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Ostermann, Falk; Wagner, Wolfgang

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Introducing the International Treaty Ratification Votes Database

FALK OSTERMANN 
Kiel University, Germany

AND

WOLFGANG WAGNER 
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands

This research note introduces the International Treaty Ratification Votes Database, which covers more than 6,000 votes on the ratification of international treaties in Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States between 1990 and 2019. In addition, the database presents data on the voting behavior of ninety parties in eight of these countries, resulting in more than 11,000 party observations. The research note presents the two datasets with their two units of analysis, the parliamentary and the party level, and describes the main variables, reaching from descriptive vote and cabinet data to issue areas, comparative party family classifications, and actual voting records. Furthermore, we suggest avenues for using the data for future research on the domestic politics of foreign policy: Our data can be used to study patterns in the politicization of international treaties and organizations, ratification delays, legislative–executive relations, the party politics of foreign policy making, and the crisis of the liberal international order.

Esta nota de investigación presenta la Base de Datos de Votos en materia de Ratificación de Tratados Internacionales (ITRVD, por sus siglas en inglés), que engloba más de 6.000 votos relativos a la ratificación de tratados internacionales en Canadá, Finlandia, Francia, Alemania, Italia, Eslovaquia, España, Turquía, el Reino Unido y los Estados Unidos entre 1990 y 2019. Además, esta base de datos también presenta datos sobre el comportamiento electoral de noventa partidos en ocho de estos países, lo cual representa más de 11.000 observaciones realizadas con respecto a los partidos. La nota de investigación presenta los dos conjuntos de datos, incluyendo sus dos unidades de análisis, el nivel parlamentario y el nivel de partido, y describe las principales variables usando desde datos descriptivos con relación a los votos y a los gabinetes hasta áreas temáticas, clasificaciones comparadas de familias de partidos y registros de votación reales. Además, sugerimos vías para utilizar estos datos en futuras investigaciones sobre la política interna de la política exterior ya que nuestros datos pueden usarse para estudiar patrones en materia de: politicización de tratados y organiza-

Falk Ostermann is a Senior Lecturer at Kiel University, Germany. He studies the domestic contestation of foreign policy with a focus on military interventions, treaties, and identity. He is the author of *Security, Defense Discourse and Identity in NATO and Europe. How France Changed Foreign Policy* (Routledge, 2019), *Die NATO* (UVK/UTB, 2020), and coeditor of the *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods* (2023, with Patrick A. Mello). He has published, among others, in the *European Political Science Review*, the *Journal of Peace Research*, and *West European Politics*.

Wolfgang Wagner is a Professor of International Security at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands. His work focuses on the domestic politics of foreign policy with a focus on legislative–executive relations and party-political contestation. His book *The Democratic Politics of Military Interventions. Political Parties, Contestation and Decisions to Use Force Abroad* came out with Oxford University Press in 2020. He has coedited special issues with *West European Politics* and *Foreign Policy Analysis* and published, among others, in the *Journal of Peace Research*, *Contemporary Security Policy* and the *Journal of Common Market Studies*.

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ciones internacionales, retrasos en las ratificaciones, relaciones legislativo-ejecutivas, política partidista de la formulación de políticas exteriores y la crisis del orden internacional liberal.

Cette note de recherche présente la Base de données sur les votes de ratification de traités internationaux (International Treaty Ratification Votes Database ou ITRVD), qui couvre plus de 6 000 votes sur la ratification des traités internationaux au Canada, en Finlande, en France, en Allemagne, en Italie, en Slovaquie, en Espagne, en Turquie, au Royaume-Uni et aux États-Unis entre 1990 et 2019. La base de données contient en outre des données sur le comportement de vote de quatre-vingt-dix partis dans huit de ces pays, pour finalement produire 11 000 observations de partis. La note de recherche présente les deux ensembles de données et leurs deux unités d'analyse, le niveau parlementaire et le niveau du parti. Elle décrit aussi les principales variables, du vote descriptif et des données de cabinet aux zones problématiques, aux classifications comparatives de familles de partis et aux réels résultats de votes. De plus, nous proposons des pistes de recherche pour analyser les politiques nationales qui utiliseraient ces données. Nos données peuvent être utilisées pour étudier des schémas de politisation des traités internationaux et des organisations, les ratifications tardives, les relations entre les parlements et l'exécutif, la politique de parti relative à l'élaboration de politiques étrangères et la crise de l'ordre libéral international.

