Party strategies and the impact of 'globalization issues' on the vote

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Introduction

The processes of globalization and of European integration have led to a transformation of the main dimensions of political competition in Western Europe. The issues of immigration and of European integration have strongly increased in salience. They have become central in defining the structure of political preferences, for both parties and voters (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). There is also strong evidence that these 'globalization issues' have a direct impact on voting choices in national elections (Tillman 2004; Vries 2007; Lachat 2008a). At the same time, however, there are still variations in the role played by these issues. The importance of the issues of immigration and of European integration differs across countries and elections. Similarly, these issues seem to matter more for some parties than others. While support for right-wing populist parties seems to be mainly driven by voters' attitudes towards Europe or immigration, these issues have a less distinct impact on support for mainstream parties (Lachat 2008a).

This paper focuses on this variation across parties in the impact of the 'globalization issues'. I suggest that these differences can be brought back to two aspects of party strategies: the salience of these issues in parties' campaigns, and the extremity of party positions. Attitudes towards immigration, for instance, should have a strong impact on the propensity to support right-wing populist parties, which differ strongly from the mainstream position on that issue and for which it represents a central campaign topic. The voting propensities for moderate parties, by contrast, should be only weakly related to citizens' preferences on immigration. I also expect these relationships between extremity, salience, and the impact on the vote, to hold for other types of issues, be they linked to globalization or not.

In order to test these hypotheses, I start from the framework of spatial models of the vote, but I modify a central assumption made in this literature. Spatial models of electoral competition see the relative issue positions of citizens and parties as a central explanatory factor for voting choices. In recent years, significant advances have been made in this theoretical framework. The basic spatial model has been extended in different ways, by specifying different types of spatial utilities, by integrating behavioral factors, or by accounting for voters' discounting of party positions (Merrill and Grofman 1999; Adams 2001; Adams et al. 2005; Schofield and Sened 2006). This has led to more robust models, that offer more powerful explanations of both voters' and parties' behavior.

However, spatial models are based on an assumption that may be seen as too restrictive: the assumption that all choice alternatives are evaluated on the basis of the same criteria.

Virtually all spatial models of voting choice – and in fact most of electoral research – assume that the vote function that relates voters' characteristics to party evaluations is the same for all parties. I suggest here instead that the determinants of electoral utilities may vary across parties. The weight attached to the various considerations that influence electoral utilities might be related to party characteristics. This could explain why some issues, such as immigration, have a distinctive impact on some parties only.

Heterogeneity *across voters* has long been recognized in models of voting choice (e.g., Rivers 1988; Bartle 2005). We know for example that voters with a higher level of political sophistication rely more strongly on ideology and issues when making their voting decision (e.g., Zaller 1992). Heterogeneity across parties, by contrast, is usually not accounted for. The assumption of inter-party homogeneity *must* be made when explaining voting *choice* and focusing on the probabilities of supporting the different parties. As the sum of the probabilities of supporting each of the choice alternatives sum to 1, any factor that increases or decreases the chances of voting for a particular party will necessary also increase or decrease the probabilities of opting for one of its competitors. The voting decision process, so conceived, has the character of a zero-sum game.

The voting decision process, however, can also be seen as two-stage process (van der Eijk et al. 2006; Rosema 2006; van der Brug et al. 2007). The first stage represents the evaluations of the parties or candidates. Such evaluations do not have to constrain each other. Some citizens may have very positive evaluations of several candidates, while others may see all candidates as unattractive choices. It need not be the case that the sum of these evaluations equals the same fixed quantity for all voters. The second stage of this model, then, is the translation of these evaluations into a voting choice – where citizens decide to support the party for which their evaluation is highest. The decision in the second stage is thus more or less determined by the evaluations of parties.

