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'Birds of a feather'? Assessing the prevalence of anti-immigration attitudes among the far right electorate

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'Birds of a feather'?
Assessing the prevalence of anti-immigration attitudes among the far right electorate

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Abstract

This article focuses on the prevalence of anti-immigration attitudes among the far-right electorate. Drawing on the distinction between the predictive power of immigration concerns, and the question of how widespread these concerns are among the far-right voter pool, we proceed in two steps. First, we assess the extent to which anti-immigration attitudes are a necessary condition for voting far right; and second we examine whether far right voters with different levels of anti-immigration attitudes exhibit similar individual and attitudinal characteristics. Using data from the 8th wave of the European Social Survey (ESS) we find that, surprisingly, anti-immigration attitudes are not a necessary condition for voting for the far right as approximately one third of far-right voters have no concerns over immigration. We further show that far-right voters with different levels of immigration concerns have different profiles when it comes to other predictors of the far right-vote including ideological affinity, attachment to the EU and government satisfaction. Our contribution is significant as we suggest that there are different routes to voting for the far right by groups with different grievances, including non-immigration related.

Key words: far right, voters, anti-immigration attitudes, European Social Survey, Europe.

Introduction

The increase in electoral support for parties on the far-right of the political spectrum has sparked growing academic interest on who votes for these parties and why (see e.g. Mudde and Rovira, Kaltwasser 2018). Complementing past work in the field of far-right voting behaviour, recent studies focus on the common features of the typical far-right voter, who is likely to be a lowly educated (Lucassen and Lubbers 2012; Stockemer et al 2018) male individual (Givens 2004; Immerzeel et al 2015) with poor prospects in the labour market (Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2016; Swank and Betz 2003; Swank and Betz 2018). In terms of attitudinal characteristics, this individual is likely to be critical of immigration (e.g. Ivarsflaten 2008; Golder 2016; Rydgren 2008; Lucassen and Lubbers 2012; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020). This makes sense theoretically, as far right parties have ownership of the immigration issue (e.g. Van de Brug and Fennema 2007; Van Spagne 2010). They attempt to capitalise on a broad range of voters' concerns- for example the erosion of cultural norms, competition in the labour market, public goods provision, crime and terrorism- by directly associating these concerns with immigration. In other words, we have theoretical reasons to expect anti-immigration attitudes to be a prominent feature of the typical far right voter.

A closer look at materials that carry out systematic reviews of empirical literature, however, suggests that evidence is more mixed than commonly assumed with regards to anti-immigration attitudes (e.g. Stockemer et. al 2018). Given that immigration is the signature theme of far-right parties, absence of agreement in the literature about the role of anti-immigration attitudes is particularly puzzling. This article argues that in order to evaluate the role anti-immigration attitudes play in far-right party support, it is important to distinguish between the predictive power of immigration concerns on the one hand, and the question of how widespread these

concerns are among the far-right electorate on the other. Using data from the 8th wave of the European Social Survey (ESS), we confirm that anti-immigration attitudes are a strong driver of the far-right vote (e.g. Lucassen and Lubbers 2012; Lubbers and Güveli 2007; Rydgren 2008). More importantly, however, we illustrate that despite this predictive power anti-immigration attitudes are not a necessary condition for voting far right. A relatively large group of far-right voters (i.e. approximately one third) has neither cultural nor economic fears related to immigration. This group of supporters also differs from the typical far right voter profile in terms of education status, ideological affinity, attachment to the EU and level of satisfaction with the government.

In terms of theoretical and empirical significance, our findings are important as they suggest that there may be different routes to voting for the far right, and different voter groups might opt for these parties for different reasons and grievances, including non-immigration related. If we are right, then the mechanism linking voter preferences to far right parties is far more complex than the literature assumes.

This article proceeds as follows. First, we situate this study within the broader literature on far-right party support. Second, we present our research questions and argument. Third, we discuss the data and methodological procedures adopted for this research. We then proceed to carry out our bivariate and multi-variate analyses and discuss our results. The article concludes by highlighting avenues for future research.

Explanations for the far-right vote

Who votes for the far right and why? This question is the focus of a vast body of literature on far-right voting behaviour, which stresses the importance of different cultural, economic, social and institutional factors (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2018; Stockemer *et al.* 2018). Focusing on the emergence of a new post-material cleavage (Hooghe and Marks 2017) that divides voters along value-based lines, recent scholarship has emphasised the role of cultural drivers of far-right party support (Norris and Inglehart 2016). Much of this literature stresses the predictive power of cultural grievances at the individual level, suggesting that the most likely far-right voters are those concerned about globalisation and the large influx of outsiders. Those voters tend to reject foreigners on the premise of cultural norms (Golder 2016). Alternative perspectives emphasise the continued importance of material concerns, suggesting that austerity, economic deprivation and wealth inequalities continue to play an important role in driving far-right party support (Adler and Ansell 2019; Colantone 2018; Fetzer 2019; Engler and Weisstanner 2020; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020).

Beyond the 'culture versus economy' debate, other perspectives adopt a social alienation angle. According to these approaches, far-right party support can also be the product of societal decline and status anxiety (Rydgren 2009; Gidron and Hall 2019; Gest 2016). This type of argument draws on Putnam's (2000) 'bowling alone' story, suggesting that the decline of social capital intensifies feelings of social alienation, drawing voters closer to anti-establishment parties. These approaches are complementary to explanations that focus on democratic alienation from an institutional perspective. Voters who mistrust democratic procedures (Hooghe et al 2011) and

evaluate the quality of governance in their country poorly (Agerberg 2017) are more likely to support the far right.

In light of these debates, authors place varying emphasis on different predictors of far-right party support. Among others, these include low levels of education (Inglehart and Norris 2016; Andersen and Zimdars 2003; Harteveld et al. 2015; Kestilä-Kekkonen and Söderlund 2014), nationalist and/ or authoritarian attitudes (Lubbers and Coenders 2017), unemployment and/or limited access to the labour market (Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2016; Swank and Betz 2003; Swank and Betz 2018), occupation (Lubbers and Scheepers 2002; Levi and Patriarca 2019), gender (Givens 2004; Immerzeel et al 2015), protest voting (Van der Brug and Fennema 2007), opinions about the quality of government (Halikiopoulou and Vasilopoulou 2018; Agerberg 2017) and extreme events such as an economic and/ or political crisis (Golder 2016).

Anti-immigration attitudes

What is striking from a first glance at this vast literature on the voters of the far right, however, is the identification of opposition to immigration as the variable with the greatest predictive power (e.g. Ivarsflaten 2008; Rydgren 2008; Golder 2016; Rooduijn et al 2017; Abbondanza and Bailo 2018; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020). The emphasis on immigration makes sense from a supply side perspective, since this issue is at the heart of the far-right's message. Far right parties exploit the multi-faceted character of the immigration issue to target immigrants as threats to national security, employment, social security and the cohesion of European Judeo-Christian values (Williams 2010). The rapidly changing nature of the European far-right and its increased ability to permeate mainstream ground and set the political agenda (Halikiopoulou 2018; Mudde 2019) are partly reflected in the ways that these parties frame immigration. While the 'old', or

extreme right, continues to justify the exclusion of immigrants primarily on the basis of ascriptive criteria such as race, blood and creed, the 'new' or populist radical right is increasingly putting forward civic justifications that draw on broader criteria of national belonging (Halikiopoulou et al 2013; Eger and Valdez 2018). Parties such as the FN, the Swiss Peoples' Party (SVP), the Alternative for Germany (AfD), the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ), the Lega, Fratelli d'Italia (FdI), and the UK Independence Party (UKIP), have (re) branded themselves and their programmatic agendas in an attempt to appeal as broadly as possible, including to voters with economic concerns (Ivaldi 2015; Levi and Patriarca 2019).

Supply and demand match if voters either respond to the far-right's brand-marking and scapegoating of immigrants, and develop anti-immigration attitudes or see their own migration critical attitudes confirmed by the far-right's rhetoric (Van Spagne 2010). As a result, they too might link multiple societal problems - ranging from unemployment to public insecurity - to the immigrant threat (Golder 2016) and consequently, vote for the far right. Individuals tend to fear immigrants for a variety of reasons. For example, as noted above, they might perceive them as a threat to the dominant value consensus and national way of life (Inglehart and Norris 2016). Concerns that the infiltration of alien values dilutes traditional social norms may fuel negative sentiments against immigrants, and drive voters to support parties that pledge strict immigration policies (Golder 2016).

Individuals may also perceive immigrants as competitors in the labour market (e.g. Mayda 2006; Dancygier and Donnelly 2013; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020). This is especially the case for those social groups that are, or perceive that they are, vulnerable to competition (Polavieja 2016; Mayda 2006). The economic drivers of anti-immigration attitudes are distinct from, but may

overlap with, the cultural drivers (Lubbers and Güveli 2007; Lucassen and Lubbers 2012; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020). Recent studies also emphasise the importance of perceptions of crime levels (Rydgren 2008), terrorism risks (Hutchins and Halikiopoulou 2020; Ezzati 2020) and the presence of refugees (Altındağ and Kaushal 2020) as prime factors for shaping anti-immigration attitudes and the far-right vote.

This suggests that there are important reasons to expect immigration to be a key driver of far right party support. However, a closer look at materials that offer systematic literature reviews suggests that empirical evidence is more mixed, and immigration attitudes do not exhibit consistent influence in determining an individual's propensity to vote for a far-right party (Stockemer et al 2018; see also Van de Brug and Fennema 2007; Golder 2016). For example, from 470 immigration-related variables in the 36 studies covered in their sample, Stockemer et al (2018: 239) find only a 51 percent success rate (239 variables). Why is the empirical evidence more mixed than we might have otherwise expected?

The prevalence of anti-immigration attitudes among the far-right electorate

This article suggests that it is important to distinguish between the question of the predictive power of immigration concerns on the one hand, and the extent to which these concerns are prevalent among the entire far right electorate on the other (Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020). While a particular individual characteristic may have strong predictive power, not all voters of a particular political party exhibit this characteristic. To illustrate: using data from the ESS, we confirm the findings from previous literature (e.g. Golder 2016; Ivarsflaten 2008; Rydgren 2008; Inglehart and Norris 2016) that both cultural and economic concerns over immigration are strong

predictors of far right party support (See Table A2 in Appendix).[1] This suggests that voters who share sceptical attitudes towards immigration may be more likely to vote for far-right parties; it does not, however, automatically imply that every far-right voter shares these attitudes. On the contrary, there are many reasons to expect a diverse far-right party voting base, as with other party families.

In a world of catchall parties (Katz and Mair 1996), distinct party families no longer carve out the clear ideological positions of the 1950s and 1960s. Ideologies have become multidimensional (for example, individuals may be economically left leaning but conservative when it comes to values), and heuristics such as personality traits or even the physical attractiveness of politicians have become increasingly important (e.g. McAllister 2015; Rachat and Kenig 2018). This multidimensionality of issues applies to a range of party families. For example, while some voters clearly identify as left or right and liberal or conservative, and make their vote choice according to these ideological dispositions (Bobbio 1996, 92), this characteristic does not apply to all voters.

