

# Social Policy Preferences and Party Choice in the 2011 Swiss Elections

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**Abstract:** *To what extent do social policy preferences explain party choice? This question has received little attention over the past years, because the bulk of the literature has argued that electoral choice is increasingly shaped by identity-based attitudes, rather than by preferences for economic-distributive social policies. We argue that in the wake of this debate, the significance of social policy preferences for electoral choice has been underestimated, because most contributions neglect social policy debates that are specific to post-industrial societies. In particular, they merely focus on income redistribution, while neglecting distributive conflicts around social investment. The Selects 2011 data allows investigating this crucial distinction for Switzerland. Our empirical analyses confirm that it is pivotal to take the pluridimensionality of distributive conflicts seriously: when looking at preferences for social investment rather than income redistribution, we find that social policy preferences are significant explanatory factors for the choice of the five major Swiss political parties.*

**KEYWORDS:** Social Policy, Preferences, Party Choice, Switzerland, Social investment

## Introduction

Do social policy preferences predict party choice? Over the last decade, this question has received relatively little attention, because a growing literature has contended that on the one hand, social policies are increasingly constrained by exogenous determinants, and on the other hand, electoral choice is “culturally realigned”, i.e. shaped primarily by identity-based attitudes over issues such as immigration and supranational integration, rather than economic-distributive social policies (Huber and Stephens 2001; Kriesi et al. 2008, Bornschier 2010; Nicolet and Sciarini 2010; Oesch and Rennwald 2010; Kitschelt and Rehm 2012; Lachat and Dolezal 2008).

While cultural realignment has without any doubt deeply transformed the Swiss party system, we contend that the thesis according to which distributive preferences have lost their significance for party choice is premature. We argue that the structural trends of post-industrialisation and social modernisation have affected the content of economic-distributive policy conflicts just as deeply as globalisation has reshaped the content of “cultural” identity-based policy conflicts. To evaluate the significance of social policy for electoral choice, however, there is need to go beyond general attitudes about social spending

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or state intervention and rather observe precisely those (re-)distributive struggles that have actually become salient as a consequence of the development of post-industrial labour markets and financial austerity. As the results show, social policy preferences have to be differentiated into preferences regarding passive measures of income maintenance and redistribution on the one hand, and preferences regarding social investment measures on the other hand. Passive social policy instruments refer to policies such as income redistribution, social insurance replacement rates or minimum wage regulations. Social investment instruments, by contrast, refer to policies such as childcare supply, education and training or labor market activation. Generally speaking, passive instruments target equality of outcomes at the present time, while social investment instruments aim at equality of opportunities and are generally oriented towards the future. Most studies neglect this distinction between different social policy strategies when investigating the economic-distributive politics dimension. However, many studies are also just unable to study it empirically for a lack of data. Fortunately, the Swiss electoral studies data 2011 (Selects) provides solutions to these empirical problems and hence represent an exceptional opportunity to study the relevance of social policy for electoral choice. Thereby, we are able to evaluate if beyond identity-based attitudes on international integration or demarcation, social policy preferences also contribute to explaining electoral choice. While the argument of this analysis goes beyond the Swiss case, Switzerland can be seen as a particularly well suited and hard case for testing the electoral significance of social policy attitudes, because it is considered a prime case of cultural realignment (Kriesi et al. 2008; Bornschieer 2010; Oesch and Rennwald 2010).

In the following section, we lay the theoretical ground for analysing whether social policy preferences predict party choice in post-industrial settings. Then, a set of hypotheses is derived and data and operationalisation issues are discussed. Sections 4 and 5 present the empirical results and assess the implications of our findings.

## Theory

Over the past decades, prominent contributions have argued that the political contest in post-industrial societies is structured foremost by the conflict over cultural liberalism, supranational integration and immigration (Kitschelt 1994: 297; Kriesi et al. 2008). This political context has been the breeding ground for the impressive electoral rise and success of national-conservative right-wing parties, which were able to place identity-based issues related to cultural openness and liberalism on the agenda. The literature holds different terminologies for this identity-based conflict, with Kitschelt and Rehm (forthcoming) speaking of “group”-conflicts, Bornschieer (2010) of “universalism vs. particularism” and Kriesi et al. (2008) of a conflict between “integration vs. demarcation”. It is assumed that the rising saliency of these issues comes at the expense of welfare and social policy attitudes as determinants of electoral choice (Lachat and Dolezal 2008), the argument being that political parties who are supposed to be increasingly constrained by exogenous factors (globalisation) would converge on the economic-distributive dimension, thereby making this dimension increasingly irrelevant for electoral competition. However, exogenous constraints affect only part of the agenda of economic policies, especially macroeconomics (Hellwig and Samuels 2007), while social policy has remained almost exclusively in the control of domestic politics (Geering and Häusermann 2013). Hence, there is no a priori reason for convergence of parties on the distributive dimension generally. Austerity pressure has been advanced as another factor that might lead parties to converge on the distributive dimension, as due to the austerity context, all governments would be forced to cut welfare effort. However, since a vast majority of the population profits from welfare

state benefits, parties have little incentive to change the status-quo by retrenching programmes which enjoy a high level of popular support (Pierson 2001). Moreover, the welfare state literature of the past years has produced overwhelming evidence against the hypothesis of convergence and stability (see e.g. Bonoli and Natali 2012; Hemerijck 2013; Gingrich 2011; Häusermann 2010; Palier 2010; Rueda 2005). Domestic partisan conflict over social policy is very much alive, but - as we argue in this article - it revolves around different and additional issues than in the past.

### *The multidimensionality of social policy instruments*

In post-industrial societies, distributive conflict revolves around specific social policy orientations. This is forcefully argued by the literature on the multidimensionality of welfare politics, which shows that post-industrialism has profoundly reshaped citizens' demands, and thereby the welfare agendas of advanced capitalist countries. Already Pierson (2001) showed that governments in mature welfare states face the choice between introducing re-commodifying, cost-containing or recalibrating reforms. The insight that welfare states are structured along different (distributive) principles has been confirmed in many subsequent contributions (e.g. Häusermann 2010; Clasen and Clegg 2011; Bonoli and Natali 2012; Fossati 2013; Geering and Häusermann 2013; Morel et al. 2011). More specifically, Häusermann (2010) shows that pension politics is not only structured along a generosity dimension but also along a conflict over recalibration of pension rights to formerly excluded groups. Similarly, unemployment politics should also consider the nature of activation policies, in addition to the generosity of replacement payments (Bonoli 2010; Fossati 2013). Likewise, the need to adapt family policy in the context of increasing female labour market participation (Esping-Andersen 2009) should not only address the level of financial support, but rather decide about the role of the state in providing affordable childcare and other facilities allowing parents to reconcile family and work. Hence, when analysing social policy preferences, the mere consideration of a programme's generosity is insufficient.

This implies that social policy preferences in a post-industrial context cannot be easily mapped on a single "more-vs.-less" dimension of welfare spending. Previous studies on the determinants of electoral choice, however, have had the tendency to use very general indicators to capture the "economic-distributive dimension", such as welfare state expansion vs. retrenchment, questions about the preferred level of social spending, questions regarding the preferred degree of state intervention in the economy or questions about the general importance of social security (see e.g. Kriesi et al. 2008; Oesch and Rennwald 2010; Leimgruber et al. 2010). Obviously, such indicators do not capture the *substantial goals* citizens would want to support through such spending or intervention, which is why it may come as no surprise that the explanatory power of such indicators for party choice has turned out to be rather weak.

