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ERNESTO CALVO MARCELO LEIRAS

The Nationalization of Legislative Collaboration:  
Territory, Partisanship, and Policymaking in  
Argentina



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**Resumen:** Este artículo analiza la nacionalización de los esfuerzos colaborativos entre los legisladores en Argentina. Al hacerlo, distinguimos entre la nacionalización de la competencia electoral y la nacionalización de la actividad legislativa de los Miembros del Congreso (MC). Para medir la nacionalización de la colaboración legislativa evaluamos el grado en el cual los MC colaboran en la elaboración de proyectos de ley con legisladores que pertenecen a su mismo bloque partidario y con legisladores que fueron elegidos en su distrito electoral de origen. Interpretamos la densidad de las redes de co-suscripción de proyectos como indicativa del grado de colaboración entre los legisladores y estimamos modelos de gráficos exponenciales aleatorios (*Exponential Random Graph Models, ERGM*) para explicar los determinantes partidarios y territoriales de la colaboración legislativa durante un período de 25 años. Un estudio de 130.000 proyectos de ley propuestos al Congreso Argentino entre 1984 y 2007 muestra que a medida que se avanza en el período analizado los efectos partidarios y los del distrito ganan prominencia. También mostramos que los efectos de distrito y los partidarios son más pronunciados cuando se establecen umbrales de frecuencia de colaboración más altos.

**Palabras clave:** nacionalización partidaria, nacionalización legislativa, colaboración legislativa, análisis de redes, modelos de gráficos exponenciales aleatorios, Argentina.

**Abstract:** This paper analyzes the nationalization of collaborative policy efforts among lawmakers in Argentina. In doing so, we distinguish the nationalization of electoral competition and the nationalization of a legislator's policy intent. To measure the nationalization of legislative efforts, we assess the degree to which legislators collaborate with members of their party and members of their district in the drafting of legislative initiatives. We interpret the density of co-sponsorship networks as indicative of legislative collaboration among legislators and estimate *exponential random graph models* (ERGM) to explain the partisan and territorial determinants of collaboration over a 25 year period. A study of 130,000 legislative initiatives proposed to the Argentine Congress from 1984 to 2007 shows district and partisan effects becoming more prominent over time. We also show that district and partisan effects are more pronounced at higher thresholds of co-sponsorship collaboration.

**Keywords:** party nationalization, legislative nationalization, co-sponsorship, network analysis, exponential random graph models, Argentina



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## I. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

“I am not shortsighted. I believe in the electoral contract. I consider that when you represent a community, a district, an idea, you should honor them. I defend the interior provinces of this country by conviction, not because I am in the government or in the opposition.”

House Rep. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (PJ, Santa Cruz), March 23, 2000, 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, Argentine House, Discussion of Initiative 114-PE-99.

“Peronism is a national movement led by the President. The offer to the citizens is National. We are not a federation of provincial and municipal parties.”

Aníbal Fernández, *Jefe de Gabinete* of President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, April 15, 2011.

The analysis of party system nationalization has figured prominently in the agenda of comparative scholars for over half a century. Earlier studies saw party system nationalization as constitutive of wider modernization processes superseding traditional societies (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Bendix 1977; Rokkan 1970). The resurfacing of nationalist political movements in Southern and Eastern Europe spurred interest in the subjective dimension of this phenomena and inspired a large literature in which Anderson’s (1983), Gellner’s (1983) and Smith’s (1995) contributions stand out. In the US, nationalization was the main subject of the protracted and fertile partisan realignment debate (elegantly discussed in Mayhew

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2000) and a key ingredient explaining policy by responsible parties (Miller and Stokes 1962, 1963). More recently, research on the effect of majoritarian electoral rules on party system fragmentation motivated a series of comparative studies on the determinants of party system nationalization (Alemán and Kellam 2008; Caramani 2004; Chhibber and Kollman 1998; Chhibber and Kollman 2004; Cox 1999; Jones and Mainwaring 2003; Leiras 2006; Morgenstern, Swindle, and Castagnola 2009; Rodden 2010; Cox and Knoll 2003; Thorlakson 2009; Harbers 2010).

Arguably, the nationalization of party competition (and collaboration) counts as one of the most studied theoretical problems in the voting literature. The nationalization of the parties' vote has been considered a prominent feature of modern electoral competition (Ziblatt 2009; Lipset and Rokkan 1967) and its absence arguably the culprit of a number of political ills such as inefficient policy implementation, under provision of public services and clientelism (Jones 2005; Lago-Peñas and Lago-Peñas 2009).<sup>2</sup>

However, almost all research on the nationalization of party systems concentrates on describing and explaining the territorial distribution of a party's vote. In spite of the theoretical links connecting the nationalization of electorates and the implementation of policy (Bartolini 2000; Cusak, Iversen, and Soskice 2007; Iversen and Soskice 2006; Stepan 2004; Miller and Stokes 1962, 1963), few researchers

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<sup>2</sup> Jones (2005) notes that the nationalization of the party system shapes the legislative strategies (and ambition) of politicians, the policy-making behavior of state institutions, the ability of executives to forge coalitions, as well as the capacity of democracies to process ethnic and religious cleavages. While he notes that nationalized party systems are of critical importance in the enactment of legislation directed towards non-parochial goals, he does not measure the level of nationalization of policy-making.

measure the degree of nationalization of the policy intent of parties and candidates. In particular, little attention has been given to the level of nationalization of lawmakers' collaborative efforts. As we will argue, electoral and legislative nationalization are distinctive phenomena and should be studied as such. In this paper we explicitly address this gap in the literature and concentrate on exploring party system nationalization as reflected in the behavior of lawmakers in Congress.

To study the national orientation of legislative efforts we consider the degree to which legislators collaborate with other members of their provincial delegation.<sup>3</sup> To measure the nationalization of legislative efforts among lawmakers we focus on the study of cosponsorship networks in Congress, responsible for the drafting and promotion of law initiatives. We focus on the decision to coauthor or cosponsor bills as an indicator of the coordination efforts legislators make while in office (Alemán 2009; Crisp, Kanthak, and Leijonhufvud 2004), and inquire on the territorial orientation of such collaborative efforts.

We build upon a burgeoning literature that in the last few years has sought to understand cosponsorship networks as expressions of public joint stances of policy preferences (Cranmer and Desmarais 2011; Alemán 2009; Alemán and Calvo 2010; Fowler 2006; Tam Cho and Fowler 2010). We consider cosponsorship networks as reflective of the policy intent of lawmakers, who connect with peers that share similar interests in policy areas or jurisdictions (Alemán and Calvo 2010); and measure the

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<sup>3</sup> A related strategy is the measure the level of nationalization of the legislator's ambition. Both Samuels (2003) and Micozzi (2009) have conducted research on the denationalization of progressive ambition in some Latin American cases. An attempt to measure provincial effects on the legislators' vote is in Jones and Hwang (2005).



nationalization of legislators' policy intent as a function of the probability of coauthoring or cosponsoring legislation in Congress. To study these cosponsorship networks, we estimate *exponential random graph models* (ERGM) of legislative collaboration over twenty five years of congressional politics in Argentina, distinguishing personal, partisan, and district level effects as well as variations over time.

Our aim in this first exercise is, broadly defined, conceptual. First, we seek to show that there is a legislative dimension to nationalization which is independent from its electoral manifestations. Secondly, we explore and briefly describe the ways in which the legislative and electoral dimensions of party nationalization may combine. At this early stage of theoretical exploration we hold no clear expectation as to which combination of electoral and legislative nationalization we are more likely to observe; nor are we able to ascertain whether any of these two phenomena causes the other or they are both outcomes of a deeper cause. Instead we present two distinct, relatively novel and increasingly demanding measures of legislative collaboration and apply them to the Argentine Congress.

