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Exclusive Solidarity?

Radical Right Parties and the Welfare State

Zoe Lefkofridi and Elie Michel

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Abstract

Radical right parties in Western Europe have traditionally shown little support for redistributive policies and have thus been typically classified as economically right wing. Yet, they are contesting the votes of a (formerly) key electorate of the social democratic parties: the working class, who supports welfare redistribution. In this study, we argue and empirically demonstrate that radical right parties have adapted their programmatic preferences to this key segment of electorate by progressively promoting redistributive policies. For our analyses we use mixed methods and rely on a combination of data sources. Firstly, we assess the salience of welfare issues in the manifestos of major West European radical right parties over the last three decades based on CMP data. Secondly, we examine their positions on welfare issues based on recent euandi data. Thirdly, we analyse the most recent manifestos of two successful radical right parties (Austrian FPÖ and French FN) qualitatively. Our findings show that for a majority of radical right parties welfare state expansion has become a salient issue, and that they do not position themselves anymore on the right regarding redistributive issues; however, these parties promote a specific kind of solidarity: exclusive solidarity.

Keywords

Political Parties, Radical Right, Welfare politics, Solidarity

Introduction*

In representative democracies social cleavages seek expression via parties (Sartori 1976) that are not always successful in picking up changes in the fabric of their electorates¹. In Europe and beyond, we are currently witnessing high degrees of electoral volatility, voters' de-alignment and re-alignment, and the rise of Radical Right parties (RR). RR parties typically mobilize voters on the sociocultural dimension (Rydgren 2007, 2004, 2005a), and their most publicized issue is their opposition to immigration (Arzheimer 2009; Van der Brug *et al.* 2005; Van der Brug *et al.* 2000). They have acquired coalition potential and in some countries they have even become partners in the formation of cabinets at national and local levels (e.g. Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands). In contrast, mainstream, moderate parties, such as Social Democratic (SD) and Christian democratic/conservative parties (that have been part of government coalitions in the post-World II era) are in decline.

A key social segment that has realigned during the last decades is the working class: formerly the key electoral clientele of parties on the left (Social Democrats, socialists and communists), workers now constitute the core supporters of the RR in Western Europe (Oesch 2008a, Rydgren 2012). This, in turn, has raised the question of how does the RR, which typically supports a free-market economy, appeal to the working class on economic, and especially welfare state issues. As the working class is most exposed to market risks its support for RR parties opposing left-wing policies (e.g. state intervention in the economy) has been puzzling. Oesch (2008a) investigated why workers are more likely than other classes to support the RR and found that "questions of community and identity (the defense of national identity against outsiders and the upholding of an exclusive form of community)" seem to be more important than economic grievances in motivating the working class to cast an RR vote in Austria, Belgium (Flanders), France and Norway (Oesch 2008a: 369).

However, as recent research shows that RR parties achieve high degrees of congruence with their supporters also on the socioeconomic dimension (Lefkofridi and Casado 2012), we need to dig deeper into RR economic agendas. Although most scholarly attention has been paid to how negative attitudes towards immigrants translate into RR support, the present contribution sheds light on the role played by redistributive solidarity in RR parties' electoral strategy. We ask: *Does the attention RR parties pay to welfare state expansion increase over time? (How) do RR parties promote redistributive solidarity?* As RR parties are powerful players in contemporary politics, a deeper knowledge of their strategy enhances understanding of how RR discourse affects the way redistributive solidarity is conceived, justified and pursued in contemporary Europe.

The argument we advance here is that although the RR's success in the 1980s was mainly due to their mobilization of sociocultural issues and immigration, their contemporary strategy relies on a combination of (left-wing) socioeconomic and (right-wing) sociocultural ideas. These ideas entertain popular fears of cultural and economic threats, which together produce an anti-immigrant, exclusionary approach to perceiving and pursuing redistributive solidarity. By framing redistributive solidarity in such a way, that is, promoting a welfare state for "blood and soil" nationhood (Banting

* This paper makes part of the book project of Banting, Keith and Will Kymlicka entitled "*The Strains of Commitment: The Political Sources of Solidarity in Diverse Societies*". Earlier versions were presented at the workshop "Welfare State and the Radical Right", May 20-21, 2014 and at the RSCAS Seminar Series, November 12, 2014 that took place at the EUI in Florence and we are grateful to the participants for their comments.

¹ This relates to the fact that parties are conservative organizations that in principle resist change (Wilson 1989, 1980). A related problem is how (well) parties communicate with their base of supporters and the broader electorate. As western European democracies matured, and technology advanced, electoral politics became more professionally organised (e.g. polls and TV instead of members and posters); however, the distance between mainstream party organizations and the social groups they used to voice became greater (e.g. see also party membership decline, Mair and van Biezen 2001; Van Biezen *et al.* 2012). This has contributed to electoral volatility and voters' realignment.

and Kymlicka, *forthcoming*), RR parties have been able to compete against the Left for the agency of redistributive solidarity. As a consequence, the effort of RR parties to optimize votes energizes the division between diversity and solidarity (*ibid.*).

Overall, we find that the salience of redistributive issues has increased for RR parties in Western Europe over the last 30 years. The SD parties' positions on these issues do not seem to have dramatically changed, but RR parties seem to be aligning with them. More precisely, we observe a shift to the traditionally left side of welfare politics (e.g. in favor of more generous redistribution) of the RR parties (with some notable exceptions like the Swiss SVP). Finally, our qualitative analysis illustrates that this positional shift of the RR parties comes with the definition of a strictly restrictive concept of redistributive politics: *exclusive* solidarity.

In what follows, we first introduce the theory of issue salience and ownership and develop hypotheses about the RR's engagement with redistributive solidarity in section I. Following Peter Hall (2014), we discuss why and how the issue ownership of redistributive solidarity is currently contested and how RRs compete with SD parties over the agency of redistributive solidarity. We formulate two hypotheses: first, RR parties increasingly invested in the politics of redistributive solidarity, which suggests that the importance of the welfare state in their electoral agendas should increase over time. In this way, RR parties are crowding out Social Democrats by competing in the same policy space on the issues of welfare. As the welfare state and redistribution concerns issues traditionally owned by Social Democrats, however, our second hypothesis is that RR parties use their own issue (immigration) to frame welfare issues; this suggests that in their electoral rhetoric the deserving recipients of welfare benefits should be clearly defined and differentiated from those undeserving ones along ethnic and national lines. In Section II we elaborate on the methodology and data we used to test these expectations empirically. In Sections III and IV we present our results and discuss whether they (dis) confirm our expectations about the quantitative (salience) and qualitative (inclusive/exclusive) aspects of redistributive solidarity. In the conclusion, we explain how this study extends our knowledge of the welfare state agendas of RR parties and discuss important questions that this study generates.

Issue Salience in Party Competition and Voting Behavior

In electoral campaigns, parties face two key constraints: resources and the attention span of voters. This forces parties to prioritize and condense their messages. The salience theory of party competition posits that parties selectively emphasize topics where they feel they have a good reputation, while deemphasizing those that may be electorally costly or put them at disadvantage against their competitors. So parties emphasize some issues more than others in their competition against each other (Sjöblom 1985; Budge and Farlie 1983; Petrocik 1996; Meguid 2008; Bélanger and Meguid 2008). In this way, parties seek to prime the salience of their own issues in the decisional calculus of voters. The tendency of parties to focus on the issues of electoral advantage is relatively path-dependent given the role of parties' institutional and organizational legacies in determining their policy package (Marks and Wilson 2000). Within a certain historical context, the argument goes, political actors favor a specific policy direction and each party identifies a set of policy issues that they "own" (van der Brug 2004).

The supply side: redistributive solidarity – an SD agenda?

In the course of modern political history, socialist and SD organizations promoted social solidarity and justice; the concession of conservatives to sharing the burdens (via welfare institutions) has typically

been part of a strategy to appease the electoral appeal of socialists and social-democrats². Due to their essential role that socialist and SD organizations and movements have played in the forming of the welfare state, they have ‘embodied’ the politics of solidarity (Esping-Andersen 1990). They have done so by fostering high levels of redistribution and by constructing the collective imaginary of solidarity at the national level across Europe. As a result, SD parties have thus come to own (i.e. they are considered the most competent to handle) the issues of social solidarity, equality, redistribution and the expansion of the welfare state³.

However, the environment in which SD parties operate has changed because of the processes of globalization and European integration. As forces of globalization became more visible and key steps towards economic integration within Europe were taken, the room for policy maneuver in areas with EU competences became increasingly constrained for mainstream office-seeking parties (Mair 2007). The Single Market and the Maastricht Treaty fundamentally changed the policy arena of national parties and dampened important policy conflicts between left and right, especially regarding the management of the national economy (e.g. Mair 2007, 2000; Johansson and Raunio 2001; Hix and Goetz 2000). According to Mair (2007; 2000) EU law, policies and institutions have been increasingly limiting the policy space, the policy instruments and the policy repertoire at parties’ disposal. This, in turn, led to dampening the competition between mainstream parties on policy domains, where the European Union (EU) has increased competences (Dorussen and Nanou 2013), such as the Common European Market. This led to convergence between mainstream SD and center-right parties on economic matters.

