

# The After Party: Electoral Consequences of Party Bans

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## Abstract

Political parties are often banned to suppress their political presence.

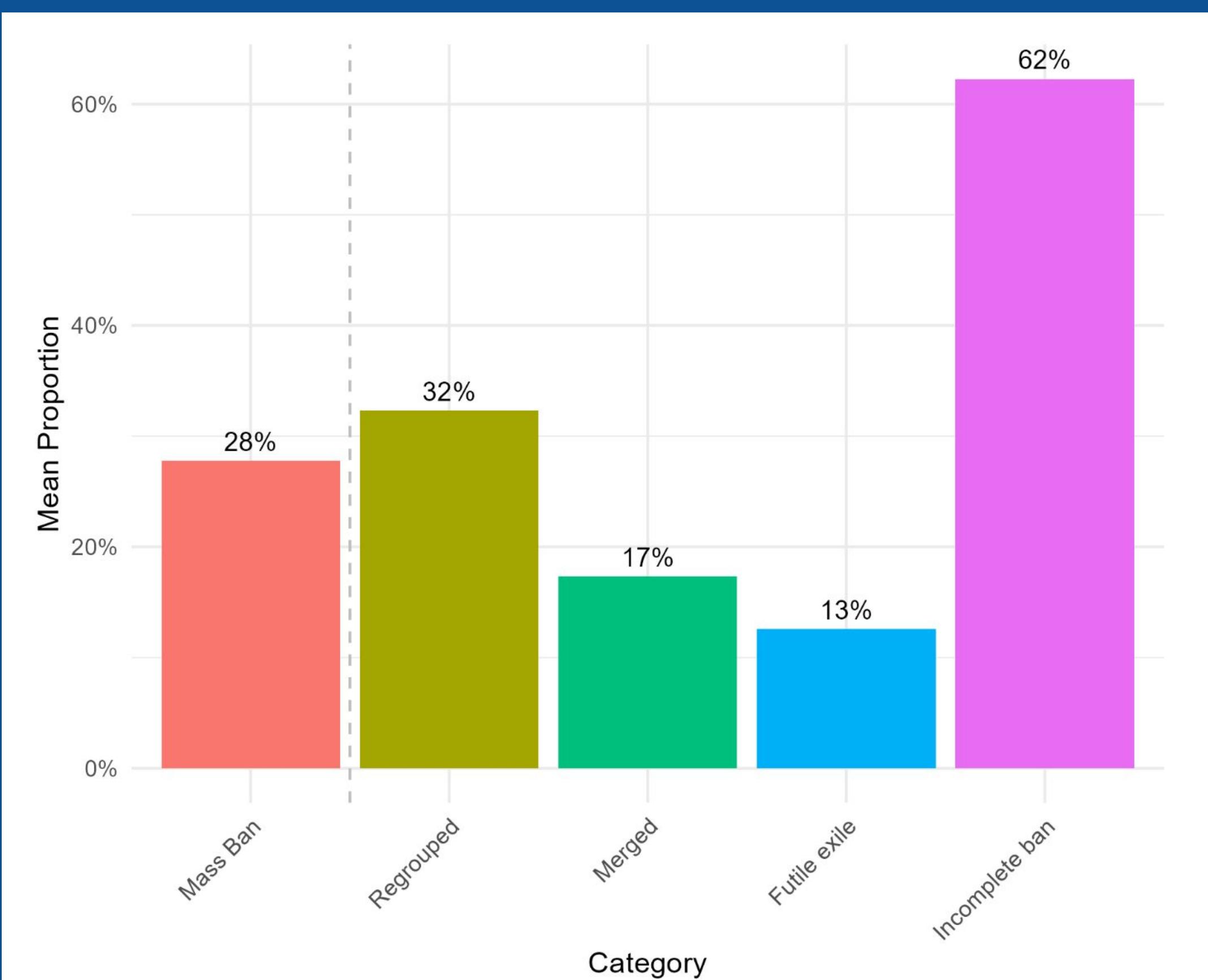
We argue that political party bans may have unintended consequences. This is because:

1. Many party bans are incomplete. Parties can come back.
2. Voters continue to vote for similar parties.
3. Other parties shift their platforms to capture these voters.

In equilibrium, this increases the probability that banned factions are represented in government.

## Data

We construct a comprehensive database of political party bans across the world since 1900. Total: 1,357 bans over 120 countries.



Most party bans are incomplete.