Introduction

Negotiating and acceding to international treaties is a key part of any state's foreign policy, and the resulting web of international treaties is an important dimension of the international order. Although not all states always follow the obligation under Article 102 of the UN Charter to register international treaties with the UN, the latter's treaty series gives access to more than 75,000 treaties¹ and provides data on states' signature, ratification, and coming into effect. Data on treaties have been used to study changes in international politics (such as "legalization," see [Goldstein et al. 2001](#)). Data on states' ratifications have been widely used in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) because they provide insights into state preferences, normative commitments, and state–society relations ([Simmons 2009](#); [Mansfield and Milner 2012](#)). The notion of ratification, although understood in political rather than legal terms, has also been used in the wake of Putnam's theory of negotiations as two-level games to capture domestic constraints in international negotiations ([Putnam 1988](#); [Evans et al. 1993](#)).

However, with the exception of the United States, our knowledge of the domestic politics of ratifying international treaties is quite limited (on the ratification politics in the United States, see, among others, [Martin 2000](#); [Delaet, Rowling, and Scott 2005](#); [Kreps, Saunders, and Schultz 2018](#)). Quantitative analyses typically study a small subset of international treaty-making, such as labor conventions ([Boockmann 2006](#)), investment ([Haftel and Thompson 2013](#)), or environmental treaties ([Hugh-Jones, Milewicz, and Ward 2018](#)). In-depth case studies have shown that ratification can be highly politicized and that processes differ across countries ([Lantis 2009](#)). We miss the bigger picture, however, because there has not been a dataset that provides information on the domestic politics of treaty ratification in a larger number of countries over a longer period of time.

¹Personal correspondence with the United Nations Treaty Collection administration, October 17, 2022.

Therefore, in this paper, we introduce the *International Treaty Ratification Votes Database* (ITRVD),² which provides information on more than 6,000 votes on the ratification of international treaties between 1990 and 2019 in the legislatures of ten countries and on the voting behavior of ninety political parties in eight of these countries. Therefore, ITRVD is a systematic effort at capturing the commitment to international cooperation—be it bilateral or multilateral—in foreign policy across a broad field of issue areas. Our data collection effort followed several criteria: First, we limited the collection to liberal democracies, where legislatures represent a broad spectrum of political interests and ideologies in society. Second, we included countries across Northern, Western, and Eastern Europe (including one postcommunist state) as well as North America and the Middle East to assure regional diversity in our data. Third, the selected cases further include countries with monist and dualist legal systems to assure coverage of different legal traditions of lawmaking and ratification. Fourth, in terms of practical importance, our dataset includes six of the G7 states (short of Japan) as central stakeholders in multilateralism and the rules-based international order, of which international treaties form a central part. The diversity of countries and issue areas covered makes ratification votes an ideal candidate for investigating foreign policy contestation across the board; likewise, studying treaty ratification assures that the contested *object* (a treaty) is actually the same across countries, furthering comparability, for instance, with regard to degrees of contestation or positioning of various party families.

Before we introduce ITRVD in more detail, we familiarize the reader with the laws and politics of ratifying international agreements. We then introduce ITRVD in two steps: We first present the parliamentary-level data and then turn to the party-level data.

Ratification Votes

Under international law, a state can express its consent to be bound by a treaty in different ways.³ The signature of its representative suffices if this is stipulated in the treaty or agreed upon by the negotiating partners. Consent can also be expressed more formally by means of ratification, which is either accomplished by an exchange of documents (called “instruments”) between two contracting states or by depositing such a document with a designated party. Although international treaties may include a clause stipulating how states shall express their consent to be bound, international law as such leaves it to states to determine which way they find most appropriate. For example, a ratification is required if “the representative of the State has signed a treaty subject to ratification” or if the intention to do so “was expressed during the negotiation.”⁴

The wide margin of discretion under international law as to how a commitment to an international treaty is expressed acknowledges that this decision is subject to a state’s constitutional provisions and to the political practices that fill these provisions with life. A more formal ratification procedure allows the government to sign a treaty “subject to ratification” and to fully commit only after certain procedural requirements have been met domestically. In exceptional circumstances, such as the transfer of competencies to a supranational organization like the European

²This paper presents a new dataset that results from the collective effort of the following consortium of colleagues: Florian Böller (University of Kaiserslautern, Germany), Stella Gianfreda (University of Genoa, Italy), Anna Herranz-Surrallés (Maastricht University, The Netherlands), Juliet Kaarbo (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom), Philippe Lagassé (Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada), Benjamin Martill (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom), Michal Onderco (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands), Falk Ostermann (Kiel University, Germany), Tapio Raunio (University of Tampere, Finland), Özlem Terzi (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands), Valerio Vignoli (University of Milan, Italy), and Wolfgang Wagner (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands).

³See Articles 11–14 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

⁴Article 14 (1) (c) and (d) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

Union (EU), this may be a referendum in which citizens vote in favor or against being bound by the treaty in question. Far more frequently, however, the legislature needs to consent to the treaty. Because many governments can only ratify a treaty once the legislature has given its consent, the act of approval in the legislature is often referred to as ratification—although technically it is an act to grant the executive permission to ratify a treaty. Nevertheless, we will follow the widespread, if somewhat colloquial, usage of the term and refer to “domestic ratification” whenever a procedure to allow the government to ratify internationally is meant.

