



**University of
Zurich**^{UZH}

**Zurich Open Repository and
Archive**

University of Zurich
University Library
Strickhofstrasse 39
CH-8057 Zurich
www.zora.uzh.ch

Year: 2022

Redistribution attitudes and vote choice across the educational divide

Attewell, David

Abstract: How does the educational divide impact contemporary redistributive politics in the knowledge economy? Traditional political economy models which see education as a labour market asset predict the relatively secure educated will oppose redistribution, while the precarious less-educated will support it. In contrast, a conception of education as a marker of social status suggests that the less-educated may be more inclined than status-secure university graduates to draw harsh boundaries against welfare state beneficiaries as a means to maintain social esteem. Building on both theoretical approaches, I analyze 2016 European Social Survey data from 15 Western European countries. I find that education has a negative relationship to support for an expansive welfare state. By contrast, education is strongly positively associated with perceptions of welfare state beneficiaries as deserving. This has implications for education as a structural divide in electoral politics. Evidence that attitudes towards the scope of the welfare state mediate the effects of education on vote choice is mixed. However, KHB mediation analyses decomposing the effects of education on vote choice reveal that deservingness perceptions are a particularly substantial mediator of education effects on voting for radical right and green parties. This explains in part why these parties represent the poles of the educational divide, whose attitudinal basis is usually understood to be socio-cultural rather than redistributive.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12486>

Posted at the Zurich Open Repository and Archive, University of Zurich

ZORA URL: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-212136>

Journal Article

Published Version



The following work is licensed under a Creative Commons: Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.

Originally published at:

Attewell, David (2022). Redistribution attitudes and vote choice across the educational divide. *European Journal of Political Research*, 61(4):1080-1101.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12486>

Redistribution attitudes and vote choice across the educational divide

DAVID ATTEWELL

Department of Political Science, University of Zurich, Switzerland

Abstract. How does the educational divide impact contemporary redistributive politics in the knowledge economy? Traditional political economy models which see education as a labour market asset predict the relatively secure educated will oppose redistribution, while the precarious less-educated will support it. In contrast, a conception of education as a marker of social status suggests that the less-educated may be more inclined than status-secure university graduates to draw harsh boundaries against welfare state beneficiaries as a means to maintain social esteem. Building on both theoretical approaches, I analyze 2016 European Social Survey data from 15 Western European countries. I find that education has a negative relationship to support for an expansive welfare state. By contrast, education is strongly positively associated with perceptions of welfare state *beneficiaries* as deserving. This has implications for education as a structural divide in electoral politics. Evidence that attitudes towards the scope of the welfare state mediate the effects of education on vote choice is mixed. However, KHB mediation analyses decomposing the effects of education on vote choice reveal that deservingness perceptions are a particularly substantial mediator of education effects on voting for radical right and green parties. This explains in part why these parties represent the poles of the educational divide, whose attitudinal basis is usually understood to be socio-cultural rather than redistributive.

Keywords: education; deservingness, welfare state, public opinion, voting behaviour

Introduction

Education has emerged as an increasingly central social divide in contemporary electoral politics, but its attitudinal underpinnings are disputed. Most researchers have argued that divisions over socio-cultural conflicts around immigration and supranational authority are responsible for the rise of an education cleavage anchored by radical right, green and liberal parties (Bornschieer, 2010; Ford & Jennings, 2020, p. 300–302; Hooghe & Marks, 2018; Stubager, 2010). However, economic inequality along educational lines is as sharp as ever, stoking renewed scholarly interest in the effects of education on attitudes towards redistribution (Bullock, 2020; Gelephithis & Giani, 2020; Marshall, 2015, 2019; Mendelberg et al., 2017).

We can more fully understand the education cleavage by integrating recent insights on the measurement of redistribution attitudes, which distinguish between attitudes about the proper scope of the welfare state and perceptions about the deservingness of welfare state beneficiaries (Cavaillé & Trump, 2015; Laenen, 2020; Van Oorschot, 2000). Traditional models of political economy view education as a labour market asset and therefore predict that the relatively secure educated oppose redistribution out of self-interest, while the precarious less-educated support it. In contrast, a conception of education as a marker of social status suggests that the less-educated may be more inclined than status-secure university graduates to draw harsh boundaries against welfare state beneficiaries as a means to maintain social esteem. These theoretical approaches

[Correction added on 27 October 2021, after first online publication: Formatting errors have been updated in this version]

imply divergent effects of education on two separate subdimensions of redistribution attitudes: preferences towards the responsibilities of the welfare state and attitudes towards the deservingness of the needy.

Analyses of the 2016 European Social Survey (ESS) data from 15 Western European countries demonstrate these contrasting effects. First, the validity of the *welfare state* and *deservingness* subdimensions finds support in principal component analyses. Subsequent ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analyses reveal that, on average, higher levels of education are associated with relative opposition to state responsibility for maintaining living standards, but also with perceptions that those receiving help from the welfare state are more deserving. By contrast, low levels of education are associated with the opposite pattern; on average being more favourable towards social provision by government, but also more likely to consider welfare state beneficiaries as shirkers gaming the system.

What implications does this have for the education cleavage in electoral politics? KHB mediation analyses allow for the decomposition of education effects and estimation of the extent to which these two types of redistribution attitudes explain educational divides in voting. Decomposing the effects of education on vote choice reveals that deservingness perceptions are a particularly substantial mediator of education effects on vote choice for radical right and green parties, whose voters are the most educationally distinctive. The evidence that attitudes towards the scope of the welfare state mediate the effects of education on vote choice is more mixed. However, welfare state support does play a role in explaining education effects on vote choice between proximate party families competing in political space, notably between radical right and conservative parties.

This paper makes two main contributions. First, it applies recent insights on the multidimensionality of redistribution attitudes to resolve conflicting evidence about the relationship between education and redistribution attitudes. Second, it demonstrates how divergent redistribution attitudes contribute to the emergent education cleavage in electoral politics. Less educated voters, who tend to see welfare state beneficiaries as undeserving, are disproportionately attracted to the radical right. Highly educated voters, who have the most positive perceptions of welfare state beneficiaries on average, are disproportionately likely to support green parties. This helps to explain why green and radical right voters represent the poles of the educational divide, the attitudinal basis of which is usually understood to be socio-cultural rather than redistributive (Dolezal, 2010; Hooghe & Marks, 2018; Stubager, 2010). In post-industrial economies, divisions between those with high and low education over the welfare state and its beneficiaries are a significant, complementary explanation for the rise of an educational cleavage, alongside conflicts over immigration and transnationalism.

Why it matters: The educational divide in post-industrial politics

A prominent vein of scholarship asserts that advanced democracies are undergoing the rise of a new structural cleavage between winners and losers of post-industrial change (Hooghe & Marks, 2018; Kriesi, 1998). Differences in educational endowments lie at the core of this divide (Häusermann & Kriesi, 2015; Margalit, 2012; Stubager, 2009, 2010). The well-educated are relatively well-equipped to succeed in competitive internationalized and increasingly skill-intensive labour markets. Those with less education suffer greater insecurity and worry more about the prospect of competition from immigrants, both in the labour market and over welfare

state resources. What this educational divide means for the politics of redistribution, however, is unclear.

Despite the link between education and economic security, less-educated working class voters have increasingly moved away from social democratic parties and into ‘proletarianized’ parties of the radical right (Betz, 1994; Hartevelde, 2016; Houtman et al., 2008; Kitschelt, 1994; Oesch & Rennwald, 2018; Rydgren, 2013). Highly educated professionals, on the other hand, have become a key constituency of left-wing parties in many countries (Häusermann, et al. 2012, p. 228; Piketty, 2018). Political realignments along educational lines are often attributed to the increasing salience of immigration and supranational integration, which divide those with high and low levels of education (Hooghe & Marks, 2018, p. 7–8; Kriesi et al., 2008; Lancaster, 2021; Teney et al., 2014). However, in an era of rising inequality and precarity, distributional conflict is far from over. Contestation over the welfare state has morphed rather than disappeared, reshaping coalitions in distributive politics (Beramendi et al., 2015; Gingrich & Häusermann, 2015; Häusermann et al., 2012; Kitschelt & Rehm, 2014).

