

## **Radical Right and the Welfare State: the electoral relevance of welfare politics**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Academic research on West-European radical right parties has produced an extensive literature. Rarely has an electorate been so intensely analysed (to name a few: Betz 1994, Kitschelt 1995, Mudde 2007, Rydgren 2012). However, scientific explanations of radical right voting behavior are not settled; this debate is lively.

Two major sets of explanations are generally offered to account for the radical right vote (Oesch 2008, Rydgren 2012). On the one hand, the cultural explanation show that the radical right vote is greatly determined by diversity and immigration issues (Rydgren 2008). Globalization is expected to intensify these cultural conflicts and fuel that radical right's electoral successes (Mudde 2007, Kriesi et al. 2012). On the other hand, economic factors are brought up to account for the radical right vote. First, a sociological profile of the radical right voter can be established across Europe: the working class constitutes the core electorate of the radical right in Western Europe (Oesch 2008, Rydgren 2012). On the supply side of electoral politics, radical right parties have adapted to the interests of their (potential) electorate: not only do they offer economic agendas, but they also adapt these agendas to the expected preferences of their voters (Rydgren 2007). Their stances on the welfare state are usually different from that of traditional right-wing parties, and they are believed to adopt the working class' support for redistribution (De Koster et al. 2012). However, when studying the radical right vote, cultural and economic issues prove to be intensely interconnected, to the point that the two dimensions are blurred (Häusermann and Kriesi, 2011). The economic and cultural dimensions of the radical right vote are somewhat entangled. Cultural determinants of the radical right vote are important, and have been largely analysed. However, recent research has focused on the electoral relevance of welfare attitudes for the radical right, investigating the degree to which welfare politics is relevant for radical right support.

Indeed, welfare attitudes prove to be a significant characteristic and determinant of the radical right vote (Derks 2006, De Koster et al., 2012). In a seminal contribution, De Koster et al.'s have established the relation between welfare attitudes and radical right voting. They find that welfare attitudes such as welfare populism or welfare chauvinism are not only high among the radical right electorates, they also underlie support for these parties (De Koster et al. 2012). Yet, this empirical evidence is limited to the Dutch case. Furthermore, most of

the literature on the radical right electorate, and their relation to welfare issues, focuses on the working class (Mau & Mewes 2012, Rydgren 2013). The relation between voting and welfare attitudes among other social groups certainly exists; notably for the self-employed, another overrepresented group in the radical right electorate. On the aggregated level, the direct linkage between economic globalization and support for the new right is mediated by the welfare state – its type and scope (Swank & Betz 2003, Arzheimer 2009). Thus, the role of welfare politics in the radical right support is puzzling.

In a nutshell, the existing analyses linking welfare politics to radical right vote are too restrictive (in terms of selected countries, time period and social groups studied). They also often lack a comprehensive theoretical framework of how welfare politics determine the radical right vote. Providing a comprehensive framework to assess the relation between welfare politics and the radical right vote is the goal of this paper. By bridging the literature on the radical right vote to the political sociology of the welfare state, I address the question of how can welfare politics influence the radical right vote? What are the sociological mechanisms of this relation?

To explore the relation between welfare politics and the radical right vote I will rely on a normative theory, based on the moral economy of the welfare state; and on a risk-based theory. Social sciences and, it is worth noting, also economists agree that two functionalist conceptions of the welfare state exist. The welfare state can be conceived as the institutional set-up for risk management. On the other hand, the welfare can be seen as the institutional set-up that reallocates wealth and reduces social inequalities (Mau & Veghte 2007). The economist label this first conceptualization of the welfare state, conceived as insurance, the “piggy bank function”. The second more moral conception of the welfare state can be labelled “ the Robin Hood function” (Barr 2012).

First, I will develop the risk-based theory, and explain how economic insecurity can account for the radical right vote. Then, I will propose a normative theory that links welfare attitudes resulting from norm violation to this voting behaviour. For both these approaches, I will first define how individuals’ welfare preferences are shaped, and second how it influences voting for the radical right.

## 2. ECONOMIC INSECURITY AND THE RADICAL RIGHT

### *Self-interest and the collectivisation of risks*

The welfare state's primary goal can be conceived as a social insurance for individuals. Individuals would comply with the welfare state arrangements (taxes, social contributions) to the extent that it guarantees them a safety net in case of loss of resources. Individuals' self-interest is the founding principle of welfare state legitimacy; it justifies its existence. The self-interested citizen is the major assumption of a risk-based welfare state approach (Hall & Soskice 2001; Rehm 2007). The relationship between the individual and the welfare state is rather instrumental: welfare state institutions originate in the benefits individuals obtain from it (Mau & Veghte 2007). In terms of welfare attitudes, the economic perspective assumes that individuals express their preference for welfare arrangements (taxes, level of redistribution, insurance) in terms of the maximization of their economic utility (Alesina & Giuliano 2009).

