

Immigration and Right-Wing Populism: An Origin Story

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Abstract

What explains the electoral success of right-wing populist parties? The existing literature highlights domestic economic and institutional explanations as well as the behavior and strategies of mainstream political parties. The literature, however, overlooks the importance of immigrant characteristics in the analysis. In this article, we argue that the economic and political profiles of immigrants' home countries influence the electoral fortunes of right-wing populist parties. In contrast to the theories based on immigrant destinations, our explanation emphasizes that the characteristics of immigrant-sending states shape voter perceptions of immigration in host countries. When immigrants' home countries are poor or perceived inferior, right-wing populist parties in host countries are better able to mobilize voters to their advantage. In particular, right-wing populism gains momentum when immigrants tend to come from host states' former colonies. Empirical analysis of right-wing populist vote share in 26 democracies from 1961 to 2013 corroborates that our hypotheses help explain variation in the electoral success of right-wing populist parties.

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Introduction

Recent waves of immigration from the Middle East and North Africa have increased ethnic and religious diversities of immigrant-hosting states. Yet increases in immigration have precipitated institutional tensions, xenophobic sentiments, and electoral support for right-wing populist parties in a number of the hosting states, particularly in Western Europe. This pattern of rising right-wing populism has varied significantly across time and space. In countries like Sweden and the Czech Republic, voter support for right wing populist parties has been relatively limited, and governments of these countries engaged in policies of accommodation and integration that have facilitated co-existence between native citizens and immigrants. In countries like the Netherlands, Hungary, France, and a number of additional Western European democracies, however, rising immigration has led to heightened domestic pressure for restrictive immigration policy and increased electoral support for right-wing populist parties.

The increasing issue salience of immigration and the rise of the radical right call for an analysis of the forces that influence the electoral fortunes of right-wing populist parties. Support for such parties is particularly puzzling for some scholars given the age of modernization and the rise of post-materialist values (Inglehart, 1990). Others have argued that citizens disadvantaged by the dynamics of modernization have provided a foundation for the emergence and success of right-wing populist parties across Europe (Betz, 1993; Kitchelt, 1995).

Building on our stance that xenophobia rests on the core of voter support for right-wing extremism, we trace drivers of xenophobia among citizens of host states in immigrant-sending states. In particular, why is it that despite comparatively similar challenges as well as comparable immigration volumes, electoral support for right-wing populist parties is higher in an increasing number of host states, but not others? And, under what conditions can immigration lead to peaceful co-existence between native citizens and its ethnically and religiously diverse “others?”

We argue that certain types of immigration provoke a higher degree of economic and cultural insecurity, which in turn triggers heightened xenophobic sentiments among constituents in host states. Under these conditions, politicizing immigrant-related issues constitutes a viable electoral strategy for right-wing populist parties. In particular, we assess how the characteristics of immigrants' home countries contribute to rising voter opposition to immigration and subsequently voter support for right-wing populism in host countries.

We propose that three characteristics of immigrants' home states are integral to this causal mechanism. First, we argue that immigration inflows from host states' colonies (former or current) compel voters to support right-wing populism, which we label as "the colonial hypothesis." While immigrants from colonies have been an important source of ethnic diversity in host states, native voters may not welcome colonial migrants as they perceive them as second-class citizens whose culture is inferior to their own. In addition, native voters may lend support to right-wing populist parties because of their concern of welfare depletion by colonial migrants. Colonial legacy, especially the one with exploitative history often legitimizes colonial migrants' claim on welfare provisions in host states. This compels a segment of electoral base to become welfare-chauvinistic toward immigrants in general, which in turn shapes their support for the radical right.

Second, we posit that right-wing populism becomes more successful when the majority of immigrants comes from poor sending states (the income hypothesis). In this case, voters may view immigration from poor countries as socially and economically undesirable. Mobilizers of right-wing populism may use this uneasiness among voters to gain political influence. Third, in line with the existing literature (Allen, 2004; Ciftci, 2012; Maussen, 2006), we propose that the religiosity of immigrants matters. Specifically, we suggest that when the share of Muslim immigrants rises, right-wing populist leaders can use cultural and security threats to mobilize voters to their advantage (the Islam hypothesis). In sum, our argument emphasizes how these three characteristics of immigrants may provide right-wing populist leaders with political maneuvers to increase their electoral success.

Using a dataset of 26 democracies from 1961 to 2013, we find overwhelming empirical support for the colonial hypothesis. Restricting our analysis to years prior to 1996 yields more robust evidence for the colonial hypothesis substantively and statistically. We find some support for the income and the Islam hypotheses, but the majority of the models in our analysis do not lend definitive support for these hypotheses.

We organize our paper as follows. We begin by reviewing the literature on immigration and the radical right. We develop three hypotheses on how the characteristics of immigrants' home countries induce voters to support right-wing populist parties. Next, we test the observable implications of our hypotheses with a dataset of 26 democracies from 1961 to 2013. Finally, we conclude with further implications for the immigration and right-wing populism literature.

Immigration and Right-Wing Populism

A large body of the comparative politics literature has focused on a fundamental question of right-wing populist success. What explains the variation in electoral success of right-wing populist parties? What are the effects of immigration on immigrant-hosting societies' internal conflicts, and how does immigration influence electoral support for right-wing extremist parties? The current bodies of work analyzing electoral support for right-wing populist parties highlight the significance of domestic economic and institutional factors as well as the behavior and strategies of mainstream political parties in immigrant-hosting states. The existing literature offers three broad explanations as potential causes of electoral support for right-wing populist parties: (1) socio-economic and political conditions of immigrant-hosting states; (2) the nature of the political competition determined by the behavior and political strategies of mainstream parties; and (3) the electoral credibility and political rhetoric adopted by right-wing populist parties.

Scholars focusing on domestic sources of right-wing populism note the importance of

immigration in fueling the electoral success of the radical right (Semyonov, Raijman and Gorodzeisky, 2008; Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, 2015; Weber, 2015; Blinder, 2015). Although the majority of the literature invokes some type of prejudice among native voters toward immigrants to explain variation in right-wing populism, the literature generally does not elaborate on which type of migration is more likely to trigger anti-immigrant sentiments. In addition to immigration, others have turned to other aspects of globalization such as large flows of trade and capital (Swank and Betz, 2003) as well as domestic sources of economic anxiety, including higher levels of unemployment (Heizmann, 2015*b*), economic competition (Swank and Betz, 2003; Semyonov, Raijman and Gorodzeisky, 2008; Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, 2015; Heizmann, 2015*a*; Lucassen and Lubbers, 2012; Oesch, 2008), and non-comprehensive or selective social benefits (Oesch, 2008; Heizmann, 2015*a*). Under these conditions, negative attitudes towards immigrants increase and become politically salient, particularly when social interaction between immigrants and native citizens is limited (Valdez, 2014).

