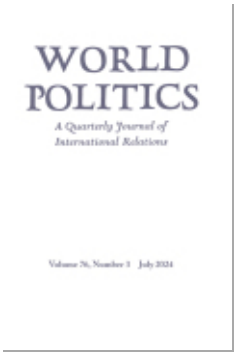
Social Democracy and the Birth of Working-Class Representation in Europe



Maayan Mor, Carles Boix

World Politics, Volume 76, Number 3, July 2024, pp. 499-542 (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/wp.2024.a933070

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND THE BIRTH OF WORKING-CLASS REPRESENTATION IN EUROPE

By MAAYAN MOR[a*] and CARLES BOIX[b]

[a] Department of Political Science, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana
[b] Department of Politics, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey
* Corresponding author. Email: mmor@tulane.edu

ABSTRACT

Despite the growing interest in the economic backgrounds of MPs in Western Europe, the evolution of working-class numerical representation before 1945 has not been systematically studied. Using data from England and Wales (1832–1944), Germany (1871–1930), and Norway (1906–1936), the authors show both that working-class MPs were elected when barriers were lowered and that almost all working-class parliamentarians were affiliated with socialist parties. The authors further probe the conditions that determined the electoral success of workers using data about all candidates, constituencies' occupational profile, and unionization in Norway between 1906 and 1936. They find that socialist parties nominated workers either in relatively uncompetitive elections in which unionization was high or in competitive races in which the party's victory was possible but not guaranteed. Using information about MPs in Germany and England and Wales, the authors find similar patterns. The article discusses the implications for research about democratization, the rise of social democracy, and the numerical representation of workers.

I. Introduction

THANKS to the renewed interest in the nature and drivers of descriptive representation, a growing number of researchers have examined the evolution of the numerical representation of the working class in recent years.[1] However, these studies remain rather limited in terms of the period they examine and the data they employ. Only a handful of studies have focused on the evolution of the class background of lawmakers starting in the postwar era. Much less attention has been given to the political and economic conditions that shaped the numerical representation of workers before World War II, precisely the time of the first democratization wave and the enfranchisement of the working

[1] Burch and Moran 1985; Wauters 2012; Carnes 2012; Carnes 2013; Carnes 2016; Carnes and Lupu 2015; Bartels 2016; Evans and Tilley 2017; Fiva and Smith 2017a; Kunovich 2017; Serrano and Bermúdez 2018; O'Grady 2019. See also Alexiadou 2022 for the change in the occupational backgrounds of West European cabinet ministers.

World Politics 76, no. 3 (July 2024) 499–542

class. In addition, existing studies on the class background of legislators, centered on Western Europe, use only countries as the unit of analysis to compare parliaments over time[2] and explain change primarily within the wealthy elite[3] or socialist and communist party families.[4]

Our article departs from these studies in several ways. First, we explore the conditions that enabled working-class political aspirants to secure a party nomination in the context of European democratization. Second, we focus on how the social composition at the constituency level, unionization rates, and the type of electoral system shaped the political fortunes of working-class candidates, mainly through the nomination procedures, electoral strategies, and organizational concerns of parties and unions. We do so by relying on a novel data set collected for three Western European parliaments across five electoral systems: single-member plurality (SMP) in Imperial Germany (1871–1918) and Norway (1906–1918); multimember plurality (MMP) in England and Wales (until 1948);[5] and proportional representation (PR) in the Weimar Republic (1920–1930) and Norway (1919–1936). Based on biographical information about the occupational backgrounds of members of parliament (MPs) in Germany and England and Wales, and information about the backgrounds of all candidates in Norway, we identify the politicians who were members of the working class. We match this biographical information to fine-grained census data about industrialization and workers' unionization at the constituency level. To our knowledge, this is the first study that uses microlevel data to investigate how the conditions in the constituency shaped the descriptive, or numerical, representation of workers in national assemblies.

By offering considerable variation in economic development and institutional and legal structures, these three countries provide a broad and informative portrayal of the political fortunes of workers in Western European parliaments in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Whereas England and Wales were early industrializers, the economies of Norway and Germany took off later. In turn, England and Wales and Norway democratized gradually while Germany experienced sharp political transitions after 1871 and again after World War I. The three

[2] Best and Cotta 2000; Best et al. 2001.

[3] Bengtsson and Olsson 2020; Fresh 2022.

[4] Ilonszki 2007.

[5] In Great Britain, we exclude Scotland because matching between parliamentary units and the reporting units for the census would require making interpolations of the electoral data that would be highly prone to measurement error. Although England and Wales had multimember plurality electoral rules, district magnitude in the years in question ranged from one to two. The majority of districts elected a single member.

countries had different electoral institutions and the responses of their governments to the mobilization of workers varied considerably, ranging from the political repression of labor mobilization in Germany to relatively peaceful relations in Norway and Britain.

Our findings are of four kinds. First, workers only started to be elected after they became eligible to vote, after governments changed the restrictions on who could run for office, and when parties were free to field working-class candidates. Second, the expansion of the franchise did not cause dramatic shifts in the numerical representation of workers and only in the interwar period did the share of working-class parliamentarians increase significantly. Third, the descriptive representation of workers hinged on the electoral fortunes of specific political parties: almost all MPs who had a working-class background were affiliated with a socialist party.

Fourth, and relatedly, the performance of socialist parties was a necessary but not sufficient condition to improve the descriptive representation of workers: the share of working-class MPs was driven by the often-conflicting electoral calculations and organizational constraints of those parties, and their decentralized procedures for nominating candidates. On one hand, socialist parties were prone to nominate working-class candidates both to spur the electoral mobilization of working-class voters and to repay the support of trade unions, and because their nomination procedures produced relatively low barriers to entry for working-class political aspirants. On the other hand, the party organization had a strong incentive to secure the election of their leaders and the most crucial lawmakers for two reasons: career motivations and self-interest. First, at the end of the day, politicians often aspire to keep governing, and second, the party needed professionalized policymakers to run an effective parliamentary party. For reasons that we expand on later in the article, professionalized politicians in leadership positions were unlikely to be of a working-class background, even in parties intent on defending the interests of workers.

Given these competing concerns and the decentralized nature of candidate nominations, socialist parties nominated workers for the seats that were either difficult to win or over which unions had greater influence on party nominations. Non-working-class candidates, who, again, were often the party's leaders and most crucial lawmakers, were likely to be nominated where the party was more confident it could win seats. Where the party did not expect to win seats, because the share of manual workers among constituents was low, it nominated the rest of its candidates, who were often not workers and were not crucial to the party

in parliament. Overall, working-class candidates were less likely than nonworkers to be nominated and to win a legislative seat—even after the adoption of PR.

Besides examining the particular case of working-class representation before World War II, our analysis makes several contributions to the general literature on descriptive representation in democracies. First, we highlight how numerical representation relies on the composition of the electorate but also depends on the ideological commitments, candidate nomination procedures, and electoral strength of different parties. For the specific topic that we examine—the representation of the working class—previous research has established that social democratic parties promoted the descriptive representation of workers by including quotas for workers[6] and by nominating union-sponsored candidates.[7] Expanding on this literature, we show that while working-class candidates were endorsed by multiple parties and ran as independents, an affiliation with a socialist party was a path close to necessary for working-class candidates to get into parliament—arguably due to the organizational linkages between socialist parties and trade unions and the capacity of the unions to mobilize workers' support.

Second, we show that the victory of those political forces that claim to represent particular social groups may be a necessary but not sufficient condition to obtain descriptive representation of the social group. Both the nomination and election of candidates depend, crucially, on the electoral strategic concerns of their parties and the parties' procedure for nominating candidates. An influential literature has stressed the role that class-based trade-offs had in the development of social democracy in Western Europe[8]: because working-class voters were never a majority of the electorate, socialist parties had to design carefully their campaigns to maximize their seat share. Indeed, we find that the nomination of different types of candidates followed from the electoral configuration of each constituency. The type of nominees was also shaped by organizational incentives. In line with the expectation that politicians maximize their reelection chances, socialist parties nominated them to safer seats, even if this course of action might have been detrimental to the descriptive representation of the working class. Naturally, nominating leading politicians in safer seats had a collective-benefit dimension as well: doing so probably strengthened the effectiveness and electoral attractiveness of the party brand and, therefore, might have had a positive spillover for all candidates.

[6] Alford 1962.
[7] Fouirnaies 2021.
[8] Przeworski and Sprague 1986.

Our third main contribution is strictly empirical. We build and expand on previous research about the underrepresentation of the working class by zooming in on the numerical representation of workers in Europe from the expansion of the franchise to all or most men and up until World War II. This timeframe allows us to test the impact of electoral and organizational effects on working-class representation during a critical historical period during which mass parties formed and stabilized, and became the central tool of representation.

This article proceeds as follows. Section II reviews the literature about working-class representation and develops our theoretical expectations about the likely drivers of the nomination and election of working-class candidates in the context of European democratization. Section III employs time-series data to examine the development of working-class representation in England and Wales, Germany, and Norway, starting with the expansion of the franchise. Using data about the party affiliation of MPs, we find that the majority of working-class politicians was affiliated with a socialist party. Section IV uses data about all political candidates in Norway from 1906 up until 1936 to explore how party nominations shaped the electoral fortunes of working-class candidates. Section V employs data on MPs from England and Wales and Germany, providing additional evidence that selective nominations shaped the class composition of parliaments in those countries. Section VI summarizes our findings and discusses their implications.

II. Candidate Resources and Party Electoral Goals

Drawing on prior research about electoral practices during European democratization and the national strategy of socialist parties, we hypothesize that two main factors shaped the numerical representation of workers in parliaments: workers' scarce resources and the electoral goals of socialist parties. We discuss sequentially how each factor affected the chances of working-class aspirants to secure a party nomination and later to win a seat in parliament.

Workers' Scarce Resources

European parliaments in the nineteenth century were exclusive institutions that reformed gradually and only when elites faced political instability[9] and the possibility of being displaced from office.[10] Voter intimidation was a widespread practice,[11] and parties that represented

[9] Ahmed 2013.
[10] Ardanaz and Mares 2014.
[11] Mares 2015.

the economic elites formed local party pacts to block socialist and communist candidates.[12] Even after the franchise was expanded to all or most men, wealthy candidates used their position as employers to intimidate workers on election day,[13] or hired bullies to instigate violence to keep voters away from polling places.[14]

Because material resources were crucial for aspiring politicians to run a successful campaign,[15] working-class candidates lacked the means to outbid wealthy competitors. The expansion of the franchise only increased candidates' reliance on material resources because it forced candidates to reach a larger electorate, a factor that likely discouraged the entry of new candidates who had limited resources.[16]

In addition to the resources necessary to wage an electoral campaign, political aspirants had to secure a source of income to sustain themselves during their term in parliament. Most European legislative assemblies did not compensate MPs for their service, forcing them to use their private wealth or a second income to fund their political careers.[17] Over time, financial resources became even more crucial for office-holding, as legislation became increasingly complex and technical, and MPs were required to devote more of their time to politics and spend more hours in parliament.[18]

Besides lacking the financial resources necessary to defeat wealthy politicians, workers were at a disadvantage because they had fewer material resources and social connections to secure a party nomination than did wealthy politicians. Unlike experienced lawmakers, who were likely to have preexisting political connections and to have developed a professional reputation in parliament, workers had little or no previous experience in office, especially soon after the expansion of the franchise. Workers also struggled to secure a party's endorsement because parties' own procedures for candidate nomination often favored elites. At the time that the franchise was expanded, the identity of party candidates was often decided in local or regional committees that tended to

[12] Schröder and Manow 2020.
[13] Arsenschek 2003; Mares 2015.
[14] Blaxill et al. 2022.
[15] Fouirnaies 2021.
[16] Harada and Smith 2014.
[17] In the UK, for example, MPs began to receive compensation only in 1912. MPs in Italy and Spain were not compensated until 1911. In Imperial Germany, members of the Reichstag were given a government stipend starting in 1906. For the UK, see Rush and Cromwell 2000, 462, 471; for Italy and Spain, see Anderson 2000, 347; for Imperial Germany, see Anderson 2000, 356.
[18] Cox 1987, 52–3.

nominate members of the constituency's local elite.[19] In countries that eventually adopted closed-list PR, political aspirants required political connections in local and regional nomination conventions in addition to the endorsement of party leaders, who gained greater influence over party placements under PR electoral rules.[20]

An affiliation with a political party was critical for resource-poor aspirants for two main reasons. First, such a connection could offset some of the private costs associated with running for office, and second, it improved their chances of winning elections. Candidates who were affiliated with a political party benefited from being identified with the party's brand name, a type of heuristic providing voters with information about the candidates' platform even if they lacked political experience or were unfamiliar to voters.[21] Along with these reputational benefits, candidates who were affiliated with political parties often received crucial organizational and material support from the party to fund and field electoral campaigns.

