

THE RISE OF THE FAR RIGHT IN EUROPE: DETERMINANTS AND RESPONSES

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Outline

- 1. Definition and evolution**
- 2. Theoretical framework: Demand and Supply**
- 3. Puzzle on demand side and dominant interpretation/solution**
- 4. Alternative (set of) interpretations/solution(s) to puzzle**
- 5. Conclusion and role of trade unions**

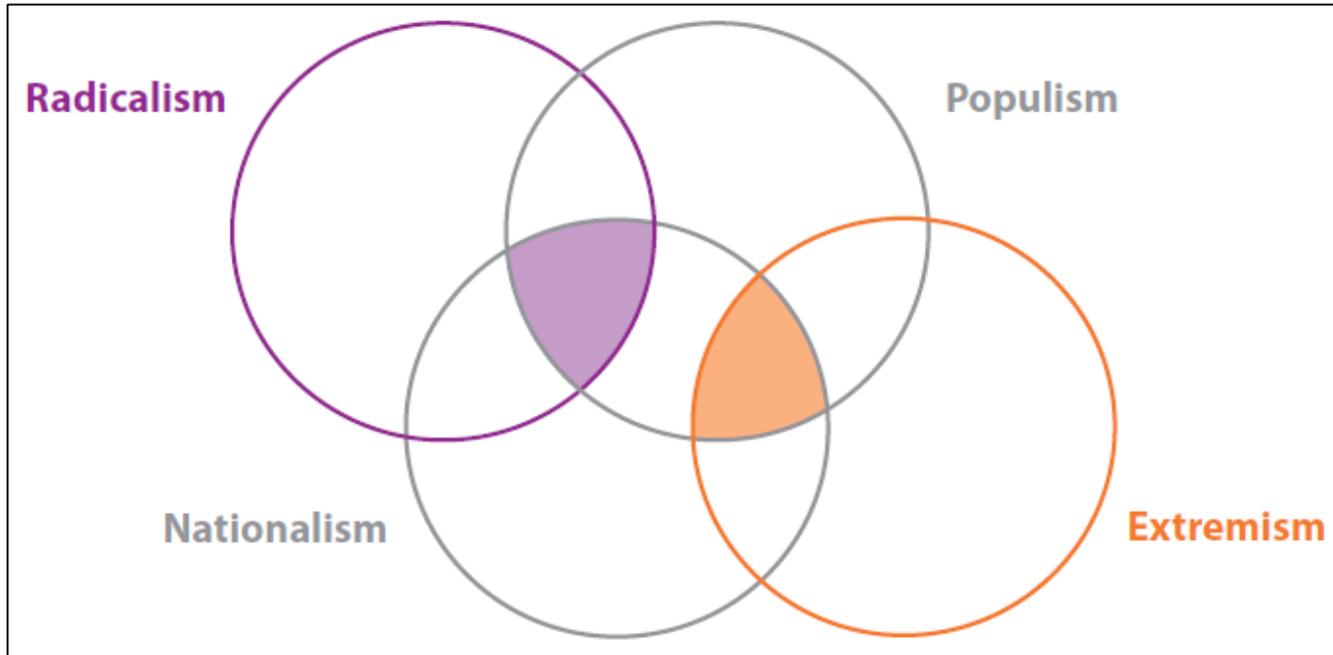
1.

