# Variants of Populism

A Cross-National Examination of the Support for Populism in 22 European countries

Marlon Schumacher[1], Quynh Nga Nguyen[2], Fabio Votta[3]

[1]) Graduate Student at the University of Stuttgart
M.C.Schumacher@live.de
[2]) Graduate Student at the University of Stuttgart
qynga.n@gmail.com
[2]) Graduate Student at the University of Stuttgart
fabio.votta@gmail.com

his paper seeks to investigate support for populist parties in Europe. While populism is an intensely debated topic, most scholarship is plagued with conceptual conflations between different variants of populism.

To avoid such conceptual confusions, this paper adopts a minimalist definition to identify core features that all subtypes of populism have in common, namely anti-establishment attitudes as well as their opposition to globalization.

While previous authors used economic and cultural factors to determine support for populism, we propose a theoretical model that distinguishes between *traditionalist and progressive populism*. This model involves two steps:

1. **Economically deprived individuals** are more likely to reject establishment parties and consequently support populist parties instead.
2. **Cultural values** determine whether these individuals support progressive or traditionalist populism:
    a. *Traditionalist populists* draw their support from people who believe that societal change has gone too far.
    b. *Progressive populists* draw their support from people who believe that their reactionary society is in need of progressive change.

In order to operationalize our conceptual considerations, we use the *Chapel Hill Expert Survey* dataset and combine it with *European Social Survey* data to identify respondents that vote for and/or identify with populist parties.

We estimate a multinomial logistic regression to test our hypotheses. Our models lend support for our theoretical expectations. Economically deprived individuals are more likely to support either variant of populism. Yet individuals who hold traditional values are more likely to support traditionalist populism, whereas the effect goes in the opposite direction for the support of progressive populism.

Further research might be able to build upon our conceptualization and give more attention to the different variants of populism, so as to not conflate the distinct explanatory frameworks that come along with them.

In the interest of Open Science, the entire code that was used to generate the content of this paper can be found in the following GitHub Repository: https://github.com/favstats/paper_delib

# 1 Introduction

This paper seeks to investigate support for populist parties in Europe. While populism is an important and intensely debated topic, most scholarship is plagued with conceptual conflations between different variants of populism. Despite efforts to avoid such conflations, many influential scholars continue to use qualifying features of the Right to describe populism, possibly leading to severe shortcomings in their empirical analyses. For example, in Inglehart's and Norris' publication "Trump, Brexit, and the rise of populism"[1] ostensibly right-wing parties such as the *National Democratic Party* in Germany or the Hungarian *Jobbik* are classified as populist left, based solely on their left-right position on the economic scale.

To avoid such conceptual confusions, this paper adopts Cas Mudde's clear minimalist definition to identify core features that all subtypes of populism have in common. In line with this definition, we suggest that populist parties are primarily defined by their degree of anti-establishment attitudes as well as their opposition to globalization. Subsequently, we propose to classify European populist parties along a *progressive and traditionalist* left-right dimension.

While previous authors used economic and cultural factors to determine support for (mostly traditionalist) populism, we propose a hierarchical theoretical model that distinguishes between traditionalist and progressive populism. This model involves two steps:

1. **Economically deprived individuals** - seeking to change the status quo - are more likely to reject establishment parties and consequently support populist parties instead.
2. **Cultural values** determine whether these individuals support progressive or traditionalist populism:
    a. *Traditionalist populists* draw their support from people who believe that cosmopolitan liberal elites undermine national unity and that societal change has gone too far.
    b. *Progressive populists* draw their support from people who believe that "neoliberal" elites (represented by institutions like multinational banks and companies) undermine the people's will by safeguarding the deeply reactionary society that is in dire need of radical change.

In order to operationalize our conceptual considerations, we use the *Chapel Hill Expert Survey* (CHES) dataset that contains information on the positions of political parties within Europe. We then devise two indices along which European parties can be classified: Anti-Establishment

[1] Inglehart, Ronald and Norris, Pippa (2016). Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash. HKS Working Paper No. RWP16-026.

vs. Establishment and Progressivism vs Traditionalism. K-Nearest Neighbour clustering identifies four clusters, traditionalist and progressive populist parties as well as their two establishment counterparts that are merged into a single establishment cluster. After the successful classification, we combine the CHES data with *European Social Survey* (ESS) data Round 5 – 8 and identify respondents that either vote for or identify with the classified populist parties, forming our dependent variable *Support for Populist Parties*.

We estimate a multinomial logistic regression to test our hypotheses of support for populism. Our models lend support for our theoretical expectations. Economically deprived individuals are more likely to support both traditionalist and progressive populist parties. Yet individuals who hold anti-immigration views as well as traditional values are more likely to support traditionalist populism, whereas the effect goes in the opposite direction for the support of progressive populism.

Further research might be able to build upon our conceptualization and give more attention to the different variants of populism, so as to not conflate the distinct explanatory frameworks that come along with them.

The following Chapter 2 discusses our theoretical framework and classification of European populist parties, as well as some of the general challenges when it comes to quantifying and analyzing populism in Europe. In Chapter 3, the used research methods are introduced and the classification of European parties is done with the help of k-means clustering. Afterwards, Chapter 4 reports on the multinomial logistic regression and its results. Finally, the conclusion (Chapter 5) gives a summary of the results and derives implications for further research.

# 2 Theory

## 2.1 What is Populist about Populism?

While populism is an important and intensely debated topic, most scholarship is plagued with conceptual conflations (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011, p. 1). Despite efforts to avoid such confusions, many influential scholars continue to use qualifying features of the Right to describe populism, possibly leading to severe shortcomings in their empirical analyses. To avoid similar mistakes, this chapter will first adopt Cas Mudde's clear minimalist definition to identify those core elements that all subtypes of populism have in common (2.1.1.). Subsequently, we propose a comprehensive framework to classify European populist parties along two relevant dimensions: progressive and traditionalist populism. (2.1.2.)

### 2.1.1 A Minimalist definition of Populism

In almost every handbook about populism, authors would eventually point out to the concept's contested nature. As Heinisch et al. describe, "[n]early as ubiquitous as articles and commentaries on populism is the assertion that it is a contested concept and difficult to define. [...] [T]here have been numerous conceptualisations, which are themselves derived from several fundamental approaches that differ [...] in their ideas on whether populism is primarily ideational, discursive, stylistic, or strategic in nature" (Heinisch, Holtz-Bach, & Mazzoleni, 2017, p. 22). This contending debate on how to best define populism is reflected by various empirical studies that emphasize different and sometimes even contradictory aspects of the phenomenon (cf. Gerring, 2001, p. 120). Broadly speaking, there exist three types of definition for populism. It can be qualified as an organizational type, as a political communication style or as an ideology. Especially the latter has gained prominence in scholarly literature (cf. Pauwels, 2011, p. 99). However, the differentiation between populism as a communication style and as an ideology seems artificial at times. Both types distinguish between the people as opposed to the elite and they both allow for a combination with other (even diametrically opposed) ideologies. In our understanding these two types of populism share so many characteristics that the differentiation between them seems to be a matter of wording rather than a matter of clear defined features of populism. Most scholars agree on the "chameleonic" character of populism (cf. Taggart, 2000). Some authors, borrowing the notion of a thin ideology from Freeden (1998), assert that populism can be combined with other more "established" ideologies like liberalism, nationalism, conservatism, federalism or socialism (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2007, p. 4; i.e. Mudde, 2016, p.

1; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 19). As Mudde and Kaltwasser emphasize, populism can be "left-wing or right-wing, organized in top-down or bottom-up fashion, rely on strong leaders or be even leaderless" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 153). A serious problem is therefore the confusion between populism and the Right, as Cas Mudde laments: "Until now, populism was almost exclusively linked to the radical right, leading to an incorrect conflation of populism and xenophobia" (Mudde, 2016, p. 1). This tendency has to do with the fact that populism gained strength in Europe with the formation of populist radical right parties in the 1980s (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 155). Their emergence triggered the blossoming of a vast scholarly literature – although focussing almost exclusively on discussing right-wing populism (cf. De Lange, 2008) while neglecting the growing impact of their counterpart on the left side of the political spectrum (cf. Lucardie & Voerman, 2012).

Despite the already existing thematization of this shortcoming, many scholars still make the mistake of using right-wing characteristics to define populism (cf. Mudde, 2007). For instance, Inglehart and Norris, in their analysis on the support for populism in Europe, justified their definition as follows: "Cas Mudde has been influential in the literature, suggesting that populist philosophy is a loose set of ideas that share three core features: anti-establishment, authoritarianism, and nativism" (Inglehart & Norris, 2016, p. 6). Considering that the publication they quoted from is called *"Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe" (2007)*, Inglehart's and Norris' statement seems to be remarkably negligent. In this publication, Cas Mudde unambiguously named authoritarianism and nativism as ideological features of the populist right and not of populism per se (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 155). We believe that it is exactly because of such a theoretical conflation that Inglehart's and Norris' empirical classification of European parties exhibits serious flaws, i.e. by wrongly categorising ostensibly right-wing parties such as the *German National Democratic Party* or the Hungarian *Jobbik* as populist left just because they happen to be on the left and right of the economic policy scale (cf. Inglehart & Norris, 2016, p. 36). As Albertazzi points out, "this insistence on making 'populist' and 'extreme right' synonymous or lumping all populists under the 'radical Right populist' banner for ease of comparison [...] is detrimental to our understanding [of] [...] populism itself" (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2007, p. 4).

To avoid similar mistakes, we propose a new classification framework, drawing on a minimalist definition to capture core features that all subtypes of populism have in common. Following Mudde (who is indeed "influential in the literature"), we view populism as "a thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an

expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people" (Mudde, 2004, p. 543; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 6). A big advantage of this minimalist definition is its neutrality, allowing us to analyse populism independently from the ideological environment in which it operates (Halikiopoulou, Nanou, & Vasilopoulou, 2012, p. 2). The particularity of Mudde's definition is the normative distinction made between the "pure" people and the "corrupt" elite (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 9). According to populists, democracy has been perverted by the corrupt elite who act in their own interests instead of respecting the volonté générale (general will of the people) (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 16). Populists proclaim their commitment to fight these corrupt elites as well as other alien enemies in possession of power in order to give back the sovereignty to the people (cf. Otjes & Louwerse, 2015, p. 60).

Studies of populism were initially focused in a narrow, national or regional context, first concentrating on the United States and later expanding to also include Latin America and Europe (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011, p. 1). Recognizing that left-wing populism was widely neglected in the past, recent scholarship has started to study this variant of populism (Rendueles & Sola, 2018; i.e. Stavrakakis, 2014). However, so far this literature tends to conduct qualitative case studies that concentrate on regional singularities instead of generalizable tendencies of the phenomenon (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011, p. 1). Left-wing populism is commonly perceived as geographically limited to Latin America while right-wing populism is associated with the European political context (Hawkins, Read, & Pauwels, 2017a, p. 267). Given the recently growing importance of left-wing populist parties in Europe (i.e. SYRIZA or Podemos), it is important to study the populist phenomenon taking into account – but without limiting it to – the regional context (comprising political, cultural and economic specificities) that it is embedded in (Lanzone, 2017, p. 229; cf. Sorensen, 2017, p. 138).

With regard to the populist phenomenon in Europe – which is this is paper's focus of study – two common points shared by all populist parties regardless of their ideological backgrounds are important to note. First, as explained above, populists reject establishment parties that they consider to represent the "corrupt elite" acting against the interests of the "pure people" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 12). Secondly, populists are consistently opposed to globalization, most notably represented by the European integration process (cf. Halikiopoulou et al., 2012; Hooghe, Marks, & Wilson, 2002; Mudde, 2007). However, while anti-establishment attitudes and euroscepticism constitute common denominators of populists from both sides of the political spectrum, the justification and intensity for these attitudes vary starkly depending on the ideological orientation of the populist parties in question (cf. Conti & Memoli, 2012; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 22). This begs another important question: what, then, distinguishes the

operating logic of different variants of populist parties?

