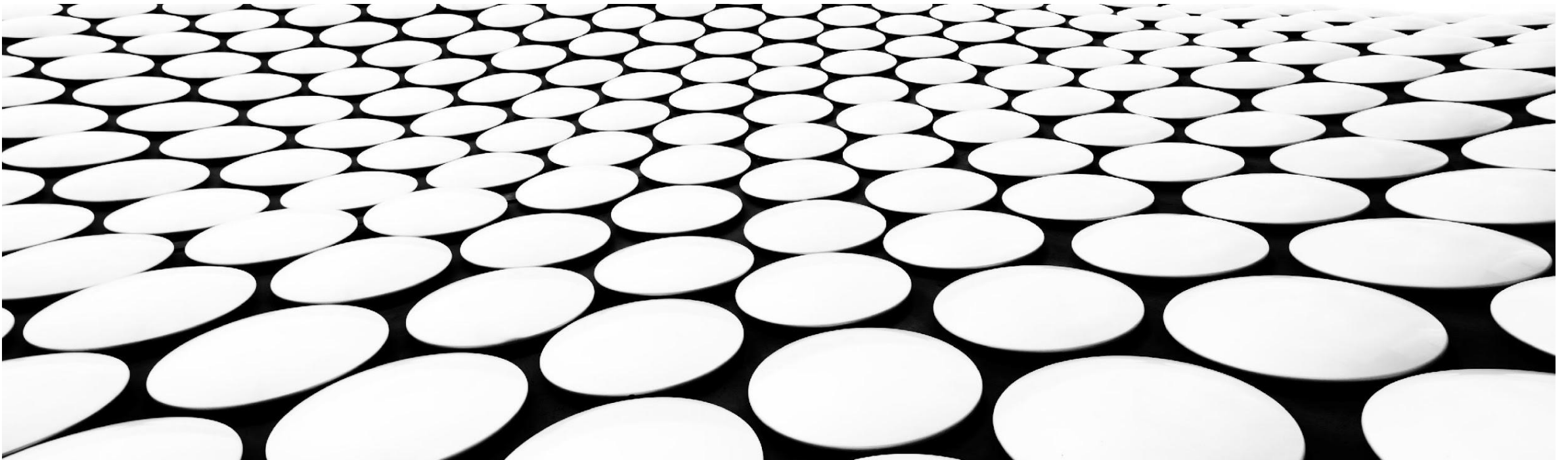

THE COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL PARTIES AND TECHNOCRACY

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WHAT DO WE THINK WHEN WE THINK ABOUT DEMOCRACY?

- Democracy in Western democracy is a synonym of party government: there is no democracy without parties.
- How did parties manage to become central actors? From mass parties to cartel parties, parties are public agent.
- Parties make political decisions, but the process is more complicated than this.

CHAIN of DELEGATION:

PEOPLE □ PARTIES □ PARLIAMENT □ GOVERNMENT



- This is how our democracies work.

THE PARTY GOVERNMENT...AND ITS CRISIS

- What does party government mean? It means that political parties are at the heart of decision-making; they are the cornerstone of political representation.
- We are *represented* by political parties, not by anyone else in institutional politics; even when we do not vote, parties embody the will of the people in the parliament.
- Representative democracy is a way to describe our regimes: representation means stand for...and parties stand for..us.
- Do you feel represented by parties?

Any thoughts on this?

THE PARTY GOVERNMENT...AND ITS CRISIS

- There have been several critics of party government: parties are too powerful and too detached from people; parties are now an instrument to select political personnel not to represent the conflict in the society; parties are now ideologically indistinguishable.
- Two important criticism to party government: the “populist” and the “technocratic”: the populist criticism is based on the idea that parties are an unnecessary mediation between the people and the decision to be taken. It is the people who decide what is good and what people decide stands.
- The technocratic criticism is based on the idea that parties have their own interests in the pursue of which they sacrifice what is good for the country. Experts on the contrary have no partisan bias and have the capacity to look in the long-run, rather than in the short-term.

THE PARTY GOVERNMENT...AND ITS CRISIS

	Party government	Populism	Technocracy
Which is the source of legitimation?	Party competition	The will of the people	Expertise and rational speculation
Focus of the actions	Accountability	Responsiveness	Responsibility
Vision of the society	Pluralistic/conflictual	Non-Pluralistic/non-conflictual	Non-Pluralistic/non-conflictual
Are voters conceived as experts?	Yes, by choosing	Yes, always	No
Conception of the elites	Top-down, with bottom-up legitimation	Bottom-up	Top-down

TECHNOCRACY

- Important differences between technocracy and party government.
- Technocracy, *as a system of government, mode of making political decisions, form of representation or source of legitimacy of the political power, is premised on the advantages that experts supposedly have compared to elected party politicians.*
- In essence, technocracy is based on superiority of expertise and the scientific approach to the social world.
- How does the theory of technocracy translate into real-world technocracy? Which are the real-world manifestations of technocracy?

