WHY DO STATES COMMIT TO INTERNATIONAL LABOR STANDARDS? Interdependent Ratification of Core ILO Conventions, 1948–2009

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Introduction

SINCE its creation in 1919, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has adopted 189 conventions on topics such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced labor, child labor, discrimination based on gender and other things, social security, working time, and occupational health and safety. ILO conventions are international treaties that are legally binding for states that choose to ratify them. They should be particularly interesting to international relations (IR) scholars because they combine features of two different kinds of treaties: those that are accepted primarily because of an expectation that other states will reciprocate cooperative behavior, as is common in the fields of trade and arms control, and those for which the expectation of reciprocity is unlikely to play a major role, as is usually the case in the domain of human rights.

Some ILO conventions share features with the first type of treaty because they are designed to mitigate regulatory competition in labor and social standards. The ILO itself points at this motivation in its promotional material:

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> "An international legal framework on social standards ensures a level playing field in the global economy. It helps governments and employers to avoid the temptation of lowering labour standards in the belief that this could give them a greater comparative advantage in international trade . . . Because international labour standards are minimum standards adopted by governments and the social partners, it is in everyone's interest to see these rules applied across the board, so that those who do not put them into practice do not undermine the efforts of those who do."[1]

The logic described in this excerpt implies reciprocity; states are expected to commit to international labor standards primarily to get other states to commit to, and comply with, those same standards.

Some conventions also share features with the second type of treaty. The ILO and many other actors portray commitment to core labor standards as having intrinsic normative value. The ILO document quoted above also stresses that adherence to international labor standards is imperative because work "is crucial to a person's dignity, well-being and development as a human being."[2] Several conventions, such as those on freedom of association, child labor, forced labor, discrimination, migrants, and domestic workers, are explicitly presented as protecting "fundamental human rights."[3] In this logic, states are expected to ratify conventions as way to endorse and express a public and legally binding commitment to a universally valid conception of human dignity.

The dual nature of ILO conventions generates interesting expectations on why and when some states choose to ratify certain core conventions. To the extent that they want to avoid regulatory competition, their decision to ratify should be influenced by the ratification behavior of their economic competitors. To the extent that they want to show support for a norm they believe in, their decision to ratify should be influenced by the degree of congruence between their values and practices in labor and social policy and the content of ILO norms. The latter expectation is consistent with the theory of "rationally expressive ratification" proposed by Beth Simmons in relation to human rights treaties.[4] But the values that state agents choose to affirm by making international commitments are not entirely endogenous; they are likely to be influenced by the norms expressed by other states, particularly by states that they consider to be peers.

This suggests that ratification decisions should be expected to be interdependent not only insofar as they reflect competitive considerations,

[1] ILO 2009, 10–11.
[2] ILO 2009, 10.
[3] ILO 2009.
[4] Simmons 2009.

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but also insofar as they reflect a desire to belong to a normative community of states. But who influences who is likely to be different in the two cases. The aim of this article is to develop hypotheses about interdependent ratification and provide empirical tests. The hypotheses are derived from rationalist institutionalism as well as sociological institutionalism, and thus draw on both rationalist and constructivist research traditions in the study of international relations. The relationship between rationalist and constructivist theories has attracted considerable attention over the past two decades.[5] Our analytical starting point is that the social mechanisms theorized within the two traditions can coexist and operate simultaneously, and thus we have no reason to expect that any evidence pointing to the importance of one class of mechanisms ipso facto proves that the other plays a negligible role. In other words, we want to avoid what Jeffrey Checkel has called a "gladiator" style of analysis, where "one perspective goes forth and slays all others."[6] Accordingly, our aim is not to test rationalist or sociological institutionalism as such, but rather to assess specific hypotheses that are inspired by the general theoretical logics developed by the two research traditions. This is especially important in the case of ILO conventions. We maintain that an analysis of the conventions' role in managing economic interdependence needs to take into account their human rights implications and that an analysis of them as statements of human rights obligations needs to take into account that such conventions raise concerns about economic competitiveness, and that therefore governments have an interest in ratification by competitors.

In the following section, we develop hypotheses on interdependent ratification inspired by rationalist institutionalism and sociological institutionalism. Drawing on the prior, we argue that states should use international labor standards to solve cooperation problems under conditions of strategic interdependence. If states desire to improve domestic labor standards but are concerned that this may advantage their economic competitors in world markets, a joint commitment to international labor standards monitored by the ILO may provide sufficient reassurance that their relative competitiveness will not be substantially affected. If this hypothesis is correct, we should expect states to be more willing to commit to ILO standards once their trade rivals have done so. Competition plays a key role in the hypothesis, but it differs in important ways from traditional competitive diffusion arguments. Such arguments typically focus on negative policy externalities: the adoption of a

[5] See Fearon and Wendt 2002 for an in-depth discussion.
[6] Checkel 2001, 243.

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policy by a government puts other governments under pressure to adopt it as well because of the concern that not adopting it may make a country less competitive.[7] In contrast, we hypothesize a positive policy externality: governments want to commit to labor standards but are reluctant to do so if their main competitors have not made similar commitments. This situation is clearly recognized in the preamble to the constitution of the ILO, approved in 1919 as Part XIII of the Treaty of Versailles. It states that an international institution is required because "the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries." Different from typical competitive diffusion arguments, our inverse externality hypothesis can be summarized as commitments made by governments enable rather than compel their competitors to commit as well,[8] which is why the argument belongs to the institutionalist research tradition. The ILO is an international institution aimed at promoting policy change by mitigating competitiveness concerns.

Drawing on sociological institutionalism, we next hypothesize that states will make formal commitments to international labor standards when doing so conforms to a norm of appropriate behavior that is prevalent in a state's peer groups. Some previous studies on the ratification of human rights treaties capture peer effects by examining the proportion of states in a country's region that have ratified the treaty in question.[9] While we take regional effects into account by controlling for influences among geographically close states, we contribute to the debate by offering a more fine-grained analysis of peer effects that is based on the membership of states in the same international organizations. This approach captures subregional and transregional peer effects in addition to regional ones. We hypothesize that states should be more willing to ratify core labor conventions in the wake of ratification by states they are intensely linked to through international organizations.

[7] Simmons, Dobbin, and Garrett 2006, 792, summarize this mechanism as follows: "When a country's policy choice gives it an edge in attracting foreign investment or in selling to export markets, competitors will have strong incentives to give up policy tools they favor on political or social grounds and follow suit—for fear of large-scale losses of investment and jobs. This of course happens whether the new policy actually creates favorable circumstances, or whether investors and global buyers merely believe that it creates favorable circumstances." This effect has been detected in a wide range of policy areas, such as capital account policy, exchange rate policy, current account policy, capital taxation, bilateral investment treaties, social protection expenditures, public sector size, and central bank independence. See Elkins and Simmons 2004; Polillo and Guillén 2005; Elkins, Guzman, and Simmons 2006; Jahn 2006; Swank 2006; Lee and Strang 2006; and Cao 2010.

[8] We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for helping us clarify this difference and for suggesting the term "inverse externality."

[9] Goodliffe and Hawkins 2006; Hathaway 2007; Wopitka and Ramirez 2008; Simmons 2009.

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The third section presents our main methodological strategy, which is based on spatial regression models applied to seven ILO conventions and 187 countries between 1948 and 2009. The conventions were designated as "core" by the ILO and their special importance in the ILO normative system has been recognized by the ILO as well as independent observers. Two of the core conventions regulate or mandate the elimination of forced or compulsory labor. These are the Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour (Convention No. 29), adopted in 1930 and ratified by 174 states (referred to in this article as Forced Labor Convention); and the Convention Concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour (Convention No. 105), adopted in 1957 and ratified by 169 states (Abolition of Forced Labor Convention). Two protect labor union rights. These are the Convention Concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (Convention No. 87), adopted in 1948 and ratified by 150 states (Freedom of Association Convention); and the Convention Concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively (Convention No. 98), adopted in 1949 and ratified by 160 states (Collective Bargaining Convention). Two others prohibit discrimination in employment. These are the Equal Remuneration Convention (Convention No. 100), adopted in 1951 and ratified by 168 countries; and the Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (Convention No. 111), adopted in 1958 and ratified by 169 countries (Discrimination Convention). Finally, one core convention mandates the abolition of child labor—the Convention Concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (Convention No. 138), adopted in 1973 and ratified by 156 states (Minimum Age Convention). Another core convention, the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention (Convention No. 182), was adopted in 1999 but is not included here because of the limited number of years in which it has been open for ratification.

The fourth section presents the outcome of our analysis. We find strong empirical support for both hypotheses. The fifth section aims to gain deeper insight into the causal mechanisms of interdependent ratification by considering how foreign influences interact with domestic politics in the ratification process. A case study of the ratification of the ILO's Equal Remuneration Convention by the United Kingdom provides qualitative evidence for our social influence hypothesis and suggests that ratification of ILO conventions by social peers can tip the balance in a domestic contest between supporters and opponents of ratification by providing argumentative ammunition to supporters. A

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quantitative test of the ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention across all countries provides further evidence in support of this conjecture. Ratification by social peers has a statistically significant effect on ratification where the proratification coalition (using the percentage of legislators who are female as proxy) is neither very strong nor very weak. These are the conditions under which foreign behavior has the greatest potential to tip the domestic balance in favor of ratification.

We discuss our findings in the sixth section and end with some concluding remarks.

Theories of Interdependent Ratification

Governments know that the ratification of ILO conventions may have consequences.[10] Externally, it exposes governments to close scrutiny of their labor legislation and practices by international bodies, which may result in forms of public condemnation that most would prefer to avoid.[11] As a former secretary of labor of the government of India explained, "We don't want to ratify [the Minimum Age Convention] because we don't want to be crucified every time someone discovers child labourers in India."[12] While the ILO itself does not apply material sanctions, its formal criticism of serious violations of ILO commitments can be used by other states to legitimize sanctions that they may decide to impose. For example, in 2003 the United States Congress enacted the "Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act," which banned imports from Myanmar and cited the ILO's condemnation of Myanmar for its use of forced labor. Domestically, ratification of ILO conventions prompted national courts in many countries to refer to them in judicial proceedings.[13] These are among the possible consequences that help to explain why most states do not ratify most ILO conventions and why some ratify conventions many years after their adoption by the ILO.

Why do states ratify ILO conventions, then? We expect that an important part of the explanation lies in what Simmons hypothesizes in relation to human rights treaties in general, "Governments are more likely to ratify rights treaties they believe in and with which they can comply at a reasonable cost than those they oppose or find threatening."[14]

[10] See Strang and Chang 1993 for a more thorough discussion of how ratification of ILO conventions can affect domestic policies, and Simmons 2009 for a broader discussion of the potential importance of the legal commitment expressed by ratification of treaties.

