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Who votes for right-wing populist parties in Europe?

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Who Votes for Right-Wing Populist Parties in Europe?

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Who Votes for Right-Wing Populist Parties in Europe?

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Abstract

We study a sample of individuals in 20 European countries that includes eight East European countries in order to identify whether these eight countries differ from the Western countries in the popularity of right-wing populist parties once we have controlled for personal attributes. The results show variation among the East European countries so that they are not distinct from Western Europe. In particular, in Hungary and Poland populist right-wing parties enjoy greater support once account is taken of the variables above. Moreover, we find that a right-wing identity, a negative view of immigrants, not being satisfied with democracy, being negative on homosexuality, and mistrust in both the national and the European parliament seem to be the factors heavily correlated with voting for a right-wing populist party in Europe. Also, men are more likely to vote for a right-wing populist party as are the old and the less educated. Having experienced unemployed also increased the probability of voting for these parties.

Keywords: Populist right-wing parties, survey evidence.

JEL Classification: P16, Z18.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to use individual-level survey data to describe broad patterns and regularities in political attitudes towards right-wing populism, defined as the electoral success of populist Right-Wing (*PRW*) parties in the European Economic Area (*EEA*) between 2002 and 2014.¹ We focus on both personal values, economic factors and country of residence. We include nine Eastern European countries and explore whether they differ fundamentally from the Western European ones.

We focus on trust in both domestic and EU institutions; placement on the left/right scale and satisfaction with democracy as representing confidence in the political establishment. Traditional values are measured with attitudes towards homosexuals and immigrants and religiosity. Then there is the placement in the income distribution and whether the individual belongs to a minority group as well as his level of education. Personal attributes also involve gender and age and finally there is the important economic factor whether the individual has ever been unemployed for three months or more. What remains to explain is captured by country dummy variables and the objective of the paper is to compare this dummy between individual Eastern European nations and between the East and the West.

The main innovation of the paper over those surveyed in the following section is to include East European nations, nations that turn out to be quite diverse in their propensity to vote for populist parties. The attitudes and voting patterns of these nations are important for the decision making within the European Union (EU) and it is of some interest to see whether they share a populist sentiment, which may disrupt the operations of the EU. These nations share the experience of having had communist societies that involved central planning, absence of democracy and limited human rights in the form of freedom of expression and freedom of movement. They may also have enjoyed more economic security since unemployed did not exist and education and health care were free of charge. This shared history may make these nations more or less prone to vote for populist right-wing parties, which then affects collective decision making at the EU level. The question whether the economic development that has taken place is linked with changes in values, making them similar to those in the West or whether the cultural heritage of these societies, such as Communism, are still dominant.

¹ The European Economic Area includes the member states of the European Union as well as Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein. The latter have to abide by the rules of the single market but cannot participate in making these rules. However, they are not a part of the monetary union nor the Common Agricultural Policy.

2. Literature

The Brexit referendum in the UK in June 2016 as well as the election of Donald Trumps as President of the US has generated an intense interest in the reasons for the success of populist politicians and parties. Below we will give a brief overview of some recent contributions. According to the political scientist Cass Mudde (see Mudde, 2016), populist parties tend to distinguish between the “pure people” and “outsiders,” and challenge prevailing elites and institutions such as the media, universities, mainstream political parties and international organisations.² Populists also tend to share a tendency to claim to represent the “people” against the prevailing authorities and institutions and to be led by charismatic leaders. It follows that the populist parties tend to disregard the rights of minorities and even challenge the rule of law. In so doing they have created a challenge to the liberal order of the post-war years based on an emphasis on free trade, the rule of law and multicultural societies that welcome immigration.

We are interested in exploring to what extent economic and cultural factors may fuel the emergence of populist parties. Ingelhart and Norris (2016) propose two explanations for the rise of populism. The first is based on economic factors that create insecurity such as international trade. The other is based on opposition to progressive values, such as feminism and environmentalism. They use the 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey to identify the ideological location of 268 political parties in 31 countries – the EU member states and Norway, Switzerland and Turkey – and use the European Social Survey (ESS) from 2002-2014 to test whether it is economic insecurity or cultural factors that predict voting for populist parties. They control for gender, age and education, experience of unemployment, measures of feeling of income security and values that were meant to separate populist and liberal values. Their regression model that pools responses to European Social Surveys conducted from 2002 to 2014 tests the two hypotheses and find more evidence for the cultural hypothesis. In a more recent paper, Guiso et al. (2017) argue that Ingelhart and Norris fail to take into account the decision by voters to abstain from voting rather than voting for populist parties. They find that a combination of the inability of governments to guarantee security has shaken confidence in traditional political parties and institutions, increasing fear beyond that already created by trade and migration.

