

Do “Non-Partisan” Municipal Politicians Match the Partisanship of their Constituents?

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Abstract

Recent research in the United States has found that municipal governments are responsive to the ideological complexion of their cities even in the absence of partisan elections. In this paper, I test for the presence of party match – a match between the partisan character of a district and the partisanship of its municipal representative – in Canada, where municipal elections are distinctively non-partisan. Using new data on district-level party support and the partisanship of Canadian municipal politicians, I find clear evidence for party match. This match is equally likely in at-large and ward elections, partisan and non-partisan elections, and large and small cities. I thus argue that partisan and ideological representation is an important and widespread feature of Canadian municipal politics. I discuss the implications of these findings for theories of municipal representation and the role of ideology in municipal politics.

1 Introduction

What role does partisan representation play in non-partisan elections? The seemingly obvious answer – the answer that non-partisan urban reformers, past and present, would *hope* is true – is simple: no role at all. While partisan or ideological cleavages may be relevant to national policy debates, the argument goes, those cleavages are little more than a distraction from the pragmatic and often technical decisions that municipal governments make about their communities. Even when partisan or ideological cleavages *are* relevant to municipal policy, they are more likely to be addressed

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by citizens' decisions about where to settle than by vigorous partisan debates within particular municipalities.

These are familiar arguments. Yet a growing body of evidence suggests that partisan and ideological cleavages are in fact deeply relevant to municipal elections and policy. Even in municipalities with formally non-partisan elections, partisan and ideological variables are important predictors of vote choice (**Lucas2020d**; Hajnal and Trounstein 2014; McGregor, Moore, and Stephenson 2016), and municipal policies reflect the ideological complexion of their communities (Einstein and Kogan 2016). What is more, non-partisan cities appear to be just as responsive to local ideology as cities with explicitly partisan elections (Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014).

These findings – the importance of partisanship and ideology in municipal elections and policy, and the absence of a clear connection between partisan elections and responsiveness – have sparked renewed interest in partisan and ideological representation at the municipal level, especially in the United States (Burnett 2019; Benedictis-Kessner and Warshaw 2016; Einstein and Glick 2018). In this article, I extend this work by looking outside the United States at an especially extreme case of non-partisanship: Canadian municipalities. In Canada, most local elections are both formally and informally non-partisan, and voters often know nothing about the partisanship of their municipal candidates. Even in cities that *do* include party labels on the ballot, municipal parties are almost always exclusively local, with only informal and tenuous connections to major provincial or federal parties. In the United States, arguments about the effects of municipal non-partisanship are vulnerable to the claim that most residents are well aware of each candidate's party affiliation regardless of the information on the ballot itself (Ferreira and Gyourko 2009). In the Canadian case, on the other hand, we have an electoral environment that allows us to probe the extent to which party and ideological match is possible even in a context in which most candidates' party affiliation is publicly unknown. Canadian elections thus provide an especially hard test for the argument that partisan and ideological representation is present in municipal politics even in the absence of partisan elections.

To assess the presence or absence of partisan and ideological representation in non-partisan Canadian municipalities, I measure party and ideological “match” – that is, a match between the character of a municipal district and its elected official – for the first time in Canada. To do so, I first use a spatial interpolation technique to build a novel dataset of ward- and municipality-level federal voting patterns. I then combine this dataset with a new survey of mayors and councillors from across Canada, using these data sources to test if Canadian municipal politicians match their districts and then explore the institutional and demographic contexts in which this match is more or less likely. While I find that non-partisanship remains an important element of Canadian municipal politics – some 30 percent of local politicians describe themselves as non-partisan – I also find clear support for party and ideological match. This match is no more likely in at-large than ward elections, no more likely when candidates are members of municipal parties or slates, and no more likely in big cities than in small ones. I thus argue that party and ideological match between districts and representatives is an important and widespread feature of Canadian municipal politics.

My findings have several implications for our understanding of municipal elections and representation. For Canadian researchers, they substantially weaken the argument – present in Canadian municipal circles for decades – that non-partisan municipal politics provides a “relief valve” for politically ambitious individuals whose party affiliation is out of step with the places where they live. More generally, my findings suggest that partisan and ideological representation is not only possible but common in municipal elections that are both formally and informally non-partisan. Finally, the absence of clear institutional and demographic correlates of party and ideological match suggests that it is as likely to occur in smaller rural and suburban places as in core urban centres, strengthening the view that contemporary elections in large and small municipalities may have more in common than past urban scholarship has suggested. I conclude by outlining how future research can build on my findings to further clarify the mechanisms through which partisan and ideological representation is produced in non-partisan elections.

2 Parties and Ideology in Municipal Elections

Logically speaking, we can imagine three possible relationships between a district's partisanship and the party identification of its elected official. First, there may simply be no systematic relationship between the two. After all, one of the reasons for the absence of a formal party system from municipal politics is the longstanding claim that partisanship and ideology are largely irrelevant to municipal politics, an argument that finds its historical resonance in the reformer's cry that there is no liberal or conservative way to fill a pothole (Anderson 1972) and persists today in arguments that celebrate municipal government as refreshingly pragmatic, sensible, and non-ideological (Barber 2013). A long line of distinguished urban politics scholarship has argued that national partisan and ideological cleavages are largely absent from local politics, especially in smaller suburban and rural municipalities, where jurisdictional constraints, risk-averse property owners, and competitive market imperatives discipline municipalities to focus relentlessly on economic growth and development (Peterson 1981; Oliver 2012; Fischel 2005). If this is so, then partisan and ideological match should appear as little more than an occasional coincidence, a random and largely irrelevant dimension of similarity between constituents and representatives.

A second possibility is that partisan match is especially *unlikely* in the municipal context – in other words, a negative relationship. This may seem implausible at first, but in fact several Canadian urban scholars have proposed it. The basic idea is simple: local elections may provide what could be called a “relief valve” for politically ambitious citizens whose partisanship is a poor match for the place where they happen to live – a Liberal, for instance, who lives in a firmly Conservative community. Rather than abandon their political hopes, these partisans may choose to seek municipal office, where their out-of-sync party affiliation can be kept close to the vest (Alexander 1972; Anderson 1972). This argument bears some resemblance to the first, insofar as it assumes that partisanship and ideology are irrelevant enough to be kept out of sight of voters in municipal politics. Empirically, it has been supported by sporadic case

studies and anecdotal evidence but has never been tested systematically.¹

The third and final possibility is that municipal politicians match the partisanship and ideology of their districts at a rate that is substantially higher than we would expect to find from chance alone. Here too we have little more than anecdotal evidence from Canada, but research from the United States suggests that this sort of match is common. Across thousands of mayoral and county legislative elections, for example, Warshaw (2019) has shown that liberal cities tend to elect Democrats and conservative cities tend to elect Republicans. These differences in the partisanship of municipal politicians have clear effects on their legislative behaviour (Burnett 2019) and on municipal policy outputs (Benedictis-Kessner and Warshaw 2016, 2020).

In this article, I provide new evidence to adjudicate among these three possible relationships in the Canadian case. However, the implications of my analysis go beyond resolving an empirical question for Canadian researchers. In the first place, ideological match has long been a key argument in defense of openly partisan municipal elections. If municipal politics is in fact *not* free of ideology, the argument goes, then it is important to be explicit about the ideological positions of municipal candidates – and the simplest way to do so is with political parties (Anderson 1972; Kaplan 1967; Lightbody 1999). However, if it turns out that we find clear evidence of party and ideological match even in the absence of explicit party competition, this weakens the case for formal partisanship at the municipal level. At the local level, at least, perhaps it is possible to have it both ways: to have ideological representation without the bickering and polarization that accompany partisan politics (Lee 2009).²

A second motivation for more systematically investigating the question of party and ideological match is to illuminate the character of municipal politics across places with very different institutional structures and population sizes. For instance, urban political scientists have tended to assume that at-large elections may be more informed by ideology than ward elections because they emphasize city-wide issues and require that candidates provide cues to a larger electorate, many of whom they will not know personally (Trounstein 2010; Welch and Bledsoe 1990). Similarly, some argue that

elections in smaller municipalities are distinctively non-ideological and more focused on managerial competence and highly localized controversies (Oliver 2012). Recent research, however, gives us some reason to doubt these assumptions. Tausanovitch and Warshaw (2014) find no difference in ideological responsiveness when comparing at-large and ward cities, and their analysis extends well past the largest American cities and into the sorts of municipalities that are ostensibly innocent of ideology. Similarly, research by Michael Sances (2018) finds that ideology plays an important role in municipal vote choice not only in big cities like Memphis and Nashville but also in suburban municipalities in Illinois. By investigating partisan and ideological match across these sorts of institutional and demographic differences, my analysis adds valuable evidence to this ongoing debate.

Finally, a clearer understanding of partisan and ideological match will also help to clarify why incumbent candidates in Canadian cities are so frequently re-elected. Incumbent re-election rates in Canada’s biggest cities are often in the 90 percent range, and past research has shown that incumbency has an enormous effect on municipal candidates’ probability of re-election (Benedictis-Kessner 2017; Lucas 2019; Trounstone 2011). In the national context, political scientists have repeatedly demonstrated that partisan match is among the most important sources of incumbent success; unsurprisingly, when an incumbent’s ideology and partisanship is a good match for their district, the incumbent finds it easier to be consistently re-elected (Gelman and King 1990; Fowler 2016). Perhaps counterintuitively, party match could exercise a *more* powerful effect on incumbency in non-partisan contests, where parties are not involved in actively encouraging high-quality candidates to seek office even in difficult-to-win districts (Carson, Engstrom, and Roberts 2007). To evaluate this possibility, the first step is to investigate the presence or absence of party match in municipal contests.

