and Zeckhauser 1988). In the case of legislators, cognitive biases towards changing the status quo may for example lead them to keep what they know. Even when the public prefers changes to specific policies decision-

makers may therefore not run the risk of adopting the changes, especially not when transition costs are involved. Changing the status quo further requires that the necessary majorities are found in political systems and that gatekeepers of existing policies are persuaded to adopt changes (Varone et. al. 2017). This involves organized interests protecting a preferred status quo from change (Baumgartner et al. 2009).

Not surprisingly, US research has therefore pointed out that a major reason for lack of congruence between majority public opinion and policy is exactly the challenge involved in changing policy. It has been found that congruence between policy and public opinion is systematically higher when the public wants to preserve rather than change the status quo (Monroe, 1998). We expect that the public is more likely to benefit from being aligned with organized interests in those circumstances where it is hardest for it to influence policy-making on its own and when opposition from groups may be most harmful, i.e. when it supports policy change. In such cases, having a public majority supporting change might not in itself provide sufficient "leverage" to affect policy adoption and the additional support of groups might be crucial for decision-makers to be receptive to the views of the citizens. In contrast, in the cases where the public wants to keep the status quo, it may make less of a difference whether groups are also against policy change, since considerable status quo bias makes policy adoption less likely in such cases anyhow. Our second hypothesis therefore suggests that the value for the public of having groups on its side is conditional upon whether it is interested in preserving the status quo or adopting change.

2. *The public is more likely to benefit from being aligned with organized interests in cases where it is interested in changing policy than when it supports keeping the status quo.*

Analysis design

Our analysis is based on a pooled sample of 160 specific policy issues in Denmark and Germany for which we have polling data on public opinion and on which media coverage included information about the positions of organized interests. The inclusion of two countries allows us to arrive at a sufficiently large sample of specific issues where public opinion has been measured. Both Denmark and Germany are advanced democratic countries with established systems of interest representation and therefore well-suited for testing our theoretical arguments. Importantly, the two countries share a number of features that might affect the ability and the incentives of politicians to respond to both media lobbying and public opinion: Both have neo-corporatist state-society structures, use proportional electoral systems and tend to be governed by coalition governments. At the same time, they differ with respect to the vertical and horizontal separation of powers with Denmark being a unitary state with a unicameral legislature and Germany having a federal, bicameral structure. Organized interests might potentially exert a greater impact on the extent to which policy-makers act in line with the view of the public in the more complex German institutional system. Here it could be expected that the flow of information between citizens and policy-makers is less smooth than in a unitary system (Rasmussen et al. 2019). German policy makers serve divergent communities and are likely to be faced with higher levels of status quo bias in decision-making structures due to the stronger separation of power. At the same, organized interests may enjoy additional access points to decision-makers in the German federal, bicameral system compared to the Danish unitary, unicameral one.

The policy issues stem from polls conducted by Gallup in Denmark and the Politbarometer in Germany in the period 1998-2010 fulfilling two important selection criteriaⁱⁱ. First, they all ask respondents to indicate whether they support making changes in the status quo of specific policies. Second, they all fall under national (as opposed to subnational or EU)

policy competence. For example, one of the German issues asks whether wealth taxation should be introduced and a Danish one asks whether differentiated VAT should be implemented. By setting 2010 as the cut-off point for the collection of polling data, we make sure that all items in the sample can be followed in a similar period of time to examine whether the specific policy change mentioned in the public opinion question was subsequently enactedⁱⁱⁱ. We determined whether policy enactment took place within a four-year period (see Gilens, 2012). To do so, coders relied on official government websites, newspaper archives, legislative databases and information from organized interests. We included the same number of issues from each country in the study to ensure an equally weighted sample of issues^{iv}. Our full dataset therefore consists of all the 102 German Politbarometer items from the period that fulfilled the mentioned selection criteria and 102 Danish items, randomly sampled by year from 211 eligible Gallup questions (see Online Appendix A for a detailed list of issues).

Relying on opinion polls may mean that our issues are more salient than average, which might increase the likelihood that politicians are responsive to public opinion (see Burstein, 2014). Importantly, however, this does not mean that we would also be more likely to find an impact of groups on the linkage between public opinion and policy, which is the focus here. Hence, saliency may both benefit and weaken the impact of organized interests depending on whether they are aligned with the public. As an example, when groups and the public want the same policy change, saliency might be beneficial for group to put pressure on policy-makers but in cases where groups are trying to block the public from either keeping or changing the status quo, it might be best to keep saliency as low as possible. Moreover, even if opinion polls cannot be regarded as an unbiased sampling frame of the latent population of policy issues, it is important to recognize that other approaches to sampling issues – such as relying on proposals under consideration, issues mentioned in the media or asking groups to name issues – are likely to present other types of biases. In our case, having issues representing a certain degree of

saliency has the advantage that it becomes “plausible that average citizens may have real opinions and may exert some political influence” (Gilens & Page, 2014: 568). At the same time, our large samples of issues display considerable variation in media saliency allowing us to control for saliency in the analyses.

We gather information about the positions of the interest group community in the media by conducting a search for organized interests that mobilized on the selected policy issues in two main broadsheet newspapers in each country. In Germany we used *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ) and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), in Denmark we used *Politiken* and *Jyllands-Posten*. Having one right-leaning and one left-leaning newspaper in each country allows us to control for the possibility that newspapers with different political orientations prioritize coverage of certain groups differently. Organized interests in the newspapers were identified using the Factiva database, where we searched for articles that refer specifically to the selected policy issues.

For each of our public opinion items we drew a random sample of newspaper articles, the size of which was individually calculated for each policy issue in order to fulfil a common and predefined margin of error. Online Appendix B provides further details about the sampling procedure requiring student assistants to read approximately 7,500 articles. After the sample of articles was defined, student assistants were trained to code claims by organized interests in order to measure the policy positions advocated by the organized interests that mobilized on the selected policy issues. Taking not only into account *which* organized interests mobilized, but also *which policy positions they advocated* is important to understand in which direction governments were pushed by organized interests (see also Giger & Klüver, 2016).

Despite significant advances in automated coding we opted for human coding, which proved the most reliable option for identifying and coding statements by organized interests. The coders identified statements by actors on policy issues and recorded the position of the

actor on the policy issue and the type of actor^v. We use a behavioral definition of organized interests (Baroni et al., 2014) including not only organized interests representing members and supporters (for example business associations and citizen groups), but also firms and expert organizations. Importantly, this definition also includes formal associations that are part of broader social movements. Yet, we exclude individual advocates and actors who run for office or represent the political system itself, i.e. political parties, party officials, and the public administration. A list of the included actor types can be found in Online Appendix C.

Using newspapers to identify the organized interests that mobilized on a policy issue and to code their issue-specific policy positions is a fruitful strategy to capture lobbying by organized interests. However, it has to be noted that the media is only one arena that comes with specific properties. Relying on newspaper coverage introduces a certain bias in the sample of organized interests as the most important players and those that use highly visible lobbying strategies (e.g. protests or demonstrations) will be more likely to be included in the sample. For instance, smaller organized interests only representing a niche sector of little public importance and a handful of supporters are less likely to receive attention from journalists. By contrast, journalists are more likely to report the positions of the major economic umbrella associations or large multinationals simply because of their structural power (e.g. Lindblom, 1977) irrespective of whether they rely on visible lobbying strategies. In conclusion, we do not claim to identify the full sample of organized interests mobilized, but we are confident that relying on newspaper coverage allows concentrating on (a) the most important players and (b) those organized interests that use publicly visible strategies.

Moreover, it should be noted that, even if there may be differences in the access of different types of organized interests to the media and other arenas, biases with respect to *the overall position of the group community on an issue* might be less pronounced than one might expect. For 20 of our issues we have supplemented our media data with additional information

about lobbying activity in the administrative and legislative arenas. For these issues, the share of actors supporting change in the newsmedia on an issue is correlated with the same measure for all arenas at 0.88. This gives ground for optimism that at least when it comes to studying the overall alignment of groups, the news media may serve as a proxy for other arenas as well.

The dependent variable in our models is *policy congruence*, i.e. whether policy is aligned with the public opinion majority^{vi}. First, we examine whether the likelihood that policy is in line with public opinion is affected by whether a majority of the groups are aligned with the public opinion majority (H1). The share of organized interests on an issue supporting change is calculated from the unique actors that expressed a position on an issue. It considers organized interests for which we could determine whether they supported or opposed a given policy change. Second, we examine whether the effect of the *alignment of the Public & Organized Interests* varies depending on whether the majority of *public is in favor of changing the status quo* by interacting our alignment and status quo measures (H2). Since our dependent variable is dichotomous we use logistic regressions in all analyses.

Our models include a number of control variables potentially affecting policy congruence. First, we include a variable measuring *media saliency*. On the one hand, attention to an issue by the media may make it easier for legislators to receive information about public preferences and put pressure on them to respond to public preferences (e.g. Lax & Phillips, 2012; Page & Shapiro, 1983). On the other hand, it is also possible that issues where governments adopt unpopular policies are the ones that trigger a lot of media attention, in which case saliency could negatively condition the linkage between opinion and policy. We measure media saliency by counting the average number of articles per day about an issue during its observation period in the four newspapers coded. In addition, we also control for the *number of actors* for which we have coded statements allowing us to test whether the volume rather than the alignment of organized interests affects policy representation. Both of these measures are

logged since we expect decreasing returns to scale on policy representation as both newsmedia coverage and actor mobilization increase and both variables are positively skewed^{vii}. Moreover, we include the year that public opinion was recorded to control for a possible time trend in the relationship between opinion and policy. Both in Europe and the US (Rasmussen et al. 2019; Monroe 1998) there is some evidence of decreasing levels of opinion-policy linkage over time. We also control for the size of the opinion majority. The latter indicates how large the public majority on an issue is irrespective of whether it supports or opposes change. Hence, we would expect that, the more united the public is, the higher the likelihood that policy is aligned with the public majority (Lax & Phillips, 2012). Finally, we include fixed effects for country and policy type of the issues in all models to control for unobserved heterogeneity between files with respect to these dimensions. For the latter, we use Lowi's (1972) distinction between distributive, redistributive, regulatory and constituent policies. His main argument is that "policies determine politics" leading to variation in patterns of conflict between issues. As a result, issues representing different policy types may experience different levels of policy congruence. Online Appendix D provides summary statistics for our variables.

We found statements on the positions of organized interests in the coded media articles on 160 of our 204 issues (94 in Germany and 66 in Denmark). Since we need information about actual group positions to test our hypotheses and do not have theoretical grounds for making specific assumptions about the degree of support in the advocacy community on cases with missing interest group information, our analysis is conducted for these 160 cases. Yet, we show in Online Appendix E that we do not have reason to suspect that this biases our results. Comparing the 160 cases to the remaining 44 cases without interest group information, we do not find a significant difference in policy congruence (see table E1 and Model E1 in Table E2) between the two subsamples. The picture is the same when we compare the effect of the remaining variables on our dependent variable in the two subsamples by interacting them with a

filter variable indicating whether the issue is present in the sample with information about organized interests. Apart from a difference in the effect of the opinion majority (which becomes significant at the 0.10 level in the sample without interest group information), we do not have statistical evidence that their effects on policy congruence depend on the availability of interest group information on an issue (see Models E1-E8 in Table E2).

Analysis

Overall, policy was congruent with the majority of the public in 86 of the 160 cases (i.e. 54 per cent) in our dataset. That this figure is surprisingly similar to what has been found in a recent US study where policy matched majority opinion 48 per cent of the time (Lax & Phillips, 2012).

Table 1. Frequency of Policy Change for different Preference Configurations (Percentages in Parentheses)

Preference configuration	Policy Change		Total
	No	Yes	
Public pro, organized interests con	29 (63.04)	17 (36.96)	46 (100)
Public con, organized interests pro	14 (63.64)	8 (36.36)	22 (100)
Public and organized interests con	20 (54.05)	17 (45.95)	37 (100)
Public and organized interests pro	20 (36.36)	35 (63.64)	55 (100)
Total	83 (51.88)	77 (48.13)	160 (100)

Notes: Positions refer to the majority view of the two communities on an issue

Before our multivariate analysis, we present a descriptive overview of the frequency of policy change in our data in Table 1 for four the possible combinations of issues where policy change is either supported or opposed by majorities of the public and/or the organized interests. The data underline that policy makers do not always adopt policies in line with the wishes of the two communities even when they are aligned. When both majorities of organized interests and the public support change, it does not happen in 36 per cent of the cases. Moreover, when they both support the status quo, policy change still happens in 46 per cent of the cases. With respect

to the balance of power between groups and the public, we see that they disagree on 68 of the 160 cases and that final policy is in line with groups in 37 (i.e. 54 per cent) of these contested cases. According to a one-sample proportion test, this score is significantly higher than the score for the public in a one-tailed test at the 0.10 level ($p=0.072$).

