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What Explains the Far Right Vote in Three European Democracies?

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Abstract

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The purpose of this paper is to investigate reasons why far-right parties have succeeded in recent parliamentary elections in France, Belgium, and Sweden. The methodology used in this research is quantitative, with an analysis of these countries' electoral history used to explore the relationship between moderation and center right party strength and far right electoral success. Furthermore, to explore the relationship between individual predictors (the independent variable), like experience of unemployment, and whether one individual votes for a far right party (the dependent variable), this paper used the statistical program STATA, with the primary data set coming from the European Social Survey. Additionally, STATA and the European Social Survey were used to explore regional contexts and individual vote for far right parties. Results from the nationally aggregate data analysis and individual predictors suggest a statistically significant relationship between an individual's experience of unemployment and vote choice for far right parties. Results from the regional analysis proved inconclusive. These results suggest a need for further research into the theory of moderation and far right party electoral success, as well as the relationship between attitudes of immigration and individual vote choice for far right wing parties.

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INTRODUCTION

For the past three decades, European far right wing parties have used a combination of fear-mongering, xenophobia, and populist policies to rally support in both presidential and parliamentary elections. In recent years, however, as *The Economist* observes, “support for the populist right in [parts of Europe] is unparalleled since the second world war. Against the backdrop of terrorism, these [parties] pose a serious threat to the openness and tolerance that Western societies take for granted” (“Playing with fear”, *The Economist* 2015). Their rise in electoral support demands the question: why? Why are far right wing parties, whose names conjure up associations of anti-Semitism, racism, and “fringe” politics, doing so well in European elections? Research regarding far right wing parties has mainly focused on explaining macro and micro reasons why citizens choose to support such far-right parties. Studies have suggested that it is due to high levels of unemployment, frustration towards “traditional” party politics, party shifts towards moderation, and recent surges in immigration. However, there has not been much research on moderation strategies, and specifically whether moderation of far-right parties increases their electoral share in parliamentary elections. Furthermore, while political scientists have noticed that regional differences do play a role in an individual’s choice to vote for far right parties (Lubbers & Scheepers 2002), there has not been an in-depth look at regional effects on the far-right vote.

Therefore, the broad question of my thesis is as follows: What factors contribute to the electoral success of far-right wing parties? With the recent triumphs of far right wing parties in European elections, these questions become

ever more relevant. This thesis will look at three countries: France, Belgium, and Sweden, and their respective far right parties' outcomes, the National Front (FN), Belgian Interest (Vlaams Belang), and the Swedish Democrats (SD), in several parliamentary elections—spanning from the Belgian parliamentary elections in 2004 to the recent Swedish parliamentary elections in 2014.

Why study extreme right wing parties in France, Belgium, and Sweden? Extreme right wing and/or nationalistic parties persist in almost every country in the world, particularly in Europe. One could look at a paper about the French National Front, for example, as a case study of the many extreme right wing parties that have swept recent European elections, particularly after the formation of the European Union. Furthermore, in recent years, the FN has pursued a strategy of "*dédiabolisation*", or in other words, of decontamination. The party has tried to rebrand itself, making it more "open" by decreasing anti-Semitic rhetoric, expelling self-proclaimed Neo-Nazi and fascist members, and changing its policies towards traditional "family values." Did the strategy of "*dédiabolisation*" work between the 2007 and 2012 parliamentary elections and how did this vary by region, specifically in terms of individual vote share?

In addition to the FN, this paper will also look at the case of the Flemish Vlaams Belang (previously Vlaams Blok), a party that also downplayed its fascist and nationalistic platform, both to examine whether it was also able to increase voter share in parliamentary elections after a strategy of moderation, and to identify the regional effects on the choice to vote for a far right wing party in such an ethnolinguistically divided country. Furthermore, this thesis will also look at the

control case of the Swedish Democrats to see whether parties that do not attempt to take a more moderate course fare similarly to parties that do, like the Vlaams Belang and the Front National. Do parties that attempt to move closer to the electoral center fare better in terms of increasing vote share than parties that remain on the ideological periphery? And again, what effects do regions, if any, have, on an individual's choice to vote for a far right wing party?

In order to understand fully the recent rise of European far-right wing parties, one must understand that past historical events and individual trends have contributed to the creation, and the existence, of these extreme right wing parties.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THE NATIONAL FRONT

The FN's history goes back to feelings of anger and resentment over the French "loss" of colonial Algeria in 1961 and a desire to go back to the simpler times of the Vichy regime during the 1940s. During the 1960s and 1970s, the Front National was first seen as a party on the periphery, made up primarily of Algerian war veterans and veterans of the 1950s Poujadist populist movement. However, its voter base grew and expanded during the late 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s, particularly in 2002 (Perrineau 2014, 25). After a significant loss in the 2007 presidential election, Jean Marie Le Pen handed over power of the party to his daughter, Marine Le Pen in 2011. Marine brought a new presence to the party—she was 42 years old, divorced, and had three children. There were quick positive effects after she took control of the party—in 2011, the FN won 15.1% of seats in the local

municipal elections (Perrineau 2014, 29). In 2012, Marine Le Pen won 17.9% of the national electorate in the *premier tour* of the French presidential elections, as compared to her father's 10.7% in the 2007 national elections (Perrineau 2014, 37). This raises the question: was there a positive effect on electoral share in the 2012 parliamentary elections related to Marine Le Pen's efforts to moderate her party?

After this period of change and moderation, what type of voter is attracted to the extreme right? According to previous literature, working-class males tend to be overrepresented among the far right electorate. More often, at least according to surveys done in 2002, French National Front voters tend to be "men...and are more likely than average to be lower-educated" (Lubbers and Scheepers 2002, 137). Additionally, "less devout Christians, and people aged from 18 to 26 are more likely to vote for the *Front National*" (Lubbers and Scheepers 2002, 139). Now, shifting to a regional context, Lubbers and Scheepers discovered that "the number of ethnic immigrants" does have a direct effect on electoral results for the FN: the more "immigrants that live in a region, the stronger the support for Le Pen" (Lubbers and Scheepers 2002, 140). Although socio-political effects such as "anti-immigrant attitudes and political dissatisfaction" (Lubbers and Scheepers 2002, 137) do help a vote for the FN, "it is important to note that the effect of nonconformism [to traditional party politics] is also rather strong" (Lubbers and Scheepers 2002, 138). Throughout Western Europe, it is generally known that most of the extreme right's support comes from the rather young and the elderly, those with a low level of education, the unemployed, and men (Werts 2010, 3). Furthermore, the FN has seen the most electoral success in regions that have seen the highest immigrant flow and

the biggest increase in unemployment rate (Chassanay 2015). However, this suggests a two-fold question at both a national and regional level: What are the effects of the party's recent moderation efforts on electoral share, what are the individual predictors for far right parties, and what effect does region and context have on an individual's choice to vote for a far right wing party?

THE FLEMISH INTEREST/VLAAMS BELANG

The Flemish Vlaams Belang serves as a comparison to the National Front National, allowing a broader approach to the question of whether attempts to move closer to the political center by far right parties lead to higher vote shares, and how much regional effects matter for voter preferences for far right wing parties. The Vlaams Belang, previously known as the *Vlaams Blok*, "transformed in the late 1980s by emulating the anti-immigrant messages and populist tactics of more successful nationalist parties in neighboring countries [like the National Front]...it caught fire in electoral systems" (Downs 2012, 90). By the 1990s, the VB "siphoned votes away from the disaffected members of the Christian Democratic and Liberal electorates as well as from a widening pool of unattached protest voters" (Downs 2012, 92). Similar to the Front National in the Provence-Cote d'Azur region of France, the *Vlaams Blok* had become "the second largest party" (Coffe, Heyndels, & Vermeir 2007, 143) in its respective region, Flanders, by 2004. However, in 2004, after being convicted under constitutional law for racism and put under a quarantine by Belgian party leaders, the Vlaams Blok (as it was known then), resolved to reinvent and modernize itself as the Flemish Interest (The Vlaams Belang). The VB wrote a more

moderate party manifesto, altered some of its policies by toning down its language on deportation of immigrants, and encouraged its office holders take more moderate positions, both to keep the party alive and to attract more voters (Coffe, Heyndels, & Vermeir 2007, 143 and Downs 2012, 93). “At least on paper, the VB has cut ties with its unsavory past while maintaining its solidly right wing [policies], [the party] participates actively in government” (Downs 2012, 102). The VB, while still certainly on the conservative side of the political spectrum, has moderated some of its positions and policy stances.

However, after taking this more moderate position in 2004, the VB has gradually lost seats in the Flemish parliament, particularly in the 2010 and 2014 parliamentary elections (Beesley 2010 and Deloy 2014). At the same time, the VB has also tried to diversify its electorate, to gain more voters who differ from those who have traditionally made up the party: previously center-right, alienated voters who are very concerned about the influx of immigrants into Belgium (Billet & De Witte 1995, 194). The Vlaams Belang, no longer content with simply being “anti-system,” tried to soften its rhetoric but did not see a higher voter share, particularly in the 2014 elections (wallstreetjournal.com 2014). Why, as compared to the French National Front, did moderation not work in Belgium and how might regional differences affect voter response?

THE SWEDISH DEMOCRATS

The case of the Swedish Democrats, or *Sverigedemokraterna*, on the other hand, highlights what could happen when a far-right party chooses not to move

closer to the center, instead staying on the periphery. Sweden has an interesting history with radical right populist parties. Although RRP (radical right populist) parties have been successful in other Western European countries, Swedish RRP parties have been historically more or less unsuccessful, until the 1990s, when “the New Democracy won 6.7 percent of the vote in the 1991 general election” (Rydgren 2006, 30). For a very long time, Sweden had a one-party structure, with the Swedish Social Democrats holding the majority of parliamentary seats since 1911, becoming the most electorally successful party in modern Western European political history (Rydgren 2006, 37).

In opposition to traditional Swedish center-left dominance, the Swedish Democrats have broken through in recent parliamentary elections, beginning in the 2010 elections. Although the SD has been around since 1988, it finally reached its pinnacle of success, as stated previously, in 2010, when it gathered 5.7% of the votes, which resulted in 20 seats in the Swedish parliament. The upward trajectory of the SD posits an interesting case in comparison to the FN and Vlaams Belang. The SD has not changed its platform from a “national xenophobic party” (Oja & Mral 2013, 277), nor has it shied away from its racist and neo-Nazi historical heritage, with local party candidates that still proudly wear swastika armbands (Groll 2014). Unlike the Vlaams Belang or the Front National, the SD has not tried to remove itself from the political periphery, and is now “represented on all levels in the Swedish democratic system” and still “remains a controversial party” (Oja & Mral 2013, 290), whose primary goal is to “defend national identity” while “advocating a highly restrictive immigration policy that denies access to social services to effectively all

non-Europeans” (Rydgren 110). Interestingly, according to a poll released in August 2015, the Sweden Democrats now have the support of 25.2% of voters, polling ahead of both the Social Democrats (the largest party in Sweden) and the *Moderata samlingspartiet* (the center-right moderate party). Many attribute the Sweden Democrats’ rise to the “growing disquiet about the country’s generous asylum policies” (*telegraph.co.uk*, 2015). However, there has been little research in English done about regional contexts on an individual voter’s choice to vote for the Swedish Democrats.

ELECTORAL HISTORY: MODERATION

THEORY: MODERATION

Why do far right parties move closer to the political center, and if they do, do these parties experience electoral success and attract more moderate voters? Although Anthony Downs’s classic treatise *An Economic Theory of Democracy* does not directly address the question of far-right parties, his book posits the theory that “every government seeks to maximize support. We further assume that the government exists in a democratic society where periodic elections are held, that its primary goal is reelection, and that election is the goal of those parties now out of power” (Downs 1957, 11). Furthermore, according to this model, parties will create policies so that they can win elections, rather than try to win elections to create policies (Downs 1957, 28). In this model, politicians are motivated by power and prestige, and cannot obtain power and prestige without winning elections (Downs 1957, 30). In this view, party platforms are a means to winning elections. According

to Downs, parties within a political system will converge towards similar ideological positions and platforms if there is one single, more successful party (i.e. in order to capture the most votes) (Downs 1957, 101).

This dynamic can be clearly seen in the French case, where one can see the increased amount of support that the anti-immigrant FN was getting as compared to the more moderate (yet still right wing) *Union pour un mouvement populaire* during the 2012 election. In response, President Nicolas Sarkozy, at the time of the election, began to harden his policies towards immigrants, particularly Muslims, in hopes of gaining some extreme right wing votes (Goodliffe & Brizzi 2015). Consistent with Downs the UMP tried to mimic the FN's success by copying some of its anti-immigrant rhetoric. However, this strategy backfired as voters saw this as a ploy rather than actual policy changes.

Additionally, Downs's theory suggests that parties and/or candidates should not pick positions that "adhere too rigidly to any one philosophic outlook" (Downs 1957, 110). Rather, parties should make sure that their policies and positions are varied, so as both to attract more moderate voters as well as to keep more ideologically extreme voters. Parties should not submit "an unorganized jumble of policies" (Downs 1957, 110), but rather identify positions that, again, attract votes from both their traditional far-right supporters and ideologically moderate voters. In the case of extreme right-wing parties in Europe, immigration has emerged as an issue that attracts both the traditional far right base as well as more moderate voters, perhaps due to its economic and cultural implications (*theweek.com* 2015).