Overall, then, “party match” is not only an empirically interesting quantity for Canadian municipal elections researchers, but also a potentially useful indicator of municipal representation more broadly. It is possible to understand party match as a measure of congruence (e.g. how often does a municipal representative’s partisanship

reflect the desires of a plurality of constituents?), as a measure of responsiveness (e.g. are more conservative places represented by more conservative representatives?), or most generally as an indicator of the presence and importance of ideological representation at the municipal scale. I focus here primarily on the broadest representational question, using party match to test if partisan and ideological representation is present even in deeply non-partisan elections; as we will see, I also provide evidence on the more specific question of ideological responsiveness in Canadian municipalities. Future research might use party match to explore other aspects of municipal elections and representation, particularly if party match data are combined with data on electoral competitiveness and candidate entry.

2.1 Municipal Non-Partisanship in Canada

Most Canadian municipal elections are non-partisan. In a recent survey, just 17 percent of Canadian municipal politicians stated that they had run in their most recent election as a member of a political party or slate.³ Moreover, Canada’s multi-party system at the federal level, combined with separate and distinct party systems in most provinces, makes it very difficult for Canadian voters to make easy assumptions about a municipal candidate’s party affiliation. In some cases, candidates have a history of political involvement at other levels of government, so their party affiliation is well known to voters; this is especially common in high-profile mayoral races, such as the mayor of Vancouver (a former NDP MP), the mayor of Toronto (the former leader of the Ontario PC Party), and the recently defeated mayor of Montreal (a former Liberal MP and cabinet minister). These cases, however, are the exception rather than the rule.⁴ In many cases, municipal candidates’ party affiliations are totally unknown to voters.

Some cities in British Columbia and Quebec do hold formally partisan elections in which nearly all successful candidates belong to a party or slate. Even in these cities, however, the parties that contest elections are not the same as those that compete in provincial or federal politics. In Quebec, municipal political parties are often little more than “teams” associated with a specific mayoral candidate, such as “Équipe De-

nis Coderre” in Montreal or “Équipe Labeaume” in Quebec City, both named after the mayoral candidate (Couture, Breux, and Koop 2018). In British Columbia, where political parties are more durable and less tied to a specific individual leader, most parties still have no formal connection to provincial or federal politics; in Vancouver, for instance, the most important parties of the past few decades have been the “Non-Partisan Association”, “Vision Vancouver”, and the “Coalition of Progressive Electors” (Tennant 1980; Lucas 2019). Throughout Canadian urban history, emerging third parties like Social Credit, the New Democratic Party, and the Green Party have contested local elections, but their success has usually been minimal and their involvement fleeting (Masson and LeSage 1994). The number of occasions in which major municipal candidates have run openly and successfully as representatives of one of Canada’s two major federal parties – Conservative and Liberal – can be counted on the fingers of one hand (Clarkson 1972; Kaplan 1967).

Canadian municipal elections, then, are overwhelmingly non-partisan, and even when political parties do participate, those parties have no formal connection to provincial or federal politics. Behind the scenes, however, most observers agree that political parties do play an important role. While systematic research is minimal, anecdotal evidence stretching back to the 1960s suggests that political parties are often involved in candidate recruitment and campaign activities in municipal elections, providing quiet support for the candidates they favour (Kaplan 1967; Anderson 1972). Political parties can provide informal assistance by mobilizing their small armies of volunteers to assist municipal candidates with door-knocking, campaign lawn signs, and other important tasks associated with the “ground game” of modern politics. Thus while Canada’s major parties disavow any official role in municipal elections, the informal networks of local strategists and volunteers that comprise the grassroots of the major parties are often mobilized into action in municipal campaigns as well.

These features of Canadian municipal politics make Canadian cities a useful “hard test” for the partisan match thesis. In the United States, many ostensibly non-partisan elections still involve contests between candidates whose party affiliations are well

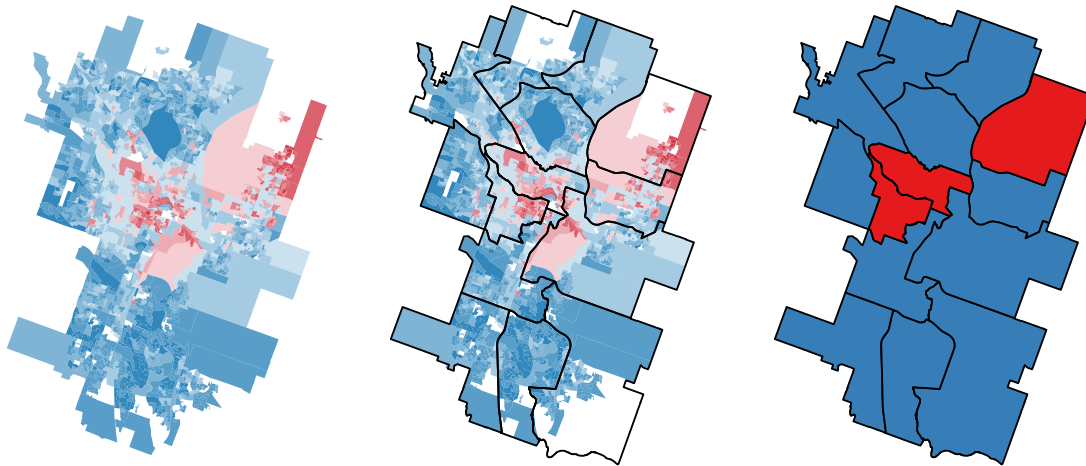
known. This is not the case in Canada. For this reason, evidence of match in the Canadian context – particularly if it is consistent across municipalities with different institutional structures and population sizes – would substantially strengthen the argument that ideological match is possible and even likely in the absence of partisan elections. We will return to this issue in the discussion section below.

3 Data and Methods

To measure party match, we need two variables: the party affiliation of municipal politicians and the partisanship of their wards or municipalities. The first of these variables – the partisanship of politicians themselves – is difficult to collect in Canada for the reasons we just discussed: in many cases, politicians’ partisanship is publicly unknown. To address this problem, I rely on data from the Canadian Municipal Barometer (CMB), an annual survey of mayors and councillors in every Canadian municipality above 9,000 population. In 2020, the first annual CMB survey was completed by 799 individuals, for a 22% response rate, comparable to response rates for the best public opinion and elite surveys in Canada and abroad (see Broockman and Skovron 2018). In the supplementary material (SM1), I provide more detail on the survey questions and respondents and provide evidence that they are broadly representative of the larger population of Canadian municipal politicians on observable measures such as gender, region, and municipal population size. The CMB survey includes a standard question on party identification, and the responses to this question represent the largest and most systematic overview of the partisanship of municipal politicians ever collected in Canada.

The second variable we need is the distribution of party support within wards and municipalities. To create this measure, I began by compiling election results at the polling station level for the 2015 Canadian federal election. These results, along with the geographic boundaries of each polling district, are provided by Elections Canada; by compiling them into a single file, we can generate a spatial dataset of federal election

Figure 1: **The Areal Weighted Interpolation Process**



These maps visualize the areal weighted interpolation procedure, which moves from federal election results at the polling district level (left), overlays municipal ward boundaries atop those results (middle), and then aggregates the election results into the ward boundaries (right).

results at a very fine-grained geographic scale. The left-hand map in figure 1, which shows the distribution of support in Calgary for the Conservative and Liberal parties at the polling district level, illustrates the geographic specificity of these data.

In most cases, the boundaries of wards and municipalities do not align with the boundaries of federal electoral districts, so the next step is to aggregate the poll-by-poll results into the municipal boundaries that are of interest to us here. The middle map in figure 1, which overlays Calgary’s municipal ward boundaries atop the federal election results, illustrates the task: rather than aggregating the results into electoral districts, we want to aggregate into these ward geographies instead. To do this, I rely on areal weighted interpolation, a procedure that aggregates lower level spatial units into higher level units in proportion to their spatial overlap with those higher-level units (Prener and Revord 2019). This interpolation procedure requires geographic boundary files, like the ward boundaries in the middle map of figure 1, to overlay the federal election results. To collect these files, I first checked the open data platforms and websites of each of the 369 municipalities for which I had responses from the CMB survey, and then sent email requests to any municipality that did not make its ward boundary files publicly available (for at-large municipalities, all we need are the boundaries of

the municipalities themselves, which are available from Statistics Canada). All told, I was able to collect boundary files for 803 CMB respondents, more than 85% of the total. This is the largest collection of municipal electoral boundary files ever compiled in Canada, capturing a diverse mix of municipalities that range from rural Alberta counties through to Canada’s largest cities.