When individuals rationally maximize their welfare, they do not only favour policies that directly benefit them, but also those that reduce their economic risks. Individuals calculate the benefits of complying with welfare institutions in terms of its costs (Iversen & Soskice 2001; Blekesaune & Quadagno 2003). Welfare preferences are defined by the exposure to risks. The welfare state can be seen as an institution that collectivises the risks of individuals. Individuals support the welfare state because it is intended to prevent from and deal with risks. They maximize their utility by sharing those risks. Therefore, the major perceived economic risks match the different benefits provided by welfare institutions: age, disability, sickness, and unemployment. Welfare state institutions provide safety nets that guarantee resources in these cases where income is interrupted: pensions, healthcare, unemployment benefits. However, this relation is rather complex, individuals do not just favour welfare policies because they directly gain from it, they have to assess their risks, their position in the society and compare themselves to others.

### *Globalisation and economic insecurity*

Economic risks are not simply the result of the individuals' rational assessment of their economic situation. Structural transformations of the economy directly impact individuals'

evaluation of risk. Globalization gives rise to new conflicts (economic and cultural) that produce oppositions and new forms of competitions among individuals.

In their landmark study on the effects of structural changes on political conflicts, Kriesi et al. argue that globalization gave rise to a revived economic competition. This process has constituted groups of “winners” and “losers” (Kriesi et al. 2012). Considering the realm of the welfare state, this new competition has led to increasing economic risks, chiefly income instability, unemployment, and labour-market instability. These new risks directly influence the individuals’ economic security; they feel personally threatened. These new risks are predominant among certain categories of the population. The industrial working class is the most exposed to international competition. However, the new risks do not only affect blue-collar workers only, but more generally low-skilled individuals are confronted to increasing competition that increases their insecurity. Overall, the globalization of the economy has increased workers’ economic insecurity. Yet, establishing this relation, Scheve and Slaughter leave open the question of what consequences this growing economic insecurity has on welfare attitudes (Scheve and Slaughter 2004).

Following the “economic logic” of globalization, individuals evaluate its consequences. They especially emphasize its negative consequences in terms of competition (Kriesi et al. 2008). The losers of globalization feel entitled to a form of reparation from their economic precariousness and insecurity (Kriesi et al. 2012). Based on the self-interest theory of welfare demands, such increasing economic insecurity should trigger higher demand for welfare insurance. Such a demand for more securing welfare policies addresses the economic consequences of globalization. However, individuals can also address the causes of increasing economic insecurity, and therefore express frustration and oppositions to economic openness and changes. In other words, the loser of globalization may not only express preferences for more protecting social policies, they may also directly reject the causes of globalization. The next section deals with the question of the influence of growing economic insecurity of on radical right voting behaviour.

#### *The two sides of economic insecurity*

Losers of globalization face increasing economic insecurity; theoretically, according to a self-interest driven model of welfare preferences, they should express preferences for more securing welfare policies. Moreover, they should express important opposition to the

process of economic globalization. This is in line with the “factor endowment model” developed in economic theories. The more skilled have more to gain from globalization than the lower skilled. Losers of globalization, and mainly blue-collar workers become less important in the economic arena as trade with countries that have abundant low-skilled workers increases. The opposition to globalization has to be understood in terms of economic self-interest: economic globalization increases the “losers’” economic insecurity, and contributes to low incomes and weak labour-market positions.

I argue that when evaluating economic globalization, individuals – especially the losers of this process – feel more economically insecure. While addressing the causes (rejection of the globalization) and the consequences (increasing demand for welfare protection), they can be expected to vote for the radical right. Therefore, I use the concept of economic insecurity as both increased individuals’ economic risk and negative perception of economic globalization. (A similar, though not identical distinction is found in Scheve and Slaughter (2004), they consider that economic insecurity shapes perception of globalization, and on the other hand reduces the capacities of governments to provide social insurance).

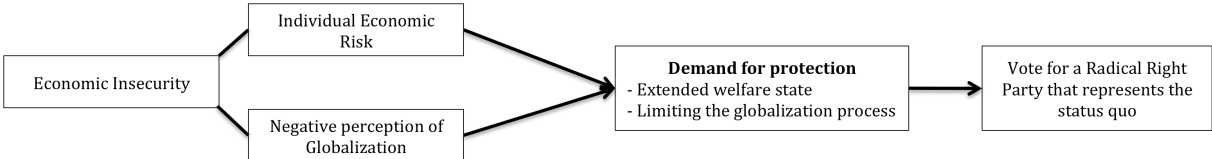
To this point, economic insecurity is not logically linked to voting for the radical right. Indeed, leftist parties usually match the demands for more economic security, that is higher intervention of the welfare state (Houtman et al. 2008). However, empirically, the lower educated and the people from low social classes combine the rejection of the welfare state with a more egalitarian view of social justice (Archterberg et al. 2011). Egalitarianism is not only compatible with rejection of the welfare state institutions, it can positively influence voting for the radical right (De Koster et al. 2012).