When right-wing populist parties take advantage of socio-economic conditions, their success also depends on the political strategies of mainstream political parties (Duverger, 1959; Müller-Rommel, 1998; Meguid, 2005). Well-organized mainstream parties can suppress electoral support for the radical right (van Kessel, 2013). The presence of a large ideological gap between mainstream and right wing populist parties, however, can undermine the efficacy of mainstream parties' strategies (Pauwels, 2010). In addition, voters tend to favor extreme right-wing parties when they perceive mainstream parties to be corrupt or untrustworthy (Bustikova, 2009) or, in a Downsian manner, when mainstream parties converge toward the center and leave the issue of immigration to the far right of the policy continuum (van Kessel, 2013, 2011; Bélanger and Aarts, 2006). Similarly, when pro-immigration parties enter government coalitions, concerns about immigration become salient and lead to a polarization of the public debate which ultimately translates into increased support for radical right parties (Arzheimer and Carter, 2006; Dahlström and Sundell, 2012; Loxbo, 2014). Under these conditions, the views and rhetoric of the extreme right parties gain a higher degree of legitimacy

and therefore electoral support.

In addition to the strategies and behavior of mainstream parties, the political behavior of the extreme right parties can shape their electoral success. Being perceived as a viable alternative to mainstream parties is a pre-condition for winning electoral support and a strategic objective of right wing parties. Right-wing populist parties can often gain credibility by establishing a coherent party structure, having charismatic leaders, and distancing themselves ideologically from mainstream parties, yet not to the extent that voters consider their views and positions in the policy spectrum too extreme (van Kessel, 2011; Mareš, 2011).¹ Under these conditions the right-wing populist parties are perceived to be capable of facing political, economic, and social challenges related to immigration, and are therefore better positioned to harness electoral support.

Right-Wing Populism: An Origin Story

While the existing literature contributes valuable insights to our understanding of how party politics affects patterns of electoral support for right-wing extremism in immigrant-hosting states, the literature's focus on party behavior overlooks the importance of immigrants' home-country characteristics in the analysis. In this article, we argue that the economic and political profiles of immigrants' home countries influence the electoral fortunes of right-wing populist parties. In contrast to the theories based on immigrant destinations, our explanation emphasizes that differences in immigrants' origin characteristics shape voter perceptions of immigration in host countries. When voters perceive immigrants' home countries as inferior or undesirable, right-wing populist parties in host countries are better able to mobilize voters to their advantage.

¹This particular dynamic can be found at the root of the limited electoral success of Neo-Nazi parties, relative to comparatively more mainstream right-wing parties as that of France's Front National, for instance.

The Colonial Hypothesis

One of the most important sources of ethnic diversity in Europe is colonial and post-colonial migration. A legacy of colonialism between the host and sending countries provides potential immigrants with a familiarity of host countries linguistic, cultural, and institutional frameworks, which in turn influence their inclinations to migrate to them (Fitzgerald, Leblang and Teets, 2014). Although not all colonial relationships induce migration flows from former colonies to their former colonial hegemony, scholars note the important relationship between colonial legacy and international migration movement (Neumayer, 2004; Riley and Emigh, 2002).

In addition, the presence of host-countries' pre-existing communities of migrants serve as supportive networks for facilitating the newcomers settling into their new host-states (Vogler and Rotte, 2000). Migrant networks help decrease the risks of migration and the transaction costs of relocating to host countries (Portes and Böröcz, 1989; Portes, 1995; Massey et al., 2005). More specifically, co-ethnic networks facilitate the process of finding work (Massey and Espinosa, 1997; Rex and Josephides, 1987; Hily and Poinard, 1987; Wilpert, 1988), finding housing (Bailey and Waldinger, 1991; Sassen, 1995; Ivan, Bernard and Kim, 1999), and integrating into society in host states (Boyd, 1989; Eric and Ooka, 2006; Hagan, 1998).

Migrants' familiarity with host countries' social, cultural, and political institutions, however, does not necessarily induce native citizens to welcome migrants from their current or former colonies. For instance, Filipino immigration into the United States during the American colonial period sparked a nationalist reaction and racial violence against Filipino migrant workers in the early 1920s (Ngai, 2004, pp. 105). Although Filipinos seemed to assimilate into American society very well, many White Americans held a prejudice that Filipino migrant workers, the majority of whom were single men, were sexually aggressive and a moral threat to white society (Ngai, 2004, pp. 110). In line with this historical pattern, we argue that immigrant inflows from former colonies of Asia, Africa, and other regions provoke threats to native citizens' national and cultural identity. This sense of insecurity among

native citizens in turn provides a platform upon which the radical right can strategically establish a nationalist, anti-immigrant manifesto.

We identify two mechanisms through which colonial migration can affect the electoral fortune of right-wing populist parties. First, colonial migration may pose a direct cultural threat to native citizens in host states. Although it is certainly true that many former colonial hegemons have imported various cultural aspects from their former colonies, including culinary and linguistic features, increases in colonial immigration may undermine the domestication of these colonial features among native citizens in host states. Moreover, some native citizens may regard colonial migrants as second-class citizens whose culture is inferior to their own. This sense of cultural superiority and their insecurity about the ownership of colonial features may drive voters into supporting right-wing populist parties in response to increases in colonial and post-colonial migration. Second, native voters may become more concerned about the possibility of welfare depletion by colonial migrants. Due to the historical economic asymmetry between colonial powers and their colonies, native citizens in host states may have a prejudice that migrants from former colonies are extremely poor and more likely to consume welfare. This particular form of welfare chauvinism can escalate for colonial powers that adopted exploitative policies because exploitative colonial history often legitimizes colonial migrants' claims on welfare provisions in host states. As native citizens become more concerned about possible welfare depletion by compensatory claims of colonial migrants, they are more likely to join a nationalistic party with a tough stance on immigrants' reliance on welfare.

