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Daring to vote right: Why men are more likely than women to vote for the radical right

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WELFARE CHAUVINISM, NATIVIST ENLIGHTENMENT: PARTY PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter established to what extent gender differences exist with regard to conventional socio-structural and attitudinal determinants of Radical Right voting. The substantial variation in the size and background of the gap – as visible in Figure 1.3 – suggests that the *supply side* of parties is highly relevant. Apparently, parties differ in important ways that affect the size and nature of their gender gap. Finding out which aspects are responsible for the gender gap will provide insights onto its underlying mechanisms, but can also explain why some gender gaps are larger than others. In this chapter I therefore turn to the supply side from the point of view of conventional models of vote choices. Can variation in Radical Right parties' ideology explain the size of their gap?

Because the previous chapter, in accordance with earlier studies, established that support for nativist policies is – across the board – about equally high among both sexes, it is unlikely that variation in parties' stances on this issue explains the size of their gender gap. Nevertheless, I leave this possibility open and briefly investigate it in this chapter. The main focus of this chapter lies, however, with two aspects of Radical Right parties' programs that are most likely to bring about a gender gap: their stance on *socio-economic* and *culturally progressive* (and in particular gender and family) issues. As I will argue below, this is especially relevant because ideological repositioning regarding both subjects is changing the face of many Radical Right parties. Any connection between the gender gap and these evolving aspects of Radical Right ideology is thus likely to have implications for the future support of these parties among male and female voters.

In cultural terms, several parties – especially in the Northwest of Europe – have embraced culturally progressive values in an attempt to preserve the 'principles of the Enlightenment against immigrants (Akkerman, 2005). Opposition against (especially) 'backward' Islam led some parties to reconsider their earlier anti-liberal stances, and

to increasingly embrace and stress topics such as women's rights and emancipation of homosexuals (Akkerman, 2015; de Lange & Mügge, 2015). This "nativist Enlightenment" reflects the incorporation of such values in some Radical Right parties' definition of national identity.

In socio-economic terms, many Radical Right parties seem to be moving towards the left. In the last two decades, many parties have begun retracting from their *laissez-faire* heritage, and new parties were founded that took a more centrist approach from the start. In several countries, such as Denmark and France, this shift towards embracing the welfare state as an integral part of national identity has been quite pronounced (Betz & Meret, 2012; Ivaldi, 2015). This formula of nativism plus socio-economic protectionism has been considered a potential 'winning' one, because it means potential 'working class authoritarian' voters no longer face a trade-off between their cultural values and economic interests (Spies, 2013).

Both changes are also potentially relevant for the gender gap. First, I hypothesize that parties that (claim to) embrace culturally progressive values such as gender equality have a *smaller* gender gap. This hypothesis is included to investigate the contention that the supposed 'ideological sexism' of Radical Right parties largely limits these parties' electoral potential to male voters (Mayer & Sineau, 2002). If pro-equality stances are more often endorsed (or deemed salient) among female voters, this argument goes, a shift towards embracing these values will be accompanied by greater electoral success among women. Obviously, it would be mistaken to simply *assume* that all (or even most) women have pro-emancipatory stances, and men don't. However, there is evidence suggesting that such positions are relatively more supported, and deemed salient, among women (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004; Neve, 1995). This contention therefore deserves an empirical test. If variation *between* Radical Right parties with regard to these issues explains the size of the gap, it would support the contention that the gender gap for the party family as a *whole* is due to its generally more culturally conservative stance.

Secondly, I hypothesize economically left-wing Radical Right parties to have a *larger* gender gap. To a larger extent than their neoliberal counterparts, such 'new winning formula' parties principally attract voters from specific subgroups, such as blue-collar, low-educated, private sector workers. At the same time, workers with such jobs are (still) predominantly male. In other words, Radical Right parties' economic stances correlate strongly with their level of 'proletarianization' (Betz, 1994; Van der Brug et al., 2012), which in turn is mirrored in the size of these parties' gender gaps. If Radical Right parties are increasingly relying on a formerly Social Democratic precarious working class base, rather than appealing to a broader coalition of constituencies, this is likely to widen the gap.

At the same time, it has been argued that both socio-economic and emancipation policy are secondary to the core component of Radical Right ideology – their nativism. As such, supporting welfare or emancipation might be mere window-dressing, affecting neither the policies, nor the constituencies of these parties. This makes it especially relevant to investigate its effect on the gender balance. In this chapter, I discuss the two developments mentioned above – which I will refer to as *Nativist Enlightenment* and

Welfare Chauvinism – in view of the literature, and try to map them empirically using data from three waves of the *Chapel Hill Expert Survey*. Combining this with *European Election Study* data from waves 1999, 2004 and 2009, I then test whether and how such changes affect Radical Right parties' electorates in terms of gender. This reveals that socio-economic party positions predict the size of the gap, while culturally progressive positions do not. I finish this chapter with a further discussion of the mechanism behind the former finding.

THEORY

In the 1980s, early Radical Right parties were unmistakably at the right-wing side of the most salient political cleavages. Economically, the anti-tax origin of quite a few of these parties – including the *Progress Party* (Norway) and *Party for Freedom* (Austria) – resulted in an anti-statist, market-oriented stance. Culturally, most parties were right-wing in the sense that they proposed an authoritarian and communitarian solution to societal problems, and often disapproved of the New Left libertarian values. Although deviations from this pattern existed, this ideological core made categorization of these parties as right-wing relatively unproblematic.

