Interests, Identities, or Cues?: The Salience of International Trade

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This paper aims to help us understand when voters become mobilized on trade. While several studies have examined what shapes preferences on trade, it remains unclear what prompts trade to become a priority for voters. Building from the political economy literature which argues that trade preferences come from a combination of self-interest and identity-based factors, I explore the role that elite cues play in making trade a salient issue to voters. I argue that because trade is a complex, multidimensional issue, voters will prioritize it when they receive cues about it from elites. Further, because mainstream parties tend to avoid clear position-taking on trade, I expect that individuals who strongly identify with these parties will be less likely than others to see trade as a salient issue. I test my predictions on a sample of 26 European countries using survey data from the 2004, 2009, and 2014 European Election Study and the Comparative Manifesto Project. Overall, I find support for my argument in 2009 which suggests that the economic crisis may have had a strong effect on the politicization of trade.

Introduction

The Global Day of Action Against Trade occurred in April 2015 which was organized in protest of the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). TTIP was an attempt at the first ever trade agreement between the European Union and United States. Germany was the epicenter of protests with almost 300 anti-trade events on this single day (Young 2017). By late 2015, the Stop TTIP Coalition had secured more than three million signatures on an European Citizens' Initiative to constrain aspects of the EU's negotiating position on the deal (Caiani and Graziano 2018). These efforts constituted an effective transnational public backlash against trade which, in conjunction with Brexit and the election of Donald Trump, ensured that TTIP would be unlikely to ever pass (Young 2017). In this paper, I aim to understand how individuals become actively opposed to trade and how this fits into a broader political context. In short, how does trade become a salient issue to voters?

The dominant approach to examining public engagement on trade has been to use economic theory to derive preferences of individuals and groups. Generally, one's position in the labor market determines whether they are a "winner" or a "loser" of globalization and this is theorized to correspond with individual support or opposition to free trade (e.g. O'Rouke and Sinnott 2001; Scheve and Slaughter 2001). Subsequent work has demonstrated how in-group versus out-group identities can shape trade preferences such that those with strong antagonistic feelings toward an out-group are less supportive of economic integration (e.g. Mansfield and Mutz 2009; Mayda and Rodrik 2005; Mutz and Kim 2017). A critique of this literature so far is that it fails to adequately account for broader political dynamics that might shape individual preferences and behavior (Owen and Walter 2017).

I draw on and extend these insights to explore the propensity of voters to prioritize trade as a political issue, rather than just examining preference formation. As the protests against TTIP demonstrate, trade can mobilize voters, but it remains unclear who these individuals are, why trade is a priority to them, and why some trade deals spark more backlash than others (Young 2017). As such, I explore how elites may contribute in the opinion formation process of citizens on international trade. As Hooghe and Marks (2005) demonstrate on the issue of European integration, public opinion is a function of economic self-interest, identity, and elite cues. Given the near constitutive relationship between free trade and economic integration, it stands to reason that cues are also an essential explanatory factor for trade attitudes.

Thus, I explore whether party attachment (weak or strong partisan) and party identification type (mainstream or nonmainstream) are factors that condition individuals' prioritization of trade. Drawing from studies on party behavior and saliency theory, I argue that trade becomes salient to voters as a result of electoral strategies of nonmainstream parties. I predict that cues can increase voter salience in two distinct ways. First, voters may follow only cues from their party on this issue. Since mainstream parties have generally tended to support economic integration and therefore keep it off their agendas, voters who identify strongly with these parties will have no cues to follow, and will therefore be less likely than other voters to see trade as salient. Second, I expect that when messages around trade and national identity are a stronger focus of domestic political competition, voters will follow these cues and highlight trade as well. Particularly, because nationalism can serve as a simple heuristic to encourage voters to prioritize the protection of domestic jobs and domestic culture, I predict that nationalist-oriented discourse by parties can result in higher trade salience.

I test this argument using survey data from the 2004, 2009, and 2014 European Election Study and the Comparative Manifesto Project. Overall, I find that while there is no consistently strong predictor across all waves of this survey, individual-level economic self-interest fails to ever lead to trade salience. However, at least in 2009, there is suggestive evidence that party attachment and party salience on trade cued voters on the issue. This finding has important implications for our understanding how parties respond to economic crises.

Literature Review
Economic Self-Interest

The predominant method of understanding public engagement with trade has been to examine individual preference formation. The Stolper-Samuelson (1941) economic theory has been used extensively to explain self-interested trade preferences across the political economy literature. It argues that the abundant factors of production in an economy benefit from open markets while scarce factors are harmed, creating "winners" and "losers." In an advanced economy, this means that capital owners and high-skilled laborers benefit from open markets since they are able to competitively compete across borders whereas low-skilled laborers are harmed due to increased labor competition and decreased wages.

Several studies have demonstrated that individual support for free trade corresponds to these divisions. Earliest studies using public opinion data to test this framework found support

for interest-based predictions in both developed (O'Rourke and Sinnott 2001) and developing countries (Mayda and Rodrik 2005). Other economic models have also been used to derive trade preferences from alternate or more fine-grained industry analyses, but all tend to reveal an economic interest-based cleavage on trade (Autor, Dorn, and Hanson 2013; Colantone and Stanig 2018). Perceptions of the benefits of trade have also found to predict trade support. For example, Mansfield and Mutz (2009) show that voters who think that trade has a positive impact on the national or their own economic conditions are more supportive of trade.

