

TESTING ELECTORAL EFFECTIVENESS OF 'PROGRAMMATIC GREENING' AS A POST-INDUSTRIAL PARTY-LED ADAPTATION STRATEGY FOR WESTERN LEFT-WING POLITICAL PARTY FAMILIES

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this research is to analyze the electoral effectiveness of the left-wing political parties' programmatic greening strategy to combat their shrinking electoral bases in the post-industrial era. More frankly, it explores the link between the frequency of left-wing political parties' environmentalist programmatic signals and their vote shares. The supply-side or top-down approach established that individual voting preferences are being shaped by choice sets provided by political parties. Accordingly, it is suggested that as the ideology-burdened post-war political environment ended, the relevance of ideologies and class positions for voting preference weakened and the left-wing electoral bases shrank. In return, left-wing political parties adopted catchall strategies to increase their grip on the median voter. One of the alternative adaptation strategies in this regard was increasing environmentalist signals in their manifesto documents. To test whether this strategy was an electorally effective one, this study raises the following question: Did more frequent green programmatic signals help left-wing political parties achieve higher vote shares? Using quantitative methods of inquiry, this research analyzes Manifesto Project's data for 1,939 manifesto documents, which were released between the years 1920 and 2018 in 56 democratic countries. Findings showed that those parties with more frequent environmental mentions in their manifesto documents were not, in general, voted at statistically significantly higher levels than those with less frequent environmental mentions. The result is valid not only for left-wing political parties but for all party families. Thus, this research concludes that increasing the tone of green programmatic signals is not an effective post-industrial adaptation strategy to follow in order to combat declining vote shares. Findings have important implications for current accounts of spatial theories of party competition, party conflict, electoral adaptation and realignment strategies of political parties, as well as issue salience, green politics, and the recently changing nature of the electoral effectiveness of party policy shifts.*

Keywords: political parties; environmentalist signals; environmental mentions; left-wing political;political parties.

Introduction

Understanding political implications of socioeconomic divisions is key to understanding 20th century Western democratic politics. Social class has long been regarded as one of the most predominant fault lines in this regard. A large amount of literature has revealed a connection between social class locations and political behaviors (Alford 1963, Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet 1968). Social class emerged as a significant tool in social stratification research, highlighting links between occupational categories and many political outcomes, including electoral behavior. In the early stages of the research, Alfordian social class distinction, which was based on the classical manual/non-manual dichotomy, provided a simplistic occupational stratification.

Alford's delineation associated the percentage of the manual and non-manual workers with the percentage of left- and right-wing votes (Alford 1963). Thereafter, Alford's two-category class distinction was replaced it with more nuanced class stratifications. Grounded in Weberian theory of class, Erikson and Goldthorpe, first developed a sevenfold scheme of class and then amended it and replaced with an elevenfold class one (Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992, Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet 1968). Although the number of categories increased over time, in many respects, the major contrast remained to be between the working and the middle classes. It is now well established from a variety of studies that working class voters are tend to support left-wing political parties which pledge a series of policies including maximum government inference in

business, planned economy, economic equality, redistribution, a strong social safety net, minimum wage increase, workers' and union rights, right of assembly, affordable housing, free education and healthcare and progressive taxation. On the other hand, middle class voters are rather inclined to support right-wing political parties promising minimal government inference in business, lower taxes, freedom of enterprise, deregulation, support for businesses and entrepreneurs and ect. (Prysby 1977, Lipset 1991, Bornschier and Kriesi 2012, Arzheimer 2013).

Nevertheless, a large body of literature has recognized that since the end of the Cold War period, the class condition on voting has weakened, and social class has lost its power to predict voting preference (Kitschelt 1994, Evans and Tilley 2011). As political parties have started to lose their class support, two approaches have emerged to explain the mechanism underlying this new situation. The first approach presented a bottom-up perspective. According to the advocates of this approach, with the acceleration of globalization, urbanization, and deindustrialization processes; introduction of technological advancements; expansion of financial markets and the service sector; the spread of mass media and the increase in education levels, a new sociological reality has emerged. The sharp contrast between social classes has blurred. Especially the working and middle class categories are now less mutually exclusive, and the overall class categories have become more homogeneous. After all, ideologies and social class has become less relevant factor of politics. As the main fault line drawn by social classes has become less distinct, new agendas of politics, such as environmentalism, human rights, quality of democracy, EU integration, gender, and immigration, have emerged as new fault lines of politics (Inglehart 1977, Backes and Moreau 2008, Kitschelt 1989, Bürklin 1985, Luca Kirchheimer 1966, Manwaring and Kennedy 2017, Krouwel 2012, Andersen 1990, Flanagan and Lee 2003, Barry 2014, Ares 2022). These new areas of competition crosscut and further weakened the class-vote link, and politics has started to realign on the poles of these new axes (Franklin et al. 1992, Kriesi 1998, Lane and Ersson 1997, Dalton and Wattenberg 1993, de Graaf, Nieuwbeerta and Heath 1995, Nieuwbeerta 1996, Inglehart 1984, 1990, Inglehart and Rabier 1986, Knutsen 1987, Elff, 2007, Green 2007,

Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2010).

In response to the sociological perspective proposed by the advocates of the bottom-up approach, supporters of the supply-side approach have argued that weakening of the class-vote link is not solely an outcome of a sociological transformation but political decisions of parties. In other words, it is not the sociological change only that attenuated the relevance of social class for politics, but it is political parties' centrist policy signals to attract median voters in order to combat shrinking their electoral bases. Expectedly, left-wing political parties, in addition to their traditional working-class electoral bases, aimed to attract electoral interests of educated, urbanized middle classes (Przeworski 1985, Webb 2004). Nevertheless, as left-wing political parties redefined their programmatic positions with centrist policies, they distanced their working-class bases. Greening was one of the adaptation strategies in this regard. Critical, anti-capitalist, and even anti-system left-wing political parties have planted environmentalist programmatic seeds with the expectation of greater electoral interest of environmentally sensible middle classes (Evans and Tilley 2012b, Evans and DeGraaf 2013, Elff 2009). Nevertheless, we still don't have enough empirical evidence to argue whether this strategy has paid back. As a systematic understanding of how greening strategy contributes to left-wing vote shares is still lacking in the literature, this research aims to fill this gap and ask the question whether greening was an effective post-industrial electoral adaptation strategy for left-wing political parties. In response to this research question, I raise the following hypothesis:

H1. As left-wing political parties view greening as an effective post-industrial strategy to combat their vote shrink, there should be a positive relationship between left-wing political parties' environmental programmatic signals and their vote shares. The more frequent programmatic green signals they have sent, the more votes they should have achieved.

The current paper has been organized in the following way. The next section gives a brief overview of the literature on social change in the Western industrialized nations, bottom-up and top-down approaches as well as the greening of the left strategy. The third section concerns with

the data and methods used for this research. The fourth section presents the findings of the research. Finally, the fifth section discusses findings with regard to the extant literature and concludes.

Weakening Class-Vote Link

Since the industrial revolution, societies of the West have been organized largely around social and economic cleavages. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) suggested that four important divides reveal major contrasts in the Western societies: Owner/worker, church/state, center/periphery, urban/rural. Among them, perhaps the most salient one is the owner/worker divide, as many Western political party ideologies were aligned around this fault line. In this regard, social class division, as the transformation of occupational locations, discloses opposing interests of individuals working in different types of jobs. Owing to occupational differences and hidden educational and income differences within, the working and the middle classes experience life differently. This causes many differences in their worldviews, ideas, perspectives, and preferences. Class has an impact on voting behavior as well. Class-based voting refers to voters' casting of votes according to their social class locations. In other words, it refers to the idea that the working class has a distinct voting preference from the middle class. Expectedly, while working-class individuals tend to vote for left-wing political parties, middle-class ones are more inclined to vote for right-wing ones. For long, this formula has been highly effective at predicting voting preferences of social classes in the industrially advanced societies of the West. Nevertheless, in today's post-industrial Western world, owing to the processes of globalization, urbanization, and deindustrialization, as well as technological advancement and automation, the occupational structure has changed. In this environment workers de-aligned from their class locations, and politics is less organized around class lines (Abou-Chadi and Wagner 2019, Ares 2022).

