

# Partisan effects in morality policy making

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## ABSTRACT

Current comparative policy research gives no clear answer to the question of whether partisan politics in general or the partisan composition of governments in particular matter for different morality policy outputs across countries and over time. This article addresses this desideratum by employing a new encompassing dataset that captures the regulatory permissiveness in six morality policies that are homosexuality, same-sex partnership, prostitution, pornography, abortion and euthanasia in 16 European countries over five decades from 1960 to 2010. Given the prevalent scepticism about a role for political parties for morality policies in existing research, this is a ‘hard’ test case for the ‘parties do matter’ argument. Starting from the basic theoretical assumption that different party families, if represented in national governments to varying degrees, ought to leave differing imprints on morality policy making, this research demonstrates that parties matter when accounting for the variation in morality policy outputs. This general statement needs to be qualified in three important ways. First, the nature of morality policy implies that party positions or preferences cannot be fully understood by merely focusing on one single cleavage alone. Instead, morality policy is located at the interface of different cleavages, including not only left-right and secular-religious dimensions, but also the conflicts between materialism and postmaterialism, green-alternative-libertarian and traditional-authoritarian-nationalist (GAL-TAN) parties, and integration and demarcation. Second, it is argued in this article that the relevance of different cleavages for morality issues varies over time. Third, partisan effects can be found only if individual cabinets, rather than country-years, are used as the unit of analysis in the research design. In particular, party families that tend to prioritise individual freedom over collective interests (i.e., left and liberal parties) are associated with significantly more liberal morality policies than party families that stress societal values and order (i.e., conservative/right and religious parties). While the latter are unlikely to overturn previous moves towards permissiveness, these results suggest that they might preserve the status quo at least. Curiously, no systematic effects of green parties are found, which may be because they have been represented in European governments at later periods when morality policy outputs were already quite permissive.

**KEYWORDS** morality policy; party family; party politics; policy change; Western Europe; methodology

The publisher’s version of the article is available at  
<https://ejpr.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1475-6765.12233>

**DOI:** 10.1111/1475-6765.12233

## Introduction

Governments sometimes face the difficult challenge of making binding decisions on issues involving conflicts of fundamental moral principles. For example, policies on abortion, euthanasia, pornography, prostitution, the regulation of sexual behaviour and same-sex partnership are often characterised as morality policies because they entail a ‘public clash of private values’ (Mooney 2001; see also Smith & Tatalovich 2003).<sup>1</sup> In contrast to other policy areas, like social, economic or environmental policy, that usually relate to conflicts over tangible resources, we still have limited systematic knowledge on the extent to which political parties matter when it comes to decisions over such value-based issues. We argue that morality policy can be considered a particularly hard test case for partisan theory because a systematic influence of political parties should be least likely in this area. There are four reasons for this.

First, unlike in many other policy areas, political parties and their constituencies are often internally split on morality issues, implying that parties usually have only little to gain and much to lose from politicising morality policies. Accordingly, parties typically choose highlighting issues they ‘own’ (Petrocik 1996) instead of issues that imply the potential to divide their voters. Second, morality policies often enter the political arena as a result of developments beyond the control of political parties – most importantly, court decisions (Adam et al. 2015). Third, party discipline is often lifted in legislative votes on morality policies, enabling politicians to follow their conscience instead of party instructions. As a result, the influence of political parties on voting outcomes is diminished (Cowley 1998; Baumann et al. 2015). Finally, if morality policies make it onto the political agenda, they are often delegated to expert commissions in order to avoid open partisan confrontation (Knill et al. 2015). Taken together, all of these factors suggest that political parties should have only very limited influence over the content of morality policies. If we find partisan effects under such an unfavourable environment, we should also find them elsewhere.

In this article, we address the question of whether parties make a difference for morality policy outputs and aim to identify the party cleavages that drive this difference. Specifically, we are interested in whether or not particular party families can be associated with more restrictive or more permissive morality policies. These policies only enter the political agenda very rarely and associated patterns of policy change are known to be highly punctuated (Hurka et al. 2016). Unlike decisions over public budgets, morality

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<sup>1</sup> Probably the ‘most classical’ morality policy is the death penalty (Mooney 2001; Studlar et al. 2013). Nevertheless, it is not included in our analysis as it has largely caused controversies in Western Europe during earlier periods and mostly before 1960. Its prohibition was amended to the European Convention on Human Rights in 1983 and has since then been ratified by almost all Convention’s parties and all states included in this study. As a result, the death penalty is now also effectively removed from national regulatory authority in Europe.

issues are not decided upon on a yearly basis and decisions over reforms are often delayed. Moreover, governments are usually not replaced every year, implying that country-year observations are not independent from one another. This means that the probability of detecting a partisan effect might be heavily influenced by our decision whether to analyse country-years or cabinets. Reflecting recent developments in the discipline (Garritzmann & Seng 2016; Schmitt 2016), we not only test whether parties matter for morality policy output, but also whether the probability of finding such an effect varies depending on the unit of analysis we choose.

In the empirical analysis, we test for the role of partisan politics across six morality policies (abortion, euthanasia, prostitution, pornography, homosexuality and same-sex marriage). We conduct a macro-quantitative analysis of 16 West European states over a time period of 50 years (i.e., 1960–2010). By employing such a long time frame, our study is less prone to biased estimates that result from too short time frames as well as from those that cover only recent decades. At the same time, this strategy ensures that relevant time periods for all six morality policies and most of the sample countries are sufficiently covered. Finally, by referring to the role of party families (Mair & Mudde 1998) for morality policy outputs, the study provides an integrated theoretical perspective not only in terms of whether parties matter, but also regarding the question of which cleavages and which parties matter for morality policy change.

Our analysis shows that parties matter when accounting for variation in morality policy outputs. However, this general statement needs to be qualified in three important ways. First, the nature of morality policy implies that party positions cannot be fully understood by merely focusing on one single cleavage alone. Instead, morality policy is located at the interface of different cleavages, including not only left-right and secular-religious dimensions, but also the conflict between materialism and postmaterialism (Inglehart 1997), the cleavage between green-alternative-libertarian and traditional-authoritarian-nationalist (GAL/TAN) parties (Marks et al. 2006), and the cleavage that runs between integration and demarcation (Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012). Second, we argue that the relevance of different cleavages for morality issues varies over time. And third, partisan effects can be found only if we employ individual cabinets rather than country-years as our unit of analysis.

In the following, we first present our theoretical arguments regarding the effects of party families and the unit of analysis before turning to the description of our methodological approach. We then describe and discuss our empirical findings before presenting our conclusions.

### **Theory and hypotheses: Effects of party families and the unit of analysis**

In order to advance our theoretical understanding on the role of political parties for morality policies, we depart from the existing party politics literature in order to derive a number of hypotheses on partisan rationales and effects of party families on morality policies. We then put forward the argument that the

detection of partisan effects is crucially affected by the unit of analysis we choose.

### ***Party cleavages and morality policy***

As indicated in the introduction, morality policies feature characteristics that render them unlikely candidates for partisan influences on policy output. However, the few existing studies on the role of political parties for morality policy change present a highly inconclusive picture. Some studies confirm that parties are important or even crucial for explaining variance in morality policy output and change (Green-Pedersen 2007; Fink 2008; Engeli et al. 2012; Fernández & Lutter 2013; Castillo Ortiz & Medina 2016), while other contributions de-emphasise the role of parties (Minkenberg 2002; Varone et al. 2006; Pettinicchio 2012; Studlar & Burns 2015). Much of this inconclusiveness has its roots in the disagreement over which cleavage should actually be considered from a theoretical perspective in order to account for the role of parties in general. While some scholars emphasise the ‘classical’ partisan politics arguments by stressing the left-right cleavage (Blofield 2008; Fink 2008; Fernández & Lutter 2013), others argue that conflict between religious and secular parties is much more important in accounting for morality policy change (Smith & Tatalovich 2003; Engeli et al. 2012; Studlar & Burns 2015).

