

IMMIGRATION AND RIGHT-WING POPULISM

An Origin Story

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What explains the electoral success of right-wing populist (RWP) parties?

- Domestic sources of right-wing populism and xenophobia:
 - **Socio-economic and political conditions** of immigrant-hosting states (Swank and Betz, 2003; Heizmann, 2015; Oesch, 2008; etc.)
 - The **behavior and political strategies of mainstream parties** (Müller-Rommel, 1998; Meguid, 2005; van Kessel, 2013)
 - The **electoral credibility and political rhetoric adopted by right-wing populist parties** (van Kessel, 2011; Mareš, 2011)
- Scholars note the importance of immigration in the RWP literature, but do not distinguish between different types of immigration.

Variety of Immigration and RWP

- Not all types of immigration provide an electoral platform for RWP.
- RWP leaders are better able to politicize “undesirable” immigration.
- We identify three types of immigration that may fuel RWP.
 1. (Post-)colonial migration
 2. Migration from poor countries
 3. Muslim immigrants

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

- Historical economic asymmetry between colonial powers and their colonies
 - Natives' prejudice that colonial migrants are extremely poor and second-class citizens
 - Natives' concern about welfare depletion by compensatory claims of colonial migrants
- A lesson from history: Filipino migration into the U.S. during the American colonial era sparked a nationalist reaction against Filipino migrant workers in the 1920s (Ngai, 2004).

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

- Voters may use cues other than colonial legacy to assess immigrants' desirability.
- Voters may find immigrants from poor countries undesirable regardless of immigrants' individual characteristics.

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

- Shifts in traditional norms and conventional values trigger nostalgic sentiments and cultural counter-reactions.
- Nationalist parties utilize xenophobic attitudes, rejection of foreigners, and strong in-group solidarity.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: SAMPLE SELECTION

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	

We focus on migrants from non-OECD sending states.

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

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

$$\text{Population Share of Muslims}_{it} = \frac{\text{Number of Muslims}_{it}}{\text{Population}_{it}}$$

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: REGRESSION

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

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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

RESULTS (No LDV) AND DISCUSSION

Model	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Years Included	1961–2013	1961–2013	1961–1995	1961–1995
Colonial Migration; _{<i>j</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>j</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

French RWP, Islam, and Colonial Migration from North and Sub-Saharan Africa

- History of colonial, post-colonial, family & labor migration
 - Post WWII
 - Post 1960s Decolonization
- Rise of far-right National Front Party - Marine Le Pen
 - Right-wing populism, euroskepticism, anti-immigration
 - Immigrants & Islam blamed for France's economic & cultural landscape
- Southeast France
 - Inhabited by descendants of "repatriated" families from colonial Algeria
 - Used by National Front to promote anti-immigration policies

So, what explains the electoral success of right-wing populist parties?

- We have sought answers in immigrants' characteristics:
 - Colonial legacy between host and sending states
 - Sending states' economic status
 - Religion
- These dynamics hold even when accounting for political, cultural, and linguistic differences between i and a multitude of j 's.
- Native citizens' perceptions about different immigration types produce variation in RWP success.

THANK YOU!
QUESTIONS?