

Estimating the Policy Position of Political Actors

Edited by
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Routledge/ECPR Studies in European Political Science



7 The policy space of party manifestos

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Democracy assigns political parties the important role of presenting citizens with alternative policies. Parties engage in a competitive struggle to gain favour with voters by presenting policy alternatives (Schumpeter 1944). The alternative positions provide the voters with an opportunity to elect a government that will take policy in one direction or another (Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson 1995). Were parties to offer no policy choice, the public would be denied any possibility to control policy outcomes (Sullivan and O'Connor 1972). Party policy alternatives also play a role in determining who governs even where the voters' choice is not the final determination; this is often the case in multiparty systems, inasmuch as negotiations among viable governing alternatives depend on party policy positions (Laver and Schofield 1990; Laver and Shepsle 1996). Finally, when it comes to policy actions pursued by governments, mandate theory says that parties in government pursue policies they have promoted during election campaigns. Evidence, too, indicates that governing parties of the left and of the right pursue different policies (Hibbs 1977; Castles 1982; McDonald, Budge, and Hofferbert 1998).

A rich source of systematic information on party policy statements comes from the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP). This has codified policy emphases in party programmes of competitive democracies throughout the post-war period. Through elections into 1993, the data cover twenty-seven nations and 229 parties (Volkens 1994), with new democracies in Central/Eastern Europe, South-east Asia, and Latin America being added almost every year.

An explicit and implicit criticism of the CMP data is that they tell us about what parties have said but not about party policy positions as such. The same or similar sort of criticism is implicit in the fact that, despite the CMP's widespread availability, several scholars have felt compelled to identify the positions of parties through expert surveys.

Here, we evaluate the CMP data as a source of information on party policy positions. In the first section, we discuss why the saliency theory foundation of the CMP data has raised questions about their use for identifying party policy positions and thereafter review various ways it has been used to

construct indicators of policy positions. The second section evaluates the validity and reliability of left-right party positions from three expert surveys. The idea is to determine whether these expert scales can be used as a sound basis for identifying where parties are located along that dimension. The third section addresses two issues. It begins with an evaluation of the validity of five CMP-based left-right scales by asking how well they square with the expert judgements. Thereafter, we evaluate the reliability of the five scales. The fourth section offers a preview of the use of the CMP data to construct party policy scales for dimensions other than left-right. We conclude with a discussion of the usefulness of both expert surveys and CMP data for placing parties in policy space.

The CMP data and derived policy scales

The CMP data have been thoroughly documented by Budge *et al.* (1987; see also Laver and Budge 1992; Klingemann *et al.* 1994; Volkens 1994). Here we briefly review the important decisions made by the Manifesto Research Group (MRG).

Policy emphases and policy positions

Following David Robertson (1976), as well as Ian Budge and Dennis Farlie (1977), the MRG coded manifesto statements into categories of policy references. The MRG originally agreed to use fifty-four common policy categories, plus allowance for sub-categories within particular countries. Later, two more were added to bring the total to fifty-six. Each category fits within one of seven policy domains: (1) Foreign Affairs, (2) Freedom and Democracy, (3) Government, (4) Economy, (5) Welfare and Quality of Life, (6) Fabric of Society, and (7) Social Groups.¹

The direct objects of the coding process are manifesto sentences or, where language dictates, 'quasi-sentences'. The theoretical framework for the coding is provided by saliency theory of political campaigns. Saliency theory 'implies that the most important aspect of the documents is the degree of emphasis placed on certain broad policy areas, rather than each party's support for, or opposition to, a specific policy within these areas' (Budge 1987: 24). That is, parties compete by emphasising policy areas they believe give them electoral advantages and by glossing over or ignoring those areas that they deem to help their rivals. One source of controversy rests on the question about whether the saliency theory produces indications of policy emphasis rather than policy position.

It is not as if the MRG coding is non-positional in policy terms. In most instances, the categories are easily interpretable as policy options, ideas, or outcomes that are valued by the party. Fifty-four of the fifty-six categories involve clear value statements. Table 7.1 shows that twenty-six CMP policy categories come from thirteen policy concepts where mentions could be

coded as either positive or negative. These pro/con categories are essentially matters of whether a party places value on one policy option or its opposite: such as a more or less protectionist policy. Thirteen other categories require favourable mention of a type of policy. That means, for instance, with the directive to code favourable statements with respect to free enterprise, a long set of critical statements about free enterprise by a Communist party would not be coded as emphases on the free enterprise system. These thirteen 'favourable mention' categories are interpretable as matters of valuing particular types of policy ideas – such as wanting to have market forces organise the national economy. Another fifteen categories refer to the goal of, need for, or importance of such things as peace, market regulation, and so on. This set considers particular policy outcomes as being of value to the party. That leaves only two of fifty-six categories where the value placed on an idea or an outcome is potentially non-directional. By all accounts and evidence, one of these two, nationalisation, is actually directional.² The other is the purposefully non-directional, catch-all category of a party's intention to pursue some sort of economic goal left unspecified by the coding instructions.

Based merely on the words alone, therefore, it is far from clear that party policy positions are not identifiable from these data. By our interpretation, statements are coded as saying which types of policy options, ideas, and outcomes parties value. At this level of analysis, what we know is that the emphasis versus positional facets of the CMP data are arguable. A determination of whether the CMP data can be used to locate parties in policy space must rely on the use and evaluation of the data themselves.

CMP data and derived measures of party policy scales

The use of the CMP data is subject to the sagacious warning that 'there is no single "correct" representation . . . there is no unambiguously correct dimensionality for the policy space . . . different applications call for different levels of detail' (Laver and Shepsle 1996: 27). The fifty-six coding categories exist for precisely those reasons. Analysts can combine fine distinctions to suit the needs of their particular research questions. If broader categories had been used at the initial coding stage, there would be no *post hoc* opportunity to expand them.

