

Is Social Left/Right Cross-Nationally Comparable in European Parties?

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Abstract

Using survey vignettes and scaling techniques, we estimate a common social left/right dimension for political parties across the member states of the European Union. Previous research shows that economic left/right travels well across the EU, meaning that the placements of parties on that dimension are cross-nationally comparable; however, the social dimension is more complex, with different issues forming the core of the social dimension in different countries. The 2014 wave of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey includes anchoring vignettes which we use as “bridge votes” to place parties from different countries on a common social left/right dimension. We estimate the dimension using the “blackbox” technique. The resulting scale offers a cross-nationally comparable interval-level measure of a party’s social left/right ideological position.

Expert surveys are widely used to obtain information on the policy positions of political parties in contemporary democracies (Ray 1999; Benoit and Laver 2006; Hooghe et al. 2010; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012; Bakker et al. 2015). One concern about the expert survey approach to measuring party positions pertains to the cross-national comparability of respondent placements (Budge 2000; McDonald, Mendes, and Kim 2007). If experts for each country place only the parties within a single party system, can we be sure that respondents for France conceive of and use a particular scale in the same way as their colleagues that complete a survey for the parties of Lithuania?

In previous work, we combined ‘blackbox’ scaling techniques (Poole 1998) with a series of anchoring vignettes (King et al. 2004; King and Wand 2007) embedded within the 2010 Chapel Hill Expert Survey to show that expert placements of political parties on the economic left-right dimension are cross-nationally comparable across Europe (Bakker et al. 2014). Yet, we also know that politics in many contemporary European democracies is multidimensional, and that a “second” dimension is an important determinant of public opinion and party competition on issues such as immigration and European integration (Hooghe and Marks 2009; De Vries and Hobolt 2012; Rovny 2014; Häusermann and Kriesi 2015; Hobolt and de Vries 2015). As challenger parties that emphasize this cultural dimension become more prominent across Europe, we require a deeper understanding of the cross-national comparability of this more complex dimension in today’s politics.

In addition to the social dimension, European integration has taken on increasing political importance, as the bailouts brought on by the financial crisis and contemporary migration challenges make clear. And although prominent theorists of representation have argued that the quality of representation at the European level is actually rather high, ‘the empirical evidence...in support of this claim refers only to the left-right dimension which, while dominant, does not constrain all of the policy preferences of voters and political parties’ (Mair and Thomassen 2010, 30). In short, while there is growing evidence for the cross-national

comparability of the left-right dimension for both expert survey respondents and European politics more broadly, it remains unclear if this is the case for other prominent dimensions of political competition in contemporary European societies.

This paper addresses questions of cross-national comparability for social left-right and European integration by extending on the combination of anchoring vignettes embedded in the 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) on party positions in Europe and Bayesian scaling techniques with foundations in the work of Aldrich and McKelvey (Hare et al. 2015). We begin by briefly describing the 2014 wave of the CHES data, with a focus on the anchoring vignettes pertaining to economic left-right, social left-right, and European integration positions. We then provide an overview of the Bayesian Aldrich-McKelvey scaling procedures that are used to recover cross-nationally comparable scaled positions on these three dimensions for political parties in Europe. These scaled dimensions are then used to replicate a prominent study on the relationship between economic and social left-right positions, and party positions on European integration (Marks et al. 2006). We report that the central findings of that article hold when using the scaled data from 12 years later.

1 CHES

The 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey on party positions in Europe is the most recent wave in an ongoing research project designed to measure the positions of political party leadership on dimensions and policies related to the economy, socio-cultural matters, and European integration (Hooghe et al. 2010; Bakker et al. 2015). 337 political scientists that study political parties and/or European integration completed the survey, and all 28 EU members, plus Norway, Switzerland, and Turkey, were included in the 2014 round. This produced information for a total of 268 political parties in Europe.

Each expert respondent placed the parties of only one party system, which creates some

uncertainty as to whether or not the expert respondents for one country differ systematically in their use of the various policy scales from experts that completed the survey for a different country. In order to address this concern, a series of anchoring vignettes were presented to every respondent at the end of the survey (King et al. 2004; King and Wand 2007; Bakker et al. 2014). This vignette section described the positions of three hypothetical parties for three dimensions: economic left-right, social left-right, and European integration.¹ Unlike the majority of the survey, every CHES respondent had the opportunity to place these hypothetical vignette parties on the same three scales, and these placements can then be used as bridging information to facilitate comparison of the respondents' other placements. The next section describes this process in more detail and presents the scaled positions for the parties included in the 2014 CHES data.

2 CHES meets BAM!

When survey respondents in different contexts answer the same survey questions, there is the potential that these respondents have different interpretations of the response categories. This is especially true when the response categories represent relative positions on a latent scale, such as left-right ideology. Differential-item functioning (DIF) occurs when such an underlying scale is interpreted differently across a range of respondents. DIF can lead to a distortion of the placements of stimuli (i.e. political parties) on a given scale. For example, a British party expert and a Greek party expert may view the end points of a pro/anti EU integration scale in slightly different ways, confounding the ability to compare parties' positions across these two countries. Although this is not an important distinction within a given country, these potential distortions could be problematic when comparing positions of parties across countries. In the late 1970s, Aldrich and McKelvey (1977) developed an estimation technique aimed at correcting DIF in perception/placement scales. Their solution,

¹The wording of the vignettes can be found below in Appendix A.

Aldrich-McKelvey scaling (henceforth A-M), assumes that there exists a true placement for a given stimuli (i.e. candidate or party) and that any individual placement of a stimuli is actually a linear distortion of this true placement. The A-M solution, then, allows each survey respondent to have her own ‘distortion’ parameters, while treating the true placement of a stimuli as fixed across all respondents. The distortion parameters act in such a way as to allow different respondents to shift the true placement to the left or right and/or to expand or contract distances between placements on the underlying scale.

A-M takes advantage of the fact that survey respondents in their data all place the same set of stimuli as well as placing themselves on an ideological left-right scale. This combination of information allows for estimation of the individual distortion parameters and results in a scale in which the placements of the respondents and stimuli are meaningfully comparable. While Aldrich and McKelvey were interested in comparing ideological self-placements of survey respondents and a set of political stimuli, the technique they developed also allows for comparison of political stimuli across different contexts. We take advantage of their insight and employ a Bayesian version of this estimator to compare placements of political parties in different countries, where the placements are derived from country-specific respondents. That is, rather than comparing the ideological self-placement of voters to their perceptions of the location of candidates on the same scale, we are interested in the relative placement of political parties that were placed by different experts on the same scale. As long as all of the respondents place at least one common stimuli, the solution to this problem is relatively straightforward.

As much of an innovation as A-M scaling represents in terms of overcoming problems with DIF, there are some serious limitations. Most notably for our purposes, A-M scaling does not allow for missing data when deriving a cross-contextually comparable scale. Given the nature of the CHES data, this is seriously problematic. The CHES asks country-specific experts to place parties on a variety of dimensions, but only in the country in which that

respondent is an expert. That is, British experts place only British parties and Greek experts place only Greek parties. When all of these country-specific data are combined, the resulting data matrix contains huge amounts of missing data, as British experts do not place Greek parties, etc. With this structure to our data, classic A-M scaling is not an option. A second, less problematic limitation is that classic A-M scaling does not yield estimates of uncertainty for the estimated stimuli positions. This limitation makes it impossible to discern whether or not two different candidates/parties are statistically distinguishable from one another on some dimension. For example, we would not be able to statistically determine whether or not one party was more pro-EU than another party. While there are options to approximate uncertainty estimates (i.e., bootstrapping) the scaling procedure itself does not yield such information.

