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Immigration and Voting Patterns in the European Union: Evidence from Five Case Studies and Cross-Country Analysis

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Abstract

Tempers flared in Europe in response to the 2015 European Refugee Crisis, prompting some countries to totally close their borders to asylum seekers. This was seen to have fueled anti-immigrant sentiment, which grew in Europe along with the support for far-right political parties that had previously languished. This sparked a flurry of research into the relationship between immigration and far-right voting, which has found mixed and nuanced evidence of immigration increasing far-right support in some cases, while decreasing support in others. To provide more evidence to this unsettled debate in the empirical literature, we use data from over 400 European parties to systematically select cases of individual countries. We augment this with a cross-country quantitative study. Our analysis finds little evidence that immigrant populations are related to changes in voting for the right. Our finding gives evidence that factors other than immigration are the true cause of rises in right-wing voting.

Keywords: *Immigration; European Union; voting*

Introduction and Motivation

Evidence suggests antipathy towards a wide variety of migrants has increased around the world. In Europe, attention has focused on anti-immigrant sentiment towards refugees from Syria in countries including Germany and France.[5] France's far-right National Rally is often linked to xenophobic sentiments towards Muslims (Chrisafis, 2017), but publicly the party calls for the restriction of all non-European migrants (Goodliffe, 2012). Anti-immigration sentiment, particularly against Muslims, is considered a cause of the UK vote to leave the EU (Abbas, 2019; Abrams and Travaglino, 2018). The view that the 2015 refugee crisis has increased support across Europe for far-right parties was reported by popular media such as The Guardian (Baboulias, 2015), Time (Bremmer, 2015), and The Washington Post (Tharoor, 2015).[6] This reported growing desire for immigration restrictions motivates our study of impacts of non-EU migrants on right-voting.

The theoretical effect of immigration on beliefs of natives is ambiguous. The Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1954) suggests larger immigrant populations reduce prejudice against immigrants through increased native familiarity. Realistic Conflict Theory (Campbell, 1965)[7],

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[5] It is perceived that "xenophobic, islamophobic and anti-immigrant sentiment, manifest in attacks on Muslims, migrants, and those perceived as foreigners and support for populist anti-immigration parties." (Human Rights Watch, 2017, p. 259).
[6] Other possible mechanisms for far-right voting include notions of national identity and pride, particularly in Finland, Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey (Lubbers and Coenders, 2017).
[7] As cited in Dustmann, Vasiljeva and Damm (2016).

however, predicts that conflicting values between groups increases prejudice. While not directly related to voting, both these attitudinal effects may influence changes in voting behavior. A substantial body of literature has attempted to measure any link between these theories and voting.[8]

Most related to our work is Georgiadou, Rori and Roumanias (2018), which also measures the correlation between immigration and voting. We contribute to this literature as one of very few studies using data from all European Union member countries' national elections, and European Parliamentary elections. Novel contributions of our work are consistent cross-country identification of party ideologies and linking political parties to European Parliament party groups as a revealed preference of parties' ideologies.

Our results suggest very little evidence that a country's immigrant shares (percentage of non-EU born individuals in the population) are correlated with voting outcomes.[9] Potential limitations to our study are relatively small sample sizes from national-level elections, and relatively low variation in immigrant population shares over the study period, which potentially exacerbate effects of measurement error.

Literature

Theoretical Backdrop

As mentioned above, two different theoretical models in the psychology literature describe different attitudinal effects of immigration on natives: Contact Hypothesis, and Realistic Conflict Theory[10]. Each is widely cited in the empirical literature that examines the relationship between voting and immigration.

The Contact Hypothesis states that contact between majority and minority groups can decrease prejudice, under certain conditions. This theory thus predicts more immigration can decrease native xenophobia, potentially shifting votes away from the political right. However, if conditions of equal status, common goals, and support from authority are not present, contact may increase prejudice (Allport, 1954).

Realistic Conflict Theory and similar theories, which have been studied in relation to far-right voting, suggest the opposite: contact between different groups could lead to increased prejudice under real or perceived inter-group competition for resources. If contact between immigrants and natives increases prejudice, we expect the native born to react xenophobically, including in their voting. For example, Lubbers and Coenders (2017) makes a positive connection between radical right-wing voting, nationalistic attitudes, and anti-immigration sentiment and Dennison and Geddes (2019) connect right-wing populism and euroskepticism to anti-immigration sentiment. Thus, given right-leaning parties generally express more

[8] Studies referring specifically to Contact Hypothesis and Realistic Conflict Theory (and similar theories) in relation to voting include Arzheimer, 2009; Della Posta, 2013; Dustmann and Preston, 2001; Dustmann et al., 2016; Edo et al., 2019; Georgiadou et al., 2018; Halla et al., 2017; Otto and Steinhardt, 2014; Rydgren, 2008; Rydgren and Ruth, 2011; Steinmayr, 2021; Vertier and Viskanic, 2018.

[9] This result includes both how native voters respond to immigration, as well as how immigrants may end up voting themselves. The duration until immigrants can vote in a particular country, if ever, varies from country to country.

[10] Realistic Conflict Theory is one of several theories with similar hypotheses including ethnic conflict theory, group conflict theory, and others.

xenophobic and anti-immigrant platforms, we expect increased prejudice to lead voters to shift to the political right.

Estimation Issues

While the effects of both theories have opposite signs, it is possible that both phenomena exert influence on voting behavior simultaneously. People respond to immigration differently, exemplified by ranges of attitudes toward refugees across the political spectrum (van Prooijen, Krouwel and Emmer, 2018). Therefore, it is important to remember that any positive or negative finding is a net effect. An additional possibility is aggregate voting patterns shifting as more naturalized immigrants vote for pro-immigrant parties, biasing an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimate of the effects of migration on natives' voting. Underlying sentiments may also influence attractiveness of migration destinations, causing omitted variables bias. For example, highly educated regions may both welcome and attract lower educated migrants, who complement, rather than compete with, native workers in the labor market (Mayda, Peri, and Steingress, forthcoming). Not controlling for such factors may create bias.[11] This endogeneity has been addressed by several past studies[12] with instrumental variables developed by Card (2001).[13]

Evidence

There is evidence that the Contact Hypothesis has a greater effect on voting behavior than the Realistic Conflict Theory. Mendez and Cutillas (2014) study immigration from Latin America to Spain and find increased voting for socialist candidates. Mayda et al., (2016) show that greater immigrant population shares in the U.S. are associated with lower Republican vote shares in Presidential, Congressional, and gubernatorial elections. Vertier and Viskanic (2018) find temporary migrant centers in French municipalities decreased votes for the right-wing National Rally.

