

# **Agents of Past Principals: The Lasting Effects of Incumbents on the Political Ideology of Bureaucrats**

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## **Abstract**

Understanding representation is central to politics. Numerous studies assess under which conditions politicians share citizens' ideological preferences. Under which conditions bureaucrats share citizens' ideological preferences has not been systematically studied, however. Yet, bureaucratic preferences shape policy outcomes. Our paper thus studies why bureaucrats are more right or left-wing than citizens in some countries and points of time, yet not others. We theorize that political ideologies of past incumbents shape this variation. Incumbents can select ideologically-aligned bureaucrats and socialize bureaucrats into ideological preferences; moreover, prospective bureaucrats may self-select into ideologically-aligned governments. As bureaucratic tenure exceeds political tenure, this politicization has lasting effects. Survey data from 87 countries supports this argument: bureaucrats are more left-leaning than citizens in countries with longer prior rule by economically left-wing governments, and more right-wing in countries with more authoritarian pasts. This suggests that incumbents continue to shape the ideological preferences of bureaucrats after leaving office.

**Keywords:** Bureaucracy; Ideological Congruence; Representation; Political Control

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## 1. Introduction

The study of representation is central to political science. A large body of work has assessed whether – and under which conditions – elected officials share the ideological preferences of citizens and produce policies that accord with citizen interests (see, among many, Golder & Stramski, 2010; Mayne & Hakhverdian, 2016). They typically share the expectation that government for the people – the formulation and implementation of policies that are responsive to citizen demands – occurs where the ideological preferences of citizens and elected officials match.

At the same time, why *bureaucrats* share the ideological preferences of citizens in some countries and times – yet not others – has received scant attention. This is a serious omission. Government for the people depends not only on whether elected officials share the ideological preferences of citizens, but also whether bureaucrats share the ideological preferences of citizens. The rationale is simple: bureaucrats shape policy outcomes. Decades of research have underscored that bureaucrats – including both civil servants in administrative positions and street-level bureaucrats, such as social workers or police officers – can play important roles in determining which policies rise on agendas, how policies are designed, and, in particular, how they are implemented (see, among many, Kingdon & Thurber, 1995; Lipsky, 2010; Page & Jenkins, 2005). Whether bureaucrats in administration and at the street-level share the attitudes and preferences of citizens thus matters for whether policies reflect citizen interests – and government is, indeed, ‘for the people’.

This insight is, of course, “the fundamental axiom ... underlying the concept of representative bureaucracy” (Meier & Nigro, 1976, p. 458). Yet, empirically, the study of representative bureaucracy has limited itself almost exclusively to studying representation of minorities. Whether bureaucrats represent the political ideological preferences of citizens has

not been considered in this literature.<sup>2</sup> Yet, recent studies suggest that countries vary among each other and over time in regards to whether bureaucrats share citizens' ideological preferences, or are more left- or right-leaning (e.g. Bednarczuk, 2015; Jensen, Sum, & Flynn, 2009; Tepe, 2012).

This paper addresses this puzzling variation both theoretically and empirically. Theoretically, the paper argues that political ideologies of past incumbents shape this variation. Incumbents can select ideologically aligned bureaucrats and socialize bureaucrats into their ideological preferences; moreover, prospective bureaucrats may self-select into ideologically-aligned governments. As bureaucratic tenure exceeds political tenure and political ideologies tend to be sticky, this politicization has lasting effects. As a result, bureaucrats retain ideological preferences of past political principals under new political principals.

Empirically, the paper provides evidence for this argument through multi-level analyses of the largest dataset on ideological congruence between bureaucrats and citizens to-date, pooling 597,143 respondents in 87 countries and 332 country-years from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), World Value Survey (WVS) and European Social Survey (ESS).

The multi-level analyses show that bureaucrats are more left-leaning than citizens in countries with longer prior rule by economically left governments, and more right-wing in countries with past authoritarian governments. These results hold when controlling for a range of individual and country-level factors, including governments' current economic ideology and extent of authoritarianism, and country-year fixed effects to control for the average ideology in a country-year.

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<sup>2</sup> As detailed below, several prior studies explain why bureaucrats might be more left-leaning and prefer larger states than citizens (e.g. Niskanen, 1971), yet leave unexplained why this varies between countries and over time.

Our results suggest that today's bureaucratic agents continue to share ideological preferences of past political principals. Past incumbents thus continue to shape ideological preferences of bureaucrats after leaving office.

This finding has important implications for our understanding of public policy, the political control of bureaucracy and political representation. If bureaucrats continue to share the preferences of past incumbents, bureaucrats are likely to be a force for policy continuity, preferring to advance policies enacted by prior administrations. Bureaucrats are thus also, at least in terms of their ideological preferences, politically responsive, not politically neutral – albeit to *past* political principals. This implies that multiple-principal models of political control over bureaucracy might be usefully extended to cover not only principals in multiple branches of government, but also in current and past governments. Our findings also provide evidence for the utility of controlling bureaucracy by shaping bureaucratic preferences, rather than minimizing discretion or strengthening oversight, for instance. Shaping bureaucratic preferences enables incumbents to shape policy outcomes not only while in office, but also after leaving.

The cost to political representation is clear: at least in part, bureaucratic government is no longer 'for the people', but 'for the previous administration'.

## **2. Literature Review**

The existing literature does not offer explicit hypotheses for our puzzle: why bureaucrats share the ideological preferences of citizens in some countries and at some points in time, yet not others.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, three important insights from existing works inform our study: that attitudinal congruence between bureaucrats and citizens matters for policy outcomes; that

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<sup>3</sup> As detailed below, Blais, Blake & Dion (1990), Knutsen (2005) and Tepe (2012) are partial exceptions.

ideological congruence is a helpful measure of the quality of representation; and that at least three mechanisms – attraction-selection, socialization and occupational incentives – might lead to ideological divergence between bureaucrats and citizens.

The literature on representative bureaucracy usefully underscores the first insight: bureaucrats who share the attitudes and preferences of citizens are more likely to advocate policies in the interest of these citizens (e.g. Bradbury & Kellough, 2008;). The empirical focus of these studies has been on representation of historically disadvantaged groups, however – rather than of political ideology of citizens.<sup>4</sup>

To study the quality of representation of citizens, scholars frequently rely on measures of ideological congruence (e.g. Blais & Bodet, 2006; Golder & Stramski, 2010). Congruence is thereby measured as “the degree of correspondence between the policy and programmatic positions of citizens and elite actors on broad ideological terms, most notably on a left-right dimension” (Mayne & Hakhverdian, 2016, p. 2). Congruence between citizens and politicians in office has been found to predict a range of positive outcomes, such as citizen satisfaction and trust (e.g. Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2014; Kim, 2009). We take from these studies that ideological congruence is a helpful measure of the quality of representation. Contrary to these works, however, we focus on ideological congruence between citizens and bureaucrats rather than elected officials.

Our study is, of course, not the first to consider ideological congruence between citizens and bureaucrats. Public choice scholars have argued that occupational incentives shift the ideological preferences of bureaucrats to the left (Niskanen, 1971). According to the ‘Bureau Voting Model’, self-interested bureaucrats hold leftist attitudes, as left-wing governments favor

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<sup>4</sup> This is even though the study of representative bureaucracy was originally motivated by political representation of citizens (Kingsley, 1944).

more public spending, which protects bureaucrats' jobs and enhances their likelihood of receiving salary increases and promotions (cf. Dunleavy, 1985).

Public Service Motivation studies also predict more left-leaning ideological preferences of bureaucrats. Bureaucrats are argued to be uniquely motivated by public service, and might thus have greater faith in – and prefer – state intervention to solve societal problems (Perry, 1996; see also Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman, 1981). Through self-selection, the public sector attracts those who wish to serve the public and might thus favor state intervention to solve societal problems (e.g. Vandenabeele, 2008; Barfort, Harmon, Hjorth and Olsen, 2019). Alternatively, public sector workplaces might socialize bureaucrats into Public Service Motivation and a preference for state intervention as they see the need for public policies in their daily work (Knutsen, 2005, p. 594).

Prior studies thus predict that bureaucrats will be more left-leaning than citizens, and that attraction-selection, occupational incentives and socialization may contribute to this leftward shift.<sup>5</sup>

Evidence for these assertions, however, is, “mixed” (Tepe, 2012, p. 232). In a *subset* of countries and time-periods, bureaucrats have indeed been found to be more left-leaning than citizens (Bednarczuk, 2015; Garand, Parkhurst, & Seoud, 1991; Jacobsen, 2012; Jensen et al., 2009; Knutsen, 2005; Rattsø & Sørensen, 2016; Tepe, 2012; Wise & Szuecs, 1996). In our analysis, we also identify a leftward shift of bureaucrats on average across countries (see Figure 1 below). Yet, this average masks considerable heterogeneity between and within countries over time.<sup>6</sup> As illustrated further below in Figure 2, in some countries and periods of time, bureaucrats are more *right-wing* than citizens, while in others they share the ideological preferences of citizens.

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<sup>5</sup> DeHart-Davis (2007, p. 892) is an exception, suggesting that public sectors may attract rule-oriented characters, which are associated with conservative political attitudes.