More often than not, national parties in office have been experiencing a growing tension between responsibility and responsiveness (Mair 2011). Because of the political constraints posed by non-majoritarian institutions and international agreements (e.g. the 1992 Maastricht Treaty of the European Community), SD parties have found it increasingly hard to promote ambitious redistributive positions in response to the demands of their core electorates. The need to act responsibly vis-à-vis their international commitments, has pushed office-seeking SD parties towards the right on socioeconomic issues, including the role and size of the state in society and economy. Social Democrats in government have had to implement treaties signed by preceding governments that set the long-term neoliberal trend in motion, but have also been themselves signatories of treaties promoting economic liberalism. They have initiated reforms in the way welfare benefits are distributed, such as the well-known Schröder’s *Agenda 2010* reforms, which touched upon the heart of the German social security system. The drastic cuts in the German unemployment and pension system caused friction within the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) but were enthusiastically supported by conservative and Christian Democratic parties {Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU)/Christlich Soziale Union in Bayern (CSU)} and the Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP). So, although SD parties have historically served as the key agents of redistributive solidarity in the post-WW2 era, during the process of European integration they found themselves compromising a lot of their welfare-related policy goals to adapt to a neoliberal environment. SD parties’ ideological support for the welfare state did not decline (Häusermann 2014), but they gradually befriended the neoliberal framework and the concepts of (pro-business) freedom, liberalization, competition, and privatization (Lavelle 2013; Pierson 2001).

Processes of globalization, as well as economic integration within Europe, have thus created a new cleavage of winners and losers, those who can engage and benefit from these processes and those that

² Even Bismarck’s “modicum of redistribution in the form of pensions, sickness insurance and workers’ compensation was to preempt the Social Democrats from winning a greater following and pursuing greater attempts at social justice” (Baldwin 1990: 3).

³ Accordingly, conservative/center-right parties have been typically considered to own the issues of security and defence; the greens are perceived as most competent on environmental issues, while the RR parties are considered to be best in handling immigration issues.

cannot (Kriesi *et al.* 2006). In political terms, the mobilization of these losers has transformed the dimensions of the cultural conflict. It did not add a new dimension, but rather changed the nature of the existing cleavages, which has been shifting into a new cleavage between integration (openness to globalization) and demarcation (protection from globalization) on the one hand, and a cultural cleavage opposing cosmopolitanism to nationalism (Kriesi *et al.* 2012). Liberalization and economic competition brought about by globalization and European integration has been especially harmful for the poorer strata: as the working class lacks the resources (e.g. education, trade unions at the global level) to survive in a global market; its jobs, wages and welfare benefits are endangered.

The demand side: working-class and left-authoritarianism

The working class has constituted the key social group favoring welfare state expansion on the demand side. As SD parties were the agents for those issues on the supply side of electoral politics, the working class stood at the core of SD electorates. For a long time socialist and SD parties were highly in sync with the working class; however, because of the constraints of globalization, the policy maneuver on socioeconomic issues available to Social Democrats became ever more narrow, the policy tools they could use were increasingly more limited and pressures to liberalize even those services served by the welfare state increased. Moreover, among SD supporters, the middle-class increased, while the working class shrank (Häusermann 2013)⁴. Large numbers of working class citizens now tend to either abstain or support other parties, such as RR parties.

To understand workers' realignment (from parties on the left to those on the RR), we need to consider that a large segment of the working class holds left-authoritarian views, namely left-wing positions on socioeconomic issues (pro-welfare) and authoritarian positions on sociocultural issues (law and order, immigration, etc.). Some fifty years ago Lipset (1966: 101-2) wrote that

“The poorer strata everywhere are more liberal or leftist on economic issues; they favour more welfare state measures, higher wages, graduated income taxes, support of trade-unions, and so forth. But when liberalism is defined in noneconomic terms – as support of civil liberties, internationalism, etc. – the correlation is reversed. The more well-to-do are more liberal, the poorer are more intolerant.”

In an ideal world of representation, Lipset's (1966) average “authoritarian worker” would be best represented by parties with left-wing positions on the socioeconomic dimension and right-wing positions on the sociocultural dimension. Left-authoritarian voters used to support communist and SD parties (Lipset 1966; 1959a, b).

Research has shown that such a group of voters still exists (Kriesi *et al.* 2008) but, in the absence of parties combining such views, it is underrepresented (Thomassen 2012; Van der Brug and Van Spanje 2009). In 2009, the left-authoritarian combination of views could not find correspondence at the party level, as no party in Western Europe offered at the same time both left-wing and authoritarian policy proposals (Lefkofridi *et al.* 2014). While parties on the left advocated pro-welfare economic positions but progressive stances on sociocultural issues (e.g. women's and gay rights', social diversity); the right, which was more traditional/authoritarian in the cultural sphere, supported a free market economy and a small state. Hence, left-authoritarians were cross-pressured between different issue dimensions: they had to make a choice between either parties on the RR (who advocated their authoritarian sociocultural views) or on the SD and radical left that supported a strong state (left-wing socioeconomic views). Their party choice depended on prevailing concerns; voters chose those parties that had similar views on the issue that they considered salient to them personally (Lefkofridi *et al.*

⁴ Moreover, as the composition of the SD constituency changed to include more middle-class rather than working-class voters, SD parties had to respond to the preferences of the middle class for cultural liberalism (Kriesi *et al.* 2008); a fine grained analysis of class voting in Germany, Switzerland and Britain (Oesch 2008b) shows that, within the middle class, it is especially salaried professionals in the social and cultural services that rally the libertarian left.

2014; see also Giger and Lefkofridi 2014): those concerned more about immigration, would support the RR; the same type of voters, however, who were more concerned about the economy, chose parties on the left.

The size of the left-authoritarian group within the electorate varies across European countries; in 2009 it ranged from 7 % among Danes and 36.2 % among Greeks (Lefkofridi *et al.* 2014). Within the EU, the threshold for parliamentary representation does not exceed 5%; so, even at its minimum (7%) the percentage of left-authoritarians would be enough to secure parliamentary representation to any party organization. The vacant left-authoritarian policy space presented a unique opportunity for the RR to stabilize its electoral support (which had been generated based on an anti-immigration agenda).

In sum, by offering a policy platform that combines pro-welfare socioeconomic views and authoritarian sociocultural attitudes, RR parties could appeal to left-authoritarians, who compose a very important part of the electorate across Western European countries. In what follows, we argue that the development of radical parties' welfare agendas is filling exactly this gap in the political space that previous research identified (Lefkofridi *et al.* 2014; van der Brug and van Spanje 2009; Kriesi *et al.* 2008). In response to left-authoritarian voters' demands, the RR moved towards the left on welfare issues, while preserving its right-wing sociocultural profile.

RR parties' welfare agendas: research hypotheses

The initial response of RR parties to globalization and European integration was to pursue a rightist path in both the economic and cultural dimensions. Indeed, a couple of new RR parties even contain the word freedom in their names as a result of their originally neoliberal anti-statist economic beliefs, such as the Austrian Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) and the Dutch Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV). In a seminal piece, Kitschelt (1995) argued that the winning formula for RR parties was the combination of neoliberal views on socioeconomic issues and authoritarian views on sociocultural issues. While in the economic dimension they advocated a free market economy, RR parties capitalized on the cultural threats of globalization (e.g. on how immigration threatens the national identity and way of life). As SD and Christian democratic/conservative parties that alternated in government were converging on economic matters, RR parties seized the opportunity to shift the focus of voters to the cultural dimension of political conflict (McGann and Kitschelt 1995): they emphasized tradition, cultural heritage, law and order as well as a negative perception of immigration.

Indeed, the key to their electoral success and the succeeding transformation of cleavages was “not the economy, stupid!” (Mudde 2007) but the most salient issues in their electoral campaigns were law and order, morality and authority, the national way of life and opposition to immigration. Through the advocacy of authoritarian and nationalistic imageries of society RR parties have not only rendered sociocultural issues, and especially immigration, highly salient but they have even shifted entire party systems towards their preferred positions on these issues (e.g. Lefkofridi and Horvath 2012; Van Spanje 2010). Under the pressure of competition from the RR, Christian Democratic/conservative parties have shifted to the right; immigration gets ever tougher, including in one the most liberal economies within the EU, the United Kingdom. Hence, even when not in government, the RR has thus been very successful in achieving its policy goals.

Although they emerged as the opponents of cultural globalization, RR parties later also tackled the consequences of economic globalization (Kriesi *et al.* 2006) to respond to changes on the demand side, where the boundaries between economic and cultural conflict started to become increasingly blurred (Häusermann and Kriesi, *forthcoming*). On the one hand, the cultural dimension of conflict in Europe today encompasses questions beyond cultural liberalism (e.g. immigration, European integration), such as issues of distribution (welfare chauvinism and welfare misuse). On the other, voters' contemporary preferences on distributive issues fail to form a single economic dimension (*ibid.*). Hence, welfare issues are hard to classify either on the socioeconomic or sociocultural dimension (see also Koster *et al.* 2012).

