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Embedded liberalism or embedded nationalism? How welfare states affect anti-globalisation nationalism in party platforms

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ABSTRACT

In industrialised democracies, welfare state provisions have offsetting implications for anti-globalisation nationalism, central to the position taking of populist radical-right parties. On the one hand, social protection has an ‘embedded liberalism’ effect, mitigating economic insecurities associated with globalisation and thereby *dampening* anti-globalisation nationalism. On the other hand, social protection has an ‘embedded nationalism’ effect, awakening worries that globalisation may undermine hard-won provisions, thereby *deepening* anti-globalisation. This paper argues and finds evidence that which of these dynamics predominates depends on the particular kind of anti-globalisation debated and on the particular party family doing the debating. Welfare effort does generally dampen anti-globalisation nationalism, but it can deepen more than dampen anti-globalisation with respect to immigration and EU-integration that more directly impact existing national welfare provisions. Welfare effort can also deepen more than dampen anti-globalisation among radical-right and radical-left parties taking issue-ownership of anti-globalisation and of protecting national welfare-state competencies from global pressure.

KEYWORDS Anti-globalisation; political parties; radical right parties; radical left parties; welfare state; embedded liberalism

Industrialised democracies face a resurgence of anti-globalisation nationalism, discernible throughout the political spectrum but central to the programs of many radical-right and radical-left populist parties. This nationalist backlash has provoked a flood of scholarship exploring the political and policy settings that might fuel or dampen anti-globalisation

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nationalism. Among the country-level conditions often identified as influencing such anti-globalisation is the welfare state. But the direction of that relevance remains widely debated, due to the complex and offsetting political-economic implications of welfare state provisions. On the one hand, the extent of welfare-state provisions has been construed as providing risk-indemnification, redistribution and compensation to losers of global political-economic engagement. Such an ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic encourages citizens and their representatives to embrace rather than eschew globalism. On the other hand, welfare-state provisions have also been construed as cherished accomplishments to be defended against the possible dangers that globalisation can pose for existing welfare states. Such an ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic can inspire anti-globalisation nationalism as a way to defend hard-won welfare protection. Given these offsetting dynamics, an important question about contemporary political economy remains unanswered: Do more generous welfare states tend to dampen, drive or have little impact upon anti-globalisation nationalism?

In this paper we try answer this question by exploring the offsetting dynamics of how the extent of welfare-state provisions – what can be termed ‘welfare effort’ – might influence anti-globalisation nationalism, focussing on such nationalist platform-orientations of political parties, including radical populist parties. We argue and find empirical evidence that the offsetting ‘embedded liberalism’ and ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamics underlie contrasting implications of welfare effort for the rise and consolidation of anti-globalisation backlash. First, we expect that welfare state effort can address globalisation risks but also awaken fears of welfare retrenchment that, respectively, soften or spur political demands for anti-globalisation nationalism by political parties throughout the political spectrum. Second, we expect that these offsetting implications mean that welfare states play out differently for different kinds of anti-globalisation backlash – spurring more than softening backlash against those faces of globalisation (e.g. immigration and EU-integration) that most obviously and saliently alter or threaten existing national welfare protections. Third, the offsetting implications of welfare states likely also play out differently for the anti-globalisation position-taking of different political parties – spurring backlash particularly among the radical right and radical left parties that emphasise (and claim issue ownership towards) the ways that globalisation might endanger hard-won national prerogatives.

The paper empirically tests these propositions by analysing party manifestos in more than two-dozen industrialised democracies between 1960 and 2017. Such data allow us to explore all our expectations about how welfare protections affect different kinds of anti-globalisation for different political parties. Our analysis explores, in particular, how different

measures of welfare-state conditions influence broad and narrow measures of anti-globalisation backlash, and also specific opposition to European Union integration and against immigration. Our analysis also explores how these different measures of existing welfare effort are associated with position-taking on different kinds of anti-globalisation nationalism expressed by different party families, including radical right and radical left parties, in contrast to their mainstream counterparts.

The principal findings are in line with our expectations but also include important surprises. First, despite offsetting implications, welfare-state effort tends on the whole to be associated with more modest anti-globalisation nationalism – a pattern suggesting that welfare states’ ‘embedded liberalism’ effects predominate in the party politics of nationalist backlash. Second, more generous welfare states do play out differently across different aspects of anti-globalisation nationalism by parties, being less likely to dampen anti-globalisation position-taking with respect to anti-EU integration and anti-immigration than with respect to broader anti-globalisation nationalism (e.g. including not just anti-EU positions but also general anti-internationalism, trade protectionism, and nationalist sentiments). Third, settings with more substantial welfare states tend to more modestly diminish and even to drive anti-globalisation nationalism among radical right and radical left parties – more than for their mainstream counterparts. An important pattern combines what we learn from looking across parties and kinds of anti-globalisation nationalism: generous social policy tends to dampen the general anti-globalisation nationalism of radical left parties, while actually fostering those parties’ nationalism with respect to anti-EU and immigration positions. Altogether, the effects of welfare states for anti-globalisation nationalism can involve either ‘embedded liberalism’ or ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamics depending on the party involved and the aspect of nationalism in question. Such empirical patterns involve broad quantitative associations in history rather than sharper causal identification. But the findings have important implications for understanding how social protection is intertwined with contemporary political ferment.

What we (need to) know about welfare policy and anti-globalisation nationalism

Among the most important developments that industrialised democracies are experiencing is a widespread turning-against international engagement. Political parties, governments, and social actors throughout the West have increasingly sought to curtail global trade and finance, European Union competences, international rule-of-law, multilateral

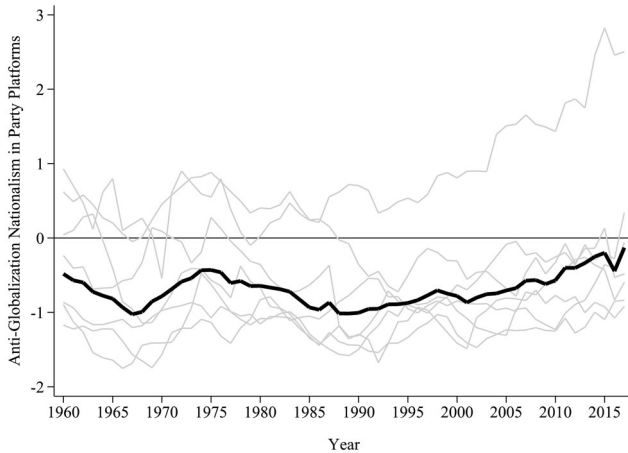


Figure 1. Anti-globalisation nationalism over time, average of all parties (black line) and by party family (grey lines) in 23 democracies.

institutional prerogatives and immigration. [Figure 1](#) provides a snapshot of this increase, tracking the party platforms of all political parties in 23 consolidated democracies, between 1960 and 2017 in terms of platform emphasis on anti-globalisation nationalism manifested in opposition to global internationalism generally, to free-trade, to EU-integration, and in support for nationalism.¹ We see that the average level of such anti-globalisation by parties is at its highest point in more than fifty years, and that the chasm dividing party on these issues has recently grown larger (shown by the larger width of the upper- and lower- range for party families).