We argue that *post-industrial and tertiarized labour markets*, the *knowledge society*, and *social modernisation* have deeply affected the nature of social policy demands and social policy conflicts. This has induced parties to respond to these new social needs by positioning themselves vis-à-vis social investment strategies (Geering and Häusermann 2013; Bonoli 2006; Esping-Andersen 2009). It is an under-researched question if the distinction between income redistribution policies and social investment policies is also reflected in public opinion and preferences, but the prominence of these policies on the agenda leads us to expect multidimensional social policy preferences even at the level of individual

voters. Accordingly, we expect that partisan conflict and public preferences go beyond conflicts over the desired level of social spending.

In our opinion *social investment* policies clearly represent a new dimension of welfare state policy. Social investment policies are particularly suited to face the three fundamental challenges of post-industrial economies. First, these measures address the consequences of labour market tertiarization (Iversen and Cusack 2000) - which has dramatically increased the share of structurally (long-term) unemployed people particularly among the lower skilled (Iversen and Wren 1998) - by means of increasing efforts on activation policies. Second, social investment policies meet the needs that have emerged as a consequence of social modernisation (notably increasing female labour market participation and less traditional family structures) by means of facilitating the reconciliation of work and care duties and by fostering education. Third, social investment policies respond to the requirements of steadily increasing international competitiveness, which demand continuous training of the workforce, both on the job and for the unemployed (Giddens 2000; Jenson 2012a and 2012b). These policies are inherently employer-friendly and are centred on the development of human capital that helps improving labour market performance and in the long run should prevent welfare state dependence (Jenson 2012a: 23). Accordingly, the political focus shifts from decommmodification to providing citizens with instruments to cope with social risks through labor market participation<sup>1</sup>. This framework hence redefines also the role of the state. Instead of focusing on compensation, it is now supposed to provide policies, which work as a “trampoline” (Torfing 1999). Generally speaking, social investment policies aim at providing support for human capital formation, as well as changing family and gender roles in the wake of social modernisation, rather than guaranteeing income security for male breadwinners and traditional family models (Esping-Andersen 1999; Häusermann 2010). In this sense, social investment policies are also connected to a culturally liberal and universalist vision of society. In order to do justice to individual life plans the state enhances equal chances, be it for women with children who need childcare facilities, be it for low skilled who benefit from retraining programmes, or be it for children with regard to education opportunities. The conflict over integration vs. demarcation preferences (Kriesi et al. 2008), which opposes universalistic and particularistic values (Bornschieer 2010; Häusermann and Kriesi 2013), thus in some way resonates with the conflict over social investment because the latter is also related to claims of equality and universalism. In other words, even though social investment policies are clearly economic-distributive policy instruments, there is an affinity between identity-based value conflicts and social investment preferences, as both address specific challenges of social modernisation arising in a post-industrial setting.

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<sup>1</sup> The theoretical conceptualisation of “social investment” as measures which invests in the workers’ resources to foster active labour market participation is called into question by Nolan (2013). Nolan argues that it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between passive income replacement and social investment both empirically and conceptually. He argues that many forms of welfare benefits are found to pertain to both categories theoretically and especially in their effects. Nolan’s critique of a too broad use of the concept of social investment is well taken. Our position on it aligns with Green-Pedersen’s discussion of the “dependent variable problem” (2004): the operationalisation and conceptualisation of social investment must depend on the research question. In the present case we argue that voters’ preferences towards political parties relate differently to different types of social policy measures. We agree that the boundaries between policies, which aim at enhancing the chances to be (re-)integrated in a knowledge society and measures which “merely” compensate for earning loss may at times be blurry with regard to certain issues. Indeed, our factor analyses results (below) also confirm such ambiguities. Nevertheless, we find two distinct factors empirically, which correspond quite closely to what we would expect. Hence, at least in the perceptions and attitudes of voters, irrespective of the actual effects and distributive outcomes of these policies, two logics of social policy can and should be distinguished.

### *Hypotheses*

Drawing on this theoretical framework of multidimensional social policy instruments, we first hypothesize (H1) that preferences towards social policy align along two dimensions: a conflict over the level of income redistribution (traditional social policy) and a conflict on the extent to which welfare states should provide social investment (post-industrial social policy). Hence, both dimensions should contribute to explaining vote choice in the Swiss elections 2011.

Second, based on the above theorized link between social investment preferences and cultural universalism vs. particularism, we expect that social investment preferences as determinants of party choice will allow us to differentiate electoral choice *within* the traditional economic left and right partisan blocs. In more detail, it is plausible to expect that the vote choice for the traditionally left-wing parties Social Democrats (SP) and Greens (GPS) is linked positively to social investment preferences, because both parties advocate universalism and equal opportunities. However, while the voters of both SP and the GPS are expected to favour social investment policies, the preferences for redistribution should be related less strongly to the vote choice for the GPS than to the one for the SP, because the GPS has always mobilised its voters mainly along identity-based cultural lines. Hence, the conflict over income redistribution should be less important in explaining whether an individual decides to cast his or her vote for the GPS. Another reason why income redistribution might have lower explanatory power for the vote in favour of the GPS is the socio-economic profile of its electorate. It has been shown consistently that voters of the Greens are particularly highly educated (Lutz 2012; Kitschelt 1994). Therefore, these individuals benefit less from redistribution than from policies providing for instance childcare facilities. Conversely, for the voters of the SP, redistributive issues should still be a key policy instrument due to the traditional social democratic ideological legacy and the necessity to appeal to their traditional electoral working class constituencies.

By definition, the parties of the traditional right-wing bloc distinguish themselves from the left with respect to their positions on income redistribution as the traditional economic-distributive conflict. For the left parties, however, the hypothesis states that the post-industrial conflict over social investment allows a better understanding of intra-bloc variance. Clearly, the conservative parties Swiss People's Party (SVP) and the Conservative Democratic Party (BDP) - which is a splinter party of the former - defend a rather traditionalist and particularistic ideological profile. Accordingly, we would expect lower support for both redistribution and social investment among the voters of both parties. The same hypothesis applies to the Christian Democratic Party (CVP) based on the traditionally conservative policy orientation of its voters (e.g. Stegmüller 2013: 1066), in particular with respect to gender equality and social modernisation. Conversely, the voters of market-liberal parties and electoral constituencies, such as the Liberal Party (FDP) and the Green Liberal Party (GLP) can be expected to endorse social investment more strongly, because these measures resonate with their culturally liberal stance. Moreover, similarly to the electorate of the GPS, the voters of the FDP and the GLP are highly educated and hence might equally benefit from social investment measures, such as an institutionalisation of childcare services, investment in (higher) education or gender equality policies.

In sum, we expect (H2) that within the left block, income redistribution is pivotal for distinguishing between the GPS and the SP voters. Within the right block, instead social investment should resonate more with the liberal parties, namely the GLP and the FDP and hence allow distinguishing between conservative and liberal right-wing electorates.

## Operationalisation and methods

To test our hypotheses we rely on the post-electoral survey data collected within the framework of the Swiss Electoral Studies (Selects) for the national parliamentary elections in 2011. Whilst 4391 randomly chosen Swiss citizens participated to the main Computer Assessed Telephone Interview (CATI) based telephone interview, a smaller sample of 1786 individuals – 55% of the original sample - also responded to an online or paper follow-up questionnaire with additional, more detailed questions. Our analyses are based on this reduced sample (because several questions were asked only in the follow-up questionnaire). Due to design characteristics (oversampling in three cantons) design weights are applied in all our analyses (Lutz 2012). In terms of possible biases in our reduced dataset ( $N = 1716$ ), respondents on average have a slightly higher socioeconomic status (education and income) and are slightly older<sup>2</sup> as compared to the complete dataset ( $N = 4368$ )<sup>3</sup>.