The latter argument has received quite a lot of academic attention in recent years. Engeli et al. (2012) argue that the extent to which morality issues can enter the political agenda is determined by whether the respective party system features a confessional cleavage that facilitates politicisation. In the religious world, where such a cleavage between religious and secular parties exists, morality policies are more likely to become politicised than in the secular world, where the confessional cleavage, if at all, runs across party lines. This theoretical approach has proven very valuable in explaining variance in terms of political attention towards morality policies (see also Studlar et al. 2013; Studlar & Burns 2015). However, patterns of actual morality policy change do not seem to be driven by differences between the two worlds – at least when the scope of individual reform movements is concerned (Hurka et al. 2016). In other words, while parties seem to matter for agenda-setting, their role for policy change is less clear-cut. Moreover, several prominent empirical cases seem to run counter to the theory’s implications (e.g., the party-based debates around same-sex marriage in secular France and child adoptions by same-sex couples in secular Denmark). All of this implies that the confessional cleavage alone might not suffice to explain the role of political parties for morality policy making.

In response to these problems, we take a more general starting point here that is based on three analytical considerations. First, particular attention needs to be paid to the political conflict that shapes decisions over morality issues. This struggle, which usually manifests itself between proponents of more permissive or restrictive policies, is rooted in a deeper overarching conflict of how to balance individual and societal interests: When states decide over morality issues, they invariably have to weigh the interests

of individuals (the pregnant woman, the ailing person, the prostitute, the pornography consumer or the homosexual person) against the interests of society as a whole (Adam et al. 2015). The analytical problem that plagues this distinction between individual and collective interests is that the former are much easier to identify than the latter. Put more precisely, the interests of the individual who wants to engage in certain morally contested behaviour is often straightforward,<sup>2</sup> but societal interests are a matter of construction. Opponents to morality policy liberalisation often highlight potential ‘slippery slopes’ or argue that liberalisation would aggravate societal problems – for example, causing deteriorating public health, rising crime rates or a general decay of societal values.

Second, we argue that the way individual political parties construct their conception of the collective interest in morality debates cannot be captured sufficiently by a single political cleavage. Instead, morality policy is located at the interface of different cleavages that all matter for understanding the policy preferences of different party families. In particular, five cleavages need to be considered in order to capture political competition in areas of morality policy: the left/right and secular/religious cleavages as well as the materialism/postmaterialism cleavage (Inglehart 1997), the GAL/TAN cleavage (Marks et al. 2006) and the integration/demarcation cleavage (Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012). In morality policies, political competition unfolds between parties that seek to protect individual autonomy and those that prefer collective ‘boundedness’ or restraint in fundamental matters of human existence. Yet, this conflict line only partly corresponds to the ‘classical’ left-right cleavage as the latter delineates left and conservative/right parties, but cannot account for the liberal party family and is also creating difficulties for religious parties. In addition, whereas matters of individual autonomy versus collective interests are also strongly related to the confessional party cleavage, it cannot fully explain varying morality policy choices either. This can be traced to the fact that trends of secularisation and the orientation towards postmaterialist values left their mark on the positioning of confessional parties, implying that the latter increasingly adopted ‘unsecular’ policy frames (Van Kersbergen 2008). At the same time, however, the decline of materialism does not mean that classical cleavages disappeared or that the materialist/postmaterialist cleavage is fully congruent with the GAL/TAN dimension which captures the cleavage between progressive and traditionalist values. Thus, the motivations that guide individual party families in the area of morality policy originate not just from one, but from various sources of party competition.

Third, as already indicated by the above argument, there is a considerable temporal dynamic in the emergence and dominance of different cleavages. New cleavages, like the materialist/postmaterialist and the GAL/TAN cleavages, developed over time. Yet, these new conflict lines did not replace or absorb existing cleavages, but rather complemented the patterns actually structuring political competition on

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<sup>2</sup> The major exception here is prostitution, where the political debate typically centres on the question of whether offering sex for money can be voluntary at all.

morality issues. This multidimensionality structuring moral debates has left its mark on the policy positioning of different party families. In this regard, it is not so much the policy preference (permissive versus restrictive) that changed over time, but the party political reasoning and ideological foundations of these preferences, as will be demonstrated in the next section.

### ***Theoretical expectations for individual party families***

How do different party families tend to balance individual and societal interests? What are their preferences in morality policy making? To answer these questions, we focus on six different party families: the leftist, the liberal, the green, the religious, the conservative and the right party families. We consider the party families approach the most suitable one for testing our argument since we feel that there is no single temporally constant party cleavage that could be considered ‘the’ relevant one for morality policy output (see also Krouwel (2012: 137–228) and Caramani (2015: 208–213) for this argument).

*Leftist parties.* Leftist parties have traditionally pursued not just securing the individual from economic insecurity and hardship, but also freeing it from socially erected boundaries hindering self-fulfillment and achievements. For the left parties, this flows from an encompassing understanding of achieving individual security (i.e., in economic and social terms) *and* liberty. If not explicitly formulated, the latter is part of the left parties’ intention to achieve inclusion of and equality among *all* individuals, the enhancement of participation opportunities and especially gender equality, which is closely affiliated to some morality issues. For example, leftist parties tend to favour extended rights for homosexual couples (Fernández & Lutter 2013; Hildebrandt 2016) and, regarding abortion policy, they typically support the pro-choice side of the debate (Blofield 2008). In a similar vein, this holds true for prostitution, where, for example, German leftist parties pushed for more permissive regulations during the Weimar Republic (Roos 2010). To a large extent, this preference of leftist parties for individual autonomy in fundamental decisions of life has been embedded in their overarching long-term goal of societal modernisation (Bartolini 2000: 54ff; Hloušek & Kopecek 2010: 15ff; Escalona et al. 2013). More recently, however, political competition and especially the emergence of new left competitors has forced the traditional left parties (social democrats/socialists and communists) to emphasise even more strongly their preference for individual autonomy by embracing postmaterialist (i.e., libertarian and egalitarian) values (Kitschelt 1994; Inglehart 1997). Moreover, leftist parties, just like liberal and green parties, are associated with representing secular constituencies (Bartolini 2000: 180ff; Hloušek & Kopecek 2010; Smith 1988). Whereas representing the secular side of the religious/secular cleavage has lost importance for leftist parties in recent decades (e.g., Kriesi et al. 2008: 11ff), it was certainly still very relevant during the earlier years of the observation period. In sum, the leftist preference for more individual autonomy regarding morality issues has flown from different sources over

time. In the early period, it was based on the parties' long-term commitment to societal modernisation expressing the left side of a cultural left-right cleavage and, in some countries, secular opposition to religious politics. In later periods, the latter motivation has faded somewhat as Christian parties have adopted more 'unsecular' frames (see below), but leftist parties have increasingly sided with the postmaterialist side of the new cultural cleavage.

*H1: The participation of the left party family in government is associated with permissive morality policy output.*

*Liberal parties.* The classical left-right cleavage is ill-suited to explaining liberal preferences on moral matters. While liberal parties' preference for little state intervention in economic matters is commonly associated with the right side of the political spectrum (i.e., neoliberalism), the idea of little state intervention in morality policies is rather a leftist position, as argued above. However, neither a cultural dimension of the left-right cleavage nor the religious-secular conflict alone can sufficiently explain the liberal party family's policy preferences (Caramani 2015). Regarding morality issues, traditional liberal ideology favouring personal freedoms, civil rights and tolerance suggests that individuals should be as free from governmental restraint as possible, especially in fundamental aspects of life that all belong to the realm of privacy. Hence, the liberal party family's morality policy preferences have 'old', but also independent, ideological roots (Kriesi et al. 2008: 17). At the same time, cleavage developments during the observation period suggest considerable amplifications. The emergence of postmaterialism (Inglehart 1997) and the GAL/TAN cleavage (Marks et al. 2006) entailed the establishment of left-liberal/libertarian parties in several European countries. These functioned as strong competitors for the established 'old' liberal parties, often forcing them to positional realignments towards more sociocultural liberality (Kriesi et al. 2008: 17ff; Krouwel 2012: 142ff). Accordingly, the liberal party family's preference on morality issues is clearly favours individual autonomy over collective restraint (see also Hloušek & Kopecek 2010: 203ff; Smith 1988).