Providing another explanation for changes in party ideology and policy, Kenneth McElwain and Maiko Heller's theory of strategic manifesto differentiation posits that parties must strike a balance between moving to the center or the periphery in order to increase their attractiveness to potential voters. However, there is an asymmetry "in the capacity of government vs. opposition parties to persuade and mobilize voters" (McElwain & Heller 2014, 3). Government parties are therefore able to move closer to more centrist positions, whereas opposition parties (like the far right) should use "policy differentiation" to distinguish themselves to voters (McElwain & Heller 2014, 4). When drafting policies or manifestos:

Parties consider not only the density of voters in the policy space, but also the attractiveness of other parties in the vicinity. The vote gain from moving to a higher density policy position is not the entire electorate located in the space, but rather some fraction of it, conditional on the number of competitors attempting the same move or already located there (McElwain & Heller 2014, 8)

However, McElwain and Heller argue that government parties are better able to gain "swayable" voters than opposition parties, because they set the legislative agenda, receive more media coverage, and are generally given both credit and blame for economic management. The authors' argument is as follows: government parties are more likely to move toward the center of the ideological space, while opposition parties are more likely to move toward the periphery of the ideological space (McElwain and Heller 2014). As a result, "to poach away the incumbents' supporters, [opposition parties] must offer a clearly differentiated legislative

agenda” (McElwain and Heller 2014, 25). The authors’ theory helps explain why and how the National Front and Vlaams Belang were considered “opposition parties” before their strategy of moderation—they attempted to be seen as “anti-party” and had positions that were on the periphery like extreme militarization, rejection of birth control, and anti-Semitism. The Swedish Democrats also followed the pattern of policy differentiation (i.e. its very extreme anti-immigrant policies and neo-Nazi history), which allowed it to distinguish themselves from traditional parties, like the Swedish Social Democratic Party, and increased their electoral support. Nevertheless, increase in electoral support for far right parties also depends on the behavior of other parties, like the center right, and the underlying distribution of voters along the political spectrum.

McElwain and Heller’s theory of strategic manifesto differentiation explains how and when a party will moderate—i.e., whether a party will choose to change its policies in order to become a “legitimate” party, or whether it will choose to remain on the periphery, distinguishing itself through “policy differentiation”, as the Swedish Democrats did. Similar to Downs’ theory regarding ideological distribution (that parties will try to maintain positions that attract more moderate voters while also keeping their more ideologically extreme base), the theory of strategic manifesto differentiation posits that parties will try to attract more swayable voters while balancing policy that keeps their base happy. However, opposition parties will try to maintain their place as “anti-system” by keeping more extreme policies. The Vlaams Belang and the Front National modified some of their extreme political positions in order to win a greater electoral share, whereas the Swedish Democrats

decided to keep their anti-system status, hoping that their anti-immigrant policies (*not* adding more moderate policies) would increase their electoral share.

Political scientists Wouter van der Brug, Meindert Fennema, and Jean Tillie have researched both the successes and the failures of European right-wing populist, or as they characterize them, anti-immigrant parties. One of the most important characteristics that anti-immigrant parties have is that far-right wing voters will often cast a vote for these parties as an “attempt to scare the political establishment” (Van der Brug, Fennema, & Tillie 2005, 542). Additionally, their success really depends on how much parties are able to gain support based on certain positions—such as anti-immigration policies (Van der Brug, Fennema, & Tillie 2005, 543). The electoral potential of each party depends on the size of the group of voters that would vote for the party and the party’s positions—which begs the question of how volatile individual voters’ positions are (this subject will be explored in depth later on in this thesis). As van der Brug et al. explain, there are many different circumstances in which anti-immigrant parties will have large electoral potentials, depending on what motives people have for voting for a particular party. As van der Brug et al. hypothesize, “the electoral potential of an anti-immigrant party depends on the extent to which it is evaluated by its policies...the larger the proportion of radical right-wing citizens in an electorate, the higher the electoral potential of an anti-immigrant party in that country” (van der Brug, Fennema, & Tillie 2005, 546). In line with Downsian theory, anti-immigrant parties will have more success when their policies are more popular and reach both moderate and far right voters.

Additionally, van der Brug and colleagues' other hypothesis indicates that the extent to which anti-immigrant parties can mobilize their electorate decreases with the size of their center right-wing competitors, and that extent is further decreased when anti-immigrant parties' center right-wing competition incorporates issues of patriotism, immigration, and increased crime into their platform. Furthermore, if a right-wing competitor moves closer to the center of the political spectrum, an anti-immigrant party can increase its potential vote share by highlighting its key policy differences (van der Berg, Fennema, & Tillie 2005, 548). In line with this theory and Downsian theory that parties should identify policies that attract more moderate voters while keeping their traditional base, anti-immigrant parties (like the Vlaams Belang and the National Front) have a challenge to create modern radical right-wing organizations while not alienating their original radical and nationalist supporters (many who had supported the party's neo-Nazi and fascist origins). Overall, the presence of a strong center-right competitor has a strong influence on the success of extreme right parties, and these far right parties can use the weakness of center right parties to highlight their policies that attract both moderate and far right supporters.

HYPOTHESIS REGARDING MODERATION

Following Downs's theory that the goal of political parties is win elections, and that parties will change their policies to win said elections, I posit that the *Front National* and the *Vlaams Belang*, wanting to attract more moderate voters so as to win elections, changed their more radical policies and rhetoric, while the Swedish

Democrats, following McElwain and Heller's theory of strategic policy differentiation, decided to maintain their anti-system status and continue to differentiate themselves from more traditional political parties. In addition, following Downs's theory of ideological distribution, moderation will not increase a party's vote share unless it succeeds in attracting more moderate voters while also keeping its more ideologically extreme base (i.e. picking up new voters while keeping old supporters). Therefore my hypothesis is as follows: moderation leads to higher vote-share and greater electoral support (all else being equal).

In addition, van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie's theory posits that opportunity (the lack of a strong center-right competitor) has a strong influence on the success of far-right parties. In line with this theory, I hypothesize that the stronger the competition from the center right (in terms of size and strength of platform), the lower the vote share and the less ideologically diverse the support will be for far right parties.

BACKGROUND

When I decided to examine the phenomenon of far right wing party success, I knew that I needed to look at the histories and trends of these parties, because context matters. Historical patterns contribute to both cross national and regional trends and as well as individual vote choices. I decided to look at the political histories of these parties and to see whether the strength of center right party might affect the fortunes of the far right party, and whether I could find corroborating evidence for my hypothesis. For my analysis, I chose to look at the same three

countries used for my statistical tests: Belgium, France, and Sweden, and their respective electoral results both pre- and post- moderation (or in the case of Sweden, lack of moderation). These case histories allowed me more accurately to identify whether moderation (and the strength of center right parties) had an effect on electoral support. Furthermore, a full investigation of individual, party, and regional factors only tells part of the story—I wanted to note exactly what happens in the party systems of each country when moderation occurs and when there is a weak (or strong) center-right presence that could contribute to the success (or failure) of far-right wing parties.

In addition, I chose countries that were similar in terms of the presence of far right movements, but different enough to be able to fully explain the effects of moderation in countries with different historical backgrounds and cultures. Although the countries do have similar control variables, Belgium and Sweden did see increases in GDP between the two election years studied, while France saw a decrease (see Appendix I). However, all three countries saw an increase in unemployment and number of immigrants between their two parliamentary election years studied. Nevertheless, the fluctuation in GDP could have an impact on individual vote choice, as economic issues are often at the forefront of voters' minds during election cycles, which might lead to a vote for more conservative parties, such as those that belong to the far right.

France, with a presidential-parliamentary system, has a history of far right wing movements, beginning with the anti-Semitic Dreyfus affair in 1894, and continuing with the rise of the monarchist political party *Action française* and the

quasi-fascist Vichy regime's control of France during the Nazi occupation. Furthermore, the early 1950s Poujadist movement (which focused mainly on tax protests and economic grievances) had a huge influence on later National Front policy priorities, with some FN leaders hailing directly from the movement itself (Hainsworth 2012). By the time the National Front came into being in the late 1970s and early 1980s, France was ripe for an extreme right wing party that could consolidate the anger and frustration of the common man against traditional party politics—this party became the National Front. The FN, under the leadership of its founder and first president, Jean-Marie Le Pen, grew in strength and numbers throughout the 1980s and 1990s, gaining large electoral shares in municipal and legislative elections in 1995 and 1997—winning an absolute majority of votes in Toulon, Marignane, and Orange in the 1995 municipal elections and winning 15.3 percent of votes in the 1997 legislative elections (Shields 2007, 260-263). In the 2002 presidential election, Jean Marie Le Pen beat other candidates to make it through the first round of the elections, but, he was soundly defeated in the second round by the incumbent president, Jacques Chirac, as many voted for Chirac in the hopes of blocking Le Pen (Shields 2007, 289). Following this devastating loss, the National Front saw a decline in electoral support in regional and national elections, as well as a formidable competitor in the center-right coalition Union for a Popular Movement (UMP). As a result, the National Front began a campaign of consolidation and restructuring, selling its headquarters and firing several employees (Riché 2008 and Sulzer 2008). After retiring in 2010, Jean-Marie Le Pen left the party to his daughter, Marine, who decided to pursue a strategy of *de-demonisation*, by which

she “recruited a swathe of younger candidates for local elections” and formed a “strategy to appeal beyond the fringes to disillusioned voters on both the right and the left.” Marine Le Pen wanted her party to be called no longer an “extreme right wing party”, saying that the label applied to non-democratic movements. While Marine has kept the FN’s policies on immigration and national security, she has “argued for higher taxes on the rich and a stronger state as a bulwark against globalization” (*The Economist* 2013). Recently, Marine has even dismissed her father from the party apparatus, after he made anti-Semitic and pro-Vichy regime comments. She also ordered skinheads and militants to be turned away or excluded from party gatherings (McDonnell 2015). Marine has successfully changed the discourse surrounding the previously much maligned National Front—but has that change in discourse resulted in greater electoral shares—and did the weakening of the UMP under Nicolas Sarkozy in 2012 contribute to a greater return for the National Front?

Similar to the National Front, the Belgian Vlaams Belang pursued a policy of moderation, transforming from an “anti-immigrant and anti-state party” (Downs 2012, 91) into a more toned-down version of its previous iteration (Downs 2012, 93). The extreme right in Belgium follows somewhat different historical trends from those of the French far right, as most far right groups in Belgium are dedicated to preserving Flemish language, culture, and history, and arguing for greater freedom for the Belgian region of Flanders, while the FN exists in a semi-presidential political system.

The fight for Flemish independence began in the early 19th century, and continued through World War II, when Belgium was occupied by Germany and the Third Reich encouraged the proliferation of Dutch language and culture throughout the country. Following the war, there were many fragmented national groups, and by 1977, the Vlaams Blok, which later became the Vlaams Belang, consolidated those groups into a cohesive national political party (Dewulf 2012). As stated previously in this thesis, the Vlaams Blok became popular in the eyes of many voters who were disaffected from traditional parties like the Christian Democrats. However, the Belgian political establishment, the media, and the international community “roundly condemned the Vlaams Blok and deemed it a pariah [through its] intolerance and its refusal to separate itself completely from earlier ties between fascism and Flemish nationalism” (Downs 2012, 92). In 2004, the Vlaams Blok was deemed a racist party under a 1981 anti-racism law by the Court of Appeal in Ghent, and forced to disband (Erk 2005, 495). As a result, the party decided to reorganize and moderate, sensing a political opportunity, much as the National Front reorganized after Jean Marie Le Pen stepped down from party leadership. The party reinvented itself as the Flemish Interest (*Vlaams Belang*), and altered “some elements of its program (toning down language on deportation of immigrants) and statutes in hoping to appear more moderate” (Downs 2012, 93). The VB cut ties with its fascist past, but saw a drastic decrease in its electoral share from the 2003 to 2010 elections (see Appendix IV). Why did the VB fare so poorly after moderation as compared to the National Front, which pursued similar policies? Although there were other center-right parties in Belgium, there was none that promoted Flemish

nationalism until the rise of the New Flemish Alliance—NVA--- (founded in 2001), which combines both left wing and right wing policies—a sort of “welfare populism.” By 2010, the NVA had become the largest party in Belgium, and by 2014, controlled the Flemish parliament (Beyens et al. 2015). This phenomenon is consistent with my original hypothesis—that the stronger the center-right party is, the less electoral share the far-right wing party will receive.

The rise of the Swedish Democrats in the past ten years is a fascinating case, as compared to both France and Belgium. For a very long time, Sweden had a “solidly one-dimensional cleavage structure” and in “no other Western European country was there such a dominant party as the Swedish Social Democrats” (Rydgren 2006, 37). However, in the early 2000s, Social Democracy weakened and the right-wing parties were able to seize upon the issue of immigration as a way to mobilize their electorate. Although the Swedish Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*) had been around since 1988, their roots in Swedish fascism and Nazism (Groll 2014) prevented them from having much electoral power. Their primary goal was, and still remains, “a defense of national identity and a highly restrictive immigration policy” (Rydgren 2006, 109-110). In the early 2000s, the Swedish Democrats failed with their anti-establishment strategy—but by 2010, had “cleared the 4 percent hurdle needed to enter parliament” and by the 2014 parliamentary elections, had won “12.9 percent” of the vote (Larsson 2016).

Why did the Swedish Democrats do so well? First, after an economic crisis in the early 1990s, the Social Democrats (the dominant leftist party) had to accept “neoliberal dogmas of low inflation, budget surpluses, privatization, and supply-side

labor policy” whilst maintaining their liberal social views. On the other hand, in 2005, the Conservative party, the *Moderata samlingspartiet*, “took a big step to the left. Party strategists finally accepted that they could only rarely win elections with an agenda that overtly challenged welfare policies and workers’ rights” (Larsson 2016). After the 2006 election, which the *Moderata samlingspartiet* won, “the center-right government took steps to continue dismantling the military, enforced protections for gay marriage, and tended to support what is often described as the world’s most liberal views for migrant workforce immigration” (Larsson 2016). By the time the 2014 elections rolled around, the Social Democrats and the *Moderata samlingspartiet* had very similar policy positions on most issues. The Swedish Democrats could now truly represent themselves as the anti-establishment party, using immigration as their main talking point.

For Swedish Democrat voters, their party gives them the opportunity to focus on the issues that matter most to them—stopping immigration from Islamic countries, keeping elites in check, and *giving Sweden back to us*---the Swedish Democrats’ main slogan (Larsson 2016). However, one of the main things stopping the Swedish Democrats from gaining more electoral power is their “origins in the fascist and white supremacist movements...the party’s rhetoric dripped with unconcealed racism, anti-Semitism, and contempt for democracy” (Larsson 2016). Although in recent years party leaders have tried to follow a strategy similar to Marine Le Pen’s de-demonization of the National Front, the Swedish Democrats have not been as successful in moderating their party structure or their party discourse: “brazen expressions of homophobia, calls to eliminate Minister of

Migration Tobias Billstrom, and to grant asylum to Anders Breivik, the Norwegian fascist terrorist who murdered seventy-seven people in 2011,” have left a sour taste in many voters’ mouths (Larsson 2016). Interestingly, the Swedish Democrat leaders just recently (after the 2014 elections) severed ties with their youth organization, which retained many of the party’s original neo-Nazi elements. Perhaps the party will try to go even further in pursuing an active policy of moderation, but only time will tell.