Such trends in anti-globalisation nationalism are important, not least given the dark history of nationalism in the 20th-century's World Wars and colonial oppression. Indeed, anti-globalisation nationalism still frequently accompanies anti-democratic authoritarian stances ([Karapin 1998](#)). It is also a frequent accompaniment to left-wing and, particularly, right-wing populist cherishing of the good 'people' and demonising of elites ([Anselmi 2017](#); [Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017](#)). However, anti-globalisation nationalism is important in-and-of-itself for the future of political and economic relations and is central to political contestation across industrialised democracies.

Given such import, anti-globalisation nationalism has been extensively studied in the social sciences, including scholarship exploring the national conditions thought to either foster or discourage anti-globalisation backlash. Among the macro-level factors found to be important to anti-globalisation is the welfare state – the complex of policy regulations, social welfare transfers and services that not only provide social rights but

provide insurance, redistribution and compensation to citizens. The sheer size and presence of the welfare state in contemporary democracies makes it an obvious candidate to colour political and economic interests with respect to anti-globalisation nationalism.

With its big footprint, however, how the welfare state actually affects anti-globalisation nationalism turns out to be a matter of considerable debate and uncertainty. On the one hand, the welfare state may *dampen* anti-globalisation nationalism. Rooted in the tradition of Karl Polanyi's *Great Transformation* (1944), many scholars argue that the welfare state's insurance, redistribution and/or compensation can ease the economic pain and insecurities accompanying political and economic globalisation. John Ruggie famously dubbed 'embedded liberalism' as the post-War system of mutually reinforcing multilateral economic openness with safeguards to protect national societies (Ruggie 1982). Scholars in this tradition not only find that economic openness might strongly spur welfare state development (Cameron 1978; Garrett 1998; Katzenstein 1985), but also that *ex ante* welfare state effort might deepen commitments to economic and political openness.

The welfare state's fostering of support for globalisation, here, can involve social policies directly dampening nationalist backlash (Hays 2009), or negatively moderating, hence dampening, the tendency of economic suffering to drive anti-globalisation nationalism (Burgoon 2009, 2013). These studies clarify such claims with respect to individual, party, or policy outcomes, and different faces of globalisation – ranging from trade openness (Ehrlich and Hearn 2014; Rickard 2015), immigration (Crepaz and Damron 2009), capital investment (Bordo *et al.* 1999), and European integration (McNamara 2015). In line with this is the view that a stalling or rolling-back of social policy may be spurring rising nationalism (Milner 2019; Snyder 2019; Trubowitz and Burgoon 2020). Extending this focus on how welfare-policy underlay global interconnectedness, finally, studies suggest that social policy's lowering of economic insecurities may defuse voter support for radical populist parties (Swank and Betz 2003). All told, these insights provide good reasons to expect welfare states to have an 'embedded liberalism' effect that diminishes anti-globalisation nationalism.

On the other hand, the welfare state has implications that can fuel anti-globalisation nationalism. Welfare state protections are among the most popular, widely cherished policy accomplishments in the industrialised democracies to have developed such protections (Brooks and Manza 2007; Pierson 1994). This can colour the way political actors view their country's openness to and engagement with the world. Various aspects of economic and political globalisation threaten, or are portrayed to threaten, hard-won welfare protections at the national level. Trade and investment globalisation,

for instance, might unleash ‘races to the bottom’ in social-welfare standards between countries seeking competitive advantage. Or migration might overburden social policy and undermine its popularity, since migrants are seen as less deserving than native-born citizens (Van Oorschot 2006, 2008). More generally, internationalism in European or global multilateral institutions can inspire regulatory convergence that might improve the weakest welfare states (De Vries 2018; Sánchez-Cuenca 2000), but might also punish the strongest welfare states (Vasilopoulou and Talving 2020) and weaken the regulatory autonomy and democratic capacities to maintain generous welfare states (Rodrik 1997; Schmitter and Streeck 1994). Such real or perceived threats to generous social policies can, in turn, spur a dynamic that is the opposite of the more familiar embedded liberalism – they can spar, namely, ‘embedded nationalism’, involving not just welfare chauvinism but also anti-globalisation nationalism and radical populism to defend one’s welfare state from hostile foreign threats.

While there is less literature developing these claims as such, some empirical work supports the logic of ‘embedded nationalism’. Most obvious are studies focussed on how polities with developed social-policy protections respond to migration and other aspects of globalisation with voter and party support for, and policies enacting, welfare chauvinism (Mewes and Mau 2013; Schumacher and Van Kersbergen 2016). Other studies link generous welfare states to broader manifestations of nationalist backlash: Veugelers and Magnan (2005) find generous social policy to be part of the path to stronger populist radical right parties; Rapp (2017) finds more generous unemployment benefits to interact with ethnic heterogeneity to undermine political tolerance towards immigration; Rooduijn and Burgoon (2018) find that economic suffering is more likely to spur (nationalist) radical party support under conditions of more generous rather than modest welfare expenditures; and some scholars have found that macro-level egalitarian welfare-related issues can drive Euroscepticism (Arzheimer 2009). Hence, we also have solid reasons to expect that more generous social policy settings may unleash ‘embedded nationalism’.

Which of these offsetting implications of welfare states predominates is *prima facie* uncertain. Of course, both the ‘embedded liberalism’ and the ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamics might unfold simultaneously, canceling-out one other in the net. Or the predominance of either dynamic might depend on particular features of social policy, features of globalisation, levels of politics, regions of the world or time periods. In any event, we have virtually no empirical literature untangling the possibilities. Hence, whether and under what conditions welfare-state effort fosters or thwarts anti-globalisation nationalism remains an important puzzle for comparative political economy.

