## 5. Party Competition in Ireland: The emergence of a left-right dimension?

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### Introduction

Party competition in most industrialized democracies is defined in terms of a general left-right rivalry. These ideological terms, left and right, are widely understood (or at least employed) and deeply embedded in everyday political discourse. They have come to function as convenient shorthand for parties' ideological dispositions. Parties of the right favour free enterprise, lower taxes and conservative social values while parties of the left are in favour of income redistribution, state regulation of industry and take liberal stances on social issues such as abortion and marriage equality. This rather parsimonious, reductionist left-right conceptualization of party competition has proven to be a, surprisingly, powerful predictor of voting behaviour (Dahlberg and Oscarsson 2006; Deth and Geurts 1989; Eijk et al 2005; Holmberg and Oscarsson 2004).

But amongst established democracies, Ireland has traditionally been the odd one out. Party competition throughout the 20th century, famously, did not pivot on a left-right axis but between two centre-right parties that were ideologically indistinct. In comparative studies of party systems, Ireland was frequently omitted due to its *sui generis* status and, where included, international observers commented, variously, that the alliance of the Catholic church with nationalist forces reduced "the possibilities of a polarisation of Irish politics along class lines" (Lipset and Rokkan 1967:49) or that the "the left-right dimension is less meaningful in Ireland than in most Western European countries" (Inglehart and Klingmann 1976:254).

This chapter examines if the terms Left and Right are any more consequential to the Irish electorate in the 21st century and whether or not there is underlying ideological substance to their usage. In particular, we ask whether or not citizens can now meaningfully place political parties on a left-right continuum and whether the concepts of left and right map onto the standard socio-economic and moral issues that they embody elsewhere. We further ask, for the first time, whether the placement of political parties by elites and citizens correspond and whether the same ideological values underline the concepts of left and right for voters and their representatives. The

overarching theme of the chapter is an examination of whether or not Ireland has become more or less similar to its European counterparts in recent decades and whether or not the crisis of 2011 and the emergence of new and stronger parties of the left, with clearer ideological messages and manifestos, has helped crystalise party competition along a more standard left-right axes.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First we explore the ability of Irish voters to place parties on the left-right spectrum and then go on to compare this with the placement of parties by candidates for election. Second we explore the substantive meaning of left and right for Irish voters and Irish candidates. Finally we briefly explore the overall levels of congruence between Irish elites and masses.

**Left and Right Party Placement in Ireland**

Jointly, the terms left and right form something of a 'super' issue but in cross-national survey work, the specific ideological issue that has been found to most highly correlate with these terms is the choice between increasing taxes to improve public services versus cutting taxes and reducing spending on welfare and health (Benoit and Laver 2006).[1] Parties and voters of the left favour increasing taxes and spending more on public services, while parties and voters of the right favour cutting taxes and reducing public expenditure. Other dimensions that are also correlated with the overarching super dimension of left and right include attitudes to social issues such as abortion and marriage equality and state regulation of the economy and industry. This broad left-right conceptualisation of party competition has proven remarkably resilient. The rise of post-materialist issues, such as concern for the environment and women's rights, were once thought to threaten the traditional left-right world view but, by and large, these new issues dimensions have been subsumed within the super structure of left-right, with parties of the left generally taking a more pro-environment, pro-gender equality stance than parties of the right.

Such is the power of these terms that voters in Western Europe have long been adept at placing parties on the left-right spectrum. Surveys have shown the ability of many

[1] There is, of course, cross country variation, for instance in Portugal and Austria left-right is better explained by social policy, which captures attitudes to on matters such as abortion, homosexuality, and euthanasia (Benoit and Laver 2006).

western publics to do so (Dalton et al 2011; Kroh 2009; Laponce, 1970; Sani, 1974). Furthermore, these placements are accompanied by relatively low standard deviations, indicating a high degree of consensus among voters (Klingemann, 1972). These findings further affirm that voters can clearly identify both their own position and the location of each party relative to all its competitors in left–right terms. But Irish voters have traditionally been less able to collectively agree on where parties are placed on the left-right spectrum and their understanding of the very terms, left and right, is out of sync with those of their West European peers (Kennedy and Sinnott 2006; Marsh et al. 2008).

A collective agreement over the location of parties in policy space is generally viewed as a necessary (though far from sufficient) prerequisite for democratic representation (Dahlberg 2009; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2010; Schmitt and Thomassen 1999; Wessels and Schmitt 2009; van der Brug 1997). If even modest levels of political accountability and representation, as advocated by the responsible party model, are to be achieved, voters and elites should share relatively similar perceptions of party positions. Where voters cannot locate parties in policy space, meaningful mandates for parties to fulfil cannot be realised. Knowledge of parties' positions on the left-right dimension is generally viewed as a good heuristic or informational short cut for parties' positions on a host of other substantive dimensions (Downs 1957; Fuchs and Klingemann 1990; van der Brug 1999). In this section, using data from the Irish National Election Study (INES) and the Irish module of the Comparative Candidate Study (CCS), we look at the ability of voters to place Irish parties on the general left-right dimension and for the first time directly compare these positions with the placement of the parties by candidates running for office.

The great advantage of the data provided in the Comparative Candidate Study is that it allows for direct comparison of elite and mass ideology, attitudes and perceptions, using exactly the same set of questions. Surprisingly little is known about the ideology of the Irish elite: while voters ideology is measured in opinion polls and, since 2002, more systematically in election studies, the ideology of the elite is something of a black box. While elite ideology can be measured through roll call vote analyses, the coding of party manifestos, through expert studies and text and media content analysis, these

approaches have their limitations, as a different data source must be used to compare elites and mass views. Furthermore, many of these measures capture strategic behaviour (e.g. roll call voting, media analysis) on the part of elites and not necessarily preferences.[2] Fundamentally, one cannot be sure that even the same underlying dimension has been measured or that the different metrics for measuring ideology have been correctly mapped to each other. Ideally, one has identical survey measures for both groups, which is precisely what the Irish Candidate studies of 2007, 2011 and 2014 provide.

These surveys were conducted by the author and a team of researchers at Trinity College, Dublin, in the immediate aftermath of each election. All parliamentary and (in 2014) local election candidates were sent copies of a standard hardcopy questionnaire in the post. The 2007 and 2011 studies were composed of five separate sections that covered the political background of the candidate, her campaign experience, her attitudes to the quality of Irish Democracy, her political attitudes and beliefs and finally a demographics section. The 2014 local election and 2016 general election studies included an additional sixth section, which explored the personality disposition of the candidate. For our purposes here, the key sections are those relating to issues and policy preferences. The response rates are displayed in Table 5.1. The overall response rates compare favourably with international standards for postal surveys and in particular with surveys of political elites. For instance, the overall response rate in 2011 was 45 per cent, very similar to the 47 per cent achieved in the 2010 United Kingdom study or the 43 per cent of returned surveys in Sweden (also in 2010) and far better than the 32 per cent in Estonia (2011) and Hungary (2010) or 24 per cent in Austria (2008).[3] Parties of the centre-left (the Labour Party and Greens notably) tend to be the highest responders whilst the response rates are somewhat lower from independent candidates. Sinn Féin's response rate has improved dramatically since the

[2] Of course, elite answers in anonymous surveys are not necessarily revealed true preferences but they are less subject to strategic considerations than positions derived from roll call voting and manifesto analyses.

[3] The Comparative Candidates Study is a multi-national study that collects data on candidates running in national elections, using a common core questionnaire. At present there are over 30 countries in the network, and while predominantly European, the list also includes Australia, Brazil, Canada and New Zealand. Comparative data can be accessed at: http://www.comparativecandidates.org/

surveys were first deployed (up from 29 per cent in 2007 to 39 per cent in 2014). Overall candidates whose parties are not entering government tend to respond at slightly higher rates, presumably reflecting an availability bias. Figure 5.1 illustrates the composition of the sample in terms of the respondents by party across the three years of the survey. The overall distributions are close to that of the population with Independents and Others underrepresented in 2007 and 2011 and Fianna Fáil overrepresented in the 2011 sample.

[Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1 about here]

Using the data from the INES and CCS we now examine the ability of both voters and candidates to place Irish political parties on a general left-right spectrum. Figure 5.2 illustrates the mean placement of political parties on a left-right spectrum by all voters in the 2011 election, along with 95 per cent confidence intervals.[4] Perhaps the single most noteworthy feature of the graph is that each of the parties clearly occupies a distinct position on the left-right spectrum, with Sinn Féin and Fine Gael acting as bookends. The overlap in positions highlighted by earlier studies (Klingermann 1972) seems to have disappeared.[5] Second, there is a reasonably large spread of parties across the range of the left-right space, with no party overlapping the centre (point 5). There appear to be parties of the left and parties of the right in the collective mind of Irish voters.[6]

Figure 5.3 produces the same information as Figure 5.2, however this time the placement is calculated from the responses of the candidates who ran in the general election of 2011. A couple of things are worth highlighting, first, party groups span almost the entire left-right spectrum, with more use of the extremes than is the case for voters. Second, the parties once more occupy very distinct positions. In particular, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael occupy the centre right of the distribution with Fine Gael

[4] The precise question wording was as follows: 'Where would you place each of the following parties on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?' The voters were asked to place Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, Labour, Sinn Féin and the Greens, while the candidates were additionally asked to place the United Left Alliance.

