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Who Votes for Authoritarian-Populist Parties?

The surge of support for Authoritarian-Populist parties in a series of 2017 elections renewed concern about this phenomenon and its potential for destabilizing long-established patterns of party competition. In June 2017, the National Front's Marine Le Pen challenged Emmanuel Macron in the second round of the French presidential elections, after defeating the socialist party on the center-left and the republicans on the center-right in the first round contest. A few months later, in September, the xenophobic and racist Alternative for Germany challenged Angela Merkel's generous refugee policies, entering the Bundestag with 94 seats – the first time a far-right party had done so since 1948. This was followed a month later by the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) coming second in parliamentary elections, winning one in four votes. In still other countries, including Austria, Switzerland, New Zealand, Norway, Finland, the Czech Republic, Italy, and Poland, Authoritarian-Populist parties have won legislative and ministerial office.[1] The performance of Authoritarian-Populist parties ebbs and flows over time but even where these parties have had only limited electoral success, their hardline anti-immigrant rhetoric, racist and religious intolerance, and nationalist policies can infect the policy agenda for governing parties on the center-right, such as the People's Party in Austria, the Republican Party in the US, and the Eurosceptic Conservative Party in the UK. All major parties have been affected by the voting success of far-right parties but they have been most damaging for Social Democratic and Labour parties.

It is important to understand the reasons why people vote for Authoritarian-Populist parties. Authoritarian-populist forces were decisive for the outcome of the Brexit referendum on the UK's membership

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in the European Union in June 2016, igniting anti-immigrant and nativist sentiments and generating a deep financial, political, and constitutional crisis within the United Kingdom. In the United States, Donald Trump has overthrown numerous conventions in American politics. His aggressive rejection of 'political correctness,' his belligerent style, and his willingness to engage in cultural wars against liberal targets seems to be particularly appealing to older, religious, white men in rural communities, especially social conservatives and xenophobes. These groups find themselves left behind by growing support for same-sex marriage, gender equality for women in politics, and immigration rights for 'Dreamers.' Rhetorical slogans to 'Build the wall,' 'Make America Great Again,' and 'Clean the Swamp' appeal deeply and symbolically to people who reject new values and establishment politics – a group that Trump mobilized to vote in the 2016 election, although it is a shrinking sector of the American electorate. Authoritarian-Populist and Progressive-Populist parties have advanced in many other post-industrial societies, disrupting long-established patterns of party competition and governing coalitions.

To understand the factors underlying electoral support for these parties, this chapter first discusses various approaches to analyzing the evidence. We then describe the research design used to analyze electoral behavior in this study, treating the individual-level indices of voting for populist and authoritarian parties developed in the previous chapter as the dependent variables. We again use data from the European Social Survey, pooling the surveys from 2002 to 2014, covering over 30 countries. When considering elections, citizens face two choices: (1) whether to cast a ballot, and (2) what party to support. Both decisions are equally important for estimating any compositional effects – and both are related in practice – although most attention has traditionally focused on analyzing who supports radical right or populist parties. This approach is inadequate, since voter turnout is not a random process and any analysis restricted to voters alone (rather than all citizens) provides an incomplete picture.[2] Young and old differ in their propensity to vote, and in their value preferences and party choices. We therefore use regression models to examine both stages of the voting process. We first examine *who participates*, demonstrating both generational and life-cycle effects. We then analyze the social and attitudinal characteristics of voters who support authoritarian parties – that is, parties that favor nationalism in foreign affairs, tough law and order, restrictions on the integration of immigrants and asylum seekers, opposing liberal lifestyles like homosexuality, and valuing order, tradition, and stability. We next analyze support

for populist parties – those using anti-establishment and anti-corruption rhetoric. The direct role of political values and generational effects are examined in detail – along with the impact of period and life-cycle effects, education, social class, and urbanization – as we expect these factors to play a key role in driving long-term processes of cultural change and changes in voting behavior. Our models control for many other socio-economic factors that are often considered important in explaining patterns of turnout and party choices.

We arrive at several major findings.

With *turnout*, we find consistent and remarkably strong generational differences in the European electorate: members of the oldest (Interwar) generation are almost *twice* as likely to report casting a ballot as are members of the youngest (Millennial) generation – a finding that is observed across diverse societies. Some of the disparity reflects life-cycle effects – as people settle down to raise families – but most of it reflects enduring generational differences. This pattern was expected and is an important part of the backlash thesis, which argues that the impact of the growing cultural gap between young and old is conditioned by rates of voting participation.

Secondly, in explaining electoral support for authoritarian parties, we find that the Interwar generation is most likely to vote for parties that are more authoritarian, while the Millennials are least likely to support them. This pattern is also consistent and significant across 19 out of 26 European countries. The generation gap is not simply attributable to period or life-cycle effects. It weakens when we control for the background characteristics on which young and old differ, such as religiosity and education. It reverses itself when we introduce attitudinal controls. In the final model, among all the factors, voting for authoritarian parties is predicted most strongly (according to the standardized betas) by cultural attitudes: self-identified left–right ideology, authoritarian values, and political attitudes. In short, the political differences between old and young can be traced to deep-rooted differences in their values and attitudes.

Finally, in analyzing voting support for parties using populist rhetoric, the patterns differ; here Millennials are more likely to vote for these parties than older generations, not less. This generation gap remains significant after controlling for period, life-cycle, compositional, and attitudinal effects. It is observed in 17 of the 26 nations under comparison. Populist support is also stronger among the working class, the less educated, men, white Europeans, the economically insecure, and those expressing political mistrust.

The results suggest that Authoritarian-Populist parties and presidential candidates combining anti-elite language with authoritarian values and policies, exemplified by Donald Trump, tend to mobilize an older, more rural base. By contrast, progressive populists like Bernie Sanders, combining anti-elite rhetoric with socially liberal values, attract younger urban supporters. What matters here are mainly the values and ideological positions that are espoused – rather than the style of discourse used to communicate these values. These findings lay the foundations for subsequent chapters that examine the institutional context shaping how votes cast for Authoritarian-Populist parties are translated into seats, ministerial office, and how they influence the policy agenda.

EXPLAINING VOTER SUPPORT FOR AUTHORITARIAN-POPULIST PARTIES

What evidence can help explain electoral support for authoritarian populists? Scholars have adopted several different approaches, each with certain pros and cons.

Macro-level Evidence of Social Conditions and Electoral Rules

Cross-national comparisons often analyze the share of the vote won by the radical right or populist political parties by examining the impact of inflow by immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers; the proportion of 'foreign citizens'; the distribution of racial minorities; the levels of unemployment and poverty; and so on.[3]

Comparative studies usually analyze the factors shaping the success of populist parties within relatively similar nations in given regions such as Western Europe, post-communist Europe, or Latin America, although a growing literature is expanding our understanding of this phenomenon around the world.[4] To reduce the risks of potentially confounding factors, scholars compare party performance and voting behavior across societies with common historical traditions, legacies of authoritarian regimes and democratic traditions, and similar levels of economic and human development. Hence, support for radical right parties has often been thought to reflect a grassroots reaction by European publics against growing ethnic heterogeneity and multiculturalism in society, using evidence such as rates of migration flows or levels of minority populations.[5] But, contrary to popular assumptions, previous research suggests that

the share of the vote won by radical right parties at the national level cannot be explained satisfactorily by indicators of growing ethnic diversity in society, including both 'objective' measures, such as the rate of immigration and asylum seekers entering each nation, and 'subjective' measures, such as the strength of nativist attitudes among the publics of given countries.[6] Similarly, studies of economic performance across nine European countries have found that aggregate economic indices gauging objective economic hardships, such as levels of unemployment or poverty, do not predict populist attitudes, although citizen's *subjective* perceptions of economic conditions are significant.[7] Researchers have also explored the impact of the 2007/2008 financial crisis and economic recession by comparing national-level indicators on levels of populist voting across European states, reporting mixed results.[8]

Within Country Comparisons

For more fine-grained analysis, political geographers have compared party support among electoral units within a single country, such as authoritarian-populist voting results in given provinces, states, regions, constituencies, wards, precincts, or counties. In America, for example, popular commentary focused on county-level results in the 2016 presidential elections and highlighted the way that Trump gained votes disproportionately in white, semi-rural small towns in the Rust Belt, characterized by low levels of education, depopulation, economic decline, and the loss of secure employment due to shuttered factories and mines.[9]