Having details is a boon, but details can just as well be seen as a burden. They all but require researchers to engage in a pre-analysis measurement investigation so that the CMP data can be organised in a form suitable for addressing a particular research question. Almost anyone who has conducted such measurement investigations can attest to the frustration they often breed. Numerous choices are presented but few standards exist to guide any choice. Members of the MRG with intimate knowledge of the CMP data have combined different coding categories and, not surprisingly, have arrived at different measurements of the party policy positions for the

Table 7.1 The Manifesto Research Group policy categories

Positive and negative categories	Mention favourably	Need for/goal of/importance of	Other
Foreign special relations	Anti-imperialism	Peace	Pursue economic goals
Military	Freedom and human rights	Incentives	Nationalisation
Internationalism	Democracy	Market regulation	
European Community	Political authority	Government efficiency	
Constitutionalism	Free enterprise	Eliminate corruption	
Protectionism	Economic planning	Keynesian demand	
Centralisation	Corporatism	Productivity	
Welfare state expansion	Marxist analysis	Controlled economy	
Education expansion	Anti-growth	Economic orthodoxy	
National way of life	Agriculture and farmers	Environmental protection	
Traditional morality	Middle class/prof.	Cultural and leisure facilities	
Multiculturalism	Underpriv. minority groups	Law & order	
Labour groups	Non-econ. demog. groups	Social harmony	
		Tech. and infrastructure	
		Social justice	

same left-right dimension. Table 7.2 looks at four of these studies. In all four cases, at least one of the authors was a member of the MRC. Despite a high degree of familiarity with the CMP data, there is not a high degree of agreement on which categories go into the left-right location of parties.

We might ask whether one of these left-right scales is correct and the others are wrong, but that is not what is at issue. Each might be correct, depending on one's purpose. That is Laver and Shepsle's point. However, we do want to know which of these five possibilities, if any, square with the ideas of left and right that researchers have in mind. If the CMP data cannot be used to retrieve the left-right positioning of parties that researchers want to use, then at best there is doubt about using the CMP data to construct a valid measure of that concept. At worst, there is distrust of using the CMP data to measure policy positions.

A second possible source of variety in left-right party positioning may come from the scoring systems applied to the CMP-based scales. Measurement is aptly defined as 'the assignment of numerals to objects or events according to rules' (Stevens 1946: 667). Decisions about how (that is, the rules) the contributions of various categories are counted (the numerals) in the process of assigning them to the parties (the objects) can make quite a difference. The possibilities are numerous and varied; for manageability at this point we focus on two.

- 1 *Subtractive measures*: scoring based on the difference between presumably opposite types of emphases relative to the overall policy space of the party.
- 2 *Ratio measures*: scoring based on emphases placed on certain types of values relative to emphases placed on presumably opposite types of values.

Laver and Budge (1992) identified twenty-six coding categories that go into their measurement definition of left-right. They add thirteen left items and subtract from this quantity the sum of thirteen right items. A party that makes 200 total statements with 100 (or 50 per cent) of them about left items and 40 (or 20 per cent) about the right items receives a score of +30 (i.e., 50-20). This difference or subtractive measure is consistent with saliency theory. Of all the statements the party made, on balance, 30 more units were devoted to left matters than to right matters. Imagine that at the next election this party says exactly the same things it had said last time but adds 200 new statements about an issue that is not of concern to the left-right scale (e.g., favourable statements about protecting the environment). Now the party is making 400 total statements, and relative to that total they are making only half as many left statements (25 per cent) and half as many right statements (10 per cent) as they did for the first election. The party's left-right position is recorded as moving from +30 to +15. That is, the party is scored as considerably less left-leaning at the second

Table 7.2 MRC categories included in left-right scales across four studies

MRC Var #	Domain	Laver and Budge	Budge and Robertson	Bartolini and Maier	Laver and Garry
				Economic	Social
102	Foreign				
103	Foreign	Decolonisation	Frn special relations, con		
105	Foreign	Military, con	Decolonisation		
106	Foreign	Peace			
107	Foreign	Internationalism, pro			
110	Foreign		European Community, con		
202	Freedom	Democracy			
204	Freedom				
304	Govt				
403	Economic	Regulation of capitalism	Regulation of capitalism	Regulation of capitalism	Regulation of capitalism
404	Economic	Economic planning		Economic planning	Economic planning
406	Economic	Protectionism, pro		Protectionism, pro	Protectionism, pro
408	Economic			Economic goals	
409	Economic			Keynesian economics	
410	Economic			Productivity	
411	Economic			Tech./infrastructure	
412	Economic	Controlled economy		Controlled economy	Controlled economy
413	Economic	Nationalisation	Nationalisation	Nationalisation	Nationalisation
504	Welfare	Welfare, pro			
506	Welfare	Education, pro			
602	Fabric		Nat'l way of life, con		
604	Fabric		Traditional morality, con		
701	Groups	Labour groups, pro	Labour groups, pro		
					Constitutionalism, con Government corruption
					Nat'l way of life, con Traditional morality, con

Table 7.2 (continued)

