Online Material for:

The asymmetric long-term electoral consequences of unpopular reforms Why retrenchment really is a losing game for left parties (Alexander Horn), in: *Journal of European Public Policy*

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Retrospective voting:

Social scientists have long discussed the strategic and electoral crisis of the Left, the importance of electoral punishment for unpopular reform, and the idea that left parties are spared voters' wrath after retrenchment because they are regarded as the credible protectors of the welfare state. The extent to which voters reward or punish parties for good or bad past performance in elections (retrospective voting, Lewis-Beck & Ratto 2013; Fiorina 1981; Key 1966), is a concern in all three debates. Yet, there is little agreement on the performance yardsticks (what is good performance) and to whom they apply (is there a partisan gradient). While neither of these three debates has addressed long-term consequences, it is important to summarise them here before we lay out our rationale for expecting that retrenchment is a losing game for the Left in the long term.

Lupu and brand dilution:

[…] brand dilution per se is not the biggest challenge for left governments that retrench the welfare state. At this point, it is worth highlighting parallels and differences with regard to the work of Lupu on brand dilution in Latin America. Like Lupu (2014, 2016), we see a link between the reputation or brand of a party, economic performance, and electoral losses. At the explanatory core of the work of Lupu is the interaction between brand maintenance and economic performance. Yet, while he posits that parties' brand dilution in combination with bad (economic) performance lead to electoral erosion (Lupu 2014: 563), we argue that – due to a greater share of unconditional welfare state supporters in the old left electorate – left and right parties face different long-term risks and chances when they cut back. Importantly, the two factors Lupu focuses on would – applied to the OECD – yield more positive implications for left parties than the losing game our credit taking and compensation argument implies. The tragedy of the Left, as outlined below, is that left promises of economic performance do not lead to compensation, even if they are fulfilled.

Our emphasis on asymmetric punishment and compensation should not be mistaken as a criticism of Lupu. He does not look at reform as key independent variable and the scope conditions are very different. Though parties have deep historical roots in South America, they have developed less stable and long-term brands than parties in advanced democracies. In addition, as Lupu (2017: 840) concedes, his "extreme cases may be unique" because – as a result of "unusual economic straits in the 1980s and 1990s" – parties "engaged in unusually dramatic forms of brand dilution, including some of the era's most unabashed policy switches".

The cabinet balance:

This cabinet balance approach is an obvious choice since our dependent variable only varies at election dates, but it also has other advantages (see Garritzmann and Seng 2016, Schmitt 2016, Horn 2017, for criticisms of the country-year convention and arguments in favor of cabinet balance designs. The cabinet approach has the substantial advantage of reflecting the policy balance of each cabinet. Reforms are very often not implemented within a single year (Pierson 1996, 2003). This renders pooled time series cross-section analyses with one-year lags problematic (as also claimed by Kittel and De Deken 2007). Extreme yet plausible examples set forth by Pierson include decade-

long lags in the case of pension politics. Albeit to a lesser extent, time lags also apply to legislation regarding unemployment insurance generosity. Related problems exist regarding partisanship. The data on partisanship and pledges is not annual data. Thus, the treatment of "annualized" country cases as independent cases despite a lack of real variation can inflate results in terms of statistical reliability. Beyond the fact that our dependent variable requires a balance approach, the cabinet balance seems more consistent with calls for a 'pragmatic intermediate solution' (Kittel and De Deken 2007: 93).

Limitations of entitlement data vis-à-vis the alternatives:

As a final note on our generosity measure, we should say that we acknowledge that the different income and family scenarios used by Scruggs, Jahn, and Kuitto, represent choices. Although we agree that it would be desirable to have data on other groups, we think these choices are plausible and serve the purpose of having comparable data on welfare state entitlements. It is also worth noting that the OECD definition of the Average Production Worker that Scruggs focused on in CWED 1 has been adjusted since the start of the time series. Yet, without such adjustments, the yardsticks against which income replacement is measured would have become less and less representative over time. However, substituting policy output measures with outcomes such as spending ratios is much more problematic. Does this mean that "expenditures are epiphenomenal to the theoretical substance of the welfare state" (Esping-Andersen 1990: 21)? Extant research on the "dependent variable problem" shows that spending measures are susceptible to fluctuations in GDP and demand for benefits, conflate private and public expenses, and lead us to underestimate policy change and partisan effects (Clasen and Siegel 2007, Kittel and De Deken 2007: 86, Horn 2017: 35-43, Bandau and Ahrens 2019). In the UK under Thatcher, for instance, OECD SOCX data (disaggregated spending data) and actual benefits were inversely related (Horn 2017: 36). We are not arguing that spending should not be used (if your interest is in welfare effort or the emphasis on investment, this may be the best you have). Yet, it is neither an indicator for retrenchment, nor what voters care about.

