

Globalization and Promissory Representation*

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Abstract

The fulfillment of election promises is a key element of representative democracy. The idea of promissory representation holds that political parties make promises to voters during election campaigns and generally keep those promises after elections if they have the opportunity to do so. Specific campaign promises let voters know where parties stand on issues, and voters' assessments of governing parties' past records of pledge fulfillment is one way in which parties are held to account. Despite the centrality of promise keeping to representation, we know little about how it is affected by economic globalization, which is one of the defining characteristics of the modern world. We argue that globalization reduces governing parties' ability to keep their campaign promises. International economic integration increases uncertainty about the feasibility of promises, imposes legal constraints in the form of international commitments that may impede promise keeping in unexpected ways, and empowers market actors that lobby governments when promises are against their business interests. We test the empirical implications of our theory with a mixed-methods approach that integrates a large-n quantitative comparative analysis of pledge fulfillment and a case study that traces the underlying causal mechanisms of the theory. The findings indicate that economic internationalization exerts a large negative effect on the likelihood of pledge fulfillment in a broad range of contexts and that the hypothesized mechanisms are clearly observable in the detailed case study. These findings have important implications for democratic representation in a highly globalized world.

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Representative democracy is a system in which there is a “necessary correspondence between acts of governance and the equally weighted interests of citizens with respect to those acts” (Saward, 1998, 51). Political parties play a vital mediating role in achieving congruence between public sentiment and public policies according to prominent accounts of contemporary mass democracy (Dahl, 1956; Downs, 1957). The idea of promissory representation, variants of which are found in the responsible party model and the mandate theory of democracy, is that this mediating role consists of parties making promises to voters during election campaigns and then keeping those promises after elections if the election results grant them sufficient authority to do so (Mansbridge, 2003, 515). According to popular understanding of how democracy works, parties that win the popular vote have a mandate to keep their campaign promises. Campaign promises impose political constraints by creating a common understanding of the policies that governments should pursue if conditions do not change in ways that make the implementation of the promise infeasible (Manin, 1997; Stokes, 2001). Governing parties may break some promises for good reasons, but consistent promise breaking has the potential to undermine parties’ reputations and the legitimacy of democracy.

Given the prominence of promise making and keeping to the theory and practice of representation, large bodies of comparative research describe and explain patterns of promise keeping. These studies generally look inward toward domestic political institutions to explain different levels of promise keeping, and have not considered the impact of economic globalization as we do here (Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge, 1994; McDonald and Budge, 2005; Thomson and Costello, 2016; Naurin, Royed and Thomson, 2019).¹ By examining the impact of globalization on patterns of pledge fulfillment, this study is relevant to the broader theoretical debate about the impact of globalization on the quality of democracy, a debate that is highly polarized. Dahl (1999) argues that internationalization undermines democracy by transferring power to distant international elites. Similarly, Rodrik (2012) coined the globalization ‘trilemma,’ according to which international integration, democracy and strong states cannot thrive simultaneously. By contrast, Keohane, Macedo and Moravcsik (2009) argue that internationalization in the form of multilateral institutions can strengthen democracy by expanding national governments’ capacity to serve citizens. These broader debates teach us about the range of possible implications of internationalization for democracy. However, few comparative studies have focused in detail on the key mechanisms of representative democracy such as promise keeping.²

There are strong theoretical reasons to expect that economic internationalization constrains parties’ capacity to fulfill their election pledges if they hold executive power after the elections. Governing parties in countries that are highly internationalized face greater uncertainty about the economic business cycle. They are also bound by international agreements that may make some promises hard to keep. In addition, economic internationalization strengthens the power of domestic and foreign economic actors who may lobby against the fulfillment of certain pledges that go against their interests. For instance, the French Socialist Party won the 1981 election on promises of nationalization and redistribution, but broke these promises, instead pursuing liberal economic policies that appealed more to international financiers than ordinary citizens (Hellwig, 2015, 147). In the present study, we examine the extent to which the negative impact of globalization is evident in a very broad range of election pledges. We examine the fulfillment of thousands of election pledges made by prospective governing parties in 12 countries prior to the formation of 57 governments that were integrated in the global economy to varying extents. We complement this quantitative analysis by exploring one case in detail, that of the UK Conservative Party’s now infamous pledge in 2010 to cut net migration to the UK to under 100,000. The case is typical of the relationship in our quantitative analysis and allows us to trace the underlying causal mechanisms using elite interviews and primary and secondary documents. The combined findings provide strong support for the negative impact of globalization on pledge fulfillment, thereby offering new insights on the fate of representative democracy in the age of globalization.

¹We use the terms “globalization” and “economic integration” interchangeably as we are most interested in the implications of the extent to which countries’ national economies are integrated into the global economic system.

²Hellwig and Samuels (2007), Ezrow and Hellwig (2014) and Hellwig (2015) study the effects of globalization on democratic accountability.

Globalization and the Politics of Election Pledges

We argue that the integration of countries into the global economy has a profound and negative effect on the ability of parties to fulfill their election pledges when they hold executive power after elections. We define globalization as the extent to which the national economy is integrated into the international system in terms of significant flows of trade in goods and services, large inward and outward investment flows, national regulations that facilitate free movements, and extensive international commitments in the form of trade agreements. These are aspects of broader patterns of globalization that have been identified as constraints on national policymakers (Rodrik, 2012; Ezrow and Hellwig, 2014).³

An election pledge is a “statement committing a party to one specific action or outcome that can be clearly determined to have occurred or not” (Royed, 1996, 79). Parties’ election manifestos or platforms contain many statements that can be considered election pledges according to this definition. In contrast to parties’ use of more general rhetoric and support for general principles, election pledges offer clear information about where parties stand on specific policy issues. Parties’ election pledges can be understood as direct appeals to voters. According to the Downsian model of party competition (Downs, 1957), which is a succinct formalization of the responsible party model, office-seeking parties take clear policy positions in order to appeal to policy-seeking voters, who vote for the party that takes positions closest to their (the voters’) preferences. Contemporary research based on the spatial model follows the same fundamental logic of parties taking distinct positions from each other in order to appeal to policy-seeking voters. The spatial model does not specify the level of detail at which parties formulate their policy stances to appeal to voters. However, “if you assume that voters are likely to have doubts about the integrity of politicians, parties would benefit from making plans quite specific” (Naurin, Royed and Thomson, 2019, 11). Here, election pledges are understood as ways in which parties give specific meaning to the abstract principles they support. The assumption of office-seeking parties has been criticized by pointing out that parties are historical entities rooted in particular societal cleavages, such as the division between church and state, and processes of industrialization (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967, 47). Parties’ identities are associated with distinct policies, which means that parties receive intrinsic rewards from pursuing and implementing those policies. This policy-seeking motivation is another reason why parties formulate specific pledges.

Comparative research on election pledges provides evidence that election pledges are concrete manifestations of differences among parties in the principles they support. Two findings, which are based on a study of over 20,000 pledges made by parties during 57 election campaigns in 12 democracies, are particularly relevant in this respect. First, parties generally make large numbers of pledges and do so in a broad range of contexts. In 160 election programs (manifestos or platforms) from parties on which comparable data are available, parties made on average 111 election pledges in each (s.d.=69.19). There are no marked differences in the frequency of pledge making between parties based on institutional context, incumbency status, or ideology (Naurin, Royed and Thomson, 2019, 44). Second, the types of pledges that parties make reflect their ideological differences. While the precise form and strength of the left-right dimension differs across countries and time periods, a prominent left-right dimension of competition generally distinguishes between left-wing parties, which support larger government programs and higher spending and taxes, and right-wing parties, which support smaller government programs and lower spending and taxes (Klingemann et al., 2006).

While acknowledging the centrality of promise keeping to canonical theoretical accounts of representation and the practice of democracy, liberal democratic theorists critique the idea that there is a normative reason to desire high levels of promise keeping at all times (Riker, 1982; Manin, 1997). Such critiques portray the idea of promissory representation as common sense, but flawed and even populist. Governing parties claim to hold clear mandates to enact the details of their platforms, but few voters have read these documents, and many governing parties gained control the executive based on the support of a minority of the electorate. The idea of a mandate is further complicated in coalition systems, where parties’ control over executive power is as much a result of their ability to negotiate with coalition partners as it is of election results. Moreover, circumstances may change between the election campaign and the next governing period in ways that leave campaign promises obsolete and fulfillment unfeasible or undesirable. Despite these objections, the idea of promissory representation looms large in the practice of representation. The ability of governments to fulfill their election pledges serves as a benchmark for voters to judge performance and to understand whether

³Mosley (2000, 2003) shows that governments retain room to maneuver in financially integrated markets.

their preferred policies (which partly guided them in their vote choice) were indeed implemented. Voters pay attention to pledge fulfillment and punish governments for not keeping their promises (Naurin and Oscarsson, 2017; Naurin, Soroka and Markwat, 2019; Cruz et al., 2019; Matthiess, 2020). Broken promises not only hurt parties' reelection prospects, but also undermine public confidence in democracy (Stokes, 2001; Duval, 2019). As Schedler (1998, 195) writes:

If after election day government officials do whatever they want, regardless of any prior campaign commitments, they ridicule the very notion of democracy as well. If electoral results do not produce any policy consequences, elections become mere devices to legitimate arbitrariness and contingency, being mechanisms to replace a random one despotic ruler with another.

Pledges are politically constraining. Parties that hold executive power have strong incentives to fulfill the promises they made during campaigns or at least to explain why fulfillment is no longer desirable or appropriate. The presence of these incentives is confirmed by the evidence that governing parties generally attempt to and often succeed in fulfilling many of their election pledges (Naurin, Royed and Thomson, 2019).

We expect globalization to exert a negative effect on the capacity of parties to fulfill their election pledges when they hold executive office after the elections. Internationalization reduces governments' room to maneuver at the domestic level on three critical dimensions that affect pledge fulfillment. First, parties in highly internationalized contexts face greater uncertainty about economic business cycles when they formulate election pledges (Clark et al., 1998; Kayser, 2005). Governments face pressures to pursue policies that respond to fluctuating global business cycles and maintain international competitiveness. Jahn (2006, 408) observes that during the period of increased globalization, "international factors became a major driving factor for policy orientation and domestic factors became subordinated to them." Global economic disruptions, such as economic or financial crises, can unexpectedly and profoundly affect countries that are deeply integrated into the international system. Consequently, policies that were considered to be appropriate during the election campaign appear inappropriate or infeasible later on. Economic disruptions may lead to unexpected fiscal shortfalls, which impede the fulfillment of pledges to expand programs and also to cut taxes. One of the most famous broken promises in U.S. history—George H. W. Bush's promise "read my lips, no new taxes"—was made based on the (incorrect) assumption that the high growth rates of the 1980s would continue during his term in office; the unexpected economic recession in 1990 forced Bush to break his promise in order to address the significant increase in the federal budget deficit.

Second, these constraints are exacerbated by international commitments that governments make in order to reap the benefits of international economic integration. Most countries have signed preferential trade agreements and bilateral investment treaties, and they have formed or acceded to international organizations to cooperate on economic issues such as free trade. These agreements often stipulate that governments pursue particular policies and maintain low or minimum levels of protection, and governments are generally committed to complying with these agreements. Many of these agreements include provisions for monitoring of state behavior and sanctioning non-compliance. Such agreements impose constraints on pledge fulfillment. It is often not clear whether particular domestic policies, which may be promised in election pledges, are consistent with international law until governments attempt to implement these policies. Governments have been repeatedly taken to international courts by other governments and private companies for domestic policies related to health, the environment, and labor standards because they potentially violate international trade law.

Third, globalization shapes the sets of actors that try to influence national governments and the preferences of those actors. These include national and international actors who gain from globalization. Many of these are market actors, such as national export-oriented firms that thrive on their ability to export their products and services to other countries. Other companies benefit from access to cheap and skilled overseas labor owing to increasing international migration. These domestic actors pressure governments to implement policies that ensure their continued access to the benefits of globalization, even if it means that governing parties break election promises. In addition, governments in internationalized contexts must pay more attention to the interests of international economic elites such as multinational corporations and financial actors, that pressure governments to pursue policies favoring long-term stability and market exchange. Sassen (1996, 54) argues that national governments are accountable to a "global, cross-border economic electorate" consisting of "inflation-obsessed bondholders," rather than to citizens.

Governing parties respond to these market elites because they lobby the government directly to pursue their preferred policies and can threaten to reduce their economic activities in the country if the government does not pursue economic policies that make it competitive with other markets. The influence of market actors limits the ability of governing parties to fulfill their election pledges to the extent that market actors' interests diverge from the policy preferences of citizens to whom election pledges are primarily directed. There is strong evidence that the policy preferences of market actors and citizens differ significantly (Mosley, 2003; Broz, Frieden and Weymouth, 2008; Hellwig, 2015). Ezrow and Hellwig (2014) find evidence of an ideological gap between citizens and economic elites when it comes to issues that can be placed on a left-right ideological continuum. Whereas citizens are more likely to favor a social model and public spending (though with variation across countries), market actors have strong preferences for lower taxes, fewer regulations, and greater economic exchange over social policies and public spending.

In sum, there are strong theoretical arguments to suppose that globalization affects promissory representation with respect to pledge fulfillment. Internationalization increases uncertainty about the feasibility of pledge fulfillment, imposes legal constraints in the form of international commitments that may impede pledge fulfillment in unexpected ways, and empowers market actors that lobby governments when the fulfillment of election pledges is against their business interests. We expect to observe that *political parties that hold executive power after elections are less likely to fulfill their election pledges in countries and time periods in which governments are more exposed to globalization.*

The analyses explore a range of conditions under which the expected negative effect of globalization on pledge fulfillment may be stronger or weaker. A widespread view is that globalization forces all countries to pursue broadly the same neoliberal agenda of lowering taxes, deregulating the economy and hollowing out social services. This view implies that to the extent that election pledges challenge neoliberal economic orthodoxy, globalization will have a negative effect on pledge fulfillment, but to the extent that pledges conform to this orthodoxy, more integration may positively affect pledge fulfillment.