### 2.1.2 Discerning between Progressive and Traditionalist Populism

The main difference originates from the populists' definition of "the pure people" and "the corrupt elite" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 148). The term populism in itself is derived from the Latin word populus - literally meaning "the people". Populists are however very ambiguous about "the people" that they intend to represent (cf. Heinisch et al., 2017, p. 22). Since "the people" is an "empty signifier" (Laclau, 2005, p. 232), its signification varies depending on historical and regional circumstances and its interpretation differs from party to party (cf. Akkerman, 2017, p. 169). As Mudde & Kaltwasser (2017) assert, "[e]ach populist actor emerges because of a particular set of social grievances, which influences its choice of host ideology, which in turn affects how the actor defines 'the people' and 'the elite'" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 22). Due to this ambiguity, the dichotomy between the "pure people" and the "corrupt elite" can be understood from a political, a cultural or an economic viewpoint (cf. Mény & Surel, 2000). Most populists therefore not only target the political elite, but also other types of elites like the economic, the cultural or the media elite (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 12).

As suggested in the previous section, the two most discussed variants are commonly labelled "left-wing" and "right-wing" populism. In recent scholarly literature however, there exist many different notions to capture these two manifestations of the populist phenomenon. Alexander and Wenzel, for instance, propose to associate left-wing populism with "disaffected liberalism" and right-wing populism with "disaffected illiberalism" (Alexander & Welzel, 2017, p. 8). Kaltwasser and Mudde, on the other hand, identify a juxtaposition between "inclusionary populism" and "exclusionary populism" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011, p. 2, 2013, p. 158). In this light, inclusive populism could be seen to focus on inclusion of the underprivileged (*socioeconomic dimension*), while exclusive populism primarily focuses on excluding the perceived "others" (*sociocultural dimension*) (cf. Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 167). In this sense, inclusive populism is considered to exhibit left-wing, and exclusive populism, right-wing characteristics. Halikiopoulou et al. (2012) for their part, consider nationalism to be the source of populism. Which variant of populism then emerges depends on whether a civic (left-wing) or an ethnic (right-wing) form of nationalism is at play (cf. Halikiopoulou et al., 2012, p. 3). These are but some of the many existing conceptualizations of populism – reflecting a certain difficulty to do justice to the diversity of this phenomenon.

We, for our part, seek to distance ourselves from the left-right labels and suggest to classify Euro-

pean populist parties along a values continuum on which *progressive populists* and *traditionalist populists* are opposing one another. There are two main reasons for as why we chose to categorize variants of populism along this value dimension and using these notions. The first reason has to do with the appropriate naming of public actors. We wish to avoid imposing a label that the actors in question would not employ to describe themselves. Populists do not necessarily agree to be pigeonholed as belonging to the "left" or to the "right" (and especially not to the "radical-left" or "radical-right"). Furthermore, it has been noted that the positions of some populist parties on political and economic issues are too incoherent to be consistently categorized as left or right (cf. Huber & Schimpf, 2017). As for the suggestion to categorize populists as *"liberal"* or *"illiberal"*, it is important to note that liberalism is a highly ambiguous concept in itself (cf. Paton, 2010, p. 9). On the one hand, the "classic" or "Lockean" version of liberalism insists on individual freedom associated to private property rights, hence rejecting any form of state intervention. On the other hand, the "social" or "Millian" version of liberalism rejects market inequality in favour of individual agency, hence encouraging state intervention, economic regulation and resources redistribution by a welfare state (Skorupski, 1999, p. 215; cf. Stephens, 2016, p. 58) In this respect, both the political right and the left can be qualified as "liberal", depending on the interpretation of the concept. Furthermore, the term "liberal" has an inextricable political and normative connotation when used within the setting of liberal democracies. No populist party – regardless of their ideological affiliation – would accept being described as "illiberal". Conversely, those populists who feel close to socialist ideals would shy away from being called "liberals". Our second reason to classify populism along a "progressivist-traditionalist" axis is of conceptual considerations. The notion of *progressivism*, defined by the Oxford dictionary as "support for or advocacy of social reform" (Murray, 2017), refers initially to the *Progressive Movement* that developed in United States in the late 19th century. It emerged as a reaction to social problems that resulted from the rapid industrialisation, urbanisation, agrarian depression and financial recession at the time. Progressivism's main assumption is that laissez-faire capitalism and excessive individualism has led to social ills, such as extreme poverty, the formation of slums, increased prostitution and the exploitation of workers. Progressives hence support state induced social reforms to help the weak and underprivileged (especially workers, women and children). The government, responsible for protecting the "public interest" against self-interest, (Nugent, 2009, p. 4; Prono, 2008, p. 258) is expected to control finance and industry to make these more accountable to citizens – and to fight social injustice in the process (cf. Prono, 2008, p. 257). The key value of progressivism is thus "openness to change" (Nugent, 2009, p. 3), and the central belief of progressives is that "society could be changed into a better place" (ibid: 5).

When speaking about progressivism since the late 20th century, it is notably associated with the "silent revolution" that describes a value change of the post-war generation towards post-materialism (cf. Inglehart, 1977). Post-materialists endorse progressive social values and new lifestyles, champion self-expression and civil liberties (cf. Inglehart, 1997, p. 131) including cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, and a greater tolerance for sexual, ethnic and religious diversity (cf. ibid: 23). This value shift brought new issues on the political agenda such as environmental protection, human rights, legalisation of abortion, acceptance of homosexuality, and gender equity, resulting in rising support for left-libertarian parties (i.e. the Greens) and progressive movements. (cf. Ignazi, 1992; Inglehart, 1977, 1997, p. 4f., 23, 240f.)

*Progressive populists*, in our understanding, are people who challenge establishment institutions on the grounds of social justice and internationalist solidarity. They believe that *"neoliberal"* transnational elites (represented by institutions like multinational banks and firms) undermine the people's will by safeguarding a deeply reactionary society that is in dire need of radical change (cf. Verbeek, Zaslove, & Klingeren, 2017, p. 390). While being essentially tolerant towards cultural, religious and sexual diversity, progressive populists believe that the current economic system of free markets is fundamentally defective – insofar as to benefit the elites to the detriment of the underprivileged, ordinary people (Bornschier, 2010; cf. March & Mudde, 2005, p. 25). Examples that progressive populists frequently use to criticize the dysfunctionality of the status quo are the financial crisis of 2008 or the European debt crisis. "Neoliberal" policies pursued by financial elites are perceived as widening the gap between rich and poor and as a danger to welfare state commitments (cf. Van Elsas, Hakhverdian, & Van der Brug, 2016, p. 1184) *Progressive populists* reject globalisation for fear of capital flight and depreciation of labour (Frieden & Rogowski, 1996; Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 389). They therefore oppose the EU – an institution considered as a means of action for these global neoliberal elites (i.e. "Goldman Sachs' revolving doors in Brussels") (cf. Hooghe, Marks, & Wilson, 2004, p. 128; March & Rommerskirchen, 2015).

The antithesis to *progressivism* is *traditionalism*. Tradition, in its broadest sense, is "anything which is typical of the past, customary, or part of a cultural identity" (Allison, 2009, p. 537). Traditionalism is the "propensity to revive or defend traditions against non-traditional beliefs and values" (ibid), and traditionalists are people who highly value traditions. In its initial meaning, traditionalism refers to the idea that established institutions and order, most notably represented by the church and the monarchy, should be protected against radical revolutions. (cf. Allison, 2009, p. 537) In a wider sense, traditionalism's object of protection can include diverse items ranging from religious orientation, sporting customs, linguistic practices to dietary habits"

(Allison, 2009). The key value of traditionalism is the preservation of stability, and the central belief of traditionalists is that society must defend the customs they hold dear against chaotic change (cf. Allison, 2009, p. 537). Examples for progressive doctrines that oppose political traditionalism are Marxism or liberal capitalism, which – in their rationalism – are inherently intolerant towards traditional values and practices. These doctrines were however unable to provide people's lives with cultural or spiritual meaning, which is important to give them a sense of security, stability and achievement. This contributes to the appeal of traditionalism, often manifesting through divers forms of nationalist or religious renaissance (cf. ibid). Traditionalism of the late 20th century refers to counterrevolutionary reactions to the "silent revolution". Supporters consist primarily of white men, elders and those left behind by globalisation, who fear that the rise of progressive demands will endanger their material status, benefits and privileges. They also see the strengthening of post-materialist values as a threat to once prevailing cultural norms that they cherish. Traditionalists value tradition and stability over change, believing that the government should apply strict measures to protect their social and cultural identity against morally corrupt influences. For them, security and order has priority over universal liberal norms (cf. Inglehart & Norris, 2016, pp. 7, 13).

*Traditionalist populists*, in our understanding, are people who challenge establishment institutions to protect their sociocultural identity. They draw their support from people who believe that cosmopolitan liberal elites undermine national unity and that societal change has gone too far. They usually endorse nationalist and authoritarian values (Mudde, 2010; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 155), emphasizing the necessity to have strong leaders repelling "external threats" to the nation state. This tendency manifests itself most notably in "ethno-centric" discourses (cf. Hainsworth, 2008) and calls for harsh policies concerning asylum and immigration issues (Mair & Mudde, 1998; Mudde, 2007). *Traditionalist populists* reject globalisation, which they see as a danger for national and local identities (cf. Verbeek et al., 2017, p. 390). This logic translate into their euroscepticism in defence of national sovereignty and cultural homogeneity against alien influences (cf. Van Elsas et al., 2016, p. 1184).

Summing up, while all populists are at odds with political elites, progressive populists especially target the economic elite. By contrast, traditionalist populists are characterized by nativism and focus on arguments around cultural antagonism (Akkerman, 2017, p. 170; cf. Mudde, 2007, p. 18 ff.). Simply put, progressivists frequently enter in a marriage of convenience with some type of "socialism" while traditionalists do the same with some type of "nativism" (Mudde, 2016, p. 1; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 21). Having established a hierarchical framework to categorize European populist parties along a populist-establishment and a progressive-

traditionalist dimension, we now proceed to explain the growing support for European populist parties.

## 2.2 What explain's Populist's Populism

Literature on the electoral success of populist parties is dominated by two broad strand of causal theorizing: (1) the Durkheimian sociological, "mass society" thesis that focusses on feelings of cultural identity loss and (2) the Downsian rational-choice, "economic" approach that builds upon materialist conceptions of representative politics. Despite significant differences within both strands with regard to the independent variables that they use (i.e. modernization, globalization or electoral rules), the causal mechanisms behind their arguments are similar (Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 268 f.). Within the latter group of Downsian rationalist accounts, Hawkins et al. narrow down interpretations of populist electoral success down to:

(a) a medium-term inability of establishment parties to immediately address socioeconomic change as demanded by the electorate, or

(b) a long-term response of citizens to a fundamentally corrupt governance system (both are "demand-side" accounts), or

(c) the strategic exploitation of electoral rules by parties resorting to populist techniques (a "supply-side" account) (cf. Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 270 f.).

As Hawkins et al. (2017a) notice, scholarship so far has "given little attention to the causes of populism at the individual level", with "research say[ing] little about the mentality of populist voters or the cognitive processes that lead people to join populist forces" (Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 267). To explain individuals' support for certain populist parties, this study will focus on the "medium-term structural change" account, which interprets populism as the result of citizens' normative attitudes and material situation when faced with socioeconomic change (Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 270 f.).