Other literature supports Realistic Conflict Theory having a greater influence. Otto and Steinhardt (2014) find evidence that increased immigration in Hamburg increases support for extreme right-wing parties. Dustmann, Vasiljeva, and Damm (2016) analyze municipalities in Denmark (excluding the largest) and find increases in refugees increased anti-immigration voting. Halla, Wagner, and Zweimuller (2017) find increased immigration in Austria increased right-wing Freedom Party of Austria votes. Brunner and Kuhn (2018) examine Swiss voting and find that more culturally dissimilar immigrants increase votes for anti-immigration policies. Edo, Giesing, Oztunc, and Poutvaara (2019) find that immigration of low-educated, non-European immigrants increases vote shares for far-right candidates in France.

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[11] As stated by Moriconi, Peri, and Turati (2019, p. 7) "unobserved factors at the individual- and at the regional levels could remain in the error term and may be correlated with voters' preferences and immigrants' locations. In such cases, the estimated coefficients will be biased and will not reflect the causal effect of immigration on voting."

[12] See for example Barone et al., 2016; Edo et al., 2019; Halla et al., 2017; Mayda, Peri, and Steingress, forthcoming; Mendez and Cutillas, 2014; Moriconi et al., 2018; Otto and Steinhardt, 2014

[13] This approach relies upon past local migration patterns to model quasi-random shocks to future migration patterns driven by higher geographic-level changes in migration, allowing authors to correct the bias in their results that would follow from migrants moving to certain labor markets by chiseling down the identifying variation in the study to that which can be explained by much earlier choices of migrants from the same home country to settle in specific locales. Here, we do not use this approach because we are only attempting to measure correlation rather than causation.

Cross-country evidence suggests that support for the far right is mitigated by generous unemployment benefits in countries with high proportions of immigrants (Arzheimer, 2009). A UK case-study indicates immigration is more salient when distrust of politicians is high (Abrams and Travaglino, 2018), but there is no clear finding of a "protest voting" explanation (Van der Brug and Fennema, 2007). Georgiadou et. al. (2018) find that sudden economic changes creating economic insecurity better explains far-right voting than immigration. Rydgren (2008) questions findings supporting the Realistic Conflict Theory, arguing individual-level data, rather than the country-level data used in many studies, is more appropriate to capture attitudes affected by personal relations with ethnically dissimilar migrants. Their study finds weak evidence that voters in ethnically heterogeneous areas are more likely to vote for far-right parties, leading the author to question past findings in support of realistic conflict theory.

Other studies, employing a variety of approaches (including cross-country, cross-region within a country, or case-studies) have found more nuanced results that do not necessarily support either theory over the other. Moriconi, Peri, Turati's (2019) cross-country approach studies 12 countries and 28 elections using individual data from the European Social Survey and creates an index of "nationalistic preference" to measure each political party's ideology by text mining each party's manifesto. While the authors' method of identifying party ideology is novel and useful, we instead rely upon previous categorizations from political scientists. Overall, the literature draws no dominant conclusion in favor of either the Contact Hypothesis or Realistic Conflict Theory, thus warranting further exploration.[14]

Our Study in the Context of the Literature

Many recent studies have examined immigration and voting patterns in Europe and the U.S. However, except for Georgiadou et al. (2018), to our knowledge no other study has used data spanning as long a time period or as comprehensive a set of countries as we do. Specifically, our study uses data for elections from 2005 through 2018, thus covering the crucial period since 2014, during which events considered emblematic of the rise of the right in Europe, including the European refugee crisis and exit of the UK from the European Union ("Brexit"), occurred. Our research thus contributes to this literature by taking a wider perspective over more elections. We also examine EU parliamentary elections, which has been done only by a handful of previous studies. Our cross-nation approach motivates the need for consistent coding of ideology, which we do using Nordsieck (2018). To our knowledge, our data set is the first to use a comprehensive comparable information source linking political parties' vote share to their ideologies and European Parliamentary groups.[15]

Data and Methodology

We first describe our data, then our case-based approach and cross-country study. Our analysis uses annual data for over 400 parties in 28 European Union Member States from

[14] However, one conclusion supported by several of the previously discussed studies is that low-skill or low-education immigrants tend to increase far-right voting, while high-skill or high-education immigrants have the opposite or no effect.

[15] Other studies have obtained party vote shares from the European Election Database that curates election results from across Europe down to the NUTS 3 level. While this source is extensive and detailed, it has not been updated to include elections after 2014 limiting its utility for future research.

national and European Parliamentary (EP) elections spanning years 2005 to 2018.[16] Our number of observed national elections per country is non-uniform as national elections are held at different intervals.[17] The years of each election in our data are shown in Appendix Table A1. Our data source, Nordsieck (2018), also links parties to political groups in the European Parliament, which we use in our cross country-analysis.[18] To measure political climate, for each election and member state we record the total share of votes earned by parties associated with selected political ideologies and EP groups. Our explanatory and control variables were obtained from the Eurostat database.[19] The explanatory variable of interest is share of the population born in any non-EU member country (non-EU-born share).[20] As demographic variables were not available at the time of study, 2019 and 2020 elections are not included in the analysis.

From Nordsieck (2018), we have recorded a total of 45 unique ideologies including communism, conservatism, and libertarianism.[21] We link vote-shares for each party with each of their listed ideologies and their EP group. Since many parties have overlapping ideologies, and EP groups are associated with many parties, we use the cumulative vote-share of an ideology/EP group in each election as our dependent variable. We are particularly interested in ideologies associated with the political right. Thus, we focus on vote-shares for parties with far-right, right-wing populism, nationalism, euroskepticism, regionalism, and populism ideologies, and collectively refer to them as "right" ideologies. Descriptive statistics are presented in Appendix Table A2.