Hence, this relation between economic insecurity and the radical right vote relies on part of the *convergence hypothesis*: the parties that usually hold office, both on the right and on the left, tend to converge in terms of economic policies. Kitschelt argues that voter then become indifferent to the economic dimension of politics, and focus on the cultural dimension (Kitschelt 1995). Another possibility is that such convergence benefits the radical right (Carter 2005). More precisely, individuals most negatively affected by economic globalization are attracted to parties that hold radical position on the globalization process itself, such as radical right parties.

Radical right parties in Western Europe have targeted the two aspects of economic insecurity that are likely perceived by the “losers of globalization”: reject of economic

globalization and increased risks that prompt demand for more welfare state intervention. They aim at defending those who were “left on the side of modernization”, those who lost more than they gained in economic and social changes.

The general expectation is that economic insecurity triggers a need for risk protection (Figure 1). The causal mechanism linking individual economic insecurity to voting for the radical right is “demand for protection”.



**Figure 1 - Relation between economic insecurity and radical right vote**

Aggregate unemployment, trade openness, capital mobility, foreign immigration are contextual variables that influence positively the radical right vote (Swank & Betz 2003; Arzheimer & Carter 2006). The macro-level relation between globalization and the radical right vote is an incentive to understand the individual level link between economic insecurity and the radical right. The next sections deal with these specific mechanisms. The mechanism, which drives the relation between economic insecurity and the radical right, is one of protection. I argue that radical right parties have successfully attracted “losers of globalization” because they are openly opposing globalization and denationalization. Individuals that face increased economic risk may support the radical right, because it appears as a “status quo” party (Geering 2013). A “protective vote” for a “status quo party” is one that refuses the changes that brought economic insecurity. The notion of a “status quo” party gathers the two dimensions of economic insecurity: rejection of the causes of change, protection against its consequences. Not only have radical right parties opposed structural changes in society (economic and cultural), but they are also even expected to turn to a “interventionist-nationalist” position. This stance combines the rejection of denationalizing processes, and economic interventionist stances that address the question of economic insecurity. Many losers of globalization express this combination of ideas, and radical right parties are expected to focus on such electorate (Kriesi et al. 2012).

### *The cause of economic insecurity: rejection of globalization and the radical right*

Individuals can assess the causes of their increasing economic insecurity. Globalization is perceived as the responsible process for increasing economic risks. If radical right parties have for some time advocated Kitschelt's winning formula, they have always criticized international openness and "*mondialisme*" (Swank & Betz 2003). Indeed, the belief that the internationalization of the economy is significant in increasing economic risks is wide-ranging. This is particularly true for the less-skilled individuals, which are "*much more likely to oppose freer trade and immigration than their more skilled counterparts*" (Scheve & Slaughter 2001). This idea is consistent with the "factor endowment model", the workers and low-skilled, since they are the most threatened by economic globalization, are likely to support it the less. In a nutshell, the "losers" of globalization are expected to support the radical right because those parties remain nationalistic (not necessarily nationalist, but as opposed to the globalization process), and the radical right confronts the causes of their increasing economic insecurity

### *The consequences of globalization: economic risks and the radical right*

Individuals that face increased economic risks, those in danger of becoming precarious are expected to support the radical right. Globalization has increased the economic risks of the losers of globalization (blue-collar worker but also the tertiary sector "*précariat*"). These risks are multiple, and of various nature. Since some social categories are more likely than others to be economically threatened, risk pertain firstly to labour-market position. The distinction between insiders and outsiders in the labour market mirrors that of winners and losers of globalization. Being at risk in terms of employment strongly influences both welfare preferences and electoral behavior (Schwander 2012). Individuals do not only perceive economic risks in possible loss of income or labour-market position, their assessment is intertwined in concerns relative to the welfare state. For instance measuring economic insecurity has to include healthcare expenses on top of mere income. (Economic Security Index, Hacker et al. 2013). Economic risks can even be measured in a broader way than with strictly economic indicators. Economic insecurity can lead to social exclusion. The notion of "*précarité*" embodies this broad conception: being poor is not only having limited resources, it also means growing away from the rest of society and the feeling of being "left out". The insecurity index EPICES ("*Evaluation de la précarité et des inégalités de santé pour les*



Centres d'Examen de Santé") integrates items on lifestyle, social and familial risks. It is positively associated to the radical right vote (Mayer 2012). Increased competition on the labor market, higher unemployment, difficult access to healthcare are all motives for the losers of globalization to support parties of the "status quo". The radical right parties are such parties, those who refuse structural changes and strongly oppose it. These parties frame economic globalization in terms of "labour and social security" more than any other party family except for the radical left (Höglinger et al. 2012)<sup>1</sup>. Few other parties than the radical right can capture the economic insecurity of the losers of globalization. Increased economic risks trigger a demand for protection and state intervention that can be matched by the radical right. Defending the status quo, these parties tend to support economically interventionist policies and favour a widely protecting welfare state.