Robustness analysis:

Importantly, our results hold for a number of important alternative explanations for the patterns we find in long-term electoral changes of left and right governments. Here, we only sum up the tests and results presented in the online appendix. In online appendix 1, we control for the costs of continued government participation with a measure that accounts for the percentage share of parties still in government in one or both legislative terms following the election at t1 (i.e., the very rare score of 1 on that indicator means that all parties remained in government after t1 and t2, see table 3 for details). This control not only helps to make sure our results are not a function of different incumbency trajectories. We focus on the effect of policies between t0 and t1 and thus cannot rule out that policy changes from other parties and after t1 affect the vote share changes. It is thus reassuring that controlling for the overlap between cabinets does not change the results. In online appendix 2, we try to rule out that the electoral support at t1 is decisive for the long-term changes (because of floor or ceiling effects). In online appendix 3, we show that we can reproduce our sequence of results using *total generosity* rather than unemployment insurance generosity for the interactions in Models 2-5.

Another valid question is whether it is justified to summarize vote share changes at t2 and t3 as long-term change. We run the models in Table 4 again. First, we regress vote changes at t2 (online

appendix 11) on generosity change, then we regress vote changes at t3 (online appendix 12) on generosity change (both times, instead of using the combined ((t2+t3)/2). Although some results that are slightly weaker, we find the old pattern from Table 4 (significant interaction in M2, insignificant interaction in M3, no compensation in M4, compensation in M5), suggesting that we are capturing stable long-term effects.

Since scholars of the welfare state often distinguish a golden age of welfare state expansion and an era of welfare state retrenchment, the question arises to what extent our findings are period-specific. When it comes to unemployment generosity, retrenchment started – at the latest – in the 1990s (Horn 2017: 45). If we use 1990 as a demarcation and insert a period dummy for retrenchment, the previous results are stable (see Appendix 13). Another strategy is to interact the multiplicative two-way interaction terms in models 2 and 3 with said period dummy, leading to a three-way interaction. As Appendix 14 shows, the resulting triple interaction is not significant, indicating that the asymmetry we find is not conditional on the period.

Finally, we look at the role of political alternatives to test if the results we find depend on whether the cabinet parties face opposition from their own block or from parties that are strongly pro-welfare state. For example, it seems plausible to hypothesize that left government parties that legislate cutbacks face a greater threat from a left opposition at t1 and thereafter, especially when the opposition emphasizes and politicizes the topic of welfare strongly. This means that there are two ways to code "within bloc alternatives": 1) based on the party labels/families, or 2) based on how much parties emphasize the welfare state in party manifestos (as in Horn and Jensen 2017). We reran the models in table 4 controlling for party family of the main opposition party (online appendix 4a) and emphasis on the welfare state of the main opposition party (4b). Online appendix 4a and 4b show that neither strategy has an effect on the asymmetric long-term vote share changes we document.

Could social investment be a way out of the left losing game?

As indicated earlier, the appeal of social investment for the new middle class may mitigate or even offset the asymmetric long-term pattern we find. We fully acknowledge the increasing importance of the politics of social investment and their potential as a vote-winner for the Left (Gingrich and Häusermann 2015, Abou-Chadi and Wagner 2019, Garritzmann et al. 2020) regarding the (new) middle class, though its newness could be debated. In countries that reacted to labor shortages in the 1970s by building a universalist consensus around social investment, social investment is not new. In Scandinavia, universal social investment existed avant la lettre and with few cracks in the consensus, social investment is supported across the left-right spectrum (Horn and van Kersbergen 2020). In countries which are social investment pioneers and were parties all support social investment (ibid), it is difficult to see how expansion of social investment could offset the long-term losing game the left finds is in.

If we turn to countries with more room for social investment expansions and more variation in party preferences (e.g., Germany), there are other reasons to doubt compensation effects. According to the Varieties of Capitalism approach, generous unemployment insurance is vital for human capital formation as an incentive to invest in the acquisition and preservation of the highly specific skills that German firms value. In a more general sense, a certain level of security and income maintenance seems necessary for social investments to yield fruit (for more on the difficult demarcation between capacitation and compensation, see Kuitto 2016). Another more

general concern is that the long time horizon of human capital investments (the temporal discrepancy between immediate budgetary costs and uncertain future human capital gains), in tandem with the challenge to attribute responsibility for investment policies, make it conceivable that policy preferences not always translate into votes (Kitschelt 2018).

Eventually, it is an empirical question whether more social investment – rather than growth – can offset or mitigate the long-term losses from generosity cuts. Thus, the third reason for our caution can be found in online appendix 8, 9, and 10. To control for social investment we had to rely on widely used measures (Kuitto 2016) such as changes in spending/GDP on training or daycare (see appendix 8-10). We find that social investment does not affect the asymmetric pattern we found. Equally important, if we replace economic growth in the triple interactions of M4 and M5 with social investment (appendix 11), left punishment for cutbacks is still not moderated in M4; and the long-term losses of right parties in M5 are no longer compensated.'