Since the mid-1990s (when SD parties, in particular, came under pressure to compromise policy goals) RR parties started revising their electoral agendas to fully exploit the left-authoritarian niche in the electoral market. Compared to other party families, the RR nowadays frames economic globalization in terms of “labor and social security” more than any other party family besides the radical left (Höglinger *et al.* 2012). Some scholars have argued that new RR parties have adopted “leftist” preferences in terms of redistribution (Derks 2006). The development of welfare agendas helped the RR expand its competitive strategy against parties of the left, and especially mainstream SD and socialist parties who had traditionally been the main proponents of the welfare state and its expansion. If RR parties tried to adapt to the views of these (potential) supporters (Rydgren 2007), it follows that over time we should observe an increase of attention paid to welfare state issues by RR parties:

H1: Welfare state expansion becomes an increasingly important policy issue in RR parties’ electoral agendas.

That said, RR parties face important constraints in their pursuit of a programmatic shift towards the left on issues of redistribution: the two core groups voting for the radical right, namely blue-collar workers and the self-employed, small-business owners have opposite preferences on welfare issues, with the former supporting extensive redistribution and the latter favoring limitation of the welfare state (Ivarsflaten 2005). Hence, RR parties’ positioning on welfare issues has to resolve the problem of accommodating the contradictory preferences of these two groups (Afonso 2014). If RR parties move too far left to match SD parties on welfare state expansion, they are in danger of alienating their conservative supporters.

Hence, although we expect RR parties to pay increasing attention to redistributive issues and to promote welfare expansion, we acknowledge that they have to do so carefully, so that their gains among industrial workers would not be offset by losses among conservative supporters in small business, rural areas and middle-class voters. In this regard, while some scholars have argued that RR parties abandoned formerly market liberal positions in favor of more centrist positions on the economy (de Lange 2007; Kitschelt 2007), others have talked about RR parties masking their economic platforms via position blurring (Rovny 2013). For instance, they promoted protectionist trade policies that would benefit certain groups while at the same time they supported cuts on welfare policies (Heinisch 2003). Over time, the strategy of the RR started deviating from Kitschelt’s (1995) winning formula of neoliberal views in support of a free market economy (socioeconomic right) combined with illiberal views on society (sociocultural right). The new winning formula of the RR (de Lange 2007) sought to respond to the aforementioned changes at the level of their electorates.

Given that SD parties who owned welfare issues have been adopting liberal positions towards labor mobility, multiculturalism and social diversity, RR parties have invaded the welfare policy space with a chauvinist agenda. At the abstract level, this is the case of a party family (RR) reacting to the issue ownership of another party family (Social-Democrats) in order to compete for votes⁵. We argue here that the support of RR parties for welfare state expansion competes against Social Democrats, the historical proponents of the welfare state, by tactfully tying it to their preferences and rhetoric on sociocultural issues, for which they have a good reputation. RR parties are essentially movements of exclusion (Rydgren 2005b) and this should be reflected in their discourse about redistribution. In addition to their well-documented cultural preferences they have developed a more generous, yet ethnically exclusive preference, regarding the welfare state (Svallfors 2012; de Koster *et al.* 2012). This is in line with the expectation that RR parties would move towards a nationalist-interventionist position (Kriesi *et al.* 2012, Chapter 1). Using their best weapon (immigration) in political competition RR parties seek to mobilize globalization and the so-called losers in European integration by appealing simultaneously to their cultural fears (e.g. erosion of traditional cultural and national way of life) and

⁵ See Spoon *et al.* 2014 for a similar argument about party competition on environmental issues.

their economic insecurities (need for protection). Drawing on their issue competence in the area of immigration, they frame the politics of solidarity in an anti-immigrant way so that they can be perceived as owners of a refined, exclusionary concept of solidarity: welfare chauvinism. In this way, their electoral discourse would promote an exclusive conception of solidarity that is specifically directed against migrants who usurp social benefits. It follows that the pro-welfare agenda advocated by RR parties should be clearly a chauvinist one (only for the natives):

H2: Only natives should benefit from the welfare state.

In this vein, an inclusive welfare state that gives migrant labor access to welfare benefits should appear as problematic, so that the RR would strive to solve this problem by re-defining the boundaries of access to the welfare state and the criteria of its deservingness. In its electoral rhetoric the deserving recipients of welfare benefits should be clearly defined and differentiated from the undeserving along ethnic and national lines.

Methodology and Data

To test these expectations empirically, we follow Lieberman (2005) who argues in favor of what he calls a nested research design. Combining large-N and small-N studies can add a “synergetic value” to the analysis: while the statistical analysis can guide case selection for in-depth research and provide direction for more focused case-studies, the (b) small-N analysis can be used to assess the plausibility of observed statistical relationships between variables (ibid.). Hence, we combine quantitative and qualitative methods, and exploit two different sources of data: on the one hand, we analyze quantitatively (salience of issues) and qualitatively (issue framing: economic/cultural; exclusive/inclusive) the manifestos that parties used to compete in elections at the national level. These have been collected and coded by the Comparative Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2013), which includes the political programs of parties from around fifty countries since 1945. The quantitative codes are generated from counts of sentences and quasi-sentences where parties position themselves on policy issues; the coding is essentially salience-based (Laver 2013). These party manifestos have been coded in a similar, systematic way across countries, and are thus comparable (notwithstanding language differences and the variation in length of manifestos across countries) (Volkens 2001). The score associated to each issue represents the percentage of manifesto length devoted to such issue. Thus, the higher the score, the more salient an issue is to the party (Spoon *et al.* 2014). This constitutes an ideal data collection for investigating the evolution of issue salience in parties’ electoral discourse, and, more precisely, preferences regarding the redistributive and welfare politics (Nygård 2006). We also use the data collected by the **euandi** project⁶, a scientific data collection of party positions on a wide range of policy issues that have been derived by both parties’ self-placement and experts’ judgments of party positions (for data description see Garzia et al. 2015). More specifically, we use the data on parties’ welfare preferences, as well as their positions on migrants’ deservingness of social benefits.

To examine the first hypothesis about the extent to which RR parties engage in the politics of solidarity, we conduct a cross-country comparison and consider countries with an electorally significant right-wing party, setting the threshold of electoral significance at 5 % in the latest national parliamentary elections. We choose this number because, as mentioned above, this is also the highest threshold for parliamentary representation within the EU. This leaves us with nine European countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Table 1 presents the cases selected for our study. In some countries, the RR has not been present since the early 1980s; in such cases the first election year with an RR party is specified in parenthesis. In

⁶ The **euandi** is a Voting Advice Application for the 2014 European Parliament Elections developed by the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. For further details see official website of **euandi**, URL: <http://euandi.eu/abouteuandi.html>.

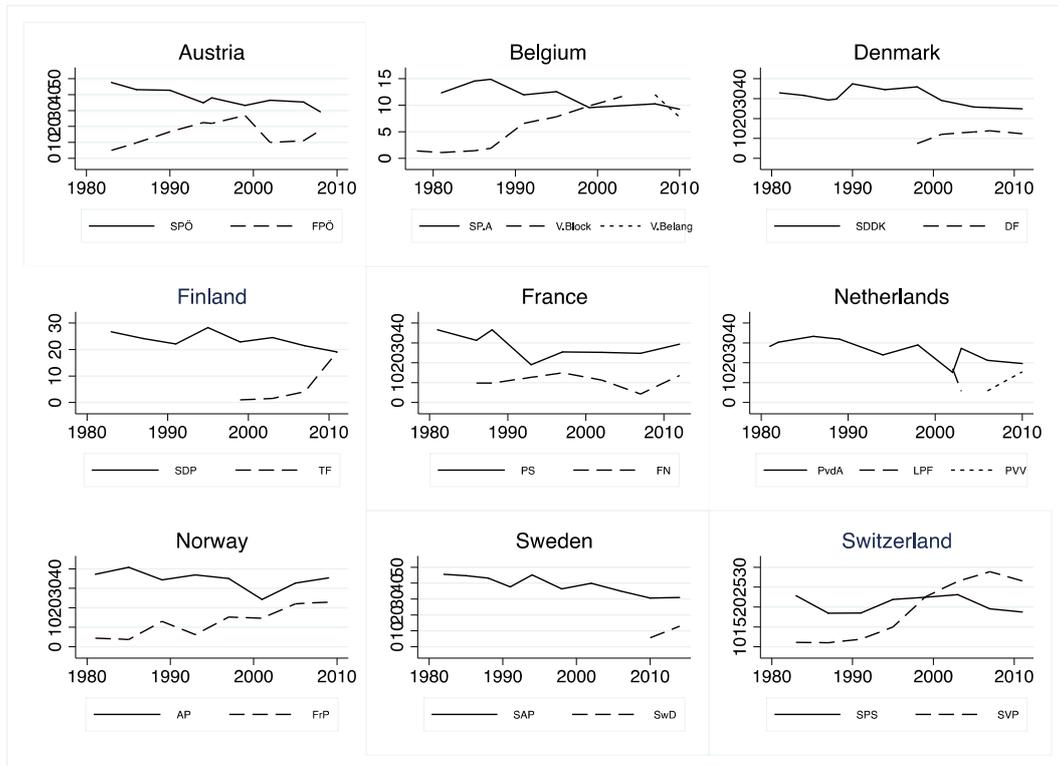
total, we look at 9 different countries and 79 elections: in 54 out of these elections both RR parties and SD parties are competing.

