

## WebAppendix 1

### Detailed survey information

Our analysis utilizes panel data from three separate longitudinal analyses: the British Household Panel Survey (1991-2008) (though the dependent variable (*Political interest*) question is not asked from 1997-2000); the German Socio-Economic Panel (1985-2008);<sup>1</sup> and the Swiss Household Panel Survey (1999-2008). Each project initially selected a random sample of households from which to interview all individuals over a certain age. These same individuals were then followed and re-interviewed year after year—even in the event of a household move or a person leaving home and starting a new household—in order to capture their opinions over time. This helps guard against attrition and affords us unique causal leverage over the dynamics of political interest. The samples were also refreshed at various points. The BHPS added extension samples from Scotland and Wales in 1999 and from Northern Ireland in 2001. The GSOEP added to its original sample of West Germans a set of East Germans starting in 1990, and it also incorporated refresher samples in 1998 (the E sample), 2000 (the large F sample of over 10,000 new respondents) and 2002 (the G sample). Overall, the GSOEP also over-samples foreigners. The SHP brought in a refresher sample in 2004. Sampling descriptions are available at: <http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/bhps> for BHPS, [http://www.diw.de/documents/dokumentenarchiv/17/diw\\_01.c.38951.de/dtc.409713.pdf#page=6](http://www.diw.de/documents/dokumentenarchiv/17/diw_01.c.38951.de/dtc.409713.pdf#page=6) for GSOEP, and <http://www.swisspanel.ch/?lang=en> for the SHP.

Because we focus substantively on political disagreement within the family, our analysis necessarily examines only households where complete information is available for both the

---

<sup>1</sup> Though the GSOEP originally started to survey in 1984, its party preference variable only becomes usable in 1985.

respondent and his/her parents (but regardless of whether respondents and parents are actually living together). We acknowledge that this limits our sample to only second-generation respondents whose parents were interviewed in the relevant years. But to establish whether this should matter for our analysis, we break down the surveys into three age groups for which we then produce some descriptive statistics. We use these different sets of second generation respondents because the category is tricky to define; technically, all respondents could be considered second-generation. These age groups are: 1) average age in the sample [23 in the British and Swiss data, 25 in the German data]; 2) 18-30 years-old [robustness-check models for this age group displayed in Appendix C, Panel 4]; and 3) 18 years-old and over. (All of the relevant statistics are presented in the table below.) For the average aged respondent in each survey, we calculate that the availability of parental variables (*Parents prefer different parties<sub>t</sub>* and *Parental political interest<sub>t-1</sub>*) makes it possible to include 10% of British 23-year-olds, 46% of German 25-year-olds, and 34% of Swiss 23-year-olds in the models. (When we drop the requirement for *Parental political interest*, these numbers rise considerably and the model results are substantively the same.)

We also investigate whether there are important differences between different kinds of respondents (for instance those in single-parent versus two-parent homes) that might threaten the generalizability of our findings. To address this possibility, we calculate the average level of *Political interest* (our dependent variable) and the average *change* in political interest from year to year, since we are interested in the dynamics of engagement over time. As shown below, these figures do not vary much across different groups of respondents. For instance, for British 18-30 year-olds, average political interest for those who make it into the sample is .32 on a 0-1 scale. For respondents of this same age group who live with only one parent, this figure is .31,

and for the same-aged respondents who live with no parents the level of political interest is .35. Importantly, none of these figures is statistically distinguishable from the others at 95% confidence levels. Change in political interest varies even less across these three groups, with average figures of .0009 for in-sample respondents, .0001 for single-parent-home respondents and -.001 for respondents with no parental information. Overall, we are confident that the individuals analyzed in our models are not substantively different on key analytical dimensions from those we leave out.