This started to change with developments that occurred from the 1990s onwards. Culturally, opposition against immigrants in general – and those with Islamic backgrounds in particular – became a central topic in almost all Radical Right parties' programs. This was accompanied by a general increase in the importance of a nationalist-versus-cosmopolitan dimension in European politics (Azmanova, 2011; Kriesi et al., 2008). Given their opposition to immigrants, the Radical Right parties were clearly still on the 'right-wing' part of this cleavage. However, the focus on allegedly conservative immigrants led some parties to reconsider their earlier anti-liberal stances, and to increasingly embrace topics such as women's rights and emancipation of homosexuals (Akkerman & Hagelund, 2007). Embracement of nativism as a core value thus led to ambiguity regarding the 'traditional' cultural issues. Economically, parties began retracting from their neoliberal heritage, and new parties were founded that took a more centrist approach from the start (McGann & Kitschelt, 2005). In terms of their electorates, the Radical Right experienced 'proletarianization'. On the other hand, it has been argued that both ideological changes are mere window-dressing, accompanying or even disguising the ideological core of these parties: their nativism.

Below, I discuss the theoretical background and empirical evidence for both developments, and formulate expectations about their effect on the gender balance of parties' electorates.

Cultural issues: nativist Enlightenment

The first ideological feature studied in this chapter could be called '*nativist enlightenment*'. Radical Right parties have traditionally been culturally conservative in their outlook, favoring conformation to national values, the institution of the traditional family, and the idea that women are 'equal but different'. However, recently, scholars have nuanced

this classification (Spierings et al., 2015). To the extent that liberal values are considered integral part of the national tradition, a liberal stance might in fact be equally well-defendable from a nationalist point of view. Akkerman and Hagelund (2007) show that the Norwegian *Progress Party* and the Dutch *Freedom Party* increasingly emphasize issues such as female labor participation and liberal family laws. Similarly, the *Danish People's Party* also increasingly focuses on liberal freedoms and values (Betz & Meret, 2009). At the very least, this shows that variation exists between parties in their views on gender and emancipation.

It is no surprise that such issues are in some cases moving to the forefront of both discourse and policy of the Radical Right. Gender equality and gay rights have been presented as a symbol of Western values as opposed to alleged conservative values of immigrants. In that sense, liberal values fit well in the nativist agenda of the radical right. For instance, issues such as the wearing of veils or headscarves have become salient as Radical Right parties increasingly focus on the Islam as a threat to Western societies (Hadj-Abdou, Rosenberger, Saharso, & Siim, 2012). Along the same emancipatory lines, some Radical Right parties – especially in the Netherlands and Norway – have promoted the protection of gay rights, and also the *National Front* (F) seems to be moving in that direction (Mayer, 2013: 163).

Akkerman (2005) stresses that, while most Radical Right parties' ideology carry (some) liberal as well as nationalist elements, parties differ in the extent to which these two elements are compatible. Parties upholding 'organicist nationalism' stress "a rejection of multiculturalism, a longing for purity, nostalgia for a mythical world of homogeneity, celebration of ties of blood and history over reason and a common humanity" (idem: 343). This is difficult to combine with liberal values. 'National' values are to be preserved against deviant individual (or minority) choices. A precautionous or even hostile stance towards gender equality and other emancipatory projects is the logical result. Civic nationalism, by contrast, refers to the Enlightenment (idem: 346). The liberal values that originate in Enlightenment are deemed essential to the West, and are to be protected. Rather than a menace to traditional society, parties based on this type of nationalism frame multicultural problems as a threat to Enlightenment ideals.

The logical consequence of this overlap of national and liberal principles is to argue for a protection of liberal values, which logically includes issues such as equality of men and women. Radical Right parties such as *Party for Freedom* (NL), *Danish People's Party* (DK) and *Progress Party* (NO) use this frame to take a stance against alleged threats to liberal values by (Muslim) immigrants. On the other hand, this will only occur to the extent that these liberal values are considered an essential part of the national self-image. In countries where this is the case to a lesser extent, for instance in Southern or Eastern Europe, Radical Right parties keep stressing a form of organicist nationalism. In short, a range of stances towards gender and emancipation – from traditionalist to liberal – is potentially internally consistent with Radical Right ideology, and Radical Right parties indeed take varying positions along this dimension.

This, too, might affect parties' gender gap. There is empirical evidence suggesting that across the board women more often agree with emancipatory policies, or find them more

salient. During the first post-war decades, women were in most countries generally more conservative on cultural issues than men (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). Domestic duties and child-rearing were argued to reinforce women's ties with traditional right-wing parties, because such parties endorsed values that rationalize traditional housewifery and motherhood (Vaus & McAllister, 1989). Alternative explanations stressed women's longevity or religiousness. Nowadays, this pattern has been reversed, although this is mainly true for postindustrial societies. Evidence shows that, on average, men have consistently less liberal attitudes towards gender equality and the emancipation of women and sexual minorities (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004; Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Mason & Lu, 1988; Neve, 1995). Indeed, according to the *European Election Study 2009*, more women than men think women should be free to decide on matters of abortion in all countries except the UK; fewer women than men think that same-sex marriages should be forbidden in all countries except Romania.