TECHNOCRACY IN THE REAL WORLD

- Two main manifestations (to simplify a bit)
- Among citizens: technocratic attitudes.
- *The technocratic mentality entails the belief that there are neutral, nonideologically committed experts able to enact solutions to governance problems after evaluating evidence and facts.*
- Technocratic mentality is elitist, pro-expertise (objective solutions)...and anti-political.
- Why? Anti-political because politicians need the people to survive, are accountable to them, prioritize short-termism and are inclined toward compromise, while solutions are objective.
- In the political real: technocratic government and technocratic ministers.

TECHNOCRACY AND POLITICS

- Technocratic ministers: non-elected non-partisan experts appointed as ministers, not accountable to citizens. Technocratic governments: composed by experts that are not elected and not accountable to the people.
- PEOPLE □ PARTIES □ PARLIAMENT □ GOVERNMENT



Technocratic governments and ministers are formally accountable to the parliament in democracy, but not accountable to the ultimate sovereign, the people.

Both **break the chain of delegation and break the party government consensus...why?**

PEOPLE □ PARTIES  □ PARLIAMENT  □ GOVERNMENT



TECHNOCRATIC MINISTERS AND GOVERNMENTS

- Party government is based on the idea that parties select politicians to be elected in parliament, the parliament selects among those politicians the PM and the ministers. As the government should reflect the composition of the parliament, which reflect the composition of the interests in the society, it cannot be non-partisan.
- Partisanship is inherent in what the government is supposed to do in party government.
- What happens with technocratic government?

FEW NUMBERS: TECHNOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS

- Party government is the trend, but technocracy is a growing exception.

The list here is not updated: in Bulgaria, Italy, Austria, Romania...technocratic governments are on the rise.

- Not all technocratic governments are composed exclusively by technocrats.

Most of the time they are caretaker: current affairs only, but in other cases they have a “political” role.

<i>Member state</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Prime Minister</i>	<i>Period in office</i>	<i>Days in office</i>	<i>Technocrat minister of economy</i>	<i>% of technocratic ministers</i>
Bulgaria	3	Berov	30/12/1992–17/10/1994	656	Yes	80
		Indzhova	18/10/1994–25/01/1995	99	Yes	100
		Raykov	13/03/2013–29/05/2013	77	Yes	100
Croatia	1	Orešković	22/01/2016–19/10/2016	270	No	28
Czech Republic	3	Tošovský	01/02/1998–17/07/1998	166	No	38
		Fischer	08/05/2009–13/07/2010	431	Yes	100
		Rusnok	10/07/2013–25/10/2013	107	Yes	87
Finland	3	Von Fieandt	29/11/1957–18/04/1958	140	Yes	100
		Lehto	18/12/1963–12/09/1964	269	Yes	100
		Liinamaa	13/06/1975–21/09/1975	100	Yes	100
Greece	5	Grivas	12/10/1989–23/11/1989	40	No	76
		Zolotas I	23/11/1989–13/02/1990	82	No	32
		Zolotas II	13/02/1990–11/04/1990	57	No	68
		Papademos	11/11/2011–16/05/2012	187	No	17
		Pikrammenos	16/05/2012–17/06/2012	31	Yes	100
Hungary	1	Bajnai	15/04/2009–14/05/2010	395	Yes	50
Italy	4	Ciampi	29/04/1993–10/05/1994	376	No	44
		Dini	17/01/1995–17/05/1996	486	Yes	100
		Monti	16/11/2011–27/04/2013	528	Yes	100
		Conte	01/06/2018–	—	Yes	35
Portugal	2	Nobre da Costa	29/08/1978–15/09/1978	18	Yes	100
		Pintassilgo	31/07/1979–12/12/1979	147	Yes	100
Romania	6	Stolojan	16/10/1991–27/09/1992	347	No	10
		Vacaroiu I	13/11/1992–18/08/1994	644	Yes	50
		Vacaroiu II	19/08/1994–01/09/1996	745	Yes	32
		Vacaroiu III	02/09/1996–03/11/1996	101	Yes	41
		Isărescu	21/11/1999–26/11/2000	373	No	5
		Cioloș	10/11/2015–11/12/2016	335	Yes	100
Total	28					

A CLASSIFICATION OF TECHNOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS

		Who's in the government	
		Mostly technocrats	Mostly partisans
Can they change the status quo?	No	<i>Nonpartisan caretaker</i>	<i>Partisan caretaker</i>
	Yes	<i>Full-technocratic government</i>	<i>Technocrat-led partisan government</i>

FEW NUMBERS: TECHNOCRATIC MINISTERS

- Are non-partisan and non-elected (not just non-elected) ministers, that might or might be not part of a technocratic governments.
- On the rise in Europe, particularly in some areas.