Using data from recent Dutch elections, I model here the first stage of the voting decision process, and show that the relationship between issue preferences and voting propensities varies across parties. Voters do not rely on entirely different criteria when evaluating a social-democratic party or a conservative party, for example, but the weights they attach to different issue dimensions vary substantially. I also suggest two factors that may explain such differences: the salience with which parties address issues, and the degree of extremity of their issue positions.

In the next section, I discuss these hypotheses in more detail. I also review the literature that has addressed this question, directly or indirectly. Then, in the third section, I present the data,

the operationalization of the concepts, and the model specification. The analyses are separated into two parts. Section four shows the extent of the variation across parties in the impact of issues, while section five tests possible explanations for this variability.

Hypotheses

There are at least two factors that may explain differences across parties in the determinants of electoral utilities: the *salience* with which parties address various issues and the *extremity* of parties' issue positions. Parties do not all emphasize the same issues in their electoral programs or during the campaign. The questions of immigration and of European integration, for instance, are particularly salient in the campaigns of right-wing populist parties (Lachat and Kriesi 2007). Parties try to focus on the political issues for which they expect to have an advantage over their competitors. This is the central contention of the 'saliency theory' of electoral competition (Budge and Farlie 1983b). This theory argues that parties 'do not compete by arguing directly with each other, but by trying to render their own areas of concern most prominent' (Budge and Farlie 1983b: 23). While this hypothesis applies probably with more strength to the content of party programs than to the campaign itself, as reflected in the mass media,[1] we may still observe important differences across parties in the issues with which they are associated. This expectation is also in line with the 'issue ownership' theory (Petrocik 1996; Petrocik et al. 2003). It argues that parties have a reputation at being particularly good at handling specific issues, such as those related to the welfare state for Social-democratic parties, or to environmental protection for the Greens. Parties seek to give more importance to these issues in voters' decisions, by emphasizing them during the campaign (Petrocik 1996). This argument is similar to that of the theory of Budge and Farlie (1983b). However, it also offers an additional reason to expect strong associations between parties and specific issues during the campaign: As shown by Petrocik et al. (2003) in the context of American Presidential elections, the media tend to emphasize the 'traditional' party-issue associations even more strongly than the candidates do themselves. Research based on this theory has also shown that the associations between parties and candidates are salient to voters. There are systematic patterns in voters' perceptions of party competence (Petrocik 1996; see also RePass 1971).

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[1] During the campaign, parties may often have no choice but to confront the proposals and issues of their competitors (Budge and Farlie 1983a; Kriesi et al. 2006). Also, the associations between parties and issues presented in the media only partially reflect the issue emphases of party programs (Kriesi 2007) or of the campaign messages directly controlled by the parties (Petrocik et al. 2003).

Such frequent associations between parties and issues are important as they may increase the *accessibility* of specific issues in voters' memory. Attitudes that are frequently activated, or that have been activated recently, have a higher degree of accessibility (Iyengar and Kinder 1987). They are more likely to impact on voters' evaluations of parties, candidates, or of other political actors. If a party or candidate is frequently put in relation with a given issue – because the party emphasizes that issue in its campaign communications, or because the party and the issue are frequently associated in the media – this issue should have a strong impact on the evaluation of the corresponding party. We know from research on priming effects that the media play a central role in influencing which issues are salient for voters, or which ones they consider to be important (Iyengar et al. 1982; Krosnick and Kinder 1990; Johnston et al. 1992; Miller and Krosnick 2000). This, in turn, affects the issues voters rely most strongly on when evaluating political actors. The political issues, as well as the associations between parties and issues, which are emphasized by the media will be more easily accessible for voters, and they should have a stronger impact on their evaluations (Iyengar 1990; Krosnick 1988, 1990). This is due to an 'accessibility bias', that is, 'the general tendency of individuals to attach greater weight to considerations that are, for whatever reason, momentarily prominent or salient' (Iyengar 1990: 168). On salient issues, voters are also more likely to perceive large differences between the positions of the competing parties (Krosnick 1988). If electoral choice really corresponds to a two-stage process, then, I would expect the evaluations of a given party to be more strongly influenced by the salient issues of that party. The relative impact of issues on party evaluations should vary across parties, as a function of the salience with which these issues are addressed by the corresponding party during the campaign.[2]

