

# **The Radical Right: Both Winners and Losers in Northern Europe**

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A Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies  
in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

**Master of Arts**

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Memorial University of Newfoundland

August 2020  
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

## **Abstract**

Radical right-wing parties have been increasing their electoral success across Europe over the last few decades. Despite the widely covered surge in their success, many radical right-wing parties have achieved marginal to no electoral success, but there continues to be a lack of research trying to explain their failure. The question guiding this thesis focuses on why there is varied electoral success of radical right-wing parties across Europe and suggests that it could be explained through differences in the importance of economic compared to cultural-political issues in each country. To investigate this, the work uses data from public opinion surveys and party manifesto content from three countries which saw different radical right-wing party success in elections between 2005 and 2011 - Finland, Norway, and Iceland. Tentative findings indicate that cultural issues were the most salient in the public and amongst parties in the country with the most electorally successful radical right-wing party, Norway. Broadly, however, the public is still much more focused on economic issues than cultural issues, but political party rhetoric is much more evenly divided. Partisanship is the most influential factor on vote choice and though issue salience was rarely significant in vote choice, it was nearly always significant when trying to explain partisanship. Though issue salience is not directly influencing vote choice, it is influencing partisanship which has a strong impact on vote choice.

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, I want to thank my supervisor, Dr. Amanda Bittner. It was with her encouragement and guidance that I have been able to write this thesis. It is in large part due to her that I was awarded a SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship which has funded my thesis work. I am most thankful for her always believing in me and pushing me to continually strive for better despite my own constant self-doubt, for this I will always be grateful. I am also indebted to the Department of Political Science at Memorial University for providing an environment that fostered intellectual growth and for supporting me with generous funding. In particular, I appreciate the opportunity to have taken courses with Dr. Scott Matthews and Dr. Amanda Bittner, both of which challenged me intellectually and pushed me to work harder. Finally, I am thankful to my parents who have wholeheartedly supported me throughout my academic career, and to my partner, Seth, for his unconditional love and support.

## Table of Contents

|  |      |
|--|------|
| List of Tables .....                                     | v    |
| List of Figures .....                                    | vii  |
| List of Abbreviations .....                              | viii |
| List of Appendices .....                                 | ix   |
| Chapter 1: Introduction .....                            | 1    |
| Chapter 2: Literature Review .....                       | 8    |
| 2.1 Radical Right-Wing Party ideology .....              | 9    |
| 2.1.1. Populism .....                                    | 10   |
| 2.1.2. Three Waves of Right-Wing Populism .....          | 11   |
| 2.2 European Party Families .....                        | 13   |
| 2.3 Typical Voters and Realignment .....                 | 14   |
| 2.4 Emergence of a New Dimension and New Cleavages ..... | 17   |
| 2.4.1. Historical Cleavages .....                        | 17   |
| 2.4.2. The Influence of Societal Changes .....           | 18   |
| 2.4.3. New and Old Cultural Dimensions .....             | 21   |
| 2.5 Salience Based Competition and Cross Pressures ..... | 22   |
| 2.5.1. Cross Pressures .....                             | 25   |
| 2.6 New Winning Formula .....                            | 27   |
| 2.7 Political Opportunity Structure .....                | 29   |
| 2.7.1. Mainstream Party Cooptation .....                 | 31   |
| 2.7.2. Mainstream Party Collaboration .....              | 32   |
| 2.7.3. Mainstream Party Ostracization .....              | 33   |
| 2.8 Economic Factors .....                               | 34   |
| Chapter 3: Data and Methods .....                        | 38   |
| 3.1 Case Selection .....                                 | 38   |
| 3.2 Party Issue Salience .....                           | 41   |
| 3.3 Public Opinion .....                                 | 43   |
| Chapter 4: Finland .....                                 | 47   |
| 4.1 History of the True Finns .....                      | 48   |
| 4.2. The Finnish Party and Electoral System .....        | 52   |
| 4.3. Issue Salience .....                                | 55   |
| 4.3.1. Issue Salience in Party Literature .....          | 56   |
| 4.3.2. Public Opinion .....                              | 61   |
| 4.3.3. Multivariate Analyses .....                       | 66   |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Chapter 5: Norway .....                                  | 72  |
| 5.1. History of the Progress Party .....                 | 73  |
| 5.2 Political Opportunity Structure .....                | 78  |
| 5.3. Issue Salience .....                                | 80  |
| 5.3.1 Issue Salience in Party Literature .....           | 80  |
| 5.3.2. Public Opinion .....                              | 84  |
| 5.3.3. Multivariate Analyses .....                       | 89  |
| Chapter 6: Iceland .....                                 | 95  |
| 6.1. Iceland's Political and Party System History .....  | 95  |
| 6.1.1. Iceland's 2009 Election .....                     | 98  |
| 6.2. Issue Salience .....                                | 100 |
| 6.2.1. Issue Salience in Party Literature .....          | 101 |
| 6.2.2. Public Opinion .....                              | 105 |
| 6.2.3. Multivariate Analyses .....                       | 111 |
| 6.3. Conclusion .....                                    | 114 |
| Chapter 7: Conclusion .....                              | 116 |
| 7.1. Manifesto and Public Opinion Data Conclusions ..... | 116 |
| 7.2. Multivariate Analyses Conclusions .....             | 118 |
| 7.3. Core Findings and Future Work .....                 | 120 |
| Bibliography .....                                       | 123 |
| Appendices .....   | 131 |

## List of Tables

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Table 3.1. Case Study Parties by Country   | 40  |
| Table 4.1. Kok Manifesto Issue Salience  | 59  |
| Table 4.2. PS Manifesto Issue Salience   | 60  |
| Table 4.3. SSDP Manifesto Issue Salience   | 61  |
| Table 4.4. Finland - What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Egocentric) | 63  |
| Table 4.5. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Finland today? (Sociotropic)     | 63  |
| Table 4.6. Most Salient Issue by Party Vote - Finland  | 65  |
| Table 4.7. Finland 2007 Election Multivariate Analyses   | 67  |
| Table 4.8. Finland 2011 Election Multivariate Analyses   | 68  |
| Table 4.9 Finland 2007 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses  | 70  |
| Table 4.10. Finland 2011 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses  | 70  |
| Table 5.1. DNA Manifesto Issue Salience  | 82  |
| Table 5.2. H Party Manifesto Issue Salience  | 83  |
| Table 5.3. FrP Manifesto Issue Salience  | 84  |
| Table 5.4. Norway - What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Egocentric)  | 86  |
| Table 5.5. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Norway today? (Sociotropic)      | 87  |
| Table 5.6. Most Salient Issue by Party Vote- Norway  | 88  |
| Table 5.7. Norway 2005 Election Multivariate Analyses  | 90  |
| Table 5.8. Norway 2009 Election Multivariate Analyses  | 91  |
| Table 5.9. Norway 2005 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses  | 93  |
| Table 5.10. Norway 2009 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses   | 93  |
| Table 6.1. Social Democratic Alliance Manifesto Issue Salience   | 103 |
| Table 6.2. Independence Party Manifesto Issue Salience   | 104 |
| Table 6.3. Iceland - What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Egocentric) | 108 |
| Table 6.4. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Iceland today? (Sociotropic)     | 109 |
| Table 6.5. Most Salient Issue by Party Vote - Iceland  | 110 |
| Table 6.6. Iceland 2007 Election Multivariate Analyses   | 112 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Table 6.7. Iceland 2009 Election Multivariate Analyses                                    | 112 |
| Table 6.8. Iceland 2007 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses                                | 113 |
| Table 6.9. Iceland 2009 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses                                | 114 |
| Table 7.1. Summary of Manifesto Findings  | 118 |
| Table 7.2. Summary of Public Opinion Findings   | 118 |
| Table 7.3. Finland Vote Choice - Significant Independent Variables and Coefficients       | 119 |
| Table 7.4. Iceland Vote Choice - Significant Independent Variables and their Coefficients | 120 |
| Table 7.5. Norway Vote Choice - Significant Independent Variables and their Coefficients  | 120 |

## List of Figures

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Figure 2.1. RRWP Positions by Country   | 28  |
| Figure 4.1. Finnish Parliamentary Election Results 1991-2011  | 50  |
| Figure 4.2. Finland 2007 Election Manifesto Content   | 57  |
| Figure 4.3. Finland 2011 Election Manifesto Content   | 58  |
| Figure 4.4. What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election?<br>(Finland) | 62  |
| Figure 4.5. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Finland today?         | 62  |
| Figure 5.1. Norwegian Parliamentary Election Results 1973 - 2017                                    | 75  |
| Figure 5.2. Norway 2005 Election Manifesto Content  | 81  |
| Figure 5.3. Norway 2009 Election Manifesto Content  | 81  |
| Figure 5.4. What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election?<br>(Norway)  | 85  |
| Figure 5.5. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Norway<br>today?       | 85  |
| Figure 6.1. Icelandic Parliamentary Election Results 1991-2017                                      | 98  |
| Figure 6.2. Iceland 2007 Election Manifesto Content   | 102 |
| Figure 6.3. Iceland 2009 Election Manifesto Content   | 102 |
| Figure 6.4. What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election?<br>(Iceland) | 106 |
| Figure 6.5. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Iceland today?         | 107 |



## **List of Abbreviations**

CSES: Comparative Study of Electoral Systems

CMP: Comparative Manifesto Project

DNA: Norwegian Labour Party (*Det Norske Arbeiderparti*)

H: Conservative Party (*Høyre*)

FrP: Progress Party (*Fremskrittspartiet*)

Kok: National Coalition Party (*Kansallinen Kokoomus*)

MARPOR: Manifesto Research on Political Representation

PS: True Finns (*Perussuomalaiset*)

RRWP: Radical right-wing party(-ies)

SDP: Social Democratic Party of Finland (*Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolu*)

SDA: Social Democratic Alliance (Samfylkingin)

SMP: Finnish Rural Party

IP: Independence Party (*Sjálfstæðisflokkurinn*)

## **List of Appendices**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Appendix A: Comparative Manifesto Project categories  | 131 |
| Appendix B: CSES Codebook Variable Description  | 132 |
| Appendix C: Full value labels from Finnish Election Study, 2007 and 2011                        | 132 |
| Appendix D: Full value labels from Icelandic Election Study, 2007 and 2009                      | 135 |
| Appendix E: Full value labels from Norwegian Election Study, 2005 and 2009                      | 136 |
| Appendix F: Finland Election Study Egocentric Issues Categorization 2007 & 201                  | 137 |
| Appendix G: Finland Election Study Sociotropic Issue Categorization 2007 & 2011                 | 138 |
| Appendix H: Iceland Election Study Egocentric and Sociotropic Issues Categorization 2007 & 2009 | 139 |
| Appendix I: Norway Election Study Egocentric and Sociotropic Issues Categorization 2005 & 2009  | 140 |
| Appendix J: Variable Coding Description   | 141 |

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Radical right-wing populist parties (RRWP) have been emerging in countries across the world, but nowhere have they seen as much broad electoral success cross-nationally as Europe. Over the last few decades, parties of this family have burst onto the electoral scene. In some countries, they have changed the electoral arena by becoming a mainstream party, like in Switzerland and Austria, and in other cases, failed to make much of an electoral impact at all, like in Iceland, Ireland, and for some time, Germany. Between 1980 and 2013, RRWP have participated in only eight governments of the more than 200 national governments that have been formed in Europe (Mudde 2013: 4). This, however, does not mean that the radical right has not impacted the positions and attention given to some issues in the political arena, the radicalization of certain policy areas, or the issues that the public sees as important. This paper will investigate what factors have enabled the institutionalization of the radical right as a significant electoral competitor in some party systems but not others.

Academic interest in the rise of radical right parties in Europe began in the 1990s, following the mass emergence of far-right parties across the continent throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Betz 1994; Ignazi 1992, 1996; Kitschelt & McGann 1995; Mudde 1996, 1999). Academic research focused on the new political issues that became important during this period, namely cultural-political issues influenced by the rise of liberal social movements. Beginning in the 1970s, social movements were focused on social equity and liberalism and the movements related issues become political issues that competed with the traditional economic issues. New issues were integrated into party platforms resulting in newly formed competing party positions on cultural issues. In general, the left-wing parties adopted socially liberal positions on cultural issues and right-wing parties adopted socially conservative positions.

These new issues and their cleavages often offered an opportunity for new political parties to develop to represent these newly relevant policy positions. This is when many radical right parties began to take shape and began the modern phenomenon this work will try to explain. In many Western European countries party competition was restructured by these issues, which led to increased polarization of party platforms between existing parties and new more radical parties that incorporated more polarized policy positions (Betz 1993: 413). Social liberalization and the growth of the left in particular fostered the emergence of an opposing socially conservative movement towards the right side of the political spectrum. This was evidenced by the emergence of an assortment of radical right-wing parties competing across Europe, be they tax populist or neofascist. By the 1990s, many of these far-right parties had grown to share common ideological beliefs, namely nationalism, xenophobia, strong law and order, and welfare state protectionism (Mudde: 1996).

When looking at patterns of parties' emergence and varied electoral success, one of the most common investigations is into sociodemographic factors and political attitudes. Research on sociodemographic factors that could be indicative of support for far-right parties has found that cross-nationally far-right supporters tend to be under 30, low-skilled workers, males, and small business owners (Andersen & Bjorklund 1990; Arzheimer & Carter, 2006; Bale 2003; Betz 1993; Coffe 2005; Coffe & Voorpostel 2010; Inglehart & Norris 2017; Ivarsflaten 2005; Lubbers et al 2002; Mudde 1999; Norris 2005; 2006; Oesch 2008; Rydgren 2001; Taggart 1995). One of the most interesting factors found in some studies is the significant amount of former left-wing voters, traditionally Social Democratic (left-wing) voters, who have begun to vote for RRWP (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008; Bale 2003; Bale et al. 2010; Immerzeel et al. 2016; Mair 1989;

Zaslove 2008). This move is theoretically against the economic interests of those voters, yet many switch anyway.

This ‘irrational’ political behaviour therefore must have ulterior motivations other than political attitudes and preferences based around economic interests or economic stability. The primary motivation behind this study is to identify and examine the factors that influence voter decisions, and how these factors drive voter realignment supporting radical right-wing parties. Radical right-wing parties have been able to capture voters from across the political spectrum. Though common sociodemographic factors are connected to RRWP voters, there are many countries with these demographics which do not have RRWP or have one that has achieved little to very marginal electoral success. This is even more puzzling when countries with very similar demographics and political histories have had diverging RRWP electoral success. For example, in the Nordic region where Denmark and Norway have two of the most electorally successful RRWP and Iceland which has no RRWP.

Existing literature has highlighted the importance of political divisions and how these divisions reshaped party competition and allowing RRWP to join the political mainstream. However, considering how much work has been done looking at the new cultural dimensions and cleavages and their effect on radical right-wing parties, there is a gap in the literature on how the public prioritizes different issues and dimensions and if this effects RRWP support. Seeing as sociocultural issues and their emergence helped introduce RRWP to party systems, it could be possible that the increased presence of such relevant sociocultural issues in a political arena is directly related to the electoral success of RRWP.

The relevance of cultural issues and economic issues to parties since the emergence of the radical right has been touched on by some authors. Most work focuses on issue salience in party

discourse or the media (Green-Pedersen 2007; Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup 2008; Green-Petersen & Odmalm 2008; Green-Pedersen & Otjes 2017; Wagner & Meyer 2014). Some studies examine issue positioning and salience, although most work still focuses primarily on parties (Immerzeel & et al. 2016; Ivarsflaten 2005; Meyer & Wagner 2018; Spoon & Kluever 2014; van der Brug 2004). The investigation of issue salience in the public is especially underdeveloped literature, though one undoubtedly worthy of investigation when trying to understand what leads people to vote for RRWP. While it is clear that many political systems compete on two political dimensions, economic and sociocultural, understanding whether citizens and parties have increasingly prioritized issues of one dimension electorally would give insight into which issues are framing political competition.

If cultural issues have become more important to voters and parties, then a whole new generation of voters and political actors may see and understand politics in cultural, rather than economic terms (Bornschier 2010: 22). This may be beneficial to the radical right due to their focus on cultural issues like immigration, multiculturalism, morality, and law and order. Cultural issues normally result in group formation based on values, whereas economic issues create groups based on economic status. Cultural issues include issues like language, religion, morality, and more recently multiculturalism, immigration, nationalism, climate change, and law and order, all issues which exist and form groups independently of economic influences. Economic issues include issues like labour markets, unemployment, the welfare state, wages, and taxation, all of these issues are intrinsically linked to economic systems.

To examine the comparative electoral success of radical right parties, this paper suggests that that a) in countries where cultural issues are more important, the radical right is more likely to succeed electorally because b) in those countries political parties and voters have prioritized

cultural issues over economic issues during elections. Based on these assumptions the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H1: Radical right-wing parties are more likely to be electorally successful if citizens find cultural issues more important than economic issues.*

If citizens find cultural issues more important than economic issues, then it would be rational for them to base their vote choice on their cultural issue preferences. If a voter has right-wing cultural issue preferences and found these issues to be the most important when considering their vote choice, then a vote cast based on ideological proximity to a party would suggest that a radical right-wing party would be the most appropriate choice.

*H2: Radical right-wing parties are more likely to be electorally successful if mainstream political parties focus on cultural issues more than economic issues.*

If mainstream parties have engaged in discussion around cultural issues that the radical right address (or even the radical left) they legitimize the new cultural issues by introducing them to mainstream discourse. If the mainstream parties focus on cultural issues related to the radical right, they may reframe political competition by placing greater emphasis on cultural issues for voters.

This study will investigate the variance of radical right-wing party electoral success across Nordic countries, specifically Finland, Iceland, and Norway. The Nordic countries provide similar political, cultural, and social history that make the difference in electoral success of radical right-wing parties between countries worth investigating (the selection of these three cases will be discussed in more depth later). By looking at the comparative salience of cultural and economic issues in public opinion and party manifestos for national elections between 2005 and 2011, the study will try to identify if cultural issues have influenced the electoral success of RRWP in Norway, the more limited electoral success of RRWP in Finland, and the absence of

RRWP in Iceland during the period indicated. Electoral success will be measured by looking at the increase in vote share and seat share in national parliamentary elections.<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this paper electoral success will focus on the radical right-party receiving comparable vote share and seat share to the mainstream parties. An investigation into these countries can help illuminate under what circumstances the far-right succeeds, and what may limit its electoral success.

Using public opinion and party manifesto data for two elections in each country, this paper has drawn some preliminary conclusions on the relationship between issue salience and RRWP electoral success. An analysis of public opinion found that sociocultural issues were of equal or more importance to voters in Norway, and that sociocultural issues were important to voters of all parties. Comparatively, in both Finland and Iceland there was a strong preference for economic issues. Multivariate analysis of the public survey responses showed that issue salience was most likely to affect vote choice in Norway, and rarely influenced vote choice in Finland and Iceland. Manifesto content analysis of mainstream parties in Norway found that there is a significant focus on sociocultural issues. In Finland and Iceland, mainstream party focus is mixed between economic and sociocultural issues and varies by the party. In Finland, the RRWP heavily favoured sociocultural issues and interestingly in Norway, the radical right party had a slight preference for economic issues.

A general and tentative conclusion could be made that in Norway sociocultural issues have become more salient than economic issues in both public and party rhetoric and this has played a part in the electoral success of the RRWP as voters think more about cultural issues than economic issues during elections. This identification of the predominant preference in

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<sup>1</sup> Finland, Iceland, and Norway all have unicameral legislatures.



Norway for sociocultural issues could be especially relevant for countries that have highly electorally successful RRWP, like Switzerland and Austria. Investigations into more European countries and the importance of issue salience in such countries could shed light on whether a shift in political emphasis from economic to sociocultural issues could explain RRWP electoral success across the continent.

This thesis will begin by outlining the existing literature that has endeavoured to explain radical right-wing party electoral success, focusing on party competition and voter behaviour. Next, I will outline the methods used to try to answer the research question and test the hypotheses that have been presented. This will be followed by three country case studies on Finland, Norway, and Iceland, these will each outline the political history and competition of each country before quantitative analysis of manifesto content and public opinion data. The conclusion will discuss the findings of the study and the future of research in this area.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The electoral success of political parties, including radical right-wing parties, is complex and influenced by a variety of factors. The literature on radical right-wing parties has been largely housed in that of party competition, public opinion, and political behaviour. These three areas all play greatly into the electoral success of any party and have thoroughly developed literature. Each of these sets of literature has broadly covered European parties and voters, with some Nordic specific studies which are used when available. When trying to establish the relevance of this work within the existing literature on radical right-wing party success,<sup>2</sup> it is important to show how each of these related topics has set out to explain RRWP success. Though the existing literature provides some answers to explain radical right-wing success, it has yet to satisfactorily explain the variance in party success in different countries. Each of these topics does, however, help explain why issue salience is a worthy explanatory factor. Each of them touches on the relevance of cultural and economic issues to party success, but not in the same way or nearly as in-depth a manner that this thesis will.

