Regional Election Dataset (RED)
Codebook

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The datasets entail variables that have been collected by other researchers or institutions. All those are referenced. We would like to remind you that appropriate citation refers to the real creators of those data even if they have been used based on our dataset!

Access: via the BJPS Harvard Dataverse (link https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/mld/)

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Feedback: We are very grateful for any constructive comments or suggestions for improvement. Please provide feedback via the **GitHub repository.** (link https://github.com/leonce-collab/Multi-level-Data)

Explore: Visit our dashboard to explore the data within interactive maps: **http://multi-level-cross-level-politics.eu/**.

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1. Conceptual information

Definition of a region: The definition of a region is closely related to the definition within the dataset of the Regional Authority Index (Hooghe et al. 2016). A region is defined as a jurisdiction between the country government and local government. We do not apply the population criterion used by Hooghe et al. (2016), but define a region as the second jurisdictional tier below the country level (compare the coverage table in the Appendix as well as the codebooks).

Definition of a party: We use the definition of a political party as indicated by our sources. However, we put in a great deal of effort to identify and synchronize the partisan names and IDs across sources and levels. The IDs always favour continuity over change. For example, a party might change its name, but otherwise remain the same in terms of organization and personnel; here we change the name but retain the old ID. This solution has the advantage that more fine-grained distinctions can easily be made ex-post, whereas the harmonization of IDs in case of different party names would be more demanding.

Temporal specification: We provide two distinct temporal configurations of the dataset. In its standard configuration, the dataset is based on electoral periods. A second specification provides yearly data.

Unit of analysis in the RED: The RD|CED contains **party-level data**, including election results for regional elections, regional cabinet composition, ideological positions of parties and regional cabinets, regional electoral and party systems, and several ID based links to other datasets.

2. Coverage

Table 1: Coverage of RED

Country	ID	Regions	Number of observations as yearly party regional cabinet dyad (panel)	Electoral period
Australia	2	Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory	2,512	1941-2012
Austria	1	Burgenland, Kärnten, Niederösterreich, Oberösterreich, Salzburg, Steiermark, Tirol, Vorarlberg, Wien	3,148	1945-2018
Belgium	3	Vlaanderen, Wallonie, Bruxelles-Capitale	489	1995-2014
Canada	4	Prince Edward Islands, Saskatchewan, Quebec, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Alberta, New Foundland and Labrador, Yukon	2,840	1943-2015
Denmark	5	FaroeIslands, Frederiksberg Municipality, Nordjyllands, Arhus, Bornholms, Fyns, Ribe, Ringkobing, Roskilde, Sonderjyllands, Storstroms, Vejle, Vestjaellands, Viborg, Kobenhavn Municipality, Kobenhavns, Frederiksborg, Gronland, Hovedstaden, Sjælland, Syddanmark, Midtjylland, Nordjylland	5,918	1966-2009
France	17	Alsace, Aquitaine, Auvergne, Basse-Normandie, Bourgogne, Bretagne, Centre, Champagne-Ardenne, Franche-Comté, Haute-Normandie, Île-de-France, Languedoc-Roussillon, Limousin, Lorraine, Midi-Pyrénées, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Pays de la Loire, Picardie, Poitou-Charentes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Rhône-Alpes, Corse, Alsace-Champagne-Ardenne-Lorraine, Aquitaine-Limousin-Poitou-Charentes, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Normandie, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, Centre-Val de Loire, Languedoc-Roussillon-Midi-Pyrénées, Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie	4,021	1986-2015
Germany	8	Bremen, Brandenburg, Hamburg, Hessen, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland, Sachsen, Thuringen, Baden-Wurttemberg, Berlin, Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Schleswig-Holstein, Bayern, Sachsen-Anhalt	4,462	1946-2017
Italy	10	Sicilia, AltoAdige, Trentino, Sardeg., Valled√¢‚Ç¨‚Ñ¢Aosta, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardi, Marche, Molise, Piemonte, Puglia, Tosca., Umbria, Veneto	12,116	1947-2019
Norway	13	Ostfold, Akershus, Oslo, Hedmark, Oppland, Buskerud, Vestfold, Telemark, Aust-Agder, Vest-Agder, Rogaland, Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane, Møre og Romsdal, Sør-Trøndelag, Nord-Trøndelag, Nordland, Troms, Finnmark	8,555	1975-2015
Spain	14	Navarra, Pais Vasco, Cataluna, Galicia, Andalucia, Aragon, Asturias, Baleares, Canarias, Cantabria, Castilla y Leon, Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura, Madrid, Murcia, Valencia, La Rioja, Ceuta, Melilla	3,621	1979-2019
Sweden	15	Älvsborg, Blekinge, Gotlands, Gävleborg, Göteborgs, Halland, Jämtland, Jönköping, Kalmar, Kristianstad, Kronoberg, Malmöhus, Norrbotten, Örebro, Östergötland, Skaraborg, Stockholm, Södermanland, Uppsala, Värmland, Västerbotten, Västernorrland, Västmanland, Dalarna, Malmö, Bohus, Skåne, Västra	13,102	1942-2014
Switzerland	16	BaselStadt, St.Gallen, Uri, Thurgau, Schwyz, Schaffausen, Wallis-Valais, Aargau, Neuchâtel, Solothurn, Graubünden-Grigioni, Genève, Freiburg-Fribourg, Vaud, Nidwalden, Bern, Obwalden, Glarus, Jura, Zug, BaselLand, Ticino, Zürich, Luzern, AppenzellA.Rh., AppenzellInner-Rhoden	5,505	1980-2010
United Kingdom	18	Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, London	829	1945-2012
13 countries		**217 regions**	**67,118**	**1941-2019**