*H2: The participation of the liberal party family in government is associated with permissive morality policy output.*

*Green parties.* The same preference for more permissive morality policies can be assumed for green parties. Next to its ecological roots, this party family has libertarian and egalitarian origins relating to postmaterialist 'new politics' issues. Due to their later emergence during the observation period, changes in conflict relevance over time are less important for green parties' positioning on morality issues. However,

the party family has positioned itself at the far ‘cosmopolitan’ end of the conflict spectrum that has characterised political competition in Europe for the past two decades at least (i.e., integration versus demarcation) (Kriesi et al. 2008: 15, 2012: 22). The preference of the Greens for individual autonomy pertains to virtually all morality policies, with the partial exception of policies that involve the human embryo or human tissue<sup>3</sup> (Hloušek & Kopecek 2010; Price-Thomas 2016). In particular, green parties have demonstrated a very coherent position in favour of same-sex marriage legislation, which is often associated with integrationist ideals and increasingly seen as a global norm (Hildebrandt 2016). But green parties also tend to be on the permissive side of the debate on all other morality policies we examine in this study. Therefore, we formulate our theoretical expectation on the behaviour of green parties analogically.

*H3: The participation of the green party family in government is associated with permissive morality policy output.*

*Conservative/right parties.* Unlike leftist, liberal and green parties, the right political spectrum is traditionally associated with the importance of societal norms – that is, general, universally binding as well as traditional values, order and a public morality that emphasises the collective rather than the individual. In this vein, conservative and rightist morality issue preferences could be directly linked to the general cultural (left-right) cleavage in the European political space as these party families represent the right extreme end of the respective ideological spectrum (Kriesi et al. 2008). In particular, this is allied with opposition to the inclusion of marginalised groups or everything deemed ‘foreign’ in general, which is a highly relevant aspect of morality policies (Ignazi 2003; Mudde 2007; Hloušek & Kopecek 2010). This indicates that the new cleavage between integration and demarcation becomes highly relevant here. This is, at the same time, exemplified by the emergence of new far-right parties out of this conflict line (Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012; see also Krouwel 2012; Caramani 2015). The rising importance of materialism/postmaterialism, a liberal-authoritarian conflict (Kitschelt 1994) and the GAL-TAN cleavage have entailed a considerable positional movement of parties making up these party families towards the right end of the ideological spectrum (see Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012; Krouwel 2012). As already indicated by their labels, conservative parties are proponents of conserving the status quo. However, it is equally plausible to assume that right and conservative parties sometimes have strong incentives to actively pursue morality policy change in line with their preferences (i.e., towards restrictiveness). This is because restrictive changes, especially if a permissive policy status quo has been previously established by left, liberal or green competitors in government, should be highly relevant for right-wing/conservative voters.

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<sup>3</sup> This does not pertain to the human embryo in the woman’s womb, however.



This provides the opportunity not just to keep these core constituencies, but also to mobilise new voters with such ideological backgrounds.

*H4: The participation of the conservative/right party family in government is associated with restrictive morality policy output.*

*Religious parties.* Adherence to religious beliefs, norms and values, as far as these are core elements of partisan ideologies, perhaps constitutes the strongest form of an ideological positioning that favours the collective at the expense of the individual. This is because individuals are conceived not to be in a position to decide only for themselves – especially in such basic matters as life and death or sexuality (Kalyvas 1996; Hloušek & Kopecek 2010; Kalyvas & Van Kersbergen 2010). Even more than conservative/right parties, religious parties tend to stress that the individual is part of a community, which entails duties. As a consequence, religious parties have put the collective over the individual in constellations of basic conflicts between the two, which is typical for morality issues (Mudde 2007; Hloušek & Kopecek 2010). Religious parties, which are overwhelmingly of a Christian type in Europe, have developed out of religious constituencies, especially churches, the ‘strongholds’ of restrictive morality policy preferences (Kalyvas 1996; Hloušek & Kopecek 2010; Kalyvas & Van Kersbergen 2010). Although Christian democratic parties increasingly adhered to pluralist values more than right and conservative parties, it cannot be denied that there are considerable ideological overlaps with the latter (Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012; Krouwel 2012; Caramani 2015). Although the religious/secular cleavage has lost importance during the observation period, it hardly became irrelevant. What has changed over time, however, is the way religious parties frame their opposition to progressive morality policies. In earlier time periods, references to divine rules used to be quite common. As a result of secularisation religious parties increasingly resorted to ‘unsecular’ frames (Engeli et al. 2012) while upholding their general scepticism regarding individual autonomy in moral matters. Hence, for that reason, we assume for that family a congruence with morality policy preferences favouring restrictiveness.

*H5: The participation of the religious party family in government is associated with restrictive morality policy output.*

The theoretical expectations formulated in this section outline how we expect different party families to address moral dilemmas in which the interests of individuals are pitted against the interests of society as a whole. However, in order to develop a sound research design that allows us to test the empirical validity of our claims, we first need to address another important theoretical issue related to the relevant unit of

analysis.

*Why the unit of analysis we choose affects the answers we get*

A typical feature of morality policy making is that (legislative) agenda-setting, not to mention policy change, is the exception rather than the rule. Compared to other policy areas, events of policy change are extremely rare, with long periods of status quo preservation dominating the empirical picture (e.g., Hurka et al. 2016). In morality policy areas, previous governmental decisions are not challenged every year. For instance, if a government manages to reform a country's abortion policy, often after years of intense societal and political debates, it is not very likely to change it again the following year or even in the following years (e.g., Githens & Stetson 1996). The same holds true for the regulation of euthanasia, pornography (Person et al. 2016), sexual behaviour (Knill et al. 2015) or same- sex partnership (Hildebrandt 2016). In fact, a fundamental intention for changing morality policy in the first place is to settle a conflict that has often plagued political elites for years with the goal of achieving a new equilibrium that lasts for longer (Knill et al. 2015). Despite these arguments, most of the existing literature on partisan effects in policy making uses country-years as the unit of analysis (e.g., Garrett & Mitchell 2001; Allan & Scruggs 2004). For the most part, this focus on country-years is the result of data availability as many datasets used in political science are structured in a time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) format. Yet this dominant approach of relying on country-years comes along with a range of theoretical problems.

While some have argued that using country-years is even problematic in scenarios in which policy decisions have to be made on an annual basis (e.g., budgets), we claim that country-years should be even less appropriate for the analysis of policies that become subject to political debates in a less regular manner, which is typical for morality policies. In addition to these arguments, it needs to be highlighted that governments hardly ever change on an annual basis, which implies that country-year observations are not independent from one another. Therefore, a country-year represents a rather artificial unit of analysis, entailing severe risks to commit type II errors (i.e., accepting the null hypothesis of no partisan effect although a partisan effect actually exists). Accordingly, recent research has argued that a focus on cabinets or government terms, instead of country-years, is a more suitable choice when testing for party effects (Schmitt 2016). So far, however, only a very few comparative studies analysing cabinets can be found (e.g., Vis 2009; Garritzmann & Seng 2016).

