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Do unhappy voters vote for radical right-wing populist parties?

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Abstract

This thesis builds on the last few decades of populist research by adding life satisfaction as a new viewpoint to the demand side of populist research. This is contextualized by the two research schools that are most prevalent in populist literature: the rationalist and the structuralist school. Building on these schools, two theories leading to supplementary hypotheses are formulated of how life satisfaction could play a role in understanding who votes for radical right-wing populist parties. The first theory argues that the wish to change an individual's current situation is fueled by low life satisfaction which in turn leads to individuals rationally voting for the party that they expect will change their situation the most drastically. This leads those individuals to vote for a populist party. The second theory argues that lower life satisfaction, in hand with the deprivation theory, fuels feelings of resentment towards the elite which in turn leads them to vote for a populist party. This thesis found, after applying a multilevel model logistic regression analysis, significant evidence that the first theory was correct. The results of this thesis imply that feelings of discontent, which were initially only researched in the context of the political system, now serve to be an independent explanatory variable.

Table of contents

Introduction	3
Scientific relevance	4
Societal relevance	5
Research structure	5
Theoretical framework	7
Supply side populism	7
The research schools	10
Demand side populism	12
Self-reported wellbeing	20
Theoretical viewpoints	22
Rational perspective research	22
Structuralist perspective	23
Method	26
Data	26
Weights	27
The variables	28
Dependent variable	28
Independent variables	29
Control variables	30
Research approach	33
Results	35
Descriptive analysis	35
Explanatory analysis	38
Null model	38
Bivariate analysis	39
Multivariate analysis	42
Conclusion	47
Limitations	48
Discussion	49
Literature	52
Appendix	61

Chapter 1 Introduction

In the last few decades, populism has flourished. Multiple accounts of an increase in the vote share of populist parties or candidates started to appear in several countries. In 2002 the List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) took the Dutch electoral campaign season by storm with their new populist viewpoints (Van der Brug, 2003, pp.89-91). It caused a significant shift from the more traditional parties toward populist parties. This shift has been apparent throughout the whole of Europe, but also in other countries, as in the 2016 United States presidential election Donald Trump, who can (arguably) be described as a populist candidate, won the election (Collinson, 2016). In more recent years we have also seen an increase in the populist vote as we have seen in the March 2018 election in Italy where two populist parties in Italy, the Five Star Movement (M5S) and Lega Nord party, arose victoriously and won a combined majority of votes and parliamentary seats (D'alimonte, 2019). Even this year, we can see an increase in the populist vote. The French election of 2022 showed that while the populist candidate Marine Le Pen did not win, her vote share increased, as in 2017 she got 33.9% of the vote share and in 2022 she got 41.5 % of the vote share (2.7 million more votes) (Clarke & Voce, 2022). In the election in Hungary on the 3rd of April 2022, Orbán won 53% with his Fidesz party 53% of the national vote resulting in a win in 88 of the 106 voting districts strengthening their grip over two-thirds of the majority of the seats (Bayer, 2022). The increase in the percentage of the populist vote differs a lot across Europe (there are also countries where the populist vote share increase has stagnated or where the populist vote share has somewhat been reduced), but it is safe to say that populism is here to stay. It is therefore no coincidence that many scholars have turned their attention to understanding who actually votes for a populist party and why. In this thesis, we will explore this question further, building on the already existing demand side of populism research. This thesis will thereby build on this research with the following concrete research question in mind:

“Who votes for a radical right-wing populist party”

As this is a popular research topic in political science, many scholars have explored different theoretical viewpoints holding this research question in mind. In the next chapter, this thesis will build a theoretical framework based on our current understanding of this research question. Hereby, an overview is given of the rationalist and structuralist research within populism research. Building on this research, this thesis will provide a new theoretical insight that has not been well explored: life satisfaction. Life satisfaction, which is the scientific interpretation of overall happiness, is for many people the ultimate goal in life itself. That it,

therefore, can provide many explanations in the social sciences field and in extension to the political science field should be a given. This thesis will demonstrate that life satisfaction is a factor that is necessary for understanding who votes for a radical right-wing populist party. Currently, most of the literature focusses on the (negative) attitudes of people with a specific topic which leads them to vote for a radical right-wing populist party. People can have negative attitudes towards immigration, European Union membership, the elite, sudden economic changes and politics leading them to vote for radical right-wing populist parties. This new theoretical insight will show that we need to look further beyond the political systematic and explanations for understanding who votes for a populist party by addressing negative attitudes towards an individuals' life in general. The wish for a drastic change (which is the theoretical underlying reasoning of the importance of life satisfaction in this case) can thereby be a reason for someone to vote for a populist party by itself. To find this, two hypotheses are drafted based on the rationalist and structuralist perspectives. The results of these hypotheses show that the rationalist perspective that moves beyond the classical economic approach by being rooted in individuals making a cost-benefit analysis based on life satisfaction is a strong addition to the demand side populism research.

1.1 Scientific relevance

This thesis adds to the scientific relevance in multiple ways. First, it adds a new theoretical viewpoint to the demand side of populism research by formulating life satisfaction as an explanatory variable. As we will see in the theoretical framework much of the important foundational research has already been done regarding the demand side of populism research. It is therefore all the more scientifically relevant if a necessary piece of the puzzle can be added to the explanatory variables when that opportunity presents itself. Second, this thesis adds to the debate on the existing rationalist and structuralist explanatory variables. As we will see in the theoretical framework many of the theories on the demand side of populism research moved towards the more structuralist side of research. Especially three of the recently most prevalent explanatory variables: "external political efficacy, populist attitudes, and political trust" which focus on the low satisfaction of politically systematic factors in society as will be elaborated further on in the theoretical framework. This thesis provides a counterpoint to this as it challenges this notion with a new rationalist approach. This new rationalist approach states that lower life satisfaction of an individual's life in general is an explanatory variable in populism research, independent of the political systematic influences. Classically, economic benefits are included in the cost-benefit analysis of rationalist approaches (especially in political science), but this thesis offers an insight whereby the benefits of the cost-benefit analysis an individual makes include life satisfaction. This rational approach will also be different than the existing rational

approaches in populist literature. Namely, the explanatory variable anti-immigration attitudes which is the most popular rational approach in the populist literature. This variable is fueled by dissatisfaction and shows that dissatisfaction has an indirect relationship with voting for a right-wing populist party through anti-immigration attitudes. This thesis however argues there also is a direct relationship between life satisfaction and voting for a radical right-wing populist party. This will be tested by controlling for the variables that claim an indirect relationship in the models. Third, this thesis adds to the question of whether life satisfaction plays an important role in political science. Since life satisfaction plays an important role in any individual's life it's a given that it has to play a large role in political science as it is so intertwined with the goals of an individual (as happiness is a goal in itself) that we can expect certain actions trying to achieve a higher life satisfaction. Even if life satisfaction appears to play a small role in specific parts of the political science field it would be theoretically interesting as it might mean that a person would not be driven by their own personal goals or it would mean that those goals would solely be based on material gains.

1.2 societal relevance

The existence of populist parties seems to be an element that had a strong influence on politics in the last few decades and that influence does not seem to be diminishing anytime soon. Understanding why people vote for a populist party will, therefore, be an important part of understanding the political climate now and in the near future. Furthermore, as the research on life satisfaction in combination with politics increases, the current theories on the driving force behind policy goals can be challenged. A large role for life satisfaction in politics challenges one of the most fundamental ideas in politics, namely, that most of the goals and reasoning behind policies should be economically based as that is what the voter's vote is supposedly based on. When life satisfaction seems to be an important explanatory variable for what people will vote on instead or besides increasing the economic position of the citizens, two societal impactful aspects arise. First, the goals for policymakers should or could shift towards policy based on increasing life satisfaction. Second, what it means to be a good government could incorporate an inclusion of life satisfaction as that is what the citizens desire from a government. Researching life satisfaction is therefore detrimental to understanding the modern principle-agent relationship between the policymakers and the citizens.

1.3 Research structure

This thesis will research whether life satisfaction plays a role in an individual's decision of whether they will vote for a radical right-wing populist party. Life satisfaction and happiness will be used interchangeably in this thesis as life satisfaction is a scientific interpretation of

overall happiness. This thesis will also look at other forms of populist parties (Radical left-wing populist parties and populist parties in general) in the form of explorative research. This thesis does not move towards causality regarding those forms as the theoretical explanation for those forms is lacking in this thesis and further research should elaborate on that front. The analysis leading up to the results is done via a multilevel logistic regression model with data from the ESS round 9 dataset (2018) and a populist party dataset from Meijers and Zaslove (2020b). This analysis explores Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom in its analysis with data from 2018. The results are presented with descriptive statistics, bivariate models, and multivariate models. Finally, the discussion will elaborate on the theoretical implications of these results.

Chapter 2 Theoretical framework

This thesis will focus on the research question: “who votes for populist radical right-wing parties?”. More specifically, this thesis will focus on whether self-reported well-being influences who votes for populist radical right-wing parties. To shed light on the theoretical insight of this thesis, this chapter will analyze this in light of two research schools of comparative politics: The rationalist school and the structuralist school (Lichbach & Zuckerman, 1997, p.244). These schools will be the foundation of the hypotheses that will be tested in this thesis. To give an idea of which approach is used in this field this thesis will discuss the main research school that is followed when describing the existing theories on the demand side of populism research. By doing this, the main hypotheses of this thesis can be better compared with the existing theories and are contextualized within the field.

This chapter will first articulate the supply side of populism research. Understanding the supply side of populism research is necessary to contextualize the demand side of populism because before we research who votes for populist parties we need to have an understanding of what populism actually is. Secondly this chapter will articulate the research concept of the two schools. This will help us understand how the grand theoretical schools in political science are applied in regards to the demand side of populism research. This, will in turn, help us formulate hypotheses on the basis of how the causal mechanism between life satisfaction and voting for a radical right-wing populist party has previously been researched. While an argument could be made to also include the culturalist school, this thesis found after applying this school that it would not add a meaningful insight to the theories and will therefore solely focus on the structuralist and rationalist school. Thirdly, this chapter will give an overview of the populist literature in the demand side of populist literature and divide this literature into the two research schools to create an understanding of the current theoretical viewpoints. An overview of the demand side of populist literature is necessary to understand what theoretical piece of the puzzle is currently missing and how the main viewpoint of this thesis will fill this gap. fourthly, this chapter will define self-reported well-being (and in extent life satisfaction) and contextualize it within political science research and then more specifically within populist research. Finally, this chapter will articulate two possible theoretical explanations of the relationship between life satisfaction and populism in light of the two research schools leading up to the two hypotheses of this thesis.

2.1 Supply side populism

What is populism? How do we define the concept and how do we distinguish this concept from other concepts especially since populism is remarkably difficult to define? That is what

the supply side research on populism tries to answer. The central question of this thesis lies in the demand side of populism research, but to understand the demand side of populism, it is necessary to understand the definition of populism and the parties which are included within this definition. This thesis will, therefore, start by contextualizing the central question by articulating the supply side of populism research in the next segment.

2.1.1 Defining the concept of populism

In the last 30 years, populism has increasingly become a more researched topic in the political science field. Populism appeared to be somewhat difficult to define and demarcate and much of the supply side research was therefore focused on defining populism. Before conceptualizing the concept populism, there were some other concepts preceding the concept of populism, namely concepts around anti-immigration parties. Since the 80s anti-immigration parties have gained an increased foothold in Western-European countries (Fennema, 1997, pp. 473-474). These parties arose from a whole different array of parties and had different historical contexts. The authors writing about this topic had some difficulties defining these parties. To solve this, Fennema (1997, pp. 475-486) stipulates three different anti-immigrant parties. First, protest parties are parties focused on citizens who are dissatisfied with the current situation of the country and are rejecting the political system. Second, racist parties are parties that are characterized by prioritizing immigration policy while not being openly racist. Third, Extreme right parties are rooted in the extreme right ideology doctrine consisting of ethnic nationalism, anti-materialism, anti-parliament, and conspiracy theories. In the decade after the 80s, the term populism became more widely used in research (Mudde, 2004, pp. 541-542). The anti-immigrant discourse also increased during that period insofar that we can speak of a populist zeitgeist. These populist parties are historically rooted in the despising of the political elite and the established parties and are present on both the left and the right side of the political spectrum and both articulated anti-immigration standpoints (Mudde, 2004, pp. 548). To define the concept of populism Mudde (2004) and Stanley (2008) suggest a more catch-all thin definition. Mudde (2004) argues for a definition of populism that it is *“an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people”* (Mudde, 2004, p. 562). Stanley (2008, pp.106-108) adds to this by arguing that populism should be defined as a thin ideology that can be combined with other ideologies.