[11] Weisband 2000 presents systematic evidence of this effect.

[12] Koenig-Archibugi interview with Dr. P. D. Shenoy, Delhi, India, December 16, 2004.

[13] Thomas, Oelz, and Beaudonnet 2004.

[14] Simmons 2009, 64.

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We can expect both the belief and the cost to be determined to a significant extent by domestic conditions. On the one hand, commitment to a convention is more likely when it embodies values supported by the political parties or groups in power and, relatedly, when the political system provides effective channels of influence to the main beneficiaries of the policies mandated by the convention.[15] On the other hand, the burden of ratification is probably lower when a state has already implemented the policies required by the convention or when a state can afford to implement the required policy adjustments, which in turn is related to the level of its economic development. Other scholars have examined these political and economic domestic factors and estimated their impact,[16] and we include the factors as control variables in the analysis we report below.

This article focuses on the insight that neither the benefits nor the burdens of ratification are likely to stem exclusively from domestic factors and, more specifically, that benefits and burdens are not independent from ratification by other states. Two influential perspectives in IR theory, rationalist institutionalism and sociological institutionalism, provide reasons to expect that decisions to ratify ILO conventions are influenced by the ratification behavior of other states. While both approaches would predict the interdependence of ratification decisions, they are complementary in that they stress different, but not incompatible, sets of causal mechanisms and thus we would expect different patterns of interdependence to emerge.

Rationalist institutionalism directs the attention of researchers of international institutions toward the role of such institutions in solving strategic dilemmas that could otherwise generate inefficient outcomes—that is, leaving potential gains on the table. The key thesis of rationalist institutionalism is that states are able to mitigate the problem of inefficiency by manipulating the context of their interactions and, more specifically, by creating and sustaining international institutions and organizations.[17]

There is ample evidence that the ILO was created in order to address problems of strategic interdependence in labor standards policy.[18] Policymakers hoped that by agreeing on and implementing common standards, they would be able to improve labor conditions according to domestic preferences without compromising the ability of their industries

[15] Rodrik 1999.

[16] Chau and Kanbur 2001; Boockmann 2001; Boockmann 2006; Flanagan 2003; and Kim 2010.

[17] Examples of this literature are Keohane 1984; Oye 1986; Martin 1992; Lake 2001; Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal 2004; and Mitchell and Powell 2011.

[18] See the extensive historical evidence presented in Follows 1951.

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to compete with foreign producers. There is some debate on whether strategic interdependence with regard to labor standards has the form of a prisoner's dilemma (PD) game or an assurance game.[19] Thomas Palley, for instance, models it as a PD.[20] Alan Hyde, by contrast, argues that at least some types of labor standards give rise to an assurance game or "stag hunt."[21] The key difference between the two is the status of mutual cooperation. In an assurance scenario, mutual cooperation is a stable equilibrium—each state prefers to keep high labor standards in its jurisdiction provided that other states do the same. In a PD scenario such collaboration is more fragile. States are tempted to defect from cooperation and use lower standards to gain a competitive advantage. What both scenarios have in common, however, is their take on the worst possible outcome. This outcome—and one that states want to avoid—is a situation in which they are left to implement higher standards while their competitors either fail to raise them or lower them.

The ILO has several of the features that rationalist institutionalists would expect to find in an international organization aimed at mitigating the fear of unreciprocated cooperation. The often detailed content of ILO conventions reduces ambiguity about what constitutes compliance and makes it easier to determine whether a state has complied or not. States are subject to demanding reporting obligations, and the supervisory system of the ILO processes information on national labor laws and practices that originates not only from governments but also from private organizations, notably labor unions. States that are found to be in violation of their obligations are named and shamed and exposed to the possibility of sanctions by other states.[22]

As noted above, in the assurance and PD scenarios the worst outcome is for a state to implement high labor standards while its competitors lower theirs or fail to raise them. The implication is that a country's decision to ratify ILO conventions should be affected by whether its trade competitors have ratified or not. We therefore formulate the following hypothesis:

> H1. A state is more likely to ratify an ILO convention when its economic competitors have ratified it.

[19] In a PD, each player prefers outcomes in this order: "ego defects, alter cooperates," "ego cooperates, alter cooperates," "ego defects, alter defects," "ego cooperates, alter defects." In an assurance game, the order of preference is "ego cooperates, alter cooperates," "ego defects, alter cooperates," "ego defects, alter defects," "ego cooperates, alter defects."

[20] Palley 2004.

[21] Hyde 2009.

[22] Weisband 2000.

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The other major approach that leads us to expect ratification decisions to be interdependent is sociological institutionalism. For sociological institutionalists in international relations, the goals, values, normative constraints, and cognitive maps of policymakers are not exogenous to their interactions with their foreign counterparts, but are at least partly constructed in a social process that transcends state boundaries. A particularly influential version of sociological institutionalism has been developed by the so-called Stanford School led by John W. Meyer and his colleagues. Its main tenet is the existence of a world culture that shapes conceptions of appropriate social actors, collective goals, and public policies, and a world polity constituted by organizational linkages that transmit this world culture to all states.[23]

The ratification of international treaties can be interpreted as one of the ways in which states affirm their adherence to norms and thus membership in a normative community.[24] The conventions adopted by the ILO can certainly be seen as embodying global norms with universalistic scope and moral content. The preamble to the ILO constitution justifies its creation with reference not only to strategic interdependence in labor policy, as seen above, but also to social justice and its contribution to world peace. The ILO Declaration of Philadelphia (May 1944) reaffirms this goal and states that "all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity."

The ratification of ILO conventions can thus be interpreted as an action that affirms a state's membership in a normative community—the community of states committed to promoting a conception of social justice. States may adopt behavior (ratification) that conforms to this identity as a result of different social mechanisms, such as mimicking, social influence, or persuasion.[25] As Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink have noted, different mechanisms may be predominant at different stages of the norm life cycle.[26] In recent years there has been significant progress in understanding the scope conditions under which such mechanisms work or not.[27]

For our purposes, it is important to distinguish two steps in the socialization process. First, peer groups operate as a source of desirable

[23] See, for instance, Finnemore 1996a; Meyer, Boli, Thomas, and Ramirez 1997; Boli and Thomas 1997; Wopitka and Ramirez 2008.

[24] See Frank 1999; Cole 2005; Wopitka and Ramirez 2008; Wotipka and Tsutsui 2008.

[25] Johnston 2008.

[26] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 898.

[27] See, for instance, Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Zürn and Checkel 2005.

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identities and models of behavior that are appropriate to those identities. Second, compliance with norms of appropriate behavior is rewarded with esteem, self-esteem, and feelings of personal consistency, while leaders of states whose behavior does not conform to those models experience pressure to eliminate or reduce such discrepancies. This pressure to conform seeks to convince state leaders "that their behavior is inconsistent with an identity to which they aspire."[28] It can be exerted by a variety of actors in a variety of sites. The actors can be peers themselves, especially peers that appear to comply with the relevant expectations. With regard to the ratification of labor conventions, the ILO itself offers a particularly favorable institutional context for the application of peer pressure. As a result of constitutional amendments adopted in 1946 that introduced demanding obligations to report on nonratified conventions, "the recurrent pressure and exposure to which States were subjected had been greatly intensified and States were placed in a position where they had to justify to other member States their refusal to ratify a particular convention or implement a certain recommendation. The Organization proceeds by a process of attrition, directed at wearing down the resistance of States."[29] Peer pressure can also be based on regional forums. For instance, at a 1960 conference in Lagos, the governments of mostly newly independent African states adopted a resolution declaring the ratification and strict application of the human rights conventions of the ILO to be a "question of honour and prestige" for all African nations.[30] An example of peer pressure exerted within the Council of Europe to ratify ILO conventions is presented below.

A key role in highlighting failures to conform to the ratification behavior of reference groups may also be played by domestic actors, such as labor unions, human rights groups, members of legislatures, or party activists. "Domestic interest groups, legislators and courts can operate within the state in a manner analogous to subjective sensations of guilt and shame within the individual. They can act as internal sanctioning mechanisms punishing violations of international norms."[31] Scholars for whom "domestic preferences are the critical causal link between systemic socialization and state policy"[32] would expect the discursive strategies of domestic groups to be the main chain of transmission between foreign and domestic ratification. But even scholars who focus on back-patting

[28] Risse and Sikkink 1999, 15.
[29] McMahon 1965, 15.
[30] Maul 2012, 260.
[31] Alderson 2001, 419.
[32] Moravcsik 1997, 539. See also Cortell and Davis 2005.

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and opprobrium at the international level identify bottom-up as well as top-down mechanisms that make international models of conduct influential.[33] The role of domestic actors in the ratification of ILO conventions is discussed in more detail—in the context of an analysis of equal pay policies in the United Kingdom—below.

Another important aspect of international socialization highlighted by recent research is the variety of channels—notably the media, transnational advocacy networks, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), epistemic communities, transgovernmental networks, bilateral diplomacy, and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)—through which normative models can travel from one country to another. As Alastair Iain Johnston[34] discusses, for a variety of reasons IGOs understood as social environments have provided a particularly fertile ground for research on international socialization.[35] The population of IGOs grew massively over the course of the twentieth century and thus opportunities for socialization and norm diffusion have multiplied dramatically. However, in contrast to what world polity theorists imply when they state that the world is "a unitary social system, increasingly integrated by networks,"[36] patterns of membership in IGOs, and possibly in other environments of state socialization, are increasingly fragmented and heterogeneous. The issue is not simply that some states have stronger connections to the world polity than other states; in fact, inequality in the number of IGO memberships per state has decreased since the nineteenth century. It is rather that, as Jason Beckfield points out, "while states are growing more even in the number of IGOs they belong to, they increasingly belong to different IGOs."[37] He finds that since 1945 the network of IGOs has become more fragmented, more heterogeneous, less cohesive, and less small-worldly in its structure. This finding means that the study of norm diffusion through intergovernmental networks requires a fine-grained analysis of who is connected to whom. If social peer groups are defined as states that influence each other's identities and provide models of appropriate behavior for those identities, then a hypothesis on the ratification of ILO conventions can be formulated as:

> H2. A state is more likely to ratify an ILO convention when its social peers have ratified it.

[33] Johnston 2008, 95–99.
[34] Johnston 2008, 26–32.
[35] See, for instance, Finnemore 1996b; Gheciu 2005; Johnston 2008; Greenhill 2010.
[36] Boli and Thomas 1997, 172.
[37] Beckfield 2010.