## Representativeness of samples

	BHPS	GSOEP	SHP
<b>Age group: Rs are Average age (23 in BHPS, 25 in GSOEP, 23 in SHP)</b>			
Percent of [average age] respondents in sample	10	46	34
Mean political interest for Rs in sample (range 0 to 1)	0.32	0.38	0.55
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/both parents, but not in sample	0.36	0.37	0.56
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/one parent	0.33	0.35	0.54
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/no parents	0.34	0.37	0.49
Mean change in political interest* for Rs in sample (range -1 to 1)	-0.03	0.001	0.02
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/both parents, but not in sample	-0.01	-0.02	-0.003
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/one parent	0.01	0	-0.08
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/no parents	-0.003	0.01	0.02
<b>Age group: Rs are 18-30**</b>			
Percent of 18-30 years-old respondents in sample	9	49	30
Mean political interest for Rs in sample (range 0 to 1)	0.32	0.35	0.56
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/both parents, but not in sample	0.35	0.36	0.52
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/one parent	0.31	0.32	0.52
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/no parents	0.35	0.37	0.55
Mean change in political interest for Rs in sample (range -1 to 1)	0.0009	0.009	0.02
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/both parents, but not in sample	0.003	0.01	0.01
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/one parent	0.0001	0.005	0.008
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/no parents	-0.001	0.004	0.003
<b>Age group: Rs are 18+</b>			
Percent of 18+ years-old respondents in sample	2	13	5
Mean political interest for Rs in sample (range 0 to 1)	0.33	0.36	0.57
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/both parents, but not in sample	0.35	0.36	0.52
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/one parent	0.34	0.33	0.53
Mean political interest for Rs who live w/no parents	0.43	0.39	0.57
Mean change in political interest for Rs in sample (range -1 to 1)	0.0008	0.007	0.02
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/both parents, but not in sample	0.0006	0.01	0.01
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/one parent	-0.001	0.002	0.006
Mean change in political interest for Rs who live w/no parents	-0.003	0.001	0.004

\*Change in political interest=Political interest<sub>t</sub> - Political interest<sub>t-1</sub>

\*\*Models for respondents age 18-30 in Appendix C, Panel 4

## **WebAppendix 2**

### **Survey questions**

#### **BHPS**

##### **Party preference**

Generally speaking do you think of yourself as a supporter of any one political party? Which one?

[If no:] Do you think of yourself as a little closer to one political party than to the others? Which one?

##### **Party choice**

Generally speaking do you think of yourself as a supporter of any one political party? Which?

[If no:] Do you think of yourself as a little closer to one political party than to the others? Which?

[If no:] If there were to be a General Election tomorrow, which political party do you think you would be most likely to support?

##### **Party voted for**

Did you vote in the [most recent] UK general election? [If yes:] Which political party did you vote for?

##### **Political interest**

How interested would you say you are in politics? Would you say you are...

Very interested, Fairly interested, Not very interested or Not at all interested?

#### **GSOEP**

##### **Party preference**

Many people in Germany lean towards one party in the long term, even if they occasionally vote for another party. Do you lean towards a particular party? [If yes] Toward which party do you lean?

##### **Left-right ideology**

In politics, people often talk about "left" and "right" when describing different political views.

When you think about your own political views, how would you rate them on the scale below?

##### **Political interest**

Generally speaking, how much are you interested in politics...

Very much, Much, Not so much or Not at all?

#### **SHP**

##### **Party preference**

If there was an election for the National Council tomorrow, for which party would you vote?

##### **Political interest**

Generally, how interested are you in politics, if 0 means "not at all interested" and 10 "very interested"?

##### **Electoral participation**

Let's suppose that there are 10 federal polls in a year. How many do you usually take part in ?

##### **Political efficacy**

How much influence do you think someone like you can have on government policy, if

0 means "no influence", and 10 "a very strong influence"?

##### **Trust in government**

How much confidence do you have in the federal government (in Bern), if 0 means "no confidence" and 10 means "full confidence"?