### *Dependent variable*

Our dependent variable is the reported vote choice. Since the focus of this article is to analyse electoral choice non-voters or individuals who did not vote for one of the main seven Swiss parties, namely the Greens (GLP), the Social Democrats (SP), the Christian Democratic Party (CVP), the Liberals (FDP), the Green Liberals (GLP), the Conservative Democratic Party (BDP) and the Swiss People's Party (SVP), were excluded (for an overview of the distribution of respondents across the seven parties, refer to Table A1 in the Appendix). We opted for the actual vote choice as dependent variable to differentiate as efficiently as possible between the electorates of the seven parties. We decided against relying on vote propensities that ask whether a respondent could imagine ever voting for a particular party. In our understanding this variable is too fuzzy to allow for precise operationalisation of *actual* electoral behaviour, i.e. the decision when a person is forced to choose between several options<sup>4</sup>.

### *Independent variables*

To analyse the structure of individual-level preferences we run an exploratory factor analysis on seventeen items that we expect to relate in different ways to income redistribution, social investment and integration/demarcation<sup>5</sup>. We try to capture redistribution preferences by means of two questions asking whether people with lower earnings should be guaranteed higher unemployment benefits or pensions, as well as their opposites (whether higher earnings should receive higher benefits). Moreover, the questions whether it should be the government's responsibility to reduce income differences and to introduce a minimum wage were included. All these measures are related to an egalitarian view of society and higher levels of redistribution. Unfortunately, it is not possible to differentiate traditional (passive) income protection policies further into redistribution vs. social insurance, because of the lack of appropriate items.

<sup>2</sup> The mean of educational achievement in the sample with 4368 respondents corresponds to 4.43, whereas the mean in our sample is slightly higher with 4.50. The same is true for age. In the sample we use the mean age is 53.7 years whereas in the original sample it is 50.2 years.

<sup>3</sup> In terms of class, there is a slight underrepresentation of production workers (11 instead of 12%), of clerks (11 instead of 12%), and of liberal professions (3 instead of 4%) and a slight overrepresentations of sociocultural specialists (20 instead of 18%).

<sup>4</sup> The main drawback of this variable is that it reduces the sample size by about 500 observations. Additional 300 were lost in the models because of the combinations of the independent variables. In particular, the income variable contributed to this additional reduction.

<sup>5</sup> Please refer to Tables A2 and A3 in the appendix for descriptive statistics and exact question wording.

To capture attitudes towards social investment<sup>6</sup>, several indicators related to education, childcare and work-care conciliation, which are the main pillars of the social investment strategy, were included. More precisely, we include questions asking whether the expenditures on education should be increased and the state should help students finance their studies. Furthermore, we incorporate items measuring whether state-financed childcare facilities should be provided for working parents, whether the state should rather support families by means of transfers or by means of childcare facilities and whether the expenditures on childcare should be cut or expanded (see Table 1).

The preferences regarding integration and demarcation were captured by including four items related to immigration. The respondents were asked whether they feel that 1) there are too many immigrants from former Yugoslavia, 2) there are too many immigrants from Germany, France or Italy, 3) the Swiss culture vanishes due to immigration, 4) there is increasing violence and vandalism due to young immigrants. In addition, an item capturing the degree of approval of a Swiss European Union (EU) membership was taken into account.

Our control variables for the logistic models are gender, age in years, income categories, and educational attainment in eight categories. Moreover, we included the profession of the respondents according to the class scheme proposed by Oesch (2006), who distinguishes between socio-cultural professionals, service employees, technicians, production workers, managers, office clerks, liberal professionals and small business owners (SBO).

Our main analytical strategy relies on identifying the configuration of individual-level preferences by means of factor analysis, and on regressing the vote choice for one of the seven main parties<sup>7</sup> on these preference dimensions and controls by means of logit models.

## Empirical results

### *The dimensionality of the social policy space*

By means of an explorative factor analysis we test whether redistribution, social investment and integration/demarcation are indeed three distinct preference dimensions. As shown in Table 1 the threefold pattern appears clearly.

Table 1 shows that all three factors form strong uniform scales with Eigenvalues well above one. The loadings of the indicators on the first factor, which captures the political conflict related to preferences for integration and demarcation, are all higher than

<sup>6</sup> Our data unfortunately does not allow estimating the saliency of the different policy measures. However, we find that childcare spending as one of the main social investment pillars is a highly salient and contested issue among the respondents. In fact, when they are asked what they consider the most pressing problem in social policy in Switzerland, around 25% of the Social democrats and the Greens indicate that increasing welfare expenditures for childcare is top priority (another 25% indicate social assistance, with all other areas (pensions, unemployment, etc.) being ranked lower). Conversely, when the respondents are asked where it would be best to cut welfare effort, between 30% and 50% of the voters of the Swiss Peoples' Party, the Liberals and the Conservative Democrats indicate childcare as the domain where cuts should be implemented first. Hence, this social policy area appears to be highly salient politically and electorally.

<sup>7</sup> We rely on logit models because we want to compare how important particular social policy preferences are as compared to voters of all other parties. In a multinomial setting instead we would always compare the results for a particular electorate to the ones of the reference category, which complicates the interpretation of the results.

Table 1: Promax rotated factor analysis of social policy and demarcation issues

Item	Integration/ demarcation	Redistribution	Social investment
Expenditures on education	-0.17	-0.04	<b>0.25</b>
State financed nurseries	-0.08	0.01	<b>0.69</b>
Financing students	-0.01	-0.08	<b>0.46</b>
Childcare versus vouchers	-0.15	0.05	<b>0.41</b>
Increasing expenditures for childcare	-0.02	0.12	<b>0.44</b>
Cutting expenditures for childcare	0.02	-0.10	<b>-0.41</b>
Lower earnings should entail higher unemployment benefits	-0.04	<b>0.73</b>	-0.03
Lower earnings should entail higher pensions	-0.06	<b>0.72</b>	-0.03
Higher earnings should entail higher unemployment benefits	-0.10	<b>-0.59</b>	-0.19
Higher earnings should entail higher pensions	-0.15	<b>-0.56</b>	-0.09
Reduction of income differences	-0.05	<b>0.39</b>	-0.34
Minimal wage	-0.14	<b>0.30</b>	-0.28
Too many immigrants from former Yugoslavia	<b>0.71</b>	0.02	0.00
Too many immigrants from Germany/France/Italy	<b>0.62</b>	-0.02	0.03
Swiss culture threatened	<b>0.63</b>	-0.04	-0.02
Violence and vandalism due to immigrants	<b>0.59</b>	-0.01	-0.12
Supporting EU membership	<b>-0.41</b>	-0.03	0.22
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>2.06</b>	<b>2.41</b>
N	1022	1022	1022

Non-voters were excluded from the analyses. Rotated factor solution (promax).

0.59<sup>8</sup> when it comes to immigration questions and at 0.41 for a rejection of EU membership. Of course, support for EU membership is negatively related to preferences for demarcation.

The factor loadings also suggest that the *income redistribution* factor is constituted primarily by the questions capturing preferences for strongly redistributive passive policies, i.e. whether low-income individuals should be entitled to higher unemployment and pension benefits (0.72). The *social investment* factor is constituted mainly by the item capturing state effort in providing childcare (0.69) but also by educational items.

