



# **Explaining Workers' Support for Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe: Evidence from Austria, Belgium, France, Norway, and Switzerland**

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**ABSTRACT.** During the 1990s, the working class has become the core clientele of right-wing populist parties in Western Europe. This article empirically examines the motives of workers for supporting a right-wing populist party. Based on data from the European Social Survey for Austria, Belgium, France, Norway, and Switzerland, three different sets of explanations are tested: (1) hypotheses stressing economic determinants, that is, the fear of wage pressure and competition over welfare benefits; (2) hypotheses emphasizing cultural determinants, that is, the perception of immigration as a threat to national identity; and (3) hypotheses focusing on social alienation, that is, dissatisfaction with the way the country's democracy works and the nonintegration into intermediary networks (trade unions). We find questions of community and identity to be clearly more important than economic grievances. Hence, in Austria and Switzerland, the electoral success of right-wing populist parties among workers seems primarily due to cultural protectionism: the defense of national identity against outsiders. In Belgium, France, and Norway, cultural protectionism is complemented by deep-seated discontent with the way the countries' democracies work.

**Keywords:** • Radical right • Working class • Electorate • Voting  
• Anti-immigrant parties

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## **1. Introduction**

Since the end of the 1990s, the large literature about the radical right has reported an increasing proletarianization of right-wing populist parties' electorate. Individual-level surveys thus suggest that workers have become the core clientele of the Austrian Freedom Party (McGann and Kitschelt, 2005: 155; Ulram, 2001: 217), the Belgian Flemish Block (Lubbers et al., 2000; Swyngedouw, 1998: 71), the

French National Front (Mayer, 2002; Perrineau, 1997: 109), as well as the Danish People's Party and the Norwegian Progress Party (Andersen and Bjørklund, 2000: 216; Arzheimer and Carter, 2006). Among voters of the Swiss People's Party and the Italian Lega Nord, workers' over-representation is only surpassed by that of small-business owners such as shopkeepers, artisans, and independents (Beirich and Woods, 2000: 132; McGann and Kitschelt, 2005: 155). Accordingly, it has been argued that during the 1990s right-wing populist parties (RPPs) have turned into a new type of working-class party (Betz, 2004: 12; Lubbers et al., 2002: 364).

This new alliance between workers and RPPs is remarkable, because it runs counter to common wisdom about class voting. One of electoral sociology's central premises expects individuals strongly exposed to labor market risks and possessing few socioeconomic resources to opt for more state intervention and hence to favor parties on the left (for example, Svallfors, 1999: 203). Workers' disproportionate support for RPPs seems to prove this expectation wrong: although located at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy, workers poll strongly for those parties most opposed to the left, that is, RPPs. This article inquires into this *seemingly* paradoxical link by trying to explain why workers are more likely than any other class (with the possible exception of small-business owners) to vote for RPPs.<sup>1</sup>

Since there are no a priori reasons why workers should be more likely to support an RPP than other classes, our analysis focuses on RPP voters' motivations in general and examines whether the class effect disappears once we control for differences in voters' attitudes. In the literature, three different sets of explanations are advanced to account for workers' disproportionate backing of RPPs. A first set of explanations gives prominence to *economic conflict*: RPPs gather support from people who have more to lose than to win from socioeconomic change, notably the opening of borders. This applies in particular to workers who, by voting for an RPP, may try to protect their jobs and wages from competition from labor migration and international trade. A second set of explanations stresses *cultural conflict*: people who vote for an RPP may primarily express their unease with multiculturalism and the rejection of equal rights for foreign citizens. Having fewer cognitive skills, workers may be particularly ill-equipped to deal with the cultural challenge posed by immigration. A third set of explanations is linked to the concept of *alienation*: citizens dissatisfied with the functioning of the political system and the party establishment vote for the strongest non-system alternative in Western European politics, for RPPs. Among workers, political alienation may be amplified by the process of social disorganization, that is, the weakening of working-class institutions, notably trade unions.

These different hypotheses will be examined on the basis of individual-level data contained in the European Social Survey 2002/03 for five Western European countries with sizeable right-wing populist parties: Austria (Austrian Freedom Party or FPÖ), Belgium/Flanders (Vlaams Blok/Vlaams Belang or VIB), France (Front National or FN), Norway (Progress Party or FrP), and Switzerland (Swiss People's Party or SVP/UDC). We use a simple model with "voting yes/no for an RPP" as the dependent variable. We then introduce two sorts of independent variables: social-structural characteristics and attitudes. The objective is to examine whether differences in attitudes (and, if so, what attitudes) account for workers' disproportionate RPP support.

This article is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews different arguments accounting for voters' motives in general and workers' motives in particular for

supporting an RPP. The aim is to derive hypotheses that can be tested empirically. Based on European Social Survey (ESS) data, Section 3 discusses the selection of cases, presents the data, and treats issues of operationalization. Section 4 establishes the explanandum by showing the actual extent of workers' over-representation among the RPPs' electorate in the five countries of our sample. In Section 5, the different hypotheses are tested in the multivariate setting of binomial logistic regressions. The article concludes with a discussion of the results.

## **2. Hypotheses Accounting for Right-Wing Populist Parties' Appeal to Workers**

In the explication of people's motives for casting a right-wing populist vote, the anti-immigration argument gained center stage in most countries in the course of the 1990s (Betz, 2001; Fennema, 1997; Lubbers et al., 2002; Van der Brug et al., 2005). However plausible this explanation is, we do not find it totally satisfying. It still leaves us wondering whether voters mainly take an anti-immigration stance for economic reasons (fear of pressure on wages and welfare benefits) or cultural reasons (unease about multiculturalism and the granting of citizen rights to foreigners). Therefore, in what follows, we try to disentangle the different elements possibly accounting for workers' right-wing populist support. Besides allowing for factors other than immigration (dissatisfaction with the political system or the decline of intermediary organizations) to determine RPP support, we separate economic hypotheses stressing resources from cultural arguments emphasizing values.<sup>2</sup> To begin with, we discuss hypotheses that ascribe workers' support for right-wing populist parties primarily to a materialist conflict over the distribution of resources.

### *Economic Explanations*

Economic explanations are based on the assumption that RPPs rally "modernization losers" (Betz, 1993; Kriesi, 1999; Kriesi et al., 2006; Lachat and Kriesi, 2003; Swank and Betz, 2003). Among modernization losers, workers are at the forefront: they have been hit hardest by the erosion of industrial mass production, the Keynesian compromise, and full employment. Their market position has been weakened as a result of the spread of information technologies and the intensification of international trade. Unlike qualified employees who benefit from technological progress and the opening of borders, workers often lack convertible skills necessary to adjust to these new circumstances. Being the main victims of economic dislocations, workers may express their resentment by opting for the only political alternative that openly rejects economic modernization: the radical right. In effect, RPPs all over Western Europe have taken a protectionist stance toward international competition, advocating trade barriers and opposing further integration in the European common market. Probably of greater electoral importance is the domestic level, where RPPs defend the principle of "national preference" with respect to employment and social security. By mobilizing against work immigration, they stand for a limitation of labor supply and thus of competition in the labor market.