Similarly, in the UK Brexit referendum, as we will see in Chapter 11, the Leave vote was concentrated in the Midlands and North of England, areas characterized by low levels of college education and employment skills, and with many manual workers and retired citizens. By contrast, the Remain voters tended to live in constituencies that are more prosperous, containing many young people, university graduates, and ethnic minorities.[10] Major regional variations were evident, with Leave voting being weaker in Scotland (38%) and Northern Ireland (44%), than the 51.9 percent found across the entire UK.[11]

In Germany, as well, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) attracts the most support in former East Germany, where the party performed particularly well in the September 2017 parliamentary elections.[12] Studies suggest that many AfD supporters have attained an economically stable middle-class existence with relatively prosperous incomes and secure jobs, but they have also experienced profound political and cultural

disruptions over the past three decades that have engendered a sense of disillusion and marginality.[13] AfD support is concentrated disproportionately among conservatives lamenting the negative consequences of immigration, especially when linked with access to welfare benefits and services. But the demographic profile of aggregate districts does not consistently support the conventional wisdom about the role of economic and social grievances, since other research states that radical right parties performed more strongly in European areas with high proportions of college-educated populations, not low, as well as in rural communities with few foreign residents and immigrants.[14]

Macro-level or aggregate-level studies may differ in their findings for many reasons, including the use of different model specifications, country coverage, time-periods, and measurement of the dependent variable.[15] The underlying reasons why any observed correlations exist, moreover, and which factors are generally most important for voting support for Authoritarian-Populist parties remains uncertain, partly because general theories are often poorly operationalized, and complex interactive causal pathways may be at work. For example, US maps of the census characteristics of county voting results demonstrate that small-town America in the Rust Belt and coal country swung toward Trump, who performed particularly well in counties with low levels of education, older white populations, while Clinton did better in urban areas with younger and more ethnically diverse populations.[16] But it remains unclear from the county-level evidence whether this pattern was due to the appeal of Trump's economic promises to restore blue-collar manufacturing jobs in middle America (as often assumed) or because his cultural message on wedge issues resonated particularly well in the Rust Belt states. We need to avoid the classic ecological fallacy in drawing inferences about individual motivations from observations of aggregate groupings to which the individuals belong.[17]

Moreover, previous literature analyzing voting for radical right populist parties across European countries and regions presents mixed and inconclusive results, partly because citizens are responding to complex structures of party choices in each election, where viable Authoritarian-Populist parties and candidates may or may not be listed on the ballot. Researchers also face challenges in establishing reliable evidence where party fortunes fluctuate sharply over successive contests; for example, where minor parties make sudden gains at the local level but fail to reach the minimal vote threshold for parliamentary representation in national elections, or if parties change issue positions and populist appeals strategically in response to evolving patterns of competition from their rivals.

Populist parties can also shift policy positions rapidly where they divide into factions and form new parliamentary alliances, such as the Finns Party leadership split in June 2017. Thus, Marine Le Pen dropped some of the most flagrant anti-immigrant, homophobic, and anti-Semitic diatribes of her father's National Front.[18] The rules of the game also matter for the credibility and electoral success of minor parties, and for tactical or strategic voting, such as the legal voting thresholds for gaining seats under Majoritarian and Proportional electoral systems.

Micro-level Analysis of Citizens

Individual-level observational evidence derived from representative surveys of the electorate provides more fine-grained analysis of the attitudes and motivations underlying voting behavior, but this approach also faces several challenges.

When analyzing voting choices for smaller and fringe parties, one issue arises from the relatively small number of voters in the standard survey samples used in national election studies. This is a common problem when analyzing the standard categorical question used for monitoring voting choices: '*Which party/candidate will you/did you vote for?*' This limitation can be overcome, however, by using alternative measures to gauge the strength of voting preferences, such as 'thermometer' scales monitoring the propensity for electors to support each of the political parties or candidates listed on the ballot. For example, the European Election Study asks respondents to rate the probability that they would *ever* vote for each of the parties standing in the election in each country, measured using standardized 10-point scales.[19] But these types of questions are not often included in national election studies and social attitude surveys. Responses to hypothetical items ('would you ever') tend to be less reliable than reported voting choices ('how did you vote'), with the risk of generating 'manufactured' answers for parties that respondents have not seriously considered supporting. Moreover, reported party preferences may also diverge widely from the actual votes cast, especially for smaller parties, partly due to strategic or tactical voting considerations.

The dynamics of individual changes in voting choices are ideally measured from longitudinal studies of electoral behavior using multiwave election surveys (of different respondents over time, such as pre-post election studies), or, even better, panel surveys (repeated observations of the same respondents over time). Panel studies are usually conducted within specific countries, however, which limits their comparative value

to test whether generalizations established in one case can be observed over many national contexts and over time.

Familiar challenges of disentangling endogeneity arise when analysis is limited to observed correlations linking attitudes and voting choices derived from cross-sectional surveys taken at one point in time, raising questions about how to interpret the direction of causality. For example, in the polls taken by the Pew Research Center during the Obama years, Republicans consistently reported being more pessimistic than Democrats about the future of the US economy and more negative in their assessment of current economic conditions.[20] This might be taken to support the theory that retrospective and prospective evaluations of the national economy shape candidate and party choices at the ballot box. But in subsequent surveys, conducted after the November 2016 election, Pew found that many Clinton and Trump voters had reversed positions in these evaluations, with Republicans becoming sharply more bullish on the current and future performance of the US economy after Trump was elected, although the underlying indicators, such as the unemployment rate, remained largely unchanged.[21] This suggests that partisanship functions as a prism that can color citizen's judgments about the state of the US economy.

Similarly, complex interaction effects have been observed in the relationship linking political discontent and populist support; for example, in the Netherlands, multiwave panel survey studies suggest that those disenchanted with established political elites were more likely to vote for populist parties, but that when Authoritarian-Populist parties subsequently blamed established political and economic elites for problems, this deepened feelings of discontent among their followers.[22] American studies have also found that partisan and media cues shape public beliefs about electoral integrity; their supporters are far more likely to believe that these specific malpractices have occurred when party leaders and candidates claim 'rigged' or 'fraudulent' elections, such as Republicans allegations about voting by undocumented immigrants, and Democratic complaints about Russian meddling in the US election.[23] The 'winners–losers' gap has also been found to be important; when populist parties are included in coalition governments, their supporters express more satisfaction with democracy than in countries where these parties are excluded from power.[24]

DATA AND METHODS

The burgeoning literature on support for Authoritarian-Populist parties and candidates has no shortage of rival theories, but systematic analysis of comparative macro- and micro-level empirical evidence supporting these

arguments remains inconclusive.[25] The research design most appropriate for analyzing micro-level attitudes and behavior from individual citizens also requires careful modeling of the decision-process. As we have seen, in elections citizens face two choices: firstly whether to cast a ballot or not, and, secondly, which candidate or party to support in the ballot. Both decisions are equally important. And the two are related – since parties seek to mobilize *and* to persuade. In practice, however, these steps are usually treated separately in the literature, with most attention being given to analyzing the profile of voters supporting radical right or populist parties. But who participates at the ballot box is far from random. Previous research has established that generations differ sharply in both their propensity to vote and in their values and party choices. Where turnout is particularly low – as in the US where around 40 percent of the eligible electorate generally stay home on polling day – examining only the preferences of voters discards information about large swathes of the public.[26] A two-step process determines the outcome of any election, involving (a) deciding whether to vote or not, and then (b) deciding which party to support. Both shape the share of votes and seats won by Authoritarian-Populist political parties. Hence, parties seek to mobilize their base and deter opposition supporters, as well as to persuade the undecided and to convert leaners.

The theoretical argument outlined in earlier chapters generates several claims about both voting turnout and party choices that can be tested using cross-national survey evidence from the pooled European Election Study. This chapter focuses on analyzing the social and demographic characteristics of the European electorate, especially the effects of generation, education, and urbanization. Our models include the year of the survey (to monitor period-effects), standard social controls, such as occupational class, sex, employment/unemployment, ethnicity, and religiosity. We also examine the role of authoritarian values and populist attitudes. Subsequent chapters examine the institutional context for how votes are translated into seats – and thus political representation.