Significant differences in socio-economic conditions separate the 24 provincial districts that compose the Argentine federation. However, no significant ethnic cleavage divides local constituencies and most politically relevant resources concentrate at the national level and in the presidential office. Therefore, there are forces that would push Argentine politics towards nationalization and also centrifugal drives that should lead to inter-provincial differences in political behavior. Indeed, Argentina has experienced both periods of relatively high electoral nationalization





(1983-1999) and, since 2001, significant denationalization. Did legislative nationalization trends precede or follow electoral trends? Are the reasons that lead legislators to cooperate more frequently with colleagues elected in the same district similar to those that lead citizens of those districts to behave differently from residents of other provinces? The combination of socio- institutional traits and electoral outcomes of the Argentine cases provides us with a particularly propitious opportunity to answer these questions and carry our theoretical exploration forward.

Results show that recent denationalization in electoral competition in Argentina has been accompanied by an increase in district level legislative collaboration. We find that partisan collaboration within districts outpaced collaboration across districts for all major parties in Argentina. Since democratization in 1983, the *provincial party delegation (PPD)* has become the prime determinant of policy design. Results provide a window into the process of legislative denationalization which complement recent scholarship on the territorial organization of party politics in Latin America (Calvo and Escolar 2005; Leiras 2007; Levitsky 2003; Gervasoni 2010; Díaz Cayeros 2006; Gibson 2005; Falletti 2010; Lodola 2009; Gibson and Suárez-Cao 2010).

## II. Nationalized Electoral Competition and Legislative Collaboration

What is a nationalized political party? So far, the literature single mindedly focuses on electoral nationalization and offers two broad sets of answers to this question. The first one focuses on the relative homogeneity of voters' behavior, both across districts and over time. According to these theories, like voters behave alike, with nationalized electorates supporting or abandoning parties in concert. Thus a nationalized party is one that in every district caters to and receives votes from constituencies that share similar socio-economic traits and policy preferences. A nationalized electorate, consequently, is one that swings in similar direction and magnitude across districts and between elections (Morgenstern and Swindle 2005; Kawato 1987; Mayhew 2000; Alemán and Kellam 2008).

A second research tradition describes nationalization as the capacity of parties to amass comparable electoral returns –e.g. vote shares- across districts. Nationalized parties, thus defined, compete in all electoral districts and gather comparable vote shares, often offering dissimilar policies to their local supporters (Jones and Mainwaring 2003; Chhibber and Kollman 2004).

Both approaches seek to capture nationalization of the party system in the electoral arena, the result of cultivating a nationalized constituency or of sound electoral performances across districts. However, the behavioral implications for legislators differ for each line of research. Indeed, while a nationalized electorate



should be expected to strengthen the national orientation of the legislator's activities –and the nationalization of its collaborative efforts with fellow lawmakers–; electoral success across heterogeneous districts may often require legislators to cater their policies to different local constituencies and, consequently, to denationalize collaborative efforts in Congress. Because the protection of the party label remains a prime concern for party members (Cox and McCubbins 2005), strategies that maximize votes across heterogeneous districts may still find that lawmakers vote together on the plenary floor while coauthoring and cosponsoring bills with a more restricted group of fellow party members.

## II. 1. Beyond the Responsible Party Model

Electoral nationalization and the nationalization of legislative collaboration describe dimensions that are both empirically and theoretically distinct. Understanding how these two dimensions of party system nationalization interact is of critical importance. A first dimension of nationalization, *electoral nationalization*, describes programmatic and performance traits shared across districts by parties and voters. Such first dimension results from parties either targeting a well-defined voter category across multiple districts or from successfully competing in all districts by catering policies to different local voters.

The second dimension, *legislative nationalization*, describes high rates of within-party and cross-district collaboration. By contrast, legislative denationalization

occurs when legislators develop policy targets that are local, forging closer ties with fellow members from the region or district.

Conventional depictions of the *responsible party model* emphasize the importance of programmatic parties with high electoral and legislative nationalization (Bartolini 2000; Franzese 2002; Miller and Stokes 1962, 1963). Under the responsible party framework, representatives cultivate programmatic party labels that target categories of voters, irrespective of their territorial origin. Policy content with clear ideological markers that target nationalized electorates, in turn, results in cosponsoring and co-authoring of bills with fellow party members irrespective of their district membership.

As described by Miller and Stokes:

“Under a system of party government the voters’ response to the local legislative candidates is based on the candidates’ identification with party programs. These programs are the substance of their appeals to the constituency, which will act on the basis of its information about the proposals and legislative record of the parties. Since the party programs are of dominant importance, the candidates are deprived of any independent basis of support. They will not be able to build in their home districts an electoral redoubt from which to challenge the leadership of their parties.” (Miller and Stokes, 1962: 533).

In the system of responsible parties, consequently, ambitious politicians organize to advance programmatic national goals. These programmatic national goals, expressed in a portfolio of legislative proposals, seek to cultivate voters according to functional rather than territorial criteria. The legislative behavior of Members of Congress (MCs), consequently, will be defined by collaboration with fellow members that are programmatically closer.



However, electoral nationalization may also occur when non-programmatic parties cultivate local voters, orienting their targets of legislation to different local constituencies while supporting each others' goals in Congress. A party that competes in all districts may often be a collection of local electoral machines, forging legislative majorities to deliver local goods. When party majorities are forged to maximize legislative gains-from-exchanges and deliver local goods (Shepsle and Weingast 1995; Weingast 1989; Gilligan and Krehbiel 1994), within-district collaboration in the drafting of bills dominates the policymaking process. In such an environment, legislative majorities allow members to meet the demands of parochial constituencies with limited programmatic goals.

Table 1: Party Nationalization in Electoral and Legislative Arenas

		<b>Electoral Nationalization</b>	
		<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Legislative Nationalization</b>	<b>High</b>	<i>Programmatic Parties with a Nationalized Constituency. Cross-district collaboration among Legislators</i> <b>(Responsible Party Model)</b>	<i>Programmatic Parties with Limited District Penetration. Cross-district collaboration among Legislators</i> <b>(Segmented Party Model)</b>
	<b>Low</b>	<i>Non-Programmatic Parties with locally defined constituencies. Within and across district collaboration among Legislators</i> <b>(Gains-From-Exchange Model)</b>	<i>Non-Programmatic Parties with locally defined constituencies. Parochial Orientation of Legislative collaboration</i> <b>(Spoils Model)</b>

In the gains-from-exchange model, consequently, legislators support fellow members when reporting initiatives from committee and vote each other proposals on the plenary floor. However, the development of local policy affinity drives party members to co-author and co-sponsor initiatives with fellow members from their districts or regions. Legislative party blocs, consequently, act as a coordination device that facilitates exchanges between party members across districts. Meanwhile, policy drafting and cosponsorship remains locally bounded (Gilligan and Krehbiel 1994; Weingast 1989). As a result, the cosponsoring and co-authoring of bills could be denationalized even as party members coordinate their electoral strategies and their committee and floor behavior in Congress. In analyzing the formation of the



Justicialista Party in Argentina, for example, both Gibson (1997) and Macor and Tcach (2005) note that strategic alliances with conservative provincial parties in its formative years<sup>4</sup> resulted in a party formed by a pro-labor metropolitan coalition and a conservative peripheral coalition. The territorial origins of different coalition members, consequently, would reinforce legislative collaboration within districts and regions, denationalizing the drafting and cosponsoring of legislation.

The second column of table 1 presents two scenarios of low electoral nationalization. The first one, in the top row, represents a case in which representatives of different districts cooperate in drafting legislation even though the party fails to compete in a significant number of districts. The formative years of Socialist parties in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe, for example, were characterized by geographically constrained but programmatically oriented parties (Bartolini 2000; Cusak, Iversen, and Soskice 2007; Calvo 2009). Similar party developments characterized the formation of the UCR in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Argentina, as well as the PRD and the PAN in Mexico.

