Party Manifesto Data and Measures of Ideology in Western Democracies

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Abstract

In this paper, we expand and update the Kim-Fording (1998, 2001b, 2002) measures of party, voter, and government ideology. Further we develop new measures of parliament ideology based on the measure of party ideology developed by Kim and Fording. These measures allow comparisons of various ideologies across different countries and across different time periods for most of the postwar period. We also compare these manifesto-based measures of party, voter, parliament, and government ideology with various existing measures.

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Introduction

The Manifesto Research Group was formed in 1979 to analyze party manifestos in 19 Western democracies comparatively and within a common framework (Budge, Robertson, and Hearl 1987). Through several iterations of data coding efforts, the party manifesto data have been collected and expanded to most major political parties in 25 Western democracies throughout the postwar period (Budge 1992; Volkens 1995, and Budge et al 2001). Many scholars of political parties have begun to take advantage of these data. Of particular interest to some researchers are new measures of party ideology as summary measures of party preferences on a single ideological dimension (e.g., Laver and Budge 1993, Kim and Fording 1998, Gabel and Huber 2000, Laver and Garry 2000, and McDonald, Mendes, and Budge 2004).

Prior to the development of party manifesto data, most party ideology measures relied on expert surveys. Despite their potential advantages, expert surveys are inherently limited. Perhaps most significantly, any measure of ideology developed with such data would be restricted in the sense that it could only be employed in cross-sectional analyses, or only for a limited number of time points. As a result, most research on party ideology has either focused on comparing parties and party movement *within* countries, or comparing parties across countries at one relatively short period in time (e.g., Castles and Mair 1984; Janda 1980). Further, with expert surveys, like mass surveys, there may be problems in using these data for *comparative* research.

On the other hand, party manifestos are available for most major political parties in Western democracies for most of the postwar period and can be coded retroactively. The manifesto data set is based on an exhaustive content analysis of manifestos (platforms) issued by all significant parties competing in each postwar election. For each document the data represent the percentage of all

statements comprised by each category. In effect, this standardizes the data with respect to document length, yielding a measure of party emphasis that is comparable.

Recently Kim and Fording expanded party manifesto research by developing measures of voter and government ideology (1998, 2001b, 2002). Since their measures are based on a manifesto-based measure of party ideology, they argue their measures allow a meaningful comparison of voters and governments across countries and across different time periods. In this paper, we expand and update the Kim-Fording measures of voter ideology and government ideology and develop new measures of parliament ideology. Further we compare the manifesto-based measures of party, voter, parliament, and government ideologies with various existing measures. We begin by briefly reviewing the measure of party ideology developed by Kim and Fording (1998), which becomes an integral part of our measures of voter, parliament, and government ideology.

Manifesto-Based Measures of Ideology

Party Ideology

In a recent paper, Kim and Fording (1998) developed an interval measure of party ideology for 17 Western democracies, based on manifesto data. The manifesto data set is based on an exhaustive content analysis of manifestos (platforms) issued by all significant parties competing in each postwar election. The data set employs a total of 56 common categories, including external relations categories (e.g., anti-imperialism), freedom and democracy categories (e.g., human rights), political system categories (e.g., governmental and administrative efficiency), economic categories (e.g., nationalization), welfare and quality of life categories (e.g., environmental protection), fabric

of society categories (e.g., multiculturalism), and social group categories (e.g., underprivileged minority groups). For each document (and thus for each party) the data represent the percentage of all statements comprised by each category. In effect, this standardizes the data with respect to document length, yielding a measure of party emphasis that is comparable.

The first task in measuring party ideology is to choose an appropriate set of categories that capture the left-right dimension. In so doing, Kim and Fording (1998) rely on Laver and Budge (1993), who analyzed 20 Western Democracies over the entire period in the data set to build a left-right scale. Using a series of exploratory factor analyses, Laver and Budge identified 13 categories as comprising left ideology and another 13 as comprising right ideology. These ideological categories consistently loaded together in a series of factor analyses (pp.24-27) and formed the basis for Laver and Budge's measure of party ideology. Kim and Fording use the same 26 categories in their attempt to build a measure of party ideology in 17 industrialized democracies during the post-war period.[1]

The manifesto data are collected such that statements in each of these 26 categories demonstrate either pro-left or pro-right tendencies. Based on these 26 categories, Kim and Fording

1 The specific categories, as listed in the codebook, are as follows. Leftist categories are: Regulation of capitalism, Economic Planning, Protectionism: positive, Controlled economy, Nationalization, Decolonization, Military: negative, Peace, Internationalism: positive, Democracy, Social services expansion: positive, Education: positive, and Labor groups: positive. Rightist categories are: Free enterprise, Incentives, Protectionism: negative, Economic orthodoxy and efficiency, Social services expansion: negative, Constitutionalism: positive, Government effectiveness and authority, National way of life: positive, Traditional morality: positive, Law and order, National effort and social harmony, Military: positive, and Freedom and domestic human rights. Detailed definitions of these categories are listed in the codebook as well as in Laver and Budge (1993, 20-24). The salience of the left-right dimension is indicated by the frequency with which ideologically relevant statements appear in party manifestos. Based on data from the updated manifesto data set, for the average party manifesto, left-right statements comprise about half (50.3%; s.d=14.5%) of all manifesto statements (N = 1971). The salience of left-right statements is also consistent over time. Since 1975, the percentage of left-right statements averages 49.7% (N=1010), nearly identical to the average for the entire period.

develop separate measures of left and right ideology for each party in each election for these countries in the following manner:

$$\text{IDLeft} = \Sigma \text{ Pro-Left Statements}$$

$$\text{IDRight} = \Sigma \text{ Pro-Right Statements}$$

In other words, IDLeft represents the percentage of all party statements that advocate left-wing positions, and IDRight represents the corresponding percentage of all party statements that represent right-wing positions. They then compute their measure of party ideology (IDParty) as follows:

$$\text{IDParty} = (\text{IDLeft} - \text{IDRight}) / (\text{IDLeft} + \text{IDRight})$$