3. Variables

Table 2: Description of variables of RED

Temporal, Geographic and Party Identification			
Variable	**Name**	**Description**	**Data format**
year	Year of observation	Calendar year of the observation	YYYY
country	Country name	Name of the country in English	string
country_id	Country ID	Unique identification of country within the project	two-digit code
region_red	Region name	Name of the region (different languages; accent formats).	string
region_id	Region ID	Unique identification number of the region composed by the 'country_id' at the beginning and a two-digit code for each region	country_id + two-digit code
region_rd_sed	Region name in RD|CED	Name of the region (different languages; accent formats) as in RD|CED, which can differ depending on the regional unit level of electoral data (aggregations possible)	string
region_id_unique	Region ID in RD|CED and unique	Unique identification number of the region composed by the 'country_id' at the beginning and a two-digit code for each region, unique and mergeable with aggregations to the RD|CED data	country_id + two-digit code
reg_elec_year	Regional electoral year	Year of the regional election. A 'b' is added at the end if this was the second election in the region that year	YYYY (+b)
reg_elec_date	Regional electoral date	Date of regional election [Date format in R data; Excel format can generate problems]	YYYY-MM-DD
reg_gov_start	Regional government start date	Start date of the regional cabinet government [many missing dates]	YYYY-MM-DD
reg_gov_st_year	Regional government start year	Calendar year of regional cabinet government start.	YYYY
reg_cab_nr	Cabinet government number	Count number of the regional cabinet government, within the coverage of the dataset	number
reg_elec_number	Regional election number	Count number of the regional election within region, within the coverage of the dataset	number
state_wide_election	Country-level election date connector	Calendar date of the last country election of reference for each year in the panel	YYYY-MM-DD
p_abbrev	Party abbreviation raw	Abbreviation of the party, which can differ across time for the same party. Abbreviation are not official abbreviations.	string
p_name	Party name raw	Raw party name without whitespaces [The standard language is English; exceptions can include original language.]	string
party_id	Party ID	Identification number of the party. Composed by the variables 'country_id', 'parfam' (see below), and the count number of parties within country. Unique for each party across time. Use this party variable for merges with RD|CED data.	country_id + parfam + two-digit code
parfam_all	Party family	Family of the party inspired by the Manifesto Project labels and coded by the project team with qualitative information. In some cases, we divert from the Manifesto Project assignment (see Country notes). 10 (ECO, ecological) 20 (COM, communist) 30 (SOC, social democratic) 40 (LIB, liberal) 50 (CHR, Christian democratic) 60 (CON, conservative) 70 (NAT, nationalist) 80 (AGR, agrarian) 90 (ETH, ethnic and regional) 95 (SIP, special issue) 98/00 (DIV, electoral alliances of diverse origin, no dominant party) 99 Independent candidate list (category added by authors). Imputations from the RD|CED dataset for missing values of available parties.	two-digit code
year_of_national_match	Year of manifestos	Calendar year of match with country election manifesto from the Manifesto Project project (Lehmann et al. 2023)	YYYY
party_id_ches	CHES ID	Merged party id of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES; Jolly et al 2022)	number
party_id_cmp	Manifesto Project Party ID	Party ID assigned by Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al. 2023).	five-digit code
cmp_year_CED	Manifesto Project year in RD|CED	Calendar year of the Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al. 2023) extracted from the year-observation connected at the party_id level from the RD|CED dataset. RD|CED data uses Manifesto Project information based on last country election, while the RED data takes the nearest year of manifesto data.	YYYY