MRG Var #	MRG Domain	Laver and Garry			
		Laver and Budge	Budge and Robertson	Bartolini and Mair	Economic
104	Foreign	Military, pro	European Community, pro		
108	Foreign	Constitutionalism, pro			
203	Freedom	Freedom and human rights	Freedom and human rights		Constitutionalism, pro
201	Freedom		Decentralisation, pro		
301	Govt		Government efficiency		
303	Govt		Government corruption		
304	Govt		Government authority		
305	Govt				Government authority
401	Economic	Free enterprise	Free enterprise	Free enterprise	Free enterprise
402	Economic	Incentives	Incentives	Incentives	Incentives
407	Economic	Protectionism, con	Protectionism, con	Protectionism, con	Protectionism, con
414	Economic	Economic orthodoxy	Economic orthodoxy	Economic orthodoxy	Economic orthodoxy
505	Welfare	Welfare, con			Welfare, con
601	Fabric	Nat'l way of life, pro			Nat'l way of life, pro
603	Fabric	Traditional morality, pro	Traditional morality, pro		Traditional morality, pro
605	Fabric	Law and order			Law and order
606	Fabric	Social harmony	Social harmony		Social harmony
607	Fabric		Multiculturalism, pro		Social harmony

election compared to the first. It has moved toward the centre by virtue of devoting attention to policy matters that are not within the categories relevant to the left-right scale.

An alternative view of the position of parties is with respect to their left-right tendencies, given however much concern they have for items of the left and the right. One could count the left and right statements of a party as a percentage of all left and right statements made by that party (Kim and Fording 1998; Laver and Garry 2000). In the example above, the 50 per cent left and 20 per cent right emphases at the first election could lead to scoring the left-right position as 71.4 (50/70). The party's left-right position at the second election is likewise 71.4 (25/35).³ Under this scoring system, therefore, the party's left-right position holds steady.

Which is the proper description of a party's position, the subtractive or ratio scores? There is, as we have already said, no way to answer this question in the abstract. Validity depends on what the researcher intends to measure. If one's intention is to locate a party in a space defined by its emphases on left versus right values relative to all values (thereby stressing the overall saliency of left and right values), then the subtractive measure is preferred. If, on the contrary, one's intention is to locate the party along the left-right dimension as such, regardless of saliency, then the ratio is preferred.⁴

Evaluating expert party policy scales

Measurement validity often appears to be an elusive standard because it depends so very much on the intent of the person constructing a scale. It is easy to interpret Laver and Budge's content-varied left-right scale and Bartolini and Mair's economic left-right scale as nothing other than different intentions of different authors. We confront this difficulty by accepting the left-right party positioning on expert scales as the meaning of left-right that we intend to measure. That simplifies the question. We ask: Can the CMP data be used to measure the left-right positions of parties as those left-right positions are understood by experts? Of course, taking the expert scales as the standard for evaluation without knowing much about their reliability and validity runs the risk of inferring that any mismatch between the expert and the CMP scales results from problems with the CMP data. It might well be the case that different expert scales measure left-right positions differently, contain a good deal of random noise, or both. That would force the unrealistic requirement that the CMP scales match moving targets. Therefore, we begin by exploring the reliability and validity of three expert scales.

Since 1980, Castles and Mair (1984), Laver and Hunt (1992), and Huber and Ingelhart (1995) have reported expert scales of party positions. They provide common coverage of eighty-four parties in sixteen Western democracies throughout the post-war period. The Castles-Mair

and Huber–Inglehart scales expressly focus on the left–right location of parties. Laver and Hunt asked their experts to place the parties along eight dimensions. They suppose that their public ownership dimension is the most indicative of the usual conception of left–right (Laver and Hunt 1992: 122). In order to test that supposition, as well as to explore the content and construct validity of the Castles–Mair and Huber–Inglehart measures, we analyse the Laver–Hunt scales on three of their dimensions: first, public ownership, second, social issues, and third, taxes versus spending.

The expert scales – one from the early 1980s, a second from the late 1980s, and a third from the early 1990s – enable us to apply David Heise’s (1969) measurement model for separating reliability and stability. This model assumes a Markovian process, so that a party’s change from today’s position to tomorrow’s will be unaffected by its position yesterday. Assuming also that the reliability at each time point is the same, all one needs for the Heise stability and reliability estimates is a simple correlation matrix. (See Table 7.3.)

Table 7.3 shows that the Castles–Mair and Huber–Inglehart scales are more highly correlated with one another than either is with any of the three Laver–Hunt measures. Interestingly, as Laver–Hunt themselves expected, their public ownership scale is more highly correlated with the Castles–Mair scale than are either their social or tax/service scale. On the other hand, the Laver–Hunt tax/service scale is slightly more highly correlated with the Huber–Inglehart scale than are the social or public ownership scales. Even more interesting is the fact that the Laver–Hunt social scale correlates more highly with general left–right scales – Castles–Mair and Huber–Inglehart – than it does with either the public ownership or the tax-service scales. This pattern of correlations suggests that perhaps the general left–right scales include content from all three dimensions surveyed by Laver and Hunt. When we regress the Castles–Mair and the Huber–Inglehart scales onto Laver and Hunt’s three scales, we find that the

Table 7.3 Correlations between expert scales

	<i>C&M</i>	<i>L&H Own</i>	<i>L&H Social</i>	<i>L&H Tax</i>	<i>H&I</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>
<i>C&M</i>	1.000					5.28	2.23
<i>L&H Own</i>	0.902	1.000				6.07	2.15
<i>L&H Social</i>	0.777	0.641	1.000			5.08	2.54
<i>L&H Tax</i>	0.896	0.949	0.653	1.000		5.58	2.14
<i>H&I</i>	0.930	0.890	0.768	0.903	1.000	5.39	2.18

C&M is the Castles–Mair scale, *L&H Own* is the Laver–Hunt public ownership scale, *L&H Social* is the Laver–Hunt social scale, *L&H Tax* is the Laver–Hunt tax and service scale, and *H&I* is the Huber–Inglehart scale. The metrics of all scales are adjusted so that they range from 0 through 10, with 0 as the leftmost and 10 as the rightmost positions. This allows the means and standard deviations to be compared directly.

left–right variation in each of the two general left–right scales is associated with all three of Laver and Hunt’s dimensions.

$$C\&M = -.478 + .466 \textit{Own} + .278 \textit{Social} + .270 \textit{Tax}, \text{ with } R^2 = .886; s_e = .764. \\ (.253) (.124) \quad (.044) \quad (.126)$$

and

$$H\&I = -.134 + .270 \textit{Own} + .258 \textit{Social} + .460 \textit{Tax}, \text{ with } R^2 = .87; s_e = .776. \\ (.514) (.126) \quad (.044) \quad (.128)$$

It appears, therefore, that the content of the left–right concept covers issues related to public ownership and government economic management and to welfare state matters of taxing, spending, and service and to social value questions involving authoritarianism, individual liberty, moral order, and the like.

