



ImproCollBar

Improving Collective Bargaining in
European Union. Comparison of
Different Industrial Relations
Regimes – ImproCollBar 101052292

Coalition building and social movement unionism

European Round Table, 23 October 2023, Leuven, Belgium

Massimiliano Andretta and Paola Imperatore

MAIN ARGUMENT

Trade Unions power and resources are declining for several reasons

- Globalization
- Changes in the labour market: unemployment, labour market dualization
- Changes in the workers structural position: sites of production, values channells
- Crisis of the State (control on economy)
- Crisis of Political Parties (linkages)

- A growing literature reports on the need and the effort of trade union revitalization
- Union rivitalization can be achieved in a variety of ways (Frege and Kelly 2003, 9)

- Organizational restructuring (membership)
- Partnership with employers
- Coalition building with social movement
- Political action and mobilization
- International links

- In this context the concept of Social Movement Unionism emerged as a peculiar form of revitalization



Theory

Bridging social movement studies and industrial relations

- Trade unions radicalization, and social movements tactics: **Social Movement Unionism** (Frege and Heary, Watermann, Seidman, Moody, Chun, Trongone, Pilati and Perra)



Tactics

- Labour struggles in non-unionized economic sectors (Della Porta, Chesta, Cini...)
- Joint mobilizations (Grote and Wagemann)
- Social movements dynamics, social appropriation and identity transformation (Andretta and Imperatore)



Interests, organization and identity formation

- Trade unions and insider/outsider dilemma (Pilati and Perra)
- Social movements dynamics and trade unions reproduction (Andretta and Rossi)



Protest Repertoire and functions

- Class struggles and labour résistance beyond trade unions (Atzeni, Cox, Nowak)



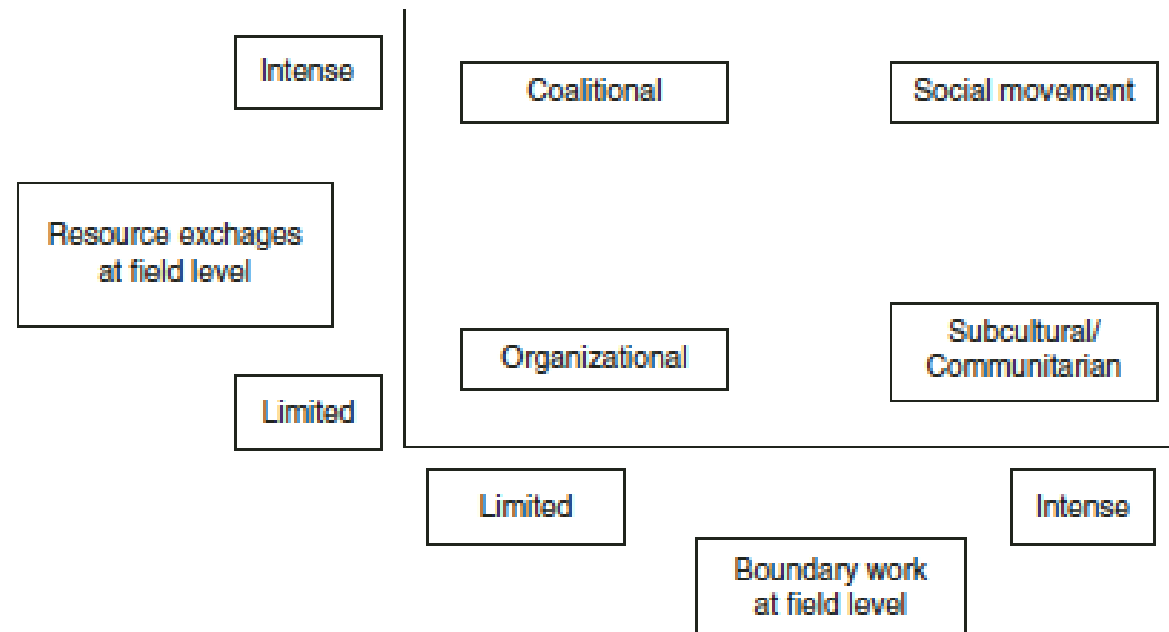
Capitalist structure, accumulation, dispossession and resistance

Social movement unionism: what social movement theory

Social movement unionism as tactic

“Unions either utilize social movement repertoires or they do not; they are therefore either revitalizing or resistant to change” and “much of the existing literature on union revitalization either documents or explains the presence or absence of social movement styles of mobilization” (Trongone 2022, p. 149).