To sum up, two logic seem to structure the relation between economic insecurity and support for the radical right: economic risk and negative perception of globalization. Certainly, these two mechanisms interact. Strong individual risk and negative perception of globalization are characteristics associated to the losers of globalization. They express preferences on the demand side that exactly match the radical right parties who are shifting to the "interventionist-nationalist" side of political conflict (Kriesi et al. 2012).

## **2. WELFARE NORMATIVE BELIEFS AND THE RADICAL RIGHT**

### *Why a normative theory of the welfare state?*

A normative theory of the welfare state challenges a conception of welfare attitudes that is solely based on self-interest. Normative and cultural factors explaining these attitudes are at least as important (Mau 2004; Van Oorschot 2006; Svallfors 2007, 2012). "The electorates of advanced industrial societies do not seem to be voting with their pocketbooks, but instead primarily motivated by 'sociotropic' concern" (Inglehart 1990). The same argument can be made about welfare attitudes. The concept of moral economy enables to widen the mechanisms of attitude formation, by adding a normative side to the narrow self-interest

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<sup>1</sup> Hypothesising that increased economic risks trigger radical right voting competes with the fact that usually the worst-off individuals and the precarious importantly abstain from voting (Kriesi & Bornshier 2013; Mayer 2012).

factor. It has been extensively referred to in recent literature on welfare attitudes (Mau 2004; Svallfors 1996, 2012). The moral economy is composed of the rights and obligations of citizens regarding welfare politics.

### *The three norms of the moral economy of the welfare state*

To understand which are the norms that constitute the moral economy of the welfare state, it is necessary to go back to the foundations of the Welfare state. The foundations of the welfare state do not refer to the history of the welfare institutions, but rather to the justifications of the welfare state, its legitimacy. Academic consensus has been reached on what these justifications are (Goodin et al. 1999, Barr 2012, Greve 2013). I argue that the moral economy of the welfare state is constituted of three overarching norms: social justice, reciprocity, and self-reliance. These norms encompass the six common moral justifications of the welfare state found in the 'foundations of welfare literature'.

The norm of **social justice** encloses three moral justifications of the welfare state: reducing poverty, promoting social equality, and promoting stability (Goodin et al. 1999). Reducing poverty was always a primary concern of society, welfare institutions originated in "Poor Laws" (Goodin & Mitchell 2000). To define poverty, one needs to take distance with a minimalist approach (fulfilling basic needs necessary for physical existence) but consider relative deprivation. The welfare state is justified by trying to minimize the relative deprivation. The promotion of social equality has evolved guarantying an equality of status (equality under the law, equality of vote) to equality of opportunity. This equality of opportunity is very pertinent when considering the welfare state. For instance, egalitarians tend to promote the better distribution of social goods, such as jobs. "Full employment policies" become therefore crucial aspects of the promotion of social equality (Goodin et al. 1999). The last dimension of social justice is to promote social stability. Not only do societies need to be stable to remain integrated, but individuals also want stability in their personal lives. This is the aim of "social security": ensuring resources to individual when their regular sources are interrupted. Empirical evidence supports the idea that social justice is a central norm defining the moral economy of the welfare state. Not only do those elements form coherent scale of what the government responsibilities should be in the eyes of the citizens

(Svallfors 2012)<sup>2</sup>; but individuals also judge positively the effects of the welfare state, such as the prevention of poverty, of social unrest, and enhancing population well-being (Van Oorschot 2010). Merging these different – though very close – aspects, I consider social justice to be one of the three core norms of the moral economy of the welfare state.

The norm of *reciprocity* is the second central norm of the moral economy of the welfare state. It is closely linked to what theorists of welfare state foundations label the promotion of social inclusion. The idea of distributive justice presupposes a political community that divides, exchanges and shares social goods. This cooperation is both the cause and the consequence of integrated communities, and it builds on social capital (Putnam 1993). One of the founding dimensions of the welfare state is therefore to promote inclusion, through the action of welfare institutions. Reciprocity is the main prerequisite for individuals to cooperate. This is extremely relevant for the groups that are expected to contribute the most. The idea of belonging to a community is a forceful justification for the welfare state, under the condition that relations among individuals are perceived to be reciprocal. ‘Contingent consent’ to an institution – here the welfare state – can be explained through reciprocity, as a norm requiring that individuals cooperate with government demands but only as long as others also do (Levi 1997). The definition of the population of those expected to contribute is of central importance: those who contribute are deserving of social benefits, those who don’t are not. Practically, the ‘deservingness’ debate demonstrates the central importance of the norm of reciprocity in the moral economy of the welfare state. When individuals evaluate who is entitled to welfare benefits, past and future contributions are of major importance. For instance, the elderly are always ranked as the most deserving, because they have contributed during their whole life. (Van Oorschot, 2008).

