# SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

# SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY EXCEPTIONALISM AND TRANSNATIONAL POLICY LINKAGES

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*World Politics*

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# SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Supporting Information provide a set of additional analyses and robustness checks that further support the argument and findings of our main paper. These include:

- Table A1 gives and overview of the **Social Democratic parties** in our data set.
- Table A2 controls for the **size of the country of a "source party."**
- Table A3 re-estimates our main model while **controlling for economic influences**.
- Table A4 incorporates more changes in the international political context in our main model, including the **Cold War** and **EU membership**, while Table A5 **limits the time period of our analysis to pre-2000**.
- Table A6 **omits** parties for which **policy position estimates are likely to be too imprecise**.
- In Table A7, we control for **countries with more than one social democratic party**.
- We **aggregate the Conservative/Christian Democrats party families** (Table A8).
- In Table A9, we focus on **parties left of the Social Democrats** and find little evidence for diffusion here.
- We explore the possible **multi-dimensionality** surrounding the decline in Social Democracy party platforms (Table A10 and Table A11).
- We examine the link via **European Parliament groups** more closely (Table A12).
- We shed more light on **Social Democratic Parties' common challenges by examining the interaction of** our main **spatial lag** with the **globalization** variable (Table A13 and Figure A1).

## Table A1. Social Democratic Parties Included in the Empirical Analyses

| Country | Party | Entry | Exit |
|---|---|---|---|
| Austria | Austrian Social Democratic Party | 1996 | 2017 |
| Belgium | Belgian Socialist Party | 1977 | 2017 |
| Belgium | Flemish Socialist Party | 1977 | 2017 |
| Belgium | Francophone Socialist Party | 1981 | 2013 |
| Belgium | Socialist Party Different | 1977 | 2017 |
| Belgium | Socialist Party Different - Spirit | 2007 | 2009 |
| Bulgaria | BSP for Bulgaria | 2005 | 2017 |
| Bulgaria | Bulgarian Socialist Party | 2006 | 2008 |
| Bulgaria | Coalition for Bulgaria | 2005 | 2017 |
| Cyprus | Progressive Party of the Working People | 2005 | 2017 |
| Cyprus | United Democratic Union of Cyprus | 2005 | 2017 |
| Czech Republic | Czech Social Democratic Party | 2005 | 2017 |
| Denmark | Social Democratic Party | 1977 | 2017 |
| Estonia | People's Party Moderates | 2005 | 2017 |
| Estonia | Social Democratic Party | 2005 | 2017 |
| Finland | Finnish Social Democrats | 1994 | 2017 |
| France | Socialist Party | 1977 | 2017 |
| Germany | Social Democratic Party of Germany | 1977 | 2017 |
| Greece | Panhellenic Socialist Movement | 1981 | 2017 |
| Hungary | Hungarian Social Democratic Party | 1995 | 2013 |
| Hungary | Hungarian Socialist Party | 1995 | 2017 |
| Ireland | Labour Party | 1977 | 2017 |
| Italy | Democratic Party | 2013 | 2017 |
| Italy | Italian Democratic Socialist Party | 1977 | 1993 |
| Italy | Italian Socialist Party | 1977 | 1995 |
| Italy | Olive Tree | 2006 | 2007 |
| Italy | Pannella List | 1979 | 2000 |
| Italy | Pannella-Riformatori List | 1979 | 2000 |
| Italy | Pannella-Sgarbi List | 1979 | 2000 |
| Italy | Radical Party | 1979 | 2000 |
| Latvia | For Human Rights in a United Latvia | 2006 | 2009 |
| Luxembourg | Socialist Workers' Party of Luxembourg | 1977 | 2017 |
| Netherlands | Labour Party | 1977 | 2017 |
| Netherlands | Radical Political Party | 1977 | 1988 |
| Norway | Norwegian Labour Party | 1978 | 2011 |
| Poland | Democratic Left Alliance | 2006 | 2014 |
| Portugal | Democratic Renewal Party | 1987 | 1990 |
| Portugal | Popular Democratic Movement | 1986 | 1986 |
| Portugal | Socialist Party | 1986 | 2017 |
| Slovakia | Direction-Social Democracy | 2006 | 2015 |
| Slovakia | Party of the Democratic Left | 2005 | 2005 |
| Slovenia | Social Democratic Party | 2008 | 2017 |
| Spain | Spanish Socialist Workers' Party | 1980 | 2015 |
| Sweden | Social Democratic Labour Party | 1977 | 2017 |
| United Kingdom | Labour Party | 1977 | 2017 |
| United Kingdom | Social Democratic Party | 1987 | 1991 |

