

Paper Stones Revisited:

Class Voting, Unionization and the Electoral Decline of the Mainstream Left

Line Rennwald (European University Institute)

and

Jonas Pontusson (Université de Genève)

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Abstract

Relying on post-election surveys, this paper analyzes how class and union membership condition voters' abandonment of mainstream Left parties and the alternatives chosen by former mainstream-Left voters in the period 2001-14. Inspired by Przeworski and Sprague's *Paper Stones* (1986), our analysis shows that Left parties face a trade-off between working-class and middle-class support and that unionization renders workers more loyal to Left parties that mobilize middle-class support. Union membership increases the likelihood that working-class citizens who abandon the mainstream Left continue to vote. It also increases the likelihood that voters abandon the mainstream Left in favor of radical Left parties while it decreases the likelihood that they turn to the radical Right. Controlling for union membership, middle-class leavers are less likely to abstain from voting and less likely to vote for the radical Right than their working-class counterparts. Middle-class leavers are more likely to vote for Greens and for mainstream Center-Right parties.

Pundits and scholars alike have conceived recent elections in liberal democracies as an epic struggle between, on the one hand, establishment politicians and parties and, on the other hand, “populist” challengers. Without denying the importance of the rise populism and, in particular, the radical Right, we wish to bring to the fore and shed light on another, related, feature of recent elections: the sharp decline of support for mainstream Left parties. The most dramatic manifestation of this phenomenon is the collapse of the Greek Socialist Party (PASOK), whose vote share fell from 43.9% in 2009 to 12.3% in 2012 and then to 6.3% in 2015. At the other end of Western Europe, the newly-formed Social Democratic Alliance of Iceland nearly replicated this spectacular collapse, falling from 29.8% of the vote in 2009 to 12.9% in 2013 and 6.6% in 2016. Under less crisis-ridden circumstances, in core EU countries, the Dutch Labor Party and the French Socialists also collapsed at the polls in the first half of 2017 (falling from 24.8% to 5.7% and from 29.4% to 7.4% respectively). As we shall document below, other mainstream Left parties have so far averted disaster, but Anglophone Labor parties, Northern European Social Democratic parties and Southern European Socialist parties have all suffered major setbacks in recent elections.

Relying the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), we present results for two separate analyses of election surveys from sixteen countries over the period 2001-14 (for a total of 37 elections).¹ Restricted to survey respondents who (by their own account) voted for the mainstream Left in the previous election, the first analysis addresses the question of who has abandoned these Left parties.

Restricted to survey respondents who voted for the mainstream Left in the previous election but not in the current election, the second analysis addresses the question of where former mainstream-Left voters have gone. Did they stop voting altogether or did they turn some other party family (the radical Left, the Greens, the Center-Right or the radical Right)?

Our approach to these questions is inspired by *Paper Stones*, the classic 1986 book by Adam Przeworski and John Sprague. Famously, Przeworski and Sprague (1986) argue that socialist parties face an electoral dilemma: they need middle-class support in order to obtain a parliamentary majority, but they tend to lose working-class support as they appeal to middle-class voters. In addition, Przeworski and Sprague argue that unions reinforce the class identity of working-class voters and thereby mitigate the electoral dilemma of socialist parties. Now, it is well established that unionization rates have fallen significantly across all OECD countries over the last 20-30 years (see Pontusson 2013). Following Przeworski and Sprague's reasoning, we hypothesize that union decline renders the trade-off between working-class and middle-class support more severe and that this accounts for some of the electoral difficulties that mainstream Left parties are currently experiencing.

To anticipate, our analysis shows that middle-class voters are more likely to abandon the mainstream Left than working-class voters when the mainstream Left primarily mobilizes working-class voters. Conversely, working-class voters are more likely to abandon mainstream Left parties that primarily mobilize middle-class voters. Consistent with Przeworski and Sprague's argument, we also find that

union membership renders working-class voters less likely to abandon mainstream Left when they appeal to middle-class voters. However, the main effect of union membership in our analysis is that it renders middle-income voters less likely to abandon the mainstream Left parties, regardless of the party's class profile.

The results of our analysis of the trajectories of the leavers can be summarized as follows. Union membership increases the likelihood that working-class citizens abandon the mainstream Left continue to vote. Also, union membership increases the likelihood that voters abandon the mainstream Left in favor of radical Left parties while it decreases the likelihood that they turn to the radical Right. Controlling for union membership, middle-class leavers are less likely to abstain from more voting and less likely to vote for the radical Right than their working-class counterparts. Middle-class leavers are also more likely to vote for Greens and for mainstream Center-Right parties.

In what follows, we begin by documenting the decline of mainstream Left parties. We then discuss *Paper Stones* and articulate the specific hypotheses that we seek to test. In the third section, we briefly discuss data and methodology. While the fourth section presents our analysis of how union membership and the class profile of parties condition the probability that working-class and middle-class voters will abandon the mainstream Left, the fifth section presents our analysis of where the leavers have gone.

1. The electoral decline of the mainstream Left

As noted above, the analyses that we will present below are based on election surveys over the period 2001-14. Pooling all of our election surveys, 68.0% of respondents who voted for the mainstream Left in the previous election stayed with the mainstream Left and 74.1% of those who voted for the mainstream Left in the current election also voted for the mainstream Left in the previous election. Conversely, 32% of mainstream-Left voters in the previous either abstained from voting or voted for another party while 25.9% of mainstream-Left voters in the current election were newcomers. By comparison, electoral support for Center-Right parties was far more stable over this period, with only 18.8% of their voters leaving and newcomers accounting for 20.9% of their electorate.² While newcomers outnumbered leavers by two percentage points for Center-Right parties, leavers outnumbered newcomers by six percentage points for the mainstream Left.

For the sixteen countries included in our analysis, Table 1 tracks the electoral decline of mainstream Left parties over a longer period of time, based on official election results. The first column records the post-war election year in which the vote share of the mainstream Left party peaked and the second column records the most recent election.³ In the following three columns, we adjust for extraordinary elections by reporting the average vote share of the mainstream Left party over two elections: (1) for the peak election and the immediately following election; (2) for the best two elections in the 1990s; and (3) for the two most recent elections. Finally, the last two columns of Table 1 report on changes in the average vote share

from the 1990s to the most recent elections, with change measured first in percentage points and then as a percentage of the 1990s vote share.

[Table 1]

Four heuristic purposes, Table 1 sorts mainstream Left parties into four groups. The first group consists of the three Social Democratic parties that most successfully mobilized working-class voters in the wake of democratization—the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish Social Democrats. Aided by the fragmentation of the Center-Right (Castles 1978), these parties held a position of political dominance for several decades, starting in the 1930s. The second group consists of Left parties that became one of the two main electoral contenders in the post-war period, competing with a unified Center-Right party. This group includes the Anglophone Labour parties, operating under more or less majoritarian electoral rules, but also the Austrian and German Social Democratic parties. The third group consists of an assortment of Left parties that have in common that they have always faced strong competition from at least two Center-Right parties. Some of these parties have been confined to a more or less permanent minority status. Finally, the fourth group consists of the French, Greek and Spanish Socialists, who made dramatic electoral advances in the early 1980s, emerging as one the two main electoral contenders and, in the Greek and Spanish cases, briefly appeared to be on the verge of becoming dominant parties.⁴

For our purposes, the most striking feature of Table 1 is that the average vote share of all mainstream Left parties, regardless of their past performance, fell from 1990s to the most recent elections. Across the sixteen countries, the decline in the

average vote share from the 1990s to the two most recent elections averaged 10.3 percentage points. It should come as no surprise that when change is measured in percentage points, small parties have generally done better than large parties.