Argument and hypotheses

We seek to clarify how welfare-state effort plays out for nationalism, building on the premise that such effort unleashes both an ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic that dampens anti-globalisation nationalism *and* an ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic that deepens it. This means that we do not know whether ‘embedded liberalism’ or ‘embedded nationalism’ prevails in general. This open expectation implies three equally-plausible hypotheses about how welfare effort can be expected to correlate with subsequent anti-globalisation nationalism. Such nationalism can manifest itself in the actions and attitudes of many political actors, or in the political outcomes they shape, but our focus, here, is on the position-taking of political parties:

H1a (‘Embedded Liberalism’ Hypothesis):

*Political parties in settings with more generous welfare states are **less supportive of or more opposed to** anti-globalization nationalism than parties in settings with less substantial welfare effort.*

H1b (‘Embedded Nationalism’ Hypothesis):

*Political parties in settings with more generous welfare states are **more supportive of or less opposed to** anti-globalization nationalism than parties in settings with less substantial welfare effort.*

H1c (‘Null’ Hypothesis):

*The offsetting ‘embedded liberalism’ and ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamics should tend to cancel one-another out, such that more generous welfare states **have no effect** in general on the anti-globalization nationalism of political parties.*

Consistent with any of these general hypotheses, we can identify particular conditions under which either the ‘embedded liberalism’ or ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic can be expected to prevail. In particular, how much welfare-state effort drives or instead dampens anti-globalisation nationalism by political parties can be expected to depend on: (1) the particular aspect of anti-globalisation nationalism at issue; and (2) the particular kind of political party involved in anti-globalisation politics. We develop each of these possibilities in turn.

First, political parties can be expected to stake-out more or less anti-globalisation nationalist positions depending on the particular aspect of globalisation at stake, since aspects of globalisation differ in how much they provoke risks that welfare states can redress and in how much the globalisation in question alters or constrains existing national welfare policies. We expect the latter to be particularly important. Some aspects of globalisation, such as the general pooling of sovereignty on issues of global political, environmental or trade governance, do not involve meaningful or in any event direct alterations of national welfare states. Even economic globalisation conditions like global trade and investment can be

expected to have only indirect implications for social policy – via possible long-term institutional convergence or competition in regulatory laxity. On the other hand, some features of globalisation have stronger and more direct implications for national welfare states – implications that can, or have at least been seen to, threaten generous national-level welfare states. This is particularly relevant for two faces of globalisation: European Union integration, and Immigration.

European Union regulation has mandated a long series of regulatory changes to conform to the *Acquis Communautaire*. And while the social policy realm is certainly not the most developed for European competences, it does involve explicit regulations focussed on development or benchmarking of national welfare-state provisions – including formal harmonisation on issues of gender and labour market regulation, and generally through the European Semester and earlier Open Method of Coordination. Beyond these incursions on national welfare-state sovereignty, the European project has involved thoroughgoing mutual-recognition trade and investment liberalisation in the Single Market. This may motivate parties in less developed welfare states to be more supportive of European integration while motivating those in generous welfare-state settings to worry about the EU hollowing-out hard-won welfare gains (Burgoon 2009; De Vries 2018; Sánchez-Cuenca 2000).

Immigration is another face of globalisation that can be expected to have strong implications for welfare states. This is partly because immigration can be directly entwined with the search for favourable labour-market and social-policy provisions – welfare magnets or not. It is also because migrants (unlike the cross-border flows of money or goods) make direct claims on government spending, particularly key aspects of welfare states like education provisions and non-contributory social-policy benefits (Hanson *et al.* 2007).

These very different stakes that different aspects of globalisation have for welfare states can be expected to shape whether substantial welfare-state effort awakens worries or hopes about a particular face of globalisation. One can expect that anti-globalisation position-taking by political parties with respect to one or another aspect of globalisation might differ accordingly. And one can expect, particularly, that more substantial welfare effort may well provoke ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamics with respect to EU-integration and immigration, more so than with respect to more general political-economic globalisation. Such logic undergirds our second hypothesis:

H2 (‘Faces of Globalization Hypothesis’):

*Welfare effort (extent of social policy intervention) is less likely to dampen the anti-globalization nationalism of political parties with respect to **EU-integration** or **immigration** than with respect to general political-economic globalization.*

Second, welfare protections can also be expected to play out differently for anti-globalisation positioning by political parties depending on the political party involved. Parties differ with respect to how much they cue voters and emphasise or claim ownership on globalisation, welfare states, or the links between them. Some parties may particularly emphasise the dangers or importance of globalisation generally, for instance, or of particular aspects of globalisation. These parties might also emphasise more or less the importance of defending or expanding (or reforming) the welfare state. And of course, parties might explicitly trumpet the intersection of these issues, focussing more or less on how (a particular aspect of) globalisation threatens or is relevant to defending existing national welfare state protections. Such differences involve more or less invocation of the ‘embedded nationalism’ or ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamics that can colour their politicking in light of the welfare state conditions within which they operate.

While such differences will partly play out in context-specific ways, the major party families clearly differ with respect to just such issue ownership and framing. In general, a number of scholars have argued and found evidence that mainstream parties – such as the Social Democratic, Liberal, Christian Democratic, and Conservative party families – contest primarily on the first-dimension issues, such as ‘left-right’ balance between state and market in political-economic life. On the other hand, newer parties often mobilise and focus mainly on ‘second-dimension’ issues – and pro-global versus anti-global nationalism is a key part of second-dimension issues, and hence issues on which the radical left and right parties have/claim issue ownership (Hooghe and Marks 2018; Kitschelt and McGann 1997). This is key for salience of the issues in party platforms.

More importantly, the substantive differences in the positions of mainstream versus radical parties on globalisation and welfare issues are also large and meaningful. Separate from differences in how salient globalisation is to parties, the radical right and to some extent also the radical left have been more anti-globalisation nationalist than have the mainstream parties, including on issues of trade, investment, and the EU (Halikiopoulou *et al.* 2012; Hooghe *et al.* 2002). This skew varies depending on the face of globalisation, with radical right parties tending to decry all pooling of national sovereignty, for cultural and political reasons as well as for economic reasons related to defending national welfare states. And radical-right parties have been particularly nativist with respect to immigration. Radical left parties, on the other hand, are particularly focussed on critiquing the economic and neoliberal faces of globalisation and EU-integration (Halikiopoulou *et al.* 2012) and have been more supportive of general global cosmopolitanism and are generally more pro-

immigration than mainstream parties (Rooduijn *et al.* 2017). But generally, we can expect a U-shaped pattern in anti-globalisation nationalism as one moves from the extreme left, through to more centrist parties, onward to the extreme-right parties (Hix 1999; Hooghe *et al.* 2002; Taggart 1998).