Based on these arguments, we can identify two economic hypotheses. People's support for RPPs may be a response to *perceived* competition from immigrants for jobs, wages, social benefits, and housing (Immerfall, 1998: 251; Mughan

et al., 2003). “Welfare state chauvinism” (the opinion that social benefits should be restricted to nationals) is part of this explanation stressing ethnic competition about scarce resources (Andersen and Bjørklund, 1990: 212; Betz, 2001: 411). Ethnic competition should be particularly strong within the social category in which most immigrants in Western Europe cluster: the working class. Hence, according to this hypothesis, once we control for people’s attitudes toward economic protectionism and welfare competition, workers should no longer be more likely to vote for RPPs than other occupational groups:

***Hypothesis 1: People who hold the opinion that immigrants bring down wages are more likely to vote for an RPP (economic protectionism).***

***Hypothesis 2: People who hold the opinion that immigrants take advantage of the welfare state are more likely to vote for an RPP (welfare competition).***

### *Cultural Explanations*

In a second set of explanations, the role of values is highlighted. Contrary to the hypotheses above, the RPPs’ electoral success is not linked with conflict over the just distribution of resources, but with these parties’ stance on questions of community and identity (Bornschier, 2005, 2007; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995). The emergence of RPPs thus represents the authoritarian response to the dominance of libertarian values and multicultural models of living (Bornschier, 2005, 2007; Ignazi, 1992; Minkenberg, 2001). Accordingly, it is argued that popular support for RPPs has much to do with the defense of national identity against multiculturalism, but little with jobs and wages. More particularly, the RPPs’ success is explained by people’s unease about the cultural challenges posed by the inflow and presence of an increasing number of foreign residents. However, unease is not shared by all members of the national community to the same extent. While higher education goes along with a “liberalizing” effect and should lead skilled employees to show greater cultural openness, less educated individuals may perceive immigration and foreign cultures as greater threats to their identity. Hence, workers possibly opt for a more authoritarian stance toward immigration than the average citizen. According to this hypothesis, what then explains workers’ disproportionate support for RPPs is their attitude toward immigrants’ influence on national culture:

***Hypothesis 3: People who hold the opinion that a country’s culture is undermined by immigrants are more likely to vote for an RPP (cultural protectionism).***

Another version of the cultural explanation puts emphasis on differences in the conception of citizenship. This argument expects right-wing populist voters to share a restrictive notion of citizenship based on a culturally (or ethnically) homogeneous community – only long-standing citizens should be considered full members of civil society (Betz, 2004). RPPs defend these exclusive definitions of citizenship and national community against “intruders” both from within (immigrants) and outside (supranational political institutions such as the European Union or the United Nations). Individuals in less privileged class locations are expected to be more receptive to the concept of “national preference” and an exclusionary notion of citizenship, to what Betz (2004) labeled “differential nativism” or Minkenberg and Perrineau (2007) the concept of a “closed society.” Hence, according to this hypothesis, once we control for differences in attitudes

about the rights to be granted to foreign citizens, workers should not be more likely to support an RPP than the average citizen:

***Hypothesis 4: People who have an exclusive definition of citizenship are more likely to vote for an RPP (differential nativism).***

*Explanations Based on Alienation*

A last set of explanations focuses on the protest character of right-wing populist parties. This argument considers voting for an RPP as the expression of protest against and frustration with the established parties (Lane and Ersson, 1994). Protest voters manifest their discontent with the political elite by choosing a party that is an outcast in the political arena. Thus, the RPPs' success is based on the mobilization of the reservoir of popular discontent: disaffected and alienated voters who articulate their deep-seated disenchantment with contemporary politics (Taggart, 1995). Confronted with mass unemployment and stagnating real income, workers are expected to be particularly prone to nurture resentment against the political establishment (Betz, 1993). Hence, this hypothesis expects dissatisfaction with the political system to explain why workers are more likely to support an RPP than other classes:

***Hypothesis 5: People who are dissatisfied with the way their country's democracy works are more likely to vote for an RPP (protest voting).***

Another explanation based on alienation insists on the weakening of traditional political loyalties. It argues that entire sectors of society are ignored by trade unions, churches, and other pillars of civil society (Immerfall, 1998: 253). Most notably, deindustrialization and economic restructuring have gone along with a disintegration of working-class culture and organizations. Deprived of the socializing influence of intermediary organizations, working-class voters may act more and more in accordance with spontaneous consciousness, whereby RPPs appear as an increasingly "natural" alternative (Andersen and Bjørklund, 1990: 214). In a context of social anomie, RPPs may offer new possibilities of political expression and mobilization and take on, among less privileged classes, the patronizing function traditionally filled by socialist or communist parties (Minkenberg, 2001: 397; Perrineau, 1997). Hence, the weakening of trade unions' capacity to integrate workers into the left-wing electorate may favor the RPPs' success within the working class (Pappi, 2002). This hypothesis thus attributes a decisive influence to intermediary networks, above all trade unions:

***Hypothesis 6: People not integrated into intermediary networks are more likely to vote for an RPP (social disorganization).***

Our subdivision into six hypotheses is admittedly schematic and somewhat artificial. Still, we believe it to be helpful for *analytical* reasons: by empirically examining different explanations in a multivariate setting, the elements more strongly linked with RPP support can be identified. At the same time, it must be emphasized that these explanations are not necessarily competing, but overlap and complete each other to some extent. Regarding *synthetic* accounts of right-wing populist voters' motives, combining economic, cultural, and (sometimes) organizational explanations, there is an extensive literature (for example, Betz, 2001; Ignazi, 2003; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995; Lachat and Kriesi, 2003; Perrineau, 1997).

### 3. Selection of Cases, Data, and the Operationalization of Hypotheses

For our analysis, we have selected five Western European countries: Austria, Belgium, France, Norway, and Switzerland. In all these five countries, there is a large right-wing populist party: the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ), the Flemish Vlaams Blok/Vlaams Belang (VIB), the French Front National (FN), the Norwegian Progress Party (FrP), and the Swiss People's Party (SVP/UDC). Our selection of right-wing populist parties is motivated, first, by the size of their electorate. We considered only RPPs that obtained at least 5 percent of votes in parliamentary elections in or prior to 2002. Second, we limited our analysis to Western European RPPs, thus excluding RPPs in Central and Eastern Europe. Third, we followed Bornschier (2005: 22; 2007), who defines RPPs on the basis of three distinctive criteria: (1) a location at the extreme right on the ideological axis ranging from libertarian-universalistic to traditionalist-communitarian positions; (2) a populist anti-establishment discourse; and (3) a hierarchical internal structure which sets them apart from pluralist parties. We argue that the five parties selected above share these three commonalities.

There are three ambivalent cases that we excluded from our analysis: the Lega Nord (LN) in Italy, the List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) in the Netherlands, and the Danish People's Party (DF). Although these three Western European parties gather comparatively large support and partly mobilize voters with the same issues as the five RPPs selected, we believe they fall outside our definition of an RPP. To begin with, the Lega Nord does not seem to have an extreme right location on the libertarian-universalistic versus traditionalist-communitarian dimension of conflict. Albertazzi and McDonnell (2005) classify it as a "regionalist populist party" and Ignazi (2003) describes its voters as "centre extremists." Similarly, the LPF does not conform well to an extreme position on the libertarian-authoritarian axis either. Pim Fortuyn advocated an innovative ideological cluster of his own, combining opposition to multicultural society with libertarian values concerning family, gender, sexuality, and related societal issues (Bornschier, 2005). Finally, of the three the large, populist Danish People's Party comes closest to an RPP. However, we have chosen to exclude it, as under the leadership of Pia Kjaersgaard it adopted a somewhat more pragmatic stance than Mogens Glistrup's remaining (and now almost defunct) Danish Progress Party (Pedersen, 2006). Revealingly, the DF has not been stigmatized like the FN in France or VIB in Belgium as an outcast in the political arena.

Our analysis is set on the individual level and based on data from the European Social Survey 2002/03. In the ESS, people are asked what party they voted for in the last parliamentary election. This question provides us with the dependent variable for Austria, Belgium, Norway, and Switzerland. In France's semi-presidential regime, presidential elections are of greater relevance than parliamentary elections. Therefore, for France, we have retained the question about the candidate voted for in the last presidential election. Table 1 shows the proportion and actual numbers of individuals in the sample who declare having voted for an RPP. A comparison of the RPPs' effective scores in the last elections (see last column of Table 1) suggests that the ESS underestimates these parties' success in four of our five countries, Norway being the exception.<sup>3</sup> Under-representation of right-wing populist voters is a constant feature of electoral surveys. It is commonly explained by socially conformist behavior (people do not admit having voted for a party of the radical right) and by RPP voters' lesser participation in surveys (Ivaldi, 2001: 55–6).