In Figure 1, we compare the first and last election for each country in our sample to measure overall changes in vote-shares for the right and immigrant population shares. This simplified approach, ignoring any intervening variation, provides an impression of general trends. From Figure 1, we see a 2.43 percentage point increase in foreign born population shares, which almost entirely consists of immigrants from other EU countries. There has also been an average increase in "right" party vote share of 4.66 percentage points. However, when taking

[16] Some data presented in this source is also available at http://www.parties-and-elections.eu. Nordsieck (2018) This source provides vote shares (percentage share of popular vote received) for each political party in every European election since 1945 and consistently categorizes party ideologies across countries. The vote share and seats won for every individual party with 1% or more of the vote during each election were recorded into a spreadsheet, and each party's ideology was recorded. For elections in which parties ran collectively as a coalition, the name of the primary party was recorded, and the orientations and EP groups of each other party in the coalition were added to its own. For parties that were renamed, the name, ideologies, and EP group affiliation as of 2018 were used, and vote shares were traced back to any previous names and recorded under the current name.

[17] In the case of Greece, we observe seven national elections which is the most of any country and includes two elections during 2012, and two during 2015. All other countries have held three to five elections.

[18] From left to right, the EP Party Groups are European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL), The Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA), Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), European People's Party (EPP), European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD), and Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF). We continue to use those EP group affiliations for the sake of continuity, even though some EP groups have changed names or are no longer officially recognized groups. i.e., EFDD is no longer officially recognized; ALDE is succeeded by Renew Europe (RE); ENF is succeeded by Identity and Democracy (ID). EP elections take place every five years, and during the observed period there were two elections, in 2009 and 2014. We include 2019 EP and national elections in descriptive statistics but exclude them from our analysis because immigrant population shares, and demographics were not yet published for 2019 while we collected data. Thus, for the EP elections, our analysis contains 55 country-election observations. Each country is observed in both EP elections, except for Croatia which is only observed in the 2014 EP election. We include national parliamentary elections for Croatia (joined EU in 2013), and Romania and Bulgaria (both joined in 2007), for the entire period.

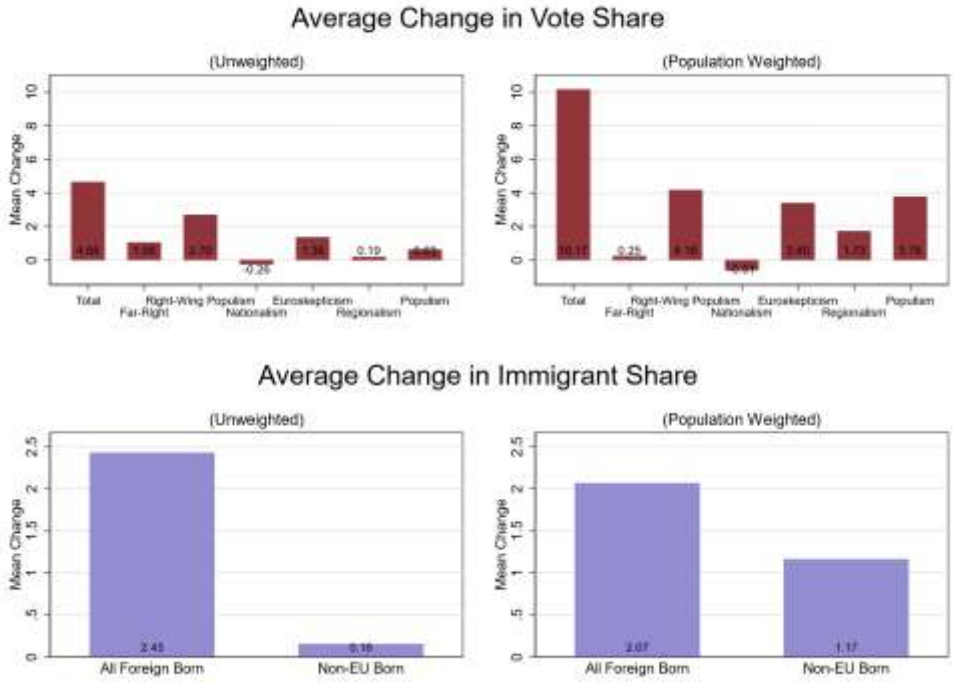
[19] ec.europa.eu/eurostat

[20] For the earliest years in our sample, the immigrant population data was not available for many countries, we thus impute these values. In the appendix, we include results using the population share of any foreign-born immigrant as the regressor of interest.

[21] Others are more granular such as 'United Ireland', which obviously is unique to Ireland and Northern Ireland, and various minority interest ideologies that each represent a specific ethnic minority.

an average weighted by country population, change in right-oriented vote-share increases to about 10.17 percentage points, and the average change in foreign born population share drops slightly, to about 2.07 percentage points, with about half of that coming from outside the EU.[22]

Figure 1. Changes in Vote/Immigrant Share from First to Last Election



Case Based Approach

The coinciding increase across the EU in both right-voting and immigration presented in Figure 1 is consistent with the literature discussed earlier, motivating further examination. Here, we reframe Figure 1 to better illustrate how experiences of immigration and voting have differed between countries. This yields a systematic selection of five countries examined as case studies. In the appendix, we present augmenting cross-country quantitative analyses.