As argued in the theoretical section, the preferences for social investment and cultural openness (i.e. integration) were expected to be correlated. Accordingly, we used a promax rotation, which allows for correlation between factors. Table 2 below shows the results of the estimated correlations between the factors that result from this analysis. The results underpin the theoretical argument and indicate that integration/demarcation and the social investment preferences are indeed correlated by -0.50. Hence, as shown in Table 1 integration/demarcation and social investment are distinct but correlated preference sets.

<sup>8</sup> While for an exploratory factor analyses the best practice would be to retain only loadings of 0.80 and above, in the social sciences such high loadings are rare. In practice, loadings between 0.4 and 0.7 are the usual standard (cf. Costello and Osborne 2005). Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) suggest even 0.32 as an appropriate threshold because this result implies that there is approximately 10% overlapping variance. Our factor loadings hence satisfy these recommendations.



Table 2: Correlation between factors (promax rotation)

	Integration/demarcation	Social investment	Redistribution
Integration/demarcation	1		
Social investment	<b>-0.50</b>	1	
Redistribution	0.07	<b>-0.18</b>	1
N	1022	1022	1022

As Table 2 shows, social investment and redistribution are also correlated, but to a very limited degree (-0.18). This result corroborates our hypothesis that social investment and redistribution are perceived as distinct policy conflicts by voters. Finally, the redistribution and integration/demarcation factors are completely orthogonal.

### *Social policy: The distributive preferences space*

After establishing that social policy is characterised by two distinct political conflicts (i.e. corroborating Hypothesis 1), we turn our attention to the positioning of the electorates of the seven main Swiss parties with respect to these two factors of the social policy space<sup>9</sup>.

Figure 1 above shows the placement of the average voter of a Swiss party in the two-dimensional social policy space. On the horizontal axis, we show preferences for redistribution and on the vertical axis preferences for social investment. The diamonds represent the average position of the different electorates and the spikes indicate the 95% confidence intervals.

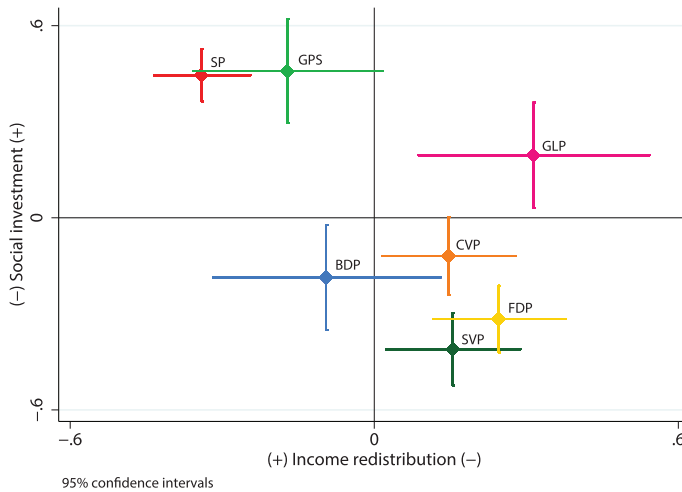
Most importantly, this figure shows that the average positions of the electorates do not just align on a diagonal connecting preferences for higher to preferences for lower support. Hence, we find that the policy specific space is not only theoretically two-dimensional, but that there is actually a potential for party competition on both social policy dimensions. In more detail, the average SP voter is clearly in favour of a comprehensive expansive social policy strategy, characterised by preferences for high levels of both redistribution and social investment. Similarly, GPS voters favour expansive social policy, but are more moderate with regard to the redistributive axis. When comparing the confidence intervals, the results indicate that the SP voters have more homogenous preferences than the electorate of the GPS.

Voters of the GLP show strong support for social investment but low support for redistributive policies. This electorate is not very homogenous, but since the confidence intervals do not overlap with the ones of other parties, this electorate can be clearly distinguished from others.

Next, Figure 1 shows that the SVP, CVP and FDP voters are located in the quadrant where support for both redistribution and social investment is low. While the CVP electorate has rather moderate preferences on social investment, the SVP voters are clearly and strongly opposed to it. This finding is probably related to both the SVP voters' conservative preferences and the aversion against state financed nurseries as compared to childcare provided at home. More strikingly, however, the position of the FDP electorate is very

<sup>9</sup> To ease the interpretability of this figure we rely on the factors we retained from the orthogonal (varimax rotation), rather than on the factors retained from the oblique rotation (promax).

Figure 1: Voters' mean attitudes about social investment and redistribution policies



close to the one of the SVP. On the vertical axis the FDP electorate is positioned between the CVP and – very close to – the SVP voters. Conversely, on the redistribution axis, voters of the FDP and GLP are most sceptical towards income redistribution.

Finally, we find that the BDP electorate comes closest to a “traditionalist” social policy strategy by supporting a moderate level of redistribution and by disagreeing with an expansion of social investment instruments. Similarly to the result for the GLP, the electorate of this newcomer to the Swiss party system has rather large confidence intervals. This might be an indication of a not (yet) fully clarified party platform or a symptom of electoral protest, which potentially unifies disparate preferences.

Overall, the empirical results corroborate our argument that voters can be distinguished with respect to redistribution *and* social policy preferences. However, to reach a clearer understanding of the extent to which these preference profiles relate to actual party choice, and whether the relevance of the distinction between social investment and redistribution holds when controlling for integration/demarcation attitudes, in the following section several logit models with party choice as dependent variable are presented.

### *Social policy preferences as determinants of electoral choice*

In Table 3 electoral choice for the seven main Swiss parties is modelled by means of two weighted logit regressions<sup>10</sup>. In the first model, only the measures for social policy preferences, namely social investment and redistribution, were included (Model 1). In the second model (Model 2), controls for integration/demarcation attitudes were added. These models allow evaluating which of the two social policy dimensions correlate more strongly with the choice for a particular party, and whether the predictive power of redistribution and social investment holds when controlling for integration/demarcation attitudes.

<sup>10</sup> For the models where we encounter difficulties of convergence, namely for the GLP and the BDP, we cross-checked our results applying penalized regression models. The results remain robust.

Table 3: Social policy and integration/demarcation preferences as determinants of electoral choice

