EXPLAINING VARIATION IN THE SUCCESS OF EXTREME RIGHT PARTIES IN WESTERN EUROPE

MATT GOLDER
New York University

Methodological problems associated with selection bias and interaction effects have hindered the accumulation of systematic knowledge about the factors that explain cross-national variation in the success of extreme right parties. The author uses a statistical analysis that takes account of these problems to examine the effect of electoral institutions, unemployment, and immigration on the support for these parties. The data set used in this analysis is new and spans 19 countries and 165 national elections. There are four substantive conclusions. The first is that it is important to distinguish between neofascist and populist parties on the extreme right because their fortunes depend on different factors. The second is that populist parties do better in countries where the district magnitude is larger and more seats are allocated in upper tiers. The third is that although immigration has a positive effect on populist parties irrespective of the unemployment level, unemployment only matters when immigration is high. Finally, there is evidence that the permissiveness of the electoral system mediates the effect of immigration on populist parties.

Keywords: *unemployment; immigration; electoral systems; extreme right parties*

During the past 20 years, extreme right parties have emerged in many European countries and enjoyed increasing electoral success at the national, regional, and local levels. This growing electoral support has often been translated into significant influence over the shape and nature of government coalitions, important policy decisions, and the electoral strategies of

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mainstream parties. These recent developments have led to a burgeoning literature that focuses on the emergence and electoral growth of extreme right parties in particular countries.[1] In contrast, surprisingly little attention has been devoted to explaining why some extreme right parties enjoy electoral success, whereas others remain marginalized.

Those empirical studies that have actually investigated the variation in the success of these parties have often produced inconsistent results. For example, some studies find that immigration matters (Anderson, 1996; Knigge, 1998; Martin, 1996), others that it does not (Mayer & Perrineau, 1989), and still others that it only matters in some countries (Givens, 2000). The same inconsistent results can be found for unemployment and electoral institutions. Jackman and Volpert (1996) argue that electoral thresholds influence the support for extreme right parties, whereas Swank and Betz (1996) provide evidence to dispute this. Knigge (1998) claims that unemployment reduces the support for extreme right parties, whereas Jackman and Volpert (1996) conclude the opposite. Lewis-Beck and Mitchell (1993) state that the effect of unemployment depends on the level of immigration. Many of these studies suffer from methodological problems relating to selection bias and the incorrect interpretation of interaction effects. Given these methodological problems and the inconsistent results that have been generated, it is worthwhile reexamining the effect of electoral institutions, immigration, and unemployment on extreme right parties.

In the next section, I provide methodological evidence to illustrate that some of the inferences made in the literature on extreme right parties may be flawed. In light of this, I then turn to a reexamination of how unemployment, immigration, and electoral institutions influence the success of extreme right parties across western Europe. Although the success of these parties is commonly associated in the minds of the public, politicians, and academics with high levels of unemployment and immigration, the causal story remains ambiguous. Do voters support extreme right parties because immigrants negatively affect their material well-being or because immigrants pose a threat to their national identity, culture, and way of life more generally? It is also unclear whether extreme right voters and elites are motivated by instrumental or expressive concerns. Are they satisfied expressing their preferences or do

1. Taggart (1996) has argued that "much of the academic coverage [of extreme right parties] has been of an explicitly comparative nature" and points to a number of special issues in prominent journals (*West European Politics* in 1988, *European Journal of Political Research* in 1992, and *Parliamentary Affairs* in 1992) and several books to support this point (Hainsworth, 1992; Merkl & Weinberg, 1993). However, the truth is that most of the articles and books written about extreme right parties are single case studies or compilations of country-specific and case-specific observations.

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they actually wish to influence electoral and policy outcomes? In this third section I outline three explanations for the level of electoral support received by extreme right parties. Although these explanations are not necessarily rival, they do generate distinct hypotheses that can be tested. In the fourth section, I describe the model that I use to test these hypotheses. This model draws on a new data set spanning all 165 national elections in 19 west European countries between 1970 and 2000.[2] Finally, I discuss the results of the model and conclude with suggestions for areas of future research.

STATISTICAL ANALYSES OF EXTREME RIGHT PARTIES

Much of the literature on extreme right parties is dominated by qualitative studies. Although this research is very helpful in generating hypotheses, it is less useful for hypothesis testing. This is because it is difficult to draw valid causal inferences from this type of work (Fearon, 1991; King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994; Lieberson, 1991). Because I am primarily interested in hypothesis testing, I focus here on those recent studies that use a variety of statistical methods to evaluate hypotheses about extreme right parties (Anderson, 1996; Givens, 2000; Jackman & Volpert, 1996; Knigge, 1998; Lewis-Beck & Mitchell, 1993; Swank & Betz, 1996). Several of the conclusions reached by this research remain open to question due to methodological errors relating to potential selection bias and the incorrect interpretation of interaction effects.

SELECTION BIAS

The fact that selection bias can seriously damage one's ability to make valid causal inferences is increasingly well understood and accepted (Geddes, 1990; Heckman, 1979; Przeworski & Limongi, 1992). Potential selection bias is a significant problem for studies analyzing the factors that influence the electoral success of extreme right parties. The issue arises because there is good reason to believe that these factors might also be systematically related to whether an extreme right party exists in the first place. One temptation in empirical analyses of extreme right parties is to ignore those countries where these parties do not exist. The problem is that this leads to biased and inconsistent estimates because those countries that have factors discouraging the extreme right vote are systematically underrepresented.

2. The countries included are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

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The second temptation is to include countries without extreme right parties but code the electoral support of these parties as zero. This is equally wrong because it assumes that factors such as unemployment and immigration have no effect on extreme right support in these countries. Jackman and Volpert (1996) were the first to highlight these problems. They recognized that the electoral success of extreme right parties is left-censored at zero because it cannot be observed in those countries lacking an organized extreme right party. In response, they used a Tobit model that utilizes a maximum likelihood estimator for (left- or right-) censored variables in their analysis.

Despite the concerns raised by Jackman and Volpert (1996) about selection bias, it is extremely rare to find subsequent work that takes it into account.[3] Much of the recent empirical analysis on extreme right parties has drawn on data from single nation studies (Lewis-Beck & Mitchell, 1993; Martin, 1996) or a small number of countries (Anderson, 1996; Givens, 2000; Knigge, 1998) where extreme right parties have been relatively successful. Many of these studies make general claims about various factors that influence the success of extreme right parties. Although these studies are often informative, they suffer from potential selection bias because they ignore countries where extreme right parties are nonexistent or where their electoral support is extremely limited.[4] For example, Ireland, Portugal, Iceland, Finland, Greece, and Luxembourg are just some of the countries that are frequently omitted in these analyses. Ignoring these countries is problematic for drawing valid causal inferences because it is likely to lead to an overestimation of those factors purportedly increasing the electoral success of extreme right parties. Other analyses do include countries where extreme right parties have failed to achieve success, but many do not take the econometric steps necessary to take account of selection issues (Taggart, 1996). This is equivalent to coding the censored observations as zero and is equally problematic for drawing valid causal inferences.

INTERACTION TERMS

Several of the most significant inferences made in the statistical analysis of extreme right parties rely on models that include interaction terms. However, the use and interpretation of these interaction terms is either incorrect or

3. Swank and Betz (1996) is one exception.

4. Although Givens (2000) states that she covers "the range of electoral success experienced by radical right parties" (p. 4) by analyzing Germany, Austria, and France, she still ignores countries where these parties are nonexistent or where they fail to win seats at the subnational level. Thus, she excludes an important part of the distribution of extreme right parties.

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inadequate in many cases.[5] To illustrate this, it is helpful to imagine a simple model with a single interaction term.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_1 X_2 + \varepsilon. \quad (1)$$

The meaning of the interaction term is perhaps easier to interpret if Equation 1 is rearranged as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + (\beta_2 + \beta_3 X_1) X_2 + \varepsilon. \quad (2)$$

The first thing to point out is that the linear components of the interaction term (X_1 and X_2) must be included separately to avoid nonsensical models (Friedrich, 1982; Gill, 2001). This is true even if the linear component is not statistically significant and even if the researcher has an a priori hypothesis that it is not relevant. Lewis-Beck and Mitchell (1993) include an interaction term between immigration and unemployment in their analysis of the National Front's electoral performance in France. However, they fail to include the linear components of the interaction term separately in their model. This is equivalent to specifying Equation 1 as $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_3 X_1 X_2 + \varepsilon$. One problem with this is that it makes the unlikely assumption that unemployment and immigration have no effect on the National Front in the absence of the other. Even if this were true, a second problem exists in that it is not possible to interpret the variance of the interaction term except in the context of the variance of its linear components. As a result, it is all but impossible to interpret Lewis-Beck and Mitchell's results in a meaningful way.