Table 1. Political Parties and Elections (N =79), CMP data

Country	Parties	Elections (first-last)	N
Austria	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreich (SPÖ) Freiheitliche Partei Österreich (FPÖ)	1983-2008	9
Belgium	Socialisten en Progressieven Anders (SP.A) Vlaams Block + Vlaams Belang (VB) (1985)	1981-2010	9
Denmark	Socialdemokratiet (SD/SDDK) Dansk Folkeparti (DF) (1998)	1981-2011	10
Finland	Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue (SDP) Perussuomalaiset (TF) (2011)	1983-2011	8
France	Parti Socialiste (PS) Front National (FN) (1986)	1981-2012	8
Netherlands	Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA) Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF) + Partij Voor de Vrijheid (PVV) (2002)	1981-2010	10
Norway	Arbeiderpartiet (AP) Fremskrittspartiet (FrP)	1981-2009	8
Sweden	Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Arbetareparti (SAP) Sverigedemokraterna (SD/SwD) (2010)	1982-2010	9
Switzerland	Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz (SPS) Schweizerische Volkspartei (SVP)	1983-2011	8

Figure 1 shows RR and SD parties' trends of electoral success over time: while support for the RR is on the rise uniformly, the decline of SD is evident in most cases under study, except for France and Norway.

Figure 1 - Vote shares of RR and SD parties in Western Europe (CMP 1980-2014)



To what extent do RR parties emphasize redistributive politics in their manifestos compared to SD parties? Is the salience of the welfare state stable over time, or is it changing? Is there a strong difference between the issues emphasized by RR parties compared to the rest of the party system? How ‘leftist’ are RR parties on welfare issues? To answer these questions, we proceed in three steps.

First, we use CMP data to inquire about the five most salient issues in the RR parties' manifestos in the nine countries under study; three points in time are selected to grasp the evolution of agendas: early 1980s, mid-1990s and the most recent election available in our data⁷. The frequency of each of the top five issues mentioned in RR manifestos is also compared to the mean salience of this issue in the system (by taking into account all the other parties competing in that election) (see also Cole 2005).

Second, we focus exclusively on the salience of politics of solidarity in time and space using, once again, the CMP data. Our goal here is to trace the evolution of salience in RR manifestos in comparison to the manifestos of SD parties in the same system. Hence, we consider the 1980s as the decade when globalization effects start being visible, and SD parties came under pressure to revise their policy goals and adapt them to an increasingly neoliberal economic context. We examine the period beginning in the 1980s until the latest election available in the CMP dataset. The key variable in this step of the analysis from the CMP data is welfare state expansion⁸. This category corresponds

⁷ In some cases, RR parties did not compete in elections as early as the 1980s. We then selected the election they contested that was closest to our time reference points.

⁸ We decided not to include here the item welfare state limitation, as it is, for most parties, of negligible proportions.

to favorable mentions of the need to introduce/maintain/expand any public social service or social security scheme. For instance, this category covers health care, child-care, elder care and pensions and social housing.

Third, to better understand RR parties' agendas, we look more closely at their current substantive preferences on welfare issues. The data collected by the **euandi** project allows us to map and compare the welfare preferences of RR and SD parties across Western Europe. Since the data was collected to study 2014 European Parliament Elections, Switzerland and Norway, which are not members of the EU, are excluded from this step of analysis. We map all other countries' RR and SD parties on a left-right space based on their positions on five welfare issues. The specific items used to construct the welfare preferences' index are: (1) *social programs should be maintained even at the cost of higher taxes*; (2) *pension benefits should be reduced to limit the state debt in [country]*; (3) *government spending should be reduced in order to lower taxes*; (4) *the government should reduce workers' protection regulations in order to fight unemployment*; and (5) *the state should provide stronger financial support to unemployed workers*⁹.

Finally, we explore, in two steps, the hypothesis that the welfare state propagated by RR parties is clearly an exclusionary one. First, we conduct a cross-party family comparison based on the **euandi** data. This data enables us to examine the positions of RR and SD parties in all countries under study¹⁰ about whether immigrants should have more difficult access to social benefits compared to the country's citizens¹¹. This question allows us to see whether and to what extent the two party families that compete on the welfare state do or do not subscribe to a concept of solidarity that includes immigrants.

Second, we conduct two in-depth case studies: the French Front National (FN) and the Austrian FPÖ. France and Austria have strong welfare states and powerful RR parties, yet they differ in a key determinant of citizens' parliamentary representation: electoral rules, i.e. proportional representation versus a majoritarian system. This has had consequences for the opportunities (e.g. participation in government) available to the RR. In the Austrian case the RR can, in theory, participate in government coalitions, provided that the mainstream parties coalesce with it (which has happened in the past). We examine the content of the RR parties' most recent programs¹² and analyze whether they promote welfare state expansion, how they frame their pro-welfare arguments, and to what extent they juxtapose the concept of solidarity with that of diversity.

In the case of the FN, we analyze the document titled "*Notre Projet: Programme Politique du FN*". This contains 106 pages and was issued for the purpose of the 2012 presidential campaign; at the time of writing, it is still considered the major and most up-to-date programmatic document of the party in 2014¹³. Contrary to the FN, the FPÖ program is very short, but this length is typical for this party. The 16 page electoral program issued for the legislative 2013 election is entitled "*Österreich im Wort*"¹⁴. When reporting our qualitative findings, we will make us use specific words or phrases in quotation

⁹ Items selected form a homogenous scale (Cronbach's alpha of 0.81, confirmed by factor analysis).

¹⁰ Because there is missing data, the Finnish parties of interest (SDP/TF) are excluded from this step of the analysis.

¹¹ The exact wording of the question in English is "It should be harder for EU immigrants working or staying in [country] to get access to social assistance benefits than it is for [country]'s citizens". This question targets immigrants from within the EU, but it can be used as a proxy of inclusiveness/exclusiveness of welfare benefits. Most likely, the exclusiveness of RR parties for EU immigrants is at least as strong, if not much stronger, for immigrants coming from non-EU countries.

¹² Note that these programs have not yet been coded by the CMP team; and to the best of our knowledge our study constitutes the first analysis of these programs.

¹³ The document is available on the party's official website: <http://www.frontnational.com/pdf/Programme.pdf> (accessed July 31, 2014).

¹⁴ The document is available on the party's official website: http://www.fpoe.at/fileadmin/Contentpool/Portal/wahl08/FP_-_Wahlprogramm_NRW08.pdf (accessed July 31, 2014).

marks (that we translate from the original texts) for the purpose of illustrating the language used to frame redistributive solidarity.

Empirical Findings I: The RR in favor of redistribution?

In this section we present our results regarding the salience of redistributive issues in RR parties agendas. In the first step of the analysis, we look at the top priorities of RR parties over time. The second and third steps concern welfare preferences of RR parties in comparison to that of SD parties, which traditionally own these issues.

Table 2 reports the top five issues of RR parties, the percentage of the manifesto devoted to it, and the mean salience for that election¹⁵. At first sight, we see that issues of a sociocultural nature (e.g. support for traditional morality, the national way of life, and law and order, as well as opposition to multiculturalism) always appear within the top five of their agendas. During the period under study, however, we see that RR manifestos also reflect a concern for broad redistributive solidarity. About 20% of the top five issues can be considered as directly or indirectly related to redistribution¹⁶. That said, there is wide variation in the salience of redistributive solidarity politics over time and countries.

¹⁵ Table 2 shows that some of the issues mentioned in RR manifestos are salient for all parties in the system, whereas others are *not* salient for most parties in the system, and in some cases, issues appear to be salient for certain parties only, and thus have high standard deviations.

¹⁶ Such are the following items: welfare state expansion, education expansion, positive perception of equality policies or social groups (farmers, special interest groups). Out of the 110 salient issues, 22 qualify as related to redistributive solidarity.

