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Taking the Measure of Social Democracy: Exploring the Ideology of the Socialist International through Topic Modeling

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Abstract

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This article investigates the political culture of European social democracy at the beginning of the Cold War by analysing the debates inside the Socialist International to define a socialist identity. There is a rich historical literature on what role European social democracy played in the origins of the Cold War, but combining digital history with a transnational approach can produce new insights into this key research question. The rarely explored Socialist International offers the best opportunity to experiment with new tools. The organisation, to which most European socialists belonged, allowed them to coordinate their activities and

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produce new insights into this key research question. The rarely explored Socialist International offers the best opportunity to experiment with new tools. The organisation, to which most European socialists belonged, allowed them to coordinate their activities and reach an agreement on ideas and strategy through debate. For this purpose, the Socialist International published a journal in the late 1940s and a book in the mid-1950s, to which most parties contributed articles or chapters. These collections are representative of the political culture of European social democracy at the time, so they provide a great opportunity to analyse transnational debates. In the era of mass parties, examining the ideology of a few great thinkers or top leaders is not enough; political culture is better expressed by myriads of speeches and articles produced by low-ranking party officials and journalists. A comprehensive analysis is beyond traditional textual analysis, but digital history is particularly suited for this purpose, as quantitative text analysis can reveal hidden similarities and underlying tensions within the social democratic culture. This article relies on new data specifically digitised for this article: the texts produced by the Socialist International for the public at large from the late 1940s to the mid-1950s. While it is a small corpus, it is comprehensive. The possibility of combining close and distant reading allows us to test which instruments of corpus linguistics are best suited to study the political culture of mass movements. This article employs topic modeling to reveal not just what were the main interests and concerns of social democrats at the time, but also differences among parties and the existence of subgroups within the socialist family. The results will allow to enrich the narrative of how European social democracy acted at the beginning of the Cold War, from the descent of the Iron Curtain, to the intense bipolar tension to the first steps in decolonisation and European integration.

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Introduction

The aim of this article is to investigate the political culture of European socialists at the beginning of the Cold War through the new tools of digital history. The late 1940s and early 1950s were a seminal period for European social democracy, as it came to adopt the identity that would define it for the following decades. At the centre of this process of self-definition was the Socialist International, the organisation that linked socialist parties around the world, offering an international source of authority and identity alternative to the Soviet Union and communism. The Socialist International also published collections of texts where the member parties debated their history and ideas, building a common ideology and identity through dialogue. Quantitative text analysis can reveal much about the content and style of social democratic ideological texts, aiding traditional analysis and producing new insights.

I am going to analyse the ideological texts that the Socialist International produced for the public, via a magazine and a book. Between 1947 and 1949, the Socialist International published the periodical "Socialist World". It printed articles from all the important parties of the socialist community; they dealt with contentious issues of the day and explained the member parties' policies and strategy. The book was conceived in the early 1950s and it was published in different forms later in the decade. The book had a similar structure to the periodical: the most important parties sent an essay retelling their history, explaining their strategic choices and defending their ideas. The output of the Socialist International for the public was neither substantial nor very popular but it is representative of socialist internationalism and provides evidence of political and ideological developments within the Western European socialist movement.

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At the same time, the analysis of the corpus of the Socialist International is an opportunity to refine tools of digital history, in order to make them suitable for analysing the history of the mid-Twentieth Century. As George Orwell famously noted, the language employed in politics is very different from ordinary or literary language (Orwell 1946). Political language obeys its own logic and adopts a specific terminology. Its rules are counterintuitive and often ordinary voters find it incomprehensible, even alienating. Interpreting a political text without the necessary background knowledge can obscure its meaning. For the programs of linguistic analysis to produce useful results, they must treat political language differently from the ordinary speech or literary language, which are the usual subjects of corpus linguistics. This makes it necessary to refine both technical procedures, such as pre-processing, and scientific interpretation of the data. This article will make some suggestions on the matter.

This article covers some of the same ground as the recent article by me, which reconstructs the publication history of “Socialist World” (Costa 2022). However, I argue that some insights are out of reach of traditional analysis, so the application of new methods allows us to produce new knowledge in the field. As Mats Fridlund noticed, history is rather conservative in its approach to digital humanities, being willing only to integrate innovations to reinforce existing methods and practices and refusing to disrupt the discipline through a paradigmatic transformation (Fridlund 2022).

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7 Quantitative text analysis provides a wide variety of tools, which can help address many historical debates. In this article, I am going to tackle seven research questions. These questions are not innovative, but they reflect open debates in the scientific literature about socialist internationalism. Each scientific question has a correlated methodological question.

1. What were the issues and interests of European social democrats in the years after the war? Can Topic Modeling be used to survey and classify the content of a corpus of political texts?
2. Were the differences among postwar socialists just based on national differences or was disagreement on issues relevant? Can corpus linguistic pick up the “ideological signal” beyond the “national signal”?
3. Was the frame of reference of Western European socialist parties limited by their government ambitions? Can quantitative text analysis identify the importance they gave to the context outside liberal democracy, in which many fraternal parties operated?
4. Was there a meaningful division between socialists embracing economic interventionism through the nation state and socialists supporting supranational integration? Does clustering according to linguistic and thematic subdivisions correspond to political subdivisions?
5. Was the debate around Marxism and socialist revisionism indicative of a meaningful division among socialists? Can digital tools reveal surprising similarities and hidden differences?
6. Which subjects did socialists avoid for political expediency? Can Topic Modeling identify silences and omissions?
7. Was the failure to reach unanimous positions a defeat of internationalism or a sign that cooperation and agreement took place at a smaller scale? Can thematic clustering confirm the existence of strategic alliances?

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- 9 Older comparative histories of socialist parties and socialist ideology quietly ignored the Socialist International under the belief that socialist internationalism ceased to matter after it was crushed by the national frenzy of the First World War. The methodological assumption was that to explain similar outcomes it was sufficient to focus on similar factors developing in each context independently or on global phenomena influencing all nations. In the most successful and popular comparative history of European socialism of the last decades, Donald Sassoon was satisfied with writing the history of European socialism as the parallel history of national parties dealing with similar problems but without meaningful coordination. As for internationalism, it was just empty rhetoric that did not influence policies and strategies at all (Sassoon 2014, p. 210). Writing comparative history in this ways risks relying too much on secondary literature and essentialising the objects of study (Kocka, Haupt 2009, pp. 13-14). New concerns and new perspectives have reopened interest in the Socialist International after the Second World War. The organisation is a vantage point from which one can gain new insights into non-communist socialists — alternatively called socialists, social democrats or democratic socialists. Newer comparative and transnational histories of socialist parties have tended to follow Stefan Berger's theoretical approach and example, as he challenged explanations based on national exceptionalism and focused on how interactions across borders and exchange of ideas influenced national developments (Berger 1994; Berger 1995). New research has focused on internationalism as practical international networking and communication, which enabled socialists to successfully coordinate strategies and policies at the European and national level (Van Kemseke 2006; Salm 2016; Broad 2017; Costa 2018; Imlay 2018; Perazzoli 2020; Shaev 2020). Likewise, the internationalist sense of belonging to a community that practiced regular contacts and meetings allowed the regular transnational transfer of ideas and practices among socialists. The postwar history of social democracy is not just national but national and transnational at the same time. I argue with this article that the differences and disagreements between socialist parties were not simply the result of national differences but derived from ideological divisions and strategic choices that cut across national identities and tied together different member parties sharing a similar political platform. This can be deduced not just from analysing strategy and policies but by measuring the ideological character of the parties through quantitative text analysis.

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10 The history of the Socialist International in the period under analysis had many sudden turns and transformations. At the beginning of the Second World War, the Labour and Socialist International — the international organisation for socialist parties — collapsed due to the inability to take a common stance (Imlay 2018; Costa 2018). In London, the British Labour Party organised socialist exiles from occupied Europe, where they debated the future of internationalism and socialism after the war. These hopes received a huge boost from the Labour Party's victory at the 1945 elections, which allowed the government of Clement Attlee to start radical reforms in Britain — nationalisations, the Welfare State, the National Health Service — that would serve as a model for democratic socialists. Socialists from across Europe met once again in May 1946 and they agreed to restart their internationalist debates and coordination through the International Socialist Conference, a provisional organisation to prepare the re-establishment of the Socialist International. Cooperation proved difficult, as the International Socialist Conference included staunchly anti-communist parties — such as the Nordic socialists — and parties that were allied with the communists — such as the Eastern European socialists, but also the French and Italian socialists (De Graaf 2019). Most socialist leaders still hoped to achieve some cooperation or at least mutual respect with the communists and the Soviet Union, in order to continue joint efforts for European reconstruction and world peace. The British Labour Party supported the decision by Eastern European socialists to ally with the communists while trying to boost their confidence and political independence. In truth, this was impossible, as the Soviet Union could not accept even limited national independence behind the Iron Curtain. Western socialists accepted the US plan of European reconstruction, requiring the isolation of Eastern Europe and the expulsion of communists from Western governments. In 1947, after the formation of the Cominform, the communists forced the socialists in Eastern Europe to fuse with them, forming nominally united socialist parties, which were actually under communist control. They also opened hostility towards social democrats in Western Europe. This tension culminated with the Prague Coup of February 1948, when Czechoslovak communists crushed even the pretence of democracy and the independent Czechoslovak social democratic party capitulated and fused with the communists. The International Socialist Conference made a decisive turn towards militant anti-communism. Pro-communist Eastern European socialists abandoned the organisation and soon were absorbed into communist parties, while socialist refugees from Eastern Europe came to Western Europe, where their comrades helped them set up their anti-communist propaganda activities.

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11 With the anti-communist turn, social democratic internationalism came to be defined by its exclusivity. The International Socialist Conference and later the Socialist International only admitted socialist parties that rejected cooperation with communism and embraced the democratic road to socialism. The Italian Socialist Party (PSI) kept its alliance with the Italian Communist Party (PCI), so for the April 1948 elections the International Socialist Conference backed the anti-communist social democrats that had split from the main party. These splinters organised in the Italian Democratic Socialist Party (PSDI), which would become the official Italian representative at the Socialist International, after the PSI was expelled (Costa 2018). After the exclusion of pro-communist socialists, the remaining socialists felt pressured to give positive content to their shared ideology beyond anti-communism. Starting with the Vienna Conference (4-7 June 1948), social democrats began to define their ideology as a combination of individual freedom and economic emancipation. The operative principle was the identification of socialism and democracy. Socialists came to accept the liberal definition of freedom, democracy and individual rights, but only as a starting point. Economic emancipation ensured by public intervention in the productive system was needed to actually realise liberalism's promise of freedom. From 1948, the process of ideological refinement advanced through public and private debates and culminated at the Frankfurt Conference in 1951, where the Socialist International was officially restored. The principles of democratic socialism were synthesized in "Aims and Tasks of Democratic Socialism" – the so-called Frankfurt Declaration –, the declaration of principles that the Socialist International adopted with its constitution. Liberal democracy was a necessary prerequisite, but true socialism would be achieved by introducing democratic rule in all spheres, including politics, economy, society and international relations. The Frankfurt Declaration defined socialism thus: "Without freedom there can be no Socialism. Socialism can be achieved only through democracy. Democracy can be fully realised only through Socialism" (Rose 1955, p. 16).

12 Given the socialist movement's long-term trajectory of shedding its suspicion of bourgeois democracy and embracing parliamentarianism and liberal rights, the role of the Frankfurt Declaration was not simply a summary of shared beliefs, it enshrined a definition of democratic socialism that all member parties had to accept. I argue: "The International Socialist Conference, later the Socialist International, was a creative force: it did not describe democratic socialism, it created the common definition of democratic socialism" (Costa 2018, p. 9).

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13 At the same time, the Frankfurt Congress defined the Socialist International as an organisation — and social democracy as a phenomenon — limited to Western and Northern Europe ([Devin 1993](#), p. 159). Excluded by authoritarian persecution in Eastern Europe and the Iberian Peninsula, socialists could only operate in a limited area. When talking about European socialism, I specifically mean a phenomenon that occurred only in the Nordic countries, the original six countries of the EEC, Britain, Switzerland and Austria. This was just Northern Europe and part of Western Europe — from the Arctic circle to Sicily, from the Pyrenees mountains to the Elbe river. In the first decades of its existence, the only prominent non-European socialist parties of the Socialist International came from societies close to the Western model, such as Australia, Israel and Japan. The comparison and transnational analysis of this article are heavily indebted to a historiographical tradition that has assumed there is such a thing as European socialism and that assigns shared features to the socialist parties of Western and Northern Europe ([Przeworski, Sprague 1986](#); [Lazar 1996](#); [Berger, Broughton \(Ed.\) 1995](#); [Moschonas 2002](#); [Eley 2002](#); [Berman 2006](#); [Sassoon 2014](#)). It is essential to be aware of this bias, but it is inevitable given the subject of study ([Kocka 2003](#)). As the new countries created by decolonisation — what was soon to be known as “The Third World” — looked for models of development and social justice, the Socialist International tried to overcome its Eurocentrism and approached socialists in Asia and South America ([Van Kemseke 2006](#); [Imlay 2021](#)). The analysis of the language of European socialists will reveal the extent of their willingness to open the doors to non-European socialists.

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14 This geographical delimitation corresponded to the long-term evolution of the socialist movement. When the labour movement emerged in the nineteenth-century as a protest movement of oppressed workers, labour activists pursued their goal through a variety of means, including militant industrial action, direct action, organisation of mutual aid, cultural education and other organisations supporting an independent milieu ([Costa 2018](#), pp. 4–5). As the twentieth century progressed, socialist leaders dropped each option in favour of a political road to power within a system of pluralist liberal democracy. Just after the war, alternative roads to socialism were still under debate, as leftist socialists in Western and Eastern Europe criticised reformism for reducing socialist political activities to parliamentarianism ([De Graaf 2019](#), pp. 184–189). However, the Cold War seems to have buried any available practice except electoral competition in the Western sense. Political parties and movements served only to formulate policies and generate consensus for elections. Harold Wilson, leader of the Labour Party put it best in 1963; there were three kinds of Socialist parties: the parties in government, the parties with the potential to be in government, and the parties not mature enough ([Devin 1993](#), p. 292). If this commitment implied a reduction of perspectives for the socialist community, as per Guillame Devin's thesis, it should appear in its ideological texts.

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15 Despite agreement on the fundamentals of social democratic ideology and identity, divisions persisted. I argued that in the early postwar years there was not just a division between reformist socialists and pro-communist socialists, but even a division among the former. He classifies the parties of the socialist movement into three tendencies: Planners, Federalists and Leftists (Costa 2018, pp. 148–151). The socialist parties classified as Planners had a strong following in the working-class, which granted them a position of electoral strength. Since they could govern alone or form coalitions from a position of strength, their political strategy aimed at exercising state power in the form of controlling the economic levers, building a generous welfare state and enacting social legislation. As a consequence of their success as national parties, they were suspicious of international commitment that could reduce their freedom of manoeuvre. This group included the British Labour Party, which with the Attlee government had provided a successful model of socialist reforms under democracy, and the Nordic parties. Federalists operated in a political system that was more fragmented due to religious and social divisions. In those countries, socialists were a political force among many that had to form centrist governments with Christian democrats and bourgeois parties. Coalitions limited their ability to realise immediately a fully social democratic programme — especially when coalitions were born not out of policy agreement but to keep extremists out. Given the difficulty of carrying out extensive planning and socialisation at national level, they did not just think exclusively about the nation state and were more open to apply efforts in building supranational organisations, with the long-term goal of achieving international planning. This group included parties of various degrees of success, from the Dutch Labour Party, to the German SPD, to Belgian and French socialists, to the Italian social democrats. The Austrian Socialist Party straddled the two blocs, since the international situation of Austria allowed for more planning and nationalisation than what would have been possible given the strength of conservative forces. Leftists emphasised the discontinuity between socialism and liberal democracy, the radical transformation of private capitalism into a system under public control and a strategic alliance with the communists. Just after the war, they were represented in the International Socialist Conference by the Italian Socialist Party and the Eastern European socialists, but after the Prague Coup they were all excluded from the organisation. If this tripartite division were meaningful, it would have influenced which themes and issues each socialist party devoted attention to in their publications.

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16 According to Dietrich Orlow, another cleavage in the socialist movement during the 1950s was the debate about the working-class nature of the socialist party, Marxism and socialist revisionism (Orlow 2000). In preparation for the Frankfurt Declaration, the International Socialist Conference in Copenhagen (1-3 June 1950) held a debate on the ideological basis of socialism, discussing the role of Marxism. Guy Mollet, the French socialist leader, argued that socialism needed Marxism to have a distinct identity, accusing Nordic social democrats of retreating into liberalism. The Swedish Prime Minister Tage Erlander and Danish socialist Alsing Andersen rejected this characterisation: Nordic socialists still supported economic democracy and public control over economic decisions (Circular 155/50, Report of the International Socialist Conference at Copenhagen, 1-3 June, 1950, 62-63, in International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam (IISH), Socialist International Archive (SI), Box 54). Public control over the economy was a precondition to the actual freedom of the individual: positive freedom required active economic intervention to go beyond the negative freedom of liberals. As the theoretician of Swedish Social Democracy Ernst Wigforss said: "collective measures serve to confer on the individuals greater opportunities to follow their own aptitudes and to develop their own capacities" (SeverinID, pp. 240-41; references to the essays of "Ideological Developments of Democratic Socialism" can be found in Appendix 1). Nordic socialists thus made a distinction between explicit Marxism and a commitment to public intervention.

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In the 1950s, European socialists faced new economic and social phenomena that did not match old theories and frameworks. The ruination of war soon gave way to accelerating growth and rising wages, which coupled with the new Welfare State eroded traditional poverty and spread consumerism and prosperity in the working-class ([Esping-Andersen 1988](#); [Timmins 1995](#); [Judt 2006](#)). Internal debates on how to adapt socialism to a new era of mixed economy and expanding middle class started a new wave of socialist revisionism ([Klotzbach 1982](#); [Orlow 2000](#); [Sassoon 2014](#); [Diamond 2015](#); [Perazzoli 2016](#)). The Frankfurt Declaration was not only binding for all members, but also started a process of ideological revision. The ideological developments that first appeared in Swedish and Dutch socialism in the 1930s and 1940s passed through the Frankfurt Declaration and a new generation of socialist revisionists in the 1950s embraced them ([Costa 2018](#), pp. 275–283). The Swedish delegate to the International, Kaj Björk, argued that nationalisation was not a goal in itself, but one of the means for economic intervention. He insisted that democracy was the ultimate end of socialism. Björk and the Dutch Labour Party also argued that socialism had to move away from its working-class character to represent people from all social strata united by a common moral aspiration. Since the Frankfurt Declaration had already elevated these ideas to international doctrine, they stimulated similar developments in other parties. Ideological evolution was not even across the movement. In Britain, the revisionists rallied around the young leader Hugh Gaitskell, challenging the prominence of nationalisation in socialist ideology, but they met resistance to changes to the party constitution. Factions within the Italian and French socialist movements adopted the Frankfurt Declaration as a benchmark to break with the more traditionally Marxist elements of their party ([Costa 2018](#), pp. 283-288). However, the Frankfurt Declaration was most effective in Germany, as there was direct descent from the Frankfurt Declaration in 1951 to the Bad Godesberg programme of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) in 1959. The Bad Godesberg programme adopted the same definition of socialism as “fully realised” democracy, accepted nationalisation of the means of production as just one instrument of economic intervention and embraced the shift from a class party to a people’s party. Sassoon sees similarities between British revisionism and German revisionism ([Sassoon 2014](#), pp. 241-242). Conversely, Dietrich Orlow focuses on revisionism as a continental phenomenon, arguing that ideological revision was uncontroversial in the Dutch Labour Party, tormented but ultimately successful in the SPD and ended in failure in the French socialist party ([Orlow 2000](#)). Quantitative tools will reveal evidence of the revisionist and Marxist debate in the social democratic texts.

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18 These years under analysis, full of events and reversal of fortunes, saw intense debates among socialists, as they tried to make sense of a world changing more rapidly than they could grasp. Active regulation was implemented to exclude communists, but the definition of socialism inside the socialist family was left to the internal debates and negotiations over political language. By reconstructing what the socialists were saying among themselves and what they were trying to communicate to the wider world, it is possible to catch social democratic culture as it crystallised in a stable form.

19 This article will focus on two collections of texts that the Socialist International produced in order to define democratic socialism in a systematic way — one before the drafting of the Frankfurt Declaration and one after. The first was “Socialist World”, which the International Socialist Conference published between 1947 and 1949 as a quarterly magazine ([Costa 2022](#)). “Socialist World” did not employ journalists but it published articles submitted by the affiliated parties. Its editors Edith Loeb, a German socialist exile, and the British Edward Thompson were responsible for gathering the articles and have them translated into English. They also wrote “Notes of the Quarter” — a summary of recent events — and book reviews. The idea of the project was to publish the international edition in English, while allowing national parties to publish the local version in their own language. The journal offered a platform for socialists belonging to the International Socialist Conference to explain their ideas and concerns to other socialists and to the international public opinion, allowing all socialists to learn from their comrades’ experience and dispelling nationalism and misunderstanding (SW11; references to the articles of “Socialist World” can be found in Appendix 1). The editorial line of Socialist World was to publish two kinds of articles: “Some will report on political situations; others will express different shades of opinion of socialist theory, method and aim” (SW12).

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20 "Socialist World" had a rocky history, which reflected the traumas and troubles of postwar social democracy. The first four issues were printed when the International Socialist Conference was trying to reconcile anti-communist socialists from Western Europe and pro-communist socialists from Eastern Europe and Italy. The editorial line was to publish the opinion of different parties to show unity in diversity, sometimes balancing one point of view against the other (Costa 2022, p. 108). In truth, even the early version of "Socialist World" was not successful. The first issue sold 1000 copies out of 4000 printed and numbers dropped afterwards. Plans to print a French, Spanish or Greek edition did not take off. Interestingly, the Czech edition was a success: it sold over 3000 copies and turned a profit. However, it was closed when Czechoslovak social democrats were deprived of political freedom after the Prague Coup.

21 The Prague Coup gave "Socialist World" a second wind. The difficult cohabitation of anti-communist and pro-communist socialists had made running the magazine difficult, but the sudden turn to anti-communism made the editorial line straightforward. The magazine embraced militant anti-communist rhetoric in the last three issues, published after February 1948. The goal of the International Socialist Conference was now to make "Socialist World" "More challenging in [its] content" (Costa 2022, p. 111). However, even this version of "Socialist World" was not a success and the International Socialist Conference concluded that interest was too low and technical difficulties too high to run such an international journal.

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22 The second collection I have included in the corpus was the second attempt of the Socialist International to reach the public at large, a book project. Two months after the Frankfurt Conference, Kaj Björk suggested to publish a book to take stock of the ideological evolution of socialism in recent decades (Circular 98/51, Minutes of the meeting of the Bureau of the Socialist International, London 30 August 1951, IISH, SI, Box 60). The project, known as “The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism”, emerged from the internal debate that had produced the Frankfurt Declaration, as socialists grappled with national differences and similarities. The procedure was similar to “Socialist World”: each member party was to produce an essay describing its national peculiarities and contributions to socialist ideology. The editors had asked from each party to focus on political thoughts and values and less on policy and economic doctrines (J. Braunthal to L. Valiani, 28 January 1952, IISH, SI, Box 393). The project was encumbered by immense delays by contributors. Finally, in 1955, the Socialist International concluded that it did not have enough material for a book, so it published the chapters it had received so far in its newsletter, “Socialist International Information” (J. Braunthal to B. Kautsky, 14 March 1955, IISH, SI, Box 393). The editor, Julius Braunthal, did not abandon plans to eventually publish the book. With some parties sending their contributions later, Braunthal came to an agreement with J.H.W. Dietz, the publishing house of German social democracy, to publish the essays as a single volume in German ([Braunthal \(Ed.\) 1958](#)). The essays were also published as a series of pamphlets in Italian (A. Schiavi to J. Braunthal, 8 March 1956; J. Braunthal to A. Schiavi, 15 March 1956, IISH, SI, Box 393). While for traditional analysis it would make more sense to read the German edition, for this linguistic analysis I employ the English chapters published in “Socialist International Information”. Although there was never a physical copy of the book in English, the book virtually exists, as the chapters were published individually — indeed, the chapters in the German book were translated from English.

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23 As I have shown, both publications were a failure: the journal never found readers and the book never came out except in translation. Still, they were interesting attempts to produce an international literature of socialism. The failure of these two media enterprises by the Socialist International shows the technical and political problems in building a shared socialist discourse across Western and Northern Europe. The Socialist International could not keep up a stable cultural output in which the individual parties would contribute their individual voice to a choral synthesis of social democratic ideology. What was achieved as a one-shot with the Frankfurt declaration was not easily replicable as a continuous enterprise. Disagreement is usually considered as evidence of a failure of internationalism. Richard Griffiths takes the deep divisions in the socialist family around the European question to conclude that socialist internationalism was non-existent ([Griffiths 1993](#)). This and other disagreements in the 1950s could confirm Imlay's thesis that the failure of international cooperation throughout the 1950s brought a disaffection towards the internationalist ideal ([Imlay 2018](#)).

24 However, even failure must be qualified, as they were just failures of unanimity. As Shaev noted, disagreement in one field did not preclude successful cooperation in another; indeed, to defuse the tension of failed cooperation, socialists sought to pursue other channels of cooperation ([Shaev 2020](#)). Under the same logic, the failure to communicate with some members of the socialist family could create deeper bonds among other members. Matthew Broad has shown how the British Labour Party and Danish social democrats cooperated intensively in their approach to the European communities, coming to a common framework through repeated contacts, partly instigated by their distance from other more federalist parties ([Broad 2017](#); [Broad 2018](#)). Thus, even the disharmony that can be traced in the magazine and the book could indicate the existence of small-scale cooperation and agreement at the level of subgroups. Statistical analysis of recurrent patterns in ideological texts will bring to light this more circumscribed form of cooperation.

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25 Finally, failure to harmonise the voices did not result just in a cacophony but even more in silence. Embarrassment had a crucial importance in socialist internationalism. Socialist leaders with government ambitions were wary in their international contacts with other socialists, because each national leader set strategic decisions and policies in order to maximise their advantage at the domestic level. International activities could boost their profile but also damage it. If the Socialist International had had too much autonomy, it could have made declarations against the policy of one party or raised an issue that embarrassed another party. In 1946, the international secretary of the Labour Party, Denis Healey, said that it was better for international socialism to move slowly and cautiously, “not so much [...] promoting positive action, as [...] preventing action by one member which might seriously but unintentionally damage another” (The Workers' Internationals 1946). For example, Healey privately said caution was essential as long as anti-communist and pro-communist socialists lived under the same umbrella: “Co-operation between the Socialist Parties in East and West is based on the tacit principle of non-interference in one another’s spheres” (D. Healey to Robert B. Kirby, 19 March 1947, in Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester (LHASC), Labour Party Archive (LP), International Department (ID), DH, Box 9, Folder 5). What made this situation particularly difficult was that embarrassment was often reciprocal. For example, in the 1950s the French Socialist Party SFIO was embarrassed by international criticism of the French policy in Algeria while the other socialist parties were embarrassed by their association with the SFIO (Shaev 2018; Shaev 2020). Diplomatic silence on both sides was suboptimal but it was the only compromise available. A key component of a discourse is not just what is said, but what is left unsaid: silence can be as important as voice. Silence is almost impossible to find through close reading, but a comprehensive survey through distant reading allows us to notice the absence of a topic or its confinement to a closed space.

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The Challenges and Opportunities of Digital History

- 27 Methodological innovations in political history have made a new focus on socialist internationalism possible and even rewarding — not only a new focus on transnationalism, but a new focus on language as the main instrument of political action ([Grimmer, Stewart 2013](#)). The school of “New Political History” emerged from the linguistic turn as an attempt to move away from the social determinism of vulgar Marxism and the elite-focused traditional political history ([Stedman Jones 1984](#); [Lawrence 2003](#); [Craig 2010](#); [Blaxill 2013](#)). As language plays a central role in politics and defines political cultures and identities, New Political History places greater emphasis on political ideas and rhetoric. While this can be reduced to an anthropological description of politics as a self-referring activity, the ambition of new political history is to use political culture and language as an explanatory factor. What is particularly significant is that political language is often the most important link between leaders and followers: political entrepreneurs build values and interpretations about social phenomena that people can accept as their political identity and framework to understand their reality. Socialists could coordinate their actions at the local, national and international level because they built discourses that expressed their values, defined their identities and set their goals, established what was appropriate to do. It was the discourse that turned disparate individuals into members of a movement that could move towards shared goals. Of course, unity was not the only outcome, the creation of meaning could be rejected as well as accepted: new political history dissects political speech as illocutionary acts — the act of the speaker of affirming or revising conceptual conventions — and perlocutionary acts — the effect they produce on the audience ([Skinner 1969](#); [Wiesner, Haapala, Palonen 2017](#)). Indeed, transmission of meaning was not univocal, but rather a dialogue and a negotiation inside the circle of political leaders and between political leaders and the rank and file. Political struggle is a struggle over meaning: winning requires the preferred meaning of the shared words to be accepted first within the party then within the electorate.