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Regional Election Results and Regional Cabinet Information

Variable	Name	Description	Data format
reg_p_votes	Regional party votes	Votes gained by the party in the regional election	number
reg_p_vshare	Regional party vote share	Party vote share (per cent) won in the regional election	percentage
reg_p_seats	Regional party seats	Number of seats won by the party in the respective regional election for the regional assembly	number
seats_assembly	Seats in assembly	Number of total seats available in the respective regional assembly	number
seat_share	Regional seat share	Party seat share (per cent) won in the respective regional election for the regional assembly	percentage
reg_turnout	Regional election turnout	Percentage of casted votes in reference to maximal number of potential votes in the respective regional election (0-100) [many missing data points]	percentage
alliance	Pre-Electoral Alliance	Dummy indicating whether the party belongs to a pre-electoral alliance; not available for Denmark, Germany, Italy, Norway and Spain	dummy
strongest_cab_p	Strongest cabinet party	Dummy indicating whether the party is the numerically speaking in terms of assembly seats the strongest one within the regional cabinet government (1) or not (0)	dummy
main_canton_exe_party	Main canton executive party in Switzerland	Swiss-specific dummy indicating whether the party is the main cabinet government party in the respective Swiss canton (1), which can differ from the strongest cabinet party in the cantonal executive context, or not (0)	dummy
cab_p	Cabinet party	Party participates in the regional cabinet government	dummy
cab_idp	Cabinet lead by independent	Regional cabinet executive is led by an independent politician without party affiliation (1) or not (0)	dummy
party_CED	Party name from RD|CED	Party name without whitespaces and first letter of each word is capitalized merged from the RD|CED dataset merged with party_id	capitalized string
p_abbrev_CED	Party abbreviation from the RD|CED	Capitalized abbreviation of the party from the RD|CED data, which can differ across time for same party, merged with party_id. Abbreviation are not official abbreviations.	capitalized string
cab_name_reg	Regional cabinet name	Surname of head of cabinet (first letter capitalized). If two or more head of cabinets in the data set have the same surname, the first letter (capitalized) of the cabinet leaders' first name is indicated in addition. If this does not suffice to discriminate among the cabinet leaders, the full first name (first letter capitalized) is indicated. Moreover, roman letters indicate the tenure for every cabinet leader with more than one tenure. We code the dominant regional cabinet in terms of most days in government in the calendar years, for coding resource reasons.	string (+ first letter of first name or full first name) (+ roman digit)
reg_cabinet_change	Cabinet change	Dummy indicating whether the regional cabinet did not govern the whole year observation but is only the one dominant cabinet with majority of year governance period (most days)	dummy
cabinet_parties_ideo_seatshare	Cabinet party seat share, ideology available	Seat share of the party if there is ideological information available AND if the party participates in the regional cabinet	percentage
cab_seat_share	Seat share of the regional cabinet	Aggregated seat shares of the regional cabinet at the region-year level	percentage
cab_p_weight	Cabinet party weight	Relative weight of each regional cabinet party within the regional cabinet: cabinet_parties.ideo_seatshare/cab_seat.share	percentage
cab_p_rilestand_wg	Cabinet party RILE standardized weighted by seat share	RILE standardized position weight according to regional cabinet's party force within cabinet: cab_p_weight x rilestand_imp	number
cab_p_market_wg	Cabinet party market liberalism position weighted by seat share	Market liberalism position weight according to regional cabinet's party force within cabinet: cab_p_weight x market_state_imp	number
cab_p_cultural_wg	Cabinet party cultural dimension position weighted by seat share	Cultural dimension position weight according to regional cabinet's party force within cabinet: cab_p_weight x cultural.dim_imp	0-1
reg_gov_rilestand_estimate	Regional government - Left-Right position	Regional government's left-right position based on rilestand_imp and weighted by cabinet parties seat share within cabinet	0-1
reg_gov_market_estimate	Regional government - Market-Liberalism position	Regional government's market-liberalism position based on market_state_imp and weighted by cabinet parties seat share within cabinet	0-1
reg_gov_cultural_estimate	Regional government - Cultural dimension position	Regional government's cultural dimension position based on cultural.dim_imp and weighted by cabinet parties seat share within cabinet	0-1