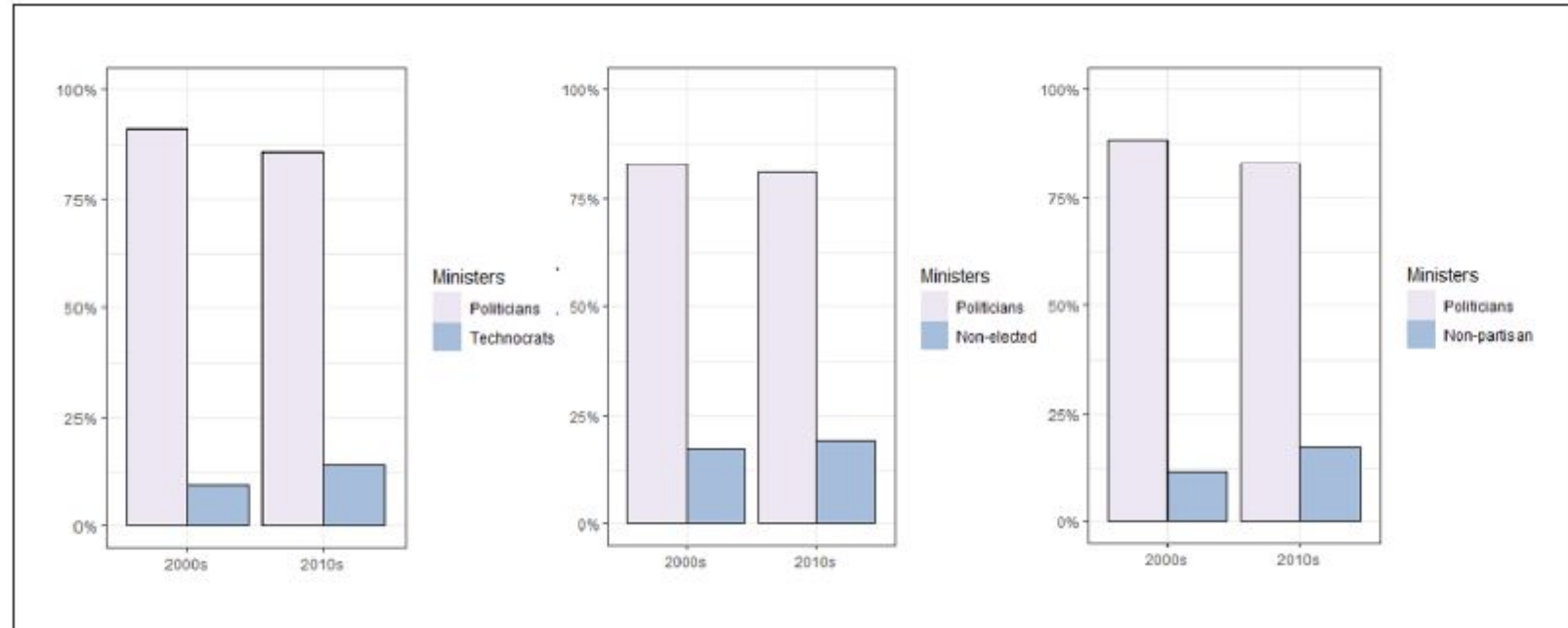


Figure 2. Percentage of Technocrats (Left), Non-Elected Ministers (Centre) and Non-Partisan Ministers (Right) Per Decade in the TMD Dataset.
Source: Own elaboration from TMD.