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Online Appendix 1-14 (Figures and Tables)

Online appendix 1: Controlling for continuous participation in government of parties after t1 and/or t2

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.308	-0.0257	0.200	0.682	0.399
	(0.884)	(0.992)	(1.128)	(0.829)	(1.607)
Real GDP growth	-0.0253			0.162	-0.0413
	(0.208)			(0.264)	(0.385)
Number of parties	-0.171	-0.610	-0.277	-0.526	-0.283
	(0.615)	(0.628)	(0.623)	(0.622)	(0.623)
Generosity change across programs	0.252	0.153	0.362	0.417	0.663
	(0.528)	(0.501)	(0.570)	(0.522)	(0.567)
Overlap with new governments in %	3.091*	2.193	2.807*	2.460	2.963*
	(1.616)	(1.489)	(1.631)	(1.553)	(1.669)
Left cabinet share		-0.0591***		-0.0426***	
		(0.0117)		(0.0163)	
Generosity change # left cabinet share		0.0221**		0.00873	
		(0.0113)		(0.0127)	
Right cabinet share			0.0237**		0.0201
			(0.0119)		(0.0203)
Generosity change # right cabinet share			0.00348		0.00472
			(0.0109)		(0.0147)
Generosity change # real GDP growth				-0.491	-0.119
				(0.312)	(0.196)
Left cabinet share # real GDP growth				-0.00697	
				(0.00470)	
Generosity change # left cabinet share # real GDP growth				0.00760	
				(0.00739)	
Right cabinet share # real GDP growth					0.000520
					(0.00551)
Generosity change # right cabinet share # real GDP growth					-0.00760**
					(0.00338)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.205466	0.243507	0.217140	0.266488	0.245322

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. All models with country fixed effects.

Online appendix 2: Controlling for governments' vote share at t1

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.377	-0.0960	0.242	0.616	0.494
	(0.850)	(0.991)	(1.073)	(0.816)	(1.513)
Real GDP growth	0.0385			0.196	0.0488
	(0.201)			(0.262)	(0.377)
Number of parties	-0.589	-1.023	-0.748	-0.931	-0.741
	(0.635)	(0.650)	(0.650)	(0.642)	(0.648)
Generosity change across programs	0.124	0.0940	0.302	0.308	0.560
	(0.507)	(0.475)	(0.549)	(0.496)	(0.549)
Governments' vote share received at t1	0.106	0.110	0.117	0.107	0.114
	(0.0747)	(0.0723)	(0.0758)	(0.0715)	(0.0752)
Left cabinet share		-0.0624***		-0.0468***	
		(0.0118)		(0.0160)	
Generosity change # left cabinet share		0.0240**		0.0119	
		(0.0114)		(0.0109)	
Right cabinet share			0.0295**		0.0283
			(0.0115)		(0.0200)
Generosity change # right cabinet share			0.00212		0.00307
			(0.0105)		(0.0138)
Generosity change # real GDP growth				-0.449	-0.116
				(0.316)	(0.186)
Left cabinet share # real GDP growth				-0.00652	
				(0.00459)	
Generosity change # left cabinet share # real GDP growth				0.00675	
				(0.00732)	
Right cabinet share # real GDP growth					-0.000255
					(0.00534)
Generosity change # right cabinet share # real GDP growth					-0.00755**
					(0.00333)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.197544	0.253118	0.223075	0.266451	0.244795

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

Online appendix 3: Replacing unemployment insurance generosity change with total generosity change

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change across all programs	0.300	-0.0464	0.523	1.060	0.974*
	(0.306)	(0.534)	(0.350)	(0.835)	(0.579)
Real GDP growth	0.0329			0.229	0.0577
	(0.198)			(0.251)	(0.355)
Number of parties	-0.418	-0.869	-0.582	-0.782	-0.593
	(0.622)	(0.639)	(0.640)	(0.626)	(0.634)
Left cabinet share		-0.0596***		-0.0413***	
		(0.0111)		(0.0155)	
Generosity change # left cabinet share		0.0114*		-0.00306	
		(0.00615)		(0.0115)	
Right cabinet share			0.0289**		0.0246
			(0.0118)		(0.0189)
Generosity change # right cabinet share			-0.00438		0.0123
			(0.00728)		(0.0129)
Generosity change # real GDP growth				-0.325*	-0.0976
				(0.193)	(0.0808)
Left cabinet share # real GDP growth				-0.00727	
				(0.00461)	
Generosity change # left cabinet share # real GDP growth				0.00509	
				(0.00380)	
Right cabinet share # real GDP growth					0.000581
					(0.00517)
Generosity change # right cabinet share # real GDP growth					-0.00692**
					(0.00307)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.185593	0.234682	0.206896	0.244417	0.229228

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

Online appendix 4a: Controlling for the party family of the main opposition party at the time of t1

