

Chapter 8

'Us and Them': Immigration, multiculturalism, and xenophobia

Alternative variants of the demand-side thesis suggest that the rise of the radical right is fuelled by shifts in public opinion generated by the growth of multiculturalism and more ethnically-diverse societies found today in postindustrial nations. Social change is thought to be driven by many factors associated with processes of globalization, notably by patterns of long-term population migration, growing numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers fleeing armed conflict, civil wars, and failed states, and more permeable national borders and more open labor markets¹. Many accounts assume that a public backlash against these trends has triggered the success of outspoken leaders such as Le Pen and Haider, especially where mainstream parties and liberal elites in the European Union and Anglo-American democracies have failed to respond to any public resentment and growing hostility directed against 'foreigners' by setting stricter limits on immigration and asylum-seekers². Election results are often regarded as a direct indicator of the state of public opinion in a society; given their heated rhetoric about the need for cultural protectionism, the electoral popularity of the radical right in Austria, Switzerland, and Belgium is understood to reflect growing racial intolerance and widespread xenophobia throughout these societies³.

Although a popular argument, this account demonstrates that in fact no automatic and direct relationship exists between aggregate indicators of the growth of multiculturalism in society, (including the inflow of immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers into any country), the balance of public opinion on these issues, and the share of the vote won by radical right parties. Instead this study theorizes that a contingent relationship exists, mediated by the role of party strategists who decide how to craft and pitch their campaign appeals about the values of cultural protectionism to gain maximum advantage, within the context of the electoral rules. The chapter first sets out the theoretical framework and discusses the sources of aggregate and individual-level evidence. We demonstrate that the share of the vote won by radical right at *national* level cannot be explained satisfactorily by a wide range of aggregate indicators of ethnic diversity, including both 'objective' measures exemplified by the official rate of immigration and asylum-seekers entering each nation, as well as 'subjective' measures, notably anti-immigrant attitudes found in public opinion within each country. Radical right parties can gain ground in societies where attitudes towards ethnic minorities remain relatively liberal and tolerant, such as Norway, as well as faring poorly elsewhere in countries where the public proves more hostile towards outsiders, such as Greece.

But at the same time, at individual-level, attitudes towards cultural protection *do* help to explain why some people vote for these parties; the study demonstrates how negative feelings towards immigration, refugees, and multiculturalism predict whether somebody casts a ballot for a radical right party, even after including a range of prior controls for their social background and political trust. Attitudes towards cultural protectionism prove far more significant predictors of radical right voting than economic attitudes. This pattern is found in nearly every country containing a relevant radical right party where we have data from the European Social Survey 2002, although there are two important exceptions to this pattern (Italy and Israel). The chapter's conclusion reflects on why different patterns emerge at individual and aggregate levels, and then considers the implications of these findings for the interpretation of election results and for understanding public opinion.

I: Theoretical framework

In one of the most influential studies, as discussed earlier in the book's introduction, Kitschelt argues that radical right party fortunes are not determined mechanically by structural trends in society; instead what matters is how parties respond (as agents) to social developments, within the context set by overall patterns of party competition⁴. In particular, he argues that where the ideological gap between moderate left and right parties closes -- for example if a broad middle-of-the-road consensus develops around issues such as the need for social tolerance of ethnic diversity, the protection of displaced populations, and respect for the human rights of political refugees -- this is believed to provide the ideal opportunity for radical right

elites to harvest popular support among the public located on the far right of the ideological spectrum. In this context, the optimal platform for radical right parties, Kitschelt suggests, will combine anti-immigrant, xenophobic rhetoric with free market economic policies. The ideological appeals and policy positions which party agents adopt are assumed by Downsian theories to be largely autonomous free choices, under conditions of perfect competition. Like chess players, political strategists are thought to decide whether their party should tack towards the center ground, or to shift further right or left, in rational pursuit of maximum electoral advantage.

There are grounds for skepticism about Kitschelt's specific claim that the closure of patterns of mainstream party competition opened the right-flank to advance by the more radical challengers, as demonstrated in the next chapter. Despite this important qualification, we can still build upon and further develop the general insights about parties as agents, suggested by Kitschelt's theory. In particular, we agree that parties are not simply political epiphenomena bobbing willy-nilly on the tides of deep-rooted sociological trends; instead they can become masters of their fate through astute judgments and effective strategies tailored to respond to popular demands, within certain institutional constraints. Essentially Kitschelt's two-level model (consisting of the democratic market where party 'supply' of public policy issues need to match public 'demands') should be recognized instead as a three-level nested model (combining the electoral regulations setting the context for both party 'supply' and voter 'demand'). The strategic agency theory developed in this book argues that parties should not be understood as purely autonomous rational actors competing against rivals for votes and seats. Instead, there is a regulated marketplace, and the most effective campaign appeals that parties adopt to mobilize popular support, and to maximize their potential seat gains, are constrained by the basic type of electoral system.

There are several building blocks in this theory. We have already demonstrated how the mechanical effects of electoral rules function as an important determinant for the entry of radical right parties into elected office and thus into government. The function of the rules controlling ballot access, campaign access, and election is analogous to protectionist regulations in the economic market, designed primarily by incumbent political parties and providing barriers, with different levels of severity, to reduce the seats awarded to minor challengers. What remains to be established in this chapter is whether the distribution of public opinion towards cultural protectionism is an important factor contributing towards the success of the radical right. On this basis, the next chapter can examine whether electoral rules also generate certain psychological effects upon strategic campaigning, by shaping the tactical calculations made by parties when crafting and targeting their broader ideological messages.

II: Explaining the national share of the vote for the radical right

Electoral support for the radical right is commonly seen by demand-side accounts to represent a grassroots reaction by European publics directed against growing ethnic heterogeneity and multiculturalism in society. Structural theories in political economy and sociology suggest that the ascendancy of these parties is generated primarily by a public backlash directed against rising numbers of immigrants and asylum-seekers, and the failure of mainstream governing parties to curb these numbers and protect national identities through effective public policy regulations.⁵ As Betz's claims: *"It should come as no surprise that the emergence and rise of radical right-wing populist parties in Western Europe coincided with the growing tide of immigrants and particularly the dramatic increase in the number of refugees seeking peace, security, and a better life in the affluent societies of Western Europe. The reaction to the new arrivals was an outburst of xenophobia and open racism in a majority of West European countries....This has made it relatively easy for the radical populist Right to evoke, focus, and reinforce preexisting xenophobic sentiments for political gain."*⁶ In effect, the distribution of public opinion in any country is read directly from election results.

Although a popular view, empirical studies investigating this relationship have generated somewhat mixed results; some have indeed confirmed that aggregate rates of immigration, and levels of refugees and asylum-seekers in each country or sub-national region, are linked to national levels of voting support for radical right parties, although others have reported finding

little support for this relationship⁷. Kitschelt examined three measures - the proportion of the foreign-born population in a country, the change in rates of immigration during the 1980s, and the share of political refugees in a population - and concluded that there was no significant correlation between these measures and the voting strength of rightwing parties during the 1980s in Western Europe⁸. For example, Sweden (with a negligible far right presence) had absorbed far more immigrants than Norway (where the *FrP* had performed relatively strongly). By contrast, Lubbers et al. compared the proportion of non-EU citizens in a country, using multi-level models, and reported that this factor contributed towards cross-national variations in extreme right-wing voting support⁹. Further confirmation of this relationship was provided by Golder, who also examined this thesis by analyzing the proportion of the resident population living in each country who are 'foreign citizens'¹⁰.