Variability in the determinants of party preferences may also be linked with parties' *issue positions*. I expect that the impact of a given issue on party evaluations will be larger for parties that take more extreme positions. A similar hypothesis has been discussed in the literature regarding the *overall* impact of ideological and issue dimensions. Several authors have shown that a higher level of party system polarization on a given dimension leads to a stronger impact of that dimension on voting decisions. This has been shown with respect to both the left-right dimension (van der Eijk et al. 2005; Green and Hobolt 2006; Ensley 2007; Lachat 2008b) and more specific issues (Alvarez and Nagler 2004; Knutsen and Kumlin 2005). This effect has mainly been explained by the salience of the corresponding issue dimensions. Alvarez and Nagler (2004), for example, argue that parties will invest less effort

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[2] A related hypothesis has been suggested by van der Brug (2004). He focuses however on the congruence of voters' and parties' preferences in terms of *issue importance* rather than issue positions, as I do here.

in communicating their issue stances on issues where they do not diverge from other parties. In such cases, voters should be less certain of the party position and the corresponding issue or ideological dimension should be less accessible when making evaluations (Knutsen and Kumlin 2005). I expect a similar effect to characterize the influence of issues on separate party evaluations. The impact of a given issue dimension on voters' electoral utilities should be larger for parties whose issue position differ strongly from those of their competitors.

To sum up my hypotheses, I expect the impact of issue dimensions on party evaluations to vary across parties. This variation should be related to party characteristics: The impact of a given issue dimension should be larger when the corresponding party takes an extreme position and when this issue is salient in the party's campaign. While the issues of immigration and European integration are of particular interest here, I expect to find such party differences for all types of issues.

Data and methods

To analyze the variability across parties in the impact of issues, I consider recent Dutch elections. This choice is guided by both theoretical and pragmatic reasons. First of all, an important consideration is that the hypotheses can only be meaningfully tested if there are enough relevant cases, that is, party × issue combinations. Furthermore, the parties should vary from one another in their issue emphases and issue positions. These requirements can only be met by considering a multiparty system, structured by several issue dimensions. Then, of course, this variety must be reflected in the corresponding election studies. I need measures of voters' positions on several issue dimensions, of their perception of party positions on these issues, and of voters' electoral utilities for the corresponding parties. Finally, in order to analyze the impact of salience, I also need data on the content of the campaign.

Data from the Netherlands fare quite well on all of these criteria. The 1994, 1998, and 2002 election studies include questions on voters' positions and on their perceptions of party positions for six issue dimensions in 1994, and seven in 1998 and 2002. While this is still a relatively modest number of issues, I can gain more confidence in the results by replicating the analysis for three different years. For these election campaigns, I can also rely on data from content analyses of the media, which provide information on the salience with which each party addressed these issues (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008).

A last important reason for investigating the Dutch case is linked with the measurement of the dependent variable. As emphasized in the introduction, it is essential to have direct measures

of voting propensities, rather than a simple measure of voting choice. Such measures are available in a large number of national election studies, in various forms such as like/dislike scales, questions on the degree of sympathy, thermometer ratings, or probabilities of future vote. While all of these questions measure the 'attractiveness' of parties, they are not equivalent to one another. As van der Eijk and Marsh (2007) have shown, the probabilities of future vote fare better than alternative measures on several central criteria (see also van der Eijk et al. 2006; Tillie 1995). In particular, probabilities of future vote display a stronger relationship with actual vote choice (van der Eijk and Marsh 2007: 11-14). This aspect is central, as I expect the voting propensities to be the basis on which the actual voting choice is made.