This widespread view is worth exploring, but it is not our argument. Instead, our point of departure is that there are marked differences among established democracies that are highly internationalized with respect to the ways in which they manage their economies and welfare regimes. These different national approaches to managing the risks associated with globalization have been theorized in the Varieties of Capitalism (VoC) literature (Hall and Soskice, 2001). Liberal Market Economies (LMEs) are said to have a comparative advantage in radical innovation, and this is sustained by deregulated labor markets, modestly sized welfare states and relatively low levels of taxation. In Coordinated Market Economies (CMEs), comparative advantage lies in specific skills and high-quality production, which are sustained by institutionalized cooperation between private and governmental stakeholders, highly regulated labor markets, higher taxes and generous welfare states. In the analysis, we explore whether the impact of internationalization on pledge fulfillment varies significantly across different types of systems (LMEs, CMEs and mixed systems).

Similarly, we explore whether the effect of globalization on pledge fulfillment differs according to the ideological positions of the parties that made them or according to the types of pledges made. Does internationalization have a more negative effect on the fulfillment of pledges made by left-wing parties than right-wing parties? Does internationalization have a more negative effect on the fulfillment of pledges to expand programs than to cut taxes and programs? The view that globalization leads countries to converge toward a neoliberal economic model suggests an affirmative answer to these questions. While this is a plausible view, we expect the empirical pattern to be more varied. In our view, internationalization reduces the capacity of governing parties to fulfill their pledges due to the uncertainty it brings with respect to the feasibility of fulfilling pledges due to economic conditions, compatibility with international commitments, and the interests of powerful market actors. Each of these sources of uncertainty may reduce the capacity of governments to fulfill typical "center-right" pledges as well as "left-wing" pledges. For instance, fiscal shortfalls may reduce the feasibility of tax cuts. International laws, such as the minimum standards often contained in EU laws, impose legal constraints on the extent to which governing parties can lower standards.

Research Design

The dataset we use for the quantitative analyses is from the Comparative Party Pledges Project (CPPP) (Thomson et al., 2017; Naurin, Royed and Thomson, 2019). The dataset includes information on over

20,000 election pledges made by parties in 12 countries prior to the formation of 57 governments. The countries covered are Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the UK, the United States. The time period ranges from the 1970s to the 2010s, with the data on some countries covering longer time periods than others. In the main part of the analyses we focus on the fulfillment of 7,770 pledges made by parties that went on to hold executive power after the elections. Some of the analyses include more pledges, including those made by parties that did not hold executive power after the elections, to examine whether globalization affects the number and types of pledges that parties make. The CPPP builds on a long tradition of research on specific campaign promises that typically focused on single-country case studies (Barrett, 1960; Pomper and Lederman, 1980). The data collection procedure involves human coding of party platforms, manifestos, or equivalent campaign materials to identify statements that qualify as election pledges.

Researchers then gathered evidence to assess fulfillment, categorizing pledges as unfulfilled, partially fulfilled or fully fulfilled. A pledge is considered partially fulfilled if some action is taken in the direction of the promise that falls short of full fulfillment, such as reducing a tax rate from 25 to 23 percent when a cut to 20 percent was promised. The evidence gathered to assess fulfillment depends on the substance of what was promised, including changes to legislation, budget allocations, or certain socioeconomic outcomes.⁴ The dataset provides evidence of significant variation across governments in the extent to which governing parties fulfilled their election pledges, which is our dependent variable. Relatively high levels of pledge fulfillment are found in most single-party executives including those in the United Kingdom, Sweden and Portugal. Parties that formed single-party governments in the UK fulfilled 86 percent of their pledges at least partially. Lower levels of pledge fulfillment are found in coalition governments, such as those found in the Netherlands, Germany and Austria. Dutch parties that entered governing coalitions fulfilled 57 percent of their pledges partially or fully. Appendix A summarizes the cases covered by listing the 57 governments that took office after elections in which the pledges were made.

The data include cases where parties and governments were exposed to very different levels of globalization, which is our key explanatory variable. We add measures of exposure to *Globalization* to the CPPP data set using the authoritative KOF Globalization Index (Dreher, 2006; Gygli et al., 2019). We use the KOF Economic Globalization Index, which combines information on *de facto* and *de jure* trade and financial globalization, including trade in goods and services, trade regulations, tariffs and agreements, financial direct investment, investment restrictions and capital account openness. This is the most appropriate index to use given our theory’s focus on economic integration and the associated institutional constraints. The findings are robust to related measures of globalization provided by the KOF Institute, as well as to trade as a percentage of GDP as an alternative measure of international integration (Appendix I). The cases studied are all highly developed trading economies, and as such exposed to the international economy to a considerable extent. However, there are marked differences in the relative levels of exposure to economic globalization. In our main analyses, the cases have KOF Economic Globalization Index values ranging from 40 to 91 (mean=73.63; s.d.=11.69). The CPPP data on election pledges include pledges made in contexts relatively insulated from globalization, such as the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as contexts that highly exposed, such as Ireland in the late 1990s and 2000s. We transform the KOF Index into z-scores to simplify the interpretation of the coefficients.

The cases also differ markedly in the ways in which national elites respond to the risks associated with globalization and therefore offer different contexts in which to explore the applicability of our expectations. In terms of the Varieties of Capitalism (VoC) framework, the cases include examples of each of the three types. Of the countries included in the dataset, Canada, the UK, the US and Ireland have been described as LMEs. Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden have been identified as CMEs. The remaining countries in our sample—Bulgaria, Italy, Portugal, and Spain—have been described as mixed systems, in that their institutional and policy arrangements are less coherent. While analysts debate the extent to which several of these countries fit the categories described by the VoC framework, the countries included provide a range of different contexts in which to examine the effects of internationalization on election pledges.

To measure parties’ ideological positions, we rely on the widely used left-right positions from the Manifesto

⁴The analyses of pledge fulfillment focus on a dichotomous measure that distinguishes between pledges that were “unfulfilled” and pledges that were either “partially” or “fully” fulfilled. This approach aligns with practices in previous research. It is also appropriate given that the possibility of a pledge being partially fulfilled arguably depends partly on the way in which the pledge itself is formulated.

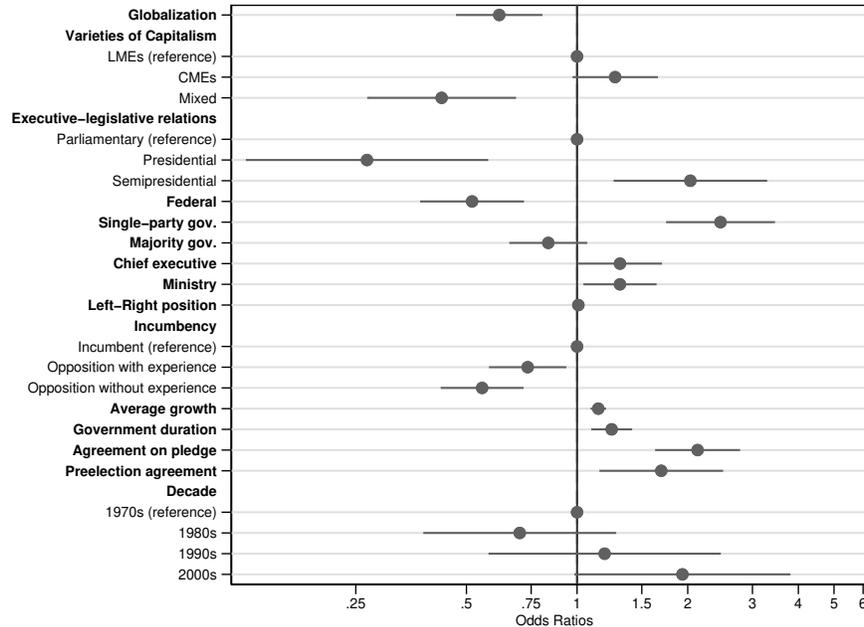


Figure 1: *Globalization* and the Fulfillment of Election Pledges. The graph depicts odd ratios for each variable (dots) together with their 95% confidence intervals (lines). Coefficients (odds ratios) are from a logit model of *Pledge Fulfillment* ($n=7,770$). Logged scale. Robust standard errors clustered by manifesto. Full model in Appendix C).

Project (Volkens et al., 2019), the so-called RILE scores, which are also derived from parties' election manifestos or platforms. These measures of parties' left-right positions are based on the Manifesto Project's established thematic coding scheme, into which each sentence or quasi-sentence of the manifesto is allocated to a thematic category. The left-right score of each manifesto is based on the proportion of text it devotes to themes considered right-wing themes minus the proportion of text it devotes to themes considered left-wing themes. We use the RILE scores to examine whether the effect of internationalization on pledge fulfillment depends on the ideology of the party that made the pledges, and also to explore whether left and right-wing parties make different numbers and types of pledges. One of the advantages of the Manifesto Project's measures is that they provide estimates of parties' ideological positions at the same time points as our observations of election pledges.

Comparative Analysis

To analyze the impact of *Globalization* on *Pledge Fulfillment*, we estimate a logit model on the 7,770 pledges made by parties that went on to hold executive power after the elections at which they made these pledges (Thomson et al., 2017). This includes all 12 countries in the CPPP data set. The dichotomous dependent variable *Pledge Fulfillment* indicates whether the pledge was unfulfilled (0) or partially/fully fulfilled (1). The exponentiated coefficients from the model depicted in Figure 1 summarize the effects of a range of explanatory variables that have been examined in previous studies of pledge fulfillment.⁵

Globalization has a strong and robust negative association with the likelihood of pledge fulfillment. The exponentiated coefficient, which can be interpreted as an odds ratio, associated with *Globalization* is below 1 and highly significant ($eb=.61$; $p=.00$), which means that a one standard deviation increase in the level

⁵The main model we present in Figure 1 includes the control variables we consider to be most theoretically relevant. We describe the operationalization of all variables and present descriptive statistics in Appendix B. The details of this model with numerical estimates are reported in Appendix C. Previous analyses of this dataset included several additional control variables, which we also include in an expanded model in Appendix D. We present estimations with country fixed effects in Appendix J.

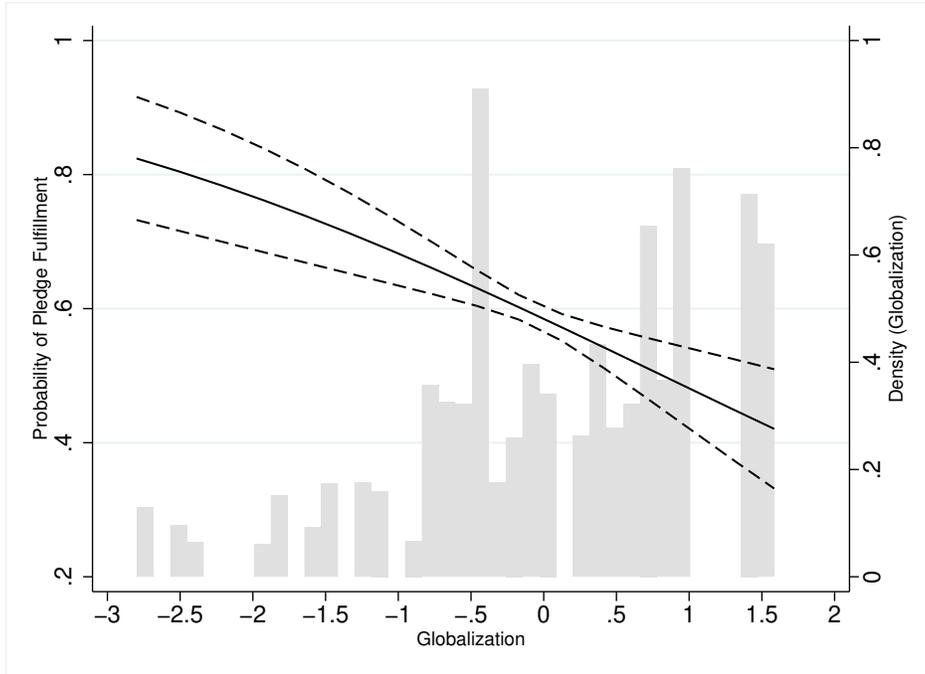


Figure 2: Predicted Probabilities of *Pledge Fulfillment* at Different Levels of *Globalization*. The graph depicts the predicted probabilities (dots) of pledge fulfillment with their 95% confidence intervals holding other explanatory variables at their mean values. The gray bars represent the histogram for *Globalization*.

of *Globalization* is associated with a decrease of 39 percent in the odds that a pledge is fulfilled. The large size of the effect is clearly evident when the effect is described in terms of expected probabilities of *Pledge Fulfillment* at different levels of this explanatory variable (Figure 2). At relatively low levels of *Globalization*, corresponding to one standard deviation below the average, the probability of pledge fulfillment is 0.68 (95% CI .63; .73). By contrast, at relatively high levels of *Globalization* corresponding to one standard deviation above the average, the probability of pledge fulfillment is 0.48 (95% CI .42; .54). This key finding on the negative effect of *Globalization* does not depend on the inclusion of the relatively internationalized cases with values around 1.5 standard deviations above the average, which can be seen in Figure 2. The coefficient associated with *Globalization* is almost identical when excluding these cases (it remains at $\beta = .61$; $p = .00$).

To examine the consistency of the effect of *Globalization* across different Varieties of Capitalism, we examined LMEs, CMEs and mixed systems separately. Figure 3 shows that the direction of the effect of globalization on pledge fulfillment is negative in all three sets of cases.⁶ However, it appears to be weakest in LMEs and strongest in the CMEs. This finding is tentative given the small numbers of countries covered. Moreover, a model with interaction terms between VoC system and *Globalization*, which is presented in Appendix E, is only partially consistent with the separate analyses of cases divided by VoC type. The interaction model also indicates that the effect of *Globalization* in CMEs is not significantly different from the effect in LMEs. It suggests that the negative effect of integration on fulfillment is largest in mixed systems.