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Party Families and Positions

Variable	Name	Description	Data format
RED_parfam	Party family without imputation, RED	Party family (see above) without imputations from the RD|CED dataset	two-digit code
reg_party	Regionalist party	Dummy indicating whether the party demands more regional authority (1) or not (0).	dummy
only_regional	Party only at regional elections	Dummy indicating whether the party is present in the panel data at the year level only in the RED dataset and not in the RD|CED. This can have two reasons: we were not able to collect electoral party results for that respective party at the country elections due an artifact of the electoral data available OR the party did not contest at country elections.	dummy
cmp_year_orig	Manifesto Project year original	Calendar year in the original Manifesto Project data (Lehmann et al. 2023) that was merged with the party observation; nearest country election in the past or future	YYYY
year_b	Manifesto Project year B	Calendar year in the original Manifesto Project data with a 'b' at the end for the second country election within one year (Lehmann et al. 2023) that was merged with the party observation	YYYY (+b)
rile	RILE	Left right party position values assigned by the Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al. 2023)	number
ml_ir	Market liberalism position	Market liberalism party position values based on item-response models on manifesto data by Röth (2017); standardized from state interventionist (0) to market liberal (1)	0-1
rilestand	RILE standardized	Left right party position values assigned by the Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al. 2023); standardized from left (0) to right (1). RILE according to Laver and Budge (1992)	0-1
cultural_position	Cultural position	Cultural dimension party position values based on item-response models on manifesto data by Röth (2017); standardized from cultural traditionalist (0) to cultural liberal (1)	0-1
econ_ches	Economic position CHES	Economic position as measured by CHES (Jolly et al. 2022). Match by nearest past year.	
left_right_ches	Left-right position CHES	General Left-Right position as measured by CHES (Jolly et al. 2022). Match by nearest past year.	
cultural_ches	Cultural position CHES	Cultural (GALTAN) position as measured by CHES (Jolly et al. 2022). Match by nearest past year.	
party_cmp	Manifesto Project party name	Party name assigned by the Manifesto Project project for the parties available (Lehmann et al. 2023)	string
p_abbrev_cmp	Manifesto Project party abbreviation	Party abbreviation assigned by the Manifesto Project project for the parties available (Lehmann et al. 2023)	capitalized string
decade	Decade of observation	Calendar decade of the observation	YYYY-decade
rile_parfam_decade	RILE mean by party family - decade	Mean RILE position of all parties in the ideological dataset by Röth (2017) by party family and decade	number range
ml_ir_parfam_decade	Market liberalism by party family - decade	Mean market liberalism position of all parties in the ideological dataset by Röth (2017) by party family and decade	0-1
rilestand_parfam_decade	RILE standardized mean by party family - decade	Mean RILE standardized position of all parties in the ideological dataset by Röth (2017) by party family and decade	
cultural_parfam_decade	Cultural position mean by party family - decade	Mean cultural dimension position of all parties in the ideological dataset by Röth (2017) by party family and decade	0-1
rilestand_imp	RILE standardized with imputations	Left right party position values assigned by the Manifesto Project (Lehmann et al. 2023) with imputed RILE standardized means by party family/decade for missing values; standardized from left (0) to right (1)	0-1
market_state_imp	Market liberalism position with imputations	Market liberalism party position values based on item-response models on manifesto data by Röth (2017) with imputed market liberalism means by party family/decade for missing values; standardized from state interventionist (0) to market liberal (1)	0-1
cultural_dim_imp	Cultural dimension position with imputations	Cultural dimension party position values based on item-response models on manifesto data by Röth (2017) with imputed cultural dimension means by party family/decade for missing values; standardized from cultural traditionalist (0) to cultural liberal (1)	0-1