## Party Supply (of extreme platforms)

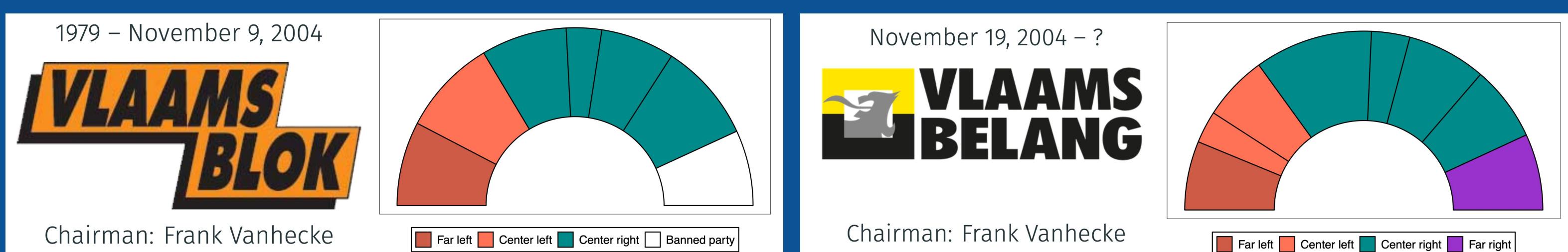
$$y_{ptn} = \beta I[p \text{ in banned fraction}] \times I[t \text{ is post-ban}] + \alpha_p + \gamma_t + \varepsilon_{ptn}$$

DiD strategy: outcome is similarity of n-gram  $n$  used by party  $p$  at time  $t$  to the banned party's manifesto.

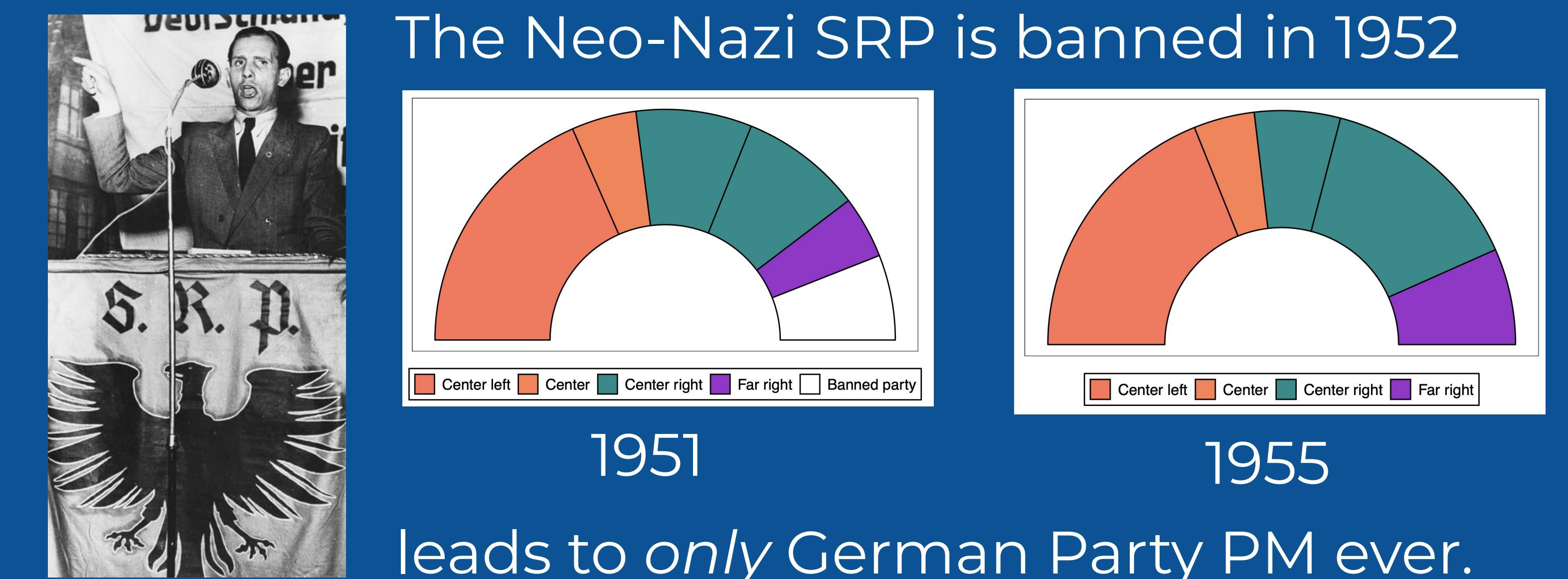
	Distinctiveness (1)	TF-IDF (2)
Banned Fraction × Post-Ban	0.1640*** (0.0255)	0.4695*** (0.0855)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.06771	0.02215
Observations	59,407	59,407
Ban × Faction fixed effects	✓	✓
Ban × Post fixed effects	✓	✓