Possible reasons for the inconsistent results in the literature is that national-level evidence remains extremely limited, characterized by an immense amount of 'noise' and measurement error¹¹. Alternative indicators of levels of immigration, citizenship, asylum-seekers, and ethnic heterogeneity are employed by different studies. Comparisons of the proportion of 'foreign citizens' in a country, for example, may generate some 'muddy' results, depending upon the relative ease or difficulty of obtaining legal citizenship in each nation, as well as the accuracy of any census data and the official government records used to monitor the proportion of illegal aliens resident within each country. Moreover the primary debate about cultural protectionism in the European Union today does not revolve around the presence of 'foreign citizens' per se, for example relatively little concern is heard about the proportion of Belgians living in Luxembourg, British citizens buying second-homes in northern France, or German citizens working in Switzerland. By contrast, heated popular debate surrounds rates of refugees, asylum-seekers, and guest-workers drawn from outside of either Western Europe or the European Union, such as the arrival of displaced Somalians, Turkish Kurds, and Balkan exiles in Paris, Berlin, and Vienna. Countries differ in the way that they collect migration statistics and who they consider to be a migrant. Some statistics are based on administrative data, for example who applies for residency permits or citizenship, or border records, while others use survey data such as the official census. The time-period for any data collection is also critical; for example whether measures capture past waves of immigration to Europe following earlier periods of decolonization, such as Algerians who moved to France or Ugandan Asians who entered Britain, or whether they focus upon more recent migration flows. And of course there may also be a substantial perceptual gap between official rates of population flows and public perceptions of these trends.

To reexamine the available evidence, we can first examine whether voting support for the radical right is related directly to a range of aggregate-level indicators of ethnic heterogeneity in each nation under comparison, utilizing a series of 'objective' measures of the number of immigrants and asylum-seekers entering each country (both the current number in 2002 as well as the total number of asylum-seekers during the previous decade), as well as 'subjective' indicators of ethnic heterogeneity from survey data.

At national-level, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) collects the most comprehensive series of international statistics monitoring the contemporary national inflow of refugees, asylum-seekers, and other populations of related concern. There are reasons to be cautious about the reliability and consistency of these official statistics, for all the reasons already discussed, but nevertheless they remain perhaps the best that are currently available. These indicators suggest that the number of such displaced populations grew rapidly during the early-1990s, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, protracted armed conflict, and cases of human rights abuses or political repression. Some of the largest population inflows into advanced industrialized societies came from displaced refugees and asylum-seekers from the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Somalia, China, and Iran¹².

Yet the number of refugees and asylum-seekers does not take into account the impact of previous patterns of immigration on multiculturalism, exemplified by the 1950s influx of West Caribbean and Asians into Britain following de-colonization, North Africans moving into France, or patterns of labor mobility during the 1980s among Turkish 'guest workers' in Germany and Sweden. Unfortunately official census data provides unreliable cross-national estimates of the

degree of ethnic heterogeneity within each country, in part because of varying national definitions of what constitutes an 'ethnic minority', as well as different measures of race, religion, and citizenship which have not been adequately standardized by international bodies. In this study, to gauge the degree of ethnic heterogeneity, we can also draw upon estimates derived from the European Social Survey 2002 to compare the proportion of residents in the sample who report that they were not born in each country and also the proportion who say that they are not citizens. These reported figures may generate a systematic slight under-estimate of ethnic heterogeneity, if any illegal immigrants are reluctant to admit to non-citizenship, but any such bias should be of roughly similar levels across countries. In addition, we also need to test for the effects of standardized aggregate rates of unemployment and also per capita GDP in each society. Studies of political economy report that the impact of immigration matters most under conditions of high unemployment, with an interaction effect where people blame 'foreigners' for job insecurity, low wages, or loss of employment.¹³ Levels of average income may be important in countries where support for the radical right is drawn disproportionately from among poorer social sectors.

[Table 8.1 and Figure 8.1 about here]

Two dependent variables are used to assess mass support for the radical right at national-level in the countries under comparison: namely, the percentage share of the radical right vote won in the most recent (2000-2004) legislative elections and also the type of contemporary radical right party existing in each country (divided into 'none', 'fringe' or 'relevant' categories). The results of the comparison, presented in Table 8.1, shows that, contrary to theories of political economy, *support for the radical right at national level is unrelated to any of the available aggregate indicators of ethnic diversity in the societies under comparison*. This pattern holds irrespective of the specific measure of ethnic heterogeneity which is considered, including the official number of refugees, asylum-seekers, and the total population of concern to the UNHCR in the most recent year available, or the survey estimates of the proportion of non-citizens and residents born overseas. Figure 8.1 illustrates the pattern more clearly by showing how the total size of the population of concern to the UNHCR (including asylum-seekers and refugees in each country) ranges substantially among the nations under comparison, with Germany, the United States, Britain, and Sweden containing some of the largest numbers, although none of these nations contain a relevant radical right party. None of the correlations in Table 8.1 prove significant, and some even point in the contrary direction to that predicted, for example, the most recently-available UNHCR figures suggest that an estimated 15,000 asylum-seekers live in each of the seventeen nations containing a relevant radical right party, compared with more than twice this number of asylum-seekers (37,000) living in the eleven nations without such a party. Similarly, the ESS survey estimates of the proportion of resident non-citizens suggest that this group constituted about 9.9% of the population sample in the countries without a radical right party, compared with 3.2% of the population in countries with a fringe radical right, and 2.8% of the population in countries with a relevant radical right party. This is the opposite of what is predicted by over-simple claims that the radical right is most successful in ethnically heterogeneous societies. Of course considerable care is needed in interpreting this relationship as this may involve a case of reverse causality; the presence of a successful radical right party gaining popular votes or seats in the legislature may well pressure the governing party or parties to further restrict the number of immigrants or asylum-seekers who are allowed to enter the country legally, as commentators suggest has occurred in the Netherlands and France¹⁴. But under these circumstances it becomes even more difficult to argue that the success of the radical right in certain countries and their failure elsewhere is driven by structural population trends.

The results also suggest that similar national-level comparisons made with the standardized rate of unemployment and per capita income in each country are also insignificantly related to support for the radical right; for example 7.7% of the working population were unemployed in the societies under comparison where there was no relevant radical right party, whereas the rate was slightly lower (5.7%) where there was such party. Figure 8.2 illustrates the lack of any consistent pattern even more clearly. Further attempts to uncover any interaction effects, for example by combining alternative indicators of ethnic heterogeneity with rates of unemployment, also failed to prove significant.