2.1.2 Populist parties

Populism adds a new ideological insight into politics, but it has difficulty in answering the famous “who gets what, when and how questions”. It is best researched in combination with other (full) ideologies. Studies like Mudde (2007b & 2007c) and more recently Meijers & Zaslove (2020a) focused on how to demarcate the different kinds of populist parties and the number of populist tendencies of a party. Mudde (2007b) looks at the radical right-wing parties and (non-)populist terms. He then formulates a ladder of abstraction to distinguish the terms and to show how they relate to each other. He articulates three groups of populist parties: “social populist parties, radical right-wing populist parties, and neoliberal populist parties” (Mudde, 2007b, pp. 29-30). In the second chapter of his book, Mudde (2007c) creates a classification of the populist and non-populist radical right-wing parties. Meijers & Zaslove (2020a, p. 399) propose an alternate method of measuring the amount of populism in political parties to better operationalize the concept of populism. They argue that *“populism is a latent construct and that the ideational multi-dimensional approach to populism can be operationalized with five separate items: “Manichean worldview,” “indivisible people,” “general will,” “people-centrism,” and “anti-elitism.” Loading strongly on a single factor, these five dimensions constitute the latent construct of populism”* (Meijers & Zaslove, 2020a, p. 399). To analyze this, they use expert surveys on parties and assess the party’s ideological position (Meijers & Zaslove, 2020a, p. 381). This measurement will also be used in this thesis to create the “voting for radical right-wing populist party” variable. They find both populism on the left and right-wing of the political spectrum (Meijers & Zaslove, 2020a, p. 399).

Studies like Jagers and Walgrave (2007) and Kessel (2015) try to look for empirical evidence of these populist parties. Jagers and Walgrave (2007, p. 11) look for evidence of populist parties in Belgium by applying a comparative discourse analysis of the political party broadcasts of the Belgian parties. They find clear evidence of the defining factors of a populist party in the party “Vlaams Blok” in Belgium. Kessel (2015, pp. 33-73) identifies the populist parties in Europe in the second chapter of his book. He does this by analyzing party literature, secondary literature, and country experts. He finds many cases of clear populist parties across Europe, but also that it is hard to distinguish between populist parties in many borderline cases. This is because parties can switch between using populist rhetoric and not using it on different instances and time frames. What is clear though, is that anti-immigration and Euroscepticism (for the countries within the European Union) play a large role for populist parties (Kessel, 2015, pp. 33-73). In chapter 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 this thesis will further explore anti-immigration and Euroscepticism and link the supply side research with the demand side.

As is described in the above segment, Mudde differentiates between radical right-wing, neoliberal, and social populist parties. This thesis will focus on radical right-wing populist parties as it is beyond the scope of this thesis to encompass all populist parties and radical right-wing populism is most central in populist research. Besides the definition of populism as described in chapter 2.2.1, the other two elements of the concept (radical and right-wing) are defined as follows. Radical is defined as *“the opposition to some key features of liberal democracy most notably political pluralism and the constitutional protection of minorities”* (Mudde, 2007b, p.26). Right-wing is defined as the believe that *“the main inequalities between people are natural and outside the purview of the state* (Mudde, 2007b, p. 27). This is in opposition to the left as they argue that these inequalities are artificial and can be solved by certain actions by the state.

2.2 The research schools

The research schools are different approaches for ways to perform research in social science and in extension political science. The schools are not explicitly named in every research, but the approaches of the schools are nonetheless used (sometimes multiple schools are combined). This is because the different research schools are based on different elements, factors, and viewpoints which combine into a different way of approaching research and formulating hypotheses (Lichbach & Zuckerman, 1997, p. 244). They begin from a different baseline of causality (cost-benefit vs. systematic or structural influences). Furthermore, these approaches are differentiated by the actor by which they form their conclusions (individual vs. structures). Finally, they use different tools to find the causality. The different schools lead to different theories and hypotheses which in turn lead to different causal explanations of who votes for radical right-wing populist parties. This thesis will (after describing the research schools in more depth) give an overview of the populist literature and their research schools. This is done to understand what approach to use to formulate a theory and a hypothesis to understand what role life satisfaction plays in understanding who votes for radical right-wing populist parties.

2.2.1 The rationalist school

The rationalist school argues that all explanations arrive from the intentional actions of individuals (Lichbach & Zuckerman, 1997, pp. 245-260). They state that collective actions, are the consequence of all individuals rational actions. The consequences on a broader scale do not need to be rational, they are a conclusion of the combined individual rational interests of people. Its Methodology is focused on finding and applying the conditions of the objective external world that influence the subjective internal world. This means that

rationalists primarily look for objective material effects for an individual. That individual would then make a cost-benefit analysis and look for the option that would maximize their benefit the most which in turn results in the decision for that individual. To do this they use static comparative tools and by doing this they are trying to find a basis for generalization and to find the preference ordering of individuals (Lichbach & Zuckerman, 1997, p. 245). In light of the central question of this thesis, research from the rationalist school might look for two aspects. First, it will look for the preference ordering of topics whereby individuals choose to vote for a populist party rather than voting for another party based on their perceived importance of certain topics. Second, it will look for predictors for certain costs of not voting for a populist party or certain benefits of voting for a populist party that influences their cost-benefit analysis in such a way that they vote for a populist party. We will see in chapter 2.3 that in research on economic predictors and anti-immigration this line of research is followed. In chapter 2.5.1 a hypothesis will be formulated based on this research school.

2.2.3 The structuralist school

The structuralist school studies explanations that arrive from networks, linkages, interdependencies, and interactions in a system (Lichbach & Zuckerman, 1997, pp. 245-260). When creating a structuralist argument researchers look at the topic in light of the other components/relationships by which it is connected. This school argues that to understand a theoretical relationship you need to find the structural parts from which that theoretical relationship came to be. To find these parts it is necessary to look at the static and dynamic relationships between individuals, communities/collectives, institutions, and organizations (Lichbach & Zuckerman, 1997, pp. 245-260). Its Methodology is based on structures. Structuralists argue that these structures are non-observable entities with causal power and by studying them they expect to find a necessary cause. To do this they primarily look for (historical) dynamics and social types that have causal power relating to these entities. In light of the central question of this thesis, research from the structuralist school looks for linkages within the overarching system/institutions which can motivate people to vote for a populist party. This motivation can be caused in two ways. First, the current linkages with the system can riot people against the system and the elite (who are framed to encompass the system) which in turn motivates them to vote for a populist party. Second, the way the system is structured enables populist parties to rally people against the system and the elite which in turn motivates them to vote for a populist party. We will see in chapter 2.3 that Euroscepticism, external political efficacy, political trust & populist attitudes, and emotional predictors will follow this line of research. In chapter 2.5.2 a hypothesis will be formulated based on this research school.

2.3 Demand-side populism

As the contextual supply side of populism is now articulated we need to set the stage for the demand side of populism. The academic literature on the demand side of populism is giving us an increasingly better understanding of the research question presented in this thesis. Many possible predictors of voting for populist parties have been researched. In the following part of this thesis we will see that this resulted in studies on economic predictors, anti-immigration predictors, Euroscepticism predictors, efficacy, political trust & populist attitudes predictors and emotional predictors as this thesis will articulate in this chapter of the theoretical framework. These are the variables that try to solve the theoretical puzzle of who votes for radical right-wing parties. This thesis will first articulate the economic predictors as these are historically important in political science. Second, Euroscepticism and anti-immigration predictors will be described as they are convoluted with the supply side of populism research, are at the core of populist parties, and should be correctly contextualized. Third, we will turn towards the efficacy, political trust & populist attitudes predictors as they are important predictors in the populist literature, and most importantly they also speak about a feeling of discontent whereby dissatisfaction also plays a large role. Finally, we will zoom in on the main variable and new viewpoint (life satisfaction) that this thesis suggests for answering the research question by pinpointing and contextualizing the existing predictors within the theoretical puzzle.

2.3.1 *Economic predictors (Rationalist)*

Some of the heaviest researched predictors in political science are economic predictors. It is therefore not unreasonable that some of the researchers on populism focused their attention on possible economic predictors. Economic predictors do not seem to be the strongest influential factor regarding voting for a populist party, but there is some evidence that there arguably is some kind of economic relationship. Most of the theoretical interesting research on these predictors is focused on research income (in)equality (Stoetzer et al, 2021), and macroeconomic predictors (Gyongyosi & Verner, 2018 & Rodrik, 2018 & Margalit 2019). After multiple studies that find a correlation between income inequality and populism, Stoetzer et al. (2021, pp. 15-16) analyze possible causal mechanisms between income inequality and populism. They do not find any conclusive causal mechanisms and raise questions regarding the empirical support of existing theories whereby macroeconomic changes in equality are a precondition for the rise of populist parties. These macro-economic predictors come in the form of globalization and financial crises. Gyongyosi & Verner (2018, pp. 61-63) find by analyzing financial crises that financial distress as a consequence of risky lending not only affects the real economy but can also influence political outcomes. Most prominently it can influence the support of radical right-wing populism. Rodrik (2018, p.16)

argues that the economic ripple effects of globalization were distributed unevenly and are one of the causes of populism. On the other hand, Margalit (2019) finds and argues that economic changes do not necessarily instigate support for populism due to material concerns, because the effect goes both ways; economic change might be a cause for grievance along cultural lines, and cultural changes can also create discontent among economic issues; *“when populist politicians address issues such as immigration, trade, or rural-urban disparities, they tap into public disaffection that goes beyond voters concern with the material impact of those issues”* (Margalit , 2019, p.166). The research on the economic predictors of the demand side of populism is driven by the materialistic losses of certain individuals and globalization influences like economic crises and immigration (Rodrik, 2021, p.148) turning into the demand for change which in turn drives them to vote on populist parties. This research, therefore, sheds light on the economic rationalist perspective on why people would vote for a populist party.

To sum up, the economic predictors seem to be a very small part of the theoretical puzzle whereby the most researched topics are focused on income inequality and macroeconomic changes. On a more abstract level, this is research on the question of whether sudden materialistic losses or a build-up of grievance due to income differentiation play a large role in determining who votes for radical right-wing populist parties. While, as described above, some evidence is found for this theoretical viewpoint, this does not seem like the predictor that is the most influential piece of the theoretical puzzle.

The usually strong economic predictors in political science are up for discussion regarding the demand side of populism when looking at the findings of Stoetzer et al. (2021), Margalit (2019), and Mudde (2007a). Populism is, by analyzing the literature, primarily driven by non-economic factors. It is, therefore, apparent that it is necessary to look at non-economic predictors. While non-economic predictor research is relatively new and underused in political science research, in populism research non-economic predictors seem to be most central to the question of who votes for populist parties and are therefore heavily researched. The most prevalent non-economic explanatory variables will be described in the next segment.

2.3.2 Anti-immigration as a predictor for voting for populist parties (Rationalist)

At the core of populist parties there is a crucial non-economic variable, anti-immigration. Anti-immigration is one of the most prevalent elements for supply and demand-side research on populism. Research on this topic is also fairly convoluted between the demand and supply side of populism research as it can be a defining part of populist parties and a

motivation for people to vote for populist parties. Authors like Mudde (2007a & 2007b) show how anti-immigration has shaped the concept of populism, Akbaba (2018) shows how populist parties shape the political (populist) discourse so that their demand increases, and Rodrik (2021) formulates how anti-immigration attitudes can increase the demand for populist parties. Mudde (2007b, p.16) argues that when defining a populist party nationalism is always a defining part. Nationalism has achieving a monocultural state by internal homogenization whereby the citizens of a nation are only people from its “own nation” as its core goal. Adding to this, Mudde (2007a, pp.136-137) argues that as opposed to neoliberal party programs and neoliberal electorates, economic policies are not as relevant and they only serve to achieve these core ideological positions. Since these ideological positions have “achieving a monocultural state” at their core it shows the importance of the anti-immigration element in populist parties (as this would be the means to achieve that goal). Coinciding with Mudde’s findings, Akbaba (2018, pp. 214-215) looks at the new style of political communication in Europe by studying the Netherlands, Finland, Italy, and Hungary and argues that populist discourse is increasingly shaped to articulate a big European family protecting their European culture. By doing this they are trying to demonize and foster hatred towards people from outside of this family which in turn increases the demand for the populist parties. Rodrik (2021, p.133) creates a conceptual framework of the effects of globalization on the support for radical right-wing populist parties whereby Rodrik looks at cultural and identity factors. Rodrik finds in the context of an anti-immigration policy that the mechanism by which immigration creates a consensus in populist support whereby Rodrik stipulates three different possible causal mechanisms (Rodrik, 2021, pp.148-154). First, the influx of foreigners can generate a cultural backlash arising from anti-immigrant sentiments from psychological and/or identity-related processes. The rejection of immigrants because they are “not like us”. Second, the influx of foreigners can cause economic dislocations which in turn can cause a reduction in wages (especially in lower skill type work). Third, the influx of foreigners can cause a reduction in the amount of available public services that are provided to the citizens of a certain country. Rodrik (2021, pp.151-154) argues that while there is some empirical evidence for the second and third causal mechanisms, there seem to be fluctuating results. The first causal mechanism seems to be the most convincing in the literature.