In sum, Kim and Fording evaluate parties on their net ideological position (scores) with respect to the left-right dimension. The measure is thus computed by subtracting the rightist score from the leftist score (%leftist statements - %rightist statements), then dividing by the total percentage of leftist and rightist statements. This procedure yields a measure of party ideology that ranges from -1 to 1 where the larger score indicates greater support for leftist policies. For ease of presentation and interpretation, they transform this measure so that it takes on a possible range of 0 to 100.[2]

2. For various validity tests of the Kim-Fording measure of party ideology, see Kim and Fording 1998, 2002. Although Kim and Fording use the same manifesto categories as Laver and Budge (1993), they construct their measure of party ideology somewhat differently. The Laver-Budge measure is equivalent to the numerator of the Kim-Fording measure, or in other words, the difference of IDLeft and IDRight as a percentage of all statements in the document. McDonald and Mendes (n.d.) call the Laver-Budge measure a "subtractive measure" and the Kim-Fording measure (as well as the Laver-Garry measure (2000), which employs the same formula as Kim and Fording) a "ratio measure" (pp.4-5). There are some philosophical differences between these two measures, and as McDonald and Mendes correctly point out, "[v]alidity depends on what the researcher intends to measure. If one's intention is to locate a party in a space defined by its emphases on Left versus Right values relative to all values (thereby stressing the overall saliency of Left and Right values), then the subtractive measure is preferred. If, on the contrary, one's intention is to locate the party along the Left-Right dimension as such, then the ratio is preferred" (p.5). Regardless of this difference in the two measures, the two are nearly identical in empirical terms as they are correlated at .96.

Having created a measure of party ideology for each country for each election year, Kim and Fording then compute a yearly series of party ideology scores within each country. They estimate missing (nonelection) years using linear interpolation, which assumes steady change in ideology between elections. While ideology is not likely to change this steadily in every case, in general this approach is reasonable since it is likely that ideology is relatively stable in the short run. More importantly, estimation of missing years facilitates comparisons across countries, which would otherwise be biased due to the irregularity of the timing of elections across countries.[3]

The manifesto data have been most recently updated by Budge, et al (2001). The newest manifesto data set includes 25 major democracies and spans most of the postwar period (up to 1998). In this paper, we expand and update the Kim-Fording measure of party ideology to include all 25 countries.[4]

Voter Ideology

We next discuss a measure capturing the ideological tendencies of the electorates in Western Democracies, also developed by Kim and Fording (1998). Since it is not feasible to describe the

3. There are various existing measures of party ideology. First, there are measures based on the surveys of country experts (e.g., Castles and Mair 1984, and Huber and Inglehart 1995). Second, there are measures based on Eurobarometer and the World Values Survey. These surveys ask citizens their position on the left-right dimension and their vote intention. From responses to these questions, they measure left-right party positions as the mean ideological position of supporters. Finally there have been other attempts to build a measure of party ideology based on manifesto data set. They include the "vanilla method" (Gabel and Huber 2000), a new hand coding scheme (Laver and Garry 2000), a quadrennial measure in the U.S. (Erikson, McKuen, and Stimson 2001), a word-scoring technique (Laver, Benoit, and Garry 2003), and a minor modification of the Laver-Budge measure by McDonald, Mendes, and Budge (2004). In the Appendix, we provide evidence which shows that most of these newer measures are highly correlated with the Kim-Fording measures.

4. The twenty-five countries included in the data set are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the U.K., and the U.S.A. All political parties included in the data set for these countries are listed in Budge el al. (2001).

exact shape of the voter distribution on an ideological dimension in all Western democracies, Kim and Fording estimated the *median* voter position in these countries as their indicator of voter ideology. The choice of the median voter position is well justified not only because it indicates the central tendency among voters, but also due to the amount of attention paid to the median voter theorem in the (formal) theoretic literature.

The Kim-Fording measure of voter ideology rests on three basic assumptions about how voters think and behave when making voting decisions. First, they assume that a left-right ideological dimension can be found in most industrialized democracies.[5] A second assumption inherent in their approach is that left-right ideology is an important, and often primary determinant of vote choice in Western democracies, and that it has been so for the entire post-war period.[6] Finally, they assume that the left-right dimension is comparable across countries.[7]

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5 Survey research has repeatedly shown that the majority of voters in most (if not all) Western democracies conceive of politics in such a fashion, and can readily place themselves on some type of left-right scale (e.g., Inglehart and Klingemann 1976). Even in the United States, where early research seemed to demonstrate an absence of ideological thinking, more recent research has found ideology to be an important organizing framework for political attitudes for a significant portion of the electorate (Achen 1975; Jacoby 1995; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1976).

6. Few would dispute the importance of the left-right dimension in influencing vote choice in these countries. While the role of ideology has often been ignored in the American voting literature, both experimental (e.g., McKelvey and Ordeshook 1990) and survey-based studies (e.g., Levitin and Miller 1979) find ideology to be an important determinant of vote choice in the United States. There is the perception that the salience of the ideological cleavage in Western democracies has diminished over time, and particularly since WWII. Such a view is fueled by evidence of the diminishing importance of social class in predicting vote choice (e.g., Franklin 1985). It does not necessarily follow, however, that the importance of left-right ideology has diminished based on this trend. Indeed, recent evidence suggests that although ideological cleavages are not as strongly related to class position as they once were, the left-right dimension remains a most significant, if not dominant cleavage in Western democracies (Blais, Blake, and Dion 1993; Budge and Robertson 1987; Knutsen 1988; Lijphart 1984; Morgan 1976; Warwick 1992). Using party manifesto data, Laver and Budge (1993) convincingly show that the left-right dimension not only exists, but is essential in the party programs in Western democracies.