[Figure 8.2 about here]

Subjective attitudes towards cultural protectionism

An alternative plausible explanation of this phenomenon is that support of radical right parties may be generated less by the 'objective' number of refugees and asylum-seekers entering a country, or by the actual proportion of ethnic minorities living in any society, than by the subjective feelings towards the perceived threats from multiculturalism¹⁵. After all, few people may be aware of the exact number of immigrants, or their proportion of the population, but what may matter is whether many people believe that there are too many 'outsiders' and 'foreigners' which endanger traditional social values and norms in each national culture. This claim is, after all, the core focus of much contemporary radical right rhetoric. To explore this issue, the European Social Survey 2002 contains a wide range of suitable items carried in a special battery designed to tap attitudes towards immigrants, multiculturalism, and race relations. Exploratory factors analysis was used to reduce these items to four primary dimensions, listed in Table 8.2, concerning perceptions of the instrumental threat of immigration, attitudes towards refugee policy, the perceived threat of multiculturalism, and lastly, for comparison, economic attitudes.

[Table 8.2 about here]

Attitudes towards immigration

Race relations and the integration of ethnic minorities from former colonies has long been a concern in European societies, such as the integration of Algerians in France, Indonesians in the Netherlands, and Asians in Britain, along with the role of 'guest workers' (*Gastarbeiter*), notably Turks recruited into the German labor force and North Africans who moved to France. The instrumental argument suggests that what matters are not levels of immigration per se, but rather the belief that any influx of new minorities could either take away public benefits such as housing, depress wages in low-skilled jobs, or exacerbate unemployment rates. The rhetoric of the radical right is littered with such claims, for example Jean-Marie Le Pen propagated the slogan: "Two million immigrants are the cause of two million French people out of work."¹⁶ Haider's slogan-"Stop the *Überfremdung*" or "over-foreignization"-could have been well received where Austrians were already afraid of losing their jobs to Central and East European migrants, or of seeing their children attending schools with many Muslim immigrants.

To see whether this rhetoric fell upon sympathetic ears among radical right voters, the first scale measured 'instrumental' attitudes towards immigration, combining seven selected survey items monitoring how far these groups were regarded as an economic or cultural threat to the country, for example by depressing wages, taking away jobs, or by undermining cultural life. These items can be seen as tapping 'instrumental', 'pragmatic', or 'resource-based' evaluations of the expected consequences of population migration, resting upon perceptions of threats to the material interests of white Europeans. The survey does not seek to define or measure the type of immigrant group, for example by distinguishing among Muslim or Catholic émigrés, instead the conception of what constitutes an immigrant is left to survey respondents in each society.

Attitudes towards refugee policy

Negative attitudes towards immigrants represent only one potential form of opposition to ethnic diversity in modern societies. The most recent wave of population migration during the last decade concerns the wave of asylum-seekers and refugees, often from the Balkans, Central Europe, and Africa, seeking to live and work in the European Union, as well as seeking settlement in Australia and Canada. The second scale included five items which were designed to measure tolerant or restrictive attitudes towards government policy concerning asylum-seekers and refugees, for example how far people felt that refugees should be given financial aid while their cases were being considered, how far they should be provided with work permits, or how far they should be entitled to bring close family members with them.

Attitudes towards multiculturalism

The third attitudinal dimension examined attitudes towards multiculturalism, to see if broader aspects of cultural globalization have generated a backlash benefiting strongly nationalist parties. Public support for the radical right could also be triggered by a broader sense of the threat posed to national values by growing multiculturalism, or a more symbolic 'identity-based' opposition to ethnic diversity, based on perceptions of the threat of foreigners to national cultures (expressed through fears about the loss of the predominant language, religion, food, and so on). Processes of globalization have weakened the protection of national borders, symbolized by the worldwide proliferation of internationally-traded consumer brands, the ascendancy of popular cultural icons and celebrities, and instantaneous communication through telecommunications, broadcasting and the Internet around the globe¹⁷. Patterns of population migration have certainly accelerated these trends, but there are only part of a broader phenomenon driven by factors such as the burgeoning of new information and communication technologies, the expansion of free markets and trade, and greater political integration within the ever-widening EU. Multiculturalism is measured in the ESS survey by items monitoring attitudes towards the value of religious diversity and the importance of sharing of cultural traditions, both of which can be regarded as representing a threat to cultural identities¹⁸.

Economic attitudes

Lastly, attitudes towards tradition left-right economic policies could also help to explain the attraction of the radical right; Kitschelt argues that it is the combination of free-market liberalism on the economy with traditional authoritarian policies towards minorities which has created the winning combination for these parties¹⁹. To capture this dimension, the fourth economic scale monitored attitudes towards economic inequality and the need for strong trade unions. The available items were far from ideal, as they only cover a limited range of economic values, but they probably tapped two important attitudes that are strongly related to broader positions towards free market versus planned economies. Claims about income equality lie at the heart of traditional socialism, as do attitudes towards the role of trade unions. While not sufficient for any detailed analysis, these items allow us to test the Kitschelt thesis.

Each of these scales was constructed by recoding the direction of the items, combining them, and standardizing the final scales to 100-points, all in a negative direction (representing hostility to immigration, refugees, multiculturalism and economic equality), for ease of interpretation. These measures can be used to examine the common claim that countries where radical right parties have succeeded in mobilizing electoral support most successfully are those where the general public is most hostile towards immigrants and least tolerant of refugees and asylum-seekers. This proposition is widely assumed in popular commentary, where the popularity of parties promulgating racist anti-foreigner policies, such as in Austria and Switzerland, is often taken as indicative of exceptionally strong racist sentiments in the general population as a whole.

Figure 8.3 demonstrates that anti-immigrant feelings do indeed vary across European countries, from the most tolerant (Sweden and Luxemburg) to the least (Hungary and Greece). Yet at aggregate level, the distribution of public opinion in each country fails to predict either the share of the vote won by the radical right or the existence of relevant radical right parties. The smaller liberal Scandinavian welfare states prove some of the most tolerant towards outsiders, whether Norway (with the FrP) and Denmark (with the DF and FP), or Sweden and Finland (without a relevant radical right party). By contrast, the least tolerant European nations include Greece and Portugal (without such a party), yet also Hungary (with the MIEP) and the Czech Republic (with the RSC).

[Figure 8.3 and 8.4 about here]

To compare this further, Figure 8.4 displays the average level of support for anti-immigrant attitudes in each country compared against the mean share of the vote won by radical right parties. Again no relationship is apparent at national-level, and this remains true even if we exclude Switzerland as an outlier. Although we shall demonstrate that *individual* attitudes hostile towards cultural protectionism (towards foreigners, refugees, and ethnic diversity) do indeed

predict whether a particular person will cast a ballot for a radical right party, this does not mean that the electoral success of these parties can be predicted at *national-level* by public opinion in any country.

Part III: Explaining individual support for the radical right

So far this chapter has failed to detect any significant link between electoral support for the radical right, aggregate-level indicators of ethnic heterogeneity, and public opinion. Yet despite this pattern, attitudes on these issues do help to predict whether individual electors voted for the radical right. The study ran a binary logistic (logit) regression model to analyze patterns of individual-level radical right voting within the pooled European sample, including the nine countries with a relevant right party that were contained in the ESS-2202. The results can be compared with the similar models used in previous chapters. The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics were first entered in the model, then the indicators of institutional trust, satisfaction with government and social trust which we have already employed as significant predictors of radical right support. These factors act as prior controls in the multivariate model, assuming that background characteristics such as age, gender and class will influence general orientations towards the political system, including patterns of institutional trust, social trust, and satisfaction with government. In turn, these factors are expected to shape more specific instrumental and identity-based attitudes towards immigration and political refugees, perspectives on cultural protectionism, and preferences for egalitarian economic policies.