Constraints in the distribution of the party's vote, consequently, result in electorates that are functionally represented but territorially bounded. In segmented party models, consequently, responsible parties cater to categories of voters but fail to either attract voter or run candidates in a significant number of districts. Under these circumstances the party faces a choice between expanding its core constituency and

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<sup>4</sup> They were mostly remnants of the so-called "concordancia" among Conservative Party and segments of the Union Civica Radical and the Socialist Party that prevailed in the notoriously fraudulent elections of the 1930s in Argentina.



adapting its programmatic goals to accommodate the preferences of different local constituents. For example, it may advance the programmatic goals of its core supporters while targeting resources to a distinct group of local voters to advance broader electoral goals in marginal districts. Given that party constituents are unevenly distributed across districts, the electoral performance of the party seems denationalized. However, their legislative behavior should still respond to programmatic preferences, making it more likely that MCs will cooperate with fellow party members, irrespective of their districts of origin. For this reason, we label this scenario the *segmented party model* of nationalization.

The last scenario combines low electoral nationalization and parochial orientation of electoral incentives. Denationalized parties, both in performance and intent, target different policies to distinct district level voters. As in the *gains from exchange model*, the incentive to collaborate in the drafting and sponsoring of law initiatives is weak and electoral performance uneven, heavily dependent on the delivery of private and club goods to voters (e.g. the *spoils model* of legislative denationalization).



### III. Electoral and Legislative Denationalization in Argentina

As described before, electoral and legislative party nationalization describe different phenomena. When electorally minded parties compete for the preferences of local voters with different preferences, legislative collaboration -and targets of policy- may vary even among parties with solid performances in all districts. As discussed by Gibson (2005), policies that shelter districts from nationwide electoral shocks may both improve electoral performance and denationalize policy goals.

Gains from exchange, with parties targeting different district level voters, are difficult to materialize. Coordination bottlenecks may hinder effective logrolling and, more importantly, different preferences across districts may lead to the predominance of clientelistic linkages in some regions and, in other regions, programmatic ones. Additionally, when agenda setting powers reside with executives, as they do in Latin American democracies, presidents may exploit the parochial orientation of legislators, buying the legislative votes of representatives of “low maintenance” constituencies (Gibson, Calvo, and Falleti 2004) without compromising the integrity of their policy programs (Cox and Morgenstern 2002). This would bias the distribution of excludable goods to some regions and thus conspire against the ability of the party to simultaneously satisfy the particularistic needs of different districts. Under these circumstances we expect to observe that a decline in electoral nationalization leads to a reduction in legislative nationalization.



As several works document (Calvo and Escolar 2005; Leiras 2007; Gibson and Suárez-Cao 2007), the Argentine party system has recently experienced a process of denationalization at the electoral level. Varying distributions of policy preferences across districts and biased allocation of resources from the national government (Gibson 1997; Calvo and Murillo 2004) have been documented to characterize the Argentine electoral arena and the strategies of Argentine governments. An analysis of this case may then be suitable to explore the wider political implications of this electoral phenomenon.

Table 2: Party Nationalization in Argentina, 1984-2008

		<b>Electoral Nationalization</b>	
		<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Legislative Nationalization</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Responsible Party Model</b> PJ (1984-1991) UCR (1984-1991)	<b>Segmented Party Model</b> Frepaso, PI, U.Ce.De., PRO
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Gains-From-Exchange Model</b> UCR (1991-2001), PJ (1991-2007)	<b>Spoils Model</b> UCR (2001, 2007), municipal and provincial Parties (MPN, FR, BSJ, Demócrata, MPJ)*

*Note:* There are a large number of provincial parties in Argentina. Those reported in Table 2 are good examples of such parties, rather than an exhaustive list.



Our approach considers the collaborative efforts of lawmakers and seeks to distinguish national or district level content of Congressional networks.<sup>5</sup> As already stated, we consider legislative nationalization to be separate from electoral nationalization, and consider that different institutional and electoral mechanisms drive political systems to nationalize in each domain. Our view highlights these different mechanisms, understanding that effective political parties must solve collective action problems and reduce transaction costs among its members. Because electoral and legislative coordination pose different challenges to politicians, we expect nationalized legislative parties and nationalized electoral parties to require different types of political investment. Hence, a nationalized legislative party is one that promotes cooperation among legislators regardless of the constituencies they represent.

### III. 1. Legislative Networks and the Nationalization of the Political System

To measure the nationalization of legislative collaboration, we take advantage of recent advances in the study of cosponsorship networks. In Argentina, Members of Congress routinely cosponsor legislation with fellow representatives, signing on each other projects to indicate support and to claim credit among voters. Almost half of

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<sup>5</sup> Juan Pablo Micozzi (2010) analyzes the local or national orientation of legislators in Argentina but, rather than measure lawmaking collaboration he instead focuses on policy targets.

initiatives proposed to Congress are signed by more than one representative, signaling joint stances on issues.

A number of authors have shown that cosponsorship data carries significant information, which can be used to estimate the preferences of legislators and the determinants of policy networks (Fowler 2006; Cranmer and Desmarais 2011).

Since 1984, the average density of Argentina's cosponsorship networks –e.g. the proportion of actual ties over all possible ties- is 0.296; with a minimum of 0.14 during the first Congress after democratization and a maximum of 0.4 during the 1997-1999 Congress.<sup>6</sup> The mean number of cosponsors is 4.63 with a median of 4. As shown in Table 1, over 91% of legislative initiatives have fewer than 9 cosponsors.

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<sup>6</sup> Beginning in 1984, a significant increase in the number of legislative initiatives proposed to Congress led to increased network density until 2001. Since then, a decline of legislative collaboration after 2003 is consistent with changes in legislative behavior by the new Peronist administration of Nestor Kirchner, characterized by a more centralized and confrontational legislative bloc policy –in an attempt to secure control of the party— and accompanied by significant legislative fragmentation among opposition parties.

Table 3: Number of Cosponsors per Bill, Argentine House, 1984-2007

Number of Cosponsors	Frequency	Percent	Cummulative
2	14,658	28.82	28.82
3	9,482	18.65	47.47
4	6,969	13.7	61.18
5	5,414	10.65	71.82
6	3,858	7.59	79.41
7	2,751	5.41	84.82
8	2,033	4	88.82
9	1,476	2.9	91.72
10	1,139	2.24	93.96
11	846	1.66	95.62
12	621	1.22	96.84
13	511	1	97.85
14	460	0.9	98.75
>15	632	1.23	99.83
Total	50,852	100	100

Note: Data from the *Secretaría de Información Parlamentaria*, Argentine Congress.

To measure the nationalization of cosponsorship networks in Argentina we take advantage of recent statistical advances to model complex relational data. We model the determinants of cosponsorship ties using exponential random graph models (ERGM), which explain the probability of observing a tie between two members [47] while accounting for social structure in relational data (Handcock et al. 2003; Robins et al. 2007). The dependent variable of our analyses is the observed tie or relation (edge) between each pair of actors or legislators (node).<sup>7</sup> For each distinct pair of

<sup>7</sup> This summary of ERGM modeling is based on Robins et al. (2007) and Handcock et al. (2008)

members  $i$  and  $j$ , the random variable  $y_{ij}$  takes the value of 1 if there is a tie and 0 otherwise. The probability of observing a tie is:

$$P(y_{ij}|X) = \exp \frac{[\theta^T g(y_{ij}, X)]}{k(\theta)}$$

where  $X$  is a matrix of attributes associated with the actors (nodes) or ties (edges) in the network;  $g(y_{ij}, X)$  is a vector of network statistics,  $\theta$  is a vector of coefficients, and  $k(\theta)$  is a normalizing constant.<sup>8</sup>

### III. 2. Dependent Variable

Unlike other types of relational data such as friendship or group membership, cosponsorship networks provide information both about the existence of a relationship and the relative frequency of such relationship (Alemán and Calvo 2010). Because the counts observed in cosponsorship data are meaningful, it is important to take advantage of such data rather than just assume away differences by reducing all counts to a single value expressing a tie.

Following Aleman and Calvo (2010) and Cranmer and Desmarais (2011), we take advantage of this extra-information by transforming the original valued matrices into synthetic data reflecting layers of the networks.<sup>9</sup> We conduct two different types of analyses that extract information on the frequency of reported ties: first, we (i) augment our data using synthetic draws from the observed frequencies of ties in the original network of cosponsors (Alemán and Calvo 2010). As more frequent ties in the

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<sup>8</sup> See Goodreau et al. (2008, pp. 7-8).