This chapter again uses the European Social Survey (ESS) waves 1–7 (2002–2014).[27] This pooled dataset contains 331,877 respondents across all waves, providing a large sample of the European public in 32 countries. This enables us to analyze electoral behavior in diverse contexts since societies vary in their historical and contemporary experience of liberal democracy and in their levels of economic growth and experience of the financial crisis. The comparison includes Scandinavian and Mediterranean states, as well as contrasts between long-standing democracies in Western Europe and post-communist nations. We can also

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compare elections held under Majoritarian, Mixed, and Proportional electoral systems, parliamentary and presidential executives, and federal and unitary states. The ESS survey also allows comparison of trends over time in European attitudes toward specific issues, for example in surveys conducted before and after the financial crisis of 2007–2013 and the refugee crisis in 2008. Cases were weighted by post-stratification weights, including design weights.

The Dependent Variable: Measuring Voting Participation and Party Support

Electoral participation is measured by whether respondents reported voting in a country's most recent national election, modeled as a simple binary (1=Yes/0=No) variable. Surveys usually over-report rates of voting participation when compared with the official record of electoral turnout, but there is no reason to believe that this will generate systematic problems for the analysis.[28]

Voting choices are more complex to measure. Many studies conventionally use a simple binary variable coded as to whether respondents voted for radical right or populist parties (1) or whether they voted for any other party (0). This process can be unreliable, as it is heavily conditioned by the prior classification of political party families. However, it can be relatively straightforward when analyzing support for mainstream Christian democratic or socialist parties, but there is considerable latitude for misclassifying populist parties. And newer parties are often ideologically unstable, dependent upon the preferences of particular factions or leaders, and they have not established a clear programmatic platform over successive elections or a record in office. In pragmatic terms, the use of categorical typologies for minor parties also limits the number of respondents available for analysis, even in large-scale samples, and also generates heavily skewed samples.

The standard approach also assumes that the goal is to understand a distinct *type* of authoritarian or libertarian populist party family, which is unified and cohesive in its programmatic appeals, rather than seeing populism as a communication style that can be adapted by politicians across the spectrum. For example, did the Republican Party suddenly become populist overnight when Trump became their standard-bearer at the national convention? We think not. It makes more sense to assume that some strands of the GOP used populist discourse well before Trump,

notably many Tea Party candidates and Sarah Palin, while other wings of the Republican Party, represented by leaders such as Mitt Romney, Ted Cruz, and John McCain, endorsed different governing styles and philosophies. Previous research suggests that well before Trump, when predicting whether voters preferred Hillary Clinton over Barack Obama in the 2008 Democratic primary, authoritarian values mattered more than income, ideology, gender, age, and education.[29] Studies have also found that authoritarians have steadily moved from the Democratic to the Republican Party in a sorting process since the early 1990s.[30] In general, the use of continuous scales captures finer distinctions, rather than throwing away information by classifying diverse parties as one family, viewing UKIP, the True Finns and PVV as all alike. For all these reasons, in this chapter we treat the extent to which parties use populist rhetoric and endorse authoritarian values as a matter of degree not as categorical types. For the dependent variables, party choices, monitored in the ESS survey, are scaled and measured using the continuous 100-point indices estimating the salience of populist rhetoric and party positions toward authoritarian–libertarian values and left–right values for each party in each election. The populism–pluralism, authoritarian–libertarian and left–right indices are derived from the CHES expert estimates at party level, as discussed in the previous chapter.

Authoritarian Values

The cultural backlash theory suggests that if citizens are choosing whether to vote and which parties to support based on their values, we will find a high level of congruence between authoritarian and socially conservative attitudes, and voting for parties that endorse these values in their policy platforms.

In seeking to disentangle the evidence, however, it is important to minimize the risks of endogeneity, especially with measures of authoritarian values. Direct measures, such as hostile attitudes toward immigrants and multiculturalism, probably influence support for parties that emphasize these issues. But it can also work the other way around, with people who endorse these parties (perhaps because of disillusionment with the mainstream parties) adopting their hardline attitudes toward immigrants.

To avoid these problems, previous studies that have measured authoritarian values have used a battery of items concerning child-rearing practices, including whether it is more important to have a child who

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is respectful or independent; obedient or self-reliant; well-behaved or considerate; and well-mannered or curious. In the American National Election Survey, for example, respondents selecting the first option in each of these questions were classified as strongly authoritarian.[31] Along similar lines, in successive waves since 1981, the World Values Survey has asked about the importance of many similar qualities for children, including obedience, independence, religious faith, and good manners.[32] As discussed earlier, to measure authoritarian values from the pooled European Social Survey 1–7, we selected five items derived from a battery originally developed by Schwartz as suitable for cross-national comparisons of personal values.[33] These items measure adherence to authoritarian values as indicated by the core concepts of: conformity (the importance of behaving properly and following traditions); security (the importance of living in secure surroundings and having a strong government to protect against threats); and deference (the importance of following rules and doing what one's told). These items refer to individual predispositions and personal preferences, not attitudes toward public policy issues, such as anti-immigration laws, that are more open to the risks of endogeneity. The scale was constructed by combining the five items and compares favorably with equivalent measures.[34]

We demonstrated in Chapter 4 how support for the authoritarian and libertarian value scales varied sharply by generation, as our theory predicts. Thus, the Interwar generation showed most authoritarian values while support steadily declines among the Millennials. The reverse pattern is evident for the libertarian values scale. As a result, the trend lines cross at a tipping point, reflecting rising levels of libertarian values among the younger cohorts. The patterns also reflect the distinct formative experiences of having grown up in different regions of Europe, with the balance of support between authoritarian and libertarian values differing among the post-war generation in Nordic and Northern Europe. The balance of support switches later, for those born in the mid-1970s, in Mediterranean Europe, and in post-communist Europe. We expect both the decision whether to vote, and the decision whether to vote for Authoritarian-Populist parties, to be influenced by generational cohort, educational characteristics, and urbanization – established earlier in the book as long-term drivers of cultural change – as well as by direct support for authoritarian values and socially conservative attitudes. Period-effects are monitored by the year of the survey and life-cycle effects are monitored, as in Chapter 4, by whether one has children living at home, and whether one is married, separated, or divorced.

Populist Anti-establishment Protest and Political Trust

There are several ways to measure populist attitudes among the electorate.[35] Populism is often assumed to have been fueled by growing public alienation and anger toward the establishment and the core political institutions of representative democracy, especially by weakening loyalties toward mainstream political parties, mistrust of politicians, and disaffection with parliaments.[36] This assumption is widespread in the literature. For example, Latin America studies suggest that weakly legitimate political institutions can encourage populist left support; in particular, where the public is deeply cynical about political parties and leaders, voters are thought to be attracted to candidates portraying themselves as radical 'outsiders,' crusading against the established political order.[37] Numerous accounts suggest that political dissatisfaction and alienation motivate support for authoritarian populism, with resentment directed against both the out-groups, such as immigrants, who are blamed for taking welfare benefits, limiting job opportunities, and thereby reducing life chances for the white working-class population, and the establishment elites, who are blamed for failure to respond to these grievances.[38]

Similarly, in the US, the dominant media narrative of the 2016 US presidential election focused on 'angry' voters frustrated with the performance of their government, the economy, and the direction of the country. Thus Trump's bombastic promises to bring back mines and mills was thought to be particularly potent for exploiting grievances in communities where factory and plant closures triggered population decline, leading to a shrinking tax base, abandoned homes and empty housing lots, and a plague of pills and booze.[39] It is true that, during the campaign, according to Gallup polls, most Americans expressed distrust in government and said that the country was 'on the wrong track.' But this account encounters several problems in seeking to explain the support for Trump. For one thing, according to Gallup trends, levels of dissatisfaction and distrust with political institutions in 2016 were no lower than in several earlier years.[40] Moreover, the lack of trust that existed had no clear electoral implication. After all, President Obama had been comfortably reelected in 2012, when a similar percentage of Americans were saying that they trusted the government in Washington DC 'always' or 'most' of the time.[41] Much of the media claims about supposed voter 'anger' are not supported by solid evidence.

To test whether political disaffection in the mass electorate actually mobilized European voters to support parties and leaders expressing

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populist rhetoric, we compare several indicators of citizen's trust toward representative institutions linking citizens and the state. Public cynicism toward government is not unidimensional and five distinct levels of support for the political system can be distinguished, ranging from the most diffuse to the most specific.[42] These included feelings toward the nation-state, adherence to regime ideals and democratic principles, confidence in the performance of the regime, trust in the core political institutions, and approval of political actors. Supporters of populism are expected to be particularly likely to reject the legitimacy of mainstream parties, elected assemblies, and incumbent politicians. For these reasons, items were selected from the European Social Survey to develop a standardized scale based on mistrust of political parties, politicians, and national parliaments.