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Nancy Chau and Ravi Kanbur examine whether the ratification of ILO conventions is affected by regional peer effects by counting how many states in a regional grouping have ratified the relevant conventions.[38] Simmons and other scholars studying the ratification of human rights treaties also take into account the proportion of states in a state's region that have ratified the treaty in question.[39] We capture social peer effects in a different way—by counting the number of shared memberships in international organizations. We hypothesize that states should be more willing to ratify core labor conventions in the wake of ratification by states to which they are intensely linked through international organizations. Membership of the organizations we consider can consist of a subset of states in a region, encompass all states in a region, or connect states located in different regions. This approach has two advantages. First, it can give us a more fine-grained insight into which countries are regarded as social peers. Many international organizations in our sample have region-wide membership, and thus our measure is able to capture regional influence. But countries can also have intense connections with a subset of states in their region or with states in other regions and our measure allows us to assess the effects of those connections as well. Second, by not considering the regional level exclusively, we increase our confidence that our analysis captures beliefs about appropriate behavior and not simply what Simmons calls "social camouflage."[40] As she points out, human rights INGOs and other advocacy groups tend to have a regional focus and the purely strategic rationale for not standing out as nonratifier among ratifiers is much weaker when the objects of comparison include subregional peers and, especially, states in other regions. We further increase our confidence in the distinctive effect of joint IGO memberships by controlling for influences among geographically proximate states in our empirical analysis.

Research Design

We estimate a model including a spatial lag of the variable that captures whether a country ratifies an ILO convention weighted by the number of joint IGO memberships and the intensity of economic competition between countries. We also include several variables for country characteristics and potential external shocks.[41] Consistent with earlier research,

[38] Chau and Kanbur 2001.

[39] Goodliffe and Hawkins 2006; Hathaway 2007; Wopitka and Ramirez 2008; Simmons 2009.

[40] Simmons 2009, 88.

[41] As recommended by Ward and Gleditsch 2008, we calculate the Moran index using the total number of ILO conventions ratified by each country. The result confirms that there is statistically significant spatial correlation among countries. Thus, the inclusion of spatial lags is appropriate here.

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we estimate a Cox proportional-hazards model, with standard errors adjusted for clustering on countries.[42] The advantage of using the Cox model over the various survival models available to researchers is that it does not require us to make assumptions about the shape of the underlying survival distribution. Moreover, when a spatial term is included, the use of the Cox model rather than parametric survival models is recommended by recent studies.[43] A test based on Schoenfeld residuals indicates that the proportional-hazards assumption holds for the large majority of the covariates in all our models. We interact the covariates for which the proportional-hazards assumption does not hold with the logged time trend, as recommended by Janet Box-Steffensmeier and Christopher Zorn.[44] We thus estimate the following equation:

$$h_{i,t} = h_0(i,t)\exp[\beta\, x_{i,t-1} + \delta\, w_{ij,t-1}\, y_{i,t-5} + \varepsilon_{i,t}], \quad (1)$$

where $h_{i,t}$ is the hazard rate for country i at time t, h_0 is the baseline hazard, β and δ are the coefficients, $x_{i,t-1}$ is a vector of control variables that are lagged by a year, and $w_{ij,t-1}\, y_{i,t-5}$ is a vector of spatial lag terms.[45] Significance tests are based on Huber (robust) standard errors. These standard errors control for possible heteroskedasticity (serial correlation) and intragroup correlation of the data.

The unit of analysis is country year. We analyze 187 countries across 62 years, from 1948 through 2009. The Forced Labor Convention began being ratified before 1948 (in 1930), and 67 countries are left censored for this convention. Others conventions were ratified either in 1948 or later. Thus, the time span for this second group of conventions starts from the year in which a convention was first ratified. For instance, ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention starts in 1951. Some, mostly very small, countries were excluded from the analysis because of data limitations. Many countries enter the database in the year of their independence, which is often after 1948. Our data set is therefore unbalanced.

[42] Beck 2008, 486. Survival analysis is an elegant way to model our empirical analysis because we are dealing with both right-censored data and left-censored data. See Beck, Epstein, Jackman, and O'Halloran 2002; Darmofal 2009. See Elkins, Guzman, and Simmons 2006 for a widely cited application of spatial econometrics with a Cox model, and Barthel and Neumeyer 2012 for a more recent example. For applications of the Cox model in the literature on the ratification of ILO conventions see Boockmann 2001; Boockmann 2006; Chau and Kanbur 2001.

[43] Golub 2008.

[44] For the significance of the proportional hazard test we rely on $p<0.05$.

[45] For a discussion on how to estimate spatial lag models, see Beck, Gleditsch, and Beardsley 2006.

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Dependent Variables

For each country in the data set we code whether it ratified an ILO core convention in a specific year, which allows us to calculate the time (in terms of years) that a country went without ratifying a convention—that is, the hazard rate. Some observations are right censored since a few countries ratified these ILO conventions after 2009. For instance, Afghanistan ratified the Minimum Age Convention on April 7, 2010. We analyze each convention independently from the others, and therefore countries drop from the data set when they ratify a convention. Ratification information is taken from the ILOLEX Database of International Labor Standards.[46] Figure 1 shows the survival rate of each convention in the period under investigation.

Independent Variables

Our main independent variables are N*N*t spatial weight matrices. A spatial weight matrix measures the impact a policy change in one country

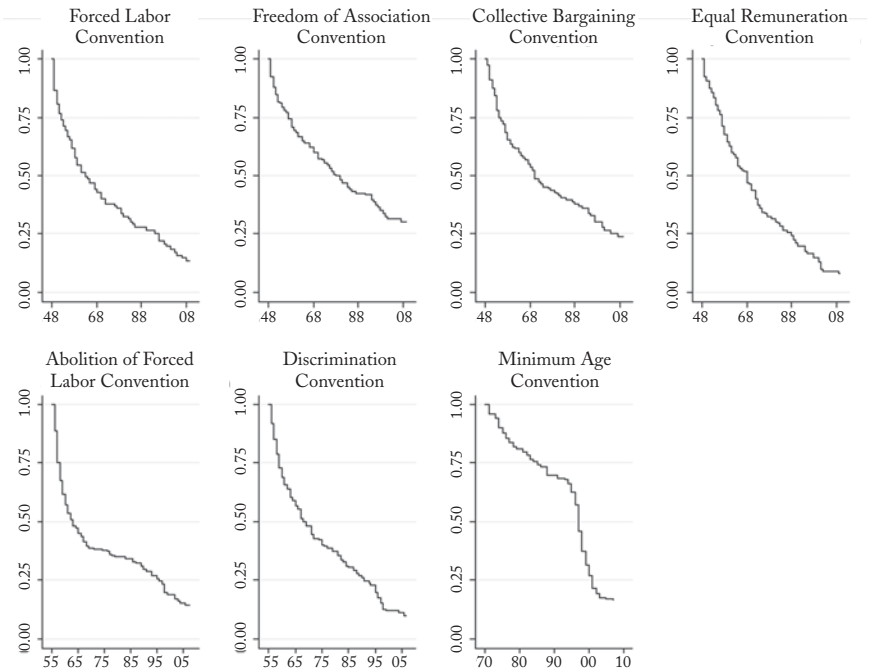


Figure 1
Survival Rates of the Seven Core Conventions

[46] Database available at http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english.

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has on all other countries. It uses specific factors, such as spatial proximity or degree of economic interdependence, to weigh the importance of a policy change in one unit to other units. In our case, the policy change is whether a state has ratified an ILO convention during the previous five years. The variable is lagged by one year to avoid simultaneity bias.[47] For instance, Afghanistan ratified the Abolition of Forced Labor Convention in 1963 and thus our lagged dependent variable scores 1 from 1964 to 1968. It should be noted that this may lead to underestimating the spatial effect if a state's announcement of its intention to ratify is sufficient to trigger a reaction in other states. The five-year cut-off point reflects the assumption that the effect of a country's ratification on the probability of triggering other ratifications fades over time. This assumption is based on the logic behind Hypothesis 1, which suggests that states may be expected to reciprocate their competitors' ratification within a reasonable time lag, and the logic behind Hypothesis 2, which suggests that ratification events—given high visibility in ILO forums—boost the domestic salience of peers' ratification. We consider alternative assumptions below.

Hypothesis 1 generates the expectation that the degree to which state A will respond to state B's ratification by ratifying the same convention itself depends on the degree of economic competition between A and B. To measure that degree of competition we use an index developed by Simone Polillo and Mauro Guillén.[48] This indicator is based on trade data that are disaggregated at the product level (two-digit level classification), yielding seventy-seven product vectors. Data come from the United Nations Global Common Database. We used rescaled Pearson correlation coefficients between product vectors for countries *i* and *j* in year *t–1* to obtain the second indicator of export similarity.[49] We label this variable EXPORT SIMILARITY.[50]

Formally, the spatial weight of the variable COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION for country A is:[51]

[47] See Beck, Gleditsch, and Beardsley 2006.

[48] Polillo and Guillén 2005.

[49] For computational reasons, we rescale the correlation index from 0 to 2.

[50] Our measure of economic competition is likely to lead to an *underestimation* of the effect of interdependent ratification because it captures the attention that states pay to the ratification behavior of states hosting competing exporters, but not the attention paid to states hosting sizeable import-competing producers (who compete for shares of their own home market with other countries' exporters). Thus, our empirical analysis should be seen as a conservative test of our hypothesis. We also note that our operationalization of export similarity provides the basis for a more fine-grained analysis than the approach used by Chau and Kanbur 2001, who classified countries into five categories, exporters of manufactures, primary products, fuel, services, and diversified exporters, on the basis of 1988–92 data.

[51] The spatial matrices have been calculated using the software MATLAB 7.0, whereas estimations are computed using the software STATA 11. We do not row-standardize our weighting matrix for theoretical and methodological reasons. Indeed, in line with our theory, we are interested in the

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$$COMPETITORS'\ RATIFICATION_{\bar{A}} = \sum_{B,C,D,\ldots} \left[EXPORT\ SIMILARITY_{A;B,C,D,\ldots} * ILO_CORE_CONV_RATIFICATION_{B,C,D,\ldots} \right], \quad (2)$$

where ILO CORE CONV RATIFICATION is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if country B (C, D . . .) ratified a given ILO convention during the previous five years, and EXPORT SIMILARITY is the variable described above, which ranges between −1 and 1.

Hypothesis 2 generates the expectation that a state is more likely to ratify a convention if the convention has been ratified by states with whom it interacts within social environments. We focus on interaction within IGOs and count the number of shared memberships in IGOs among any two states. The empirical implication is that if state A has a high number of joint memberships with state B, A is more likely to ratify an ILO convention if B has ratified it. Data from the Correlates of War (version 2.0) data set on memberships in intergovernmental organizations are used to construct the variable IGOs MEMBERSHIP.[52] Formally, the spatial weight of the variable ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION for a country A is:[53]

$$ASSOCIATES'\ RATIFICATION_{\bar{A}} = \sum_{B,C,D,\ldots} \left[IGOs_MEMBERSHIP_{A;B,C,D,\ldots} * ILO_CORE_CONV_RATIFICATION_{B,C,D,\ldots} \right]. \quad (3)$$

Control Variables

We include several economic and political control variables in our model to avoid overestimating the effect of our main explanatory variables. All these variables are lagged by one year to avoid posttreatment bias.