<sup>9</sup> Valued matrices are  $R \times C$  matrices with their diagonal describing the total number of ties by each individual  $i$  and off diagonal elements describing the count of ties between each pair of individuals  $[i, j]$ .

original affiliation matrix increase the probability of observing a tie in the synthetic data, we bootstrap ERGM estimates from 1000 network draws and retrieve estimates of the model.<sup>10</sup> Our bootstrapped ERGM estimates, consequently, weigh more heavily those ties among pairs of legislators which occur more frequently.

As a second strategy to account for differences in the observed frequency of ties is to (ii) *thin down* the original data into multiple cross-sections of the network (Cranmer and Desmarais 2011), progressively increasing the number of cosponsored initiatives that are required to report a tie. As we *thin down* the original cosponsorship data, ERGM estimates provide information on the more active pairs of legislators. This allows us to observe the determinants of more intense or frequent cosponsorship activity.

### III. 3. Independent Variables

We include a number of edge and node covariates as predictors of cosponsorship in the Argentine Congress. To test the effect of shared identity traits we include covariates for shared party membership, shared government/opposition membership, shared district, contiguous provinces, and shared committee membership. We expect that members who belong to the same party will be more likely to agree on their policy preferences and more likely to interact frequently to disclose their law initiatives. Consequently, shared partisanship should increase the likelihood of observing a tie between pairs of legislators. Other terms that describe homophile traits, such as being a member of the government or belonging to the same

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<sup>10</sup> For references see Calvo and Aleman (2010).



district should also result in higher cosponsorship. However, we expect lower network effects when parties are nationalized and, consequently, within party factions that cut across provinces become a more important determinant of policy collaboration. To this end, we include also a term interacting the district and party variables, allowing us to assess within- and across-district collaboration by members that belong to the same party. Other controls distinguish first time legislators and the customary edge parameter which serves as a constant in exponential random graph models.

Model specification follows existing usage, testing for homophily for those terms that explain shared traits (party, province, region, and committee) and defining as node covariates those variables that describe individual MCs traits (freshman). Models are estimated for each of the 12 congresses (two year periods) between 1984 and 2007.



## IV. Results

Results of the bootstrapped specifications are presented in Table 3, which presents median ERGM coefficients from 1000 synthetic networks drawn from the original data for each of the twelve Congresses after democratization. Results show party and provincial memberships as important determinants of legislative collaboration (joint effects).

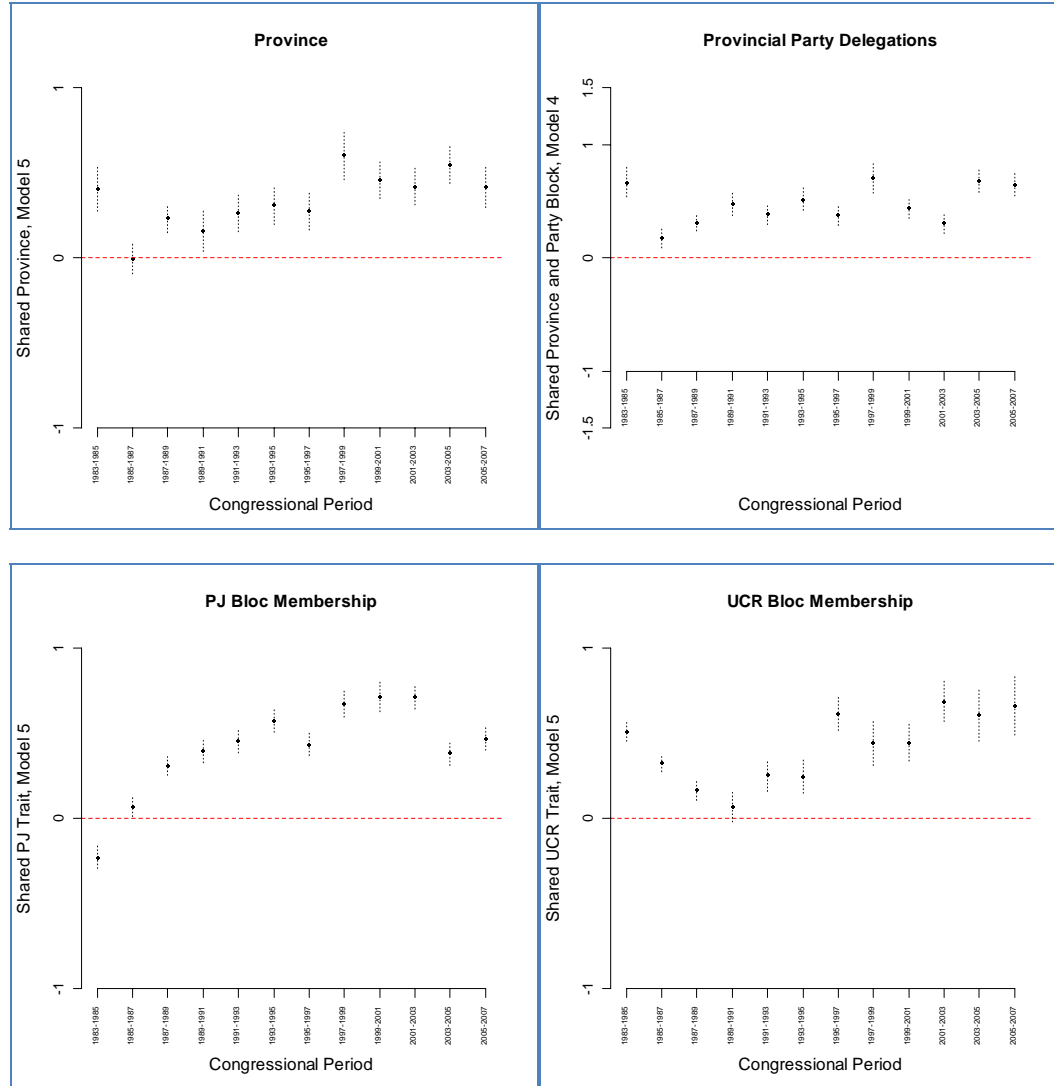
As shown in Table 3, Peronist co-membership increases collaboration in all Congressional periods but one, 1984-1985, when a major split between the old party guard and the “Renovadores” led to a sharp realignment among Peronist elites. Similarly, UCR co-membership increases collaboration among lawmakers in all periods but one, 1990-1991, the aftermath of the hyperinflationary crisis that led to the resignation of then President Raul R. Alfonsín. An intensely partisan period also seems to emerge in the aftermath of the 2001 crisis, with shared membership in the PJ and the UCR leading to significantly more intense collaboration. Shared provincial membership is an equally strong predictor of collaboration among lawmakers, with substantively and statistically significant coefficients in all but one period, 1986-1987. Particularly noteworthy is the increasing importance of provincial co-membership as a determinant of collaboration since 1998. Results strongly support extensive narrative accounts of the consistent territorialization of party politics since the beginning of Carlos S. Menem’s second administration (1995-1999).

