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House of Cards or West Wing? Self-reported HEXACO Traits of Danish Politicians

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ABSTRACT

This paper is the first to explore variation in self-reported Honesty-Humility trait levels among politicians. In a relatively representative sample of Danish candidates (n = 239) for the national parliament, we find that more experienced, female, and more right-wing politicians self-report higher levels of Honesty-Humility. Comparing the self-reports of politicians to these of a community sample, we find that politicians self-report much higher levels of Honesty-Humility than ordinary citizens do. In addition to this, politicians self-report systematically higher on the HEXACO factors Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience, and lower on Emotionality. By and large, the latter findings replicate existing work relying on Big Five/Five Factor personality models. We end with a discussion on the relevance of self-reported personality traits of politicians.

1. Introduction

Would you rather have Frank Underwood (*House of Cards*) or Josaiah Bartlett (*West Wing*) as President of the US? Underwood craves power and prestige and [spoiler alert] cheats, brags, kills, lies, and bribes his way to the Presidency. Bartlett instead fights for policies, is modest, openly admits mistakes, and honestly concedes to voters that he "screwed" them. These two fictional politicians present two extremes of the Honesty-Humility personality trait, that is part of the HEXACO Model of Personality (Ashton & Lee, 2007): on the one hand the dishonest Underwood, on the other hand the honest Bartlett. Perceptions of this personality trait are highly relevant in politics. Voters appreciate sincerity and fairness in leaders (Boehm, 2001; Smith, Larimer, Littvay, & Hibbing, 2007; Van Vugt, 2006) and are disgusted by lying and cheating politicians. The question we ask here is: Do politicians differ on self-reported Honesty-Humility – from each other and from citizens – and, if so, can factors such as political ideology, gender and political experience account for these differences?

Several recent studies provide information about personality trait levels of politicians in the Big Five or Five-Factor model (FFM) framework using questionnaire-based data (Best, 2011; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Consiglio, Picconi, & Zimbardo, 2003; Dietrich, Lasley, Mondak, Remmel, & Turner, 2012; Hanania, 2017; Joly, Hofmans, & Loewen, 2018; Nørgaard & Klemmensen, 2018; Vecchione, Castro, & Caprara, 2011) or speech analysis (Ramey, Klingler, & Hollibaugh,

2016). These studies have mapped personality differences between politicians and citizens, as well as differences between politicians. The HEXACO model, which we use, is an alternative to the Big Five/FFM. The HEXACO model has been derived from recent lexical studies across more than ten languages (e.g., Lee & Ashton, 2008). It suggests that people's basic personality can be structured in six domains (Ashton & Lee, 2007). Specifically, the HEXACO model comprises three dimensions – Extraversion, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience (in the following: Openness) – which are very similar to their Big Five/FFM counterparts. Further, two HEXACO dimensions are rotated variants of their Big Five/FFM counterparts, namely, Emotionality (Neuroticism) and Agreeableness vs Anger (Agreeableness). Importantly, the HEXACO model comprises the dimension of Honesty-Humility, which is not included in the Big Five/FFM framework (Ashton, Lee, & de Vries, 2014). This dimension is characterized by sincerity, fairness, greed avoidance and modesty (Ashton et al., 2004; Lee & Ashton, 2010) and, as argued, is highly relevant in politics. Our study is the first providing information about self-reported Honesty-Humility levels among politicians. We do so by using a sample of politicians with an unusually high response rate (33.3%) and which is representative in terms of political ideology. Also, our sample contains politicians who were elected to parliament, as well as those who failed to get elected. This provides unique variation in political experience, which we use to test for differences in reported levels of Honesty-Humility and the other HEXACO traits. We end with a discussion on the relevance of self-reported personality traits of

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Table 1
Parties, number of candidates and survey respondents.

Parties	Rough categorization	N respondents	N candidates	% seats in election 2015
Unity List	Socialist	42 (48.8%)	86	8%
The Alternative	Green	21 (36.8%)	57	5.1%
Socialist People's Party	Socialist	33 (37.5%)	88	4%
Social Democrats	Social democratic	27 (30.7%)	88	26.9%
Radikale Venstre	Social liberal	25 (35.2%)	71	4.6%
Venstre	Conservative liberal	22 (24.4%)	90	19.4%
Christian Democrats	Christian democratic	14 (77.8%)	18	0%
Conservative People's Party	Conservative	11 (20.4%)	54	3.4%
Liberal Alliance	Libertarian	21 (28%)	75	7.4%
Danish People's Party	National conservative	22 (25%)	88	21.1%
Total		239 (33.3%)	718	

Note: Parties are sorted from left to right (own classification). Percentage of respondents is between brackets.

politicians.