Given this distribution of attitudes, and the possibility that issues surrounding the role of women are more salient among women, it has been argued that more 'gender conservative' Radical Right parties have a relative difficulty in attracting female voters. In 2002, Mayer and Sineau (2002: 50) described the 'authoritarian paternalism' of Jean-Marie Le Pen's *National Front* (F) and asked themselves "why women [would] vote for a party that is militantly against the rights won at the price of so many battles: the right to work, the right to interrupt an unwanted pregnancy?". After party leadership was taken over by Marine le Pen, the fact that she is divorced and has shown sympathy for women who abort a pregnancy "could make it less morally reprehensible, less difficult, for a woman to vote for her" (Mayer, 2013: 175). Reversely, it has been argued that anti-feminist sentiments might be important for male Radical Right voters who feel threatened in their traditional masculine supremacy (Ford & Goodwin, 2010). From this, too, it would follow that a shift away from culturally conservative stances decreases the male electoral dominance. This leads to the following expectation at the individual level:

H1a *gender is a less important predictor of Radical Right support for parties that take a more liberal position on emancipatory issues.*

This is, in turn, likely to result in the following pattern at the aggregated level:

H1b *the gender gap will be smaller for radical right parties that take a more liberal position on emancipatory issues.*

Socio-economic issues: welfare chauvinism

The second ideological feature central to this chapter is Radical Right parties' socio-economic position. As noted by Mudde (2007: 123), the Radical Right party family (by now) "spreads a significant part of the whole dimension between the two poles of *laissez-faire* and state economy". Some Radical Right parties originally had – or were even uniquely founded for – a strong neoliberal position, in which anti-statist and populist

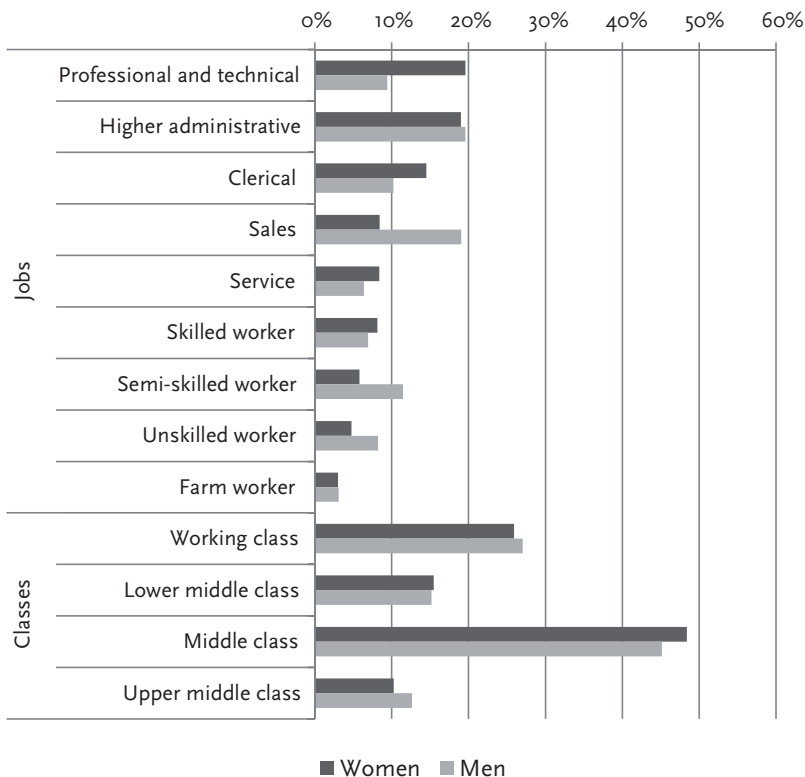
arguments were used to criticize high taxes and large governments. A combination of nationalist and neoliberal policies reflected the early electoral opportunities for Radical Right parties (Kitschelt, 1997). In the 1980s Jean-Marie le Pen (*National Front*, France) claimed to have been a ‘Reaganite’ long before neoliberal policies became fashionable (quoted in Betz & Meret, 2012: 114). His daughter Marine le Pen, however, has developed a rather coherent political project aimed at ‘demonialisation’, shielding France from the influence of banks and big enterprises, stimulating re-industrialization by curtailing global trade, and fiercely protecting France’s ‘*acquis sociaux*’ by means of the welfare state – although these services should often be limited to French citizens (ibid: 118-120).

This shift towards more left-leaning socio-economic policies is by no means restricted to the *National Front*. During the nineties, many Radical Right parties moved towards the economic center as a result of increased competition with social-democratic parties (McGann & Kitschelt, 2005). This fits the assertion that protection against globalization in both a cultural and economic sense constitutes one pole of the new political cleavage of the early 21st century (Azmanova, 2011; Kriesi et al., 2008). Indeed, scholars agree that most Radical Right parties’ economic stance can often not be described as classically right-wing (Mudde, 2007; Mughan, Bean, & McAllister, 2003; Rydgren, 2012). On the other hand, others found this move to be half-hearted or non-existent before the 2000s (Van Der Brug & Van Spanje, 2009). Importantly, the Radical Right’s socio-economic policy positions are instrumental to achieving other goals. For instance, foreign residents or immigrants are either to be excluded from such services, or to pay higher premiums (Betz & Meret, 2012: 120). Parties in East-Central Europe have been shown to be particularly protectionist, reflecting their ideological “mix of traditional nationalism and state socialism” (Mudde, 2007: 356). All these varying contexts and histories lead to a wide array of stances on socio-economic policies among Radical Right parties, “depending on the party studied, but also when this party was studied” (Ivaresflaten, 2005: 469).