We include the additional spatial term NEIGHBORS' RATIFICATION, which is meant to capture the effect of ratification by countries that are geographically proximate. We do this in order to ensure that the variables ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION and COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION show the operation of the mechanisms we hypothesized and not simply the mechanism of emulation among close neighbors. NEIGHBORS' RATIFICATION is obtained by multiplying the distance (from capital to capital) by

absolute pressure on a country independent of the pressure on another country. Moreover, row-standardization does not come without consequences and may impact inference; see Plümper and Neumayer 2010, 428–31.

[52] Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke 2004.

[53] Since the three spatial terms are highly left-skewed, we use the logarithm to reduce the impact of outliers. Our results, available on request, are not sensitive to the logarithmic transformation.

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the number of ILO conventions that the other country ratified within the past five years and then taking its reciprocal.[54]

We also include the variable CUMULATIVE RATIFICATIONS, which counts the number of countries that ratified each convention in previous years. Including this variable allows us to check that diffusion is not merely driven by the increasing number of countries ratifying ILO conventions for reasons independent of the relationships among them, such as common shocks.[55] Moreover, it allows us to check for potential endogeneity resulting from including a lagged dependent variable as an independent variable in our model.[56]

It is especially important to control for two domestic variables, GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) PER CAPITA and POLITICAL REGIME. GDP PER CAPITA can be expected to influence ratification for a number of reasons. First, governments of richer countries are likely to have stronger administrative capacities and therefore they may find it less burdensome to comply with the reporting requirements entailed by ratification and with the formal need to revise labor legislation. Second, actual labor standards are usually higher in developed economies and therefore policy adjustments are less costly for them. Third, in wealthier countries potential beneficiaries and supporters of the policies mandated by the core conventions may have access to more resources for organization and mobilization.[57] The type of political regime can be expected to influence ratification because political leaders competing for the popular vote in contested elections are more likely to want to be seen as promoting the rights of workers, women, ethnic minorities, children, and the other groups that the core ILO conventions aim to protect from exploitation.[58] Apart from electoral incentives, such leaders are also more likely to have a genuine belief in the normative validity of those rights.

We also control for LEGAL TRADITION, which is a dummy variable that scores 1 if a country has a common law system and 0 otherwise.[59]

[54] Data on distance are from Mayer and Zignago 2011. The effect of our main spatial terms is unchanged (or stronger) if we exclude NEIGHBORS' RATIFICATION (results available from the authors upon request).

[55] Franzese and Hays 2008.

[56] Plümper and Neumeyer 2010.

[57] Data on gross domestic product (GDP) per capita are from Heston, Summers, and Aten 2011; Madison 2011. Data on unionization rates are either unavailable or potentially misleading outside of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) context. The Potential Labor Power (PLP) index developed by Rudra 2005 cannot be applied to our analysis because it is only available for a small subset of our observations, but GDP per capita appears to be a satisfactory proxy because "average PLP in the high-income countries is *more than five times greater* than the average PLP in the low-income countries, and almost twice as high as the middle-income countries (in the 1990s)." Rudra 2005, 39.

[58] Rodrik 1999. Data on the variable REGIME are from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland 2010.

[59] Data are from Ayyagari, Demirgüç-Kunt, and Maksimovic 2006.

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We include this variable because some scholars highlight the role of domestic legal traditions in making countries more or less likely to ratify international treaties and submit to the scrutiny of international courts and semi-judicial bodies.[60] We also take into account the fact that a set of historical, cultural, and political factors may affect the propensity of states to commit to human rights treaties.[61] To capture this aspect, we create the variable RATIFIED HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES, which counts how many core international human rights treaties a state has ratified in previous years.[62] To ensure that any effect of ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION actually reflects the ratification behavior of specific countries with which a state shares IGO memberships, we also control for the absolute number of IGOs a country is member of (ABSOLUTE IGO MEMBERSHIPS). Finally, we include POPULATION and a dummy that scores 1 during the Cold War period (COLD WAR), that is, before 1989.[63] Table 1 summarizes the univariate statistics. For the control variables, descriptive statistics refer to the Forced Labor Convention.

Findings

Tables 2–5 report the results of the analysis for each convention. Overall, there is strong support for both Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2.

Regarding COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION, the coefficients are positive and statistically significant at conventionally accepted standards for all conventions, with the exception of the Freedom of Association Convention.[64]

We obtain similar results for ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION. The coefficients are positive and statistically significant at conventionally accepted standards for all conventions, with the exception of the Abolition of Forced Labor Convention.

When we include both spatial terms in the same model, results for three conventions do not change. Both variables continue to have a positive and statistically significant effect on the ratification of the Forced Labor Convention. COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION is confirmed as the only driver of the Abolition of Forced Labor Convention, and only ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION matters for the Freedom of Association

[60] Simmons 2009; Mitchell and Powell 2011.

[61] We are grateful to Beth Simmons for directing our attention to this issue.

[62] See Baccini and Koenig-Archibugi 2014, Appendix A for details.

[63] Population data are from Maddison 2011. We rescaled this variable to avoid obtaining very small coefficients. Our results are not sensitive to this choice.

[64] For an alternative operationalization of COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION, see Baccini and Koenig-Archibugi 2014, Appendix B.

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TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Variables	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*Minimum*	*Maximum*	*No. Obs.*
Competitors' Ratification					
Forced Labor Convention	1.24	1.01	0	3.39	1867
Abolition of Forced Labor Convention	1.36	1.05	0	3.86	2511
Freedom of Association Convention	1.26	1.03	0	3.17	3969
Collective Bargaining Convention	1.37	1.02	0	3.43	3354
Equal Remuneration Convention	1.37	0.89	0	3.56	2945
Discrimination Convention	1.24	0.90	0	3.67	2675
Minimum Age Convention	1.24	1.19	0	4.43	3567
Associates' Ratification					
Forced Labor Convention	4.16	1.68	0	6.43	1867
Abolition of Forced Labor Convention	5.06	1.73	0	7.38	2511
Freedom of Association Convention	4.64	1.43	0	6.51	3969
Collective Bargaining Convention	4.79	1.37	0	6.66	3354
Equal Remuneration Convention	5.01	1.39	0	6.92	2945
Discrimination Convention	5.08	1.55	0	6.98	2675
Minimum Age Convention	4.92	1.90	0	7.88	3567
Control Variables [a]					
Cumulative Ratifications	70.24	33.23	0	129	1867
Neighbors' Ratification	0.14	0.23	0	1	1867
GDP per capita [b]	5.75	1.36	2.70	9.50	1867
Regime	0.34	0.47	0	1	1867
Legal Tradition	0.27	0.45	0	1	1867
Ratified Human Rights Treaties	1.71	2.25	0	10	1867
Absolute IGO Memberships	35	17.47	1	92	1867
Population [c]	0.31	1.43	6.51e–07	12.04	1867
Cold War	0.76	0.43	0	1	1867

[a] For the control variables, descriptive statistics refer to the Forced Labor Convention.
[b] GDP in 1967 US dollars.
[c] Population divided by 100,000,000.

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TABLE 2
DETERMINANTS OF RATIFICATION OF CORE ILO CONVENTIONS ON FORCED LABOR

	Forced Labor Convention			*Abolition of Forced Labor Convention*		
	(1)	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*	*(5)*	*(6)*
Competitors' Ratification	0.767***		0.775***	0.298**		0.269**
	(0.143)		(0.189)	(0.117)		(0.133)
Associates' Ratification		0.362*	0.269***		0.142	0.127
		(0.187)	(0.095)		(0.098)	(0.088)
Neighbors' Ratification	−1.057	−1.004		−2.117*	−1.886	
	(0.781)	(1.409)		(1.156)	(1.289)	
Cumulative Ratifications	0.010	−0.007	0.005	0.007	0.005	0.010*
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
GDP per capita	−0.085	−0.046	−0.046	−0.056	−0.068	−0.046
	(0.099)	(0.098)	(0.099)	(0.080)	(0.081)	(0.081)
Regime	0.209	0.158	0.177	0.392*	0.409**	0.383*
	(0.264)	(0.250)	(0.265)	(0.209)	(0.206)	(0.210)
Legal Tradition	0.197	0.141	0.288	0.569***	0.515**	0.580***
	(0.231)	(0.236)	(0.244)	(0.213)	(0.214)	(0.215)
Ratified Human Rights Treaties	−0.108	−0.152**	−0.080	0.014	−0.003	0.021
	(0.067)	(0.070)	(0.068)	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.050)
Absolute IGO Memberships	0.010	0.006	0.001	0.008	0.010	0.006
	(0.012)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Population	−2.118**	−3.049**	−2.280**	−0.433**	−0.494**	−0.424**
	(0.973)	(1.312)	(1.038)	(0.175)	(0.197)	(0.175)
Cold War	0.688	−0.099	0.705	0.307	0.190	0.482
	(0.510)	(0.456)	(0.524)	(0.411)	(0.393)	(0.404)
PH test (Prob>χ^2)	0.89	0.43	0.78	0.78	0.47	0.82
No. of countries	125	125	125	172	172	172
No. of ratifications	92	92	92	135	135	135
Observations	1,867	1,867	1,867	2,511	2,511	2,511

Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

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TABLE 3
DETERMINANTS OF RATIFICATION OF CORE ILO CONVENTIONS ON LABOR UNION RIGHTS