The last norm of the moral economy of the welfare state is *self-reliance*. It has always been the norm (meaning the convention) when individuals consider welfare (Goodin & Mitchell 2000). Self-reliance is at the centre of the welfare state narratives. Individuals who are

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<sup>2</sup> Defining “Government responsibility”, Svallfors constructs a scale very close to what the norms of social justice is. It is constructed of the following items on the scope of action of the welfare state: “ensure a job for everyone”; “ensure adequate healthcare for the sick”, “ensure reasonable standards of living for the unemployed”; “ensure sufficient child services for working parents”; “provide paid leave from work to those who have to care for family members”. Even if cross-national and categorical variations are strong, support for this dimension of social justice is strong in industrialized countries.

perceived to be self-reliant, sufficient without state intervention, are positively viewed (Halvorsen 1998). Regarding the foundations of the welfare state literature, self-reliance is tightly linked to the dimensions of efficiency. In that sense, not only are individuals responsible for their own welfare; but poverty, need of assistance are viewed as a personal failure (Hasenfeld & Rafferty 1989). Self-reliance is also very important at the macro-level, since dependence is envisaged as violating the rule of 'Pareto efficiency' (when no one can be better off, without some others being worse off). Too great dependency bears greater cost on the general welfare of society (Goodin et al. 1999). For these reasons, self-reliance is the third central norm driving the moral economy of the welfare state.

### *Norms and Institutions*

The three central norms of the moral economy of the welfare state are not fixed, and certainly not equivalent over time, countries, classes and individuals. Norms are not the result of the simple aggregation of preferences; individual as well as more systemic factors contribute to shaping the moral economy of the welfare state. Much of the literature that considers the normative dimensions of welfare attitudes stands on an institutionalist point of view. Esping-Andersen's seminal contribution on welfare regime types insists on the idea that those regimes have to be considered in terms of social relations. Each of these regimes is grounded on "shared moral assumptions" (Esping-Andersen 1990). Institutions, as the formal rules, procedures and practices that structure the relationship between individuals and the state, shape both norms and interests, and their effect is considered as "paramount" (Svallfors 2007, Larsen 2008). The impact of institutions on welfare attitudes has been specifically observed: "in simplified form, the mental figure looks like this: institutions give rise to certain interests and norms, which in turn either reinforce or undermine the original institutions" (Rothstein, 1998). Welfare regimes are rooted in distinct normative values, but regimes themselves tend to "mold" the welfare attitudes (Svallfors 1997, Mau 2004). This reciprocal relation exists whether looking at institutional arrangements or tangible public policies (Mettler & Soss 2004). This section defined the constitutive norms of the moral economy of the welfare state, grounded in moral justifications for the foundations of the welfare state, and influenced by existing institutions. The next section will develop how those norms can shape attitudes, and political behaviour.

### *Norm violation*

Social justice, reciprocity and self-reliance are the driving norms of the moral economy of the welfare state. To understand the relation they can have on voting behaviour, one needs to consider how norms define attitudes, and how these influence the vote. First I will argue on a theoretical point that norms, and especially their violations can shape welfare attitudes. Then, I will develop the causal mechanism that links the perception of the violation of the norms of the moral economy of the welfare state to the radical right vote.

Norms are considered to be the “cement” of society (Parsons 1968). Moreover, normative beliefs correlate positively with individual behavior (Fishbein 1967). The norms of the moral economy of the welfare state do not only shape the different welfare states, they influence attitudes and behaviours of individuals.

Much of the literature on norms has focused on the question of norm compliance, and most importantly on norm deviance. Since norm conformity is the most common, it is thus less interesting behaviour (Merton 1986). Focusing on an individual’s deviance, and its consequence for this individual only is problematic (Bicchieri & Muldoon 2011; Brennan et al. 2013). In terms welfare preferences, I argue that perhaps the most important influence of norms is the perceptions of other individuals’ compliance to the norms or their violation. Normative beliefs have to coincide both with what an individual thinks, but also to what he believes the others think, and should do (Bicchieri & Muldoon 2011). The normative approach to welfare attitudes implies that social representations are shaped by normative beliefs, that is followed by either consent or dissent within and among social groups (Staerklé et al. 2011). Normative beliefs should not be considered “external” or “exogenous”, individuals evaluate those norms in relation to the representation and perceptions that they have of society, and that is mainly other individuals’ behaviour.