Probabilities of future vote are measured in Dutch electoral studies with the following set of questions:

> *Some people are quite certain that they will always vote for the same party. Others reconsider each time to which party they will give their vote. I will mention a number of parties. Would you indicate for each party how probable it is that you will ever vote for that party? Tell me the number that applies to the party. If you do not know a party or if you do not know the answer, do not hesitate to say so and we will continue with the next party.*
>
> *The PvdA?*
> *Etc.[3]*

Respondents give their answers using a ten-point scale, ranging from 'certainly never' to 'sometime certainly'. Probabilities of future vote were measured for nine parties in 1994 and for eleven in 1998 and 2002 – though I can use only part of these in my analyses, as questions on the perceived issue positions were asked for a smaller number of parties.

The model to be estimated with these data can be specified as follows:

$$Y_{ij} = \alpha_j + \sum_{k=1}^{K} \beta_{jk} U_{ijk} + \varepsilon_{ij}, \tag{1}$$

where Y_{ij} is the voting propensity of voter i for party j, α_j is the value of the constant for the model of party j, U_{ijk} is the spatial utility for voter i and party j on issue dimension k, β_{jk} is the

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[3] The order in which the parties are listed is randomized.

impact of these spatial utilities on the voting propensity for party j, and ε_{ij} is a random error term. Furthermore, the impact of spatial utilities should depend on party characteristics, that is,

$$\beta_{jk} = \delta_j + \sum_z \gamma_{zj} \cdot S_{zjk} + \theta_{jk}, \qquad\qquad (2)$$

where β_{jk} is the coefficient from equation 1 and corresponds to the estimated impact of issue dimension k on the propensity to support party j, δ_j is the constant of the equation for party j, the S_{zjk} are z characteristics of party j on dimension k, and θ_{jk} is a random error term. In the models below, I include two party characteristics, the salience of each issue dimension and the party position. The latter will be included in both the linear and squared forms.

The spatial utilities are measured as the absolute value of the distance between parties and voters, that is,

$$U_{ijk}^P = \left| P_{jk} - P_{ik} \right|, \qquad\qquad (3)$$

where P_{jk} and P_{ik} are the positions of party j and of voter i, respectively, on issue dimension k. In the spatial modeling literature, two different ways of measuring party positions are used: either individual or average perceptions (for a review of this debate, see Gilljam 1997; Merrill and Grofman 1999: 174–179; Lewis and King 2000; Macdonald et al. 2007). I will rely on individual perceptions for the main version of the model, and test alternative specifications to check the robustness of the findings.

Probabilities of future vote and spatial utilities are available for four parties in 1994, and five in the next two elections. These parties are the PvdA, the VVD, D66, the CDA, GroenLinks (in 1998), and the LPF (in 2002). Voters' and parties' positions were measured on six or seven of the following eight issue dimensions:

- European unification:[4] 'European unification is going too fast' vs. 'European unification should be completed as fast as possible'
- Asylum seekers (not in 1994): 'Allow more asylum seekers to enter' vs. 'send back as many asylum seekers as possible'

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[4] In 1998 and 2002, the corresponding labels were: 'European unification should go further' and 'European unification has already gone too far'.

- Ethnic minorities: 'Foreign workers and ethnic minorities should be able to live in the Netherlands while preserving all customs of their own culture' vs. 'these people should adjust themselves fully to Dutch culture'
- Euthanasia: 'Euthanasia should be forbidden' vs. 'euthanasia should always be allowed to end a life upon a patient's request'
- Crime (not in 1998):[5] 'The government should be much tougher on crime' vs. 'the government is currently acting tough enough on crime'
- Income differences: 'Differences in income should be increased' vs. 'differences in income should be decreased'
- Social benefits (only in 1998): 'Social benefits are too low' vs. 'social benefits are too high'
- Nuclear plants: 'Additional nuclear plants should be built' vs. 'no new nuclear plants should be built'

On all of these dimensions, respondents' positions and their perception of party positions were measured with seven-point scales.