## Two case studies

### An Incomplete Ban: Belgium 2004



### A Complete Ban: Lower Saxony, 1952

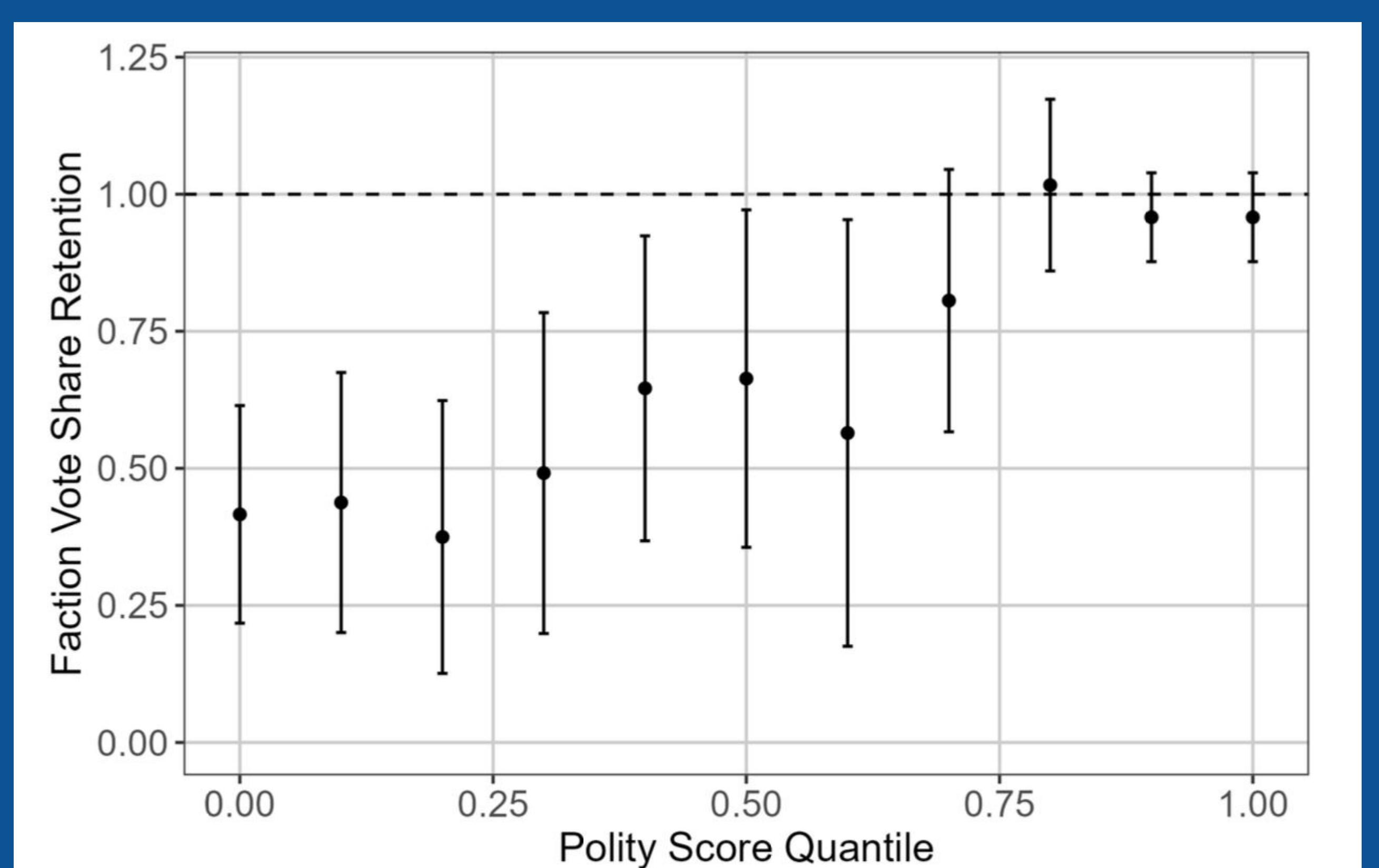


The Neo-Nazi SRP is banned in 1952 leads to *only* German Party PM ever.

## Voter Demand (for similar parties)

$$y_{ct} = \beta pre\text{-ban votes}_{f(ct)} \times I[t \text{ is post-ban}] + \alpha_c + \gamma_t + \varepsilon_{ct}$$

DiD strategy: outcome is voteshare for banned party's faction in country  $c$  at time  $t$ . Plot  $\beta$  across regime types.



In mature democracies, banning a party has no effect on the faction's performance. Autocrats divert 50% of votes.

## In Equilibrium (banned factions win)

$$y_{fct} = \beta I[f \text{ is banned fraction}] \times I[t \text{ is post-ban}] + \alpha_{fc} + \gamma_{ft} + \varepsilon_{fct}$$

DiD strategy: outcome is whether faction  $f$  is in government.

	Leave-Out Vote Share (1)	Represented in Government (2)
Banned Fraction × Post-Ban	7.764*** (1.490)	0.0729** (0.0294)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.93845	0.49345
Observations	2,037	2,037
Outcome Mean	11.78	0.0309
Cluster	Ban × Faction	Ban × Faction
Ban × Faction FEs	✓	✓
Ban × Post FEs	✓	✓

Also ask us about: within party candidate extremeness (Belgium), Nazi language in parliamentary speech (Lower Saxony), structural estimates and counterfactual vote shares (Lower Saxony).