Clearly, a populist party that is nativist and anti-establishment may oppose free trade as recent examples show. The negative income and employment effects of trade may affect

² For a review of the literature on populism see Mudde and Katwesser (2017).

subgroups of the labour force as demonstrated in a rapidly growing literature that shows how international trade is having a negative effect on local economies. Pessoa (2014) finds that workers in the U.K. in industries that became exposed to Chinese import competition earned significantly less over the period 2000-2007 because of fewer years of employment and lower hourly earnings while employed. The economic effects of import competition can also have political effects by creating protectionist sentiments and increase the share of voters of populist parties. Dippel, Gold and Heblich (2015) find an effect of trade-integration with China and Eastern Europe on voting in Germany from 1987-2009. The vote share of extreme-right parties responds significantly to trade integration measured by changes in manufacturing employment. Curtice (2016) studies public attitudes to the European Union in Britain and finds concerns about the cultural consequences of EU membership but that voters are inclined to think that membership is economically beneficial. Colantone and Stanig (2016) study voting patterns in Western Europe and find that voters in Western Europe in areas more exposed to competition from Chinese imports tend to vote in a more protectionist and nationalist direction.

Financial crises tend to reduce trust in societies. Hence it is possible that they also reduce trust in domestic institutions, political parties and international institutions. Funke et al. (2016) study election data for 20 developed economies going back to the year 1870 and find that polarization rises following financial crises and that voters seem to move towards right-wing populist parties. Hernandez and Kreisi (2016) reach similar conclusions in their study of election outcomes in 30 European countries in the two elections that preceded the latest crisis and the one that followed. They find that falling output, increased unemployment and increased debt, resulted in losses for incumbent parties in Western Europe, but less so in Central and Eastern Europe. There is also the study of Bartels (2014) who found in a sample of 42 elections in 28 OECD countries before and after the Great Recession that 1% growth of GDP increased the voting share of the incumbent party by 1.2%. In a recent paper, Dustmann et al. (2017) find that growth in GDP per capita increases support for European integration, and trust in both European and national parliaments, while an increase in the unemployment rate have a negative effect on these same variables. The economic situation matters more in regions where people have traditional and autocratic values. If political populism is associated with less trust in parliamentary institutions and more Euroscepticism then adverse macroeconomic shocks tend to increase the demand for populist political parties. They find that the effect of macroeconomic shocks is almost twice as large on trust towards national as opposed to trust towards the European parliament in this study. Thus, citizens blame national

politicians more than their European counterparts for adverse economic conditions. These authors conclude that anti-EU sentiment is more sensitive to national identity and personal attributes than economic factors so that economic growth will not fully restore support for the European Union. The UK is clearly an outlier in terms of lack of trust towards the EU and falling trust in recent years in this study. Yann et al. (2017) find a relationship between increases in unemployment voting for populist parties. Moreover, they find a correlation between the increase in unemployment and a decline in trust in national and European political institutions. Overall, these authors find that crisis-driven economic insecurity is a driver of populism and political distrust. Frieden (2016) uses data from Eurobarometer surveys since 2004 to explore changes in attitudes before and after the recent crisis. He found that the crisis reduced trust in both national governments as well as the EU. He also found that less educated and less skilled citizens, along with the unemployed, are particularly lacking in trust; and that those in the southern periphery – the debtor nations – are uniformly disappointed with their national political institutions. The UK is again an outlier in terms of lack of trust towards the EU. In another recent paper, Foster and Frieden (2017) analyse the responses individuals in Eurobarometer surveys conducted from 2004 to 2015, to study the reasons for changes in trust during the recent financial crisis. The authors confirm the results of previous studies that the better educated have the highest levels of trust in both their national governments and the EU, while those with lower levels of skill and education have less trust. Economic variables, such as unemployment, help explain the variation in trust among Europeans over time and across countries.