FEW NUMBERS: TECHNOCRATIC MINISTERS

- Technocratic ministers are those who have not been elected, have never run as candidates for any election (even if unsuccessful) and have not been a member of any political party before being appointed (very selective!)
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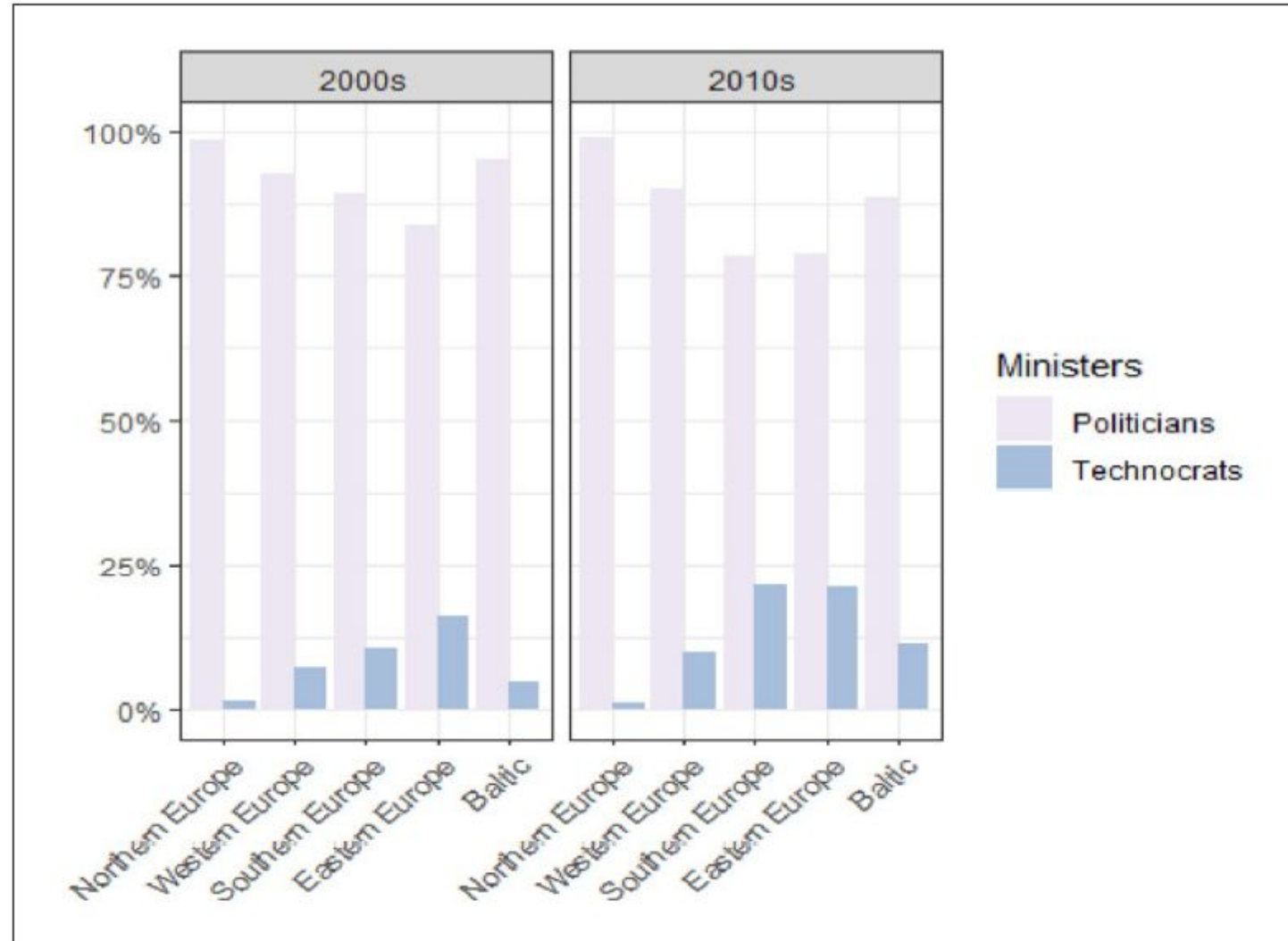
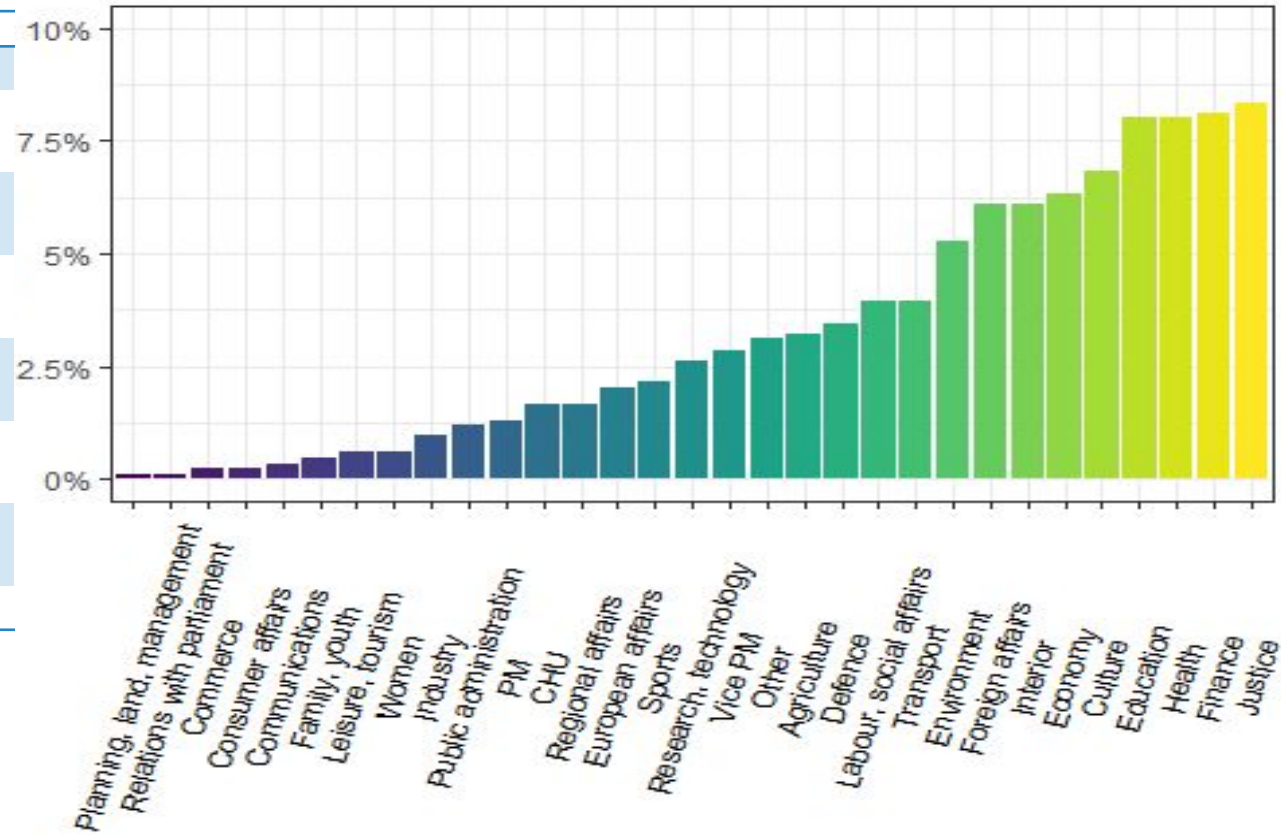