States differ widely in the procedures of domestic ratification (Martin 2000; Martínez 2019; Cope, Verdier, and Versteeg 2022). Students of international law often refer to the distinction between “monist” and “dualist” legal systems to account for these differences. The former considers international and domestic (“municipal”) law as two parts of a single legal order, both of which are directly binding domestically. In contrast, dualist legal systems emphasize that international and domestic law are separate spheres, and international agreements become binding domestically only once respective implementing legislation has been adopted. Although this distinction reflects fundamental differences in the philosophy of law (Dupuy 2012), it is increasingly considered blurred in practice and thus of limited help to account for different procedures of domestic ratification (Verdier and Versteeg 2015).⁵

An important difference in domestic ratification procedures concerns the question of which international agreements need to be sent to the legislature for approval. Many countries distinguish politically significant agreements from less significant, technical ones and leave the latter to the executive to ratify without any involvement of the legislature (Kulovesi 2000; Kadelbach 2019). For example, the German Basic Law requires “the consent or participation, in the form of a federal law, of the bodies responsible” for “treaties that regulate the political relations.”⁶ In a similar vein, the Italian constitution stipulates that “Parliament shall authorize by law the ratification of such international treaties as have a political nature, require arbitration or a legal settlement, entail change of borders, spending, or new legislation.”⁷ In France, peace treaties, commercial treaties, those in relation to international organizations, committing the finances of the state or affecting existing national law, those related to the status of persons, or those involving the cession, exchange, or addition of territory all require legislative approval.⁸ In contrast, in Westminster systems like the United Kingdom and Canada, the authority to ratify international treaties is a purely executive one—although the legislature is often required to adopt implementing legislation.⁹

The case of the United States illustrates that political practice can deviate significantly from the wording of the constitutional provisions. Although Article 2, Section 2, of the American Constitution does not mention any exemptions to the two-thirds majority requirement in the Senate for international treaties, the 1974 Trade Act allows trade agreements to be passed by simple majorities in both houses of Congress. Moreover, so-called executive agreements that the president may conclude unilaterally have been proliferating. For the period between 1946 and 1999, Krutz and Peake report that more than 90 percent of all international agreements were executive agreements, including prominent ones like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the agreements on US membership in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Krutz and Peake 2009, 2). Resorting to executive agreements can be a sign of political contestation of an issue a treaty is

⁵Tellingly, “whether the German approach is dualist or monist has been disputed for decades, without a clear result” (Kadelbach 2019, 184).

⁶Article 59 German Basic Law.

⁷Article 80 Italian constitution.

⁸Article 53 French constitution.

⁹On the United Kingdom, see Templeman (1991); on Canada, see Lantis (2009, 24f).

covering, preempting contentious ratification politics in legislatures or political polarization (Martin 2000). Conversely, in other cases, executive agreements may be adopted when the content of a treaty is considered too trivial to merit parliamentary scrutiny.

Another important difference in domestic ratification procedures concerns the decision-making rules within the legislature. At one end of the spectrum, an agreement can be considered silently approved unless a certain quorum of MPs demands that approval be made explicitly.¹⁰ Frequently, however, approval is given in the form of a statute, although the procedure may deviate from ordinary domestic legislation.¹¹ How the final decision is taken also depends on general voting practices in the respective legislature. According to Thomas Saalfeld,

Some parliaments such as the British House of Commons, the Danish *Folketing*, the Norwegian *Storting* and the Swedish *Riksdag*, witness more than 1,000 recorded votes per parliamentary term. In other chambers, like the Austrian *Nationalrat* or the German *Bundestag* during the 1960s and 1970s, only a handful of votes were recorded in each parliamentary session (year). (Saalfeld 1995, 538)

The remaining decisions are taken by acclamation or a show of hands.¹² A further difference concerns possible supermajority requirements. The two-thirds majority requirement in the US Senate is the most well-known one. According to Verdier and Versteeg (2015, 141), “a growing number of countries now require supermajority votes for certain categories of treaties.” In Slovakia and Germany, a supermajority is required for any transfer of powers to the EU (Verdier and Versteeg 2015). Finally, states with bicameral legislatures differ with a view to the chamber(s) that need to approve an international agreement. Next to constitutional and procedural aspects, these divergent practices of ratification reveal different conceptions of executive prerogatives in foreign policy matters. However, the rights and abilities of legislatures to vote on international treaties subject them to domestic politics and, therefore, potentially to political contestation, which we can then measure comparatively on the very same subject, a specific treaty. We will now turn to describing the two datasets on the parliamentary and party level and to some first analyses regarding patterns of contestation that result from this effort at data collection.