The emergence of populism in the wake of economic recessions and financial crises may be reduced by the creation of a welfare state. Swank and Betz (2003) analysed national elections in 16 European countries from 1981-1988 and found that a welfare state weakens the link between international trade and immigration, on the one hand, and support for the populist right, on the other hand. Mayda et al. (2007) found that the population tends to be less risk averse when it comes to international trade in small countries with higher levels of government expenditures. Finally, Rodrik (1998) argued that since governments can reduce aggregate risk through redistribution and also by providing a stable provision of publicly provided goods and services there was a tendency for more open economies to have larger governments.

Inglehart and Baker (2000) use data from three waves of the World Values Surveys, including 65 countries and 75 percent of the world's population and find evidence for economic development affecting cultural values as well as some persistence of distinctive

cultural traditions. Economic development is found to be associated with shifts from absolute norms and values toward values that are more rational, tolerant, trusting and participatory. This supports what in sociology is called the modernization theory.³ However, cultural values do not only respond to economic development but are persistent so that the cultural heritage of a society – be it in the form of a religion or economic system – leaves an imprint on values that endure in spite of increased economic development. These cross-country differences – that is cross-cultural differences – are transmitted from one generation to the next through schools and the media. Inglehart and Baker mention the emergence of fundamentalist Islam as an example of the persistence of cultural heritage in spite of economic development. Another example is given by Fukuyama (1995) who argued that societies that suffer from low levels of trust are at a competitive disadvantage in global markets because of the difficulties of developing large and complex institutions, such as corporations. Yet another example is mentioned by Inglehart and Baker, which is that East Germany is much closer to the ex-communist countries of the Czech Republic and the Baltic States than West Germany in terms of “traditional/secular” versus “self-expression” values. Thus, the cultural heritage of a country matters, in this case their communist past. Another example is that the Protestant nations lean away from traditional values and towards self-expression values while the former Communist countries do the reverse. Colonial ties also matter, so that, to take an example, the English-speaking countries share some common values. Moreover, they find that the Catholic societies of Eastern Europe form a sub-cluster of the Catholic world between the West European Catholic societies and the Orthodox societies. Following German unification and the fall of the Soviet Union both the former West Germany and the former East Germany experienced a change in values toward rational values and an emphasis on self-expression and away from traditional values.

Our main empirical question is whether the East European nations are distinct in terms of values when it comes to vote for populist right-wing parties because of their communist heritage or whether economic growth and a higher standard of living has made their value system close to what we find in Western Europe once account is taken of the attributes of individuals.

³ See Bell (1973, 1976).

3. Populist parties

We are interested in the propensity of individuals and nations to vote populist right-wing parties (PRW) into power. Table 1 lists all *PRW*-parties found in 20 countries contained in the dataset.⁴ Their election results in the most recent parliamentary elections in 2002 and 2014 are also listed, showing an increase in support in 14 out of 20 countries.⁵ In terms of the share of votes in 2014 and the increase from 2002 Hungary tops the list. There is also a PRW party in Greece that did not exist in 2002 and had a vote share of 20.5% in 2014. In third place, there is Finland where the “True Finns” have around a fifth of the voting share. Perhaps surprisingly, Sweden comes next with the Swedish Democrats having a vote of 12.9%. After Poland we have Bulgaria, Austria, and Lithuania. At the bottom of the list is Italy where the Lega Nord lost many votes during this period. Just above Italy, we have Belgium, the Netherlands, Slovenia, France, Estonia, and Denmark. Germany and the UK are close to the centre of the list.

4. Explanatory variables

Our data comes from the European Social Survey (*ESS*) and contains answers from individuals in 20 member countries of the *EEA* between 2002 and 2014, 11 Western European countries and nine Eastern European countries. The *ESS* is carried out every two years, measuring the attitudes and behavioral patterns for more than 295,000 persons in various European countries. We use 140,920 observations from the survey.

The names and definition of selected variables are listed in Table 2. The names of the variables are those from the *EES* with an *N_* added to indicate the normalisation. The dependent variable, *pop*, takes the value 1 if an individual voted for a *PRW*-party in the last election, but 0 otherwise. Variables meant to capture cultural traits and trust in institutions are continuous variables taking a value between 0 and 1 except for the ones measuring religion. These are trust in the national parliament, trust in the EU Parliament, placement on the left/right scale of the political spectrum, satisfaction with democracy, attitude towards homosexuals, attitudes towards immigrants and place in the income distribution. In addition, we have three dummy variables for respondent not being religious, being somewhat religious or being highly religious. Age is measured in the number of years at the time of the election.