In the next sections we will briefly review the existing work on (self-reported) personality differences between politicians, as well as between politicians and citizens.

1.1. Differences between citizens and politicians

Judge, Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt (2002) performed a meta-analysis on the link between leadership emergence and leadership effectiveness and the Big Five traits. They report a positive correlation between leadership and Extraversion ($r = 0.22$), Openness ($r = 0.16$), Conscientiousness ($r = 0.20$), and Emotional stability (i.e., low Neuroticism, $r = 0.17$), and a very weak positive correlation with Agreeableness ($r = 0.06$). In line with this, MPs from Italy (Caprara et al., 2003), the United States (Hanania, 2017), Denmark (Nørgaard & Klemmensen, 2018) and Germany (Best, 2011) also score higher on Extraversion than ordinary citizens, and – with the exception of Italy – score higher on Emotional Stability. Regarding the other three traits, the differences between citizens and politicians differ per country. It is unclear whether these differences stem from country differences, self-report biases, and/or reliability/validity issues that emerge in samples with low response rates or when using very brief personality batteries (Bakker & Lelkes, 2018). For self-reported Honesty-Humility, we have no a priori expectations regarding differences between citizens and MPs.

1.2. Ideological differences between politicians

Ideology correlates with personality at the level of citizens (Mondak & Halperin, 2008). At the level of MPs the evidence is more mixed. Best (2011) argues that German MPs are highly similar in personality and that only MPs from what he calls two "outlier" parties form exceptions to this rule: MPs from the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS, now: Die Linke) scored significantly higher on Neuroticism while MPs from the liberal-conservative Free Democratic Party (FDP) scored significantly lower on Neuroticism. Similarly, Nørgaard and Klemmensen (2018) report no significant correlation between ideology and the personality traits Openness and Conscientiousness among Danish MPs. They do report that left-wing politicians in Denmark are more agreeable than right-wing politicians. They also find that MPs from centrist parties score lower on Agreeableness and higher on Extraversion than MPs from non-centrist parties. For Canadian, Belgian, Italian and American MPs ideological differences do correlate significantly with personality: Italian center-right politicians scored higher on Extraversion and Conscientiousness than center-left politicians (Caprara et al., 2003). US Republican legislators scored higher on Conscientiousness (Dietrich et al., 2012; Hanania, 2017), but lower on Openness and Agreeableness than Democratic legislators. Joly et al. (2018) report that left-wing Canadian and Belgian politicians scored higher on Openness than right-

wing politicians. With regard to Honesty-Humility, no previous study has investigated the link between political ideology and self-reported levels of politicians. Generally, Honesty-Humility has been found to be related to lower Social Dominance Orientation (Lee, Ashton, Ogunfowora, Bourdage, & Shin, 2010; Leone, Desimoni, & Chirumbolo, 2012) and a more left-wing political orientation (Zettler & Hilbig, 2010), also in Denmark (Lee, Ashton, Griep, & Edmonds, 2018). Although one might thus expect a link between Honesty-Humility and a left-wing political orientation in community samples, we feel more comfortable by not specifying any a priori hypothesis concerning politicians herein, because no prior study has looked at self-reported scores from politicians.

1.3. Differences in experience and standing among politicians

Only one study analyzed this: among the German MPs top politicians scored higher on Extraversion than the backbenchers (Best, 2011). Especially in party systems with few personal vote-seeking incentives and strong party discipline, like our case Denmark, you might expect differences between the top politicians of a party and the backbenchers. The latter primarily need to follow the leader and not stand out in order to obtain promotions and reselection for the next election. The party leaders, however, need to be much more visible and thus require a different strategy. Perhaps this then also attracts different people with different personality profiles. Another consideration is that the experience of holding power might corrupt people. Some studies indeed report that when participants are primed with power in an experiment, they become more hypocritical (Lammers, Stapel, & Galinsky, 2010). This may also have an effect on the Honesty-Humility scores that are reported herein: Our sample includes both elected and not-elected politicians, which allows us to test how different levels of political experience impact on self-reported personality traits. But, again, we test this from an exploratory point of view.

2. Method

2.1. Danish politicians sample

Directly after the Danish national elections of 2015 all candidates (n = 798) for the Danish parliament (*Folketing*) were invited to participate in a survey. The survey is part of the Comparative Candidates Survey (www.comparativecandidates.org) and asks questions about the candidates' career, campaign activities, political preferences, and several background questions. A total of 239 surveys were completed (response rate = 33.3%). This is an unusually high response rate compared to Hanania (2017; 4%), Caprara et al. (2003; 10%), and Dietrich et al. (2012; 21%). Responses rates per party differ quite a bit, with a very high response rate for the Christian Democrats (77.8%) and

a low one for the Conservative People's Party (20.4%). A chi-square test of contingency tables fails to reject the hypothesis that in terms of party affiliation the sample of completed questionnaires differs from the full sample (chi square = 16.81, p-value = 0.08). However, excluding the Christian Democrats does make the sample representative (chi square = 10.77, p-value = 0.29). Table 1 reports the number of politicians per party in the survey and on the candidate list. In our sample 46 respondents were elected, and 193 were not elected. A chi-square test rejects the hypothesis that the ratio elected/non-elected politicians in our sample differs from the population of elected and non-elected politicians (chi square = 0.77, p = 0.38).

