© (2010) Swiss Political Science Review 16(3): 373–402

So Close But So Far: Voting Propensity and Party Choice for Left-Wing Parties

DANIEL BOCHSLER AND PASCAL SCIARINI
Central European University Budapest and University of Geneva

While the bulk of the literature focuses on the vote for parties from different blocs, the purpose of our article is to study the vote for two parties that are ideologically very close to each other: The Social Democrats and the Greens in Switzerland. To that end, we develop a two-step model, where voters first make a selection of parties that are acceptable to them and then make their electoral choice out of this set of acceptable alternatives. We use voting propensities as a measure of the first, consideration step and we show that they strongly depend on the distance between voters and parties on the Left–Right scale. With regard to the second, choice stage of the electoral process we hypothesize about the factors that may account for the varying ability of the two parties to convert potential voters into real voters. Our empirical tests provide encouraging support for our hypotheses regarding the impact of socio-demographic variables and issue voting. Strategic considerations, by contrast, do not seem to matter.

KEYWORDS: Intra-Bloc Voting • Two-Step Model • Switzerland • Social Democrats • Greens

Introduction[1]

In Switzerland, the Social Democratic party (SP) and the Green party are two competitors that have a highly similar ideological profile and are located very close to each other on the left side of the political spectrum. No wonder then that citizens display very similar probabilities to vote for either party, and that SP and Green potential voters share a number of socio-demographic and political characteristics (Sciarini 2010a, b). Despite having almost the same level and content of electoral potential, the SP and

[1] We are grateful for insightful comments by Dominik Hangartner, the participants of the workshop "Voting behavior and campaign dynamics in the Swiss National Elections 2007" in Neuchâtel (23–24 October 2009), the three anonymous reviewers and the three editors of this special issue.

the Greens nevertheless differ strongly from each other with respect to their electoral strength: While the difference between the two parties narrowed in the 2007 elections, the SP's vote share still remains double that of the Greens. This raises the question why voters decide for one or the other party within the same electoral camp. More specifically, why do citizens displaying a high probability to vote for either of two parties that are ideologically close to each other end up voting for one party, rather than for the other? The purpose of our article is to highlight the determinants of electoral choice for parties that belong to the same party bloc and that are programmatically almost identical.

Relying on the choice-set literature (Manski 1977), which has been applied by Steenbergen and Hangartner (2008) to study electoral behaviour, we develop a two-step model. The first step is known as the *consideration stage*, where voters evaluate the various parties in competition and make a first selection of parties that are acceptable to them. In the second, *choice stage*, voters make their electoral choice from the set of alternatives selected in the first stage.

Our contribution to the existing literature is twofold. First, while several studies have deepened academic knowledge about the electoral choice of parties from different party blocs, our study focuses on the electoral choice of parties that belong to the same party bloc.[2] Swiss national elections appear to be an ideal playing field in that respect, since in the Swiss multi-party system party positions are frequently overlapping. Secondly, we innovate by using the voting propensity as a measure of the first, consideration stage. While the voting propensity is increasingly used in electoral research, both in Switzerland and abroad (e.g. Kriesi et al. 2005; Lutz 2006; Nicolet and Sciarini 2010a; Tillie 1995; Van der Brug et al. 2007), there is still a lively debate between those who support it and those who claim the superiority of the classic measure of party preferences (party choice). To our knowledge, however, none of the existing studies has attempted to use the vote probability in the context of the two-step model, in order to study the voting decision of those voters who rate two (or more) parties equally high.

In the first stage, we argue that voters rely on their left–right ideological orientation to select the set of parties they may vote for. Now, because the

[2] Previously, intra-bloc electoral dynamics have, for instance, been studied in connection with split-ticket voting (Bawn 1999; Gschwend 2007) or with strategic considerations for post-electoral coalition formation (Schofield et al. 1998).

SP and the Greens are ideologically so close to each other, in the second stage left voters need to resort to additional factors that are not directly linked to the left–right dimension when making their electoral choice. We investigate the role played by three different sets of explanatory factors: socio-demographic variables, issue opinions, and strategic considerations.

The structure of the article is as follows. In the next section we develop our theoretical argument regarding the first (consideration) and the second (choice) stages of the process of electoral choice. We then present the data and turn to the empirical tests, starting with the consideration stage and proceeding with the choice stage. Our data stems from the 2003 and 2007 Swiss election studies, and more especially from the post-electoral, nationwide surveys that were carried out after these two elections, which provide information about voting propensities.

Theoretical Framework

Kitschelt's (1993, 1994) work offers a valuable starting point to specify the characteristics of the left electorate. Kitschelt's conception relies on the assumption that the political space in which parties act and in which citizens form their opinions comprises two dimensions. The first dimension is economic in nature, and it corresponds to the modern translation of the old class cleavage, which gave rise to left parties in general and to social democratic parties in particular, in the 19th century (Bartolini 2000). The second, cultural dimension opposes libertarian to authoritarian values – or post-materialist to materialist values (Inglehart 1977, 1990).

According to this two-dimensional conception of politics, a citizen can decide to support a left party because she shares the party's preferences on the economic and/or on the cultural dimension: While the working class historically opted for the political left because of its economic programme (i.e. on issues such as redistribution, income equality, social justice or state interventionism), the new middle class (in particular the socio-cultural specialists), the young generations, women, and highly qualified persons have more recently been mobilized mainly because they share the left's values on the second, cultural dimension. On their side, the Greens initially focused on voters with post-materialist – and more especially environmental – values, but they widened their political programme during the 1980s and 1990s, moving from a one-issue party to a multiple-issue party. By so doing the Greens have progressively integrated the first, economic, dimension of

politics, and they have drifted to the left of the political spectrum (Dolezal 2008; Finger and Sciarini 1991; Ladner 2008; Sciarini 1991; Vatter and Stadelmann-Steffen 2008).

More recent studies have accepted the basic thrust of this two-dimensional conception of the political space, but they have suggested that the nature of the second dimension has changed, meaning that it has integrated a new line of conflict regarding the desired level of openness vs closedness of the country (Brunner and Sciarini 2002; Giugni and Sciarini 2009) – or, as some authors prefer to call it, integration vs demarcation (Bornschier and Helbling 2005; Kriesi et al. 2006). The left–right dimension, in turn, can be seen as the synthesis of the two – economic and cultural – conflict lines, and opposes parties with a left-libertarian profile to parties with a right-authoritarian profile (e.g. Kriesi 1998).

Nowadays, voters see the SP and the Greens as remarkably close to each other on the left–right dimension (e.g. Lachat and Selb 2005; Nicolet and Sciarini 2010b), and as highly similar in their sociological composition and values profile (e.g. Holzer and Linder 2003; Sciarini 2010b; Selb and Lachat 2004).[3] In a comparative perspective, Switzerland is a country where the Social Democrats' and the Greens' views converge most with respect to economic policy, cultural liberalism, and European and immigration policy, and this at the level of both the parties and their voters (Dolezal 2008). From this we derive our first hypothesis regarding the consideration stage of the voting process: given that the SP and the Greens are ideologically so close to each other, we assume that both parties are essentially targeting the same voters, that is, voters holding similar preferences on the left–right dimension.

Now, given both the high ideological proximity of the Social Democrats and the Greens and the high similarity of their electoral potential, the persistent difference in their electoral strength is puzzling. Because the two parties are ideologically so close to each other, the left–right dimension is of little help to solve the puzzle: Potential voters will not be able to decide for which party they will eventually vote on this basis, since from an ideological viewpoint the two parties are equally acceptable to them. Therefore, when left voters make their final choice between the SP and the

[3] The electoral potential of the Swiss Socialist and Green parties corresponds closely to the characteristics that one expects from a left party, and more especially from a new left party: This potential is higher among women, young people, socio-cultural specialists, and highly educated persons. Between 1995 and 2007 the sociological profile of the SP's electoral potential further narrowed to approach that of the Greens (Sciarini 2010b).

Greens, they need to rely on additional criteria that are not directly linked to the left–right dimension. To account for the differences in the electoral choice for the Social Democrats and for the Greens we wish to point to three likely explanations. The first two factors relate to residual differences with respect to the sociological composition and to the value profile of the Social Democrats' and Greens' electorate, whereas the third pertains to strategic considerations.