Table 2 - Top five issues in RR parties' manifestos since the 1980s (CMP)

	Early 1980s			Mid 1990s			Latest election		
	1983	Frequency	Mean	1993	Frequency	Mean	2008	Frequency	Mean
Austria									
	1. Traditional Morality: Positive	8.1	8.5 (7.8)	1. Traditional Morality: Positive	11.4	9.9 (7.7)	1. National Way of Life: Positive	11.3	17.6 (5.7)
	2. Free Market Economy	7.9	7.6 (1.5)	2. National Way of Life: Positive	11.0	5.5 (8.8)	2. Political Authority	7.8	8.3 (3)
	3. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	4.8	4.3 (3.6)	3. Law and Order: Positive	8.1	6.8 (5.8)	3. Traditional Morality: Positive	7.5	3.2 (2)
	4. National Way of Life: Positive	4.6	5.9 (3.5)	4. Free Market Economy	5.3	4 (3)	4. Traditional Morality: Negative	6.9	3.7 (2.2)
	5. Law and Order: Positive	4.2	3.5 (3)	5. Environmental Protection: Positive	4.7	5.6 (6.3)	5. Agriculture and Farmers: Positive	6.6	4.7 (4.1)
Belgium									
	1981			1995			2010		
	1. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	11.1	5.6 (3.9)	1. Political Authority	14.9	5.8 (5.2)	1. Political Authority	18.9	8.1 (6.3)
	2. Education Expansion	7.9	3.9 (1.8)	2. Federalism	10.9	4.8 (4.4)	2. Law and Order: Positive	18.6	7.4 (4.8)
	3. Welfare State Expansion	6.1	4.2 (2.7)	3. Environmental Protection: Positive	9.9	5.4 (4.4)	3. Federalism	14.5	5.4 (5.4)

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4. Freedom and Human Rights	5.0	2.5 (1.7)	4. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	9.7	11 (3.5)	4. Multiculturalism: Negative	7.8	1.9 (2.9)
5. Culture: Positive	5.0	2.9 (2.6)	5. Welfare State Expansion	9.2	9.4 (4.1)	5. National Way of Life: Negative	4.0	0.5 (1.1)
Denmark								
			<i>1998</i>			<i>2011</i>		
			1. Multiculturalism: Negative	15.1	5.3 (2.3)	1. Multiculturalism: Negative	16.1	3.3 (6.2)
			2. European Community/Union: Negative	13.7	2.8 (4.6)	2. Law and Order: Positive	12.4	3.8 (6.1)
			3. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	11.0	4.1 (3.7)	3. Freedom and Human Rights	10.4	7.6 (9.3)
			4. Welfare State Expansion	11.0	6.6 (3.8)	4. Political Authority	8.6	6.1 (4.4)
			5. Free Market Economy	6.8	1.9 (2.6)	5. Education Expansion	7.8	9 (5.3)
Finland								
						<i>2011</i>		
						1. National Way of Life: Positive	10.5	1.5 (3.6)
						2. Agriculture and Farmers: Positive	10.2	2.5 (3.4)

							3. Welfare State Expansion	9.6		12.9 (6.4)
							4. Democracy	6.7		2.5 (2.3)
				5. Freedom and Human Rights	5.3	1.5 (1.7)	5. Market Regulation	5.7		3.2 (1.8)
France	<i>1986</i>			<i>1993</i>			<i>2012</i>			
	1. Traditional Morality: Positive	8.1	1.6 (3.2)	1. Traditional Morality: Positive	11.4	2.2 (4.6)	1. Law and order: Positive	13.1		4.2 (3.9)
	2. Free Market Economy	7.9	4.8 (5.1)	2. National Way of Life: Positive	11.0	2.2 (4.4)	2. Welfare State Expansion	11.4		11.7 (3.9)
	3. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	4.8	2 (2.5)	3. Law and Order: Positive	8.1	1.7 (3.1)	3. National Way of Life: Positive	9.4		2.4 (3.3)
	4. National Way of Life: Positive	4.6	2.3 (1.9)	4. Free Market Economy	5.3	2.2 (2)	4. Market Regulation	8.1		9.4 (5.3)
	5. Law and Order: Positive	4.2	2.7 (2.3)	5. Environmental Protection: Positive	4.7	5.3 (5.3)	5. Agriculture and Farmers: Positive	7.1		3.8 (3)

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Netherlands		2002		2010				
	1. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	15.0	6.7 (4.6)	1. Law and Order: Positive	15.5 6.8 (3.7)			
	2. Technology and Infrastructure	8.7	7.6 (2.2)	2. Multiculturalism: Negative	13.6 2.6 (4)			
	3. Political Authority	7.1	4.5 (2.8)	3. Economic Goals	6.5 2.9 (2.4)			
	4. Welfare State Expansion	7.1	6.4 (2.3)	4. Education Expansion	5.5 5.7 (2.5)			
	5. Equality: Positive	5.5	2.6 (1.3)	5. European Community/Union: Negative	5.3 1.5 (1.6)			
Norway		1981		1993		2009		
	1. Free Market Economy	16.0	4.2 (6.3)	1. Free Market Economy	20.4	5 (7.8)	1. Welfare State Expansion	10.4 14.4 (2.1)
	2. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	13.7	4 (4.5)	2. Freedom and Human Rights	10.6	4.9 (3.8)	2. Technology and Infrastructure	9.4 5.8 (1.8)
	3. Economic Orthodoxy	11.5	2 (4.2)	3. Military: Positive	6.4	2.1 (2.1)	3. Education Expansion	8.4 10.6 (1.8)
	4. Welfare State Limitation	4.8	1.2 (1.9)	4. Technology and Infrastructure	4.9	4.6 (2.5)	4. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	7.8 2.3 (2.7)

	5. Military: Positive	4.7	2 (1.5)	5. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	4.4	2.3 (1.3)	5. Free Market Economy	6.8	1.7 (2.5)
Sweden									
							<i>2010</i>		
							1. Welfare State Expansion	13.7	15.2 (5.1)
							2. National Way of Life: Positive	12.3	1.7 (4.3)
							3. Law and Order: Positive	8.8	4 (3.4)
							4. Non-economic Demographic Groups	8.3	4.4 (2.8)
							5. Multiculturalism: Negative	7.4	0.9 (2.6)
Switzerland									
	<i>1983</i>			<i>1995</i>			<i>2011</i>		
	1. Non-economic Demographic Groups	10.0	5 (5.1)	1. Economic Orthodoxy	11.5	4.8 (5.2)	1. European Community/Union: Negative	35	4.4 (10.8)
	2. Environmental Protection: Positive	6.9	12.8 (9.5)	2. Law and Order: Positive	10.8	4.1 (4.3)	2. Democracy	27.5	3.8 (8.5)

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3. Culture: Positive	5.6	1.8 (1.9)	3. Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	8.1	4 (5.9)	3. Political Authority	16.7	5.6 (8.7)
4. Freedom and Human Rights	5.4	8.9 (14)	4. Welfare State Expansion	5.8	7.7 (5.7)	4. Law and Order: Positive	6.0	6 (7.1)
5. Education Expansion	5.1	2.1 (1.8)	5. Education Expansion	5.5	2.3 (1.7)	5. Multiculturalism: Negative	5	0.6 (1.6)

We take a closer look at issues related directly to the welfare state (*expansion* or *limitation*) and more indirect elements, such as fostering a *free market economy* or *economic orthodoxy*, which are negatively associated to expanding welfare state solidarity. We observe three different patterns regarding the evolution of redistributive economic policy preferences of RR parties (Table 2):

The first group, which is composed of France and the four Scandinavian countries in our sample, tends to support our first hypothesis: welfare politics, and more precisely welfare state expansion, is gradually becoming a central feature of the RR agendas. In this respect, the Norwegian Progress party {Fremskrittspartiet (FrP)} and French Front National are model cases. In the case of Norway, the *free market economy* and *economic orthodoxy* made up more than 25% of the RR party manifesto in 1981 but in 1993, this proportion shrunk. In 2009 welfare state expansion constituted the most important issue for the FrP. In the case of France, the *free market economy* in the 1980s used to rank among the top five most salient issues and constituted 7.9 % of their manifesto. In 2012, however, a *free market economy* does not appear anymore among the top five; *welfare expansion* has taken its place with a score of 11.4 %. In both cases, we see a clear shift from the liberal economic agenda of the 1980s to a more welfare-oriented manifesto in the most recent election. As the other RR Scandinavian parties are much younger, we cannot talk about evolution over time like in Norway. However, they all advocate welfare state expansion, and this is top-issue for Sverigedemokraterna (SwD) in 2010 – a year when it achieved an electoral breakthrough.

Second, Austria constitutes a single category where pro-redistributive policy preferences do not appear among the top five issues of the FPÖ. Still, this RR party evolved on these issues: it used to be a fervent proponent of *free market economy* in the 1980s. In the 1990s this preference was still a top issue but less salient. Support for *free market economy* has disappeared from the more recent manifestos available in the CMP data. The question remains, however, whether the shift away from more right-wing economic policies has been accompanied by an increase in redistributive and pro-welfare preferences – a question, which we will address in the final empirical section.

The third group of countries in our sample includes Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Contrary to our hypothesis, the relevance of welfare-oriented issues in RR parties' manifestos in these cases is decreasing over time. Although RR parties in these countries used to rank *welfare expansion* among their top priorities, this is not the case in their more recent manifestos. We must note however, that in Belgium and the Netherlands, the parties changed during the period under study. This may not be as relevant for Belgium, since the Vlaams Belang (VB) is the direct successor Vlaams Block; it is however important in the case of the Netherlands, where the PVV has taken up the space on the RR after the disappearance of the Pim Fortuyn List (LPF). Not only did the LPF push forward welfare state expansion and social justice (labeled *equality positive*), but it did so in greater proportion than other parties competing in the same election. On the other hand, the PVV does not emphasize these issues in its manifesto.