Denmark has multi-member electoral districts with open party lists. This produces an electoral outcome relatively proportional to party vote shares and a highly fractionalized party system with parties that have different mixes of economic left-right ideology and cultural progressive-conservative ideology. For example, *Radikale Venstre* is culturally progressive and economically centrist; the *Danish People's Party* is culturally conservative and economically left-wing; the *Liberal Alliance* is a classical, economically right-wing libertarian party but culturally more progressive than *Venstre*, the other liberal party. Traditionally, the two main parties of government in Denmark are the *Social Democrats* and *Venstre*. In sum, Denmark offers a party system with ideologically heterogeneous parties with very different experiences with government. Also, with *The Alternative* and to a lesser extent the *Liberal Alliance*, the party system contains two new parties. This may offer a more diverse mix of politicians than the more "established" party systems like in the United States.

In the survey after the election, the *Brief HEXACO Inventory* (BHI; de Vries, 2013), consisting of 24 questions (4 per HEXACO dimension), was added. For elite surveys it is important to be economic regarding the length of the questionnaire, and therefore only a very brief HEXACO instrument (and not, for instance, the HEXACO-60, Ashton & Lee, 2009), was feasible to administer. De Vries (2013) finds that – considering its brevity – the BHI is a relatively valid and reliable measurement of the HEXACO dimensions. The BHI has been available in English and in Dutch. We translated the English version into Danish, using the translation-retranslation technique (e.g., Brislin, 1980) with bilingual (English/Danish) translators (see Appendix A for items in English and Danish).

To confirm the fit of the BHI to the data we ran confirmatory structural equation models. All variables loaded on the relevant factors, except for the question 'I have to cry during sad or romantic movies', which unexpectedly had a negative (instead of a positive) loading on Emotionality. We thus omitted this item from the model and obtained satisfactory fit measures for the BHI model (RMSEA = 0.04; SRMR = 0.08, CFI = 0.95). In sum, all six dimensions of the HEXACO were reproduced and in all cases except Emotionality we use the 4 items of the BHI to calculate the factor scores. From the raw scores we subtracted 4 (the minimum) and divided by 16 (the maximum).[1] This rescales the variables from 0 to 1. We transformed data to allow straightforward comparisons between traits given that Emotionality was measured with one item less.

In our comparison between politicians we use the following variables: gender, ideology (left-right position, progressive-conservative position, and the extremity of the left-right position), age and political experience. These variables are taken from the candidate survey. Left-right ideology is measured with 8 Likert scales that measure economic policy preferences. We combined these questions into a single scale (Cronbach's α = 0.91, see Appendix B for question wordings). We added a variable measuring the extremity of left-right ideology, because on some personality aspects centrists politicians may differ from politicians with a radical position. For this variable we took the absolute distance between the left-right position of the politician and the center

of the scale. As sketched above, Danish politics is multidimensional. To evaluate the effect of this multidimensionality we use 7 Likert scales that measure politicians attitudes on questions such as the environment, immigration, crime and morality. Again, we combined these questions into a single scale (Cronbach's α = 0.8), which we labelled the progressive-conservative scale (or prog-con scale; see Appendix B). Political experience is coded as 1 if a respondent is now or has been in parliament, or has been a party member for > 9 years (the median value of years of party membership in the data), otherwise political experience is coded as 0. In our analyses we z-scale all the variables, except gender and political experience. Table 2 contains the descriptive statistics for these variables.