**Table A2. Party Policy Diffusion – Country Size**

| | Model A1 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8239 |
| | (0.0107)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.2926 |
| | (0.1107)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0182 |
| | (0.0076)** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0039 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0015)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1480 |
| | (0.0105)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1440 |
| | (0.0104)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | -0.0000 |
| | (0.0001) |
| Observations | 4,049 |
| Year and Party Fes | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

**Countries' Population Size as an Additional Diffusion Influence**

The size of a country has not been taken into account in our main model(s). The reason is that our argument focuses on social democracy, and especially foreign incumbents, as the key driver behind party policy diffusion. That said, it may be plausible that social democrats from smaller countries pay more attention to parties from larger and, hence, more powerful or visible countries. At the same time, social democratic parties from smaller countries may be ignored. To control for this, we incorporate the size of a country as captured by its population (logged) to

condition the effect of party policy diffusion among social democrats. That is, we modify $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ so as to take account of the difference in countries' annual mean population as defined by the World Bank Development Indicators. Specifically, this spatial lag must meet the conditions of $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$, but we also introduce the following: for $i \neq j$, $w_{i,j}=(\text{population}_j - \text{population}_i)$ if $\text{population}_j > \text{population}_i$ and 0 otherwise (Ward and John 2013, 16). The elements $w_{i,j}$ of the weighting matrix thus become continuous as higher values capture differences between a larger ($j$) and a smaller ($i$) country.

Tables A2 summarizes our findings based on the difference in countries' population size. Our core spatial variable, $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$, which we modified for this robustness check, is statistically insignificant. This suggests that social democratic parties do *not* necessarily respond more to foreign incumbents of their own party family that come from larger countries.

## Controlling for Economic Influences

Williams (2015), Williams and Whitten (2015), and Williams, Seki, and Whitten (2016) use a broader set of alternative predictors including economic variables. We re-estimated our main model with corresponding controls for GDP growth and inflation (all are temporally lagged by one year), which are taken from the World Bank Development Indicators. Inflation is measured by the consumer price index, reflecting the annual percentage change in the cost to the average consumer of acquiring a basket of goods and services that may be fixed or changed at specified intervals, such as yearly. Second, the World Bank defines economic growth as the annual percentage growth rate of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency. Aggregates are based on constant 2010 US dollars. Table A3 summarizes our main model incorporating these additional economic controls. Our core result is robust. The spatial variable $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent}}$

$^{\text{Social Democrats}}$ remains positive and statistically significant, while the economic controls do not seem to shape parties' policy positions in our sample.

**Table A3. Party Policy Diffusion – Economic Influences**

| | Model A2 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8141 |
| | (0.0111)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.4572 |
| | (0.1245)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0295 |
| | (0.0089)*** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0063 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0017)*** |
| GDP Growth | 0.0007 |
| | (0.0030) |
| Inflation | -0.0031 |
| | (0.0032) |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1577 |
| | (0.0110)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1531 |
| | (0.0109)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | 0.0031 |
| | (0.0012)** |
| Observations | 3,827 |
| Year and Party FEs | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* $p<0.10$; ** $p<0.05$; *** $p<0.01$

