From Left to Right:

Explaining the working-class vote for populist radical right parties in Western Europe, 2006-2018

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Abstract

Since their (re-)introduction to Western European party systems in the 1990s, populist radical right parties have attracted support from working-class voters, who, according to classic cleavage theory are expected to vote for left-wing parties. This thesis tests three mechanisms that could explain this turn to the right: economic grievances, cultural protectionism, and protest voting. Furthermore, it tests whether some of these mechanisms are more important than the others, and whether their strength depends on issue salience. By performing a multi-level logistic regression on data gathered in twelve Western-European countries, this thesis concludes that all tested mechanisms play an important role in explaining why working-class citizens vote for populist right-wing parties, and that these mechanisms do not only apply to the working-class, but to other classes in society as well. It also finds that the mechanisms regarding cultural protectionism exhibits the largest effect of the three tested mechanisms, and that the explanatory power of these mechanisms is heavily influenced by issue salience because of major events, even to the point where some mechanisms only display an significant effect when made salient by a major event.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

One of the key institutions of modern liberal democracies is free and fair elections (Diamond, 2003) in which political parties compete in a market-like sphere for the support of individual voters. In the last ten to fifteen years, we have witnessed some landslide election results in Western Europe, with the main change being the establishment of the radical right as a (new) party pole in almost every Western European country (Oesch & Rennwald, 2018), witnessing the greatest change in party systems, for most countries, since the development of green parties. Moreover, the introduction of some of these radical right parties is especially interesting, as it is argued that these parties have reshaped the structure of modern party systems. Working class voters, who traditionally vote for left-wing parties, seem to be susceptible to the message of populist radical right parties and are attracted to vote for this new pole.

Electoral studies have found that a significant share of the votes for populist radical right parties are from voters in the working class (Betz, 1993; Oesch, 2008), voters who according to the traditional models put forward by Lipset and Rokkan (Lipset & Rokkan, 1962) would vote for left leaning parties like the social-democrats or socialists. A plausible explanatory framework for this change was given by Hans Peter Kriesi, with his development of a new cleavage, the demarcation-integration cleavage (Grande & Kriesi, 2012), radically adapting the existing sphere of the four main cleavages put forward by Lipset and Rokkan in the 1960s, and providing evidence that parties systems were not 'frozen' any longer in Western Europe. The introduction of a cultural axis cross-cutting the classical economic left-right axis may explain why certain voters leave some of the left-wing parties and move towards the populist radical right. Yet, how this changed ideological positioning of parties exactly explains this shift remains a topic of debate.

Several authors have described mechanisms that can explain why a part of the working-class voters have defected from classical left leaning parties, like social-democrats and socialists, towards populist radical right parties. These mechanisms involve motives of economic grievances, cultural protectionism and general protest voting (Ivarsflaten, 2008; Oesch, 2008). These mechanisms are all rooted in dissatisfaction with current policy and changes in society as a result of globalization, of which the working class is one of the greatest losers. Two of these mechanisms can be placed in the two different dimensions of globalization, the economic and cultural dimension, while the third is more rooted in general dissatisfaction. However, there is debate about whether either of these dimensions is more important to voters than the other, and therefore, if one of these mechanisms has greater explanatory power than the others. Some authors (e.g. Bornschier & Kriesi, 2013; Oesch, 2008) argue that the mechanism that is located in the cultural dimension is best suited to explain the vote change, but this thought is not universal. In recent years, it is argued that populist radical right parties are profiling themselves beyond their classical issues of migration on economic issues (Loch & Norocel, 2015), making it likely that voters are not supporting populist radical right parties solely for cultural reasons

anymore. Moreover, growing discontent with democracy over the last decade (Maciel & de Sousa, 2018) would suggest that the importance of protest voting has increased.

Furthermore, the evidence on which the claim is based that the cultural issues are best explaining was gathered over fifteen years ago, meaning before the economic and monetary crisis of 2008, leading to the possibility that the conclusions form these studies could be outdated. Moreover, the consequences of issues salience theory suggest that it is dependent on issue salience during elections which mechanisms are best suited, as voters are primed to base their vote on subjects that are in the short term memory (Bélanger & Meguid, 2008; Repass, 1971). This lends further strength to the thought that other mechanisms than cultural protectionism have a strong explanatory basis on why working-class voters turn to populist radical right parties. However, this claim regarding issue salience is hard to test as salience is a difficult concept to measure (Epstein & Segal, 2000).

Therefore, this thesis wants to reassess the explanatory powers of the described mechanism with more recent data, which is in part gathered during the aforementioned economic crisis and partly during the refugee crisis of 2015 and later, to test whether over time, there is a difference in which mechanisms are more important in explaining why working class voters vote for radical right parties. By comparing over different times and election results it will be possible to assess whether one or several mechanisms are more dominant across all datapoints or whether this dominance shifts over time. Furthermore, this thesis will assess whether at different points in time, different mechanisms become more or less important because of major events that have shaped elections, like the economic and monetary crisis in Western Europe in the period of 2008-2012 and the refugee crisis of 2015 and onwards.

This thesis will therefore focus around two questions that are related to each other:

Which mechanism explaining working class votes for populist radical right parties has the greatest explanatory power between 2006 and 2018?

To what extent does the explanatory power of these mechanisms change over time due to external major events?

This thesis is academically relevant as it will help expand the theories around multi-dimension cleavage-forming by demonstrating if the two dimensions of globalization are of equal importance regarding populist radical right parties, or whether these parties have gained votes based on only a single dimension. The thesis contributes to the debate on why populist radical right parties perform well in elections and contributes to the debate on whether class voting still exists. Furthermore, it will help understand whether some mechanisms regarding working class voters who vote populist radical right have a greater explanatory value than others.

Moreover, this thesis will also try to link the theories regarding issue salience to the proposed mechanisms of why a part of the working-class voters has turned towards populist radical right parties. It also tests already existing theories with more contemporary data to see if they are still valid regarding newer data, and new societal developments. It will help gaining insight in voting behaviour of the working class after the now published studies, which mostly use data up to 2008, where it is concluded that the mechanisms in the cultural dimension are the most important. It will therefore contribute to the large debate around general volatility, reasons for changing party and development of political systems, as this thesis tries to provide further clarification for the ongoing success of a relative new group of political parties all across Western-Europe.

In relation to societal and political relevance, this thesis could be relevant for political stability as it can help determine why voters change parties, and which motives are important for voters when deciding for which party they vote. It also tries to demonstrate whether context is important in this line of election studies, providing insight for political parties in determining how to campaign during elections, and determine where their main focus should be in election time to perform well. Furthermore, it could help predict when populist radical right parties will perform well in elections if it is more clear which mechanisms are good at explaining vote choice under which circumstances.

This thesis will start by laying out the theoretical framework that gives an overview of cleavage theory through the decades and will provide the theoretical basis on which the tested mechanisms are based. It will also describe the characteristics of populist radical right parties and how these characteristics are linked to the proposed mechanisms. In the section about the methods the given method will be explained, a logistic regression on votes for populist radical right parties with (an index of) statements that measure the suggested mechanisms. The data of the European Social Survey (ESS) from 2006; 2010; 2014 and 2018 will be used for this, gathered in twelve Western European countries, with a total N of 45284. Subsequently, the results of the logistic regression will be presented and discussed. This thesis will continue with the implications of the results for the tested mechanisms and their importance, and the implications for using salience theory in this field of study. It will conclude with recommendations for future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

This part will lay out the theoretical basis for this thesis, from which the hypotheses will be presented. It will give an overview of the cleavage theory, first presented by Lipset and Rokkan, followed by the introduction of the new demarcation-integration cleavage. Subsequently, it will explain the concept and characteristics of populist radical right parties. Finally, it will present the mechanisms that could explain why working-class citizens vote for populist radical right parties, along with the hypotheses that will be tested in this thesis to answer its main question.

2.1 Cleavage Theory

One of the most influential and core articles in political science was written by Martin Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan and it was concerned with explanations for voting behaviour. Lipset and Rokkan tried to find an explanation for the existing party structures in Western Europe and North America. They stated that parties in European party systems developed along four 'cleavages' in society. Two of the described cleavages are products of the *national* revolution and are concerned with statebuilding. These are the *subject versus dominant culture* cleavage and the *church versus government* cleavage. The subject versus dominant culture cleavage is sometimes described as the centre versus periphery cleavage. This cleavage mostly explains the existence of regional parties who object to the central authority in a country, sometimes to the point that they strive for independence of a certain region. Examples of parties formed along this cleavage are the CSU in Bavaria in Germany or the Scottish Nationalist Party in the United Kingdom. The second cleavage stemming concerned with state authority, the church-state cleavage, explains the existence of confessional parties like the CDA in the Netherlands or the KDU-CSL in the Czech Republic. These parties mainly exist based on their tradition in the Church and how much power the Church should have within the state. Furthermore, these parties often emphasize the importance of social-Christian norms and values within society. (Lipset & Rokkan, 1962).

The other two cleavages illustrated by Lipset and Rokkan find their roots in the industrial revolution, the *landed interests versus industrial entrepreneurs* cleavage and the *workers versus employers* cleavage. Sometimes labelled as the *land versus industry* cleavage, the landed interests versus industrial entrepreneurs cleavage describes the conflict between the rising importance of industrial freedoms and decreasing importance of the rural economy, leading to the rise of farmers parties that stated that the central government had too little concern for the needs of farmers and rural entrepreneurs relative to the needs of large multinationals and industrial entrepreneurs. An example of a still existing political party that formed around this cleavage is the Finnish Centre Party. The final cleavage discussed by Lipset and Rokkan, workers versus employers, is possibly the most influential of the four cleavages in political science. It describes the conflict between the interest of workers, like minimum wages, against the

interests of owners of companies, like for example free trade and possibilities for terminating contracts. Examples of parties that formed around this cleavage are plenty, like the British Labour party, the SDP in Germany and the United States Republican party (Lipset & Rokkan, 1962). Furthermore, party systems are often viewed along this cleavage with the labels *'left'* and *'right'*, in which the left stands for equality in socio-economic policy, which greatly overlaps with workers interest, and in which the right stands for freedom in socio-economic policy, which greatly overlaps with owners' interests (Van Der Brug & Van Spanje, 2009).

In the case of most parties, they did not stem from a single cleavage, but out of a combination of cross-cutting cleavages. For example, most regionalist parties, formed around the centre-periphery cleavage, also have an agenda on economic issues, descending from the worker-employer cleavage. Moreover, which cleavages are most important in a country depend on whether a cleavage is salient. It is highly unlikely to find parties that have formed around the centre-periphery cleavage in states without autonomous regions or regions that strive for independence, while in city states, it is unlikely to find parties that have formed around the land versus industry cleavage, as there is no rural ground available for farming.

At the time that Lipset and Rokkan published their influential article about cleavages in Western party systems, these party systems were mostly seen as 'frozen'. This period was characterized by low volatility figures and high political stability. This became partly due to the ending of suffrage extensions, which lead to dramatic changes in party-systems as new voters entered the political arena, but also because the societies were stable after the Second World War. During the late 1960s, this period ended when an increase in volatility was seen, accompanied by the entrance of new political parties in several European countries (Bartolini & Mair, 2007). Yet, more recent debates around this notion of frozen party systems challenge the idea that party systems were ever frozen (Bartolini & Mair, 2007; Smith, 1989).

Traditionally, it has always been thought that the working class mostly votes for parties with left-wing positions on socio-economic issues. This is rooted in the workers-owners cleavage put forward by Lipset and Rokkan, since the working class is expected to have preferences for decent minimum wages, good healthcare systems for citizens with low incomes and protection of workers' rights (Oesch & Rennwald, 2018). This meant that the working class was an important base of voters for social-democratic parties and for socialist parties against more confessional and conservative parties, who drew support from the rural and owner classes. Whether a country hosts a confessional or a conservative party mostly depends on the salience of the church versus state cleavage. When this cleavage is salient a confessional party will be found, in absence of a conservative party.

Over time, the party- systems in Western Europe developed, first with the rise of the New Left and green parties which transformed the party systems in Western Europe to include more diverse political parties on the left side of the political spectrum (Green-Pedersen & Van Kersbergen, 2002; Kitschelt, 1988).