It is also important to remember that the results of interaction models cannot be interpreted as in regular additive models because the coefficients are conditional. For example, the marginal effect (or conditional coefficient) of X_2 on the outcome variable (Y) is determined by taking the first derivative of Equation 2 with respect to X_2. This is:

$$\frac{\partial Y}{\partial X_2} = \beta_2 + \beta_3 X_1. \quad (3)$$

It is clear from this that the effect of X_2 depends on the level of X_1. Although this should be taken into account when making inferences about the impact of

5. For a good discussion of interaction effects in linear and nonlinear models, see Friedrich (1982) and Gill (2001).

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X_2 on the outcome variable, this is rarely done. Most scholars simply report a single coefficient for X_2 rather than a range of coefficients (Knigge, 1998). Moreover, it is normally the case that this single coefficient describes the estimated causal effect of X_2 when the modifying variable (X_1 in this case) is zero. The information that can be gathered from this single coefficient is often severely limited and can be quite misleading when it comes to interpretation.

The standard errors in interaction models are also conditional. For example, the standard error of X_2 conditional on $X_1 = x_1$ is the following:

$$S_{\beta_2 + \beta_3 X_1 | X_1 = x_1} = \sqrt{\text{var}(\beta_2) + \text{var}(\beta_3) X_1^2 + 2X_1 \,\text{cov}[\beta_2, \beta_3]}. \quad (4)$$

None of the studies dealing with extreme right parties that include interaction terms ever calculates the full range of conditional standard errors (Jackman & Volpert, 1996; Knigge, 1998; Lewis-Beck & Mitchell, 1993). As a result, they fail to provide an appropriate assessment of the uncertainty of their empirical evidence concerning those variables included in their interaction terms. Golder (in press) illustrates the danger that this can cause for making valid causal inferences when he replicates Jackman and Volpert's (1996) model. This model includes an interaction term between electoral thresholds and the effective number of parties. Although Jackman and Volpert supply detailed information relating to the conditional coefficients by providing point estimates at selected percentile values, it is impossible to evaluate them because they do not provide the corresponding conditional standard errors. Given access to their data, Golder was able to replicate their results and calculate the full range of conditional standard errors. Using these figures he shows that Jackman and Volpert's inferences relating to electoral thresholds and multipartism are open to question.

It may be possible to resolve some of the inconsistent results concerning the effect of unemployment, immigration, and electoral institutions on extreme right parties by dealing with some of these methodological issues. This is the focus for the remaining sections.

EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESES

An analysis of the role played by unemployment, immigration, and electoral institutions provides at least three explanations for the level of support received by extreme right parties. The focus on how unemployment and immigration influence the extreme right vote relies on arguments about what

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drives voter preferences, whereas the focus on electoral institutions emphasizes the way in which institutions constrain voters' choices given their preferences.

THE MATERIALIST ARGUMENT

The materialist argument focuses on the connection between unemployment and immigration that is often made by extreme right parties in their electoral strategies. The National Front in France, the Republicans in Germany, and the Freedom Party in Austria have all been particularly vocal in linking the number of immigrants in their respective countries to the number of unemployed. For example, Jean-Marie Le Pen used the slogan "Two million immigrants are the cause of two million French people out of work" during the 1984 European elections in France (Mitra, 1988). The Republicans in Germany have campaigned under a similar slogan: "Eliminate Unemployment: Stop Immigration." Other attempts to link the issue of immigration and unemployment can be seen in Haidar's "Austria First" petition drive and Le Pen's publicly stated desire to repatriate immigrants and give French citizens preference in the job market. These slogans seem to be explicit appeals to voters who fear that their material well-being is threatened by the influx of immigrants.

There is little theoretical or empirical evidence to support the claim that immigration actually causes unemployment (Borjas, 1994, 1995; Friedberg & Hunt, 1995; Zimmerman, 1995). Theoretical economic models are equivocal as to whether immigration actually has a negative effect on the economy in terms of unemployment or growth; it all depends on the assumptions made about whether the economy is open or closed to international trade and the degree of substitutability between immigrants and natives (Borjas, 1995, p. 5). The empirical evidence that immigration causes unemployment is not very strong either. Most studies indicate that immigration does not have an effect on wages or unemployment (Altonji & Card, 1991; Borjas, 1994). Moreover, these studies also find that those natives who are the closest substitutes with immigrant labor do not suffer significantly as a result of increased immigration (Friedberg & Hunt, 1995, p. 42). Although much of this research has been conducted in the United States, several comparative studies in European countries have reached similar conclusions (Hunt, 1992; Pischke & Velling, 1994).[6] It is important to remember, however, that the materialist argument does not require that immigration actually cause unemployment, just that people believe that it does.

6. The fact that I find a negative correlation (–0.29) between unemployment levels and the number of immigrants in my data set further supports these findings.

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We do know that economic conditions shape electoral outcomes. In an exhaustive survey of the economic voting literature, Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier (2000) conclude that electorates are strongly affected by global economic fluctuations (real and perceived) and that plausible economic indicators (objective or subjective) do account for much of the variance in government support. The problem is that economic voting theories focus on how incumbent political parties are rewarded or punished for their economic performance. They do not explain why voters who wish to punish incumbent parties should vote for extreme right parties over any other opposition party. Because people traditionally think of left-wing parties as more competent to deal with unemployment, it might actually be more reasonable to assume that these parties are better positioned to benefit from high unemployment levels.

This does not mean that unemployment does not matter, however. Much depends on why voters think that unemployment is high. It is hard to see why people would vote for extreme right parties if they think that unemployment is caused by tight monetary policy or rigidities in the labor market. However, it is less difficult to see why they might do this if they think that immigration is the cause of unemployment. This is likely to happen when there are large numbers of foreigners in the country. The claims of extreme right politicians and the media linking unemployment and immigration may be more compelling in these circumstances. Individual voters are also more likely to make this connection on their own when there are a lot of foreigners around. The materialist argument, therefore, generates the following hypothesis:

> *Materialist hypothesis:* Unemployment increases the vote for extreme right parties when immigration is high. Unemployment does not affect (or lowers) the voteshare received by extreme right parties when immigration is low.

THE IDEATIONAL ARGUMENT

The ideational argument focuses on the threat to national identity and culture posed by immigration. People who are worried about immigrants have had few options but to vote for extreme right parties. This is because discourse on immigration policy has traditionally been constrained in western Europe. Mainstream parties have avoided the issue as much as possible (Freeman, 1995). Extreme right parties have taken advantage of this and portrayed their mainstream competitors as conscious agents of a multiculturalism that undermines national cohesiveness. Although much of the mainstream right has responded by strengthening its position on the immigration issue, it has not always been successful at countering the appeal of the extreme right. This is not surprising, given that only extreme right parties

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make immigration a central tenet of their electoral campaigns. People who are truly concerned with the cultural threats posed by immigration simply do not believe that voting for the mainstream right is a credible means of significantly altering immigration policy.

A growing collection of survey and opinion polls provide evidence that immigration is an important electoral issue for the extreme right. Mitra (1988) noted that 39% of the electorate of the French National Front in the 1984 European elections stated that immigration was the main reason for voting as they did. This figure was 46% in the 1986 legislative elections. A SOFRES-TF1 survey from 1986 found that 60% of the National Front electorate in France cited immigration as a motivation for voting as they did (Martin, 1996, p. 19). The recent electoral strategies of extreme right parties provide further evidence that immigration is an issue with electoral benefits for them. Why else would the Austrian Freedom Party and the Italian Northern Leagues have taken up the immigration issue in the late 1980s and early 1990s, while the Flemish Block and the French National Front have hardened their positions? Evidence from opinion polls and electoral strategies does seem to suggest that immigration causes people to vote for extreme right parties on ideational grounds.