We find some support for the expectation in hypothesis 1 that, when majorities of groups and the public are aligned, policy is more likely to be congruent with majority public opinion ($X^2, =3.17$, $p=0.075$). When the public and the groups defend the same position (the 92 cases in the last two preference configurations), policy is aligned with public opinion in 55 (i.e. 60 per cent) of the cases. In the 68 cases in the first two preference configurations where they are not aligned, policy is in line with the position of the majority of the public in 31 (i.e. 46 per cent) of the cases.

We also find some descriptive evidence supporting hypothesis 2 that the benefits enjoyed by the public of being aligned with groups are stronger in cases in which it supports change. Policy change is significantly more frequent when it is supported by both communities (64 per cent) compared to only one of them (37 and 36 per cent respectively) ($X^2, =7.14$, $p=0.008$ and $X^2, =4.74$, $p=0.029$). In contrast, whether the status quo is kept is less affected by whether both types of actors oppose a change. There is no significant difference in the frequency of policy change between the scenarios where only one or both of the actors oppose a change ($X^2, =0.6852$, $p=0.408$ and $X^2, =0.519$, $p=0.471$).

**Table 2. Policy Congruence (*Is Policy Congruent with the Public Opinion Majority?*)
(Logistic Regression Co-efficients with SEs in Parentheses & P-values)**

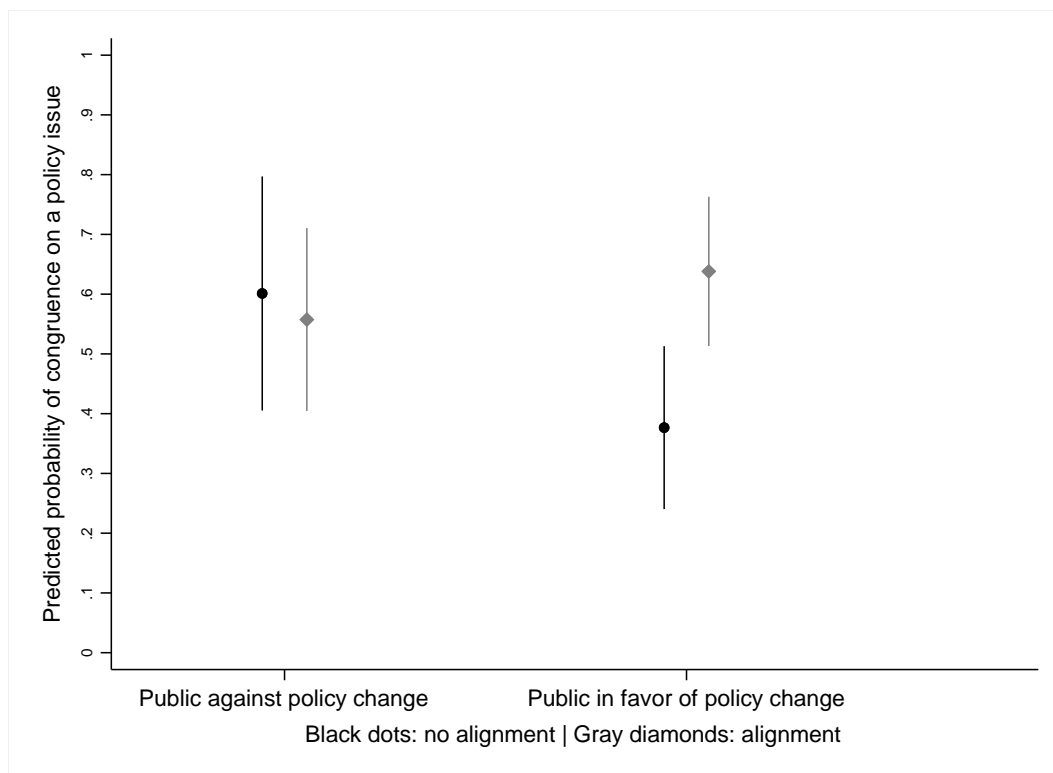
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Alignment of the Public & Organized Interests	0.57+	0.68*	-0.40	-0.20
	(0.32)	(0.35)	(0.55)	(0.58)
Public in favor of Change			-1.09*	-1.00+
			(0.54)	(0.56)
Alignment of the Public & Organized Interests * Public in favor of Change			1.49*	1.38+
			(0.69)	(0.74)
Media Saliency (logged)		0.04		0.03
		(0.14)		(0.14)
Size of Public Opinion Majority		1.37		1.06
		(1.54)		(1.57)
Number of Coded Organized Interests (logged)		-0.26		-0.23
		(0.25)		(0.26)
Year		-0.06		-0.05
		(0.05)		(0.05)
Policy Type (baseline: Redistributive)				
Distributive		-1.83*		-1.80*
		(0.73)		(0.74)
Regulatory		0.56		0.61
		(0.41)		(0.42)
Constituent		-0.00		-0.01
		(0.67)		(0.69)
Country (baseline: Germany)				
Denmark		0.36		0.26
		(0.38)		(0.39)
Constant	-0.18	-0.48	0.56	0.26
	(0.24)	(1.30)	(0.44)	(1.37)
Number of Cases	160	160	160	160
Loglikelihood test	3.17	19.91	8.31	23.74
Probability	0.07	0.02	0.04	0.01

+ p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

These descriptives provide some preliminary support for our theoretical expectations. As a next step, we present our statistical models allowing us to control for additional factors when examining these relationships. In the logistic regression of policy congruence reported in Table 2, we find some evidence that congruence is higher when a majority of the organized inter support the public opinion majority (p=0.049 in Model 2 including controls) as expected in hypothesis 1. The predicted probability of congruence is 60 per cent when a majority of organized groups side with the opinion majority compared to 45 per cent when this is not the case (calculated based on Model 2). Models 3 and 4 add an interaction between the variables

Alignment of the Public & Organized Interests and Public in Favor of Change to determine whether the impact of groups and the public being on the same side on an issue varies depending on whether the public wants to preserve or change the status quo. In line with the expectation in hypothesis 2, there is a positive interaction between the two variables indicating that the public is more likely to benefit from being aligned with groups when it has a preference for policy change.

Figure 1. Effect of Alignment between Groups and Public Opinion on predicted probability of congruence when the public supports the status quo and policy change (based on model 4)



The effect is illustrated in Figure 1. It shows that whether organized interests and the public are aligned only makes a significant difference for the likelihood of policy congruence in the cases where the public supports changing policy. In these cases, the predicted probability of policy congruence with the public opinion majority is 63.81 (+-12.49) per cent when the public enjoys support from the majority of the organized interests whereas it is

37.67 (+-13.64) per cent in the remaining cases (Model 4). In contrast, the confidence intervals are widely overlapping in the cases where the public supports presenting the status quo, indicating that the extent to which the public is aligned with groups in such cases does not matter.

The control variables present several interesting findings. Neither the number of organized interests coded nor media saliency increase policy congruence. There is also no statistical evidence of a time trend in policy congruence over the period studied. In contrast to what we saw in previous research on the US states (Lax & Phillips, 2012), there is also no significant impact of the size of the public opinion majority on the likelihood of policy congruence on our 160 issues. The level of policy congruence is also not significantly different in the two countries even if they experience different degrees of decentralization and that the clarity of responsibility might be weaker in federal than unitary systems (Rasmussen et al. 2019). Instead, distributive issues display lower policy congruence scores than the other policy types. The pressure on decision-makers to respond to public opinion on these issues may be lower, since such issues are characterized by a low overall degree of contestation (Lowi, 1972). The loglikelihood tests reveal that the best fitting model is Model 4 with a critical value for the chi-square statistic of 23.74 (df=11) corresponding to a p-value of 0.01.

Rather than the alignment of groups affecting policy representation, it is also possible that the volume of activity of organized interests exerts an impact. With more organized interests being active, the flow of information between citizens and policymakers on an issue should be stimulated (see e.g. Bevan & Rasmussen, 2017). This might both increase the ability of and incentives for decision-makers to be responsive to public opinion. More group activity should make it easier for decision-makers to find out what the public's preferences on an issue are. And it might also make them more likely to act in line with these public preferences since the likelihood that voters receive information about non-compliance might be higher.

According to such an argument, the sheer presence of groups active on an issue should matter since both opposing and supporting groups could, in principle, contribute to stimulating the flow of information between voters and decision-makers. Since we do not count statements in the entire population of almost 30,000 articles but a sample, we cannot control for the total number of actors on an issue in this study. However, our sampling procedure is designed in such a way that we code more articles on an issue, the larger the population of articles (see Online Appendix B). To test this alternative explanation, Models 2 and 3 included a proxy for the volume of group activity examining whether the number of groups coded on an issue affects policy representation. We did not find a positive effect of group activity on policy representation in Table 2, irrespective of whether we include the interaction between alignment and the public's position (Model 4) or only the former (Model 2). Table F1 in Online Appendix F shows that this effect is also not significant when tested with fewer confounders. Our measure is crude and does not allow us to fully rule out that the volume of group activity affects policy representation. Indeed, it is possible that both the alignment of groups and their activity levels matter since they speak to different theoretical logics of how groups can condition policy representation. However, we see that even when considering a proxy for this alternative explanation, the alignment of groups still has the expected effect in the dataset.

Our results are also robust to a number of alternative specifications. We included all control variables simultaneously in Model 2 to control for the various potential factors that might affect policy congruence. However, the alignment between groups and the public remains significant at the 0.10 level or below when including each of them *one at a time*. When only one control variable is included at a time in Model 4, the significance level of the interaction between alignment and the public's position increases. We also ran robustness checks calculating the share of the public, not only among respondents expressing an opinion, but including those who answered "don't know". These alternative specifications present the same

substantial results for the impact of organized interests on policy congruence (see Online Appendix G)^{viii}.

Splitting the samples by country (see Online Appendix H) shows that there is only a significant main effect of advocacy support for public opinion on policy congruence in the German cases (and in the smaller Danish sample the effect is estimated as negative, but statistically indistinguishable from zero). In both systems, the interaction between alignment and the public's position is positive as expected in hypothesis two but it is only significant in the larger German sample. The differences we observe may be related to the lower likelihood of estimating effects with sufficient precision in our two subsamples, which vary in size (Germany: 94 cases, Denmark: 66 cases). As indicated in our analysis design, they may also result from the fact that groups can potentially make a greater difference in either supporting or weakening public opinion in the German bicameral context where status quo bias can be expected to be higher. Policy action may be harder to achieve where policy-makers serve divergent communities and there are additional access points for organized interests than in the Danish unicameral system. Nevertheless, whether the conditioning impact of organized interests varies between political systems deserves further attention in future research as data for a higher number of countries becomes available.

Conclusion

This paper adds to debates concerning the effect of public opinion and organized interests on public policy (e.g. Gilens & Page, 2014; Lax & Phillips, 2012; Bevan & Rasmussen, 2017). Specifically we linked organized interests to policy representation by studying how the alignment of organized interests affects whether governmental decision-makers adopt policies that represent the opinion of the public. In a novel study of 160 policy issues in Germany and Denmark we analyzed the effect of organized interests on whether policy is congruent with the policy preference of the public opinion majority. We argued that organized interests have the

potential to influence policy representation by affecting the weight political decision-makers attach to public opinion. However, we pointed out that having support from groups might not be equally important in all circumstances but particularly important in cases where the majority of the public is interested in overcoming potential status quo bias and changing policy.

Our analyses supported our expectations that the interplay between public opinion and organized interests is important for understanding the formation of public policy. We find support that the alignment of organized interests active on an issue affects the linkage between public opinion and policy. When the majority of organized interests mobilized are aligned with public opinion, policy is more likely to be congruent with public opinion. Yet, we also showed that having support (opposition) from the group community is primarily an asset (disadvantage) for the public when it wants to change policy. In cases, the public wants to preserve the status quo, the opinion of the group community does not affect the likelihood that policy ends up reflecting its policy positions. These findings are robust to controlling for media saliency as well as other factors that may affect the opinion-policy linkage. They underline the importance of including organized interests in studies of policy representation, which have to date only paid scarce attention to groups.

With respect to the long-standing debate about the democratic role of organized interests, organized interests have the potential to play a positive role in transmitting the views of the public to decision makers. Our analysis highlighted that when the majority of organized interests support the position held by the citizens the chances are higher that final policies are aligned with the public opinion majority. Yet, the other side of the coin is that the absence of lobbying on behalf of the majority position may serve to suppress the opinion-policy linkage. When most organized interests are on the opposite side of the public, it is less likely that decision-makers adopt policy in line with public opinion. Rather than acting as a general safeguard for democratic governance, whether organized interests stimulate responsiveness is

thus conditional on the voice expressed by the community of organized interests. Depending on the representativeness of organized interests on a policy issue, it may be both comforting and worrying that whether citizens get what they want depends on whether they agree with groups. Yet, normative defenders of populist democracy may be keen to learn that it is primarily in the cases where the public is up against status quo bias and aims at changing policies that group opinion is important. In these cases, organized interests can make the strongest difference for whether the public wins or loses.