7 Though little direct evidence exists to evaluate this claim, there is reason to believe this assumption is more or less plausible. Over the years, a large literature has developed which confirms that there is a common ideological dimension with which one can compare *party ideology* across different countries (Browne, Gleiber, and Mashoba 1984; Budge and Robertson 1987; Castles and Mair 1984;

Assuming the comparability, continuity, and relevance of the left-right dimension, it is then possible to develop a measure of the ideological position of a particular electorate that is comparable across countries and across time. To do so, one must first begin to conceive of elections as large-scale opinion polls. In this sense one might think of ballots as questionnaires, which instruct the "respondent" to choose the party that is closest to him or her on a left-right ideological scale. Assuming we have accurate, comparable, interval-scale measures of party ideology for each party in an election, we can then treat election results, along with the corresponding measures of party ideology, as a grouped frequency distribution and calculate fairly reliable estimates of measures of central tendency such as the median and the mean. In other words, we infer ideological tendencies based on the rational choices of ideological voters.

To estimate the median ideological position within the electorate of each country, at each election, Kim and Fording proceed in a series of three steps. First, for each election, they obtain ideology scores for each party in that election using the formula above and place the parties on an ideological dimension by their score.[8] Second, for each party, they find an interval on this

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Cusack and Garrett 1993; Dodd 1976; Gross and Sigelman 1984; Janda 1980; Laver and Budge 1993; Laver and Schofield 1990, 248; Morgan 1976; Warwick 1992). From these results, along with the common perception that in many countries, left-right ideological orientations serve as a basic reference point for voters' choices of candidates/parties (Fuchs and Klingemann 1990; Inglehart and Klingemann 1976; Lancaster and Lewis-Beck 1986; Langford 1991; Laponce 1981; Lewis-Beck 1988; Percheron and Jennings 1981), it logically follows that there is a common ideological dimension with which one can compare *voter ideology* across different countries.

8. One objection to using manifesto statements to construct a measure of party ideology is likely to be that voters rarely, if ever, read them. Although this is undoubtedly true, this does not necessarily mean that manifesto statements are poor *indicators* of ideology if manifestos are representative of party behavior that *is* observable to voters. Recent evidence concerning this question indicates that this may indeed be the case. Contrary to the expectations of many political scientists, evidence from the United States, Great Britain and former West Germany indicates that parties do indeed fulfill the vast majority of their pledges (Budge and Hofferbert 1990; also see Robertson 1987 for a review of research in this area). As a result, though manifesto statements may not affect voter perceptions of parties in any direct way, a measure of party ideology based on manifesto statements is likely to be highly correlated with voter perceptions due to their common relationship with party ideology.

dimension where its supporters are located. This was done in the following manner: for each party they calculate the midpoint between this party and the one immediately left of it and another midpoint between this party and the one immediately right of it. They assume that those who vote for this party fall into this interval between these two midpoints on the left-right ideological dimension. In other words, this is a simple application of the Euclidean preference relations: simply put, voters choose the candidates/parties that are closest to them. Voters on the left side of this interval will vote for the party on the left of this party and the ones on the right side of this interval will vote for the party on the right of it.[9]

Third, for each election, they find the percentage of the vote received by each party.[10] At this point, they have the percentage of the electorate that falls into each interval that they have created. Having now transformed the data to a grouped frequency distribution, they estimate the median position by using a formula outlined in almost any introductory statistics text (they use Bohrnstedt and Knoke 1988, 52). The particular variant of this formula that they use is as follows:

$$M = L + \{(50 - C) / F)\} * W$$

Where:

M = Median voter position (ideological score)

L = The lower end (ideological score) of the interval containing the median.

9. Kim and Fording assume sincere voting by assuming that voters choose the candidates/parties that are closest to them. They minimize the potential impact of tactical/strategic voting by using appropriate election data in countries with ordinal ballot structures where vote transfer is possible (Ireland and the Australian House) and in Germany with a mixed electoral system. See Kim and Fording 1998 for details. For insignificant impact of tactical voting on the estimate of the median voter position in countries with a multi-party system whose electoral system is characterized by single-member district plurality rule (Canada, New Zealand (until recently), and the United Kingdom), see Kim and Fording 2001a, and Kim and Kostadinova 2003.

10. For election data, we primarily relied on Mackie and Rose (1990). We supplemented these data with election results reported annually in the *European Journal of Political Research.*

C = The cumulative frequency (vote share) up to but not including the interval containing the median.

F = The frequency (vote share) in the interval containing the median.

W = The width of the interval containing the median.

We expand the original Kim-Fording measure by including all countries and time periods contained in the latest manifesto data set. Having created a measure of voter ideology for 25 countries for 364 election months, we then compute a monthly series of voter ideology scores within each country. We estimate values for missing (nonelection) months by using linear interpolation, which assumes steady change in ideology between elections. While we realize that ideology is not likely to change this steadily in every case, we feel that in general this approach is reasonable since it is likely that ideology is relatively stable in the short run. More importantly, estimation of missing months/years facilitates comparisons across countries, which would otherwise be biased due to the irregularity of the timing of elections across countries. Finally, we create a yearly series of voter ideology scores by computing the average monthly voter ideology score for each year.[11]

[11] There have been a few attempts to construct measures of voter ideology. They are based on citizen surveys both in the U.S. (e.g., Durr 1993, and Erikson, McKuen, and Stimson 2001) and in Western Europe (e.g., Huber 1989, and Powell 2000). Recently McDonald (2002) constructed slightly modified versions of the Kim-Fording measure. These measures are highly correlated with the Kim-Fording version (see Appendix). For additional validity tests of the Kim-Fording measure of voter ideology, see Kim and Fording 1998 (pp.80-84).