One implication of this argument is that when there are large numbers of foreigners in a country, people are more likely to vote for extreme right parties. The empirical evidence at the subnational level is generally inconclusive as to whether districts with higher percentages of immigrants are more likely to exhibit higher vote shares for extreme right parties (Mudde, 1999). For example, Mayer and Perrineau (1989) report that a reasonable correlation between the proportion of immigrants in the residential population and support for the National Front can be found at the departmental level in the 1988 presidential elections in France, but not at the municipal level. Givens (2000) finds that extreme right parties do better in those regions in Austria and France where there are many foreigners. However, she finds that this is not the case in Germany. This subnational evidence does not contradict the implication noted above though. It may be the case that regions with lots of foreigners exhibit high voteshares for extreme right parties on the grounds that voters have more direct contact with immigrants. However, it may also be the case that voters in regions with small numbers of immigrants are just as likely to vote for the extreme right because they fear an influx of immigrants into their region (Martin, 1996, p. 21). Here it is the knowledge that there are large numbers of foreigners in the country who could come to their region that causes them to vote for extreme right parties. The inconclusive evidence of a correlation between the percentage of immigrants in a given region and the regional voteshare of extreme right parties is perfectly compatible with the

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belief that the national voteshare of these parties is affected by the percentage of immigrants in the national population. It is true that individuals in countries where there are few foreigners may also support extreme right parties because they fear an influx of immigrants from surrounding countries. However, the difficulty involved in crossing national borders compared to the ease with which foreigners can move around within a given country suggests that the primary concern of most voters will be the number of immigrants already in their own country. The ideational argument, therefore, generates the following hypothesis:

Ideational hypothesis: Higher levels of immigration help extreme right parties irrespective of the unemployment level.

THE INSTRUMENTAL ARGUMENT

The instrumental argument is built on the belief that the specific electoral institutions of each country may affect the ability of extreme right parties to achieve their goals. Consider the reasonable assumption that an extreme right party wants to achieve some form of political influence. It is clear that this party wields political influence if it wins seats in parliament. However, it is also possible for it to exert some influence even if it has no chance of actually winning any seats; as long as it has sufficient votes to affect electoral outcomes it can win policy concessions from those parties that are realistically challenging for district seats. The point is that in both of these cases the extreme right party must win a certain percentage of the vote in an electoral district (X_i^*) to attain political influence (the subscript refers to district i). The more electoral districts there are in which this party exceeds the value X_i^*, the greater its national political influence. It should be clear from this analysis that extreme right party elites and voters face a coordination problem. Unless enough individuals vote for extreme right parties to push them past X_i^*, these parties will not be able to exert any political influence.

District magnitudes influence the value of X_i^*. The larger the district magnitude, the smaller the percentage of votes needed to win the last district seat. Not only is it easier for extreme right parties to win seats themselves when the district magnitude is large, it is also easier for them to simply affect the election outcome. Because the coordination problem for extreme right parties is smaller in districts with larger magnitudes, one would expect the extreme right to win more votes in these districts. One would also expect that party elites devote more resources to these districts because the marginal benefit in terms of voters mobilized should be higher. The percentage of seats allocated in upper tiers above the district level also influences X_i^*. All countries allo-

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cate seats at the district level but some also allocate them at the regional and/or national level. For example, half of the seats in Germany are allocated at the district level and half at the national level. In Greece, seats are allocated at the district, regional, and national levels. In the case of the Netherlands, the district is the same as the national level because the whole country is treated as a single electoral district. In my data set, the percentage of seats allocated in upper tiers ranges from zero for those countries without upper tier seats to 50% in Germany. Upper tier seats tend to be compensatory seats that are used to reduce the disproportionality of electoral systems at the district level (Amorim Neto & Cox, 1997). As a result, their practical effect is to reduce the size of X_i^*. For example, extreme right parties that have insufficient votes to win seats at the district level may have enough votes to win seats in upper tiers. This leads to the prediction that the extreme right will win more votes in those countries that have large district magnitudes and a large percentage of upper tier seats.

An alternative way of assessing X_i^* might be to use effective electoral thresholds since they measure the number of votes required to win a district seat. However, this measure has several drawbacks compared to using district magnitudes and upper tier seats. The first is that much of the recent theoretical literature on voter and elite coordination in party systems focuses on the district magnitude rather than the electoral threshold (Cox, 1997, 1999). Second, it is not clear that the method for constructing effective thresholds is theoretically justified (Penadés, 1997). This is partly due to the problems associated with capturing the effect of district magnitudes and compensatory/additional seats in a single number. It seems preferable to allow the effect of district magnitudes and upper tier seats to speak for themselves (Amorim Neto & Cox, 1997). Third, an emphasis on the district magnitude is also preferred on the grounds of parsimony because the calculation of effective thresholds can be somewhat convoluted. Moreover, the calculation is based on the district magnitude anyway.

It should be remembered that the relative importance of district magnitudes and upper tier seats will depend on the extent to which voters and elites are motivated by instrumental and strategic concerns. This is because the coordination story described above assumes that these groups are interested in affecting electoral outcomes. This need not be the case. It is quite possible that party elites and voters are actually motivated by expressive concerns rather than a desire to win political influence (Schuessler, 2000). It may be enough for them to simply express their support for extreme right ideas. This means that the institutional constraints posed by electoral systems will have little effect on expressive voters and elites. It is arguable that socioeconomic

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conditions such as the level of unemployment and immigration will also have little effect on the decisions of expressive voters. The instrumental argument, therefore, generates the following hypothesis:

> *Instrumental hypothesis:* If elites and voters are instrumentally motivated, then the voteshare of extreme right parties will be higher in countries that have large district magnitudes and a large number of upper tier seats. This will not be the case if elites and voters are expressively motivated.

Before stating the statistical model that I use to test these hypotheses, a distinction needs to be drawn between older, neofascist parties and more recent, populist parties on the extreme right. The names for these more recent extreme right parties vary. Betz (1994) calls them *radical right* or *populist*. Taggart (1996) also calls them *populist*. Ignazi (1992) simply calls them *new right*.[7] Although these typologies are common in the literature, there has been no statistical analysis to examine whether factors such as unemployment, immigration, and electoral institutions affect these parties differently. This is somewhat surprising, given that neofascist and populist parties have clearly enjoyed distinctly different patterns of electoral success during the past 20 years. This can be seen in Figure 1. The electoral success of neofascist parties has declined or remained fairly stable during the past 30 years, whereas that of populist parties has grown enormously since 1985.[8] Because it is not immediately obvious why unemployment, immigration, or the electoral system would affect these parties differently, one could argue that I do not need to make this distinction. The problem is that populist party elites and voters may be instrumental, whereas neofascist elites and voters may be expressive. It may also be the case that populist voters are materialist, whereas neofascist supporters are ideational. Although it is impossible to see inside the heads of these people to determine their motivation, it is possible to test these claims if one makes a distinction between these parties as I do in my statistical model.

7. Kitschelt (1997) argues that extreme right parties can be split into more than these two typologies. For example, he distinguishes between fascist parties, welfare chauvinist parties, right-authoritarian parties, and populist antistatist parties.

8. To calculate the average percentage of the vote received by neofascist and populist parties, I found the percentage of votes won by these parties in the closest election prior to the year for which I was making the calculation. These figures were then summed and divided by the number of countries that actually had elections. The countries included in these calculations and the specification of whether an extreme right party was considered populist or neofascist can be seen in Table 1. The criteria for distinguishing between these parties are discussed in the next section.

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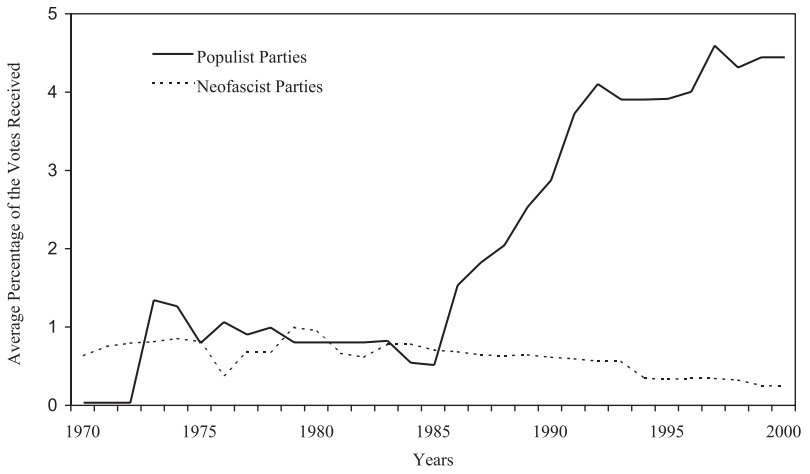

Figure 1. **The electoral success of populist and neofascist parties in western Europe, 1970-2000.**

