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Exit from intergovernmental organizations - How domestic politics conditions international disintegration

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International disintegration

Disintegration is *rare* but not an *infrequent* event

- Between 1975 and 2004, a state has withdrawn from a multilateral agreement once every 10 days on average (Helfer 2005).

Some more recent examples of democratic withdrawal:

1. UK withdrawal from the EU
2. US ending TPP negotiations
3. Japan exiting the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling

The prevalence of IGO withdrawal highlights the necessity to analyze this “under-explored question” (Shi, 2018, p. 221)

International disintegration

The inverse of established theories of international relations often fall short of explaining disintegration (Vollard 2014; Webber 2014)

- Scholars have begun to develop original, self-contained theories of international **disintegration**
 - Some of these arguments were developed against the backdrop of Brexit

One core arguments for disintegration is **international isolation** (Jones 2018)

- Greece 2015 (imposed isolation)
- UK (self-imposed isolation)

Both forms of isolation are due to a **preference divergence** of states at the international level

- These arguments have been corroborated in empirical research (Shi 2018; von Borzyskowski and Vabulas 2019)

Theory

Withdrawal and the two-level game

Scholarship has left two questions unanswered:

1. Why do states withdraw from intergovernmental organizations if there is no incentive (isolation)?
2. Why do states not withdraw if they have an incentive?

To better understand the dynamics of withdrawal it can be helpful to understand the decision to exit from a **two-level** perspective.

- Governments are engaged in negotiations on an international as well as on a domestic level (Putnam, 1988).
- Actors at the **national level** (level II) are required to “ratify” decisions made on the **international level** (level I)
 - Their role in the termination of membership in an intergovernmental organization should not be underestimated.
- Depending on the size of the **domestic win-set**, i.e. the number of ratifiable deals, a certain foreign policy decision becomes more or less likely.

Domestic polity and the influence of additional pivotal actors

First, I want to compare coalitions and single-party governments.

- Two mechanisms have been proposed:
 - Coalitions foreign policy is **more extreme** because individual coalition members can **diffuse responsibility** across the entire coalition (Oktay, 2014).
 - Mechanism has been corroborated in comparative political science (Fisher & Hobolt, 2010; Hobolt & Karp, 2010; Powell & Whitten, 1993; Vowles, 2010).
 - Voters' inability to punish parties for their foreign policy decisions can create **incentives** for political parties to pursue extreme foreign policies unilaterally.
- As the number of actors included in a coalition government increases, so does the number of **veto players** (Gehlbach, 2013).
- Increasing number of veto players depresses the size of the **win-set** and the likelihood of a change of the status quo (Tsebelis 1995, 2002).
 - Sustained domestic deliberations will have a **moderating** effect on foreign policy decision-making.

H_1 : Coalition governments are more/less likely to withdraw from intergovernmental organizations than single-party governments.

Domestic politics and the influence of ideological fractionalization

Two mechanisms are linked to the ideological preferences of coalition partners and foreign policies.

- Coalition members with extreme preferences may be able to **hijack** the foreign policy-making processes of coalition governments (Beasley & Kaarbo, 2014; Clare, 2010; Kaarbo, 1996a, 1996b).
- Threat to upend a coalition, unless a certain foreign policy demand is met, may shift the foreign policy of entire coalition governments.
- Diverging preferences of coalition governments may gridlock the decision-making process (Clare, 2010; Martin & Vanberg, 2014; Oktay, 2014).
- As the distance between coalition partners increases, this may render the **win-set** empty and prevent the withdrawal from an intergovernmental organization.

In conjunction with the diverging preferences of states on the **international level** we can:

1. Explain why states **do not withdraw** if they have an incentive and
2. Explain why they **do withdraw** if they do not have an incentive

Withdrawal but no incentive

I **assume** that if there is an incentive to withdraw, this is associated with a certain degree of **salience** in the public discourse.

- Hijacking is more likely when nobody is watching
- Without public attention withdrawal from an IGO may not be determined by the ability of single members to **hijack** the coalition.

H₂: The withdrawal from intergovernmental organizations becomes **more likely** as the preferences of pivotal actors diverge **more strongly** if there is no preference divergence on level I (H5 in the paper).