A large and growing body of literature investigated the weakening class-vote link and suggested that the social class divide, which was once the main fault line of politics, has become blurred and more permeable. The class de-alignment thesis of Clark and Lipset (1991) and Franklin et al. (1992) provides important

insights to understand the decline in class voting and proposes that social classes are becoming increasingly similar in their voting behavior (see also Franklin 1985, Nieuwbeerta and De Graaf 1999). A long-term reduction of class relevance in the extent to which it determines voting decisions has been studied by political scientists and provided some mixed results. The decline in class voting has been well documented, especially in Britain (Andersen and Heath, 2002; Heath, Jowell, and Curtice 1985; Evans, Heath, and Payne 1991). Relying on the Alford index of class voting, Clark and Lipset (1991) have found that, from 1964 to 1983, class voting declined from 64% to 52% in Britain. According to them, the change from industrial to service-oriented economic structures declined the share of the working class and increased the share of educated, high-skilled service class professionals in the overall workforce. Franklin and his colleagues found that class voting declined from 44% to 26% between the years 1964 to 1987. Andersen and Heath (2002) showed the persisting but changing effect of contextual social class on voting decisions in Britain using British Election Studies and Census data between the years 1964 and 1997. They find evidence for class de-alignment but lingering effects of contextual class. Nevertheless, it was also argued that class voting is far from being regarded as a global phenomenon (Nieuwbeerta 1995, Brooks et al. 2006, Evans and DeGraaf 2013). It was suggested that class voting is even increasing recently in the Eastern Europe (Evans 2006).

Having detected the weakened class-vote link in some countries, political scientists turned to investigate this matter from an etiological perspective. They raised the following question: What is the reason underlying the declining relevance of social class for voting preferences? Two approaches were featured, one sociological and one political. We will take a closer look to both below.

The bottom-up or demand-side approach focuses on sociological changes derived basically from the modernization processes that eventually alter voter preferences. According to the advocates of this approach, modernization is responsible for the changing feature of the class-vote association. Basically, the developments in the economic and social circumstances in the West, such as improvement in life standards (Abrams and Rose 1960),

expansion of higher education (Manza et al. 1995), growth of in-class heterogeneity (Franklin 1992, Rose and McAllister 1986), increasing post-materialist values (Inglehart 1977, Inglehart and Rabier 1986), have weakened the class-vote connection. Green (2007) linked weakening of the class-vote link with processes of urbanization and deindustrialization, a growing middle class, rising education levels, the emergence of valence issues in politics, and convergence of party positions (see also Evans and Tilley 2012a). To replace the class division, immigration, gender equality, race, and ethnicity have emerged as new dimensions of political competition (Kirchheimer 1966, Manwaring and Kennedy 2017, Krouwel 2012, Kitschelt 1989, Bürklin 1985, Andersen 1990, 1989, Barry 2014). These new dimensions crosscut the economy-based class contrast and further distanced individuals from their traditional class identities (Kitschelt 1994, Kriesi et al 2006).

While advocates of the demand-side approach suggested a bottom-up mechanism, supporters of the supply-side approach built their argument on the opinion formation role of political parties (Broockman and Butler 2017). Their argument was not new but based on some earlier arguments regarding the role of political actors in the political conflict (Sartori 1969, Kelley, McAlister, and Mughan 1985, Przeworski and Sprague 1986, Kitschelt 1994). They propose that the weakening of the class-vote link is not due to a socio-economic transformation but to preference-shaping policy signals sent by political parties to maintain greater electoral support. For instance, as political parties such as PvdA in the Netherlands and PS in France could no longer politicize their traditional arguments, they started to follow a new strategy (Abou-Chadi and Wagner 2019). They aimed to extend their traditional constituency to a wider range of constituencies with more diversity of views (Przeworski 1985, Evans and Tilley 2011, Best 2011). This comes as no surprise as we know from earlier research that parties change their issue positions if they lose in elections (Somer-Topcu 2009) or if the general performance of the economy changes (Jacobs and Hindmoor 2024). They may diversify their issues (Wagner et al. 2018) or adopt new issues (Hobolt and De Vries 2015, Wagner et al. 2018) as a response to these circumstances. To extend their appeal beyond their traditional constituencies, left-wing political parties left their ideological baggage and confrontations behind and sent more

centrist signals to appeal to the electoral attention of the middle classes. They politicized new issues, such as environmentalism, immigration, and gender, and offered corresponding policy sets to the voters (Przeworski and Sprague 1986, Kirchheimer 1966, Manwaring and Kennedy 2017, Krouwel 2012, Kitschelt 1989, Bürklin 1985, Andersen 1990, Barry 2014). As a result, parties' less powerful ideological signals diluted class-based voting behavior and made voters' class positions less relevant to their party choice (Evans 2000, Evans and Tilley 2012a, Elff 2007, Rennwald and Evans 2014, Evans and De Graaf 2013). Rennward and Evans (2014), using data for policies of Social Democratic parties in Austria and Switzerland, found that a top-down explanation is more promising than the bottom-up one. Nevertheless, the top-down argument was not free of criticism, as using the ESS and Chapel Hill Survey data, Ares (2022) showed that class differences continue to exist on different dimensions as long as parties politicize these new issues. The strength of class voting is conditioned on the moderating role of issues politicized by parties. In other words, the class-vote link is context as well as politicization-dependent (Ares 2022).