In this article, we test our theoretical expectations using both country-years and cabinets as the unit of analysis and compare the results. This way, we are able to assess whether our choice of the unit of analysis makes a difference for the conclusions we draw. At the same time, we are able to address which approach can be considered superior and thereby contribute to a lively research debate in comparative policy analysis, on which only a fistful of studies have been published so far.

## Data, measurement and methods

### *Data*

The dataset we employ in order to test the propositions developed above comprises 789 country-years from 16 West European countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom). For 42 non-democratic country-years, we coded missing values (1967–1974 for Greece, 1960–1976 for Portugal and 1960–1976 for Spain). The data for our dependent variable *morality policy permissiveness* have been assembled within a large-scale research project (Knill et al. 2015). Data on party families have been retrieved from Heichel et al. (2015), which integrates information from various sources. All other variables used in the analysis come from the sources described below.

### *Measurement: Cabinets and party families*

Since our underlying data are structured in a country-year format, some coding decisions have to be made in order to identify cabinets. For the most part, we follow the approach proposed by Schmitt (2016). First, we count a new cabinet if either of the following conditions is met: (a) a change in the head of government; (b) a change in the partisan composition of a government; (c) a formation of a government after an election. Second, we allocate the year in which a cabinet changes to the cabinet that has been in power for the longest time during this year. In most cases, cabinets either do not change at all or only once during a year. In the latter case, the decisive information is whether the cabinet change has taken place before or after 30 June. If cabinets change twice or more often, we do not discard the country-year from the analysis, but still allocate the year to the government that has been in power for the longest time. In order to make this decision transparent, we calculate the duration of every single government based on the date of the cabinet change and allocate the country-year to the government with the longest relative duration. Third, if only individual ministers are replaced, we do not count a new cabinet because none of the three conditions introduced above is met in such a scenario. In some rare circumstances, cabinet members were replaced by ministers from another party. In these few cases, we use the weighted average of cabinet shares across the entire duration of the cabinet instead of counting two cabinets.

Applying the rules for cabinet identification introduced above, we count 301 different cabinets. In our dataset, the median cabinet duration is two years (mean = 2.5, with a standard deviation of 1.3). The longest cabinets are found in Switzerland (mean = 3.9 years), whereas cabinets in Italy have lasted for only an average of 1.6 years since 1960. In total, the number of cabinets we count range from 13 in Switzerland<sup>4</sup> to 30 in Italy. Given this variation and since the probability of policy change should relate to cabinet

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<sup>4</sup> This figure excludes the countries with non-democratic time periods.

duration, it is crucial to control for the total length a cabinet stayed in office.

Regarding our central independent variable, there is no single best approach in terms of aggregating single party families into larger ideological families (or blocs). Therefore, we opt for a high level of aggregation for some parties (see Caramani (2015) for a recent discussion and a similar aggregation to the one we present here). Whereas there is no difference to established approaches for the liberal and green party family, we aggregate the social democratic/socialist, left-socialist and communist party families into a single ‘left parties family’. For the conservative and right parties, we treat conservative parties separately and aggregate all types of right parties (including ultra or far right parties) into one larger party family. The latter is labeled ‘right’ in the empirical analyses. We consider this approach reasonable as we do not have differing assumptions for single party families from the left or right political spectrums. However, treating the religious party family (which is, in a European context, largely equivalent to Christian (i.e., Catholic and protestant) parties) as distinct from the party family that consists of right and conservative parties seems justified. This is because religious parties are considered the most pronounced opponents of permissive morality policies. The centrality of the religious/secular party cleavage is still widely acknowledged as being most crucial for partisan impacts on morality policies (Engeli et al. 2012; Engeli & Rothmayr Allison 2013). This is similar for conservative parties since they are often considered closer or even functionally equivalent to religious parties (Engeli et al. 2012). Furthermore, it is often suggested that they should be distinguished from right, especially far right, parties (Krouwel 2012; Caramani 2015). We concur, although we do not have different theoretical expectations for right as compared to conservative parties (see above).

### ***Dependent, independent and control variables***

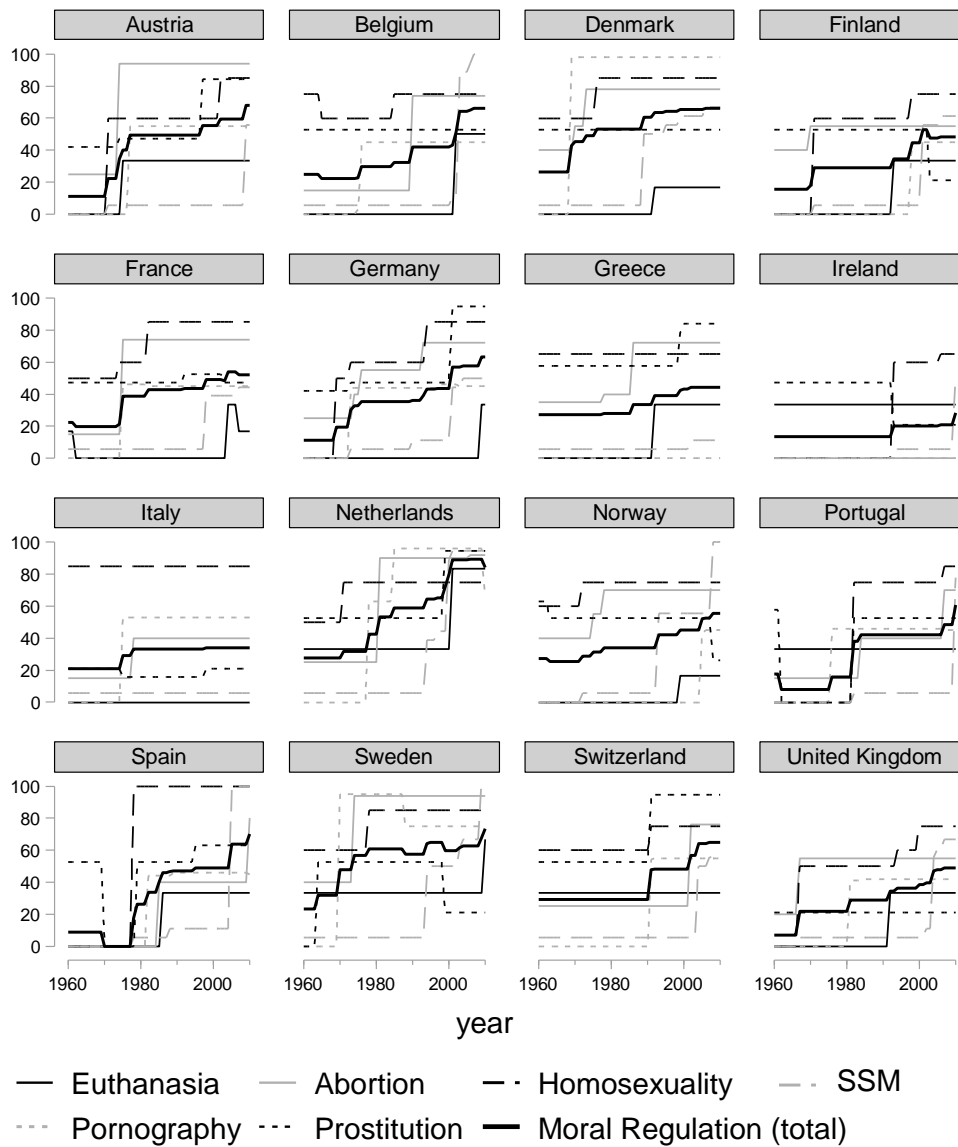
An index that captures the degree of permissiveness of six morality policies (euthanasia, abortion, pornography, prostitution, same-sex marriage and homosexuality) serves as the dependent variable in all regressions. This variable was constructed as follows. First, we created a two-level index for each policy separately. The first level indicates the general paradigm of regulation, while the second level contains further policy unique specifications. In the case of pornography, for instance, the first-level value is assigned according to which types of pornography are legal (e.g., adult, animal and/or violent pornography). The second level of the pornography index expresses how many distribution channels are legally available (e.g., print media, television, sex shops). By applying this basic logic, we end up with an index that captures the degree of permissiveness of each policy in percentage.<sup>5</sup> While countries in which a certain behaviour under consideration is completely illegal have 0 per cent permissiveness, countries in which there are no legal restrictions to performing that action can reach up to 100 per cent permissiveness. While equivalent

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<sup>5</sup> Please consult the Online Appendix for more details on the measurement approach.

to previous approaches in terms of what is being measured (i.e., permissiveness versus restrictiveness of morality policy output), the measures we gain from our approach are more fine-grained and allow the detection of more relevant changes than the ones used in existing studies (e.g., Knill et al. 2015; Studlar & Burns 2015). In a second step, we constructed an overall index of morality policy by adding up the policy-specific permissiveness percentages and dividing the sum by the number of policies. Figure 1 shows how the sampled countries scored in terms of their regulation of morality issues over time.