⁴ The classification of the parties is based on Balceré (2011), Bakker et al. (2015), Bornschier (2010), Inglehart and Norris (2016), Minkenberg (2002), Minkenberg (2015), Mölder (2011), and Wodak et al. (2013).

⁵ We note that some countries do not have a right-wing populist party using our definition, such as Spain, Iceland, and Ireland. These were omitted from our sample.

Table 1. Populist parties in different countries

<i>Country</i>	<i>Party name</i>	2002 % (last election)	2014 % (last election)	Change
Hungary	<i>Fidesz, Jobbik (new)</i>	41.1	69.4	28.3
Poland	<i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS), Kongres Nowej Prawicy (KNP) (new)</i>	9.5	31.0	21.5
Greece	<i>Anexartitoi Ellines (ANEL) (new), Chrysí Avgí, LAOS</i>	-	20.5	20.5
Finland	<i>Perussuomalaiset (PS)</i>	1.0	19.0	18.0
Sweden	<i>Sverigedemokraterna (SD) (new)</i>	-	12.9	12.9
Bulgaria	<i>Ataka (AT) (new), Bulgarsko Natsionalno Dvizhenie (IMRO)</i>	3.6	11.8	8.2
Austria	<i>Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ)</i>	10.1	17.5	7.4
Lithuania	<i>Partija tvarka ir teisingumas (PTT) (new)</i>	-	7.3	7.3
Czech R.	<i>Úsvit (new)</i>	-	6.9	6.9
Germany	<i>Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) (new), Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD)</i>	0.1	6.0	5.9
U.K.	<i>The UK Independence Party (UKIP) (new)</i>	-	3.1	3.1
Slovakia	<i>Slovenská národná strana (SNSk), Kotleba (new)</i>	3.3	6.1	2.8
France	<i>Front National (FNf)</i>	11.1	13.6	2.5
Norway	<i>Fremskrittspartiet (FRP)</i>	14.6	16.3	1.7
Denmark	<i>Dansk Folkeparti (DF)</i>	12.0	12.3	0.3
Slovenia	<i>Slovenska Nacionalna Stranka (SNSi)</i>	4.4	2.2	-2.2
Estonia	<i>Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond (EKRE)</i>	2.4	0.0	-2.4
Netherl.	<i>Partij Voor de Vrijheid (PVV) (new), Pim Fortuyn (PM), Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (SGP)</i>	18.7	12.2	-6.5
Belgium	<i>Vlaams Belang (VB), Front National (FNb)</i>	11.3	3.7	-7.6
Italy	<i>Alleanza Nazionale (AN), Lega Nord (LN)</i>	16.0	4.1	-11.9

Note: The table shows the support for each party in the last parliamentary election in 2014 or before that year compared to the last parliamentary election in 2002. Hence, some of the results are from a year preceding 2014 or 2002. Source: European Election Database.

There are several other dummy variables. These are not belonging to a minority group, gender (1 denoting females), having low education (secondary school or less), middle level or tertiary education and a dummy for those who have been unemployed for 3 months or more.⁶

⁶ The ESS changed its units of measurement for self-placement in the income distribution after their third survey in 2006. In order to account for that difference, the answers before and after the change were normalized.

Finally, there is a dummy variable for each country and each wave of the European Social Survey, starting in 2002.

Table 2. Definition of variables

Dependent variable:	Variable takes value 1 for:	
<i>Pop</i>	Voted for a PRW-party	
Continuous (0-1) variables	Description	Meaning of variable's highest value
<i>N_trstprl</i>	Trust in national parliament	Complete trust
<i>N_trstep</i>	Trust in EU Parliament	Complete trust
<i>N_lrscle</i>	Placement on left/right scale	Identify as far-right
<i>N_stfdem</i>	Satisfaction with democracy	Very satisfied
<i>N_freehms</i>	Attitude towards homosexuals	Very negative
<i>N_inwbcnt1</i>	Attitude towards immigrants	Very positive
<i>Income dist.</i>	Placement in income distribution	In the top 10% of the distribution
<i>Age</i>	Age at the time of interview	
Dummy variables	Variable takes value 1 for:	
<i>Low-Relig</i>	Being not so religious	
<i>Mid-Relig</i>	Being somewhat religious	
<i>High-Relig</i>	Being highly religious	
<i>Not belonging to minority</i>	Not belonging to a minority group	
<i>Gender</i>	Female	
<i>Low-Educ</i>	Having less than lower secondary education	
<i>Mid-Educ</i>	Having secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education	
<i>High-Educ</i>	Having tertiary education	
<i>Unemploy</i>	Having at some time been unemployed for 3 months	
<i>Country</i>	Country of interview	
<i>Round</i>	Period of the interview	

Source: European Social Survey.