The framework I want to propose for the assessment of the impact of norms on welfare attitudes and consequently on voting behaviour is an interactive one. It is an individual’s assessment of the compliance of others to the norms of the welfare state that mainly shape his welfare attitudes. More precisely, welfare attitudes and following electoral preferences are sharply influenced by the perception that others violate one (or more) of the three core norms of the moral economy of the welfare state. Differentiation is the mechanism that leads the perceptions of the violation of norms of the moral economy of the welfare state to polarized welfare attitudes. These extreme welfare attitudes underlie support for the radical

right. Normative beliefs produce different representations for different social groups. Boundaries are set between those groups, and as a result, some are positively connoted (in-groups), others are negatively connoted (out-groups) (Tajfel 1978). The antagonisms produced between groups are the central feature of normative beliefs (Staerklé et al. 2012). As a result, the norm-violating individuals are *differentiated*, they are considered an out-group, and thus considered as negative elements of society (Kreindler 2005). For the moral economy of the welfare state, this implies that some individuals are defined as violating the norm of social justice, reciprocity, or self-reliance. Each of these norms can be translated in more explicit and concrete welfare attitudes. The perception of a violation of one, or more, of the core norms of the moral economy of the welfare state results in extreme positions in terms of those welfare attitudes. As a result of this extreme attitude that is driven by group differentiation, blame is put on the out-group. My general hypothesis is that this blame (extreme welfare attitude) can translate into a vote for the radical right.

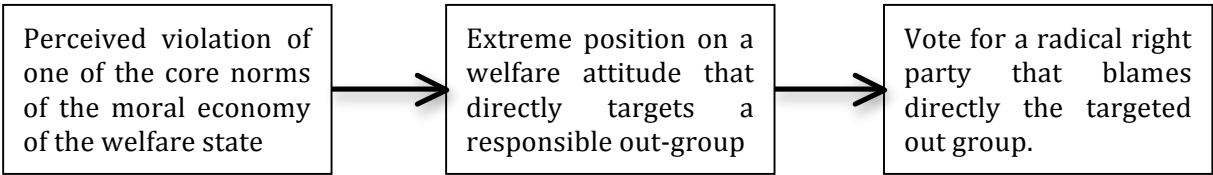


Figure 2 - Mechanism linking the perceived violations of norms to the radical right vote

This section presents the welfare attitudes associated to each of the three core norms of the moral economy of the welfare state. I argue that individuals who perceive that a welfare norm is violated will hold extreme position on the associated welfare attitude. This extreme attitude is the result of a differentiation process: a norm-violating out-group is defined, and its deviant behaviour antagonizes some individuals. The radical right parties are likely to capture this welfare antagonism because they are ideologically prone to such differentiation processes (Figure 2).

*Normative welfare attitudes and radical right voting*

Nationalism is central to the ideology of radical right parties. They define bounded communities, those of the natives (Mudde 2007). Furthermore, exclusion appears to be a characteristic of radical right parties, considering different groups than the mere national community (Sniderman et al. 2000). They are essentially movements of exclusion (Rydgren

2005). Another part of the literature on radical right parties focuses on the populist ideology. Even if populism is a “thin ideology”, it has a “chameleonic character” (Betz 1994; Mény & Surel 2002; Mudde 2004); it displays an exclusionary trademark. Populism relies on an antagonism between “us” and “them”. Populism is founded on a vertical and a horizontal opposition. Whether directed at the “corrupted elite” (vertical) or another out-group (horizontal), the mechanism is one of differentiation between a heartland, an idealized community and a negatively perceived group (Taggart 2002). Because of these exclusionary features, radical right parties are expected to capture the antagonisms produced by the perceptions of norms violation. In other words, citizens who display extreme welfare attitudes because they feel some individuals are violating a core norm of the moral economy of the welfare state are more likely to vote for radical right parties. The next section details the attitudinal mechanisms that would influence such behaviour.

Welfare populism is the attitude derived from the norm of reciprocity. It emerges when individuals feel an out-group is not contributing its share of the welfare social contract. Parallel to the two-dimensional opposition of populism, welfare populism can differentiate a vertical and a horizontal out-group. On the one hand, the “welfare scroungers” designate those that abuse the welfare system, the “welfare dependents” that violate the norm of reciprocity. On the other hand, the “corrupted elite” is an encompassing notion that gathers economic elites, but also the constitutive elements of the welfare system. In that sense, public servants can become the target of such welfare populism, as they are the elites of the welfare system, and are deemed usurpers of its benefits. Thus, the welfare populist opposes the “hard working citizens”, the “little guys” to citizens and elites who do not contribute their share to the welfare system while greatly benefiting from it. This distinction echoes the one expressed by Saint-Simon, which opposed a productive class to the “social parasites”<sup>3</sup>. The parasites are those who do not participate in the industrious production. Those parasites are the out-group targeted by citizens, and they believe the radical right parties also oppose such individuals. Welfare chauvinism is an attitude that supports a “system of social protection only for those who belong to the ethnically defined community and who have contributed to it” (Kitschelt 1995). It has been presented as a central feature of populist right vote in Europe in recent years (De Koster et al. 2012). Welfare chauvinism fits

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<sup>3</sup> “Sur la querelle des abeilles et des frelons ou Sur la consommation respective des producteurs et des consommateurs non producteurs” published in 1819.