How does relate to parties’ electoral gender balance? I expect that parties with a socio-economically left-wing profile have the weakest electoral appeal among women. This is at first sight counter-intuitive. After all, in many studies, women show on average more support for socio-economically left-wing policies (Inglehart & Norris, 2000). According to the *European Election Study* 2009, more women than men agree that wealth should be redistributed, or that major public services and industries ought to be in state ownership. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 1, women are more likely to work in the public sector than men, and have been argued to be disproportionately dependent on the welfare state. Due to a ‘feminization of poverty’, it has been argued that the social safety net has become relatively important to women, making them more supportive of state provision (Gidengil et al., 2005: 1174). All this would lead to the expectation that a socio-economic more left-wing stance would on average be especially attractive – rather than deterring – among female voters. However, Chapter 1 showed that the gender gap did not at all disappear after taking men’s and women’s views on economic issues into account.

The reason to expect that parties with a stronger welfare chauvinist profile would attract more men is as follows. Radical Right parties that have embraced a pro-welfare state discourse rely more strongly on voters from specific socio-economic groups (Harteveld, forthcoming). Due to gendered work and employment patterns, workers in these specific groups are more often male. Figure 2.1 shows that the groups of skilled and semi-skilled workers – the occupational groups with the highest propensity to vote for the Radical Right – consist of about twice as many men as women. Professional and technical occupations, a category that includes education and health jobs, and which are least likely to vote for the Radical Right, consist of many more women than men. In terms of self-perceived class, the scores do not differ much, but there too men are somewhat overrepresented among the class that is most likely to vote for the Radical Right – the working class.

Figure 2.1 Occupations and classes by gender



Source: European Election Study

The extent to which these groups are over- or underrepresented among the Radical Right's electorate depends on parties' positions on socio-economic issues: the more left-wing, the stronger the overrepresentation of working class voters (see Van der Brug

et al., 2012: 59). Radical Right parties that have moved to the socio-economic left can thus be expected to attract a more specific constituency of voters in fitting the ‘loser of globalization’ profile, and these are more often male. The gender gap is therefore likely to mirror the ‘proletarianization’ of parties. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H2a *gender is a more important predictor of Radical Right support for socio-economically more left-wing parties*

Which, in turn, is likely to result in the following expectation at the party-level:

H2b *socio-economically left-wing Radical Right parties have a larger gender gap than neoliberal parties*

DATA AND METHOD

The European Election Study again provides the individual-level data. To increase variation at the supply side level, the 1999, 2004 and 2009 waves are included (Schmitt, Loveless, Adam, & Braun, 2004; Van der Eijk, Franklin, Schönbach, Schmitt, & Semetko, 1999; van Egmond et al., 2009). The propensity to vote (PTV) for the largest Radical Right party in the country remains the dependent variable. Because the propensity to vote was measured on either a 10- or a 11-point scale, depending on the wave, they were rescaled to a 0-to-10 range in all years. A dummy indicates whether the respondent is male (0) or female (1). Furthermore, the self-reported social class of the respondent is measured on a five point scale. The Left-Right self-placement indicator was also rescaled to a 0-to-10 scale in all years.¹⁹

Measurements of parties’ ideological positions are derived from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES), which consists of experts’ judgments about parties’ positions on a 11-point scale. For parties’ economic position, the following description was used by CHES: “Parties on the economic left want government to play an active role in the economy. Parties on the economic right emphasize a reduced economic role for government: privatization, lower taxes, less regulation, less government spending, and a leaner welfare state”. The validity of this particular item was confirmed by Bakker et al. (2014: 1100), who conclude that “party experts in Europe view the left/right economic dimension of party competition in largely the same way across countries”. The resulting scores range from roughly 3 for the Southeast-European parties *Attack* (Bulgaria) and *Greater Romania* party to almost 9 for *Flemish Interest* (Belgium) and *Northern League* (Italy). Other generally left-wing parties are *Danish People’s Party* and *True Finns*, while the *Freedom Party* of Austria (although often described as a relatively neoliberal party)

19 For both PTV and Left-Right position this was done by multiplying the values on the 10-point scale by $\frac{11}{10}$.

is assigned a centrist position of 5. Still, there is enough face validity in the relative scores to allow for comparison. For instance, the ‘programmatic turnover’ towards a left-wing party is clearly visible in the trend of the *National Front*, which moved from an economically right-wing position (8.7) in the 1990s to an increasingly moderate position in 2006 (6.6) and 2010 (6.5). To measure parties’ stances on liberal values and emancipation, the most valid indicator is *Social Lifestyle Tolerance*. ‘Social lifestyle’ is illustrated by the expert survey coordinator with one example, homosexuality. Due to the label and example it is likely that experts considered parties’ stances towards individual expression and emancipation in general, with probably extra emphasis on tolerance towards homosexuality. The variable was recoded as ‘*Social Lifestyle Intolerance*’, with low values indicating tolerance, and high values indicating intolerance.