Furthermore, the party-systems described by Lipset and Rokkan during the 1960s unfroze in the two decades after the publication of the article. This has had the consequence that the four cleavages of the two authors are no longer fully relevant for most countries. This phenomenon, which was partly caused by secularization, has led to a diminishing influence of a number of cleavages. As the power of the church decreased, so did the alignment of confessionalist parties to the churches. They became more general centre parties based on norms and values found in religion, rather than actual religious parties themselves (Hooghe & Marks, 2018). Moreover, the landed interests versus industrial entrepreneurs cleavage lost much of its power as the amount of medium-sized farms in Western Europe dropped in favour of large agricultural entrepreneurs, leaving a far smaller number of actual farmers in the country (Kitschelt, 1997). This is still visible today as there are hardly any 'farmers parties' left in Western Europe. Consequently, the main cleavage left based on the party-systems described by Lipset and Rokkan is the classical left-right cleavage, workers versus entrepreneurs, especially in countries that do not have regions that want to secede.

2.2 Globalization and a 'new' critical juncture

The processes of fading national boundaries, leading to a globe-wide spreading of nearly everything, from goods and workers to protest movements, news reports and crime, is called globalization (Cochrane & Pain, 2004). Goods are produced in one country and sold in another, leading to a more integrated world economy. In the studying of Western European politics, a focus on globalization first of all means studying the concept of Europeanization, which is sometimes seen as a phenomenon of globalization on a continental level, with much more direct impact on citizens of Western European Countries (Schmidt, 2003). The fading of borders and worldwide economic and cultural integration has been beneficial for a lot of individuals, but also has a downside for another part of the population. In the academic world, this became most apparent after studying the results and voting mechanisms of the European Constitution referendum in 2005, in which the French and Dutch citizens rejected the document (Azmanova, 2011). The consequences of globalization are shown in the demarcation-integration cleavage, which inhabits two different dimensions: the cultural and the economic dimension. Both encompass a spectrum that ranges from full integration to full demarcation. This new cleavage crosscuts the traditional cleavage described by Lipset and Rokkan.

It can therefore be argued that the classical left-right cleavage described by Lipset and Rokkan, on which the main economic dimension of voting was always based, has changed completely, or that at least the interests of different voting groups within this system have changed. In the cleavage described by Lipset and Rokkan in the 1960s, it was in the working class' interest to have laws regarding, for example, equal opportunity towards the labour market, whereas now, with an increase in inflow of foreign population, it could be in their interest to restrain some of these full rights, which is according to the cleavage of Lipset and Rokkan a right-wing policy. It is therefore the question whether the existing left-right dimension, which was developed based on the cleavage theory of Lipset and Rokkan, still holds in the same way today. It is arguable that the complete theoretical system of political placement needs changing because of the consequences of globalization, which would have consequences for all studies regarding placement and categorizing of political parties and studies of electoral motives.

Kriesi et al. (2008) describe three main mechanisms which augment to the formation of winners and losers of globalization. The first is an increase in economic competition. Lead by the United States, the world economy further liberated, leading to less protection for sectors that had always relied on protective measures from national governments, leading to a decrease in protected property rights (Kriesi et al., 2008). In this context, large multinational companies push for further world market liberalization, putting stress on smaller companies that only focus on the domestic market. Because of the outsourcing of labour, which affects workers, and the pressure on domestic companies, which affects the owners, this process cuts through the existing worker owner cleavage (Kriesi et al., 2008).

The second mechanism described by Kriesi et al. is an increase in cultural diversity. One of the consequences of globalization is the substantial immigration of ethnically different groups into Western Europe. These immigrants on the one hand help boost the economy of Western European countries, yet on the other hand seem to have become a perceived potential threat to the living standard and national values of the native population. How immigrants are viewed by members of the native population, as a enrichment or a threat to the country, seems to be highly dependent on education level (Kriesi et al., 2008), in which higher education levels result in a more tolerant stance towards immigrants. Furthermore, most of these immigrants have been granted social rights in national welfare systems, putting these systems under greater stress, and connecting this mechanism to the first mechanism described above.

The third and final mechanism leading to winners and losers in globalization concerns with an increase in political competition between the traditional nation state and international, or even supranational, political actors. As a consequence of globalization, part of the powers and problem-solving capabilities of nation states have been transferred to political bodies above the nation states. This is obvious in the European case where the European Union and the European Central Bank have gathered significant decision-making powers over its member states. This development leads to losers of globalization in two ways. First, material losers in civil servants who lose their job in the reduction of the national public sector. But, this development leads to cultural losers as well, as individuals who heavily identify with the national community in the nation state identify that the national identity and powers of the nation state are deteriorating (Kriesi et al., 2008). It could also be argued that this is strengthened by the blurring of traditional party identity boundaries, as a result of the moving from mass and catch-all parties towards cartel-parties, and moving power towards European institutions (Mair, 2013). Citizens feel abandoned by the ideological safety parties used to provide and do not always understand how political parties are governed nowadays. This loss of political efficacy leads to a further distance between parties and the electorate and to the thoughts that an ordinary citizen cannot influence politics, which causes more distrust towards mainstream parties. To protest these mainstream parties, some citizens vote for populist radical right parties who advocate themselves as different and anti-establishment.

The mechanisms regarding economic competition and cultural diversity described above redraw the spade in which political parties can be placed. This works out in a two-dimensional space in which political parties can position themselves. These dimensions are the economical dimension and the cultural dimension, which both run from full integration to full demarcation. This leads to four rough quadrants of political stances on this cleavage, existing of all possibilities between economic integration, economic demarcation, cultural integration, and cultural demarcation.

This 'new' cleavage described by Kriesi et al. builds on the framework developed by Lipset and Rokkan nearly four decades earlier. What was added by Kriesi et al. is a societal division along post-material or cultural issues that is cross-cutting the division that is made in the possibly changed economic dimension, leading to a multi-dimensional sphere in which parties can be placed to characterize them, rather than a one-dimensional line. This transformation makes it much more visible why populist radical right parties can be a viable option for traditional left-leaning working class voters, as especially the addition of the second societal division makes it clear that those parties are not an enormous distance away from those policy voters, something that would seem if you only place these parties on a one-dimensional economic dimension (Azmanova, 2011; Spies, 2013). Yet, the existence of two dimensions does raise the question whether one of these two dimensions is more important than the other, and if that is the case, why.

Three of these four quadrants created by tabling the two dimensions discussed by Kriesi et al. (1995) host existing grand party families in Western Europe. The economic demarcation and cultural integration quadrant houses the green and social-democratic parties. The economic and cultural integration quadrant houses the liberal party families. The economic integration and cultural demarcation quadrant is traditionally home to the populist radical right parties, but over the last decade, some of the parties have moved towards a more neutral stand regarding the economic side of the story, making them adopt a position which is fairly neutral on the economic integration-demarcation line, a trend that was called the new winning formula (Kitschelt, 1995). This formula applied a nativist stance towards the economy and welfare systems.

The confessionalist and conservative party families mostly fall close to the dead centre of the political space, being moderate on both dimensions. This leaves the economic and cultural demarcation quadrant mostly empty as Western Europe has a lack of left-wing authoritarian parties (Azmanova, 2011; Van Der Brug & Van Spanje, 2009), even though some populist radical right parties seem to move closer to this quadrant. However, this is not a new phenomenon. Ever since the diminishing power of trade-unions, working class voters have been underrepresented as nearly all parties that favour restrictive economic measures are culturally more open, leaving to a representation gap for that part of the electorate, especially in electoral systems that do not allow for a large number of parties, as is for example the case in the United Kingdom or the United States. The electoral systems that are based on first past the post only allow for one major left party, that must both serve the working class and the cultural elite, which are also mostly left-leaning, but put more emphasis on post-material issues like the environment (Heery, 2009).

As a result of the lack of viable parties in the economic and cultural demarcation quadrant, a substantial part of the left-wing authoritarian voters is relocating to other parties in different quadrants of the demarcation-integration cleavage. A large share of this left-wing authoritarian vote consists of working class voters (Napier & Jost, 2009). Therefore, left-authoritarian voters transfer to other parties in the political system, including to populist radical right parties, which in general favour cultural demarcation, but have a neutral to slightly integration leaning economic stance (Grande & Kriesi, 2012). This is the direct consequence of political dealignment that is seen by a large part of the working class vote (Bornschier, 2018), as there are no large mainstream political parties that represent their exact policy preferences.

The two dimensions described by Grande and Kriesi are partially overlapping with each other. There is no clear cut-off point of where one dimension ends and the other one begins, there is a grey area where the two coincide with one another. The most helpful definition, which cannot separate the two described dimension fully, states that the economic dimension encompasses issues that involve policy around (re)distributional conflicts, while the cultural dimension encompasses issues that involve policy around identity-based conflicts (Häusermann & Kriesi, 2015).

Even though this distinction does not fully mark the difference between the two dimensions, it does help in categorizing most policy issues into either of the two dimensions. For example, issues about minimum wages or dismissal laws are evidently found in the economic dimension, while issues about which religious holidays should become national holidays or laws around law and order are part of the cultural dimension.

2.3 Populist Radical Right Parties

A far more influential change of Western European party systems, especially for working class voters, originated as a consequence of ongoing globalization during the last two decades of the twentieth century. The effects of globalization have led to a new cleavage between winners and losers of globalization: the demarcation-integration cleavage (Grande & Kriesi, 2012), and the rise of populist radical right parties. The rise of these parties have led to significant change in Western European Party systems (Hooghe & Marks, 2018).

Populist radical right parties are parties that are located on the (far) right of the mainstream political spectrum, that is largely based on the worker vs. owner cleavage described by Lipset and Rokkan. They distinguish themselves form normal right-wing parties in three characteristics. First, they use populist techniques to profile themselves and swing voters. Populism is defined as "*an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated in two homogenous and antagonistic groups, the 'pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite' and which argues that politics should be an expression of the general will of the people*" (Mudde, 2004 p.543). In their rhetoric, populist parties split the population into two groups and distance themselves from the corrupt elite that has governed the country for decades. This appeals to working class voters who generally find themselves to be losers of the process of globalization, and thus have little trust in and gratitude for the people who ran the country through this process, as it has not been beneficial for them. This characteristic applies to both dimension of the demarcation-integration cleavage described by Kriesi, as this perceived misruling of the state happens on both dimensions.

The second characteristic that distinguishes populist radical right parties from ordinary right-wing parties is nativism. Nativism is the ideology that holds *"intense opposition to an internal minority on the grounds of its foreign connections"* (Higham, 1955), in some cases to the extent of displaying xenophobia or even racism. Expanding on this, this ideology holds that everything that is non-native to the state, whether it are individuals or their ideas, should be viewed as something that is threatening the ideal of the purely homogenous nation-state, and that the nation state should only be reserved for native citizens of the nation state (Mudde, 2007). This characteristic is completely contained in the cultural dimension of the integration-demarcation cleavage, which gave enormous boosts to populist radical right parties.

The final characteristic that distinguishes populist radical right parties from ordinary right-wing parties is authoritarianism. Populist radical right parties challenge the liberal part of democracy, as they believe in a heavily ordered society, in which violation of that authority is to be punished severely (Mudde, 2007). Even though this concept does not directly challenge democracy itself, it does not provide that all liberal fundamental rights necessary for a liberal democracy are guaranteed, as some of these rights, like equal rights for all citizens, whether they are native citizens or immigrants are not a part of the nativist ideology that these populist parties pursue.

Together with the traditional left-wing parties, it are these populist radical right parties, like the Front National in France, the PVV in the Netherlands or the LEGA in Italy that compete for the working class left-authoritarian vote. It are these parties that have seen surges in electoral results in the last two decades, because of the introduction of the new demarcation-integration cleavage, and the success among losers of the globalization process. Heavy losers because of the volatility are mainly the socialist and social-democratic parties. Whether left-authoritarian voters turn towards left-liberal parties or towards populist radical right parties seems to be the result of whether the individual voter values the cultural or the economical dimension more (Lefkofridi, Wagner, & Willmann, 2014), which seems to suggest that issue salience during election campaigns is important for electoral outcome of the votes of left-authoritarian voters. Evidence suggests that this salience could be important in two ways. When economic issues are salient during elections, this could lead to either of two possibilities. First, with high salient economic issues, it is likely that working class voters will focus more on parties that are strong on economic issues for them, leading to a vote for traditional left-wing parties like socialists and social-democrats (Achterberg, 2006; Harteveld, 2016). The other possibility is that working class voters move towards populist radical right parties via the mechanisms in the economic dimension that are explained below, following reasoning that contain economic grievances, cultural protectionism and protest voting or a combination of these.