In conclusion, the research on Anti-Immigration is mixed between the supply side and the demand side of populism as stated in chapter 2.2.2. and demonstrated in this chapter. Some research on this topic is on the definition of populist parties (as anti-immigration is an important factor) and some research is on how populist parties utilized the influx of immigration as a scapegoat to gain votes (the supply side) and other research is focused on

anti-immigration as a predictor for voting on a populist party (demand side). On a more abstract level, the research on the anti-immigration predictors of the demand side of populism is driven by the opposition towards immigrants in a country by using them as a scapegoat fueled by discontent. This thesis argues in opposition to the anti-immigration explanatory variable that discontent alone can be a reason to vote for radical right-wing populist parties. No scapegoat is needed to vote on the party that they expect to change their situation the most drastically. Finally, when looking at the research schools of anti-immigration (demand side) research, certain individuals order their preferences in a way to decide what the most important issue is what motivates them to vote for a specific party. In this case, the individuals want to vote for the party that is portraying an anti-immigration stance. This turns into the demand for a party that advocates for anti-immigration policies which will, in turn, incentivize them to vote for populist parties. This research, therefore, sheds light on the rationalist perspective on why people would vote for a populist party as preference ordering is at the core of this causal mechanism.

2.3.3. Euroscepticism

Euroscepticism has also been a widely studied topic regarding populist parties. This mostly stems from the question of how the effects of globalization play a role in the supply and demand side of populist parties. Authors like Krouwel & Abts (2007), Pirro et al. (2018) and Van der Brug & Fennema (2009) research this topic. Krouwel & Abts (2007, p. 261) make a typology of European discontent whereby they differentiate by targets and degree of discontent and whereby they differentiate between European Union support and European integration. They state that populist parties mobilize people on this topic by a trust - distrustful/skeptical stance towards incumbents instead of just negative attitudes (Krouwel & Abts, 2007 & pp. 267-269). Pirro et al. (2018, pp.11-13) find when studying cases after European Union crisis situations in France, Germany, Italy, Greece, The Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, and the United Kingdom that Left-wing populist parties focus on socio-economic European Union issues and right-wing populist parties on immigration while the mainstream parties remain silent on this issue. They do suggest that this does not mean that the rise of populist parties is necessarily caused by an expression of Eurosceptic sentiments. In confirmation of that claim, Van der Brug & Fennema (2009, pp.16-17) find when studying countries in the European Union with ESS that this relationship is relatively weak and suggests that feelings of being discontent should be a stronger predictor of voting for a populist party.

In sum, the research on Euroscepticism is somewhat mixed between the supply side and the demand side of populism as stated in chapter 2.2.2. and in this chapter. Some research on

this topic is focused on how populist parties utilized the European Union as a scapegoat to gain votes and gained it as a party characteristic (the supply side) and other research is focused on Euroscepticism as a predictor for voting for a populist party (demand side). On a more abstract level, this means that the causal mechanism that is expected in these studies, is that dissatisfaction would, by using the European Union as a scapegoat for their dissatisfaction, mobilize voters to vote for radical right-wing populist parties because the populist parties formulate an anti-European union standpoint. This is a stark example of research on a predictor that needs a systematic factor to be true as dissatisfaction with the European Union is central to this predictor (and the causes/dependencies of this institution serve as the systematic influence within this relationship). This thesis argues that dissatisfaction does, in contrast to the above theories, not need a political systematic reliance to be a predictor for who votes for radical right-wing parties. Individuals simply want to change their own situation and look at the parties who formulate the most drastic anti-current situation standpoint to vote on. In the context of the demand-side research schools, the discussed literature on Euroscepticism looks at the influence of the feelings towards the European Union on voting for a populist party. It looks at the linkages between the influence of this overarching legislating institution, the European Union, on support for populist parties. To do this it looks for evidence for the conditions of when the anti-European Union stance leads to support for populist parties. Since it looks at the conditions, linkages, and structures it is structuralist research.

2.3.4 External political efficacy, political trust & populist attitudes

Some of the other most researched predictors for voting for a populist party, focus on the feeling of discontent towards the political system based on trust, ability to participate, and feelings of aversion against the elite. These predictors are political efficacy (Spruyt et al., 2016), lower political trust (Jiang & Ma, 2020), and populist attitudes (Akkerman et al., 2014) and are also strong predictors when researched parallel with each other (Geurking et al., 2020). Spruyt et al. (2016, p. 343) find that external political efficacy has a distinct effect on populism besides populist attitudes. Jiang & Ma (2020, p.375) find that political distrust can act as a moderating source to raise votes for right-wing populist parties in the elections. Akkerman et al. (2014, p.1344) find a link between populist attitudes and voting on populist parties. Geurkink et al, (2020) find that populist attitudes, political trust, and external political efficacy all have a distinct relationship with populist voting preferences. The variable political trust measures: *“the extent to which individuals feel that political parties, government, or parliament fulfill their expectations, that is, their policy expectations”* (Geurking et al., 2020, p.250). The variable external political efficacy measures: *“the extent to which an individual feels that he or she has an influence on the political process and the degree to which he or*

she believes that political institutions are responsive to their demands” (Geurking et al. p.251, 2020). The feeling of having an influence on a political system is inherently dependent on the structures of that political system. The variable “populist attitudes” measures the populism that is present among individuals. It hereby includes people centrism with the belief that it is needed to further the general will and it includes anti-elite with the antagonistic distinction between the pure people, the elite and the general will (Geurking et al. pp.252-253, 2020).

In sum, all three of these research topics are clearly rooted in many different levels of interactions and linkages it has with the structures in a political system as this feeling of discontent towards the political system is possible due to the way the political system is structured. This, therefore, means that it is structuralist research. This line of research will be used in the structuralist hypothesis of this thesis as we will see in chapter 2.5.2. These variables are related to life satisfaction because they theorize that discontent fuels voting for radical right-wing parties. The most prominent difference between life satisfaction and the variables mentioned in this chapter is that the variables mentioned in this chapter measure discontent in the context of the political system. As we will see, this thesis expects that feelings of discontent that are caused by influences outside of the scope of discontent towards the political system based on trust, ability to participate, and feelings of aversion against the elite will be important for understanding who votes for radical right-wing populist parties.

2.3.5 Emotional predictors

This thesis looks at the influence of happiness/ life satisfaction which is partly rooted in a growing emotional argument on predicting voting for populist parties. The emotional side has been long overlooked in social science research (Demertzis, 2006, p.103). The idea that emotions could play a large role in political science research was until the early 2000’s conceived as being useless because emotions were suggested to be irrational elements that would not influence an individual’s rationality in regards to their decision-making process (Demertzis, 2006, pp.103-104). This is all rooted in the idea that (objective) interests are dominant in the decision-making process as opposed to “passion” playing a role by which people can make a decision. Emotions are a result/reflection of certain aspects of social relations: “*An emotion is something we do (or do not do) as part of our interactions with others*” (Clarke et al. 2006, pp.6-7). They are different depending on the time, social contexts, and the place where an individual is located. How are emotions perceived in politics? On the one hand, the use of emotions is being perceived as negative since politicians should act on reason, not on emotion (Clarke et al. 2006, p.5). On the other hand,

we admire a politician who has a passion for their policies and who speaks from the heart. Emotionally motivated actions are here to stay and are a core element of understanding politics.

Research on the emotional side in political science is therefore increasingly getting renewed attention as it is now being seen as an intrinsic part of politics. Within populism research, emotions appeared to be important predictors because the uncertainties of the state and within that state create a sense of powerlessness for individuals which in turn causes resentment (Demertzis, 2006, p.104). In articles like Rico et al. (2017) & Salmela & Scheve (2018) anger and fear, emotional aspects are argued as being a possible predictor of voting for populist parties which seem to be rooted in this resentment (Cossarini & Valespín, 2019, p.44). Rico et al. (2017, p.444) find by analyzing data from Spain that anger had a significant effect on populist attitudes, but fear was not a significant predictor in their research. Salmela & Scheve (2018, p. 452) theorize there is a distinction between right-wing populism and left-wing populism. Right-wing populism, they suggest, is driven by repressed shame which in turn leads to anger, resentment, and hatred against perceived enemies. Left-wing populism is driven by a shared negative emotional feeling which can transform into many emotions like anger, pride, joy, and hope resulting in support for left-wing populist parties or civil rights movements.

In sum, emotions are rooted in many factors, but the emotional factor relating to populism (resentment) is rooted in multiple factors that are found due to analyzing the (perceived) failure of the state. This theoretical causal mechanism works as follows. First, there is a state that inherently causes many uncertainties due to the vast amount of different aspects of society it determines. Second, an individual is being negatively influenced by a specific policy or state action. They themselves do not have the power to change this and as they feel powerless against the state, they get angry which in turn leads to resentment against the state. This resentment leads those individuals to vote for populist parties as those parties oppose the current version of the state the most. Since these structural uncertainties are a combination of uncertainties on the state level and on the individual level, which leads to resentment, which in turn leads to support for populist parties this will be regarded as structuralist research. This research is comparable to the theoretical viewpoint as it could be argued that it also leads people to vote for a populist party by changing their current situation. Research on emotional predictors is however fueled by dissatisfaction about uncertainties regarding the state in contrast to a more direct dissatisfaction effect.

2.3.6 The demand side populism puzzle

As we have seen many different theoretical viewpoints have been explored. First, the sudden materialistic losses and a build-up of grievance due to income differentiation are explored in the economic predictors. The theory on these predictors argues that these issues lead voters to take action to oppose the incumbents by voting for populist parties. Second, the theory that some people are driven to vote for radical right-wing populist parties by the opposition towards immigrants in a country is explored. This theory argues that certain individuals order their preferences to vote for the most anti-immigrant party (a radical right-wing populist party). Third, dissatisfaction with the European Union to mobilize voters is explored. This theory argues that the presence of an all-encompassing institute can be utilized to create a scapegoat that causes people to take action in opposition to it (vote for anti-European Union parties). Fourth, the theories on discontent towards the political system based on trust, ability to participate, and feelings of aversion against the elite were explored by addressing external political efficacy, political trust & populist attitudes. These theories expect that this discontent fuels voting for the parties that articulate this discontent (populist parties). Fifth, the theory on resentment caused by the inherent uncertainties is explored by looking at the emotional predictors. This theory expects that people who are discontent due to certain policies or state actions take action against the state by voting for populist parties. Apparently dissatisfaction/discontent due to many factors plays a crucial role in the demand side of populist literature, but one important piece of the puzzle regarding dissatisfaction is missing which the above theories do not explore. All of the theories that include discontent are based on a specific discontent with something. This might however be overlooking that dissatisfaction, in general, can also lead to someone wanting to change their current situation. There are many factors that can lead to an individual being dissatisfied with their lives and therefore their personal current situation. It is also unclear how life satisfaction fuels other variables like anti-immigration. Some people will choose to use immigrants as a scapegoat and some will not. It is however safe to assume that when someone is dissatisfied with their current situation they want to change that situation. This can lead people to vote for radical right-wing populist parties as they oppose the current situation the most. This thesis argues that it does not matter why people are dissatisfied with their lives, it only matters that they want to get out of that situation. This thesis expects that this is independent of possible scapegoats like the European Union, immigrants or the government as the expectation of change will have a direct influence on someone's vote. This thesis, therefore, looks at life satisfaction to operationalize someone's content with their current situation. The theoretical base of this variable will be further articulated in the next segment.

2.4 Self-reported wellbeing (SWB)

This thesis adds to the research on the demand side of populism research by further exploring a recently upcoming predictor in political science: “Subjective wellbeing” (SWB). SWB is a subjective measure and includes a global assessment of a person’s life (Diener, 1984, pp. 543-544). It is a measurement of happiness and is considered to be the strongest motivation for human action as it is supposed to be its highest good (Diener 1984, p.542). Social scientists focus hereby most on life satisfaction (Diener, 1984, p. 543). Even though there are other possible determinators that can influence SWB like positive and negative emotions (Helliwell & Barrington-Leigh, 2010, pp. 733-735). They appear to be a weaker and more volatile determinant of SWB. Life satisfaction is a more reflective broad measurement of the continuing circumstances of an individual's life. To add to the research on populism this thesis will therefore focus on life satisfaction as a whole as opposed to individual emotions (like anger and fear as mentioned above).