Having collected the spatial files, I then carried out the interpolation procedure for each municipality, producing an estimate of the votes received by each party in each municipality and ward. This estimate of each party’s vote total allowed me to calculate party vote share and margin of victory for each ward and municipality. For illustrative purposes, I plot the results of this procedure for the city of Calgary in the right-hand map in figure 1, where we see three Liberal wards in red and eleven Conservative wards in blue. Moving from left to right across the maps in figure 1 provides a visual summary of the areal weighted interpolation procedure: first we collect detailed election results in a spatial format, then we overlay ward boundaries or (for at-large elections) municipal boundaries atop these results, and then we use areal weighted interpolation to aggregate the results into the higher level ward or municipal boundaries. The result is a measure of the partisanship of each municipality and ward.⁵

3.1 Outcomes of Interest

Our principal outcome of interest in this paper is *party match*: the proportion of elected municipal politicians whose partisanship matches that of their district. I measure party match by coding observations as (1) when the politician’s partisanship and the district’s partisanship are the same, and (0) when they are not. As will be clear in the results section below, I calculate this match both with and without CMB respondents who consider themselves non-partisans.⁶

While party match is of interest in itself – it may be a clue, for instance, that party networks are active behind the scenes in municipal recruiting and campaigning – our main interest in party match is as an indicator of a more general *ideological* match between a politician and her constituents. Measuring ideological match using data

from a federal multi-party system – especially one with an important second dimension related to regional autonomy and sub-nationalism – inevitably involves compromises whose weaknesses I try to minimize by providing several distinct measures and tests. The first measure, which I use in the main text below, assigns districts won by the Conservative Party as “right” and those won by the other major parties – Liberal, NDP, Bloc Quebecois, and Green – as “left”. I then code municipal politicians in the same way, and record politicians who match the ideology of their districts as (1) and those who do not as (0). This is a blunt measure, to be sure, but it is defensible especially in the context of the 2015 election, in which a desperate Liberal Party ran very deliberately to the left of the more traditionally left-wing NDP. Indeed, the Comparative Manifestos Project (Volkens et al. 2019) assigned the 2015 Liberal Party manifesto the most left-wing score of the major parties in 2015, and assigned all of the parties I consider “left” firmly to the left side of the political spectrum.⁷

A second approach to measuring ideological match, which may help to overcome some of the oddities created by Canada’s multi-party plurality electoral system, is to ignore the local winner in a district and simply code Conservative districts as “right” and non-Conservative districts as “left”. On this measure, any ward or municipality with an estimated Conservative vote share above 50% is considered “right”, and those below 50% are considered “left”. This measure takes advantage of the fact that, whatever may have been happening on the left in Canada in 2015, the Conservative Party was the only viable party of the right. I use this measure in the supplementary material (SM6) to test the robustness of my findings in the main text and find, reassuringly, that my substantive findings are identical.

Ideology, of course, is not merely a dichotomous matter of “right” and “left” – an individual, party, or district can be *more* or *less* left-wing or right-wing. Neither of the above measures capture this. Thus, as an additional test of ideological match, I replace party identification with each CMB respondent’s ideological self-placement, which ranges from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right). To test for ideological match, I assess the relationship between this ideological self-placement measure and Conservative vote

share in the politician’s ward or district – again taking advantage of the fact that the absence of any other competitors on the right makes Conservative vote share a useful continuous measure of the ideological character and strength of a district. Here, too, my findings are consistent with those that use the blunter dichotomous measures described above.

3.2 Independent Variables

In addition to the general descriptive question of how much party and ideological match we find in Canadian municipalities, I will also explore several contextual predictors of party match to better understand the circumstances in which match is more or less likely. The first of these is *partisan elections*, which I measure using a CMB question that asked if the respondent ran in their most recent election as a member of a municipal party or slate. If voters are consistently aware of linkages between municipal political parties and their federal counterparts (Tennant 1980), we would expect to find that party match is higher when candidates run as members of parties or slates.

A second institutional variable of interest is ward and at-large elections. In at-large elections, as we have discussed above, municipal politicians need to build a city-wide coalition of voters, and in many cases, they will be unable to make the personal connections with individual voters that are available to diligent door-knocking candidates in ward elections. This may incentivize at-large candidates to advertise their partisan or ideological affiliations more explicitly in order to provide clear cues to their city’s voters. I have thus used municipal websites to code each of the CMB respondents in this analysis for whether they were elected in a ward or at large.

The third variable of interest is the *strength of party support* in each district. In some cases, wards and municipalities are closely divided and competitive; since the party that wins in these districts is much more variable over time, party match should be more random, and less likely in general, in such districts. If, on the other hand, we consistently find Liberal councillors in districts where Conservatives enjoy 70 or 80

percent vote share, this would represent a more substantial challenge to any argument for party match. I thus include the estimated margin of victory for the winning party in each district.⁸ To account for the fact that this margin varies by party, and to capture the average within-party effect of party strength on match, I also include fixed effects for the “winning” party in each ward or municipality in my models of party and ideological match.

Fourth, I include the (logged) *population size* of each municipality. As I discussed above, if municipal politics in big cities is distinctively partisan or ideological in character, we would expect to see that party and ideological match is more likely in big cities than in smaller places.

Finally, I include region fixed effects (West, Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic) in all models. Region is a valuable control variable because the character and competitiveness of party competition varies by region in Canada. Given historical differences in municipal governance and politics across Canadian regions, it is also plausible to imagine that we might also find regional differences in patterns of party and ideological match.

3.3 Measurement and Models

To test for the presence or absence of party and ideological match, I begin with a simulation approach, comparing observed rates of match to a distribution of match rates that we would expect from a purely random process. To see the intuition behind this approach, imagine that both politicians and districts were divided evenly among four possible parties. This would create sixteen possible politician-district pairings, four of which would be party matches. In this scenario, we would therefore expect to see a party match rate of 25% simply by chance. My approach follows the logic of this thought experiment but adds realism by drawing random pairings from the observed distributions of both politicians and districts in the actual data. I begin by drawing 1,000 random pairs of politicians and districts (randomly selecting one politician from the CMB survey and one ward or municipality from the electoral data) and calculate the proportion of these 1,000 pairs that are matches. I then repeat this procedure 1,000

times, producing a distribution of match rates that could plausibly emerge by chance. By comparing our observed value of party or ideological match to the distribution of simulated values, we can assess the likelihood that our observed rates are a result of a random matching process.

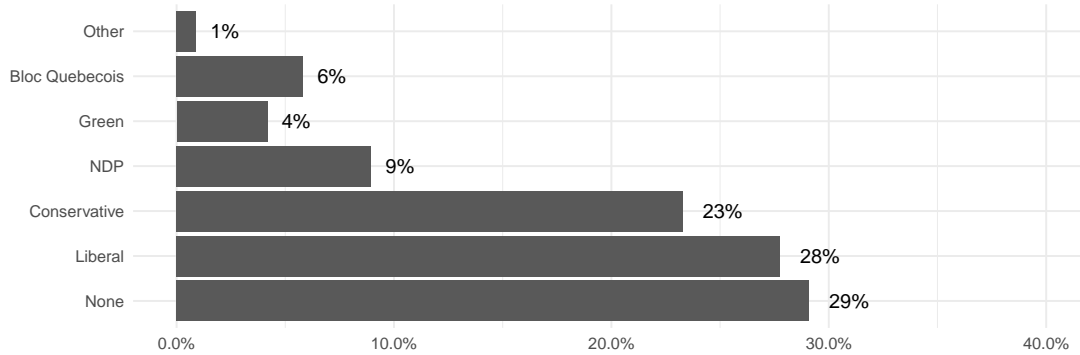
My focus on *random* match as the baseline for comparison follows directly from the three logical possibilities outlined above: the “relief valve” argument, the “irrelevance” argument, and the “partisan representation” argument. If rates of partisan match are consistent with random matches between districts and representatives, this would support the view that ideological and partisan representation are indeed irrelevant in Canada’s non-partisan municipalities. If those rates tend to fall below what we would expect from random matches, this would strengthen the “relief valve” position; if they are above what we would expect, this would strengthen the “partisan representation” position. Since all three positions are “live” options in public discourse and political science research, comparing match rates to a random baseline provides a good assessment of the character of partisan and ideological representation in Canadian cities.⁹

Following the simulations, I then assess the predictors of party and ideological match using a logit model, plotting average marginal effects for each variable. In the supplementary material, I provide full tables for these models and show that my findings are robust to the alternative measures of ideological match described above as well as alternative modelling strategies, including a multilevel model with varying intercepts for each municipality and region.

4 Results

I begin with figure 2, which summarizes the distribution of party identification among municipal politicians in the CMB survey.¹⁰ In general, the distributions mirror those in the Canadian population as a whole: nearly thirty percent of municipal politicians do not identify with any political party, roughly one quarter identify with each of the two major parties (the Liberals and the Conservatives), and the remainder identify

Figure 2: **Party Identification, CMB**



Description: the distribution of federal party identification among Canadian Municipal Barometer respondents.

with one of the other parties.¹¹

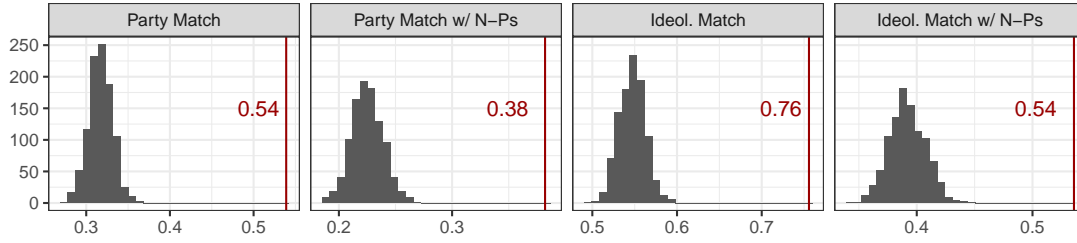
The most obvious and important lesson to draw from figure 2 is that a substantial fraction of municipal politicians consider themselves non-partisans. Given how rare it is to find independent politicians in Canadian provincial or federal legislatures – in federal politics, just one has been successful in the past decade – the figure illustrates very clearly that non-partisan politicians are much more common at the municipal level than at other levels. Whatever else we might discover about partisan and ideological match in Canadian cities, we must not forget the basic fact that local legislatures are an especially congenial home for non-partisans.¹²

4.1 Party and Ideological Match

Figure 2 has shown that municipal governments are home to a substantial number of non-partisans. Still, like the Canadian public more generally, the overwhelming majority of CMB respondents *do* identify at least weakly with a federal political party. How well do these party affiliations match patterns of partisan support among constituents? And what does this suggest about the ideological match between districts and their municipal representatives?

