Globalization and Elite Responsiveness: Trade Shocks, Competitive Contexts, and Political Ideology

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The Political Center is Collapsing in Western Democracies
Extensive Work on Trade and Voter Support for Populism

- Trade and other aspects of globalization linked to cultural ideological responses
  - Support for far-right populism (Gingrich 2017, Colantone & Stanig 2018, Milner 2021)
  - Anti-immigrant sentiment (Autor et al. 2020)
  - Authoritarian attitudes (Norris & Inglehart 2019)
- And more recently, economic self-interest (Rommel & Walter 2018, Campello & Urdinez 2021)
Research on elite responses to trade is more limited and inconclusive (Rodrik 2021), focuses exclusively on economic ideology, and draws primarily from the US context.

- Evidence that voters’ interests only marginally impact how members of Congress vote on legislative bills (e.g. Guisinger 2009)
- Others find local dynamics do impact legislative votes on trade policy in the US, but effects might either be:
  - Increased protectionism (Feigenbaum & Hall 2015)
  - Or more generalized ideological polarization (Autor et al. 2020)
Do legislators shift their economic and cultural ideology in response to trade-induced shifts?

What role do local competitive and electoral contexts play in shaping these ideological shifts?
### Theoretical Expectations

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Why France?:
- Trade with LDCs has increased dramatically over past two decades, but with significant regional variation
- Prevalence of both far-right and far-left

Why the French Senate?:
- Use of majoritarian and PR electoral systems in the same body
**Research Design**

- **Dependent Variable**: (Change in) individual legislator ideology
  - Original dataset of 3,600 roll call votes in the French Senate (1996-2007)
  - Hand-coded economic (2,227) and cultural (613) bills, validated with Comparative Agendas Project
  - Bayesian dynamic item response (IRT) models to estimate ideological positions over time

**Main Independent Variables**:
- Local trade exposure
- Autor et al (2020)'s imports per worker (IPW) measure
- Electoral institutions (majoritarianism vs. PR)
- Electoral competitiveness
- Vote share of far-right/far-left in previous election

**Models**:
- First-differences models with controls (department-level, demographic, economic, and political) and two-way unit/time FEs.
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Trade Shocks and Economic Ideology

Panel A: $\Delta$ IRT Score, Economic Dimension (Individual)

Panel B: $\Delta$ IRT Score, Economic Dimension (Department)

Coeff on $\Delta$ IPW

Econ+Demog Ctrls
Pol Ctrls A
Pol Ctrls B
Trade Shocks, Competitive Majoritarianism, and Economic Ideology

\[ \Delta \text{ Economic Ideology Score (Indiv)} \]

Coeff on \( \Delta \text{IPW} \times \text{Majoritarian} \times \text{Competitiveness} \)

Vote Margin

\[ \Delta \text{ Economic Ideology Score (Indiv)} \]

Meyerrose & Watson

Trade, Competitive Contexts, & Ideology

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Trade Shocks and Radical Party Strength: Overall Results

(a) Strong Radical Left

(b) Strong Radical Right
Trade Shocks and Radical Left Strength: Results by Party

(a) Economic Dimension

(b) Cultural Dimension
### Summary and Conclusion

#### Economic dimension

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<td>No change Shift right (all)</td>
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