Even where a strong correlation is found between attitudes and voting choices, however, it is difficult to establish the direction of causality from cross-sectional social surveys alone, since complex reciprocal relationships can be at work. Thus, people dissatisfied with liberal elites in Washington DC, Paris, and London, and those with ethnocentric and hostile racist attitudes toward ethnic minorities, multiculturalism, and immigration may decide on this basis to cast their ballot for Authoritarian-Populist leaders and parties. But citizens may also rationalize their voting choice, expressing support for the policy issues most closely associated with a candidate or party although actually motivated by other reasons, such as seeing the world through strong partisan lenses. In the US, for example, Trump may have attracted votes for diverse reasons unrelated to his vague policy promises about restoring jobs, cutting taxes, or building a wall against Mexico. Thus, Trump support may come from die-hard Republicans out of a sense of party loyalty, from residents in the Rust Belt Mid-West and coal country discontented with the failure of the Democrats to stem community decline, from citizens disapproving of the Obama presidency and America's economic recovery, from Hillary Clinton haters concerned about emails, or from those attracted by Trump's flamboyant personality, pugilistic style, and belligerent campaign rhetoric. Similarly, deep cynicism about corrupt politicians and unresponsive bureaucratic elites may have led Latin American and European citizens to support populist outsiders crusading against established political order.[43] Reciprocal effects may underlie any observed correlations – in this regard, political discontent is best regarded as both a cause and a consequence of the rise of populist parties.[44]

Controls

Our analysis examines the impact of the cultural values scrutinized earlier – including authoritarian values prioritizing security, conformity and loyalty, socially liberal or conservative attitudes, and the respondent's self-placement on the left–right ideological scale. We also control for several other factors emphasized in the literature on voting behavior.

Classic theories based on the Michigan model of voting behavior, suggest that voting turnout and party support are often driven by affective feelings of social identity in the mass electorate, including class cleavages. The role of socio-economic inequality is widely regarded as important in accounts emphasizing that the economically left-behind are the base for authoritarian-populist support.[45] But systematic individual-level survey evidence for this thesis remains mixed, and the role of social class on attitudes and values means that the impact may be indirect.[46] Occupational class is monitored using the five-fold Goldthorpe class schema.[47] The impact of several other economic indicators is also scrutinized, including long-term unemployment and subjective feelings of economic insecurity, as well as dissatisfaction with the performance of the national economy. The models also control for sex, religiosity, ethnicity, and urbanization. Many previous studies have found a significant gender gap, finding stronger support for radical right parties among men.[48] We expect religiosity to strengthen support for Authoritarian-Populist parties, which emphasize traditional morality, illustrated by the strong support of Evangelicals for Donald Trump. By contrast, members of ethnic minorities, and residents of ethnically diverse urban areas, are expected to reject authoritarian-populist appeals. The selected variables and the coding used in this chapter are listed in Appendix B. All models were checked and found by tolerance tests to be free of problems of multicollinearity.

EXPLAINING VOTING PARTICIPATION

Table 8.1 shows logistic regression models of who votes in European national elections. Once all the factors were entered into the model, the results demonstrate that authoritarian values are significantly associated with *greater* voting turnout, not less, although the relationship is weak; thus around three-quarters (74%) of those scoring high on the authoritarian values scale reported voting in national elections, compared with two thirds (68%) of those scoring low. By contrast, authoritarian

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TABLE 8.1. *Predicting who votes, Europe*

		B	S.E.	Sig.
Generation	Interwar (1900–1945) (Ref)	0.00		
	Boomers (1946–1964)	– 0.44	0.02	***
	Gen X (1965–1979)	– 1.07	0.02	***
	Millennials (1980–1996)	– 1.98	0.02	***
Year (period)	2002 (Ref)	0.00		
	2004	– 0.40	0.03	***
	2006	– 0.19	0.02	***
	2008	– 0.08	0.02	***
	2010	– 0.11	0.02	***
	2012	0.04	0.02	*
Life cycle	Children	0.26	0.01	***
	Married	0.38	0.03	***
	Separated or divorced	– 0.02	0.04	N/s
Class	Manager	0.42	0.02	***
	Routine non-manual	0.30	0.02	***
	Petty bourgeoisie	0.27	0.02	***
	Skilled manual	0.06	0.02	*
	Manual (Ref)	0.00		
Background	Education	0.28	0.01	***
	Sex (male)	0.08	0.01	***
	Urbanization (1–5 scale Most rural to most urban)	– 0.04	0.00	***
	How religious are you on 10-pt scale	0.03	0.00	***
	Member of an ethnic minority	– 0.83	0.02	***
Economic	Income insecurity	– 0.12	0.01	***
	Ever been unemployed for 12 months or more	0.01	0.01	N/s
	Dissatisfaction with present state of national economy	0.03	0.00	***
Values	Authoritarian values (Schwartz scale)	0.01	0.00	***
	Political mistrust (in parliament, parties and politicians)	– 0.01	0.00	***
	Placement on left–right scale	0.02	0.00	***
	Constant	1.50	0.05	***
	Nagelkerke R^2	0.20		
	% Correctly predicted	78.2		
	N	155,443		

Note: Logistic regression where reported voting participation (0/1) is the dependent variable.
Sig *** .001, ** .01, * .05, N/s Not significant.
Source: European Social Survey, Cumulative File Rounds 1–7.

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orientations were *not* significant predictors of engaging in direct participation, such as boycotts, demonstrations, and petitioning. This suggests that social conformity, deference toward authorities, and authoritarian orientations in general tend to encourage voting, which is a conventional norm in democratic societies. But elite-challenging types of activities such as street protests seem to be regarded by authoritarians as inappropriate forms of rowdy and disruptive behavior.

By contrast, populist mistrust of representative institutions was negatively related to turnout; not surprisingly, alienated citizens who generally don't trust politicians, parties, and parliaments are more likely to stay home (exit) rather than casting a ballot. To mobilize support, therefore, Authoritarian-Populist parties have an incentive to press the classic wedge issues that are likely to excite social conservatives, but their anti-establishment rhetoric may discourage voting participation.

The results confirm that the generation gap in turnout is substantial, as expected. Thus, if we compare mean turnout among generations across all European countries, almost twice as many of the oldest (Interwar) cohort reported casting a ballot as did the Millennials (82 percent to 43 percent respectively). As Figure 8.1 illustrates, this pattern is consistently observed across all European regions and in every country from Austria to Ukraine, whether long-established democracies such as Sweden and France or post-communist states such as Lithuania and the Czech Republic. In some cases, such as Switzerland and France, a steady drop in turnout can be seen across successive birth cohorts but in others, such as Turkey, Norway, and Sweden, there is a steady erosion over cohorts until the Millennials, when a precipitate fall in participation occurs.

Are these differences due to the formative socialization experiences of different birth cohorts? Young and old differ in many other forms of political activism, suggesting that value change may be altering orientations toward the role of citizens and the repertoires of action connecting citizens to the state.[49] In the ESS surveys, for example, while almost none of the Interwar generation (3%) reported engaging in a lawful demonstration within the previous 12 months, three times as many Millennials (9%) reported doing so. Previous research suggests that some of the observable age-related contrasts are attributable to life-cycle effects; for example, younger people tend to be more residentially mobile when college students and seeking employment away from home, making it more difficult for them to get listed on the electoral register or to vote, before settling down to raise a family and developing roots in a community.[50] Period-effects may also be at work; for example, if the European