Incentive but no withdrawal

A conditioning element to the exit from intergovernmental organizations is the domestic **win-set**.

- If withdrawal is a **salient issue**, coalition partners can not surrender their preference as easily.
- Given **ideological fractionalization** on international cooperation, the government will likely be impeded in its ability to withdraw from an IGO.

H₃: The withdrawal from intergovernmental organizations becomes **less likely** as the preferences of pivotal actors diverge **more strongly** if there is a preference divergence on level I (H4 in the paper).

Research Design

Data

Information on **withdrawal** and **incentive**

- IGO exits (Pevehouse 2020)
 - Information on IGO membership
 - Allowed me to code termination of membership
- Preference divergence of states in IGOs (Bailey et al. 2015)

Information on **domestic actors** and **ideological fractionalization**

- Relevant actors (Nyrup and Bramwell 2020)
 - Collection of ministers in a government
 - Includes party affiliation
 - Includes policy portfolio of ministers
- Ideological fractionalization (Volkens et al. 2020)
 - Data from the Manifesto project
 - Measures of "preference of international cooperation"

Specifying relevant actors

I assume that **issue-dependent**, specific members of the cabinet may play a **more important** role than others.

- Relevant ministers possess certain amount of autonomy over their portfolio (Martin & Vanberg, 2014)
- These relevant ministers are pivotal to the decision-making
- If *pivotal* ministers are from the same party, they should resemble single-party governments

Controls and modelling strategy

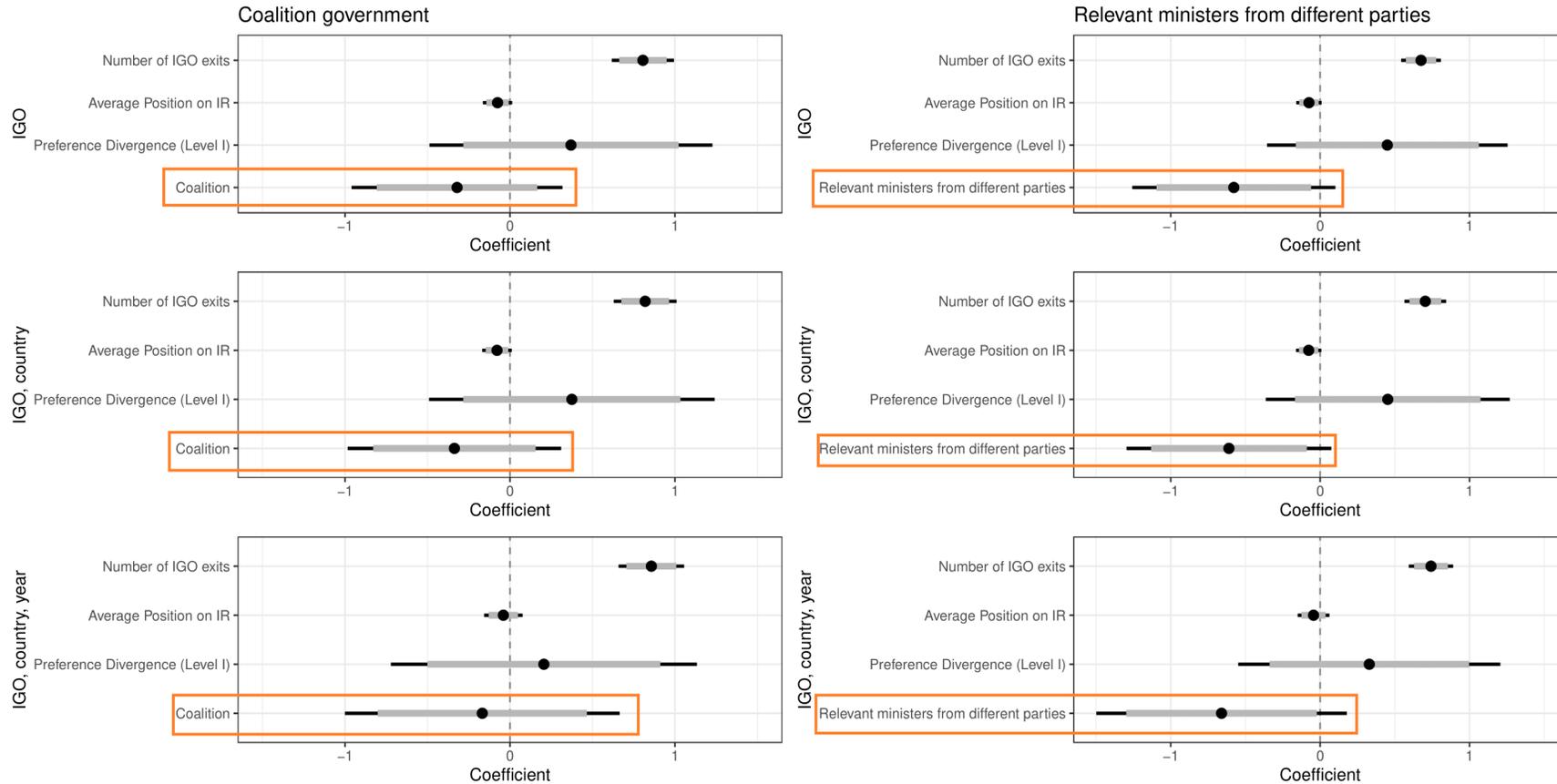
- Incentive (binary): Utilising Bailey et al.'s (2015) **preference divergence** measure I identify the preference divergence among IO members
 - I create a binary measure that, if s country is further from the mean than one standard deviation then I code this as „preference divergence on level I“
- Average internationalism score: Sum of internationalism score for **each minister** in a coalition per party, divided by the number of ministers.
- Number of exits per year from a specific IGO: Count of exits from an IGO in a given year.

