

Assessing the effect of neighbourhood context on Populist Radical Right voting: a four-country comparison of France, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK

Carl Berning (University of Mainz, Germany)

Jocelyn Evans (University of Leeds, UK)*

Myles Gould (University of Leeds, UK)

Eelco Harteveld (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

Gilles Ivaldi (University of Nice, France)

* Corresponding author – j.a.j.evans@leeds.ac.uk

Paper prepared for ECPR General Conference, Hamburg, 23-25 August 2018.

Introduction

Why is Radical Right Populist (RRP) support much stronger in some areas than others? Research into Radical Right voting has generally focused on individual level and, to a lesser extent, ecological correlates as their explanans. A number of pieces of research have employed multi-level models to combine contextual and individual factors, both in country studies and comparative work. However, most if not all of the comparative research has remained at a relatively high spatial level – regions or constituencies – and even case studies have tended to use higher aggregations, or focused on municipalities or communes in a region of the country. While these studies have yielded important insights, the literature is still short of an encompassing theoretical and empirical understanding of the role of local context in RPP support. We consider that individual motivations to prefer such parties may partly feed on local living conditions, or are catalysed by them. We employ a unique comparative and geocoded dataset that allows to investigate the role of voters' context, and subsequently its interplay with perceptions and attitudes, in a fine-grained way in four European democracies.

Using a new comparative survey fielded in the 2017 post-election period in four countries as part of the ORA 'Subnational Context and Radical Right Support in Europe' (SCoRE) project (www.politik.uni-mainz.de/score),¹ this paper locates voters at a much finer spatial level – electoral wards in England and Wales, canton-IRIS hybrids in France, geographic grids in Germany, and districts (wijk) in the Netherlands, corresponding to local area (LAU) and 'district' (NUTS3) units – to allow a much more precise measure of local context. Geospatial location of the survey respondents represents a significant step forward in understanding the role of 'neighbourhood' in vote choice, for example allowing the combination of individual perceptions of local government, administration, and infrastructure with official measures of local socio-economic conditions.

The analysis first assesses the extent to which different geospatial levels account globally for variation in Radical Right support. How important is context, and at which level? It then looks at the specific socio-economic and -cultural conditions, at the local level, which pick up this variance, in particular ethnic / immigrant population and deprivation. Finally, it begins to analyse the effect of local conditions on individuals by introducing cross-level interactions with educational groupings. By doing so, we not only look at the presence of ethno-religious outgroups or immigrants, but also expand the scope of analysis to look at the possibility of conditioning from this context, and present a first 'baseline' multi-level model to a comparative analysis of RRP party support in the four countries.

Theory

Theories of individual and contextual drivers, and debates across these, are well established in the RRP vote literature. A relatively standard set of demographics and attitudinal drivers characterise the principal individual motivations for RRP support among European electorates, in some ways analogously to the minimum definition of the RRP party family (Mudde, 1996). A couple of theoretical elephants in the room should be herded at this point. First, in this paper we limit ourselves to a single attitudinal variable, on immigrant threat to culture. Clearly, the literature on RRP support posits a multiplicity of different attitudes and values underpinning votes for these

¹ The project is funded by the ESRC, ANR, NWO and DfG. This paper was co-authored by five members of the team, but data and input was gratefully received from the rest of the team, viz Sarah de Lange, Tom van der Meer, Wouter van der Brug, Paul Norman, Nicholas Hood, Jérôme Dutozia, and Kai Arzheimer.

parties, including populism, ethnocentrism, authoritarianism, anti-establishment feeling, nationalism, Euroscepticism, even nostalgia and social pessimism (Rydgren, 2008; Werts et al, 2013; Rovny, 2013; Steenvorden and Harteveld, 2018). Given that we focus on the effects of socio-economic context on demographic groups, specifically educational strata, we limit ourselves to controlling for attitudinal effects using a variable tapping attitudes to cultural threat from immigrants – close to what has been described as the core ideological component of RRP, namely nativism (Mudde, 2007: 19).

Second, despite focusing on the core demographics below, we do not test one of the most commonly used demographic variables in the RRP literature, namely occupation. We exclude this for a number of reasons. First, there is a high degree of collinearity between education and occupation. Second, the occupational drivers of RRP support most recently identified in the literature (Oesch, 2008; Rydgren, 2012) are less easily coded across the four countries, meriting their own paper in this regard. Third, in electoral terms, a growing literature is identifying education as a new cleavage at least partly supplanting occupational class (Evans and Tilley, 2017). When combined with concerns over simplicity and clarity, we have preferred to leave occupation to one side for the moment, to concentrate on three baseline demographic variables.

Unlike many voting models which include demographics as controls, or indeed riskily eschew demographics to focus further down the causal funnel (Johnston et al, 2018), the role of demographic profile has been a relatively consistent mainstay of explanations for RRP support. As Coffé (2018) highlights, gender has constituted a stable predictor of Radical Right support, with women under-represented within this voting group – even if there are cross-national differences in the size of this effect (Immerzeel et al, 2015), and the label *Männerparteien* may be simplistic (Spierings and Zaslove, 2015). Whether this is due to gender differences in occupational (Givens, 1994) or religious (Mayer, 2002) status, authoritarian attitudes or issue focus (Harteveld et al, 2015), gender's heuristic role has been notable particularly in those few cases where it is not valid, for example in the 2017 French presidential election (Amengay et al, 2018).

Similarly, the association between age and Radical Right support has been established as a youth phenomenon, with propensity to vote RRP lower among older voters (Lubbers et al, 2002; Arzheimer, 2009). Given younger electors' proclivity to not vote, such a pattern is observable as a relative contrast – most youngsters will not vote RRP. Moreover, there are clear exceptions to this pattern – UKIP support in the UK has been more prevalent among older voters (Ford et al, 2012; Ford and Goodwin, 2014); the FN's traditional electorate in the 1980s was older (Mayer and Perrineau, 1992); in a similar period, Vlaams Blok found its main support from the middle-aged in the late 1980s (Swyngedouw, 1992). Yet, as the party and voter profiles converged over time and country (Evans, 2005), so the predominance of appeal to younger voters has ostensibly been reinforced.

Since the establishment of post-materialist value-change through the expansion of education, and partial reorientation of political competition along a new progressive / reactionary dimension (Ignazi, 1992; Kitschelt, 1997), an educational contrast between high and low strata has characterised RRP support. Again, early manifestations of support often varied from this trend – higher educational support for the FN (Mayer and Perrineau, 1992), for example, or the Austrian FPÖ (Arzheimer, 2016) – but the phenomenon has been associated predominantly with those with lower educational attainments. Again, the underlying mechanism has a number of explanations – the greater tendency to liberal values among the highly educated (Weakliem, 2002) or the economically vulnerable position of 'modernisation losers' or the 'left behind' with skillsets ill-suited to globalised, post-industrial society (Betz, 1994; Minkenberg, 2003; Andersen and Zimdars, 2003; Fourquet,

2017). Some variation has been observed not by educational strata in terms of level, but rather technical versus classical educational streams, tapping in to occupational position (Betz, 2001; Evans 2005).