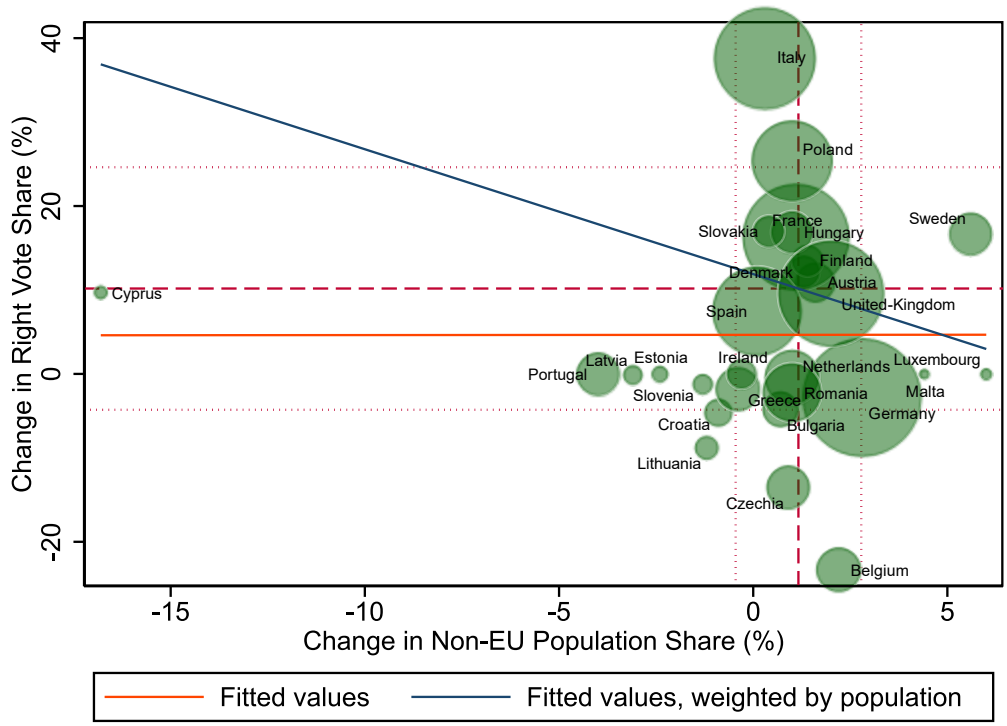
Case Selection

Figure 2 presents disaggregated information from Figure 1 in a scatter plot. The horizontal axis shows changes in shares of non-EU migrants between first and last elections by country, while the vertical axis shows associated changes in right voting. The size of dots represents the population of the country. The population weighted mean for changes in right-voting is displayed with a vertical dashed line; dotted lines mark the mean plus or minus one standard

[22] This statistic in the European context stands partially in contrast to work published in this journal by Norlander and Sørensen (2018) that finds a dramatic slowdown in migration in the United States, supported by further work by Castañeda Hernández and Sørensen (2019).

deviation. Corresponding horizontal lines display the same for changes in the migration rate. These vertical and horizontal lines cut the graph into Sectors, representing changes in both variables in a given country, relative to means and standard deviations.

Figure 2. Scatterplot of Changes in Percentage of Non-EU Immigrants and Right Voting



The first Sector, the "northwest" part of the graph, corresponds to decreases in immigration a standard deviation or more below average ("low"), along with increases in right-voting more than a standard deviation above average ("high"). The second, "north", Sector also represents high changes in right-voting, but accompanied by "medium" changes in immigration, i.e. those not more than one standard deviation above or below the average change. These sectors can be summarized, in terms of immigration and right-voting changes, as follows starting with the upper-left and moving left to right: 1) low-high (0 countries), 2) medium-high (2 countries), 3) high-high (0 countries), 4) low-medium (5 countries), 5) medium-medium (13 countries), 6) high-medium (4 countries), 7) low-low (2 countries), 8) medium-low (2 countries) and 9) high-low (0 countries). Details listing each country's Sector are available in Appendix A Table 3.

Before proceeding to case selection, we provide some intuition and initial results from the cross-country framework. First, we note that because our scatter plot examines changes on changes, we implicitly control for institutional differences for each country that do not vary over time. Second, we note that a positive correlation between immigration and right-voting would yield countries with relatively small (or negative) changes in immigration also having relatively small (or negative) changes in right-voting. Conversely, countries with relatively large

changes in immigration would have relatively large changes in right-voting. In other words, we would expect to see many observations in Sectors 3 and 7; a negative relationship would be suggested by observations in the opposite Sectors (1 and 9). However, we observe only two countries in Sector 7, and no countries in other "corner" sectors. Additionally, the figure displays two fitted regression lines, one giving each country equal weight (the relatively flat line), and one weighting countries by population (the negatively sloped line). Thus, Figure 2 suggests no strong evidence of a relationship between immigration and voting at the cross-country level.

It is important to acknowledge that country-specific cultures and institutions may lead to idiosyncratic responses to immigration, a form of heterogeneity that our approach cannot control for. We thus now proceed to select representative cases to explore any evidence of such responses. Nearly half (13) of the 28 countries fall into the "central" medium-medium Sector 5; i.e. they experienced no unusual changes in immigration nor right-voting. Three of the eight other sectors are empty. We thus choose one country from each of these five non-empty Sectors (other than 5) and proceed to examine the case in more detail below. For Sector 2, we choose Poland as it is an Central European country and some of the authors have familiarity with its institutions. Sector 4 is represented by Portugal, by far the most populous in the sector. For Sector 6, we choose Sweden as a country which saw an above average increase in both variables. For Sector 7 we select Croatia to represent Mediterranean countries. Finally, from Sector 8 we choose Belgium to have a Western European country. The appendix presents figures detailing changes in voting and immigration for each selected country.

Poland

Poland is one of two countries falling into Sector two, demonstrating that countries can experience a more than standard deviation above average increase in right-voting, absent a notable change in immigration. Specifically, between Poland's 2005 and 2015 elections, the non-EU foreign born share increased by only one percentage point, explaining just over 60% of the total increase in immigration. During this period, Poland experienced a 25.4 percentage point increase in right-voting, the second largest in our sample after Italy. This was driven primarily by increased euroskeptic voting---an increase in right-wing populism essentially offset decreased nationalist voting. This increased euroskeptic voting was brought about by the inclusion of the euroskeptic Solidarity Poland (SP) and Poland Together – United Right (PRZP) parties into an electoral coalition with the Law and Justice (PiS) party, yielding euroskeptic classification of the coalition in our data, rather than by any increase in overall vote shares of these three parties.