We might expect the same to apply to voters of the far right. The sheer electoral success of far-right parties since 2014 underscores the possibility that these parties have extended their appeal well beyond their core, anti-immigrant voting base. Riding on a wave of success, many such

[1] To capture the influence of fears about immigration on the far-right vote, we use a dummy variable coded 1 if the respondent voted for the far right and 0 otherwise. To measure our independent variable, we include both economic and cultural fears, as well as an interaction between the two. Other controls include the following variables: education, age, gender, place of residence, religiosity, professional activity, self-placement on a left-right scale, attachment to the European Union, satisfaction with the government; participation in social/ civic activities; and perceived possibility to influence the political system (Norris 2005; Allen 2017) (see Table A1 in appendix for the operationalisation). Because our dependent variable is binary (coded 1 if respondents vote for far-right parties and 0 otherwise) we carry out logistic regression analysis (Long et al. 2006).

parties, including the FN, the AfD and the Italian Lega, have doubled their vote share over the past decade, gaining 10, 15 and sometimes 20 to 30 percent of the popular vote. Alongside their leitmotif, the anti-immigration platform, these parties have increasingly adopted a populist platform with an anti-elitist message at its center. They challenge the political system, and all actors that represent it, as enemies of the popular will. In this sense they have become *anti-parties*, seeking to capitalise on growing popular discontent, regardless of whether this discontent originates in the economic, cultural or social realm (Canovan 1999; Rooduijn 2016).

This suggests that instead of a uniform far-right voter profile (e.g. Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Halla *et al.* 2017), there may in fact exist different types of far-right voters. While some are responding to the anti-immigrant far right propaganda, others may be drawn by the populist, anti-elitist, anti-establishment and protest-orientated narrative of these parties (Akkerman et al 2014). In sum, the far-right party populist turn and the tremendous increase in electoral support that has accompanied it, render it plausible that different far-right party supporters vote for such parties for different reasons. This brings us to our first hypothesis:

H(1): Anti-immigration attitudes are not a necessary condition for voting far right

If our analysis confirms our theoretical expectations that voters may also choose far-right parties for reasons other than immigration, then a next step should be to examine these voters more closely. Debates within the inner circles of contemporary populist far-right parties such as the FN or the AfD reveal significant differences among party membership between the more ideologically driven and moderate members (Loew and Faas 2019). We might expect similar divides among the far right electorate.

Voters with anti-immigration attitudes constitute the core far right voting base. Their opposition to immigration is ideological- or principled (Rydgren 2008; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020). As such they are likely to also have strong nationalist (Lubbers and Coenders 2017) and anti-elitist (Akkerman et al 2014) attitudes expressed, for example, in their disapproval of the European Union and their domestic institutions. These voters also tend to be predominantly right-wing and may hold conservative social and religious values (e.g. Chandler and Tsai 2001) On the other hand, non-core voters are likely to be less ideological, supporting the far right for non-principled reasons. As such they may not necessarily hold explicitly strong nationalist positions. They may also differ from the core voters on a range of other individual and attitudinal characteristics including education, position in the labour market, religiosity and/or ideological affinity. From this, we derive our second hypothesis:

H(2): Far-right supporters with anti-immigration attitudes are likely to have different individual and attitudinal characteristics from those supporters who are less sceptical of immigration

Research Design

We test our two hypotheses using data from the ESS (2018).[2] We categorize 'far right' parties according to the definitions provided by Lucassen and Lubbers (2012, as well as Halikiopoulou and Vlandas (2020), which yields a list of 21 parties in 16 countries (see Table A3 in the

[2] Asking questions about attitudinal, political, and demographic factors, the ESS allows for individual level analyses across cases and across time. We restrict our analysis to the 8th wave, of the ESS (2016) (N=31000). Using the ESS also follows a long tradition of studies in the fields of far right parties and voting behaviour (e.g. Ivarsflaten 2008; Lucassen and Lubbers 2012; Rydgren 2008, Oesch 2008).

Appendix).[3] In order to proceed in our analysis, it is important to first specify what it means to hold anti-immigration attitudes. This specification is the more important the more voters choose the middle value between negative and positive sentiments toward immigrants. In methodological terms, this entails caution when assigning individuals to categories, which suggest they hold anti-immigration attitudes. The problem is amplified by the fact that we lack a clear-cut theoretical definition, which would allow us to determine the cut-off point between those who hold and those who do not hold anti-immigration attitudes. Nevertheless, we can probably agree that individuals who are in the middle (5 on the 0-10 scale) are neither pro- nor anti-immigrant and hold neutral attitudes on whether immigrants enrich the economic and cultural life of a country.

Using the cut-off point of 5, we assign voters to one of the four categories: (1) voters with economic and cultural fears related to immigration; (2) voters with predominantly economic fears; (3) voters with predominantly cultural fears; and (4) voters with neither cultural nor economic fears[4]. To do so, we create a binary distinction between the absence and the presence of economic and cultural fears. In an additional coding, we proceed by categorising respondents on the neutral scale (5) as holding anti-immigrant attitudes. This categorization is even more conservative as we only code individuals who rate both immigration proxies at a value of 6 or higher as having neither economic nor cultural fears. The aim of this additional coding is to

[3] The version of the ESS (2018) data we use includes 23 countries. We excluded Russia and Israel because they are not in Europe. We also excluded Ireland, Iceland, Luxembourg, and Spain because there was no far right party at the time of data collection in 2016 that was sufficiently strong to be listed as a vote choice in the ESS.
[4] We test whether the assumption of irrelevant alternatives (IIA) hold: a Suest- Hausmann test of IIA confirms that this is not a problem.

identify whether there is still a sizable percentage of far-right voters without any kind of anti-immigration attitudes or fears, even if we exclude the middle category.

To provide a first overview of where voters stand concerning anti-immigrant attitudes, we combine the two 0 to 10 scales on cultural and economic fears to one 0 to 20 scale, and show both the raw numbers and the percentage of far-right voters within each category. In a second and third step, we present the distribution of different types of far-right voters, with a benchmark of 5 and 6 for having these fears, respectively. Fourth, we display some histograms of all independent variables across the four categories of far-right voters. These histograms give us some indication on whether far right voters with or without immigration fears display different characteristics. Fifth, we run a multiple regression model. The dependent variable distinguishes four types of far-right voters: (1) voters with neither economic nor cultural fears related to immigration, (2) voters with economic fears related to immigration, (3) voters with cultural fears related to immigration, (4) voters with economic and cultural fears related to immigration. The reference category refers to voters with neither economic nor cultural fears related to immigration. Because our dependent variable is categorical, with no hierarchy in the categories, we carry out multinomial logistic regression analysis (Long et al. 2006). Our controls are the same as before. We also add country fixed effects to control for all country specific variation, as well as clustered standard errors by country. Since this maximum likelihood estimation does not allow us to directly interpret the coefficients, we also present predicted probability plots of all our independent variables. These predicted probabilities display the graphical representation of the possible varying effect of any of the independent variables on our four categories of voters.

Results

Our results support H(1). Specifically we find that not everyone who votes for the far right necessarily fears or rejects immigrants (Tables 1 and 2). On the contrary, a relatively large group of far-right voters is either neutral in terms of their immigration stance, or pro-immigrant. For example, Table 1, which combines the cultural and economic immigration sentiment proxy on a 0 to 20 scale illustrates that the majority of voters is below the threshold of 10 entailing they are sceptical of immigrants to varying degrees. However, we also see that roughly one-third (36 percent of far-right voters) are above the threshold of 10, entailing that there is a sizable proportion of voters who do not hold anti-immigration attitudes. If we look at Table 2 and take the 5-point cut-off, more than 30 percent of far right-voters have neither economic nor cultural fears related to immigration. This is a remarkable number given that these parties' dominant focus is on immigration.

Table 3 further illustrates that we can distinguish between two large groups of far-right voters if we take their positions on immigration as their defining feature. Rather unsurprisingly, the largest group of far-right voters, comprising roughly 42 percent of respondents, are voters who think that immigrants pose both a cultural and economic threat. However, the second largest group of far-right voters are voters who have neither cultural nor economic concerns over immigration. This group makes up roughly 32 percent of self-declared far-right voters. The final two groups, voters with predominantly economic or predominantly cultural fears only make a relatively small percentage of the total of self-declared far-right voters. The former group consists of 16 percent of the total of radical right supporters and the latter of roughly 11 percent. Even if we include the middle category of 5 as having immigration related fears, there are still 15 percent of far-right voters in the category of no economic and no cultural fears (see Table 3).

<Tables 1, 2 and 3 about here>

This implies that the far-right has reached out beyond its core. Not everyone who votes for the far right does so because they reject immigrants. The fact that we have a heterogeneous pool of voters when it comes to support for the far-right's leitmotiv of immigration, supports the plausibility of different types of support bases; that is, these different groups of voters could also be distinct when it comes to other characteristics of the far-right vote. In particular, it is possible that the two largest blocks of far-right voters, i.e. voters with economic and cultural concerns over immigration, and voters with neither concern, differ concerning other characteristics, such as attachment to the EU or degree of religiosity. A series of histograms documents differences between far-right voters, in particular between those voters with economic and cultural concerns related to immigration, and those voters where these concerns are absent (see Appendix).

A more formal analysis presented in Table 5 and Figures 1 to 11 largely confirms this initial descriptive picture. In support of H(2), we find that there are key differences between our two main groups of voters – voters with economic and cultural fears, and voters who do not express these fears – concerning the influence of four factors: (1) left-right placement, (2) attachment to the European Union and (3) satisfaction with the government, (4) the feeling on whether they can influence the political system.[5] For the two small groups of voters, i.e. voters with either cultural

[5] For some of the statistically significant variables (e.g. satisfaction with the EU), the confidence intervals overlap between our main categories (i.e. voters with immigration fears and voters without immigration fears). However, this is unavoidable if for one type of voter the likelihood of voting for the far-right increases, while it decreases for the other type.

or economic fears, the different effects of the 11 variables are minor and as such, we do not discuss differences in detail.

Our results confirm that we may distinguish between two types of far-right voters: ideologues who constitute the core, principled, anti-immigrant far-right voting base, and peripheral moderates who are not particularly concerned with immigration. Ideologues have both economic and cultural concerns over immigration; they are also more right-wing than voters without these fears (see Figure 1 and 7). This finding is in line with the literature on anti-immigration sentiment, which argues that right-leaning individuals are more likely to hold positions critical of immigration (see Chandler and Tsai 2001; Rustenbach 2010). In addition, their likelihood to vote for the far right further increases with their dissatisfaction with the national government and the EU (see Figures 8 and 9). They are also more likely to vote for the far right the less they believe they are able to influence the political system decreases (see Figure 11).

In contrast, peripheral moderates are those with less explicit anti-immigration sentiments. Our analysis yields a range of particularly interesting results with regards to this group. Specifically, these voters are distinct from the ideologues in that their likelihood of voting for the far right increases with their satisfaction with the government and the EU. Voters in this group are not necessarily right-wing, but they have an increased probability to vote far right if they think that they can influence the political system. It is likely that these voters see the-far right as an alternative means of political engagement, in the absence of the possibility of influencing the system through mainstream parties.

With regards to religiosity, it is theoretically possible that far right-voters with anti-immigration sentiments are more religious than those without these fears. Religion could induce negative attitudes towards immigrants (Bloom at al 2015) considering that far-right parties often attempt to mobilise immigration concerns on religious grounds, for example by presenting themselves as defenders of Christian values against Islam (e.g. Froio 2018). In doing so they have partly displaced conservative and Christian democratic parties as the main protectors of Christian identity. In addition, the combination of religious purity coupled with the anti-immigration sentiment might resonate well with religious fundamentalists or individuals with absolutist religious beliefs (see Bloom et al 2015). However our empirical analysis suggests that the moderates are not necessarily less likely than the ideologues to hold religious values.

In order to reassure both the reader and ourselves regarding the validity of our findings we conduct some alternative specifications with our data. For example, if we exclude the two governing parties at the time of the survey – the Hungarian Fidesz Party and the Polish Pis Party - the findings in Figures 1 to 11 do not change.

