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Is Europe moving in the right direction? A statistical analysis of right-wing populism

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Abstract

Right-wing populism has emerged as a major political force in Europe over the last 10 to 15 years and changed the political balance in several countries. Many researchers and studies have attempted to explain this phenomenon with various outcomes. These studies have usually focused on theoretical explanations or statistical analyses of individual countries. This thesis aims at explaining right-wing electoral success in 27 European countries from 2008-2019. Two frameworks will be introduced and discussed, the "Losers of modernization" and "Regressive left", along with key characteristics of the right-wing ideology. Three hypotheses based on economic deprivation, political trust and immigration developed from a theoretical ground will then be tested in a panel data analysis.

Based on data from Eurostat, European Social Survey and official data on election results, I examine whether socio-economic factors of the countries yield any explanatory power for electoral success in national elections during the time period. The main findings imply little statistical evidence for factors such as unemployment, income and immigration for Europe as a whole. However, regional differences between Western and Eastern Europe prove to be highly evident in terms of significance in the explanatory variables. Economic deprivations such as unemployment and shrinking household income can help explain the electoral success of right-wing parties in Western Europe, along with negative attitudes towards immigrants. The European integration and the wider globalization illuminate the Western European rise of right-wing populism. In Eastern Europe, political distrust, rising inequalities and growing influx of immigrants provide fertile ground for the right-wing parties. Here, national identity and nationalism prove to be strong factors for electoral success.

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1. Introduction

Europe has experienced a growing electoral success for right-wing populist parties over the last 20 years. The populist parties are emerging in more countries throughout Europe, and in some countries, they have achieved substantial shares of the votes in elections and reached governmental power. This political trend has changed the political order. Brexit has dramatically and decisively changed the common European project, while European democracies are being put on the test during the ongoing Corona crisis (e.g. Hungary). In Norway, the most prominent (and extreme) example of far-right ideology is the terror attacks on July 22, 2011. Outside Europe, right-wing heads of state like Donald Trump in the US and Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil are constantly challenging the established political order.

The topicality of this phenomenon makes it a highly relevant and interesting topic to investigate, especially in Europe where we see a common trend despite the countries' heterogeneous nature[1]. The fact that Europe's party system is largely dominated by established party families such as conservatives, social-democratic parties and Christian democrats, makes the emergence of the populist right even more interesting. In post-war Europe, right-wing populists are one of the few groupings in the European party system that have succeeded in achieving electoral success. What makes it extra interesting is that the populist group is much less homogenous compared to the established party families (Ennser, 2012). Naturally, there are disagreements whether these parties can be classified into one and the same group. Nonetheless, their electoral success as a political group is remarkable.

Given the tragedies during World War II and throughout the ethno-nationalist driven wars in the Balkans in the 1990s, one could think that extreme right and far right conceptions should have little to none appeal in the European populations today. Their destructive threat to liberal democracies and human rights should be well implemented in our minds. Nevertheless, "modern" right-wing and far right populism has existed as phenomenon for a long time. From the 1950s, new right-wing populist parties emerged such as the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and the French National Front (FN) (Wodak, KhosraviNik, & Mral, 2013). Although modest in its beginning, the populist movement saw a significant rise throughout the 1980s as more right-wing parties made their mark in European elections. From the 1990s, the growth has been slower, with a handful of exceptions (Mudde, 2007, pp. 1-8) , to again experience strong growth over the last 10 to 15 years. Many studies have been conducted in the field which intend to

[1] By heterogeneous nature, I mean different history, religion, language, political system and other circumstances.

explain why these parties experience growth in certain periods, while declining in others. Similarly, there have been attempts to understand why right-wing populism succeed in certain countries, while representing a relatively marginal electoral force in others (Mudde, 2007, pp. 1-8).

What makes right-wing populism fascinating is that it resembles many well-known ideologies. Still, it does not advocate a coherent ideology but rather introduces a mixed set of beliefs, stereotypes and attitudes, which are intended to mobilize a wide range of voters in the political landscape (Wodak et al., 2013). To get a grasp on the right-wing populist ideology, we need to understand this phenomenon and what these parties really want to change. Like other political phenomena, the key is to understand why voters vote for these parties, which in turn means that we must comprehend the factors that drive the support for the parties.

My motivation for the thesis, is to find an explanation for why right-wing populism has become a major electoral force the last 10 – 15 years, and possibly why the political success varies so much between European countries. Given that several studies exist, I will try to investigate the phenomenon from a slightly different angle compared with what has been mainly done. Most studies in political science emphasizes theoretical explanations and frameworks, but in little to no combination with statistical testing. One explanation to this is lack of access to socio-economic data together with data on political attitudes and/or electoral behaviour (De Vries & Hoffmann, 2016). Obviously, there are other studies that have attempted to answer this through statistical analysis, but this has usually been done explicitly on individual countries.

In this thesis, I investigate determinants statistically based on theory of electoral support for radical right-wing populist parties (RWP) in 27 European states. The main objective is to uncover patterns that explains the political success of RWPs: why do people vote for these parties? What are the common features for the countries where right-wing populist parties have success?

Since right-wing populism are an extensive issue, I must make some delimitations due to time limitations. I will mainly focus on the demand sides of the issue, namely causations related to the voters and their preferences. Supply factors like party structure and leaders are important factors as well, but I will not go in-depth into these.

The outline of the thesis is as follows. In the next chapter I will discuss previous studies and their theoretical explanations to right-wing populism and electoral support. Here I will highlight the most prominent features of right-wing populism and their ideological standpoints. I will also discuss the researchers' different views on definitions, ideology and causes related to right-

wing populism. Furthermore, I will try to portray how this relates to a pan-European context, but also the national states individually. I will also present the main frameworks and theoretical thoughts. I will use them as my main theoretical explanations and later link them to the statistical results.

In chapter 3, I will present the dataset with variables and their properties. The selection of variables will be discussed and justified. The choice of variables will mainly reflect the theoretical explanations put forward.

Chapter 4 will introduce the method of the thesis and present the statistical methods to be used. I will review the properties of my dataset and discuss which relevant methods that can be used. Since there are some statistical advantages and disadvantages of the potential methods, I will dedicate a fair deal of this chapter in discussing them. In conclusion, I will argue for my choice of method based on this

In the following chapter 5, I will present my statistical results and comment on the most important findings. I will present statistical results for Europe, but also for Western and Eastern Europe separately. The purpose is to illustrate possible similarities and differences within Europe.

Chapter 6 will discuss my hypotheses against the statistical findings. I will also go through weaknesses and strengths of my thesis and what could have been done differently. Furthermore, I will also try to make some recommendations on what can be done in future studies. Finally, I will summarize and present my main conclusions of this thesis.

2. Theory

This section reviews the theoretical aspects related to why right-wing populist parties evolve and prevail in elections, and how existing research attempts to explain the phenomenon. I will first go through theoretical definitions of a right-wing party and introduce and discuss their main traits and characteristics. Next, two theoretical frameworks will be presented and discussed. Thirdly, some main explanations for electoral success will be put into context. Ultimately, I will present the hypotheses which will serve as foundation for my empirical study.

2.1. Left vs. right – the political definition

Defining and explaining a political concept or ideology can be difficult as there are many nuances, perceptions and beliefs in how an ideology can and should be defined. The set of ideas and attitudes that represents a political ideology is highly individual and can vary from country to country or even between people. To be able to categorize political ideologies, there is need for a set of features that most researchers can agree upon. A universal idea is the left-right division in the political landscape. The origins of this political spectrum date back to the French Revolution in 1789, where left and right represented the two sides of the revolution (Heywood, 2017, p. 15). The leftist ideas were based upon liberty, civil rights and equality by the law, while the right-side supported monarchy, privileges and authority. In other words, the political left revolted against the aristocratic and theocratic institutions which represented the political right. This division laid the foundation for the political landscape we know today, or at least before the emergence of popular right-wing parties. However, the definitions of left and right have changed over time, and even argued for being turned completely upside down.

The terms today are used in a variety of different settings where a typical right-wing person is favouring private ownership and free markets, regardless of what their opinion is on democracy and human rights. Similarly, the left-wing is recognized as one who supports nationalized enterprises and state involvement, regardless of their attitudes towards democracy and human rights. The definition of left and right has been heavily influenced by historical incidents, which has shaped the division we know today. With the introduction of "socialism" by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the 1820s and the later establishment of the Marxist Soviet Union in the 1920s, the political left got a very different meaning. The ruling Marxist elite adopted a totalitarian and authoritarian rule with total absence of human rights and equality for the people. In the name of an egalitarian people's democracy, the Soviets heavily modified

the ideas of the political left and even turned some elements upside down (Hodgson, 2018, pp. 3-6).

The political right which in its origins was associated with authoritarian rule and rejection of people's rights to freedom and equality, has changed much. The 1930s far right ideologies Nazism and Fascism represented an authoritarian rule with total absence of human rights and people's right to freedom. Ironically on this basis, the Nazi far right had more in common with the Marxist far left than with other parties on the same side of the political spectrum. From the 1970s and especially during the 1990s, the political right began to adopt the concepts of free markets, liberty and freedom. During the Reagan and Thatcher era this was even further consolidated as "true" right values. This is quite ironically as this represented the basic values of the original left. So, based on the very key aspects of the political left and right, they have more or less swapped places (Hodgson, 2018, p. 5).

The point of discussing the left/right evolvement is that the definitions highly depend on the factors we put into the concept. When talking about right-wing or far right, we need to understand what defines the "right". The comparison of Marxist far left, and Fascist far right implies evidence that these ideologies are closer related to each other when taking the original definition into account. Additional concepts and ideologies must therefore be introduced to explain right-wing populism.

2.2. The concept of right-wing populism

Right-wing, populist right, far right, extreme right, right-wing populism. The concept has many names that are used interchangeably, and it is not easy to know which one is the most appropriate and precise to use. That is also what describes the difficulty of defining this concept.

Populism in its very definition is derived from the Latin *populus* meaning "people" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2020). The term has then been used widely as a political representation of the masses or simply the people's will. Populism as a political style or discourse is thus a general protest against actions that prevents direct rule of the people (Pelinka, 2013). Nevertheless, it is one of the most poorly understood political concepts (Taggart, 2002). As populism refers solely to the will of the people, it is a very loose concept that can be interpreted and applied in countless ways. That is precisely why it is difficult to understand, and it opens for a variety of interpretations.

Generally, parties that are referred to populist parties are equally defined by other ideologies, implying that the concept can be applied to both left and right politics. Yet, right-

wing populism has received the most attention in recent decades, despite that the definition of populism is perhaps more in line with the original political left. The simple reason is that populist parties in Europe today share a right-wing political ideology at the bottom but applies a populist style or discourse to it.

Therefore, the ideological position of the parties is frequently debated among the researchers. The Swedish author Jens Rydgren explains that these cannot be regarded as populist as they are mainly defined by ethnic nationalism (Rydgren, 2017). National identity and security are their main concern. Others imply that they are more of an anti-immigrant or anti-elitist character (Mudde, 2007, p. 12). All these definitions are relevant characteristics of populist parties, because it is precisely this conceptual vagueness that allows populism to be linked to all aspects of politics.

In the next sections I will attempt to describe populism of the political right and its ideological stance. I will use the term "right-wing populism" (RWP) as a common denominator to avoid confusion and underpin simplicity.

2.2.1. The people of populism

I will start by explaining what is meant by "the people". This means definitions of "the people" and whom is applies for. We can illustrate this problematic with a relevant quote (Pelinka, 2013);

"Were Native Americans or African slaves part of the people when, in 1776, some Americans declared and spoke on behalf "We, the People of the United States"? Is everybody who lives on a given territory – independent of the roots – part of "the People"?

Pelinka introduces the very core problem of defining "the people", which is the perception that differs substantially among the declared right-wing populist parties. In many ways, the definition of the people is the essence in the discussion of defining right-wing populism. There have been various ways of approaching this, and the literature on the topic is quite extensive. The problem is not that researchers highly disagrees in the field (naturally to an extent), but rather due to the lack of any clear and consistent definitions. Therefore, I will introduce some theoretical frameworks that describes the phenomenon. In attempt to establish a clear terminology, I will highlight the common patterns and features shared by the RWPs found in the established frameworks in the field.

2.2.2. The family resemblance

In the European Parliament, the political parties are organised into political groups based on their political affiliation (European Parliament, 2020). These parties share many of the same political beliefs and agendas and works towards many of the same goals. This way of thinking is based on Wittgenstein's idea of "Family Resemblance" (Craig, 1986, pp. 78-82). With family resemblance, Wittgenstein implies that something can be categorized if individuals share the same properties. So individual *a* can be categorized with individual *b* if they are relatively similar. However, *b* can also be relatively similar to *c*, so then all three can be put in the same "family". This is a good way to define political parties, which serves as my foundation for party selections. On the other hand, the chain of "similar" parties can be so long that in the end, individual *a* can be very different from individual *x*. That is a problem as individual *a* and *x* could potentially share many traits but be completely different in other areas. As such, explaining general political success among RWPs can be problematic as party *a* and *x* can experience different results, if only particular political issues produce electoral support. The point is that parties within the same family are not necessarily affected by the success of others, so additional common theoretical platforms must be included.

2.2.3. The minimum and maximum definition

Another way of categorizing the political parties is by two approaches called the "lowest common denominator" and the "greatest common denominator" (Mudde, 2007, pp. 14-15). These two approaches rely on the similarities between the parties, much like the family resemblance idea. However, they base their rationale on the number of shared traits that can be found among the political parties.

The minimum definition emphasizes the few traits that all right-wing populist parties have in common (Eatwell, 1996). The idea here is how far we must extend our definition to find a common denominator. This strength of the concept is the possibility of a broad inclusion of many and diverse parties, which may be relevant for my study. On the other hand, having a too broad definition can weaken the overall explanation power as we might be dealing with heterogenous phenomena. A central discussion here is how and when parties should be registered with common traits. Mudde (2007) demonstrates the dilemma between parties that "at some time" have been linked together and parties that "generally" share the same traits and thus same political family. He recommends the second approach which seem plausible as parties must be consistent over time to be regarded as part of a party group. That is important

when discussing populism because much of its ideology is based on emotional individual political cases which changes over time (Civita, 2019).

The maximum definition focuses on how many common denominators there are between the parties. To develop a maximum definition, one needs to discuss and find as many core features as possible. Compared to the minimum definition, the maximum represents a more precise way to describe populism. On the other hand, it may introduce difficulties in categorizing the parties as not all parties may fulfil the criteria for a maximum definition. Mudde (2007) lists a few cores that usually features the RWPs; nativism/xenophobia, authoritarianism and populism. I will go through these terms later.

To approach these two definitions, introduction of some core identifications of right-wing populism is needed to establish this as an ideology and political group. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, Rydgren (2017) discusses the definition of populism. He refers to this ideology as "ethnic nationalism" instead. Rydgren emphasizes the nationalist aspect of RWPs, and links nationalism to identity in how the populists are defining "the people".

2.2.4. Nationalism

Nationalism as an ideology is a broad concept. It can be defined as an ideology that promotes the interests of a particular nation (Smith & Hall, 2004, p. 9). In this case there is important to distinguish between a "nation" and a "state". A nation refers to a group of people belonging to the same ethnic or cultural community, while a state is a political and geographical entity regardless of the ethnic composition within it. These two terms are very important to be aware of when further discussing the characteristics of populism and the parties.

Nationalism is what unites the right-wing populist parties in several ways. In an ideal world, the nation and the state are one, and therefore the state should compose of the single native nation. This gives connotations to dark times in European history, but their objective is to keep the state as homogenous as possible (Rydgren, 2017). How it can be achieved is through various actions from assimilation to expulsion and genocide in the most extreme way. This is naturally out of question to most right-wing parties today, but there are examples of where extreme right has gone that far. Holocaust and later the Yugoslav wars where extreme nationalist Serb and Bosnian Serb forces massacred Bosniak, Croat and Kosovar-Albanian populations based on the idea of a Greater Serbia (Hoare, 2010) are notable examples of extreme ethnic nationalism.

The core ideas of populist nationalism combines a utopic thought of a homogenous and harmonious people exclusively inhabiting the fatherland or motherland (Taggart, 2000). The

nostalgia of a past where the nation and state where "clean" and cultural homogeneous strives the populist movements. In many ways, the populists reject the present state of the world, where state and nation are not in harmony where "the people" have been driven away from their roots. Therefore, to regain the idealized nationalistic past, populists excludes all forms of multiculturalism and diversity (Lazaridis, Campani, & Benveniste, 2016). This is where nationalism and the populist idea of protectors of "the people" comes from. Taggart (2000) further discuss that the fatherland or motherland varies across movements, whether it is a nation or a region. The main idea is that the populists speak about the idealized "heartland" as a belonging to the "the people" and the people only, regardless of how long they have inhabited the "heartland".

2.2.5. Nativism

Nativism can be defined as a political idea where native people born in a country are favoured over immigrants and other non-native people (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). The nativist element in right-wing populism is the return of power to the natives of an area and resurgence of the native culture on behalf of immigrants and other "non-native" people (Mudde, 2007). The idea of "the people" is exclusively directed towards the natives. For this reason, populists tend to exclude whole groups of people who do not fit into the idealized image of "the people". They equal the people with the nation and therefore there is no space for immigrants and other minorities (Rydgren, 2017). As such, nativism can be related racism, which can be difficult to distinguish. Still, nativism may be both racist and nonracist depending on the circumstances. The differences between populist movements also affects how nativism is interpreted. Whether it is culture, religion, language or something else, the idea of nativism depends on how populists imagine the idealized world. Generally, this picture is usually based on the construction of a picture of a common enemy. Who the common enemy is, largely depends on the national context. Mudde (2007) makes a good categorization of whom these common enemies usually are, which he divides into four different types of enemies (Mudde, 2007, pp. 64-89). An illustration of this is shown in Figure 1.