ANALYSIS

Table 1 shows the electoral success of far right parties who have chosen to moderate, or in the case of the Swedish Democrats, have chosen not to moderate, in comparison with the relative strength of the center right party in each respective country.

Table 1. Moderation of Far Right Parties (FRP) in Belgium, Sweden, and France and Outcome Across Time

	Successfully Moderated	Did Not Moderate
Weak Center Right Party	France (Electoral Increase in FRP)	Sweden (Electoral Increase in FRP)
Strong Center Right Party	Belgium (Electoral Decrease in FRP)	

Figure 1. 2007 and 2012 French Parliamentary Vote Share, First Round¹

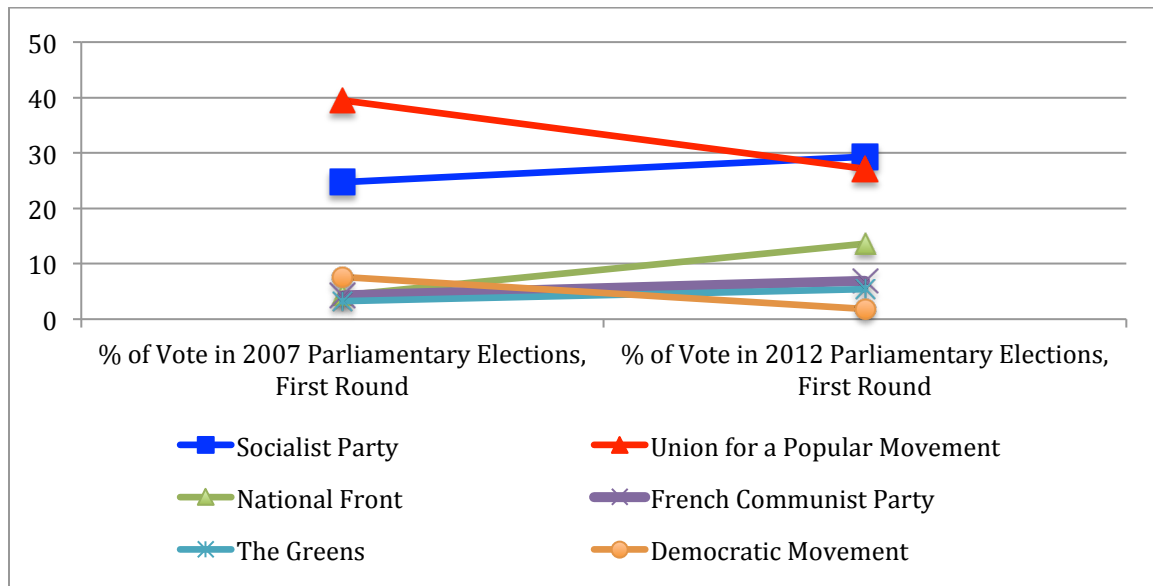
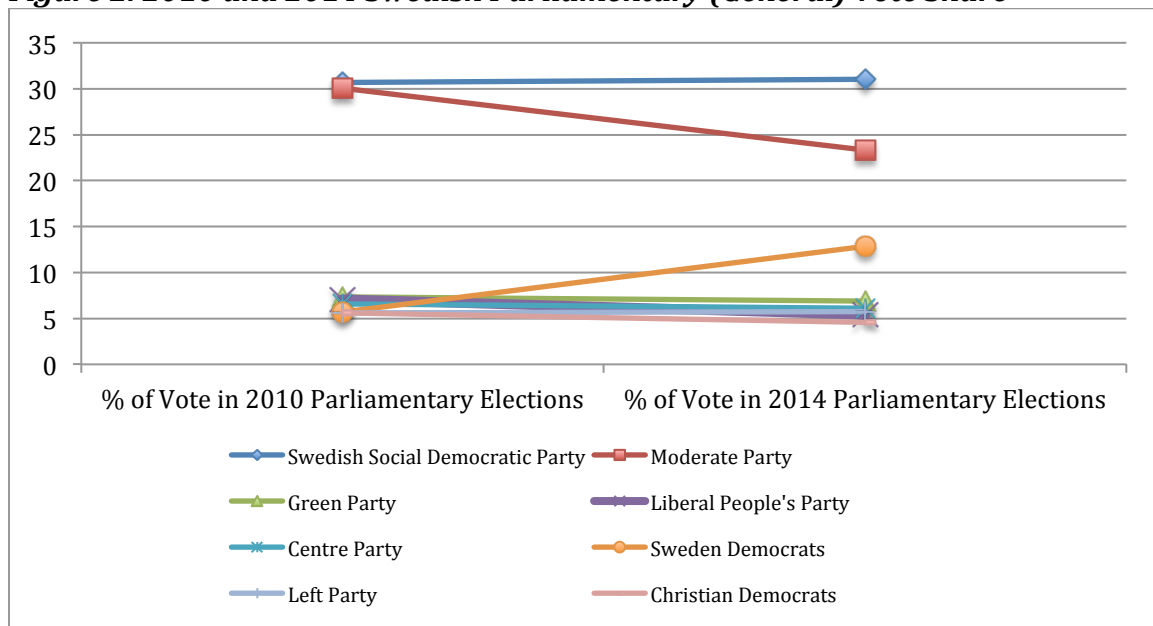


Figure 2. 2010 and 2014 Swedish Parliamentary (General) Vote Share²

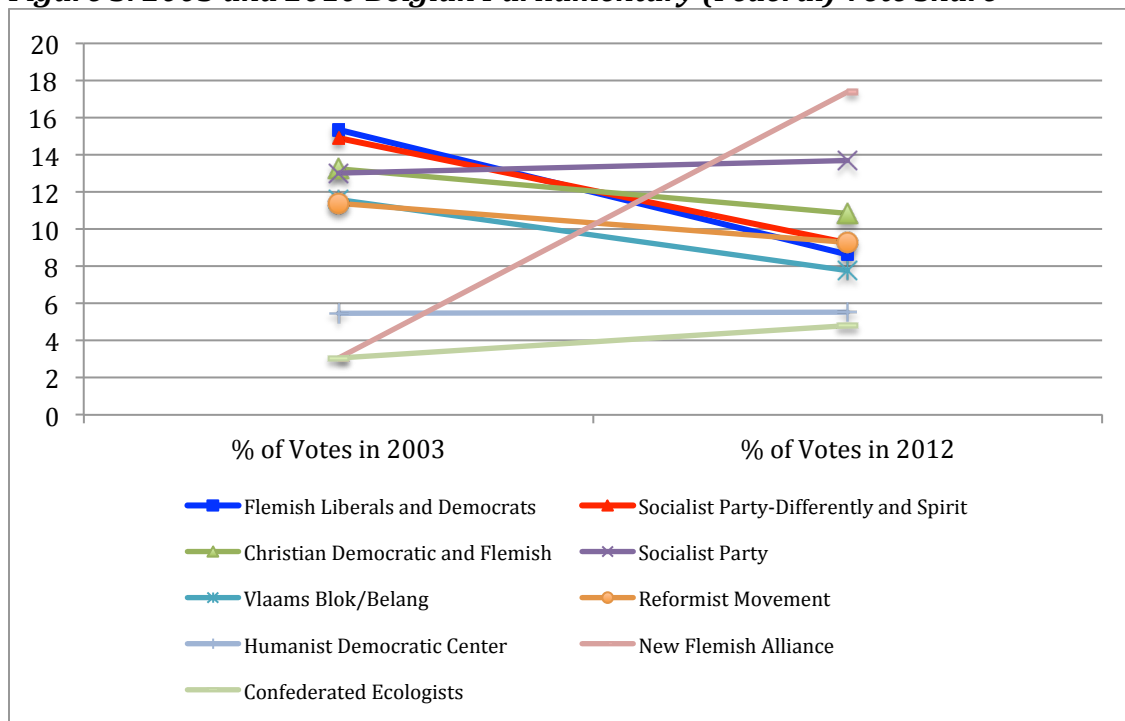


¹ For the sake of clarity of presentation, I am excluding parties whose vote share was less than 3%. Additionally, in 2012, the French Communist party renamed itself the Left Front, forming a coalition with the Left Party. In 2012, the Democratic Movement party won only two seats. Source of election results: electionresources.org

² For the sake of clarity of presentation, I am excluding parties whose vote share was less than 5 percent. Additionally, in 2014, the Christian Democrats received 4.57 percent of the vote. Source of election results: electionresources.org

Does moderation have an effect on vote share? Or are there other variables that could affect the electoral success of a far right wing party after moderation? According to the trends in vote share seen in Figures 1, 2, and 3, France and Sweden saw an electoral increase for their respective far-right wing parties in parliamentary elections after successful moderation (in France) and incomplete moderation (in the case of Sweden). However, in the case of the Vlaams Belang in Belgium, which pursued a policy of moderation, it did not see an electoral increase, but rather an electoral decrease. What contributed to the electoral success of France post-moderation and the prominent increase in electoral support in Sweden? Does the hypothesis about the strength of center right parties hold true for these cases?

Figure 3. 2003 and 2010 Belgian Parliamentary (Federal) Vote Share³



³ For the sake of clarity of presentation, I am excluding parties whose vote share was less than 5 percent. Source of election results: electionresources.org

While Marine Le Pen decided to pursue her strategy of moderation of the FN, a concurrent phenomenon took place in which the predominant center right party, the UMP, decreased in popularity, in part due to the failed leadership of the party's president Nicolas Sarkozy (Chrisafis 2012). In fact, part of the reason for the UMP's poor showing in both the presidential and the parliamentary elections of 2012 was the UMP's courtship of the far right: "[instead of focusing] on the Eurozone and intervention in Libya...[Sarkozy and his party] chose to pour his energies into veering hard-right in a crusade against immigration and halal meat" (Chrisafis, 2012). This strategy in fact did not lead to a capturing of far right voters, but rather "served to strengthen Marine Le Pen" (Chrisafis, 2012). A similar situation happened in Sweden, except there the center-right party, the *Moderata samlingspartiet*, chose to merge more closely with the Social Democrats (the traditionally leftist party)—meaning that there was no longer a traditional right-left cleavage between major parties (Larsson 2016). Therefore, the far right wing party, the Swedish Democrats, had the chance to occupy the political space left open by the *Moderata samlingspartiet*—similar to how the UMP's inept handling of increased immigration contributed to an increase in popularity and electoral vote share of the National Front.

What then contributed to the Vlaams Belang's electoral loss in the 2010 Belgian federal elections? In line with the theory that the strength of center right parties has an effect on the success of far right wing parties, the growth in popularity and increasing strength of the New Flemish Alliance (N-VA), a center-right nationalist party, contributed to the VB's decrease. The first appearance of the

N-VA occurred in 2003, when the party appeared on the ballot in the Flemish region and in Brussels. In the 2007 federal election, the N-VA entered into a coalition with the Christian Democrats (CD&V), and witnessed an electoral success, with the CD&V and the N-VA capturing 29 percent of Flemish votes (Beyens et al 2015, 5). After ending its coalition with the Christian Democrats in 2008, the N-VA went on to win 17 percent of votes in the 2010 federal elections (Figure 4), making it the largest party in the Belgian parliament (Beyens et. al 2015, 4). Although the N-VA and the VB have similar positions favoring Flemish autonomy, the VB's voters favor the party's "discourse on immigration and law and order" (Beyens et al. 2015, 7). The N-VA is better able to capture a wider swath of voters whilst maintaining a base of pro-Flemish, nationalist supporters who, before 2003, would side with the VB's policy positions regarding Flemish independence.

Although these electoral histories suggest a key variable that can explain vote share increase for far right parties, there are also other variables that could affect the increase in vote share for the National Front post-moderation, and for the increase in vote share for the Swedish Democrats. Did the National Front's actual restructuring of its organization (eliminating neo-Nazi members, removing Jean-Marie Le Pen from power) have more of an effect on the party's success as compared to changing policy positions, as the VB did (Downs 2012, 102)? Furthermore, did the SD and FN witness greater electoral share simply because of the weakness of the center right party? Did moderation have little to no affect on the FN's success in the 2012 parliamentary elections? Therefore, my analysis indicates a relationship between the weakness of the center right party (the independent

variable) and electoral success of far right wing parties (the dependent variable), while highlighting the fact that moderation may not actually lead to greater vote share, in part due to many confounding variables.

Now, I will explore the relationship between individual level voter characteristics for far right parties across these three different countries, as well as the regional contexts that can lead to increased vote share for far right parties.

THE FAR RIGHT VOTE

THEORY: INDIVIDUAL LEVEL VOTER CHARACTERISTICS

What attracts voters to far right parties? Researchers have generally found that four variables: foreign immigration, economic distress (correlated directly with increased unemployment), institutional factors like proportionality of electoral systems, and social welfare state policies have affected the electoral success of far right wing parties (Jesuit and Mahler 2004, 3). However, at the individual level, what are traits that typically attract voters to far right wing parties and policies? Although many hypothesize that higher rates of immigration will correlate with an increased vote share for extreme right wing parties, researchers have shown that (especially in regional level analysis) there is an “absence of a clear cut relation between the number of immigrants and the electoral success of ERPs in certain territorial units” (Jesuit and Mahler 2004, 4). Furthermore, some scholars “have hypothesized that high levels of immigration in a country or region might actually dampen support for extreme right wing parties” (Jesuit and Mahler 2004, 3), as those in close contact with immigrants may view them as neighbors or friends rather than economic

competitors. In addition, traditional theories of economic interest indicate that “in countries where competition for scarce resources intensifies due to worsening economic conditions or an increasing number of immigrants, social groups are more likely to perceive stronger competition over these scarce resources” (Lubbers et al. 2002, 349). Therefore, it could hold true that it is not in fact increased immigration rates that contribute to higher electoral share for far right wing parties, but rather it is negative attitudes and perceptions towards immigration that correlate with a vote for extreme right wing parties. This theory is consistent with the idea of the “contact hypothesis”—that those who live in close contact with immigrants are less threatened by them than those who do not know anyone of an immigrant background. Additionally, unemployment, both at an individual level and at a regional level, has correlated with a vote for far-right parties (Jackman and Volpert 1996, 516). However, the question remains: what are individual level characteristics that correlate with a vote for extreme right wing parties?