<Table 5 about here>

<Figures 1 to 11 about here>

Conclusion

This article has focused on the diverse voting pool of far-right parties. We commence from an initial observation that the empirical literature on far-right voting tends to produce inconclusive

results that often do not match the theoretical expectations that there is one type of far-right voter, especially concerning the far right's signature theme of immigration. This suggests that insufficient attention has been paid to the fact that the far right voting base could consist of groups with different characteristics and preferences. In order to assess this claim empirically we have tested the extent to which immigration attitudes are a necessary condition for far-right voting and examined the individual and attitudinal characteristics of different far right voter groups. Our results from both bivariate and multivariate analyses, using data from the 8th wave of the ESS illustrate that the pool of far-right supporters is more diverse and heterogeneous than we might expect, confirming that far-right voters are not drawn from one demographic cohort. Instead, the far-right voter pool is diverse as multiple can paths lead to far-right party support.

Our contribution is significant as the identification of different routes to voting for the far right by groups with different grievances, including non- immigration related, challenges the conventional wisdom that focuses almost exclusively on immigration as the key driver of far-right party support. If one third of far-right voters are individuals with neither cultural nor economic concerns over immigration, then the mechanisms linking voter preferences to far-right parties is far more complex than the literature assumes. This is especially pertinent at a time when the far right has tripled its vote share in many countries. To extend their support to such a degree, far-right parties must mobilise beyond their secure, or traditional, voting base and attract diverse population groups. Why and how they do this, especially beyond their immigration comfort zone, is pivotal for understanding far right party support.

Our study has offered a first step in understanding different types of far-right voters. Our overall finding, i.e. that not everyone votes for the far right because of immigration-related fears, is in

itself important. Limitations in our design, however, allow room for further examination. First, data availability has restricted the scope of our research. As the ESS 8th wave was conducted in 2016, and does not cover all European countries, we were not able to include some far-right populist parties such- for example UKIP- or capture voting trends during the latest populist wave in 2017 in our analysis. Second, we mainly point to correlations rather than causal connections in our research design. Third, the static nature of our study entails that we only measure differences in types of far-right voters at one point in time. This design does not allow us to follow individual trajectories of far-right party support. For example, it is possible that peripheral voters initially vote for the far right for reasons other than immigration, but in the long run become socialised into these parties and endorse their ideological positions. This would entail a transition from peripheral to principled voting. Or it may be the opposite: their lack of strong ideological positions entails they are occasional far-right voters, more likely to abandon the far right at the next election.

Longitudinal, panel or experimental studies, could further examine these possibilities. Specifically, future research should delve more closely into mechanisms that link each type of voter to the far right. The identification of the specific circumstances under which different voters may be drawn to the far right will significantly benefit the research community.

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Figures and Tables

Table 1: Distribution of far-right voters by degree to which they fear immigration, scale 0-20

	Immigration fears	**Far right voters**	**Percent**	**Cum. Percent**
Very strong fears	0	253	10.23	10.23
	1	60	2.43	12.65
	2	125	5.05	17.70
	3	95	3.84	21.54
	4	145	5.86	27.41
	5	129	5.21	32.62
	6	178	7.19	39.81
	7	183	7.40	47.21
	8	220	8.89	56.10
	9	166	6.71	62.81
	10	270	10.91	73.73
	11	153	6.18	79.91
	12	147	5.94	85.85
	13	125	5.05	90.91
	14	73	2.95	93.86
	15	61	2.47	96.32
	16	43	1.74	98.04
	17	23	.93	98.99
	18	15	.61	99.60
	19	5	.2	99.80
No fears at all	20	5	.2	100

Table 2: Different types of far right voters (benchmark at 5 for both dimensions)

	Raw number	Percent
Economic and cultural fears	1081	41.66%
Economic fears	409	15.76%
Cultural fears	285	10.98%
Neither cultural nor economic fears	820	31.59%
Total	2595	100

Table 3: Different types of far right voters (benchmark at 6 for both dimensions)

	Raw number	**Percent**
Economic and cultural fears	1621	62.47%
Economic fears	350	13.49%
Cultural fears	222	8.55%
Neither cultural nor economic fears	402	15.49%
Total	2595	100

Table 4: Multinomial logistic regression of far-right voters with different immigration concerns

Model	**I**	**II**	**III**
Education	-.094**	-.020	-.066*
	(.046)	(.051	(.037)
Age			
35-49	-.060	.037	.088
	(.213)	(.204)	(.175)
50-64	-.203	-110	-.218
	(.211)	(.239)	(.180)
Over 65	.143	.047	.053
	(.304)	(.364)	(.259)
Gender	-015	.259	.446***
	(.140)	(.163)	(.113)
Place of Residence			
A big city	.646**	.153	.046
	(.300)	(.342)	(.247)
Suburbs or outskirts of a big city	.490	.175	.012
	(.214)	(.232)	(.161)
Country village	.715***	.204	.184
	(.216)	(.235)	(.162)
Farm or home in countryside	.438	-.072	.031
	(.307)	(.383)	(.272)
Religiosity	.022	-.022**	.033
	(.025)	(.025)	(.021)
Professional activity			
Paid work limited contract	.228	.044	.025
	(.275)	(.335)	(.229)
Self-employed or working for family business	-.126	-.139	-.295
	(.253)	(.299)	(.212)
In school or studying	-.154	.250	-.991**
	(.487)	(.495)	(.459)
Retired	-.199	-.068	-.169
	(.259)	(.311)	(.215)
Unemployed	.384	.719*	..0003
	(.325)	(.386)	(.343)
Disabled	.192	-.513	-.214
	(.373)	(.522)	(.343)
Other	.797	-.524	.389
	(.633)	(1.17)	(.525)
Housewife or houseman	.203	.434	-.109
	(.324)	(.365)	(.292)
Self-placement of left-right scale	.063*	.057	.160***
	(.034)	(.037)	(.039)
Attachment to the European Union	-.070**	-.129***	-.175***
	(.029)	(.032)	(.024)
Satisfaction with the national government	-.055*	-.047	.076
	(.033)	(.036)	(.027)
Participation in civic and social activities	-.022	.011	-.106*
	(.075)	(.077)	(.063)
Influence the political system	-.133	-.085	-212***
	:085)	(.093)	(.069)
Constant	-.020	.274	-2.46***
	(.507)	(.512)	(.380)
Pseudo Rsquared	.11		
N	2403		

Note: $^{***}p<.01$, $^{**}p<.05$, $^{*}p<.1$. We also run our multinomial logistic model with country dummies, and the results mimic those presented in Table 4 and Figures 2 to 12. The same applies if we exclude Hungary and Poland, whose two far-right parties Fidesz and Pis are not always coded as far right?