There is perhaps less agreement and empirical stability across contextual drivers. Two principal variables characterise the majority of work – immigration and unemployment. As parties mobilising on xenophobic and ethnocentric attitudes, immigration is expected ecologically to associate positively with RRP vote, other things being equal. However, the precise nature of this relationship is complex. First, high levels of immigrant contact in diverse areas have been shown to moderate group trust and ethnocentrism (McLaren, 2003; Hewstone and Swart, 2011). Furthermore, the ‘quality’ of contact, as well as mediating factors, is important to the immigration-RRP equation. The so-called halo effect takes this into account, observing that RRP support is often higher in areas with low ethnic diversity, but adjacent to areas with higher diversity (Perrineau, 1997). Perception of out-groups without interpersonal contact leads to heightened levels of ethnocentrism and xenophobia. Regular, poor-quality contact through daily travel, for example, and other experiential behaviour, leads to increased ethnocentrism and xenophobia (Quillian, 1995; Hjerm, 2007). In such cases, the empirical expectation is an association between contiguous areas’ level of ethnic diversity and RRP support in the ‘home’ area – although robust empirical tests of this are rare (Rydgren and Ruth, 2013; Evans et al, 2018).

Third, the relationship between immigrant presence, contact and RRP support may be non-linear. Previous research has found, for example, that there are threshold effects in aspects of RRP support including party membership (Biggs and Knauss, 2012; Rink et al, 2008; Savelkoul et al, 2017). A fourth element of complexity is that of temporal dynamics. The vast majority of research into immigration uses cross-sectional data (pooled or otherwise) to measure its effect. Only a small amount uses time-series or change data (e.g. Kaufmann, 2017). Similarly to how a robust operationalisation of a halo characterises level of adjacent ethnicity in relation to the local context, so time dynamics posit differentials in situation as vital to understanding the role of immigration and ethnic diversity in RRP support. Where immigration has increased, and where white communities’ own behaviour in terms of changing area (‘white flight’) condition the context of an area, this may impact upon RRP support. At its simplest, rising immigration in an area will have a differential effect depending on the initial rate.

The SCoRE data allow us to confront a number of these complexities. For example, the higher spatial detail combined with individual-level data allows us to construct a number of models of spatial effect for context, including local area and contiguous / proximate areas as sites of poor-quality contact to establish the validity of the halo effect (Evans et al, 2018). Similarly, the inclusion in the survey of questions regarding quality / frequency of inter-ethnic contact can allow us subjective and objective measures to include in tests of contact and conflict hypotheses. Unfortunately, across-time change tests are more restricted – impossible through cross-sectional survey data, and relatively restricted for ecological data given boundary changes, and the infrequency of census-level measurements.

One of the theoretical complexities we can look at is the moderation of the effect of immigrant by several factors (the nature of majority-minority contact; the spatial location of a neighbourhood) and the dependence on the measurement used (levels or change; smaller or larger areas). This is important to examine further given most previous studies have reported mixed and often widely diverging findings (see Stockemer 2016 for an inventory). Our aim is to disentangle some of these.

Similar considerations apply to the role of unemployment in RRP support, though here the causal mechanism is more complex still. First, conceptually unemployment is an indirect cause of RRP support as a priori there is no rationale for unemployment to have a direct effect on RRP support. RRP supporters do not generally mobilise on strong economic policies, nor are they perceived to be strong in valence terms on economic issues – they do not ‘own’ these. Instead, unemployment is seen as a marker of social insecurity which may render voters susceptible to RRP appeals. This ‘modernisation loser’ hypothesis has only been visible in some empirical testing (e.g. Jackman and Volpert, 1996) but in others no significant relationship is found (Lubbers et al, 2002) or indeed the negative effect is observable (Knigge, 1998). In an echo of the instability in the VP-function literature caused due to changing specifications of variables (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2013), the precise relationship between unemployment and RRP support is unclear. Moreover, the default national-level measurement of economic context may be the wrong spatial level to be identifying the impact of context.

One issue with existing research, no matter how the contextual mechanism conditions RRP support, is how the context works upon individuals. Often, data limitations make it difficult to model the theorized relation between individuals and their context. Many (especially early) studies have relied fully on correlations on the ecological level, which treats individuals within those homogeneously and introduces potential problems of ecological inference. By contrast, purely individual level survey data is poor at providing contextual data, beyond subjective interpretations of respondents. Where multilevel models (or simple fixed effects variants thereof) are tested, the ecological level is generally very high – a region or constituency, often derived from variables included as part of the sample quotaing. Any comparative research will usually only have the country-level measures available, and for relatively small samples in each country. When smaller areas are available for Level 2 (in multilevel parlance), this is almost inevitably for single countries only, or even subnational regions. Consequently, identifying a stable effect for local context across time and space is hampered considerably. In terms of the spatial component, the SCoRE data across the UK,² France, Germany and the Netherlands is intended to provide a set of large-scale survey data using identical questions to respondents geocoded as precisely as possible, to enable a hierarchy of spatial levels to be identified.

The capacity to look at local context is important not just to define an individual’s environment, but also to examine how the environment may have differential effects by the individual’s own profile. In this paper, we look at this with regard to education. As we have discussed above, educational level may play a role in RRP support either due to cognitive mobilisation and liberal values, or due to socio-economic (in)security in a post-industrial jobs market. The effect of unemployment or migration observed at a national level may hide variation in effect across these different educational strata. Furthermore, an overall national situation with regard to these two macro-indicators may itself conflate significant variation at the local level, this latter spatial aggregation being more likely to exercise effect on an individual’s perceptions and behaviour. In short, does an individual with a low level of education have the same propensity to vote RRP in an area of high unemployment or immigration, as a similar individual in an area of low unemployment or immigration? Similar arguments could be extended to other demographic characteristics, but as an initial exploratory analysis, we restrict ourselves to the educational variable.

² We use only England and Wales in this analysis, given the different party system in Scotland, and virtual non-existence of UKIP as a significant electoral force there.