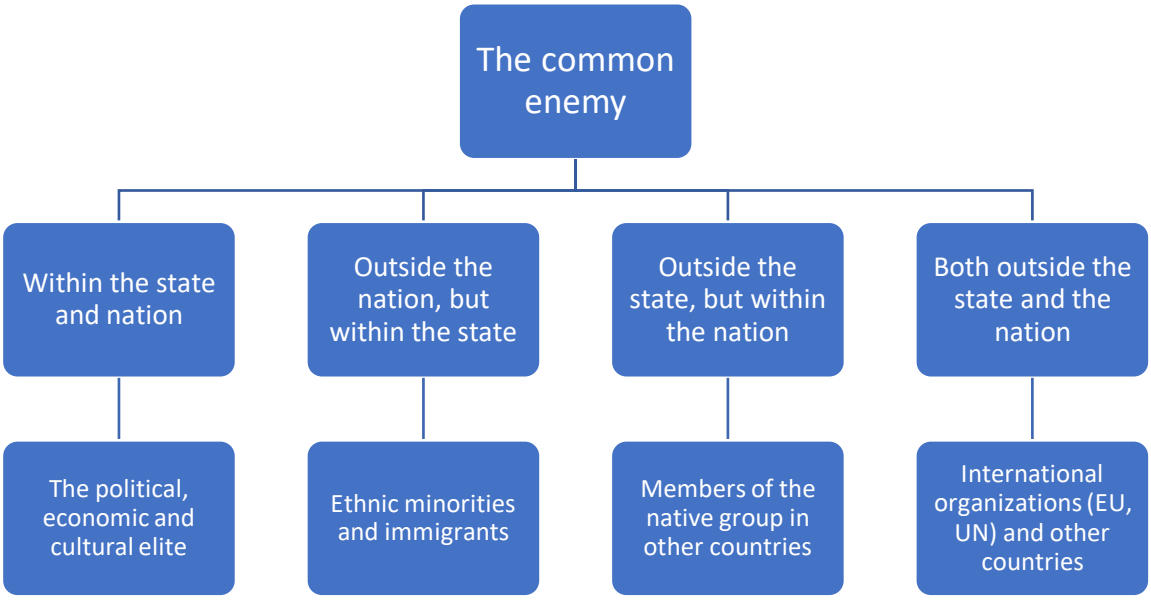

Figure 1: The Common Enemy

The essence is that almost all types of enemies in the eyes of populist can be directed to any of the four categories depending on the national context. This is also largely how I have organized my explanatory variables in the methodology part as they represent this populist picture of a "common enemy". Although all four are important, I emphasize the first two as they are the most prominent categories.

Within the state and nation

As discussed, the common denominator in nativist populism is the conception of the composition of "the people". The people are a sovereign and therefore the state and its decisions should solely be based on the people's "will" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). "The people" are usually a classless composition based on cultural and ethnical means. Since "the people" are a united and indifferent group, they represent the only legitimate voice in the society. The populists thus advocates themselves as the speakers of the people, and the only ones who truly understands the people's will and sentiments (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). According to Rydgren (2017), that is why populists tends to refer to the "common man" or the "the people" in their rhetoric. In populist thinking, the rejection of the "elite" and the ruling class is therefore predominant, where the core idea is that there is a dominant "elite" which only serve themselves. This is the typical example of the "enemy both within the nation and the state". The elite is a part of the native group and the state but acts disloyally towards the nation with sole intentions of enriching themselves, regardless of the nation's best interest. This kind of "corruption" and selfishness is covered up behind political jargon and apparently good-intended

actions. The people on the other hand, are considered pure and incorrupt which intensions are always in the nation's best interest. This anti-elitism is widely considered a central characteristic trait in populism (Canovan, 1981). Ironically, the populists do not reject the political system but rather attempt to distinguish themselves from other parties, even though populist leaders are in positions of power.

Within the state but outside the nation

Another typical issue among the populist movements is the category of "within the state but outside the nation". This is the classical ethnic minority question and has been reasonably predominant in Western Europe for a period of time. Negative attitudes towards non-European immigrants have had a strong effect on the voter's preferences for anti-immigrant parties (Van der Brug, Fennema, & Tillie, 2000). This is the strong xenophobic aspect of populist rhetoric, where they play on people's feelings rather than addressing the facts. In Western European countries, immigration from non-European countries and especially Muslim countries have been treated with fear and suspicion, where questioning their real intentions are frequently stated by the populist anti-immigrant parties. Even though many of the immigrants are refugees of war, economic crises or other devastating issues, the populists usually claim that these "war refugees" are economic immigrants that only seeks personal gains and therefore no place for them in the country. The idea of immigrants having a "secret" agenda is also one of the main xenophobic traits of populist parties. Many of these parties address an ongoing "cultural infiltration" by Muslims, which intentions are Islamisation of Europe through gradually imposing their cultural set of ideas and way of living. Together with threats of Islamist terrorist attacks, the RWPs campaigns heavily on these perceived threats to turn the population against the immigrants (Hameleers et al., 2018). Other literature implies that the naïve policies of the left have made all this possible. This idea is called "The Regressive Left" (Harris & Nawaz, 2015) and is one of the theoretical frameworks that I will present and discuss later.

Xenophobic ideas of immigration are also present in Eastern Europe, although the focus in these countries are usually against other national minorities. For example, the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is frequently targeted with suspicion and discrimination. The fear of Hungarian territorial aggression is deeply embedded in the Slovak consciousness and parties have successfully spread this fear into its population (Haight, 1997, p. 35). Other examples of this can be found in the Baltic states where it is the fear of Russia using the Russian minority as a tool to achieve geopolitical goals (Budrytė, 2011, pp. 21-27). However, the most common and targeted groups throughout Eastern Europe are the Roma people, Jews and increasingly the

small groups of non-European immigrants. In several Eastern European countries, the anti-Roma sentiment have been increasingly and openly discoursed showing that right-wing rhetoric against minorities have been more and more accepted in parts of the population (Bernát, Juhász, Krekó, & Molnár, 2013). The study also shows that eight of out ten Hungarians thought that Roma people are a problem because they do not integrate into the society, and that the problem will be solved if the Roma finally started to work and contribute. The typical xenophobic discourse here is that the Roma people are criminal by nature and that there exist a "Gypsy mafia" that infiltrates the society. A related prejudice is that they are "social parasites", referring to the high unemployment among the Roma people, and that they do not want to be a part of the society and contribute as everyone else. Instead, they maintain the "victim" picture to obtain social benefits from the state to continue to live as they do. This "mainstream" nativism in Hungary (and other countries) has gone so far that some far-right parties have stated that Hungary's problems are due to "genetic causes" clearly relating to the Roma people (Bugajski, 1994, p. 411).

Outside the state but within the nation

This category is perhaps not decisive on its own but may be a contributor in particular cases. Usually, the culprits here are members of the "elite" that have emigrated by motivation of personal enrichment. More commonly, are natives of the nation that are living outside the state. Since right-wing populists frequently view the borders of their nation to exceed the current state, they tend to include people of the same ethnic group in neighbouring countries as part of their nation. The conflict erupts when people from these groups disagree with the beliefs of the radical right-wing populists[2]. Then they are accused as traitors of the nation.

Both outside the nation and the state

From the previous sections, we see that right-wing populists hold a fundamental distrust against several groups in the society. The external world is no exception, whether it is international organizations or other countries. This category often has a historical context where former aggressors or occupiers are targeted. Although falling, anti-German sentiments and Russophobia is still present in parts of Eastern Europe, and to a lesser extent in Western Europe (Haerpfer, 2003). The substantial Euroscepticism found in many RWPs can also be placed here,

[2] I use «radical» here as these beliefs are usually found in more radical elements of RWPs, while not so predominant among the more mainstream populists.

where they accuse the EU of ignoring the social consequences of globalization and undermining the nation's independence (Buti & Pichelmann, 2017).

Based on these four categories, there are clearly patterns in both Western and Eastern Europe where nationalism, nativism and xenophobic ideas are widespread among the populist and far right-wing parties. On the other hand, there are differences in how nativist ideas are interpreted, which largely depends on the national context. In Western Europe, the non-European immigrants are targeted in general without any clear connection to a specific nationality other than "Muslims" in general. In Eastern Europe, the most common accusation by right-wing parties are national minorities and how they represent a "fifth column" of their own nation which intentions are disloyal against the state (Mudde, 2007, p. 72).

2.3. Theoretical frameworks

In order to attempt to place the populist right-wing phenomena into theoretical frameworks, I have decided to emphasize two main frameworks that I believe are central and important works in the field. In addition to the core identifications I introduced in the previous section, two frameworks exist that describe how right-wing parties have had possibilities to grow and receive a fair share of the votes in elections throughout Europe. The first is called "Losers of modernization" and was introduced by the German political scientist Hans-Georg Betz (1994). The core idea in his work is that unskilled and low-skilled workers are marginalized in social progressions and faces difficulties with unemployment and lower income when the society changes (Betz, 1994). The other framework is based on the "Regressive Left" concept introduced by the British activist Maajid Nawaz in his work "Radical" (Harris & Nawaz, 2015). The essence in his memoirs as a former Islamist is that the political left is naïve and obsessed with political correctness. As such, they ignore the threats from orthodox and extreme religious actions through being naïve and afraid of offending people of other beliefs. This political correctness has allowed radical Islam to grow and operate freely in (Western) Europe. This kind of political correctness, naivety and "selling out" the country has caused right-wing parties to agitate and protest which has allowed them to grow.

I believe these frameworks are highly relevant for my paper as they address many of the issues and traits that I discussed in the previous sections. It can also serve as good explanations for why some countries have experienced dramatic increases in votes for populist right-wing parties.

2.3.1. The "Losers of Modernization" theory

In his work, Hans-Georg Betz (1994) explains how radical right-wing populism can be understood as a modernization issue. He begins with explaining how right-wing populism shares many similarities with the rise of fascism in the interwar period. The fact that both fascism and right-wing populism represents a "revolt against modernism" is an interesting approach. During the early twentieth century, Europe experienced a rapid industrialization, development and modernization of their societies. Therefore, the traditional hierarchical class system was radically challenged. As such, the middle class saw its social position and status threatened by the growing modernization and centralization of industries. In addition, the formation of organized labour and growing Marxist movements made the threat even more imminent (Lipset, 1981). Lipset argues that the fascists managed to exploit the middle class' fears of an economic crisis by appealing to their very instinct of survival. Furthermore, Nazism in Germany managed also to appeal to the working class and especially those without special skills and knowledge. As a social group that also faced immediate threats from the growing economic difficulties caused by the industrialization, the Nazis' succeeded in addressing their fears of an economic crisis. This was especially true in Germany where the economic situation suffered tremendously in the interwar period, due to large war reparations to France and Great Britain causing severe hyperinflations. Germany's economy was thus in a downward spiral causing massive unemployment and economic insecurity. In that way, they manage to appeal to a substantial share of the population across social classes by playing the "losers of modernization" card.

This type of major changes in the economy also prevailed in the last decades during the financial crisis and Euro crisis. During these substantial changes in the world economy, the labour markets and economic stability were seriously challenged. This led to a massive increase in unemployment and economic insecurity among many Europeans, not unlike the German example in the 1920s and 1930s. In addition, the crisis has uncovered the failures of European welfare states and the European project by failing to take care of those with serious economic problems (Poli, 2016). Simultaneously, the Arab Spring and Syrian Civil War raged, causing substantial waves of immigration to Europe shifting the demographic composition of the countries. This has made the pressure on the economy and labour market in some countries even bigger in an already difficult position.

From this we can start to draw a picture of a situation with increasing structural unemployment in middle to low-skilled workers, declining wages and general insecurity among

the population. This is exactly the essence of Betz' (1994) theory of "losers of modernization". Increasing unemployment due to technological changes, higher competition for low-skilled jobs and loss of comparative advantage due to the ever-growing globalization, has made many citizens "losers of modernization". These "losers of modernization" naturally opposes this development and are more inclined to vote for right-wing parties that swears to "take back control" with their idealized nostalgia of the past. From this we can see a certain synergy between Betz' framework and RWPs rhetoric. With strict reduction in immigration, criticism of the decadent elite and favouritism of native citizens in welfare and economic matters, the populist right-wing parties advocates themselves perfectly as protectors of "the people" and the "losers of modernization".

This is the link Betz (1994) suggests between "losers of modernization" and support for populist right-wing parties. The lack of cultural and social capital, social disintegration and relative deprivation as a result of economic crisis and globalization produces support for RWPs. Still, Betz does not exclusively target bad or good times when discussing his modernization theory, which opens up for a discussion on whether this can only be applied in times of crisis or if the phenomenon also persists during economic growth and prosperity. As right-wing voting is frequently addressed as a result of political frustration and protest voting (Coffé, 2004), there is possibilities for "losers of modernization" in both types of economic periods. During hard times, several groups will experience and fear an economic crisis. On the other hand, some people also experience relative deprivation during prosperous times. These groups may feel that they are not benefitting equally from economic growth compared to other groups in the society. The result may be groups of the population which feels marginalized and excluded, where structural unemployment may not be the case. This type of "losers of modernization" is another aspect, where marginalized groups are pulled out as factors that allows right-wing parties to prosper (Adamson, 2019). It is therefore needed to understand this framework as a theory that is not exclusively found during economic recessions, and economic variables such as unemployment and income might not be perfectly correlated with electoral voting for RWPs.

2.3.2. The "Regressive Left" theory

In the book "Islam and the Future of Tolerance; a Dialogue", Maajid Nawaz introduces the term "Regressive Left" (Harris & Nawaz, 2015). Together with the American writer Sam Harris, he explains how the political left has facilitated his former occupation as a radical

Islamist. In his reflections, he warns against the liberal and naïve Western attitude against Islamism, and stresses how the leftists turn a blind eye to the radical Islam in the name of multiculturalism and liberalism. He further explains how the "regressive left" has contributed to the Islamist's advancement of their own agenda. This have been possible due to the cultural relativeness of the political left with its good but misguided intentions to judge Muslims from their own perspective. The political left's emphasis on multiculturalism, secularism and political correctness has allowed such groups to grow without being disturbed.

The research on the "regressive left" discourse have received surprisingly little attention, although it represents a highly relevant issue in politics and political science. Therefore, I will try to explain the term as simple as possible with its key concepts and how it can be related to right-wing populism. Even though the discourse intentionally is pointed towards Islamism and behaviour of the political left, I believe there is much similarities between how actions of the political left influences right-wing politics and rhetoric. To truly understand the meaning of the "regressive left", it requires an introduction of some concepts. Wubs (2019) discuss some of the key features in the "regressive left" discourse which is highly relevant in my case (Wubs, 2019).

Before going into the key concepts, I will remind the distinction between "regressive" and "conservative" as both terms refer to a "return to an earlier or previous stage of development". Usually, the word "conservative" means preserving of traditional institutions, property rights, culture and religion, but not necessarily return to an earlier stage in terms of development. The term "regressive" on the other hand is normally associated with a backward way of thinking where returning to a former or less developed state is the outcome (Lexico, 2020). "Regressive" is therefore mostly used in a negative manner, while "conservative" is not.

Liberalism

A traditional feature of the political left is liberalism. It is an important aspect as it represents a major dilemma in the left/right discourse, as both claim to be protectors of liberal values. The essence of liberalism is limitation of state governance and emphasis on civil rights. Wubs (2019) discusses how "freedom of speech" as a universal core of liberalism is also a heated debate in Western countries. Paradoxically, the political left stresses that unrestricted freedom of speech may lead to harassment and discrimination of certain groups already marginalized in the society. Therefore, unrestricted freedom of speech undermines the core idea of liberalism itself. The political right on the other hand, advocates this as a suppression of individual rights

where people should be allowed to say what they want. The populist right stresses this as not being in line with "liberal values" and a typical feature of the "regressive left".

Secularism

Secularism has historically been a shared ideal among the political left, well-illustrated by Karl Marx' famous quote "Religion is the opium of the people (Marx, 1844). Secularism implies that state and religion should be separated, and that religious beliefs should be a private matter (National Secular Society, 2020). Although there are different interpretations of the importance of religion by leftists, institutionalization of religion has generally been rejected by the political left. Because of this, the political left (except authoritarian communist regimes) has historically tolerated various religious groups in the society. This tolerance of religion has been highly criticized by the populist right for being a naïve attitude, and a blind sense of reality where there is no distinction made between potential radical groups and other religious communities.

Multiculturalism

Historically, the political left has generally criticized the Western colonist and imperialist past. To distance themselves from this, multiculturalism or cultural relativism stands as important features among the political left. The idea of cultural relativism is that all cultures should be understood and treated as individual cultures in order to avoid prejudices and discrimination (Eriksen, 2001). Therefore, all groups within the state should be allowed to express and maintain their own culture regardless of the nation's traditional culture and religion. Elements of the political right have labelled this as typical "regressive left" with acceptance of cultural and religious elements that are out of touch with modern democratic societies (Wubs, 2019).

Political correctness

The idea of "political correctness" is perhaps the most prominent feature of the critics from the political right. The thought here is that the political left is "policing" the language in order to restrict the freedom of speech. Much of the criticism and accusations is the unwillingness of the political left to face or discuss the truth in fear of offending certain groups in the society. This "political correctness" is harming the society which becomes unable to do anything and

face problems due to fear of offending people. This aspect of the "regressive left" is highly emphasised by the right-wing populists.