The results of the pooled model in Table 8.3 confirm the significance of all the cultural attitudes: as expected, *negative attitudes towards immigration, refugees, multiculturalism and economic equality all predicted individual radical rightwing votes, remaining significant even after including the full battery of prior controls*. The overall fit of the model still remained modest but it also strengthened (evaluated by the Nagelkerke R^2), compared with previous estimates. To go further, we again need to explore these patterns when broken down by nation, without any controls.

[Table 8.3 about here]

As Table 8.4 illustrates, the cultural indicators measuring negative attitudes towards immigration, refugees and multiculturalism proved significant predictors of individual radical right voting in seven of the nine nations containing a relevant radical right party (in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland). Compared with the attitudes of the general public, these indicators proved quite strong in these societies, such as strong anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiments expressed by supporters of the FPÖ in Austria and *Lijst Pym Fortuyn* in the Netherlands. Moreover, in these seven countries the indicators measuring negative attitudes towards economic equality failed to predict voting patterns. Admittedly the economic measures contained in the ESS-2002 remain limited, nevertheless, contrary to Kitschelt's thesis of a 'winning formula', it appears that anti-foreigner feelings and cultural protectionism provide far better explanations of the success of the radical right in Austria and Switzerland than any appeal to free market liberalism. In Italy there was a slightly different pattern, however, as support for the radical right in this country was more strongly related to economic attitudes rather than anti-immigrant feelings. The major exception to the general pattern concerns Israel, where none of these attitudinal scales proved to be significantly related to voting support for *Mafdal* and *IL*. It appears as though the deep religious cleavage in Israel, dividing secular and more orthodox Jews, as well as Jews and Muslims, and related attitudes towards issues of national security, the Palestinian question, and the role of the West Bank, coupled with the unique history and origins of the Israeli state as a nation of immigrants and refugees, means that these attitudes fail to resonate in generating support for these particular parties.

[Table 8.4 about here]

Conclusions

It is widely assumed in popular commentary that secular trends in modern multicultural societies are critical for rising levels of support for radical right parties. In particular, patterns of population migration, the influx of immigrants and refugees, and the perceived cultural threat from

globalization are generally believed to have encouraged more racist attitudes in the public which leaders such as Le Pen and Haider have been keen to foster and exploit. Support for extremist political groups may also have been encouraged more recently by xenophobia directed against Muslim populations, indicated by reports of rising levels of hate crimes in the United States and within Europe in the aftermath of 9/11 and subsequent terrorist incidents.²⁰ Yet the previous literature examining the empirical link between aggregate indicators of ethnic heterogeneity and the proportion of votes cast for radical right parties has reported inconclusive results.

Two major conclusions can be drawn from the evidence analyzed here. First, this chapter has demonstrated that no significant relationship exists at national (aggregate) level between the national share of the vote cast for radical right parties and a wide range of indicators of ethnic diversity, whether measured 'objectively' by estimated official rates of refugees and asylum-seekers, the proportion of non-nationals and non-citizens living in a country, or subjectively by public opinion towards immigration. Parties such as the *Vlaams Bloc*, the FPÖ and One Nation have certainly emphasized racist rhetoric, anti-foreigner diatribes, and the theme of cultural protectionism as the leitmotif recurring throughout their leadership speeches and at the heart of their manifesto policies. Other issues, such as criticism of the European Union powers and policies, or attacks on the welfare state, are also often implicitly framed in ways tapping into culturally protectionist sentiments. Although the electoral success of these parties is often interpreted by media commentators, news journalists and some scholars as a public backlash directed against ethnic minorities in the countries where they do well, in fact the relationship proves far more complicated and nuanced.

At individual-level, however, support for cultural protectionism does indeed predict who will vote for the radical right, as expected, with anti-immigrant and anti-refugee attitudes remaining significant variables even after applying a battery of prior social and attitudinal controls. This pattern is found consistently in many, although not all, of the nine countries in the ESS survey that contained a relevant right party. By contrast, the limited measures of attitudes towards free market or egalitarian economic policies failed to prove consistently significant predictors of radical right support in most nations.

Why do these results appear inconsistent at different levels? Quite simply, the well-known ecological fallacy suggests that we should not assume that patterns found at national level will also be found at individual-level. And the individual-fallacy means that we should not assume that patterns found at individual-level will also exist among public opinion at national-level²¹. The main reason for the disparity is the skewed nature of radical right votes; these parties usually gain the support of only a small sector of the electorate, even in countries where they qualify as 'relevant'. Hence it is highly misleading to generalize on the basis of the attitudes held by their supporters to the general distribution of public opinion existing in the countries where they perform relatively well. Figure 8.5 illustrates the distribution of anti-immigrant attitudes more clearly, in the pooled European sample. There is a normal curve in this distribution, but in the polar extremes it is skewed towards the right. The group most hostile towards ethnic diversity forms the pool of potential electoral support most likely to vote for the radical right. But this does not mean that the outcome for the radical right in votes, still less in seats, can be read as an accurate indicator to interpret the state of public opinion in each country.

The 'demand-side' interpretation therefore does contribute towards part of the explanation for radical right success, and yet because both political disaffection and cultural protectionism are characteristic of many postindustrial societies, it is difficult to use these factors to explain where these parties have, and have not, advanced. Even at individual level, in the pooled model the combination of the social background of voters, their level of political trust, and their attitudes towards cultural protectionism only explained, at most, roughly one fifth of the variation in voting for the radical right. On this basis, we need to also consider the 'supply-side' of the equation, and how parties respond to the public when crafting their ideological values and developing their organizational base, within the constraints set by the broader type of institutional context and electoral system.

Table 8.1: National-level indicators and radical right support

| | Data Source | Means by type of contemporary radical right party | | | Correlation with % Radical Right vote | |
|---|-------------|---|--------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|------|
| | | None | Fringe party | Relevant party | R. | Sig. |
| OBJECTIVE INDICATORS | | | | | | |
| Number of refugees, 2002 | (i) | 57,755 | 152,328 | 40,737 | .015 | N/s |
| Number of asylum-seekers, 2002 | (i) | 37,429 | 17,517 | 15,290 | -.059 | N/s |
| Number of asylum-seekers, 1992-2001 | (iv) | 158,530 | 426,310 | 147,760 | -.128 | N/s |
| Total population of concern, 2002 | (i) | 95,185 | 171,637 | 112,358 | .117 | N/s |
| Total pop. of concern standardized per 1000 residents | (i) | .16 | .46 | .51 | .194 | N/s |
| Proportion of residents born overseas | (ii) | 10.5 | 7.7 | 9.9 | .109 | N/s |
| Proportion of resident non-citizens | (ii) | 9.9 | 3.2 | 2.8 | -.018 | N/s |
| ECONOMIC INDICATORS | | | | | | |
| Standardized rates of unemployment, 2002 | (iii) | 7.7 | 7.9 | 5.7 | -.204 | N/s |
| Per capita GDP 2000 (US\$) | (v) | 20,849 | 16,840 | 20,064 | .060 | N/s |
| SUBJECTIVE INDICATORS | | | | | | |
| Anti-immigrant attitude 100-pt scale | (ii) | 51.8 | 56.0 | 53.6 | -.142 | N/s |
| Number of countries | | 11 | 8 | 17 | 36 | |

Note: The coefficients represent the national-level means by the type of radical right party and the correlation with the proportion of radical right vote 2000-2004 in each country. None of the correlations or difference between means proved significant (at the 95% confidence level).