This would also suggest that class-based voting is still an ongoing phenomenon in modern day politics but is adapting to deal with new issues. Some authors suggest that class-voting has declined over the last couple of decades. However, more recent evidence suggests that for most West-European countries, class-voting still exists, but is more hidden as some classes' votes are distributed over two party families rather than one. This implies that class-voting did get more scattered, but class remains a good predictor of voting behaviour, with sometimes the added possibility that multiple party families are attractive to, for example the working class. Working class voters are likely to vote for either left-leaning parties or the radical right, but not for other party-families (Achterberg, 2006; Oesch & Rennwald, 2018), a claim that however interesting, goes beyond the scope of this thesis but will be shortly revisited in the discussion of the implication of the results.

While populist radical right parties are unitary on their demarcation view in the cultural dimension, Harteveld described two categories in which populist radical right parties can be distinguished regarding their positions on the economical dimension, however, the classification can differ regarding when the party was studied (Ivarsflaten, 2005). The first group are populist radical right parties that present themselves as protectors against globalization, who in the economic dimension, mobilize voters with policies containing welfare chauvinism (Harteveld, 2016). Though these parties are more left-leaning on the economic dimension, it is hard to call them left-wing parties as their redistribution is only for a part of the population, while a full left-wing party defends social rights policies for all citizens in a country, not a party of it, as they are characterized by equality for all. The second category of Harteveld

contains parties who stay close to the classical laissez-faire economy. Parties in this category are often founded on the basis of anti-tax, regionalist or anti-statist parties (Harteveld, 2016). A natural conclusion from this distinction is that the mechanism regarding economic grievances may be less important for countries which have a populist radical right party that is placed in this second category. This effect may be seen in the analysis in the different intercepts for counties, portraying a difference for which type of populist radical right party the country has.

2.4 Exploring the demarcation-integration cleavage for the working class

This section will explain how the consequences of globalization described in the previous sections link to actual votes from the losers of globalization for populist radical right parties. The three mechanisms provided by Kriesi will each be elaborated towards a testable mechanism on the individual level of why a citizen would vote for a populist radical right party. First, to determine whether the mechanisms that are tested can explain away a part of the effect that is attributed to class, this thesis will first test the assumption that a respondents' social class is an important predictor for determining which party to vote for and that working class voters are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Members of the working class are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties than citizens in other social classes.

Daniel Oesch (2008) has provided four main mechanisms that can explain citizens of the working class, who in the classical model are expected to vote left-wing, are willing to vote for populist radical right parties. These mechanisms can be separately placed in the dimensional framework set out by Kriesi, making it possible to assess whether one sub-dimension of the demarcation-integration cleavage is more important than others. The first mechanism set out by Oesch describes two reasons in the economic dimension that could lead to a populist radical right vote, as those parties promise to stop economic outsourcing and want to ban immigration, also when the aim of immigration is to provide labour. Because of economic integration, citizens of the working class are afraid that, as a result of outsourcing and of import of cheap labour forces, their wages will be put under stress and thereafter decrease (Oesch, 2008). Working class citizens feel threatened for their living standard and their job security and therefore vote for a populist radical right party.

A second mechanism in the economic dimension is provided regarding the welfare state. Inhabitants of a state fear that immigrants only migrate to their country to benefit from generous social welfare systems. They fear that as a result of immigrants who come looking for opportunity, rather than fleeing from prosecution or war, the welfare policies will become untenable because of the costs (Oesch, 2008). To prevent that from happening, they vote for populist radical right parties that want to deny immigrants access to social benefits. This mechanism fits extremely well in the authoritarian characteristic of populist radical right parties, as the reasoning of the mechanism follows the logic of universal rights being applicable to only certain groups within a country. Not everyone inhabitant of a country has the same basic rights regarding welfare benefits. This mechanism also seems to have a cultural component within itself, as it is perceivable that individuals who think that other cultures are a threat to a nation also want to deny immigrants social benefits because of cultural protection.

17

Elizabeth Ivarsflaten (2008), just as Daniel Oesch, recognizes that there are multiple mechanisms that can explain why working-class voters turn to populist radical right parties. In her article, she operationalises the mechanisms that Oesch calls economic protectionism a little different, focusing more on general economic grievances. She argues that when a country is doing poorly economically, meaning actual economic decline, a decline in the speed of economic growth, or just a perception of this, would lead working class voters to cast their vote for a populist radical right party. However, Ivarsflaten does not include a mechanism regarding welfare benefits that is included in the model of Oesch, meaning she has no mechanisms in which both dimensions of the demarcation-integration cleavage interact. This is a major critique on her model, however, due to data-constraints, the model used in this thesis will be very similar to the model of Ivarsflaten, omitting the two-dimensional mechanism regarding welfare chauvinism. In the standard modules of the European Social Survey (ESS), there are no general questions which can be used to validly measure attitudes towards welfare chauvinism. Therefore, knowing that this will leave a gap in the model, this thesis cannot include variables that measure this specific mechanism. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: The mechanism regarding economic grievances explains away a part of the effect of being a working-class member on voting for populist radical right parties.

The mechanism provided that is contained in the cultural dimension of the demarcation-integration cleavage involves the protection of national identity and is very similarly described by both Oesch and Ivarsflaten. Citizens who think that that immigrants from different cultural backgrounds provide a threat for the national identity and culture of a country may be appealed by the nativism characteristic of populist radical right parties (Oesch, 2008), which makes those parties oppose massive immigration from non-native, culturally different citizens. Moreover, they also oppose the adaption of traditions or cultural uses suggested or demanded by groups of new citizens, another message that resonates with the part of the electorate that favours cultural authoritarianism, a characteristic found in the working class. This mechanism, regarding authoritarian views on the cultural dimension claims that people who favour cultural protectionism are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: The mechanism regarding cultural protectionism explains away a part of the effect of being a working-class member on voting for populist radical right parties.

So far, the three explanations provided fit for two of the characteristics of populist radical right parties, authoritarianism, and nativism. The last provided mechanism that could explain working class votes for populist radical right parties involves the final characteristic of populist radical right parties, populism. As a consequence of being on the losing side of globalization, a lot of members of the working class feel neglected by the political establishment that has ruled the country through this process of globalization the last two to three decades (Cochrane & Pain, 2004). Therefore, a lot of these working-class voters are susceptible to the populist rhetoric of the corrupt elite versus the pure people. Because of a decrease in political disengagement and political trust amongst these voters, it is viable that these voters do not vote according to classic policy preferences, but mainly because they want to object to the ruling political establishment (Oesch, 2008), leading to a vote for a populist radical right party that profiles itself on this struggle between the elite ruling class and the disengaged working class. This motive for voting is not included in the demarcation integration cleavage but is completely outside cleavage theory. Votes for populist radical right parties are for some voters just protest votes. They want to voice that they object to current political establishment by voting for a party that object to this establishment regardless of the content of the policies carried out by the current establishment. These voters just want to voice their general discontent. Ivarsflaten describes this mechanism in a way complementary to Oesch, yet she writes about an opposition towards political elitism, rather than protest voting. However, in theoretical explanation and operationalisation, it comes clear that the two authors describe the same phenomenon in society despite using different labels for the concept. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: The mechanism regarding protest voting explains away a part of the effect of being a working-class member on voting for populist radical right parties.

There is much debate on which of these provided mechanisms that can explain why working-class voters vote for populist parties exhibits the greatest effect. It is mainly theorized that the mechanisms in the cultural dimension should be more important than the economic ones (Bornschier & Kriesi, 2013). This is also found by Oesch, who states that the mechanism in the cultural dimension, the cultural protectionism mechanism, is best suited to explain why blue collar voters have changed to populist radical right parties (Oesch, 2008). Oesch tested this relationship in five Western European countries with data gathered in 2002. So, the study that find these results uses data that has been gathered before the economic crisis that hit Western Europe in 2008. Therefore, this thesis retests this assumption with data gathered during the economic and monetary crisis that started in 2008, and data gathered during the mass in surge of refugees in the second part of the 2010s. Furthermore, this thesis wants to test whether the strengths of these mechanisms hold over time, meaning it will use data that was gathered over a large amount of time. Therefore, data gathered between 2006 and 2018 will be used.

2.5 The effect of major events

Whether or not these hypotheses are supported can differ for certain years because of contextual factors like for example the economic crisis in Western Europe between 2008 and 2012 or the so called refugee crisis after 2015, stemming the idea that issue salience can play an important role in determining whether or not a mechanisms exhibits a significant effect. This notion of issue salience encompasses the idea that citizens base their vote on issues that are highly important during the election campaign (Bélanger & Meguid, 2008; Lefkofridi et al., 2014; Repass, 1971). Following this line of reasoning, the mechanisms should vary in explanatory power dependent on whether issues in the economic or cultural dimension are salient. As this thesis uses an analysis in multiple countries in Western Europe, it will focus on major events regarding issue salience as these major events have effect on all countries in the sample, rather than events that have only impact on the national level. Therefore, two major events on continental scale will be used as indicators to test whether the branch of literature regarding issue salience is applicable to the socio-political realm of class-based voting mechanisms.

The first event is the economic and monetary crisis that hit the world, and the Eurozone from 2008 to 2012. During this period, the Western world faced a fierce economic crisis as a result of mortgage malpractices in the United States, which was linked to European banks via a number of dubious constructions. This downfall hit Southern Europe especially hard, leading to a near bankruptcy of Greece, prompting a setback in the rate of the Euro, worsening the crisis for the entire Eurozone (Frieden & Walter, 2017). Studies regarding the electoral consequences of the economic crisis have highlighted two main results. First, during economic crises, support for foreign aid and development aid is reduced (Heinrich, Kobayashi, & Bryant, 2016). Second, citizens who were hit harder by the economic crisis were more likely to vote for Eurosceptic parties (Hobolt & de Vries, 2016). These are two findings that both favour the idea that populist radical right parties could perform better during an economic crisis, as populist radical right parties are Eurosceptic by nature and opposed to foreign aid. However, this effect is probably not large as populist radical right parties are issue owners on the cultural dimension and less strong on the economic dimension, meaning that parties that profile themselves on economic issues more prominent are to benefit better from a crisis. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: The economic crisis of 2008 has a strengthening effect regarding the mechanism of economic grievances in the data gathered in 2010 and 2014.

The second major event that is selected to study issue salience regarding populist radical right votes is the refugee crisis that started in 2015. After the start of the civil war in Syria, and the rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq, a lot of citizens of those countries fled their homes towards the European Union. A part went over land through Turkey, while others fled via Africa and across the Mediterranean Sea, in small dinghies, of which some have sunk during the crossing, resulting in thousands of deaths. Several attempts towards a unitary EU policy have been made, with different degrees of success. All these common policies were criticized heavily by populist radical right parties. Given the recency of these events, there have been very few studies published regarding voting behaviour during this crisis. The limited studies published suggest that party preferences during this crisis shifted heavily for all citizens, forming new preferences on the basis of prior immigration attitudes (Mader & Schoen, 2019). This would suggest that populist radical right parties would benefit heavily during this crisis as they are one of the main issues owners regarding immigration. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: The refugee crisis of 2015 has a strengthening effect regarding the mechanism of cultural protectionism in the data gathered in 2018.

However, given the limitation of this thesis and the debate that highlights how difficult it is to correctly measure issue salience (Epstein & Segal, 2000) these two hypotheses will be tested in an exploratory way. This will encompass two different measures. One involves interaction-terms for the different mechanism in the years the data has been gathered. The second method involves performing cross-level interactions regarding economic and immigration factors and the associated mechanisms. The results of these methods will determine whether there are indications that salience regarding these mechanisms needs to be studied further.

3. Conceptualization and Methods

In this chapter the concepts of the theoretical framework will be explained and the methods for the research will be discussed. The datasets and statements used to test the hypotheses will be presented and the exact dependent and independent variables selected. The statistical analysis used will be presented and the control variables will be selected and explained why they are a necessary addition to the tested multi-level logistic model.