After clarifying and discussing the main elements in the "regressive left" concept, it needs to be put in context with right-wing populism. With respect to the four core features of the left, a picture of the typical criticism from right-wing populists can be drawn. As "defenders" of multiculturalism, the radical right is pointing out the naivety of the left in terms of immigration. As I discussed in the section about the RWPs "nativity" aspect, the populist right accuses the leftists of the immigration problems. According to this view, with their obsessiveness of tolerance and inclusion, the political left has allowed problematic groups such as radical Islamists to grow undisturbed which has ultimately led to "numerous"[3] terrorist attacks in Europe. Furthermore, the populist right is accusing the political left to be unable to address other problematic issues with immigration such as integration, behaviour and contributions to the society due to their fear of offending them.

Political correctness is one of the main accusations of the "regressive left" from the right-wing populists. As I discussed, the rejection of the "political elite" is a prominent feature of right-wing rhetoric. This is also where the "political correctness" comes in. Through highly policed and advanced language, the political elite is covering up the "true problems" into a language full of technicalities and complexities that most people do not understand properly (Canovan, 1981). In that way, they can continue to execute their politics and personal gaining without stepping on anyone's toes. Political correctness is merely a tool to keep the people at distance, so that they can do whatever that is in their personal interest (Canovan, 1981). This is also discussed by Nawaz (2015), where he states that the political left is so obsessed by winning against their political enemies, that they can turn a blind eye and cooperate with radical Islamists if it's in their interest.

My main argumentations for emphasizing this framework are that the right-wing populist ideology and rhetoric is highly in line with the ideas of the "regressive left". The similarities are many and I believe that features and actions of the political left has contributed much to the growth of right-wing populism over the last decades, as their rhetoric is very much about criticizing these traits of the political left.

[3] In quotation mark as far more attacks is conducted by other groups than in the name of Islam. Source: (Europol, 2015)

2.4. The electoral success of right-wing populist parties

Now that the main characteristics and traits of RWPs are presented and the two frameworks introduced, the main explanations of electoral success must be put in context to finalize the theoretical structure.

A simple and straightforward method of categorizing the answers, is by dividing them into a "supply" side and a "demand" side (Von Beyme, 1988). The "supply" side refer to the characteristics and behaviour of the right-wing parties, while the "demand" side represents traits, experiences and attitudes of the voters. As the literature on the topic is extensive, I would focus on main explanations introduced by Arzheimer (2018) in his work. He further divides the explanations into micro, meso and macro levels (Arzheimer, 2018).

2.4.1 Micro-level factors

Party identification

Naturally, voters vote for parties they affiliate the most with. Remarkably, party affiliation has not been a major explanation for right-wing electoral success. As party identification usually is acquired over years of political socialization, it should hardly be any different for RWPs (Arzheimer, 2018). Interestingly, he argues that the problem is not party identification itself, rather the lack of party identification. He further points out that the absence of identification with mainstream right-oriented parties is a notable precondition for RWP voting. The essence is when a sufficient number of voters do not feel any connection with mainstream parties, they are more inclined to vote for more radical parties. These parties may better represent their right-wing values or simply their frustration that established parties have become too centre-oriented.

Ideologies and values

The "protest vote" is a frequently stated explanation of right-wing electoral success (Arzheimer, 2018). One aspect is that protest voting is a result of marginalisation of voters' political opinions and values. Another explanation is that supporters of RWPs are not necessarily pure radical in their political preferences, but rather seek to correct policies through protest voting. Arzheimer explains that traditional mainstream-right voters support radical right parties in order to press mainstream-right parties to reconsider their position and move towards the radical right. It is contiguous to believe that features of the "regressive left" theory can explain the desire to push the mainstream-right parties away from the left. In fact, Arzheimer

claims that regardless of what values that are highlighted, protest voting is more of a hope of adjustment by the mainstream parties. When this is achieved, the support for RWPs will collapse.

The immigration issue is frequently pulled out as a typical feature of right-wing populism, and there is no doubt that religion, crime and ethnicity are persistent issues among right-wing parties and their voters. However, being sceptical to immigration does not necessarily mean that voters are inherently racist or possess extreme forms of xenophobia (Rydgren, 2008). Rydgren argues that voters can mean that there is need for a reduction in immigration without having racist or xenophobic attitudes. Reasons for reducing immigration can be pressure on the labour market or fear of losing jobs due to higher competition from immigrants, effectively reflecting the "losers of modernization" theory.

2.4.2. Meso-level factors

Party strength

Why RWPs perform differently between countries have been connected to how well-established the party is. Unsurprisingly, well-established and professionally led parties are more successful in elections than their weaker counterparts (Carter, 2013). These parties are usually more moderate in their ideology and political agenda and thus a more viable alternative to the voters. In that way, they have succeeded in building a significant and consistent voter base loyal to the party. This has been highlighted in the explanation of why parties such as the French RN, Norwegian Progress party and the Swiss people's party are some of the more successful populist parties (Mudde, 2007).

Party ideology

It is quite clear that RWPs represents a more radical view than mainstream-right parties. However, RWPs themselves have very different views in their ideological conceptions, which makes it challenging to develop a common "radical right" ideology (Mudde, 1996). Mudde illustrates this well by pointing out how the RWPs relates to each other. The French Rassemblement National (FN) and Italian Lega are rejected by the British UKIP. FN distances themselves from the Greek Golden Dawn for being too extreme, while the LGBT community-supporting Dutch PVV have little appeal among conservative parties like Law and Order in Poland.

To understand their electoral success, the structure of the electoral system has been pulled out as an important aspect. In Western Europe, where democratic values stand strong and probably represents the only viable governmental solution, RWPs that opposes democratic values are less likely to gain support. In Eastern Europe however, where democratic values are newer, radical parties are more likely to be successful as authoritarian tendencies may be more "acceptable" (Havlík & Mareš, 2017). The composition of parties in the system is also viewed as important. Success of RWPs largely depends on whether the sentiments of the voters are satisfied by existing parties. If a population demands more restrictive immigration policies and none of the mainstream parties' advocates this, then there are more likely that RWPs will emerge as successful (Arzheimer, 2018). This illustrates some of the difficulties of comparing RWPs. Their heterogeneity can impose challenges in giving viable answers for their common electoral success.

2.4.3. Macro-level factors

The more classical explanations apply at the macro level. These are issues at national level, which are results of governmental policies. Again, issues here are immigration and unemployment. I discussed their relationship in the previous section about micro-level factors, but here it is more pointed towards the general unemployment and immigration levels rather than the voter's preferences. Previous studies have concluded with various results, both positive correlation between unemployment and right-wing support, but also cases with no significant relationships. However, unemployment seems to have a positive effect under certain conditions where benefits from unemployment are minimal (Vlandas & Halikiopoulou, 2019). This may indicate that countries with substantial welfare programs receives lower support for RWPs as there are fewer disadvantages from being unemployed. Another assumption is that this may reinforce the "losers of modernization" theory.

Lastly, the role of media has also been brought out as a factor. Potential voters are exposed to massive information through different channels of the media. A study in the Netherlands found a positive relation between immigration coverage in media and support for RWPs (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2007). This is also highlighted by Fukuyama (2018) in his book, where he underlines that electoral behaviour is heavily influenced by media coverage of particular topics (Fukuyama, 2018). These studies indicate that people's attitudes on certain issues may be equally important as the actual circumstances.

2.5. Operationalization - Summary and hypotheses

Generally, RWPs seems to reject the established political system in some way. Prominently, the rejection of the "elite" and the RWPs belief of rightfully claiming themselves as the "protector of the people". The theory also indicates that most RWPs have elements of authoritarianism in their view of the political structure. Economic explanations such as unemployment and income seem to have an unsettled importance. Lastly, the immigration issue and attitudes towards other ethnic groups is perhaps the most prevalent denominator among RWPs. To make this neat and systematic, Figure 2 illustrates how my theoretical foundation is built up:

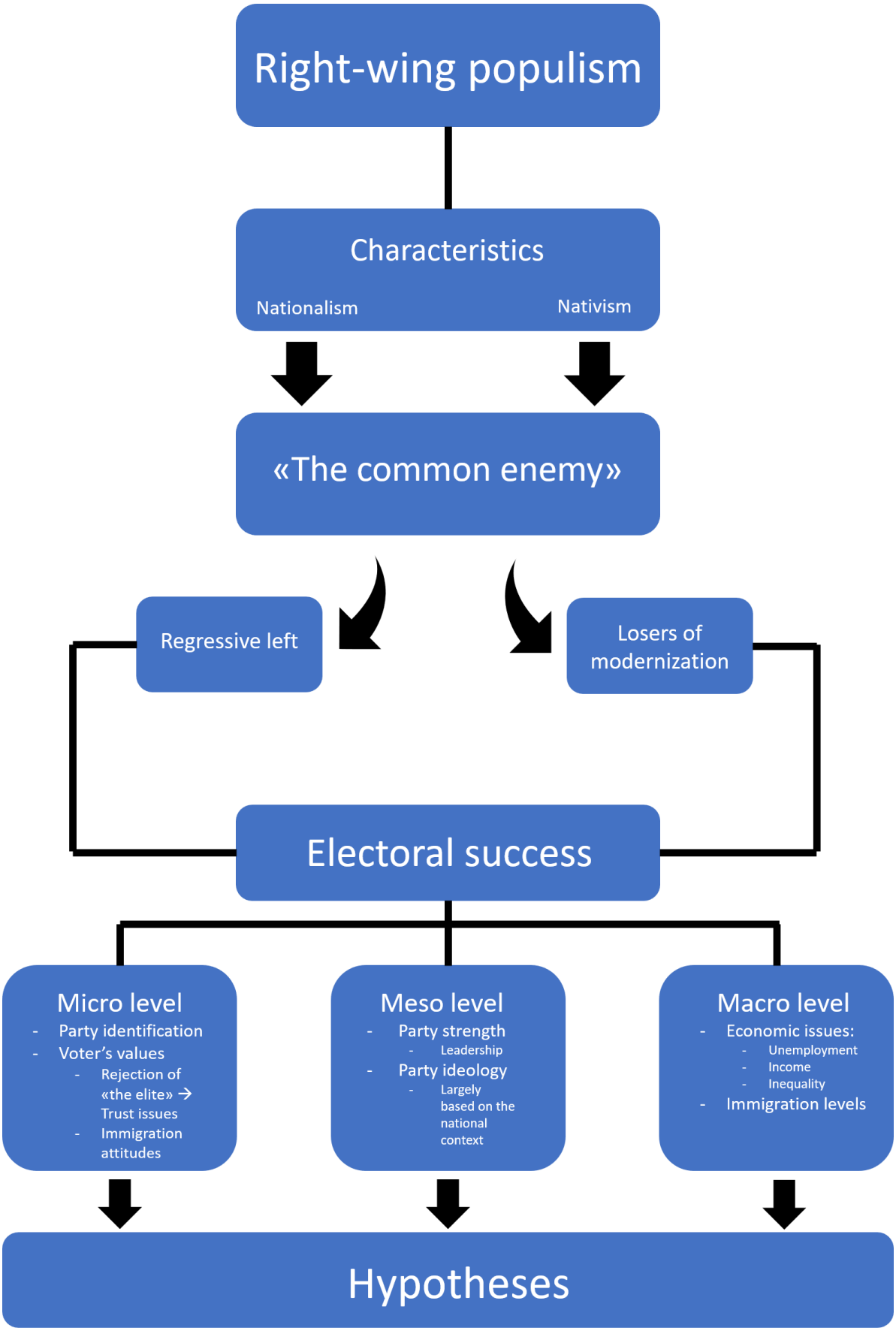

Figure 2: Operationalization and Summary of Theory

The right-wing populism phenomenon is initially described by main characteristics that recognizes the RWPs. The main traits, nationalism and nativism[4], are largely motivated by the idea of the a "common enemy". The previously illustrated underlying concepts of the "common enemy" can be related to the two frameworks, which again lay the foundation for explaining electoral success. Finally, these explanations provide basis for developing hypotheses and later variables for empirical testing (will be discussed in depth in the methodology section).

Based on my theoretical discussion and frameworks, I have subsequently developed three hypotheses that I want to test empirically and statistically. Hopefully, these tests will confirm the theoretical explanations.

H1: The more economically disadvantaged and the more unequal income distribution, the higher the vote share is for RWPs.

H2: The lower the trust of politicians and the political system in general, the higher the vote share is for RWPs.

H3: The higher the share of immigrants and negative attitudes towards immigration, the higher the vote share is for RWPs.

Since most studies acknowledges the differences between Western Europe and Eastern Europe in political attitudes due to decades of different political systems, I will test these hypotheses together and separate. Conclusion wise, I will focus on Western and Eastern Europe separately and rather compare the two regions and discuss their similarities and inequalities. I believe that is the most accurate way to do it, as comparing all countries together may not give reliable and meaningful answers as they are too heterogeneous.

[4] Authoritarianism, populism and traditional right-wing policies are included here. However, I have only highlighted nationalism and nativism for simplicity and as they are the main traits in my opinion.

3. Data

In this part of the thesis, I will present the dataset and its properties and features. First, the variables will be presented and discussed. Then, I will discuss the quality and abilities of the dataset.

3.1. The dataset

Construction of a high-quality dataset is critical for obtaining good results. The dataset used in this thesis is mostly composed and prepared by me. By this, I mean that all key numbers and values are retrieved from other sources, but the collection, sorting and structure is done by me.

The data mainly stems from two different sources, Eurostat and European Social Survey. Eurostat is a statistical bureau which provides high quality statistics for Europe and the European Union. The bureau is a part of the European Commission and their richness in data material enables good and reliable comparisons between countries and regions within Europe (Eurostat, 2020). I choose Eurostat because it has a variety of relevant statistics available on most countries and using the same source across countries strengthens the comparability. Eurostat is also an inter-European bureau which provides comparable statistics for all member countries, which gives fair and distributed data from a reliable source.

The European Social Survey (ESS) is an academically driven cross-national survey that has been conducted across Europe since 2001. Every two years, questionnaires as surveys, measure attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of diverse populations in more than thirty countries (European Social Survey, 2020). The reason for choosing ESS is that it measures attitudes and beliefs that may be difficult to measure in other ways. We know that voting behaviour is difficult to explain and is often based on many factors, so including attitude variables may be a good way to explain electoral success. Like Eurostat, ESS is an established provider for survey data and I have applied their data on all countries to make a comparable dataset. Thus, I regard my two main sources for data material to be highly trustworthy and reliable.

The dataset consists of 27 countries with their respective right-wing political parties (Appendix 1). Moreover, it contains several variables, both independent, dependent and text variables. These are further divided into categorical, numeric and continuous variables which add up to a total of 17 variables (Appendix 2).

3.2. The variables

A complete overview of the variables can be found in the appendix (Appendix 2). I will present general features and descriptive statistics for the variables and comment on some of the main attributes. A complete and detailed summary of the descriptive statistics can be found in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4.

3.2.1. The dependent variable

The dependent variable in my analysis is the election results. Unlike most analyses, I initially had two independent variables; The EU parliament elections and national elections. The reason for this is that voting behaviour is complex and difficult to understand. I therefore included both election types in order to analyse whether there are some notable differences. Nevertheless, I ended up with focusing on national elections as it is probably the most concerning for its population, as well as differences in election outcomes were minimal. I also tested both variables against the explanatory variables and they did not produce any notable differences in the correlations or regression results. Since I want to capture the national differences and similarities, it was thus logical to keep national elections as dependent variable. On the other hand, every country has different challenges and agendas during elections, so election results do not necessarily reflect the same opinions, i.e. there is unobserved heterogeneity. The EU election variable was intended to capture that. Still, as we know from theory, there are some common patterns in RWP voting, so hopefully the national election variable will be sufficient in the analysis. The dependent variable is a ratio variable, meaning that it is measured in percentage.

The National Election Results

National elections have 81 observations but are unevenly distributed as election intervals differ between countries. Some countries have four elections, while other have only two. The average support for RWPs in national elections is 16.2%. The *between* difference is reasonably larger than *within* ranging from 0.3% (Cyprus) to 52.7% (Hungary) as minimum and maximum values. For illustrative means, I included both the distribution of EU and national elections results, which are shown in Figure 3.