This inference squares with Huber and Inglehart’s own content inquiry into the meaning of left–right used by their experts. In all sixteen countries under analysis here, the most important left–right issues cited by their experts refer to what Huber and Inglehart call ‘economic and class conflict’, a grouping of issues that includes private ownership, redistribution, inflation, employment, and public spending (Huber and Inglehart 1995: 78 and 86–9). Furthermore, Huber and Inglehart (1995: 86–9) report that the secondary dimension of the left–right content cited in all sixteen countries covered here involved either authoritarianism (government control of all spheres of life, civil rights and liberties, etc.), traditional versus new culture (religious value, moral order, secularism, social conservatism, the environment, etc.), or xenophobia (racism, immigration intolerance, etc.).

To bring the Laver and Hunt measures into line with the left–right content of Castles–Mair and Huber–Inglehart, we have calculated a weighted average of the Laver–Hunt public ownership plus social values plus tax and service scales in order to reformulate a left–right scale. The public ownership and tax/service scales have a weight of 1.5 and the social scale has a weight of 1.0. That gives three times as much weight to economic as to social issues, a fact that accords with the regression coefficient weights in the two equations above.

Substituting the weighted Laver–Hunt measure into the correlation matrix produces the statistics in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4 Correlations between expert scales using the weighted Laver–Hunt measure

	<i>C&M</i>	<i>L&H</i>	<i>H&I</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>
<i>C&M</i>	1.000			5.28	2.23
<i>L&H</i>	0.941	1.000		5.64	2.06
<i>H&I</i>	0.930	0.936	1.000	5.39	2.18

Table 7.4 shows that the weighted Laver–Hunt measure is more highly correlated with both Castles–Mair and Huber–Inglehart than was any single one of their three separate measures. Therefore, we accept the weighted *L&H* scale as more content and construct valid compared to any one of their separate measures.

The Heise measurement model produces stability and reliability estimates of:

Reliability	=	0.947
Stability, early 1980s to late 1980s	=	0.994
Stability, late 1980s to early 1990s	=	0.988
Stability, early 1980s to early 1990s	=	0.982

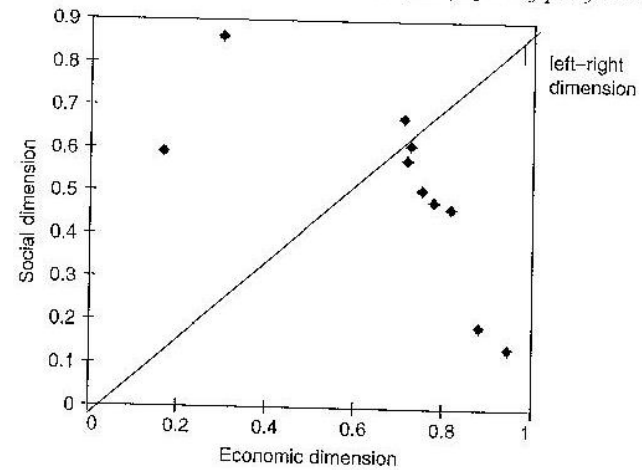
The measurements are highly reliable; 94.7 per cent of the variation is systematic and just over 5 per cent is random. Once the modest unreliability is taken into account, the positioning of the parties is almost perfectly stable. These results can be taken as both good news and bad news. To the good, there is very little randomness in the experts' placements of the parties. The bad news is that a problem would arise if one were to attempt to use the expert scales as a basis for analysing party movements (see, e.g., Knutson 1998). There are essentially no observable movements other than those due to a small amount of measurement error. Across a decade's time, the experts saw the parties in essentially the same relative locations. Perhaps the parties never moved, or perhaps the experts are reporting an over-time general statement about party locations.

Validity and reliability of CMP scales

In order to evaluate the validity and reliability of the scales constructed from the CMP data, we use the five left–right scales catalogued in Table 7.2. We have created scores for each of the five scales by, first, summing the right items and the left items and then calculating a subtractive measure (right–left) and a ratio measure (right/[right + left]).⁵ Because the expert scales show no sign of change in party positions, as if the experts have summarised the typical positions of the parties, we use each party's 1972–92 period average from the CMP scales for testing the CMP scale validities. Requiring a party to have a manifesto throughout this twenty-year period reduces the number of parties we analyse from eighty-four to sixty-six. Once we know something about the CMP validity, we turn back to the Heise reliability and stability test and apply it to the CMP scales.