We also considered whether the effect of *Globalization* differs depending on the ideological positions of the parties that made the pledges. We estimated the model with an interaction term between *Globalization* and *Partisan Left-Right Ideology*. The main finding is that *Globalization* has a significant and negative association with *Pledge Fulfillment* for parties on the left and the right, as shown in Figure 3.⁷ For all left-wing parties and for right-wing parties with ideology scores up to 1.5 standard deviations above the mean observed ideology score, which means “to the right of the mean,” *Globalization* has a significant negative effect on

⁶Full models are reported in Appendix E.

⁷Full models are reported in Appendix F.

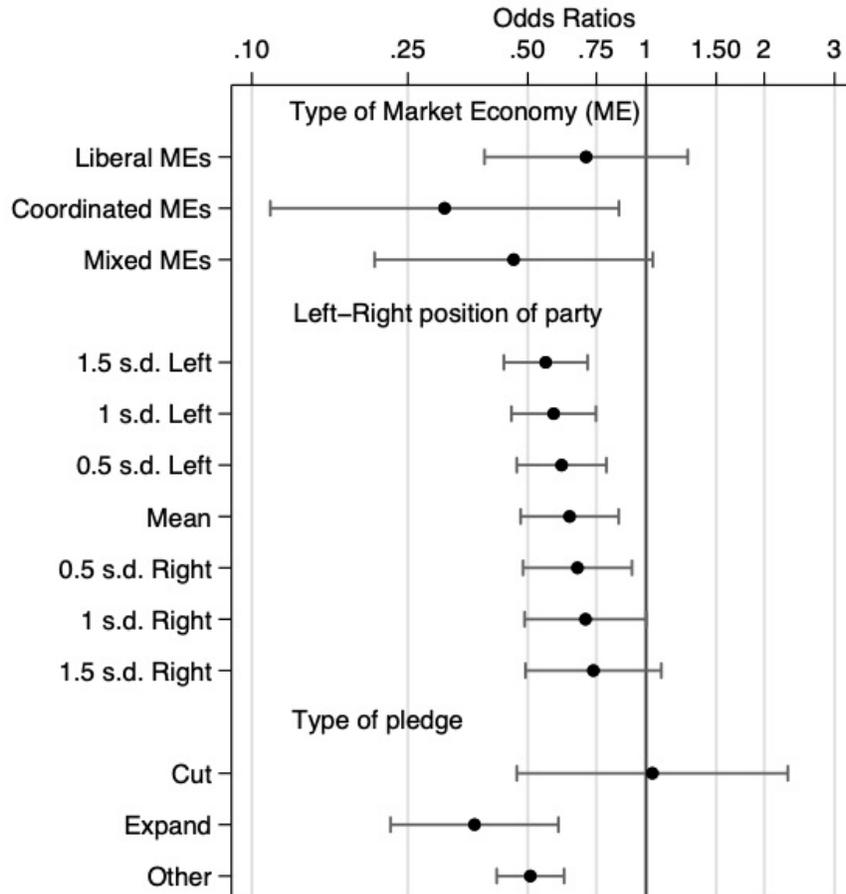


Figure 3: Marginal Effects of *Globalization* on *Pledge Fulfillment* under Different Conditions. Logged Scale. The dots present odds ratios together with their 95% confidence intervals. The estimated effects of *Globalization* by the type of market economy are estimated in three separate models, one for each type of market economy (Appendix E). The estimated effects of *Globalization* by the left-right position of the party are estimated in a model with an interaction between economic *Globalization* and *Partisan Left-Right Ideology* (Appendix F). The estimated effects of *Globalization* by type of pledge are estimated in three separate logit models, one for each type of pledge (Appendix G).

pledge fulfillment. At the same time, there is a significant interaction between *Globalization* and *Partisan Left-Right Ideology*, which indicates that *Globalization* has a weaker negative effect on pledge fulfillment for right-wing parties than left-wing parties. The coefficient associated with *Globalization* becomes insignificant for parties with *Partisan Left-Right Ideology* scores that are 1.5 standard deviations above the observed mean. These are relatively right-wing, if not necessarily “extreme right-wing” parties and account for a small but important proportion of our observations; a total of 762 of the 7,770 pledges were made by such parties. The parties concerned are the U.S. Republicans in 1984 and 1988, the UK Conservatives in 1983, 1987 and 1992, the German CDU/CSU in 2005, and the Conservative Party of Canada in 2011. The findings suggest that the fulfillment of these parties’ pledges is not significantly affected by their country’s exposure to international markets.

The effect of *Globalization* could also vary by the type of the pledge. We examined 4,444 pledges made by parties in 48 manifestos from six countries (Bulgaria, Canada, Ireland, Sweden, the US, and the UK), for which a detailed categorization of pledge type is available. Each of the pledges was categorized according to whether it involved cutting taxes, cutting government programs, raising taxes, expanding government programs, or an “other” category of promise. The “other” category consists mainly of pledges to change rules and regulations. Pledges to cut taxes, of which there are many, and to cut programs, of which there are few, are typical economically liberal pledges. We group these pledges together to examine whether the proportion of pledges that parties make to cut taxes or programs is related to *Globalization*. The effects of *Globalization* on the fulfillment of different types of pledges are depicted in Figure 3.⁸ The odds ratio associated with *Globalization* is insignificant for pledges to cut taxes and programs (n=422), but is below 1 and significant for “expansionary pledges” (pledges to expand programs and raise taxes; n=1,412) and for “other” types of pledges (n=2,610). These findings indicate that *Globalization* has no discernible effect on the fulfillment of cut pledges, but has negative effects on the fulfillment of expansionary and other types of pledges.

The significant and negative impact of *Globalization* on the fulfillment of expansionary and other types of pledges is noteworthy, because it indicates that parties are unlikely to make more modest pledges in globalized contexts knowing that their capacity to fulfill pledges in those contexts is reduced. One could have argued that international integration leads to fewer pledges or to more modest pledges that are more easily fulfilled. This would mitigate any observable effect of globalization on pledge fulfillment. To the extent that this happens, any observable negative effects of globalization on pledge fulfillment are conservative estimates of the true size of the effect.

Empirically, we find that levels of international economic integration have no effect on the numbers of pledges that parties make and only a marginal effect on the types of pledges that parties make. Moreover, parties’ left-right ideological positions are a more important predictor for pledge-making. We examined the 160 manifestos from ten countries on which we have comparable data on the frequency of pledges made by each party in each manifesto. We estimated a negative binomial model with the count of pledges in each manifesto as the dependent variable and *Globalization* as one of the explanatory variables (Model 1, Appendix H).⁹ The coefficient associated with *Globalization* is not significant (p=.50), which is also the case for the other explanatory variables included in the model. These non-findings accord with previous analysis of the frequency of pledge making, which concluded that parties make comparable numbers of pledges, whether they be left-wing or right-wing parties, incumbents or challengers, or in systems where single-party governments or coalitions are the norm (Naurin, Royed and Thomson, 2019, 39-55).

Globalization has some relationship with the types of pledges that parties make. However, the strength of this relationship is conditional and quite modest in comparison to the relationship between parties’ ideological positions and the types of pledges they make. We first estimated a General Linear Model with the proportion of “cut” pledges in each manifesto as the dependent variable and *Globalization* as one of the explanatory variables (Model 2, Appendix H). The coefficient associated with *Globalization* is not significant (p=.73). By contrast, *Partisan Left-Right Ideology* has a strong and highly significant association, as expected, with the proportion of cut pledges they make. Figure 4 depicts these relationships using predicted values. The expected proportion of pledges that are cut pledges is the same, around .10, regardless of the level of *Globalization*. By contrast, parties further to the right make far higher proportions of pledges that are cut pledges than do parties to the left.

⁸Full models are reported in Appendix G.

⁹Full results are presented in Appendix H.

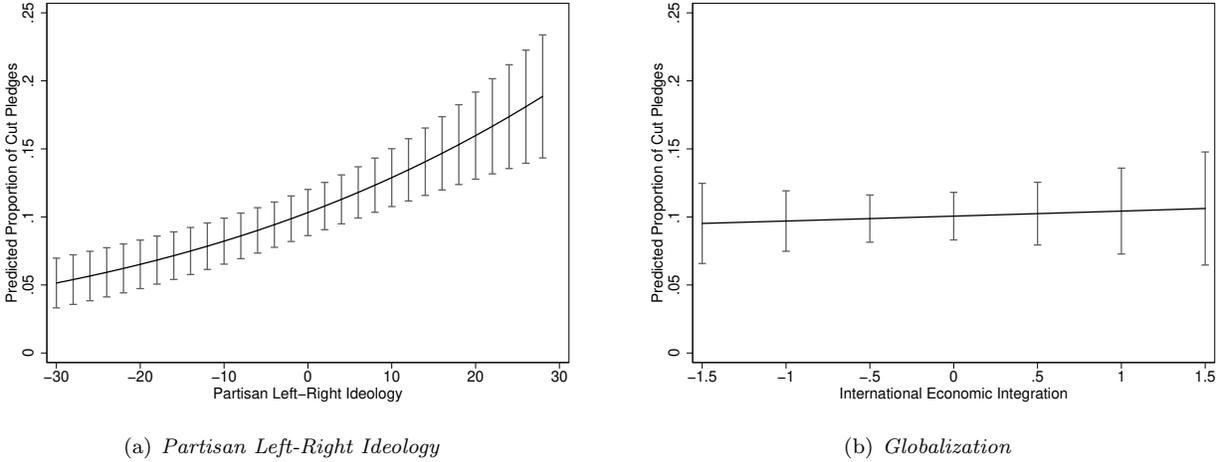


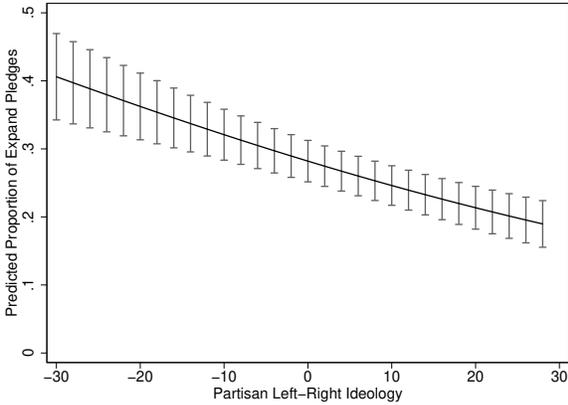
Figure 4: *Partisan Left-Right Ideology, Globalization, and Party Pledges to Cut Taxes and Programs.* The graphs depict predictive probabilities together with 95% confidence intervals for different levels of *Partisan Left-Right Ideology* (a) and *Globalization* (b). Full models in Appendix H.

Globalization is positively, albeit modestly, associated with the proportion of parties’ pledges that are expansionary. Again, the effect of parties’ ideological positions is far greater than international exposure. Pledges to expand government programs, of which there are many, and pledges to raise taxes, of which there are few, were grouped together to create a category of “expansionary” pledges. We estimated a General Linear Model, but this time with the proportion of “expansionary” pledges in each manifesto as the dependent variable and *Globalization* as one of the explanatory variables (Model 3, Appendix H). The coefficient associated with *Globalization* is positive and significant ($p=.00$). As countries are more exposed to international markets, parties tend to make relatively more expansionary pledges. While somewhat counter intuitive, this positive relationship is consistent with the Varieties of Capitalism framework, according to which Coordinated Market Economies in particular may ameliorate some of the risks associated with globalization and international competition by expanding government programs. More surprising is that four of the six countries we examine here are Liberal Market Economies (Canada, Ireland, the UK and the US), and the results hold even if we restrict the analysis to these four countries. This suggests that expansionary policy responses to economic internationalization are not limited to CMEs. While significant, this effect of *Globalization* is smaller than the effect of *Partisan Left-Right Ideology*, whereby parties further to the right make relatively fewer expansionary pledges than parties to the left. The effects of *Globalization* and ideology are depicted as predicted values in Figures 5(a) and 5(b), respectively.

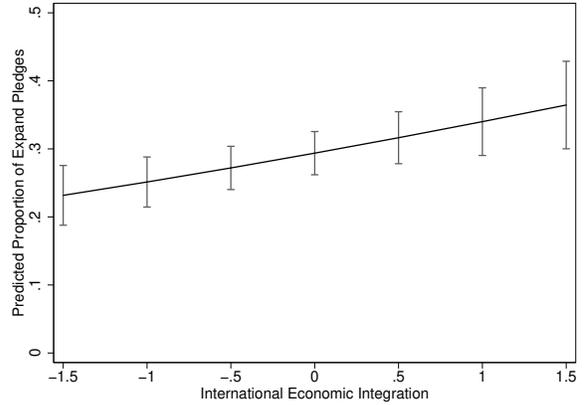
These results indicate that to the extent that manifesto writers are cognizant of constraints on pledge fulfillment imposed by globalization, these considerations play a minor role compared to the need to formulate policy appeals that win votes and secure the support of key party factions and supporters. This finding parallels previous findings that parties in coalition governments – where they face constraints in fulfilling their pledges particularly as junior partners – do not appear to make markedly different pledges from parties in systems where single-party executives are the norm (Thomson et al., 2017).

The British Conservative’s Migration Pledge

In order to further scrutinize our theory, we selected a typical case of the relationship between globalization and pledge breaking. We examine why the British government under the leadership of the Conservative Party was not able to fulfill one of its central election pledges of 2010, to reduce net migration to below 100,000, during the 2010-15 governing period when the party held executive office. The case is typical because the party could not implement a salient election promise in a period of deep integration into the



(a) Partisan Left-Right Ideology



(b) Globalization

Figure 5: Partisan Ideology, Globalization, and Party Pledges to Expand Programs and Taxes. The graphs depict predictive probabilities together with 95% confidence intervals for different levels of *Partisan Left-Right Ideology* (a) and *Globalization* (b). Full models in Appendix H.

global economy. We therefore expect it to illustrate the underlying causal mechanisms. In 2010, the United Kingdom ranked as the 5th most globalized country in the world, just below Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland and The Netherlands. Although net migration fell somewhat after the 2010 election, the government failed to bring it even close to the promised benchmark, and numbers started to increase again after 2012.