Given that workers lacked the necessary resources and connections to win elections on their own, their electoral fortunes often depended on the support of political parties. During Europe's mass democratization, socialist parties empowered workers by providing them with the party's brand name, organizational resources to field political campaigns, and a salary if they were elected to parliament.[22] Workers were able to secure nominations in socialist parties mostly because of the strong organizational ties between socialist parties and trade unions. Socialist parties nominated workers in exchange for trade unions' financial support of the party.[23] In some circumstances, trade unions also had a strong presence in socialist parties' local and regional branches,[24] giving them a direct say on candidate nominations and the selection of their own members.

Parties' Electoral Goals

In the process of endorsing candidates, socialist party leaders had to weigh three, often competing goals. First, they needed to win a large number of

[19] In Prussia, for example, decisions about nominations were made by local notables and reached by consensus. From 1870, local parties gained more control over candidate nomination; see Kühne 1994, 22. In Norway, aspirants had to secure the majority of the votes cast by party delegates in the constituency nomination conventions. See Valen 1988, 212–3.

[20] Cox, Fiva, and Smith 2019.

[21] Downs 1957, chp. 6; Lupu 2016.

[22] Although communist parties also had ties to trade unions and they nominated many workers as candidates, they were less electorally successful than socialist parties and there were fewer of them.

[23] Braunthal 1978, 127; Luebbert 1991; Fouirnaies 2021.

[24] Terjesen 1990, 116.

legislative seats, something that meant adopting an electoral strategy that maximized their seat-share in parliament.[25] Nominating working-class candidates arguably mobilized workers. Yet it could alienate voters from the new middle class, too.[26] Second, the leaders had to reward the trade unions that supported the party by nominating some of their members to fairly safe legislative seats—that is, seats that the party was more likely to win. Finally, socialist party leaders had to guarantee that the party's leadership and most skilled lawmakers, who often were not workers, won seats. This consideration was crucial to ensure that the party could operate effectively in parliament and advance its political agenda.

SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF DISTRICTS AND THE ROLE OF ELECTORAL RULES

Socialist parties nominated working-class candidates where the share of working-class voters among constituents was close to the electoral threshold needed to win seats for the party. Because the majority of manual workers was not organized in political associations, and unionization rates varied by constituency, socialist parties could not depend always on trade unions to mobilize all workers.[27] By nominating a working-class candidate, socialist parties hoped to gain the support of voters who shared the candidate's class background and were also the demographic group least likely to vote.[28]

The electoral threshold needed to secure a socialist victory varied, in turn, with the electoral rule in place. In winner-takes-all electoral rules, in which only one candidate wins representation in parliament, the effective threshold is 50+1 percent for two candidates, declining as

[25] Przeworski and Sprague 1986.

[26] Parties nominate candidates who are descriptively similar to the voters they wish to mobilize. See Dancygier 2018; Desai and Frey 2021; Weeks et al. 2023. Socialist parties were aware that working-class candidates increased turnout among workers. In Britain, for example, the Labour Party nominated working-class candidates where it anticipated a favorable electoral swing for the party; see Rush and Cromwell 2000, 471. Evidence on voters' preferences for working-class candidates is mixed. The majority of recent empirical and experimental research does not find evidence that voters are alienated by working-class candidates; see Carnes and Lupu 2023, 262–3; Barnes, Kerevel, and Saxton 2023; but see also Horne 2022; Wüest and Pontusson 2022.

[27] Unionization rates varied by industry. Industries such as mining, which required a high concentration of relatively skilled workers, had the highest unionization rates. For this reason, unionization rates were typically high when the share of skilled manual workers in the labor force was also high. But the unionization rate could also be low when many workers across multiple industries had low unionization rates. On the relationship between unionization rates and plant size, see Pontusson 1995. See Bartolini 2000, 279 for unionization rates across European countries and over time.

[28] Boix and Magyar 2022.

the number of candidates increases.[29] Accordingly, a seat would be considered relatively safe if the share of working-class voters among constituents were higher than 50 percent—becoming safer as the share of workers among constituents increased. Under PR electoral rules, where parties win seats in proportion to their vote share, socialist parties operating in closed-list PR systems nominated working-class candidates for the seats that could be won by the party, but that the party was not guaranteed to win. By this logic, the safer seats in PR were the seats at the top of the party list, which the party expected to win given the share of working-class voters in the constituency.

Parties did not typically nominate workers in safer seats—that is, those with more than 50 percent workers in plurality systems and seats at the top of the electoral list in PR systems—for two main reasons. First, because of their brand name, socialist parties could win support from workers even if a working-class candidate did not lead the party list. Again, it made sense to nominate workers to marginal seats because they encouraged electoral mobilization while still strengthening the party's brand name as a workers' party, something that was less necessary in safe seats. The second reason why socialist parties often nominated workers for less safe seats was their decentralized organizational structure. Decisions about candidate nominations in socialist parties were typically made in local nomination conventions even after the adoption of PR, which generally granted greater control over nominations to party leaders.[30] The delegates in the nomination conventions were elected by dues-paying party members, and candidates managed to secure a party nomination if the majority of the delegates voted in their favor.[31] Given that the local party proposed the candidate lists to the convention, where trade unions did not have much power in the local party, non-working-class political aspirants were likely in a favorable position to secure nominations for the safer seats. Unlike resource-scarce aspirants, these candidates likely had both political connections and a professional reputation derived from their prior experience in office. The class composition of the socialist ticket varied somewhat across countries according to the relationship between the socialist party and

[29] During the nineteenth century, most Western European countries held elections in single-member districts with plurality rule. Some exceptions are the UK, which had multimember districts with plurality rule, in which the candidates with the highest vote shares won the election. Belgium, before adopting PR in 1899, had a multimember plurality electoral system, in which the winning party took all the seats in the constituency.

[30] Valen 1988, 216–7; Cox, Fiva, and Smith 2019.

[31] Valen 1988, 212–3.

the trade union, and the independence of the local party from the national leadership.[32] We return to this point when we discuss the empirical results.

TRADE UNIONS

Constituencies with high unionization rates were typically considered safer for socialist parties, because the trade unions organized and mobilized workers on a large scale on election day.[33] High unionization rates increased the likelihood that socialist parties would nominate workers for two reasons: the process of candidate nomination, which was often determined at the local or provincial level, and the organizational ties between the party's central leadership and trade unions. In constituencies that had high unionization rates, trade unions had more influence in the nomination conventions and thus could nominate their own members. The national leadership of socialist parties had strong incentives to nominate some workers for safer seats to repay the trade unions for their contribution to advancing the interests of workers. The working-class candidates nominated by socialist parties were the leaders of the largest and most influential trade unions, who were rewarded for their long-term service to the socialist cause,[34] and the most skilled spokesmen among the workers.[35]

PARTY LEADERS AND PROFESSIONALS

Two main motivations drove socialist parties to nominate their own leaders and most capable lawmakers, who often were not workers, for the seats about which the party was relatively confident. First, political ambition pushed political leaders to secure the safest seats to maximize their reelection chances. Second, making sure the party's most crucial

[32] The relationship between socialist parties and trade unions varied by country and was shaped by the legacy of labor suppression. Where labor mobilization was repressed, trade unions depended on the party. Where no suppression of labor occurred, the trade unions and the parties were equal partners (Norway) or the party was largely controlled by the unions (Britain). See Marks 1989, chp. 2. The autonomy of local nomination conventions varied across countries and according to the financial independence of the local party. British parties were considered more centralized, whereas Norwegian parties were fairly decentralized. In all countries, the national leadership of the socialist parties had some informal influence over the local nomination of candidates. See Valen 1988 and Rush and Cromwell 2000, 567.

[33] Amat et al. 2020.

[34] Braunthal 1978, 139.

[35] Braunthal 1978, 136. Braunthal observes that this was the strategy in Germany, which served as a model for other continental European socialist parties. In Imperial Germany, for example, all high-ranking trade union leaders eventually became MPs; see Anderson 2000, 391.

lawmakers entered parliament was essential for the party to operate effectively in parliament and advance its policy agenda.[36] The alternative—that is, nominating the party's leaders for less safe seats—meant taking the risk that the party's leadership would not be elected and therefore would be less able to steer the party's parliamentary agenda.[37] As we mention above, the party's local leaders and public figures were also more likely to be nominated for the safer seats because nominations were determined in the local nomination conventions, which were steered by the local party with some influence from the party's national leadership.[38]

To summarize, our theoretical expectations about the nomination of working-class candidates are as follows. First, an affiliation with a socialist party provided workers with the best path into parliament. Second, socialist parties nominated workers where working-class candidates could help the party to win a marginal seat. Third, the number of working-class candidates rose as the unionization rate rose. Fourth, socialist parties nominated their leaders, who were often not workers, for safer seats, where the socialist party was reasonably certain to win a seat given the high share of workers among constituents. More precisely, under plurality rules we would expect professionalized candidates to be nominated where the share of manual workers was larger than half the electorate. In closed-list PR, socialist parties nominated the most crucial candidates for seats at the top of the party list, where the party was certain to win based on the share of workers among constituents. Where the share of workers among constituents was far below the threshold and therefore the party did not expect to win a seat, the party nominated the rest of its candidates who were often not workers and were not among the party's most capable lawmakers.[39] In the next section, we examine the conditions that increased the numerical representation of workers using evidence from England and Wales, Germany, and Norway.

[36] Socialist party representatives typically consisted of socialist intellectuals who either had or did not have a working-class background, members who built their career in the ranks of the party and the trade unions, and a minority of manual workers; see Braunthal 1978, 136; Terjesen 1990, 120.

[37] Although the trade unions and socialist parties wanted to advance the interests of workers, they did not always agree on the policy goals or the ways to achieve them. See Marks 1989.

[38] Valen 1988, 216–7; Cox, Fiva, and Smith 2019.

[39] In the nomination conventions, parties managed to easily fill up the nominations for the nonviable seats. These candidates typically hoped to gain prestige from the nomination to a national legislature. These nominations served as a starting point for positions in local or national politics. See, for example, Valen 1988, 222.

III. Socialist Parties and the Development of Working-Class Representation

We code the occupations of MPs and candidates based on candidate self-reporting (Norway) or a combination of self-reporting and information collected by researchers (England and Wales and Germany).[40] Unlike contemporary democracies, in which information about the occupational background of MPs might be biased because many lawmakers report that their profession is politics,[41] professional politicians were rare in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Therefore, candidates reported their actual occupations or professional training. This information was available to the public and printed in newspapers and candidate information pamphlets. In our data, we have information about the occupational backgrounds of all but three individuals.

The sources that we use for occupational backgrounds differ in the level of detail about individuals' career paths and connections to political parties and workers' unions. The source for Imperial Germany, for example, reports the career paths of MPs and their ties to trade unions, while the data from Norway include one or two professions per candidate and do not indicate whether the candidate was a trade union member. The British data include information about occupations and employment by the party but do not report the career history of MPs before taking office.

To generate a consistent measure of individuals' class background, we code MPs and candidates as members of the working class if they worked only in a manual occupation in industry, trade, or agriculture before first taking office. The most common career path of working-class candidates and MPs included activity in trade unions or socialist newspapers, while only a minority of working-class candidates were not involved with unions or socialist parties.[42] Because the information on Norway is not sufficiently detailed to enable us to determine whether working-class candidates also engaged in these activities, we code these individuals as members of the working class if their occupational information includes

[40] See sections 1 and 2 in the supplementary material for more information about the data sources and coding.

[41] Squire 1992.