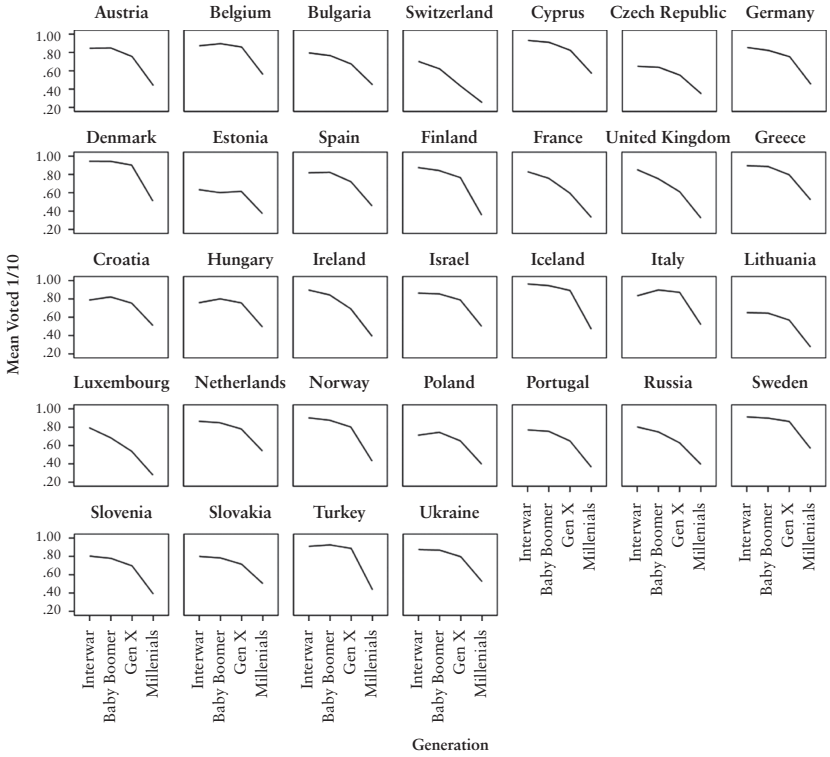

FIGURE 8.1. *Turnout by generation*
Note: Reported voting by generation.
Source: European Social Survey, Cumulative File Rounds 1–7.

financial crisis and subsequent austerity policies discouraged traditional center-left social democratic and labour supporters from going to the polls. Table 8.2 indicates that the generational effects in voting turnout are significant and large, without consistent period-effects linked with the year of the survey. Life-cycle effects are also observed; those who are married and with children (although not those divorced or separated) are significantly more likely to vote, although the effects of one's birth cohort are stronger.

The impact of education on voting participation was also significant. As has been observed for more than half a century, ever since the classic *Civic Culture* study, the cognitive skills, knowledge, and sense of efficacy associated with education consistently predict multiple forms of civic engagement, including registering and casting a ballot.[51] Thus, among

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TABLE 8.2. *Predicting voting support for parties that are more authoritarian*

		Model 1				Model 2				Model 3				Model 4				Model 5			
		B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.
Generation	Interwar (1990–1945) (Ref)	0.00				0.00				0.00				0.00				0.00			
	Boomers (1946–1964)	−1.97	0.16	−0.05	***	−2.08	0.16	−0.05		−2.76	0.16	−0.07	***	−0.92	0.17	−0.02	***	0.03	0.15	0.00	N/s
	Gen X (1965–1979)	−1.69	0.17	−0.04	***	−1.81	0.17	−0.04		−2.77	0.19	−0.06	***	0.24	0.19	0.01	N/s	0.58	0.18	0.01	***
	Millennials (1980–1996)	−2.77	0.20	−0.05	***	−3.09	0.20	−0.05		−2.96	0.21	−0.05	***	−0.14	0.21	0.00	N/s	0.46	0.20	0.01	*
Year (Period)	2002 (Ref)					0.00			...	0.00				0.00				0.00			
	2004					−1.82	0.21	−0.03		−4.58	0.37	−0.08	***	−3.92	0.38	−0.07	***	−2.47	0.35	−0.04	***
	2006					−0.92	0.21	−0.02		−0.97	0.21	−0.02	***	−0.02	0.24	0.00	N/s	0.98	0.22	0.02	***
	2008					0.67	0.19	0.01		−0.73	0.19	−0.01	***	−0.47	0.22	−0.01	*	−0.13	0.20	0.00	N/s
	2010					0.95	0.20	0.02		0.92	0.20	0.02	***	1.61	0.22	0.03	***	1.24	0.21	0.02	***
	2012					0.61	0.20	0.01		0.67	0.20	0.01	***	1.25	0.20	0.02	***	1.58	0.18	0.03	***
Life-cycle	Children									1.88	0.13	0.05	***	1.17	0.13	0.03	***	0.75	0.12	0.02	***
	Married									3.93	0.40	0.06	***	3.44	0.39	0.05	***	2.12	0.36	0.03	***
	Separated or divorced									1.11	0.54	0.01	*	1.16	0.53	0.01	*	0.39	0.49	0.00	N/s

(*continued*)

TABLE 8.2. (*continued*)

		Model 1				Model 2				Model 3				Model 4				Model 5			
		B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.
Class	Manager													−1.78	0.24	−0.03	***	−1.55	0.22	−0.03	***
	Routine non-manual													−1.33	0.19	−0.03	***	−1.12	0.18	−0.02	***
	Petty bourgeoise													1.04	0.19	0.02	***	−0.32	0.18	−0.01	N/s
	Skilled manual													−1.05	0.27	−0.01	***	−0.66	0.25	−0.01	***
	Manual (Ref)													0.00				0.00			
Background	Education													−0.93	0.05	−0.06	***	−0.61	0.05	−0.04	***
	Sex (male)													2.13	0.12	0.05	***	1.57	0.11	0.04	***
	Urbanization (1–5 scale Most rural to most urban)													−0.86	0.05	−0.05	***	−0.85	0.04	−0.05	***
	How religious are you on 10-pt scale													0.97	0.02	0.15	***	0.44	0.02	0.07	***
	Member of an ethnic minority													−3.47	0.32	−0.03	***	−2.13	0.30	−0.02	***
Economic	Subjective financial insecurity													1.14	0.08	0.05	***	1.01	0.07	0.04	***
	Ever been unemployed for 12 months or more													−1.81	0.14	−0.04	***	−0.90	0.13	−0.02	***
	Dissatisfied with present state of national economy													0.23	0.03	−0.03	***	0.27	0.03	−0.03	***
Values	Authoritarian values (Schwartz scale)																	0.15	0.00	0.11	***
	Political mistrust (in parliament, parties, and politicians]																	0.05	0.00	0.05	***
	Placement on left-right scale																	3.02	0.02	0.35	***
	(Constant)	51.98	0.12		***	52.36	0.18		***	52.06	0.18		***	50.10	0.37		***	21.88	0.51		***
	Adjusted R2	0.00				0.004				0.007				0.05				0.19			

Notes: OLS regression models predicting whether respondents voted for a party scored by experts on the authoritarian values standardized scale (for the items and construction, see Table 7.1). Sig *** .001, ** .01, * .05, N/s Not significant. Ref = the excluded category.

Source: The European Social Survey Cumulative File Rounds 1–7 N, 119,7331 in 21 European countries.

those with low levels of formal education, around 71 percent of Europeans reported voting, compared with 81 percent among the group with high educational qualifications. Even larger educational disparities are found with more demanding forms of participation, such as contacting officials, working for parties, signing petitions, and consumer boycotts.

The remaining demographic and socio-economic predictors were largely consistent with past research; thus, on average, voting turnout was marginally higher among the rural and semi-rural European communities (areas with aging populations and long-established residents) compared with major cities (which are more often home to younger people, students, immigrants, and transient professional and service-sector employees). Turnout was generally much stronger among middle-class professionals and managers than among blue-collar workers; work by Sidney Verba and his colleagues has established the impact of socio-economic status to be one of the classic predictors of voter turnout, partly because occupational class is strongly associated with formal educational qualifications, and thus with stronger cognitive skills and civic knowledge, as well as feelings of political efficacy.[52] Turnout was also greater as expected among men than women, white Europeans rather than ethnic minorities (who may not be eligible citizens), and the more religious (who are also disproportionately older). Economic factors were not consistently or strongly associated with voting turnout. Although subjective financial insecurity is a significant predictor of lower turnout, having experienced unemployment was not important, and those less satisfied with the state of the national economy were *more* likely to vote.

Overall, the model explained about one-fifth of the variation in the propensity to vote. Meta-analysis of the extensive research literature suggests that other factors reported in other studies may also play an important role, such as micro-level political interest, media attention, and the strength of partisan identification, as well as macro-level variations in electoral contexts, such as the type of Majoritarian or Proportional Representation electoral system, the closeness of the race, and the frequency of contests.[53]

Our analysis largely confirms the typical social profile of voters, but it indicates that the Interwar and Baby Boom generations are far, far more likely to participate in elections than the Millennials – to a considerably greater extent than previous research has indicated. This leads to substantial disparities by birth cohort and the over-representation of the 'grey vote' in parties and elections. In addition, citizens with authoritarian

values are more likely to vote, while those mistrusting political institutions are less likely to do so.