Main explanatory variable	Hypothesis	Mechanism	Modelling
Coalition (dummy)	H_1	Additional relevant actors	Logit: varying intercepts
Distance between coalition parties	H_2 & H_3	Ideological incongruence among relevant actors	Logit: interaction & varying intercepts

Table 1: Modelling strategy for different hypotheses

Preliminary analysis

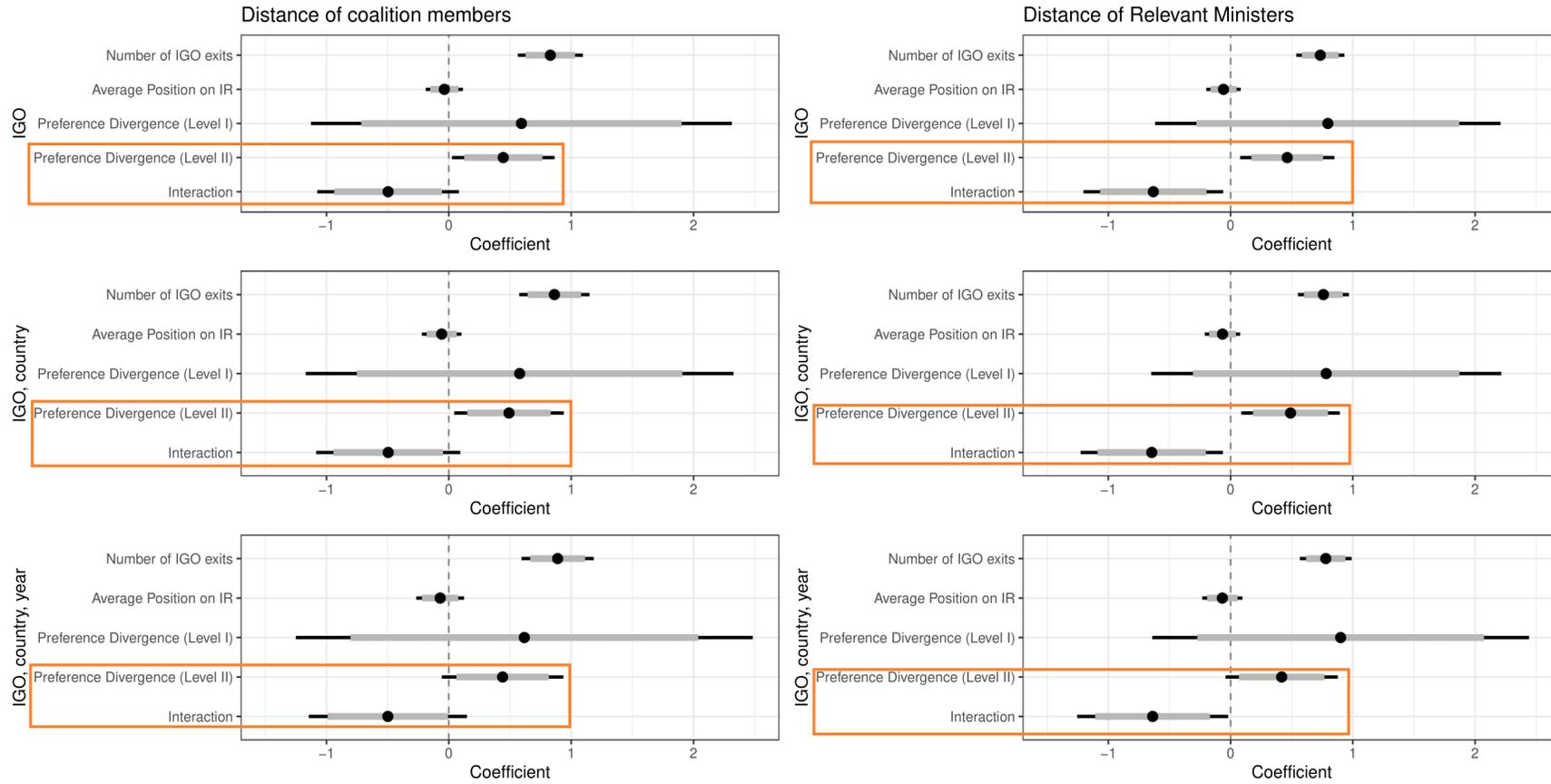
Institutional differences



Single party vs. coalition

- Relevant ministers from different parties has a negative effect (significant at $p < 0.05$)
- Number of exits from given IGO in a given year has a large positive effect

Ideological fractionalization



Ideological fractionalization

- When incentivized, ideological fractionalization makes exit less likely
- Without incentive, ideological fractionalization becomes more likely
- The effect is more pronounced for the analysis of relevant ministers

Preliminary conclusion

Preliminary conclusion

Domestic politics can have a **conditioning** influence on the exit from intergovernmental organizations.

- The analysis has shown that coalition governments, per se, do not exit more or less frequently.
- The position of parties in a coalition shape the behavior of the government.
 - Given an **incentive**, coalition governments will be caught in a deliberative process that moderates their behavior
 - Exits that appear “unprovoked” and without public attention occur more frequently if the coalition government is highly fractionalized.