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.288	-0.0536	0.247	0.713	0.803
	(0.853)	(1.025)	(1.078)	(0.853)	(1.492)
Party family main opposition	-0.0939***	-0.00406	-0.0925**	-0.00130	-0.0990**
	(0.0319)	(0.0557)	(0.0468)	(0.0587)	(0.0476)
Real GDP growth	0.00512			0.206	-0.000373
	(0.188)			(0.270)	(0.367)
Number of parties	-0.368	-0.577	-0.365	-0.485	-0.367
	(0.701)	(0.679)	(0.705)	(0.671)	(0.710)
Generosity change across programs	0.332	0.123	0.342	0.374	0.660
	(0.515)	(0.480)	(0.541)	(0.503)	(0.543)
Left cabinet share		-0.0576***		-0.0446**	
		(0.0218)		(0.0222)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0230**		0.0129	
		(0.0114)		(0.0121)	
Right cabinet share			0.000882		-0.00378
			(0.0176)		(0.0243)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.00109		-0.00131
			(0.0101)		(0.0134)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.473	-0.190
				(0.320)	(0.182)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00590	
				(0.00467)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00618	
				(0.00740)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					0.000200
					(0.00536)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00741**
					(0.00319)
Observations	195	195	195	195	195
R^2	0.197327	0.218058	0.197196	0.236889	0.226221

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

Online appendix 4b: Controlling for the emphasis the main opposition puts on welfare state issues at t1

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.431	-0.163	0.324	0.589	0.882
	(0.883)	(1.053)	(1.117)	(0.890)	(1.541)
Welfare emphasis of main opposition	0.0629	-0.0542	0.0184	-0.0553	0.0234
	(0.0606)	(0.0705)	(0.0692)	(0.0693)	(0.0686)
Real GDP growth	0.0517			0.200	0.0895
	(0.193)			(0.260)	(0.368)
Number of parties	-0.189	-0.638	-0.290	-0.537	-0.278
	(0.672)	(0.680)	(0.680)	(0.669)	(0.681)
Generosity change across programs	0.148	0.172	0.311	0.426	0.600
	(0.517)	(0.494)	(0.571)	(0.515)	(0.572)
Left cabinet share		-0.0663***		-0.0525***	
		(0.0148)		(0.0172)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0250**		0.0158	
		(0.0118)		(0.0113)	
Right cabinet share			0.0254*		0.0240
			(0.0134)		(0.0212)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.00115		-0.00116
			(0.0106)		(0.0135)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.458	-0.191
				(0.309)	(0.183)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00592	
				(0.00448)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00570	
				(0.00708)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.000449
					(0.00532)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00708**
					(0.00319)
Observations	195	195	195	195	195
R^2	0.180043	0.222884	0.192710	0.240232	0.219019

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

Online appendix 5: Long-term effects of unemployment generosity on GDP growth

	(1) L.GDP growth (= at t2)	(2) L.GDP growth (= at t2)	(3) L.GDP growth (= at t2)	(4) L2.GDP growth (= at t3)	(5) L2.GDP growth (= at t3)	(6) L2.GDP growth (=t3)
Generosity change	0.00599	0.0154	-0.350*	0.0135	0.0193	-0.495**
	(0.0901)	(0.0860)	(0.197)	(0.148)	(0.150)	(0.252)
Real GDP growth at election time t1		-0.147**	-0.145**		-0.0270	-0.0296
		(0.0590)	(0.0589)		(0.0696)	(0.0693)
Number of parties		-0.113	-0.133		-0.134	-0.153
		(0.112)	(0.112)		(0.126)	(0.124)
Generosity change across programs			0.248**			0.351**
			(0.116)			(0.153)
Observations	205	204	202	187	186	185
R^2	0.238947	0.280090	0.289828	0.242378	0.251701	0.275743

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

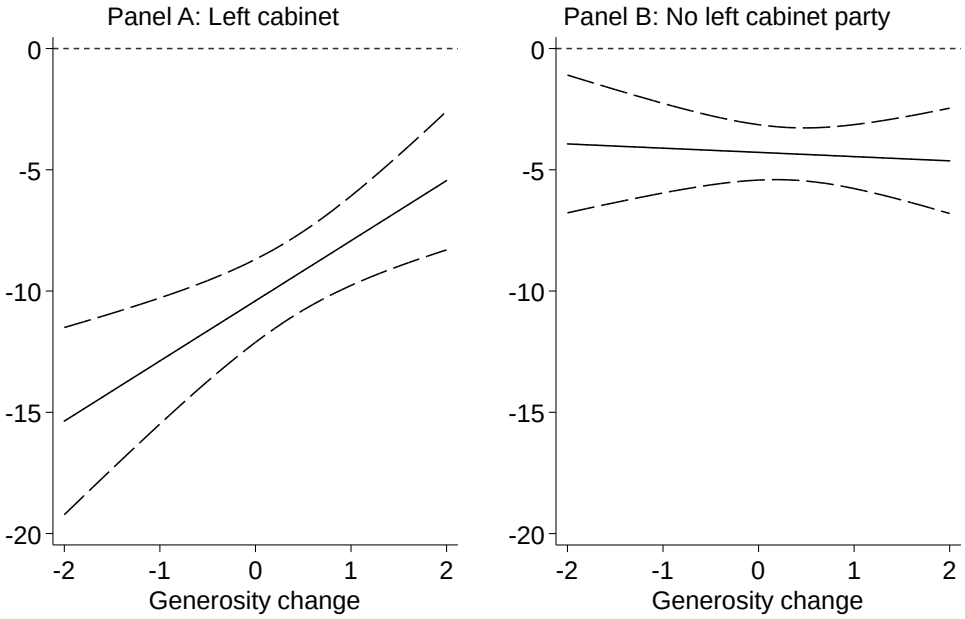
Online appendix 6a: Controlling for generosity changes excl. unemployment insurance generosity