[5] The mean positions are as follows: Fine Gael 6.8, Fianna Fáil 5.95, Labour 4.5, Greens 4.15 and Sinn Féin 2.82.

[6] The number of respondents who were unable to place the parties ranged from a low of 20 per cent for Fianna Fáil to a high of 28 per cent for Sinn Féin.

furthest to the right with a mean position of 7.2 and Fianna Fáil next with a mean position of 6.4. On the centre-left the Greens and Labour party are also statistically distinct from each other, with the Green mean position of 4.4 and Labour 3.8. Further to the left and occupying its own space is Sinn Féin with a mean position of 2.3 and occupying the far left is the United Left Alliance at 1.1. Interestingly, three of the six parties are viewed as quite leftist by candidates and yet quite distinct from each other. The far right space is, however, still available for occupation. The pattern is remarkably similar to that displayed in Figure 5.2, though voters do not use quite as much of the available spectrum as the candidates; their vision of the party system is somewhat more compressed. Additionally, voters invert the positions of the Labour and Green parties.

Figure 5.2 and 5.3 about here

Figure 5.4 produces this candidate positioning of political parties for the years 2007, 2011 and 2014 and we see there is very little movement evident, remarkably little, when we consider these crisis years. The only party that occupies a distinctly different position across this seven-year period is the Green Party, which occupies a more centrist position in 2014, compared with 2007 and 2011.[7] A similar graph for voters placement of parties demonstrates little movement also, except both Fine Gael and the Labour Party appear to move towards the right in the minds of voters, especially in 2011 when the Labour party median position is 4.5, up from 3.6 in 2002.

Figure 5.5, produces the party placement on the left-right spectrum by the parties' own candidates and voters, that is, on this occasion the samples are confined to those who ran for the party and those who voted for the party. Here we witness more variance in placement: additionally the confidence intervals are larger as the sample sizes are quite small, especially when it comes to candidates for parties such as the Greens. In terms of distances between candidate and voter positioning of parties the greatest discrepancy is that of the Labour Party, which its voters deem a distinctly more centrist party than Labour candidates running for office. Also, Sinn Féin voters view the party as much closer to the centre of the spectrum than do Sinn Féin candidates. Interestingly, party

[7] It must be noted that the 2014 sample is of local election candidates, while 2007 and 2011 are national candidates. The positions of both Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil are also to the right of their 2007 and 2011 positions in the 2014 sample.

voters place all of their respective parties to the right of where their own candidates place them and indeed where voters, taken as a whole, place them. Sinn Féin voters in particular view their party as rather more centrist than the general population and Fianna Fáil voters see the party as quite distinctly to the right of its overall voter placement. This particular finding is at odds with international research which finds that elites are more polarised than their voters, with candidates from left wing parties more left than their supporters (which is the case in Ireland) and candidates from parties of the right more right-wing than their voters (McClosky 1960; Lutz 2008).

FIGURE 5.5 AROUND HERE

Nonetheless, overall the descriptive evidence presented here suggests that Irish voters have a conception of the policy space in left-right terms that corresponds broadly with that of political elites and they appear, in the aggregate, to be able to distinguish parties from each other in terms of their left-right placement. The question remains however as to what left and right mean to Irish voters, and this is explored in the following section.

**Left-Right Correlation with socio-economic policy issues:**

Being able to place parties in general terms on a left-right dimension does not reveal much about what these concepts mean to voters or whether or not they inform voting behaviour. In this section we explore if the ability of Irish voters to place the parties on a general left-right scale is reflected in more substantive policy issues aligning with the dimension, as has been found to be the case elsewhere (Holmberg and Oscarsson 2004).

Ideally, to explore this relationship we would have data that measure voters and candidates' placement of parties on economic, cultural and moral dimensions, but unfortunately such information is not available. In this section, we thus explore the relationship between voters' and candidates' self-placement on the left-right dimension and compare this with their preferences on more substantial issue dimensions. Essentially, we examine where respondents place themselves on the left-right political

spectrum and whether or not these positions correlate with standard conceptions of the terms left and right, as revealed in their positions taken on issues such as the existence of God or regulation of industry.

As a first descriptive cut at this question, Figure 5.6 graphs the mean left right self-placement of party voters against their position on the taxes versus spending scale.[8] This scale asks voters to choose between the options of reducing public services in order to lower taxes or raising taxes to improve health and social services, which as discussed above is typically the dimension that most highly correlates with left-right in industrialised democracies (Benoit and Laver 2005). As is clear from the figure there is not a strong relationship between the two dimensions across the three election studies in the Republic of Ireland.[9] Even allowing for a general tendency for voters to cluster near the centre of the spectrum, we should expect left-wing party supporters to bunch more towards the top left of the graph and the centre-right wing voters towards the bottom right. But no such pattern is evident; there is essentially no relationship between where voters place themselves on a left-right scale and where they place themselves on the issue of taxes versus spending., While Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil voters place themselves, on average, on the right of the general left-right spectrum, this does not translate into a different mean position from Labour or Sinn Féin voters on the issue of raising taxes or cutting spending. If anything, what we see is a year effect rather than a party effect. Finally, while party voters' mean self-placement on the left right axis (especially for Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Sinn Féin) is largely static across the nine-year period, we notice an overall movement by voters in 2011 towards cutting taxes, which is perhaps understandable in light of the tax increases that were introduced in the December 2010 budget (though the size of this move should not be overstated; all party means are still on the pro-spending/improving services side of the scale). If we examine the same data for the candidates (Figure 5.7), we notice a much clearer pattern, with a strong relationship between left-right self-placement and preferences

[8] 18 per cent of voters were unable to place themselves on the Left-Right scale in 2011, a figure which is broadly comparable with other democracies (Dalton et al 2011). Only 4 per cent of respondents did not know their preference on taxes versus spending.

[9] Note the full range of both scales (0-10) are not mapped in this figure, the magnification is to allow the reader to discern clearly the voter positions.

over whether to tax more or cut public services.[10] Irish elites' self-placement on left-right is consistent with the their preference on matters of taxation. Interestingly, Fine Gael local election candidates in 2014 are significantly more likely to place themselves to the right of the 2011 general election candidates.

Figures 5.6 and 5.7 about here

To explore the relationship between left-right and substantive policy positions more systematically, we next examine the correlation between nine policy questions and left-right self-placement for both voters and candidates (full details on the policy position scales are provided in Table 5A.1 in the Appendix). The full correlation matrix between all policy items is presented in Table 5.2. The first column represents the correlation between candidates' self-placement on the left-right scale and their self-placement on the concrete issue dimensions, while the first row represents the same information for voters. For candidates, the highest correlation between left-right self-placement and other policy positions is with the response to state regulation of industry (0.59), followed by responses to the question of state ownership of industry (0.44). There is a clear economic underpinning to elites' left-right ideology. These correlations are supportive of Downs' original conception of Left-Right as reflecting preferences over the degree of state intervention in the economy (Downs 1957). For voters, however, there are very low correlations between left-right self-placement and positions taken on other standard policy dimensions, with the highest correlation (and then only a mere 0.21) being with the belief in the existence of God. It seems Irish voters' self-positioning on issues related to economic and moral issues do not correlate strongly with their own left right self-placement; the relationships remain very weak by international standards (Dalton et al 2011).

Table 5.2 around here

Finally, Figure 5.8 presents the marginal effects from a regression analysis of voters' left-right self-placement against a battery of seven policy positions (state regulation of

[10] Unfortunately, the taxes-spending item was not included in the 2007 candidate survey. Note while there is also a year effect evident in Figure 5.7, it is impossible to know if this is due to temporal or sample effects, given that the sample in 2014 consists of local election candidates.

industry, belief in God, attitudes to abortion, environmentalism, taxes versus spending, private ownership of industry and attitudes to European Integration). The marginal effects measure the expected change in the dependent variable (left vs. right-self placement) as a function of a change in a given explanatory variable, while keeping all the other covariates constant. Even in the most parsimonious model we can see that self-placement on left-right is only significantly related to attitudes to the environment and the existence of God for Irish voters. Those who favour economic growth over protection of the environment are more likely to place themselves on the right of the spectrum and similarly those who believe God definitely exists are also most likely to consider themselves as having a general right-wing disposition. However, there is no significant relationship between policy issues such as taxes versus spending, commitment to European integration, regulation of industry and private ownership of business. These results suggest that while Irish voters are willing to place themselves on the left-right scale, the standard economic underpinning of left-right is not guiding their choice. One interpretation of these results may be that the super structure of left-right is driven by cultural, moral or post-materialist values for Irish voters, though even here the relationship is rather weak.