Greening As an Adaptation Strategy for the Left

Green politics was rooted in Xenophon's Gaia hypothesis in BC, which was developed by dystopian green thinker James Lovelock in modern times (Richardson 1995). According to Barry (2014), green theorizing could be analyzed chronologically in three steps. The first step aimed to focus on environmentalism as a unique approach in politics. The second step expanded its focus and interested to the matters of state, democracy, and justice. Finally, the third step further widened its horizons and merged with other disciplines such as economy, health, and development. With the increase in the pace of capitalist production since the 1980s, Green politics gained ground in the West (Backes and Moreau 2008). The clean democracy view, which suggests that democracies are more environmentally friendly than non-democracies, entrenched Greens' position in democratic politics (Kammerlander and Schulze 2020). Established in 1972, the Australian Values Party was the first green party, which was followed by many national

green parties, including the prominent British Green Party that was established in 1973. The first Green party that gained a seat in a national parliament was in 1979 in Switzerland (Richardson 1995). Green parties can be categorized as niche parties. As niche parties' time horizon is larger than mainstream parties, this is also true for Greens. They prioritize establishing a strong ideological base and committed activists and voters rather than thinking about the next election. In this regard, they are policy seekers and prefer achieving their long-term policy goals to short-term ones such as increasing their share of votes and number of seats. Thus, Greens, like other niche parties, are less likely to respond to short-term fluctuations in the voter position. However, Hunold and Dryzek (2002) argued that Greens can sometimes follow a statist, sometimes an oppositional, and sometimes a combination of the two in order to achieve their goals, and by implication, they are pragmatic. Younger and better-educated individuals with post-material values are natural electoral bases of Green parties. They flirt with other political traditions such as Liberal Democrats in the UK and radical parties in Netherlands and feminists in many countries of the world (Adams et al. 2006, Lehrer 2012, Bürklin 1987). Bürklin (1987) defined green party as: Radical and idealistic in thought, ecological and naturalistic in its program, and unconventional in its behavior. While some Green parties followed a Gaian ecologist view, others followed a pure environmentalist one. Nevertheless, European Green parties ideologically locate mostly on the left hand side of the political spectrum, with the only exception being the Latvian Green Party in Europe (Carter 2013). In Britain, Greens followed a pure green route; in Germany, they were closer to socialist movements and integrated into grey parties, prioritizing pensioner interests. The French Lest Verts were only established in 1984, which has had a weak effect on French politics (Richardson 1995). Green parties failed to develop a common program (Hunold and Dryzek 2002). Nevertheless, despite differences in their ideologies, Green parties mostly claim that market-oriented economies and the capitalist economic model are responsible for energy-intense production and high consumption rates. They prioritize climate change, pollution reduction, sustainable development, and nature care. They oppose an anthropocentric point of view and sharp distinction between human and

non-human worlds as well as fight against drought, famine, desertification, lack of water, resource depletion, ozone layer depletion, forest destruction, pollution of seas, rivers, and other resources, as well as armament and nuclear power (Barry 2014). According to Greens, all this environmental devastation will lead to social turmoil, and the society will eventually break down. As a solution, they propose a minimalist and sustainable way of living, organic farming, green energy, and reducing CO₂ emissions, as well as democratization, peace, welfare, and disarmament for a society of well-being.