Table 3: Exponential Random Graph Models on Synthetic Data, Bootstrapped Estimates, Argentine Cosponsorship Networks, 1984-2007

Congress	1984-1985	1986-1987	1988-1989	1990-1991	1992-1993	1994-1995	1996-1997	1998-1999	2000-2001	2002-2003	2004-2005	2006-2007
Edges	<b>-1.46***</b> (0.02)	<b>-1.39***</b> (0.02)	<b>-1.93***</b> (0.03)	<b>-2.32***</b> (0.03)	<b>-2.4***</b> (0.04)	<b>-2.43***</b> (0.04)	<b>-2.38***</b> (0.03)	<b>-2.98***</b> (0.04)	<b>-2.84***</b> (0.04)	<b>-2.56***</b> (0.04)	<b>-2.41***</b> (0.04)	<b>-2.6***</b> (0.04)
Shared Province	<b>0.41***</b> (0.09)	0 (0.06)	<b>0.23***</b> (0.05)	<b>0.16**</b> (0.08)	<b>0.27***</b> (0.07)	<b>0.31***</b> (0.07)	<b>0.28***</b> (0.07)	<b>0.61***</b> (0.09)	<b>0.46***</b> (0.07)	<b>0.42***</b> (0.07)	<b>0.55***</b> (0.07)	<b>0.42***</b> (0.08)
Shared Party and Province	<b>0.24**</b> (0.09)	<b>0.16*</b> (0.09)	<b>0.16*</b> (0.09)	<b>0.44***</b> (0.11)	<b>0.24**</b> (0.11)	<b>0.29***</b> (0.11)	0.16 (0.11)	<b>0.29**</b> (0.12)	0.09 (0.12)	0.13 (0.11)	<b>0.26**</b> (0.11)	<b>0.32***</b> (0.11)
PJ	<b>-0.23***</b> (0.04)	<b>0.07**</b> (0.04)	<b>0.31***</b> (0.04)	<b>0.39***</b> (0.04)	<b>0.46***</b> (0.04)	<b>0.58***</b> (0.04)	<b>0.44***</b> (0.04)	<b>0.68***</b> (0.05)	<b>0.72***</b> (0.06)	<b>0.72***</b> (0.05)	<b>0.38***</b> (0.05)	<b>0.47***</b> (0.05)
UCR	<b>0.51***</b> (0.03)	<b>0.33***</b> (0.03)	<b>0.17***</b> (0.04)	0.07 (0.06)	<b>0.26***</b> (0.06)	<b>0.25***</b> (0.06)	<b>0.62***</b> (0.06)	<b>0.44***</b> (0.08)	<b>0.45***</b> (0.07)	<b>0.69***</b> (0.08)	<b>0.61***</b> (0.10)	<b>0.66***</b> (0.11)
Others	0.25 (0.26)	<b>0.33**</b> (0.15)	-0.02 (0.12)	-0.02 (0.14)	0.08 (0.14)	0.22 (0.14)	<b>0.33**</b> (0.13)	<b>0.24*</b> (0.14)	<b>0.42***</b> (0.14)	<b>0.27**</b> (0.13)	<b>0.21*</b> (0.12)	<b>0.25**</b> (0.13)
Contiguos Province	<b>-0.42***</b> (0.09)	<b>-0.19***</b> (0.05)	0.06 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.05)	-0.11 (0.11)	0.1 (0.10)	0.56 (0.41)	<b>-0.35***</b> (0.08)	<b>0.8***</b> (0.30)	0.54 (0.59)	0.04 (0.05)	0.13 (0.14)
Shared Committee	<b>-0.11**</b> (0.05)	<b>-0.28***</b> (0.05)	<b>-0.27***</b> (0.05)	<b>-0.17***</b> (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)	<b>-0.16***</b> (0.05)	<b>-0.38***</b> (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)	-0.07 (0.05)	<b>-0.23***</b> (0.05)	<b>-0.27***</b> (0.04)	<b>-0.17***</b> (0.04)
Freshman		<b>-0.07***</b> (0.02)	<b>0.06***</b> (0.02)	<b>0.11***</b> (0.03)	<b>-0.09***</b> (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.03 (0.03)	<b>0.14***</b> (0.03)	<b>-0.07**</b> (0.03)	<b>-0.16***</b> (0.03)	<b>-0.06**</b> (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)
N	31166.4257	38486.3509	34897.234	24113.9923	23475.7278	22142.6045	23705.4178	18209.3955	18918.6174	20781.2907	22002.102	20571.7775
AIC	31241.5376	38563.442	34975.0225	24190.1551	23552.5586	22218.6991	23782.117	18285.7613	18995.5788	20857.8573	22078.3327	20647.8721
BIC	-15574.213	-19234.175	-17439.617	-12047.996	-11728.864	-11062.302	-11843.709	-9095.6978	-9450.3087	-10381.645	-10992.051	-10276.889

Note: Bootstrapped Exponential Random Graph Models reporting changes in the log-odds ratio of observing a cosponsorship network tie. Positive (negative) coefficients represent more (less) likely observable ties. The magnitude of the coefficient represents the “strength” of the effect.

Figure 1: Evolution of Estimates Explaining Cosponsorship Networks in Argentina, 1984-2007



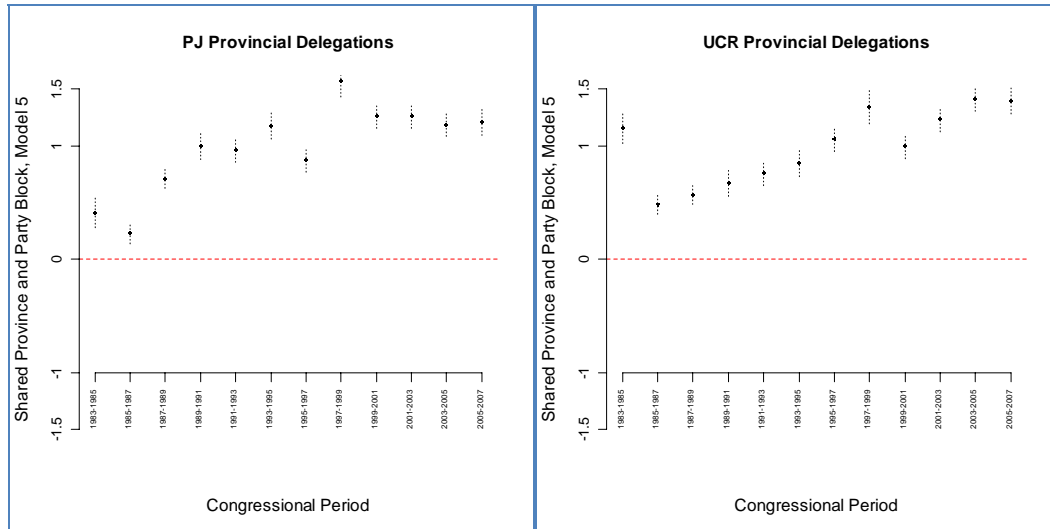
*Note:* Bootstrapped Exponential Random Graph estimates reporting the independent variables' contribution to changes in the log-odds ratio of observing a cosponsorship network tie.

To better visualize and compare the results, we plot our bootstrapped coefficients in Figure 1, displaying the importance of shared provincial membership (upper left), the importance of shared province and party (upper right), and the importance of shared membership in the Peronist PJ (lower left) or the UCR (lower right). As it is possible to observe, estimates of the 1984-1985 Congress are somewhat exceptional. This corresponds with two distinctive features of this first post-democratization Congress: firstly, this first Congress saw considerably more limited legislative activity than subsequent Congresses. Much legislation in this first Congress was initiated by the national executive in order to deal with the institutional and socio-political demands of the transition process. Secondly, this first democratic congress saw a party realignment within the Peronists, with the emergence of the “Renovadores” challenging the old guard both in Congress and in the electoral arena. The result was a decline in within PJ cosponsorship paired with a significant increase in within-district cosponsorship.

We observe both more significant within party and within district collaboration over time. Particularly high district and party level effects are observed after the 1997, in spite of the decline in within PJ cosponsorship after the realignment of 2005.

Figure 2 presents the estimates of co-membership in a Party and Province, provincial delegation. The joint effect of province and party became more pronounced over the last twenty years, supporting extensive narratives of the increasing importance of district level politics in Argentina.

Figure 2: Shared Partisan and Provincial Membership as a determinant of legislative Collaboration, PJ and UCR Delegations, 1984-2007



More prominent partisan and district level effects are also described when analyzing cosponsorship in individual provinces, as in Figures 3 and 4. In all five of the largest provinces (Buenos Aires, CABA, Córdoba, Santa Fe, and Mendoza) within district collaboration has consistently increased since democratization in 1984. The relative smaller delegations of a majority of provinces, which elect only 5 and 7 members, have wider confidence intervals and a display a more erratic collaboration pattern.