Data

The questions delivered in the SCoRE large-n surveys were identical across all four countries, with some small variations accounting either for difference in political supply, and additional questions relating to country specificities (e.g. 2016 Brexit referendum vote in the UK). Internet panels were quota'd by age, gender, education and, in the UK case, deprivation quintile. Fieldwork for the surveys was carried out close to first-order elections – in between the April / May 2017 presidentials and June legislatives in France, shortly after the respective March 2017 and June 2017 legislative elections in the UK, three months prior to the German Bundestag elections of September 2017, and two months after the March 2017 legislative elections in the Netherlands. The questions we use from these data are the age, gender and education demographics, plus one measure of immigrant sentiment, namely a 7-point scale asking respondents if immigrant presence threatens or enriches their country culturally.

Ecological data are derived from the latest public demographic sources relating to national territories, including census data and other publicly available sources. Table A1 in the appendix provides the specific measurement in each country. We have endeavoured to use common measures where possible. However, inevitably, there is some variation across some measures due to national specificities. This is perhaps most pronounced for the migration measure, where measures vary by individual and household, and where in the Netherlands, the available measure of the presence of people with an 'immigrant background' refers to individuals either born outside the country or with at least one parent who is foreign born (i.e., combining first and second generation immigrants). We use a measure only identifying first-generation immigrants, and note in the analysis where this has an impact on the findings.

To allow the use of these ecological data to measure context at finer spatial scales, survey respondents were geocoded to allow their location within local districts. In the UK, postcode of the respondent's home address was used. In France, a measure of longitude and latitude was used. For the Netherlands, respondents' neighbourhood was derived based on their postal code. In Germany, respondents' addresses were coded by the survey company and allocated to the 1km² raster grid coordinates used by German public agencies.

Models and findings

We fit a series of multi-level mixed effects models to the four countries. Having examined the variance component structure for the four countries, we then use a standard set of predictors, to identify the relative importance of different spatial levels on Radical Right support, and then to examine the individual main effects and, perhaps most importantly, the effect of spatial context on these individual effects. We restrict these cross-level interactions to first order only, and focus principally on Level 2 interactions. Given the ecological indicators are largely robust to the inclusion of the individual level effects (and noted where they are not), for the sake of space we show the full main effects model, and then the interaction model, rather than presenting the nested versions.

[Figure 1 about here]

We consider the use of two dependent variables. The first is the 11-point propensity to vote measure for the respective RRP – UKIP, FN, AfD and PVV. As Figure 1 shows, however, the distribution in all four countries is highly skewed. This would be expected in England and Wales, given the collapse of the UKIP vote in the 2017 election. Conversely, in France, there is a relatively greater proportion of high-propensity RRP voters – although, for the most successful of the four parties in terms of vote share (acknowledging the personalised nature of the vote in the presidential case), the size of the modal response at 0 is still striking. Given this skew and lack of added information from the use of the scale, particularly if collapsed, we choose instead to run a mixed logit model using previous vote (2015 General Election in the UK³; first round of 2017 Presidential election in France; March 2017 Tweede Kamer vote in the Netherlands) or vote intention (September 2017 Bundestag elections in Germany).

For Level 3, we include only the random intercept. Due to a lack of model convergence in the severely restricted German sample, due to availability of cases at the 1km² spatial level, we are only able to model Levels 1 and 2. At Level 2, we use immigration, unemployment and deprivation measures to model socio-economic context. However, in Germany, deprivation could not be included as no measure of social housing was available at Level 2.

Table A1 in the appendix presents the exact measures used for each country. We separate out unemployment and deprivation, which is measured using proportion of population of the Level 2 unit living in social housing, to examine whether broader definitions of economic insecurity, including for example individuals in precarious or low-paid labour, have an independent effect on Radical Right support beyond the ‘classic’ predictor of unemployment, collinearity permitting. We also include a measure of population density, to test for evidence of an urban-rural effect on RRP support, which has been identified in more recent RRP literature (Lévy, 2002; Fourquet, 2016). Whilst not a perfect measure of the rurality of an area, particularly when focusing on a finer spatial level, it is a standard, available measure across the four countries with sufficient variation across its range, unlike OECD indicators, for example. In the German case, a dummy control for former East German Länder is included given the unequal distribution of immigration across West Germany and the former GDR.

At the individual level, we use the three standard demographics associated with RRP support – age, gender and education. Age is included at the interval level; gender is coded 1 for male; education is categorised as three levels – degree level and above; secondary and intermediate; lower and none, which acts as the reference. Whilst the effect of these three variables may vary, as described earlier, consistently across voting models they account for a substantial proportion of variance in RRP support. As such, they provide a useful baseline model upon which to develop subsequent mediation and causal models. We exclude immigrant voters from the analysis, given immigrant status is a very strong predictor of RPP support, and may therefore mechanically create a negative correlation between immigrant presence and RPP support.⁴

As noted earlier, we limited our mediating factor to a single variable – the cultural impact of immigration, measured on a 7-point scale from ‘cultural life is undermined by immigration’ to

³ Again, due to the collapse in the UKIP vote post-Brexit, we use vote recall for the 2015 election to ensure a larger sample of UKIP voters. Given the structural shock causing defection of UKIP voters in 2017 to the Tories in 2017, we are confident that vote recall for these relatively proximate elections under unique circumstances will be valid.

⁴ In fact, only in the Dutch case does the inclusion of immigrant voters cause this problem empirically. In France, Germany and the UK, inclusion of immigrant voters has no substantive effect on model findings. However, conceptually, the exclusion is valid, and consequently we retain it.

‘cultural life is enriched by immigration’. Lastly, we fit two sets of cross-level interactions to explore how local context may condition standard predictors of RRP support.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 1 presents the variance component structures for the four countries at Levels 2 and 3. It suggests that, in all four countries, most variation is likely to take place at the individual level. This is a useful reminder to avoid over-emphasising the role of context. At the same time, variation remains on higher levels, which calls for an explanation. Furthermore, as discussed in the theory section, there are likely interactions between context and individual characteristics which may usefully nuance our understanding of the main demographic effects.

[Table 2 about here]

Table 2 presents the main effects models for the four countries. Looking first at the individual effects, there are very few points of similarity across all four countries. Indeed, in terms of demographics, there is no pattern across all four countries. For age, only two countries see the expected pattern of older voters being less likely to support RRPs; in Germany and England and Wales, there is no effect. (In case of England and Wales, the high covariance between age and cultural threat sees the former effect washed out – but its direction is, as found in previous research on UKIP, towards older voters favouring UKIP more than younger.) For gender – one of the historical mainstays of RRP vote – again three countries see the expected ‘male’ effect, although with substantially varying coefficient size, but in the case of France, where gender has also traditionally been strong, as previously describe, Marine Le Pen’s success in appealing to female voters redresses the balance towards a null gender effect. Even education, as perhaps the *primus inter pares* among demographic predictor of modern RRP support, fails to reach significance in the German case; in the other three countries, the expected monotonicity from low to high education obtains, or in the French case, contrasts higher education with the other two groups.⁵ Of course, in the German case, the small sample size may be inflating standard errors. However, for education, even if a Type 2 error is a risk, the direction of the educational contrasts does not correspond to the low-high pattern of the other countries.