Figure 3. Distribution of Technocratic Ministers by Macro-Area and Decade.
Source: Own elaboration from TMD.

FEW NUMBERS: TECHNOCRATIC MINISTERS

Degree	%	Education	%	Career	%
PhD	37%	Law	26%	High-ranking civil servant	32%
Master degree	58%	Economics	26%	Academic	19%
Bachelor degree	4%	Stem	17%	Business executive	15%
Other	1%	Social Science	10%	Law career	9%
		Humanities	7%	Diplomat	5.5%
		Medicine	6%	Medical doctor	3.5%
		Other	8%	Other	16%



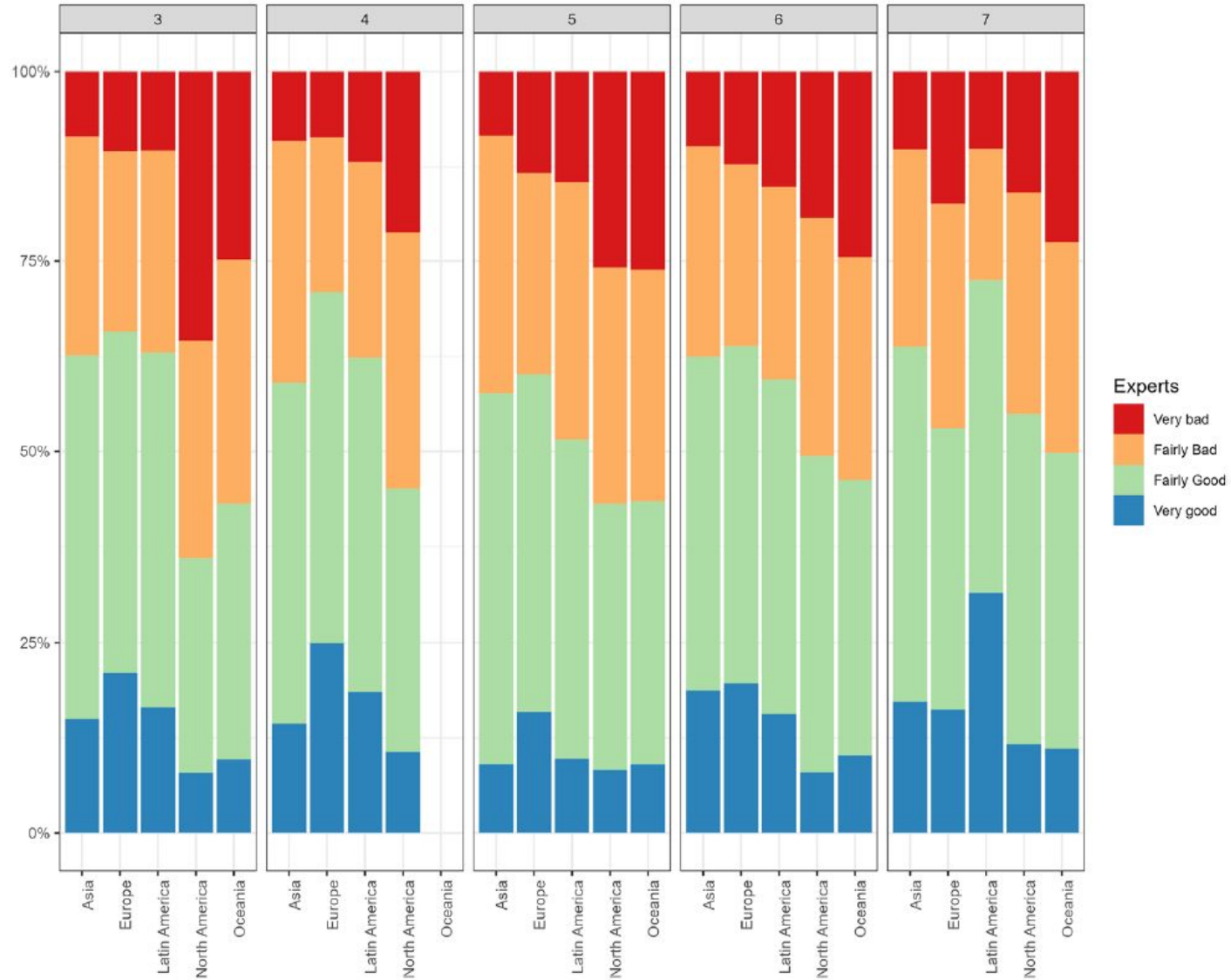


WHY WOULD POLITICIANS DECIDE TO APPOINT A TECHNOCRATIC
MINISTER OR A TECHNOCRATIC GOVERNMENT?

WHY WOULD POLITICIANS DECIDE TO APPOINT A TECHNOCRATIC MINISTER OR A TECHNOCRATIC GOVERNMENT?

- To solve a political crisis: political gridlock, there is no majority in the parliament, so technocratic government works for everyone.
- To solve major disagreement within a coalition: party A wants the minister of economy and so does party B. To avoid conflicts, a technocratic minister might be the third option (no one wins, but no one loses either).
- To signal credibility: there are parties that prefer to have an economic expert to either calm down the market or to reassure supranational institutions that the government will comply with international rules. Any example?
- To make hard decision: no party wants to be blamed for cutting services or pensions...but they are “required” to do so (Greece, during the Great Recession in 2008-2009). Technocratic governments/ministers serve the purpose.
- New issues, parties do not have an expertise, therefore they appoint an expert to show that they are committed to deal with this issue.

DO CITIZENS LIKE EXPERTS IN GOVERNMENT? WVS DATA



DO CITIZENS LIKE EXPERTS IN GOVERNMENT? AN EXPERIMENT

These are the parties and the ministers that you might see on the screen: the Partito Democratico headed by Nicola Zingaretti; MoVimento 5 Stelle, headed by Giuseppe Conte and Beppe Grillo; Forza Italia, headed by Silvio Berlusconi; Lega headed by Matteo Salvini. Vittorio Colao, minister for the Technological innovation and former Vodafone CEO; Daniele Franco, Finance Minister and former high-rank civil servant at the Bank of Italy; Marta Cartabia, minister of Justice and former member of the Constitutional Court.