Parliamentary-Level Data

The ITRVD parliamentary-level dataset includes more than 6,000 votes in legislatures in ten countries—Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey,¹³ the United Kingdom, and the United States—between 1990 and 2019. We only included liberal democracies in years when they scored 6 or higher on the polity variable of the POLITY 5 dataset, the level usually retained to qualify as a liberal democracy (Polity Project 2020).¹⁴ Except for the United States, where both the Senate and the House of Representatives vote on international agreements, we exclude votes in second chambers or committees to ease comparability across countries. Because of the different legal and political avenues for ratification men-

¹⁰Such a provision can be found, for example, in the Dutch “Law on the approval and publication of treaties.” See Rijkswet van 7 juli 1994, houdende regeling betreffende de goedkeuring en bekendmaking van verdragen en de bekendmaking van besluiten van volkenrechtelijke organisaties, article 5.

¹¹In the German *Bundestag*, for example, treaties are generally subject to two, not the usual three readings (Section 78 of the *Bundestag*’s rules of procedure).

¹²Although we have witnessed in France, for instance, that military deployments have changed from mere show-of-hands votes to nominally recorded roll calls to document political positions, giving testament to foreign policy contestation (Wagner et al. 2017), this has not happened yet for the large batch of international treaties both the *Assemblée nationale* and the *Sénat* are voting on regularly.

¹³For Turkey, however, the dataset only includes a sample of eighty-two treaties. Because the data from Turkey are not complete, the parliamentary-level analyses in the remainder of this section do not include Turkey.

¹⁴We thus exclude ratification votes in Turkey from 2014 on.

tioned above, the number of votes is not evenly distributed across countries: The two Westminster systems in the dataset, the United Kingdom and Canada, account for only sixteen and twenty-one ratification votes, respectively. In contrast, France, Spain, Germany, and Italy all have more than 1,000 entries; the United States (401), Finland (520), and Slovakia (636) fall in between these two extremes.

The unit of analysis in the parliamentary-level data is a vote held in the legislature's plenary on a specific international agreement. We use a shortened English name of the agreement but also retain a long English and original-language name as separate variables. We also code whether an agreement is a bilateral or multilateral one (three+countries) to enable investigations that are interested in bilateral relations or broader patterns of international cooperation. For students of international organizations, we also coded whether an agreement was negotiated by an international organization like the EU. Additionally, EU and NATO occur as dedicated issue areas to serve scholars specifically interested in these organizations' role in ratification politics.

All treaties were coded into one or two of twenty-nine issue areas by country experts to enable investigations into specific policy fields (see Appendix 2). We also added a variable that groups these issue areas into three broader categories: *diplomacy*, *economy*, or *security*. When it came to the actual vote, country experts recorded yes, no, and abstention votes. We use these data to calculate three more variables directly: the share of yes and no votes and a so-called *agreement index* (AI) that has been introduced by [Hix, Noury, and Roland \(2007\)](#) to record party cohesion in the European Parliament and which has been used to measure party-political contestation (e.g., [Wagner et al. 2018](#); [Böller 2022](#)). In some countries, such as Germany, the majority of votes is not recorded. Instead, the chair observes that a motion is accepted, often unanimously. In these cases, country experts have coded them as *ACC* (accepted) or *unACC* (accepted unanimously). Additionally, the following variables are provided:

- country,
- cabinet (based on ParlGov data by [Döring and Manow 2018](#)),
- the year and precise date of a vote,
- the chamber the vote occurred in (also carrying a three-digit country tag for disambiguation),
- (non)mandatory character of the vote,
- RCV: registers whether the vote has been recorded numerically, and
- the total number of votes cast.

Finally, and if possible, country experts also recorded an agreement's signature date. Measuring the time span between an agreement's signature and its ratification by parliament can inform studies on contestation, assuming that the longer the period, the harder it is for a government to get a majority behind a treaty. The dataset also has a *Background to Coding* file that documents specific decisions taken by country coders.

These variables enable a variety of calculations that inform us about the patterns of treaty ratification and its politics (see *Avenues* section below).

Party-Level Data: Patterns of Contestation

While the parliament-level data inform us about overall *degrees* of contestation, we need party-level data to identify the drivers of politicization and the resulting patterns of contestation. ITRVD therefore also provides data on the voting behavior

of ninety parties in Canada, Finland, Germany, Italy, Slovakia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This adds to a growing number of datasets that provide information on voting behavior in legislatures (Poole and Rosenthal 2000; Hix, Noury, and Roland 2007; Louwse, Ojjes, and van Vonno 2018; Sieberer et al. 2020) in order to examine the domestic politics of foreign policy-making (Milner and Tingley 2015; Coticchia and Vignoli 2020; Raunio and Wagner 2020).