Our main point, however, is that one can also expect a U-shaped pattern in how much welfare-state effort affects anti-globalisation nationalism across parties. Among mainstream parties, the ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic ought to be less salient relative to the ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic, given the focus on economic concerns and opportunities quite central to the positioning of such parties. As a result, welfare effort may more readily dampen than deepen anti-globalisation among these parties. Among radical left and radical right parties, however, we expect the opposite, that the ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic will receive more explicit framing and cuing attention in party discussions than the ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic. The reasons include how position-taking by the radical parties are connected to issue ownership and multifaceted, political and cultural (and not just narrow economic) concerns. Such position-taking may make the anti-globalisation sentiments of radical parties, particularly radical right parties focussed on national identity politics, partly impervious to any welfare-state assuaging of economic risks. But at the same time, issue ownership should make radical parties, particularly radical left parties, more focussed on how globalisation might threaten national welfare-state autonomy or national sovereignty generally. Generally, hence, generous welfare state settings are more likely to deepen the anti-globalisation nationalism of radical parties:

H3 (‘Radical-versus-Mainstream Party Hypothesis’):

*More substantial or generous welfare effort will more strongly diminish anti-globalization nationalism among **mainstream parties** (Social Democratic, Liberal, Christian Democratic and Conservative party families) than among **radical left and radical right parties**.*

A strong version of this expectation is that more substantial welfare effort should tend to be associated with development of more anti-globalisation nationalism among radical parties and *less* anti-globalisation nationalism among mainstream parties – befitting the contrasting prominence of the ‘embedded liberalism’ and ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamics in the respective party-family groupings. The more modest variant, however, is that more welfare state generosity or spending should be more negatively or less positively associated with subsequent anti-globalisation nationalism among mainstream than among radical parties.

A final expectation framing our empirical analysis combines judgement about how welfare states play out across different aspects of anti-

globalisation position-taking and about how welfare effort plays out differently across party families. In particular, radical left parties tend to be much more cosmopolitan than their radical-right and even mainstream counterparts when it comes to immigration and general cooperation. And radical left parties are often the most invested in defending social protection. Combined with how the ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic looms largest for those aspects of globalisation that most saliently threaten generous welfare states, welfare effort’s consequences for the positioning of radical left parties are likely to be differ more starkly across dimensions of (anti-)globalisation than applies to other parties:

H4 (‘Radical Left on Immigration and EU Hypothesis’):

For radical left parties more than for other parties, more generous welfare effort should least dampen or more substantially deepen the anti-globalization nationalism with respect to immigration and EU integration than with respect to other faces of globalization.

Research design

We test our hypotheses by analysing party platforms of parties in a broad cross-section of industrialised democracies between 1960 and 2017. Our analyses cover all political parties (numbering 585) in between 21 and 32 countries, depending on the availability of different welfare-state measures (see below), with the countries in each analysis listed in Online Appendix 2. We focus on how various measures of anti-globalisation nationalism in the platforms of all such parties might be influenced by various measures of welfare-state effort in the countries within which parties operate. This approach allows us to identify measures of anti-globalisation nationalism across the major party families and also across different faces of nationalism relevant to our arguments. Matched to recognised measures of welfare state size and generosity capturing substantial variation in welfare effort, the resulting data provide substantial leverage to test the four hypotheses. We do so in the simplest, most direct way, focussed on direct associations between welfare effort and outcomes, and consider a range of specifications and estimators to gauge how welfare effort plays out for anti-globalisation nationalism by political parties. The empirical exploration lays out broad quantitative associations in history that support inferences and can systematically test our hypotheses.

Dependent variables

Our manifesto measures are based primarily on the Manifesto Data Project (MPD) (Klingemann *et al.* 2007) that includes measures of

positioning relevant to a range of pro- and anti-globalisation nationalism between 1960 and 2017. To measure anti-immigration positioning, we also draw on a Dancygier and Margalit's (2020) dataset focussed on coding of such positioning in 12 countries. These kinds of platform measures have been widely used in the study of political positioning and party dynamics, including in a range of studies of radical populist party positioning and anti-globalisation nationalism (Burgoon 2009, 2013; Colantone and Stanig 2018; Milner and Judkins 2004; Zürn *et al.* 2012). We focus on measures that include both positive and negative statements on issues clearly relevant to anti-globalisation nationalism. Using these, we calculate 'net' measures that combine positions embracing minus positions eschewing such anti-globalisation nationalism. To create more normal distributions, we take the natural logarithm of the 'positive' statements about these anti-global nationalism issues and subtract the natural logarithm of the 'negative' statements about them (adding 0.5 to both to avoid zeroes) (see Lowe *et al.* 2011).

We focus on four measures of anti-globalisation nationalism for all included parties: (1) anti-globalisation (broad); (2) anti-globalisation (narrow); (3) anti-EU; and (4) anti-immigration.² *Anti-globalisation (broad)*, our most encompassing measure, includes the sum of positive statements about *internationalism* (on international cooperation and support for global institutions); *protectionism* (particularly on trade tariffs and quotas); *European Union* (political and economic integration in Europe); and *National way of life* (nationalism, patriotism, national ideas). *Anti-globalisation (narrow)* focuses on the components most acutely relevant to anti-globalisation (positive versus negative statements about *internationalism* and *protectionism*) rather than also about nationalism or anti-EU, particularly important for parties operating outside of Europe. *Anti-EU*, then, focuses on positive versus negative statements about the *European Union*. Unfortunately, the MPD coding does not code issues of immigration. For this reason, we rely on a re-coding of the extensive Dancygier and Margalit (2020) dataset on party manifestos with respect to immigration. That 'DM' dataset builds explicitly on the MPD-based methodology of coding manifestos and has the best over-time coverage of any attempted coding of party-positioning towards migration, making it comprehensive and compatible with our MPD-based measures of other aspects of anti-globalisation nationalism. We recode the DM pro-immigration versus anti-immigration stances as logged differences of percentages of total sentences (like our other MPD-based measures), yielding a measure of *anti-immigration*. This provides a more compatible and valid measure of such positioning than is possible using any other dataset, but the drawback is that it covers fewer countries than our MPD data (12 European countries

between 1963 and 2013).³ All these MPD-based and DM-based party-platform measures are calculated for individual parties in a given country and year, and our baseline specifications use linear interpolation between election years, though all baseline results are robust to non-interpolated data.

Before empirically summarising these measures, it is important to confront basic questions about their validity and relevance. First, one can ask whether our dependent variables really measure what we want. We do find that comparisons with qualitative treatments and other quantitative measures, such as in the CHES data expert-codings of parties' positioning on EU integration and immigration, correlate highly with our MPD- and DM-based measures. Of course, our (and others') measures of anti-globalisation positioning may not capture all aspects of anti-globalisation, such as on cultural imperialism, and our measures may pick up not just anti-globalisation but also '*alter-globalization*' positions, where a party wants a different kind of, rather than less, global connectedness. We submit that our encompassing measures have broad validity for our interest in the key faces of anti-globalisation nationalism our arguments address.