In order to overcome these limitations, we use the Bayesian Aldrich-McKelvey (BAM) scaling procedure developed in Hare et al. (2015). In that paper, the authors place senators, candidates for the Senate, and survey respondents on a common ideological scale. Their data are strikingly similar to ours in that only respondents from a senator's/candidate's home state place that senator/candidate, which leads to an abundance of missingness in the final data set (compiling data from all 50 states). The survey used by Hare et al. (2015) also asked respondents to place President Obama, the Democratic and Republican parties, and the Tea Party on the same ideological scale that they were placing their state-specific Senate candidates. So, while respondents in two different states placed different senators/candidates from one another, all respondents placed the president and the parties. These common stimuli act as 'bridging' votes and are the key to developing a cross-contextually comparable scale.

As described above, the 2014 wave of the CHES includes anchoring vignettes that we use as bridge votes to construct a cross-nationally comparable scale. The Bayesian implementation of A-M scaling easily handles the missing data in our model as missing values are automatically imputed via Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC). MCMC also directly produces

measures of uncertainty that reflect both variance in the observed placements of parties as well as the degree of missingness for a given party. This yields larger standard errors for parties with fewer observed placements.

The BAM model closely resembles a Bayesian factor model, with the primary distinction being how the parameters and the latent variable are indexed. That is, the factor model assumes that there is some latent variable, X , that is specific to a given respondent and that this latent variable is related to observable indicators. The latent variable is related to these observable indicators through parameters (often called factor loadings) that are indexed by the observed indicators. In the BAM model, the indexing is reversed relative to the factor model. This means that the the latent variable X is now indexed by observable indicator and the parameters in the model are now indexed by respondent. For our data, this translates to the position of a party on a specific dimension X_j , where j indexes party, being related to an expert's placement of that party y_{ij} , where i indexes expert, through paramters α_i and β_i . Following the above discussion α and β are the distortion parameters that map the expert's perception of a party's placement onto the 'true' position of that party.

To be Bayesian, we must specify distributional assumptions for the unknown quantities in the model. We must also specify the distrubtion of the dependent variables, in this case the expert placements of the parties, y_{ij} . As these placements are 11 point scales, we assume them to be normally distributed with an estimated mean and variance. We then set the mean position of expert i 's placement of party j to be equal to the the true position of party j , X_j , as well as the parameters α_i and β_i . Formally, the model is:

$$y_{ij} \sim N(\mu_{ij}, \tau_{ij})$$

$$\mu_{ij} = \alpha_i + \beta_i X_j$$

The unknown quantities, α, β , and X require prior distributions in the Bayesian setup. For this model, we specify uniform priors for α and β and a standard Normal prior for X . Finally,

we specify an uniformed conjugate Gamma prior for the variance of expert placements, τ_{ij} . Formally:

$$\alpha_i \sim \text{Uniform}(-100, 100)$$

$$\beta_i \sim \text{Uniform}(0, 100)$$

$$X_j \sim N(0, 1)$$

$$\tau_{ij} \sim \text{Gamma}(1, .1)$$

In order to identify the model and to set the scale of the latent variable, we constrain the β s to be positive. This assures that higher values of the latent variable, X , are associated with higher values of the expert placements. Substantively, this means for the economic and social left-right dimensions, higher values of the latent variable indicate more right-wing positions whereas for the EU dimension, higher values of the latent variable represent a more pro-EU position. As an additional identification constraint, we specified prior positions for the vignette party placements that respects the intended ordering of the vignette placements. This is what King et al. (2004) refer to as vignette equivalence and is a requirement of anchoring vignette-based scaling. That is, in order to be included in the model, experts must correctly perceive the ordering of the vignette parties. We require that each party be placed by at least 3 experts in order to be included in the estimation. With these restrictions, we are able to produce a cross-nationally comparable scale for the economic left-right, social left-right, and pro/anti-EU integraton dimension for 259 parties based on the input of 333 experts. We estimated the model using JAGS (Just Another Gibbs Sampler) via the R package `rjags`. For each dimension, we ran two chains for 20,000 iterations, discarding the first 5,000 as a burn-in. The chains show strong evidence of convergence across a variety of diagnostics.

After running the BAM procedure for each of the three dimensions for which we have vignette placements, we then sample 1,000 draws from the posterior distribution of each party's

placement on each dimension. We then summarize these distributions graphically by plotting the mean and 95% interval of each party's distribution for each dimension. We present these distributions in the following graphs, but separate each dimension into two graphs in order to make reading the y-axis labels easier. Figures 1 and 2 plot the left-leaning and right-leaning parties in terms of economic positions while Figures 3 and 4 present the same on the social dimension. Finally, Figures 5 and 6 display the distributions of parties on the European dimension.

As Figures 1–6 illustrate, there is a great deal of variation across these parties in terms of their positions on these three dimensions. These plots help us to identify the most extreme parties on these various dimensions across the members of the EU. For example, the Greek KKE party is the most left-wing in terms of economic left-right position whereas the Slovenian SDS party is the most economically right-wing party. Similarly, the most left-wing parties in terms of social policy are the green parties of Belgium and the UK while the most right-wing in terms of the social dimension are the German NPD party and Britain's UKIP. Finally, in terms of the EU dimension, the liberal parties of Italy and Finland are at the extreme pro-EU end of the scale whereas the Greek KKE and the UK's UKIP have the most anti-EU integration positions. These results pass the face validity test, as the parties line up where we would expect them to. It is also worth noting that the vignette parties, labeled as *A*, *B*, and *C* are *not* the most extreme parties on any dimension but, rather, the other parties are placed relative to the experts' perception of where the vignette parties fall.