very well with the idea of 'violated reciprocity' (Van Oroschot 2008, Van der Waal et al. 2010). Immigrants are considered an out-group less entitled to welfare, because they have contributed less (by nature they arrive in the welfare system later; in addition they are perceived as a structurally dependent group). They are viewed as a threat to the welfare state that is based on the norm of equal reciprocity. Parallel to welfare populist attitudes, immigrants also constitute an out-group at which welfare chauvinism is directed. Thus welfare chauvinism is conceptualized as a specification of welfare populism, as it relies on the same principle of violated reciprocity<sup>4</sup>. Some individuals believe the norm of reciprocity is violated, and they express extreme welfare populist or welfare chauvinist attitudes. They believe that undeserving groups – whether they are an elite or an out-group such as immigrants – unfairly monopolize welfare benefits. These welfare populist or welfare chauvinist are more likely to vote for radical right parties.

Welfare retrenchment is the welfare attitude associated to the norm of self-reliance. The norm of self-reliance insists that individuals should not rely on the welfare state to fulfil their needs. Those who are autonomous are positively viewed. On the other hand, individuals who are deemed "welfare dependent" are negatively viewed. The relation between the norm of self-reliance and the attitude of welfare retrenchment is complicated, because it plays both on the micro and the macro level. Much of the libertarian economic tradition, most prominently Hayek and Friedman, argues that the welfare state is not the ideal arrangement to maximize the well-being of a society. They argue the welfare state should be reduced to its minimal form, because its institutions foster dependency, corrupt citizens from a righteous conduct; and therefore does not allow for the maximization of welfare. It is very unlikely that individuals think about the norm of self-reliance on a macro-level economic scale. However, citizens can perceive that some individuals violate the norm of self-reliance by becoming voluntarily welfare dependent. Then, individuals can assess that the welfare state institutions foster such behaviours, and thus feel they should be retrenched. According to Kitschelt's famous "winning formula", radical right parties hold (or held) preferences for the reduction of the welfare state's scope and range (Kitschelt 1995). Therefore, because some individuals believe the welfare state foster of form of dependency that benefits an

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<sup>4</sup> Parallel to this sociocultural approach of welfare chauvinism is a socioeconomic one. "Realistic conflict theory", assumes that some groups are in competition for scarce or valued social resources. However, this approach has been empirically proven wrong (Mau & Mewes, 2012)



out-group that violates the norm of self-reliance, they are more likely prefer the reduction of the welfare state policies.

Egalitarianism is the welfare attitude associated to the norm of social justice. This welfare attitude often has been equated to support for the welfare state (Svallfors 1999). However, egalitarianism is not just support for welfare institutions. Expressing egalitarian views can even go along critical views pertaining the welfare state (Achterberg et al. 2011). Here, egalitarianism is considered as the attitude expressed when individuals feel the norm of social justice has been violated. In terms of differentiation, citizens perceive this violation because they can identify out-groups that are clearly in precarious conditions. Contrary to the out-groups defined when assessing the violations of reciprocity and self-reliance norms, the out-groups here are not necessarily judged negatively. In fact, referring to the framework of populism, individuals can feel that those less well-off citizens are part of the imagined “us”. This idea is particularly relevant for some categories of the population. For instance, the working class usually displays high levels of egalitarianism. Workers and the less well-off tend to express egalitarianism the most dramatically (Svallfors 2012). At the same time, the working class is considered as the core electorate of the radical right (Oesch 2008; Mau & Mewes 2012, Rydgren 2013). Therefore we can hypothesize that some individuals who feel they are part of a group that suffers from the violations of social justice and thus are strongly egalitarian, are likely to vote for the radical right.

I have shown how the perceived violations of the norms of the moral economy of the welfare state can lead to group differentiation and welfare attitudes that can translate into radical right vote (table 1). Yet, this moral economy is a complex system of norms, which most likely interact together. It is very possible the interactions of welfare attitudes resulting from the perceived violation of welfare norms may increase their influence on voting for the radical right. For instance, when both norms of reciprocity and social justice feel violated, individuals can feel the “us” in-group is not entitled to enough social benefits, whereas some are not contributing their share (welfare scroungers or immigrants). Alternatively, the critics of the welfare state under the violations of the norms of reciprocity and self-reliance can be combined. The retrenchment of the welfare state can be associated to the expression that

welfare redistribution benefits an undeserving ‘welfare elite’, or that its beneficiaries should be limited to the most deserving (excluding unemployed and immigrants for instance)<sup>5</sup>.