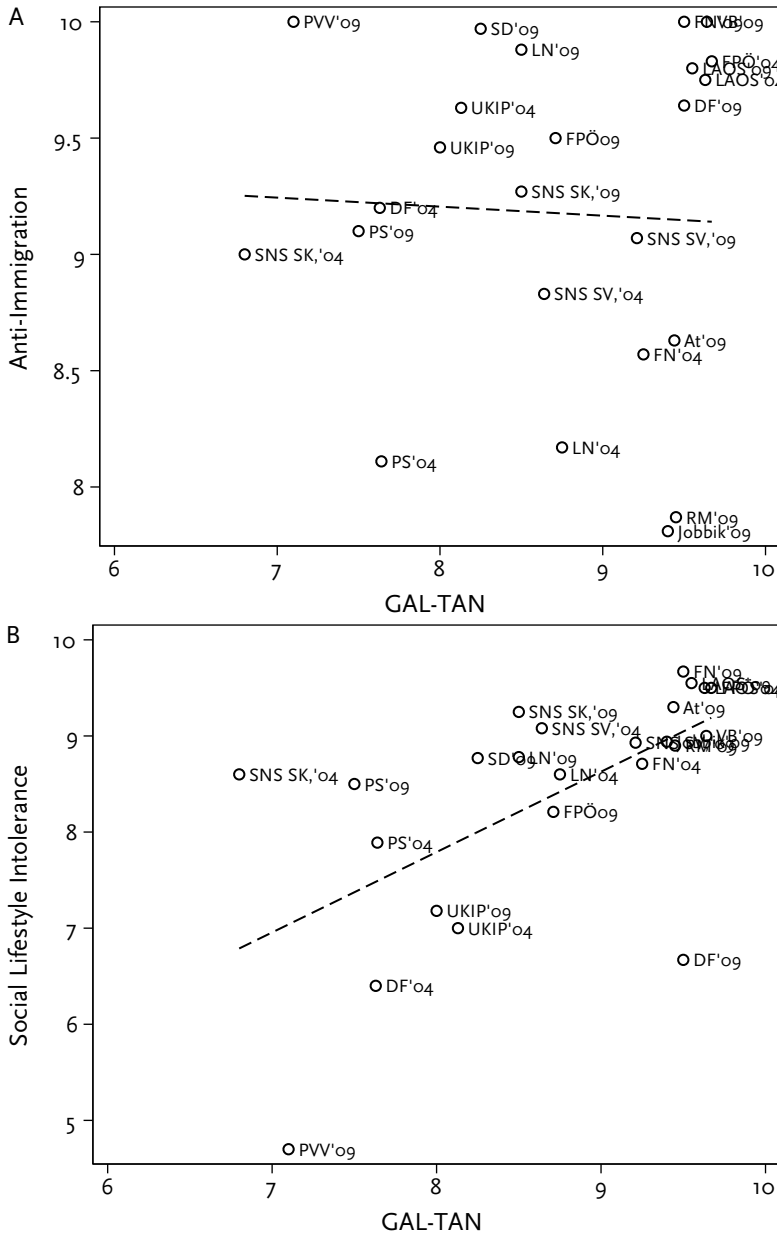
Unfortunately, the *Lifestyle Intolerance* indicator is only available in the 2004 and 2009 waves. As an alternative operationalization available in all three waves, the GAL-TAN measure is included. GAL-TAN consists of a continuum that ranges from a Green, Alternative and Liberal stance (low values) to a Traditional, Authoritarian and Nationalist outlook (high values). Although this indicator is somewhat convoluted (De Lange, 2007), it can function as a suitable indicator for the extent to which parties uphold emancipatory values: all three main components tap into the core dilemma, as sketched earlier, between respecting the individual choice (as part of civic nationalism) or protecting society’s organic traditions, order and coherency. Moreover, the framing of the question in the Chapel Hill survey mentions the following examples of GAL: “access to abortion, active euthanasia, same-sex marriage, or greater democratic participation”.

In order for GAL-TAN to measure the intended concept, it should pick up stances towards individual freedoms (the libertarian-authoritarian dimension), rather than a nationalist stance on issues such as immigration. This seems to be the case: Figure 2.2a confirms that parties scoring high on GAL-TAN are not systematically related to CHES’ measure of parties’ immigration stance ($r = -0.03$). By contrast, the GAL-TAN measure *does* correlate strongly and significantly with the *a priori* most valid indicator, *Social Lifestyle Intolerance* ($r = 0.60$), as confirmed by Figure 2.2b. GAL-TAN can therefore primarily be considered to capture parties’ stance on individual freedoms, rather than their views on immigration.

The CHES data also contains the experts’ estimates of the *saliency* of each issue on the same 11-point scale. The saliency of *Social Lifestyle Intolerance* is included to investigate whether the saliency rather than the position matters for the gender gap.

The models are estimated with random intercepts for country-election combinations. This way, variables at the country-election level – that is, parties’ ideology – can be included in the models.

Figure 2.2 Relation between GAL-TAN, Immigration (A) and Social Lifestyle Intolerance (B) position



Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey

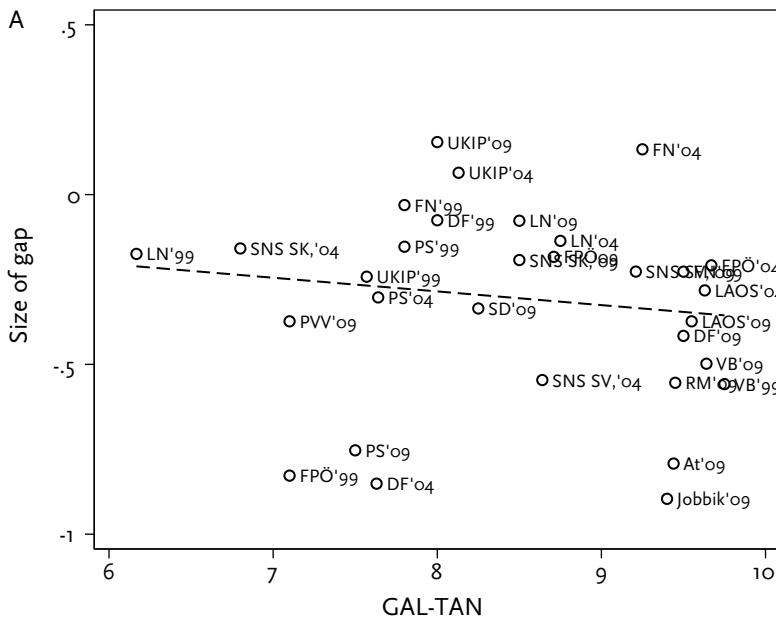
RESULTS

The hypotheses are tested as follows. First, graphs will be used to investigate the bivariate relationship between the size of the gap and parties' ideology. After that, a multivariate model is estimated to test whether the size of the gender gap significantly depends on the substance of party ideology, while controlling for both the other aspects of parties' ideology and a range of individual-level characteristics.