CMP validity

Figures 7.1a and 7.1b illustrate the factor loadings (principal axis with varimax rotation) of all five CMP scales. The analysis includes the three



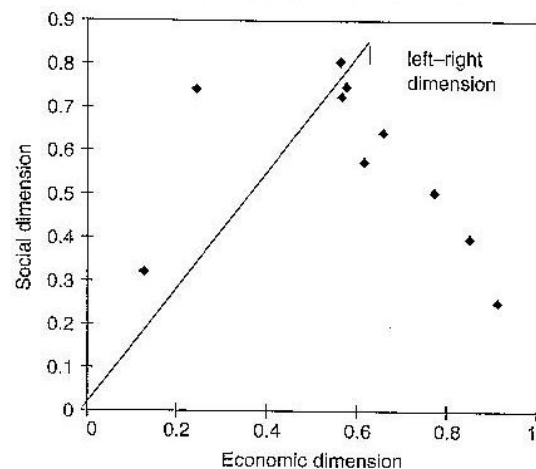
Numerical value of factor loadings, Figure 7.1a

Scale	Varimax rotation		Rotation to expert scale centroid	
Castle–Mair	0.731	0.610	0.952	-0.013
Laver–Hunt	0.713	0.670	0.977	0.044
Huber–Inglehart	0.723	0.577	0.924	-0.033
Budge–Robertson	0.759	0.505	0.905	-0.111
Laver–Budge	0.825	0.462	0.927	-0.186
Bartolini–Mair	0.895	0.192	0.804	-0.437
Laver–Garry econ	0.965	0.141	0.824	-0.521
Laver–Garry social	0.133	0.592	0.486	0.363
Laver–Hunt own	0.787	0.479	0.909	-0.149
Laver–Hunt social	0.275	0.858	0.767	0.472

Figure 7.1a Factor loadings of expert scales and CMP subtractive scales

expert left–right scales and, in order to help define the factor space, the Laver and Hunt public ownership and social ratings. Figure 7.1a shows the loadings for the subtractive measures; Figure 7.1b shows the loadings of the ratio measures.

For ease of exposition at this point, the two factors can be discussed as 'pure' indicators of an economic dimension (the horizontal axis) and a social dimension (the vertical axis). In that view, the expert scales appear to be a mix of those two dimensions, with slightly more weight attributable to the economic than the social. Relative to the expert scales, the CMP scales are more economic-laden. Indeed, they are even



Numerical value of factor loadings, Figure 7.1b

Scale	Varimax rotation		Rotation to expert scale centroid	
	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4
Castle-Mair	0.578	0.767	0.960	-0.014
Laver-Hunt	0.563	0.826	0.999	0.033
Huber-Ingelhart	0.568	0.743	0.935	-0.020
Budge-Robertson	0.616	0.589	0.839	-0.149
Laver-Budge	0.780	0.516	0.877	-0.325
Bartolini-Mair	0.924	0.254	0.751	-0.596
Laver-Garry econ	0.859	0.405	0.834	-0.454
Laver-Garry social	0.115	0.326	0.331	0.100
Laver-Hunt own	0.660	0.656	0.919	-0.145
Laver-Hunt social	0.234	0.760	0.752	0.260

Figure 7.1b Factor loadings of expert scales and CMP ratio scales

closer to the horizontal axis than is the Laver-Hunt public ownership expert scale.

Given that we are accepting the expert scales as the meaning of left-right, the CMP scales are slightly off the mark on the validity question. To determine by just how much the CMP scales miss that mark, we follow Guilford and Hoepfner's (1969) advice and rotate the horizontal dimension so that it goes directly through the centroid formed by the three expert scales. The rotation substitutes the criterion of defining a dimension by how well it hits a theoretical mark as opposed to the how well it accounts for particular types of variance (where the varimax criterion is maximising

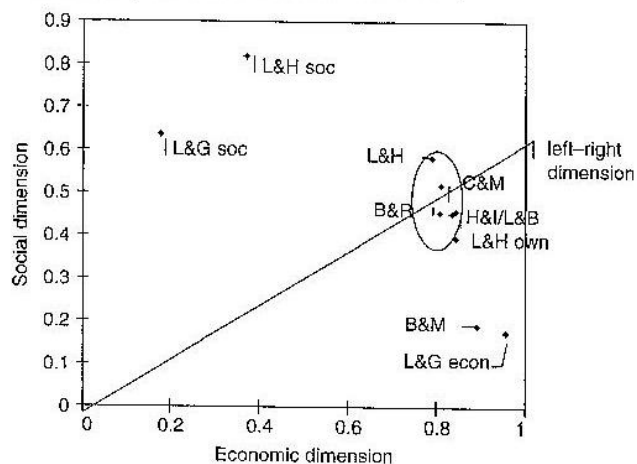
the squared factor loadings). The expert scales are quite well defined by the left-right axis. They load highly on it and near zero on an orthogonal axis. This corroborates the inferences that they are highly reliable (communalities > .9) and valid (nearly pure) measures of what we take to be left-right party positioning. The loadings of the CMP scales show them to be measuring something similar but slightly angular. In that sense, none of them is a precisely valid measure of left-right. They have, it would appear, too much economic content and/or too little social content to match what the experts have in mind for left-right.

This conclusion should not be overdrawn. The CMP measures, especially the subtractive measures of Budge-Robertson and Laver-Budge, are close approximations to the left-right party positions given by the expert scales. The Bartolini-Mair and Laver-Garry CMP scales were designed to measure principally the economic or the social positioning of parties, and they do.

Attempts to make adjustments to the scales moved the CMP measures closer to the experts but a residual analysis revealed that five parties are scored consistently different by the experts and CMP. The Italian Communists (PCI) and Danish Centre Democrats (CD) have scores considerably farther left for the experts than for the CMP. The conservative Italian MSI is about as right-leaning as a party gets, according to the experts. The CMP scales place the MSI to the right of centre but not at the extreme right. Finally, the Finnish KESK and Norwegian Høyre are each scored as right of centre by the experts, whereas the CMP scales have both parties as centre-left.