- I have shown that it is necessary to be precise in the assessment of who is a **relevant actor** in a coalition’s foreign policy decision-making.

Thank you very much for the attention!

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Exit and theories of international integration

In comparison to the expansive field of scholarship on **international integration** our understanding of the causes of disintegration remains limited (Vollard 2014).

Take Moravcsiks (1997) liberal intergovernmentalism:

- Key to integration are economic interdependencies and interest group preferences, however...
 - Poll by the British Chamber of Commerce 60 percent opposed Brexit (Elliott, 2016).
 - Poll by the Confederation of the British Industry. 80 percent preferred remain (Inman, 2016).

Check the article again

- Poll by EFF manufacturing has shown, 63 percent wanted to remain whereas only 5 percent wanted to exit (Macalister, 2016).
- Socio-economic arguments increasingly fall short when we try to explain international cooperation or lack thereof (König, 2018).

Empirical studies of IGO Exit

Case study research (Shi 2018)

- Study of Japanese withdrawal from the international whaling commission
- Changing norm of whaling globally vs. national preference of interest groups and long tradition isolated the country from the other members
- Case study research frequently suffers from issues of external validity
 - Japanese preference for whaling not transferrable to other arenas

Cross-sectional time-series research (von Borzyskowski and Vabulas 2019)