<sup>6</sup> A separate set of works underscores variation in bureaucratic ideologies within countries across state institutions (see, e.g., Clinton, Bertelli, Grose, Lewis and Nixon, 2012).

In light of prior studies, this variation remains puzzling.<sup>7</sup> Why do bureaucrats share the ideological preferences of citizens in some countries, yet not others – and within those countries in some points in time, yet not others? Prior studies do not resolve this conundrum, but suggest it is an important puzzle to address: attitudinal congruence between bureaucrats and citizens matters for policy outcomes, and ideological congruence in particular matters for the quality of representation. Existing works also suggest that attraction-selection, occupational incentives and socialization could be at play in explaining variation in ideological congruence. We draw on these findings to develop a theoretical explanation.

### **3. Theoretical Argument: The Lasting Effect of Political Principals on the Ideological Preferences of Bureaucrats**

To develop our theoretical argument, we build on the literature on the political control of bureaucracy and, in a narrower sense, studies of the relationship between political and bureaucratic ideology (see, classically, Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman, 1981). This literature does not explicitly account for variation in ideological congruence between citizens and bureaucrats. However, it has sought to explain why bureaucrats share the ideological preferences of politicians, and we take this as a starting point for developing our argument.

Like most of the literature, we depart from a principal-agent model, in which political principals delegate tasks to bureaucratic agents (cf. Moe, 1989). As principals cannot perfectly monitor agents, principal-agent problems arise where the preferences of political principals and

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<sup>7</sup> Partial exceptions are Blais et al. (1990), Knutsen (2005) and Tepe (2012). Comparing the U.S. and Canada, Blais et al. (1990, p. 384) posit that “the more the political debate focuses on the role of the state, the more substantial the sectoral cleavage is going to be.” Comparing the impact of sector employment on party choice in eight West-European countries, Knutsen (2005, p. 598) argues that bureaucrats are relatively more left-wing in countries with social-democratic welfare regimes, “due to the higher level of political conflict coupled with welfare services in these countries.” This inference is based on greater sector cleavage in a single country (Denmark), however. In a cross-section of 11 European countries, Tepe (2012, p. 261) similarly finds that bureaucrats are relatively more likely to vote for left-wing parties in social-democratic service economies. While these studies seek to account for the magnitude of the left-shift of bureaucrats vis-à-vis citizens, they cannot explain our broader variation of interest: why bureaucrats may, additionally, share the ideological preferences of citizens, or take more right-wing views. Moreover, prior studies only compare means across countries – which differ in many ways beyond political debates or welfare regimes.

bureaucrats diverge (Gailmard and Patty, 2007). Principals thus seek to align the ideological preferences of bureaucrats. An extensive literature has explored their tools to do so (see, e.g., McCubbins, Noll & Weingast, 1987). For our purposes, two are particularly pertinent.

First, political principals can attract and/or select ideologically-aligned bureaucrats. Principals can appoint likeminded bureaucrats at higher echelons in most OECD countries, and across the hierarchy in many developing countries (e.g. Kopecky et al, 2016). More indirectly, political principals can attract ideologically-aligned bureaucrats – not only in administration but also at the street-level – by, for instance, defining or expanding organizational missions, governmental programs, job conditions and job contents which are particular attractive to candidates who share their ideological preferences (see, e.g., Clinton et al, 2012). As a result, prospective bureaucrats with ideologically-aligned preferences may self-select into governments or government programs whose ideologies they share. Even in countries marked by high bureaucratic autonomy, politicians can thus shape – directly or indirectly – the staffing of bureaucracy (Dahlström and Holmgren, 2017).<sup>8</sup>

Second, political principals may socialize bureaucrats into their ideological preferences: Principals may appoint ideologically-aligned leaders of organizations, who can shape the organizational culture and ideologies which bureaucrats socialize into in their workplace (cf. Taormina, 2008). Moreover, political principals can socialize bureaucrats into their ideological preferences through interactions in the state (Heclo and Wildawsky, 1974). A range of prior studies provide evidence for a potential socialization and ideological congruence between political principals and bureaucrats (e.g. Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman, 1981; Heclo and Wildawsky, 1974; Jacobsen, 2012;). Moreover, research on authoritarian legacies

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<sup>8</sup> As a result, in OECD governments with merit safeguards which deprive principals of appointment powers (cf. Kopecky et al., 2016), attraction and self-selection – e.g. through governmental programs – is likely to carry greater weight as a mechanism. By contrast, in countries lacking merit safeguards, selection – principals appointing ideologically-aligned bureaucrats – may be expected to be more prominent. In either case, ideological alignment may occur.



shows that citizens internalize the ideology of authoritarian regimes (Neundorf 2009), and that authoritarian legacy effects are more pronounced for those who benefit from the regime, or are exposed to the regime's socialization more directly, for example through work (Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2019; Neundorf and Pop Eleches, 2020). Bureaucrats who work for, and benefit from public employment under authoritarian regimes, may thus be expected to be more likely to be socialized into the regime's ideology.

This holds all the more as non-democratic principals require bureaucratic agents, from ministerial administrations down to members of security services, to execute the regime's orders. In non-democratic regimes more so than in democracies, this requires people who embrace hierarchy, willing to follow orders – even if those orders go against the interests of other members of society, and *in extremis* include repression or committing atrocities. This need is independent of the economic ideology of the regime, be it Nazi-Germany, Soviet-Russia or modern-day China. In order to have their orders executed, autocratic regimes rely in part on a system of threats, incentives and institutional structures; yet, bureaucrats with an authoritarian orientation are likely more willing to participate in such a system. Research on authoritarianism was born out of the experiences of Nazi-Germany (Adorno et al, 1950). The psychological constructs of authoritarianism and social dominance orientation (Pratto et al, 1994) capture features that would be attractive to autocratic regimes irrespective of their economic ideology<sup>9</sup>; and autocratic principals rely on the same mechanisms introduced before to shape bureaucracy: selection, attraction, and socialization, leading to a more 'right-wing' public sector workforce – in an authoritarian sense – than the rest of the population.

Ideological congruence between bureaucrats and political principals may thus arise through selection, attraction (self-selection) and socialization. This in turn can lead to

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<sup>9</sup> See McFarland et al (1992) for an analysis of authoritarianism in Soviet-Russia.

ideological divergence between citizens and bureaucrats, if current political principals do not share the ideological preferences of citizens.<sup>10</sup>

Typically, however, most bureaucrats are not recruited by current political principals. Rather, in career bureaucracies, the tenure of bureaucrats surpasses the tenure of political principals (Moe, 1989). Consequently, most bureaucrats serving a political principal tend to have been recruited, attracted and (initially) socialized into ideological preferences by past political principals. Such ideological preferences may be ‘sticky’, that is changing only slowly over time, in part as political principals can make deliberate efforts to enhance the ‘stickiness’ of bureaucratic ideology, for instance by unionizing likeminded bureaucrats to protect them from dismissal in subsequent governments (Chen and Johnson, 2015; see also Horn, 1995). We build on this line of reasoning to argue that the current ideological preferences of bureaucratic agents are shaped by the ideological preferences of past political principals. As bureaucratic preferences matter for policy outcomes (Baekgaard, Blom-Hansen and Serritzlew, 2015), this implies bureaucrats remain agents of *past* political principals – rather than of citizens or current political principals.

This argument can be translated into two testable hypotheses, which account for the multi-dimensionality of political ideology. While acknowledging the multiplicity of ideological cleavages in society (cf. Sartori, 1976), we follow prior studies which construe the left-right dimension as a summary of two ‘value dimensions’: an economic ‘markets-versus-state-redistribution’ dimension and a political ‘liberal-versus-authoritarianism’ dimension, where the right is associated with a greater preference for markets and authoritarianism (see, e.g., Hix, 1999). In developing countries in particular, this second value dimension frequently translates into a democracy-authoritarianism cleavage (Deegan-Krause, 2007).

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<sup>10</sup> We thus do not assume that ideological congruence between citizens and bureaucrats requires congruence between bureaucrats and politicians, nor that the latter is (un)desirable (cf. Miller & Whitford, 2016).

We expect both of these dimensions to shape the left-right ideological preference of bureaucrats relative to citizens:<sup>11</sup>

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Bureaucrats are more left (right)-leaning than citizens in countries with longer past rule by governments with left (right)-wing economic ideologies.