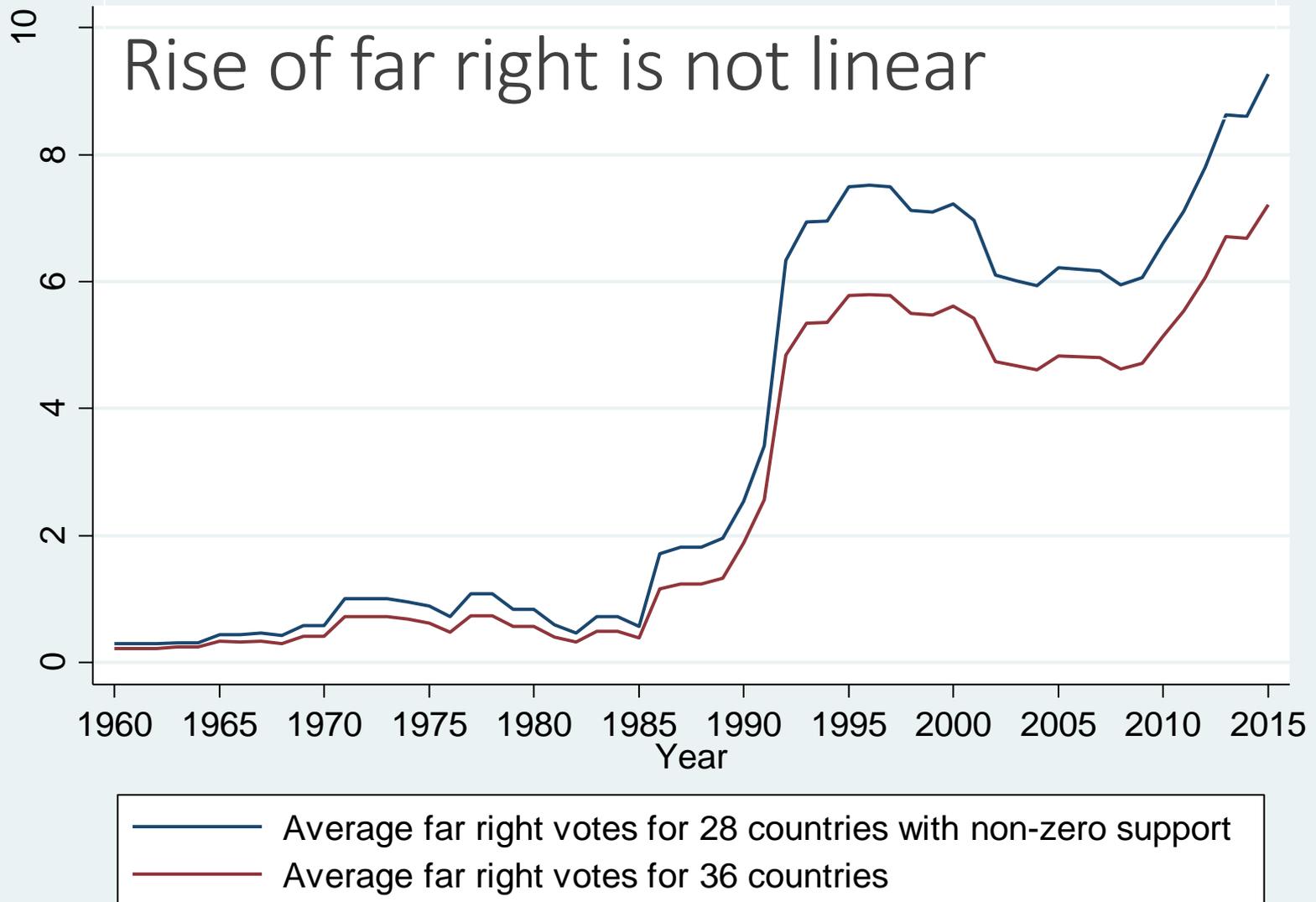
Definition and Evolution

⇒ Not coherent

⇒ Not linear

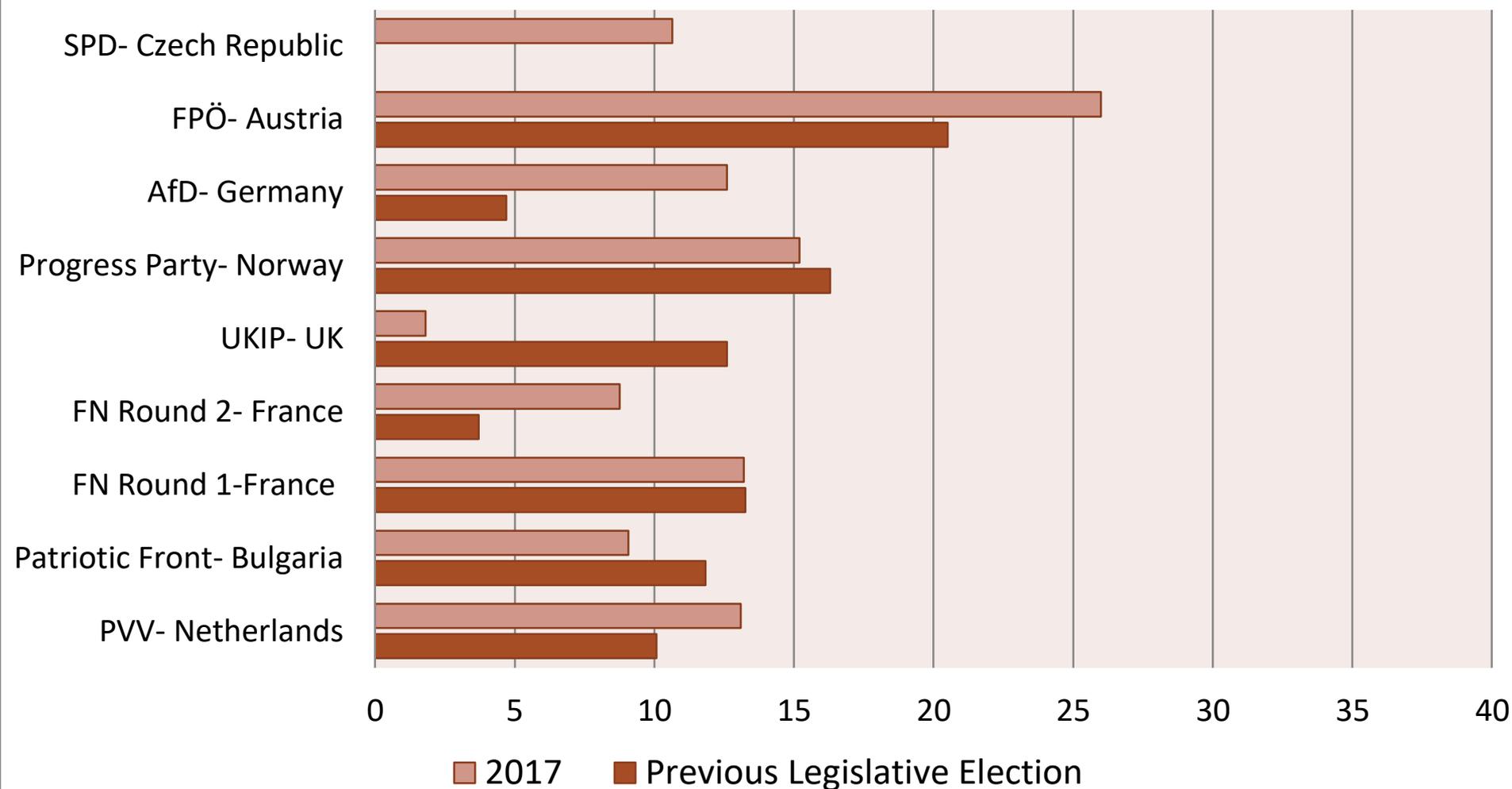
The far right is not a singular phenomenon





Armingeon, Klaus, Virginia Wenger, Fiona Wiedemeier, Christian Isler, Laura Knöpfel, David Weisstanner and Sarah Engler. 2017. *Comparative Political Data Set 1960-2015*.

Far right party performance in Legislative elections across Europe- 2017 compared to previous national election (% votes cast)



2.

Theoretical framework

⇒ Demand

⇒ Supply



SUPPLY

Closed

Open

DEMAND

High

Failure

Success

Low

Failure

Failure



3.