**Figure 1.** Regulation of morality issues by country.



As the main independent variables, we use the share of cabinet seats held by various party families (Heichel et al. 2015). In addition to the party variables, we control for political constraints, the data for which are taken from the Political Constraint Index (POLCON) dataset (Henisz 2002, 2013). POLCON III is constructed by identifying the institutional branches that possess veto power over policy change. Thus, by controlling for political constraints, we account for the political environment that could impact upon a government's ability to pass its preferred policies. The same holds true for levels of democracy, which we control for by including the Revised Combined Polity Score of Polity IV by Marshall and Gurr (2014).

Another important factor influencing morality policy output is religion, which we control for via the share of Catholics in society (Maoz & Henderson 2013) and the state-church relationship. Regarding the latter, we distinguish between a state's stance on religion as either hostile, cooperating or there is the existence of a state religion. This variable is based on Fox's (2008) Official Government Involvement in Religions index, which differentiates altogether 14 categories along these three main types. For our purposes, we collapse the index into three categories that represent state religion hostility or strict separation (value 0), a cooperation between the two (value 1) and state religions, including the category 'quasi-state religions' from Fox's original dataset (value 2). Values for years not covered by Fox are filled based on our own investigations. We refrain from employing church attendance rates as a measure of religiosity as years covered by respective surveys, like the European Values Study (EVS 2015), are less than half of our study's timespan. Hence, denominational composition and state-church relationship are the sole measures for testing religion's impact.

Furthermore, we constructed a dummy variable that indicates whether a country belongs to the religious or to the secular 'world' according to the typology introduced by Engeli et al. (2012). For those countries that formed part of Engeli et al.'s original analysis, we adopted the authors' classification. For countries not mentioned in the original study (France, Greece and Ireland), we assigned membership in the two worlds based on the long-term electoral performance of confessional parties (Table 1). As argued by Engeli et al. (2012: 188), 'in order to have an ongoing religious-secular conflict that would place it in the religious world' countries need a strong performance by Christian democrats over an extended period of time. Thus, we placed Greece and France in the secular world and Ireland in the religious world category. Except for the categorisation of Ireland, this is in line with the latest approach by Studlar and Burns (2015) who pursued the same classification. We consider Ireland's Fine Gael to belong to the Christian democratic family and Fine Gael's continuously strong electoral performance entails religious world membership (Heichel et al. 2015).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> As a robustness check, however, we re-ran all regressions reported in this article with the alternative coding for Ireland as belonging to the secular world (Studlar & Burns 2015). Since directions of influence and levels of

In order to capture the effect societal modernisation can have on policy output, we control for gross domestic product (GDP) per capita using Penn World Table Version 7.1 (Heston et al. 2012) and levels of tertiary education (Barro & Lee 2013) (see Table A1 in the Online Appendix for the distribution of variables in our sample).

**Table 1.** Membership in the Two Worlds of Morality Politics.

Religious World	Secular World
Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland	Finland, France, Greece, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom

### *Methodological approach*

In order to assess whether our choice for the unit of analysis matters for the findings we obtain, we run two sets of models: one set with the country-year as unit of analysis and the other with cabinets. In each set, we test in separate regressions the influence of leftist, liberal and green party families, on the one hand, and conservative, religious and right-wing party families, on the other. When the country-year is employed as the unit of analysis, the dataset has a TSCS format, which is the standard tool on which comparative policy scholars base their analyses (Schmitt 2016). Analysing TSCS data entails pooling observations over time and across countries. Thereby, a high number of observations can be reached; a clear advantage for policy scholars that struggle with the common small-n problem in quantitative research. The downside of TSCS analysis is in the often inherent violation of assumptions of linear regression, especially regarding the correlation of errors (Beck & Katz 1995; Beck 2001). Therefore, researchers need to account for issues such as panel heteroscedasticity and serial autocorrelation through their modelling approach. For the TSCS regressions, we opted for pooled regressions with a Prais-Winsten AR(1) correction and panel-corrected standard errors (PCSE) – a well-established approach in TSCS analysis (Plümper et al. 2005). We report regression results for this baseline model (Prais-Winsten + PSCE) and additionally for models with either fixed country effects (Prais-Winsten + PSCE + fe\_c) or fixed time effects (Prais-Winsten+ PSCE+ fe\_t). For the cabinet-based regressions, we employ exactly the same sample, time span and control variables as in the country-year-based ones. The only exception to that rule is that we additionally control for cabinet duration. Analogous to the country-year based regressions, observations are pooled in the cabinet-based ones. We employ country-clustered standard errors and report models with and without country fixed effects.

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significance remain stable and coefficients only marginally change, we refrain from reporting those results.

## Analysis and results

In order to assess whether the choice of the unit of analysis makes a difference for the conclusions drawn, we run our regression models twice. Table 2 displays the results obtained by relying on the country-state year as unit of analysis and Table 3 contains the results for the cabinet-based approach. In the country-year regressions, the signs of the regression coefficient point in the expected direction in the cases of left and liberal parties, which are positively associated with rather permissive regulation of morality issues, and in the cases of religious and conservative parties, which are negatively associated with policy permissiveness. Only in the cases of green parties and right parties is the sign opposite to our expectations. This might partly be due to the fact that both party families were in power for much shorter time periods than the other party families, which complicates the identification of their effect. Regarding green parties, it also needs to be stressed that they only came to power later when morality policy output was already quite permissive. Thus, although the coefficients display the expected signs for the most part, none of the party variables in the regressions with the country-year as the unit of analysis reaches statistical significance.

The picture is different for the control variables in the country-year regressions. All variables related to religion (share of Catholics, religious versus secular world, and state- church relationship) reach a p-value of 0.01 in most of the models and at least 0.05 in all of them. As expected, the higher the share of Catholics in a country, the more restrictive the regulation of morality matters becomes. Membership in the religious world results in more permissive policy output, which supports the ‘two worlds’ argument by Engeli et al. (2012). Thus, while previous studies could not confirm that individual morality policy reforms are larger in scope in either of the two worlds (Hurka et al. 2016), countries in the religious world seem to have made greater progress towards permissiveness than countries in the secular world. When it comes to the state-church relationship, our findings contradict Minkenberg’s (2003) argument that close institutional ties between state and church produce more permissive policies because such arrangements constitute unfavourable opportunity structures for churches to influence policy. Contrary to this reasoning, our results suggest institutional proximity between state and church to be negatively associated with policy permissiveness.

Regarding the measures on socioeconomic development (GDP and tertiary education), both display statistical significance in four out of the six models in Table 2. This suggests a positive relationship between socioeconomic development and morality policy permissiveness. Interestingly, this association is not maintained in the regressions that include a time count variable since it absorbs the variance within countries over time, leaving only the cross-country variance to be explained by the substantive variables, which suggests that the significant effect of socioeconomic development variables in the other models is mainly driven by developments within countries over time rather than cross-national variance.