TABLE 1. *Countries, Parties, and the Number of Observations in the European Social Survey 2002/03*

Country	RPP party	N observations (voters only) in sample	NRPP voters in sample	Proportion of RPP voters in sample	Party's score in last election
Austria	FPÖ	1224	68	5.6%	10.0% (2002)
Belgium*	VIB	772	73	9.5%	9.9% (1999)
France**	FN	793	90	11.4%	16.9% (2002)
Norway	FrP	1335	209	15.7%	14.6% (2001)
Switzerland	SVP	867	156	18.0%	22.5% (1999)

\* Since the Flemish Block VIB is a regional party, our analysis of Belgium includes only the regions where VIB participated in elections.

\*\* France: Front National shows Le Pen's score in the first round of voting in the presidential elections of 2002.

For our analysis, we limit the sample to national citizens who declared having voted for a party in the last parliamentary election (or for France, the last presidential election). Our dependent variable is whether citizens voted for an RPP in the last election. Our independent variables encompass, first of all, socio-demographic controls for *sex*, *age* (three categories), and *class location*. For class location, a detailed eight-category measure is used that discriminates hierarchically between more or less privileged positions as well as horizontally between different work logics (Oesch, 2006a, b). Based on individuals' information about their employment status (employee or employer/self-employed) and their present or past occupations (using the International Standard Classification of Occupations at the most detailed four-digit level), we distinguish the following eight categories: (1) large employers and self-employed professionals, (2) small-business owners, (3) managers, (4) technical specialists, (5) sociocultural specialists, (6) clerks, (7) service workers, and (8) production workers.<sup>4</sup> For the regression analysis, managers and technical and sociocultural specialists are combined into a large grouping (the salaried middle class) that comes close to John Goldthorpe's service class (Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1993), while service workers and production workers are merged into a unitary working class.

Alongside these socio-demographic controls, we construct one independent variable for each of the six hypotheses. With the exception of Hypothesis 6 (union membership), they are all based on an attitude. We have recoded these attitudes into a three-part variable with the value 0 for "disagree," 1 for "neither disagree nor agree," and 2 for "agree."<sup>5</sup> The following list shows the attitudes used to translate our hypotheses into three-part variables:

- H1: Average wages and salaries are generally brought down by people coming to live and work here (economic protectionism).
- H2: People who come to live here take out more in terms of welfare services than they put in in terms of taxes (welfare competition).
- H3: A country's cultural life is generally undermined by people coming to live here from other countries (cultural protectionism).
- H4: People who have come to live here should not be given the same rights as everyone else (differential nativism).

H5: Dissatisfied with the way democracy works in my country (protest voting).

H6: Have not been a trade union member in the last 12 months (social disorganization).

#### 4. Right-Wing Populist Parties' Class Basis

Before inquiring into the determinants of workers' RPP support, we briefly establish the explanandum – the fact that workers are effectively more likely than other classes to vote for these parties. For this purpose, Figure 1 displays for each class the proportion of voters who supported an RPP in the last election. In order to facilitate interpretation, the intersection of the x- and y-axis is set at the value of each country's average RPP support. Hence, bars above the horizontal line tell us that a given class features higher than average RPP support, while bars below the line indicate lower than average support. Contrary to the thesis of the end of class voting (Clark and Lipset, 1991), these results show a clear class pattern for right-wing populist support. Three aspects of this pattern are noteworthy.

First, the thesis of a proletarianization of the right-wing populist parties' electorate clearly seems correct for the five countries on which this study focuses. Hence, production workers (for example, assemblers, mechanics, and bricklayers) are the class showing the highest level of support for the FPÖ in Austria, the VLB in Belgium, and FrP in Norway. In France, another working-class category is even more strongly over-represented among the FN electorate than production workers: service workers (for example, cooks, shop assistants, and nursing aides). In Switzerland, the SVP receives its largest support from small-business owners, but production workers are also strongly over-represented among RPP voters. Production workers' support for an RPP exceeds average support by a factor of 1.3 in Switzerland, 1.4 in France, 1.6 in Austria, 1.7 in Belgium, and 1.9 in Norway.

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. As noted, this class provides the SVP in Switzerland with its strongest support, but it also offers above-average support for the respective RPP in Austria, Belgium, and (very slightly so) France. This somewhat unlikely alliance between the *petite bourgeoisie* and the working class in right-wing populist support has received extensive attention in the literature (for example, Ivarsflaten, 2005: 465; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995: 10–11; Perrineau, 1997: 108–9).

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. This is not surprising: several electoral studies show that these highly skilled employees working in education, health, social welfare, culture, and the media have become the backbone of the New Left (Güveli et al., 2007; Kriesi, 1998; Müller, 1999; Oesch, 2006b, 2008).

Figure 1 reveals which classes are over-represented and under-represented among RPP voters, but it does not give any information about the relative importance of the different classes within the right-wing populist electorate. For this purpose, Figure 2 shows the proportion of votes contributed by each occupational group to the RPPs' electoral results. It reveals more clearly than Figure 1 the significance of production workers for the RPPs' success: They make up a fourth of the electorate of the FPÖ and FN, and two-fifths of the VLB's. Moreover, the working class not