## Controlling for Changes in the International Political Context

Systemic changes in the international political context may affect party policy positions. System-wide shocks that affect all parties in our sample may well shape what issues parties perceive as policy priorities and, thereby, alter their position. The year-fixed effects we include address this issue to a large degree. That said, we also decided to examine two other influences more specifically: the end of the Cold War (which we control for in the form of a dummy variable that receives the value of 1 until 1991, 0 otherwise), and membership of the European Union (EU; coded as a binary variable with a value of 1 if a party's country of origin was a member of the EU, 0 otherwise). Finally, to examine whether the influence of social democratic parties' policy diffusion changed over time, especially in light of the discussion surrounding the "Third Way" in the main text, we limit our sample to the pre-2000 period. Tables A4 and A5 summarize our findings.

As Table A4 shows, adding *Cold War* and *EU Membership* does not alter the substance of our main finding. The coefficient estimate of the former, which is positively signed and statistically significant, highlights, however, that parties were generally positioned more towards the right of the political left-right spectrum during the Cold War. Limiting the time period to pre-2000 emphasizes that party policy diffusion was perhaps stronger still than the estimate in the main text suggest among social democratic parties for curtailed period prior to 2000 when "senders" were electorally successful. The coefficient estimate for $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ in Table A5 is about twice the size of that reported in the main text.

**Table A4. Party Policy Diffusion – Changes in the International Political Context**

| | Model A3 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8215 |
| | (0.0107)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.3301 |
| | (0.1127)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0194 |
| | (0.0076)** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0043 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0015)*** |
| Cold War | 57.7219 |
| | (4.1191)*** |
| EU Membership | 0.0468 |
| | (0.0454) |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1496 |
| | (0.0105)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1457 |
| | (0.0104)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | 0.0033 |
| | (0.0012)*** |
| Observations | 4,049 |
| Year and Party Fes | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

**Table A5. Party Policy Diffusion – Limited Time Period (1977-1999)**

| | Model A4 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.7901 |
| | (0.0177)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.6805 |
| | (0.1741)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0449 |
| | (0.0144)*** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0096 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0027)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1726 |
| | (0.0173)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1662 |
| | (0.0170)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | 0.0061 |
| | (0.0022)*** |
| Observations | 1,781 |
| Year and Party FEs | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

### Excluding Cases with Highly Uncertain Party Positions

Benoit, Laver, and Mikhaylov (2009) estimate the uncertainty surrounding the party-policy position data of the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP), i.e., the data we use for our dependent variable and the construction of the spatial lags. By simulating the data's underlying error-generating processes via bootstrapping analyses of coded quasi-sentences, Benoit, Laver, and Mikhaylov (2009) then provide precise levels of nonsystematic errors for the left-right party position (among other variables in the CMP). We assessed the uncertainty surrounding each par-

ty's policy position using the left-right standard error estimate in Benoit, Laver, and Mikhaylov (2009). We then omitted all observations from the sample and the corresponding weighting matrices if their standard error estimate was above the 75$^{th}$ percentile of the standard-error variable's distribution. Table A6 summarizes the findings – our core result remains unchanged, although $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ now has a slightly smaller coefficient estimate compared to that reported in the main text.

**Table A6. Party Policy Diffusion – Omitting Cases for which Positions are Uncertain**

| | Model A5 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8322 |
| | (0.0136)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.2557 |
| | (0.1514)* |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0120 |
| | (0.0100) |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0028 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0020) |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1266 |
| | (0.0134)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1234 |
| | (0.0133)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | 0.0029 |
| | (0.0013)** |
| Observations | 2,227 |
| Year and Party FEs | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

## Countries with More than One Social Democratic Party

As discussed in the main text, we are primarily interested in the cross-country diffusion of social democratic parties' positions. However, in some countries and years, more than one social democratic party existed domestically and competed with others.