Hypothesis 1: An increase in immigration from former or current colonies leads to an increase in voter support for right-wing populism.

The Income Hypothesis

The colonial hypothesis implicitly hinges on the idea that native voters may perceive colonial migrants as poor and economically undesirable, and in turn this prejudice leads to an increase in voter support for right-wing populism. Although voters may use colonial legacy as a shortcut to make a judgment about the level of economic development in immigrants' home countries, they may use other cues to infer the level of economic development in immigrants' home countries. Then, it is possible that right-wing populism gains momentum when immigration inflows originate from less developed economies regardless of colonial ties.

Hypothesis 2: An increase in immigration from less developed economies leads to an increase in voter support for right-wing populism.

Cultural Backlash and Islam Hypothesis

Whereas the colonial and income hypotheses offer socio-economic explanations to the ascending electoral support for right-wing parties in immigrant-hosting states, an additional hypothesis we extend to this phenomenon underscores the Islamic identity of the immigrants' origin countries. This explanation builds upon and contributes a religious dimension to the cultural backlash account of the rise of the radical right (Inglehart, 1990, 1997; Inglehart and Norris, 2004). This perspective maintains that shifts in traditional norms and conventional values trigger nostalgic sentiments and cultural counter-reactions that can be utilized by nationalist parties as a means of garnering political momentum and electoral support. This strategy is particularly lucrative with respect to cultural change and existential insecurity (of both a security and economic nature) provoked by rising immigration trends. Under these conditions, the presence of immigrants can invoke xenophobic attitudes, rejection of foreigners, strong in-group solidarity and rigid adherence to traditional norms that can transform into voter support for right-wing populist parties.

We build upon the cultural backlash theory and other scholarly works linking the rising

number of immigrants to the rise of right-wing populist parties by arguing that the Islamic identity of immigrants' origin countries further exacerbates xenophobic sentiments among native voters in host states. When immigrants come from Islamic backgrounds, concerns about multiculturalism and religious shifts in host states become particularly pressing issues. These conditions provide nationalist parties with an opportune momentum to construct radical, anti-immigrant political platforms that exploit xenophobic sentiments for electoral gains. This is particularly the case when nationalist parties' anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim agendas provide a viable alternative to mainstream parties (Betz, 1994).

The politicization of immigrant's Islamic background and nationalist parties' anti-immigrant, anti-Islam political rhetoric is evident in an increased number of established, immigrant-hosting democracies. For instance, Bruno Le Maire, a French radical-right politician addressed the French parliament by emphasizing that the enemy that must be "fought with utmost strength within France is "political Islam" which he defined as the "Islam that criticizes our culture" and "makes our women invisible."² The electoral rise of nationalist parties in immigrant-hosting democracies signals that the Islamic identities of immigrants and their origin countries are considered to be the transgressor of their national identity and the cause of shifts in their societies' cultural norms and traditional attitudes. Furthermore, nationalist parties' politicization of immigrants' Islamic identity has proven to be an electorally advantageous strategy for nationalist parties.

Hypothesis 3: An increase in Muslim immigration leads to an increase in voter support for right-wing populism.

²"The attacks in France show that its colonial past endures"
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jul/22/attacks-france-colonial-past-war-terror>

Empirical Analysis

Sample Selection and Data Sources

We focus on 26 democracies around the world, including most countries in Western Europe and countries like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. We also include transitioning democracies in Eastern Europe which have received substantial immigration pressure in recent years. While distinct from both historical and cultural perspectives, the countries included in the sample share certain commonalities that are central components in our analysis. First, all countries share a common foundation of democratic norms and institutions, albeit with relatively distinct positions in a range of stable and consolidated democracies. Second, the majority of the countries under consideration share a domestic party system that allows the rise of third parties, and in certain cases, the recent rise of right-wing populist parties and their increasing electoral support. Finally, all countries included in our analysis have been destinations favored by immigrants searching for economic and social opportunities as well as refugees escaping the dire political and economic situations their own home countries. Notably excluded from the sample is the United States, which albeit its status as a consolidated democratic state and most preferred immigration destination country, is excluded from the analysis due to its unique two-party system under which right-wing populist politicians have had no success in gaining electoral influence with a recent exception of 2016 Republican presidential candidate, Donald Trump. To summarize the sample used in our analysis, we present the countries and time frame in Table 1.

We obtained the data on our dependent variable, the vote share for right-wing populist parties in immigration-destination countries, from Swank (2014)'s Comparative Parties Dataset and the *Parties and Elections in Europe* (2016). The dependent variable remains constant until an election is held. To exploit the variation in the dependent variable, we only focus on years in which elections were held. This explains why countries in Table 1 have different starting and ending years although we broadly focus on the time period from 1961

Table 1: Countries Included in the Sample

Region & Type of Democracy	Country	Time Period
Developed Democracies in Western Europe	Austria	1962 - 2013
	Belgium	1961 - 2010
	Denmark	1964 - 2011
	Finland	1962 - 2011
	France	1962 - 2012
	Germany	1961 - 2013
	Greece	1974 - 2012
	Ireland	1961 - 2011
	Italy	1963 - 2013
	Netherlands	1963 - 2012
	Norway	1961 - 2013
	Portugal	1975 - 2011
	Spain	1977 - 2011
	Sweden	1964 - 2010
Switzerland	1963 - 2011	
United Kingdom	1964 - 2010	
Non-European Developed Democracies	Australia	1961 - 2013
	Canada	1962 - 2011
	Japan	1963 - 2012
	New Zealand	1963 - 2011
Transitioning Democracies	Bulgaria	1990 - 2013
	Czech Republic	1996 - 2013
	Hungary	1990 - 2013
	Poland	1991 - 2011
	Romania	1990 - 2012
	Slovak Republic	1994 - 2012

to 2013. Since elections are normally held at different times across the countries, the sample does not feature a common time period.

To operationalize our hypotheses, we focus on immigrant stocks originating from non-Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. Focusing on non-OECD immigration inflows frees us from a variety of potential biases. First, the colonial hypothesis is unlikely to hold for wealthy former colonies. For instance, it is difficult to imagine a situation in which the British regard Americans, Canadians, and Australians residing in the U.K. as second-class citizens. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine a situation in which immigrants from wealthy countries become instrumental in increasing voter support

for right-wing populism. For instance, German and French immigrants in Switzerland are not the primary target of the Swiss People’s Party. In other words, home-country income differentials among OECD migrants are unlikely to produce different outcomes in voter support for the radical right in host countries.