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Regional Party System Information

Variable	Name	Description	Data format
reg_electoral_system	Regional electoral system	Dummy indicating whether the electoral system is proportional (1) or not (0)	dummy
cumpolsory_voting	Compulsory voting	Dummy indicating whether the act of voting is compulsory by law (1) or not (0)	dummy
rai20regionid	RAI region ID - 2020	Region identifier according to the Regional Authority Index v3 (Shair-Rosenfield et al. 2020; Hooghe et al. 2016)	number
rai20region_name	RAI region name - 2020	Region name according to the Regional Authority Index v3 (Shair-Rosenfield et al. 2020; Hooghe et al. 2016)	string
cog_rile_vote	Center of Gravity - Left-Right (vote)	Ideological position of the mean voter measured as the weighted left-right party position, weights based on regional vote shares	0-1
cog_rile_seat	Center of Gravity - Left-Right (seat)	Ideological position of the mean voter measured as the weighted left-right party position, weights based on regional seat shares	0-1
cog_market_vote	Center of Gravity - Market liberalism (vote)	Ideological position of the mean voter measured as the weighted mean market-liberalism party position, weights based on regional vote shares	0-1
cog_market_seat	Center of Gravity - Market liberalism (seat)	Ideological position of the mean voter measured as the weighted mean market-liberalism party position, weights based on regional seat shares	0-1
cog_cultural_vote	Center of Gravity - Cultural dimension (vote)	Ideological position of the mean voter measured as the weighted cultural party position, weights based on regional vote shares	0-1
cog_cultural_seat	Center of Gravity - Cultural dimension (seat)	Ideological position of the mean voter measured as the weighted mean cultural party position, weights based on regional seat shares	0-1
vote_force_ideo_available	Vote share with ideology available	Vote share of the party, with NA for parties without ideological information, e.g., electoral alliances	percentage
seat_force_ideo_available	Seat share with ideology available	Seat share of the party, with NA for parties without ideological information, e.g., electoral alliances	percentage
covered_vote_ideo	Vote share coverage with ideology available	Vote share coverage including only parties with ideological information	percentage
covered_seat_ideo	Seat share coverage with ideology available	Seat share coverage including only parties with ideological information	percentage
vote_relative_cog	Vote share adapted (ideology)	Vote share adapted simulating full coverage with available electoral results and party ideology at the regional election level: vote_force.ideo_available/covered_vote.ideo	percentage
seat_relative_cog	Seat share adapted (ideology)	Seat share adapted simulating full coverage with available seat distribution and party ideology at the regional election level: seat_force.ideo_available/covered_seat.ideo	percentage
reg_enp_vote	Effective number of parties – vote based	Calculated on for every regional election with the formulae of Golosov (2010). Golosov provided a kind of inverse Herfindahl-Hirschman Index as a measure for concentration that approximates 1 for a single dominant party to higher number in highly fragmented systems. Vote shares are used as a basis for this measure.	1.76 – 13.83
reg_enp_seat	Effective number of parties regional – seat based	Calculated on for every regional election with the formulae of Golosov (2010). Golosov provided a kind of inverse Herfindahl-Hirschman Index as a measure for concentration that approximates 1 for a single dominant party to higher number in highly fragmented systems. Seat shares are used as a basis for this measure.	1.00 – 12.60

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Country Level Data on the Regional Level