2.2. Community sample

To obtain a community sample students of an introductory course in Personality Psychology at a Danish university were asked to approach an acquaintance (e.g., friend, relative, roommate) who should fill out a personality survey, including both the BHI and a (pilot) Danish version of the 200-item HEXACO Personality Inventory-Revised (HEXACO-200; Lee & Ashton, 2006). The final sample (N = 211, 50% female[2]) ranged from 18 to 79 (M = 29, SD = 13) years and consisted largely of students (53%) and people working (33%). Importantly, the correlations between the BHI dimensions and their respective counterparts from the HEXACO-200 were relatively high, namely, r = 0.80 for Honesty-Humility, r = 0.74 for Emotionality, r = 0.80 for Extraversion, r = 0.76 for Agreeableness, r = 0.84 for Conscientiousness, and r = 0.78 for Openness. Similarly, we also asked students to provide observer reports (using the HEXACO-200) on their acquaintances, and the correlations between the (from the acquaintances) self-reported BHI dimensions and the (from the students) observer-reported HEXACO-200 dimensions were relatively high for each pair: r = 0.59 for Honesty-Humility, r = 0.49 for Emotionality, r = 0.52 for Extraversion, r = 0.50 for Agreeableness, r = 0.63 for Conscientiousness, and r = 0.59 for Openness. In contrast, the correlations between any BHI dimension and any other (i.e., not corresponding) HEXACO dimension were always lower: $|0.02| \leq r \leq |0.40|$ when comparing the self-ratings, and $|0.00| \leq r \leq |0.38|$ when comparing the self-reported BHI dimensions with the observer reported HEXACO-200 dimensions. In sum, these findings support the use of the BHI for assessing the HEXACO dimensions.

To compare the self-reports of the community sample to the sample of politicians we removed the 'I have to cry during sad or romantic movies' item from the Emotionality scale. Also without this item we obtained satisfactory fit measures for the BHI model in the community sample (RMSEA = 0.04; SRMR = 0.08, CFI = 0.95).

3. Explaining variation in politicians' self-reported Honesty-Humility scores

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics of politicians' self-reported Honesty-Humility and several covariates (see Appendix C for raw scores of the personality traits). The distribution of Honesty-Humility is strongly skewed to the right, with almost no observations to the left of the scale. This means that politicians score very high on self-reported Honesty-Humility. We also calculated the means of Honesty-Humility per party. None of the parties differs significantly from the mean score on Honesty-Humility. The *Christian Democrats* come closest to a significant difference from the mean (dif = −0.06, t = 1.67, Welch two-sample t-test). This is the only party that is not represented in parliament. The *Conservative Party* has the highest scores, although not significantly different from the mean. In sum, party affiliation does not

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[1] For Emotionality we subtracted 3, and divided by 12.

[2] Concerning the demographic information, only the valid cases (neglecting single missing data) are reported.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics of politician data.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Honesty-Humility	239	0.78	0.16	0.25	1.00
Emotionality	239	0.36	0.19	0.00	1.00
Extraversion	239	0.87	0.14	0.38	1.00
Agreeableness	239	0.60	0.15	0.12	0.94
Conscientiousness	239	0.69	0.17	0.19	1.00
Openness	239	0.75	0.16	0.19	1.00
Left-Right position	239	4.03	2.78	0	10
Prog-Con position	239	3.77	3.13	0	10
Female	239	0.30	0.46	0	1
Age	239	46.72	12.53	19	73
Political experience	239	0.55	0.50	0	1
Extreme position	239	2.46	1.61	0	5

systematically explain differences in self-reported *Honesty-Humility* among politicians.

Can other factors – like gender, age experience and ideology (see Table 2 for descriptive statistics) – explain variation in self-reported Honesty-Humility scores between politicians? Our regression model predicts only 4% of the variation in Honesty-Humility (n = 239, see Fig. 1 for a graphical presentation of the results, see Appendix D for regression table). The regression output indicates that political experience has a positive and significant effect (b = 0.29, t = 2.01). The difference between not-experienced politicians and experienced politicians is approximately 1/3 a standard deviation in Honesty-Humility (or 0.04 in the unstandardized Honesty-Humility measure). In sum, the more experience the more likely a politician is to self-report high Honesty-Humility values.[3]

We also find that female politicians self-report higher Honesty-Humility levels than male politicians. This, in fact, is the strongest effect: female politicians score approximately 0.35 standard deviation of Honesty-Humility higher than male politicians do. This difference between men and women is also found in samples of ordinary citizens (Lee & Ashton, 2018). We also find one weakly significant, positive effect of ideology: Right-wing politicians self-report somewhat higher scores on Honesty-Humility than left-wing ones, which is in contrast to results reported for civilians (Lee & Ashton, 2018; Zettler & Hilbig, 2010).

4. Do politicians differ from the ordinary population?

Table 3 presents the means of self-reported personality traits of politicians and citizens (see Appendix C for raw scores). Using Welch two-samples *t*-test we find that politicians on a scale from 0 to 1 have higher levels in Honesty-Humility (μ_{diff} = 0.12, t = 6.87), Extraversion (μ_{diff} = 0.13, t = 9.26), Agreeableness (μ_{diff} = 0.03, t = 2.06), Conscientiousness (μ_{diff} = 0.12, t = 7.11), and Openness (μ_{diff} = 0.08, t = 5.41), as well as lower levels in Emotionality (μ_{diff} = −0.1, t = −6.1). Remarkably, politicians self-report much higher scores on Honesty-Humility than ordinary citizens.