According to political scientists Marcel Lubbers, Merove Gijsberts, and Peer Scheepers, the reason “why certain social categories are more likely to vote for extreme right-wing parties is mostly explained by four clusters of attitudinal positions” (Lubbers et al. 2002, 348). These attitudinal positions are as follows: anti-immigrant attitudes, political dissatisfaction, favorable in-group attitudes, and authoritarian attitudes. Therefore, those who see immigrants as a threat and are angry at the political establishment are more likely to cast a vote for extreme right wing parties. However, one can also see differences between countries in the importance of individual level background characteristics and sociopolitical

attitudes. Typically, those in lower social classes “are more likely to vote for extreme right-wing parties in countries where levels of inter-ethnic competition are higher” (Lubbers et al. 2002, 352). Therefore, researchers have argued in previous studies that “manual workers, the self-employed, routine non-manual workers, and the unemployed are more likely to vote for extreme right-wing parties” (Lubbers et al. 2002, 364). Additionally, in cross-national studies men, youth voters, and less well-educated people tend to vote for the extreme right-wing parties. Furthermore, although higher levels of non-European Union citizens do affect the electoral shares of extreme right-wing parties cross-nationally, “people who perceive immigrants as competitors are more likely to express exclusionary reactions including voting for the extreme right” (Lubbers et al. 2002, 371). Therefore, one can hypothesize that although national levels of immigration do correlate with a higher vote share for far right parties, in line with traditional theories regarding economic interests, regions where people simply have unfavorable opinions of immigrants have just as much an effect on individual voter choice for far right wing parties as do regions with high immigration rates. In sum, the unemployed, men, the working-class, younger voters, those with unfavorable attitudes toward immigrants and the government in general, and the less well educated tend to vote for extreme right wing parties.

HYPOTHESES

In order to address the basic question: what factors contribute to the electoral success of far-right wing parties, this thesis will look at two different issues of interest: aggregate national trends (the best predictors of individual vote choice

for far right parties in France, Belgium, and Sweden), and then subnational regional differences that could affect an individual's likelihood to vote for far-right parties.

INDIVIDUAL PREDICTORS AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

According to previous research (as mentioned in my literature review and discussion of theories), the unemployed, men, the working-class, younger voters, the less well educated, and those with unfavorable attitudes of immigrants and the government in general, tend to vote for extreme right wing parties. Therefore, I hypothesize that individuals who have been unemployed, in particular men, are more likely to vote for far-right wing parties. Additionally, I hypothesize that men will be predicted to vote for far right parties more than women. Furthermore, individuals living in regions with higher levels of unemployment and higher rates of immigration will be more likely to vote for far right parties, controlling for other significant variables (like gender, sex, religious belief, etc).

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Moving to an analysis of voting behavior both at an individual level, and then looking at regional contexts, I decided to look at the 2003 and 2010 Belgian parliamentary elections, the 2007 and 2012 French parliamentary elections, and the 2010 and 2014 Swedish parliamentary elections, choosing to specifically focus on the regional effects on a vote for far right parties. I used the European Social Survey for both my individual and contextual analysis, with additional statistics from the World Bank and other sources for my regional contextual analysis. The European

Social Survey has monitored social change in Europe since 2002. Every two years, face-to-face interviews are conducted with newly selected, cross-sectional samples. The ESS sampling strategy is as follows: “all samples must be representative of all people aged 15 and over, individuals are selected by strict random probability methods, quota sampling is not permitted at any stage, and all countries must aim for a *minimum* (the sampling size is usually much higher) effective achieved sample size of 1,500 or 800 in countries with populations of less than 2 million” (European Social Survey). My regional subsample data (coming from the ESS) is small; however, despite the limitations of the data, there are enough observations in these subnational macro regions to warrant drawing at least tentative inferences about regional contextual analysis. In addition, I have shown the sample size for each region in Tables 2-7.

Table 2. Number of Individual Voters in French Regions, 2007 Parliamentary Elections (First Round)⁴

Region	Freq.	Percent
Region Parisienne	316	15.24
Bassin Parisien Est	151	7.28
Bassin Parisien Ouest	198	9.55
Nord	145	6.99
Est	208	10.03
Ouest	288	13.89
Sud Ouest	238	11.48
Sud Est	293	14.13
Mediterranee	236	11.39
Total	2073	100

⁴ See Tables 20, 22, and 25 for information about regions' geographical combinations.

Table 3. Number of Individual Voters in French Regions, 2012 Parliamentary Elections (First Round)

Region	Freq.	Percent
Region Parisienne	171	14.1
Bassin Parisien	222	18.3
Nord	77	6.35
Est	139	11.46
Ouest	166	13.69
Sud Ouest	144	11.87
Sud Est	169	13.93
Mediterranee	125	10.31
Total	1213	100

Table 4. Number of Individual Voters in Belgian Regions, 2004 Parliamentary Elections

Region	Freq.	Percent
Flemish Region	776	61.78
Brussels Region	74	5.89
Walloon Region	406	32.32
Total	1,256	100

Table 5. Number of Individual Voters in Belgian Regions, 2010 Parliamentary Elections

Region	Freq.	Percent
Brussels	112	6.57
Flemish Region	1079	63.29
Walloon Region	513	30.11
Total	1704	100

Table 6. Number of Individual Voters in Swedish Regions, 2010 Parliamentary Elections

Region	Freq.	Percent
East Sweden	251	16.77
East Middle Sweden	282	18.84
South Sweden	358	23.91
West Sweden	323	21.58
North Sweden	283	18.9
Total	1497	100

Table 7. Number of Individual Voters in Swedish Regions, 2014 Parliamentary Elections

Region	Freq.	Percent
East Sweden	424	23.67
East Middle Sweden	256	14.29
South Sweden	415	23.17
West Sweden	342	19.10
North Sweden	354	19.77
Total	1791	100

My first statistical test explored individual predictors for voting for the far right in all three countries in different election years. I used the ‘margins’ command in STATA to explore the predicted probability of voting for the far right party, using unemployment status, gender, and the interaction of the two as variables and holding constant several control variables at their means (such as age, income level, religious status, and education level). As seen in Tables 8-13 the means of these variables remained similar from country to country, with the exception of the mean of the age of respondents in the 2007 French ESS survey, which was slightly higher than the average respondent’s age (48) at 53.8 years of age. Furthermore, the mean number of children in both the 2010 and 2014 Swedish European Social Survey was slightly less than the Belgian and French means. However, Sweden has a lower birth rate per capita than both France and Belgium (World Bank). Additionally, French respondents to both the 2007 and 2012 European Social Survey had fewer years of education than Belgian and Swedish respondents. However, France does have “less graduates at the doctorate level” than other OECD countries, which could contribute to the lower mean (Education at a Glance 2012: OECD).

Table 8. Means for ESS French Respondents in 2007⁵

Variable	Mean
Gender	45.39% Male, 54.61% Female
Marital Status	4.79
Income Level	5.17
Age	53.8
Unemployment Status	4.70
Religion	1.55
Education (Years)	8.98
Have Children (Yes/No)	3.06
Opinion about Immigration	4.68

⁵ Gender Variable is put as percent of respondents that are male, and then percent of respondents that are women.

Table 9. Means for ESS French Respondents in 2012

Variable	Mean
Gender	46.26% Male, 53.75% Female
Marital Status	4.49
Income Level	12.94
Age	48.43
Unemployment Status	4.47
Religion	1.53
Education (Years)	9.8
Have Children (Yes/No)	3.06
Opinion about Immigration	4.85

Table 10. Means for ESS Belgian Respondents in 2004 (Responding to the 2003 Parliamentary Elections)

Variable	Mean
Gender	48.17% Male, 51.83% Female
Marital Status	3.32
Income Level	12.74
Age	48.88
Unemployment Status	4.93
Religion	1.55
Education (Years)	13.08
Have Children (Yes/No)	3.39
Opinion about Immigration	4.90

Table 11. Means for ESS Belgian Respondents in 2010

Variable	Mean
Gender	48.12% Male, 51.88% Female
Marital Status	4.66
Income Level	6.01
Age	48.5
Unemployment Status	4.70
Religion	1.56
Education (Years)	14.27
Have Children (Yes/No)	3.30
Opinion about Immigration	4.56

Table 12. Means for ESS Swedish Respondents in 2010

Variable	Mean
Gender	47.96% Male, 52.04% Female
Marital Status	4.57
Income Level	6.15
Age	49.36
Unemployment Status	4.86
Religion	1.49
Education (Years)	12.85
Have Children (Yes/No)	2.89
Opinion about Immigration	5.97

Table 13. Means for ESS Swedish Respondents in 2014

Variable	Mean
Gender	49.86% Male, 50.14% Female
Marital Status	3.63
Income Level	6.34
Age	50.23
Unemployment Status	4.92
Religion	1.71
Education (Years)	13.34
Have Children (Yes/No)	2.88
Opinion about Immigration	5.78

Furthermore, for the regional contextual analysis aspect of my thesis, I employed a logistic regression model for each election year, and then used the margins command in STATA to help understand and interpret multiple interactions in my regression. I then held several important variables constant that could affect an individual living in a specific region's decision to vote for a far right party. Although I was looking at individual level responses and characteristics to national survey data, I also decided to look at regional contextual characteristics to determine whether a region's higher concentration of unemployment and immigration would have a correlation with an individual living in the region's vote for far right-wing parties.

DATA ANALYSIS

I. National Aggregates

H1: In line with traditional theory regarding individual voter characteristics for far-right parties, I hypothesize that individuals who have been unemployed, in particular men, are more likely to vote for far-right wing parties.

Wanting to test traditional theories regarding individual predictors for far right party vote, I decided to look at national aggregate data from the European Social Survey. I wanted to see how multiple interactions of variables affect the likelihood of an individual voting for a far right party. I chose to specifically look at the relationship between gender and an individual's experience of unemployment in parliamentary elections in Belgium, France, and Sweden. I ran ANOVA tests to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between certain variables, holding constant several variables' means (see Figures 11-16). I then used the [margins] command in STATA to determine the predicted probability of voting for a far right party, holding several variables constant. I found the following results:

Table 14. Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the National Front in the 2007 French Parliamentary Elections

Variable	Predicted probability	Std. Error	P-value
Male	.026***	.007	0.000
Female	.007	.006	0.226
Ever Unemployed	.021*	.013	0.089
Never Unemployed	.022**	.009	0.024
Male, Ever Unemployed	.043**	.021	0.037
Male, Never Unemployed	.006	.015	0.647
Female, Ever Unemployed	.001	.016	0.907
Female, Never Unemployed	.037***	.014	0.009

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

b. Control variables held constant at their means: Age, Number of Children, Education Level, Income Level, Religion, Opinion towards Immigration. However, there is not a regional control.

Figure 4. Adjusted Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, Gender, and Unemployment Status in the 2007 French Parliamentary Elections

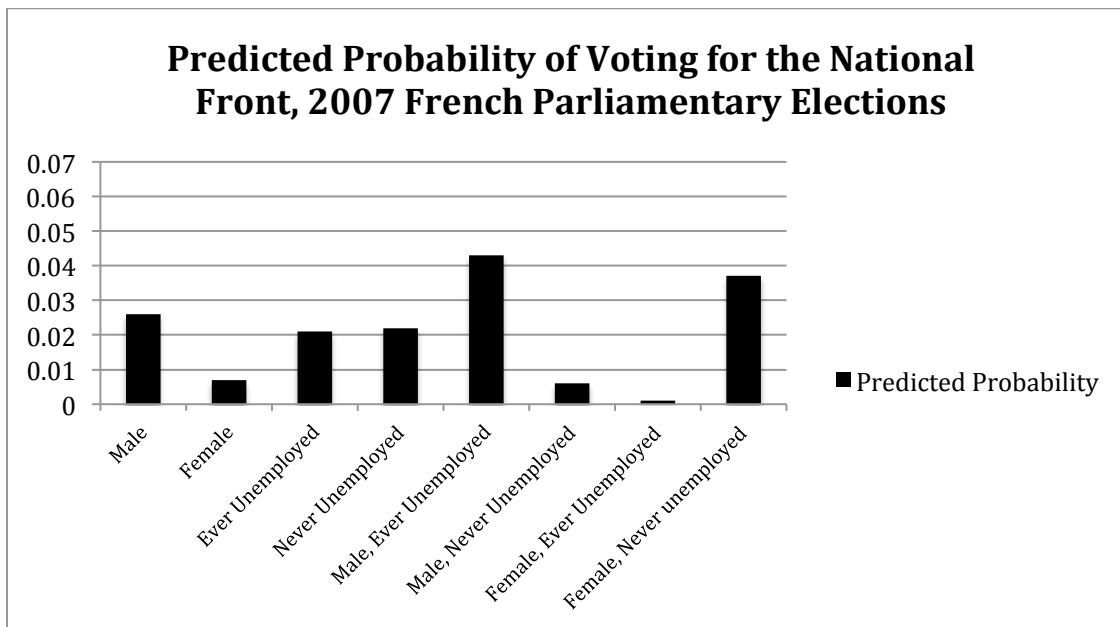


Table 14 indicates a lack of a statistically significant relationship ($P, MU=0.089$) between unemployment (whether an individual has or has not been unemployed at some point in their adult life) and a vote for the far right party (regardless of gender), which in this case, is the National Front. In addition, this analysis does not demonstrate support for my hypothesis that those who have been unemployed are more likely to vote for far right parties, as there is a higher (albeit very small difference) between the predicted probability of someone who has never been unemployed and the predicted probability of someone who has been employed. Nevertheless, men who have been unemployed have a higher predicted probability than women to vote for the far right party. My results indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between women who have never been unemployed and a vote for the National Front, which is a very interesting result—

this could be due to the fact that women who have never been unemployed have spouses or children who have been unemployed. Unfortunately, this question was not asked in the European Social Survey. Perhaps future research could focus on the effect of familial unemployment and vote for far right parties. Nevertheless, men do have a higher predicted probability of voting (.026) for far right parties than women (.007), which supports my hypothesis that men are more likely to vote for far right wing parties than women. Next, I will focus on individual predictors for far right party vote in the 2012 French parliamentary elections.