Figure 3: Cosponsorship Networks in Argentina, 1984-2007, Shared District Membership by Congressional Year, Selected Provinces

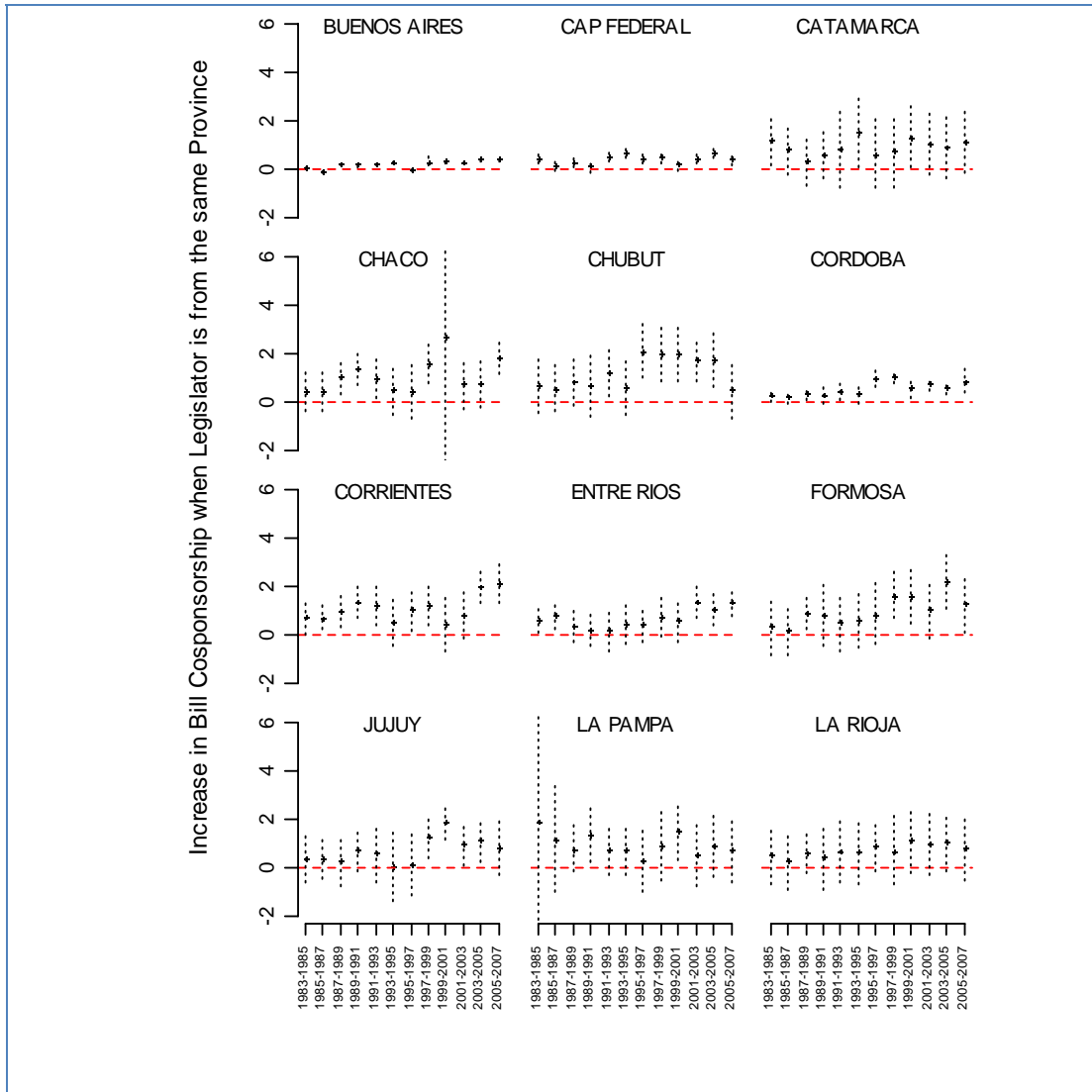
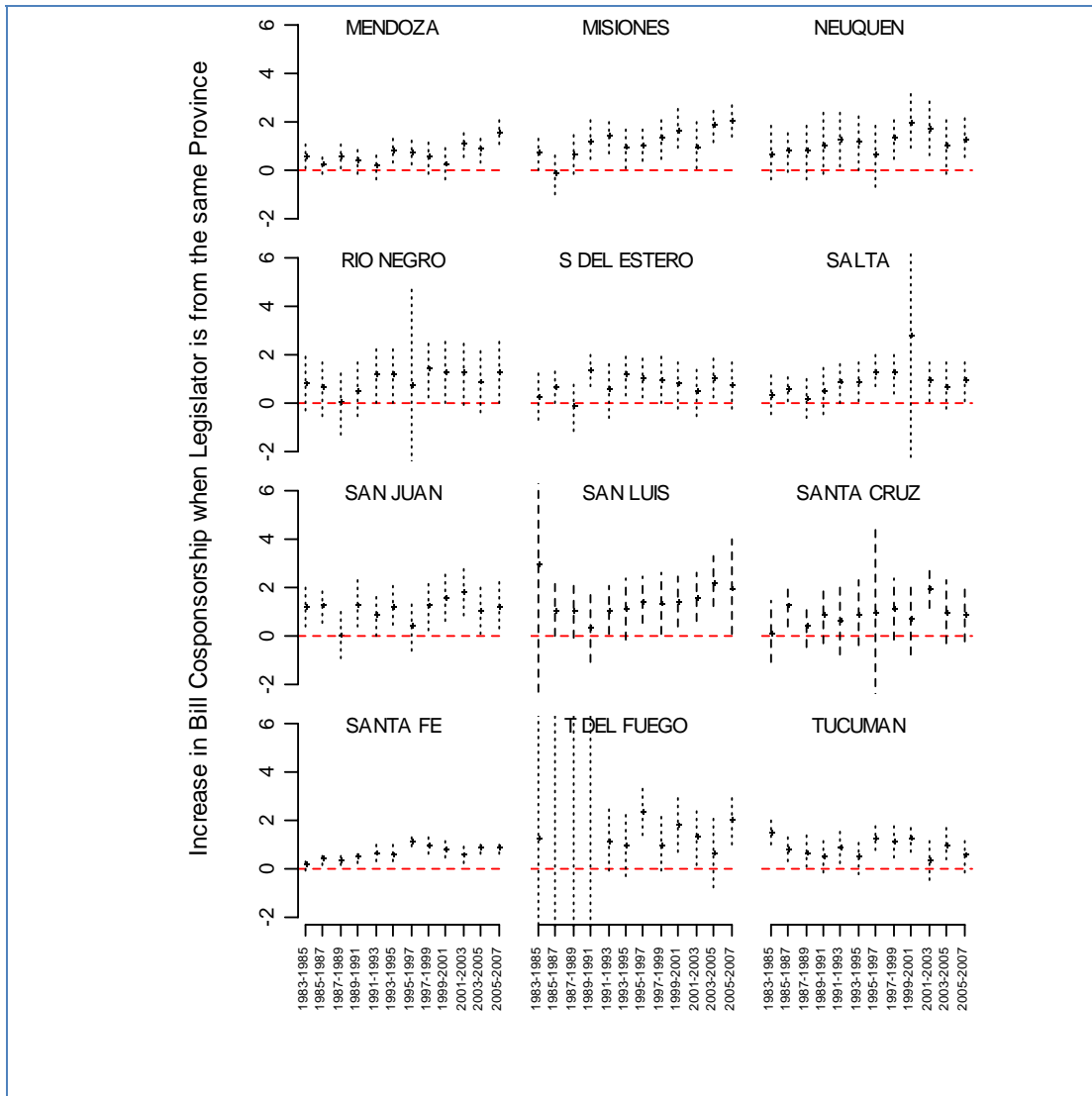


Figure 4: Cosponsorship Networks in Argentina, 1984-2007, Shared District by Congressional Year, Selected Provinces