[42] As Best et al. 2001, 75, observe, lower-class candidates in Britain could not hope to win elections without organizational support. In Germany, the majority of SPD MPs were small entrepreneurs and socialist journalists. Parties often put their full-time politicians on the payroll of their intermediary organizations to finance their political career. See Best et al. 2001, 70–71.

these activities in addition to a manual occupation.[43] Using information about workers' occupational history, we distinguish workers in England and Wales and Germany from non-working-class candidates who did an internship in a manual profession but then developed a career in trade unions or the socialist press.[44]

Figure 1 graphs the change in the numerical representation of workers in England and Wales, Germany, and Norway before World War II, measured as the share of workers among MPs. For Norway, we also show the share of working-class candidates. To all graphs, we add the seat share of the socialist party at the national level. All three graphs show that the share of working-class MPs increased from the prewar era to the interwar era regardless of the electoral rules in place. This change can largely be attributed to an improvement in the conditions that were critical to the success of socialist parties. After World War I, many countries expanded voting rights, unionization rates increased, and workers were organized exclusively by socialist trade unions. Parties developed more centralized organizations and the electorate became more party oriented.

The top graph shows that workers in England and Wales entered parliament only after the Third Reform Act of 1884, which expanded the franchise to male skilled workers. In the following years and during the interwar era, the share of workers among British MPs was closely tied to the electoral fortunes of the Labour Party. This share peaked in 1929, when Labour managed to win one-third of the seats in the House of Commons; the share dropped in the next election when Labour lost seats at a similar proportion.

In Germany, shown in the middle graph, the share of working-class legislators began to rise after 1890, when the SPD was allowed to compete in elections. The graphs for prewar England and Wales and Germany also show that the share of working-class MPs did not increase

[43] We can reasonably assume that many of the Norwegian working-class candidates had positions in trade unions and the socialist press given the close organizational linkages between the party and the unions.

[44] We do not code female candidates who were reportedly housewives (N = 7 in Weimar Germany and N = 406 in Norway) as members of the working class. This category likely includes women from multiple social classes. As mentioned above, an affiliation with a socialist party lowered the entry barriers to resource-poor aspirants, including women, but female political participation during European democratization was the highest among middle- and upper-class women; see Boix and Magyar 2022. In the Norway data, 40 percent of all female candidates were affiliated with either the Labor or the Communist Party. The rest were in other parties. This distribution suggests that "housewives" came from multiple social classes.

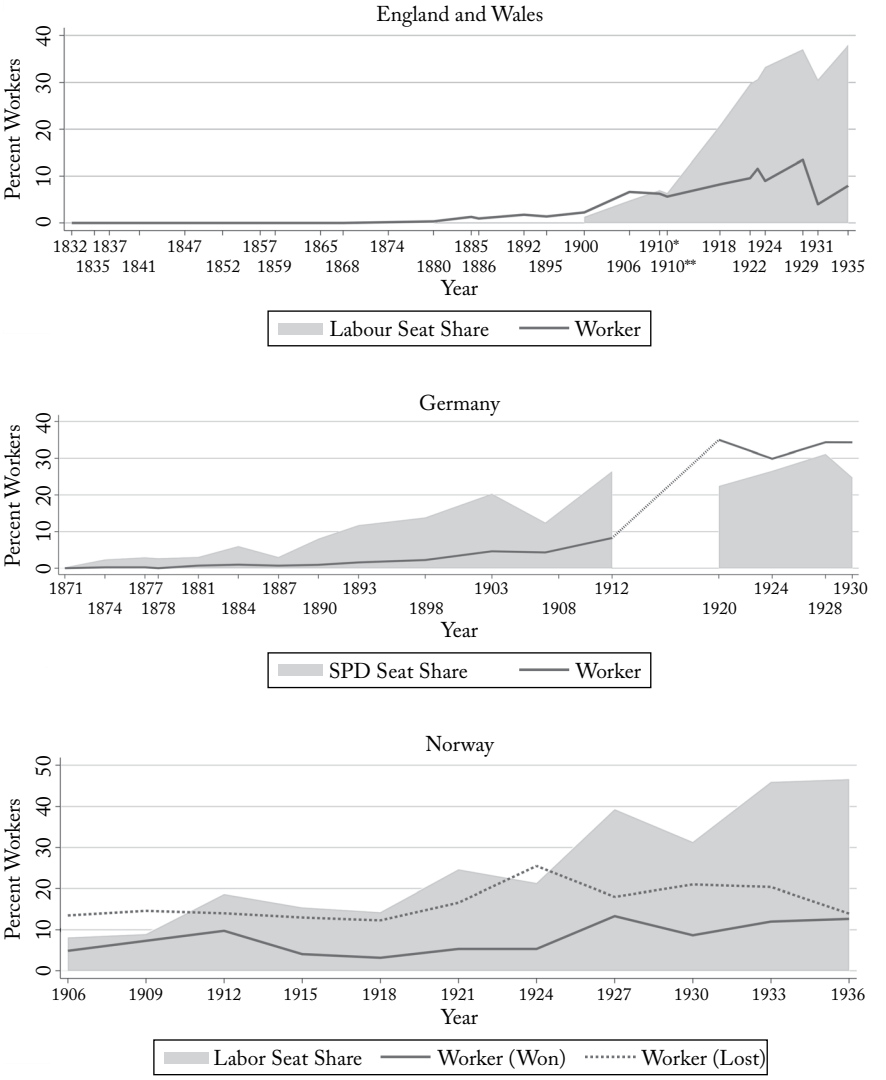


Figure 1
Development of Working-Class Representation in Britain, Germany, and Norway[a]

Sources: Information about the occupational backgrounds of MPs in England and Wales was collected from the "Members of Parliament after 1832" data set compiled by Michael Rush and available through the website of The History of Parliament Trust; information for Germany was taken from the BIORAB-KAISSERREICH and the BIO-WEIMAR databases; data for Norway was coded from the "Norwegian Parliamentary Elections from 1906 to 2013" data set compiled by Fiva and Smith 2022.

[a] Figures show the change, over parliamentary terms, in the share of working-class MPs in England and Wales and Germany, and MPs and candidates in Norway before World War II. In the graph for England and Wales, 1910* is the January election and 1910** is the December election. The graph for Norway shows two different quantities: the share of working-class candidates who won a seat (elected MPs) and the share of candidates who lost.

dramatically after the expansion of the franchise to most and then to all men. This finding is presumably because of the safeguards embedded in the institutional reforms passed to contain working-class parties[45] and because elites intimidated working-class voters[46] and formed electoral pacts against socialist candidates.[47]

In interwar Germany, the share of workers in the Reichstag of the Weimar Republic reached 35 percent. The change between the two periods should be interpreted with caution given the abrupt institutional discontinuity between Imperial Germany and the Weimar Republic and that we are using different data sources for prewar and interwar Germany. In Imperial Germany, in which labor mobilization was suppressed and voter intimidation was pervasive, the numerical representation of workers was tied to performance of the SPD. In the Weimar Republic, which had far fewer limitations on political competition, not all working-class MPs were affiliated with the SPD.

In Norway (bottom graph), the share of working-class MPs fluctuated around 7 percent under plurality rule in single-member districts. In the interwar era, the share of workers in the Storting increased gradually, a pattern that reflects the institutional continuity from the prewar era. Much like in Britain, the change in the share of working-class MPs in Norway was tied to the electoral fortunes of the socialist party. The share peaked in 1927 following the merger of the two socialist parties and then dropped slightly in 1930 when the socialist Labor Party lost 20 percent of its seats. The graph for Norway also shows that, throughout the period, the share of workers among all candidates was higher than the share of working-class MPs. This revelation leads us to suspect that the numerical representation of the working class was not due to the short supply of working-class candidates.

Figure 2 shows tree maps of the party affiliation of the working-class MPs in our data. For Norway, we also plot the maps for candidates. The rectangles in each map represent the percentage of working-class politicians who were affiliated with a given party in each country and electoral system. The majority of working-class politicians were affiliated with socialist parties. In England and Wales, nearly all working-class MPs were affiliated with the Labour Party before 1918 (97 percent) and in the interwar years (97 percent).

In Imperial Germany (1890–1912), the majority (84 percent) of working-class MPs from 1890 to 1912 were affiliated with the SPD, and the rest of the workers were affiliated with the Catholic Center Party, the

[45] Larcinese 2011; Ahmed 2013; Emmenegger and Walter 2019.
[46] Mares 2015.
[47] Aardal 2002, 202, citing Aasland 1965, 287; Schröder and Manow 2020.

Figure 2
The Party Affiliation of Working-Class MPs and Candidates in England and Wales, Germany, and Norway[a]

[a] Figures show tree maps of the party affiliation of working-class MPs (all countries) and candidates (Norway only) in our data by country and electoral rules. Large rectangles indicate that a large proportion of working-class MPs and candidates were affiliated with a given party. See sections 1 and 2 in the supplementary material for information about data sources and coding. KPD = German Communist Party; Zentrum = German Catholic Party; Venstre = Norwegian Left Party (liberal); NKP = Norwegian Communist Party. Other = other parties or independent candidates.

Zentrum (13 percent), and other parties (3 percent). Consistent with our expectations, socialist parties offered workers the best path into parliament when the electoral context was strongly biased against working-class candidates.

Looking at the party affiliation of German MPs between 1920 and 1930, we see that half (56 percent) of working-class MPs were still affiliated with the SPD. Although the German Communist Party (or KPD) contributed to the high share of workers in the Reichstag of the Weimar Republic, only one out of seven workers were in the KPD, while every second working-class MP was a representative of the SPD. In Norway, a strong correlation existed between class background and affiliation with a socialist party. The majority of working-class MPs and candidates were affiliated with the socialist Labor Party before the interwar era. During that period, a fifth of working-class MPs were still affiliated with the Liberal Party, possibly because of the historic ties between socialist unions and the Liberal Party. But after the adoption of PR, the vast majority of working-class MPs (89 percent) belonged to the Labor Party.

IV. Party Nominations and the Electoral Fortunes of Working-Class Candidates: Evidence from Norway

Norway went through a quick process of industrialization, starting in the late 1870s and through the 1880s.[48] In contrast to other countries in Europe, such as Germany, France, and Italy, Norway made hardly any attempts to repress the mobilization of its workers and unions.[49] Traditionally, the social basis of the Norwegian Labor Party was the working class. After 1930, the party also received votes from small farmers.[50] The party had very close ties to workers' organizations and served as the main coordinator between local and sectoral unions from 1885 to 1899.[51] By 1906, the first year in our data set, the socialist movement took over all the trade unions and nominated trade union members in the Labor Party.[52] Throughout the years in our data, the trade unions and the Labor Party remained separate organizations but maintained a cooperative relationship. The members of both organizations sat on each

[48] Luebbert 1991, 62.
[49] Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 22; Bartolini 2000, 323–4.
[50] Hamilton 1982, 440.
[51] Bartolini 2000, 256.
[52] Luebbert 1991, 121, 124, 163; Eliassen and Sjøvaag Marino 2000, 329.

other's executive committees, and most trade union leaders were also party members.[53]

Between 1906 and 1918, Norwegian parliamentary elections were conducted in single-member districts with runoff elections in the second round. The universal male franchise was expanded to include educated women with property in 1907 and all women in 1913. In 1919, Norway switched to PR.[54]

Before the transition to PR, party candidates were selected in local nominating conventions—a procedure that raised barriers to working-class candidates who were not a part of the local elite and had no prior experience in politics. Because political parties were not well-organized before World War I, Norwegian interest groups had considerable influence on the identity of party candidates, and in some circumstances, they pressured parties to nominate their chosen candidate.[55] With the adoption of PR, the parties solely controlled the procedure for candidate nomination, and the national party leaders increased their influence over candidate nominations.[56] At that point, the constituency's socialist nomination convention made the candidate decisions[57] under the informal influence of the national party leadership.[58]

To test our hypotheses about candidate nominations, we rely on an existing data set that Jon Fiva and Daniel M. Smith compiled,[59] which contains information about the occupational background of all parliamentary candidates and their party affiliation between 1906 and 1936. We code candidates as members of the working class based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) scheme, which is commonly used by researchers to aggregate occupational information from censuses. The ISCO coding scheme classifies professions hierarchically according to major occupational groups, ranging from managers to refuse workers. We determine that an MP was a worker if their ISCO-8 occupational code, which was provided by Fiva and Smith in their data set, equals seven, eight, or nine. These occupational categories correspond to craft and related trade workers; plant and machine operators; and assemblers, cleaners and helpers, respectively.