When we instead measure change relative to initial levels, the Greek Socialists and the Icelandic Social Democratic Alliance stand out as the mainstream Left parties that have done worst at the polls while the British and Irish Labour, along with the French and Swiss Socialists, are the parties whose vote shares have held up best.⁵

One other feature of Table 1 deserves to be noted. With two exceptions (Finland and Iceland), all these parties peaked well before the 1990s and suffered substantial vote-share losses from their peak to the 1990s. Due to data availability, our analysis focuses on the period 2001-14. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the electoral decline of the mainstream Left that occurred over this period is the continuation of general trend that dates back to the 1970s (see Rennwald 2015). Arguably, the recent rise of right-wing populist parties with a strong working-class base should be seen as a late manifestation (rather than the cause) of the electoral decline of the mainstream Left.⁶

2. Conceptual framework and hypotheses

The analytical history of electoral socialism that Przeworski and Sprague present in *Paper Stones* (1986) proceeds from the “constructivist” (or Gramscian) propositions that the activities of political parties determine the voting behavior of individuals and that there is nothing natural about politics being organized on the

basis of class divisions in society. In Przeworski and Sprague's words, "the claims of workers are particularistic, and when workers organize as a class they seek to impose upon the entire society the image of classes, each endowed with particularistic interests." By contrast, capitalists represent themselves as a class "only in moments of folly." Their response to the particularistic claims of the working class "is not a particularism of the bourgeoisie but ideologies which deny altogether the salience of class interests, either by posing a universalistic model of society composed of individual-citizens whose interests are in harmony or by evoking alternative particularisms of religion, language, ethnicity, etc." In short, the salience of class for politics and, in particular, for the political behavior of workers depends on the presence of political parties that seek to mobilize workers as a class (Przeworski and Sprague 1986:8-10).

Przeworski and Sprague proceed to document that, contrary to the expectations of Marxists and other 19th-century socialist thinkers, the development of industrial capitalism did not usher in the demise of the middle classes and the proletarianization of society as a whole. Farmers, shopkeepers and other small businessmen were displaced, but they were replaced by new middle classes as well as manual workers. In no country did the working class ever become the majority of the electorate in the wake of democratization. Indeed, Przeworski and Sprague's census-based estimates for seven West European countries indicate that workers as a proportion of the electorate peaked some time between 1900 and 1950. Workers constituted just about 50% of the Belgian electorate in the early 1920s, but in the

other six countries their share of the electorate never exceeded 40% (Przeworski and Sprague 1986:39).

Recognizing that the mobilization of working-class voters could not possibly deliver the electoral majority that would make societal reform by democratic means possible, socialist parties began to court other electoral constituencies—in the first, small farmers and farm laborers, but also, increasingly, the new middle classes. In pursuing what Przeworski and Sprague refer to as “supraclass strategies,” they abandoned or, at least, postponed some of their more radical transformative ambitions. This is a familiar story and its retelling by Przeworski and Sprague is not terribly distinctive.

What makes *Paper Stones* an exciting and important book is the light that it sheds on the following puzzle: firmly committed to democratic principles and pursuing supraclass strategies, social parties have only rarely succeeded in mobilizing a majority of voters. Their rapid rise in the wake of democratization was in fact followed, from the 1940s, by a long period of electoral stagnation. Przeworski and Sprague’s explanation of this stagnation boils down to the following proposition: seeking to mobilize support among non-workers by making supraclass appeals, socialist parties undermine the salience of class to workers and thereby enable other political parties to compete for the working-class vote.

Analyzing aggregate voting patterns in seven countries from 1900 to 1980, Przeworski and Sprague identify a persistent trade-off: as socialist parties have gained support among other classes, they have invariably lost support among

workers. At the same time, however, their analysis shows that the steepness of this trade-off varies considerably across countries and, as a result, so does the “carrying capacity” of socialist parties. Historically, the trade-offs faced by Danish, Norwegian and Swedish Social Democrats have been less steep than the trade-off faced by their Belgian, Finnish, French and German counterparts. In other words, the Scandinavian parties suffered smaller losses among working-class voters as they expanded their electoral base beyond the working class.

In seeking to explain why the trade-off varies across countries (and to some extent over time as well), Przeworski and Sprague suggest that the nature of the competitors that socialist parties face matters, but their main line of argumentation pertains to the role of unions. Unions, they argue, serve to sustain the class identity of workers and thereby reduce the need for socialist parties to emphasize class politics in order to preserve the electoral support of workers. According to Przeworski and Sprague, the union effect on the electoral trade-off faced by socialist parties is particularly strong when union membership is concentrated in a single confederation and when collective bargaining is centralized.⁷

As noted by Sainsbury (1990), Przeworski and Sprague’s argumentation proceeds from a narrow and (arguably) old-fashioned conceptualization of the “working class” as consisting exclusively of manual workers employed in mining, manufacturing, construction, transport and agriculture. Sainsbury (1990:34) also points that Przeworski and Sprague’s empirical analysis does not involve any direct observations of the proportion of workers voting socialist. Instead, Przeworski and

Sprague estimate this critical parameter based on the proportion of workers within the population eligible to vote and official election results.

Our individual-level analysis of survey data is meant to complement Przeworski and Sprague's macro-level historical analysis of election results. Analyzing survey data allows us to observe the class profile of Left party electorates directly and to determine whether or not there exists a trade-off between working-class support and middle-class support at the individual level or, in other words, to determine whether or not working-class voters become less loyal supporters of Left parties as these parties mobilize other voters. The limitations of our alternative empirical strategy also deserve to be noted. Comparable cross-national survey data are only available for a relatively short and recent period. As a result, we cannot address the question of whether or not the electoral trade-off identified by Przeworski and Sprague has changed over time, nor can we estimate the slope of the trade-off for different countries.

Much like *Paper Stones*, we rely on a simple dichotomy between, on the one hand, the working class and, on the other hand, the middle class. But our definition of "the working class" is broader than Przeworski and Sprague's definition. As documented by Oesch (2006) and many others, low-skilled individuals employed in services occupy disadvantageous positions in the labor market that are comparable to (or worse than) the positions of "manual workers" in terms of job security and occupational status. Many of these individuals earn less than manual workers. They are less likely to be unionized and may be less likely to self-identify as

“working class,” but they certainly cannot be considered members of “the middle class” by any objective criteria.

Oesch (2006) proposes a schema whereby occupations are assigned to “classes” that are defined not only by labor-market position, but also by “work logics.” With respect to labor-market position, Oesch distinguishes between low-skill and high-skill occupations. On the second dimension, he identifies four distinctive work logics: organizational, technical, interpersonal and independent. Combining the two dimensions yields eight “classes.” Retaining Oesch’s classification of occupations, we simplify his class schema by conceiving the working class as composed of “service workers” and “production workers” and the middle class as encompassing the other four classes characterized by dependent employment: “office clerks,” “socio-cultural (semi-)professionals,” “technical (semi-)professionals” and “(junior) managers.”

Needless to say, we lose information (or precision) by focusing on the electoral behavior of these large classes. In particular, our analysis in this paper ignores the distinction between old and new middle classes that features so prominently in recent literature on electoral realignments (e.g., Kitschelt and Rehm 2015, Häusermann and Kriesi 2015). We do not wish to deny the distinctiveness of “socio-cultural professionals” or, more generally, the relevance of work experiences for political behavior. To reiterate, the main objective of this paper is to evaluate the trade-off thesis advanced by Przeworski and Sprague. From the perspective of Przeworski and Sprague, the critical question is how working-class voters respond to Left parties’ efforts to mobilize middle-class support and there is no obvious

reason why this response should differ depending on the segments of the (broad) middle class that Left parties target. In addition, existing studies suggest that the distinctiveness of socio-cultural professionals, relative to the old middle class(es), primarily have to do with their proximity to Greens and other “New Left” parties. The proximity of the new middle class to mainstream Left parties is less clear and varies much more across countries (see Müller 1999, Dolezal 2010, Oesch 2013, Arndt 2014, Rennwald 2017, Oesch and Rennwald 2017).

By our broad definition, the electoral weight of the working class has declined since the 1970s, but this decline is much less dramatic than the decline of the manual working class. Pooling CSES data for 2001-14, Table 2 presents estimates of the size working class and the middle class relative to the electorate as whole (including non-voters) in our sixteen countries. The two classes in Oesch’s eight-class schema that we do not recode as either “working class” or “middle class” are included here under the heading “employers, small business and self-employed.”⁸

[Table 2]

Table 2 confirms the basic premise of *Paper Stones* in that the working class, even broadly conceived, does not constitute an electoral majority in any of these countries. Table 2 also shows that the working class remains a large electoral constituency, which Left parties ignore at their own peril. The working-class share of the electorate ranges between a low of 22% in Switzerland and a high of 44% in the UK, but Switzerland is something of an outlier. In ten out of sixteen countries, the working-class share of the electorate ranges between 35% and 44%.

Distinguished by the fact that business owners and self-employed account for nearly a third of the electorate, Spain stands out as the one country in which the working class is larger than the middle class. In Finland, these two classes are of roughly equal size.