After removing the five parties that mismatch on the expert versus CMP scales, we reanalysed the subtractive CMP scales reported in Figure 7.1, given that the subtractive scales appear more similar to the expert scales than do the ratio scales. The results are illustrated in Figure 7.2; numerical values are reported below the figure. Without those five parties in the analysis, the Laver-Budge and Budge-Robertson CMP scales appear very near to the left-right dimension. The Laver-Budge position is virtually identical to that of the Huber-Ingelhart experts, and the Budge-Robertson position is quite near.

Several conclusions are warranted. The CMP data can be used as valid measures of party policy positions as judged against the party positioning given by experts. On this question of validity, the subtractive measures appear slightly more valid than the ratio measures. In particular, the two subtractive CMP scales that were designed to combine economic and social policy statements, Budge-Robertson and Laver-Budge, are close approximations to left-right party positions produced by experts. Except for five parties, these two CMP scales are near equivalents of the Huber-Ingelhart expert scale. Arguably, the mismatches on five parties could be held against a validity claim for the CMP scales, but just as arguably the expert placements of those five parties could be responses to the reputation of the five parties rather than to their actual policy advocacy. This is, we think, an issue that merits further investigation.



Numerical values of factor loadings

Scale	Varimax rotation		Rotation to expert scale centroid	
Castle-Mair	0.809	0.515	0.959	0.002
Laver-Hunt	0.787	0.581	0.976	0.070
Huber-Inglehart	0.836	0.444	0.944	-0.072
Budge-Robertson	0.806	0.448	0.921	-0.053
Laver-Budge	0.845	0.451	0.955	-0.071
Bartolini-Mair	0.896	0.176	0.851	-0.331
Laver-Garry econ	0.963	0.160	0.899	-0.380
Laver-Garry social	0.145	0.633	0.461	0.457
Laver-Hunt own	0.846	0.387	0.922	-0.126
Laver-Hunt social	0.349	0.822	0.735	0.508

Figure 7.2 Two-dimensional factor analysis results for expert and CMP scales, excluding five parties (Danish CD, Finnish KESK, Italian PCI, Italian MSI, and Norwegian Høyre)

CMP reliability

We have evaluated the validity of the CMP scales based on the average of the parties' policy positions across a twenty-one-year period. That leaves open the question of whether the CMP data can be used for single time points. Application to shorter time frames would make it possible for researchers to use the CMP scales to analyse movements as parties adopt

different mixes of strategic and sincere positions from one election to the next. This is not possible with the expert scales, for we have already seen that experts place the parties in almost completely stable locations. Therefore, we need to know two additional facts about the CMP scales with respect to single elections: first, are they reliable measures of party positions? Second, if they are reliable, do parties move around or stay at fixed positions in the policy space?

We evaluate the reliability of both subtractive and ratio CMP scales through the same Heise measurement model we earlier applied to the expert scales. The time points are, as nearly as practicable, the most recent election prior to each expert survey: Castle-Mair prior to 1983; Laver-Hunt prior to 1990; and Huber-Inglehart prior to 1993. In countries that held no election between 1990 and 1993, the time-3 point is the last election in the CMP94 data set (Volkens 1994), and the time-2 election is the one preceding that. With these data, we generated the correlation matrices reported in Table 7.5. In turn, from each threefold set of correlations, we estimate the reliability of the measure and the stability of the positions.

The Laver-Budge CMP scale is just as highly reliable as the expert scales. The Budge-Robertson scale and the Laver-Garry economic scale are also reasonably reliable. The Bartolini-Mair scale falls below most conventions for acceptable reliability, with less than 80 per cent of its variation being systematic. The Laver-Garry social policy scale, with reliabilities of only 0.069 for the subtractive scoring and of 0.123 for the ratio scoring, is mostly noise. There are likely to be several reasons for these varying reliabilities. First, scales formed with a large number of items, such as Budge-Robertson and Laver-Budge, tend to produce higher reliabilities compared to those with fewer items. This is true in conventional testing, and it appears to be true for the CMP data. Second, it may well be that the Bartolini-Mair scale requires that different items have different weights (see note 5). Third, reliability estimates could be sensitive to the inclusion of certain items. In particular, the positive and negative welfare items, excluded from the Bartolini-Mair scale but included in Budge-Robertson, Laver-Budge, and Laver-Garry economic scales, are likely to add systematic variation to party positions (Budge *et al.* n.d., ch. 2).

The stability estimates are as heartening for any and all party analysts as the reliability estimates are for those who have used or want to use the CMP scales. As measured by the Budge-Robertson and Laver-Budge CMP scales, the parties are not completely stable. Parties do offer different positions from one time to another. This, as we have been suggesting, opens the door to the possibility of using the CMP scales to analyse party movements. We know from other analyses (Budge, Robertson and Hearl 1987; Laver and Budge 1992; Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge 1994; Budge *et al.* n.d., ch. 2) that over the long run parties do not stray too far from their usual ideological, left-right location. It is rare to see one party 'leap-frog' another in left-right positions. We see from Table 7.5, however, that the party positions are

Table 7.5 Correlations, reliability and stability of left-right party positions for each of six CMP scales, based on a three-wave panel for sixty-six parties

CMP Scale		Correlations			Scoring	Reliability	Stability		
		Subtractive Score	Ratio Score*				T1-T2	T2-T3	T1-T3
		Time 1	Time 2	Time 3					
<i>Budge and Robertson</i>	Time 1	1.00	0.768	0.591	Ratio*	0.875	0.878	0.770	0.676
	Time 2	0.427	1.00	0.673	Subtractive	0.889	0.480	0.831	0.399
	Time 3	0.355	0.739	1.00					
<i>Laver and Budge</i>	Time 1	1.00	0.787	0.650	Ratio*	0.987	0.798	0.826	0.659
	Time 2	0.741	1.00	0.815	Subtractive	0.942	0.786	0.845	0.664
	Time 3	0.626	0.796	1.00					
<i>Bartolini and Mair</i>	Time 1	1.00	0.663	0.632	Ratio*	0.757	0.875	0.953	0.834
	Time 2	0.614	1.00	0.722	Subtractive	0.654	0.938	1.016	0.953
	Time 3	0.624	0.665	1.00					
<i>Laver & Garry Economic</i>	Time 1	1.00	0.863	0.604	Ratio*	1.060	0.814	0.700	0.570
	Time 2	0.778	1.00	0.742	Subtractive	0.874	0.891	0.920	0.820
	Time 3	0.716	0.804	1.00					

