

Factors of change I: demand-side explanations

Session 10

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- ① Explaining party system change: demand vs. supply factors
- ② Factors of change I: demand-side explanations
- ③ The changing role of class: “Explaining Workers’ Support for Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe” (Oesch, 2008)
- ④ More recent findings
- ⑤ Additional readings
- ⑥ References

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 - Or try to adequate empirical patterns to the existent theories (e.g., cleavage theory)

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- From analyses at the **aggregate**-level (country, party-system or election level) to analyses at the **party and voter** (i.e., individual) levels

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 - Question: who votes for new parties and why?

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**The changing role of class: “Explaining
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 - **Class cleavage traditionally explained vote for left/right parties:** the sociological premise is that **low-income voters should support parties that proposes a stronger intervention of the state on the economy to minimize risk exposure**
- Therefore, ***Research Question***: **why workers are more likely than any other class (with exceptions) to vote for RPPs?**

Hypotheses

- Emerging theses to explain **why workers would shift from socialist and communist parties:**
 - H1. Economic anxieties
 - H2. Cultural threat
 - H3. Social alienation/political dissatisfaction

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- “RPPs are in this sense defenders of the principle of” national preference” regarding employment and social security” (Andrea’s response paper)
- “RPPs may be favoured by those who believe that immigrants lower wages and exploit the welfare state” (Andrea’s response paper)

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- **QUESTION:** how is the second hypothesis different from the first one?

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- **QUESTION:** why should workers be more likely to hold this kind of opinions?

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- **QUESTION:** what do the author mean by intermediary networks?

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- **QUESTION:** what do you think of this case selection strategy?

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- **QUESTION:** does this definition coincide with the Mudde's definition?

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- “For the paper, written in 2008, these data may still be representative, even though one could also argue against it, but in 2022 a new analysis with more recent data is needed” (Miguel’s response paper)
- “In the last two decades different events have taken place, which could have had influenced how persons vote. With the refugee crisis in 2015 it would be interesting to view which impact that would have in the above mentioned categories” (Miguel’s response paper)

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- **QUESTION:** what do you think of this empirical strategy?

Empirical evidence

- Proportion of RPP supporters by class and country

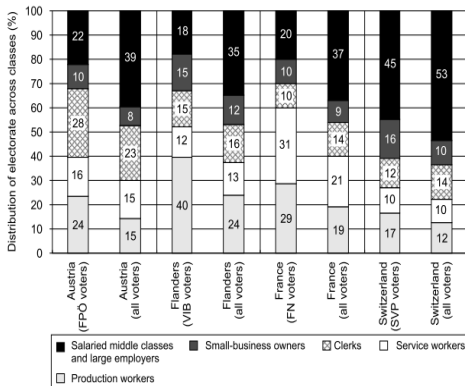


FIGURE 2. *Class Composition of the Right-Wing Populist Parties' Electorate*

Figure 1: Figure 2 in Oesch (2008)

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 - ② “Second, alongside the two little-privileged classes of production and service workers, a third category is over-represented among RPP followers, namely, small-business owners”
 - ③ “Third, two categories show very little sympathy for RPPs in all five countries. This applies to the traditional bourgeoisie (comprising large employers and self-employed professionals) and, above all, sociocultural professionals and semi-professionals”

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 - In Switzerland and Austria, alienation doesn’t have any effect but it is very important in the other countries, **why??**
 - “It is noteworthy that these determinants of RPP support do not entirely pick up the class effect.” **What does this mean?**
 - Conclusion: “voters’ attitudes make a much bigger explanatory contribution than their socio-demographic characteristics”

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 - ② Belgium, France and Norway

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- “left- and right-wing parties have three choices: ignore them, copy their talking points, or confront them” (Andrea’s response paper)
- “Since 2008 there have been phases with high economic instability, as it is for example with the financial crisis in 2008 and the COVID-19 crisis, which may have had an additional impact on how small-business owners vote” (Miguel’s response paper)

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- “what can conventional political parties, both on the left and the right, do in response to the rise of these radical right-wing populist parties?” (Andrea’s response paper)
- “left- and right-wing parties have three choices: ignore them, copy their talking points, or confront them” (Andrea’s response paper)
- “Since 2008 there have been phases with high economic instability, as it is for example with the financial crisis in 2008 and the COVID-19 crisis, which may have had an additional impact on how small-business owners vote” (Miguel’s response paper)
- “Also additional RPP parties have been formed in western Europe, which would also be taken into consideration in a more recent analysis” (Miguel’s response paper)

More recent findings

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- “Electoral competition in Europe’s new tripolar political space: Class voting for the left, centre-right and radical right” ([Oesch & Rennwald, 2018](#))
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 - ① the left
 - ② the centre-right
 - ③ the PRR

More recent findings

- Five class categories and two types of voting classes:

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- Conclusion: “Old patterns are structured by an economic conflict: Production workers vote for the left and small business owners for the centre-right based on their economic attitudes. In contrast, new patterns are linked to the rise of the radical right and structured by a cultural conflict”

Additional readings

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- “The Paradox of Well-being: Do Unfavorable Socioeconomic and Sociocultural Contexts Deepen or Dampen Radical Left and Right Voting Among the Less Well-Off?” ([Rooduijn & Burgoon, 2018](#))

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- “Education and Anti-Immigration Attitudes: Evidence from Compulsory Schooling Reforms across Western Europe” ([Cavaille & Marshall, 2019](#))

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