Figure 3 provides the answer to these questions, summarizing both the observed rate of match in the data and the match rates that we would expect to see simply by

Figure 3: **Party and Ideological Match: Random vs. Observed**



Description: these plots visualize the distribution of plausible match rates that could emerge from a random process (gray bars) along with the observed rate of party or ideological match (red line and text).

chance. In each plot, the vertical red line marks the observed rate of match in the data, and the red text reports that rate; in the top-left plot for example, we see that 54% of CMB respondents, excluding non-partisans, match the partisanship of their districts. The gray bars in each plot record the distribution of plausible rates of party or ideological match drawn from the random simulations. Visual comparison of the distance between the vertical red line and the dark gray bars in each plot reveal that the probability of observing match rates like those we see in our data given a random matching process is vanishingly small. We thus have clear evidence for both party and ideological match among Canadian municipal politicians.

In the supplementary material (SM2), I test if these patterns are robust across Canadian regions, municipal populations, and institutions. The results hold very robustly across both ward and at-large municipalities and across all population sizes. The same is true in three of the four Canadian regions I study; in the fourth, Atlantic Canada, the number of available cases is probably too small to produce a reliable simulation. Thus, across institutions, populations, and nearly all regions, I find clear evidence for party and ideological match in Canadian municipalities. Of the three possible relationships discussed above, the evidence clearly favours positive match.

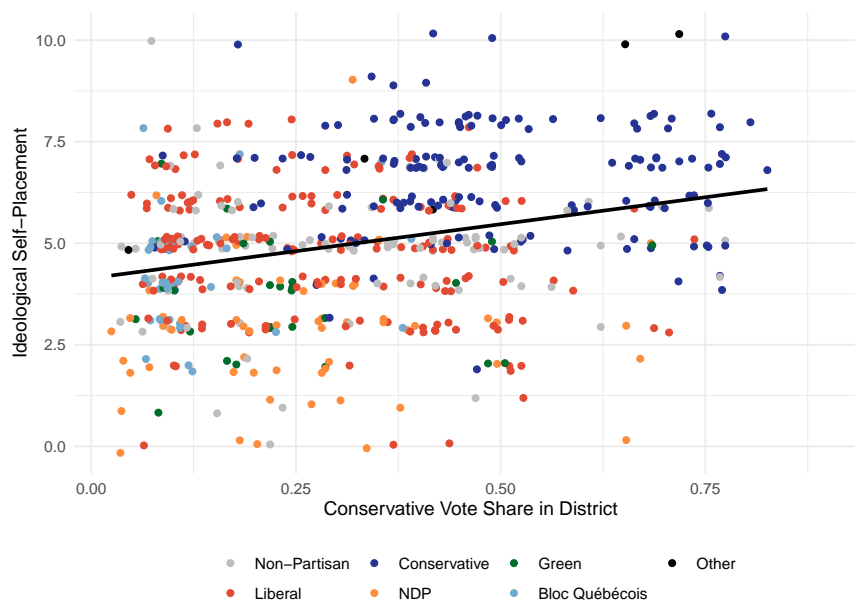
While all four plots in figure 3 suggest that party and ideological match rates are well above what we would expect from chance, the actual match rates, reported in red, also merit discussion – particularly because, in the case of party match with non-

partisans, the rate is well below 50%. We must remember, however, that the “party match with non-partisans” plot represents an extremely stringent test of partisan representation; not only does it assume that all forms of partisan representation are as relevant at the municipal level as the federal level, it also assumes that every self-described non-partisan in the CMB survey represents a *failure* of representation. Both of these assumptions are probably unnecessarily strict; in Quebec, for example, representation by, say, an NDP as opposed to a Bloc Quebecois partisan is less important for residents at the municipal level compared to the federal level. Moreover, it is quite likely that some non-partisan CMB respondents simply hesitated to disclose their partisanship even in a confidential survey. I thus take 38% as a very conservative estimate of the “floor” for party match in Canada: even if we assume that representation of the full suite of federal parties is important at the municipal level, and even if we assume that every “non-partisan” CMB respondent in fact feels no connection with a political party, it is still the case that nearly 40% of municipal politicians match the partisanship of their districts. However, if we are interested in party match as an indicator of ideological responsiveness, and if we assume that the most informative data come from municipal politicians who disclose their partisanship, we find that representatives match the ideological preference of their districts in more than three quarters of cases. While future research will help to clarify if these numbers are “low” or “high” in comparative terms, they support the general claim that partisan and ideological representation is more common than not in Canada’s non-partisan municipalities.

To add additional clarity to the findings in figure 3, figure 4 replaces the blunt dichotomous measure of ideology with a continuous measure, plotting municipal politicians’ ideological self-placement against the estimated Conservative vote share in their district. Each circle in the figure is an individual politician, who are coloured according to their federal party identification. The black line summarizes the linear relationship between ideological self-placement and district Conservatism. If ideological match is present, we should see that ideologically conservative representatives are more likely to be found in strongly Conservative districts, and in fact this is just what the pos-

itive slope of the black line suggests. Notice, too, that the colours of the individual circles align well with our expectations; while there are certainly many exceptions, as we would expect when using federal partisanship as a blunt measure of ideology, it is nevertheless the case that Conservative partisans are much more likely to place themselves on the ideological right and to represent districts that have higher Conservative vote shares.¹³

Figure 4: Ideological Self-Placement and District Conservatism

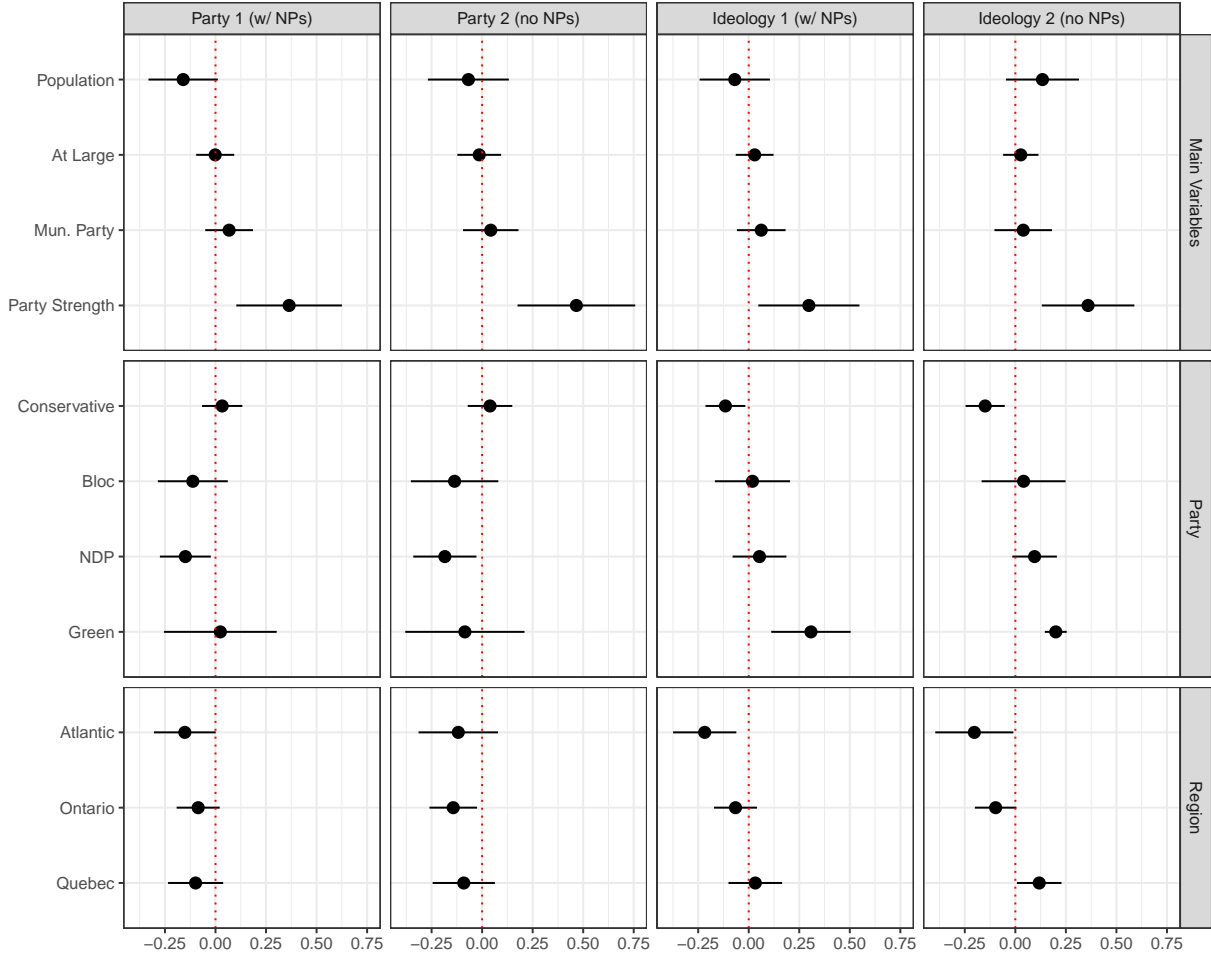


Description: A plot of CMB respondents' ideological self-placement (y-axis) and the estimated Conservative vote share in the respondent's district (x-axis). Each circle is coloured according to the respondent's federal partisanship. To increase legibility, points are vertically jittered by 10%.