Sources:

(i) UNHCR. July 2003. *Asylum Applications Lodged in Industrialized Countries: Levels and Trends, 2000-2002*. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.ch>. The total population of concern to the UNHCR in each country includes all refugees, asylum-seekers, refugees returning home, and people uprooted within their own countries (internally displaced persons).

(ii) Estimate from the *European Social Survey, 2002*, weighted by design and population. For the 100-point standardized anti-immigrant attitude scale, see Table 8.2

(iii) OECD *Main Economic Indicators* 2004. www.oecd.org

(iv) OECD Inflows of asylum-seekers into selected OECD countries, 1991-2001. www.oecd.org

(v) World Bank *World Development Indicators, 2002*. The per capita GDP is standardized by Purchasing Power Parity www.worldbank.org

Table 8.2: Dimensions of cultural attitudes, ESS-200

| | <i>Negative attitudes towards</i> | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Immigrants | Refugees | Multiculturalism | Economic equality |
| Immigrants take jobs away in country or create new jobs (1-10) | .716 | | | |
| Immigrants harm economic prospects of the poor more than the rich (1-5) | .713 | | | |
| Average wages/salaries generally brought down by immigrants (1-5) | .702 | | | |
| Immigration bad or good for country's economy (1-10) | .680 | | | |
| Immigrants make country worse or better place to live (1-10) | .649 | | | |
| Country's cultural life undermined or enriched by immigrants (1-10) | .614 | | .408 | |
| Immigrants make country's crime problems worse or better (1-10) | .478 | | | |
| Government should be generous judging applications for refugee status (1-5) | | .712 | | |
| Granted refugees should be entitled to bring close family members (1-5) | | .684 | | |
| Financial support to refugee applicants while cases considered (1-5) | | .663 | | |
| People applying refugee status allowed to work while cases considered(1-5) | | .609 | | |
| Immigrants should be given same rights as everyone else (1-5) | | .507 | | |
| Better for a country if a variety of different religions (reversed) (1-5) | | | .797 | |
| Better for a country if almost everyone share customs and traditions (1-5) | | | .672 | |
| Government should reduce differences in income levels | | | | .782 |
| Employees need strong trade unions to protect work conditions/wages | | | | .779 |
| Percentage of variance explained by each factor | 20.3 | 14.4 | 10.1 | 8.7 |

Note: Exploratory principal component factor analysis of cultural attitudes using varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization. The analysis is based upon the pooled 21-nation European Social Survey weighted by design and population. Each scale was summed from these items and standardized into a 100-point scale.

Source: European Social Survey, 2002

Table 8.3: Cultural attitudes and the radical right vote, pooled sample

| | <i>Predictors of voting for the radical right, pooled 8-nation European sample</i> | | |
|--|--|------------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Sig. |
| (Constant) | -5.887 | | |
| DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND | | | |
| Age (In years) | .010 | .003 | *** |
| Sex (Male=1, Female=0) | .209 | .109 | * |
| Ethnic minority (Ethnic minority=1, else=0) | -.007 | .376 | N/s |
| SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS | | | |
| Education (Highest level attained on a 6-point scale from low to high) | .016 | .046 | N/s |
| Salariat (professional and managerial employees) | -.201 | .178 | N/s |
| Petit bourgeoisie (self-employed) | .573 | .129 | *** |
| Skilled manual working class | .118 | .207 | N/s |
| Unskilled manual working class | .156 | .164 | N/s |
| Ever been unemployed (for more than 3 months) | .364 | .128 | *** |
| Religiosity (Self-identified as religious on a 7-pt scale) | -.072 | .019 | *** |
| INDICATORS OF TRUST AND SATISFACTION | | | |
| Institutional trust (60-pt scale) | -.017 | .006 | *** |
| Satisfaction with government (60-pt scale) | -.004 | .007 | N/s |
| Social trust (30-pt scale) | -.016 | .010 | N/s |
| CULTURAL ATTITUDES | | | |
| Negative attitudes towards immigration | -.013 | .004 | *** |
| Negative attitudes towards refugees | .010 | .004 | ** |
| Negative attitudes towards multiculturalism | .009 | .003 | *** |
| Negative attitudes towards economic equality | .006 | .003 | * |
| Nagelkerke R ² | .218 | | |
| Percentage correctly predicted | 91.2 | | |

Notes: The model presents the results of a binary logistic (logit) regression model including the unstandardized beta coefficients (B), the standard errors, and their significance, in the pooled 8-nation European sample weighted by design and population size. The dependent variable was whether the respondent had voted for a radical right party. For the construction of the cultural scales, all standardized to 100-points, see Table 8.1.

Sig.001=***; Sig .01=**; Sig .05 =*

Source: Pooled sample 8-nations, European Social Survey 2002 (ESS-2002)