Table 7.5 (continued)

CMP Scale		Correlations			Scoring	Reliability	Stability		
		Subtractive Score	Ratio Score*				T1-T2	T2-T3	T1-T3
		Time 1	Time 2	Time 3					
<i>Laver & Garry Social</i>	Time 1	1.00	0.099	0.184	Ratio*	0.123	—	—	—
	Time 2	0.039	1.00	0.228	Subtractive	0.069	—	—	—
	Time 3	0.202	0.350	1.00					

Note

The time points are defined by a nation's prior election closest to 1983, 1990, and 1995. In countries that held no election between 1990 and 1993, the time 3 point is the last election in the CMP94 data set (Volgens 1994), and the time 2 election is the one preceding that. The reliability and stability estimates are calculated by the measurement model formulae developed by Heise (1969).

* Ratio scoring sometimes leaves a party's position undefined. In those instances, we excluded the party from all correlations in the respective scale. Exclusions include: *B&R* - Finnish SDP; *B&M* - Italian MSI; *L&G econ* - Italian MSI; *L&G soc* - Belgian VU; Canadian NDP; Canadian Lib; Canadian PC; Danish KF; Finnish FDP; Swedish Com, Swedish SD.

changeable in the short run. Together these sets of findings mean that the parties do not wander so far from their ideological base as to alienate their core constituents, but they do take up different positions at different times.

CMP scales other than left-right

Our efforts thus far have been directed at evaluating the validity and reliability of CMP scales that locate parties' left-right policy positions. There are theoretical propositions that call for tests of party policy position-taking in multidimensional space. This is why, for instance, Laver and Hunt (1992) went to such lengths to have their experts identify party positions along eight dimensions. In this section, we provide an analysis of the validity and reliability of party positions along distinguishable economic and social dimensions.

All three factor analyses reported above suggest an interesting possibility with respect to the economic and social dimensions. The CMP scales that have been constructed as measurements of economic and social policy positions are closer to orthogonal than are the Laver-Hunt expert placements of parties on their economic and social dimensions. The Bartolini-Mair and Laver-Garry CMP economic scales load higher on the economic dimension and lower on the social dimension than does the Laver-Hunt public ownership scale. Likewise, the Laver-Garry social scale, while a noisy measure, has a lower association with the economic dimension than does the Laver-Hunt expert-based social policy scale (see Figures 7.1 and 7.2). One interpretation of these results is that the Laver-Hunt experts allowed a party's position on economic policy to influence their placement of the parties on social policy and, likewise, allowed a party's position on social policy to influence their placement of the parties on economic policy.

We have developed our own CMP scales for economic and social policy. In a manner similar to the instructions Laver and Hunt gave their experts, we included economic items that we thought indicated support for or opposition to public ownership *and* willingness to tax and spend. We selected social items to indicate party policy positions that place a high priority on individuals as the basic social unit of society (liberal), as contrasted with placing a high priority on the community as a whole as the basic social unit (conservative). Using those conceptualisations, we included thirteen left and nine right categories as indicative of left-right economic policy positioning, and five liberal and five conservative categories as indicators of social policy positions. From these we calculated subtractive measures (right/conservative minus left/liberal) of economic and social policy positions. (See Table 7.6.)

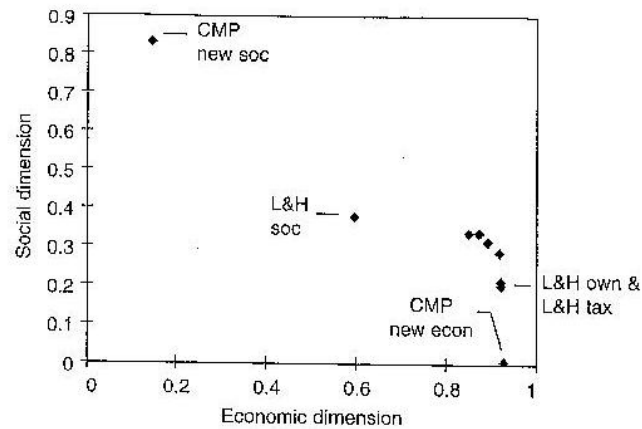
To check the content validity of these new indicators, we factor analysed them (using their 1972-92 averages) together with the left-right CMP scales from Laver-Budge and Budge-Robertson *plus* the left-right expert

Table 7.6 Subtractive measures of economic and social policy positions

Economic categories		Social categories	
Left	Right	Left	Right
Centralisation: pro	Decentralisation	Nat'l way of life: con	Nat'l way of life: pro
Market regulation	Free enterprise	Trad'l morality: con	Trad'l morality: pro
Economic planning	Protectionism: con	Multiculturalism: pro	Multiculturalism: con
Corporatism	Productivity	Minority groups: pro	Law and order
Protectionism: pro	Infrastructure	Non-economic groups	Social harmony
Keynesian economics	Economic orthodoxy		
Controlled economy	Welfare: con		
Nationalisation	Education: con		
Marxism	Labour groups: con		
Social justice			
Welfare: pro			
Education: pro			
Labour groups: pro			

scales from Castles-Mair and Huber-Ingelhart *plus* the public ownership, social, and taxing and spending ratings from Laver-Hunt. All sixty-six parties for which we have CMP and expert data are included. The results are shown in Figure 7.3.