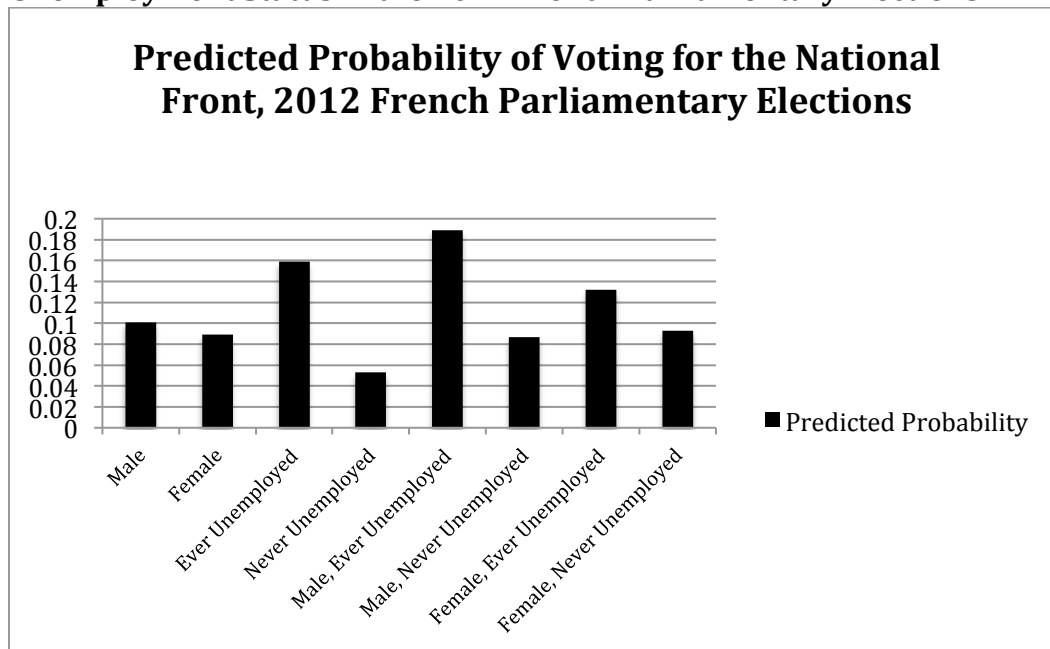
Table 15. Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the National Front in the 2012 French Parliamentary Elections

Variable	Predicted probability	Std. Error	P-value
Male	.101***	.021	0.000
Female	.089***	.020	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.159**	.034	0.000
Never Unemployed	.053	.035	0.136
Male, Ever Unemployed	.189***	.052	0.00
Male, Never Unemployed	.087	.055	0.113
Female, Ever Unemployed	.132***	.047	0.006
Female, Never Unemployed	.093	.048	0.658

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

b. Control variables held constant at their means: Age, Number of Children, Education Level, Income Level, Religion, Opinion towards Immigration. However, there is not a regional control.

Figure 5. Adjusted Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, Gender, and Unemployment Status in the 2012 French Parliamentary Elections



According to Table 15, there is a statistically significant relationship between unemployment and a vote for the far right party (regardless of gender), which in this case, is the National Front. This analysis does indicate support for my hypothesis that individuals who have been unemployed at some point in their lives are more likely to vote for far right parties. Furthermore, men who have been unemployed at some point in their lives have a smaller p-value ($P, MU=0.00$) than women who have been unemployed ($P, WU=0.006$) at some point in their lives. Additionally, this predictive model indicates both men and women who have, at some point in their working lives, been unemployed, are more likely to vote for the far-right party, which in this case of the 2012 French parliamentary elections, is the National Front. Generally, men have a higher predicted probability than women of voting for the far right party. Men who have been unemployed have a higher

predicted probability of voting for a far-right party than women who have been unemployed. This test shows support for my hypothesis that those who have been unemployed, and in particular men, are more likely to vote for far-right wing parties.

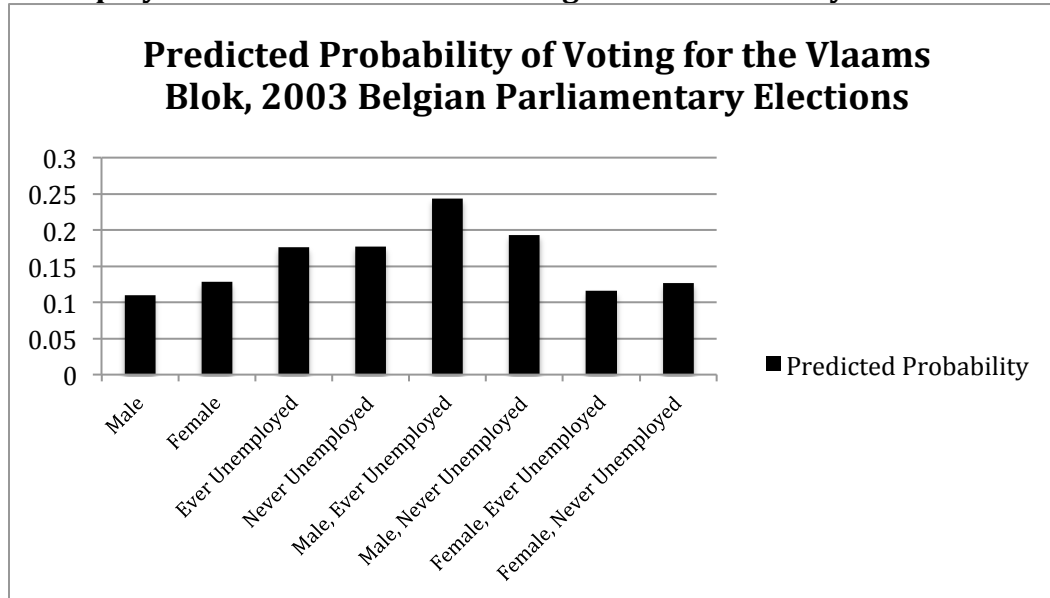
Table 16. Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the Vlaams Blok in the 2003 Belgian Parliamentary Elections

Variable	<i>Predicted probability</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Male	.011***	.019	0.000
Female	.128***	.018	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.176***	.038	0.000
Never Unemployed	.177***	.034	0.000
Male, Ever Unemployed	.243**	.064	0.000
Male, Never Unemployed	.193***	.051	0.000
Female, Ever Unemployed	.116***	.044	0.008
Female, Never Unemployed	.127***	.048	0.002

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

b. Control variables held constant at their means: Age, Number of Children, Education Level, Income Level, Religion, Opinion towards Immigration. However, there is not a regional control.

Figure 6. Adjusted Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, Gender, and Unemployment Status in the 2003 Belgian Parliamentary Elections



According to Table 16, there is no effect for gender or unemployment, or the interaction between gender and unemployment as there is little difference between the predicted probabilities. My analysis does not indicate support for my hypothesis as both those who have been unemployed and those who have been employed have similar levels of predicted probability, and the same p-value ($P=0.000$). Similar to my analysis of the 2007 French parliamentary elections, women who have never been unemployed have a higher predicted probability than women who have been unemployed (.127 versus .116). As explained previously, perhaps familial unemployment or a close relationship with someone who has been unemployed could explain this intriguing result.

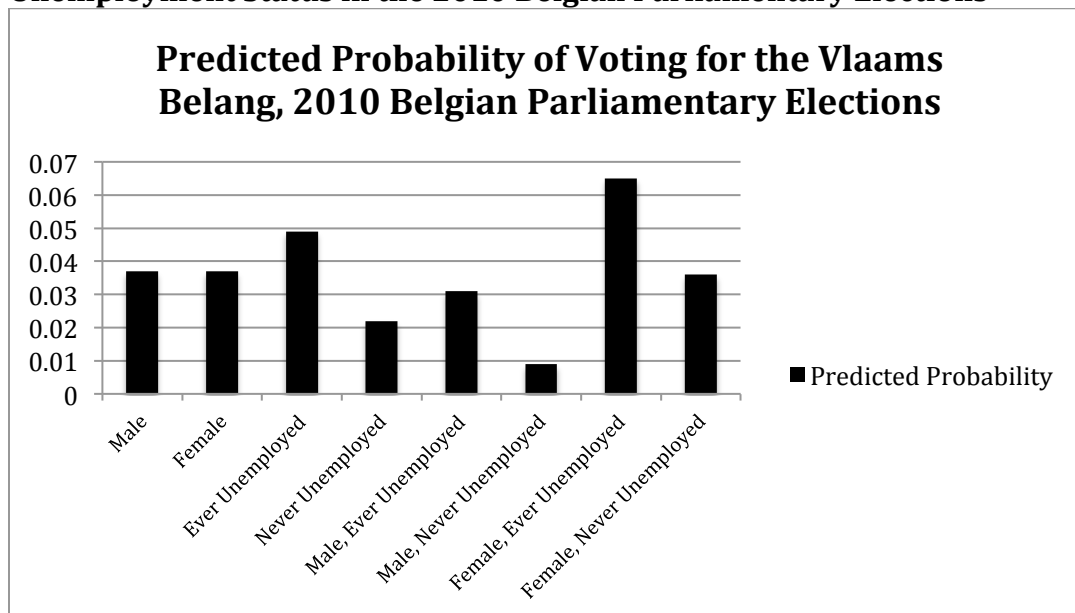
Table 17. Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the Vlaams Belang in the 2010 Belgian Parliamentary Elections

Variable	Predicted probability	Std. Error	P-value
Male	.037***	.009	0.000
Female	.037***	.008	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.049***	.017	0.003
Never Unemployed	.022	.016	0.197
Male, Ever Unemployed	.031***	.027	0.248
Male, Never Unemployed	.009	.026	0.741
Female, Ever Unemployed	.065***	.020	0.001
Female, Never Unemployed	.036	.022	0.135

a. *p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

b. Control variables held constant at their means: Age, Number of Children, Education Level, Income Level, Religion, Opinion towards Immigration. However, there is not a regional control.

Figure 7. Adjusted Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, Gender, and Unemployment Status in the 2010 Belgian Parliamentary Elections



According to Table 17, there is a statistically significant relationship between unemployment and a vote for the Vlaams Belang ($P, U=0.003$). We can now see the effects of unemployment on an individual's choice to vote for far right wing parties. This analysis does indicate support for my hypothesis that individuals who have been unemployed at some point in their life are more likely to vote for far right parties. Furthermore, men who have been unemployed have a higher predicted probability of voting for the far right party than men who have never been unemployed. This same trend is seen with women who have been unemployed. My results are inconclusive when it comes to gender preference for far right parties, as men and women have the same p-values and predicted probability of voting for the far right party, the Vlaams Belang. This analysis of the 2010 Belgian parliamentary elections shows support for my hypothesis that those who have been unemployed, regardless of gender, are more likely to vote for far-right wing parties.

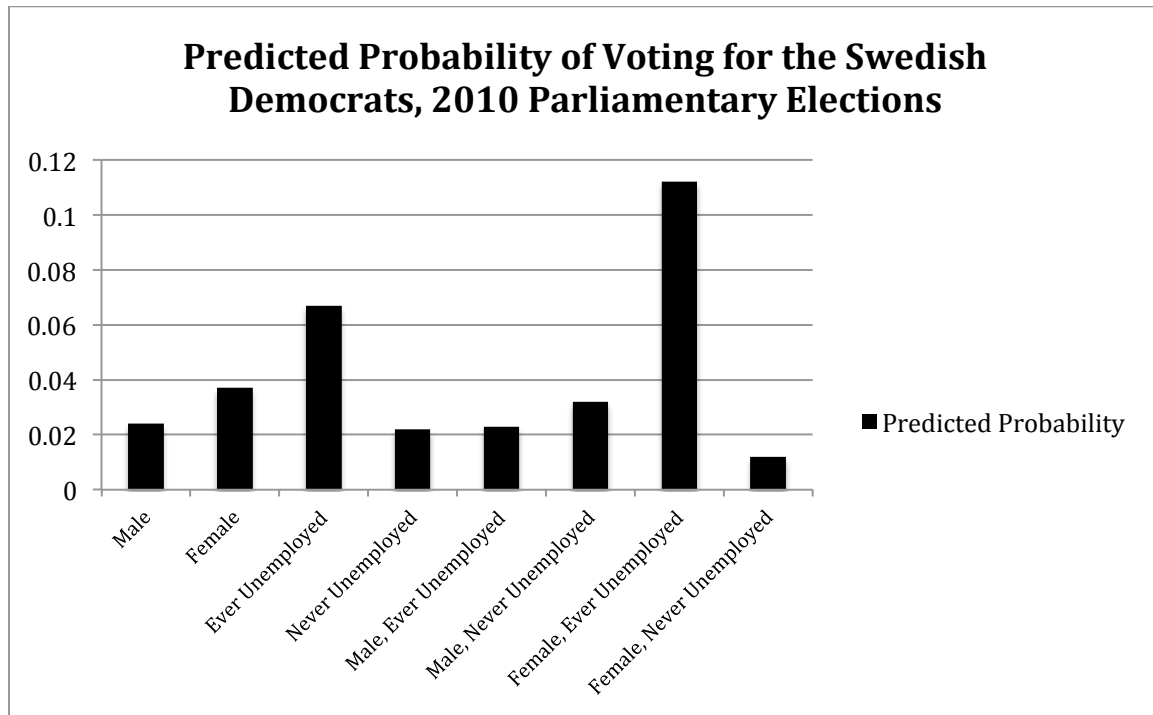
Table 18. Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the Swedish Democrats in the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

Variable	Predicted probability	Std. Error	P-value
Male	.024***	.008	0.003
Female	.037***	.008	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.067***	.019	0.000
Never Unemployed	.022*	.013	0.082
Male, Ever Unemployed	.023	.025	0.367
Male, Never Unemployed	.032	.009	0.102
Female, Ever Unemployed	.112***	.028	0.000
Female, Never Unemployed	.012	.016	0.631

a. *p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

b. Control variables held constant at their means: Age, Number of Children, Education Level, Income Level, Religion, Opinion towards Immigration. However, there is not a regional control.