The decline of the working class might be invoked to explain some of the decline of mainstream Left parties since the 1970s. As documented by a number of studies, however, the period since the 1970s is also characterized by a marked decline of working-class support for mainstream Left parties. As emphasized by Gingrich and Häusermann (2015) as well as Rennwald (2015), Left parties have partly offset their losses among working-class voters by mobilizing middle-class voters (see also Knutsen 2006 and Arndt 2013). This, then, brings us back to the trade-off between working-class and middle-class support.

In principle, the trade-off argument pertains to voters switching to Left parties as well as switching away from Left parties. For the time period for which we have the necessary individual-level data (2001-14), it makes sense to focus on voters leaving the mainstream Left. Following Przeworski and Sprague, we hypothesize that the propensity of working-class and middle-class supporters to abandon mainstream Left parties is conditional on the class profile of these parties. Empirically, we operationalize the class profile of a party by the ratio of the share of workers in the party's electorate divided by the share of workers in the entire electorate. A ratio smaller than 1 indicates that the electorate as a whole is more working-class than the party's electorate, while a ratio above 1 indicates that the party's electorate is more working-class than the electorate as a whole. The higher

the ratio, the stronger is the working-class profile of the party. To minimize endogeneity, our measures of the working-class profile of mainstream Left parties are based on survey respondents' party choices in the previous election.⁹ As shown in Appendix 2, the working-class profile of mainstream Left parties in our CSES-based dataset (consisting of 37 elections in 16 countries) ranges between 0.61 (Switzerland in 2011) and 1.53 (Sweden in 2014).¹⁰

For the purposes of this paper, we propose to bracket the thorny question of why the class profile of Left party electorates varies across countries and over time. Suffice it to say that, much like Przeworski and Sprague, we assume that class profiles partly reflect strategic choices by Left parties. As suggested by recent literature that emphasizes “supply-side” explanations of class voting (e.g. Evans and De Graaf, 2013; Rennwald and Evans 2014, Rennwald 2015), parties seeking to appeal to working-class voters will emphasize different issues in their election campaigns (not only or primarily in their election manifestos) and position themselves differently on some issues than parties seeking to appeal to middle-class voters. Arguably, group-based appeals of a rhetorical or symbolic nature and historical legacies also matter. While we do not assume that more “leftist” Left parties necessarily have a stronger working-class profile, we do assume that class profiles realized in the previous election influence voters' perceptions of parties in the current election.

As summarized above, the core argument advanced by Przeworski and Sprague in *Paper Stone* implies the following hypothesis:

H1: *Working-class voters are more likely to abandon the mainstream Left than middle-class voters when the working-class profile of the mainstream Left is weak. Conversely, middle-class voters are more likely to abandon the mainstream Left than working-class voters when the working-class profile of the mainstream Left is strong.*

Przeworski and Spague's discussion of the role of unions in turn implies the following:

H2: *Unionized working-class voters are less responsive to the class profile of the mainstream Left than unorganized workers; i.e., they are less likely to abandon the mainstream when its working-class profile is weak.*

As indicated already, we set out to test these hypotheses using a broad, more up-to-date, definition of the working class rather than Przeworski and Sprague's narrow definition. We also go beyond their discussion by exploring the effects of union membership among middle-class voters. Przeworski and Spargue seem to conceive unionization as exclusively a working-class phenomenon, but we know that unionization spread to middle-class occupations in many countries in the 1960s and 1970s.¹¹ What are the implications of middle-class unionization for the electoral dilemma facing the Left? There are two possibilities (and they are not mutually exclusive). First, middle-class unionization might make it possible for Left parties to mobilize middle-class electoral support on terms that enable them to preserve the loyalty of their working-class supporters. Secondly, it seems reasonably to suppose that unionized middle-class voters may be more attracted to Left parties with a strong working-class profile. To explore the first idea would

require us to construct yet another macro variable (unionization among middle-class supporters of Left parties) and to interact this variable with the class profile of Left parties as well as individual characteristics of survey respondents (class and union membership). With survey data for only 37 elections in 16 countries, we are wary of engaging in such an exercise. For the time being, we restrict ourselves to testing the the middle-class equivalent of the second hypothesis:

H3: *Unionized middle-class voters are less responsive to the class profile of the mainstream Left than unorganized middle-class voters; i.e., they are less likely to abandon the mainstream when its working-class profile is strong.*

The voting trajectories of those who abandon the mainstream Left is not a question discussed at any length in *Paper Stones*. As noted above, Przeworski and Sprague's core argument is that supra-class strategies appeal to voters as individual citizens and thus turn workers into issue-oriented voters without strong partisan attachments (e.g., Przeworski and Sprague 1986:51). The implication would seem to be that working-class leavers might go anywhere and should not be expected to behave differently from middle-class leavers. At the same time, however, Przeworski and Sprague (1986:79) suggest that the existence of rival parties that appeal to workers on the basis of class or some other "particularistic" identity renders the Left more vulnerable when it adopts supra-class strategies. While their discussion of this point focuses on competition between socialist and communist parties, they also observe that the existence of "confessional, linguistic and ethnic parties" that appeal to workers renders the trade-off between working-class and middle-class support stronger (Przeworski and Sprague 1986:74).

Going beyond *Paper Stones*, there can be little doubt that working-class households have fared badly by comparison to middle-class households in terms of income growth and economic insecurity since the 1990s. Globalization in general and immigration in particular threaten the economic status of workers to a far greater extent than they threaten the economic status of middle-class professionals. Meanwhile, it seems to be generally true that the policy platforms on which mainstream Left parties have campaigned in elections (and implemented in government) have prioritized fiscal consolidation, at the expense of redistributive social spending, and structural reforms designed to promote labor-market flexibility, supplemented by “social investment.”¹² Against this background, we hypothesize that workers who abandon the mainstream Left do so with other options in mind than their middle-class counterparts. Specifically, we propose the following hypotheses:

H4: *Working-class leavers are more likely than middle-class leavers to abstain from voting.*

H5: *Working-class leavers are more likely than middle-class leavers to vote for “anti-establishment” parties of the radical Left and the radical Right.*¹³

H6: *Working-class leavers are less likely than middle-class leavers to vote for Greens and Center-Right parties.*

Once again, we expect union membership to condition the effects of class. Many studies show that union members are more likely to vote and there is at least some evidence to suggest that the association between union membership and electoral participation is strongest for citizens with low socio-economic status (e.g.,

Kerrissey and Schofer 2013, Rosenfeld 2014). Other studies have shown that union membership is associated with support for redistribution (Mosimann and Pontusson 2017) and also with support for immigration (Donnelly 2016). Importantly for our purposes, Mosimann and Pontusson (2017) find that the union effect on support for redistribution is strongest for individuals with high incomes (or, in our terminology, members of the middle class). Against this background, we test the following hypotheses:

H7: *Union membership reduces the relative propensity of working-class leavers to abstain from voting.*

H8: *Union membership reduces the relative propensity of working-class leavers to vote for the radical Right.*

H9: *Union membership increases the propensity of working-class and middle-class leavers to vote for the radical Left.*

3. Data, variables and model specifications

The two sets of analyses that we present and discuss below are set at the individual level and based on data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems. The CSES is a unique research program that gathers and harmonizes national post-election surveys from around the world.¹⁴ Relying on CSES modules 2–4, we restrict our analysis to advanced industrialized countries in which there is mainstream Left party that has historically sought to mobilize the working class on the basis of a more or less coherent reformist ideology.¹⁵ As noted already, this

leaves us with 37 elections in 16 countries (see appendix 1). At the individual level, both sets of analyses are restricted to survey respondents who can be identified as members of the working class or the middle class based on their occupational status.

As the data are nested, we estimate hierarchical models with country-elections as the level-2 units. In addition, our models include country dummies to take account of the fact that for many countries we have data for more than one election. We apply the sample weights provided by the CSES at level 1. We also apply sample weights at level 2 to correct for differences in sample sizes, since they differ a great deal across elections.

The dependent variables in both sets of analyses are dichotomous. Most political scientists who seek to identify determinants of dichotomous variables opt for a logistic regression model. To accommodate sample weights, we instead opt for linear probability models. As noted by Beck (2015), such models are common in other social sciences, notably economics (Beck 2015).¹⁶

At the individual level, the independent variables of theoretical interest are social class and union membership. Based on Oesch's (2006) classification scheme, we capture the class identity of survey respondent by a dummy for middle class, with working class as the reference category. Similarly, union membership is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 for survey respondents who belong to a union.