These residual differences are closely linked to the distinct historical origins and trajectories of the two parties. On the one hand, the Social Democratic party is an old, established political party, with roots in the industrialization process in the 19th century. While the SP has updated its electoral programme to appeal to voters holding post-materialist values, it has kept strong ties with the working class and with trade unions.[4] On the other hand, the Green party is the newcomer in the Swiss party system. Rooted in new social movements, it has from the outset targeted people holding post-materialist and libertarian values, i.e. young generations, highly qualified people, and the new middle class (Seitz 2008). In contrast to the SP, the working class never belonged to its core constituency. In addition, the Greens' early emphasis on gender equality has rendered them particularly attractive to female voters (Dolezal 2008; Ladner 2008; Schneider 2008; Sciarini 2010a, b). Further, while members and voters of the Green party certainly hold leftist preferences, recent studies show that they are more interested in new left values, in particular with respect to environmental protection, than in the traditional left, redistributive programme (Holzer and Linder 2003; Ladner 2008; Sciarini 2010b). Finally, the Greens have been more ambiguous than the Social Democrats in their support of Switzerland's openness to the outside world in general, and to the European Union in particular (e.g. Brunner and Sciarini 2002; Nicolet and Sciarini 2010b).

Based on these differences between the two parties from the perspective of their sociological and value profile we formulate a first set of hypotheses regarding the choice stage. First, among left potential voters the difference in party choice between the Social Democrats and the Greens is expected to vary as a function of age, education and gender. More specifically, we assume that the likelihood to vote for the Social Democrats rather than for the Greens increases with age (Hypothesis 2a) and decreases with

[4] These links have nevertheless tended to get lost during the past decades, at least among SP voters (Oesch and Rennwald 2010a, b).

the level of education (Hypothesis 2b), that it is higher among men than among women (Hypothesis 2c), and also higher among trade union members (Hypothesis 2d).[5] Secondly, we posit that among potential left voters the likelihood to vote for the Social Democrats rather than for the Greens varies as a function of preferences on various issue dimensions. The Social Democrats still mobilize on the classical economic (redistributive) dimension, and should thus be attractive to voters with a strong preference for state intervention (Hypothesis 3a). On its side, the Green party stands first of all for ecology and is expected to be especially attractive on this issue (Hypothesis 3b). Finally, the Social Democrats have supported international openness earlier and less ambiguously than the Greens and are, therefore, likely to benefit more from the openness-related issue (Hypothesis 3c).[6]

Thirdly, we assume that strategic considerations are significant in explaining the difference in electoral choice for the SP and for the Greens – and, therefore, for the greater electoral success of the former over the latter. The permissiveness of the electoral system is the usual suspect, that is, the typical institution that is supposed to affect the electoral choice. In the case of the National Council elections, a district-based proportional representation system (PR) applies, except in the six smallest cantons, where a majoritarian system applies. However, in PR contests district magnitude varies from 2 to 34 seats, which may affect the electoral choice. More specifically, we assume that in small cantons with few seats, left voters are likely to cast a "useful" vote and opt for the Social Democrats, fearing that their vote might be lost if they vote for a party (the Greens) that might prove unable to reach the natural threshold (Hypothesis 4).

---

[5] We use union membership as a proxy for class location. In preliminary tests we also included the impact of social class; however this turned out to be highly unstable, presumably because of the small number of cases in sub-categories.

[6] In addition to measures of issue opinions, we also looked at the possibility of including party identification in our model, but we ultimately refrained from doing so. First, we do not see any compelling theoretical reason why party identification should matter differently for the SP and for the Greens. Second, the inclusion of party identification raises methodological problems in the context of our two-stage model: Given that party identification is so closely related to the electoral choice, including it would simply anticipate the dilemma that left-wing voters face when choosing between the SP and the Greens that our article aims to explain. We have nevertheless carried out additional tests including party identification. While this inclusion obviously increases the R^2 the model is not more informative from a substantial viewpoint, since party identification has – as expected – the same effect for SP and Greens voters; the other variables are only slightly affected.

Data and Operationalization

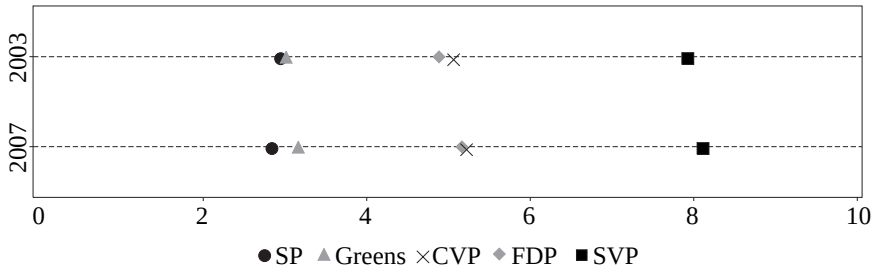
Our data come from the 2003 and 2007 Swiss election studies. In both years, a sample of Swiss citizens was interviewed in the aftermath of the national elections. Besides questions measuring voting propensities and voting choices (our two dependent variables; see below), we also use socio-demographic characteristics, self-position on the left–right scale and parties perceived position on the same scale, and opinions on political issues. Regarding the last issue, our indicator of the economic dimension measures whether the respondents support an increase (or a decrease) of taxes on high income. As an indicator of values on the new, cultural dimension we first use a question regarding ecology, which asks the sample whether it favours the decommissioning (or not) of nuclear plants. Secondly, we resort to a measure of preferences on the openness-closedness conflict line, and more specifically on whether Switzerland should join the EU or stay outside. Issue preferences are measured on five-value scales (ranging from 1 to 5, with "neither-nor" as the intermediary position (3)). Descriptive statistics of the independent variables are provided in the Appendix.

Figure 1 confirms that the SP and the Greens are seen as ideologically highly similar by Swiss voters: In 2003, the respondents of the post-electoral survey positioned both parties at exactly the same point (3.0) on an 11-point left–right scale (0 to 10); four years later, the SP moved 0.1 points to the left, whereas the Greens moved 0.2 points to the right. Similarly, Figure 2 shows that in both 2003 and 2007 more than 50% of the electorate locates the SP and the Greens either on exactly the same position on the left–right scale, or at only one point of distance; the share reaches 76% if we include respondents who locate the SP and the Greens with a two-point distance.

Consideration Stage

According to the choice-set literature, in the consideration stage voters apply a small number of criteria in order to eliminate some of the many voting alternatives (Steenbergen and Hangartner 2008: 4). The probability of future vote (or "voting propensity") reflects the idea that in the consideration stage voters pre-select a set of parties that they might vote for. That is, the variable represents very well the set of all parties that voters may consider as being eligible – possibly including parties that do not compete in

Figure 1: Perceived Left–right Location of the Five Main Swiss Parties, 2003 and 2007



the electoral district[7] – before voting for their favourite party, or deciding to make a strategic vote. Voting propensities have been understood in the literature as a measure of electoral utilities (Tillie 1995; Van der Eijk et al. 2006, and many others). In the present article we use them to operationalize the first, consideration stage of electoral choice.

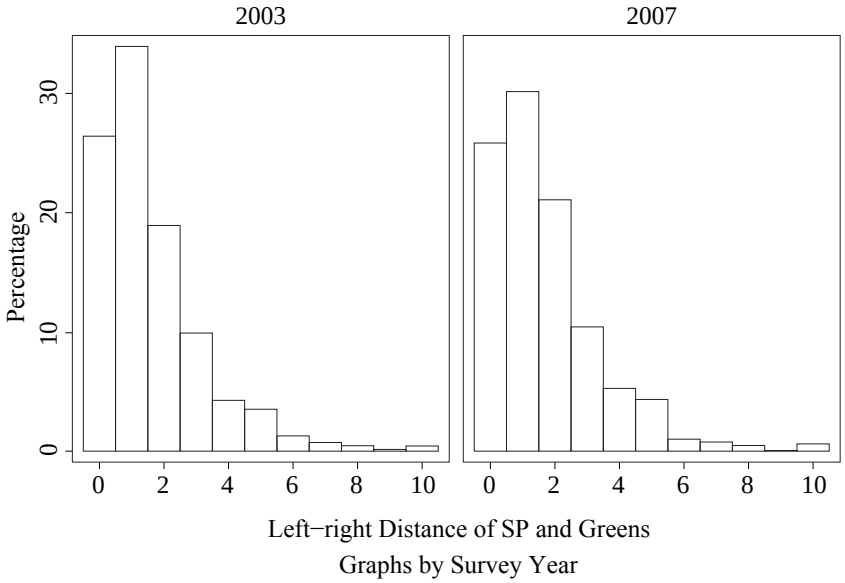
The 2003 and 2007 surveys include a question on voting propensities: For each of the most important Swiss political parties, respondents were asked to evaluate, on the 0 to 10 scale, the likelihood that they might vote for a given party in the future. As Table 1 clearly shows, there is a strong overlap of voting propensities for the Social Democrats and for the Greens in Switzerland, and this both at low and high levels of voting propensities.