Second, one can also ask whether party platforms say anything about anti-globalisation nationalism in actual governmental behaviour and policy. As a general matter, a range of studies of party manifestos, including with the MPD data and operationalizations on which we rely, have found policy to show-up statistically significantly in policy outcomes, variously measured (e.g. Klingemann *et al.* 1994; Thomson *et al.* 2017; Bräuninger 2005). Fully exploring and establishing whether the same is true for our party-platform measures of anti-globalisation nationalism would require more attention and empirical discussion than our current analysis allows. However, our various measures of anti-globalisation nationalism in party platforms do appear to be associated with *subsequent* measures of actual policies of globalisation.⁴

Based on our measures of parties' anti-globalisation nationalism, three patterns are key by way of summary description. First, [Figure 1](#) above summarised a pattern worth recalling, that parties' anti-globalisation nationalism, on average, had tended to diminish compared to the earliest-1960s, before trending towards more anti-globalisation nationalism by the 1990s and particularly in the last decade.

Second, such average patterns mask how the detailed party-country-year measures are quite dispersed: for all four measures of anti-globalisation nationalism the standard deviations are greater than the means, and the range of variation within countries is greater than that between countries (see [Online Appendix 2](#) for all summary statistics, and [Online Appendix Figure A1.3](#) for the between- and within-country spread). Such dispersion has varied over time, and not in a uniform trend: periods of

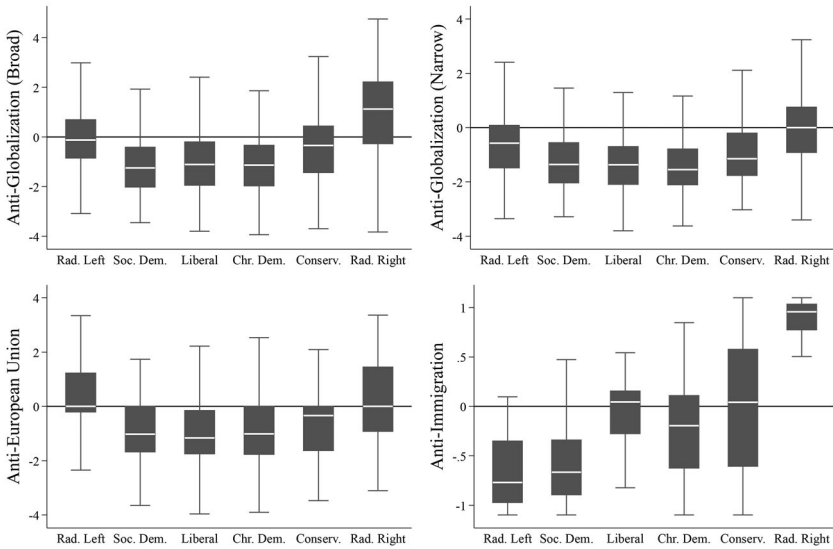


Figure 2. Party manifestos on anti-globalisation nationalism, by measure and party family.

economic crisis, like the crisis of the 1970s and the post-2008 financial crisis, exhibit not only increasing but also more dispersed (or polarized) anti-globalisation positioning.⁵

Third, party positioning with respect to our measures of anti-globalisation nationalism differ substantially across key party families. Figure 2 provides a box-plot overview of our four measures of anti-globalisation nationalism, summarising the party positions on these measures across six party families on which we focus.⁶ Our coding of party families relies on the coding from the MPD project with respect to the four principal mainstream party families: Social Democratic parties, Liberal parties, Christian Democratic parties, and Conservative.⁷ Our coding of Radical Left and of Radical Right party families, however, follows the coding of the PopuList project's categorisation of 'extreme left' and 'extreme right' (Rooduijn *et al.* 2019) that overlaps but adjusts the MPD categories of radical left and nationalist parties, respectively.⁸ Across our coded party families, we observe considerable variation in positioning, with the box-plot hairs capturing the spread in anti-globalisation positioning within the family. The main pattern is corroboration of the 'U-curve' patterns identified in earlier studies of party positioning with respect to issues of anti-globalisation and anti-EU matters. The expected exception to such distribution is anti-immigration, where the distribution is monotonic, with Radical Left parties tending to be the least anti-immigration and Radical Right parties the most anti-immigration in their stances.

Independent variables

We measure our key explanatory factor, welfare-state effort, by relying on widely-used indicators of the extent of social welfare policies. We focus on four different variables. First, *social security transfers (as a percentage of GDP)* captures the social assistance provisions, mainly passive transfers for unemployment, old-age, sickness, et cetera (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2019a). Second, *total social expenditures (as a percentage of GDP)* measures a more encompassing gauge of social policies in terms of in kind services and not just social transfers, including most of the well-known realms of social policy but excluding education provisions (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2019b). Third, we consider *total welfare and education spending*, a measure of total welfare spending that adds total social expenditures to public education spending (OECD 2019c). Fourth, we consider *welfare state generosity*, a measure that focuses on the Comparative Welfare Entitlement Database's (CWED) index of generosity based on programmatic attributes of rather than spending on social policy assistance with respect to unemployment insurance, sickness/disability insurance, and pension programs (Scruggs *et al.* 2017). Available countries using all four of these measures are listed in Online Appendix 2, where we also present correlation matrices for the various independent and dependent variables.

The first three of our independent variables are focussed on expenditures as a percentage of GDP, capturing the take-up and economic footprint of social policies, and thereby their felt presence in the country's political-economic life. To understand the origins of social policy, to explain policy generosity, then such spending measures are not the most appropriate – captured in Esping-Anderson's sage observation that 'It's difficult to imagine that anyone struggled for spending *per se*' (Esping-Andersen 1990: 21). However, we are interested here in the *consequences* of welfare state effort or extent, and spending captures such effort, also in terms of what enters political consciousness and observed importance to a country's economic health. This argues in favour of spending-based measures, which have the added advantage of providing more coverage in terms of countries and years. But the generosity provisions provide an important triangulation of our main concept of welfare effort.⁹

Estimation approach and controls

Our analysis of these data focus on regressing each of our four measures of anti-globalisation nationalism of all parties (in a given party-country-year) on each of our measures of welfare effort. To test Hypotheses 1a–1c

and Hypothesis 2, a first specification looks at the general associations between welfare effort and measures of anti-globalisation nationalism. To test Hypotheses 3 and 4, a second specification focuses on how such effects of welfare effort on measures of anti-globalisation nationalism vary across party families.