Information on issue salience comes from a content analysis of the media. These data were collected in the framework of a research project on the transformation of national political spaces in Western Europe (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). All articles related to the election or to politics in general published during the two months before the election in two major newspapers (*NRC Handelsblad* and *Algemeen Dagblad*) were selected. The title and lead (or first paragraph, if there was no lead), were coded sentence by sentence, to identify all relationships between political actors and issues. I rely here only on the frequency with which a party was set in relation to each of the issues. For these content analyses, political issues were coded into twelve thematic categories. Unfortunately, the correspondence between these categories and the issue dimensions available in the survey data is not always perfect. In some cases, the categories of the content analysis are more general. The categories used to measure salience and the corresponding issue dimensions are: European integration (European unification), Immigration policy (Asylum seekers), Cultural liberalism (Ethnic minorities, Euthanasia), Law and order (Crime), Economic liberalism (Income differences), Welfare state (Social benefits), and Environmental protection (Nuclear plants). The correspondence between the two sets of categories may be problematic for the issues of euthanasia and ethnic minorities, which fall into the same general category of 'cultural liberalism'. In the analyses

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[5] The labels for the ends of the scale were different in 2002: 'The government should act tougher on crime' vs. 'the government is acting too tough on crime'.

below, I will mention how strongly the results vary when these two issue dimensions are excluded.

The salience of these issue categories for the various parties is measured as follows:

$$S_{jk} = \frac{N_{jk}}{N_j} - \frac{N_k}{N} \, .$$ (4)

N_{jk} is the number of issue statements of party j related to issue k, N_j is the total number of issue statements of party j, N_k is the total number of issue statements related to issue k, and where N is the total number of issue statements, over all parties and issues. This measure indicates thus the difference between the salience of issue k for party j and the average salience of this issue.

Before turning to the empirical results, a last aspect of the estimation procedure must be discussed. The model specified in equations 1 and 2 is hierarchical. It combines individual-level and party-level variables, and it implies a cross-level interaction (the effect of party characteristics on the individual-level relationship between spatial utilities and party preferences). I estimate this model by following a two-step strategy (Achen 2005; Jusko and Shively 2005; Lewis and Linzer 2005): First, I estimate the individual-level model separately for each party, with OLS regressions. Then, I use the coefficients from the first-stage models as the dependent variables and regress them on party characteristics. I estimate the second-stage model using weighted least squares regressions, which allow accounting for the differences across parties in the standard deviation of the stage-one coefficients. The weights are computed following the method proposed by Lewis and Linzer (2005: 351f.).[6]

Variation across parties in the impact of spatial utilities

First, I focus on the extent of the variation across parties in the impact of spatial utilities. To this end, I estimated the model of equation 1 separately for each party. Table 1 presents the corresponding results for the 2002 election study, with spatial utilities computed as linear distances and with individual perceptions of party positions.

We see that most issue dimensions have a significant and negative impact on electoral utilities. The predicted probabilities to support a party tend to diminish as the voter-party issue

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[6] The procedure recommended by Lewis and Linzer can be estimated using the *edvreg* program for Stata, available at http://svn.cluelessresearch.com/twostep/trunk/edvreg.ado.

distance gets larger. Most interesting, however, is the degree to which these results vary across parties. As expected, we can observe substantial differences in the impact of the issue dimensions. This appears very clearly for the issues of European unification, asylum seekers, and crime, which have a significant impact for some parties but not for others. Voters' preferences on European integration, for instance, do not influence the probabilities to support the PvdA or the CDA, but they have a strong impact on the likelihood to vote for the LPF. Attitudes towards asylum seekers have a significant impact on most propensities, but the size of that impact is twice as large for the LPF than for moderate parties. Variations across parties can be observed for all issues. Even for political issues that have a significant impact on all probabilities to vote, the estimated effects vary across parties, by a factor of two or three. For example, the point estimates for the issue of euthanasia range from -0.13 for the LPF to -0.33 for the CDA. Similarly, the estimated effects of voters' attitudes towards the issue of income differences range from -0.09 (LPF, D66) to -0.30 (VVD).