3.1 Parties and election years

This chapter starts with the conceptualization of populist radical right parties, which is necessary for the dependent variable in the analysis. The previous chapter already explained the characteristics of populist radical right parties: nativism, authoritarianism, and populism, so this section will display which political parties in Europe are considered populist radical right parties in this thesis. For this classification, this thesis relies upon 'the PopuList' program, a project of international populism scholars, headed by Matthijs Rooduijn, which publishes lists of current and former populist radical right parties, based on the characteristics populism, far right and euroscepticism (Rooduijn et al., 2019). For the countries included in the analysis, this means that the following parties are considered populist radical right parties. Consequently, a vote for this party in the last parliamentary election will be considered an event in the categorical dependent variable of 'voted for populist radical right party'.

Table 1: Overview of populist radical right parties used in the analysis and election years

Country	Populist Radical Right Party	Election years
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria (*FPÖ*)	2006, 2013, 2017
Belgium	Flemish Interest (*VB)*	2003, 2007, 2010, 2014
	National Front (FN)	
Denmark	Danish People's Party (*DF*)	2005, 2007, 2011
Finland	Finns Party (*Ps*)	2003, 2007, 2011, 2015
France*	National Rally / Front (*FN*)	2002, 2007, 2012, 2017
Germany	Alternative for Germany (*AfD*)	2013, 2017
Italy	LEGA	2018 (LEGA only PRR in 2018)
Netherlands	Party for Freedom (*PVV*)	2006, 2010, 2012, 2017
	Forum for Democracy (*FVD*)	
Norway	Progress Party (*FrP*)	2005, 2009, 2013, 2017
Sweden	Sweden Democrats (*SD*)	2010, 2014.
Switzerland	Swiss People's Party (*SVP*)	2003, 2007, 2011, 2015
United Kingdom	United Kingdom Independence Party (*UKIP*)	2005, 2010, 2015, 2017

Source: The PopuList (Rooduijn et al., 2019).

*In France, the first round of the presidential election is analysed rather than parliamentary elections

As can be seen above, the analysis will only include Western-European countries. The reason for this is that a large part of the voters in countries in Eastern-Europe are politically socialized in the communist era before the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall. As a consequence of this, there are large differences in how democracy is valued in countries in Eastern and Western Europe (Neundorf, Ezrow, Gerschewski, Olar, & Shorrocks, 2017), and therefore, it is very likely that the mechanisms developed based on Western European citizens are not applicable to citizens of former communist countries. Even though this is an interesting question, this is not one that can be addressed in this thesis and therefore, Eastern European countries are omitted form this analysis. Furthermore, it is likely that the dimensional space described by Kriesi et al., which was written for and based on Western (European) countries, is not applicable to Eastern European countries.

Furthermore, the fifth round of the ESS was performed with a delay in Austria, making it difficult to compare the data for Austrians with individuals for other countries, as the Austrian data was gathered in 2013 rather than 2010. Therefore, just as in the main dataset of the ESS, the data for Austria is not analysed in the analysis of round 5 (2010). Denmark and Sweden will not be analysed in the round 9 dataset (2018) as the data from those two countries has not yet been released by the ESS.

3.2 The working class

The other main concept of this thesis that needs further clarification is working class members. In the earlier rounds of the ESS there was a question regarding the respondents' subjective class in society. In the later rounds that are used in this thesis this question has been omitted. In these rounds, only the respondents' employment status, employment relation (employer, employee, self-employed) and number of supervised by the respondent are measured. Furthermore, the ESS contains a very detailed measure of what the respondents' job is (e.g. primary school teacher; administrative employee, soldier etc.), the so called ISCO-08 measure. For a long time, scientists relied upon the writings of Robert Erikson and John Goldthorpe to divide society into different classes (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1993), yet it is questioned whether that classification still holds for the contemporary labour market, as the labour market has developed further into a third-sector dominated institution, rather than an market mainly focused on industrialized work. (Oesch, 2006).

Daniel Oesch has provided a schema which uses the measured variables in the ESS to recode a class classification for respondents in the dataset, based on their job description in the ISCO measure, their employment relation, number of co-workers supervised, number of people employed and income. This is a useful addition to the Erikson-Goldthorpe scale as it better reflects the expansion of the welfare-state in Western Europe. Furthermore, it bases the class placement in part on the employment characteristics of the partner, which is useful as more women have entered the labour market since the 1970s (Oesch, 2006). This measure, which contains ten different categories, will be recoded into dummy variables for low; middle and high-class. These dummies will then be used in the analysis to estimate the class-effect in the dataset. The exact coding from the categories of Oesch to the dummy variables is displayed in the Table 2.

Table 2: Oesch categories to class dummies

Employment group	*Class*
Self-employed professionals and large entrepreneurs	High
Technical experts	High
(Associate) managers	High
Socio-cultural professionals	High
Small business owners	Middle
Clerks	Middle
Technicians	Middle
Social cultural semi-professionals	Middle
Production workers	Low
Service workers	Low

3.3 Data and mechanisms

This research will encompass data gathered over four rounds of the European Social Survey (ESS), namely those in 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2018 (rounds 3, 5, 7 and 9). By using multiple rounds, it will be possible to see if the strength of the mechanisms changes over time by interpreting the different interaction effects analysed for certain years. This would be much harder if only one round of the ESS was analysed, as you cannot compare effects across multiple years. The interval of four years is chosen as nearly all Western European countries have national elections every four years, and those that do have parliamentary terms of five years have all had elections in between the measurement years. This is the reason why the analysis will use the ESS rounds 3, 5, 7 and 9, as the four year gaps in between those rounds means that the dependent variable can be updated with new election results for nearly every country in the sample for every new year analysed. Furthermore, the relative recency of data-gathering means that this study will help closing the gap in the literature on working class populist vote in the last decade.

Several of the main questions that are present in the core of the ESS, and are therefore asked to respondents in every round, are useful for testing the proposed mechanisms in this thesis. The statements that are used as independent variables in this thesis are coded into a scale of eleven points (0-10). For the mechanism of economic grievances, a combination of two questions will be used as the variable. To make interpretation of the model easier, the answers to economic satisfaction, cultural protection and protest voting will be recoded so that the mechanisms function in the same direction as the class-effect, meaning that a high score on the variables indicates that a respondent scores high on the presence of the mechanism. In this way, all the relationships that are tested should be positive relationships, which are easier to interpret in line with the working-class effects. The corrected answers on the statements below will be used as the main independent variables of the logistic regression model. The statements used are the following ("European Social Survey Round 3-9," 2020):

Table 3: Statements used to measure voting mechanisms

Mechanism	Statement	Possible score
Economic Grievances[1]	On the whole how satisfied are you with the present state of the economy in [country]?	0-10
	How do you feel about your household's income nowadays?	1-4
Cultural Protectionism	Would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?	0-10
Protest Voting	On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [country]?	0-10

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[1] The mechanism for economic grievances will be calculated as follows: ((economic satisfaction+feel about income)/14)*10.

The calculation for economic grievances is chosen so that this variable is, in final, measured on the same scale as the other two mechanisms. Furthermore, by including these two statements this mechanism reflects both a respondents' thought regarding the general state of the economy, and feelings about someone's personal financial situation.

The statement that is used to measure protest voting is not perfect to measure protest voting attitudes but is still used in this model. The reason for this is that only respondents who have voted in the last election can be coded in the dependent variable. Indices of political trust fall short for this criterion as a lot of people who indicate that they have low political trust stayed at home during the last election, meaning that they would be deleted as missing cases. The relation between dissatisfaction with democracy and low turnout is weaker, meaning that this measure is better equipped to be used as it leads to a wider range of answers being used in the logistic model.

In addition to the mechanisms, an explorative analysis of contextual importance will be included in the final model. Using the pooled data from 2006 to 2018, this relation will be tested in two different ways. First, interaction-coefficients will be estimated which test the expected possible effects of the economic crisis from 2008 to 2012 and the refugee crisis from 2015 onward. These interaction-coefficients will contain a dummy for the year the respondent has participated in the survey and the score on the associated mechanism. If these interaction-coefficients yield significant result, this will be an important first indicator that large contextual factors are important in determining via which reasoning working class voters decide to vote for a populist radical right party.

To see whether there are indications that these major events have effects on the strengths of the mechanisms, the interaction-effects are estimated in for all possible mechanisms per year. They contain whether the respondent is from the dataset of a certain year when either of the two major events was salient in Western Europe, and the score of that respondent on the respective mechanism it is associated with. This has led to nine interaction effects, of which three will be used in a single model, all from the same year. The interaction-effects that are not expected to have an effect are tested as well, to control whether importance of a mechanism has increased without it being expected to have become more important. The years are chosen as, given the lag in the dependent variable as the studied election can be from several years before the data gathering, the elections used in these ESS rounds were likely to have those major events as major issues in them.

The second method in which issue-salience is studied is via two cross-level interactions. Two of the control variables on the country level, GDP per capita and number of asylum seeker per 100.000 inhabitants give a substantive indication of how a country was effected by the economic crisis and whether a country received a disproportional large in surge of refugees. By estimating these cross-level interaction-effects, it can be shown whether there are indications that salience has played an important role regarding the strength of the tested mechanisms for economic grievances and cultural protectionism.

This leads to two further interaction terms that will be tested separately from the year-mechanism interactions described above. Combined, these two interactions give a good indication whether it is important to study this relationship further. The importance of issues salience is purposely tested in two ways as both methods have certain drawbacks. The method using the year-interactions as it is not certain that the only issue that was happening during these years were the major events. The data could be blurred by national issues in the economic or cultural dimension that have an effect on the national level. However, the method with the cross-level interactions is not ideal as well as the impact of the major events is not fully captured in the variations in two control variables. They are likely to have a further complex influence via other voting motives than only these mechanisms. Therefore, both will be estimated to see if there is a solid basis for further research into this subject, in the conviction that both will supplement each other, limiting the effects of the drawbacks for each method.

3.4 Multi-level Logistic regression and control variables

It is not possible to conduct this study with an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis for several reasons. First, the categorical dependent variable (voted for populist radical right party in last election) violates three of the assumptions of OLS-model: additivity and linearity; independent errors and normally distributed errors (Field, 2011). To correct the additivity and linearity and normally distributed errors violation, we can adjust the model to include the log-odds that Y=1 as the dependent variable. This is called a logistic regression. But this does not solve the problem of independent errors fully, as the data that is being used is gathered over multiple years in multiple countries. As a result of this, the errors will be correlated for respondents who reside in the same country, leading to possible ecological fallacies, where relationships observed in groups are assumed to hold for individuals, while there is no statistical evidence for that (Luke, 2004). Furthermore, nested data at country level could lead to downwardly biased standard errors, meaning it becomes more likely that you make a type 1 error in which you find significant effects when in fact there is no effect at all.

There are two possible solutions for the violation of independent errors due to multi-level data. The first solution is running a fixed-effects model in which dummy-variables for each country are included. These dummies explain the variance on the country level away, correcting the independent error violation. However, this has one great disadvantage, in that all variance on the country level is cleared away and cannot be explained in other factors like for example economic prosperity or immigration numbers. To make it possible to analyse the variance on the country level, the other solution, a multi-level model will be used, which includes a second error term to correct for the fact that the data is gathered in multiple countries where errors can correlate, but leaves room for control variables on the country level to explain differences in variance caused by country-level variables (Luke, 2004). Therefore, this thesis will use a multi-level logistic regression to test the hypotheses presented in the theoretical framework. The multi-level model is preferred above the fixed-effects model as it allows insight in the effect of the country-level variables. Furthermore, a multi-level model will show how much variance on the country level still needs to be explained, leaving room for further improvement of the model, rather than a complete clearing away of the variance by country dummies. Moreover, it leaves the possibility for possible cross-level interactions, which could be a later addition to the model. These cross-level interactions are not possible to test in a fixed-effects model as all variance on the country-level is absorbed by the country dummies.

To prevent attributing effects to the mechanisms that are caused by other factors, this thesis controls for some factors in the logistic regression model. These control variables can be spilt into two categories, the control variables on the individual level and the control variables on the country level. On the individual level, these will be the social-demographic characteristics age (in years), gender (dummy) and class, the characteristic of which the effect will be tried to explain away via the mechanisms presented in the theoretical framework. The age variable will be corrected with a value of 18 meaning that the youngest respondent in the dataset, who is 18 years old, will have a value zero on this variable. An overview of these variables, their means and standard deviations can be seen in Table 4.