	(Model 1)		(Model 2)		(Model 1)		(Model 2)		(Model 1)		(Model 2)	
	GPS	GPS	GPS	GPS	SP	SP	SP	SP	CVP	CVP	CVP	CVP
<b>Redistribution</b>	-0.020 (0.189)	-0.002 (0.195)	<b>0.559***</b> (0.130)	<b>0.589***</b> (0.134)	r	r	r	r	0.057 (0.172)	0.058 (0.172)	r	r
<b>Social investment</b>	<b>0.957***</b> (0.196)	<b>0.598*</b> (0.252)	<b>1.353***</b> (0.152)	<b>1.003***</b> (0.182)	<b>0.589***</b> (0.134)	<b>1.003***</b> (0.182)	r	r	-0.224 (0.159)	-0.234 (0.159)	r	r
<b>Demarcation</b>					<b>-0.640***</b> (0.161)	<b>-0.640***</b> (0.161)	r	r	r	r	r	r
Female	0.427 (0.373)	0.557 (0.382)	-0.212 (0.242)	-0.088 (0.243)	-0.088 (0.243)	-0.103 (0.297)	r	r	-0.103 (0.297)	-0.099 (0.297)	r	r
Age	-0.015 (0.012)	-0.016 (0.012)	0.002 (0.007)	0.001 (0.007)	0.001 (0.007)	-0.005 (0.009)	r	r	-0.005 (0.009)	-0.005 (0.009)	r	r
Compulsory education	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r
Basic vocational	3.369* (1.417)	3.390* (1.376)	-1.365 (0.954)	-1.262 (0.998)	-1.262 (0.998)	0.963 (1.297)	r	r	0.963 (1.297)	0.960 (1.305)	r	r
Vocational	2.368* (1.076)	2.350* (1.080)	0.986° (0.549)	1.040° (0.596)	1.040° (0.596)	0.174 (0.811)	r	r	0.174 (0.811)	0.173 (0.811)	r	r
Diploma school	2.967** (1.109)	2.841* (1.110)	0.218 (0.633)	0.042 (0.684)	0.042 (0.684)	0.171 (0.908)	r	r	0.171 (0.908)	0.167 (0.911)	r	r
High school	1.082 (1.160)	0.995 (1.164)	0.665 (0.665)	0.645 (0.696)	0.645 (0.696)	0.203 (0.979)	r	r	0.203 (0.979)	0.200 (0.982)	r	r
Higher vocational	1.905° (1.136)	1.922° (1.144)	0.600 (0.597)	0.630 (0.635)	0.630 (0.635)	0.563 (0.867)	r	r	0.563 (0.867)	0.561 (0.867)	r	r
Vocational university	2.051° (1.173)	1.952° (1.171)	0.711 (0.662)	0.603 (0.689)	0.603 (0.689)	0.467 (0.918)	r	r	0.467 (0.918)	0.462 (0.924)	r	r
University	1.161 (1.185)	0.957 (1.190)	1.086° (0.606)	0.861 (0.645)	0.861 (0.645)	0.319 (0.906)	r	r	0.319 (0.906)	0.310 (0.913)	r	r
Income	0.072 (0.067)	0.067 (0.066)	-0.042 (0.042)	-0.052 (0.042)	-0.052 (0.042)	0.087 (0.061)	r	r	0.087 (0.061)	0.087 (0.061)	r	r
Sociocultural specialist	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r
Service worker	-1.075 (0.696)	-0.933 (0.676)	-0.239 (0.384)	-0.101 (0.388)	-0.101 (0.388)	1.051* (0.487)	r	r	1.051* (0.487)	1.052* (0.488)	r	r
Technician	-0.791 (0.633)	-0.710 (0.633)	0.275 (0.355)	0.397 (0.362)	0.397 (0.362)	-0.000 (0.522)	r	r	-0.000 (0.522)	0.003 (0.524)	r	r
Production worker	0.060 (0.606)	0.341 (0.616)	-0.084 (0.449)	0.152 (0.451)	0.152 (0.451)	0.010 (0.589)	r	r	0.010 (0.589)	0.016 (0.607)	r	r
Manager	-1.970** (0.698)	-1.917** (0.698)	-0.534° (0.308)	-0.466 (0.314)	-0.466 (0.314)	0.247 (0.404)	r	r	0.247 (0.404)	0.249 (0.406)	r	r
Clerk	-0.239 (0.487)	-0.192 (0.486)	0.005 (0.378)	0.030 (0.399)	0.030 (0.399)	0.544 (0.498)	r	r	0.544 (0.498)	0.545 (0.498)	r	r
Liberal professional	-0.669 (0.870)	-0.647 (0.816)	-1.172* (0.547)	-1.296* (0.537)	-1.296* (0.537)	0.383 (0.560)	r	r	0.383 (0.560)	0.384 (0.561)	r	r
SBO	-1.451° (0.855)	-1.261 (0.863)	-1.305** (0.470)	-1.079* (0.489)	-1.079* (0.489)	0.756 (0.513)	r	r	0.756 (0.513)	0.761 (0.524)	r	r
Constant	-4.404** (1.425)	-4.454** (1.402)	-1.451° (0.789)	-1.529° (0.801)	-1.529° (0.801)	-3.342** (1.093)	r	r	-3.342** (1.093)	-3.338** (1.100)	r	r

Table 3: Continued

	(Model 1)		(Model 2)		(Model 1)		(Model 2)		(Model 1)		(Model 2)	
	GPS	FDP	GPS	FDP	GLP	SP	GLP	SP	BDP	SVP	BDP	SVP
II null model	-260.90		-260.90		-641.85		-641.85		-329.54		-329.54	
II full model	-215.83		-212.32		-489.07		-476.41		-319.44		-319.43	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup> (McFadden)	0.17		0.19		0.24		0.26		0.03		0.03	
N	933		933		933		933		933		933	
	(Model 1)		(Model 2)		(Model 1)		(Model 2)		(Model 1)		(Model 2)	
	FDP	FDP	FDP	FDP	GLP	SP	GLP	SP	BDP	SVP	BDP	SVP
Redistribution	-0.457*** (0.133)	-0.454*** (0.132)	-0.196 (0.195)	-0.201 (0.198)	0.124 (0.206)	0.114 (0.206)	0.124 (0.198)	0.201 (0.198)	0.114 (0.206)	-0.308* (0.146)	0.114 (0.206)	-0.393*** (0.151)
Social investment	-0.594*** (0.138)	-0.648*** (0.179)	0.179 (0.194)	-0.105 (0.211)	-0.225 (0.188)	-0.024 (0.236)	-0.225 (0.188)	-0.105 (0.211)	-0.024 (0.236)	-1.253*** (0.159)	-0.024 (0.236)	-0.557*** (0.204)
Demarcation	0.191 (0.241)	0.206 (0.241)	0.963* (0.376)	-0.440* (0.219)	0.112 (0.335)	0.358 (0.221)	0.112 (0.335)	-0.440* (0.219)	0.358 (0.221)	0.469° (0.258)	0.046 (0.333)	1.380*** (0.212)
Female	0.005 (0.009)	0.005 (0.009)	-0.014 (0.011)	-0.014 (0.011)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.012)	0.031*** (0.011)	-0.014 (0.011)	0.033*** (0.012)	-0.004 (0.008)	0.003 (0.009)	-0.810*** (0.276)
Age	0.005 (0.009)	0.005 (0.009)	-0.014 (0.011)	-0.014 (0.011)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.012)	0.031*** (0.011)	-0.014 (0.011)	0.033*** (0.012)	-0.004 (0.008)	0.003 (0.009)	-0.810*** (0.276)
Compulsory education	0.005 (0.009)	0.005 (0.009)	-0.014 (0.011)	-0.014 (0.011)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.012)	0.031*** (0.011)	-0.014 (0.011)	0.033*** (0.012)	-0.004 (0.008)	0.003 (0.009)	-0.810*** (0.276)
Basic vocational	2.860*** (0.817)	2.845*** (0.810)								-1.878 (1.273)		-1.846° (1.052)
Vocational	0.612 (0.609)	0.599 (0.607)	-0.504 (1.082)	-0.609 (1.105)	-0.145 (0.722)	-0.144 (0.737)	-0.504 (1.082)	-0.609 (1.105)	-0.145 (0.722)	-1.263* (0.529)	-0.144 (0.737)	-1.243* (0.576)
Diploma school	0.482 (0.709)	0.454 (0.706)	-0.078 (1.147)	-0.249 (1.162)	-0.493 (0.898)	-0.391 (0.923)	-0.078 (1.147)	-0.249 (1.162)	-0.493 (0.898)	-0.797 (0.595)	-0.391 (0.923)	-0.536 (0.659)
High school	0.684 (0.733)	0.672 (0.730)	0.711 (1.137)	0.574 (1.147)	0.063 (0.872)	0.025 (0.875)	0.711 (1.137)	0.574 (1.147)	0.063 (0.872)	-1.729* (0.727)	0.025 (0.875)	-1.943* (0.771)
Higher vocational	0.909 (0.654)	0.892 (0.657)	0.261 (1.082)	0.167 (1.102)	0.276 (0.782)	0.303 (0.794)	0.261 (1.082)	0.167 (1.102)	0.276 (0.782)	-2.053*** (0.598)	0.303 (0.794)	-2.052** (0.644)
Vocational university	1.307° (0.706)	1.273° (0.706)	-0.207 (1.159)	-0.417 (1.179)	-0.814 (0.989)	-0.736 (1.007)	-0.207 (1.159)	-0.417 (1.179)	-0.814 (0.989)	-2.433*** (0.675)	-0.736 (1.007)	-2.291*** (0.750)
University	1.198° (0.677)	1.152° (0.686)	0.382 (1.050)	0.109 (1.064)	-1.651° (0.915)	-1.483 (0.947)	0.382 (1.050)	0.109 (1.064)	-1.651° (0.915)	-2.968*** (0.736)	-1.483 (0.947)	-2.689** (0.832)
Income	0.024 (0.044)	0.023 (0.044)	0.153* (0.073)	0.149* (0.072)	0.072 (0.059)	0.078 (0.059)	0.153* (0.073)	0.149* (0.072)	0.072 (0.059)	-0.110* (0.053)	0.078 (0.059)	-0.111° (0.057)
Sociocultural specialist	0.434 (0.468)	0.435 (0.467)	0.782 (0.790)	0.816 (0.775)	-0.902 (0.651)	-0.946 (0.647)	0.782 (0.790)	0.816 (0.775)	-0.902 (0.651)	0.203 (0.550)	-0.946 (0.647)	0.122 (0.572)
Service worker	0.434 (0.468)	0.435 (0.467)	0.782 (0.790)	0.816 (0.775)	-0.902 (0.651)	-0.946 (0.647)	0.782 (0.790)	0.816 (0.775)	-0.902 (0.651)	0.203 (0.550)	-0.946 (0.647)	0.122 (0.572)