4.2 Predictors of Party and Ideological Match

What factors make party and ideological match more or less likely? To help begin to answer this question, figure 5 summarizes the average marginal effects of several predictors on the probability of observing a match between a district and its representative. The first and third columns include non-partisans in the models, making the overall probability of a match less likely. The second and fourth columns exclude non-partisans, focusing only on those districts in which the representative identified with a federal political party in their CMB survey response. At the top of each column are

Figure 5: Predictors of Party and Ideological Match

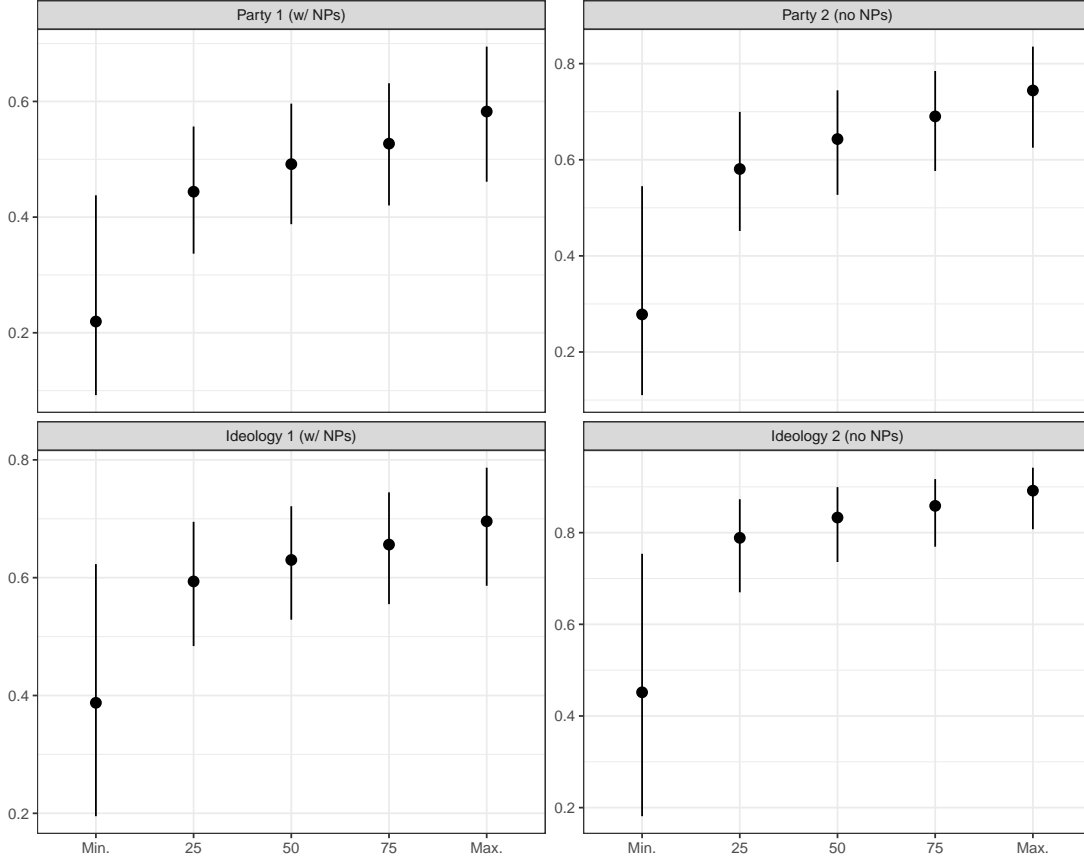


Description: The predictors of party and ideological match; each coefficient is the average marginal effect of the variable on match. The first and third columns include non-partisans; the second and fourth columns exclude non-partisans. See the supplementary materials (SM3) for the complete table. For party, base=Liberal. For region, base=West.

the four variables that are most of interest to us: the (logged) population size of the municipality, whether the individual is elected at large, whether the individual ran as a member of a municipal party or slate, and the (logged) estimate of the 2015 margin of victory in the district. Below these four variables are coefficients for the party fixed effects (base category = Liberal) and the region fixed effects (base category = West). The marginal effects in all four columns are drawn from logit models; full tables are available in the supplementary material (SM3).

Three of the four variables at the top of each column consistently have no discernible

Figure 6: **Party Strength and Party/Ideological Match**



These plots display the expected value of party/ideological match at five values of party strength: the minimum observed value, the 25th percentile, the median, the 75th percentile, and the maximum value.

relationship with party match. Party and ideological match appear to be no more or less likely in big cities than in small ones. Those who are elected at large are no more or less likely to match their districts than those who are elected in wards. And those who run under the banner of a municipal party or slate are no more likely to match their district's partisanship or ideology than those who run as independents. These findings confirm what we had already suspected from the simulations above: party and ideological match is a phenomenon that is common across municipalities of very different sizes and institutional contexts.

In contrast to these three variables, the next variable – the estimated 2015 federal margin of victory for the winning party in the ward or district – has a strong and

substantively large relationship with both party and ideological match. Since margin of victory ranges from zero to one, this coefficient summarizes the average marginal effect of a shift from a margin of victory of zero (logically impossible) to a margin of victory of one (extremely unlikely). Thus, to make the substantive meaning of this coefficient a bit clearer, figure 6 plots the expected value of party and ideological match at five values of party strength: the observed minimum, 25th percentile, median, 75th percentile, and observed maximum value. Notice that the expected probability of a match leaps upward in each plot as we move from the minimum value to the 25th percentile, but then increases much more modestly through the remainder of the plot. Across all four plots, we see an increase of at least twenty percentage points in the probability of a match as we move from highly competitive to moderate stronghold (25th percentile) districts. As we would expect, we see a substantial increase in the probability of a match as we move from very competitive districts to moderate strongholds, and then a more modest increase as the party’s strength in the district increases beyond that point.

In general, then, we have found little systematic variation in party and ideological match by local institutions or population size. Unsurprisingly, party and ideological match become more likely as we move from highly competitive districts to strongholds.¹⁴ But both party and ideological match appear to be just as likely among the CMB respondents in ward and at-large districts, in municipal partisan and non-partisan elections, and among representatives from smaller towns and suburban cities and in the country’s biggest cities.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

Canadian municipalities offer a distinctive opportunity to test for the presence of partisan and ideological representation in the absence of partisan elections. Using new data on the aggregate character of Canadian wards and municipalities, along with the party identification and ideological self-placement of Canadian municipal politi-

cians, this article has provided a first systematic test of party and ideological match in Canada. I found, first, that a substantial fraction of Canadian municipal politicians are non-partisan, in the sense that they do not identify even weakly with any federal political party. In terms of aggregate representation, this means that Canadian municipal politicians actually look *more* like the Canadian public than their provincial or federal counterparts; the proportion of Canadians who do not identify with any federal party matches the proportion of non-partisan municipal politicians almost perfectly. At a disaggregated level, however, this also means that many wards and municipalities are represented by politicians who do not match their district. Thus, while collective representation at the municipal level probably mirrors the distribution of partisanship more closely than at other levels, this collective achievement requires representational failures at the "dyadic" level: to produce municipal legislatures with a representative proportion of non-partisans, some partisan districts are "stuck" with a non-partisan representative.¹⁵

Despite the important presence of non-partisans on Canadian city councils, I also found clear evidence for party and ideological match. Nearly 40% of municipal politicians match the partisanship of their districts, and this number rises to 54% when we exclude non-partisan politicians from the analysis. These numbers may seem low, but as I noted above, we must keep in mind that some forms of party match at the federal level are probably only minimally relevant to municipal politics; we are generally more interested in using party match as an indicator of *ideological* proximity than to understand, for instance, whether Bloc Québécois districts are represented by Bloc Québécois councillors as opposed to New Democratic Party councillors. On this second measure, ideological match, we see much higher values: 54% when including non-partisans and 76% when we exclude non-partisan politicians from the analysis. Thus even when we include the 30% of local politicians who are non-partisan – and make the rather unlikely assumption that such politicians are universally non-ideological – we *still* find that a majority of municipal politicians match the ideology of their districts. Even in the absence of partisan elections, ideological match is the norm, rather than the

exception.

These findings substantially weaken the empirical claim that non-partisan municipal politics is generally free of ideological representation, as well as the argument that serious ideological politics is only to be found in the very biggest cities. For contemporary urban reformers who cherish the “businesslike” character of municipal politics, this is unfortunate news. But for those who accept that municipal public policy inevitably involves ideologically freighted decisions – about spending, redistribution, city building, land use, and much more – these results are reassuring. Even in the absence of municipal political parties, many Canadians have local representatives whose partisanship and ideology is broadly representative of the district they represent.