As is evident from Figure 5.9, candidates have a much more consistent set of beliefs, with their left-right self-positioning demonstrating a strong economic foundation.[11] There is a significant relationship between their attitude to the regulation of business, private ownership of industry and taxation and their left-right position, with the strongest predictors being regulation of industry and the taxes versus spending dimension. Additionally, as with voters, belief in the existence of God is positively related to right wing self-placement. Finally, the explained variance of the model is much higher for candidates than it is for voters, with almost half the variance in self-placement accounted for by these six variables alone, while the equivalent figure for voters is less than 3 per cent.

Figures 5.8 and 5.9 around here

**Overall distribution of the Population and Candidates**

[11] Note the Abortion item was not asked of candidates in 2007 and 2011.

In this last section we examine the overall congruence between voters and candidates on a number of substantive policy dimensions. Figure 5.10 provides the distribution of voters from the 2011 INES and candidates from the 2011 candidate survey in terms of their left right self-placement (see also chapter 6). The first panel provides the information for all voters and all candidates and we see that there is a clear leftward skew for candidates compared with voters; in essence the voters are more conservative than the candidates though the median response for both is 5 on the 0 to 10 scale. The 2nd through 4th panels provide the same information for the three main parties. Again the rightward skew is evident for voters relative to their party candidates and is particularly noteworthy for the Labour party. The median Labour party candidate places herself at 3 on the 0-10 scale while the median voter places herself at 6. The median Fianna Fáil candidate places herself at 5, while the median Fianna Fáil voter places herself at 7. Fine Gael has no candidates who place themselves at the extreme of the scale but a small proportion of their voters self identify as quite far right with about 15 per cent of Fine Gael voters self-identifying as a 9 or 10 on the left-right scale. Not a single Fine Gael candidate self identifies as this right wing.

Figure 5.11 presents a similar set of information but this time examining responses to the question of taxes versus spending. Here we see a reasonable overlap of the distribution between voters and candidates, though voters do generally favour cutting taxes over increasing spending compared with candidates. The fit between Fine Gael voters and candidates is rather good but again the Labour party candidates seem distinctly more left than their voters, favouring increasing taxes over cutting spending, which is slightly puzzling in light of the 2016 campaign where Labour's losses were largely attributed to their cutting of services during the 31st Dáil (2011-2016).

Figure 5.10 and 5.11 about here

There are a whole host of policy issues on which the distributions of voters and candidates appear to be quite out of sync, although the particular issues vary by party. For instance, Figure 5.12 illustrates the distribution of voters and candidates on European Unification. It is clear that Fine Gael and Labour representatives are generally more pro further European integration than their support bases while the opposite

relationship holds for Sinn Fein. On immigration there seems to be quite a disjoint between the median view of elites and candidates in left wing parties (see Figure 5.13). Sinn Fein's supporters are strongly in favour of imposing strict limits on immigrants (modal response) while the party's representatives are much more likely to disagree with this statement.

Figure 5.12 and 5.13 about here

Figure 5.14 offers another insight into this match between the overall distribution of voters and parties by overlaying the mean position of parties on taxes versus spending (with 95 per cent confidence intervals) on the voter distribution. The figure reveals that while the distribution of voters is across the spectrum, the parties are clustered quite closely together on this dimension (with overlapping confidence intervals). What is perhaps most noteworthy from this graph is that no party occupies the positions from 0-4 on the scale (cutting taxes), which represents almost a third of the electorate. Fine Gael occupies the centre of the spectrum and with no party further towards the tax cut end of this spectrum, these voters are theirs for the picking (assuming this is a salient feature of vote choice for some of them). A similar pattern is revealed when one overlays party positions on the state versus private ownership of business and industry. While there is a wider distribution of party positions, the right of the distribution of voters who strongly favour privatisation are again unrepresented by a political party.[12]

Figure 5.14 about here

**Conclusion**

Most Irish voters no longer have difficulty in placing both themselves and political parties on a general left right dimension. They are comfortable with the spatial language of politics and party competition that dominates academic and media discourse. They know which parties are ostensibly left-wing and which are more centre right. However, there appears to be little underlying policy coherence to these placements. Voters' preferences on economic and social issues do not correspond well with their own perception of their left-right position. Elites, on the other hand have

[12] Roughly 40 per cent of respondents give a score of 8,9 or 10 in response to the question of ownership where 10 represents the view that "Most of business and industry should be privately owned ".

much more consistent preferences; candidates of the left favour raising taxes, regulating business and state ownership of industry, while candidates who self-identify as centre right, favour deregulation, cutting taxes and private ownership.

As such we have a disjunction whereby candidates are policy consistent but voters are not. The educational differences between the two groups will go part of the way to explaining the divergence, as policy consistency and higher education are quite strongly correlated. But the fact remains that the typical Irish voter is less policy consistent than her equivalent in other advanced democracies. Something is amiss in the communication of coherent policy messages between parties and voters. A number of possible explanations suggest themselves.

First, it is noteworthy that even within parties, there are still relatively wide distributions of preferences on the main policy dimensions. We find candidates for Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael who strongly favour cutting taxes but also others who are equally strongly in favour of raising them. Most Irish parties, especially the two largest ones, are quite broad churches. As a result, voters end up hearing quite mixed messages. This issue may be particularly exacerbated in the Irish case, given the very high levels of contact between voters and candidates. Second, the nature of candidate competition at constituency level seems to militate against policy emphasis. Voters (as demonstrated in chapter 9) place a very high value on having a TD who works for the local area represent them in parliament, as such, at the district level candidates compete on factors such as service and the provision of goods as much, if not more so, than policy. Finally, we may be witnessing valence politics (Stokes 1963); this seems especially relevant in the context of the 2011 election. Voters were choosing between candidates and parties on the basis of perceived competency to run the economy rather than their ideological positions on the issue; every voter was for rigourous growth, a reduction in unemployment and an end to the bailout and associated austerity.

Nonetheless, it is worth noting that despite almost three years of economic crisis, left and right appear to have no more substantive meaning for Irish voters in 2011 than in 2002. The narrative of the election campaign and the clearer articulation of policy

positions by the new and stronger parties of the left was not reflected in greater consistency in policy thinking amongst voters.

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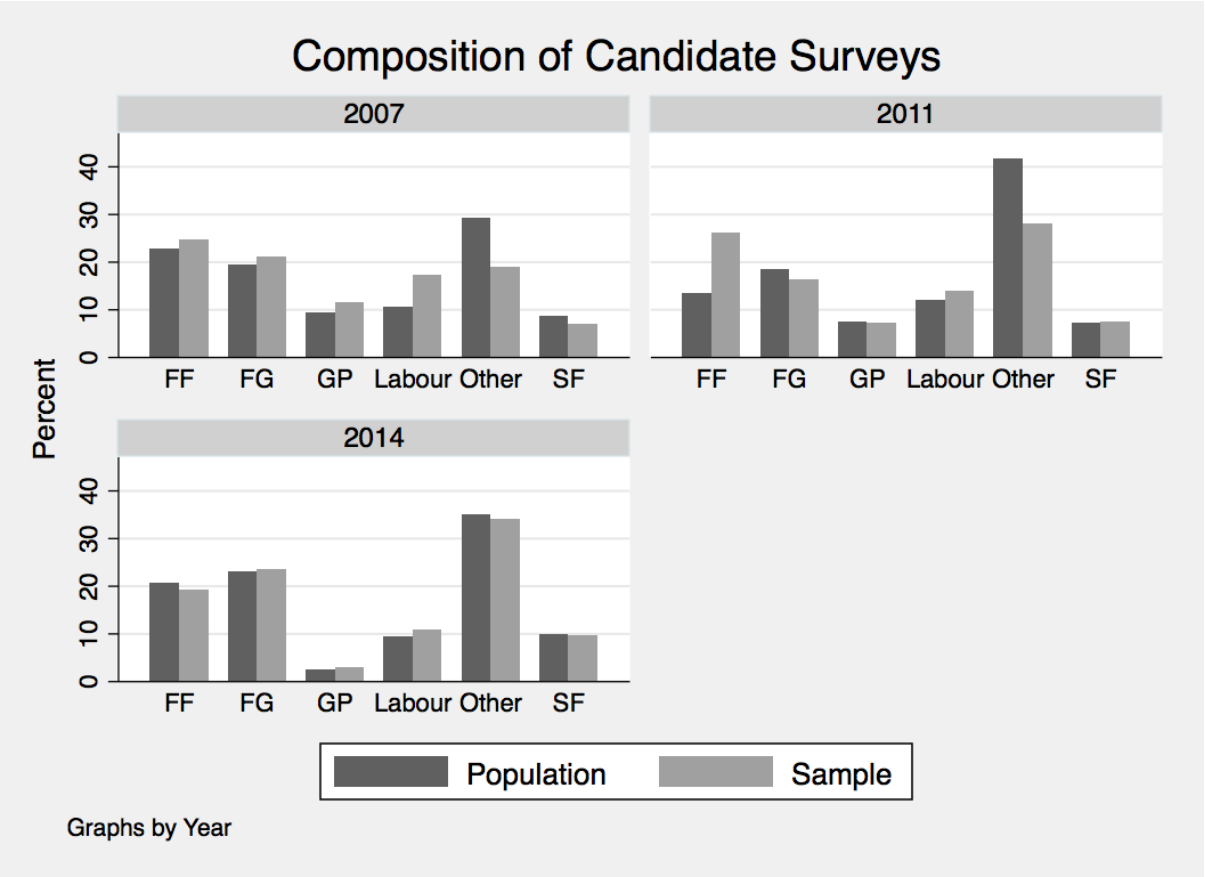