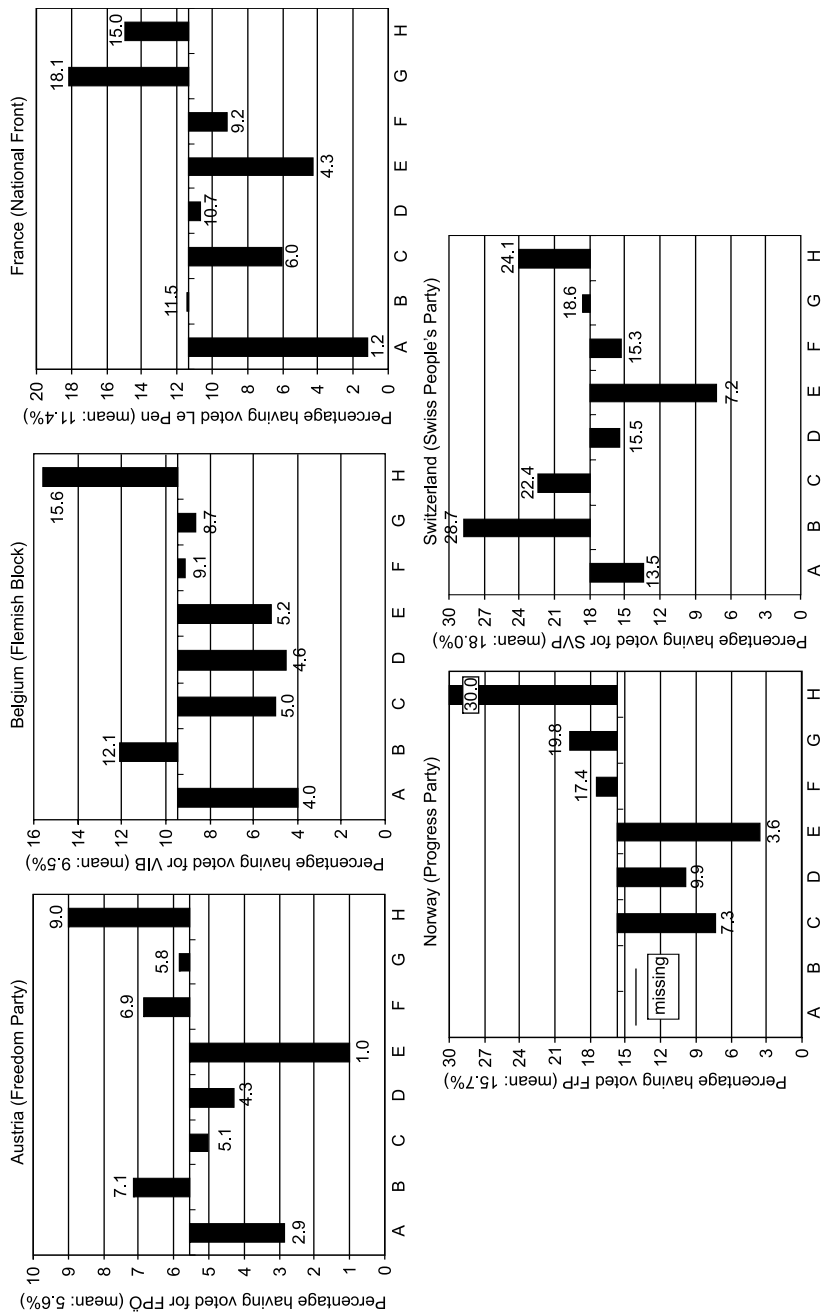


FIGURE 1. *Electoral Support for Right-Wing Populist Parties by Class Location*

Notes: **A:** Large employers and self-employed professionals; **B:** Small-business owners; **C:** Managers and administrators; **D:** Technical professionals and semi-professionals; **E:** Sociocultural professionals and semi-professionals; **F:** Office clerks; **G:** Service workers; **H:** Production workers.

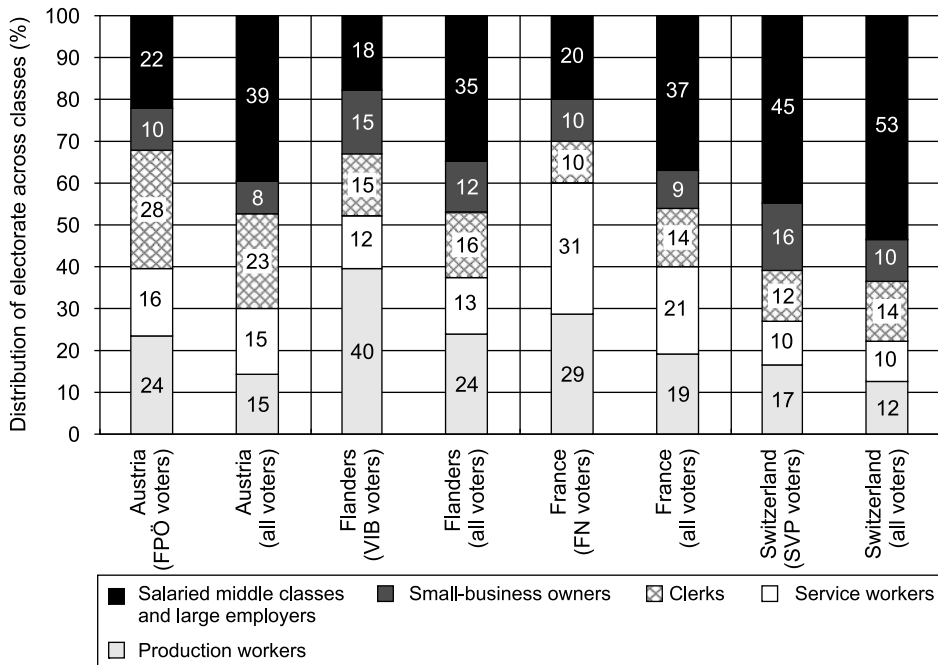


FIGURE 2. Class Composition of the Right-Wing Populist Parties' Electorate

Note: There is no information for the self-employed (small-business owners and large employers) in Norway.

only comprises production workers, but certainly also service workers and, arguably, clerks (for example, secretaries, reception clerks, and telephonists). Defined in this extensive way, the working class makes up around 50 percent of the electorate, but is responsible for two-thirds of votes received by right-wing populist parties in Austria, Belgium, and France. Switzerland does not follow this pattern: the salaried middle class, jointly with the small *traditional bourgeoisie*, accounts for a bigger share of SVP votes than the extended working class. The SVP thus comes closer to the profile of a catch-all party. We must also note the modest contribution made by small-business owners to the RPPs' electoral success: despite their affinity with RPPs, this numerically not very important category does not constitute more than 16 percent of the RPPs' electorate in any of the five countries. The *petite bourgeoisie* is evidently too small a category to explain the RPPs' electoral success. This also suggests that the disproportionate research interest in this category may be somewhat academic.

### 5. Multivariate Analysis into the Determinants of Workers' RPP Support

To test our hypotheses, we evaluate six different models for the determinants of RPP voting. For each country, a first model (model 0) includes socio-demographic factors only (gender, age, and class). In models 1–3, two variables are added (and then taken away again) to test for (1) economic determinants, (2) cultural

determinants, and (3) determinants linked to alienation. Model 4 then combines all these determinants. Finally, in model 5, we test for conditional effects by integrating interaction effects between workers and attitudes. All these models are estimated with binomial logistic regressions. The results are displayed in Tables 2–6.

Model 0 shows that in all five countries workers are significantly more likely to vote for an RPP than members of the salaried middle class. In Austria, Belgium, and above all Switzerland, this also applies to small-business owners. While age does not seem strongly to influence RPP support, gender does: men in Austria, France, and Norway are significantly more likely to vote for the FPÖ, FN, and FrP than women. It must be noted, however, that the explanatory power of this socio-demographic base model is small: the pseudo-Rs suggest that only between 2 percent (Switzerland) and 8 percent (Norway) of variance is accounted for by gender, age, and class.<sup>6</sup>

The introduction of two economic determinants in model 1 makes a significant contribution in all five countries, most strongly so in Austria. Here, it seems partially to account for workers' FPÖ support: once we control for the fear of wage dumping and welfare competition, the coefficient for workers becomes smaller. Besides Austria, the fear of wage dumping is significantly linked with RPP voting in Belgium and France, but not in Norway and Switzerland. In these two latter countries, however, welfare competition proves to be consequential for RPP support. The fear of immigrants' taking advantage of the welfare state also strongly increases the odds of RPP support in France and (to a lesser extent) in Austria.

While economic protectionism and fear of welfare competition doubtlessly play a role in the RPPs' success, model 2 suggests that cultural determinants are of greater relevance in all five countries. In France and Switzerland, "cultural" model 2 explains much more variance in RPP support than "economic" model 1 or "alienation" model 3. In Austria and Norway, differences are smaller. Still, this model fares best everywhere except in Belgium. The decisive variable for RPP voting seems to be the fear that immigration undermines a country's culture: it is highly significant in all five countries. In contrast, the opinion that immigrants should not have the same rights as national citizens only affects RPP voting in France and Switzerland, but not in the other three countries. Once we integrate these cultural determinants into our model, the class effect (workers versus salaried middle class) grows weaker in France and Belgium, and disappears altogether in Austria and Switzerland. In contrast, none of the attitudes we control for account for the fact that workers are significantly more likely to vote for the FrP in Norway than the salaried middle class.

Model 3, based on social alienation, has very little explanatory power in Austria and Switzerland, but makes an important contribution to the understanding of RPP support in Belgium and Norway. The decisive variable here is dissatisfaction with the country's democracy. It is the single most important predictor of voting for the Vlaams Blok in Belgium (Flanders) and also strongly affects support for the FN in France and FrP in Norway. Not surprisingly, dissatisfaction with the country's democracy has less influence on support for the two better established parties of the populist right, the FPÖ or SVP, which were both represented in government at the time of the survey. While our other measure for alienation (not being a trade union member) significantly increases the likelihood of RPP support in Austria, Norway, and Switzerland, this link is not very strong.