Party Placements with 95% Credible Intervals

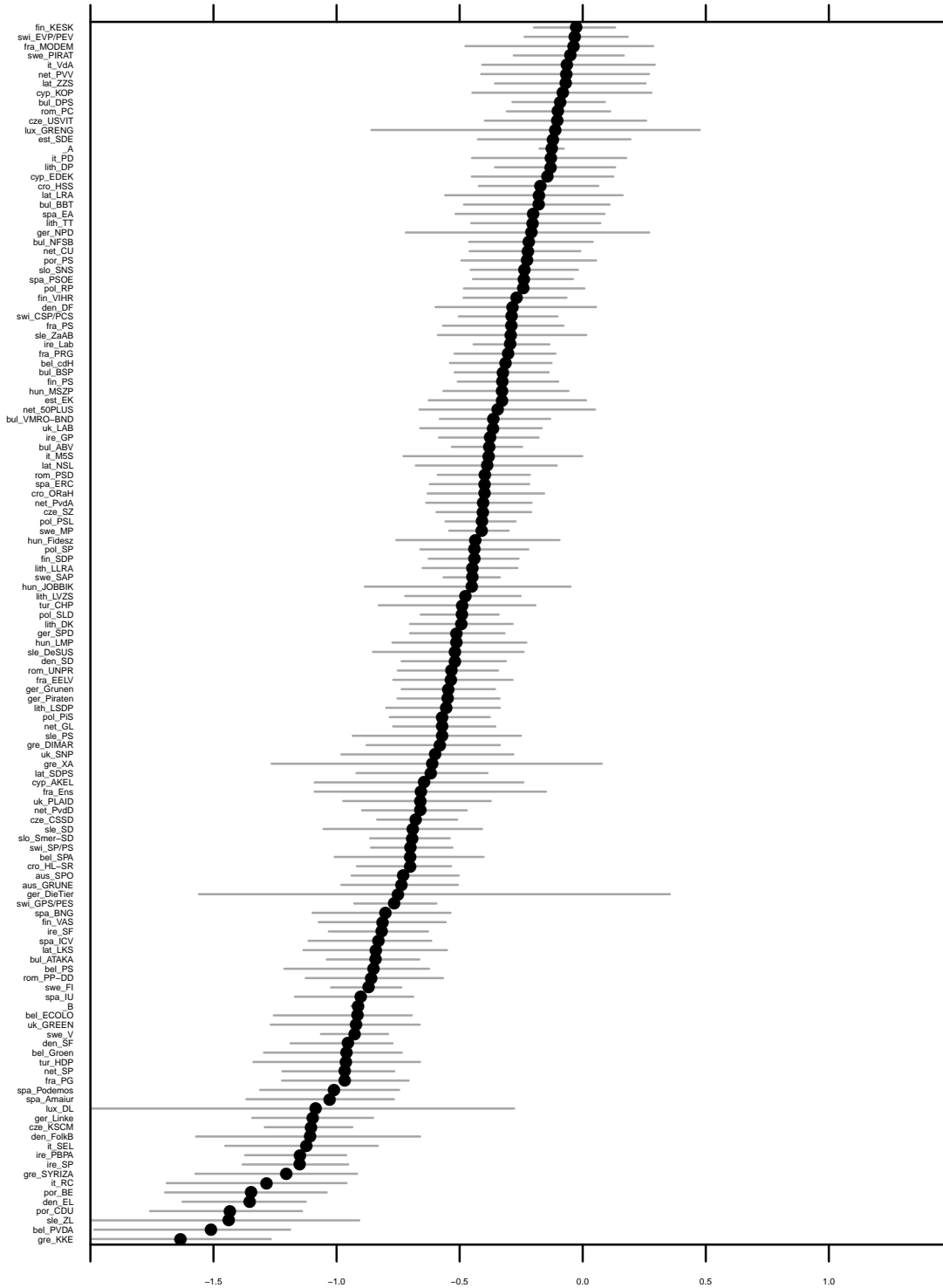
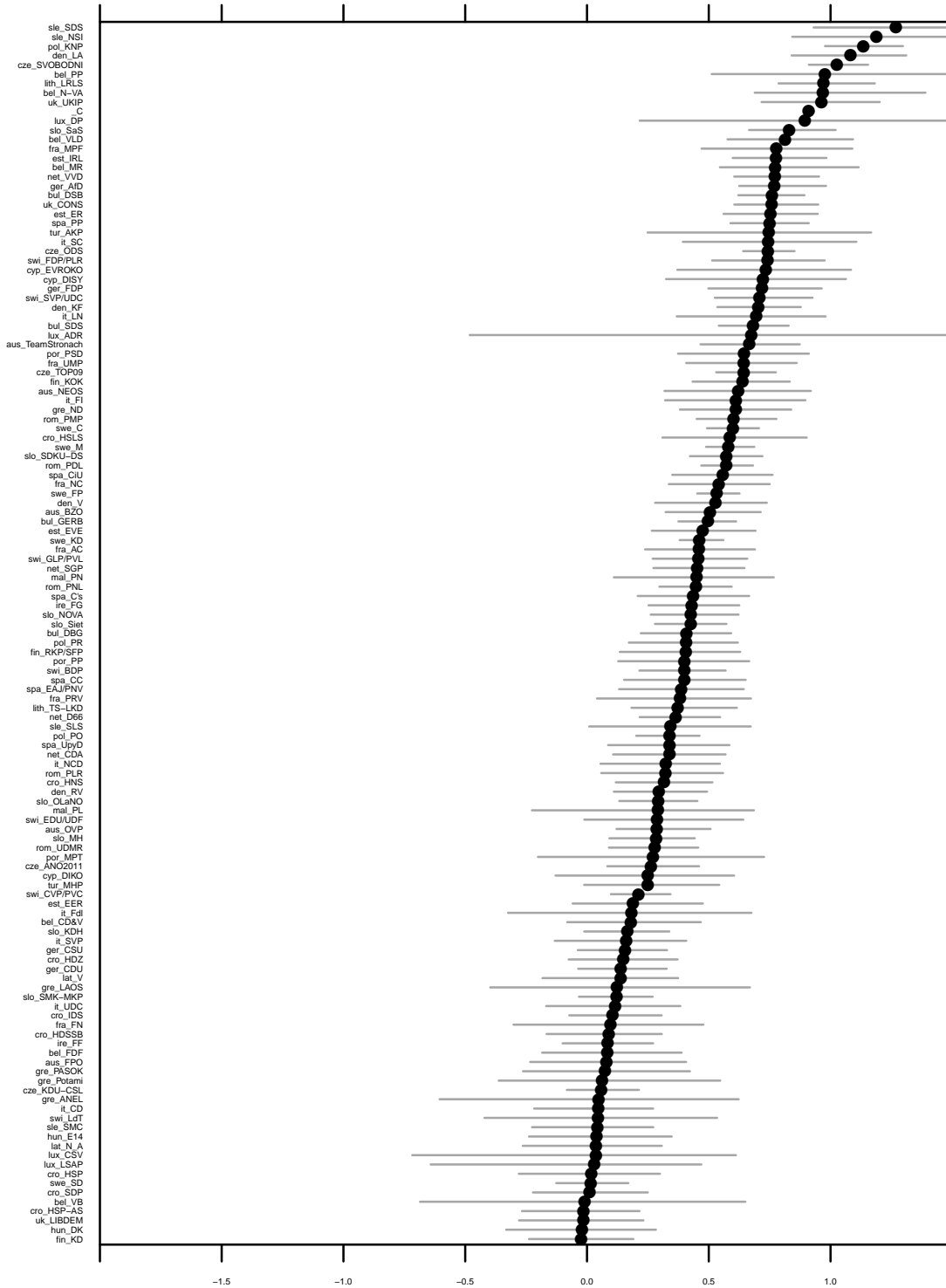


Figure 1: Economic left-right

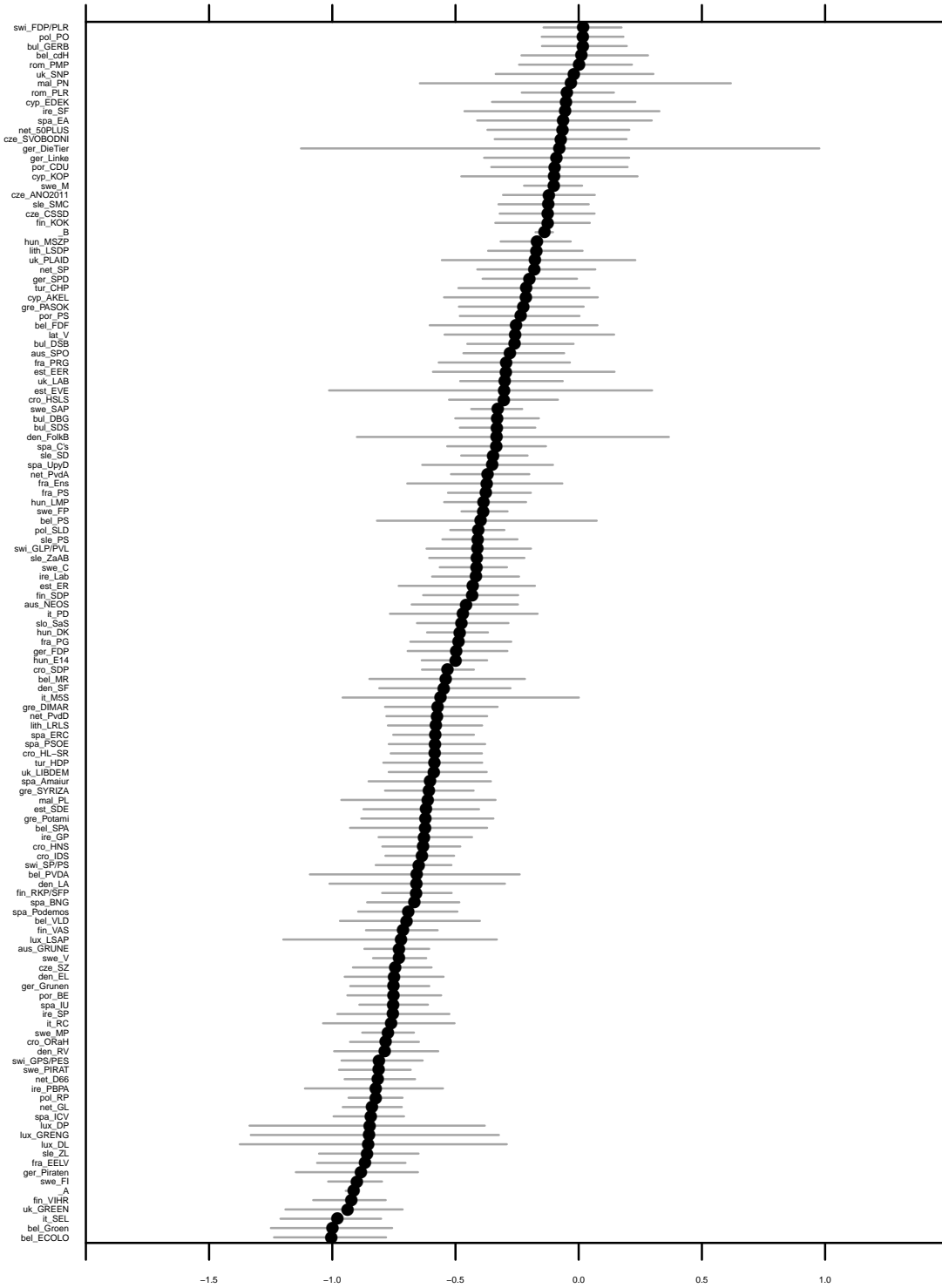
Party Placements with 95% Credible Intervals