Populism is not a new, but a rather recurring phenomenon. Support for populist parties grow especially during periods of major structural transitions because formerly established institutions and order are thrown into a maelstrom of uncertainty, a sort of crisis situation (cf. Kelly, 2017, p. 511). As the primary catalyst for socioeconomic change, industrial modernization serve as the explanatory factor for the rise of anti-establishment forces during the late 19th and early 20th century. Industrialisation and urbanization restructured the division of labour, and in the process they also alter the relationship between the state and the individual. Society becomes more

atomized, moving away from familiar vehicles of social integration, like the church or the family, towards more bureaucratic and anonymous institutions. Individuals feeling socially disintegrated in this modernization process turn to populist parties who promise to bring back the "good old days" (cf. Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 269). In the post-industrial era of the late 20th and early 21st century, globalization as the new trigger for structural change accounts for the strong uptrend of contemporary populism. This argument, now commonly known as the *globalization losers thesis*, was first proposed by Betz (1994), who reasons that globalization reorganized the economy and society to the benefit of some, but also to the detriment of others (cf. Betz, 1994). Globalization essentially depicts a disconnection between social and spatial relations (cf. Scholte, 2005). In a figurative manner, it is described as "the process of world shrinkage, of distances getting shorter, things moving closer [...], pertain[ing] to the increasing ease with which somebody on one side of the world can interact, to mutual benefit, with somebody on the other side of the world" (Larsson, 2001, p. 9). From an economic perspective, it is understood as a process of "markets and people around the world [...] becoming more integrated over time" (Sen, 2001). In this sense, factors of production are becoming increasingly mobile, with especially four aspects concerned: goods (trade), money (capital), people (labour), and ideas (knowledge) (cf. IMF, 2000). As globalization brings about new cultural, social and economic inputs, it triggers fear and hostility for several, distinct reasons. While the accelerating movement of goods and money are worrisome to individuals who depend heavily on socioeconomic stability, the increased mobility of people and ideas worry primarily those who want to safeguard a homogenous, culturally inclusive society. Both the socioeconomic and the sociocultural aspect of globalization play therefore distinctive roles in the strengthening of support for populist parties. While economic grievances contributes to the general electoral success of populist parties (2.2.1.), differing values and attitudes internalized by individuals will determine which type of populist party they are likely to support (2.2.2.).

### 2.2.1 The Socio-Economic Aspect of Globalization

Today's post-industrial age, characterized by a drop in industrial activities and by a growing demand of services, gives new opportunities to the "winners" of globalization who stand out as being "flexible, professional, and entrepreneurial". Those who do not meet these criteria – often "the unemployed, the underemployed, the unskilled, and those whose jobs are threatened by advancing technology' – are the 'losers' of globalization" (Betz, 1994). Globalization in the economic and financial sphere gives some producers, investors and workers better conditions to make profit while making it more precarious for others in terms of incomes, jobs security

and welfare benefits (cf. Verbeek et al., 2017, p. 390). Because these "losers" feel abandoned by mainstream parties, which have consistently supported pro-market policies associated with globalization, they turn to populist parties for democratic representation (cf. Betz, 1994).

As measured by the KOP Globalization Index, the movement of goods, people, capital and knowledge has steadily increased since the 1970s (cf. KOF Swiss Economic Institute, 2018). As a result, patterns of economic competition have changed, which in turn creates an increasing number of people unable to offer the sought-after skills and know-how for rewarding jobs. Well-paid work for hardworking, but less qualified workers gradually disappeared, especially in developed countries. This tendency frustrates especially those having difficulties to be mobile (i.e. older people or low-skilled people facing language barriers). Their fear of losing their jobs if exposed to fierce competition in the global labour market is therefore particularly great (cf. Spruyt, Keppens, & Van Droogenbroeck, 2016, p. 337). As summed up by Rodrik:

> "Globalization drove multiple, partially overlapping wedges in society: between capital and labor, skilled and unskilled workers, employers and employees, globally mobile professionals and local producers, industries/regions with comparative advantage and those without, cities and the countryside, cosmopolitans versus communitarians, elites and ordinary people. It left many countries ravaged by financial crises and their aftermath of austerity" (Rodrik, 2018, p. 12).

Especially events like the financial crisis of 2007-2008 serve for some as proof for the degeneration of excessive globalization. According to the OECD, such crises are more likely to occur when the degree of uncontrolled capital flows is high (cf. OECD, 2011, p. 49). The EU, an institution embodying cultural and economic integration (cf. European Commission, 2018), is seen as a vehicle for globalization and hence as a danger to the status and wellbeing by many people. Above all, EU institutions are especially disliked because they deny member states the freedom to adopt their own economic policies (cf. Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 271) Despite awareness for these public concerns, "the economic anxiety, discontent, loss of legitimacy, fairness concerns that are generated as a byproduct of globalization rarely come with obvious solutions or policy perspectives" (Rodrik, 2018, p. 12). Whether the hypothesis that globalization causes economic misery is objectively true does not matter in this case. As establishment parties fail to fix the problem, people who perceive themselves as "globalization losers" see in anti-establishment and anti-globalization parties the only solution to address their fears.

On the other hand, it has been questioned by some authors whether a higher degree of globalization really leads to major social problems. As Agéndor and Florian argue, globalization can

induce higher net income inequality, higher rates of unemployment and poverty, but mainly in the beginning of the process. In the long run, a higher level of globalization results in the decline of poverty and income inequality (cf. Agénor, 2004; Dorn, Fuest, & Potrafke, 2018). However, "[i]n the long run we are all dead", as John Maynard Keynes cleverly points out, "[e]conomists set themselves too easy, too useless a task if in tempestuous seasons they can only tell us that when the storm is long past the ocean is flat again" (Keynes, 1923, p. 80). Since especially those in an economically precarious situation depend on their jobs for daily survival, they are not in a position to wait for the long-term positive impact of globalization to manifest. It is therefore plausible to assume the following:

> H1: The more precarious the economic situation of an individual, the higher the probability of that individual supporting populist parties.

While globalization is an "economic or technical phenomenon", it is also "a cultural evolution" at the same time. This is why its sociocultural aspect also influence the perception that citizens have of populist parties.

### 2.2.2 The Socio-Cultural Aspect of Globalization

Individuals dissatisfied with current establishment elites and resenting the ills of globalization are more likely to seek anti-status quo alternatives by supporting populist parties. However, rational citizens do not remain indifferent about whom they entrust the task of dethroning the "corrupt elite" from the party political power stronghold. Given a choice, these individuals will obviously slant towards the populist party that they feel ideologically closer to. Whether citizens support the progressive or traditionalist variant of populism depends on sociocultural values, norms and practices that they have internalized.

Culture, in the first place, is constituted by collective values and norms and therefore plays an important role for social coherence. It is part of a "collective consciousness", responsible for "form[ing] a moral glue that results in social integration." The feeling of disintegration and normlessness, also called anomie by Durkheim, occurs especially during periods of transitions like the 19th century's industrial modernization and today's resurgence of globalization (cf. Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 269). Culture, according to Kroeber and Kluckhohn,

> "consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (I.e.,

> historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future action" (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952, p. 181).

Cultural norms and practices are important as they provide people's lives with a sense of security, stability and achievement (cf. Allison, 2009, p. 537). Traditionally understood, it is bound to a specific territorial boundary. However, an increased level of globalization also means that cultural practices and experiences become gradually deterritorialized (cf. Tomlinson, 2012, p. 2 ff.). As a consequent, certain aspects of the local culture may be "diluted" or even disappear while particularities become stronger. This constitute a worrying development especially for individuals who cherish traditional ways (cf. Nijman, 1999, p. 150).

Furthermore, cultural globalization goes hand in hand with an active promotion of a cosmopolitan identity (cf. Spruyt et al., 2016, p. 337). Cosmopolitanism is part of a progressive mentality, which is rejected by those who fear a loss of values and traditions. Images of an invasion by foreigners, who pose a threat to cultural norms and therefore to social cohesion, often serve as a strong stimulus for anti-immigration sentiments (cf. Mudde, 1999, p. 188 ff.). This is why identity has gained an important place in the political agenda, especially of those who endorse traditional-conservative and materialist values (cf. Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 390). It is therefore plausible to assume the following:

> H2: The more culturally exclusive the values of an individual, the higher the probability of that individual supporting traditionalist populist parties.

Opposing these culturally exclusive individuals are those whose cultural norms and values are fundamentally cosmopolitan. These individuals mainly belong to the post-war generation, which grew up endorsing post-material, universal ideal about human rights, rule of law, tolerance and individual freedom from traditional constraints (Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 390; cf. Jansen, 2011, p. 297). As Calhoun explains, "cosmopolitanism has become an enormously popular rhetorical vehicle for claiming at once to be already global and to have the highest ethical aspirations for what globalization can offer" (Calhoun, 2008, p. 209). A cosmopolite, which derives from the word kosmos (world, universe) and polis (citizen), describes a person who is culturally inclusive. Ingram, citing emancipatory struggles such as the 1848 "Springtime of Nations" or the Communist Manifesto's call to international solidarity amongst workers, argues that populism can have a universalistic, cosmopolitan and inclusive character. Populism is thus not always territorially or ethnically exclusive. This is why he criticizes the conception that populism is always xenophobic and cosmopolitanism is always elitist (cf. Hawkins et al. (2017a) 654 f.]. It is

therefore plausible to assume the following:

> H3: The more culturally inclusive the values of an individual, the higher the probability of that individual supporting progressive populist parties.

It is however important to note that the socioeconomic and sociocultural dimensions of globalization are not completely independent from one another. Economic and sociocultural factors may interact in a way that intensify support for populist parties. For instance, the new labour structure induced by contemporary globalization has produced "a splintered and atomized workforce; without powerful unions to reinforce a new sense of class identity, individuals find themselves powerless to mobilize" (Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 269). As a result, feelings of identity loss, alienation and helplessness develop amongst those who are unable to cope with these changes (cf. Hawkins et al., 2017a, p. 269). In this case, economic globalization has also contributed to the widening of sociocultural cleavages. It is also well-established that especially individuals who are in a precarious economic situation resent immigrants, whom they might lose their jobs to, or whom they see as a cost to welfare benefits. In this case, economic insecurity reinforces anti-immigrant feelings (Hawkins, Read, & Pauwels, 2017b, p. 349). It is therefore plausible to assume the following:

> H4: Economic insecurity and cultural values interact in a way that increases the probability of an individual supporting populist parties

# 3 Methods and Data Preparation

The following section introduces the data and its sources. We use the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) on European party positions in order to construct our dependent variable of *Support for Establishment/Populist Parties* (i.e. Support for Progressive or Traditionalist Populist parties) along with individual level data from the European Social Survey (ESS) (Section 3.1). The section further operationalizes our hypotheses (cultural and economic explanations for populism) and give a description of the used control variables. Following this, the statistical methodology is explained (Section 3.2).

## 3.1 Data & Operationalization

The CHES dataset contains information on the positions of 365 political parties in 40 European countries on european and national policy issues in the timerange between 1999 and 2014. This makes the CHES data suitable for identifying the ideological party positions that can be classified as progressive and traditionalist populism within the European context. Since parties have changed over time, for the purposes of our analysis we only use the latest available data from 2014.

As a first step, we selected two variables that are in line with our minimalistic definition of populism. They will be used to construct the an Establishment - Anti-Establishment Axis.

### 3.1.1 Establishment - Anti-Establishment Axis

Populism, as it is conceptualized in this study, is characterized by two main features: a disdain for the established elites that supposedly exploit the *pure* and *little* people and an opposition to the effects of globalization that brings cultures and economies closer together at the expense of the (local) working class.

**Anti-Elite Sentiment**

Anti-Elite Sentiment is measured with the 11-point scale (0-1) variable *antielite_salience* that indicates the salience of anti-elite rhetoric within a given party. This corresponds with Mudde and Kaltwasser's concept of populism where the "corrupt elite" is pitted against the pure people (M/K 2017: 12).

- *Salience of anti-establishment and anti-elite rhetoric*
  0. Not important at all

1. Extremely important

**Euroskepticism**

Euroskepticism (*position*[2]) will be used as a proxy variable for anti-globalization. Populists are consistently opposed to the European integration process, albeit for different reasons.

- *Overall orientation of the party leadership towards European integration*
  1. Strongly opposed
  2. Strongly in favor

### 3.1.2 Progressivism - Traditionalism Axis

Next, we try to identify the value cleavage between progressivism and traditionalism.

This cleavage divides *progressives*, who favor progressive social values, promote liberal lifestyles and acceptance of homosexuality, civil liberties and multiculturalism from *traditionalists* who take the opposite stance on of all these positions. The following variables have been selected in order to distinguish between progressive and traditionalist populism.

**GAL-TAN**

GAL-TAN is a new politics dimension invented by Hooghe et al. (2002). The capital letters are abbrevations for a scale that is supposed to capture the new fault lines in European politics and they stand for *Green-Alternative-Libertarian* (GAL) and *Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist* (TAN) respectively.