We use non-OECD migrant stocks to construct our measures of colonial migration and the migration-weighted income variable of non-OECD sending states. We rely on World Bank’s data on bilateral immigration stocks measured in 10-year increments. Given the structure of the immigration data, we have increased the size of the statistical sample by linearly interpolating the values for immigration (e.g., filling in missing values for 1991, 1992, 1993, and 1994 by using the values from 1990 and 1995).

To construct our first independent variable, colonial migration, we explore whether host state i has ever been a hegemon of non-OECD sending state j by using the CEPII data (Melitz and Toubal, 2012, 2014; Mayer and Zignago, 2011; Head, Mayer and Ries, 2010; Head, Mayer et al., 2013). We use the official OECD ascension dates to determine whether a sending state is a non-OECD state in a given year. We then sum all colonial bilateral migration stocks and divide this sum by the total immigrant stock in i from a multitude of non-OECD sending states j . Formally,

$$\text{Colonial Migration}_{it} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^n M_t^{ji} C_t^{ij}}{\sum_{j=1}^n M_t^{ji}},$$

where M_t^{ji} is the migration stock from non-OECD j in i at time t , and C_t^{ij} is a binary indicator of colonial legacy between i and j with 1 noting that i has ever been j ’s hegemon at or before time t . Therefore, $\text{Colonial Migration}_{it}$ is the size of colonial immigrant stock as a share of i ’s entire non-OECD immigrant population from at time t . We use this value instead of a population share or a share of the total immigrant population including both OECD and non-OECD migrants because both right-wing populist parties and their supporters tend to

politicize this narrow subset of the immigrant population even when these migrants constitute a relatively small share of i 's entire population.

We employ a similar method in generating our independent variable for the income hypothesis. Formally,

$$\text{Weighted Income of } j_{it} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^n M_t^{ji} I_t^j}{\sum_{j=1}^n M_t^{ji}},$$

where M_t^{ji} is the migration stock from non-OECD j in i at time t , and I_t^j is the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of non-OECD j at time t . Using the same method, we also create several control variables. *Population Share of Migrants from j* is i 's migrant stock from all non-OECD countries as a share of i 's entire population. To control for political differences between i and j , we construct *Weighted Polity Score of j* . Additionally, we compute *Weighted Linguistic Proximity between the i and j* , *Weighted Geographic Contiguity between i and j* , and *Weighted Distance between i and j* to control for linguistic and cultural distances between i and j .

For the Islam hypothesis, we linearly interpolate the data on population shares of Muslims, retrieved from the World Religion Database (Johnson and Grim, 2008). Finally, we assembled data on i 's macroeconomic indicators, specifically the GDP per capita, population, and unemployment rate.³

Empirical Strategy

We regress the post-election right-wing populist vote share, $RWP \text{ Vote Share}_{it}$ on its pre-election lag, $RWP \text{ Vote Share}_{i,e-1}$ as well as Colonial Migration $_{it}$, Weighted ln(GDP per capita) of j_{it} , and Population Share of Muslims $_{it}$, using ordinary least squares (OLS) model with standard errors clustered on countries. Including the lagged dependent variable ac-

³For macroeconomic indicators, we used Penn World Table via Haber and Menaldo (2011) and supplemented it with data from the World Bank. Data on electoral system comes from Comparative Political Parties Dataset.

counts for the dynamic process between two elections and produces estimates that indicate short-run correlations between the dependent and independent variables. Each model includes country fixed effects to capture country-specific, time-invariant variables that may drive the dependent variable. Year fixed effects are included to capture global shocks that may influence the success of right-wing populism across multiple countries in a given year. Formally,

$$\begin{aligned} \text{RWP Vote Share}_{it} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{RWP Vote Share}_{i,e-1} + \beta_2 \text{Colonial Migration}_{it} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{Weighted ln(GDP per capita) of } j_{it} + \beta_4 \text{Population Share of Muslims}_{it} \\ & + \sum_{k=5}^n (\beta_k \text{Control Variable}_{(k-4),it}) + \alpha_i + \mu_t + \epsilon_{it}, \end{aligned}$$

where α_i and μ_t note country and year dummies, respectively, and $e - 1$ indicates the dependent variable from the previous election. We report the results in Table 2. We also replicate the models without the lagged dependent variable and report the results in Table 3.

Results and Discussion

Throughout the eight models reported in the two regression tables, we find generally robust support for the colonial hypothesis. For instance, the coefficient in Model (4) in Table 2 indicates that right-wing populist vote share increases by 3.5 when colonial migration constitutes 50 percent of the immigration stock relative to none. We also find some support for the income hypothesis that right-wing populism is negatively associated with migration from wealthy non-OECD sending states. Although the population share of Muslims is positively associated with natives' support for right-wing populism, the relationship appears weaker than the colonial hypothesis.

Table 2: Determinants of Right-Wing Populist Vote Shares

Model	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Years Included	1961– 2013	1961– 2013	1961– 1995	1961– 1995
RWP Vote Share $_{e-1}$	0.746*** (0.075)	0.776*** (0.084)	0.626*** (0.100)	0.541*** (0.094)
Colonial Migration $_i$	2.564* (1.240)	2.286 (1.452)	5.966*** (1.400)	7.005*** (1.326)
Weighted ln(GDP per capita) of j	-0.511 (0.453)	-0.590 (0.638)	-0.930 (0.609)	-1.436+ (0.745)
Population Share of Muslims $_i$		14.825 (37.945)		121.420* (57.351)
Population Share of Migrants from j	-14.609 (25.347)	-9.861 (27.711)	-20.945 (42.109)	-27.579 (36.216)
Weighted Polity Score of j	0.089 (0.101)	0.134 (0.121)	0.205 (0.127)	0.221 (0.140)
Weighted Linguistic Proximity between the i and j	0.293 (0.841)	0.109 (0.721)	-0.624 (1.721)	-0.238 (1.379)
Weighted Geographic Contiguity between i and j	0.254 (2.185)	0.812 (2.229)	-3.089 (2.362)	-3.226 (2.574)
Weighted Distance between i and j (km)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
ln(GDP per Capita) $_i$		0.147 (1.457)		2.222 (1.405)
ln(Population) $_i$		-0.645 (4.485)		2.759 (6.714)
Unemployment Rate $_i$		-0.027 (0.157)		-0.028 (0.094)
Electoral System $_i$		0.931 (0.663)		-2.645 (1.983)
Observations	335	302	205	194
Countries	26	26	25	22
R ²	0.763	0.759	0.699	0.717

Note: This table portrays a pooled cross-sectional time-series ordinary least squares (OLS) analysis of right-wing populist vote shares in year t . All independent variables are taken from year t unless otherwise noted. For instance, $e - 1$ indicates a variable from the previous election. Cluster-robust standard errors are shown in parentheses. ***, **, * and + indicate statistical significance levels of .1, 1, 5 and 10 percent, respectively. Country and year fixed effects are included in all models.