	Freedom of Association Convention			*Collective Bargaining Convention*		
	(7)	*(8)*	*(9)*	*(10)*	*(11)*	*(12)*
Competitors' Ratification	0.217		−0.026	0.315*		0.074
	(0.139)		(0.182)	(0.165)		(0.245)
Associates' Ratification		0.499***	0.445***		0.320***	0.300***
		(0.147)	(0.114)		(0.092)	(0.096)
Neighbors' Ratification	−1.586**	0.344		−0.612	−0.354	
	(0.692)	(1.160)		(1.052)	(1.189)	
Cumulative Ratifications	−0.004	−0.010	−0.012	0.003	−0.027***	−0.027***
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.005)
GDP per capita	−0.192*	−0.169*	−0.177*	−0.126	−0.187*	−0.185*
	(0.099)	(0.097)	(0.097)	(0.089)	(0.098)	(0.097)
Regime	0.935***	0.873***	0.879***	0.344	0.295	0.290
	(0.238)	(0.243)	(0.240)	(0.256)	(0.253)	(0.254)
Legal Tradition	−0.919***	−0.919***	−0.924***	−0.498**	−0.561**	−0.560**
	(0.267)	(0.273)	(0.272)	(0.251)	(0.249)	(0.248)
Ratified Human Rights Treaties	−0.006	−0.030	0.008	0.056	0.072	0.074
	(0.053)	(0.037)	(0.054)	(0.045)	(0.052)	(0.051)
Absolute IGO Memberships	0.011	0.001	0.004	0.002	0.005	−0.005
	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Population	0.135	0.384	0.388	−1.759**	−2.052**	−2.024**
	(0.570)	(0.672)	(0.691)	(0.834)	(1.008)	(0.998)
Cold War	−0.782***	−0.885***	−0.811***	0.959**	−1.230***	−1.254***
	(0.261)	(0.279)	(0.244)	(0.467)	(0.336)	(0.331)
PH test (Prob>χ^2)	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.23	0.01	0
No. of countries	172	172	172	173	173	173
No. of ratifications	99	99	99	109	109	109
Observations	3,969	3,969	3,969	3,354	3,354	3,354

Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

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TABLE 4
DETERMINANTS OF RATIFICATION OF CORE ILO CONVENTIONS ON DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

	Equal Remuneration Convention			*Discrimination Convention*		
	(13)	*(14)*	*(15)*	*(16)*	*(17)*	*(18)*
Competitors' Ratification	0.220*		0.089	0.651***		0.533***
	(0.119)		(0.132)	(0.148)		(0.185)
Associates' Ratification		0.580**	0.460***		0.752***	0.132
		(0.230)	(0.148)		(0.206)	(0.150)
Neighbors' Ratification	−2.079**	1.031		0.333	3.988***	
	(0.823)	(1.491)		(0.677)	(1.314)	
Cumulative Ratifications	0.005	0.002	0.002	−0.007	−0.002	−0.008
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.006)
GDP per capita	−0.184**	−0.148*	−0.158*	−0.001	0.0003	0.003
	(0.081)	(0.082)	(0.082)	(0.084)	(0.081)	(0.082)
Regime	0.492***	0.446**	0.444**	0.095	0.089	0.091
	(0.190)	(0.196)	(0.193)	(0.210)	(0.211)	(0.208)
Legal Tradition	0.617**	0.695***	0.623**	0.490**	0.510**	0.506**
	(0.255)	(0.258)	(0.253)	(0.241)	(0.241)	(0.240)
Ratified Human Rights Treaties	−0.025	0.078**	−0.004	0.165***	0.152***	0.150***
	(0.052)	(0.034)	(0.051)	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.041)
Absolute IGO memberships	0.013*	0.006	0.006	−0.004	−0.013*	−0.006
	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Population	0.307	0.351	0.446	−0.348	−0.339	−0.364
	(0.382)	(0.431)	(0.430)	(0.362)	(0.368)	(0.387)
Cold War	0.302	0.252	0.260	1.092	0.867***	0.981***
	(0.340)	(0.345)	(0.366)	(0.224)	(0.214)	(0.218)
PH test (Prob>χ^2)	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
No. of countries	173	173	173	173	173	173
No. of ratifications	138	138	138	137	137	137
Observations	2,945	2,945	2,945	2,675	2,675	2,675

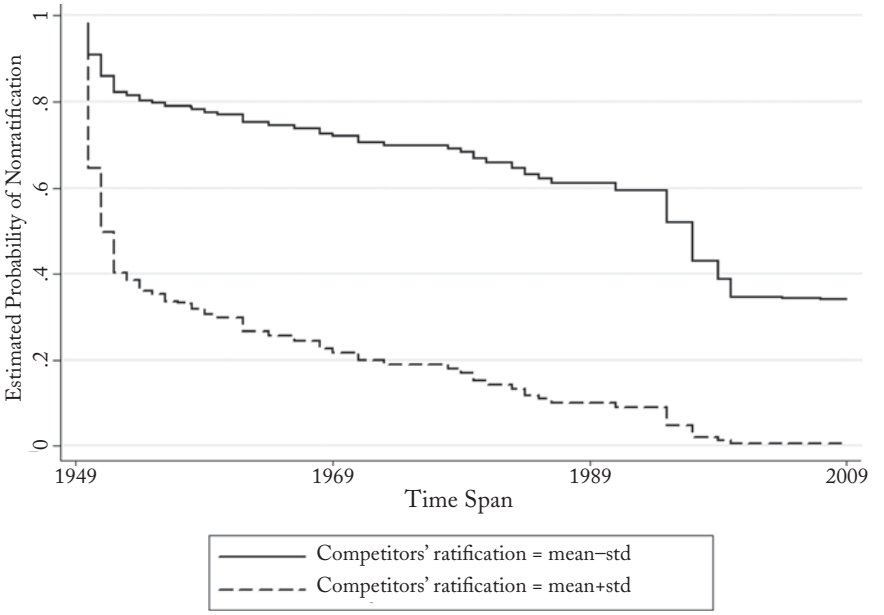
Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

TABLE 5
DETERMINANTS OF RATIFICATION OF THE CORE ILO CONVENTION ON MINIMUM AGE FOR EMPLOYMENT

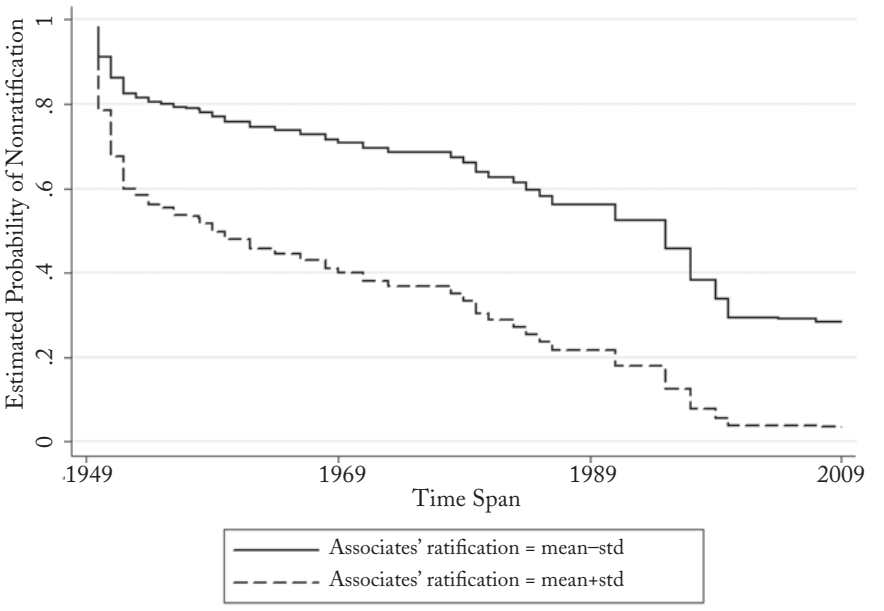
	Minimum Age Convention		
	(19)	*(20)*	*(21)*
Competitors' Ratification	0.355**		0.253
	(0.177)		(0.196)
Associates' Ratification		0.467**	0.412**
		(0.201)	(0.178)
Neighbors' Ratification	–0.000	–0.003	
	(0.004)	(0.004)	
Cumulative Ratifications	–0.007	–0.002	–0.013
	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.011)
GDP per capita	0.071	0.083	0.077
	(0.055)	(0.054)	(0.054)
Regime	0.141	0.130	0.128
	(0.190)	(0.190)	(0.188)
Legal Tradition	–0.643***	–0.627***	–0.644***
	(0.222)	(0.221)	(0.217)
Ratified Human Rights Treaties	0.099**	0.080*	0.086*
	(0.049)	(0.046)	(0.048)
Absolute IGO Memberships	0.002	–0.001	–0.001
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Population	–0.027	–0.026	–0.025
	(0.094)	(0.102)	(0.096)
Cold War	–1.450**	–0.924*	–1.400**
	(0.666)	(0.559)	(0.624)
PH test (Prob>χ^2)	0.56	0.68	0.58
No. of countries	169	169	169
No. of ratifications	128	128	128
Observations	3,538	3,538	3,567

Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

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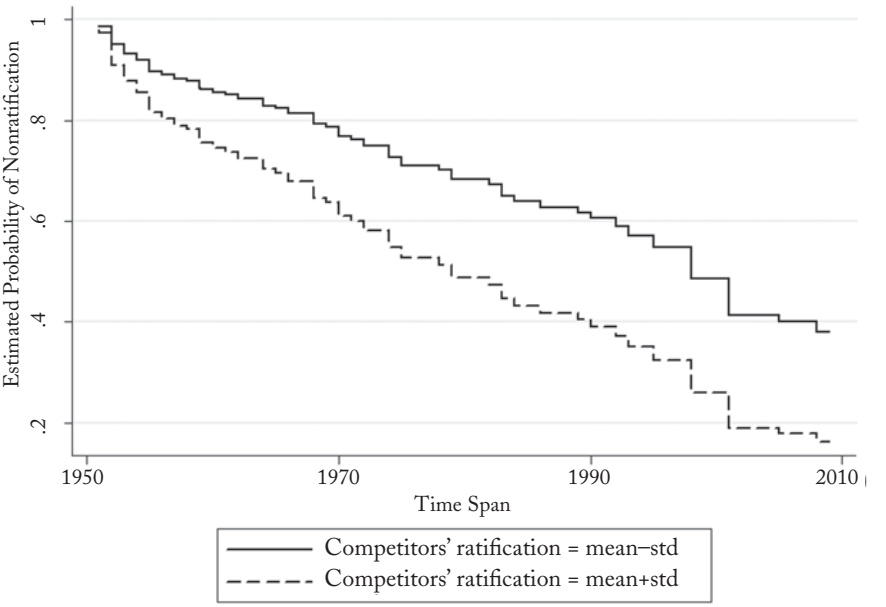
(a)