**Figure 5.1:** Irish Candidate Surveys, comparison of population and sample distribution by party and year.

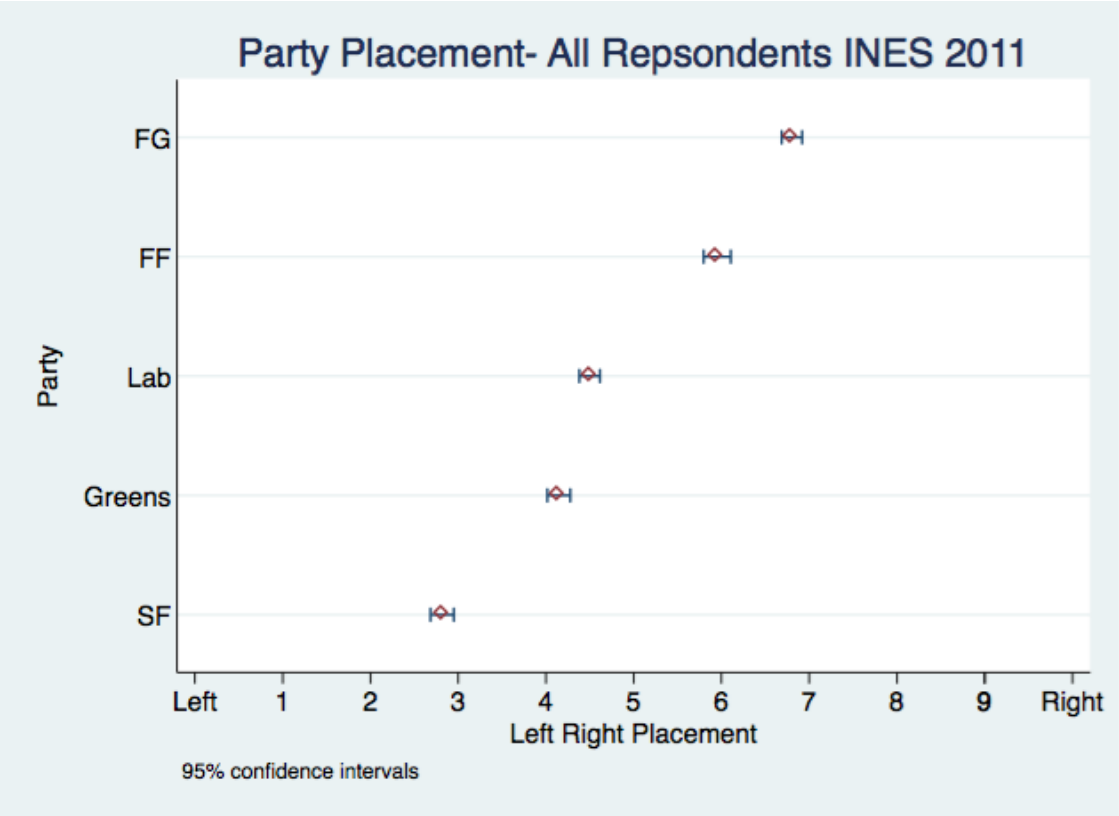



**Figure 5.2:** Placement of Parties on Left-Right dimension, INES 2011

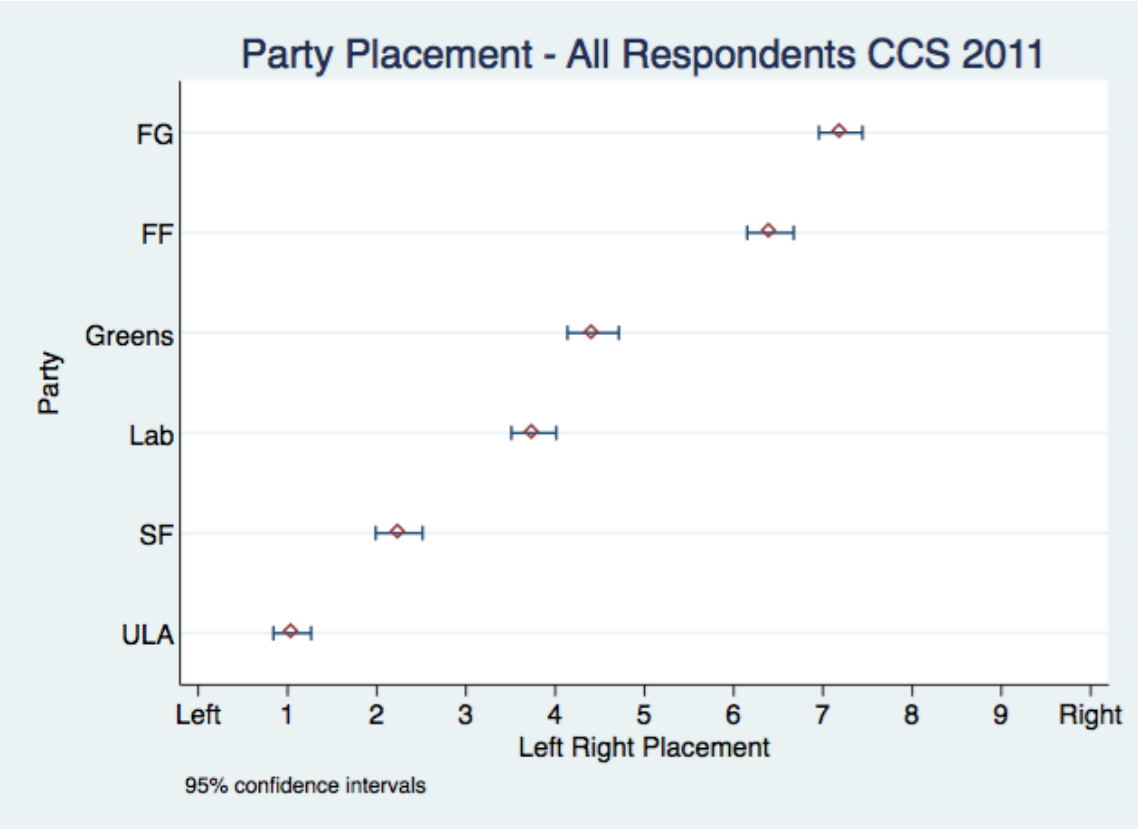



**Figure 5.3:** Placement of Parties on Left Right dimension, CCS 