This thesis will also include some control variables on the country level. The scores on these variables are the same for every respondent from the same country as they measure country statistics and characteristics. On the country level, there will be control variables containing the GDP per capita, to control for economic inequality between the countries, asylum numbers in the same year, to control for disproportionality in immigrant attitudes due to a larger wave of immigration in some countries, and finally, an index that corrects for the disproportionality of the electoral system of a country. According to literature, it is likely that especially higher immigration numbers are leading to more votes for radical right parties, but economic inequality can also boost votes for populist radical right parties (Han, 2016), but also a higher GDP per capita is expected to raise the number of votes for a populist radical right party as those countries have a larger difference in economy with the countries immigrants are coming from. Therefore, economic differences with immigrants are larger, leading to a greater perceived threat to the economy. For the GDP per capita, the data gathered by the World Bank will be used in the model (World Bank, 2019). The source for the number of asylum seekers per 100.000 inhabitants is the OECD (OECD, n.d.).

The last one, the disproportionality index, is necessary as in some countries, due to tactical voting as a result of the electoral system, a vote for a populist radical right party is a little less likely than in countries which use perfect proportional representation. Gallagher's (1991, 2019) disproportionality index is used for this. It is expected that a greater electoral disproportionality will lead to less votes for a populist radical right party, as it is not tactical to vote for new or small parties. The voter takes in such a case a greater risk that his or her vote will be lost as a party cannot make it into parliament, making it tactical to vote for a larger, more mainstream party. As the model will be using multi-level data, there will be a different intercept in the model for each of the countries studied. The differences between these intercepts will indicate which variance on the country level is still unexplained by the multi-level variables entered in the model. These results can be interesting for further study into which conditions are especially favourable or unfavourable in certain countries, not yet identified by the literature.

Table 4: Descriptives individual-level variables regression

Variable name	Range	2006 Mean	S.D.	2010 Mean	S.D.	2014 Mean	S.D.	2018 Mean	S.D.	Combined Mean	S.D.
Voted for PRR	0-1	p=0.102		p=0.087		p=0.089		p=0.108		p=0.097	
Age	0-82	32.62	16.29	33.70	16.60	37.78	16.91	38.48	16.87	35.86	16.87
Gender (M)	0-1	p=0.493		p=0.492		p=0.505		p=0.512		p=0.501	
High class	0-1	p=0.293		p=0.314		p=0.310		p=0.326		p=0.311	
Middle class	0-1	p=0.368		p=0.341		p=0.366		p=0.362		p=0.360	
Low class	0-1	p=0.339		p=0.345		p=0.324		p=0.312		p=0.329	
Ec. grievances	0-10	3.92	1.80	4.41	1.85	4.31	1.84	3.99	1.82	4.16	1.84
Cult. Protec.	0-10	4.16	2.41	3.95	2.32	3.90	2.43	4.06	2.50	4.01	2.42
Protest voting	0-10	3.86	2.21	3.93	2.25	3.93	2.31	3.97	2.29	3.93	2.27
N		10528		9980		13293		11.483		45284	

Source: European Social Survey Rounds 3, 5, 7, 9

Table 5: Correlation between the mechanism variables

	Ec. grievances	Cult. Protec	Protest voting
Ec. grievances			
Cult. Protec	0.215		
Protest voting	0.529	0.279	

N = 45396

Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

As can be seen in the correlation matrix in Table 5, there is some correlation present in the data, most notably between the variables that are used to test the mechanisms for economic grievances and protest voting. However, to be sure that the results are robust, some additional multicollinearity tests will be performed on the definitive models to make sure that multicollinearity does not influence the outcome of the multi-level logistic regression.

The correlation-scores between the other variables that are used in the multi-level logistic regression model are small enough to indicate that it is likely that no multicollinearity will appear as a result of those variables. However, to be thorough, multicollinearity checks will be performed for all variables to exclude any risks of having a large portion of multicollinearity present in the model. The dependent variable and gender are not tested in the correlation matrix as it is counterintuitive to test correlations with dummy variables.

4. Multi-level logistic Regression analysis

The results of the multi-level logistic regression will be presented in this chapter. First, the presented mechanisms will be tested with a further explanation of the result. Second, the hypotheses regarding possible issue salience of the two described major events will be tested and presented. Finally, a complete model with all tested variables combined will be presented and analysed. From this, the implications for the hypotheses and their subsequent theories will be discussed.

4.1 Testing the mechanisms

The models presented in Table 6 show the outcome of the first multi-level logistic regression analysis, with the dependent variable being whether or not an individual has voted for one of the populist radical right parties presented in Table 1 in the last election. Adding the control variables per level, and the mechanisms individually gives the opportunity to assess the impact of all the variables entered individually, before analysing the possible effect these variables have on each other. This strengthens the results as it gives the possibility to accurately assess the effect attributed to one variable in model A, which is explained away by another variable in model B. These results are presented in Table 6.

The coefficients presented in the tables below require some additional information to be interpreted correctly. In contrary of an ordinary least squares regression, or a regular multi-level regression, the coefficients in a logistic regression do not indicate the linear relationship between X and Y, where an increase of one in X means a coefficient increase in Y. In a logistic regression, an increase of one in X means an $e^{coefficient}$ times increase in the predicted odds of Y, which indicates the likelihood of an individual to vote for a populist radical right party. This somewhat counterintuitive presentation of the data is the result of using a dummy-variable as the dependent variable of the analysis. This means that for every coefficient in the model, an extra step is necessary to correctly interpreted that coefficient. This value will not be presented for all coefficient, only for those where it is meaningful to say something about the value of the coefficient itself.

Unlike an OLS regression which has an R^2, there is no standard measure for amount of variance explained present for logistic models. Therefore, both the Akaike information criterion (AIC) and the Bayesian information criterion (BIC) of the tested models are presented in Table 6. These are both measures for the log-likelihood of an entire model, with a penalty for the number of parameters that are estimated in the model. Though the numbers themselves are meaningless to interpret, both the AIC and BIC are decreasing when entering the mechanisms or control variables into the model. Therefore, it can be concluded that the entered variables are a meaningful addition to the model.

Table 6: multi-level logistic regression on voted for Populist radical right party 2006-2018

Model	1 Coeff	2 Coeff	3 Coeff	4 Coeff	5 Coeff	6 Coeff	7 Coeff
Constant	-2.236*** (0.016)	-2.559*** (0.202)	-3.855*** (0.634)	-5.440*** (0.673)	-5.691*** (0.641)	-5.470*** (0.683)	-6.761*** (0.696)
Age		-0.002** (0.001)	-0.002** (0.001)	-0.002** (0.001)	-0.007*** (0.001)	-0.002** (0.001)	-0.007*** (0.001)
Gender (M)		0.404*** (0.033)	0.405*** (0.033)	0.452*** (0.034)	0.319*** (0.035)	0.445*** (0.034)	0.359*** (0.035)
Class High		-0.547*** (0.047)	-0.546*** (0.047)	-0.485*** (0.047)	-0.363*** (0.049)	-0.488*** (0.047)	-0.331*** (0.049)
Class Middle		Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Class Low		0.569*** (0.037)	0.568*** (0.037)	0.514*** (0.038)	0.384*** (0.039)	0.512*** (0.038)	0.354*** (0.039)
Ec. Griev.				0.170*** (0.010)			0.031*** (0.012)
Cult. Protec.					0.353*** (0.008)		0.324*** (0.008)
Protest vote						0.199*** (0.008)	0.111*** (0.009)
Year 2006		Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Year 2010		-0.047 (0.050)	-0.082 (0.052)	-0.156*** (0.052)	-0.094* (0.054)	-0.107** (0.053)	-0.119** (0.054)
Year 2014		0.053 (0.047)	-0.094 (0.059)	-0.225*** (0.060)	-0.089 (0.061)	-0.157*** (0.060)	-0.154** (0.062)
Year 2018		0.089* (0.049)	-0.038 (0.063)	-0.075 (0.065)	-0.005 (0.065)	-0.054 (0.066)	-0.026 (0.067)
GDP			0.022* (0.011)	0.037*** (0.012)	0.029** (0.012)	0.035*** (0.012)	0.040*** (0.012)
Immigr.			0.001*** (0.000)	0.002*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)
Elec. Dispr.			0.001 (0.011)	0.005 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.011)	0.008 (0.011)	0.001 (0.011)
Country var.		0.452 (0.187)	0.475 (0.202)	0.489 (0.205)	0.465 (0.202)	0.556 (0.238)	0.542 (0.234)
AIC	28746.29	26567.53	26554.41	26280.55	24201.00	25883.25	23976.64
BIC	28755.01	26646.02	26659.06	26393.92	24314.37	25996.62	24107.45

N = 45284; Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01
Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

One of the interesting findings visible across the models run in Table 6 is that there are significant differences in voting for populist radical right parties for all three class categories defined. Both the high-class variable coefficient and the low-class coefficient are significant, meaning that both these groups differ significantly from the reference-group, the respondents in the middle class. Furthermore, the high-class coefficient is negative while the low-class coefficient is positive, meaning that there is a relationship between class and voting for populist radical right parties. The lower a respondents' class is, the further the odds increase that this respondent has voted for a populist radical right party in the last election. This finding supports hypothesis 1 that respondents from lower social classes are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties than respondents from other social classes.

Observed over the different models, the effect for the dummies for both high-class and low class becomes weaker when the mechanisms are tested individually and combined. This leads to the conclusion that the effect of class is in part mediated away by the mechanisms. However, this table does not determine with certainty whether these mechanisms only hold for working class citizens, or for the other classes as well. Therefore, the model is run again each class category, these results are visible in Appendix A. These three tables show that there is a significant effect of the mechanisms in all three class groups. Therefore, the mechanisms do not only apply for working class citizens, but are applicable to all classes in society, strengthening their explanatory power in society. The mechanisms are correct in explaining away a part of the class voting in general, not just for the lower classes.

The first mechanism that will be assessed is the mechanism regarding economic grievances. This mechanism is tested individually in model four in Table 6 and assessed in combination with the other mechanisms in model seven in the same table. When looking at the individual effect of economic grievances, it produces an significant effect on the odds of the dependent variable, meaning the more economic grievances an individual experiences, the more likely it is that this respondent will vote for a populist radical right party, holding the effect of the other variables constant. When a respondent scores one unit higher on the measured variable, the odds on voted for a populist radical right party increase with approximately 19% (as $e^{0.170}$ is roughly 1.19). This effect is significant at $p<0.01$.

However, this effect changes drastically when it is entered along with the other mechanism variables in model seven. In this model, the reported coefficient has dropped to 0.031, meaning that in this model, for a one increase in the measured score for economic grievances, the odds of voting for a populist radical right party increase with approximately 3% ($e^{0.031}$ is roughly 1.03). Though the coefficient has decreased a lot, it is still significant at $p<0.01$. This shows that there is an effect of economic grievances present, in the expected direction of more economic grievances lead to greater odds of voting for a radical right party, but that this effect is probably less impactful than the mechanism regarding cultural protectionism, which will be discussed in the following paragraph. Moreover, this diminished effect in model seven could be an indicator that the mechanism of economic grievances is partly contained within

in the other mechanisms as most of its effect present in model four is mediated away in model seven. An indication of this was already present in the high correlation between the mechanisms for economic grievances and protest voting. More on this will follow in the conclusions section of this thesis. The results regarding economic protectionism in Table 6 show that hypothesis 2 is supported.

The second mechanism that is assessed is the mechanism regarding cultural protectionism. This mechanism is tested individually in model five of Table 6. This mechanism, just as economic grievances, produces a positive effect on the odds of voting for populist radical right parties. The positive relationship between more cultural protectionism leads to an increase in odds for voting for a populist radical right party exists in the expected direction. So for this mechanism, when a respondents' score increases with one, the odds of that respondent voting for a populist radical right party increase with approximately 42% (as $e^{0.353}$ is roughly 1.42), holding the effects of the other variables constant, an effect that is significant at $p<0.01$. Furthermore, contrary to the mechanism of economic grievances, this effect is relatively stable when this mechanism is tested along with the other mechanisms of this thesis.