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Bureaucrats are more right (left)-leaning than citizens in countries with longer past rule by authoritarian (democratic) government

That both economic *and* authoritarian ideologies of (past) political principals may shape the ideological left-right preferences of bureaucrats is plausible in light of prior studies. While these have largely focused on the economic ideologies of bureaucrats – arguing, for instance, that bureaucrats prefer economically left governments which favor larger states (see literature review) – the aforementioned research on authoritarian legacies underscores the plausibility of bureaucrats internalizing authoritarian ideologies of principals and thus the relevance of incorporating this second ‘value dimension’ into hypotheses about left-right wing ideological preferences of bureaucrats.<sup>12</sup>

Of course, ideologies of political principals are not the only potential explanation of ideological divergence between bureaucrats and citizens. Differential legacies of public sector recruitment and management systems may cause cross-country differences in demographic and socio-economic compositions of public sector workforces, including in levels of education,

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<sup>11</sup> A more precise implication of our argument is that economically left (right) governments are associated with bureaucrats who prefer economically left (right) policies; and democratic (authoritarian) governments are associated with bureaucrats who prefer democratic (authoritarian) states. To align our hypotheses with limited available data about bureaucratic ideologies, we, instead, rely on a left-right dimension as a summary or combination of these two value dimensions of ideology. From a theoretical point of view, there is evidence that holding right-wing attitudes in either the economic, or the authoritarian sense is sufficient for voters to self-identify as right-wing on a one-dimensional ideological scale (Gidron 2020). Furthermore, empirically, a unidimensional ideology dependent variable – rather than separate economic and democratic ideology dependent variables – arguably makes it harder to identify independent effects of economically left and democratic political principals. This data limitation thus precludes us from assessing effects on different dimensions of ideology, but does not detract from the validity of our hypothesis testing, as, as aforementioned, economic and democratic ideology may each be theoretically expected to shape aggregate left-right ideological preferences.

<sup>12</sup> We would thus, for instance, expect a bureaucrat with a past authoritarian economically-left principal to be more left-leaning than a bureaucrat with a past authoritarian economically-right principal, but more right-leaning than a bureaucrat with a past democratic economically-left principal.

income, age and gender (Gottschall et al., 2015), which may shape ideological preferences. Our statistical analyses thus control for individual-level demographic differences between private and public sector employees.

Moreover, socio-economic differences between countries may matter. With rising incomes, self-actualization goals – including serving others – may become more important in individual preferences (see, e.g., Inglehart, 1990). In richer countries, public service motivation – rather than salary and job security – may thus become more central in attracting candidates to the public sector (cf. Dur and Zoutenbier, 2014); and candidates with greater public service motivation may be more left-leaning.

Lastly, government size might matter. Larger states may attract candidates with greater faith in state intervention and thus more leftist attitudes than average citizens. Moreover, larger states may socialize public servants into preferring larger states, be it through active indoctrination or contextual interactions with other employees (e.g. Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1987; Meier & Nigro, 1976, p. 466). We control for these rival explanations when assessing our hypotheses.

#### **4. Data and Model Specification**

To test our hypotheses, we constructed a dataset which combines individual-level data from surveys on ideological preferences, employment sector and demographics with country-level data on our explanatory variables.

To get leverage on our country-level explainers, we maximize the number of country-years by combining individual-level data from World Value Survey (WVS) (2005-2014), European Social Survey (ESS) (2008-2014) and Comparative Study of Electoral Systems Survey (CSES) (1996-2016) rounds which included respondents' left-right ideological preferences *and* identified whether the respondent works in the public sector. In total, this

yielded a sample of 597,143 observations, 87 countries and 332 country-years (Appendix A), enabling us to control for a much wider set of country-level factors than classic works such as Golder and Stramski (2010).

For our dependent variable, thanks to comparably phrased questions across surveys, we can measure the ideological self-placement of respondents on a left-right scale across surveys (0-10, where 0 stands for the extreme left).<sup>13</sup> Congruence can then be operationalized by the distance between the ideological self-placements of bureaucrats and citizens.

The flipside of maximizing sample size by combining ESS, CSES and WVS surveys is the inability to assess congruence in a more fine-grained manner, for instance in terms of multiple dimensions of ideology or policy preferences (e.g. Rohrschneider & Whitefield, 2007). However, our standard left-right scale arguably measures our core ideological congruence concern; has been a staple in cross-country studies of congruence (e.g. Golder & Stramski, 2010; J. Huber & Powell, 1994); and is conceptually consistent across countries (e.g. Inglehart, 1990; Norris, 2004). Moreover, as detailed further below, our estimates rely on *within*-country differences in the *relative* placement of bureaucrats and citizens on the 0-10 scale. As such, they are not affected by differences in the average left-right placement of respondents across countries, or cross-national differences in the meaning respondents attribute to specific points on the scale.

The combination of distinct surveys also requires that we operationalize bureaucrats – and our public sector dummy – in an encompassing manner as those employed by government. This reflects our understanding of bureaucrats, as public employees in administrative positions in ministries and public sector institutions, as well as street-level bureaucrats, such as social workers or police officers (cf. Lipsky, 2010). A more fine-grained assessment of our

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<sup>13</sup> The WVS survey contained a 1-10 left-right scale instead. We harmonize ESS, CSES and WVS scales through a linear projection of the WVS scale onto a 0-10 scale, which preserves the endpoints and avoids information loss. Our results are not sensitive to this approach. They equally hold when collapsing the scales onto a common 9-point scale as in Giebler et al (2010: 249) (Appendix D(7)).

hypotheses for distinct groups of government employees is only partially feasible: WVS and CSES data only differentiate between public and several types of non-public sector respondents. In the ESS surveys – which do differentiate between distinct types of public employees – we include respondents who work for ‘central or local government’, ‘other public sector (such as education and health)’ and ‘state-owned enterprises’ (SOEs). Our results remain robust with an operationalization which excludes SOE employees and ‘other public sector workers’ (Appendix D(3)).

Finally, our data allows us to follow prior studies and control for numerous other individual-level determinants of political ideology: age, education, income, employment status, gender, marital status and union membership (see e.g. Dimick, Rueda, & Stegmueller, 2017; Jensen et al., 2009; Tepe, 2012).<sup>14</sup>

At the country-level, our hypotheses require measures for the economic ideology of current and past governments and for the extent to which current and past governments are or were authoritarian.

For data on the economic ideology of governments, we would, ideally, draw on a left-right placement of governments on a 0-10 scale. Unfortunately, to our knowledge, none of the three common approaches to position governing parties ideologically on a 0-10 spectrum – expert surveys (e.g. Bakker et al., 2015); election manifesto coding (e.g. Klingemann et al, 2006) or mass surveys (e.g. Golder & Stramski, 2010) – extend in coverage (even remotely) to our sample of 87 countries and 332 country-years. As a second best, we thus draw on a categorical indicator of the economic left-right orientation of governments from the Database of Political Institutions (DPI) (Cruz, Keefer, & Scartascini, 2016). The indicator codes whether the party of the chief executive is left, center, or right with respect to economic policy, and has been used in a range of prior works (e.g. Dutt & Mitra, 2005). As such, the measure represents

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<sup>14</sup> Appendix B contains details on the coding of these variables.

a coarser, but arguably still valid measure of our variable of interest. In our analyses below, we include dummies for economically left-wing governments.

The DPI dataset extends back to 1975 and thus permits us to construct a variable which captures previous rule by governments with left economic ideologies. To construct the most encompassing variable possible, we follow Huber and Stephens (2001, p. 61) in operationalizing the economic ideology of past governments as the proportion of years in the past that a country had a government with a left-wing economic ideology, measured from the first year for which data are available in the DPI dataset to one year before the respective CSES/WVS/ESS survey was conducted.<sup>15</sup> As an example, for the observations in Sweden 2002, this is the share of years between 1975 and 2001 during which a government with a left-wing economic ideology governed.

To measure current and past democratic and authoritarian rule, we rely on the combined Freedom House and Polity scale (Teorell et al 2017) that ranges from 0 (least democratic) to 10 (most democratic). It exceeds individual indices in terms of breadth and coverage, and combines assessments of the competitiveness and openness of elections, as well as political rights and civil liberties. As such, it usefully approximates the extent of authoritarian or democratic rule. For ease of interpretation, we reverse this variable, such that higher scores denote more authoritarian government. Our results are robust to using alternative democracy-autocracy measures (Appendix D(7)).

We also draw on the combined Freedom House and Polity scale to measure previous authoritarian (and democratic) rule. To ensure consistent time periods for legacies of past

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<sup>15</sup> As a consequence, our ‘past government’ ideology variables include previous years in power of incumbents who remain in office. While alternative operationalizations risk creating large (and arbitrary) between-country differences in what the measure represents, our approach precludes drawing substantive conclusions about incumbents’ current terms from insignificant effects of current government ideology (see results section).

economic ideology and authoritarianism, we take the average authoritarian score of a country since 1975 (until the respective country-year observation).<sup>16</sup>

Lastly, we measure per capita income with per capita GDP (constant 2005 US dollars, logged) from the World Development Indicators; and the size of the state with the share of government consumption as a percent of the GDP from Penn World Tables (both from Teorell et al., 2017).

In our combined dataset, respondents place themselves slightly to the right of the ideological spectrum (5.3 on a scale of 0-10); 14 percent of respondents work in the public sector; 30 percent live in a country with an economically left government; economically left governments were in power in 36 percent of previous years since 1975; and the average authoritarian score is 1.34 in the country-year, and 3.29 on average since 1975 (on a scale from 0 to 10) (see Appendix C for summary statistics).