The one individual effect where there is a consistent finding is on the attitudinal driver, the threat of immigrants to national culture. In all four cases, higher levels of perceived benefit to culture from immigrants leads to a significant reduction in the propensity to vote for RRPs. This is hardly a surprising finding, but is important nonetheless in confirming the validity of the models.

The Level 2 effects are similarly varied. In the Dutch case, none of these reaches significance. This is partly due to the operationalisation of migration as first-generation only. If, as is normally the case, first- and second-generation migrants were included, the migration variable is significant and

⁵ A note of caution – a four-category coding for France, differentiating intermediary and secondary education from higher education, does find a monotonic effect. The collapsed intermediary educational category may be confounding effects.

positive, although the inclusion of the cultural threat variable does wash this out.⁶ Here, then, the precise specification of 'migrant' is important to arriving at a null or a significant finding.⁷ Of the remaining three countries, none finds a positive effect, with France and Germany seeing significant negative effects on probability of vote for RRP.

Moving to unemployment, again the picture varies. Whilst there is no effect in Germany or the Netherlands, France, England and Wales see a positive effect of unemployment in the individual's immediate spatial environment and RRP vote. This contrasts with analyses at higher spatial level, including cross-country comparisons, which predominantly found negative or null effects. For these countries, then, the immediate economic context appears to have an effect.

Population density matters in France and Germany, but in very different ways. As density increases, so the probability of voting FN decreases. This would seem to reflect the success of the FN in peri-urban areas (Rivière, 2012; Guilluy, 2014) rather than city centres (loci of liberal metropolitan groups, and therefore FN wastelands). In the German context, where the density measure is based upon jobs in agriculture and fishing, there is a substantial 'agricultural' effect on AfD support. For the Netherlands, and England and Wales, however, there is no independent density effect. Finally, the inclusion of the social housing measure for deprivation in the three countries where this is possible has no explanatory power whatsoever, beyond what unemployment accounts for.

[Figures 2 and 3 about here]

We move now to examine the interaction effects (parameter estimates not shown). To aid interpretation, we present a predicted probability plot for each of these in Figures 2 and 3. To recall – we focus upon the first-order interaction of individual education with level of immigration and level of unemployment, in order to examine whether there is variation in different educational strata's probability of voting RRP conditioned by these contextual variables, or whether these groups are context-invariant in this regard.

It must be said that, looking at the interaction plots across the four countries, the evidence for effect of local context is scant. Most of the trends in each education stratum have overlapping confidence intervals. For migration, the interaction with education provides no additional explanatory nuance to the main effects model, with the partial exception of the low education stratum in the Netherlands, which increases in RRP vote probability as migration grows, contrasting with a flatline for both other educational strata. Incidentally, it is worth noting that this is in contrast to the halo specification of a similar model where levels of migrants in contiguous areas does have a differential effect on voter attitudes (Evans et al, 2018). Unemployment fares little better. The most noticeable change is for the middle educational stratum in England and Wales, where there is a significant increase in likelihood of UKIP vote in higher migrant areas, from a position closer to the high educational stratum in low migration areas. This would match the ethnic competition hypothesis (Rydgren and Ruth, 2013), and is some evidence of occupationally vulnerable groups conditioned by context, where marginalised and secure groups (low and high educational groups, respectively) are stable. However, across the

⁶ A polynomial test of migration even with first- and second-generation migrants shows no non-linearity, unlike the threshold effect found in some previous studies.

⁷ Further analyses in the Dutch case, using an interaction between immigrants and population density, found that the effect of the former was only significant in areas with density higher than 3000 inhabitant / km², ie highly urbanised environments.

other three countries, the evidence for local context conditioning support is as low as for immigration.

Discussion

As a set of 'baseline' models using the ecological and individual level data, the above models are just one of many potential specifications that might be used with the fine-grained spatial level that these data provide. As such the three-demographic, four contextual-level variable specification is a useful first-principles test of the data. The homogenisation of the predictors, particularly at Level 2, can still be progressed further.

At Level 3 – the regional level – there is very little evidence of variance being accounted for, with the partial exception of the Netherlands. At Level 2, there is more variance, particularly in the case of England and Wales, but whilst unemployment and immigration matter at this level, the variable is more 'descriptive', given its relative homogeneity across all individuals. Possible explanations derived from significant interaction effects, showing how individuals may be conditioned differentially by their environment, are sadly lacking. Again, coding may be an issue here. First, the cut-points for the different educational strata are largely subjective, with choices regarding placing low with no qualifications, or upper-secondary together with tertiary, potentially confounding important effects. Short of data-mining the most substantial effects, the justification needs to remain conceptual. Furthermore, the technical / classical separation which is of relevance in all countries is not examined here, and may be more fruitful in identifying more or less socio-economically vulnerable groups, rather than 'scholastically chronological' groups.

Whilst we have focused on the cross-level interactions, there is of course scope for intra-level interactions, for example testing the conditional effect of unemployment on immigration (cf Golder, 2003). However, in terms of the second-order interaction with educational groupings, the findings from these models do not suggest that great explanatory value will be found cross-level. Whilst the overall findings from the local data suggest little contextual conditioning, we should not forget that this is simply two potentially relevant variables from the literature – absolute level of unemployment and migration. Other measures, including the halo effect, which we have tested elsewhere (Evans et al, 2018) seem to provide more promising evidence of cross-level interaction. Indeed, not only are the independent variables open to change, so indeed is the dependent variable. We deliberately eschewed the PtV measure due to its skewed distribution. However, the use of vote may not be the best explanandum for identifying cross-level effect. As previous comparative work on RRP has emphasised, institutional and political variables play a significant role in explaining RRP success. Consideration of attitudes, rather than actual vote, may be a more fruitful avenue to look for local context affecting individuals.

Overall, the main effects models generally identify variation that we would expect given the core variables we have included for each country. They are instructive in showing different effects by country, underlining that one size does not necessarily fit all for RRP comparatively. The Level 2 effects, in particular, show instability in line with the previous research. Cross-level conditioning remains an attractive concept, but an empirical proof is still out of reach.