However, there is also strong evidence that individuals are highly ignorant of trade policy. Hiscox (2006) demonstrates how sensitive support for trade is to question wording and framing in surveys. Rho and Tomz (2017) demonstrate that providing information about the distributional consequences changes individuals' trade support. In a survey about the perceived benefits of trade agreements, Guisinger shows how almost 50% of Americans think that trade has no effect on prices or have no opinion on this (2017). Thus, these studies support the idea that citizens' attitudes toward trade, as measured by survey questions about level of trade support, may reveal misleading information about how true these preferences are and to what extent these preferences fit into broader political priorities and behaviors of voters.

Identity

Although trade has historically been understood as a purely economic issue (Milner and Tingley 2015), recent work has explored trade as a social issue. Among these factors were nationalism and chauvinism (Mayda and Rodrik 2005; O'Rouke and Sinnott 2001) and ethnocentrism (Mansfield and Mutz 2009). Margalit (2012) demonstrates that there is a causal link between social factors and trade preferences which correspond to a unique and systematic dimension. He argues that people perceive trade as part of a package of openness which can lead to growing exposure to foreign influences, flows of foreign goods and labor, and shifting moral codes. Similarly, Hellwig (2014) argues that globalizations create a cross-cutting issue dimension that complicates traditional cleavages structures.

Separately, there is a vast political culture literature which argues that globalization is associated with changes in cultural and social values (Hermann, Tetlock, and Diascro 2001; Mendelsohn and Wolfe 2001; Rankin 2004). Inglehart and Welzel (2010), for example, show how globalization can lead to rapid value change as diverse ideas, goods, and people are allowed to flow freely across borders. While those with progressive values tend to embrace these

cosmopolitan influences, those who hold more conservative social values tend to be wary of how these influences can erode traditional ways of life (Inglehart and Norris 2016). This social dimension is argued to have an even stronger effect on trade preferences than economic interest (Mansfield and Mutz 2009).

Elite Cues

There are a few reasons to doubt that economic self-interest or identity-appeals would be a strong predictor of trade mobilization. The political economy literature tends to implicitly assume that individuals' preferences on trade are understood and considered by policy makers in a way that constrains the trade policy making process. In fact, early work on this has revealed that voters do not hold their representatives accountable for their votes on trade related issues (Guisinger 2009), that individuals have highly heterogeneous preferences and preference intensity on trade, and that the public tends to be much more protectionist than elite behavior indicates (Guisinger 2017). This may be because, although individuals may have preferences on trade that correspond to these models, these preferences are not necessarily always priority to voters. So then when does it become a priority?

In their seminal study, Campbell et al. (1960) demonstrate how party identification serves as a "perceptual screen" which shapes how individuals interpret politics, such that those with strong attachments to a party are strongly inclined to follow party cues on policy matters. Building from this, Converse (1964) demonstrates how only the most politically informed and partisan individuals have a solid belief system that informs their political preferences, and Zaller (1992) emphasizes that political elites play a strong role in shaping the opinions of these unattached and uninformed individuals. Elite cues have already been shown to explain public support for European integration – a related multidimensional issue – so it stands to reason that elite cues on trade are also important factors to consider (Hooghe and Marks 2005).

Partisanship and political knowledge have been considered to varying extents in studies on trade preference formation with mixed results. Education has, for the most part, been a consistent predictor for trade preferences across this literature such that those with higher levels of education are more supportive of trade (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2006; Rho and Tomz 2017).[1]

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[1] However, whether education is merely a proxy for skill-level or drives preferences through a political knowledge mechanism remains underexplored.

Partisanship on the other hand, has often been overlooked completely (Scheve and Slaughter 2001) or has shown no to have no effect on trade opinions (Mansfield and Mutz 2009).

The role that the broader political context plays in shaping these preferences on trade has received little attention. Given the influential role that parties play in shaping the national agenda through electoral strategies, understanding party position taking on trade remains a crucial area of research to account for the context in which people form their opinions on trade policy. Initial research has begun to examine how economic consequences of trade policy affect support for different party types (Colantone and Stanig 2018; Rommel and Walter 2018) but little consensus exists on this relationship.

Theory and Hypotheses

First, to test the effect of self-interest in shaping the propensity of individuals to highlight trade as a political priority, I introduce two related hypotheses that look at economic disadvantage. I examine whether trade will be a salient topic amongst low-skilled laborers as these people are considered to be the "losers" of liberalization policies. Although, as discussed above, I am skeptical that economic interest alone could prompt citizens to name trade as salient, there are reasons why self-interest might still be influential. Because this population is most negatively and directly affected by liberalization, they may be more sensitive to the issue. Although individuals who support free trade may also be significantly affected, if the current policy is in their favor and the benefits are indirect, they may be less likely to see this as a concern that should be addressed. Thus, I predict the following:

> **H$_{1a}$** *The "Who" Hypothesis:* Trade will be a salient political issue amongst low-skilled workers.

> **H$_{1b}$** *The "Economic Anxiety" Hypothesis*: Trade will be a salient issue amongst individuals with economic concerns.