Compared to the Manifesto Project (CMP, Volkens et al. 2020) and expert surveys, such as the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES, Jolly et al. 2022), voting data come with several advantages (Wagner 2020): First, while CHES data have high levels of validity and reliability, questions on foreign policy are not included in all surveys. Second, voting data have a high level of validity because they are directly linked to actual policy decisions on a country's agenda. Manifestos can downplay, reframe, or ignore issues on which the party is divided. By contrast, votes in legislatures force lawmakers to take a position on a specific policy proposal. This allows for a very fine-grained mapping of the foreign policy space. Third, voting data provide not only insights into the level and pattern of political contestation *among* parties but also into the degree of unity and contestation *within* every political party. Fourth—and notwithstanding differences in political systems, parliamentary statutes, and political culture—parliamentary voting data allow comparisons over time, between issue areas, and between countries.

Our party-level dataset provides data on the voting behavior of ninety political parties.¹⁵ It includes more than 11,000 entries that record the number of yeses, noes, abstentions, and all votes cast (as a result of the former) for a political party in a particular ratification vote. We use the English treaty shorthand (“treaty_name_EN_short”) to identify votes across the two datasets, and we use native party abbreviations as primary party identifiers while also providing variables with full native and English party names. Next to basic data such as year, date, country, and chamber, we also provide the party identification codes that are used in the CMP and CHES. Finally, and important for comparative analyses across countries, we code the party family for each of the ninety parties. Because Christian-democratic and conservative parties occupy comparable positions in party systems, we merge these two families into one (“chriscon”). Additionally, we distinguish radical-left, green, social-democratic, liberal, and radical-right parties. As with the parliamentary-level data, ITRVD party voting data come with precalculated shares of yes/no votes to directly eyeball party unity. Based on ParlGov, the party-level data contain a textual (“gov_opp”) and a numerical variable (“gov_opp_num”) that records a party's belonging to the governing coalition or the opposition at the time of each vote. Finally, because of the relevance of regionalist parties in some countries, we also code whether a party is a regionalist one (for the relevance of regionalist parties in foreign policy see Lecours 2002; Hazarika 2014; Plagemann and Destradi 2015; Verbeek and Zaslove 2015; Blarel and Van Willigen 2021). We included a dummy variable “regional_party” for every party in addition to our family coding. This allows for multiple research avenues focusing on issues such as cabinet politics (Kaarbo 2012; Oktay 2022) or the impact of federalism on foreign policy.

In the countries under study, the number of parties represented in legislatures ranges from two in the United States to more than thirty in Italy, which skews the distribution of data across countries. To facilitate the comparative study of levels of support and opposition for international agreements, the party-level dataset provides information on party families that cluster parties into groups with shared core values and interests. This additional information facilitates the comparative analysis of commonalities and differences across the main party families. Of course, parties

¹⁵In France, there are no roll-call votes for ratification. We also do not have party-level data for Spain. In Turkey, we have party-level data for the sample of eighty-two treaty votes only. In Italy, the dataset does not include voting data for very minor parties.

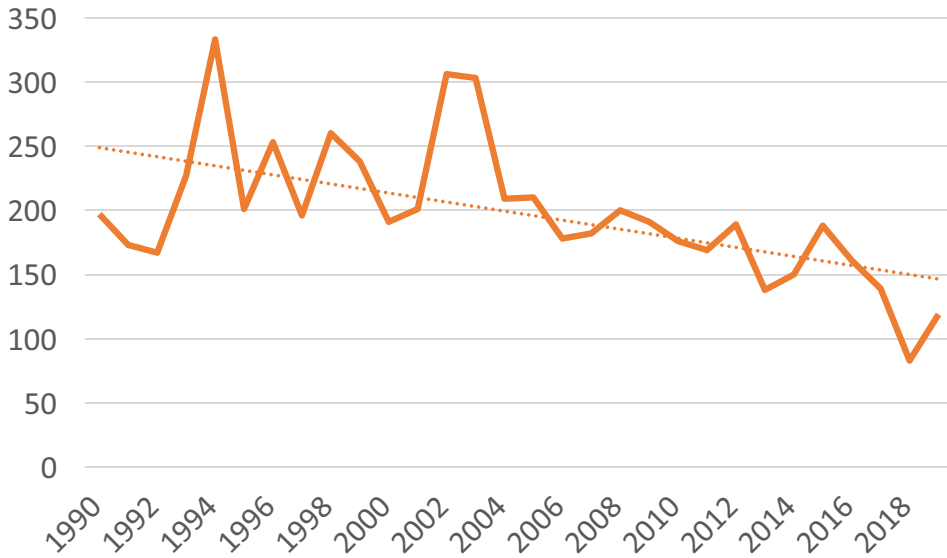


Figure 1. Number of ratification votes per year

are not distributed evenly across party families, and some party families have no parliamentary representation in some of the countries in our sample. Of the ninety parties in our dataset, twenty-eight are Christian-democratic/conservative, twenty are social-democratic, fifteen are radical-right, and ten are liberal. Eight parties are radical-left and six are green, while three parties cannot be attributed to any of the families because they show ideological heterogeneity deemed too large to neatly fall into one family.