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28 What makes new political history a suitable framework for quantitative text analysis is not just the centrality of language. Traditional analysis is too often focused on a few key speeches by great leaders through close reading, what Franco Moretti calls “very solemn treatment of very few texts taken very seriously”(Moretti 2013, p. 72). According to Fabian Brinkmann, such “symptomatic reading” tries to gain general significance from individual cases assumed to be representative. What Moretti instead calls “distant reading” is more suitable for investigating political culture in the era of mass parties and popular politics, given the potential of quantitative text analysis to analyse hundreds of thousands of articles and speeches by thousands of politicians, intellectuals and party activists. While close reading of selected texts can produce anthropological thick description of culture and narrative, distant reading allows to identify general trends and trace the long-term evolution of discourses (Blaxill 2013, p. 319).

29 Fridlund argues that digital historians will integrate digital tools into traditional methods. Indeed, most historians and researchers employing quantitative text analysis are at pains to reject the idea it could be the exclusive tool for analysing texts. According to Blaxill, quantitative text analysis must support close reading of individual texts by providing a panoramic view, assessing what is typical and part of a larger trend, improve verifiability and uncover unexpected evidence or the absence of evidence (Blaxill 2013, pp. 328–330). Grimmer and Stewart believe that quantitative methods can augment the ability of researchers to analyse large quantities of political texts, but they do not substitute close reading (Grimmer, Stewart 2013).

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30 This article is going to employ topic modeling, a tool that has already a solid track-record in historical research. Topic modeling is a form of computer-aided text processing meant to uncover latent structures — topics — in the text that are responsible for a set of observations — words ([Blei, Ng, Jordan 2003](#); [Blei 2012](#); [Maier, Waldherr, Miltner, et al. 2018](#)). Topic modeling analyses a corpus — a collection of texts —, composed of individual documents, in turn composed of individual terms. The program identifies “topics” — what the document talks about — as clusters of words that tend to co-occur. This definition is useful for the program, but for the human readers, “topics” must be understood in their ordinary definition, i.e. the subject one talks about. This is what a topic model uncovers from an unsupervised (not human-directed) analysis of texts. Topic modeling works under the assumption that the order of the words within the document is irrelevant (bag of words). Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) is the most common and most tested form of topic modeling. It is particularly useful for exploratory and descriptive analysis. More advanced forms of topic modeling also consider metadata and the relationship between topics, showing the dynamic evolution of a topic. LDA works under the assumption that each document is composed of multiple topics, each with a different weight, and each topic is composed of multiple words, each with a different probability to co-occur with other words. This is often represented through a word cloud, where the biggest words are the ones most likely to appear when dealing with a certain topic.

31 Historians see several potential uses of topic modeling. According to [Fridlund and Brauer](#), topic modeling serves as a form of data mining to extract information from large collections of texts or as a confirmation of intuition ([Fridlund, Brauer 2013](#)). [Guldi](#) also believes that it is normal for 80 per cent of the results of topic modeling to be unsurprising; at the same time, the tool can reveal ignored episodes and produce a new macro perspective ([Guldi 2019](#)). For [Greene and Cross](#), topic modeling also reveals where the attention of political speakers was — especially if their space to write or time to speak was limited ([Greene, Cross 2017](#), p. 79). [Jo and Brinkmann](#) see the possibility of integrating topic modeling into theory-driven Critical Discourse Analysis, as it could statistically represent the existence of multiple discourses in a society that regulate what ideas and words are possible to articulate ([Brinkmann 2019](#); [Jo 2019](#)). [Grimmer and Stewart](#) say that automated content analysis can serve to scale political actors and locate them in the ideological space — if their language is ideological enough ([Grimmer, Stewart 2013](#)). [Guldi](#) also argues that topic modeling can identify repeated patterns of actions and speech, which are expression of historical structures of power and identity ([Guldi 2019](#)).

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32 The political researchers and historians mentioned above tend to believe that the corpora for historical research should be small enough to be also read closely by the researcher: “Unlike the giant corpora of hundreds of millions of words common in linguistics, these smaller corpora do not become larger than the historian, and quantify only what has first been read” (Blaxill 2013, p. 322). This is the case for the corpus produced by the Socialist International. However, there are many advantages in picking this corpus for analysis. First of all, the corpus is exhaustive: it is not a selection of texts by the Socialist International, it includes all the articles and essays the Socialist International produced for the wider public in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Secondly, the corpus is representative: all socialist parties from Western Europe operating in a democracy submitted either an article or an essay — except the Swiss socialists. Before being expelled, the Italian Socialist Party and the socialist parties from Eastern Europe also submitted contributions. The corpus includes parties from a wide range of political systems and national contexts. However, there is no language barrier, since all the texts are in English. If translation is violence, in this case it is one not imposed by the researcher, but part of the original conception. While qualitative text analysis forces to analyse texts in the same language — often recreating a form of national exceptionalism —, analysing the texts of this international organisation makes it possible to bring comparative and transnational perspective to quantitative text analysis. Instead of relying on secondary literature for comparative and transnational history, it is possible to study the documentary evidence of two episodes of interaction and confrontation directly. At the same time, it must be recognised that the corpus being representative of the Socialist International means it carries its Western European and Nordic bias. Even if it was an international socialist dialogue, it was still limited to a portion of the European continent.

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33 The Importance of Preprocessing

- 34** Although Topic Modeling with LDA is unsupervised, choices on how to pre-process the texts and setting the number of topics to find greatly influence the output. Theories or sound guidelines on how to set these parameters are still underdeveloped ([Jo 2019](#) p. 336). Even the insights gained in one field might be useless or counterproductive in another. This section will describe the problems in preparing the texts produced by the Socialist International for analysis.
- 35** Preliminary operations are standard for topic modeling and other forms of quantitative text analysis: make all the words lowercase, eliminate punctuation between words, eliminate apostrophes.
- 36** A very significant decision was not to proceed with stemming or lemmatization, because it would cancel a lot of nuances, as political language often depends on subtle variations on similar terms. Stemming “socialism” into “social” would make it indistinguishable from the adjective “social” — which could be attached to another term to become “social movement”, “social reforms” or “social class”. Lemmatization is more promising, but even so I would lose the distinction between “socialist” — the adjective referring to ideas or policies — and “socialists” — the people with the agency to implement them. Lemmatization would also make it more difficult to produce consistent ngrams - see below.

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37 The choices regarding ngrams were the most significant for the comprehension of the text and thus the most difficult. Ngrams are word sequences, usually of two or three words (bigrams and trigrams respectively) that are treated as a single word. How important this decision was is best exemplified by the most common pairing: the term “social democracy.” Because of the bag of words assumption, the program would treat “social” and “democracy” as two separate tokens. Not only would this have made finding the term harder, but also it would have altered the frequency of the words “social” and “democracy” as self-standing terms. In order to make the term recognisable by the program, I connected them through an underscore in order to turn them into one token — for example “social democracy” became “social_democracy”. The crux of the problem was to determine which word pairings could be turned into one token. The decision had to be taken case by case by someone already very familiar with the ideological texts of twentieth century European social democracy, so I prepared a list of bigrams and trigrams.

38 Compiling the list, I followed a series of criteria. Analogy with other languages was handy: since a bigram treats two words as one word, it is useful to look at other languages where the bigram is already one word. For example, “social democracy” is one word in German (Sozialdemokratie) and Italian (socialdemocrazia) and a hyphenated word in French (social-démocratie), so it made most sense to turn the bigram into “social_democracy”. Name of institutions are often a string of two, three or even more words. “United Nations” would mean much more than the two tokens “united” and “nations”. As for “national socialism” and “anti-fascism”, not only could they be one word without hyphen — as they are in other languages —, but the independent word would send a signal opposite to its meaning.

39 Other ngrams were left as two tokens. For example, the texts speak interchangeably of “Soviet Union” and “Soviet Russia”. “Soviet” is enough to understand the reference to the state — there were no references to the “soviet” as a revolutionary council. The individual word “Soviet” could count all references to the Soviet Union, while making the two bigrams into two separate tokens would be useless and indeed reduce the visibility of the reference.

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```
# Setting up folders and loading packages
set.seed(12345)
library(XML)
library(tm)
library(quanteda)
library(topicmodels)
library(textclean)
library(tokenizers)
library(wordcloud)
library(ggplot2)
library(pals)

inputDir ← "SI_Texts"
```

logs

...

```
## Uploading texts, n-grams and metadata
files.v ← dir(path = inputDir, pattern = ".*xml")
number.of.documents ← as.double(length(files.v))
list.of.trigram.df ← read.csv(file = "List trigrams.csv", sep = ";")
list.of.bigram.df ← read.csv(file = "List bigrams.csv", sep = ";")
metadata ← read.csv(file = "SI_metadata.csv", sep = ";")
document.ID.v ← metadata$ID
```

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```
# Uploading the raw corpus as a dataframe
```

```
corpus.raw.df ← data.frame(0, 0)
```

```
for (i in 1:length(files.v)) {  
  corpus.raw.df[i, 1] ← as.character(document.ID.v[i])  
  doc.object ← xmlTreeParse(file.path(inputDir, files.v[i]), useInternalNodes = TRUE)  
  paras ← getNodeSet(doc.object, "/d:TEI/d:text/d:body//d:p", c(d = "http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0")  
  words ← paste(sapply(paras, xmlValue), collapse = " ")  
  words ← tolower(words)  
  words ← gsub("-", "_", words)  
  words ← strip(words, char.keep = "_", apostrophe.remove = FALSE)  
  words ← gsub("'", " ", words)  
  corpus.raw.df[i, 2] ← words  
}  
colnames(corpus.raw.df) ← c("ID", "Text")
```

```
# Turning bigrams and trigrams into a single token
```

```
corpus.grammed.df ← corpus.raw.df
```

```
for (i in 1:length(corpus.grammed.df$Text)) {  
  text.to.substitute.v ← corpus.grammed.df[i, 2]  
  for (l in 1:length(list.of.trigram.df$Pattern)) {  
    pattern.f ← list.of.trigram.df[l, 1]  
    replacement.f ← list.of.trigram.df[l, 2]  
    text.to.substitute.v ← gsub(pattern.f, replacement.f, text.to.substitute.v)  
  }  
  for (k in 1:length(list.of.bigram.df$Pattern)) {  
    pattern.f ← list.of.bigram.df[k, 1]  
    replacement.f ← list.of.bigram.df[k, 2]  
    text.to.substitute.v ← gsub(pattern.f, replacement.f, text.to.substitute.v)  
  }  
  corpus.grammed.df[i, 2] ← text.to.substitute.v  
}
```

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- 43** As a last step, I removed stopwords from the documents — meaning the most common words in a language that would appear in every text regardless of the topic.

```
# Remove stopwords

for (i in 1:length(corpus.grammed.df[, 2])) {
  corpus.grammed.df[i, 2] ← removeWords(corpus.grammed.df[i, 2], tm::stopwords("SMART"))
}
```

- 45** The solution for the problem of ngrams is sufficient to understand the thematic content of the text but it is far from perfect. To return to the previous example, “social democracy” makes sense as the specific label of an idea and a movement, but the expression gains rhetorical strength by associating the term “democracy” to the term “social”, going beyond mere formal or liberal democracy. Different kinds of analysis require different forms of preprocessing.

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Exploring the Corpus with Topic Modeling

47 Among the many uses of topic modeling, description and exploration of data is basic but important. The ability to describe the content of texts is very useful when dealing with a large corpus. Even though the corpus of the Socialist International is not too large to be read closely, topic modeling can uncover macro trends and underlying structures that could evade traditional reading.

48 The corpus of the Socialist International is made up of 55 articles from “Socialist World” and 9 essays from “The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism” — all listed in Appendix 1. Some articles from “Socialist World” were not included in the corpus because they were too short to be analysed properly — mostly reviews. These numbers might suggest that the corpus is unbalanced, but actually the essays are longer than the articles. The average essay is slightly below 12,000 words, while the average article is slightly above 2000 words. The word counts of the individual document shown in Appendix 1. In total, the corpus is composed of 100,060 words from the articles of “Socialist World” and 107,180 words from the essays of “Ideological Developments of Democratic Socialism”. This divides the corpus neatly into one section representing the late 1940s — before the Frankfurt Declaration - and the other section representing the 1950s - after the Frankfurt Declaration.

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49 In order to compensate for the different lengths, I decided to cut all documents into strings of 1000 words.

```
# Turning the texts into strings of equal length
chunked.corpus.l ← chunk_text(corpus.grammed.df[, 2], chunk_size = 1000, doc_id = corpus.grammed.d
  1])
chunked.corpus.df ← cbind(names(chunked.corpus.l), (do.call(rbind.data.frame, chunked.corpus.l,
  )))
colnames(chunked.corpus.df) ← c("ID", "Text")

# create a document feature matrix

sotu.corpus ← corpus(as.character(chunked.corpus.df$Text), docnames = as.character(chunked.corpus.d

corpus.tokens ← tokens(sotu.corpus)

corpus.dtm ← dfm(corpus.tokens, tolower = FALSE)
```

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51 As mentioned above, there is no established method to set the number of topics with LDA. Measuring topic coherence, as suggested by some practitioners, did not produce topics with greater human legibility - meaning that higher topic coherence did not increase the ability of the human reader to guess the content of the topic from the correlated words. After many trials, the number of topic was set empirically at 18 and Gibbs sampling was chosen as method.

```
# Fit a Latent Dirichlet Allocation model with set number of topics

number.of.topics ← 18

topicModel ← LDA(corpus.dtm, number.of.topics, method = "Gibbs", control = list(iter = 1000,
  seed = 1, verbose = 25))
```

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53 After producing the topic model, I extracted the two most important measurements, phi and theta. Phi represents the distribution of words over topics. Theta represents the distribution of topics over documents.

```
tmResult ← posterior(topicModel)

phi ← tmResult$terms

theta ← tmResult$topics
```

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55 However, the theta the program returned is not useful, because the documents had been cut into strings of 1000 words. To calculate a useful theta, I determined the distribution of topics over the original documents by taking the values of the strings comprising the original document and calculating their mean value (Jockers 2014, p. 152-154).

```
# Dataframe of the composition of documents, with percentage of topics in each
chunk.composition.df ← as.data.frame(theta)

file.ids.v ← rownames(chunk.composition.df)
file.id.l ← strsplit(file.ids.v, "-")
file.chunk.id.l ← lapply(file.id.l, rbind)
file.chunk.id.m ← do.call(rbind, file.chunk.id.l)

chunk.composition.df ← cbind(file.chunk.id.m[, 1], chunk.composition.df)

theta.mean.p ← as.matrix(aggregate(chunk.composition.df[, 2:ncol(chunk.composition.df)],
  list(chunk.composition.df[, 1]), mean))

theta.mean ← theta.mean.p[, 2:(number.of.topics + 1)]
theta.mean ← apply(theta.mean, c(1, 2), FUN = as.numeric)
row.names(theta.mean) ← theta.mean.p[, 1]
```

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Appendix 1: Corpus composition

table 2

57 Using the distribution of words over documents made it possible to read the composition of the 18 topics and attribute them a synthetic label – meaning a brief title summing up the content of the topic. The list of topics gives a panoramic view of the interests of European social democracy in the early Cold War era.

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A data.frame: 18 × 2

Topic Label <chr>	Most probable terms <chr>
Topic 1: Europe and Federalism	europe, economic, union, european, world, political, problem, powers, forces, nations, maintain, federation, balance, america, result, kind, soviet, long, war, accept, make, assembly, communists, demands, gradual, peace, internal, lead, sovereignty, western
Topic 2: Germany	german, germany, occupation, military, british, berlin, spd, zone, future, costs, government, agreement, l�ander, allies, germans, authority, authorities, essential, powers, western, london, discussions, occupying, ruhr, time, work, allied, question, control, central
Topic 3: International Affairs	international, policy, socialist, economic, countries, present, political, world, socialists, national, planning, situation, organisation, great, socialist_parties, co_operation, free, problems, democracy, force, country, control, time, question, european, part, power, government, important, means
Topic 4: Socialist parties (marginal 1)	people, national, jewish, radical, war, bund, russian, democratic, world, freedom, nationalism, groups, russia, indian, part, organisations, peoples, nationalist, education, jews, soviet, live, poland, eastern_europe, workers, understanding, fight, propaganda, members, polish
Topic 5: Socialism (general)	political, socialism, working_class, democracy, time, democratic, power, struggle, state, social, revolutionary, movement, bourgeois, action, economic, system, years, means, revolution, workers, found, hand, made, germany, theory, period, group, capitalism, republic, marxism
Topic 6: Austria	austrian, austria, german, adler, view, party, national, social_democracy, victor, part, radical, karl, bauer, remained, groups, schutzbund, idea, vienna, otto, bourgeoisie, early, monarchy, circles, kautsky, forced, war, young, felt, proved, friedrich
Topic 7: French colonialism	french, france, union, viet_nam, general, independence, agreement, indo_china, fighting, end, march, representatives, armistice, government, consists, negotiations, resistance, men, rest, september, aims, convention, head, force, republic, diet, st, indo_chinese, country, troops
Topic 8: British colonialism	colonial, government, development, british, colonies, territories, nigeria, agricultural, african, peoples, india, legislation, stage, population, picture, village, education, social, local, industries, world, co_operatives, britain, gold, people, representatives, land, working, co_operative, west

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Topic 9: Italy	italy, italian, turati, socialists, communists, working_class, socialist_party, liberty, great, back, reformist, liberal, government, reform, support, catholic, middle_classes, meant, intervention, fascism, industrialists, won, public, ideology, interests, inevitable, violence, aim, maintained, young
Topic 10: Labour movement	movement, labour, workers, political, social, work, life, norwegian, labour_party, activity, trade_union, basic, democratic, norway, conditions, finland, important, began, interests, finnish, development, century, economic, strong, people, members, country, organisations, community, socialist
Topic 11: North American labour movement	labour, american, political, united_states, group, cio, unions, canada, mr, ccf, time, action, roosevelt, afl, movement, home, deal, year, farmers, politics, canadian, sweden, industries, big, membership, government, policies, large, committee, independent
Topic 12: French socialism	socialist, socialism, blum, marx, leon, society, capitalist, french, socialists, idea, history, class, doctrine, man, men, france, sfio, power, ideas, jaurès, pointed, revolution, class_struggle, action, solidarity, historical, thought, examination, word, sense
Topic 13: Economy	economic, war, per_cent, foreign, government, production, trade, wages, industrial, living, increased, prices, workers, increase, level, countries, exports, goods, economy, year, standard, industry, end, imports, national, price, years, situation, great, made
Topic 14: British socialism and nationalisation	british, nationalisation, socialist, britain, labour_party, controls, thought, income, policy, case, capital, professor, influence, time, distribution, taxation, power, direct, ideas, industry, land, idea, full, wealth, years, property, greater, doctrine, practical, accepted
Topic 15: Ideological development and planning	party, programme, society, production, state, economy, view, economic, social, general, means, question, principles, system, attitude, principle, ideas, planned, aim, fact, part, order, individual, private, land, income, control, stated, point, capitalist
Topic 16: Party affairs	party, government, communists, parties, social_democrats, policy, majority, elections, people, made, formed, position, social_democratic, social_democratic_party, opposition, congress, years, coalition, programme, members, parliamentary, seats, time, war, support, social_democracy, lost, votes, election, communist

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	parliamentary, seats, time, war, support, social_democracy, lost, votes, election, communist
Topic 17: Industry and mixed economy	state, industry, industries, private, hands, capital, nationalised, nationalisation, important, mines, people, dutch, public, million, production, banks, addition, national, undertakings, transport, property, bank, peasants, planned, control, total, economy, enterprises, shares, factories
Topic 18: Socialist parties (marginal 2)	socialists, socialist_party, socialist, party, spain, organisation, conference, socialist_parties, members, groups, comrades, national, spanish, greece, de, exile, meeting, spite, inside, committee, prison, franco, leaders, number, executive, partido, leader, february, express, organisations

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table 1 Topic label with the most probable terms