**WebAppendix 3, Panels 1-6**

**Alternate model specifications**

Panel 1

**Political interest in Britain**

*Effects of alternate parental partisan disagreement measures*

<i>Predictor</i>	Alternative 1			Alternative 2		
	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	
Lagged DV ( <i>t-1</i> )	.66	(.02)	*	.66	(.02)	*
Parental disagreement						
Alternative 1: Choose different parties	.001	(.01)				
Alternative 2: Voted different parties				.02	(.01)	
Parental political interest ( <i>t-1</i> )	.12	(.02)	*	.12	(.02)	*
Education	.03	(.02)		.05	(.02)	*
Male	.03	(.01)	*	.04	(.01)	*
Age	.02	(.03)		-.01	(.03)	
Native	-.03	(.03)		-.03	(.03)	
Election year	-.01	(.02)		.04	(.02)	*
Constant	.07	(.08)		.10	(.07)	
<i>N</i>	2225			2112		
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.52			.53		

**OLS regression**, fixed effects (for region and year) models; S.E.s clustered by household identifier; \*p<.05.

Panel 2

**Political interest in Britain, Germany and Switzerland**

*Effects of parental partisan disagreement, ordered logit models*

<i>Predictor</i>	Britain			Germany			Switzerland		
	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	
Lagged DV ( <i>t-1</i> )	6.52	(.23)	*	6.28	(.08)	*	8.58	(.31)	*
Parents prefer different parties	.07	(.17)		.16	(.05)	*	.28	(.12)	*
Parental political interest ( <i>t-1</i> )	1.22	(.22)	*	1.50	(.07)	*	.96	(.24)	*
Education	.36	(.17)	*	.50	(.04)	*	.62	(.18)	*
Male	.24	(.09)	*	.43	(.02)	*	.37	(.08)	*
Age	.26	(.27)		.37	(.09)	*	.10	(.42)	
Native	-.53	(.22)	*	.05	(.04)		.02	(.11)	
Election year	.06	(.20)		.01	(.06)		.07	(.18)	
<i>N</i>	2414			40315			2214		
Wald Chi <sup>2</sup>	1063.5			8730.9			1359.5		

**Ordered logit**, fixed effects (for region and year) models; S.E.s clustered by household identifier; \*p<.05.

Panel 3

**Political interest in Britain, Germany and Switzerland**  
*Effects of parental partisan disagreement controlling for parental political interest at time t*

<i>Predictor</i>	Britain			Germany			Switzerland		
	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	
Lagged DV ( <i>t</i> -1)	.66	(.02)	*	.58	(.01)	*	.68	(.02)	*
Parents prefer different parties	.01	(.02)		.01	(.01)	*	.03	(.01)	*
Parental political interest ( <i>t</i> )	.16	(.02)	*	.17	(.01)	*	.11	(.02)	*
Education	.04	(.02)	*	.04	(.003)	*	.04	(.02)	*
Male	.03	(.01)	*	.04	(.002)	*	.03	(.007)	*
Age	.01	(.03)		.03	(.01)	*	.003	(.04)	
Native	-.05	(.02)	*	-.01	(.004)		-.005	(.02)	
Election year	.01	(.02)		-.02	(.01)		.004	(.02)	
Constant	.11	(.07)		.07	(.01)	*	.22	(.05)	*
<i>N</i>	2519			40633			2200		
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.56			.46			.62		

**OLS regression**, fixed effects (for region and year) models; S.E.s clustered by household identifier; \*p<.05.

Panel 4

**Political interest in Britain, Germany and Switzerland**  
*Effects of parental partisan disagreement for 18-30 y.o. respondents*