First, the review will define RRWP ideology and the party type as a party family within Nordic party systems. Next, it will discuss the RRWP voter and recent re- and de-alignment of voters along new dimensions and cleavages. Then political competition and the influence of cross-pressures and priming on the voter will be covered to help set up the discussion of public opinion. Party interaction and opportunities will be covered, as this is relevant to the analysis of manifesto data. Finally, work done on the importance of economic factors will be introduced. The literature covered will set up how this study will contribute to ongoing work on RRWP in party competition and political behaviour in Nordic party systems.

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<sup>2</sup> The term 'success' always refers to electoral success.

## **2.1 Radical Right-Wing Party ideology**

Radical right-wing party ideology is significant because it defines the beliefs and values that the party stands for, as many of the beliefs of radical right-wing parties are based around culturally non-economic values and preferences. Ideally, a voter's electoral choice is based on sharing ideological beliefs with a party, so what beliefs and values that party has is therefore key to understanding their electoral success. Mudde (1996: 229) surveyed RRWP definitions to try and identify key ideological features and found that 58 different beliefs or values of the RRWP ideology have been mentioned in the literature, and so the actual ideology of radical right parties is still debated and remains unclear.

The classic and most basic definition of the RRWP ideology up to this point is Mudde's (2010) which identifies three core characteristics: nativism, authoritarianism, and populism. Nativism is the belief that states should be inhabited by only people native to that country. It focuses on the nation-state and the idea that non-native entities are threats to the homogenous state (Mudde 2010: 1174). Though nativism and nationalism may seem identical to the racism of the radical right fascist parties of the past, they are different concepts. For example, nativism and nationalism use "differentialist nativism" or "cultural differentialism", rather than ethnic racism which is why nativism is the preferred term (Bornschiefer 2010, 5). Rooduijn (2014: 80) refers to this specific type of nationalism used by modern RRWP as 'nativism': the 'Good' nation-state is threatened by 'Evil' outsiders who undermine collective homogeneity. Authoritarianism is the principle that the state should have an ordered society where the opposition is punished. Authoritarianism is also used in conservatism (Mudde 2002: 1174). Finally, populism suggests that there are two groups in society the 'pure people' and the 'corrupt elite'. These three core characteristics help outline the basic shared beliefs of RRWP cross-nationally.

### **2.1.1. Populism**

Populism is a term often used when talking about radical right-wing parties, but unlike nativism and authoritarianism, it is more complex to understand. In the context of radical right-wing parties, populism has additional features that are relevant to outline which make RRWP populism unique. The first feature of populism that influences radical right-wing party politics is the belief that politics should be an expression of the people, and so RRWP are often proponents of direct democracy. ‘New populism’ is the name given to the populism that defines RRWP which centres around ‘the people’. ‘The people’ is a group that is portrayed as the virtuous and homogenous group of a region, often a nation (Zaslove 2008, 322). Populism tends to be used in tandem with other stronger ideologies like nationalism, socialism, or communism (Mudde 2004: 544). For RRWP populism it is used in tandem with nationalism. This form of populist nationalism and nativism tends to portray ‘others’ as a threat to the people, but instead of others being exclusively elites as in traditional populism, foreigners define ‘others’ in populist nationalism (Art 2007, 332).

This kind of populism can also be understood as exclusionary populism as it focuses on excluding non-natives and ethnic/cultural minorities from material goods - such as jobs, housing, welfare services, and giving primary access to these goods to natives of the country (Mudde & Kaltwasser: 2013). It is also exclusionary in a political sense, as they often attempt to limit the political rights of immigrants. Finally, it excludes non-natives and minorities symbolically, as ‘the people’ in populist nationalism is defined by the ethnic natives of the state. Right-wing parties are the only party type that employs an exclusionist meaning of community (Bornschieer 2010: 7). It should be noted that populist discourse is not uncommon in many countries and it is used by even mainstream parties across the political spectrum. A frequently cited example is the use of populism by the New Labour Movement under Tony Blair in the UK (Mudde 2013: 9;

Mudde 2004: 549; Rooduijn et al 2012: 564), but it is the use of exclusionary populism by RRWP that is unique.

### ***2.1.2. Three Waves of Right-Wing Populism***

Far-right parties have been competing in elections since the early twentieth century and are most notable for taking a significant role in the political history of many countries toward the mid-twentieth century. However, the radical right-wing parties competing in modern elections are not necessarily always direct successors of these historical versions of the party type. The characteristics of the modern party type are integral to their recent electoral success and make up their version of the party type. Andersen and Bjorklund (2008) have defined three ‘waves’ of populist parties in Europe, and each has its distinct features.

The first wave emerged in many countries in the 1930s and is defined by the fascist extreme-right Nazi parties of the Second World War. This wave and its characteristics are most often thought of when one hears the terms radical right or far-right parties. Some of the key features of this wave, like fascism and biological/hierarchical racism, are missing in most of the far-right parties of today. In Scandinavia, neo-fascist parties also emerged in the 1950s, though they failed to gain much electoral support. These 1950s parties are still considered part of the first wave due to their shared beliefs (Anderson & Bjorklund 2008: 3). The second wave was the populist tax protest parties of the 1970s. These were considered right-wing mostly due to their economic ideology. In Scandinavia, these parties focused predominantly on neoliberal policies, but they also presented as anti-elitist, had a populist political style (rather than ideology), and despite arguing for tax cuts, demanded more money for health care and old-age pensions. Many of these features have been carried into third wave radical right-wing parties (Anderson & Bjorklund 2008: 4). The most notable example of the party type of the second wave was the

Scandinavian tax protest parties. The third wave is the current xenophobic, nationalist, populist party, which was born in the 1980s.

Rydgren (2005: 413) argues that the first successful modern RRWP was the National Front, which established itself in France in the 1970s and 1980s and that this party influenced the emerging RRWP across Europe in the 1980s. Contrary to popular belief, this wave does not have fascist or neofascist tendencies, because in general, the parties are pro-democracy (which is why the term ‘extreme right’ will not be used as it suggests illiberal beliefs). Their racism is not hierarchical or biological as that of the first wave but instead is cultural, ethnopluralist xenophobic. Hierarchical/biological racism purports that one race is superior to another. Ethnopluralism believes that to preserve national characteristics and culture that different peoples need to be kept separated to prevent the mixing of ethnicities which would lead to cultural extinction. It does not believe that one race is superior just that they are different and inherently incompatible (Rydgren 2005: 427). Parties that have roots in the first wave of extreme right parties often have a more difficult time establishing themselves as respectable parties, such as the Swedish Democrats. Radical right-wing parties also often have difficulty in countries that had a particularly strong first wave, like Germany (Art 2007: 338; Bornschier 2012).

Following their core ideology, modern RRWP focus on a key set of issues. These issues are part of the basis of the argument of this paper, so identifying the issues most often associated with the radical right can help explain why issue salience may be important when looking at electoral success. RRWP are not single-issue parties focused on immigration as some may believe them to be (Immerzeel et al, 2016; Mudde 1999; van der Brug 2004). The most common issues RRWP address are crime, law and order, nationalism, immigration, and European integration, or what Mudde called the populist radical right trinity of corruption–immigration–

security (Mudde 2010: 1179). More specifically they may discuss welfare abuse (Bale 2003: 69), security, and national identity (Spies & Franzmann 2011). Though immigration is often very important they also address other issues (Taggart 1995: 40). In some cases, parties may have a position of economic liberalism (Kriesi et al, 2006). Based on their ideology and core issues, parties within the radical right-wing party family have generally focused on some common cultural issues, which is key to the arguments of this paper.

## **2.2 European Party Families**

European party systems have relatively consistent party families cross-nationally that tend to structure party competition, party interactions, and coalition formation. The existence of a radical right-wing party family establishes a group of parties that can be considered when studying the radical right and shapes our understanding of how they fit into party competition. Ennser (2012) is often cited as the landmark study on European party families. He argues that party families can be identified if they share a) origins and sociology, b) transnational links, c) policy and ideology, and d) party name (Ennser 2012: 152). Ennser labels four main European party groupings. These are the Greens, Social Democrats, Liberals and Conservatives/Christian Democrats (Ennser 2012: 159), though more minor party families may exist like regionalist parties, agrarian parties, or ethnic/linguistic parties (Caramani 2004: 177). In some cases, the New Left is also described as a party family, made up of socialist or communist parties (Henjak 2010: 438; Immerzeel et al. 2016; Knutsen: 1998; Kriesi et al 2006, 925).

The RRWP is now also considered a party family, as they have a common ideology and common policy positions cross-nationally (Ennser, 2012: 151; Mudde 1996, 2010; Rydgren 2005), and have been identified in several works as such (Henjak 2010: 485; Immerzeel et al., 2016; Knutsen: 1998). Though they may not share the same names like Social Democratic or

Conservative parties, common RRWP names include: ‘front’, ‘movement’, ‘league’, ‘alliance’, ‘bloc’, ‘union’ or ‘list’ (Ennsner 2012: 157). They may also feature the words ‘freedom’ or ‘people’s’ and use the country’s nation in their name (e.g. Danish, Austrian). In many countries where the radical right-wing party is electorally successful, it owns the issues of immigration, nationalism, and law and order (Immerzeel et al, 2016). In some cases, if the mainstream right-wing is seen as equally capable of dealing with these issues, the radical right-wing party may share the issues with the right-wing party families.

RRWP have recently been characterized as making up a tripolar party system defined by the groupings of party families on the left, the centre-right/moderate, and the right/far-right (Afonso & Papadopoulos, 2015: 621; Kriesi 2015: 727;). The left is made up of Social Democrats, Green, and the New Left, the centre-right/moderate with the Conservatives, Liberals, and Christian Democrats, and the right having just the RRWP. Mainstream party families, especially social democrats and conservative parties, have traditional economic positions that are integral to their political positioning and political competition. Whereas it is debated whether the far-right’s economic positions play any part in their ideology or influence public support.

### **2.3 Typical Voters and Realignment**

A lot of research has been done to establish the ‘typical’ radical right-wing party voter to see if it is possible to explain RRWP success through certain sociodemographic characteristics and political attitudes. The findings have been replicated in several countries across Europe but the number of shared characteristics defining a radical right-wing party voter is more accurate in some countries than others. In the literature reviewed for this work, there were many characteristics of the typical RRWP voter and the most common have been gathered and listed here. The most common feature was being **under-30** (Arzheimer & Carter, 2006; Betz 1993;



Coffe & Voorpostel, 2010; Lubbers et al 2002; Mudde, 1999; Norris 2005; Rydgren 2001, 2006; Taggart 1995), then being a **manual/low-skilled worker (blue collar)** (Andersen & Bjorklund 1990; Arzheimer & Carter 2006; Bale 2003; Betz 1993; Lubbers et al 2002; Norris 2005; Oesch 2008), being **male** (Arzheimer & Carter 2006; Bale 2003; Betz 1993; Inglehart & Norris 2017; Lubbers et al 2002; Norris 2005; Taggart 1995), **less educated** (Arzheimer & Carter 2006; Bale 2003; Coffe 2005; Inglehart & Norris 2017; Lubbers et al 2002; Norris 2005; Taggart 1995), **self-employed/small business owner** (Arzheimer & Carter 2006; Betz 1993; Ivarsflaten 2005; Lubbers et al 2002; Taggart 1995), **pensioners** (Arzheimer & Carter 2006; Betz 1993; Inglehart & Norris 2017; Norris 2005), **non-religious** (Coffe 2005; Lubbers et al 2002; Norris 2005), **previous non-voters** (Kitschelt & McGann 2005; Taggart 1995) and people that **lack social ties** (Arzheimer & Carter 2006; Coffe 2005). Lower educated voters are thought to vote RRWP because they work low-skilled jobs that are more likely to be taken by immigrants or because they may not have been exposed to liberal values through more extensive education (Arzheimer & Carter 2006, 421).

Some suggest that people with the characteristics mentioned are often more reliant on the welfare system and are trying to protect their interests and access to welfare as they see immigrants as a threat to the system (Arzheimer & Carter 2006, 421). But both Kriesi and Grande (2012:13) and Oesch (2008) found that disdain for immigrants is mostly rooted in cultural values and national identity rather than personal economic well-being. Oesch (2008) found that cultural feelings related to immigration, such as a threat to national identity and differential nativism have a much stronger effect on RRWP vote choice than economic determinants like job competition from immigrants or welfare chauvinism. The characteristics present in the typical RRWP voter are also strikingly similar to the former typical Social

Democratic voter, and it has been found that many former left-wing voters have begun voting for RRWP (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008; Bale 2003; Bale et al. 2010; Immerzeel et al. 2016; Mair 1989; Zaslove 2008). This move of working-class voters from voting for the left to the right is one of the most important determinants of RRWP support across some European countries.

An excess of the typical characteristics of RRWP supporters mentioned being present in any given population is not enough for a radical right-wing party to be electorally successful. Though the examples outlined below do not cover the countries in this study, they do provide some valuable insight into the complexity of sociodemographic and opinions and vote choice. A study comparing Flanders and Wallonia look at voter characteristics and found that in Wallonia though there were more individual sociodemographic factors and attitudes, including anti-immigration attitudes and non-religious population, that would theoretically support radical right success, but there is no successful radical right-wing party in Wallonia (Coffe 2005: 90). This is supported by Lubbers et al (2002) earlier finding that social structure composition cannot explain variation in RRWP support across countries. Actual attitudes towards immigrants also do not seem to be a good indicator of RRWP electoral success. In Belgium, Wallonians have stronger anti-immigrant attitudes compared to Flanders but they have no RRWP and Flanders does (Coffe 2005: 86). Both Sweden and Denmark have similar attitudes about wanting to accept fewer refugees, but again the RRWP in Denmark has been much more electorally successful. This could be because the issue is more salient on the political agenda (Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup 2008: 616). There was an increase in anti-immigrant feelings in every European country from 1988 to 2000, but the most drastic increase in anti-foreigner sentiment was within the first half of that period and not every country developed a radical right-wing party at that time (Semyonov et al. 2006: 426). Public attitudes are not affected by the emergence of RRWP parties and the

relevant attitudes normally pre-date the existence of RRWP (Mudde 2013: 7). Typically attitudes that are associated with RRWP support tend to exist before the establishment of RRWP.

## **2.4 Emergence of a New Dimension and New Cleavages**

### ***2.4.1. Historical Cleavages***

Political divisions, also known as cleavages, identities, and allegiances have changed as society has evolved and faced new political issues, allowing new conflicting beliefs to form political conflicts. A political cleavage is defined as “a specific structure of political conflict that profoundly shapes their political systems... it was in particular West European countries where social conflicts took the form of ‘cleavages’” (Kriesi & Grande, 2012: 8). Kriesi (1998) says cleavages need to have three components, a “structural base, political values of groups involved, and political articulation” (165), and that social groups that are divided along a cleavage must be aware of their identity, represented by a political organization, and must actively make decisions based on that identity (167). Parties are often positioned so that they represent the political beliefs of a group along one side of a political division, but with new conflicts and divisions there is room for established parties to take a position and new parties to emerge.

For much of the 20th century, most Western European party systems and politics could be understood through four cleavages - centre/periphery, secular/religious, rural/urban, and owner/worker conflict (Kriesi et al 2006, 923). These cleavages became embedded in the party system and structured political competition for much of the 20th century in Europe, resulting in the freezing hypothesis put forward by Lipset and Rokkan (1967). Bartolini and Mair (1990) suggest a decline of these four traditional cleavages in the late 20th century and that they were at least partially replaced by a new cleavage based around values. This is suggested because voting began to be explained by value and issue preferences instead of structural or socio-demographic

variables (Kriesi 1998: 166). This indicates that social groups could be formed based on values and could be the base of a cleavage, rather than just an aspect of a cleavage (Kriesi 2010: 678).

Some suggest that many of the traditional cleavages, like class, that existed in the frozen system are less prominent in modern politics and no longer explain voter ties or habits (Ignazi 1992: 4; Kriesi 1998: 166, 923; Kriesi et al 2006: 923). This may be due to socioeconomic and sociocultural changes that occurred in the mid 20th century in much of Western Europe.

Socioeconomically, there was a shift towards modernization, and a move from mass production to specialized manufacturing, a higher-skilled workforce, and a tertiary sector focus. The jobs in these new sectors required higher levels of education and skills and produced a new middle class made up of public sector employees and civil servant workers (Betz 1993; 420).

Socioculturally, there were waves of secularization, the proliferation of the welfare state, and increased levels and access to education (Coman 2017: 249; Kriesi 1998: 168; Oesch & Rennwald: 2010). The proliferation of the welfare state meant that the importance of unions was becoming less relevant. The populist right was able to appeal to those who may have lost the group/collective identities of union members of the working class in the post-industrial age, with the RRWP offering a ‘national’ community in which people could belong (Oesch & Rennwald 2010, 348). Globalization, the opening of borders (Oesch 2008, 350), and European integration all become highly politicized in the 1980s and 1990s (Kriesi et al 2006: 924). Though these issues have many economic effects, they were often framed culturally by the RRWP and gained salience towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### ***2.4.2. The Influence of Societal Changes***

Post-war prosperity, economic security and sociocultural and socioeconomic changes resulted in the 1970’s New Social Movements and its libertarian postmaterialist ideas- which

introduced universalistic values, libertarianism, cultural liberalism and focused on issues like equal rights for women, LGBTQ+, minorities, alternative lifestyles, and the environment and these were all put on the political agenda (Betz, 1993: 413). With the emergence of liberal values, soon the opposite conservative values came onto the political agenda. Moral and cultural values and issues in the 1970s cut across and weakened the traditional left-right distributional economic class conflict. New Politics' post-material issues that emerged in the 1970s created a new dimension defined by newly relevant political conflicts. Parties were forced to take a position on the new dimension, but the party's position on cultural issues may not have been represented through the parties' traditional economic left-right dimension position. This new dimension will be referred to as the sociocultural dimension (Bornschieer 2010, 4; Inglehart & Norris 2017: 445). This sociocultural dimension focuses primarily on cultural issues and has been called by several different names, including the 'post-materialism–materialism' cleavage (Knutsen 1998), libertarian-authoritarian (Betz, 1993; Ennser, 2012; Grande & Kriesi 2012; Hino 2012; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995), libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian (Bornschieer 2010), Green-alternative-libertarian and traditional-authoritarian-nationalist (GAL-TAN) (Kriesi 2015; De Lange, 2007).

The post-material values and associated issues were adopted and represented by the Social Democrats by the late 1960s or by the new parties of the leftist socialists or Green parties in the 1970s and 1980s (Bornschieer 2015: 682; Knutsen 1998: 65). Though the left extreme of postmaterialism was represented in Social Democratic parties relatively early, the creation of right-wing populist parties as a distinct opponent on cultural values did not emerge until the late 1980s. The Green parties and RRWPs were the parties born of New Politics, with the Greens coming from the silent revolution and RRWP emerging as a reaction (Ignazi 1992: 6). The

representation of the left resulted in a materialist New Right reaction, which led to the creation of xenophobic populist authoritarian parties, forming the bipolar dimension of these postmaterialist parties (Bornschieer 2010:1; Inglehart & Norris 2017: 444; Ignazi 1992; Kriesi 1998; Bornschieer 2007). The New Left and New Right formed what Kriesi (2010) has called a new value-based dimension (673), best defined by the Green-alternative-libertarian and traditional-authoritarian-nationalist, GAL-TAN acronym.

The New Right values rejected individual and social equality, social integration of marginalized groups, used xenophobia/racism, and focused on a free marketplace, reducing the role of the state, a classical liberal economic position, law and order and traditional moral values (Betz 1993: 413, 421). Those issues of the New Right defined the parties in the 1980s, but modern parties have decreased their focus on economic issues and increased their focus on cultural liberal issues, specifically those of immigration, multiculturalism, and European integration (Kriesi et al 2006: 950). The new radical right-wing parties only began to focus on the cultural issues we associate with RRWP today, such as national demarcation against open borders, cultural homogeneity, and traditional authority in the late 1980s and 1990s (Oesch & Rennwald 2010: 347). Though many radical right-wing parties emerged in the 1980s, many parties only experienced a large increase in electoral success in the mid-late 1990s (Bornschieer 2010: 1). The issue of immigration specifically was adopted in the late 1980s by many populist right-wing parties, and this characteristic is one that has come to define the modern third wave RRWP (Bornschieer 2010: 7; Arzheimer & Carter 2006: 427). In many countries where the RRWP achieved electoral success in the 1990s, cultural issues remain relevant, indicating a permanent new dimension (Bornschieer 2010:7).

#### ***2.4.3. New and Old Cultural Dimensions***

In some countries, a 'cultural' dimension may have already existed, defined by cleavages structured on issues like religion, ethnicity, or language. In countries that had particularly strong old cultural cleavages, cultural issues were likely already salient and affecting the political structure of the party system. Often this allowed conflicts of new issues to be positioned easily within the existing cultural dimension (Bornschieer 2010; Kriesi et al, 2006; Rovny & Polk 2019; Rydgren 2005). The historical conflict between culture and economic values has been studied before, as some countries have strong historic cultural cleavages. Henjak's (2010) study found that the relationship between economic value orientations and vote choice is much stronger in countries that did not have strong historical cultural cleavages (religious, ethnic), like the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries (also supported in Rennwald, 2014). This does suggest that the new cultural conflict is more likely to emerge and be strong in countries that previously had a significant cultural conflict (such as Switzerland).