Parliament Ideology

Now we turn our attention to parliament ideology. We develop two separate measures of parliament ideology. Our measures tap two distinct characteristics of the parties in the parliament. First, they incorporate information concerning the relative share of power held by each party in the parliament. Second, they take into account the preferences, or the ideology of the parliamentary parties as measured on a left-right scale described above.

For the first measure, for any given parliament we define parliament ideology as:

$$\sum \{Ideology_i * (\#Seats_i / Total\ Seats)\}$$

where:

$Ideology_i$ = the ideology of party i

$\#Seats_i$ = the total number of parliamentary seats controlled by party i

Total Seats = the total number of seats in the parliament.

We collect data for the number of parliamentary seats for each party in each country in our sample, for the entire postwar period through the late 90's.[12] For each election, we combine this information with the party ideology scores by taking a weighted average of party ideology scores, where the weights are the proportion of total parliamentary seats held by each party (as in the equation above). Since we have the month of each election in this data set, we then merged the data into a monthly data set, spanning all years. Next, we interpolated the data across months and years within each country. We then computed the average monthly score for each year, for each country.

[12] For parliamentary seat data, we primarily relied on Mackie and Rose (1991). We supplemented these data with election results reported annually in the *European Journal of Political Research*.

We build this new measure of parliament ideology for all 25 countries in the data set for most of the postwar period. Since the measure of party ideology is a continuous measure of liberalism taking on a possible range of 0 to 100, our measure of parliament ideology also becomes a measure of relative liberalism and takes on a possible range of 0 to 100.

Our second measure of parliament ideology incorporates the relative position of the parties when considering the relative power held by the parties in the parliament. Mainly, we develop a legislative median measure (or median party measure). This is simply the position of the party that contains the median legislator, assuming that all legislators in a given party take the same ideological position.[13] Like our first measure, we interpolated the data across months and years within each country. We then computed the average monthly score for each year, for each country. This second measure of parliament ideology also becomes a measure of relative liberalism and takes on a possible range of 0 to 100.[14]

Conceptually this measure is somewhat different from the first measure: this measure is appropriate when a simple majority rule is used for the decision(s) being studied and when a researcher can assume that the median legislator gets her/his way in producing legislative outcomes. The first measure is better suited to describe the overall distribution of preferences among all members of the parliament. Despite this conceptual difference, the two measures of the parliament ideology are highly correlated at r = .96.

[13] This measure has already been used by others including Powell 2000, Powell and Vanberg 2001, and McDonald and Mendes 2002. We simply use our measure of party ideology to calculate the median scores. For Powell, and Powell and Vanberg, the primary party measure is based on surveys developed by Castles and Mair (1984) and Huber and Inglehart (1995). McDonald and Mendes develop measures of legislative median based on two minor modifications of Laver and Budge (1993).

[14] For the United States, our measures of parliament ideology rely on the House of Representatives.

Government Ideology

Government partisanship has become an increasingly important explanatory variable in comparative politics, as comparativists have tried to assess the impact of the parties in power on various policy outputs and performances. In the case of Western democracies, government partisanship has mostly been measured on a Left-Right ideological dimension. This is the case because ideology has been the most important and common cleavage in these countries throughout the postwar period as we argued above (Blais et al. 1993; Budge and Robertson 1987; Kim and Fording 1998; Knutsen 1988; Lijphart 1984; Warwick 1992), and political parties are assumed to reflect the dominant cleavage in society (Budge 1994; Laver and Budge 1993).

Conceptually speaking, most analysts would agree that a valid measure of government ideology should tap two distinct characteristics of the parties (or *party)* in power. First, the measure should incorporate information concerning the relative share of power held by each of the governing parties. Second, the measure should take into account the preferences, or the ideology of the governing parties as measured on a left-right scale. More specifically, for any given government, government ideology is defined as:

$$\sum \{Ideology_i * (\#Posts_i / Total\ Posts)\}$$

where:

$Ideology_i$ = the ideology of party i

$\#Posts_i$ = the total number of cabinet posts controlled by party i

Total Posts = the total number of posts

Based on this equation, Kim and Fording (2002) built a continuous measure of government ideology for Western democracies as follows. They first collect yearly data for the number of cabinet portfolios for each party in each country in their sample, for the entire postwar period through the late 1990's.[15] For each year, they then combine this information with the party ideology scores by taking a weighted average of party ideology scores, where the weights are the proportion of total cabinet portfolios held by each party (as in the equation above).[16] Thus for some countries where unified control of government occurs on a regular basis, the government ideology score reduces to the party ideology score for the party in power. For multi-party governments, however, the measure takes advantage of the information they have about the varying ideologies of the parties and their relative shares of power.

Using the measure of party ideology introduced above, this new measure of government ideology was originally built for 17 countries for the entire postwar period. Since the measure of party ideology is a continuous measure of liberalism taking on a possible range of 0 to 100, the Kim-Fording measure of government ideology also becomes a measure of relative liberalism and takes on a possible range of 0 to 100.[17] In this paper, we expand their measure by adding eight countries not included in the original Kim-Fording measure.

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[15] They use cabinet composition data contained in Woldenborp, Keman, and Budge (1993, 1998).

[16] For the United States, their measure of government ideology is based on the party that controls the presidency.

[17] See Kim and Fording (2002) for an in-depth discussion of the existing measures of government partisanship, a comparison of their measure and the existing measures, and their replications of past studies of the role of government partisanship in Western democracies. They also included various validity tests of their measure of government ideology.