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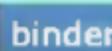
```
#Assigning each text a colour referring to the group the party belongs to – see later for explanation
```

```
color.topics ← polychrome(n = 18)
color.documents ← as.character(metadata$Bloc)
color6 ← brewer.pal(n = 6, "Set2")
color.documents[color.documents = "British"] ← color6[1]
color.documents[color.documents = "Continental"] ← color6[2]
color.documents[color.documents = "Editors"] ← color6[3]
color.documents[color.documents = "Leftist"] ← color6[4]
color.documents[color.documents = "Nordic"] ← color6[5]
color.documents[color.documents = "Marginal"] ← color6[6]
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60 A cursory view of the eighteen topics immediately reveal a stark difference between some general topics and some very specific topics. On the one hand, the general topics have a more balanced distribution over the documents; they are the following: “Topic 16: Party affairs”; “Topic 5: Socialism (general)”; “Topic 13: Economy”; “Topic 3: International Affairs”. Not only are these the most common issues social democrats were talking about, but the vocabulary was not specific to any nation.

61 Essays of the book Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism are identified by the surname of the author plus “ID”. Articles from Socialist World are identified by SW and a number.

For Example SW56 is ‘Antal Ban, The last months of social democracy in Hungary, Socialist World, June-August 1948’ and ChristiansenID is ‘Ernst Christiansen, The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Denmark, Socialist International Information, 4 January 1958, 1–16’

The ID can be found in Appendix 1

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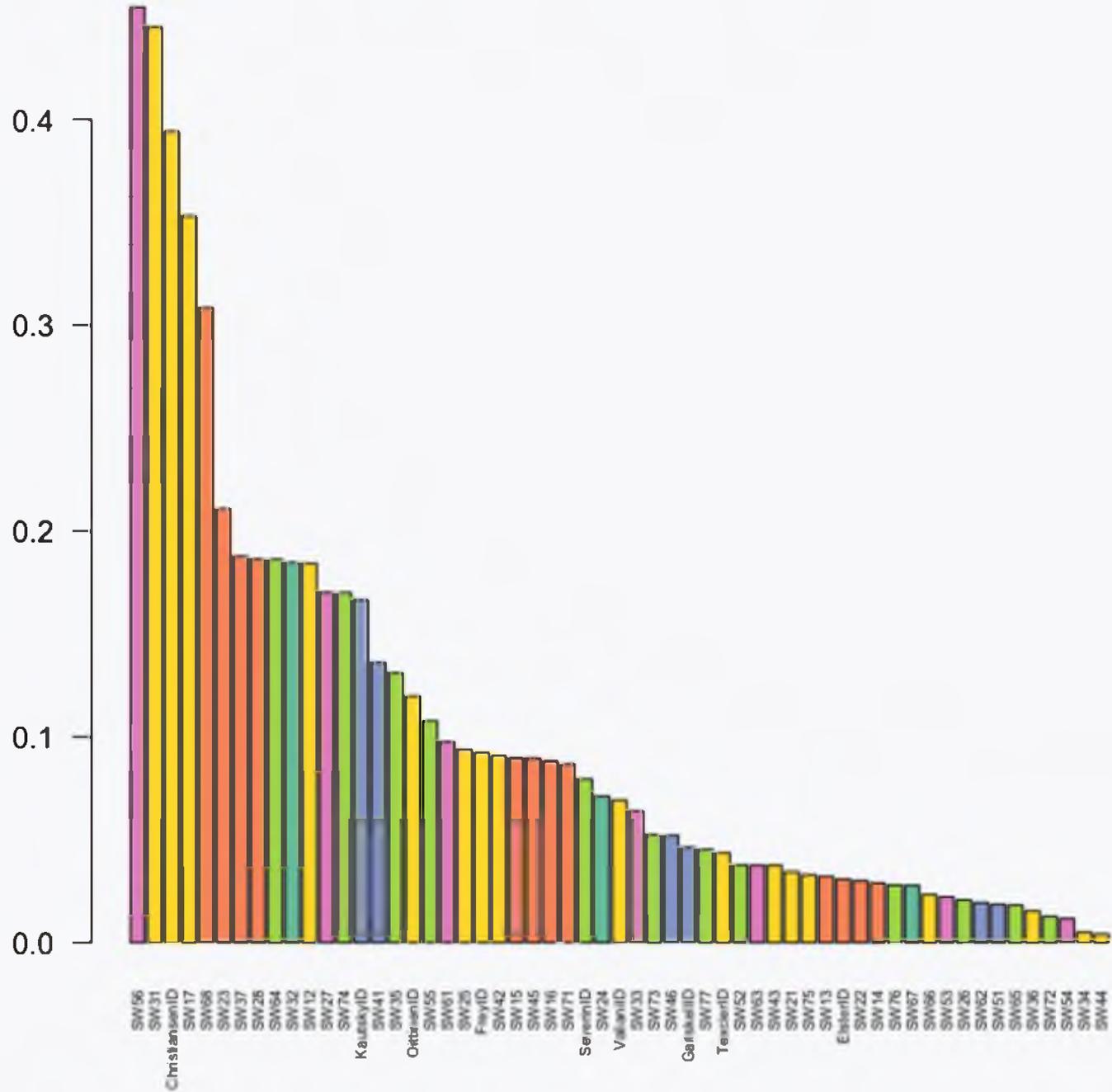
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Topic 16: Party affairs



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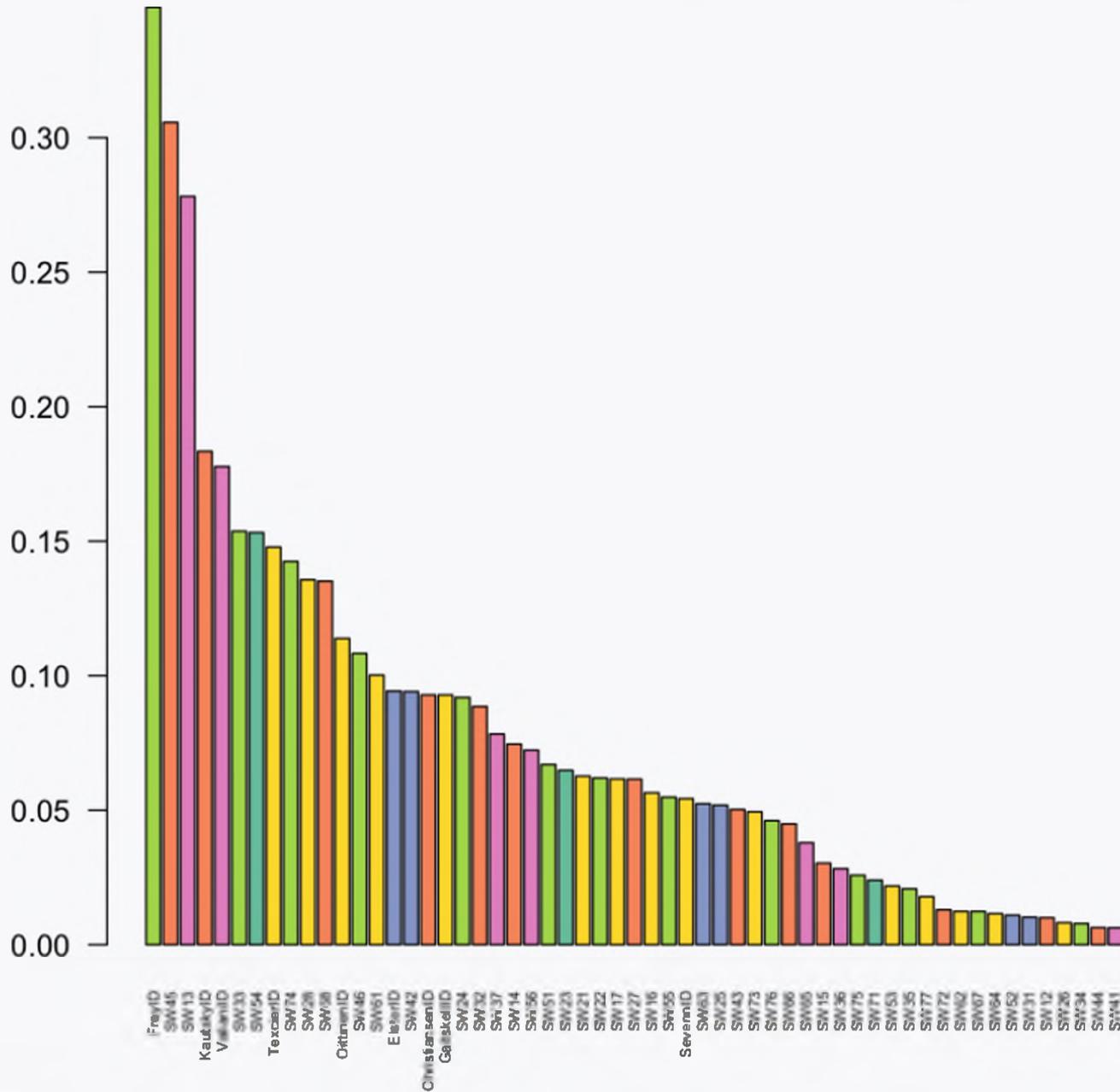
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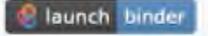
Topic 5: Socialism (general)



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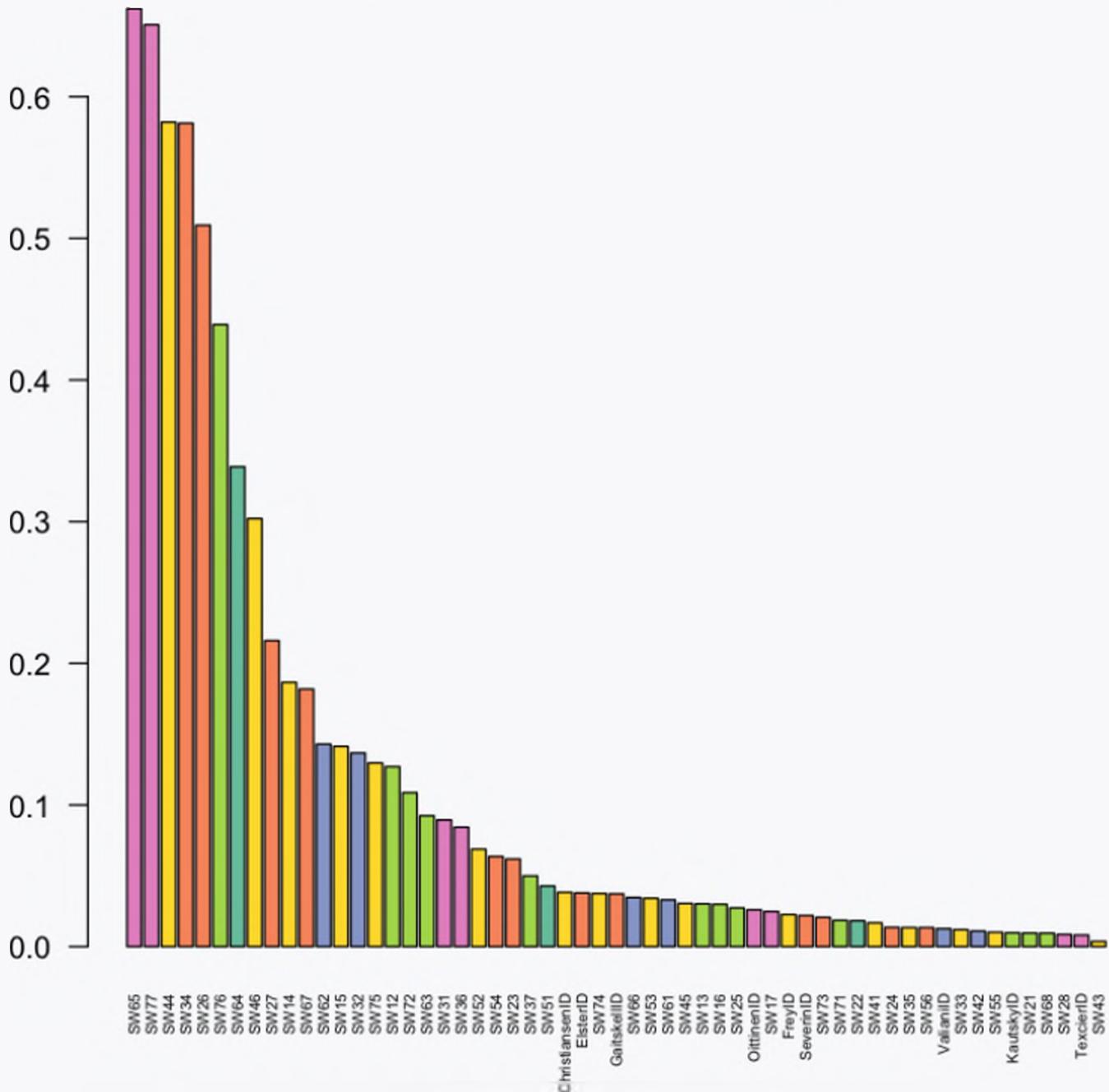
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Topic 13: Economy

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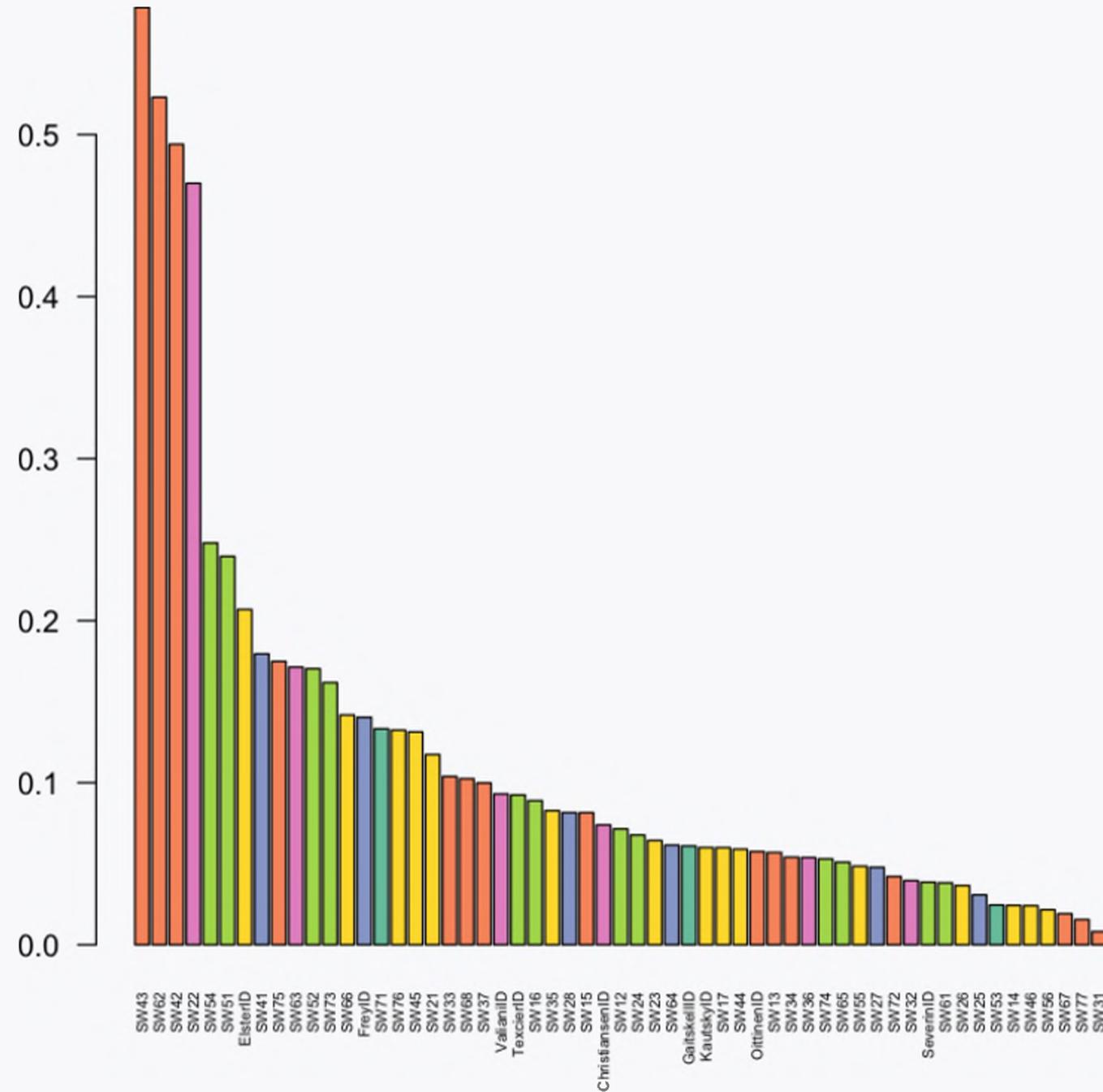
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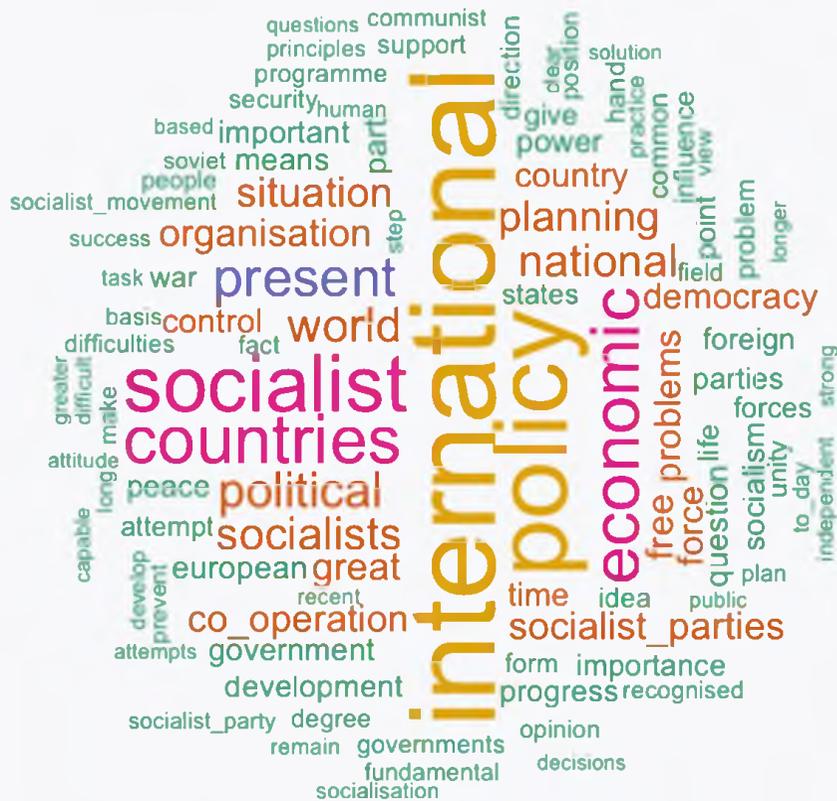


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figure 1 Most common and evenly distributed topics

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63 On the other hand, the topics with the most skewed distribution are dominated by nation-specific words. For example, “Topic 6: Austria”, is hardly used by anyone but Benedikt Kautsky writing the history of Austrian socialism for the book “Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism” (KautskyID).

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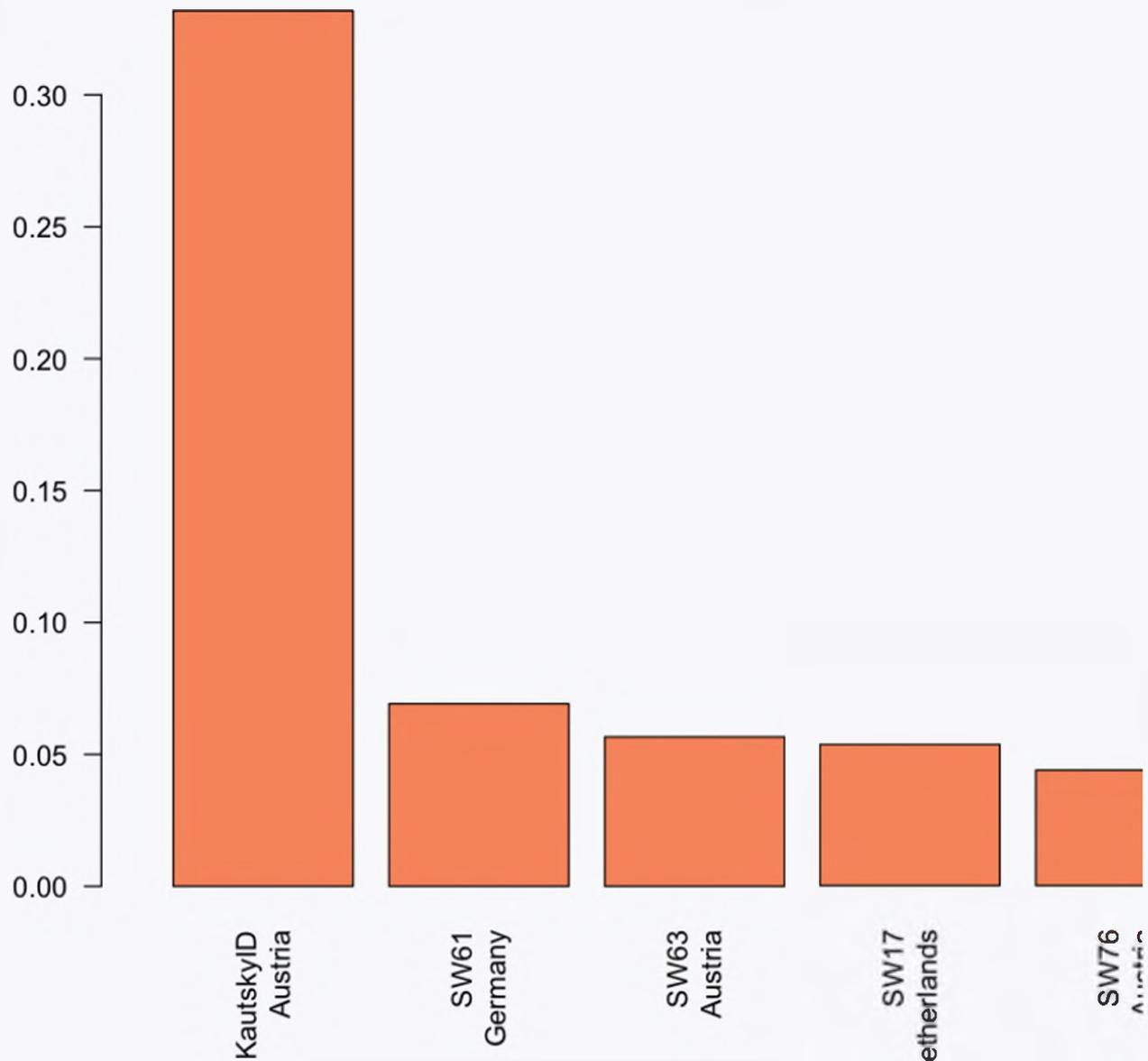
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Topic 6: Austria



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65 Other topics are easier to identify with specific concerns for postwar socialists, especially contentious ones such as the fate of Germany and European affairs. Germany had started the recent World War and it was at the centre of any plan to rebuild Europe. It was particularly controversial for socialists, as the International Socialist Conference initially excluded German social democrats. Throughout 1947 their admission was harshly debated. Western socialists were open to readmit German socialists. Conversely, Eastern European socialists were really hostile to the Germans, because Eastern Europeans had suffered more during the war and they opposed the US strategy of rebuilding a West Germany integrated in the West (Steininger 1979; Misgeld 1984). European integration proved to be extremely controversial for socialists in the 1950s and 1960s, dividing Continental socialists on one side and British and Nordic socialists on the other (Griffiths 1993). Another topic — “Topic 11: North American labour movement” — reveals the interest of the International Socialist Conference for the problems outside the European context in which most parties operated. The Second World War and the Cold War revealed that the major global players were not in Europe anymore.

66 Beyond a simple survey of the topics extracted, topic modeling also offers insights into how topics shaped the discourse. At a basic level, a topic defines the words that are going to be used when speaking about a subject, but the words needed to properly speak about an issue could come from a specific combination or network of topics. For example, I mentioned before how “Topic 6: Austria” is used when talking about Austrian topics. However, Kautsky’s text is also composed by more general topics, such as “Topic 5: Socialism (general)”, “Topic 16: Party affairs” and “Topic 3: International Affairs”. I compare it with the text “Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Italy”, written by Italian socialist Leo Valiani for the same book (ValianiID). The composition of this text appears very similar: the nation-specific “Topic 9: Italy” and the more general topics “Topic 5: Socialism (general)”, “Topic 3: International Affairs”, “Topic 16: Party affairs”. It is legitimate to conclude that to generate an essay on the history of socialism in a given nation, it is necessary to combine a topic providing the words to describe national peculiarities and the topics providing the words to deal with common concerns — socialism and its history, international affairs, party affairs. Party history as a genre is thus represented as a specific network of topics. This confirms that both “Socialist World” and the book “Ideological Developments of Democratic Socialism” were intended to give the parties a platform to describe their national situation and their specific ideas about socialism, although within shared parameters that made them intelligible to other socialists.

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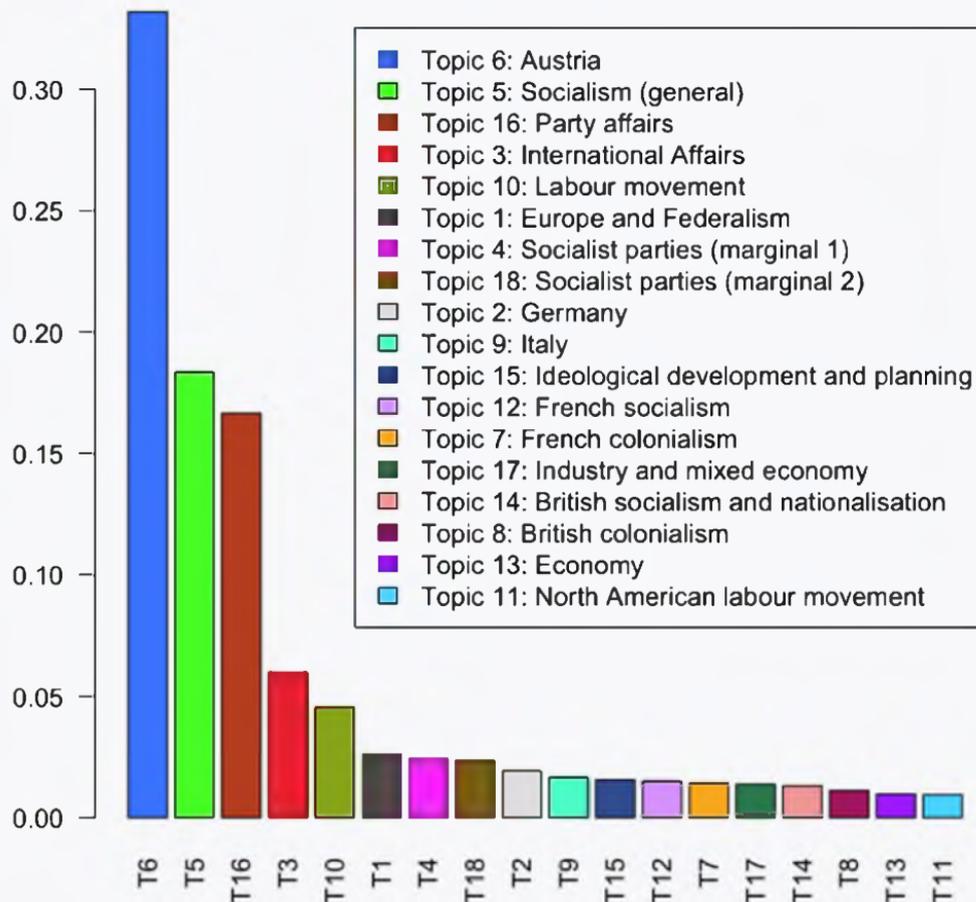
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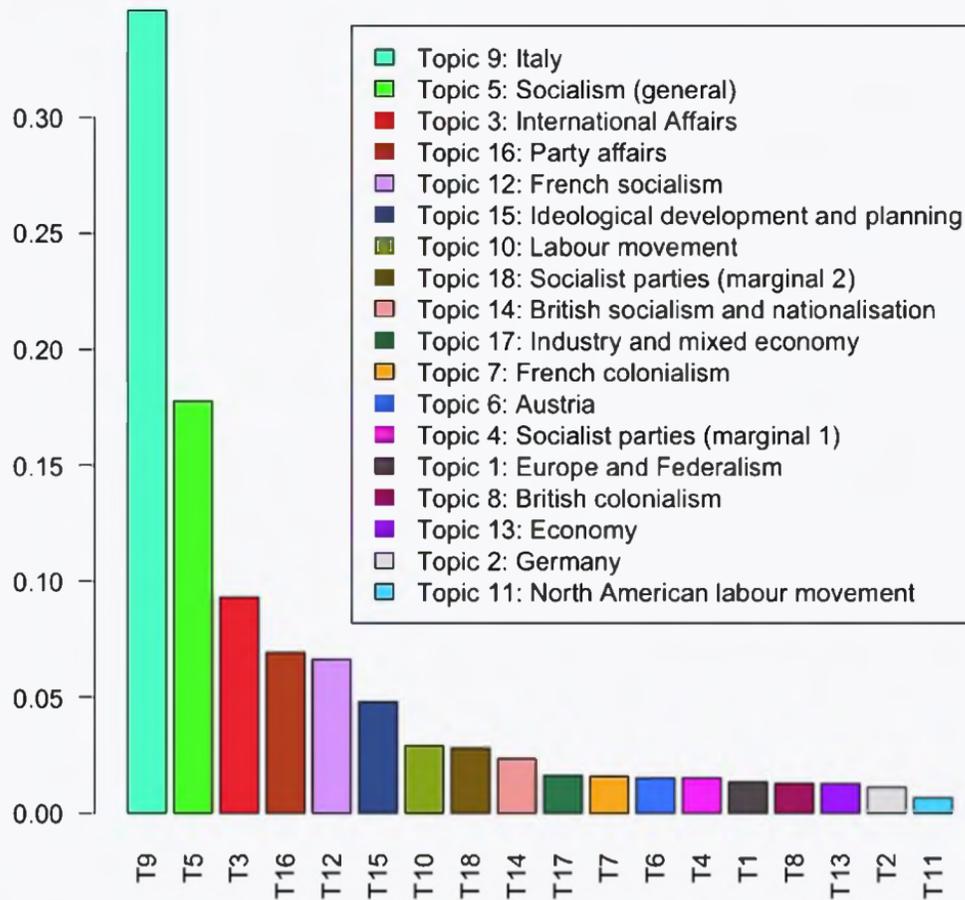
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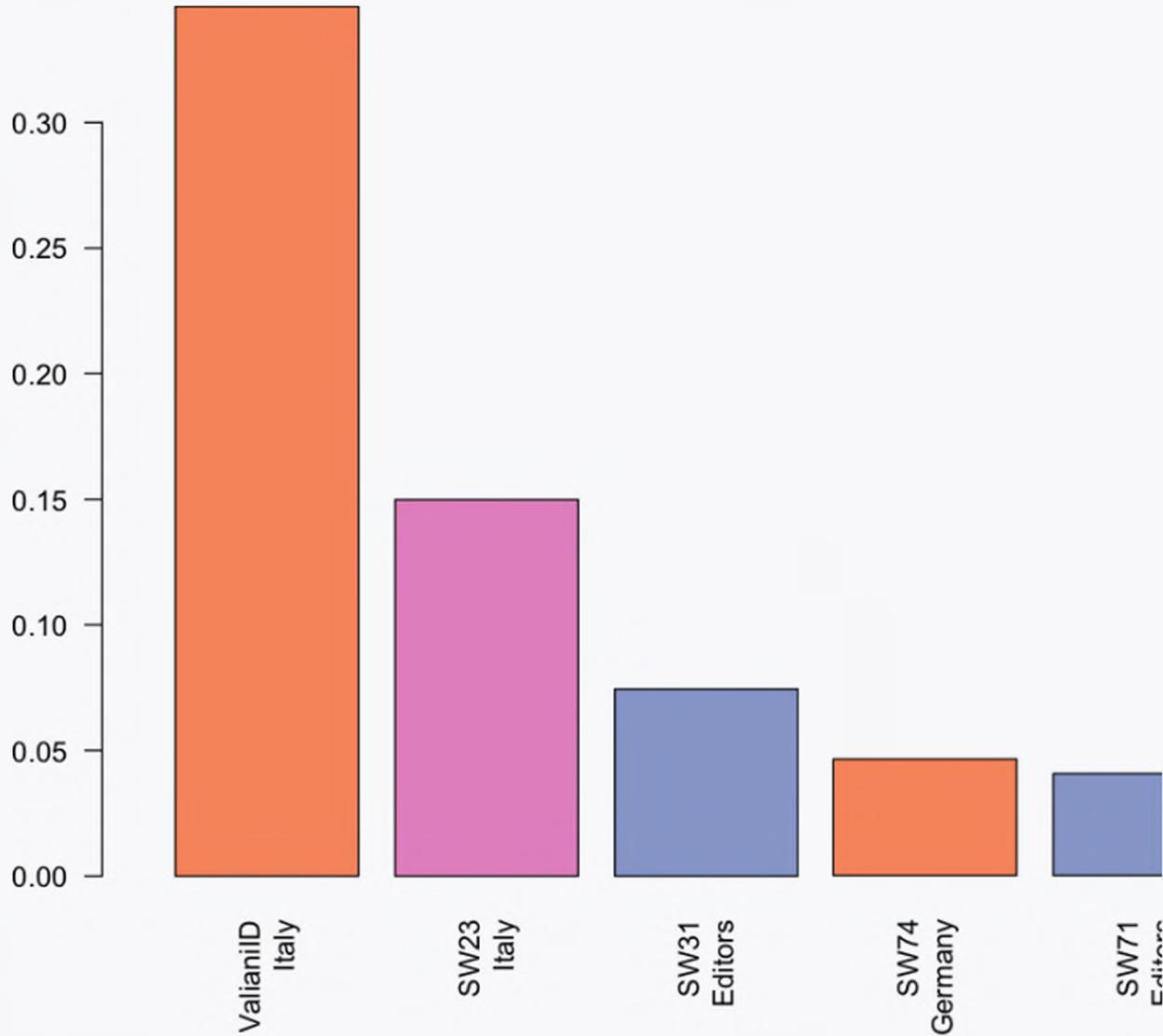
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Topic 9: Italy



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figure 3 Comparison of essays of The ideological Development of Democratic Socialism

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68 As mentioned above, avoiding embarrassment was a priority in the production of international socialist texts. The imperative of “Socialist World” was political, so it was “committed to publishing only articles advocating a policy with which the national party is in agreement” (Costa 2022, p. 129). Unsurprisingly, “Socialist World” asked permission from the SFIO to publish an article on the Monnet plan, asked articles on colonial affairs from parties of the colonizer country and articles on South America from a US socialist close to the State Department and the CIA. This silence on colonialism is reflected in the corpus: colonial matters are absent from most articles and only present in a few articles isolated from the rest of the corpus, which were commissioned with the explicit goal of being exculpatory. Measurements through corpus linguistics reveal this by showing how the topics “Topic 7: French colonialism” and “Topic 8: British colonialism” have very distinctive terms and have a very skewed distribution. For example, Topic 8 appears only in two apologetic articles by the British and an article by Indian socialists. It is practically absent in every other article, showing that when “Socialist World” was not justifying colonialism, it kept silent about it. Even the mildly critical article by the Indian socialists came from a “marginal” party – see below.

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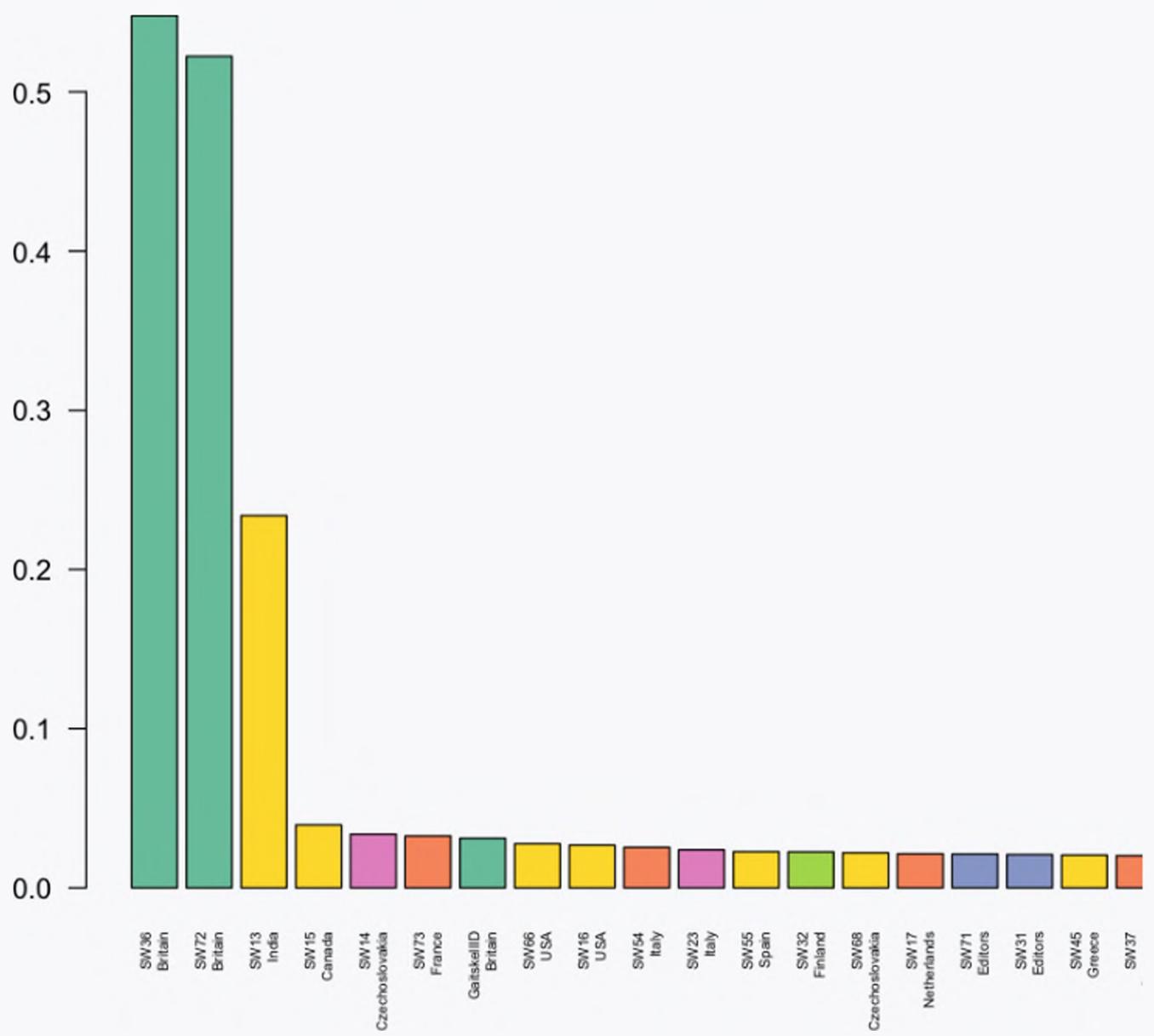
Topic 8: British colonialism

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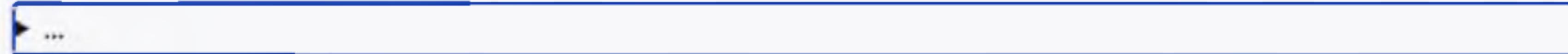


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figure 5 Topic 8 British colonialism

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71 Embarrassment and studied silence is confirmed by archival sources: Swedish and Danish social democrats refused to send articles covering contentious international questions, preferring factual and plain articles on economic data (Costa 2022, p. 125). This is confirmed by looking at the composition of the articles they sent to Socialist World.



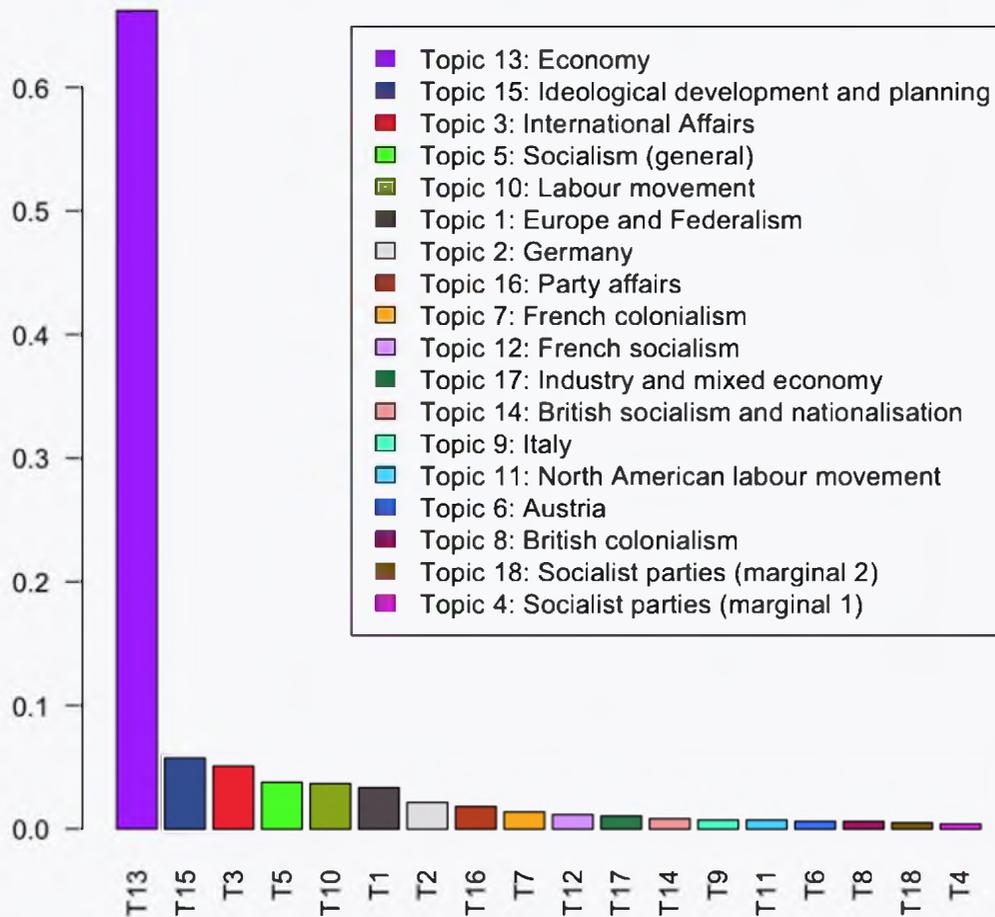
SW65 ' Denmark's economic position '

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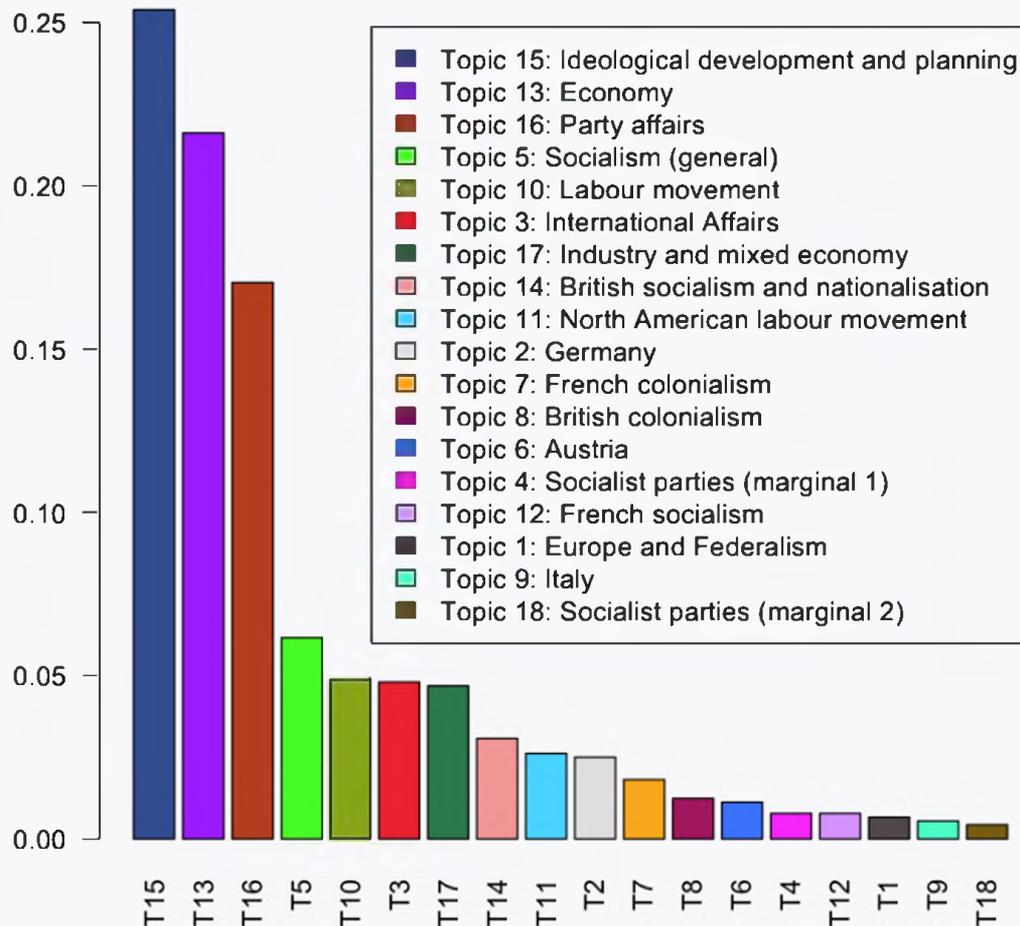
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SW27 ' Social Democracy in Sweden since the war '



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figure 6 Swedish and Danish social democrats position

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73 Finally, a distinctive feature of this topic model is the existence of at least four topics that could refer to the socialist movement in general. The already mentioned “Topic 5: Socialism (general)” is common to many texts from different nations. The other three — “Topic 4: Socialist parties (marginal 1)”, “Topic 18: Socialist parties (marginal 2)”, “Topic 10: Labour movement” — are limited to a few texts, though not exclusive to one nation.

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77 The reason for the existence of “Topic 10: Labour movement” seems to be its almost exclusive use by two essays by the Norwegian socialist Torolf Elster (ElsterID) and the Finnish socialist Reino Oitinnen (OitinnenID) and an article by the Finnish socialist Vaino Leskinen (SW32) — this is shown both by the distribution of the topic over documents and the presence of the words “Norwegian” and “Finland” among the thirty most common words of the topic.

Frustratingly, the choice seems to be simply stylistic: the Norwegian and Finnish socialists consistently refer to their political movement with the term “labour movement”. The term is not so common even in texts by Swedish or Danish socialists, with which they shared traditional ties. This shows the risk of quantitative text analysis to over-emphasise stylistic nuances such as the choice between “labour movement” and “socialist movement”. However, this problem would be reduced when working with a larger corpus.

A data.frame: 1 × 2

<code><!--</code>	Topic Label	Most probable terms <code><chr></code>
<code>></code>	<code><chr></code>	
10	Topic 10: Labour movement	movement, labour, workers, political, social, work, life, norwegian, labour_party, activity, trade_union, basic, democratic, norway, conditions, finland, important, began, interests, finnish, development, century, economic, strong, people, members, country, organisations, community, socialist

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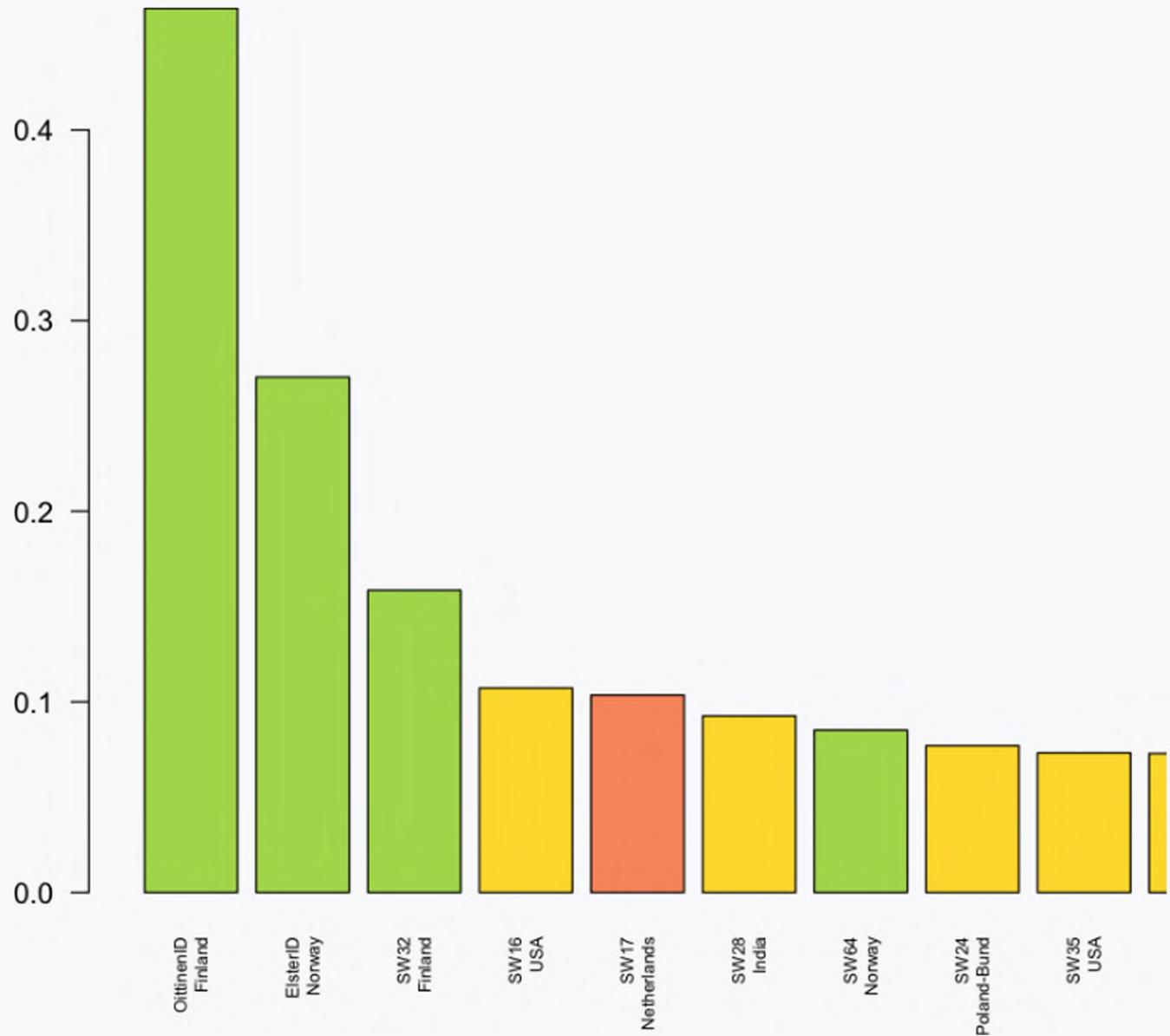
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figure 10 Topic 10 Labour movement

79 More significant is the difference between “Topic 5: Socialism (general)” on one side and “Topic 4: Socialist parties (marginal 1)” and “Topic 18: Socialist parties (marginal 2)” on the other. As I have indicated with my choice of labels, what distinguishes these two topics is their use by parties at the margin of the international socialist movement, who often operated under conditions of illegality and persecution.