When looking at model seven in Table 6, we can see that the coefficient for the cultural protectionism mechanism has only diminished slightly, especially in relation with the decrease of the coefficients for the other two variables. The coefficient of 0.324 shows that, when controlled for the other mechanisms, the odds for a respondent whose score on the cultural mechanism increases with one, still increase with roughly 38% ($e^{0.324}$ roughly equals 1.38), an effect that is significant at $p<0.01$. Given this strong relationship, and the fact that this is the only mechanism that retains a stable coefficient when all the mechanisms are tested together, this is a strong indication that this mechanism is likely to display the strongest reason for why citizens vote for populist radical right parties. This finding is further supported when the models are run for all separate countries present in the dataset. The results of this are shown in Appendix B. In this appendix, cultural protectionism is the only mechanism works significantly, in the expected direction, in all tested countries. This leads to the conclusion that hypothesis 3 is supported. A further interesting result shown in model five of Table 6 is that the mechanism for cultural protectionism has a high mediating effect on the effect of gender, suggesting that this mechanism is stronger for male voters than for female voters.

The final mechanism that needs to be assessed is tested individually in model six of Table 6, the mechanism regarding protest voting. When tested without the other discussed mechanisms, this mechanism has coefficient of 0.199, meaning that for one point increase on this variable, the odds on voting for a populist radical right party increase with approximately 22% (as $e^{0.199}$ roughly equals 1.22), holding the effect of the other variables constant, which is an effect in the expected direction. Just as with the other two mechanisms, when tested individually, this coefficient is significant with $p<0.01$, meaning that there is statistical evidence that all mechanisms are present in the dataset. As the ESS is a

large dataset which uses weighing mechanisms to reflect the actual population, it can be concluded that these mechanisms are present in society.

When tested in while controlled for the other suggested mechanisms of this thesis, the effect of this mechanism is partly mediated away, but there is still a medium sized, significant coefficient remaining. This coefficient of 0.111 indicates that an increase of one on this variable causes an increase of roughly 12% in the odds that an individual votes for a populist radical right party ($e^{0.111}$ is approximately 1.12), holding the effects of the other variables constant, a coefficient that is significant at $p<0.01$. As is visible in model seven of Table 6, the coefficient of the protest voting mechanism is not as stable as the mechanism for cultural protectionism, yet it holds effect better when controlled for the mechanism in regard to the mechanism for economic grievances, suggesting that general protest voting is a factor for itself. Still, the results show that hypothesis 4 is supported. However, a drawback regarding this mechanism is that some people who want to protest the political system stay at home during elections. These respondents could not be measured in this analysis as the dependent variable is based on what party a respondent voted for during the last election. Respondents who stayed at home during the last election were dropped from this analysis as missings, making it difficult to grasp the full scope of this mechanism.

As mentioned before when discussing the correlations between the variables, there are some indications that multi-collinearity could be an issue in the model. To further control for possible multicollinearity the VIF-scores, which are the main indicators for multicollinearity, for all variables have been calculated. The largest VIF resulted in a score of approximately 2, at the variable used for economic grievances and the dummy for ESS round 7, which indicates that multicollinearity is not a problem in this model, as the rule of thumb is that a VIF of over five indicates possible multicollinearity, and a VIF of over 10 proves definite multicollinearity. The VIF scores of the other variables did not reach above two. The exact VIF-scores of the independent variables used can be found in Appendix D. Given that the VIF results do not even reach the first threshold of five, it is concluded that multicollinearity will not be an issue regarding the results of this thesis.

4.2 Assessing the control variables

Examining the control-variables entered in the model, there are no remarkable results regarding the individual level-control variables. A respondents age has a significant negative effect, meaning that older people are slightly less likely to vote for populist radical right parties. This is likely caused by more party loyalty found in elder people, who sometimes have voted for one and the same party their entire life. Therefore, it is not strange to find that elderly people are a little less likely to vote for parties that are members of a relatively new party family. Furthermore, as most elderly people are no longer an active part of the labour-market, they have less incentive for protectionist measures regarding the economy, as in most Western-European countries, there are government guarantees regarding benefits for the elderly and pensions.

The gender variable shows convincingly that male respondents are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties than female voters. The odds for a male voting for a populist radical right party are a little over 48% percent higher than the odds for a female respondent to vote for such a party. This confirms earlier study about this relation, which argues that male voters are more likely to vote for populist parties as, because of a difference in socialization and a different notion of populism, they are more susceptible for populist rhetoric, which mostly focuses heavily on masculine characteristics (Spierings & Zaslove, 2017).

Examining the control variables on the country level yields more interesting results. The coefficients regarding GDP per capita and number of asylum-seekers are significant. In countries with a higher GDP per capita have slightly higher odds to vote for a populist racial right party. This is explained by having more to lose from mass immigration, as the pay-gap between citizens and newcomers is larger. The same holds for the change in odds caused by influx of asylum-seekers. When a country has more people requesting asylum, there is a slight increase in the odds of voting for a populist radical right party.

The interesting part of the results at the country-level control variables is seen regarding the disproportionality index. This variable is not significant in any of the models it has been added to. This would indicate that the success in number of votes for populist radical right parties is not dependent on the opportunities created by the electoral system of a country. This would indicate that either, a lot of people voting for populist radical right parties do not consider tactical voting despite knowing the party they are voting for has smaller chances of entering parliament, or that they want to convey a message to the other parties by purposely voting for a party that is unlikely to enter parliament. By still voting for this party they want to show that there are still voters who support the ideas of a party that is unlikely to enter parliament.

4.3 Effects of major events

In this section, the results regarding the exploratory research into major issue salience will be presented. The results regarding the year-interactions, which can be seen in the models displayed in Table 7, yield some interesting results.

Table 7: Multi-level logistic regression on voted for populist radical right parties with year interactions, 2006-2018

Model	1	2	3
	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff
Constant	-6.844*** (0.718)	-6.455*** (0.705)	-6.648*** (0.688)
Age	-0.007*** (0.001)	-0.007*** (0.001)	-0.007*** (0.001)
Gender (M)	0.359*** (0.035)	0.352*** (0.035)	0.360*** (0.035)
High class	-0.332*** (0.049)	-0.332*** (0.049)	-0.336*** (0.049)
Middle class	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Low class	0.352*** (0.039)	0.355*** (0.039)	0.356*** (0.039)
Ec. Griev.	0.025* (0.013)	0.001 (0.014)	0.047*** (0.013)
Cult. Protec.	0.311*** (0.008)	0.325*** (0.009)	0.289*** (0.009)
Protest vote	0.124*** (0.010)	0.084*** (0.011)	0.120*** (0.010)
Year 2006	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Year 2010	-0.318** (0.112)	-0.139** (0.054)	-0.139** (0.054)
Year 2014	-0.155** (0.062)	-1.085*** (0.137)	-0.166*** (0.062)
Year 2018	-0.036 (0.068)	-0.044 (0.068)	-0.331*** (0.129)
EC 2010 interaction	0.025 (0.027)		
CLT 2010 interaction	0.070*** (0.019)		
Protest 2010 interaction	-0.064*** (0.022)		
EC 2014 interaction		0.103*** (0.024)	
CLT 2014 interaction		-0.005 (0.016)	
Protest 2014 interaction		0.092*** (0.020)	
EC 2018 interaction			-0.063** (0.026)
CLT 2018 interaction			0.121*** (0.017)
Protest 2018 interaction			-0.021 (0.020)
GDP	0.042*** (0.013)	0.037*** (0.013)	0.039*** (0.012)
Immigr.	0.001*** (0.000)	0.002*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)
Elec. Dispr.	0.002 (0.011)	0.000 (0.011)	0.002 (0.011)
Country var.	0.563 (0.247)	0.580 (0.247)	0.539 (0.230)
AIC	23964.46	23894.66	23923.84
BIC	24121.43	24051.63	24080.81

N = 45284; Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01
Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

First, the interaction-effect for economic grievances in 2010 is not significant, while, contrary to what was theorized, there is a small significant interaction-effect regarding cultural protectionism in 2010. This would lead to the conclusion that there is no salience effect in regard to the bad state of the economy on the economic grievances mechanism in 2010. This could have several reasons. Firstly, some of the elections used in the 2010 dataset were held before the start of the crisis in 2008, which could blur the data. Secondly, it could be that there is no interaction-effect present in the dataset. It remains remarkable that there is a significant positive interaction-effect for the cultural protectionism mechanism, as at least there is no general major event that could explain this trend across all countries studied. Further, model one in Table 7 shows that there is a negative interaction-effect for protest voting in 2010, indicating that during the period 2006-2010, there was less protest voting in the studied countries.

The 2014 interaction-coefficient with economic grievances is significant at $p<0.01$ and yields a moderately strong effect. As seen in model two of Table 7, the main effect of economic grievances turns to negative when this interaction is added, the opposite direction of what was determined before the addition of the interaction-effects, meaning that respondents with more economic grievances are less likely to vote for populist radical right parties in this model. However, when combined with the interaction effect that uses this model, the odds for respondents in 2014 for voting for a populist radical right party go up when economic grievances increase.

This leads to the question whether the economic grievances mechanism only displays a significant effect in the rounds of 2010 and 2014, as the interaction-effects of those two years lead to the expected effect in model four, while for the respondents from 2006 and 2018, the mechanism has a negative effect in model four. When looking at the models run per round of the ESS in Appendix C, it displays exactly this result. The mechanism for economic grievances displays a significant effect at $p<0.01$ for rounds five and seven (2010 and 2014), while there is no significant effect present in round 3 and 9 (2006 and 2018), which is also depicted in the margins plot in Figure 1. In this figure, it is visible that the mechanism of economic grievances has a positive effect in 2010 and 2014, contrary to 2006, where the margins are negative, and 2018, where the margins are not significant. This provides further strength to the conclusion that because of salience created by the economic crisis in 2008, the mechanism for economic grievances gets a boost and becomes significant. Further study of model two in Table 7 shows that there is no extra effect for cultural protectionism in 2014, which is in line with the expectations that main voting motives were centred around economic issues. A further interesting finding is that there is a significant positive interaction-coefficient for protest voting in 2014, suggesting that there were more motives for protest voting present in the data gathered in 2014, a conclusion which is also visible in Figure 1.

39

Figure 1: Effects on Marginal Predicted Mean per mechanism per year.
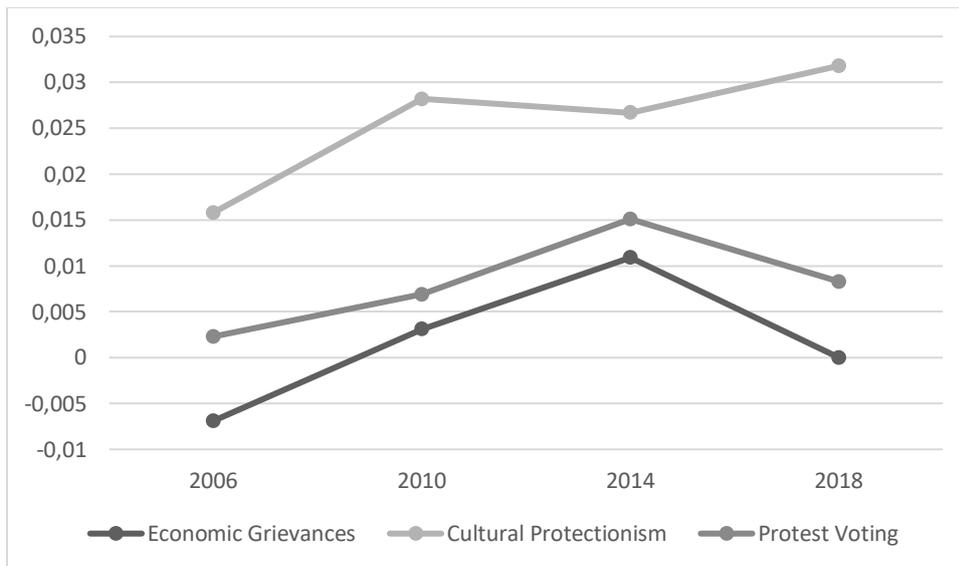
Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

The interaction-effect regarding cultural protectionism in 2018 is significant at $p < 0.01$. Contrary to the interaction-effects estimated for the economic grievances mechanism, the main effect of cultural mechanism variable maintains relatively stable when this interaction-effect is estimated. This shows that the mechanism for cultural protectionism is present in all four rounds of the ESS, but that it is indeed much stronger in round nine, which was held in 2018, when the refugee-crisis had hit Europe a few years earlier. This lends strength to the theory that issue salience caused by major events could strengthen the effects of these mechanisms. Furthermore, what stands out is the negative interaction-coefficient for economic grievances in the 2018 model, which lead to a value of exactly zero on the marginal predicted mean depicted in Figure 1, strengthening the idea that issue salience plays an important role regarding the strengths of these mechanisms. As the main focus was on cultural issues, the strength of the economic mechanism decreases for respondents interviewed in 2018. In the same model, it is also visible that there is no significant extra interaction-effect regarding protest voting, leading to the conclusion that the amount of protest voting does not significantly differ from other years in the dataset.