Unpacking redistribution: Education effects in a multidimensional context

A central theme in the social policy literature is that welfare states not only redistribute resources but also insure individuals against risk (Gingrich & Ansell, 2012, p. 1627). We would thus expect that the risks individuals face in the labour market affect their support for redistribution. Particularly in the context of the knowledge economy, researchers have found that education and skills are not only associated with higher income but also with lower risk of unemployment (e.g., Kapstein, 2002; Powell & Snellman, 2004). By virtue of its insurance function, education appears to reduce individuals’ support for redistribution (Alesina & Giuliano, 2011; Busemeyer, 2014; Iversen & Soskice, 2001; Moene & Wallerstein, 2001; Rehm, 2009, 2011).¹

Bullock (2020) makes an important contribution by leveraging exogenous changes in compulsory secondary education requirements across US states to identify the causal effects of education on support for redistribution, government responsibility for living standards and welfare. He finds that education is negatively associated with support for government redistribution and responsibility for living standards, but is not associated with opposition to welfare or attributing poverty to laziness. Bullock interprets this as evidence that education effects redistribution attitudes primarily via the channel of economic self-interest.

Recent literature further demonstrates the value of analyzing different dimensions of redistribution attitudes to explain the changing social structure of distributional conflict (e.g., Beramendi et al., 2015; Garritzmann et al., 2018; Gingrich & Häusermann, 2015). So far, this work has mostly focused on how income and occupational class affect different aspects of redistribution preferences.² I build on this comparative research by analyzing how the educational divide that is increasingly reshaping the political landscape relates to two particular subdimensions of redistribution attitudes across 15 Western European countries. These subdimensions distinguish between redistribution attitudes that prime different psychological mechanisms of self-interest and moral judgement.

Cavaillé and Trump (2015) argue that issues of ‘*redistribution from*’ the rich involve questions about the state’s responsibility to meet generalized social needs and reduce inequality, evoking ‘self-oriented’ considerations of individuals’ relative economic positions and whether they would personally benefit from social programs and efforts to reduce inequality. Since the psychological

mechanism triggered is one of self-interest, these issues divide high earners who will bear the brunt of taxes used to finance redistribution from low earners who would be the primary beneficiaries of it (ibid. 148).

Hypothesis 1 is consistent with the same self-interest-based logic as the classic political economy model: because education is an important labour market asset, on average, those with higher levels of educational attainment should oppose a more expansive role for government in providing economic security and reducing inequality (H1).

Hypothesis 1: Education is negatively associated with support for the welfare state.

By contrast, issues of ‘*redistribution to*’ the poor or disadvantaged prime mechanisms of social affinity and empathy (Cavaillé & Trump, 2015, p. 148). Instead of inward-facing calculations of personal benefit or cost, individuals’ views on deservingness reflect (a) whether or not they view the needy as worthy of help, and (b) whether they view the act of helping recipients as just and unproblematic, or instead view social assistance through the lens of moral hazard.³

One might expect the economically secure not to blame poverty on the unfairness of a social structure within which they prosper, but instead on the individual failings of benefit recipients. However, empirical research consistently finds that more affluent people are *less* likely than their poorer counterparts to blame poverty on personal failings. Bullock’s (1999, p. 2076) study of Americans’ attitudes towards welfare finds that the poor were more likely to attribute welfare recipients’ situation to laziness, relative to middle class respondents. Van Oorschot (2006, p. 34) similarly notes that ‘it is often found that those in lower socio-economic positions have more negative views of, e.g. unemployed people and people on benefit’. At the other end of the economic spectrum, Rueda (2017) argues that the wealthy are more sensitive to altruistic concerns than the poor, since their relative security gives them greater latitude to take non-material considerations into account in forming attitudes towards redistribution.

One potential explanation for this counter-intuitive relationship between economic standing and perceptions of the vulnerable lies in how the psychological pressures of status insecurity can sharpen negative evaluations of stigmatized groups (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2012; Fiske, 2011; Ridgeway, 2019). Crucially, when it comes to social status, people tend to be *last-place averse* (Cavaillé, 2014; Kuziemko et al., 2014). Lower status groups are particularly strongly motivated to defend the status order to maintain their continued separation from stigmatized populations at the very bottom of status hierarchies (Gidron & Hall, 2017, 2020; Lamont, 2000). Indeed, social psychologists have argued that ‘if low status groups cannot construct a positive social identity, then group members may resort to denigrating outgroups of similar status in an attempt to raise the *relative* status of their in-group by lowering the status of a perceived competitor’ (Kuppens et al., 2015, p. 1261).

There is reason to believe these status dynamics are particularly strongly linked to education. The advent of mass higher education has strengthened its social legitimacy as a measure of worth. Despite contemporary increases in inequality, meritocratic narratives present academic attainment as the path for individuals to achieve social mobility in spite of their backgrounds (Bourdieu, 1984). As a result, education is closely associated with an individual’s place in contemporary status hierarchies (Fiske, 2011; Ridgeway, 2019).

As the ranks of the university educated have increased, the subjective social status of those with lower levels of education has fallen (Gidron & Hall, 2017, p. S74, 2020; Spruyt & Kuppens,

2015). Often, lower status groups can combat social stigma by forming their own positive in-group identities. However, the less-educated struggle to pursue this strategy. Their low status is socially legitimated, and the absence of educational attainment offers little material with which to build positive group identification (Kuppens et al., 2015). Less-educated people might thus instead adopt negative views of welfare beneficiaries' deservingness in an effort to distance themselves from their membership in a low-status group (Fiske, 2011, p. 102–103; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Stubager, 2009; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The relatively secure social status of the highly educated, meanwhile, obviates the need to stigmatize benefit recipients in order to maintain social esteem. I thus hypothesize that increases in education are also associated with positive perceptions of recipients' deservingness (H2).

Hypothesis 2: Education is positively associated with favourable perceptions of benefit recipients' deservingness.

Implications of welfare state and deservingness attitudes for education effects on vote choice

Education is increasingly powerful, not only in shaping attitudes, but also as a structural divide in contemporary party politics (Bornschier et al., 2021; Häusermann & Kriesi, 2015; Hooghe & Marks, 2018; Langsæther & Stubager, 2019; Stubager, 2010). This perspective suggests that attitudes partly mediate the effect of education on voting behaviour; structurally rooted groups in conflict develop distinct attitudes and preferences which are reflected in their vote choice. If there are indeed significant differences in welfare state support and perceptions of deservingness across educational groups, we can expect them to have implications for voting patterns by education, since there is evidence that these attitudes are themselves a significant predictor of vote choice (Attewell, 2021).

In terms of theoretical expectations, then, a political economy perspective on the education cleavage suggests that the relative economic security of the higher educated should predispose them to vote for liberal and conservative parties which oppose an expansive and egalitarian welfare state (H3a).

Hypothesis 3a: Welfare state attitudes mediate the positive effect of education on voting for liberal and conservative parties.

Conversely, the relatively economically precarious lower educated should be more likely to vote for radical left and social democratic parties which are supportive of state responsibility for maintaining decent living standards (H3b).

Hypothesis 3b: Welfare state attitudes mediate the negative effect of education on voting for radical left and social democratic parties.

A perspective which instead views educational attainment as conferring or diminishing status has different implications for vote choice. Status insecurity and feelings of relative deprivation are associated with voting for radical right parties (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2012; Gidron & Hall, 2017; Suryanarayan, 2019). Such parties offer scapegoating narratives centred not only on ethnic minorities, but also the unemployed, who they cast as undeserving benefit scroungers (Afonso & Rennwald, 2018; Busemeyer et al., 2021; de Koster et al., 2012; Rathgeb, 2021). As a result, the

status insecurity of the lower educated should motivate them to vote disproportionately for radical right parties who offer their voters a positive relative comparison with stigmatized welfare state beneficiaries.