Table 3: Continued

	(Model 1)		(Model 2)		(Model 1)		(Model 2)		(Model 1)		(Model 2)	
	FDP	GLP	FDP	GLP	BDP	GLP	BDP	GLP	SVP	SVP	SVP	SVP
Technician	0.417 (0.461)	1.255* (0.614)	0.426 (0.461)	1.322* (0.614)	-0.052 (0.505)	1.814*** (0.516)	-0.095 (0.507)	1.404* (0.769)	-0.337 (0.517)	-0.337 (0.517)	-0.516 (0.550)	-0.516 (0.550)
Production worker	-0.031 (0.546)		-0.001 (0.550)		-0.262 (0.554)		-0.379 (0.555)		0.627 (0.513)	0.627 (0.513)	0.134 (0.536)	0.134 (0.536)
Manager	0.707* (0.362)	1.788*** (0.516)	0.711* (0.362)	1.814*** (0.516)	-0.279 (0.433)	1.814*** (0.516)	-0.328 (0.435)	1.404* (0.769)	0.020 (0.450)	0.020 (0.450)	-0.127 (0.481)	-0.127 (0.481)
Clerk	0.589 (0.472)	1.632** (0.625)	0.589 (0.471)	1.642** (0.621)	-1.335* (0.644)	1.642** (0.621)	-1.358* (0.641)	1.404* (0.769)	0.126 (0.485)	0.126 (0.485)	0.016 (0.540)	0.016 (0.540)
Liberal professional	1.208* (0.504)	0.847 (0.724)	1.209* (0.497)	0.831 (0.752)		0.831 (0.752)		1.404* (0.769)	0.757 (0.593)	0.757 (0.593)	0.600 (0.604)	0.600 (0.604)
SBO	0.543 (0.476)	1.289* (0.752)	0.557 (0.479)	1.404* (0.769)	-0.080 (0.533)	1.404* (0.769)	-0.181 (0.528)	1.404* (0.769)	0.822 (0.509)	0.822 (0.509)	0.438 (0.533)	0.438 (0.533)
Constant	-3.773*** (0.951)	-4.899*** (1.425)	-3.737*** (0.948)	-4.837*** (1.419)	-4.146*** (1.130)	-4.837*** (1.419)	-4.254*** (1.178)	-4.146*** (1.130)	0.664 (0.829)	0.664 (0.829)	0.313 (0.907)	0.313 (0.907)
Il null model	-461.37	-261.85	-461.37	-261.85	-304.14	-261.85	-304.14	-304.14	-525.57	-525.57	-525.57	-525.57
Il full model	-409.01	-230.88	-408.83	-228.58	-280.77	-228.58	-278.84	-280.77	-392.65	-392.65	-355.15	-355.15
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup> (Mc Fadden)	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.13	0.08	0.13	0.08	0.08	0.25	0.25	0.32	0.32
N	933	838	933	838	882	838	882	882	933	933	933	933

Standard errors in parentheses, we report unstandardized coefficients, r indicates the reference category.

$^{\circ}p < 0.10$ ,  $^*p < 0.05$ ,  $^{**}p < 0.01$ ,  $^{***}p < 0.001$

Note: the sample reduction for the GLP and BDP from 933 to 838 and 882 respectively is due to over-prediction since in our dataset there are no individuals with basic vocational training who indicate to have voted for one of these two parties. In more detail, our sample includes 66 BDP and 58 GLP voters. We therefore replicated the regressions for GLP and BDP with penalized logit models, and the results for the main explanatory variables do not change. Since with penalized logit models weights cannot be applied we display the results of the logit models with decided to display the models with the reduced samples.

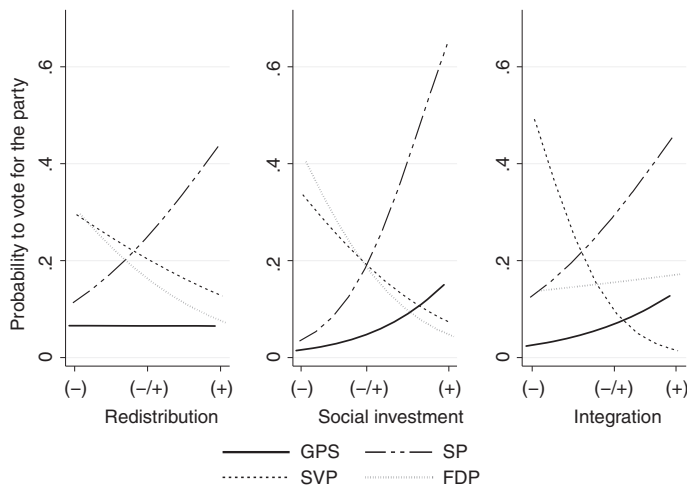
The results in Table 3 suggest that both social policy preference dimensions are indeed relevant predictors of vote choice. The regression findings show that using measures which capture both social policy dimensions, we are actually able to differentiate the electorates of the main seven Swiss parties (H2) in ways that remain hidden when only using a general pro-vs.-anti welfare-measure, and that these results hold even when controlling for integration/demarcation attitudes.

More precisely, we see that individuals endorsing both redistribution and social investment are significantly more likely to vote for the SP. Interestingly, however, the results show that *only* social investment is significant in explaining whether an individual is more likely to vote for the GPS, thereby confirming our expectation regarding intra-bloc differences within the left.