Figure 8. Adjusted Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, Gender, and Unemployment Status in the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary Elections



According to Table 18, there is a statistically significant relationship between unemployment and a vote for the Swedish Democrats ($P,U=0.000$). This analysis does indicate support for my hypothesis that individuals who have been unemployed at some point in their life are more likely to vote for far right parties. However, my results do not indicate support for my hypothesis that men will have a higher predicted probability than women for voting for a far right party, as women have a higher predicted probability (.037) of voting for the Swedish Democrats than men do. Additionally, there is a statistically significant relationship between women who have been unemployed and vote for far right parties ($P,FU=0.000$), while there is not a statistically significant relationship between men who have been unemployed and their vote for far right parties.

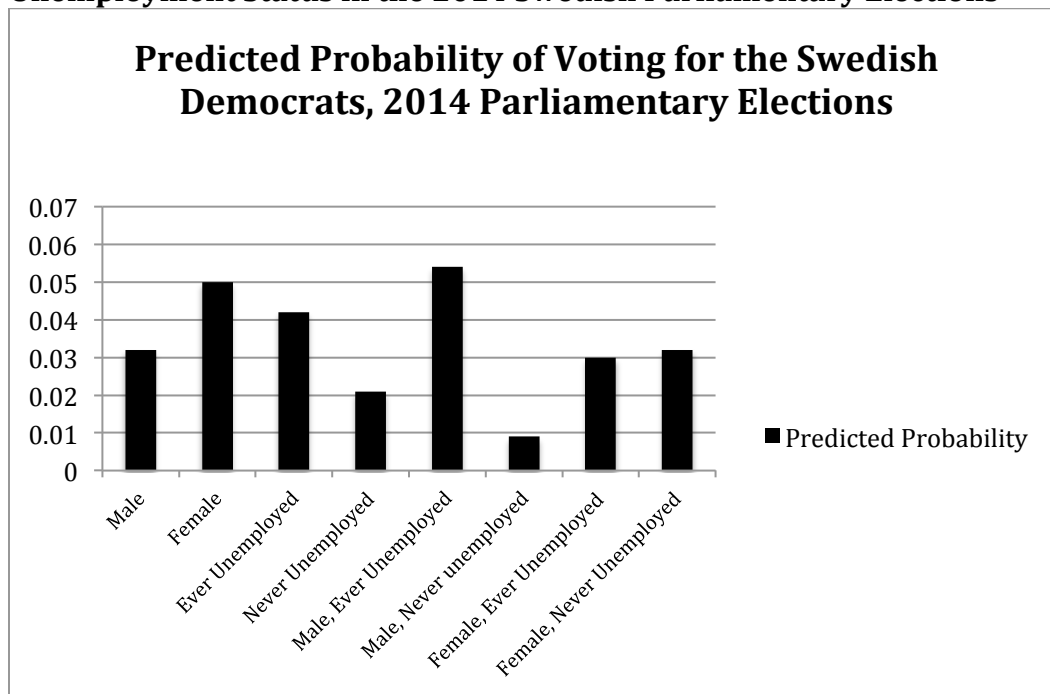
Table 19. Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the Swedish Democrats in the 2014 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

Variable	Predicted probability	Std. Error	P-value
Male	.032***	.008	0.000
Female	.050***	.008	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.042**	.042	0.035
Never Unemployed	.021	.021	0.116
Male, Ever Unemployed	.054**	.025	0.037
Male, Never Unemployed	.009	.020	0.629
Female, Ever Unemployed	.030	.029	0.304
Female, Never Unemployed	.032*	.018	0.078

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

b. Control variables held constant at their means: Age, Number of Children, Education Level, Income Level, Religion, Opinion towards Immigration. However, there is not regional control.

Figure 9. Adjusted Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, Gender, and Unemployment Status in the 2014 Swedish Parliamentary Elections



According to Table 19, there is a statistically significant relationship between unemployment and a vote for the far right party (regardless of gender), which in this case, is the Swedish Democrats ($P, U=0.035$). This analysis does indicate support for my hypothesis that individuals who have been unemployed at some point in their life are more likely to vote for far right parties. Furthermore, men who have been unemployed at some point in their lives have a higher predicted probability than women who have been unemployed at some point in their lives. Nevertheless, I do not have conclusive results that show support for my hypothesis that men are more likely to vote for far right parties than women, as women have a higher predicted probability of voting for the Swedish Democrats. Additionally, this predictive model follows fascinating trends seen in the 2003 Belgian parliamentary elections and 2007 French parliamentary elections, as women who have never been unemployed have a slightly higher predicted probability of voting for the far right party than women who have been unemployed.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

My analysis of individual results for Belgium, France, and Sweden indicates that there is a relationship between unemployment (regardless of gender), and vote for far right parties, as four tests (excluding the 2007 French parliamentary elections and 2003 Belgian parliamentary elections) showed a higher predictive probability of voting for far right-wing parties when an individual has been unemployed at some point in their life. However, results proved inconclusive when it came to gender and vote for far right wing parties, as there were many similar

results (including the same predicted probabilities) between men and women and their respective votes for far right wing parties.

II. REGIONAL CONTEXT

H2: Individuals living in regions with higher levels of unemployment and higher immigrant populations will be more likely to vote for far right parties, controlling for other significant variables.

In every country and region in this study, the dependent variable is a dichotomous dummy variable (voted for a far right party or did not vote for a far right party). I tested this hypothesis by analyzing two parliamentary elections per country. I performed a logistic regression analysis, then used the 'margins' command in STATA to identify the predicted probability of an individual voting for a far right party in a specific region, fixing all control variables to their mean values to compare regional differences (see figures 11-16, for mean values). Additionally, to determine statistical significance for these models, a value significant at $p=.05$ denotes a statistically significant relationship between the variable and a vote for a far right party. The following graphs show the predicted likelihood of voting for a far right party in specific regions (see figures 5-10, for regional subsample size) in each respective country in the given years. I have also included tables displaying aggregate national data on unemployment levels and immigrant population percentages in order to examine regional contextual effects that might impact a vote for far right parties.

Figure 10. Regional Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, 2007 French Parliamentary Elections

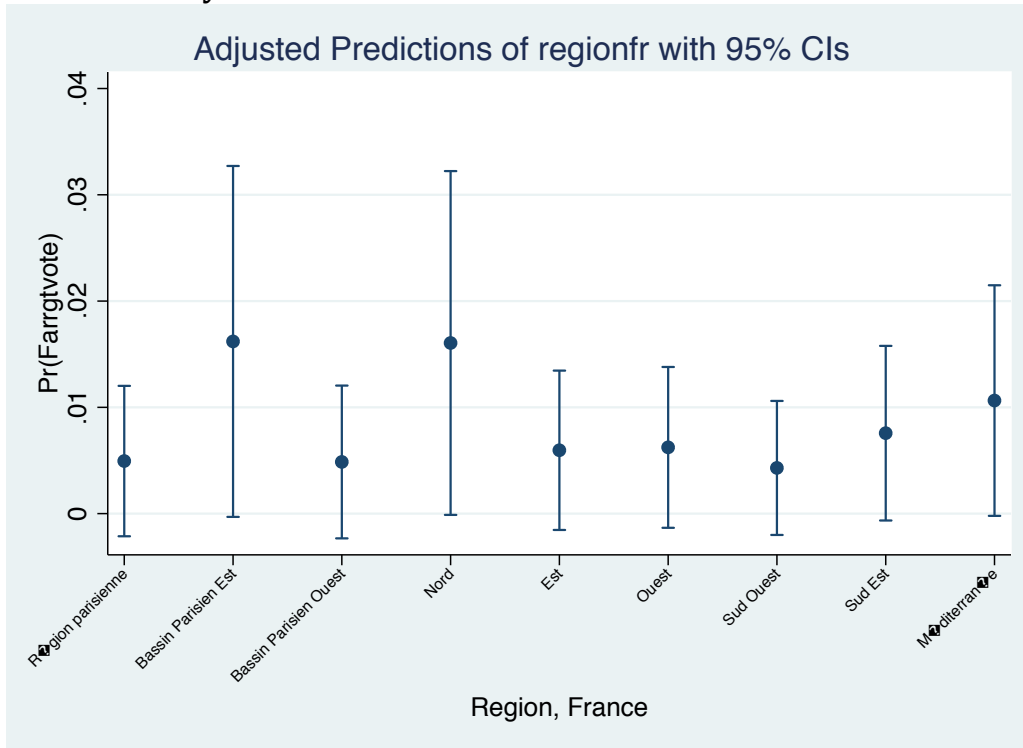


Figure 11. Regional Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, 2012 French Parliamentary Elections

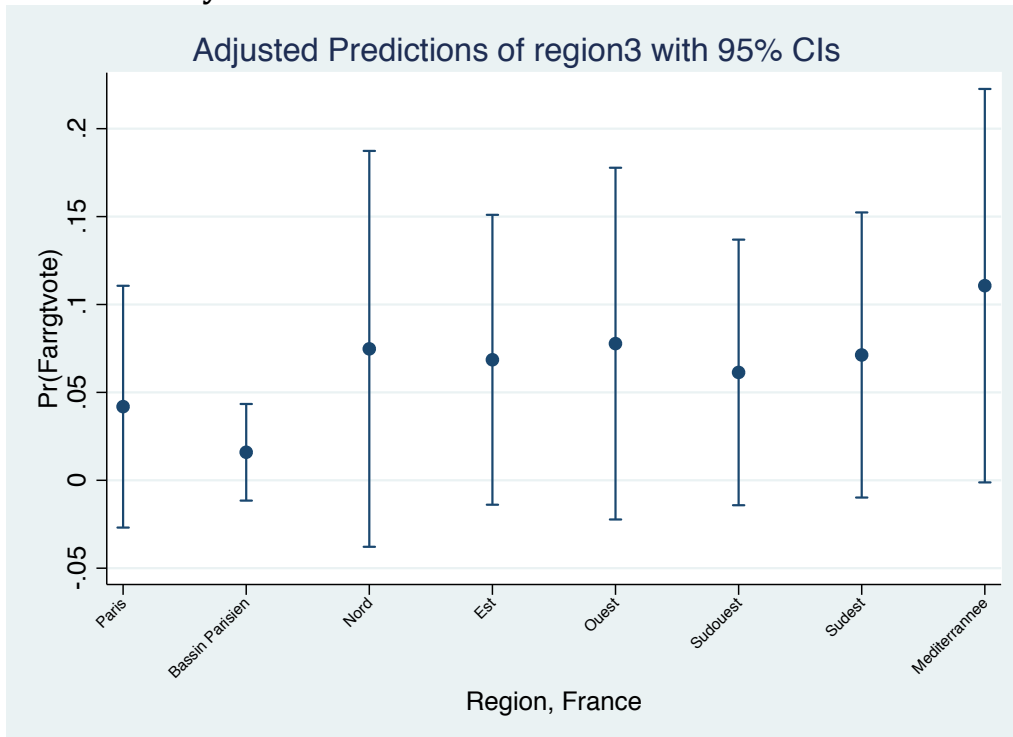


Table 20. French Immigrant Total Population Percentage
2012 French Total Immigrant Population Percentage⁶

Region Name	Immigrant Population Percentage as compared to total regional population
Bassin Parisien	0.03
Nord	0.06
Est	0.08
Ouest	0.02
Sudouest	0.06
Sudest/Mediterranee	0.09

Table 21. France Long-term Unemployment Rates (2014, Change from 2013 to 2014)⁷

Region Name	Unemployment Rate 2014	Unemployment Change 2014/2013
Paris	9.6	0.7
Bassin parisien	10.4	0.7
Nord	13.7	-0.9
Est	10.7	0.0
Ouest	8.5	-0.2
Sudouest	9.0	0.5
Sudest	9.55	-0.4

According to the logistic regression model displayed in Figure 10, highlighting regional predictors for the 2007 French parliamentary elections, there was not a statistically significant difference between regions and an individual's

⁶ *Note: I decided to break up departments into regions. Ile-de-France makes up Bassin Parisien/Paris, Normandie, Nord-Pas-de-Calais Picardy, and Alsace make up Nord, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté and Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes make up Est, Bretagne, Pays de la Loire, and Central-Val-de-Loire make up Ouest, and Aquitaine-Limousin-Poitou-Charentes makes up Sudouest, and Languedoc-Roussillon-Midi-Pyrénées, Corse, and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur makes up Sudest/Mediterranee. I also had difficulty finding any sort of immigration population statistics and regional population statistics for 2007, as France completed its census in 2012.

Source Immigration Population 2012):

http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?reg_id=99&ref_id=TCRD_012#col_1=1&tab_1=2

Source (Regional Population 2012): <http://www.insee.fr/en/bases-de-donnees/default.asp?page=recensements.htm>

⁷ Source:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics_at_regional_level

predicted probability for voting for the far right party. Furthermore, all of the confidence intervals for all of the regions in this regression model are wide, therefore the results are not robust. However, the region that has the highest predicted probability of an individual voting for the FN is the Mediterranean region ($P(\text{Mediterranean}) = .1119$). The region that has the lowest predicted probability for voting for the far right party is part of the Paris region (the Bassin Parisien) ($P(\text{Bassin Parisien}) = .0417627$). These results are interesting to note as the Bassin Parisien has a higher regional unemployment rate than the Southeast/Mediterranean region, while the Mediterranean region has a higher regional proportion of immigrants than any other region. However, since the results for the predicted probability model displayed in Figure 10 are not statistically significant, it is difficult to make any strong conclusions for or against my hypothesis.

According to the logistic model displayed in Figure 11, there was not a statistically significant difference between regions. However, like the results displayed in Figure 10, the region that had the highest predicted probability of voting for the FN is the Mediterranean region ($P(\text{Mediterranean}) = .1119$), while the region that had the lowest predicted probability for voting for the far right party is part of the Paris region (Bassin Parisien) ($P(\text{Bassin Parisien}) = .041767$). Nevertheless, the results for this model are not statistically significant, and therefore I cannot make any conclusions for or against my hypothesis, as was the case in the previous model highlighting the 2007 French parliamentary elections.