The left's marriage with green ideology is a new phenomenon. To adapt to the new socio-economic environment discussed above, left-leaning parties, which lost their working-class bases, targeted newly growing socioeconomic segments. Many radical left parties have downplayed their traditional ideological stances and centralized their programs to attract electoral interests of new middle classes. They incorporated newly emerging issues such as environmentalism, ethnicity/race, and gender issues into their ideology in order to remain electorally and politically relevant (Kirchheimer 1966, Manwaring and Kennedy 2017, Wang and Keith 2020, Krouwel 2012, Kitschelt 1994, 1989, Bürklin 1985, Andersen 1990, Barry 2014). European radical left parties have rebuilt their anti-capitalist stance on the view that capitalism is devastating the environment. Although not as environment-friendly as green parties, they were certainly quicker than social democratic and right-wing parties in embracing environmentalism and adopting greener programs (Wang and Keith 2020, Charalambous and Lamprianou 2015, Backes and Moreau 2008). Many prominent left parties of Europe, such as the Finnish Left Alliance, the Swedish Communist Party, the Communist Party of Spain and the Left Party of Germany, took post-materialist turns and incorporated environmentalism into their agendas (Zilliacus 2001, Arter 2000). The red-green alliance was not surprising, as the ideology of socialist and other left-wing parties and of greens have many commonalities by nature (Carter 2013). The traditional left and greens share utopianism and romantic idealism, and both are critical, anti-capitalist, anti-colonialist, and pro-scientist (Hutton and Connors 2004). Nevertheless, the transformation did not follow the same route everywhere. As Labour party

moved to the center, its working-class base shrank in Great Britain. Yet, this strategy seemed to have worked in Britain, as the Third Way policy brought the Labour to power (Evans et al. 1999). After introducing programmatic changes to mediate their policies to the center in the 1990s, the working class continued to support the Social Democratic Party in Austria, while in Switzerland, the Social Democratic Party, by politicizing new cultural issues, lost its traditional working-class base but gained support from the new middle classes (Rennwald and Evans 2014). Similarly in Sweden, the working class de-aligned from the Social Democratic Party and supported the Sweden Democrats while political authoritarianism and distrust operated as driving forces behind it (Oskarson and Demker 2015). A similar scenario was observed for the Social Democratic Party in Denmark, as the party lost its working-class base after implementing centrist policies (Arndt 2013). The transformation was even more challenging in some other countries, as, besides attracting the attention of new middle classes and remaining electorally strong, stabilizing the economy was another challenging item on the agenda (Dickson 2004). SYRIZA and PODEMOS are good examples in this regard. The tragic economic crises in Greece and Spain have prevented the parties from focusing on the green agenda (Wang and Keith 2020). On the other hand, the greening project did not work evenly for the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) or the Taiwanese Kuomintang (KMT).

Data and Methods

Norris (2019) suggested that manifestos representing party ideologies and issue positions, quantify party stances on a wide range of issues more clearly than other indicators. This research used party manifesto data to identify party positions. The Manifesto Project reviews spatial positions of over 1000 parties in more than 50 countries since 1945. It allocates parties into policy positions across a great many issues, including the ideology. The dataset breaks manifestos into quasi-sentences and makes experts code them in terms of frequency of use. The Manifesto Project is widely used to assess policy positions of parties (Budge 2001). This research examines 1,939 manifesto documents, which were released between the years 1920 and 2018 in 56

democratic countries (Volkens et al. 2017).

To account for the relationship between parties' environmentalist positions and vote shares, a series of variables were employed. "pervote" was used as the dependent variable of the analysis. The variable ranges from 0.00 to 90,65 and presents the vote share of each political party for each election. Parties' programmatic positions on environmentalism were assessed with the variable "environmentalism+" which operates as the key independent variable. The environmentalism variable ranges from 0,00 to 75,41 and higher values represent more frequent positive mentions of the environment in party manifestos. The variable "parfam" is used to categorize party families. In the dataset, political parties were categorized according to their party family locations, i.e., ecologist, left-socialist/other left, social democratic, liberal, Christian democrat, conservative, nationalist, agrarian, ethnic-regional, and special issue parties. To reveal the pure environmentalism-vote share relationship, democracy, freedom and human rights, left-right position, free-market economy, and anti-growth economy variables were controlled. In addition, country dummies were controlled to account for any unmeasured cross-country variations.

Findings

Figure 1 shows party families' mean ideological positions on a left-right ideological index. Not surprisingly, (1) socialist/other left, (2) ecologist, (3) social democratic, and (4) ethnic regional party families mean ideological positions are below zero. On the other hand, (5) special issue, (6) liberal, (7) agrarian, (8) Christian democrat, (9) conservative, and (10) nationalist party families are above zero. It should be noted that some special issue parties could be regarded as slightly leftist, as shown with the confidence intervals in the figure, nevertheless, their mean position is above zero. Based on this result, analyses will be restricted to the first four party families.