Figure 1: The effect of education on different types of far-right voters

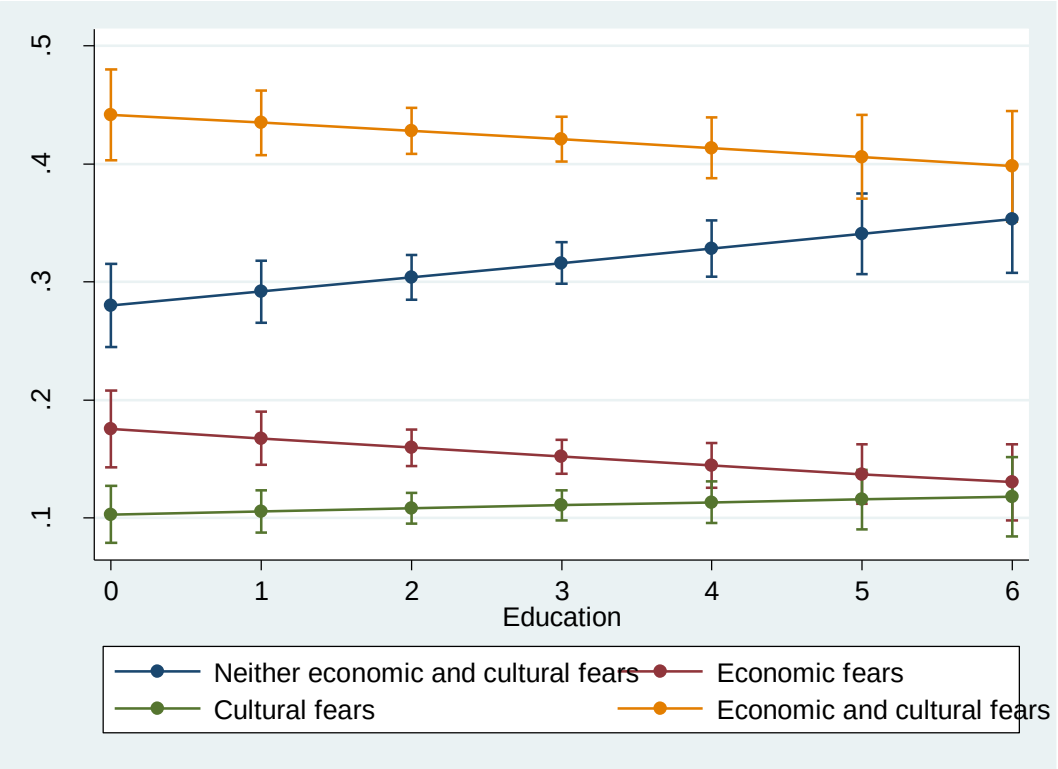


Figure 2: The effect of age on different types of far-right voters

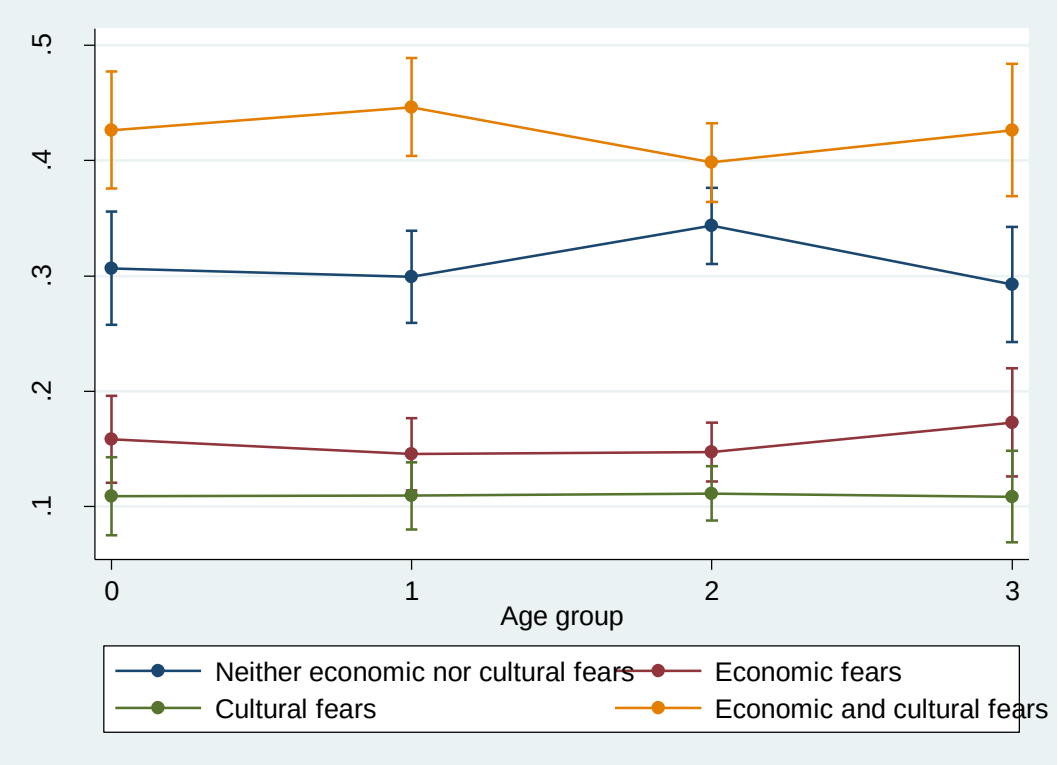


Figure 3: The effect of gender on different types of far-right voters

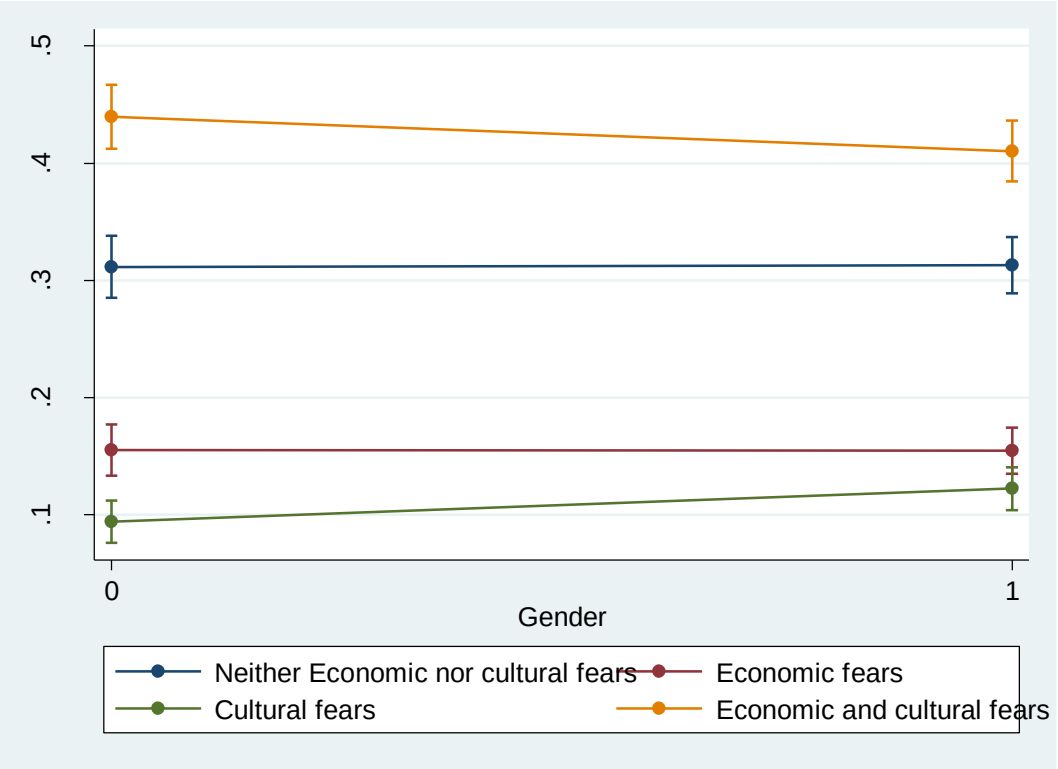


Figure 4: The effect of the place of residence on different types of far-right voters

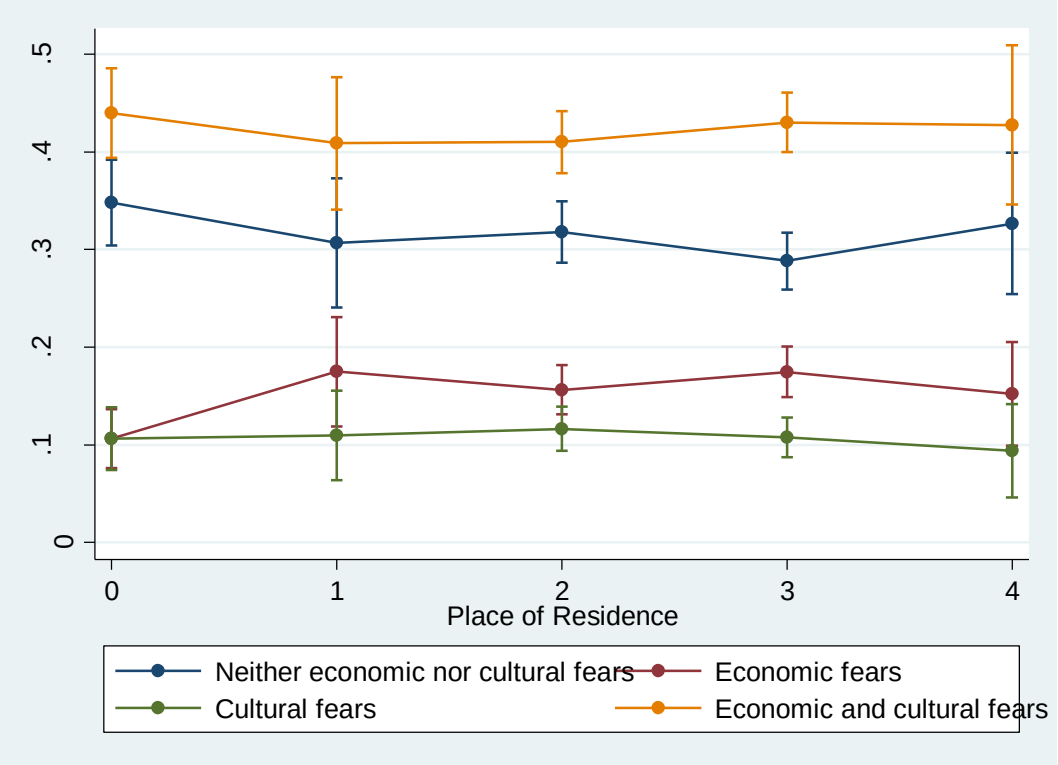


Figure 5: The effect of religiosity on different types of far-right voters

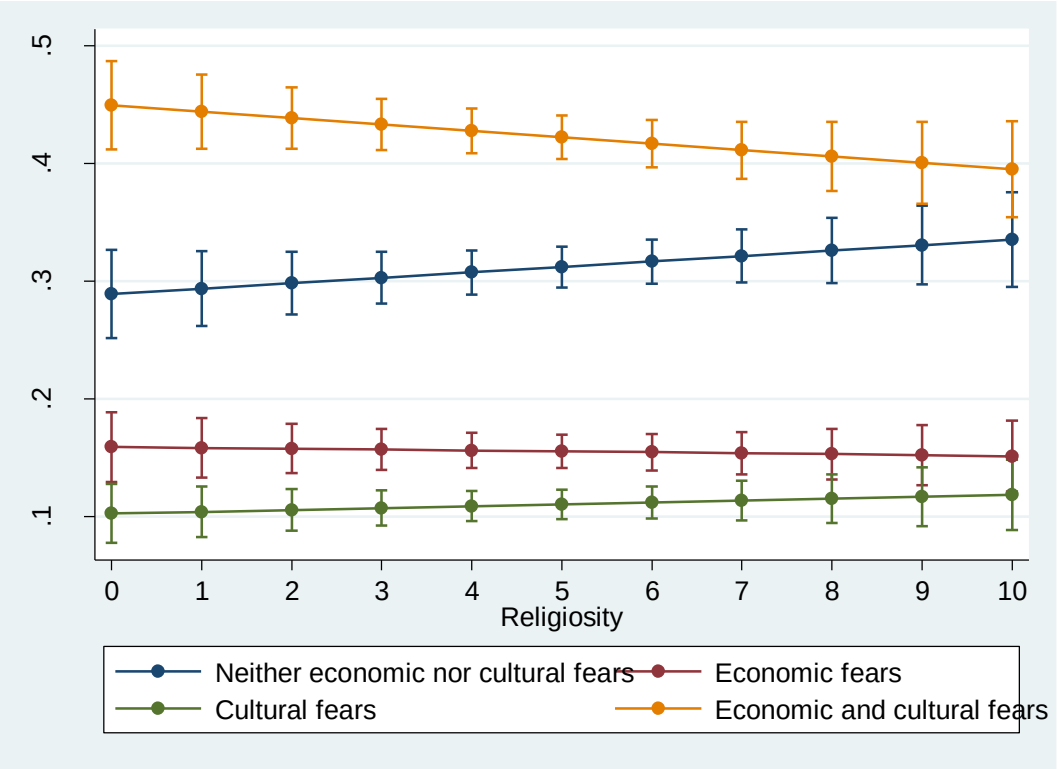


Figure 6: The effect of professional activity on different types of far right voters

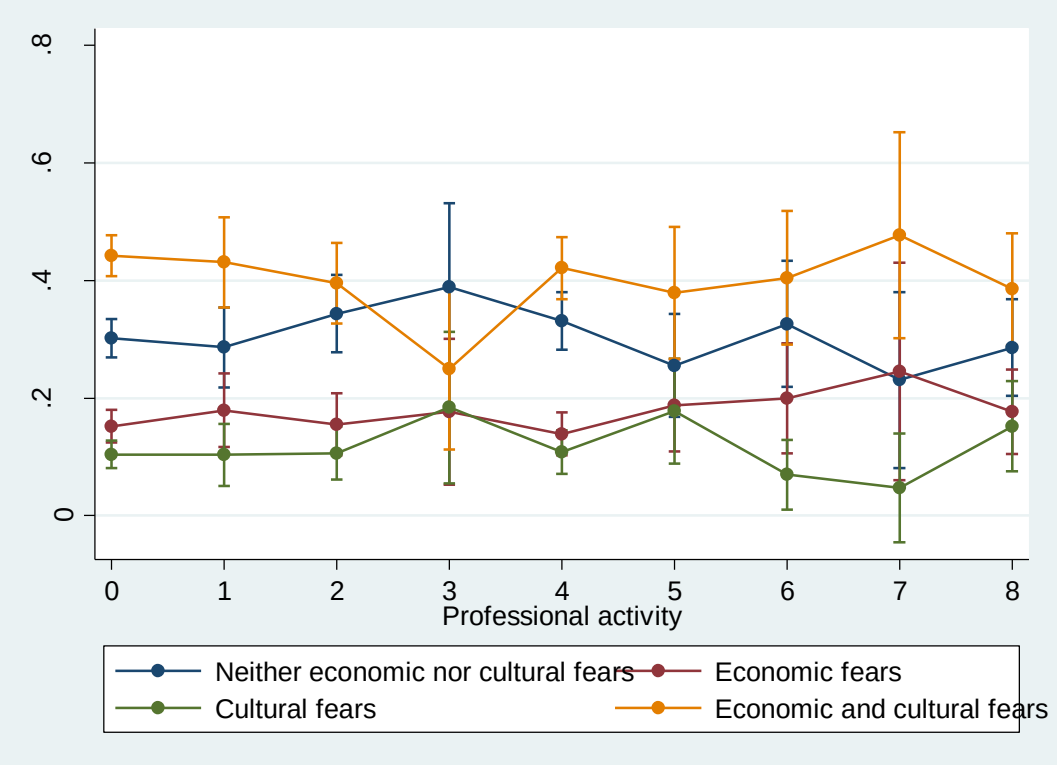


Figure 7: The effect of left-right placement on different types of far-right voters