Hypothesis 4a: Deservingness perceptions mediate the negative effect of education on voting for radical right parties.

Conversely, the highly educated are not status insecure and lack motivation to draw sharp downwards boundaries against the needy. High levels of education promote discomfort with strict moral hierarchy and denigration of outgroups, and so may be associated with a greater tendency to perceive poverty as due to structural rather than individual failings. Disproportionately high-education green voters have been shown to be ideologically supportive of redistribution, even if their relative affluence renders their material incentives towards redistribution more mixed (Bremer & Schwander, 2019; Röth & Schwander, 2021). However, there is evidence that deservingness perceptions are more strongly predictive of green voting than welfare state attitudes (Attewell, 2021). Their relative status security and more positive perceptions of the needy may thus partly explain the tendency of the highly educated to vote for green parties (Dolezal, 2010).

Hypothesis 4b: Deservingness perceptions mediate the positive effect of education on voting for green parties.

Data and methods

The 2016 ESS is an appropriate dataset to test these hypotheses because it includes an extensive battery of questions on redistributive preferences and attitudes across a range of countries (European Social Survey Round 8 Data, 2016). In particular, I analyze 15 Western European countries⁴ from the dataset in order to examine the relationship between education and attitudes towards redistribution. Below I explain the operationalization of the different variables; full descriptive statistics can be found in Supporting Information Appendix 1.

Dependent variables: Deservingness perceptions and welfare state support

The first set of dependent variables of interest measure attitudes towards redistribution. Previous cross-national research on attitudes towards redistribution often relies on a single question which directly asks respondents about their support or opposition to government redistribution of incomes. This is understandable because most cross-national survey datasets lack multiple questions on attitudes towards redistribution which are consistently repeated over time. However, this operationalization is both theoretically and empirically problematic if attitudes towards redistribution are multidimensional (Cavaillé & Trump, 2015, p. 146).

I thus use principal component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation to analyze the structure of redistribution attitudes.⁵ Table 1 displays the two strongest components I call *deservingness* and *welfare state*, corresponding to Cavaillé and Trump (2015)'s '*redistribution to*' and '*redistribution from*', respectively.⁶ *Deservingness* explains about 24 per cent of the variance in redistribution attitudes, while *welfare state* explains about 23 per cent of the variance in redistribution attitudes. Both variables are standardized with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1, so their effects can be more easily compared.

Table 1. Rotated factor loadings

| Survey item | <i>Deservingness</i> | <i>Welfare State</i> |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| Government should reduce differences in income levels | -0.020 | 0.414 |
| Large differences in income are acceptable to reward talents and efforts | 0.112 | 0.315 |
| For a society to be fair, differences in people's standard of living should be small | 0.036 | 0.376 |
| It should be government's responsibility to ensure a reasonable standard of living for the elderly | -0.086 | 0.478 |
| It should be government's responsibility to ensure a reasonable standard of living for the unemployed | 0.150 | 0.407 |
| It should be government's responsibility to ensure sufficient childcare services for working parents | -0.073 | 0.418 |
| Many manage to obtain benefits they are not entitled to | 0.420 | -0.127 |
| Social benefits and services in (respondent's country) make people lazy | 0.525 | 0.057 |
| Social benefits and services in (respondent's country) make people less willing to care for each other | 0.503 | 0.004 |
| Most unemployed do not really try to find a job | 0.495 | -0.017 |

Note: this table reproduces the factor analysis from Attewell (2021). Strongest factor loadings in bold.

Questions that load most strongly onto the *deservingness* component ask respondents to make judgements about people who receive social benefits and services and the effects of government assistance on recipients' sense of personal and social responsibility.⁷ This theoretical framework suggests these questions should tap respondents' social affinity with benefit recipients. Higher values of *deservingness* indicate more positive views towards benefit recipients.

Questions that load most strongly onto the *welfare state* component concern attitudes towards inequality and the scope of government responsibility in social and economic policy. Questions of government responsibility should provoke a calculation of self-interest, in which respondents ask themselves whether or not they would personally benefit from redistribution. Higher values on *welfare state* indicate support for government responsibility for providing social services and reducing inequality.

Dependent variable: Vote choice

The second dependent variable of interest is vote choice, which is operationalized by grouping political parties into party families which share historical and ideological traditions, namely *conservative*, *social democratic*, *radical right*, *liberal*, *green* and *radical left*. Details on the coding of party families, including a full list of parties, appear in Supporting Information Appendix 3.

Key independent variable: Education

The central independent variable is *Education*. It uses the cross-nationally harmonized International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) measure to capture the respondents' highest level of educational attainment. It ranges from less than a lower secondary education, to lower secondary, lower tier upper secondary, upper tier upper secondary, advanced vocational, lower tertiary and finally a higher tertiary degree. This measure allows for a more fine-grained

understanding of the effects of education on redistribution which can capture non-linearities in the relationship.

Controls

In keeping with other literature on attitudes towards redistribution, I also include a series of controls: female gender, religiosity (operationalized as never, rarely or weekly church attendance), rural/urban location (an ordinal measure ranging from the reference category of farm or country village, town or small city and suburbs, to big city) and age. In the main models, I do not control for income and class in order to avoid post-treatment bias, or 'overcontrol' (Elwert, 2013); since these follow partly from education, they would be mediators, rather than confounders of educational effects on attitudes and vote choice.

Modelling

The analysis proceeds in two steps. First, I model *deservingness* perceptions and *welfare state* attitudes as a function of *Education* in OLS regressions, controlling for potential confounders.

Next, I assess the extent to which the educational divide in electoral politics is mediated by *welfare state* and *deservingness* attitudes. I employ the KHB method, a form of mediation analysis designed for non-linear probability models (Breen et al., 2013; Breen et al., 2018; Kohler et al., 2011). This method allows the researcher to estimate the amount of a given predictor's effect on a dichotomous outcome which is mediated via another variable, to generate meaningful measures of statistical uncertainty for mediation effects, and to compare the relative strength of different mediators.⁸ While the KHB method can be employed with various types of non-linear probability models, I use logistic regression, since I model vote choice as a binary outcome of voting for a given party family versus all other party families. These logistic regressions include the same prior set of controls for age, gender, religious attendance and rural/urban location. For my purposes, the KHB method allows for the decomposition of direct and indirect effects (via attitudes) of education on vote choice, to assess their relative magnitude and test their statistical significance.

All models include country fixed effects to account for unobserved characteristics of individual countries, as well as standard errors clustered at the country level to account for autocorrelation of errors at the country level. Survey responses are weighted by combining the ESS's post-stratification weights and population weights to account for differential selection probabilities within each country as well as differences in population size across countries, in keeping with ESS recommendations (Kaminska, 2020).⁹

Analyses

For descriptive purposes, Figure 1 displays the uncontrolled means of *deservingness* and *welfare state* across educational groups. The lowest educational group has both the most negative *deservingness* perceptions and the highest average *welfare state* support on average, but this relationship slowly reverses for increasingly higher levels of education. The tertiary educated represent nearly the opposite pattern: this group has by far the most positive perceptions of *deservingness* but also displays moderate opposition to the *welfare state*. Building upon Cavaille's

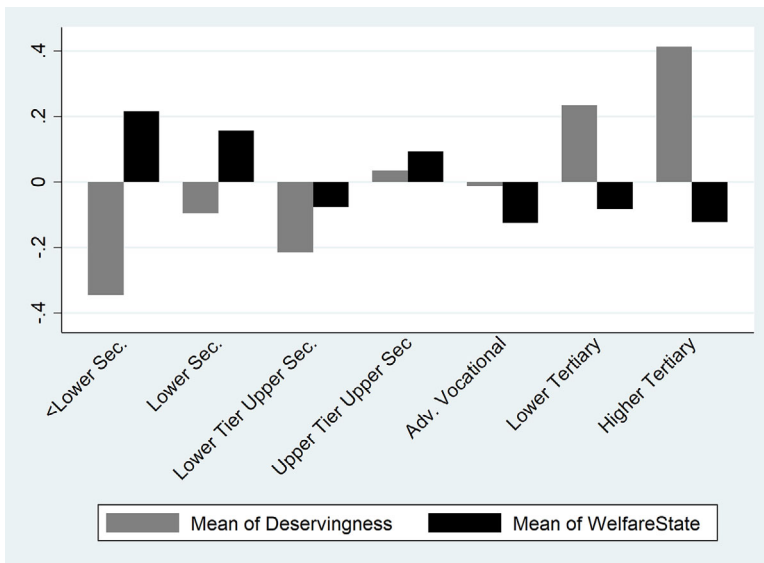


Figure 1. Mean deservingness and welfare state by education [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

(2014, p. 199) finding for Great Britain, breaking down redistribution attitudes into subdimensions reveals educational groups across Western Europe to be cross-pressured.