Ideology: Cross-National and Cross-Time Comparisons

Limited space prevents us from presenting details of all of the measures we introduce in this paper. Instead we show a few aggregate trends in this section. In Figure 1 we present a cross-national comparison of the average voter ideology scores of 21 Western democracies during the entire period of 1945-1998.[18] In short, Figure 1 presents a snap-shot describing the entire period of analysis. During this period, it is clear that Norway, Luxembourg, and Sweden have been the most left-leaning states, while Iceland, the U.S.A., and Turkey have been at the opposite end of the ideological spectrum of Western democracies.

(Figures 1 about here)

In Figure 2, we present cross-national comparisons of the average parliament ideological scores of 21 Western democracies during the period of 1945-1998. Figure 2(a) displays the relative positions of the weighted-mean version of parliament ideology in these countries, while Figure 2(b) displays country averages of the legislative medians. During this period, the parliaments of Israel, Iceland, and Turkey have been most conservative, while Norway, Luxembourg, Sweden, and Finland, on average, have had most liberal parliaments. Most countries maintain roughly the same positions relative to other countries in the two different measures of parliament ideology.

[18] As we stated above, we construct measures of ideology for 25 Western democracies. There are four countries (Greece, Spain, Japan, and Portugal), however, for which manifesto data are not available for the whole post-war period. We do not include these countries in the subsequent analyses as the time periods over which the scores are averaged are not comparable. The average scores reported in Figure 1, as well as the subsequent analyses, are based on observed *and* interpolated scores for each country. Because of the irregularity of the timing of elections across countries, the first and last years for which we have manifesto data vary somewhat across countries. The first election year, for which data are available among the countries in Figure 1, ranges from 1945 to 1950, while the last year for which data exist varies from 1994 to 1998.

(Figures 2(a) and 2(b) about here)

Table 1 presents the correlation between the two different versions of parliament ideology for individual countries in our dataset. Iceland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Spain, Japan, Belgium, and Turkey display very high correlation between the two measures ($r \geq .85$), while countries such as Germany, Greece, Norway, and Israel display low level of correlation ($r < .6$). It is not immediately clear to us what institutional/procedural features in these countries make these correlations different.[19]

(Table 1 about here)

In Figure 3, we present average government ideology scores for each of the 21 countries, averaged over the period 1945-1998.[20] As we would expect, Norway, Finland and Luxembourg, on average, have had the most left-leaning governments during this period, while France, Switzerland and Israel have had the most conservative governments.

(Figure 3 about here)

Next we examine *aggregate* movements in our measures of ideology among our panel of countries. Figure 4 shows trends over time in all of the measures of ideologies we have discussed in this paper, based on annual average scores across 21 countries for which we have all of the ideology scores for the entire period of analysis. Figure 4(a) shows trends in voter ideology, the weighted-mean version of parliament ideology, and government ideology, while Figure 4(b) substitutes the legislative median version of parliament ideology for the weighted mean. For the

19 At this point, we can only conjecture that members of the parliaments in high-correlation countries are symmetrically distributed around the median legislator position along the ideological dimension. What combinations of institutions and procedures make this type of distribution possible is a potential future research agenda.

[20]As was the case with our estimates of voter ideology, the first and last years for which government ideology scores can be computed varies slightly across countries. The first year of available data ranges from 1945-49, while the last year of available data varies from 1994-98.

most part, the three series in each figure appear to track one another very closely, and it is therefore not surprising to find that they are highly correlated (r_{vp} (between voter and parliament) = .955, r_{pg} = .885, r_{vg} = .774, N = 46 in Figure 4(a) and r_{vp} = .891, r_{pg} = .896, r_{vg} = .774, N = 46 in Figure 4(b)).

(Figures 4(a) and 4(b) about here)

Several observations can be made at this point. First, the fact that the measure of citizen preferences (voter ideology) is highly correlated with the measures of the preferences of elected officials (parliament ideology and government ideology) is an indication that representative democracy is working in these countries. Second, nevertheless we can see that institutional arrangements, along the political processes in these countries, have had distorting effects. This is evident by the fact that the correlations are higher between voter ideology and parliament ideology and the latter and government ideology, and somewhat lower between voter ideology and government ideology. Third, the correlation between voter ideology and the measure of parliament ideology that reflects the overall power distribution of the parties (the weighted mean) is higher than the correlation between voter ideology and the legislative median. This seems to suggest that the parliaments in Western democracies which adopt procedures and institutions that maintain the power distribution among political parties seem to do a better job of reflecting citizen preferences than those that primarily rely on simple majoritarian rules (or those in which the median legislator's preferences usually prevail). On the other hand, the legislative median seems to be a (slightly) better predictor of government ideology, suggesting that governments tend to mirror the median party preferences in Western democracies.

Conclusion

In this paper, we expanded and updated the Kim-Fording measures of party, voter, and government ideologies and developed new measures of parliament ideology for Western democracies. These measures allow comparisons of various ideologies across different countries and across different time periods for most of the postwar period. We also compared the manifesto-based measures of party, voter, parliament, and government ideologies with various existing measures.

These measures of ideology can be used in various areas of comparative politics research (e.g., Stevenson 2001, Kim and Fording 2001, 2003, and McDonald, Mendes, and Budge 2004. Also see Kim and Fording 1998, pp.88-91 for discussion of potential uses of these measures). In particular, these new measures allow for comparative analysis of democratic performance under different political institutional arrangements. That is, by comparing the congruence and the responsiveness among the measures of ideology that reflect different stages of the democratic process, we can enhance our understanding of the institutional effectiveness of translating citizen preferences into government policy, thus maximizing democratic performance (e.g., Huber and Powell 1994, Lijphart 1999, Powell 2000, Powell and Vanberg 2001, McDonald, Mendes, and Budge 2004).