2.4.1 SWB in political science theories

Subjective wellbeing is an increasingly more researched topic in political science research because it explores whether a goal incumbents should strive for is to increase individual well-being and social welfare as opposed to purely economic gains which are historically assumed (Fleurbaey, 2009, p.1029). On the one hand, SWB research in political science is focused on policy goals (Whitely et al., 2010 & Clapham, 2010 & Bache, I., & Reardon, 2013). Whitely et al. (2010, pp.742-744) look for the effects of public policy outcomes on life satisfaction. They find that the feeling of being able to influence policy strongly positively influences life satisfaction when the government can control for economic shocks. Clapham (2010, pp. 263 – 265) argues that using policy to promote happiness should be one of the key goals for decision-makers by theorizing that an emphasis on well-being can lead to an increase in self-esteem and a feeling of control which in turn will lead to improved well-being. Bache & Reardon (2013) argue that there might be a shift towards more well-being focused policy in British politics via a multiple streams method approach that tries to explain what factors politicians focus on. On the other hand, subjective well-being is increasingly being used as a predictor in political science for political participation (Lindholm, 2020 & Cheng et al., 2021 & Flavin & Keane, 2012). Lindholm (2020, pp. 480-481) finds a reciprocal effect between SWB and protesting by doing a causality test. The stronger effect of SWB on the intention of wanting to protest can in turn lead to a decrease in well-being. Cheng et al. (2021, p. 17) find by analyzing data from the World Values Survey on Hong Kong that lower life satisfaction can lead to more radicalized actions such as strikes or boycotts. They do however not find a relationship between life satisfaction and non-radicalized forms of

participation. Flavin & Keane (2012, pp. 70-76) do find a robust relationship between life satisfaction and political participation in the United States. They find, unlike Cheng et al., that life satisfaction has no direct relationship with political protest only with conventional forms of political participation. Specifically, they find a strong relationship between life satisfaction and voting.

2.4.2 SWB in voting research

While the relationship between SWB and political participation is still up for debate, the relationship between SWB and voting seems like the findings of Flavin (2012) to be more robust (Ward, 2019 & Liberini et al., 2018 & Esaisson et al., 2019 & Weitz-Shapiro & Winters, 2011). Ward (2019, pp. 514-516) looks at the electoral demand for an increase in SWB-centered policy and finds that SWB is a strong predictor of incumbent support whereby higher SWB leads to higher incumbent support. It explains more of the variance for incumbent support than macroeconomic variables like economic growth, unemployment, and inflation. This suggests that there are in fact significant electoral incentives for politicians to increase their focus on SWB when making policy. Liberni et al. (2018, pp. 25-26) also find that SWB is a predictor for incumbent support. Furthermore, they find that although SWB is a predictor for incumbent support that relationship also has a second underlying factor besides holding the government accountable. The relationship can also be partially explained by influences on SWB that cannot reasonably be expected to have come from public policy outcomes like the unfortunate passing of a family member. Esaisson et al. (2019, p. 39) also find a relationship between SWB and government support and argue that this is because citizens have signed a happiness contract with the government. They state that this contract means that citizens adjust their political system support according to their SWB. They suggest that people who have lower SWB are less willing to comply with policy and actions and the system of the governments. Weitz-Shapiro & Winters (2011, pp. 119-120) look at the relationship between life satisfaction and voting in Latin America and whether higher life satisfaction leads to voting or other forms of political participation or whether voting leads to higher SWB. They find a small significant relationship between voting and life satisfaction on the one hand. On the other hand, they find a stronger significant relationship between life satisfaction and voting whereby the higher life satisfaction the higher propensity to vote. They suggest that this research indicates that in the relation between SWB and voting, SWB is more likely to be the independent variable.

2.4.3 SWB and populism

Keeping in mind the following five aspects of SWB as discussed in the previous part of this thesis we can state that the relationship between SWB and populism is an important addition

to the demand side populism research. First, happiness is seen as the ultimate good of humanity. To be happy with your life is therefore expected to be a strong predictor for many possible actions a human can take and should be thoroughly researched. Second, SWB is increasingly being used as a policy goal and it is therefore important to analyze if this makes any sense in the populist case. Third, people with lower SWB appear to be voting less on the incumbent party because they are less happy with their current situation. We should therefore analyze whether this vote that relates to being unhappy with their current situation also causes people to vote populist more often since populist parties oppose this current situation created by the “corrupt established elite”. Fourth, the emotional aspect seems to be important in populism because of individuals' feelings of resentment towards the state and is mostly researched by looking for a relationship between anger & fear and populism. Other than the fear and anger predictors, which are very volatile predictors, life satisfaction is a more reflective broad measurement of the continuing circumstances of an individual's life. It can therefore create a more consistent picture to visualize this relationship between (un)happiness and populism. Furthermore, the research on emotions within politics is dependent on the systematic influences which, this thesis argues, are only partly necessary to understand who votes for radical right-wing populist parties. Fifth, as described in chapter 2.3.6 it contrasts the research that argues that discontent is only a predictor for populist parties when the discontent is in the context of a certain factor. By analyzing this, we would further explore the possibility of whether voting populism is a vote of discontent with the wish for change, independent of an individual's stance towards a specific factor. In conclusion, this thesis tries to look for evidence of whether lower SWB will cause people to vote for populist radical right-wing parties more often. It, thereby, sheds light on the question of whether all the different factors that can influence an individual's life satisfaction which is not encompassed by the current populist demand-side literature can be a major factor in determining who votes for a populist party.

2.5 Theoretical viewpoints

As discussed above this chapter divides populist literature into structuralist and rationalist research. To analyze the theoretical explanation for the relationship between SWB and voting for populist parties this chapter will now articulate a theoretical viewpoint from each of the schools leading to a hypothesis for each of the theories.

2.5.1 SWB and voting on populist parties; the rational perspective

Happiness is considered to be the strongest motivation for human action as it is supposed to be its highest good (Dienser 1984, p.542). Rationality can be a driving force to help people achieve more happiness (Bernard, 2010, pp. 11-14). This can be seen in contrast to the

more traditional rationalist theories which argue that people look for objective material effects in their cost-benefit analysis. This thesis argues that even though life satisfaction is not an objective material beneficial effect, it is nonetheless a benefit people will strive for since it is to be the strongest motivation for human action as it can be the goal of life itself. To live a rational life in regards to achieving happiness, people will make choices whereby they take their personal knowledge into account to achieve higher levels of excitement in the short term and satisfaction with their lives in the long term. When taking the principles of rational choice research into account as described in the first part of the theoretical framework we can assign the following point of view regarding the relationship between happiness and voting for populist parties. When people are less satisfied with their lives it is rational to take action towards changing their current life situation so that their life satisfaction will increase. Since people want to increase their life satisfaction and are motivated to take action towards this goal they make a cost-benefit analysis when picking a party to vote on and are motivated to choose the party that will most likely change their current situation. A populist party advocates for changing the current situation because the current situation is supposed to be horrendous due to dominating elite who are opposing the interests of the people. It can thereby be rational to vote for populist parties whenever someone's life satisfaction is low as those parties are most likely to cause a change in the current situation. This thesis thereby formulates the following hypothesis:

“H1: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the more likely they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party”

This hypothesis is the most important theoretical insight of this thesis. This is because if we can accept this hypothesis, it means that, in contradiction to the most popular theories on voting for a populist party, people can vote for a populist party independent of how the actual political system is situated (even though that is one of the most important aspects of a populist party). This means that this hypothesis serves as a direct opposition to external political efficacy and political trust as these theories assume that people are motivated to vote for a populist party due to political systematic factors.

2.5.2 SWB and voting on populist parties; the structuralist (relative deprivation) perspective

As described in chapter 2.3.2. the research on political trust looks at the fulfillment of expectations of political institutions. The research on external political efficacy looks at the amount of influence someone perceives he/she has on the political system/process. Whereby the lower amount of external political efficacy the more likely someone votes for a radical right-wing populist party. The structuralist viewpoint of this thesis argues that due to

the relative deprivation theory the life satisfaction of people gets lower when comparing themselves to the elite creating an anti-elite stance which causes them to vote for populist parties independent of their anti-elite stance caused by a decrease in political trust and low amounts of external political efficacy.

The relative deprivation theory is a theory about a group of people who take a specific action because they are deprived of something (Davis, 1959, pp. 280-284). Within this theory, we take the following two core factors into account. First, there is a specific perceived value that is desired by a population or group of people. The people who possess this (perceived) value are non-deprived compared to the deprived. This can be an in-group comparison or an outgroup comparison. Second, when someone of the deprived group compares their own situation regarding that value to someone of the non-deprived group they get a subjective opposite to the non-deprived group called relative subordination. The relative deprivation theory is not uncommonly used in political science literature articles like articles by Grasso et al. (2019) and Asingo (2018). Grasso et al. (2019, pp. 426-428) researched the effects of the relative deprivation theory on social and political action. They find that when someone has lower contextual economic capabilities that person is increasingly mobilized to do unconventional acts of participation (like demonstrating) but is not increasingly mobilized to participate in conventional activism (like voting). Asingo (2018, pp. 78-82) finds in a case study on Kenya that intra-personal relative deprivation influences both the likelihood of whether someone protests and whether someone votes. Whereby intra-personal relative deprivation means the situation wherein a person is now compared to a past situation (Asingo, 2018, pp. 74-75).

In this thesis, the relative deprivation theory will be applied with the following reasoning: A group of people feels that they have lower life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is a desired value since this is (as described previously in this chapter) the biggest motivation for human action. The group that has lower life satisfaction notices an outgroup, the elite, who are in power and have the ability to change the structures of the society in the interests of the people and increase their life satisfaction. They perceive that this group of elites uses this power to increase their own life satisfaction as opposed to using it for the people. Therefore they perceive their position as being the pure people as opposed to the corrupt elite. Hereby they (the deprived group) get a subjective opposition towards the non-deprived group (the elite). Comparable to the emotional causal mechanism of chapter 2.3.3 people get a feeling of resentment towards the established elite. Due to this feeling of resentment, they want to take action against these elite members of society and they will thus vote for a populist party. This thesis, therefore, expects when looking from the structuralist perspective that the effect

of life satisfaction on voting for a populist party is mediated by the feelings of resentment a person has against the elite. This thesis thereby formulates the following hypothesis:

“H2: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the higher an individual's anti-elite stance is which in turn increases the likelihood they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party”

In contradiction to the previous hypothesis, this viewpoint does in fact assume like political trust and external political efficacy that the influence of the political system is detrimental to understanding who votes for a right-wing populist party. This viewpoint serves therefore in somewhat of an opposition to the first hypothesis. This hypothesis shows the importance of the structural influences and if we cannot reject this hypothesis, accepting the first hypothesis has fewer theoretical implications. This is because the first hypothesis argues for less systematic influences which makes not rejecting this hypothesis, a counterargument to that viewpoint.

Chapter 3 Method

This chapter will set out the method used in this thesis. First, it will discuss the data that is used in this thesis. It will explain why the different datasets were used to carry out the analysis. Second, it will discuss the variables used divided into the dependent, independent, and control variables. It will hereby explain how the different variables were made. Third, the research approach is discussed.

3.1 Data

Understanding the origins and quality of the data is important to understand how research arrives at its conclusion and to understand whether those conclusions are valid. This chapter will therefore articulate the different datasets used in this chapter to give an understanding of the origins (and possible biases) of this research. The variables that are based on this data will be discussed in chapter 3.2. The base of the methodology of most of the independent variables of this thesis is created by using data from the European Social Survey (ESS) (2018). As this is the base of the methodology, this thesis will elaborate further on the core foundations of this dataset. ESS is a cross-national survey that is done every two years (European Social Survey, z.d.-c). The survey, which is held in 38 countries, asks the participants questions regarding attitudes and beliefs regarding social structures, social factors, political factors, economic factors, and moral factors. It gathers data by enacting face-to-face interviews with citizens of the participating nations. The funding of the ESS data consists of contributions of the participating countries to a central coordination office and the fieldwork costs per country. The earlier rounds of the European social survey were funded by the European Commission, the European science foundation (ESF), and national funding. The more recent rounds were funded by the European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) European Social Survey. (z.d.-b). This thesis will use data from the ESS because of to the following two reasons. First, it encompasses a wide array of data regarding the social and political factors relevant to answering the hypotheses in this thesis. Second, the ESS data is well suited for multilevel model testing (European Social Survey, z.d.-a). This thesis uses the 9th round of the ESS dataset which is held in 2018 and encompasses the countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

The dataset for the dependent variable as will be further elaborated on in chapter 3.2.1 is based on a dataset for populist parties composed by Meijers & Zaslove (2020b). This

dataset measures the position of parties and the attitudes of parties related to populism (Meijers & Zaslove, 2020b, p.2). The data is created via expert surveys on 250 parties in 28 European countries held in 2018. Additionally, this thesis uses four datasets for four country-level control variables (which will be elaborated on further in chapter 3.2.3) based on the theories in the theoretical framework. The first dataset is a dataset from Our World in Data (Boix et al., 2022) and measures the age of democracy. It is used for the control variable “Age of democracy” whereby the year 2018 will be used as a measuring point (as will be elaborated in 3.2.3.1). The second dataset is from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (2019) and measures the amount of immigrant stock that a country has. It will be used for the control variable “amount of immigrants in this country” (as will be elaborated in 3.2.3.2) whereby the year 2017 will be used as a measuring point as it is the closest to 2018. The third dataset that is used is simply a binary variable that contains the countries within the European Union and is simply taken from the European Union website (European Union, z.d.). The fourth dataset that is used, is the Gini coefficient from the World Bank whereby the data from 2018 will be used (The World Bank, 2020). The data will be used for the country-level control variable “income inequality in this country” (as will be further elaborated on in 3.2.3.4).