- *Position of the party [...] in terms of their views on democratic freedoms and rights. "Libertarian" or "postmaterialist" parties favor expanded personal freedoms, for example, access to abortion, active euthanasia, same-sex marriage, or greater democratic participation. "Traditional" or "authoritarian" parties often reject these ideas; they value order, tradition, and stability, and believe that the government should be a firm moral authority on social and cultural issues (galtan).*
  0. Libertarian/Postmaterialist
  1. Center
  2. Traditional/Authoritarian

**Social Lifestyle**

The acceptance of different lifestyle is a phenomena that consistently splits traditionalists from

[2]The Euroskepticism variable has been recoded so that higher values indicate higher opposition to European integration.

progressives. While progressives push for the acceptance of non-traditional social lifestyles traditionalists see this push as undermining very fabric of society.

- *Position on social lifestyle (e.g. homosexuality) (sociallifestyle).*
  0. Strongly supports liberal policies
  1. Strongly opposes liberal policies

**Civil Liberties**

While progressives favor civil liberties and rehabilitation of criminals into society, traditionalists favor tough measures can serve as a deterrence, even at the expense of civil liberty.

- *Position on civil liberties vs. law and order (civlib_laworder).*
  0. Strongly promotes civil liberties
  1. Strongly supports tough measures to fight crime

**Multiculturalism**

Traditionalists usually see a looming threat from immigrants from different countries, especially when they come from non-European countries, so they favor their complete assimilation into the host country. Progressives on the other hand understand diversity as strength and favor multicultural society without assimilation.

- *Position on integration of immigrants and asylum seekers (multiculturalism vs. assimilation) (multiculturalism).*
  0. Strongly favors multiculturalism
  1. Strongly favors assimilation

**Left-Right Scale**

Lastly, a general left-right scale is added to this dimension. While our definition of the Progressive-Traditionalist Axis is mostly based on value differences, it's not *just* that. Party affilliation with a set of ideas matters as well and therefore we also include a measure of ideology through this scale.

- *Position of the party [...] in terms of its overall ideological stance (lrgen).*
  0. Extreme left
  1. Center
  2. Extreme right

Having selected the variables, a maximum likelihood factor analysis with varimax rotation is conducted in order to estimate whether our proposed dimensions are being measured by the

relevant variables.

Figure 1: Factor Analysis of CHES Data


Based on the Kaiser-Criterion, two distinct dimensions are extracted explaining a total variance of 0.78%. The extracted scales are then summed into two scales *Establishment vs. Anti-Establishment* and *Progressive vs. Traditionalism*, each standardized from 0 to 100 points to facilitate easy interpretation.

As a next step, we want to extract our traditionalist and progressive populist parties. This will be done with the help of *k-means clustering*. K-Means clustering is a very popular form of unsupervised machine learning that helps with classification problems. The algorithm producess a $k$ number of clusters (classification groups), where k is specified by the researcher. K-Means clustering estimates a centroid (i.e. a center) for each group that has the highest *intra-class similarity* within a given cluster (i.e. smallest distance from the centroid) and the lowest *inter-class similarity* with other specified cluster (i.e. maximized distance from other cluster centroids). The resulting clusters have minimal *within cluster variation* and a maximum of *between cluster variation* (cf. Friedman, Hastie, & Tibshirani, 2001, p. 509 ff.).

The classical algorithm for k-means clustering is the Hartigan-Wong algorithm (1979), where the the total within-cluster variation is defined as the sum of squared (Euclidean) distances between data points and the corresponding centroid:

$$W(C_k) = \sum_{x_i \in C_k} (x_i - \mu_k)^2$$

Where $x_i$ is a data point belonging to the cluster $C_k$ and $\mu_k$ is the mean of values that are classified as cluster $C_k$ (centroid).

Each data point $x_i$ is classified as a specific cluster so that the sum of squares euclidian distance of the observation to their assigned cluster centroid $\mu_k$ is minimized.

$$Within - SS = \sum_{k=1}^{k} W(C_k) = \sum_{k=1}^{k} \sum_{x_i \in C_k} (x_i - \mu_k)^2$$

Finally, the total within-cluster sum of square (Within-SS) measures the appropriateness of the clustering based on how much it can be be minimized.

Now the algorithm can come into use. As a first step, the algorithm randomly selects k points from the given data that will be used as centroids. Next, two steps will be repated iteratively until convergence is achieved:

*1. Cluster Assignment Step*

Using Euclidean distance, the distances to the centroid are calculated and the data points are classified to be part of a cluster.

*2. Centroid Update Step*

In this step, a new centroid is calculated based on the estimated clusters. These centroids serve as new starting point and all data points are reassigned.

The algorithm converges when the clusters do not change in the next iteration (the last two iteration produce the same clusters with the same data points within them).

Finally, the two scales *Establishment vs. Anti-Establishment* and *Progressive vs. Traditionalism* are handed over to the K-means clustering algorithm. Based on the *Gap Statistic* method (cf. Tibshirani, Walther, & Hastie, 2001), four clusters are suggested as the optimal number of clusters.[3] Figure 2 shows the results of the gap statistic that clearly indicate four clusters.

The four clusters that are estimated with the help of the k-means algorithm can be named as traditionalist and progressive populist parties as well as their two establishment counterparts (establishment progressives and traditionalists). Together with the clustering method, the two dimensions can be used to visualize the ideological position of each European party and its classification, which is illustrated in Figure 3.

[3]Elbow and average silhouette method also suggest four clusters as optimal.

Figure 2: Results of Gap Statistic Method

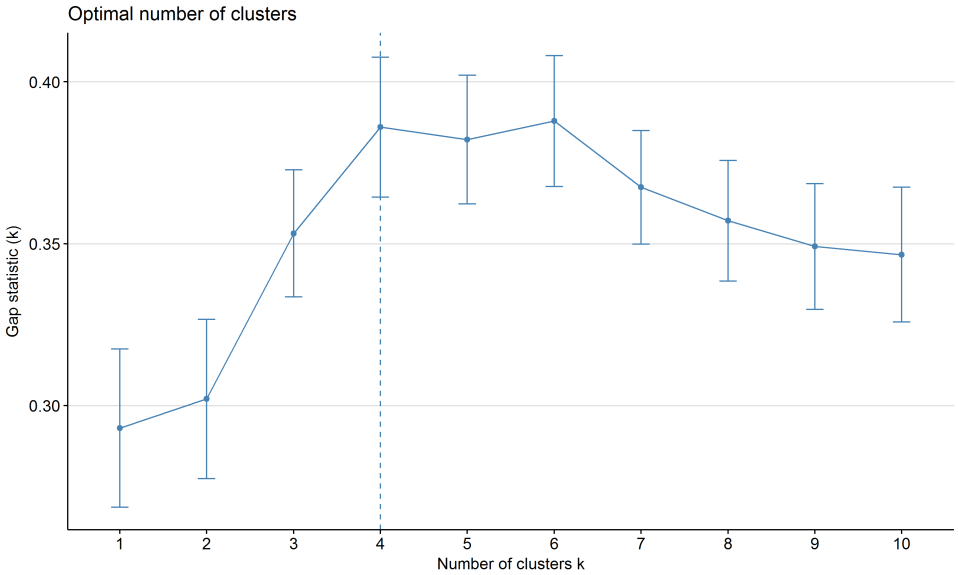



Figure 3: Party Alignment of European Parties


In order to validate the clusters, let's pick some examples and see whether the classified parties fit our theoretical expectations.

The *top-left quadrant* shows progressive populists such as:

*Syriza*

After winning the parliamentary elections in January 2015, SYRIZA (*Coalition of the Radical Left*) attempted to carry out the difficult balancing act between extreme left-wing positions, opposition to EU imposed austerity and yet supposedly pro-European commitments. In social policy, Syriza is particularly committed to the socially disadvantaged in society with progressive value policies such as guaranteeing that unemployed, homeless and low-income people should be allowed to use the health facilities free of charge or that family reunification should be made easier for individuals with a migration background (cf. BBC News, 2014).

*Podemos*

In the general elections held on December 20, 2015, the left-wing political party Podemos that emerged from a protest movement obtained 20.68% of the votes and 69 deputies in the whole of the State. The Spanish "Indignados", the "indignants" of the Podemos movement, practice critique of globalization and capitalism often symbolized in the overarching EU bureacracy. Among other measures, they defend abortion, want to stop house evictions, suppress church privileges, promote renewable energies and are in favor of curbing nuclear energy. With regard to political parties, they propose to stop gauging, reduce subsidies and expand restrictions on connections between politicians and companies.

*Red–Green Alliance (Denmark)*

The Red–Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) was formed as a collaboration between the Left Socialists (VS), the Danish Communist Party (DKP) and the Socialist Labor Party (SAP) in 1989. During the last parliamentary elections in 2015, the Red–Green Alliance gained 7,8% of the popular vote. Enhedslisten does not stand in European elections, but supports Folkebevægelsen mod EU (*Popular Movement against the EU*), a heavily anti-EU political party that only competes for the European elections. The party attaches great importance to combating social inequality and poverty, as well as advocating strengthening and expanding the welfare state (cf. Local Denmark, 2015). Politically, the party is in favor of more space for all forms of diversity, including gender, sexuality, disability and ethnic background.

The *top-right quadrant* shows traditionalist populists such as:

*AfD*

The alternative for Germany (AfD) is a political party founded in 2013 in Germany. As of 2014, it gradually moved into 14 state parliaments and in the 2017 general election, the AfD received 12.6% of the vote and thus became the third strongest force and the strongest opposition party in the German Bundestag. Regarding the EU, they have been in favor of renationalization of policies that are currently situated in the EU (cf. BBC News, 2017). The AfD represents conservative-antifeminist positions in gender politics and rejects gender equality policies and relies thereby on Christian fundamentalist and nationalist ideas. Therefore, the AfD is a party with traditional values. According to the AfD, Islam does not belong to Germany. In particular, the party calls for a ban on minarets and the face veil.

*Front National*

The Front National (FN) was founded in 1972 in France and moved into the national assembly

with 8 seats in 2017 (cf. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018). In the European Parliament, the FN owns 18 out of the 74 French seats. With regard to foreign policy, the FN is strongly against EU membership and they vividly oppose immigration and asylum seekers and want to limit the rate of people allowed into the country. Furhtermore, their economic policy blames globalization for national ills which makes them favor protectionist policies.

The *bottom-left and bottom-right quadrants* show progressive and traditionalist establishment parties:

These quadrants include known establishment parties such as the German SPD and CDU, Labour Party and Conservatives in the UK and the Socialists and REM in France, among others. Given that the distinction between kinds of establishment parties is not of greater interest to us, we will merge progressive and traditionalist establishment parties into a single establishment party group.

A full list of used parties as well as their respective scores and affiliations can be found in the appendix Table **??**.

### 3.1.3 Dependent Variable: Support for Establishment/Populist Parties

After the successful classification, we combine the clusters from the CHES data with the *European Social Survey* (ESS) Round 5 – 8. We decided to use only this timerange, because in this way we capture the years after the European financial crisis (2008-09). Two variables will be used to measure our dependent variable *Support for Establishment/Populist Parties*:

1. *What party did you vote for in the last national election?*

2. *Which party is closest to your views?*

A respondent that either voted for or indicated that they feel closest to a specific party, will be classified as either supporting a progressive or traditionalist populist or an establishment party, based on the clusters generated by the k-means alghorithm. If it is the case that a person voted for a party but felt close to a different party, we decided to classify said person as a supporter of the party that it felt most close to (thus ranking their vote as less indicative of their support). This is based on the assumption that many voters have an incentive to vote strategically and they might end up voting for an establishment party even though they actually support a populist party.

After merging of the datasets is completed, we are initially left with 130155 respondents from 22

European countries. However, given that there are many missing values for respondents who gave no indication on whether they support a political party (32.99%), we are ultimately left with 87238 cases for the purposes of our descriptive analysis and 68403 for the multinomial logistic regression analysis (where all missing values were deleted listwise).[4]

### 3.1.4 Independent Variables: Cultural and Economic Explanations

Next, the hypotheses will be operationalized with corresponding ESS variables. *Economic deprivation* will be captured with two variables: *Economic Insecurity* (4-point scale) and the dummy variables *Unemployment*, and *Welfare*. The *cultural value hypothesis* will be measured with an index for *Anti-Immigration Sentiment* and four *Schwartz Human Value* dimensions, all ranging from 0 to 10: *Openness*, *Self-Transendence*, *Self-Enhancement* and *Conservation*, where the former two are associated with liberal values and the latter two are associated with conservative values (cf. Shalom H Schwartz, 1994; Shalom H. Schwartz, 2005). The models further include common socio-demographic control variables, for example, *Age*, *Education* and *Sex* but also includes a *Left-Right Scale*, *Religiosity*, *Government Satisfaction*, *Ethnic Minority Status*, *Trust in Global Governance* and the dummy variable *Rural vs. Urban*. Lastly, regional dummies (East, West, North and Southern Europe) and time dummies for each year will be included in the model as controls (2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016).