Figure 2 shows an OLS model predicting *welfare state* attitudes under controls. The results of Model 1 show the relationship between education and support for the *welfare state* is negative and statistically significant, under controls. All educational groups are less supportive of *welfare state*

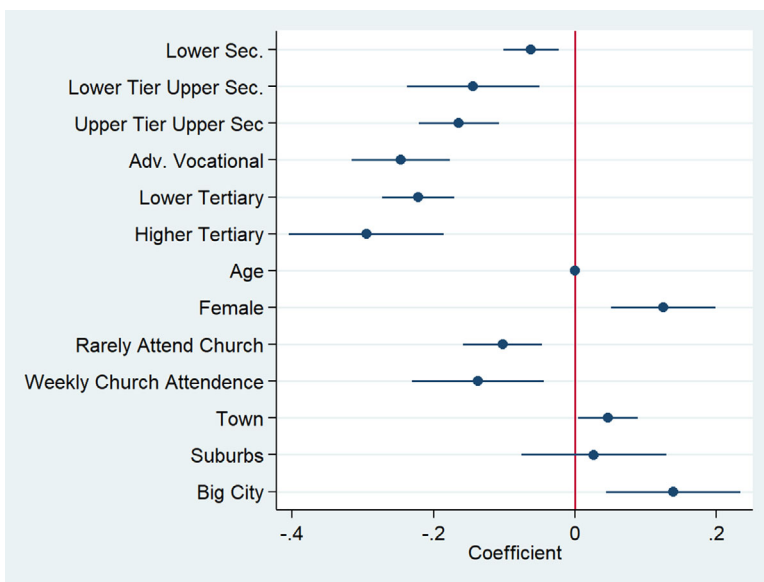


Figure 2. Model 1, determinants of welfare state support [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

relative to the reference category of those with less than a lower secondary education. Effects range from an average reduction of about 0.08 standard deviation units in support for *welfare state* for lower secondary educated respondents relative to the reference category, to an average reduction of 0.33 standard deviation units for those with a higher tertiary education relative to the reference category. This offers support for Hypothesis 1 in line with the expectations of the political economy model.

Figure 3 reports the results of a model estimating the determinants of *deservingness*. The results of Model 2 show that education is strongly and statistically significantly associated with more positive perceptions of *deservingness* relative to the reference category of less than a secondary education, even after controlling for age, church attendance and rural/urban location. Specifically, those with a lower tertiary education are on average 0.48 standard deviation units more positive and those with a higher tertiary education are on average 0.61 standard deviation units more positive on *deservingness* relative to the least educated. This finding is consistent with Hypothesis 2.

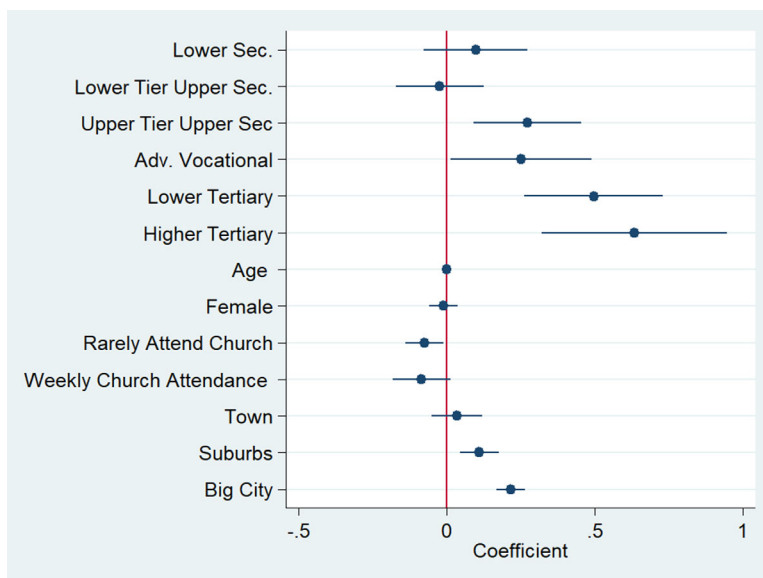


Figure 3. Model 2, determinants of *deservingness* perceptions [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

Table 2 below displays the results of logistic regressions predicting vote choice, and KHB mediation analyses decomposing direct effects of education on vote choice from indirect effects of education via *welfare state* attitudes and *deservingness* perceptions. Coefficients represent the change in the log odds of voting for a given party family associated with a one-unit increase in education. Here, my measure of education operationalizes the ISCED measure continuously for ease of interpretation (otherwise, direct and indirect effects would have to be displayed separately for each education category relative to reference category). For my purposes, the key information is contained in Column A, which shows the total effects of education on vote choice for a given party family, Column C, which shows the statistical significance of indirect effects and Columns D1 and D2, which estimate the percentage of total education effects on vote choice mediated by the attitudes of interest.

Table 2. Direct and indirect effects of education on vote choice

| Partyfamily | A: Estimated total effect of education on vote | B: Estimated direct effect of education on vote (controlling for <i>welfare state</i> and <i>deservingness</i>) | C: Estimated indirect effect of education on vote via <i>welfare state</i> and <i>deservingness</i> values | D1: % of total education effect mediated by <i>welfare state</i> | D2: % of Total education effect mediated by <i>deservingness</i> |
|------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Conservatives | 0.00 (0.02) | N/A, NS | N/A, NS | N/A, NS | N/A, NS |
| Social Democrats | -0.06*(0.03) | -0.08*(0.03) | -0.01(0.01) | N/A NS | N/A NS |
| Radical Right | -0.28*** (0.04) | -0.21*** (0.03) | -0.07*** (0.02) | 0.52% | 25.0% |
| Greens | 0.22*** (0.02) | 0.16*** (0.03) | 0.06*** (0.01) | -3.7% | 31.9% |
| Radical Left | -0.020(0.038) | N/A, NS | N/A, NS | N/A, NS | N/A, NS |
| Liberals | 0.23*** (0.033) | 0.22*** (0.036) | 0.00(0.01) | N/A, NS | N/A, NS |

Note: Coefficients derived from logistic regression models predicting vote choice. *p = 0.05, **p = 0.01, ***p = 0.001, standard errors in parentheses. N/A, NS = Not applicable, total or indirect effects are not significant and thus are not decomposed.

Recall that earlier analyses found education to be negatively associated with *welfare state* support and positively associated with *deservingness* perceptions. Hypothesis 3a predicted the relatively negative *welfare state* attitudes of the higher educated would be associated with a greater propensity to vote for free-market conservative and liberal parties, while Hypothesis 4a predicted the relatively positive *welfare state* attitudes of the lower educated would be associated with a greater propensity to vote for radical left and social democratic parties.