80 Within this framework, it is clear that “Topic 5: Socialism (general)” was used by parties operating in a Western liberal democracy to describe their history and evolution, while “Topic 4: Socialist parties (marginal 1)” and “Topic 18: Socialist parties (marginal 2)” belonged to parties operating in a different context. Even the article written by German social democrats using Topic 4 (SW74) is about the Berlin blockade and the threat of communist persecution — a situation very different from what a Western European socialist party would normally experience. The topic model has also caught that the survey of recent events in “Notes of Quarter” SW41 and SW71 contains references to the persecution of Spanish socialists and Eastern European social democrats.

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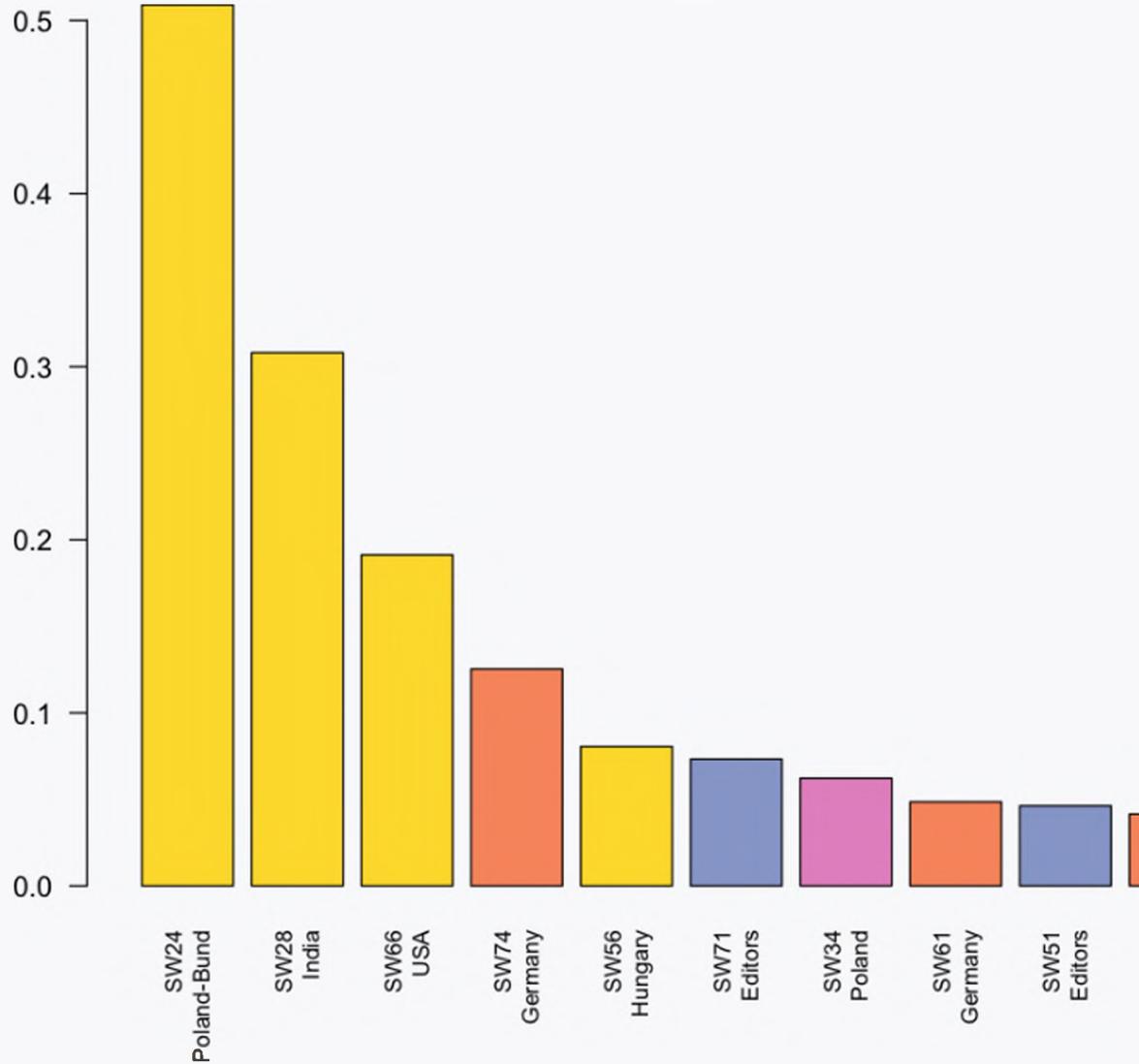
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Topic 4: Socialist parties (marginal 1)



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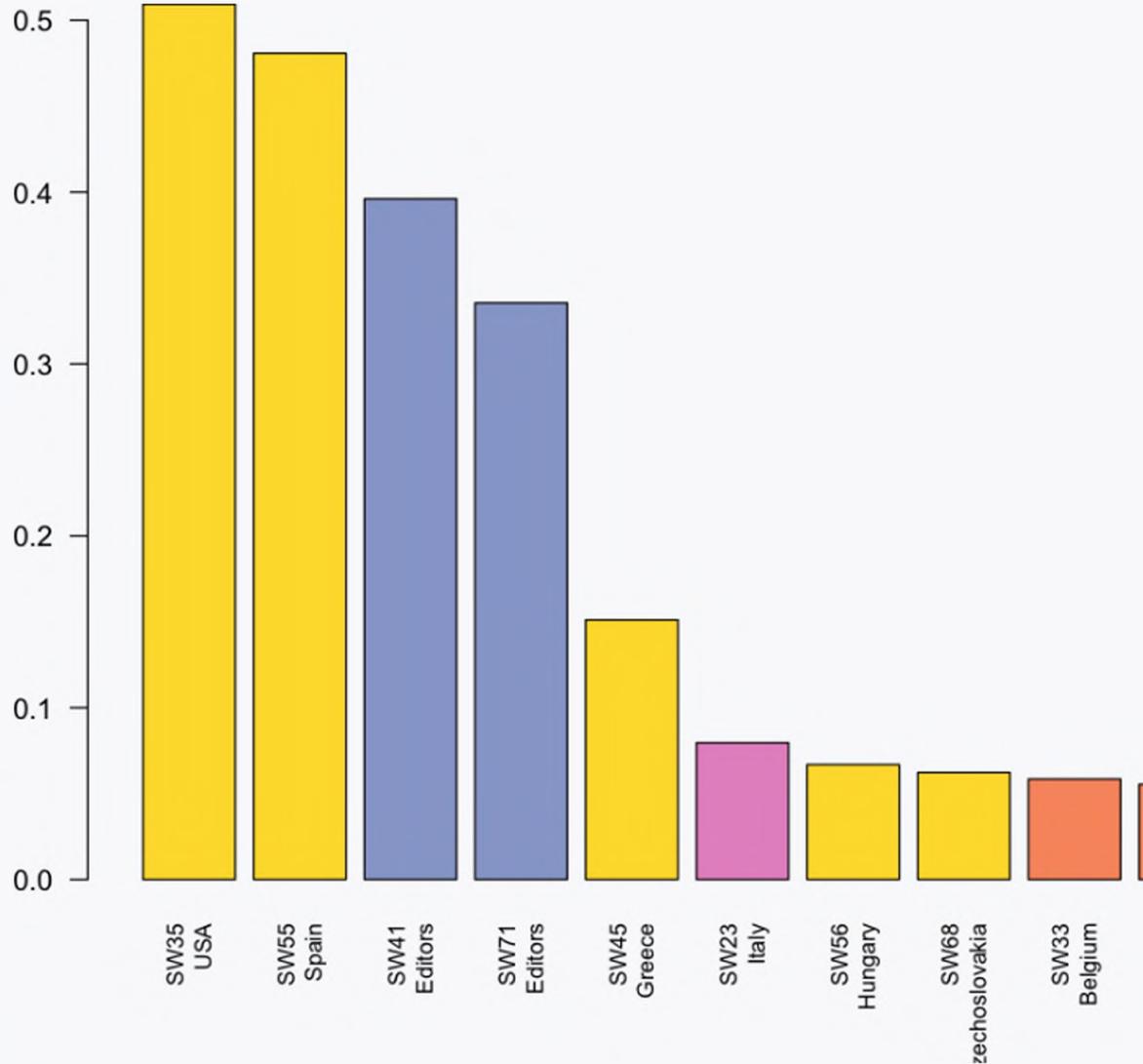
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Topic 18: Socialist parties (marginal 2)



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82 The fact that marginal parties described their situation by using a set of words that Western European socialists did not use would confirm Devin's argument: the identification of socialism with parliamentary democracy reduced its horizon to Western Europe. Likewise, this seems to confirm Peter Van Kemseke's thesis that while socialists talked about the problems of decolonisation, it was not at the centre of their interests and it was rather a way to defuse deeper divisions in Europe (Van Kemseke 2006, p. 277). Even in the journal and book of the Socialist International, the discourse of international socialism pushed the interests and concerns of socialists outside liberal democracy to the margins.

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81 Apparent Unity, Latent Division

84 Topic modeling has served well as a descriptive and exploratory method, but it can do more. The editorial line of both Socialist World and the book was to push for unity in diversity, but latent divisions persisted. The measurements of topic modeling allow us to classify ideological texts and to infer these divisions within the socialist movement.

85 The average usage of each topic has given every document its specific signature, which is a quantifiable measure with which to compare not just individual texts, but clusters of texts. When some topic is overrepresented in the language of a group of people, it can reveal something about the interests and concerns of that political group. Using Euclidean metric, it is possible to calculate the distance between each text and all the other texts of the corpus, with texts thematically closer to each other clustering together. This clustering is represented here through a tree diagram — a dendrogram. Texts closer together end up in the same tree branches, which merge with the next closest branch, until all branches merge into one.

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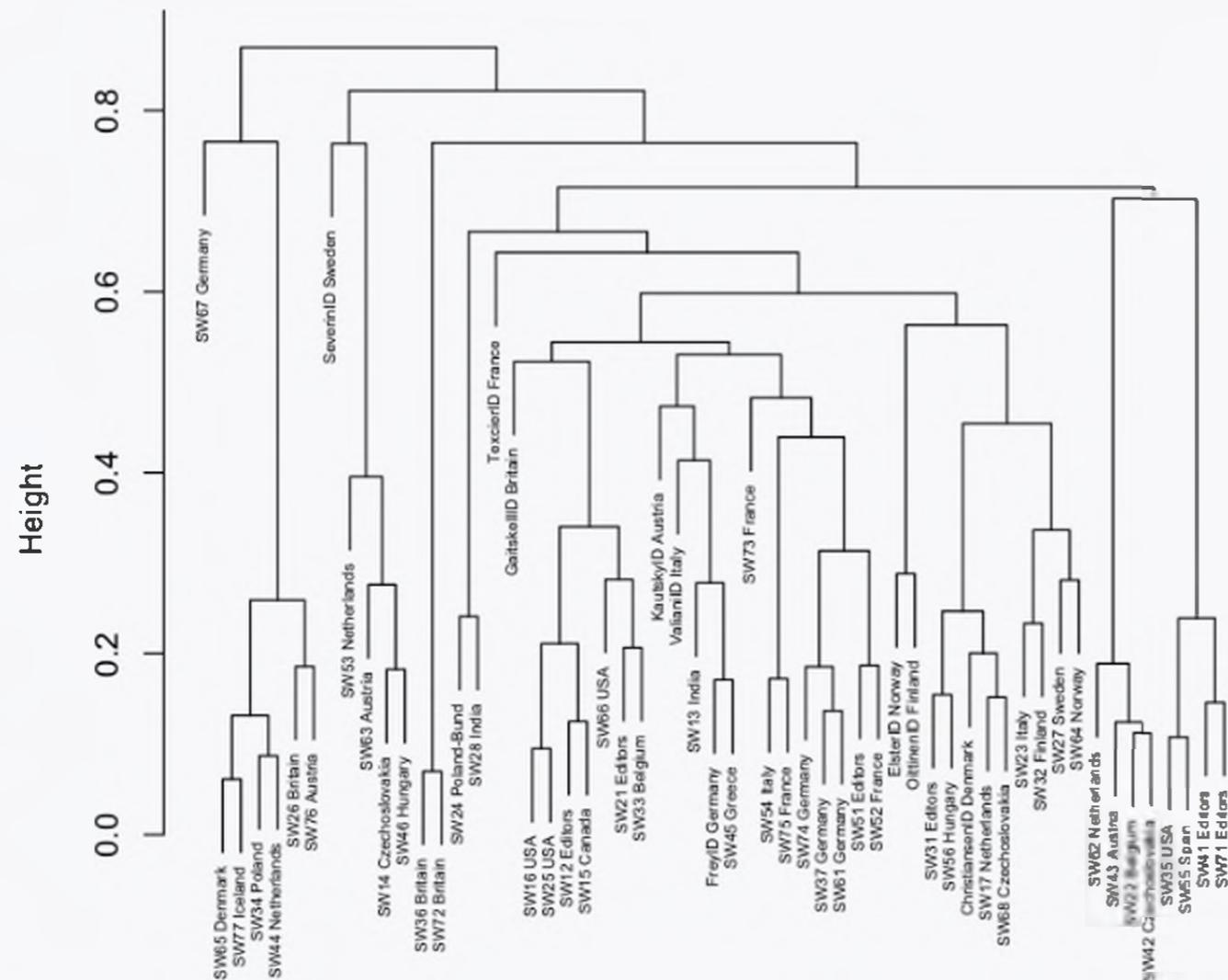
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Texts of the Socialist International

Cluster Dendrogram



corpus.SI.dm
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figure 12 Texts of the Socialist International - Cluster Dendrogram

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87 The first observation is that the national signal is rather powerful. Documents from the same nation often end up in the same tree branch. This could mean either a similarity of interests or a shared vocabulary to speak about events in the same nation. For other branches, the thematic signal is stronger. To emphasise this clustering, the unsupervised program drew ten boxes around ten branches of the dendrogram.

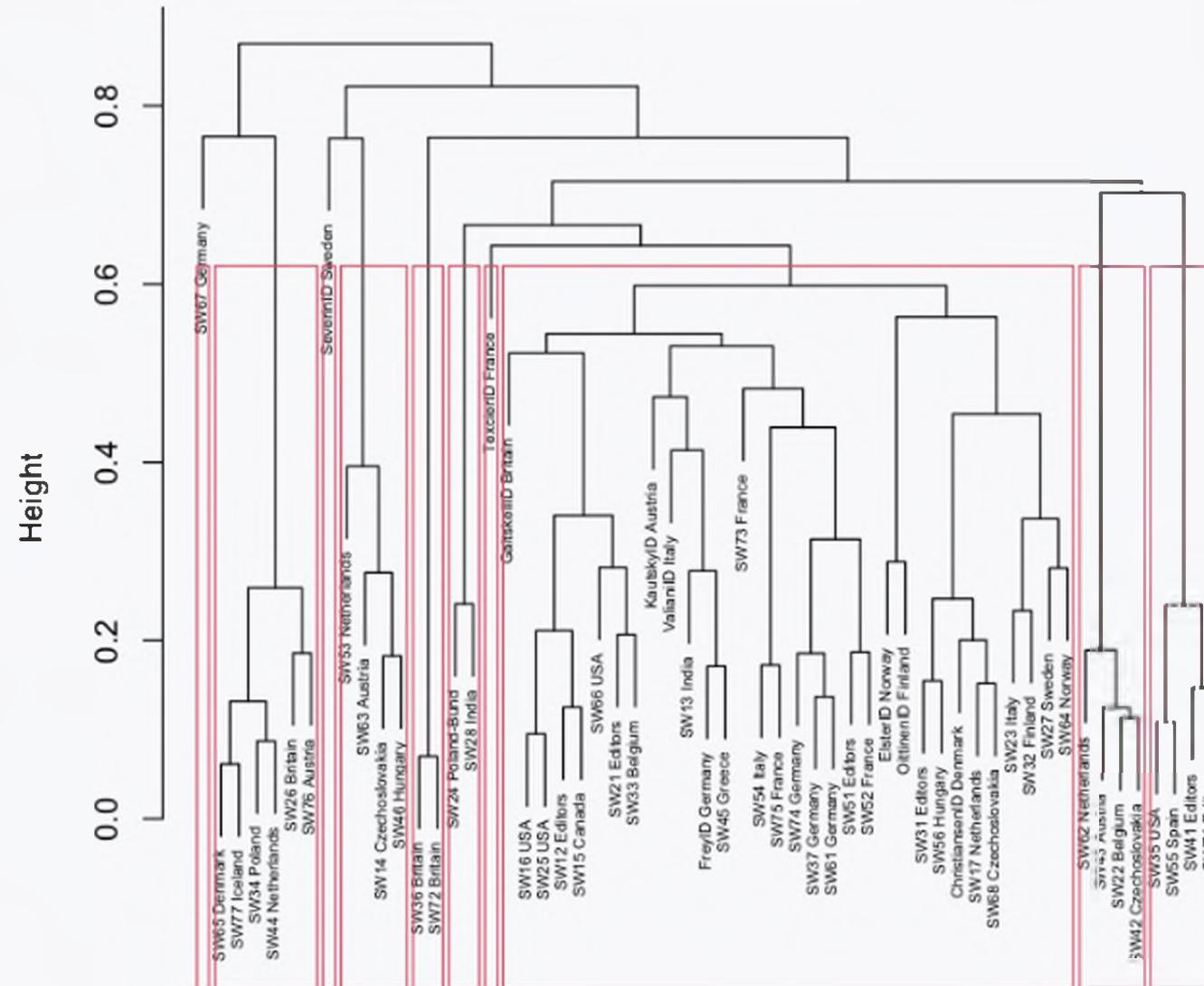
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figure 13 Texts of the Socialist International Cluster Dendrogram divided in ten boxes

89 It is clear that some documents are even more isolated from the rest than expected. The first, third and seventh box are just one article each, while the sixth box only holds two articles. The first box only consists of the article SW67, which, atypical for a socialist text, describes the problem of the military occupation of the Western zones of Germany. The national histories of Swedish and French socialism — SeverinID and TexcierID, respectively the third and seventh box — are also isolated from the rest. The sixth box includes two articles by rather marginal parties. Other branches have clearer thematic component.

90 The second box includes articles from “Socialist World” describing the economic situation in the country of the writer. Socialist parties from many different nations are represented.

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<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
45	SW65	Denmark's economic position	Jorgen Paldam	Denmark	1948	1940s	Nordic	1967

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
55	SW77	Economic Development in Iceland	Gylfi Gislason	Iceland	1948	1940s	Nordic	2813

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
25	SW34	Poland's Three-year plan	A Polish correspondent	Poland	1947	1940s	Leftist	1539

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
32	SW44	Holland's Economic position	G.M.Nederhorst	Netherlands	1948	1940s	Continental	1922

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
19	SW26	Britain meets the crisis	A British Correspondent	Britain	1947	1940s	British	2036

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32	SW44	Holland's Economic position	G.M.Nederhorst	Netherlands	1948	1940s	Continental	1922

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
19	SW26	Britain meets the crisis	A British Correspondent	Britain	1947	1940s	British	2036

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
54	SW76	Austria's Economic Future	Karl Waldbrunner	Austria	1948	1940s	Continental	1704

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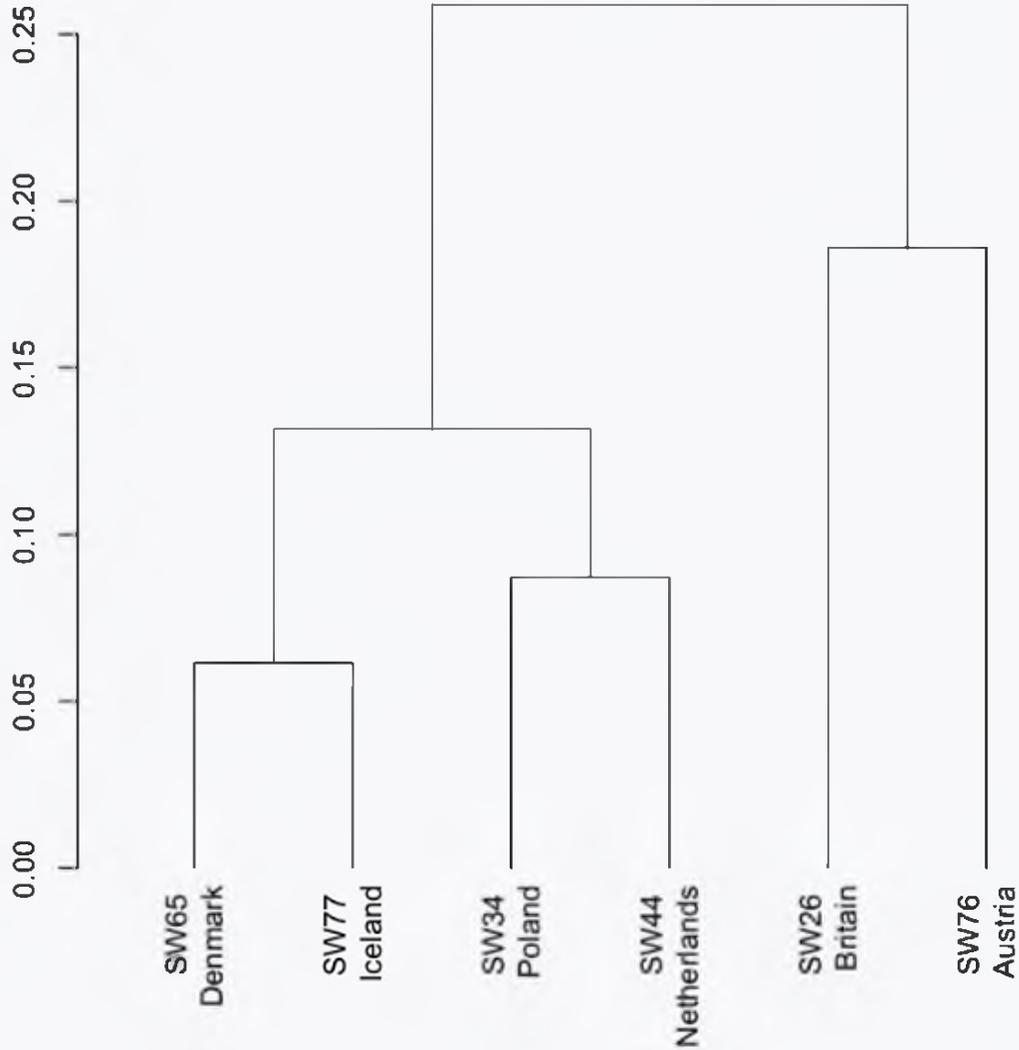
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Texts of the Socialist International

Economic Survey



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figure 14 Texts of the Socialist International — Box 2, Economic Survey

92 The fourth box includes articles from Socialist World describing nationalisation, a policy that was being implemented, though in different forms, both in Western and Eastern Europe. Socialists were greatly interested in debating the issue but also to show off their success in socialising the economy.

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
37	SW53	Nationalisation in Holland	G.M.Nederhorst	Netherlands	1948	1940s	Continental	2510

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
43	SW63	Socialism and planning in Austria	Karl Waldbrunner	Austria	1948	1940s	Continental	2047

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
10	SW14	Czechoslovakia on the road to socialism	Czechoslovakia on the road to socialism	Czechoslovakia	1947	1940s	Leftist	2213

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
34	SW46	Social revolution in Hungary	A Hungarian correspondent	Hungary	1948	1940s	Leftist	1675

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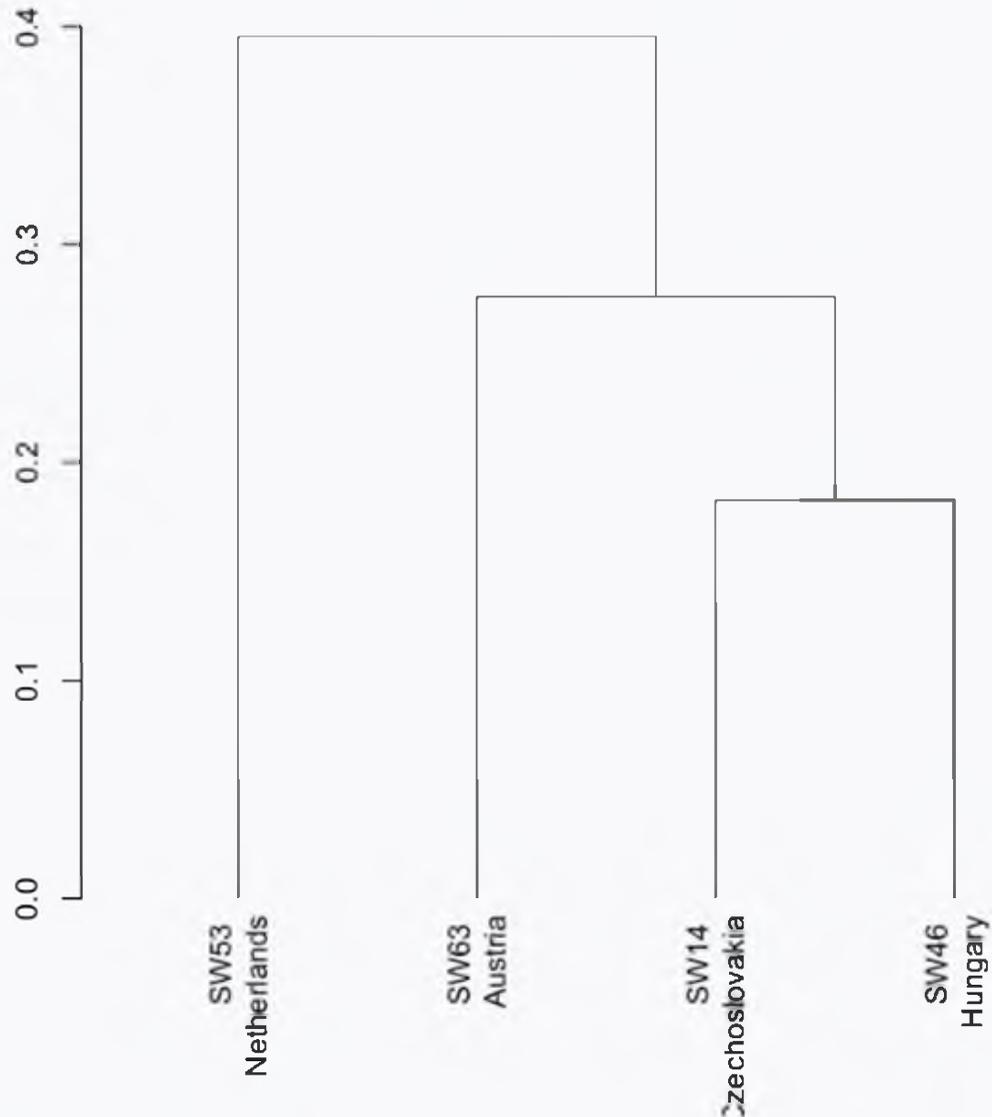
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The fifth box simply includes articles describing British colonialism.

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<-/->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
27	SW36	Imperialism – New Style	J.D.Krivine	Britain	1947	1940s	British	2065

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<-/->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
50	SW72	Labour's Colonial Policy	H.D.Hughes	Britain	1948	1940s	British	3309

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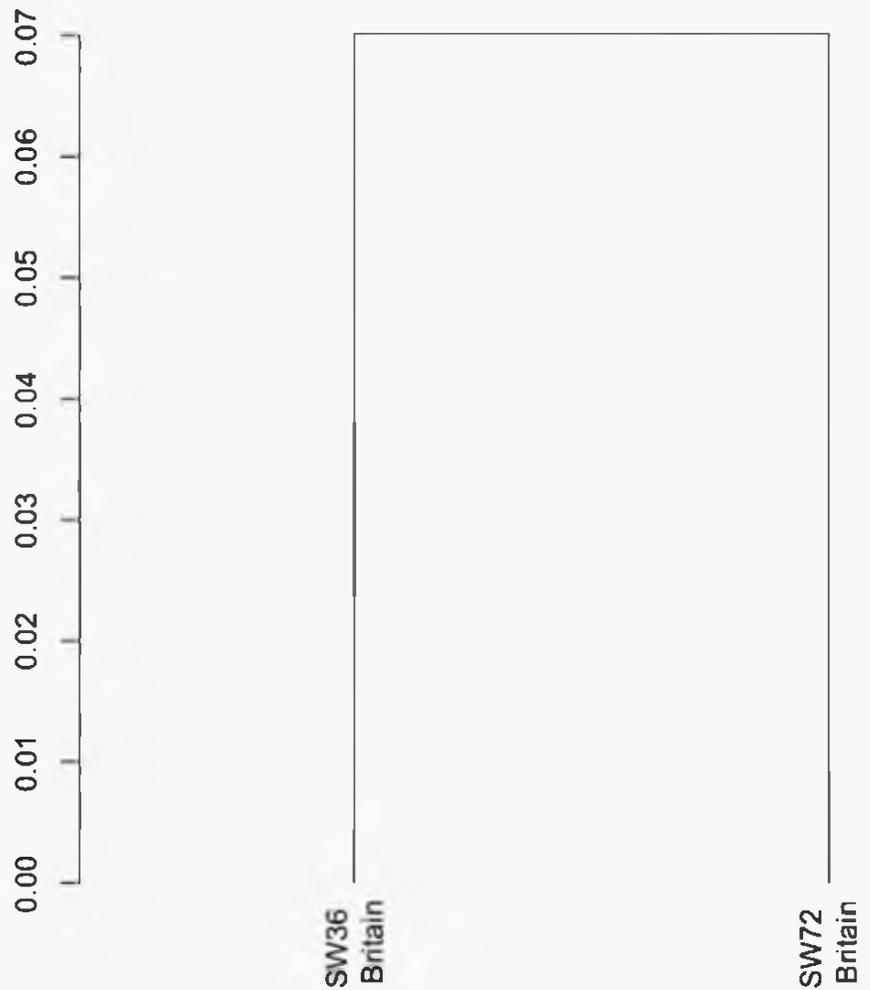
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figure 16 Texts of the Socialist International — Box 5, Colonialism

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Finally, the ninth box is about international cooperation. Not only was this the core business of socialist internationalism, but the postwar period offered many opportunities to envision different forms of cooperation — such as European integration — or to show regret about the mutual hostility generated by the Cold War.

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
42	SW62	International socialist planning	G.M.Nederhorst	Netherlands	1948	1940s	Continental	3377

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
31	SW43	The Third Force	Oskar Pollak	Austria	1948	1940s	Continental	2551

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
15	SW22	A new Socialist International	Max Buset	Belgium	1947	1940s	Continental	1676

A data.frame: 1 × 8

<!-->	ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>
30	SW42	International socialist co-operation	Vilém Bernard	Czechoslovakia	1948	1940s	Leftist	3316

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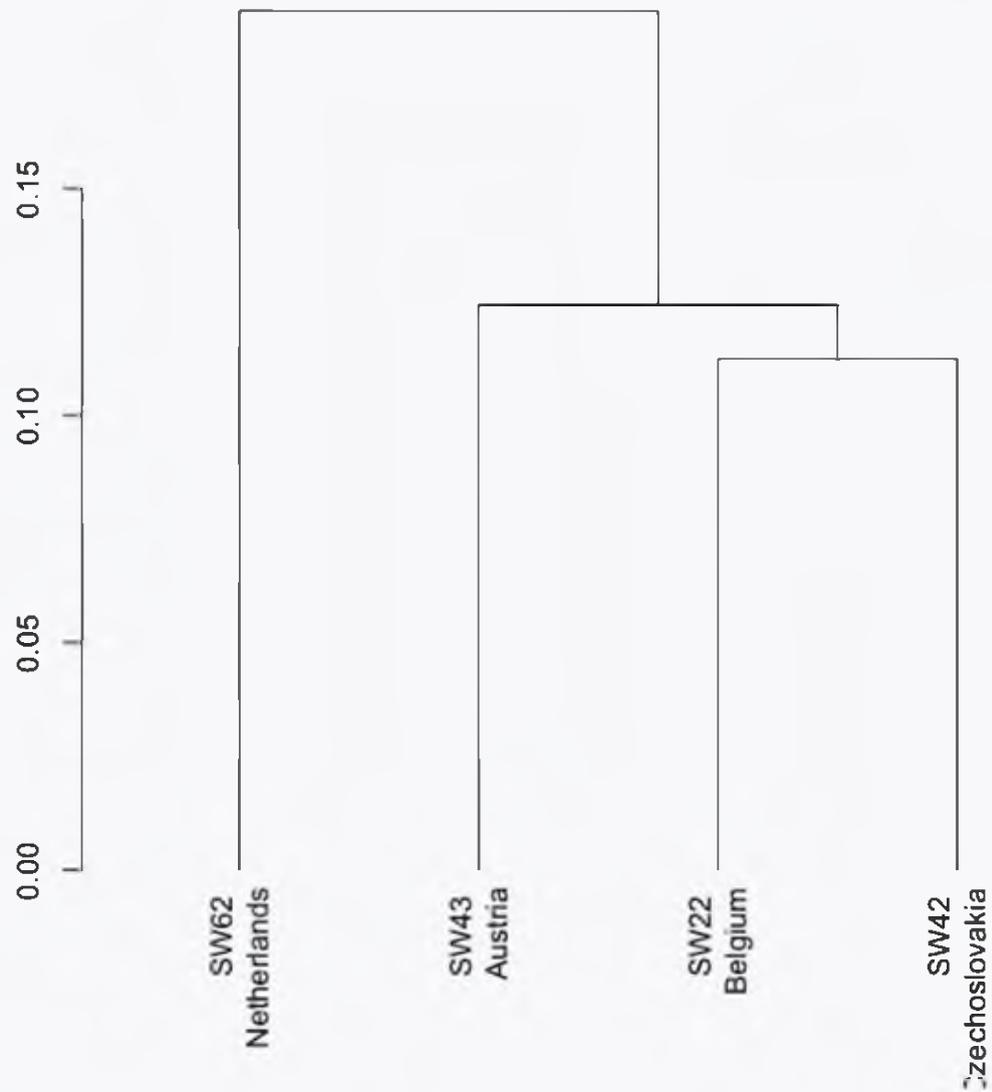
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figure 17 Texts of the Socialist International – Box 9, International Cooperation

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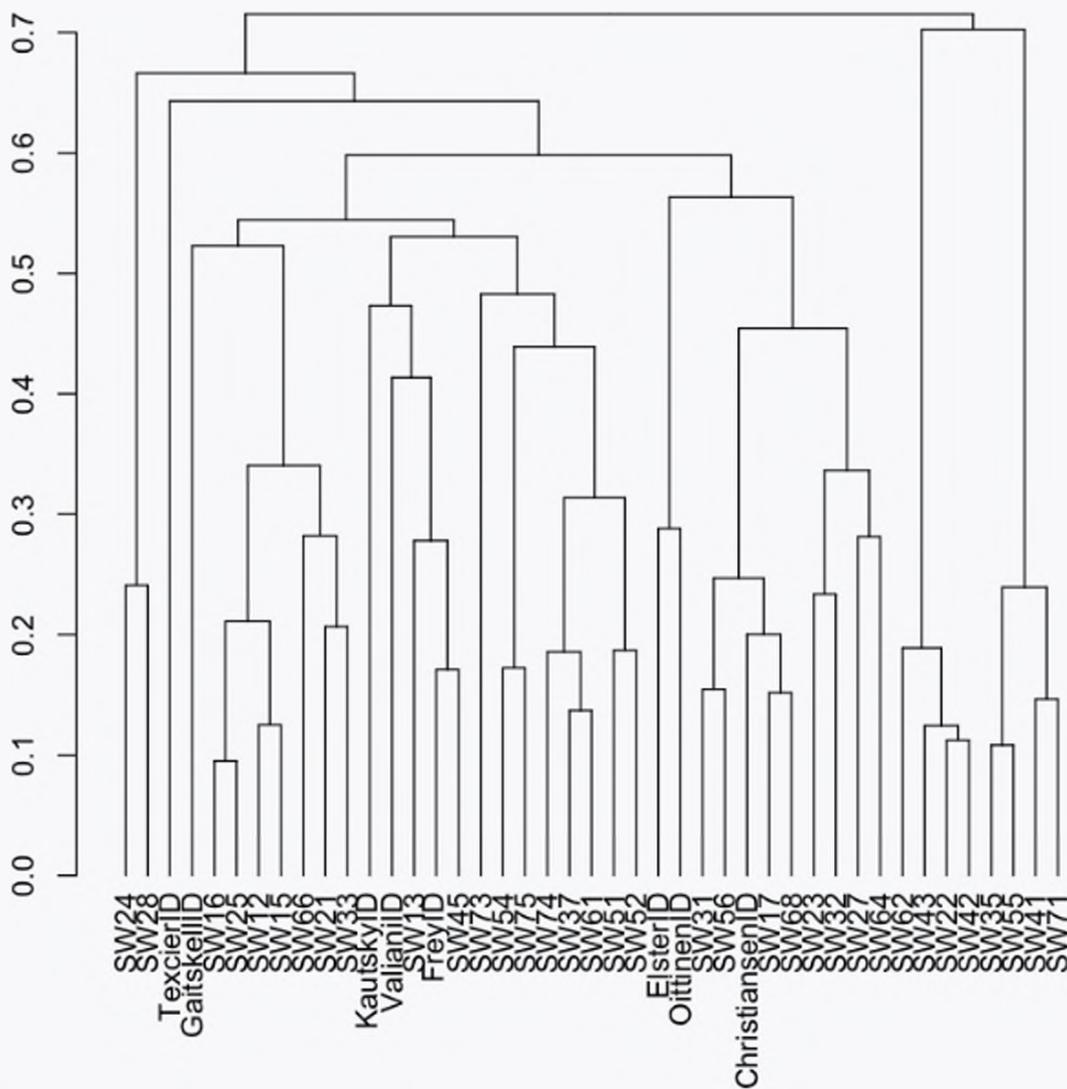
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figure 18 Texts of the Socialist International — Box 8, miscellaneous documents

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100 The clustering has shown issues concerning parties across geographical and ideological divisions. However, thematic measurements can also be shown to match political divisions inside the Socialist International.

101 Employing the different topic usage, I am now going to test my division of the parties into three groups. In addition, I have used a fourth group for socialist parties that are “marginal”, according to Devin’s definition. This includes socialist exiles from Communist countries, Francoist Spain or extra-European parties. These parties operated outside Western European liberal democracy, so, as per Devin’s thesis, they were marginal to the Socialist International or European social democracy, although they were important symbols. A fifth category – “Editorial” – is for the articles written by Loeb and Thompson, who worked directly for the international organisation and did not speak for a member party. I have divided the articles and essays of the Socialist International according to these five categories . I excluded the Austrian socialists because of their position as a liminal case between Planners and Federalists. The results show the general trends of international socialism.

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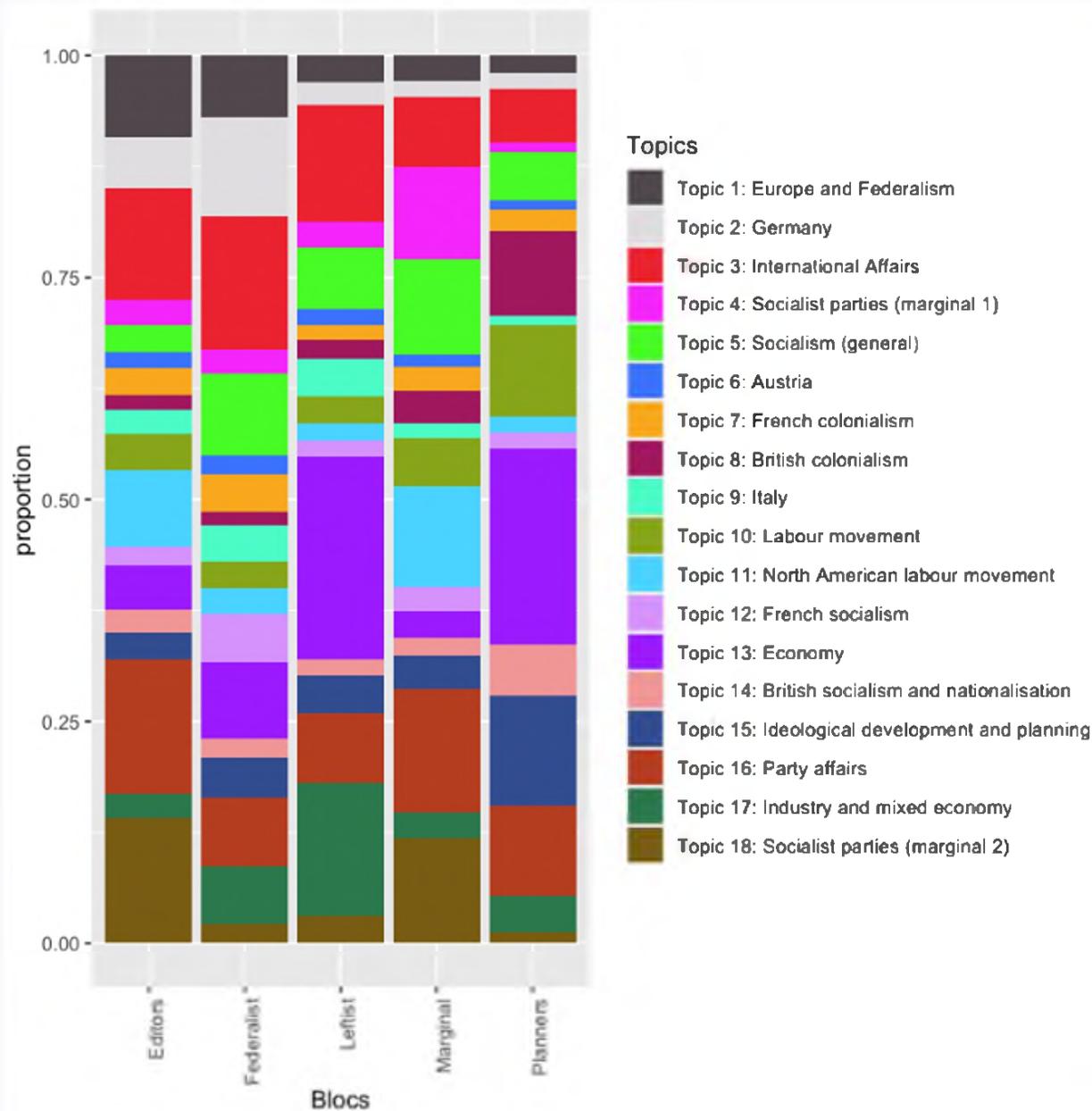
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figure 19 Topic usage per grouping of parties

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103 Besides the topics more specific to some nations, which has been discussed above, the blocs of parties are clearly defined by their language. These measurements confirm that “Topic 4: Socialist parties (marginal 1)” and “Topic 18: Socialist parties (marginal 2)” are most common in the marginal group — 10% and 12% respectively. “Topic 18: Socialist parties (marginal 2)” is also well represented (14%) in the articles by the editors, who often reported about socialist persecution.

104 The real difference in topic usage is visible in those topics that are not nation-specific. The group of socialists I call Planners deserve such a name. Economic issues are a huge part of their language, as shown by “Topic 13: Economy” — 22% —, “Topic 15: Ideological development and planning” — 12% —, “Topic 14: British socialism and nationalisation” — 6%. For the Federalist bloc, the results are respectively 9%, 5% and 2%. This skew is somewhat balanced by the fact that usage of “Topic 17: Industry and mixed economy” is more pronounced among Federalists than Planners — 7% and 4% respectively.