Lijphart's (1979) early study found that religion and language were better predictors of vote choice than class in countries where there were ethnic/linguistic/religious divides present (450). If these ethnic or cultural divides are now present among the increasingly multicultural states in Europe, could they become the strongest predictors of vote choice? Geertz (1963) found that primordial communal loyalties, like religion or language, can be very powerful, and they could prevent the presence of competing cleavages of socio-economic interests. Even Sartori found that "class is the major determinant of voting behaviour only if no other cleavage happens to be present" (1969: 76). If cultural issues have started to dominate party competition, politics could be understood in a cultural rather than an economic way.

It is clear that there have been massive changes in Western European countries and there is increasing evidence that voting no longer conforms to social groups. Instead it is motivated by

personal values. It has been argued that the issue and the value-based voter has replaced the party identification and social class voter (Bornschiefer 2010; Gosselin 2008; Ignazi 1992, 1996; Kriesi, 1998; Minkenburg 2013; Inglehart & Norris, 2017). The increasingly volatile elections in Europe (Betz 1993) suggest a dealignment, and potentially a realignment of voters in Western Europe from traditional societal based cleavages to value cleavages (Kriesi 2010: 674; Oesch & Rennwald: 2010). As new cultural topics became politicized, new parties emerged to represent beliefs based around these issues that were not previously addressed and forced old parties to adopt positions that may not have aligned with their positions on the economic left-right spectrum.

## **2.5 Salience Based Competition and Cross Pressures**

To see whether these cleavages exist in certain political systems, one can look at the salience of certain issues in the minds of voters or party competition. Green-Pedersen (2007) looks at issue competition, defined as which content makes up political parties' agendas or "party competition on which issues should dominate the party-political agenda." Saliency theory proposes that parties compete using selective issues and avoid direct issue confrontation with other parties (Dolezal et al, 2014: 57). This is in contrast to positional competition over a few issues where parties take varied positions on mainly the same socio-economic issues. Political competition has more recently been described as being based around both issue and positional competition (Van der Brug 2004; Green-Pedersen 2007; Meguid 2005).

Belanger & Meguid (2008) investigated issue-based vote choice and issue ownership, the idea that parties and candidates try to mobilize voters by emphasizing issues they are competent at handling (issue reputations). If an issue is salient, then theoretically issue ownership should affect vote choice, and the more salient the issue, the more likely it is to affect vote choice



(Belanger & Meguid, 2008: 479). Parties do emphasize issues they own and deemphasize issues that are not favourable to them electorally (Dolezal et al, 2014: 58). This is supported by issue ownership theory “which argues that parties strategically increase the salience of those issues on which they hold advantaged positions while trying to mute issues somehow harmful to them.” (Rovny 2013, 5). Most parties compete on the same issues but hold different policy positions. There are especially diverging positions on sociocultural issues (Dolezal et al, 2014: 67, 69). This competition co-exists with Down’s (1957) spatial model of party competition.

Issue saliency theory puts forth the idea that parties place different amounts of importance on different issues. What happens though, when parties have different positions on the socio-economic dimension and the sociocultural dimension? More importantly what happens if a voter’s two positions do not align with their usual party of choice? Herein lies the problem: if voters’ preferences on the socioeconomic dimension align with one party but their preferences on the sociocultural dimension align with another, which party should the voter choose? Theoretically, a voter’s choice would be “rational” if they choose a party that is ideologically similar to them, but if they are ideologically similar to more than one party then voters are faced with a difficult decision. This is why issue salience is critical to the success of RRWP, as the parties need to mobilize voters based on issues that were largely absent from political competition decades ago. The electoral success of RRWP comes from their ability to get voters from various parts of society (Zaslove 2008: 327) and their “peculiarity consists of their capacity to mobilize voters from all social strata and from all previous political alignments” (Ignazi 1992: 5).

Voters can hold positions on a variety of different issues, these positions can be contradictory if they fall on different sides of competing dimensions/cleavages. The importance

they give different issues has the potential to change which issue and issue position they prioritize when making vote choices (Ivarsflaten 2005: 467). This is best illustrated by someone holding left-wing economic positions, but right-wing cultural preferences (ibid: 468). The unique situation means that:

“[Parties] do not have to sway voters to a new issue position, they have to shift them to a new issue: away from the socioeconomic issues, like (un)employment, and towards the sociocultural issues, like immigration. Therefore, the main struggle of the populist radical right party family is to increase the saliency of ‘their’ issues, i.e. corruption, immigration, and security” (Mudde, 2010: 1179).

Although members of different social classes may share some values, there can also be a variety of preferences and behaviours, as “individuals who happen to have similar values for whatever reason also tend to have similar political preferences, even if they are in structurally different class positions” (Kriesi 1998: 174).

RRWP have been particularly adept at appealing to voters by being right-wing on the liberal-authoritarian dimension but centre-left on the state-market dimension (Bale et al 2010: 412, see also De Lange, 2007; Van Spanje and Van der Brug, 2009). But in countries where some RRWP are still right-wing economically, low skilled workers support the RRWP despite it being against their economic preferences (this was found to be true amongst Swiss People’s Party voters) (Oesch & Rennwald 2010: 362). Gougou & Labouret’s (2013: 86) study of the 2002 French election found that “votes for Le Pen essentially depended on the cultural axis, almost systematically hitting maximum probability among voters belonging to the most ethno-authoritarian decile, and this regardless of their position on the economic axis”. Afonso & Papadopoulos (2015) found that in Switzerland “working-class voters may vote for left parties

because of their socio-economic agenda, they predominantly vote for [populist right-wing parties] because of their positions on non-economic issues” (619). These findings support the idea that RRWP voters do share similar cultural values regardless of economic values, and that they might be weighing cultural issues more heavily when heading to the ballot box.

### ***2.5.1. Cross-Pressures***

Early evidence that Social Democratic voters were switching support to RRWP was found by Kitschelt & McGann (1995) and later several other studies have confirmed that the RRWP do take votes from left-wing parties (Bale 2003: 72; Bale et al. 2010; Coffe 2008: 179; Lubbers et al. 2002). To best illustrate the variety of competing preferences and identities citizens face, Oesch & Rennwald (2010: 348) give a portrait of the competing pulls of one voter in Switzerland: a Production worker’s economic identity as working-class (vote for Social Democrats), religious identity as Catholic (vote for Christian-Democratic Party), and cultural identity as a member of the national community (vote for Swiss People’s Party). This has also been described as cross-pressures (Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee: 1954: Campbell et al: 1964), or cross-cutting cleavages (Gosselin, 2008: 1). Cross-pressures mean that some people are under conflicting influences for their vote choice; a “combination of characteristics which, in a given context, would tend to lead the individual to vote on both sides of a contest” (Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee: 1954).

Blue-collar workers and small business owners are the most overrepresented occupational groups in the RRWP electorate, but they hold polarized economic beliefs - strong state intervention compared to less state intervention. However, RRWP can build a coalition of voters based on the fact that these two groups “on average agree on position issues that cut across the economic left-right spectrum – the punishment of crimes, the restriction of immigration and

asylum, and limiting the reach of the European Union” (Ivarsflaten 2005: 489). This suggests that voters have not changed their economic preferences, but that their policy preferences on the cultural dimension are stronger vote motivators (Ivarsflaten 2005: 466). Rovny (2013) also found that RRWP supporters are divided on economic issues, but they support RRWP because they prioritize new political-cultural issues. Fossati & Hausermann’s (2014: 590) Swiss study suggests that electoral choice is culturally realigned and is shaped by “identity-based attitudes over issues such as immigration and supranational integration, rather than economic-distributive social policies”.

Both priming and agenda setting play a large part in how voters evaluate the political world. The average voter cannot pay attention to everything in the political world and this is important because what they do pay attention to is likely what they will decide is most relevant when making political decisions (Iyengar & Kinder 1987: 64). Priming is the process whereby different amounts of attention are given to some issues or considerations over others, and the effect these different amounts of attention have on a political decision (Iyengar & Kinder 1987: 63). For example, going into an election a voter is faced with an abundance of political issues, like unemployment, foreign relations, immigration, the state of the welfare system and more, but priming would result in considering one of these political issues above others in their decision. In national elections, campaigning parties can “influence vote choices by priming attitudes towards certain issues” (Kleinnijenhuis, van Atteveldt, & Dekkers 2018: 570).

Political actors can prime issues by setting the media agenda with issues. In theory, campaigns and their issues flow from political actors to the media and then to the public, because the media rely on official sources (Kleinnijenhuis, van Atteveldt, & Dekkers 2018: 570). This is the process of agenda-setting, where issues are made salient through the media to the public

(ibid). Though priming consists of agenda-setting, it's primarily the process where "the issues in the news become the most salient considerations to decide whether and how to vote" (ibid), specifically "to increase the weight of the emphasized issues in decisions" (ibid). The goal of priming is not to change the attitudes of voters on a specific issue, like whether to support immigration or not, it is to increase the importance of the issue of immigration when a voter is considering which issues are most important in their vote choice. Priming will play an important part in the cross-pressure voters face.

## **2.6 New Winning Formula**

As discussed earlier, scholars have argued that Western European party systems are two-dimensional, because a unidimensional spectrum is not sufficient to illustrate modern party competition. The original left-right dimension is economic, and the new dimension is cultural, with Green-alternative-libertarian and traditional-authoritarian-nationalist (GAL-TAN) most accurately addressing the cultural issues that are salient now. The positioning of RRWP parties on these dimensions was first theorized by Kitschelt's original 'winning formula' - a radical right-wing party held a far-right-wing position both culturally and economically, with neoliberal economic policies and authoritarian and nationalist sociocultural policies (Ivarsflaten 2008: 6). However, Kitschelt's formula originated in the 1980s and struggles to explain the recent positioning of many RRWP in the twenty-first century.

De Lange's (2007) 'new winning formula' suggests that RRWP hold centrist to centre-left economic positions while holding far-right cultural positions and argues that the old winning formula explains the electoral success of RRWP in the 1980s but not in the 2000s (411). Ivarsflaten's (2005: 478) study found that the Danish People's Party and the National Front are centrist economically and extreme culturally. Inglehart and Norris' (2019) most recent study

using Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) 2014 data found that the far-right: Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ), Belgian Flemish Interest (VB), Danish People's Party (DF), Finnish True Finns (PS), French National Rally (RN), Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), and Swedish Democrats (SD) all have centrist to centre-left economic and far-right sociocultural positions, which fits the new winning formula thesis (see figure 2.1). The CHES data shows that the old winning formula is still used by the Alternative for Germany (AfD), the Norwegian Progress Party (FrP), the Swiss People's Party (SVP/UDC), and the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) as they still hold right-wing economic policies and far-right cultural policies. The centre to centre-left economic positions of most of the parties is not surprising, as it reflects the adoption of the new winning formula that has helped many radical right-wing parties see electoral success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Figure 2.1

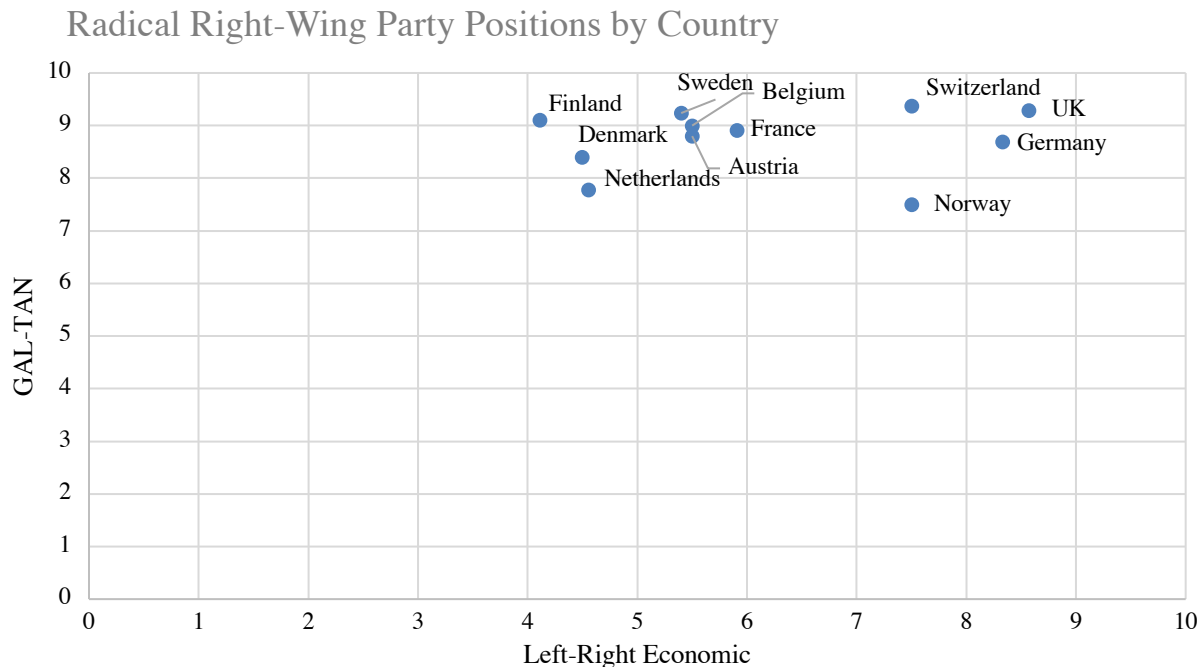


Chart created by the author using data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2014.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Despite being one of the case studies for the paper, an Icelandic party is not included in this chart. This is because Iceland was not included in the CHES 2014 data. In addition, there was not a radical right-wing party in Iceland.

The use of the new versus the old winning formula is significant because if a party's position on the new cultural divide (gal-tan) were the same as on their traditional left-wing dimension (i.e. the old winning formula), then a one-dimensional party system would remain. When the positions of a party on both dimensions reinforce each other there may not be an opportunity for new parties to emerge. If a party's positions diverge on the two dimensions, then a more complex two-dimensional party system emerges (Bornschieer 2010:8). Old cleavages will remain stable if the new mobilized cultural cleavages align with the traditional cleavages (Gosselin 2008: 3).

## **2.7 Political Opportunity Structure**

The reaction of mainstream parties is part of the 'political opportunity structure', which is a favourable set of circumstances that help new parties emerge. The favourable circumstances for RRWP include the convergence of mainstream party positions and the position of the mainstream right-wing party (Spies & Franzmann, 2011), as well as political and electoral institutions, and party-specific characteristics like leader charisma (Kriesi et al 2006, 928). Kitschelt & McGann (1995: 14) stated that "The fortunes and behaviour of a political party are dependent not only on the presence or absence of an electorate close to its party position, but also on the strategic interactions of political parties in the competitive system". The convergence of mainstream parties' positions to the centre on the traditional left-right spectrum is significant because it can make it difficult for voters to differentiate between parties. If parties are ideologically similar on a political dimension a voter may feel that the parties no longer reflect their political views and switch to a new more radical party. The convergence to the centre can also depoliticize economic issues and create niches for potential parties on new issues (Spoon & Kluver 2019, 1; Bornschieer 2012; Grande & Kriesie 2012: 19; Rydren 2005: 423; Spies & Franzmann 2011). In some countries' parties are already divergent, and the mainstream right-

wing party may fall fairly far right on traditional-communitarian issues (like in the UK) and have ownership of issues the far-right would normally address (i.e. immigration, security). This makes it more difficult for a radical right-wing party to be successful, as there is less space for the party in the competitive space (Bornschieer 2010: 14).

Parties may have some right-wing positions while maintaining more centrist positions and these contradicting positions will result in parties maintaining a relatively moderate perceived position (Bornschieer 2010: 15). In countries where there was no radicalization of the left, it is less likely that a right-wing party will have emerged as there would be no bipolar opportunity for emergence (Bornschieer 2012). If a mainstream right-wing party adopted RRWP issues temporarily without a response from the left (like in Germany), then it is likely the RRWP will not have survived electorally (Bornschieer 2010:22). There is more likely to be space in a political system that is two dimensional, so if traditional cleavages (class, economic) still dominate then there will fewer opportunities for a new party to establish itself (Bornschieer 2012).

There have been different theories to try to explain mainstream parties' reaction to the electoral success of the radical right, but it is important to consider both the supply side that is the parties and the demand side of the electorate. One of the main explanatory factors of the success of the radical right and the proliferation of their issues is the mainstream parties' reaction to them. Several authors have put forward different reactions that the parties can have, but in general, they agree (in relatively similar wording) that parties can: ignore, stigmatize/ostracize, incorporate/collaborate, or co-opt the RRWP (Akkerman 2015; Bale et al. 2010; Downs 2001; Meguid 2005; Minkenberg 2013). Since Downs' (2001) study is cited by several authors, this study will use his definitions: ignoring the party is used to try to delegitimize the RRWP and the importance of their issues, this could backfire if voters think the issues are important.



Stigmatize/ostracization (which he calls isolation), involves attacking the party through legal or formal restrictions like a *cordon sanitaire*. Co-optation is a very common reaction where parties take the policies that make the RRWP electorally successful, but this strategy could result in the loss of moderate supporters. Collaboration or incorporation involves voting on legislation together or coalition formation (Downs 2001: 26-28). A more in-depth review of the consequences of each of these strategies is outlined below.

### **2.7.1. Mainstream Party Cooptation**

Cooptation legitimizes the radical right and their issues and normally results in the RRWP policies being implemented (Minkenberg 2013: 5). A successful example of this was the cooptation of issues of nationalism and immigration by the mainstream right parties in Flanders, Belgium from the Flemish Interest (the RRWP). The mainstream parties managed to co-opt both the issues and issue ownership from the RRWP (Pauwels 2011: 60). Bale (2003) found that cooptation and the often-resulting increased salience of immigration and other issues can be beneficial to all parties on the right if they are willing to cooperate to use the RRWP votes to hold office and pass legislation. If the main left-wing party loses votes to other left-wing parties, the RRWP are not a threat to their likelihood of governing. But if they lose votes to the right bloc then a right-wing coalition is much more likely making the RRWP a much bigger threat. (Bale et al 2010: 411).

Several works have investigated if cooptation of the policy positions that make RRWP popular is happening amongst the mainstream parties of Western Europe. Han (2015) found that right-wing parties became more restrictive with regards to their multiculturalism policy when RRWP were electorally successful, and the left-wing parties did in certain scenarios too. Rooduijn et al (2012) found that there was no increase in populist rhetoric by mainstream parties.

Van Spanje (2010) found that in a system where a radical right-wing party was electorally successful all parties moved towards more restrictive immigration policy. It also found that other parties became more restrictive on immigration when radical right-wing parties were more successful. Akkerman (2015) found that between 1995 and 2011 immigration did increase in salience in manifestos and that the more successful the radical right-wing party, the more rightward mainstream parties moved. The Liberal (centre-right) parties tended to move rightward, but the Social Democratic (left-wing) parties and Christian conservatives (centre-right to right-wing) remained relatively unfazed ideologically by the radical right (Akkerman 2015, 60-63). Finally, Wagner & Meyer (2017) found that all parties have moved towards the right on the liberal-authoritarian dimension and increased their salience of RRWP issues in manifestos in 17 countries (98). Overall, there has been an increase in the salience of issues of the cultural dimension in the late 20th century, including content on European integration, law and order, and the environment (Green-Pedersen 2007: 615). This indicates that the cooptation of RRWP issues and issue positions is happening in many European countries, influencing the electoral success of the RRWP.

### ***2.7.2. Mainstream Party Collaboration***

Collaboration is an increasingly popular mainstream strategy and is most clearly illustrated in government coalitions or parliamentary agreement. Naturally, this is likely to pull some of the policies of a coalition right-ward, but it can also have a de-polarizing effect on RRWP positions. In Sweden and Denmark, the difference in collaborating with the RRWP can be at least partially explained by the willingness of smaller centre right-wing parties to collaborate with left-wing parties. The mainstream right in Denmark had incentive to work with the radical right because the Social Liberals (centre party) were governing with the Social

Democrats (centre-left). In Sweden, the large centre-right party was still able to work with the centrist Social Liberals, so appealing to the RRWP would have threatened their ability to form a centre government (Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup 2008: 610; Green-Pedersen & Odmalm 2008: 378). De Lange (2012) found that collaboration with the RRWP in the form of coalitions is of interest to mainstream right parties when they become mathematically/electorally possible as it can help them achieve their office seeking goals. De Lange's work supports the finding that bloc politics play a large role in the mainstream right's reaction to the RRWP in Bale (2003), Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup (2008), and Green-Pedersen & Odmalm (2008) earlier studies. Some studies have found that collaboration and incumbency can have detrimental effects on RRWP electoral success, as was seen in Austria (Akkerman & DeLange, 2012; Heinisch 2003)

### **2.7.3. Mainstream Party Ostracization**

To ignore or ostracize the radical right, mainstream parties must have a coherent message, otherwise, ostracization is likely to fail in stopping RRWP success (Bale et al, 2010: 421,413; Art 2007: 335; Downs 2001). In other words, all parties must agree to react to the RRWP the same way. The most effective ostracization technique is the *cordon sanitaire*, which is an agreement to not cooperate with the RRWP in any form, including parliamentary or government-related actions (Coffe 2005: 77). However, there is mixed evidence regarding whether complete ostracization works to effectively eliminate the RRWP. Van Spanje & Van der Brug (2009) found that the Flemish Interest (radical right-wing party) benefitted from exclusion, the Lega Nord (radical right-wing party) would have benefitted if they had been excluded, the Danish People's Party (radical right-wing party) would not have benefitted, and all other parties evaluated in the study would not have been affected electorally at all. Non-cooperation by mainstream parties signals that RRWP are seen as illegitimate by all established parties and this

action could increase attention to the party (Van Spanje & Van der Brug 2009: 376). In the long term, ostracization can be effective if all parties participate, as voters may begin to believe their vote for RRWP will never influence policy or result in them forming government (Art 2007: 335; Van Spanje & Van der Brug 2009: 357).