[53] Galenson 1949, 71–72.
[54] Bartolini 2000, 215; Fiva and Smith 2017a, 1375.
[55] Aardal 2002, 185.
[56] Aardal 2002, 190.
[57] Valen 1988, 212–3.
[58] Valen 1988, 216–7; Cox, Fiva, and Smith 2019.
[59] For information about the data set, see Fiva and Smith 2017a. For the data set, see Fiva and Smith 2022.

In the regression analysis, we focus on two main explanatory variables. The first variable is the share of manual workers in the constituency's labor force population, which we calculate based on the 1910 census downloaded from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).[60] The census file from IPUMS includes every individual's HISCLASS code, an international historical class classification used by researchers to compare historical periods and countries. We consider an individual to be a worker if his or her HISCLASS code was six, seven, and nine through twelve. These codes capture high skilled, medium skilled, low skilled, and unskilled manual workers and are comparable to the ISCO-8 codes that we use for the class background of MPs and candidates.[61] We expect to find that when the share of manual workers among the constituency's voters approached 50 percent and the elections were decided based on plurality rule in SMD, the Labor Party nominated a working-class candidate. In PR electoral rules, the Labor Party nominated workers where they could win the party a marginal seat.

Based on the replication information from Cox, Fiva, and Smith,[62] we aggregate the census units to match the boundaries of constituencies in our SMD data set (1906–1918) and once again to match the boundaries of the PR constituencies in our data (1921–1936). In several cases, the census data were collected for entire cities that encompassed several constituencies. We aggregate these constituencies into synthetic constituencies, which leads to a reduction in the number of constituencies in our data for 1906–1918 from 126 to 106.

Our second explanatory variable is the rate of unionization in the constituency, which we calculate using the 1909 Norwegian Communities Database (*Kommunedatabasen*).[63] After aggregating the number of union members from the municipality to the constituency level, we divide that figure by the total labor force population in 1910 in the constituency.[64] We expect to find that the Labor Party nominated working-class candidates in constituencies that had a high unionization rate.

[60] We include only workers who were eligible to vote. See the supplementary material for more information about coding decisions.

[61] The candidate and MP data set had no unskilled workers.

[62] See the replication files of Cox, Fiva, and Smith 2016.

[63] Luebbert 1991, 170, estimated that in 1914, 35 percent of all male industrial workers in Norway were unionized. Also in Norway, Terjesen 1990, 125, reports that 37 percent of male and female workers were unionized in 1912.

[64] As in other countries, unionization rates in Norway varied by constituency. In 1909, 49 percent of all workers were employed in plants that had more than 100 employees, where unionization rates were typically higher. See Terjesen 1990, 108.

Working-Class Nominations and Electoral Fortunes in Plurality Electoral Rules

We start with the conditions in the constituency that determined the electoral success of working-class candidates between 1906 and 1918 under plurality electoral rules. We focus on first-round elections given that elite coordination determined who the candidates were in the second round.[65] Figure 3a shows bar graphs of the class composition of Labor Party candidates, displayed according to the percentage of workers in the constituency, which we rounded to the nearest decile for presentational purposes. The highest share of workers among Labor Party candidates was in constituencies that had around 50 percent manual workers. In these constituencies, the share of manual workers among constituents was sufficient for the Labor Party to win a seat but not sufficient to guarantee a win.

Looking at Figure 3b, which shows the class composition of the Labor candidates who won and became MPs, we see that roughly half of the constituencies with about 50 percent manual workers were represented by working-class Labor MPs. Constituencies with more than 60 percent manual workers were represented almost exclusively by nonworkers. These candidates were typically the local leaders of the party or socialist mayors of communities in the constituency. They managed to stand out among the candidates and gather significant support due to their high public profile and prior experience in office.[66]

In Figures 3c and 3d, we show bar graphs of the class composition of Labor Party candidates and MPs, displayed by the rate of unionization in the constituency, which we divide into three levels, low, medium, and high, based on the values that the variable takes. Looking at Figure 3c, the higher the rate of unionization, the larger the share of non-working-class Labor candidates. In Figure 3d, we see no clear relationship between unionization rates and the election of working-class candidates. In constituencies with high unionization rates, workers were more likely to secure a party endorsement possibly because of unions' influence on local nomination conventions. However, they were not guaranteed to win a legislative seat.

[65] Fiva and Smith 2017b. Moreover, candidates who lost in the first round in a given constituency could compete in the runoff elections of a different constituency; see Aardal 2002, 184.

[66] Between 1906 and 1918, all Norwegian parties nominated multiple candidates in the same constituency during the first round of elections. In the data set, we find no relationship between the share of manual workers and the number of socialist candidates nominated in the same constituency. It was not an uncommon occurrence for a party to nominate multiple candidates in the same single-member constituency. See, for example Fouirnaies 2021, 6 in Britain. Thomas Kühne's *Handbook of Prussian Elections*, published in 1994, shows a similar pattern.

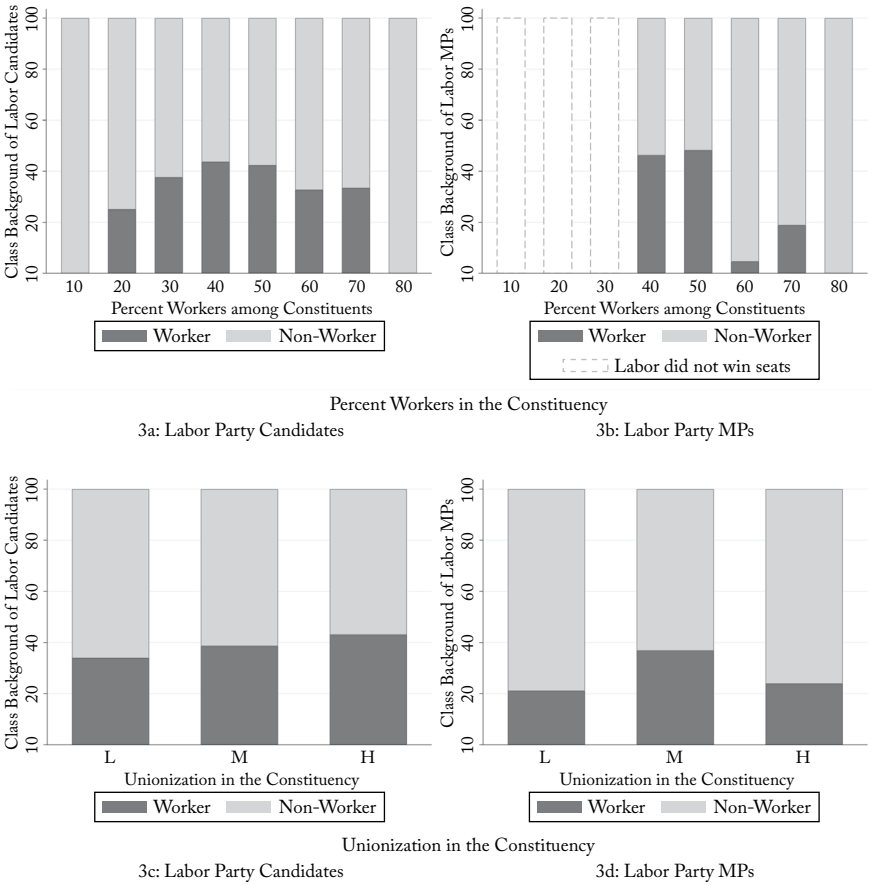


Figure 3
Constituency's Class Profile, Unionization Rates, and the Class Background of Norwegian Labor Candidates and MPs, 1906–1918[a]

[a] Figure 3a shows the occupational background of all Labor candidates, displayed by the constituency share of workers, rounded to the nearest decile. Figure 3b shows the occupational background of Labor MPs. No Labor candidates were elected in constituencies with less than 40 precent manual workers. The Labor Party did not field candidates where the share of workers among constituents was below 5 percent. The data set does not have constituencies with more than 78 percent workers. Figure 3c shows the occupational background of the Labor candidates, displayed by the constituency unionization rate and divided into three levels. L=low values (bottom quartile of the variable's distribution); M=middle value (two middle quartiles); H=high values (top quartile). Figure 3d shows the occupational background of Labor MPs by the three levels of unionization.

Table 1 examines the covariates of our outcomes of interest using OLS models with year fixed effects. In our models, we include our measure of the percentage of manual workers, along with the rate of unionization in the constituency. We also include the natural log of the size of the

electorate, which we use to proxy for urbanization, and an indicator that equals one if the constituency is synthetic. Because we are interested in the selective nominations of the Labor Party, we keep only Labor parliamentary candidates in our sample.

Columns 1 and 2 in Table 1 test the hypothesis that socialist parties nominated working-class candidates where the share of working-class voters among constituents was close to the electoral threshold needed to win a seat. To test our hypothesis about candidate nominations and electoral rules, we ran two regression models. We included in the first regression model the percentage of workers among constituents. In the second regression model, we included the quadratic term. We expected

Table 1
Constituency Conditions and Working-Class Representation in Plurality Electoral Rules[a]

	Outcome: Labor Candidate is Working Class		*Outcome: The Labor Candidate Won*	
	(1)	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*
Percent manual workers	−0.00447*	0.0177	0.00630***	−0.00643
	(0.00184)	(0.0105)	(0.00133)	0.00870
Percent manual workers, squared		−0.000225*		0.000150
		(0.000105)		(0.0000874)
Unionization	0.00506*	0.00448	0.00225	0.00393*
	(0.00230)	(0.00231)	(0.00167)	(0.00175)
Candidate is working class			−0.0435	−0.237
			(0.0320)	(0.388)
Candidate is working class × Percent manual workers				0.0163
				(0.0163)
Candidate is working class × Percent manual workers, squared				−0.000243
				(0.000167)
Constant	1.319***	0.847	−0.677*	−0.483
	(0.393)	(0.449)	(0.287)	(0.335)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
R-squared	0.050	0.059	0.096	0.114
Adjusted R-squared	0.036	0.042	0.080	0.093
Observations	518	518	518	518

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; standard errors in parentheses

[a] Results from OLS models with year fixed effects where the dependent variable is an indicator that equals one if the Labor candidate was a worker (columns 1 and 2) or whether the Labor candidate won the elections (columns 3 and 4). The sample includes Labor Party candidates who ran in the first round of five national elections: 1906, 1909, 1912, 1915, and 1918. Unit of observation is Labor candidate. The rest of covariates are the size of the electorate (logged) and an indicator for a synthetic constituency. See the full Table B in the supplementary material.

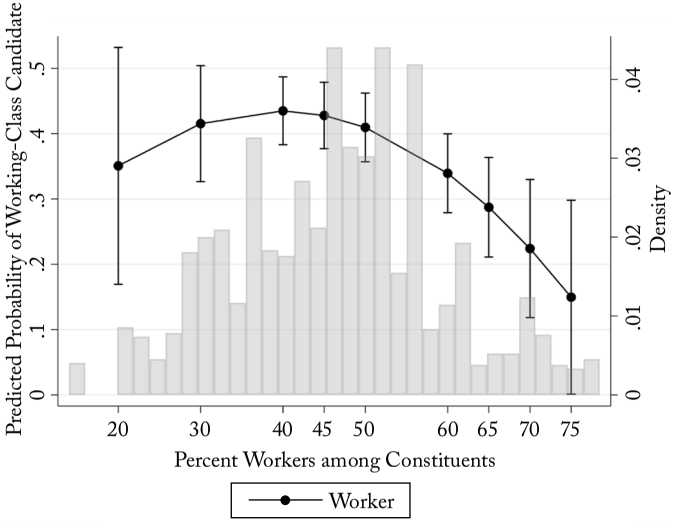
to find a nonlinear relationship between the share of workers among constituents and the class background of the candidate. In both columns, the dependent variable equals one if the Labor candidate was a member of the working class and zero otherwise.

In column 1, the coefficient on the share of manual workers is negative and statistically significant, indicating that as the share of workers among constituents increases, the Labor candidate was less likely to be a worker. In column 2, we use a quadratic specification for the share of workers among constituents to test the hypothesis that socialist parties nominated working-class candidates when the share of workers among constituents was just below or above the electoral threshold needed to win. We find a nonlinear relationship between the constituency's occupational profile and the class background of the Labor candidate. We plot the marginal effects from the quadratic specification in Figure 4a, revealing that the Labor candidate was less likely to be a worker when the share of workers among constituents was low. However, as the share of workers among constituents approached 30 percent, the Labor Party became increasingly likely to nominate a worker. Consistent with our expectation, when the share of working-class voters among constituents approached the electoral threshold needed to win the election, the Labor Party was more likely to nominate working-class candidates.