5. Empirical analysis

Pop is a choice variable which only takes the values 0 and 1, so it does not follow a normal distribution. Therefore, a regression by least squares would produce the wrong standard errors. Running a logistic regression would counter this problem, but the interpretation of the coefficients would be more complicated. Therefore, we choose to use a least-squares regression in order to simplify interpretation, even though the standard errors for the estimated coefficients might be wrong. In order to account for unequal inclusion probabilities in the survey and differences in the countries' population size, post-stratification and population weights provided by the ESS are used. The weighted dataset is considered as a random sample of the European population. The Variance Inflation factors (*VIF*) for each variable revealed that the model contained little multicollinearity.

The generic estimation equation is given by:

$$pop_{it} = \beta_0 + X'_{it}\beta_1 + Z'_{it}\beta_2 + T_t + C_i + u_{it},$$

where pop_{it} takes the value 1 if the individual voted for a PRW party; X is a matrix with the values and attitudes variables and religion listed in Table 2, Z has the demographic and economic variables (age, income distribution, education, gender, unemployment, minority group), T_t has the years of interview dummies, and C_i are country dummies.

Table 3 shows the regression results for the cultural and demographic variables along with their significance and heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors. The coefficients of the country and time dummy variables are shown in the following Table 4. The analysis of the full model contains 140,921 observations, as 90,256 observations were dropped due to one or more missing variables.

The coefficients of the independent variables are mostly as predicted. A right-wing identity, a negative view of immigrants, not being satisfied with democracy, being negative towards homosexuality, and mistrust in institutions seem to be the factors heavily correlated with voting for a *PRW* party. In addition, women are less likely to vote for these parties, as are the young while the low- and mid-level educated are more likely to vote for them compared to the highly educated. Having no experience of being unemployed for at least three months in the past makes one less likely to vote for a *PRW* party.

The only perhaps puzzling result is that individuals are more likely to vote for these parties if they place themselves higher in the income distribution. There is also the question why people with “medium religiosity” are less likely to vote for a PRW party than the group of low and high religious respondents.

Table 3. OLS Regression with sample weights. Dependent variable: *Pop*

Variables	Coef. Est.	Std. Error	T-value	
Intercept	0.0160	0.006	2.55	*
Trust in national parliament	-0.0144	0.005	-3.19	**
Trust in EU Parliament	-0.0264	0.004	-6.23	***
Placement on left/right scale	0.1300	0.004	28.95	***
Satisfaction with democracy	-0.0291	0.004	-7.30	***
Attitude towards homosexuals	0.0119	0.004	3.31	***
Attitude towards immigrants	-0.0445	0.004	-11.23	***
Placement in income distribution	0.0072	0.003	2.43	*
Age	0.0002	0.000	5.50	***
Low religiosity	Reference Dummy			
Medium religiosity	-0.0066	0.002	-3.70	***
High religiosity	0.0020	0.002	1.07	N.S.
Does not belong to a minority group	-0.0034	0.003	-1.14	N.S.
Female	-0.0064	0.002	-4.19	***
LowEduc	Reference Dummy			
MidEduc	0.0055	0.002	2.71	**
HighEduc	-0.0043	0.002	-2.28	*
Has not ever been unemployed for 3 months	-0.0035	0.002	-2.03	*

Significant at 95% confidence level, ** significant at 99% confidence level, *** significant at 99.5% confidence level.

Table 4 shows the coefficients of the country and ESS-round dummy variables. The time dummies show that the support of PRW parties increased between 2008 and 2010 following the world financial crisis and also between 2012 and 2014, which can possibly be attributed to the euro crisis. There was also an increase between 2004 and 2006, which is more difficult to explain.