Variable	Name	Description	Data format
regional_party_CEDinfo	Regionalist party as by RD|CED	Dummy indicating whether the party is regionalist (1) or not (0) - see above; merged from the RD|CED by party_id for control	dummy
vote_share_reg_nationalelec	Party regional vote share - country election	Party vote share in the respective region in the last country election. Information merged by party_id with the RD|CED panel data	percentage
seat_share_reg_nationalelec	Party regional seat share - country election	Party seat share in the respective region in the last country election. Information merged by party_id with the RD|CED panel data	percentage
parl_year_statewide	Parliamentary election year - country	Calendar year of parliamentary election of the corresponding observation of the country government data (RD|CED dataset)	YYYY
parl_date_statewide	Parliamentary election date - country	Date of parliamentary election of the corresponding observation of the country government data (RD|CED dataset)	YYYY-MM-DD
cab_name_statewide	Country cabinet name	Country cabinet name of the corresponding observation of the country government data (RD|CED dataset)	string
cab_nr_statewide	Country cabinet number	Country cabinet number of the corresponding observation of the country government data according to available data in the RD|CED dataset	number
cab_startdate_statewide	Country cabinet start date	Country cabinet's first day in office of the corresponding observation of the country government data (RD|CED dataset)	YYYY-MM-DD
cab_rile_statewide	Country cabinet - Left-Right position	Country cabinet's left-right position of the corresponding observation of the country government data (RD|CED dataset)	0-1
cab_market_state_statewide	Country cabinet - Market-Liberalism position	Country cabinet's market-liberalism position of the corresponding observation of the country government data (RD|CED dataset)	0-1
cab_cult_statewide	Country cabinet - Cultural dimension position	Country cabinet's cultural dimension position of the corresponding observation of the country government data (RD|CED dataset)	0-1

Cross-level Ideology Data

Variable	Name	Description	Data format
multi_level_rilestand_proximity	Multi-level - Left-Right proximity	Ideological left-right proximity (RILE standardized) between country cabinet and region in terms of regional electoral arena (RED COGs)	0-1
multi_level_market_proximity	Multi-level - Market-Liberalism proximity	Ideological market-liberalism proximity between country cabinet and region in terms of regional electoral arena (RED COGs)	0-1
multi_level_cultural_proximity	Multi-level - Cultural dimension proximity	Ideological cultural dimension proximity between country cabinet and region in terms of regional electoral arena (RED COGs)	0-1
multilevel_governments_rilestand_proximity	Multi-level - Governments Left-Right proximity	Ideological left-right proximity between country cabinet and regional cabinet	0-1
multilevel_governments_market_proximity	Multi-level - Market-Liberalism proximity	Ideological market-liberalism proximity between country cabinet and regional cabinet	0-1
multilevel_governments_cultural_proximity	Multi-level - Governments' Cultural dimension proximity	Ideological cultural dimension proximity between country cabinet and regional cabinet	0-1

4. Party positions

In this dataset, we provide party positions based on expert surveys (Jolly et al. 2022) and manifesto-based data at the country and regional level (Lehmann et al. 2023; Alonso et al. 2013). There is a long tradition of literature debating what party positions are, how to measure them and how to scale them. We do not take a position on this debate here, but the overriding principle is to give users as much choice as possible. Therefore, we provide party IDs from different datasets so that users can merge and create the largest possible number of potential party positions based on existing datasets. Nevertheless, we provide some default party positions derived from the country level, the choice of which is explained below (part 4a). We also provide positions at the regional level, some of which have been imputed from the country level. This provision is discussed and validated in parts 4.b and 4.c.

a. Party positions of the country-level

This data set provides standard party positions derived from the country level. It includes three conventional dimensions from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey, as well as those based on manifesto data, namely an overall left-right, an economic, and a cultural dimension. Expert positions are generally considered valid but limited in scope (1999-2019; Jolly et al. 2022). On the other hand, manifesto-based positions are broader in scope, although their exact positions are contested due to the infinite scaling possibilities using fine-grained issue salience measures (Lehmann et al. 2023). The discussion on scaling involves Franzmann and Kaiser (2006), Lowe et al. (2011), and Röth (2017). Based on the manifestos, we present the RILE (overall left-right positions) and Markeco (economic dimension). It should be noted that the Manifesto Project dataset does not include a 'cultural' dimension. Furthermore, we offer a left-right, economic, and cultural dimension, also derived from the Manifesto Project data, but scaled using item response models as recommended by Röth (2017). These positions demonstrate higher convergent validity with expert placements and greater comparability in terms of their properties (Röth et al. 2018; Röth 2017; Garritzmann et al. 2021). Table 3 below illustrates the convergent validity of the various indicators.