References

- Amengay, A., Durovic, A. and N. Mayer, 2018. L'impact du genre sur le vote Marine Le Pen. *Revue Française de Science Politique*, 67(6): 1067-1087.
- Andersen, R., & Zimdars, A., 2003. Class, education and extreme party support in Germany, 1991–98. *German Politics*, 12(2), 1-23.
- Arzheimer, K. 2009. Contextual Factors and the Extreme Right Vote in Western Europe, 1980–2002. *American Journal of Political Science* 53: 259–275.
- Arzheimer, K., 2016. Electoral Sociology—who Votes for the Extreme Right and Why—and When?. *The Populist Radical Right: A Reader*, 277.
- Betz, H. G., 1994. *Radical right-wing populism in Western Europe*. Springer.
- Betz, H.-G., 2001. Entre échec et succès: l'extrême-droite à la fin des années quatre-vingt-dix in P. Perrineau (ed.) *Les Croisés de la société fermée*, Paris: L'Aube.
- Biggs, M. and S. Knauss, 2012. Explaining Membership in the British National Party: A Multilevel Analysis of Contact and Threat, *European Sociological Review*, Volume 28, Number 5, 633-646.
- Coffé, H., 2018. Gender and the Radical Right. In *The Oxford Handbook of the Radical Right*. Oxford University Press.
- Evans, G., Tilley, J., 2017. *The New Politics of Class*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Evans, J., 2005. The dynamics of social change in radical right-wing populist party support. *Comparative European Politics*, 3(1), 76-101.
- Evans, J., N. Hood, M. Gould & P. Norman, 2018. Ethnic-group adjacency, ethnocentrism and Radical Right vote: a two-level test of the halo effect in England, paper, Manchester University, 13 June.
- Ford, R. and Goodwin, M., 2014. *Revolt on the Right : Explaining Support for the Radical Right in Britain*. Routledge, London.
- Ford, R., Goodwin, M. and D. Cutts, 2012. Strategic Eurosceptics and polite xenophobes: Support for the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) in the 2009 European Parliament elections. *European Journal of Political Research*, 51(2): 204-234
- Fourquet J., 2016. L'influence de l'isolement et de l'absence de services et commerces de proximité sur le vote FN en milieu rural. *IFOP Focus*, n°135, mars.
- Fourquet, J., 2017. Un nouveau clivage. Perdants versus gagnants de la mondialisation. *Commentaire* 2017/2 (Numéro 158), p. 265-270.
- Givens, T. E. 2004. The Radical Right Gender Gap. *Comparative Political Studies* 37: 30–54.
- Golder, M., 2003. Explaining variation in the success of extreme right parties in Western Europe. *Comparative Political Studies*, 36(4), 432-466.
- Guilluy C., 2014. *La France périphérique. Comment on a sacrifié les classes populaires*. Paris, Flammarion

- Harteveld, E., W. van der Brug, S. Dahlberg, and A. Kokkonen, 2015. "The Gender Gap in Radical-Right Voting: Examining the Demand Side in Western and Eastern Europe." *Patterns of Prejudice* 49, nos. 1–2: 103–134.
- Hewstone, M., & Swart, H., 2011. Fifty-odd years of inter-group contact: From hypothesis to integrated theory. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 50(3), 374–386.
- Hjerm, M., 2007. Do numbers really count? Group threat theory revisited. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 33(8), 1253–1275.
- Ignazi, P., 1992. The silent counter-revolution: Hypotheses on the emergence of extreme right-wing parties in Europe. *European Journal of Political Research* 22.1: 3–34.
- Immerzeel, T., Coffé H., and T. Van der Lippe. 2015. Explaining the gender gap in radical right voting: A cross-national investigation in 12 Western European countries. *Comparative European Politics* 13.2: 263–286.
- Jackman, R. W., & Volpert, K., 1996. Conditions favouring parties of the extreme right in Western Europe. *British Journal of Political Science*, 26(4), 501–521.
- Johnston, R., Jones, K. and D. Manley, 2018. Age, sex, qualifications and voting at recent English general elections: an alternative exploratory approach. *Electoral Studies* 51 (2018) 24–37
- Kaufmann, E., 2017. Levels or changes?: Ethnic context, immigration and the UK Independence Party vote. *Electoral Studies*, 48():57–69.
- Kitschelt, H., and A. McGann, 1997. *The radical right in Western Europe: A comparative analysis.* University of Michigan Press.
- Knigge, P., 1998. The ecological correlates of right-wing extremism in Western Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, 34(2), 249–279.
- Lévy J. 2002. Vote et gradient d'urbanité. L'autre surprise du 21 avril. *Espaces Temps.net*.
- Lewis-Beck, M. S., & Stegmaier, M., 2013. The VP-function revisited: a survey of the literature on vote and popularity functions after over 40 years. *Public Choice*, 157(3–4), 367–385.
- Lubbers, M., M. Gijsberts, and P. Scheepers, 2002. Extreme right-wing voting in Western Europe. *European Journal of Political Research* 41:3, 345–378.
- McLaren, L., 2003. Anti-immigrant prejudice in Europe: Contact, threat perception, and preferences for the exclusion of migrants. *Social forces*, 81(3), 909–936.
- Mayer, N., 2002. *Ces Français qui votent Le Pen.* Paris: Flammarion.
- Mayer, N. and P. Perrineau, 1992. Why do they vote for Le Pen?. *European Journal of Political Research*, 22(1), 123–141.
- Mellon, J., Evans, G., 2016. Class, electoral geography and the future of UKIP: Labour's secret weapon. *Parliam. Aff.* 69(2): 492–498.
- Minkenberg, M., 2000. The renewal of the radical right: between modernity and anti-modernity. *Government and Opposition*, 35(2), 170–188.
- Mudde, C., 1996. The war of words defining the extreme right party family. *West European Politics*, 19(2), 225–248.