Why do we see such consistent evidence of party match in non-partisan Canadian municipalities? What are the mechanisms that *produce* party match in non-partisan elections? While we cannot answer these questions without additional data – which I discuss below – our findings do suggest that some mechanisms are more likely than others. For instance, if explicit *informational cues* are crucial to party match, we might expect to see higher levels of match in bigger cities and/or at-large elections, where higher levels of media coverage (in big cities) and city-wide coverage of municipal elections (in at-large elections) create more opportunities for candidates to signal their partisan or ideological positioning with specific issue positions, elite endorsement patterns, or more subtle cues such as lawn sign colours. However, while these cues are certainly important for understanding vote choice in specific elections (Holman and Lay 2020), we find no general evidence of increased party match in at-large districts or larger municipalities. Another possible mechanism, *party organization*, would imply that larger, better-funded, and higher-capacity parties are more active behind the scenes in recruiting and supporting candidates. Once again, however, the consistency of party match, and the positive relationship between district support and party match for all parties, suggests that formal party organization is probably not the most important mechanism for party match in Canadian municipalities.¹⁶

More likely mechanisms may relate to the characteristics of candidates and dis-

tricts themselves. Several studies have found that voters make assumptions about candidates' ideology on the basis of observable characteristics such as gender and race – characteristics that are available even in very low-information contests (Crowder-Meyer, Gadarian, and Trounstein 2019; Ondercin and Fulton 2019; Juenke and Shah 2016). Even more fundamentally, party match may occur through a mechanism that requires nothing of voters on election day: the characteristics of the district itself. As we discussed above, a deeply Conservative district may be more likely to produce a suite of Conservative candidates not only as a matter of pure probability (if 75% of the district is Conservative, a random draw of candidates from the district is likely to be mostly Conservative as well), but also because Conservative residents of the district might think of themselves as having a good chance of election, and may also likely to receive encouragement and opportunities to run from likeminded residents. Discriminating among these mechanisms will require new data sources – especially large-scale municipal election results and surveys of municipal electoral candidates. Our findings in this paper suggest that affinity-based cues and compositional mechanisms are probably the best place to begin such studies.

More generally, my findings in this paper illustrate the need for a renewed research agenda on ideology, representation, and policy responsiveness in Canadian municipalities. Perhaps most obviously, these findings suggest that we should expect to see policy responsiveness in Canadian municipalities of the sort that Tausanovitch and Warshaw found in the United States. But *do* we see such responsiveness in Canada? Are Canadian municipal governments more or less responsive to their publics than in the United States? Fine-grained electoral data, along with survey datasets of increasing size, are making it possible to estimate the local ideological complexion of Canadian wards and cities for the first time. What Canadian researchers do not have, however, are comparable indicators of policy outputs: revenue sources, spending rates, and public policy outputs across Canadian municipalities. Collecting these data should be a priority for Canadian researchers who are interested in policy responsiveness at the municipal level.

Notes

¹Alexander (1972) and Anderson (1972) provide some examples, as does Kaplan (1967). For a more recent example, see the discussion of mayoral elections in Calgary in Markusoff (2017).

²Of course, there may still be other reasons to prefer partisan elections, such as increased turnout (Caren 2007), increased citizen engagement (Schaffner and Wright 2002), or clearer information about the performance of the party in power.

³This survey is the Canadian Municipal Barometer, which I discuss in more detail below.

⁴Even in these cases, party affiliations are less well known than one might think. In the case of John Tory, for example, who had recently been the *leader* of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, just 56% of Torontonians associated Tory with the Conservatives; the remainder selected other parties (26%) or selected don't know (18%). See McGregor, Moore, and Stephenson (2016).

⁵While the specifics of this procedure are distinct to the Canadian context, my approach is inspired by American studies that make use of precinct- and county-level presidential election returns to make assumptions about the character of local places. See Desposato and Petrocik (2003) and Einstein and Kogan (2016). Readers who are familiar with the recent American literature might also wonder why I have not used two alternative approaches from the United States. The first, party registration data, simply do not exist in Canada. The second, public opinion estimates using multilevel regression and poststratification (Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2013), is possible for municipalities but not for wards because we do not have the census socio-demographic data necessary for poststratification at that scale.

⁶Readers familiar with Canada's multi-party plurality electoral system may rightly wonder if this measure adequately captures district partisanship, since a ward could equally end up as "Liberal", for example, as a result of an overwhelming victory or as a result of a tight three-way race. To account for this issue I include a measure of "party strength" in the regression analysis below. I also show in the supplementary material (SM5) that the probability of partisan match increases as a party's estimated vote share and margin of victory increases in that district.

⁷Parties in the CMP generally range between -50 (very left-leaning) and 50 (very right-leaning). In 2015, the scores were as follows: Conservative Party of Canada (29.02), Green Party (-17.57), Liberal Party of Canada (-20.68), New Democratic Party (-9.67), and Bloc Québécois (-5.67).

⁸This variable is highly skewed. I thus use the logged margin of victory in the models below.

⁹Comparing match rates to a literal null value – a match rate of zero – would be inappropriate because we would expect some matches to arise simply by chance, even if party match is irrelevant to municipal representation. At the other extreme, comparing match rates to federal rates would be mostly uninformative, since, by construction, partisan match would be nearly 100% at the federal level (this is because we are using federal party vote share to estimate match). We thus know from the outset that party match will be lower in municipal elections than federal elections. I will return to this issue in the discussion section below.

¹⁰Note that these calculations do not adjust for the strength of partisanship - these are simply the responses to the question, “In federal politics, do you usually think of yourself as a...” followed by a list of political parties.

¹¹Compared to the 2015 Canadian Election Study, CMB respondents are slightly more likely to identify as Liberals and slightly less likely to identify as New Democrats, when compared to the general population. This may be a reflection of the high levels of NDP identification in the rural northern parts of many provinces, whose municipalities are not large enough to be included in the CMB survey.

¹²In the supplementary material (SM5), I provide more information about patterns of non-partisanship across institutions and population sizes. Most notably, I find that non-partisans are *more* likely to appear in big cities than in smaller municipalities.

¹³I provide a version of this plot focused on partisanship, rather than ideological self-placement, in the supplementary material.

¹⁴I provide additional information on this finding in SM5

¹⁵See Weissberg (1978) for an introduction to collective versus dyadic representation.

¹⁶See SM6 for additional detail regarding this mechanism.

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6 Author Biography

Jack Lucas is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Calgary. His research is focused on urban democracy and urban political development in Canada. He is the author of *Fields of Authority: Special Purpose Governance in Ontario, 1815-2015*, published by University of Toronto Press, and co-editor of *Big City Elections in Canada*, forthcoming at University of Toronto Press. He has also published recent articles in *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *Urban Affairs Review*, and *Electoral Studies*.

Supplementary Materials

Jack Lucas

July 17, 2020

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1 Canadian Municipal Barometer Survey

The Canadian Municipal Barometer survey is an annual survey of elected municipal officials in every Canadian municipality above 9,000 population. Invitations to complete the 2020 CMB survey were distributed by email on January 6, 2020 and the survey closed on February 28, 2020. A total of 799 individuals completed the survey, for a response rate of 22%. 787 individuals completed the question on federal partisanship that is central to the analysis in this paper. In the table below, I summarize the distribution of survey respondents in comparison to the population of municipal mayors and councillors. These breakdowns provide strong evidence that our survey responses are broadly representative of the larger population from which they are drawn.

	Responses	Survey %	Population %
Province			
BC	96	12.4%	12.0%
AB	95	12.2%	10.0%
SK	19	2.5%	2.5%
MB	29	3.7%	3.0%
ON	272	35.1%	36.0%
QC	197	25.4%	28.0%
NB	19	2.5%	3.0%
NS	26	3.4%	3.0%
PEI	7	0.9%	0.7%
NFLD	13	1.7%	1.5%
YT	2	0.3%	0.2%
NWT	1	0.1%	0.2%
Gender			
M	428	69.50%	68%
F	188	30.50%	32%
Population			
9-15K	275	29.30%	29%
15-25K	184	19.60%	21%
25-50K	155	16.50%	16%
50-100K	94	10%	12%
100-500K	152	16.20%	14%
500K+	80	8.50%	8%

The relevant questions from the Canadian Municipal Barometer survey are as follows:

Party identification. All “none of the above” and “don’t know” responses coded as non-partisan.

- Question text: “In federal politics, do you usually think of yourself as a:” Options: Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Green, Bloc Quebecois, Other, None of the above, Don’t know.
- Number of complete responses: 787.

Municipal political party.

- Question text: “In the last municipal election, did you run as a candidate with a particular party or slate?” Options: No, Yes.
- Number of complete responses: 771.

Ideological self-placement.

- Question text: “In politics people sometimes talk of left and right. Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means left and 10 means right?” Options: 0:10, Don’t know.
- Number of complete responses: 674.

2 Simulations: Robustness

In these figures, I replicate the simulations from the main text within specific institutional structures (figure 1), regions (figure 2), and population size categories (figure 3). In all but one case, the plots demonstrate consistent evidence for party match across institutions, regions, and population sizes. The exception is Atlantic Canada, where we have just 32 observations. This may suggest that party match is less likely in Atlantic Canada, or it may suggest that additional data are required in order to adequately distinguish between observed party match and what we would expect from chance.