In addition, all the analyses presented below include individual-level controls for age, gender and residence (village, small or medium city, suburbs, large city). These

are standard socio-demographic control variables and have been shown to be relevant predictors for mainstream Left voting, but we do not have strong theoretical expectations as to how they might affect probabilities of abandoning the mainstream or trajectories of voters who abandon the mainstream Left.

4. Who has abandoned the mainstream Left?

To begin with, we look at the decision of individual voters to abandon the mainstream Left. For this purpose, we restrict the sample to working-class and middle-class respondents who say that they voted for the mainstream Left party in the previous election. The dependent variable takes the value 1 for respondents who did not vote for the mainstream Left party in the election that just took place and 0 for those who again voted for the mainstream Left party.¹⁷

We are interested in the effects of class and union membership, as individual-level variables, and how they interact with the class profile of the mainstream Left party to determine the probability that an individual will stop voting for this party. To reiterate, the class profile of the party is measured based on voting patterns in the previous election (and varies from one election to another in a given country). In addition to the individual-level control variables mentioned above, our linear probability models include two macro-level control variables: incumbency and the effective number of parties. Incumbency is a dummy variable that assumes the value of 1 if the Left party holds cabinet seats going into the election in question.

We include this variable on the assumption that incumbents are likely to have lost electoral support during the time period covered by our analysis (as illustrated most obviously by the Greek case). Taken from Armingeon *et al.* (2016), the effective number of parties is measured based on the outcome of the previous election.¹⁸ The motivation behind including this variable is the idea that Left parties are likely to do badly when faced with many competitors (and, in particular, with competition from the radical Left and the Right).

The results of estimating five different models are presented in Table 3. Model 1 includes only individual-level variables. In Model 2, we add working-class profile and incumbency and, in Model 3, we add the effective number of parties¹⁹. In Model 4, we add the two-way interaction between class and the class profile of the party. In Model 5, finally, we estimate the three-way interaction between class, union membership and the class profile of the party. Note that all models include a random slope for social class at the country-election level.²⁰

Regarding the direct effects of individual-level variables, we find that union members and older individuals are less likely to abandon the mainstream Left than unorganized and younger individuals. By contrast, there is no significant difference between working-class and middle-class voters in their propensity to abandon the mainstream Left, nor between men and women. We also do not find any significant effects of residence, though the signs of these coefficients suggest that voters in rural areas and small towns are more inclined to turn away from Left parties than voters in large cities and their suburbs. As for the macro-level control variables, the coefficient for incumbency is positive, as expected, but it is not statistically

significant. On the other hand, we do find significant support for the hypothesis that voters are more likely to abandon the mainstream Left parties when these parties face many competitors.

[Table 3]

Turning to the trade-off between working-class and middle-class support, the “raw results” shown in Table 3 are difficult to interpret. Based on Model 4, Figure 1 illustrates the two-way interaction between the respondent’s class and the class profile of the Left party that she voted for in the previous election. Also based on Model 4, Figure 2 in turn shows the average marginal effect of class (i.e., the effect of a respondent being middle class rather than working class) conditional on the degree to which the working-class voters were overrepresented in party’s electorate in the previous election.

[Figures 1-2]

As shown in Figure 1, our results suggest that working-class and middle-class voters alike are more likely stay with Left parties that have a strong working-class profile. It should be noted, however, that the direct effect of class profile is not statistically significant in Table 1. More importantly for our purposes, our results suggests that there is an electoral trade-off along the lines suggested by Przeworski and Sprague: working-class voters are more likely than middle-class voters to abandon the mainstream Left when its working-class profile is weak and middle-class voters are more likely than working-class voters to jump ship when the party’s working-class profile is strong. Note that this trade-off is not very strong from a statistical point of view. The average marginal effects of class when the party’s

working-class profile is weak or strong fail to clear the 95% threshold of statistical significance, but they do clear (or come very close to clearing) the 90% threshold, as shown in Figure 2. With only 37 observations of class profile, a somewhat lenient standard of statistical significance would seem to be in order. It certainly seems premature to reject Hypothesis 1 based on this evidence.

Incorporating the role of unionization into this picture, Figure 3 plots the effect of union membership conditional on class profile for working-class voters while Figure 4 does the same for middle-class respondents. (Both figures are based on Model 5 in Table 3). Consistent with Hypothesis 2, the point estimates shown in Figure 3 suggest that unionized workers may be less likely than unorganized workers to abandon Left parties that appeal to middle-class voters. Again, the point estimates at opposite ends of the class-profile spectrum fail to clear the 95% threshold of statistical significance, but the point estimates for predominantly middle-class Left parties do clear the 90% threshold. The proposition that working-class unionization allows Left parties to reach out to middle-class voters without losing working-class is weakly confirmed by our results.

[Figures 3-4]

For middle-class voters, we find a statistically strong effect of union membership. Contrary to our third hypothesis, this effect is not conditioned by the class profile of Left parties. Regardless of class profile, unionized middle-class voters are much less likely to abandon the mainstream Left than middle-class voters who are not union members.²¹

The trade-off shown in Figures 1-2 disappears when we estimate a logistic model without sample weights for all 37 elections, but we do observe a trade-off of more or less similar magnitude when we estimate a logistic model with data from the sub-sample of countries for which CSES includes at least two election surveys. For the large sample, dropping the one Danish election (2001) suffices to recover the trade-off between middle-class and working-class support at 90% significance. The effects of union membership reported above are robust to these different specifications (results available upon request).

5. Where did they go?

We now turn to the question of where voters who abandoned the mainstream Left have gone or, more precisely, where they went at the time they abandoned the mainstream Left. It is, of course, perfectly possible that some of these voters returned to the mainstream Left in a subsequent election or moved again, to yet another option.²² (CSES data do not allow us trace voter transitions over an more extended period of time).

As indicated above, we consider the following options available to voters who abandon the mainstream Left: (1) non-voting, (2) vote for a Center-Right party, (3) vote for a Green party, (4) vote for a radical Left party or (5) vote for a radical Right party. Again, we are interested in how class and union membership and the interaction between them affect choices among these options. Our analysis here is restricted to “leavers,” i.e., to survey respondents who say that they (a) voted for the

mainstream Left in the previous election and (b) did not vote for the mainstream Left in the current election. As a result, the total number of observations at the individual level is much smaller than in our analysis of the choice to abandon (or stay with) the mainstream Left.

Pooling all 37 elections, the distribution of choices by the 3,218 respondents who abandoned the mainstream Left is as follows: 45% voted for a Center-Right party, 17% voted for the radical Left, 16% did not vote at all, 14% voted for the Greens and 8% voted for the radical Right. The small number of leavers who turned to the radical Right comes as something of a surprise, but other studies (e.g., Evans and Mellon 2016) show that radical Right parties primarily draw voters from the Center-Right and that mainstream-Left leavers who end up voting for the radical Right commonly transition through the Center-Right. It should also be kept in mind that our dataset does not include very recent elections (in which radical Right parties have done well and have perhaps become more direct competitors of the mainstream Left).

For each of the options, we estimate a separate linear probability model with a dichotomous dependent variable: choosing the option or not. As the class profile of the mainstream Left party is no longer relevant, we do not include any macro variables in this analysis. We do include the individual control variables identified earlier. The models are again hierarchical and we weight for sample size.²³ In the models designed to predict voting for Greens, radical Left and radical Right, we drop countries and elections where these parties are not meaningful electoral

competitors.²⁴ Needless to say perhaps, non-voting and voting for a Center-Right party are always an option.²⁵

We begin by estimating models that do not interact class and union membership and then estimate models with interaction terms added. Reported in Appendix 3, the first set of models are less vulnerable to the “small-N problem” and, in any case, provide the most appropriate tests of our baseline hypotheses concerning differences between working-class and middle-class leavers (hypotheses 4-6). Figure 5 summarizes these results graphically. Keeping in mind that the class dummy takes the value of 1 for middle-class respondents, the results confirms our hypotheses that, relative to their middle-class counterparts, working-class voters who leave the mainstream Left are more likely to stop voting (H4) and less likely to vote for Greens and Center-Right parties (H6). Regarding our hypothesis 5, the evidence is mixed: working-class leavers are more likely to vote for the radical Right, but they are not more likely to vote for the radical Left.