Figure 2 shows mean vote shares of four party families by election year with the lowess technique. Lowess was preferred, as we are more interested in longer trends than shorter fluctuations in this analysis. It is seen that in a 100-year period from the 1920s to the 2020s,

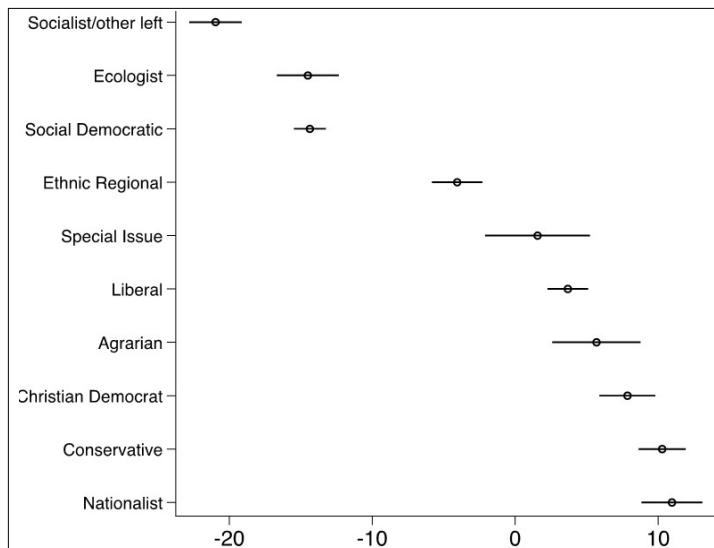


Fig. 1. Ideological Position of Party Families

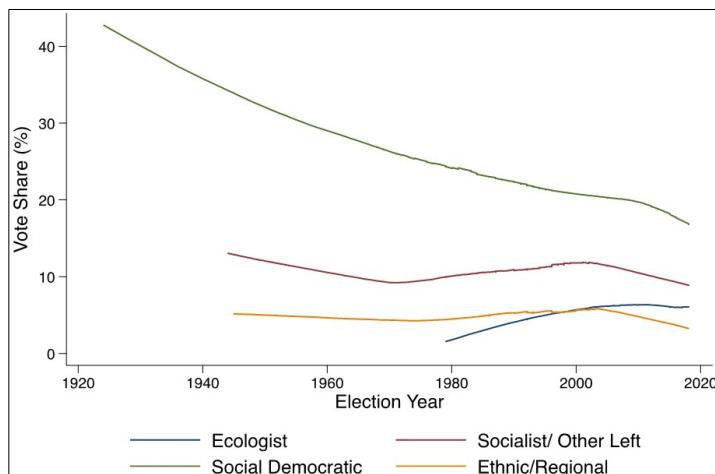


Fig. 2. Vote Share of Party Families by Election Year

social democratic parties' average vote share declined from about 45% to below 20%. On the other hand, socialist/other left parties largely protected their vote share at about 10%. Ecologist parties started to be established in the 1980s, when their vote share was only about 5%. While in the 2020s they reached about 10% vote share. Lastly, ethnic-regional parties' vote share ranged between 5% and 10%.

In Figure 3, scatter plots and fitted lines show the relationship between positive environmentalist mentions and vote shares of parties from four party families. It can be observed that more frequent positive environmentalist mentions are not associated with higher vote shares for any of the party families. Instead, for ecologist,

socialist/other left and ethnic/regional party families, the trend is downwards. Especially for the ecologist parties, the negative trend seem to be interestingly strong. Ecologist parties that mention the environment more often seems to have lower vote shares. In general, the greater number of environmentalist mentions do not seem to bring about higher vote shares for the left-leaning parties, yet to raise this argument, results of inferential statistics are needed (Table 1).

Table 1 shows mean positions of four party families on six issues that are used as independent variables in the below analyses. They are: environmentalism, democracy, freedom/human rights, left-right position, free market economy, and anti-growth economy.