TABLE 2. *Voting for the FPÖ (Austria): Coefficients of Binomial Logistic Regressions*

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.
Male	* 0.61 0.26	† 0.51 0.28	0.36 0.27 *	0.68 0.27	0.42 0.30	0.38 0.30
Young (<35 years)	0.19 0.37	0.48 0.39	0.19 0.40	0.00 0.39	0.21 0.43	0.19 0.44
Middle-aged (35–50 years) [ref.]	0.03 0.28	–0.07 0.30	–0.15 0.30	–0.10 0.29	–0.20 0.32	–0.20 0.32
Old (>50 years)	–0.11 1.05	0.22 1.07	–0.08 1.07	–0.18 1.06	0.23 1.09	0.22 1.11
Traditional bourgeoisie	† 0.90 0.48	0.77 0.53	0.80 0.50 †	0.81 0.49	0.69 0.57	0.60 0.59
Small-business owners						
Salaried middle class [ref.]						
Clerks	* 0.92 0.37	* 0.97 0.39	* 0.86 0.38	* 0.90 0.38	* 1.00 0.42	* 1.02 0.43
Production and service workers	** 0.93 0.34	* 0.75 0.37	0.44 0.36 *	0.84 0.35	0.53 0.40	–0.10 1.27
Wages brought down by immigration		*** 1.35 0.39			* 1.03 0.40	* 0.93 0.47
Tax and services: immigrants take out more		* 0.88 0.41			0.48 0.46	0.28 0.56
Country's culture undermined by immigrants			*** 1.86 0.36		** 1.33 0.40	** 1.62 0.48
Immigrants should not have the same rights			0.49 0.30		0.33 0.33	0.54 0.41
Dissatisfied with the country's democracy				0.33 0.30	0.23 0.33	0.23 0.43
Trade union member				* –0.99 0.39	† –0.69 0.41	† –1.04 0.57
Workers × wages brought down						0.65 0.93
Workers × immigrants take out more						0.51 0.99
Workers × culture undermined						–0.77 0.83
Workers × not the same rights						–0.46 0.68
Workers × dissatisfied with democracy						–0.11 0.70
Workers × union member						0.82 0.83
Constant	–3.82 0.35	–5.03 0.59	–4.49 0.43	–3.78 0.40	–5.08 0.65	–4.88 0.73
N	1219	1072	1125	1180	1001	1001
Pseudo-R	0.030	0.099	0.107	0.050	0.143	0.155

Notes: †  $p < 0.1$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ . [ref.] = reference category.

TABLE 3. *Voting for the Vlaams Blok (Belgium): Coefficients of Binomial Logistic Regressions*

	Model 0 coef. s.e.	Model 1 coef. s.e.	Model 2 coef. s.e.	Model 3 coef. s.e.	Model 4 coef. s.e.	Model 5 coef. s.e.
Male	0.08 0.25	0.07 0.27	0.15 0.27	0.06 0.27	0.17 0.31	0.20 0.32
Young (<35 years)	0.33 0.34	0.27 0.37	0.57 0.36	0.29 0.37	0.48 0.42	0.56 0.44
Middle-aged (35–50 years) [ref.]						
Old (>50 years)	-0.34 0.28	-0.39 0.30	-0.75 0.30	-0.25 0.31	-0.49 0.34	-0.51 0.35
Traditional bourgeoisie	-0.13 1.07	0.06 1.09	0.00 1.08	0.01 1.10	0.33 1.14	0.40 1.17
Small-business owners	* 1.09 0.44	* 1.15 0.46	† 0.76 0.46	† 0.80 0.48	0.80 0.51	0.72 0.55
Salaried middle class [ref.]						
Clerks	0.68 0.44	0.65 0.46	0.59 0.45	0.50 0.46	0.39 0.50	0.48 0.52
Production and service workers	** 1.15 0.35	** 1.07 0.37	* 0.88 0.36	* 0.86 0.37	0.52 0.41	0.72 1.12
Wages brought down by immigration	**	0.92 0.30			0.38 0.35	0.21 0.51
Tax and services: immigrants take out more		0.13 0.33			-0.38 0.38	-0.22 0.55
Country's culture undermined by immigrants			*** 1.79 0.34	**	1.30 0.40	* 1.32 0.53
Immigrants should not have the same rights			0.48 0.30		0.53 0.35	* 1.02 0.49
Dissatisfied with the country's democracy				*** 2.54 0.36	*** 2.29 0.39	*** 2.49 0.52
Trade union member				† 0.51 0.30	† 0.57 0.34	0.32 0.49
Workers × wages brought down						0.50 0.70
Workers × immigrants take out more						-0.27 0.79
Workers × culture undermined						-0.21 0.80
Workers × not the same rights						-0.81 0.71
Workers × dissatisfied with democracy						-0.11 0.81
Workers × union member						0.46 0.68
Constant	-3.82 0.35	-3.19 0.48	-3.91 0.46	-4.37 0.47	-4.79 0.64	-5.11 0.82
N	769	711	740	746	682	682
Pseudo-R	0.035	0.087	0.116	0.185	0.265	0.284

Notes: †  $p < 0.1$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ . [ref.] = reference category.

TABLE 4. *Voting for the Front National and Le Pen (France): Coefficients of Binomial Logistic Regressions*

	Model 0 coef. s.e.	Model 1 coef. s.e.	Model 2 coef. s.e.	Model 3 coef. s.e.	Model 4 coef. s.e.	Model 5 coef. s.e.
Male	0.37 0.24	0.31 0.25 †	0.47 0.26 *	0.50 0.24 †	0.47 0.28 *	0.56 0.28
Young (<35 years)	-0.57 0.38	-0.46 0.40	-0.33 0.41	-0.55 0.39	-0.34 0.44	-0.39 0.45
Middle-aged (35–50 years) [ref.]						
Old (>50 years)	0.08 0.25	-0.31 0.26	-0.33 0.27	0.10 0.26	-0.49 0.30	-0.43 0.30
Traditional bourgeoisie	-0.26 1.06	-0.16 1.08	-0.47 1.10	-0.21 1.07	-0.39 1.19	-0.50 1.26
Small-business owners	0.61 0.44 †	0.76 0.46	0.33 0.47	0.62 0.45	0.69 0.50	0.78 0.54
Salaried middle class [ref.]						
Clerks	0.42 0.44	0.57 0.46	0.30 0.47	0.48 0.45	0.42 0.51	0.54 0.55
Production and service workers	*** 1.17 0.29 **	1.09 0.32 *	0.82 0.32 ***	1.08 0.31 *	0.76 0.36	0.78 1.56
Wages brought down by immigration		** 1.14 0.36			0.55 0.38	0.14 0.55
Tax and services: immigrants take out more		** 1.95 0.61			0.74 0.65	0.56 0.85
Country's culture undermined by immigrants			*** 1.50 0.35	*	0.97 0.38 *	1.16 0.56
Immigrants should not have the same rights			*** 1.45 0.30	***	1.48 0.33 ***	2.31 0.55
Dissatisfied with the country's democracy			***	1.55 0.32 ***	1.37 0.36 **	1.65 0.52
Trade union member				-0.37 0.41	-0.38 0.48	0.79 0.70
Workers × wages brought down						0.72 0.78
Workers × immigrants take out more						0.88 1.39
Workers × culture undermined						-0.77 0.78
Workers × not the same rights					†	-1.35 0.71
Workers × dissatisfied with democracy						-0.05 0.76
Workers × union member					*	-1.95 0.99
Constant	-2.88 0.32	-4.91 0.71	-4.15 0.44	-3.86 0.42	-5.52 0.77	-5.98 1.02
N	793	771	778	785	756	756
Pseudo-R	0.045	0.137	0.193	0.102	0.262	0.287

Notes: †  $p < 0.1$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ . [ref.] = reference category.