Focusing on media coverage to identify organized interests that mobilized on an issue had several advantages in our study. First, we were able to code the policy positions advocated by organized interests for a large number of policy issues that go a long way back in time in a reliable way without being dependent on the memory of respondents in elite interviews. Second, it also meant that we were not dependent on being able to collect information about stakeholders from formal tools of access on the issues (such as written and oral consultations), which were not used consistently on all issues. Third, we were able to include issues in our sample that were not already on the agenda of government administrations or lawmakers.

Yet, despite the advantages of relying on media coverage in our study, there is scope for expanding our approach in future studies to the lobbying efforts made by organized interests in other arenas. This would make it possible to shed light on the respective role of insider contacts to decision-makers and outsider strategies such as media lobbying (e.g. Binderkrantz et al., 2015; Holyoke, 2003; Holyoke et al., 2012). Also, while we have concentrated our attention on whether groups side with public opinion or not, follow-up studies may scrutinize the causal mechanisms through which groups affect the linkage between opinion and policy further, e.g. by analyzing how groups frame issues and use information. Finally, while we have made an important step forward by presenting the first analyses of the effect of interest group lobbying on the link between public opinion and collective decision-making outside the US,

future research should extend our analyses beyond Germany and Denmark. Even though these countries share many similarities with other established democracies, there is scope for further comparative research to test the external validity of our findings.

ⁱ While our focus is on the signal on “group alignment” decision-makers receive from the news media, we discuss below how our findings may be generalizable to advocacy expressed through other channels. Hence, on the 20 of our issues on which we have information about lobbying activity from multiple arenas, the share of actors supporting change in the newsmedia is correlated with advocacy support for change in all arenas at 0.88.

ⁱⁱ For further information, see [link to project to be inserted].

ⁱⁱⁱ Examining polls from 1998 has the advantage that we start in a year when general/federal elections were held in both countries while ensuring a long enough time span to find a high number of eligible issues in each country.

^{iv} We could in principle have included a higher number of Danish than German items in our analysis, which controls for country-level variation. However, another important concern was to work with a sample size allowing our team sufficient resources to both systematically code statements by organized interests in two major newspapers per country and examine whether policy change happened within our observation period on each issue.

^v More details are provided in Online Appendix B and the full guidelines as they were given to the student assistants are available at [link to project to be inserted].

^{vi} The share is calculated as support among those who stated an opinion to avoid assuming that parts of the public expressing “don’t know” were against the policy in question. However, as we report later, alternative specifications including “don’t know” respondents do not alter the substantial results.

^{vii} While there is a relationship between overall media saliency and interest group mobilization in the media, the measures are only correlated at 0.5, indicating that they

measure distinct phenomena. Our findings with respect to the conditioning impact on the alignment of groups on policy congruence are robust when only one of them is included.

^{viii} The correlation of the public opinion measures including and excluding “don’t know” respondents is 0.98.

References

- Agnone, Jon. 2007. "Amplifying Public Opinion: The Policy Impact of the U.S. Environmental Movement." *Social Forces* 85(4): 1593-1620.
- Austen-Smith, David. 1993. „Information and influence: Lobbying for agendas and votes." *American Journal of Political Science* 37(4): 799-833.
- Baroni, Laura, Brendan J. Carroll, Adam W. Chalmers, Luz M M Marquez and Rasmussen, Anne. 2014. "Defining and Classifying Interest Groups." *Interests Groups and Advocacy* 3(2): 141-59.
- Baumgartner, Frank R., Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David C. Kimball and Beth Leech. 2009. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bevan, Shaun and Jennings, Will. 2014. "Representation, agendas and institutions". *European Journal of Political Research* 53(1): 37-56.
- Bevan, Shaun and Rasmussen, Anne. 2017. "Voluntary Associations and Dynamic Agenda Representation in the United States." *Policy Studies Journal*, Early View.
- Binderkrantz, Anne Skorkjær. 2005. "Interest Group Strategies: Navigating Between Privileged Access and Strategies of Pressure." *Political Studies*, 53: 694-715.
- Binderkrantz, Anne Skorkjær, Christiansen, Peter Munk and Pedersen, Helene Helboe. 2015. "Interest Group Access to the Bureaucracy, Parliament, and the Media." *Governance* 28(1): 95-112.
- Binderkrantz, Anne Skorkjær, Chaqués, Laura Bonafont and Halpin, Darren R. 2017. „Diversity in the News? A Study of Interest Groups in the Media in the UK, Spain and Denmark." *British Journal of Political Science* 47(2): 313-328.

- Brooks, Joel E. 1985. "Democratic Frustration in the Anglo-American Polities: a Quantification of Inconsistency Between Mass Public Opinion and Public Policy." *Political Research Quarterly* 38(2): 250-261.
- Chaqués, Laura Bonafont and Palau, Anna M. 2011. "Assessing the Responsiveness of Spanish Policymakers to the Priorities of their Citizens." *West European Politics* 34(4): 706-730.
- Bouwen, Peter. (2004). "Exchanging access goods for access: A comparative study of business lobbying in the European Union institutions." *European Journal of Political Research* 43(3), 337-369.
- Broscheid, Andreas and Coen, David. 2007. "Lobbying Activity and Fora Creation in the EU: Empirically Exploring the Nature of the Policy Good." *Journal of European Public Policy* 14(3): 346-65.
- Burstein, Paul. 2003. "The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda." *Political Research Quarterly* 56(1): 29-40.
- Burstein, Paul. 2014. *American Public Opinion, Advocacy, and Policy in Congress What the Public Wants and What It Gets*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Burstein, Paul and Linton, April. 2002. "The Impact of Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Social Movement Organizations on Public Policy: Some Recent Evidence and Theoretical Concerns" *Social Forces* 81(2):380-408.
- De Bruycker, Iskander. 2019. "Democratically Deficient, yet Responsive? How politicization facilitates Responsiveness in the European Union.", *Journal of European Public Policy*, OnlineFirst.
- De Bruycker, Iskander and Rasmussen, Anne. 2019. "A Blessing or Curse for Congruence? How interest mobilization affects congruence between voters and elected representatives in the European News Media.", Paper presented at the sixteenth biennial EUSA conference in Denver, May 9-11, 2019

- Eising, Rainer. 2007. "Institutional Context, Organizational Resources and Strategic Choice." *European Union Politics* 8(3): 329-62.
- Fellowes, Matthew C. and Wolf, Patrick J. 2004. „Funding Mechanisms and Policy Instruments: How Business Campaign Contributions Influence Congressional Votes.“ *Political Research Quarterly* 57(2): 315-324.
- Ferejohn, John. 1986. „Incumbent performance and electoral control.“ *Public Choice* 50(1–3): 5–25.
- Fiorina, Morris P. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Furlong, Scott R. and Kerwin, Cornelius R. 2005. "Interest group participation in rule making: A decade of change." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 15(3): 353-370.
- Giger, Nathalie and Klüver, Heike. 2016. "Voting against your constituents? How lobbying affects representation." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(1): 190–205.
- Gilens, Martin. 2012. *Affluence and influence: Economic inequality and political power in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Gilens, Martin and Page, Benjamin I. 2014. "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens." *Perspectives on Politics* 12(3): 564-581.
- Gordon, Stacy B. 2001. "All Votes Are Not Created Equal: Campaign Contributions and Critical Votes." *Journal of Politics* 63(1): 249-269.
- Gray, Virginia, Lowery, David, Fellowes, Matthew and McAtee, Andrea. 2004. "Public Opinion, Public Policy, and Organized Interests in the American States." *Political Research Quarterly* 57(3): 411-420.
- Hall, Richard L. and Deardorff, Alan. 2006. "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy." *American Political Science Review* 100(1): 69–84.

- Holyoke, Tom T. 2002. "Choosing Battleground: Interest Group Lobbying Access Across Multiple Venues." *Political Research Quarterly* 56(3): 325-36.
- Holyoke, Tom T., Brown, Heath & Jeffrey R. Henig. 2012. "Shopping in the Political Arena: Strategic State and Local Venue Selection by Advocates." *State and Local Government Review* 44(1): 9-20.
- Imig, Doug. 2002. "Contestation in the Streets: European Protest and the Emerging Euro-Polity." *Comparative Political Studies* 35(8): 914–933.
- Imig, Doug and Tarrow, Sidney. 2000. "Political Contention in a Europeanising Polity." *West European Politics* 23(4): 73–93.
- Jacoby, William G. and Schneider, Sandra K. 2001. "Variability in State policy priorities: An empirical analysis." *Journal of Politics* 63(2): 544-568.
- Jennings, Will and John, Peter. 2009. "The Dynamics of Political Attention: Public Opinion and the Queen's Speech in the United Kingdom." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(4): 838-854.
- Jones, Bryan D. and Baumgartner, Frank R. 2004. "Representation and Agenda Setting." *Policy Studies Journal* 32(1): 1-24.
- Jones, Bryan D., Larsen-Price, Heather and Wilkerson, John. 2009. "Representation and American Governing Institutions." *Journal of Politics* 71(1): 277-290.
- Key, Validmer O. 1966. *The Responsible Electorate: Rationality in Presidential Voting, 1936–1960*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Klüver, Heike. 2012. „Informational Lobbying in the European Union: The Effect of Organizational Characteristics.“ *West European Politics* 35(3): 491-510.
- Klüver, Heike. 2013. *Lobbying in the European Union: Interest groups, lobbying coalitions and policy change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Klüver, Heike and Pickup, Mark. 2019. "Are they Listening? Public Opinion, interest groups and government responsiveness." *West European Politics* 42(1): 91-112.

- Klüver, Heike and Spoon, Jae-Jae. 2016. „Who Responds? Voters, Parties, and Issue Attention.“ *British Journal of Political Science* 46(3): 633-654.
- Kollman, Ken. 1998. *Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Lax, Jeffrey R. and Phillips, Justin H. 2009. “Gay rights in the States: Public opinion and policy responsiveness.” *American Political Science Review* 103(3): 367-386.
- Lax, Jeffrey R. and Phillips, Justin H. 2012. “The democratic deficit in the States.” *American Journal of Political Science* 56(1): 148-166.
- Lindblom, Charles Edward. 1977. *Politics and Markets: The World's Political-Economic Systems*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lipsky, Michael. 1968. “Protest as a Political Resource.” *American Political Science Review* 62(4): 1144–1158.
- Lowery, David. 2007. „Why Do Organized Interests Lobby? A Multi-Goal, Multi-Context Theory of Lobbying“. *Polity* 39(1): 29-54.
- Mahoney, Christine. 2008. *Brussels versus the beltway: Advocacy in the United States and the European Union*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Monroe, Alan D. 1979. “Consistency between Public Preferences and National Policy Decisions”. *American Politics Research* 7(1): 3-19.
- Monroe, Alan D. 1998. “Public Opinion and Public Policy, 1980-93”. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 62(1): 6-28.
- Nanou, Kyriaki and Dorussen, Han. 2013. “European Integration and Electoral Democracy: How the European Union Constrains Party Competition in the Member States.” *European Journal of Political Research*. 52.1: 71-93.
- Nownes, Anthony J. 2006. *Total Lobbying. What Lobbyists want (and how they try to get it)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Page, Benjamin I. and Shapiro, Robert Y. 1983. „Effects of Public opinion on Policy.“
American Political Science Review 77(1): 175-190.
- Peters, Yvette and Ensink, Sander J. 2014. “Differential Responsiveness in Europe: The Effects of Preference Difference and Electoral Participation.” *West European Politics* 38(3): 577-600.
- Pitkin, Hanna F. 1967. *The concept of representation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Powell, Bingham G. Jr. 2000. *Elections as instruments of democracy: Majoritarian and proportional visions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Rasmussen, A, Carroll, B and Lowery, David. 2014. ”Representatives of the Public? Public Opinion and Interest Group Activity.” *European Journal of Political Research* 53(2): 250-68.
- Rasmussen, Anne, Romeijn, Jeroen and Toshkov, Dimiter. 2018. ”Dynamics of Regulatory Policymaking in Sweden: The Role of Media Advocacy and Public Opinion.” *Scandinavian Political Studies* 41(1): 49-74.
- Rasmusen, Anne, Reher, Stefanie and Toshkov, Dimiter. 2019. “The Opinion-Policy Nexus in Europe and the Role of Political Institutions.” *European Journal of Political Research* 58(2): 412-34.
- Reher, Stefanie. 2018. “Gender and Opinion-Policy Congruence in Europe.” *European Political Science Review* 10(4): 613-35.
- Riker, William H. 1962. *The Theory of Political Coalitions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Samuelson, William and Richard Zeckhauser 1988. “Status Quo Bias in Decision-Making.” *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty* 1(1): 7-59.
- Schattschneider, Elmer E. 1960. *The Semisovereign People*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

- Schlozman, Kay Lehman, Verba, Sidney and Brady, Henry E. 2012. *The Uneheavily Chorus. Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Schneider, Sandra K. and William. G. Jacoby. 2006. *Citizen influences on state policy priorities: The interplay of public opinion and interest groups*. In Jeffrey E. Cohen (Ed.) *Public Opinion in State Politics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Smith, Mark A. 2000. *American Business and Political Power. Public Opinion, Elections, and Democracy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Stimson, James A., Mackuen, Michael B. and Erikson, Robert S. 1995. "Dynamic Representation." *American Political Science Review* 89(3): 543-565.
- Strøm, Kaare. 1990. "A Behavioral Theory of Competitive Political Parties." *American Journal of Political Science* 34(2): 565-598.
- Strøm, Kaare and Müller, Wolfgang C. 1999. *Policy, Office or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Truman, David. B. 1951. *The Governmental Process*. New York: Knopf.
- Varone, Frédéric, Karin Ingold and Charlotte Jordain 2017. "Defending the status quo across venues and coalitions: evidence from California interest groups." *Journal of Public Policy* 37(1): 1-26.
- Witko, Christopher. 2006. "PACs, Issue Context, and Congressional Decisionmaking." *Political Research Quarterly* 59(2): 283-295.