Sweden

While no country experienced a standard deviation above average increase in both right-voting and immigration, of the four countries that experienced more than a standard deviation increase in immigration, Sweden was the only one that also saw any increase in right-voting (less than one standard deviation above average). The foreign-born share in Sweden increased by 6.1 percentage points, with immigration from non-EU countries (our key measure in Figure 2) accounting for over 90% of the increase.[23] Overall right-voting increased by 16.7 percentage

[23] Only Luxembourg saw a greater increase in the share of these migrants.

points, explained by a 14.6 percent increase in right-wing populism, driven solely by increased votes for Sweden Democrats (SD) along with a 2.1 percentage point increase in euroskepticism driven by the otherwise left leaning Left Party. Thus, Sweden arguably best fits the narrative of increased immigration leading to increased right-voting. This could signify Sweden being significantly more responsive to immigration than other countries, or it could represent Sweden's experience being a statistical outlier.

Croatia

Between its 2007 and 2016 national elections, Croatia experienced a relatively large decrease in both immigration and right-voting. Right-voting decreased for four of five ideological measures. Three right parties dropped off the political map between 2007 and 2016: the nationalist and regionalist Croatian Democratic Alliance of Slavonia and Baranja (HDSSB), the regionalist and otherwise not right-categorized Croatian Peasant Party (HSS), and the nationalist and far-right Croatian Party of Rights (HSP). Partially offsetting these decreases was an increase in votes received by the euroskeptic categorized new Living Wall (ZZ) party. There was a 4.6% decline in right voting, along with modest declines in the foreign-born population during this period, accounted for entirely by a decline in Non-EU foreign-born. These outcomes are indeed consistent with a positive impact of immigration on right-voting.

Portugal

In Figure 2, we saw that Portugal was one of the countries that experienced a larger than average decline in immigration, along with no change in right-voting. Looking to the specifics of changes between Portugal's first and last elections in our data, the precise zeros in changes in each right-ideology illustrate the fact that no right parties received measured vote shares in either election. During this same period, Portugal saw a significant decline in its' foreign-born share. In fact, the four-percentage point decline in the non-EU share of immigrants was the second largest decline we observe (after Cyprus).

Starting with the assumption that increased immigration is linked to increased right-voting, it should be of no surprise that there was no increase in right-voting after the substantial decrease in Portugal's non-EU-born population. What does run counter to this notion is that Portugal initially had no right-parties receiving substantial votes, despite the presence of significantly more immigrants in 2005. Rather, in both elections, the left and center-left parties received a majority of votes, followed by center to center-right liberal and Christian democratic parties.

Belgium

Belgium falls into Sector 8 in Figure 2, demonstrating a case with declining right-voting, even without a substantial decrease in immigration. In fact, Belgium experienced increased immigration between the 2007 and 2014 elections, though not more so than the EU average. Overall, the foreign-born population increased 3.1 percentage points, with around 80% of this driven by an increase among migrants from outside the European Union. Belgium experienced a dramatic 23% plus decline in voting across all right-ideologies.[24] Of note, Flemish Interest (VB) and National Front (FN) together accounted for over a 10-percentage

[24] This massive decrease was driven by declines in our five specific measures of right ideology. It is also important to note that Belgium had many parties receiving more than 1% of votes in each election: 11 in 2007 and 13 in 2014.

point decline in votes cast for parties espousing a nationalist ideology. When looking at Figure 2, it is clear that the decrease driven by these two parties alone would produce one of the largest declines in right-voting that we observe in our data. Additionally, euroskeptic, far-right, and right-wing populist parties saw their respective vote shares decline by around 4, 2 and 7 percentage points, respectively. The decline in regionalism accounted for the single largest decline in right-voting at 10.5 percentage points. This was driven by the exit of the Francophone Democratic Federalists (FDF) from the Reformist Movement (MR) coalition and our identification procedure associating a coalition with the ideologies of each member party.[25]

Conclusions

In this study, we have analyzed data from 28 EU member countries in order to test for evidence of a correlation between immigrant populations and voting for right-wing parties, based upon the changes between the first and last elections we observe in our sample. Here, we find no evidence of a positive correlation between these two variables. We then select five countries as short cases to examine, based upon their combined experience of changes in immigration and changes in the percentage of votes cast for right-wing parties. This examination does not rule out the possibility that some countries may respond to increased immigration with increased right-voting. A further battery of multiple linear regressions, reported in our appendix, examines all observed elections. While our extensive quantitative analysis does on occasion find significant results, they are sporadic and inconsistent between regressions, suggesting that such results may be nothing more than statistical outliers.

Thus, overall, our study does not provide support for the hypothesis that increased immigrant populations are related to increased voting for parties on the political right. Furthermore, this implies that there is no clear evidence that either the Contact Hypothesis, or Realistic Conflict Theory have had a net effect on voting behavior, at least in the aggregate. Both, however, may have had equal effects of opposite sign that cancel each other out in our estimates.

Our results may differ from those of other studies discussed herein on account of methodological differences. First, our method of classifying parties relies on the ideologies identified by Nordsieck (2018), while studies have used textual analysis of parties' manifestos (Moriconi et. al., 2019) or older party identification based on ideological distance to fascism (Georgiadou et. al., 2018). While there is some overlap between party categories by each of these other methods, they are not identical. Second, it is possible that there is more variation in immigrant population shares and right-wing vote shares at more local levels of geography, and thus our country-level analysis is unable to detect an existing correlation. For example, studies which use provincial (Georgiadou et. al., 2018; Moriconi et. al., 2019) or municipal (Vertier and Viskanic, 2018) level data may be better able to measure such a correlation.