If a cordon sanitaire is not possible, the left-wing parties are more likely to maintain electoral support if they either maintain their original moderate/left social position or adopt new restrictive cultural positions. These options have varied consequences, if they do not hold their left-wing position, then they are likely to lose votes to smaller left-wing parties that tend to take a strong stance against the RRWP (Bale et al, 2010: 417, 422). If mainstream left parties adopt restrictive policies, then they may lose credibility for a lack of policy coherence or purity. Cooptation of the issues by either the left or the right also legitimizes the issues in the political arena (but not always the party) (Bornschieer 2012). Meguid found that many parties initially used a dismissive or ignore strategy, but later adopted accommodative restrictive policy or polarized more adversarially (2005: 353).

## **2.8 Economic Factors**

Initially, it was thought that high unemployment or economic crises fostered an opportunity for RRWP to succeed, but several works have disproved this theory. Arzheimer & Carter (2006) found that RRWP perform better electorally when the unemployment rate is low and suggest that voters may turn to established and economically experienced parties when unemployment is high as the economy is likely seen as more important in those circumstances (434). Pauwels (2011, 66) found that in 2009 in Belgium that high unemployment coincided with the electoral drop of radical right Flemish Interest which “supports the hypothesis that voters prefer parties that have shown competence in employment and socio-economic policies

rather than inexperienced populist radical right parties in times of crisis”. Lubbers et al (2002) also found a negative relationship between unemployment and RRWP party support, and that differences in the unemployment rate across countries did not explain RRWP support. So not only was the relationship not significant but it was also negative (364).

In regard to economic crashes, Stockemer (2017) found that radical right-wing parties are more electorally successful in countries that were not hit by the 2008 economic recession, except France and Germany. Between 2009 and 2013 the RRWP gained only a “1 percentage [point] increase in aggregate average regional vote share” (1536). There is evidence that immediately after banking crashes RRWP do well electorally, but no such effects were found for non-financial economic shocks or recessions (Norris and Inglehart 2019: 137).

The RRWP is more likely to find support in prosperous countries. Both Anderson & Bjorklund (2008) and Taggart (1995) found that new protest parties have the best political conditions for electoral success when there is long term economic success and a strong welfare state because the absence of economic problems, like unemployment, allows other issues to be important. Generally, countries where RRWP have not been as electorally successful have been post-industrial societies that had economic downturns and higher levels of unemployment in the 1980s and 1990s (Rydgren, 2005: 415). Mudde’s prediction that “the economic crisis has slowed down their electoral growth, by returning the political debate to socioeconomic rather than sociocultural issues, there are good reasons to believe that the post-crisis era could see a resurgence of PRRPs” (2013: 15), seems to have been accurate with a surge of RRWP support across Europe in the most recent national elections. These studies support the idea that when economic issues are not pressing politically, RRWP are more likely to be successful, as the importance of cultural issues and economic issues could be changing for voters and parties.

By touching on literature from various fields, it is evident that many different factors go into the electoral success or failure of parties. The theories presented on issue salience in political party rhetoric, mainstream party reactions to new challenger parties, and political behaviour, have influenced the hypotheses and arguments around issue competition in public opinion and party competition and radical right-wing party success that guide this paper. Each set of literature touches on issues and the radical right in some way, like the key issues that influence party ideology, attitudes on certain issues which are attributed to a ‘typical’ radical right voter, the issues that define the new cultural dimension and new cleavages, the competing pressures of issues and their positions, and finally party issue competition. Issues have come up and stood out as a relevant factor of importance across various studies but their relationship with radical right-wing parties has yet to be investigated, except for some work by Green-Pedersen (Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup 2008; Green-Pedersen & Odmalm, 2008; Green-Pedersen & Otjes 2017), but these have been limited to an investigation of party literature.

The most obvious gap in the literature is the lack of work looking at issue importance in public opinion, an area that could help explain political behaviour and party success in different countries. Though the work looking at issues salience in party manifestos has been established, it is worth updating it based on the more recent elections that are discussed in this study. There have been no studies on issue salience in Norwegian, Finnish, or Icelandic party manifestos using Comparative Manifesto data or using CSES data (at least in English). This means that there has been no real investigation into the issues that were most important in the party manifestos or public opinion during the two elections where the FrP won more than 20% of the vote share or when PS drastically increased its vote share by fifteen percentage points. The inclusion of data

on issue salience in public opinion and party rhetoric will bring together the two areas of research to demonstrate a broader study of issue salience and radical right-wing party success.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Spoon & Kluver, 2019 did a large-N study that used both public opinion and manifesto data to investigate vote switching to non-mainstream parties, which by definition included radical right parties.

### **Chapter 3: Data and Methods**

The research question driving this paper asks why radical right-wing parties succeed electorally in some countries but fail to have much of an electoral impact in others. To try to answer this question I put forward the argument that there is a relationship between changing economic and cultural issue salience and radical right-wing party electoral success. Both parties and the public as a whole can find certain issues important, party rhetoric and public opinion can certainly be quantified to give an idea of exactly which issues are at the top of parties' agendas and the front of voters' minds, and how this translates into vote choice. Since this study looks at both the parties' issue salience and issue salience in public opinion it will require more than one kind of data and analysis. This chapter will discuss case selection, then explain the data and methods used to measure and evaluate party issue salience and the survey data on public opinion used to try to explain political behaviour that leads to radical right-wing party success.

#### **3.1 Case Selection**

The selection of cases that will be investigated was limited by the data availability of public opinion surveys. Party manifesto data is easily accessible from the Comparative Manifesto Project, but comparable cross-national public opinion data is harder to find. The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) provided the best data to compare public opinion and vote choice for this study. Forty-one countries participated in the CSES Module that included relevant questions on issues of importance, Module Three (discussed in more detail in section 3.3). For the study, it is beneficial to look at European countries that had more than one election during this period, that way we can see if there is any change in issue salience in party manifestos, public opinion, and electoral success of parties. In the period Module Three covers, 2006 to 2011, seven European countries had two elections, these were Czech Republic, Finland,



Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, and Poland. Unfortunately, Germany and Poland did not provide data for the two relevant issue importance variables/questions in both elections, so that leaves the following five countries with available data for the two variables - Czech Republic, Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands, and Norway. The similarities between Finland, Iceland, and Norway are suitable for a Most Similar System Design (MSSD), as they all share similar histories, sociocultural, and socioeconomic characteristics, the Netherlands also shares many of the key characteristics typical of Northern European countries (though it is significantly more multicultural). Though the Czech Republic would be an interesting case, there are significant differences in the political culture of post-communist states and non-communist Western European countries, including the institutionalization of democracy, democratic backsliding, economic differences, and pre-existing strong nationalism, that make it difficult to include the country in an MSSD. For this reason, the Czech Republic will not be included in the study. To strengthen the MSSD only the three Nordic case studies will be used. Therefore, the case studies chosen include Finland, Iceland, and Norway.

The election studies that the CSES collected data for are from the following years: Finland in 2007 and 2011, Iceland in 2007 and 2009, and Norway in 2005 and 2009. Each of these countries offers a different example of the electoral success of a radical right party which makes them optimal for comparison. Firstly, The Finnish case shows a drastic increase in the radical right Finns Party (formerly True Finns) (PS) electoral success between 2007 in 2011, where it increased its vote share by 15 percentage points (Statistics Finland, Parliamentary Elections - Tables). PS went from the eighth biggest party in parliament to the third biggest. For the Finnish case, it is expected that there will be an increase in the salience of cultural issues from 2007 to 2011 that corresponds with its increased electoral success. The radical right

Norwegian Progress Party (FrP) had less than a percentage point change between the 2005 and 2009 elections, retaining its place as the second biggest party in parliament and the party of the opposition. In this study, they are the case of an institutionalized and ‘mainstream’ party due to its vote share being similar to that of the mainstream parties. I would expect to see cultural issues be salient in both elections. Finally, there is the Icelandic case, where there was no radical right-wing party in either the 2007 and 2009 election (this was also the case in the 2003 and 2013 elections). It is predicted that Iceland will have low saliency of cultural issues in both elections.

Since each of these countries has a multiparty system there are too many parties to analyze every party that competed in the relevant elections. Therefore, the most electorally successful mainstream left-wing party and right-wing party of each party system will be looked at in addition to the radical right-wing parties. The Norwegian Centre for Research Data has compiled parliamentary election results from 1990 onwards. Table 3.1 lists the names of the parties that will be studied from each country, with the party names (in English and the country’s native language) and abbreviations. Using Ennsner’s (2012) categorization of party families, the parties from each family were chosen based on their electoral success in the two elections between 2006 and 2011. Based on the country case selections, the study will look at eight different political parties for a total of six elections between 2006 and 2011.

Table 3.1. Case Study Parties by Country

| Country        | Centre-Left Party   | Centre-Right Party                                    | Far-Right Party                           |
|----------------|---|---|---|
| <i>Finland</i> | Social Democratic Party of Finland (Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolu) (SDP) | National Coalition Party (Kansallinen Kokoomus) (Kok) | True Finns (Perussuomalaiset) (PS)        |
| <i>Iceland</i> | Social Democratic Alliance (Samfylkingin) (SDA)                               | Independence Party (Sjálfstæðisflokkurinn) (IP)       | N/A                                       |
| <i>Norway</i>  | Norwegian Labour Party (Det Norske Arbeiderparti) (DNA)                       | Conservative Party (Høyre) (H)                        | Progress Party (Fremskrittspartiet) (FrP) |

### 3.2 Party Issue Salience

Based on the literature on party issue salience and positions, party issue salience is most effectively analyzed by using data collected through text analysis. According to Spies & Franzmann (2011) party positions and issues can be studied using data from mass surveys, expert survey data, or manifesto data. Mass surveys give researchers data on positions and issue importance through the mass public's perception of the parties, which is useful when trying to analyze how voters choose between parties. Mass cross-national surveys are unlikely to ask questions specifically about the issue salience of national political parties. This makes mass surveys difficult to use when trying to measure issue salience for parties. Expert survey data like the Chapel Hill Expert Survey has also been used to measure both position and salience in a number of studies (Inglehart & Norris 2019; Lubbers et al 2002; Meyer & Wagner 2018; Rovny & Polk, 2019; Wagner 2012). Though country expert data can give an informed opinion on party positioning and issue salience, the CHES data, unfortunately, does not use consistent questions in each survey and does not include the same countries in every survey. This makes the CHES data difficult to use if one wants to do a longitudinal study. Benoit and Laver's (2007) expert survey only has one time point, so it is not optimal for comparative studies. In some cases, authors have used content analysis in the form of coded newspaper media to analyze salience and issue positions (Bornschieer, 2012; Bornschieer, 2015; Kriesi et al 2006; Rennwald & Evans, 2014), but this would be difficult without a firm grasp of the language of every country that is studied.

Content analysis using manifesto data is, for this study, the most effective option and is the most popular form of data to use when looking at salience in party discourse (Akkerman, 2015; De Lange, 2007; Dolezal et al, 2014; Dolezal et al, 2016; Green-Pedersen, 2007; Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup, 2008; Green-Pedersen & Mortensen, 2015; Green-Pedersen & Otjes, 2017; Harmel & Svasand, 1997; Lehmann & Zobel, 2018; Meguid 2005; Spies & Franzmann,

2011, Spoon & Kluver, 2019; Wagner 2012; Wagner & Meyer 2017). Manifestos (in some countries called election programs or platforms) are official documents produced by parties or election coalitions used to outline their policy positions when they compete in national elections (Werner et al. 2019). Manifesto data is optimal because it uses official party documents to generate issue salience and policy positions. The Comparative Manifesto Project, now called Manifesto Research on Political Representation (MARPOR), has collected manifestos from the mid-twentieth century onward and is constantly updating the dataset with new manifesto data using a consistent coding scheme and issue categories.

MARPOR provides both the original manifestos and a coded dataset based on the salience of issues. MARPOR codes both positive and negative statements to make it possible to derive positions from the dataset and more specific value-based statements. Manifestos are coded for parties in each national lower house election if they have won at least one seat (Volgens et al. 2019). The Manifesto Project trains coders to code the manifestos, looking to answer the question “What message is the party/presidential candidate trying to convey to voters? Which are the issues the party/presidential candidate regards as important?” (Werner et al. 2019). The manifestos body text is coded (none of the chapter or section headings are coded) into quasi-sentences. A quasi-sentence is normally one sentence but can also be different parts of a single sentence if the parts of the sentence are unrelated or have two distinct statements, but a quasi-sentence never consists of two or more sentences (Werner et al 2019: 6).

The Manifesto Project divides these quasi sentences into seven policy areas, with 56 different categories, each representing a unique issue (see Appendix A), and in some cases subcategories (sub-issues) (Werner et al 2019: 7). These categories can be divided into economic and non-economic issues, which was done by Spies & Franzmann (2011) (see

Appendix A). Of the 56 categories, 32 are noneconomic and 24 are economic. To calculate the amount of salience parties give to economic compared to non-economic issues one can use the total percentage of sentences devoted to each category.

For this study, any issue that comprised five percent or more of a manifesto will be considered one of importance to the party. Five percent has been chosen as the threshold because few issues make up more than 5% of a manifesto, as most receive between zero and four percent (Volkens et al, 2018). This finding is confirmed by Lehmann & Zobel (2018) who state that most categories are around or below 5%, so any issue with more than 5% is one with a rather high saliency (1071). For this reason, it can be assumed that an issue that has comprised more than 5% of a manifesto is one that is important and salient to a party.

Based on the review of previous studies, it is clear that RRWP experience the most electoral success when every mainstream party adopts issues that the RRWP addresses. For this reason, it is necessary to look at not only the issue content of the RRWP manifestos but also the mainstream right-wing party and left-wing parties. Using the coded MARPOR data, issues will be divided into economic and sociocultural categories to compare overall manifesto content and all individual issues will be ranked for each party to see if the same issues are salient between parties.

### **3.3 Public Opinion**

There is a symbiotic relationship between the salience of issues in the public and within party discourse. Identifying the importance of different issues in the public can help explain how salient cultural issues are in modern politics. The most appropriate measure of issue salience in the public for this study is through public opinion surveys. For each case, national election

surveys will be used both to look broadly at which issues were salient to the public and to run multivariate analyses on which variables affected vote choice in each election.

The two most accessible methods of assessing public opinion on national political issues are through National Election Studies or Eurobarometer data. National Election Studies often ask the question “What is the most important issue facing the country presently?” or some close variation. The studies also often ask “What is the most important issue for the voting decision?”, which is an even more valuable question, especially when trying to look at priming. Both of these questions will offer valuable information on which issues voters perceive to be the most important in the country and which most influence their vote. There are some issues with using national election studies for comparative studies. Some countries in Europe have done election studies for decades and offer easy access to the data (including Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Norway), but some of them provide no codebook in English (i.e. Switzerland). Other European countries have only recently started doing National Election Studies (France, Austria) and some have sporadic election studies that have not been done systematically (Belgium). Given these factors, the use of National Election Studies can be difficult. However, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) has created a common set of questions that have harmonized some national election studies.

The CSES has created a collaborative comparative election survey. Participating countries and volunteer researchers use a common set of questions developed by a committee of scholars which are included in cross-national post-election studies. The data from the national election studies are then translated into English and combined into a single dataset. CSES has done four modules so far, the first covers elections from 1996-2001, Module Two 2001-2006, Module Three 2006-2011, and Module Four 2011-2016. Each module focuses on a different

theme, so some questions do not exist in every module. This limits the use of the data longitudinally. Module Three (2006-2011) has compiled relevant data as the focus of the study was on voters' perceptions and responses to political choices in an election. In its questionnaire two questions are asked that are pertinent to this study, each of them is open-ended, meaning respondents were free to answer however they please, these answers were then coded by the collaborators of each country and translated into English (if necessary). The first 'egocentric' question asks: "What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election?" (C3001\_1) (questionnaire Q1a) they also ask a follow-up question which asks for the second most important issue (See Appendix B for question and explanation) (Comparative Study of Electoral Systems). They then ask a 'sociotropic' question: "What do you think is the most important political problem facing [COUNTRY] today?" (C3002\_1) (questionnaire Q2a.) (See Appendix B for question and explanation) (ibid). From this point on egocentric will be referred to as the personal level question and sociotropic will be referred to as the country level. These two questions will provide the attitudinal data needed to evaluate issue salience in the public.

These national election surveys also offer the opportunity to run multivariate analyses to assess the impact of these personal and country level questions on party vote choice in parliamentary elections. This way the actual influence of issue salience and other variables on vote choice can be analyzed. All variables were coded by the author into dummy variables and all models used logistic multivariate analysis.<sup>5</sup> For the multivariate analysis models on vote choice in Finland and Norway, there are nine total independent variables - three partisanship variables, the age variable (*Aged Over 50*), gender variable (*Female*), education level variable (*Post-Secondary Education*), personal level issue salience (*Personal Level Salience*), the country

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<sup>5</sup> For a detailed description of the coding of variables see Appendix J.

level issue salience (*Country Level Salience*), and right-wing ideological stance (*Right-Wing*).

The Iceland models have a total of eight independent variables as only two parties are included in the model, so there is one less partisanship variable.

The paper is divided into three country cases, for each case, there will be a review of secondary literature to frame the political culture, history, and competition. There will then be a quantitative analysis of the manifesto content of the relevant three (or two in the case of Iceland) parties and then a quantitative analysis of the two public opinion questions from CSES for each election with multivariate analyses on party vote choice.



## Chapter 4: Finland

Compared to the other RRWP in Northern Europe, the emergence and electoral success of the True Finns Party (PS)<sup>6</sup> was rather late. PS was formed in the 1990s and its big increase in vote share did not occur until the 2011 national election. Between the 2007 and 2011 national election, PS managed to increase its vote share by over fifteen percentage points. A remarkable jump in electoral support for a fringe party in national politics. The 2011 election was a breakthrough election where PS drastically increased its vote share while every other party decreased its vote share. Looking at the salience of issues may help explain how the PS went from a relatively minor party to one of the biggest parties in parliament in one election. PS' unique history differs from other Nordic RRWP as it emerged later, but its success came faster than that of other parties. Its surge in electoral success makes it a case worth investigating to see if issues of the radical right have established themselves in Finnish political party rhetoric or the public's political agenda. For the Finnish case, I expect the sociocultural dimension and its issues to be more salient in the 2011 election than in the 2007 election.

The PS is the newest radical right party in the Nordic region, and it has a distinct party history within the party family in the region. Unlike the Norwegian and Danish RRWP, the True Finns did not emerge as a tax populist party in the 1970s. The True Finns Party was established in 1995 and was created as a de facto successor of the Finnish Rural Party (SMP). There is some debate that the PS is not a radical right-wing party, but based on the party's policy positions, which are socioeconomically centrist and sociocultural authoritarian, along with its populist political style and cross-national ties to other radical right-wing party in the European

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<sup>6</sup> Since 2011 the party has changed its English name to The Finns or The Finns Party. Since the party was called The True Finns during the time period discussed this name will be used.

Parliament, it has been considered a RRWP in several studies (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008; Arter 2010; Jungar & Jupskas 2014; Kestilä-Kekkonen & Söderlund 2014; Widfeldt 2018).

Public opinion data, manifesto data, and election results in Finland allow for direct analysis of changes in issue salience and far-right electoral success from 2007 to 2011. To provide context to the evaluation of this primary data, this chapter will first go over the historical background of the PS and its success up to 2007, typical PS voters, and the electoral system in Finland. This will be followed by a quantitative analysis of the issue salience in the major party manifestos using MARPOR data and then in public opinion from the Finnish National Election Study through the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems.

#### **4.1 History of the True Finns**

The Finnish Rural Party (SMP), the ‘predecessor’ of the True Finns, was formed in 1959 to try and represent the ‘forgotten people’ (forgotten by the ruling government), and the ‘small man’ in the country (Arter 2010: 486). The Finnish Rural Party, as the name suggests, was an agrarian party with populist, anti-establishment, left-leaning social populist, and right-wing traditionalist social beliefs (Arter 2012: 815). The SMP attracted support among dissatisfied citizens, low-income citizens, and other groups who later continued to support the PS, though SMP did not ever address immigration as a political issue (Kestila 2006: 174). Changes in Finnish society, specifically industrialization and a move away from agriculture to the tertiary sector, led to the party's dwindling electoral support. In 1995 SMP went bankrupt and was disbanded. One of the major reasons a radical right party did not emerge earlier in Finland is because of the need to remain on good terms with the Soviet Union until its fall in 1991. After the Second World War a political consensus against right-wing policies was formed, the most relevant being around foreign policy and Fenno-Soviet relations. In addition, Finland signed two

agreements that forbid all overt fascist activity – the Moscow Armistice in 1944 that ended the Continuation War against the Soviet Union and the Treat of Paris in 1947 for Finland’s role as an Axis co-belligerent in WWII (Kestila 2006: 171).