Figure 1. Mario Diani’s Modes of Coordination (2015, p. 16)



Our Typology for Italian Trade Unions Mobilization

Empirical ex-ante categories:

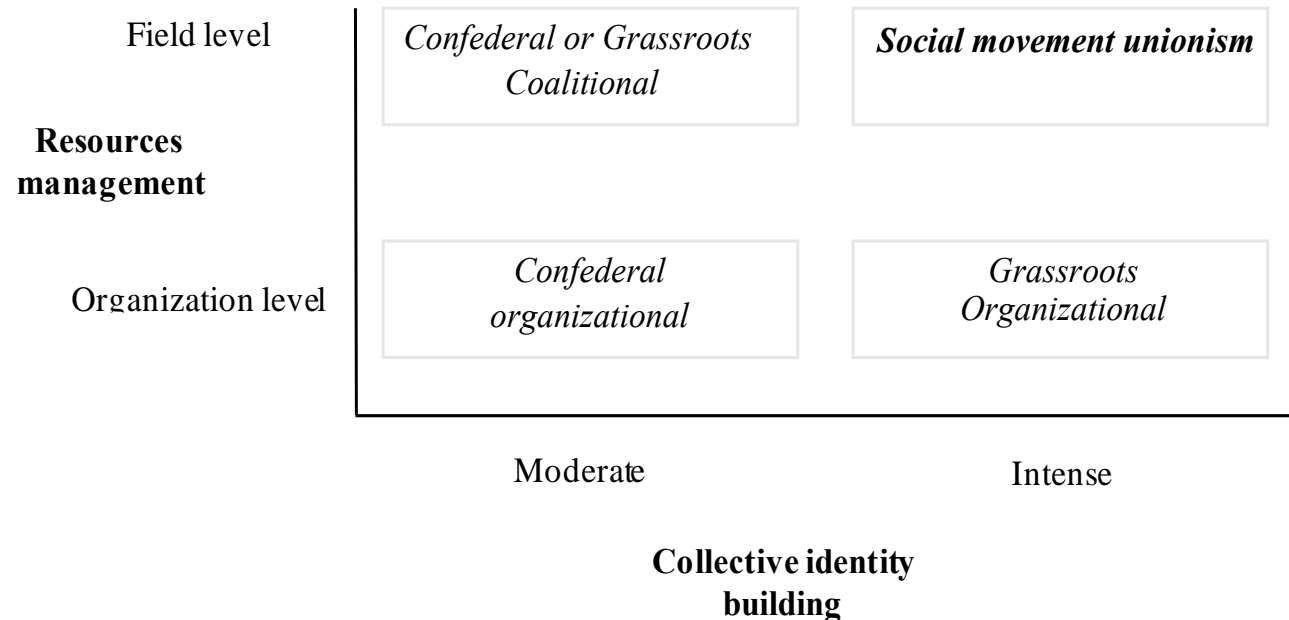
1. Confederal Organizational
2. Confederal Coalitional
3. Grassroots Organizational
4. Grassroots Coalitional



**Social Movement
Unionism**

Social Inclusiveness
Expressive Repertoire
Generalized Frames

Figure 2. Italian trade unions modes of coordination





Method and Research Questions

Method and RQs

- ❖ Protest Event Analysis (PEA)
- ❖ Source: La Repubblica.it
- ❖ Key Word: protest*
- ❖ Period: 1994-2021
- ❖ Collected PE:
 - 6.311 (all)
 - 2.086 (trade unions)

RQ 1 What modes of coordination prevailed?

RQ 2 What kind of trade unions promoted a coalitional mode of coordination

RQ 3 To what extent a coalitional mode of coordination predicts social movement unionism

Analysis

Labour modes of coordination in Italy (1994-2021)