Table 8.4: Cultural attitudes and the radical right vote by nation

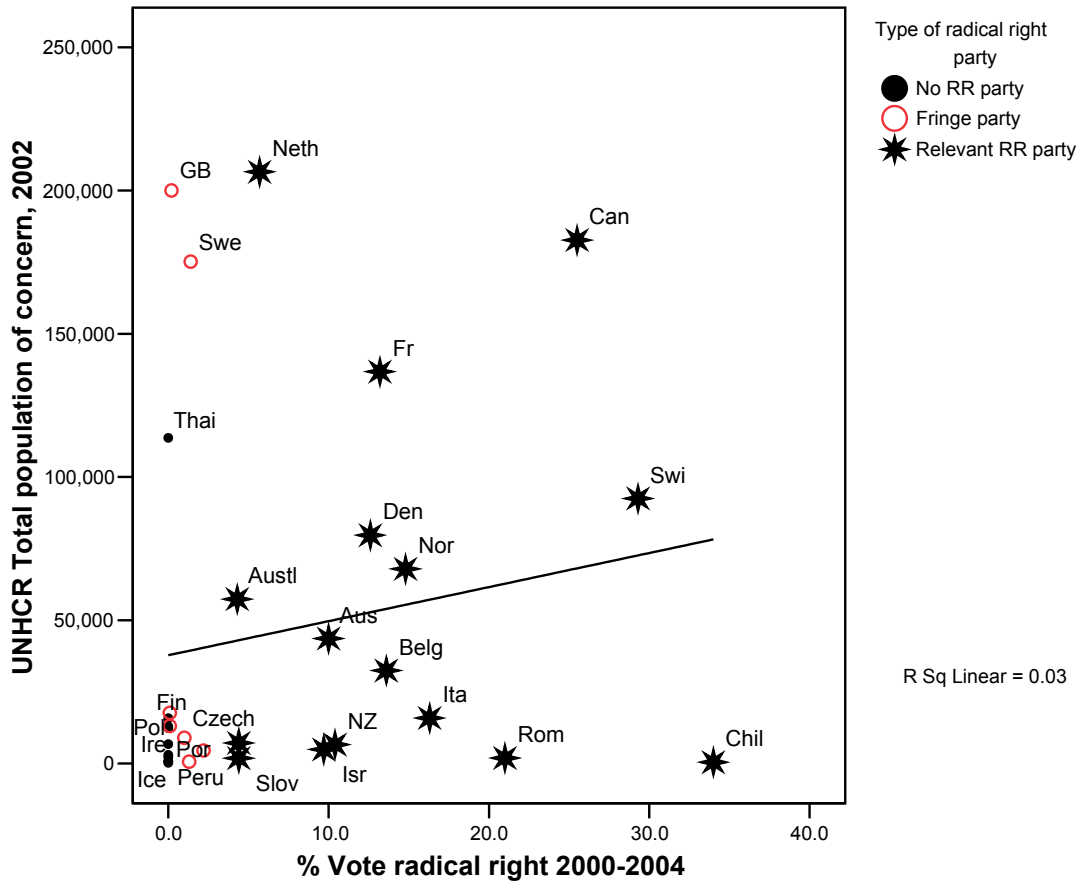
| <i>Nation</i> | <i>Party</i> | Negative attitudes towards... | | | |
|---------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | | Immigration | Refugees | Multiculturalism | Economic equality |
| Austria | FPÖ | 11.3 ** | 10.3 ** | 10.8 * | 7.0 N/s |
| Belgium | VB, FN | 13.9 *** | 12.9 *** | 14.7 *** | -2.3 N/s |
| Denmark | DF, FP | 14.7 *** | 11.6 *** | 13.7 *** | 0.9 N/s |
| France | FN | 18.5 *** | 18.6 *** | 9.0 *** | 0.1 N/s |
| Israel | Mafdal, IL | -7.3 N/s | 2.8 N/s | 6.3 N/s | 2.3 N/s |
| Italy | AN, LN, MsFt | 0.6 N/s | 2.6 *** | 2.0 * | 6.9 *** |
| Netherlands | PF, CD | 9.3 *** | 7.5 *** | 10.0 *** | 2.7 * |
| Norway | FrP, FLP | 7.7 *** | 7.5 *** | 10.1 *** | 3.5 N/s |
| Switzerland | SVP, EDU, SD, LdT, FPS | 6.8 *** | 9.6 *** | 7.8 *** | 9.0 *** |
| TOTAL | | 4.5 *** | 10.3 *** | 5.9 *** | 5.6 *** |

Note: For the construction of the 100-point standardized scales see Table 8.1. The coefficients represent the mean difference between the position of voters for radical right parties and all other citizens on these scales. The significance of the mean difference between groups is measured by ANOVA. The sample was weighted by design and population size.

Sig.001=***; Sig. .01=**; Sig. .05 =*

Source: European Social Survey 2002 (ESS-2002)

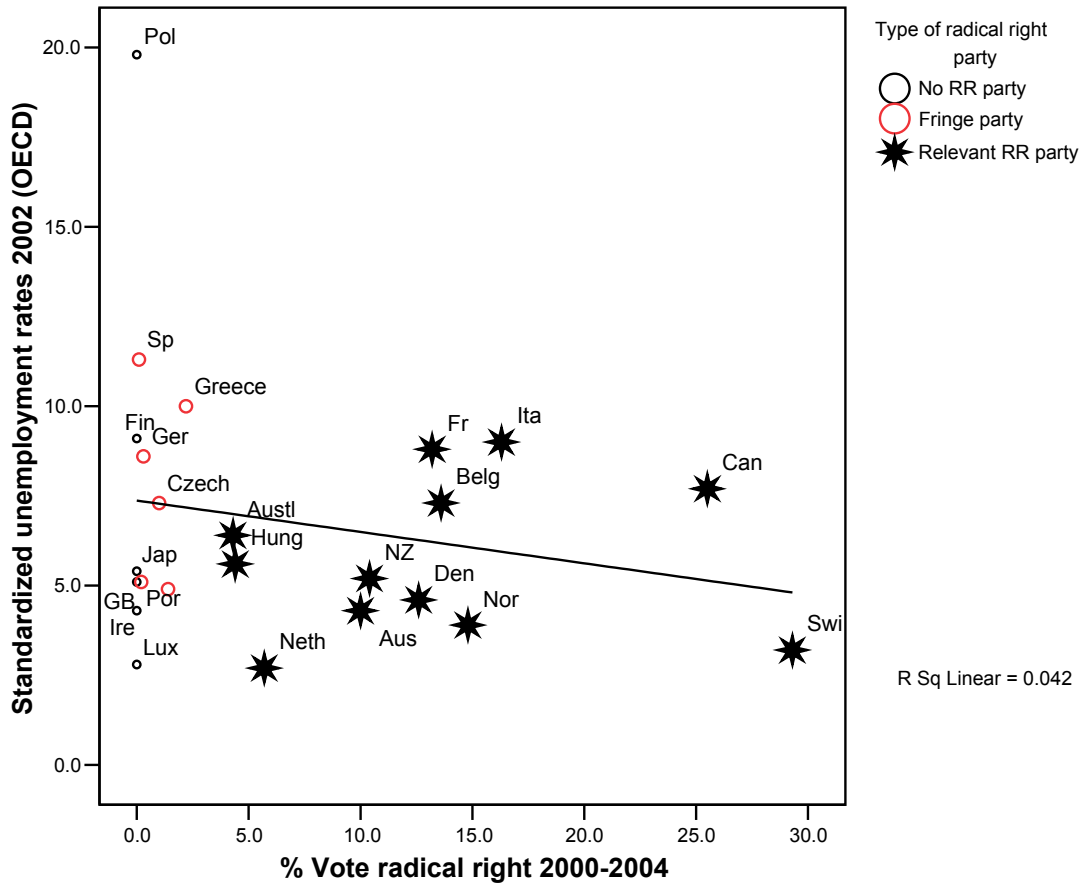
Figure 8.1: Number of refugees and radical right votes



Notes: The total number of refugees, asylum-seekers, and others of concern to the United National High Commissioner for Refugees, 2002, by country of residence. Three countries are excluded as outliers in the data (the United States, Russia and Germany), each containing about 900,000 refugees, asylum-seekers and other populations of concern to the UNHCR. The inclusion or exclusion of these countries does not change the substantive interpretation of the results.