Whether the PS is simply a continuation of the Finnish Rural Party is questionable, especially when looking at its modern-day core supporters and policy positions. However, the founders of PS were all previously members of the SMP (Kestila 2006:174). One of PS’ founders, Timo Soini, became the party leader of the True Finns in 1997 was the deputy chair of the SMP from 1989 to 1992 and the SMP party secretary from 1992 to 1995. In the 1999 election, the first PS competed in, 39% of candidates had previously run as SMP candidates (Arter 2012: 813). Despite PS’ historical roots being in the SMP, the party, its candidates, and its issue positions have evolved to a point where the PS is distinct from its ‘predecessor’. Unlike the SMP, PS does not rely solely on support from rural areas or the agrarian population. Compared to other modern RRWP whose success may be hindered by a negative connection to an older neo-fascist party or movement, having ties to an agrarian party does not have the same kind of social pariah status.

In 1999 the PS competed in its first parliamentary election and it received just under 1% of the vote share, four years later in 2003 it received 1.57%. Its electoral success jumped to 4.05% in 2007 and then its results increased fourfold receiving 19.04% in 2011 (see Figure 4.1). This drastic increase in vote share is one of the reasons the party is so interesting, as its electoral success was not gradual, but rather drastic. Since this uptick, its vote share has remained relatively high with it receiving 17.65% in 2015 and 17.5% in 2019 (Statistics Finland – Parliamentary elections - Tables).

Figure 4.1

### Finnish Parliamentary Election Results 1991 - 2011

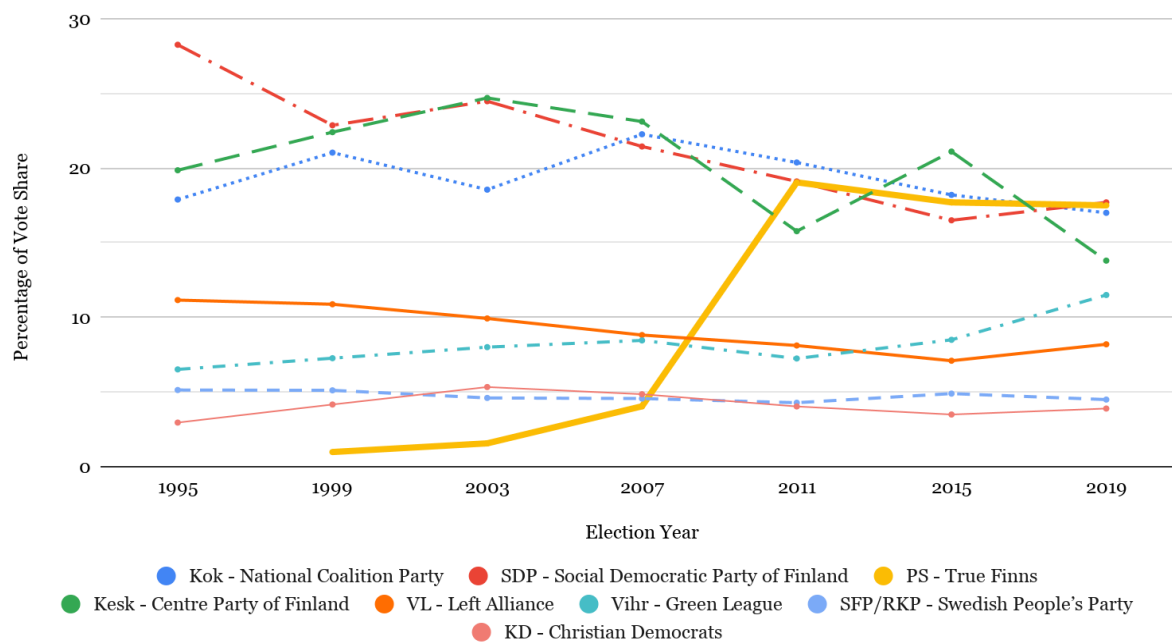


Chart created by the author using data from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data's European Election Database and Statistics Finland.

The party elected three MPs in 2003, five in 2007, and in 2011 the party won thirty-nine seats. This resulted in the party going from being the smallest party in parliament to the third biggest (based on seat distribution) with the second-highest vote share, increasing its seat share eightfold (Arter 2012: 814; Nurmi & Nurmer 2011: 236). The jump in electoral success between 2007 and 2011 is the largest electoral gain by any party in Finland ever, based on both seat share and vote share (Arter 2013: 99). When looking at the electoral results of the parties that competed in the 2011 election, the PS is the only party to have increased its electoral results from the 2007 election, and it increased its vote share in every district in mainland Finland<sup>7</sup> (Nurmi & Nurmi 2011: 236). The Centre Party had the biggest loss in vote share, with a decrease of just over seven percentage points and a loss of seats in eleven of fourteen districts (Nurmi & Nurmi

<sup>7</sup> Mainland Finland excludes the autonomous Åland Island.

2011: 236). The National Coalition Party lost nearly two percentage points of its vote share and the Social Democratic party decreased its vote share by just over two points. In an election where every other party was a loser in its vote share, the PS came out a winner and the reasons behind this are of particular interest to this paper.

The academic assessment of PS policy positions and manifesto content suggests that the party has evolved over the fifteen years of its existence. The party always held traditional fundamentalist beliefs related to sociocultural issues. The party is against changes in society that affect the ‘moral base of Finnish society’, specifically criticizing liberal attitudes that threaten the ‘traditional family’ and Christian values (Arter 2010: 497). Before 2007, the party addressed traditionalism, moralism, law and order, Euroscepticism, and religion, and targeted pensioners, the farming and rural population, and entrepreneurs and small businesses (Widfeldt 2000: 493). It was not until 2007 that the PS dedicated a whole section of its manifesto to immigration and asylum policy, with a focus on acculturation and mono-culturalism (Arter 2010: 498). All of these issues and the groups they are aimed at are common to the RRWP and continue to be salient to the party, but before 2007 there was an absence of the issues of immigration and multiculturalism. Due partly to its roots as an agrarian party, the PS has maintained moderately left-wing positions on economic issues. Its dual left-wing economic and right-wing sociocultural position was always fitting to the new winning formula of RRWP.

The electorate that supports the PS is similar to the profile of RRWP supporters across Europe that have been described in many other studies. PS voters hold very strong anti-immigrant attitudes, and in 2007 the supporters were predominantly male, working-class, had low levels of education, were under 44 years of age (Kestila 2006: 169) and the party had high levels of support amongst the lower-middle class, farmers, small entrepreneurs, and the urban

working and lower class (Nurmi & Nurmi 2011:235). In Finland, similar to all other Nordic countries, the most significant indicator of RRWP support is attitudes about immigration (Widfeldt 2018: 16). Alongside anti-immigrant attitudes, PS supporters tend to be distinctly opposed to the EU (ibid). In 2007, 53.5% of PS voters were working class, this was the highest percentage of support from this class of any party (Arter 2010, 501). In the 2011 election, 27% of PS voters had voted for the Social Democrats in 2007 and 14% had not voted. This is in line with the theory that working-class left-wing voters realign to RRWP and of the RRWP talent of motivating previous non-voters (Kestilä-Kekkonen & Söderlund 2014: 657).

A study by Kestilä found that the Finnish public desires strict immigration policy (but not refugee policy), views immigrants as a threat to cultural cohesion, and feels they may weaken the national economy (2006: 183). Compared to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, Finland held significantly more anti-immigrant attitudes. However, the existence of anti-immigrant attitudes does not necessarily result in an electorally successful RRWP. Kestila (2006: 184) showed that the Germans and the French hold the most extreme anti-immigrant attitudes, but Germany did not have a successful RRWP for decades and the National Rally in France remains largely a fringe party, especially in parliamentary elections. Though other countries that have negative attitudes towards immigrants like Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands do have successful to moderately successful RRWP, so Finland could fit into either group.

#### **4.2. The Finnish Party and Electoral System**

The political opportunity structure in Finland began to open up in the late 1990s and early 2000s due to several changes in the political arena. Sociocultural issues began to be more salient in the early 1990s, with the accession of Finland to the EU in 1994 opening up a new area for parties to take positions on. This particular topic highlighted centre-periphery tensions and issues

of national interest and sovereignty (Arter 2010: 486). By the early 2000s, consensus politics was becoming the norm in Finland and coalition governments had been growing. The two cabinets between 1995 and 2003 consisted of five different parties from across the political spectrum (Arter 2010: 487). The growing coalition of parties likely moved many of the government parties towards the centre and limited the political options of voters. This would open up the edges of the political spectrum for more radical parties.

PS' profile was raised in 2006 during the country's presidential election when the party leader, Timo Soini, ran as a candidate. Though he only won 2.8% of votes, his participation in the race attracted media interest and attention to him and the party (Arter 2010: 489). Soini's rhetoric was anti-elite, anti-intellectual, and anti-consensus, and criticized the recent rainbow coalitions as being anti-democratic, arguing there were no longer real political alternatives in the Finnish political arena (Arter 2010: 489). The 2009 European Parliamentary election was the first election where immigration was a major issue of debate and PS took 9.8% of the vote share in this election (Rannanpää 2010: 78, 81). Following the electoral success at the European election, in the 2011 national parliamentary election, the PS manifesto had developed a strong mix of Euroscepticism and cultural nationalism (Arter 2012: 816). The PS has been particularly successful at reframing the welfare state in sociocultural terms, focusing on the threat of immigrants and the EU threatening sovereignty over the Finnish welfare state (Nordensvard & Ketola 2015: 356). In 2011, Timo Soini's experience as a Member of the European Parliament from 2009 to 2011 helped highlight European issues as they relate to Finnish national politics (Nurmi & Nurmi 2011: 236). These things together throughout the early 2000s provided an opportunity for the emergence of a new party in the Finnish party system.

The type of electoral system a country uses will also affect the electoral success of political parties. Finnish national parliamentary elections use an open-list proportional representation system. Each district elects a different number of representatives depending on the constituency's population and those elected can be a mix of candidates from different parties (Nurmi & Nurmi 2011: 235). Parties can run a maximum of fourteen candidates in each of Finland's fourteen mainland electoral districts (Arter 2013: 102; Elections Finland 2019). The district magnitude ranges from seven in Lapland to thirty-five in the constituency of Uusimaa (this excludes the autonomous Province of Åland, which acts as the fifteenth district and elects one representative) (Statistics Finland – Parliamentary elections, quality description). In open-list systems, candidates play an important role and the PS used this to its advantage by finding charismatic candidates and those already known to the public.

The party has seen electoral success in the open-list system in part due to the use of high-profile electoral candidates. In 2003, the party had Tony 'the Viking' Halme, a professional boxer, wrestler, and media personality, with a habit of making racist and homophobic comments, run on the party list. In the election, Halme received the fifth highest nominal vote in the country (Arter 2013: 108). In 2007, Pertti 'Velto' Virtanen, a former rock musician, was elected to parliament as a PS party member. Virtanen held the seat from 2007 to 2015 (Arter 2013: 108). Other PS members that were famous outside of politics before being elected include Rita Tuulikki 'Kike' Elomaa, a former bodybuilding champion and pop singer (elected in 2011), Veera Ruoho a former Olympic taekwondo practitioner (elected in 2015, defected in 2017), and Juha Vaatainen a former professional athlete (in parliament from 2011-2015). In the 2007 election, the party had only moderate success in its total vote share, but it had several high



profile and successful candidates. In 2003 along with Halme's success, party leader Timo Soini received the third-highest share of individual votes in the country (Arter 2013: 108).

In the 2011 election, most candidates that ran on the PS list had no previous parliamentary experience or name recognition. In fact, 80% of PS candidates had not run in parliamentary elections before (Arter 2013: 109). The party did, however, field many candidates. The PS fielded as many candidates as the Social Democrats, historically the biggest party in Finland, and more than six of the other seven parliamentary parties (there were nine parliamentary parties at the time) (Arter 2013: 110). Along with its 15 percentage point increase in vote share, the party increased total votes and seat share in all fourteen mainland constituencies. Despite having an inexperienced group of candidates, the party was successful in electing a large number of seats partly through the success of individual candidates receiving large amounts of votes, and the favourability of the distribution of seats in the open-list system.

#### **4.3. Issue Salience**

Largely absent in the literature (at least in English) that looks at the True Finns is any discussion of issue salience or priming. The goal of the following data analysis is to see whether sociocultural issues and issues favourable to RRWP became salient in Finland and if that influenced the increase in PS vote share in the 2011 election. The purpose of this section is to look at what exactly the public and political parties emphasized during the election period to see what issues were primed and if they influence the electoral success of PS. This will be done using quantitative analysis of data from a) party manifestos of the three main parties, and b) election surveys. The coding of manifestos was done as part of the Comparative Manifesto Project, and each of the party manifestos from the Finnish elections had between 97% and 100% of quasi sentences successfully coded (meaning almost all text in the manifestos was assigned to

a category). The public opinion data was collected as part of the Finnish Election Study and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, in 2007 there were 1,283 respondents and in 2011 there were 1,298. Using the manifesto data, I have ranked the most salient issues overall, including any issues that received more than 5% of manifesto content (threshold justified in Methods chapter). I have also grouped issues into two groups based on the policy dimensions, economic and sociocultural, to compare overall manifesto content of each dimension.

For public opinion I have done the same, ranking the most common most important issues given in surveys and then categorizing them to compare the salience of issues from each dimension, and also by party voted for. Finally, there will be multivariate analyses of vote choice using public opinion data. This will hopefully give us an idea of whether economic or sociocultural issues are more salient in manifesto content and public opinion and looking at individual issues will offer more information on election specific or country-specific issues. The section will begin by evaluating manifesto content and then look at public opinion data.

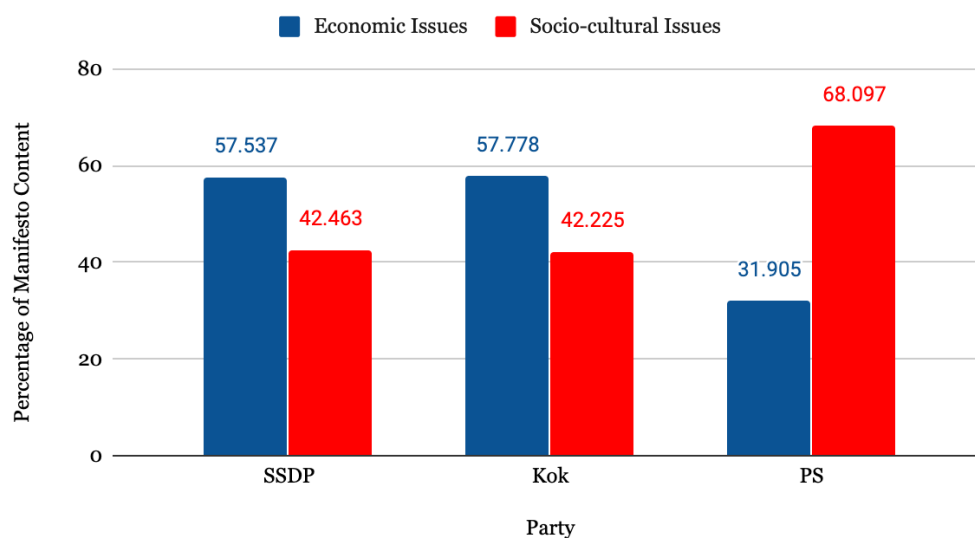
#### ***4.3.1. Issue Salience in Party Literature***

It is important to see whether parties favour economic or social issues in their official documents as the manifesto content is likely to guide their electoral strategies. As expected for a radical right-wing party, the PS favour sociocultural issues over economic issues in both the 2007 and 2011 election. Interestingly though it is much more focused on sociocultural issues in 2007 than in 2011, decreasing from 68% to 56% of manifesto content, a decrease in sociocultural content by about 12% (See figures 4.2 and 4.3). What is even more interesting is the content that comprises the manifestos of the Social Democrats (SDP) and the National Coalition Party (Kok), because we know that the reaction of mainstream parties can affect the success of the radical right. In 2007, both of these parties' manifestos were made up of more than 57% economic

issues, but by 2011 these parties' manifesto content went in diverging directions. In 2011, the SDP's economic manifesto content has increased from 57% to 84% and Kok swayed in favour of sociocultural issues, but only slightly more than economic issues, increasing from 42% to 47%. The SDP manifesto content suggests a strategy of ignoring the RRWP by avoiding cultural issues, which had been predominant in the PS's manifesto in the previous election making up 68% of the content. Kok's move towards cultural issues could suggest a reaction of co-optation, not necessarily of a radical policy position but at least of the policy issues, as the party could be vying for ownership over cultural issues.

Figure 4.2

#### Finland 2007 Election Manifesto Content

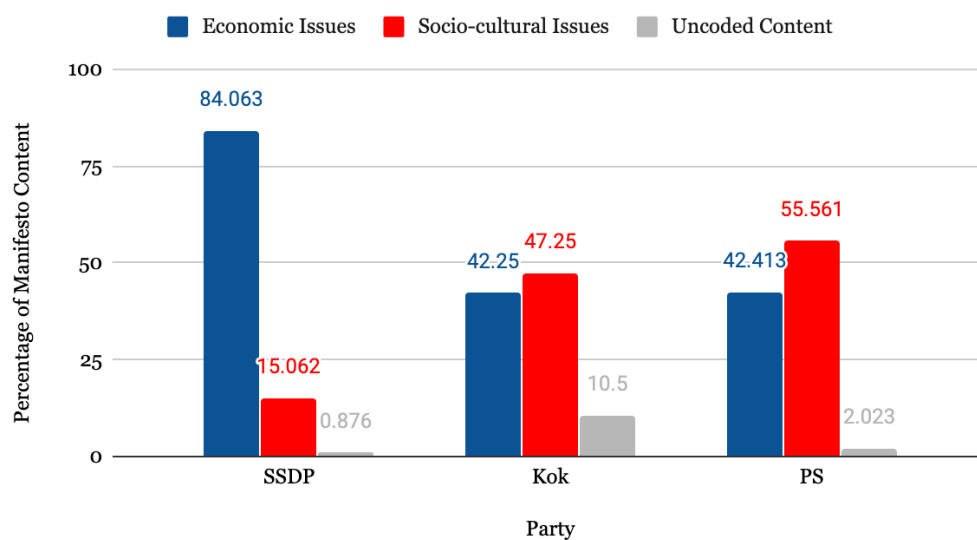


This focus on cultural issues by Kok and PS is especially interesting considering this election was not long after the European financial crisis (it will be shown later that EU bailout funds were a high priority to Finnish voters in 2011). The election campaign focused on the financial bailout arrangement in the European Union to rescue the Greek, Irish, and Portuguese economies, and PS was a vocal opponent of the bailout measures (Nurmi & Nurmi 2011: 236)

Despite the timing of this election, the fact that two of the three biggest parties chose to focus on cultural issues more than economic issues shows that the priorities of major parties swung away from economic issues, even if only slightly, and did not necessarily line up with the issues salient to the public.

Figure 4.3

### Finland 2011 Election Manifesto Content



Looking at the exact issues the parties focus on will help illustrate which cultural issues became more salient and if they were related to the far-right. This is especially relevant when looking at Kok, seeing as it increased its cultural manifesto content. In 2007, Kok's most salient issues were Welfare State Expansion at 22% and Labour Groups (positive) at 13%, both of these are economic issues, though the cultural issues of Environmental Protection, Equality (positive), and Education Expansion all made up between 5 and 7% of the content (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Kok Manifesto Issue Salience

|               | 2007                     | %      | 2011                       | %     |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------|----------------------------|-------|
| Economic      | Welfare State Expansion  | 22.222 | Economic Orthodoxy         | 10.5  |
|               | Labour Groups: Positive  | 13.333 | Welfare State Expansion    | 10    |
|               | Welfare State Limitation | 5.556  | Labour Groups: Positive    | 8.75  |
|               | Incentives: Positive     | 5      |                            |       |
| Sociocultural | Environmental Protection | 6.667  | Civic Mindedness: Positive | 19.25 |
|               | Equality: Positive       | 6.667  | Political Authority        | 6.25  |
|               | Education Expansion      | 5.556  | Environmental Protection   | 5.25  |

For Kok in 2011 Civic Mindedness (positive) was the most salient issue at 19%, followed by Economic Orthodoxy at 10.5%, Environmental Protection and Political Authority both make up more than 5%, Welfare State Expansion dropped by 12% and Labour Groups (positive) dropped by just under 5%. Civic Mindedness is defined as “appeals for national solidarity and the need for society to see itself as united. Calls for solidarity with and help for fellow people, familiar and unfamiliar” this includes positive mentions of civil society, denouncing anti-social attitudes, support for public-spiritedness and public interest (Manifesto Codebook 2019). It is difficult to determine how an increase in this issue category relates to the RRWP, but it could relate to anti-elite sentiments espoused by the RRWP about the ruling parties.