'Table 1 about here'

The corresponding results for the 1994 and 1998 elections show similar variation. In both of these elections, the impact of issues varies strongly across parties, and some issues have a significant impact on some of the parties only. These results are summarized in Table 2, along with those of 2002. For each issue and election, the table indicates the minimum and maximum values of the point estimates, as well as their standard deviation. It appears clearly from the table that the results of 2002, discussed above, are not different from those of earlier elections. Clearly, there is much variation across parties in the type of issues that affect voters' electoral utilities. Attitudes towards European unification, which can be included in all three elections, have a significant impact for some of the parties only. Attitudes towards asylum seekers show a similar pattern in 1998 and 2002. The major question is how this variability can be explained. I expect the impact of issue orientations on party preference to be related to parties' electoral strategy, that is, to their issue positions and to the salience with which each issue is addressed. I turn to these hypotheses in the next section.

'Table 2 about here'

The effects of party strategies

To estimate how much of this variation is due to the extremity of party positions and to the salience with which they address the various issues, I turn to the second stage of the estimation. Table 3 indicates the effects of parties' characteristics. The coefficients of the first-stage models were regressed on the average party position on the corresponding issue, in its linear and squared forms, as well as on the salience with which the issue was addressed. Party position has a significant impact in all three elections, but not salience. The relationship between party positions and the magnitude of the effect of spatial utilities is non-linear, as can be seen from the opposed signs of the linear and squared forms of the variables. Furthermore, we also see that the strength of this effect declines over time.

'Table 3 about here'

These effects are illustrated in Figure 1. It shows the predicted values of the stage-one coefficients, that is, of the effects of spatial utilities on the probabilities to vote, as a function of the average perceived position of parties. Both point estimates and the bounds of the 95 percent confidence interval are presented. The figure is divided into three panels, one for each election year. The range of values of party positions corresponds to the actual range observed in the data. These predicted results were computed by setting the salience of issues at its average value.

The figure shows clearly that the estimated effect of spatial utilities varies with party positions. The more extreme the position of a party on a given issue dimension, the stronger is the effect of that issue dimension on the probability to support the corresponding party. In the 1994 election, for example, the estimated coefficient for the effect of linear distances is –0.07 for a party located on the middle of an issue scale. The magnitude of this effect increases strongly as parties move away from the center. The pattern is the same in 1998 and 2002, but the effect of parties' extremity is smaller, especially in 2002. The effect of party positions, however, is significant in all three elections.

'Figure 1 about here'

Issue salience, by contrast, does not appear to affect the strength of issue voting. The estimated coefficients are negative, as expected, but they are not significant, even considering the small number of observations.[7]

As mentioned above, alternative specifications of the model have also been tested using squared voter-party distances and average perceived party positions. The corresponding results, presented in the appendix in Table A.1, are very similar to those of the main specification. They show that the non-linear effect of parties' extremity is quite robust across all four specifications. The effect is even stronger when relying on average party positions, rather than on individual perceptions. As far as issue salience is concerned, these alternative specifications do not either show any effect on the strength of issue voting.

Conclusion

This paper started from the observation that the effect of the 'globalization issues' has increased, but still varies across countries, elections, and parties. I have suggested that these differences should be related to the strategy of parties. Attitudes towards European integration and towards immigration should matter more for parties that emphasize these issues in their campaign and which take relatively extreme position on these questions. In order to analyze these effects, I argued that it was necessary to let the impact of issues vary across parties. This means relaxing an assumption which is virtually always made in the analysis of electoral behavior. While this assumption is necessary in analyses of voting *choice*, it must not be made when analyzing electoral utilities. In line with a two-stage model of voting choice, such party evaluations represent the basis on which voters make their electoral choice. I have suggested that these evaluations should depend more strongly on the issues with which parties are frequently associated. Such effects of party strategies should not be specific to the 'globalization issues', such as immigration and European integration. Rather, it should apply equally to more traditional issue dimensions.