Puzzle on demand side and
dominant interpretation

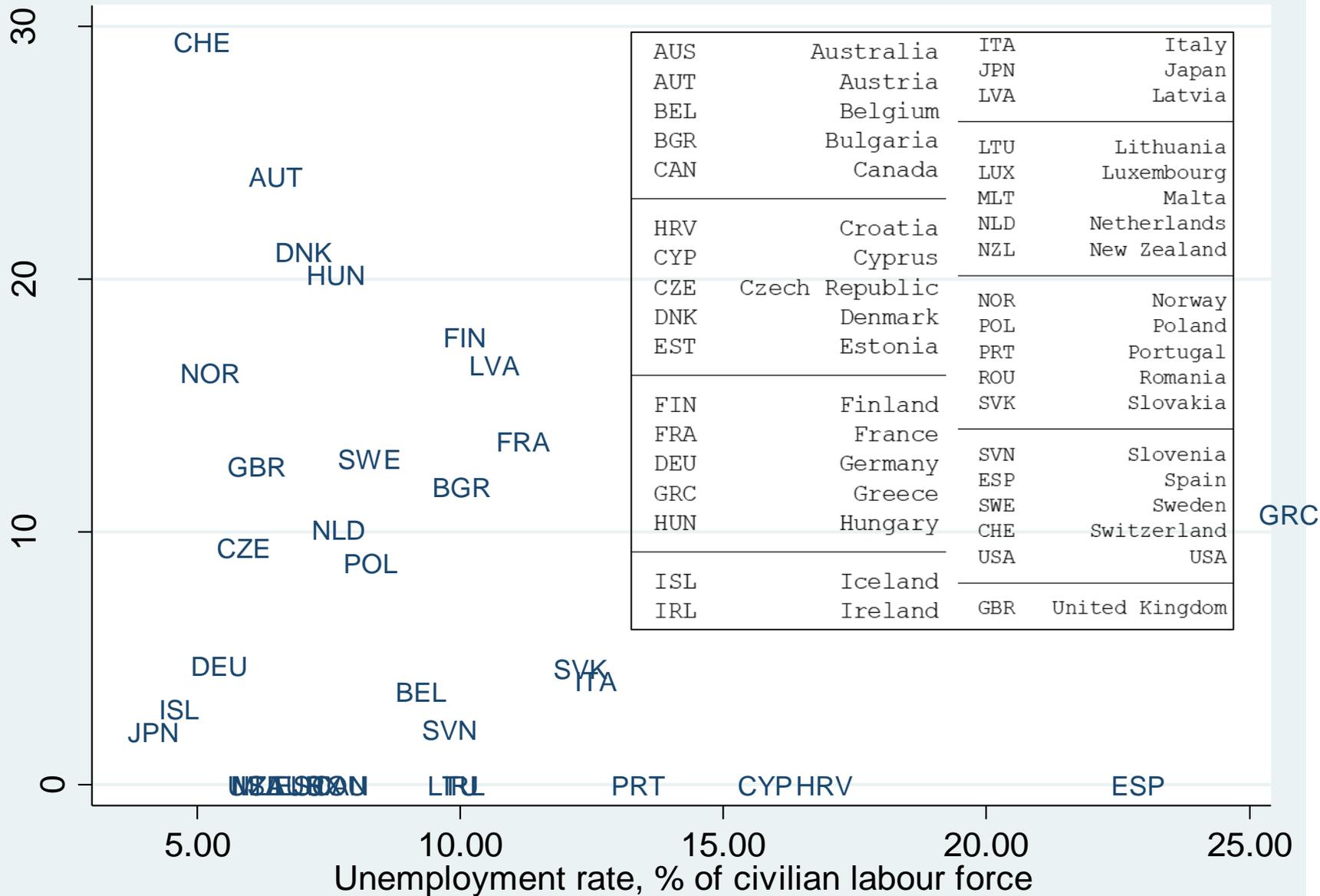
The puzzle of the economic crisis and the rise of the far right in Europe

Economic concerns

- Financial and economic crisis
- Economic insecurity rise
- Not just economic => also social breakdown
- Note: both absolute and relative deprivation SO not just during crisis => can happen with economic modernisation and/or unequal growth

Problems/criticisms

- Correlation between economic insecurity and national level far right votes is low
- Many far right voters are not unemployed and/or on low income



Dominant solution: new transnational cleavage and cultural backlash

Conventional wisdom: phenomenon is new & about 'new Nationalism' (sovereignty, anti-immigration, anti-elitism

- Uniform, linear and rising, caused by cultural insecurity

Two dimensions:

1. Ethnic competition

- Fear of loss of cultural identity
- Perceived incompatibility between cultures
- Perceived inability of certain groups to assimilate

2. Cultural backlash about broader value change

- Reaction against progressive cultural change

Indicators: Immigration, social values, education, mistrust in global/national governance

4.