In 2007, the PS manifesto had Welfare State Expansion as the most salient issue at 15%, but the next seven most salient issues were all sociocultural and together they made up over 37% of the manifesto (see table 4.2). The top issues included European Community (negative), Multiculturalism (negative), Military (positive), Democracy, and National Way of Life (positive), all of these are key RRWP issues, especially National Way of Life (positive). This issue category could also be called ‘nationalism’ as it includes “Favourable mentions of the manifesto country’s nation, history, and general appeals to” patriotism, and nationalism and encouraging pride of citizenship (Manifesto Codebook 2019). In 2011 National Way of Live became the most salient issue in the PS manifesto making up just over 10%. In 2011 more issues

are above the four percent threshold of significance, with Agriculture and Farmers and Welfare Expansion coming in as the second and third most important issues at around 10% and 9% respectively. Core issues of Democracy, Law and Order (positive), Multiculturalism (negative), and European Community (negative) remain salient. The appeal to Farmers and Agriculture seems natural for the PS given its history, it is also not unusual for a radical right-wing party to appeal to this group because they are often classified as self-employed/small business owners who are statistically more likely to support RRWP according to previous research (Arzheimer & Carter 2006; Betz 1993; Ivarsflaten 2005; Lubbers et al 2002; Taggart 1995). Though Welfare State Expansion is categorized as an economic issue, depending on how it is discussed it could be framed culturally. Since the PS falls into the category of RRWP the use of the new winning formula through discussion of the expansion of the welfare state is in line with the party values and left-wing economic positions.

Table 4.2. PS Manifesto Issue Salience

|               | 2007                       | %      | 2011                                       | %      |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------|--|--------|
| Economic      | Welfare State Expansion    | 15.094 | Agriculture and Farmers: Positive          | 10.182 |
|               |                            |        | Welfare State Expansion                    | 9.643  |
|               |                            |        | Market Regulation                          | 5.732  |
|               |                            |        | Governmental and Administrative Efficiency | 5.125  |
|               |                            |        | Technology and Infrastructure: Positive    | 5.057  |
| Sociocultural | European Union: Negative   | 10.978 | National Way of Life: Positive             | 10.452 |
|               | Equality: Positive         | 7.719  | Democracy                                  | 6.676  |
|               | Multiculturalism: Negative | 5.146  | Law and Order: Positive                    | 5.327  |

The SDP's top issues are heavily skewed economic in both elections, with the two issue categories of Welfare State Expansions and Labour Groups (positive) together making up almost 35% of the manifesto, though the cultural issues of Internationalism (positive), Equality (positive), and Environmental Protection all received about 5% of manifesto space in 2007 (see Table 4.3). In 2011, the top five issues are economic, together they make up more than 50% of

the manifesto. The issues discussed by the SDP are typical of a Social Democratic Party in a traditional economic focused party system (see table 4.3).

Table 4.3. SDP Manifesto Issue Saliience

|               | 2007                       | %      | 2011                            | %      |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--------|
| Economic      | Welfare State Expansion    | 18.342 | Labour Groups: Positive         | 15.412 |
|               | Labour Groups: Positive    | 16.834 | Economic Orthodoxy              | 11.033 |
|               | Technology and             | 11.307 | Technology and Infrastructure:  | 10.508 |
|               | Infrastructure: Positive   |        | Positive                        |        |
|               |                            |        | Economic Goals                  | 8.932  |
|               |                            |        | Economic Growth: Positive       | 8.757  |
| Sociocultural |                            |        | Governmental and Administrative | 6.655  |
|               |                            |        | Efficiency                      |        |
|               |                            |        |                                 |        |
| Sociocultural | Education Expansion        | 6.03   |                                 |        |
|               | Internationalism: Positive | 5.276  |                                 |        |
|               | Equality: Positive         | 5.025  |                                 |        |

Overall the issues covered by the main three parties have not unanimously moved to sociocultural issues. PS does lean towards sociocultural issues in its manifesto and more recently Kok does as well, but the Social Democrats have moved towards a stronger focus on economic issues.

#### 4.3.2. Public Opinion

Now that we have looked at issues the parties find important, it is necessary to see if the issues are reflected in the public. In the manifesto content we have seen that the PS favours sociocultural issues, the SDP favours economic issues, and Kok is relatively evenly split favouring different dimensions in each of the elections. A cursory glance at the public opinion data shows that the issues of importance in Finland, both personally and at the country level, are associated with economic issues. Contrary to the party data there is a distinct trend of economic preference in the Finnish public overall.

At the country level, public opinion data shows that economic issues received 66% of responses in 2007 and 74% of responses in 2011 to a question asking to name important political problems (see Figures 4.4 and 4.5). At the personal level, there is slightly less of a clear

distinction, especially since there is a change in fifteen percent points of responses between 2007 and 2011, all moving from economic issues to cultural issues. Though in 2011 economic issues continue to make up more responses, the difference goes from a difference of 40% to less than 10%. This could partly be because the sheer number of cultural issues discussed increased from 20 to 27, matching the number of economic issues mentioned.

Figure 4.4.

What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Finland)

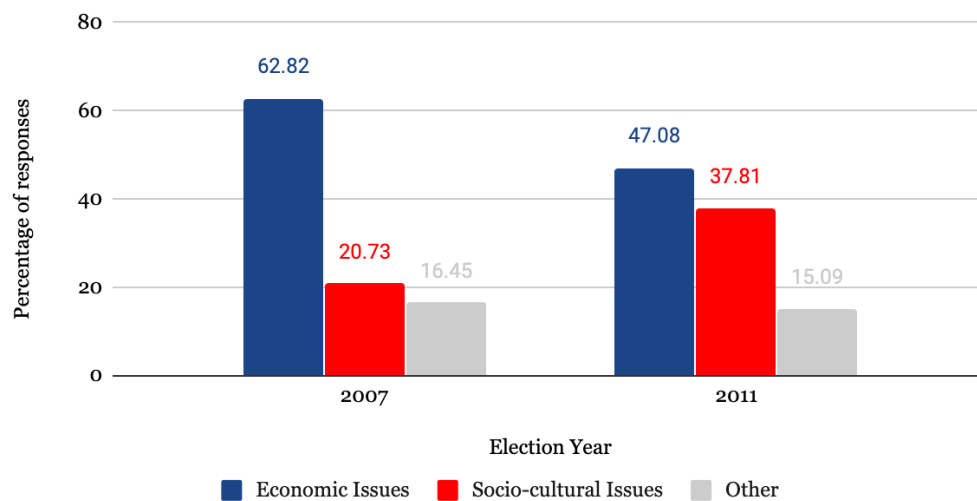
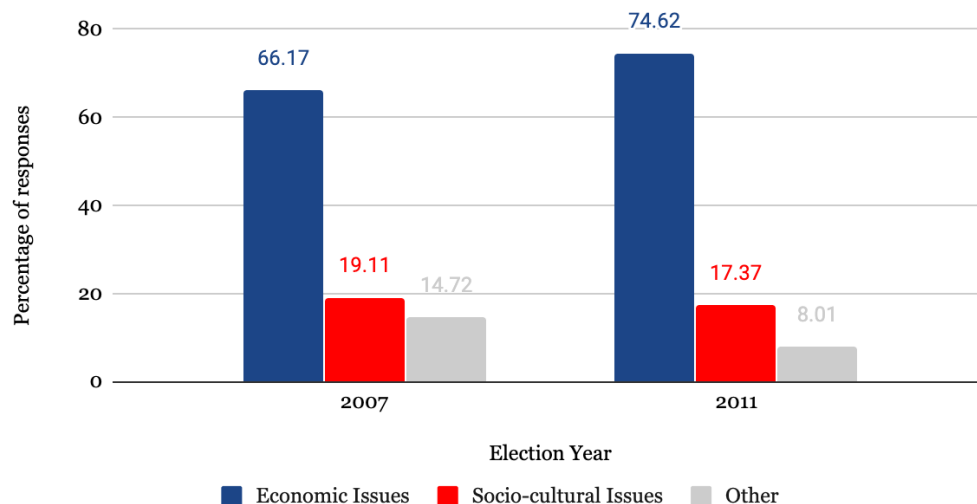


Figure 4.5.

What do you think is the most important political problem facing Finland today?





Though looking at the categorization of issues helps give a picture of competing policy dimensions, looking at specific issues will help explain what exactly defines each policy dimension. This is important because certain issues, like immigration, multiculturalism, law and order, and nationalism, are all issues that would likely favour PS. By evaluating the exact issues, we can see what kind of economic issues and sociocultural issues are important and whether they are beneficial to the new cultural parties.

Table 4.4. Finland - What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Egocentric)

| 2007   | %    | 2011                                 | %     |
|--|------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Pensioner issues                             | 8.03 | Negative EU issues / stability funds | 13.41 |
| Employment/unemployment                      | 7.25 | Employment/unemployment              | 9.01  |
| Care of the elderly                          | 7.01 | Finnish economy                      | 5.7   |
| Status and support of families with children | 6.7  | Growth of income disparity           | 5.16  |
| Social and health care (general)             | 5.61 | Pensioner issues                     | 5.01  |
| Nature conservation                          | 4.52 | EU                                   | 4.08  |
| Taxation of pensioners                       | 4.44 | Care of the elderly                  | 4.01  |
|  |      | Immigrant policy                     | 3.7   |

Table 4.5. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Finland today? (Sociotropic)

| 2007                    | %    | 2011                            | %     |
|-------------------------|------|---------------------------------|-------|
| Employment/unemployment | 19.8 | Poverty                         | 29.89 |
| Poverty                 | 16.6 | Employment/unemployment         | 25.65 |
| Elderly issues          | 5.92 | National economy                | 4.39  |
| Health care (general)   | 5.77 | Elderly issues                  | 4.31  |
| Environmental issues    | 3.59 | EU                              | 3.93  |
| Retirement              | 2.49 | Immigrants: neutral attitudes   | 1.93  |
| Economic development    | 2.42 | Health care (general)           | 1.69  |
| Social security         | 2.42 | Retirement                      | 1.69  |
| Alcohol / illegal drugs | 2.26 | Other problem (not specifiable) | 1.69  |

At the personal level, the most important issues in 2007 were pensioner issues, employment/unemployment, care of the elderly, status and support of families with children, and

social and health care general (all of these made up more than 5% of responses) (see table 4.4). In 2011 the most important issues were Negative EU issues/stability funds, employment/unemployment, the Finnish economy, growth of income disparity, and pensioner issues (see table 4.5). Negative EU issues/stability funds were categorized as a cultural issue because of the EU content, however, due to the lack of clarity in the issue category the issue could also be classified as economic because it mentions stability funds. If it was categorized economically, the swing in responses from economic to cultural in 2011 at the personal level would be almost wholly cancelled out. This would mean that in both elections at the personal and at the country level, more than 60% of respondents would have indicated an economic issue as the most important, meaning there would be a consistent preference of economic issues on both the country and personal levels.

Interestingly, in 2007 there are no RRWP issues mentioned (see table 4.6), though there are new left issues, including climate change (1.56%), gender equality (1.01%), and nature conservation (4.52%). In 2011, we can see several issues that are relevant to RRWP, the EU (4.08%), immigration policy (3.7%), and tolerance and multiculturalism (1.46%). Though we do not know if these issues were important because people view them positively or negatively, it does tell us that in this election a larger portion of people had issues that are central to RRWP's policies at the front of their mind.

Below Table 4.6 shows the top three most salient issues by party voted for. The most important issues at both the personal and country level in both elections are all economic for those that voted for the SDP, except for EU/EU politics in 2011, but it only receives about 5% of responses. For those that voted for Kok all of the most salient issues were economic in 2007. In 2011 two sociocultural issues were salient, but EU/EU politics at only 5% and negative EU

issues at 12.5%.

Table 4.6. Most Salient Issue by Party Vote - Finland

| SDP           |        |  |        |                 |        |   |        |
|---------------|--------|--|--------|-----------------|--------|---|--------|
| 2007          |        |  |        | 2011            |        |   |        |
| Country Level |        | Personal Level                             |        | Country Level   |        | Personal Level  |        |
| Employment    | 24.76% | Pensions                                   | 13.81% | Poverty         | 35.32% | Employment  | 11.01% |
| Poverty       | 21.43% | Employment                                 | 11.90% | Employment      | 31.65% | Taxation  | 8.26%  |
| Health care   | 6.19%  | Care of the elderly                        | 9.52%  | EU/ EU politics | 5.05%  | Growth of income disparity                                    | 8.26%  |
| Kok           |        |  |        |                 |        |   |        |
| 2007          |        |  |        | 2011            |        |   |        |
| Country Level |        | Personal Level                             |        | Country Level   |        | Personal Level  |        |
| Employment    | 25.00% | Care of the elderly                        | 9.24%  | Employment      | 26.79% | Finnish economy/sustaining welfare/raising retirement age     | 14.88% |
| Poverty       | 11.96% | Correction on income taxes                 | 8.15%  | Poverty         | 26.19% | Negative EU issues/support indebted countries/stability funds | 12.50% |
| Health care   | 7.61%  | Taxation                                   | 7.61%  | EU/ EU politics | 4.76%  | Employment  | 11.31% |
| PS            |        |  |        |                 |        |   |        |
| 2007          |        |  |        | 2011            |        |   |        |
| Country Level |        | Personal Level                             |        | Country Level   |        | Personal Level  |        |
| Poverty       | 15.62% | Pensions                                   | 9.38%  | Poverty         | 32.07% | Negative EU issues/support indebted countries/stability funds | 23.91% |
| Immigration   | 12.50% | Status and support of family with children | 9.38%  | Employment      | 23.37% | Employment  | 10.87% |
| Health care   | 9.38%  | NATO                                       | 9.38%  | Elderly Issues  | 5.98%  | Immigration   | 9.78%  |

PS had a more significant level of responses related to sociocultural issues, with over 12% saying immigration was the most important issue facing the country in 2007 and over 9% saying NATO was at a personal level. In 2011 Negative EU issues received 23.91% and immigration received over 9%. Generally, the majority of voters regardless of the party they voted for said

employment or poverty was the most important issue facing them and the country in both elections.

Based on public opinion data and manifesto content in Finland, there seems to be a disconnect between the issues the parties discuss and the issues the public believes are highly important during the election. The issues that parties prime are not the ones that appear to be at the front of the public's mind. It is possible that though the public sees some issues as important it may not be factored into vote choice. There is already much research on sociotropic versus egocentric voting and which is more likely, but in this case, both sociotropically and egocentrically the focus is on economic issues. Based on previous studies, if the public sees the economy as important, then the parties that are traditionally associated with economic responsibility should be more electorally successful, as the Social Democrats. But in 2007 and 2011 the Social Democrats decreased its vote share from the previous election and Kok decreased its vote share in one of these elections. Running a multivariate analysis model looking at how different issues affected vote choice for each party may help explain why the True Finns saw such an increase in electoral success.

#### ***4.3.3. Multivariate Analyses***

Based on the multivariate analysis of the three parties with a dependent variable of vote choice in 2007, the following was found. The only significant and strong variable predicting PS vote choice is PS Partisanship at 5.35. The independent variable Kok partisanship was omitted, due to the prediction of perfect failure, as no respondent holding Kok partisanship voted for PS. This multivariate analysis model only explains about 47% of the vote variance for PS. The multivariate analysis of vote choice for the SDP shows that two variables are significant. These variables are the SDP partisanship which is very strong at 5.34 and interestingly the PS

partisanship variable. The PS partisanship variable is much weaker at 1.63, but it is still significant. These variables explain 67% of the variance of votes for the SDP.

Table 4.7. Finland 2007 Election Multivariate Analyses

|                          | PS Vote                   | SDP Vote                  | Kok Vote                  |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| PS Partisanship          | 5.347708***<br>(.8170434) | 1.626345**<br>(.7286978)  | 2.009725**<br>(.8959015)  |
| SDP Partisanship         | .8525403<br>(.9702842)    | 5.341858***<br>(.4274623) | -.7223667<br>(1.083744)   |
| Kok Partisanship         | 0<br>omitted              | -1.33668<br>(1.070147)    | 5.910334***<br>(.5084201) |
| Aged Over 50             | -.819955<br>(.719716)     | .324829<br>(.4060546)     | .0429264<br>(.4667528)    |
| Female                   | .0223344<br>(.6639456)    | .3933238<br>(.3793376)    | -.1508457<br>(.4455047)   |
| Post-Secondary Education | .2240595<br>(.7314754)    | -.5162909<br>(.3907529)   | .5796077<br>(.4716241)    |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.2716185<br>(.7322644)   | .6281406<br>(.4469638)    | 1.252593**<br>(.5395161)  |
| Country Issue Salience   | -.7915193<br>(.7017327)   | .4346106<br>(.4346512)    | .3441441<br>(.5482943)    |
| Right-wing Ideology      | .5822493<br>(.8023224)    | -.1879657<br>(.4223126)   | 1.787881***<br>(.5794185) |
| constant                 | -4.167903<br>(1.343374)   | -4.78427<br>(.9102313)    | -5.940825<br>(1.161912)   |
| Observations             | 517                       | 656                       | 665                       |
| Pseudo R-squared         | 0.4724                    | 0.6651                    | 0.7337                    |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

Looking at the independent variables in the multivariate analysis for the Kok vote choice, there are four significant independent variables, Kok partisanship, PS partisanship, right-wing ideology, and salience of economic issues at the personal level. The strongest variable by far is Kok Partisanship at 5.91, PS Partisanship at 2.01, right-wing ideology at 1.79, and salience of economic issues at the personal level at 1.25. The personal level issue salience coefficient is positive, so those that find economic issues important are more likely to vote for Kok. These variables all have a positive effect on vote choice for Kok and explain more than 73% of the variance in votes for Kok.

Table 4.8. Finland 2011 Election Multivariate Analyses

|                          | PS Vote                   | SDP Vote                  | Kok Vote                  |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| PS Partisanship          | 5.969187***<br>(.5410431) | -.526628<br>(.7947237)    | 0<br>Omitted (failure)    |
| SDP Partisanship         | .2415034<br>(.4083969)    | 5.409356***<br>(.4219546) | 0<br>Omitted (failure)    |
| Kok Partisanship         | -.6019767<br>(.6808845)   | -.6087148<br>(1.10038)    | 5.958655***<br>(.6128372) |
| Aged Over 50             | 1.499416***<br>(.4627616) | -.214643<br>(.3858784)    | .8093582*<br>(.4686151)   |
| Female                   | -.0804995<br>(.3412204)   | -.2364262<br>(.3675344)   | .5402945<br>(.478196)     |
| Post-Secondary Education | -.4603123<br>(.3481815)   | -.3730764<br>(.38065)     | -.2149895<br>(.5395965)   |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.5568102<br>(.3393071)   | -.0691474<br>(.3661825)   | .9814474**<br>(.4664173)  |
| Country Issue Salience   | .21417<br>(.4428109)      | .8500995*<br>(.4907574)   | -.0570608<br>(.5609728)   |
| Right-wing Ideology      | -.2592221<br>(.3705793)   | -1.161014***<br>(.406851) | 1.212244<br>(.7406202)    |
| constant                 | -3.454698<br>(.797981)    | -3.151315<br>(.8252868)   | -6.738619<br>(1.350479)   |
| Observations             | 748                       | 748                       | 474                       |
| Pseudo R-squared         | 0.5743                    | 0.6879                    | (0.7215)                  |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

In the 2011 election model, PS Partisanship and aged over 50 are significant predictors of a vote for PS. Once again partisanship is a very strong predictor at 5.97 and aged over 50 at 1.50. The model explains 57% of the variance in vote choice of PS. In the SDP model, the variable SDP Partisanship is significant and very strong at 5.41, right-wing ideology is significant and negative at -1.16, and country level issue salience is significant at .85. The country level issue salience coefficient is positive, so those that found economic issues important at the country level are more likely to vote for SDP. The model explains 69% of the variance in vote choice for the SDP. In the Kok model, there are three significant variables - Kok partisanship at 5.96, personal level issue salience at .98, and aged over 50 at .81. The personal level issue salience coefficient is positive, so those that find economic issues important are more likely to vote for

Kok. The model omitted both PS partisanship and SDP partisanship, meaning that none of those that indicated partisanship for PS and SDP voted for Kok. The model explains 72% of the variation in votes for Kok. Apart from partisanship, in both the 2007 and 2011 age, ideology, and country and personal level issue salience were all significant at least once. Regarding the issue salience variables, they were significant twice. There is a positive relationship between finding economic issues important at the personal level and voting for Kok in 2011 and finding economic issues important at the country level increased the likelihood of voting SDP.

The most significant independent variable in every vote choice model is partisanship. Since partisanship influences vote choice so strongly, it seems necessary to see if some of the independent variables could be influencing partisanship. The issue salience variables are the most important independent variables in the models on partisanship (see Tables 4.9 and 4.10). Interestingly, two variables are significant and negative for PS partisanship, in 2007 the country level issue salience variable at  $-.97$ , and in 2011 the personal level issue salience at  $-.55$ . In both cases, this tells us that voters that found economic issues were less likely to hold PS partisanship. In the 2007 model for SDP partisanship, personal level issue salience is significant and positive  $.52$ , and again in 2011 at  $.47$ . For Kok partisanship in 2007, country level issue salience was significant at  $.52$  and in 2011 personal level issue was significant at  $.55$ . Even if issue salience may not always be significant to vote choice, it was significant and influenced partisanship for every party at either the personal or country level in both elections.