TABLE 5. *Voting for the Progress Party (Norway): Coefficients of Binomial Logistic Regressions*

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.	coef. s.e.
Male	** 0.51 0.16 **	0.58 0.17 *	0.42 0.16 **	0.56 0.16 **	0.52 0.17 **	0.51 0.18
Young (<35 years)	0.14 0.23	0.04 0.24	0.07 0.23	0.06 0.23	-0.07 0.25	-0.04 0.25
Middle-aged (35–50 years) [ref.]						
Old (>50 years)	-0.05 0.17	-0.14 0.18	-0.12 0.18	-0.11 0.18	-0.21 0.19	-0.21 0.19
Traditional bourgeoisie	-	-	-	-	-	-
Small-business owners	-	-	-	-	-	-
Salaried middle class [ref.]						
Clerks	*** 1.19 0.29 ***	1.08 0.29 **	0.93 0.30 ***	1.07 0.29 **	0.81 0.31 †	0.58 0.33
Production and service workers	*** 1.55 0.19 ***	1.44 0.20 ***	1.34 0.20 ***	1.45 0.20 ***	1.24 0.21 *	1.10 0.50
Wages brought down by immigration		0.49 0.23			0.38 0.24	0.17 0.48
Tax and services: immigrants take out more		*** 0.81 0.22		*	0.53 0.24	0.46 0.40
Country's culture undermined by immigrants			*** 1.04 0.19		*** 0.81 0.21 **	1.12 0.37
Immigrants should not have the same rights			* 0.52 0.23		0.13 0.31	0.68 0.46
Dissatisfied with the country's democracy				*** 1.08 0.19 ***	0.88 0.20 *	0.70 0.35
Trade union member				** -0.47 0.16 *	-0.43 0.17 **	-0.79 0.30
Workers × wages brought down						0.24 0.56
Workers × immigrants take out more						0.13 0.50
Workers × culture undermined						-0.51 0.45
Workers × not the same rights						-0.95 0.63
Workers × dissatisfied with democracy						0.29 0.43
Workers × union member						0.51 0.37
Constant	-2.97 0.21	-3.55 0.27	0.37 0.29	-2.93 0.24	-3.53 0.31	-3.40 0.42
N	1335	1300	1326	1321	1288	1288
Pseudo-R	0.078	0.096	0.114	0.113	0.142	0.161

Notes: † p < 0.1; \* p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001. [ref.] = reference category.

TABLE 6. *Voting for the Swiss People's Party (Switzerland): Coefficients of Binomial Logistic Regressions*

	Model 0 coef. s.e.	Model 1 coef. s.e.	Model 2 coef. s.e.	Model 3 coef. s.e.	Model 4 coef. s.e.	Model 5 coef. s.e.
Male	0.16 0.18	0.19 0.19	0.17 0.20	0.24 0.19	0.24 0.21	0.28 0.21
Young (<35 years)	-0.48 0.55	-0.45 0.56	-0.68 0.63	-0.52 0.55	-0.62 0.64	-0.58 0.64
Middle-aged (35–50 years) [ref.]						
Old (>50 years)	0.25 0.19	0.16 0.19	0.01 0.20	0.20 0.19	-0.05 0.21	-0.03 0.21
Traditional bourgeoisie	-0.19 0.43	-0.31 0.47	-0.19 0.47	-0.27 0.43	-0.25 0.48	-0.25 0.49
Small-business owners	** 0.78 0.28	* 0.69 0.29	* 0.70 0.29	* 0.70 0.28	* 0.61 0.30	0.61 0.30
Salaried middle class [ref.]						
Clerks	0.02 0.29	0.00 0.30	0.05 0.30	0.00 0.29	0.06 0.31	0.07 0.31
Production and service workers	† 0.40 0.22	0.28 0.23	0.31 0.24	0.37 0.23	0.20 0.25	-0.90 1.02
Wages brought down by immigration		0.30 0.22			0.12 0.24	-0.04 0.27
Tax and services: immigrants take out more		*** 1.16 0.33		*	0.75 0.35	† 0.71 0.39
Country's culture undermined by immigrants			*** 1.17 0.24	***	0.99 0.26	*** 1.21 0.30
Immigrants should not have the same rights			*** 1.02 0.22	***	1.00 0.23	** 0.87 0.26
Dissatisfied with the country's democracy				0.29 0.26	0.15 0.28	0.15 0.33
Trade union member			*	-0.79 0.32	-0.56 0.34	-0.54 0.40
Workers × wages brought down						0.73 0.63
Workers × immigrants take out more						0.37 0.92
Workers × culture undermined						-0.77 0.60
Workers × not the same rights						0.78 0.61
Workers × dissatisfied with democracy						-0.07 0.68
Workers × union member						-0.39 0.79
Constant	-1.91 0.21	-2.76 0.37	-2.67 0.27	-1.89 0.22	-3.12 0.41	-3.00 0.44
N	867	820	847	864	802	802
Pseudo-R	0.019	0.048	0.098	0.029	0.109	0.128

Notes: † p < 0.1; \* p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001. [ref.] = reference category.



In model 4 we introduce all the determinants of models 1–3 at the same time. Once we control for economic and cultural attitudes as well as aspects of social alienation, only one variable is significantly linked with RPP support in all five countries: people's fear that immigrants undermine the country's culture. In contrast, economic fears of wage dumping carry some weight only in Austria, and the fear of welfare competition only in Norway and Switzerland. Another variable is of much greater relevance in Belgium, France, and Norway, namely dissatisfaction with the country's democracy. In these countries, this attitude represents (together with fear of the country's culture being undermined by immigration) the most important predictor of RPP support. It is noteworthy that these determinants of RPP support do not entirely pick up the class effect. In France and Norway, workers remain more likely to vote for the FN or FrP even if we control for attitudes toward immigrants' influence on wages, the welfare state, the country's culture, and for political dissatisfaction.<sup>7</sup> This also applies to clerks in Austria and small-business owners in Switzerland, two classes that stand out as being particularly likely to vote for the FPÖ and SVP, respectively. The missing piece here might be provided by economic grievances not linked with immigration, but with high taxes and prices – neoliberal grievances. Ivarsflaten (2008) shows that, unlike other European RPPs, the FPÖ and SVP are as good as or better than any major right-wing party at mobilizing voters with neoliberal economic preferences.

Since compositional effects seem to account only partially for workers' disproportionate support of RPPs, we integrate into a last model (model 5) interaction terms between workers and different determinants to check for conditional effects.<sup>8</sup> With the exception of two small effects in France, none of these terms are significant in any country. Yet even though they are not statistically significant, there still seems to be a systematic pattern to these interaction effects. Economic determinants (and above all the fear of wage dumping) appear to be more important for working-class than middle-class voters' decisions to support an RPP (the interaction term "worker  $\times$  fear of wage dumping" is positive in all five countries and the term "worker  $\times$  welfare competition" in four countries). In contrast, cultural fears seem to be somewhat less decisive for workers than for the middle class (the interaction term "worker  $\times$  immigrants undermining culture" is negative in all five countries and the term "workers  $\times$  differential nativism" in four countries). Hence, while in general cultural attitudes toward immigration appear to be more consequential for RPP support than economic attitudes, the fear of wage dumping and welfare competition finds a larger echo among workers than among the middle class.

A last comment must be made with respect to these models' explanatory power. Pseudos R indicates that model 5 accounts for roughly 28 percent of variance in Belgium and France, 16 percent in Austria and Norway, and 13 percent in Switzerland. Thus, voters' attitudes make a much bigger explanatory contribution than their socio-demographic characteristics. It is noteworthy that our model provides the best fit for the two most radical right-wing parties in our sample, that is, the VLB and FN, while it fares worst in accounting for support of the most established RPP, that is Switzerland's SVP.