We find more definitive support for the three hypotheses when we restrict our analysis to years prior to 1996. This difference is not driven by the presence of transitioning democracies, the majority of which enter the dataset in the 1990s. The results remain similar when we restrict our analysis to a group of consolidated democracies. While we do not have strong

theoretical grounds to conduct additional analyses at the moment, we suspect that the rise of Euro-skepticism has played a more important part in shaping right-wing populist politics since the 1990s (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002; Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2008). This may explain why the empirical support for the colonial hypothesis is weak when we include more recent years of European economic integration in the analysis.

We identify two possible cases of reverse causality. First, right-wing populist parties can move mainstream parties' stances on immigration policy even in the absence of substantial legislative influence, which in turn can influence immigration patterns.⁴ Second, there is evidence that migrants tend to avoid countries where right-wing populism is dominant even when controlling for entry restrictions (Fitzgerald, Leblang and Teets, 2014).

These cases are unlikely to bias our results for two reasons. First, the presence of the lagged dependent variable accounts for potential immigration policy changes in response to right-wing populism. In other words, the lagged dependent variable implicitly controls for any immigration policy changes that may have influenced the independent variables. In addition, since both the dependent variable and the independent variables are from time t , we believe that it is difficult for right-wing populist parties to push shifts in immigration policy that would result in changes in immigration patterns in the same time period. Second, we included immigration policy variables as controls and lagged all independent variables by a year to see whether the results remain robust. We find strikingly similar results in these empirical extensions.

⁴See Meguid (2005) for how right-wing populist parties may be able to cause mainstream parties to implement more restrictive immigration policy.

Table 3: Determinants of Right-Wing Populist Vote Shares without the LDV

Model	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Years Included	1961– 2013	1961– 2013	1961– 1995	1961– 1995
Colonial Migration _{<i>i</i>}	11.110** (3.230)	11.121*** (2.871)	13.160** (4.105)	13.078*** (2.088)
Weighted ln(GDP per capita) of <i>j</i>	-1.025 (1.250)	-1.172 (1.361)	-1.359 (1.178)	-2.209+ (1.222)
Population Share of Muslims _{<i>i</i>}		133.288+ (67.854)		183.442* (78.310)
Population Share of Migrants from <i>j</i>	-38.315 (66.275)	-19.776 (62.147)	-6.443 (64.506)	-17.378 (51.085)
Weighted Polity Score of <i>j</i>	0.234 (0.218)	0.319+ (0.176)	0.279+ (0.158)	0.302+ (0.146)
Weighted Linguistic Proximity between the <i>i</i> and <i>j</i>	2.295 (2.234)	1.489 (1.853)	-0.403 (3.253)	0.939 (2.140)
Weighted Geographic Contiguity between <i>i</i> and <i>j</i>	-2.731 (4.952)	-2.289 (4.165)	-7.586 (5.961)	-6.621 (4.499)
Weighted Distance between <i>i</i> and <i>j</i> (km)	0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.000)	0.001 (0.001)
ln(GDP per Capita) _{<i>i</i>}		1.913 (2.323)		3.967 (2.587)
ln(Population) _{<i>i</i>}		2.580 (8.982)		0.910 (9.359)
Unemployment Rate _{<i>i</i>}		0.027 (0.207)		-0.020 (0.189)
Electoral System _{<i>i</i>}		2.550 (1.602)		-6.559** (1.742)
Observations	341	304	211	196
Countries	26	26	25	22
R ²	0.472	0.505	0.532	0.615

Note: This table portrays a pooled cross-sectional time-series ordinary least squares (OLS) analysis of right-wing populist vote shares in year t . All independent variables are taken from year t unless otherwise noted. For instance, $e - 1$ indicates a variable from the previous election. Cluster-robust standard errors are shown in parentheses. ***, **, * and + indicate statistical significance levels of .1, 1, 5 and 10 percent, respectively. Country and year fixed effects are included in all models.

Case Studies

The presence of immigrants in destination countries, particularly in the case of Europe, has served as a fertile ground for right-wing populist parties to materialize. This phenomenon can be observed in parties such as Austria's Freedom Party, Party for Freedom in Netherlands,

National Front in France, Golden Dawn in Greece, and Independence Party in UK. What can be observed from these parties' electoral strategies is a shared tendency to accentuate perceived economic, political, and cultural threats due to immigration inflows.

By focusing on the characteristics of immigrants' home countries, our work expands the scope of analysis beyond the literature's focus on aggregate immigration. To illustrate our logic linking the immigrant's home countries' characteristics to the political rhetoric and subsequent electoral support for right-wing populist parties in destination countries, we offer a brief discussion of these dynamics in the cases of France and Netherlands.