In 2007 one third (32%) of the electorate displays exactly the same probability to vote for the Social Democrats as for the Greens (last column); an additional 36% of the electorate displays a highly similar voting propensity for both parties (difference of one or two points on the 11-point scale). This result also holds when focusing on voters with a high voting propensity for SP or Greens (i.e. on voters with a maximal voting propensity for SP or Greens equal or greater than 8): 24% of these voters have the same voting propensity for both parties, and an additional 35% have a highly similar voting propensity.[8]

[7] The open character of this question is reflected by the fact that the average voting propensity of the Greens is only slightly lower in cantons where they did not compete in elections than in cantons where they did. Similarly, missing cases are only marginally higher in the former cantons.

[8] While the position of other parties, especially the Christian Democrats (CVP) and the Liberals (FDP), also overlap on the left–right axis, these two parties have a fairly different electoral potential: Among those voters who express a very high propensity to vote CVP or FDP (80% or more), only 29% express a similar voting propensity (difference of up to two

Figure 2: Perceived Distance between SP and Greens Location on the Left–right Axis, 2003 and 2007



Given their ideological proximity the large overlap between SP and Greens voting propensities should not come as a surprise. Our modelling of the consideration stage takes this into account, and posits that the voting propensities for the five largest Swiss parties (CVP, FDP, Greens, SP, and SVP) is accounted for by the voters self-location on the left–right axis and by their perception of parties location on the same scale. The self-location of a given voter is noted as LR_R, whereas LR_p stands for the left–right location of party p according to that voter's perception.[9] Our spatial model explains the voting propensities of a voter with the distance between her own position and the perceived party position on the left–right axis:[10] Voting

points) for both parties.

[9] Location of political parties on the left–right scale varies slightly depending on the voters' own location. Overall, the location of SP and Greens on the left–right scale correlates positively with the voters' own location; voters locate the Greens and the SP closer to their own position in cantons where the Greens participate in the government than in cantons where the Greens are not members of the governing coalition.

[10] Similar spatial models relying on propensities have been used in earlier research, among many others that by Westholm (1997: 868–76), Merrill and Grofman (1999: 53–63), Lachat (2008). For a critical discussion, see Lewis and King (1999).

Table 1: Overlaps in Voting Propensities for the SP and the Greens: Difference on the 11-Point Scale, at Different Levels of Left Voting Propensities (2007, Relative Percentages)

Difference in Voting Propensities (SP–Greens)	Maximal Propensity to Vote for SP or Greens				
	0	1 to 4	5 to 7	8 to 10	Overall
0	100	23	19	24	32
1		30	19	16	18
2		24	21	19	18
3		15	12	12	11
4		8	7	7	6
5			15	9	8
6			4	3	2
7			3	2	2
8				4	2
9				1	0
10				4	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100
N	1’288	1’920	2’892	3’565	9’665

propensity should drop as the spatial distance with a party increases. We model this expectation as a function of the squared distance between the voters self-location and the parties location $(LR_R - LR_p)^2$. In addition, we further include party-specific dummy variables for each party Δ_p controlling for the possibility that certain parties are per se more acceptable to voters than others, and we interact these variables with the squared distance, since for some parties the left–right positioning might be more important than for others. Hence, our spatial model of the voting propensities vp looks as follows.

$$vp = \alpha + \beta_1 (LR_R - LR_p)^2 + \beta_2 * \Delta_p + \beta_3 * \Delta_p * (LR_R - LR_p)^2 + \varepsilon$$

Acknowledging that the error terms of the voting propensities might be correlated across parties, we employ a *seemingly unrelated regression* model for metrically scaled dependent variables, which allows the inclusion of several dependent variables that are not independent from each other. Our five related dependent variables are the voting propensities for

Table 2: Seemingly Unrelated Regressions (OLS), Explaining Voting Propensities through the Distance on the Left–right Axis

	Greens		SP		CVP		FDP		SVP	
		Robust		Robust		Robust		Robust		Robust
	Coef.	Std.Err.	Coef.	Std.Err.	Coef.	Std.Err.	Coef.	Std.Err.	Coef.	Std.Err.
Squared Distance	-0.059**	0.002	-0.065**	0.002	-0.068**	0.003	-0.076**	0.003	-0.076**	0.002
Time Dummy (Year = 2007)	0.407**	0.080	-0.488**	0.083	0.820**	0.075	0.027	0.074	0.275**	0.093
2007 × Squared Distance	-0.006(*)	0.003	0.002	0.003	-0.006	0.004	0.005	0.004	-0.003	0.003
Constant	5.268	0.054	5.968	0.055	4.455	0.051	5.338	0.049	5.398	0.062
N	7’537		7’537		7’537		7’537		7’537	
R^2	0.1940		0.2030		0.1187		0.1436		0.2814	

Note: (*) = p < 0.1; * = p < 0.05; ** = p < 0.01 (two-sided).

the five parties.[11] Following the bulk of the literature, we assume that the voting propensity (dependent variable) is metrically scaled.

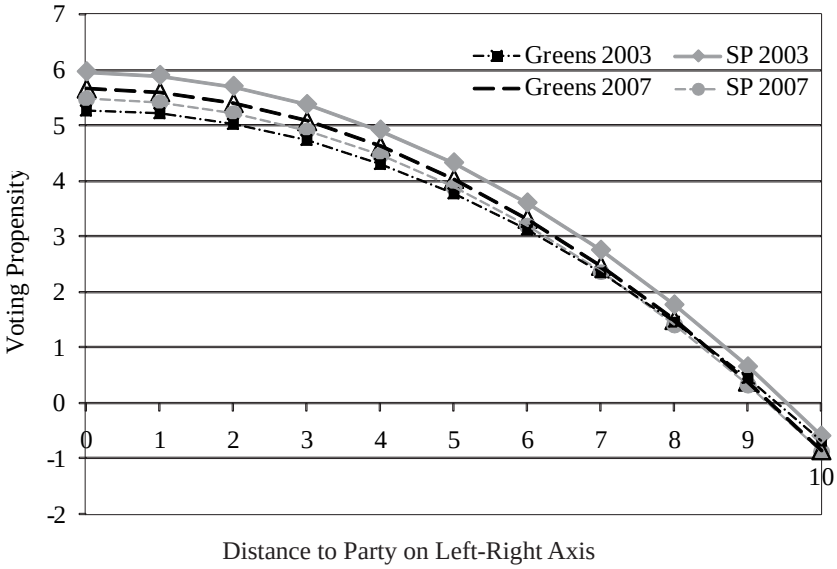
The detailed results of this analysis for 2003 and 2007 appear in Table 2 and the results regarding the SP and the Greens are presented graphically in Figure 3. In line with our first hypothesis all models of Table 2 show that with increasing distance from a given party on the left–right axis the voting propensity for that party drops. However, there are some differences across parties. Most importantly, at similar distance from the Greens on the left–right axis voting propensities for this party increased between 2003 and 2007, whereas an opposite trend holds for the Social Democrats: At a similar distance from the Social Democrats voting propensities for this party decreased. And while in 2003 voters showed a higher probability to vote for Social Democrats than Greens, this difference vanished by 2007. We also see that the left–right dimension is especially relevant to explain voting propensities for the left-wing (SP, Greens) and right-wing parties (SVP), but less so for the centre-right parties (CVP, FDP).

Choice Stage

From the previous section we know that the Social Democrats and the Greens are both equally successful with respect to voting propensities, and ideologically hardly distinguishable for the voters. Now, voters holding a high voting propensity for a specific party do not necessarily end up voting for that party. For instance, out of the 23% of the individuals with a high (equal or greater than 80%) propensity to vote for the Greens, only 13% (in 2003) and 19% (in 2007) voted for the Greens, whereas 30% in 2003 (25% in 2007) voted SP. Similarly, voters who rate the Social Democrats and the Greens as the most viable options in their consideration stage will not automatically vote for either party. They may abstain or vote for another party. This is typically the case when the criteria that voters use in the choice stage are not speaking for either, or both, left-wing parties. In other words, a high voting propensity for a given party is not a sufficient condition to vote for that party. It is, however, a necessary condition: In both election years, 99% of Green voters indicated a high voting propensity (equal or greater than 50%) for the Greens; the corresponding figure is 95% for the SP.

[11] The model only considers those voters who indicated voting propensities for all five parties. We have excluded other, smaller parties (LPS, Lega, EVP), because voting propensities for these parties were only asked in the few cantons where these parties compete.