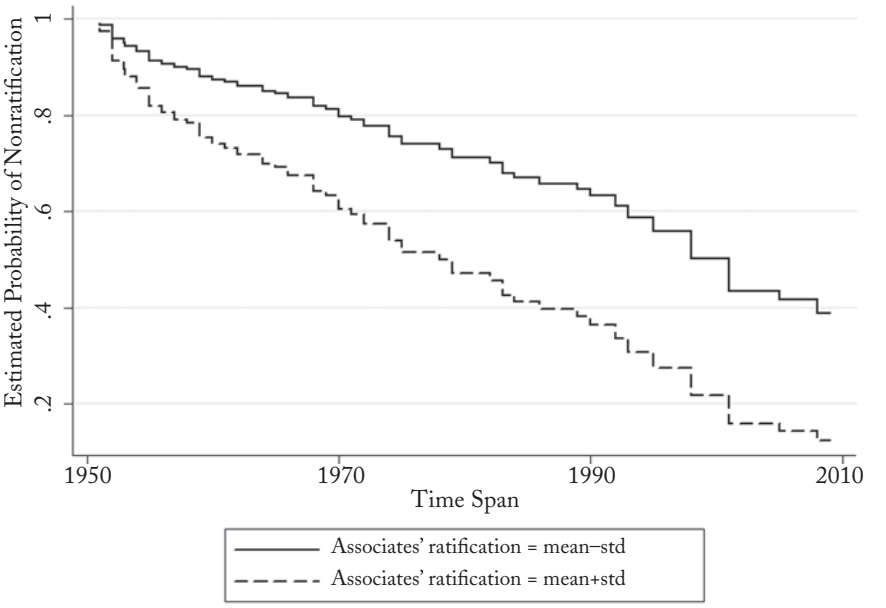
(b)

FIGURE 2
FORCED LABOR CONVENTION: ESTIMATED PROBABILITY OF NONRATIFICATION AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION AND ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION

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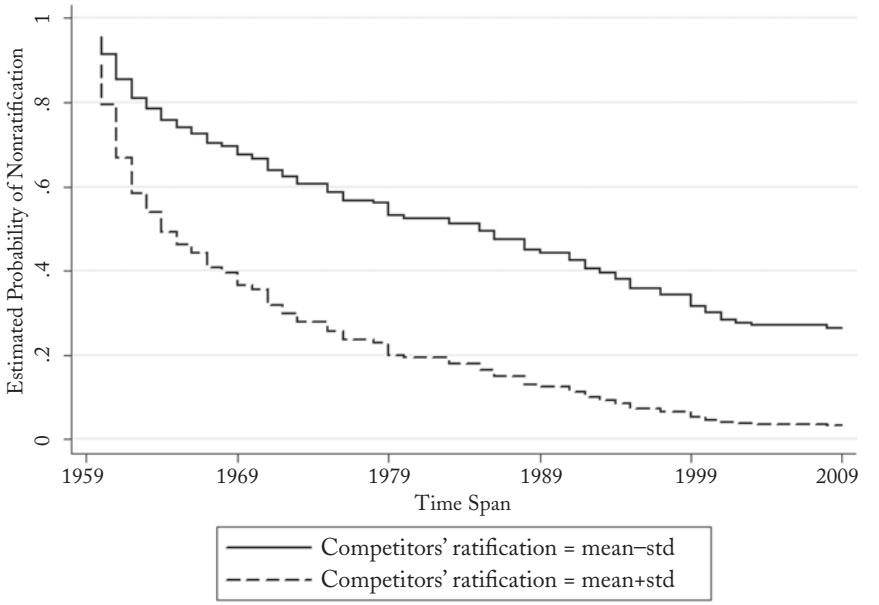
(a)



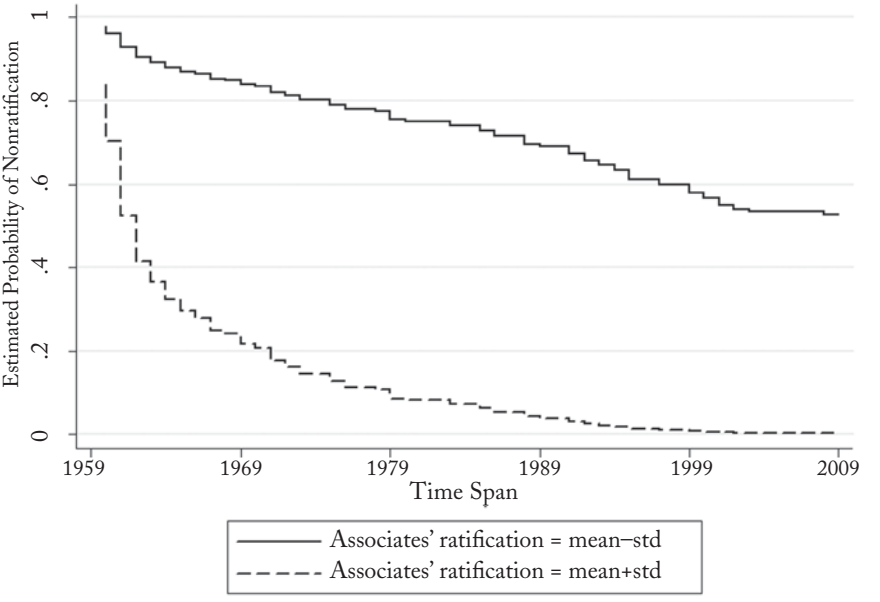
(b)

FIGURE 3
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CONVENTION: ESTIMATED PROBABILITY OF NONRATIFICATION AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION AND ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION

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(a)



(b)

FIGURE 4
DISCRIMINATION CONVENTION: ESTIMATED PROBABILITY OF NONRATIFICATION AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION AND ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION

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Convention. By contrast, only COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION remains positive and statistically significant in relation to the Discrimination Convention and only ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION remains positive and statistically significant in relation to the Collective Bargaining Convention, the Equal Remuneration Convention, and the Minimum Age Convention.

Figure 2(a) and (b), Figure 3(a) and (b), and Figure 4(a) and (b) illustrate the magnitude of the effects of COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION and ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION on the probability of ratification. We show the survival curves for the Forced Labor Convention, the Collective Bargaining Convention, and the Discrimination Convention.[65]

Two other ways of gauging the substantive effect of our variables of interest are presented in Table 6. One consists of first differences of the marginal effects and the other consists of ratios of the marginal effects.[66] The table is computed on the basis of the estimates of the models in which COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION and ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION are included separately and are statistically significant. For those variables, we take a standard deviation below and above the mean to make the effects comparable to those obtained from the survival curves, and hold the other variables at their means. While an increase of two standard deviations produces a small change in percentage terms, the ratios show that the probability of ratification is mostly between two and six times higher for countries with high values in our explanatory variables than for countries with low values in them.

With respect to our control variables, there is some evidence that regimes where leaders are chosen through contested elections are more likely than autocracies to ratify core ILO conventions, although this is true only for some conventions. By contrast, developed economies are not more likely than developing countries to ratify ILO conventions. LEGAL TRADITION seems to be an important predictor of the probability of ratifying ILO conventions, whereas the other control variables—including CUMULATIVE RATIFICATIONS and NEIGHBORS' RATIFICATION—have no consistently significant effects across all seven conventions.

We perform additional analyses based on alternative assumptions. First, the analyses presented so far reflect the assumption that the effect

[65] Where statistically significant, the survival curves for the Freedom of Association Convention, the Equal Remuneration Convention, the Abolition of Forced Labor Convention, and the Minimum Age Convention are shown in Baccini and Koenig-Archibugi 2014, Appendix C.

[66] We thank an anonymous referee for suggesting the inclusion of a first differences table. Since marginal effects and first differences are difficult to interpret with the Cox model due to the absence of a baseline hazard, we run probit models with cubic polynomials to estimate the first differences. We used the STATA command MARGINS to calculate the predicted probability.

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Table 6
The Effect of Competitors' Ratification and Associates' Ratification on the Probability of Ratification

	Marginal Effect at (Mean−Std.) %	*Marginal Effect at (Mean+Std.) %*	*(Mean−Std.) → (Mean+Std.) %*	*(Mean+Std.)/ (Mean−Std.)*
Forced Labor Convention				
Competitors' Ratification	1.6	5.6	4.3	3.7
	[0.8, 2.3]	[3.5, 7.8]	[2.7, 5.5]	
Associates' Ratification	1.5	6.1	4.6	4.1
	[0.5, 2.6]	[2.2, 10.0]	[1.7, 7.4]	
Abolition of Forced Labor Convention				
Competitors' Ratification	2.3	4.4	2.1	1.9
	[1.6, 3.0]	[3.2, 5.7]	[1.6, 2.7]	
Freedom of Association Convention				
Associates' Ratification	1.0	3.3	2.3	3.3
	[0.6, 1.4]	[2.1, 4.5]	[1.5, 3.1]	
Collective Bargaining Convention				
Competitors' Ratification	1.7	2.1	0.4	1.2
	[0.9, 2.4]	[1.3, 3.0]	[0.3, 0.6]	
Associates' Ratification	1.4	2.5	1.1	1.8
	[0.7, 2.0]	[1.3, 3.7]	[0.6, 1.7]	
Equal Remuneration Convention				
Competitors' Ratification	3.6	4.8	1.2	1.3
	[2.8, 4.5]	[3.7, 6.0]	[0.9, 1.5]	
Associates' Ratification	2.4	7.6	5.2	3.2
	[1.3, 3.4]	[4.6, 10.6]	[3.3, 7.2]	
Discrimination Convention				
Competitors' Ratification	2.9	7.0	4.1	2.4
	[2.1, 3.6]	[5.2, 8.8]	[3.1, 5.2]	
Associates' Ratification	1.5	9.2	7.7	6.1
	[0.5, 2.4]	[5.9, 12.6]	[5.4, 10.2]	
Minimum Age Convention				
Competitors' Ratification	1.3	3.3	2.0	2.5
	[0.8, 1.7]	[2.2, 4.4]	[1.4, 2.7]	
Associates' Ratification	0.7	4.6	3.9	6.6
	[0.2, 1.1]	[2.6, 6.5]	[2.4, 5.4]	

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of foreign ratifications will be felt by governments within five years. There is no substantial change in our results if we stipulate a shorter (three years) or longer (seven years) time span. We find that our spatial variables lose statistical significance for several conventions if we do not specify a temporal cut-off point, which is consistent with the expectations derived from our theories and stated above. States tend to ratify in the context of expectations of reciprocity within a reasonable time span and in the wake of salient foreign ratification events whose domestic salience fades with time.

Second, while we have analyzed each convention separately, it is possible that the ratification of a core convention *x* by country *i* might influence the probability that country *j* ratifies a core convention other than *x*. This may be due to the fact that the core conventions are sometimes bundled together—including by the ILO itself in its promotional activities—as an expression of a comprehensive commitment to the protection of basic rights at work. For instance, by 1998 Indonesia had ratified four core conventions and, in announcing the government's intention to ratify the remaining three, the Indonesian manpower minister declared, "There are seven main conventions, and the countries which have ratified them are considered democratic."[67] After ratification, the director general of the ILO publicly congratulated Indonesia on becoming "the first country in the Asia-Pacific region to have ratified all seven of the core conventions covering fundamental principles and right at work."[68] The ILO also publicized the fact that Indonesia was the forty-seventh of ILO's 170 member states to have ratified all seven core conventions.