Immigration and Right-Wing Populism in France

France has a long standing history of colonial, post-colonial, family, and labor immigration. During the late 19th century, France relied on labor migration from other Western European countries such as Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland. In the post-World War II (WWII) reconstruction era, France actively recruited Italian, Spanish, and Algerian foreign workers. The decolonization period of the 1960s further increased the number of immigrants as Algerians and North Africans were able to migrate into the country. Furthermore, the number of immigrants within French borders increased to about 5,897,000 in the 1980s, comprising 10.4 percent of the entire French population and contributing to the country's 1990s ranking as the world's seventh top immigrant-destination country preceding Germany.⁵

In the meantime, France's immigration policy took a notably restrictive course. While France's current migrant population of 7,784,000 immigrants comprises nearly 12.1% of the country's total population, the country has launched a series of labor and social policies aimed at restricting migrant inflows from migrant-sending countries, particularly from former French colonies.⁶ The 2004 law of banning ostentatious religious clothing from public schools served a dual purpose to this end. On the one hand, the law was an effective way to

⁵Migration Policy Institute

⁶Migration Policy Institute:

<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/top-25-destination-countries-global-migrants-over-time?width=1000&height=850&iframe=true>.

deter further inflows of Muslim immigrants who were attracted to France due to large pre-existing networks of co-ethnics. On the other hand, the headscarf law was aimed at limiting the visibility of Islam in France's secular democratic system and ensure the alignment of individual cultural and religious values with longstanding French national values.⁷

Questions pertaining to the characteristics of the immigrants' origin countries as well as the immigrants' own individual traits have critically influenced natives' perceptions about immigrants' integration prospects and served to fume the anti-immigrant agenda of France's far-right National Front party. Based on their region of origin, gender, and education levels, France's immigrants, particularly new entrants, have faced diminished employment opportunities due to rigid labor-market requirements and restrictions on public sector employment of foreign nationals.⁸ These barriers can explain why North African and sub-Saharan African immigrants tend to be employed in low-skilled sectors of the labor market.⁹

The French right-wing populism has focused on these characteristics to secure the largest possible electoral dividends. This trend has been particularly evident in the rise of the radical National Front (FN) party which has gradually and steadily become a prominent player in French politics. Established in 1972, the party continues to gain momentum under the leadership of Marine Le Pen who has worked to build a local grassroots base and reorient the party's image into a leading mainstream force in contemporary French politics.

The National Front relies on a platform of right-wing populism, anti-immigration, euroskepticism, and protectionism while utilizing a nationalist rhetoric that underscores the presence of immigrants and Islam as sources of blame for France's shifting economic and cultural landscape. The politicization of immigrants' colonial origin is evident in the case of Southeast France, a region inhabited by the descendants of "repatriated" families from colonial Algeria. The demographic makeup of the region has provided Marine Le Pen's Na-

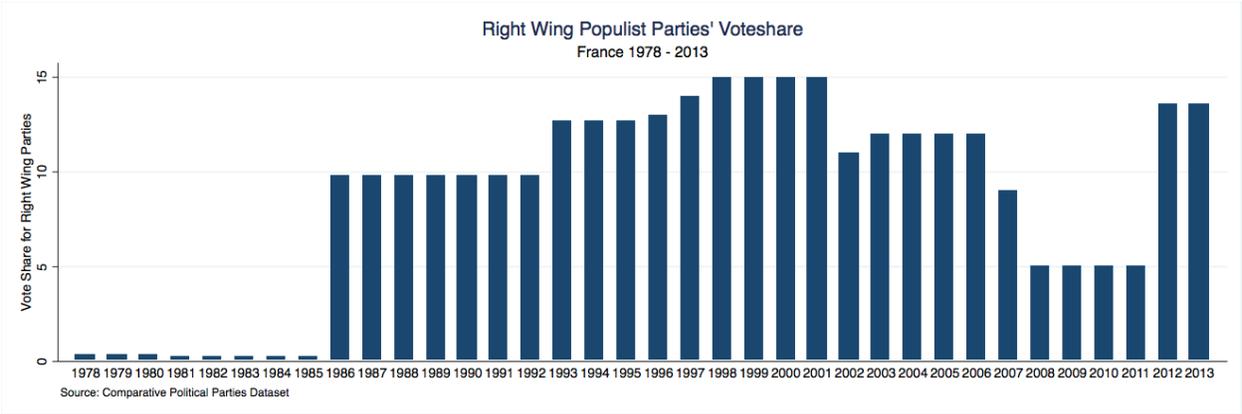
⁷Starting in 1905, France has exercised a particular brand of secularism - *Laïcité* - a model of prohibiting religious influence on the affairs of the French republic.

⁸"Slow Motion: The Labor Market Integration of New Immigrants in France"
<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/slow-motion-labor-market-integration-new-immigrants-france>

⁹"Slow Motion: The Labor Market Integration of New Immigrants in France"

tional Front party with the political arsenal needed to promote policies that call for limits on immigrant inflows as a way of maintaining France’s national and cultural status quo. Most recently, the party has pinpointed immigration as a security threat and pressed its anti-immigrant rhetoric by calling for revoking of citizenship privileges of terrorists with dual nationality as necessary measures to promote France’s national security. Emphasizing the immigrant threat to France’s national identity has provided the far-right National Front party with growing electoral leverage and an increasingly prominent place in France’s domestic politics as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Vote Share of Right-Wing Populist Parties in France (1978–2013)



Immigration and Right-Wing Populism in Netherlands

The Netherlands has a rich history of colonial immigration, the origins of which can be traced back to its 17th century reign as a leading naval and commercial power with multiple colonies around the world. Incentivized by the country’s initial wealth and acceptance of cultures and religions distinct from their own, the Netherlands became a desired home for significant numbers of immigrants throughout the country’s 1590s, 1800s, post-WWII and post-1990s waves of immigration.¹⁰ Thanks to the Dutch tradition of embracing and celebrating multiculturalism, the country’s earlier immigrants were the beneficiaries of multiple accommodation policies aimed at improving their social and economic integration into Dutch

¹⁰Focus Migration

society while simultaneously preserving their own cultural and religious identities. Extending government services in their native languages and establishing relatively easy access to citizenship rights, were only a few of the policy accommodations established by the Dutch government to facilitate the integration of post-WWII guest workers from former colonies. These measures contributed significantly to the country's cultural diversity and increased the number of nationalities within its borders from 28 to 110 in the period between 1971 and 1998.¹¹

The immigrants' ability to successfully integrate into Dutch society however, has been critically influenced by their countries of origin and ethnic categories. For instance, the integration of immigrants belonging to the non-Western, *alloctonen* ethnic category (this group includes immigrants from Turkey, Africa, Latin America, and most Asian countries) has lagged behind to the successful integration of their *autochtonen* counterparts from Europe, North America, Oceania, Indonesia and Japan. While the latter have fared relatively well and have been favored by the Dutch public, immigrants from Turkey, Morocco, and former colonies remain socioeconomically disadvantaged and culturally marginalized. The Turks and Moroccans in particular, are among the Netherlands' under- educated ethnic groups that face high levels of unemployment and welfare dependency. By 2006, 30 percent of Turks and Moroccans received social security benefits relative to 13 percent of the *autochtoon* portion of the Dutch population.¹²