<i>Predictor</i>	Britain			Germany			Switzerland		
	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	
Lagged DV ( <i>t</i> -1)	.66	(.02)	*	.57	(.01)	*	.68	(.02)	*
Parents prefer different parties	.002	(.02)		.02	(.01)	*	.03	(.01)	*
Parental political interest ( <i>t</i> -1)	.11	(.02)	*	.13	(.01)	*	.09	(.02)	*
Education	.05	(.02)	*	.04	(.003)	*	.04	(.01)	*
Male	.03	(.009)	*	.04	(.002)	*	.03	(.007)	*
Age	-.06	(.06)		.08	(.01)	*	.004	(.04)	
Native	-.06	(.03)	*	.003	(.004)		-.005	(.01)	
Election year	.05	(.02)	*	-.02	(.01)		.01	(.01)	
Constant	.13	(.07)		.09	(.02)	*	.20	(.05)	
<i>N</i>	2189			32339			2115		
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.53			.43			.61		

**OLS regression**, fixed effects (for region and year) models; S.E.s clustered by household identifier; \*p<.05.

Panel 5

**Political interest in Britain, Germany and Switzerland**  
*Effects of parental partisan disagreement controlling for parental partisan agreement*

<i>Predictor</i>	Britain			Germany			Switzerland		
	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	
Lagged DV ( <i>t-1</i> )	.67	(.02)	*	.58	(.01)	*	.68	(.02)	*
Parents prefer different parties	.007	(.02)		.03	(.01)	*	.03	(.01)	*
Parents prefer the same party	.01	(.01)		.02	(.003)	*	.001	(.007)	
Parental political interest ( <i>t-1</i> )	.11	(.02)	*	.10	(.01)	*	.09	(.02)	*
Education	.04	(.02)	*	.05	(.003)	*	.05	(.01)	*
Male	.03	(.009)	*	.04	(.002)	*	.03	(.007)	*
Age	.02	(.03)		.03	(.01)	*	-.01	(.03)	
Native	-.05	(.02)	*	-.001	(.004)		-.004	(.01)	
Election year	.11	(.02)	*	-.02	(.01)	*	.009	(.02)	
Constant	.06	(.07)		.09	(.02)	*	.20	(.05)	*
<i>N</i>	2414			40315			2133		
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.55			.45			.62		

**OLS regression**, fixed effects (for region and year) models; S.E.s clustered by household identifier; \*p<.05.

Panel 6

**Political interest in Britain and Germany ("F" sample)**  
*Effects of parental partisan disagreement*

<i>Predictor</i>	Britain			Germany			Germany		
	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	
Lagged DV ( <i>t-1</i> )	.71	(.01)	*	.64	(.02)	*	.56	(.02)	*
Parents prefer different parties	.01	(.02)		.04	(.01)	*	.025	(.01)	*
Parental political interest ( <i>t-1</i> )							.16	(.02)	*
Education							.04	(.009)	*
Male							.05	(.006)	*
Age							.05	(.02)	*
Native							-.008	(.010)	
Election year							.01	(.01)	
Constant	.09	(.004)	*	.13	(.01)	*	-.02	(.04)	
<i>N</i>	4235			4445			4399		
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.51			.41			.45		

**OLS regression**, fixed effects (for region & year) models

S.E.s clustered by household identifier, \*p<.05

German models draw only from the "F" sample of the GSOEP



## WebAppendix 4

### Parties included in analyses (In order of appearance in surveys)

<i>Britain</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Switzerland</i>
Conservatives	SPD Social Democrats	PRD Swiss Radical-Democratic Party
Labour	CDU Christian Democrats	PDC Swiss Christian-Democrat Party
Liberal Democrats	CSU Christian Socialists	PSS Swiss Socialist Party
SNP Scottish National	FDP Free Democrats	UDC Democratic Union of the Centre
PC Plaid Cymru	The Greens	PLS Swiss Liberal Party
The Greens	PDS/Left	AdI Independent Alliance
UUP Ulster Unionist	REP Republikaner	PEV Swiss Evangelical Party
SDLP Social Democratic and Labour		PCS Swiss Christian Social Party
DUP Democratic Unionist		PST Swiss Labour Party
SF Sinn Fein		AVF Socialist Green Alternative
		PES Swiss Ecology Party
		DS Swiss Democrats
		UDF Federal Democratic Union
		PSL Swiss Freedom Party
		Lega dei ticinesi
		GL Green liberals
		BDP Conservative Democratic Party