A more detailed description of the used variables can be requested from the authors.

## 3.2 Statistical Methodology

Multinomial logistic regression expands upon binary logistic regression, so that it is possible to predict three or more outcomes of a variable. Each category of the variable of interest is compared to the *reference category*, which is specified by the researcher, with the consequence that estimated parameters (logits and/or odds ratios) are interpreted in reference to that category (cf. Hosmer Jr, Lemeshow, & Sturdivant, 2013, p. 269).

For this example, we assume that the multinomial model is run over a categorical response category $Y$, coded as 0, 1, or 2, where 0 is used as reference categaory. Similar to the logistic regression model, where the the logit is understood as $Y = 1$ versus $Y = 0$, a multinomial logistic regression compares the outcomes $Y = 2$ and $Y = 1$ to $Y = 0$. Therefore, two distinct logit functions are estimated:

[4] Note that is certainly a high amount of missing values. Imputation could be considered in this case, however, this would be beyond the scope of this seminar paper.

$$g_1(x) = ln\left[\frac{Pr(Y=1|x)}{Pr(Y=0|x)}\right]$$

$$g_2(x) = ln\left[\frac{Pr(Y=2|x)}{Pr(Y=0|x)}\right]$$

This model is almost analogous to a logistic regression model, except that the multinomial logit equations contrast each of response category $Y$ with reference category $Y = 0$. When $Y$ has a binary outcomethe multinomial logit model reduces to the usual logistic regression model.

The probabilities for each Y-Category is calculated as follows:

$$Pr(Y = 0|x) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{g_1(x)} + e^{g_2(x)}}$$

$$Pr(Y = 1|x) = \frac{e^{g_1(x)}}{1 + e^{g_1(x)} + e^{g_2(x)}}$$

$$Pr(Y = 2|x) = \frac{e^{g_2(x)}}{1 + e^{g_1(x)} + e^{g_2(x)}}$$

Theoretically a multilevel model would have been needed to estimate the model properly, but given that there are some countries with almost none or no populist supporters in our data, this would lead to problems. In order to still account for the hierarchical order of our data, we decided to use regional variables of Europe, based on the four classifications: Eastern, Western, Southern and Northern Europe.

# 4 Analysis

In this section, a short examination of descriptive statistics takes place (Section 4.1) followed by a report on the results of estimated multinomial logistic regression models which are subsequently examined for their implications regarding the research hypotheses (Section 4.2).

## 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

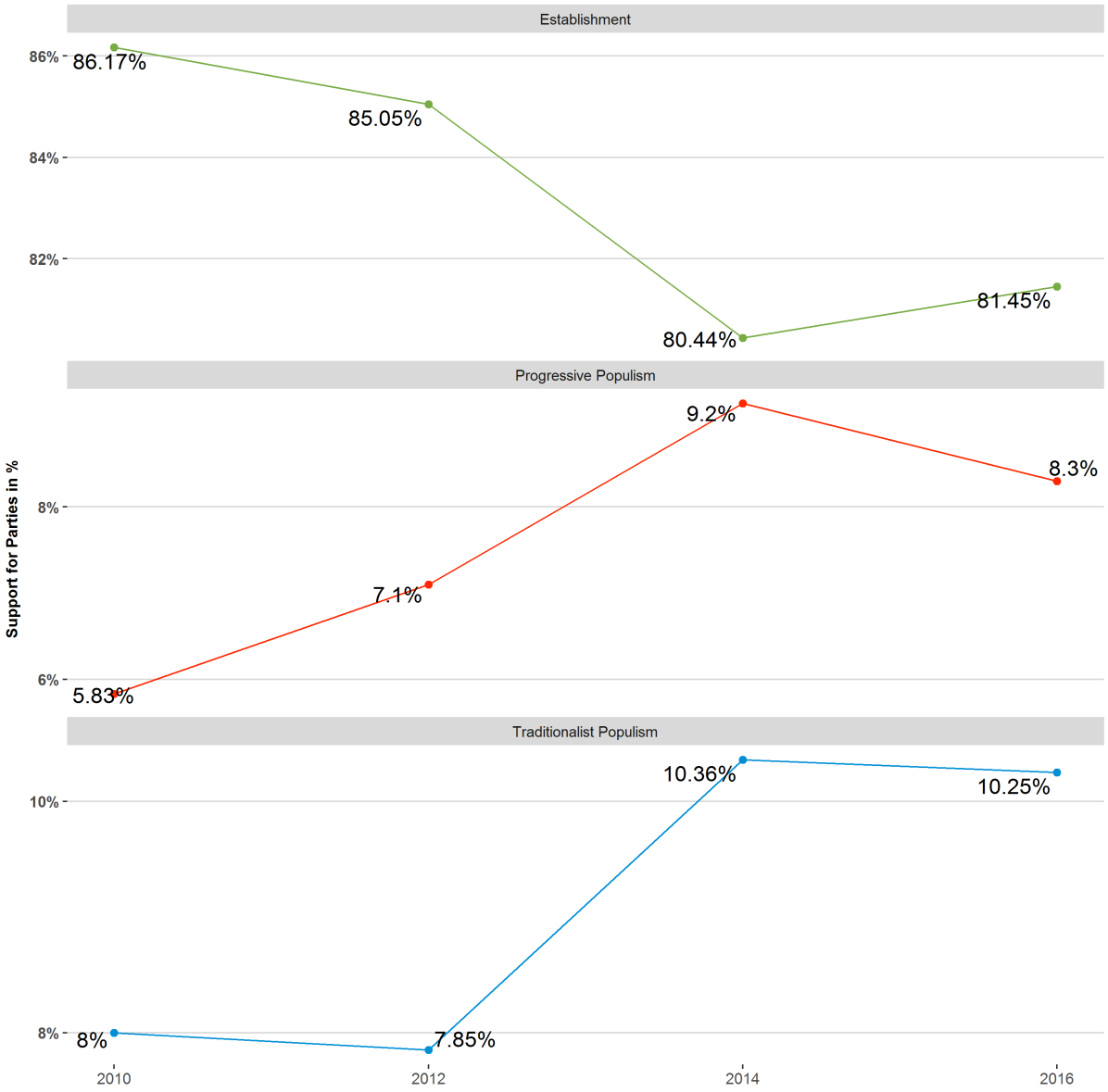
This section will introduce some basic descriptive statistics of the used variables. More specifically, we examine the support for populism over time, its geographical distribution and how it differs among different socio-demographic groups. Table 1 shows summary statistics for all used variables.

Table 1: Summary Statistics

| **Variable** | **N** | **Mean** | **SD** | **Median** | **Range** | **Missing in %** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Support for Estab./Populism | 87238 | - | - | - | - | 32.99 |
| Age | 129833 | 49.11 | 18.60 | 49.00 | 14 - 114 | 0.27 |
| Education | 129551 | 3.79 | 1.85 | 4.00 | 1 - 7 | 0.48 |
| Female (0/1) | 130054 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.10 |
| Left-Right Scale | 114144 | 5.11 | 2.20 | 5.00 | 0 - 10 | 12.32 |
| Ethnic Minority (0/1) | 128564 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 1.24 |
| Religiosity | 129073 | 4.54 | 3.07 | 5.00 | 0 - 10 | 0.85 |
| Rural (0/1) | 129824 | - | - | - | 1 - 5 | 0.27 |
| Trust in Global Governance | 115922 | 4.74 | 2.33 | 5.00 | 0 - 10 | 10.95 |
| Government Satisfaction | 123137 | 4.17 | 2.09 | 4.33 | 0 - 10 | 5.41 |
| Anti-Immigration Sentiment | 119842 | 4.87 | 2.14 | 4.67 | 0 - 10 | 7.94 |
| Openness | 125645 | 3.89 | 1.77 | 3.67 | 0 - 10 | 3.49 |
| Conservation | 124934 | 6.74 | 1.64 | 7.00 | 0 - 10 | 4.03 |
| Self-Enhancement | 126084 | 4.82 | 2.02 | 5.00 | 0 - 10 | 3.15 |
| Self-Transcendence | 126310 | 7.72 | 1.42 | 8.00 | 0 - 10 | 2.97 |
| Economic Insecurity | 128930 | 2.10 | 0.88 | 2.00 | 1 - 4 | 0.96 |
| Unemployed (0/1) | 129533 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.50 |
| Welfare (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.02 |
| Eastern Europe (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.00 |
| Western Europe (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.00 |
| Northern Europe (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.00 |
| Southern Europe (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.00 |
| Year 2010 (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.00 |
| Year 2012 (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.00 |
| Year 2014 (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.00 |
| Year 2016 (0/1) | 130155 | - | - | - | 0 - 1 | 0.00 |

Figure 4 shows the support for populist and establishment parties over the timerange that is present in our dataset (2010 - 2016). As can be observed in the figure, support for populist parties has increased in recent years and support for the establishment has fallen. Support for

Figure 4: Support for Establishment/Populist Parties over Time



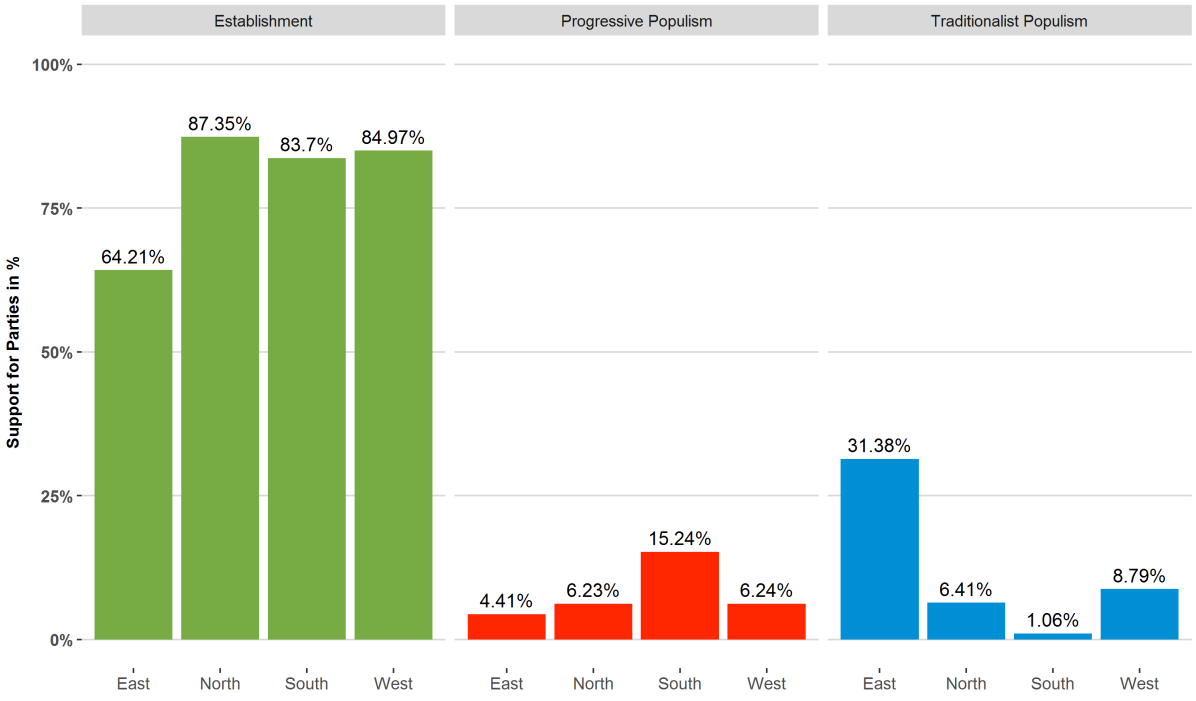

Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 87238.

established parties has dropped from 86.17% in 2010 to 81.45% in 2016, reaching the lowest point in 2014 with 80.44%. The opposite trend can be observed for the support of populist parties: support for progressive populists has risen from 5.83% in 2010 to 8.3% in 2016. In regards to traditionalist populism, there was an increase from 8% in 2010 to 10.25% support in 2016. Support for progressive and traditionalist populist parties peaked with 9.2% and 10.36% respectively in 2014 and has remained relatively constant for 2016.