THE STATISTICAL MODEL

The materialist, ideational, and instrumental hypotheses are tested with the statistical model in Equation 5. This model is calculated using the voteshare of neofascist parties and populist parties, as well as the combined voteshare of these parties.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{VOTESHARE}_{i,t} = {} & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{UNEMP}_{i,t} + \beta_2 \text{IMMIG}_{i,t} + \\ & \beta_3 (\text{UNEMP*IMMIG})_{i,t} + \beta_4 \text{LOGMAG}_{i,t} + \beta_5 \text{UPPERTIER}_{i,t} + \\ & \beta_{6\text{-}23} \text{COUNTRY DUMMIES}_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t}. \end{aligned} \tag{5}$$

The dependent variable VOTESHARE measures the percentage national electoral support for extreme right parties.[9] UNEMP measures the percent-

9. I do not have data on IMMIG for 14 elections. These figures are missing either because the data do not exist or because they are not currently available. The specific elections affected are listed in the appendix. I was also unable to collect comparable data for the variables UPPER, MAGNITUDE, and LOGMAG for the 1970 Swedish election. This was because there were two lower houses of parliament at this time (correspondence with the Swedish Social Science Data Services). Information concerning the construction of specific variables and the sources for data can be found in the appendix. More detailed information can be found at http://homepages.nyu.edu/~mrg217/codebook.pdf.

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age of the total labor force that is unemployed at the national level in an election year. IMMIG measures the percentage of the national population composed of foreign citizens. One could argue that this variable does not capture the number of foreigners that people think are in the country. This is true because there is no immediate reason to assume that an individual's subjective perception of the number of foreigners in a country is the same as the objective figures used in my statistical model. However, this is not a problem if this perception bias is consistent because the bias would act as a constant that is added to, or subtracted from, the objective figures. This will not affect the interpretation of my results. Moreover, Kitschelt (1997, p. 61) has concluded that there is not a great deal of difference between subjective and objective measures of the foreign population in west European countries anyway. He found that in exactly those countries that actually did have relatively large numbers of immigrants, more people thought there were too many foreigners. This means that the coefficients for IMMIG can be interpreted with some confidence. The interaction term UNEMP*IMMIG is included in the model to measure the conditional effect of unemployment and immigration on the electoral success of extreme right parties. This is necessary to test the materialist argument, which states that unemployment should increase the voteshare of extreme right parties when immigration levels are high but not when immigration levels are low.

The variable LOGMAG is based on the logged magnitude of the median legislator's district. The median is preferable to the average district magnitude because it offers a better measure of central tendency in nonnormal distributions (Amorim Neto & Cox, 1997). This measure is logged to capture the intuition that the marginal causal effect of a unit change in district magnitude is smaller when the district magnitude is large.[10] The fact that I am using a single measure (logged median district magnitude) to capture the effects of various district magnitudes in each country should be remembered when interpreting the coefficients on LOGMAG. If the coefficients are statistically significant, then the instrumental argument gains support. If they are not significant, this could either be because district magnitudes do not affect the voteshare of extreme right parties or because my measure of district magnitudes is not sufficiently sensitive to the variability of within country district magnitudes. At that point, it would be necessary to test the hypothesized relationship using district-level data. Finally, the variable UPPERTIER measures the percentage of assembly seats allocated in upper tiers above the district level.

10. In fact, my results are unaffected if the logged average district magnitude is used instead of the logged median district magnitude.

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To test the effect of these independent variables on the support for extreme right parties, it is useful, as I noted earlier, to make a distinction between neofascist and populist parties. This distinction is not as easy to make as it appears. I have not found two studies of extreme right parties that include an identical list of neofascist and populist parties. Some authors even list the parties differently, depending on which particular piece of work one reads (Betz, 1994; Betz & Immerfall, 1998). Clearly this is problematic if one wants to develop testable and generalizable conclusions about extreme right parties. The problem would be eased to some extent if there were clear criteria for determining whether a party was neofascist, populist, or mainstream right. I try to provide such criteria but recognize that no one list of extreme right parties is going to achieve unanimous acceptance by scholars who study these parties. Thus, I also test whether the results of my model are robust for slightly different lists of neofascist and populist parties.

Many scholars have categorized neofascist parties on the basis of their origins. In this sense, a party is neofascist if it is a descendant of an earlier neofascist party or if it is formed by a recognizable fascist party from the interwar period. This method of categorization seems problematic on several counts. First, the fact that many individuals who were fascists in the interwar period set up political parties in the postwar period does not necessarily mean that these new parties should be considered neofascist. The Popular Alliance (now the Popular Party) in Spain falls into this category.[11] Second, the idea that a party can be defined as neofascist on the basis of its origins seems to ignore the possibility that parties evolve and constantly change their characteristics. For example, the Italian Social Movement (MSI) was clearly neofascist for most of the postwar period. However, since 1994 and its change of name to the National Alliance it should no longer be considered neofascist. This is not because it changed its name but because its ideology and programmatic statements no longer have anything to do with neofascism. As a result, I prefer to label parties as neofascist based on their ideology and programmatic statements.[12]

I have decided to label nonneofascist extreme right parties as populist because it is their populism that separates them from the mainstream right. Populism cannot be defined in terms of policy content or a particular ideology.[13] Instead, it is defined by two characteristics: first, its appeal to the peo-

11. Jackman and Volpert (1996) and Ignazi (1992) treat the Popular Party as a neofascist party, but few others do. Most consider it to be a conservative party on the mainstream right.

12. For a discussion of the differences between populist and neofascist parties in terms of ideology, party organization, and social constituencies, see Kitschelt (1997, pp. 27-42).

13. Populist parties do not share a core ideology. Some parties such as the Norwegian Progress Party, which was initially called Anders Lange's Party for a Strong Reduction of Taxes,

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ple. Populists tend to be advocates of direct democracy and "claim legitimacy on the grounds that they speak for the people: that is to say, they claim to represent the democratic sovereign, not a sectional interest such as an economic class" (Canovan, 1999, 4). Second, populism is antisystem. I do not mean by this that it is antidemocratic in any sense because all the populist parties in my sample are prepared to work within the democratic system; rather, I mean that it challenges the established power holders and elite values. Mainstream parties of the left and right may make populist claims in that they appeal to the people from time to time, but this is not their defining characteristic. Moreover, mainstream parties cannot credibly challenge elite values in any meaningful sense because they are themselves the embodiment of those elite values. It is on this basis that I have categorized populist parties.

Table 1 illustrates these categories. Unlike Taggart (1996), I do not categorize the Rural Party in Finland as a populist party because it is primarily an example of an agrarian, rather than a political, populist movement. This decision is based on a distinction made by Canovan (1981, 1983). Categorizing the Finnish Rural Party as a mainstream right party is also supported by Kitschelt (1997, p. 49). The Austrian Freedom Party is categorized as a mainstream right party until 1986 when it underwent a dramatic shift in its programmatic message following its takeover by Haidar. In line with its change in ideology, I categorize it as a populist party from this point in time. To some extent the categorization of the Dutch Center Party (now the Center Democrats) as neofascist is questionable. However, my conclusions do not depend on whether this party is treated as neofascist or populist.

The data set, which spans 19 countries and 165 national elections between 1970 and 2000, is new and provides several advantages over those used in previous studies. The first is the large number of countries included in the analysis. This helps to overcome problems related to selection bias that might affect small-N studies or statistical analyses based on a small sample of countries. The second advantage is that it allows one to test hypotheses over a longer period of time than previous studies. Finally, the fact that immigration data has been collected on all 19 countries is another advantage. Many of the previous studies testing the effect of immigration have been limited in their ability to generalize their conclusions due to the relatively small number of countries for which they had immigration data.

Social Contributions, and Public Intervention, are concerned with high levels of taxation. Others such as the Northern Leagues in Italy are focused on reversing state centralization and defending the rights of the periphery. The Austrian Freedom Party campaigns against political corruption and the Proporz system, whereas parties such as the French National Front emphasize the immigration issue. The only thing that all these parties have in common is their populist appeal.