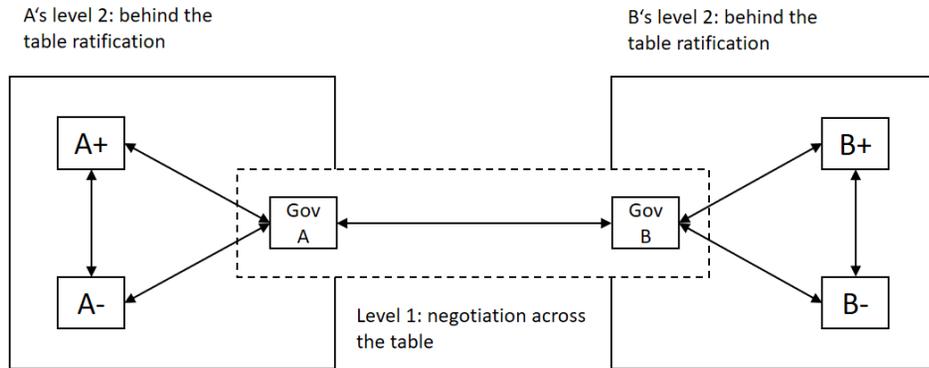
- Time-series cross-sectional analysis
- Between 150.000 and 420.000 observations per model
- Nationalism of government does not influence exit
- Preference divergence leading to isolation prove relevant for withdrawal
- Cross-sectional time-series analyses are unable to explain lack of exits given the relevance of preference divergence (rewrite this)

Scholarship has developed a decent understanding of the incentives of exit, what we are lacking is a better understanding of the conditions of exit

Embedding withdrawal in a two-level framework

There must be a conditioning element to withdrawal...

- A first step to answer the puzzle above is to answer what may constrain governments foreign-policy decision-making

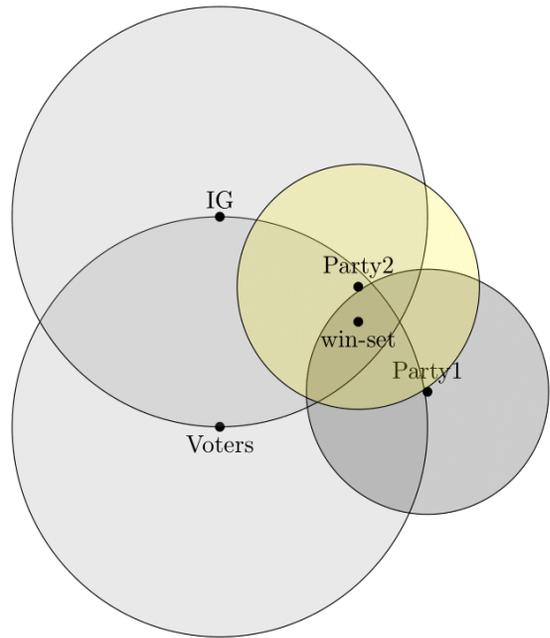


- Changing the status-quo (membership in an IGO) needs to be acceptable for national veto-players
- Unless all relevant actors agree to withdraw, governments may suffer costs from withdrawing regardless

Who are the relevant actors?

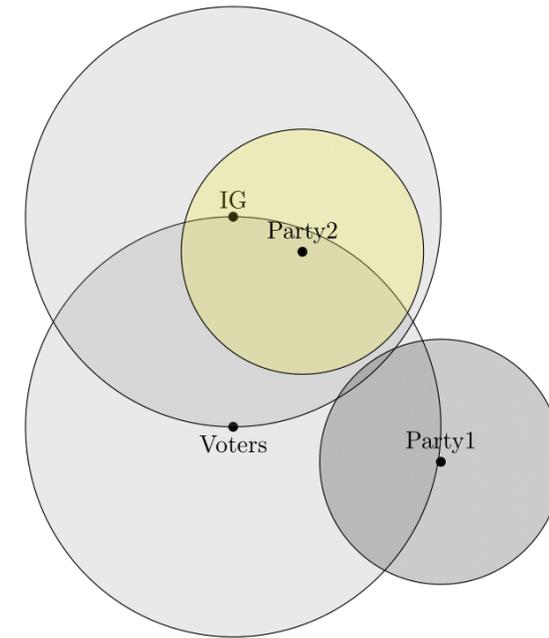
- Scholarship on foreign-policy decision-making has increasingly moved beyond the voters vs. interest groups conceptualization and has begun to include other relevant actors.
- Judiciary
- Other legislative chambers

Linking coalitions, ideology and the TLG



a) Congruent coalition parties

- Coalition parties are somewhat ideologically congruent
 - Win-set of acceptable foreign policies is not empty