105 Federalists also deserve their names, given their interest in “Topic 3: International Affairs” — 17% — and “Topic 1: Europe and Federalism” — 6%. The corresponding values for the Planners bloc are 6% and 2%. This is intentional: as mentioned above, Danish and Swedish social democrats preferred not to talk about foreign affairs in “Socialist World”.

106 These results seem to confirm the basic picture of Planners being more concerned with economic factors and the possibility of shaping them at national level and Federalists being more preoccupied with the limitations and potential of international factors. This is of course just a general trend, so it is still possible for individual articles by Planners to deal with foreign affairs and for individual articles by Federalists to deal with economic matters.

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107 Another surprising result is that the Leftist Bloc is as interested as the Federalists in “Topic 3: International Affairs” — 13% to 17% —, but Leftists are closer to Planners in the use of “Topic 13: Economy” — 23% to 22%. This could easily be explained by Marxist references, but, interestingly, there is not a single token for “marx” or “marxism” in the texts produced by Eastern European socialists before the Prague Coup. In the entire corpus, explicit references to Marxism are extremely lopsided. The token “marx” is the fourth most likely word in “Topic 12: French Socialism.” It is also present in “Topic 6: Austria” — “marxist”, “austro_marxist” and “austro_marxists” are the 32nd, 106th and 117th most likely words. In the generalist “Topic 5: Socialism (general)”, “marxism”, “marxist” and “marxists” are respectively the 30th, 40th and 149th likeliest word.

108 The predominance of economic issues without explicitly referencing Marx or Marxism in the texts by the Leftist group can be explained in two ways. First, as long as Leftists co-existed with anti-communist socialists in the International Socialist Conference, they preferred to concentrate on the achievements of their domestic policies, which could reinforce their socialist credentials. Their reluctance to deal with controversial topics was not different from that of Danish and Swedish social democrats. Thus, both Nordic and British socialists on one side and Eastern European socialists on the other avoided the contentious issue of Marxism. However, since they also wrote often about international affairs, there was a second, more important similarity between Leftists and Planners. Leftist socialists actually felt closer to the British Labour Party than the explicitly Marxist SFIO. Indeed, the Labour Party stood out from other Western European socialists in the Continent for its strong working-class base and the radical social programme of the Attlee government. It even engendered fascination and admiration among Leftist socialists and communists before 1948 (Costa 2018, p. 58). Angelica Balabanoff — at a time General Secretary of the Comintern — even said that the practical policies of the Labour Government increasing the purchasing power of the poor were better evidence of actual Marxism than theoretical orthodoxy.

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109 As references to Marxism do not correlate with a greater attention to economic issues, we can talk about the Federalist parties adopting a merely rhetorical Marxism to define their history and identity. The fact that the tokens related to Marx are mostly found in topics relegated to French texts seems to confirm Orlow's thesis about the persistence of Marxism in French socialist culture despite a changing political and social context. As Tony Judt noted, French socialists rhetorically embraced Marxism because of competition with the communists, even though in a period such as the 1950s they adopted more centrist and moderate policies than their non-Marxist comrades ([Judt 2011](#)). The SFIO even pushed for the Socialist International to recognise Marxism as a structural component of democratic socialism. However, the intense debate on Marxism between 1949 and 1951 led to the Frankfurt Declaration to simply recognise the historical importance of Marxism, without any commitment on whether it was still valid in 1951 ([Costa 2018](#), pp. 277–283). Thus, it is not surprising to find “marx” in Topic 5, which is more common in texts with a historical bent. For example, the text FreyhID was written as the SPD was in the middle of its transformation into a revisionist party, so references to Marxism indicated the past of the party, not its present policies. Nordic and British socialists also did not mention Marxism much outside historical narratives, because they stressed the importance of redistribution of income and public control of the economy using a non-Marxist conceptual framework.

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110 This division between Planners and Federalists had great relevance for the history of European social democracy. As the different usage of topics shows, the disagreement between Continental socialists on one hand and Nordic and British socialists on the other was not just occasional, but it involved a deep difference of opinion on the definition of socialism. This would seem to qualify Sassoon's thesis that most socialist parties except the French followed the road of socialist revisionism in the 1950s ([Sassoon 2014](#), pp. 241-242), since even those parties were divided between Planners and Federalists. Griffiths and Imlay are also wrong to interpret a failure of unanimity as a failure of internationalism. Topic usage shows that in the period under analysis the socialist movement was divided, but European socialists clustered around two centres of gravity: the Planners group and the Federalists group. This could have been deduced through their policies towards European integration, but it is also confirmed by the topic survey: language and ideas of Danish and British socialists tended to cluster together and distance themselves from their Continental comrades. This would confirm the thesis of Shaev and Broad that even in the presence of dissent, meaningful cooperation took place around specific issues and in smaller groups ([Shaev 2014](#); [Broad 2020](#)). As Shaev notes about the international relations between socialists: "The discussions were indeed often inconclusive but focusing on loose coalitions rather than unanimous compromises reveals important achievements on issues of regional trade liberalisation" ([Shaev 2018](#), p. 260). More meaningful than a difference between traditionalists and revisionists was the difference between socialists from states of the European Coal and Steel Community and soon the European Economic Community (the Inner Six), which included most Federalists, and the socialists from states of the soon to emerge European Free Trade Association (the Outer Seven), which included most Planners.

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- 112** In his autobiography, Denis Healey relates his period as International Secretary of the Labour Party in the years of the reconstruction of the socialist family: “Many of the difficulties that troubled our relations with the continental socialists arose from differences in mental and linguistic patterns which were not central to the issue at stake” ([Healey 1989](#), p. 93).
- 113** While it is an intriguing observation, saying that linguistic and cultural misunderstandings were at the root of all disagreements is rather disingenuous. I would argue that the opposite was true. The interests and concerns of the parties were disguised as differences of temperament and national character in order to preserve unity. Political struggle is a battle over meaning: to win it, it is necessary to have the preferred meaning of the shared words accepted by the electorate. As the founder of New Political History, Gareth Stedman Jones, argued “What we must therefore do is to study the production of interest, identification, grievance and aspiration within political languages themselves” ([Stedman Jones 1984](#), p. 22). Therefore, we must treat linguistic differences as evidence of different political and ideological positions.
- 114** In 1951, Federalists and Planners agreed on a shared definition of socialism in the form of the Frankfurt Declaration. This was an important step in defining a socialist identity and restoring unity, but it did not cancel out other debates on the meaning and direction of socialism. One side identified socialism with the mixed, managed economy inside the nation state, the other with a supranational solution beyond the nation state (which was first identified with the Third Force and later with the European Union). This was a difference of emphasis rather than radical incompatibility, indeed Planners still supported international economic cooperation and Federalists still wanted planning at the international level. They simply had different assessments about the short-term and long-term strategy, depending on their concrete opportunities. However, disagreement over European integration would divide the European socialist movement until the end of the Cold War.

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115 Topic Modeling has thus served to confirm key hypotheses for socialist internationalism in the Cold War era: the marginalisation of socialists operating outside Western European liberal democracies; the demotion of Marxism in the debate about socialist revisionism; the division between Planners and Federalists; the building of a shared culture and language among Continental socialists on one hand and among Nordic and British socialists on the other. Confirmation of previous hypotheses rather than creating new ones is to be expected and proves the validity of the method, but it makes the use of quantitative text analysis in history less revolutionary than in other fields, as Fridlund predicted. On the other hand, topic modeling performed very well as an exploratory tool to describe and automatically classify the content of a large collection of documents. It is fair to assume that both testing hypotheses and data exploration could perform even better with a larger corpus.

116 This research has laid some ground for further analysis of political texts from the era of mass politics. I have stressed the importance of pre-processing to show that political texts in general and social democratic texts in particular had their own rules, which require a specific treatment. The choice of lemmatization could be particularly controversial and require additional reflection. Furthermore, social democratic texts require a specific list of ngrams before being analysed.

117 And yet, while all these issues involve theoretical reflections from traditional historians and experts of digital humanities, the main problem in developing quantitative text analysis for the Cold War era is exquisitely practical. Unlike political texts until the nineteenth century — available in digitised form on archive.org or Google Books — or recent political texts produced directly as digital, the mass of political documents from the mid-twentieth century does not exist in the digital form. Books, conference reports, party newspapers and journals still exist only on printed paper. The main exception comprises parliamentary debates, which unsurprisingly receive the lion's share of attention from digital historians. It is not even reasonable to expect a rapid digitisation of books and periodicals both for the cost involved and the issue of copyright.

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118 What made this article possible was that I have personally digitised the entire corpus. Its limitation — its small dimension — is also what made this analysis possible. Researchers cannot expect much digital history in this area unless external funds are secured to produce databases for both traditional and digital historians.

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Appendix 1: Corpus composition