### *Model Specification*

To estimate the effect of country-level factors on the ideological congruence between bureaucrats and citizens, we rely on multilevel models. They allow us to estimate simultaneously the ideological position of citizens and bureaucrats as a function of individual-level covariates, such as age and education, *and* country-level variables, such as the economic ideology of government. Cross-level interactions between country-level variables and the public-sector dummy then enable us to estimate the determinants of cross-national and cross-year heterogeneity in ideological divergence between bureaucrats and citizens. To illustrate, past authoritarian rule would shift bureaucratic ideologies to the right (relative to citizens), if

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<sup>16</sup> As a result of controlling separately for economic ideology and authoritarian rule, our approach also allows us to differentiate the effects of economically-left (e.g. communist) authoritarian regimes from economically-right authoritarian regimes (see Appendix E(4)).



the interaction between past authoritarian rule and the public sector dummy was significant (and positive) in our regressions.

Note that this approach implies that we are estimating ideological congruence *after* controlling for differences in the demographic and socio-economic composition of public sector workforces. A purist interpretation might call for assessing congruence between bureaucrats and citizens *unadjusted* for individual-level controls. Yet, as noted above, differences in public employment systems may lead to differences in individual-level factors, such as income, age, and education that are known to be correlated with ideology (e.g. Dimick et al., 2017). In order to arrive at credible estimates for our country-level explanators of interest, we thus net out individual-level differences. Our results are, however, not sensitive to the exclusion of individual-level factors (Appendix D(3)).

Our approach is also preferable to a seemingly simpler alternative: estimating differences in ideological positions between bureaucrats and citizens for each country-year, and then regressing those differences on country-level factors. While arguably more intuitive, this approach is also more likely to be biased: country-level factors may affect bureaucrats and citizens differently. Accounting for differential effects requires a model with ideological positions of all survey respondents as the dependent variable and cross-level interactions to allow bureaucratic and citizen ideology to be affected differently by country-level factors.

Multilevel models also allow us to capture two types of unobserved heterogeneity. First, countries are allowed to vary in terms of their average ideology through the use of country-year specific intercepts. All differences in political ideology – and differences in meanings respondents attribute to ideological placement on the 0-10 scale – between country-years are thus controlled for. This arguably goes a long way in assuaging concerns about omitted variable bias and measurement invariance when assessing ideological divergence between bureaucrats and citizens. Secondly, we relax the assumption that the effect of individual-level

variables has to be uniform across countries, and estimate random coefficients for all individual-level variables. The effects of income, employment status and other individual-level factors may thus vary across country-years.

In sum, we estimate a random coefficient model with the ideological positioning of respondents as the dependent variable, and cross-level interactions between our country-level factors and the public sector dummy as our key explanators (cf. Gelman and Hill 2007, Rabe Hesketh and Skrondal 2008). Using the example of authoritarian government as our level-2 variable of interest, the random intercept, random coefficient model for the ideological position of individual  $i$  in country-year  $j$  is:

$$Ideology_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j} Public\ Sector_{ij} + \Sigma \beta_j Level-1\ Variables + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (1)$$

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} Authoritarian\ Government_j + \Sigma \gamma Level-2\ Variables + \zeta_{0j} \quad (2)$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \delta_{10} + \delta_{11} Authoritarian\ Government_j + \Sigma \delta Level-2\ Variables + \zeta_{1j} \quad (3)$$

Starting with the first equation, an individual's ideology is thus a function of the country-year-specific intercept  $\beta_{0j}$ , and individual-level (Level-1) covariates, including the public-sector dummy, as well as an error term  $\varepsilon_{ij}$ . The second equation describes the effect of country-level (Level-2) covariates on country-year differences, allowing ideology to vary as a function of e.g. authoritarian government, as well as an error term  $\zeta_{0j}$ . Finally, the hypotheses regarding congruence are tested using the third equation that lets the effect of the public sector dummy  $\beta_{1j}$  vary as a function of country-level factors as well as an error term  $\zeta_{1j}$ . For our purposes, the key parameter of interest is  $\delta_{11}$ : the effect of the cross-level interaction between being a bureaucrat and our country-level variables (authoritarian government in our example above).

Our observational approach is, of course, not without limitations. In particular, we are unable to leverage (quasi)experimental variation in the ideology of political principals. Our results thus remain at risk of omitted variable bias. As noted above, though, our modelling

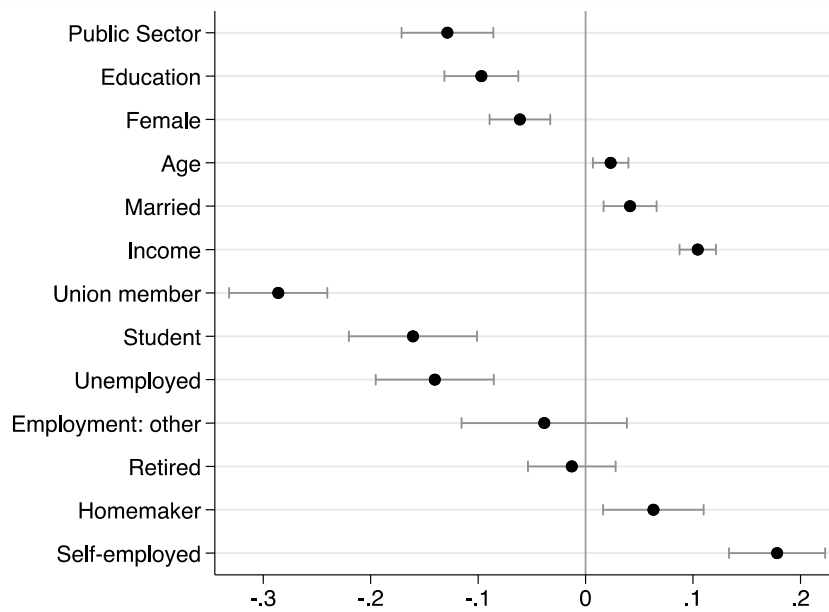
choices mitigate this potential bias: we control for *all* differences in ideologies between countries and years (as we are estimating determinants of *differences* in the ideology of bureaucrats relative to citizens in a country-year); differences in the demographic and socio-economic composition of public sector workforces; and a range of country-year-level rival explanations for differences in the ideology of bureaucrats and citizens (cf. robustness section). This arguably goes a long way towards addressing potential biases.

## 5. Results

We present our results in three steps. First, we look at individual-level determinants of ideology to estimate the average effect of being a public-sector worker. The results confirm predictions of prior studies: bureaucrats are on average more left-wing. Subsequently, we visualize the variation across countries and time which this average effect masks: bureaucrats are more left-wing in some countries and years, yet more right wing or ideologically congruent with citizens in others. To account for this variation we, third, present results from our multi-level models. They provide evidence for our theoretical argument: past rule by economically left-wing and authoritarian governments are both significant predictors.

As a first step, Figure 1 plots estimates for a baseline model (1) in which we control for all level-1 variables: age, gender, education, income, marital status, union membership, employment status and our public sector dummy. The results for control variables are consistent with prior studies (e.g. Dimick et al., 2017; Jensen et al., 2009; Tepe, 2012). Being older, married, richer and self-employed are all associated with a more right-wing ideological position, while a higher education level, as well as being a union member, female, student and unemployed, are associated with a more left-wing position.