An alternative interpretation

⇒ Immigration not just cultural

⇒ Welfare state policies

⇒ Party strategies

Note: Series of (published and work in progress) papers provide support for the following points – we show some evidence in next slides. See reference list at end of presentation

Immigration not just cultural

Immigration matters – but it is not just about culture

- Immigration has both economic and cultural impact
- Large literature in economics analysing impact of immigration
- People also voice economic concerns about immigration

Implications for far right party success

- Far right success is a coalition of core voters – the ‘nationalists’ – and non-core voters – the ‘materialists’
- Analyse relevance of economic and cultural concerns over immigration for far right support using pooled survey data

Economic and cultural concerns over immigration and their impact on far right party support – 2014 European Social Survey

	Dislikes (<5 on 10 points scale) immigration's impact on economy	>4	Dislikes (<5 on 10 points scale) immigration's impact on culture	>4
Voted far right	800	666	706	760
Did not vote far right	3634	9,034	2,604	10,064
Percentage voted for far right	18.04%	6.87%	21.33%	7.02%
TOTAL	4,434	9,700	3,310	10,824

Vlandas and Halikiopoulou (2017) The winning anti-immigration coalition: Concerns over the economic and cultural impact of immigration and far right party success in Europe

Role of welfare state policies

Economic insecurity not just about economic performance

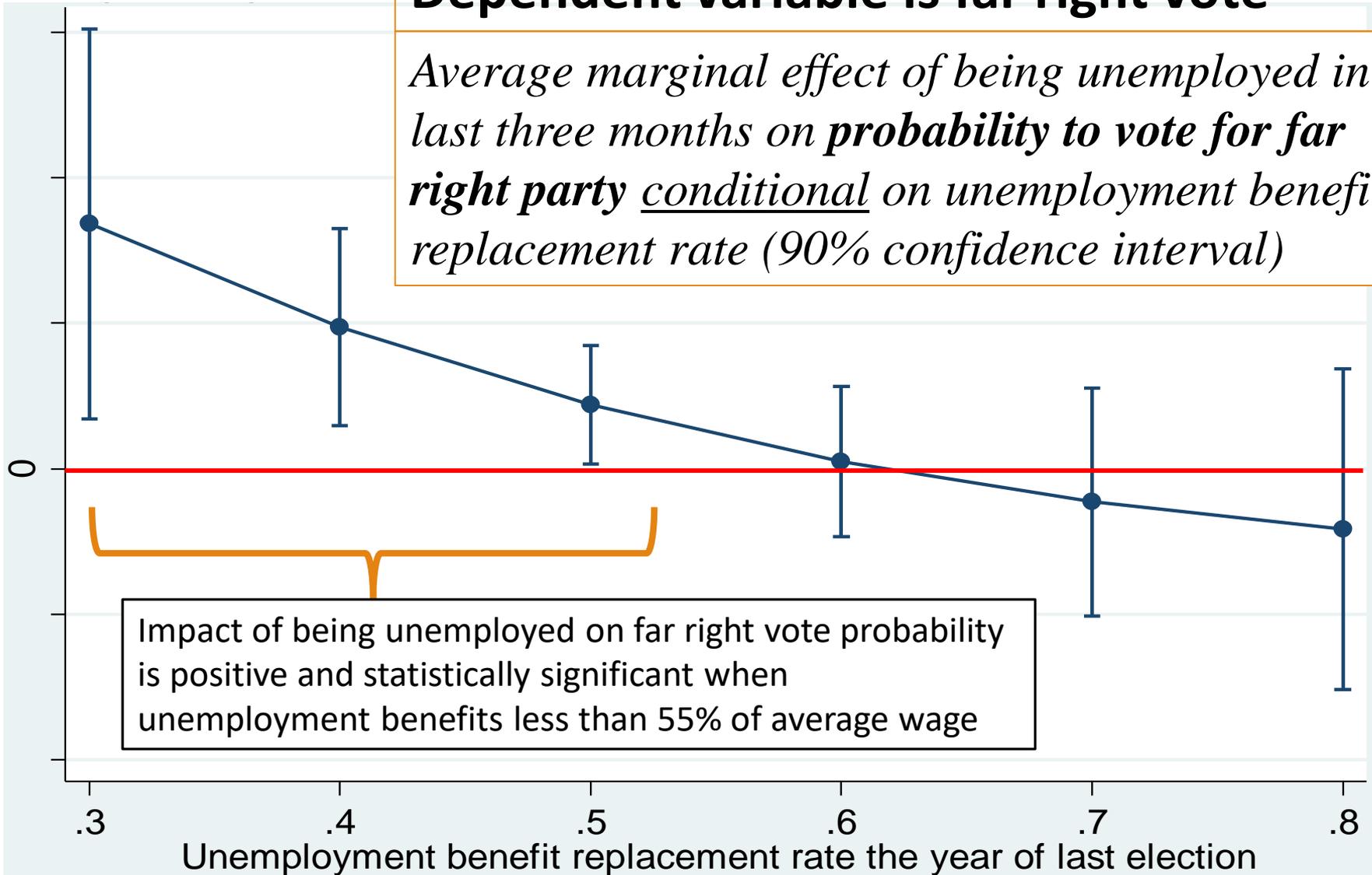
=> Policies and unions matter

- Economic&cultural insecurity increase probability of voting for far right
- BUT welfare state institutions and trade union membership *on average* lower far right support
- AND social policies mediate impact of belonging to social risk group on perceptions of economic insecurity
- THUS certain social policies mediate impact of belonging to social risk group on probability of voting for far right parties

NB: we have evidence at both national and individual level

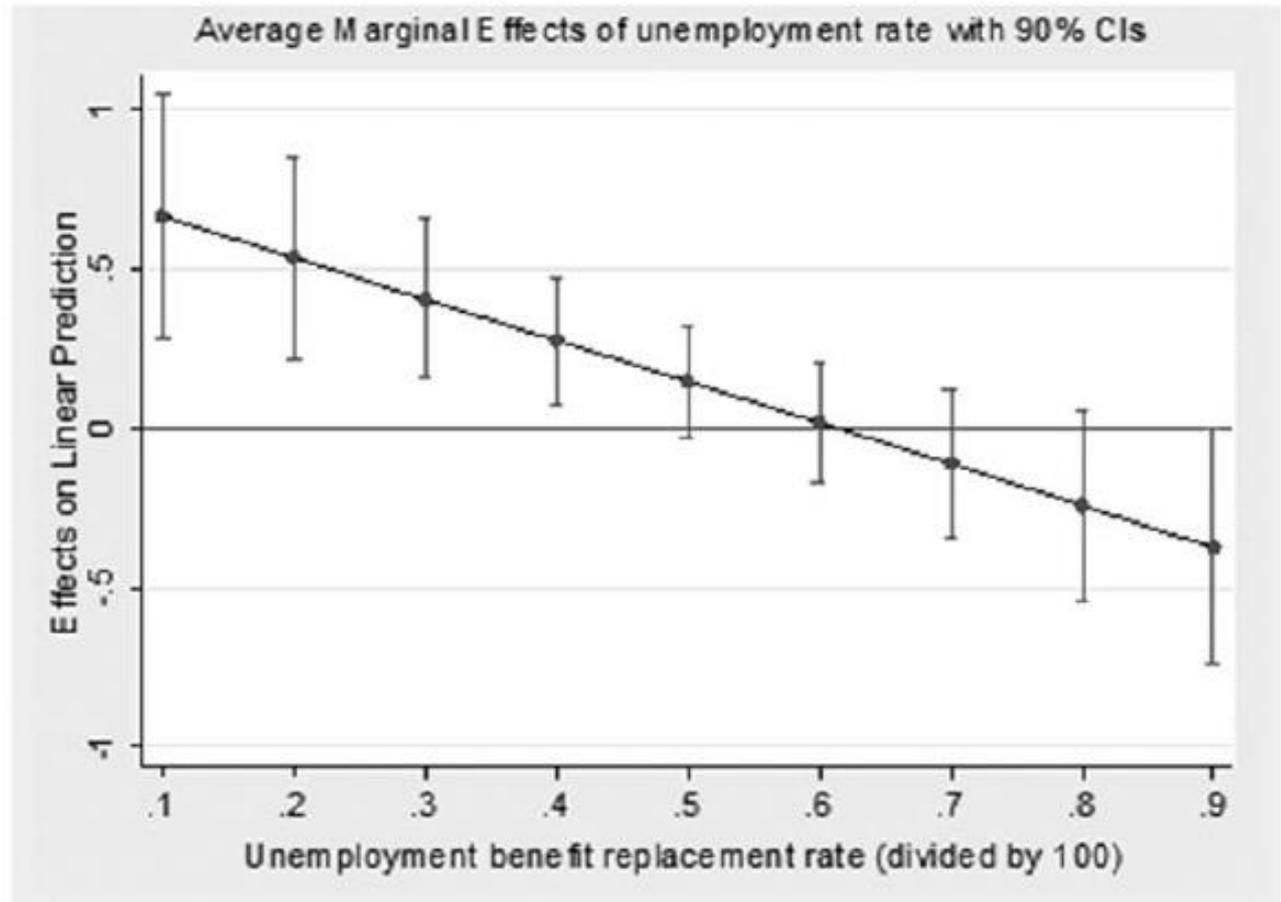
Dependent variable is far right vote

*Average marginal effect of being unemployed in last three months on **probability to vote for far right party** conditional on unemployment benefit replacement rate (90% confidence interval)*