[Figure 5]

As shown in Figure 5, the direct effects of union membership are consistently significant and straightforward: controlling for class, union members who abandon the mainstream Left are less likely to stop voting and less likely to vote for the Center-Right as well as the radical Right. They are more likely to vote for the radical Left, but also for Greens. Simply put, union members who abandon mainstream Left parties are more likely to remain on the Left, broadly conceived, than leavers who are not union members.

Figure 6 in turn reports predicted probabilities of choosing any one of the five options, based on estimating models that interact class affiliation and union membership. Setting statistical significance tests aside for the time being, voting for the Center-Right is by far the most common choice of all four types of mainstream-Left leavers. For non-unionized working-class leavers, the rank order of the other options is as follows: (2) non-voting, (3) radical Left, (4) radical Right, and (5) Greens. The rank order for non-unionized middle-class leavers is distinctly different: (2) Greens, (3) radical Left, (4) non-voting and (5) radical Right. In terms of rank ordering, the class-specific effects of union membership can be summarized as follows: for unionized working-class leavers, voting for the radical Left trumps non-voting and for unionized middle-class leavers voting for the radical Left marginally trumps voting for the Greens.

Table 4, finally, shows the class-specific marginal effects of union membership on the probability of leavers choosing each of the five options (based on the interaction models). Our results confirm the hypothesis that union membership reduces the propensity of working-class leavers (but not middle-class leavers) to abstain from voting (H7). They also confirm the hypothesis that union membership increases the probability of both working-class and middle-class leavers turning to the radical Left (H9). However, the negative effect of union membership on the propensity of working-class leavers to vote for the radical Right is not statistically significant (calling H8 into question). Beyond the hypotheses with which we set out, we also find that union membership reduces the probability

of middle-class leavers to vote for the Center-Right as well as the radical Right and that it increases their probability of voting for Greens.

[Table 4]

6. Conclusion

To summarize very briefly, the preceding analysis of CSES data for 2001-14 suggest that the trade-off between working-class and middle-class posited by Przeworski and Sprague (1986) continues to haunt mainstream Left parties. As suggested by Przeworski and Sprague, unionization mitigates this dilemma to some extent and, by extension, union decline might an important factor behind the electoral decline of the mainstream Left.

Going beyond Przeworski and Sprague, our analysis shows that working-class and middle-class voters who abandon the mainstream tend to opt for different alternatives and that some of the effects of union membership are class-specific. Though the mechanisms are different for working-class and middle-class voters, the overall effect of unionization is to sustain electoral support for the broad Left.

In closing, let us briefly mention what we consider to be the main limitations of the preceding analysis and promising avenues for future research. An obvious limitation is that our analysis in this paper does not take into account party platforms or the policies that mainstream Left parties have pursued in government. Another limitation is that our analysis does not capture cross-national and overtime variation in the effects of class, conditional on union membership and the class

profile of parties. To address the question of whether or not electoral trade-offs have become more severe for mainstream Left parties, it would be worthwhile to replicate the macro-level analysis in *Paper Stones* with more recent data, but it would also be interesting to explore election surveys for individual countries going back to the 1960s.

Less obviously perhaps, the preceding analysis assumes that the “union membership” has similar implications across countries and individuals. We have not taken into account that some unions are more closely affiliated with Left parties than others (see Arndt and Rennwald 2016) and that some are more solidaristic than others (Mosimann and Pontusson 2017). There are significant data constraints, but also exciting research opportunities in this domain. Finally, we are keen to explore electoral trade-offs by disaggregating the working class and the middle class into distinct segments.

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Table 1: The vote share of mainstream Left parties

	election years		average vote share			change since 1990s	
	post-1960 peak	most recent	peak+1	best 2 in 1990s	2 most recent	absolute	percentage
1. long-term dominant parties:							
Denmark	1960	2015	42.0	36.7	25.6	-11.1	-30.3
Norway	1957	2017	47.6	36.0	29.1	-6.9	-19.2
Sweden	1968	2014	47.7	41.5	30.9	-10.6	-25.5
2. long-term contenders:							
Australia	1972	2016	49.2	42.2	34.1	-8.1	-19.2
Austria	1979	2017	49.3	40.5	27.7	-12.8	-30.6
Germany	1972	2017	44.2	38.7	23.1	-15.6	-37.0
New Zealand	1972	2017	44.0	36.9	31.0	-5.9	-28.7
UK	1966	2017	45.6	39.1	35.2	-3.9	-10.0
3. permanent also-rans:							
Finland	1995	2015	25.6	25.6	17.8	-7.8	-30.5
Iceland	2003	2017	28.9		8.9	-20.0*	-69.2*
Ireland	1969	2016	15.4	14.9	13.0	-1.9	-12.8
Netherlands	1977	2017	31.1	26.5	15.3	-11.2	-42.3
Switzerland	1963	2015	25.1	22.2	18.8	-3.4	-15.3
4. post-1980 risers:							
France	1981	2017	34.0	22.3	18.3	-4.0	-17.9
Greece	1981	2015	47.0	44.2	9.3	-34.9	-79.0
Spain	1982	2016	46.4	38.2	22.3	-15.9	-41.6

See text for explanation. * = change from peak+1 rather than 1990s. Source: Armingeon et al (2016), supplemented by data from Wikipedia (recent election results).

Table 2: The class composition of the entire electorate, average percentage shares for 2001-14.

	working class	middle class	employers, small business and self-employed
Australia	23	60	17
Austria	37	47	16
Denmark	37	54	9
Finland	43	44	12
France	41	52	7
Germany	37	52	11
Greece	25	45	30
Iceland	38	44	17
Ireland	39	43	18
Netherland	30	58	12
New Zealand	30	51	20
Norway	32	58	10
Spain	42	27	32
Sweden	41	49	10
Switzerland	22	63	15
UK	44	47	10
average	35	50	15

Source: Own calculations based on CSES data.

Table 3: Determinants of abandoning the mainstream Left (multilevel linear probability regression models).

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Union member	-0.050*** (0.014)	-0.050*** (0.014)	-0.051*** (0.013)	-0.051*** (0.013)	-0.038* (0.017)
Middle class	0.006 (0.011)	0.007 (0.011)	0.005 (0.011)	0.002 (0.010)	0.015 (0.011)
Age	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.004*** (0.001)
Female	0.004 (0.012)	0.004 (0.012)	0.003 (0.012)	0.004 (0.012)	0.005 (0.012)
Residence (ref.=large city)					
Village	0.017 (0.015)	0.017 (0.015)	0.015 (0.015)	0.015 (0.015)	0.015 (0.015)
Small/Medium city	0.022 (0.016)	0.022 (0.016)	0.021 (0.016)	0.020 (0.017)	0.021 (0.017)
Suburbs	-0.003 (0.013)	-0.003 (0.013)	-0.004 (0.013)	-0.004 (0.013)	-0.004 (0.013)
Working class profile		-0.219 (0.245)	-0.205 (0.199)	-0.314 (0.195)	-0.423* (0.179)
Incumbency		0.080 (0.056)	0.060 (0.045)	0.060 (0.045)	0.060 (0.045)
No parties			0.143** (0.050)	0.145** (0.051)	0.146** (0.051)
WCprofile*Middle class				0.110+ (0.066)	0.208+ (0.108)
WCprofile*Union member					0.148 (0.134)
Member*Middle class					-0.027 (0.017)
WCprofile*Member*Middle class					-0.142 (0.120)
Constant	0.614** (0.229)	0.537** (0.205)	0.530*** (0.105)	0.532*** (0.105)	0.517*** (0.103)
Random effects					
Level 1 variance	0.010*** (0.002)	0.008*** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.002)
Level 2 variance	0.196*** (0.003)	0.196*** (0.003)	0.196*** (0.003)	0.196*** (0.003)	0.196*** (0.003)
Random slope class	0.001*** (0.001)	0.001*** (0.001)	0.001*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)
Intercept-slope covariance	0.002 (0.004)	0.002 (0.006)	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)
N level-1 (N level-2)	10130 (37)	10130 (37)	10130 (37)	10130 (37)	10130 (37)
AIC	12692.4	12689.0	12670.5	12669.1	12669.3
BIC	12844.1	12855.1	12843.8	12849.7	12871.5
ICC	0.047	0.039	0.046	0.045	0.045
Log likelihood	-6325.2	-6321.5	-6311.2	-6309.6	-6306.6