Column A in Table 2 shows that education is not statistically significantly associated with voting for conservative or radical left parties – for these parties, there is no education effect to decompose. Education is positively and statistically significantly associated with voting for liberal and green parties, and negatively associated with voting for social democratic and, to a much stronger degree, radical right parties. In Column D1, however, we see that *welfare state* attitudes are not a substantial mediator of education effects for these party families – indirect effects are not statistically significant for liberal and social democratic parties, while for radical right and green parties they are substantively quite small.¹⁰ In sum, the higher educated are not on average more likely to vote for conservative or liberal parties as a result of their relative opposition to the *welfare state* – this lack of mediated education effects via *welfare state* attitudes is evidence against Hypothesis 3a. Education is not associated with radical left voting at all, while indirect effects of education on social democratic voting via *welfare state* support are not statistically significant, evidence against Hypothesis 3b.

Column D2, however, shows substantial mediation effects of education via *deservingness* perceptions on voting for the greens and the radical right, parties which exemplify the educational divide in electoral politics. The decomposition of education effects shows that *deservingness* perceptions explain about 32 and 25 per cent of the total education effect on voting for green and radical right parties, respectively. This is evidence consistent with Hypotheses 4a and 4b. This finding is noteworthy, as these are educationally distinctive parties whose electoral bases are often understood primarily through the opposition of those with low and high levels of education on socio-cultural issues rather than issues of redistribution (e.g., Dolezal, 2010; Stubager, 2010). Overall, these findings suggest that the indirect effect of education on vote choice via *deservingness* perceptions is generally much stronger than those via *welfare state* support.

However, it is possible that *welfare state* attitudes as well as *deservingness* perceptions are an important mediator of education effects on vote choice in more fine-grained comparisons between adjacent party families competing in political space. Oesch and Rennwald (2018) conceive of contemporary party competition in Europe as one in which left, right and radical right ‘poles’ engage in bilateral competition over specific social constituencies. As the growth of radical right parties has increasingly challenged the centre-right, electoral competition between the two has become an area of increasing scholarly focus (Gidron & Ziblatt, 2019; Pardos-Prado, 2015; Webb & Bale, 2014). Abou-Chadi et al. (2021) and Abou-Chadi and Immergut (2019) find that conservative parties often lose economically insecure and relatively pro-redistribution voters to radical right parties, particularly when conservative governments embrace retrenchment of pensions. While this previous work focuses on intra-Right competition over occupational classes, we can also ask whether *welfare state* and *deservingness* attitudes help to explain the educational divide in vote choice between the centre-right and radical right.

Table 3 repeats the KHB mediation analysis procedure in a logistic regression model predicting voting for the centre-right versus radical right. Column A indicates that education has a strong positive effect on voting for conservative parties over radical right parties. Column C shows

Table 3. Direct and indirect effects of education on conservative versus radical right voting

| | A: Estimated total effect of education on vote | B: Estimated direct effect of education on vote (controlling for welfare state and deservingness) | C: Estimated indirect effect of education on vote via welfare state and deservingness values | D1: % of total education effect mediated by welfare state | D2: % of total education effect mediated by deservingness |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| Voting Conservative (vs. Radical Right) | 0.26***(0.05) | 0.20***(0.05) | 0.06***(0.02) | 14% | 9% |

Note: N = 5,122. Pseudo R² = 0.18.

that these education effects are partially mediated via *welfare state* attitudes and *deservingness* perceptions. In Columns D1 and D2, we see that an estimated 14 per cent of the total effect of education on vote choice is mediated by *welfare state* attitudes, while 9 per cent of the total effect of education is mediated by *deservingness* perceptions. In other words, while *welfare state* attitudes do not mediate education effects in predicting voting for conservative parties versus all other party families, they do appear to mediate educational differences in vote choice within the political Right.

Alternative explanations and robustness checks

This section addresses four potential counterarguments. The first is that different socialization experiences stemming from parental background, rather than education itself, drive the observed education effects on redistribution attitudes. In Supporting Information Appendix 4.1, I control for parental educational attainment and father's occupation in two models predicting attitudes. The results show that education effects on *welfare state* attitudes (but not *deservingness* perceptions) shrink under these controls, but education remains a substantial and statistically significant predictor of these attitudes after controlling for parental background.

A second argument is that socialization within institutions of higher education accounts for lower support for the welfare state among the highly educated, rather than the economic effect of education on reducing economic risk. Indeed, recent research suggests that instructors may transmit ideas related to the efficiency costs of redistribution or that concentrations of affluent students promote economic conservatism on campuses (Gelepathis & Giani, 2020; Mendelberg et al., 2017). Supporting Information Appendix 4.2 shows that the effect of education on *welfare state* support remains robust in augmented analyses that assess the potential confounding role of higher education socialization by controlling for anti-redistributive norms hypothesized to be inculcated on campuses.¹¹

A third counterargument may be that redistributive conflict along educational lines is driven by conflict about *types* of social policy rather than the scope of welfare state benefits and services. In this view, the highly educated support social investment policies such as childcare and training designed to facilitate labour market participation, while those with lower levels of education instead support passive consumption policies such as pension and unemployment benefits (e.g., Beramendi et al., 2015; Garritzmann et al., 2018; Häusermann et al., 2015). Supporting Information Appendix 4.3 decomposes the *welfare state* measure in consumption and investment policy areas, and shows that education is negatively associated with support for both social consumption and social investment policies.

Finally, Supporting Information Appendix 5 (Appendix Table 7) adds controls for socio-cultural attitudes often theorized to mediate the effect of education on vote choice (Hooghe & Marks, 2018; Stubager, 2010). Indirect effects on radical right and green voting via *deservingness* perceptions are robust in KHB mediation models controlling for attitudes towards immigration and European integration. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that it is possible that there are unobserved confounders that might affect estimates of mediation effects, and the cross-sectional nature of the data limits my ability to address issues of possible reverse causality.

A further strength of the KHB method is its ability to compare the relative strength of multiple mediators. This allows me to compare the strength of *deservingness* perceptions and *welfare state* attitudes as mediators of education effects on vote choice, compared to socio-cultural attitudes traditionally understood as fundamental to the education cleavage. Supporting

Information Appendix 5 (Appendix Table 8) shows that estimated indirect effects of education on voting green via *deservingness* perceptions are modestly stronger than those via immigration attitudes, and substantially stronger than those via European integration attitudes. For radical right voting, the magnitude of indirect education effects via *deservingness* perceptions are about half as strong as those via immigration attitudes, but are virtually identical in strength to those via European integration attitudes. Supporting Information Appendix 5 (Appendix Table 9) further replicates this procedure to compare the strength of mediators of education effects on conservative versus radical right voting. The results show that mediation effects via *welfare state* attitudes on voting for conservative parties over radical right parties are somewhat over half as strong as those via immigration attitudes and stronger than those via European Union (EU) integration attitudes and *deservingness* perceptions.

In sum, the effects of education on vote choice via *welfare state* support and *deservingness* perceptions are robust to several plausible alternative explanations, such as parental background, investment or consumption preferences and socio-cultural attitudes toward immigration and the EU. This paper does not claim that attitudes other than the *welfare state* support and *deservingness* perceptions are irrelevant to educational differences in vote choice. Rather, these findings suggest these two redistributive subdimensions are mechanisms linking education to vote choice, in addition to these other influences.

Discussion

This paper contributes to the literature in two ways. First, it draws on scholarship in sociology and social psychology to argue that education represents a status divide, and not only a divide rooted in economic risk or socio-cultural attitudes. Status differentials between those with lower and higher levels of education mean they differ in their proclivity to sharply demarcate themselves from the needy in order to maintain their own social esteem. While material insecurity pushes the lower educated towards support for a more encompassing welfare state, status insecurity inclines them towards harsher judgements of welfare state beneficiaries. I find that higher levels of education are on average associated with more positive attitudes towards the deservingness of welfare state beneficiaries compared to less-educated individuals,¹² but are also associated with more negative attitudes towards the scope of the welfare state, in keeping with the political economy literature.