3.1.1 Weights

When using survey data that uses multiple countries, many differences in the sample designs can occur. This can be due to the cost of certain procedures in different countries or different rules that need to be applied with data gathering. If this is the case, weights need to be added to adjust for these differences to be able to make correct inferences about the data. In this thesis, this is also the case as in some countries address-based sampling was used which increases the number of people who participate and live alone (European Social Survey, z.d.-d, p.2). It is, therefore, necessary to apply weights to the data before analyzing it. To apply weights two levels of analysis need to be taken into consideration as this thesis applies a multilevel model. This is because data designs can differ in different ways in the first level and in the second level. For the first level (the individual level) a weighting variable that ESS made was applied to the data design (using an r survey package (Lumley, 2004)). For the second level, a control variable population was included in the models. This variable is simply the population count in 2018, counted in millions. Data from the Worldbank (z.d.) is used to make this variable. Both of these weights are applied to all of the models in the analysis (except for the second level population weights in the descriptive analysis as this is a control variable and therefore does not apply to descriptive statistics).

3.2 The variables

To understand exactly what this thesis researches, this thesis will operationalize the variables in detail in this chapter.

3.2.1 Dependent variable

To construct a variable for voting for a populist radical right-wing party it is necessary to understand which party people voted for. The variable in ESS for this question is constructed as: “Which party did you vote for in that election?” (European Social Survey, 2018, p.9). Hereby the score is country-specific based on the parties that are present in that specific country. Taking these scores into account this thesis constructs a variable whereby the question “Did the participant vote for a populist radical right-wing party?” is answered. This variable is created with a measurement of 0 and 1 whereby 0 is equal to yes and 1 is equal to no. This is done by comparing the party the participants voted on with the list of populist parties constructed by Zaslove & Meijers (2020a, pp.397-398). As stated in 2.2.2 of the theoretical framework they construct a multi-dimensional approach for operationalizing populist parties. Additionally, it addresses three challenges to previously made measurements. The first challenge is that measurements that are used were inconsistent with the conceptual framework when following the ideational approach or is not able to capture the multidimensionality of populism (Zaslove & Meijers, 2020a, p.397). The second challenge is that binary measurements caused problems in corner cases (which this thesis will also suffer under). This means that many parties were not included that do have some populist characteristics, but not enough to be a complete populist party. Taking these parties completely out of the equation creates a skewed picture of the presence of populist influences in a country because it then creates the picture that the populist characteristics of parties in a country are less than that they truly are. The third challenge is that the measurement used in previous studies were based and used on a too limited number of cases. Overcoming these three challenges makes this measurement a convincing new measuring tool which this thesis will employ to apply to its dependent variable.

They provide a dataset in which the values of this measurement are displayed (Meijers & Zaslove, 2020b). This thesis uses this dataset to make a list of populist radical right-wing parties via two conditions. First, if a party scores higher than 7 on the populist scale this thesis lists it as a populist party. The populism variable is measured as follows: “*Variable based on the factor regression scores of the following items: ‘manichean’, ‘indivisible’, ‘general will’, ‘people centrism’, and ‘antielitism’*” (Meijers & Zaslove, 2020c, p.19). The measurement of the variable is a 0-10 scale whereby 0 is not at all populist and 10 is very populist. Second, if a party scores higher than 7 on the left-right scale this thesis lists it as a

radical right-wing party. This variable is measured with the following question: *“Please tick the box that best describes each party’s overall ideology on a scale ranging from 0 (left) to 10 (right) (i.e. the general left-right scale)”* (Meijers & Zaslove, 2020c, p.19). The measurement of the variable is a 0-10 scale whereby 0 is left ideology and 10 is right ideology. This list is finally compared with the party that the participants in the ESS dataset voted for to compute the “voting for a populist radical right-wing party” variable.

This thesis focuses on radical right-wing populist parties. It is however interesting to also analyze the effect on other forms of populist parties. The theory in this thesis is based on radical right-wing populist parties and it is therefore not possible to say anything about the causality when analyzing the effects on the other forms of populist parties. What this analysis can do, is serve as a form of a more explorative kind of research. This can lead to an insight into how the continuation of life satisfaction research on the demand side of populism should be formulated. This thesis will therefore analyze the relationship between life satisfaction with left populism and populism in general. The results of this analysis create a preliminary picture of the effects of life satisfaction on all the other forms of populist parties without claiming causality. This can serve as a starting point of additional research on this topic. It also adds to the research which focuses on the differences in the demand side of the different kinds of populist parties. Both of these left-wing populist parties and populist parties, in general, will also be based on the dataset of Meijers & Zaslove (2020b). The variable “voting for a Left-wing populist party” is constructed with the following two conditions. First, a party has to score higher than 7 on the populist scale to be considered a populist party. Second, if a party scores lower than 3 on the left-right scale a party will be considered a radical left-wing party. The variable “voting for a populist party” will simply be constructed by the condition that a party has to score higher than 7 on the populism scale without any other requirements to encompass all the populist parties.

3.2.2 Independent variables

3.2.2.1 Life satisfaction

As stated in chapter 2.4 of the theoretical framework, life satisfaction is the most prominent measurement for self-reported wellbeing in social science as it is the broadest measurement of the continuing circumstances of an individual’s life. This key explanatory variable is a variable within the ESS dataset and is constructed via the question: *“All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays?”* (European Social Survey, 2018, p.11). It is created with a measurement of 0 to 10 whereby 0 is extremely dissatisfied and 10 extremely satisfied.

3.2.2.2 Anti-elite stance

For the second hypothesis of this thesis, it is necessary to formulate an anti-elite stance. This variable will be constructed via the variable trust in politicians which is constructed by asking the participants a score on how much they personally trust politicians (European Social Survey, 2018, p.8). It is created with a measurement of 0 to 10 whereby 0 is no trust at all and 10 is complete trust. As stated in chapter 2.3.4. this variable is important in understanding who votes for a populist party. Therefore, trust in politicians will also be included as a control variable when analyzing the first hypothesis.

3.2.3 Control variables

The control variables used in this thesis are mainly based on the theoretical explanations for voting for a populist party as stated in the theoretical framework chapter. Other control variables are based on other theoretical notable points and commonly used demographic control variables.

3.2.3.1 Age of Democracy

As is touched upon in the populist parties chapter (2.1.2) of the theoretical framework it is challenging to distinguish between populist parties. To incorporate a control variable for some influences of these differences the age of democracy control variable is included as Kessel argues that there are differences between post-communist countries and countries in Western Europe in regard to the present populist parties (Kessel, 2015, pp. 170-183). This is because populist rhetoric is more present in almost every party in countries with less established democracies which in turn creates difficulties in distinguishing between them. These can therefore be factors that can cause differences between populist parties in countries and be influential in understanding the demand side of populism. This thesis will therefore control for the differences between older and younger democracies by using the Age of Democracy data from Our World in Data (Boix et al., 2022). This data is based on the RoW classification and the assessments of V-Dem's experts. For the values of this data, the age of the democracy per country is based on the age of the democracy in 2018 as this is the same year as the ESS data. According to the data, there have been some doubts about the degree of the quality of democracy in Hungary and Serbia in recent years. This thesis however assumes that they are democracies with working voting systems, especially as most of the doubts have risen after the election that is measured in the ESS dataset.

3.2.3.2 Anti-immigration

As described in chapter 2.3.2 the anti-immigration predictor appears to be a strong predictor for voting for populist parties. As this is such a prevalent aspect of voting for a populist party we can expect that people act differently in regard to voting for populist parties when different amounts of immigrants are present in a country and when the attitudes towards immigrants are negative. It is, therefore, necessary to control for this factor which will be done via two control variables. The first control variable serves as attitudes towards immigration which is theoretically important as described in chapter 2.3.2 and is constructed in ESS via the question: "Immigrants make your country a worse or a better place to live". It is created with a measurement of 0 to 10 whereby 0 is a worse place to live and 10 is a better place to live. The second control variable is a macro control variable that encompasses the possible structural influences of the presence of immigrants. As this variable is at the core of populist parties it is possible that the relationship differs between countries depending on the presence of immigrants in a country. The variable is described as: "Amount of immigrants in this country". It is measured by the International migrant stock as a percentage of the total population. This data is gathered by the United Nations (2019). For this data, the data gathered in 2015 will be used as that is the closest previous year to 2018 (which is the same year as the 9th round of the ESS dataset).

3.2.3.3 Member of the European Union

As stated in the Euroscepticism predictor part of this theoretical framework in chapter 2.3.3 there are differences in results regarding the influence of Euroscepticism on populism. As this is theoretically possibly influential for the central question, this thesis will control for this factor via two variables. The first control variable is constructed in ESS via the question: "How much trust do you have in the European parliament". It is created with a measurement of 0 to 10 whereby 0 is no trust at all and 10 is complete trust. The second control variable is a macro variable which measures whether a country is a member of the European Union. This macro control variable entails a possible structural influence as we can expect differences between countries depending on whether a country is part of the European Union (as this is a defining part of many populist parties). This is to be done via a simple binary variable based on data from the European Union (European Union, z.d.). The values of this variable will be measured by a categorical measurement whereby 0 means yes and 1 means no depending on whether that particular country is a part of the European Union.

3.2.3.4 Income inequality

As stated in the economic predictor part of this theoretical framework in chapter 2.3.1 there are differences in results regarding the influence of economic variables on populism.

Economic inequality is one of the studied macro-economic predictors which has possible influence on voting for a populist party, this thesis will ,therefore, control for this variable. This thesis thereby formulates a country-level control variable which is described as “Amount of income inequality in this country” based on the Gini index from the World Bank (2020). It measures how much the income among individuals deviates from a perfect equal distribution. The Gini index is based on a Lorenz curve of the cumulative of all income of the different households in a country. The deviance distance is measured via a scale between 0 and 100 whereby 0 means perfect equality and 100 means complete inequality.

3.2.3.5 External political efficacy

As stated in chapter 2.3.4 of this theoretical framework this variable seems to be a strong predictor of voting for a populist party. This thesis will therefore control for this variable. External political efficacy will be controlled for by a variable created by two variables roughly based on the research of Craig et al., (1990, pp. 302-305). The first variable is constructed via the questioning: “*how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on what the government does?*” (European Social Survey, 2018, p.6). It is measured via a scale whereby 1 is not at all and 5 is a great deal. The second variable is constructed via the questioning: “*how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?*” (European Social Survey, 2018, p.7). It is measured via a scale whereby 1 is not at all and 5 is a great deal. Both of these variables are computed into the variable external political efficacy which is measured via a scale whereby 1 is little external political efficacy and 10 is a great deal of external political efficacy.

3.2.3.7 Demographical control variables

As is usual in social sciences this thesis will control for demographic variables. The following three control variables are formulated based on the ESS dataset. First, the control variable gender is created via a categorical variable measured with two options; male and female (European Social Survey, 2018, p.47). Second, age will be controlled with the variable age which is measured by the age of each respondent (European Social Survey, 2018, p.47). Third, education will be controlled by the creation of dummy variables based on the variable: “*What is the highest level of education you have successfully completed?*” (European Social Survey, 2018, p.50). Using this variable 2 binary dummy variables are created including whether someone’s highest level of education completed was middle education and higher education with lower education as the dummy variable reference point.