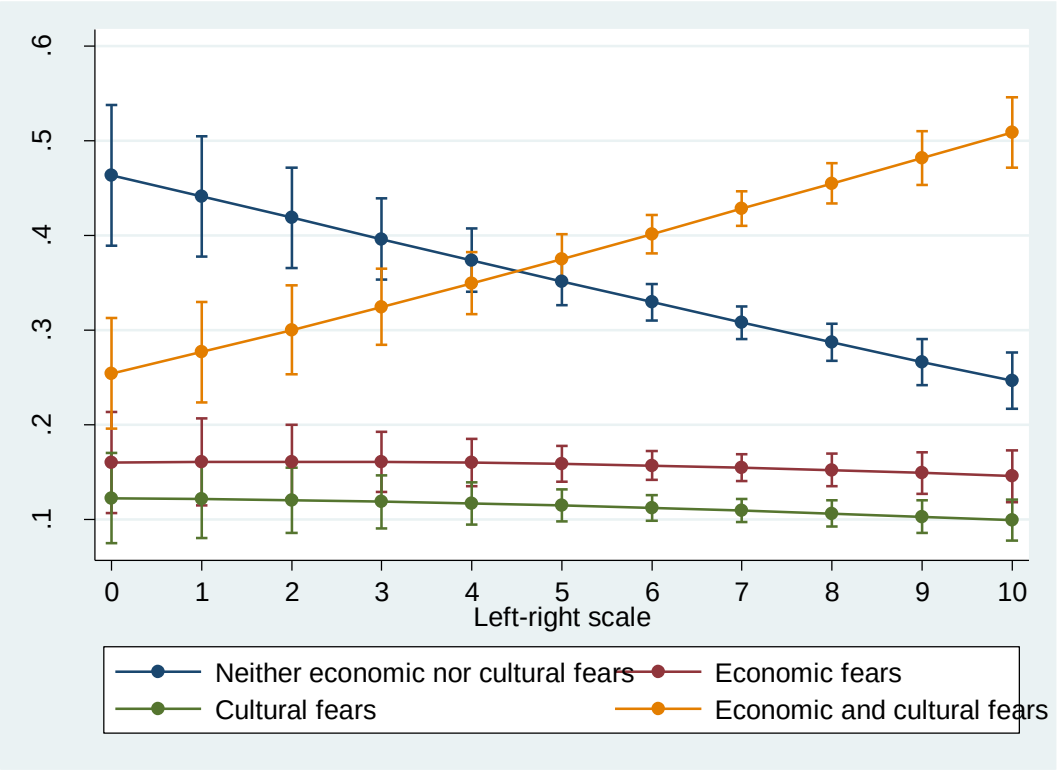


Figure 8: The effect of attachment toward the EU on different types of far-right voters

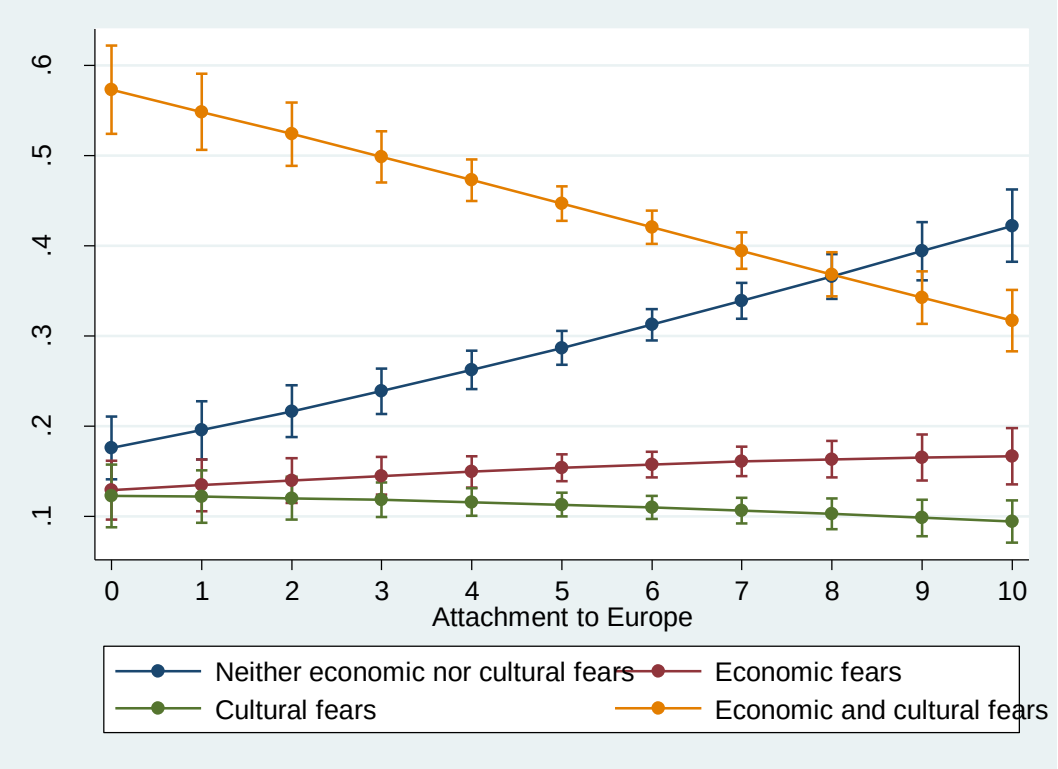


Figure 9: The effect of satisfaction with the national government on different types of far-right voters

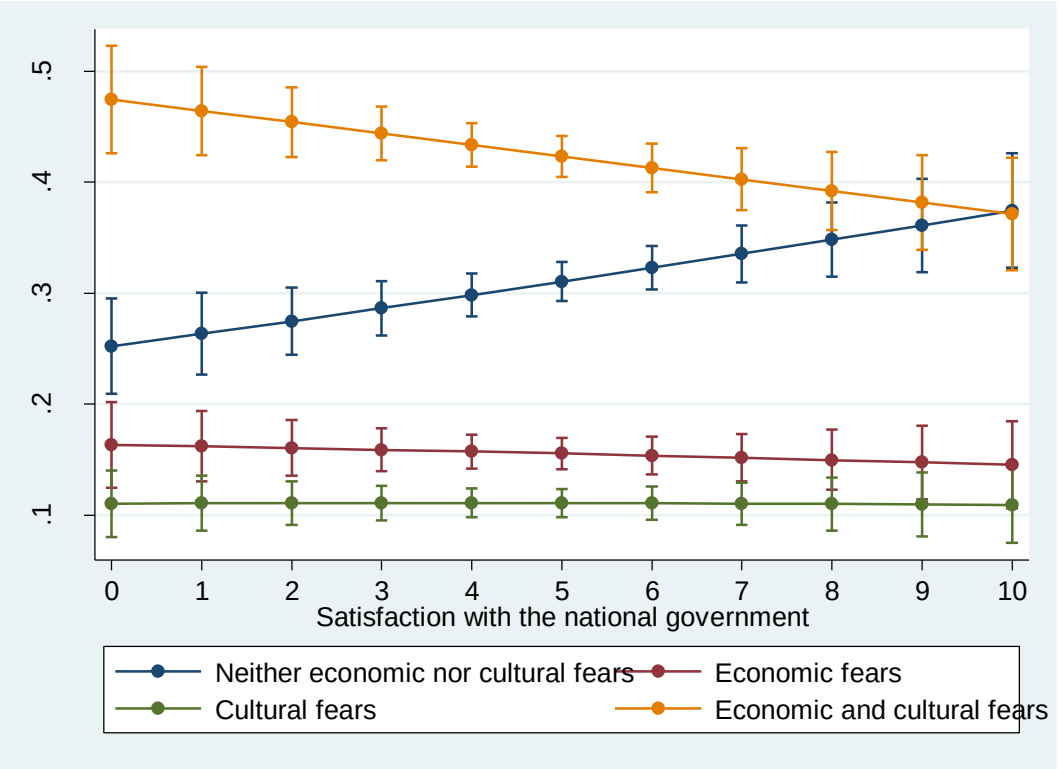


Figure 10: The effect of participation in civic and social activities on different types of far-right voters

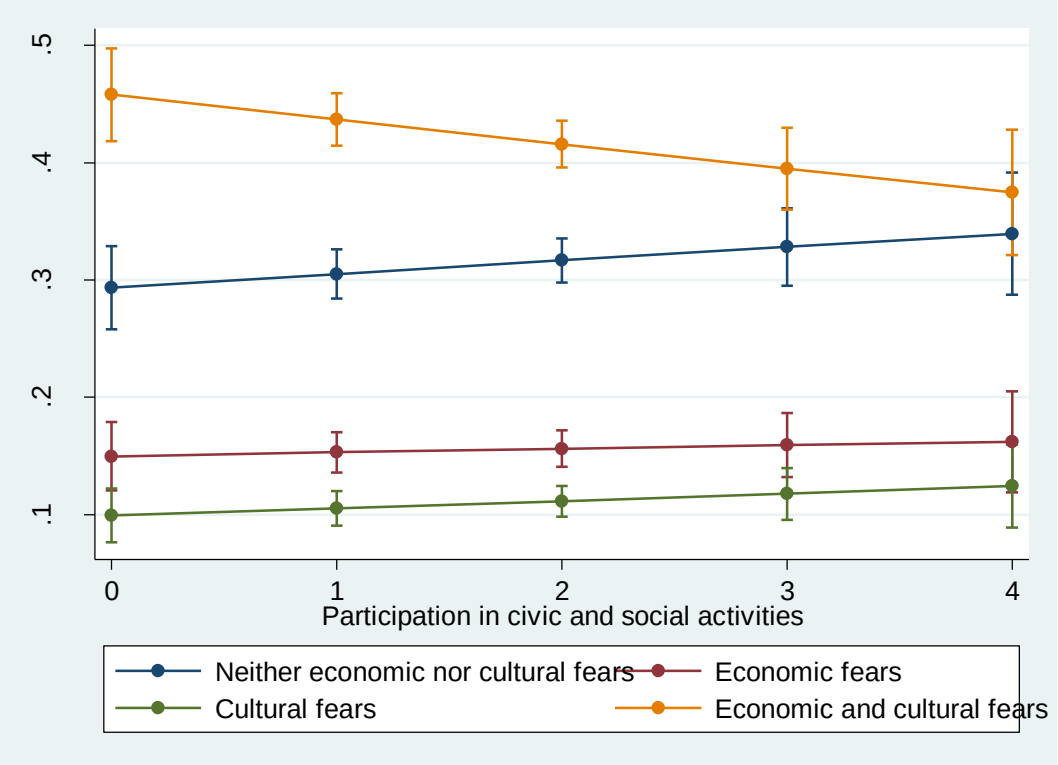
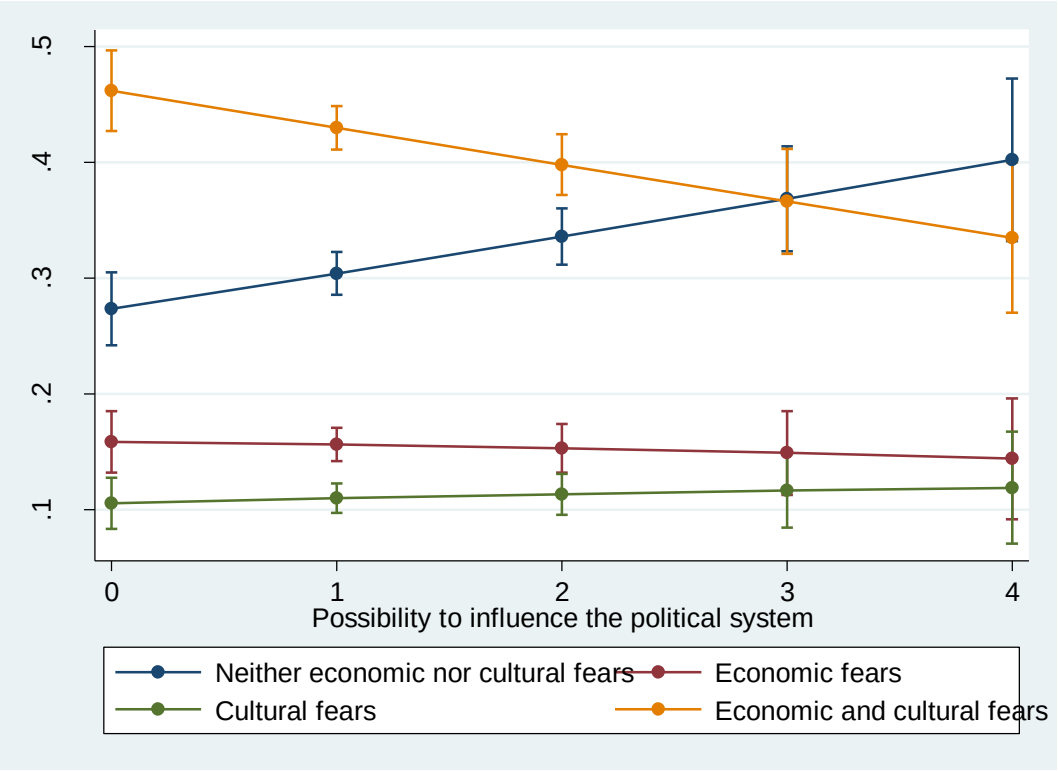