<b>Violated Norm</b>	<b>Targeted out-group</b>	<b>Resulting Welfare Attitude</b>	<b>RR vote</b>
Reciprocity	Welfare scroungers/Immigrants	Welfare populism/Chauvinism	+
Self-Reliance	Welfare dependents	Welfare Retrenchment	+
Social Justice	Poor/”us”	Egalitarianism	+

**Table 1 - Mechanisms linking welfare normative beliefs to radical right voting**

**CONCLUSION**

This paper considers two hypotheses that contribute to the explanation of the radical right vote. First, the “losers of globalization” are expected to face economic insecurity; confronted to economic risk and expressing a negative perception of globalization, they seek protection by voting for radical right parties. Second, individuals that feel the core norms of the moral economy of the welfare are being violated, and thus express extreme welfare attitudes that target a specific group, are expected to support radical parties that reflect these group boundaries. The previous sections have assessed these mechanisms. Both hypotheses rely on different assumptions about the welfare state, and the way individuals interact with it. However, the hypotheses are considered more complementary than competing.

The two theories of the welfare state underline the capital role of institutions. On the one hand, economic risks are mediated through welfare institutions. Different welfare policies determine the scope of economic risks. Very generous regimes, in terms of welfare insurance of resource redistribution, will reduce the economic risks of individuals. Conversely, individual face higher economic risks and are more subject to macro-level economic changes in minimal welfare states. On the other hand, institutions are a decisive influence on the shaping of common norms of the welfare state. As noted before, welfare institutions transpose the significant norms of the moral economy of the welfare state (and their relative prevalence), but these institutions “mold” the welfare norms as well. Macro-

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<sup>5</sup> Drawing from the first hypothesis, another interaction is conceptually possible. However, it is very unlikely that a significant share of individuals, or specific social groups combine egalitarianism and welfare retrenchment attitudes.

level characteristics such as welfare institutions are a determining factor in the relation between welfare politics and the radical right vote (Figure 3)<sup>6</sup>.

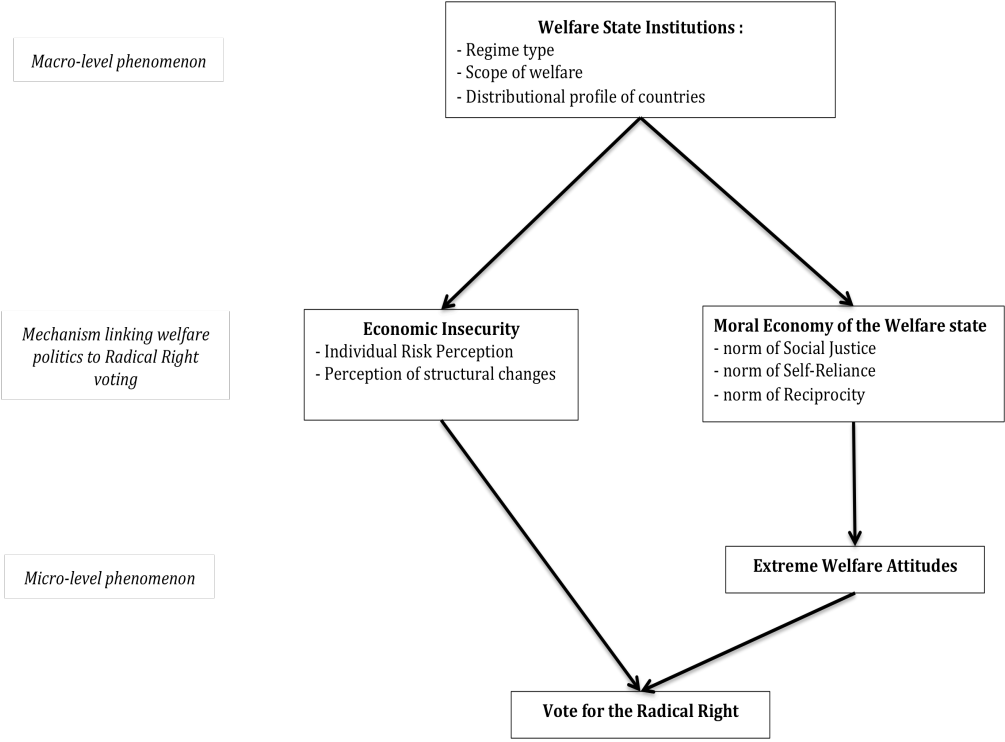


Figure 3 – A conceptual framework for explaining the radical right vote through welfare politics

This paper relies on existing empirical research to formulate comprehensive theories of how welfare politics influences the radical right vote. However, such theories require empirical testing. Only a comparative study of Western European radical right electorates can verify it. A second point of discussion is to understand the impact of the great recession on both theories. Most certainly, it has abruptly increased economic insecurity. The dramatic recession may also have affected the prevalence of the norms of the moral economy of the welfare state, the extent to which they are violated, but also the definitions of the “us” or of the different out-groups.

<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of clarity, the influence of welfare norms on welfare institutions was not represented. The object of this framework however is to explain how institutions impact welfare attitudes and consequently electoral behavior, not how such norms influence the institutional design of the welfare state.

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