Second, the paper assesses to what extent educational divides over redistribution contribute to the emergent education cleavage in electoral politics. Less educated voters, who on average see welfare state beneficiaries as undeserving, are disproportionately attracted to the radical right; highly educated voters who on average have the most positive perceptions of welfare state beneficiaries are disproportionately likely to support green parties. Results of KHB mediation analyses corroborate that different perceptions of deservingness of welfare state beneficiaries explain in part why green and radical right voters represent the poles of the education cleavage.

Evidence on the role of attitudes towards the scope of the welfare state in mediating educational effects on vote choice is more mixed. However, welfare state attitudes are found to mediate education effects in a more fine-grained analysis of vote choice between competing party families, specifically conservatives and the radical right. Differences in attitudes on both the welfare state and deservingness subdimensions help to explain why on the Right, the lower educated vote

disproportionately for radical right parties over conservative parties, potentially consistent with research arguing that these voters are characterized more strongly by welfare chauvinist attitudes than outright hostility to redistribution (van der Waal et al., 2010).

In sum, education has typically been understood as a structural divide linked to parties primarily competing on the socio-cultural, rather than the economic dimension (Kriesi et al., 2006; Stubager, 2009, 2010). However, this appears partly to be a function of how redistribution attitudes are measured. A deservingness/welfare state framework suggests that the educational divide in party politics is also an expression of redistributive conflict, but in a multidimensional way. These results suggest that education is associated with vote choice both directly and indirectly, via differences in attitudes not just about the proper scope of the welfare state, but even more strongly about the deservingness of welfare state beneficiaries themselves.

As educationally distinctive radical right and green parties continue to gain ground electorally, scholars have begun to focus on their impacts on social policy both in and outside of government (Abou-Chadi & Immergut, 2019; Afonso & Rennwald, 2018; Chueri, 2020; Röth & Schwander, 2021). This paper helps clarify the contours of redistribution attitudes held by the core social support groups of these parties, with consequences for both their welfare state agendas and the constraints imposed by the opinions of their voters. With their success in attracting a lower-education base of voters, radical right parties may risk greater backlash from their base for supporting the retrenchment of welfare state programs (Afonso, 2015). However, the particularly negative perceptions of welfare state beneficiaries in the eyes of their voters may give radical right parties leeway to pursue certain kinds of spending cuts if framed around punishing benefit cheating by the undeserving (Chueri, 2020). Conversely, green parties' growing success among highly educated voters with the most positive views of the needy, ties them to an electoral base that may be particularly averse to the kinds of negative conditionality frequently imposed upon the poor and unemployed.

To further contextualize and explore these results, more research is needed. When groups are cross-pressured across two attitudinal dimensions, the relative salience of each dimension becomes crucial for vote choice. Prior research into this question has often focused on how cross pressures between socio-cultural and economic attitudes are resolved in vote choice (Gidron, 2020; Lefkofridi et al., 2014). However, the findings of this paper suggest a new way in which this also applies to the alignment of different social groups in redistributive conflicts. Since, on average, educational groups take internally conflicted positions in terms of deservingness perceptions and welfare state support, future research examining what drives changes in these subdimensions' relative salience over time can help us better understand the evolution of the education cleavage.

Acknowledgements

I thank the Editors of the *European Journal of Political Research* and three anonymous reviewers for their highly productive comments over the course of the review process. I express my gratitude to Gary Marks, Liesbet Hooghe, Rahsaan Maxwell, Marc Hetherington and Jan Rovny for their crucial feedback on this piece as members of my dissertation committee. I am also grateful to Leah Christiani, Eroll Kuhn, Andreas Jozwiak, Lucy Britt, Kaitlin Alper and Sean Norton for their helpful comments on drafts at various stages of this article's development.

Open access funding provided by Universitat Zurich.

Online Appendix

Additional supporting information may be found in the Online Appendix section at the end of the article:

Supplementary material

Notes

1. In tension with this perspective, Häusermann et al. (2015) and Schwander (2020) argue that labour market insecurity has extended into the educated middle classes, with potential consequences for their redistribution preferences.
2. Häusermann & Kriesi (2015) link attitudes and socio-structural variables including education to vote choice. My contribution focuses on the relationship between education and redistribution attitudes, and the extent to which the relationship between education and vote choice is mediated by these attitudes. Häusermann & Kriesi (2015) also include measures of what they call ‘welfare misuse’, which overlap with the *deservingness* dimension employed in this paper. However, they subsume these items under a broader dimension of universalism-particularism, a factor which also includes attitudes about the EU, cultural liberalism and immigration.
3. This conceptualization is distinct from previous research focused on perceptions of the relative deservingness of particular groups. Scholars have found that recipients’ perceived effort and degree of control over their economic fortunes have a significant impact on people’s evaluations of their deservingness (Feather, 1999; Fincham & Jaspers, 1980). Van Oorschot (2006) finds that individuals living in different welfare state regimes perceive a similar spectrum of deservingness from the elderly (most deserving), to the sick and disabled, to the unemployed and finally to immigrants (least deserving). Some researchers argue that deservingness perceptions stem from a pre-political, reflexive heuristic rooted in evolutionary psychology (Petersen et al., 2011; Petersen, 2015).
4. Countries included in the analyses are Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. I exclude countries which were part of the former Soviet Bloc, since the transition from communism led to sharp discontinuities in their education regimes, which transformed the availability of education and its relationship to labour market outcomes across generations (Kwiek, 2014).
5. See Supporting Information Appendix 2 for the full list of survey questions used and more details about the PCA procedure.
6. This paper uses the conceptual labels of *deservingness* and *welfare state* because they capture general orientations towards welfare state beneficiaries (the unemployed as well as the poor) and the preferences for the scope of government social policy. The survey questions used to construct the dependent variables in this paper overlap with those used to construct the dimensions of ‘Redistribution To’ and ‘Redistribution From’ in Cavaillé (2014) and Cavaillé & Trump (2015) from 2008 ESS data, but not all questions from the 2008 survey wave were available in the 2016 ESS.
7. Other research on welfare state attitudes operationalizes the concept of deservingness in different ways, asking respondents whether specific groups deserve more or less money from the welfare state than they currently receive (Jeene et al., 2014), whether respondents are concerned about a certain group’s living standards and their relative concern for each group in relation to others (Van Oorschot, 2006), or most directly whether the members of a given group deserve financial assistance from the state or not (Jensen & Petersen, 2017; Van Oorschot, 2000).
8. See Langsæther and Evans (2020) for a relevant and recent application of the KHB method to evaluating the mechanisms underlying class divides in attitudes over inequality.
9. I do not estimate multilevel models because a test of the intraclass correlation shows the rho statistic at 0.05, suggesting levels of multilevel or nesting effects too low to necessitate a hierarchical linear modelling approach (see Robsin & Pevalin, 2016, p. 35). However, I do employ robust clustered errors at the country level and use country fixed effects in order to account for country-level autocorrelation.

10. In the case of voting green, somewhat paradoxically, the estimated total effect of education is less than the estimated direct effect of education, controlling for *welfare state* support (as seen in Column D1). This is a suppression effect – indicating that for these voters, education has a stronger effect on vote choice at a given level of *welfare state* support. Since the suppression effect is quite small, it is unlikely to be substantively meaningful.
11. The two beliefs available in ESS are ‘social benefits and services place too great a strain on business’ and ‘social benefits and services place too great a strain on the economy generally’. Augmenting the model with those two controls does not weaken the relationship between education and *welfare state* attitudes. Moreover, while negative education effects on *welfare state* support are strongest at the higher tertiary level, there is virtually no difference between the vocational level and lower tertiary level, a key theorized site of socialization. While not dispositive, this evidence is inconsistent with the socialization argument.
12. This result diverges from Bullock (2020, p. 16)’s finding in the context of the United States that education is not strongly related to perceptions that poverty is justified by the weak work ethic of the poor, or that welfare makes people work less. This may be the result of differences in the extent of racialization of welfare politics in the United States relative to Western Europe, in the ideological dimensionality of party competition in a two-party system versus predominantly multiparty systems, or for other reasons. It would be beneficial for future comparative research to investigate the sources of discrepancies in these findings.