### *Predicted Probabilities of RPP Voting*

In a last set of analyses, we try to make results more easily accessible by calculating the predicted probabilities of RPP support based on the binomial regression

coefficients of four different models: the base model, an economic model (fear of wage dumping), a cultural model (fear of culture being undermined), and an alienation model (dissatisfaction with the country's democracy). For each model, only one variable is added and then, again, removed. Hence, Figure 3 shows the predicted probabilities of RPP support for four variables at a time: (1) a given sex (male); (2) a given age (31–50 years); (3) a given class position (production or service worker); and (4) a positive ("agree") or negative ("disagree") attitude toward an issue. This figure reveals the extent to which an attitude (economic, cultural, or political dissatisfaction) affects the likelihood of middle-aged, male workers voting for an RPP.

Figure 3 shows a similar pattern for the Austrian FPÖ and Swiss SVP. In these two countries, RPP support is most strongly fostered by a negative attitude toward immigrants' influence on the country's culture. In Austria, 17 percent of male workers who believe immigration undermines their national culture vote for the FPÖ, but it is only 3 percent among those who do not share this view. In Switzerland, a similar gap separates male workers apprehensive of immigrants' influence on national culture from those untroubled by this grievance (39 percent and 15 percent voting for the SVP, respectively). In Austria, the FPÖ gathers very little support among those male workers who do not expect immigrants to bring down wages (3 percent), whereas in Switzerland this attitude does not make a large difference to SVP support. Likewise, dissatisfaction with the way the country's democracy works carries little weight in the explanation of the FPÖ's and SVP's electoral success.

This result strongly contrasts with the picture found for Belgium. Here, dissatisfaction in Flanders with the country's democracy clearly represents a key motive for casting a VLB vote. More than a third of Flemish male workers dissatisfied with the way their democracy works vote for the VLB, whereas among Flemish male workers satisfied with the state of their democracy, support for the VLB falls to 4 percent. In addition to this dominant influence, the fear that immigrants undermine the country's culture (and, to a lesser extent, bring down wages) also stimulates workers' affinity with the VLB: 30 percent of male workers apprehensive of immigrants' impact on Flemish culture vote for the VLB. This proportion falls to only 6 percent among those male workers who do not share the same apprehension.

In Norway, the same two attitudes (political dissatisfaction and cultural protectionism) strongly fuel RPP support as in Belgium. In Norway, almost half of all politically dissatisfied male workers vote for the FrP (48 percent), whereas only 24 percent of male workers who are satisfied with the way Norwegian democracy works vote for the FrP. A similar gap emerges with respect to male workers' attitude about immigrants' influence on national culture. Among pessimists, FrP support rises to 41 percent, but falls to 19 percent among optimists. In comparison, the fear of wage dumping seems to be much less relevant for FrP support (38 percent among pessimists and 26 percent among optimists).

In France, these three attitudes (fear of wage dumping, fear of the culture being undermined by immigration, and political dissatisfaction) taken individually each lead to a share of 30 percent of male workers voting for the Front National. In contrast, among male workers untroubled by these grievances, FN support falls to 11 percent (do not fear wage dumping) or 9 percent (satisfied with the country's democracy). The factor most strongly hampering the FN's electoral

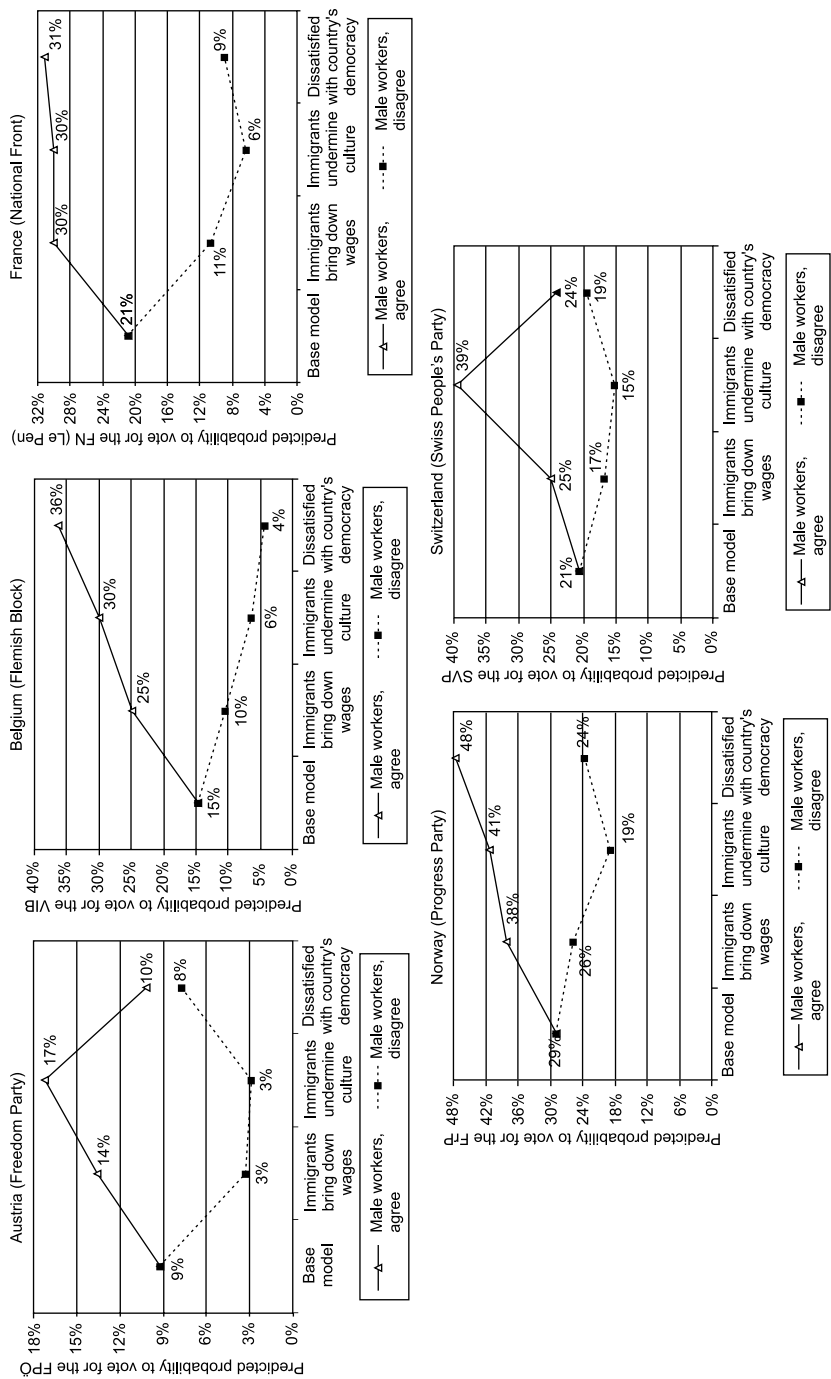


FIGURE 3. Predicted Probability for a Middle-Aged, Male Worker to Vote for an RPP

success among male workers is a positive attitude toward immigrants' cultural influence. Only 6 percent of male workers who believe immigration to be positive for France's culture vote for the FN. As in Belgium and Norway, the electorate of the Front National seems primarily mobilized by cultural protectionism and political dissatisfaction.

### *Discussion of Cross-Country Differences*

Table 7 gives a general summary as to the motives of voters for supporting an RPP and facilitates cross-country comparison. Based on their voters' motives, the five RPPs can be divided into two groups. A first group includes the two republics of the Alps, Austria and Switzerland. Here, the RPPs' electoral success seems primarily due to a protectionist attitude toward the cultural (and, to a lesser extent, economic) implications of immigration. Tellingly, if attitudes on immigrants' cultural impact are taken into account, workers are not more likely than middle-class voters to support an RPP in these two countries. Political dissatisfaction (the protest vote) does not appear to be correlated with workers' support for these two parties. This is not surprising insofar as the FPÖ and SVP are the oldest RPPs in our sample, with a tradition of democratic involvement. At the time of the survey, they were in government and thus benefit less from an anti-cartel bonus. However, a caveat applies to the case of Austria: the FPÖ suffered heavy losses between the parliamentary elections of 1999 (26.9 percent) and 2002 (10.0 percent). It is thus possible that the FPÖ primarily lost support among disaffected and alienated voters who abandoned the party after it entered into government in 1999 and thus ceased being a credible anti-establishment party. Incumbency seems to have been an electoral liability for the FPÖ.