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Appendix

Correlations between Kim-Fording Measures of Party and Voter Ideology and Various Alternative Measures

Alternative Measures	Kim-Fording Party Ideology	Kim-Fording Voter Ideology
Party Ideology		
Laver and Budge	-.96 (709)	---
Laver and Garry	-1.0 (709)	---
Gabel and Huber	-.72 (709)	---
Castles and Mair	-.70 (623)	---
Huber and Inglehart	-.66 (618)	---
World Values Survey	-.68 (71)	---
Eurobarometer*	-.61 (180)	---
McDonald (Single-Election)	-.89 (904)	---
McDonald (Moving Average)	-.84 (904)	---
Voter Ideology		
McDonald Median Ideology I**	---	-.75 (263)
McDonald Median Ideology II***	---	-.85 (263)

*We used a version provided by Bingham Powell.
**Based on the Kim-Fording measure and three election moving average (see McDonald 2002).
***Based on the adjusted Kim-Fording measure (see McDonald 2002).

Table 1. Correlation Between Alternative Versions of Parliament Ideology (Mean vs. Median)

Country	Correlation	Average Difference (Mean-Med)
Iceland	0.93	2.53102
Luxembourg	0.93	1.411945
Portugal	0.93	-1.944427
Netherlands	0.88	-2.139867
Finland	0.87	-1.813657
Sweden	0.86	-11.03597
Spain	0.86	-4.794246
Japan	0.86	3.038934
Belgium	0.85	1.366831
Turkey	0.85	1.765548
Italy	0.8	-0.296661
Switzerland	0.8	-3.503135
Denmark	0.78	-10.10883
Great Britain	0.77	1.56794
France	0.76	1.470306
United States	0.74	-6.52818
Austria	0.7	-2.100299
Australia	0.7	-2.141008
Ireland	0.69	-2.712174
Canada	0.69	-0.244745
New Zealand	0.61	2.69231
Israel	0.59	-4.935408
Norway	0.58	-11.84932
Greece	0.53	-3.989676
Germany	0.42	2.063194
Average	0.7592	-2.089183

Figure 1. Voter Ideology in Western Democracies, 1945-1998
Average Median Voter Position

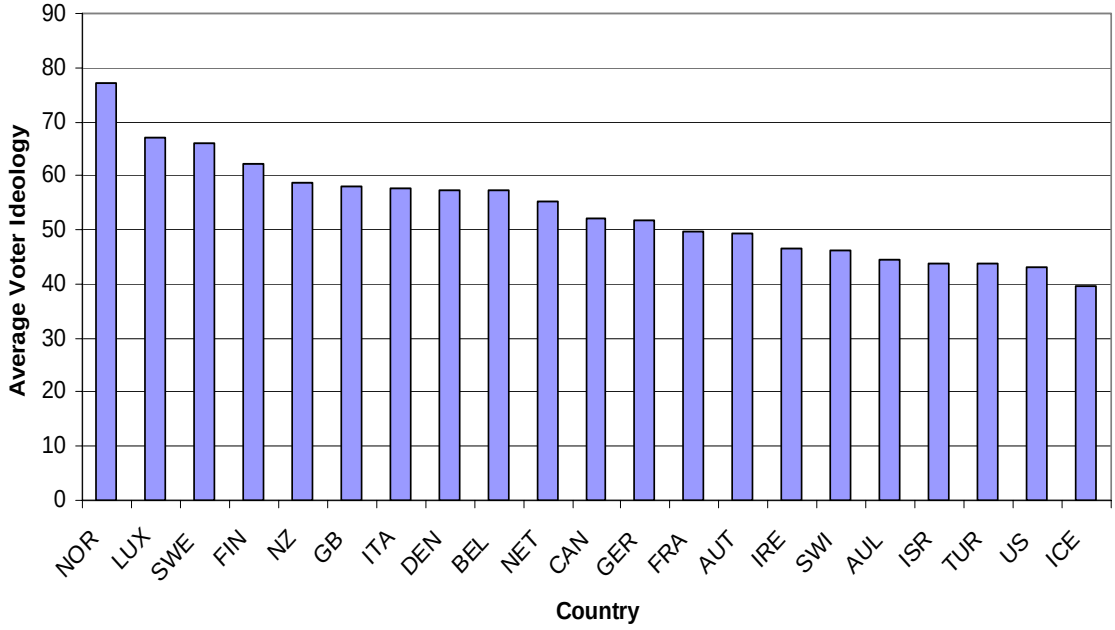

Figure 2(a). Parliament Ideology (Weighted Mean) in Western Democracies, 1945-1998

