

# **Moderate and Radical Right-Wing Voting in Western Europe**

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# The Ideas

- What does political “right” refer to?
- Do reasons of moderate and radical right voting differ significantly?
- Is economy becoming less important in party choice?
- Has the new political dimension based on values already emerged?
- Can classic theories of electoral behavior explain radical right voting?

# Hypotheses (1)

- Lazarsfeld et al. (1944): The key mechanism affecting voting behavior is social influence
  - H1: People who are embedded in religious networks are more likely to vote moderate right
  - H2: Labor union members are less likely to vote both moderate and radical right
- Campbell et al. (1960): Party choice is predicted by party identification
  - H3: People who identify themselves with political right are more likely to vote for them

# Hypotheses (2)

- Policy voting model
  - H4: People who oppose redistribution of income are more likely to vote moderate right
  - H5: People who oppose immigration are more likely to vote radical right
- Protest vote model
  - H6: People who do not trust political institutions are more likely to vote radical right

# Data

- European Social Survey integrated 5-wave data for years 2002 to 2010
- **Dependent:** party voted last national election
- Only waves closest to national elections
- Only cases with
  - Radical right as possible choice in the survey
  - Presence of respondents who actually voted for them
- 32 elections in 13 countries
  - Flanders and Wallonia analyzed separately

# Party Classifications

- Moderate right:
  - Membership in European People's Party
  - Membership in national level right-wing electoral alliances
  - Expert surveys
- Radical right:
  - Expert surveys only
- **Surveys:** Huber and Inglehart (1995), Lubbers (2000), Hooghe et al. (2006)

# Method

- **Dependent:** voting moderate and radical right opposed to “left-to-center” (reference)
- **Necessary:** multinomial logistic + multilevel
- Unfortunately, impossible
- Therefore, two multilevel binomial logistic models as pseudo-multinomial
- First: moderate right vs. reference
- Second: radical right vs. reference

	Fixed effect	Random effect (95% CI)	Fixed effect	Random effect (95% CI)
Political trust	-0.001		-0.499***	[0.146, 0.349]
Protest activity	-0.195***		-0.257***	
Self-identification with political right	1.345***		1.418***	
Opposition to income redistribution	0.305***	[0.140, 0.256]	0.169***	
Anti-immigrant attitudes	0.064**		0.730***	[0.351, 0.728]
Religious participation	0.336***	[0.133, 0.242]	-0.192***	
Level of education	0.121***		-0.290***	
Labor union membership	-0.224***		-0.213***	
Gender (female)	-0.018		-0.386***	
Age	0.253***		-0.469***	
Constant	-0.223	[0.550, 0.907]	-2.562***	[1.358, 2.266]



	Fixed effect	Random effect (95% CI)	Fixed effect	Random effect (95% CI)
Political trust	0.073***		-0.395***	[0.167, 0.354]
Protest activity	-0.356***		-0.378***	
Opposition to income redistribution	0.512***	[0.153, 0.270]	0.371***	
Anti-immigrant attitudes	0.134***		0.969***	[0.426, 0.723]
Religious participation	0.423***	[0.102, 0.191]	-0.013	
Level of education	0.069***		-0.312***	
Labor union membership	-0.405***		-0.316***	
Gender (female)	-0.116***		-0.511***	
Age	0.537***		-0.403***	
Constant	0.043	[0.377, 0.626]	-2.244***	[1.282, 2.134]