Politicians and citizens differ most strongly on Extraversion (almost one standard deviation in the distribution of Extraversion in both samples, as expressed by Cohen's d). This replicates existing work. Regarding the other traits findings are highly similar to the recent comparison of Big Five personality traits of Danish MPs and citizens by Nørgaard and Klemmensen (2018). The only difference is that we find that politicians self-report higher levels in Agreeableness than ordinary citizens, whereas Nørgaard and Klemmensen do not find this. However,

the difference we report is very small (Cohen's d = 0.19), and also note that the conceptualization of Agreeableness is different in the HEXACO model compared to the FFM.

5. Explaining variation in the other personality traits among politicians

Fig. 1 summarizes the results of six OLS regression analyses. In each of these analyses one of the HEXACO dimensions is the dependent variable (see Appendix E for personality trait scores per party). The independent variables are the same as before.

The effect of the economic left-right position of respondents is non-significant in all analyses. This is also in line with the Danish MP sample of Nørgaard and Klemmensen (2018). The cultural progressive-conservative position variable relates to self-reported low Conscientiousness and high Openness. Although earlier studies do not distinguish between an economic and cultural dimension of political conflict, these are similar to differences between left-wing and right-wing politicians in the Italian and American samples (Caprara et al., 2003; Hanania, 2017). Finally, ideological extremity relates to self-reported low Agreeableness and (somewhat) higher Emotionality.

As for the other covariates, we find an effect of gender for Conscientiousness and no effect for age. Experienced politicians self-report lower scores on Agreeableness and Openness to Experience than unexperienced politicians.

6. Conclusion

This paper finds that politicians self-report higher levels of Honesty-Humility than ordinary citizens. In particular, more experienced, female, and more right-wing politicians self-report to have higher levels of Honesty-Humility. This is the first study that analyzes Honesty-Humility among politicians. At the same time we replicate existing studies that found that politicians self-report higher levels of Extraversion and Emotional Stability than ordinary citizens do (Best, 2011; Caprara et al., 2003; Hanania, 2017; Nørgaard & Klemmensen, 2018). With this we contribute to an emerging literature that contrasts the (self-reported) personality traits of politicians and ordinary citizens, and explores variation in the (self-reported) personality between politicians.

But how valid are interpretations based on politicians' self-reports? Our study finds that politicians describe themselves as being rather honest and sincere, thus, more like Josaiah Bartlett and less like Frank Underwood. But to quote Frank Underwood: "After all, we are nothing more or less than what we choose to reveal." Consequently, politicians may be motivated to present themselves as having socially more desirable ("better") trait levels than they really have. And, indeed, our data indicate some support for biased self-reports: First, the politicians' scores on Honesty-Humility were highly skewed to high values (see Table 1). Second, some correlations between the HEXACO factors indicate that politicians' ascribe themselves socially more desirable trait levels across factors (e.g., a positive correlation between Honesty-Humility and Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness, see Appendix F).

On the other hand, for several reasons we do not think that our data provide conclusive evidence that the politicians' self-reports were (strongly) biased towards social desirability. First, the (s)election procedures that politicians undergo to reach the national level of politics may result in people with very similar personalities. Second, the intercorrelations between the HEXACO factors in the politician sample were not high in general (Appendix F), not higher as compared to the community sample (Appendix F), and not higher as compared to intercorrelations of Big Five factors in low stake situations (e.g., Hilbig, Moshagen, & Zettler, 2016). Third, the fact that female politicians report higher levels of Honesty-Humility is in line with previous research