References

- Abou-Chadi, T., Cohen, D., & Wagner, M. (2021). The centre-right versus the radical right: the role of migration issues and economic grievances. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1853903>
- Abou-Chadi, T., & Immergut, I. (2019). Recalibrating social protection: Electoral competition and the new partisan politics of the welfare state. *European Journal of Political Research*, 58(2), 697–719.
- Afonso, A. (2015). Choosing whom to betray: Populist right-wing parties, welfare state reforms, and the trade-off between office and votes. *European Political Science Review*, 7(2), 271–292.
- Afonso, A., & Rennwald, L. (2018). Social class and the changing welfare state agenda of radical right parties in Europe. In B. Palier, H. Schwander, & P. Manow (Eds.), *Welfare democracies and party politics: Explaining electoral dynamics in times of changing welfare capitalism* (pp. 171–196). Oxford University Press.
- Alesina, A., & Giuliano, P. (2011). Preferences for redistribution. In A. Bisin & J. Benhabib (Eds.), *Handbook of social economics* (pp. 93–132). North-Holland.
- Attewell, D. (2021). Deservingness perceptions, welfare state support, and vote choice in Western Europe. *West European Politics*, 44(3), 611–634.
- Bakker, R., Edwards, E., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., Marks, G., Polk, J., Rovny, J., Steenbergen, M., & Vachudova, M. (2015). *2014 Chapel Hill expert survey*. Version 2015.1. University of North Carolina. Available at chesdata.eu.
- Betz, H.-G. (1994). *Radical right-wing populism in Western Europe*. Macmillan.
- Beramendi, P., Häusermann, S., Kitschelt, H., & Kriesi, H. eds. (2015). *The politics of advanced capitalism*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bornschieer, S. (2010). *Cleavage politics and the populist right: The new cultural conflict in Western Europe*. Temple University Press.
- Bornschieer, S., Häusermann, S., Zollinger, D., & Colombo, C. (2021). How ‘us and them’ relates to voting behavior—Social structure, social identities, and electoral choice. *Comparative Political Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414021997504>.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984 [1979]). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste*. Harvard University Press.
- Breen, R., Karlson, B.K., & Holm, A. (2013). Total, direct, and indirect effects in logit and probit models. *Sociological Methods and Research*, 42(2), 164–191.
- Breen, R., Karlson, B.K., & Holm, A. (2018). Interpreting and understanding logits, probits, and other nonlinear probability models. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 44, 39–54.
- Bremer, B., & Schwander, H. (2019). Green voters and support for different social policy logics in times of electoral realignment. Paper presented at the Conference of Europeanists, June 20–24th, Madrid.

- Bullock, H.E. (1999). Attributions for poverty: A comparison of middle-class and welfare recipient attitudes. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29(10), 2059–2082.
- Bullock, J. G. (2020). Education and attitudes towards redistribution in the United States. *British Journal of Political Science*, 51(3), 1230–1250. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123419000504>.
- Busemeyer, M.R. (2014). *Skills and inequality: Partisan politics and the political economy of education reforms in Western welfare states*. Cambridge University Press.
- Busemeyer, M.R., Rathgeb, P., & Sahm, P. (2021). Authoritarian values and the welfare state: The social policy preferences of radical right voters. *West European Politics*, 45(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2021.1886497>
- Cavaillé, C. (2014). *Demand for redistribution in the age of inequality*. Doctoral Dissertation. Harvard University.
- Cavaillé, C., & Trump, K.-S. (2015). The two facets of social policy preferences. *The Journal of Politics*, 77(1), 146–160.
- Churi, J. (2020). Social policy outcomes of government participation by radical right parties. *Party Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068820923496>
- Dolezal, M. (2010). Exploring the stabilization of a political force: The social and attitudinal basis of green parties in the age of globalization. *West European Politics*, 33(3), 534–552.
- Doring, H., & Manow, P. (2019). *Parliaments and governments database (Parlgov): Information on parties, elections, and cabinets in modern democracies*. Development version. <http://www.parlgov.org/#documentation>.
- Elchardus, M., & Spruyt, B. (2012). The contemporary contradictions of egalitarianism: An empirical analysis of the relationship between the Old and New Left/Right alignments. *European Political Science Review*, 4(2), 217–239.
- Elwert, F. (2013). Graphical causal models. In Morgan, S.L. (Ed.), *Handbook of causal analysis for social research* (pp. 245–273). Springer.
- European Social Survey Round 8 Data. (2016). Data file edition 2.2. NSD- Norwegian Centre for Research Data, Norway- Data archive and distributor of ESS data for ESS ERIC. doi:10.21338/NSD-ESS8-2016.
- Feather, N.T. (1999). Judgments of deservingness: Studies in the psychology of justice and achievement. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 3(2), 86–107.
- Fincham, F.D., & Jaspers, J.M. (1980). Attribution of responsibility: From man the scientist to man as lawyer. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 13(1), 81–138.
- Fiske, S. (2011). *Envy up, scorn down: How status divides us*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Ford, R., & Jennings, W. (2020). The changing cleavage politics of Western Europe. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 23: 295–314.
- Garritzmann, J.L., Busemeyer, M.R., & Neimanns, E. (2018). Public demand for social investment: New supporting coalitions for welfare state reform in Western Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25(6), 844–861.
- Gelepithis, M., & Giani, M. (2020). Inclusion without solidarity: Education, economic security, and attitudes towards redistribution. *Political Studies* <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321720933082>.
- Gidron, N. (2020). ‘Many ways to be right: Cross-pressured voters in Western Europe. *British Journal of Political Science*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123420000228>.
- Gidron, N., & Hall, P.H. (2017). The politics of social status: Economic and cultural roots of the populist right. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 68(S1), S57–S84.
- Gidron, N., & Hall, P.H. (2020). Populism as a problem of social integration. *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(7), 1027–1059.
- Gidron, N., & Ziblatt, D. (2019). Center-right political parties in advanced democracies. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22: 17–35.
- Gingrich, J., & Ansell, B. (2012). Preferences in context: Micro preferences, macro contexts, and the demand for social policy. *Comparative Political Studies*, 45(12), 1624–1654.
- Gingrich, J., & Häusermann, S. (2015). The decline of the working class vote, the reconfiguration of the welfare support coalition and consequences for the welfare state. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 25(1), 50–75.
- Harteveld, E. (2016). Winning the losers, but losing the winners? The electoral consequences of the radical right moving to the economic left. *Electoral Studies*, 44(1), 225–234.
- Häusermann, S., Picot, G., & Geering, D. (2012). Rethinking party politics and the welfare state- Recent advances in the literature. *British Journal of Political Science*, 43(1), 221–240.