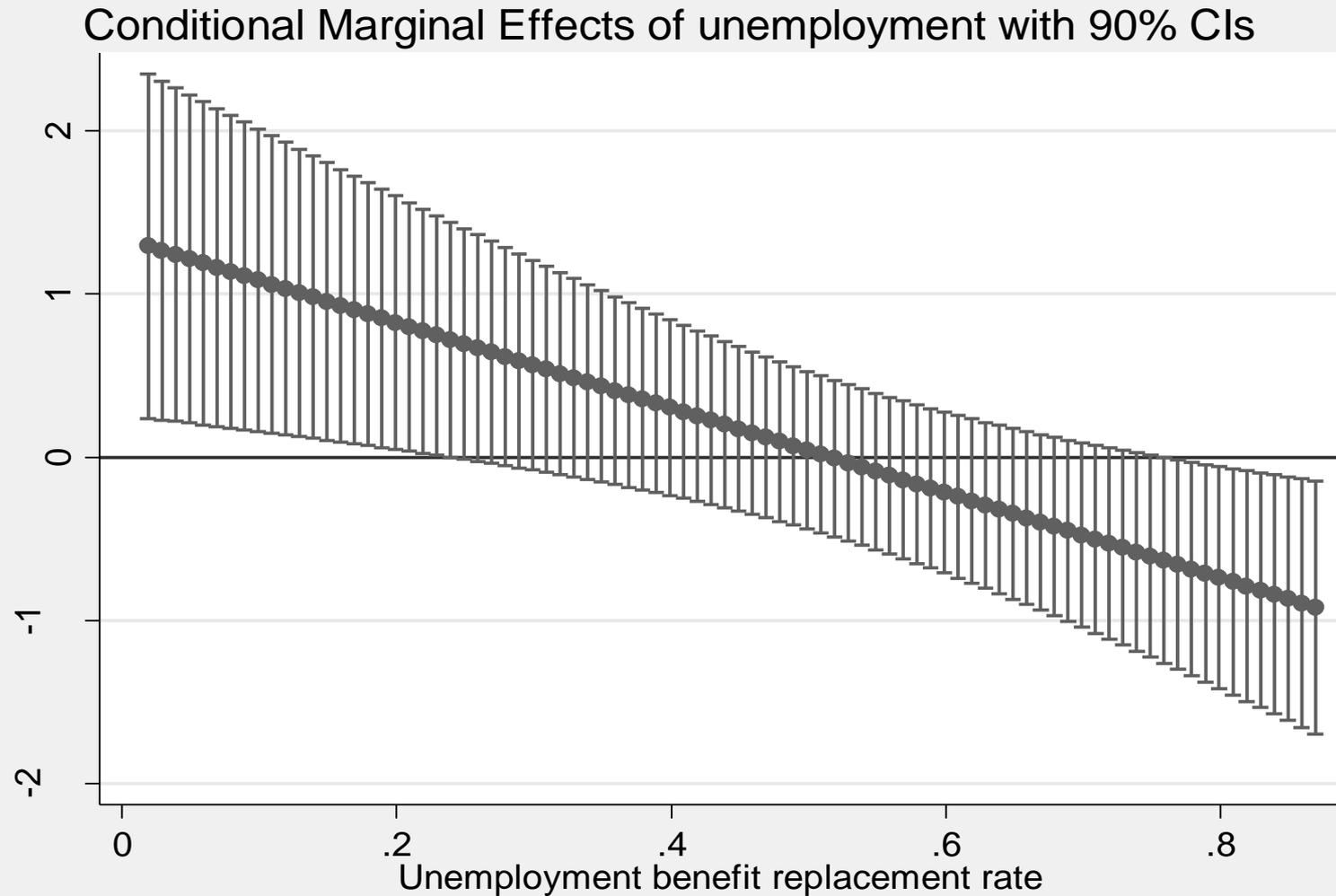
Welfare state institutions mediating role - national level test using European Parliament election results

Unemployment benefits limit impact of higher unemployment on far right support in last three European Parliament elections



Source: Halikiopoulou and Vlandas (2016) *Risks, Costs and Labour Markets: Explaining Cross-National Patterns of Far Right Party Success in European Parliament Elections*. *Journal of Common Market Studies*

Effect of unemployment on far right party votes conditional on unemployment benefits in national elections of western and eastern European countries since 1991



Role of party strategies: a new winning formula?