Economic Left–Right: right parties

Figure 2: Economic left-right

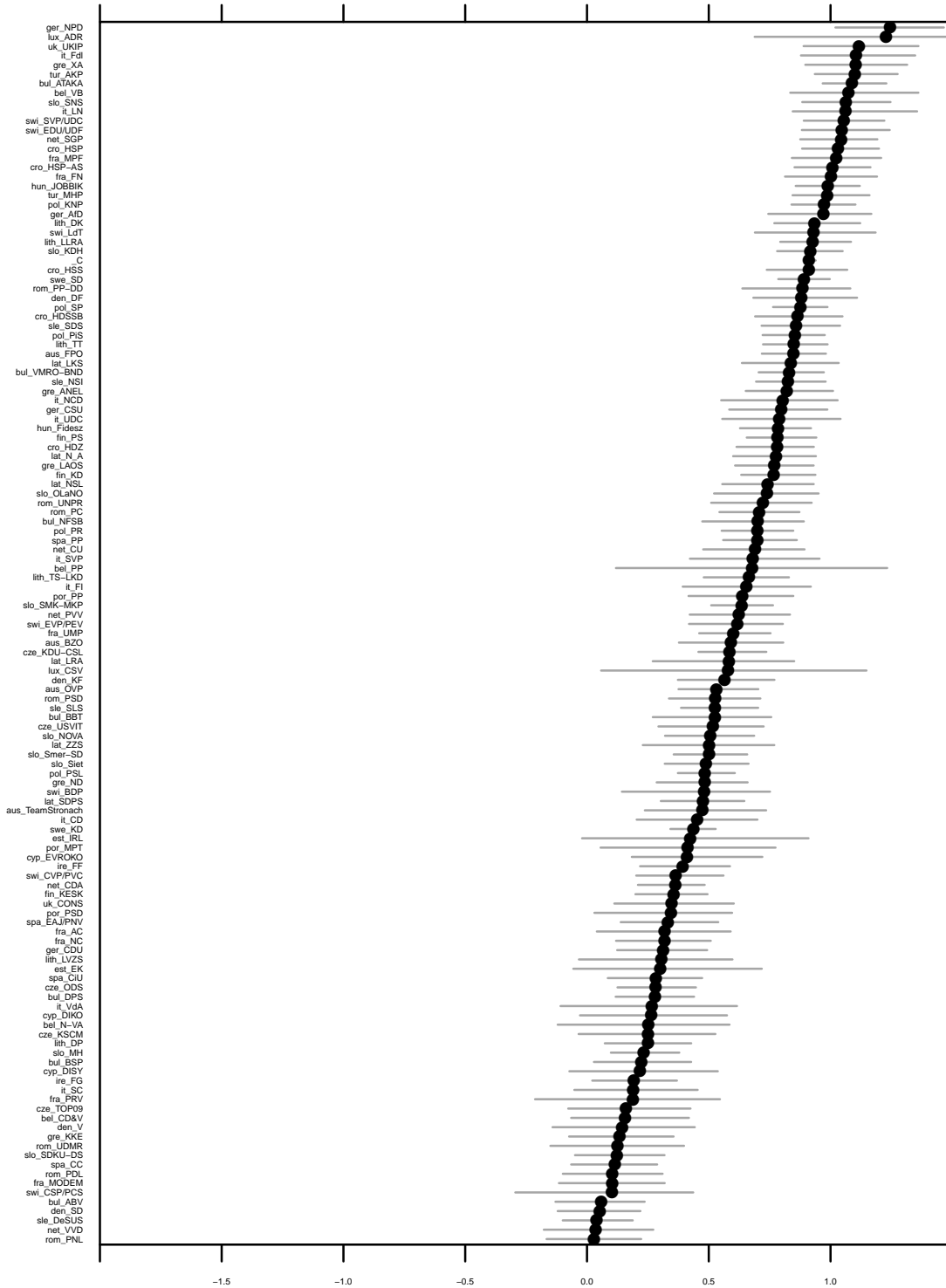
Party Placements with 95% Credible Intervals



Social Left–Right: left parties

Figure 3: Social left-right

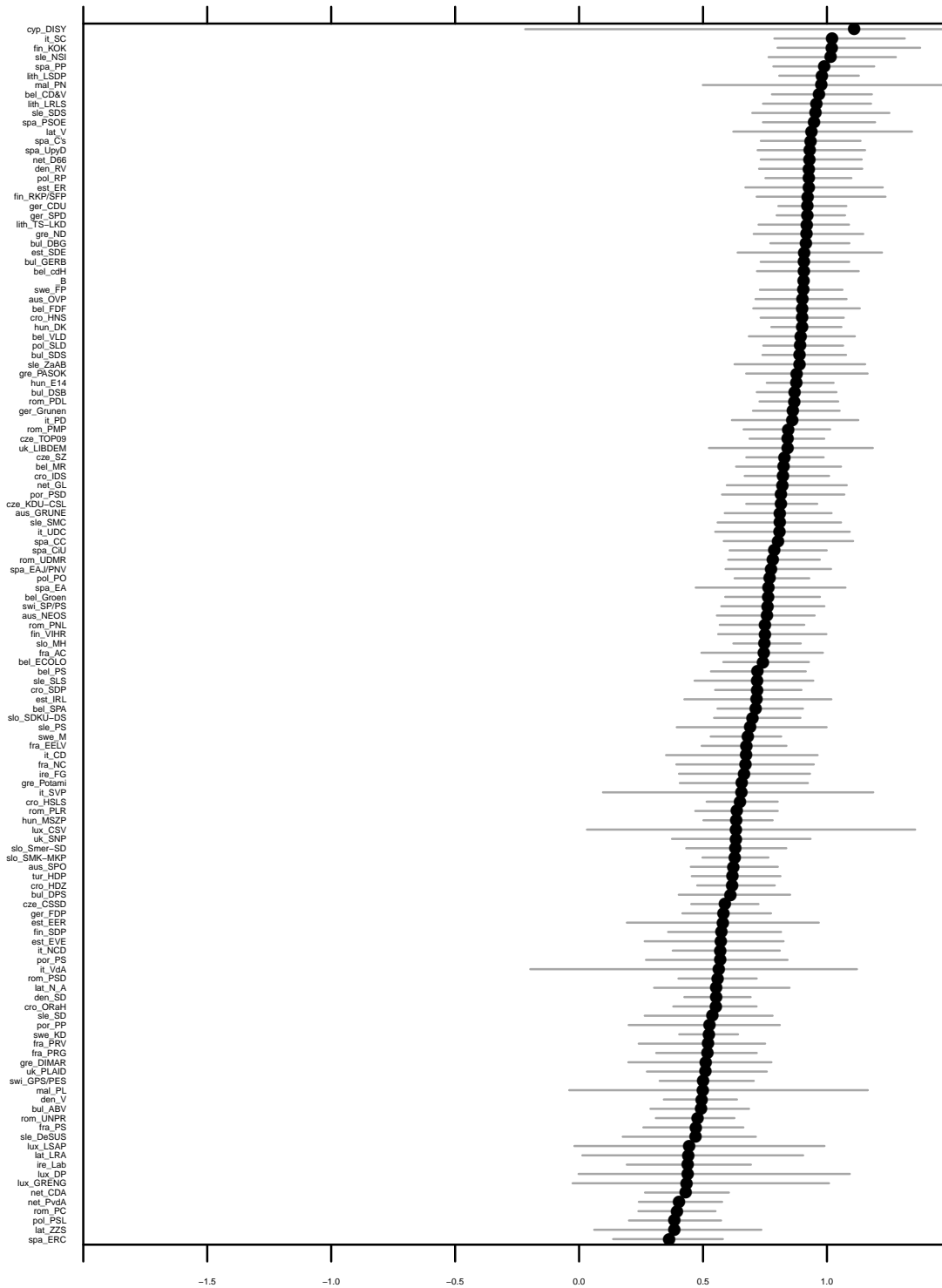
Party Placements with 95% Credible Intervals