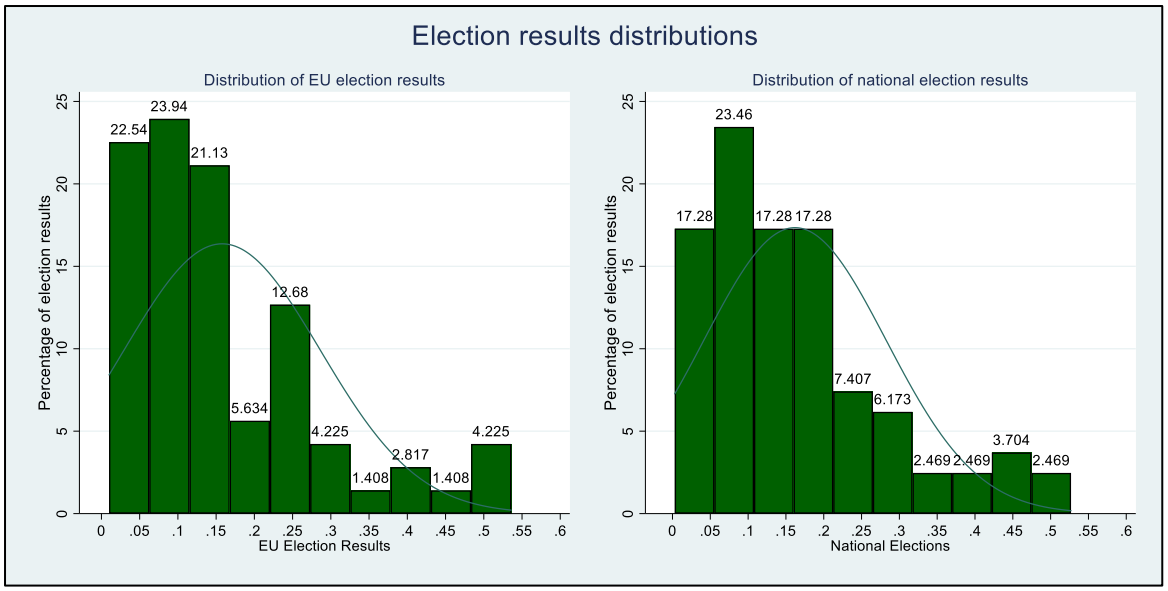

Figure 3: Election Results Distributions

From the distributions we can see that most of the election results are situated between 0 and 20%. National election results are slightly more distributed than the EU election results (Standard deviation is 0.128 and 0.120 for EU elections and national elections respectively).

3.2.2. The independent variables

The independent variables are used to explain a possible relationship with the dependent variable. The dataset has nine different independent variables equally distributed among the 27 countries over 12 years. This gives approximately 324 observations for each variable. The variables are either ratio, continuous or scale variables (Appendix 2). The choice of variables is based on the theory, where each variable is intended to represent theoretical explanations for RWP voting. I will go through each variable and present summary statistics to get a better sense of their properties.

Unemployment level

The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the total labour force. This definition refers to people who are reported without work but are available for work and have actively taken efforts to find work (OECD, 2020c). The average is 8.75% but differs substantially from 2.4% (Czech Republic) to 27.47% (Greece). As such, the *between* country variation is larger, i.e., unemployment rates differ more between countries than *within* countries over the 12 years.

I initially also made an unemployment change variable to measure changes in unemployment from year to year. The formula was simply $uemp_t - uemp_{t-1}$, implying changes from previous year to current year. The overall mean is -0.35% indicating that unemployment has decreased in the period as a total. It ranges from -4.38% which is the highest decrease in unemployment from a year to another, while the maximum increase of unemployment over one year is 9.77%. Due to multicollinearity issues and small sample size, I decided to drop it.

Household income

Household income variable is the median household income in a country. The median divides the income distribution into two equal parts: one-half falling below the median income and one-half above the median. The rationale for choosing median household income rather than mean household income is that it is less sensitive to the extreme outliers of the income scale (Missouri Cencus Data Center, 2020), and the measure is therefore commonly used. This is also related to the Public Choice theory where preferences of the median voter are usually decisive in elections (Shughart & William, 2008). This is very much in line with the populists focus on the "common man".

The median household income is € 15 916, with a minimum value (Bulgaria) of € 1 479 and maximum (Switzerland) € 44 134. Variation wise, the *between* effects are naturally larger than *within* effects reflecting the relatively stable income inequalities across countries.

Like the unemployment variable, the household income also had a change variable. Here, the overall average change is 3.87%, indicating a general increase in income across the countries. This variable was dropped for the same reasons as the change in unemployment variable.

Gini

The Gini index measures the inequality in the distribution of household income in a country (The World Factbook, 2020). The index ranges from 0 to 100 where 0 is perfect income equality (all have the same income) while 100 is perfect income inequality. The mean score is 29, but it ranges between 20 and 40 indicating potential differences between the countries.

Corruption

The corruption variable is based on Transparency International's yearly indexes on corruption, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). The index captures the general corruption in public sectors within a country and receives a score from 0 to 100 (Transparency International, 2020). Zero means highly corrupt while 100 is very clean. For simplicity, I have switched the score, such that higher score means more corruption (new score = *100 – original CPI score*). For example, an original CPI score of 88 is illustrated as 12 in my dataset.

Immigration Share

This variable is intended to capture the yearly change of immigrant population within a country. Note that this does not mean the total share of immigrants in a country, but the additional immigrant arriving in the country each year, relative to the size (population) in the country. I constructed the variable by taking the total number of immigrants arriving in a country each year and calculated the percentage compared to the total population in the same year. A formula is added below for clarification:

$$\frac{total\ immigrants\ arriving\ in\ country\ x\ in\ t\ year}{total\ population\ of\ country\ x\ in\ t\ year} * 100 = Immigration\ Percentage\ of\ Population$$

In that way, I can reveal changes in immigration each year to assess whether there are notable differences throughout the period.

Trust in Politicians

This is one of three variables retrieved from the European Social Survey (ESS). The variable is based on a questionnaire where people where asked; *"On a score from 0 to 10 how much do you personally trust politicians? 0 means you do not trust politicians at all, and 10 means you have complete trust".* Naturally, this variable is a scale variable where numbers ranges from 0 to 10. I have included this variable as it describes the general attitude towards the political system and how people view their politicians as representatives of the people. As one of my hypotheses focuses significantly on RWP's deep distrust towards the "political elite", this variable is intended to represent that. The overall average is 3.30 which illustrates a fairly low trust in politicians across Europe.

Attitude towards immigration from poor countries

In addition to the actual immigrant share in the population, attitudes toward immigration has proved to be equally important in populist right-wing thinking. The RWPs frequently target immigrants in their rhetoric, where xenophobia and fear of the unknown is important aspects. I want to include a variable accounting for that. As such, this ESS variable asks; *"To what extent do you think (country) should allow people from poorer countries outside Europe to come and live here?"*. The questionnaire ranges from 1 to 4, where 1 equals "allow many to come and live here" while 4 equals "allow none".

Immigration Attitude Index

This variable is intended to capture the more general attitude towards other ethnic groups and thus the nativity or "common enemy" aspect. This is an index variable estimating people's general opinion on how good or bad immigration is for the country. To construct the index, I used three different variables from ESS which all ranges from 0 to 10, where 0 is mostly negative and 10 is mostly positive to immigrants. The three variables are: 1) immigration is generally bad/good for the country's economy as a whole, 2) the country's cultural life is generally undermined/enriched by immigration and 3) the country becomes a worse/better place to live as a result of immigration. I first calculated the average values from all three categories in all countries from every year, then I added them together and finally divided it by three to find the average value. The interpretation for this variable is the same, a scale variable from 0 to 10 where 0 is worst and 10 is best.

Other variables

A time variable is included in the dataset and is named "Year". This period was chosen due to that it is a period with substantial changes in the share of votes for RWPs throughout Europe, and there might be a time trend across Europe that is not captured in the other variables. The relatively short time period results in few observations, as elections are usually held every third, fourth or fifth years. I have therefore just two to four elections per country in the given period. A disadvantage is that it will produce few actual observations. On the other hand, I am dependent on having observations for as many countries as possible since the objective is to analyse common patterns across Europe. It was therefore natural to choose the period from 2008-2019 where most RWPs have enough support to do any meaningful analyses. I could have extended the time period to increase the number of observations, but then I would not be able

to include all the countries due to lack of elections results. Since the objective of the thesis requires as many countries as possible, I had to limit the time period so more countries could be included.

Lastly, I have made a binary variable named "Region". The countries are split into two regions, Western Europe and Eastern Europe, based on the traditional political definition of West and East Europe from the Cold War era (OECD, 2020a). In other words, former communist countries in Europe are regarded as Eastern Europe, even though it does not belong to neither Eastern nor Western Europe geographically (e.g. Czech Republic). Contrary, Greece and Cyprus which are geographically South-eastern European countries are assigned to the western bloc. The rationale behind this is that countries in Europe have different history and circumstances that in various ways makes them difficult to compare[5]. The dataset illustrates this well when comparing the values of the variables (e.g. household income). Given the theoretical explanations, I believe it is more accurate to compare them against each other instead of relying too much on the overall significance. I suspect that notable differences between Eastern and Western Europe exist, so enlightening these may be interesting in order to understand electoral success in both regions. All Western European countries are marked with 0 and Eastern European countries with 1.

3.3. The right-wing populist parties

A difficult task was to decide which parties that should represent their countries as an RWP (the complete list of these parties is presented in Appendix 1). I started by looking at parties that are frequently highlighted in the literature, as well as those who has clearly taken a right-wing populist standpoint. Then I checked the parties against the theory and the main traits.

The parties included range from classical populist parties, to more far-right and extreme right parties. For example, the Greek Golden Dawn and its Cypriot sister party ELAM are of the more extreme calibre (Katsourides, 2013). Other parties such as the Swedish "Sverigedemokraterna" and the Austrian FPÖ have shown elements of neo-fascism, but I would regard them as typical RWPs as it is not a prominent feature compared to the Greek or Cypriot parties. Whether these parties are completely comparable is thus debatable, but ideologically they share many of the same traits and attitudes, and I have therefore decided to include them together.

[5] I described how attitudes and different views in the characteristics of RWPs illustrated a clear distinction between East and West Europe in the theory section.

A notable exception is the inclusion of the Spanish and Portuguese People's parties (PP). These parties are not strictly considered right-wing populist parties but rather conservative traditional right parties. The lack of RWPs on the Iberian Peninsula is an interesting exception. Portugal and Spain are relatively new democracies in a Western-European context due to long-time right-wing dictatorships. This has been highlighted as a reason for why growth of new right-wing parties has been curtailed. These parties have generally been rejected by the Spanish and Portuguese citizens (Alonso & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015), which have resulted in a fragmentation and weak organization of the populist right in these countries (Mudde, 2007). Nonetheless, there has been a rise of right-wing populism in Portugal and Spain in the recent years. The Portuguese Chega and Spanish VOX have received 1,3% and 15,1% respectively of the votes in the last elections (Politico, 2020). It seems that the right-wing populist trend is finally taking place in Iberia as well. Despite this, I have decided to not include these parties as their election record is limited. The argument for including the PPs is that they have right-wing elements. An example of this is the Portuguese 2015 election, where the PP were a part of a right-wing coalition (Portugal Ahead). This is part of my justification for including these parties as well as for making the dataset more convenient. Still, I will urge to understand that the election results of these parties must not be fully equated with other more classical right-wing parties such as the French FN or the Austrian FPÖ.

3.4. Data quality

Regarding properties of a dataset, Park (2011) discusses some important checkpoints when evaluating the quality of the (panel) data[6] (Park, 2011).

- The dataset must be longitudinal with some fixed and/or random effects.
- Individuals need to be consistent and not changing over time. i.e. a country must retain a country throughout the actual period.
- Consistency in time periods. The specific time variable must be of equal length.
- Equal number of observations for an individual in each period.
- Measurement should be conducted by same method.

The dataset is longitudinal as it spans over a period of 11 years but gives only three observations per country due to election intervals. Next, there are some fixed/random effects in the dataset which I will discuss later. The individuals are given in countries, which is consistent

[6] The checkpoints introduced by Park (2011) are directed towards panel data, which is the method I will use. The rationale for choosing this method will be explained later in the method chapter.

in each period and is denominated in yearly data. There is only one observation for each country in every time period and the measurements are all conducted by same methods.

Based on Park's checkpoints, the quality of my dataset should be quite good. However, whether T and n are too small or too large remains a question. As *T=3* and *n=27* are quite small in terms of panel data, it might be more difficult to handle than a larger dataset. To compensate for a lower number of time periods, I extended the number of countries (from 17 to 27) to balance the dataset. Still, a small dataset with too many explanatory variables can be sensitive to overfitting, where the model describes the random error rather than the relationship between variables (Frost, 2020b). This can give misleading R-squared values and coefficients. Another problem is outliers and noise which can be problematic with a small dataset. Outliers and extreme values can produce skewed distributions and influence variance and standard deviations in a negative manner. One solution is to extend the dataset, but it is difficult without extending the time frame or lowering the scale and analyse results at the sub-national level. I still think handling these issues is doable. Measures can be good processing of the data to obtain a high-quality dataset, limit the number of hypotheses as well as sticking to simpler models.

3.5. Data processing and cleaning

Before use, the dataset needs processing and cleaning, so it is useable and in a desired form. The main purpose is to make sure that the data is understandable and gives meaningful answers. To do so, I have denominated most variables in percentages or shares of total value to simplify the interpretation and make them size neutral as countries vary in size. For example, as median household income is originally given in 1000 euros, the coefficients will be very small. I thus divided all numbers by 1000, so that a real income of €44 000 is displayed as 44 in the dataset.

I have also considered issues with missing data and extreme outliers. Outliers refers to observations of extreme high or low values. These values lie outside of the general area of other variables and are unusual observations that are not representative for the general relationship in regressions. The outliers can be problematic for statistical analyses because they can cause tests to miss significant findings or distort real results (Frost, 2020a). Therefore, it is necessary to identify values that are unusually high or low in the dataset. We can use the national elections as an example of what we need to consider when dealing with outliers. This is illustrated in Figure 4.

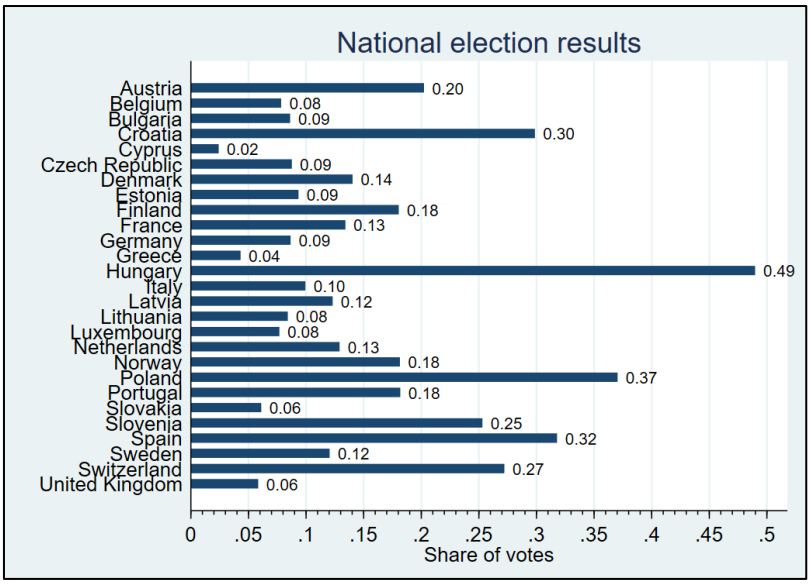

Figure 4: National Elections Results per Country

The figure suggests that mean election results varies notably. If we look at Hungary, the RWP support is considerably higher than most countries and must be regarded as an outlier in this case. Therefore, it is important to consider how problematic they are for our dataset and whether they may be excluded or not. I have decided to not remove them as there are other countries with similarly high shares of votes (e.g. Poland and Croatia). This gives an indication that Hungary despite having abnormally high shares of votes, is not a single extreme outlier. These countries are also placed within the same region, which makes them comparable.

Missing data is another common problem in statistical analyses. Too many missing values can weaken the overall strength of the model and its explanation power. Panel data is usually classified as either unbalanced or balanced. An unbalanced dataset means that the values in a dataset are unequally distributed, implying missing values. A balanced dataset with as much observations as possible is therefore preferred. On the other hand, having an unbalanced dataset in panel regressions may not be as problematic as it may be in other methods. An unbalanced dataset due to randomly missing observations (i.e. missing values for certain years for countries or firms) is usually unproblematic. The reason is that when missing data is random, it is not correlated with the idiosyncratic error (Wooldridge, 2015). This is an important assumption in panel data which needs to be satisfied to obtain reliable and unbiased coefficients. My dataset had some missing values in the first place, but mostly due to randomly missing values. Nevertheless, I tried to fill out the missing values as much as possible to obtain the best and most reliable coefficients. Especially the three variables retrieved from ESS had missing values due to that it is only conducted every two years. I dealt with this by using imputation which

means replacing missing values with substituted values. All the missing values in the years between have been filled out with the previous years' value. I do not believe this method imposes problems since it only applied a single value missing every two years, resulting in one year that needed to be imputed per observation[7].

Still, there are countries which are entirely left out from the ESS variables. Latvia and Luxembourg do not have any observations in these variables. These are virtually the only missing variables, so I regard my dataset to be strongly balanced and sufficient for conducting panel data analyses.

The completion of the dataset has been time consuming. There have been notable challenges in quantification of the data and uncertainties around endogeneity (this will be discussed in depth in the discussion chapter). Nonetheless, I have strived to process and improve the data as best as possible within the given time frame and available resources.

[7] A majority of the countries had missing values here at some point, but particularly the Eastern European countries had missing values due to not participating in the earliest surveys (from 2006 – 2014).

4. Methods

In this part I will present the methodical approach. I will discuss relevant methods and models which can be applied to the data and eventually select the most suitable model for the empirical analysis.