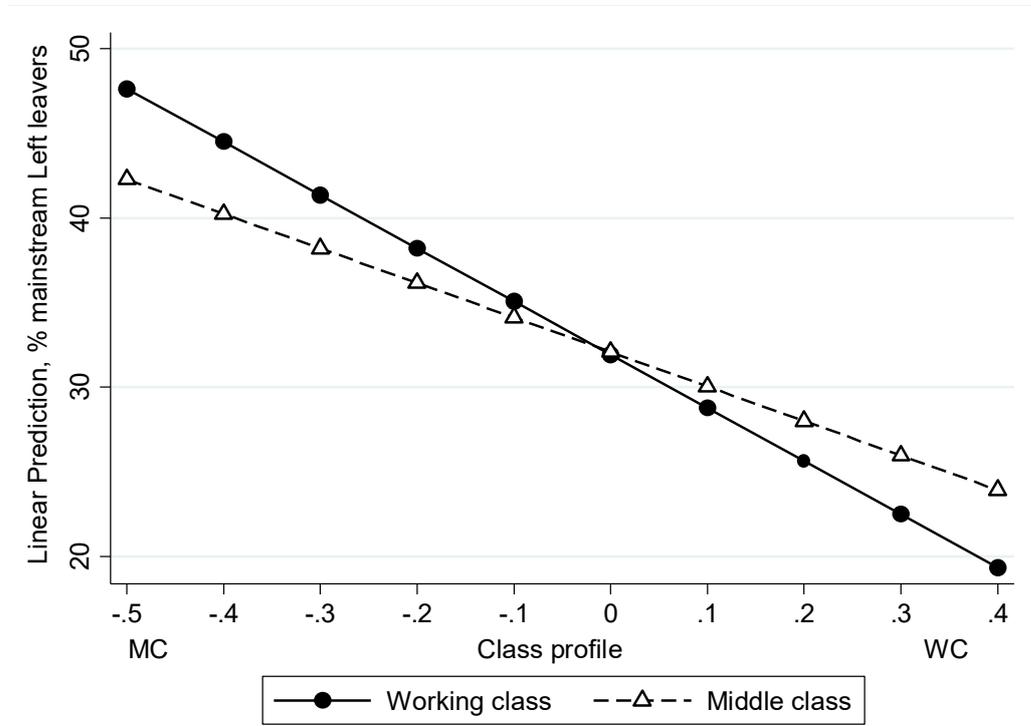
Note: Standard errors in parentheses; + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. All models include country dummies (not shown).

Table 4: Marginal effects of union membership on the choice of options, conditional on class

	working-class	middle-class
Center-Right	+4.2	-9.4*
non-voting	-7.8*	-1.0
radical Left	+6.7*	+10.2*
Greens	+0.2	+5.9*
radical Right	-3.0	-4.2 ⁺

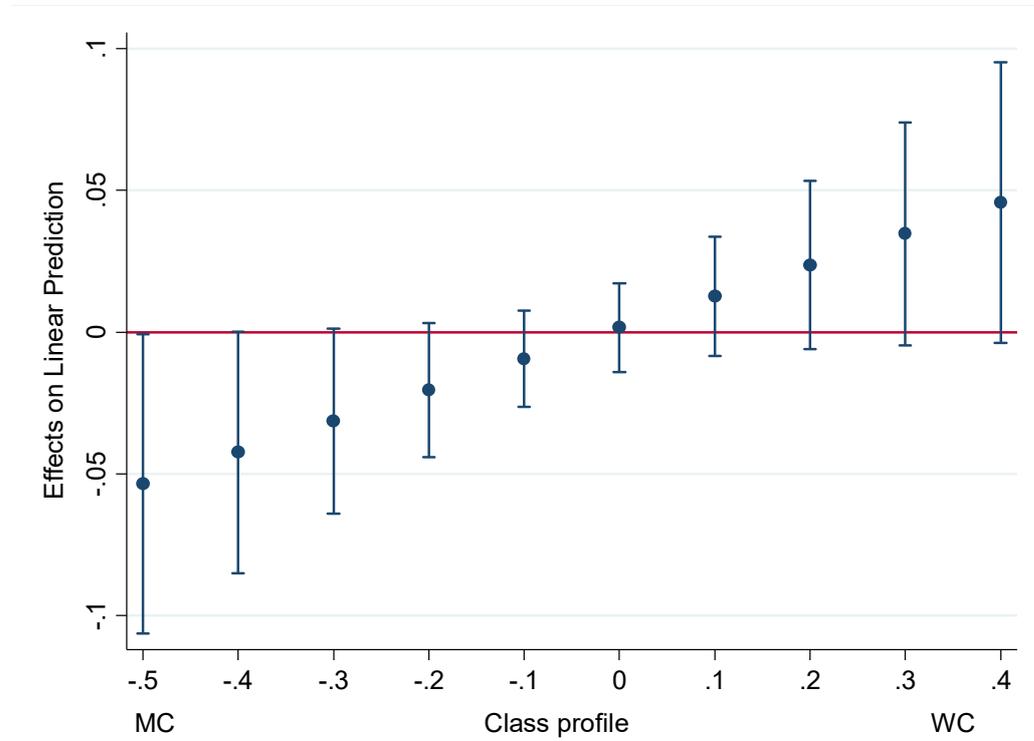
⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$

Figure 1: Predicted probabilities of leaving the mainstream Left by social class conditional of working-class profile.



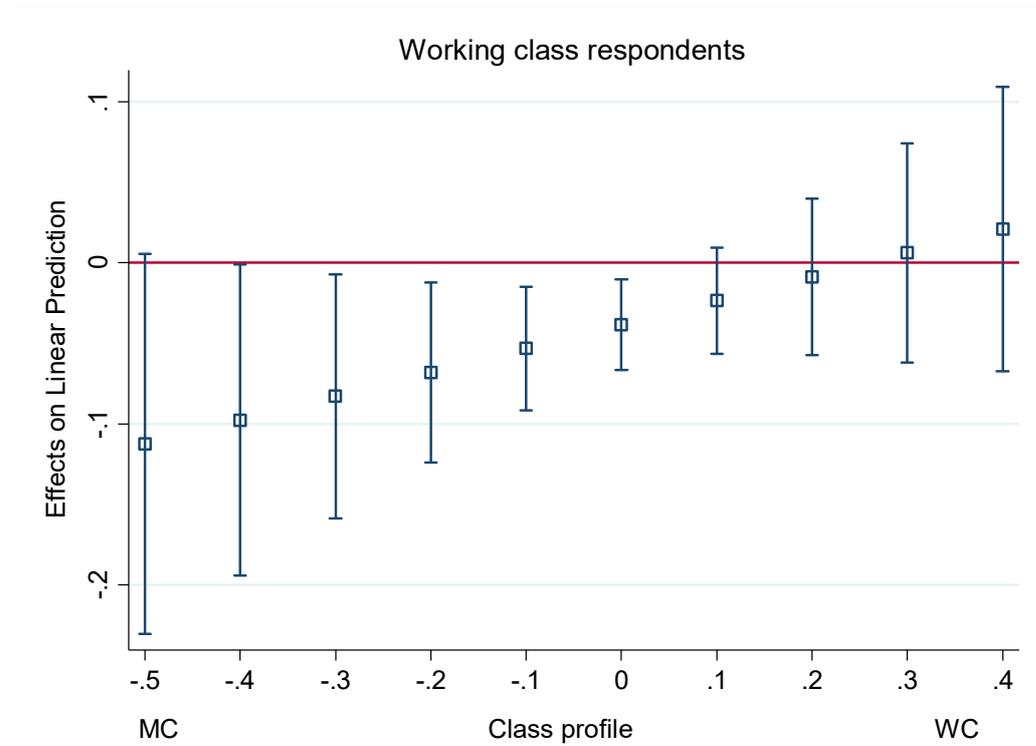
Based on Model 4 in Table 3.

Figure 2: The average marginal effect of class on leaving the mainstream Left conditional on working-class profile, with 90% confidence intervals.