Social Left-Right: right parties

Figure 4: Social left-right

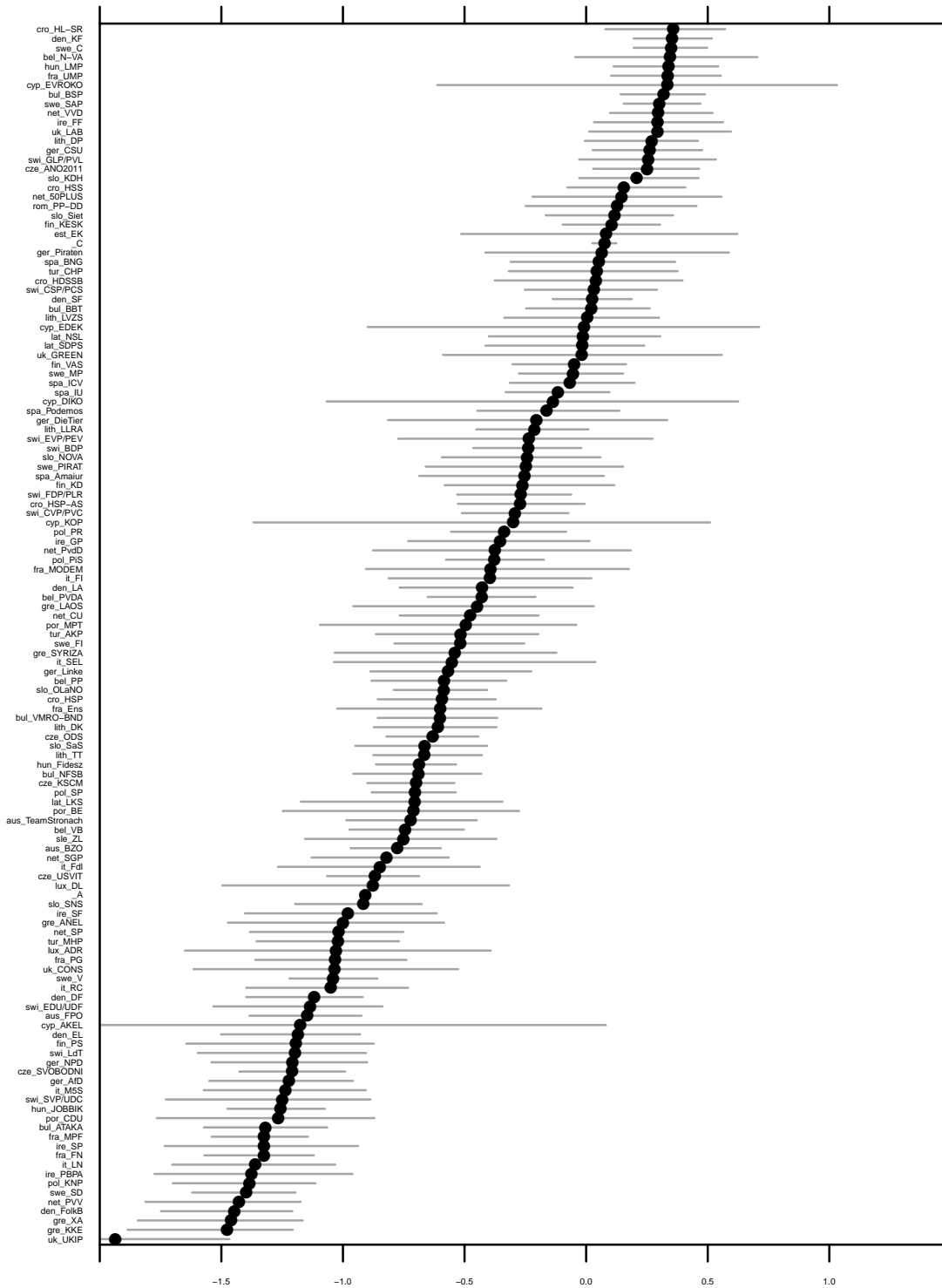
Party Placements with 95% Credible Intervals



EU Position: Pro-EU parties

Figure 5: European Integration

Party Placements with 95% Credible Intervals



EU Position: Anti-EU parties

Figure 6: European Integration

An obvious question is whether or not the scale produced by the BAM procedure is interestingly different from the unscaled placements in the CHES data. To answer this, we sorted the data based on their rank orders on the two dimensions and plotted these against each other. Thus, we created 2 new variables for each dimension that range from 1 to 262, representing the lowest to highest values on each dimension. Next, we plot these two sets of rank orders against each other. If there were no differences in the rank orders between the BAM solution and the unscaled expert placements, the points would fall in a straight 45 degree line. To the extent that the rank orders differ, the points diverge from the ‘perfect’ fit. Figures 7, 8, and 9 display these comparisons.