Online Appendices

Online Appendix A: Included Survey items

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
4	DE	Sind Sie dafür, dass Hartz IV-Empfänger stärker als bisher ...	zu gemeinnützigen Arbeiten herangezogen werden, oder sind Sie da dagegen?
16	DE	Wenn es um die Kürzung von Ausgaben geht: In welchen Bereichen sollte da bei uns in Deutschland gespart werden? ...Sollte bei den Sozialleistungen gespart werden?	ja nein
17	DE	Wenn es um die Kürzung von Ausgaben geht: In welchen Bereichen sollte da bei uns in Deutschland gespart werden? ... Sollte im Bereich Gesundheit gespart werden?	ja nein
18	DE	Wenn es um die Kürzung von Ausgaben geht: In welchen Bereichen sollte da bei uns in Deutschland gespart werden? ...Sollte bei Verkehr und Straßenbau gespart werden?	ja nein
19	DE	Wenn es um die Kürzung von Ausgaben geht: In welchen Bereichen sollte da bei uns in- Deutschland gespart werden? ...Sollte bei Rüstung und Verteidigung gespart werden?	ja nein
20	DE	Wenn es um die Kürzung von Ausgaben geht: In welchen Bereichen sollte da bei uns in Deutschland gespart werden? ...Sollte bei der Kinderbetreuung gespart werden?	ja nein
22	DE	Ich nenne Ihnen jetzt einige Bereiche, in denen es zu Kürzungen kommen könnte. Wo sollte Ihrer Meinung nach gekürzt werden? Sollte bei der Rente gekürzt werden?	ja nein
24	DE	Ich nenne Ihnen jetzt einige Bereiche, in denen es zu Kürzungen kommen könnte. Wo sollte Ihrer Meinung nach gekürzt werden? Sollte bei der Familienförderung gekürzt werden?	ja nein
28	DE	Und was meinen Sie zu möglichen Steuererhöhungen? F.85b Sollte eine Steuer auf den Kauf und Verkauf von Wertpapieren eingeführt werden?	ja nein
30	DE	Und was meinen Sie zu möglichen Steuererhöhungen? F.85d Zu Jahresbeginn wurde die Mehrwertsteuer für Hotelübernachtungen gesenkt. Sollte das wieder rückgängig gemacht werden?	ja nein
33	DE	Bürger, die Steuern hinterzogen haben, und sich deshalb beim Finanzamt selbst anzeigen, müssen bisher nur ihre Steuern nachzahlen und erhalten keine weiteren Strafen. Sollte das ...	so bleiben oder sollten Steuerhinterzieher zukünftig bestraft werden, auch wenn sie sich selbst anzeigen?
37	DE	Zurzeit wird darüber gesprochen, ob der Abzug der deutschen Soldaten aus Afghanistan bereits 2011 beginnen soll oder erst später. Was meinen Sie, soll der Abzug ...	2011 beginnen oder erst später?
42	DE	Wenn es um die Höhe von Manager-Gehältern geht, ...	Staat sollte eingreifen sollte nicht eingreifen
50	DE	Der Arcandor-Konzern, zu dem auch Karstadt und Quelle gehören, hat die Bundesregierung wegen finanzieller Schwierigkeiten um Hilfe gebeten. Finden Sie eine finanzielle Unterstützung von Arcandor mit Steuermitteln richtig, oder finden Sie das nicht richtig?	richtig nicht richtig
56	DE	Im Herbst entscheidet der Bundestag über die Verlängerung des Bundeswehr-Einsatzes in Afghanistan. Finden Sie das richtig, wenn sich ... Deutschland weiterhin mit Soldaten am UN-Friedenseinsatz in Afghanistan beteiligt, oder finden Sie das nicht richtig?	richtig nicht richtig

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
57	DE	Die USA werden die Zahl ihrer Soldaten in Afghanistan deutlich erhöhen. Jetzt gibt es den Wunsch der US-Regierung, dass auch Deutschland die Zahl seiner Soldaten erhöht. Was meinen Sie: Soll Deutschland ...	Zahlen der Soldaten erhöhen soll Deutschland das nicht tun?
62	DE	Zurzeit gibt es bei längeren Mietverhältnissen unterschiedliche Kündigungsfristen für Mieter und Vermieter. Wenn ein Mieter seine Wohnung kündigen will, beträgt die Kündigungsfrist immer drei Monate. Für den Vermieter hingegen verlängert sich die Kündigungsfrist, je länger die Wohnung vermietet ist. Was meinen Sie: Sollte es weiterhin unterschiedliche Kündigungsfristen für Mieter und Vermieter geben oder sollte dies geändert werden?	weiterhin unterschiedliche Kündigungsfristen sollte geändert werden
65	DE	Die Deutsche Bahn ist bislang vollständig in staatlichem Besitz. Das Schienennetz soll auch weiterhin in staatlichem Besitz bleiben. Im Bereich Personen- und Güterverkehr plant die Bundesregierung aus CDU/CSU und SPD, einen Teil der Deutschen Bahn zu verkaufen. Finden Sie es richtig, dass die Bundesregierung ...	einen Teil der Deutschen Bahn verkaufen will, oder finden Sie das nicht richtig?
68	DE	Die CDU hat vorgeschlagen, dass in Zukunft diejenigen Rentner, die über lange Jahre Beiträge zur Rentenversicherung einbezahlt haben, mindestens eine Rente bekommen sollen, die über der Armutsgrenze liegt. Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag ..	gut oder nicht gut?
73	DE	Der Autohersteller Opel hat hauptsächlich wegen Problemen seines amerikanischen Mutterkonzerns die Bundesregierung um finanzielle Hilfen gebeten. Was meinen Sie, ...	sollte der Staat Opel mit Steuermitteln helfen oder sollte sich der Staat bei Opel raushalten?
76	DE	Darüber hinaus werden weitere Maßnahmen zur Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft gefordert. Ich nenne Ihnen nun verschiedene Maßnahmen. Sagen Sie mir bitte jeweils, ob es diese Ihrer Meinung nach geben sollte oder nicht. Sollte es vom Staat für alle Bürger sogenannte Konsumgutscheine ...	über einen bestimmten Geldbetrag geben, die man innerhalb einer bestimmten Zeit für den Kauf von Waren einlösen kann, oder sollte es keine solchen Konsumgutscheine geben?
78	DE	Darüber hinaus werden weitere Maßnahmen zur Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft gefordert. Ich nenne Ihnen nun verschiedene Maßnahmen. Sagen Sie mir bitte jeweils, ob es diese Ihrer Meinung nach geben sollte oder nicht. Sollten für Privatpersonen ...	die Steuern gesenkt werden oder sollte es keine solchen Steuersenkungen geben?
79	DE	Darüber hinaus werden weitere Maßnahmen zur Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft gefordert. Ich nenne Ihnen nun verschiedene Maßnahmen. Sagen Sie mir bitte jeweils, ob es diese Ihrer Meinung nach geben sollte oder nicht. Sollte es ...	finanzielle Hilfen für einzelne, in Schwierigkeiten geratene Unternehmen geben, oder sollte es keine solchen finanziellen Hilfen geben?
80	DE	Darüber hinaus werden weitere Maßnahmen zur Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft gefordert. Ich nenne Ihnen nun verschiedene Maßnahmen. Sagen Sie mir bitte jeweils, ob es diese Ihrer Meinung nach geben sollte oder nicht. Sollte es für Unternehmen und Betriebe ...	stärkere finanzielle Entlastungen geben oder sollte es die nicht geben?
82	DE	Es wird auch darüber gesprochen, ob eine Vermögensteuer auf hohe Vermögen erhoben werden soll. Sind Sie ...	für eine solche Vermögensteuer oder sind Sie dagegen?
83	DE	Zudem fordert die CSU die Wiedereinführung der Entfernungspauschale ab dem ersten Kilometer, so dass die Kosten für den Weg zum Arbeitsplatz wieder voll von der Steuer abgesetzt werden können. Sind Sie ...	für die Wiedereinführung der Entfernungspauschale ab dem ersten Kilometer, oder sind Sie dagegen?

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
87	DE	Es gibt die Forderung, dass sich Deutschland in Afghanistan auch in den stärker umkämpften Gebieten im Süden mit Soldaten militärisch beteiligt. Was meinen Sie: Sollen ...	deutsche Soldaten in den stärker umkämpften Gebieten im Süden Afghanistans eingesetzt werden oder sollen dort keine deutschen Soldaten eingesetzt werden?
88	DE	Zu einem anderen Thema: Die Bundeswehr darf in Friedenszeiten innerhalb Deutschlands bisher nur im Katastrophenfall eingesetzt werden. Jetzt plant die Bundesregierung eine Grundgesetzänderung, wonach die Bundeswehr auch bei sonstigen Bedrohungen eingesetzt werden darf, wenn die Mittel der Polizei nicht ausreichen. Finden Sie es ...	richtig, wenn die Bundeswehr innerhalb Deutschlands auch in solchen Fällen eingesetzt werden darf, oder finden Sie das nicht richtig?
92	DE	Bei den Hartz-IV-Regelungen, also den Maßnahmen im Bereich der Arbeitslosen- und Sozialhilfe, wird über eine Erhöhung des Arbeitslosengeldes II gesprochen. Was meinen Sie - wonach sollten sich Erhöhungen beim Arbeitslosengeld II richten: ...	weiterhin nach der Entwicklung der Renten oder in Zukunft nach der Entwicklung der Lebenshaltungskosten?
96	DE	Beim Thema "Mindestlohn für Briefzusteller" ist es bisher zu keiner Einigung zwischen CDU/ CSU und SPD gekommen. Was meinen Sie: Sollte es bei den Briefzustellern ... (Zur Info: Briefzusteller = Brief(aus)träger)	einen Mindestlohn geben oder sollte es keinen Mindestlohn geben?
100	DE	Was meinen Sie grundsätzlich: Sollten die Strompreise in Deutschland ...	staatlich kontrolliert werden, oder sollten die Strompreise dem freien Wettbewerb überlassen bleiben?
103	DE	Aufgrund einer gesetzlichen Regelung sollen bis zum Jahr 2021 alle deutschen Atomkraftwerke stillgelegt werden. CDU/ CSU und SPD haben im Koalitionsvertrag festgelegt, daran nichts zu ändern. Jetzt gibt es die Forderung, die vorhandenen Atomkraftwerke auch über den beschlossenen Zeitraum hinaus zu betreiben. Was meinen Sie, ...	soll es beim beschlossenen Atomausstieg bleiben, oder sollen die Atomkraftwerke länger betrieben werden als beschlossen?
109	DE	Innenminister Wolfgang Schäuble hat zur Bekämpfung der Kriminalität vorgeschlagen, zukünftig die Fingerabdrücke und Passfotos aller Bundesbürger auf Dauer zu speichern und der Polizei zur Verfügung zu stellen. Finden Sie das ...	richtig oder finden Sie das nicht richtig?
120	DE	Im Zusammenhang mit dem Klimawandel wird über eine stärkere Besteuerung von Flügen gesprochen. Sind Sie ...	für eine stärkere Besteuerung von Flügen oder sind Sie dagegen?
133	DE	Die Einnahmen der gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung reichen nicht aus, um die Leistungen für die Versicherten wie bisher bezahlen zu können. Bei der Reform des Gesundheitssystems hat sich die Große Koalition aus CDU/CSU und SPD jetzt darauf geeinigt, die Beiträge für die Krankenversicherung zu erhöhen. Finden Sie ...	diese Beitragserhöhung richtig, oder finden Sie dies nicht richtig?
138	DE	Zu einem anderen Thema: Im Zusammenhang mit dem Amoklauf von Emsdetten wird über ein Verbot von gewaltverherrlichenden Computerspielen diskutiert. Sind Sie ...	für ein Verbot solcher Computerspiele, oder sind Sie gegen ein solches Verbot?
146	DE	Die Bundeswehr darf in Friedenszeiten innerhalb Deutschlands nur im Katastrophenfall eingesetzt werden. Innenminister Schäuble fordert bei der Fußball-Weltmeisterschaft den Einsatz der Bundeswehr, um die Polizei zu entlasten. Finden Sie es ...	richtig, wenn die Bundeswehr dafür eingesetzt würde, oder finden Sie das nicht richtig?