Figure 3. Italian trade unions mobilization across time

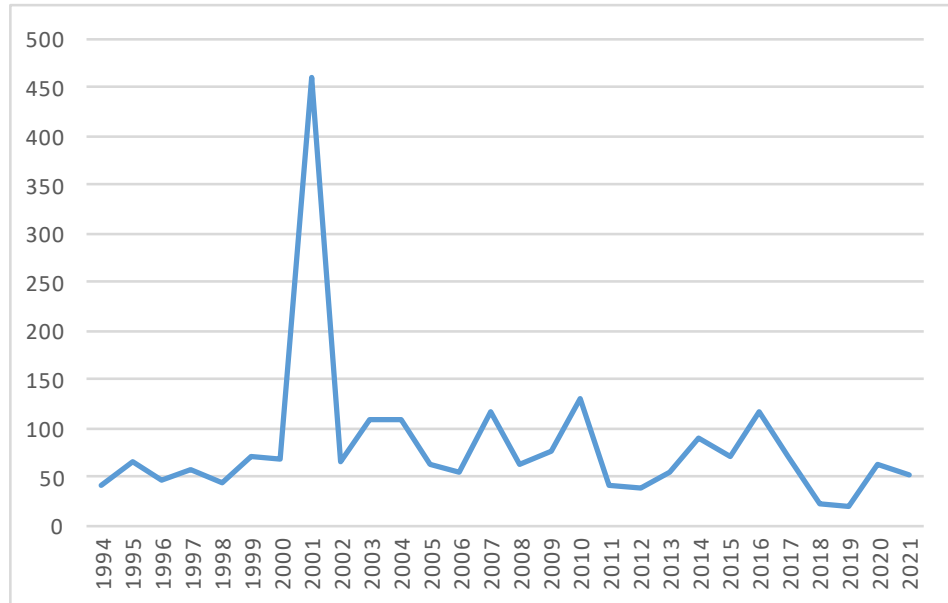


Table 1. Modes of coordination of the Italian trade unions

	Frequency	%
Confederal org.	949	45,5
Confederal coal.	168	8,1
Grassroots org.	487	23,3
Grassroots coal.	482	23,1
Total	2086	100,0

Social inclusion

SOCIAL MOVEMENT UNIONISM INDICATORS	BINARY LOGISTIC ODDS RATIO REFERENCE CATEGORY= CONFEDERAL Org. (N. of Obs. 2,086)			PSEUDO R SQUARED
	CONFEDERAL COALITIONAL	ORGANIZATIONAL GRASSROOTS	RADICAL COALITIONAL	
Peripheral social actor	5.01***	1.47**	11.0***	0.16
Social alliance	4.78***	n.s.	9.39***	0.15