- Häusermann, S., & Kriesi, H. (2015). What do voters want? Dimensions and configurations in individual-level preferences and party choice. In P. Beramendi, S. Häusermann, H. Kitschelt & H. Kriesi (Eds.), *The politics of advanced capitalism* (pp. 202–230). Cambridge University Press.
- Häusermann, S., Kurer, T., & Schwander, H. (2015). High-skilled outsiders? Labor market vulnerability, education, and welfare state preferences. *Socio-Economic Review*, 13(2), 235–258.
- Hout, M., Brooks, C., & Manza, J. (1995). The democratic class struggle in the United States: 1948–1992. *American Sociological Review*, 60(6), 805–828.
- Houtman, D., Achterberg, P., & Derks, A. (2008). *Farewell to the leftist working class*. Transaction Publishers.
- Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2018). Cleavage theory meets Europe's crises: Lipset, Rokkan, and the transnational cleavage. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25(1), 109–135.
- Iversen, T., & Soskice, D. (2001). An asset theory of social policy preferences. *American Political Science Review*, 95(4), 875–895.
- Jeene, M., Van Oorschot, W., & Uunk, W. (2014). The dynamics of welfare opinions in changing economic, institutional, and political contexts: An empirical analysis of Dutch deservingness opinions, 1975–2006. *Social Indicators Research*, 115(1), 731–749.
- Jost, J.T., & Banaji, M.R. (1994). The role of stereotyping in system-justification and the production of false consciousness. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 33(1), 1–17.
- Kapstein, E.B. (2002). Winners and losers in the global economy. *International Organization*, 54(2), 359–384.
- Kaminska, O. (2020). Guide to using weights and sample design indicators with ESS data. https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/methodology/ESS_weighting_data_1_1.pdf
- Kitschelt, H. (1994). *The transformation of European social democracy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kitschelt, H., & Rehm, P. (2014). Occupations as a site of political preference formation. *Comparative Political Studies*, 47(12), 1670–1706.
- Kohler, U., Karlson, K.B., & Holm, A. (2011). Comparing coefficients of nested nonlinear probability models. *The STATA Journal*, 11(3), 420–438.
- de Koster, W., Achterberg, P., & van der Waal, J. (2012). The new right and the welfare state: The electoral relevance of welfare chauvinism and welfare populism in the Netherlands. *International Political Science Review*, 34(1), 3–20.
- Kriesi, H. (1998). The transformation of cleavage politics: The 1997 Stein Rokkan lecture. *European Journal of Political Research*, 33(1), 165–185.
- Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschie, S., & Frey, T. (2006). Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: Six European countries compared. *European Journal of Political Research*, 45(6), 921–956.
- Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., & Dolezal, M. (2008). *West European politics in the age of globalization*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kuppens, T., Easterbrook, M.J., Spears, R., & Manstead, A.S.R. (2015). Life at both ends of the ladder: Education-based identification and its association with well-being and social attitudes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(9), 1260–1275.
- Kuziemko, I., Buell, R.W., Reich, T., & Michael, I.M. (2014). Last place aversion: Evidence and redistributive implications. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 129(1), 105–149.
- Kwiek, M. (2014). Changing higher education and welfare states in postcommunist Central Europe: New contexts leading to new typologies. *Human Affairs*, 24(1), 48–67.
- Laenen, T. (2020). *Welfare deservingness and welfare policy: Popular deservingness opinions and their interaction with welfare state policies*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Lamont, M. (2000). *The dignity of working men: Morality and the boundaries of race, class, and immigration*. Harvard University Press.
- Lancaster, C.M. (2021). Immigration and the sociocultural divide in Central and Eastern Europe: Stasis or evolution? *European Journal of Political Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12474>.
- Langsæther, P.E., & Evans, G. (2020). More than self-interest: Why different classes have different attitudes to income inequality. *British Journal of Sociology*, 71(4), 594–607.
- Langsæther, P.E., & Stubager, R. (2019). Old wine in new bottles? Reassessing the effects of globalisation on political preferences in Western Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, 58(4), 1213–1233.

- Lefkofridi, Z., Wagner, M., & Willman, J. E. (2014). Left-authoritarians and policy representation in Western Europe: Electoral choice across ideological dimensions. *West European Politics*, 37(1), 65–90.
- Margalit, Y. (2012). Lost in globalization: International economic integration and the sources of popular discontent. *International Studies Quarterly*, 56(1), 484–500.
- Marshall, J. (2015). 'Education and voting Conservative: Evidence from a major schooling reform in Great Britain. *The Journal of Politics*, 78(2), 382–395.
- Marshall, J. (2019). The anti-Democrat diploma: How high school education decreases support for the Democratic Party. *American Journal of Political Science*, 63(1), 67–83.
- Mendelberg, T., McCabe, K.T., & Thal, A. (2017). College socialization and the economic views of affluent Americans. *American Journal of Political Science*, 61(3), 606–623.
- Moene, K.O., & Wallerstein, M. (2001). Inequality, social insurance, and redistribution. *American Political Science Review*, 95(4), 593–611.
- Oesch, D., & Rennwald, L. (2018). Electoral competition in Europe's new tripolar political space: Class voting for the left, centre-right, and radical right. *European Journal of Political Research*, 57(4), 783–807.
- Pardos-Pardo, S. (2015). 'How can mainstream parties prevent niche party success? Center-right parties and the immigration Issue. *Journal of Politics*, 77(2), 352–367.
- Petersen, M.B. (2015). Evolutionary political psychology: On the origins and structure of heuristics and biases in politics. *Political Psychology*, 36(S1), 45–76.
- Petersen, M.B., Slothuus, R., Stubager, R., & Togeby, L. (2011). Deservingness versus values in public opinion on welfare: The automaticity of the deservingness heuristic. *European Journal of Political Research*, 50(1), 24–52.
- Piketty, T. (2018). Brahmin left vs. merchant right: Rising inequality and the structure of political conflict, evidence from France, Britain, and the US 1948–2017. World Inequality Database Working Papers hal-02878211, HAL.
- Powell, W.W., & Snellman, K. (2004). The knowledge economy. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30(1), 199–220.
- Rathgeb, P. (2021). Makers against takers: The socio-economic ideology and policy of the Austrian Freedom Party. *West European Politics*, 44(3), 635–660.
- Rehm, P. (2011). Social policy by popular demand. *World Politics*, 63(2), 271–299.
- Rehm, P. (2009). Risks and redistribution: An individual-level analysis. *Comparative Political Studies*, 42(7), 855–881.
- Ridgeway, C. L. (2019). *Status: Why is it everywhere? Why does it matter?*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Robsin, K., & Pevalin, D. (2016). *Multilevel modeling in plain language*. SAGE Publications.
- Röth, L., & Schwander, H. (2021). Greens in government: The distributive policies of a culturally progressive force. *West European Politics*, 44(3), 661–689.
- Rueda, D. (2017). Food comes first, then morals: Redistribution preferences, parochial altruism, and immigration in Western Europe. *Journal of Politics*, 80(1), 225–239.
- Rydgren, J. (Ed.) (2013). *Class politics and the radical right*. Routledge.
- Schwander, H. (2020). Labour market insecurity among the middle class: A cross-pressured group. *Political Science and Research Methods*, 8(1), 369–374.
- Spruyt, B., & Kuppens, T. (2015). Warm, cold, competent, or incompetent? An empirical assessment of public perceptions of the higher and less educated. *Current Sociology*, 63(7), 1058–1077.
- Stubager, R. (2009). Education-based group identity and consciousness in the authoritarian-libertarian value cleavage. *European Journal of Political Research*, 48(1), 204–233.
- Stubager, R. (2010). The development of the education cleavage: Denmark as a critical case. *West European Politics*, 33(3), 503–533.
- Suryanarayan, P. (2019). When do the poor vote for the right wing and why: Status hierarchy and vote choice in the Indian states. *Comparative Political Studies*, 52(2), 209–245.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W.G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 7–24). Nelson.
- Teney, C., Lacewell, O.P., & De Wilde, P. (2014). Winners and losers of globalization in Europe: Attitudes and ideologies. *European Political Science Review*, 6(4), 575–595.
- Van der Waal, J., Achterberg, P., & Houtman, D. (2010). 'Some are more equal than others.' Economic egalitarianism and welfare chauvinism in the Netherlands. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 20(4), 350–363.
- Van Oorschot, W. (2000). Who should get what and why? On deservingness criteria and the conditionality of solidarity among the public. *Policy and Politics*, 28(1), 33–48.

- Van Oorschot, W. (2006). Making the difference in social Europe: Deservingness perceptions among European citizens of European welfare states. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16(1), 23–42.
- Webb, P., & Bale, T. (2014). Why do Tories defect to UKIP? Conservative Party members and the temptations of the populist radical right'. *Political Studies*, 62(4), 961–970.

Address for Correspondence: David Attewell, Department of Political Science, University of Zurich, Switzerland;
Email: attewell@ipz.uzh.ch