- Mudde, C., 2007. *Populist radical right parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oesch, D., 2008. Explaining workers' support for right-wing populist parties in Western Europe: Evidence from Austria, Belgium, France, Norway, and Switzerland. *International Political Science Review*, 29(3), 349-373.
- Perrineau, P., 1997. *Le Symptôme Le Pen*. Fayard, Paris.
- Quillian, L., 1995. Prejudice as a response to perceived group threat: Population composition and anti-immigrant and racial prejudice in Europe. *American sociological review*, 586-611.
- Rink, N., Phalet, K., and M. Swyngedouw, 2008. The effects of immigrant population size, unemployment, and individual characteristics on voting for the Vlaams Blok in Flanders 1991–1999. *European Sociological Review*, 25(4), 411-424.
- Rivière, J., 2012. Trajectoires résidentielles et choix électoraux chez les couches moyennes périurbaines, *Espaces et Sociétés*, n° 148-149, p. 73-90.
- Rovny, J., 2013. Where do radical right parties stand? Position blurring in multidimensional competition. *European Political Science Review*, 5(1), 1-26.
- Rydgren, J., 2008. Immigration sceptics, xenophobes or racists? Radical right-wing voting in six West European countries. *European Journal of Political Research*, 47(6), 737-765.
- Rydgren, J., ed., 2012. *Class politics and the radical right*. Routledge.
- Rydgren, J. and P. Ruth, 2013. Contextual explanations of radical right-wing support in Sweden: socioeconomic marginalization, group threat, and the halo effect. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 36(4), 711-728.
- Savelkoul, M. and P. Scheepers, 2017. Why lower educated people are more likely to cast their vote for radical right parties: Testing alternative explanations in The Netherlands. *Acta Politica*, 52(4), 544-573.
- Savelkoul, M., Laméris, J. and J. Tolsma, 2017. Neighbourhood Ethnic Composition and Voting for the Radical Right in The Netherlands. The Role of Perceived Neighbourhood Threat and Interethnic Neighbourhood Contact. *European Sociological Review*, 33(2), 209-224.
- Spierings, N. and A. Zaslove, 2015. Conclusion: Dividing the populist radical right between 'liberal nativism' and traditional conceptions of gender. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 49(1-2), 163-173.
- Steenvoorden, E. and E. Hartevelde, 2018. The appeal of nostalgia: the influence of societal pessimism on support for populist radical right parties. *West European Politics*, 41(1), 28-52.
- Stockemer, D., 2016. Structural data on immigration or immigration perceptions? What accounts for the electoral success of the radical right in Europe? *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54(4), 999-1016.
- Swyngedouw, M., 1992. National elections in Belgium: The breakthrough of the extreme right in Flanders. *Regional & Federal Studies* 2.3: 62-75.
- Weakliem, D., 2002. The effects of education on political opinions: An international study. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 14(2), 141-157.

Werts, H., Scheepers, P. and M. Lubbers, 2013. Euro-scepticism and radical right-wing voting in Europe, 2002–2008: Social cleavages, socio-political attitudes and contextual characteristics determining voting for the radical right. *European Union Politics*, 14(2), 183-205.

Table 1 Variance decomposition – vote choice

	England and Wales		France		Germany		Netherlands	
	Variance	ICC	Variance	ICC	Variance	ICC	Variance	ICC
Level 2	1.26	0.29	0.26	0.11	0.57	0.15	0.07	0.02
Level 3	0.06	0.01	0.13	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.05

Table 2 Mixed effects multi-level binary logit models of RRP vote (random intercept only at Level 3)

	England and Wales	France	Germany	Netherlands
Immigrant %	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.013* (0.006)	-3.344* (1.568)	0.007 (0.005)
Unemployment %	0.065** (0.019)	0.025*** (0.006)	-0.163 (3.372)	0.023 (0.085)
Deprivation %	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.003)		0.012 (0.105)
Pop density	-0.002 (0.001)	-.000*** (0.000)	373.712* (164.317)	-0.000 (0.000)
Age	-0.002 (.002)	-0.029*** (0.002)	0.009 (0.008)	-0.017*** (0.003)
Male	0.177** (0.060)	-0.019 (0.051)	1.214*** (0.250)	0.364*** (0.091)
Intermediate education	-0.268** (0.082)	0.005 (0.082)	0.375 (0.305)	-0.724*** (0.102)
High education	-0.578*** (0.080)	-0.856*** (0.082)	-0.537 (0.375)	-1.616*** (0.153)
Cultural threat	0.540*** (0.018)	0.707*** (0.018)	1.428*** (0.149)	0.618*** (0.030)
Intercept	0.237 (0.209)	2.482*** (0.003)	-16.732 (16.113)	-3.472*** (0.335)
Variance (Level 2)	1.313 (0.145)	0.121 (0.086)	0.402 (0.344)	0.017 (0.041)
Variance (Level 3)	0.044 (0.040)	0.040 (0.016)		0.048 (0.101)
n	15,747	14,750	1,322	5,138

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Figure 1 Propensity to vote RRP (SCoRE surveys in France, Germany, Netherlands, England and Wales)

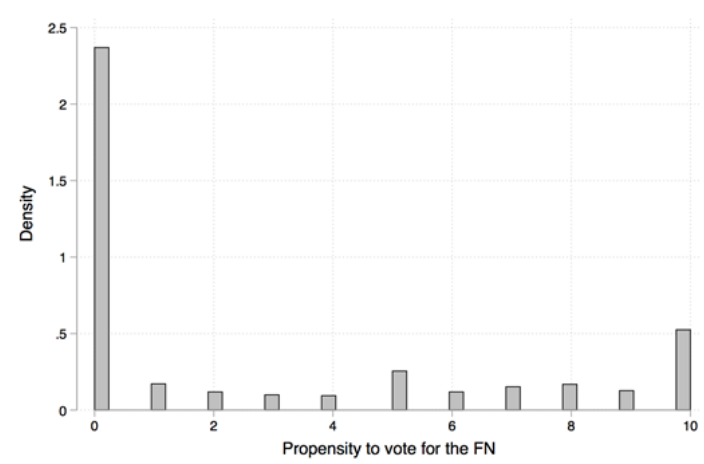
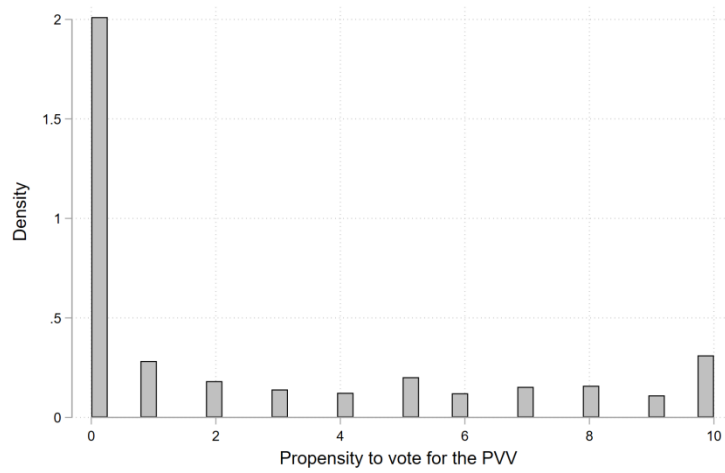
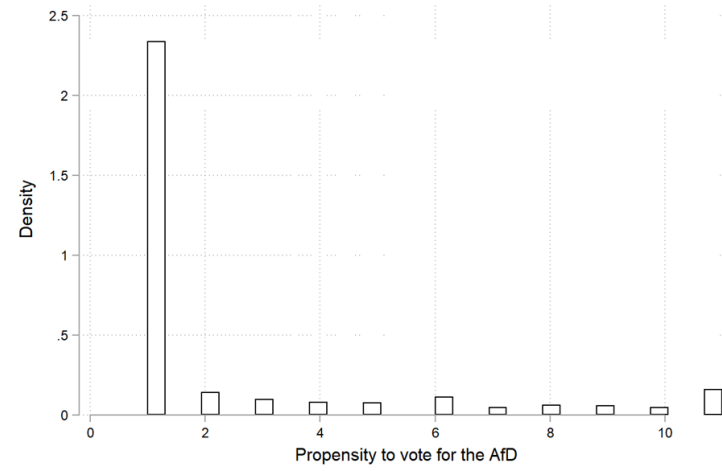
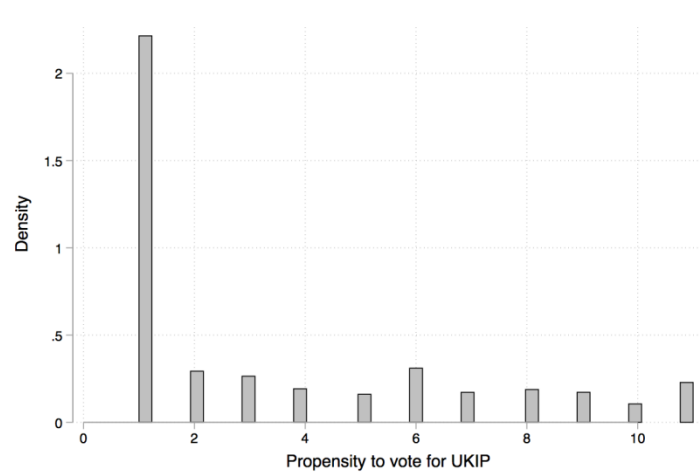