Moving from interest theories, I argue that because trade provides diffuse net-gains for large segments of the population, politicians in mainstream parties – who frequently find themselves with governing opportunities – have little incentive to politicize trade. This is in part due to the multidimensional nature of trade; because the economic and social consequences of trade tend to pull in opposite ideological directions, it cannot be easily mapped on to the traditional left-right spectrum to provide a clear heuristic for voters. For example, voters who

tend to embrace more of a conservative heuristic in their decision making processes would want to protect their traditional way of life – the standard platform of mainstream right-wing parties – but would also want to protect domestic workers and industry from foreign influences – which is inconsistent with the standard right-wing party lassiez faire economic stance. This discourages mainstream parties from taking a strong position on the issue, prompts an "everything to everyone" broad appeal strategy (Somer-Topcu 2015) and encourages mainstream party partisans in the electorate to focus on other issues more clearly aligned with the party platform.

Based on this, I argue that nonmainstream parties will use this opportunity to act as issue entrepreneurs on trade (Hobolt and De Vries 2015). Particularly, by explicitly linking nationalism (a clear heuristic) to trade (a complex policy issue), parties with nationalist agendas can increase the salience and divisiveness over trade policy. By appealing to those disadvantaged by globalization and emphasizing their distinct, extreme position on the issue (Wagner 2012), nationalist parties put trade on the agenda, and thus, encourage voters to think about it as well. Because trade cannot be neatly placed on the traditional ideological spectrum, I argue that it will only ever be a salient issue for voters with weak (or no) partisan attachments. This is because voters with strong partisan attachments are likely to follow party cues by focusing on issues that the party owns or draws more attention to (Budge 2015; Budge and Farlie 1983). It is only for individuals who are not driven by mainstream party cues who will make trade salient.

> **H₂** *The "Party ID" Hypothesis*: Trade will be a salient issue amongst individuals with weak or no partisan attachment to mainstream political parties.

Finally, I outline two hypotheses that focus on how political competition between parties can shape priorities of even non-partisans. In attempt to gain office, mainstream parties typically have to respond to the priorities of voters by focusing more attention on important issues (Klüver and Spoon 2014). Thus, even if nonmainstream parties activate trade, it is unlikely that mainstream parties would be able to keep it off the agenda. More focus on trade could lead parties to stake out different aspects of trade policy to compete on (Budge 2015) or could even reveal intense ideological debates within parties (Box-Steffensmeier, Arnold, and Zorn 1997). Either of these options may result in greater party polarization on trade which can cause further concern about the issue in the electorate (Spoon and Klüver 2015). Specifically on European integration, Hooghe and Marks (2005) demonstrate that elite divisions lead to a more divided

electorate. Given that free trade is a foundational element of the EU, it is rational that political division can have the same polarizing effect on the electorate. Therefore, if parties are talking more about trade than it is more likely that voters will be thinking about it.

> **H₃** *The "Party Cues" Hypothesis*: As trade becomes more salient to political parties, it will become more salient to individuals.

In addition to considering party salience of trade, parties may also create cognitive short cuts to help voters prioritize issues. As discussed above, the use of a nationalist heuristic creates a simple guide for conservative voters. For those who want to prioritize both the domestic economy and domestic culture, nationalism hints at a clear policy bundle. Thus, highlighting nationalist social issues may also lead voters to prioritize nationalist economic issues.

> **H₄** *The "Nationalism" Hypothesis*: As nationalist sentiment in a country increases, trade will become more salient to individuals.

Data and Methodology

I test my predictions in 26 European Union countries[2] using data from the 2004, 2009 (van Egmond et al. 2010) and 2014 European Election Survey (Popa et al. 2015). The EES surveys approximately 1,000 citizens in each EU country in the summer after European Parliament elections. This data was chosen due to the cross-national standardization of question coding and timing. I test these hypotheses using logit regression models with robust standard errors clustered at the country level.[3]

The dependent variables for this study come from the open-ended question which asks respondents about the "most important issue (MII) facing (YOUR COUNTRY) at the moment."[4] This question is frequently used in comparative studies to measure the priorities of voters (Spoon and Klüver 2014). Respondents' verbatim responses to this question were then classified into

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[2] Croatia and Malta are the two EU countries omitted from the sample. Croatia is omitted due to missing data and Malta is omitted because of its' two-party system. Lithuania and the UK drop out of the sample in 2004 due to missing/inconsistent data.

[3] I estimated these models both with standard logit and with rare events logit to test the robustness of the results given the relatively infrequent mention of trade as an MII. The results were consistent across the different estimation strategies. The standard logit models are presented in this paper.