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Table 1
Populist and Neofascist Parties

Country	Populist Party	Neofascist Party
1. Austria	Freedom Party (since 1986)	None
2. Belgium	Flemish Block, National Front	None
3. Denmark	Progress Party	None
4. Finland	None	None
5. France	National Front	Other Extreme Right
6. Germany	Republicans	National Democratic Party, Union of German People
7. Greece	None	National Political Union, National Democratic Union, National Alignment, National Party, Party of the Progressives
8. Iceland	None	None
9. Ireland	None	None
10. Italy	Northern League, Piedmont-Regional Autonomy, Venetian League, Lombard League	Italian Social Movement (until 1994)
11. Luxembourg	None	None
12. Malta	None	None
13. Netherlands	None	Center Party, Center Democrats
14. Norway	Progress Party	None
15. Portugal	None	Christian Democratic Party, New Force
16. Spain	None	National Alliance, National Union
17. Sweden	New Democracy	None
18. Switzerland	Swiss Motorist's Party, League of Tessins	National Action, Vigilance, Swiss Democrats
19. United Kingdom	None	National Front, British National Party

Several methodological issues had to be dealt with in calculating the statistical model shown in Equation 5. First, my dependent variable is left-censored at zero. It is fairly safe to assume that electoral support for extreme right parties exists in every country. However, this cannot be observed in those countries where there is no organized extreme right party. For example, populist parties garnered no electoral support in 116 election years of the 165 in my sample, whereas neofascist parties won no support in 112. To take account of this problem I follow the advice of Jackman and Volpert (1996) and use a Tobit model that utilizes a maximum-likelihood estimator for left-

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censored variables. As King (1994) notes, "The result is a much more realistic model of the process generating censored data and may be interpreted as if from a linear Normal regression with no censoring" (p. 210). The estimated coefficients represent the marginal effect of the independent variables on the underlying support for extreme right parties.[14]

A second methodological problem arises because I adopt a pooled time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) design. If I were using a linear regression model I would use the Beck and Katz (1995) procedure for panel-corrected standard errors to take account of potential panel heteroskedasticity and contemporaneously correlated errors. Unfortunately, this procedure is not available for Tobit models. However, I do attempt to take account of potential country heterogeneity by running a fixed effects model with country dummy variables (Beck, 2001; Greene, 2001a). I also examined the data to see whether autocorrelation might be a potential problem. The results from a Breusch-Godfrey Test (Greene, 2000, p. 542) indicate that this is not the case for populist parties.[15] The same test indicated the presence of autocorrelation in the case of neofascist parties. As a result, I checked my inferences for

14. Tobit models are more complex than most other regression models because there are three types of marginal effects that can be analyzed. Consider the standard Tobit model that allows for data that are left-censored at 0:

$$y_i^* = x_i\beta + \varepsilon_i$$
$$y_i = y_i^* \ \ if \ \ y_i^* > 0$$
$$y_i = 0 \ \ if \ \ y_i^* \leq 0$$

where y_i^* is the latent dependent variable, y_i is the observed dependent variable, x_i is the vector of independent variables, β is the vector of coefficients, and $\varepsilon_i \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$. The coefficients that appear in Tables 2 and 3 indicate the marginal effect of the independent variables on the latent dependent variable, y^*, that is, $\frac{\partial E(y^*|x)}{\partial X} = \beta$. It is also possible to analyze the marginal effects of the independent variables on the observed dependent variable, y, that is, $\frac{\partial E(y|x)}{\partial X} = \beta\Phi(\frac{x\beta}{\sigma})$, where $\Phi(\frac{x\beta}{\sigma})$ is the probability that an observation is not censored, or on the uncensored observed dependent variable, $y|y > 0$, that is, $\frac{\partial E(y|y>0,x)}{\partial X} = \beta(1 - \delta(-\frac{x\beta}{\sigma}))$, where $\delta(\alpha) = \lambda(\alpha)(\lambda(\alpha) - \alpha)$, $\lambda(\alpha) = \frac{\phi(\alpha)}{1-\Phi(\alpha)}$, and $\alpha = -\left(\frac{x\beta}{\sigma}\right)$. I choose to focus on the marginal effect of the independent variables on the latent dependent variable because this means that the results I generate can be directly compared with other studies that examine the latent support for extreme right parties (Knigge, 1998) and the previous attempts to apply a Tobit analysis in this area (Golder, in press; Jackman & Volpert, 1996; Swank & Betz, 1996). For more information on Tobit models see Amemiya (1984), King (1994), Greene (2000, 2001b), and Sigelman and Zeng (1999).

15. The coefficients on the lagged residuals were insignificant. Moreover, an *F* test of the joint significance of the coefficients on the lagged residuals indicated that they were indistinguishable from 0. Thus there was little evidence for autocorrelation when support for populist parties was the dependent variable. These results are not shown but can be obtained from the author on request.

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neofascist parties using a model that included a lagged dependent variable. My inferences were not affected.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

The results of the statistical model can be seen in Table 2.[16] The country dummy variable for the Netherlands was dropped in each case.[17] Statistical significance was calculated using one-tailed *t* tests because the ideational, materialist, and instrumental arguments have directional hypotheses. I provide results based on the combined voteshare of extreme right parties, populist parties, and neofascist parties. I include the results for the combined extreme right only to illustrate the information that is gained by distinguishing between populist and neofascist parties. The results of primary interest are those for Model 2 because this model is the correct test of the materialist, ideational, and instrumental hypotheses. Model 1 is calculated without the interaction term (UNEMP*IMMIG) and is included to provide a point of comparison with our model of interest (Model 2).

The effect of the electoral system variables can be interpreted directly from Table 2. The results when the extreme right parties are combined indicate that larger district magnitudes and more upper tier seats help extreme right parties. One might infer from this that extreme right parties and their voters are instrumental. However, it is clear that this conclusion is somewhat misleading once one distinguishes between populist and neofascist parties. Although larger district magnitudes increase the electoral support for both

16. The default settings for the maximum likelihood optimizers used by STATA did not always allow full convergence. However, if the tolerance for the log-likelihood is changed to ltolerance (1e-5), then full convergence is achieved. Convergence is declared when the relative change in the log-likelihood from one iteration to the next is equal to ltolerance (•).

17. The Netherlands acts as the base level against which other country effects can be compared. I do not actually show the coefficients on the country dummy variables, however, because these are not of interest here. All of the country dummy variables appear insignificant when the dependent variable is the voteshare of populist parties. However, this does not mean that they can be dropped from the analysis. Although none appears to be individually significant, a log-likelihood test indicates that they are jointly significant and must be included in a correctly specified model (Gujarati, 1995, pp. 280-281). The log-likelihood from Model 2 with country dummies included is –154.55, whereas the log-likelihood from the model without country dummies is –230.52. This gives a chi-square value of 151.93, that is, 2(–154.55 + 230.52). The *p* value of obtaining this chi-square value or greater is much less than .005. Because this probability is extremely low, one can conclude that the country dummies must be retained. When the dependent variable was the voteshare of neofascist parties, the country dummy variables for France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom were all significant.

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Table 2
The Dependent Variable Is the Voteshare Received by Extreme Right Parties Combined, Populist Parties Separately, and Neofascist Parties Separately

	Combined Sample		Neofascist Parties		Populist Parties	
Regressor	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Constant	–20.30**	–18.39**	–7.37**	–7.11**	–49.51	–41.93
	(5.97)	(6.11)	(1.95)	(2.13)	(111.91)	(103.10)
UNEMP	0.01	–0.22	–0.18**	–0.20**	0.48	–0.86
	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.30)	(0.63)
IMMIG	2.39**	2.02**	0.30	0.25	2.05**	0.87
	(0.41)	(0.50)	(0.19)	(0.26)	(0.60)	(0.76)
UNEMP*IMMIG		0.06		0.01		0.22**
		(0.05)		(0.02)		(0.09)
LOGMAG	2.11*	2.00*	1.56**	1.54**	3.43**	3.69**
	(1.11)	(1.11)	(0.35)	(0.35)	(1.61)	(1.56)
UPPER	0.51**	0.51**	–0.08	–0.08	1.63**	1.97**
	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.46)	(0.47)
Country dummies						
Standard error	4.04	4.02	1.08	1.08	4.72	4.57
Log likelihood	–258.84	–257.99	–85.67	–85.63	–157.39	–154.55
Noncensored	86	86	50	50	49	49

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses. $N = 150$, number of groups = 19, and average observations per group = 7.9.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$ (one-tailed).

neofascist and populist parties, it is worth noting that they have less than one half the impact on neofascist parties (the coefficient is 1.54) than they do on populist parties (the coefficient is 3.69). This suggests that neofascist parties are less concerned with instrumental goals than populist parties. This inference is further supported by the fact that upper tier seats help populist parties (the coefficient is 1.97) but have no effect on neofascist parties.[18]

The impact of unemployment and immigration on the electoral success of extreme right parties cannot be interpreted so easily from the tables. The results when the extreme right parties are combined provide little support for the idea that there is an interaction effect between unemployment and immigration. This is because the interaction term is not significant. Again, this inference is somewhat misleading. The inclusion of the interaction term (UNEMP*IMMIG) in the case of populist parties is, in fact, strongly sup-

18. One possible explanation for the insignificance of upper tier seats is that neofascist parties often fail to receive sufficient votes to overcome district, regional, or national level thresholds to actually participate in the allocation of these seats. One would not necessarily expect the coefficient on UPPERTIER to be positive or significant if neofascist parties are not eligible for these seats.