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.534	0.0307	0.630	1.026	1.402
	(0.536)	(0.759)	(0.716)	(0.753)	(1.308)
Real GDP growth	0.0360			0.184	0.0709
	(0.198)			(0.262)	(0.374)
Number of parties	-0.413	-0.809	-0.537	-0.721	-0.526
	(0.623)	(0.633)	(0.632)	(0.625)	(0.631)
Other generosity Changes/without unemployment	0.152	0.0887	0.300	0.333	0.593
	(0.520)	(0.491)	(0.565)	(0.515)	(0.567)
Left cabinet share		-0.0615***		-0.0479***	
		(0.0114)		(0.0157)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0244**		0.0138	
		(0.0114)		(0.0116)	
Right cabinet share			0.0279**		0.0269
			(0.0116)		(0.0196)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.000869		-0.000788
			(0.0107)		(0.0139)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.472	-0.177
				(0.313)	(0.187)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00576	
				(0.00452)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00640	
				(0.00719)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.000385
					(0.00537)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00720**
					(0.00328)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.187330	0.236072	0.206841	0.253312	0.232082

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

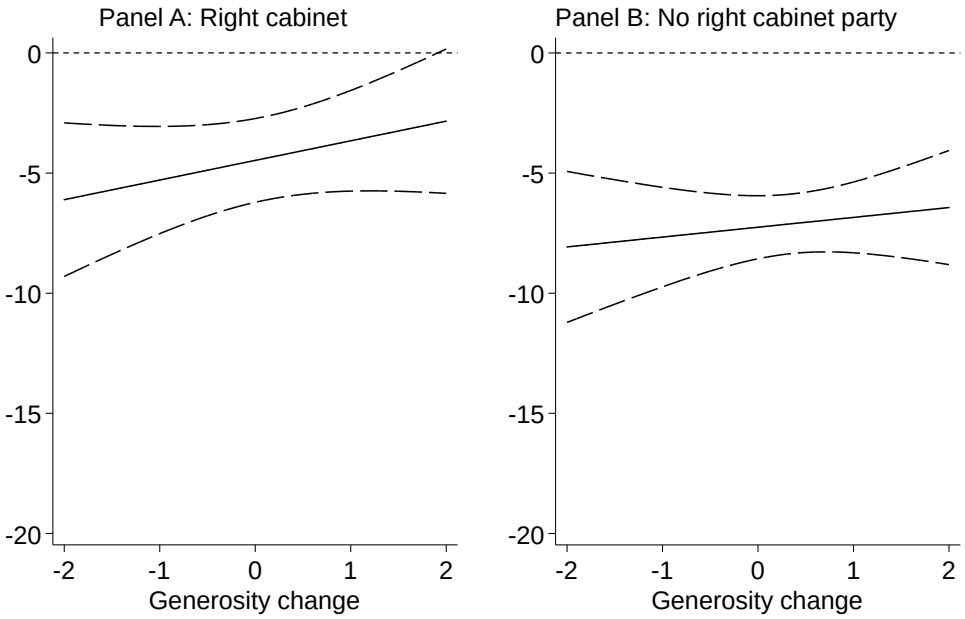
Online appendix 6b: Figures 2-5 with total generosity change excluding unemployment as control

Figure 2. long-term electoral consequences of generosity changes dependent on partisanship



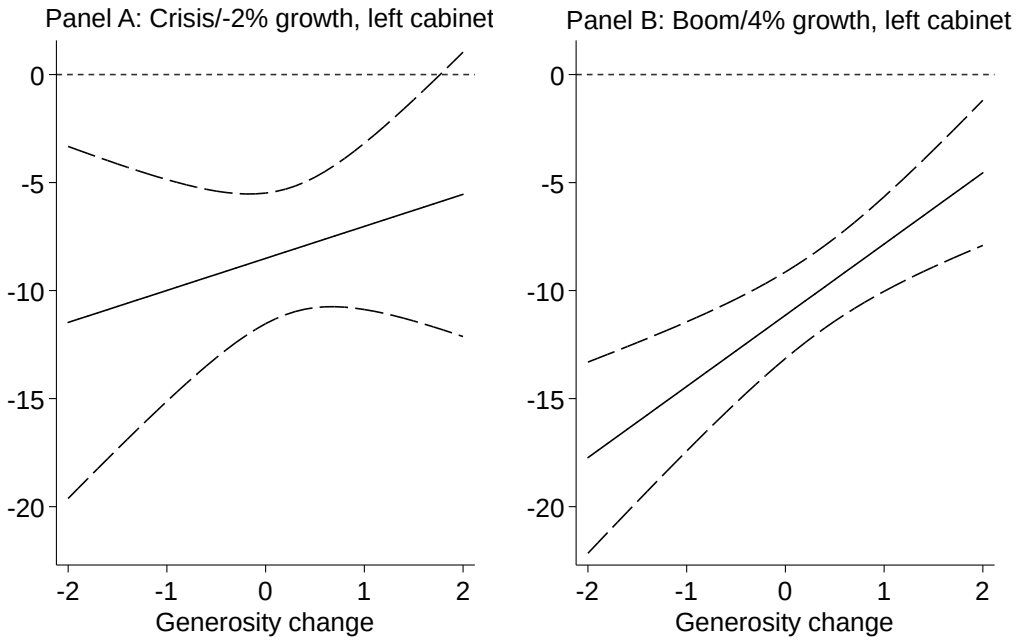
Note: The solid line represents the predicted vote change as a function of the welfare generosity change (based on Model 2 in appendix 6a). Dashed lines represent the 90% confidence interval.