Bivariate relations

Figure 2.3a and Figure 2.3b show the relation between the size of the gender gap (vertical axis)²⁰ and parties' positions on cultural items (*Social Lifestyle Intolerance* and GAL-TAN; horizontal axis) for 26 party-year combinations. A negative gap indicates that women express less support for a party than men, and the majority of parties actually experience such a gap. It was hypothesized that the gap would be smaller for parties with a conservative position on GAL-TAN and *Social Lifestyle Intolerance*. However, no pattern emerges linking GAL-TAN to the size of the gap ($r = -0.11$, ns). With regard to *Social Lifestyle Intolerance*, Figure 2.3b shows that no correlation either ($r = -0.03$, ns). The *Freedom Party* (NL) and *Danish People's Party* are the most liberal parties in the data, but have a modest (2009) or even relatively large gap (2004). In short, there is thus no evidence that a more liberal position on such issues is related to a smaller gender gap.

Figure 2.3 Relation between gender gap, GAL-TAN position and *Social Lifestyle Intolerance* position



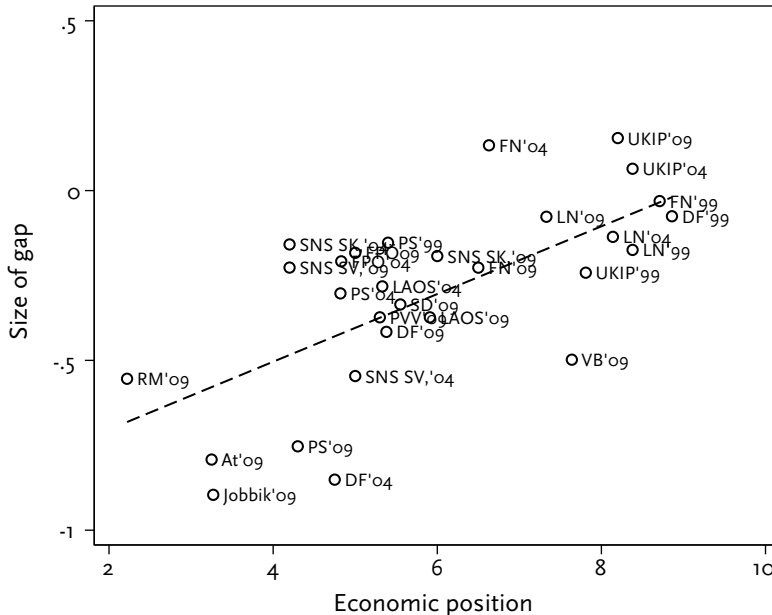
20 Calculated as the $PTV_{women} - PTV_{men}$. An alternative specification would be to express the size of the gap as a share of the total vote, which is less sensitive to the size of parties: $(PTV_{women} - PTV_{men}) / (PTV_{overall})$. This alternative operationalization yielded highly similar results.

I now turn to Radical Right parties' position on economic issues. Does it predict how well they attract female voters? Figure 2.5 suggests it does. A very strong and significant positive correlation ($r = 0.87$; $p < 0.01$) exists between the two indicators. Parties at the most neoliberal end of the scale have a small – or even absent – gap, whereas large gaps can be found among parties with a socio-economically more left-wing profile. This pattern is replicated for CHES' more fine-tuned economic sub-items of redistribution ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$), public services ($r = 0.73$, $p < 0.01$) and deregulation ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$), which suggest the overall economic stance, rather than one particular aspect of it, affects parties' gender gap.

Multivariate test

The bivariate analyses suggested that the size of the gender gap depends on parties' position on socioeconomic issues, but not on their stance on individual freedoms. Are these findings robust to a multivariate test, controlling for a range of party- and individual-level indicators? Table 2.1 shows the results of a multilevel regression with propensity to vote (PTV) for the Radical Right party as the dependent variable. These models do not include measures of respondents' attitudes on immigration or emancipation, because these were only asked once, in 2009. However, additional analyses, which include the 2009 wave's measures on immigration (2 items) and emancipation (3 items), confirm that both attitudes affect voting (with Radical Right voting being associated with more strict views on immigration and opposition to emancipation). However, the effect of views on immigration or emancipation does not differ between men and women (conditionality), nor do emancipation values explain the gender gap (composition).