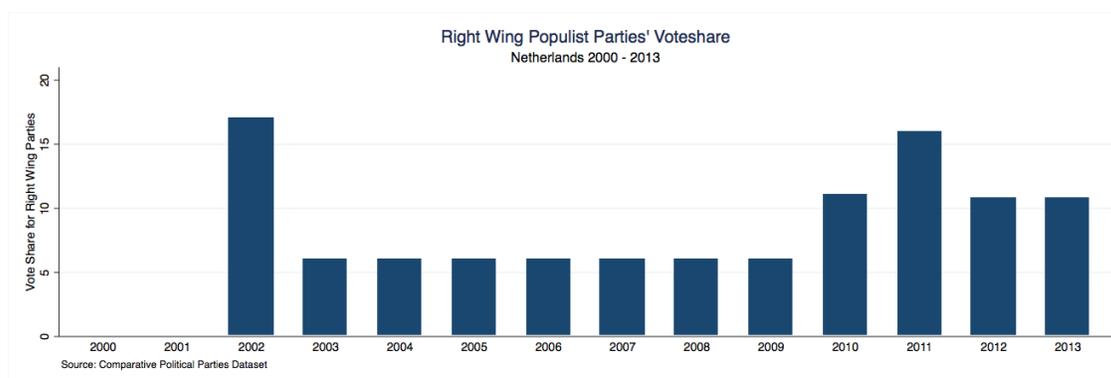
While multiculturalism has traditionally been a source of pride for the Dutch government and its citizens, the country's recent course of action has demonstrated an unambiguous break with its historical, migrant-accommodating past in terms of policy, political rhetoric, and public perceptions. Stringent immigration laws introduced by the Dutch legislature since 1998 have gradually replaced integration policies and signaled the country's direction towards a path of cultural assimilation and social exclusion. The introduction and implementation of the the dual citizenship law by the Dutch legislature in 1992 was intended to

¹¹Focus Migration

¹²Focus Migration

maximize the integration of immigrants and was even followed by government campaigns urging migrants to naturalize. The law was largely successful and it allowed Moroccans and immigrants from other former colonies to obtain Dutch citizenship and integrate into their host-societies. In 1997, however, the dual citizenship law was highly contested and eventually countered with the reinstatement of the obligation to renounce prior citizenship. This quick turn in the citizenship policy had resulted in a 2.7 percent decrease in naturalization rates relative to its peak of 10.9 percent in 1996. Furthermore, the Dutch government approved the Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers (WIN - Newcomers' Integration Law) in 1998, which enforced financial sanctions on adult immigrants who failed to participate in Dutch social, vocational, and linguistic training.¹³ By 2007, the Dutch government replaced the WIN with a more stringent integration law (Wet Inburgering) which imposed linguistic restrictions on both existing foreign residents and new immigrants. In doing so, the Netherlands, once hailed for its enthusiasm for multiculturalism, has become the only country in the world that demands linguistic and societal knowledge from its immigrants as a pre-requisite to permanent residency.¹⁴

Figure 2: Vote Share of Right-Wing Populist Parties in The Netherlands (2000–2013)



As assimilation measures emerged to replace the country’s policies of integration, public perceptions toward immigrants’ have also become increasingly more prone to xenophobic sentiments. Coinciding with increases in immigrant inflows from former colonies, public

¹³Studiepakket Multicultureel Nederland

¹⁴Studiepakket Multicultureel Nederland

perception, and governmental response to immigration has in recent years grown aggressively anti-immigrant and anti-foreign. Thus, while Moroccans and Antilleans remain subject to racial profiling by the country's police, their presence within the Dutch borders is increasingly targeted by Dutch populist parties who have gained crucial political advantage since 2002 (See Figure 2).

By depicting immigrants from former colonies and particularly those of Islamic faith, as a danger to Dutch security and national identity, Dutch populist parties have been able to effectively mobilize voters to their advantage. The Dutch far-right Party for Freedom (PVV) has been particularly successful to this end. Founded in 2004 by Geert Wilders, PVV has become one of the Dutch leading political parties with an increase in its vote share from 5.9 percent in 2006 to 15.5 percent in 2010. The party's electoral growth reflects the electorate's rising xenophobic attitudes in response to the socioeconomic and cultural shifts facing Dutch society. By pressing an agenda of anti-immigration, especially from Islamic and non-Western cultures, the party has been able to score consistently high in opinion polls and secure its position as the third most represented party in the Dutch Parliament. Pushing an agenda of Nexit (Netherlands' exit) from the European Union, the "de-Islamification" of Netherlands and comparing the Koran to Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, the party's aggressive rhetoric has dominated the Dutch political debate and gathered the electoral support of voters disenchanted with their government's response to recent inflows of refugees and Muslim immigrants.

Conclusion

What explains the electoral success of right-wing populist parties? We have sought answers to this question in immigrants' characteristics, particularly their historical colonial relationship with host states, economic status, and religion. We have found evidence that these characteristics were instrumental in inciting the emergence of right-wing populism in major

immigrant destinations.

The post-WWII immigration trends continue to imprint the political, institutional, and cultural landscapes of immigrant-hosting societies with ethnic diversity, multiculturalism, and institutional shifts that often have a lasting impact in the domestic politics of the immigrant-hosting societies. As recent flows of immigration from the Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe have highlighted, immigration perturbs the internal dynamics of host societies.

Focusing our analysis on a sample of ethnically diverse, immigrant destinations, we have emphasized the importance of immigrants' origins in shaping voter support for right-wing nationalist parties. Our findings suggest that voter support for right-wing populist parties increases when immigrants come from lower socio-economic backgrounds characterized by colonial history and low economic development in their home countries. This dynamic holds even when accounting for political, cultural, and linguistic differences between host countries and immigrants' home countries. Our findings also remain robust to the inclusion of various domestic economic and political variables.