## WebAppendix 5

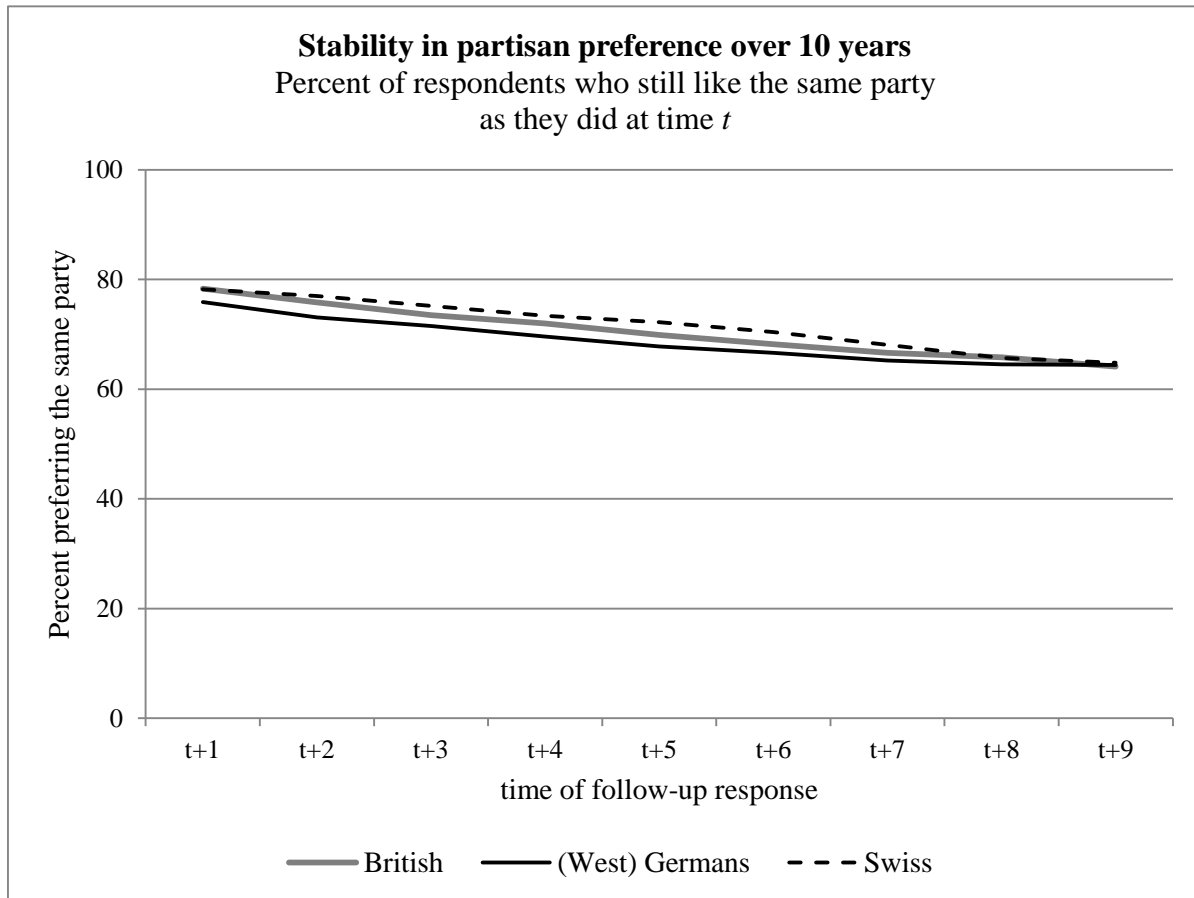
### Alternate Dependent Variables in Switzerland