Figure 3: Explaining Electoral Utilities through the (Squared) Distance to the Political Party on the Left–right Axis, in 2003 and 2007



Notes: Results of Seemingly Unrelated OLS Regression on a Weighted[a] Dataset. [a] Weights by party choice, in order to correct for sample bias.

In the second, choice step of the model, voters make their decision from the set of parties that are acceptable to them. Accordingly, we consider all voters with a high potential to vote for SP and Greens, that is, all voters who selected both SP and Greens in the consideration stage, and face the dilemma of choosing between either party. Our case selection for the second stage follows the idea of earlier studies that have used voting propensities to estimate the aggregate electoral potential of a political party (Kriesi et al. 2005; Sciarini 2010a). These studies have assumed that the potential to vote for a certain party is a linear transformation of the voting propensity, and voters who indicate a voting propensity of 9 out of 10 points can be counted as voters with a 90% potential to vote for a certain party. We adopt this logic, but move to the individual level of analysis: To identify the potential SP and Greens voters, we count every voter to the degree that she indicates that she might possibly vote for these parties, i.e. we weight voters according to their voting propensity for these parties. More specifically, as a weighting factor we use the product of the propensities to vote for the SP and for the Greens. Consequently, voters with a voting pro-

Table 3: Descriptive Information about our Dependent Variable in the Choice Stage in Cantons where both SP and Greens were Running in Elections, After Selection of Cases Included in the Choice Stage (Third Column), Compared to a Non-Selective Sample (Second Column)

	Non-selective Sample (All Voters, Weighted by Party Choice)		Selective Sample, Voters Weighted by the Product of their Propensities to Vote for SP and Greens (Further Weighted by Party Choice)	
	2003	2007	2003	2007
Share of SP Voters	11%	10%	27%	26%
Share of Green Voters	3%	5%	8%	13%
Share of Voters for Other Parties	34%	36%	20%	22%
Abstainers	53%	49%	45%	39%
Not Including Abstainers:				
Share of SP Voters	23%	19%	49%	42%
Share of Green Voters	3%	5%	8%	13%
Share of Voters for Other Parties	43%	45%	39%	38%

pensity of 1 for both parties will be weighted to 100%, those with a voting propensity of 0.9 for a party and 0.8 for the other will be weighted to 72%, those with a voting propensity of 0.2 for each party will be weighted 4%, etc., whereas voters with a voting propensity of 0 for SP and/or Greens will be excluded from the analysis.

Voters with a maximal voting propensity (100%) correspond best to our idea of voters who need to make a decision for either party in the second stage. But voters with high propensities for both parties also belong (albeit to a lower degree) to the set of voters who face a dilemma between SP and Greens. In sum, this weighting procedure enables us both to focus on voters with high voting propensities for both parties, and to avoid resorting to an arbitrary cut-off point to select potential left-wing voters.

Unsurprisingly, our selection results in a set of voters who are more likely to vote for SP or Greens than are average voters (Table 3): The non-selective sample includes all voters (only weighted by participation

and party choice)[12]; the selective sample only includes those voters who have been identified as the potential voters for SP and Greens. While in the selective sample abstainers are still the largest group of voters, the chances of potential left voters to finally cast their vote for SP or Greens are nevertheless considerably higher than in the whole sample.[13]

Table 4 presents the results of a multinomial logit model in which the electoral choice is regressed on the three sets of explanatory variables discussed in the theoretical section, and using the vote for the SP as the reference category;[14] we also include interaction terms between the year dummy (2007) and all independent variables, which inform about the evolution of their effect between 2003 and 2007.

We first see that the explained variance of our choice stage model is fairly low, with a R^2 of roughly 12%. This is hardly surprising. We cannot expect a high explanatory power in a model that looks for explanations of electoral decisions on two parties that belong to the same political bloc; this electoral choice concerns voters who – according to the strongly correlating voting propensities – are ambiguous with respect to their decision to vote for one party or the other.[15] Besides, results of multinomial logits

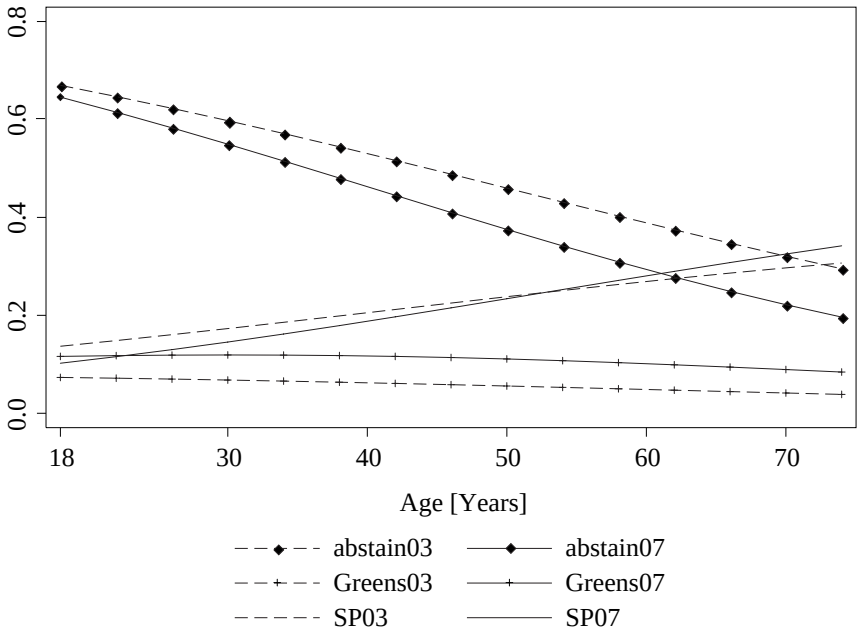
[12] Given the differences between real turnout and turnout in our sample, and similar differences with respect to party choice, for the second step we have weighted our data accordingly.

[13] The high number of abstainers and of voters for other parties shows that many of the potential SP and Greens voters do not in fact vote for these parties, and that these other options should not be dropped from the analysis.

[14] To check for a possible violation of the assumption of independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA), repeated Hausman and Small-Hsiao tests were conducted for the multinomial logit models. The Hausman test indicates that the IIA alternative is not violated; Small-Hsiao tests, however, suggest that the assumption is violated. Therefore, we also ran multinomial probit models (see Appendix).

[15] An alternative would be to look at the "panachage" vote. In all cantons with PR-systems, voters have the opportunity to give some of their personal preference votes to candidates of other parties; this "panachage" vote might resolve the dilemma that they face when choosing between two similar parties. Additional tests, not reported here, show that in both election years, one voter out of five who voted for the SP also gave votes to the Greens; the corresponding figure is even higher among voters who gave their first vote to the Greens (roughly one out of three also gave votes to the SP). Most of the explanatory variables in our model locate SP-Green panachage voters somewhere in the middle between SP and Green voters. However, there is a general rule (also valid for other parties) that highly educated voters are the most likely to use the panachage vote. Unfortunately, the 2003 and 2007 surveys do not measure how many of their votes (in large cantons, the ballot counts up to 34 votes) they gave away. In addition, a distinction of SP-Green panachage voters would

Figure 4: Age and Voting Behaviour of Potential SP / Greens Voters, 2003 and 2007



or probits are difficult to grasp based on coefficients, all the more so since our model includes several interaction terms. Therefore, we also rely on graphical presentations of the results.

Figures 4 to 7 illustrate how voters with a high voting propensity for SP and Greens made their choice in the 2003 and 2007 elections. Figure 4 shows the relationship between age and electoral choice, with all other variables held constant at their mean or at their median value. We first see that among SP and Greens potential voters the likelihood to abstain substantially decreases with age: Old voters were less likely than young voters to abstain in 2003, and especially in 2007. Secondly, the vote for the SP and for other parties, except the Greens, increases as a function of age.[16] In other words, rather than abstaining, older voters belonging to the

further decrease the size of the categories of our dependent variable. For these reasons we chose to focus on the first vote that was expressed in the survey.

[16] The results might generally seem rather low for SP and Greens, because all other variables are set at their mean (median for the issue questions). But in case of skewed distributions of other variables, this might result in rather low values in this figure.