**Figure 1: Individual-Level Determinants of Political Ideology**



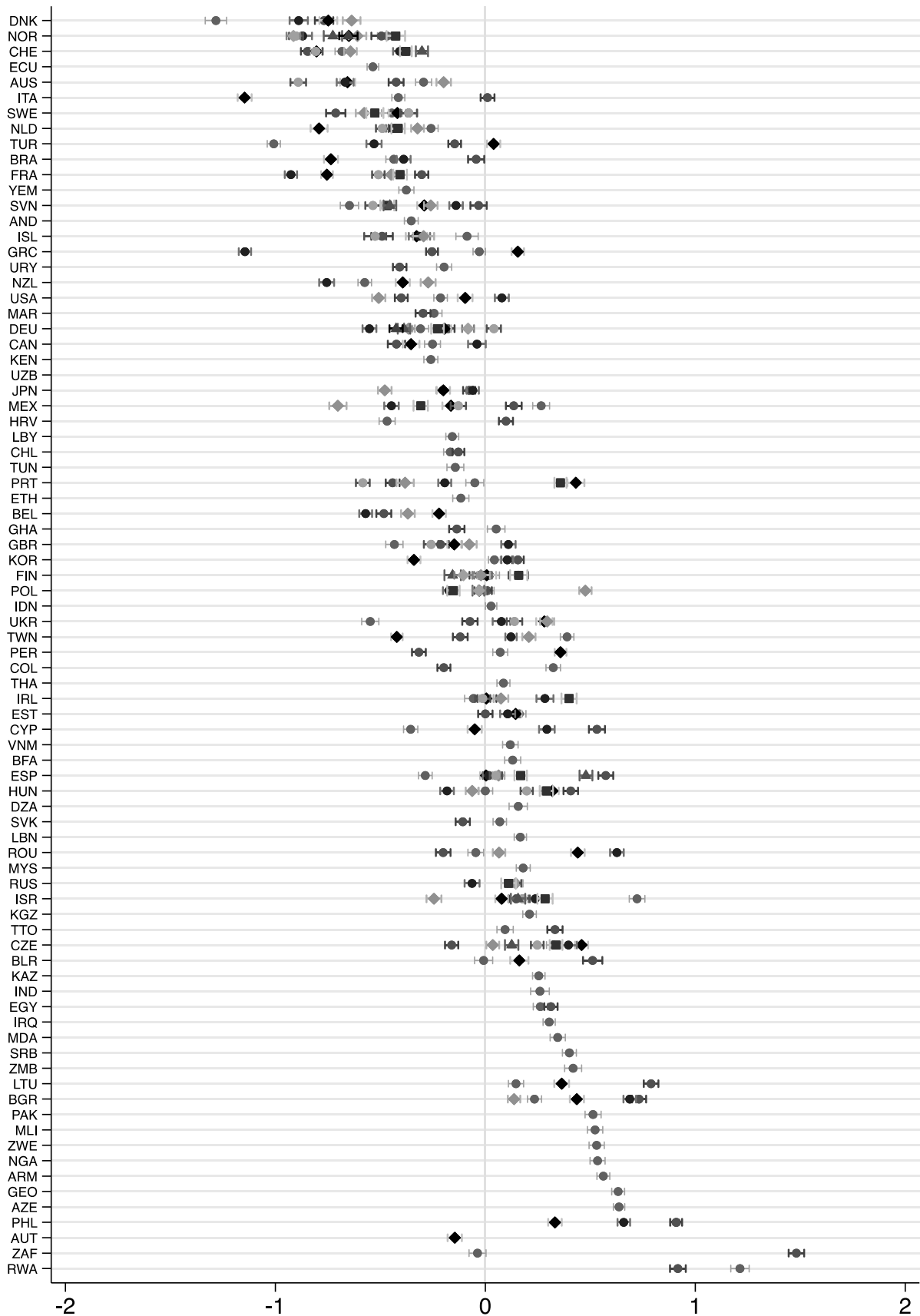
Notes: Mean coefficient estimates with 95 percent confidence intervals based on Model 1, Table 1. Dependent variable: ideological positioning (on 0-10 scale).

Our results also confirm predictions of Bureau Voting Model and Public Service Motivation studies. After controlling for other individual-level determinants, the ideological positioning of bureaucrats is 0.13 points to the left (on a 0-10 scale) of average citizens across country-years.

This average, however, masks cross-national and temporal variation. Figure 2 visualizes this variation, based on interactions of individual-level public sector and country-year dummies for all country-years. Each marker thereby represents one survey year in a country..

In some countries, such as Denmark and the Netherlands, bureaucrats are noticeably more left-leaning than citizens, and this effect is consistent across survey years. In others, such as Bulgaria or the Philippines, bureaucrats are consistently more right-wing, while in others yet – such as Finland, Israel or Korea – bureaucrats are more left-wing than citizens in some years, more right-wing in other years, and not significantly different from citizens in other years. What explains this variation across countries and over time?

**Figure 2: Bureaucrat-Citizen Ideological Congruence: Country-Year Variation**



Note: Country-year specific estimates of bureaucrat ideology relative to non-bureaucrat respondents with 95 percent confidence intervals. Model controlling for other demographics as in Model 1, Table 1. Different markers indicate different survey years for a country.

**Table 1: Estimation Results**

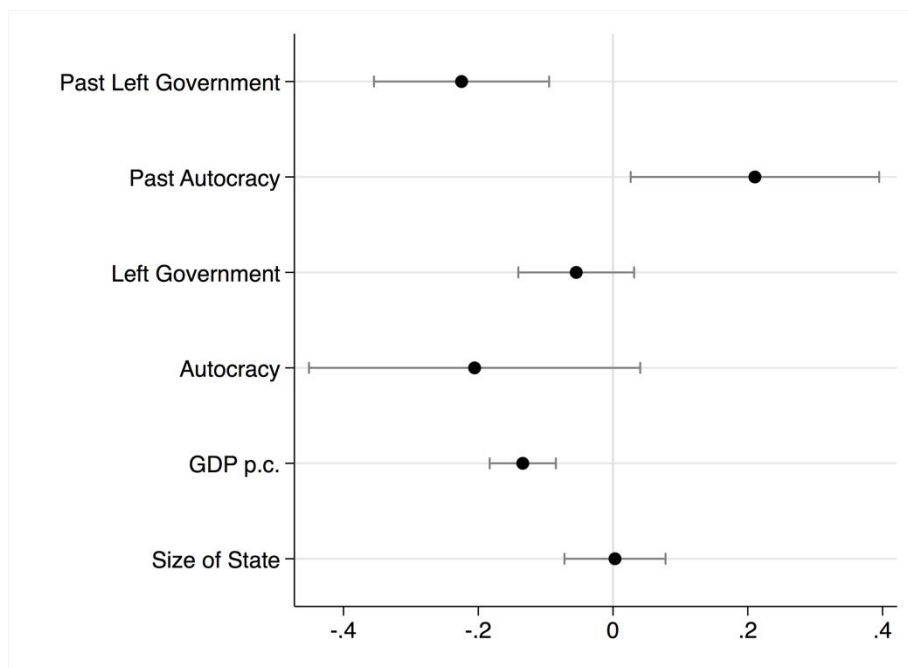
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Age	0.002** (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)
Female	-0.061*** (0.014)	-0.068*** (0.015)	-0.055*** (0.014)	-0.055*** (0.014)
Married	0.041** (0.013)	0.037** (0.013)	0.036** (0.013)	0.037** (0.013)
Income	0.104*** (0.009)	0.106*** (0.009)	0.109*** (0.009)	0.109*** (0.009)
Union member	-0.286*** (0.023)	-0.287*** (0.024)	-0.274*** (0.024)	-0.274*** (0.024)
Education	-0.097*** (0.018)	-0.102*** (0.018)	-0.093*** (0.018)	-0.094*** (0.018)
Employment: self-employed	0.178*** (0.023)	0.184*** (0.024)	0.186*** (0.024)	0.185*** (0.024)
Employment: retired	-0.013 (0.021)	0.004 (0.022)	-0.000 (0.022)	-0.000 (0.022)
Employment: housewife	0.063** (0.024)	0.077** (0.024)	0.082*** (0.024)	0.081*** (0.024)
Employment: student	-0.161*** (0.030)	-0.150*** (0.032)	-0.141*** (0.032)	-0.142*** (0.032)
Employment: unemployed	-0.140*** (0.028)	-0.129*** (0.029)	-0.121*** (0.029)	-0.121*** (0.029)
Employment: other	-0.038 (0.039)	-0.027 (0.040)	-0.030 (0.041)	-0.030 (0.041)
Public Sector Dummy	-0.129*** (0.022)	1.345*** (0.203)	1.336*** (0.202)	1.218*** (0.279)
<i>Level-2 Variables</i>				
GDP per capita (log)		-0.187** (0.061)	-0.216*** (0.062)	-0.103 (0.095)
Size of State		0.745 (1.062)	0.424 (1.222)	-0.140 (1.268)
Economically Left Government			0.120 (0.146)	0.159 (0.148)
Past Economically Left Government			0.477 (0.255)	0.454 (0.258)
Authoritarian Government				0.018 (0.047)
Past Authoritarian Government				0.059 (0.041)
<i>Cross-level interactions</i>				
Public Sector X GDP per capita (log)		-0.160*** (0.018)	-0.147*** (0.017)	-0.134*** (0.025)
Public Sector X Size of State		0.317 (0.327)	0.240 (0.375)	0.029 (0.382)
Public Sector X Economically Left Government			-0.058 (0.044)	-0.055 (0.044)
Public Sector X Past Economically Left Government			-0.201** (0.069)	-0.225*** (0.066)
Public Sector X Authoritarian Government				-0.021 (0.013)
Public Sector X Past Authoritarian Government				0.021* (0.009)
Constant	5.163*** (0.072)	6.817*** (0.731)	6.908*** (0.733)	5.731*** (1.052)
AIC	1617595.25	1550459.07	1487530.64	1487527.02
N (countries)	83	78	76	76
N (country-years)	301	284	273	273
N (individuals)	356544	341799	327597	327597

Notes: Multilevel models with country-year specific intercepts and random slopes for level-1 variables. Dependent variable: ideological position. Cluster robust standard errors in parentheses. \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001

We present our multi-level model results in Table 1 with an increasing set of controls: individual-level (model 1), economic country-level factors (rival explanations) (2), economic ideology of current and past governments (Hypothesis 1) (3), and, in a full model, current and past authoritarian rule (Hypothesis 2) (4).

For ease of interpretation of our core results, Figure 3 plots the full model (4) coefficients of our estimates of interest, i.e. the interaction terms between country-level factors and the public-sector dummy.

**Figure 3: Determinants of Ideological Divergence Between Bureaucrats and Citizens**



Notes: Mean coefficient estimates with 95 percent confidence intervals based on Model 4. Size of State rescaled to 10 percentage point change, and, for ease of comparison with Left Government, current and past Autocracy rescaled to 0-1 scale.