Figure 5 visualizes the support of populist parties for European regions as defined by the UN[5]. It can be observed that Eastern Europe stands out in regard to the support for established parties,

[5]Standard country or area codes for statistical use (M49). See: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/

Figure 5: Support for Establishment/Populist Parties Across European Regions



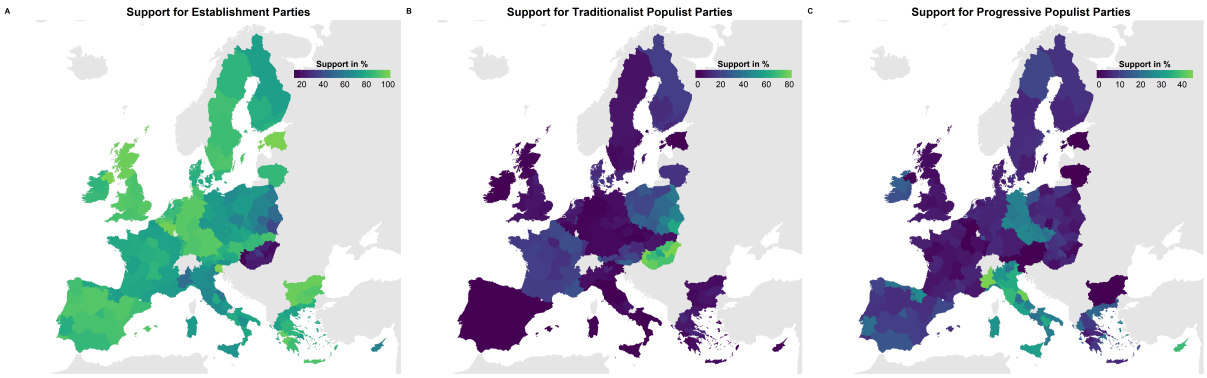

Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 87238.

where it is significantly lower than in other regions: only 64.21% support established parties in Eastern Europe, whereas in any other region support is well above 80%. Most notably, the support for non-establishment parties in Eastern Europe is primarily due to traditional populists (31.38%). Regarding the support of progressive populists, the East does not stands out clearly anymore.

Southern Europe, like Northern and Western Europe, shows more than 80% support for established parties, but the south clearly stands out in regard to their support for progressive populists (15.24%). In regard to traditionalist populists, a very different picture emerges for Southern Europe, where support is just over 1% and thus hardly worth mentioning. Such low support for populists cannot be observed in any other region, where the mininum is at least 6%.

Additionally, Figure 6 shows three maps and the distribution of support for establishment, traditionalist and progressive populist parties in Europe. One can clearly observe the difference of establishment party support between Eastern and Western Europe which goes right through Germany. The prevalence of traditionalist populist in Eastern Europe becomes rather clear to see, specifically in Hungary where the Fidesz dominates the political landscape. In regards to progressive populists, one can observe that East Germany and the Czech Republic, as well as Southern Europe seem to be the hotspots of support.

Figure 6: Support for Establishment/Populist Parties by NUTS - Regions




Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 87238.

Figure 7 seeks to visualize the socio-demographic characteristics of establishment and populist party supporters. The chart uses violinplots paired with boxplots, inside which the arithmetic mean is shown. The dotted line shows the overall mean. In addition, on the right hand side of each plot the results of a t-test are reported.

A clear picture emerges regarding self-placement on the left-right scale in the upper left part of Figure 7. Those who support progressive populists generally locate themselves on the political left (Mean = 3.09; SD = 2.05). On the other hand, the supporters of traditional populists tend to place themselves on the right-wing spectrum (Mean = 6.46; SD = 2.16). One can also observe that the average supporter for establishment parties places themselves right in the middle of the left-right spectrum (Mean = 5.18; SD = 2.17). T-tests between each pair further shows that the p-values are below 0.001, indicating that all differences are statistically significant. At first, this seems like a trivial finding, however these results once again confirm our operationalization and validate the idea that we accurately captured traditionalist and progressive populists in their respective categories.

With regard to age in the upper right part of Figure 7, it becomes clear that supporters of established parties are older than those who support populist parties. The average supporter populist parties is 47.35, in regards to progressive populists and 49.34, whereas the average establishment supporter is 51.32 years old. As the t-tests show, the differences between the group of supporters for established parties over the other two groups are statistically significant. However, there seems to be no statistically significant difference between the supporters of traditionalist and progressive populists in regards to age.

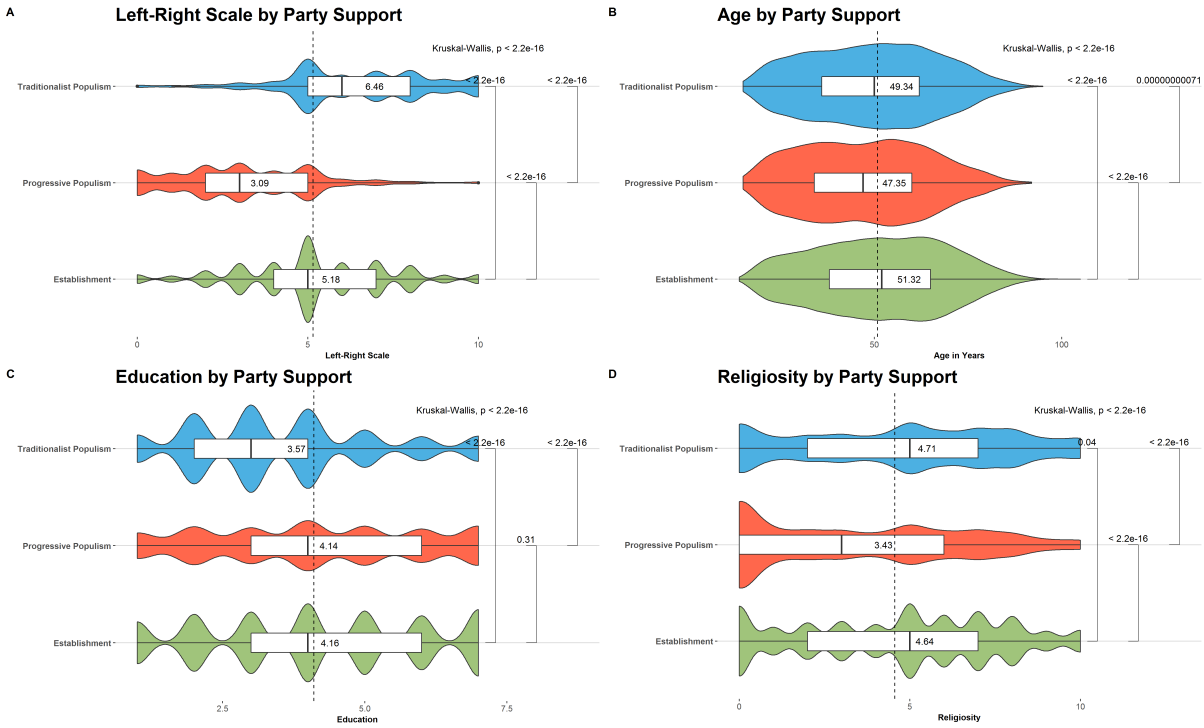
The bottom-left graph of Figure 7 shows the distribution of education. One can clearly observe that supporters for traditionalist populists stand out with lower education levels (Mean = 3.57; SD = 1.61) than the supporters of established parties (Mean = 4.16; SD = 1.9) or progressive populists (Mean = 4.14; SD = 1.9) and these differences are statistically signfiicant. The educational attainment differences between supporters of progressive populists and supporters of established parties is also statistically significant but only marginally lower for the latter.

Lastly, the bottom-right graphic of Figure 7 shows the degree of religiosity by party support. Focusing on the the graph, supporters of progressive populists stand out clearly with a low average level of religiosity (Mean = 3.43; SD = 3.08). Supporters of traditional (Mean = 4.71; SD = 3.1)and established parties (Mean = 4.64; SD = 2.96) both share a similar degree of religiosity, with the former exhibiting higher levels of religiosity. As the results of the t-tests show, all differences between groups are highly statistically significant.

## 4.2 Multinomial Logistic Regression

This section will present the results of multinomial logistic regressions used to estimate the support for progressive and traditionalist populism followed by a short summary and discussion

Figure 7: Support for Establishment/Populist Parties by Socio-Demographics




Number in boxplots show the arithmetic mean. Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 68403.

of the findings in regards to our hypotheses.

### 4.2.1 Results

Five models will be estimated in total: *Model 1* only includes the results of the control variables. *Model 2* tests the economic hypothesis and *Model 3* tests the cultural hypothesis. Lastly, *Model 4* estimates variables of both hypotheses together and *Model 5* shows additional interaction effects between them.[6] Instead of a table, it was decided to use a coefficient plot in order to visualize the results, shown in Figure 10. The big advantage of reporting the results in this way is that in addition to estimates and p-values, the relation and differences between coefficients can be intuitively read.

[6] All models were checked by tolerance tests to be free of problems of multicollinearity.

The results found in the descriptive part are further corroborated in *Model 1*. In terms of *Age*, the chance of supporting both progressive and traditionalist populism is 1.01 times lower for each year that a person ages compared to the chance of supporting an establishment party. In regard to *Education*, the chance to support traditional populists compared to support established parties is 1.23 times lower per educational attainment score (OR = 0.81; 95% CI [0.79 - 0.82]; $p < 0.001$). With respect to the *Left-Right Scale*, the previously identified trend also emerges clearly: the chance to support progressive populists compared to support for established parties is 1.45 times lower (OR = 0.69; 95% CI [0.68 - 0.70]; $p < 0.001$), whereas the chance to support progressive populists is 1.45 higher (OR = 1.45; 95% CI [1.43 - 1.47]; $p < 0.001$). Not surprising are the effects of *Government Satisfaction* and *Trust in Global Governance*. Governmant satisfaction seems to decrease the chance of supporting both progressive (OR = 0.85; 95% CI [0.83 - 0.86]; $p < 0.001$) and traditionalist populist parties (OR = 0.90; 95% CI [0.88 - 0.91]; $p < 0.001$). The same trend emerges for trust in global governance: for each point on the scale, the chance to support a traditionalist populist party decreases by 1.06 (OR = 0.94; 95% CI [0.92 - 0.95]; $p < 0.001$) and the chance to support a progressive populist party decreases by 1.05 (OR = 0.95; 95% CI [0.93 - 0.96]; $p < 0.001$) compared to support for establishment parties. Figure 8 shows the (average) marginal effects of the estimated control variables and further visualizes the identified trends (based on the full Model 4).