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
158	DE	Zum Thema Mindestlohn: Damit inländische Arbeitskräfte vor billiger Konkurrenz aus dem Ausland geschützt werden, ist es in der Bauwirtschaft gesetzlich vorgeschrieben, dass alle Arbeitskräfte als Mindestlohn den niedrigsten Tariflohn erhalten müssen. Sind Sie ...	dafür, dass auch in anderen Branchen alle Arbeitskräfte als Mindestlohn den niedrigsten Tariflohn erhalten sollen, oder sind Sie dagegen?
159	DE	Zur Zeit wird darüber gesprochen, sehr hohe Einkommen stärker zu besteuern als bisher. Sind Sie ...	für eine stärkere Besteuerung sehr hoher Einkommen, oder sind Sie dagegen?
160	DE	Der Steuerexperte der CDU/CSU Paul Kirchhof hat vorgeschlagen, in einigen Jahren ab einem bestimmten Einkommen einen einheitlichen Steuersatz von 25 Prozent zu erheben. Dafür sollen sämtliche Steuervergünstigungen abgeschafft werden. Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag ..	gut, nicht gut, oder können Sie das nicht beurteilen?
164	DE	In der gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung sind bisher nicht berufstätige Ehepartner kostenlos mitversichert. Es gibt den Vorschlag, dass auch für den Ehepartner von Alleinverdienern mit hohem Einkommen Beiträge zur gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung gezahlt werden müssen. Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag .	nicht erhoben gut oder nicht gut?
169	DE	Um staatliche Maßnahmen zur Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft finanzieren zu können, werden verschiedene Einsparmöglichkeiten diskutiert. Wie ist das mit der Steuerfreiheit von Nacht-, Sonntags- und Feiertagszuschlägen? Wären Sie da mit Kürzungen einverstanden?	ja nein
170	DE	Um staatliche Maßnahmen zur Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft finanzieren zu können, werden verschiedene Einsparmöglichkeiten diskutiert. Wie ist das mit den Steinkohlesubventionen? Wären Sie da mit Kürzungen einverstanden?	ja nein
171	DE	Ein anderer Vorschlag, um staatliche Maßnahmen zur Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft finanzieren zu können, ist eine Erhöhung der Mehrwertsteuer. Wären Sie in diesem Zusammenhang für eine Erhöhung der Mehrwertsteuer?	ja einverstanden nein nicht einverstanden
176	DE	Zur Zeit kann nur bei schweren Straftaten und Sexualdelikten angeordnet werden, einen DNA-Test durchzuführen und zu speichern. Sind Sie ...	dafür, dass in Zukunft auch bei weniger schweren Straftaten ein DNA-Test angeordnet werden darf, oder sind Sie dagegen?
177	DE	Zu einem anderen Thema: Bisher müssen Bundestagsabgeordnete ihre Nebeneinkünfte ab einer bestimmten Höhe nur dem Bundestagspräsidenten mitteilen. Was meinen Sie: Sollten Nebeneinkünfte von Bundestagsabgeordneten ...	zukünftig auch veröffentlicht werden müssen, oder sollten sie das nicht?
178	DE	Zur Zeit wird auch über eine gesetzliche Neuregelung von Vaterschaftstests gesprochen. Sollte es verboten werden, ...	einen Vaterschaftstest ohne Einwilligung der Mutter durchzuführen, oder sollte das nicht verboten werden?
179	DE	Nach der Einführung der LKW-Maut wird jetzt auch über eine Maut für PKW gesprochen. Wären Sie ...	für die Einführung einer PKW-Maut, wenn dafür Steuern wie die KFZ- und die Mineralölsteuer gesenkt würden, oder wären Sie dagegen?

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
183	DE	Die Europäische Union hat die Vorschriften gegen die Luftverschmutzung drastisch verschärft: Seit dem 1. Januar darf nur noch an 35 Tagen im Jahr eine bestimmte Menge Dieselruß und Feinstaub in der Luft überschritten werden. Was meinen Sie: Sollte es wegen der Luftverschmutzung in den betroffenen Städten ...	ein begrenztes Fahrverbot für Diesel-PKW und -LKW ohne Rußfilter geben, oder sollte es nicht geben
199	DE	Ein weiterer Reformvorschlag, der als Bürgerversicherung bezeichnet wird, besteht darin, dass zukünftig alle Personen - also auch Selbständige und Beamte - auf alle Einkommensarten - also auch auf Zinsen und Mieteinnahmen - einen bestimmten Prozentsatz ihres Einkommens als Krankenversicherungsbeitrag zahlen sollen. Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag im Vergleich zum bisherigen System ...	besser schlechter, oder können Sie das nicht beurteilen?
204	DE	Für den Bereich der gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung gibt es den Vorschlag, dass die Beiträge zu den Krankenversicherungen gesenkt werden sollen und dafür die Patienten einen größeren Teil der Leistungen selbst bezahlen müssen. Finden Sie ...	diesen Vorschlag gut, oder finden Sie ihn nicht gut?
205	DE	Zu einem anderen Thema: Die Bundesregierung plant, auch in Privathaushalten die Schwarzarbeit - z.B. für Putzen oder Babysitten - strafrechtlich zu verfolgen. Finden Sie das ...	richtig, oder nicht richtig?
206	DE	Die SPD hat sich für die Schaffung von Eliteuniversitäten ausgesprochen. Was meinen Sie, ...	brauchen wir in Deutschland Eliteuniversitäten oder brauchen wir keine Eliteuniversitäten?
208	DE	Wegen der angespannten wirtschaftlichen Lage wird über verschiedene Maßnahmen zur Ankurbelung der Wirtschaft gesprochen. Es gibt den Vorschlag, einen Feiertag zu streichen. Sind Sie ...	für die Streichung eines Feiertages, oder sind Sie gegen die Streichung eines Feiertages?
209	DE	Das Bundesverfassungsgericht hat entschieden, dass Beitragszahler mit Kindern in der Pflegeversicherung besser gestellt werden müssen als Kinderlose. Um das umzusetzen, planen SPD und Grüne die Beiträge für Kinderlose in der Pflegeversicherung je nach Einkommen um maximal 9 Euro pro Monat anzuheben. Finden Sie es richtig, dass ...	die Beiträge für Kinderlose angehoben werden sollen, oder finden Sie das nicht richtig?
212	DE	Um die Löcher im Haushalt zu stopfen, plant die Bundesregierung die Streichung der Eigenheimzulage, also die Zuschüsse zum Erwerb eines Eigenheims. Finden Sie die Streichung der Eigenheimzulage ...	richtig nicht richtig
213	DE	Außerdem plant die Bundesregierung die Kürzung der Entfernungspauschale, so dass Kosten für den Weg zum Arbeitsplatz nur noch ab dem 21. Entfernungskilometer von der Steuer abgesetzt werden können. Finden Sie das ...	richtig nicht richtig
216	DE	Wie ist das mit den Umschulungsmaßnahmen der Arbeitsämter? Wären Sie da mit Kürzungen einverstanden?	ja, einverstanden nein, nicht einverstanden
218	DE	Wie ist das mit den Steinkohle-Subventionen? Wären Sie da mit Kürzungen einverstanden?	ja, einverstanden nein, nicht einverstanden
219	DE	Die Bundesregierung hat zur Senkung der Lohnnebenkosten vorgeschlagen, dass die Versicherungsbeiträge für das Krankengeld, das bisher von Arbeitgebern und Arbeitnehmern gemeinsam gezahlt wurde, zukünftig nur noch von den Arbeitnehmern zu tragen sind.	Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag gut, oder finden Sie ihn nicht gut?
220	DE	Die CDU/CSU hat zur Senkung der Lohnnebenkosten vorgeschlagen, den Zahnersatz aus der gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung heraus zu nehmen. Stattdessen soll jeder Arbeitnehmer für Zahnersatz eine private Pflichtversicherung abschließen.	Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag gut, oder finden Sie ihn nicht gut?

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
221	DE	Es gibt auch den Vorschlag, dass Patienten bei einem Arztbesuch eine Praxisgebühr bezahlen sollen.	Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag richtig, oder finden Sie ihn nicht richtig?
222	DE	Die CDU/CSU schlägt im Gegensatz dazu vor, dass die Patienten 10% aller Krankheitskosten selbst zahlen sollen, höchstens jedoch 2% vom Jahreseinkommen.	Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag gut, oder finden Sie ihn nicht gut?
223	DE	In der gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung zahlt bisher jeder - abhängig von der Höhe seines Einkommens - unterschiedlich hohe Beiträge. Der Vorschlag der von der CDU eingesetzten Herzog-Kommission sieht vor, dass ab 2013 alle einen einheitlichen Beitrag zur gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung zahlen sollen, und Versicherte mit niedrigem Einkommen dafür Zuschüsse aus Steuermitteln erhalten sollen. Was finden Sie besser: ...	das bisherige System, den Vorschlag der Herzog-Kommission oder können Sie das nicht beurteilen?
226	DE	Es gibt eine Reihe von Vorschlägen zur Vereinfachung des Steuersystems, die vorsehen, dass die Steuersätze deutlich gesenkt werden. Dafür sollen alle Steuervergünstigungen wie z.B. die Eigenheimzulage, die Entfernungspauschale und sonstige Abschreibungsmöglichkeiten wegfallen. ...	Fänden Sie eine solche Änderung des Steuersystems gut, oder sollte das Steuersystem so bleiben wie bisher?
229	DE	Wirtschaftsminister Wolfgang Clement hat vorgeschlagen, den Kündigungsschutz in kleineren Unternehmen zu lockern. Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag ...	gut oder finden Sie diesen Vorschlag nicht gut?
230	DE	Für den Fall, dass es zu wenig Ausbildungsplätze gibt: Sollten dann alle Betriebe, die nicht ausreichend ausbilden,	eine Ausbildungsplatz-Abgabe bezahlen müssen, oder sollten sie keine Ausbildungsplatz-Abgabe bezahlen müssen?
231	DE	Es gibt den Vorschlag, dass Versicherte, die Kinder haben, in Zukunft bei der Rentenversicherung günstiger gestellt werden sollen als Kinderlose. Finden Sie ...	diesen Vorschlag gut, oder finden Sie ihn nicht gut?
232	DE	Ab nächstem Jahr soll die Tabaksteuer deutlich erhöht werden, so dass die Packung Zigaretten dann einen Euro teurer wird. Finden Sie ...	das richtig oder finden Sie das nicht richtig?
237	DE	Es gibt auch den Vorschlag, das Arbeitslosengeld zu kürzen, um zusätzliche Anreize zu schaffen, auch schlechter bezahlte Jobs anzunehmen.	Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag gut, oder finden Sie ihn nicht gut?
239	DE	Es gibt auch den Vorschlag, dieses Jahr auf eine Rentenerhöhung zu verzichten. Sind Sie ...	für diesen Vorschlag, oder sind Sie gegen diesen Vorschlag?
240	DE	Die Rentenversicherung hat Finanzprobleme. Es gibt deshalb den Vorschlag, dass es im nächsten Jahr für die Rentner keine Rentenerhöhung geben soll. Sind Sie ...	für diesen Vorschlag, oder sind Sie gegen diesen Vorschlag?
241	DE	Und hätten Sie es besser gefunden, ...	statt dessen die Beiträge zur Rentenversicherung zu erhöhen, die von Arbeitnehmern und Arbeitgebern bezahlt werden, oder hätten Sie das nicht besser gefunden?
251	DE	Seit der Einführung des Euro gibt es in einigen Bereichen Preiserhöhungen. Was meinen Sie: ...	muss da die Politik eingreifen oder wird sich das regeln, wenn sich die Verbraucher preisbewußt verhalten?