The evidence presented in previous chapters, combined with the findings in this one, points to three key conclusions:

(1) Millennials and Generation X hold far more socially liberal views on cultural issues than their parents and grandparents;
(2) the process of demographic turnover is gradually expanding the proportion of the population drawn from these younger birth cohorts, so that Millennials and Generation X have become the new majority in the electorate in Western societies; nevertheless,
(3) due to large differences in voter turnout, the values of the older birth cohorts are systematically over-represented in conventional party politics and elections.

This representation gap can have major consequences, generating tension between long-term processes of cultural change and processes of political representation. Before considering these issues, however, what predicts voting for authoritarian and populist parties?

WHO SUPPORTS PARTIES THAT ARE MORE AUTHORITARIAN?

To summarize the key findings concerning who voted for parties that are more authoritarian in the most recent national election, Table 8.2 presents the results of series of OLS regression models. The dependent variable is the authoritarianism party scale, based on expert ratings of the degree to which political parties endorsed authoritarian policies. Model 1 includes the generational cohorts. Model 2 adds the year for period-effects. Model 3 adds life-cycle indices of children and marital status. Model 4 adds a range of demographic and social controls, including the Goldthorpe class schema, sex, education, the strength of religiosity, the degree of residential urbanization, belonging to an ethnic minority, experience of long-term unemployment, economic dissatisfaction, and subjective financial insecurity. Finally, Model 5 adds the key indicators of cultural values, including the authoritarian value scales, mistrust in national political institutions, and self-placement on the left–right ideological scale.

The models highlight several main findings.

First, the results in Model 1 confirm that older and younger birth cohorts differ significantly in voting for authoritarian parties. The Interwar cohort

is far more likely to support authoritarian parties than younger cohorts, with least support found among Millennials. This provides further confirmation of the cultural backlash thesis, which emphasizes intergenerational differences as drivers of value change. The next two models show that these generational effects persist after we add the year of the survey (period-effects) and indicators of life-cycle effects (marriage and children). The year of the survey does not display a linear trend, but there is some indication of a rise in support in 2010, after the economic crisis. The indicators of marriage and the family are also related to voting for parties that are more authoritarian – although it cannot be determined whether this means that people become more favorable toward these values as they age or whether those with greater emphasis on social conformity and respect for traditions are more likely to marry and have children.

Model 4 reduces the statistical significance of generation once controlling for class: there is a steady increase in voting for authoritarian parties among blue-collar workers, as we observed in Chapter 4 in the class profile of those endorsing authoritarian values. After almost 60 years, the Lipset working-class authoritarianism thesis stands the test of time, although it remains unclear whether this is due to the association between occupational class and education or between class and material security. The consistent gender gap, documented in many previous studies, is further confirmed here, with men more likely to vote for authoritarian parties than women.[54]

Education also proves significant and negative, with authoritarian parties winning more support from the less educated sectors of the population. This effect could be attributed either to the role of formal education in determining subsequent social status and occupation, or to the values and knowledge acquired from formal schooling or to the fact that the more educated tend to come from relatively prosperous families and experienced greater levels of existential security during their formative years.

Urbanization was negative – indicating that voting for authoritarian parties is strongest in rural and non-metropolitan areas of Europe, in semi-rural villages and small towns, rather than in inner-city urban areas. The strength of religiosity, closely linked with a wide range of traditional values, is also positively associated with voting for authoritarian parties – and indeed is one of the strongest social predictors of authoritarian voting, just as it was a strong predictor of authoritarian values. Not surprisingly, members of ethnic minorities are less inclined to vote for these parties, given the close links between authoritarianism, anti-immigrant policies, and xenophobia.

Subjective income insecurity, measured by the difficulty of living on household savings, and dissatisfaction with the state of the national economy, are both significant predictors of support for authoritarian parties. At the same time, having experience of long-term unemployment is *negatively* correlated with support, which is inconsistent with one of the central assumptions of economic grievance theories.

In short, voting for authoritarian parties is strongest among the older generation, men, the less educated, white European populations, in semi-rural areas, and among the most religious. The effects of sex, education, religiosity, class, ethnicity, and urbanization remain stable across successive models, confirming the demographic profile found in earlier studies – although the reasons for these relationships remain open to alternative interpretations.[55]

In addition to all these controls, Model 5 enters the cultural values and attitudinal scales that we expected to predict voting support for authoritarian parties. Authoritarian values, political mistrust (toward politicians and parties), and right-wing position on the left–right ideological scale, were all significantly linked with voting for authoritarian parties. Most importantly, once these cultural measures were included in this model, the effects of being part of the Generation X or Millennial generations reversed, suggesting that the voting differences between the older and younger cohorts is due to their differing values. The final model 5, combining a wide range of social controls and cultural attitudes, provides a comprehensive account of voting support for authoritarian parties in Europe.

To look at the results descriptively, Figure 8.2 shows the links between voting for parties that are more authoritarian and the strength of authoritarian values, using the Schwartz scale. The results confirm the strong association, with countries such as Turkey, Slovakia, Hungary, and Greece high on both scales. These are also the societies that the next chapter demonstrates have some of the most electorally successful Authoritarian-Populist parties. By contrast, Sweden, France, and Germany have some of the lowest support for authoritarian values and authoritarian parties. The correlation between these factors was strong and significant ($R^2 = 0.442$ ***). Figure 8.3 illustrates the relationships broken down by country, showing the link between values and votes is clear in most countries under comparison, exemplified by the pattern observed in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.

Are the observed generational differences consistent across all countries? Table 8.3 presents the simple correlations between generation and voting support for authoritarian parties in 26 European states. It is

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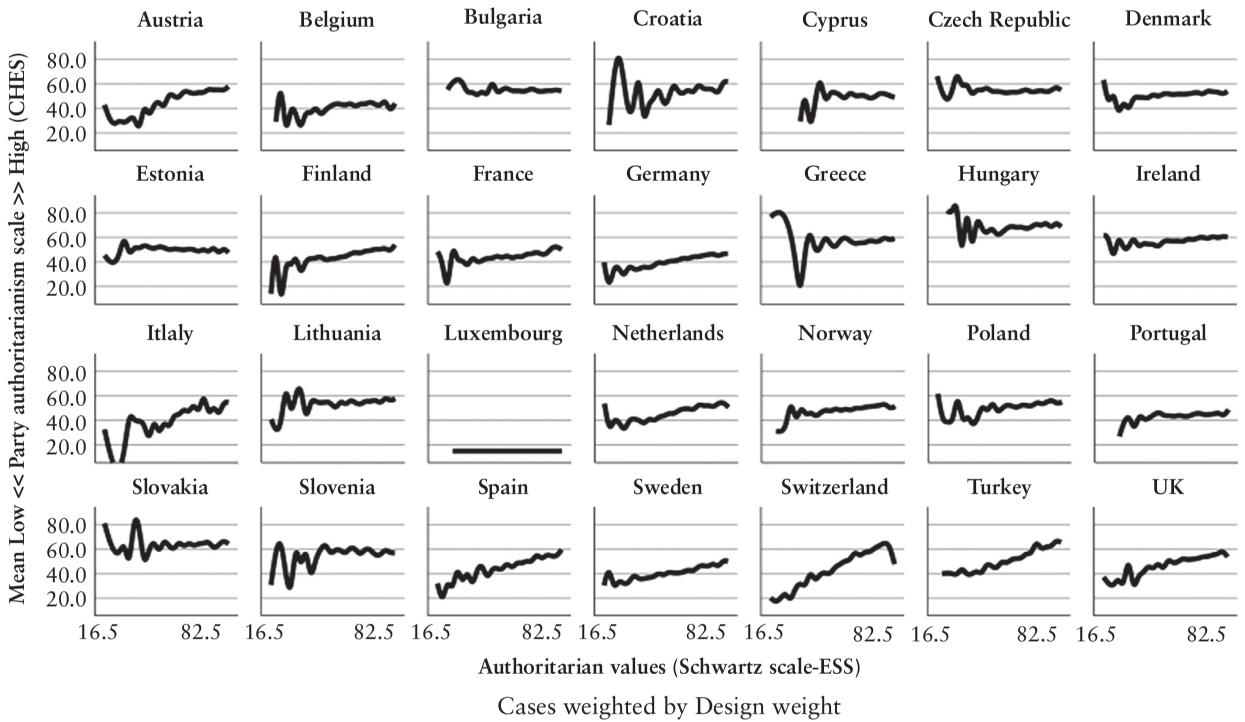

FIGURE 8.2. *Authoritarian values and voting for parties with policy positions that are more authoritarian, by country*
Notes: Political parties are classified according to their score on the authoritarian scale in CHES data. Authoritarian values in the electorate are measured by the Schwartz items in the ESS concerning the importance of security, social conformity, and deference, described in Table 4.3.
Source: European Social Survey, Cumulative File Rounds 1–7.