2011

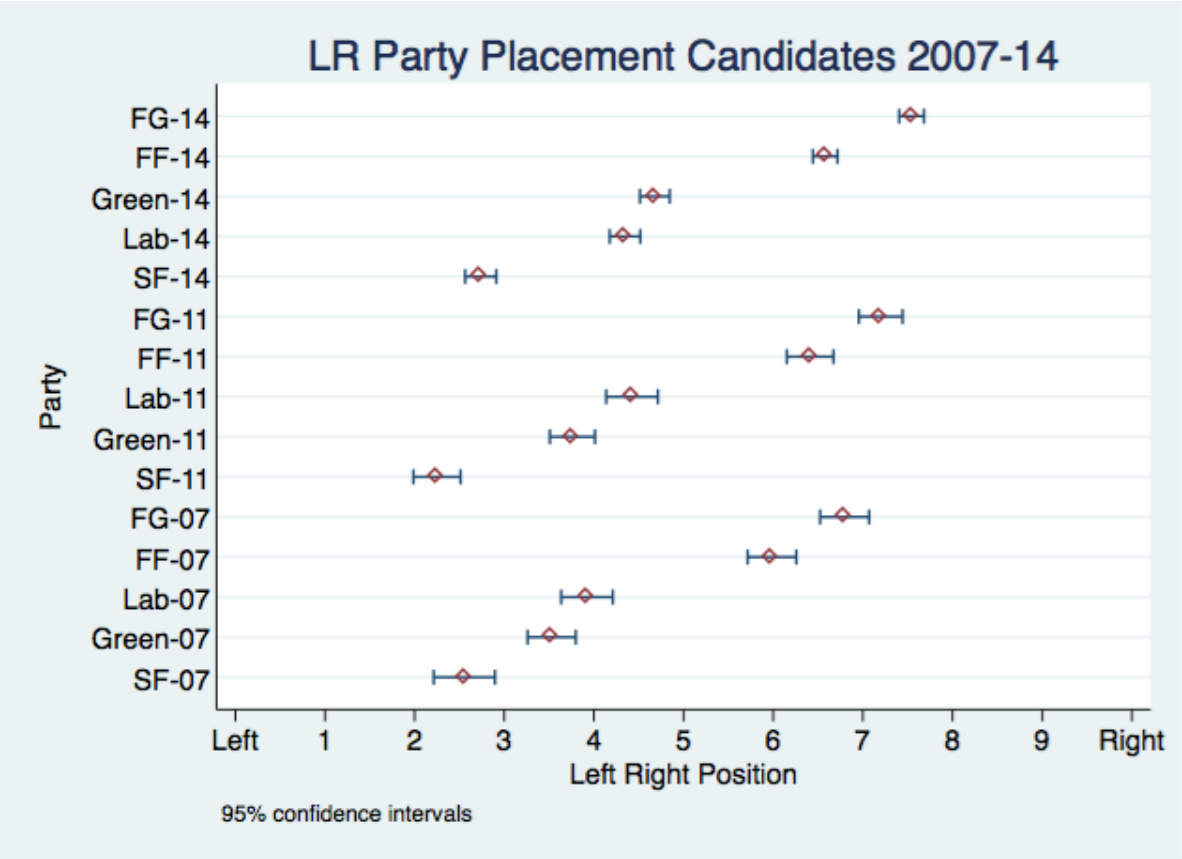



**Figure 5.4:** Candidate Placement of Political Parties, 2007-2014

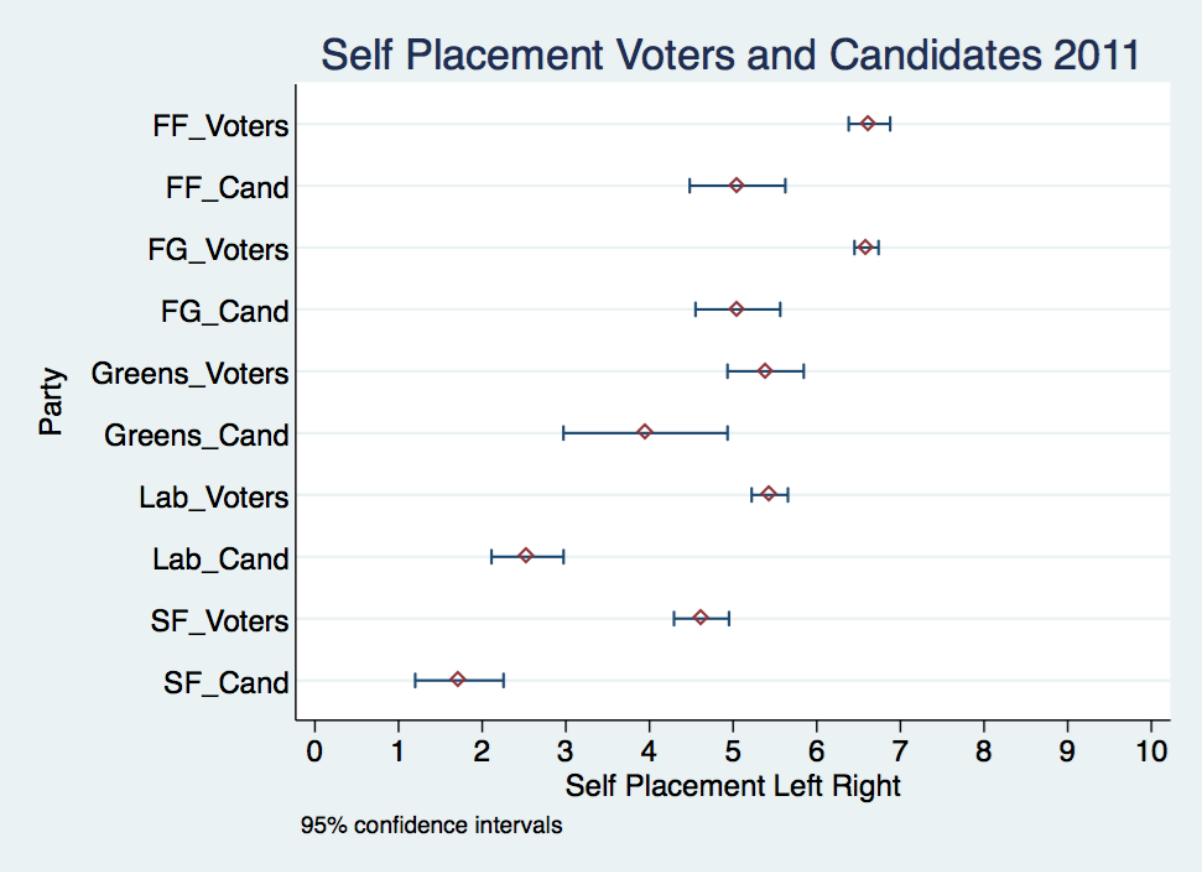



**Figure 5.5**: Party candidates and Party voters placement of their own party.

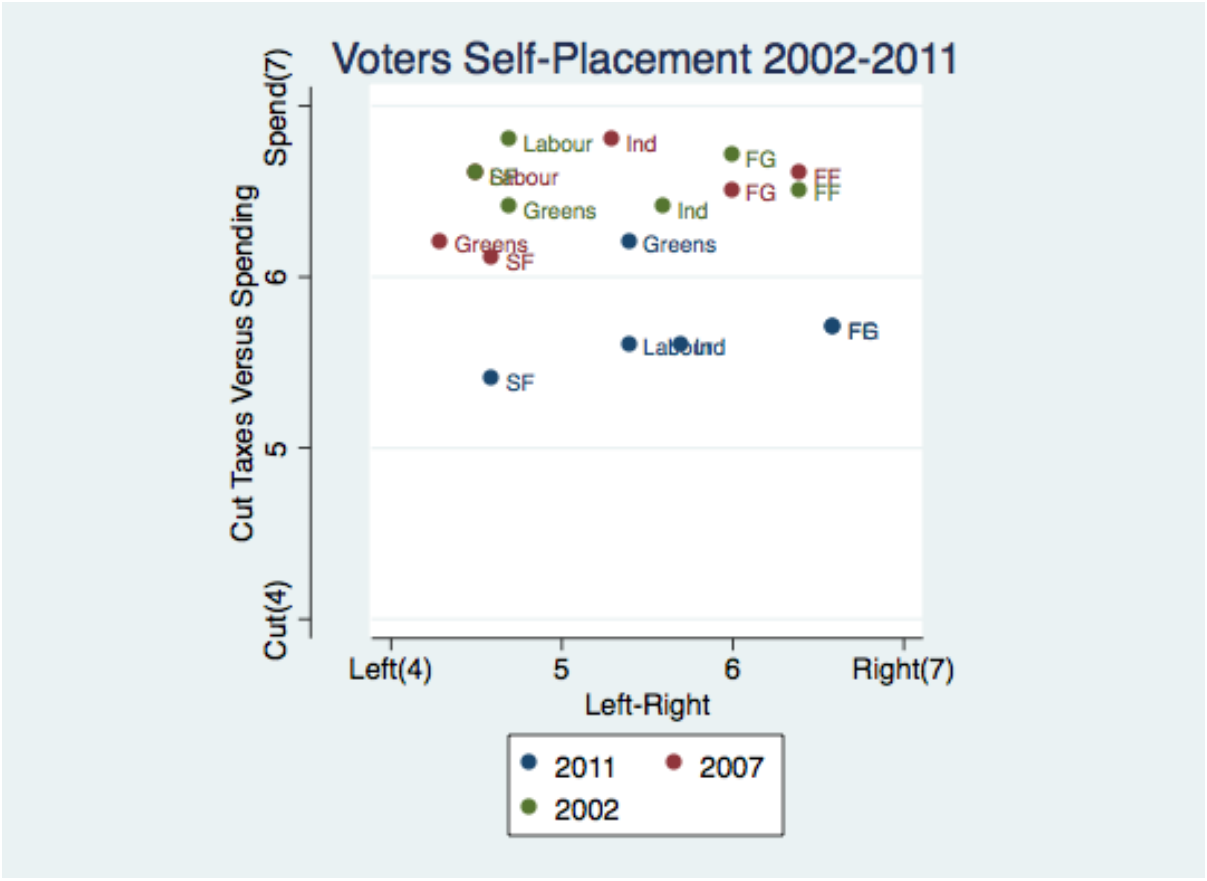