[4] This question takes slightly different forms across the three waves. In 2004, respondents can list any number of MIIs; in 2009 and 2014 respondents were limited to three and two MIIs, respectively. In order to maximize relevant information contained in the data across the waves, I do not limit this variable to only the top two MIIs.

distinct categories. Of these categories, two are directly relevant for this study: protectionism and international trade. I used the sum of respondents naming either protection or trade as the MII as the dependent variable *Trade Salience.* For this study, MII salience is an appropriate way to capture if and when voters are thinking about trade at all. Individuals who single trade out as important – either at the individual, regional, or national level – are those most probable to be mobilized as part of a trade-oriented constituency, if one exists. This variable is coded as 1 when respondents named trade or protectionism as an MII, and 0 otherwise.[5]

I used verbatim responses provided in the 2014 EES to explore what answers were coded as being related to trade or protectionism. A sample list of verbatim *Trade Salience* responses can be found in Appendix A below. Responses focused on protectionism reflected concerns about threats to domestic industries. For example, responses include statements such as "Unfair competition from EU member countries," and "Taxing foreign products further to encourage French buying." Responses coded as international trade were more varied. Many respondents specifically referred to TTIP or other free trade agreements as an important issue. However, there were also occasional statements referencing related topics such as globalization, unemployment, or labor migration. The varied responses coded as being related to trade reflect the complexity and multidimensionality of the issue and should be further evaluated in future research to comprehensively capture an underlying trade attitude. Given the content of the verbatim responses for *Trade Salience* categories, I also created a broader index of *Globalization Salience* which includes references to globalization in addition to trade and protection as an MII.[6] This will allow me to draw more consistent inferences between the different waves of the survey.

Unsurprisingly, the number of individuals saying that globalization was the MII was extremely rare reflecting the unlikelihood that this forms a salient political cleavage. However, across the waves there were still 452 individuals who named trade or globalization as one of the most important issues facing the country. It was the most salient in 2009 with 197 respondents and least salient in 2014 with 112 respondents.[7] These responses were highly clustered. In 2004

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[5] The 2004 MIP codebook is inconsistent compared to 2009 and 2014. In 2004, there is only one "trade" category rather than both trade and protection. Further, Austria, France, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, France, and Cyprus had different codebooks. Trade related responses (e.g. offshoring, Chinese imports, globalization) were recoded when possible, but there was no comparable response for the UK and as such, it was omitted from the 2004 sample.
[6] In 2004, globalization and trade are considered part of the same category for most countries.
[7] Because the number of MIIs in each wave was slightly different, this may not reflect a meaningful decrease in salience from 2009 to 2014.

and 2009, more than half of the respondents who prioritized trade came from Finland or France. In 2014, the majority were clustered in Austria, Finland, and Germany. Based on this clustering, it is perhaps then unsurprising that anti-TTIP protests, which peaked in frequency in 2015, were heavily concentrated in Germany and Austria (Caiani and Graziano 2018).

The independent variables for **H₁ₐ**, **H₁ᵦ**, and **H₂**, come from other self-reported answers in the EES survey. *Low Skill* is a dummy variable that is coded 1 for respondents who work in a low-skilled industry, and 0 otherwise. *Unemployed* is a dummy variable that is coded 1 for respondents who were unemployed at the time of the survey. *Education* captures how long the respondent attended formal schooling. Per **H₁ₐ** and **H₁ᵦ**, I predict that low-skilled or unemployed workers with low levels of education are more likely to name trade as a MII since these are people most likely to be dissatisfied with globalization. I also include a measure *Sociotropic Evaluation* which is coded for 1 for respondents who reported that the economy was either "a little worse" or "a lot worse" than the year before, and 0 otherwise. This serves as an additional measure of economic anxiety and as such, I expect to be a positive predictor of trade salience (Mansfield and Mutz 2009).

To test the impact of partisan affiliation and strength on trade salience, I first examined the national party that the respondent identified with. I then used the party family classification from the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) (Volkens et al. 2018). Respondents were coded as affiliating with a mainstream political party if the party was coded by the CMP as Social Democrat, Liberal, Conservative, or Christian Democrat. All other parties were coded as nonmainstream. Then, I used the respondent's reported partisan strength from the EES to identify those who strongly identified with a mainstream party. *Mainstream PID* takes on a value of 1 for all respondents who identified strongly with a mainstream party and 0 otherwise. Per **H₂**, I predict that trade is more likely to be salient for individuals without mainstream party affiliation since these parties are more likely to have an obfuscated stance on trade. I also include the standard battery of demographic controls for age, gender, trade union membership, and right-leaning ideology based on the self-placement on the ideological scale. Consistent with my theory, I expect union membership to be positively associated with trade salience as trade unions could provide additional cues to members about how trade deals affect citizens but I have no prior expectations for the other controls given inconsistent or null findings in previous literature.

At the country-level, I incorporate two variables from national party manifestos (Volkens et al. 2018) in order to test **H₃** and **H₄**. Although timing of parties' Euromanifestos would be more proximate to these surveys than national party manifestos, I chose to focus on national manifestos in an attempt to capture national political debates which are still the primary areas for political mobilization and contestation on globalization (Kriesi et al. 2006; Young 2017). First, I include *Party Trade Salience* which is calculated using the positive (per407) and negative (per406) mentions of trade in a party's manifesto as a percentage of the entire manifesto. Second, I include *Party Nationalism Salience* which is the sum of a party's appeals to a national way of life (per601), traditional morality (per603), and critiques of multiculturism (per608). For both these country-level variables, I take the average value across the party system in the national election prior to the respective EP elections.[8] Per my theory, I expect that higher levels of country-level salience of trade and nationalism will lead to more individual level trade salience.