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ported; its coefficient has the predicted sign and is highly significant. The coefficient on the interaction term for neofascist parties is not significant.[19] However, it does have the predicted sign and one should not immediately jump to the conclusion that it was wrong to include it in the case of neofascist parties. It may still be the case that unemployment or immigration have notable causal effects at different values of the relevant modifying variable. The only way to know if this is true is to calculate the full range of conditional coefficients and standard errors. All one can infer about the interaction terms from the figures given in Table 2 is that there is strong evidence for a conditional relationship between unemployment and immigration for populist parties and that this would not have been known if no distinction had been made between populist and neofascist parties.

It is important to remember that the conditional coefficients and standard errors that appear in Model 2 are only informative in the special case when unemployment or immigration is actually zero. For example, the figures for neofascist parties simply indicate that unemployment reduces the support for these parties when immigration is zero and that immigration has no effect when unemployment is zero. Although some limited information is learned from these figures, better inferences can be made when the full range of conditional coefficients and standard errors are calculated. These are graphically illustrated for neofascist parties in Figures 2 and 3. The solid sloping lines indicate how the value of the estimated causal effect of UNEMP or IMMIG changes across the full range of the relevant modifying variable. One can see whether these conditional coefficients are statistically significant by considering the one-tailed 95% confidence intervals (dashed lines) that are drawn around them. The coefficients are not significant when the lower bound of the confidence interval is below the zero line and the upper bound is above it. In other words, the estimated causal effect of UNEMP and IMMIG is indistinguishable from zero at these points. The coefficients are only significant when the upper and lower bounds are above or below the zero line.

The first thing to note is that the conditional coefficient on unemployment is negative across the full range of observed immigration levels. This implies that higher levels of unemployment always reduce neofascist support. Although the negative effect on neofascist parties is actually significant whenever foreigners comprise less than 7.4% of the total population, it is never very sizeable (the coefficient ranges from only –0.20 to –0.16 in its entire range of significance). There is simply no evidence that unemployment

19. These results suggest that Knigge's (1998) conclusion that there is no significant interaction effect between immigration and unemployment may be due to her failure to distinguish between populist and neofascist parties on the extreme right.

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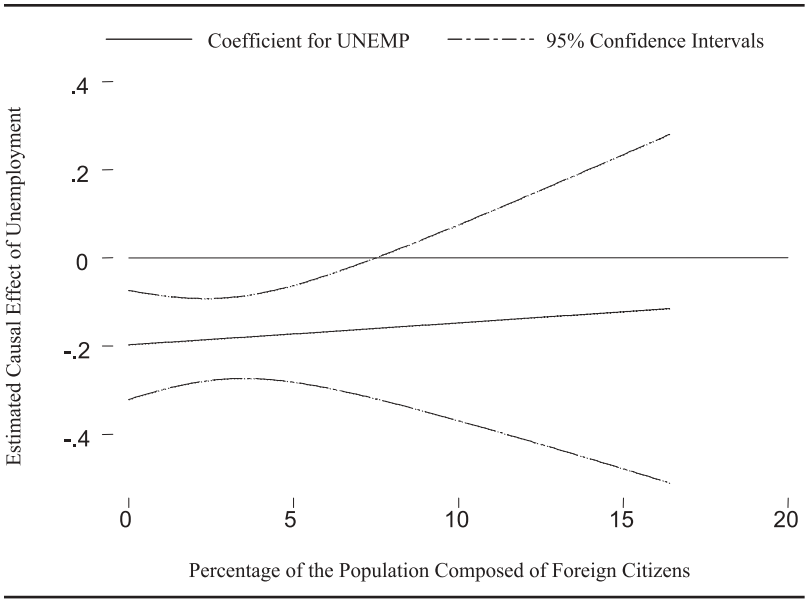

Figure 2. **The effect of unemployment on neofascist party voteshare conditional on the percentage of foreign citizens.**

ever increases the voteshare of neofascist parties. As a result, the materialist argument has no support in the neofascist party case. Nor is there any evidence to support the ideational hypothesis. The fact that the upper bound of the confidence interval in Figure 3 is always positive and the lower bound is always negative means that there is no evidence that the number of foreigners in a country ever influences the electoral success of neofascist parties. The combined evidence from these figures indicate that socioeconomic conditions such as immigration and unemployment have little or no influence on neofascist parties. This inference provides further support for the proposition that neofascist elites and voters are expressive. The evidence concerning electoral system constraints and socioeconomic factors is entirely consistent with these groups simply wishing to express their support for neofascist ideas.

The estimated causal effects of unemployment and immigration for populist parties are illustrated in Figures 4 and 5. Again, one-tailed 95% confidence intervals indicate when these effects are significant and when they are not.

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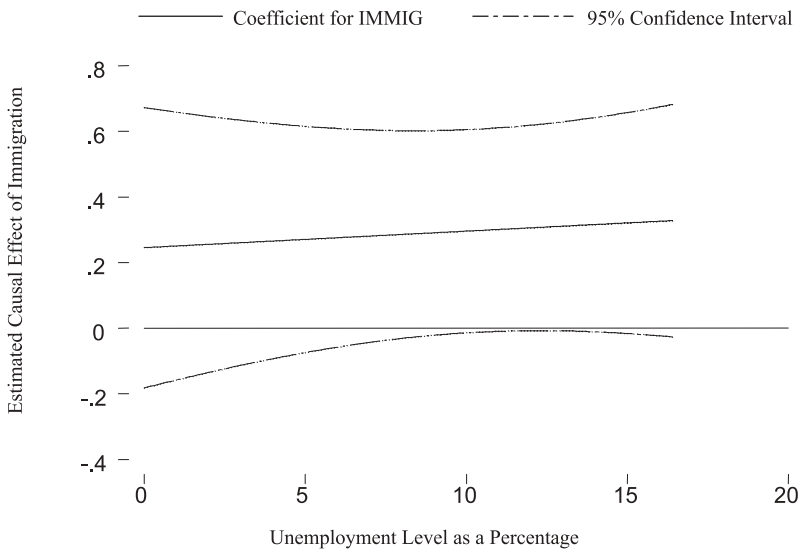

Figure 3. **The effect of immigration on neofascist party voteshare conditional on the unemployment level.**

It is immediately obvious that unemployment has no effect on the electoral support of populist parties when there are few foreigners in the country (see Figure 4). It is only when foreigners comprise more than 6.3% of the total population that unemployment actually influences the voteshare of populist parties. 23.6% of the observations actually come from countries with a foreign population larger than this. This result is exactly what the materialist argument predicts. Populist party voters only seem to be responsive to the claims made by extreme right parties linking unemployment to immigration when there are large numbers of foreigners in the country.