4.4 Cross-level interactions

To further strengthen the results regarding major events, these hypotheses are tested in a second way as well, given that the year-interaction method has some drawbacks. Therefore, three further models are estimated with cross-level interactions rather than year-interactions. These models are displayed in Table 8 below.

Table 8:Multi-lelvel logistic regression on voted for populist radical right parties with cross-level interactions, 2006-2018

Model	1		2		3	
	Coeff		Coeff		Coeff	
Constant	-6.651*** (0.711)		-6.271*** (0.673)		-6.191*** (0.688)	
Age	-0.007*** (0.001)		-0.007*** (0.001)		-0.007*** (0.001)	
Gender (M)	0.360*** (0.035)		0.359*** (0.035)		0.359*** (0.035)	
High class	-0.331*** (0.049)		-0.338*** (0.049)		-0.338*** (0.049)	
Middle class	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
Low class	0.357*** (0.039)		0.353*** (0.039)		0.353*** (0.039)	
Ec. Griev.	0.003	(0.037)	0.031*** (0.012)		0.010	(0.037)
Cult. Protec.	0.324*** (0.008)		0.242*** (0.013)		0.243*** (0.013)	
Protest vote	0.112*** (0.009)		0.112*** (0.009)		0.112*** (0.010)	
Year 2006	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
Year 2010	-0.116**	(0.055)	-0.126**	(0.054)	-0.125**	(0.054)
Year 2014	-0.149**	(0.062)	-0.159*** (0.061)		-0.156**	(0.062)
Year 2018	-0.025	(0.067)	-0.035	(0.066)	-0.035	(0.066)
Ec griev*GDP	0.000	(0.001)			0.000	(0.000)
Cult. Protec*immigr			0.001*** (0.000)		0.001*** (0.000)	
GDP	0.038*** (0.013)		0.039*** (0.012)		0.037*** (0.012)	
Immigr.	0.001*** (0.000)		-0.001*** (0.001)		-0.001*** (0.000)	
Elec. Dispr.	0.001	(0.011)	0.002	(0.011)	0.002	(0.011)
Country var.	0.543	(0.234)	0.493	(0.212)	0.494	(0.212)
AIC	23978.02		23914.67		23916.34	
BIC	24117.55		24054.20		24064.59	

N = 45284; Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01
Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

The results regarding issue-salience because of major events gathered via the cross-level interaction methods are mixed. First, regarding the interaction-effect between GDP per capita and economic grievances, there is no indication that GPD strengthens or diminishes the effect of the economic grievances. However, GDP does interact strongly enough with economic grievances to mediate away the small effect the mechanism had in the initial model (model seven in Table 6). However, the major drawback of this method is that GPD per capita alone probably does not give a full indication of the problems caused by the economic crisis. Moreover, GDP per capita is the same for each citizen of a country, while the crisis hits some citizens harder than others, meaning it could be that this method has difficulty to grasp the full effect of the context of the crisis. Concluding, there seems to be some small effect that explains away the significant effect of the economic grievances mechanism, but it is not strong enough to provide a significant result by itself. Therefore, based on the evidence from both methods, the conclusion about hypothesis 5 is that there is mixed evidence so that it cannot be supported nor rejected, as both methods tested yield contradictory results.

In regard to the interaction-effect between the cultural protectionism mechanism and number of asylum-seekers per 100.000 inhabitants, the picture is clearer. There is a significant ($p<0.01$) coefficient for the interaction-effect in the expected direction. Furthermore, the main coefficient for the cultural protectionism mechanism remains significant when the cross-level interaction term is added to the model. However, there is one interesting result regarding this cross-level interaction. When the interaction-effect is added, the main coefficient for number of asylum-seekers per 100.00 inhabitants turns from a significant positive effect to a significant negative effect ($p<0.01$). This is explained by the scales of the possible variables, especially the interaction-effect, which, because of the way it is calculated, contains very high values. Therefore, a large part of the effect caused by immigration numbers is absorbed into the interaction-effect. Concluding, based on both testing methods, there is enough evidence to determine that hypothesis 6 is supported.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter, the main conclusions of this thesis will be presented and discussed. It will provide an answer to the research questions posed in the introduction and display the limitations of this thesis. From that last point, this thesis will conclude with recommendations for further research and discuss points on which the body of literature around this subject could be expanded.

5.1 Main conclusions

This thesis started by laying out the framework of cleavage-theory and how it has developed through the last sixty years, with the latest addition being the (re-)introduction of populist radical right parties, which have attracted a lot of support from working class voters. The thesis described three mechanisms, economic grievances, cultural protectionism, and protest voting, that could explain why some working-class voters no longer vote for socialist or social-democratic parties but turned towards the populist radical right.

The first main finding of this thesis is that the presented mechanisms, which were developed for working class voters are applicable to middle- and high-class voters as well. Therefore, the mechanisms are not only usable for describing why working-class voters vote for populist radical right parties, but in general of why citizens vote for such parties. They are a significant addition to vote prediction models and can mediate away effects first contributed to class. The finding that these mechanisms are applicable to higher class voters as well could also mean that there are other groups in society to identify as losers of globalization, groups, that are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties.

Furthermore, after controlling for the mechanisms, the tested models still showed a significant effect for the class groups. This could mean two things. First, it could be that class in itself has a significant influence on how a citizen chose which party to vote for. This would indicate that the scholars who contest that class-voting does not exist are correct. Second, it could also be the case that there are still more mechanisms present in society which have not yet been identified by the literature.

This second point is very likely as there are policy-suggestions that combine the two dimensions. For example, a policy in which immigrants cannot receive social benefits for the first couple of years they are present in their new country, a policy which was introduced by the United Kingdom. This policy clearly combines both dimensions as it links redistributive policy, which is in the economic dimension, with immigration, which belongs in the cultural dimension. This is part of the mechanism that Oesch called welfare chauvinism in his article but had to be omitted from this thesis due to data constraints. Statements that could be used to measure this mechanism were only present in round 7 (2014) of the ESS, meaning it could not be used in this study which uses data gathered over four rounds. Yet, the mechanisms probably do not stop there. It is likely that there are further mechanisms in society which could further explain away some of the effect that is now contributed to the class of a respondent.

Furthermore, this finding also confirms that the classic cleavage theory put forward by Lipset and Rokkan in the 1960s is not fully applicable anymore to modern day voting behaviour. It seems that the main cleavages put forward by those authors are not the dominant ones in society any longer, and that the demarcation-integration cleavage has taken over this position, especially in the cultural dimension. This finding raises the question whether this cleavage can be integrated in the classic model of Lipset and Rokkan, or whether those two are incompatible.

The second main finding of this thesis is the conclusion that the mechanism in the cultural dimension still has the greatest effect on why citizens vote for populist radical right parties in relation to the other two mechanisms that were tested in this thesis. This is in line with the findings of Oesch based on data gathered in 2002, and with the theorizing of Kriesi. However, this claim gains substantial strength as it is proven again with more temporary data and a large N study across a large number of Western-European countries. The mechanism regarding cultural protectionism seems to be the main reason of why citizens vote for populist radical right parties over the last two decades. It is therefore concluded that the mechanism regarding cultural protectionism has the greatest explanatory power for why citizens vote for populist radical right parties between 2006 and 2018.

This thesis also shows that the effect of the mechanism placed in the economic dimension, economic grievances, has a smaller effect, and its strength fluctuates over the different years. The third tested mechanism, regarding protest voting displays a significant effect, and its strength maintains relatively stable across the tested years. This raises the question whether the conclusion that dissatisfaction is rising in Western-Europe is true.

The third main finding of this thesis is that there seems to be an influence of issue salience on the strengths of the tested mechanisms. The most interesting finding regarding this conclusion is the fact that the economic grievances mechanism only displays a significant effect in the datasets that use data gathered in 2010 and 2014. It seems that the economic grievances mechanism only displays a significant effect when it gets a salience boost. In the studied period, this boost came in the form of the economic and monetary crisis that hit Western Europe. But this conclusion also holds for the cultural dimension, as the mechanism regarding cultural protectionism displayed a stronger effect in that data gathered in 2018, during the aftermath of the refugee crisis. It is therefore concluded that issue salience theory can play an important role in determining which mechanisms can explain away the effect normally contributed to the class a respondent belongs to. Furthermore, issue salience can have an impact on the strength of those mechanisms.

5.2 Recommendations

One of the main points on which this thesis could be improved is on the operationalisation of the mechanisms that are tested. Regarding mechanism of economic grievances, it was tried to combine components of feelings towards the economy in general, and feelings towards a respondents' personal financial situation. Even though it seemed this has been achieved, this could be further improved to test the mechanism more accurately. The same holds for the mechanism regarding protest voting. Because of the dependent variable that required voting, a part of the protest mechanism could not be measured, as some dissatisfied voters choose not to go out and vote on election day. Even though these people might not have voted for a populist radical right party, they could have sympathies for it, which is equally interesting to study in this regard.

But there are more interesting issues around protest voting that could be studied further. Dissatisfaction with the way a democracy functions in a country may be one of the most important reasons for individuals to vote from a protest motive, but there are more reasons why a voter could choose to do so. It would be valuable to further studies those reasons with the objective to further deconstruct this protest voting mechanism into different kinds of motives for protest voting. Especially with the additional motive to strengthen a democracy in a country because democracy functions best when it is generally supported by the public.

Another drawback of this thesis is the way in which it explores the possibilities of the influence of issue salience. As discussed in the methods section, either way in which this relation was explored has its drawbacks. One of these was visible in the rather small but significant effect for economic grievances in 2010, as some of the election data used was gathered for the start of the crisis. This was the case for four of the nine countries in that sample. This will have blurred the data regarding this relationship. However, given that the same relationship, but much stronger, was found in 2014, the conclusion that issue salience was important regarding the strength of the economic grievances mechanism stays supported with sufficient evidence.

Regarding these exploratory results, it is recommended that this fields receives additional attention. There needs to be further research into this relation between the salience of major events and the strengths of the mechanisms of why citizens vote for populist radical right parties. Questions that could be researched are for example: When has an event enough impact to lend a salience boost to certain mechanisms? And, which actors play important roles in creating that salience? It could be important to identify other major events that were not studied in this thesis, and it could be important to study these events not only on the international level with datasets like the one used in this thesis, but also to look into major events on the national level, like for example the Ibiza-affair around the FPÖ in Austria in 2019.

A further point that should receive additional attention from scholars is why some part of the working class has turned towards populist radical right parties and why some blue-collar citizens have chosen to remain with the traditional left-wing parties. The sample used in this thesis showed that working class voters are overrepresented when voting for populist radical right parties, but it also shows that a majority of the working-class voters votes for other parties. It would be valuable to identify the causes of why some working class choose to switch party, with the objective to get a better insight in volatility and create more stable party systems.

A final remark regarding recommendations stemming from the results of this thesis involves the geographical scale. This thesis performed analysis on Western European countries. However, populist radical right parties are not a Western European phenomenon. It would be valuable to study if these mechanisms are applicable to other countries with a populist radical right party/politician, to see if they can be applicable outside of Western Europe. Obvious examples are Poland, Hungary, Brazil, and the United States. Even though, as stated before in this thesis, these countries may have other factors at play because of different political cultures and later political socialization, it could be that parts of these mechanisms are applicable to those countries as well.