Right-wing economic issue

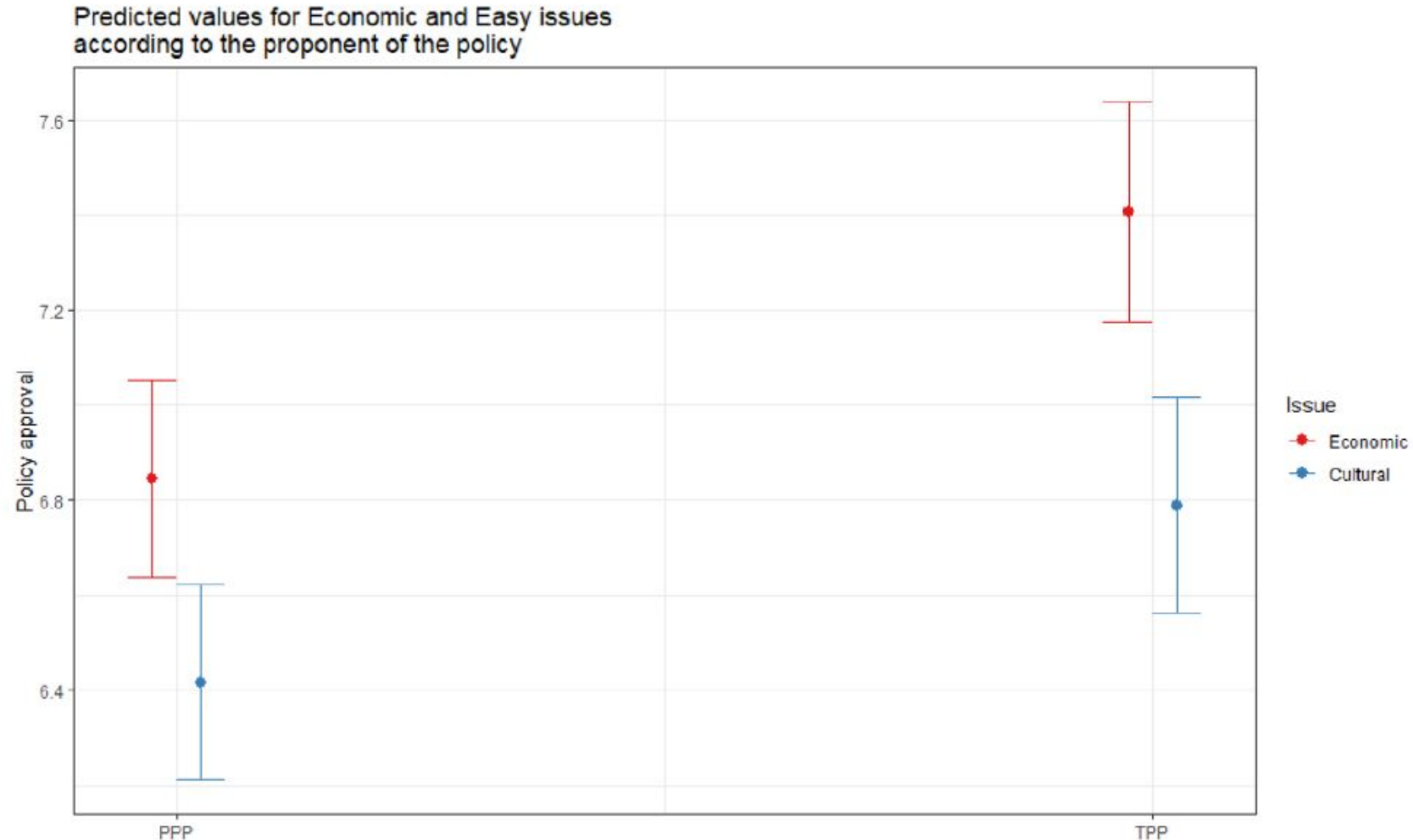
The news reported that [**Forza Italia headed by Silvio Berlusconi, the League headed by Matteo Salvini, the Minister of Finance, the independent Daniele Franco**] plans to put forward in the next months a law aimed at reducing taxes for self-employed persons earning less than 150,000 euro yearly.