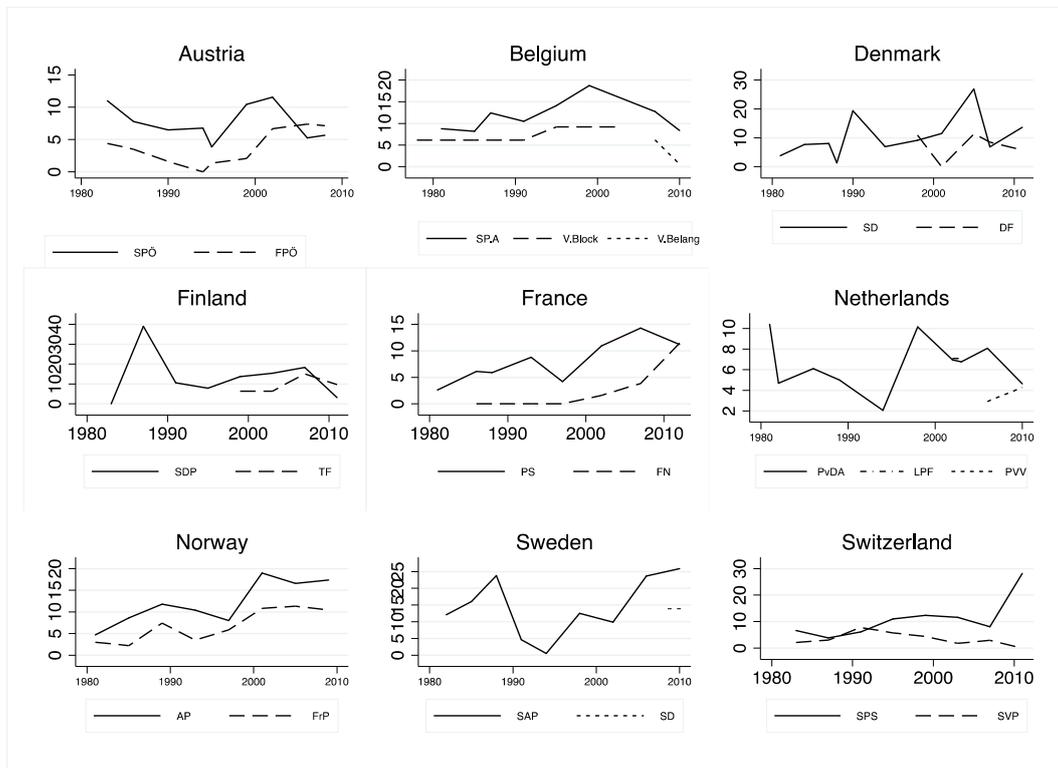
Overall, RR parties in Western Europe can by no means be considered indifferent to issues of redistribution, although different patterns emerge over time and across countries. We move on to narrow our analytical lens and focus on the salience of welfare state expansion in particular. This refers to introducing, maintaining or expanding any type of social service or social security scheme (except for education). Not only does this indicator allow us to see if RR parties have really invested the issue of solidarity but it allows us to observe to what extent RR parties challenge SD parties on their key issue: the welfare state. Figure 2 presents the salience of *welfare state expansion* in the manifestos of RR and SD parties for every election they have competed in since 1980 until the most recent election in the CMP data (which varies across countries).

Two patterns emerge in Figure 2: the divergent and convergent evolution of salience of welfare state expansion. Divergent evolution happens when the salience of welfare expansion increases for the RR parties, while at the same time it decreases for SD parties (e.g. Austria, Belgium, and Finland) or the other way around (e.g. Switzerland). In Austria and Finland, for instance, we clearly see not only

that the salience of welfare state expansion of SD parties declines but that it is even surpassed by that of the RR parties in the late 2000s. This is less evident in Denmark and the Netherlands, though they seem to experience similar evolutions. In the case of the Netherlands, the LPF in the early 2000s had similar levels of salience as the PvdA, and the PVV is following a similar trend. Though in Denmark the evolution is less clear, the gap in salience between the two party families is decreasing. In the case of Switzerland the salience levels of welfare expansion between the SVP and the PSS are clearly diverging but in a different direction than in Austria, Belgium, and Finland. Over time, the SVP is the only RR party for which the salience of welfare expansion is decreasing neatly; it reaches the lowest level of any RR party considered in this study.

The second pattern that emerges from these data is the convergent evolution of SD and RR parties' advocacy in favor of welfare state expansion. This is very clear in France and Norway (where salience increases for both parties). The case of France is an illustration of a dramatic change: the FN did not advocate welfare state expansion in the 1990s but in 2012 it reached a similar level of salience as the PS. The salience of welfare expansion for RR parties is highest in Norway and Sweden, where, as we saw earlier, this is their most salient issue (albeit of lower salience compared to SD parties).

Figure 2 - Salience of Welfare State Expansion in RR and SD parties' manifestos (CMP 1981-2011)

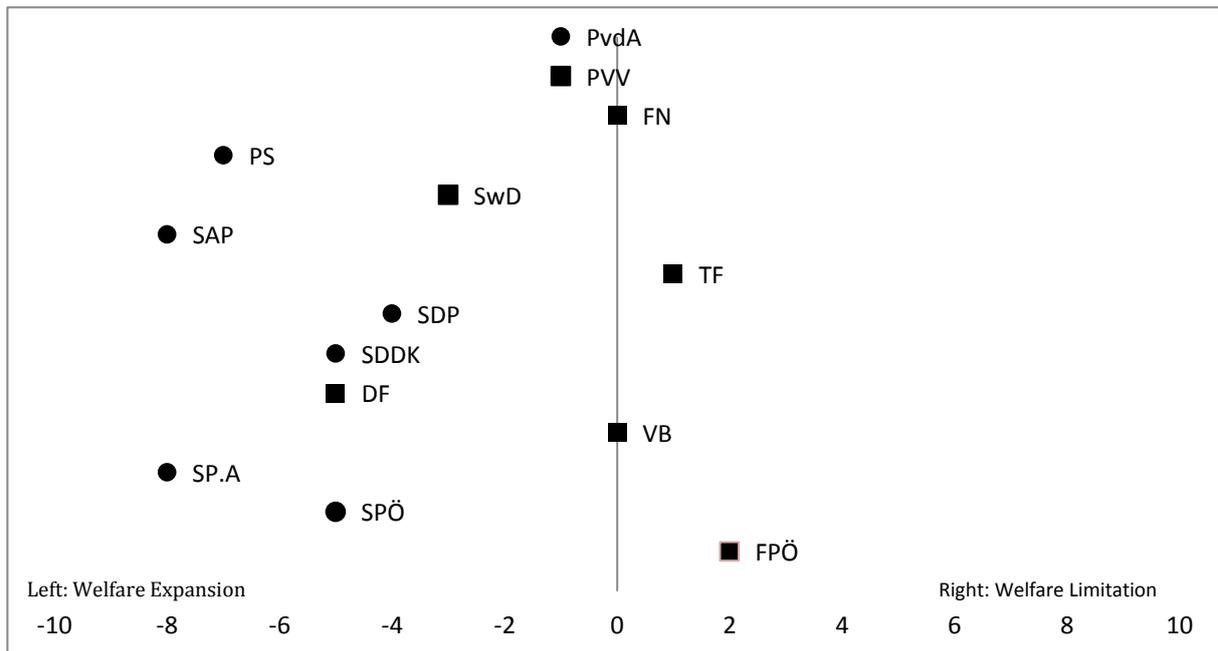


The two previous steps have shown that welfare expansion is a relevant issue for the RR and it is particularly salient for Scandinavian RR parties. This finding also reflects the fact that preference for welfare expansion is high for all parties in these universalistic welfare regimes. However, the picture is not as clear for the other RR parties.

Trends of salience over time are a good indicator to show the importance of welfare issues for the RR parties; yet, it is not sufficient. We can get a more complete picture once we examine the positions of parties on welfare issues, to which we now turn. In the third step of our cross-country and cross-party comparison, we look at RR and SD parties' positions on welfare state issues in 2014, which are

displayed in Figure 3. Negative values (-10) represent left wing positions on welfare issues, and positive values (+10) represent right-wing positions.

Figure 3 - Party position on Left/Right index of welfare issues (euandi 2014)



The left-right positioning of RR and SD parties reveals that parties from both families are located rather on the left side of welfare politics. As expected, all of the SD parties position themselves on the left side of welfare politics, and so do three out of the seven RR parties under study (DF, PVV, SD). French FN and Belgian VB are exactly at the center of the axis, whereas FPÖ and the True Finns have slightly more right-wing welfare positions compared to all other RR parties in the sample. We should underline that none of the RR parties under study is located on the extreme right of the axis, which would classify them as against the welfare state and its expansion. Looking at the distance between the national pairs of parties, we observe that on this twenty-point scale, the mean distance between the RR and the SD parties on welfare issues is 4.5. Most notably, there is no real difference in the left-right positioning of the two party families in Denmark and the Netherlands.