2008
Student and
workers
protest



Social inclusion

Figure 5: Peripheral Social Actors

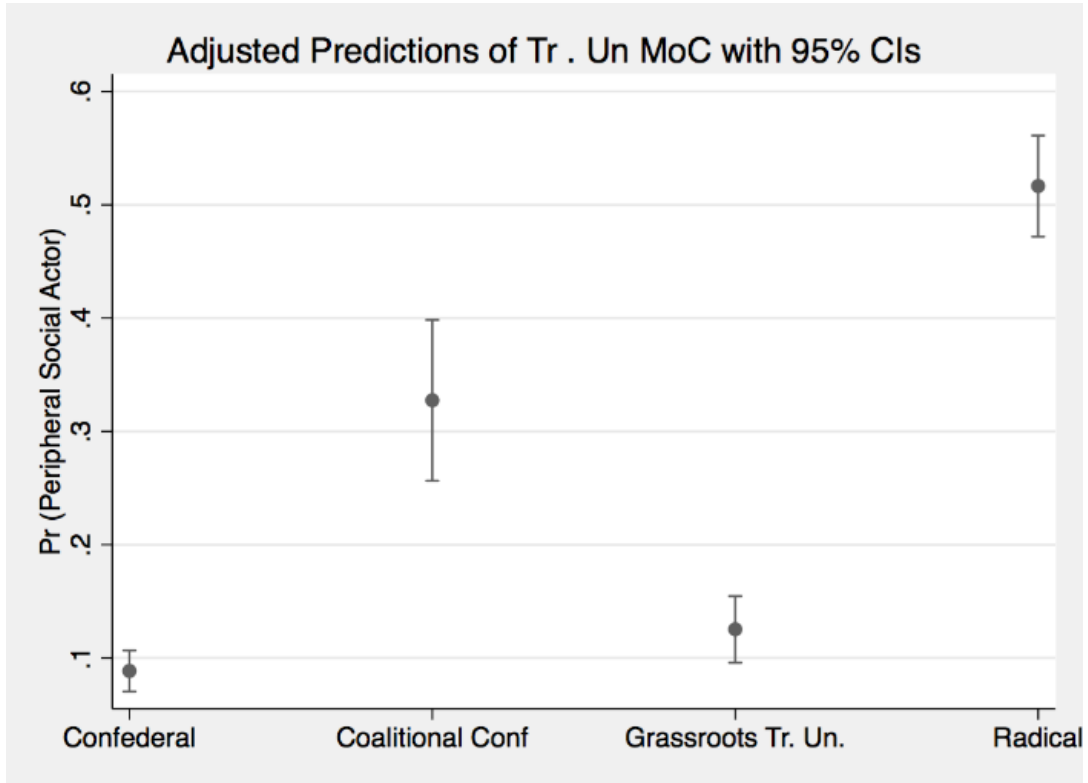
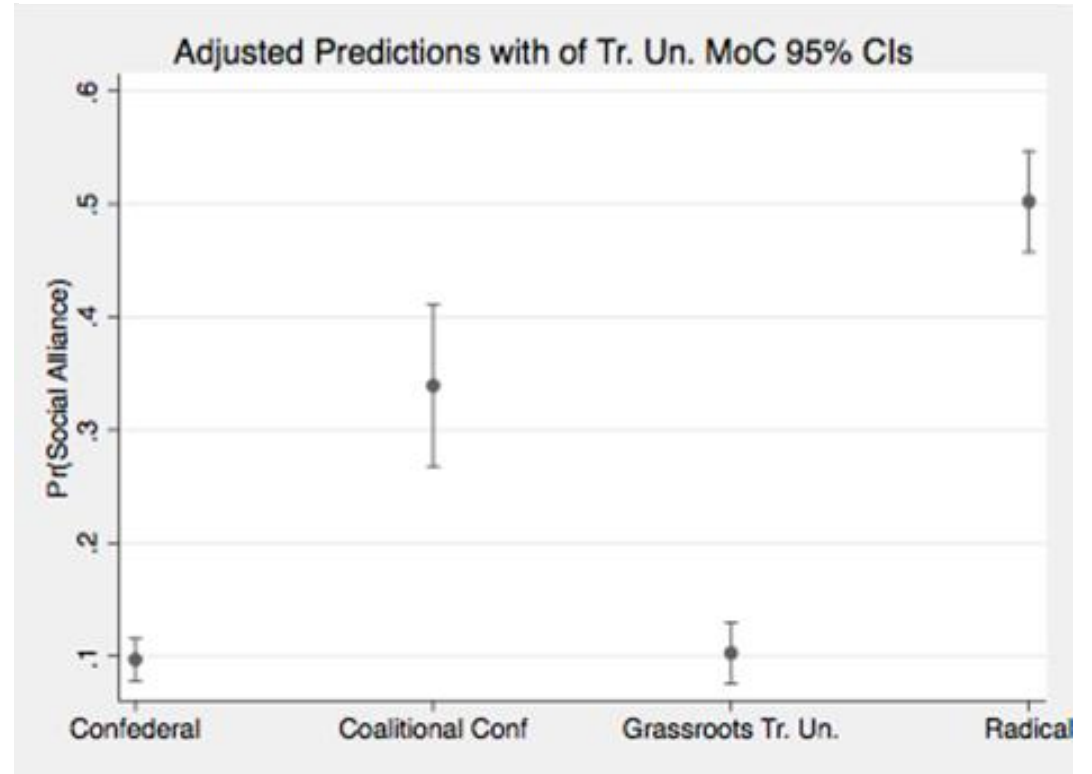