These hypotheses were tested with data from three recent Dutch elections. The analyses have revealed much variation in the impact of issues across parties. Most important, they have shown that the impact of issues is strongly related to party positions – but not to issue salience. Electoral utilities are more strongly influenced by issues on which parties take non-centrist positions. The strength of this effect varies across elections – it is strongest in 1994

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[7] This result remains unchanged when removing the potentially problematic issues of euthanasia and ethnic minorities, for which the correspondence between the two sets of categories, at the individual and party levels, is weaker.

and weakest in 2002 – but it is significant in all cases. Furthermore, the effect is robust across alternative specifications of the proximity model of voting choice, with linear and squared distances, and with individual or average perceived party positions.

Appendix

'Table A1 about here'

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Table 1. Impact of (linear) proximity utilities on electoral utilities in the 2002 Dutch elections. Coefficients and standard errors estimated with OLS regressions. Party positions measured with individual perceptions

	PvdA	D66	CDA	VVD	LPF
Constant	0.80***	0.70***	0.91***	0.85***	0.68***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
European unification	-0.05	-0.12**	-0.09	-0.09**	-0.17***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Asylum seekers	-0.16***	-0.17***	-0.02	-0.17***	-0.33***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Ethnic minorities	-0.18***	-0.23***	-0.24***	-0.15***	-0.19***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Euthanasia	-0.29***	-0.30***	-0.33***	-0.24***	-0.13***
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)
Crime	-0.13**	-0.06	-0.01	-0.09*	-0.17**
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Income differences	-0.24***	-0.09*	-0.22***	-0.30***	-0.09*
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.04)
Nuclear plants	-0.20***	-0.14***	-0.34***	-0.25***	-0.14***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
N	1140	1055	1086	1137	730
R^2	0.03	0.29	0.27	0.33	0.37

*p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001*

Table 2. Summary of the estimated effects of (linear) proximity utilities with individual perceptions of party positions, by issue and election year.

	1994			1998			2002		
	min	max	s.d.	min	max	s.d.	min	max	s.d.
Europ. unification	-0.14	-0.05	0.04	-0.05	0.01	0.03	-0.17	-0.05	0.04
Asylum seekers				-0.22	-0.04	0.07	-0.33	-0.02	0.11
Ethnic minorities	-0.26	0.01	0.12	-0.15	-0.01	0.06	-0.24	-0.15	0.04
Euthanasia	-0.36	-0.15	0.09	-0.41	-0.15	0.11	-0.33	-0.13	0.08
Crime	-0.16	0.04	0.09				-0.17	-0.01	0.06
Income differences	-0.43	-0.12	0.16	-0.33	-0.05	0.14	-0.30	-0.09	0.09
Social benefits				-0.29	-0.14	0.06			
Nuclear plants	-0.28	-0.05	0.10	-0.28	-0.14	0.06	-0.34	-0.14	0.08

Table 3. Effects of party position and issue salience on the relationship between spatial utilities and probabilities to vote.

	1994		1998		2002	
	Coef.	Std. Err.	Coef.	Std. Err.	Coef.	Std. Err.
Position	4.14***	0.94	1.80*	0.68	1.31*	0.51
Position^2	-4.03***	0.92	-1.88**	0.61	-1.10*	0.45
Salience	-0.29	0.86	-0.38	0.29	-0.20	0.30
Constant	-1.13***	0.23	-0.54**	0.17	-0.54***	0.14
Adj. R^2	0.42		0.33		0.18	
N	24		35		35	

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*
Note: results based on linear distances and individual perceived party positions. The models are estimated with WLS.