To sum up, our hypothesis that welfare issues are increasingly salient for the RR parties, and that these parties are contesting the SD parties on their issue tends to find partial support in the data. Redistribution is an increasingly salient issue for RR parties, and their position on this issue is very close to that of the SD parties. In particular, this hypothesis is confirmed in the Scandinavian countries, and to some extent also in the Netherlands. That said, Belgium and Switzerland tend to disconfirm our hypothesis, as RR parties in these countries tend to focus on non-economic issues, or adopt rightist positions on redistribution and welfare.

Empirics II: Solidarity vs. Diversity in RR discourse

In this section we analyze whether the concept of solidarity that parties promote is inclusive or exclusive. First, we comparatively examine the positions of SD and RR parties of six European countries (Austrian SPÖ and FPÖ, Belgian SP.A and VB; Danish SDDK and DF; French PS and FN; Dutch PvdA and PVV; Swedish SAP and SwD). Table 3 shows clearly that all RR parties (marked in

bold) either tend to agree or strongly agree with the exclusion of immigrants from welfare benefits. SD parties are supportive of an inclusive concept of solidarity, with the exception of the Austrian SPÖ which positions itself in the middle of the scale, thus supporting neither harder nor easier access of immigrants to social benefits. In what follows, we analyze whether and to what extent this tension between solidarity and diversity is visible in the manifestos of RR parties in Austria and France.

Table 3 - Exclusion of immigrants from welfare benefits (euandi 2014)

Completely disagree	Tend to disagree	Neutral	Tend to agree	Completely agree
PS, SAP, SP.A	PvdA, SDDK	SPÖ	SwD, FPÖ	PVV, FN, DF, VB

To recall, the quantitative analysis of Austria and France showed change over time (Figure 2): although RR parties in these countries used to have economically liberal preferences in the 1980s, they have moved towards the left on welfare issues. This is very clear in the case of France: for the FN, which used to hold an economically orthodox neoliberal position in the 1980s, welfare state expansion became a prominent issue in more recent decades. We saw earlier (Table 2 and Figure 2) that welfare state expansion has become a salient issue for the FN – most likely a result of Marine Le Pen’s takeover of the party presidency in 2011. Below we will see how this quantitative trend translates in qualitative terms in their most recent program. In the case of Austria, we saw that the FPÖ and the SPÖ have been converging regarding the degree of attention they pay to welfare state extension. Moreover, in terms of positions on welfare issues (Figure 3), FN is exactly at the 0 point on the scale, while the FPÖ is only slightly more on the right side of the scale.

If the FN and the FPÖ have embraced the concept of solidarity, and promote welfare related policy preferences, what kind of solidarity are they expressing in their electoral manifestos? Do they advocate in favor of generous welfare policies, but on an exclusive basis? In what follows, we tackle these questions through a careful qualitative study of the most recent programs issued by FN and FPÖ. We focus on the promotion of welfare state expansion, and the framing of pro-welfare arguments and solidarity and present our cases separately.

The FN’s left-wing economic turn

The FN’s left-wing shift is confirmed by its program: it presents itself in clear rupture with former references to a free market economy, and the first strong economic argument of the program is to re-build a strong state, and to protect the public services “that have been decimated by privatization and three decades of ultraliberal politics”. Another example of the FN’s shift is its determination to keep the 35-hour working week. This policy is very much an indicator of the left-right economic divide for parties in France; it was implemented by a socialist government in 1998 and has been fought against by all centrist and right parties. The FN claims to be a forceful proponent of social justice and advocates rather progressive social policies, such as higher taxes for the wealthiest, a return to full retirement at the age of 60, and an ambition to defend and improve social security.

Immigration: an economic problem

In the case of the FN, immigration is undeniably one of the most salient issues in the program and it is primarily framed in economic terms. For the FN immigration is a tool of “big corporate interests” to

exert pressure and lower the wages. Immigration is presented as a “weapon in the service of capital”¹⁷. From the perspective of immigrants, the FN explains that they move to France because of the “most generous social advantages in Europe”. The FN claims that social programs would function as a “sucking pump” driving legal and illegal immigrants to France.

To illustrate how immigrants are blamed for ineffective social justice and failed social programs, let’s examine the case of French public housing, which is directed at the less well-off. The FN considers that immigrants, both legal and illegal, are the first cause of the housing crisis. The FN claims that immigrants are favored in terms of housing compared to French citizens. Thus the FN’s economic framing of immigration is expressed both in terms of causes and consequences: immigrants move to France because of generous social benefits, and they threaten social security and welfare programs by abusing it.

The FN’s generous but exclusive welfare policy preferences

Overall, when dealing with specific redistributing policies, the FN makes two major claims: to increase the benefits for the less well-off and to ensure a “national priority”. This concept is sometimes also labeled “national preference” or “citizen priority” and it is central to the welfare agenda of the FN. To illustrate the FN’s dual claim well, we will focus on their rhetoric about healthcare and family policy. The FN has made “securing” social security, and thus health insurance, one of its priorities. But the social model of solidarity that the FN seeks to defend, however, is explicitly exclusive. One of the main policies the FN defends is the suppression of the *Aide Médicale d’Etat* (AME), a medical insurance for the poorest, whatever their legal immigration situation. Naturally this absolutely universalist policy is the FN’s nemesis. The suppression of AME would, according to the FN, not only improve social security finances, but on a more normative level it would also mean ending the assistance to individuals that are “undeserving” of national solidarity. This measure is characteristic of the FN’s ideology of solidarity, but it is a one-off policy.

Furthermore, the FN position on social security goes much further in terms of exclusiveness: the suspicion that immigrants are benefiting from the system goes hand in hand with the claim that they are “undeserving”. The FN even wants to set up an “observatory for the social rights of foreigners”. Its mission would be to control immigrants more thoroughly and make sure that they are not “abusing” the system. For instance, one of its measures would be to make identity checks more strict (e.g. with biometric documents) to ensure that “immigrants do not duplicate their IDs” in order to benefit from the same social service several times. With regards to social security, immigrants are not considered as deserving as French citizens, even when they are not breaking any rules. For instance, the FN wants to introduce a waiting period of one year in which an immigrant would work and contribute through taxes to social security, without receiving any benefits. Once this extra contribution has been paid, immigrants would be seen as more fit to become integrated into the reciprocal system of social security.

Family policy is also a good example of the FN’s exclusive redistributive solidarity. The party is the proponent of a very generous family policy: a large increase in family subsidies, but also in subsidies for people with special needs, and for the elderly. All these financial or fiscal aids should, however, be restricted to French citizens. The FN details their exclusiveness by considering that a family needs “a least one French parent” to be eligible for family-related social benefits. The division between solidarity and diversity is crystal clear in the case of the FN.

¹⁷ Both terms “grand patronat” (big corporate interests) and “grand capital” (big capital) are symbolically associated with the rhetoric of the left.

The FPÖ's blurred economic policy

The FPÖ has a more inconsistent economic messages compared to the FN. It preserves some key elements of neoliberal rhetoric: it argues in favor of a “thin” state that should limit itself to its “genuine” tasks so that costs for administration sink and taxes are reduced, private investments would follow, jobs would be created, which would lead to more prosperity for all. Contrary to the FN, the FPÖ does not travel too left on the economic dimension, but it does send blurry messages: on the one hand it seeks to reduce taxes whereas on the other it wants to maintain the existing social security and pension systems. The solution to this paradox is to confine the welfare state to the natives. More specifically, the FN’s “sucking pump” argument mentioned above is exactly what the FPÖ uses *against* a basic social security for all people living in Austria: the FPÖ opposes such a scheme as it would create “an unequal form of redistribution” and would encourage the immigration of people who are “exclusively interested in the Austrian social services”.

Immigration: a Cultural Problem?

The FPÖ starts by framing immigration in purely cultural-religious terms: decades of immigration from “foreign cultural circles”, the FPÖ argues, brought about “radical changes in the structure of the population”, whereby Islam became the second biggest cultural community in Austria. The FPÖ perceives this as a threat for the (cultural) future of Austria: the Islamic community would, by the end of the century, become the “strongest” group in the entire country. Moreover, the FPÖ portrays peoples of Islamic culture as non-conforming to Austrian constitutional principles and as undercover “conquerors”¹⁸. In its chapter “Women-Men-Partnership-Family”, the FPÖ states clearly that immigration from non-European countries has even endangered equality of opportunity between women and men¹⁹ in Austria.

Although having framed immigration as a cultural threat in the introduction of its electoral program, the FPÖ then links immigrants to economic problems, such as abuse of the welfare state and unemployment. In the first chapter, titled “Austria first”, the FPÖ begins with facts about immigration²⁰ to elaborate more on the extent to which immigrants are welcome and under what conditions. At this point the FPÖ proposes that Austria should start sending foreigners back to their countries of origin: foreigners who misuse the social system, delinquents, those whose asylum application was rejected, and those for whom there is no job or adequate housing in Austria should be repatriated. Moreover, the FPÖ’s chapter “social justice” very much resembles the FN program in that it emphasizes the economic aspects of migration. Without presenting any specific statistics, the FPÖ writes that “a large part” among migrants either has no job or is over- proportionately hit by unemployment because of their low education level. It is here that the FPÖ places the image of a “strained social system” – a welfare state under pressure because of “economic refugees” (Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge).