Figure 6: Social Alliance



Repertoire

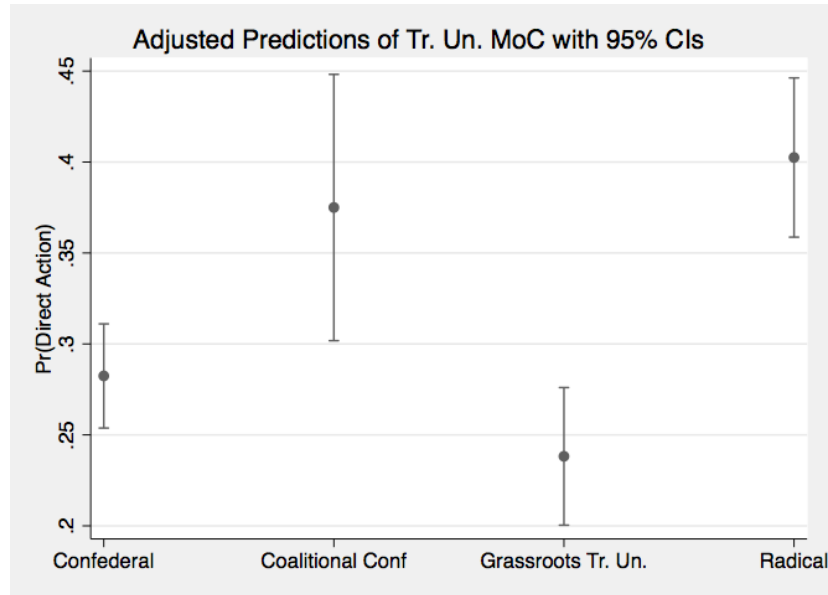
	CONF. COALITIONALE	ORGANIZ. GRASSROOTS	RADICAL COALITIONAL	
March/Rally	1.82***	0.64**	1.56***	0.02
Direct action	1.52**	n.s.	1.71***	.02
Strike	0.42***	n.s.	0.41***	.03
Multiple Repertoire	n.s.	0.57***	1.66***	.03