**Table A7. Party Policy Diffusion – Social Democratic Parties "At Home"**

| | Model A6 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8216 |
| | (0.0107)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.3076 |
| | (0.1105)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0191 |
| | (0.0076)** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0040 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0015)*** |
| Social Democracy at Home | 0.1079 |
| | (0.3230) |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1492 |
| | (0.0105)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1451 |
| | (0.0104)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | 0.0033 |
| | (0.0012)*** |
| Observations | 4,049 |
| Year and Party Fes | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* $p<0.10$; ** $p<0.05$; *** $p<0.01$

To control for any influence stemming from this, we created a new variable, which receives a value of 1 if more than one social democratic party existed in a given country-year according to Table 1 of the main text (0 otherwise). Table A7 displays the results from this robustness check. The main variable of interest, $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$, remains positively signed and statistically significant. Substantively, there is hardly any difference compared to the main text, which suggests that the diffusion of party policies among social democratic parties is indeed more of a cross-country phenomenon.

## Aggregating the Conservative/Christian Democrats Spatial Variable

The empirical approach in the main text treats Conservative and Christian Democrats as two different party families or blocs. Theoretically, however, the two could be considered as one as the Conservatives merged with the European People's Party (EPP) formed by the Christian Democrats in the 1990s. Thus, Table A8 employs a more aggregated perspective in that we present models for Conservative parties and Christian Democrats jointly. That is, Model A7 focuses on Conservative/ Christian Democrat incumbents abroad, while Model A8 adds the spatial lag on all Christian Democrats and Conservative parties. All other model specifications are unchanged.

Consistent with the analysis presented in the main text, this aggregated perspective provides no evidence of positive and significant learning and emulation diffusion processes among these center-right parties across borders. This reinforces our conclusion that party family specific policy diffusion from social democratic incumbents is unique. The negative effect of $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Christian Democrats/Conservatives}}$ warrants further attention: while not the main focus of our study, it seems that parties in this family tend to distance themselves from electorally unsuccessful family mem-

ber, but that policy does not diffuse from successful Conservative/ Christian Democrat incumbents to other parties of the same family across borders.

**Table A8. Party Policy Diffusion – Christian Democratic/Conservative Party Family**

| | Model A7 | Model A8 |
|---|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8229 | 0.8206 |
| | (0.0106)*** | (0.0107)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.2844 | 0.2674 |
| | (0.1105)*** | (0.1106)** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0176 | 0.0165 |
| | (0.0076)** | (0.0076)** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0037 | -0.0035 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0015)*** | (0.0015)** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1488 | 0.1503 |
| | (0.0105)*** | (0.0105)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1447 | 0.1463 |
| | (0.0104)*** | (0.0104)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Christian Democrats/Conservatives}}$ | | -0.0013 |
| | | (0.0005)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Christian Democrats/Conservatives}}$ | -0.0014 | -0.0000 |
| | (0.0005)*** | (0.0008) |
| Observations | 4,049 | 4,049 |
| Year and Party Fes | Yes | Yes |
| $R^2$ | 0.884 | 0.884 |
| RMSE | 0.308 | 0.307 |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients. Standard errors are in parentheses. All models are estimated with a constant as well as year and party fixed effects included in all models (omitted from presentation). The scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale. All explanatory variables are based on one-year lags, and the spatial lag variables capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

## Party Policy Diffusion Left of the Social Democrats

One aspect of our theory contends that "the political right" is more diverse than Social Democratic parties, which makes diffusion among Christian Democrats/Conservatives more difficult. Our analyses in the main text and here (Table A9) support this claim, but it may be an effort worth making and examine this as well for parties left of the Social Democrats.