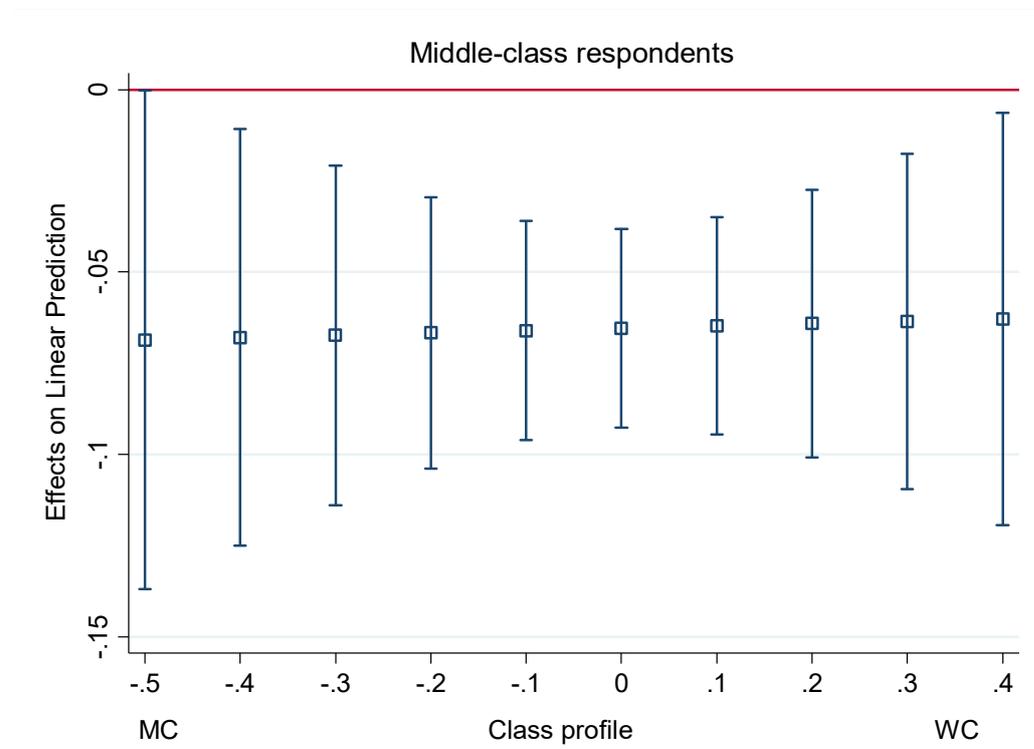
Based on Model 4 in Table 3.

Figure 3: The average marginal effect of union membership on leaving the mainstream Left conditional on working-class profile, working-class respondents, with 90% confidence intervals.



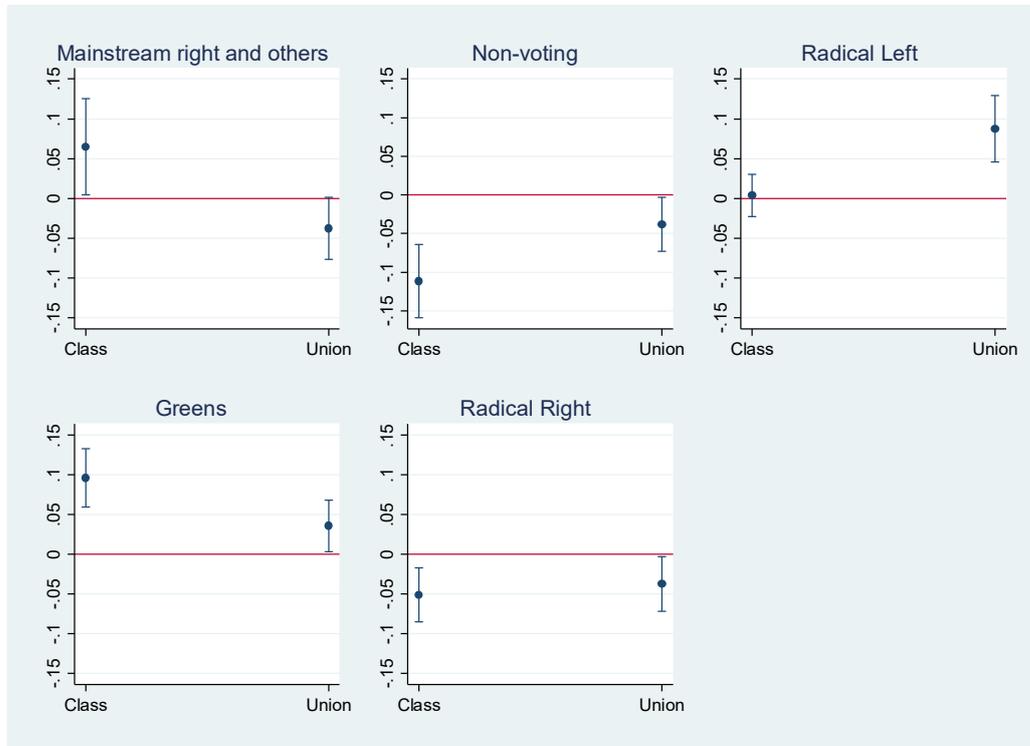
Based on Model 5 in Table 3.

Figure 4: The average marginal effect of union membership on leaving the mainstream Left conditional on working-class profile, middle-class respondents, with 90% confidence intervals.



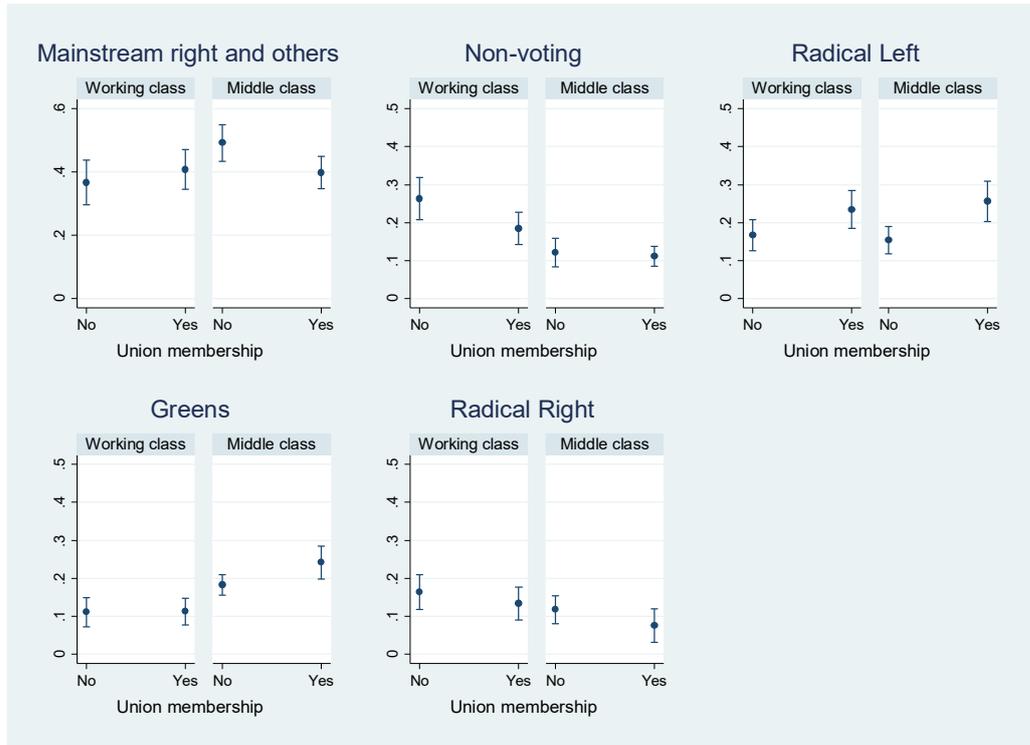
Based on Model 5 in Table 3.

Figure 5: Average marginal effects of class and union membership on the choice of options, with 95% confidence intervals.



See Appendix 3 for full regression results.

Figure 6: Predicted probabilities of choosing the options for combinations of class and union membership, with 95% confidence intervals



Full regression results available upon request.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Countries and elections included in the analysis

Countries	Elections
Australia	2004, 2007, 2013
Austria	2013
Denmark	2001
Finland	2003, 2007, 2011
France	2012
Germany	2002, 2005, 2009, 2013
Greece	2009, 2012
Iceland	2003, 2007, 2009, 2013
Ireland	2002, 2007
Netherlands	2002, 2006, 2010
New-Zealand	2002, 2008, 2011
Norway	2001, 2005, 2009, 2013
Spain	2004
Sweden	2002, 2006, 2014
Switzerland	2011
United Kingdom	2005

Appendix 2: The working-class profile of mainstream Left parties, 2001-14.