Figure 1: **Match by Institution**

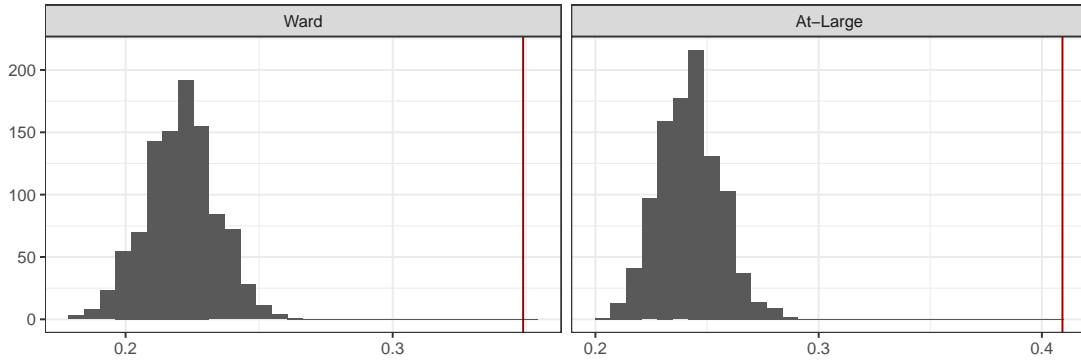


Figure 2: **Match by Region**

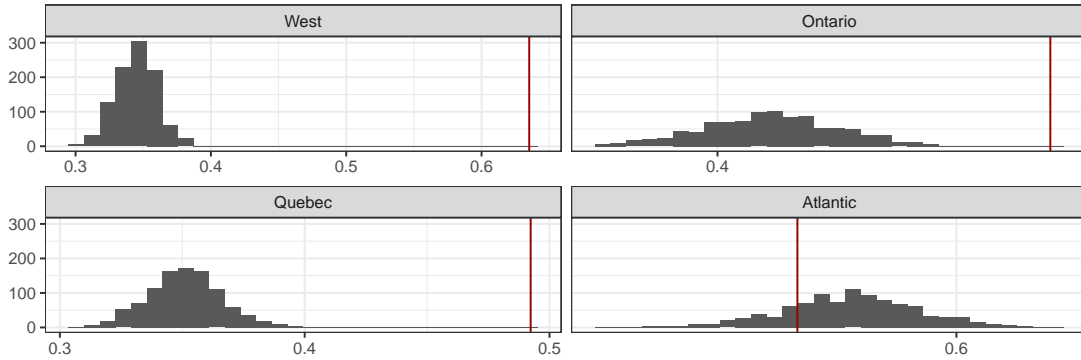
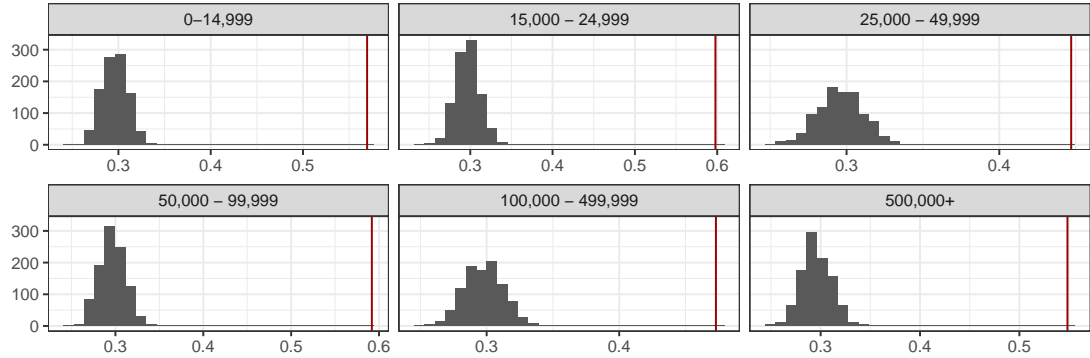


Figure 3: Match by Population Size



3 Predictors: Alternative Approaches

Here I provide the full coefficients for the model reported in the main text (the first column of the table below) along with two alternative models: an OLS model (the second column) and a multilevel model with variable intercepts for municipality and region (the third column). Patterns of statistical significance reported in the main text are robust to these modelling choices.

Table 1: Predictors of Ideological Match

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Ideological Match		
	<i>logistic</i>	<i>OLS</i>	<i>generalized linear mixed-effects</i>
	(1)	(2)	(3)
At Large	0.127 (0.206)	0.030 (0.049)	0.093 (0.198)
Party Strength	1.284** (0.560)	0.299** (0.130)	1.166** (0.541)
Mun. Party	0.267 (0.266)	0.061 (0.061)	0.395 (0.279)
Population Size	−0.298 (0.383)	−0.070 (0.089)	−0.294 (0.375)
Party: Con	−0.482** (0.212)	−0.115** (0.050)	−0.404** (0.206)
Party: NDP	0.234 (0.303)	0.054 (0.070)	0.344 (0.316)
Party: Green	1.863* (1.062)	0.272* (0.144)	2.000* (1.065)
Party: Bloc	0.080 (0.412)	0.019 (0.094)	0.210 (0.421)
Region: ON	−0.276 (0.229)	−0.069 (0.055)	
Region: QC	0.141 (0.294)	0.033 (0.069)	
Region: Atlantic	−0.922*** (0.355)	−0.221*** (0.083)	
Constant	−0.489 (0.569)	0.390*** (0.133)	−0.626 (0.498)
Observations	636	636	636
R ²		0.058	
Adjusted R ²		0.042	

Note:

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

4 Municipal Non-Partisans

The model below reports a logit model of the predictors of non-partisanship. I find no relationship between non-partisanship and ward/at-large institutions. Nor does *municipal* partisanship predict federal partisanship, a clear testament to the disconnect between municipal and federal political parties that we discussed above. Population size, however, *is* related to municipal partisanship, and in the opposite direction that most observers would expect: non-partisanship is more likely in larger municipalities than smaller ones.

This finding is counterintuitive at first, since urban scholars tend to think of big cities as the place where ideological and redistributive politics is possible at the local scale. Yet it may in fact have a logic that is well worth exploring in future research. In small towns and rural municipalities, it is regularly the case that whole towns – even several towns – are represented by a single MP or MLA. Few opportunities are available in these areas for individuals to enter federal or provincial politics, which may lead active partisans to consider running for local office instead. In bigger cities, on the other hand, a city can have as many or even more provincial and federal representatives as municipal councillors. Given incumbent success rates in big cities, opportunities to pursue provincial or federal office may prove to be *more* readily available to ambitious partisans than opportunities for municipal office. This could result in a higher proportion of non-partisan candidates for municipal office in big cities. Whatever the cause, however, the presence of non-partisans on big city councils may be a factor that makes big city politics less ideologically structured than we might otherwise expect, given the array of ideologically charged and redistributive issues that big cities must address. These possibilities are worthy of more focused research, using data sources such as municipal roll calls, to better understand the consequences of having non-partisan politicians on big-city councils in Canada.

Table 2: Predictors of Ideological Match

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Non-Partisanship
At Large	−0.113 (0.232)
Party Strength	−0.188 (0.606)
Mun. Party	−0.403 (0.292)
Population Size	1.043** (0.415)
Party: Con	−0.100 (0.244)
Party: NDP	0.046 (0.324)
Party: Green	−1.283 (1.069)
Party: Bloc	0.154 (0.437)
Region: ON	−0.286 (0.269)
Region: QC	0.204 (0.322)
Region: Atlantic	0.557 (0.370)
Constant	−1.119* (0.626)
Observations	636
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

5 Electoral Systems and Party Strength

As noted in the main text, Canada’s multi-party system, combined with plurality elections, substantially complicates any claims about “Liberal” or “Conservative” or “NDP” districts, because it assumes, for instance, that a Liberal district that was won in a tight three-way race is just as much a Liberal district as one that was secured in a blowout. I have sought to adjust for this problem in the regression analyses in the main text using the “party strength” variable. Here I present two additional plots that provide additional reassurance that my measure of district partisanship is behaving well.

In figures 4 and 5 below, I begin by dividing the data into ten equally-sized bins, much like a histogram; in the first figure, these bins are the margin of victory in the district, and in the second figure, the bins are the voteshare for the winning party. For each bin, I then calculate and plot the mean value of party match. What we should see, if our measure of party match is working properly, is that the probability of a match will increase as the district moves from being what we might call a “plurality win” (a district that was won because of a tight multi-party contest) to being a “stronghold” (a district that was won because a large plurality or majority of voters actually cast a ballot for the winning party). In fact this is precisely what we see: the values of party match climb steadily across the figure as we move from left to right, beginning in the 30 percent range and climbing toward 70 percent in the most dominant districts.¹

Given these figures, it is likely that my measures of party and ideological match are likely to *understate*, rather than overstate, the importance of ideological representation in Canadian municipalities, because I have not excluded the narrow-win districts from inclusion in the party match measure. When we focus only on the stronghold districts, we see much clearer evidence of party match, even when we include non-partisans in the analysis (as I do here). In short, Canada’s multi-party plurality elections create some headaches, but no serious problems, for our analysis.