Table 4.9. Finland 2007 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses

|                          | PS Partisanship            | SDP Partisanship           | KOK Partisanship         |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Aged Over 50             | -1.013806***<br>(.3832784) | .709208***<br>(.206183)    | .0065096<br>(.2140431)   |
| Female                   | -.2943731<br>(.3710421)    | -.1113639<br>(.192821)     | -.2310947<br>(.2077894)  |
| Post-Secondary Education | -.670509*<br>(.3841157)    | -.2460432<br>(.1977089)    | .4974138**<br>(.220373)  |
| Personal Issue Salience  | .5913553<br>(.4503741)     | .5164456**<br>(.2419285)   | .398203<br>(.242695)     |
| Country Issue Salience   | -.9670416***<br>(.3734779) | .0914624<br>(.2251878)     | .5200922**<br>(.2597182) |
| Right-wing Ideology      | -.9834125**<br>(.4050982)  | -1.744449***<br>(.2149537) | 2.922586***<br>(.327739) |
| Constant                 | -1.211448<br>(.6899653)    | -1.140001<br>(.4007196)    | -4.096043<br>(.5209741)  |
| Observations             | 733                        | 733                        | 733                      |
| Pseudo R-Squared         | 0.0911                     | 0.1317                     | 0.2270                   |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

Table 4.10. Finland 2011 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses

|                          | PS Partisanship            | SDP Partisanship           | KOK Partisanship          |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aged Over 50             | -.5422377***<br>(.2108581) | .7264342***<br>(.1890655)  | .2164469<br>(.2246577)    |
| Female                   | -.5975516***<br>(.2110743) | -.2374607<br>(.1784693)    | -.3019065<br>(.2154932)   |
| Post-Secondary Education | -.5997619***<br>(.212799)  | -.1767297<br>(.1830286)    | 1.109058***<br>(.2475451) |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.5523221***<br>(.2084373) | .4654068***<br>(.1794623)  | .5471945**<br>(.2187258)  |
| Country Issue Salience   | .0745221<br>(.2591435)     | .2361488<br>(.2374262)     | -.1714542<br>(.2753871)   |
| Right-wing Ideology      | -.2070315<br>(.2083117)    | -1.530678***<br>(.2006156) | 3.649003***<br>(.4276357) |
| Constant                 | -.0416182<br>(.4059578)    | -1.086278<br>(.3739568)    | -4.843741<br>(.617753)    |
| Observations             | 826                        | 826                        | 826                       |
| Pseudo R-Squared         | 0.0472                     | 0.1082                     | 0.2975                    |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

The data looking at Finland tells us that the PS focused on sociocultural issues and has achieved electoral success despite public opinion generally finding economic issues significantly



more important. However, some issues key to PS, like immigration and the EU are listed as some of the most important issues by the public. This could perhaps signal the early stages of a turn towards more cultural issue-based politics and it would be interesting to see which issues were salient in the public and party manifestos in the later 2015 and 2019 elections. The multivariate analyses tell us that issue salience in effecting some vote choice, but more significantly it is affecting partisanship. The partisanship models tell us that finding economic issues makes it more likely to hold partisanship of the mainstream parties SDP and Kok and makes it less likely to hold PS partisanship. This aligns with the thesis' hypothesis that radical right-wing party supporters are more likely to find sociocultural issues important.

## **Chapter 5: Norway**

The Norwegian Progress Party (FrP) has, for most of its existence, continued to outperform itself at every election. Since its early creation and subsequent breakthrough into mainstream party politics, the FrP has arguably become one of the most well established and normalized RRWP in Europe. The 2009 election is the best electoral result to date for the FrP, as it received a higher vote share than even the elections which saw them join the government in 2013 and 2017. Though the party holds some traditional conservative party characteristics, it is classified as a radical right-wing party in Ennser's (2012) study on party families and Jungar & Jupkas' (2014) evaluation and classification of Nordic far-right parties, and has been frequently cited as a radical right-wing party in other comparative works (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: Bale 2003; Bale et al 2010; Bjerkem 2016; Downs 2001; Oesch 2008; Widfeldt 2018). The party is anti-establishment and anti-immigration, but less authoritarian and more economically right-wing than other RRWP, although it has recently moved towards the centre economically (Jungar & Jupkas 2014: 216). In the party's manifesto it describes itself as "a 'liberal people's party with a base in the Norwegian constitution, Norwegian and Western tradition and cultural heritage ... [with] a Christian worldview and humanistic values" (Fremskrittspartiet 2009).

The goal of this chapter is to evaluate the history and issue salience of the FrP and the Norwegian party system and to see how the FrP was able to become the second-largest political party in parliament following the 2005 and the 2009 elections. Similar to the last chapter, this section will discuss the history of the party and party system to see how the FrP evolved into a third wave RRWP. Then using the manifesto data and public survey data, I will again investigate whether the economic or sociocultural dimension is more salient through the aggregation of issues into the two dimensions. Then I will look at a more detailed breakdown of issues to identify the individual issues which make up the policy dimensions to see which issues are

unique to the country and elections and to see if the RRWP's new cultural issues are present in these two successful elections. This will be followed by multivariate analyses of vote choice. Since the FrP was very successful electorally in both of these elections, I expect to see highly salient sociocultural issues and to see new cultural issues on the political agenda.

### **5.1. History of the Progress Party**

The FrP is one of the original modern far-right parties in Europe. It joined parliament in the Norwegian earthquake election of 1973 when the five-party system was disrupted by new parties (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 2). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Norway experienced a major expansion of the welfare state and an increase in taxes, but this occurred under a right-wing bourgeoisie government rather than a left-wing labour government (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 19). Right-wing party supporters had expected a policy change away from state expansion after the right-wing party formed government, so the frustration from a lack of diversity in policy positions between the two major left and right parties resulted in the election of more parties in 1973 diversifying the party system.

The FrP was created during the second wave of tax protest neoliberal right-wing parties, similar to the Danish Progress Party which has also gone on to be one of the most electorally successful RRWPs in Europe today. The FrP was created by Anders Lange and was initially called the 'Anders Lange Party for Strong Reduction in Taxes and Public Intervention' (Harmel & Svasund 1997: 319). Lange established the party after he felt the major right-wing party, the Conservatives, had abandoned many of its right-wing positions after forming a government. Lange's initial goal in creating the party was to influence party positions and policy rather than trying to win many votes or seats (Harmel & Svasund 1997: 319).

In its first election in 1973, the party won just over 5% of the vote share and four seats in

the national parliament, establishing it as a parliamentary party immediately after its creation (ibid, 320). Lange died in 1974, and after three years of uncertainty for the party, in 1977 Carl I. Hagan took over as leader and the party was renamed the Progress Party, taking the name of the recently formed Danish Progress Party (later renamed to the Danish People's Party). Under Hagan the party became a third-wave RRWP moving away from predominantly neoliberal policy issues, with the leader stating that the party "combine[s] the best from social democratic thinking and the best from conservative thinking" (Downs 2002: 11), a statement reflective of De Lange's 'new winning formula'.

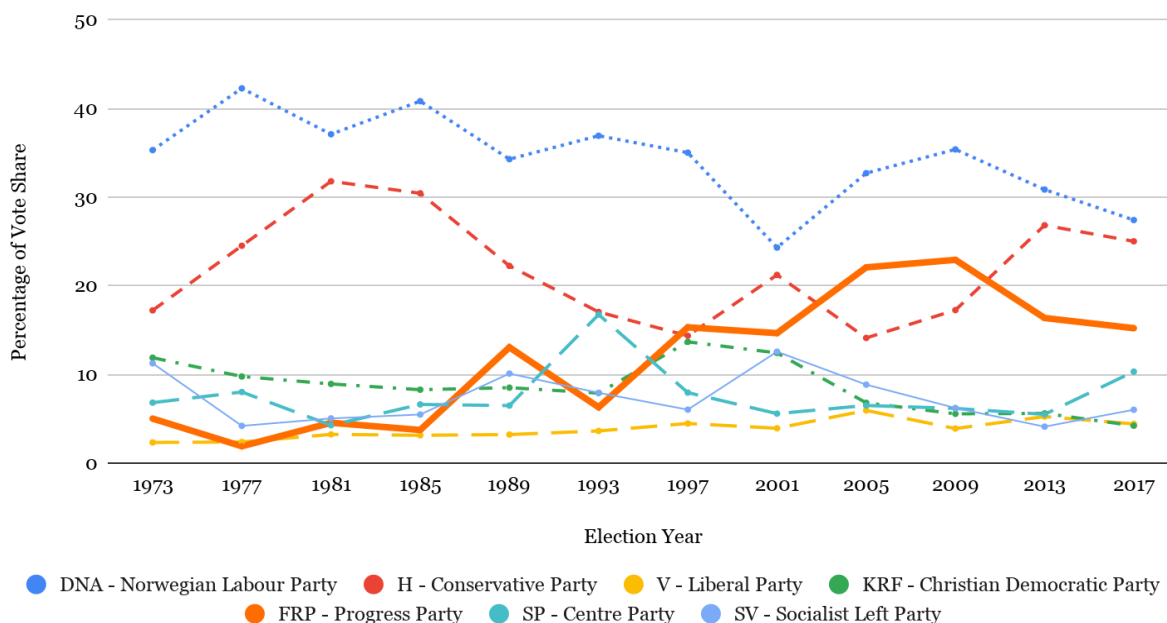
From 1977 to 2006 the party was chaired by Carl I. Hagan, who became the longest-serving party leader in Norwegian history (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 21). Under Hagan the party became a highly disciplined, hierarchical, and centralized organization. Hagan's long-term goal was to prepare the party for government by making the party responsible and predictable, which is a challenge faced by almost every RRWP in Northern and Western Europe (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 21). Hagan can also be categorized as a typical RRWP leader, he was good with the media, an effective speaker, and had a simple message aimed at the 'common man'. He had a similar style to Jörg Haider, who completely rebranded the Austrian RRWP, the Freedom Party of Austria, and brought it major electoral success (Widfeldt 2000: 490).

In the 1977 election as the newly branded FrP, the party lost all of its parliamentary seats, but in 1981 the FrP was elected back into parliament and has been represented there in every election since (Widfeldt 2018:5). After electoral support of around 10% in 1989 and 1993, in the 1997 parliamentary election the party won the second-highest vote share of any party at around 15% of the vote share. In 2001 the party's vote share dropped and they became the third-largest party in parliament (see figure 5.1). In 2005, the party increased its electoral success and for the

first time received more than twenty percent of the vote share, winning 22.06% (Widfeldt 2018: 5). In 2006 Hagan was replaced by Siv Jensen, and under Jensen the party achieved its most successful electoral result winning 22.9% of votes in 2009. Since 2013 the party has remained the third-largest party in parliament, winning 16.35% of the vote share in 2013 and then 15.2% in 2017. FrP joined a minority government in 2013 with the Conservative Party and this coalition government continued after the 2017 election.

Figure 5.1.

### Norwegian Parliamentary Election Results 1973 - 2017



In Norway, there was continuity between the second and third wave of RRWP, as the same party represented the RRWP in the country during each wave (but with a change in name). The party's roots as a neoliberal tax populist party is reflected in the party's continual representation of neoliberal policies. This causes some inconsistencies as the party supports welfare chauvinist policies while holding onto its neoliberal policies, somewhere between the old and the new programmatic winning formula. The party actively supports strong neoliberal policies like reforming the public sector by introducing outsourcing, partial privatization of

hospitals, and tax cuts while also advocating for strong welfare programmes and support for the elderly (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 11). One of the key reasons the FrP can hold these seemingly contradictory policy positions is because the party argues that the country should use a part of its oil revenue to fund welfare programming while simultaneously cutting taxes (Bale 2003: 73). This makes the FrP's situation unique among radical right-wing parties that continue to hold neoliberal policies, as it can promote neoliberal policies without threatening socially liberal policies that involve government spending. There is, however, an ongoing debate about whether the government should be saving oil money or spending it.

In 2005 the FrP adopted policies in favour of education in the Norwegian language, against subsidized housing, and affirmative action policies that favoured immigrants (ibid: 9). In 2006 the party recommended an immigration policy that established a quota of one thousand "non-western" immigrants per year including asylum seekers and family reunification (ibid). The party is often grouped in with RRWP of continental Europe, but the party actively dissociates from overtly racist and radical movements, like Le Pen's National Front, to maintain a respectable image (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 10). Despite this dissociation, the party maintains strong anti-immigrant positions. The manifestos of the FrP have included an explicit critique of multiculturalism and argued that an ethnically homogenous society was necessary for peace because different groups cannot co-exist peacefully (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 11). It also made the statement that "continued immigration of asylum seekers to anything like the extent seen in recent years will lead to serious conflicts between ethnic groups in Norway" (Widfeldt 2000: 491). Some of its other policies included repatriation of all refugees as soon as it was safely possible and limiting the number of resident permits for asylum seekers to one thousand a year (Widfeldt 2000: 491). The party also pushes more law and order policies with

harsher legal punishments and is a proponent of direct democracy (Widfeldt 2018: 9).

The electoral rise of the FrP (see Figure 5.1) coincided with an increase in the number of immigrants from 200 to 8,617 between 1983 and 1987, a large increase for an ethnically homogeneous country (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 6). By 2006 the population of Norway was made up of 5% non-western immigrants, with a majority of the immigrant population residing in Oslo. This led to an increase in the salience of immigration-related issues like ghettoization, schooling, juvenile delinquency, language issues, unemployment, welfare dependency, prejudice, and discrimination (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 8). By 1988 immigration attitudes were a significant indicator differentiating FrP supporters from non-supporters, specifically the negative attitude towards immigrants (ibid: 7-8). Other significant indicators of RRWP support in Norway were dissatisfaction with democracy in the country, fear of welfare competition, and cultural protectionism (Oesch 2008: 359), and all of these issues are associated with the modern radical right.

The issues that arose from the increase in immigration were framed culturally rather than economically, which is especially important for RRWP success. Under Hagen in the 1980s, the FrP adopted an anti-immigration line that received a lot of media attention (Downs 2001: 33). Though the party was initially a tax protest party, by the 1990s the FrP had adopted positions related to non-economic issues, including being the first openly anti-immigrant party in the country. Early on the party argued that money spent on asylum seekers should be spent instead on elderly and sick Norwegians (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 6). In 1994 the anti-immigration faction won control of the party over the liberalists, at which point the party dropped any pro-immigration policy from its program. Following this faction take-over of the party, four out of ten party members left the party (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 10). This party policy change

marked the beginning of the modern FrP.

## **5.2 Political Opportunity Structure**

The FrP continues to hold right-wing economic policies. This is likely because of the consensus on anti-immigrant policies amongst nearly all parties across the political spectrum in Norway. Stricter immigration policies known as the ‘immigration stop’ were introduced in 1975 under the Labour Party government. The FrP played a major role in bringing immigration and integration into the political agenda and helped push the Conservatives towards a more restrictive immigration policy in the 1990s, but the rise of the FrP came after immigration policies had significantly tightened. In the 1990s the FrP was not able to establish complete ownership of the issue because of the other parties’ strong anti-immigrant and integration policies (Bale et al. 2010). Before 2000 even the left-wing Socialist Party had adopted a restrictive immigration policy, and because there was no concern for losing votes to the left, the Labour Party was able to adopt a restrictive immigration policy to compete with the right as well.

After a Conservative government was elected in 2001 it passed a series of restrictive immigration policies making the party tough on immigration. There is more of a disagreement between the more minor right-wing parties on immigration policies than between the left and the right, but overall most parties hold restrictive immigration policies. Due to the passing of major immigration legislation in 1975 and 2001, by 2001 all the major parties had adopted restrictive policies (Bale 2003: 78). The Labour Party has proved to be a strong opponent to the FrP and has maintained over 30% of the vote share in every parliamentary election except in 2001. This is in spite of the increase in FrP vote share and its overlapping economically left and socially right voter base with the FrP.

The FrP’s influence on party policy positions of competing parties is clear, as the



Conservative Party moved rightward on most issues between 1973 and 1993. Despite the existence of the moderate right-wing Christian People's Party and the Centre Party, the only real threat to the Conservatives was the FrP on the radical right. The vote share of the more moderate Christian People's Party and Centre Party had been decreasing between 1973 and 1993 but the FrP had been increasing. The threat of the FrP taking votes was probably a strong motivation for the Conservative Party to move its policies rightward.

Coalition building is a key part of Norwegian electoral politics, and often influences the electoral success of parties. In the 2009 election campaign the major right-wing party, the Conservatives, stated it would be willing to form a government with any right-wing party, including the FrP. However, the minor right-wing parties, the Liberals and Christian Democrats, both stated they were unwilling to form a coalition with the FrP because of the differences in its immigration and economic policies (Allern 2010: 904). In wake of this, the FrP came out saying it would not support any government that excluded them even during a budget process. The unwillingness of the right-wing parties to work together meant that there was no real government coalition option among the right and no alternative to the left-wing Labour Party proposed red-green alliance coalition that had been in power going into the election (Allern 2010: 906). Despite the uncertainty of a right-wing coalition, both the Conservatives and the FrP increased their vote share.

Once again, the electoral system of a country plays a part in any parties' success. Since 1989 Norway has had a 4% electoral threshold (Andersen & Bjorklund 2008: 18). The country uses a direct election/open-list system, meaning they vote directly for a member to be their constituency representative and use proportional representation. The country is broken down into 19 constituencies which elect multiple members, with a total of 169 members elected into

parliament. The number of members from each constituency varies by district based on population and area, but Oslo elects the most at seventeen and Aust-Agder the least with four. Of the 169 members elected, 150 are constituency representatives and 19 are members at large (one from each constituency) (Government of Norway 2017). Members of parliament are elected for a fixed four-year term and cannot call an early election.

### **5.3. Issue Salience**

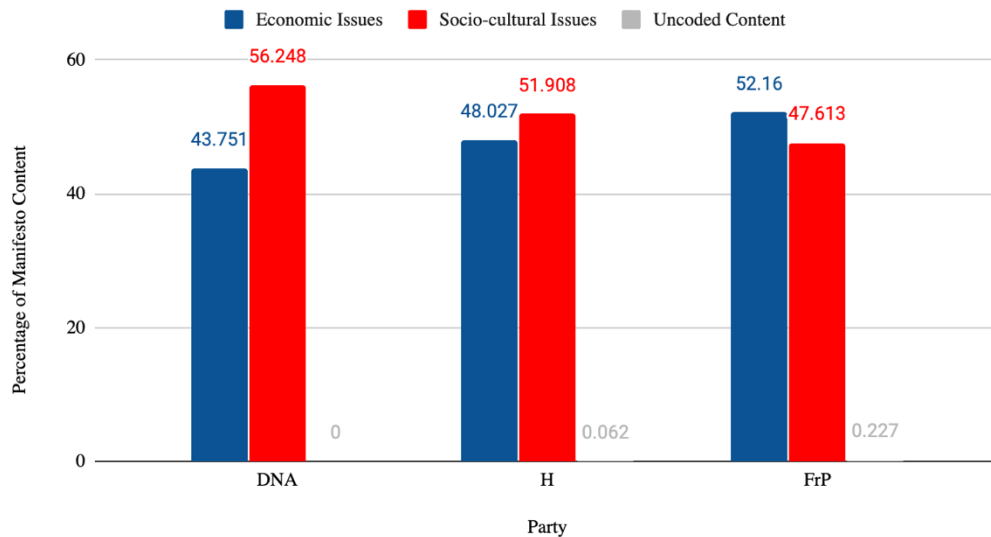
The Finnish public opinion data told us that the public is focused on economic issues and the party manifestos are split depending on the party, but that RRWP issues were more salient in the 2011 election than the 2007 election. Now the study will do the same investigation into the Norwegian manifesto data and public opinion data to see which dimension dominates and which individual issues are at the front of voters and parties' minds to see if they may have effected FrP's electoral success. In the manifesto data, each manifesto's content was coded at more than 98% of the content. In the public opinion surveys run by the Norwegian National Election Study with the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, they received 2,012 responses in the 2005 election and 1,782 in the 2009 election.

#### ***5.3.1 Issue Salience in Party Literature***

Based on the CMP data, it appears that the three major parties in Norway have made cultural issues almost equally or more important than economic issues (see Figures 5.2 and 5.3). In both the 2005 and the 2009 elections the Labour Party (DNA) and Conservative Party (H) dedicate more than half of their manifesto content to sociocultural issues.