Figure 3. long-term electoral consequences of generosity changes dependent on partisanship



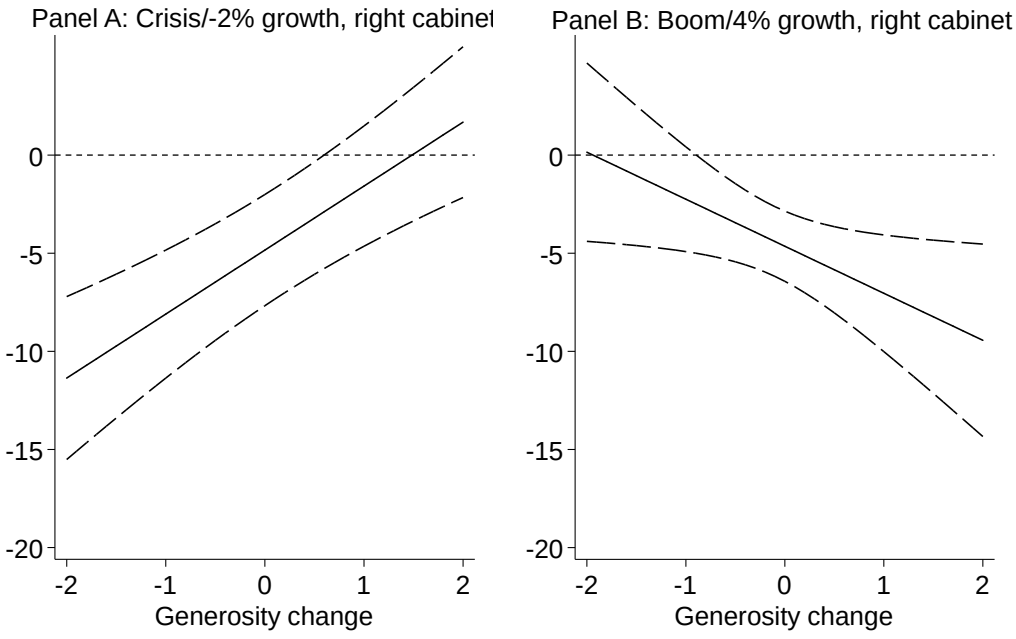
Note: The solid line represents the predicted vote change as a function of the welfare generosity change (based on Model 3 in appendix 6a). Dashed lines represent the 90% confidence interval.

Figure 4. long-term electoral consequences of generosity changes X partisanship X GDP growth



Note: The solid line represents the predicted vote change as a function of the welfare generosity change (based on Model 4 in appendix 6a). Dashed lines represent the 90% confidence interval.

Figure 5. long-term electoral consequences of generosity changes X partisanship X GDP growth



Note: The solid line represents the predicted vote change as a function of the welfare generosity change (based on Model 5 in appendix 6a). Dashed lines represent the 90% confidence interval.

Online appendix 7: Table 4 replicated with cabinet duration (number of years) as control

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.343	-0.106	0.308	0.654	0.880
	(0.870)	(0.985)	(1.108)	(0.830)	(1.547)
Real GDP growth	0.0411			0.200	0.100
	(0.198)			(0.261)	(0.380)
Number of parties	-0.411	-0.797	-0.529	-0.696	-0.506
	(0.625)	(0.634)	(0.633)	(0.624)	(0.630)
Generosity change across programs	0.177	0.0971	0.320	0.358	0.623
	(0.507)	(0.482)	(0.552)	(0.501)	(0.552)
Cabinet duration	-0.187	-0.174	-0.208	-0.292	-0.289
	(0.450)	(0.410)	(0.445)	(0.404)	(0.449)
Left cabinet share		-0.0614***		-0.0471***	
		(0.0115)		(0.0157)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0252**		0.0147	
		(0.0111)		(0.0116)	
Right cabinet share			0.0281**		0.0282
			(0.0115)		(0.0197)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.000720		-0.00204
			(0.0106)		(0.0138)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.495	-0.198
				(0.306)	(0.189)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00596	
				(0.00451)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00666	
				(0.00708)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.000698
					(0.00541)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00711**
					(0.00328)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.189648	0.236294	0.207907	0.254621	0.233653