The results support our hypotheses. Bureaucrats are more left-leaning than citizens in countries with longer past rule by governments with left-wing economic ideologies (significant at the 1% level); and more right-leaning than citizens in countries with longer past authoritarian rule (significant at the 5% level). These effects are substantively significant. At the extreme,

going from none to uninterrupted past rule by governments with left-wing economic ideologies since 1975 shifts bureaucrats by 0.23 to the left relative to citizens on a 0-10 scale. At the same time, going from fully democratic to fully autocratic past rule since 1975 shifts bureaucrats by 0.21 to the right of citizens. By comparison, the average ideological positioning of bureaucrats across our 332 country-years is 0.13 points to the left of citizens. Prolonged past autocratic and economically left-wing rule thus arguably have large effects on the ideological positioning of bureaucrats relative to citizens. Moreover, they have large effects relative to other, frequently studied determinants of political ideology. The effects of uninterrupted left-wing or democratic government since 1975 (relative to no left-wing or authoritarian rule) each are more than three times larger than the effect of gender on political ideology, roughly equivalent to the effect of education (going from primary school to post-secondary education), and only somewhat smaller than the effect of being a union member.

While the ideologies of past political principals matter, current principals do not exert statistically significant effects. Neither the effect of left economic ideologies of governments nor authoritarian rule are significant at the 5%-level – though, as aforementioned, this might be due to our ‘past government’ variables including previous years in power of current incumbents.

Lastly, in terms of our rival explanations, we do not find evidence for a significant effect of the size of the state. However, we do find that greater per capita incomes shift the ideological preferences of bureaucrats to the left of citizens. As noted, this is theoretically plausible: in richer countries, there may be greater self-selection of those with higher Public Service Motivation, and arguably more left-leaning attitudes, into public service (cf. Barfort et al., 2019).



## 6. Robustness Checks

To ensure our core findings are not spurious, we assess their robustness and sensitivity to changes in our econometric model and the operationalization of our core variables (Appendix D); as well as the inclusion of additional country-level controls and interactions (Appendix E).

Our results remain robust with an ordered logit specification (Appendix D(1)); fixed effects as an alternative to random intercepts for the average ideology in each country-year (Appendix D(2)); the omission of individual-level controls (Appendix D(3)); the use of a less inclusive public sector dummy, excluding employees of state-owned enterprises and public sector workers outside of central and local government (from the ESS survey) (Appendix D(5))<sup>17</sup>; the use of an alternative measure for democracy and authoritarianism, the Unified Democracy Scores, which draws on ten extant scales (Pemstein, Meserve and Melton, 2010) (Appendix D(7)); and a 9-point rather than 11-point left-right scale to harmonize the ESS, WVS, and CSES ideology scales (Appendix D(4)). The effect of past rule by economically left governments is also robust to an operationalization as a 20-year moving average, rather than rule since 1975. However, the effect of past authoritarian rule is no longer significant with a 20-year moving average, suggesting that earlier authoritarian periods before the third wave of democracy might be contributing to the effects of past authoritarian rule (Appendix D(6)).

Our results are also robust to additional rival explanations. First, we additionally control for the average size of the state since 1975. Past left-wing (and authoritarian) rule could coincide with a larger (smaller) state in the past, and larger states may attract candidates with more leftist attitudes, or socialize bureaucrats into preferring larger states. Our effects could then simply reflect past state sizes. We do not find this to be the case (Appendix E(1)).

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<sup>17</sup> If we further restrict our sample only to ESS respondents and our public sector dummy only to central and local government employees, we obtain qualitatively similar results which are not statistically different from our full model results (results available upon request).

Second, in non-OECD countries in particular, clientelism (the exchange of public sector jobs for electoral support by political parties) might shape bureaucratic ideologies, particularly where it is predominantly associated with only select parties on the left-right spectrum (Knutsen, 2005). Similarly, corruption may matter, and coincide with authoritarian rule. Larger (corrupt) states multiply rent-seeking opportunities for bureaucrats, who might thus prefer more state involvement. We thus incorporate measures for bureaucratic corruption and clientelism (V-Dem's public sector corruption index and clientelist party linkage measure). Neither exert significant effects, and our results remain robust (Appendix E(2)).

Third, other differences in public employment systems – beyond those controlled for by differences in public sector workforce demographics, country-level factors such as state size and clientelism, and a country's political ideology – could affect our results. There are, however, no generally accepted global classifications of public employment systems we could draw on, not least as these systems differ in many dimensions (e.g. Gottschall et al., 2015). We are thus limited to adding classifiers for countries with shared public employment characteristics which could *plausibly* shape bureaucratic ideologies in ways currently not controlled for. Two classifiers are particularly plausible. First, countries with a *Rechtsstaat* tradition (Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Japan) have historically prioritized legal backgrounds in the civil service, which might be associated with conservative ideological preferences (DeHart-Davis, 2007, p. 892; Gottschall et al., 2015). Second, the ideology of British civil servants (and former British colonies) might diverge, with the UK historically privileging generalist candidates from elite universities (Gladden, 1967). Countries with a *Rechtsstaat* tradition indeed have more right-wing bureaucrats; the Britain (and colonies) classifier is not significant. At the same time, evidence for our hypotheses remains robust (Appendix E(3)).

Finally, several recent studies suggest that right-wing authoritarian regimes are more successful than left-wing authoritarian regimes at retaining power resources in democratic transitions (e.g. Ziblatt 2017; Albertus and Menaldo 2018; Albertus 2019). If this extends to keeping ‘their’ bureaucrats in place after transitions to democracy, the effect of authoritarian regimes on ideology could be partly due to this differential legacy effect of left and right-wing authoritarian regimes. We test this with an interaction effect between autocratic legacy and past left-wing government (Appendix E(4)). We do not find statistically significant evidence for differential legacy effects. This may be due to sample size limitations or as a significant share of bureaucrats were retained after democratization in some communist countries (Meyer-Sahling 2004). Providing more conclusive evidence on the change and continuity of bureaucratic agents of past principals under different regimes thus remains for future research.

In sum, the evidence for our core argument – that past political principals shape today’s bureaucratic ideologies – remains robust across model specifications, alternative variable operationalizations and the inclusion of additional country-level controls and interactions. The evidence for **H1** (past left-wing rule) is thereby somewhat stronger than for **H2** (past authoritarian rule).

## **7. Conclusions and Implications**

Understanding and explaining the quality of representation is central to political science. Numerous works have assessed whether and under which conditions politicians share the ideological preferences of citizens. Yet, under which conditions bureaucrats share the ideological preferences of citizens has not been studied. This is an important omission. Bureaucratic preferences shape which policies rise on agendas and how policies are designed and, in particular, implemented. Government for the people thus depends in part on bureaucrats sharing the preferences of citizens.

Studying bureaucratic preferences has, of course, been a staple in public administration and public choice (e.g. Niskanen, 1971). Bureau Voting Model and Public Service Motivation studies in particular provide rationales for why bureaucrats might be more left-leaning than citizens. In our cross-country and -year sample, we do find that bureaucrats are on average more left-leaning than citizens. Yet this average masks heterogeneity: countries vary among each other and over time in regards to whether bureaucrats share citizens' ideological preferences, or are more left- or right-leaning.

This article is the first to account for this puzzling variation. It does so both theoretically and empirically. Theoretically, it argued that the political ideologies of past incumbents shape this variation. Incumbents can recruit ideologically aligned bureaucrats and socialize bureaucrats into their ideological preferences. Moreover, they can attract ideologically aligned bureaucrats, for instance through governmental programs which are particularly attractive to applicants who share incumbent ideological preferences. As bureaucratic tenure exceeds political tenure and political ideologies tend to be sticky, this politicization has lasting effects. Consequently, bureaucrats retain ideological preferences of past political principals. Results from our multi-level analyses provide empirical support: bureaucrats are more left-wing than citizens in countries with longer past rule by governments with left-wing economic ideologies, and more right-wing than citizens in countries with more authoritarian pasts.

This suggests that today's bureaucratic agents continue to share (part of) the ideological preferences of past political principals. Incumbents thus continue to shape the ideological preferences of bureaucrats after leaving office. As other studies have shown that bureaucratic preferences shape policy outcomes (see, e.g., Baekgaard, Blom-Hansen and Serritzlew, 2015), our findings suggest that incumbents shape policy outcomes not only while in office, but also after leaving office, by shaping bureaucratic preferences.

This finding has important implications for our understanding of public policy, the political control of bureaucracy and political representation. If bureaucrats continue to share the preferences of previous political principals, bureaucrats are likely to be a force for policy continuity: they will continue to prefer and advance policies enacted by prior administrations. This adds an important argument and evidence to prior research on policy continuity and change (see, e.g., Sabatier, 2007).

Moreover, that bureaucrats share the ideological preferences of previous political principals contributes to long-standing debates about political neutrality versus responsiveness of bureaucrats (see, e.g., Weber, 1978; Carpenter, 2001). Our results suggest that, at least in terms of ideological preferences, bureaucrats are politically responsive. However, this responsiveness extends to *past* political principals. Multiple-principal-problems of political control over bureaucracy thus extend not only to principals in multiple branches of government, but also to political principals in current and past governments (cf. Moe, 1989; McCubbins, Noll & Weingast, 1987).