Figure 1. Impact of the average perceived party positions on the effect of spatial utilities, by election year.
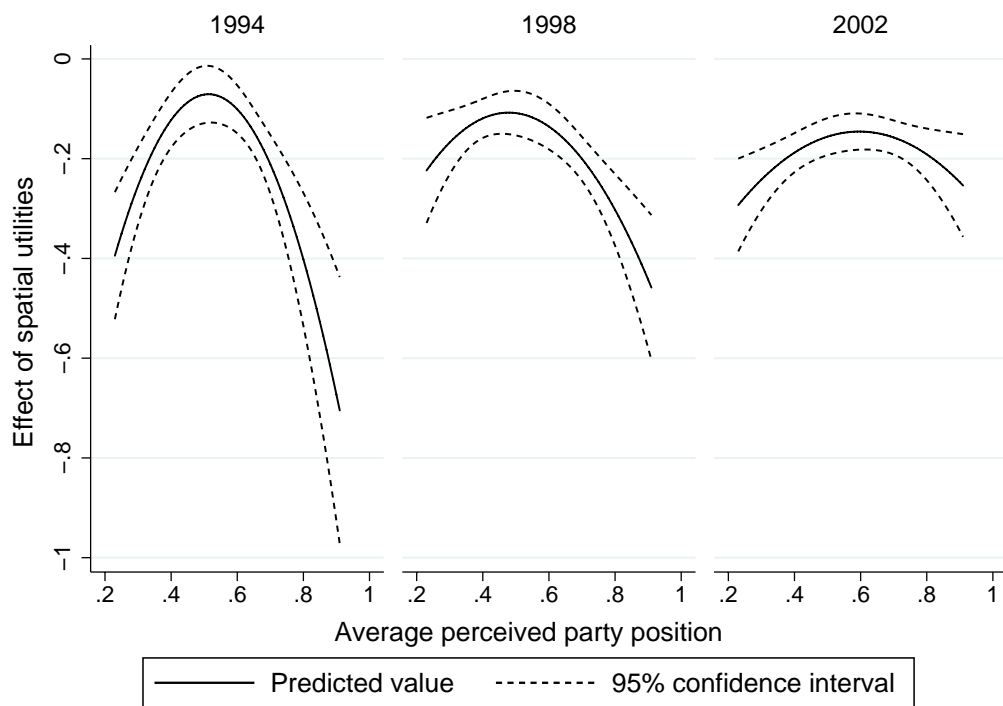
Table A.1. Effects of party position and issue salience on the relationship between spatial utilities and probabilities to vote, for various specifications of the individual-level model.

	Position	Position^2	Salience	Constant	Adj. R^2	N
Squared proximities, individual perceptions						
1994	4.20***	-4.16***	0.07	-1.13***	0.36	24
	(1.09)	(1.07)	(1.04)	(0.26)		
1998	2.16*	-2.38**	-0.24	-0.61**	0.40	35
	(1.83)	(0.75)	(0.35)	(0.21)		
2002	0.96	-0.83*	-0.17	-0.46**	0.04	35
	(0.60)	(0.53)	(0.36)	(0.16)		
Linear proximities, average perceptions						
1994	6.84***	-6.65***	-0.72	-1.78***	0.38	24
	(1.67)	(1.63)	(1.52)	(0.40)		
1998	4.45***	-4.24***	-0.34	-1.20***	0.37	35
	(1.07)	(0.97)	(0.46)	(0.27)		
2002	2.58**	-2.25**	0.26	-0.85**	0.15	35
	(0.91)	(0.80)	(0.55)	(0.25)		
Squared proximities, average perceptions						
1994	8.16**	-8.12**	-1.22	-2.10**	0.26	24
	(2.51)	(2.46)	(2.34)	(0.60)		
1998	4.95**	-4.83**	-0.26	-1.34**	0.25	35
	(1.59)	(1.44)	(0.69)	(0.41)		
2002	1.78	-1.61	0.38	-0.70	0.03	35
	(1.33)	(1.17)	(0.83)	(0.36)		