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

Online appendix 8: Table 4 replicated with change in daycare spending as control

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.381	-0.0659	0.357	0.689	0.877
	(0.882)	(1.021)	(1.112)	(0.851)	(1.524)
Real GDP growth	0.0207			0.182	0.0606
	(0.208)			(0.266)	(0.376)
Change in daycare spending/GDP	-1.629	-0.134	-1.707	-0.221	-1.576
	(4.352)	(4.002)	(4.227)	(4.194)	(4.571)
Number of parties	-0.417	-0.812	-0.535	-0.722	-0.522
	(0.623)	(0.633)	(0.630)	(0.624)	(0.629)
Generosity change across programs	0.164	0.0927	0.300	0.335	0.594
	(0.529)	(0.494)	(0.570)	(0.519)	(0.571)
Left cabinet share		-0.0615***		-0.0478***	
		(0.0113)		(0.0156)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0244**		0.0139	
		(0.0114)		(0.0119)	
Right cabinet share			0.0279**		0.0270
			(0.0116)		(0.0196)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.000533		-0.00171
			(0.0106)		(0.0138)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.471	-0.185
				(0.313)	(0.187)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00576	
				(0.00451)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00635	
				(0.00721)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.000413
					(0.00536)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00698**
					(0.00330)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.187983	0.236975	0.206293	0.253505	0.231671

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.
We had to use the change in public spending (relative to GDP) for daycare and training (set to zero for years preceding 1980).

Online appendix 9: Table 4 replicated with change in spending for training as control

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.311	-0.120	0.280	0.693	0.843
	(0.900)	(1.018)	(1.149)	(0.835)	(1.578)
Real GDP growth	0.0630			0.202	0.123
	(0.204)			(0.264)	(0.380)
Change in training spending/GDP	5.668	5.997	6.679	5.669	6.521
	(4.721)	(4.370)	(4.773)	(4.360)	(4.711)
Number of parties	-0.381	-0.757	-0.508	-0.653	-0.478
	(0.628)	(0.640)	(0.634)	(0.629)	(0.629)
Generosity change across programs	0.198	0.0993	0.346	0.314	0.594
	(0.529)	(0.497)	(0.574)	(0.518)	(0.575)
Left cabinet share		-0.0627***		-0.0492***	
		(0.0114)		(0.0157)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0261**		0.0141	
		(0.0114)		(0.0109)	
Right cabinet share			0.0296**		0.0299
			(0.0116)		(0.0199)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.000604		-0.00182
			(0.0104)		(0.0140)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.486	-0.181
				(0.311)	(0.189)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00547	
				(0.00454)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00687	
				(0.00712)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.000788
					(0.00537)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00685**
					(0.00332)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.202702	0.248794	0.223552	0.260460	0.243028

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects. We had to use the change in public spending (relative to GDP) for daycare and training (set to zero for years preceding 1980).

Online appendix 10: Table 4, Model 4 and 5 with social investment policy change instead of growth

	(M4) Daycare Triple Left	(M5) Daycare Triple Right	(M4) Training Triple Left	(M5) Training Triple Right
Generosity change	-0.416	0.0929	-0.280	0.344
	(1.014)	(1.109)	(1.056)	(1.208)
Left cabinet share	-0.0652***		-0.0627***	
	(0.0122)		(0.0114)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share	0.0244**		0.0285**	
	(0.0114)		(0.0117)	
Change in daycare	-3.272	-1.591		
	(7.105)	(5.831)		
Generosity change Change in daycare	15.24*	5.580		
	(8.632)	(6.434)		
Left cabinet share # Change in daycare	0.0509			
	(0.0839)			
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Change in daycare	-0.133			
	(0.118)			
Number of parties	-0.881	-0.599	-0.724	-0.491
	(0.648)	(0.626)	(0.643)	(0.629)
Generosity change across programs	0.230	0.402	0.136	0.394
	(0.489)	(0.570)	(0.503)	(0.572)
Right cabinet share		0.0329**		0.0307***
		(0.0129)		(0.0118)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share		-0.00243		-0.00264
		(0.0108)		(0.0112)
Right cabinet share # Change in daycare		-0.0542		
		(0.102)		
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Change in daycare		0.0986		
		(0.121)		
Change in training			7.674	4.009
			(5.950)	(6.884)
Generosity change # Change in training			6.097	4.764
			(5.954)	(8.973)

Left cabinet share			-0.0258	
# Change in training			(0.0614)	
Generosity change			-0.0352	
# Left cabinet share			(0.134)	
# Change in training				
Right cabinet share				0.0918
# Change in training				(0.107)
Generosity change				-0.0181
# Right cabinet share				(0.118)
# Change in training				
Observations	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.253468	0.218051	0.251934	0.228855

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects. We had to use the change in public spending (relative to GDP) for daycare and training (set to zero for years preceding 1980).