Figure 12. Regional Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, 2010 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

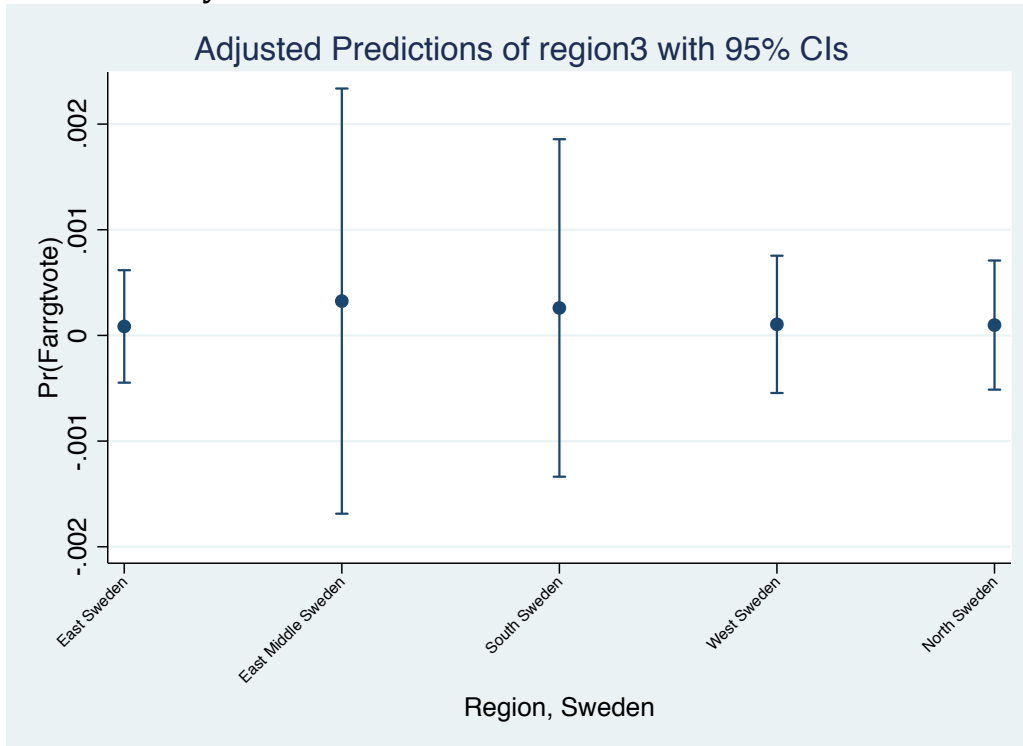


Figure 13. Regional Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, 2014 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

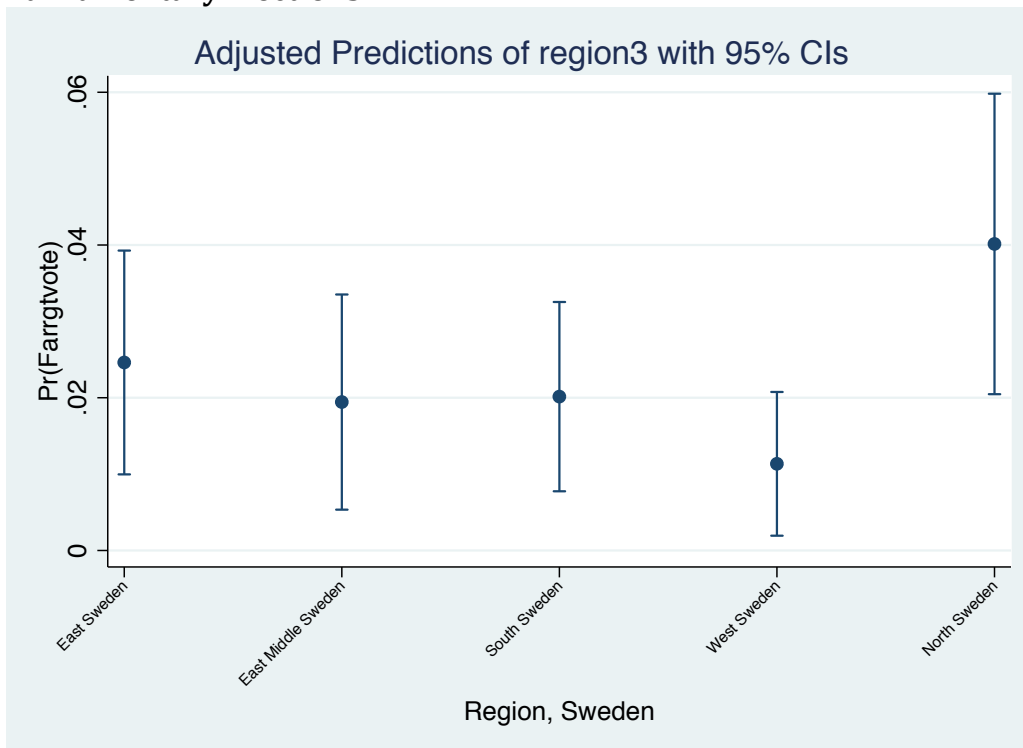


Table 22. Swedish Migration Statistics⁸
2014 Swedish Migration Statistics

Region Name	Migrant Population Percentage as compared to total regional population
East Sweden	.007
East Middle Sweden	.007
South Sweden	.011
West Sweden	.008
North Sweden	.010

2010 Swedish Migration Statistics

Region Name	Migrant Population Percentage as compared to total regional population
East Sweden	.004
East Middle Sweden	.004
South Sweden	.004
West Sweden	.004
North Sweden	.006

Table 23. Sweden Long-term Unemployment Rates (2014, Change from 2013 to 2014)⁹

Region Name	Unemployment Rate 2014	Unemployment Change 2013/2014
East Sweden/East Middle Sweden	7.6	-0.1
South Sweden	8.3	-0.2
North/West Sweden	8.0	0.0

⁸ Note: Author decided to break up counties into regions. Södermanland, Uppsala, and Västerbotten make up East Sweden. Gävleborg, Stockholm, Västmanland, and Örebro make up East Middle Sweden. Blekingelan, Gotland, Jonkoping, Kalmar, Kronoberg, Skåneland, and Östergötland make up South Sweden. Dalarna, Halland, Varmland, and Västra Götaland make up West Sweden. Jämtland, Norrbotten, and Västernorrland make up North Sweden.

Source for Migrant Population: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Facts-and-statistics-/Statistics.html>

Source for Regional Population: http://www.scb.se/en/_finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/population/population-composition/population-statistics/#c_undefined

⁹ Source:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics_at_regional_level

According to the logistic regression model showing analysis from the 2010 Swedish parliamentary elections, we cannot determine statistically significant results between regions. However, the region that has the highest predicted probability of voting for the Swedish Democrats (the far right party) is East Middle Sweden, ($P(\text{EMS}) = .0003246$). This is interesting to note as this region had the lowest unemployment rate and had the same migrant population percentage as other regions in the country. Furthermore, the region that has the lowest predicted probability for voting for the far right party is West Sweden ($P(\text{WS}) = .0001046$), which had the same migrant population percentage as several other regions and a lower unemployment rate than South Sweden. Nevertheless, these results are inconclusive as they are not statistically significant. Turning to the logistic regression model showing the results from the 2014 Swedish parliamentary elections (Figure 13), we can see that the region that has the highest predicted probability of voting for the Swedish Democrats (the far right party) is North Sweden ($P(\text{NS}) = .04$). The region that has the lowest predicted probability for voting for the far right party is West Sweden ($P(\text{WS}) = .0113$). The strong result for North Sweden does indicate a statistically significant relationship. What could be the reasons for the statistically significant relationship between an individual's choice to vote for a far right party and living in North Sweden? Looking at my regional data provided in Table 22, one can see that in 2014, the highest percentage of migrants within a region's population was in North Sweden (0.10), increasing from the percentage of migrants within North Sweden in 2010, which was .006. Perhaps the influx of refugees coming from wars in Syria and other parts of the Middle East

increased the proportion of immigrants in North Sweden, and had an effect on Swedish citizen's decision to vote for the far right party.

Furthermore, this relationship between aggregate and individual levels of data supports part one of my hypothesis: that individuals living in regions with higher migrant populations will be more likely to vote for far right parties.

However, North Sweden did not have the highest unemployment rate in the country, which proves my hypothesis to be inconclusive. It is difficult to make any strong conclusions about the relationship between regional unemployment rates and individual vote choice for far right parties.

Figure 14. Regional Predictions of Far Right Party Vote, 2003 Belgian Parliamentary Elections



Table 24. Belgian Foreign Born Population (2011)¹⁰

Region Name	Total Foreign Born Population Percentage as compared to total regional population
Brussels Capital Region	.469
Flanders	.072
Wallonia	.106

Table 25. Belgian Foreign Born (not in EU-27) Population (2011)¹¹

Region Name	Total Foreign Born (not in EU-27) Population Percentage as compared to total regional population
Brussels Capital Region	.171
Flanders	.027
Wallonia	.026

Table 26. Belgian Long-term Unemployment Rates (2014, Change from 2013 to 2014)¹²

Region Name	Unemployment Rate 2014	Unemployment Change 2013/2014
Brussels/Capital Region	18.3	-0.9
Flemish Region	5.1	0.1
Walloon Region	11.8	0.5

¹⁰ I had difficulty finding any sort of migrant population statistics, as Belgium does not keep official records for public consumption, and thus was obliged to use these statistics. Additionally, as Brussels is the capital of the European Union, I hypothesize that there must be a large foreign-born population because of EU bureaucratic employees.

Source: Belgian Foreign Born Population Size, Foreign Born (not in EU-27), Regional Population: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/belgium-country-permanent-immigration>

¹¹ I had difficulty finding any sort of migrant population statistics, as Belgium does not keep official records for public consumption, and thus was obliged to use these statistics.

Source: Belgian Foreign Born Population Size, Foreign Born (not in EU-27), Regional Population: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/belgium-country-permanent-immigration>

¹² Source:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics_at_regional_level

My results for Belgium are inconclusive. According to the 2004 European Social Survey results, there is a much higher predicted probability of voting for far right party in the Flemish region than in Brussels or Wallonia, which could be because of the VB's extreme rhetoric about *Flemish* independence and nationalism. Unfortunately, there is little available data on the exact population of immigrants in Belgium, but of the studies that have been conducted on immigration rate, the Flemish part of Belgium does have a slightly higher number of non-EU immigrants than the Wallonia region (see Table 25), which could partially explain the increased support for a xenophobic party such as the Vlaams Belang. In terms of the lack of information on the 2010 parliamentary elections, there were regions where the Vlaams Belang (the far right party) got no votes at all in certain parts of the country. This suggests the influence of an institutional constraint on respondents in Wallonia, probably due to the concentration of Flemish speakers who tend to vote for the Vlaams Belang and the lack thereof of Flemish speakers in Wallonia (European Election Database). Therefore, my results are inconclusive and do not indicate support for or against my hypothesis.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Due to the inconclusive results of my logistic regression analyses of subnational regional differences and individual vote choice for far right parties, I cannot say I found any strong conclusions in support or against my hypothesis that that individuals in regions with higher unemployment rates and large immigrant populations will be more likely to vote for far right wing parties. Nevertheless, I

found that during my predictive analyses of the Swedish 2014 parliamentary elections, there was a statistically significant relationship between voters who live in North Sweden and their choice to vote for the Swedish Democrats, the far right party. This may have a correlation with immigrant population growth in the region (see Figure 7), but there could be other factors, such as lack of economic growth or an increasing elderly population that could contribute to a vote for the Swedish parties. Indeed, there is too much variation between the various elections and countries for a definite conclusion about the relationship between high numbers of immigrants, levels of unemployment, and a vote for far right wing parties. Further research could delve more closely into the relationship between perception of increased immigration and vote for far right wing parties, as some political scientists have indicated that the perception of increased immigration, rather than actual immigration rates, has more of a correlation with a vote for far right wing parties (Lubbers et al. 2002, 371).

However, my analysis of individual level data did allow me to make a strong conclusion for my hypothesis that those who have been unemployed are more likely to vote for far right parties. This leads me to conclude that, regardless of region or country, there seems to be a definite relationship between individuals who have been unemployed and vote for far right wing parties.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In recent years, there has been an increase in electoral success of European far right-wing parties in regional, parliamentary, and presidential elections. Clearly,

voters are angry and afraid—perhaps because of globalization, a changing economy, and increasing numbers of immigrants who are changing the racial makeup of previously homogeneous countries. My thesis originally sought to explore the broad question of: *why?* Why, in part, are these far right wing parties doing so well? Who is voting for these far right wing parties, and do regional differences have any effect on whether an individual votes for a far right wing party? Using both historical trends and quantitative methods, I tried to answer these questions.

Based on my quantitative methods, across all three countries and all six elections, I was unable to find statistical correlations for national subregional differences and individual vote choice for far right parties. I did find a statistically significant relationship between vote for far right parties and whether an individual lived in North Sweden, which had the highest proportion of migrants living in the region as compared to other Swedish regions. Nevertheless, there was not enough consistency across countries and elections to make a definite conclusion regarding regional unemployment, immigrant population proportion, and far-right party vote. Perhaps there's an unobserved variable, like racial bias, that would contribute to an individual's vote for far-right parties. However, I did find that there is a statistically significant relationship between an individual's employment history and his or her vote for far right wing parties. In four out of six cases studies, if an individual has at all been unemployed at some point in his or her life, he or she is more likely to vote for a far right wing party. Additionally, the electoral history of these far right parties indicates that the strength of the center right party does affect their electoral share,

highlighting the fact that context matters when individuals choose to vote for far right parties.

For political scientists interested in the phenomenon of moderation of far right parties, looking at the historical trends of a country with a far right party that did not have successful moderation and had a strong center right party could prove beneficial and show more clearly the relationship between moderation and far right vote while controlling for center right party strength. Additionally, for those interested in individual level characteristics that correlate with far right party vote, an in-depth look at individuals' *perceptions* of immigration rate and a correlation (perhaps through exit poll data or another social survey) with a vote for far right wing parties would add to the knowledge of individual level characteristics that share a relationship with far right wing party vote. Furthermore, a panel survey following voter choice and characteristics over time would increase knowledge about the relationship between party change, cross-time effects, individual characteristics and temperament, that correlate with a vote for far right wing parties.