Because the ILO and governments sometimes treat the core conventions as a cohesive set, states may be influenced not only by the ratification of a specific convention by other states, but also by the ratification of core conventions in general. To account for this possibility, we relaxed the assumption that ratifications of core conventions are independent from one another. Specifically, we pooled six core conventions together (we excluded the Minimum Age Convention from this analysis because it was ratified much later than the others and we would lose many observations by including it). By pooling the conventions, our dependent variable becomes the number of years before a country ratifies one of the six conventions. This analysis shows that ratification of any four core conventions has a positive effect on the ratification of

[67] Antara 1998. The minister also declared, "By ratifying these conventions, the protection over labourers at home would be clearer, while on the other hand it would also improve the Indonesian image in the international forum." *Hindu Business Line* 1999a.

[68] *Hindu Business Line* 1999b.

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other core conventions by competitors or associates, with the exception of the Discrimination Convention for which associates' ratification, though positive, is not statistically significant.[69]

The Case of Equal Pay Legislation in the United Kingdom

We hypothesize above that states are more likely to ratify international labor conventions if their social peers have ratified them and we focus on peer status that derives from common memberships in international organizations. Our statistical analysis finds empirical evidence supporting this hypothesis. As noted, international organizations are social environments that can influence behavior through a range of mechanisms, such as mimicking, social pressure, and persuasion.[70] But the formal ratification of international treaties in general and ILO conventions in particular usually involves a number of domestic actors in a context determined by domestic political institutions. A fuller explanation of ratification decisions in terms of social-peer effects should therefore attempt to identify causal mechanisms that connect changes in the international environment (that is, ratification by other states) with domestic political processes. In this section, we consider more closely the process that led to the ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention in 1971 by the United Kingdom. The case study is intended to be both confirmatory, that is, aimed at ascertaining whether foreign ratifications played a role, and exploratory, that is, aimed at developing hypotheses on how they played that role.[71]

Britain's ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention is consistent with Hypothesis 2, as it came in the wake of international commitments made by several peer countries to implement equal pay for men and women. Figure 5 shows that the values of ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION for the UK, that is, ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention by states with which Britain shared many IGO memberships, peaked at the beginning and then again at the end of the 1960s. The first peak triggered the start of an insistent shaming campaign on the part of equal pay advocates in the UK, while the second peak coincided with the government's decision to ratify the Equal Remuneration Convention.

The British case thus can be considered typical from the perspective of our hypothesis[72] and other scholars have noted that the presence of

[69] See Baccini and Koenig-Archibugi 2014, Appendix D.
[70] Johnston 2008.
[71] See Seawright and Gerring 2008 on confirmatory and exploratory case studies.
[72] Seawright and Gerring 2008.

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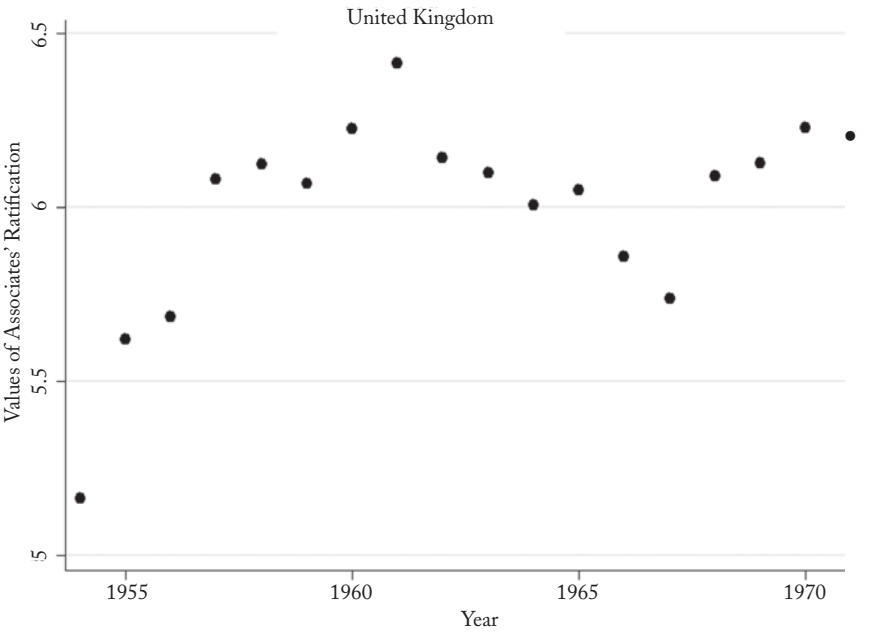


FIGURE 5
EQUAL REMUNERATION CONVENTION: VALUES OF ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM BETWEEN 1953 (YEAR AFTER FIRST RATIFICATION) AND 1971 (YEAR OF UK RATIFICATION)

international legal commitments to equal pay by socially close countries was one of the factors that led to Britain's decision to ratify and reform its domestic legislation in the late 1960s.[73] A closer analysis of the case can be a source of more fine-grained hypotheses on how international factors affect what is ultimately a domestic political process.

In the previous section, we noted that pressure to conform to the standards of behavior of a state's peer group can be applied by the peers themselves as well as by domestic actors. The British government was subject to pressure from both sides. For instance, the 1957 founding treaty of the European Economic Community (EEC) included an article mandating equal pay between men and women, and around that time the member states of the Council of Europe deliberated on a European Social Charter that included a provision on equal pay, which the British government was unwilling to accept. During one of the debates,

[73] See Povall 1992.

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France's government representative supported his call for progressive social policies by invoking Europe's achievements and civilizing mission and reproached Britain for undermining them: "We are here to affirm our pride in Europe. . . . In setting up this European Economic Community, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg have shown that this Common Market and this Economic Community would mean nothing if it did not imply also social progress for the peoples of these countries. These six countries are among those which have ratified most readily the international labour conventions. How, then, could it be that other countries which are not associated in the Common Market but which, in Europe, have often given the signal for social progress, how then could countries like Great Britain or the Scandinavian countries remain behind and not associate themselves with the countries of the Common Market in the advance towards social progress . . . ?"[74]

In the UK, pressure to align national policy with those of its peers also came from domestic actors. By the time the United Kingdom ratified the Equal Remuneration Convention in 1971, twenty years after its adoption by the ILO, the issue of equal pay for men and women had been on the British political agenda for over a century. Among the most vocal supporters of legislation mandating equal pay for work of equal value were female activists in the labor movement, including the female politicians elected to parliament as Labour Party candidates throughout most of the twentieth century. These elected representatives were relentless in raising the issue of equal pay in parliament, demanding appropriate legislation and the ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention. A particularly prominent role in the equal pay campaign was played by Edith Summerskill, who was first elected to parliament in 1938 and forcefully advocated such legislation throughout her long career in the House of Commons and then in the House of Lords.[75]

In attempting to enlarge the coalition for equal pay legislation, supporters of reform developed a wide range of arguments; some were based on considerations of efficiency, but most were based on considerations of justice and fairness. Opponents also used a mix of economic and ethical arguments, but tended to voice arguments based on cost

[74] ILO 1959, 88–89. Labor union delegates to the same conference who maintained that the equal pay principle had to be accepted by all European countries were even blunter in their shaming tactics: "[O]ne cannot help wondering whether there are in Europe countries which can really . . . claim to belong to Europe, to civilized Europe, while refusing by subtleties of procedure or parliamentary expedients to accept such standards? I refuse to believe it. Those countries do not have their place in the Council of Europe or in the I.L.O." ILO 1959, 93–94.

[75] See, for instance, Henig and Henig 2001, 20.

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and competitiveness more often. In 1968, the Confederation of British Industry protested that implementing equal pay would cost between £600 million and £1 billion—increasing wage costs by 32 percent in some sectors—and ruin the British export industry.[76] As late as 1969, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (finance minister) of the Labor government, Roy Jenkins, opposed equal pay on the grounds that the balance of payments effect would be serious.[77]

An analysis of parliamentary debates during the 1960s highlights the role played by foreign examples in the argumentative strategy of supporters of equal pay. In 1963 Summerskill stressed in the House of Lords that several countries had already ratified the Equal Remuneration Convention and that "[c]ountries within the Common Market are establishing equal pay for equal work and it has been written into the Treaty of Rome. Britain is lagging behind."[78] Two years later, Shirley Summerskill, Edith's daughter and herself a prominent feminist member of parliament, complained in the House of Commons that "Forty-four countries have ratified [the Equal Remuneration Convention], but the United Kingdom has not. The Common Market countries, under the Treaty of Rome, are bound to ensure and maintain the adoption of equal pay conditions for women. In these ways, it is a disgrace that Britain is lagging behind other industrial countries."[79]

Members of the government found themselves under increasing pressure to defend Britain's ratification record. Lord Chalfont, for instance, noted in 1967 that "only seven countries in the world are party to more . . . Human Rights Conventions than we are."[80] Retorting, however, that fifty-four countries had ratified the Equal Remuneration Convention, Edith Summerskill confronted him with the question, "If it is possible for 54 countries to find it economically possible to give equal pay, why is it that Great Britain, with a Labour Government, fails to do so?"[81] In condemning those countries that paid lip service to ILO principles but failed to honor them, she stated: "I am ashamed to think that Britain is included among these countries."[82] She also dismissed arguments based on national specificities in industrial relations: "Many countries with an

[76] van der Vleuten 2007, 84.

[77] Castle 1984, 705. van der Vleuten 2007 shows at length that concerns about wage costs and international competitiveness of domestic industries had an important effect on equal pay policy in European Economic Community countries as well.

[78] *Hansard* HL Deb 19 June 1963 vol. 250 cc1282–96.

[79] *Hansard* HC Deb 23 June 1965 vol. 714 cc1904–12.

[80] *Hansard* HL Deb 18 December 1967 vol. 287 cc1261–64.

[81] *Hansard* HL Deb 18 December 1967 vol. 287 cc1261–64.

[82] *Hansard* HL Deb 22 January 1969 vol. 298 cc954–1020.

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employment structure no less complex than our own have ratified the Convention. Among them are Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Norway and Sweden. If they have been able to ratify it, why does this country, with a Labour Government, find it impossible to do so?"[83]

Similarly, Shirley Summerskill complained, "We in this country have always lagged behind advanced western countries in this matter, and certainly behind the Common Market countries. This was a shameful situation, because the way a society treats its women is an indication of its civilisation and progress."[84]

The persistence of the parliamentary advocates of equal rights legislation paid off in late 1969 when the British government finally agreed to submit equal pay legislation to parliament. To a significant extent, this legislative innovation was due to the efforts of another prominent female politician, Barbara Castle, who at the time was Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity in Harold Wilson's Labor Party cabinet. The immediate impetus for the policy change came when female Labour members of parliament, led by Lena Jeger, tabled an equal pay amendment to a government prices and incomes bill, which helped Castle overcome the Chancellor of the Exchequer's opposition and announce an equal pay bill.[85] In justifying the proposed bill to her cabinet colleagues, Castle wrote, "Legislation on the lines I have suggested would enable us to ratify ILO Convention 100 and we should do so when the legislation was passed. The introduction of equal pay on these lines would bring us into line with the developing practice in the European Economic Community countries . . ."[86] Castle's efforts succeeded; the Equal Pay Act was passed by parliament in 1970 and the Equal Remuneration Convention was ratified a year later.