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Appendix A: Models run per class category

Table A1: multi-level logistic regression on voted for populist radical right party for high-class people

Model	1 Coeff		2 Coeff		3 Coeff		4 Coeff	
Constant	-5.694***	(0.885)	-6.135***	(0.816)	-5.998***	(0.905)	-7.172***	(0.897)
Age	0.008***	(0.002)	0.001	(0.002)	0.007***	(0.002)	0.002	(0.002)
Gender (M)	0.496***	(0.079)	0.315***	(0.082)	0.474***	(0.079)	0.354***	(0.083)
Ec. Griev.	0.182***	(0.025)					0.020	(0.029)
Cult. Protec.			0.435***	(0.017)			0.405***	(0.018)
Protest vote					0.235***	(0.018)	0.142***	(0.021)
Year 2010	-0.316***	(0.120)	-0.235*	(0.125)	-0.251**	(0.121)	-0.275**	(0.127)
Year 2014	-0.361***	(0.138)	-0.203	(0.138)	-0.269**	(0.137)	-0.266*	(0.141)
Year 2018	-0.146	(0.124)	-0.115	(0.126)	-0.125	(0.126)	-0.136	(0.129)
GDP	0.023	(0.015)	0.018	(0.009)	0.024	(0.015)	0.027*	(0.015)
Immigr.	0.002***	(0.001)	0.001	(0.001)	0.002**	(0.001)	0.001*	(0.001)
Elec. Dispr.	0.019	(0.023)	0.001	(0.023)	0.022	(0.023)	0.008	(0.024)
Country var.	0.680	(0.319)	0.565	(0.257)	0.746	(0.905)	0.676	(0.308)
AIC	5767.87		5137.07		5648.74		5079.46	
BIC	5850.95		5220.16		5731.83		5177.65	

N= 14093; Standard errors in parentheses

* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

Table A2: multi-level logistic regression on voted for populist radical right party for middle-class people

Model	1 Coeff	2 Coeff	3 Coeff	4 Coeff
Constant	-5.353*** (0.826)	-5.656*** (0.792)	-5.472*** (0.905)	-6.697*** (0.854)
Age	0.002 (0.002)	-0.004** (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	-0.004** (0.002)
Gender (M)	0.472*** (0.057)	0.310*** (0.059)	0.454*** (0.058)	0.345*** (0.060)
Ec. Griev.	0.176*** (0.018)			0.030 (0.021)
Cult. Protec.		0.359*** (0.013)		0.330*** (0.013)
Protest vote			0.203*** (0.013)	0.117*** (0.016)
Year 2010	-0.282*** (0.091)	-0.219** (0.093)	-0.238*** (0.091)	-0.255*** (0.094)
Year 2014	-0.472*** (0.105)	-0.342*** (0.106)	-0.391*** (0.105)	-0.404*** (0.108)
Year 2018	-0.251** (0.124)	-0.186* (0.102)	-0.246** (0.102)	-0.211** (0.104)
GDP	0.033** (0.015)	0.027* (0.014)	0.034** (0.015)	0.036** (0.015)
Immigr.	0.002*** (0.001)	0.002** (0.001)	0.002** (0.001)	0.002*** (0.001)
Elec. Dispr.	0.005 (0.018)	-0.001 (0.018)	0.009 (0.018)	0.003 (0.019)
Country var.	0.620 (0.285)	0.592 (0.261)	0.699 (0.312)	0.666 (0.308)
AIC	8931.52	8224.07	8802.61	8148.18
BIC	9016.21	8308.75	8887.29	8248.27

N= 16300; Standard errors in parentheses

* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

Table A3: multi-level logistic regression on voted for populist radical right party for low-class people

Model	1 Coeff		2 Coeff		3 Coeff		4 Coeff	
Constant	-4.407*** (0.629)		-4.856*** (0.646)		-4.476*** (0.674)		-5.794*** (0.698)	
Age	-0.007*** (0.001)		-0.012*** (0.001)		-0.008*** (0.001)		-0.012*** (0.001)	
Gender (M)	0.405*** (0.049)		0.302*** (0.050)		0.408*** (0.049)		0.346*** (0.051)	
Ec. Griev.	0.163*** (0.014)						0.040	(0.016)
Cult. Protec.			0.312*** (0.011)				0.283***	(0.011)
Protest vote					0.182*** (0.012)		0.095***	(0.013)
Year 2010	-0.016	(0.076)	0.042	(0.078)	0.029	(0.076)	0.025	(0.078)
Year 2014	0.030	(0.085)	0.158*	(0.087)	0.077	(0.085)	0.092	(0.088)
Year 2018	0.142*	(0.082)	0.199**	(0.085)	0.155*	(0.084)	0.191**	(0.086)
GDP	0.031*** (0.011)		0.028**	(0.011)	0.031*** (0.012)		0.036*** (0.012)	
Immigr.	0.001**	(0.000)	0.001	(0.000)	0.001**	(0.000)	0.001*	(0.001)
Elec. Dispr.	-0.002	(0.014)	-0.012	(0.015)	0.000	(0.015)	-0.009	(0.015)
Country var.	0.327	(0.146)	0.361	(0.157)	0.409	(0.177)	0.409	(0.179)
AIC	11596.87		10830.71		11447.24		10742.30	
BIC	11680.56		10914.41		11530.93		10841.21	

N= 14891; Standard errors in parentheses

* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

Appendix B: Models run per country

Table B1: Logistic regression on voted for populist radical right party per country, 2006-2018

Model	Austria	Belgium	Switzerland	Germany	Denmark	Finland
Rounds	3, 7, 9	3, 5, 7, 9	3, 5, 7, 9	7, 9	3, 5, 7	3, 5, 7, 9
	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff
Constant	-5.392*** (0.266)	-4.305*** (0.318)	-3.012*** (0.240)	-7.065*** (0.412)	-4.958*** (0.264)	-2.384*** (0.185)
Age	-0.016*** (0.003)	-0.018*** (0.005)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.005 (0.005)	0.002 (0.004)	-0.005** (0.003)
Gender (M)	0.290*** (0.107)	0.253* (0.147)	0.302*** (0.106)	0.607*** (0.185)	0.246** (0.126)	0.577*** (0.092)
Class High	-0.120 (0.167)	-0.281 (0.222)	-0.262** (0.128)	0.202 (0.234)	-0.374** (0.190)	-0.566*** (0.124)
Class Middle	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Class Low	0.386*** (0.078)	0.388** (0.164)	0.274** (0.126)	0.253 (0.210)	0.536*** (0.146)	0.073 (0.101)
Ec. Griev.	0.064* (0.036)	-0.186*** (0.048)	-0.054 (0.040)	0.066 (0.051)	0.094** (0.039)	0.088*** (0.034)
Cult. Protec.	0.398*** (0.024)	0.339*** (0.034)	0.391*** (0.025)	0.248*** (0.037)	0.400*** (0.028)	0.196*** (0.023)
Protest vote	0.054*** (0.148)	0.300*** (0.037)	0.069** (0.030)	0.372*** (0.043)	-0.019 (0.032)	0.093*** (0.025)
Year 2006	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.		Ref.	Ref.
Year 2010		-0.914*** (0.180)	0.019 (0.142)		0.289* (0.167)	-1.819*** (0.150)
Year 2014	0.948*** (0.163)	-1.589*** (0.220)	-0.324** (0.147)	Ref.	0.268* (0.162)	-0.941*** (0.121)
Year 2018	1.328*** (0.148)	-1.342*** (0.226)	0.235 (0.144)	0.627*** (0.413)		-0.974*** (0.121)
AIC	2405.92	1478.40	2379.36	1035.04	1900.00	3446.83
BIC	2468.15	1549.22	2443.89	1090.46	1961.48	3518.04
N	3723	4621	2607	3488	3455	4787

Standard errors in parentheses

* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

Table B1: Logistic regression on voted for populist radical right party per country, 2006-2018 (continued)

Model	France	United Kingdom	Italy	The Netherlands	Norway	Sweden
Rounds	3, 5, 7, 9	3, 5, 7, 9	9	3, 5, 7, 9	3, 5, 7, 9	5, 7
	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff	Coeff
Constant	-5.531*** (0.363)	-8.290*** (0.529)	-2.236*** (0.392)	-5.429*** (0.271)	-3.901*** (0.201)	-6.657*** (0.493)
Age	-0.031*** (0.004)	-0.005 (0.005)	-0.010** (0.005)	-0.012*** (0.005)	-0.001 (0.003)	-0.013** (0.006)
Gender (M)	0.254*** (0.132)	0.435*** (0.154)	-0.037 (0.161)	0.459*** (0.110)	0.454*** (0.097)	0.386* (0.233)
Class High	-0.486** (0.199)	-0.234 (0.215)	-0.161 (0.233)	-0.475*** (0.150)	-0.399*** (0.133)	-0.170 (0.410)
Class Middle	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Class Low	0.450*** (0.147)	0.225 (0.174)	0.272 (0.177)	0.677 (0.123)	0.349*** (0.108)	0.808*** (0.269)
Ec. Griev.	0.097* (0.050)	0.034 (0.050)	-0.172*** (0.055)	0.065* (0.039)	0.036 (0.032)	0.099 (0.068)
Cult. Protec.	0.391*** (0.029)	0.271*** (0.032)	0.329*** (0.034)	0.284*** (0.026)	0.306*** (0.022)	0.492*** (0.049)
Protest vote	0.091*** (0.033)	0.180*** (0.037)	-0.102** (0.045)	0.223*** (0.032)	0.145*** (0.025)	0.155*** (0.054)
Year 2006	Ref.	Ref.		Ref.	Ref.	
Year 2010	-0.225 (0.216)	1.943*** (0.416)		1.235*** (0.160)	-0.078 (0.120)	Ref.
Year 2014	1.088*** (0.193)	3.019*** (0.398)		0.483*** (0.175)	-0.278** (0.131)	0.626*** (0.233)
Year 2018	1.337*** (0.363)	2.281*** (0.413)		0.746*** (0.177)	-0.540*** (0.201)	
AIC	1705.13	1420.24	993.45	2519.67	3107.91	651.03
BIC	1774.05	1493.13	1033.08	2591.56	3178.41	703.49
N	3887	5576	1047	5093	4488	2512

Standard errors in parentheses

* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

Appendix C: models run for the separate datasets

Table C1: multi-level logistic regression on voted for populist radical right party by ESS round

Model	2006 (round 3) Coeff	2010 (round 5) Coeff	2014 (round 7) Coeff	2018 (round 9) Coeff
Constant	-4.425*** (1.722)	-6.187*** (0.637)	-6.875*** (1.025)	-6.851*** (1.190)
Age	-0.010*** (0.002)	-0.012*** (0.002)	-0.005*** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)
Gender (M)	0.311*** (0.071)	0.456*** (0.080)	0.370*** (0.068)	0.334*** (0.068)
Class High	-0.506*** (0.027)	-0.497*** (0.114)	-0.177* (0.095)	-0.229** (0.092)
Class Middle	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Class Low	0.216*** (0.078)	0.397*** (0.090)	0.484*** (0.077)	0.363*** (0.077)
Ec. Griev.	-0.039 (0.025)	0.101*** (0.027)	0.087*** (0.023)	-0.032 (0.024)
Cult. Protec.	0.256*** (0.016)	0.369*** (0.019)	0.306*** (0.015)	0.389*** (0.015)
Protest vote	0.106*** (0.019)	0.095*** (0.021)	0.173*** (0.017)	0.099*** (0.017)
GDP	0.029 (0.025)	0.044*** (0.009)	0.036** (0.015)	0.028* (0.015)
Immigr.	-0.003 (0.009)	-0.004*** (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	0.005 (0.003)
Elec. Dispr.	-0.100* (0.059)	-0.129*** (0.027)	-0.028 (0.043)	0.011 (0.045)
Country var.	1.038 (0.514)	0.115 (0.060)	0.408 (0.183)	0.536 (0.248)
AIC	5841.21	4725.89	6490.80	6297.14
BIC	5928.35	4812.39	6580.74	6385.33
N	10528	9980	13293	11483

Standard errors in parentheses

* p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9

Appendix D: VIF-scores

Table D1: VIF-scores of the multi-level logistic regression

Variable	VIF
Age	1.05
Gender (M)	1.03
Class High	1.33
Class Low	1.32
Ec. Griev.	1.65
Cult. Protec.	1.16
Protest vote	1.47
Year 2010	1.58
Year 2014	1.97
Year 2018	1.66
GDP	1.33
Immigr.	1.32
Elec. Dispr.	1.41
Mean VIF	1.41

N= 45284

Source: European Social Survey Round 3, 5, 7, 9