4.1. Multicollinearity

Before going into the model selection, I will briefly discuss a statistical issue that may be present in my dataset. Multicollinearity can be a severe problem which can lead to unreliable and unstable estimates in regression analyses (Allison, 2012). As mentioned earlier, I have already removed some variables that might be prone to multicollinearity. Still, it is useful to conduct a test to check whether some of the variables may suffer from multicollinearity. The test is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Multicollinearity test

	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**	**(8)**	**(9)**	**(10)**
(1) Year	1.000									
(2) Unemployment Level	0.101	1.000								
(3) Household Income	-0.334	-0.145	1.000							
(4) Gini	-0.106	-0.110	0.105	1.000						
(5) Corruption	-0.094	-0.151	0.424	-0.156	1.000					
(6) Immigration Percentage of Population	-0.189	0.239	-0.181	0.029	0.077	1.000				
(7) Trust in Politicians	0.138	0.290	-0.355	0.051	0.050	-0.125	1.000			
(8) Attitude towards Immigrants from Poor Countries	-0.186	-0.196	0.295	-0.076	0.037	-0.052	-0.181	1.000		
(9) Immigration Attitude Index	-0.045	-0.157	0.076	-0.028	0.109	0.072	-0.492	0.066	1.000	

What is considered too high multicollinearity is debated and there seems not to be any clear rules. A thumb rule is, that if the correlations are above 0.60, we should suspect that the variables may suffer from multicollinearity issues (Allison, 2012). The table indicates that my variables do not seem to suffer from serious multicollinearity, so I assume that it is not a major problem so far.

4.2. Model selection and method

Correct model selection in econometric analyses are important in order to obtain strong and reliable results. Choosing the correct model and method thus need reflection and judgements of the dataset and its features. My data set is a panel data composed by 27 countries and their respective political parties (see appendix 1), in the period from 2008 to 2019. Every unit in every time period has additional information in other variables.

4.2.1. Panel data

Panel data (also called longitudinal data or cross-sectional time-series data), consists of observations on the same units in several different time periods (Kennedy, 2003). What distinguish panel data from other models such as cross section and time series models is that the *same* cross-sectional units are observed over time or in a specific time period.

Having multiple observations on same units allow us to control for unobserved characteristics of the units unlike cross-sectional or time-series data (Wooldridge, 2015). Problems with unobserved heterogeneity is a serious problem and can cause misspecification of the model. A good illustration of this challenge is well-represented by Hajivassiliou (1987). He studied how external debt repayments is a problem for developing countries. A key argument for using panel data is that every country has different history, institutions, political structure and religious denomination. Taking these unique features of a country into account, the implication is that these features result in different attitudes when it comes to borrowing and debt repayments. When not including these heterogeneities into the model, the results will end up biased and wrong (Hajivassiliou, 1987). Using a panel data model, which allows the researcher to consider that individuals, firms, states or countries are heterogeneous is therefore an important advantage.

Baltagi (2008) discussed several advantages and limitations of panel data in his work. As they are highly relevant for my work, I will present some of his key aspects (Baltagi, 2008):

Panel data can better provide variability, less collinearity, more degrees of freedom and efficiency. Since we have observations across different entities of different sizes and characteristics the variation will be higher, and the risk of multicollinearity is reduced due to that variables are less likely to be based on the exact same features.

Another central argument is that panel data is more suitable of studying dynamics of adjustment. Unlike cross-sectional data, panel data can estimate the relation of an individual's behaviour at one point to behaviour at another point in time. As my thesis is about conducting

voting behaviour at one point compared to another point based on input variables, this ability of panel data is thus very important to my analysis.

Lastly, it allows us to analyse trends and lags in behaviour or decision making which is useful in order to understand how certain factors impact policies or other decisions. Since I want to analyse how particular factors influence voting behaviour, using panel data is therefore an obvious choice as the best and most appropriate model which allows us to understand election results based on lagged variables.

There are nevertheless some limitations that we need to be aware of when dealing with panel data. Panel data consists of multiple observations of the same unit over time; hence it is data demanding. Preferably, we need observations for all units in all time periods (balanced panel) which can be difficult to obtain.

Another limitation is that good panels have a sufficient time span. A short time span with too many variables may give weak and misleading results. A solution is to increase number of spells or units. Still, more spells can be difficult in terms of data collection and handling. In terms of my case, the dataset does not investigate a substantial long period of time and that may cause problems regarding this limitation. However, I have included more observations per year to compensate for this, but I need to be aware of this when analysing the data.

Baltagi (2008) introduced further limitations such as attrition, nonresponse and self-selectivity which are all important to know. I will not go further in depth on these limitations in this paper.

4.2.2. Properties of panel data

Mathematically, panels can be expressed by a simple equation:

$$y_{it} = \alpha + \beta x_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad x_{it,} i = 1, \dots, N, t = 1, \dots, T.$$

The *y* represents the dependent variable while *x* is the independent variable(s). The α and β are coefficients and i and t are connotations for units and time. The error term ε plays an important role in panel data and the assumptions of the error term determine whether we have to use the fixed effects or random effects model. I will discuss these types of model selection and their properties later.

Panel data can be divided into long and short panels. Short panels usually have many individuals but fewer spells. Long panels are the opposite, with few individuals and many time periods (Cameron & Trivedi, 2005). The definition of a long and short panel is not exact, but

panels generally have more observations per year than number of spells. Too short panels produce weak explanation power and risks incorrect rejection of the null hypothesis, known as type II error. Too long panels can produce significant variables that otherwise should not be significant, which leads us to type I errors, which is non-rejection of a false null hypothesis (Akobeng, 2016). Since my dataset consists of only $T=3$, which must be considered a short panel, I must be aware of type II errors.

The second aspect of panel data is whether it is balanced or unbalanced as already mentioned. This is not necessarily a huge problem as most software programs handles unbalanced panels well but may require some additional estimations and computations.

4.2.3. The panel data model

Now that our data is presented and processed for analyses, we need to decide which model we should use to obtain the best and most consistent coefficients. When dealing with panel data, there are mainly two models that are commonly used; the fixed effects (FE) and random effects model (RE). There are other models such as mixed effects (ME), between effects (BE) and first-differences (FD) which are preferred in some cases, but for convenience, I will focus on FE and RE as they are the most used and generally preferred models.

Before I go into the FE and RE models, I will just mention the third common way to estimate panel data. Pooled OLS can be appropriate in some cases, but as it uses the normal OLS technique it is likely that the individual-specific effects are ignored and thus assumptions about orthogonality in the error term is violated (Schmidheiny & Basel, 2011). However, it is wise to test whether we can use the simpler pooled OLS instead of FE and RE before we go into these models, which I will do a little later.

To decide which model that is best for my case, we need to understand their nature and properties. The essence in their differences is that random effects model can introduce bias under some conditions but reduces the variance of the coefficient estimates. Fixed effects on the other hand, will produce unbiased estimates but may be prone to high variance (Clark & Linzer, 2015). Both bias and variance can seriously damage the estimates and it is therefore vital to choose the correct model. Still, as we have to choose between one of the models which will probably produce some bias or variance, the decision made has to be some sort of "trade-off" between the two features in either model.

4.2.4. The fixed effects model

In fixed effects models, the individual-specific effect is a random variable that is allowed to be correlated with the explanatory variables (Schmidheiny & Basel, 2011). This means that if there are omitted variables in the model that most likely are correlated with other variables, the fixed effects model will control for that. The rationale behind is that the model controls for time-invariant variables with time-invariant effects, meaning that each variable serves as their own controls. The intuitive understanding here is whatever effects the omitted variables would have on the other variables at one point in time, will be the same effect as in another point, implying constant or fixed effects (Williams, 2015).

The fixed effects model can be illustrated as a functional form like this:

$$y_{it} = \beta_1 X_{it} + \alpha_i + u_{it}\,, i = 1, \dots, n, t = 1, \dots, T,$$

where *i* represents individuals and *t* time. There is also a special α_i which refers to the entity-specific intercepts that capture heterogeneities across individuals. There are several methods for estimating a fixed effects model. The most commonly used is the *least squares dummy variable model* (LSDV) and the *within* estimation model. The main difference is that the LSDV uses dummy variables while the within model does not (Park, 2011). Since there is no dummy variables in our dataset, it will be most appropriate to focus on the *within* model[8]. The *within* model uses the variation from each individual to assess the regression. In that way, it looks at the within variation in each country which is relevant for me as I want to see if changes in the independent variables have effects on the election results over time.

4.2.5. The random effects model

In the random effects model, the individual-specific effect is a random variable that is uncorrelated with the explanatory variables (Schmidheiny & Basel, 2011). For RE to be unbiased and consistent, the error terms must be random and not correlated with the independent variables whatsoever. That is a strong assumption which needs to be checked for before deciding to use random effects model. On the other hand, if this is true, the RE models lets you estimate time-invariant variables and use Generalized Least Squares (GLS). This will usually give better and more consistent estimators which makes RE a better model. Yet, this

[8] The region variable can be regarded as a dummy variable, but it will be used separately in the regressions, so it would not count as a dummy variable in the regression model

hinges on the assumption about no error term correlation, as it can only be used if this is confirmed. A list of the important assumptions is provided in Table 2 to clarify their differences:

Table 2: Assumptions of Fixed and Random Effects Estimator (Wooldridge, 2015)

Assumptions	**Fixed Effects**	**Random Effects**
A1.	Linearity in parameters	Linearity in parameters
A2.	Random sampling	Random sampling
A3.	No perfect collinearity	No perfect linearity
A4.	Zero conditional mean	Zero conditional mean
A5.	Homoskedasticity	Homoskedasticity
A6.	No autocorrelation	No autocorrelation
A7.	Independent variables change over time	Independent variables uncorrelated with error term

4.2.7. The problem of high variance vs. bias

Clark and Linzer (2015) discusses this issue in their paper on using fixed effects or random effects. A major drawback of the "within" estimation is that if we have few observations per unit, the estimate of β tends to be sensitive to the random error. As such, the effects from x on y may diverge substantially from the true effect. Furthermore, if the sample size is very small, the effect of each unit may account for most of the variation in the dependent variable. This is a serious problem which will considerably reduce the explanation power of the model as well as increasing the standard errors of the coefficients. The advantage of RE models here is that it allows the estimation of β to be pooled. This means that the outliers which can give very wrong answers in the FE model is reduced back towards its mean value. This will produce more stable and consistent coefficients, especially in small samples where outliers will produce high variance.

On the other hand, there is a serious possibility that these estimators will be biased if not handled properly. From the assumption we know that there must not be any correlation between the independent variables and the error term for RE to be unbiased. In other words, if we have omitted variables that might have a notable impact on the dependent variable, there will be correlation and RE is useless. Compared to the small sample set problem in FE, the more correlation there is in a RE model, the more biased the coefficients will be. Biased coefficients will give wrong answers and then we cannot say anything about the relationship between x and y. As we can see, both models have their advantages and disadvantages. So how should we decide which one we should use?

But first, we need to test FE against the normal OLS model, which is done by a regular F-test. The essence of this test is that the null hypothesis indicates that at least one dummy parameter is not zero. If the null hypothesis is rejected, there is individual-specific effects in the model and FE must be used. The results from the F-test can easily be obtained by executing a normal fixed-effects regression model for panel data, see Figure 5:

```
F test that all u_i=0: F(25, 43) = 12.50                     Prob > F = 0.0000
```

Figure 5: F-test for choice between Pooled OLS and Fixed effects model

The F-test is highly significant, and we can reject our null hypothesis regarding individual-specific effects. This implies that there is such effects and we cannot use the regular OLS model in this case.

Secondly, we need to check RE against pooled OLS. This is done by using the Breuch and Pagan's Lagrange multiplier test (Breusch & Pagan, 1980). This test examines if the variance of individual-specific effects is zero. If the null hypothesis is rejected, there is presence of random effects in the model and the RE will be more suitable than the pooled OLS. The test results are represented in Figure 6:

```
Breusch and Pagan Lagrangian multiplier test for random effects

        Elecnat[CountryID,t] = Xb + u[CountryID] + e[CountryID,t]

        Estimated results:
                         |       Var     sd = sqrt(Var)
                ---------+------------------------------
                 Elecnat |    .0149251        .1221683
                       e |    .0029929        .0547074
                       u |    .0152934        .1236666

        Test:   Var(u) = 0
                                  chibar2(01) =    41.00
                               Prob > chibar2 =   0.0000
```

Figure 6: Breuch-Pagan test for choice between Pooled OLS and Random effects model

Again, the test is highly significant, and the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that also in this test, the regular OLS cannot be used to estimate our model. As such, the Pooled OLS models is therefore rejected as a viable alternative in my panel data regression.

Lastly, we need to compare the FE model against the RE model to finally decide which one is the best and most appropriate. This is conducted through the Hausman test (Hausman, 1978). The essence of the Hausman test is basically used to test for orthogonality of the random effects

and the regressors (Greene, 2000). As such, we can explain the Hausman test as a test to check whether fixed or random effects is the most consistent estimator:

$$H_0: cov(x, e) = 0$$

$$H_1: cov(x, e) \neq 0$$

We want to check if we can reject the null hypothesis or not. If the null hypothesis is rejected, the fixed effects models is the most appropriate and consistent estimator. Here, the random effects will be correlated with the error term and produce biased estimators. If we fail to reject the null hypothesis, the random effect estimator is regarded consistent and uncorrelated with the error terms. Then we must use the random effects estimator, see Figure 7:

	Coefficients (b) FE	(B) RE	(b-B) Difference	sqrt(diag(V_b-V_B)) S.E.
Uempl_level	.0027832	.0026409	.0001422	.001512
Income_level	.0031281	.0017194	.0014087	.0023876
Income_chng	.0022574	.001974	.0002834	.0002064
Gini	-.0002108	-.0035292	.0033184	.0041021
Corruption	-.0000778	-.0002365	.0001587	.0015483
Imgr_prcnt	.0385282	.0279841	.0105441	.0137433
Trust_in_pol	-.0126239	-.0095628	-.0030611	.0079666
Imgr_poor_~y	.1664951	.1293273	.0371678	.0232649

b = consistent under Ho and Ha; obtained from xtreg
B = inconsistent under Ha, efficient under Ho; obtained from xtreg

Test: Ho: difference in coefficients not systematic

chi2(8) = (b-B)'[(V_b-V_B)^(-1)](b-B)
= 6.32
Prob>chi2 = 0.6116

Figure 7: Hausman test for choice between random and fixed effects model

In our test, we can see that the p-value is way above the critical significance level of 0.05. Therefore, we can assume that the dependent variable is uncorrelated with the error term, and we should use the random effects model. Since the regular Hausman test checks whether the parameters of a fixed effects (FE) and random effects (RE) are similar, it does not give an explicit answer of which estimator to use. To ensure that the RE estimator is consistent and unbiased, we need to conduct a couple of additional tests. First, heteroscedasticity and serial correlation must be checked for, which does not seem to be a problem according to my tests (Appendix 5). Then we can execute a robust Hausman test (Arellano, 1993) to finally decide whether the RE estimator is the most appropriate method or not. The problem of only using the regular Hausman test is that it requires one estimator to be completely efficient with response to the null hypothesis. This is difficult to achieve if there is heteroscedasticity or serial correlation in the panel data. The robust Hausman test essentially performs a cluster robust

version of the normal Hausman test which can then confirm that RE is a consistent and efficient estimator (Figure 8).

```
. rhausman FE RE, cluster
bootstrap in progress
----+--- 1 ----+--- 2 ----+--- 3 ----+--- 4 ----+--- 5
.................................................. 50
.................................................. 100
------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Cluster-Robust Hausman Test
(based on 100 bootstrap repetitions)

b1: obtained from xtreg Elecnat Uempl_level Income_level Income_chng Gini Corruption Imgr_prcnt Trust_in
> _pol Imgr_poor_cntry, fe
b2: obtained from xtreg Elecnat Uempl_level Income_level Income_chng Gini Corruption Imgr_prcnt Trust_in
> _pol Imgr_poor_cntry, re

    Test:  Ho:  difference in coefficients not systematic

                  chi2(8) = (b1-b2)' * [V_bootstrapped(b1-b2)]^(-1) * (b1-b2)
                          =         1.84
                Prob>chi2 =       0.9855
```

Figure 8: Robust Hausman test for RE and FE model

The results from the robust Hausman test strengthens my assumption of using the RE estimator over the FE. Now, the p-value is even higher with 0.98. Since the statistical tests implies that the RE estimator is consistent and unbiased, it will be used in the regression analysis in the following section.

5. Results

The results from the analysis will be presented in this chapter. First, I will present correlation matrices to illustrate the overall relationship between the variables. After that, I will discuss and select the best models for the regression, and then present the regression results. In addition, I will discuss some of the main findings, but the main discussion in relation to the hypotheses and theory is in the following discussion chapter.

5.1. Correlation matrices and model selection

Before discussing the general correlations and regressions, I will just illustrate the mean election results for each country which is useful to have in mind when reading the results from the analysis. The mean election results from 2008-2019 is shown in Figure 9.