Figure 2 Fitted probabilities of RRP vote – education*immigrants (SCoRE surveys in France, Germany, Netherlands, England and Wales)

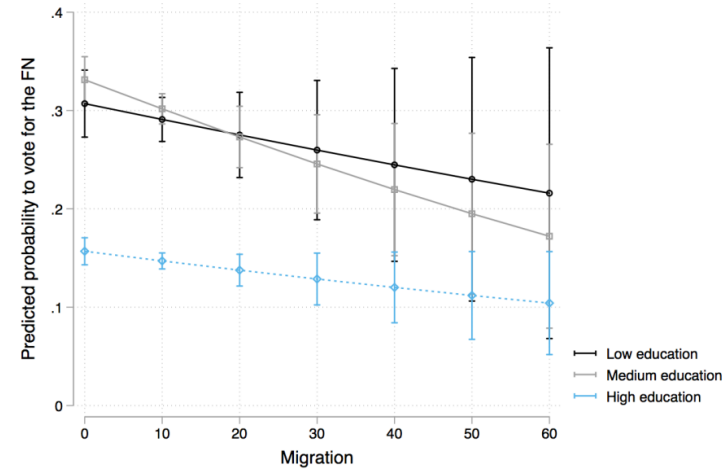
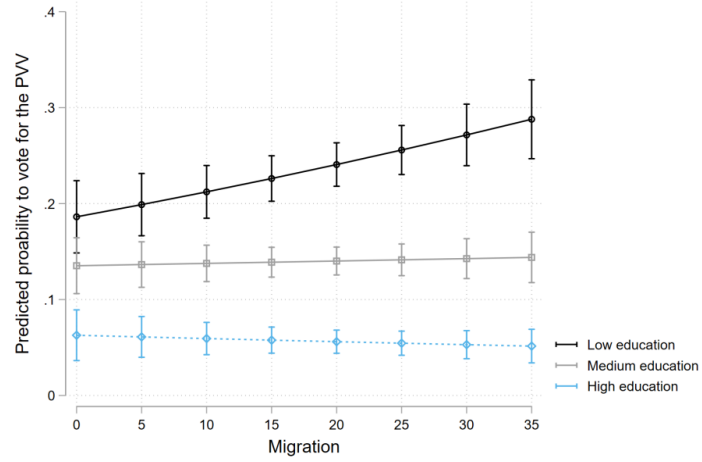
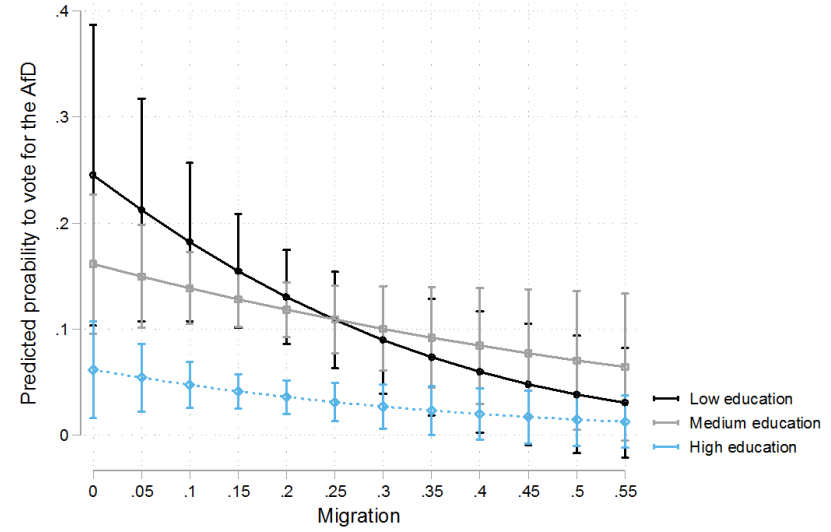
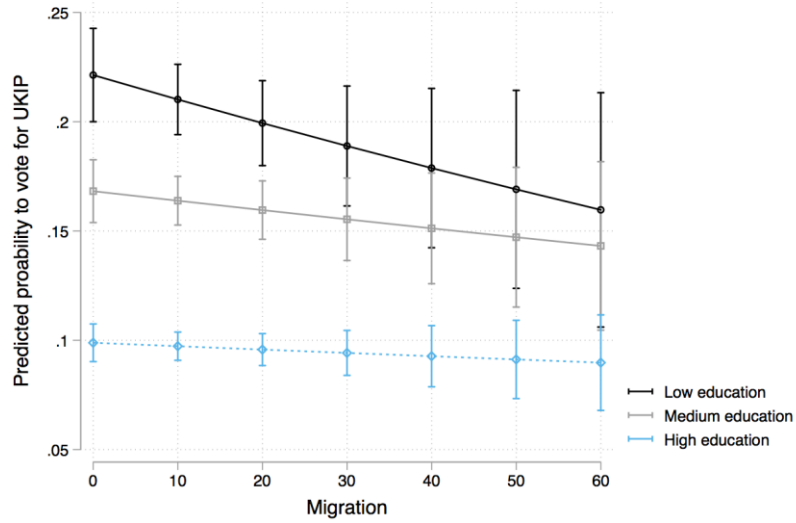
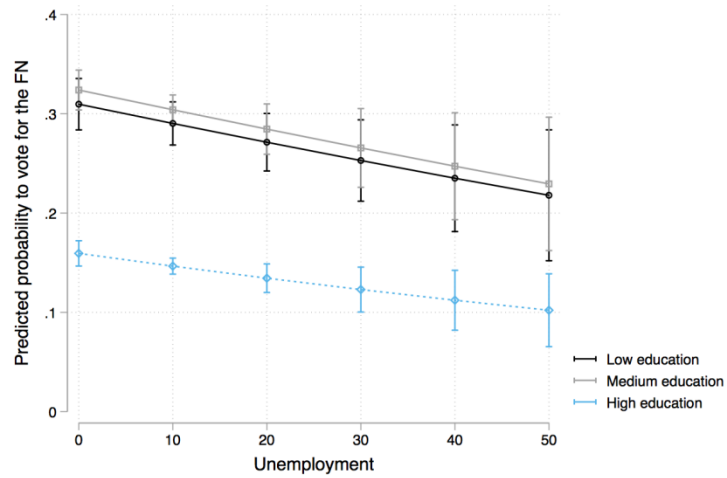
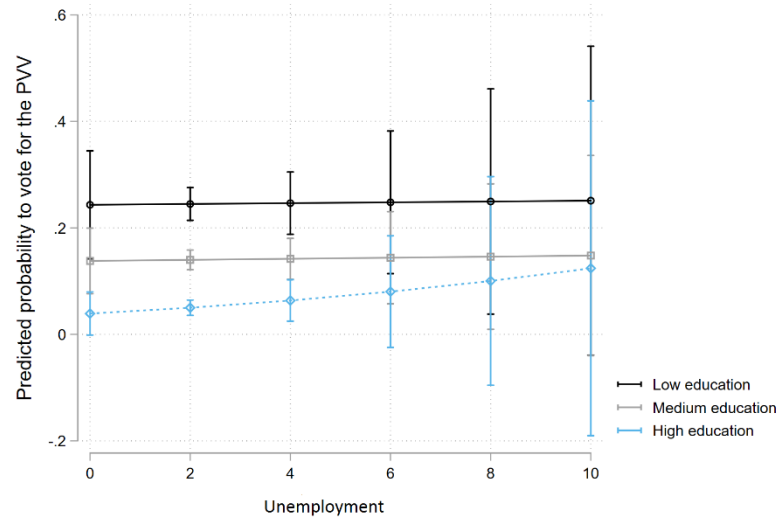
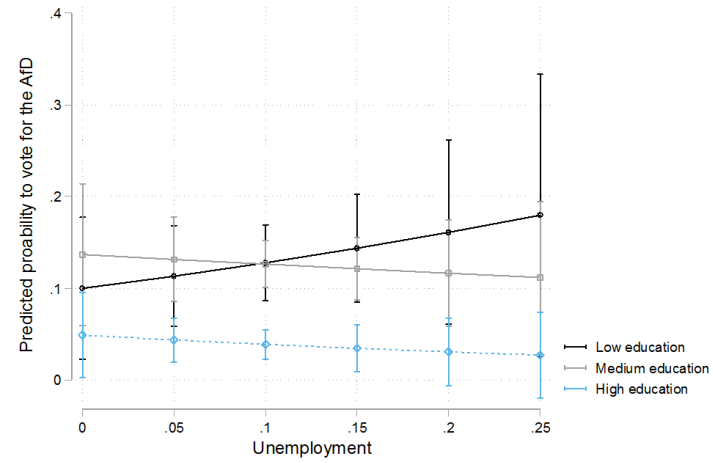
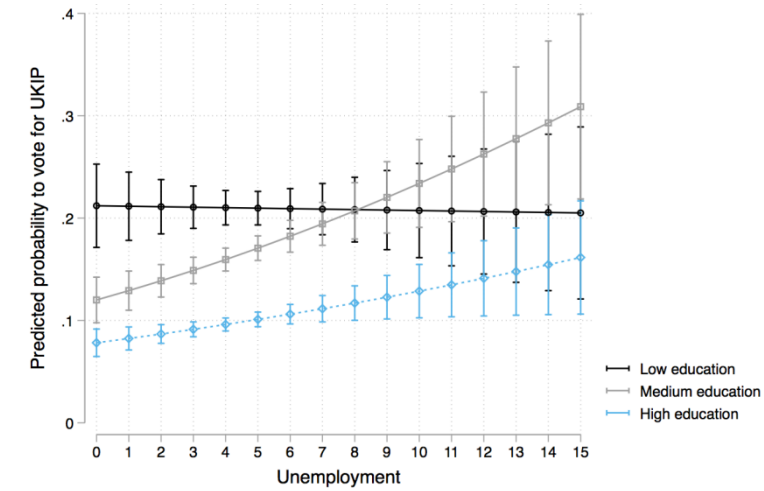