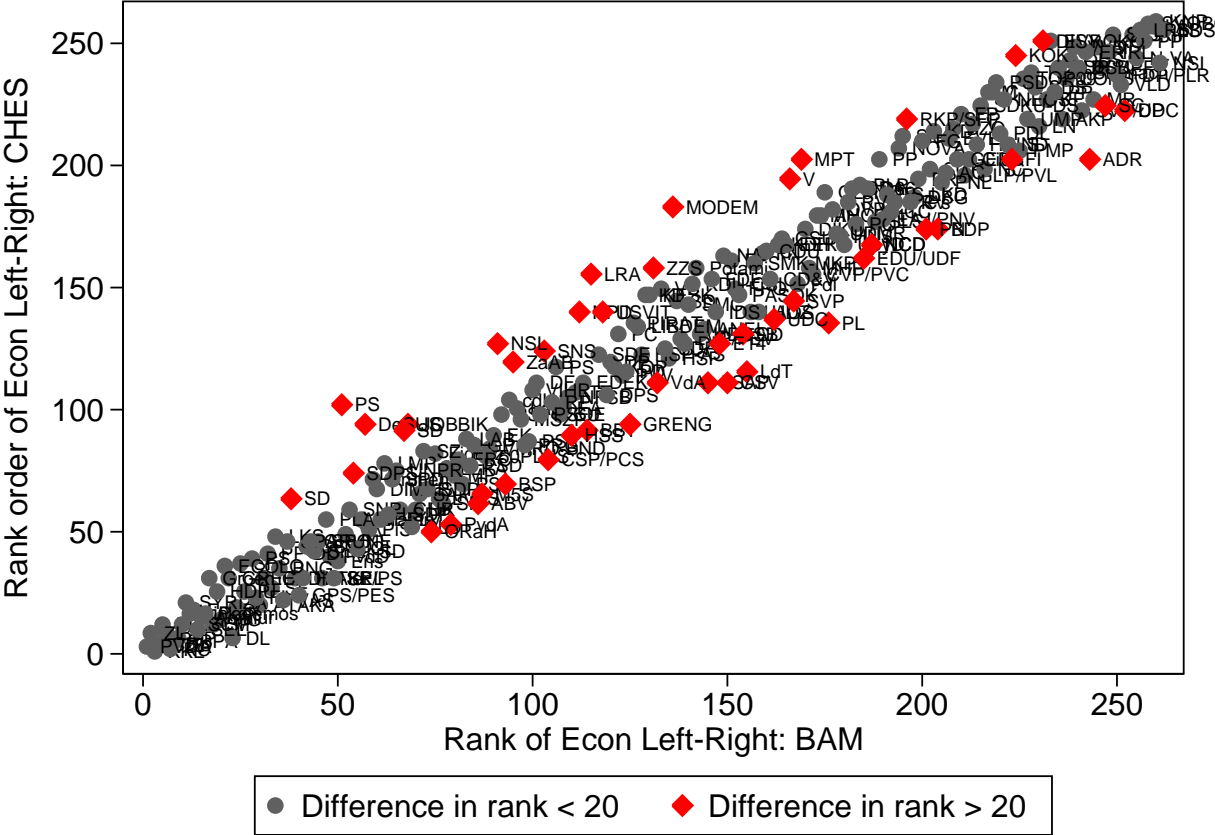


Figure 7: Comparison of Economic left-right rank orders

to the unscaled CHES positions, these two parties are the seventh and fifth most anti-EU parties in the data. This demonstrates that the British and Greek experts view the vignette parties differently from one another, in that the rank ordering of these two parties actually flips when the vignettes are considered. The question remains, however, as to whether or not UKIP is meaningfully more anti-EU than is KKE. In order to answer this question, we sampled 10,000 draws from each parties' posterior distribution and graphically present these distributions in Figure 10. We then compare these two sets of draws and compute the number of times that a draw from UKIP's posterior distribution is more anti-EU than the corresponding draw from KKE's posterior. We find that 93% of the time (9,300 out of 10,000 draws), UKIP has a more extreme anti-EU position than does KKE. This is strong evidence in support of the statement that UKIP is the most anti-EU party in our data, once their placements are rescaled relative to the vignette parties and uncertainty is taken into account.

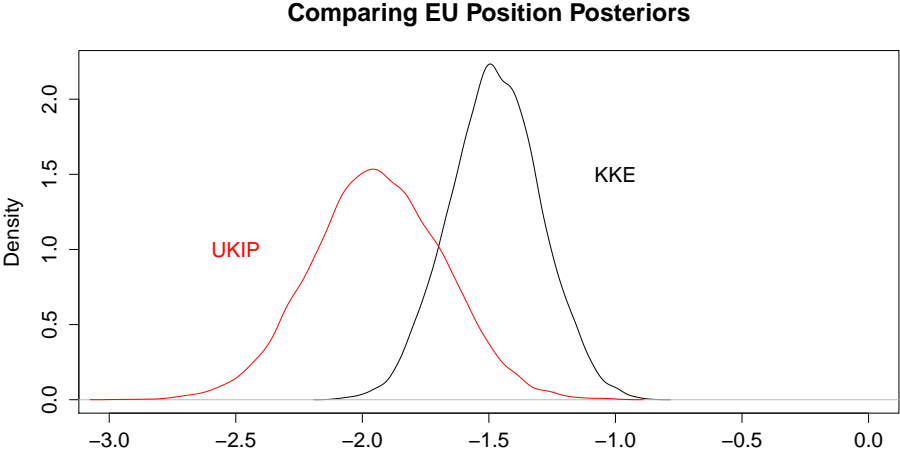


Figure 10: Comparison of EU positions

As an additional check on the validity of the BAM solutions, we examine the relationship between the rescaled economic, social, and EU dimensions. We find that that dimensions are related to one another in modest, yet expected, ways. The correlation between placements

on the economic and social left-right scales is 0.37, between the economic and EU dimensions is 0.23 and between the social and EU dimensions is -0.33 . Figures 11, 12, and 13 display these relationships. The parties from Central and Eastern Europe are plotted in red to highlight any differences in these relationships across East and West Europe. We also add horizontal and vertical lines to separate the plots into four quadrants representing left and right positions and pro and anti-EU positions. In Figure 11 we see that most parties fall in either the economic and social left or the economic and social right quadrants, with no obviously discernable differences between East and West Europe. As for the relationship between economic and EU positions, we see the familiar inverted-U shape, discussed more below. In Figure 13 we again see the inverted-U, with extreme parties on the left-right dimension tending to be more anti-EU and those with moderate left-right positions tending to be more pro-EU. Here, however, we see that there are very few parties in Central or Eastern Europe that fall in the social left/anti-EU quadrant. In the CEES systems, anti-EU parties tend to be more right-wing in terms of social policy. In the next section, we explore these relationships in more depth.