#### Electoral Participation, Political Influence and Trust in Government in Switzerland *Effects of parental partisan disagreement*

<i>Predictor</i>	Electoral Participation			Political Influence		Trust Government			
	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		
Lagged DV ( $t$ )	.06	(.003)	*	.42	(.03)	*	.54	(.03)	*
Parents prefer different parties	.03	(.01)	*	.002	(.01)		-.003	(.009)	
Parental version of DV ( $t-1$ )	.24	(.04)	*	.11	(.03)	*	.17	(.03)	*
Education	.05	(.02)	*	-.003	(.02)		.03	(.01)	*
Male	.008	(.009)		-.001	(.01)		-.004	(.007)	
Age	-.07	(.05)		.04	(.04)		.001	(.03)	
Native	-.01	(.02)		-.006	(.01)		.007	(.01)	
Election year	-.02	(.02)		-.004	(.02)		-.006	(.02)	
Constant	.15	(.04)	*	.37	(.09)	*	.25	(.04)	*
<i>N</i>	1847			2148		2121			
$R^2$	.55			.25		.40			

**OLS regression models**, fixed effects (for region and year) models; S.E.s clustered by household identifier; \* $p < .05$ .

## WebAppendix 6



The samples are native born respondents, 18 years old or older, who chose a party at time  $t$ .

Including East Germans lowers the percent of respondents displaying stability by 1-2 points in each year.

## **WebAppendix 7: Alternate measures of disagreement**

Given that scholars dispute the best way to measure disagreement, we test its effects in multiple ways. The first alternative measure of parental discord is the ideological distance between parents' preferred parties. To determine the ideological placement of parties, we draw on existing studies by Laver and Hunt (L/H) (1992) and Benoit and Laver (B/L) (2006). These cross-national inquiries use expert surveys to establish parties' ideological stances. The L/H study estimates party placement in eight main policy areas as of 1988-1989, and B/L updates this study in 2003, providing a more concise overall left-right score for each party. For the German survey we use an average score across the eight policy dimensions of the L/H study to impute party positions for waves up through 2002. For years 2003 and later we use the B/L basic left-right placement of each party. The correlation between the two scales is .87, indicating that not much changes with the switch from L/H to B/L. And we think it worth the adjustment to boost the accuracy of the measure.<sup>2</sup>

Using these values, we created a variable for the ideological distance between parents' parties. This is the absolute difference between the left-right score of the mother's preferred party minus the score of the father's preferred party. The greatest distance to register on a 20-point scale is 7.6 in Germany, (it is 9.6 in Britain and 13.7 in Switzerland). However, we scale the item from 0 to 1. A 0 signals that there is no ideological distance between parents' preferred parties, that one parent supports a party while the other supports no party, or that both parents support no party.

---

<sup>2</sup> We also ran the model using Huber-Inglehart (H/I) (1995) party placement scores. The H/I estimates are no different substantively from the L/H and B/L studies, hence we use the two data points offered by combining the L/H and B/L studies.

Our other alternative measure of parental disagreement is the absolute difference between parents' self-reported left-right positions. This ideology question is asked only once and in only one survey (GSOEP 2005). The results of these alternate analyses are presented below.

Political *Distance between parents' parties* has a significant, positive effect on the next generation's political interest. This is similar to the effect of the base parental party disagreement measure used in the main text. This signals that a wider gap between parents' preferred parties boosts the effects of disagreement. Substantively, German respondents whose parents are polarized by party experience a 2% increase in political interest from year-to-year, above and beyond everything that predicted political interest the prior year.

As shown in the second model, left-right ideological distance divorced of party allegiance has no effect on political interest. When ideological distance is used, there are no significant results. This signals that the relevant dynamic for Swiss political interest is parents' support of different parties, rather than the political-ideological distance between them.