Figure 3 Fitted probabilities of RRP vote – education*unemployment (SCoRE surveys in France, Germany, Netherlands, England and Wales)



Appendix A1 Demographic and contextual measures

	France	Germany	Netherlands	England & Wales
Education	Low = BEPC to no qualification Med = CAP-BEP High = Bac and higher	Low = No qualification to Hauptschulabschluss Med = Realschulabschluss/ Fachhochschulreife High = Abitur or higher	Low = only primary education or lower secondary (VMBO) Med = MBO or equivalent High High = vocational or academic higher education (HBO/WO)	Low = no qualification to CSE grades 2-5 Med = (G)CSEs, NVQs. High = A-level or higher
Immigration	% of foreign born	% of immigrant families	% of population born outside, or with at least one parent born outside, NL (<i>allochtoon</i>)	% of foreign born population
Unemployment	% of population unemployed	% of population unemployed	% of population claiming unemployment benefit	% of unemployed in active population
Deprivation	% of population in social housing	[unavailable]	% of households living in social housing	% of population in social housing
Density	Population per km ²	Urban / rural categorisation	Population per km ²	Population per hectare

Appendix A2 Spatial units

	France	Germany	Netherlands	England & Wales
Level 1				
<i>Sample</i>	14,750	1,322	5,138	15,747
Level 2				
<i>Unit</i>	<u>Composite areas*</u>	<u>1km-grid square</u>	Districts (wijk)	Wards
<i>Sample</i>	8,749	254	1,537	6,365
Level 3				
<i>Unit</i>	Departments	Municipalities	Municipalities (gemeente)	Constituencies
<i>Sample</i>	96	-	370	573

Note: underlined spatial units represent artificial geographies constructed to allow analysis at appropriate spatial level nationally where no pre-existing administrative or political districts can be used.

* *France*

Type	Average pop.	N survey respondents (total)
Local catchment area (BV)	14429	2646
Electoral canton	25187	1108
Municipality	7452	219
Inter-communality (EPCI)	17371	702
IRIS	3766	6559
TRIIRIS	8508	7180