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[3] When we restrict our experience variable to distinguish only between MPs (1) and non-MPs (0) we find a positive difference in Honesty-Humility scores using a *t*-test. This difference however disappears in the regression analysis.
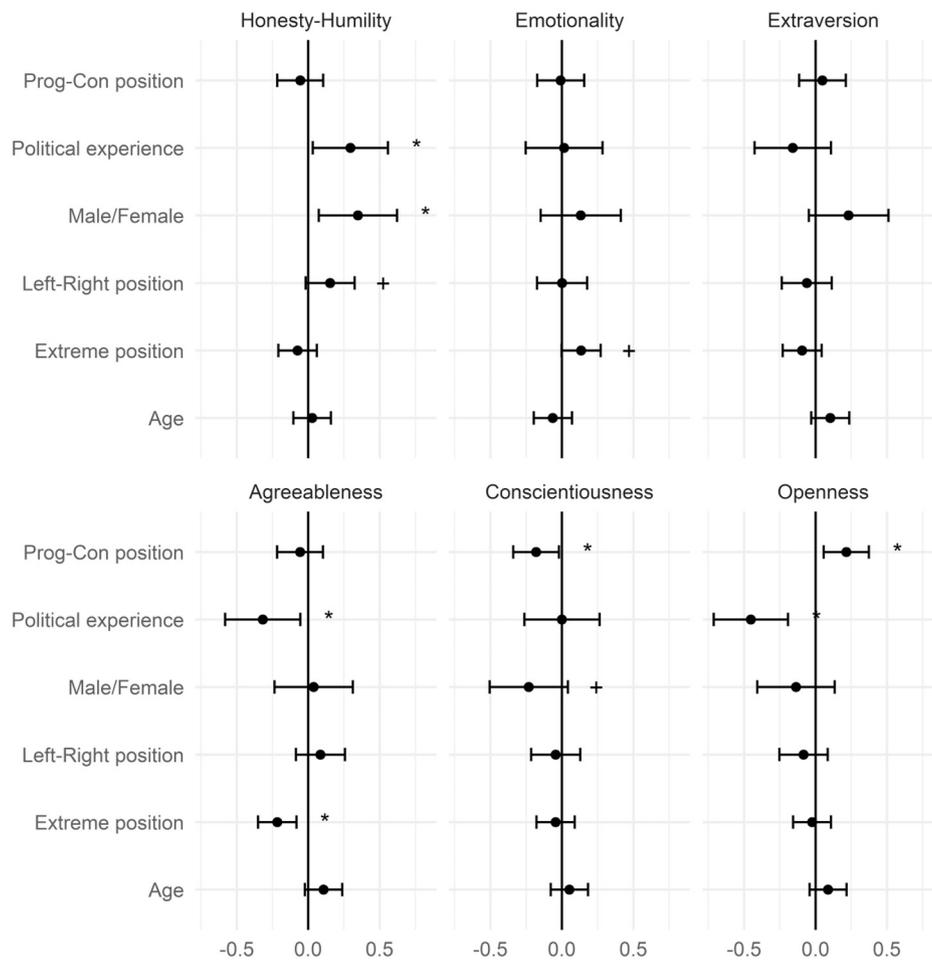
Fig. 1. OLS regression coefficients predicting the self-reported HEXACO traits. Each facet contains results from a single OLS regression with one of the HEXACO traits as dependent variable, and the variables in rows as covariates. The dot is the point estimate, and the line is the 95% confidence interval. * is p < 0.05 and + is p < 0.1.

Table 3
Means of self-reported personality traits of politicians and citizens.

Personality trait	Mean citizens (s.e) N = 211	Mean politician (s.e.) N = 239	Standardized difference
Honesty-Humility	0.67 (0.01)	0.78 (0.01)*	0.66
Emotionality	0.45 (0.01)	0.36 (0.01)*	−0.51
Extraversion	0.74 (0.01)	0.87 (0.01)*	0.88
Agreeableness	0.57 (0.01)	0.60 (0.01)*	0.19
Conscientiousness	0.58 (0.01)	0.69 (0.01)*	0.67
Openness to experience	0.67 (0.01)	0.75 (0.01)*	0.51

* A two-sample Welch *t*-test demonstrates a significant difference between politicians and citizen at p < 0.05. The standardized difference is Cohen's D, which divides the difference between the two means by the pooled standard deviation.

on populations at large (e.g., Lee & Ashton, 2018). Finally, self-reports of politicians have not always produced socially desirable outcomes. German MPs, for example, reported lower levels of Conscientiousness than ordinary citizens (Best, 2011). More broadly, one could question whether certain levels in a trait are automatically desirable for politicians. Caprara et al. (2003) found that people tend to vote for politicians who have a similar personality. That is, people high in Extraversion prefer to vote for politicians who are also high in Extraversion, but people low in Extraversion prefer to vote for politicians who are

also low in Extraversion. As such, it is not automatically clear what are desirable trait levels for a politician.

Irrespective of whether politicians' self-reports are biased by socially desirable responding (or the degree thereof), we believe that it is important to document self-reported personality traits of politicians. For one, if these self-reports reflect accurate self-descriptions of politicians, we have encountered a problem of democratic representation. This is, citizens do not agree with politicians' self-image as honest and humble. Danes – like most people in democracies – do not find politicians particularly trustworthy.[4] If, however, politicians deliberately report to have high levels of Honesty-Humility, then the variation between politicians is interesting. Why do female, right-wing and more experienced politicians report higher levels of Honesty-Humility? Is social desirability more important to them? Or do politicians' scores reflect a mélange of people who are actually high in Honesty-Humility and those who deliberately bias their responses in this direction? If so, future research should aim to disentangle the influence of substance and style (see, e.g., research on Impression Management Scales, Müller & Moshagen, n.d.) in politicians' self-reports.