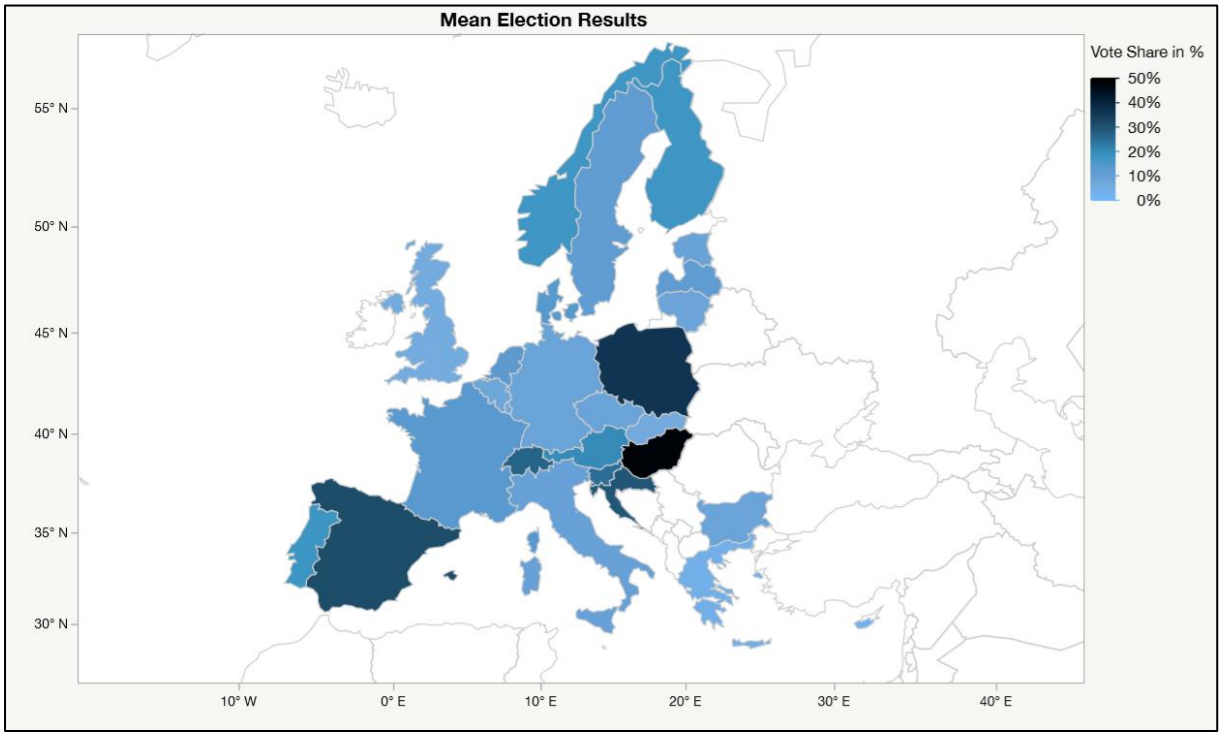

Figure 9: Mean Election Results between 2008-2019

Table 3 beneath shows the correlation between the independent variables and election results for Europe as whole and by region. In the "All Europe" data set, only *Gini* and *Immigration attitude index* indicate some correlation, but those are not particularly strong

either. The *Year* variable is positively correlated, implying that support for RWPs have increased during the time period 2008-2019. In Western Europe, the *Immigration attitude index* is more correlated with election results than in Eastern Europe, while the *Immigration percentage of population* shows stronger correlation in the East. This may indicate that different immigration issues are associated with electoral support in Western and Eastern Europe.

Table 3: Correlation between election results and explanatory variables

	All Europe	Western Europe	Eastern Europe
National elections	1.000	1.000	1.000
Year	0.101	0.088	0.167
Unemployment rate	0.006	0.180	-0.273
Household income	-0.025	0.237	0.084
Gini	-0.161	0.046	-0.353
Corruption	0.009	-0.157	-0.121
Immigration percentage of population	0.034	0.089	0.275
Trust in politicians	-0.004	0.141	0.036
Attitude towards immigrants from poor countries	0.066	-0.128	0.180
Immigration attitude index	0.157	0.357	0.101

For the economic variables, higher unemployment is positively correlated with election results in Western Europe, but negative in East, which is interesting. However, inequality issues (Gini) seems to be more influential in Eastern Europe, while household income is more relevant in Western Europe with a correlation coefficient of 0.23.

As mentioned earlier, multicollinearity is a challenge with this dataset. Although the test from the method chapter showed no serious multicollinearity, the correlations between some of the explanatory variables are high (Appendix 6). I regard these correlations to be a potential multicollinearity problem, which needs to be dealt with. In an attempt to solve or at least improve the situation, I will use forward selection to add predictors in turn to develop the best model while eliminating serious multicollinearity. To check for multicollinearity when adding predictors, I will use the variance inflation factor (VIF). The VIF is a useful tool for controlling multicollinearity, as it estimates how much the variance of a coefficient is "inflated" due to linear dependence with other predictors (Allison, 2012). The critical value for when multicollinearity becomes a problem is debated among researchers, but a VIF between 5 and 10 usually indicates a possible multicollinearity issue. Above 10 is regarded a serious problem. I will attempt to add variables in three turns until multicollinearity becomes an issue. Then the best model without unacceptable multicollinearity problems will be chosen. I begin with one

variable from each "category" of variables[9] which is intended to lend support to the three hypotheses. These are *Household income*, *Corruption* and *Immigration percentage of population*, which I regard as good and reliable variables. I will also add the random effects regression coefficients for each model to examine how the relationship between explanatory variables and election results changes (Table 4). The coefficients and regression results for each model can be found in Appendix 7.

Table 4: VIF scores for model 1

Variables	**All Europe**		**Western Europe**		**Eastern Europe**	
	VIF	**Coef.**	**VIF**	**Coef.**	**VIF**	**Coef.**
Year	1.03	0.001	1.06	-0.000	1.20	-0.000
Household income	4.16	-0.002	3.05	0.003	2.06	-0.002
Corruption	2.96	-0.000	2.15	0.000	1.69	-0.002
Immigration percentage of population	1.91	0.005	1.61	-0.034	1.81	0.071
Mean VIF	2.52		1.97		1.69	

With only three variables, most correlations are not very high, except some correlations between income and corruption (see appendix 6). This is can also be seen as income level has higher VIF scores in all three cases. However, the VIF scores are acceptable as all values are under 5. The regression coefficients are also very small. I would proceed to the next model by adding some variables.

Table 5: VIF scores for model 2

Variables	**All Europe**		**Western Europe**		**Eastern Europe**	
	VIF	**Coef.**	**VIF**	**Coef.**	**VIF**	**Coef.**
Year	1.05	0.001	1.13	-0.003	1.25	0.001
Household income	4.27	-0.001	3.66	0.006	1.85	-0.009
Corruption	4.53	-0.000	4.01	-0.001	2.17	-0.001
Immigration percentage of population	2.22	0.027	1.75	0.004	2.40	0.103
Trust in politicians	4.81	0.000	7.55	-0.022	1.41	-0.034
Unemployment rate	1.60	-0.007	2.29	0.010	1.54	-0.004
Immigration Attitude index	1.92	0.001	2.38	0.037	1.34	-0.000
Mean VIF	2.91		3.25		1.71	

When adding *Trust in politicians*, *Unemployment rate* and *Immigration attitude index* to the model, the VIF increases for almost all variables compared to model 1. The corruption and income variables are approaching 5, which means that they start to become a possible

[9] A category here is related to the three hypotheses, i.e. the categories are economic, trust and immigration.

multicollinearity problem. The most striking result is the *Trust in politicians* score for Western Europe of 7.55, which is problematic. Such a high score means that I probably have to remove this variable. I will however keep it until the next model to see how it changes when adding additional variables.

Regarding the coefficients, the immigrant percentage of population in Eastern Europe increases more than the other variables indicating that election results increases more here when this variable increase. Interestingly, the same variable change in Western Europe when adding Immigration attitude index, which may indicate that immigration attitudes are important here.

Table 6: VIF scores for model 3

Variables	**All Europe**		**Western Europe**		**Eastern Europe**	
	VIF	**Coef.**	**VIF**	**Coef.**	**VIF**	**Coef.**
Year	1.08	0.000	1.13	-0.002	1.48	0.004
Household income	4.77	0.000	4.24	0.008	3.83	-0.045
Corruption	4.57	-0.000	4.63	-0.002	2.69	-0.003
Immigration percentage of population	2.26	0.022	2.01	0.018	2.61	0.213
Trust in politicians	5.94	-0.008	15.36	-0.063	1.84	-0.097
Unemployment rate	1.78	0.000	2.48	0.008	1.86	-0.004
Immigration attitude index	2.37	-0.004	5.63	0.095	1.43	0.015
Gini	1.68	-0.004	3.90	0.005	2.63	-0.026
Attitude towards immigrants from poor countries	1.62	0.093	3.39	0.127	1.35	0.087
Mean VIF	2.90		4.75		2.19	

With all variables included, the VIF becomes increasingly problematic, especially for Western Europe, where the trust in politicians score is alarmingly 15.36. This variable is also exceeding the limit of 5 in the model for all Europe. On the other hand, it is low in Eastern Europe with a score of only 1.84. Thus, multicollinearity seems to be more of an issue in the models for Western Europe than those for Eastern Europe. This means that I have to remove some of the variables to deal with multicollinearity issues. For Western Europe, I will obviously remove *trust in politicians* as it is the main source of multicollinearity. It is also highly correlated with *Corruption*, implying that they are representing much of the same explanations. This is not problematic, as they are both factors intended to explain the trust hypothesis. The same goes for *Gini* and *Household income* and the economic hypothesis, so I will remove *Gini* from the Western European model as well to further improve the model. Even though the VIF scores for Eastern Europe are lower, the corruption variable will be removed as it is a bit high correlated with the income variable.

The changes in the coefficients are much in the same variables as in the previous model, especially in the immigration variables. *Trust in politicians* and *Household income* are also increasing in Eastern Europe. These changes give us an indication of which variables that are more important for explaining electoral support.

Table 7: VIF scores for final models

Variables	**All Europe**		**Western Europe**		**Eastern Europe**	
	VIF	**Coef.**	**VIF**	**Coef.**	**VIF**	**Coef.**
Year	1.08	0.004	1.12	-0.022	1.48	0.004
Household income	4.77	0.006	3.36	0.057	3.06	-0.024
Corruption	4.57	-0.005	2.92	-0.003		
Immigration percentage of population	2.26	0.022	1.12	-0.002	2.59	0.119
Trust in politicians	5.94	-0.008			1.58	-0.051
Unemployment rate	1.78	0.006	2.12	0.011	1.77	-0.004
Immigration attitude index	2.37	-0.040	2.45	0.455	1.17	0.000
Gini	1.68	-0.048			2.19	-0.015
Attitude towards immigrants from poor countries	1.62	0.093	1.94	0.057	1.31	0.050
Mean VIF	2.90		2.22		1.89	

After removing the problematic variables, the VIF scores are substantially reduced. Now, all variables for Western and Eastern Europe are below 5, which is good. Some of the correlations are still a little high (see appendix 6) to conclude that multicollinearity is completely dealt with. However, since the VIF scores are relatively good and below 5, I believe these models are improved enough that multicollinearity is not a serious issue anymore. The VIF scores are a little too high in the "All Europe" model, but I will let it be as the main focus is on the regions, and they yield little meaningful explanations to electoral support for RWPs in Europe as previously discussed, which I also will prove in the regression models. In terms of the regression coefficients, there is an increase in the coefficient values, especially in Western Europe which indicates that removing *Trust in politicians* and *Gini* have improved the model. The *Immigration percentage of population* coefficient has decreased in Eastern Europe when *Corruption* was removed but is still higher than the rest. It is also now more significant than it was in the previous model (see appendix 8).

With removal of these variables, we now have a slightly different set of variables in the models for Western and Eastern Europe. This make the models incomparable, which could be a problem. To avoid this, I have examined changes in the coefficients in one model with all variables and one without *Gini* and *Trust in politicians* for Eastern Europe in attempt to make it comparable to the Western European model (Appendix 9). The inclusion of these two

variables results in minimal changes in the coefficients and no change in the signs. Furthermore, there is no fundamental change in the significance levels when adding the two variables. I therefore assume that these models are comparable even though the model for Eastern Europe includes two additional variables.

5.2. Regression results

To assess the impact of the independent variables on the election results, I have conducted three random effects estimations. One for Europe as a whole, and one each for Western and Eastern Europe. Table 8 below shows the summary regression statistics for the three cases.

Table 8: Random effects regression models

	All Europe				**Western Europe**				**Eastern Europe**			
National Elections	Coef.	Robust Std. Err	Z	P > | z |	Coef.	Robust Std. Err	Z	P > | z |	Coef.	Robust Std. Err	Z	P > | z |
Year	0.004	0.002	0.21	0.844	-0.022	0.003	-0.63	0.530	0.004	0.005	0.73	0.467
Unemployment level	0.006	0.002	0.24	0.820	0.011	0.004	3.54	**0.000*** **	-0.004	0.004	-1.08	0.280
Household Income	0.006	0.002	0.03	0.976	0.057	0.002	2.09	**0.037** **	-0.024	0.013	-1.80	**0.071***
Gini	-0.048	0.005	-0.91	0.325					-0.015	0.006	-2.46	**0.014** **
Corruption	-0.005	0.001	-0.48	0.723	-0.003	0.001	-0.29	0.774	-0.003	0.003	-1.03	0.301
Immigration Percentage of Population	0.022	0.035	0.62	0.525	-0.002	0.037	-0.06	0.952	0.119	0.064	1.86	**0.063***
Trust in Politicians	-0.008	0.014	-0.57	0.664					-0.051	0.030	-1.70	**0.090***
Attitude towards Immigrants from Poor Countries	0.093	0.055	1.71	**0.019** **	0.057	0.046	1.23	0.219	0.050	0.065	0.78	0.437
Immigration Attitude Index	-0.040	0.016	-0.30	0.737	0.455	0.018	2.45	**0.014** **	-0.000	0.022	-0.04	0.965
R2	0.018				0.402				0.442			
N	78				48				30			
Sigma_u (σ_v)	0.092				0.020				0.049			
Sigma_e (σ_e)	0.056				0.056				0.039			
Rho	0.726				0.109				0.602			

*Notes: *significant at the 0.1 level, **significant at the 0.05 level, ***significant at the 0.01 level.*

5.2.1. Regression results for Europe

The most striking finding in this regression is that most variables are not significant, except for *Attitude towards immigrants from poor countries*. The R-squared of my model is also very low (1.8%), suggesting poor overall explanation power. Furthermore, the standard deviation of residuals within groups σ_v is 0.09 and 0.056 for σ_e (overall error term). On this basis, 72.4 %

of the variance is due to differences across panels (countries). This is also known as the intra-class correlation.

Looking at the significance and coefficients, there is only one variable that is significant at 10 % level: increased negative attitudes towards immigrants from poor countries results in higher support for RWPs. Apart from that, the model does not produce any significant coefficients for explaining electoral support. There may be several reasons for why the model does not come out with significant coefficients. I suspect that the main reason is that the effects of the variables are heterogeneous, which is illustrated in the significance difference between Western and Eastern Europe.

5.2.2. Regressions results – Western Europe

The economic variables unemployment and household income are both significant at 1% and 5% level respectively, which means that economic deprivation affects electoral support for RWPs. This testifies that the "losers of modernization" theory fits well with the statistical results.

The corruption variable is not significant, which means that we find no evidence for claiming that political trust issues are related to electoral support for RWPs in Western Europe.

Lastly, the immigration attitude variable is significant, which means that immigration is an important factor for explaining electoral support. On the other hand, the immigrant share variable is not significant, indicating that immigrant attitudes are more deciding the actual number of immigrants in the country.

5.2.3. Regression results – Eastern Europe

When we look at Eastern Europe, other variables prove to be significant. The pattern is almost the opposite of Western Europe, except of *household income*. This confirms that the variable effects are heterogeneous and that looking at Europe together yields little explanatory meaning. Unemployment is not significant, but the "Gini" on the other hand, is significant, but surprisingly implies that higher inequality lowers the support for RWPs. This suggest that economic matters are important explanations in Eastern Europe as well, but in slightly different ways.

Unlike Western Europe, the *Trust in politicians* variable is significant, indicating that lower trust in the political system produces electoral support for RWPs.

The immigrant share of population is significant for the Eastern Europe model, while the attitude variables are not. This indicates that the actual immigration rate affects electoral support more than people's immigration attitudes

5.3 Postestimation – Residuals

The regression results proved that the variable effect on electoral support for RWPs are very heterogeneous. Therefore, it can be difficult to know exactly why some countries within the regions achieve much greater electoral success than others. Even though the regression results demonstrated interesting findings, I suspect that there are important country-specific factors that are not captured in the models. Thus, it is useful to examine the degree of the explanations that lies in the residuals. This is useful to extract cases where predicted values and actual values diverge in order to see which countries that underperforms or overperforms. This is illustrated in Figure 10.