The work of Dustmann and Preston (2007) demonstrates that welfare concerns and cultural similarity drive attitudes towards immigration, but they find no evidence that labor market concerns have any effect. Despite some limitations, our analysis supports this notion by showing that there is weak evidence that the *presence* of immigrants effects right-wing voting

[25] The Reformist Movement (MR) party, together with the Francophone Democratic Federalists (FDF) party saw a decrease in their combined vote share of only around one percentage point.

at the national level. This may indicate that right parties pitch not only to economic anxieties based upon weak empirical evidence, but also upon feelings of cultural threat which may not align with the actual level of immigration. Further work by demographers and other social scientists to provide clearer information to citizens about the level of immigration to their countries may assist individuals in making more informed voting decisions.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Elections by Country

Country	EU Elections	National Elections
Austria	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2008, 2013, 2017
Belgium	2009, 2014, 2019	2007, 2010, 2014, 2019
Bulgaria	2009, 2014, 2019	2005, 2009, 2013, 2014, 2017
Croatia	2014, 2019	2007, 2011, 2015, 2016
Cyprus	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2011, 2016
Czechia	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2010, 2013, 2017
Denmark	2009, 2014, 2019	2005, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019
Estonia	2009, 2014, 2019	2007, 2011, 2015, 2019
Finland	2009, 2014, 2019	2007, 2011, 2015, 2019
France	2009, 2014, 2019	2007, 2012, 2017
Germany	2009, 2014, 2019	2005, 2009, 2013, 2017
Greece	2009, 2014, 2019	2007, 2009, 2012.5, 2012.6, 2015.1, 2015.9, 2019
Hungary	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2010, 2014, 2018
Ireland	2009, 2014, 2019	2007, 2011, 2016
Italy	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2008, 2013, 2018
Latvia	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2018
Lithuania	2009, 2014, 2019	2008, 2012, 2016
Luxembourg	2009, 2014, 2019	2009, 2013, 2018
Malta	2009, 2014, 2019	2008, 2013, 2017
Netherlands	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2010, 2012, 2017
Poland	2009, 2014, 2019	2005, 2007, 2011, 2015
Portugal	2009, 2014, 2019	2005, 2009, 2011, 2015
Romania	2009, 2014, 2019	2008, 2012, 2016
Slovakia	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2010, 2012, 2016
Slovenia	2009, 2014, 2019	2008, 2011, 2014, 2018
Spain	2009, 2014, 2019	2008, 2011, 2015, 2016, 2019
Sweden	2009, 2014, 2019	2006, 2010, 2014, 2018
United Kingdom	2009, 2014, 2019	2005, 2010, 2015, 2017

Note: Years represent the year of each observed election for every country and each type. Croatia joined the EU on 1 July 2013. In the case of Greece, decimal values indicate the number of the month of any election that occurred in a year when multiple elections were held.

Table A2. Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Count
GUE/NGL vote-share	6.92	9.52	0.00	41.80	161
Greens/EFA vote-share	4.68	6.07	0.00	26.60	161
SD vote-share	24.15	11.02	5.30	58.60	161
ALDE vote-share	14.05	13.68	0.00	58.60	161
EPP vote-share	29.27	12.97	0.00	70.10	161
ECR vote-share	5.03	8.71	0.00	42.40	161
EFDD vote-share	2.42	6.00	0.00	32.70	161
ENF vote-share	2.00	5.17	0.00	26.00	161
NI vote-share	10.24	13.15	0.00	92.30	161
Right vote-share	15.04	14.86	0.00	71.30	161
Far-Right vote-share	1.81	5.41	0.00	41.40	161
Nationalism vote-share	4.09	6.67	0.00	41.40	161
Right-wing Populism vote-share	4.39	7.05	0.00	28.20	161
Euroskepticism vote-share	5.05	10.53	0.00	51.40	161
Regionalism vote-share	2.79	9.37	0.00	55.70	161
Populism vote-share	0.30	2.83	0.00	32.70	161
Foreign-Born Population Share	10.73	7.40	0.00	46.54	161
Non-EU-Born Population Share	6.72	4.17	0.00	24.18	161
Population in Millions	18.27	22.89	0.41	82.52	161
GDP per capita (2010$)	24231.70	15405.03	4184.70	81743.18	161
Gini Coefficient	30.14	4.01	22.70	40.20	157
Unemployment Rate	9.45	4.85	2.90	26.50	161
Share of population 65 and over	17.14	2.39	10.80	22.60	161

Note: EP groups are mutually exclusive. Ideologies are not mutually exclusive.

Table A3. Summary of Sectors Described in Figure 2

		Change in Immigrant Share		
		Low	**Medium**	**High**
Change in Right Vote Share	High	(1) (None)	(2) Italy, **Poland**	(3) (None)
	Medium	(4) Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, **Portugal**, Slovenia	(5) Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, United Kingdom	(6) Germany, Luxembourg, Malta, **Sweden**
	Low	(7) **Croatia**, Lithuania	(8) **Belgium**, Czechia	(9) (None)