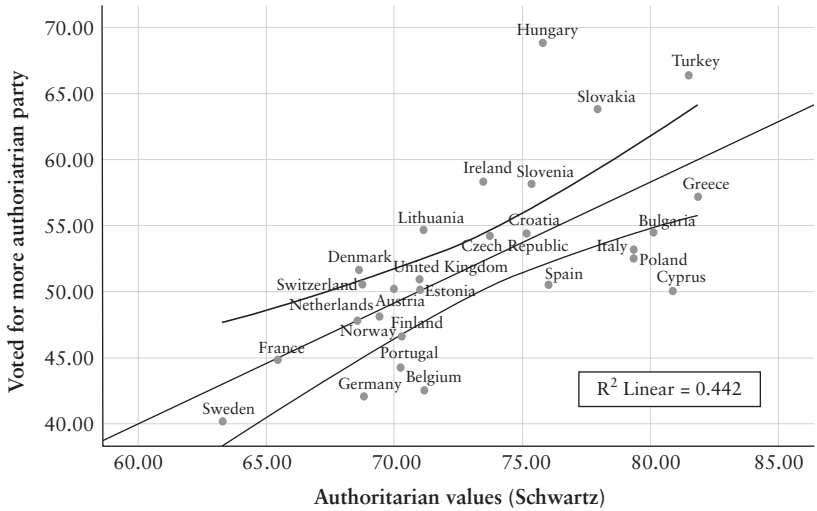

FIGURE 8.3. *Authoritarian values and support for parties that are more authoritarian*

Notes: Political parties are classified according to their score on the authoritarian scale in CHES data. Authoritarian values in the electorate are measured by the Schwartz items in the ESS concerning the importance of security, social conformity, and deference, described in Table 4.3.

Source: European Social Survey, Cumulative File Rounds 1–7.

striking that in nearly all countries, where significant differences can be observed, the older generations, that is the Interwar and Baby Boomer birth cohorts, were more likely to vote for authoritarian parties than younger generations. The only exceptions were Cyprus and Hungary, where parties endorsing authoritarian policies received more support from the younger cohorts.

WHO SUPPORTS POPULIST PARTIES?

To explore further, Table 8.4 tests the effects of the same set of factors on voting for parties that were populist (those rated highly by experts as using anti-elitist and anti-establishment rhetoric).

The demographic and social controls for populism differ in several important regards from the results observed for authoritarian voting. In particular, across the series of models *it is the younger cohorts who are consistently drawn toward parties that are more populist*. The simple correlations in Table 8.3 show that this is a consistent pattern across

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TABLE 8.3. *Generational cohorts and voting, by country*

	Voted for parties that are more authoritarian		Voted for parties that are more populist		
	R.	Sig.	R.	Sig.	N.
Austria	−0.096	**	0.201	**	4,719
Belgium	−0.019	N/s	0.091	**	7,714
Bulgaria	−0.025	N/s	0.118	**	3,763
Croatia	−0.108	**	−0.057	**	1,300
Cyprus	0.052	**	−0.058	**	2,527
Czech Republic	−0.109	**	−0.008	N/s	5,908
Denmark	−0.086	**	0.041	**	6,869
Finland	−0.059	**	0.102	**	8,377
France	−0.075	**	0.072	**	5,163
Germany	−0.092	**	0.102	**	13,244
Greece	−0.058	**	0.166	**	4,528
Hungary	0.194	**	0.112	**	4,279
Ireland	−0.164	**	0.146	**	9,081
Italy	−0.244	**	0.218	**	9,300
Lithuania	−0.066	**	−0.002	N/s	2,426
Netherlands	−0.088	**	0.079	**	9,456
Norway	−0.008	N/s	−0.022	*	7,635
Poland	−0.042	**	−0.081	**	5,294
Portugal	−0.083	**	0.130	**	3,423
Slovakia	−0.113	**	0.125	**	4,433
Slovenia	−0.021	N/s	0.057	**	3,342
Spain	−0.109	**	0.149	**	7,367
Sweden	−0.027	*	0.084	**	8,405
Switzerland	−0.087	**	−0.037	*	4,573
Turkey	0.012	N/s	0.031	N/s	4,272
UK	−0.159	**	0.109	**	5,472

Note: The simple Pearson correlations (R) and significance (P) between generational cohort and voting for a party that was more authoritarian and a party that was more populist. A negative correlation implies that parties received more votes from the Interwar cohort. A positive correlation implies that parties received more votes from the Millennial cohort. Sig *** .001, ** .01, * .05, N/s Not significant.

Source: European Social Survey, Cumulative File Rounds 1–7.

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TABLE 8.4. *Predicting voting support for parties that are more populist*

		Model 1				Model 2				Model 3				Model 4				Model 5			
		B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.
Generation	Interwar (1900–1945) (Ref)	0.00																			
	Boomers (1946–1964)	1.53	0.14	0.04	***	1.41	0.14	0.04	***	0.72	0.14	0.02	***	1.23	0.14	0.03	***	1.46	0.14	0.04	
	Gen X (1965–1979)	2.03	0.15	0.05	***	1.87	0.15	0.05	***	0.72	0.17	0.02	***	1.78	0.17	0.05	***	2.14	0.17	0.05	***
	Millennials (1980–1996)	3.91	0.18	0.08		3.53	0.18	0.07		3.23	0.18	0.06	***	3.82	0.18	0.08	***	4.29	0.18	0.08	***
Year (Period)	2002 (Ref)					0.00				0.00				0.00				0.00			
	2004					−3.32	0.18	−0.07	***	−1.95	0.32	−0.04	***	−0.32	0.32	−0.01	N/s	0.06	0.32	0.00	N/s
	2006					−2.74	0.18	−0.06	***	−2.82	0.18	−0.06	***	−0.01	0.20	0.00	N/s	−0.01	0.20	0.00	N/s
	2008					−0.60	0.17	−0.01	***	−0.67	0.17	−002	***	−0.30	0.19	−0.01	N/s	−0.11	0.19	0.00	N/s
	2010					−1.00	0.17	−0.02	***	−1.03	0.17	−0.02	***	−0.29	0.19	−0.01	N/s	−0.41	0.19	−0.01	*
	2012					−0.98	0.18	−0.02	***	−0.92	0.18	−002	***	0.49	0.17	0.01		0.48	0.17	0.01	***
Life-cycle	Children									1.84	0.12	0.05	***	1.13	0.11	0.03	***	1.04	0.11	0.03	***
	Married									−1.90	0.35	−0.03	***	−1.78	0.34	−0.03	***	−2.12	0.33	−0.04	
	Separated or divorced									−1.75	0.47	−0.01	***	−2.53	0.45	−0.02	***	−2.71	0.45	−0.02	***
Class	Manager													−1.47	0.20	−0.03	***	−1.17	0.20	−0.02	***
	Routine non-manual													−2.03	0.16	−0.05	***	−1.95	0.16	−0.05	
	Petty bourgeoise													−1.36	0.17	−0.03	***	−1.22	0.16	−0.02	
	Skilled manual													−0.55	0.23	−0.01	*	−0.62	0.23	−0.01	***
	Manual (Ref)													0.00				0.00			
Background	Education													−0.52	0.04	−0.04	***	−0.34	0.04	−0.03	***
	Sex (male)													1.17	0.10	0.03	***	1.23	0.10	0.04	***
	Urbanization (1–5 scale Most rural to most urban)													0.65	0.04	0.05	***	0.65	0.04	0.05	

	How religious are you on 10-pt scale															0.17	0.02	0.03	***	0.13	0.02	0.02	
	Member of an ethnic minority															−1.82	0.28	−0.02	***	−1.96	0.28	−0.02	***
Economic	Subjective financial insecurity															2.60	0.07	0.12	***	2.22	0.07	0.11	***
	Ever been unemployed for 12 months or more															0.32	0.12	0.01	***	0.38	0.12	0.01	
	Dissatisfied with present state of national economy															1.40	0.02	−0.20	***	0.89	0.03	−0.13	***
Values	Authoritarian values (Schwartz scale)																			0.10	0.00	0.08	***
	Political mistrust (in parliament, parties, and politicians)																			0.11	0.00	0.13	***
	Placement on left-right scale																			−0.16	0.02	−0.02	***
	(Constant)	34.56	0.11	***	36.02	0.16	***	35.86	0.16	***	35.55	0.32	***	20.62	0.47	***
	Adjusted R2	0.00			0.009			0.011			0.096			114		

Notes: OLS regression models predicting whether respondents voted for a party scored by experts on the authoritarian values standardized scale (for the items and construction, see Table 7.1). Sig *** .001, ** .01, * .05, N/s Not significant. Ref = the excluded category.