Avenues for Future Research: Examining the Politics of Treaty Ratification with ITRVD

In this research note, we refrain from attempts at explaining trends in our data and instead merely point to interesting avenues for future research: In the parliamentary-level dataset, we find that fewer and fewer international agreements have been submitted to a vote in legislatures ([figure 1](#)).

The declining number of ratification votes speaks to debates about the rise of informal intergovernmental organizations, such as the G20 or the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI, [Vabulas and Snidal 2021](#)), and transnational public-private governance initiatives, such as the Global Partnership for Waste Management ([Westerwinter 2021](#); [Westerwinter, Abbott, and Biersteker 2021](#)). [Vabulas and Snidal \(2021\)](#) found that the number of formal, treaty-based intergovernmental organizations plateaued, and the same might apply to international agreements more generally.¹⁶ However, the declining number of ratification votes could also reflect governments' decisions to submit fewer agreements to legislatures, either because they delayed the decision to ratify an agreement that they signed or because they decided that an agreement would not require parliamentary approval. Further research is needed to determine the relative importance of these two developments.

[Figure 2](#) shows ratification votes according to issue areas (see Appendix 2) that we aggregate into three overarching foreign policy categories: *diplomacy* (including citizenship, culture, health, or generic cooperation/amity treaties), *economics* (includ-

¹⁶We owe this point to one of the anonymous reviewers.