3.3 Research approach

The main aim of this thesis is to enhance our understanding of what determines whether an individual will vote for a populist party. This thesis thereby formulated two hypotheses. These hypotheses are articulating an effect on the question of whether someone votes for a populist party. To look for and understand these effects, observations need to be analyzed which leads us to an understanding of whether these effects are apparent. To find this, we need to analyze many observations to create a generalizable understanding of these effects. This thesis will therefore test these hypotheses by drawing statistical inferences within a large N data analysis. This form of analysis is well suited to this thesis because this creates high external validity which in turn creates a stronger generalizable understanding of the variables that determine why an individual votes for a populist party.

This thesis argues that populism can have a very different effect depending on the country because of the following reasons based on the theoretical framework. The political science literature first recognizes different kinds of populist parties and there are different kinds of populist parties visible in every country. This means that there are differences in the quantity of the radical right-wing populist parties depending on the country. Second, as we have also seen, parties are highly influenced by immigration and potentially influenced by European integration, and differences in either of these factors could influence populism in a country. Third, there are also some additional political systematic reasons for how populism in a country can differ. Some countries have different political systems whereby it is possible that populism is instigated via new parties or within existing larger parties (Vachudova, 2021, pp.491-492). Four, there are also differences between Eastern Europe and Western Europe that can influence populism (Kessel, 2015, p. 4). Finally, it can matter to what extent populist issues are politicized (Damstra et al., 2021, p. 112). Taking into account these differences within populism per country, researching a generic effect of happiness on voting is not only more interesting if you also explore the possible variation caused by these differences, it is necessary to avoid the assumption of independent errors of a non-multilevel regression model. This thesis expects different relationships between the main independent variables and the dependent variables depending on the country. This thesis will therefore enact a random slopes model analysis to analyze the relationship between SWB and voting for populist radical right-wing parties. This model allows for differences in the slope of the effect differing per group (in this case differing per country). This is detrimental to populism research because as described above, populism can be influenced by many factors which can differ depending on the country, which in turn creates the necessity for any possible predictor to be under the scrutiny of the possible influences of these differences. The dependent variable of this thesis is voting for a radical right-wing populist party. This is a

dichotomous variable because the values of this variable are binary values with the options yes and no. This means that it is not possible to apply a (regular) multilevel random slopes regression model because and therefore, this thesis uses a logistic version of the multilevel random slopes model. This model estimates the likelihood of an event occurring (yes or no). In other words, in this case, we are estimating the likelihood that someone votes for a radical right-wing populist party.

To confirm the hypotheses this thesis will deploy descriptive statistics, bivariate explanatory analysis, multivariate analysis, and assumption tests. To confirm the first hypothesis: "*H1: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the more likely they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party*" the following steps are taken. First, this thesis will analyze the descriptive statistics for any anomalies and look at the bivariate analysis for an initial effect. Second, the multivariate model will be analyzed and the hypothesis will be rejected unless a significant effect with $p < 0.05$ is found regarding the relationship between life satisfaction and voting for radical right-wing populist parties when including all the micro and macro control variables and when all the weights are applied. Finally, the hypothesis will then be confirmed and the implications will be discussed in the final chapter. To confirm the second hypothesis: "*H2: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the higher an individual's anti-elite stance is which in turn increases the likelihood they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party*" the following steps are taken. The first step will be the same compared to the first hypothesis. The second step is testing the four conditions that need to be met with $p < 0.05$ for mediation analysis in bivariate analysis (which will be elaborated further on in the bivariate analysis part). As these conditions will be met a Sobel analysis is applied to test for the significance of the mediation with $p < 0.05$. The third step is to add all the control variables in the multivariate analysis and analyze whether these effects are still significant with a $p < 0.05$. Finally, the hypothesis will then be confirmed or rejected and the implications will be discussed in the final chapter. After these steps one final step is taken to be able to use a multilevel random slopes logistic model and to be able to find meaningful results: The necessary assumptions have been analyzed. The method and the results of this analysis can be found in the appendix.

Chapter 4 Results

This chapter will visualize the results via the models that are conducted to answer the hypothesis formulated by this thesis. This will be done within the following sub-chapters. First, it will describe the descriptive statistics of the variables used in this thesis. Second, it will portray the explanatory statistics in regards to the hypothesis starting with the null model to find the intraclass correlation. Third a bivariate analysis is enacted whereby a mediation analysis is enacted. Fourth, it will continue to discuss the results of the explanatory analysis by discussing the results of the multivariate analysis whereby the first hypothesis will be answered and the explorative analysis of the other forms of populism are portrayed.

4.1 Descriptive analysis

In table 4.1 are the descriptive statistics displayed of all the variables used in this thesis. After filtering all the missing cases, non-responsive cases and non-voters cases the total observed cases (N) that this research observes is 24.109. Two notable elements should be taken into account when looking at these statistics. First, these descriptive statistics are with the micro-level weights included. The Macro level weight (population) has not been included as this is a control variable which will be included in the explanatory analysis. Second, in the explanatory analysis, the variables are centered and all the variables scaling above 10 are standardized. The statistics below are before centering and standardizing the variables to give a better insight into the variables (the mean of centered variables is always 0). The descriptive statistics are shown to give the reader an idea about what all the variables that are used in this thesis look like.

T.4.1 descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean/percentage	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Micro variables				
Vote for right-wing populist dummy				
Yes	11%			
No	89%			
Life satisfaction	7.41	1.96	0	10
Trust in politicians	3.85	2.35	0	10

External political efficacy	4.70	1.68	2	10
Trust in EP	4.71	2.43	1	10
Immigration attitudes	5.20	2.34	1	10
Gender (dummy)				
Male	49%			
Female	51%			
Age	52.35	17.09	15	90
Education (dummy)				
Lower education	59.6%			
Middle education	13.7%			
Higher education	26.7%			
Belonging to ethnic minority				
Yes	4%			
No	96%			
Vote for left-wing populist dummy				
Yes	2%			
No	98%			
Vote for populist dummy				
Yes	16%			
No	84%			
Macro variables				
Age of democracy	71.48	34.80	19	170
Immigrant stock	11.27	5.49	1	23
Member of the European Union				
Yes	82.2%			

No	17.8%			
Income inequality (Gini)	30.60	3.48	1	41.3
Population (million)	49.32	26.18	42	88
Total observations	Valid N 24.109			

In table 4.1 we can see that regarding the dependent variable (voting for a radical right-wing populist party), with the operationalization of radical right-wing populist parties which this thesis deploys, 11% of the participants voted on radical right-wing populist parties. This is important to note as the differences between the definition of radical right-wing populist parties is debatable and as this thesis uses an arbitrary cut off point for the operationalization of these parties as is described in chapter 3.2.1. As we can see in table 4.2 the difference between countries in this percentage can be quite large between countries. In some countries like Poland the percentage of people who vote for a radical right-wing populist party is very large as more than 50% of the votes were on a radical right-wing populist party. In many other countries like Estonia, Great Britain, and Denmark this percentage is 0 as there are no radical right-wing populist parties (following the operationalization of this thesis). This is expected as this thesis expects large differences between countries as mentioned in chapter 3 which makes it necessary to employ a multilevel model in the explanatory analysis. Furthermore, regarding the main independent variables, we can see that people are on average fairly satisfied with their lives as the mean of life satisfaction is 7.41. When looking at the scores of the variable regarding the independent variable of the second hypothesis, it seems that people do not trust politicians highly on average as the mean is 3.85. Finally, in regards to the exploratory analysis of radical left-wing populist parties and generic populist parties we see two notable aspects in T.4.1 First, we can see that very few parties fulfill the radical left-wing populist parties condition with only 2% of the parties. Second, the overall populist parties are 16% which leaves only 3% for non-radical left- and non-radical right-wing populist parties.

T.4.2 Percentage populist radical right-wing parties per country

Country	% Pop. Radical right	Country	% Pop. Radical right
Austria	17.5%	Croatia	0%
Belgium	0.3%	Hungary	72.6%
Bulgaria	6.2%	Ireland	0%
Switzerland	25.3%	Italy	24.8%

Cyprus	0%	Lithuania	0%
Czechia	5.5%	Netherlands	8.4%
Germany	0%	Norway	0%
Denmark	0%	Poland	52.3%
Estonia	5.9%	Portugal	0%
Spain	0%	Sweden	0%
Finland	11.4%	Slovenia	27.5%
France	12.8%	Slovakia	23.5%
United Kingdom	0%		

4.2 Explanatory Analysis

In this part all of the relevant models will be estimated and all of the hypotheses will be tested. This segment will first go over the null model to articulate the intraclass correlation. This is necessary to confirm that the multilevel model we are using is in fact the correct model. Second, a bivariate analysis is enacted for the two main (hypothesis relevant) independent variables. Finally, a multivariate analysis is enacted to test the first hypothesis.

4.2.1 Null model; Intraclass correlation

As this thesis uses a multilevel model and the data is nested within a higher level (countries) we can estimate the intraclass correlation coefficient (Finch, 2019, p.24 & Finch, 2019, p.44-46). The intraclass correlation coefficient is a measurement of the difference in the effect on the outcome varying between countries in comparison to the overall effect. If the intraclass correlation coefficient would be 0, it would be futile to use a multilevel model as this would mean that there are no differences between the countries regarding the dependent variable. To find this, this thesis enacted a null model whereby voting for a right-wing populist party was selected as the dependent variable. This model produces an estimated value of the variance and a residual value which in turn can be used to calculate the intraclass correlation. The result of this calculation is an ICC of 0,4105. This means that the correlation between voting for a right-wing populist party among people of the same country is 0.4105 which in turn means that 41.1% of the variance of voting for a radical right-wing populist party is due to the variance between countries. This is expected as there are theoretical reasons for large differences between the presence of radical right-wing parties in countries as described in chapter 3.1 and due to the large numerical differences in the presence of radical right-wing parties in countries as we can see in Table 4.2. To conclude, this thesis finds that there are large differences between countries (the difference is drastically larger than 0%), which means that the use of a multilevel model compared to a linear regression

model is necessary to avoid violating the assumption of independent errors of a linear regression model.

4.2.2 Bivariate analysis

To answer both the hypotheses this thesis will (as stated in chapter 3) measure the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable within a multilevel logistic regression model. A multilevel bivariate logistic regression model shows the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables before adding the control variables. This will give us a first look into the possible effects of the independent variables and can be compared to the multivariate analysis to see what the influence of the control variables is. It also gives us an idea of the potential effects of the independent variables which can in turn help answer our hypothesis. If the relationship is only significant before adding the systematic variables, the theoretical insight (look beyond the political systemic factors to understand who votes for a populist party) which this thesis tries to prove is disproven. For the bivariate analysis, the population variable is included as the weights control variable for the second level (country level) of the multilevel model (the micro-level weights are also included).

The bivariate analysis in T.4.3 will be used as part of the analysis for both of the hypotheses. The first hypothesis: “*H1: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the more likely they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party*” predicts a negative relationship between life satisfaction and voting for a right-wing populist party. To look at the differences of the effect before and after adding the control variables a bivariate analysis is performed. This is visualized in T.4.3. where life satisfaction as an independent variable and voting for radical right-wing populist parties as a dependent variable is analyzed (with population as the weighing control variable). In table 4.3 we can see that as expected there is a negative effect of life satisfaction on voting for a right-wing populist party. This effect is significant in our bivariate model with a $p < 0.01$ and has an odds ratio of 0.741. This means that for every increase in life satisfaction the odds of voting for a right-wing populist party change by factor 0.741. The next steps for analyzing the first hypothesis are done in the multivariate analysis (4.2.3).

T.4.3 Bivariate analysis life satisfaction on voting for a right-wing populist party

Independent variable	B	OR
Intercept	-6.003*** (1.229)	

Life satisfaction	-0.300** (0.125)	0.741
PopulationMillion	-0.004 (0.477)	0.996
Level 2 N	25	
Level 1 N	24109	

*=p<.05; **=p<.01; ***=p<.001: two-tailed. Standard errors in parentheses

The second hypothesis: “H2: *The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the higher an individual's anti-elite stance is which in turn increases the likelihood they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party*” calls for a mediation effect of an individual's anti-elite stance (which is operationalized as trust in politicians). Hereby it is predicted that whenever life satisfaction is lower the trust in politicians is lower which in turn leads individuals to vote for a right-wing populist party. For a mediation hypothesis, four steps need to be applied. The first step is to analyze whether the b1 coefficient of the independent variable (life satisfaction) has a significant effect on the dependent variable (voting for a right-wing populist party). As is analyzed in table 4.3 this condition is fulfilled as life satisfaction has a significant effect ($p < 0.01$) on voting for a radical right-wing populist party.