**Figure 5.6:** Voter self-placement, Left-Right and Taxes Spending.

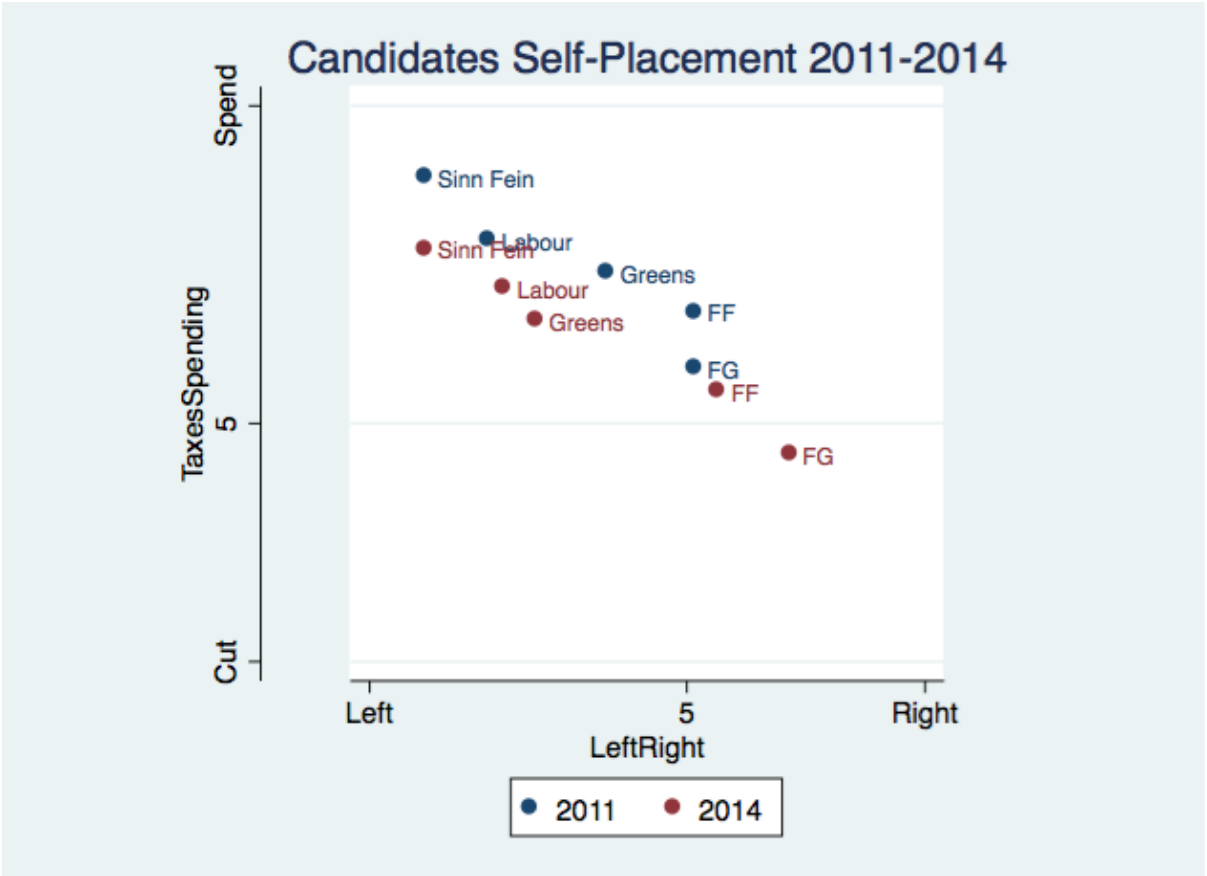



**Figure 5.7: Candidate self-placement, Left-Right and Taxes Spending.**

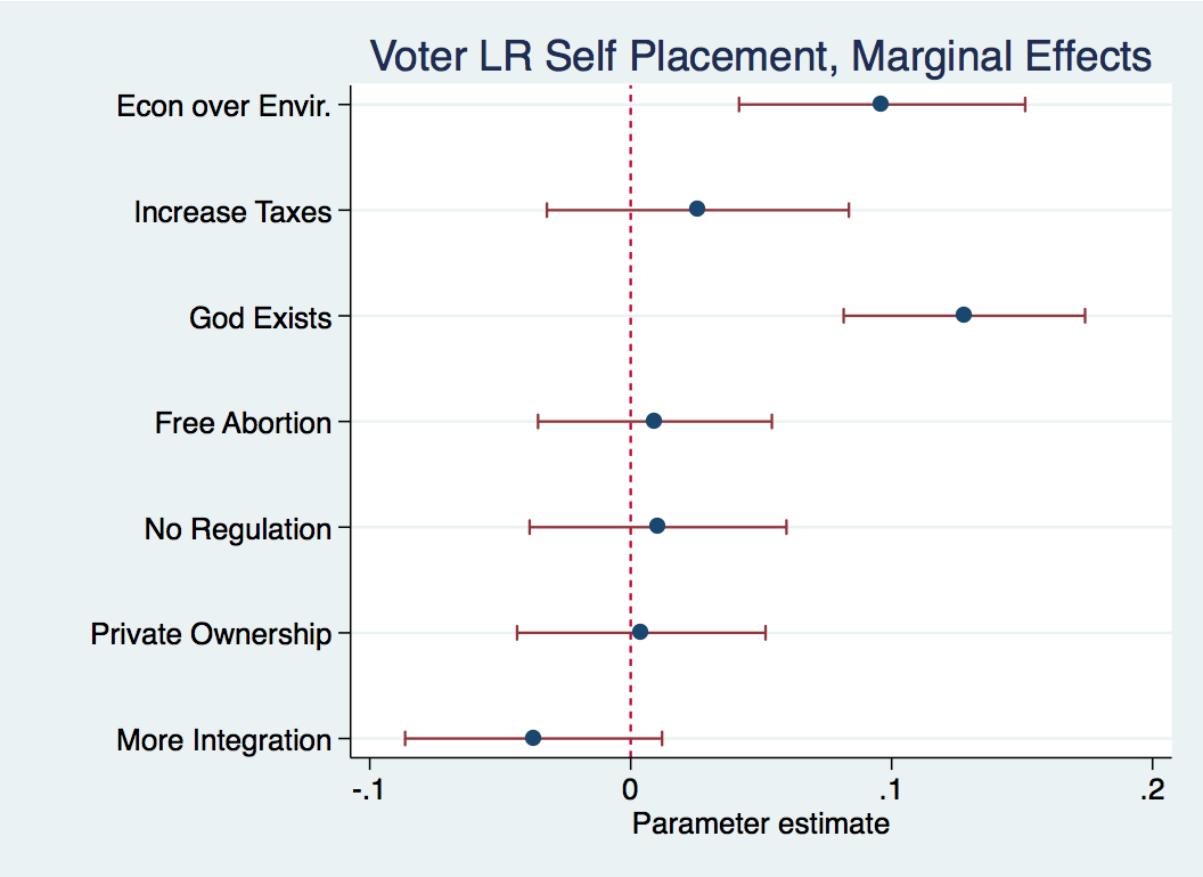



**Figure 5.8**: Marginal Effects with 95% confidence intervals, Voters 2011

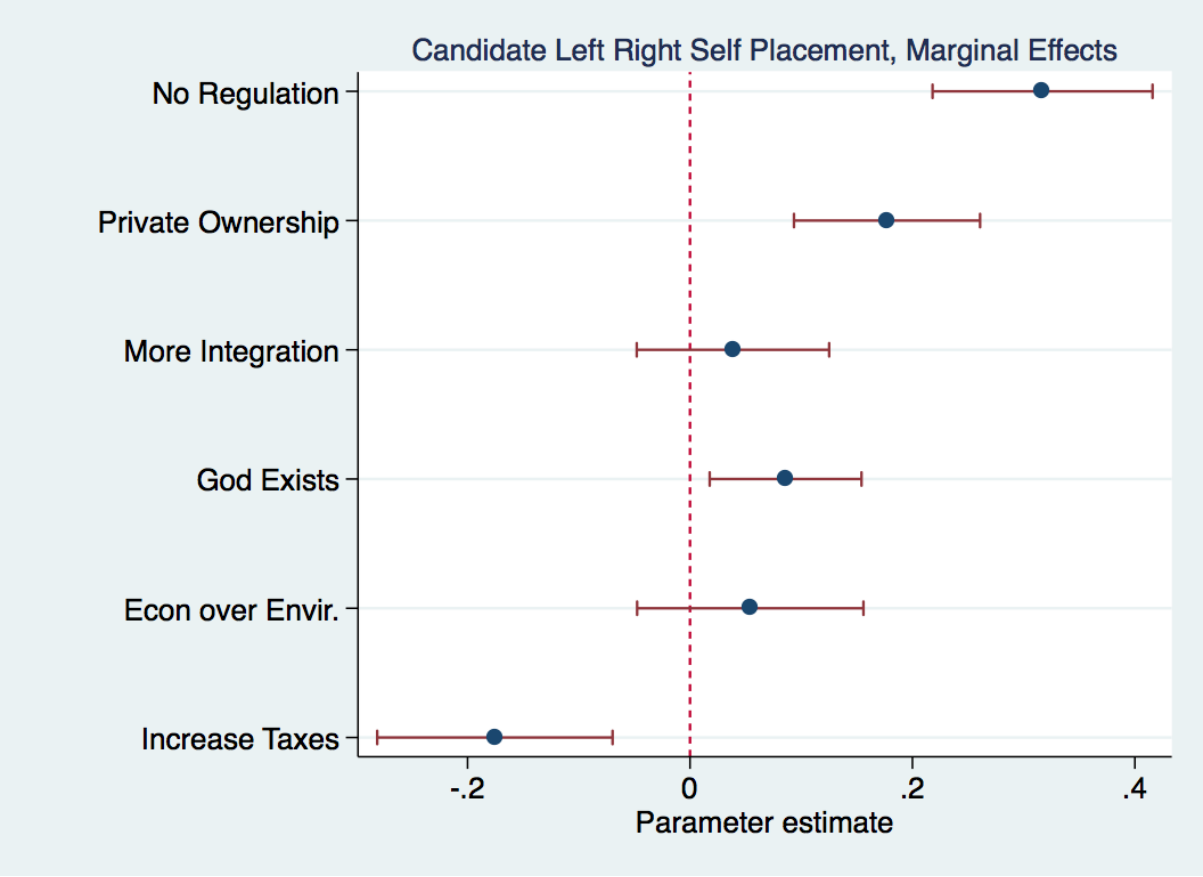