2023
Workers and
grassroots
trade union

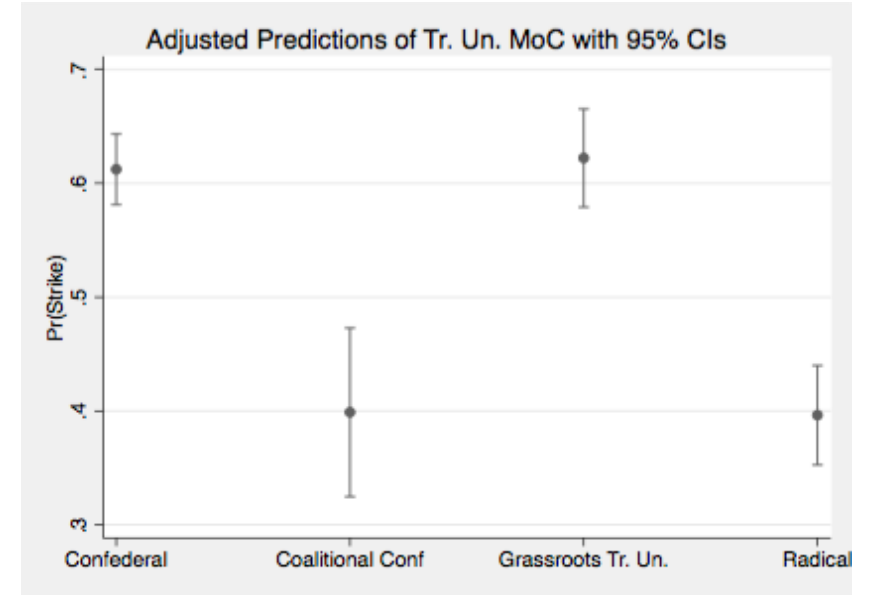


Repertoire

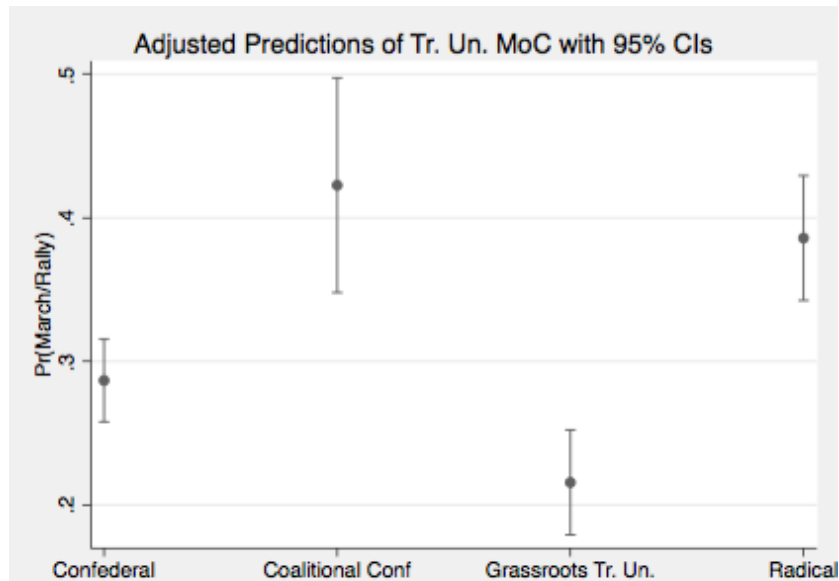
DIRECT ACTION: EXPRESSIVE



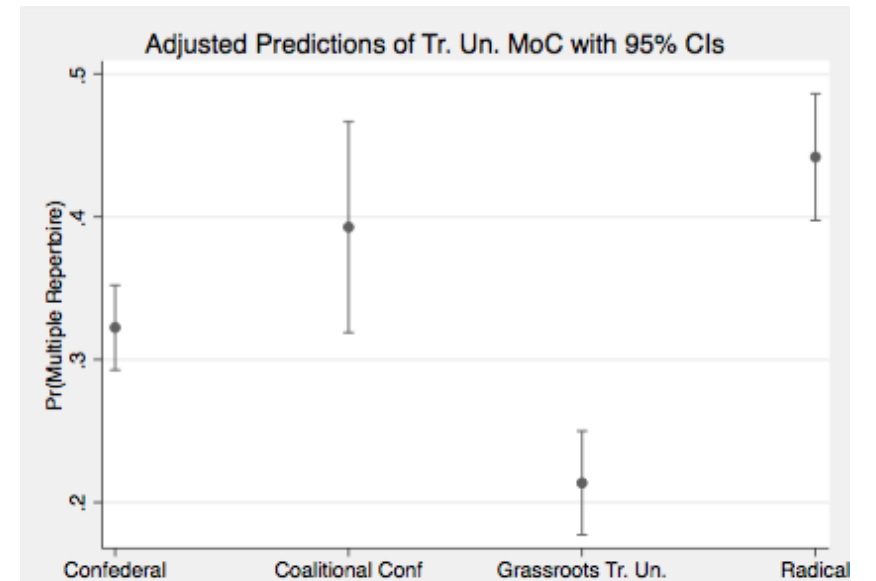
STRIKE: INSTRUMENTAL



MARCH/RALLY: EXPRESSIVE



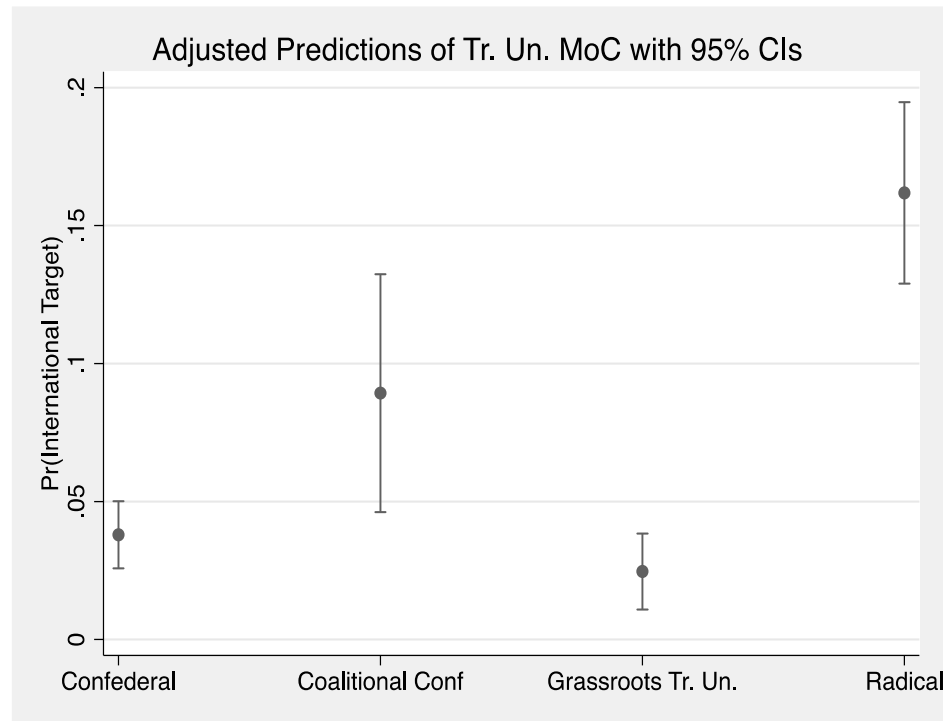
MULTIPLE REPERTOIRE: EXPRESSIVE



Target

Democracy	5.11***	n.s.	7.66***	0.10
Environment and Peace	5.66***	n.s.	8.68***	0.13
International Target	2.48**	n.s.	4.89***	0.08