To trace the underlying causal mechanisms, we rely on a range of secondary sources (including academic studies and newspaper articles), primary archival materials (such as election manifestos, consultation reports, and government communications), and interviews with political, administrative, and economic elites who were involved in the debates. In selecting the interviewees, we strove to maintain a balance across political ideologies, views on the immigration issue, and background and across the public and private sector. The interviewees included, among others, the former Minister for Immigration, Damian Green, a member of the Conservative Party and the former Secretary of the Department of Business, Innovation, and Skills, Sir Vince Cable, a member of the Liberal Democratic Party.¹⁰

The main factors in relation to the net-migration pledge align with the mechanisms outlined in the theory. The formulation of the pledge itself was driven primarily by party competition and ideology, rather than the constraints imposed by globalization. The rise of a right-wing, anti-immigrant challenger party and public opinion that supported curbs on migration put strong pressure on the party to appear take a tough stance on this issue. The breaking of the pledge was driven by a combination of factors relating to global market movements, international commitments that conflicted with the promise, and effective lobbying by national and international market actors. Economic uncertainty, EU membership, and lobbying efforts by various market actors, both within and outside the UK, hampered the ability of the government to reduce migration to a point that would have fulfilled its election promise.

The Genesis of the Migration Pledge

The Conservative Party formulated the pledge to cut net migration in response to public concerns regarding increasing levels of migration in a challenging economic context. Before the 2010 election, the Conservative Party, led by David Cameron, was the main opposition party challenging the incumbent Labour Party, led by Prime Minister Gordon Brown. At that time, the country was reeling from the global financial crisis, and unemployment had risen to over 2 million for the first time since the 1990s. These economic conditions fueled anti-immigration sentiments in large parts of the population who believed that the economic problems

¹⁰A full list of interviewees can be found in Appendix K. Each interview lasted between 30-60 minutes.

and immigration were intimately linked. These fears were deepened by an increase in net migration during this time. One study found that in the 12 months to June 2010, fewer British citizens were leaving the country (60% decline) and more overseas students were entering the country (35% increase).¹¹ A clear majority of British citizens became opposed to immigration. A survey by Ipsos MORI in 2011 found that 64% of respondents believed there were too many immigrants in Britain (Blinder and Richards, 2020). MigrationWatch UK, an anti-immigration lobby group, articulated many of the concerns, claiming that the government had lost control over its national borders, resulting in “immigration on a scale that is placing strain on our public services, housing, environment, society and quality of life.”¹²

Public opposition to immigration put pressure on political parties before the 2010 election. The right-wing UK Independence Party (UKIP) positioned itself as the party to tackle immigration (Ford and Goodwin, 2014). They pledged to end “uncontrolled mass immigration” by imposing an immediate five-year freeze on immigration with intent of permanent settlement (Carey and Geddes, 2010, 860). This allowed UKIP to gain public support and put pressure on both the Conservative and Labour Parties. Immigration featured prominently in the 2010 election campaign, including the three leaders debates (Carey and Geddes, 2010). Both major parties responded to public opinion and the UKIP challenge by proposing to control immigration.

The Conservatives were concerned because the party was losing supporters to UKIP at an alarming rate. UKIP won second place in the European Parliament elections in 2009 and its transformation into a multi-issue party strengthened its appeal at the national level (Ford and Goodwin, 2014, 84). UKIP’s message resonated with many voters who typically voted for the Conservatives, and it gained most votes in Conservative-held constituencies. With UKIP gaining ground on the Conservative Party and a majority of public opinion in favor of reducing migration, Conservative leader David Cameron committed the party to reducing immigration. On January 10, 2010, just months ahead of the general election, he made the now infamous promise in a BBC interview, stating that if he won the election he would limit net immigration to “tens of thousands” each year. The pledge had been carefully prepared beforehand. It was developed by the then-Shadow Minister of Immigration, Damian Green based on a pamphlet he had written with David Davies (another prominent Conservative politician) on economic migration. It was agreed upon by a small group of party elites, including the shadow Home Office team and the leadership of the Conservative Party. The 2010 Conservative Party election manifesto made the 100,000 net migration target official party policy (Conservative Party, 2010). According to our interviewees, the pledge was not merely aspirational; or as Cameron put it himself: “no ifs, no buts.”¹³

According to many observers and our interviewees, the calculus behind Cameron’s move was to respond to public concerns about immigration and to neutralize migration as an issue during the campaign (Bale, Hampshire and Partos, 2011). And indeed, during the campaign, the Conservative Party won significant political ground on the basis of their pledge on the immigration issue, the only issue on which the party scored significantly better than Labour.¹⁴ According to a YouGov survey, at 25.2% the Conservatives were far ahead of both Labour (6.3%) and the Liberal Democrats (1.8%) on respondents’ judgement of the best party to handle immigration. Immediately after announcing the promise in early 2010, Cameron’s personal favorability ratings increased substantially (Dahlgreen, 2015).

The Road to Failure

The Conservative Party won the 2010 election and subsequently led a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats. Under the leadership of then-Home Secretary Theresa May, the UK Home Office introduced one of the harshest immigration policies in British history. The government implemented a cap on skilled labour migration from outside the European Union, which was promised in the Conservative’s 2010 manifesto. It introduced a new minimum income threshold for people with spouses from overseas, which was arguably consistent with its 2010 manifesto statement to “limit[...] access only to those who will bring the most value

¹¹Owen, Paul and Alan Travis. “Vince Cable warns coalition colleagues over immigration cap.” *The Guardian*. 27 August 2010.

¹²Ahuja, Ajana. “Is Britain full? - Anjana Ahuja on the UK population question.” *The Times*. February 16, 2010.

¹³Travis, Alan. “Net migration to UK higher than when coalition took office.” *The Guardian*. February 26, 2015. One might also ask if the party leaders expected to be able to fulfill the pledge. Our interviewees who participated in the genesis of the pledge shared the view that there was a sincere sense within the party leadership that the target was achievable when it was formulated.

¹⁴Elliott, Francis. “Cameron steps back to avoid tensions within party.” *The Times*. February 27, 2010.

to the British economy,” a statement that conveys clear intent, but does not specify the action that would be taken. The government also cracked down on “bogus” colleges and “foreign criminals.”¹⁵ In addition, the Hostile Environment Policy, as it was called, included administrative and legislative steps to make it as difficult as possible for non-citizens to stay in the United Kingdom, with the hope they would “voluntarily leave.”¹⁶ Yet, net migration remained well above 100,000, and even increased to 336,000 just before the 2015 election (up from 246,000 in 2010) according to the UK Office of National Statistics. Despite failing to fulfill the promise, it was repeated by the Conservative Party during the 2015 election campaign. The same promise was again repeated at the 2017 election, after Theresa May took over the leadership of the party. Only in 2019 did the Conservative Party replace the net-migration pledge with a promise to implement an Australian-style points-based immigration system.

Our analysis of a range of sources indicate three main reasons why the Conservatives were unable to fulfill the pledge. One obvious (though not the most important) obstacle to implementing the election promise was the UK’s membership in the European Union. The UK had agreed to the freedom of labor movement across Europe as part of the four freedoms within the European Single Market. To accede to the EU in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania had agreed to limited movement of labor. In 2013, the transition period expired, which increased migration significantly from both countries to the UK. The European Single Market therefore constrained the government’s ability to fulfill its promise. Or as Theresa May put it after it became clear that the government had failed to keep its promise: it was “unlikely” the target of getting net migration below 100,000 would be met, saying EU migration had “blown us off course.”¹⁷ However, the effect of the EU should not be overstated. By far the majority of immigrants to the UK during this time came from non-EU countries. According to data from the Office of National Statistics, migrants from EU member countries account for less than one-third of long-term migrants to the UK. In 2010, of the 281,000 immigrants, 196,000 were from outside the EU (70%), only 85,000 were from the EU. Even if the UK would have eliminated all immigration from the EU, they would not have achieved their target of 100,000 (Office of National Statistics). Rather than focusing on EU citizens, the UK government’s attempts focused on cutting immigration from non-EU countries, including the immigration of skilled individuals who were highly sought after by UK businesses and organizations in the private and public sectors and to some extent overseas students.

The government’s inability to affect or even anticipate emigration was another important constraint on its capacity to fulfill the pledge, and one that was subject to considerable uncertainty. A decline in British emigration after 2010 contributed significantly to the failure to fulfill the pledge. The fall in emigration was partly the result of the increased costs of living abroad due to a weak pound, with the government having little control over currency movements due to the UK’s integration in global financial markets.¹⁸ In a consultation report, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) had warned the UK government already in 2010 that uncertainties about emigration numbers as well as EU rules might limit the feasibility of achieving the net migration target (Migration Advisory Committee, 2010). In addition, many Britons returned to the UK during this period from crisis-hit Spain and Dubai, which further contributed to increased net migration.¹⁹

Furthermore, the pledge was opposed by a broad range of national and international actors from the private and public sectors. Following a call for responses on these issues, the Migration Advisory Committee, an independent government advisory committee, received over 400 responses by domestic and international actors including the Scottish Government, the Government of Ireland, the Embassy of Japan, various trade federations, banking associations, law firms, law associations, the health and social services sectors (including hospitals, medical services and nursing homes), private companies, the British Chamber of Commerce, the oil industry, universities, research institutes, the Royal Bank of Canada, the Greater London Authority, the Department of Health, the Department of Education, the Department of Work and Pensions, and

¹⁵Trilling, Daniel. “10 years on, David Cameron’s toxic net migration pledge still haunts the UK.” *The Guardian*. January 14, 2020.

¹⁶Hill, Amelia. “Hostile Environment: the hardline Home Office policy tearing families apart” *The Guardian*. November 28, 2017; Trilling, Daniel. “10 years on, David Cameron’s toxic net migration pledge still haunts the UK.” *The Guardian*. January 14, 2020.

¹⁷“Cameron accused of ‘total failure’ on immigration.” *BBC*. November 27, 2014.

¹⁸Owen, Paul and Alan Travis. “Vince Cable warns coalition colleagues over immigration cap.” *The Guardian*. 27 August 2010.

¹⁹Travis, Alan. “Cameron’s empty immigration promise.” *The Guardian*. January 11, 2010.

the Migration Policy Institute. The opposition expressed to the cap was as strong and forceful as it was unanimous. Of the responses quoted in the report, which we provide a full list of in Appendix L, only one response from a member of the public argues in favor of the cap.

Private and public sector employers warned that the introduction of a “cap” on migration would lead to major skill shortages in the United Kingdom. The lobbying efforts came from a variety of directions, including politicians from all parties, business groups, law firms, car manufacturers, pharmaceutical companies and the National Health Service (NHS). The NHS relied on recruiting skilled and relatively low paid care workers from abroad. Gerwyn Davies from the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development expressed his concerns with a stark warning to the government:

“The reality for employers is that training workers to plug the UK skills gap is a lengthy task. (...) The abrupt introduction of a radical cap would therefore leave many employers with a bigger skills problem and tempt employers with global operations to offshore jobs, where they can find the skills.”²⁰

Sectors with international operations raised concerns about the significant adverse economic effects of restricting immigration. In a joint response to the Migration Advisory Committee consultation, the Association of Foreign Banks (AFB) and British Bankers’ Association (BBA) threatened that:

“If the ability of migrants to enter the UK under Tier 2 is significantly reduced, AFB and BBA members will create jobs overseas, that otherwise would have been created in the UK. As a result, the teams supporting those roles will also be located overseas.” (Migration Advisory Committee, 2010, 105).

Similar forecasts about business offshoring came from other sectors, including the oil and gas sector as well as international law firms (Migration Advisory Committee, 2010, 105). Sarah Mulley, Associate Director at the Institute of Public Policy Research, summarized the implications of the Migration Advisory Committee’s report succinctly:²¹

“The ... analysis shows clearly how difficult it will be for the government to fulfil its promise to cut immigration substantially. The government now faces an unpalatable choice between introducing a policy which it knows will be damaging to the economy and public services, or failing to fulfil a key promise to the electorate.”

Further pressure came from outside the United Kingdom. A major concern was that restrictive immigration measures would make it difficult to secure trade cooperation. Several of our interviewees pointed out the effect of the policies on relations with India. In the summer of 2010, the new policies threatened the successful conclusion of important negotiations between Britain and India to promote trade between the two countries. The UK government wanted the Indian government to allow British banks, legal and insurance firms and small manufacturers to operate in India. In return, India asked for mutual recognition of qualifications so that its lawyers and bankers would be able to operate in the UK. The Indian government was concerned that the cap on immigration would make this difficult, and was also dismayed by what they called racially prejudiced policies toward Indians. The pressure on the British government was intense as the government had much to lose from a failure of the deal. In 2009, total bilateral trade between the UK and India was worth £11.5 billion, and UK exports to India totalled £4.7 billion.²² Our interviews confirm that the pressure worked; right after a high-level meeting between the UK and Indian governments, the UK decided to shelve planned restrictions on intra-company transfers, which were opposed by Indian firms.

Similarly, the Embassy of Japan indicated that restrictive immigration policies:

“(...) would effectively force Japanese companies operating in the UK to reduce their future investment and to withdraw from this country. This will result in a huge number of job cuts for British workers employed in these companies” (Migration Advisory Committee, 2010, 145).

²⁰Owen, Paul and Alan Travis. “Vince Cable warns coalition colleagues over immigration cap.” *The Guardian*. 27 August 2010.

²¹Boxell, James and Chris Cook. “Immigrant cap in UK ‘will curb overseas students.” *The Financial Times*. November 19, 2010.

²²Waugh, Paul. “Cable warns on immigration as Cameron flies out to woo India.” *The Evening Standard*. July 27, 2010.