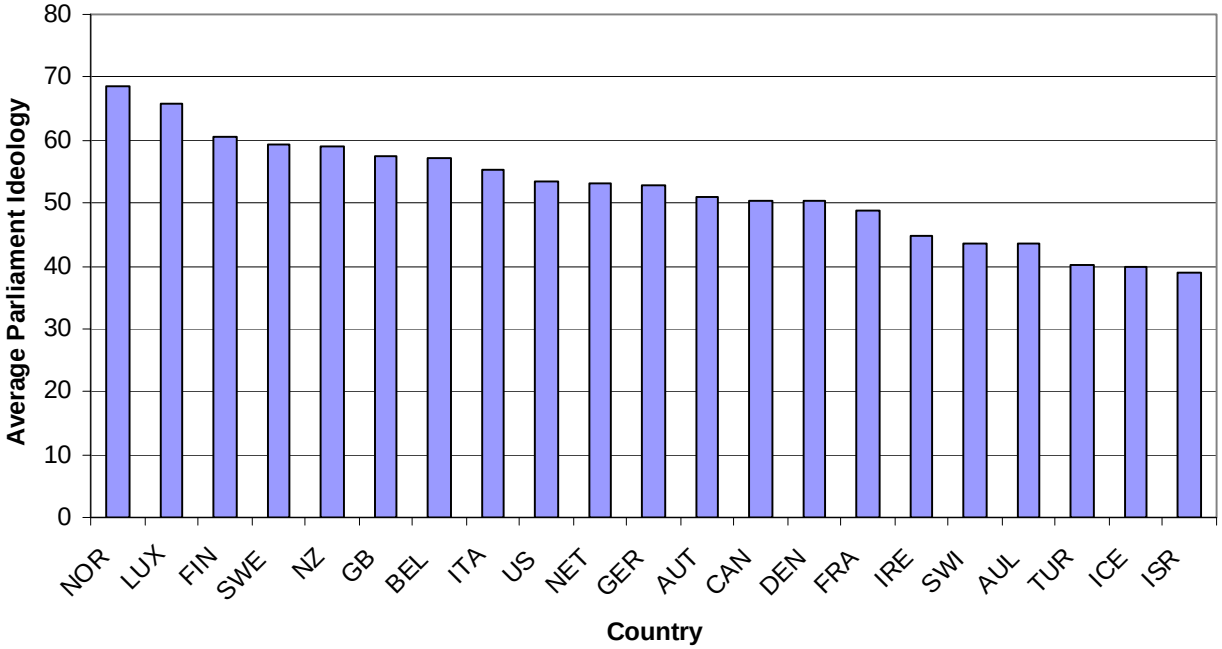

Figure 2(b). Parliament Ideology (Median) in Western Democracies, 1945-1998

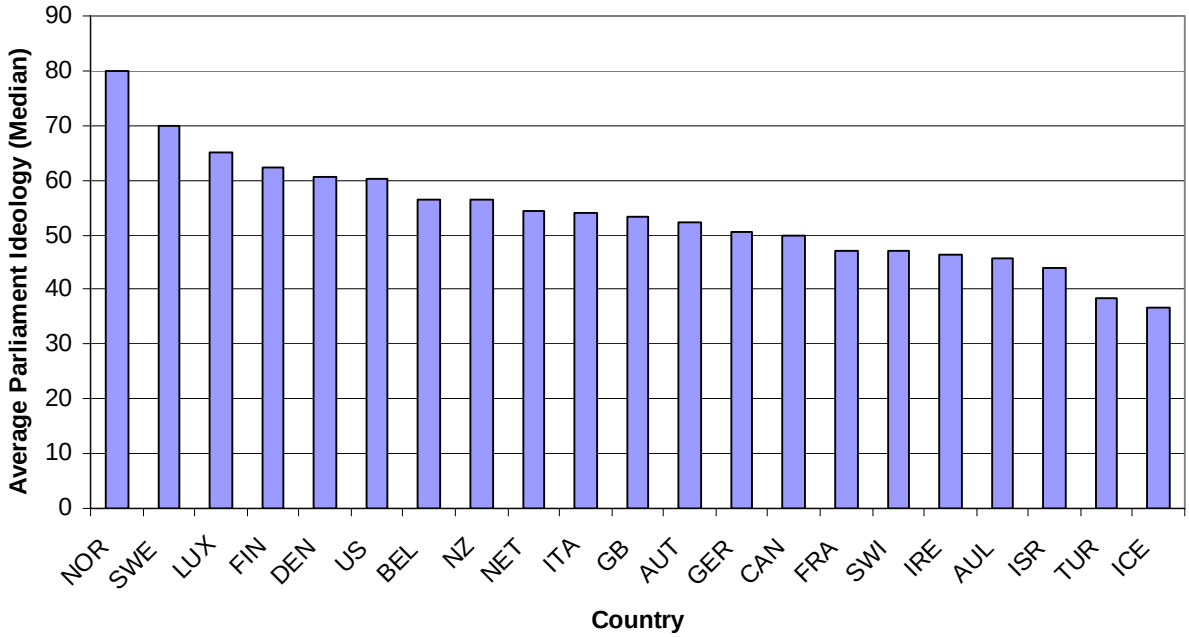

Figure 3. Government Ideology in Western Democracies, 1945-1998

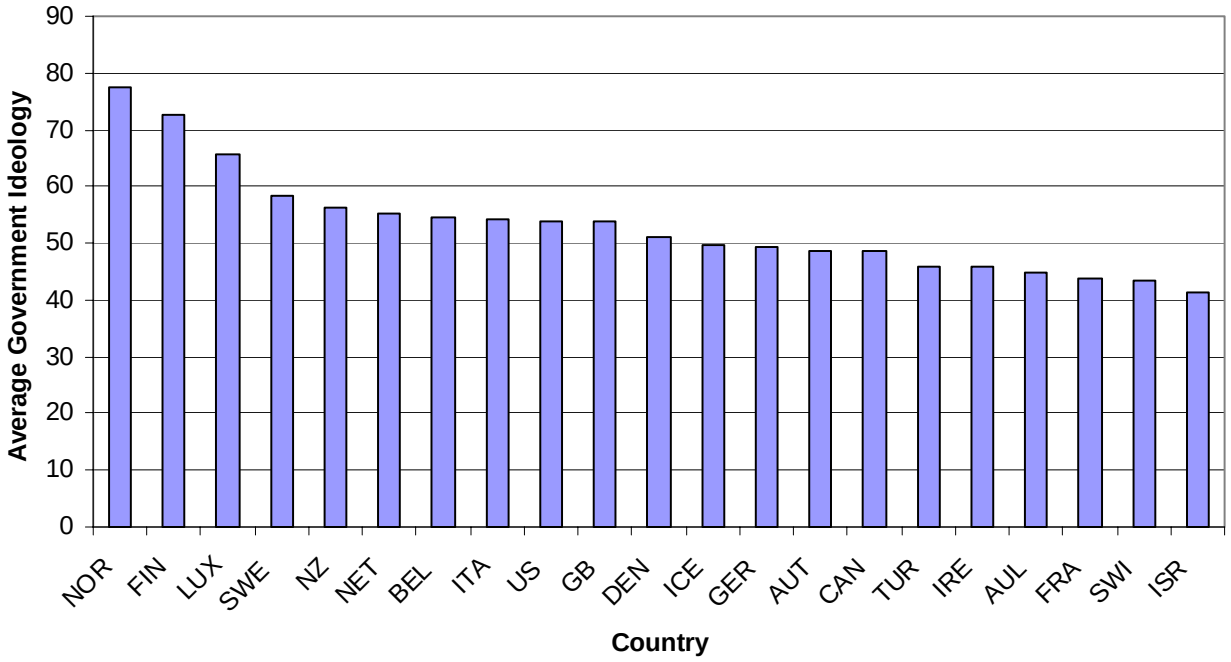