Given the continuous measures of party positions, our models are OLS estimators with fixed country and decade effects to address possible country-wise and time-wise omitted variable bias, heteroskedasticity and correlation of errors. To address the many sources of omitted variable bias, we also control for a range of substantive party-country-year and country-year conditions. All of our right-hand side parameters are lagged values, based on five-year moving averages (including observation year) to address obvious simultaneity issues but also to address the time it takes for conditions to percolate their way through party deliberations. The party-specific controls include the party family (with ‘miscellaneous parties’ as the excluded category) and a party’s vote share in the last election. Importantly, we also include a party’s platform positioning with respect to the MPD-scale of *Left-to-Right platform*, which includes an array of manifesto items including support for or against markets or government interventions in the economy and the valuation of the state. We adjust this measure, however, so as to remove those components that have entered-into our aforementioned measures of anti-globalisation nationalism. The country-year conditions in our baseline estimations include *Polity IV* to measure democracy; *KOF index of de facto globalisation* to measure ex ante exposure to actual political and economic globalisation; and *unemployment rate* to capture macroeconomic economic suffering.

Findings

To present and discuss the results, we focus first on the direct effects that test Hypotheses 1a–1c and Hypothesis 2, and then on the moderating effects of party family that test Hypotheses 3 and 4. In doing so we shall focus on a range of figures that visualise the effects of how our four measures of welfare effort are associated with or affect our four measures of anti-globalisation nationalism. We relegate the full regression results for the underlying models to Appendix tables (see Online Appendices 4 and 5).

Before turning to the main results, we note that the various substantive controls perform broadly in line with expectations and past research. For instance, anti-globalisation nationalism tends to be positively associated with more generally right-wing platform position-taking and with past exposure to economic, political and social globalisation; and negatively

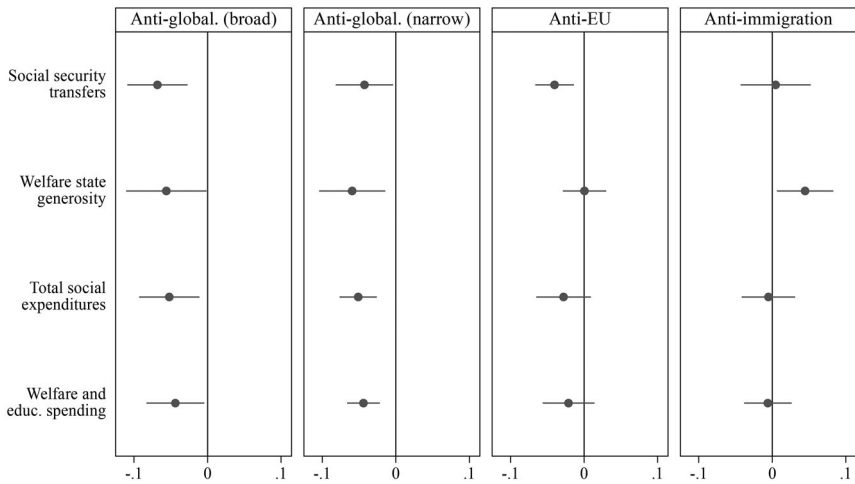


Figure 3. Direct effects of welfare effort on anti-globalisation nationalism (with 95% confidence intervals).

associated with the lagged Polity IV democracy measure. Most importantly, anti-globalisation nationalism tends to significantly differ across the six party families in line with Figure 3 above – revealing a distinct U-curve pattern of anti-globalisation nationalism, except for the more monotonic pattern for anti-immigration.

Average effects

Figure 3 summarises the key regression results of the average-effect models that test Hypotheses 1a–1c and Hypothesis 2. The figure shows how each of our four measures of anti-globalisation nationalism (given by the column name) is associated directly with each of our four measures of welfare effort (given by the row name). Such association is captured here simply by the coefficients and confidence intervals for each of the measures of welfare effort that enter our regressions in sixteen separate models, each also including the full battery of controls to isolate the possible role of welfare effort (see Online Appendix 4). Where both the coefficient and confidence interval are in negative territory, the results suggest support for the ‘embedded liberalism’ hypothesis (1a). Where the coefficient and confidence interval are positive, in contrast, this supports the ‘embedded nationalism’ hypothesis (1b), while insignificant results support the null – or canceling-out – hypothesis (1c). Our test of Hypothesis 2 is whether we observe clear difference in what predominates across the four faces of anti-globalisation nationalism.

It is clear from [Figure 3](#) that welfare effort tends to diminish most measures of anti-globalisation nationalism. All of our measures of lagged welfare effort are statistically significantly associated with both of our anti-globalisation measures (broad and narrow). With respect to anti-EU positioning, furthermore, we see that most measures of welfare effort are negatively signed (significantly so for social-security transfers and for total social expenditures), also suggesting welfare-effort dampening anti-EU position-taking. Anti-immigration is the obvious outlier, where our measures of welfare effort tend to have no significant impact, except for a significantly *positive* association for welfare state generosity. These differences across faces of anti-globalisation nationalism are not artefacts of sample coverage – recall that the anti-immigration measure is only available for 12 of the countries available for the other measures.¹⁰

On the whole, this pattern suggests support for Hypothesis 1a. The ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic tends to predominate the ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic for most measures of welfare effort and the broad measures of anti-globalisation nationalism.¹¹ The reason why an ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic predominates is hard to nail-down. Most obviously, it could express the power of basic economic interests animating the ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic rather than the more complicated political calculations undergirding the ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic (where political parties need to anticipate how their state’s social policy is affected by a given face of globalisation).

While each row of [Figure 3](#) also provides the key information relevant to testing Hypothesis 2, [Figure 4](#) provides a clearer visualisation of how differently or similarly welfare effort plays out across the different faces of anti-globalisation nationalism. [Figure 4](#) is based on the same models summarised in [Online Appendix 4](#), but here we show counterfactual predictions of how the full observed variation of a given measure of welfare effort plays out across the four measures of anti-globalisation nationalism. Here it is very clear that we have support for Hypothesis 2: Every measure of welfare effort tends to correlate less negatively and less significantly with anti-EU and with anti-immigration measures than with the other and more composite measures of anti-globalisation nationalism. In our reckoning, this suggests that the ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic looms larger, with those faces of anti-globalisation nationalism most associated with altering and potentially threatening generous welfare states. Of course, the pattern might have other explanations, for instance that ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamics are less salient with respect to anti-EU and anti-immigration positioning. But there is little theoretical or empirical basis for such interpretation. This makes heightened ‘embedded nationalism’ the most likely culprit.