Additionally, I control for country-level measures of economic conditions in the year prior to the EP elections (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2018). I include measures of *Economic Growth, Unemployment, Import Exposure* (imports % of GDP), and *Safety Net* (public spending on social welfare programs as % of GDP). I expect that trade will be more salient when economic growth is low and unemployment is high due to negative economic conditions that could prompt criticism of national economic systems. I expect that individuals in countries with higher levels of imports will be more likely to report trade as an important issue because imports can threaten domestic industry.[9] Consistent with the embedded liberalism thesis (Ruggie 1982), I expect that trade is less likely to be salient where there are higher levels of social safety nets to protect citizens from globalization shocks and economic insecurity.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 below presents full models with pooled responses across each of the three waves. Model 1 looks only at the limited dependent variable of *Trade Salience* whereas all subsequent models (2-6) use *Globalization Salience* as the dependent variable since the results did not vary drastically. I first consider **H₁** which predicts that the "losers of globalization" will

[9] I also look at exposure to trade overall (imports+exports as % of GDP) and found no difference in results.

be those most likely to prioritize trade. Across the three models, there is no evidence of this effect for either the skill or unemployment variables. In fact, the indicator for education works in the opposite direction than predicted and the effect is statistically significant. Those with higher levels of education are more likely to name trade as a salient issue than those with lower levels of education. One possible explanation for this finding is that those with lower levels of education may be more likely to name a more proximate concern such as "job creation" or "unemployment" as an MII than a more systemic, complex answer like trade or globalization. Particularly given the high statistical significance of this finding, this potential explanation requires further examination. One finding that is particularly robust across all models is that individuals with negative sociotropic evaluations are more likely to name trade as a salient issue than those with a neutral or positive economic outlook. Comparing this to the null (and negative) finding about unemployment, this seems to support the idea that voters weigh the national economic conditions rather than their own economic prospects.

Next, **H₂** explores the effects of partisanship and partisan attachment on trade salience. While none of these variables reach statistical significance, the relationship of party affiliation seems to work in the predicted direction. Individuals who reported having a strong attachment to a mainstream party, or any party at all, were less likely to report trade as salient compared to other voters. Interestingly, individuals that have weak attachments to mainstream parties are more likely to name trade as salient. This supports the overall idea that those who are strongly following cues of mainstream parties are likely to prioritize other issues that parties are focusing on. Finally, those who are right-leaning seem to display a higher likelihood of naming trade as an MII which is consistent with the fact that those with right-leaning ideology have traditionally tended to prioritize free market capitalism, but this effect is not statistically significant.

The individual-level control variables reveal highly interesting information. Age and trade union membership does not seem to be a significant predictor of trade salience. While it is not particularly surprising that older voters are more likely to focus on trade, it is interesting that membership in a trade union has no statistical effect. Since these individuals are more likely to be directly affected by trade policy and recognize the importance of its effect on the national economy as well as their personal circumstances, this suggests that unions are not activating voters on the issue in a consistent way. In fact, the direction works in the opposite direction from what would be expected if unions were providing cues to members about the importance of

trade; trade union members are seemingly less likely to see trade as salient. One possible explanation of this non-effect is that this could conceal important differences in import- versus export-competing trade unions. However, because this study is looking at trade as a priority instead of the nature of trade preferences or trade as a problem, this remains a puzzling finding.

The effect of gender is perhaps the strongest and most consistent predictor of individual-level trade salience in this study. Women are less likely to prioritize trade as an important issue facing the country than men and this finding is highly statistically significant in most models. It is conventional wisdom that women are more likely to focus on social or "compassion" issues rather than economic issues. However, when compared with the robust finding across trade literature that women are far more likely to be opposed to free trade than men, this reveals an important puzzle about economic representation (Guisinger 2017; Mansfield, Mutz, and Silver 2015; Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey). Women's opposition to trade is typically attributed to differences in risk aversion (Tversky and Kahneman 1974) – women are more protectionist because they are skeptical of the uncertainty that comes with free market capitalism (Mansfield, Mutz, and Silver 2015) – yet my findings show that trade policy is not a first-order political priority for women. This finding prompts us to consider how trade is distinct from other economic or integration-related issues from a gendered-perspective and particularly, how the multidimensional nature of trade may have distinct implications for women's preferences compared to men's. This reveals an important area for future research.

Table 1: Pooled Analysis

	Model 1 DV: MIP Trade	Model 2 DV: MIP Globalization	Model 3 DV: MIP Globalization
Low-Skill	0.180 (0.200)	-0.012 (0.235)	0.034 (0.249)
Unemployed	-0.483 (0.465)	-0.110 (0.317)	-0.118 (0.318)
Sociotropic Evaluation (neg)	0.508*** (0.160)	0.591*** (0.192)	0.401*** (0.129)
Education	0.342** (0.138)	0.367*** (0.125)	0.364*** (0.128)
Right-Leaning	0.179 (0.284)	0.152 (0.286)	0.145 (0.286)
Strong MSP ID	-0.061 (0.322)	-0.192 (0.311)	-0.196 (0.303)
MSP ID	0.028	0.053	0.093