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
258	DE	Was meinen Sie, sollte zur Beseitigung der riesigen Hochwasserschäden ...	zeitlich begrenzt eine zusätzliche Steuer erhoben werden, oder sollte keine zusätzliche Steuer erhoben werden?
259	DE	Und was meinen Sie, sollte zur Finanzierung der Hochwasserschäden die geplante Steuerreform um ein Jahr ...	verschoben werden oder sollte sie nicht verschoben werden?
260	DE	Ein weiterer Vorschlag zur Entlastung der Rentenversicherung ist die Erhöhung des Rentenalters auf 67 Jahre. Sind Sie ...	für diesen Vorschlag oder sind Sie gegen diesen Vorschlag?
265	DE	Die Bundesregierung plant die Einführung eines Pfands auf Getränkedosen in Höhe von 50 Pfennig.	Finden Sie das gut, oder finden Sie das nicht gut?
267	DE	Die Bundesregierung plant eine Umstellung der Landwirtschaft, bei der mehr Wert auf natürlichen Anbau und artgerechte Tierhaltung gelegt wird.	Finden Sie das gut, oder finden Sie das nicht gut?
274	DE	Und was meinen Sie, muß der Staat stärker gegen den Mißbrauch der Sozialhilfe vorgehen?	ja nein weiß nicht
277	DE	Die Bundeswehr besteht heute zu einem großen Teil aus Wehrpflichtigen. Wie sollte die Bundeswehr in Zukunft aussehen?	Sollte es auch in Zukunft Wehrpflichtige geben, oder sollte sich die Bundeswehr ausschließlich aus Freiwilligen, also Berufs- und Zeitsoldaten zusammensetzen?
279	DE	Bundeskanzler Gerhard Schröder hat vorgeschlagen, daß ausländische Fachkräfte für die Computerbranche eine begrenzte Arbeitserlaubnis in Deutschland, die sogenannte Green Card, erhalten sollen.	Finden Sie das gut, oder finden Sie das nicht gut?
280	DE	Zur Zeit wird über ein Verbot der rechtsextremen NPD gesprochen. Sind Sie ...	für ein Verbot der NPD, oder sind Sie dagegen
281	DE	Brauchen wir zur Bekämpfung des Rechtsradikalismus in Deutschland ...	schärfere Gesetze, oder reichen die vorhandenen aus?
282	DE	Die Bundesregierung erhält durch den Verkauf von Mobilfunklizenzen Mehreinnahmen von fast hundert Milliarden D-Mark. Was meinen Sie, sollten mit diesem Geld ...	ausschließlich Staatsschulden getilgt werden, oder sollte das Geld auch für andere Zwecke eingesetzt werden?
285	DE	Die Bundesregierung plant, daß gleichgeschlechtliche Lebensgemeinschaften den Ehen rechtlich weitgehend gleichgestellt werden sollten.	Finden Sie das gut, oder finden Sie das nicht gut?
286	DE	Der Gesetzentwurf sieht unter anderem auch vor, daß gleichgeschlechtliche Lebensgemeinschaften bei der Lohn- und Einkommensteuer wie Ehepaare behandelt werden.	Finden Sie das gut, oder finden Sie das nicht gut?
287	DE	Was meinen Sie, sollte ausländischen Arbeitskräften in Zukunft der Zuzug erleichtert werden, ...	wenn sie in Deutschland gebraucht werden, oder sollte der Zuzug nicht erleichtert werden?
291	DE	Aufgrund der hohen Benzinpreise wird über die Aussetzung der Ökosteuer gesprochen. Was meinen Sie ...	sollte die Ökosteuer ausgesetzt werden, oder sollte sie nicht ausgesetzt werden?
294	DE	Die Bundesregierung plant eine zusätzliche Steuer auf alle Energiearten, also Strom, Gas, Benzin und Heizöl, um damit eine Senkung der Lohnnebenkosten zu finanzieren.	Finden Sie das gut oder finden Sie das nicht gut?
295	DE	Zur Zeit wird über eine Erhöhung der Erbschaftsteuer gesprochen. Sind Sie dafür, ...	daß die Erbschaftsteuer erhöht wird, oder sind Sie dagegen?

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
296	DE	Es wird auch über eine Wiedereinführung der Vermögenssteuer gesprochen. Sind Sie dafür, ...	daß die Vermögenssteuer wieder eingeführt wird, oder sind Sie dagegen?
297	DE	Nach den (neuen) Plänen der Bundesregierung soll die Rente in den nächsten Jahren nur in Höhe der Inflationsrate steigen.	Finden Sie das gut, oder finden Sie das nicht gut?
298	DE	Außerdem gibt es den Vorschlag, daß jeder Arbeitnehmer verpflichtet wird, zusätzlich zur gesetzlichen Rentenversicherung in eine private Altersversorgung einzuzahlen.	Finden Sie diesen Vorschlag gut, oder finden Sie ihn nicht gut?
300	DE	Die Bundesregierung plant, das Staatsbürgerschaftsrecht zu verändern. Danach sollen Kinder von seit längerer Zeit in Deutschland lebenden Ausländern mit der Geburt zusätzlich die deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit erhalten. Bis zum 23. Lebensjahr müssen sie sich dann entweder für die deutsche oder für die ausländische Staatsangehörigkeit entscheiden.	Finden Sie diese Neuregelung insgesamt gut, oder finden Sie die nicht gut?
302	DE	Es gibt den Vorschlag, daß es Frauen bei der Bundeswehr in Zukunft erlaubt werden soll, auch Dienst in Kampfeinheiten leisten zu dürfen. Was meinen Sie, ...	soll Frauen der Dienst in Kampfeinheiten erlaubt werden oder soll das Frauen nicht erlaubt werden?
306	DE	Was meinen Sie, sollte sich Deutschland finanziell am Wiederaufbau im Kosovo beteiligen?	ja nein
308	DE	In Deutschland regelt das Ladenschlußgesetz, wann und wie lange die Geschäfte geöffnet haben dürfen. Was meinen Sie, sollte man ...	dieses Gesetz abschaffen und es damit jedem Geschäft selbst überlassen, wann es geöffnet hat, oder sollte man dieses Gesetz nicht abschaffen?
309	DE	Und sollte es den Geschäften erlaubt werden ...	auch Sonntags zu öffnen, oder sollte das nicht erlaubt werden?
311	DE	Die Grünen fordern in ihrem Wahlprogramm, den Benzinpreis innerhalb von 10 Jahren schrittweise auf 5 D-Mark anzuheben	Stimmen Sie dieser Forderung zu, oder stimmen Sie ihr nicht zu?
314	DE	Was meinen Sie zur doppelten Staatsbürgerschaft? Sollten in Deutschland lebende Ausländer die deutsche Staatsbürgerschaft nur erhalten, ...	wenn sie auf ihre ausländische Staatsbürgerschaft verzichten, oder sollte in Zukunft die doppelte Staatsbürgerschaft immer möglich sein?
317	DE	Seit Jahren wird über ein deutsches Holocaust-Mahnmal in Berlin gestritten. Was meinen Sie, ...	sollte ein solches Mahnmal errichtet werden, oder sollte es nicht errichtet werden?
3	DK	Udlicitering af mad til ældre	For I mod Ved ikke
4	DK	Udlicitering af rengøringshjælp til ældre.....?	For I mod Ved ikke
7	DK	Bør Danmark efter din opfattelse støtte en eventuel militær operation mod Irak?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
12	DK	Det bør ikke være tilladt offentligt at udtrykke sympati for terrorister eller terrorgrupper?	Enig Hverken eller Uenig Ved ikke
15	DK	Er De alt i alt for eller imod, at der er en lukkelov, der fastsætter regler for forretningernes åbningstid?	I mod For Ved ikke

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
18	DK	Skal Danmark efter din opfattelse opretholde værnepligten, eller skal forsvaret udelukkende uddanne frivillige soldater?	Kun at uddanne frivillige soldater Opretholde værnepligten Ved ikke
28	DK	I dag er det sådan at, under visse omstændigheder, er muligt at gå på efterløn, når man fylder 60 år. Ordningen diskuteres i øjeblikket blandt politikerne, da nogle mener ordningen er for dyr og får danskerne til at forlade arbejdsmarkedet for tidligt. Mener du at efterlønsordningen skal bevares eller afskaffes?	Afskaffes Bevares Ved ikke
37	DK	Mener du, at kirker med en meget lav belægningsprocent bør lukkes?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
38	DK	Skal det efter Deres opfattelse være muligt for pensionister selv at betale for ekstra hjemmehjælp udover det, som det offentlige bevilger, eller skal dette ikke være muligt?	Muligt Ikke muligt Ved ikke
46	DK	På Vesterbro er der åbnet et sundhedsrum – et socialt- og sundhedsfagligt tilbud til stofmisbrugere og hjemløse, der færdes på Vesterbro. Det ikke tilladt at fixe i dette sundhedsrum. Er du overvejende enig eller uenig i, at der i tillæg til sundhedsrummet skal etableres et reelt fixerum til narkomanerne i København?...	Meget enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Meget uenig Ved ikke
49	DK	ER DU ENIG ELLER UENIG I, AT DER SKAL LAVES EN FAST FORBINDELSE OVER KATTEGAT EN BRO TIL BÅDE BILER OG TOG?	HELT ENIG OVERVEJENDE ENIG OVERVEJENDE UENIG HELT UENIG VED IKKE
50	DK	Mener du, politikerne bør tvinge private virksomheder til at ansætte flere indvandrere for at sikre fremtidens velfærd?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
67	DK	Socialdemokraterne og Socialistisk Folkeparti vil gøre skattefradraget mindre ved store pensionsindbetalinger. Hvad synes du om dette forslag? Er det...	En meget god idé En overvejende god idé En overvejende dårlig idé En meget dårlig idé Ved ikke
69	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at man skal stramme rygeforbuddet, så det også bliver ulovligt at ryge på f.eks. små værtshuse og enmandskontorer?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
72	DK	Er du for eller imod, at der er vikarer, der underviser i folkeskolen uden at være uddannede folkeskolelærere?	Imod For Ved ikke
85	DK	Bør Den danske regering tilkendegive sin utilfredshed med situationen i mellemøsten ved at indføre sanktioner i form af handelsrestriktioner over for Israel?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
94	DK	Det diskuteres for tiden om det danske forsvar i fremtiden skal råde over ubåde. Skal det danske forsvar efter Deres opfattelse råde over ubåde eller ej?	Nej Ja Ved ikke
95	DK	Det diskuteres for tiden om kongehusets medlemmer modtager for mange midler fra staten i form af det såkaldte apanage. I hvor høj grad er De enig eller uenig i, at kongehuset alt i alt modtager for mange penge fra staten?	Enig Hverken eller Uenig Ved ikke
99	DK	Det er blevet foreslået, at der i Folketinget oprettes et såkaldt lovråd, der skal kontrollere om de love, der vedtages i Folketinget, er i overensstemmelse med Grundloven. Går De ind for eller De imod oprettelsen af et sådant lovråd?	Går ind for Er i mod Ved ikke

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
100	DK	Det er blevet foreslået, at der skal være mere politi på gaderne. Skal der efter Deres opfattelse være mere eller mindre politi på gaderne eller skal det være som nu?	Mere Som nu Mindre Ved ikke
101	DK	Det er blevet foreslået, at fartgrænsen sættes op fra 110 km/t til 130 km/t på motorveje. Er De for eller imod dette forslag?	For I mod Ved ikke
102	DK	Det er blevet foreslået, at forbyde reklamer ti minutter før og ti minutter efter børneprogrammer. Går De ind for eller er De imod dette forslag?	Går ind for Er i mod Ved ikke
103	DK	Det er fra forskellige sider blevet fremført, at kongehuset bør aflægge regnskab til det offentlige for dets brug af de midler, det får fra det offentlige. Hvilket af følgende udsagn er De mest enig i?	A: Kongehuset bør aflægge regnskab for dets brug af de bevilgede midler således, at det offentligheden kan få indsigt i kongehusets økonomi. B: Kongehuset behøver ikke at aflægge regnskab til det offentlige, så længe det ikke bruger mere end de midler, der er bevilget. C: ved ikke
104	DK	Det er meget vigtigt, at skattetrykket under ingen omstændigheder stiger i de kommende år...?	Enig Uenig
108	DK	Er det efter din opfattelse en god eller en dårlig ide, at myndighederne rydder Christiania og beygger almindelige beboelseshuse i stedet for?	God ide Dårlig ide Ved ikke
115	DK	Går De ind for eller er De imod, at det offentlige tilbyder børnepasningsorlov for forældre med børn under 9 år?	For I mod Ved ikke
139	DK	Mener De, at det offentlige bør dække de tab, landbruget har som følge af kogalskab?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
147	DK	Skal alle personer over 67 år efter Deres opfattelse kunne få folkepensionens grundbeløb uafhængigt af deres økonomiske forhold eller skal folkepensionens grundbeløb være afhængig af modtagerens økonomiske forhold?	Afhængig af økonomiske forhold Uafhængig af økonomiske forhold Ved ikke
151	DK	Skal der efter Deres opfattelse bevilges flere eller færre penge til politiet eller skal det nuværende niveau fastholdes?	Flere Som nu Færre Ved ikke
152	DK	Skal det efter Deres opfattelse være forbudt eller ej at bruge antibiotiske vækstfremmere i dyrefoder?	Skal være forbudt Skal ikke være forbudt Ved ikke
154	DK	Skal regeringen efter Deres opfattelse gribe ind i konflikten eller skal regeringen lade helt være med at gribe ind i konflikten og overlade det til arbejdsmarkedets parter at forhandle sig frem til en løsning?	Skal gribe ind Skal ikke gribe ind Ved ikke
159	DK	Synes du, at der skal gives karakterer før 8. klasse?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
160	DK	Udover terminsprøver og eksamer i de ældste klasser, bruger folkeskolen i stigende grad test og prøver for at måle elevernes standpunkter helt ned i de yngste klasser. Synes du der er for få, for mange eller et passende antal test og prøver i folkeskolen?	For få Tilpas For mange Ved ikke