**Table 2.** *Regression results for country-year as unit of analysis*

	Country-Year left, liberal, green	Country-Year left, liberal, green, fe(country)	Country-Year left, liberal, green, fe(time)	Country-Year religious, conservative, right	Country-Year religious, conservative, right, fe(country)	Country-Year religious, conservative, right, fe(time)
Left Parties in Government	0.014 (3.497)	0.020 (3.579)	0.017 (3.445)			
Liberal Parties in Government	0.003 (5.520)	0.014 (5.729)	0.009 (5.447)			
Green Parties in Government	-0.005 (47.00)	-0.006 (47.79)	-0.005 (46.27)			
Conservative Parties in Government				-0.012 (4.657)	-0.016 (4.739)	-0.013 (4.548)
Religious Parties in Government				-0.022 (7.114)	-0.029 (7.271)	-0.017 (6.934)
Right Parties in Government				0.001 (58.51)	-0.001 (59.77)	-0.007 (57.42)
Political Constraints (PolCon)	0.002 (11.03)	-0.002 (11.48)	0.007 (10.87)	0.002 (11.11)	-0.001 (11.48)	0.008 (10.87)
Share of Catholics	-0.351*** (0.228)	-0.944*** (0.751)	-0.527*** (0.200)	-0.364*** (0.219)	-0.949*** (0.749)	-0.529*** (0.201)
State/Church Relationship	-0.219*** (8.754)	-0.151* (11.01)	-0.245*** (7.905)	-0.234*** (8.599)	-0.153* (10.99)	-0.247*** (7.932)
GDP	0.204*** (0.000697)	0.233*** (0.000694)	-0.037 (0.000746)	0.210*** (0.000688)	0.231*** (0.000693)	-0.038 (0.000746)
Tertiary Education	0.374*** (1.200)	0.388*** (1.164)	0.028 (1.365)	0.365*** (1.174)	0.385*** (1.156)	0.024 (1.363)
Polity IV (Democracy - Autocracy)	0.032 (0.843)	0.090** (0.792)	0.009 (0.808)	0.037 (0.833)	0.100*** (0.784)	0.016 (0.799)

Engeli et al. (Religious vs. Secular World)	0.224** (16.49)	1.148*** (62.96)	0.290*** (13.82)	0.231** (15.91)	1.161*** (62.84)	0.294*** (14.03)
Country Dummy	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Time			0.609*** (0.537)			0.611*** (0.540)
Observations	789	789	789	789	789	789
$R^2$	0.152	0.432	0.260	0.167	0.435	0.260

Standardized beta coefficients; Standard errors in parentheses

+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table 3.** *Regression results for cabinet as unit of analysis*

	Left, Liberal & Green Parties	Left, Liberal & Green Parties, fe_c	Religious & Conservative Parties	Religious & Conservative Parties, fe_c
Left Parties in Government	0.147** (9.441)	0.089* (8.732)		
Liberal Parties in Government	0.097 (30.87)	0.186** (18.13)		
Green Parties in Government	-0.093+ (190.5)	-0.066 (177.7)		
Conservative Parties in Government			-0.085 (15.05)	-0.056+ (9.662)
Religious Parties in Government			-0.141+ (28.35)	-0.081 (28.59)
Right Parties in Government			-0.049+ (113.1)	-0.061* (97.23)
Political Constraints (PolCon)	-0.099 (56.29)	-0.153** (33.12)	-0.101 (60.06)	-0.151** (32.62)
Share of Catholics	-0.490* (0.497)	-1.818*** (1.066)	-0.507* (0.539)	-1.801*** (1.077)
State/Church Relationship	-0.405* (23.10)	-0.144 (20.13)	-0.418* (24.46)	-0.118 (18.94)
GDP	0.373* (0.00192)	0.439* (0.00187)	0.377* (0.00185)	0.452* (0.00182)
Tertiary Education	0.287 (3.139)	0.200 (3.639)	0.251 (3.464)	0.171 (3.967)
Polity IV (Democracy -Autocracy)	0.010 (7.575)	0.056 (4.613)	0.020 (8.055)	0.038 (6.306)
Engeli et al. (Religious vs. Secular World)	0.265* (24.24)	1.936*** (73.31)	0.315* (26.61)	1.949*** (74.32)
Cabinet Duration	-0.007 (3.669)	0.029 (1.550)	0.003 (3.730)	0.029 (1.748)
Country Dummies	NO	YES	NO	YES
Observations	301	301	301	301
R2	0.628	0.832	0.623	0.822

Standardized beta coefficients; Standard errors in parentheses

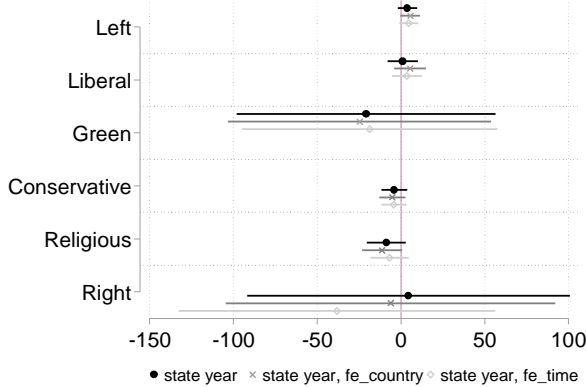
+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

When comparing the results obtained by the cabinet-based regressions with those obtained by the country-year as the unit of analysis, a stark contrast appears between control and party variables. While results for the control variables are similar to each other regardless of the unit of analysis, the cabinet-based regressions deliver much stronger results for the party variables. Here, the coefficients for left parties in government suggest a statistically significant positive relationship with morality policy permissiveness in both specifications: the one with and the one without fixed effects. When it comes to liberal parties, the positive relationship with policy permissiveness yields statistical significance in the fixed effects specification only. Similarly, the coefficient for the right party family displays a significant negative relationship with policy permissiveness in the fixed effects specification only. Results for green parties in government do not reach conventional significance levels. This also holds true for the coefficients for the conservative and religious party families.

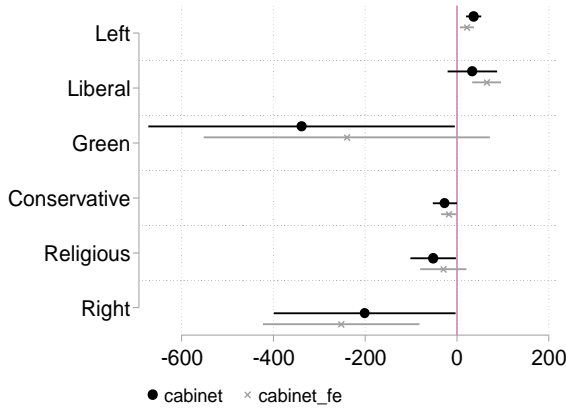
Figure 2a and 2b contrast the results obtained by country-years and by cabinets as units of analysis. Overall, the stronger results obtained when the dataset is collapsed to the cabinet level suggest that cabinets, rather than country-years, are the more suitable unit of analysis for studying the influence of parties on (morality) policy output. This supports the point raised by scholars about the questionability of annual data as the most suitable basis for inquiries into the party effect (Döring & Schwander 2015; Garritzmann & Seng 2016; Schmitt 2016). As observed by Schmitt (2016: 1443): ‘Parties often need time to develop and implement substantive policies according to their preferences after being elected.... That makes it less likely that partisan variables will appear statistically significant within a country-year framework.’ For a policy area such as morality, where change occurs only sporadically, this seems to be even more the case than in comparative welfare state research, for which Schmitt (2016) presents the argument. To assess our hypotheses tests, we therefore rely on the results obtained by the cabinet-based regressions.