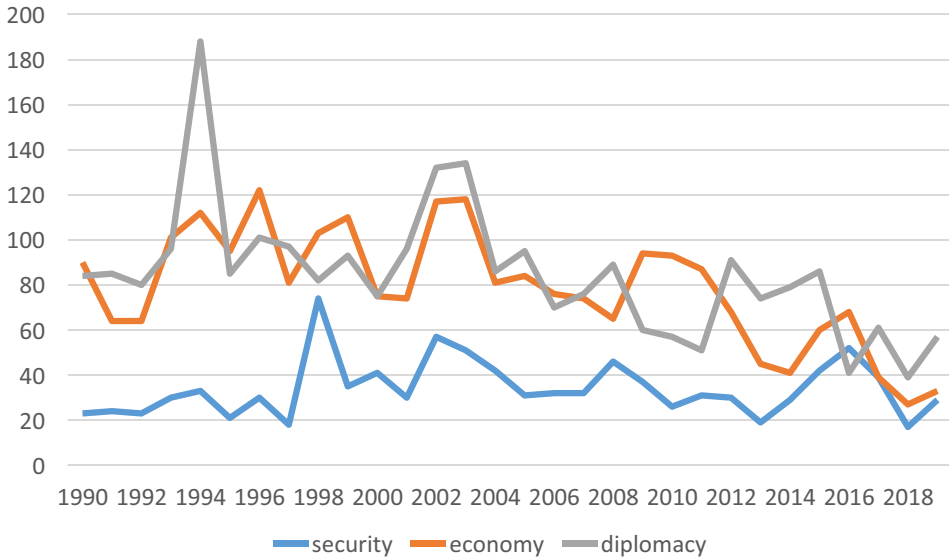


Figure 2. Number of ratification votes per issue area

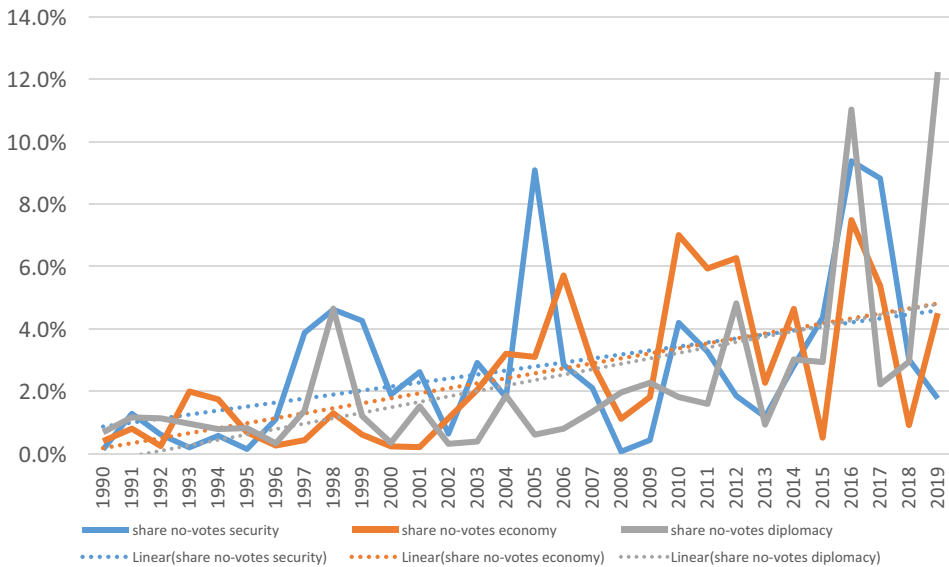


Figure 3. Average share of no-votes per issue area and year

ing agriculture, customs, energy, labor, or taxation), and *security* matters (including arms control, defense treaties, NATO, or policing and criminal law cooperation). The figure shows that the downward trend is driven by fewer economic and diplomatic agreements, whereas security-related treaties show a rather steady multiyear average.

Our data allow us to study levels of opposition to ratification over time and across countries. To measure opposition, we have calculated the share of no-votes. [Figure 3](#)

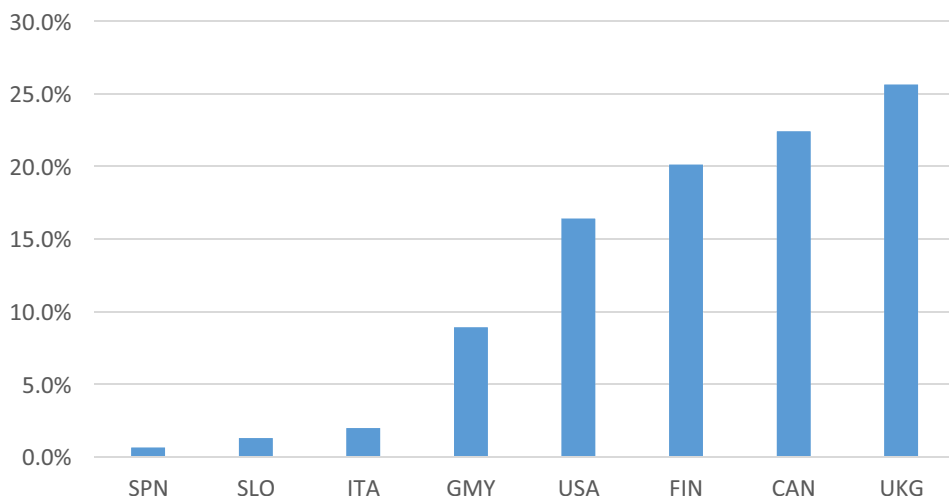


Figure 4. Average share of no votes for ratification votes across countries.

shows that the average share of no-votes has increased from very low levels of around 1 percent immediately after the end of the Cold War to higher levels, especially after 2015.¹⁷ The average number of no-votes in ratification has more than tripled from the 1990s to the 2010s.

Figure 4 shows that levels of opposition differ considerably across countries: The two Westminster countries in the dataset show relatively high average shares of no-votes of 22.4 percent (Canada) and 25.6 percent (the United Kingdom), respectively, whereas Spain, Slovakia, and Italy all show average shares of no-votes between 0.6 percent and 2.0 percent.

This, however, is partly a selection effect because the few agreements that are put to a vote in Westminster systems are also highly salient and contested ones, such as the votes on EU treaty reform and the withdrawal from the EU in the United Kingdom or free trade agreements in Canada. In sum, the parliamentary-level data can be used to study trends in states' making of commitments and the degree to which these commitments are contested domestically. Recent work on the crisis of the liberal international order could profit from the database, enabling, for instance, studies of international agreements in specific issue areas (such as trade) and how such agreements are contested domestically, facilitating cross-country and longitudinal comparison. Our datasets allow the calculation of the time between a state's signature of an agreement and its ratification. This measure has previously been used to better understand the politics of treaty-making (Schneider and Urpelainen 2013). Our datasets facilitate additional quantitative analyses of "delayed ratification" (Haftel and Thompson 2013).

To illustrate the analytical potential that we see for the party-level dataset, figure 5 visualizes the average share of no-votes for radical-right parties in the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s. Figure 5 shows that the average share of no-votes has increased from 7.5 percent in the 1990s to 25 percent in the 2000s and 52 percent in the 2010s. At the same time, the heterogeneity of radical-right parties' voting behavior has also increased, ranging in the 2010s from 8.4 percent in Italy to 100 percent in Germany and the United Kingdom. We leave it to students of radical-right parties and foreign policy to interpret these figures and to use our dataset to identify the treaties and

¹⁷The high point in 2016 does not result from any particular (type) of treaty. Instead, it results from opposition parties in Italy and Slovakia voting much more frequently against treaty ratifications. The Five Star Movement in particular voted against the vast majority of treaties under PM Renzi's in 2015/2016.