Figure A4. First to Last Election in Poland

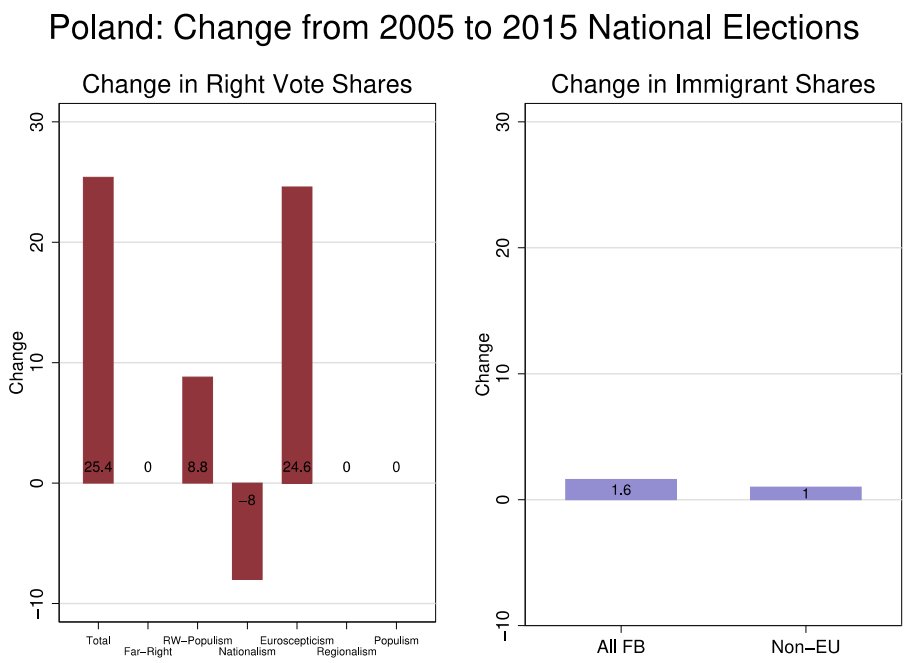


Figure A5. First to Last Election in Sweden

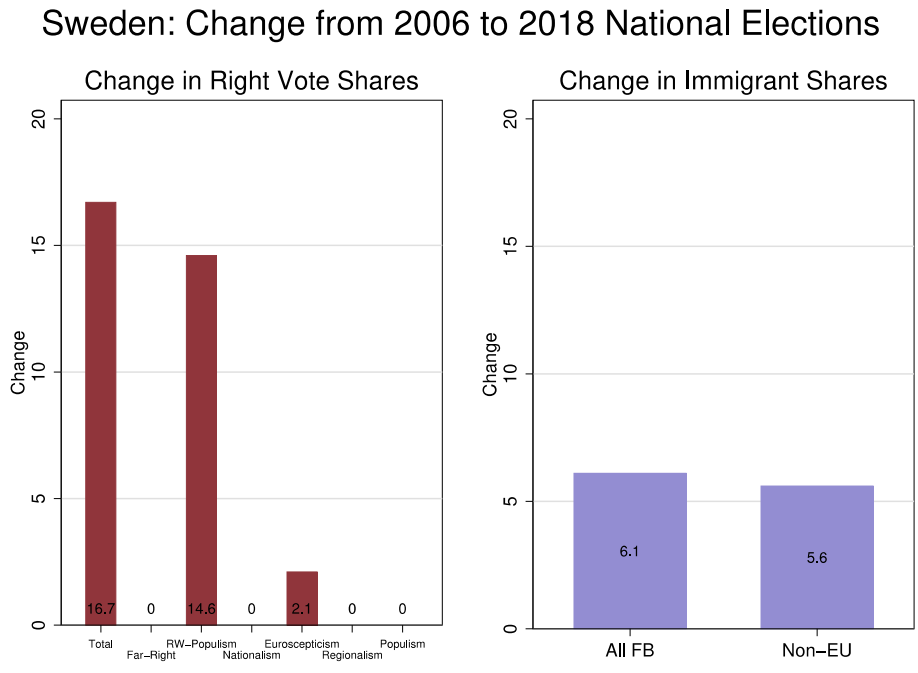


Figure A6. First to Last Election in Croatia

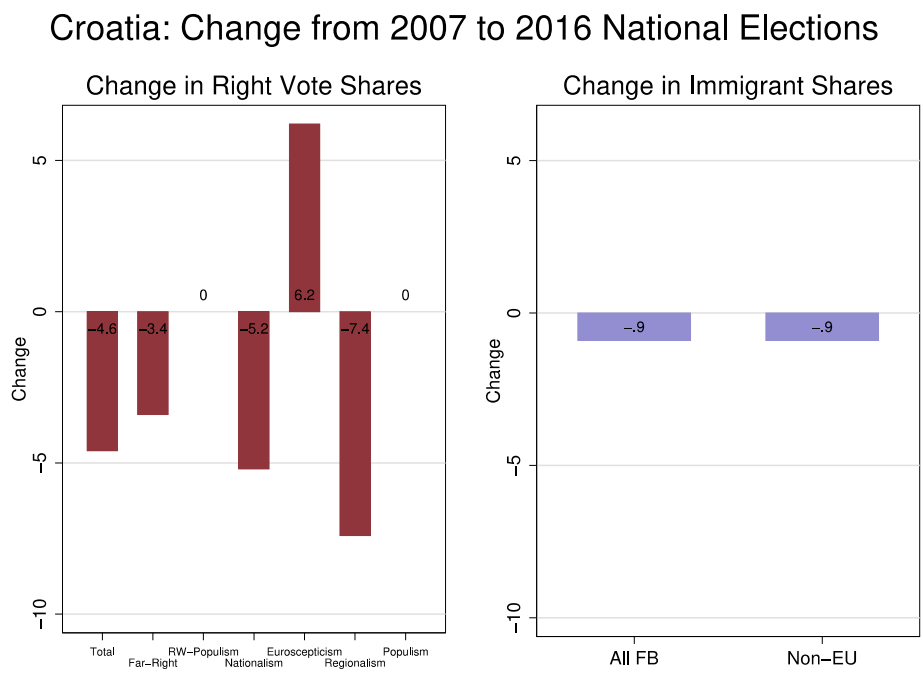