There is also strong evidence for the ideational hypothesis in the populist party case (see Figure 5). The ideational argument suggested that higher levels of immigration would increase the electoral support of populist parties irrespective of the unemployment level. Only when unemployment is less than 1.3% does immigration have no effect on the voteshare of populist parties. Just 12 observations, or 7.3% of my sample, had an unemployment level less than this and all but three observations came from the 1970s. It is hard to imagine that west European countries will manage to reduce unemployment levels below 1.3% anytime soon. This means that immigration increases the

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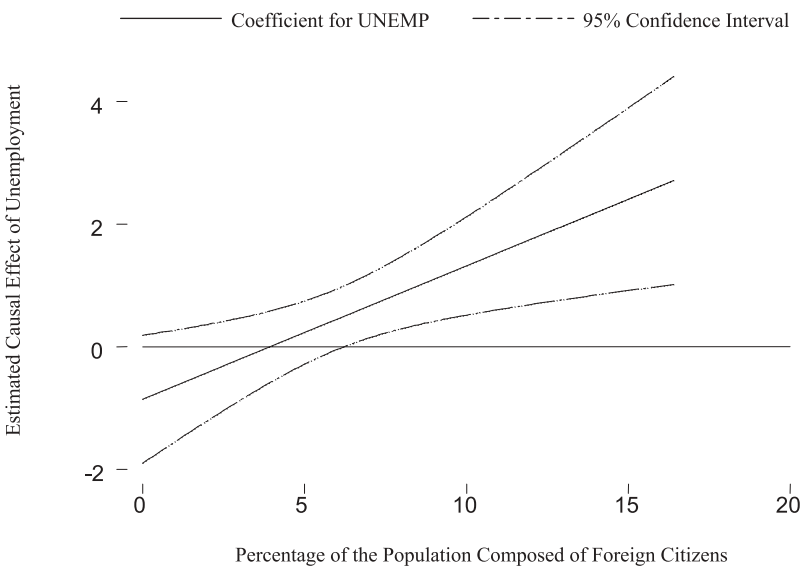

Figure 4. **The effect of unemployment on populist party voteshare conditional on the percentage of foreign citizens.**

voteshare of populist parties at all realistically observable levels of unemployment. Further evidence in favor of the ideational argument comes from Model 1, where immigration clearly helps populist parties.[20]

Given that immigration appears to increase the support for populist parties irrespective of the level of unemployment, it is worth considering the relationship between immigration and the electoral system more closely. One would expect electoral institutions to have a direct effect on the success of populist parties because these institutions tend to be systematically biased (to differing degrees) against small parties. Evidence in support of this expectation has already been presented. However, one would also expect electoral institutions to modify the effect of factors such as immigration.[21] Although higher levels of immigration may create a demand for populist parties, the permissiveness of the electoral system may influence whether this demand is translated into actual votes (Amorim Neto & Cox, 1997). This is because individuals are less likely to support small parties in plurality systems for fear

20. Model 1 can be seen as a direct test of the ideational hypothesis since it evaluates the unconditional effect of immigration on extreme right parties.

21. See William Roberts Clark (2002) for a discussion of institutions as modifying variables.

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Figure 5. **The effect of immigration on populist party voteshare conditional on the unemployment level.**

of wasting their vote than they are in more proportional systems. If this argument is correct, then one would expect immigration to have a greater effect on the success of populist parties in countries where the district magnitude is larger. This can easily be tested by including an interaction term between immigration and the logged median district magnitude. I did this by estimating the following model:[22]

$$\begin{aligned} \text{VOTESHARE}_{i,t} = {} & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{IMMIG}_{i,t} + \beta_2 \text{LOGMAG}_{i,t} \\ & + \beta_3 (\text{IMMIG*LOGMAG})_{i,t} + \beta_4 \text{UNEMP}_{i,t} \\ & + \beta_5 \text{UPPERTIER}_{i,t} + \beta_{6\text{-}23} \text{COUNTRY DUMMIES}_{i,t} \\ & + \varepsilon_{i,t}. \end{aligned} \tag{6}$$

The results of this model are shown in Table 3.

22. The interaction term between unemployment and immigration was removed for several reasons. First, it simplifies the presentation of results. Second, I have already shown that immigration always helps populist parties irrespective of the level of unemployment. Finally, including this additional interaction term does not affect the results.

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Table 3
The Dependent Variable Is the Voteshare Received by Populist Parties

Regressor	Model 3
Constant	–45.55 (105.14)
IMMIG	0.87 (1.33)
LOGMAG	1.69 (2.38)
IMMIG*LOGMAG	0.45 (0.46)
UNEMP	0.52* (0.30)
UPPER	1.40** (0.50)
Country dummies	
Standard error	4.65
Log likelihood	–156.93
N	150
Noncensored	49
Number of groups	19
Average observations per group	7.9

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$ (one-tailed).

As predicted, the coefficient for the interaction term between immigration and logged median district magnitude is positive. Thus, the marginal effect of immigration increases as district magnitudes become larger. To fully appreciate how the permissiveness of the electoral system influences the effect of immigration on extreme right parties, it is necessary to examine the full range of the conditional coefficients for immigration. These are shown graphically in Figure 6 along with one-tailed 95% confidence intervals.

Whereas the earlier results indicated that immigration always helped populist parties, Figure 6 illustrates that this is not the case in plurality systems (when LOGMAG = 0). The marginal effect of immigration is only significant when the median district magnitude becomes greater than 3.3 (or LOGMAG > 1.2). All but two of my observations from proportional representation systems had a median district magnitude greater than this. This indicates that large numbers of foreigners can be expected to help populist parties in most proportional representation systems. Moreover, the positive effect of immigration increases as the electoral system becomes more proportional. Thus the results clearly indicate that the effect of immigration on the success of populist parties depends on the permissiveness of the electoral system.

How much faith can one have in these results? One potential problem arises due to the impossibility of measuring illegal or clandestine immigration. Greek data is particularly problematic in this regard. I chose to use data on the size of the foreign population found in Greek population censuses.

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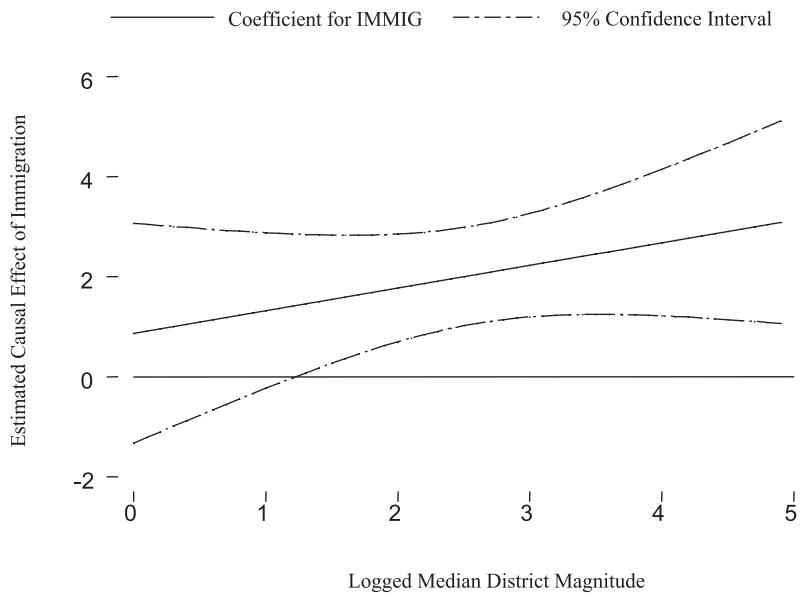

Figure 6. **The effect of immigration on populist party voteshare conditional on the logged median district magnitude.**

These figures were smaller than those indicated by the number of foreign citizens holding Greek resident's permits.[23] Any potential problems with this are exacerbated by the fact that there are an estimated 250,000-500,000 undocumented workers that enter Greece during the course of each year (SOPEMI, 1999). SOPEMI estimate that foreigners actually accounted for about 5% of the total population in the early 1990s, rather than the 1.6% stated by the Ministry of National Economy. Luxembourg is another country whose immigration data might cause problems for my analysis. This is because the size and composition of the foreign population in Luxembourg is so unusual. Foreign citizens have accounted for more than 20% of the total Luxembourg population since 1973 and more than 30% since 1991. Most of these foreign citizens are from western Europe and are generally not perceived to pose a strong cultural threat. Another potential problem relates to my categorization of populist and neofascist parties. For example, one might reasonably argue that the Dutch Center Democrats (formerly the Center Party) should be considered a

23. Because most countries used census figures to calculate the size of their foreign population, I did the same for Greece to ease the problem of cross-national comparability.

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populist party and not a neofascist one. I took account of these difficulties by recalculating my model with the Center Democrats recategorized as a populist party and then with the data from Luxembourg and Greece removed. The results were not affected by any of these changes.

CONCLUSION

Several recent attempts have been made to systematically explain the variation in the success of extreme right parties. Although this research has led to some accumulation of knowledge, it has also generated inconsistent results. Some of this research suffers from methodological problems related to selection bias and the interpretation of interaction effects. Given the inconsistent results and methodological problems, I reexamined the role played by unemployment, immigration, and electoral institutions. A summary of the results are shown in Table 4.