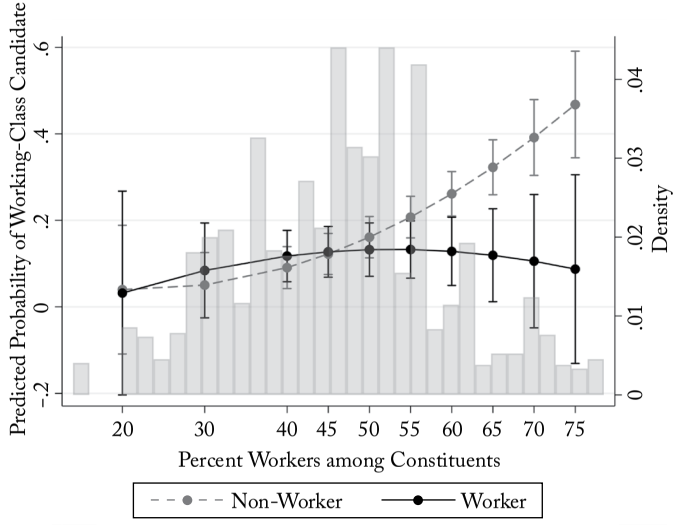
Based on the estimates in columns 1 and 2, we also test the hypothesis about the relationship between the constituency's unionization rate and the class background of socialist candidates. Looking at the coefficient on unionization in column 1, as the share of unionized workers increased, the Labor Party was more likely to nominate a working-class candidate. In column 2, when the quadratic term of the share of workers among constituents is included, the coefficient on unionization is also positive and falls just short of statistical significance at conventional levels (p-value = 0.053).[67] Overall, we observe that as unionization rates increased, working-class aspirants were more likely to be nominated by the Labor Party.

Columns 3 and 4 investigate how nominations by the Labor Party shaped the parliamentary representation of the working class, again by running regression models with and without the quadratic term. This analysis provides additional evidence that selective nominations of working-class candidates shaped the numerical representation of workers in parliament. Furthermore, it provides a point of comparison

[67] When we use the natural log of the rate of unionization, the coefficients on unionization are positive and statistically significant. The coefficients on the share of workers among constituents maintain their direction but fall short of statistical significance because of the multicollinearity between the share of workers among constituents and unionization.



4a: Marginal Effects: Constituency Occupational Profile on Candidate's Class Background



4b: Marginal Effects: Constituency Occupational Profile and Candidate's Class Background on Labor Party Success

Figure 4
Marginal Effects: Constituency Profile and Candidate Class in Plurality Electoral Rules[a]

[a] Figure 4a shows the marginal effects of the percentage of workers among constituents (squared term) on the class background of the Labor candidate. Estimates are derived from column 2 of Table 1. Figure 4b shows the marginal effects of the interaction between (1) the percentage of workers among constituents (squared term) and (2) the candidate's class background on the likelihood that the candidate won a seat for the Labor Party. These estimates are derived from the estimation in column 4 of Table 1.

to the numerical representation of workers in Germany and England and Wales in section V, for which we have data only on the class background of MPs but not on candidates. As in columns 1–2 in Table 1, we expect to find a nonlinear relationship between the share of working-class voters among constituents and the class background of the MP. Our binary dependent variable equals one if the Labor candidate won the election.

In column 3, the coefficient of the share of manual workers is positive and statistically significant at conventional levels, indicating that the Labor Party was successful in constituencies that had a high share of manual workers. In column 4, we examine how candidates' class background and the share of workers among constituents jointly shaped the electoral fortunes of these candidates. When we add the squared term of the share of manual workers, which we use to test our hypothesis about the electoral threshold, the coefficients on these covariates are indistinguishable from zero, presumably due to multicollinearity. Still, when we plot the marginal effects from the interactions in Figure 4b, we see that when the share of workers among constituents was at 50 percent, non-working-class candidates were more likely than workers to win a seat for the Labor Party.[68] Consistent with our theory, all else equal, working-class MPs were less likely than nonworkers to represent constituencies that were considered safe for the Labor Party. In Table D in the supplementary material, we repeat the analysis in probit regression models, finding that the effects of the share of manual workers on the class background of Labor candidates and MPs were substantively similar.

Looking at the role of unionization rates in column 3, we see that the coefficient on the rate of unionization does not appear to be related to the electoral success of the Labor Party. In column 4, the coefficient on unionization is positive and statistically significant, but when we remove an outlier, the coefficient loses statistical significance.[69] When we investigate the marginal effects of unionization by interacting the rate of unionization with an indicator for the candidate's class background, we do not find that unionization in the constituency covaried with the electoral fortunes of working-class candidates. We conclude that as unions rose in strength, the chances that working-class candidates were nominated by the party also increased because of unions' influence in the local nomination committees. However, high rates

[68] In our data set, the correlation between the share of manual workers and unionization is 0.36 (1906–1918 constituencies). We reran the regressions from Table 1 without unionization and the substantive results are similar. See the results in Table F in the supplementary material.

[69] For removing the outlier, see Table E in the supplementary material.

of unionization in the constituency were insufficient to guarantee the election of working-class candidates.

Working-Class Nominations and Electoral Fortunes in PR

We turn now to examine how the conditions in the constituency affected the nomination of working-class candidates in Norway's closed-list PR system. In this type of electoral system, what determines a candidate's chances of winning a seat is her ranking on the party's list. Candidates who are placed at the bottom of the party list have a low chance of winning a seat in parliament. In contrast, candidates who are placed at the top of a party's list can reasonably expect to be elected.

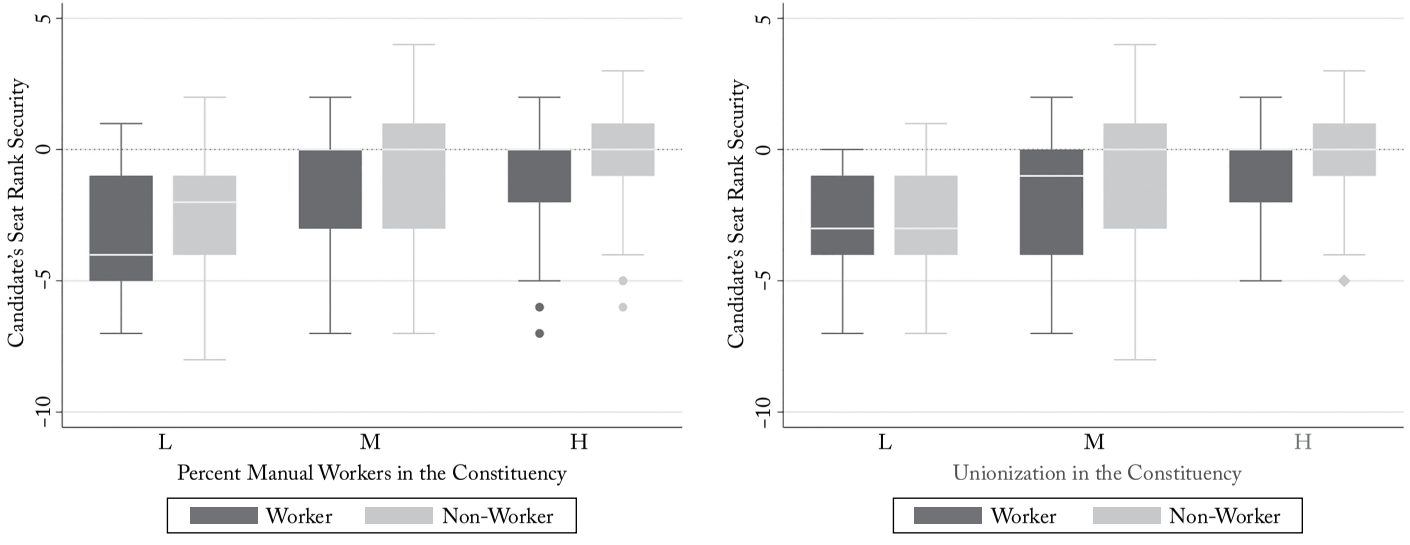
To measure the likelihood that the candidates in our data managed to win a seat, we use the measure of seat rank security.[70] The score reflects the likelihood that a candidate will be elected given her party's past success in the constituency and the candidate's current ranking on the party list. We calculate this score by subtracting each candidate's ranking on the party list from the number of seats that her party won in the previous election. By way of example, consider a case in which a given party won three seats in a given constituency in the previous election. If the party's candidate is ranked in the fifth place by her party, her seat rank security is −2. She will be less likely to win a legislative seat compared to a candidate who is ranked second on the same party list in the same constituency and therefore has a seat rank security of one.[71] Candidates with positive values on the measure of seat rank security were likely to win a legislative seat. These candidates were also ranked higher on the party list. Candidates whose seat rank security was zero had a chance to win a seat, but winning was not guaranteed.

Recall that we hypothesized that two factors determined where socialist parties nominated working-class candidates. First, we expected them to nominate workers when the working-class candidate could win a marginal seat for the party, a factor that depended on the share of manual workers among the constituency's eligible voters. Second, we expected socialist parties to nominate workers where the unionization rate was high because in such constituencies trade unions had greater leverage over party nominations.

Figure 5 shows box-and-whisker plots with the relationship between the candidates' seat rank security, which measures the candidate's chances of winning a seat, candidates' social class, and two different structural

[70] Cox et al. 2021.

[71] In the analysis, we keep in the sample only candidates who competed for legislative seats, excluding candidates who competed for deputy (alternate) positions.



5a. Constituency Occupational Profile

5b. Constituency's Unionization Rate

Figure 5
Candidates' Seat Rank Security by Candidate Class and Constituency Characteristics[a]

[a] Box-and-whisker plots show the seat rank security of Labor candidates, displayed by the candidate's social class and constituency characteristics. The seat rank security score, developed by Cox et al. 2021, measures the chances that the candidate wins a parliamentary seat. We calculate this score by subtracting the candidate's ranking on the party list from the number of seats the party won in the previous election. Values higher than zero indicate the candidate is likely to win a seat. The horizontal axis in plot 5a shows the share of manual workers in the constituency and the horizontal axis in plot 5b shows the constituency unionization rate. From left to right: L = low values (bottom quartile of the variable's distribution); M = middle value (two middle quartiles); H = high values (top quartile). Working-class candidates were nominated for the more competitive seats in the constituency as the share of workers among constituents increased and in constituencies with high unionization rates. Overall, non-working-class candidates were nominated for better seats than workers. The sample includes all Labor candidates between 1924 and 1936.

conditions in the constituency: the share of manual workers and unionization rates. Given that we are interested in the selective party nominations of working-class candidates in the Labor Party, we present pairwise comparisons of workers and nonworkers by structural conditions, which we again divide into three levels—low, medium, and high—based on the values that the variables take.

Figure 5a shows that, as the share of workers among constituents increased, working-class candidates were more likely to be nominated for the more viable seats in the constituency. In constituencies with a high share of manual workers, the seat rank security of the majority of working-class candidates was below zero, indicating that they were nominated for seats the party was able to win, but was not guaranteed to win. In contrast, when we look at the seat rank security of nonworkers, we see that the Labor Party nominated nonworkers where their seat rank security was higher than zero and, therefore, they were more likely to win a seat. In Figure 5b, we see that as the rate of unionization in the constituency increased, working-class candidates were nominated for the more viable seats where they had some chance to win but it was not guaranteed. In contrast, non-working-class candidates were nominated where they were more likely to win a seat, as a higher proportion of them had a seat rank security higher than zero.

In Table 2, we present results from OLS regressions with year fixed effects for which the candidate's seat rank security is the dependent variable. In the regressions, we include the candidate's class background, the share of manual workers in the constituency, the unionization rate at the constituency, an indicator that equals one for female candidates and zero otherwise, and the district's magnitude. We expect the Labor Party to nominate workers for competitive seats in constituencies that had a high share of manual workers among their constituents and high unionization rates. As in the analysis of prewar Norway, we ran pairs of regression models, in which the first model includes the share of workers among constituents and the second model includes the quadratic term.