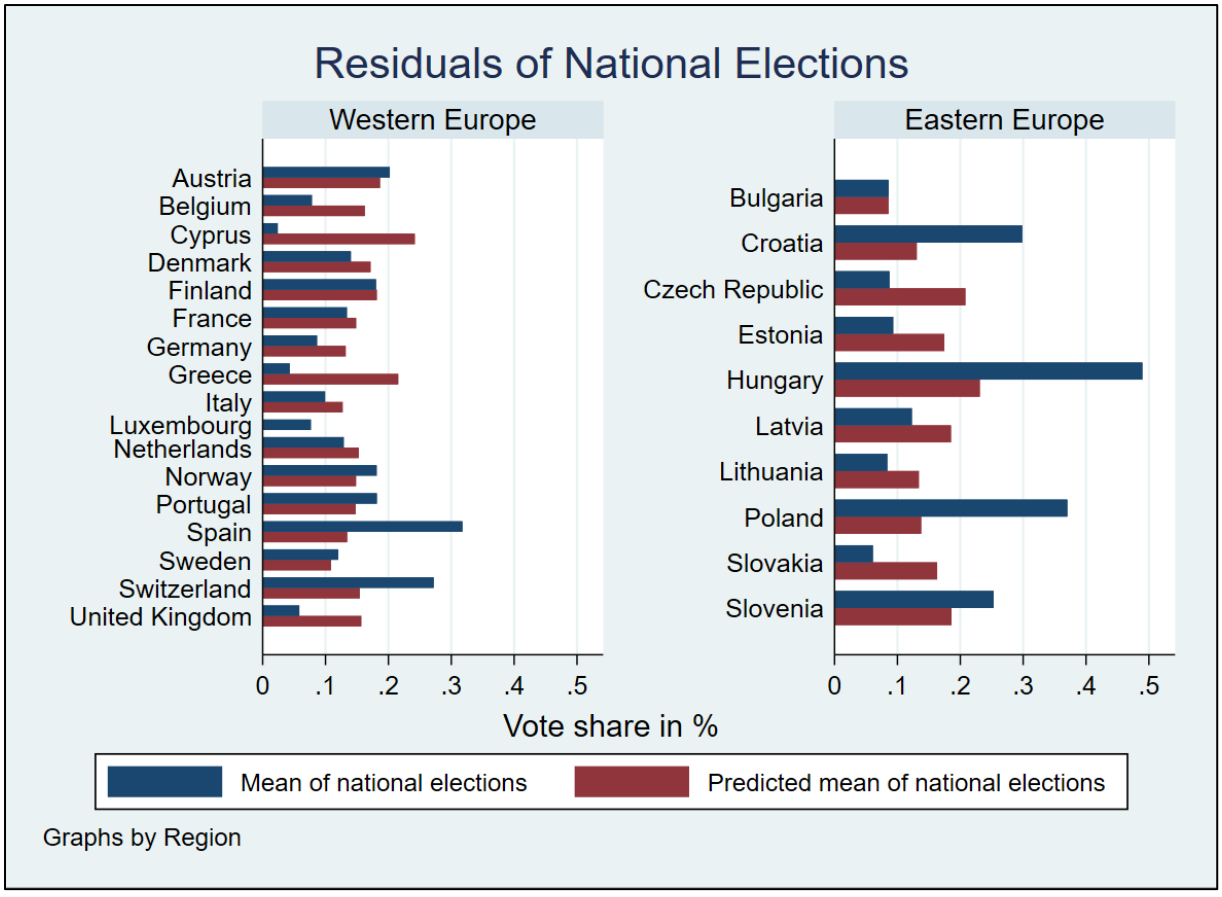

Figure 10: Residuals by region

The figure has some interesting findings that can help explaining why some countries overperform, while others underperform. It opens up opportunities to look at other potential

explanations that may be unique for particular countries that are not captured in the regression model (which will be discussed later). The predicted and actual values appear to be more aligned in the Western Europe than in Eastern Europe. In Western Europe, Cyprus and Greece underperforms substantially, while Spain overperforms. The RWPs in Cyprus and Greece are considered more extreme, while the PP party in Spain is more moderate than the others. I interpret this as how extreme the parties are, has a significant impact on the election results. In Eastern Europe, Hungary, Poland and Croatia stands out as they overperform. I will discuss these findings more in the discussion chapter 6.

6. Discussion

I will first summarize my key findings from the regressions and then discuss their relevance against the theory and hypotheses. Then I will discuss statistical challenges related to my case and give some thoughts on what could have been done differently. Finally, I will give some brief recommendations for further research on this topic.

6.1. Key findings

The most striking result was the absence of significance in the overall (all Europe) regression model. Even though one immigration variable came out significant, there is clear evidence that an overall model does not give good answers on the relationship between the explanatory variables and support for RWPs. Therefore, there is no statistical answers that can support the hypotheses in the "All Europe" model. The important finding here is that European countries are probably too heterogeneous that this phenomenon can be explained through a common model. Although probably similar factors play a role, Europeans' perceptions, attitudes and preferences are too different to be equally affected in the context of elections. It is precisely the systematic differences between Western and Eastern Europe that is perhaps the most interesting result.

6.1.1. H1 – The economic explanations

The classical explanation to right-wing populism has been based on economic difficulties and marginalization of people in the society, which has led to support for RWPs. This has also been the foundation in the "losers of modernization" theory, where economic deprivation is one of Hans-Georg Betz' (1994) main explanations. This theory is thus relatively easy to understand in this context. Seeing this in the context of the "regressive left" theory may be somewhat more unclear as it has no clear direct economic explanations. Still, I think it is essential in an economic context. As I discussed in theory, right-wing populists' idea of a nostalgic past is important here as it portrays the past as a financially secure and predictable time. A party that wants to "take back control" and lead the society back to these safe times will likely appeal to some voters in a difficult economic situation. This is probably also reinforced by the RWPs harsh criticism of the "elite" and the left-wingers who are identified as scapegoats for bringing the country into these difficult times. On this basis, both theories apply well to both Western and Eastern Europe, and there is statistical evidence supporting H1 in both cases.

Nonetheless, I believe the most important finding here is what is emphasized in each region regarding the theories. This is illustrated by the differences in the significant variables, where unemployment matters more in Western Europe, while economic inequalities are prominent in Eastern Europe.

In a Western European sense, I suspect the economic factors are related to marginalization issues and the increasing globalization in this region. Even though xenophobia plays an important role in the RWP rhetoric, it does not necessarily mean that immigration scepticism are purely based on racism (Rydgren, 2017). It could also be economic reasons for reducing immigration such as pressure on the labour market, which can contribute to economic difficulties for many people (e.g. higher unemployment and lower wages). It may also be conceivable that this is related to the prominent Euroscepticism among RWPs, as the EU's immigration policies and economic integration make these issues even more pressing due to a steady influx of immigrants as well as free movement of labour. The true explanation is therefore difficult to know for sure, as economic factors and immigration attitudes are likely related to other issues making it difficult to reveal the real causal relationships.

In Eastern Europe, it is also reasonable to think that the "losers of modernization" theory is applicable but expressed differently. Lower household income is related to higher support for RWPs, but Gini has unexpectedly the opposite effect. Especially since many countries in Eastern Europe have experienced the sharpest rise in inequality in Europe since the fall of communism, and have substantial income disparities today (Blanchet, Chancel, & Gethin, 2019). Although it seems contradictory, the inequality has simultaneously decreased in many of the countries where the RWPs held governmental power (e.g. Poland, Hungary and Croatia), which can explain why these parties have gained support when inequality have decreased.

How much real impact it has can be discussed, and various studies conclude that economic means are of moderate importance (Margalit, 2019). Other studies show that there exists a relation, but explicitly under extraordinary circumstances (e.g. financial crises) (Anduiza & Rico, 2016). Although it shows a statistical correlation, I would be careful to emphasize it too much. I think the main finding here is that there are clear differences between Western and Eastern Europe in economic explanations to RWP support.

6.1.2. H2 – The (lack of) political trust

Trust and protest elections have repeatedly been cited as explanations of right-wing populist success (Guiso, Herrera, Morelli, & Sonno, 2017). The big common denominator here is the right-wing populist's conception of the struggle between the people and the elite. In many ways, the "elite" is a relatively vague term, and it can be difficult to know what and who the term covers. Still, it is strongly associated with the "regressive left" theory, and most of the elements fit into the right-wing populist image of the elite. It is also likely to assume that (economic) marginalized groups in the "losers of modernization" theory feel strongly overlooked by the government and are therefore fundamentally more sceptical to the political system. This has also been tested through studies showing that the trust factor is amplified during economic crises (Algan, Guriev, Papaioannou, & Passari, 2017).

On the other hand, the trust variable is only statistically significant in Eastern Europe, so we find no evidence for a link between trust and RWPs support in Western Europe. This was expected as the countries in Eastern Europe demonstrated persistently lower trust in political institutions than western European countries in my dataset. The political culture and the democratic history of these countries are pulled out as explanations here. Newer democracies are often less effective, transparent and inclusive, and the institutional performance is overall poorer than in more established democracies (Boda & Medve-Bálint, 2012). The authoritarian past and relatively short period of democracy in the post-communist Europe makes people tend to have less confidence in their institutions.

Given that the inequalities in Eastern Europe are greater, and that corruption is a generally bigger problem[10], one can believe that people will have less confidence in the authorities. Another explanation that can be drawn towards the economic perspective, is how strong and effective the welfare state is. Countries without good safety nets can make people feel vulnerable and not protected by their authorities, which can weaken the general trust in the political system. This may be plausible in an Eastern European context, as their social expenditures are systematically lower compared to Western Europe (OECD, 2020b).

[10] In my dataset, Eastern European countries performed almost systematically poorer on the CPI index, only with a few exceptions.

6.1.3. H3 – Immigration and attitudes

Immigration and immigration issues are frequently highlighted as the single most important factor for RWP support. This is also well reflected in the statistical results for both regions, where the attitude variable are significant in Western Europe, while the immigrant share variable prevails in Eastern Europe. Again, there is a noticeable difference between the regions. The fact that the attitude variable in Western Europe is significant lends support for H3. However, whether the attitudes are caused by racist and anti-pluralistic means, or a desire for lower immigration without xenophobic motivations is difficult to say. Still, I think this reinforces the fact that RWP support in Western Europe is closely linked to globalization issues and the constant European integration.

That the immigrant share variable is significant in the Eastern Europe, strengthens the idea that ethnic minorities and the increasing numbers of non-European immigrants are important factors for RWP support, which is also highlighted in other studies (Kende & Krekó, 2020). Since non-European immigration and multiculturalism have existed much longer in Western Europe, I think that the Eastern European immigration skepticism is largely linked to nationalism and the need of building a national identity after centuries of foreign rule (Batt, 2001). Still, the main finding is that I strongly believe that immigration issues are largely dependent on the national context and its definition of "the people", and the findings indicates support for H3 in both regions.

Nonetheless, I need to be aware of not stating too explicit causations, as attitudinal variables are difficult to measure accurately and may be prone to endogeneity issues.

6.2. Alternative explanations for RWP support

The residual postestimation introduced some interesting findings where countries like Spain, Switzerland, Hungary, Poland and Croatia overperformed while Greece and Cyprus underperformed. In these cases, there are likely other aspects which is not captured in the model that influence electoral support.

6.2.1. Party leadership

Charisma and strong leadership has frequently been pulled out as a crucial factor for electoral success of RWPs (Van der Brug & Mughan, 2007). In this context, strong (and partly eccentric) personalities have been highlighted such as Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, Marine Le Pen

in France and Victor Orbán in Hungary. A strong charismatic leader can be unifying and create a substantial appeal among the voters, which we have good examples of from Europe's fascist past. However, the results from van der Brug and Mughan (2007) do not indicate a direct correlation between strong leadership and electoral success. If that had been the case, then I would have expected the residuals in i.e. France and the Netherlands to diverge more than they do. So, it might have an influence in particular settings, but it does not seem to be a persistent factor in explaining electoral support for RWPs.

6.2.2. Party extremism

As briefly explained in the results, more extreme right-wing parties seem to underperform (e.g. Greece and Cyprus). Both the neo-Nazi Cypriot ELAM and the Greek Golden Dawn reached their height in terms of electoral success during the midst of the Euro and the contemporary refugee crisis. Both parties campaigned heavily on immigration as the single cause for economic problems in the countries (Bedock & Vasilopoulos, 2015). Much of their electoral success may thus lie in the simple "protest vote" hypothesis, where correcting the politics of mainstream parties are equally important as actually supporting their far-right values. When this is done, these parties will become redundant and lose electoral support. This was also discussed by Arzheimer (2018) in the theory, which I believe provides a viable explanation to their sudden popularity and following political marginalization. The fact that the Spanish Partido Popular (PP) overperforms supports this line of reasoning, as PP is a more moderate conservative party representing a more feasible and stable long-term alternative. Thus, party extremism seems to be an influential factor in explaining electoral support for RWPs. I considered to include a variable for this, but as it is hard to quantify party extremism, I found it too speculative to categorize the parties on my own. I also did not found any reliable classifications on this either, so I decided to drop it.

6.2.3. Other country-specific effects

Other country-specific circumstances can explain why for example Poland and Hungary differ. Saideman and Ayres (2008) discuss some features related to the ruling Fidesz party in Hungary (Saideman & Ayres, 2008, p. 128). The Hungarian diaspora is relatively huge, and many Hungarians live outside the modern Hungarian state. Fidesz has maintain close ties with this diaspora and instituted a law in 2004 which offered dual citizenship to ethnic Hungarians living outside the state (Kovács, 2006). This has led to a much larger voter base. In addition, Fidesz

has taken a clear nationalistic stance aiming at preserving Hungary's self-identity and Christian culture (Halmai, 2018). This has led to a strong anti-immigration stance, where the government went so far as to build a border wall against neighbouring countries during the refugee crisis in 2015. This set of thinking has also resulted in more paranoid statements from other far-right parties that view Hungary as a country surrounded by a "sea of Slavs" (Mudde, 2007, p. 75). This kind of ethno-nationalist thinking and fear of external threats is also present in Poland, where the Catholic Church is often equated with Polish patriotism and served as a symbol of independence (Halmai, 2018). Given that these have been prominent ideas embedded in the national consciousness, combined with the flow of refugees into Europe, it is likely that it affects the high electoral results in Poland and Hungary.

To sum up, I still believe that much of the explanation of RWP support lies within the variables I have included, when Western and Eastern Europe are analysed separately. Nevertheless, the residuals discussion shows that particularly the national context and the party profile matter. A natural next step could thus be to try to quantify some of these variables. This is, nevertheless, very challenging, but would be a promising path for future research. Another major conclusion for research is to be very careful to try to find explanations that apply for all of Europe, given the heterogeneous causations for RWP support. I think it would be appropriate to focus on comparable regions rather than Europe as a whole.

6.3. Statistical challenges

6.3.1. Sample size

The thesis has been subject to various difficulties related to data, method and the empirical results. First and foremost, there have been challenges regarding the sample size. The dataset has 324 observations in total, but this was reduced to 78 when I sorted it into sample groups (i.e. countries). When this was further divided into two regions, I ended up with 48 and 30 observations for Western and Eastern Europe respectively. I considered that to be a relatively low number of observations, and there was a risk for ending up with misleading answers. I knew that small sample sizes usually results in larger standard errors and wide confidence intervals will cause the estimation to be uncertain and inconsistent (Heckmann, Gegg, Gegg, & Becht, 2014). Consequently, I suspected my models to suffer from small sample size. On the other hand, the standard errors were not very large either (see appendices). Whether or not my models are credible is debatable. I choose to rely on it based on the statistical values that occur.

Nevertheless, it is important to keep this in mind when emphasizing the results. Obviously, the model could have been improved with more observations or conducted over a longer period. The only problem is that I have already included most of the European countries in my dataset, so extending the number of observations is difficult. Given that elections are conducted at intervals makes it also challenging to achieve more observations within the time period. Therefore, extending the time period was an alternative, but that was difficult as most RWPs are relatively new in the political landscape, with short electoral records.

Lastly, I tried to address the multicollinearity problem by removing independent variables in hope that it would produce better results and higher significance. I believe that much of the severe multicollinearity problems were solved by this as the VIF tests indicated. Nevertheless, the removal of explanatory variables did not affect the outcome significantly.

6.3.2. Model and method

Although I have been aware of that panel data methods have been the right method of choice, there have been some issues here. My tests indicated that the random effects estimator should be the best and most consistent estimator. As I discussed in the model section, the model requires some vital prerequisites and assumptions to be satisfied.

Many of the variables are attitude variables, which are difficult to quantify. This can represent possible endogeneity problems, as attitudes are likely a result of or a combination of other factors. I still chose to include these variables because they are highlighted in the theories and right-wing populist thinking, despite being a quantification challenge. Smelser and Baltes (2001) explain this issue well in their book; *"In the process of quantification, important information is lost for the sake of simplicity and calculability. (..) At the same time, the dominance of quantification also erases existing objects and relations, making some social phenomena, which cannot be quantified, practically invisible."* (Smelser & Baltes, 2001, p. 646). This has been a pervasive challenge in the thesis. Although they have proven to be significant, it is difficult to know the motivations behind attitudes, which can be highly individual.

I considered using the instrumental variables (IV) method to control for endogeneity problems, but I were uncertain whether the criteria could be satisfied. One criterion for using IV is that Z can't have a direct effect on Y, but only through X (Lousdal, 2018). Because I do not know whether attitudes are directly related to election results or not, it is difficult to determine. This was also partly why I introduced the residuals in the results chapter.

7. Conclusion

In this thesis I have tried to answer why European right-wing populist parties have experienced electoral success over the last 10 – 15 years. In the theory we saw that characteristics such as nationalism, nativism and xenophobia are essential ingredients in developing a right-wing populism ideology. This ideology is largely based on the definition of the people and the populist's proclamation as "defenders of the people" against a corrupt national elite. In many ways, this perpetual struggle lays the foundation for all right-wing populist thinking and rhetoric. This right-wing worldview is well reflected in the "Losers of modernization" and "Regressive left" theories, which in turn serves as reliable explanations for my statistical results.