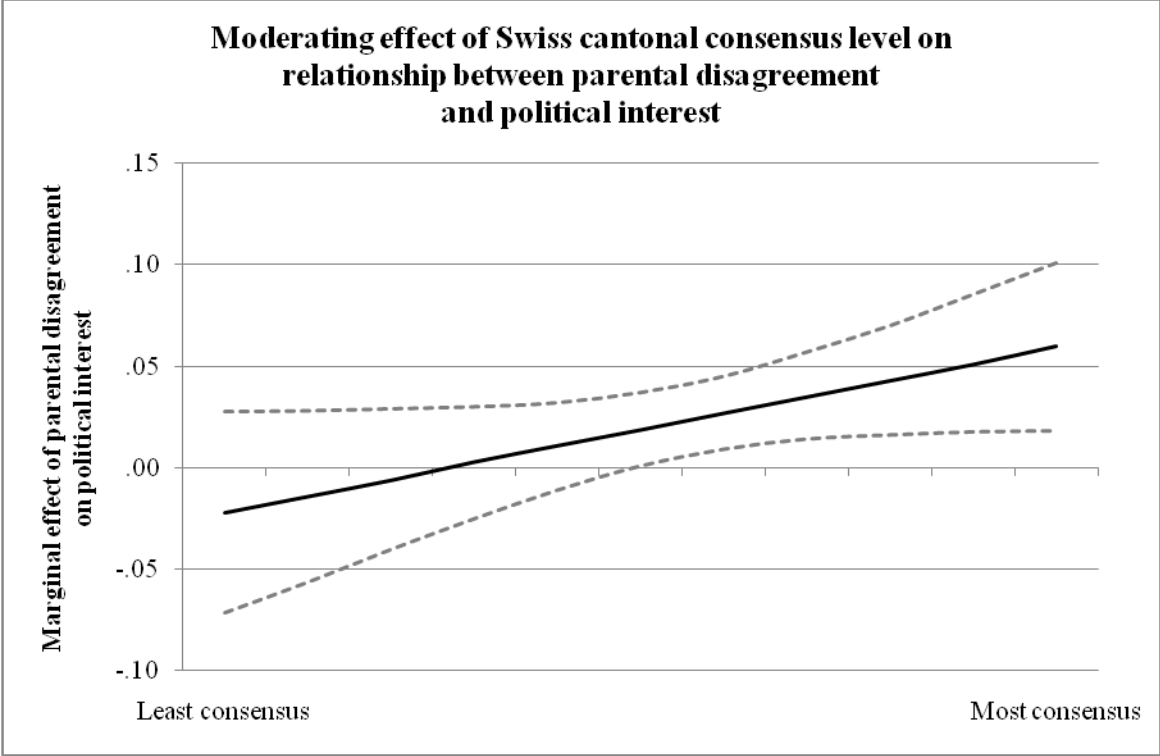
**Political interest in Germany**  
*Effects of parental party and ideological distance*

<i>Predictor</i>	Party distance			Ideology distance		
	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>		<i>Coef.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	
Lagged DV ( <i>t</i> -1)	.58	(.01)	*	.62	(.02)	*
Distance between parents' positions	.02	(.01)	*	.03	(.02)	
Parents' political interest ( <i>t</i> -1)	.11	(.006)	*	.11	(.020)	*
Education	.05	(.003)	*	.04	(.010)	*
Male	.04	(.00)	*	.05	(.01)	*
Age	.03	(.01)	*	.01	(.02)	
Native	.00	(.004)		-.01	(.010)	
Election year	-.02	(.01)				
Constant	.08	(.01)	*	.05	(.04)	
<i>N</i>	44223			2551		
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.44			.47		

**OLS regression**, fixed effects (for year and region) models.

S.E.s clustered by household; \**p*<.05, \*\**p*<.01. Ideology distance measured only in 2005.

WebAppendix 8



Lincom in Stata 11 produces these point estimates along with their 95% confidence intervals.