In column 1, the coefficient on the class background of the candidate is negative, indicating that working-class candidates were less likely to be nominated for the safer seats. In column 2, we test the hypothesis that the Labor Party nominated workers where it hoped to win a marginal legislative seat. We interact the class background of the candidate with the squared term of the share of manual workers in the constituency and plot the marginal effects from the interaction term in Figure 6. As the share of manual workers increased, socialist working-class candidates were nominated for seats that were more viable. However,

TABLE 2
CONSTITUENCY CONDITIONS, PARTY NOMINATIONS, AND CLASS REPRESENTATION UNDER PR[a]

	Outcome: Candidate's Seat Rank Security			
	(1)	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*
WCC	−0.451*	−14.40*	−0.741***	−0.883***
	(0.186)	(6.682)	(0.183)	(0.242)
Percent manual workers	0.0613***	0.415***		
	(0.0101)	(0.104)		
WCC × Percent manual workers		0.560*		
		(0.266)		
Percent manual workers, squared		−0.00335***		
		(0.000965)		
WCC × Percent manual workers, squared		−0.00556*		
		(0.00263)		
Unionization			0.0952***	0.0859***
			(0.0125)	(0.0163)
WCC × Unionization				0.0218
				(0.0244)
Constant	−3.552***	−12.30***	−1.332***	−1.272***
	(0.655)	(2.722)	(0.374)	(0.380)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
R-squared	0.235	0.270	0.262	0.263
Adjusted R-squared	0.223	0.255	0.251	0.251
Observations	563	563	563	563

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; standard errors in parentheses

[a] Results from OLS models with year fixed effects where the dependent variable is the seat rank security of the candidate. This measure captures the likelihood that the candidate will win a legislative seat. We calculate it by subtracting the candidate's ranking on the party list from the number of seats that the party won in the previous election. The sample includes all Labor candidates. Unit of observation is Labor candidates. WCC = Working-class candidate. Five elections are included: 1924, 1927, 1930, 1933, 1936. The rest of covariates (shown in Table C in the supplementary material) are the district's magnitude and an indicator for a female candidate.

when the share of workers among constituents reached 60 percent, working-class candidates became less likely to be nominated for seats they could reasonably win.

We find at least two possible explanations for why the seat rank security of working-class candidates begins to drop as the share of manual workers in the constituency increases. First, the Norwegian Labor Party did not face a substantial electoral threat from the Communist Party. The Labor could therefore appeal to voters outside of the party's natural constituency by nominating nonworkers for marginal seats without the

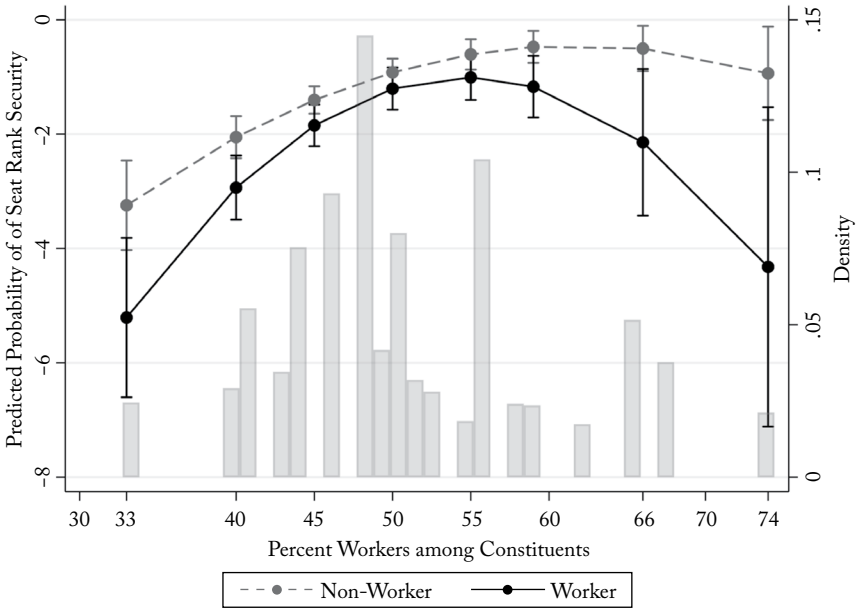


FIGURE 6
MARGINAL EFFECTS: CONSTITUENCY PROFILE AND CANDIDATE CLASS BACKGROUND IN PR RULES[a]

[a] Figure shows marginal effects of an interaction between the share of manual workers (squared term) and the candidate's social class on candidate's seat rank security. Estimates are based on the estimation in column 2 of Table 2.

risk of losing the votes of workers.[72] Second, recall that we hypothesized that the relationship between the share of manual workers among constituents and the class background of the candidate depended on the country-specific context in which candidates were nominated. In Norway, the Labor Party had powerful local party organizations because it first broke out in municipal elections.[73] The party thus had many local leaders and public officials competing for Storting nominations. Given that candidates in Norway had to live in the province to be eligible to run in the constituency,[74] the national leadership of the party was less able to strategically distribute candidates across constituencies. The combination of the geographical limitations and the strength of local parties

[72] Przeworski and Sprague 1986, 74.
[73] Terjesen 1990, 120.
[74] Valen 1988, 224.

in Labor strongholds could explain why workers were less likely to secure nominations for viable seats where the share of manual workers among constituents was especially high.

In column 3, we test the hypothesis about the relationship between the unionization rates in the constituency and the chances that working-class candidates were nominated for viable seats. We include in the regression model the candidate's class background and the constituency unionization rates and see that the coefficient on the class background of the candidate is negative and statistically significant, indicating that working-class candidates were nominated for seats that were considered less safe. In column 4, we examine the relationship between the unionization rate in the constituency and the candidate's seat rank security given the candidate's class background. The coefficient on the interaction term is indistinguishable from zero, indicating that as the rate of unionization increased, working-class candidates were not more likely than nonworkers to be nominated for safer seats. This result is consistent with historical evidence that unions' influence on party nominations declined after the adoption of PR and party leaders gained greater influence on candidate nominations.[75]

V. Manual Workers and Numerical Class Representation beyond Norway

Did the structural conditions in the constituency shape the numerical representation of workers outside of Norway? Using information about the social class of MPs in England and Wales and Germany, we estimate the relationship between the share of workers among constituents and the class background of MPs. As in the analysis of Norway, we ran two regression models for each pair of country-electoral system: SMP in prewar Germany, MMP with a majority of single-member districts in England and Wales, and PR in interwar Germany.[76] In the first regression model, we include our measure for the share of workers among constituents. In the second regression, we include the quadratic term.

[75] In section 3.2.2 in the supplementary material, we report the results of a robustness test using an alternative dependent variable for relative seat safety. We compute this variable by calculating the difference between the number of seats that the socialist party is expected to win given the share of manual workers among constituents and the candidate's ranking on the socialist party's list. The results support the argument that workers were more likely to be nominated in seats that the party was not guaranteed to win.

[76] We include the 1918 British elections, the first with a universal male franchise, with the elections in the interwar era.

Table 3 presents the results from zero-inflated regressions, taking into account the number of structural zeros caused by the small number of socialist MPs, especially in the prewar data sets. The dependent variable is an indicator that equals one if the MP was a worker and zero otherwise. As in the previous section, we consider MPs to be members of the working class if their biography included only manual occupations.

In columns 1 and 2, we focus on Imperial Germany. Our proxy for the share of manual workers is the percentage of the labor force that was employed in trade and industry.[77] The support base of the SPD was mostly Protestant, and the party was allowed to compete in elections only from 1890, after the Catholic Center Party, the Zentrum, already became the party of the majority of Catholics.[78] Given the religious profile of SPD voters, we include in the sample only constituencies in which the share of Protestants in the population was larger than 75 percent, which were half of the constituencies in Germany.[79] In column 1, the coefficient on the share of workers among constituents shows a negligible relationship to the class background of the MP, and the effect is indistinguishable from zero. Consistent with our theory, in SMP, we do not find evidence of a linear relationship between the share of workers among constituents and the class background of the MP. But when we use a quadratic specification in column 2, the coefficients on the share of workers among constituents take opposing directions. In Figure 7a, we show the marginal effects of the quadratic specification on the class background of the MP. The likelihood that an MP was a member of the working class increases until the share of trade and industry reaches 60 percent. We suspect that the electoral threshold in Germany is higher than in Norway because of the pervasiveness of voter intimidation.[80] Constituencies may have been winnable for the SPD only when the share of manual workers among constituents was especially high. These constituencies had sufficient workers whose voting autonomy was not compromised and thus could vote for the SPD. We unfortunately do not have sufficient variation over time in our pre–World War I data to test this hypothesis.

[77] Although this measure does not capture the share of manual workers, it does allow us to capture constituencies with a high share of industry and trade and constituencies that were mostly agrarian, where the share of laborers in the labor population was high.

[78] Mor 2022.

[79] In section 3.3.3 of the supplementary material, we show results for Catholic-majority constituencies and for all of Germany. We find no relationship between the share of people in trade and industry and the class background of the MP in Catholic-majority constituencies. When we look at the results from all German constituencies, we see a nonlinear relationship, peaking when the share of people in trade and industry reaches 80 percent.

[80] Mares 2015.

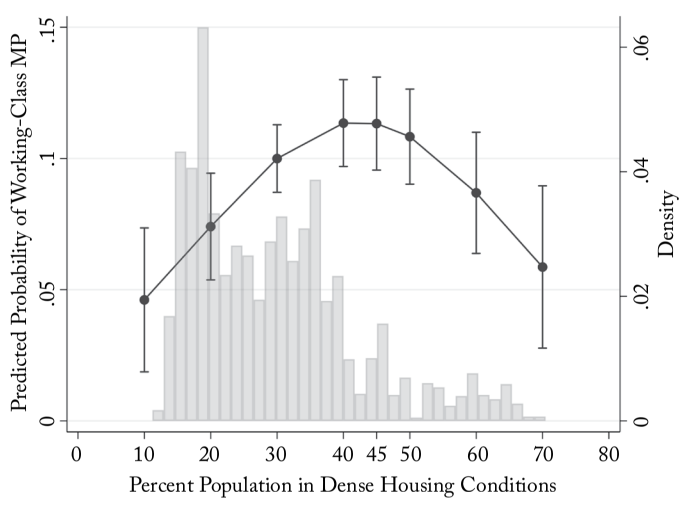
Table 3
Share of Working-Class Voters and Numerical Class Representation[a]

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Imperial Germany 1890–1918	*Imperial Germany 1890–1918*	*Weimar Republic 1924–1930*	*Weimar Republic 1924–1930*	*England and Wales 1886–1917*	*England and Wales 1886–1917*	*England and Wales 1918–1944*	*England and Wales 1918–1944*
Percent workers	−0.0108	0.0908	1.422**	−6.222	1.723	−7.459	1.134	7.299**
	(0.007)	(0.0626)	(0.535)	(5.829)	(0.881)	(5.649)	(0.439)	(2.705)
Percent workers, squared		−0.0007		7.791		6.912		−8.615**
		(0.0004)		(5.913)		(4.267)		(3.212)
Constant	−0.934	−4.493	−1.344***	0.471	−1.733*	1.159	−1.081***	−2.43***
	(0.589)	(2.331)	(0.272)	(1.404)	(0.716)	(1.844)	(0.175)	(0.539)
Observations	1336	1336	1806	1806	4563	4563	3403	3403
AIC	367.6	366.3	2661.5	2661.8	511.1	510.7	1414.6	1408.9

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; standard errors in parentheses

[a] Results from zero-inflated regressions where the dependent variable equals one if the MP was a manual worker and zero otherwise. Unit of observation is the individual MP. The percent of eligible workers was calculated based on the institutional context in each case and the availability of data on the share of workers among constituents: columns 1 and 2: the share of the labor force in industry and trade; columns 3 and 4: the share of manual workers in agriculture, trade and industry; columns 5 and 6: the share of low-skilled male workers; columns 7 and 8: the share of population in the constituency experiencing housing density larger than 1.5 people per room; Controls: columns 1 and 2 include an indicator for by-elections and an indicator for Prussia, where voters' autonomy was relatively more compromised (Ziblatt 2009; Mares 2015); columns 3 and 4 include an indicator for Prussia. Columns 5 and 6 include an indicator that equals one if the MP was elected in a by-election, and an indicator for district magnitude, which takes the values one or two; columns 7 and 8 include an indicator that equals one if the election was in 1918 (with male suffrage only).