```
SW.Articles ← read.csv(file = "Socialist World, List of Articles.csv", sep = ";")
ID.Essays ← read.csv(file = "Ideological Development, Essays.csv", sep = ";")
```

- 121** List of all the articles published on “Socialist World” — some were not included in the analysis. Editorial staff made up of Edith Loeb (German) and Edward Thompson (British).

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A data.frame: 55 × 5

ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Issue <chr>
SW11	A Message by the Rt. Hon. P.J.- Noel-Baker	Philip Noel-Baker	United Kingdom	June-August 1947
SW12	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	June-August 1947
SW13	An Indian Plan for socialism	Jayaprakash Narayan	India	June-August 1947
SW14	Czechoslovakia on the road to socialism	Anonymous	Czechoslovakia	June-August 1947
SW15	Canada and the CCF	David Lewis	Canada	June-August 1947
SW16	American labour trends	Philip Taft	USA	June-August 1947
SW17	The Dutch Labour Party	Koos Vorrink	The Netherlands	June-August 1947
SW21	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	September-November 1947
SW22	A new Socialist International	Max Buset	Belgium	September-November 1947
SW23	Italy – Political battleground	Anonymous	Italy	September-November 1947
SW24	The Bund – A Jewish socialist movement	Lujan Blit	Poland	September-November 1947
SW25	Correspondence	Anonymous	USA	September-November 1947
SW26	Britain meets the crisis	Anonymous	United Kingdom	September-November 1947
SW27	Social Democracy in Sweden since the war	Karl Fredriksson	Sweden	September-November 1947
SW28	The radical democratic party of India	V.B. Karnik	India	September-November 1947
SW29	Reviews	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	September-November 1947
SW31	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	December 1947- February 1948

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SW31	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	December 1947- February 1948
SW32	Finland since the armistice	Vaino Leskinen	Finland	December 1947- February 1948
SW33	The United States and socialism	Victor Larock	Belgium	December 1947- February 1948
SW34	Poland's Three-year plan	Anonymous	Poland	December 1947- February 1948
SW35	Socialism in Latin-America	Robert J. Alexander	USA	December 1947- February 1948
SW36	Imperialism – New Style	J.D. Krivine	United Kingdom	December 1947- February 1948
SW37	The Revival of German Social-Democracy	Erich Ollenhauer	West Germany	December 1947- February 1948
SW38	Reviews	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	December 1947- February 1948
SW41	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	March-May 1948
SW42	International socialist co-operation	Vilém Bernard	Czechoslovakia	March-May 1948
SW43	The Third Force	Oscar Pollak	Austria	March-May 1948
SW44	Holland's Economic position	G.M. Nederhorst	The Netherlands	March-May 1948
SW45	The Socialist Movement in Greece	A. Gregoroyannis	Greece	March-May 1948
SW46	Social revolution in Hungary	Anonymous (Vilmos Böhm)	Hungary	March-May 1948
SW47	Reviews	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	March-May 1948

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SW51	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	June-August 1948
SW52	The problem of the Ruhr	Leon Blum	France	June-August 1948
SW53	Nationalisation in Holland	G.M. Nederhorst	The Netherlands	June-August 1948
SW54	European unity and European reconstruction	Cerilo Spinelli	Italy	June-August 1948
SW55	Spanish socialists fight on	Rodolfo Llopis	Spain	June-August 1948
SW56	The last months of social democracy in Hungary	Antal Ban	Hungary	June-August 1948
SW57	Reviews	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	June-August 1948
SW61	Berlin - City of decision	News from Germany – SPD	West Germany	September-November 1948
SW62	International socialist planning	G.M. Nederhorst	The Netherlands	September-November 1948
SW63	Socialism and planning in Austria	Karl Waldbrunner	Austria	September-November 1948
SW64	Norway since liberation	Haakon Lie	Norway	September-November 1948
SW65	Denmark's economic position	Jorgen Paldam	Denmark	September-November 1948
SW66	Labour's Contribution to international understanding	Mark Starr	USA	September-November 1948
SW67	The high cost of occupation	Erich Labunde	West Germany	September-November 1948
SW68	The suppression of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party	Vilém Bernard	Czechoslovakia	September-November 1948
SW69	Reviews	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	September-November 1948
SW71	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	December 1948- February 1949
SW72	Labour's Colonial Policy	H.D. Hughes	United Kingdom	December 1948- February 1949

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SW72	Labour's Colonial Policy	H.D. Hughes	United Kingdom	December 1948- February 1949
SW73	French policy in Indo-China	Georges Brutelle	France	December 1948- February 1949
SW74	Berlin fights for freedom	Kurt Mattick	West Germany	December 1948- February 1949
SW75	Some aspects of Western Union	Jean Weiller	France	December 1948- February 1949
SW76	Austria's Economic Future	Karl Waldbrunner	Austria	December 1948- February 1949
SW77	Economic Development in Iceland	Gylfi Gislason	Iceland	December 1948- February 1949
SW78	Reviews	Editorial Staff	Editorial Staff	December 1948- February 1949