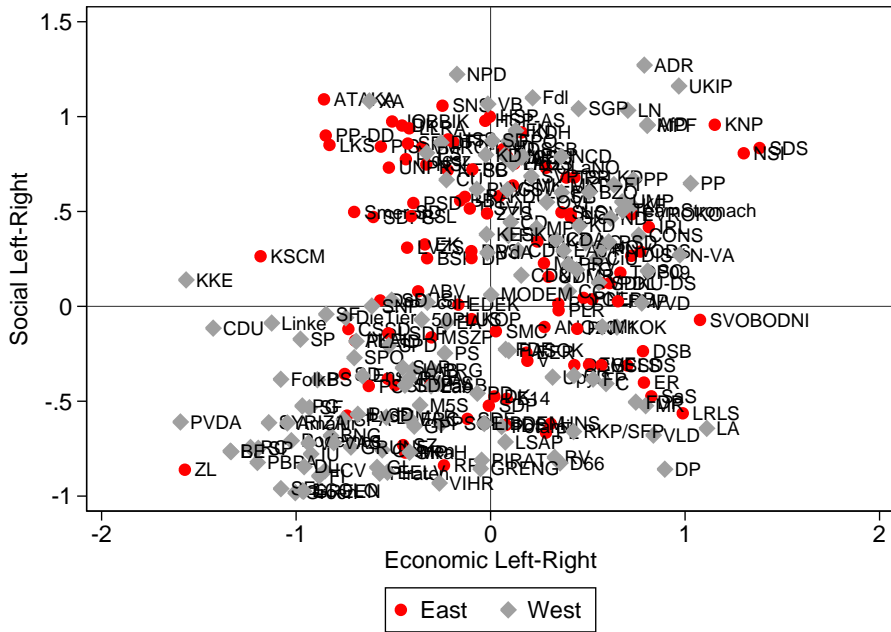


Figure 11: Social and Economic left-right BAM scales

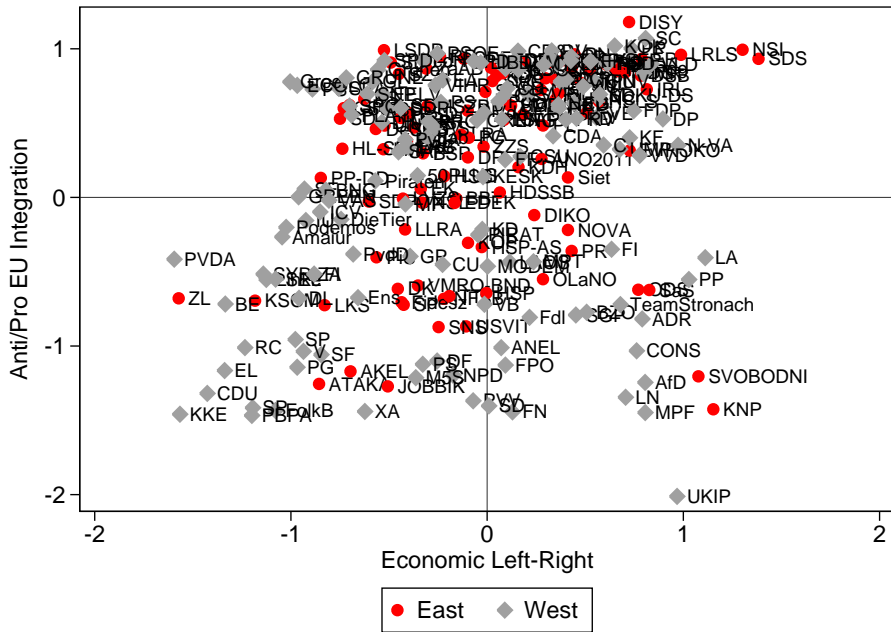


Figure 12: EU and Economic left-right BAM scales

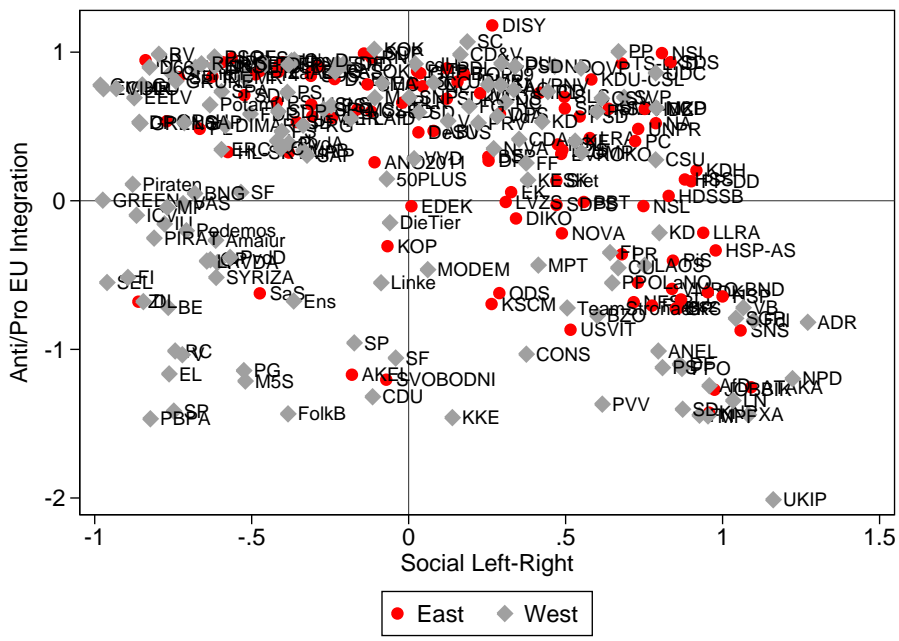


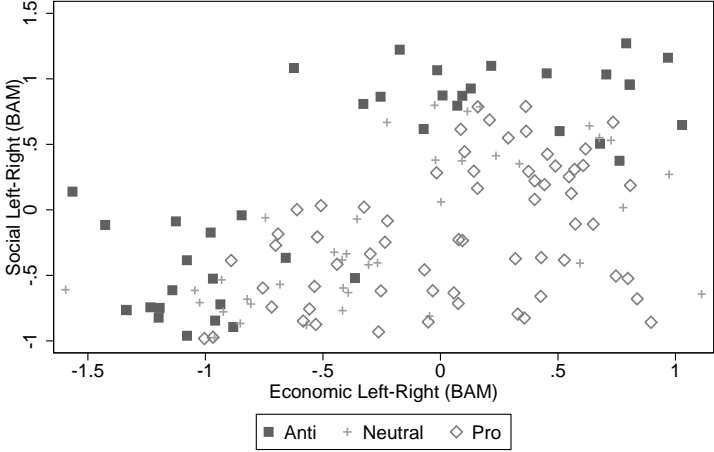
Figure 13: EU and Social left-right BAM scales

3 Replication

A prominent paper using all three dimensions—economic left-right, social left-right (aka GAL/TAN), and EU support—Marks et al. (2006) model support for European integration in 2002 using the economic and social dimensions. In this section, we replicate the Marks et al. (2006) analysis and extend it in two ways. First, we directly replicate the analysis for 2014. Second, we conduct the analysis with the rescaled versions of all three dimensions. We find that the model holds up for 2014. In addition, the rescaled and cross-nationally comparable measures provide more support for the reliability of these findings. For economic left-right, the classic U-curve of support, where extreme parties on the economic left and right are more likely to oppose the EU, still largely explains Euroskepticism in the most recent expert survey. In contrast, for social left-right, the story is simpler, with socially right-wing parties opposed while socially left-wing parties tend to favor the EU.

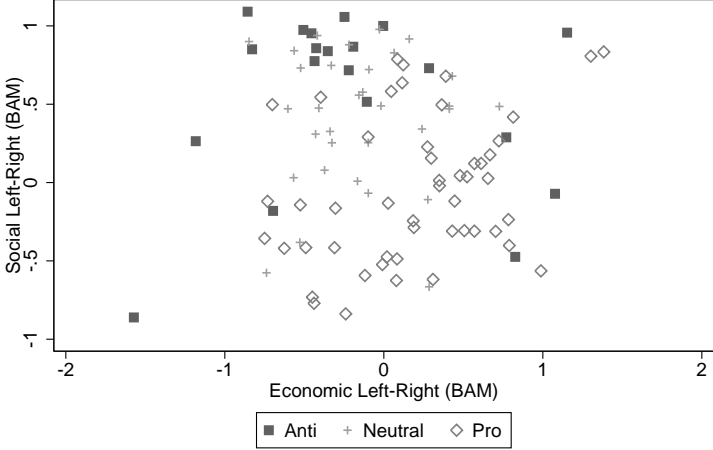
In this section, we use the rescaled dimensionality measures to evaluate the relationship between economic left-right, social left-right, and support for European integration. We start with the Marks et al. (2006) analysis, which emphasized the differences and similarities between east and west on Euroskepticism. In both regions in 2002, extremism mattered, such that parties in the middle on economic left-right supported the EU while the extremes opposed; however, the major difference between the two regions is that in the west, right-wing economic parties were also right-wing on the social dimension (correlation: 0.57) whereas in the east, left-wing parties were more often on the social right-wing (correlation: -0.49). While the correlations and associated patterns have weakened in the ensuing years, the pattern still largely holds in 2014 with the rescaled measures, with a positive correlation (0.40) between economic and social left-right in the west and a negative correlation (-0.20) in the east.

In Figures 14a and 14b, we present the three dimensional space, with economic and social left-right on the x and y-axes, while EU support is crudely measured as a trichotomous variable.



Note: $n=141$ parties. On the rescaled EU position measure ranging from -1.5 to 1.6, pro- parties have a score between 0.5 and 1.6, neutral parties have a score from -0.5 to 0.5, and anti- parties score between -1.5 and -0.5.

(a) Western Europe



Note: $n=102$ parties. On the rescaled EU position measure ranging from -1.5 to 1.6, pro- parties have a score between 0.5 and 1.6, neutral parties have a score from -0.5 to 0.5, and anti- parties score between -1.5 and -0.5.

(b) Central and Eastern Europe

Figure 14: Left-Right Dimensionality and Positions on European Integration

In the first two columns of Table 1, we first replicate the Marks et al. (2006) model for the Western EU members. For 2002, Column 1 shows that economic right-wing parties are more supportive of the EU than left-wing parties while social right-wing parties are more Euroskeptical. Column 2 shows the effect of extremism. While the social right-wing extremism variable just shows that the Euroskeptical trend is exaggerated on the social right-wing extreme, the economic left-right extremism variable highlights the curvilinear nature, the famous upside down U-curve. In short, the extremes on the economic left and right both oppose the EU.

Columns 3 and 4 extend the 2002 model to the most recent CHES year. The same pattern largely holds for 2014. Extremism matters for both economic and social left-right. As Marks et al. (2006, 163) explain, “The reason for this is that the European Union is a centrist project.” For our purposes, beyond the interesting consistency of the 2002 finding in 2014, even after the many years of Euro crisis, the final two columns are the most significant. Even with our cross-nationally comparable measures of these three dimensions, the same substantive patterns and correlations are demonstrated in these data. This consistency between the raw, unscaled, measures of dimensionality and our rescaled measures offers more support for the extremism finding in the original paper.