Figure 11: The effect of the self-perceived possibility to influence the political system on different types of far-right voters



Appendix

Table A1: Operationalisation of Independent variables

Variable Name	Operationalisation
Education	7 value scale ranging from 0 less then lower secondary education to 6 higher tertiary education
Age	4 value ordinal variable comprising the four categories 18 to 34, 35 to 49, 50 to 64; and above 65
Gender	Dummy variable coded 0 for women and 1 for men
Place of residence	We distinguish five categories: (1) Living in a big city, (2) Suburbs or outskirts of a big city, (3) Town or small city, (4) village in the countryside, (5) farm or home in the countryside. Since we cannot necessarily assume a linear relationship between the variable place of residency and far right electoral support, we create four dummy variables with living in a big city serving as the reference category
Religiosity	11 value scale ranging from not at all religious to very religious
Professional Activity	We distinguish 9 professional categories: (1) paid work unlimited contract, (2) paid work limited contract, (3) self-employed or working for family business, (4) in school or studying, (5) retired, (6) unemployed, (7) disabled, (8) other, (9) housewife or houseman. To distinguish these 9 activities, we create 8 dummy variable, with the first category paid work unlimited contract serving as the reference category
Self-placement on a left-right scale	11 value scale ranging from left (coded 0) to right (coded 10)
Attachment to the European Union	11 value scale ranging from not emotionally attached (coded 0) to (10) very emotionally attached
Satisfaction with the national government	11 value scale ranging from extremely dissatisfied (coded 0) to (10) very satisfied
Participation in social and civic activities	5 value ordinal variable (coded 0 to 4) ranging from much less than most to much more than most
Influence the political system	ordinal variable coded 0 for individuals, who think that the political system does not at all allow people to have an influence on politics, to 4 the political system allows a great deal of people to have an influence on the political system.

Table A2: Logistic regression model measuring the influence of economic and cultural fears on the far right vote

Economic fears	-.108*** (.020)
Cultural fears	-.082*** (.018)
Interaction between economic and cultural fears	-.151*** (.004)
Education	-144*** (.015)
Age [reference category: ADD]	
35-49	-.148** (.076)
50-64	-.267*** (.077)
Over 65	.877** (.111)
Gender	.175*** (.050)
Place of residence	
A big city	-3.98*** (.229)
Suburbs or outskirts of a big city	-.039 (.071)
Country village	-.062 (.071)
Farm or home in countryside	-.441*** (.110)
Religiosity	.013*** (.008)
Professional activity	
Paid work limited contract	.161 (.107)
Self-employed or working for family business	-.355** (.093)
In school or studying	-.632*** (.180)
Retired	.285*** (.093)
Unemployed	-.207 (.128)
Disabled	.142 (.147)
Other	.065 (.255)
Housewife or houseman	-.263** (.120)
Self-placement of left-right scale	.344*** (.012)
Attachment to the European Union	.011 (.010)
Satisfaction with the national government	.079*** (.011)
Participation in civic and social activities	-.153 (.027)
Constant	-2.50*** (.153)
Pseudo Rsquared	.18

Table A3: List of far-right parties included in our analysis

Country	**Far right party**
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ)
Austria	Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ)
Belgium	Vlams Belang (VB)
Czech Republic	Workers Party of Socialist Justice (DSSS)
Denmark	Danish Peoples' Party (DF)
Finland	Finns Party (PS)
France	French National Front (FN)
France	Movement for France (MPF)
Germany	National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD)
Germany	The Republicans (REP)
Hungary	Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik)
Hungary	Hungarian Civic Alliance (Fidesz)
Italy	Lega Nord (LN)
Lithuania	Order and Justice (TT)
Netherlands	Party for Freedom (FPVV)
Norway	Progress Party (FrP)
Poland	Law and Justice (PiS)
Poland	Congress of the New Right (KPN)
Poland	League of Polish Families (LPR)
Portugal	National Renovator Party (PNR)
Sweden	Sweden Democrats (SD)

Figure A(1): Education levels across different types of far right voters

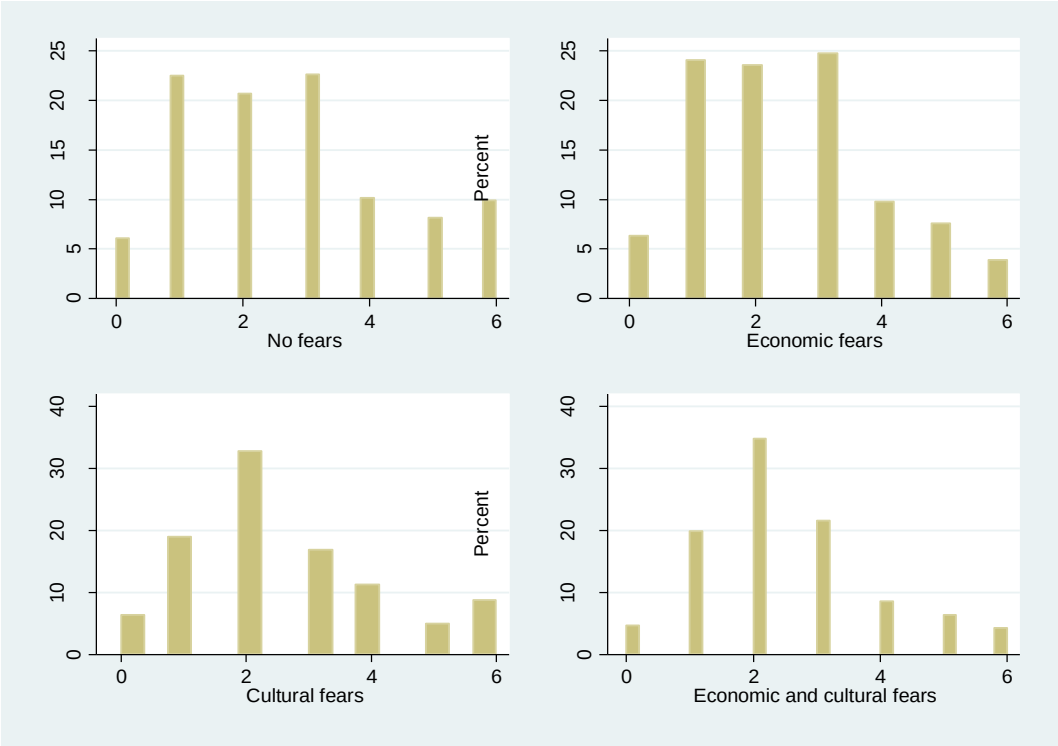


Figure A(2): Age differences across different types of far right voters (Graph 1: 18 to 35; graph 2: 36 to 50; graph 3: 51-65; graph 4 66 and over)

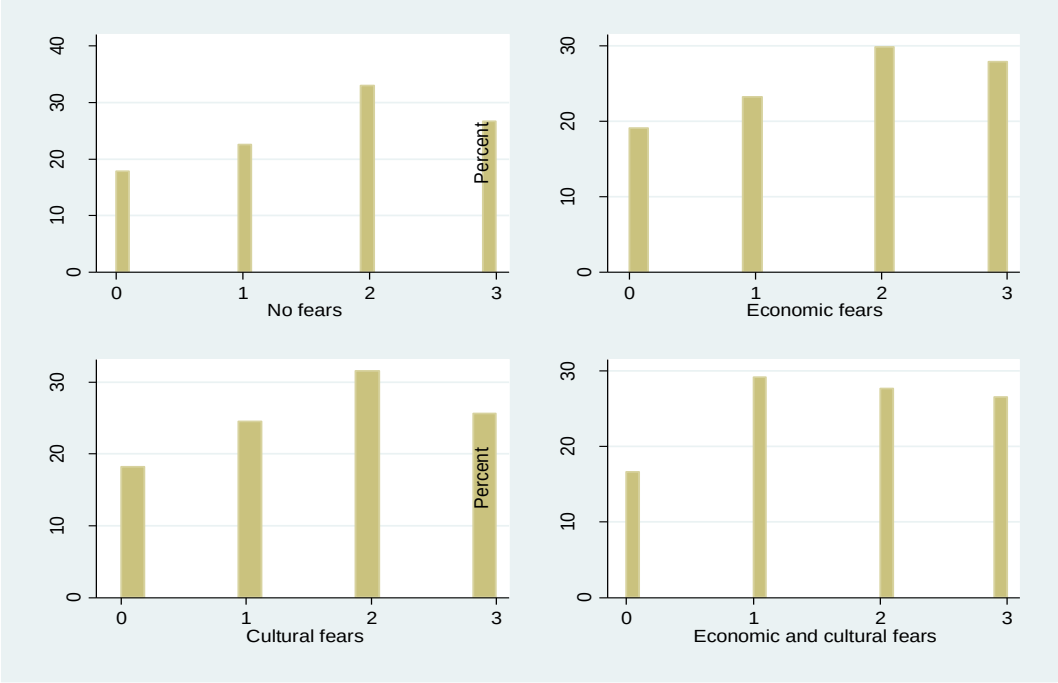


Figure A(3): Gender differences across different types of far right voters (left bar are women, the right bar are men)