Finally, we aim to widen our consideration of the forces that determine voter support for nationalist parties in immigrant destination countries. More specifically, there exist widespread concerns about the impact of global change and immigration trends on tradition and culture. Large majorities in nearly every country feel their traditions need protection from foreign influences (PEW Research Center). Furthermore, opinions about immigration are closely linked to perceptions about threats to a countrys culture. In 46 of 47 countries, those who favor stricter immigration controls are also more likely to believe their way of life needs to be protected against foreign influence (PEW Research Center). Future research should explore public perceptions about immigrants' religious and cultural characteristics and investigate the ways through which radical-right leaders exploit these public perceptions to gain electoral influence.

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Appendices

Table 4: Summary statistics, 1961-2013

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
RWP Vote Share $_{e-1}$	3.757	6.533	0	32.1	341
Population Share of Migrants from j	0.032	0.026	0.002	0.13	348
Weighted ln(GDP per capita) of j	7.416	0.811	4.921	9.154	348
Weighted Polity Score of j	0.261	3.987	-8.638	9.050	348
Weighted Linguistic Proximity between i & j	0.984	0.891	0	5.473	348
Weighted Geographic Contiguity between i & j	0.118	0.245	0	0.96	348
Weighted Distance between i & j	4666.259	2978.97	461.265	13961.408	348
Colonial Migration	0.187	0.303	0	0.927	348
ln(GDP per Capita)	9.215	1.141	6.392	11.541	341
ln(Population) $_i$	16.452	1.045	14.744	18.668	348
Unemployment Rate	6.146	4.236	0	24.5	336
Population Share of Muslims	0.015	0.022	0	0.129	321
Electoral System	1.607	0.689	0	2	341

Table 5: Summary statistics, 1961-1995

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
RWP Vote Share $_{e-1}$	1.672	3.915	0	23	211
Population Share of Migrants from j	0.024	0.019	0.002	0.079	218
Weighted ln(GDP per capita) of j	7.006	0.664	4.921	8.668	218
Weighted Polity Score of j	-1.099	4.235	-8.638	9.050	218
Weighted Linguistic Proximity between i & j	0.913	0.791	0	5.175	218
Weighted Geographic Contiguity between i & j	0.099	0.217	0	0.96	218
Weighted Distance between i & j	4611.67	3108.084	461.265	13961.408	218
Colonial Migration	0.242	0.331	0	0.927	218
ln(GDP per Capita)	8.702	0.987	6.392	10.79	211
ln(Population) $_i$	16.386	1.064	14.744	18.64	218
Unemployment Rate	5.008	3.947	0	20.8	206
Population Share of Muslims	0.01	0.017	0	0.129	213
Electoral System	1.55	0.731	0	2	211

Table 6: Correlation Matrix: 1961 - 2013

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
(1)	1												
(2)	0.177**	1											
(3)	0.358***	0.383***	1										
(4)	0.182***	0.135*	0.526***	1									
(5)	0.118*	-0.175**	0.176***	0.202***	1								
(6)	0.101	-0.0872	0.118*	0.216***	0.420***	1							
(7)	-0.146**	0.404***	-0.00104	0.0178	-0.394***	-0.538***	1						
(8)	-0.157**	0.0165	-0.294***	-0.0947	-0.305***	-0.0921	-0.0182	1					
(9)	0.397***	0.518***	0.729***	0.247***	-0.132*	-0.197***	0.179***	-0.154**	1				
(10)	-0.103	0.191***	0.00675	-0.132*	-0.129*	0.0825	-0.0408	0.401***	0.100	1			
(11)	0.0692	0.0585	0.415***	0.475***	0.219***	0.173**	0.00454	-0.107*	0.247***	0.105	1		
(12)	0.232***	0.220***	0.334***	0.160**	0.164**	-0.0820	-0.168**	0.00517	0.220***	0.0931	0.181**	1	
(13)	0.154**	-0.328***	0.117*	0.0380	0.270***	0.268***	-0.488***	-0.212***	0.0244	-0.333***	0.107	0.0929	1

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Variable List:

- (1) RWP Vote Share, (2) Population Share of Migrants from j, (3) Weighted $\ln(\text{GDP per capita})$ of j,
(4) Weighted Polity Score of j, (5) Weighted Linguistic Proximity between i & j,
(6) Weighted Geographic Contiguity between i & j, (7) Weighted Distance between i & j (Most Populated Cities, km),
(8) Colonial Migration, (9) $\ln(\text{GDP per Capita})$, (10) $\ln(\text{Population})$,
(11) Unemployment Rate, (12) Population Share of Muslims, (13) Electoral system (PR or single-member districts)

Table 7: Correlation Matrix: 1961-1995

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
(1)	1												
(2)	0.113	1											
(3)	0.213**	0.185**	1										
(4)	0.0930	-0.00849	0.412***	1									
(5)	0.0862	-0.0617	0.205**	0.146*	1								
(6)	-0.0553	0.110	0.104	0.188**	0.402***	1							
(7)	-0.177*	0.280***	-0.0242	0.106	-0.333***	-0.487***	1						
(8)	-0.103	0.167*	-0.151*	-0.0203	-0.357***	-0.00275	-0.0516	1					
(9)	0.407***	0.349***	0.624***	0.0418	-0.118	-0.190**	0.0804	-0.0303	1				
(10)	-0.144*	0.310***	-0.0580	-0.253***	-0.131	0.164*	-0.131	0.558***	0.0692	1			
(11)	0.0271	0.0697	0.408***	0.364***	-0.0442	-0.0823	0.213**	0.00630	0.366***	0.0951	1		
(12)	0.144*	0.191**	0.239***	0.0575	0.323***	0.0839	-0.234***	0.0661	0.128	0.146*	0.131	1	
(13)	0.161*	-0.425***	0.0612	-0.0631	0.291***	0.268***	-0.459***	-0.210**	0.0196	-0.254***	0.0320	0.103	1

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Variable List:

- (1) RWP Vote Share, (2) Population Share of Migrants from j, (3) Weighted $\ln(\text{GDP per capita})$ of j,
(4) Weighted Polity Score of j, (5) Weighted Linguistic Proximity between i & j,
(6) Weighted Geographic Contiguity between i & j, (7) Weighted Distance between i & j (Most Populated Cities, km),
(8) Colonial Migration, (9) $\ln(\text{GDP per Capita})$, (10) $\ln(\text{Population})$,
(11) Unemployment Rate, (12) Population Share of Muslims, (13) Electoral system (PR or single-member districts)