The main findings of the thesis illustrated that here are no significant correlations at an overall European level, which confirms the complexity and heterogeneity of the issue. The interesting findings are rather the significant differences between the Western Europe and Eastern Europe, suggesting that the rise of RWPs in the two regions are quite different processes. The region-specific models turned out to yield several significant variables. Economic issues and attitudes towards immigration prevailed in the West, while the share of immigrants, inequality and trust issues were evident in the East. This indicates challenges of globalization in Western Europe, while nationalism is a stronger factor in Eastern Europe.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Political Parties by Country

Country	Political Party	Political group by EU
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria *Freiheitliches Partei Österreichs (FPÖ)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Belgium	Flemish Interest *Vlaams Belang (VB)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Bulgaria	Attack *Ataka*	None
Croatia	Croatian Democratic Union *Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica (HDZ)*	European People's Party (EPP)
Cyprus	National Popular Front *Ethniko Laiko Metopo (ELAM)*	None
Czech Republic	Freedom and Direct Democracy *Svoboda a přímá demokracie (SPD)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Denmark	Danish People's Party *Dansk Folkeparti (DF)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Estonia	Conservative People's Party of Estonia *Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond (EKRE)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Finland	Finns Party *Perussuomalaiset (PS)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
France	National Rally *Rassemblement national (RN)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Germany	Alternative for Germany *Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Greece	Golden Dawn *Khrysi Avgi (X.A)*	None
Hungary	Fidesz *Fidesz*	European People's Party (EPP)
Italy	League/League for Salvini *Lega Nord/Lega per Salvini*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Latvia	National Alliance *Coalition Nacionālā apvienība (NA)*	European Conservatives and Reformists Party (ECR)
Lithuania	Order and Justice *Partija Tvarka ir teisingumas (TT)*	None
Luxembourg	Alternative Democratic Reform Party *Alternativ Demokratesch Reformpartei (ADR)*	European Conservatives and Reformists Party (ECR)
Netherlands	Party for Freedom *Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV)*	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Norway	Progress Party *Fremskrittspartiet (FrP)*	None
Poland	Law and Justice *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS)*	European Conservatives and Reformists Party (ECR)
Portugal	People's Party *Partido Popular (CDS – PP)*	European People's Party (EPP)
Slovakia	Slovak National Party *Slovenská Národná Strana (SNS)*	None
Slovenia	Slovenian Democratic Party Slovenska Demokratska Stranka (SDS)	European People's Party (EPP)
Spain	People's Party *Partido Popular (PP)*	European People's Party (EPP)
Sweden	Sweden Democrats *Sverigedemokraterna*	European Conservatives and Reformists Party (ECR)
Switzerland	Swiss People's Party *Schweizeriche Volkspartei (SVP)*	None
United Kingdom	United Kingdom Independence Party	None

Appendix 2 – Variable Description

Variable name	Variable type	Description	Description example	Measurement level
Country	Categorical	Country name	Austria	Nominal
CountryID	Categorical	An identification number for a specific country	1	Interval
Political Party	Categorical	The right-wing populist party in a country	Freiheitliches Partei Österreichs (FPÖ)	Nominal
Year	Quantitative	The time period of a current observation	2008	Interval
Region	Binary	Whether a country belongs to eastern- or western Europe	1	Interval
EU Election Results	Dependent	The election results from last European Parliament election	From 0 to 100	Ratio
National Election Results	Dependent	The election results from last national election	From 0 to 100	Ratio
Unemployment Level	Independent	The percentage of unemployed workers in the total labour force	From 0 to 100	Ratio
Unemployment Change	Independent	The annual change of unemployment level	3.56	Continuous
Household Income	Independent	The median household income	15.91	Continuous
Household Income Change	Independent	The annual change in median household income	3.87	Continuous
Gini	Independent	The Gini index for inequality	From 0 to 100	Scale
Corruption	Independent	The Corruption Perceptions Index for corruption	From 0 to 100	Scale
Immigrant Percentage of Population	Independent	The annual share of population which is immigrants	From 0 to 100	Ratio
Trust in Politicians	Independent	People's trust in their politicians	From 0 to 10	Scale
Attitude towards Immigration from Poor Countries	Independent	People's attitude towards third world immigrants	From 1 to 4	Scale
Immigration Attitude Index	Independent	General attitude towards immigrants	From 0 to 10	Scale

Appendix 3 – General Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max
CountryID	324	14	7.801	1	27
Year	324	2013.5	3.457	2008	2019
Region	324	.37	.484	0	1
EU Election Results	71	.158	.128	.01	.536
National Elections	81	.162	.121	.003	.527
Unemployment Level	324	8.743	4.608	2.4	27.47
Unemployment Change	324	-.035	1.675	-4.38	9.77
Household Income	321	15.916	10.153	1.479	44.134
Household Income Change	320	3.87	7.403	-16.19	47.4
Gini	321	29.581	3.926	20.9	40.2
Corruption	324	33.972	16.742	6	67
Immigrant Percentage of Population	324	.896	.756	.02	4.28
Trust in Politicians	311	3.301	1.259	1.36	6.85
Attitude towards Immigration from Poor Countries	311	2.599	.386	1.61	3.55
Immigration Attitude Index	311	4.986	.931	1.61	8.35

Appendix 4 – Panel Data Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Variation	Mean	St. Dev	Min	Max
CountryID	Overall	14	7.8	1	27
	Between		7.94	1	27
	Within		0	14	14
Year	Overall	2013.5	3.46	2008	2019
	Between		0	2013.5	2013.5
	Within		3.46	2008	2019
Region	Overall	0.37	0.48	0	1
	Between		0.49	0	1
	Within		0	0.37	0.37
EU Election Results	Overall	0.158	0.128	0.010	0.536
	Between		0.114	0.044	0.525
	Within		0.060	0.036	0.331
National Election Results	Overall	0.162	0.120	0.001	0.536
	Between		0.111	0.024	0.489
	Within		0.049	0.022	0.366
Unemployment Level	Overall	8.74	4.61	2.4	27.47
	Between		3.75	3.49	19.02
	Within		2.77	-2.15	17.55
Unemployment Change	Overall	-0.035	1.67	-4.38	9.77
	Between		0.33	-0.84	0.84
	Within		1.64	-4.54	9.66
Household Income	Overall	15.91	10.15	1.479	44.134
	Between		10.12	2.93	37.44
	Within		2.03	6.50	23.69
Household Income Change	Overall	3.87	7.40	-16.19	47.4
	Between		2.99	-1.58	10.22
	Within		6.79	-22.54	42.07
Gini	Overall	29.58	3.92	20.9	40.2
	Between		3.80	23.83	35.97
	Within		1.14	26.12	33.80
Corruption	Overall	33.97	16.74	6	67
	Between		16.67	8.58	60.33
	Within		3.43	26.47	47.80
Immigrant Percentage of Population	Overall	0.89	0.75	0.02	4.28
	Between		0.73	0.12	3.83
	Within		0.22	0.36	1.87
Trust in Politicians	Overall	3.30	1.25	1.36	6.85
	Between		1.19	1.63	5.15
	Within		0.47	2.00	5.41
Attitude towards Immigration from Poor Countries	Overall	2.59	0.38	1.61	3.55
	Between		0.36	1.80	3.29
	Within		0.15	1.89	3.32
Immigration Attitude Index	Overall	4.98	0.93	1.61	8.35
	Between		0.79	3.11	6.36
	Within		0.50	2.37	7.33

Appendix 5 – Heteroskedasticity and Serial Correlation Check

```
Cross-sectional time-series FGLS regression

Coefficients:  generalized least squares
Panels:        homoskedastic
Correlation:   no autocorrelation

Estimated covariances      =         1          Number of obs      =        77
Estimated autocorrelations =         0          Number of groups   =        26
Estimated coefficients     =        10          Obs per group:
                                                              min =         1
                                                              avg =     2.961538
                                                              max =         4
                                                 Wald chi2(9)    =     15.96
Log likelihood             =  60.37842           Prob > chi2     =    0.0677
```

Elecnat	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Uempl_level	.0015955	.0034924	0.46	0.648	-.0052495	.0084405
Income_level	-.0003376	.002825	-0.12	0.905	-.0058745	.0051992
Income_chng	.0023523	.0019082	1.23	0.218	-.0013878	.0060924
Gini	-.01107	.0041183	-2.69	0.007	-.0191417	-.0029983
Corruption	.0003958	.0016287	0.24	0.808	-.0027965	.0035881
Imgr_prcnt	.0545007	.0402092	1.36	0.175	-.024308	.1333094
Trust_in_pol	-.0461688	.0242202	-1.91	0.057	-.0936396	.001302
Imgr_poor_cntry	.0967714	.0443345	2.18	0.029	.0098775	.1836654
Attit_imgr	.0701045	.0219458	3.19	0.001	.0270916	.1131175
_cons	-.027975	.2453854	-0.11	0.909	-.5089215	.4529715

Appendix 6 – Correlation Matrices

Appendix 6a – Correlation Matrix for all Europe

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
(1) National Elections	1.000									
(2) Year	0.101	1.000								
(3) Unemployment Level	0.006	-0.017	1.000							
(4) Household Income	-0.025	0.181	-0.435	1.000						
(5) Gini	-0.161	0.008	0.498	-0.449	1.000					
(6) Corruption	0.009	-0.139	0.509	-0.808	0.447	1.000				
(7) Immigration Percentage of Population	0.034	0.195	-0.383	0.727	-0.299	-0.598	1.000			
(8) Trust in Politicians	-0.004	0.104	-0.595	0.783	-0.581	-0.839	0.603	1.000		
(9) Attitude towards Immigrants from Poor Countries	0.066	0.040	0.302	-0.424	0.243	0.377	-0.235	-0.307	1.000	
(10) Immigration Attitude Index	0.157	0.107	-0.314	0.537	-0.294	-0.646	0.334	0.648	-0.489	1.000

Appendix 6b – Correlation matrix for Western Europe

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
(1) National Elections	1.000									
(2) Year	0.088	1.000								
(3) Unemployment Level	0.180	0.124	1.000							
(4) Household Income	0.237	0.153	-0.632	1.000						
(5) Gini	0.046	0.049	0.693	-0.691	1.000					
(6) Corruption	-0.157	-0.005	0.664	-0.711	0.760	1.000				
(7) Immigration Percentage of Population	0.089	0.084	-0.382	0.610	-0.326	-0.364	1.000			
(8) Trust in Politicians	0.141	0.008	-0.720	0.796	-0.806	-0.856	0.498	1.000		
(9) Attitude towards Immigrants from Poor Countries	-0.128	-0.087	0.395	-0.498	0.427	0.504	-0.247	-0.412	1.000	
(10) Immigration Attitude Index	0.357	0.035	-0.472	0.534	-0.526	-0.651	0.208	0.734	-0.674	1.000

Appendix 6c – Correlation matrix for Eastern Europe

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
(1) National Elections	1.000									
(2) Year	0.167	1.000								
(3) Unemployment Level	-0.273	-0.306	1.000							
(4) Household Income	0.084	0.267	-0.290	1.000						
(5) Gini	-0.353	-0.017	0.275	-0.627	1.000					
(6) Corruption	-0.121	-0.384	0.312	-0.514	0.113	1.000				
(7) Immigration Percentage of Population	0.275	0.332	-0.489	0.648	-0.282	-0.585	1.000			
(8) Trust in Politicians	0.036	0.234	-0.352	0.334	-0.408	-0.480	0.427	1.000		
(9) Attitude towards Immigrants from Poor Countries	0.180	0.318	0.097	0.028	0.023	-0.225	0.091	0.246	1.000	
(10) Immigration Attitude Index	0.101	0.176	0.135	0.091	0.037	-0.393	0.164	0.092	0.007	1.000

Appendix 7 – Regression results

Appendix 7a – Coefficients from regression in model 1

All Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	.0017778
Income_level	-.0021
Corruption	-.000768
Imgr_prcnt	.0056829
_cons	-3.366971

Western Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	-.0003695
Income_level	.0036744
Corruption	.0000809
Imgr_prcnt	-.0345098
_cons	.8412193

Eastern Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	-.0005423
Income_level	-.0028159
Corruption	-.0029036
Imgr_prcnt	.0714439
_cons	1.411259

Appendix 7b – Coefficients from regression in model 2

All Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	.0013088
Income_level	-.0017095
Corruption	-.00087
Imgr_prcnt	.0273182
Trust_in_pol	.0004233
Uempl_level	.0016012
Attit_imgr	-.0074891
_cons	-2.417726

Western Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	-.0030633
Income_level	.006251
Corruption	-.0011813
Imgr_prcnt	.0049523
Trust_in_pol	-.022553
Uempl_level	.0107459
Attit_imgr	.0379097
_cons	6.001815

Eastern Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	.0015702
Income_level	-.0090386
Corruption	-.0010625
Imgr_prcnt	.1035385
Trust_in_pol	-.0348106
Uempl_level	-.0040936
Attit_imgr	-.0000393
_cons	-2.778351

Appendix 7c – Coefficients from regression in model 3

All Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	.0004803
Income_level	.00009
Corruption	-.0005429
Imgr_prcnt	.0222211
Trust_in_pol	-.0080702
Uempl_level	.0006183
Attit_imgr	-.004881
Gini	-.0048056
Imgr_poor_cntry	.0939056
_cons	-.861252

Western Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	-.0026263
Income_level	.0089685
Corruption	-.0025473
Imgr_prcnt	.0181169
Trust_in_pol	-.0634924
Uempl_level	.0087146
Attit_imgr	.0955147
Gini	.0051888
Imgr_poor_cntry	.1277135
_cons	4.48753

Eastern Europe

Elecnat	Coef.
Year	.0048152
Income_level	-.0454321
Corruption	-.003755
Imgr_prcnt	.2136231
Trust_in_pol	-.097701
Uempl_level	-.0043258
Attit_imgr	.0154224
Gini	-.026672
Imgr_poor_cntry	.0873491
_cons	-8.350742

Appendix 8 – Main regression results

Appendix 8a – Main regression results for all Europe

Random-effects GLS regression — Number of obs = 78
Group variable: CountryID — Number of groups = 26

R-sq: — Obs per group:
within = 0.2245 — min = 2
between = 0.0016 — avg = 3.0
overall = 0.0188 — max = 4

Wald chi2(9) = 8.01
corr(u_i, X) = 0 (assumed) — Prob > chi2 = 0.5336

Elecnat	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Year	.0004803	.0024425	0.20	0.844	-.0043068	.0052675
Uempl_level	.0006183	.0027177	0.23	0.820	-.0047084	.0059449
Income_level	.00009	.0030539	0.03	0.976	-.0058954	.0060755
Gini	-.0048056	.0048785	-0.99	0.325	-.0143674	.0047562
Corruption	-.0005429	.0015336	-0.35	0.723	-.0035487	.0024628
Imgr_prcnt	.0222211	.0349537	0.64	0.525	-.0462868	.0907291
Trust_in_pol	-.0080702	.0185701	-0.43	0.664	-.0444668	.0283265
Imgr_poor_cntry	.0939056	.0400096	2.35	0.019	.0154882	.1723231
Attit_imgr	-.004881	.0145165	-0.34	0.737	-.0333328	.0235708
_cons	-.861252	4.867991	-0.18	0.860	-10.40234	8.679834
sigma_u	.0920856					
sigma_e	.05643292					
rho	.72697559	(fraction of variance due to u_i)				

Appendix 8b – Main regression results for Western Europe

Random-effects GLS regression — Number of obs = 48
Group variable: CountryID — Number of groups = 16

R-sq: — Obs per group:
within = 0.0869 — min = 2
between = 0.6367 — avg = 3.0
overall = 0.4022 — max = 4

Wald chi2(7) = 21.60
corr(u_i, X) = 0 (assumed) — Prob > chi2 = 0.0030

Elecnat	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Year	-.0022381	.0035602	-0.63	0.530	-.009216	.0047397
Uempl_level	.0115279	.0032545	3.54	0.000	.0051493	.0179066
Income_level	.0057064	.002734	2.09	0.037	.0003478	.011065
Corruption	-.0003958	.0013773	-0.29	0.774	-.0030953	.0023036
Imgr_prcnt	-.002272	.0377776	-0.06	0.952	-.0763147	.0717708
Imgr_poor_cntry	.0566105	.0461005	1.23	0.219	-.0337448	.1469657
Attit_imgr	.0459667	.0187597	2.45	0.014	.0091985	.082735
_cons	4.061517	7.161369	0.57	0.571	-9.974509	18.09754
sigma_u	.02047523					
sigma_e	.05833387					
rho	.10968779	(fraction of variance due to u_i)				

Appendix 8c – Main regression results for Eastern Europe

```
Random-effects GLS regression                   Number of obs     =         30
Group variable: CountryID                       Number of groups  =         10

R-sq:                                           Obs per group:
     within  = 0.5481                                         min =          2
     between = 0.4315                                         avg =        3.0
     overall = 0.4421                                         max =          4

                                                Wald chi2(8)      =      13.21
corr(u_i, X)   = 0 (assumed)                    Prob > chi2       =     0.1048
```

Elecnat	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Year	.0039815	.0054742	0.73	0.467	-.0067477	.0147106
Uempl_level	-.0047459	.0043968	-1.08	0.280	-.0133634	.0038717
Income_level	-.024623	.0136482	-1.80	0.071	-.051373	.0021271
Gini	-.0151388	.0061634	-2.46	0.014	-.0272188	-.0030587
Imgr_prcnt	.11982	.0643971	1.86	0.063	-.006396	.2460359
Trust_in_pol	-.0514791	.030329	-1.70	0.090	-.110923	.0079647
Imgr_poor_cntry	.050942	.0655398	0.78	0.437	-.0775135	.1793976
Attit_imgr	-.0009912	.0226732	-0.04	0.965	-.0454298	.0434474
_cons	-7.225569	10.86592	-0.66	0.506	-28.52239	14.07125
sigma_u	.04910214					
sigma_e	.0398986					
rho	.60231555	(fraction of variance due to u_i)				

Appendix 9 – Regression results with and without Gini and Trust in politicians for Eastern Europe

Variables	With	Without
	Coefficients	Coefficients
Year	0.003	0.002
Household income	-0.024	-0.029
Corruption	-0.003	-0.003
Immigration percentage of population	0.119	0.094
Trust in politicians	-0.051	
Unemployment rate	-0.004	-0.001
Immigration attitude index	-0.000	-0.021
Gini	-0.015	
Attitude towards immigrants from poor countries	0.050	0.056

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