We can confirm *H1* and *H2* in that left and liberal parties in government tend to liberalise morality policies. We reject *H3* as we do not find green parties to be associated with permissive policies. Despite not reaching conventional statistical significance levels, results suggest the opposite effect: green party strength in government is negatively associated with policy permissiveness. However, as briefly mentioned above, this puzzling finding might be driven by the fact that green parties became part of government coalitions after the major morality battles had been fought. Regarding *H4* and *H5*, our results are mixed. While all signs of coefficients suggest a negative association with policy permissiveness, none of the coefficients for conservative, religious and right parties reaches consistently high significance levels across the model specifications with and without fixed effects. However, for all three party families, coefficients reach significance in one of the specifications if the more generous 90 per cent significance threshold is applied.

**Figure 2a.** Coefficient plot with country-year as unit of analysis.



**Figure 2b.** Coefficient plot with cabinet as unit of analysis.



What needs to be taken into account for an interpretation of those results is that there is a general trend towards permissiveness in morality policies across most countries over time. Only very seldom have countries reversed a liberalisation passed in the past. The dynamic might therefore be such that left and liberal parties are associated with more permissive morality policies while conservative, religious and right parties tend to maintain the regulatory status quo in most cases, rather than actually changing policies towards restrictiveness. The latter implies that these parties also refrain from *reversing* previous policy moves towards permissiveness even if they occasionally try to do so (e.g., the conservative government in Spain between 2011 and 2015, which attempted to overturn the abortion policy change of 2010 under socialist leadership). This explains why results for left and liberal parties are more clear-cut and more stable than results obtained for parties from which we expected a negative association with policy permissiveness.

## Conclusion

From a theoretical perspective, morality policies can hardly be considered political parties' most favourite

area of activity. Parties and their constituencies are often internally split over fundamental questions relating to life, death and sexuality. Accordingly, parties in government often leave decisions on contentious matters such as abortion, euthanasia, same-sex marriage, pornography and prostitution to external actors like courts or expert commissions. If legislative action and hence a vote in parliament becomes necessary, party discipline is often lifted, implying diminished control of political parties over voting outcomes and policy change. Given this unfavourable environment, one should expect political parties to have only very limited influence over the fate of a state's morality policies. We have therefore presented this policy area as a particularly hard test case for partisan theory, contributing to the ongoing debate over the role of political parties for morality policy change in the pertinent literature. Furthermore, we have contributed to the nascent literature exploring the extent to which the choice of the unit of analysis makes a difference for the conclusions we draw on the 'parties matter' argument.

In fact, we find that whether or not we are able to identify a partisan effect is strongly related to the theoretical assumptions we use in our model specification. Specifically, if we analyse country-years, we are unable to find any systematic influence of partisan ideology on morality policy permissiveness. Yet, we concur with existing criticisms of this analytical approach because it requires unrealistic theoretical assumptions (Plümper et al. 2005; Schmitt 2016). If we analyse the activity of individual cabinets, which is a much more plausible unit of analysis in our view, we find that party families do indeed make a significant difference to a state's regulatory approach on morality issues. In particular, party families that tend to prioritise individual freedom over collective interests (i.e., left and liberal parties) pursue significantly more liberal morality policies than party families that stress societal values and order (i.e., conservative/right and religious parties). While we do not find that the latter are particularly likely to overturn previous moves towards permissiveness, our results suggest that they might preserve the status quo at least. Curiously, we do not find any systematic effects of green parties, which may be due to the fact that they have been represented in European governments much less frequently than the other party families considered here and – more importantly – only during later time periods (Krouwel 2012).

Accordingly, we make three contributions to the literature. First, we show that political parties indeed make a significant difference for a state's regulatory approaches on morality issues. This finding is based on the first large-scale comparative analysis of comprehensive regulatory output data relating to six morality policies, spanning across 16 countries and a time period of 50 years. Second, we find that neither the left-right cleavage nor the secular-religious cleavage can explain partisan efforts in the area of morality policy on their own, which is a substantial and innovative finding as previous morality policy research that paid particular attention to parties' roles stressed the importance of either one of them. Instead, political competition on morality issues originates from different sources and the importance of these sources for the formulation of morality policy preferences varies over time. In particular, while parties often derived

their morality policy profile from a cultural left/right or religious/secular logic in earlier time periods, other cleavages, like the ones between materialism and postmaterialism, GAL/TAN, and integration and demarcation, have increasingly replaced the reasoning behind partisan preferences without changing the partisan preferences themselves. Thus, the location of morality policies at the interface of different cleavages implies that none of them on their own sufficiently capture the way parties strike the balance between the rights of individuals and interests of society at large. Finally, our analysis suggests that whether or not we are able to identify a partisan effect is crucially driven by our choice of the unit of analysis. While we find that parties matter when analysing the activities of individual cabinets, no partisan effect can be found in an analysis of country-years. This latter ties in with very recent findings in other policy areas and should alert future researchers when they set up their research designs testing partisan theory.

## Acknowledgements

Research for this article was conducted within the project ‘Comparative Analysis of Moral Policy Change’ (MORAPOL), 2011–2016, headed by Professor Christoph Knill (University of Konstanz/Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich). We thank project collaborators for support and helpful comments. Student assistants provided valuable help during data collection. Special thanks go to Adrian Rinscheid, Sebastian Hellmeier and Robin Hering. This work was supported by the European Research Council (ERC) in the form of an Advanced Grant (no. 249388).

## Supporting Information

Additional Supporting Information may be found in the online version of this article at the publisher’s web-site:

Table A1. Distribution of Variables in Sample Table

A2. Index on Abortion Policy Table

A3. Index on Euthanasia Policy Table

A4. Index on Pornography Policy Table

A5. Index on Same-sex Partnership Policy Table

A6. Index on Homosexuality Policy Table

A7. Index on Prostitution Policy

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**Online Appendix (Supplement)**

**Table A1.** *Distribution of Variables in Sample*

Variable		Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Observations
Left Parties	overall	0.36	0.37	0	1	N = 816
	between		0.16	0.09	0.73	n = 16
	within		0.34	-0.37	1.13	T = 51
Liberal Parties	overall	0.16	0.26	0	1	N = 816
	between		0.19	0	0.71	n = 16
	within		0.18	-0.55	1.10	T = 51
Green Parties	overall	0.01	0.03	0	0.22	N = 816
	between		0.01	0	0.28	n = 16
	within		0.25	0.02	0.21	T = 51
Conservative Parties	overall	0.15	0.30	0	1	N = 816
	between		0.2	0	0.58	n = 16
	within		0.24	-0.42	0.99	T = 51
Religious Parties	overall	0.18	0.27	0	1	N = 816
	between		0.2	0	0.52	n = 16
	within		0.18	-0.34	0.8	T = 51
Right Parties	overall	0.002	0.02	0	0.23	N = 816
	between		0.2	0.28	0.03	n = 16
	within		0.02	0.12	0.72	T = 51
Political Constraints	overall	0.43	0.16	0	0.72	N = 815
	between		0.11	.28	0.63	n = 16
	within		0.11	.12	0.72	T-bar = 50.94
Catholicism	overall	45.68	37.99	0	99	N = 816
	between		38.96	0	93.16	n = 16
	within		4.27	25.82	56.82	T = 51

State Church Relationship	overall	1.43	0.61	0	2	N = 816
	between		0.6	0	2	n = 16
	within		0.19	0.63	2.08	T = 51
GDP	overall	22681.17	8845.39	4181.73	51791.63	N = 806
	between		4769.3	12879.04	31435.69	n = 16
	within		7532.69	4250.74	45045.15	T-bar = 50.38
Tertiary Education	overall	8.03	5.26	.73	30.32	N = 816
	between		2.62	2.43	10.67	n = 16
	within		4.61	-0.58	28.12	T = 51
Levels of Democracy	overall	8.92	3.78	-9	10	N = 816
	between		2.06	4.27	10	n = 16
	within		3.21	-4.36	14.64	T = 51
Engeli et al.	overall	0.63	.48	0	1	N = 816
	between		.5	0	1	n = 16
	within		0	0.63	0.63	T = 51