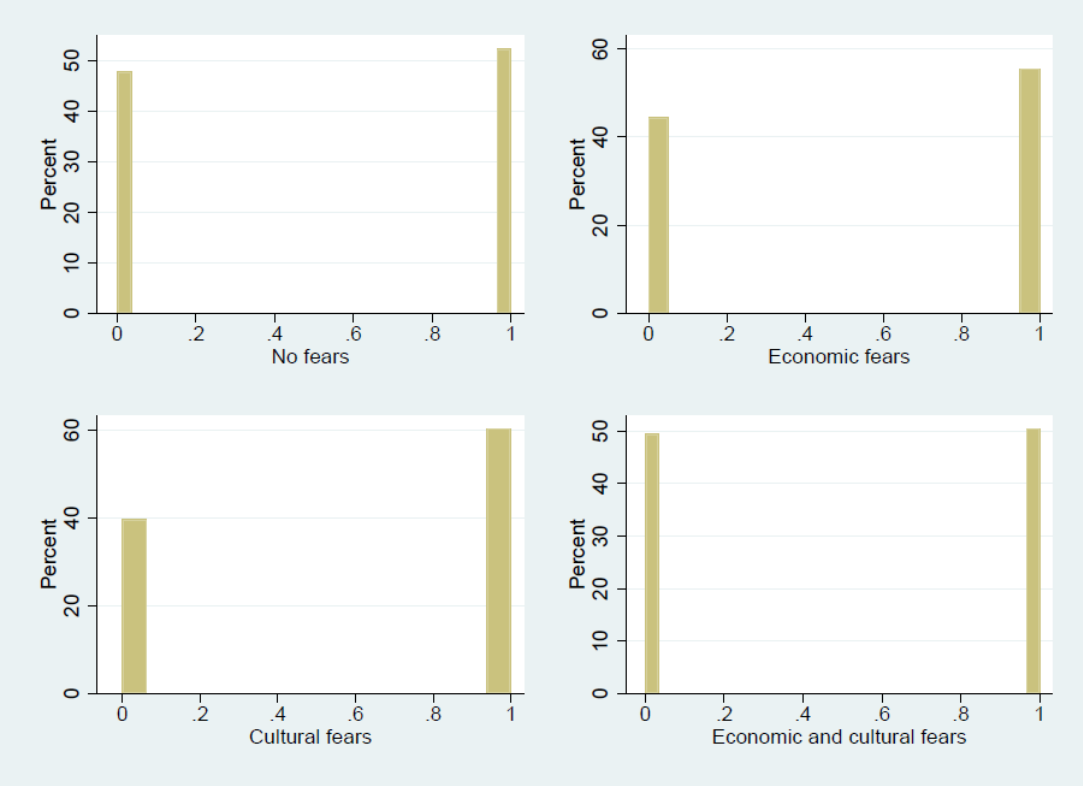


Figure A(4): Differences in the place of residence across different types of far right voters (rural to urban)

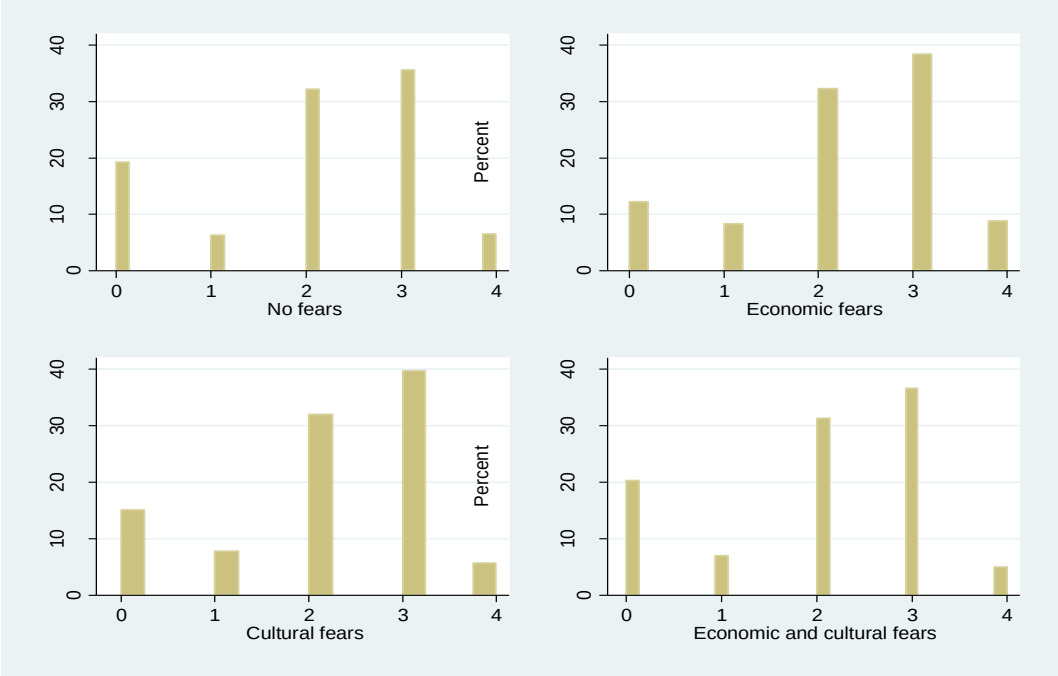


Figure A(5): Religiosity and different types of far right voters

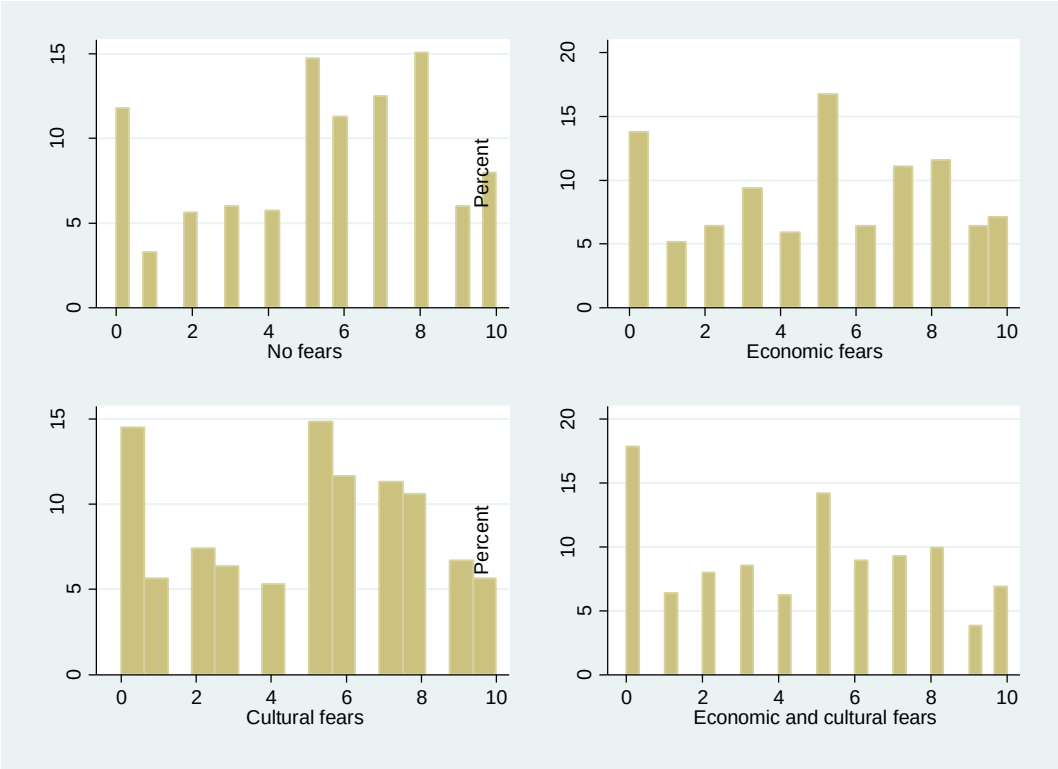


Figure A(6): Different professional activities across different types of far right voters