**Table A9. Party Policy Diffusion – Party Policy Diffusion Left of the Social Democrats**

| | Model A9 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8237 |
| | (0.0106)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.2964 |
| | (0.1105)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0186 |
| | (0.0076)** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0039 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0015)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1487 |
| | (0.0105)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1447 |
| | (0.0104)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Left of Social Democrats}}$ | -0.0021 |
| | (0.0013) |
| Observations | 4,049 |
| Year and Party Fes | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

Specifically, the proper reference point for Social Democrats may not be to their right, but the political left. To this end, we used information in the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP; Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006; Volkens et al. 2015) and group ecological (green), left socialist, and other left (Communist) parties for a spatial lag that then comprises this information next to the incumbency status and whether a party is not a rival one "at home." Table A9 is then a replication of our core model in the main text, but we replace $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ by $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Left of Social Democrats}}$: the latter being the foreign-incumbent spatial lag that focuses on party platforms left of the Social Democrats. However, as in the case of Christian Democrats/Conservatives, we do not find evidence for a diffusion effect here, which further supports our main argument and the findings reported in the main text.

## Multi-Dimensionality Surrounding the Decline in Social Democracy

Studies of the dilemma and decline of Social Democracy frequently emphasize the importance of a two-dimensional political space and the surrounding trade-off faced by these parties with regards to voter appeal. As argued by Kitschelt (1994), for instance, the decline of Social Democratic parties may be driven by their progressive positions on the cultural dimension, which has "alienated the core constituency of Social Democracy, the working class" (Abou-Chadi and Wagner 2020: 247). Our main analysis focuses on the left-right scale and, thus, a one-dimensional issue space. In order to fully account for the multidimensionality of the policy space occupied by Social Democrats, which may well have implications for the diffusion of policy positions, we conducted two additional analyses.

First, using the information in Benoit and Laver (2006), we identified which countries are likely characterized by a predominantly one-dimensional issue space and which by a more multi-

dimensional issue space: in our European sample, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Italy, Norway, and Iceland are all (nearly) one-dimensional, all other countries are likely characterized by a multidimensional issue space. We then created a binary variable (1 = one-dimensional issue space, 0 = multi-dimensional issue space) and performed two analyses to probe whether countries with a one-dimensional issue space may be driving our results.

**Table A10. Party Policy Diffusion – Multi-Dimensionality and Social Democracy**

| | Model A10 | Model A11 |
|---|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8187 | 0.8216 |
| | (0.0127)*** | (0.0107)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.2398 | 0.3076 |
| | (0.1356)* | (0.1105)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0186 | 0.0191 |
| | (0.0092)** | (0.0076)** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0033 | -0.0040 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0018)* | (0.0015)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1478 | 0.1492 |
| | (0.0127)*** | (0.0105)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1442 | 0.1451 |
| | (0.0125)*** | (0.0104)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | 0.0034 | 0.0033 |
| | (0.0013)** | (0.0012)*** |
| One Dimensional Issue Space | | -0.3135 |
| | | (0.3222) |
| Observations | 2,798 | 4,049 |
| Year and Party Fes | Yes | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

We begin by focusing our analysis on the sub-set of countries that feature a multi-dimensional issues space (Model A10); next we added the dichotomous issue dimensionality item to the explanatory variables and replicate the main model (Model A11). Table A10 shows that our main finding remains robust taking the second dimension into consideration this way.

Second, building on recent empirical work (Abou-Chadi and Wagner 2020; Whitefield and Rohrschneider 2019), we operationalize the second, cultural dimension more directly and examine the diffusion of party policy positions on this dimension. The "second dimension contains topics related to the organization of society and to cultural and moral issues" (Abou-Chadi and Wagner 2020: 248). Progressive positions toward EU integration are frequently described as part of this dimension (see Whitefield and Rohrschneider 2019: 30). According to Abou-Chadi and Wagner (2020: 249), the "politicization of the second dimension and of EU issues forced Social Democratic parties to compete on a dimension where their traditional electorate has more heterogeneous preferences and where they compete with new challenger parties." Against this background, we returned to the CMP data (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006; Volkens et al. 2015) and coded parties' positions on EU integration: following the operationalization of the "traditional" left-right position of parties, we concentrate on positive and negative statements in manifestos to create a variable capturing parties' positions toward EU integration on a scale of 1 to 10, with higher values indicating more positive positions regarding integration. We then use this variable as an alternative dependent variable modifying the temporally lagged dependent variable as well as the spatial lags of our main model accordingly. Hence, except for the median voter item, no variable is based on the general left-right scale anymore.