Table 2 presents the same analysis conducted in the Central and Eastern European states. Despite some differences among coefficients between east and west, the broad patterns (signs, significance, etc.) are surprisingly consistent, suggesting that the geographic distinction between the two regions is not as useful for this analysis as it once was.

Using the cross-nationally comparable dimensionality measures created in this paper, we replicated and extended an earlier study of party-based Euroskepticism, illustrating that ideological extremism is still a crucial factor to consider.

Table 1: Analyzing Party Position on EU, Western Europe
Replication and Extension of Marks et al. 2002

	2002 Linear b (S.E.)	2002 Nonlinear b (S.E.)	2014 Linear b (S.E.)	2014 Nonlinear b (S.E.)	BAM Linear b (S.E.)	BAM Nonlinear b (S.E.)
Economic Left-Right	0.29*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.44*** (0.02)	0.38*** (0.02)		
Social Left-Right	-0.38*** (0.02)	-0.44*** (0.02)	-0.41*** (0.02)	-0.45*** (0.02)		
Economic L-R Extremism		-0.16*** (0.01)		-0.12*** (0.01)		
Social L-R Extremism		-0.08*** (0.01)		-0.11*** (0.01)		
Economic L-R BAM					0.61*** (0.03)	0.50*** (0.03)
Social L-R BAM					-0.70*** (0.04)	-0.72*** (0.03)
Economic L-R Extremism BAM						-0.53*** (0.04)
Social L-R Extremism BAM						-0.85*** (0.05)
Constant	6.06*** (0.11)	7.00*** (0.10)	4.86*** (0.11)	6.53*** (0.11)	0.23*** (0.02)	0.68*** (0.03)
R^2	0.18	0.45	0.32	0.53	0.26	0.44
N	1310	1310	1428	1428	1418	1418

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Ordinary Least squares regressions. Weighted by vote.

Table 2: Analyzing Party Position on EU, Central and Eastern Europe
Replication and Extension of Marks et al. 2002

	2002 Linear b (S.E.)	2002 Nonlinear b (S.E.)	2014 Linear b (S.E.)	2014 Nonlinear b (S.E.)	BAM Linear b (S.E.)	BAM Nonlinear b (S.E.)
Economic Left-Right	0.19*** (0.02)	0.16*** (0.02)	0.28*** (0.02)	0.25*** (0.02)		
Social Left-Right	-0.34*** (0.02)	-0.34*** (0.02)	-0.31*** (0.01)	-0.22*** (0.01)		
Economic L-R Extremism		-0.07*** (0.01)		-0.04*** (0.01)		
Social L-R Extremism		-0.06*** (0.01)		-0.10*** (0.01)		
Economic L-R BAM					0.55*** (0.03)	0.53*** (0.03)
Social L-R BAM					-0.42*** (0.03)	-0.30*** (0.03)
Economic L-R Extremism BAM						-0.11** (0.04)
Social L-R Extremism BAM						-0.54*** (0.06)
Constant	6.65*** (0.17)	7.33*** (0.15)	5.81*** (0.13)	6.16*** (0.11)	0.45*** (0.02)	0.60*** (0.02)
R^2	0.49	0.60	0.42	0.54	0.37	0.42
N	833	833	1197	1197	1197	1197

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Ordinary Least squares regressions. Weighted by vote.

4 Discussion

In this paper, we combined a series of anchoring vignettes that depicted hypothetical political parties with Bayesian scaling techniques to produce cross-nationally comparable positions on economic left-right, social left-right, and European integration for a wide range of political parties in Europe. There was already growing theoretical and empirical evidence that the economic left-right dimension travelled well across Europe (Bakker et al. 2014). The findings we report in this paper indicate that social left-right and European integration also have a high degree of pan-European comparability. This is important information, both because these dimensions make up an increasingly important part of party competition in Europe, and because it suggests that the items included in the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys measure these dimensions quite effectively.

Our replication of a prominent study on the relationship between economic and social ideology and European integration further illustrates this point. Although the research we replicated used unscaled party positions from 2002, we find a similar structure to party positions on European integration in the 2014 scaled data. Party positions on European integration are structured and are systematically related to ideology on the economic and social left-right dimensions.

Our findings also generate intriguing questions for future research. In particular, the fact that meaningful differences between the scaled and unscaled positions on European integration, although limited in number, tend to be concentrated at the extremes requires additional examination. But in sum, the preliminary work that we present here supports the cross-national comparability of key concepts for party competition in contemporary European societies, and further bolsters the Chapel Hill Expert Survey as a valuable data source for political parties in 21st century Europe.

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Appendix. Vignette Text

Finally, we are going to present you with descriptions of 3 hypothetical parties and their views towards economic, libertarian/traditional, and EU issues. We would like you to place these hypothetical parties on the following dimensions.

First, we would like you to place hypothetical Parties A, B, and C on the EU dimension.

Party A conceives the European Union as an intergovernmental organization in which member states, not the European Commission or the European Parliament, should be the dominant players. It rejects exiting the EU, but it wishes to reclaim state sovereignty from the EU. *On a 1-7 point scale with 1 being extreme anti-EU and 7 being extreme pro-EU where would you place this party?*

Party B conceives the European Union as a supranational organization that provides Europeans with citizenship and a range of public goods. This party believes the European Commission should become the government of the European Union. *On a 1-7 point scale with 1 being extreme anti-EU and 7 being extreme pro-EU where would you place this party?*

Party C believes that both member states and European institutions should play a vital role in EU policy making. The party is willing to pool national sovereignty in the EU if this is efficient and feasible. European policy should be guided by subsidiarity, the principle that what can be better done at the national/subnational level should not be centralized. *On a 1-7 point scale with 1 being extreme anti-EU and 7 being extreme pro-EU where would you place this party?*

Next, we would like you to place the hypothetical parties on the economic dimension.

Party A advocates a social market economy with an emphasis on social justice, solidarity, and support for a welfare state. However, this party opposes state ownership, defends private property, and resists excessive intervention of the state in the economy. It believes there is a sharp trade-off between welfare spending and economic competitiveness. *On a 0-10 point scale with 0 being extreme left and 10 being extreme right where would you place this party?*

Party B views the equalization of life chances for all citizens as an important goal of government. It favors active government in regulating domestic and international markets, and supports steeply progressive taxes to fund redistributive social programs. *On a 0-10 point scale with 0 being extreme left and 10 being extreme right where would you place this party?*

Party C believes in small government. It favors minimal regulation of domestic and international markets, supports the privatization of many government oper-

ations, and opposes high taxes to fund redistributive social programs. *On a 0-10 point scale with 0 being extreme left and 10 being extreme right where would you place this party?*

Finally, we'd like you to place these 3 hypothetical parties on the libertarian/traditional dimension.

Party A frames its policies around principles of social justice, grassroots democracy, and multiculturalism. The party favors same-sex marriage, active euthanasia, and access to safe abortion. *On a 0-10 point scale with 0 being extreme "Libertarian/postmaterialist" and 10 being extreme "Traditional/authoritarian" where would you place this party?*

Party B favors non-discrimination legislation covering gender, race and sexual orientation, but opposes minority quotas. The party sees itself as a pragmatic party that is willing to compromise if this is necessary to achieve its broad goals. *On a 0-10 point scale with 0 being extreme "Libertarian/postmaterialist" and 10 being extreme "Traditional/authoritarian" where would you place this party?*

Party C emphasizes traditional family values, law and order, and the nation. It opposes the legalization of same-sex marriage and the right to die. It believes that the government should be a firm moral authority on social and cultural issues. *On a 0-10 point scale with 0 being extreme "Libertarian/postmaterialist" and 10 being extreme "Traditional/authoritarian" where would you place this party?*