Our findings also provide evidence for the utility of controlling bureaucracy by shaping bureaucratic preferences, rather than (solely by) minimizing discretion or strengthening oversight, for instance (see, e.g., Hood et al., 2004). It enables incumbents to reap an important intertemporal benefit: to continue to shape bureaucratic preferences and thus policy outcomes long after leaving office.

However, the cost to political representation is clear: at least in part, bureaucratic government is no longer ‘for the people’, but ‘for the previous administration’.

While these are important conclusions, they also showcase more generally how much can be learnt from studying variation in ideological congruence between bureaucrats and citizens.

In terms of explaining this variation, our study is, of course, but a first attempt. As such, it is not without limitations. With better data availability over time - for instance future World Value Survey waves – future works may assess the robustness of our findings with more fine-grained and multi-dimensional measures of bureaucrat ideology, and by using models that focus on within-country variance in the ideological congruence between bureaucrats and citizens, or leverage (quasi)experimental variation of the ideology of political principals. Better data might also enable scholars to disentangle whether our findings apply to some groups of public servants and policy issues more than others. Our more aggregate measures of public employees and political ideology do not enable us to shed light on this. Our sample of bureaucrats might also raise concerns about bias: it includes employees of central *and* local governments, while our measures of the ideology of political principals focus – particularly for the economic ideology measure – on central governments. If at all, however, this should lead to conservative bias: political principals can only shape the ideology of a *subset* of bureaucrats in our sample. We may *underestimate* the effect of past political principals on the political ideology of bureaucrats.

Perhaps most importantly, future works could investigate the mechanisms underlying the effect of past political principals on bureaucratic ideology, in particular whether ideological alignment between past political principals and today’s bureaucrats is due to selection, attraction into governmental programs (self-selection) or the socialization of ideologically-aligned bureaucrats. Our data does not enable us to provide direct evidence for these theorized mechanisms.

The potential research opportunities in the study of the political ideology of bureaucrats, however, far exceed those related to addressing the limitations of our study. To illustrate, whether ideological congruence between citizens and bureaucrats affects citizen trust in and satisfaction with government; and which policy outcomes are shaped by this ideological

congruence are just two of many potential areas for research. Above all then, this paper seeks to turn scholarly attention towards studying variation in ideological congruence between citizens and bureaucrats.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A. Survey Data Sources

<b>Survey</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Countries</b>	<b>Country-Years</b>	<b>Observations</b>
<b>WVS</b>	2005-2014 (2 waves)	72	98	137 337
<b>ESS</b>	2008-2014 (4 waves)	31	102	197 446
<b>CSES</b>	1996-2016 (4 waves)	52	157	262 360
<b>Total</b>	1996-2016	87	332	597 143

Note: Overlapping country-years between surveys are pooled in the dataset. Number of observations are for surveys for which ideology and public sector variables are available. The n for some of the estimated models is smaller due to missing values and listwise deletion. The mean and standard deviation of ideology is virtually identical and not significantly different between the full sample vs the estimated models. As such, we do not have any evidence to suggest that missingness is biasing our inferences.



## Appendix B. Coding of Individual-Level Socio-Economic & Demographic Controls

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coding</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Age</b>	In years (continuous)	Rescaled to 10-year change in regressions
<b>Gender</b>	Male (0), Female (1)	
<b>Education</b>	Primary (1), secondary (2), post-secondary (3)	Includes complete and incomplete education
<b>Income</b>	Income quintiles (from lowest (1) to highest (5))	ESS and WVS contained income deciles which were collapsed into CSES quintiles
<b>Marital status</b>	Married or living with a permanent partner (1), Not married (0)	
<b>Union membership</b>	Active or inactive union member (1); no union member (0)	
<b>Employment status</b>	Employed, Self-employed, Retired, Housewife, Student, Unemployed, Other	Included as individual dummies

## Appendix C. Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
<i>Level-1 variables:</i>				
Political ideology	5.29	2.44	0	10
Age	46.3	17.8	14	123
Female	0.53	0.50	0	1
Married	0.62	0.49	0	1
Income	2.83	1.32	1	5
Union member	0.18	0.38	0	1
Education	2.14	0.70	1	3
Employment: self-employed	0.09	0.29	0	1
Employment: retired	0.13	0.34	0	1
Employment: homemaker	0.08	0.28	0	1
Employment: student	0.05	0.21	0	1
Employment: unemployed	0.05	0.22	0	1
Employment: other	0.02	0.15	0	1
Public Sector Dummy	0.14	0.35	0	1
<i>Level-2 variables:</i>				
Economically Left Government	0.32	0.47	0	1
Past Economically Left Gov.	0.36	0.28	0	1
Size of State	0.19	0.06	0.07	0.50
GDP per capita (log)	9.48	1.26	5.77	11.14
Authoritarian Government	1.34	2.20	0.00	9.75
Past Authoritarian Government	3.29	2.77	0.26	9.74

## Appendix D: Robustness Checks (I): Different Econometric Models and Variable Operationalizations

	(1) Ordered Logit	(2) Fixed. Effects	(3) Without Level-1	(4) Alt. ideology scale (9pt)	(5) Narrow public sector	(6) Alt. past principals: 20 year	(7) Alt. autocracy measure. (UDS)
Age	0.003*** (0.000)	0.003*** (0.001)		0.001 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)
Female	-0.063*** (0.007)	-0.069*** (0.014)		-0.034*** (0.010)	-0.061*** (0.015)	-0.054*** (0.014)	-0.050*** (0.016)
Married	0.050*** (0.007)	0.064*** (0.015)		0.028*** (0.010)	0.037*** (0.013)	0.036*** (0.013)	0.039*** (0.015)
Income	0.089*** (0.003)	0.115*** (0.010)		0.072*** (0.007)	0.108*** (0.009)	0.108*** (0.009)	0.107*** (0.010)
Union member	-0.232*** (0.008)	-0.300*** (0.025)		-0.194*** (0.018)	-0.282*** (0.024)	-0.278*** (0.024)	-0.274*** (0.026)
Education	-0.100*** (0.005)	-0.122*** (0.019)		-0.075*** (0.013)	-0.099*** (0.019)	-0.094*** (0.018)	-0.094*** (0.020)
Employment: self-employed	0.142*** (0.012)	0.191*** (0.028)		0.130*** (0.017)	0.198*** (0.025)	0.186*** (0.024)	0.187*** (0.026)
Employment: retired	-0.036*** (0.012)	-0.046 (0.034)		0.002 (0.017)	0.007 (0.022)	-0.006 (0.022)	0.012 (0.024)
Employment: housewife	0.117*** (0.014)	0.159*** (0.032)		0.062*** (0.018)	0.092*** (0.024)	0.079*** (0.024)	0.091*** (0.026)
Employment: student	-0.091*** (0.017)	-0.117* (0.046)		-0.093*** (0.024)	-0.139*** (0.032)	-0.147*** (0.032)	-0.119*** (0.034)
Employment: unemployed	-0.051*** (0.016)	-0.063* (0.030)		-0.081*** (0.021)	-0.118*** (0.029)	-0.124*** (0.029)	-0.101*** (0.031)
Employment: other	0.024 (0.023)	0.003 (0.045)		-0.015 (0.031)	-0.021 (0.041)	-0.033 (0.042)	0.005 (0.045)
Public Sector Dummy	1.071*** (0.141)	1.352*** (0.264)	1.066*** (0.264)	0.853*** (0.202)	0.649* (0.291)	1.290*** (0.242)	0.564 (0.317)
<i>Level-2 Variables</i>							
GDP per capita (log)	-0.118*** (0.006)		-0.143* (0.066)	-0.084 (0.071)	-0.095 (0.095)	-0.129 (0.084)	0.133 (0.134)
Size of State	-0.108 (0.082)		-0.283 (0.765)	-0.187 (0.928)	-0.104 (1.260)	0.789 (1.228)	-0.467 (1.329)
Economically Left Government	0.257*** (0.011)		-0.076 (0.071)	0.105 (0.106)	0.160 (0.147)	0.202 (0.146)	0.091 (0.155)
Past Economically Left Government	0.172*** (0.018)		0.126 (0.193)	0.341 (0.188)	0.459 (0.256)	0.147 (0.289)	0.661* (0.288)
Authoritarian Government	0.108*** (0.003)		0.074* (0.036)	0.017 (0.034)	0.021 (0.047)	-0.005 (0.054)	0.450* (0.194)
Past Authoritarian Government	-0.100*** (0.002)		-0.071*** (0.024)	0.042 (0.031)	0.057 (0.041)	-0.058 (0.046)	0.236 (0.200)
<i>Cross-level interactions</i>							
Public Sector X GDP per capita (log)	-0.130*** (0.013)	-0.162*** (0.024)	-0.146*** (0.024)	-0.094*** (0.018)	-0.073*** (0.027)	-0.150*** (0.025)	-0.049 (0.034)
Public Sector X Size of State	0.729*** (0.180)	0.793* (0.363)	1.011*** (0.346)	0.037 (0.269)	-0.092 (0.401)	0.124 (0.364)	0.063 (0.399)
Public Sector X Economically Left Government	-0.051* (0.020)	-0.080 (0.048)	-0.065 (0.043)	-0.032 (0.030)	-0.008 (0.046)	-0.047 (0.045)	-0.011 (0.047)
Public Sector X Past Economically Left Gov.	-0.187*** (0.037)	-0.231*** (0.071)	-0.254*** (0.071)	-0.149*** (0.046)	-0.251*** (0.067)	-0.169* (0.071)	-0.261*** (0.065)
Public Sector X Authoritarian Government	-0.011 (0.006)	-0.013 (0.011)	-0.023* (0.011)	-0.012 (0.009)	0.006 (0.015)	0.001 (0.016)	-0.047 (0.048)
Public Sector X Past Authoritarian Government	0.015*** (0.006)	0.020* (0.010)	0.027*** (0.010)	0.013* (0.007)	0.021* (0.010)	-0.011 (0.013)	0.199*** (0.044)
Constant	0.143*** (0.002)	5.117*** (0.068)	6.859*** (0.705)	5.683*** (0.788)	5.665*** (1.051)	6.579*** (0.829)	4.387*** (1.161)
AIC	1222918.09	1491636.89	1999591.66	1292642.3	1487603.16	1487455.65	1282514.06
Countries	76	76	80	76	76	76	71
Country-years	276	276	300	276	276	276	237
N	327597	327597	437732	327597	327597	327597	281601