Table 3: Convergence of provided positions

Dimension	**Left-Right**	**Economic**	**Culture**
Benchmark (Jolly et al. 2022)	Overall ideological stance (left and right) **(lrgen)**	Ideological stance on economic issues **(lrecon)**	Ideological stance on social and cultural values **(galtan)**
Build in Manifesto Project Measures (Lehmann et al. 2023)	**0.61** (RILE)	**0.48** (markeco)	-
Issues			
Item response model (following Röth 2017)	**0.73** (market liberalism + cultural homogeneity)	**0.75** (market liberalism versus state interventionism)	**0.70** (cultural diversity versus cultural homogeneity)
Issues			
n	886	886	891

Note: Correlations are based on nearest neighbour matching. Thus, CHES positions are merged to Manifesto Project-based positions from 1999-2021. Exact matching results are very similar (not shown). Highlighted are pairwise correlation coefficients. Descriptions of the benchmarks are taken from the CHES codebook (Jolly et al. 2022).

b. Party positions of the regional level

Regrettably, regional party positions receive significantly less coverage than country positions. There is no equivalent expert survey of regional party positions across countries. The only comparable dataset with position data is the Regional Manifesto Project (Alonso et al. 2013). Regional manifestos require more coding resources than country-level data, as manifestos are inflated by the number of regions in a country. The coverage is still below the country level and includes several elections in Spain, Italy, and the UK (Alonso et al. 2013).

To expand the coverage of regional-level party positions, we imputed country-level positions to the corresponding regional party branch with the closest temporal match. However, this method still leaves many regional parties without coverage. Some parties are not covered because they have existed at the regional level for a longer period than at the country level, while others have never gained significant presence in the country electoral arena but remain significant in certain regions. These parties are coded differently. To determine the party position, we calculate a running decade average based on the full sample across all countries and regions for party families. If a party is still not covered by this method, we assess their political leanings qualitatively, considering concepts such as socialism or conservatism, and assign them the same running decade average for party families. This approach covers almost 99% of all parties that have won seats in any of the electoral arenas in the sample.

High coverage may compromise validity. Our imputation technique eliminates differences in party positions of regional branches across regions and time. We acknowledge the existence of such differences, but at the current state of research, we are unable to provide more specific party positions at the regional level. However, we can approximate the amount of distortion introduced into the data through our choices by validating the regional imputations in two ways. Firstly, we will correlate the left-right measures provided by the country and regional manifesto projects to identify any empirical variations between the two sources of positions. However, this approach has some serious problems. Therefore, we will provide a second validation by merging both data sources and placing the regional and country-level manifestos in the same item response space.

c. Validating the imputation of regional party positions

Both the regional (Alonso et al. 2013) and country-level manifesto projects (Lehmann et al. 2023) contain hand-coded issues that are aggregated into scores of relative emphases, known as salience. In both datasets, there is an overall left-right dimension that combines several issues into a single positional dimension. This dimension is called RILE and was first suggested by Budge and Laver in 1992 for the Manifesto Project. A simple method for validation would be to merge and correlate the RILE positions of regional parties and their country-level branches using the nearest temporal match. This will allow us to observe the degree of left-right position convergence across levels for the same party.

Three major problems must be transparently laid out regarding such a comparison. Firstly, the Regional Manifesto Project cannot be considered a representative sample of the party systems in the dataset. It is important to note that this analysis is based solely on the information provided and does not include any additional aspects. It only includes regional manifestos from three countries that have (asymmetrically) decentralized regions, resulting in highly regionalized party systems. Additionally, the coverage of parties within these countries is highly biased. For instance, in Italy, over 50% of the coded parties come from Alto Adige/South, Valle d'Aosta, or coded manifestos of the Five Star Movement - a party known for its ambiguous stances. Spain has a highly regionalised party system too. Country-level parties typically have distinct branches for each region, but their positional autonomy is restricted. Therefore, we would expect a higher correspondence between country and regional positions for Spanish country-level parties. In the UK, we have a typical representation of country-level and regional parties, including social democrats, conservatives, the Scottish National Party, and Plaid Cymru. However, there are unfortunately very few observations. In short, we consider this sample a hard-test in terms of cross-level party position similarity.