Figure 2.5 Relation between size of the gender gap and Economic position



I now turn to the findings of Table 2.1. The negative effect of the female dummy in Model 1 confirms that a gender gap indeed exists. Its persistence in Model 2, after adding a range of controls, shows that the gap is not simply a composition effect of socio-economic status or right-wing views. Model 3 adds party positions and their interaction with gender. These interactions signify whether the gender gap (as captured by the main effect of gender) is moderated by party stances, and thus provide a core test of the hypotheses. Because immigration is key to the Radical Right ideology, its effect and interaction are included here as well. However, as expected due to the findings of Chapter 1, parties' stances on this issue do not affect their gender gap. Neither do parties' positions on *Social Lifestyle Intolerance* and *GAL-TAN*, which is in line with the bivariate findings above. A significant interaction *does* exist, however, between gender and parties' stance on economic issues. This, too, is in line with the bivariate relation, and robust to the inclusion of a range of control variables (Model 4).

Table 2.1 Full regression model

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Gender (female) | -0.296*** (0.033) | -0.324*** (0.043) | -1.053 (0.694) | -1.184 (0.768) |
| <i>Controls</i> | | | | |
| Left-Right self-placement | | 0.227*** (0.008) | | 0.227*** (0.008) |
| Education (years) | | -0.022*** (0.003) | | -0.022*** (0.003) |
| <i>Class</i> | | | | |
| Lower middle class | | -0.294*** (0.071) | | -0.290*** (0.071) |
| Middle class | | -0.523*** (0.056) | | -0.515*** (0.055) |
| Upper middle class | | -0.877*** (0.079) | | -0.869*** (0.079) |
| <i>Employment type</i> | | | | |
| Employed | | -0.06 (0.081) | | -0.061 (0.081) |
| Student | | 0.031 (0.152) | | 0.064 (0.152) |
| Household | | -0.18 (0.130) | | -0.175 (0.131) |
| Retired | | -0.261** (0.085) | | -0.261** (0.085) |
| Unemployed | | 0.255* (0.111) | | 0.254* (0.111) |
| Other | | 0.148 (0.147) | | 0.126 (0.147) |

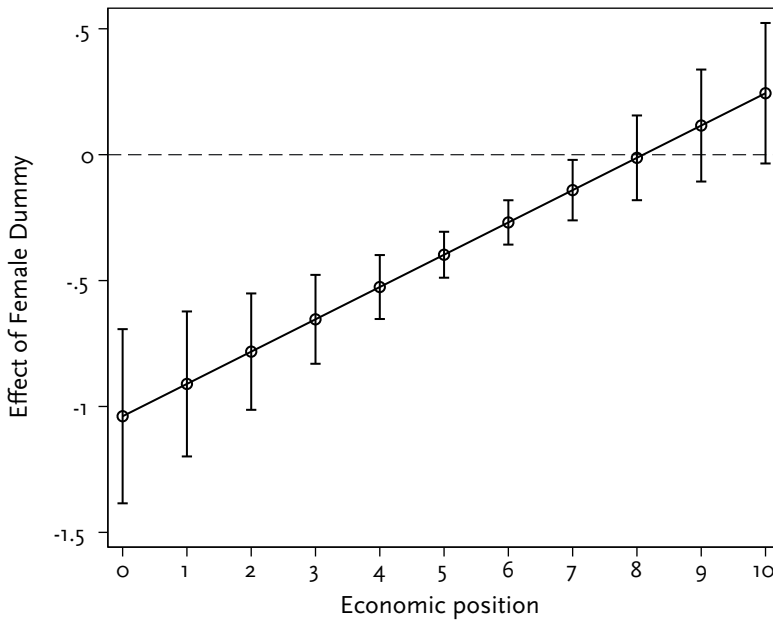
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| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Party level variables</i> | | | | |
| Immigration | | | -0.223 (0.237) | -0.297 (0.222) |
| Social Lifestyle Intolerance | | | -0.037 (0.156) | -0.021 (0.138) |
| GAL-TAN | | | -0.137 (0.211) | -0.161 (0.191) |
| Economy | | | -0.063 (0.103) | -0.011 (0.095) |
| <i>Interactions</i> | | | | |
| Female X Immigration | | | -0.007 (0.062) | 0.010 (0.072) |
| Female X SL Intolerance | | | 0.037 (0.042) | 0.018 (0.044) |
| Female X GAL-TAN | | | -0.027 (0.059) | -0.012 (0.063) |
| Female X Economy | | | 0.128*** (0.026) | 0.128*** (0.031) |
| Wave and intercept | | | | |
| 2009 election | 0.272 | 0.359 | 0.59 | 0.542 |
| | -0.387 | -0.277 | -0.303 | -0.286 |
| Intercept | 2.257*** (0.155) | 2.087*** (0.177) | 6.217* (2.517) | 6.119** (2.299) |
| N | 30481 | 19058 | 23501 | 19058 |

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

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey; European Election Study

Figure 2.6 shows a marginal effects plot of the female dummy. Indeed, the pattern of Figure 2.5 is confirmed: large and significant gaps for the most left-wing parties; an insignificant gap from position 8 onwards. The correlation between the gap and parties' socio-economic position is thus sizeable and robust.