	Average	First election	Last election
Australia	1.17	1.18	1.09
Austria	1.20		
Denmark	1.40		
Finland	1.33	1.41	1.37
France	0.93		
Germany	1.08	1.17	1.01
Greece	0.96	0.96	0.97
Iceland	0.91	0.96	0.68
Ireland	0.96	0.91	1.01
Netherlands	1.01	0.95	0.94
New-Zealand	1.20	1.08	1.23
Norway	1.10	0.98	1.15
Spain	1.09		
Sweden	1.35	1.30	1.53
Switzerland	0.61		
United Kingdom	1.14		

Note: The first column displays the average working-class profile over the entire period or the working-class profile in a given election in the only election included in our dataset.

Appendix 3: Linear probability of choosing one option vis-à-vis all others among mainstream-Left leavers

	M1 Mainstream right	M2 Non-voting	M3 Radical Left	M4 Greens	M5 Radical Right
Union member	-0.038 ⁺ (0.020)	-0.038* (0.018)	0.087*** (0.021)	0.036* (0.017)	-0.037* (0.017)
Middle class	0.065* (0.031)	-0.112*** (0.024)	0.004 (0.014)	0.096*** (0.019)	-0.051** (0.017)
Age	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.001** (0.000)	0.001** (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.001* (0.001)
Female	-0.018 (0.019)	-0.002 (0.014)	0.031* (0.015)	0.040** (0.012)	-0.054** (0.018)
Residence (ref.=large city)					
Village	0.067* (0.028)	-0.008 (0.021)	-0.042 (0.027)	-0.045 ⁺ (0.025)	0.027 (0.017)
Small/Medium city	0.035 (0.026)	0.017 (0.016)	-0.030 (0.019)	-0.025 (0.021)	-0.002 (0.016)
Suburbs	0.068* (0.028)	-0.031 (0.023)	-0.005 (0.028)	-0.029 (0.027)	-0.010 (0.018)
Constant	0.356*** (0.074)	0.282*** (0.036)	0.134* (0.065)	0.162*** (0.025)	0.051 (0.047)
Random effects					
Level 1 variance	0.013*** (0.002)	0.002*** (0.001)	0.008*** (0.002)	0.001*** (0.000)	0.008*** (0.002)
Level 2 variance	0.217*** (0.003)	0.119*** (0.006)	0.134*** (0.007)	0.124*** (0.007)	0.086*** (0.006)
N level-1 (N level 2)	3218 (37)	3218 (37)	2728 (33)	2885 (32)	2407 (26)
AIC	4363.0	2378.4	2455.8	2146.4	1035.0
BIC	4478.5	2493.8	2562.2	2253.9	1127.6
ICC	0.056	0.019	0.057	0.011	0.081
Log likelihood	-2162.5	-1170.2	-1209.9	-1055.2	-501.5

Note: Separate multilevel linear regression models for each of the options. Standard errors in parentheses; ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. All models include country dummies (not shown).

Endnotes

¹ See Appendix 1 for a list of countries and elections included in our analysis.

² The label “Center-Right parties” is shorthand for “Center-Right and other parties.” In our analysis, this category includes all parties that are not coded as mainstream Left, radical Left, Greens or radical Right.

³ The identification of the mainstream Left party is straightforward except for France and Iceland. For France, Table 1 refers to the Socialist Party (not the Communist Party) and, for Iceland, it refers to the Social Democratic Alliance, which was formed in 2000 by the Social Democratic Party and smaller leftist parties. Note that the Icelandic Social Democratic Party never exceeded the vote shares of the Social Democratic Alliance in the early 2000s. Note also that the all time vote-share peak of Swedish Social Democracy was in 1940 (53.8%). For all other countries, the post-war peak is also the all-time peak.

⁴ Note that vote shares for the French Socialists refer to the first round of parliamentary elections. This measure fails to capture the electoral strength of the French Socialist Party relative to Left parties in other countries. It must be kept in mind that the French Socialists won 3 out of 6 presidential elections between 1981 and 2012.

⁵ Note that the French figure for recent elections is the average of exceptionally good performance in 2012 and an exceptionally bad performance in 2017.

⁶ Evans and Mellon’s (2016) analysis of British voter transitions illustrates this point nicely. The analysis shows that the Conservatives lost more votes to UKIP than Labour did in 2015, but many UKIP were former Labour voters who either did not vote or voted for the Conservatives in 2015.

⁷ Przeworski and Sprague’s view of unions as enablers of the pursuit of supraclass electoral strategies by socialist parties stands in marked contrast to the view advanced by Kitschelt (1994). Very much influenced by the advances made by Southern European socialist parties in the 1980s, Kitschelt argues that strong unions represent a constraint on the ability of mainstream Left parties to reposition themselves in response to new political issues and cleavages.

⁸ This heterogeneous group includes self-employed professionals, farmers, any and all business owners, and also corporate executive. While class membership is determined at the two-digit level of the 1988 version of the ILO's International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) for Modules 2-3 of the CSES, it is determined at the three-digit level of the 2008 version for Module 4. Unemployed and retired survey respondents have been assigned to a class based on their prior occupation. For European countries, the estimates in Table 2 are similar to estimates derived from the European Social Survey (see Rennwald 2015: 71, 2017: 29). See Rennwald (2015: 70-74) for data on changes in the class composition of electorates in selected countries since the 1970s.

⁹ There are good reasons to be concerned about the accuracy of respondents' recall of how they voted, especially their recall of how they voted in the previous election (often four or five years ago). To reassure ourselves in this regard, we have explored the correlations between our survey-based estimates of the vote shares of Left parties and official elections as reported by Armingeon *et al* (2106). For vote shares in the current election, the correlation is .961 ($p < .001$); for vote share in the previous election, the correlation is .844 ($p < .001$); and for vote-share changes from the previous election, the correlation is .791 ($p < .001$). Note also that survey respondents who do not declare any party (or abstention) in the current election represent 7.1% and those who do not declare any party choice in the previous election represent 13.9% of all respondents.

¹⁰ It is noteworthy that working-class profile is correlated with the overall vote share of mainstream Left at 0.55 ($p < .001$): the electorate of large Left parties tends to be more working-class than the electorate of small Left parties.

¹¹ We sorely lack good comparative data on unionization by occupational categories. As reported by Becher and Pontusson (2011), union density rates in the upper half of the income distribution are commonly higher (sometimes much higher) than union density rates in the lower half of the income distribution.

¹² Commonly associated with the notion of a "Third Way," this reorientation of the mainstream Left has arguably been most pronounced in Denmark and Sweden: see Rathgeb (2017). On the OECD-wide retreat from redistribution since the mid-1990s, see Pontusson and Weisstanner (2017).

¹³ See Oesch (2008), Arzheimer (2013) and Afonso and Rennwald (2017) on the appeal of right-wing populist parties for working-class voters.

¹⁴ For more information, see <http://www.cses.org/>

¹⁵ This restriction leads to the exclusion of election surveys from Canada, Japan, the US and Eastern Europe. We cannot use surveys from CSES module 1 because they lack information about vote choice in the previous election.

¹⁶ Recent contributions to political science that use linear probability models include Hainmueller and Hangartner (2013), Lindgren, Oskarsson and Dawes (2016) and Hix and Noury (2016).

¹⁷ Again, voters' recall of votes cast broadly corresponds to actual election results (see note 9).

¹⁸ The measure is based on the share of votes obtained by political parties in a given election and calculated according to the formula proposed by Laasko and Taagepera (1979).

¹⁹ Working-class profile and effective number of parties are centered at their mean value.

²⁰ Not reported in Table 3, the null model shows that the country-election context accounts for 9.7% of the variance in the decision to abandon the mainstream Left. The ICC score drops to 5.5% when we add country dummies.

²¹ The coefficient estimates shown in Figure 4 are consistently significant the 95% level as well.

²² See note 6.

²³ We obtain very similar results when we estimate logistic regression models without sample weights (available upon request).

²⁴ We drop all Australian and British elections in models of voting for the radical Left; all Icelandic and British elections in models of voting for Greens; and the 2002 Swedish election and the 2013 Australian election as well as all British, Icelandic, Irish and Spanish elections in models of voting for the radical Right. Literally no mainstream Left leavers voted for these options in the cases that have been dropped. Note the total number of observations used to estimate the model of voting for the radical Right is only 2,407 (see Appendix 3).

²⁵ In principle, voting is mandatory in Australia, but the law is no longer strictly enforced and we do have Australian mainstream Left leavers who stopped voting in our dataset. In the most recent Australian election (2016), voter turnout was 91.0%.