INTERNATIONAL TARGET

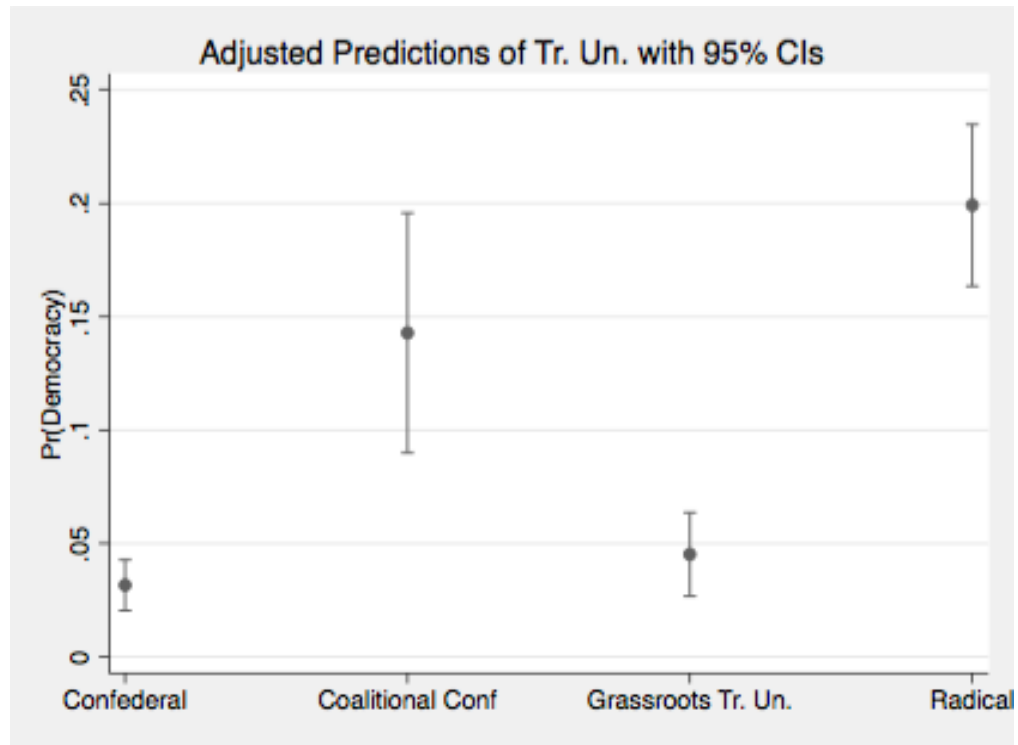


5/11/20
22
Europe
for
Peace

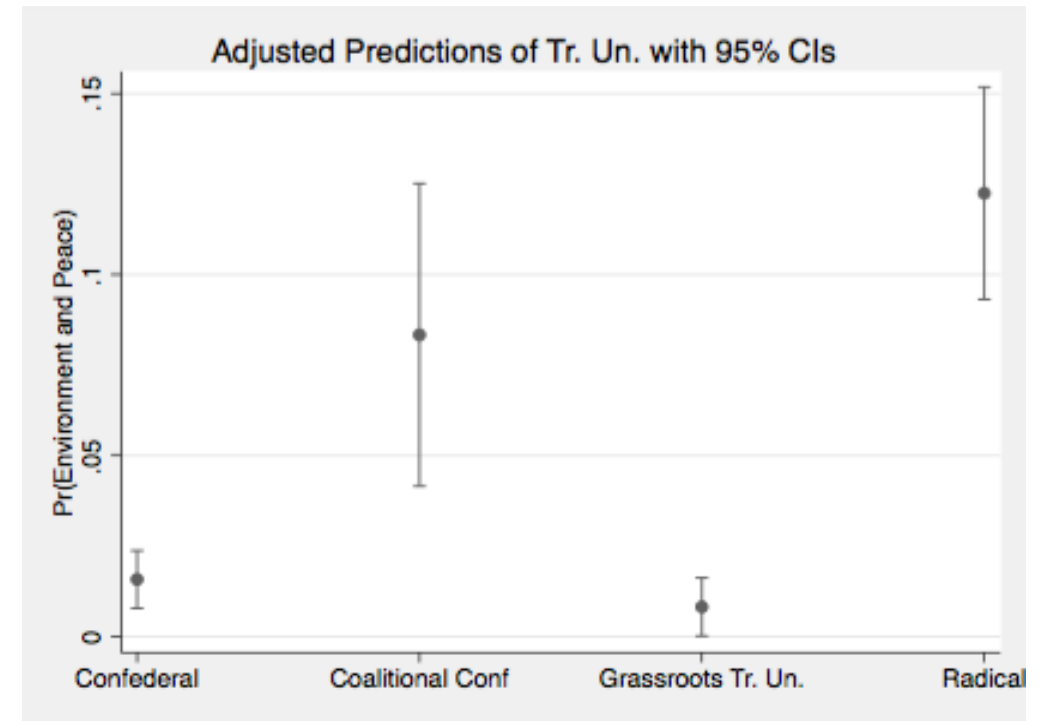


Frame

DEMOCRACY



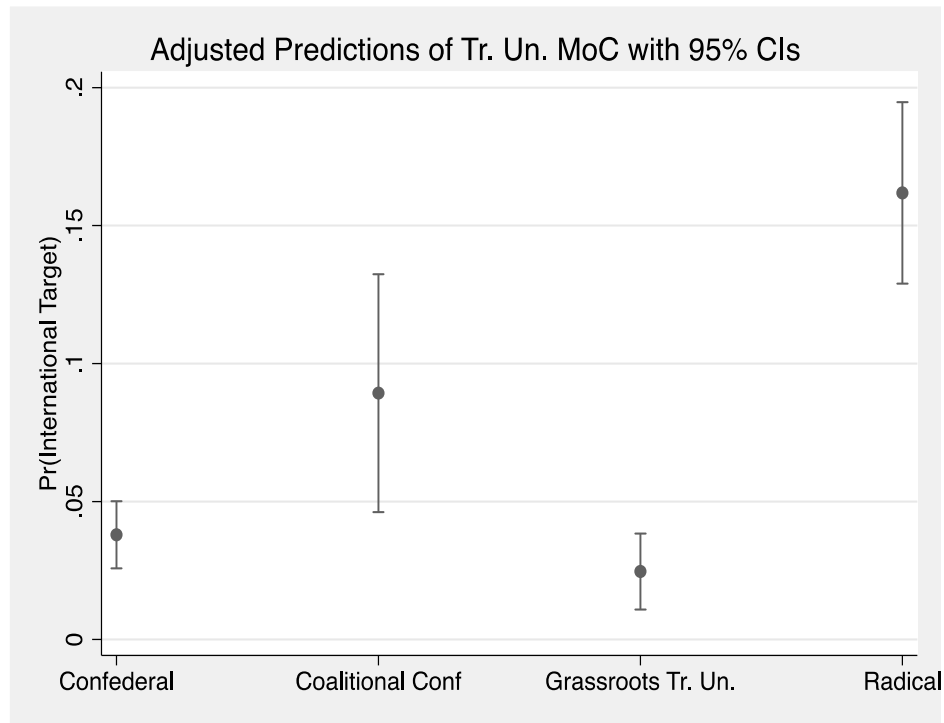
ENVIRONMENT/PEACE



Target

	CONF. COALITIONAL	ORGANIZ. GRASSROOTS	RADICAL COALITIONA L	
Democracy	5.11***	n.s.	7.66***	0.10
Environment and Peace	5.66***	n.s.	8.68***	0.13
International Target	2.48**	n.s.	4.89***	0.08

INTERNATIONAL TARGET



5/11/20
22
Europe
for
Peace



CONCLUSIONS

First results & future research

- ❖ **RQ 1:** Almost 30% of the labour protest has been coordinated with a Coalitional Mode
 - ❖ **RQ 2** Coalitions are mostly forged by grass-roots trade unions
 - ❖ **RQ 3** A coalitional model predicts a social movement unionism

 - ❖ That is: Coalitions in the protest arena make trade unions able to reach a larger constituency (overcoming the insider/outsider dualization); through the use of a more expressive repertoire of action (beyond striking) and generalize their claims (democracy, environment and peace)
- ❖ CROSS COUNTRY ANALYSIS
 - ❖ QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF COALITIONS
 - ❖ QUALITATIVE RESEARCH WITH DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS FOR IDENTITY BUILDING



Thank you