	(0.187)	(0.133)	(0.134)
Strong Partisan	-0.013	-0.042	-0.040
	(0.141)	(0.167)	(0.169)
Female	-0.451***	-0.348**	-0.357**
	(0.130)	(0.161)	(0.160)
Age	0.179*	0.087	0.093
	(0.098)	(0.097)	(0.096)
Union	-0.033	-0.059	-0.069
	(0.091)	(0.071)	(0.071)
Party Trade Salience	0.643	0.565	0.557
	(0.555)	(0.519)	(0.502)
Party Nationalism Salience	-0.091	-0.004	0.002
	(0.105)	(0.067)	(0.066)
Unemployment Rate	-0.173*	-0.201**	-0.171**
	(0.095)	(0.093)	(0.086)
Economic Growth	-0.160	-0.162	-0.133
	(0.151)	(0.127)	(0.124)
Safety Net	0.104**	0.107**	0.132**
	(0.053)	(0.049)	(0.055)
Import Exposure	-0.021**	-0.018**	-0.016**
	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Eastern Europe	-0.188	-0.323	-0.254
	(0.524)	(0.452)	(0.450)
Constant	-7.151***	-6.692***	-7.766***
	(1.101)	(1.226)	(1.631)
Pseudo R^2	.08	.08	.08
Observations	28,955	28,955	28,955

*$p<0.1$; ** $p<0.05$; *** $p<0.01$

Moving on to the party cue variables in **H3** and **H4**, cues from parties about trade and nationalism reveal no support for my predictions. Across the three models, there is no statistical evidence that individuals prioritize trade more when parties in their countries also prioritize it or that nationalism works as a heuristic to activate voters on trade, however the relationship for *Party Trade Salience* does work in the predicted direction. This result may be due to an unreliable measure of party-trade salience since this variable only captures the mean salience of trade at the party level, rather than clear anti-trade positions taken by parties or cues from different types of parties, particularly anti-trade messages by nonmainstream parties. Future iterations of this paper will explore the nature of party cues on trade in a more nuanced way that will allow a more direct test of the theory presented in this paper.

Finally, country-level contextual controls are mostly consistent across the three models in Table 1 but all operate in counterintuitive ways. Countries with lower levels of unemployment and higher levels of social safety net spending are more likely to see trade as salient. Further,

countries with less exposure to trade are less likely to see trade as salient. The effect of all of these variables is statistically significant and seem to suggest that trade is not a MII where economic conditions are the worst or where trade has the biggest impact on economies. Perhaps this also reflects the idea that individuals are more likely to be focused on more proximate economic issues when national economic conditions are weak, as was suggested by the individual-level unemployment variable. The finding that countries with high social safety net spending are more likely to see trade as salient casts doubt on the idea of the embedded liberalism thesis (Ruggie 1982) which holds that countries can prevent backlash against globalization by compensating those who have been disadvantaged by open markets. Lastly, there seems to be no statistical difference on trade salience between east and west Europe.

Given the importance of the 2008 crisis and the changing geopolitical context between the 2004 and 2014 elections, in Table 2 below I explored the robustness of the findings presented above in each ESS wave independently. The overall results reveal heterogeneous effects across the three waves of the data where the model does a much better job at explaining individual-level trade salience in 2004 and declines greatly in explanatory power through 2014. Aside from the significance of the country-level economic variables, the 2004 model does not vary greatly from the pooled models. However, important differences can be seen in 2009.

Table 2: Year-by-Year Analysis

	Model 4 2004	**Model 5** 2009	**Model 6** 2014
Low-Skill	0.151 (0.210)	-0.077 (0.264)	-1.109 (0.979)
Unemployed	0.163 (0.754)	-0.306 (0.538)	-0.146 (0.631)
Education	0.313*** (0.106)	0.262 (0.170)	0.325** (0.139)
Sociotropic Evaluation (neg)	0.290 (0.240)	0.087 (0.183)	0.765*** (0.248)
Right-Leaning	-0.184 (0.751)	0.113 (0.460)	0.070 (0.319)
Strong MSP ID	0.717 (0.458)	-0.710** (0.360)	0.609 (0.742)
Strong Partisan	0.358 (0.254)	-0.241 (0.261)	0.208 (0.421)
Female	-0.742*** (0.253)	-0.442 (0.310)	-0.047 (0.180)

Age	0.391***	0.048	-0.026
	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.130)
Union	-0.170	-0.117**	-0.035
	(0.148)	(0.053)	(0.072)
Party Trade Salience	-3.648	2.621***	-0.337
	(3.297)	(0.561)	(0.783)
Party Nationalism Salience	0.363	0.411***	-0.047
	(0.500)	(0.116)	(0.141)
Unemployment Rate	0.252	0.062	-0.229*
	(0.358)	(0.096)	(0.131)
Economic Growth	1.061	-0.142	-0.034
	(1.105)	(0.110)	(0.247)
Safety Net	0.794	0.044	0.052
	(0.674)	(0.052)	(0.058)
Import Exposure	-0.363	-0.002	-0.020*
	(0.251)	(0.006)	(0.011)
Eastern Europe	4.049	-1.349**	0.018
	(3.282)	(0.665)	(0.791)
Constant	-19.532	-7.693***	-5.065**
	(13.924)	(1.674)	(2.476)
Pseudo R^2	.22	.13	.08
Observations	5,789	11,388	11,778