To sum up, the pressure of these actors was intense and multi-dimensional. It was expressed publicly (through the media, including through the notoriously vociferous British tabloid newspapers) as well as behind closed doors (through lobbying the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, the Home Office, or the Prime Minister through the Business Advisory Group). Although the pressure did not convince the government to abandon the pledge altogether, our interview evidence supports the view that the government did not pursue many of the measures it had originally intended to, and many compromises were made. For example, the Home Office agreed not to restrict intra-company transfers (which made up a significant share of immigration) and made significant concessions on foreign students and family policies. As one of the interviewees notes “if there hadn’t been resistance, from lobby groups, from me and my colleagues, they [anti-immigration measures] would have gotten much worse.”²³

Alternative Considerations

An alternative and somewhat cynical interpretation of the events described above might be that the Conservative Party’s net migration pledge was mainly symbolic, that the party did not have any serious intention of fulfilling the pledge, and that it did so knowing that there are no significant consequences of breaking campaign promises. In our view, the evidence from this case and from comparative research does not support such an interpretation. Although the formulation of the pledge was a response to political circumstances, it was made after a considerable amount of deliberation among party elites. According to those close to the Home Office and David Cameron, there was a sense that the pledge was achievable. One interviewee noted that the target did not seem far off given that net migration had been below 100,000 just a few years earlier. The evidence indicates that the government made sincere attempts to fulfill the pledge. It imposed a cap on non-EU migration, introduced new income requirements for family reunification, implemented tougher standards for education providers that brought in overseas students, and generally created a hostile environment for migrants, all of which were criticized heavily as draconian.

There have clearly been significant consequences from breaking this promise. The net migration pledge became an “albatross around the government’s neck.”²⁴ The non-fulfillment of the pledge fueled the further rise of UKIP, whose leader criticized Cameron for failing to limit migration to the UK. With the looming electoral threat of UKIP, internal divisions widened within the Conservative Party, and many Conservatives left the party to join UKIP. These divisions were among the factors leading to yet another fateful promise by the Conservative Party: its 2015 manifestos pledge to call a referendum on British membership of the European Union (Dorey and Garnett, 2016, 240). In the end, the non-fulfillment of the migration pledge at least indirectly cost Prime Minister David Cameron his political career, as he stepped down as Prime Minister after the leave campaign won the Brexit referendum in 2016. These personal political consequences of pledge breaking for Cameron in this particular case are also on display in the main findings from comparative research, which shows that the non-fulfillment of election pledges can be costly for parties’ electoral support (Naurin and Oscarsson, 2017; Duval, 2019; Matthiess, 2020).

Another alternative interpretation of the case study might be that the non-fulfillment of the pledge was mainly a consequence of coalition politics, rather than international constraints. Indeed, the Conservative Party’s junior coalition partner, the Liberal Democrats, were much more supportive of immigration and opposed including the pledge in the coalition agreement.²⁵ However, on balance the influence of the Liberal Democrats does not appear to have been decisive in the non-fulfillment of the pledge. Immigration was one of the policy areas in which the Liberal Democrats were unable to exert any significant influence over the Conservative-led government (Partos and Bale, 2015). Not one of the policies outlined in the Conservative Party’s manifesto in that area was dropped from the government’s agenda; all that was added was the inclusion of a Liberal Democrat promise to end the detention of children in asylum cases—a promise that even many “mainstream” Conservatives supported or could tolerate. All accounts of the formation of the coalition suggest that immigration was a non-negotiable ‘red-line’ for the Conservatives and that the Liberal Democrats were made aware of this from the outset (Bale, Hampshire and Partos, 2011).²⁶ In our interview, Sir Vince Cable himself described the Liberal Democrat’s influence as negligible:

²³Interview 1.

²⁴Interview 5.

²⁵“Cameron accused of ‘total failure’ on immigration.” *BBC News*. November 27, 2014.

²⁶One of our interviewees points out that the forceful opposition by Sir Vince Cable was even counterproductive in that it reduced the willingness of the Home Office to negotiate with the Department of Business.

“We were preventing them from reaching their target. But of course, the real reason wasn’t our obstruction. I mean, that would have helped, but it was because of when there were gaps in the labour market, there were no restrictions on people coming in from the EU, and there was nothing the government could do to affect them. But having set a target, it made it abundantly clear to the British public what the problem was: the European Union.”

A final argument against the coalition politics interpretation of the case study is that the Conservative Party was unable to fulfil the migration pledge even after the coalition ended in 2015 and it continued governing as a single-party government. This indicates that the presence of the Liberal Democrats in government does not explain the failure to fulfil the pledge in the 2010-15 period.²⁷

In sum, our study of the Conservative Party’s broken net migration pledge provides vivid illustrations of the theoretical mechanisms through which globalization reduces the likelihood that governing parties fulfill their election pledges. In line with our argument, international integration constrained the British government because of its international commitments, especially its membership of the EU. Economic uncertainty associated with globalization also played a role, partly in relation to the unpredictability of both inward and outward migration flows. Finally, the case illustrates how market actors can lobby government successfully when their interests would be threatened by the fulfillment of an election pledge. The results of the analysis complement the quantitative finding as they contextualize and illustrate how the causal mechanisms play out in practice.

Conclusion

Globalization poses a formidable challenge to democratic representation at the national level. Governing parties in highly internationalized contexts fulfill significantly fewer of the pledges they made to voters before the elections that brought them to power. Promise keeping is central to promissory representation, which is the mainstay of mainstream democratic theory and popular conceptions of how democracy works. Until now, comparative research on election pledges has looked mainly inward, toward the domestic level, to explain differences in the likelihood of pledge fulfillment in different governments and time periods. But treating governments effectively as independent units is no longer appropriate as modern states are deeply embedded in layers of international interdependence. This applies not only to research on election pledges, but also to other aspects of democratic performance.

Our findings indicate that although internationalization has only a modest effect on pledge making, it has large and negative effect on the likelihood of pledge fulfillment. The negative effect of internationalization applies in a broad range of contexts and to a broad range of parties and pledges, not only to pledges that are typically left-wing or social democratic. It is also striking that internationalization reduces the likelihood of fulfillment of a broad range of pledges, not only pledges that are considered economic pledges. There is some evidence that right-wing parties are significantly less affected by internationalization than left-wing parties. However, we found no evidence that internationalization facilitates the fulfillment of right-wing or conservative parties’ pledges, as is sometimes suggested.

The consequences of promise breaking in the context of international constraints have yet to be examined. Failure to deliver on election pledges is associated with the widespread belief that politicians are untrustworthy promise breakers. Such lack of trust can be corrosive if it becomes synonymous with expectations of betrayal, rather than healthy vigilance on the part of citizens with respect to government performance. A key question is whether citizens hold governing parties to account for promise breaking if those parties are deeply constrained by globalization. Answering these questions would shed light on the causes of the globalization backlash and the rise of populist parties. Our findings indicate that consistent pledge breaking in globalized contexts may at least contribute to anti-globalization backlash and the rise of extreme parties, with important implications for promissory representation by mainstream parties.

Our findings do not necessarily indicate that national representative democracy is impossible in the age of globalization. The broader debate on the impact of globalization on democracy includes claims other

²⁷Thomson et al. (2017) find that coalition governments are on average less likely to fulfill election pledges. However, senior coalition partners, which control the prime ministership, and coalition partners that control the government departments are in relatively strong positions when it comes to pledge fulfillment. These parties tend to fulfill pledges at similar rates to parties in single-party governments.

than promise making and keeping, and a comprehensive assessment requires that these be considered too. Proponents of the view that globalization can enhance democratic performance at the national level assert that globalization enables governments to pursue long-term welfare-enhancing policies for their citizens. While international integration may be costly in terms of promise keeping and policy responsiveness, it may be beneficial in terms of responsibility, which is another key element of democratic representation. One of the major challenges in this field of research is to assess the trade-offs between these different aspects of democratic representation. This research agenda is all the more salient as political movements to limit globalization gather pace.

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A Sample of Countries, Parties, and Elections

Single-party executives with legislative majorities (15 governments)	
Bulgaria:	1997-2001, ODS
Canada:	1993-97, Liberals; 1997-2000, Liberals; 2000-04, Liberals; 2011-15, Conservatives
Ireland:	1977-81, Fianna Fáil
Portugal:	2005-09, PS
Spain:	1989-93, PSOE; 2000-04, PP
UK:	1974-79, Labour; 1979-83, Conservative; 1983-87, Conservative; 1987-92 Conservative; 1992-97, Conservative
United States:	1977-81, Democrats
Single-party executives with legislative minorities (16 governments)	
Bulgaria:	2009-13, GERB
Canada:	2004-06, Liberals; 2006-08, Conservatives; 2008-11, Conservatives
Ireland:	1987-89, Fianna Fáil
Portugal:	1995-99, PS
Spain:	1993-96, PSOE†; 1996-2000, PP†
Sweden:	1994-98, Social Democrats†; 1998-2002, Social Democrats†; 2002-06, Social Democrats†
United States:	1981-85, Republican; 1985-89, Republican; 1989-93, Republican; 1993-97, Democrats; 1997-2001, Democrats
Coalition executives with legislative majorities (22 governments)	
Austria:	2000-03, ÖVP/ FPÖ; 2003-07, ÖVP/ FPÖ; 2007-08, SPÖ/ ÖVP; 2008-13, SPÖ/ ÖVP
Bulgaria:	1995-96, BSP/NS; 2001-05, NDSV/DPS; 2005-09, BSP/NDSV/ DPS‡
Germany:	2002-05, SPD/ Greens; 2005-09, CDU-CSU/ SPD; 2009-13, CDU-CSU/ FDP
Ireland:	1982-87, Fine Gael/Labour; 1989-92, Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats; 1992-94, Fianna Fáil/ Labour; 2002-07, Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats; 2007-11, Fianna Fáil/ Progressive Democrats/ Greens; 2011-2016, Fine Gael/Labour
Italy:	2001-06, Berlusconi II's coalition (FI/ AN/ LN/ UDC/ NPSI/ PRI)‡; 2008-11, Berlusconi IV's coalition (PdL/ LN/ MpA/ PID)‡
Netherlands:	1986-89, CDA/ VVD; 1989-94, CDA/ PvdA; 1994-98, PvdA/VVD/D66
Sweden:	2006-10, Moderate Party/Centre Party/People's Party/ Christian Democrats‡
Coalition executives with legislative minorities (4 governments)	
Ireland:	1997-02, Fianna Fáil/ Progressive Democrats†
Italy:	1996-98: Prodi I's Ulivo coalition (PDS/PPI/RI/FdV/UD)†‡; 2006-08, Prodi II's coalition Unione (DS/DL/PRC/RnP-PdCI/ IdV/FdV/UDEUR)‡
Sweden:	2010-14, Moderate Party/ Centre Party/ People's Party/ Christian Democrats‡

Note: †: minority governments that had an agreement with one or more opposition parties or parliamentarians to maintain support. ‡: includes pledges made by governing parties that were part of pre-election coalitions. Dataset does not include opposition parties in Italy. *Source:* Thomson et al. (2017).

B Variables and Descriptive Statistics

Variables included in the analyses of pledge fulfillment.

Pledge Fulfillment: The variable takes a value of 1 if a pledge was partially or fully fulfilled and 0 if it was not fulfilled. Data are from CPPP.

Globalization: Globalization is measured using the KOF Economic Globalization Index, which combines information on *de facto* and *de jure* trade and financial globalization, including trade in goods and services, trade regulations, tariffs and agreements, financial direct investment, investment restrictions and capital account openness. Data are from KOF.

Varieties of Capitalism: The Variety of Capitalism to which each of the twelve countries belongs uses the classifications of (Hall and Soskice, 2001).

Executive-Legislative Relations: Variable that captures whether the country is a parliamentary, presidential or semi-presidential system.

Federal System: Binary variable that takes the value 1 if the country is a federal system, and 0 if not.

Single-Party Government: Binary variable that takes the value 1 if a single party controls the government executive, and 0 if not.

Majority Government: Binary variable that takes the value 1 if the party or parties that hold executive office control a majority of legislative seats, and 0 if not.

Chief Executive: Binary variable that takes the value 1 if the party holds the chief executive position, and 0 if not. Data from country specialists in the CPPP as necessary supplemented with data from the EJPR Data Yearbooks.

Ministry: Binary variable that takes the value 1 if the party holds the ministry relevant to the issue of the pledge, and 0 if not. Data from country specialists in the CPPP as necessary supplemented with data from the EJPR Data Yearbooks.

Partisan Left-Right Ideology: Partisan ideology on the left-right axis from the Comparative Manifesto Project (Volkens et al., 2019). We use the so-called RILE scores, which are also derived from parties' election manifestos or platforms.

Incumbency: Variable that captures whether the party is an incumbent, opposition with experience or opposition without experience. Data from country specialists in the CPPP as necessary supplemented with data from the EJPR Data Yearbooks.

Economic Growth: Average growth rate of the country over the lifetime of the government. Data are from the World Bank.

Government Duration: Variable that captures the duration of the government in months. Data from country specialists in the CPPP as necessary supplemented with data from the EJPR Data Yearbooks.

Agreement on Pledge: The variable takes a value of 1 if a pledge was similar to a pledge made by another party, 0 if not. Data are from CPPP.

Pre-election Agreement: Binary variable that takes value 1 if a coalition agreement existed before the election, and 0 if not. Data from country specialists in the CPPP as necessary supplemented with data from the *European Journal of Political Research* (EJPR) Data Yearbooks.

Decade: Decade in which the pledge was made. Data are from CPPP.

	mean	sd	min	max
Pledge Fulfillment	.5579151	.4966665	0	1
Globalization	.0846586	1.015564	-2.7991	1.584555
Liberal Market Economies	0	0	0	0
Coordinated Market Economies	.2857143	.451783	0	1
Mixed Market Economies	.2687259	.4433256	0	1
Parliamentary	0	0	0	0
Presidential	.0694981	.2543156	0	1
Semi-Presidential	.0305019	.1719749	0	1
Federalism	.3495495	.4768584	0	1
Single-party government	.3791506	.4852069	0	1
Majority government	.3070785	.4613119	0	1
Chief Executive	.7700129	.4208513	0	1
Ministry	.7683398	.4219202	0	1
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	.3077757	15.60059	-40	33.6
Incumbent	0	0	0	0
Opposition with Experience	.3628057	.4808404	0	1
Opposition without Experience	.1548263	.3617623	0	1
Economic Growth	2.45471	2.156673	-1.62	9.14
Government Duration in Years	3.707246	.9389175	1.166667	5.133333
Agreement on pledge	.0584299	.2345696	0	1
Pre-election Agreement	.1325611	.3391216	0	1
1970s	0	0	0	0
1980s	.127027	.3330247	0	1
1990s	.2788932	.4484837	0	1
2000s	.551094	.4974146	0	1
N	7770			

Note: N refers to the numbers of cases (pledges) in the analysis of pledge fulfillment. For ease of interpretation, the KOF Economic Globalization Index was transformed to z-scores based on the distribution of the variable across the entire sample, which includes pledges of parties that entered the opposition, and of which we do not examine fulfillment in this study.