Secondly, the RILE indicators differ on the regional and country levels because they include different issues. The raw data includes three questions exclusively used at the country level and not at the regional level, as well as three questions that exist only at the regional level and not at the country level. This means that over 20% of the underlying issues are different. Furthermore, some non-overlapping issues hold significant influence over left-right positions. For instance, although welfare expansion is not included in the regional RILE, it is, on average, the most prominent issue in the entire country-level corpus.

Thirdly, in the RILE approach, positions also depend on the relative salience of issues that are not considered in the RILE index (see Röth 2017; Lowe et al. 2011). If we assume systematic differences in the overall salience dedicated to issues included in the RILE composition across tiers, we have an additional source of bias. Using RILE scores, it is unclear how much of the differences and similarities between regional and country positions of the same party are substantive and how much is driven by the specific scaling approach of RILE. This uncertainty is minimized in the next section.

To improve comparability, it is important to take the debate about valid party positions seriously and use the same scaling procedure for both regional and country-level manifestos. The first step is to harmonize both manifesto datasets and estimate a latent dimension with a generalized item response model (following Röth 2017). This creates a common space for regional and country-level manifestos using the same available issues. In contrast to the ready-made RILE approach, we can ensure that the same issues are used at both levels. Additionally, we estimate a cultural dimension that is currently absent from both data sets (see issue selection in Table 4). Finally, we combine the market and cultural dimensions to create an overall left-right dimension.

Table 4: Issue selection for a common political space across levels

	Issues left	Issues right
Market dimension	per403 (market regulation), per412 (controlled economy), per413 (nationalization economy), per504 (welfare expansion), per415 (Marxism), per404 (economic planning), per409 (Keynesian demand management), per501 (environmental protection), per701 (labour +)	per401 (free market), per414 (economic orthodoxy), p402 (economic incentives), per303 (administrative efficiency), per505 (welfare reduction)
Cultural dimension	per108 (EU +), per201 (political freedom), per503 (equality, antidiscrimination), per602 (national way of life -), per604 (traditional way of life -), per607 (multiculturalism +)	per110 (EU -), per406 (protectionism +), per601 (national way of life +), per603 (traditional morality +), per605 (law and order), per608 (multiculturalism -)
Item response left and right	Left issues of market and culture combined	Right issues of market and culture combined

Note: All issues are transformed by using the logarithm of dimension-based salience in a generalized item response model. Positions are predicted by empirical Bayes means and standardized 0-1.

The four positional measures can be validated by comparing the same parties at both regional and country levels, using the nearest temporal match with a distance of less than 6 years. On average, the temporal distance is 0.15 years.

Table 5: Correlation table of country-level and regional party positions of the same parties (closest temporal match)

	All parties	Country-level parties	Regionalist parties
RILE	0.73	0.74	0.29
Item response left and right	0.84	0.86	0.45
Market dimension	0.80	0.81	0.36
Cultural dimension	0.71	0.74	0.41
n	653	400	153

The correlation between the matched parties indicates a high convergence for all indicators. However, previous studies (Röth and Kaiser 2019; Garritzmann et al. 2021; Röth et al. 2018; Röth 2017) have shown that the item response-based indicators perform better. It is interesting to note that the composite left and right index performs best with a correlation of 0.84. The market dimension shows a higher correspondence than the cultural dimension. For each positional index, the correspondence is significantly higher for country-level parties than

for regionalist ones. We utilize the regionalist party dummy in the dataset, where regionalist parties are defined as those with a predominant regional agenda compared to those with a predominant national agenda. This is important when considering the characteristics of this matching sample. The amount of regionalist parties in the remaining countries and regions of the data set is substantially lower than in the regions of the three countries in this comparison. Therefore, for typically country-level parties in the larger sample of this dataset, the correspondence is likely to be well above 0.8. This has been demonstrated in Germany, where positions on the regional and country level correlated around 0.88 (Kleider et al., 2019). Overall, these results provide confidence in the use of imputed country-level positions for parties at the regional level, until better measures are available for the coverage provided by this dataset.

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