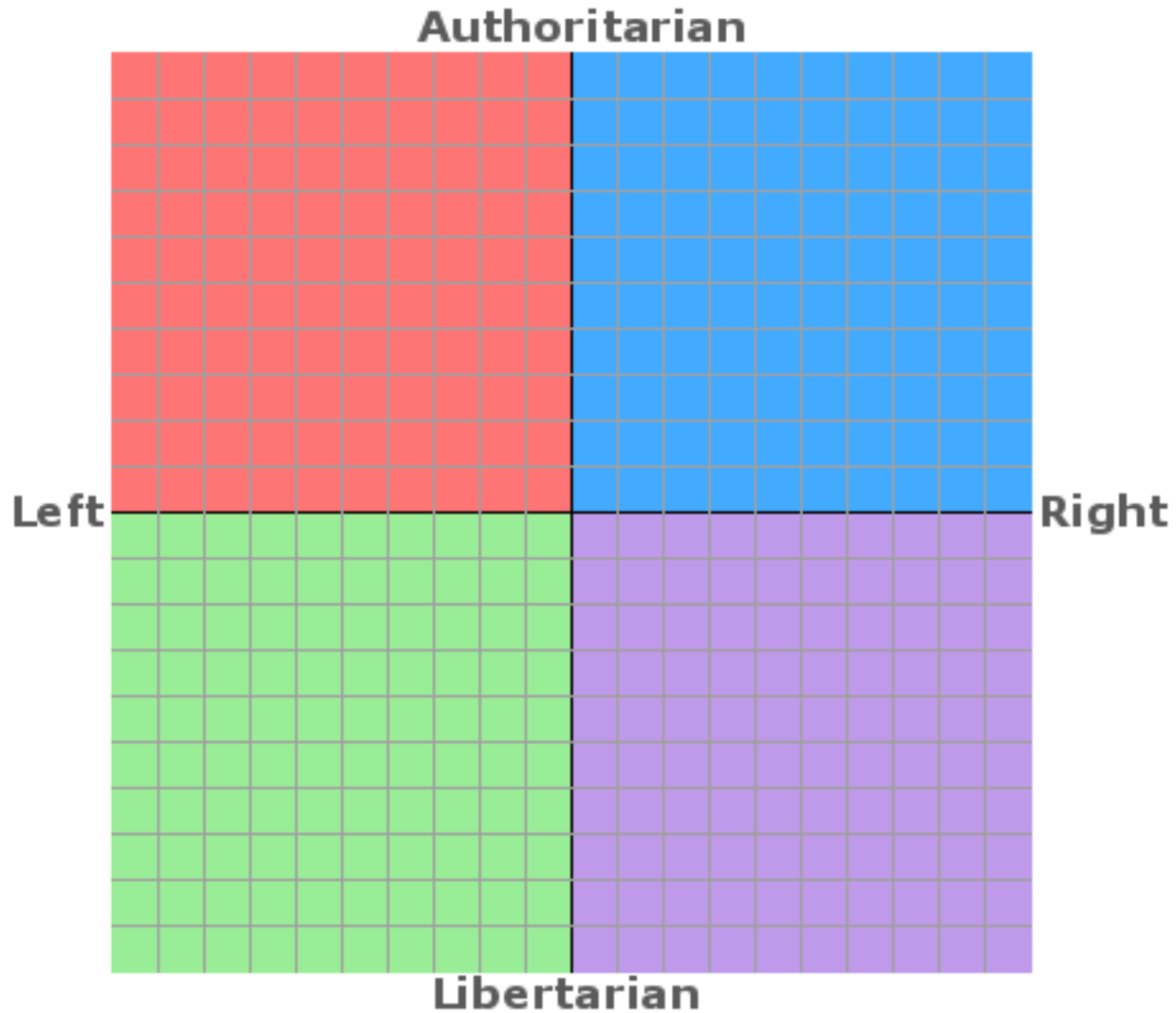
# Discussion (1)

- Full confirmation of classical theories
- Identification with political right is the strongest predictor in both cases
- Opposition to income redistribution and religious networks are strong and stable predictors of moderate right voting
- Radical right voters, in turn, are ones with low political trust and anti-immigrant attitudes in most countries and over time

## Discussion (2)

- Radical right manage to combine democratic anti-elitist (populist) agenda and anti-immigrant (xenophobic) appeal
- Attract—among others—disillusioned young males who are out of established networks
- Paradox caused by the post-1991 decay of radical left?
- Low protest activity as element of “right political culture”?

# New Political Space?



# New Political Space v.2.0

Left



Statist  
“xenophiles”

Pro-market  
“xenophobes”



Right

Radical right seem to be  
somewhat outside this  
dichotomy