**Appendix: Measures of Party Profile**

According to our definition a party has a clear profile with respect to a given issue if i) its position is distinct from that of its competitors, and ii) it is internally united. To assess the clarity of party profiles we rely on data from the Comparative Candidate Survey (CSS). More specifically, for each of the five parties under study we compute the average position on a given issue scale among the candidates of a party. We then calculate the average distance between the party's location and that of its four competitors and use this distance as a measure of the "distinctiveness" of its profile: The higher the distance, the higher the distinctiveness of the party. Second, we use van der Eijk's (2001) index of agreement as a measure of the party's "internal unity" (or "cohesiveness"). This index informs about the degree to which a group of people shares the same preferences on an ordered rating scale.[[1]](#footnote-1) It ranges from -1 (full disagreement) to 1 (full agreement). In the present case, 1 would mean that all candidates of a given party indicate exactly the same position (i.e., preference) on a given issue scale. Finally, the mean between the distance and the agreement index is our measure of party profile: The higher the mean the clearer the profile.

The resulting index of profile clarity ranges empirically from 0.82 to 1.52 (mean=1.08). To distinguish between a low, a moderate or a high profile we apply the following cut-off points: A party has a "low" profile if the mean between distance and agreement is lower or equal to 0.95; it has a "moderate" profile if the mean is greater than 0.95 but lower or equal to 1.15; and it has "high" profile if the mean is greater than 1.15.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Synthetic indicator of issue competition (left-right)**

We start with the parties' profiles on the left-right dimension, which we use as a synthetic indicator of issue competition. Table A1 (first row) presents the average position on the 1 to 5 scale for each of the five parties under consideration.[[3]](#footnote-3) The second row shows the measure of "distinctiveness" and the third the measure of "internal unity". The mean between distance and agreement appears in the fourth row, and the resulting classification of party profile in the last row.

*Table A1: Clarity of parties' profile on the left-right dimension (CCS data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Social Democratic party(N=274) | Green party(N=263) | Christian Democratic party(N=208) | Radical democratic party(N=228) | Swiss People's party(N=212) |
| Average position of party's candidates  | 1.77 | 1.95 | 3.02 | 3.58 | 4.25 |
| Distinctiveness: mean distance with competitors | 1.44 | 1.31 | 1.03 | 1.17 | 1.67 |
| Internal unity: agreement index | 0.72 | 0.65 | 0.78 | 0.68 | 0.69 |
| *Average between distance and agreement* | *1.08* | *0.98* | *0.91* | *0.93* | *1.18* |
| *Clarity of profile* | *moderate* | *moderate* | *low* | *low* | *high* |

Notes: The (rescaled) left-right scale ranges from 1 (left) to 5 (right).

The five parties do not differ much from each other in terms of internal unity on the left-right dimension. By contrast, they substantially differ with respect to the distinctiveness of their issue position: The Swiss People's party is the party with the most distinct profile on the left-right dimension, ahead of the Social Democratic party and the Green party. The Christian democrats and the Radical democrats have comparatively less clear profiles. Therefore, distinctiveness contributes to a large extent to the resulting party profile on the left-right dimension: The Swiss people's party has high profile clarity, the Social democrats and the Greens have moderate profile clarity, and the Christian and the Radical democrats have weak profile clarity.

**EU issue (international openness)**

Our measure of the clarity of party profiles on the EU issue stems from a five point scale regarding whether Switzerland should join the EU (table A2).

*Table A2: Clarity of parties' profile on the EU membership issue (CCS data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Social Democratic party(N=273) | Green party(N=260) | Christian Democratic party(N=205) | Radical democratic party(N=218) | Swiss People's party(N=199) |
| Average position | 4.43 | 3.76 | 2.05 | 2.13 | 1.03 |
| Distinctiveness: mean distance with competitors | 2.19 | 1.69 | 1.30 | 1.28 | 2.06 |
| Internal unity: agreement index | 0.67 | 0.29 | 0.39 | 0.35 | 0.98 |
| *Average between distance and agreement* | 1.43 | 0.99 | 0.85 | 0.82 | 1.52 |
| *Clarity of profile* | *high* | *moderate* | *low* | *low* | *high* |

Note: The EU issue scale ranges from 1 ("fully against") to 5 ("fully in favor").

The extremely strong profile of the Swiss People's party on the EU membership issue is clear from table A2: Nearly all its candidates "fully" oppose EU membership, and the party's position is fairly distinct from that of its competitors. The Social democratic party also exhibits a highly clear profile, but in support of EU membership. Its position is even more distinct than that of the Swiss People's party, but its cohesiveness is lower. By contrast, table A2 highlights the unclear profile of the two center-right parties. Both parties share a very similar, fairly indistinctive position with respect to EU membership, and are strongly internally divided on that issue. Finally, the Greens have a more distinct position than the two center-right parties, but they are not less internally divided. Their resulting profile is moderate.

**Fiscal issue (economic redistribution)**

The distribution of parties' preferences on the fiscal issue appears in table A3.[[4]](#footnote-4)

*Table A3: Clarity of parties' profile on the redistributive issue (CCS data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Social Democratic party(N=275) | Green party(N=270) | Christian Democratic party(N=204) | Radical democratic party(N=226) | Swiss People's party(N=213) |
| Average position | 1.35 | 1.56 | 2.91 | 3.88 | 4.21 |
| Distinctiveness: mean distance with competitors | 1.79 | 1.64 | 1.30 | 1.54 | 1.79 |
| Internal unity: agreement index | 0.83 | 0.72 | 0.41 | 0.44 | 0.60 |
| *Average between distance and agreement* | 1.31 | 1.18 | 0.86 | 0.99 | 1.20 |
| *Clarity of profile* | *high* | *high* | *low* | *moderate* | *high* |

Note: The redistributive issue scale ranges from 1 ("fully in favor of redistribution") to 5 ("fully against").

On the redistribution issue it is the Social Democratic party that exhibits the clearest profile: Its distinctiveness is as high as that of the Swiss people's party and its internal unity is higher. The Swiss people's party comes next. Both parties display high profile clarity. In comparison with these two parties, the Green party holds both a less distinctive and less cohesive position on the redistribution issue, but it nevertheless (just) exceeds the threshold of a "highly clear profile". In spite of their low internal unity, the Radicals have moderate profile clarity on this issue, whereas the Christian Democrats fare badly on both the distinctiveness and cohesiveness aspects and, therefore, fall again into the "low profile" category.

**Reference**

van der Eijk, Cees (2001). Measuring agreement in ordered rating scales. *Quality and quantity* 35: 325-41.

1. Van der Eijk's (2001) index of agreement helps to overcome the weakness of measures based on standard deviation, which capture both consensus and skewedness. His agreement index first decomposes the frequency distribution into constituent layers, and then computes the weighted average degree of agreement. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For parties that are "borderline" cases on a given issue, i.e. parties that are very close to the cut-off point (e.g. the Green party on the redistributive issue), we ran robustness tests relying on the alternative coding. The results remain fairly stable. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The initial scale ranged from 0 to 10, but to ease comparisons with the other two issues we have recoded it from 1 to 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. In the candidate survey, unlike in the post-election survey among voters, preferences with respect to redistributive policy are not measured with a question regarding whether one should increase taxes on high incomes, but with a more general question regarding whether “income and wealth should be redistributed to ordinary people”. The difference is, however, unproblematic, as we are mainly interested in the characterization of party profile on the economic, distributive dimension. For that purpose the question on "income and wealth" is perfectly appropriate. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)