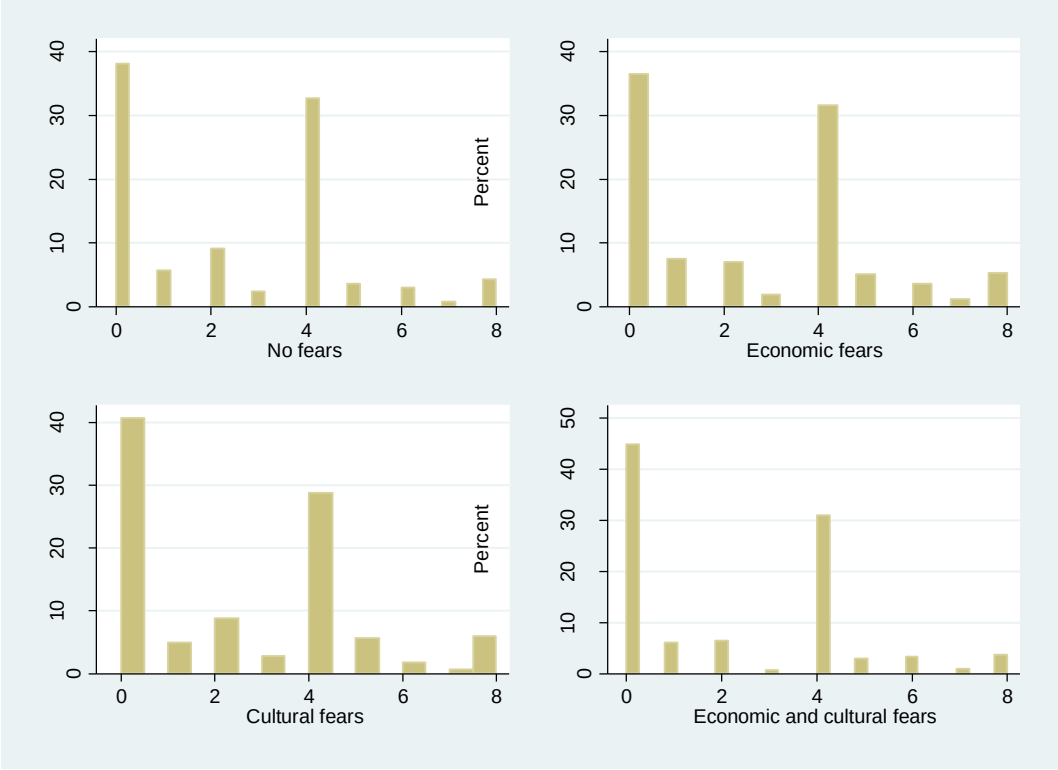


Figure A(7): Left-right placement across different types of far right voters

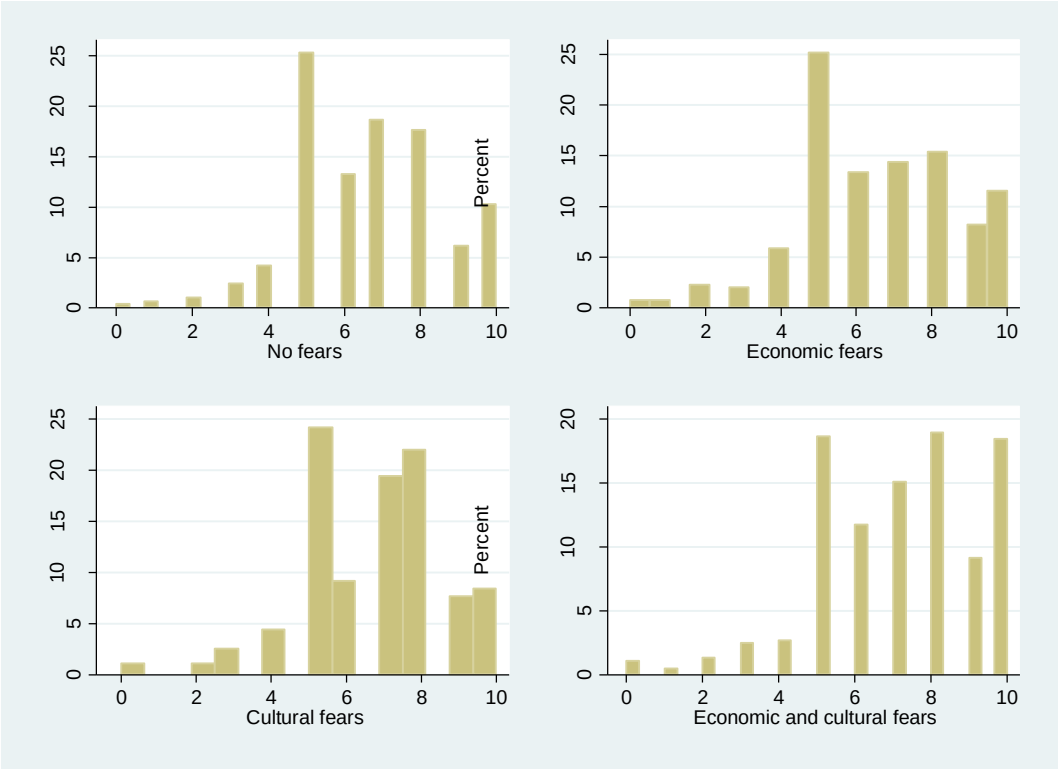


Figure A(8): Attachment to the EU across different types of far right voters

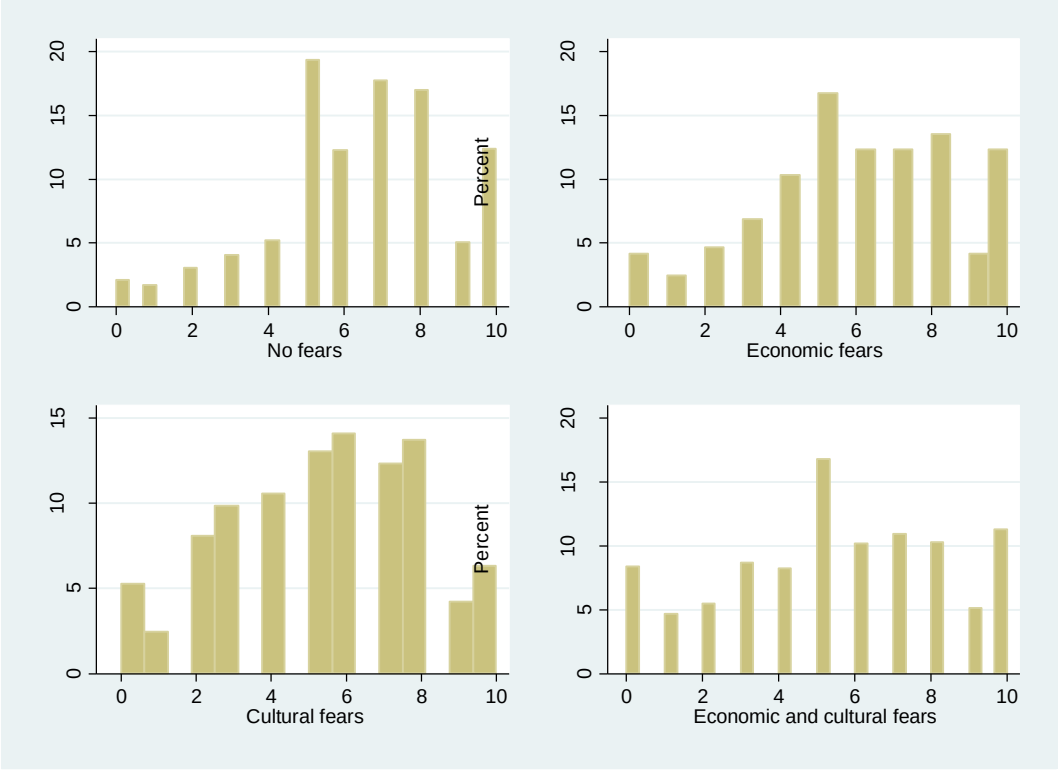


Figure A(9): Satisfaction with the national government across different types of far right voters

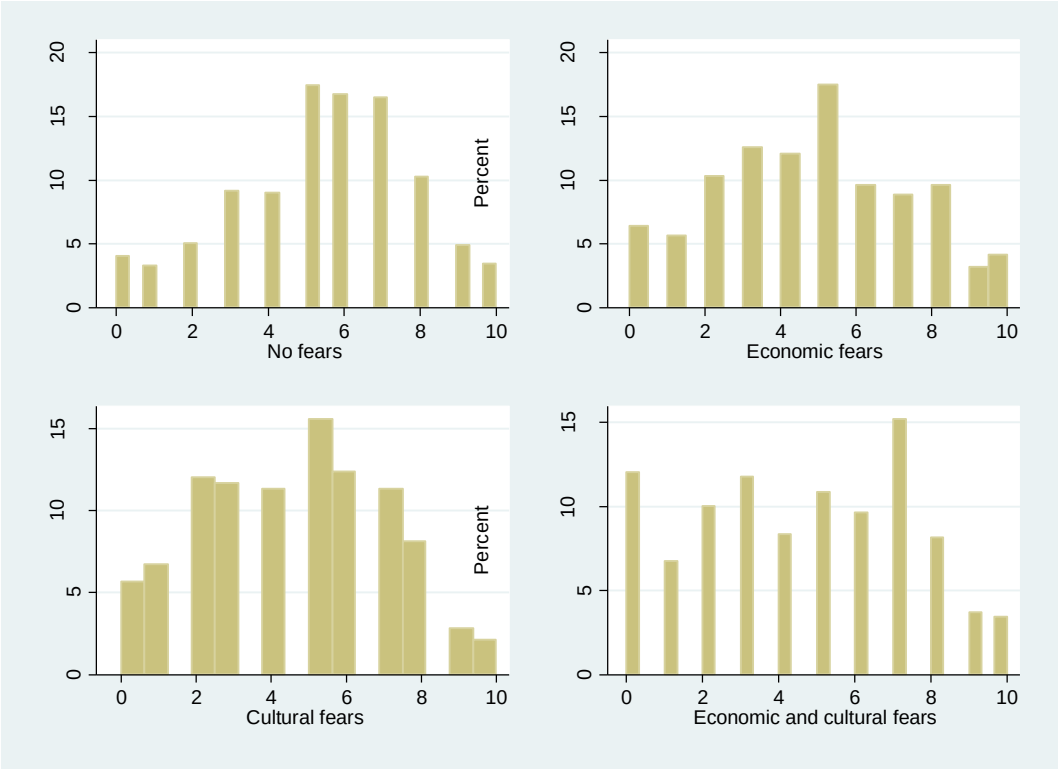


Figure A(10): Participation in civic and social activities across different types of far right voters

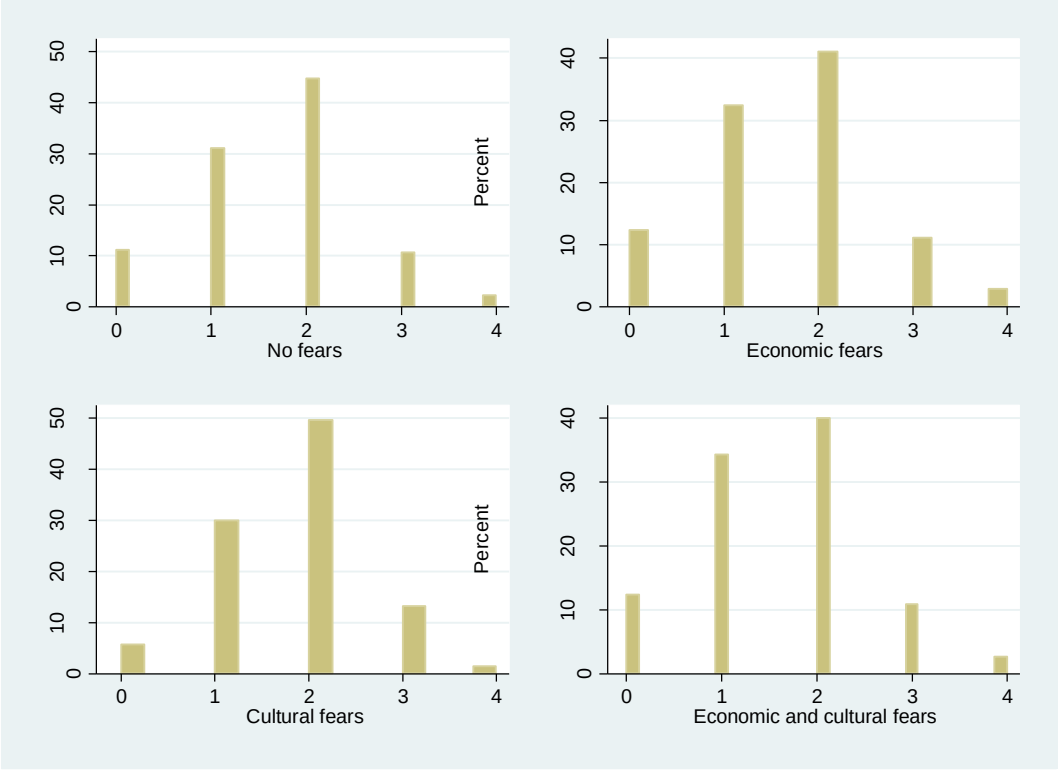
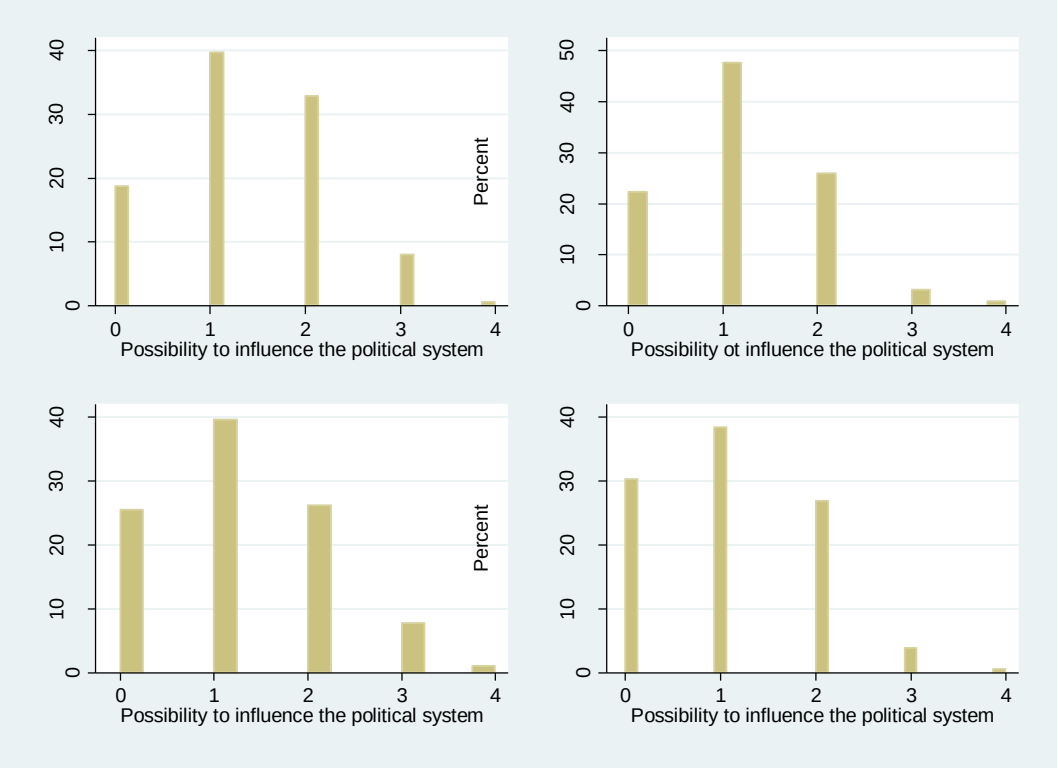



Figure A11: The perceived possibility to influence the political system across different types of far-right voters.