7a: Marginal Effects of the Share of People Employed in Trade and Industry (squared) on MP's Class Background in Imperial Germany 1890–1912



7b: Marginal Effects of the Percentage of People Experiencing High Housing Density (squared) on MP's Class Background in England and Wales 1918–1944

Figure 7
Marginal Effects: Share of Workers among Constituents and MPs' Class in Germany and England and Wales[a]

[a] Figure 7a shows the marginal effects of the percentage of people employed in industry and trade in Imperial Germany on the class background of the MP. Estimates are based on Table 3, column 2. Figure 7b shows the marginal effects of the squared term of the share of people experiencing high housing density on the class background of the MP in England and Wales from 1918 to 1944. Estimates are based on column 8 of Table 3.

Columns 3–4 of Table 3 focus on the Weimar Republic. We measure the share of workers among constituents as the percentage of male and female workers in trade, industry, and agriculture out of the total labor force population. In column 3, the coefficient on the share of manual workers is positive, indicating that as the share of manual workers among constituents increased, the constituency's representatives were more likely to have a working-class background.

These results are consistent with our expectation for a positive and linear relationship between the share of workers among constituents and the class background of the respective MP in Weimar Germany. To see why this is the case, consider the following. Unlike the Norwegian Labor Party, the German SPD had incentives to nominate working-class candidates in proportion to the share of workers among constituents because it faced a considerable electoral threat from the communist party, the KPD.[81] This reality forced the SPD to appeal mainly to its natural constituency, the manual workers. In addition, in the final years of Imperial Germany and during World War I, trade unions recruited new members and improved their position in the historically unequal partnership with the SPD.[82] In this new position, they may have been able to place more of their members on the party's list.

In column 4, as we expect, we do not find evidence for a concave association between the share of workers among constituents and the class background of the MP. When we plot the marginal effects from the interaction term, we see that the predicted probability remains the same for constituencies with 35–45 percent manual workers.[83] Starting from 45 percent manual workers among constituents, the predicted probability gradually increases.

Column 5 shows the results for pre–World War I England and Wales, in which our measure for the share of workers among constituents is the percentage of skilled male workers among the eligible voters in the constituency. The results in column 5 show that as the share of manual workers in the constituency increased, the constituency was more likely to be represented by a working-class MP (p-value = 0.05). The case of prewar England and Wales presents a divergence from the expected nonlinear relationship between the share of workers among constituents and the class background of the MP. In the prewar period, the Labour Party did not have a coherent party organization and was controlled

[81] Przeworski and Sprague 1986, 71–2.
[82] See Marks 1989, chp. 3.
[83] See Figure D in the supplementary material.

by the national trade unions.[84] Recall that in section II we hypothesized that candidate nominations were determined in local nomination conventions with influence from the party's leadership. In the centralized organizational structure in prewar Britain, almost every successful Labour candidate was endorsed by trade unions.[85] In this context, many of the party's most capable lawmakers were likely also workers. In column 6, we add the squared term of the share of manual workers to the regression. We do not find evidence for a nonlinear relationship between the share of manual workers in the constituency and the class background of the MP.

In columns 7 and 8 of Table 3, we focus on England and Wales from 1918 to 1944. We proxy for the share of manual workers using information about housing density, a metric used to measure the share of British workers among constituents in the interwar era.[86] Looking at the results in column 7, we see that as housing density increases, the constituency was not more likely to be represented by a working-class MP. But when we use a nonlinear specification in column 8, the coefficients become statistically significant. Consistent with our expectations, under an electoral system similar to SMP, the Labour Party nominated workers where the victory of the Labour was possible but not guaranteed. In Figure 7b, we plot the marginal effects from the quadratic specification and show that as the share of people living in the poorest conditions reaches 45 percent, the likelihood that the MP is a member of the working class declines.[87] These estimates mirror our findings from prewar Norway under SMP electoral rules.

VI. Conclusion

In this article, we analyze the change in the numerical representation of the working class in Europe starting from the expansion of the franchise and up until World War II. Using data about the structural conditions in the constituency and the class backgrounds of MPs in England and Wales, Germany, and all parliamentary candidates in Norway, we show

[84] Marks 1989, 67–8. The Labour Party was founded by trade unions to protect union interests in parliament after the voters of the Liberal Party rejected working-class candidates; see Marks 1989, 66–7. At least until after World War II, British trade unions maintained their dominance in the Labour Party conventions; see Marks 1989, 75.

[85] Fouirnaies 2021, 7.

[86] For more information about housing density in England and Wales, see section 1.2 in the supplementary material.

[87] The threshold for the nomination of working-class candidates might be higher, however, as this measure likely captures unskilled and low-skilled workers but not medium-skilled manual workers.

that socialist parties were crucial in helping working-class political aspirants get into office. We also find that the electoral and organizational concerns of social democratic parties, as well as their candidate nomination procedures, affected the numerical representation of workers. Socialist parties nominated workers selectively: working-class aspirants were more likely to be assigned to difficult seats that the party could win but was not guaranteed to win. In addition, workers were also nominated for safer seats in constituencies that had high rates of unionization—a consequence of the power of trade unions and the need for socialist parties to repay them for their mobilization efforts.

Our findings from Norway highlight the electoral disadvantages that working-class candidates faced. The results are consistent with evidence from prior research that the underrepresentation of workers is not due to the voters' low demand for working-class representatives[88] but rather related to the calculations and procedures that determine party nominations.[89] In the context of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe, decisions about candidate nominations were shaped both at the local level, where workers had to compete with local party leaders and activists for nominations, and at the national level, where the party's leadership had to balance between several electoral goals: mobilizing workers, attracting voters who did not belong to the party's natural constituency of manual workers, and securing the representation of leaders and professionalized politicians.

This article speaks to at least two broad research agendas. First, it sheds light on the factors shaping descriptive representation, particularly by focusing on the electoral calculations, nomination procedure, and institutional priorities of party organizations as central drivers in the selection of candidates, often at the expense of the type of electorates they purport to represent. Second, the article contributes to a growing literature on the relationship among industrialization, electoral reform, and the rise of social democracy in Europe.[90] We expand this literature by focusing on an important outcome of socialist parties' success: the replacement of wealthy elites with working-class representatives. This change did not fully coincide with the two major institutional reforms that are at the center of the literature on European democratization: the expansion of the franchise and the change to electoral rules. In Imperial

[88] See, for example, Carnes and Lupu 2016; Vivyan et al. 2020.

[89] Dancygier et al. 2015.

[90] Boix 1999; Bartolini 2000; Cusack, Iversen, and Soskice 2007; Ahmed 2013; Leemann and Mares 2014; Mares 2015; Emmenegger and Walter 2019; Benedetto, Hix, and Mastrorocco 2020; Schröder and Manow 2020; Boix and Magyar 2022.

Germany, the share of manual workers in the Reichstag remained low although almost all men had been eligible to vote since 1871. The share of workers among constituents increased only when the SPD was allowed to compete in elections from 1890 onward. In Norway, the share of working-class MPs increased significantly only after 1924, the second election under PR. These examples illustrate that parliamentary diversification is a unique and, so far, largely overlooked aspect of European democratization.

This article opens up several new avenues of research as well. First, it calls for a deeper and broader study of the relationship between socialist parties and trade unions, which varied across countries in Europe, around the nomination of candidates. Second, it suggests that we need more work on the nature and characteristics of those workers who managed to win a party nomination. We find that even though trade unions helped workers to secure party nominations, the support of trade unions was insufficient to guarantee the election of working-class candidates. Future research could examine whether differences in workers' skills or position in the trade unions determined whether they were more likely to win a legislative seat. Third, given that in Norway candidates had to live in the province to be eligible to run in the constituency, future researchers could examine whether, in a context that did not require candidates to reside in the constituency, socialist parties nominated union-sponsored candidates selectively across constituencies for seats that were very likely to be won by their socialist candidate. Finally, this article alerts researchers of descriptive representation in general about the need to pay more attention to the role that electoral rules, nomination procedures, and organizational tradeoffs play in shaping the nomination of candidates.

Supplementary Material

Supplementary material for this article can be found at http://muse.jhu.edu/resolve/248.

Data

Replication files for this article can be found at https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/TLKOAK.

References

Aardal, Bernt. 2002. "Electoral Systems in Norway." In Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart, eds., *The Evolution of Electoral and Party Systems in the Nordic Countries*. New York, N.Y.: Agathon Press: 167–224.

Aasland, Tertit. 1965. "Valgordningen 1906–1918" [The Electoral System 1906–1918]. *Historisk Tidsskrift* 44: 267–97.

Ahmed, Amel. 2013. *Democracy and the Politics of Electoral System Choice: Engineering Electoral Dominance*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.

Alexiadou, Despina. 2022. "Cabinet Ministers and Inequality." *European Journal of Political Research* 61, no. 2: 326–50. At https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12482.

Alford, Robert. R. 1962. "A Suggested Index of the Association of Social Class and Voting." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 26, no. 3: 417–25. At https://doi.org/10.1086/267115.

Amat, Francesc, Carles Boix, Jordi Muñoz, and Toni Rodon. 2020. "From Political Mobilization to Electoral Participation: Turnout in Barcelona in the 1930s." *Journal of Politics* 82, no. 4: 1559–75. At https://doi.org/10.1086/708684.

Anderson, Margaret Lavinia. 2000. *Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Ardanaz, Martin, and Isabela Mares. 2014. "Labor Shortages, Rural Inequality, and Democratization." *Comparative Political Studies* 47, no. 12: 1639–69. At https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414013512609.

Arsenschek, Robert. 2003." Der Kampf um die Wahlfreiheit im Kaiserreich: zur parlamentarischen Wahlprüfung und politischen Realität der Reichstagswahlen 1871–1914." (Beiträge zur Geschichte des Parlamentarismus und der politischen Parteien, bd. 136). ["The Fight for Free Elections in Imperial Germany: Election Examination and Political Reality in the Elections in Imperial Germany 1871–1914." (Contributions to the History of Parliamentarism and Political Parties, vol. 136)]. Düsseldorf, Germany: Droste.

Barnes, Tiffany D., Yann Kerevel, and Gregory W. Saxton. 2023. *Working Class Inclusion: Evaluations of Democratic Institutions in Latin Americ*a. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.

Bartels, Larry M. 2016. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Bartolini, Stefano. 2000. *The Political Mobilization of the European Left, 1860–1980: The Class Cleavage*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.

Benedetto, Giacomo, Simon Hix, and Nicola Mastrorocco. 2020. "The Rise and Fall of Social Democracy, 1918–2017." *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 3: 928–39. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055420000234.

Bengtsson, Erik, and Mats Olsson. 2020. "Peasant Aristocrats? Wealth, Social Status and the Politics of Swedish Farmer Parliamentarians 1769–1895." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 45, no. 5: 573–92. At https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2020.1727563.

Best, Heinrich, and Maurizio Cotta, eds. 2000. *Parliamentary Representatives in Europe, 1848–2000: Legislative Recruitment and Careers in Eleven European Countries*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

Best, Heinrich, Valerie Cromwell, Christopher Hausmann, and Michael Rush. 2001. "The Transformation of Legislative Elites: The Cases of Britain and Germany since the 1860s." *Journal of Legislative Studies* 7, no. 3: 65–91. At https://doi.org/10.1080/714003883.

Blaxill, Luke, Gidon Cohen, Gary Hutchison, Patrick M. Kuhn, and Nick Vivyan. 2022. "Electoral Violence in England and Wales, 1832–1914." Working Paper, School of Government and International Affairs (SGIA), Durham University. At http://victorianelectionviolence.uk/publications/, accessed December 18, 2023

Boix, Carles. 1999. "Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies." *American Political Science Review* 93, no. 3: 609–24. At https://doi.org/10.2307/2585577.

Boix, Carles, and Zsuzsanna Magyar. 2022. "The Rise of Swedish Social Democracy." *British Journal of Political Science* 53, no. 1: 281–96. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123422000102.

Braunthal, Gerhard. 1978. *Socialist Labor and Politics in Weimar Germany*. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books.

Burch, Martin, and Michael Moran. 1985. "The Changing British Political Elite, 1945–1983: MPs and Cabinet Ministers." *Parliamentary Affairs* 38, no. 1: 1–15. At https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.pa.a051967.

Carnes, Nicholas. 2012. "Does the Numerical Underrepresentation of the Working Class in Congress Matter?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 1: 5–34. At https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-9162.2011.00033.x.

Carnes, Nicholas. 2013. *White-Collar Government: The Hidden Role of Class in Economic Policy Making*. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press.