What implications does my research carry, not only for European politics, but also in a broader context—what implications does it carry in the American political context? Many commentators have already established a parallel between the rise of European right wing populist parties and the American tea party movement of the last decade, but only more recently has a link been established between Donald Trump's increasing popularity and electoral success in the 2016 American presidential primary race and European extreme right-wing populist leaders.

Figure 15. Cartoon from *The Economist*, December 12, 2015.

[Image of cartoon comparing Donald Trump with European right wing populist leaders redacted due to copyright restrictions]

Clearly, both American and European populist leaders are able to tap into the anger of the economically disaffected, the frustrated, the unemployed—the “silent majority”, to use the colloquial American term. In both Europe and America, voters feel insecure economically and culturally. Both continents have increasing levels of economic unrest, immigration, and face the threat of jihadist terrorism (the recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels only contributing to such fears). Additionally, both continents have citizens who fear that the “establishment elite” will not be able to deal with these issues correctly and quickly. As a result, these citizens are turning to the polls, voting in record numbers for populist candidates that spout xenophobic and anti-Islamic rhetoric. Unless the center right is able to show voters that it can and will listen to their frustrations and create substantive policies that will answer those fears, the populist right’s electoral success will only continue to increase—both in America and in Europe.

APPENDIX

Appendix I. Country Statistics

France GDP in USD (billions)				
2012	40,908.27			
2007	41,600.83			
Belgium GDP in USD				
2010	44,358.26			
2003	30,702.51			
Sweden GDP in USD				
2010	52,076.26			
2013	60,430.22			
France Unemployment Levels				
2012	9.9			
2007	8			
Belgium Unemployment Levels				
2010	8.3			
2003	8.2			
Sweden Unemployment Levels				
2010	8.7			
2014	8			
France Immigrant Population				
2012	327,432			
2007	293,980			
Belgian Immigrant Population				
2010	135,281			
2003	112,060			
Swedish Immigrant Population				
2010	98,801			
2013	115,845			

Sources:

Belgian Immigration Rates: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/migration-statistics/asylum-migration/2007/01_belgium_annual_report_on_asylum_and_migration_statistics_2007_final_version_23sept09_en.pdf

Electoral Results: electionresources.org

GDP and Unemployment Rates: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/>

France Immigration Rates: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics

Swedish Immigration Rates: <http://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Facts-and-statistics-/Statistics.html>

Appendix II. 2007 French Parliamentary Elections

Logistic Regression Explaining Regional Effects on Far Right Vote in 2007 French Parliamentary Elections

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Logistic Regression Coefficient</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Control Variables				
Gender	-.259	.470	-1.61	0.108
Age	.000	.020	-0.10	0.917
Number of Children	-.011	.596	1.02	0.307
Education Level	-.0255*	.070	-2.79	0.005
Income Level	-.470	.106	0.92	0.360
Religious Status	-.222	.515	1.33	0.182
Experience of Unemployment	-.059	.488	-2.33	0.020
Occupation	-.078*	.333	1.25	0.020
Marital Status	-.025	.054	-.047	0.640
Opinion about Immigration	-.470***	.092	-5.13	0.000
Region (Independent Variable)				
Region Parisien	.097	.768	0.37	0.567
Bassin Parisien Ouest	1.199	.861	1.39	0.164
Bassin Parisien Est	-.0177	1.02	-0.02	0.986
Nord	1.189	.858	1.39	0.166
Est	0.187	.934	0.20	0.841
Ouest	0.233	.932	0.25	0.803
Sudouest	-.141	1.02	-0.14	0.890
Sudest	.429	.883	0.48	0.628
Mediterranee	.772	.860	0.90	0.90

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

$N = 2,036$, $R^2 = .0149$

Predicted Probability of Regional Effect on Far Right Vote in 2007 French Parliamentary Elections (Control Variables Held at Means)

<i>Variable (Region)</i>	<i>Margin</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Region Parisien	.004	.003	1.37	0.171
Bassin Parisien Ouest	.0162	.008	1.92	0.054
Bassin Parisien Est	0.005	.004	1.32	0.185
Nord	.016	.008	1.95	0.052
Est	.006	.004	1.56	0.119
Ouest	.006	.004	1.61	0.107
Sudouest	.004	.003	1.34	0.182
Sudest	.007*	.004	1.81	0.007
Mediterranee	.011	.005	1.92	0.055

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the National Front in the 2007 French Parliamentary Elections

Variable	<i>Predicted probability</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Standard Score</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Male	.026***	.007	4.00	0.000
Female	.007	.006	1.21	0.226
Ever Unemployed	.021*	.013	1.70	0.089
Never Unemployed	.022**	.009	2.25	0.024
Male, Ever Unemployed	.043**	.021	3.02	0.037
Male, Never Unemployed	.006	.015	2.09	0.647
Female, Ever Unemployed	.001	.016	0.12	0.907
Female, Never Unemployed	.037***	.014	2.6	0.009

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

Appendix III. 2012 French Parliamentary Elections

Logistic Regression Explaining Regional Effects on Far Right Vote in 2012 French Parliamentary Elections

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Logistic Regression Coefficient</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Control Variables				
Gender	-.754	.470	-1.61	0.108
Age	-.002	.020	-0.10	0.917
Number of Children	.609	.596	1.02	0.307
Education Level	-.196***	.070	-2.79	0.005
Income Level	.097	.106	0.92	0.360
Religious Status	.687	.515	1.33	0.182
Experience of Unemployment	-1.134***	.488	-2.33	0.020
Occupation	8.53e-.06***	.000	0.700	-0.000
Marital Status	.0226***	.131	0.864	-0.235
Opinion about Immigration	-.357*	.111	0.001	0.001
Region (Independent Variable)				
Paris.	.974	1.03	.02	0.465
Bassin Parisien	-.1073	1.15	-.93	0.350
Nord	.645	1.16	0.56	0.577
Est	.517	1.02	0.51	0.612
Ouest	.564	1.29	0.51	0.608
Sudouest	.335	1.05	0.32	0.752
Sudest	.637	1.01	0.63	0.528
Mediterranee	1.06	1.03	1.02	1.02

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .001$

Predicted Probability of Regional Effect on Far Right Vote in 2012 French Parliamentary Elections (Control Variables Held at Means)

<i>Variable (Region)</i>	<i>Margin</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Paris	.042	.034	1.18	0.237
Bassin Parisien	.0146	.012	1.14	0.254
Nord	.077	.058	1.31	0.190
Est	.068	.042	1.62	0.106
Ouest	.071	.046	1.52	0.128
Sudouest	.057	.036	1.59	0.112
Sudest	.076	.043	1.78	0.076
Mediterranee	.112*	.057	1.98	0.048

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

$N = 2,241$, $R^2 = .2509$

Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the National Front in the 2012 French Parliamentary Elections

Variable	<i>Predicted probability</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Standard Score</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Male	.101***	.021	4.79	0.000
Female	.089***	.020	4.43	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.159**	.034	4.63	0.000
Never Unemployed	.053	.035	1.49	0.136
Male, Ever Unemployed	.189***	.052	3.64	0.00
Male, Never Unemployed	.087	.055	1.59	0.113
Female, Ever Unemployed	.132***	.047	2.77	0.006
Female, Never Unemployed	.093	.048	0.44	0.658

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Appendix IV. 2003 Belgium Parliamentary Elections

Logistic Regression Explaining Regional Effects on Far Right Vote in 2003 Belgium Parliamentary Elections

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Logistic Regression Coefficient</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Control Variables				
Gender	.366	.201	1.82	0.069
Age	.004	.008	0.56	0.576
Number of Children	-.014	.051	2.15	0.031
Education Level	-.057	.041	-1.39	0.165
Income Level	.066	.055	1.17	0.241
Religious Status***	1.02	.221	4.61	0.000
Experience of Unemployment *	-.132	.484	-2.74	0.006
Occupation	.156	.55	1.27	0.014
Marital Status	.001	.037	0.02	0.980
Opinion about Immigration*	.109	.005	2.15	0.031
Region (Independent Variable)				
Brussels Region <i>N= 780, R2=.00712</i>	1.199	.861	1.39	0.164

Predicted Probability of Regional Effect on Far Right Vote in 2003 Belgium Parliamentary Elections (Control Variables Held at Means)

<i>Variable (Region)</i>	<i>Margin</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Flemish Region	.164***	.0148	11.08	0.000
Brussels Region	.0409	.0236	1.73	0.008

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the Vlaams Blok in the 2003 Belgian Parliamentary Elections

Variable	<i>Predicted probability</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Standard Score</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Male	.011***	.019	6.07	0.000
Female	.128***	.018	8.40	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.176***	.038	4.69	0.000
Never Unemployed	.177***	.034	5.27	0.000
Male, Ever Unemployed	.243**	.064	3.53	0.000
Male, Never Unemployed	.193***	.051	3.90	0.000
Female, Ever Unemployed	.116***	.044	3.00	0.008
Female, Never Unemployed	.127***	.048	3.26	0.002

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

Appendix V. 2010 Belgium Parliamentary Elections

Note: I could not perform a logistic regression analysis or determine predicted probability for the 2010 Belgium Parliamentary Elections because there were certain regions of the country that received no votes for the far right party.

Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the Vlaams Belang in the 2010 Belgian Parliamentary Elections

Variable	<i>Predicted probability</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Standard Score</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Male	.037***	.009	4.05	0.000
Female	.037***	.008	4.33	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.049***	.017	2.87	0.003
Never Unemployed	.022	.016	1.09	0.197
Male, Ever Unemployed	.031***	.027	1.16	0.248
Male, Never Unemployed	.009	.026	0.09	0.741
Female, Ever Unemployed	.065***	.020	3.16	0.001
Female, Never Unemployed	.036	.022	1.47	0.135

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01
 Number of observations= 1,445
 R2-0.038

Appendix VI. 2010 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

Logistic Regression Explaining Regional Effects on Far Right Vote in 2010 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Logistic Regression Coefficient</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Control Variables				
Gender	-.024	.356	-0.07	0.945
Age	-.017	.011	-1.55	0.122
Number of Children	.081	.088	.092	0.357
Education Level	-.079	.056	-1.40	0.160
Income Level	-.054	.069	0.78	0.437
Religious Status	-.000	.000	-1.12	0.262
Experience of Unemployment	-.127	.081	-1.56	0.120
Occupation	2.79e-06***	.000	0.866	-.000
Marital Status	.007***	.006	0.290	-.006
Opinion about Immigration	-.515	.081	0.000	-.673
Region (Independent Variable)				
East Middle Sweden	1.199	.795	1.69	0.092
South Sweden	1.118	.787	1.42	0.155
West Sweden	0.208	.864	0.24	0.810
North Sweden	0.141	.906	.16	0.870
East Sweden	1.123	.734	1.23	0.08

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

$N = 1,358$, $R^2 = .2288$

Predicted Probability of Regional Effect on Far Right Vote in 2010 Swedish Parliamentary Elections (Control Variables Held at Means)

<i>Variable (Region)</i>	<i>Margin</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
East Sweden	.00009	.0003	0.31	0.754
East Middle Sweden	.00032	.0010	0.32	0.752
South Sweden	.00026	.0008	0.32	0.750
West Sweden	.00010	.0003	0.32	0.752
North Sweden	.00009	.0003	0.31	0.754

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the Swedish Democrats in the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

Variable	<i>Predicted probability</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Standard Score</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Male	.024***	.008	2.94	0.003
Female	.037***	.008	4.45	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.067***	.019	3.59	0.000
Never Unemployed	.022*	.013	1.74	0.082
Male, Ever Unemployed	.023	.025	0.90	0.367
Male, Never Unemployed	.032	.009	1.63	0.102
Female, Ever Unemployed	.112***	.028	3.92	0.000
Female, Never Unemployed	.012	.016	0.72	0.631

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

Appendix VII. 2014 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

Logistic Regression Explaining Regional Effects on Far Right Vote in 2014 Swedish Parliamentary Elections

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Logistic Regression Coefficient</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Control Variables				
Gender	-.367	.272	-1.35	0.177
Age	.003	.008	0.40	0.688
Number of Children	.069	.070	0.98	0.327
Education Level	.000	.000	1.63	0.103
Income Level	-.030	-.055	-0.55	0.584
Religious Status	.241	.310	0.78	0.437
Experience of Unemployment	.006	.070	0.08	0.937
Occupation	.042	.054	0.872	0.824
Marital Status	-.002	.004	-0.46	0.643
Opinion about Immigration***	-.474	.060	-7.93	0.000
Region (Independent Variable)				
East Middle Sweden	-.249	.454	-0.55	0.583
South Sweden	-.220	.408	-0.54	0.690
West Sweden	-.790	.489	-1.61	0.106
North Sweden	.496	.368	1.35	0.178
East Sweden	.332	.542	1.34	0.121
* $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$				
$N = 1,358, R^2 = .2288$				

Predicted Probability of Regional Effect on Far Right Vote in 2010 Swedish Parliamentary Elections (Control Variables Held at Means)

<i>Variable (Region)</i>	<i>Margin</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>P-value</i>
East Sweden	.025***	.008	3.31	0.001
East Middle Sweden	.020***	.007	2.71	0.007
South Sweden	.020***	.006	3.19	0.001
West Sweden	.011*	.004	2.37	0.018
North Sweden	.040***	.010	4.01	0.000
* $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$				

Predicted Probability of Individual Vote for the Swedish Democrats in the 2014
Swedish Parliamentary Elections

Variable	<i>Predicted probability</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Standard Score</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Male	.032***	.008	3.91	0.000
Female	.050***	.008	6.07	0.000
Ever Unemployed	.042**	.042	2.13	0.035
Never Unemployed	.021	.021	1.57	0.116
Male, Ever Unemployed	.054**	.025	2.09	0.037
Male, Never Unemployed	.009	.020	0.48	0.629
Female, Ever Unemployed	.030	.029	1.03	0.304
Female, Never Unemployed	.032*	.018	1.76	0.078

a.*p <.1, **p <.05, *** p<.01

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