Source: The European Social Survey, Cumulative File Rounds 1–7. N, 119,7331 in 21 European countries.

European countries; there are significant associations between birth cohort and voting for populist parties in 18 of the 26 countries under comparison: younger cohorts favor these parties more than older ones. As we have argued, populist anti-establishment rhetoric – criticizing the corruption of the political classes, mainstream parties, and elected assemblies, denigrating public-sector bureaucrats, judges and fake news media, claiming that more decisions need to be made by the 'real' people – is a handy stick that can be used by political outsiders from across the political spectrum. Thus, when populism is blended with progressive appeals, it can mobilize support among the young – if they can be persuaded to vote. By contrast, anti-establishment language about restoring power to the 'real' people linked with authoritarian positions promising tough law and order, restricted border flows, and the restoration of national sovereignty, appeals more strongly to older citizens who are easier to mobilize to vote.

Other factors from the analysis in Model 2 indicate that no consistent period-effect emerges; instead, there are trendless fluctuations over the years. The life-cycle effects in Model 3 are also inconsistent. Model 4 adds the battery of social controls, suggesting that voting for populist parties is stronger among blue-collar workers, the less educated, men, urban populations, and the religious. Parties using populist anti-elite discourse are also likely to appeal to financially insecure households without reservoirs of savings for rainy days, the unemployed, and those dissatisfied with the performance of the national economy. In this regard, the economic thesis finds support – although economic satisfaction may also be exogenous if cued by prior partisanship and candidate preferences. Finally with all these controls, the generational patterns remain consistent, and voting for populist parties is strongest among those holding authoritarian values, expressing political mistrust, and those placing themselves on the left of the left–right ideological spectrum.

The analysis in Table 8.4 leads us to conclude that a combination of several standard demographic and social controls with cultural values provides the most useful explanation for European voting behavior and party choices. But there are important tensions and contrasts in the observed patterns, with voting for authoritarian parties being concentrated disproportionately among the older generations, and among men, religious people, whites, rural communities, and the less educated, blue-collar workers, and less financially secure – all social sectors generally left behind by cultural value change. Voting for parties using populist rhetoric shares several similar characteristics, such as by class, education,

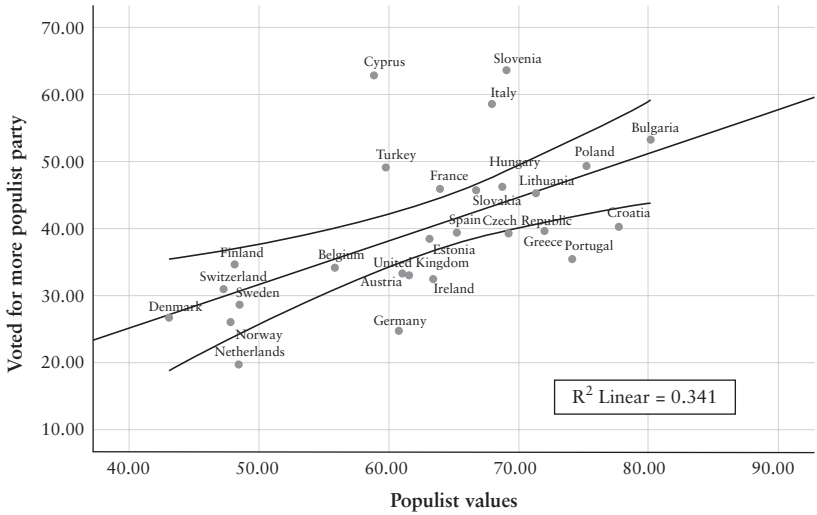

FIGURE 8.4. *Populist values and support for parties that are more populist*
Notes: Political parties are classified according to their score on the populism scale in CHES data. Populist values in the electorate are measured by the items in the ESS concerning trust in parliaments, parties, and politicians.
Source: European Social Survey, Cumulative File Rounds 1–7.

and sex, but there is one big exception: support for populist parties is strongest among the younger birth cohorts, not the older ones. Figure 8.4 illustrates the scatterplot associations between populist values and votes at national levels, confirming the significant linkages, although the overall correlation is weaker than that observed to be connecting authoritarian values and votes (R2 = .341**). The weaker correlation can be attributed in large part to the three outliers, notably Cyprus, Slovenia, and Italy, which have more populist voters than might be expected by the cultural values in these societies.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The evidence examined here points to several main findings.

First, it confirms that a substantial *generation gap in voting participation and party choices exists*. Younger cohorts are far less likely to vote – a widely observed and consistent pattern across European countries. As we demonstrated in earlier chapters, young people therefore differ sharply from their parents and grandparents in their socially liberal,

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libertarian, and post-materialist attitudes. Through population turnover, Millennials and Generation X are now a bare majority of citizens in the electorate. Because they are much less likely to vote, however, their preferences are systematically under-represented among the voting public. By contrast, the Interwar and Baby Boom generations are a steadily shrinking sector of the general population – but they are substantially more likely to vote, so their partisan preferences have a stronger impact on electoral outcomes.

If young and old shared broadly similar ideological values and party choices, then the lower rate of voting by younger citizens, while undesirable for civic engagement, would not matter. But voting for authoritarian parties in Europe is significantly stronger among the older generation, as well as among men, the less educated, the religious, and white populations living in rural areas. After applying socio-demographic controls, voting for parties endorsing authoritarian policy positions was also strengthened by mistrust of political institutions, authoritarian values, and right-wing ideological self-placement. Voting support for parties with populist anti-establishment appeals differs in several respects, however, particularly since it tends to be greater among younger than older cohorts.

The consistent patterns we have observed across diverse European societies take us further toward understanding this phenomenon but the exact reasons underlying some of these relationships remain open to interpretation. According to the economic grievance thesis, social class and educational correlations with voting support for authoritarian and populist parties reflect the level of economic security experienced because of socio-economic status, job security, salaries, and career opportunities. It does not imply the presence of intergenerational differences. The cultural backlash thesis suggests that the educational effects are linked with the acquisition of knowledge and cognitive skills, and the level of security experienced during one's formative years – which produces substantial intergenerational differences in cultural attitudes, levels of social tolerance, and adherence to socially liberal values.

The cultural backlash argument has significant implications. The generational gap in Western societies is likely to heighten the salience of the cultural cleavage in future politics, regardless of possible improvements in the underlying economic conditions or any slowdown in globalization. The orthogonal pull of cultural politics generates tensions and divisions within mainstream parties, allowing new opportunities for populist leaders to mobilize electoral support. Nevertheless, it often is difficult for Authoritarian-Populist parties to build an organizational base that

persists beyond particular leaders. Party institutionalization is challenging for minor parties but essential to enable them to sustain themselves in legislative office and government coalitions. The net result is that Western societies may face increasingly unpredictable electoral outcomes, growing challenges to the legitimacy of liberal democracy and the liberal consensus about the values of engagement in the world and tolerance of diversity at home.

The evidence considered in this chapter raises several issues that will be examined in subsequent chapters. The pooled ESS from 2002 to 2014 provides sufficient cases to examine support for smaller parties, and European reactions to the period shock of the 2007–2013 financial crisis, but it does not permit the analysis of long-term dynamic patterns. Further chapters therefore scrutinize time-series data from selected cases, including time series from national election surveys, to examine long-term trends in cultural attitudes and populist voting support in cases of Brexit in the UK and the election of Trump in the US. This can help to establish more conclusive evidence of the linkages hypothesized to exist between *changes* in cultural values and *changes* in authoritarian-populist party support. Moreover, to understand more fully the varied electoral fortunes of political parties in different countries, the roles of supply-side party competition and electoral systems also need to be addressed. The next chapter analyzes how votes are translated into seats, and the institutional context that shapes electoral outcomes.

Notes

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