**Table A2. Index on Abortion Policy**

	PARADIGM	SPECIFICATIONS	VALUE (in %)
0	Total prohibition		0.00
1	Medical indication, life	time restricted	10.00
2		unrestricted	15.00
3	Medical indication, health	time restricted	20.00
4		unrestricted	25.00
5	Criminological <i>or</i> eugenic indication	time restricted	30.00
6		unrestricted	35.00
7	Criminological <i>and</i> eugenic indication	time restricted	40.00
8		unrestricted	45.00
90	Social indication	short ( $\geq 12$ weeks)	50.00
10		long ( $< 12$ weeks)	55.00
11	Choice model, short	short ( $\geq 12$ weeks)	60.00
12	Combination choice model short +	Plus 1 indication long	70.00
13		Plus 2 indications long	72.00
14		Plus 3 indications long	74.00
15		Plus 4 indications long	76.00
16		Plus 5 indications long	78.00
17	Choice model, long	long ( $< 12$ weeks)	80.00
18	Combination choice model long +	Plus 1 indications long	90.00
19		Plus 2 indications long	92.00
20		Plus 3 indications long	94.00
21		Plus 4 indications long	96.00
22		Plus 5 indications long	98.00
23	Unrestricted		100.00



**Table A3. Index on Euthanasia Policy**

	PARADIGM	SPECIFICATIONS	VALUE (in %)
0	Total prohibition		0.00
1	1 type of euthanasia allowed	terminally ill	8.33
2		gravely ill	16.67
3		ill	25.00
4		no medical conditions	33.33
5	2 types of euthanasia allowed	terminally ill	41.67
6		gravely ill	50.00
7		ill	58.33
8		no medical conditions	66.67
9	3 types of euthanasia allowed	terminally ill	75.00
10		gravely ill	83.33
11		ill	91.67
12		no medical conditions	100.00

**Table A4. Index on Pornography Policy**

	PARADIGM	SPECIFICATIONS (Legality of different types of distribution channels)	VALUE (in %)
1	Total Prohibition		0
2	Only adult pornography allowed, high age limit (age $\geq 18$ )	0 Types	40
3		1 Type	41
4		2 Types	42
5		3 Types	43
6		4 Types	44
7		5 Types	45
8		6 Types	46
9		7 Types	47
10		8 Types	48
11	9 Types	49	
12	Only adult pornography allowed, low age limit (age $< 18$ )	0 Types	50
13		1 Type	51
14		2 Types	52
15		3 Types	53
16		4 Types	54
17		5 Types	55
18		6 Types	56
19		7 Types	57
20		8 Types	58
21	9 Types	59	
22	Adult and Animal OR Violent Pornography allowed, highest age limit of any type $\geq 18$	0 Types	60
23		1 Type	61
24		2 Types	62
25		3 Types	63
26		4 Types	64
27		5 Types	65
28		6 Types	66
29		7 Types	67
30		8 Types	68
31	9 Types	69	
32	Adult and Animal OR Violent Pornography allowed, highest age limit of any type $< 18$	0 Types	70
33		1 Type	71
34		2 Types	72
35		3 Types	73
36		4 Types	74
37		5 Types	75
38		6 Types	76
39		7 Types	77
40		8 Types	78
41	9 Types	79	
42	Adult and Animal AND Violent Porn allowed, highest age limit of any type $\geq 18$	0 Types	80
43		1 Type	81
44		2 Types	82

45		3 Types	83
46		4 Types	84
47		5 Types	85
48		6 Types	86
49		7 Types	87
50		8 Types	88
51		9 Types	89
52	Adult and Animal AND Violent Porn	0 Types	90
53	allowed, , highest age limit of any type	1 Type	91
54	<18	2 Types	92
55		3 Types	93
56		4 Types	94
57		5 Types	95
58		6 Types	96
59		7 Types	97
60		8 Types	98
61		9 Types	99
62	All Porn and all distribution legal		100

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Types of legal Distribution Channels:

1. Trade: Import/Export
2. Distribution via electronic networks / Internet
3. Distribution via public TV and radio broadcasting
4. Distribution via satellite or cable TV (pay TV)
5. Distribution via print media
6. Distribution via videos, sex shops, and adult cinemas
7. Zoning requirements
8. Advertisement
9. Hours of operation

**Table A5. Index on Same-sex Partnership Policy**

PARADIGM	SPECIFICATIONS (Equalization in social, inheritance, tax, adoption, and ART law)	VALUE (in %)
1	Total prohibition	0.00
2	Nonregistration	5.56
3	Equalization in one law sector	11.12
4	Equalization in two law sectors	16.68
5	Equalization in three law sectors	22.24
6	Equalization in four law sectors	27.80
7	Equalization	33.36
8	Registration model	38.92
9	Equalization in one law sector	44.48
10	Equalization in two law sectors	50.04
11	Equalization in three law sectors	55.60
12	Equalization in four law sectors	61.16
13	Equalization	66.72
14	Gay marriage	72.28
15	Equalization in one law sector	77.84
16	Equalization in two law sectors	83.40
17	Equalization in three law sectors	88.96
18	Equalization in four law sectors	94.52
19	Equalization	100.00

**Table A6. Index on Homosexuality Policy**

PARADIGM	SPECIFICATIONS (Age restrictions)	VALUE (in %)
1	Prohibition of all practices (total)	0
2	Prohibition of at least one practice (partial)	10
3	High for all practices ( $\geq 20$ )	50
4	High ( $\geq 20$ ), but not for all practices	55
5	Medium for all practices ( $\geq 17$ )	60
6	All practices allowed with age restrictions	65
7	Medium ( $\geq 17$ ), but not for all practices	65
8	Low for all practices (=16)	75
9	Low (=16), but for not all practices	80
10	Very low ( $\geq 14$ ) for all practices	85
10	Very low ( $\geq 14$ ), but with no age restrictions for one/some practices	90
11	No restrictions (age restrictions only for individuals <14)	100

Note: The age for age restrictions indicates the minimum age of the younger person in sexual activities to indicate whether the sexual activities between two persons are legal (i.e., the age of consent).

**Table A7. Index on Prostitution Policy**

	PARADIGM	SPECIFICATIONS	Value (in %)	
1	Total prohibition		0	
2	Abolitionism	Location	everywhere prohibited	5.26
3			very limited ( legal in private flats but no in brothels and streets)	10.52
4			limited (legal in private flats and streets but not in brothels)	15.78
5			wide ( legal in private flats and brothels but not in streets)	21.04
6		Personal Requirements (Minimum Age + Health checks)	limited (minimum age over legal age plus health checks)	26.3
7			wide (either or)	31.56
8			very wide (minimum age <= legal age and NO health checks)	
9			Permission without recognition	Location
10	limited (private flats + streets, but not brothels)	42.08		
11	wide (private flats + brothels but not streets)	47.34		
12	very wide (all three locations permitted)	52.6		
13	Personal Requirements (Minimum Age + Health checks)	limited (minimum age over legal age plus health checks)		57.86
14		wide (either or)		63.12
15		very wide (minimum age <= legal age and NO health checks)		
16		Permission with recognition		Location
17	limited (private flats + streets, but not brothels)		73.64	
18	wide (private flats + brothels but not streets)		78.9	
19	very wide (all three locations permitted)		84.16	
20	Personal Requirements (Minimum Age + Health checks)		limited (minimum age over legal age plus health checks)	89.42
21			wide (either or)	94.68
22		very wide (minimum age <= legal age and NO health checks)	100	