C Pledge Fulfillment (Full Results)

Globalization	-0.488***	(0.000)
<i>Varieties of Capitalism (Reference: LME)</i>		
Coordinated Market Economies	0.239*	(0.081)
Mixed Market Economies	-0.848***	(0.000)
<i>Executive-legislative Relations (Reference: Parliamentary)</i>		
Presidential	-1.316***	(0.001)
Semi-Presidential	0.710***	(0.004)
Federalism	-0.658***	(0.000)
Single-party government	0.899***	(0.000)
Majority government	-0.180	(0.148)
Chief Executive	0.269**	(0.045)
Ministry	0.269**	(0.022)
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	0.008**	(0.021)
<i>Incumbency (Reference: Incumbent)</i>		
Opposition with Experience	-0.309**	(0.012)
Opposition without Experience	-0.595***	(0.000)
Economic Growth	0.133***	(0.000)
Government Duration in Years	0.217***	(0.001)
Agreement on pledge	0.755***	(0.000)
Pre-election Agreement	0.527***	(0.008)
<i>Decade (Reference: 1970)</i>		
1980s	-0.359	(0.244)
1990s	0.173	(0.642)
2000s	0.660*	(0.056)
Constant	-1.329***	(0.004)
Wald Test	609.381***	
Observations	7770	

p-values in parentheses

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

D Pledge Fulfillment (Expanded Model)

Globalization	-0.743***	(0.000)
<i>Varieties of Capitalism (Reference: LME)</i>		
Coordinated Market Economies	0.695**	(0.010)
Mixed Market Economies	-0.970***	(0.000)
<i>Executive-legislative Relations (Reference: Parliamentary)</i>		
Presidential	-1.241***	(0.002)
Semi-Presidential	1.056***	(0.001)
Bicameralism	0.480*	(0.063)
Federalism	-1.129***	(0.000)
EU Member	0.197	(0.323)
<i>Incumbency (Reference: Single-party Majority)</i>		
Single Party Minority	0.387**	(0.014)
Coalition Majority	-0.562**	(0.033)
Coalition Minority	-0.525*	(0.091)
Chief Executive	0.210*	(0.093)
Ministry	0.209*	(0.080)
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	0.008**	(0.014)
Government Ideology Range	-0.119	(0.316)
Herfindahl Index	0.423	(0.189)
Distance to Median Legislator	-0.109	(0.482)
<i>Incumbency (Reference: Incumbent)</i>		
Opposition with Experience	-0.365***	(0.009)
Opposition without Experience	-0.487***	(0.001)
Economic Growth	0.155***	(0.000)
Government Duration in Years	0.274***	(0.000)
Number of Pledges/10	-0.011	(0.202)
Agreement on pledge	0.793***	(0.000)
Pre-election Agreement	0.519***	(0.003)
<i>Decade (Reference: 1970)</i>		
1980s	-0.232	(0.438)
1990s	0.444	(0.189)
2000s	1.166***	(0.002)
Subset	-0.367	(0.163)
Constant	-1.788***	(0.002)
Wald Test	1084.447***	
Observations	7770	

p-values in parentheses

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

E VoC and Fulfillment (Full Results)

	(1) LMEs	(2) CMEs	(3) Mixed	(4) Interaction model
Globalization	-0.350 (0.248)	-1.176** (0.629)	-0.772* (0.024)	-0.216 (0.179)
Presidential	-0.251 (0.629)			-0.837** (0.039)
Federalism	-1.556*** (0.000)	-0.538** (0.028)	0.000 (.)	-0.576*** (0.000)
Single-party government	1.296** (0.021)	0.781* (0.069)	0.961*** (0.005)	1.106*** (0.000)
Majority government	0.419* (0.088)	-0.059 (0.170)	-0.213 (0.170)	-0.111 (0.278)
Chief Executive	0.263 (0.199)	0.231 (0.109)	0.492* (0.084)	0.251** (0.040)
Ministry	0.143 (0.360)	0.275* (0.056)	0.353 (0.199)	0.286*** (0.008)
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	0.007 (0.205)	0.009 (0.125)	0.005 (0.740)	0.011*** (0.001)
<i>Incumbency (Reference: Incumbent)</i>				
Opposition with Experience	-0.062 (0.773)	-0.330*** (0.007)	-0.239 (0.212)	-0.246** (0.013)
Opposition without Experience	-0.281 (0.124)		-0.625*** (0.000)	-0.562*** (0.000)
Economic Growth	0.134*** (0.008)	0.245** (0.019)	0.168*** (0.002)	0.137*** (0.000)
Government Duration in Years	-0.005 (0.961)	0.305*** (0.001)	0.140 (0.647)	0.208*** (0.000)
Agreement on pledge	0.804*** (0.000)	0.794*** (0.000)	0.036 (0.891)	0.733*** (0.000)
Pre-election Agreement		0.658* (0.051)	0.387 (0.272)	0.549*** (0.003)
<i>Decade (Reference: 1970)</i>				
1980s	0.412 (0.183)			-0.526* (0.060)
1990s	0.480 (0.125)	0.934*** (0.000)	0.743* (0.091)	-0.103 (0.748)
2000s	1.448*** (0.000)	1.761*** (0.000)	1.192* (0.085)	0.530* (0.077)
Coordinated Market Economies				0.405 (0.223)
Mixed Market Economies				-0.963*** (0.000)
Semi-Presidential			0.695 (0.214)	0.836*** (0.000)
CMEs × Integration				-0.207 (0.591)
MMEs × International Economic Integration				-0.716*** (0.001)
Constant	-1.322** (0.017)	-2.153*** (0.000)	-2.944** (0.025)	-1.426*** (0.000)
Wald Test	842.257***			790.743***
N	3462	2220	2088	7770

p-values in parentheses

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

F Left-Right Ideology and Pledge Fulfillment (Full Results)

Globalization	-0.448***	(0.002)
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	0.010***	(0.005)
Integration × Ideology	0.006*	(0.094)
<i>Varieties of Capitalism (Reference: LME)</i>		
Coordinated Market Economies	0.169	(0.218)
Mixed Market Economies	-0.880***	(0.000)
<i>Executive-legislative Relations (Reference: Parliamentary)</i>		
Presidential	-1.150***	(0.006)
Semi-Presidential	0.772***	(0.001)
Federalism	-0.629***	(0.000)
Single-party government	0.895***	(0.000)
Majority government	-0.211*	(0.087)
Chief Executive	0.246*	(0.071)
Ministry	0.280**	(0.012)
<i>Incumbency (Reference: Incumbent)</i>		
Opposition with Experience	-0.334***	(0.008)
Opposition without Experience	-0.557***	(0.000)
Economic Growth	0.122***	(0.000)
Government Duration in Years	0.222***	(0.001)
Agreement on pledge	0.726***	(0.000)
Pre-election Agreement	0.564***	(0.005)
<i>Decade (Reference: 1970)</i>		
1980s	-0.138	(0.673)
1990s	0.324	(0.382)
2000s	0.808**	(0.021)
Constant	-1.433***	(0.002)
Observations	696.481***	
N	7770	

p-values in parentheses

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

G Pledge Type and Fulfillment (Full Results)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
	Cut	Expand	Other	Interaction model		
Globalization	0.037	(0.928)	-1.001***	(0.000)	-0.609***	(0.000)
<i>Varieties of Capitalism (Reference: LME)</i>						
Coordinated Market Economies	1.514***	(0.001)	-0.170	(0.706)	(0.390)	(0.621)
Mixed Market Economies	-0.115	(0.893)	-2.301***	(0.000)	-1.635***	(0.000)
<i>Executive-legislative Relations (Reference: Parliamentary)</i>						
Presidential	-0.282	(0.721)	-0.326	(0.474)	-0.921**	(0.011)
Federalism	-0.103	(0.918)	-2.247***	(0.001)	-1.729***	(0.000)
Single-party government	0.289	(0.656)	0.916***	(0.002)	0.799***	(0.001)
Majority government	1.010***	(0.004)	-0.094	(0.735)	0.034	(0.859)
Chief Executive	1.591*	(0.054)	0.113	(0.576)	0.505**	(0.019)
Ministry	0.564	(0.460)	0.169	(0.405)	0.003	(0.989)
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	-0.004	(0.688)	0.023***	(0.000)	0.014***	(0.000)
<i>Incumbency (Reference: Incumbent)</i>						
Opposition with Experience	-0.164	(0.592)	-0.950***	(0.000)	-0.096	(0.503)
Opposition without Experience	-0.571	(0.132)	-0.648***	(0.000)	-0.242*	(0.072)
Economic Growth	-0.004	(0.966)	0.215***	(0.000)	0.154***	(0.000)
Government Duration in Years	0.285	(0.345)	0.034	(0.721)	0.030	(0.772)
Agreement on pledge	0.694	(0.122)	0.757**	(0.016)	-0.053	(0.876)
Pre-election Agreement	-1.914***	(0.003)	0.751**	(0.034)	0.683**	(0.032)
<i>Decade (Reference: 1970)</i>						
1980s	-0.443	(0.362)	0.242	(0.642)	-0.002	(0.994)
1990s	-0.695	(0.208)	0.975	(0.107)	0.328	(0.268)
2000s	-0.412	(0.658)	1.821**	(0.030)	1.232***	(0.001)
Cut Pledges						
Expand Pledges						
Cut × Integration						
Expand × Integration						
Constant	-2.060**	(0.039)	-0.372	(0.513)	-0.920**	(0.026)
Wald Test	368.867***		1053.088***		1144.630***	
N	422		1412		2610	

p-values in parentheses

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

H Pledge Making (Full Results)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Number	Proportion Cut	Proportion Expand
Globalization	-0.036 (0.052)	0.040 (0.116)	0.214*** (0.073)
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	-0.003 (0.004)	0.025*** (0.005)	-0.018*** (0.003)
Economic Growth	-0.008 (0.013)	-0.019 (0.022)	0.016 (0.018)
Pre-election Agreement	0.284 (0.200)	0.002 (0.131)	0.608*** (0.124)
Numbers of Pledges/10		-0.043*** (0.008)	-0.016 (0.011)
Constant	4.865*** (0.078)	-1.586*** (0.155)	-0.819*** (0.167)
Wald Test	4.126	58.590***	98.774***
Observations	160	123	123

Standard errors in parentheses

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

I Alternative Measures of Globalization

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Trade (KOF)	-0.384***	(0.001)	
Financial (KOF)		-0.307***	(0.009)
Trade (Percentage GDP)			-0.479*** (0.000)
VoC (Reference: LMEs)			
Coordinated Market Economies	0.169	(0.260)	0.180 (0.199) -0.270 (0.124)
Mixed Market Economies	-0.542***	(0.004)	-0.698*** (0.006) -0.829*** (0.000)
<i>Executive-legislative relations (Reference: Parliamentary)</i>			
Presidential	-1.071***	(0.002)	-1.214*** (0.001) -1.206*** (0.000)
Semi-Presidential	0.520**	(0.034)	0.662** (0.020) 0.431* (0.059)
Federalism	-0.575***	(0.002)	-0.434** (0.011) -0.597*** (0.001)
Single-party government	0.846***	(0.000)	1.112*** (0.000) 0.793*** (0.000)
Majority government	-0.275**	(0.032)	-0.126 (0.339) -0.327** (0.015)
Chief Executive	0.255*	(0.072)	0.254* (0.057) 0.247* (0.051)
Ministry	0.234*	(0.050)	0.281** (0.017) 0.180 (0.126)
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	0.006*	(0.088)	0.009*** (0.010) 0.003 (0.470)
<i>Incumbency (Reference: Incumbent)</i>			
Opposition with Experience	-0.329***	(0.008)	-0.293** (0.016) -0.264** (0.021)
Opposition without Experience	-0.619***	(0.000)	-0.622*** (0.000) -0.527*** (0.000)
Economic Growth	0.140***	(0.000)	0.121*** (0.000) 0.137*** (0.000)
Government Duration in Years	0.221***	(0.000)	0.203*** (0.001) 0.243*** (0.000)
Agreement on pledge	0.772***	(0.000)	0.762*** (0.000) 0.798*** (0.000)
Pre-election Agreement	0.543**	(0.017)	0.680*** (0.001) 0.525** (0.019)
<i>Decade (Reference: 1970s)</i>			
1980s	-0.603**	(0.022)	-0.298 (0.336) -0.370 (0.158)
1990s	-0.178	(0.554)	0.147 (0.673) -0.003 (0.991)
2000s	0.227	(0.394)	0.524 (0.123) 0.383 (0.178)
Constant	-1.052**	(0.011)	-1.424*** (0.002) -1.022*** (0.006)
Observations	513.670***		594.318*** 464.538***
N	7770		7770 7770

p-values in parentheses

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

J Model of Pledge Fulfillment with Fixed Effects for Countries

Globalization	-0.598***	(0.005)
Single-party government	0.747***	(0.000)
Majority government	-0.237**	(0.021)
Chief Executive	0.278**	(0.011)
Ministry	0.216**	(0.043)
Partisan Left-Right Ideology	0.004	(0.302)
Incumbent (Reference)	0.000	(.)
Opposition with Experience	-0.242**	(0.030)
Opposition without Experience	-0.371***	(0.000)
Economic Growth	0.159***	(0.000)
Government Duration in Years	0.163***	(0.003)
Agreement on pledge	0.724***	(0.000)
Pre-election Agreement	0.463**	(0.038)
1970s (Reference)	0.000	(.)
1980s	0.050	(0.841)
1990s	0.551*	(0.093)
2000s	1.114***	(0.004)
United States (Reference)	0.000	(.)
United Kingdom	2.671***	(0.000)
Netherlands	1.921***	(0.008)
Ireland	2.034***	(0.005)
Sweden	2.390***	(0.000)
Spain	1.262***	(0.000)
Germany	1.806***	(0.001)
Italy	0.970**	(0.014)
Portugal	1.865***	(0.000)
Bulgaria	0.739**	(0.031)
Canada	1.017***	(0.007)
Austria	1.460**	(0.025)
Constant	-3.487***	(0.000)
Observations	1946.423***	
N	7770	

p-values in parentheses

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

K List of Interviews

Below is a list of interviewees. The interviews part of the project was certified as exempt from IRB review. All interviews were loosely structured interviews based on common guiding questions. The interviews were conducted remotely via video conference or telephone call and lasted between 30-60 minutes. Our study presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involved no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context. We initiated discussions by reading our consent script so that the subjects verbally consented to be interviewed. Interview subjects could also consent or decline for our conversation to be recorded using a handheld digital voice recorder. Participants were only interviewed after they provided verbal consent. Interview subjects could also request for the interview to be terminated at any time during the interview. For those participants who consented to audio recording, the consent script indicates that audio recording can be terminated at any time and that any portion of the audio recording can be erased at the participant's request. Finally, we received consent for any direct quotes that we use in the text.