Figure 8: Marginal Effects for Control Variables - Model 4

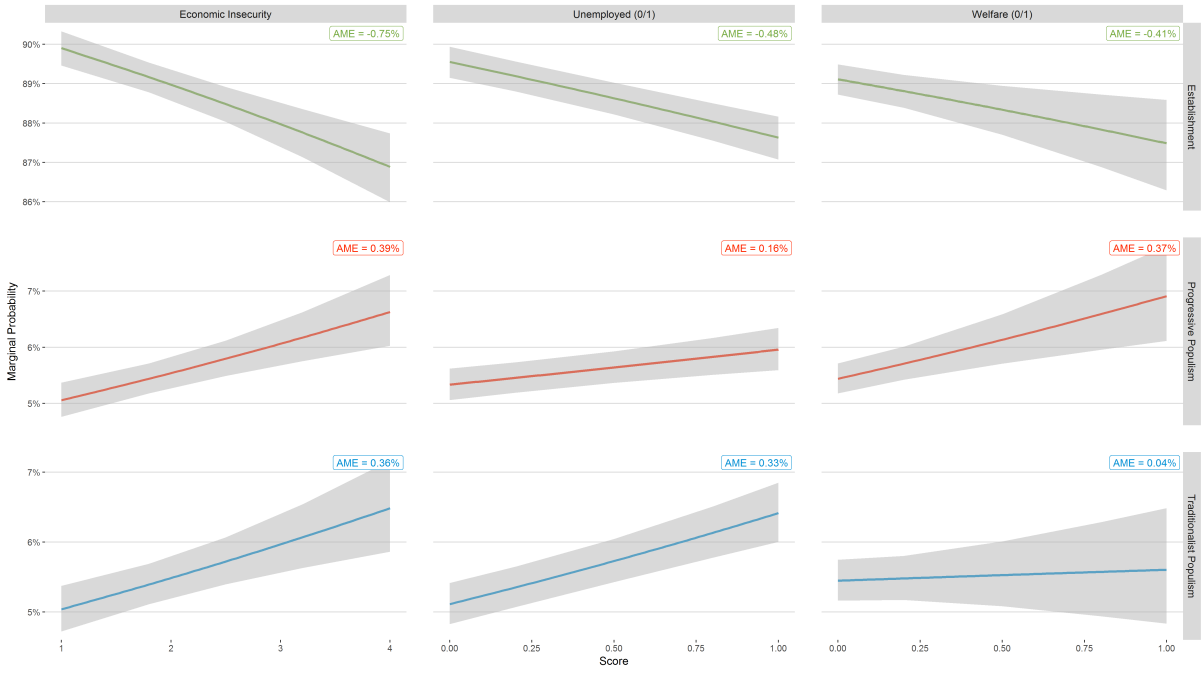

Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 68403.

Next, the economic hypothesis will be examined in *Model 2*. Here it can be seen that the chance

for support of progressive populists compared to support of established parties increases by 1.08 per point on the *Economic Insecurity* scale (OR = 1.08; 95% CI [1.04 - 1.13]; p < 0.001). Similarly, the chance of supporting traditionalist populism also increases by 1.18 with higher perceived economic insecurity (OR = 1.18; 95% CI [1.13 - 1.23]; p < 0.001).

Similar effects can be observed with *Unemployment*, where being unemployed increases the chance by 1.21 to support progressive populists (OR = 1.21; 95% CI [1.13 - 1.28]; p < 0.001) and by 1.20 to support traditionalist populists compared to supporting establishment parties (OR = 1.20; 95% CI [1.13 - 1.28]; p < 0.001). In regard to *Welfare*, a different picture emerges. While there is a 1.17 times greater chance to support progressive populists when on welfare compared to support established parties, it should be noted that the effect is only slightly significant (OR = 1.17; 95% CI [1.03 - 1.32]; p < 0.05). The same does not seem to be the case for traditionalist populists, where being on welfare has no significant effect albeit it goes in the expected direction (OR = 1.02; 95% CI [0.89 - 1.17]; p = 0.79). Figure 9 shows the (average) marginal effects of the estimated economic deprivation predictors and further visualizes the identified trends (based on the full Model 4).

Figure 9: Marginal Effects for Economic Hypotheses - Model 4

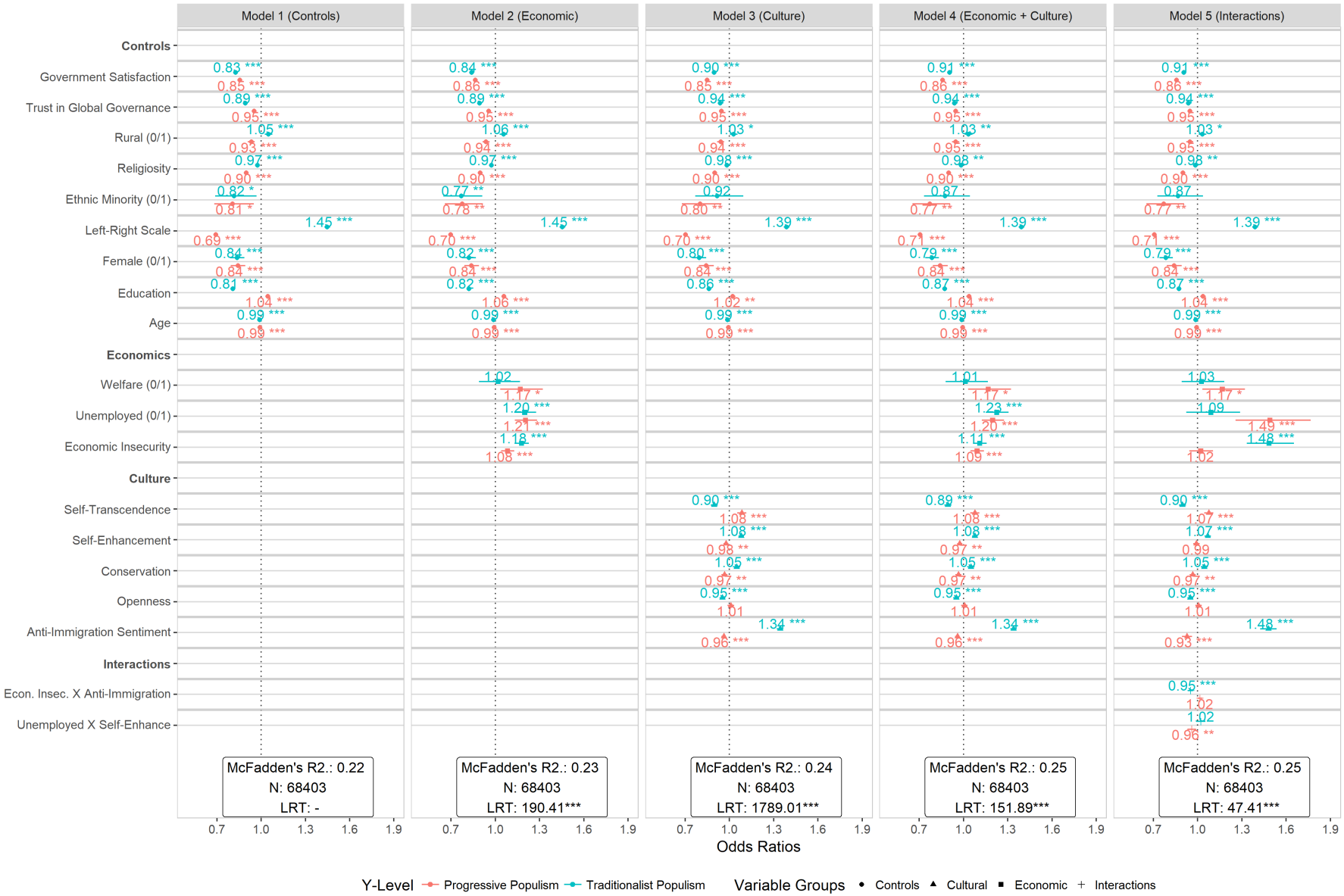



Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 68403.

In terms of the economic dimension, it can be seen that as economic deprivation increases, the chance of support for populists is higher compared to support for established parties. However, the effect of dependence on social benefits/welfare varies. Furthermore, almost all effects are significant in the model, and McFadden's $R^2$ increases from 0.22 to 0.23 in Model 1 compared

to the control model and a likelihood ratio test shows a statistically significant better fit than the control Model 1, ($\chi^2 = 190.41; p < 0.001$).

Figure 10: Coefficient Plot: Models 1 - 5



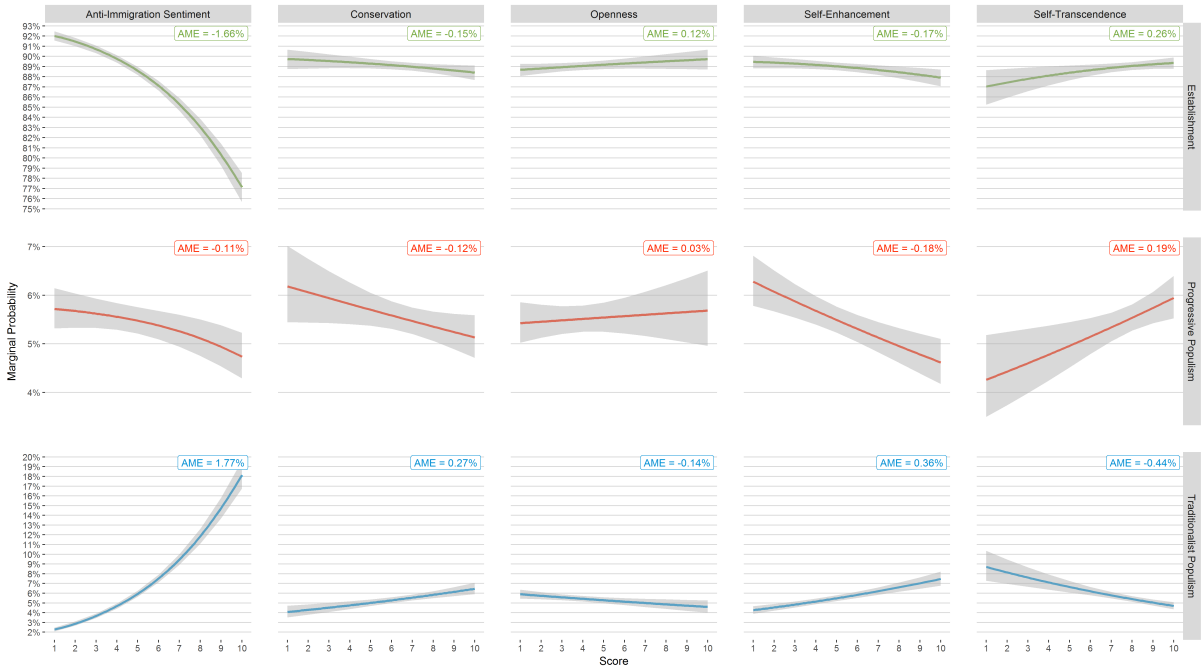

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01 , ***p < 0.001. Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 68403. Regional and Temporal control variables are omitted.

Next, we examine the results in regards to the *cultural thesis* and focus on *Model 3*. Here one can observe that *Anti-Immigration Sentiment* increases the chance of support for traditionalist populist parties by 1.34 compared to support for established parties (OR = 1.34; 95% CI [1.32 - 1.36]; $p < 0.001$). As expected, *Anti-Immigration Sentiment* pulls in the opposite direction for progressive populism: for each point on the anti-immigration scale, the chance to support progressive populists decreases by 1.04 (OR = 0.96; 95% CI [0.95 - 0.98]; $p < 0.001$).

There are also similar patterns regarding *Conservation* attitudes: the chance of supporting traditionalist populists is 1.05 times higher compared to support for established parties (OR = 1.05; 95% CI [1.02 - 1.07]; $p < 0.001$), whereas the chance of supporting progressive populists is 1.03 times lower compared to support for established parties (OR = 0.97; 95% CI [0.95 - 0.99]; $p < 0.01$).

A similar pattern can also be noted in terms of *Openness*: the chance of supporting traditionalist populists is 1.05 times lower compared to support for established parties (OR = 0.95; 95% CI [0.93 - 0.97]; $p < 0.001$), whereas the chance of supporting progressive populists is 1.01 times higher compared to support for established parties, albeit the effect remains insignificant (OR = 1.01; 95% CI [0.99 - 1.03]; $p = 0.38$).

Figure 11: Marginal Effects for Cultural Hypotheses - Model 4




Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 68403.

The effects of the *Self-Enhancement* and the *Self-Transcendence* scale are also in line with expectations and pull in opposite directions for progressive and traditionalist populism. For each scale point on the self-enhancement scale, the chance of support for traditionalist populists

is 1.08 higher compared to establishment party support (OR = 1.08; 95% CI [1.06 - 1.10]; p < 0.001). Regarding the support for progressive populists, the chance of support for progressive populists is 1.02 lower compared to establishment party support (OR = 0.98; 95% CI [0.96 - 0.99]; p < 0.01).