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
167	DK	Alkolåsen er et apparat, der forhindrer, at du kan starte din bil, hvis du er alkoholpåvirket. Er du enig eller uenig i, at det er en god idé, at indføre en lov der kræver alkolåse installeret i alle nye biler i Danmark?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
186	DK	Der er også forslag om, at boligejernes rentefradrag sættes ned, så en mindre del af renteudgiften kan trækkes fra i skat. Helt konkret er der et forslag om at sænke rentefradraget fra 33% til 25% af renteudgiften. Er du overvejende for eller imod dette forslag om at nedsætte rentefradraget?	For Overvejende for Overvejende imod Imod Ved ikke
188	DK	Der har på det seneste været eksempler på at folkeskoleelever har ydet fysisk vold på deres folkeskolelærere. Mener du at folkeskolen skal kunne afvise denne type børn fra skolen?	JA NEJ VED IKKE
191	DK	Det diskuteres på Christiansborg, om der skal indføres såkaldt roadpricing i Danmark, dvs. at bilister skal betale et beløb i kørselsafgift for hver kørt kilometer. Til gengæld foreslås registreringsafgiften for biler sat ned. Mener du, at det er en god eller en dårlig idé at indføre roadpricing i Danmark?	En god idé En dårlig idé Ved ikke
196	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at børnefamilierne blandt de afviste irakiske asylansøgere bør få asyl i Danmark:	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
197	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at Danmark skal være med i missilskjoldet?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
206	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at det er en god idé at halvere dagpengeperioden fra fire til to år?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
210	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at det er en god idé, at der indføres et loft for fradrag for faglige kontingenter på 3.000 kr. årligt?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
211	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at det er en god idé, at der spares på ulandsbistanden, således at beløbet fastholdes på samme niveau i kroner og øre?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
217	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at det vil være en god idé at lave særlige eliteklasser på enkelte folkeskoler, hvor elever med særlige boglige-, musikalske- eller idrætsevner kan samles?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
218	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at det vil være en god idé at ændre SU-systemet med henblik på at motivere de studerende til at komme hurtigere igennem studierne?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
219	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at en person med en erhvervsbaggrund som f.eks. tømrer skal have lige så let adgang til Danmark som en akademiker?	Uenig Overvejende uenig Overvejende enig Enig Ved ikke
224	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at kontrollen med de danske landbrug bør skærpes med henblik på at gribe ind mod misbrug af antibiotika?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
225	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at kønsopdelte forældremøder bør forbydes i folkeskolen?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
226	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at man også skal forbyde rygning udendørs i det offentlige rum?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
227	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at multimedieskatten bør afskaffes?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
231	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at regeringen bør nedsætte en undersøgelseskommission, der skal undersøge hele sagen?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
236	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at studerende bør have udbetalt dobbelt SU i den periode af deres uddannelse, de studerer i udlandet?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
237	DK	Er du enig eller uenig i, at særskatten på pensionsudbetalinger på over 382.000 kr. årligt bør afskaffes?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
240	DK	Er du enig eller uenig med Dansk Folkepartis forslag om, at man skal betale sin SU tilbage, hvis man rejser til udlandet inden for de første 5 år efter endt kandidatuddannelse?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
247	DK	Er du for eller imod, at regeringens planlagte lettelser i topskatten udskydes i to år?	For Overvejende for Overvejende i mod I mod Ved ikke
256	DK	Er du overvejende for eller imod ovenstående forslag om at hæve bundgrænsen for, hvornår der skal betales topskat?	For Overvejende for Overvejende imod Imod Ved ikke

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
257	DK	Er du overvejende for eller imod ovenstående forslag om, at topskatten sænkes mere end bundskatten?	For Overvejende for Overvejende imod Imod Ved ikke
261	DK	For at samle de nødvendige 120 point for folk under 24 år kræves der meget høje uddannelser fra et af verdens 20 bedste universiteter. Eksperter har vurderet, at kun ganske få individer under 24 år kan leve op til disse krav. Mener du, at kravene er for skrappe?	Nej Ja Ved ikke
262	DK	Foreningen Skole og Forældre stillede i denne uge forslag om, at man ophæver den traditionelle klasse og dermed også klassekvotienterne i folkeskolen. I stedet foreslår de, at man arbejder med flydende undervisningsfællesskaber, hvor der nogle gange kan være op til 75 elever på et hold - og andre gange ned til 10 elever pr. hold. Venstre og Skolelederforeningen bakker op. Er du overvejende enig eller uenig i, at man dropper klassen og klassekvotienterne?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
268	DK	Med jævne mellemrum debatteres dette emne også herhjemme. Nogle mener, at en sådan kontrolleret udlevering af heroin til særligt hårdt belastede stofmisbrugere, som skal indtages på særlige klinikker, burde iværksættes som en forsøgsordning i Danmark. Er De enig eller uenig heri?	Helt enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Helt uenig Ved ikke
269	DK	Har Det Kongelige Teater efter Deres opfattelse behov for nye bygninger eller skal Kongelige Teater efter Deres opfattelse fungere indenfor de nuværende ygningsmæssige rammer?	Behov for nye bygninger Skal fungere inden for de nuværende bygningsmæssige rammer Ved ikke
292	DK	I Danmark har vi tradition for at have urensset grundvand i hanerne. Men pesticider tvinger flere og flere drikkevandsboringer til at lukke. Derfor har miljøminister Karen Ellemann netop lagt op til, at mere dansk drikkevand skal renses med kul, inden det når forbrugerne. Mener du at Danmark skal rense mere grundvand?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
297	DK	I Norge har regeringen nedsat en ligelønskommission. Denne kommission sikrede for nyligt 3 milliarder ekstra i lønningsposen til de traditionelle kvindefag. Q6 Mener du, den danske regering bør oprette en sådan ligelønskommission?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
298	DK	Iværksætterskatten betyder, at iværksættere og investorer skal betale yderligere 25 procent i skat, hvis de ejer mindre end 10 procent af en virksomhed. Er du enig eller uenig i, at den såkaldte iværksætterskat bør afskaffes?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
308	DK	Mener Du at der bør indføres generelle krav til hvor meget plads, der som minimum skal være pr. barn i en børneinstitution, eller mener du at det bør være op til de lokale myndigheder i kommunerne at afgøre?	Der bør indføres generelle krav Det bør de lokale myndigheder afgøre Ved ikke
309	DK	Mener Du at der bør indføres generelle krav til, hvor meget personale, der som minimum skal være pr. barn i en børneinstitution, eller mener du at det bør være op til de lokale myndigheder i kommunerne at afgøre?	Der bør indføres generelle krav Det bør de lokale myndigheder afgøre Ved ikke

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
314	DK	Mener du grundlæggende at det er en god eller en dårlig idé, at indføre et pointsystem i en eller anden form, der regulerer hvilke udenlandske ægtefæller der kan få lov til at flytte til Danmark?	En god idé En overvejende god idé Overvejende en dårlig idé En dårlig idé
337	DK	Er du overvejende enig eller uenig i, at P2 skal være en kommerciel radiokanal?	Meget enig Overvejendeenig Overvejendeuenig Meget uenig Ved ikke
339	DK	Politikerne har vedtaget en historisk bankpakke på op til 100 mia. kr. Målet er at undgå en kreditklemme i samfundet (afslag fra banken på lån til private kunder og rhvervskunder.) Mener du, at bonus og aktieoptioner til bankledelserne helt skal forbydes i de banker, som modtager hjælp fra denne bankpakke?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
350	DK	Q1: Regeringen er på ved med en ny terrorlovgivning, der vil gøre det muligt for myndighederne uden dommerkendelse at få udleveret passagerlisterne på samtlige flyafgange ind og ud af Danmark. Støtter du en sådan lov?	Støtter helt sikkert Støtter muligvis Støtter ikke Støtter helt sikkert ikke
363	DK	Q11: Det er blevet foreslået at indføre læseundervisning i børnehaveklassen. Det skal være et fast timetal som varetages af en lærer. Er du enig eller uenig i at indføre læseundervisning i børnehaveklassen på denne måde?	Helt enig Enig Hverken/eller Uenig Helt uenig Ved ikke
365	DK	Mener du, at regeringen bør straffe kommunerne for ikke at overholde skatteaftalen?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
372	DK	Er du overvejende positiv eller negativ overfor indførelse af differentieret moms?	Meget positiv Overvejende positiv Overvejende negativ Meget negativ Ved ikke
376	DK	I dag må klasserne i folkeskolen kun deles i hold med de fagligt stærke og svage på hvert sit hold i kortere forløb på f.eks. et par uger. Det er nu blevet foreslået, at skoleklasser i enkelte fag som f.eks. matematik skal kunne deles i et helt år ad gangen	Meget enig Overvejendeenig Overvejendeuenig Meget uenig Ved ikke
393	DK	Mener du Danmark bør trække sine styrker hjem fra Irak i konsekvens af, at amerikanske og britiske soldater er mistænkt for at have mishandlet og ydmyget irakiske krigsfanger?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
395	DK	Regeringen er på ved med en ny terrorlovgivning, der vil gøre det muligt for Politiets Efterretningstjeneste uden konkret mistanke at forhøre sig hos alle andre danske myndigheder – fra Socialforvaltningen til Skattevæsenet – om enkeltpersoner. Støtter du en sådan lov?	Støtter helt sikkert Støtter muligvis Støtter helt sikkert ikke Støtter ikke
402	DK	Er du overvejende for eller imod at indføre forbud mod løse hunde i byer?	For Overvejende for Overvejende imod Imod Ved ikke
409	DK	En skoles gennemsnitlige testresultater burde være offentlige, så man kan se, hvilke skoler og kommuner der klarer sig bedst?	Helt enig Enig Hverken/eller Uenig Helt uenig Ved ikke

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
413	DK	Regeringen er på vej med en ny terrorlovgivning, der generelt lægger op til øget tv-overvågning på offentlige pladser og trafikknudepunkter. Støtter du en sådan lov?	Støtter helt sikkert Støtter muligvis Støtter ikke Støtter helt sikkert ikke
414	DK	Skal der stilles krav om, at folk der forkynder islam i Danmark, f.eks. i en moske, har en Imam-uddannelse?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
420	DK	Er du overvejende enig eller uenig i, at folkeskolen skal afsætte ekstra ressourcer til undervisning af højt begavede børn?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
425	DK	Q4 Skal regeringen efter din opfattelse gribe ind i konflikten eller skal regeringen lade helt være med at gribe ind i konflikten og overlade det til arbejdsmarkedets parter at forhandle sig frem til en løsning?	Regeringen skal gribe ind Regeringen skal ikke gribe ind Ved ikke
430	DK	Bør man indføre en bindende læseplan for den litteratur, der undervises i i andre skolefag, f.eks. fransk, tysk og engelsk?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
435	DK	Regeringen foreslår efterlønsbidraget sættes op med 667 kr. om året. Til gengæld nedsættes a-kasse-kontingentet tilsvarende med 667 kr. om året. Er du for eller imod dette forslag?	For Imod
441	DK	Socialdemokraterne og Socialistisk Folkeparti vil indføre en millionærskat på omkring 5 % af folks indkomst over 1 million kr. Hvad synes du om dette forslag? Er det...	En meget god idé En overvejende god idé En overvejende dårlig idé En meget dårlig idé Ved ikke
444	DK	Der er i dag TV-overvågning på togstationer, i S-tog og i metroen. Mener du bankerne også bør have tilladelse til udendørs overvågning af pengeautomaterne?	Ja Nej Ved ikke
464	DK	Er du tilhænger eller modstander af, at det danske forsvar skal opbygge en styrke på 4.000 mand, der skal kæmpe i forreste række i fremtidige internationale konflikter?	Stærk tilhænger Overvejende tilhænger Overvejende modstander Stærk modstander Ved ikke
465	DK	Regeringen foreslår, at udlændinge, der ønsker familiesammenføring i Danmark, først skal bestå en test i dansk og danske samfundsforhold. Er du for eller imod dette forslag?	For Imod
474	DK	Mener du, at tre måneder af barselsorloven bør reserveres til faren, så de falder bort, hvis han ikke bruger dem	Ja Nej Ved ikke
477	DK	Regeringen foreslår, at dagpengene til unge mellem 25 og 29 år halveres i forhold til i dag. Er du for eller imod dette forslag?	For Imod Ved ikke
482	DK	Er du overvejende enig eller uenig i, at politiet bør kunne konfiskere bilen, hvis den anvendes til hensynsløs kørsel?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
497	DK	Regeringen skal kæmpe mod menneskeskabte klimaændringer ved at indføre restriktioner som bompenge eller vejafgifter mod bilkørsel?	Helt enig Enig Hverken enig eller uenig Uenig Helt uenig Ved ikke