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[4] According to European Social Survey Round 7 (2014) more than half of the respondents report a 5 or lower on a 0–10 scale measuring trust in politicians (high values reflect high trust). Although this might be due to the effect that most politicians are from a different party than a citizen supports.

Appendix A. HEXACO questionnaire as fielded in Danish with original English wording

Items (Danish first, original English wording below)	Trait	
1. Jeg kan se på et maleri i lang tid. I can look at a painting for a long time	Openness to Experience	
2. Jeg sørger for, at ting altid er på deres plads. I make sure that things are in the right spot	Conscientiousness	
3. Jeg forbliver uvenlig overfor nogen, som har været ondsindet overfor mod mig. I remain unfriendly to someone who was mean to me	Agreeableness	R
4. Ingen kan lide at tale med mig. Nobody likes talking with me	Extraversion	R
5. Jeg er bange for at føle smerte. I am afraid of feeling pain	Emotionality	
6. Jeg har svært ved at lyve. I find it difficult to lie	Honesty-Humility	
7. Jeg synes, at videnskab er kedeligt. I think science is boring	Openness to Experience	R
8. Jeg udskyder indviklede opgaver så længe som muligt I postpone complicated tasks as long as possible	Conscientiousness	R
9. Jeg giver ofte kritik. I often express criticism	Agreeableness	R
10. Jeg har let ved at tage kontakt til fremmede. I easily approach strangers	Extraversion	
11. Jeg bekymrer mig mindre end andre. I worry less than others	Emotionality	R
12. Jeg gad godt vide, hvordan man på uærlig vis kan kan tjene en masse penge. I would like to know how to make lots of money in a dishonest way	Honesty-Humility	R
13. Jeg har en god fantasi. I have a lot of imagination	Openness to Experience	
14. Jeg arbejder meget præcist. I work very precisely	Conscientiousness	
15. Jeg enes hurtigt med andre I tend to quickly agree with others	Agreeableness	
16. Jeg kan lide at snakke med andre I like to talk with others	Extraversion	
17. Jeg overvinder let problemer på egen hånd I can easily overcome difficulties on my own	Emotionality	R
18. Jeg vil gerne være berømt. I want to be famous	Honesty-Humility	R
19. Jeg elsker mennesker med mærkelige idéer. I like people with strange ideas	Openness to Experience	
20. Jeg gør ofte ting uden rigtigt at tænke. I often do things without really thinking	Conscientiousness	R
21. Selv når jeg bliver behandlet dårligt, forbliver jeg rolig. Even when I'm treated badly, I remain calm	Agreeableness	
22. Jeg er sjældent veloplagt. I am seldom cheerful	Extraversion	R
23. Jeg fælder en tåre, når jeg ser sørgelige eller romantiske film. I have to cry during sad or romantic movies	Emotionality	
24. Jeg har krav på sæbehandling. I am entitled to special treatment	Honesty-Humility	R

R = reversed coded.

Appendix B. Questions used for left-right and progressive-conservative scales

Economic left-right scale	Cultural progressive-conservative scale
It was incorrect to shorten the unemployment benefit period	Immigration is a serious threat to Danish culture
We should strive for equal economic conditions for everyone regardless of education	It is necessary to open the limits for import of qualified personnel
The government should refrain from interfering with the economy	Women should have priority when looking for a job and for promotion
High income should be taxed harder than the case is today	Violent crimes should be punished much harder than they are today
Too many people receive social benefits without having to do anything in exchange	Efforts to improve the environment must not harm business
Economic inequality benefits society	The environment should be protected by stronger measures
Many public tasks will be carried out better and cheaper if left to private institutions	I feel as much as a European as Danish
It should be a political priority to ensure a social safety net for everybody	

Note: For each question there were 5 answer categories (fully agree to fully disagree).

Appendix C. Means of raw scores of self-reported personality traits of politicians and citizens

Personality trait	Mean citizens (s.e.) N = 211	Mean politician (s.e.) N = 239	Standardized difference
Honesty-Humility	14.69	16.54*	0.66
Emotionality	8.44	7.35*	−0.51
Extraversion	15.91	17.94*	0.88
Agreeableness	13.1	13.54*	0.19
Conscientiousness	13.25	15.1*	0.67
Openness to experience	14.72	16.02*	0.51

  * A two-sample Welch t-test demonstrates a significant difference between politicians and citizen at $p < 0.05$. The standardized difference is Cohen's D, which divides the difference between the two means by the pooled standard deviation. All variables expect emotionality have 4 as minimum and 20 as maximum score. Emotionality only has three items, with 3 as minimum and 15 as maximum.