## IV.1. Analyzing the determinants of Higher Level Cosponsorship

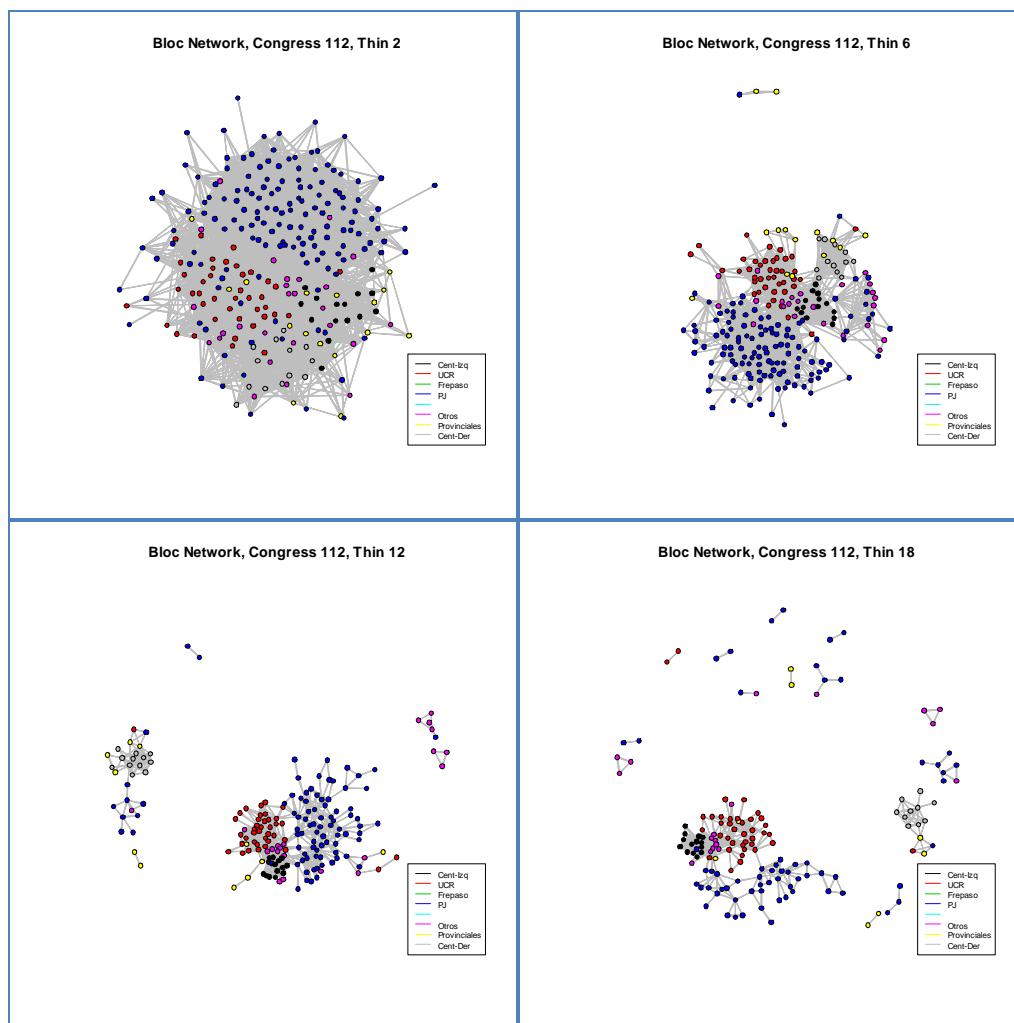
In the previous analyses, we estimated the average effect of shared partisanship and district membership on legislative collaboration. We showed more prominent partisan and provincial effects over time, for the average member of congress irrespective of their actual level of collaboration. However, as described before, the valued matrix that describes cosponsorship activity also provides information to distinguish high level collaborators and compare their behavior to that of low level collaborators. For example, we may find that most legislators have cosponsored at least one project with every member of their party, which would result in a very dense and uninformative network. However, we may find that members are more selective when considering high numbers of reported ties. To this end, Cranmer and Desmarais (2011) propose to thin down very dense networks by estimating ERGM models using different tie thresholds.

An example of the different networks observed by thinning the cosponsorship data successively is shown in Figure 5. The upper left plot describes a network that requires at least two projects to report a tie. As it is possible to observe, the network is very dense, as most legislators cosponsor at least two projects with a large number of fellow MCs. As we elevate the threshold to a more demanding level, requiring say at least 6 projects to be cosponsored to report a tie (Figure 5, upper right plot), we observe a smaller network with considerable more structure. We see further separation across parties. In this second plot, smaller third parties are not mixed in the PJ and UCR networks.





Figure 5: Cosponsorship Networks by Intensity of the Tie (Thinning), Argentine House, 2006-2007.



Note: Estimated using data from *Información Parlamentaria*, Argentine Congress.

Instead, we observe well defined local (provincial) parties<sup>11</sup>, parties on the left, on the right, as well as significant clustering among members of the PJ and the UCR. In analyzing this second plot, we see that at higher levels of collaboration partisanship effects are stronger. Further thinning the cosponsorship network, requiring 12 projects (Figure 5, lower left) or 18 projects (Figure 4, lower right) to

<sup>11</sup> Namely parties that compete in only one or just a few provincial districts.

report a tie, we see separate networks for the provincial parties. A larger network comprises the PJ, the UCR, and a small group of center-left parties.

Figure 5 should illustrate how thinning allows us to observe higher levels of the cosponsorship network. Estimating exponential random graph models at each of the different thinning stages, consequently, we can assess how important partisan and district level effects are as we move from mapping single ties to mapping high activity cosponsorship.

To model high level cosponsorship activity we run 20 different models for each Congress, each of them increasing the number of cosponsored projects that are required to report a network edge or tie. Rather than providing tables with the estimates for all two hundred models,<sup>12</sup> Figure 6 describes the linear estimates of shared province on cosponsorship at each level of thinning and for each of the twelve congresses. Models are extremely robust, showing an increase on the importance of shared provincial membership explainign cosponsorship as the threshold increases. That is, as we analyze more active cosponsors, the importance of shared province increases significantly.

Much more dramatic is the effect of shared party and province (provincial delegation) on cosponsorship, as the level of activity increases. As shown in Figure 7, the effect of shared province and party on the probability of observing a network tie increases from around .5 in very dense networks to around 3 when at least 20 cosponsorship projects are required to observe a tie.

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<sup>12</sup> These tables are available upon request.

Figure 6: Provincial Effects on Cosponsorship Networks by Intensity of the Tie (Thinning), 1984-2007, Shared District by Congressional Year