Not just about demand and policies, also supply

Far right parties increasingly able to draw on multiple insecurities by using nationalism (populism might not be key) to portray their solutions to these insecurities as effective and legitimate

Main supply side changes

1. From extremism to radicalism => seems less illegitimate, break with past
2. From ethnic to civic nationalism => attract beyond core voters
3. From market liberal to welfare chauvinists => capture those who are economically concerned

=> (3) works well especially with demise of Keynesianism and move of Left to centre; (1) and (2) makes far right parties acceptable to previously left wing and/or working class voters (+ weakened unions)

Conclusion 1: summary determinants

Rise of far right parties but differences across countries and individuals

- Supply and demand
- Economy and culture

We need to supply alternative solutions to meet demand drivers of far right support

- Immigration not just about culture
- Demand (economic insecurity) is not just a given: It is function of policy choices/institutions (welfare state) and interest groups (unions)
- Two effects of adopting far right positions: obfuscation and legitimation => balance positive on welfare, less so on immigration

Conclusion 2: what role for trade unions?

Direct effect of unions

- Unions politicise socio-economic -over cultural -dimension
- Strong social democratic union confederations significantly decrease support for radical right
- Union members are significantly less likely to vote for radical right

Examples of indirect effect of unions on far right

- Stronger unions associated with more generous unemployment benefits, higher job security and unions can limit liberalisation of EPL, lower wage inequality, keep Left parties on left
- Other roles: Limiting anomy in deprived neighbourhoods? Fighting privatisation of media? Limit wage competition (through bargaining coverage)? Others??

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

References to our work (joint with Daphne Halikiopoulou)

Halikiopoulou, D. and Vlandas, T. (2015) The Rise of the Far Right in Debtor and Creditor European Countries: The Case of European Parliament Elections. *The Political Quarterly*. Volume 86, Issue 2, April–June 2015, Pages 279-288.

Halikiopoulou, D. and Vlandas, T. (2016) Risks, Costs and Labour Markets: Explaining Cross-National Patterns of Far Right Party Success in European Parliament Elections. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, volume 54, Issue 3, pages 636-655

Vlandas, T. and Halikiopoulou, D. (2018) Does unemployment matter? Economic insecurity, labour market policies and the far right vote in Europe. *European Political Science*

Halikiopoulou, D. and Vlandas, T. (forthcoming) What is new and what is nationalist about Europe's new nationalism? Explaining the rise of the far right in Europe, *Nations and Nationalism*.

Vlandas and Halikiopoulou (2018) Far right and welfare state policies. Conference paper, European Social Policy Network Associated conference

Vlandas and Halikiopoulou (2017) The winning anti-immigration coalition: Concerns over the economic and cultural impact of immigration and far right party success in Europe, *American Political Science Association Conference*.

Why far right parties do well at times of crisis: the role of labour market institutions

—
Tim Vlandas and Daphne Halikiopoulou

Working Paper 2016.07

etui.

Risks, Costs and Labour Markets: Explaining Cross-National Patterns of Far Right Party Success in European Parliament Elections*

DAPHNE HALIKIOPOULOU and TIM VLANDAS
University of Reading

Abstract

Does the economy affect patterns of far-right party support across countries? This article reconceptualizes micro-level analyses that focus on the effect of unemployment through a framework of costs, risks and the mediating role of labour market institutions. It then derives several hypotheses and tests them on the results of the previous three EP elections in all EU Member States. Findings from multiple regression analyses indicate that unemployment, real GDP growth, debt and deficits have no statistically significant effect on far-right party support at the national level. By contrast, labour market institutions influence costs and risks: where unemployment benefits and dismissal regulations are high, unemployment has no effect, but where either one of them is low, unemployment leads to higher far-right party support. This explains why unemployment has not led to far-right party support in some European countries that experienced the severity of the 2008 eurozone crisis.