For each scale point on the self-transcendence scale, the chance of support for traditionalist populists is 1.11 lower compared to establishment party support (OR = 0.90; 95% CI [0.87 - 0.92]; p < 0.001). Regarding the support for progressive populists, the chance of support for progressive populists is 1.08 higher compared to establishment party support (OR = 1.08; 95% CI [1.05 - 1.11]; p < 0.001). Figure 11 shows the (average) marginal effects of the estimated cultural predictors and further visualizes the identified trends (based on the full Model 4).

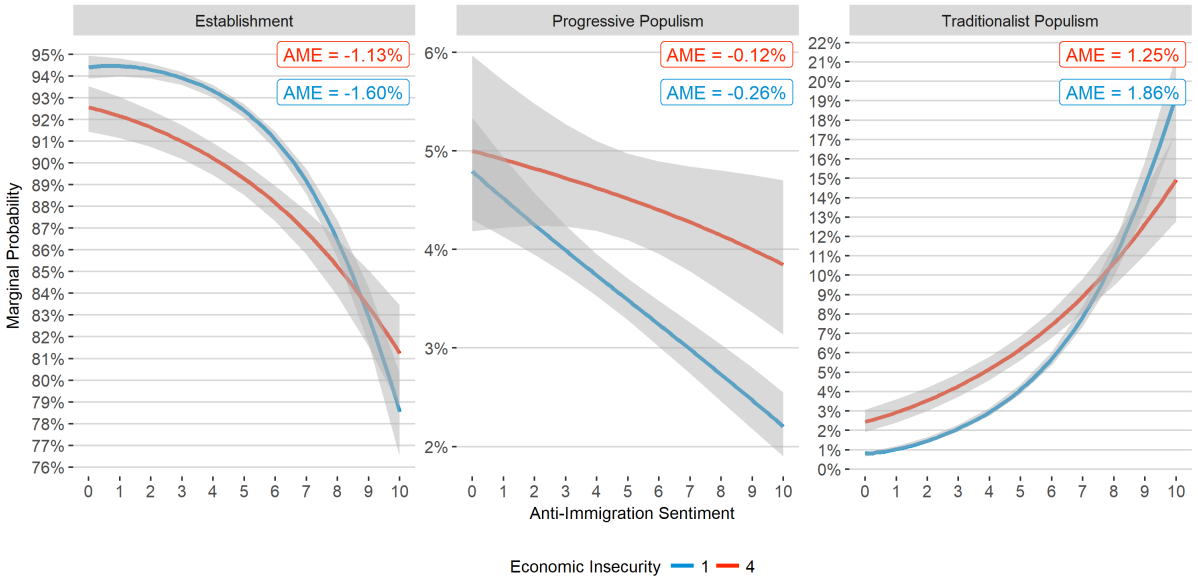
The McFadden's $R^2$ increases from 0.22 to 0.24 and the fit of the model is significantly better compared to the control Model 1, ($\chi^2 = 1790.01; p < 0.001$). As expected by our theoretical considerations, the effects on the cultural dimension went in opposite directions: culturally inclusive values seem to increase the support for progressive populists and decrease the support for traditionalist populists whereas exclusiveness seems to increase the support and inclusiveness decreases the support for the latter. It can thus be noted that the cultural dimension on its own is a meaningful differentiation between which form of populism is supported. However, it should also be emphasized that the effect sizes found here are rather weak.

*Model 4* includes the economic as well as the cultural dimensions. This further confirms the previously found effects. In terms of the economic dimension reduced effects can be observed. However, despite a slight weakening of the effect sizes, significances remain untouched and the estimates continue to show the expected direction. Moreover, the McFadden's $R^2$ increases from 0.24 to 0.25 and the fit of the model is significantly better compared to Model 3, ($\chi^2 = 151.89; p < 0.001$).

Lastly, *Model 5* shows two interaction effects that combine the economic and cultural dimensions. Pairwise interaction effects are estimated between each possible combination of the economic and cultural predictors. Only two of these interaction effects yielded a p-value below 0.05: an interaction between *Economic Insecurity* and *Anti-Immigration Sentiment* and an interaction between *Unemployment* and *Self-Enhancement* values. The small number of significant effects does not bode well for hypothesis H4. Nonetheless, the effects will be interpreted.

For the interaction between *Economic Insecurity* and *Anti-Immigration Sentiment*, we interpret the marginal effects depicted in Figure 12. Focusing on the marginal probabilities for the support of establishment parties, one notices that support decreases quite sharply with increasing

Figure 12: Marginal Effects for Interaction: Economic Insecurity × Anti-Immigration Sentiment



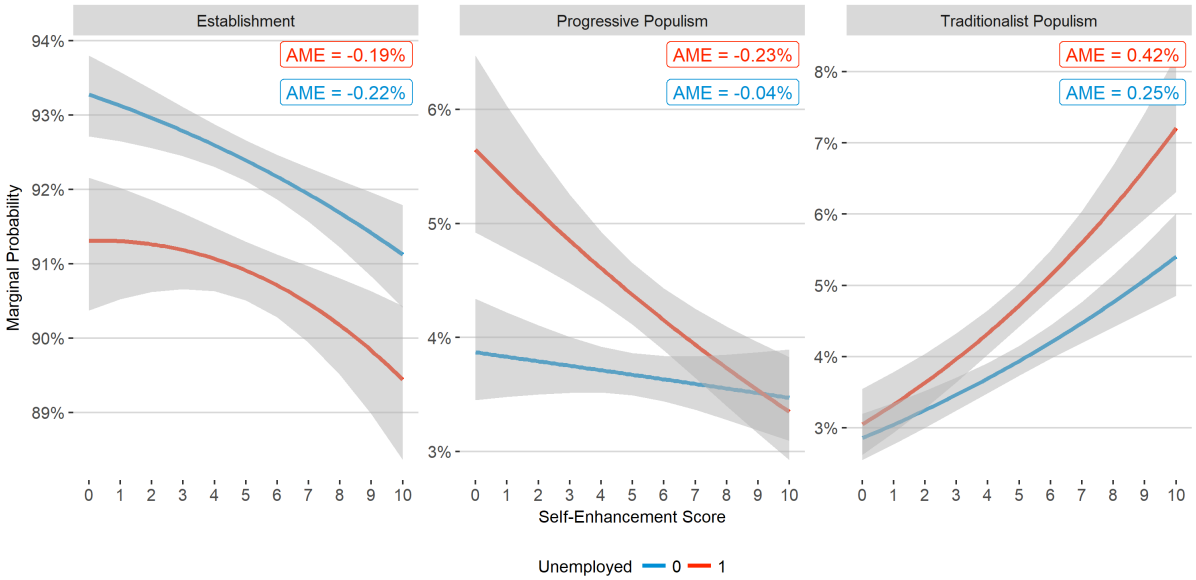

Based on Model 5. Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 68403.

*Anti-Immigration Sentiment*. However, while the effect starts out lower for those that are most economically insecure, anti-immigration sentiment has a higher influence for those that feel very economically secure. This is an interesting finding and the opposite of what we would expect. Similarly, focusing on the support for traditionalist parties, the same effect emerges: while the probability for those with no anti-immigration sentiment is somewhat higher for those that are economically insecure, the effect of anti-immigration sentiment is higher for those that feel economically secure. On the other hand, the support for progressive populists decreases more strongly for those that are highly economically secure compared to those that are economically insecure, as anti-immigration sentiment increases.

Lastly, we take a more detailed look at Figure 13 where the interaction between *Unemployment* and *Self-Enhancement* is visualized. One can observe the already established effects: as self-enhancement values increase, the probability of support for establishment and progressive populist parties decreases and increases for traditionalist populists. However, in regard to progressive and traditionalist populists, this effect is even stronger for those that are unemployed. This is the expected effect that we formulated in Hypothesis H4.

Although the McFadden's $R^2$ remains the same (0.25) the fit of Model 5 is significantly better compared to Model 4, ($\chi^2 = 47.41; p < 0.001$). However, it should be noted that only two interaction effects of all the possible combinations between the economic and cultural dimensions yielded significant effects, of which only one showed the expected direction. This makes hypothesis H4 untenable and it must therefore be rejected.

Figure 13: Marginal Effects for Interaction: Unemployed × Self-Enhancement




Based on Model 5. Source: ESS Data Round 5 - 8; N = 68403.

# 5 Conclusions

This section will briefly summarize the results and then conclude the study with a few words on limitations and future research.

With regard to our multinomial logistic models, it can be said that our hypotheses were able to be mainly *confirmed*. Let's start with the economic hypothesis:

> H1: The less economically fortunate (economic dissatisfaction, unemployment, economic insecurity, living on welfare), the higher the probability of supporting populist parties.

The models estimated here mainly support this hypothesis. Unemployment, economic insecurity and receiving welfare increase the chance to support populists compared to support of established parties. Altough, the impact of living on welfare seems not to be as great as the other two factors mentioned and does not yield a significant effect in supporting traditionalist populists. In addition, in Model 3, where the cultural dimension has been added, there is a slight reduction of the effects. Despite this, all significances remain stable and the estimates continue to show the expected effects.

Concerning the cultural dimension, the results of the multinomial logistic regression also support our hypotheses:

> H2: The more culturally inclusive (values), the higher the probability of supporting

progressive populist parties.

H3: The more culturally exclusive, the higher the probability of supporting a traditionalist populist party.

Inclusive values (high values for self-transcendence and openness and lower anti-immigration sentiment) increases the probability of support for progressive populists, but openness lacks a statistically significant effect. In addition, exclusive values (low values for self-transcendence and openness and a high value for anti-immigration), increase the probability of supporting traditionalist populism. Anti-immigration in particular seems very important here and stands out clearly from the other effects. Additionally, openness values decrease the chance of supporting traditionalist populist parties. Even in Model 4, which combines all predictors, all estimated effects remain stable. The effects also show our previously suspected differentiation. The economic dimension increases the likelihood of supporting populist parties in general. The cultural dimension, on the other hand, shows that it has diametrically opposed effects on the support of traditionalist and progressive populists.

The last hypothesis concerning interaction effects stated as follows:

H4: When economic and cultural factors interact, the support for populist parties is higher.

The empirical evidence obtained through multinomial logistic regression does not support this hypothesis. Two statistically significant effects were found, however most interactions were not. An interaction between *Anti-Immigration Sentiment* and *Economic Insecurity* implied that the effect of the former on populist party support is *weaker* for those that are very economically insecure, suggesting the direct opposite of what we expected. Future research should further investigate what factors might cause this discrepancy. On the other hand, the other interaction effect between *Unemployment* and *Self-Enhancment* showed the expected direction and the influence of self-enhancement values was *stronger* for those that are unemployed. However, given the overwhelming contradictory evidence, this hypothesis has to be rejected.

It should also be stressed that while all the effects found are significant, they are rather weak, especially when it comes to the cultural dimension. In addition, almost all control effects remain significant in all models. In the academic literature, supporters of populist parties are often associated with features such as older age and lower education. Some minor surprises were found here: in terms of educational attainment, more education decreases the support for traditional populists, whereas the same isn't true for supporters of progressive populists where higher

Table 2: Summary of Results

| Hypothesis | Confirmed | Indications/ Tendencies | Restrictions |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***H1:*** *The less economically fortunate (economic dissatisfaction, unemployment, economic insecurity, living on welfare), the higher the probability of supporting anti-establishment parties.* | Yes | + | Weak Effects<br>Welfare not signicant for Traditionalist Populists |
| ***H2:*** *The more culturally inclusive (values), the higher the probability of supporting progressive populist parties.* | Yes | + | Weak Effects<br>Openness not signicant for Progressive Populists. |
| ***H3:*** *The more culturally exclusive, the higher the probability of supporting a traditionalist populist party.* | Yes | + | Weak Effects. |
| ***H4:*** *When economic and cultural factors interact, the support for populist parties is higher.* | No | - | No significant effects except for two inconclusive evidence |

A "+" sign indicates at least some empirical evidence in favor of the hypothesis and a "-" sign stands for contradictory empirical evidence.

education levels are associated with higher support. Further, when it comes to age, the models suggest that younger age is associated with higher support for progressive as well as traditional populists.

The goal of this paper was to bring some clarity on the confusion between different variants of populism that all too often have neglected this multidimensionality. Further research might be able to build upon our conceptualization and give more attention to the different variants of populism, so as to not conflate the distinct explanatory frameworks that come along with them.

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