Carnes, Nicholas. 2016. "Why are There So Few Working-Class People in Political Office? Evidence from State Legislatures." *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 4, no. 1: 84–109. At https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2015.1066689.

Carnes, Nicholas, and Noam Lupu. 2015. "Rethinking the Comparative Perspective on Class and Representation: Evidence from Latin America." *American Journal of Political Science* 59, no. 1: 1–18. At https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12112.

Carnes, Nicholas, and Noam Lupu. 2016. "Do Voters Dislike Working-Class Candidates? Voter Biases and the Descriptive Underrepresentation of the Working Class." *American Political Science Review* 110, no. 4: 832–44. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055416000551.

Carnes, Nicholas, and Noam Lupu. 2023. "The Economic Backgrounds of Politicians." *Annual Review of Political Science* 26: 253–70. At https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051921-102946.

Cox, Gary W. 1987. *The Efficient Secret: The Cabinet and the Development of Political Parties in Victorian England*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.

Cox, Gary W., Jon H. Fiva, and Daniel M. Smith. 2016. "The Contraction Effect: How Proportional Representation Affects Mobilization and Turnout." *Journal of Politics* 78, no. 4: 1249–63. At https://doi.org/10.1086/686804.

Cox, Gary W., Jon H. Fiva, and Daniel M. Smith. 2019. "Parties, Legislators, and the Origins of Proportional Representation." *Comparative Political Studies* 52, no. 1: 102–33. At https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414018762369.

Cox, Gary W., Jon H. Fiva, Daniel M. Smith, and Rune J. Sørensen. 2021. "Moral Hazard in Electoral Teams: List Rank and Campaign Effort." *Journal of Public Economics* 200: Article 104457. At https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2021.104457.

Cusack, Thomas R., Torben Iversen, and David Soskice. 2007. "Economic Interests and the Origins of Electoral Systems." *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 3: 373–91. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055407070384.

Dancygier, Rafaela M. 2018. *Dilemmas of Inclusion: Muslims in European Politics*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Dancygier, Rafaela M., Karl-Oskar Lindgren, Sven Oskarsson, and Kåre Vernby. 2015. "Why are Immigrants Underrepresented in Politics? Evidence from Sweden." *American Political Science Review* 109, no. 4: 703–24. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055415000404.

Desai, Zuheir, and Anderson Frey. 2021. "Can Descriptive Representation Help the Right Win Votes from the Poor? Evidence from Brazil." *American Journal of Political Science* 67, no. 3: 671–86. At https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12664.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York, N.Y.: Harper.

Eliassen, Kjell A., and Marit Sjøvaag Marino. 2000. "Democratisation and Parliamentary Elite Recruitment in Norway 1848–1996." In Heinrich Best and Maurizio Cotta, eds., *Parliamentary Representatives in Europe, 1848–2000: Legislative Recruitment and Careers in Eleven European Countries*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

Emmenegger, Patrick, and André Walter. 2019. "When Dominant Parties Adopt Proportional Representation: The Mysterious Case of Belgium." *European Political Science Review* 11, no. 4: 433–50. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773919000225.

Evans, Geoffrey, and James Tilley. 2017. *The New Politics of Class: The Political Exclusion of the British Working Class*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Fiva, Jon H., and Daniel M. Smith. 2017a. "Norwegian Parliamentary Elections, 1906–2013: Representation and Turnout across Four Electoral Systems." *West European Politics* 40, no. 6: 1373–91. At https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2017.1298016.

Fiva, Jon, H., and Daniel M. Smith. 2017b. "Local Candidates and Voter Mobilization: Evidence from Historical Two-Round Elections in Norway." *Electoral Studies* 45: 130–40. At https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2016.11.021.

Fiva, Jon. H., and Daniel M. Smith. 2022. *Norwegian Parliamentary Elections, 1906–2017* [Data set]. NSD—Norwegian Centre for Research Data. At https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD2405-V5, accessed March 24, 2022.

Fouirnaies, Alexander. 2021. "Can Interest Groups Influence Elections? Evidence from Unions in Great Britain 1900–2019." Working Paper. At https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3771526, accessed March 31, 2021.

Fresh, Adrian. 2022. "Elite Persistence in the Era of Britain's Expanding Overseas Trade." Working Paper. At https://www.dropbox.com/s/ghece7gtoiga6pv/Fresh_OverseasTrade.pdf?dl=0, accessed August 22, 2022.

Galenson, Walter. 1949. *Labor in Norway*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Hamilton, Richard F. 1982. *Who Voted for Hitler?* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Harada, Masataka, and Daniel M. Smith. 2014. "You Have to Pay to Play: Candidate and Party Responses to the High Cost of Elections in Japan." *Electoral Studies* 36: 51–64. At https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2014.06.011.

Horne, Will. 2022. *Class Dismissed: The Labour Party and the Decline of Working-Class Representation*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University.

Ilonszki, Gabriella. 2007. "Socialist and Communist Members of Parliament: Distinctiveness, Convergence, and Variance." In Maurizio Cotta and Heinrich

Best, eds., *Democratic Representation in Europe: Diversity, Change, and Convergence*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.
Kunovich, Sheri. 2017. "Occupational Diversity in Polish Politics, 1991–2011." *International Journal of Sociology* 48, no. 1: 60–75. At https://doi.org/10.1080/00207659.2018.1414503.
Kühne, Thomas. 1994. Handbuch der Wahlen zum preussischen Abgeordnetenhaus, 1867–1918: Wahlergebnisse, Wahlbündnisse und Wahlkandidaten. (Handbücher zur Geschichte des Parlamentarismus und der politischen Parteien, bd. 6) [Handbook of the Elections to the Prussian House of Representatives, 1867–1918: Election Results, Electoral Alliances, and Candidates. (Handbooks of the History of Parliamentarism and Political Parties, vol. 6)]. Düsseldorf, Germany: Droste.
Larcinese, Valentino. 2011. "Enfranchisement and Representation: Italy 1909–1913." At https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254398128_Enfranchisement_and_Representation_Italy_1909-1913, accessed January 10, 2023.
Leemann, Lucas, and Isabela Mares. 2014. "The Adoption of Proportional Representation." *Journal of Politics* 76, no. 2: 461–78. At https://doi.org/10.1017/s0022381613001394.
Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Stein Rokkan. 1967. "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction." In Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*. New York, N.Y.: Free Press.
Luebbert, Gregory M. 1991. *Liberalism, Fascism, or Social Democracy: Social Classes and the Political Origins of Regimes in Interwar Europe*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.
Lupu, Noam. 2016. *Party Brands in Crisis: Partisanship, Brand Dilution, and the Breakdown of Political Parties in Latin America*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.
Mares, Isabela. 2015. *From Open Secrets to Secret Voting: Democratic Electoral Reforms and Voter Autonomy*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.
Marks, Gary Wolfe. 1989. *Unions in Politics: Britain, Germany, and the United States in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
Mor, Maayan. 2022. "Government Policies, New Voter Coalitions, and the Emergence of Ethnic Dimension in Party Systems." *World Politics* 74, no. 1 (January): 121–66. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887121000228.
Mor, Maayan, and Carles Boix. 2024. "Replication data for: Social Democracy and the Birth of Working-Class Representation in Europe." Harvard Dataverse, V1. At https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/TLKOAK.
O'Grady, Tom. 2019. "Careerists versus Coal-Miners: Welfare Reforms and the Substantive Representation of Social Groups in the British Labour Party." *Comparative Political Studies* 52, no. 4: 544–78. At https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414018784065.
Pontusson, Jonas. 1995. "Explaining the Decline of European Social Democracy: The Role of Structural Economic Change." *World Politics* 47, no. 4 (July): 495–533. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887100015197.
Przeworski, Adam, and John Sprague. 1986. *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism*. Chicago, Ill.: Chicago University Press.

Rush, Michael, and Valerie Cromwell. 2000. "Continuity and Change: Legislative Recruitment in the United Kingdom 1868–1999." In Heinrich Best and Maurizio Cotta, eds., *Parliamentary Representatives in Europe, 1848–2000: Legislative Recruitment and Careers in Eleven European Countries*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

Serrano, Inmaculada, and Sandra Bermúdez. 2018. "The Composition of Spanish Parliaments: What are the MPs Like?" In Xavier Coller, Antonio M. Jaime-Castillo, and Fabiola Mota, eds., *Political Power in Spain: The Multiple Divides between* MPs and Citizens. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan: 21–41.

Schröder, Valentin, and Philip Manow. 2020. "An Intra-Party Account of Electoral System Choice." *Political Science Research and Methods* 8, no. 2: 251–67. At https://doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2018.58.

Squire, Peverill. 1992. "Legislative Professionalization and Membership Diversity in State Legislatures." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17, no. 1: 69–79. At https://www.jstor.org/stable/440081.

Terjesen, Einar A. 1990. "Norway." In Marcel van der Linden and Jürgen Rojahn, eds., *The Formation of Labour Movements 1870–1914: An International Perspective, volume I*. Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill: 103–31.

Valen, Henry. 1988. "Norway: Decentralization and Group Representation." In Michael Gallagher and Michael Marsh, eds., *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective: The Secret Garden of Politics*. London, UK: Sage.

Vivyan, Nick, Markus Wagner, Konstantin Glinitzer, and Jakob-Moritz Eberl. 2020. "Do Humble Beginnings Help? How Politician Class Roots Shape Voter Evaluations." *Electoral Studies* 63: Article 102093. At https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2019.102093.

Wauters, Bram. 2012. "Blue Collars Striking the Red Flag: Formal and Descriptive Representation of the Working Class in the Belgian House of Representatives 1946–2007." *Labor History* 53, no. 2: 225–43. At https://doi.org/10.1080/0023656X.2012.679398.

Weeks, Ana Catalano, Bonnie M. Meguid, Miki Caul Kittilson, and Hilde Coffé. 2023. "When Do Männerparteien Elect Women? Radical Right Populist Parties and Strategic Descriptive Representation." *American Political Science Review* 117, no. 2: 421–38. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055422000107.

Wüest, Reto, and Jonas Pontusson. 2022. "Voter Preferences as a Source of Descriptive (Mis)representation by Social Class." *European Journal of Political Research* 61, no. 2: 398–419. At https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12511.

Ziblatt, Daniel. 2009. "Shaping Democratic Practice and the Causes of Electoral Fraud: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Germany." *American Political Science Review* 103, no. 1: 1–21. At https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055409090042.

Authors

Maayan Mor is an assistant professor of political science at Tulane University and a junior fellow at the Institutions, Politics and Economics Research Center at the University of Barcelona. Her research interests include ethnic identities, political parties, political development, and the causes and effects of inequalities in representation in Western Europe. She is currently completing a book manuscript

about the effect of government policies on the formation of an ethnic dimension in party competition, drawing on case studies in Germany, Belgium, and Israel in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Her research has been published in the *American Journal of Political Science* and *World Politics*. She can be reached at mmor@tulane.edu.

Carles Boix is the Robert Garrett Professor of Politics and Public Affairs at Princeton University and the director of the Institutions, Politics and Economics Research Center at the University of Barcelona. His latest books are *Democratic Capitalism at the Crossroads: Technological Change and the Future of Politics* (Princeton University Press, 2019) and *Political Order and Inequality* (Cambridge University Press, 2015). He has published in leading journals such as *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Law, Economics and Organization*, *Journal of Politics*, *International Organization*, *PNAS*, and *World Politics*. He can be reached at cboix@princeton.edu.

Acknowledgments

For comments and suggestions, we thank Nicholas Carnes, Jon H. Fiva, Danny Metcalf, Daniel M. Smith, Jonas Pontusson, and three anonymous reviewers. An earlier version of this article was presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in 2022 in Montreal, Canada. We thank Chitralekha Basu, Martin Hansen, Emmy Lindstam, and Zsuzsanna Magyar for sharing data sets, codes, or advice on the data. For research assistance, we thank Daniel Ruiz, Roger Sanjaume i Calvet, Júlia Diaz, Ferran Montserrat, and Pau Grau.

Funding

Carles Boix acknowledges funding from the European Research Council (erc) under the European Union's Programme of H2020—the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014–2020), Project "The Birth of Party Democracy," Grant Agreement no. 694318.

Key Words

candidate nomination, democratization, descriptive representation, electoral system, social democracy, trade unions, Western Europe, working class