Table A11 summarizes our findings for this robustness check. Note that $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign Social Democrats}}$ replaces $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ as the inclusion of the latter prevented model convergence. Our main

finding is robust: $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ exerts a positive and significant effect, even though the impact size is about half of that reported in the main text. This is expected, though, as "left and right continue to strongly define ideological camps on most dimensions" (Whitefield and Rohrschneider 2019: 33), i.e., the left-right scale remains the dominant one despite the existence of a second, cultural dimension on EU integration.

**Table A11. Party Policy Diffusion – Multi-Dimensionality: EU Integration**

| | Model A12 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.0099 |
| | (0.0022)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.0413 |
| | (0.0449) |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | -0.0006 |
| | (0.0029) |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0006 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0006) |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | -0.0004 |
| | (0.0003) |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign Social Democrats}}$ | -0.0005 |
| | (0.0003)* |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | 0.0015 |
| | (0.0005)*** |
| Observations | 3,514 |
| Year and Party Fes | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position on EU integration (dependent variable) is recalibrated to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

## European Parliament Groups

We suggest that our findings can partly be explained by strong transnational institutional links, including the Party of European Socialists (PES) as an effective and powerful party federation in the European Parliament. To shed more light on this component of our theory, we follow Senninger et al. (2020) and modify our core spatial lag so as to capture the policy position of all foreign incumbent parties belonging to PES as a potential influence on the PES parties "at home." The influence of non-incumbents or parties not belonging to the PES is set to 0.

**Table A12. Party Policy Diffusion – European Parliament Groups**

| | Model A13 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8209 |
| | (0.0107)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.3043 |
| | (0.1104)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0189 |
| | (0.0076)** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0040 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0015)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1504 |
| | (0.0105)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1463 |
| | (0.0104)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent PES}}$ | 0.0038 |
| | (0.0011)*** |
| Observations | 4,049 |
| Year and Party FEs | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

The data on European Parliament groups are taken from Schmitt et al. (2016). As shown in Table A12, $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent PES}}$ is positively signed and significant. Our main result holds, and this supplementary analysis provides evidence that Social Democratic parties emulate foreign Social Democratic incumbents at least partially due to the institutionalized links in the European Parliament.

## Globalization as a Common Challenge

As we argue in the main text, Social Democratic parties faced unique cross-national challenges at least since the 1970s, including the decline of the industrial working class and globalization (see also Ward et al., 2011). Here, we focus in more detail on the common challenges posed by globalization. While we control for globalization in our models, we now interact this variable with our core spatial lag. If globalization is one of the major challenges of Social Democratic Parties and this, *inter alia*, strengthens the cross-country exchange facilitating parties' learning and emulation across borders, as we argue, we should find stronger effects of $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ at high levels of globalization.

Table A13 presents the results of this analysis and shows that $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ is now negatively signed, i.e., setting *Economic Globalization* to 0, Social Democratic Parties may even distance themselves from Social Democratic incumbents abroad. However, we do not observe a value of 0 for *Economic Globalization* in our data, and the multiplicative specification is, as anticipated, positive and significant.