The FPÖ puts “Austrians first”, to the extent that it even contradicts its own neoliberal ideas of free market competition. For instance, the FPÖ proposes that in sectors where there is strong need for labor (e.g. health and care), there should be no demand for foreigners immediately after the liberalization of the market. Instead, the AMS (Austrian unemployment agency) should, based on long-term planning,

¹⁸ The FPÖ goes so far as to say that it opposes the construction of anything that symbolizes the desire to conquer Austria, masked under freedom of religion, such as minarets. It also clarifies that violation of the Austrian constitution, such as violence against women, lack of respect towards the freedom of press and opinion and the torture of animals, are not covered by freedom of religion and should thus be punished.

¹⁹ The FPÖ specifically refers to forced marriage and the headscarf as well as genital mutilation as “clear signs” of women’s oppression, which cannot be accepted in Austria.

²⁰ Every sixth resident of Austria and every third resident of Vienna has foreign roots; in 2007 there were 820,000 legal and 100,000 illegal immigrants in the country.

train Austrians so that they can qualify for these posts. In other words, rather than give the jobs to qualified immigrants, more public money should be spent training Austrians so that they get the available jobs instead.

Saving the strained welfare state

In the case of FPÖ, the solution to the problem of a strained welfare state is to create a social security tailor-made for “temporary” *Gastarbeiter*, which would give them access to medical care and would be financed by their own contributions. Non-natives who are frequently or long-term unemployed should lose both their residence and working permits. The FPÖ makes it very clear that the Austrian social security system should not include immigrants, for whom different arrangements should be made. Although the FPÖ does not go into as much detail as the FN does (note, however, that the FPÖ program is only 16 pages), in the FPÖ’s ideal world immigrants should be nothing more than temporary workers²¹ who will soon leave and should not be part of the Austrian welfare system. The “already expensive welfare state (7 billions per year)” should target those really in need and the FPÖ does support social programs for the elderly, people with special needs and the unemployed, but membership in all these categories is reserved to native Austrians. Although the FPÖ is not as left-wing on welfare issues, it shares the concept of exclusive solidarity with the FN, which expresses even greater degrees of distrust towards immigrants.

Immigration: a threat to the Austrian and French welfare states

Immigration remains at the core of both FN and FPÖ programs. RR parties in both countries perceive immigration, and consequently also diversity, as a threat to the welfare state and thus propagate an exclusive, chauvinist concept of solidarity. The FN and FPÖ are very similar in that they portray social programs as “endangered” by immigration. In both parties’ discourse, immigrants are held responsible for the failure of some social programs, and are certainly threatening the financial equilibrium of social security. Immigration is conceptualized as creating social injustice, and every ambitious welfare policy of the FN and FPÖ is tied to an exclusive concept of “national priority”.

Discussion-Conclusion

Globalization and economic integration processes have challenged the capacity of SD parties to deliver on their welfare policy promises. This is important because these parties have functioned as the traditional agents of redistributive solidarity and the major proponents of welfare state expansion in Western European political history (Hall 2014). By embracing neoliberal policies (liberalization and privatization) its relationship with its supporters, and especially the working class, which is in need of protection, came under strain. We have argued here that the RR grasped the opportunity to appeal to the working class by moving to the left on socioeconomic issues, while remaining on the right on sociocultural issues and especially immigration. Aiming at a key niche in the electoral market, left-authoritarianism, the RR sought to redefine the politics of solidarity by developing chauvinist welfare agendas.

We have explored empirically the proposition that RR parties gradually invaded the political space traditionally occupied by SD parties: over time, welfare state expansion became a salient topic for many RRs. Our research shows clearly that while SD parties did not abandon economic equality and the promotion of welfare state expansion, RR parties made a gradual yet radical move towards the left on redistribution, abandoning their pro-market neoliberal ideology to adopt pro-welfare positions. SD

²¹ For an analysis of conflicting rationalities and the role of the RR in the case of the Austrian Seasonal Worker Scheme, see Horvath (2014).

parties combine their (moderate left) position on economic issues with socially and culturally progressive liberal values, but RR parties combine it with socially and culturally conservative attitudes. Future studies should inquire about whether (and how much) the RRs' increasing attention to welfare expansion contributed to their electoral successes given that their initial victories were mainly based on anti-immigrant proposals.

In addition to the salience of welfare state expansion, we have looked at party positions on welfare issues. Our data shows that SD parties and RR parties nowadays reside in the same segment of the policy space when it comes to welfare preferences. Future research should address the variation in levels of welfare-related salience and the positions of RR parties and explain why some parties (e.g. FN) travel more to the left than others (e.g. FPÖ) by considering country-level factors such as type of welfare regime, electoral system, or party system polarization. Party-specific characteristics may also play a role, such as the age of RR parties and their participation in government.

This variation, in turn, affects the room for maneuver available for SD parties in their competition for votes and their pursuit of policy (at the national party system level). To successfully promote a combination of egalitarian pro-redistributive policies SD parties should, in all probability, seek alliances with the Greens, and the Radical Left, where they exist. Once again, majoritarian systems and PR differ in the extent to which SD parties face competition at the left-liberal location of the policy space. Variation across PR systems plays a role in affecting party competition and coalition potential. Yet, the Left can unite precisely on defending these values: democracy, equality, and social commitment to redistribution.

Another question that remains open is whether SD parties attract right-liberals, as they gradually became more moderate on the economy and more liberal on sociocultural issues. The right-liberals form a group that previous research identified as lacking a match at the party level (e.g. Lefkofridi et al. 2013), similarly to the left-authoritarians that RR parties sought to pair. In majoritarian contexts, right-liberals could "cross the line" and support a party of the "other" ideological block – a switch that could benefit SD parties. In a proportional multi-party system, however, party-switches usually occur within the left- or within the right-bloc (intra-bloc volatility) (Bartolini and Mair 1990).

Furthermore, we have conducted a cross-party family comparison of current positions on immigrants' deservingness of welfare services that portrayed SD and RR across Europe as have opposing views: the former oppose and the latter favor more difficult access for immigrants to social benefits. Here, the exception is the Austrian SPÖ, which neither favors nor opposes more difficult access for immigrants to social benefits. This may be reflecting how much under pressure the SPÖ currently is; the FPÖ appeals more and more to those segments of the electorate that used to support the SPÖ in past decades, namely those people that have been benefiting from the welfare state promoted by the SPÖ. We have argued in this chapter that the FPÖ, like other RR parties in Europe, try to steal those voters from SD parties by linking the welfare state to immigration, thus juxtaposing solidarity and diversity. Our in-depth study of the FN and FPÖ electoral programs makes it clear that the promotion of welfare state expansion occurs within an anti-immigrant frame, the issue around which the RR are perceived as most competent.

Drawing on their credibility on matters of immigration, RR parties advocate against further immigration and existing immigrants' access to the same social benefits as the natives and even argue in favor of repatriating immigrants, thus presenting immigrants' exclusion as the solution to a complex economic reality. The imagery of immigrants is based on a series of negative stereotypes: immigrants come to one's country not in search of a better future (e.g. civil liberties) but because of the existing welfare benefits. The abuse of the social system by immigrants is portrayed as the cause of welfare state failures. Immigrants are also presented as the double cause of rising unemployment: on the one hand, they lack education and skills so they are more likely to be unemployed and in need of unemployment benefits; on the other, if they are skilled and are allowed to work in the country they get those jobs that could have gone to natives, if the welfare state would invest in training the natives.

Solidarity is thus eroded by the electoral strategy and discourse of the RR, which entertains simultaneously both economic insecurities and cultural fears.

Given the changes in their economic agendas and positions documented here, perhaps we should rethink the term “radical right” as a label for parties that promote a pro-welfare agenda in the context of populist-nationalist (regionalist), anti-immigrant and exclusionist rhetoric. Authors that study the RR’s success in Western Europe have used different labels for this party family: radical right (Kitschelt 1995; Norris 2005), populist radical right (Mudde 2007) or extreme right (Ignazi 2003; Carter 2005). According to Kitschelt (2007) this debate is “futile” because, despite their conceptual disagreements, authors agree on the cases that belong to this party family. By emphasizing the socio-economic preferences of radical right parties, our contribution reopens this debate. However, instead of focusing on how to label these parties, our study questions their conventional placement on the political spectrum.

The rhetoric of “natives first” employed by the RR is particularly dangerous during the current economic crisis, which has put more pressure on European economies and welfare systems. Instead of searching the causes of their problems in the regulation of the financial sector, the irresponsible behavior of banks or the fact that multinational capital has the power to threaten governments to relocate their investment/industry to countries with lower wages and weaker labor rights, the RR in creditor states emphasized the cultural and moral differences (working and spending habits) between North and South and blamed the crisis on lazy and corrupt Southerners. Now that Southern European economies are plagued by unemployment and some of their citizens are forced to migrate to the North, the RR is expected to intensify this chauvinist discourse and energize the division between solidarity and diversity by accentuating the differences among Europeans, not just between European and non-European (e.g. Islamic) cultures.

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