Table 4: Descriptive Information about our Dependent Variable in the Choice Stage in Cantons Multinomial Logit Regression for the Electoral Choice (Choice Stage) Among Potential SP and Greens Voters (Base Category in all Models: Vote for SP)

Vote Decision	Main Model (1)						With Union Membership (2)						With District Magnitude (3)					
	Abstain		Greens		Others		Abstain		Greens		Others		Abstain		Greens		Others	
	Coef.	R S.E.	Coef.	R S.E.	Coef.	R S.E.	Coef.	R S.E.	Coef.	R S.E.	Coef.	R S.E.	Coef.	R S.E.	Coef.	R S.E.	Coef.	R S.E.
Dummy 2007	1.80*	0.87	2.01	1.45	1.64*	0.82	3.55**	1.16	3.84*	1.62	3.34**	1.06	2.44*	1.03	2.38(*)	1.27	1.58	1.06
Age (Years)	-0.03**	0.01	-0.03**	0.01	0.01	0.00	-0.03**	0.01	-0.03**	0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.03**	0.01	-0.03**	0.01	0.01	0.00
Age × 07	-0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.02(*)	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.01	-0.01(*)	0.01	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.01
Education	-0.14**	0.03	0.09	0.05	0.03	0.03	-0.14**	0.03	0.09(*)	0.05	0.04	0.03	-0.14**	0.03	0.08	0.05	0.03	0.03
Education × 07	-0.14(*)	0.07	-0.06	0.07	-0.12*	0.05	-0.29*	0.12	-0.16**	0.08	-0.19**	0.06	-0.13(*)	0.07	-0.06	0.07	-0.12*	0.05
Sex (Female)	0.40**	0.14	-0.06	0.18	0.21	0.17	0.32*	0.13	-0.11	0.19	0.15	0.17	0.41**	0.13	-0.07	0.18	0.21	0.16
Sex × 07	0.34(*)	0.19	0.05	0.24	0.25	0.19	0.54(*)	0.28	0.09	0.29	0.36	0.32	0.36(*)	0.19	0.06	0.25	0.26	0.19
Taxation	0.33**	0.11	-0.03	0.13	0.45**	0.12	0.32**	0.10	-0.04	0.13	0.44**	0.12	0.32**	0.11	-0.02	0.13	0.44**	0.12
Taxation × 07	0.09	0.15	0.08	0.15	-0.04	0.15	0.21	0.26	0.03	0.21	0.02	0.21	0.09	0.15	0.07	0.15	-0.03	0.15
EU Integration	-1.57**	0.19	-0.78**	0.30	-1.73**	0.16	-1.53**	0.19	-0.73**	0.30	-1.69**	0.16	-1.57**	0.18	-0.79**	0.30	-1.73**	0.15
EU Integration × 07	-0.16	0.32	0.12	0.55	-0.18	0.33	-0.83*	0.41	-0.10	0.74	-0.74*	0.33	-0.16	0.33	0.12	0.55	-0.18	0.33
Nuclear Energy	-0.16*	0.07	0.35**	0.09	-0.37**	0.07	-0.16*	0.07	0.35**	0.10	-0.37**	0.07	-0.17*	0.07	0.36**	0.08	-0.38**	0.07
Nuclear Energy × 07	-0.20*	0.09	-0.29(*)	0.17	-0.09	0.09	-0.37**	0.14	-0.35*	0.17	-0.15	0.11	-0.20*	0.10	-0.31(*)	0.16	-0.08	0.09
Dist Magnitude (Log)													-0.11	0.16	0.13	0.35	-0.10	0.14
Magnitude × 07													-0.25	0.25	-0.14	0.39	0.01	0.22
Union Membership							-0.78**	0.21	-0.57*	0.25	-0.48**	0.21						
Union Member × 07							0.26	0.47	0.02	0.57	-0.50	0.52						
Constant	3.42	0.27	-1.39	0.78	0.83	0.38	3.66	0.28	-1.23	0.81	1.00	0.41	3.73	0.54	-1.74	0.65	1.13	0.68
N	4’907						3’916						4’907					
Pseudo R^2	0.112						0.133						0.114					

Note: (*) = p < 0.1; * = p < 0.05; ** = p < 0.01 (two-sided).

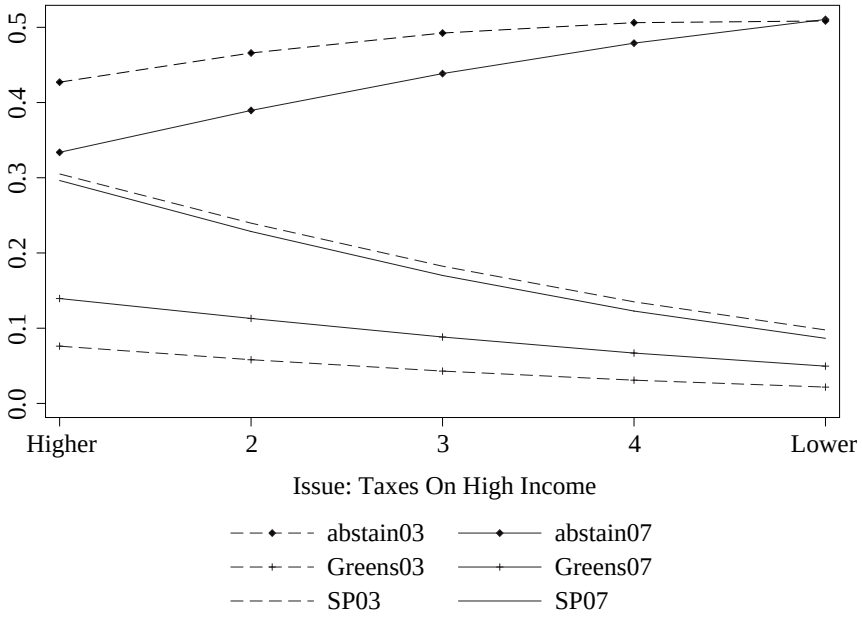
electoral potential of the left tended to vote for the Social Democrats, or for other parties, but not for the Greens. The Greens were only successful in mobilizing young potential voters. In fact, among young voters the Greens performed as well as the SP, especially in 2007. In sum, Figure 4 confirms our hypothesis 2a that among potential left voters the difference in party choice in favour of the SP (over the Greens) increases with age. The strong link of older voters to the SP and to other parties contributes to the explanation of why the Greens score below their electoral potential. This, together with the fact that turnout is far higher among older voters than among young voters, offers a first explanation of the persistent difference in electoral success between the SP and the Greens.

The likelihood of abstaining decreases significantly as a function of education (Table 4). In spite of their high propensity to vote for left parties, voters with a low level of education massively abstained; on their side, voters with a higher level of education were more likely to vote for SP, Greens, or for other parties. This effect becomes even stronger in 2007 than in 2003. We cannot, however, confirm our hypothesis 2b regarding the differences in electoral success between the SP and the Greens, since in comparative terms the latter did not perform better than the former among highly educated persons. Similarly, gender cannot contribute to the explanation of difference in electoral success between the SP and the Greens, since both parties suffered about equally from a low level of mobilization among women. Hypothesis 2c is thus not confirmed.

In the second model of Table 4 we include a measure of union membership, which turns out to be a significant predictor of the SP vote: In line with our hypothesis 2d, potential left voters who belong to a trade union abstain less and vote more for the SP than for the Greens or for other parties. At first glance, the inclusion of the union membership variable increases the explanatory power of the model substantially, and it also changes the impact of individual variables. However, this result is mainly due to the drop in the number of observations: In the 2007 survey the question about union membership was included in a separate, written questionnaire that was returned by only a small and selective sample of voters. This heavily affects several of our variables, and results of the second model should be considered with caution.[17]

[17] Similarly, the differences between the two elections are an artefact of the selective sample in 2007. We have replicated the first model for the same cases included in the third model. This leads to an increase of the explanatory power to 0.1369, and the coefficients and standard errors for all variables, except for the gender variable, almost exactly corre-

Figure 5: Position on the Economic, Taxation Issue and Voting Behaviour of Potential SP / Greens Voters, 2003 and 2007



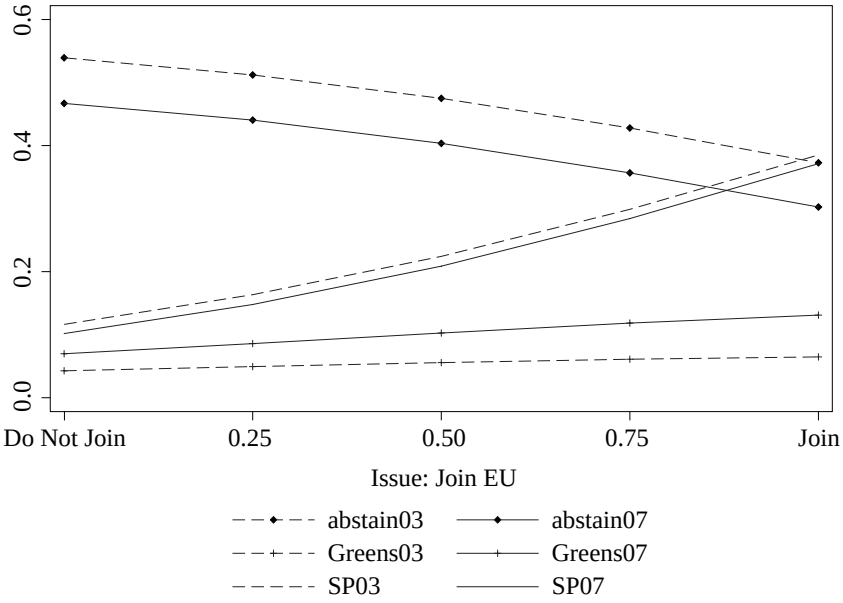
We now turn to the effects of our three issue conflicts, starting with the classic, redistributive conflict over taxes (Figure 5). The likelihood of voting for Social Democrats and Greens strongly varies according to one's preference with respect to taxes on high income. Among left potential voters who strongly oppose such taxes the predicted probability to vote for the SP is lower than 10%; among respondents who strongly support SP and Greens this probability amounts to 30%. As Table 4 and Figure 5 show, a similar effect also holds for the Greens. Against our Hypothesis 3a, the taxation issue thus does not make any difference in the conversion rate between SP and Greens.