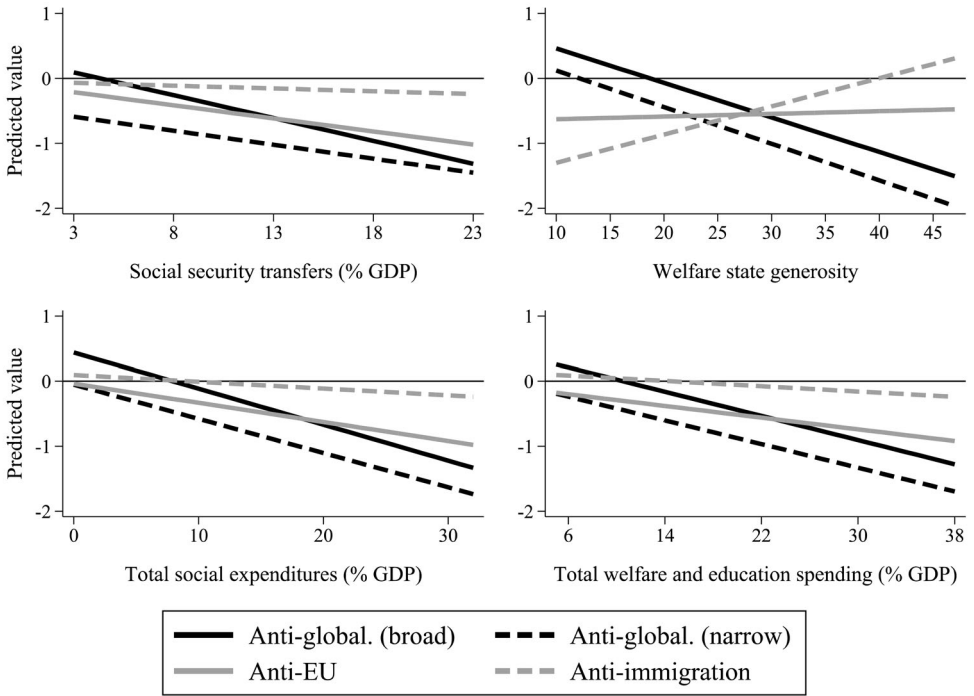


Figure 4. Counterfactual predictions of direct effects of welfare effort on anti-globalisation.

Effects by party family

Figure 5, our last figure, summarises the results testing Hypotheses 3 and 4, focussed on the differences between party families. The results are based on the same specifications referred to above, in our average-effects models, but here the sixteen models include an interaction term between welfare effort and each party family. These reveal differences across party families, differences very similar to splitting the samples by party family. Each of the sixteen panels of Figure 5 shows the marginal plot of the interactions, showing how each measure of welfare effort affects each party family's position-taking on each measure of anti-globalisation nationalism. Included are also the confidence interval capturing whether each conditional effect of welfare effort is statistically significant at the 95%-confidence level – either positively (i.e. where welfare effort spurs anti-globalisation nationalism) or negatively (i.e. where welfare effort diminishes anti-globalisation nationalism). This visualises our test of both Hypothesis 3 on how welfare effort plays out across party families, and Hypothesis 4 on how among radical-left parties welfare effort plays out differently between anti-EU and anti-immigration compared to general anti-globalisation nationalism.

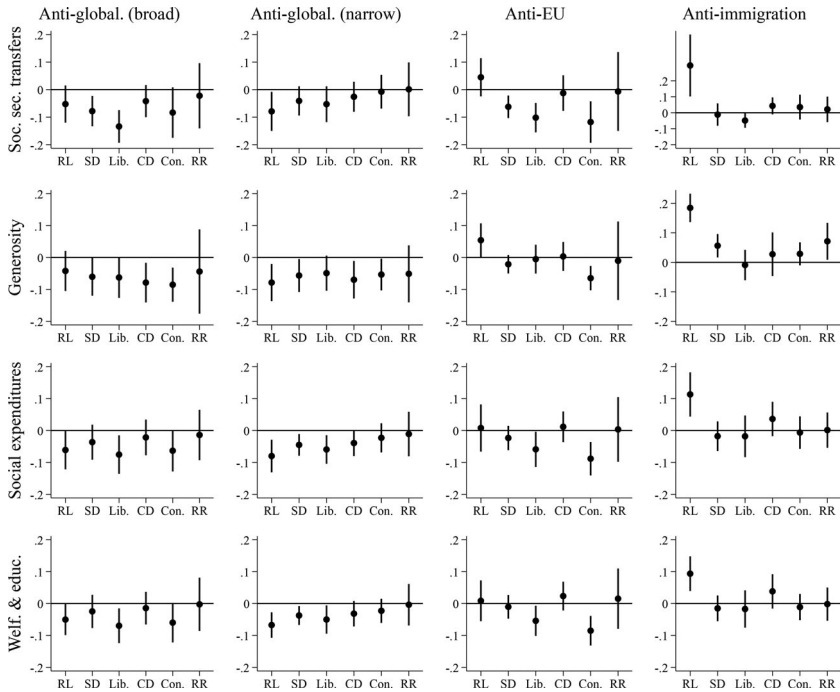


Figure 5. Marginal effects of welfare state effort on anti-globalisation, anti-EU, and anti-immigration party positions (with 95% confidence intervals).

Note: RL = Radical Left, SD = Social Democratic, Lib. = Liberal, CD = Christian Democratic, Con. = Conservative, RR = Radical Right.

Our Hypothesis 3, recall, is that welfare effort ought to play-out differently across party families in a broad U-curve pattern, more diminishing of nationalism for mainstream parties than it is for the radical extremes. The results are not so clear-cut. On the one hand, the mainstream parties tend more often to have a negative association with measures of anti-globalisation backlash (15/16 for Social Democratic, 16/16 for Liberal, 9/16 for Christian Democratic and 14/16 for Conservative parties) than do either radical left or radical right parties (8/16 for Radical Left and 9/16 for Radical Right). And these negative effects are more often statistically significant for mainstream than for radical parties (6/16 for Social Democratic, 10/16 for Liberal, 3/16 for Christian Democratic and 6/16 for Conservative parties, compared to 5/16 for Radical Left and 0/16 for Radical Right parties). On the other hand, there is enough volatility across party families, and particularly for radical left parties, that one cannot speak of a consistent U-curve obtaining. Still, the pattern supports our that ‘embedded liberalism’ looms larger and ‘embedded nationalism’ smaller for mainstream than for radical parties.

Figure 5 also harbours a test of our last Hypothesis 4, that the more ‘embedded nationalist’ dynamic for anti-EU and anti-immigration faces of

nationalism should be starker among radical-left than other parties. This does indeed emerge. Radical left parties, often enough, respond to more generous welfare effort by dampening their anti-globalisation nationalism. But they are alone among all party families in responding to greater welfare effort with *increased* anti-EU and anti-immigrant position-taking. This response is statistically significant in 5 of the 8 models.