Interview 1 (March 29th, 2021; online interview): Rt Hon Sir Vince Cable, Former Secretary of the Department of Business, Innovation, and Skills. Member of the Liberal Democratic Party.

Interview 2 (June 29th 2021; online interview): Dr. Nick Hillman, Former Special Advisor to Baron David Willets at the Ministry of Universities and Sciences and Director of HEPI.

Interview 3 (June 23rd, 2021; phone interview): Professor Sir David Metacalf, Former Chair of the Migration Advisory Committee and Emeritus Professor of the London School of Economics.

Interview 4: Ian Robinson (June 28th, 2021; online interview), Former Assistant Director responsible for Economic Migration Policy at the UK Home Office, Partner at Fragomen LLP.

Interview 5: Jill Rutter (Jul<https://www.overleaf.com/project/602c560d8b7218a050a836e9y> 7th, 2021; online interview), Institute for Government, British Government Civil Servant until 2011.

Interview 6: Jonathan Portes (online interview): Former Chief Economist in the UK Cabinet Office and Director of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

Interview 7: Rt Hon Damian Green (online interview): Former Immigration Minister, Member of the Conservative Party.

L Responses to Migration Advisory Committee Consultation

The Migration Advisory Committee conducted a consultation process for the UK government in 2010 (Migration Advisory Committee, 2010). They received over 400 written responses to their consultation. Below is a list of quoted responses from their report (we include all direct quotes provided in the document in Chapter 4, but more evidence is summarized in the document):

“We are strongly opposed to the Government’s current proposals to cap migration through Tiers One and Two of the points-based system by implementing a permanent limit.” Federation of Small Businesses.

“As well as seeing the proposed cap as being detrimental to the economy the TUC also sees it as being detrimental to the very social cohesion of our diverse society.” Trades Union Congress

“AFB and BBA Members are currently at a critical point in the economic cycle. They need to recruit quickly to key posts to maintain the competitiveness of their UK based operations.” Association of Foreign Banks and the British Bankers’ Association (joint response).

“A cap on non-EU economic migration would have an adverse effect and would act as a barrier to economic growth and competitiveness.” Federation of Small Businesses.

“The annual limit is too blunt an instrument to address the complex needs of an economy growing its way out of a recession. What Scotland needs is an immigration system based on economic need, not on ideology.” Scottish Government.

“Skill shortages are already emerging in the oil and gas industry in Aberdeen and if it is not possible to recruit in the North East these jobs will be permanently lost to overseas locations.” Orion Consultancy Services Ltd.

“If AFB and BBA members are unable to expand as they need to within the UK because of immigration controls, they will instead expand overseas. In addition to the roles which will not be created in the UK, this will also have an impact on essential knowledge transfer to the UK workforce.” Association of Foreign Banks and the British Bankers’ Association (joint response).

“We would argue that the international flow of highly qualified and skilled scientists and technologists is necessary for the proper advancement of science and for the development of a knowledge based economy that depends on that advancement of knowledge and the UK’s full participation in the global enterprise of scientific research and discovery.” The Beatson Institute for Cancer Research.

“Business has no ideological objection to a cap – but protecting global mobility is essential to retaining the UK’s reputation as an attractive place in which and from which to invest and do business.” Confederation of British Industry.

“It needs to be emphasized that Japanese companies’ employees and Japanese doctors will usually stay in the UK for 3 to 5 years on personnel rotation and that they have no intention to stay permanently in this country. It would be misleading and wrong to categorize them as ‘migrants’. Embassy of Japan.

“We believe ... that it is critical to the UK’s attractiveness as a place in and from which to invest and do business that ICTs of less than 3 years duration are excluded from the limits in Tier 1 and 2. We believe it is essential to distinguish between migration leading to settlement and genuine temporary knowledge and skills transfer which is so important to businesses with a global footprint.” Confederation of British Industry.

“It is not realistic to support an international assignment for a duration of 2-3 years and not permit the employee to be accompanied by immediate dependants.” Pepsi Co UK and Ireland (joint response).

“Restrictions on extensions would remove the ability of migrants to plan for the medium to long term (e.g. buy a house without worrying they will have to leave the country in a couple of years), and would make the UK and sponsored UK jobs less attractive.” Sybersolve Solutions Limited.

“BCC does not support the suggestion that sponsors should have to give their non-EU migrant workers health insurance.” British Chamber of Commerce.

“To be able to recruit alternatives to Tier 1 and Tier 2 general from the UK workforce would take some years as either there is generally a shortage of the skills and experience we are looking for here in the UK or we are looking to develop global talent by hiring non-UK nationals into our businesses headquartered in the UK.” Shell.

“Alternatives cannot be found. Generally speaking, Tier 2 Japanese immigrants from Japanese companies are responsible for adjustment and liaison between offices in the UK and Japan. They need considerable knowledge and experience of the Japanese head office’s policies and decisions, as well as communication ability in Japanese and English.” Nissin Travel Service (UK) Ltd.

“Due to their nature as highly skilled and skilled workers Tier 1 and 2 migrants are unlikely to have a major impact on public services and social integration. Migrants using Tier 1 and 2 are likely to contribute far more to the economy and UK society through their teaching, research and knowledge exchange than they take out through use of public services.” University of Plymouth.

“The FSB is of the view that the impact of skilled and highly skilled workers will be negligible on public services as these migrants will be in an excellent position to seek work and generate wealth for the country as a whole. This will lead to a positive impact on wider society via business growth and future job creation.” Federation of Small Businesses.

“Skilled migrants contribute to the provision of public services; in our case the provision of health care in the Acute and Neurological Rehabilitation areas.” Ramsay Health Care UK.

“Reportedly, hate crime against tier 1 and 2 migrants is more prevalent than crime committed by these migrants.” East of England Strategic Migration Partnership.

“Imposing a cap on ICTs would damage our ability to provide and deliver IT and technology projects – efficiencies, transformation, competitive advantage – that UK organizations demand of us. We would need to seek to re-deploy some functions – regional ‘HQ’ functions, such as HR, legal and finance – outside of the UK, but the impact would not just be on our own business but also on our customers. The extent of the damage would depend on the severity of any cap.” Tata Consultancy Services.

“In recent years there has been a concerted effort by Government, private sector and charitable organisations to encourage promising students to take up careers in Science, Technology, Education and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. While the Wellcome Trust strongly supports these efforts, we see them as complementary to the need to attract talented international scientists to work in the UK. If the UK wishes to sustain its world-class reputation for scientific research, we need the best people, not just an adequate number of people.” Wellcome Trust.

“Some employers, such as those who recruit for lower-skilled shortage occupations such as chefs, said that it would be relatively easy to train and up-skill resident workers, provided that a reasonable timeframe of a couple of years were given. Others, such as those employers that have difficulty filling more highly skilled occupations in finance, IT, engineering, doctor and nursing vacancies, suggest that training and up-skilling is a far lengthier task. They will require several years before they are in a position not to rely on non-EEA migrant workers.” Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development.

“In general, training and up-skilling to the level of practical use may take a long time. The change should be made gradually. Immediate reduction may cause a severe impact on business.” Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation Europe Limited.

“The Embassy of Japan believes that capping the Tier 2 (ICT) would effectively force Japanese companies operating in the UK to reduce their future investment and to withdraw from this country. This will result in a huge number of job cuts for British workers employed in these companies.” Embassy of Japan.

“The CIPD is also concerned about the possibility of jobs being offshored if employers cannot access the skills they need in the UK. Qualitative interviews with our members. . . suggest that those organisations with global operations, particularly in IT and finance, may offshore jobs via their existing ‘offshore facilities’. With this in mind, many employers said that intra-company transfers (ICTs) were vital to the success of their global operations. Of the very small minority of employers who would be tempted to offshore jobs, many would be particularly attracted to countries such as India if the labour supply from outside the EU was cut off or reduced.” Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development.

“In common with the wider business community, RBC has concerns that a hard quota on Tier 1 (General) and Tier 2 will have substantial adverse effects on long term economic growth. In particular, a limit could irrevocably damage the UK’s current reputation as a key international business hub as global companies look to relocate from an increasingly hostile business environment. Many sectors, in particular the banking sector, see this measure as a “last straw” and are currently making impact assessments with a view to moving parts of their business offshore. A hard cap will particularly hit the graduate training programmes of many large organisations, including RBC.” Royal Bank of Canada.

“The contribution that Tier 1 and Tier 2 migrants can make in terms of inward investment is an aspect that is often overlooked. For example, PwC needs experienced Chinese and Arab nationals operating within the UK firm to ensure that it can give confidence to clients looking to invest in the UK. Inbound immigration of people of the right calibre from countries with high inbound investment potential can therefore be very beneficial for the UK economy.”

“The ability to attract high levels of inward investment to the UK and establish London in particular as an international hub for global business, has been central to the UK’s relative economic prosperity over the last decade. As the UK emerges from recession, ensuring limits on the economic tiers are implemented in a way that does not jeopardise this reputation will be vital to securing the recovery. We are encouraged by the government’s recognition of the importance of the UK being seen as “open for business”; this perception must not be undermined by the cap.” Confederation of British Industry.

“It is important to recognise that the global mobility policies imply a degree of interdependence between countries in the number and timing of international assignments, which fluctuates as business needs change. Employers sense a serious risk that an adverse immigration climate in the UK will damage the country’s reputation as a global business hub and spill over to other countries where British staff are assigned. This could cause a double rebound for the UK economy, reducing interest in inward investment from overseas companies and reducing prospects for British staff to work abroad.” Permits Foundation.

“If the ability of migrants to enter the UK under Tier 2 is significantly reduced, AFB and BBA members will create jobs overseas, that otherwise would have been created in the UK. As a result, the teams supporting those roles will also be located overseas.” Association of Foreign Banks and British Bankers’ Association (joint response).

“Some businesses have been clear and said that the inclusion of ICTs in the cap will reduce the number of jobs their company bases in the UK, and may have affected their decision to set up here in the first place.” British Chambers of Commerce.

“The result of any restrictions on intra-company transfers would be that projects would have to be relocated to our head office in the Netherlands or our operations in the USA, which would be taking investment and business outside of the UK.”

“The proposals [for limits on Tiers 1 and 2] would therefore have a significant negative and disproportionate impact on London. In short, they will put the economic recovery at risk by creating skill gaps and placing London at a competitive disadvantage in the global competition for talent and inward investment. A limit in Tier 1 and Tier 2 migration would have a negative economic impact on London without significantly reducing net migration.” Greater London Authority.

“The shortage of higher skilled medical and care staff are of particular concern for the North East. The fear is that the proposal for Tier 2 migrants on a ‘first come, first served basis’ with limited visas available would make it difficult to respond to demand to those positions at times of greatest need.” North East Strategic Migration Partnership.

“There remain significant parts of the country and significant services e.g. mental health services, specialist nursing skills and social care services in London where an inability to recruit the right skills will lead to gaps and pressures on local services.” Department of Health.

“It is possible for the health sector to reduce its overall dependence on level 1 and 2 migrants. However, to train and develop a health care professional can take years – and for those in consultant roles, sometimes decades.” Skills for Health.

“Immigration has played an important role in staffing the NHS; however, workforce planning and DH investment in education and training have been aimed at achieving greater self-sufficiency. This investment has resulted in greater self-sufficiency but the very size of the NHS, the global mobility of healthcare professionals and the need for highly trained professional and skilled clinical staff means that it is unlikely to be able to achieve total self-sufficiency.” Department of Health.

“Social care continues also to be reliant on migration and this is particularly the case in senior skilled care workers and children’s social workers who are recognised as shortage occupations. Restricted migration in these areas will make the current situation worse, with commensurate risks to the quality and safety of service provision.” Department of Health.

“The local hospital would be at breaking point with all of the wards filled with elderly patients with non-acute needs.” Brooklands Nursing Home.

“The IHAS considers that any limits on the non-EEA migration to the healthcare sector will in the short to medium term have a catastrophic effect on the provision of healthcare in the UK and suggests that restriction to migration must not be implemented until the UK has appropriate places to train UK staff in the skills that are needed for them to fill the vacancies.” Independent Healthcare Advisory Services.

“Research shows that, in majority migrants arriving and settling in the region are young, fit, and less dependent on local services than the host population, more likely to be working and contributing to the local, regional and national economy through national insurance contributions.” North East Strategic Migration Partnership.

“Morgan Stanley provides private healthcare insurance to all of its employees and assignees, and the firm pays for private schooling for the children of senior international assignees, therefore having limited impact on public services.” Morgan Stanley.