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table 2 Articles of Socialist World

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123 List of all the essays that were supposed to become the book “Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism”. The original essays were published in the internal bulletin of the Socialist International – “Socialist International Information” – and later translated into German and Italian.

figure 20

A data.frame: 9 × 6

ID <chr>	Author <chr>	Title <chr>	Journal <chr>	Date <chr>	Pages <chr>
ChristiansenID	Ernst Christiansen	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Denmark	Socialist International Information	4 January 1958	1–16
ElsterID	Torolf Elster	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Norway	Socialist International Information	5 November 1955	787–815
FreyhID	Richard Freyh	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Germany	Socialist International Information	19 January 1957	43–63
GaitskellID	Hugh Gaitskell	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Great Britain	Socialist International Information	24 December 1955	921–51
KautskyID	Benedikt Kautsky	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Austria	Socialist International Information	21 April 1956	265–85
OittinenID	Reino Oittinen	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Finland	Socialist International Information	5 January 1957	1–18
SeverinID	Frans Severin	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Sweden	Socialist International Information	31 March 1956	215–48
TexcierID	Jean Texcier	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in France	Socialist International Information	18 February 1956	105–35
ValianiID	Leo Valiani	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Italy	Socialist International Information	18 June 1955	401–20

show source code

table 3 Chapters of Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism

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A data.frame: 57 × 9

ID <chr>	Title <chr>	Author <chr>	Country <chr>	Date <int>	Decade <chr>	Bloc <chr>	Word_Count <int>	NewBloc1 <chr>
ChristiansenID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Denmark	Ernst Christiansen	Denmark	1958	1950s	Nordic	8256	Planners
ElsterID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Norway	Torolf Elster	Norway	1955	1950s	Nordic	12119	Planners
FreyID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Germany	Richard Freyh	Germany	1957	1950s	Continental	11237	Federalist
GaitskellID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Great Britain	Hugh Gaitskell	Britain	1955	1950s	British	15177	Planners
KautskyID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Austria	Benedikt Kautsky	Austria	1956	1950s	Continental	10306	Federalist
OittinenID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Finland	R.H.Oittinen	Finland	1957	1950s	Nordic	8806	Planners
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SeverinID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Sweden	Frans Severin	Sweden	1956	1950s	Nordic	16408	Planners
SW12	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editors	1947	1940s	Editors	3495	Editors
SW13	An Indian Plan for socialism	Jayaprakash Narayan	India	1947	1940s	Marginal	3177	Marginal
SW14	Czechoslovakia on the road to socialism	Czechoslovakia on the road to socialism	Czechoslovakia	1947	1940s	Leftist	2213	Leftist
SW15	Canada and the CCF	David Lewis	Canada	1947	1940s	Marginal	2684	Marginal
SW16	American labour trends	Philip Taft	USA	1947	1940s	Marginal	2413	Marginal
SW17	The Dutch Labour Party	Koos Vorrink	Netherlands	1947	1940s	Continental	1181	Federalist
SW21	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editors	1947	1940s	Editors	1227	Editors
SW22	A new Socialist International	Max Buset	Belgium	1947	1940s	Continental	1676	Federalist
SW23	Italy – Political battleground	An Italian Correspondent	Italy	1947	1940s	Leftist	2461	Leftist
SW24	The Bund – A Jewish socialist movement	Lujan Blit	Poland-Bund	1947	1940s	Marginal	1766	Marginal
SW25	Correspondence	A student of America	USA	1947	1940s	Marginal	492	Marginal
SW26	Britain meets the crisis	A British Correspondent	Britain	1947	1940s	British	2036	Planners
SW27	Social Democracy in Sweden since the war	Karl Fredriksson	Sweden	1947	1940s	Nordic	1921	Planners

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SW27	Social Democracy in Sweden since the war	Karl Fredriksson	Sweden	1947	1940s	Nordic	1921	Planners
SW28	The radical democratic party of India	V.B.Karnik	India	1947	1940s	Marginal	1762	Marginal
SW31	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editors	1947	1940s	Editors	927	Editors
SW32	Finland since the armistice	Vaino Leskinen	Finland	1947	1940s	Nordic	2762	Planners
SW33	The United States and socialism	Victor Larock	Belgium	1947	1940s	Continental	2090	Federalist
SW34	Poland's Three-year plan	A Polish correspondent	Poland	1947	1940s	Leftist	1539	Leftist
SW35	Socialism in Latin-America	Robert J.Alexander	USA	1947	1940s	Marginal	2078	Marginal
SW36	Imperialism – New Style	J.D.Krivine	Britain	1947	1940s	British	2065	Planners
SW37	The Revival of German Social-Democracy	Erich Ollenhauer	Germany	1947	1940s	Continental	2750	Federalist
SW41	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editors	1948	1940s	Editors	1599	Editors
SW42	International socialist co-operation	Vilém Bernard	Czechoslovakia	1948	1940s	Leftist	3316	Leftist