Figure 5.9: Marginal effects with 95% confidence intervals, Candidates 2011

**Figure 5.10: Distributions of Candidates and Voters, L-R scale 2011**

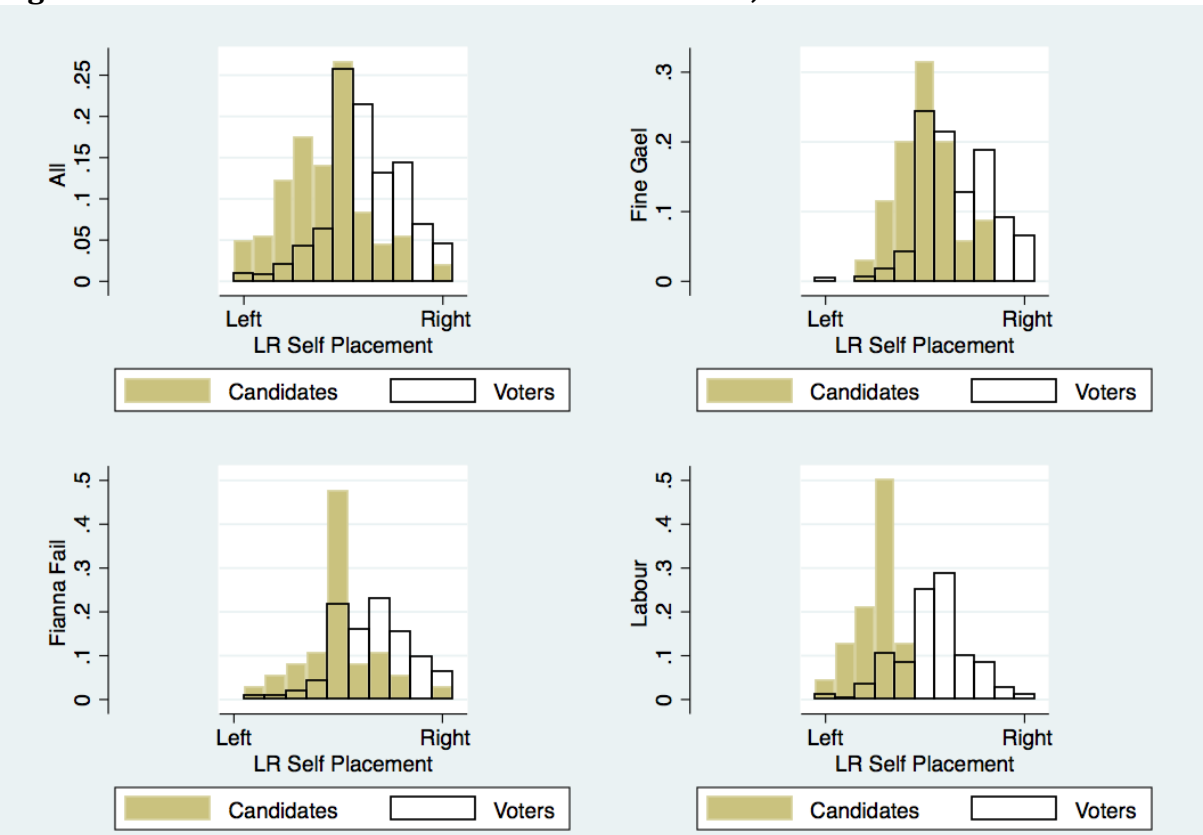



**Figure 5.11: Distributions of Candidates and Voters, Taxes versus Spending 2011.**

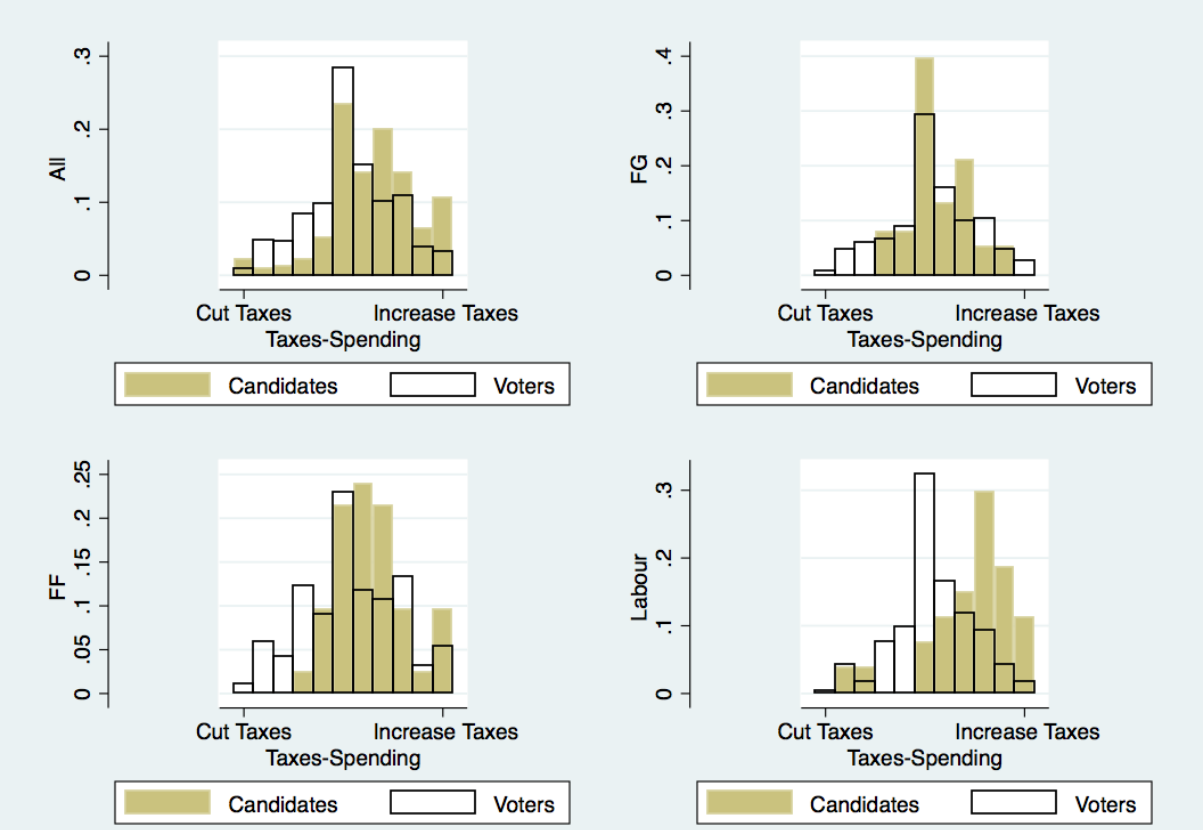
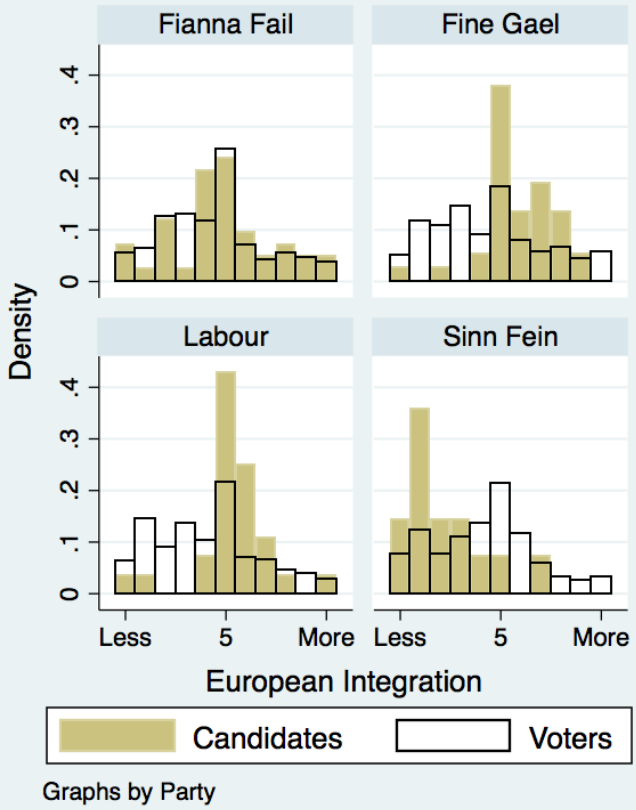