The most striking aspect of the results is that the new CMP-based economic and social scales are nearly orthogonal to one another. By this rendering, there are two distinct dimensions. In this policy space, both the expert and CMP left-right scales arise more as a matter of economic than social policy positions. We saw this in the previous factor analyses (Figure 7.2). Now, in addition, we see that there is not much to distinguish the Laver-Hunt public ownership and taxing/spending from one another or from the general left-right dimension. Their two economic scales are, as one would hypothesise, less related to the social dimension than the Castles-Mair and Huber-Ingelhart expert placements of parties expressly on the left-right dimension, but only slightly so. Most interesting, perhaps, is the fact that in this space, where the economic and social dimensions are more clearly distinguishable than in the preceding analyses, party positions on social policy, as ascertained from the Laver-Hunt experts, are more a matter of left-right economics than social liberalism/conservatism. Therefore, there is good reason to worry about whether experts are able to separate their views about party social policy position-taking from their views of party economic policy position-taking.



Numerical values of factor loadings

Scale	Varimax Rotation	
Castle-Mair	0.911	0.291
Huber-Inglehart	0.886	0.318
Budge-Robertson	0.843	0.341
Laver-Budge	0.866	0.343
Laver-Hunt own	0.914	0.208
Laver-Hunt social	0.597	0.383
Laver-Hunt tax	0.914	0.216
CMP new econ	0.921	0.012
CMP new social	0.157	0.838

Figure 7.3 Two-dimensional factor analysis results for expert and CMP scales, designed to investigate the separability of economic and social dimensions

Are the new CMP-based economic and social policy scales reliable? The answer is mixed. The over-time (early 1980s, mid/late 1980s, and late 1980s/early 1990s) threefold intercorrelations for each scale are shown in Table 7.7.

Applying the Heise measurement model to these correlations produces the following reliability and stability estimates.

Reliability	=	<i>Economic</i>	<i>Social</i>
Stability, early 1980s to late 1980s	=	0.960	0.703
Stability, late 1980s to early 1990s	=	0.712	0.482
Stability, early 1980s to early 1990s	=	0.855	0.690
Stability, early 1980s to early 1990s	=	0.609	0.333

This particular economic scale is highly reliable, $r_{xx} = .960$. There is also

Table 7.7 Correlations between CMP-based economic and social policy scales

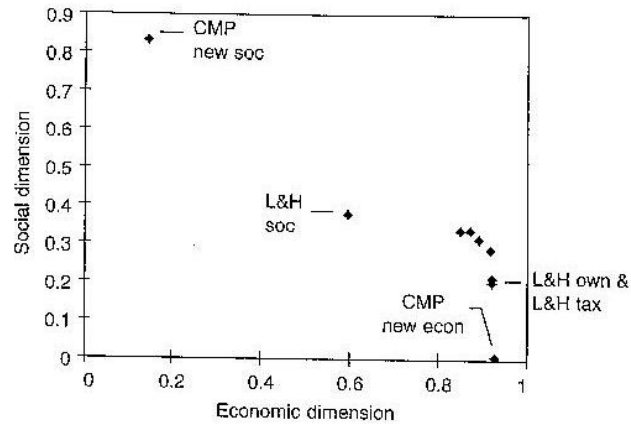
	<i>Econ</i> _{t1}	<i>Econ</i> _{t2}	<i>Econ</i> _{t3}	<i>Social</i> _{t1}	<i>Social</i> _{t2}	<i>Social</i> _{t3}
<i>Econ</i> _{t1}	1.000					
<i>Econ</i> _{t2}	0.684	1.000				
<i>Econ</i> _{t3}	0.585	0.821	1.000			
<i>Social</i> _{t1}				1.000		
<i>Social</i> _{t2}				0.339	1.000	
<i>Social</i> _{t3}				0.234	0.485	1.000

t1 = early 1980s
t2 = mid/late 1980s
t3 = late 1980s/early 1990s

stability in the economic policy position-taking of parties similar to the stability estimated for the Laver-Budge left-right scale. The social scale's reliability is not so filled with noise as to render it uninformative, but it does fall below a .80 reliability that we would take as minimally acceptable. If we can trust this measure, there is a suggestion that party policy position-taking is less stable, more dynamic, on social liberalism/conservatism than on economic left-right. Could it be that the parties' strategic attempts to attract voters come principally from manoeuvring along the social dimension, while they stand pat on the economic principles that help to define who they are – communists, socialists, social/Christian democrats, free-marketers, and conservatives? The pattern of stability and change suggests as much.

Conclusion

The main message to draw from the analyses presented here is that the CMP data can be and have been used to provide valid and reliable measurements of party policy positions. Accepting expert survey assessments of party policy positions as the standard for what it means for a party to be on the left, on the right, or in the centre, we have shown that the Budge-Robertson and the Laver-Budge CMP-based measures of left-right party locations are quite similar to what the experts say. And, once we take account of the expert versus CMP differences with respect to five parties – the Danish CD, Finnish KESK, Italian PCI and MSI, and Norwegian Høyre – these two CMP measures are placing the parties in essentially the same way on the left-right positions. On the question of reliability, we demonstrate that the three expert surveys are highly reliable measurements of party left-right positions, with reliabilities close to 95 per cent. We also show that the Laver-Budge left-right CMP scale is just as reliable. With respect to validity and reliability, there is little that distinguishes between the results from expert surveys and, at least, the Laver-Budge CMP scaling of parties. The evidence here tells us that, to



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