Online appendix 11: Table 4, but with vote share change at t2 as dependent variable

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.566	0.0779	0.509	1.025	1.436
	(0.934)	(1.113)	(1.173)	(0.912)	(1.582)
Real GDP growth	-0.162			-0.0234	-0.112
	(0.195)			(0.262)	(0.386)
Number of parties	-0.260	-0.642	-0.359	-0.493	-0.309
	(0.641)	(0.664)	(0.649)	(0.666)	(0.663)
Generosity change across programs	-0.0969	-0.178	0.0118	0.0486	0.294
	(0.530)	(0.513)	(0.570)	(0.528)	(0.580)
Left cabinet share		-0.0554***		-0.0432**	
		(0.0120)		(0.0169)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0248*		0.0124	
		(0.0134)		(0.0136)	
Right cabinet share			0.0265**		0.0246
			(0.0117)		(0.0192)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.00267		-0.00529
			(0.0118)		(0.0153)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.583*	-0.244
				(0.331)	(0.200)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00506	
				(0.00503)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00801	
				(0.00756)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.0000199
					(0.00552)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00609*
					(0.00367)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.164288	0.212746	0.177482	0.226375	0.198993

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

Online appendix 12: Table 4, but with vote share change at t3 as dependent variable

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	-0.112	-0.631	-0.375	0.0516	-0.222
	(1.033)	(1.140)	(1.368)	(1.049)	(1.953)
Real GDP growth	0.229			0.383	0.276
	(0.251)			(0.321)	(0.437)
Number of parties	-0.689	-1.194	-0.861	-1.117	-0.849
	(0.728)	(0.754)	(0.740)	(0.740)	(0.730)
Generosity change across programs	0.583	0.579	0.802	0.802	1.051
	(0.629)	(0.617)	(0.681)	(0.633)	(0.670)
Left cabinet share		-0.0698***		-0.0535***	
		(0.0139)		(0.0181)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0262*		0.0139	
		(0.0140)		(0.0180)	
Right cabinet share			0.0290**		0.0310
			(0.0146)		(0.0242)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.00317		0.00658
			(0.0140)		(0.0183)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.455	-0.118
				(0.374)	(0.261)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00656	
				(0.00538)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00656	
				(0.00873)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00144
					(0.00638)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00872*
					(0.00454)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.195972	0.245256	0.217675	0.264874	0.238701

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

Online *appendix* 13: Table 4 with Retrenchment period (1990 and after) dummy variable as *control*

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.315	0.00338	0.351	0.689	0.764
	(0.872)	(1.007)	(1.111)	(0.830)	(1.473)
Real GDP growth	0.0444			0.160	0.0978
	(0.199)			(0.262)	(0.375)
Number of parties	-0.294	-0.689	-0.397	-0.622	-0.380
	(0.594)	(0.603)	(0.599)	(0.599)	(0.599)
Generosity change across programs	0.0992	0.0266	0.207	0.242	0.440
	(0.516)	(0.489)	(0.563)	(0.523)	(0.565)
Retrenchment (post-1990) = 1	-2.174*	-1.692	-2.080*	-1.365	-1.947
	(1.239)	(1.292)	(1.245)	(1.280)	(1.200)
Left cabinet share		-0.0599***		-0.0488***	
		(0.0116)		(0.0157)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0228**		0.0139	
		(0.0112)		(0.0111)	
Right cabinet share			0.0265**		0.0273
			(0.0114)		(0.0194)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			0.000142		-0.000648
			(0.0104)		(0.0131)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.417	-0.139
				(0.314)	(0.177)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00477	
				(0.00450)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00554	
				(0.00714)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.000962
					(0.00534)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00706**
					(0.00308)
Observations	196	196	196	196	196
R^2	0.209160	0.240651	0.221414	0.251852	0.238675

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.

Online appendix 14: Table 4 without total generosity change/change across programs as control

	(1) General	(2) Left	(3) Right	(4) Triple Left	(5) Triple Right
Generosity change	0.401	-0.321	0.620	0.676	1.369
	(0.481)	(0.792)	(0.612)	(0.603)	(1.117)
Real GDP growth	0.00000825			0.175	0.0671
	(0.187)			(0.258)	(0.350)
Number of parties	-0.337	-0.764	-0.451	-0.685	-0.422
	(0.608)	(0.622)	(0.615)	(0.614)	(0.610)
Left cabinet share		-0.0604***		-0.0468***	
		(0.0113)		(0.0157)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share		0.0271**		0.0146	
		(0.0131)		(0.0102)	
Right cabinet share			0.0266**		0.0239
			(0.0115)		(0.0188)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share			-0.00330		-0.00364
			(0.00925)		(0.0123)
Generosity change # Real GDP growth				-0.493*	-0.111
				(0.294)	(0.170)
Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				-0.00558	
				(0.00443)	
Generosity change # Left cabinet share # Real GDP growth				0.00787	
				(0.00720)	
Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					0.000341
					(0.00532)
Generosity change # Right cabinet share # Real GDP growth					-0.00614**
					(0.00310)
Observations	201	201	201	201	201
R^2	0.165926	0.224984	0.182533	0.243114	0.200673

Prais-Winsten regressions, PCSE in parentheses. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01. All models with country fixed effects.