**Table A13. Party Policy Diffusion – Interaction with Globalization**

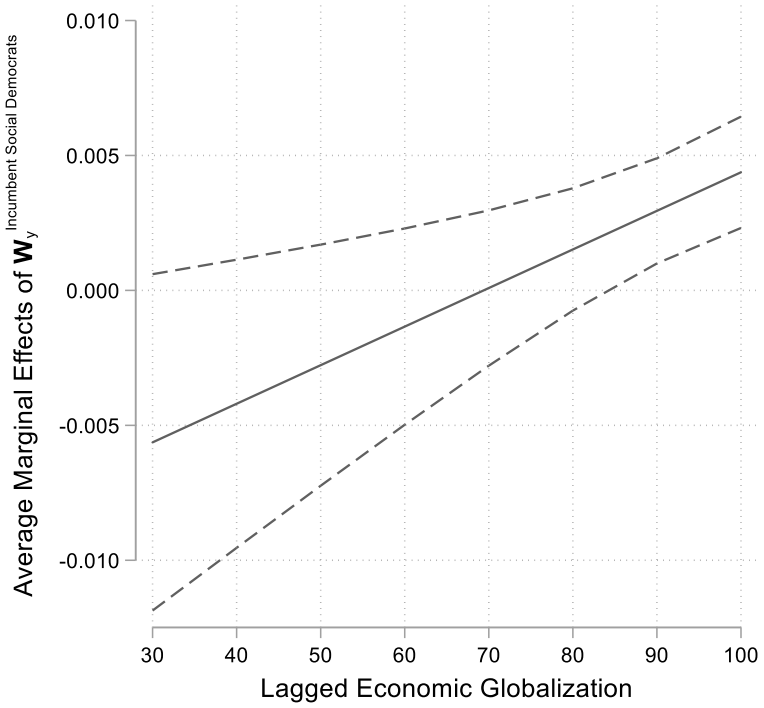
| | Model A14 |
|---|---|
| Lagged Party Position | 0.8205 |
| | (0.0107)*** |
| Lagged Median Voter | 0.3124 |
| | (0.1105)*** |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | 0.0186 |
| | (0.0076)** |
| Lag Median Voter * | -0.0041 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0015)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Domestic}}$ | 0.1514 |
| | (0.0106)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Foreign}}$ | 0.1474 |
| | (0.0104)*** |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ | -0.0099 |
| | (0.0055)* |
| $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats *}}$ | 0.0001 |
| Lagged Economic Globalization | (0.0001)** |
| Observations | 4,049 |
| Year and Party Fes | Yes |

*Notes.* Table entries are coefficients; standard errors in parentheses; constant as well as year and party fixed effects included, but omitted from presentation; the scale for party position (dependent variable) is recalibrated from the left-right estimates reported by the CMP to fit on the 1-10 median voter scale; all explanatory variables are one-year lags, the spatial lags capture parties' policy positions of the year before the last election.

* p<0.10; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

Figure A1 clarifies the impact further and plots the marginal effects of $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ for values of *Economic Globalization.* As expected, the graph mirrors the positive coefficient estimate of Table A13 and we find a positive impact of $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$ for higher levels of *Economic Globalization*. These results are consistent with our argument that the common and unique challenges generated by globalization for Social Democratic parties fueled the diffusion of party policy positions from successful incumbents within this party family.

**Figure A1. Average Marginal Effects of $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent Social Democrats}}$**




*Notes.* Dashed lines are 90 percent confidence intervals. Estimates are based on Model A14.

It may also be interesting to compare these results with Table A12. Our theory focuses on two main mechanisms to explain Social Democratic exceptionalism and party policy diffusion among Social Democrats: major competitive challenges from the 1970s and exceptionally strong transnational organizations. While we are mainly interested in the net effect of these giving rise to party policy diffusion from Social Democratic incumbents abroad to sister parties at home, a comparison of Tables A12 and A13 suggests that the mechanism on transnational linkages and institutions is no more or less strongly pronounced than the one on major challenges: the marginal effect estimate of $\mathbf{W}y^{\text{Incumbent PES}}$ is 0.0038 in Table A12, which is not significantly different from the significant marginal effect estimates plotted in Figure A1.

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