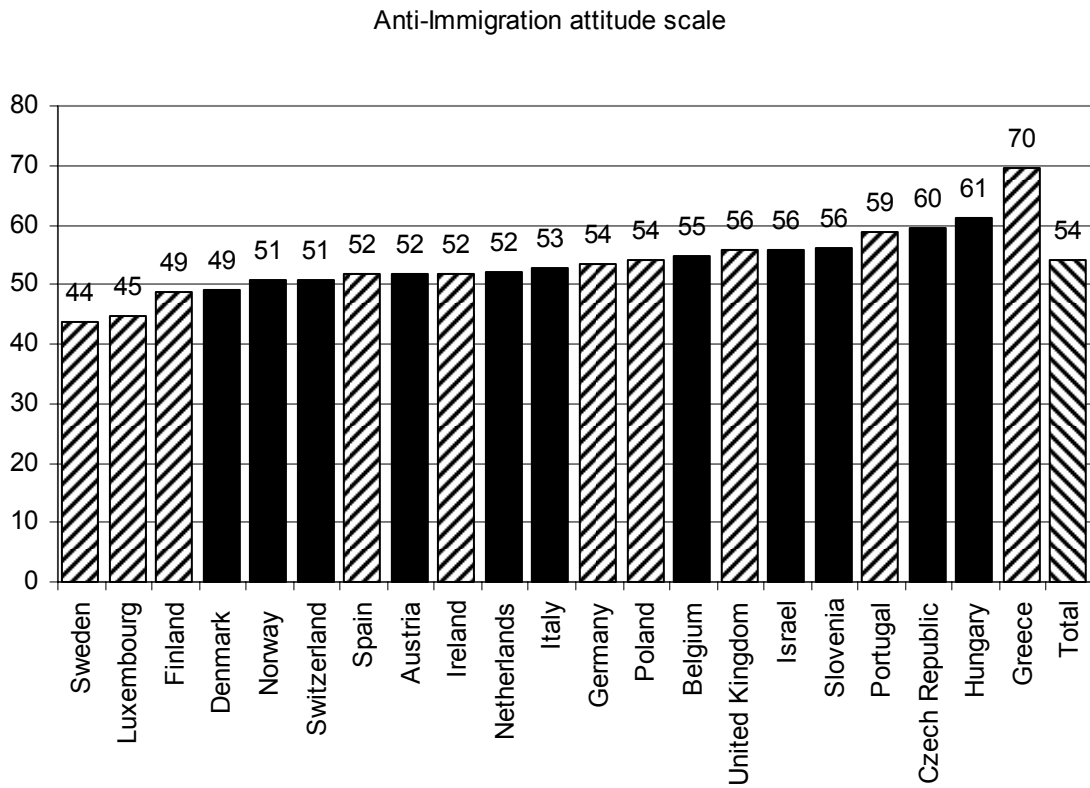
Source: UNHCR 2002 Statistics <http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/tehis/vtx/statistics>

Figure 8.2: Unemployment rates and radical right votes



Note: Standardized unemployment rates, 2002 from OECD *Main Economic Indicators* 2004. www.oecd.org

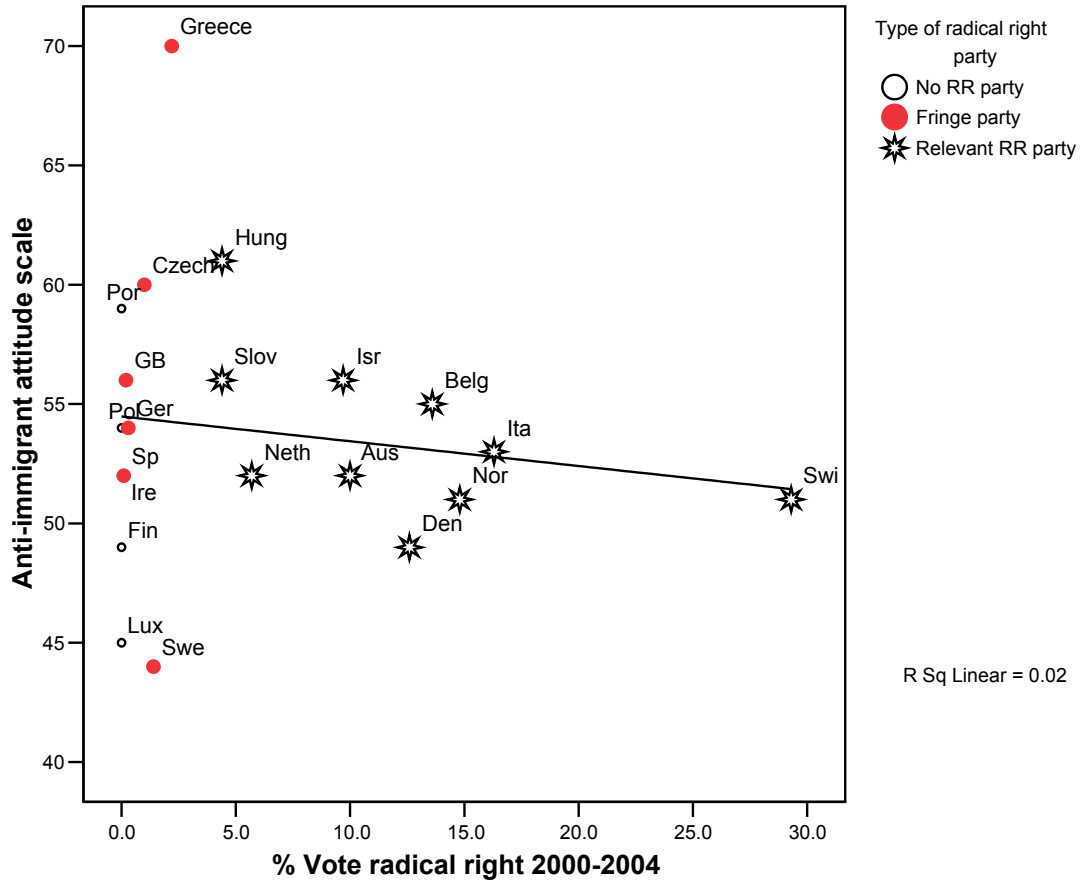
Figure 8.3: Anti-immigrant attitudes scale by nation



Note: Nations containing a relevant radical right party are highlighted in solid columns. For the construction of the 100-point attitudinal scale, see Table 8.2.

Source: European Social Survey 2002 (ESS-2002)