My analysis makes several important conclusions. The first is to highlight the importance of distinguishing between neofascist and populist parties on the extreme right. Although these distinctions are increasingly made in the theoretical literature, they have not been taken into account by recent statistical analyses of extreme right parties. This is the case despite the obvious differences in the electoral fortunes of these parties. Significant gains in information are forthcoming when this type of distinction is made. The most obvious is that the fortunes of these parties depend on different factors. For example, the level of unemployment and immigration matters for populist parties but not for neofascist parties. A more intriguing finding is that the voters and elites of neofascist parties seem to be expressive, whereas the elites and voters of populist parties seem to be instrumental. Clearly, it is important to recognize the ecological inference problem in imputing individual-level motivations from aggregate data (King, 1997; Schuessler, 1999). However, my analysis simply claims that the aggregate-level data is consistent with instrumental voters and elites in the case of populist parties but not in the case of neofascist voters and elites.

The evidence that neofascist elites and voters do not take account of the strategic conditions created by electoral institutions or the issues of unemployment and immigration is significant. This implies that a steady group of voters are willing to express their support for neofascist ideas irrespective of strategic and socioeconomic conditions. To some extent this is supported by Figure 1, which shows that the level of neofascist support across western Europe has remained essentially unchanged since 1970. However, this does not explain the cross-national variation in the electoral success of these par-

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Table 4
Summary of Results

	Materialist		Ideational	Instrumental
	Unconditional	Conditional		
Combined sample	–	–	+	+
Populist parties	–	+	+	+
Neofascist parties	–	–	–	–

Note: + = support for the hypothesis; – = lack of support for the hypothesis.

ties. The fixed effects (country dummy variables) for those countries where neofascist parties exist were all positive and significant. This suggests that there is something about these particular countries that is not being modeled. Clearly, more research needs to be done to explain the cross-national variation in the success of neofascist parties.

The analysis provides strong evidence that the effect of unemployment on populist parties is conditional on the level of immigration. Unemployment only increases the voteshare of populist parties when there are large numbers of foreigners in the country. This inference was made possible by the inclusion of an interaction term between unemployment and immigration. Many models examining the effect of unemployment have failed to include this term (Givens, 2000; Jackman & Volpert, 1996; Swank & Betz, 1996). As a result, they assume that unemployment causes individuals to vote for extreme right parties in an unconditional way. Because the economic voting literature provides no evidence why higher levels of unemployment would cause people to vote for extreme right parties over any other, the inclusion of unemployment in an unconditional way in these models lacks a strong theoretical justification. Moreover, the evidence from Model 1 in my analysis clearly shows that unemployment never helps extreme right parties in an unconditional way. This is true for the combined sample, as well as the populist and neofascist parties separately.[24] The inclusion of an interaction term between unemployment and immigration also allows me to conclude that higher levels of immigration always help populist parties, irrespective of the level of unemployment. The figures in Model 1 also support this inference. This evidence is consistent with the belief that populist party voters and elites are motivated by ideational, as well as materialist, concerns.

24. This result is at odds with Jackman and Volpert's (1996) finding that unemployment directly increases the electoral success of extreme right parties. This is somewhat surprising, given that their methodology and model was similar to that used in Model 1 here. The main difference is that they did not include an immigration variable in their model.

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The final contribution relates to the effect of electoral institutions on extreme right parties. Although it is often argued that electoral systems will have an effect on extreme right parties, this has rarely been tested in a systematic way. Where these arguments have actually been tested, there is little evidence to support them. Swank and Betz (1995, 1996) find that neither electoral thresholds nor an ordinal measure of proportionality taken from Huber, Ragin, and Stephens (1993) have any effect. Jackman and Volpert (1996) conclude that higher thresholds do reduce the support for extreme right parties. However, their inferences are open to question since they fail to calculate the full range of conditional standard errors for their results. Once these are calculated, there is little evidence to support their conclusion (Golder, in press). Thus, there is little to suggest that electoral systems ever matter for extreme right parties. In contrast to these studies, my analysis provides strong evidence that electoral institutions do matter.[25] Populist parties clearly fare better when the district magnitude is large and when there are more upper tier seats. There is also evidence that the permissiveness of the electoral system mediates the effect of immigration levels on populist parties. Although large numbers of foreigners may create a demand for populist parties, electoral institutions influence the extent to which this demand is translated into actual votes.

The evidence that electoral systems matter should encourage further research in this area. The results of my model are consistent with the notion that party elites and voters face a coordination problem (Cox, 1997, 1999). My theoretical discussion of this problem generated auxiliary hypotheses that could also be tested. For example, one would expect populist parties to devote more resources to those districts where the coordination problem is lowest, that is, districts with high magnitudes. A logical next step would also be to analyze district-level electoral data within and across countries to fully capture the variation in district magnitude.[26] Using a variable to measure the median district magnitude as I did can only capture some of this information. Another step would be to investigate the relationship between electoral system characteristics and the ideological position of parties. I have proposed that electoral systems create coordination problems for extreme right parties. In fact, any small party that seeks to exert influence in a political system faces

25. It is slightly odd that I have found evidence that electoral institutions matter whereas previous studies have not. One explanation for this is that unlike these other studies, I distinguished between neofascist and populist parties. Moreover, I used district magnitudes and upper tier seats as separate variables. Much of the previous literature has focused on electoral thresholds.

26. Those studies that have analyzed subnational data have ignored district-level variation in electoral institutions (Givens, 2000).

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such problems. In this regard, the electoral system does not create special problems for extreme right parties. However, there is theoretical reason to believe that electoral institutions also generate centripetal or centrifugal incentives in party systems (Cox, 1990). As a result, the electoral systems may not only affect the ability of small parties to exert influence in a political system, but may also affect the ideological position of those parties. It would be interesting to test this argument to see if it can explain why some countries have successful parties located on the extreme right.

APPENDIX
Data Sources and Variable Construction

Although some information about the construction of variables and data sources can be found below, more detailed information can be found at http://homepages.nyu.edu/~mrg217/codebook.pdf.

ELECTION RESULTS

Results from 1970 to 1990 were taken from Mackie and Rose (1991). More recent results were found in various issues of *Electoral Studies* and the *European Journal of Research*, as well as several Web sites.

MEDIAN DISTRICT MAGNITUDE

This variable represents the district magnitude of the median legislator. If no seats were allocated above the district level, then the median legislator was taken as the total number of legislators divided by two. If seats were automatically allocated in tiers above the district level, then the number of legislators elected at the district level were found and divided by two to determine the median legislator. If seats were not automatically allocated in tiers above the district level, then the median legislator was determined by taking the total number of legislators and dividing by two. The magnitudes of each district in each country were found and the one associated with the median legislator was used. These values were logged. The logged average district magnitude was calculated in a similar fashion except that the total number of seats in the assembly minus those seats automatically allocated to an upper tier were divided by the total number of districts.

UNEMPLOYMENT DATA

Data on unemployment came from DG-II (ECFIN B/5) in the European Commission. These unemployment figures are standardized based on EUROSTAT definitions. The

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one exception to this is Malta, where the figures were taken from the United Nations Monthly Bulletin of Statistics.

IMMIGRATION DATA

The foreign population is measured as the percentage of foreign citizens in each country. Data were taken from two sources. I used data from several SOPEMI publications (1992, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999) unless individual national statistical offices could provide data with greater coverage. For those countries that used census figures to calculate the percentage of foreign citizens, I have interpolated in a linear fashion between the census observations to get annual figures. Moreover, if figures on the percentage of foreign citizens were available for a 12-month period, either side of an election, they were used for that electoral year. This affected six observations. The 1974 figures for foreign citizens in Denmark were used for the 1973 election (but not the 1971 election), the 1983 figures in Ireland were used for the 1982 elections, the 1980 figures in Italy were used for the 1979 election, the 1984 figures in the United Kingdom were used for the 1983 elections, the 1998 figures in Switzerland were used for the 1999 elections, and the 1999 figures in Spain were used for the 2000 election. Even following this approach, there were 14 elections for which I do not have figures on foreign populations from SOPEMI or from national statistical offices (Denmark in 1971; Greece in 2000; Iceland in 1971; Ireland in 1973, 1977, 1981; Italy in 1972, 1976; Norway in 1973; Portugal in 1999; and the United Kingdom in 1970, 1974, 1974, 1979). This is either because the data does not exist or because the figures were not available.

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Matt Golder is a Ph.D. student in the politics department at New York University. His interests include comparative politics, Western Europe, and methodology. He is the author of Electoral Institutions, Unemployment and Extreme Right Parties: A Correction *(British Journal of Political Science, in press) and the coauthor of* Fiscal Policy and the Democratic Process in the European Union *(European Union Politics, 2002).*

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