T.4.4 Bivariate analysis life satisfaction on political trust

Independent variable	B
Intercept	2.356*** (0.165)
Life satisfaction	0.213*** (0.013)
PopulationMillion	-0.190 (0.169)
Level 2 N	25
Level 1 N	24109

*=p<.05; **=p<.01; ***=p<.001: two-tailed. Standard errors in parentheses

The second step of mediation is to analyze whether the independent variable (life satisfaction) has a significant relationship with the mediating variable (trust in politicians). To analyze this, a multilevel regression model is enacted whereby trust in politicians is the dependent variable and life satisfaction is the independent variable which is shown in table 4.4. As is visible in table 4.4 life satisfaction has a significant effect on political trust ($p <$

0.001). The independent variable (life satisfaction) has a significant effect on the mediating variable (political trust). The second condition is therefore also fulfilled.

The third step of mediation is to analyze how the effect of the independent variable (life satisfaction) on the dependent variable (voting for a right-wing populist party) is influenced when you add the mediating variable (trust in politicians) into the model. If the effect of the independent variable (life satisfaction) on the dependent variable (voting for a right-wing populist party) reduces to close to 0 we can speak of (almost) full mediation. If it is reduced by any other margin we can speak of partial mediation. In T.4.5 it is visible that the coefficient effect of life satisfaction has been changed, however, this is by a very small margin of -0.300 in T.4.5 compared to -0.308 in T.4.3 and the odds ratio did also change by a small margin in T.4.5 (0.735) compared to T.4.3 (0.741). The effect even increased instead of being reduced by a very small margin. This condition has therefore not been fulfilled, but to be thorough the fourth step of mediation analysis will be applied.

T.4.5 Multivariate mediation analysis

Independent variable	B	OR
Intercept	-6.023*** (0.000)	
Life satisfaction	-0.308** (0.000)	0.735
Trust in politicians	-0.066*** (0.000)	0.936
Population	-0.074*** (0.000)	0.929
Level 2 N	25	
Level 1 N	24109	

*=p<.05; **=p<.01; ***=p<.001: two-tailed. Standard errors in parentheses

In the fourth step of mediation we analyze how significant the effect of the mediation is. To analyze this, this thesis employed a Sobel analysis (Allen, 2017). This test is used to measure whether the effect of the mediation is significant. The results from the Sobel test result in a p-value of 0.307. This means that the p-value >0.05 meaning that there is no significant mediation effect. In other words, we do not find that lower life satisfaction causes individuals to trust politicians less which in turn leads them to vote for a right-wing populist

party is stronger. This means that we reject our second hypothesis: *“H2: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the higher an individual's anti-elite stance is which in turn increases the likelihood they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party”*.

To conclude, we have seen that there are preliminary signs of an effect regarding the first hypothesis by analyzing the bivariate model as there is a correlation between life satisfaction and voting for radical right-wing populist parties. The next steps towards confirming this hypothesis will be further analyzed in the next segment. The second hypothesis has been tested by initially looking at all of the conditions of mediation analysis and then looking at the significance of the possible mediation via a Sobel test. When analyzing the results we can conclude that this hypothesis has been rejected as no evidence is found for the claim that *“H2: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the higher an individual's anti-elite stance is which in turn increases the likelihood they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party”*.

4.2.3 Multivariate analysis

Following the bivariate analysis in the previous section the following logistic multilevel model multivariate analysis will be conducted in T.4.6 to explore the first hypothesis of this thesis further. This analysis will consist of two models. In both models, all the micro control variables as mentioned in chapter 3 will be used. In the first model, only the micro control variables are included (except for the population control variable as it serves as a weighing variable). In the second model, the macro-control variables are included in the analysis.

As we can see in the first model in T.4.6, life satisfaction still has a significant effect when including the micro control variables as $p < 0.01$ and it has an odds ratio of 0.774. In other words, for every increase in life satisfaction the odds of voting for a right-wing populist party changes by factor 0.774. This means that, even when the variables that rely on the political systematic factors like trust in politicians and external political efficacy are included, life satisfaction still has significant explanatory power. Both of these variables are still significant predictors in both of the models. It however seems that life satisfaction touches on a separate explanatory part of the variables that predict who votes for a radical right-wing populist party which will be further elaborated on in the discussion chapter.

As we can see in the second model in T.4.6 life satisfaction also has a significant effect when including the macro-control variables as $p < 0.01$ and it has an odds ratio of 0.793. This means that for every increase in life satisfaction the odds of voting for a right-wing populist party changes by factor 0.793. This shows that even when controlling for the theoretical based macro and micro control variables the effect of life satisfaction on voting for

a radical right-wing populist party is still significant. Taking these results into account we now can conclude our judgment on the first hypothesis. To accept this hypothesis we needed to find a significant effect of $p < 0.05$ between life satisfaction and voting for a radical right-wing populist party when including all the (micro and macro) control variables. As can be seen in the results of the analysis in table 4.6 this condition has in fact been fulfilled and we can, therefore, accept the first hypothesis: *“H1: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the more likely they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party”*. The control variables that are included are based on the theoretically interesting variables which are articulated in the theoretical framework. This means that these results of the models portray an effect which is adding a new piece to the theoretical because all the other possible theoretical explanations (pieces of the puzzle) are included.

As described in chapter 3.2 we expected large differences between countries when studying populism. In the second model in T.4.6 we can see that the difference between countries is 23.488 and that the difference between slopes is 0.084. This means that variation of the intercepts between countries is 23.488 which is fairly high. This was expected because of the differences between countries regarding the presence of radical right-wing populist parties. The variance between the slopes of life satisfaction and voting for radical right-wing populist parties between countries is 0.084. This is relatively low, but it does mean that there is some difference between the slopes depending on the country. Finally, the assumptions (which can be found in the appendix) are analyzed and no notable problems were found. This means that we can assume that the results found in this analysis are correctly interpreted.

T.4.6 Multivariate analysis hypothesis 1

Model	M1		M2	
	B	OR	B	OR
Fixed effects				
Intercept	-5.586*** (1.297)	0.003	0.181 (3.133)	1.198
Stflife	-0.256** (0.125)	0.774	-0.232** (0.109)	0.793
Gender	-0.265*** (0.051)	0.767	-0.265*** (0.051)	0.767
Agea	-0.132*** (0.026)	0.876	-0.132*** (0.026)	0.877
Trust in EP	-0.131*** (0.036)	0.877	-0.132*** (0.036)	0.877

Immigration attitudes	-0.109*** (0.027)	0.896	-0.109*** (0.027)	0.897
Trust in politicians	-0.043*** (0.126)	0.955	-0.046*** (0.013)	0.955
External political efficacy	-0.043** (0.189)	0.958	-0.043** (0.019)	0.958
Education Dummy				
Lower education (reference)				
Middle education	-0.465*** (0.089)	0.628	-0.467*** (0.089)	0.627
Higher education	-0.732*** (0.070)	0.480	-0.734*** (0.070)	0.480
Immigrant stock			0.004 (0.490)	1.036
EU member			-5.115* (2.598)	0.006
Gini			-0.175 (0.348)	0.839
Age of democracy			0.570 (0.548)	1.768
Population	-0.051 (0.487)	0.950	-0.172 (0.507)	0.842
Random-effects				
Country variance	24.111		23.488	
Slope variance of life satisfaction	0.095		0.084	
Model summary				
-2log likelihood	-5138.5		-5153.6	
Level 2 N	25		25	
Level 1 N	24109		24109	

*=p<.05; **=p<.01; ***=p<.001: two-tailed. Standard errors in parentheses

In table 4.7 the results of the analysis of the relationship between life satisfaction with radical left-wing populism (Model 3) and all populist parties (Model 4) are visualized. It seems that in both forms life satisfaction has a significant effect on voting for those particular populist parties. This shows that life satisfaction (after already playing a significant role regarding

radical right-wing populist parties) could play a significant role in determining who votes for radical left-wing populist parties and populist parties in general. At first glance, it looks like life satisfaction has a larger effect on the more radical forms of populist parties as it has a larger coefficient regarding radical right-wing populist parties (-0.232) and radical left-wing populist parties (-0.220) compared to the all populist parties (-0.114). It is also interesting to note that external political efficacy has barely any effect at all when looking at radical-left wing populist parties as it has such an important role in populist literature.

The differences between the two models in 4.7 regarding the slopes and the intercepts are also somewhat interesting. The fourth model shows lower differences in the intercept between countries than the in the second and third model, showing that radical forms of populist parties vary more in the intercept. It is also interesting that the variance of the slope is close to 0 when looking at the radical left-wing populist parties. Finally, two things should be kept in mind when analyzing the effects in table 4.7. First, the effects found in table 4.7 are explorative effects and should be further elaborated on from a theoretical standpoint (some suggestions are made in the discussion of this thesis). Second, radical-left-wing populist parties are quite small in quantity as most of these parties are a fraction less populist than their radical right-wing counterparts. This means that the amount analyzed is quite small, which in turn puts question marks around the validity of these results.

T.4.7 Multivariate analysis radical left-wing populism (M3) & Overall populism (M4)

Model	M3		M4	
	B	OR	B	OR
Fixed effects				
Intercept	18.905 (27.790)	16623.138	3.566** (1.669)	35.362
Stflife	-0.220 *** (0.098)	0.802	-0.114** (0.046)	0.893
Gender	-0.145 (0.103)	0.865	-0.284*** (0.042)	0.753
Agea	-0.559*** (0.055)	0.572	-0.271*** (0.022)	0.763
Trust in EP	-0.127* (0.068)	0.880	-0.103*** (0.026)	0.903
Immigration attitudes	0.065 (0.066)	1.068	-0.072*** (0.022)	0.930
Trust in politicians	-0.070** (0.028)	0.933	-0.072*** (0.011)	0.930
External political efficacy	-0.001 (0.039)	0.983	-0.070*** (0.016)	0.932

Education Dummy				
Lower education (reference)				
Middle education	-0.231 (0.231)	1.260	-0.310*** (0.070)	0.733
Higher education	-0.182 (0.182)	1.199	-0.625*** (0.055)	0.535
Immigrant stock	3.224 (3.255)	25.930	0.444* (0.232)	1.558
Eu member	-30.466 (30.466)	0.000	-5.545*** (1.141)	0.004
Gini	-0.370 (1.506)	0.691	0.026 (0.171)	1.026
Age of democracy	-4.034 (3.036)	0.018	-0.176 (0.251)	1.192
PopulationMillion	2.626 (2.626)	13.825	0.568** (0.233)	1.764
Random-effects				
Country variance	28.377		8.256	
Slope variance of life satisfaction	0.004		0.041	
Model summary				
-2log likelihood	-1340.8		-7481.5	
Level 2 N	25		25	
Level 1 N	24109		24109	

*=p<.05; **=p<.01; ***=p<.001: two-tailed. Standard errors in parentheses

To conclude, we have seen that there is a significant negative relationship between life satisfaction and voting for radical right-wing populist parties in the bivariate models (with the inclusion of all the weights). This effect still holds when adding both the micro and the macro variables in the multivariate analysis. It is therefore apparent that there is ample evidence to accept the first hypothesis: *“H1: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the more likely they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party”*. Also when looking at radical left-wing populist parties and all populist parties in the explorative part of this analysis, a significant effect between life satisfaction and the relevant populist parties has been found.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

This thesis focuses on the demand side of populism research. It thereby builds further on the research question: “who votes for populist radical right parties?”. To do this, this thesis first set the theoretical stage of populism research. First, the current populist theoretical framework was presented whereby the different research was contextualized within the research schools. Hereby a small overview of the supply side is presented to contextualize this thesis. Second, two research schools in populism research, rationalism, and structuralism were explained. The rationalist school sets out to explain the cost-benefit and preference-ordering side of populism research whereby someone votes for a populist party when they think that action would benefit them the most. The structuralist school sets out to explain the systematic and structural influences side of populism research which can lead someone to vote for a populist party. Third, the demand-side research of populism research is presented. The chapter begins by tackling the economic theories on the demand side of populism research as these are prominent in political science research. After concluding that economic predictors do not give a sufficient explanation for why someone votes for a populist party, immigration and whether a country is part of the EU are discussed. After articulating those predictors the most prominent predictors in the demand side literature: External political efficacy, political trust & populist attitudes are tackled which are intertwined with being satisfied with the political system. Then, the theoretical framework moved towards the emotional side of populism research to formulate the last necessary part of the puzzle before the stage for the main explanatory variable of this thesis was set. This part articulated that anger and fear leading to resentment stemming from the inconsistencies of the government seem to be the emotions with the most explanatory power for understanding who votes for populist parties. The stage is now set for the theoretical piece this thesis adds to the demand side research of populism which is life satisfaction. In contradiction to the external political efficacy, political trust & populist attitudes it finds its explanatory power in an individual’s satisfaction with their life in general not solely in the context of the political system. In contradiction to the emotional predictors, the variable life satisfaction serves as a more consistent overview of one’s life instead of the inconsistent emotional predictors and is not solely dependent on the inconsistencies of the state. The theory of this thesis expects that people who are less satisfied with their life are more inclined to vote for a radical right-wing populist party. This theory leads to the rationalist hypothesis: *“H1: The lower an individual’s life satisfaction is, the more likely they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party”*. To further analyze whether this relationship is based on general life satisfaction and not based on systematic contextual structures a structural hypothesis is theorized and tested. Following the relative deprivation theory, one could expect that the relationship

between life satisfaction and voting for a radical right-wing populist party is stronger when mediated by an anti-elite stance. If someone has lower life satisfaction it would mean that they can project their low life satisfaction on the elite which in turn motivates them, to take action against them by voting for a radical right-wing populist party. This in turn leads to the following hypothesis: *“H2: The lower an individual's life satisfaction is, the higher an individual's anti-elite stance is which in turn increases the likelihood they are to vote on a radical right-wing populist party”*