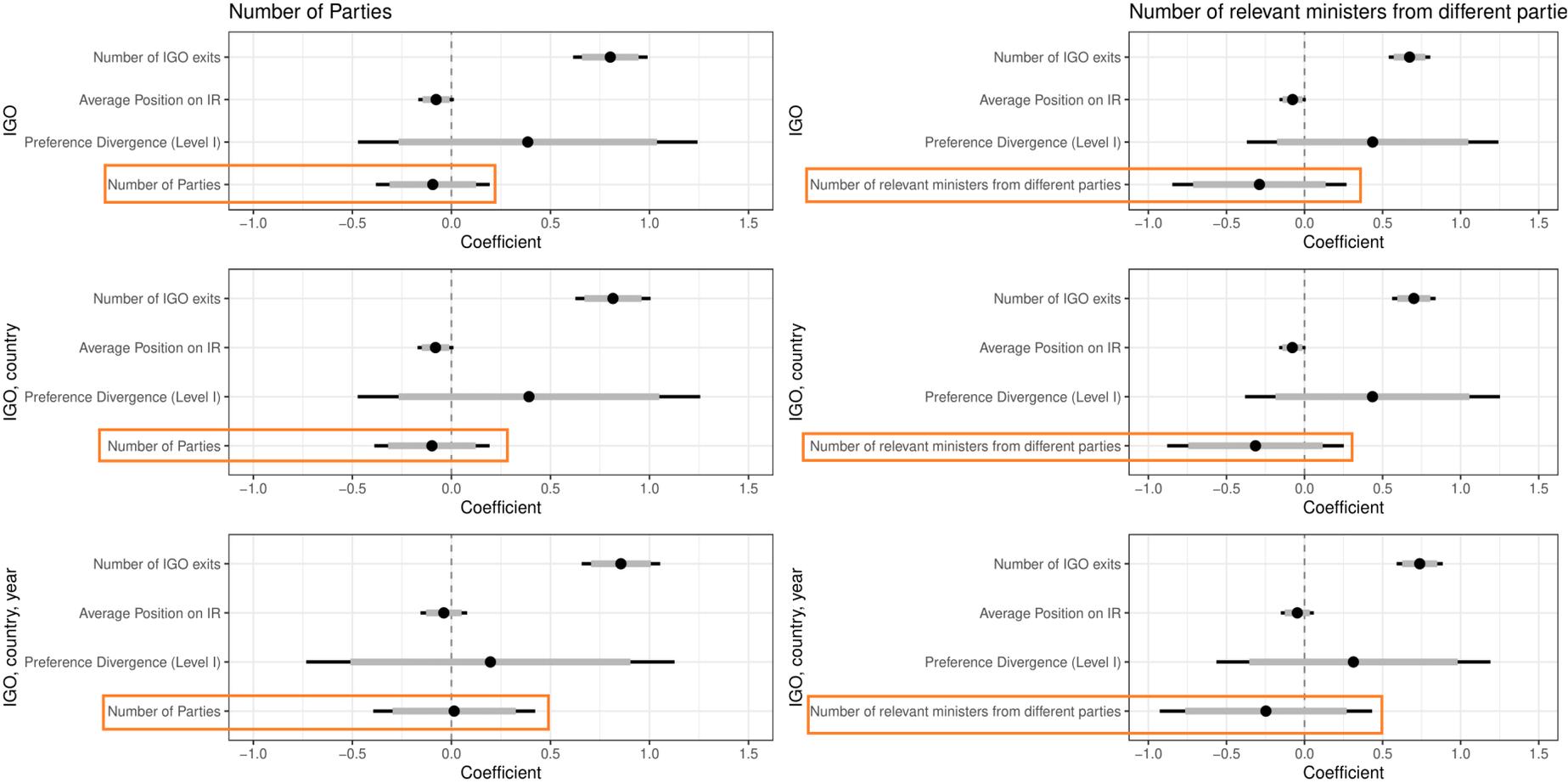


b) Incongruent coalition parties

- Coalition parties are not ideologically congruent
 - Win-set of acceptable foreign policies is empty

I assume that greater **ideological distance** increases the likelihood that no satisfying policy can be found.

Domestic polity - Number of parties & Number of relevant ministers



Number of relevant actors