*$p<0.1$; ** $p<0.05$; *** $p<0.01$*

Most notably, Model 5 reveals that 2009 does have a distinct trend that seems to be more indicative of a story about political parties and party cues than the other two waves. In 2009, individuals with strong attachments to a mainstream party were significantly less likely to report trade as salient, while trade was more salient in countries where parties talked about trade and nationalism more often in their manifestos. All of these effects are significant at the p<.05 level or higher. Additionally, the effects of education, age, sociotropic evaluations, and gender disappear compared to the pooled models. One possible interpretation of these findings is consistent with my theoretical predictions about how parties cue voters on trade. It suggests that as the economic crisis hit, parties responded by talking about economic issues which were concerns of voters (Klüver and Spoon 2014). Politicizing trade could have been one way that parties, particularly nonmainstream ones, attempted to differentiate themselves from parties responsible for upholding the passive free trade consensus. As shown, those who strongly identified with mainstream parties were less likely in this context to name trade as an important issue than those with weak or no attachment to mainstream parties. Further, we see that in 2009

trade was less likely to be salient in eastern than western Europe. Presumably, because of the precipitous decline in economic conditions in the larger, western economies, parties here faced greater pressure to respond. This finding is consistent with research that demonstrates how the economic crisis disadvantaged governing parties and led to increasing support for radical right- and left-parties in Western Europe (Hernández and Kriesi 2016). Because the partisan and regional effects disappear in 2014, this provides suggestive evidence that trade becomes an active part of the political debates in times of economic crisis.

One important caveat of this study is that from the data it is impossible to know the position of respondents who name globalization or trade as an MII. In other words, is trade an *issue* or a *problem*?[10] In some of the verbatim responses, negative attitude is certainly clear (e.g. "unfair competition"), but for the majority of responses, it is unclear whether the respondent thinks trade is a good or a bad thing (e.g. "TTIP"). Thus, understanding more about the trade preferences of those who see trade as a political priority is an important area for future research as we aim to understand more about the nature of the backlash against globalization. While economic theory leads us to believe that those disadvantaged by globalization would be the most opposed to it and prospect theory (Tversky and Kahneman 1974) would lead us to believe that those facing economic loss would be most apprehensive about trade, the results presented here do not seem to support these ideas.

Based on the results presented here, I have several plans to extend this research. First, I plan to extend the individual-level trade salience data by looking at trade salience in the EES in 1999 as well as comparing these results to the MII data in the CSES as well. Extending available data on trade salience will allow for more reliable and robust estimations of when trade becomes salient to individuals. Further, sorting through the verbatim responses of MIIs across the waves of the survey data will allow for a more valid measure of trade salience. As seen in the Appendix, the 2014 coding of "protection" and "free trade" by EES researchers was mostly accurate, but other economic issues could also be appealing to concerns about trade. For instance, references to the single market were sometimes talked about in a way that expressed concerns about wage decreases and could therefore be reasonably coded as an MII related to trade, but were otherwise reflected concerns about immigrants. Although trade and immigration, particularly labor migration, are related is an important extension of the argument presented here.

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[10] See Wlezien 2005 for a discussion on the difference between the most important *issues* and *problems* questions.

Thus, sorting through and recoding these potentially-related MIIs could allow for a more wholistic understanding of who is prioritizing trade and how voters are understanding the issue.

A second extension of the study presented here will utilize the EES media study which traced local media coverage of the EP elections in the three weeks leading up to the election. While this data will only provide a small sample of how trade was linked to EP elections in the media, understanding how often trade was discussed, how it was linked to other issues, and how this varied across countries will provide further leverage in understanding how voters use cues and the broader information environment to understand and prioritize trade. In order to understand how voters come to prioritize trade, it is important to understand how often the media talks about trade and how it is framed. The media not only has the potential to cover the issue on behalf of political parties, but it can also be an independent actor that provides additional information or cues that could put trade onto voters' agendas. Thus, the role that the media plays in covering or setting the agenda on trade is an important area for future research.

Conclusion

In sum, this paper aims to help us understand when voters become mobilized on trade. While several studies have examined what opinions people have on trade, no one yet has looked at when it becomes a priority for voters. Drawing on studies of economic theory and political behavior, I argue that it is only under very rare circumstances that voters highlight trade as an important issue. I expected that the only voters who prioritize trade are those who are directly negatively affected by trade policy and those who are not closely aligned with mainstream political parties. Because of the complexity of trade, I predicted that cues from parties about the importance of trade would be important in helping them to prioritize the issue; however given the incentive that mainstream parties have to keep trade off of the agenda, cues on trade would only be provided to individuals without a strong attachment to a mainstream party and would be tied to a nationalist agenda. I tested my predictions on a sample of 26 European countries using data from the European Election Study in 2004, 2009, and 2014.

Overall, this paper found some evidence for my argument. Across the three waves there was no support for the idea that those most disadvantaged by globalization – low-educated respondents or low-skilled workers – were more likely to see trade as salient. However, there is evidence that general anxiety about the state of the national economy led individuals to prioritize trade. While there is no general trend that links party cues on trade to voter-level salience across

the sample, this study does reveal a strong effect of the 2009 crises on the politicization of trade; in 2009 mainstream party supporters were less likely than other respondents to report trade as salient, and trade became more salient in countries where parties were prioritizing trade and nationalism in their manifestos. The party-effect disappeared in 2014, as did the effect of age and gender—other strong predictors of trade salience in 2004. Taken together, these findings suggest that trade did become politicized by nonmainstream parties in response to the economic crisis in a way that may have disrupted previous trade salience patterns. The long-term effect of this remains to be seen.