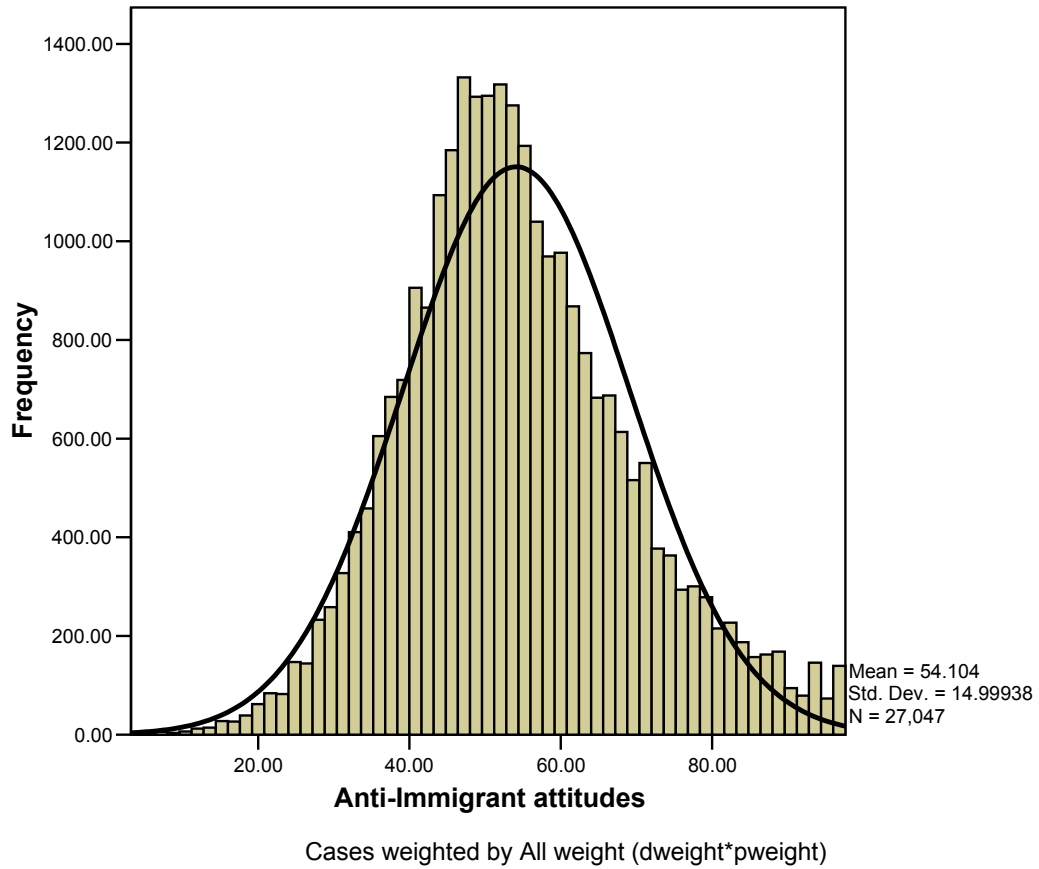
Figure 8.4: Anti-immigrant attitudes and support for the radical right



Notes: For the construction of the attitudinal scale, see Table 8.2.

Source: European Social Survey 2002 (ESS-2002)

Figure 8.5: The distribution of anti-immigrant attitudes in public opinion



Notes: For the construction of the attitudinal scale, see Table 8.2.

Source: Pooled 8-nation European Social Survey 2002 (ESS-2002)

¹ Christian Boswell. 2002. *European Migration Policies in Flux: Changing Patterns of Inclusion and Exclusion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Sarah Spencer. Ed. 2003. *The Politics of Migration*. Oxford: Blackwell.

² For a discussion, see Hans-Georg Betz. 1994. *Radical Rightwing Populism in Western Europe*. New York: St Martin's Press. Chapter 3; Roger Karapin. 2002. 'Far right parties and the construction of immigration issues in Germany.' In *Shadows Over Europe: The Development and Impact of the Extreme Right in Western Europe*. Eds. Martin Schain, Aristide Zolberg, and Patrick Hossay. Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan; Rachel Gibson, Ian McAllister, and T. Swenson. 2002. 'The politics of race and immigration in Australia: One Nation voting in the 1998 Election.' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25 (5): 823-844; Cas Mudde. 1999. 'The single-issue party thesis: Extreme right parties and the immigration issue.' *West European Politics*. 22(3):182-197; R.A. DeAngelis. 2003. 'A rising tide for Jean-Marie, Jorg, and Pauline? Xenophobic populism in comparative perspective.' *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 49 (1): 75-92. The fullest account of this thesis can be found in Rachel Gibson. 2002. *The Growth of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press and also Rachel Gibson. 1995. 'Anti-immigrant parties: The roots of their success.' *Current World Leaders* 38(2):119-30.

³ C. Boswell. 2000. 'European values and the asylum crisis.' *International Affairs* 76 (3): 537-+.

⁴ Herbert Kitschelt, with Anthony J. McGann. 1995. *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

⁵ See, for example, Jeff Crisp. 2003. 'The closing of the European gates? The new populist parties of Europe.' In Sarah Spencer. Ed. 2003. *The Politics of Migration*. Oxford: Blackwell; Grete Brochmann and Tomas Hammar. Eds. 1999. *Mechanisms of immigration control: a comparative analysis of European regulation policies*. New York: Berg.

⁶ Hans-Georg Betz. 1994. *Radical Rightwing Populism in Western Europe*. New York: St Martin's Press. P.81.

⁷ For a discussion, see Thomas F. Pettigrew. 1998. 'Reactions toward the new minorities of Western Europe.' *Annual Review of Sociology* 24:77-103; Rachel Gibson. 2002. *The Growth of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press.

⁸ Herbert Kitschelt, with Anthony J. McGann. 1995. *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

⁹ Marcel Lubbers, Mérove Gijsberts, and Peer Scheepers, 2002. 'Extreme right-wing voting in Western Europe.' *European Journal of Political Research* 41 (3): 345-378.

¹⁰ Matt Golder. 2003. 'Explaining variations in the success of extreme right parties in Western Europe.' *Comparative Political Studies* 36(4): 432-466.

¹¹ John Salt. 1994. *Europe's International Migrants: Data sources, patterns and trends*. London: HMSO; European Commission. 2004. *Eurostat Yearbook 2004*. 'Migration and asylum'. Luxembourg: European Commission.

¹² See United Nations Human Commissioner for Political Refugees. 2003. *Asylum Applications Lodged in Industrialized Countries: Levels and Trends, 2000-2002*. Geneva: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/statistics>.

¹³ Matt Golder. 2003. 'Explaining variations in the success of extreme right parties in Western Europe.' *Comparative Political Studies* 36(4): 432-466.

¹⁴ Martin Schain. 1987. 'The National Front in France and the Construction of Political Legitimacy.' *West European Politics* 10(2):229-252.

¹⁵ For a discussion, see Joel S. Fetzer. 2001. *Public attitudes toward immigration in the United States, France, and Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁶ Subra Mitra. 1988. 1988. 'The National Front in France: A Single-Issue Movement?' *West European Politics* 11(2):47-64.

¹⁷ For a discussion, see David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. 1999. *Global Transformations*. Stanford: University of Stanford Press. Chapter 7.

¹⁸ The conceptual distinction between 'instrumental' and 'symbolic' forms of anti-immigrant attitudes is derived from Rachel Gibson. 2002. *The Growth of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press. P.74-8. See also the discussion in Lawrence Bobo, James R. Kluegel, and Ryan A. Smith. 1997. 'Laissez-faire racism: the crystallization of a kinder, gentler, anti-black ideology.' In *Racial Attitudes in the 1990s: Continuity and Change*, eds. Steven A. Tuch and Jack K. Martin. Westport, CT: Praeger. Pp. 15-41.

¹⁹ Herbert Kitschelt, with Anthony J. McGann. 1995. *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

²⁰ Human Rights Watch. 2002. *We Are Not the Enemy: Hate Crimes Against Arabs, Muslims, and Those Perceived to be Arab or Muslim after September 11*.
<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/usahate/>

²¹ See the critique by Mitch A. Seligson. 2002. 'The renaissance of political culture or the renaissance of the ecological fallacy?' *Comparative Politics* 34 (3): 273+ and the reply by Ronald Inglehart and Christopher Welzel. 2003. 'Political culture and democracy - Analyzing cross-level linkages.' *Comparative Politics* 36 (1): 61-+.