Comparing the Eastern and Western European nations, the average value of the dummy variable for the 11 West European nations is -0.011 while the average for the nine East European nations is around zero (0.0007 to be precise). So on average, the East European nations have a slightly lower country effect. However, there is variation within the group. Hungary has the largest country dummy coefficient, followed by Norway, and Poland while the Czech Republic, Estonia, United Kingdom, Greece, Slovakia, and Germany have the lowest dummies. Both Hungary and Poland were in the top half of Table 1, but Finland, Greece, and Sweden, also at the top of that table, have negative coefficients in Table 4, which suggests that the explanatory variables account for the populist sentiments in these countries.

Table 4. OLS Regression with sample weights. Dependent variable: *Pop*

Dummy variables	Coef. Est.	Std. Error	t-value	
Austria	Reference Dummy			
Belgium	-0,010	0,004	-2,31	*
Bulgaria	-0,036	0,006	-5,57	***
Croatia	-0,041	0,007	-5,63	***
Czech Rep.	-0,068	0,004	-16,69	***
Denmark	0,035	0,005	6,96	***
Estonia	-0,067	0,004	-15,47	***
Finland	-0,015	0,004	-3,65	***
France	-0,017	0,005	-3,82	***
Germany	-0,047	0,004	-12,41	***
Greece	-0,047	0,004	-10,63	***
Hungary	0,258	0,009	29,53	***
Italy	-0,025	0,006	-4,38	***
Lithuania	-0,021	0,007	-2,88	**
Netherlands	-0,020	0,004	-4,77	***
Norway	0,109	0,006	18,38	***
Poland	0,061	0,005	11,94	***
Slovenia	-0,036	0,004	-8,17	***
Slovakia	-0,044	0,005	-8,80	***
Sweden	-0,032	0,004	-7,93	***
United Kingdom	-0,052	0,004	-13,10	***
Round 1: 2002				
Round 2: 2004	0,001	0,002	0,52	N.S.
Round 3: 2006	0,029	0,002	12,76	***
Round 4: 2008	0,021	0,002	10,61	***
Round 5: 2010	0,031	0,002	13,80	***
Round 6: 2012	0,033	0,002	14,29	***
Round 7: 2014	0,050	0,003	18,36	***
Degrees of Freedom:	140.920	.	= signific. at 90% conf. lvl	
(90,256 observations deleted due to lack of observations)		*	= signific. at 95% conf. lvl	
Residual Standard Error:	0,186	**	= signific. at 99% conf. lvl	
Multiple R-Squared	12,85	***	= signific. at 99.5% conf. lvl	
Adjusted R-Squared	12,82			
F-Statistic:	155,9			
Note: Heteroskedasticity-consistent robust standard errors				

It is of some interest that two Eastern European countries – Hungary and Poland – rank high in Table 1 and also have large positive coefficients of the country dummies in Table 4. The other Eastern European countries; Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Slovakia, have negative country dummies, which indicates that time-constant country-specific factors are not pulling them in that direction.

6. Conclusions

We have discovered that the Eastern European nations differ in their propensity to vote for a *PRW* party. They have a slightly higher average country effect but vary greatly internally. Thus Hungary and Poland have a greater affinity with such parties while the Baltics, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Croatia and Slovakia have much less. But we can also find comparable countries in Western Europe such as Denmark and Sweden, which also are inclined to vote for a *PRW* party.

The coefficients of the personal attributes have a familiar pattern. A right-wing identity, a negative view of immigrants, not being satisfied with democracy, being negative on homosexuality, and mistrust in institutions seem to be the factors heavily correlated with voting for a *PRW* party. In addition, women are less likely to vote for these parties, as are the young while the low- and mid-level educated are more likely to vote for them compared to the highly educated. Having no experience of being unemployed for at least three months in the past makes one less likely to vote for a *PRW* party. The only surprising result is that individuals are more likely to vote for these parties if they place themselves higher in the income distribution. There is also the question why people with “medium religiosity” are less likely to vote for a *PRW* party than the group of low and high religious respondents.

One limitation of the study is that some political parties which are not considered *PRW* have adopted more radical policies to win votes from *PRW* parties. Therefore, overall populism support could be underestimated. The UK is a good example where the Conservative Party became more populist as a response to the challenge presented by the UK Independence Party. In fact, in the recent study by Dustmann et al. (2017) the Conservative Party is counted among populist parties based on its manifesto.

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