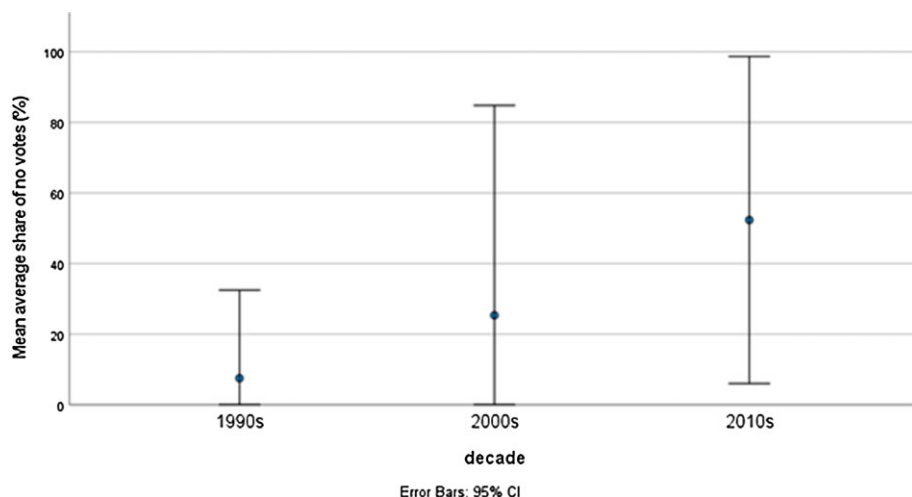


Figure 5. Average share of no-votes of radical-right parties.

issues that received the most/least support from this family. Of course, similar calculations can be done for any other party family, and this suggests promising avenues of future research: Scholars of foreign policy can, for example, examine whether there are any differences in party-political contestation across the countries and regions under study, to what extent green parties developed from *anti-system parties* to stakeholders of the liberal international order, and whether opposition clusters in particular issue areas. Such analyses can contribute to a better understanding of the domestic drivers of contestation of states' international commitments.

Given the orientation on and inclusion of CMP and CHES variables into ITRVD, the party-level data could be combined with other foreign policy variables from these databases to investigate parties' positioning on various foreign policy issues, reaching from European integration to trade and security and defense issues. As mentioned above, ITRVD can also be used to inform research agendas on cabinet politics, regional parties, and federalism (or a combination thereof), providing these scholarships with both issue area and party-specific data that can be used for solving their research puzzles. Scholars could also look at whether parties' votes on domestic and international politics align, i.e., whether the same parties are on the same page regarding domestic and international issues.¹⁸

Conclusion

The ITRVD datasets contribute to a thriving line of research that uses voting data in legislatures to examine the domestic politics of foreign policy (e.g., Milner and Tingley 2015; Wagner et al. 2018; Coticchia and Vignoli 2020; Haesebrouck and Mello 2020; Böller 2022; Ostermann and Stahl 2022). The dataset does not cover all world regions. Hence, ratification politics might look differently elsewhere. However, past research in other fields of foreign policy, i.e., military intervention (Ostermann and Wagner 2023, online first), has shown that patterns of contestation have a lot in common between world regions. In the case of such a broad field as international treaties, we would expect that specific patterns of regional integration, colonial legacies in the Global South and their continuing relations of dependence, or fragile statehood could influence the number of (signed and) ratified treaties, the time span between signature and ratification, issue areas covered

¹⁸We owe this idea to a reviewer.

by international agreements, and contestation around them. Nevertheless, studying treaty ratification, be it through datasets like these ones or other more interpretive methods, carries the advantage of being able to analyze international cooperation based on the exact same issue. There can be no doubt that exploring treaty ratification and its domestic politics further is an important element in the study of the contemporary contestation of foreign policy and the rules-based international order. It can inform us on the pervasiveness of politics in contesting the international order across countries, regions, and issues to gauge challenges to the rules-based order in a more encompassing way. This will lead to a more fine-grained understanding of where and how international cooperation is under pressure, or where and how it is still largely uncontested.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. List of countries and number of entries in datasets

Country	Number of ratification votes per country	Number of cases of political parties' voting behavior
Canada	21	83
Spain	1,060	
Finland	520	136
France	1,211	
Germany	1,006	85
Italy	1,057	6,775
Slovakia	636	3,945
Turkey	82	274
United States	401	126
United Kingdom	16	99
SUM	6,010	11,523

Appendix 2. List of issue areas

Diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizenship Civil and family law Communication and post/mail Culture Diplomacy EC/EU Environment General cooperation Health Human and civil rights Migration, asylum, refugees Nuclear (civilian) Science, research, education Space Sports
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture, fishery, food Development Economics and finance Energy Labor Social security Taxation Tourism Trade and investment Transportation
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arms control and disarmament NATO Policing and criminal law cooperation Security and defense