The SP could attract significantly more voters than the Greens (and even more so than the other parties) thanks to its positive stance towards EU membership (Figure 6 and Table 4).[18] Left, pro-European voters are more than three times more likely in 2003, and almost four times more

spond to the third model.

[18] In the dataset that we used, the scale for the EU integration issue has been recoded, and ranges from 0 to 1.

Figure 6: Position on the EU Accession Issue and Voting Behaviour of Potential SP / Greens Voters, 2003 and 2007



likely in 2007, to vote for the SP, than anti-European voters. For the Green party, the pro-EU effect is much weaker. This result confirms our hypothesis 3b, and provides an additional explanation of the difference in electoral success between the SP and the Greens, especially given that a majority of voters in our sample supports EU membership. The Greens have been more ambivalent than the SP with respect to EU membership, and they seem to still pay a price for this ambivalent attitude.

Finally, Figure 7 shows that rejection of nuclear energy increases the probability that potential SP / Greens voters will actually vote for these parties, rather than for other parties. In 2003, the Greens benefited especially strongly from the vote of potential left-wing voters with pro-ecology preference, but the difference between the two parties vanished in 2007 (see Table 4). In other words, the ecological issue helped the voters to make a choice between SP and Greens in 2003, but not so in 2007. This thus leads to only a partial confirmation of our hypothesis 3c that the Greens should be the main beneficiaries of ecological values.

Our fourth and last hypothesis regarding the difference in electoral success between the SP and the Greens relates to the role of political institu-

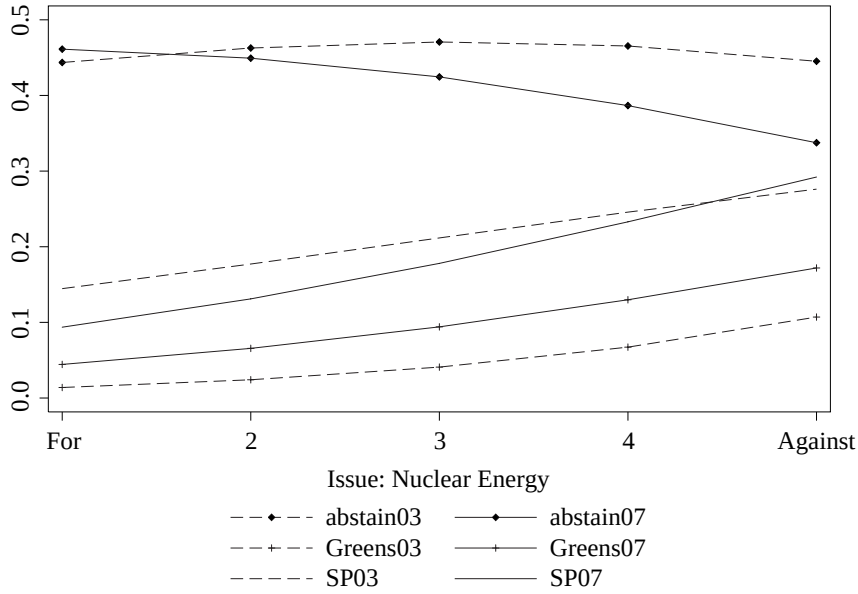
tions, and more especially of the permissiveness of the electoral system. To test this hypothesis we have included a (logarithmised) measure of district magnitude in our estimations (see Table 4, model 3). However, this variable has no effect whatsoever, if we focus on those cantons where both the Green party and the Social Democrats were running for election. It has a statistically significant effect if all cantons are included, but this effect is meaningless. It is only due to the fact that in many cantons voters do *not have* any choice; they simply cannot vote for the Greens, since the latter do not run for election. This suggests that there is no impact of district magnitude on the demand side (voter behaviour), once we control for the self-selection process of political parties, which present lists only in cantons where they have a good chance to reach the district threshold (Hug 2003). That some districts are too small might be the reason why the Green party in Switzerland competed in only 15 cantons in 2003 and 17 cantons in 2007 (Selb and Pituctin 2009). As an alternative explanation for the absence of impact of the electoral system one can point to the counter-role played by *list apparentments*: In all cantons where both Green party lists and the Social Democrats were running, they had concluded a *list apparentment*, so that votes cast for a non-successful party were transferred to the allied party. Under such circumstances, Green voters did not have compelling reasons to defect and to vote for the SP (Bochsler 2010).

Conclusion

In this article we have addressed a question on which the existing literature is mostly silent: how do voters make their intra-bloc decision, that is, how do they eventually opt for a party from a larger set of parties they may equally vote for. Such a situation depicts a scenario where at least two parties share a very similar political profile and hence campaign for essentially the same voters, and where these voters have to find some sort of cues to make their electoral choice.

We have argued that the probability of future vote that is extensively used in electoral research as a measure of voting propensities actually fits quite well with the theoretical model of electoral choice on which we rely in this article, namely the two-step model. In the first, consideration stage voters evaluate which parties they may possibly vote for. This is measured through the voting propensities indicated by the voters, and results in a pool of potential voters of left-wing parties, that is, of voters who include

Figure 7: Position on the Ecological Issue and Voting Behaviour of Potential SP / Greens Voters, 2003 and 2007



both the SP and the Greens in their pre-selection. In the second, choice stage voters make their choice from the list of parties that rank high on their voting propensities.

Empirically, we used a spatial model to account for the consideration stage. In line with our first hypothesis, the distance between voters self-location on the left–right dimension and their perceived location of a given party on the same dimension appears as a consistent predictor of voting propensities. We then looked more closely at potential SP and Greens voters, as identified by their voting propensities, and analysed this selective sample in the second, choice stage of the electoral process. In the present context, the choice stage turns out to be especially delicate for left-wing voters, because Social Democrats and Greens are ideologically so similar and are located so close on the left–right dimension that there is hardly any compelling reason to vote for one party rather than for the other. Differences between the two parties are residual and concern some specific aspects such as the newness of the Greens and their special concern for libertarian issues, or, conversely, the persistent links between the SP and trade unions, or its resilient appeal to voters sensitive to redistributive issues.

We have formulated hypotheses along these lines, as an attempt to solve what appears to be a genuine puzzle: why are the Greens still lagging so strongly behind the Social Democrats with respect to electoral strength, while according to vote probabilities they are as popular as their left competitor? Empirical tests have provided encouraging support for some of our hypotheses and, therefore, make a contribution to solving the puzzle.

The conversion of potential left-wing voters into real voters increases with age for the Social Democrats, whereas it decreases with age for the Greens. This, together with the substantially higher turnout among older voters, accounts for the difference in electoral success between the SP and the Greens. Similarly, as compared to the Greens, the SP still benefits from its close links with trade unions: Potential left voters that belong to a trade union vote significantly more for the SP than for the Greens (or for other parties). Similarly, issue preferences on the openness - closedness dimension, as measured by individual attitudes towards EU membership, are influential. More specifically, the likelihood of eventually voting for the SP increases substantially as one moves from anti- to pro-EU attitudes. By contrast, gender and education do not contribute to the explanation of the difference in electoral success between the two parties, nor do preferences on the economic, redistributive issue and opinions on nuclear energy (in 2007). Finally, the permissiveness of the electoral system does not play any role at the choice stage, but only matters on the offer side.

The analysis also informs us about those voters who have the SP or the Greens in their choice set, but eventually decide not to vote for either party. We found that young people, voters with low education levels, but also those with opinions that oppose left-wing parties' preferences on political issues, especially regarding EU integration, were more likely to abstain. Preferences that are in conflict with the SP or Green positions on any of the issues under study also result in a higher probability to vote for another party.