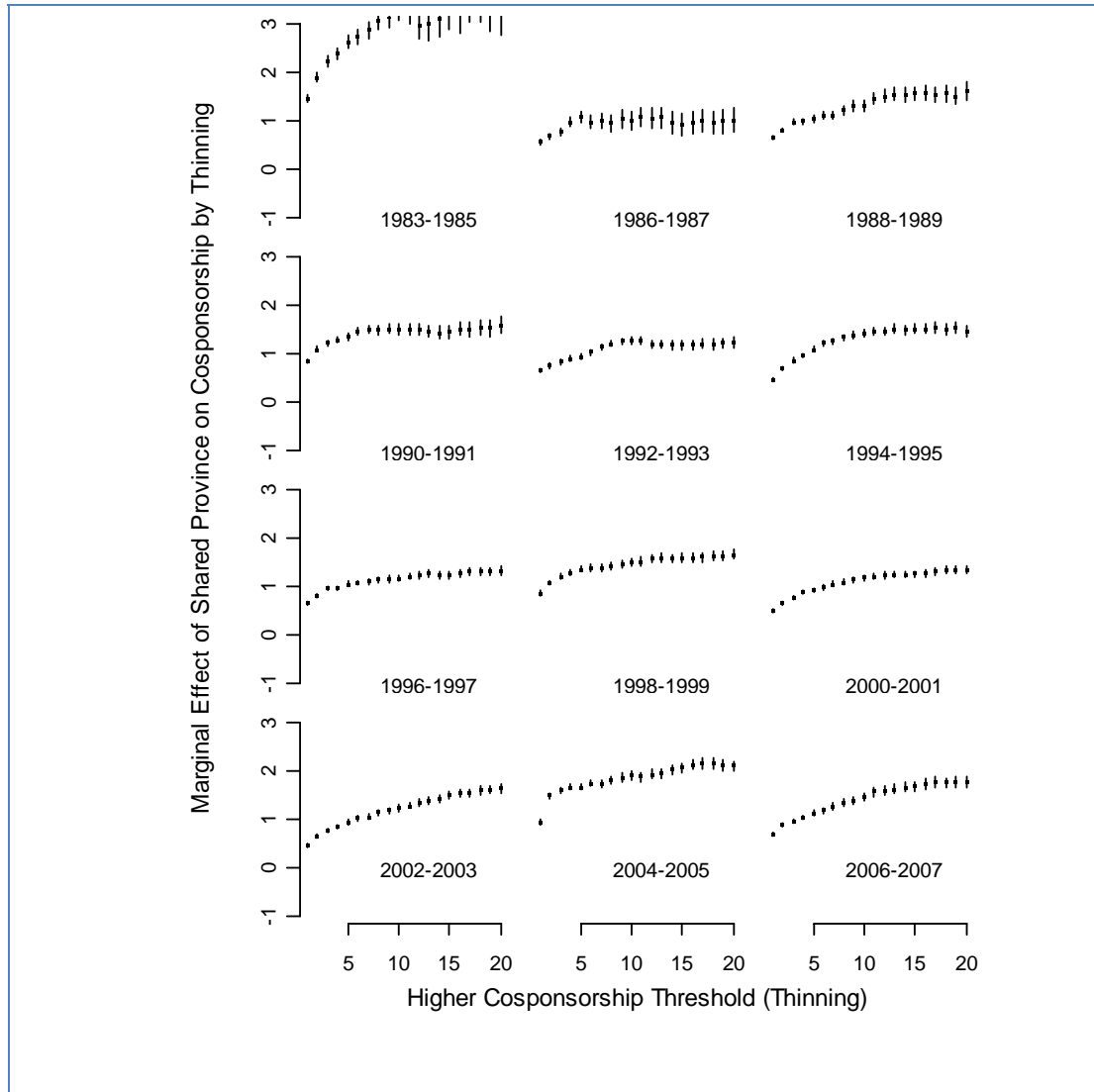
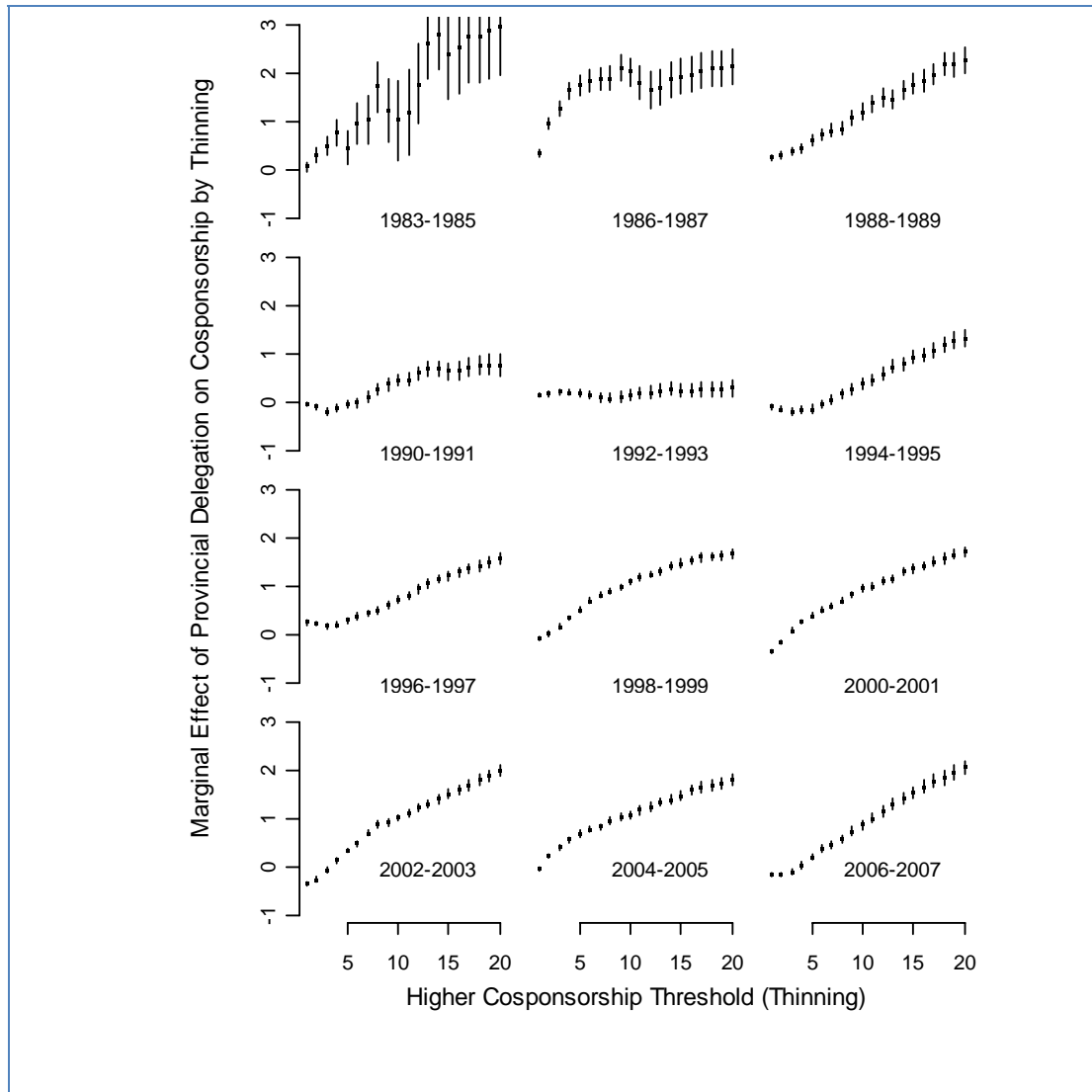


Figure 7: Cosponsorship Networks in Argentina by Intensity of the Tie (Thinning), 1984-2007, Shared Provincial Delegation (District and Party) by Congressional Year



## V. Concluding Remarks

Until recently, the territorial roots of policy collaboration have been a blind spot of contemporary theories of party system nationalization. Striving to fill this conceptual gap, comparative studies of party nationalization have focused on the geographical variation of political preferences and the electoral behavior of voters. Yet, the conceptions they advance yield different predictions about the translation of this variation into legislative outcomes. Homogeneity of electoral support across districts could occur, we argue, because parties represent constituencies with similar preferences but also because they simultaneously satisfy constituencies with different views and needs. The same goal, electoral nationalization, can be achieved through different legislative organizations: a *responsible party* with frequent cross-district collaboration, if district level preferences are similar; or an effective vote-trading machine, with less frequent collaboration, if they are different. The important substantive point to stress is that electoral nationalization does not always indicate nationalization of policy intent. Electoral nationalization may result from the effective combination of several territorially targeted initiatives. In other words, a complete portrayal of nationalization as a political phenomenon needs to incorporate a heretofore overlooked dimension: legislative nationalization.

Electoral and legislative nationalization are conceptually independent. They are also theoretically related. Logrolling imposes high costs on political transactions and a heavy burden on fiscal resources. Therefore, *gains from trade* models may be difficult to sustain. Geographically circumscribed targeting

strategies may be more efficient when electoral performance is uneven across districts and clientelistic linkages predominate. Under these circumstances, we expect reductions in electoral nationalization to strengthen provincial co-sponsorship networks and thus lead to a reduction in legislative nationalization.

Results of our study of legislative collaboration over 12 congressional periods in Argentina are largely consistent with this hypothesis. Shared provincial membership has been a strong predictor of legislative collaboration in almost all periods, but it has become more significant since 1998, when according to recent studies the Argentine party system started to show the first signs of political territorialization. More significantly, the joint impact of party and provincial effects on legislative collaboration has consistently increased as electoral nationalization declined.

Our study also identifies significant variation across parties, provinces and periods. This suggests that other factors, whose identification demands further theoretical work, filter the influence of electoral trends on the structure of legislative collaboration.

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