Figure A7. First to Last Election in Portugal

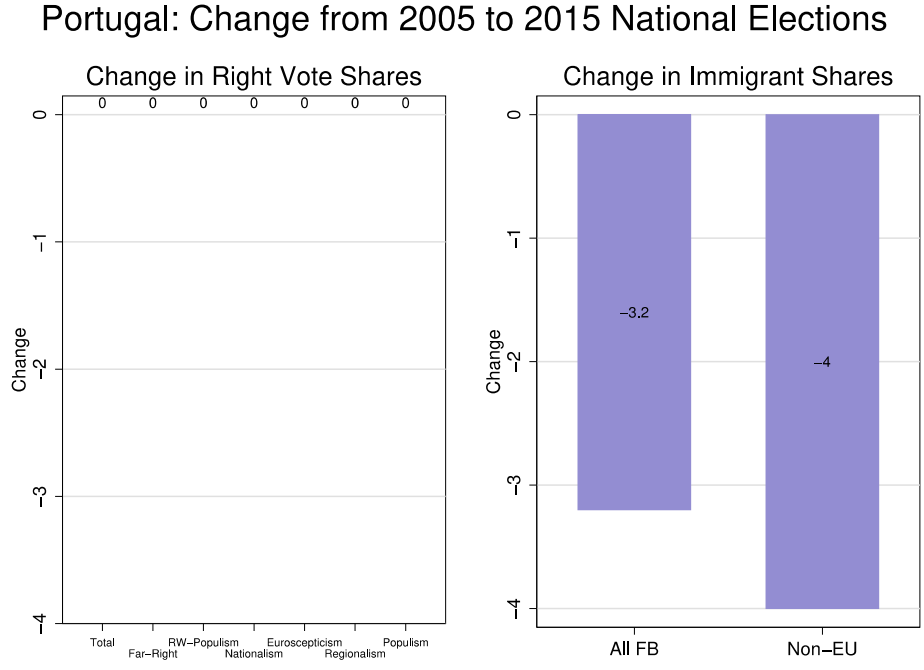
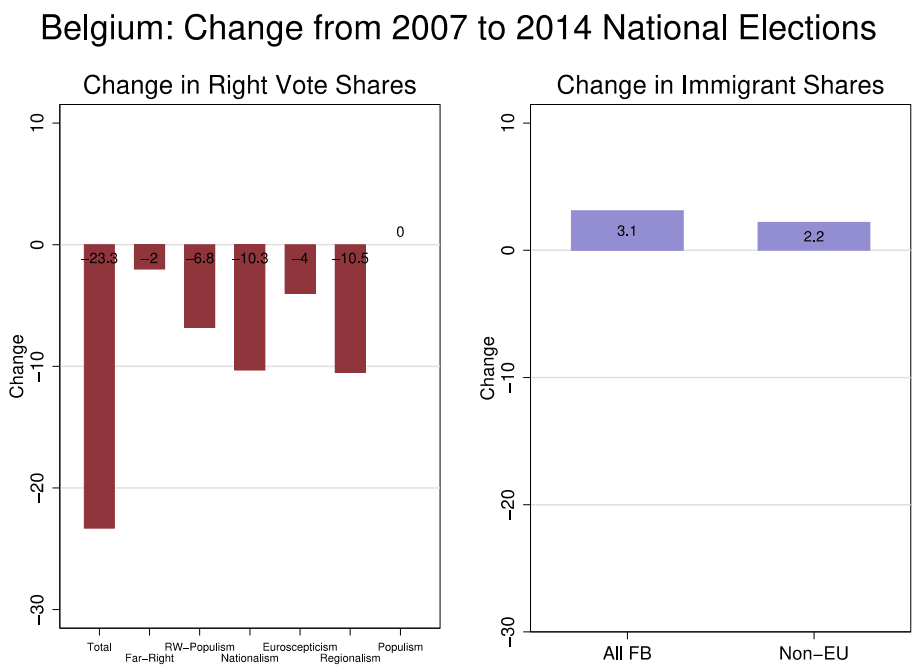
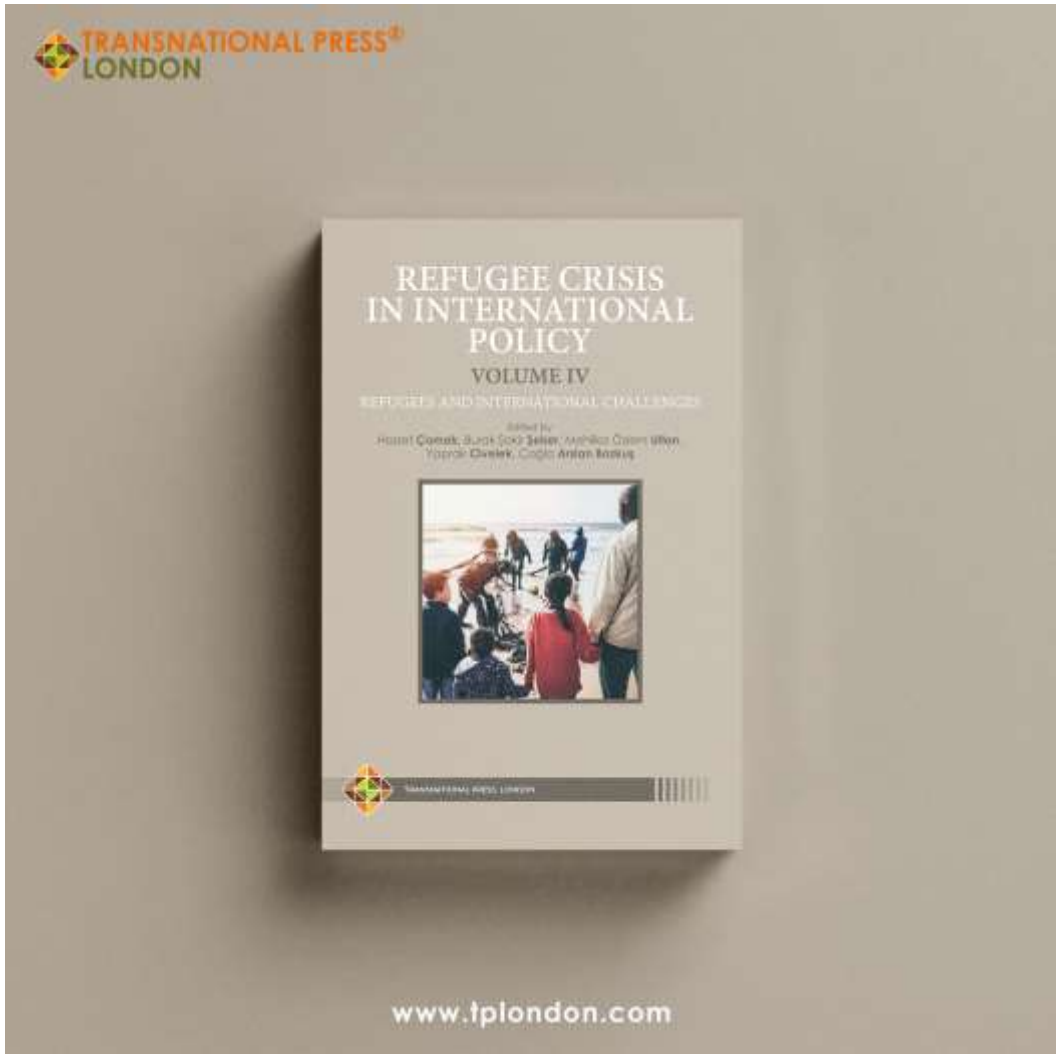


Figure A8. First to Last Election in Belgium





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