In sum, our findings contribute to the explanation of the persisting difference in success between the Greens and the SP, with the latter taking advantage of its higher conversion rates among older voters, trade union members and EU supporters. The fact that the explanatory power of our choice stage model is fairly low does not mean that our conception is wrong or that our model is not correctly specified. Instead, we wish to emphasize once again that explaining intra-bloc electoral choice is by definition a delicate endeavour. Given this, our empirical findings are indeed promising.

References

Bartolini, S. (2000). *The Political Mobilization of the European Left. 1860–1980: The Class Cleavage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bawn, K. (1999). Voter Responses to Electoral Complexity: Ticket Splitting, Rational Voters and Representation in the Federal Republic of Germany. *British Journal of Political Science* 29(3): 487–505.

Bochsler, D. (2010). L'union fait la force: les apparentements de listes au sein de la gauche. In Nicolet, S. and P. Sciarini (eds.), *Le destin électoral de la gauche: Le vote socialiste et vert en Suisse*. Genève: Georg (361–94).

Bornschier, S. and M. Helbling (2005). Stabilität und Wandel von Parteiensystemen und Konfliktlinie zwischen Öffnung und Abgrenzung: Der theoretische Ansatz. In Kriesi, H. et al. (eds.), *Der Aufstieg der SVP: Acht Kantone im Vergleich*. Zürich: NZZ (11–40).

Brunner, M. and P. Sciarini (2002). L'opposition ouverture-traditions. In Hug S. and P. Sciarini (eds.), *Changements de valeurs et nouveaux clivages politiques en Suisse.* Paris: L'Harmattan (29–93).

Dolezal, M. (2008). Kein Sonderfall: Die Schweizer Grünen im europäischen Vergleich. In Baer, M. and W. Seitz (eds.), *Die Grünen in der Schweiz: Ihre Politik, ihre Geschichte, ihre Basis*. Zürich: Rüegger (135–150).

Finger, M. and P. Sciarini (1991). Integrating "New Politics" into "Old Politics": The Swiss Party Elite. *West European Politics* 14(1): 98–112.

Giugni, M., and P. Sciarini (2009). Polarisation et politisation en Suisse. In Suter C. et al. (eds.), *Rapport social 2008*. Zurich: Seismo (222–43).

Gschwend, T. (2007). Ticket-splitting and strategic voting under mixed electoral rules: Evidence from Germany. *European Journal of Political Research* 46(1): 1–23.

Holzer, T. and W. Linder (2003). Die Wahlentscheidung im Wechselspiel zwischen Parteiidentifikation und Sachfragenorientierung. In Sciarini, P., Hardmeier, S. and A. Vatter (eds.), *Schweizer Wahlen 1999*. Bern: Haupt (85–122).

Hug, S. (2003). Selection Bias in Comparative Research: The Case of Incomplete Data Sets. *Political Analysis* 11: 255–74.

Inglehart, R. (1977). *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values And Political Styles Among Western Publics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

——— (1990). *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kitschelt, H. (1993). Class Structure and Social Democratic Party Strategy. *British Journal of Political Science* 23(3): 299–337.

——— (1994). *The Transformation of European Social Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kriesi, H. (1998). *Le système politique suisse* (2nd edition). Paris: Economica.

Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschier, S. and T. Frey (2006). Globalization and the Transformation of the National Political Space: Six European Countries Compared. *European Journal of Political Research* 45(6): 921–57.

Kriesi, H., Selb, P., Lachat, R., Bornschier, S. and M. Helbling (eds.), (2005). *Der Aufstieg der SVP: Acht Kantone im Vergleich*. Zürich: NZZ.

Lachat, R. (2008). The impact of party polarization on ideological voting. *Electoral Studies* 27: 687–98.

Lachat, R. and P. Selb (2005). Schweiz. In Kriesi, H. et al. (eds.), *Der Aufstieg der SVP: Acht Kantone im Vergleich*. Zürich: NZZ (41–58).

Ladner, A. (2008). Die Mitglieder und Aktiven der Grünen. In Baer, M. and W. Seitz (eds.), *Die Grünen in der Schweiz: Ihre Politik, ihre Geschichte, ihre Basis*. Zürich: Rüegger (39–54).

Lewis, J. and G. King (1999). No Evidence on Directional vs. Proximity Voting. *Political Analysis* 8(1): 21–33.

Lutz, G. (2006). Party Potential and the Pattern of Party Election in the 2003 Swiss Federal Elections. *Swiss Political Science Review* 12(4): 191–215.

Manski, C. (1977). The Structure Of Random Utility Models. *Theory and Decision* 8(3): 229–54.

Merrill, S. and B. Grofman (1999). *A Unified Theory of Voting: Directional and Proximity Spatial Models*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nicolet, S. and P. Sciarini (eds.), (2010a). *Le destin électoral de la gauche: Le vote socialiste et vert en Suisse*. Genève: Georg.

——— (2010b). Introduction. In Nicolet, S. and P. Sciarini (eds.), *Le destin électoral de la gauche: Le vote socialiste et vert en Suisse*. Genève: Georg (9–44).

Oesch, D. and L. Rennwald (2010a). La disparition du vote ouvrier? Le vote de classe et les partis de gauche en Suisse. In Nicolet, S. and P. Sciarini (eds.), *Le destin électoral de la gauche: Le vote socialiste et vert en Suisse*. Genève: Georg (219–56).

——— (2010b). Un électorat divisé? Les préférences politiques des classes sociales et le vote de gauche en Suisse en 2007. In Nicolet, S. and P. Sciarini (eds.), *Le destin électoral de la gauche: Le vote socialiste et vert en Suisse*. Genève: Georg (257–291).

Schneider, M. (2008). Die Grünen in Zahlen: Analyse der Wahlergebnisse 1975 bis 2007. In Baer, M. and W. Seitz (eds.), *Die Grünen in der Schweiz: Ihre Politik, ihre Geschichte, ihre Basis*. Zürich: Rüegger (151–62).

Schofield, N., Martin, A., Quinn, K. and A. Whitford (1998). Multiparty electoral competition in the Netherlands and Germany: A model based on multinomial probit. *Public Choice* 97(3): 257–93.

Sciarini, P. (1991). L'élite partisane face aux clivages politiques "classiques". In Ayberk U. et al. (eds.), *Les partis politiques à coeur ouvert: Enquete auprès des cadres partisans helvétiques*. Lausanne: L.E.P (120–43)

——— (2010a). La concurrence au sein de la gauche. In Nicolet, S. and P. Sciarini (eds.), *Le destin électoral de la gauche: Le vote socialiste et vert en Suisse*. Genève: Georg (131–77).

——— (2010b). Le potentiel électoral des partis de gauche. In Nicolet, S. and P. Sciarini (eds.), *Le destin électoral de la gauche: Le vote socialiste et vert en Suisse*. Genève: Georg (87–129).

Seitz, W. (2008). "Melonengrüne" und "Gurkengrüne": Die Geschichte der Grünen in der Schweiz. In Baer, M. and W. Seitz (eds.), *Die Grünen in der Schweiz: Ihre Politik, ihre Geschichte, ihre Basis*. Zürich: Rüegger (15–37).

Selb, P., and R. Lachat (2004). *Elections 2003*. Bern: Haupt.

Selb, P., and S. Pituctin (2009). Some Methodological Issues in the Study of New Parties Entry and Electoral Success. *Party Politics* 15.

Steenbergen, M. and D. Hangartner (2008). *A Manski-Type Choice Set Model With Screening Rule.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of APSA (2008, 27–31 August), Boston.

Tillie, J. (1995). *Party Utility and Voting Behaviour*. Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis.

Van der Brug, W., Van der Eijk, C. and M. Frankin (2007). *The Economy and the Vote: Economic Conditions and Elections in Fifteen Countries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van der Eijk, C., Van der Brug, W., Kroh, M. and M. Franklin (2006). Rethinking the dependent variable in voting behavior: On the measurement and analysis of electoral utilities. *Electoral Studies* 25(3): 424–47.

Vatter, A. and I. Stadelmann-Steffen (2008). Viele Grünschnäbel und immer mehr graue Häupter. In Baer, M. and W. Seitz (eds.), *Die Grünen in der Schweiz: Ihre Politik, ihre Geschichte, ihre Basis*. Zürich: Rüegger (55–71).

Westholm, A. (1997). Distance versus Direction: The Illusory Defeat of the Proximity Theory of Electoral Choice. *American Political Science Review* 91(4): 865–83.