On the right, respondents who show lower support for both social policy strategies are more likely to choose either the FDP or the SVP. For the new parties in the political landscape (GLP and BDP) and the CVP, the results concerning the distributive preferences are not significant. Only when interpreting the signs of the relationships irrespective of significance levels, there is tentative evidence supporting the hypothesis that economic policies help differentiating between voters within the right: while the BDP and CVP voters tend to favour redistribution but are sceptical towards social investment, the pattern for the GLP corresponds to the one of the FDP. Finally, we see that integration/demarcation attitudes are significant predictors of the vote for the SP, the GPS and the GLP, the FDP and the SVP. Moreover, as expected, those individuals who are more sceptical towards integration can be shown to have a lower probability of voting for the SP, the GPS, and the GLP, while they have a higher probability to vote for the SVP. Most importantly for our study, however, the effects of social policy preferences remain robust even when controlling for integration/demarcation attitudes.

Since logit coefficients are difficult to interpret with respect to their substantial effects for the likelihood to choose a party, we illustrate the results for Model 2 (Table 3) graphically. Figure 2 plots the predicted probabilities of voting for a particular party (y-axis) depending on the preferences for redistribution (graph 1), social investment (graph 2) and

Figure 2: Predicted probability of voting for a party depending on redistribution, social investment and integration preferences



demarcation (graph 3). To ease the interpretation of the findings, we plot only the results for those parties, where we obtain a significant effect in the models shown in Table 3. These are the GPS, the SP, the FDP and the SVP.

In the first graph to the left, we see the probability of voting for a particular party depending on redistribution preferences (promax factor) holding age, gender, education, income, social class, social investment as well as integration/demarcation preferences constant at their means.

The graph shows that individuals who show only low support for income redistribution are almost equally likely to vote for the FDP and the SVP, namely in around 30% of the cases. Conversely, the probability that respondents who indicate strong support for redistribution vote for the SP is about 45%. Instead, the relationship between redistribution preferences and the GPS vote is not significant, as indicated by the flat line.

Now, we turn our attention to the pattern, which links social investment preferences and electoral choice. The middle graph in figure 3 shows that the endorsement of social investment policies is related significantly to both the probability of voting for the GPS and the SP, whereas it is related negatively to the likelihood of voting for the FDP and the SVP. In more detail, Figure 3 shows that an individual with the lowest level of support for social investment has a probability close to zero to vote for the SP or the GPS. The same individual, however, would vote for the FDP or for the SVP in about 35 to 40 cases out of 100. Moreover, it is particularly noteworthy that social investment is the predictor with the biggest substantial effect in predicting party choice for the SP, the GPS and the FDP.

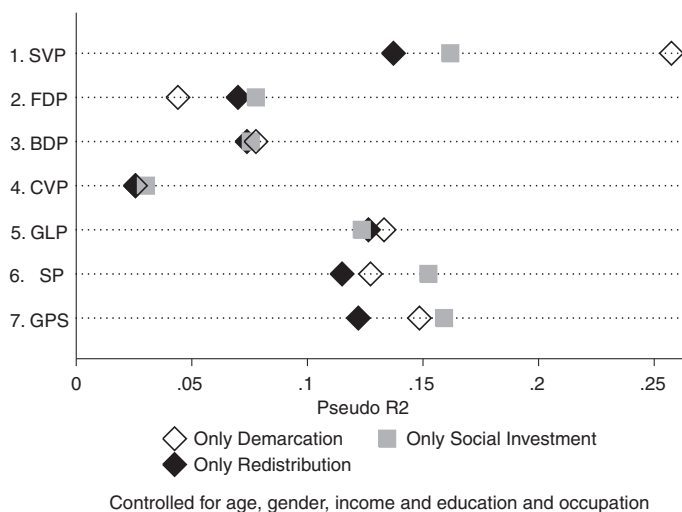
Finally, graph 3 to the right shows that the probability of individuals who strongly support demarcation to vote for the SVP is about 45%. Conversely, respondents who are clearly in favour of openness and integration are significantly more likely to vote for the SP and the GPS<sup>11</sup>. While the effect for the latter two parties is rather small, the likeliness to vote for the SP increases from about 15 to around 50 percent.

In sum, our second hypothesis is partially corroborated, because we can show that redistribution and social investment attitudes allow differentiating among left voters: while support for the SP is structured by both redistribution and social investment preferences, support for the GPS depends only on attitudes towards social investment policies. The differentiation within the right bloc instead has received only little support, because the voters of the FDP and the SVP hold more similar social policy preferences than we expected. The electorates of the SVP and the FDP both tend to oppose social investment, as well as redistributive policies. The main finding, however, is that the distinction of social policy preferences into redistribution and social investment adds to the explanation of electoral choice in Switzerland and that our results hold even when controlling for integration/demarcation attitudes. And as will be shown below, social investment preferences have an even higher explanatory power for electoral choice than redistribution preferences.

In a last step the relative significance of integration/demarcation and social policy preferences for explaining electoral choice is assessed. To this aim we compare the predictive power of these variables separately in figure 4 by plotting the McFadden pseudo R-squared of different models. The three main independent variables are introduced sequentially, each time jointly with the controls for age, gender, income, education and class. The hollow diamond shows the pseudo R-squared for a model including only the integration/demarcation but without social policy preference variables. The black diamond shows the model where we

<sup>11</sup> The same holds for the GLP. This party was not included in the graph because only the integration/demarcation preferences were significant but no social policy preference.

Figure 3: Pseudo R-squared by party for different model specifications



introduced exclusively the item capturing redistribution and the grey square shows the explained variance for a model including only social investment attitudes.

The findings displayed in Figure 4 show that the main determinant for explaining the SVP vote is a respondent's attitude towards demarcation: modelling just the demarcation preferences together with the controls we reach an explained variance of impressive 30 percent. Modelling just preferences for social investment, which of course are correlated to the demarcation attitudes, the explained variance is reduced to about 23 percent. When including only preferences for redistribution the model fit for the SVP decreases to about 15 percent. These findings lend support to the literature arguing that the integration/demarcation attitudes are pivotal in understanding cultural realignment and the rise of the SVP. For our study, however, it is almost more important to note that the predominant effect of integration/demarcation preferences over social policy preferences holds only for the SVP, but not for the other parties.

We find that social policy preferences relate more clearly to the FDP vote than integration/demarcation preferences. The main determinant of the FDP vote choice is social investment, which however outperforms redistribution just slightly by few percentage points. Conversely, when including only demarcation attitudes the explained variance drops from about 8 to 5 percent.

The third finding, in line with the results discussed above, is that the left parties can be distinguished in terms of their mobilization patterns. The results show that the best predictors for the GPS vote are both demarcation and social investment attitudes. The variable performing best in explaining why an individual has a higher chance to vote for the SP is social investment, which explains about 22% of the variance. Demarcation attitudes explain about 18% and redistribution preferences just 12 percent of the overall variance. This is probably substantially the most important result of our study: social investment preferences clearly outperform redistribution preferences in explaining party choice, even among left parties.

Turning to the results for the GLP and the BDP, we find very similar patterns. For both these parties all models perform almost equally well, and explain between 7 and 12 percent of the variance respectively. The decision to vote for the CVP instead is clearly influenced



by other factors than social policy or integration/demarcation attitudes, because all three models perform poorly and explain only 3 percent of the total variance.

Overall, these findings support our claim that distinguishing social policy preferences in attitudes towards redistribution and attitudes towards social investment is key for understanding the significance of social policy for electoral choice in Switzerland. Had we not introduced social investment in the model, we would have portrayed the FDP, the SP and the GPS electoral choice inadequately, namely as being predominantly driven by integration/demarcation issues, similarly to the SVP. Instead, our findings clearly show that the demarcation argument clearly holds only for the SVP. The reduction of electoral dynamics to integration/demarcation politics falls short of conceptualising social policy attitudes correctly and recognising that in post-industrial societies, distributive conflicts are no longer a mere matter of general welfare state support.