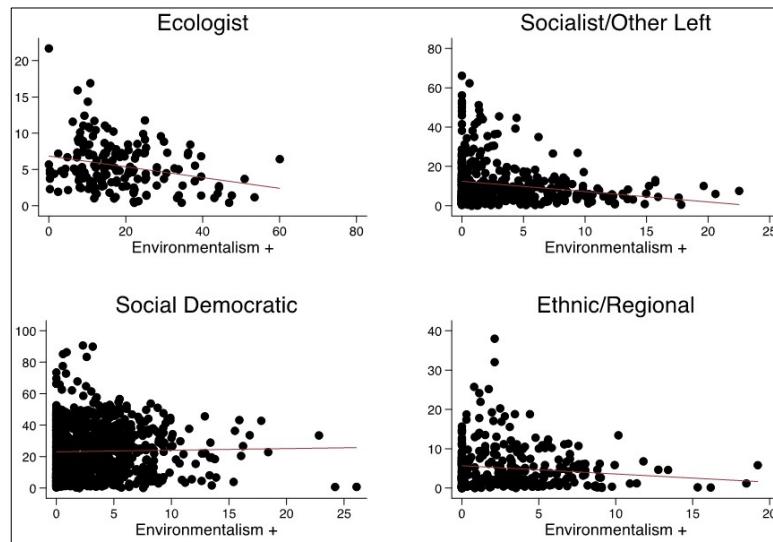


Fig. 3. Environmental Mentions vs. Vote Shares of Party Families

Table 1. Party Family Positions (Mean)

	Environmentalism	Democracy	Freedom/ Human Rights	Left-Right Position	Free Market Economy	Anti- Growth Economy
Ecologist	18.60	4.54	2.72	-14.50	0.35	4.57
Socialist/Other Left	3.23	5.06	2.58	-20.96	0.38	0.66
Social Democratic	2.97	4.19	2.52	-14.36	0.74	0.47
Ethnic/Regional	3.15	4.20	3.55	-4.05	1.42	0.65

Data: Manifesto Project (1920-2018)

As expected, ecologist parties rank the top in the environmentalism score by 18.60, and the gap between them and the other party families is large. When democracy scores are observed, all the party families have scores between 4.19 and 5.06. A similar picture can be seen for freedom/human rights. The differences between party families are marginal. Left-right position scores show that the socialist/other left party family is the leftmost one by -20.96, followed by the ecologist, and social democratic party families by scores around -14 and the ethnic/regional party family by -4.05. For free market economy, party family positions are again quite close. The scores range from 0.35 to 1.42. Lastly, anti-growth economy mentions are very rare in three party families, which produced low scores below 1. Nonetheless, for ecologist parties, this score is 4.57.

Table 2 shows results of four linear regression models predicting vote shares of each party family. The key independent variable is environmentalism, gauging positive environmentalist mentions of party manifestos. Democracy, freedom/human rights, left-right

position, free market economy, and anti-growth economy were recruited as controls. Country dummies were also controlled to capture unmeasured variations across countries.

The first model shows results of the regression analysis for ecologist parties. More frequent environmentalist signals are not associated with higher levels of vote shares for any of the party families. Instead, interestingly, for ecologist parties, more frequent mentions of environmentalism are statistically significantly associated with lower vote shares ($p=0.004$). In other words, the more frequently ecologist parties mention the environment, the less likely they are to be voted for. The picture is similar for the social democratic party family. More frequent mentions of environmentalism are associated with lower levels of vote share for this party family too ($p=0.022$). For left-socialist or other left ($p=0.256$) and ethnic-regional ($p=0.561$) party families, the relationship is not statistically significant. Lastly, it should be noted that, in general, models are powerful, producing from 0.41 to 0.58 adjusted R2 scores.

Table 2. Linear Regression Models Predicting Vote Share of Party Families

		Party Family			
		Ecologist	Socialist/ Other Left	Social Democratic	Ethnic-Regional
Environmentalism (+)	-0.06	-0.10	-0.31	0.04	
	(0.02)**	(0.09)	(0.13)*	(0.07)	
Democracy	-0.18	0.04	-0.00	0.06	
	(0.06)**	(0.06)	(0.00)	(0.06)	
Freedom/ Human Rights	0.02	-0.17	-0.38	0.04	
	(0.09)	(0.11)	(0.15)*	(0.05)	
Left-Right Position	-0.01	0.07	0.00	0.06	
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)**	
Free Market Economy	0.00	-0.47	-0.23	0.25	
	(0.34)	(0.47)	(0.37)	(0.13)	
Anti-Growth Economy (+)	-0.04	-0.28	-1.68	0.50	
	(0.04)	(0.18)	(0.37)***	(0.18)**	
Country Dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<i>Intercept</i>	7.30	9.49	44.16	0.97	
<i>Adjusted R</i> ²	0.5830	0.5818	0.4174	0.4814	
<i>N. of Obs.</i>	169	465	883	336	