Left-wing economic issue

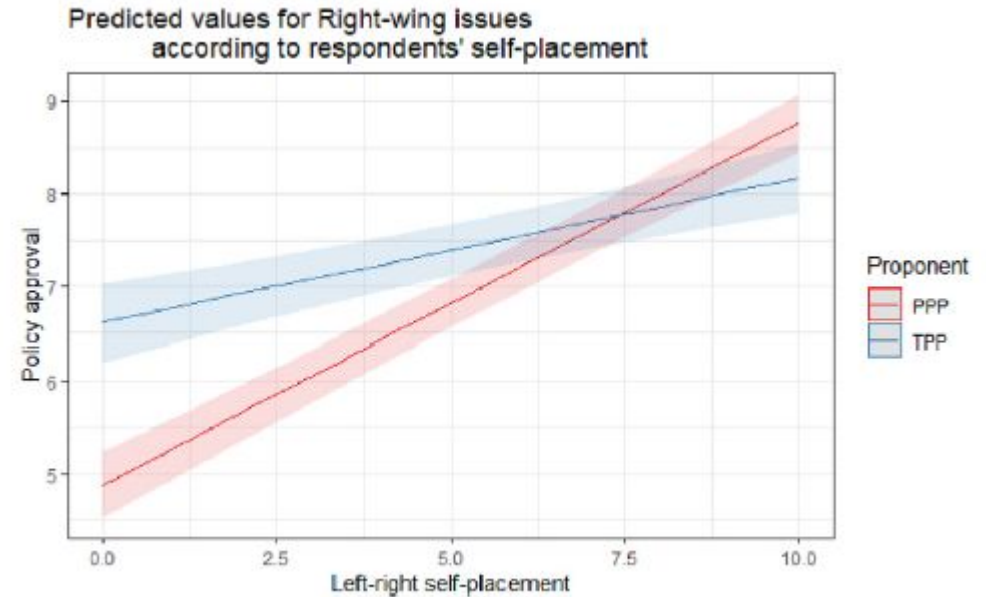
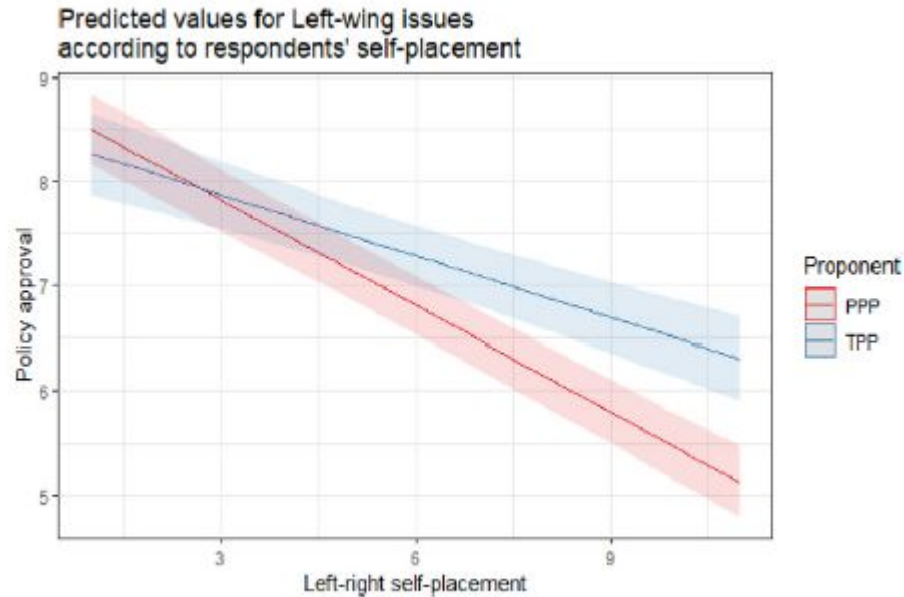
The news reported that [**the Democratic Party headed by Nicola Zingaretti, the MoVimento 5 Stelle headed by Giuseppe Conte and Beppe Grillo, the Minister of Finance, the independent Daniele Franco**] plans to put forward in the next months a law aimed at slightly increasing the wealth tax on the richest 7% of the population.

DO CITIZENS LIKE EXPERTS IN GOVERNMENT? AN EXPERIMENT

- TPP = technocratic proponent
- PPP = partisan proponent
- Red = economic issue
- Blue = cultural issue, not shown before
- Y-axis: level of approval
- What do the findings suggest?



DO CITIZENS LIKE EXPERTS IN GOVERNMENT? AN EXPERIMENT



- X-axis: position of the respondents on the left-right scale.
- Y-axis: level of approval
- TPP = technocratic proponent
- PPP = partisan proponent
- Left wing issues: income tax/immigrant's nationality. Right wing: tax cuts/borders' control

CONCLUSIONS

- Rise of technocracy: good or bad news for democracy?
- Is there an expert-led wave in politics? Yes and No.
- Is technocracy an alternative to representative democracy or party government to save democracy? No.
- Vicious-circle: the more technocracy spreads to solve political problems, the more people would think that parties are not fit to lead a democracy. The more power is shifted to technocracy, the more technocracy will be politicized (because they make political decision).
- Therefore, when we need experts taking decisions, the losers of technocratic decisions will be less inclined to believe in experts' judgements (e.g. COVID).