## Conclusion

In the last decades, the scholarly literature has reached major advances in explaining electoral choice by means of attitudes towards cultural liberalism, openness and integration/demarcation. The main argument in this literature has been that globalisation and post-industrialisation cause cultural realignment. Voters (so-called “globalisation losers”) turn to parties promoting demarcation, even if these parties promote policies that contradict their social policy interests; while other voters (“globalisation winners”<sup>12</sup>) choose left wing parties, because they endorse cultural liberalism and integration. This pattern was supposed to show that social policy preferences do not structure party choice significantly anymore. Thereby, however, the theoretical conceptualization of the social policy dimension, i.e. the relevant distributive conflicts present in post-industrial economies, has been largely neglected and misconceptualized in too general terms of welfare support vs. opposition.

In the present article we show that integration/demarcation issues are indeed pivotal in explaining vote patterns. However, we also show that for a considerable share of individuals, the most important predictor for party choice is social policy preferences, more specifically social investment preferences. By reconceptualising the social policy dimension in terms of those conflicts which are at the forefront of post-industrial welfare agendas, we were able to show in particular that social investment preferences are crucial predictors of party choice, even outweighing redistribution preferences clearly for both Social Democrats and Greens.

These results, thus, support our claim that post-industrialisation has transformed the social policy preferences just as much as the integration/demarcation attitudes and that new social risks (Bonoli 2006) need to be addressed by parties (Geering and Häusermann 2013) with reference to social investment policies, such as reconciling work and care duties, providing (re-)training for individuals with low or obsolete skills and life-long learning opportunities. Only when capturing this distinction between traditional social policy instruments (passive benefits) and post-industrial strategies (social investment) can we assess the importance of social policy in today’s electoral party dynamics.

More specifically, our findings suggest that social policy issues are by no means valence issues. In fact, the profile of the electorates of the major seven Swiss parties can be distinguished very clearly by means of the attitudes towards these policies. Moreover, cutbacks

<sup>12</sup> Globalisation winners, i.e. individuals with higher socioeconomic status could be shown to have an above-average likelihood to vote for Social democratic and Green parties (cf. Lutz 2012; Geering and Häusermann 2013).

vs. expansion in the field of childcare services are more salient to voters than, e.g. unemployment benefit reforms (see FN7).

We also hypothesised that social investment would allow distinguishing the electoral choice within partisan blocks. This was confirmed for parties of the left. While social investment is a relevant predictor for choosing both the Greens and the Social Democrats, redistribution preferences are significantly related to choosing only Social Democrats but not the Green party. Additionally, we tested whether this distinction helps differentiating between conservative and liberal parties of the right. However, even though the patterns of the relationships go in the expected direction our results are not significant in this respect.

Our conclusion is that in the future social investment and more generally a more careful way of conceptualising social policy attitudes should find their ways into the mainstream literature on party choice and party system dynamics, because they provide important insights into the motives steering electoral choice in post-industrial societies.

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## Appendix

Table A1: Respondents per party

Party	N Voter	Share (%)
Swiss Peoples' Party (SVP)	558	20.45
Liberal Party (FDP)	508	18.62
Conservative Democratic Party (BDP)	135	4.95
Christian Democratic Party (CVP)	425	15.58
Green Liberal Party (GLP)	160	5.87
Social Democrats (SP)	714	26.17
Green Party (GPS)	228	8.36
Total	2728	100

Table A2: Question wording

Selects code	Item	
F58002	Expenditures on education	Are you in favour of increasing expenditures on education?
f14701	State financed nurseries	Should the state be responsible of providing affordable childcare for working parents?
f14702	Financing students	Should the state be responsible of providing financial help for students and apprentices from low-income families?
f14708r	Childcare versus vouchers	Should the state rather be in favour of increasing effort into creating additional nursery schools or fiscally relieve families?
f14709_3	Increasing expenditures for childcare	Should an increase in childcare expenditures be the focus of government's social policy activity?
f14712_3	Cutting expenditures for childcare	Should a decrease in childcare expenditures be the focus of government's social policy activity?
f14718	Lower earnings should entail higher unemployment benefits	Low income earners should receive more unemployment benefits than high-income earners.
f14716	Lower earnings should entail higher pensions	Low income earners should receive more pension benefits than high-income earners.
f14717	Higher earnings should entail higher unemployment benefits	Low income earners should receive less unemployment benefits than high-income earners.
f14715	Higher earnings should entail higher pensions	Low income earners should receive less pension benefits than high-income earners.
f58009	Reduction of income differences	Government should reduce differences in income levels.
f15805	Minimal wage	The government should introduce minimal wages to ensure a decent standard of living.
f14801	Too many immigrants from former Yugoslavia	There are too many immigrants from former Yugoslavia and Albania in Switzerland.

Table A2: Continued

Selects code	Item	
f14802	Too many immigrants from Germany/France/Italy	There are too many immigrants from Germany, France and Italy in Switzerland.
f14807	Swiss culture threatened	Swiss culture is vanishing due to increasing immigration.
f14808	Violence and vandalism due to immigrants	Violence and vandalism are increasing because of increasing immigration levels.
f15430	Supporting EU membership	How strongly do you agree that Swiss should become an EU member?

Table A3: Descriptive statistics

Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
<b>Socioeconomic variables</b>				
Female	0.46	0.50	0	1
Age	53.70	14.81	18	90
Income	7.47	2.69	1	11
Compulsory education	0.04	0.19	0	1
Basic vocational	0.01	0.10	0	1
Vocational	0.39	0.49	0	1
Diploma school	0.09	0.28	0	1
High school	0.07	0.25	0	1
Higher vocational	0.16	0.37	0	1
Vocational university	0.09	0.28	0	1
University	0.16	0.37	0	1
<b>Class variables</b>				
Sociocultural specialist	0.20	0.40	0	1
Service worker	0.09	0.29	0	1
Technician	0.11	0.31	0	1
Production worker	0.10	0.29	0	1
Manager	0.26	0.44	0	1
Clerk	0.10	0.30	0	1
Liberal professional	0.05	0.21	0	1
SBO	0.09	0.29	0	1
<b>Redistribution factor</b>				
Lower earnings should entail higher unemployment benefits	-0.01	0.89	-2.33	1.89
Lower earnings should entail higher pensions	2.66	1.02	1	4
Higher earnings should entail higher unemployment benefits	2.74	0.93	1	4
Higher earnings should entail higher pensions	2.90	0.93	1	4
Reduction of income differences	3.14	0.95	1	4
Minimal wage	2.36	1.32	1	5
	2.05	1.26	1	5

Table A3: Continued

Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
<b>Social investment factor</b>	-0.01	0.80	-2.37	2.01
Expenditures on education	3.71	0.75	1	5
State financed nurseries	2.62	0.93	1	4
Financing students	1.72	0.71	1	4
Childcare versus vouchers	2.43	1.42	1	5
Increasing expenditures for childcare	0.17	0.38	0	1
Cutting expenditures for childcare	0.23	0.42	0	1
<b>Demarcation factor</b>	-0.01	0.89	-2.10	1.86
Too many immigrants from former Yugoslavia	3.29	1.36	1	5
Too many immigrants from Germany/France/Italy	2.87	1.35	1	5
Swiss culture threatened	2.78	1.48	1	5
Violence and vandalism due to immigrants	3.33	1.35	1	5
EU membership	3.70	1.26	1	5

Notes: N = 933

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