A second group of countries includes Belgium, France, and Norway. Here, protest voting clearly plays a central role: dissatisfaction with the way the country's democracy works is the single most important determinant of voting for the Flemish Block and the Progress Party, and the second most important determinant for the Front National. Unlike the SVP and FPÖ, these parties (above

TABLE 7. *Recapitulation of the Hypotheses' Empirical Validity*

	Economic conflict		Cultural conflict		Social alienation	
	H1: differential Nativism <i>Wages brought down</i>	H2: Welfare Chauvinism <i>Immigrants take out more</i>	H3: Cultural protectionism <i>Culture undermined</i>	H4: Political protectionism <i>Not equal rights for immigrants</i>	H5: Protest vote <i>Dissatisfied with the country's democracy</i>	H6: Disorganization <i>Not union member</i>
Austria (FPÖ)	+	+	++	-	-	+
Belgium (VlB)	+	-	++	-	++	-
France (FN)	+	+	++	++	++	-
Norway (FrP)	-	+	++	-	++	+
Switzerland (SVP)	-	+	++	++	-	+

Notes: ++ strong positive influence; + positive influence; no significant influence.

all the VIB and FN) still had a pariah status in the political arena at the time of the survey. Accordingly, they gain more from protest voting. However, for these three countries, grievances over immigration's negative influence on the national culture are of paramount importance as well. The electorate of the VIB, FN, and FrP thus seem mobilized by a combination of cultural protectionism against immigration and the strong expression of political discontent.

In comparison, economic fears linked to immigration, while relevant in some form for all five RPPs, are clearly of lesser significance than cultural grievances in explaining the RPPs' electoral success. In this respect, our findings show surprisingly little cross-country variation. Finally, results are ambiguous with respect to intermediary networks. While union membership hampers (as predicted) RPP support in Austria, Norway, and Switzerland, the effect is small. In contrast, there is no significant effect in France (where union membership is very low), and even a small (unexpected) negative effect in Belgium. Hence, union membership seems to affect RPP support in some countries, but is clearly not the key factor.

## 6. Conclusion

This article has started out from the observation that workers make up a disproportionate share of the electorate of RPPs. If we hold age and gender constant, workers are twice as likely as middle-class voters to support an RPP in Austria, three times as likely in Belgium and France, and four times as likely in Norway (but only 1.3 times as likely in Switzerland). This article has thus asked what factors explain the class difference in RPP voting.

To answer this question, we have analyzed three competing hypotheses for voters' motivations to support an RPP in order to see whether they account for class differences. The hypotheses examined first stressed economic determinants: insecure employment prospects and the fear of wage pressure. A second set of hypotheses emphasized cultural determinants: the perception of immigration as a threat to national identity and the refusal to grant foreign residents equal rights. Third, we explored hypotheses focusing on social alienation: dissatisfaction with the way democracy works and non-integration into intermediary networks (trade unions).

Our findings from multivariate analysis show that once we control for voters' economic and cultural grievances over immigration, workers in Austria and Switzerland no longer significantly differ from middle-class voters in their RPP support. In Belgium and France, we additionally need to control for dissatisfaction with the country's democracy to explain workers' over-representation among RPP voters. In Norway, workers (and clerks) remain significantly more prone to support the FrP even if we account for differences in voters' attitudes toward the economic and cultural implications of immigration and political dissatisfaction. This suggests that there are additional factors explaining workers' affinity with the FrP than those identified in this article.

If we compare the explanatory power of the different hypotheses, we find questions of community and identity (the defense of national identity against outsiders and the upholding of an exclusive form of community) to be more consequential for RPP support than economic grievances in all five countries. Particularly Austria's Freedom Party and Switzerland's People's Party seem to owe their success to the articulation of the concept of a culturally closed society. The

same concept of differential nativism also plays a central role in the explanation of RPP support in Belgium (Flanders), France, and Norway. However, in these three countries, disenchantment with contemporary politics is as powerful a determinant for voters' RPP support in general and workers' RPP support in particular as are cultural grievances. The VIB, FN, and FrP seem to prosper in their role as the party system's outcast and benefit from citizens' unhappiness with the party establishment and political elites.

What are the implications of our findings? They suggest that economic parameters play a smaller role than often assumed in the rise of right-wing populism. The RPPs' electorates appear more afraid of immigrants' negative influence on the country's culture than on the country's economy. More particularly, cultural grievances over immigration are also more important for RPP support than economic grievances for the two class categories with the weakest labor market position: production and service workers. This result is consistent with earlier findings that the RPPs' scores are not related to high levels of unemployment (Arzheimer and Carter, 2006; Bjørklund, 2007). Cultural questions of identity are more important than economic questions of resources. The formula for Blocher's, Dewinter's, Hagen's, Haider's, or Le Pen's electoral success seems clear: "It's the identity, stupid!"

### Notes

1. This link may be only "seemingly" paradoxical, as RPPs have taken an ambivalent position on economic issues. While they clearly take a right-wing stance on cultural issues, their economic programs usually combine elements from neoliberalism (lower taxes), protectionism (less international trade), and welfarism (higher pensions). Hence, depending on the country, RPPs may be clearly opposed to a left-wing economic stance (for instance, the SVP in Switzerland) or, on the contrary, defend economic positions traditionally taken by the left (for instance, the VIB in Belgium).
2. A similar approach can be found in Ivarsflaten (2008), where three distinct grievance-mobilization models are examined: (1) grievances arising from economic change; (2) grievances arising from elitism and corruption; and (3) grievances arising from the immigration crisis.
3. However, as a reviewer has pointed out, if we compare the Progress Party's score in regional elections in 2003 (16.4 percent at the national level) with its share in the European Social Survey 2002/03 (15.7 percent), we also find for Norway signs of the characteristic under-representation of RPP voters in social surveys.
4. For details about the operationalization of the class variable, see Oesch (2006a: 283–4).
5. The distribution of attitudinal scores shows a large peak in median values: people often neither agree nor disagree. For this reason, we have merged people who strongly disagree with those who disagree as well as people who strongly agree with those who agree. People who neither disagree nor agree were recoded into a separate third category.
6. It must be noted that what we call here a "socio-demographic model" strongly differs from other socio-structural models used to explain why RPPs have been successful in some European countries, but not in others (for example, Norris, 2005; Van der Brug et al., 2005). While our model is set on the micro-level of individual voters and socio-demographic controls include age, gender, and class, socio-structural models are set on the macro-level of countries and the variables introduced are unemployment, inflation, or growth.
7. In analyses not shown here, we have distinguished service workers from production workers in order to estimate the effect of these two class categories on RPP voting separately. Conclusions varied very little: service workers are somewhat less likely to

support an RPP than production workers in Austria, Belgium, and Norway, whereas the opposite is true in France. By lumping together production and service workers, results shown in Tables 2 and 3 for Austria and Belgium somewhat underestimate the likelihood of production workers casting an RPP vote and overestimate that of service workers doing so. For the other three countries, changes in results are negligible.

8. *Compositional effects* occur when two groups differ on an explanatory variable; this is the case if, for instance, dissatisfaction with democracy is the decisive determinant for RPP support and workers are more likely than the middle class to be dissatisfied with the country's democracy. These effects contrast with *conditional effects*. Such conditional effects occur when a variable has a differential impact on party support among worker and middle-class voters; this is the case if, for instance, dissatisfaction with the country's democracy increases RPP support among the former, but decreases it among the latter (see Howell and Day, 2000).

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