Data: Manifesto Project (1920-2018)

Conclusion and Discussion

While in the 1950's and the 1960's, ideology and social class were strong factors accounting for voting decisions. According to the class-voting theory, while working-class individuals of the society vote for left-wing political parties, middle-class persons vote for right-wing ones. Nevertheless, it was suggested that owing to a series of factors including globalization, urbanization, post-modernism, and deindustrialization processes, as well as the rise of the knowledge economy and growing middle classes in the Western countries, ideology and class have largely lost their ability to predict voting preferences (Inglehart 1977, Backes and Moreau 2008). The working-class individuals' increased level of education and income on one hand and middle-class individuals' proletarianization on the other, as well as post-materialist individualism and upward mobility, might have caused blurring of the sharp contrasts between these classes. Owing to these historical, political, social, and economic reasons, working- and middle-class characteristics of voters weakened (Evans, Heath, and Payne 1991, Evans, Heath, and Payne 1999, Clarke et al. 2004). As the boundaries between the left and right became vague, values became more influential in determining political contrasts. Economy-related cleavages were superseded with value-related ones and many cross-class divides emerged. To give an

example, GAL-TAN was suggested as a new dimension of political competition, which is gradually replacing the traditional left-right cleavage in the post-industrialized societies of the West. Representing the controversies of the old and new politics, while GAL represents green, alternative, and libertarian values, TAN represents traditional, authoritarian, and nationalist ones. On the GAL pole, values such as environmentalism, multiculturalism, freedoms, and human rights, and on the TAN pole, values such as nationalism, authoritarianism, conservatism, traditional values, and law and order are being promoted.

A new line of research emerged to understand the mechanisms underlying declining class-vote association. The top-down or preference-shaping approach suggested that restricted choice sets offered by parties are responsible for the decline of the relevance of traditional economy-based divides. Parties aimed to increase their grip on the median voter with catchall strategies (Przeworski 1985, Webb 2004). According to the advocates of this approach, re-theorization of the left was a post-industrial party-led adaptation strategy that started with policy shifts sent by the parties and ended with the attenuation of the traditional class-vote link. To combat loss of class-based votes, left-wing political parties started to forge more electorally attractive programs. In these programs, in order to broaden their appeal to a wider constituency, they targeted the electoral attention of the middle class by making centripetal

maneuvers and sending centrist programmatic signals. As a result, centrifugal forces have gained power in politics, and political agendas have converged in the center. More specifically to the left, as a result of economically centrist, social liberal third-way policy signals, the working class is alienated from the left-wing parties (Evans 2000; Heath, Evans, and Payne 1995; 1999, Evans and Tilley 2012a; Elff 2009, Jansen, Evans, and DeGraaf 2013; Abou-Chadi and Wagner 2019; Karreth et al. 2013).

Greening was one part of this strategy. Most radical left parties modified their positions towards green stances. In many countries their centripetal policy repositioning alienated their traditional working-class supporters and weakened the class-voting link. This research tested whether the greening of the left is an effective electoral strategy for the left-wing political parties to increase their vote share. It is, to my knowledge, the first attempt to test the supply-side argument from the effectiveness of environmentalism perspective. More frankly, this research was set to find an answer to the question of whether sending more frequent environmental signals has increased the vote share of the left-wing political parties. Findings suggest that greening is not an effective adaptation strategy for left-wing political parties. In other words, electoral success of parties of any

left-wing party family is not due to the frequency of green signals. There may be some other factors at work. One potential factor is economy. Gourley and Khamis (2023) showed that electoral success of green parties could be associated with economic determinants (see also Richardson 1995). They explored whether local economic conditions affect green parties' electoral success and found a positive association between economic growth and vote shares of Green parties in national elections. A one percent increase in real quarterly GDP change is associated with a 0.64 percent increase in European Green Party's and a 9.6 percent increase in Green Party's vote share. Also being party of a coalition government decreases Green party's vote share by 1.5 percent (Gourley and Khamis 2023).

This research has shown that greening is not an effective electoral strategy for left-wing political parties. Yet, it does not answer the question of why not. It is difficult to understand, especially for ecologist parties, why greater frequency of environmentalist mentions is associated with lower levels of vote share. Maybe extra votes are not associated with green programmatic signals but with other party-led ones. A further study could assess this.

A better understanding of the electoral effectiveness of party policy shifts should be developed to move the debate forward

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