After describing the methodological necessities in the third chapter, these hypotheses are tested in the fourth chapter with a logistic multilevel (random intercept & slopes) model. First, a bivariate analysis was enacted to analyze possible initial effects before adding the control variables. Regarding the first hypothesis, a clear significant effect was visible between life satisfaction and voting for a right-wing populist party. Regarding the second hypothesis, the four conditions of a mediation analysis were tested. All of the four conditions were fulfilled and a Sobel test was enacted to test whether the mediation effect is significant. This showed a non-significant effect. This means that we can reject the second hypothesis as the effect between life satisfaction and voting for a radical right-wing populist party is not mediated by an individual's anti-elite stance. In the next part of the fourth chapter, a multivariate analysis is enacted to analyze whether the effect of life satisfaction on voting for radical right-wing populist parties still holds when adding micro and macro control variables. Two models were analyzed, the first model had just micro-control variables, and the second model added the macro-control variables. In both models, a clear (negative) significant effect was found regarding life satisfaction on voting for radical right-wing populist parties. After checking for the assumptions (which are analyzed in chapter 4.3 and did not seem to cause any problems) we can accept the first hypothesis.

In conclusion, this thesis analyzed whether life satisfaction plays a role in determining who votes for radical right-wing populist parties. It found that it plays a significant role in explaining the non-systematic and non-economic factors that determine why someone votes for a radical right-wing populist party.

5.1 Limitations

Allthough this thesis did a thorough analysis with the available tools there were five limitations that can lead to research gaps. First, the definition of populist parties is and will (probably forever) be contested as it is a relatively broad concept. This thesis used data by Meijers and Zaslove (2020b) which has a substantive theoretical foundation and operationalization, but there are other datasets like the PopuList (Rooduijn et al., 2019) that could possibly lead to

different results. Second, the thesis took an arbitrary cut-off point when operationalizing whether a party is a radical right-wing populist party. As it is impossible to exactly pinpoint what the scores should be for radical right-wing populist parties, there are some differences in the results depending on which score is used. Third, not all the underlying variables to control for the systematic political factors (external political efficacy, political trust & populist attitudes) were present. Especially in regards to populist attitudes which is not included as a control variable. Furthermore, the operationalization used of external political efficacy could be defined with more underlying variables than used in this thesis (which were not available in the datasets this thesis uses). Fourth, although the other forms of populist research were analyzed the causality of this thesis is limited to radical right-wing populist parties. Fifth, this thesis used the rationalist and structuralist schools, but there is an argument to be made to also include the culturalist school. This thesis has chosen to not include this school as it overlaps too much with the structuralist school for the purposes of this specific research topic and no new theoretical insight stemmed from that viewpoint in this case. It might however be interesting to address this in further research.

5.2 Discussion

The implications of the results of this thesis are that a new viewpoint has been added to the explanatory variables that has previously not been addressed which appears to play a detrimental role in understanding who votes for radical-right wing populist parties. This viewpoint is that satisfaction with one's life, in general, is a part of the solution. This is in opposition to anti-immigration, EU-membership, external political efficacy, political trust, populist attitudes & emotional predictors which are based on being discontent due to factors stemming from the political system and in opposition to trust in the European parliament and anti-immigration attitudes which fuel dissatisfaction through a scapegoat causing individuals to vote for radical-right wing populist parties. Many of these variables were still significant in the analysis which means that life satisfaction does not replace those variables, it merely exists besides these variables as a part of the puzzle that tries to understand who votes for populist parties (some of the effects were however quite small so it could be that part of the effect is replaced). This means that it partly does not matter what causes people to be discontent to vote on a party that opposes the system. Theoretically, the basis of this vote is based on the foundation that these parties advocate for a drastic change. People who are dissatisfied with their lives are rationally speaking motivated to take action towards changing this situation. When they make a cost-benefit analysis when picking a party to vote on they are motivated to choose the party that will most likely change their current situation. Populist parties oppose the current system and people are therefore convinced to vote on populist parties as they have the highest likelihood to change the current situation. It hereby does not

matter that people already have feelings of opposition towards the politicians as we have seen, lower life satisfaction means that people simply vote based on the most change. This theoretical insight opens a whole new possible research branch as radical (non-populist) and activist parties also advocate for large changes. Further research should analyze whether a lower life satisfaction can lead to more votes on those parties and what can determine differences in degrees of change. It might be for example possible that the effect is present in activist parties with broader goals compared to parties with more narrow goals as they are intensely focused on instigating a single change which might not be enough of a drastic change for people to vote for those parties. This is especially the case if the “change motivation” means that individuals want to change their whole situation. On a more grand theory level, these results mean that while the structuralist perspective can give many strong explanations for why someone votes for a radical-right wing populist party the rationalist perspective is also a strong part of the puzzle as individuals add life satisfaction to their cost-benefit analysis.

The focus of this thesis was on determining who votes for radical right-wing populist parties, but it also analyzed radical left-wing and generic populist parties. For both situations, life satisfaction appeared to have a significant effect but had a smaller effect when analyzing populist parties in general. This could be because when leaving out the “radical” part of the populist parties people expect less of a change and are thus less motivated to vote on that form specific populist party. However, further research should focus on the theoretical bases of this relationship regarding these forms of populist parties to understand the causality of this relationship.

This thesis furthermore showed that life satisfaction plays an important role in determining someone's vote. As this is the case, using life satisfaction as a policy goal seems to be an interesting topic to research further. This opens a whole new subfield of research questions namely: What does it mean for policy to be focused on increasing life satisfaction and what would be the difference compared to economically minded policy? Do some voters appreciate life satisfaction based policy more compared to economically minded policy (especially since populist voters do not seem to be little influenced by economically minded policy)? What are the differences between countries in this regard?

Finally, as this thesis also showed an effect of life satisfaction after controlling for the relevant variables within the field of political science, these results should be a motivator for more researchers to include life satisfaction as a possible explanatory variable in the many political science theories. In this thesis, it served as the encompassing of the wish to change

someone's current situation, but it could take many forms like understanding how well certain policy is received as mentioned above. Life satisfaction or happiness is something that people can see as the ultimate goal in life. It serves as an all-encompassing variable of all the perceived good and bad things that happen in someone's life. It is, therefore, no surprise that it has a big influence in the political science world, and with more research in this field, it will be given the credit it deserves.

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Appendix

A.1 Assumptions

As with every statistical model there are certain assumptions that need to be fulfilled to use a model. If some assumptions are not met it is possible that the power of significance for some variables is skewed causing an unjust rejection or acceptance of a hypothesis. When assumptions are violated questions need to be asked about whether using that specific model leads to correct results. There are two sets of assumptions we need to fulfill for a multilevel logistic model. This thesis employs a logistic model and is therefore required to fulfill the following four logistic regression assumptions (Field, 2018, pp. 911-915). First, we have to analyze whether the dependent variable is binary. Second, the data should be independent of each other. Third, the independent variables should not be correlated too highly with each other in the model. Fourth the continuous independent variables should have a linear relationship between the numeric and log odds. As this is a multilevel model we expect there to be correlation within the clusters (Finch, 2019, p.37). This means that we expect that depending on the country the effect will differ. These assumptions will be tested with an analysis of the data with descriptive statistics, VOF tests, and Q-Q plots, the results will then be reported in the next segment.

A.2 Assumptions tests

As described above five assumptions need to be tested for this analysis. Four of the assumptions are tested below and the fifth (the intraclass correlation) is tested in chapter 4.2.1. This thesis does not find any problematically violated assumptions when analyzing the assumptions. Especially since the N is fairly large (24109) any remaining doubts about the possible problems regarding the assumptions are drastically diminished. In the next segment, a small summary is given regarding the tested assumptions.

A.2.1 Binary dependent variable & independent data

To find whether the dependent variable is binary we simply need to look at the values of the dependent variable “voting for a radical right-wing party”. As the values are 0 and 1 we are allowed to assume that this variable is binary. Whether the data is independent means that we need to look at the data and find whether the groups are based on different people (participants). We can assume that this is true because ESS gathers different participants (European Social Survey. (z.d.-c)) That means that for the different rows of data ESS does not duplicate people and the data is therefore independent of each other. As this is a multilevel model the data of the countries also need to be independent and since no countries have duplicated this assumption is also fulfilled.

A.2.2. Independent continuous variables are linearly correlated to the log odds

In logistic regression, the variables of the independent continuous variables are assumed to be linearly correlated to the log odds. To test whether this assumption is fulfilled scatterplots are visually analyzed to find whether the variables are fairly linearly associated with voting for a radical right-wing populist party. This thesis finds that all of the variables used in this analysis are fairly linearly associated with the dependent variable. This can be seen in A.3 & A.4 where both scatterplots of the main independent variables used in this thesis are visualized.

A.2.3 Multicollinearity

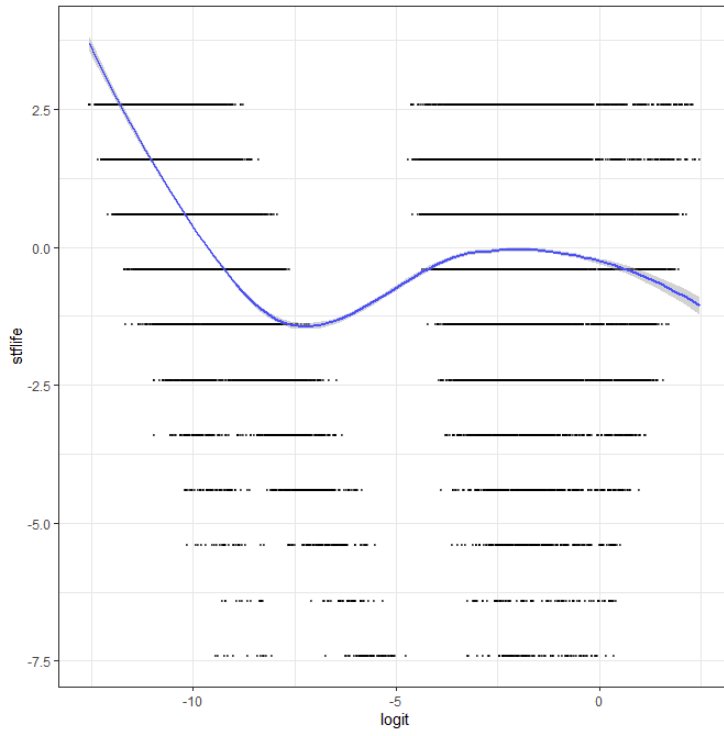
To test whether the independent variables that are used in the model have problematic intercorrelations between them the multicollinearity needs to be tested. To test whether multicollinearity is a problem, this thesis looks at the VIF score. The VIF score is required to be lower than 10 to not cause problems regarding multicollinearity (Finch, 2019, p. 9). If the VIF score is higher than 5 the variable should be noted and possibly excluded. The VIF scores are measured within a model and analyzes if there are any multicollinearity problems within that model. For this test, the second model of T.4.6 is used as that model includes all the variables of the hypotheses. There are no notable high VIF scores on any of the variables used in this thesis as can be seen in A.5, therefore, there is no multicollinearity problem.

A.5 Multicollinearity

Variable	VIF
Micro variables	
Life satisfaction	1.24
Trust in politicians	1.18
External political efficacy	1.23
Gender	1.01
Age	1.05

Trust in EP	1.01
Immigration attitudes	1.00
Education (dummy)	
Middle education	1.03
Higher education	1.08
<hr/>	
	Macro variables
<hr/>	
Age of democracy	2.71
Immigrant stock	2.43
Member of the European Union	2.47
Income inequality (gini)	1.22
Population (million)	1.29
<hr/>	
Total observations	Valid N 24.109
<hr/>	

A.3 linearity log-odds plot life satisfaction



A.4 linearity log-odds plot trust in politicians