Appendix D. OLS regression table predicting self-reported Honesty-Humility of politicians

|	Dependent variable
	Honesty-Humility
Left-Right position	0.157*
	(0.087)
Prog-Con position	−0.059
	(0.082)
Female	0.347**
	(0.139)
Age	0.029
	(0.067)
Political experience	0.270**
	(0.134)
Extreme position	−0.076
	(0.068)
Constant	−0.258**
	(0.106)
Observations	239
R^2	0.065
Adjusted R^2	0.041***
Residual Std. error	0.979 (df = 232)
F statistic	2.701** (df = 6; 232)

  * $p < 0.1$.
  ** $p < 0.05$.
  *** $p < 0.01$.

Appendix E. Personality traits per party

Here we inspect whether there is variation among self-reports of politicians of different parties. We have plotted the average score on each trait per party. Politicians from *Unity List* differ most frequently from the mean: they self-report lower levels in Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and higher levels in Emotionality. *Liberal Alliance* politicians self-report higher levels in Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. *Danish People's Party* politicians self-report higher on Conscientiousness and *Social Democrats* self-report lower on Emotionality. Finally, unsurprisingly for a party with a strongly progressive platform, politicians from *The Alternative* self-report higher scores on Openness. Like Best (2011), deviations from the mean are most common with outlier parties such as *Unity List*, *Liberal Alliance* and *The Alternative*. Only with regard to Conscientiousness, deviations from the mean follow a pattern that is similar to results from the United States (Hanania, 2017). That is, the more right-wing parties self-report higher scores, and the most left-wing self-report lowest scores. The party level, however, is perhaps not the most interesting one, because ideological differences are sometimes stronger within parties than between-parties. For example, in our data there are no significant differences in left-right position between politicians from the *Danish People's Party*, *Venstre* (the Liberal Party), and the *Liberal Alliance*. Therefore, it seems more relevant to check for individual ideological differences.
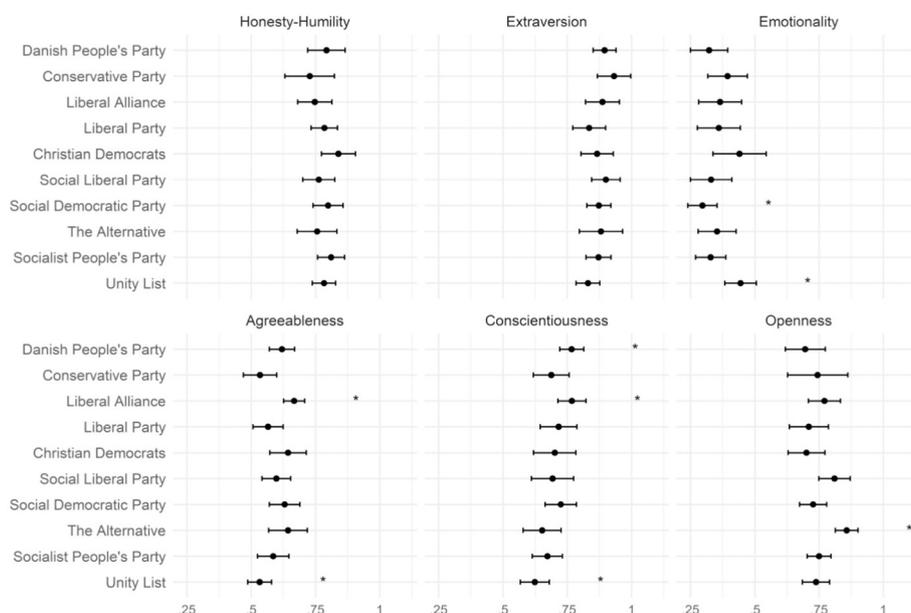
Note: Dots are means, bars are 95% confidence intervals. Stars are added if the personality traits in one party differ significantly from the rest of the sample of the politicians, using a two-sample Welch *t*-test with $p < 0.05$ as cutoff.

Appendix F. Correlations between self-reported HEXACO traits

	H	E	X	A	C	O
H	1	0.30	0.09	0.39	0.22	−0.17
E	−0.05	1	0.06	0.04	−0.01	0.02
X	0.36	−0.26	1	0.20	0.06	0.08
A	0.2	−0.21	0.28	1	0.02	−0.11
C	0.22	−0.09	0.22	0.1	1	−0.20
O	−0.02	−0.17	0.23	0.17	0.07	1

Note: H = Honesty-Humility, E = Emotionality, X = Extraversion, A = Agreeableness, O = Openness, C = Conscientiousness. Upper diagonal consists of correlation of traits in the community sample (n = 211); the lower diagonal consists of correlation of traits in the politician sample (n = 239).

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