SW43	The Third Force	Oskar Pollak	Austria	1948	1940s	Continental	2551	Federalist
SW44	Holland's Economic position	G.M.Nederhorst	Netherlands	1948	1940s	Continental	1922	Federalist
SW45	The Socialist Movement in Greece	A.Gregoroyannis	Greece	1948	1940s	Marginal	1961	Marginal
	Social evolution in	A.Hungarian						

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SW45	The Socialist Movement in Greece	A.Gregoroyannis	Greece	1948	1940s	Marginal	1961	Marginal
SW46	Social revolution in Hungary	A Hungarian correspondent	Hungary	1948	1940s	Leftist	1675	Leftist
SW51	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editors	1948	1940s	Editors	1173	Editors
SW52	The problem of the Ruhr	Leon Blum	France	1948	1940s	Continental	1688	Federalist
SW53	Nationalisation in Holland	G.M.Nederhorst	Netherlands	1948	1940s	Continental	2510	Federalist
SW54	European unity and European reconstruction	Cerilo Spinelli	Italy	1948	1940s	Continental	4109	Federalist
SW55	Spanish socialists fight on	Rodolfo Llopis	Spain	1948	1940s	Marginal	2940	Marginal
SW56	The last months of social democracy in Hungary	Antal Ban	Hungary	1948	1940s	Marginal	1634	Marginal
SW61	Berlin - City of decision	Executive Committee of the SPD	Germany	1948	1940s	Continental	814	Federalist
SW62	International socialist planning	G.M.Nederhorst	Netherlands	1948	1940s	Continental	3377	Federalist
SW63	Socialism and planning in Austria	Karl Waldbrunner	Austria	1948	1940s	Continental	2047	Federalist
SW64	Norway since liberation	Haakon Lie	Norway	1948	1940s	Nordic	1705	Planners
SW65	Denmark's economic position	Jorgen Paldam	Denmark	1948	1940s	Nordic	1967	Planners

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SW65	Denmark's economic position	Jorgen Paldam	Denmark	1948	1940s	Nordic	1967	Planners
SW66	Labour's Contribution to international understanding	Mark Starr	USA	1948	1940s	Marginal	2383	Marginal
SW67	The high cost of occupation	Erich Labunde	Germany	1948	1940s	Continental	2175	Federalist
SW68	The suppression of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party	Vilém Bernard	Czechoslovakia	1948	1940s	Marginal	821	Marginal
SW71	Notes of the quarter	Editorial Staff	Editors	1948	1940s	Editors	712	Editors
SW72	Labour's Colonial Policy	H.D.Hughes	Britain	1948	1940s	British	3309	Planners
SW73	French policy in Indo-China	Georges Brutelle	France	1948	1940s	Continental	2500	Federalist
SW74	Berlin fights for freedom	Kurt Mattick	Germany	1948	1940s	Continental	1304	Federalist
SW75	Some aspects of Western Union	Jean Weiller	France	1948	1940s	Continental	2636	Federalist
SW76	Austria's Economic Future	Karl Waldbrunner	Austria	1948	1940s	Continental	1704	Federalist
SW77	Economic Development in Iceland	Gylfi Gislason	Iceland	1948	1940s	Nordic	2813	Planners

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TexcierID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in France	Jean Texcier	France	1956	1950s	Continental	14443	Federalist
ValianiID	The Ideological Development of Democratic Socialism in Italy	Leo Valiani	Italy	1955	1950s	Continental	10428	Federalist

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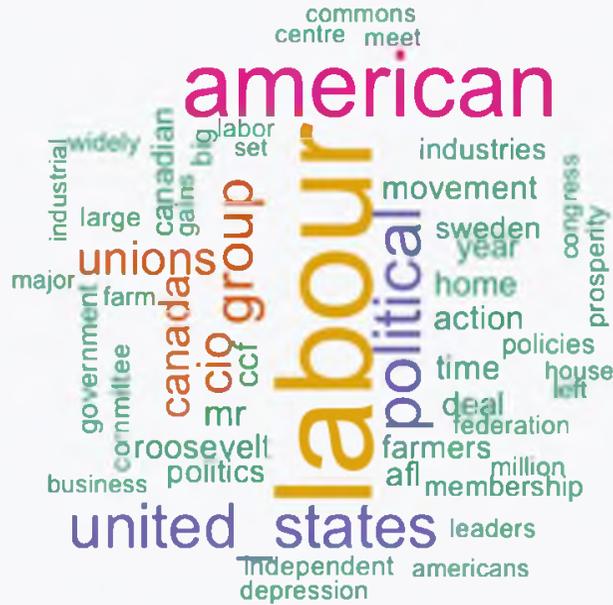
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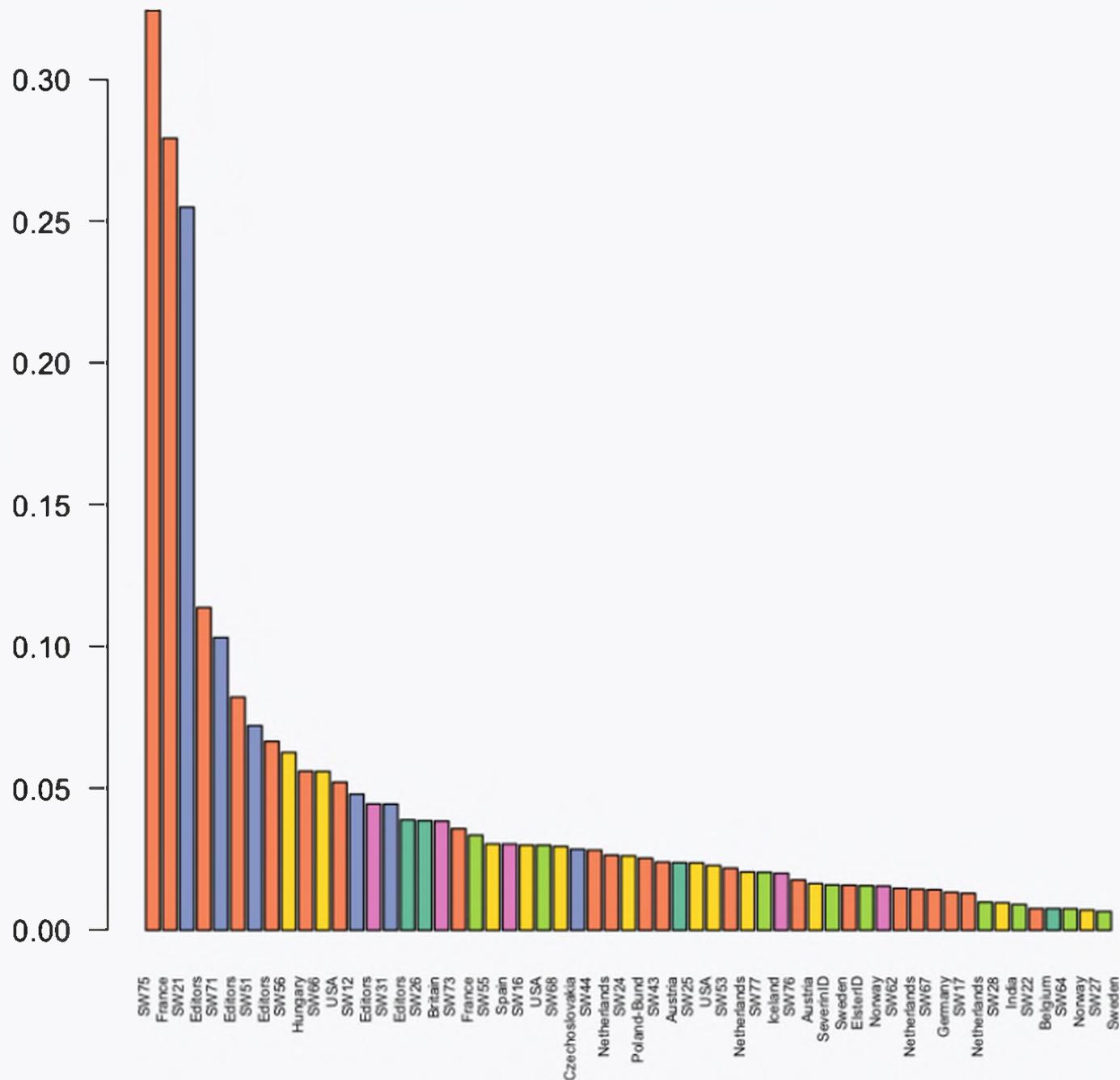
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Topic 1: Europe and Federalism



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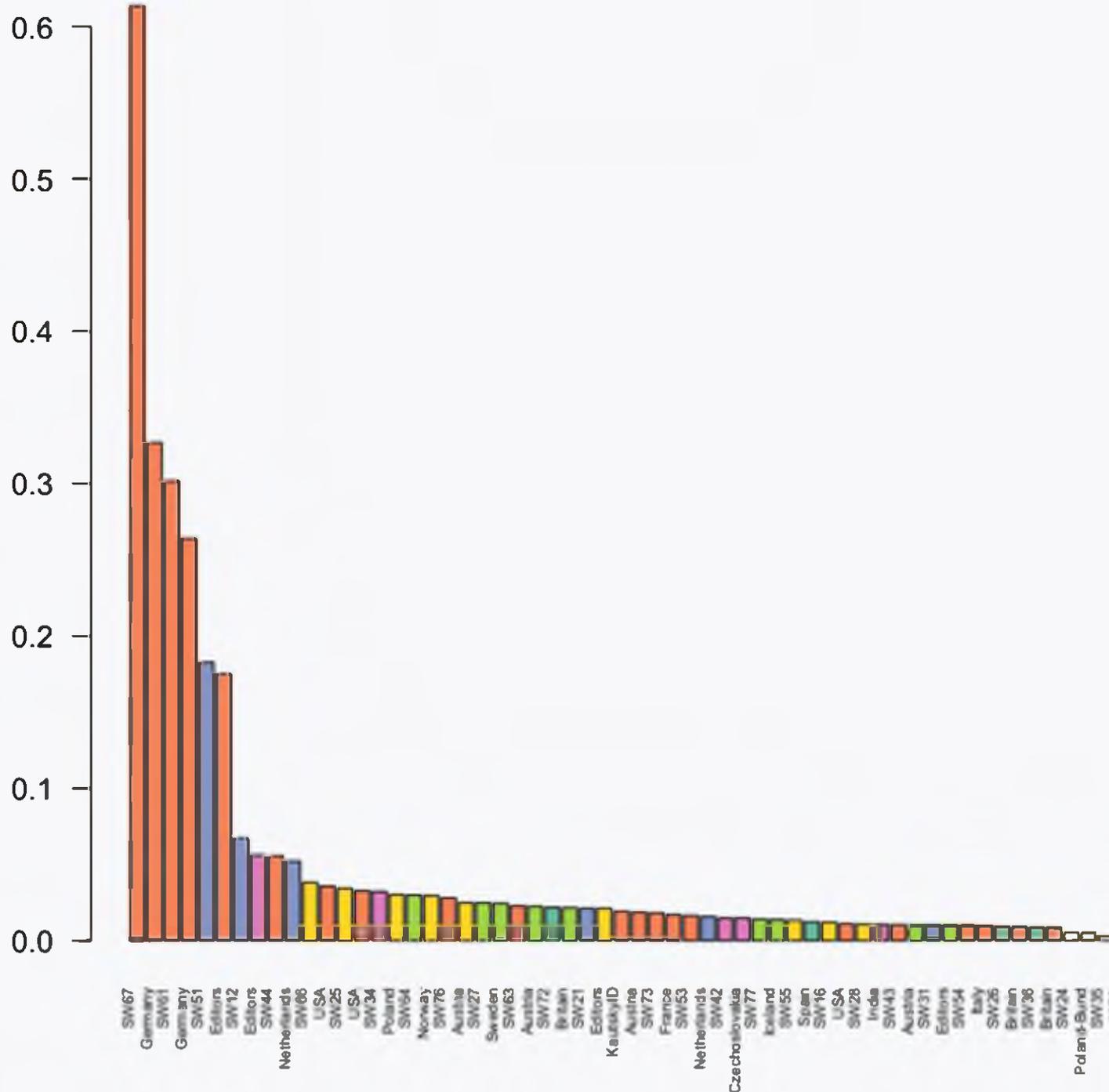
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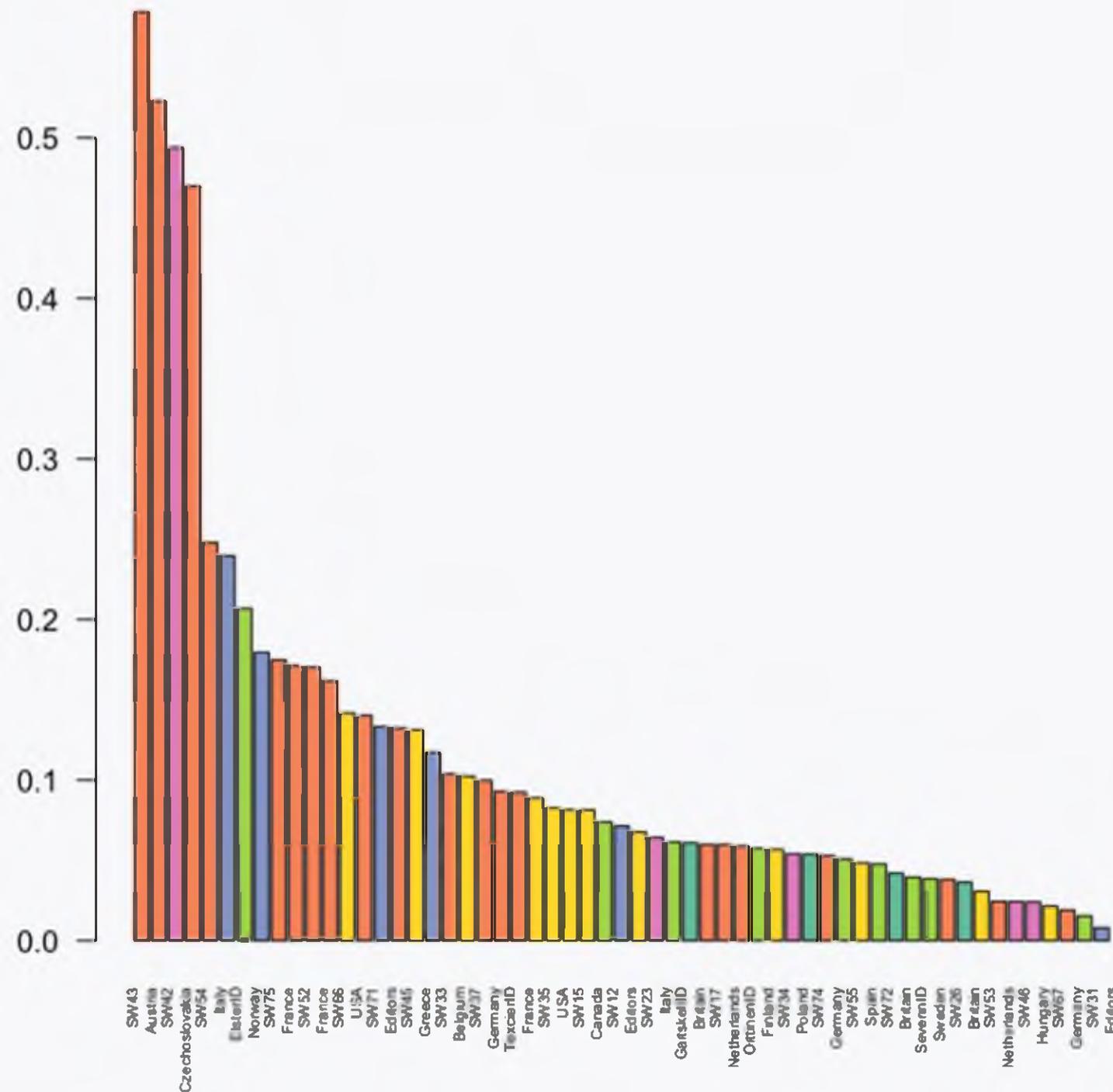
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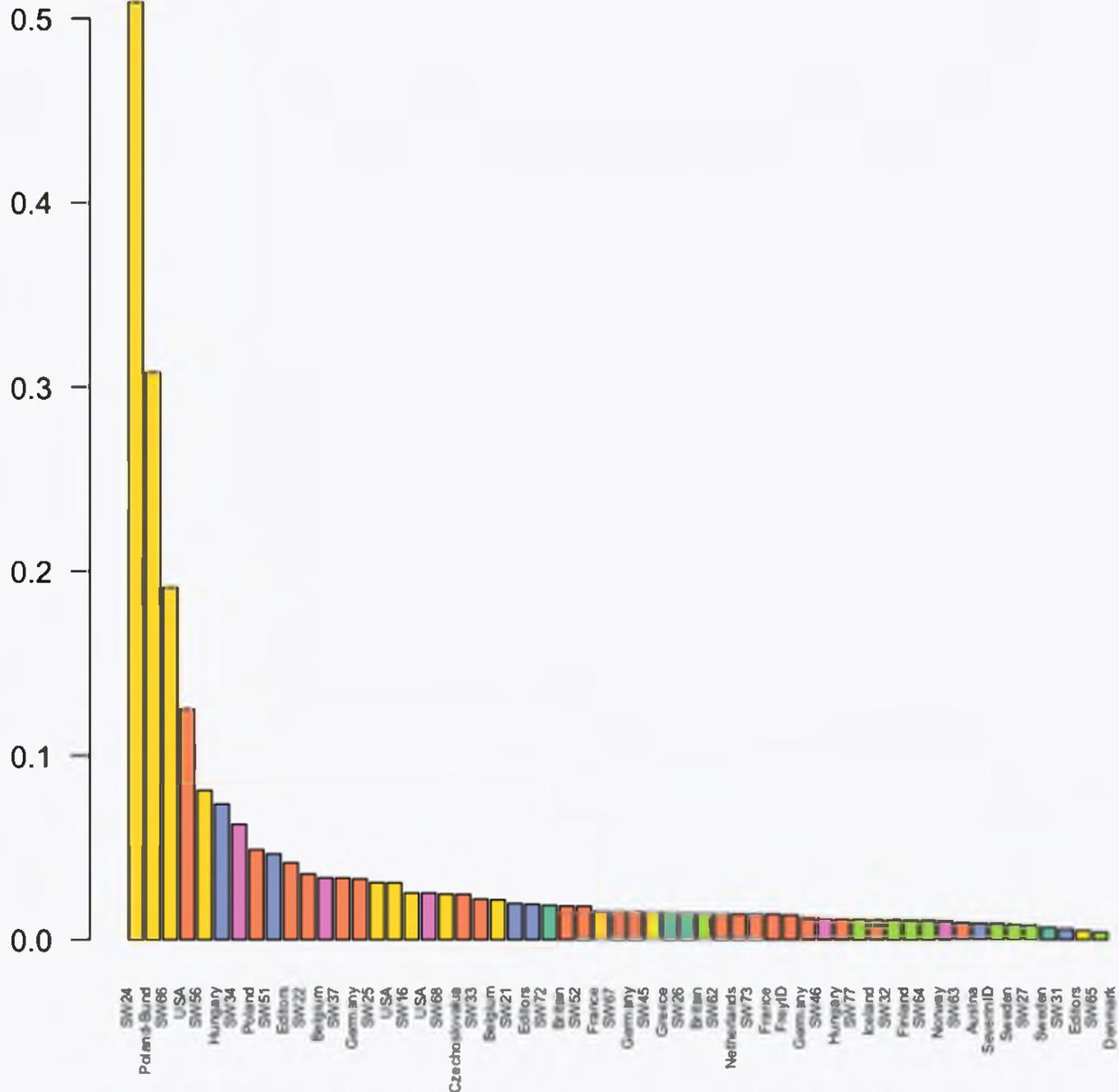
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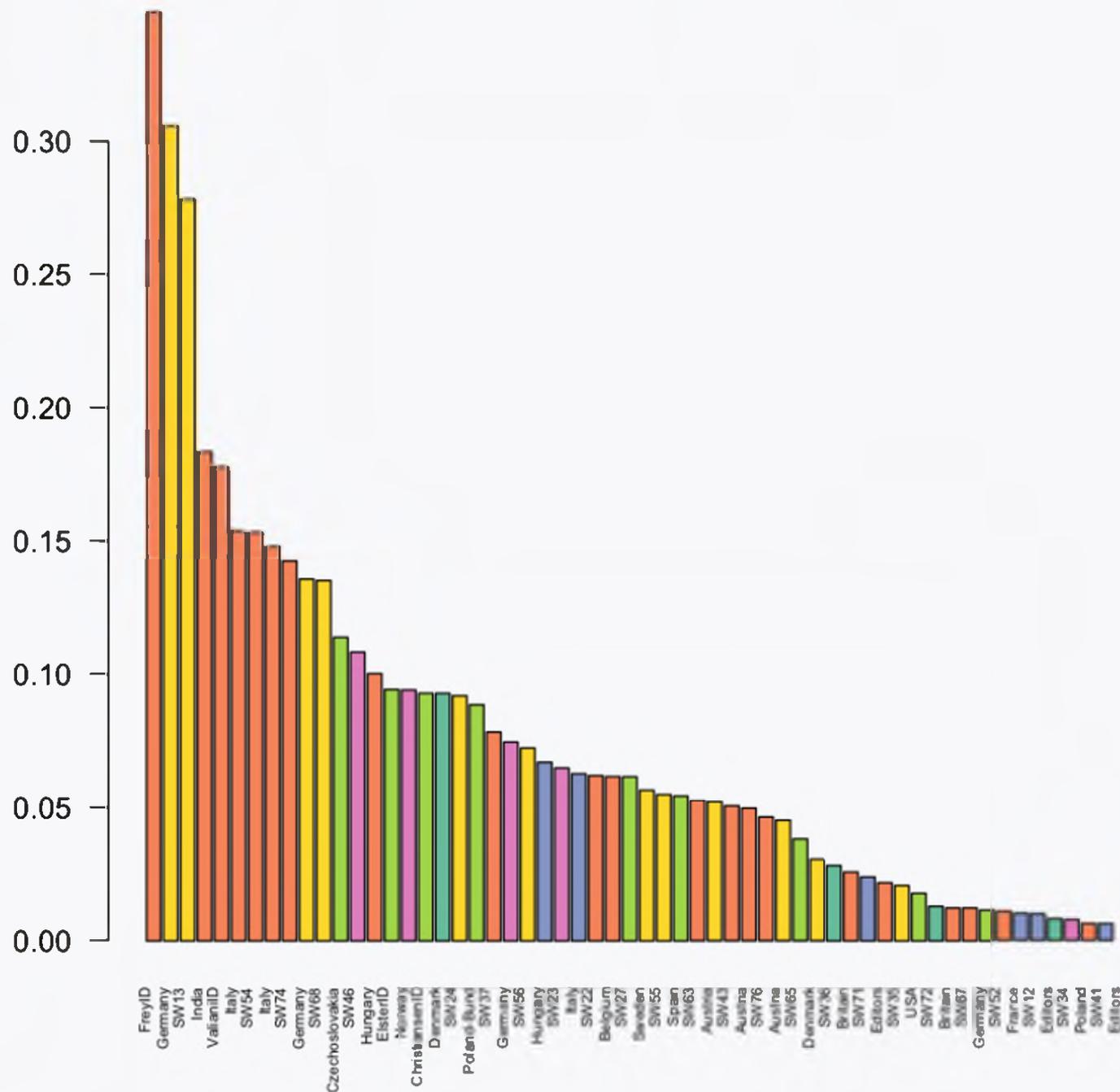
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Topic 5: Socialism (general)



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Topic 6: Austria

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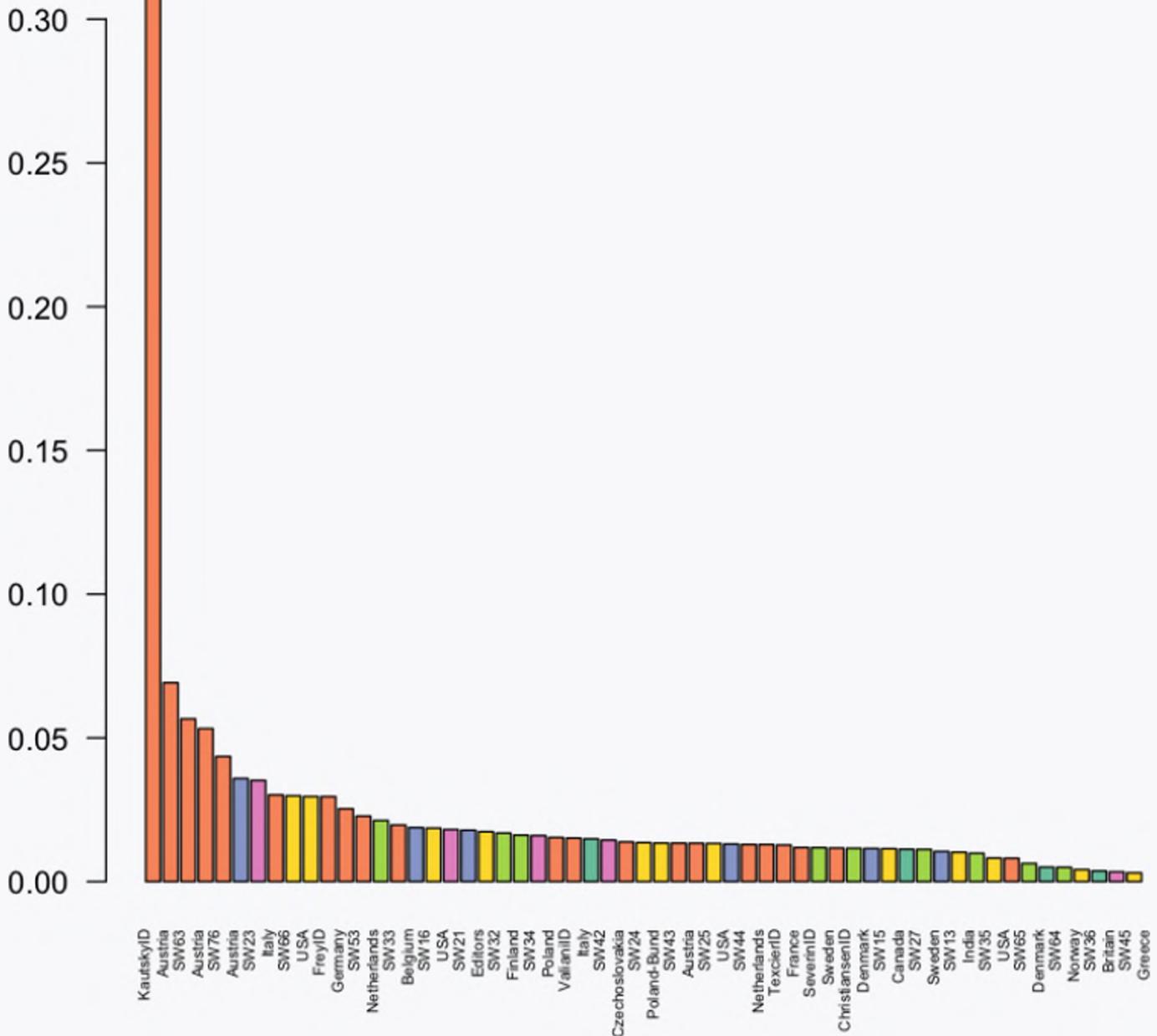


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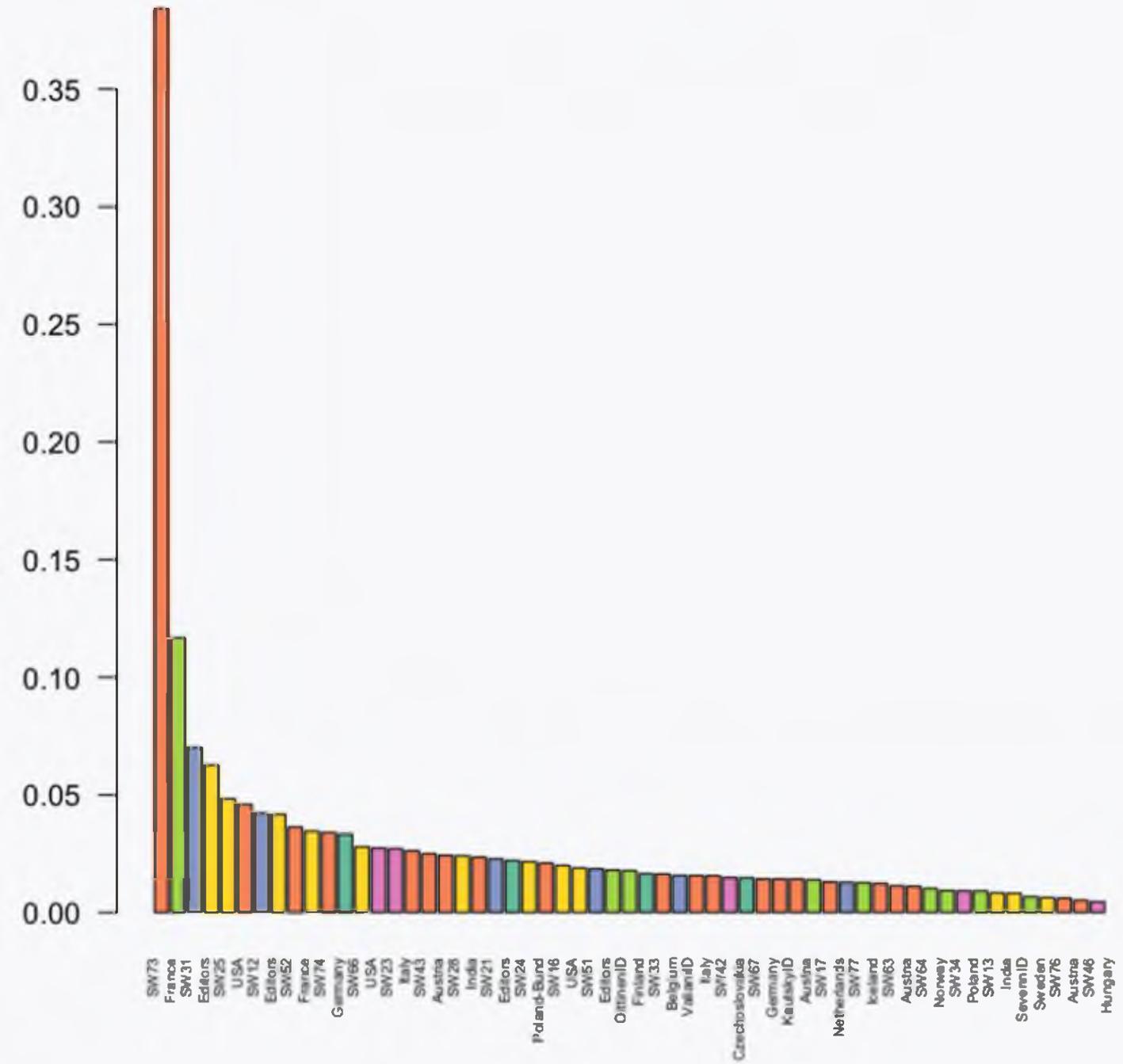
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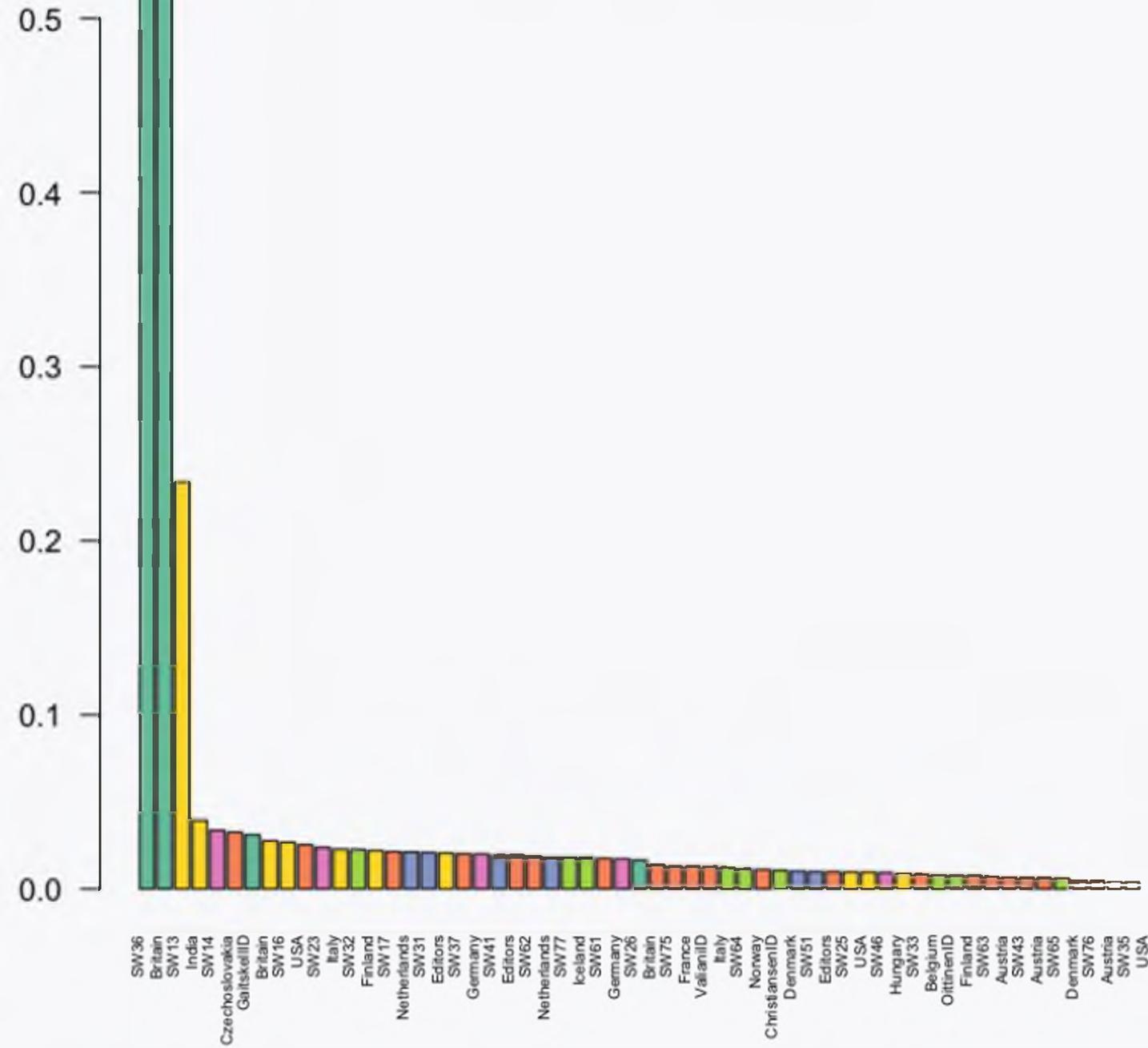
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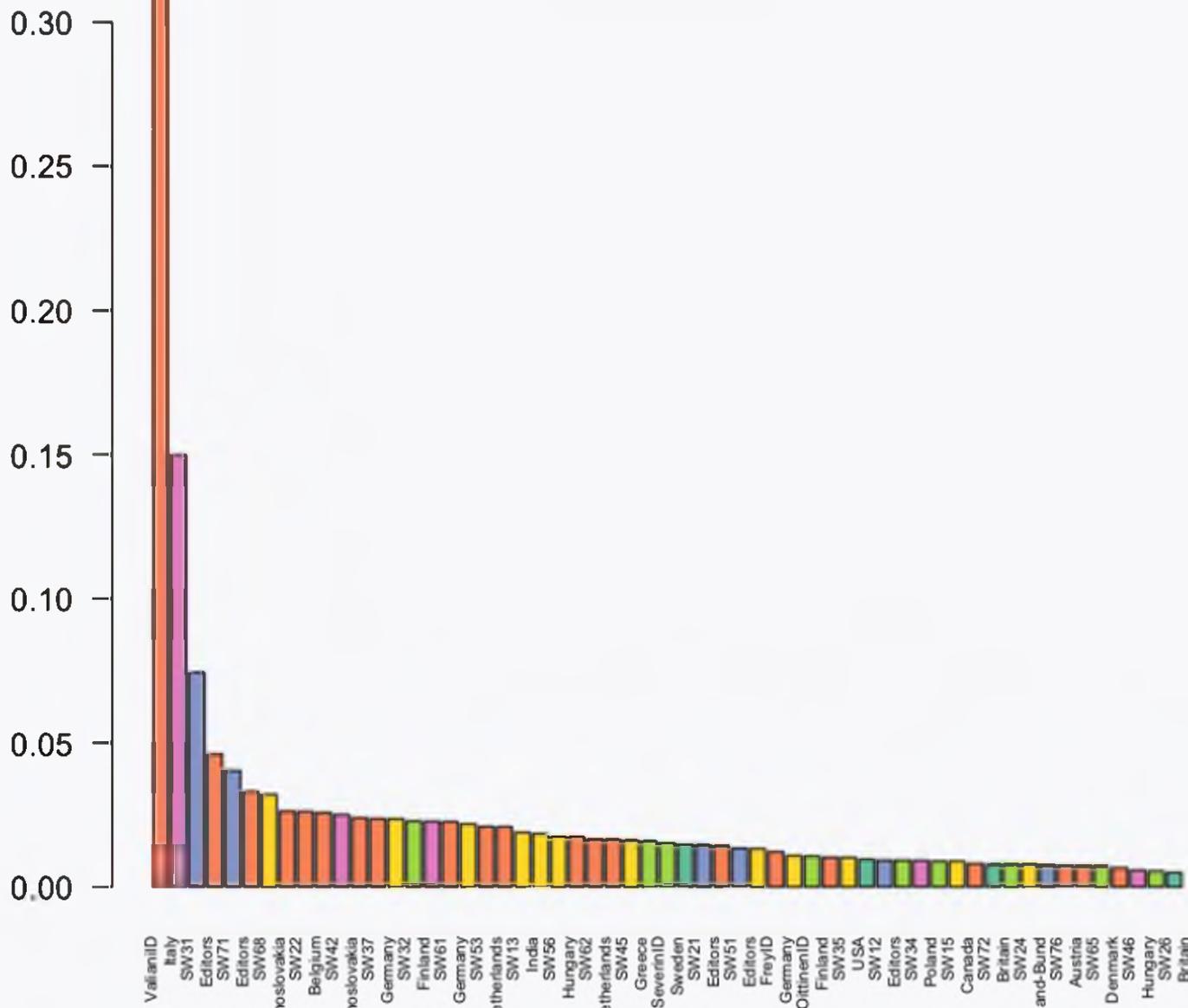
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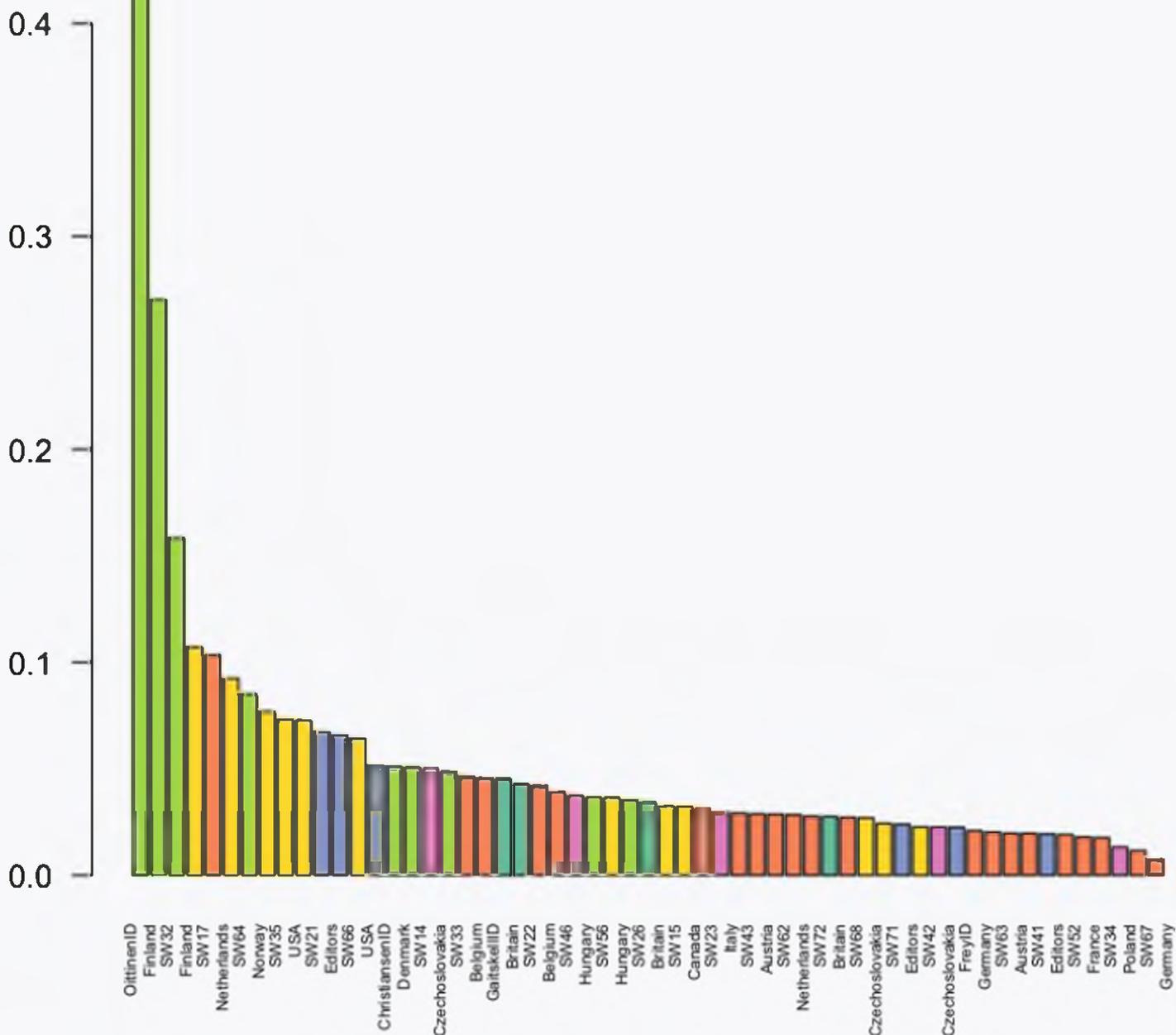
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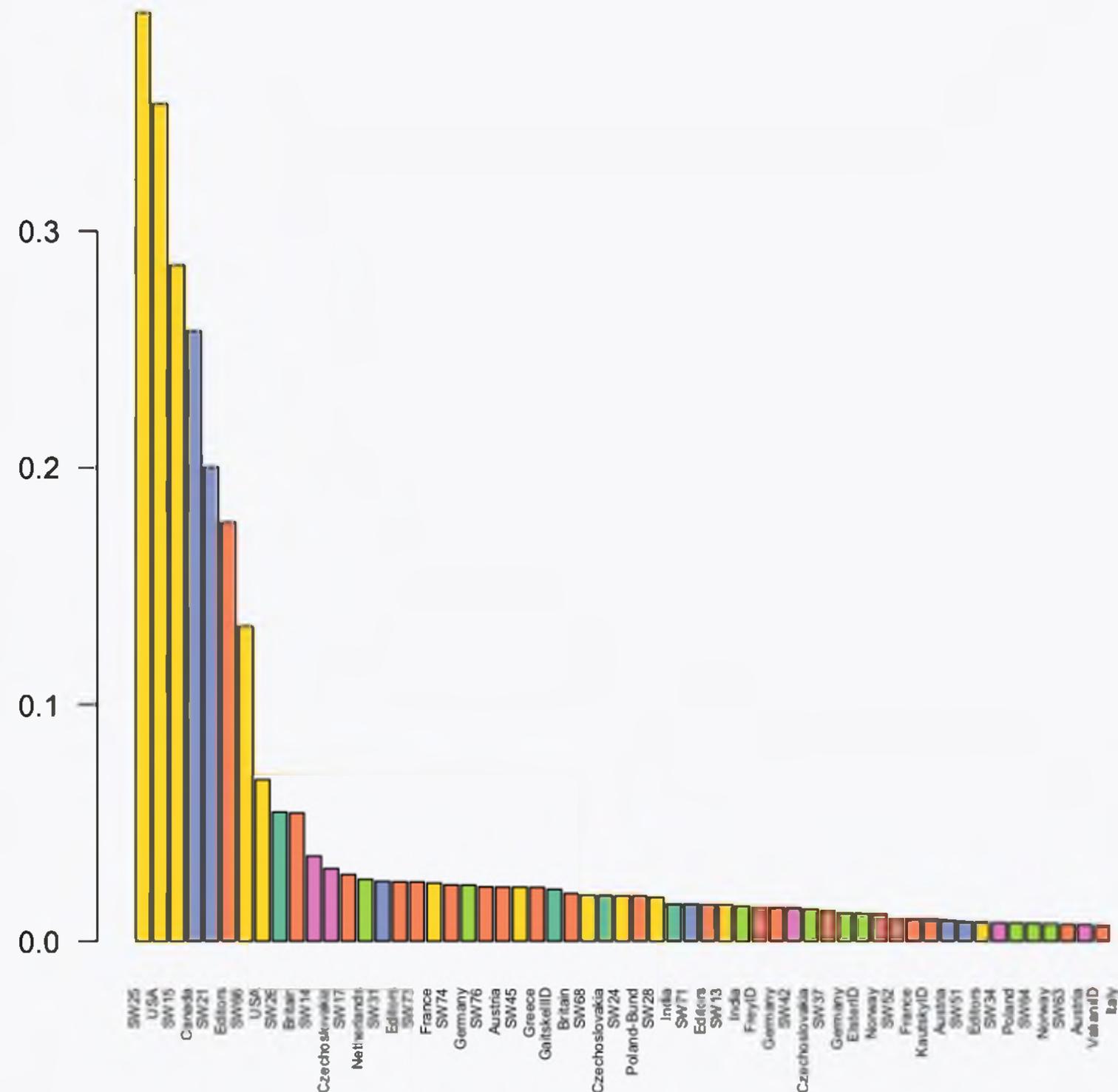


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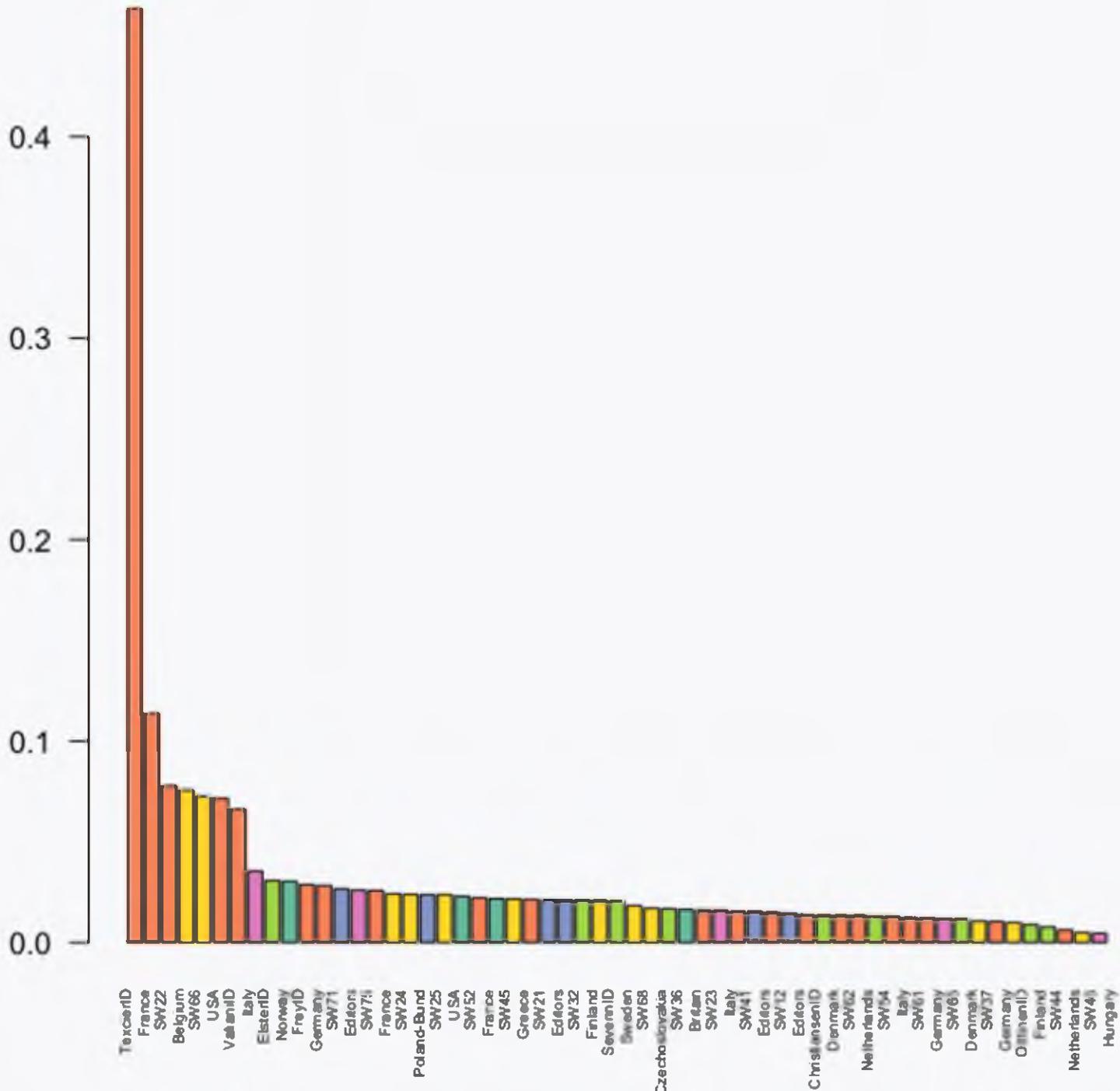
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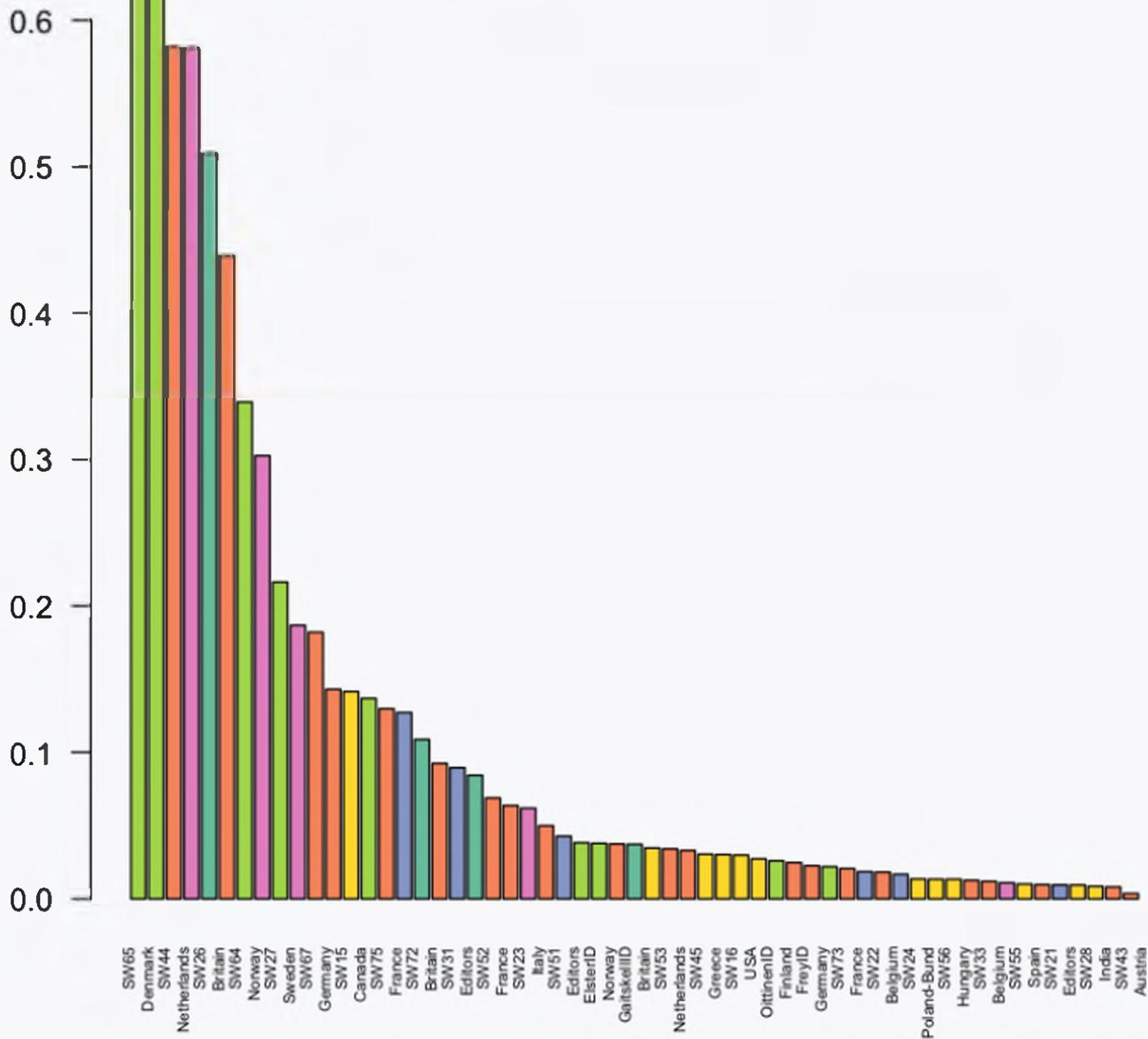
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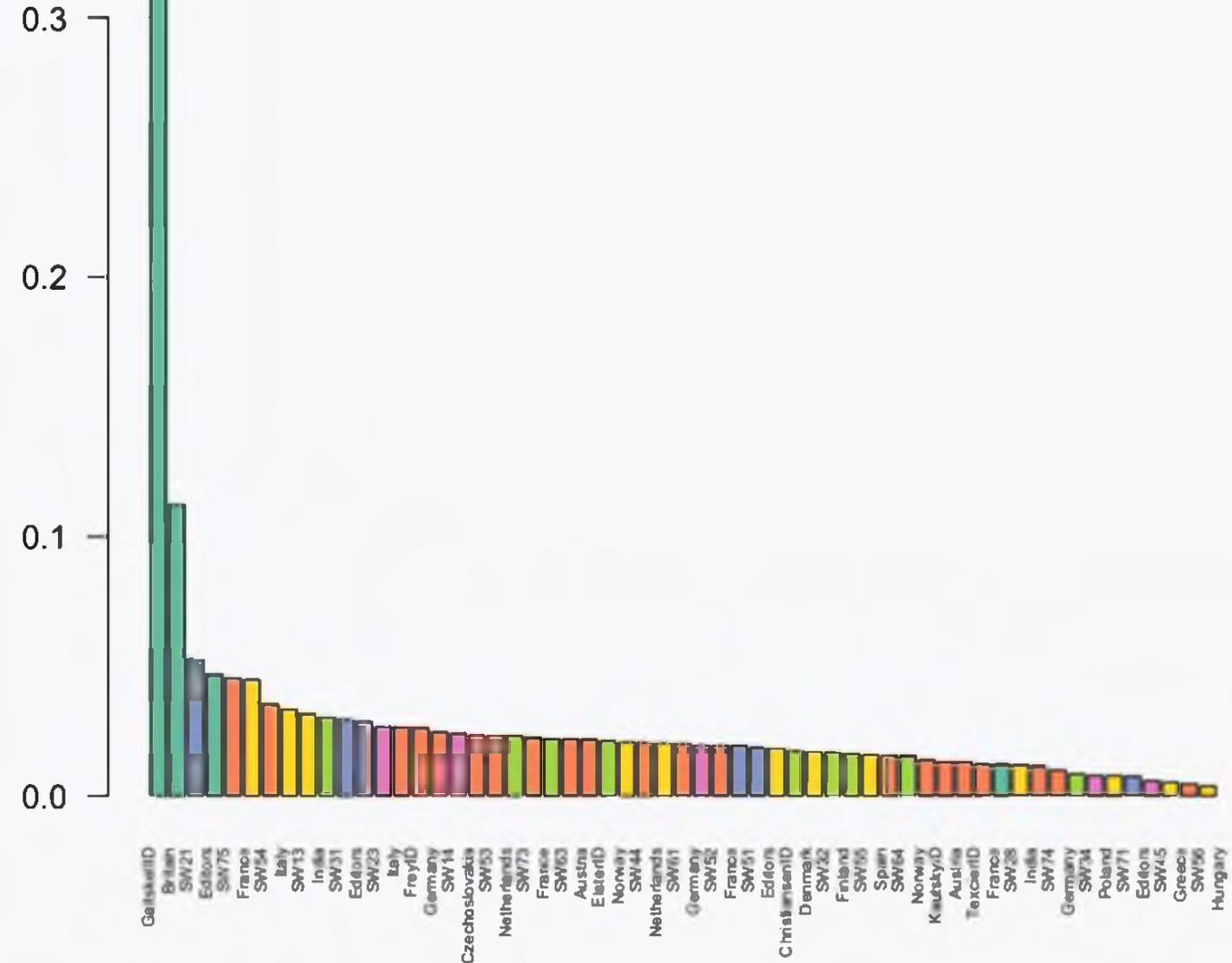


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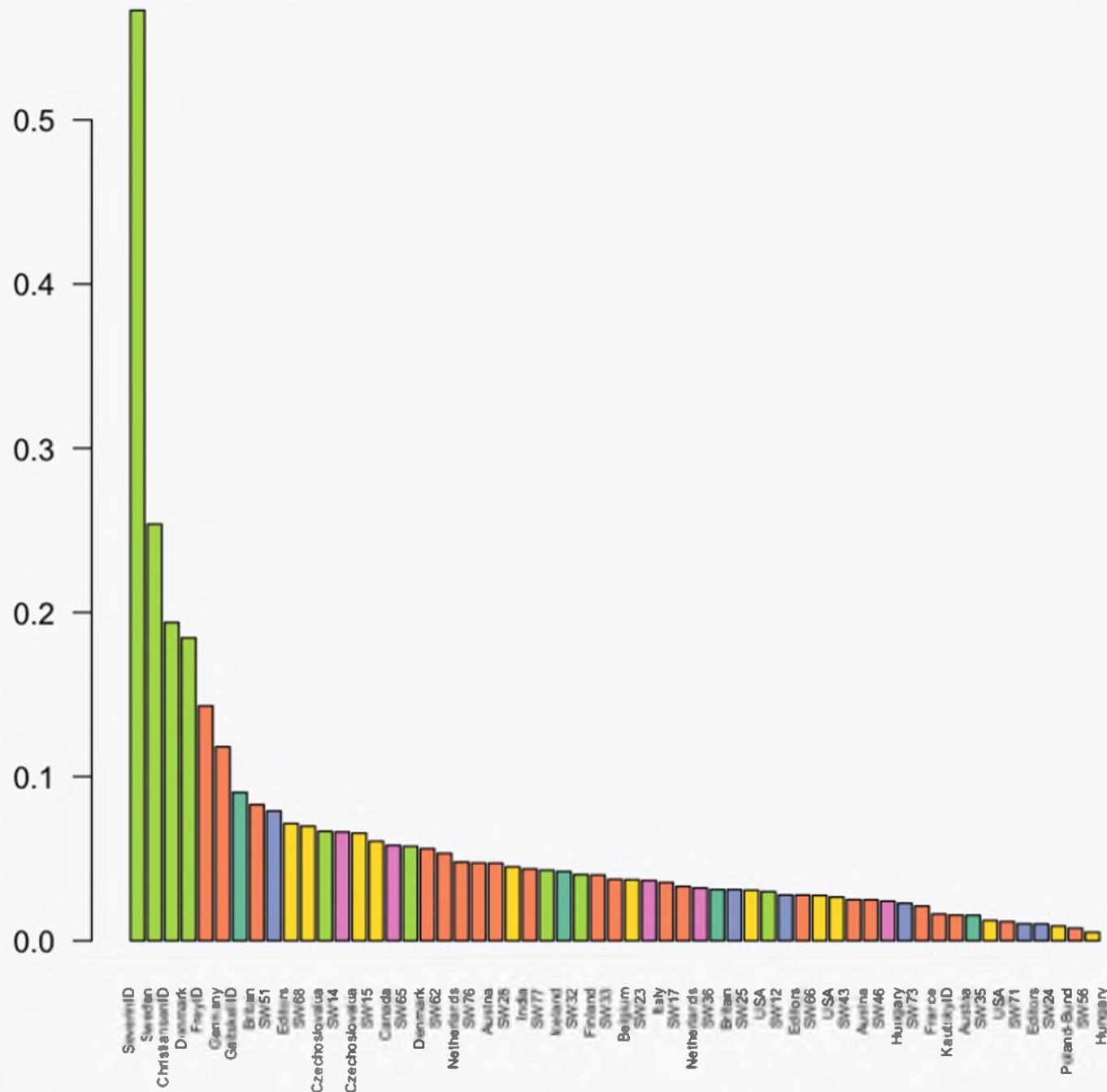
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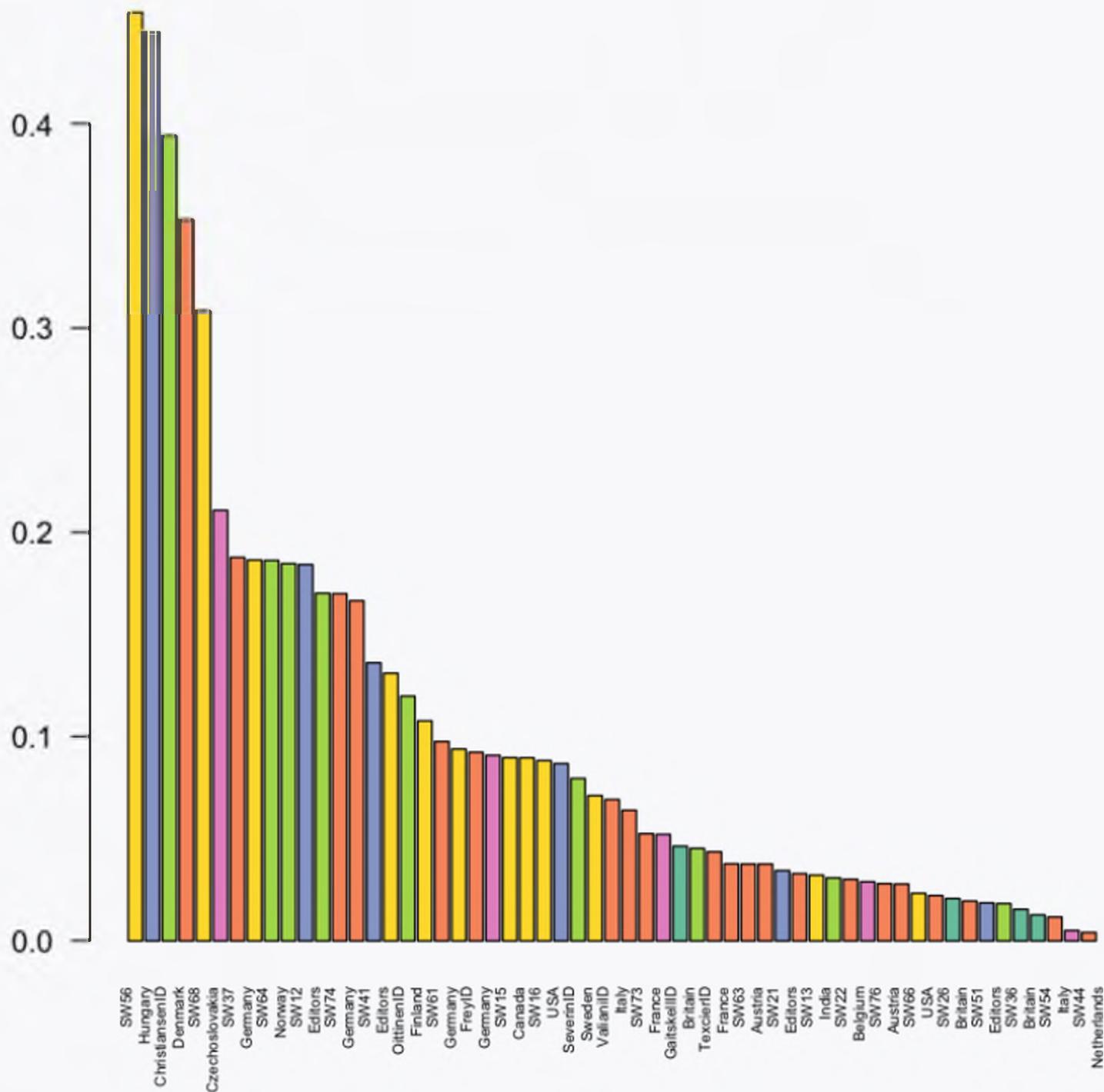
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Topic 16: Party affairs



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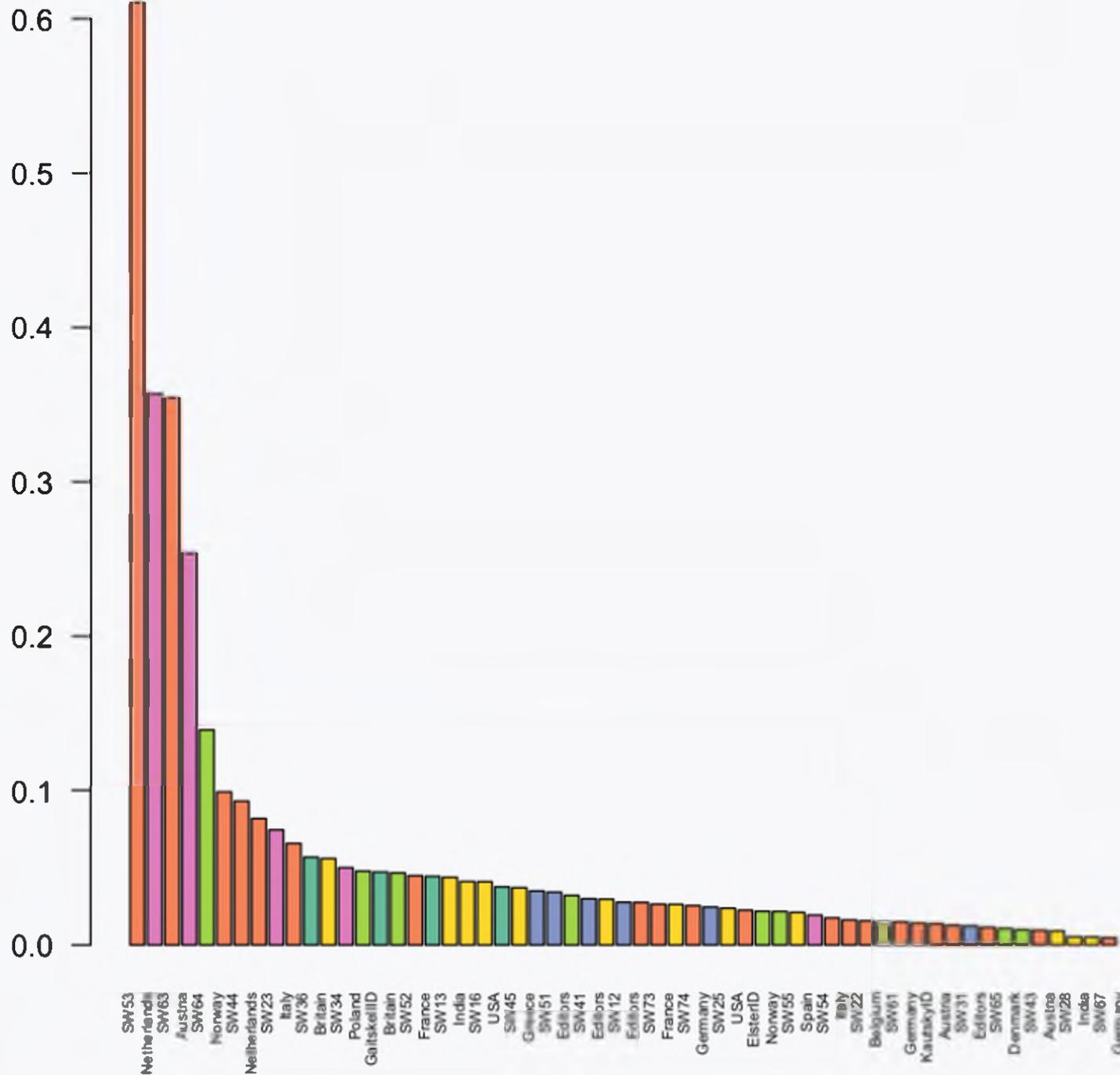
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Topic 17: Industry and mixed economy



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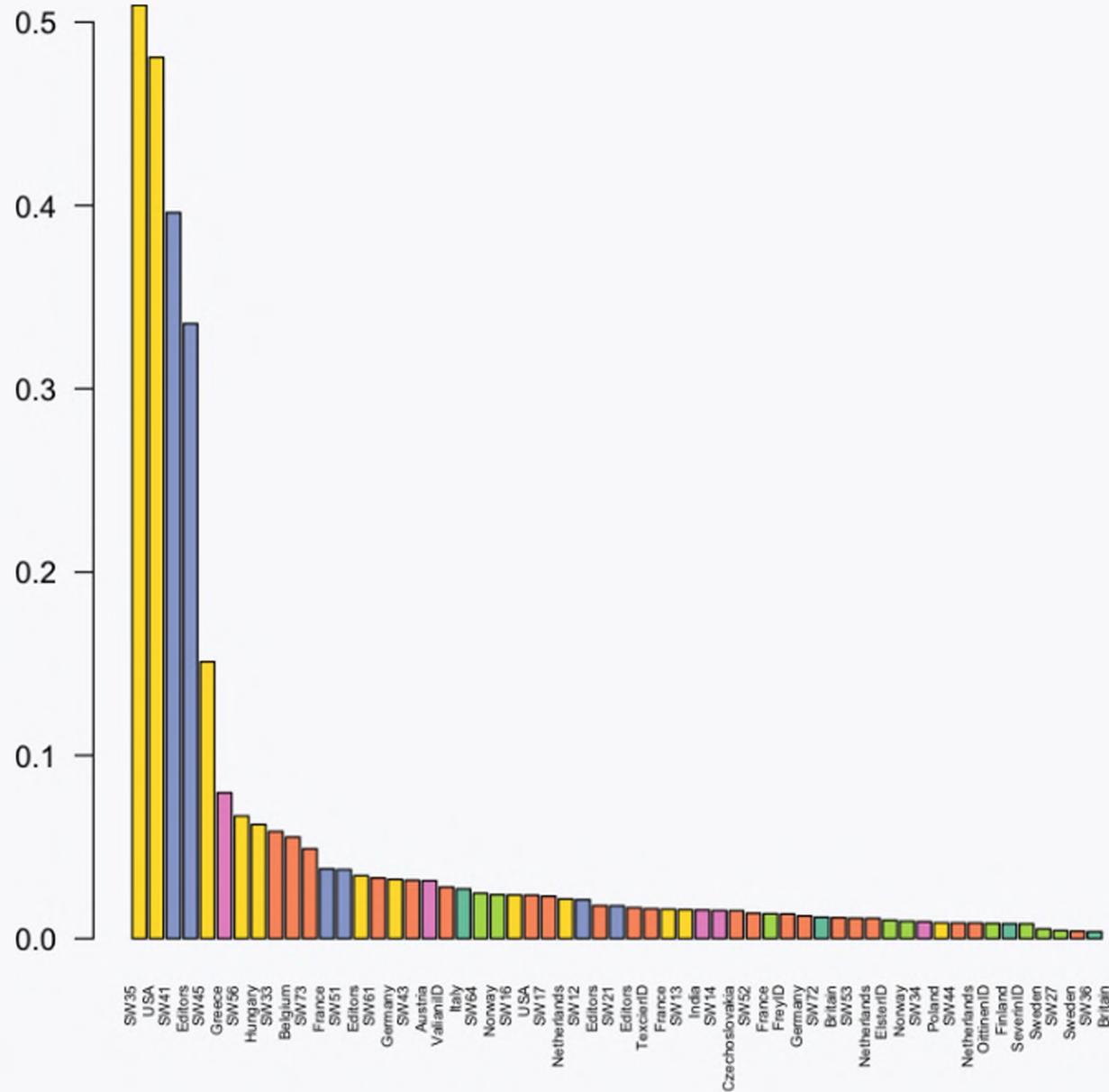
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Healey, Denis (2) Judt, Tony (2) Perazzoli, Jacopo (2) Adam, S. (1) show 59 more ...

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