The British case highlights two things. First, ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention and adoption of equal pay legislation was a highly contentious issue in the political arena, and it pitted predominantly female politicians and activists against predominantly male politicians, trade unionists, and employers. In her memoir, Castle commented on the legislative episode that triggered the policy change, "Once again it was the women who made the running."[87] Similarly, Edith Summerskill remarked that it was only because the Secretary of

[83] *Hansard* HL Deb 18 June 1969 vol. 302 cc1026–96.
[84] *Hansard* HC Deb 09 February 1970 vol. 795 cc913–1038.
[85] Perkins 2003, 329.
[86] United Kingdom Cabinet 1969.
[87] Castle 1993, 427.

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State for Employment and Productivity was a woman that there was an equal pay act at all.[88] Second, references to the ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention and other international legal instruments on equal pay by socially close countries constituted a recurring component of the argumentative strategies of the supporters of policy change in Britain. Faced with objections to equal pay framed mainly in terms of economic cost, supporters sometimes used foreign ratifications to undermine the economic arguments, as in the Edith Summerskill speech quoted above, but they often used the gap between Britain and its peers as a basis of moral condemnation, as shown by the use of the terms "civilization," "lagging behind," "disgrace," and "shame" in the speeches excerpted above.

The UK case prompts us to formulate the following general conjecture. Ratification by social peers can tip the balance in the domestic contest between supporters and opponents of ratification by providing argumentative ammunition to the former and potentially extending the proratification coalition to include actors interested in the good standing of their state in international forums. It has been noted that international law can help shift the domestic balance of power on contentious policy issues.[89] Our argument differs from this scenario in that the focus is not on how international treaties already ratified by a state empower certain actors within that state, but on how treaty ratification by other states helps certain actors to speed up ratification by their own state. The processes are distinct, but clearly compatible. Indeed, we can easily imagine the same groups first using foreign ratifications to press for domestic ratification and then using domestic ratification to press for change in domestic labor practices. In the supplementary material,[90] Appendix E reports the results of a statistical analysis that provides some empirical support for this tipping-the-balance argument in relation to the ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention.

Discussion

For most core ILO conventions, we found that states are more likely to ratify them if they have already been ratified by other members of the same IGOs and by countries that export similar goods.[91] On the whole,

[88] Meehan 1985, 54.
[89] Simmons 2009 provides an extensive discussion of this effect.
[90] Baccini and Koenig-Archibugi 2014.
[91] Of course, this is not to say that ratification by associates or competitors is a necessary or a sufficient condition for domestic ratification across all countries. Some states ratify core labor conventions

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there is strong support for both of our hypotheses and the theories on which they are based. We also examined one domestic-level causal mechanism that can account for the effect of ratification by social peers and found that foreign ratifications can tip the balance in a domestic contest between supporters and opponents of domestic ratification. In our analysis of the Equal Remuneration Convention, we highlighted the role female politicians played in pressing for ratification, but there is no reason to expect that proratification coalitions always have a single convention in their sights; some may have a more general interest in promoting human rights at work. This is consistent with the findings of the pooled analysis reported above. Ratification of some conventions by a state has a positive effect on the ratification of other core conventions by its competitors and associates. This finding suggests that ILO conventions can be supported (or opposed) either individually, because of the specific right that they establish, or as a bundle of related commitments to uphold the basic rights of workers. Indeed a coalition may be comprised of members with narrow or broad goals. It is a promising topic for further research.

What are the theoretical implications of the exceptions to our overall finding that ratifications are interdependent? First, it is notable that behavior by social peers and economic competitors influenced ratification of the Forced Labor Convention of 1930, whereas only competitors' behavior influenced ratification of the Abolition of Forced Labor Convention of 1957. In light of the historical evidence assembled by Daniel Maul, the most likely explanation of this difference is the different content of the conventions in relation to the broader political and economic context.[92] In addition to other loopholes, the Forced Labor Convention permits forced or compulsory labor performed for "public purposes" to continue for a transitional period. The Abolition of Forced Labor Convention was meant to close such loopholes and, crucially, it explicitly prohibits the use of any form of forced or compulsory labor "as a method of mobilising and using labour for purposes of economic development." This norm was rejected by numerous states, including postcolonial governments that claimed the right to "exercise extraordinary powers in their role as emergency regimes in the development effort."[93] Policies such as compulsory youth labor services in

regardless of ratification by their competitors or associates. Our method for estimating the extent of spatial interdependencies can also help us to identify those states that seem to be indifferent to foreign ratifications. See Baccini and Koenig-Archibugi 2014, Appendix F.

[92] Maul 2007; Maul 2012.

[93] Maul 2007.

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some African countries were defended by governments as a necessary tool to mobilize national resources for pressing development goals. For instance, in 1962 a government representative from the Côte d'Ivoire rejected an ILO committee's criticisms of such policies by arguing that they gave young people prepared to shed blood for their country the chance "to defend the real independence of the country, by which I mean its economic independence."[94] To this day, the ILO's framing of compulsory labor as a human rights issue continues to be resisted by governments that privilege authoritarian methods of economic development.[95] Our findings complement Maul's historical analysis by suggesting that mechanisms of social peer pressure may be ineffective when they are pitted against fundamental beliefs about what constitutes a legitimate development strategy.

Second, another exception to the general pattern is that behavior by social peers and economic competitors influenced ratification of the Collective Bargaining Convention, whereas only social peers influenced ratification of the Freedom of Association Convention. In this case, as in the case above, the most likely explanation of this difference is the different content of the conventions. The Freedom of Association Convention gives generic protection to the right to create and join trade unions, which is closely linked to the general right to associate that is proclaimed in the national constitutions of many countries as well as in international human rights conventions. The Collective Bargaining Convention is more constraining, as it prohibits a potentially wide range of antiunion activities by employers and governments and promotes the regulation of terms and conditions of employment by means of collective agreements. The difference between the content of these conventions suggests two (not mutually exclusive) explanations for the different impact of competitors' ratification. First, the close connection of the Freedom of Association Convention to a widely recognized core human right may have delegitimized opposition to ratification based on competitiveness concerns, whereas the connection is more questionable in relation to the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Convention. Second, while it is clear that labor union rights have raised significant concerns about relative production costs in a wide variety of national and industrial settings,[96] in some circumstances the Freedom of Association Convention may have been seen as useful in reducing the

[94] Maul 2012, 265.
[95] Maul 2007.
[96] See, for instance, Deyo 1989.

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bargaining power of workers and thus economic costs for exporters. On the basis of the experience of Indonesia and Argentina, Teri Caraway argues that the "ILO's understanding of freedom of association is distinctly liberal, which has important implications for the creation of *powerful* as opposed to *free* trade unions. In this liberal conceptualization, many labour regulations that limit union fragmentation and that increase union bargaining power are considered to be violations of freedom of association. In practice this has meant that the ILO makes policy recommendations that encourage union competition and that discourage centralized collective bargaining."[97] Our findings could be seen as providing support for Caraway's thesis in relation to the Freedom of Association Convention, but our explanations require further empirical investigation.

Furthermore, the analyses that include COMPETITORS' RATIFICATION and ASSOCIATES' RATIFICATION in the same model can be a source of interesting additional insights. As noted above, the effect of ratification by associates washes out the effect of ratification by competitors in regard to the Collective Bargaining Convention, the Equal Remuneration Convention, and the Minimum Age Convention. This finding points to the possibility that when the social peer group formally acknowledges the importance of the rights protected by those conventions, normative arguments in favor of ratification become so compelling that they condemn to irrelevance any countervailing argument based on what economic competitors have done. Both the general validity of such an interpretation and a proper understanding of the causal mechanisms involved require further investigation, for instance through detailed case studies of the ratification history of countries where economic and social logics pulled in opposite directions. A case study of the Minimum Age Convention, for example, could focus on groups of countries with proven high incidence of child labor in specific export-oriented sectors, such as South Asian or Central American states competing in export markets for garments or African states competing in export markets for cocoa and tea. Detailed investigations of policy processes could establish whether the growing acceptance of global norms against child labor among a state's peer groups diminished the appeal of a normative argument that is often associated with competitiveness arguments, that is, the position that children under 15 must play an economically useful role in their communities.[98]

[97] Caraway 2006, 210.
[98] On this belief see, for instance, Weiner 1991 and Bass 2004.

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Conclusion

Two themes have been voiced again and again by proponents of international labor standards, from the origins of the debate in the early nineteenth century to recent debates about the social impact of economic globalization. The first theme is that the protection and promotion of labor standards is a normative obligation that sorts "good" from "bad" states—where goodness is, depending on the period and the ideology of the proponent, variously defined in terms of Christian precepts, humanitarianism, civilization, social justice, human rights, or other belief systems. The second theme is that doing the right thing exposes states to the risk of suffering competitive disadvantages in international markets and that institutionalized cooperation among potentially competing states is necessary to reduce that risk. This article assesses the absolute and relative importance of social and economic determinants of interdependent decisions to ratify labor rights conventions. For six of the seven core conventions, we find that a state is more likely to ratify a given convention if the convention has already been ratified by states with which it has a large number of joint IGO memberships. We find the same kind of effect in relation to states that export similar goods. While a substantial increase in foreign ratifications produces a small change in the probability of ratification, the probability of ratification tends to be between two and six times higher for countries with high values in our explanatory variables than it is for countries with low values.

In addition to examining whether foreign ratification matters for domestic ratification, we also investigate how it matters, that is, we searched for causal mechanisms that produce those effects, specifically those that operate at the domestic level. A case study of the ratification of the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention by the United Kingdom in the mid-twentieth century shows that foreign ratifications were used by proponents of domestic ratification–mainly as part of shaming tactics—to overcome the resistance of opponents of policy change. A statistical test suggests that the ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention by social peers has the clearest impact on states where the contingent of female legislators is strong enough to make effective use of foreign examples but not strong enough to obtain ratification regardless of what other states do. This indicates that foreign ratifications are more likely to tip the balance in favor of ratification where the balance between proratification and antiratification groups is more even. Further research on this mechanism could provide a valuable contribution to the integration of domestic and system-level explanations in the analysis of treaty ratification and international policy diffusion.

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Supplementary Material

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