ID	Country	Qwording	Respwording
498	DK	Regionernes berettigelse har været debatteret meget de seneste år. Mener du, at regionerne bør bibeholdes, eller mener du, de skal nedlægges (og deres opgaver derefter fordeles på hhv. kommuner og stat)?	Regionerne skal nedlægges Regionerne skal bestå Ved ikke
499	DK	Reglen at husejere skal rydde deres fortov for sne.	Lov/regel bør fjernes Lov/regel bør fastholdes Ved ikke
501	DK	Reglen om at man ikke må flage med udenlandske flag uden forudgående polititilladelse.	Lov/regel bør fjernes Lov/regel bør fastholdes Ved ikke
503	DK	Reglen om, at man i de fleste danske skove kun må færdes i dagtimerne, og at man må ikke forlade stierne.	Lov/regel bør fjernes Lov/regel bør fastholdes Ved ikke
510	DK	SKAL DET OFFENTLIGE KUNNE AFVISE AT UDFØRE GRATIS FERTILITETSBEHANDLING, HVIS KVINDEN (FAMILIEN) IKKE KAN FORSØRGE SIG SELV OG BARNET	ENIG OVERVEJENDE ENIG OVERVEJENDE UENIG UENIG VED IKKE
512	DK	SKAL DET OFFENTLIGE KUNNE AFVISE AT UDFØRE GRATIS FERTILITETSBEHANDLING, HVIS KVINDEN ER RYGER	ENIG OVERVEJENDE ENIG OVERVEJENDE UENIG UENIG VED IKKE
514	DK	SKAL DET OFFENTLIGE KUNNE AFVISE AT UDFØRE GRATIS FERTILITETSBEHANDLING, HVIS KVINDEN IKKE LEVER I FAST PARFORHOLD	ENIG OVERVEJENDE ENIG OVERVEJENDE UENIG UENIG VED IKKE
517	DK	Som pensionist kan man søge om at få nedsat tv licensen, så man kun skal betale halv tv licens. Er du enig eller uenig i, at studerende bør have samme rettighed til at søge om nedsat licens?	Enig Overvejende enig Overvejende uenig Uenig Ved ikke
526	DK	Hvad vil du mene om, at Danmark importerer strøm fra udlandet, der er fremstillet ved atomkraft?	Rigtig god ide God ide Hverken god eller dårlig ide Dårlig ide Uacceptabelt Ved ikke
535	DK	Hvor enig er du i følgende: Danmark skal have flere vindmøller på land?	Enig Helt enig Ved ikke Uenig Helt uenig
546	DK	Som De måske har hørt diskuteres det fra flere sider om der er behov for en kommunalreform i Danmark. Blandt andet skal antallet af kommuner reduceres fra de nuværende 275 til ca. 50-100 kommuner. Er det efter Deres opfattelse en god eller en dårlig ide, at antallet af kommuner reduceres?	God ide Dårlig ide Ved ikke

Online Appendix B: Sampling and Coding of Newspaper Articles

To find relevant articles on the 102 Danish and 102 German issues, we conducted a Boolean keyword search with keywords that are closely related to the policy item in two broadsheet newspapers per country, one left-leaning and one right-leaning. In Germany we used *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ) and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), in Denmark we used *Politiken* and *Jyllands-Posten*. Our searches include articles from one month before the public opinion survey question was asked until either a) policy change occurred or b) the four-year period for which we traced policy developments ended. We identified almost 30,000 newspaper articles, from which we drew a random sample of articles for each policy issue. It was individually calculated in order to fulfil a common and predefined margin of error, i.e. 0.14. In effect, this means that the larger the population of articles on an issue, the smaller the share of articles included in the sample from that issue, so that the error stays the same. The individual sample sizes are calculated according to the following two formulas:

Sample Size Calculation:

$$\text{Sample Size} = (p*(1-p)) / ((\text{Margin of Error}/1.96)^2)$$

Finite Population Correction:

$$\text{True Sample Size} = (\text{Sample Size} * \text{Population}) / (\text{Sample Size} + \text{Population} - 1)$$

Since we do not have any prior information about the quantities or probabilities we want to observe, we impute $p = 0.5$ in the formula above. Given that the margin of error is largest around $p=0.5$ this is a conservative estimate and effectively the margin of error will usually be lower than 0.14. For the samples on our 102 German and 102 Danish issues, the students were asked to code 4,753 articles in Germany (2,591 from the SZ and 2,162 from FAZ) and 2,819 newspaper articles in Denmark (1,170 from Politiken and 1,649 from Jyllandsposten).

Sometimes, the articles that were sampled turned out not to be about the issue. In these cases (to keep the sample size per issue the same), student coders indicated this and selected the next article in the population of articles on the policy issue and coded that article instead.

Each article was content-coded with respect to reported statements by actors that address the policy in question, giving each statement a unique statement ID and each actor a unique actor ID. A statement was defined as the supply of information or the presentation of the opinion of an actor. It included direct and indirect quotes as well as more general information about statements made by actors (e.g. if the article stated that an actor has "said" or "holds a view" on something, it was considered a statement). Statements that were relevant to the wider topic but not to the specific policy issue, or to a related but distinct policy issue, were excluded. The analysis includes statements in favour of or against the policy action in question made by a broad set of non-state actors engaged in policy relevant activities on a given issue such as membership associations, firms and expert organizations. We refer to these as organized interests. Our analysis excludes individual citizens and experts as well as actors from the political systems in the two countries, such as political parties, civil servants and party officials.

Online Appendix C: Overview of Different Types of Organized Interests

Public interest groups

Environment and animal welfare
Humanitarian – international
Humanitarian – national
Consumer Group
Government reform
Civil liberties
Citizen Empowerment
Other public interest

Business and occupational associations

Peak-level business group
Sector-wide business group
Breed associations
Technical business associations
Other business group
Doctors' associations
Other medical professions
Teachers' associations
Other occupational associations

Firms

Labour groups

Blue-collar union
White-collar union
Employee representative committee
Other labour groups

Identity

Patients
Elderly
Students
Friendship groups (i.e. non-specific groups related to a country)
Racial or ethnic
Women
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transsexual
Other – undefined - identity group

Hobby and religious groups

Sports groups
Other hobby/leisure groups
Groups associated with the protestant church
Roman/Catholic groups
Other religious group

Expert organizations

Think tanks

Institutional associations

Associations of local authorities
Associations of other public institutions
Associations of managers of public institutions
Other Institutional associations

Online Appendix D: Summary of Independent Variables

Table D1. Descriptives Continuous Measures

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max	Obs
Media Saliency (logged)	-2.22	1.65	-7.31	1.41	160
Number of Organized Interests coded (logged)	1.46	0.84	0	3.14	160
Opinion Majority	0.69	0.11	0.50	0.97	160

Table D2. Descriptives Categorical Measures

Variable	Label	Per cent	Obs
Policy Congruence	No	46.25	160
	Yes	53.75	
Year	1998	5.63	160
	1999	8.13	
	2000	5.00	
	2001	4.38	
	2002	3.13	
	2003	13.75	
	2004	3.75	
	2005	10.00	
	2006	4.38	
	2007	6.88	
	2008	10.63	
Policy type	Distributive	9.38	160
	Regulatory	36.25	
	Redistributive	46.88	
	Constituent	7.50	
Country	Germany	58.75	160
	Denmark	41.25	
Alignment of the Public & Organized Interests	No	42.50	160
	Yes	57.50	
Public in favor of Policy Change	No	36.88	160
	Yes	63.13	

Online Appendix E: Comparison of Subsamples including and excluding Interest Group Measures

Table E1. Policy congruence for sub samples including and excluding measures of group opinion (absolute values)

		Is Policy Congruent with the Public Opinion Majority?		
		No	Yes	Total
Interest group information	No	25 (56.82%)	19 (43.18%)	44 (100%)
	Yes	74 (46.25%)	86 (53.75%)	160 (100%)
	Total	99 (48.53%)	105 (51.47%)	204 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 1.543, p=0.214$

**Table E2. Policy Congruence (*Is Policy Congruent with the Public Opinion Majority?*)
Comparison of the effects of key variables on cases including and excluding interest group information
(Logistic Regression Co-efficients with SEs in Parentheses & P-values)**

	(E1)	(E2)	(E3)	(E4)	(E5)	(E6)	(E7)	(E8)
Interest Group Information	0.42 (0.34)	0.42 (0.34)	0.04 (1.02)	2.69 (2.07)	0.62 (0.78)	0.21 (0.65)	0.51 (0.76)	0.20 (0.53)
Media Saliency (logged)			0.09 (0.23)					
Media Saliency* Interest Group Information			-0.16 (0.25)					
Opinion majority				4.51+ (2.49)				
Opinion majority * Interest Group Information				-3.10 (2.86)				
Year					-0.00 (0.08)			
Year * Interest Group Information					-0.03 (0.09)			
Policy Type (baseline: Redistributive)								
Distributive						-0.51 (1.37)		
Regulatory						0.18 (0.74)		
Constituent						-0.92 (1.02)		
Distributive * Interest Group Information						-0.90 (1.53)		
Regulatory * Interest Group Information						0.43 (0.82)		
Constituent * Interest Group Information						1.23 (1.20)		
Country (baseline: Germany)								
Denmark							0.29 (0.80)	
Denmark * Interest Group Information							0.08 (0.87)	
Public in favor of Change								-0.68 (0.62)
Public in favor of Change * Interest Group Information								0.43 (0.70)
Constant	-0.27 (0.30)	-0.27 (0.30)	-0.05 (0.99)	-3.52+ (1.82)	-0.27 (0.71)	-0.18 (0.61)	-0.51 (0.73)	0.11 (0.46)
Number of Cases	204	204	198	204	204	204	204	204

+ p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Online Appendix F: Number of Coded Groups & Policy Congruence

Table F1. Policy Congruence (*Is Policy Congruent with the Public Opinion Majority?*)
(Logistic Regression Co-efficients with SEs in Parentheses & P-values)

Variable	(F1)
Number of Organized Interests coded (logged)	-0.24 (0.19)
Constant	0.50 (0.32)
Number of Cases	160

Online Appendix G: Policy Congruence (public opinion measures including “don’t know” respondents)

Table G1. Policy Congruence (*Is Policy Congruent with the Public Opinion Majority?*)
(Logistic Regression Co-efficients with SEs in Parentheses & P-values, public opinion measures including don’t know respondents)

	(G1)	(G2)	(G3)	(G4)
Alignment of the Public & Organized Interests	0.55+	0.63+	-0.30	-0.19
	(0.32)	(0.35)	(0.50)	(0.54)
Public in favor of Change			-1.03*	-1.05+
			(0.50)	(0.54)
Alignment of the Public & Organized Interests * Public in favor of Change			1.47*	1.43*
			(0.67)	(0.72)
Media Saliency (logged)		-0.08		-0.09
		(0.14)		(0.14)
Size of Public Opinion Majority		-0.41		-0.57
		(1.57)		(1.63)
Number of Coded Organized Interests (logged)		0.04		0.06
		(0.25)		(0.26)
Year		-0.09+		-0.07
		(0.05)		(0.05)
Policy Type (baseline: Redistributive)				
Distributive		-1.81**		-1.84**
		(0.69)		(0.70)
Regulatory		0.02		0.10
		(0.42)		(0.43)
Constituent		0.68		0.69
		(0.75)		(0.77)
Country (baseline: Germany)				
Denmark		0.81*		0.71+
		(0.39)		(0.40)
Constant	0.03	0.45	0.64	1.01
	(0.24)	(1.31)	(0.39)	(1.36)
Number of Cases	160	160	160	160

+ p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Online Appendix H: Split Sample by Country

Table H1. Policy Congruence in the Country Samples
(Is Policy Congruent with the Public Opinion Majority?)
(Logistic Regression Co-efficients with SEs in Parentheses & P-values)

	Germany		Denmark	
	(H1)	(H2)	(H3)	(H4)
Alignment of the Public & Organized Interests	1.06*	-0.07	-0.17	-0.85
	(0.43)	(0.72)	(0.51)	(0.87)
Public in favor of Change		-1.35+		-0.60
		(0.72)		(0.85)
Alignment of the Public & Organized Interests * Public in favor of Change		1.73+		1.07
		(0.92)		(1.09)
Constant	-0.59+	0.34	0.47	0.85
	(0.32)	(0.59)	(0.40)	(0.69)
Number of Cases	94	94	66	66

+ p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001