Understanding when and why the public becomes mobilized on trade will reveal insights about the nature of the "backlash against globalization" occurring throughout the western world. Particularly within the context of the Europe, continued public support for (or at least a lack of strong opposition) economic integration remains crucial for the prosperity of the EU. The "four freedoms" – the free movement of goods, services, capital, and persons – date back to the 1957 Treaty of Rome. If EU citizens begin to withdraw their support from these principles, the future of the European project will be severely undermined. Thus, this paper seeks to help us understand the nature of voter behavior on this crucial aspect of economic integration.

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Appendix: Verbatim Responses to EES "Most Important Issue" Question in 2014
Below is a sample of verbatim responses that were provided in the language the respondent
answered in. Translations are from Google Translate, and are therefore, only estimations.

2014 MIP Verbatim Responses

Protection	
Gesch�fte gehen zu grunde	Businesses perish
Produire fran�ais	French production
Minden k�lf�ldi k�zben van, semmi nem Magyar	Everything is in the world, nothing is Hungarian
Nacionalo partikas produktu aizliegums tirgot	Prohibition of marketing of national food products
La concrance d�loyal des pays membre de l eu	Unfair competition from EU member countries
Przejmowanie przemyslu przez zachodnie panstwa	Taking over the industry by Western countries
Trade	
TTIP	TTIP
TTIP	TTIP
Dass unsere Gebiete nicht ins Ausland verkauft warden	That our territories are not sold abroad
Dass unser Wasser nicht verkauft wird'dass es nicht zu dem Freihandels Abkommen kommt	That our water is not sold'that it does not come to the free trade agreement
Lebensmittel'Abkommen mit der USA	Food deals with the US will be banned, so there will be no free trade agreement
Lebensmittel Freihandel sabkommen	Foods deal with the USA
Ttis	TTIP
Handelsabkommen mit der USA	Trade agreement with the USA
Freihandelszone zw. USA und Eu	Free trade zone between USA and EU
Freihandelsabkommen	FTA
Freihandel ab komme n	FTA
Freihandelsabkommen	FTA
Hallitsematon maahan muutto	Uncontrolled Migration
La crisi del lavoro	The labor crisis
Il lavoro	The work
Mondialisation ouverture des marches competitivite	Globalization market opening competitiveness
Le commerce mondial	World trade
Le projet de pacttransatlantique	The Transatlantic Pact Project
Deutsch'amerikianisches Handelsabkommen	German-American trade agreement
Freihandelsabkommen mit den USA	Free trade agreement with the USA
TTIP (Transatlantisches Freihandelsabkomme EU ' USA) + CETA	TTIP
das TTIP'Abkommen	TTIP
Energiewende	Energy transition
Wirtschafts und W�hrungsfragen"Banken'Geldfl�sse	Economic and currency issues"banks' money flows
europ�ischer Energiemarkt	European energy market
El paro	Unemployment
Invandring	Immigration

2014 MIP2

Protection	
FAIRE FACE AUX CONCURRENCES EXTERIEURES ET PAYS EMERGENTS	FACING EXTERNAL COMPETITIONS AND EMERGING COUNTRIES
Taxer davantage les produits �trangers pour encourager a acheter francais	Taxing foreign products further to encourage French buying
Delocalizzazione di aziende che potrebbero produrre in Italia garantendo posti di lavoro	Relocation of companies that could produce in Italy guaranteeing jobs
Latvijas zemju izpardosana sveszemniekiem	Removal of land from Latvian landlords
Netiek pirktas Latvij? ra�ot?s preces.	Not bought in Latvia? produce goods.
Les d�localisations	The delocalizations
Trade	
Freihandels ankommen	FTA
Freihandelsabkommen	FTA
Ttap	TTIP
DEFICIT COMMERCIAL	Commercial Deficit
accord transatlantique	Transatlantic agreement
Il mondo del lavoro	The job's world
Sosiaalialaan kohdistuvat leikkaukset	Cuts in the social field
La disoccupazione	Unemployment
Kilpailukyky	Competitiveness
Vienti	Exports
Le commerce ext�rieur est insuffisant	Foreign trade is insufficient
Les flux de marchandises	The flow of goods
Les accords tafta(c est une catastrophe)	The tafta agreements (it's a disaster)
Die ganze Diskussion �ber das Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und den USA	The whole discussion about the EU-US Free Trade Agreement
Exportwirtschaft	Export Industry
Frei'Handelspakt Eu'Usa	Free Trade Pact Eu'Usa
Freihandelsabkommen	FTA
Freihandelszone mit der USA	FTA with the USA
Building trade	Building trade
A falta de exporta��o ir aos mercados	Failure to export to markets
VISOKA BREZPOSELNOST	High loss
Internationell handel	International trade
tRADING WITH OTHER COUNTRIES and the EU cointrol us too much	Trading with other countries and the EU control us too much
TRADE	Trade