**Figure 5.12: Distributions of Candidates and Voters, European Integration 2011.**



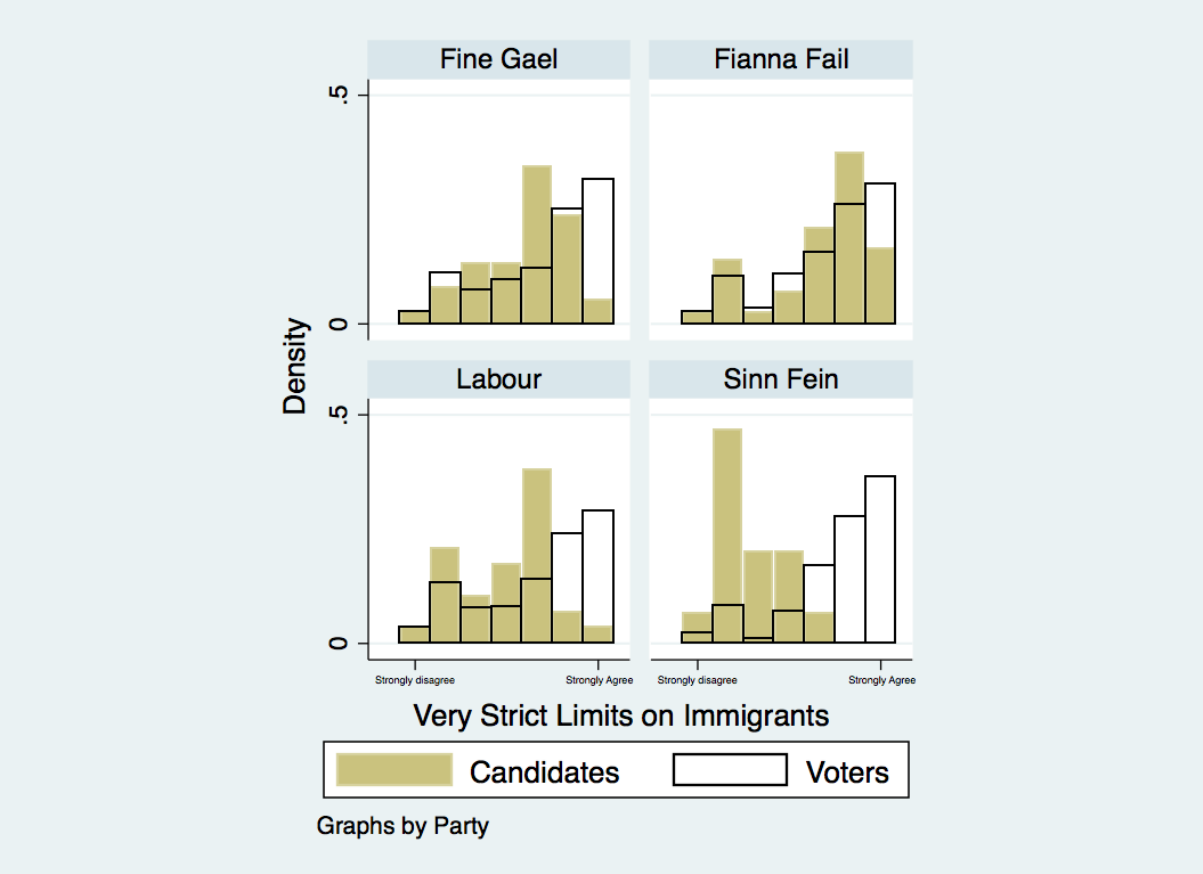



**Figure 5.13: Distributions of Candidates and Voters, Immigration 2011.**

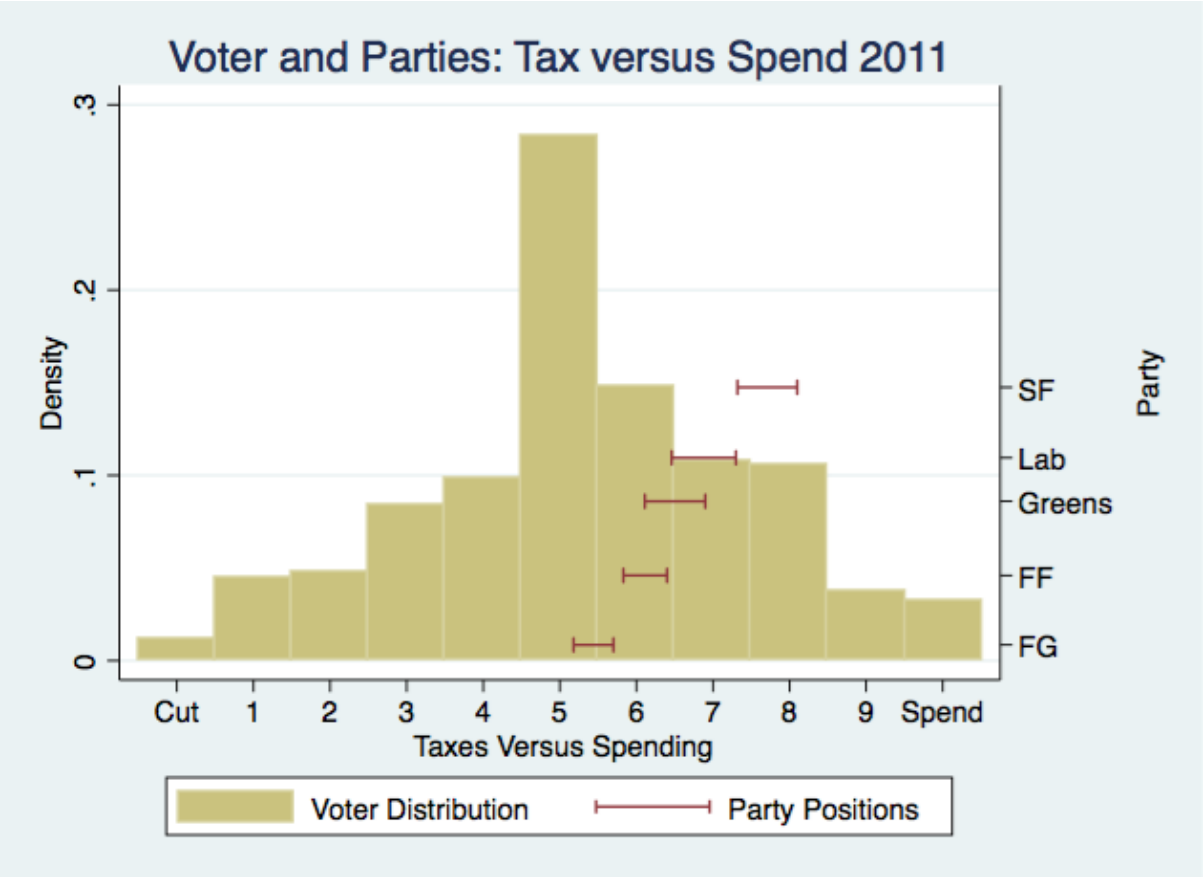



**Figure 5.14: Distributions of Candidates versus Party Mean position, Taxes versus Spending 2011.**

**Table 5.1: Overview of Irish Candidate Studies**

| Party | 2007 | | 2011 | | 2014 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Candidates | Response rate % | Number of Candidates | Response Rate % | Number of Candidates | Response Rate % |
| Fine Gael | 91 | 41 | 104 | 39 | 466 | 41 |
| Fianna Fáil | 107 | 40 | 75 | 57 | 415 | 37 |
| Labour | 50 | 62 | 68 | 44 | 189 | 46 |
| Greens | 44 | 45 | 43 | 60 | 47 | 49 |
| Sinn Féin | 41 | 29 | 41 | 37 | 197 | 39 |
| Progressive Democrats | 30 | 30 | - | - | - | |
| People Before Profit | | | | | 43 | 47 |
| Independent/ Other | 103 | 31 | 235 | 39 | 665 | 38 |
| Total | 466 | 40 | 566 | 45 | 2022 | 40 |