Our interpretation, in line with our arguments above, is that particularly radical left parties are torn between their ‘embedded liberal’ and ‘embedded nationalist’ responses to more generous welfare effort. For aspects of globalisation involving less direct pressures on generous welfare states – as obtains for our anti-globalisation (narrow) measure – we see radical left parties respond more with ‘embedded liberalism’ than with ‘embedded nationalism’. However, it is precisely the opposite with respect to the two faces of anti-globalisation nationalism, anti-EU-integration and anti-immigration, that involve reigning-in possible constraints on generous welfare states. The less-significant effects for anti-EU positions might reflect many other factors, such as a polity’s more complex and country-specific relationships with the EU. However, we interpret the basic pattern as corroboration of Hypothesis 4.

All of the patterns reported in [Figures 3–5](#) hold up to many sensitivity and robustness tests. First, they hold up to alternative specifications of the basic dataset – for instance, to a version of the data without linear interpolation between election-years or focussing on common baselines of country-years despite varying coverage across welfare-effort measures. Second, the results also hold up to alternative specifications of anti-globalisation nationalism. This applies not just the full composite of anti-globalisation (broad) plus anti-immigration as alluded to above, but also alternative combinations such as anti-global (medium) that includes other mixes of internationalism, protectionism, nationalism and anti-EU positions. And it applies to other specifications of looking at separate or combining positive and negative statements in party platforms. Third, they also hold up to other specifications of welfare-state effort, including other general spending measures (e.g. spending per unemployed person or head of population; or the BTI social safety net codings), or measures focussed on transfers as opposed to services – suggesting that the passive and visible face of welfare state effort have the strongest implications (results not shown but available upon request). Fourth, the results hold up to different controls, either fewer controls (e.g. dropping country dummies to focus on between- rather than within-country effects); or additional controls, such as a party’s welfare chauvinism or a country’s macro-economic position (growth, debt, deindustrialization). Fifth and finally, the results hold with alternative estimators, including jack-knifing of standard errors or

full jack-knife analysis, or to random intercept multi-level models (with countries as level 2 variables).

Conclusion

This study has explored the possibility that welfare state effort in democratic polities tends to have offsetting effects for the positioning of political parties regarding anti-globalisation nationalism. On the one hand, we expect and find that under many circumstances, social policy may well unleash an ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic that offers mitigation of economic insecurities related to economic and political globalisation and in turn diminishes anti-globalisation nationalism of parties. On the other hand, social policy effort may also unleash an ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamic that awakens a defensive worry by political parties that political and economic globalisation might threaten generous welfare states. We find that on average – across various measures of welfare effort and various measures of anti-globalisation nationalism across various party families – the ‘embedded liberalism’ dynamic tends to predominate.

More importantly, however, we also find support for our expectations about the particular circumstances that can moderate the predominance of ‘embedded liberalism’ versus ‘embedded nationalism’ dynamics. Particularly, we find that various measures of welfare effort do tend to follow a marginally more ‘embedded nationalist’ and less ‘embedded liberal’ dynamic on issues of EU-related and immigration-related globalisation – as compared to more general issues of political-economic globalisation. We also find that settings with more generous welfare effort are more likely to diminish and less likely to spur anti-globalisation nationalism among mainstream parties than among radical parties of the left and right. And most starkly, we find that welfare effort plays out particularly differently across these issues for radical left parties, which tend to more strongly embrace anti-EU and anti-immigration stances in more generous welfare settings but tend also to more strongly eschew general anti-globalisation nationalism when the globalisation in question is less constraining of existing national welfare arrangements. Altogether, we see these as patterns that begin to sort out the offsetting and uneven ‘embedded liberalism’ and ‘embedded nationalism’ effects of social policy for anti-globalisation nationalism.

We make these inferences conscious of the preliminary character of the evidence we have marshalled. We await more and better measures of welfare effort and anti-globalisation nationalism. This can be found in other measures of party manifestos and positioning, also in other country-years than those in our study. With existing data, further, we can imagine a refinement and extension of the disentangling of ‘embedded

liberalism' and 'embedded nationalism' dynamics. This could involve more detailed analysis of party positioning and statements and legislative behaviour. And it can involve looking at which sub-features of welfare state effort play out for backlash or considering how welfare state effort interacts with other macro-political economic conditions. More broadly, future work should extend study of how social policy development's implications for party-positioning plays-out for actual legislative and regulatory policy development. And more deeply, future work can go beyond broad quantitative associations in history to develop research designs that, if narrower in empirical sweep, allow more refined causal identification. In the meantime, we submit that we have unearthed clearer conceptual and empirical bases for the judgement that welfare states have significant but also uneven implications for anti-globalisation nationalism.

Notes

1. The measure is based on coding of data from the Manifesto Project Database (MPD), discussed in detail below. The countries included for the Figure are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States. The party families, also discussed below, are Radical Left, Social Democratic, Liberal, Christian Democratic, Conservative, Radical Right, and Other (miscellaneous).
2. See Appendix 1 for a full description of these four measures.
3. For instance, the Chapel Hill Election Survey (CHES) and the MPD-based Parties' Immigration and Integration Positions Dataset (PImpPo) cover only the period starting in 1999. We do, however, replicate our baseline results using both databases in our robustness tests.
4. For instance, country-year averages of our key encompassing measures of party positioning – *Anti-globalization Nationalism (broad)* and *Anti-globalization Nationalism (narrow)* – tend to be associated significantly and negatively with an encompassing measure of actual policy: the *KOF Index of De Jure Political and Economic Globalization*. See Table A1.1 in Appendix 1 for a summary of these results.
5. This contrasts the image of rising dispersion suggested by Figure 1, reflecting its focus on the main party families. That highlighted the increasing anti-globalization nationalism of radical right parties relative to other party families.
6. This snapshot excludes, hence, miscellaneous parties not in these key party families.
7. For the party-family coding of parties, see the MPD codebook: https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/download/data/2020b/codebooks/codebook_MPDataset_MPDS2020b.pdf.
8. For the list of parties so-coded, see: <https://populistorg.files.wordpress.com/2020/02/01-thepopulist.pdf>.

9. In robustness tests we replicate the baseline results using other specifications of welfare spending, for instance spending per head of the population or as a share of the unemployed.
10. The negative associations we see for these latter measures of anti-globalization nationalism are not appreciably changed should we focus on the same 12 European polities as for the anti-immigration estimation.
11. This pattern, incidentally, also applies modestly even to a measure of anti-globalization nationalism that combines our anti-globalization and anti-immigration measures, available for 12 countries (see Appendix 4).

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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