Figure 2.6 Marginal effects of female dummy, over economic positions

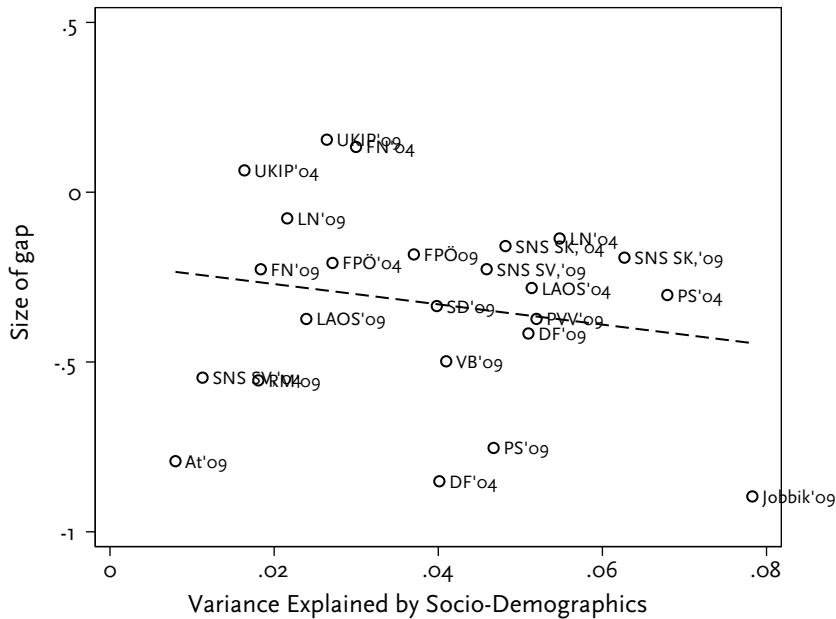
Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey; European Election Study

Additional analyses show no three-way interaction between the respondents' gender, socio-economic position (on any indicator) and parties' economic ideology. In other words, parties' ideology does not affect the relative importance of economic indicators among men and women differently.

Exploring the causal mechanism

To recall, the expected reason for the overrepresentation of men among Radical Right parties with a relatively left-wing socio-economic profile was that these parties draw more voters with a precarious working class profile, and these voters are more often male. As a result, the gender gap mirrors the 'proletarianization' of parties. Evidence for this mechanism can be found in Figure 2.7. It shows that the gender gap is largest for parties for which the explanatory power (in terms of pseudo- R^2) of the socio-demographic variables used in Table 2.1 (excluding gender itself) is the highest – that is, when parties draw most clearly on specific socio-economic strata of society (Van der Brug et al., 2012).²¹

21 It must be noted that the R^2 of this model (which includes socio-economic status, sector, age and education) is not very high. This reflects both the fact that such factors are usually not the strongest determinants of Radical Right voting (Van der Brug et al., 2013), but also that the number of socio-demographic measures that are comparable across waves was low. If anything, this low R^2 will likely lead to an *underestimation* of its correlation with the size of the gender gap.

Figure 2.7 Gender and explained variance by socio-structural variables

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey; European Election Study

By contrast, parties for which the explained variance of such variables is relatively low – that is, parties that draw on a broader coalition of voters than the working class alone – are predicted to have a smaller gap. This correlation is moderately strong but significant ($r = -0.25$; $p < 0.01$). All in all, the conclusion seems warranted that the large gender gap in voting for welfare chauvinist Radical Right parties reflects these parties' strong electoral reliance on specific groups of blue-collar voters – voters who tend to be relatively often male.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I investigated to what extent variation in Radical Right parties' position on various issues is related to the size of their gender gap. A first relevant finding is that the gender gap in Radical Right voting does not depend on parties' stance on emancipatory issues such as gay's and women's rights. This refutes the assertion that women would more often specifically dislike the Radical Right's stance regarding these issues. It therefore seems useful not to overestimate the importance of emancipatory issues for Radical Right parties, for whom the topic remains instrumental to their nativist agenda (Akkerman, 2005), or the salience of this topic for female voters as a group (for a discussion, see Mudde, 2007: 113). As expected, parties' position on immigration issues did not predict the size of the gap either.

A very strong and robust correlation does exist between the size of the gender gap and parties' position on socio-economic issues. Parties that take a more left-wing position on socio-economic issues – such as some of the Nordic and Eastern European parties – have a much larger gap than parties that are (or were) more *laissez-faire* in their outlook, such as the *Northern League* (IT), but also the *National Front* (F) in its earlier years. Additional analyses suggest that this is due to the fact that welfare chauvinist Radical Right parties draw more heavily on economically vulnerable groups than socio-economically more right-wing parties do. Although men and women can both face economic hardship due to changes in the post-industrial era, the social groups most connected to this phenomenon – mostly private sector unskilled and service workers – consist of more men than women. They form a specific constituency of the relatively 'welfare chauvinist' subfamily of the radical right. As a result, the gender gap is – at least partly – a function of the degree of 'proletarianization' (Betz, 1994) of parties.

Over time, Radical Right parties may or may not adopt the 'new winning formula' of pro-welfare nativism. This is not, however, mere ideological window-dressing. This chapter showed that such shifts are accompanied by substantive moves in parties' constituencies. However, even the most recent EES wave studied in this chapter, 2009, took place before the crisis in the Eurozone and the increased levels of immigration due to the Syrian civil war – two developments that seem to have increased Radical Right parties' appeal to socio-economic protection and welfare chauvinism (Ivaldi, 2015). A general prediction would be that, to the extent that Radical Right parties do increasingly adopt the 'New Winning Formula', their gender gap will increase rather than shrink, all else (especially their reputation; see Part II) equal. Research using recent data can shed light on this.

At the same time, this chapter also shows that socio-structural factors – even when considered in their interaction with party positions – cannot fully account for the gap. While it can explain why for some parties the gap is larger than for others, it does not explain why a 'net' gap remains even after controlling for a wide range of characteristics of parties and voters. The key puzzle from Chapter 1 remains unresolved: why do women appear structurally less likely to support Radical Right parties, even among those who agree with them? This calls for broadening the set of explanations. In Part II, I therefore turn to a third, socio-psychological, model of voting behavior.