Figure 4(a). Average Voter, Parliament (Weighted Mean), and Government Ideology Scores by Year

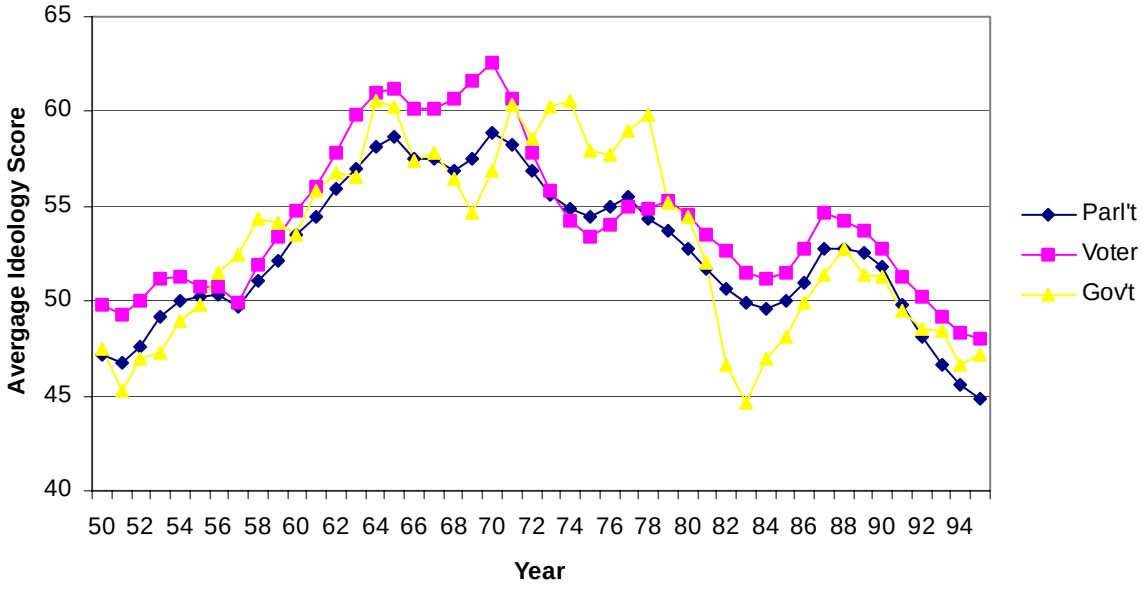
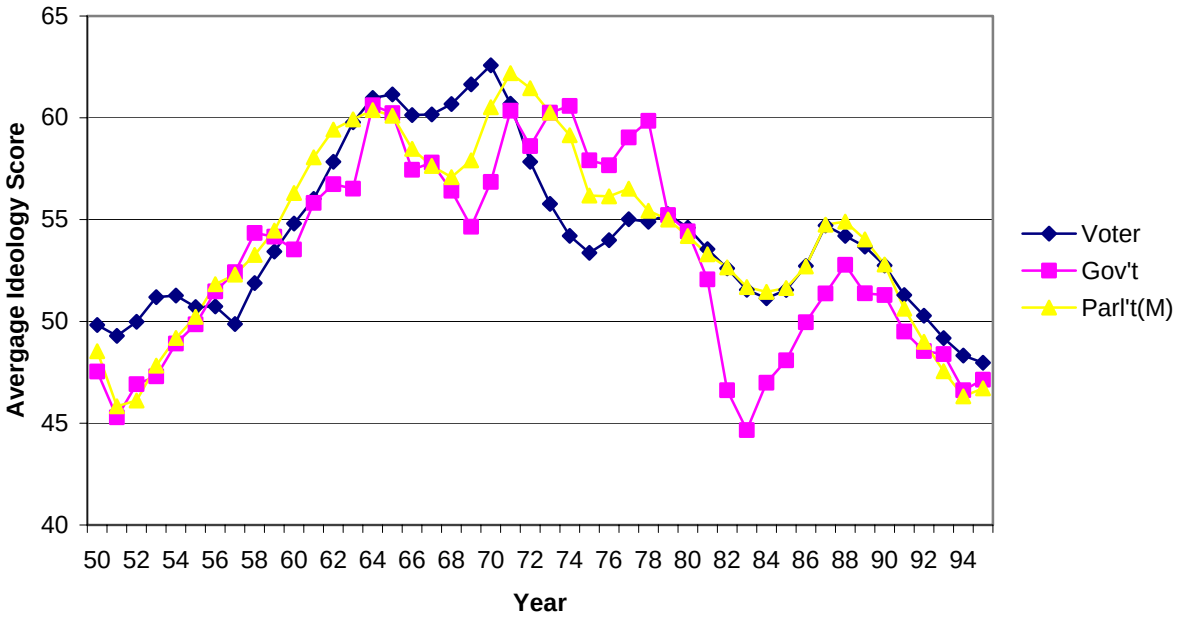
Figure 4(b). Average Voter, Parliament (Median), and Government Ideology Scores by Year