Appendix

Table A1: Descriptive Statistics of the Explanatory Variables in the Choice Stage Model

Variable	Obs	Weighted Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Dummy 2007	4’907	0.43	0.50	0	1
Age (Years)	4’907	45.20	16.20	18	93
Education[a]	4’907	5.53	2.20	1	9
Gender (Female)	4’907	0.56	0.50	0	1
Taxation	4’907	1.95	0.99	1	5
EU Integration	4’907	0.59	0.35	0	1
Nuclear Energy	4’907	3.91	1.25	1	5
District Magnitude (Log)	4’907	2.67	0.65	1.10	3.53
Trade Union Membership (Dummy)	3’916	0.20	0.40	0	1

Note: [a] Education is measured on a 9-point scale for the highest degree of education that is assumed to be ordinary (1 primary school, 2 compulsory education, 3 basic vocational training, 4 vocational education, 5 diploma school, 6 high school, 7 high vocational training, 8 high vocational college, 9 university).

Table A2: Multinomial Probit Regression for the Electoral Choice (Choice Stage) among Potential SP and Greens Voters (Base Category in All Models: Vote for SP)

	Main Model (1)						With Union Membership (2)						With District Magnitude (3)					
Vote Decision	Abstain		Greens		Others		Abstain		Greens		Others		Abstain		Greens		Others	
	Coef.	Robust Std.Err.	Coef.	Robust Std.Err.	Coef.	Robust Std.Err.	Coef.	Robust Std.Err	Coef.	Robust Std.Err	Coef	Robust Std.Err	Coef	Robust Std.Err	Coef.	Robust Std.Err.	Coef.	Robust Std.Err.
Dummy 2007	1.22*	0.59	1.20	0.88	1.07(*)	0.55	2.37**	0.78	2.51*	1.02	2.25**	0.72	1.75*	0.72	1.49(*)	0.78	1.10	0.71
Age (Years)	-0.02**	0.00	-0.02**	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.02**	0.00	-0.02**	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.02**	0.00	-0.02**	0.01	0.00	0.00
Age × 07	-0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.02(*)	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.01
Education	-0.11**	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.02	-0.11**	0.02	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.02	-0.11**	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.02
Education × 07	-0.09(*)	0.05	-0.04	0.05	-0.08*	0.03	-0.20*	0.08	-0.11*	0.06	-0.13**	0.05	-0.09	0.05	-0.04	0.05	-0.08*	0.03
Gender (Female)	0.31**	0.11	-0.01	0.11	0.14	0.12	0.25*	0.10	-0.04	0.12	0.10	0.12	0.32**	0.10	-0.02	0.12	0.14	0.12
Gender × 07	0.26(*)	0.15	0.06	0.15	0.19	0.14	0.42*	0.20	0.08	0.19	0.28	0.23	0.28(*)	0.14	0.07	0.16	0.20	0.14
Taxation	0.24**	0.08	0.01	0.08	0.31**	0.09	0.24**	0.08	0.00	0.09	0.31**	0.09	0.24**	0.08	0.01	0.08	0.31**	0.09
Taxation × 07	0.05	0.11	0.04	0.10	-0.03	0.11	0.15	0.19	0.02	0.14	0.01	0.15	0.06	0.11	0.04	0.10	-0.02	0.11
EU Integration	-1.21**	0.14	-0.63**	0.19	-1.27**	0.11	-1.19**	0.14	-0.60**	0.19	-1.25**	0.11	-1.21**	0.14	-0.64**	0.19	-1.27**	0.11
EU Integration × 07	-0.05	0.23	0.11	0.36	-0.07	0.24	-0.55(*)	0.29	-0.07	0.49	-0.49	0.24	-0.05	0.24	0.12	0.36	-0.07	0.24
Nuclear Energy	-0.11*	0.05	0.19**	0.04	-0.26**	0.05	-0.12*	0.05	0.19**	0.05	-0.26**	0.05	-0.12*	0.06	0.19**	0.04	-0.26**	0.05
Nuclear Energy × 07	-0.16*	0.07	-0.18(*)	0.10	-0.08	0.06	-0.27**	0.10	-0.22*	0.10	-0.11	0.08	-0.16*	0.07	-0.19*	0.09	-0.07	0.06
Dist Magnitude (Log)													-0.08	0.13	0.08	0.22	-0.06	0.10
Magnitude × 07													-0.20	0.18	-0.10	0.25	-0.01	0.15
Union Membership							-0.63**	0.17	-0.41*	0.18	-0.34*	0.15						
Union Member × 07							0.26	0.34	0.03	0.40	-0.35	0.37						
Constant	2.66	0.21	-0.66	0.42	0.67	0.27	2.85	0.22	-0.56	0.44	0.77	0.29	2.88	0.43	-0.89	0.41	0.82	0.46
N	4’907						3’916						4’907					

Note: (*) = p < 0.1; * = p < 0.05; ** = p < 0.01 (two-sided).

Si proches, mais si loin:
probabilité de vote et choix électoral pour les partis de gauche
lors des élections fédérales 2003–07

Alors que la littérature existante s'est essentiellement intéressée au vote pour les partis appartenant à différents blocs politiques, l'objectif de cet article est d'étudier le vote pour deux partis qui sont idéologiquement très proches l'un de l'autre, le Parti socialiste suisse et les Verts. A cette fin, nous développons un modèle à deux étapes, dans lequel les votants sélectionnent d'abord les partis qui leur semblent acceptables et choisissent ensuite sur cette base le parti pour lequel voter. Nous utilisons la probabilité de vote comme mesure de la première étape et nous montrons que cette probabilité dépend fortement de la distance entre les votants et les partis sur une échelle gauche-droite. S'agissant de la deuxième étape, celle du choix électoral, nous formulons plusieurs hypothèses relatives aux facteurs susceptibles d'expliquer la capacité variable des deux partis à convertir leurs électeurs potentiels en électeurs réels. Les tests empiriques soulignent l'impact des facteurs socio-démographiques et du vote d'enjeu. En revanche, les considérations stratégiques ne semblent pas jouer de rôle.

So nah, und doch so fern:
Wahlneigungen und Wahlentscheidung für linke Parteien
in den Schweizer Nationalratswahlen 2003–07

Die Literatur untersucht meistens die Wahlentscheidung zwischen Parteien unterschiedlicher Blöcke. Demgegenüber fokussiert dieser Aufsatz auf die Wahlentscheidung zwischen ideologisch kaum unterscheidbaren Parteien, den Sozialdemokraten und den Grünen in der Schweiz. Die Untersuchung basiert auf einem Zweistufenmodell, in dem Wähler zunächst für sie denkbare Parteien aussuchen, und anschliessend einer dieser Parteien die Stimme geben. Die erste Selektionsstufe wird mittels Wahlneigungen (resp. Wahlwahrscheinlichkeiten) gemessen. Sie hängt eng mit der Positionierung auf der Links-Rechts-Achse zusammen. Ferner betrachten wir unterschiedliche Faktoren um die eigentliche Wahlentscheidung zwischen den in Betracht gezogenen Parteien erklären kann. Die stärkste empirische Erklärungskraft im zweiten Teilmodell haben soziodemografische Faktoren und thematische Fragen. Strategische Überlegungen scheinen hingegen keine Rolle zu spielen.

Daniel Bochsler is a post-doctoral researcher at the Central European University (CEU). His research focuses on political parties, elections and direct democracy, looking particularly at Switzerland and at young democracies. His publications include articles in Electoral Studies, Europe-Asia Studies, the European Yearbook for Minority Issues, Public Choice, Regional and Federal Studies. His recent monograph, *Territory and Electoral Rules in Post-Communist Democracies*, has been published by Palgrave (2010).

Address for correspondence: Central European University (CEU), DISC, Nador utca 9, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary. Phone: +36 1 327 3086; Fax: +36 1 327 3087; Email: dbochsler@gmail.com.

Pascal Sciarini is Professor of Swiss and Comparative Politics, and Head of the Department of Political Science, University of Geneva. His writing on Swiss politics (direct democracy, decision-making processes, European policy, Europeanization) and political behaviour has appeared in various journals. His most recent publication is a co-edited book on the vote for the Social Democrats and the Greens in Switzerland: Nicolet, Sarah et Pascal Sciarini (eds.) 2010. *Le destin électoral de la gauche: Le vote socialiste et vert en Suisse*. Genève: Georg.

Address for correspondence: Department of Political Science, University of Geneva, 40, Bd. du Pont d'Arve, CH-1211 Geneva 4, Switzerland. Phone: +41 (0)22 379 83 86; Fax: +41 (0)22 379 83 64; Email: pascal.sciarini@unige.ch.