Notes: Multilevel models with country-year specific intercepts and random slopes for level-1 variables. Dependent variable: ideological position. Cluster robust standard errors in parentheses. \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001

## Appendix E: Robustness Checks (II): Rival Explanations and Interaction Effect

	(1) Past Size of State	(2) Corruption & Clientelism	(3) Public Service Traditions (PST)	(4) Differential legacy interaction effect
Age	0.002* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)
Female	-0.055*** (0.014)	-0.054*** (0.014)	-0.054*** (0.014)	-0.055*** (0.014)
Married	0.036*** (0.013)	0.036*** (0.013)	0.036*** (0.013)	0.037*** (0.013)
Income	0.109*** (0.009)	0.108*** (0.009)	0.108*** (0.009)	0.109*** (0.009)
Union member	-0.274*** (0.024)	-0.277*** (0.024)	-0.277*** (0.024)	-0.275*** (0.024)
Education	-0.094*** (0.018)	-0.095*** (0.018)	-0.095*** (0.018)	-0.094*** (0.018)
Employment: selfemployed	0.185*** (0.024)	0.187*** (0.024)	0.186*** (0.024)	0.185*** (0.024)
Employment: retired	0.000 (0.022)	-0.005 (0.022)	-0.005 (0.022)	0.000 (0.022)
Employment: housewife	0.082*** (0.024)	0.080*** (0.024)	0.080*** (0.024)	0.081*** (0.024)
Employment: student	-0.142*** (0.032)	-0.146*** (0.033)	-0.147*** (0.032)	-0.142*** (0.032)
Employment: unemployed	-0.121*** (0.029)	-0.124*** (0.029)	-0.124*** (0.029)	-0.122*** (0.029)
Employment: other	-0.029 (0.041)	-0.032 (0.042)	-0.033 (0.042)	-0.030 (0.041)
Public Sector Dummy	1.081*** (0.370)	1.546*** (0.333)	0.961*** (0.297)	1.252*** (0.275)
<i>Level-2 Variables</i>				
GDP per capita (log)	-0.152 (0.111)	-0.018 (0.107)	-0.139 (0.094)	-0.117 (0.093)
Size of State	0.664 (1.366)	-0.664 (1.271)	-0.307 (1.265)	-0.873 (1.267)
Past Size of State	-1.705 (1.553)			
Corruption		1.233*** (0.416)		
Clientelism		-0.320 (0.280)		
British PST			-0.366 (0.240)	
Rechtsstaat PST			0.073 (0.149)	
Economically Left Government	0.142 (0.147)	0.181 (0.145)	0.189 (0.148)	0.127 (0.145)
Past Economically Left Government	0.517 (0.275)	0.406 (0.255)	0.406 (0.256)	-0.821* (0.365)
Authoritarian Government	0.029 (0.045)	-0.032 (0.055)	0.020 (0.047)	0.337 (0.426)
Past Authoritarian Government	0.027 (0.051)	0.039 (0.040)	0.048 (0.041)	-0.799 (0.478)
Past Economically Left Government X Past Authoritarian Government				3.507*** (0.736)
<i>Cross-level interactions</i>				
Public Sector X GDP per capita (log)	-0.123*** (0.032)	-0.162*** (0.030)	-0.112*** (0.026)	-0.134*** (0.025)
Public Sector X Size of State	-0.159 (0.487)	0.035 (0.369)	0.103 (0.389)	0.011 (0.376)

Public Sector X Past Size of State	0.346 (0.528)			
Public Sector X Corruption		-0.228 (0.153)		
Public Sector X Clientelism		-0.115 (0.085)		
Public Sector X British PST			0.103 (0.063)	
Public Sector X Rechtsstaat PST			0.191* (0.082)	
Public Sector X Economically Left Government	-0.051 (0.045)	-0.048 (0.045)	-0.049 (0.043)	-0.058 (0.044)
Public Sector X Past Economically Left Government	-0.241*** (0.071)	-0.238*** (0.068)	-0.195*** (0.066)	-0.307*** (0.109)
Public Sector X Authoritarian Government	-0.023* (0.012)	-0.003 (0.016)	-0.014 (0.014)	-0.181 (0.121)
Public Sector X Past Authoritarian Government	0.028* (0.014)	0.018 (0.010)	0.023* (0.010)	0.110 (0.127)
Public Sector X Past Authoritarian Government X Past Economically Left Government				0.254 (0.224)
Constant	6.402*** (1.295)	4.901*** (1.176)	6.186*** (1.054)	6.515*** (1.026)
AIC	1487528.35	1487441.92	1487448.58	1487510.69
Countries	76	76	76	76
Country-years	276	276	276	276
N	327597	327597	327597	327597

Notes: Multilevel models with country-year specific intercepts and random slopes for level-1 variables. Dependent variable: ideological position. Cluster robust standard errors in parentheses. \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001

## Appendix F. Survey years and countries in the dataset

Country	Years (surveys included in the dataset)									
AND	2005									
ARM	2011									
AUS	1996	2004	2005	2007	2012					
AUT	2014									
AZE	2011									
BEL	2010	2012	2014							
BFA	2007									
BGR	2001	2005	2010	2012						
BLR	2001	2008	2011							
BRA	2002	2006	2010							
CAN	2004	2006	2008							
CHE	1999	2003	2007	2010	2012	2014				
CHL	2006	2011								
COL	2005	2012								
CYP	2006	2010	2011	2012						
CZE	1996	2002	2006	2010	2012	2014				
DEU	1998	2002	2005	2006	2009	2010	2012	2013	2014	
DNK	2007	2010	2012	2014						
DZA	2013									
ECU	2013									
EGY	2008	2013								
ESP	1996	2000	2004	2007	2010	2011	2014			
EST	2010	2011	2012							
ETH	2007									
FIN	2003	2005	2007	2010	2011	2012	2014			
FRA	2006	2007	2010	2012	2014					
GBR	1997	2005	2010	2012	2014					
GEO	2009									
GHA	2007	2012								
GRC	2009	2010								
HKG	1998	2000	2004	2008						
HRV	2007	2010								
HUN	1998	2002	2009	2010	2012	2014				
IDN	2006									
IND	2006									
IRL	2002	2007	2010	2012	2014					
IRQ	2012									
ISL	1999	2003	2007	2009	2012					
ISR	1996	2003	2006	2010	2012	2014				
ITA	2005	2006	2012							
JPN	2004	2005	2007	2010						
KAZ	2011									
KGZ	2011									
KOR	2004	2005	2008	2010						
LBN	2013									
LBY	2014									
LTU	2010	2012	2014							
MAR	2007	2011								
MDA	2006									
MEX	1997	2000	2003	2005	2006	2009	2012			
MLI	2007									
MYS	2012									
NGA	2011									
NLD	1998	2002	2006	2010	2012	2014				
NOR	1997	2001	2005	2007	2009	2010	2012	2014		
NZL	2002	2008	2011							

PAK	2012							
PER	2006	2011	2012					
PHL	2004	2010	2012					
POL	1997	2001	2005	2007	2010	2012	2014	
PRT	2002	2005	2009	2012	2014			
PSE	2013							
ROU	1996	2004	2005	2009	2012			
RUS	2010	2011	2012					
RWA	2007	2012						
SRB	2005							
SVK	2010	2012						
SVN	1996	2004	2005	2008	2010	2011	2012	2014
SWE	2002	2006	2010	2011	2012	2014		
THA	2007							
TTO	2006	2011						
TUN	2013							
TUR	2007	2011						
TWN	1996	2001	2006	2008	2012			
UKR	1998	2006	2010	2011	2012			
URY	2006	2011						
USA	1996	2004	2006	2008	2011			
VNM	2006							
YEM	2014							
ZAF	2006							
ZMB	2007							
ZWE	2012							

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