“In members’ experience many Tier 1 and Tier 2 migrants have private healthcare for themselves and their dependants, often as part of a benefits package offered to the migrant along with their job” Immigration Law Practitioners’ Association.

“[...] the dependants of Tier 1 and 2 migrants tend to be skilled, of working age and have little impact on NHS services.” North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership.

“If the social worker workforce, which is already under considerable pressure from vacancy rates and substantial workloads, loses its supply of overseas trained social workers, it could put at risk the reforms to social work practice and child safeguarding that the Government is looking to the Social Work Reform Board and Munro Review to help achieve.” Department for Education.

“High national vacancy and turnover rates contribute to poor delivery of services and therefore increase the risk of poor outcomes for vulnerable children and their families. In the most serious cases, the absence of workers has been cited as a contributing factor in the serious injury or death of children and young people known to social services.” Department for Education.

“The ability to access a global workforce is of paramount importance from a Higher Education perspective. Universities compete to attract the brightest and best staff from a truly international pool of candidates. It is vital that universities are able to compete internationally and to ensure that researchers are attracted to bring their grants/funding and research teams to the UK. Limiting the ability for this to happen will inevitably make the UK a far less attractive option for staff who are being solicited by other employing institutions.” Royal Holloway, University of London.

“As a world-class university with a strong international reputation it is essential that we sustain the high quality of our research and teaching. Academic and research staff from overseas play a vital role in this, both those who come to Oxford as employees and those who visit to pursue collaborative research projects or to attend conferences or give occasional lectures or short courses for our students. Without such international academic mobility our ability to offer world-class teaching and to engage in cutting-edge research would be seriously compromised.” University of Oxford.

“At a national level, large differences in net migration have only small-scale impacts on the numbers of children and young people, at least in the medium term. [. . .]. However, there could be much more marked impacts at a more localised level, particularly in areas which currently have relatively high net migrant inflows.” Department of Education.

“Our members also note that some of “Our members also note that some of the region’s schools are dependent on migrant children to remain open. We are concerned that plans for a reduction in Tier 1 and 2 migration may put some schools’ futures in doubt, and thereby undermine advances in community cohesion.” North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership.

“In members’ experience significant numbers of Tier 1 and Tier 2 migrants opt for private schools in the UK for their children.” Immigration Law Practitioners’ Association.

“Society as a whole benefits from the integration of individuals from diverse communities, as these migrants tend to come to the UK as individuals to work basing themselves in major commercial centres, and do integrate into the wider community, as opposed to creating their own micro communities.” FactSet Europe Limited.

Skillset would favour neither measure as the potential damage to the sector caused by either could be equally great. Companies would need to be able both to extend existing contracts and take on new migrant workers at different times in order to remain competitive.” Skillset (Sector Skill Council for the Creative Industries).

Extensions are mostly approved and switching category is very easy, thus, most migrants will make it to 5 years and be able to apply for ILR, at which point they are likely to move away from their current job and possibly out of the sector – thus, we have added one more person who has a permanent right to stay in the UK AND created demand for one more migrant chef to replace them. It should be made much harder to extend and switch, which would mean a lot more migrants going home after their 3 years and would affect the appeal of working in the UK as an eventual place to settle.” e2e Linkers.

“There are already strict and stringent controls under the PBS for applications outside of the UK for Tiers 1 and 2 therefore I believe that the reductions should be targeted on extensions and switching between routes.” Fluor Limited.

“Companies generally request extensions for two reasons. Normally it is because the non-EU migrant is doing exceptional work and the company wishes him to continue this position. This is good for the company and the economy. Sometimes a company requests an extension because it has not been possible to replace that migrant with a resident worker. The removal of the ability to request extensions will leave skill gaps within a firm that were previously covered by invaluable migrant workers.” Price Waterhouse Coopers.

“It is hard to see how measures of this kind could be compatible with the right to family life under Article 8 of the ECHR.” MigrationWatch UK.

“We also believe that there is a fundamental right to respect for family and private life and to marry and found a family without discrimination. These rights are embodied in the European Convention of Human Rights and transposed into UK law through the Human Rights Act 1998. We believe that any system or cap that restricts or discourages migrants’ access on the basis of family status or encourages access to a migrant with no dependants would be challenged legally.” Permit Foundation.

“Alternatives to employing Tier 1 and 2 migrants, including training and up-skilling of the resident workforce in Scotland will take time to achieve.” Scottish Government.

“It is important for employers to take responsibility for identifying skills requirements as well as investing training in their staff rather than relying on government funding for training.” Skills Funding Agency.

“Policy-makers should turn this potential threat to UK competitiveness into an opportunity to raise employer ambition and to encourage employers to invest into the training and skills development of the UK resident workforce.” UKCES.

“There is a range of activity already underway to ensure more UK residents are seeking work and have the necessary skills. However, this work will necessarily take time to develop and put in place. For example, the Work Programme which will provide an integrated package of support to help unemployed people back into sustained work will be introduced from summer 2011.” Department of Work and Pensions.

“Given that so many of our posts are highly specialised, and funded by limited-term grants from external funding bodies and other organisations, it is frequently not practicable for us to train resident workers, both because of the specialised background required and because of time constraints.” University of Oxford.

“Compared to most other professions, the training period for scientists is extremely long. In the life sciences, becoming a specialist researcher of the type employed by the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute would be likely to involve three years of undergraduate study, four years of postgraduate training and three or more years of postdoctoral work. Training a person to this level is also very expensive.” Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute.

“The UK’s world-class research institutions need to be able to hire the best individuals in their fields, not simply a UK or EEA individual who is ‘good enough’.” Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute.

“Every effort must be made to ensure the economic routes remain flexible enough to meet demand, which we would expect to increase as the economic situation in the UK improves.” Confederation of British Industry.

“Without these migrants, economic recovery is put at risk as companies fail to fill job vacancies with potentially damaging effects on output and growth. Companies may fail to expand or expand less than they would do otherwise.” UKCES.

“As a University we value being able to use both routes and whilst we do not extensively use Tier 1 we would not wish to see a reduction of numbers in this Tier, however the impact on the University would be less significant, than a reduction in Tier 2.” Cranfield University.

“BBUS, and the wider utilities sector within which it operates, would be hugely impacted through reducing tier 2 migrant’s entry into the UK.” Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions.

“Provided the Tier 2 route remains as currently defined the impact of Tier 1 reductions would be negligible.” Doosan Babcock.

“Every effort must be made to ensure the economic routes remain flexible enough to meet demand, which we would expect to increase as the economic situation in the UK improves. As we have made clear in previous submissions to the MAC, retaining flexibility in Tier 2 is the primary focus for CBI members.” Confederation of British Industry.

“Tier 1 is a common route of entry for scientists and researchers... The Wellcome Trust Institute advises prospective non-EU recruits who meet the criteria for Tier 1 to apply under this category as we consider it offers greater flexibility to employers and applicants than Tier 2.” and “If the criteria for Tier 1 are changed in a way that makes it more difficult for high-skilled scientists to qualify, it is likely that science employers will increasingly rely on Tier 2.” Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute.

“The impact from Tier 1 would become fundamentally greater if Tier 2 is restricted as most bank sector employees are, by nature of their earnings, defined as highly skilled and would seek to use this route if the other is not accessible.” Association of Foreign Banks and the British Bankers’ Association (joint response).

“Highly skilled migrants are globally mobile and provide a positive contribution to any economy.” BT.

“... if severe restrictions are put on the Tier 1 (General) route it would make the UK a less attractive place for individuals to come to the UK to work and would severely hamper our members’ ability to recruit the “brightest and best” to work in the UK, thereby hindering our members’ local and global competitiveness.” Association of Foreign Banks and the British Bankers’ Association (joint response).

“It’s important for the UK economy that it is open and attractive to the best talent in the world, and those global high flyers considering coming to the UK face a visa process that is quick and that has a predictable outcome.” Sybersolve Solutions Ltd

“Both Tier 1 and Tier 2 migrants bring enormous talent and skills to the UK, in turn benefiting businesses and the economy as a whole as well as passing valuable skills and knowledge to resident workers.” KBR.

“... highly skilled non-EU nationals prefer to apply to come to the UK under Tier 1 (General) as it is the immigration category which gives them the most flexibility in relation to the type of work they are able to do in the UK.” Association of Foreign Banks and the British Bankers’ Association (joint response).

“Migration should be reduced exclusively through the Tier 1 route. Tier 1 individuals are coming to the UK on a speculative basis, and are by definition the lower priority than the Tier 2 route which is for individuals required specifically for employment by employers.” Masala World.

“Although Tier 1 is for highly skilled the jobs the migrants undertake overseas may have little or NO relevance to UK employers. Often jobs that migrants under Tier 1 undertake are low paid and unskilled and irrelevant to the jobs they did overseas.” Las Iguanas.

“Having set a desired level of Tier 1 visa issuance, we strongly support using the pass mark as the primary and overwhelmingly dominant tool to bring the number of applications into balance with the quota.” Sybersolve Solutions Ltd.

“Given the potential for dependants to take up unskilled jobs that could otherwise be occupied by UK-born workers, we believe that dependant numbers should be reduced by a greater proportion than migrant numbers. To address this, CIPD believes that immigrants with unskilled dependants should have their points reduced accordingly” Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

“If the UK Government wishes to strengthen the new system in limiting the number of non-EU migrants, we would like to suggest that raising the points system on higher income levels rather than raising the requirements for English language ability.” Mitsubishi Corporation International.

“Notwithstanding our view that there should be no cap on ICTs, Morgan Stanley believes that ICTs and Tier 2 (Generals) on assignments lasting less than 12 months should be exempt from any limit. This is because they do not contribute to the annual net migration figures and therefore capping them will not assist the Government’s aim of reducing net migration to the tens of thousands.” Morgan Stanley.

“We believe, therefore, that it is critical to the UK’s attractiveness as a place in and from which to invest and do business that the ICT route is excluded from the limits in Tier 1 and 2.” Confederation of British Industry.

“We strongly support the continued exemption of [the intra-company transfer] route from annual limits.” UK Trade & Investment.

“Whilst we appreciate that the Government has a commitment to reducing the net migration flow into the UK, removing the flexibility from global businesses that have chosen to invest in UK jobs is not the way to do this, and could have severe long term consequences for the economy.” British Chambers of Commerce.

“ICT is essential to the continued strength and competitiveness of the sector. Given the predominance of multinationals and the global nature of the industry, the ability to move personnel between regions is critical to companies’ business models. It enables the transfer of key knowledge and skills, ensures the safe delivery of projects important to the UK’s energy security and economy by competent and experienced personnel and allows UK resident workers to develop and share their own expertise across the globe. The ICT is a two way process which brings great benefit to UK workers, thousands of whom are currently working overseas in other oil and gas provinces. If the ICT route were stifled in the UK, these UK expats could in some cases have to be brought back to the UK to redress the balance across the organisation as non-EEA migrants were denied entry to the UK.” Oil & Gas UK.

“The TUC and affiliates have for years expressed their concerns about the over lax rules governing the use of Intra Company Transfer (ICTs). The continuing growth of ICTs as a percentage of all those migrant workers entering via Tier 2 merely adds to this concern. Whereas the TUC and affiliates have always accepted that there is a legitimate role for ICTs we do not believe it legitimate that ICTs are being used to fill jobs which could be done by people in the resident labour market. This is an issue which needs to be addressed irrespective of the discussion around the cap.” TUC.

“We recognise, however, that concerns have been raised about potential abuse of the ICT route. CBI members believe there is little foundation for these concerns and the CBI has not seen any evidence of abuse of the system.” Confederation of British Industry.

“The basic fact is that it’s cheaper to operate this way. The idea that the vast majority of these 30,000 employees have unique skills is simply not true. The majority are undertaking Business and System Analysis work and technical development work which require skill sets which can be readily found here in the UK from unemployed IT professionals.” Member of the public.

“The main reason for the length of stay is it takes time to transfer skills, depending on the nature of the transfer, build good relationships for business and to provide continuous support now and when they return to Japan for our products etc. If the necessary length of stay for the Japanese transferees is not permitted, the business operations in the UK will be seriously restricted /damaged.” Hochiki Europe (UK) Limited.

“Our members do not generally contribute to net migration and through their international assignment programmes, the number of individuals they transfer into the UK is balanced by the number they transfer overseas.” Association of Foreign Banks and the British Bankers’ Association (joint response).

“‘Market-based’ mechanisms such as these are not perfect, but they do provide a clear indicator that the employer faces a genuine need and that the prospective immigrant has scarce and valuable skills. They would also raise needed funds to support workforce development and/or the cost of processing visas.” Migration Policy Institute.

“It is important to ensure that the labour market remains flexible. We cannot support the merging of the shortage occupation list (SOL) and the resident labour market test.” Confederation of British Industry.

“In the case of care workers, a number of employers have told us that they will not be able to continue to provide services safely and legally without the recruitment of migrant workers.” Skills for Care & Development.

“The impact on our company of reducing the number of migrants through the Tier 2 shortage route would be crippling. Skilled specialist chefs are fundamental to our business and without them we would not be able to survive. We would at best need to curtail our operations very significantly, and at worse even liquidate the business. In the interim we have had to put all expansion plans on hold.” Masala World.

“The Royal Ballet recruits dancers from an international talent pool and to maintain its standing as a world class company needs to ensure that it can recruit the very best candidates.” The Royal Opera House.

“The impact of limiting Tier 2 migrants would be huge to the oil and gas industry.” Oil & Gas UK.

“Without the flexibility of recruiting non-EEA migrant teachers, one likely consequence of teacher shortages is greater use of temporary supply teachers. Covering vacancies with supply teachers is much more expensive for schools than employing full-time non-EEA migrant teachers.” Department for Education.

“As a company we have always felt that the shortage occupation route does not adequately reflect or address the challenges the engineering contracting industry faces when trying to fill certain positions.” Fluor Limited.

“We believe that Tier 1 and 2 workers’ automatic eligibility to apply for permanent residency . . . should be reviewed. We believe that entitlements to permanent residency and citizenship should be amended under Tier 2 to ensure that more people leave at the end of their stay, one of the original aims of the Points Based System.” Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.