1. There is only one individual in the final bin, who happens not to match the partisanship of their district.

Figure 4: Party Match by Binned Margin of Victory

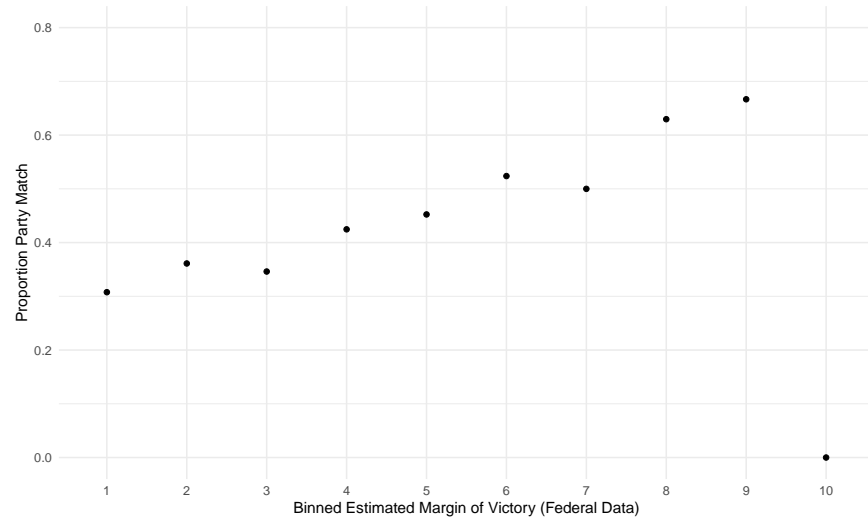
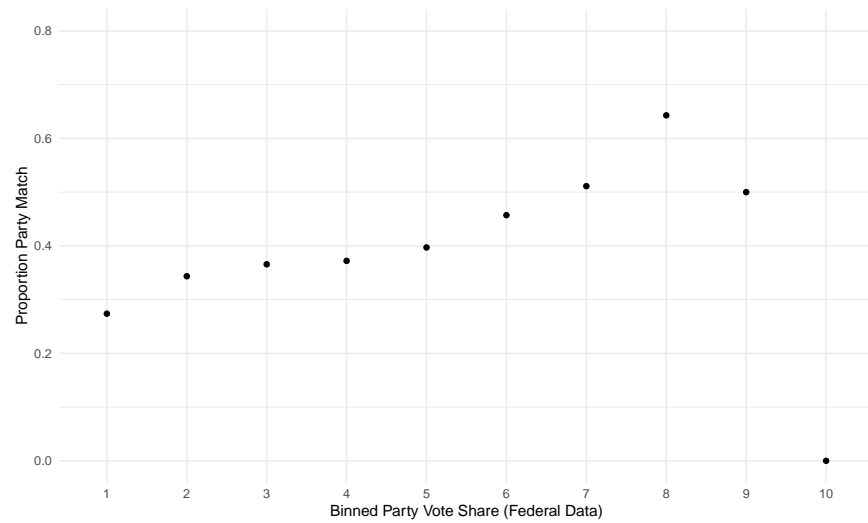


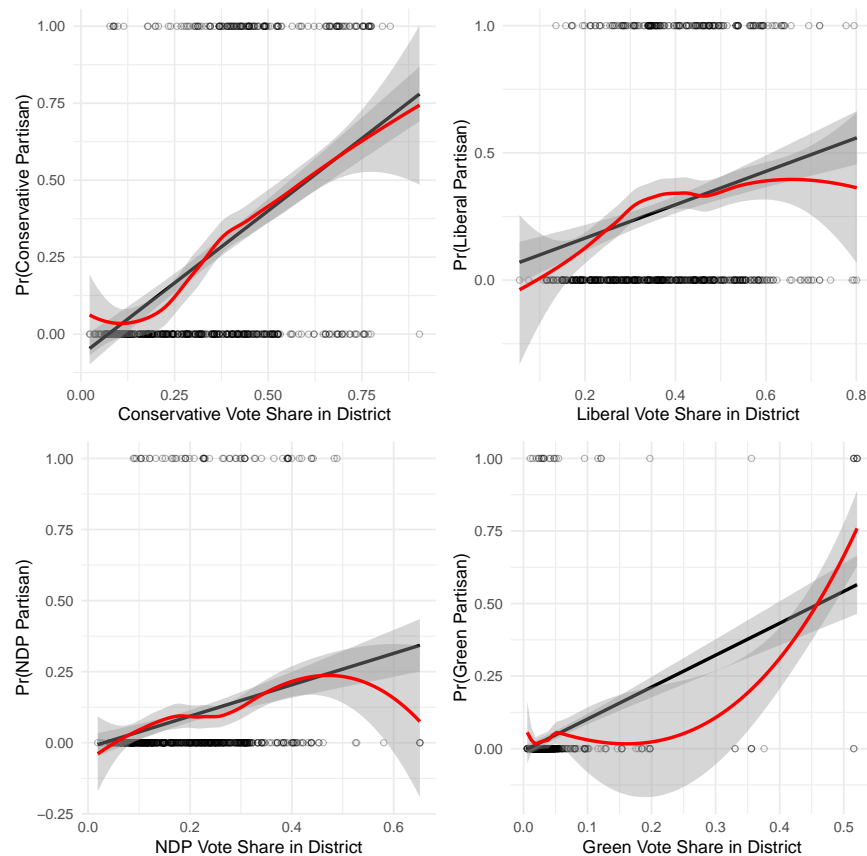
Figure 5: Party Match by Binned Vote Share



6 Party Strength and Party ID: Additional Plots

Figure 6 replicates figure 4 in the main text using partisanship and district party voteshare rather than ideological self-placement. Each plot shows the probability that a municipal representative will identify with the party as the district vote share for that party increases. Black lines plot the linear relationship, and red lines plot the relationship using a locally weighted smoother.

Figure 6: District Ideology and Municipal Representatives' Party ID



7 Coefficient Tables

Table 3 summarizes the coefficients for the models from which average marginal effects are drawn in the model in the main text. Table 4 compares results using two distinct measures of ideological match: the party-winner-based measure, which is used in the main text, and the Conservative-votes share-based measure, which I describe in the main text as a possible alternative approach to ideological match. My substantive findings are identical using either measure.

Table 3: Predictors of Party and Ideological Match

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Party Match		Ideological Match	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
At Large	−0.007 (0.211)	−0.062 (0.239)	0.127 (0.206)	0.172 (0.286)
Party Strength	1.602*** (0.598)	2.022*** (0.668)	1.284** (0.560)	2.302*** (0.774)
Mun. Party	0.296 (0.266)	0.186 (0.304)	0.267 (0.266)	0.250 (0.465)
Population Size	−0.703* (0.389)	−0.295 (0.444)	−0.298 (0.383)	0.858 (0.594)
Party: Con	0.140 (0.215)	0.168 (0.242)	−0.482** (0.212)	−0.847*** (0.280)
Party: NDP	−0.697** (0.328)	−0.788** (0.355)	0.234 (0.303)	0.815 (0.581)
Party: Green	0.102 (0.600)	−0.359 (0.636)	1.863* (1.062)	14.883 (692.013)
Party: Bloc	−0.509 (0.428)	−0.576 (0.474)	0.080 (0.412)	0.302 (0.845)
Region: ON	−0.367 (0.233)	−0.616** (0.262)	−0.276 (0.229)	−0.542* (0.293)
Region: QC	−0.424 (0.302)	−0.395 (0.340)	0.141 (0.294)	0.953* (0.494)
Region: Atlantic	−0.670* (0.362)	−0.510 (0.431)	−0.922*** (0.355)	−1.046** (0.484)
Constant	−1.113* (0.595)	−0.871 (0.659)	−0.489 (0.569)	−0.574 (0.788)
Observations	636	474	636	474

Note:

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

Table 4: Ideological Match: Two Measures

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Id. Match (Measure 1)		Id. Match (Measure 2)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
At Large	0.127 (0.206)	0.172 (0.286)	0.133 (0.207)	0.092 (0.286)
Party Strength	1.284** (0.560)	2.302*** (0.774)	1.036* (0.558)	1.760** (0.766)
Mun. Party	0.267 (0.266)	0.250 (0.465)	-0.020 (0.265)	-0.736* (0.445)
Population Size	-0.298 (0.383)	0.858 (0.594)	-0.694* (0.383)	-0.258 (0.559)
Party: Con	-0.482** (0.212)	-0.847*** (0.280)	-0.612*** (0.213)	-1.047*** (0.277)
Party: NDP	0.234 (0.303)	0.815 (0.581)	0.217 (0.303)	0.781 (0.579)
Party: Green	1.863* (1.062)	14.883 (692.013)	1.858* (1.063)	14.907 (686.061)
Party: Bloc	0.080 (0.412)	0.302 (0.845)	-0.049 (0.413)	0.051 (0.859)
Region: ON	-0.276 (0.229)	-0.542* (0.293)	-0.339 (0.229)	-0.692** (0.288)
Region: QC	0.141 (0.294)	0.953* (0.494)	0.350 (0.296)	1.577*** (0.535)
Region: Atlantic	-0.922*** (0.355)	-1.046** (0.484)	-0.729** (0.352)	-0.670 (0.493)
Constant	-0.489 (0.569)	-0.574 (0.788)	-0.186 (0.567)	0.259 (0.774)
Observations	636	474	636	474

Note:

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