Figure 5.2

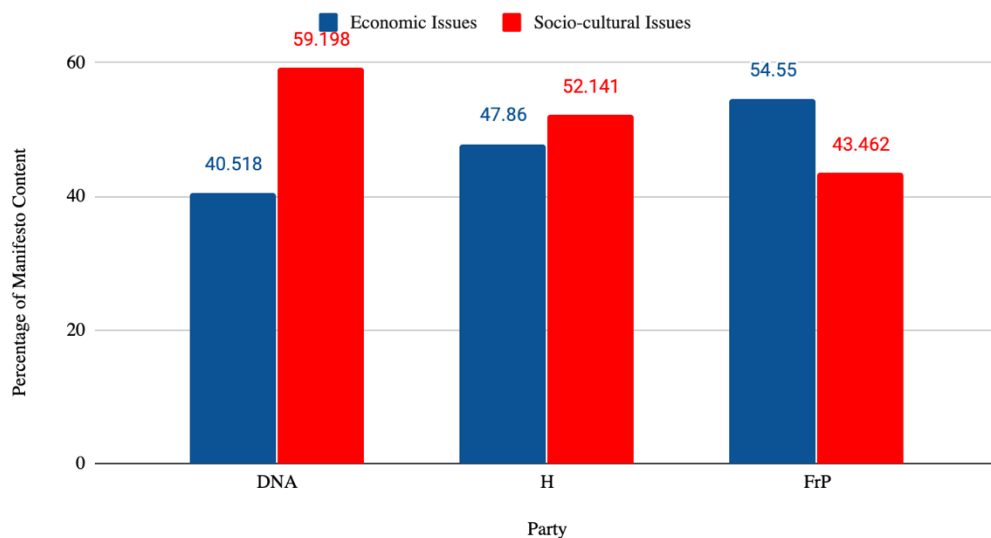
### Norway 2005 Election Manifesto Content



The DNA has a stronger preference for sociocultural issues with them making up over 56% and then over 59% in 2005 and 2009. H's manifestos are more equally split, with over 51% and then over 52% going to sociocultural issues. Curiously, the FrP manifestos are made up of more economic content than sociocultural content in both elections. Again though, it is almost an even split with economic issues making up over 52% and then over 54% in 2005 and 2009.

Figure 5.3

### Norway 2009 Election Manifesto Content



An analysis of specific issues in each manifesto will tell us exactly which issues were the most salient for each party. The most salient issue for the DNA was Welfare State Expansion, but the party also has many significant issues that are non-economic. In 2005 the second most salient issue was Internationalism (positive) and in 2009 it was Education Expansion. Of the six issues with over 5% in DNA's 2005 manifesto, four of them were sociocultural, and of the six in 2009 four were sociocultural. The issues of Equality (positive), Education Expansion, and Internationalism (positive) were all significant in both election manifestos.

Table 5.1. DNA Manifesto Issue salience

|               | 2005                                    | %      | 2009                                    | %      |
|---------------|---|--------|---|--------|
| Economic      | Welfare State Expansion                 | 16.587 | Welfare State Expansion                 | 17.365 |
|               | Technology and Infrastructure: Positive | 8.594  | Technology and Infrastructure: Positive | 5.318  |
| Sociocultural | Internationalism: Positive              | 10.216 | Education Expansion                     | 12.753 |
|               | Equality: Positive                      | 7.632  | Environmental Protection                | 8.8    |
|               | Education Expansion                     | 6.37   | Equality: Positive                      | 6.824  |
|               | Culture: Positive                       | 5.469  | Internationalism: Positive              | 5.129  |

H's number one issue in both elections was economic, though it was Free Market Economy in 2005 and Welfare State Expansion in 2009. In both years, similar to DNA, the second most salient issue was sociocultural, Freedom and Human Rights in 2005 and Education Expansion in 2009. H's most salient issues were equally divided between economic and cultural issues, with three of each making up more than 5% of the manifesto in each election. Education Expansion was the only sociocultural issue that was significant in both elections.

Table 5.2 H Manifesto Issue Salience

|               | 2005                                    | %      | 2009                                    | %      |
|---------------|---|--------|---|--------|
| Economic      | Free Market Economy                     | 11.036 | Welfare State Expansion                 | 15.547 |
|               | Welfare State Expansion                 | 8.508  | Economic Growth: Positive               | 7.739  |
|               | Technology and Infrastructure: Positive | 7.028  | Technology and Infrastructure: Positive | 5.906  |
| Sociocultural | Freedom and Human Rights                | 8.693  | Education Expansion                     | 10.794 |
|               | Education Expansion                     | 8.261  | Environmental Protection                | 8.69   |
|               | Decentralization                        | 5.24   | Law and Order: Positive                 | 6.857  |

The FrP also had an economic issue as its most salient in both election manifestos, Free Market Economy in 2005 and Welfare State Expansion in 2009. Unlike DNA or H, the FrP's second most important issue in both elections was also economic, with Welfare State Expansion and Technology and Infrastructure (positive) the second most important issue in each election. In 2005 the three most salient issues were all economic, together these three economic issues alone made up around 33% of the manifesto content. The remaining three issues that received more than five percent were all sociocultural in 2005. In the 2011 manifesto, the eight issues that received more than five percent were split, with five economic and three sociocultural. Education Expansion and Military (positive) were significant in both elections. In 2011 Culture (positive) also became significant, making three core RRWP issues present and significant in at least one of the FRP manifestos.

Across all parties, the issues of welfare state expansion, educational expansion, and technology and infrastructure (positive) were all significant in both elections. For all parties in both elections, the most salient issues were evenly split between economic and social issues, but the most salient issue was always an economic issue. The mainstream parties' manifestos did contain more content on sociocultural elements than those of the FrP, so mainstream parties were focusing on sociocultural issues.

Table 5.3. FrP Manifesto Issue Salience

|               | 2005                                    | %      | 2009                                       | %      |
|---------------|---|--------|--|--------|
| Economic      | Free Market Economy                     | 12.737 | Welfare State Expansion                    | 10.443 |
|               | Welfare State Expansion                 | 11.334 | Technology and Infrastructure: Positive    | 9.398  |
|               | Technology and Infrastructure: Positive | 10.538 | Governmental and Administrative Efficiency | 7.807  |
|               |   |        | Free Market Economy                        | 6.813  |
|               |   |        | Incentives: Positive                       | 5.022  |
| Sociocultural | Education Expansion                     | 9.439  | Education Expansion                        | 8.404  |
|               | Law and Order: Positive                 | 7.013  | Military: Positive                         | 6.713  |
|               | Military: Positive                      | 6.141  | Culture: Positive                          | 5.172  |

### 5.3.2. Public Opinion

Now, we move on to look at how public opinion data compares to the manifesto data to see which dimension more salient, which issues were important, and if any of those issues would be beneficial to the FrP. Similar to the parties' manifesto content, the public opinion data is relatively evenly divided between economic and sociocultural issues. On a personal level in 2005, the public favoured economic issues at around 52% and sociocultural issues at 34%. In 2009 this evened out to a difference of less than .10% between economic issues at 41.87% and sociocultural issues at 41.96% (see Figure 5.4). On the country level, the difference is again small. In 2005 economic issues make up just under 43% of responses and sociocultural just over 40%. In 2009 sociocultural issues became more salient and made up almost 50% of responses with just under 39% of respondents choosing an economic issue (see Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.4.

What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Norway)

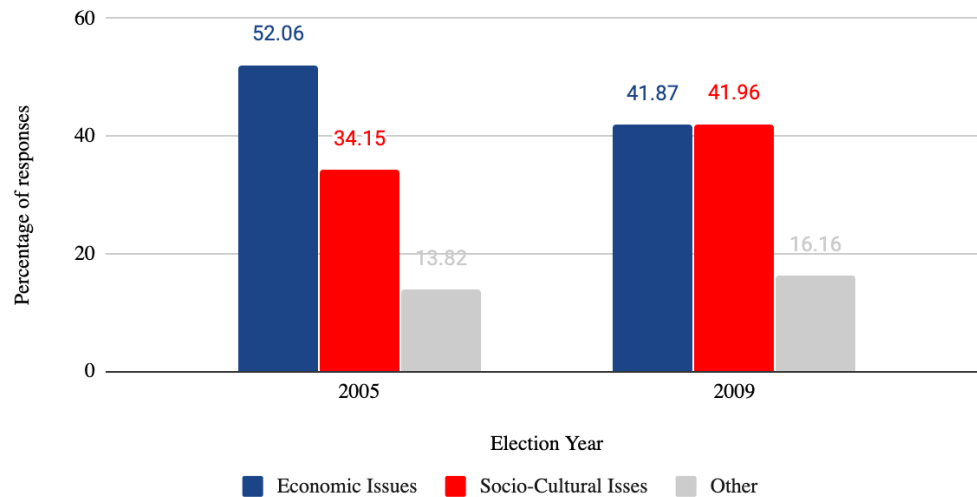
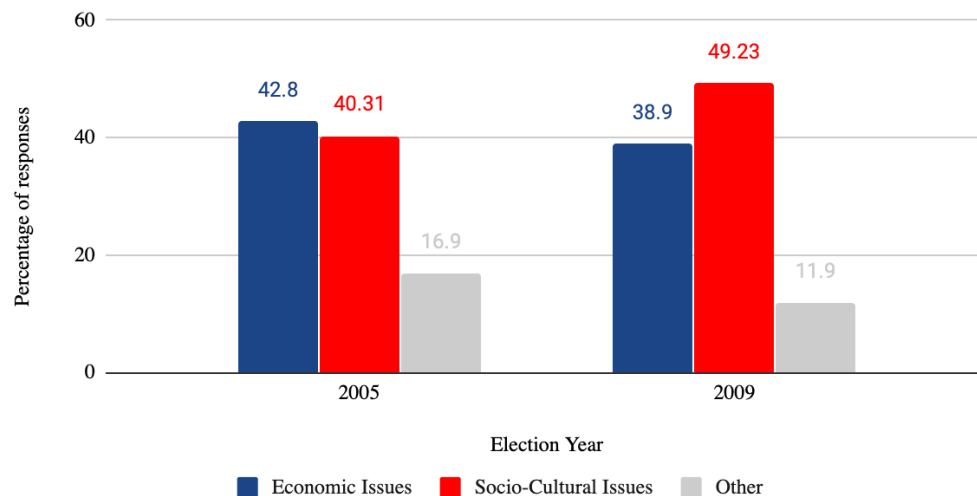


Figure 5.5.

What do you think is the most important political problem facing Norway today?



Seeing as sociocultural issues are more salient to the public both personally and country-wide in 2009, and sociocultural issues are almost equally salient to economic issues at the country level in 2005, it is important to see exactly which issues were important and whether they reflect the core issues of RRWP. On a personal level School and Education Issues are the

most popular response in both years, making up more than 14% of responses in 2005 and then more than 12% in 2009. In 2005 at the personal level Care for the Elderly, Taxes, and Health Services all made up a significant portion of responses. In 2009 on the personal level School and Educational issues, Environmental Issues (10.66%), Immigration/Refugee Policy (8.75%), Care for the Elderly (7.24%), Taxes (6.85%), and other Health/Social Issues (5.27%) were all significant.

Table 5.4. Norway - What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Egocentric)

| 2005                                    | %     | 2009                                    | %     |
|---|-------|---|-------|
| School and educational issues           | 14.76 | School and educational issues           | 12.79 |
| Care for the elderly                    | 10.93 | Environmental issues                    | 10.66 |
| Taxes                                   | 6.96  | Immigration / refugee policy            | 8.75  |
| Health service                          | 4.97  | Care for the elderly                    | 7.24  |
| Social equalization/distribution        | 3.68  | Taxes                                   | 6.85  |
| (Other) economic issues                 | 3.53  | (Other) health / social issues          | 5.27  |
| The question of government alternatives | 3.43  | Communication/transport                 | 3.59  |
| Immigration / refugee policy            | 3.08  | The question of government alternatives | 2.97  |

On a country level, the most important issue in both years was Environmental Issues (13.57% and 15.43%). In 2005 this was followed by Employment (8%), the European Union (6.86%), Care for the Elderly (5.96%), School and Educational Issues (5.22%), and Health Service (4.67%). In 2009 Environmental Issues was followed by Climate Change/Policy, together making up over 25% of responses. This was followed by Immigration/Refugee Policy (9.2%), Employment (8.42%), Care for the Elderly (7.18%), and School and Educational Issues (4.71%).



Table 5.5. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Norway today? (Sociotropic)

| 2005                            | %    | 2009  | %     |
|---------------------------------|------|---|-------|
| Environmental issues            | 8.7  | Environmental issues                              | 15.43 |
| Employment                      | 8    | Climate change / policy                           | 11.84 |
| EU                              | 6.86 | Immigration / refugee policy                      | 9.2   |
| Care for the elderly            | 5.96 | Employment  | 8.42  |
| School and educational issues   | 5.22 | Care for the elderly                              | 7.18  |
| Health service                  | 4.67 | School and educational issues                     | 4.71  |
| Poverty                         | 3.73 | Health service                                    | 3.37  |
| Industrial/trade politics       | 3.33 | (Other) economic issues                           | 3.14  |
| Other problem (not specifiable) | 3.33 | Other problem (not specifiable)                   | 3.09  |
| Aid to developing countries     | 3.28 | Oil politics / distribution of national resources | 2.58  |
| Immigration / refugee policy    | 3.18 | Communication/transport                           | 2.19  |
| (Other) foreign policy issues   | 3.13 | EU  | 2.13  |

In 2009 immigration was a salient issue in the public on both a personal and national level. This coincides with the FrP's most successful electoral result. Of all the issues in the public opinion survey, Immigration / Refugee Policy is the only one that is a core radical right-wing issue, though it is highly salient in 2009. Immigration, the EU, the Fight Against Terrorism in 2005 and the EU and Defence and Security Policy Issues in 2009 are all issues that likely would have favoured the FrP.

Given the importance of environmental issues in the elections it is surprising the FrP did well, as the party does not believe global warming is man-made and is publicly skeptical of the United Nations Climate Panel conclusions (Aalberg 2009: 1069). In fact, in 2008 it was the only party in parliament that opposed a parliamentary wide climate agreement to be climate neutral by 2030 (ibid). Though as the only party that is vocally unsupportive of climate change initiatives, they would have been the only party to vote for if one did not support climate change mitigation efforts.

Table 5.6. Most Salient Issues by Party Vote - Norway

| DNA                           |        |                               |        |                      |        |                               |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--------|
| 2005                          |        |                               |        | 2009                 |        |                               |        |
| Country Level                 |        | Personal Level                |        | Country Level        |        | Personal Level                |        |
| Employment                    | 10.74% | School and educational issues | 17.96% | Environmental Issues | 18.08% | School and educational issues | 13.28% |
| Environmental Issues          | 8.27%  | Care for the elderly          | 13.38% | Climate Change       | 13.28% | Environmental Issues          | 10.33% |
| EU                            | 7.57%  | Health services               | 8.10%  | Employment           | 11.07% | Care for the elderly          | 9.41%  |
| H                             |        |                               |        |                      |        |                               |        |
| 2005                          |        |                               |        | 2009                 |        |                               |        |
| Country Level                 |        | Personal Level                |        | Country Level        |        | Personal Level                |        |
| EU                            | 11.03% | Taxes                         | 16.91% | Environmental Issues | 13.59% | Taxes                         | 18.77% |
| Employment                    | 8.82%  | School and educational issues | 15.44% | Climate Change       | 9.06%  | School and educational issues | 17.48% |
| Industrial/trade politics     | 6.99%  | Other economic issues         | 12.87% | Care for the elderly | 9.06%  | Immigration                   | 6.47%  |
| School and educational issues | 6.99%  | Interest rates                | 8.46%  | Employment           | 8.74%  | Care for the elderly          | 6.47%  |
| FrP                           |        |                               |        |                      |        |                               |        |
| 2005                          |        |                               |        | 2009                 |        |                               |        |
| Country Level                 |        | Personal Level                |        | Country Level        |        | Personal Level                |        |
| Care for the elderly          | 9.35%  | Care for the elderly          | 15.16% | Immigration          | 20.54% | Immigration                   | 28.62% |
| Employment                    | 8.39%  | Taxes                         | 11.61% | Employment           | 8.75%  | Taxes                         | 12.79% |
| EU                            | 7.74%  | Immigration                   | 11.61% | Care for the elderly | 8.42%  | Care for the elderly          | 8.75%  |

The breakdown of the three most salient issues depending on the party the respondent voted for (see Table 5.6) helps give insight into the issues that were most important in each electorate. Cultural issues are evenly spread out in responses for each electorate at both the personal and country level. Environmental Issues, Climate Change, School and Educational

Issues, and the EU are all amongst the most salient issues for respondents that voted for DNA. For DNA voters a sociocultural issue was the most salient issue among respondents at both the personal and country level in 2009 and the personal level in 2007. Respondents that voted for the Conservative Party (H) also listed sociocultural issues as the most important issue facing the country in both elections, with the EU in 2005 and Environmental Issues in 2009. Other salient sociocultural responses included Climate Change, Immigration, and School and Educational Issues. For the FrP supporters, Immigration was by far the most common response as the most important issue facing the country and personally in 2011. Apart from immigration, the only other sociocultural issue that received a significant amount of responses was the EU. Care of the elderly although not a sociocultural issue, is highly salient and is a radical right-wing party issue.

Sociocultural issues are the most salient issue overall at the personal and country level. When looking at the most important issue by party choice, sociocultural issues are significant there regardless of the vote choice. The issues are also those of ‘new cultural politics’ that focus on the environment, climate change, immigration, and the EU. Despite the fact we can see that respondents do find sociocultural issues very salient, it is important to see whether these issues involved vote choice.

### ***5.3.3. Multivariate Analyses***

Looking at multivariate analysis models for vote choice can hopefully help explain the high levels of support for the FrP during these elections. In 2005 there are two significant variables in the model for voting for the Progress Party, post-secondary education which is negative at -.74 and right-wing ideology at 2.12, so those without post-secondary education and those with right-wing ideology are more likely to vote for FrP. The FrP Partisanship variable was dropped as it predicted success perfectly, meaning all those that indicated FrP partisanship voted

FrP. The model explains 13% of the variance in the FrP votes. There are three significant variables in the model for DNA vote choice, these are DNA partisanship, being female, and right-wing ideology. The DNA partisanship dummy is very strong and positive at 5.00, the female variable is relatively weak and positive at .64, the right-wing ideology coefficient is negative at -1.36. The model dropped the FrP partisanship as it predicted failure perfectly, meaning no respondents that identified FrP partisanship voted for DNA. The model explains 66% of the variance in DNA votes.

Table 5.7. Norway 2005 Multivariate Analyses

|                          | FrP Vote                 | DNA Vote                   | H Vote                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| DNA Partisanship         | 1.170369<br>(.716246)    | 5.003788***<br>(.4177397)  | 13.59809<br>(1201.703)    |
| H Partisanship           | .9660666<br>(.6706662)   | -.5264326<br>(.8546998)    | 19.6861<br>(1201.702)     |
| FrP Partisanship         | 0<br>Omitted (success)   | 0<br>Omitted (failure)     | 0<br>Omitted (failure)    |
| Aged Over 50             | -.0914356<br>(.4212526)  | .207335<br>(.3408661)      | -.2614979<br>(.4610594)   |
| Female                   | -.457218<br>(.4443416)   | .6424931*<br>(.3584357)    | -.2302553<br>(.45716)     |
| Post-Secondary Education | -.7408344*<br>(.4446227) | .3694805<br>(.3748937)     | 1.254544***<br>(.4791791) |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.433549<br>(.4253284)   | -.2426902<br>(.3616012)    | 1.161159**<br>(.4739131)  |
| Country Issue Salience   | .1225709<br>(.4176366)   | -.0803217<br>(.3390192)    | -.5354538<br>(.4657139)   |
| Right-wing Ideology      | 2.11676***<br>(.6257748) | -1.356479***<br>(.4192079) | 1.632126<br>(1.048683)    |
| constant                 | -4.037901<br>(1.057223)  | -3.513221<br>(.7673147)    | -20.28296<br>(1201.703)   |
| Observations             | 583                      | 583                        | 583                       |
| Pseudo R-squared         | 0.1328                   | 0.6616                     | 0.7759                    |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

There are two significant variables in the model for H vote in 2005, these are post-secondary education and salience of economic issues at the personal level. The strongest variable is post-secondary education at 1.25, so those with a higher level of education are more likely to

support H. The salience of economic issues coefficient is 1.16, because it is positive it means those that think economic issues are salient at the personal level are more likely to vote for H. The model omitted the FrP partisanship variable as it predicted failure perfectly, meaning those that indicated FrP partisanship did not vote H. This model explains 78% of the variance in votes for the Conservative Party.

Table 5.8. Norway 2009 Multivariate Analyses

|                          | FrP Vote                   | DNA Vote                  | H Vote                    |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| DNA Partisanship         | 1.292133<br>(.8279994)     | 4.984341***<br>(.4286418) | -.4108257<br>(.6301496)   |
| H Partisanship           | 2.469851***<br>(.8044378)  | -.2556233<br>(.7098517)   | 3.564559***<br>(.4722822) |
| FrP Partisanship         | 7.918656***<br>(1.078)     | 0<br>Omitted (failure)    | -1.993487*<br>(1.098068)  |
| Aged Over 50             | .8296685**<br>(.3450411)   | -.1543067<br>(.3455095)   | -.5485835*<br>(.3199695)  |
| Female                   | -.6250121*<br>(.3586861)   | .4450256<br>(.3423723)    | .5245478<br>(.3335904)    |
| Post-Secondary Education | -.4017481<br>(.348902)     | -.5348543<br>(.3459465)   | .9487475***<br>(.3247716) |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -1.029784***<br>(.3476769) | .7980877**<br>(.3560676)  | .40514<br>(.317041)       |
| Country Issue Salience   | -.3747177<br>(.344178)     | .396922<br>(.3489439)     | .2003021<br>(.318233)     |
| Right-wing Ideology      | .8430428<br>(.6778141)     | -1.02541**<br>(.4263632)  | 2.311104***<br>(.6259584) |
| Constant                 | -3.613072<br>(.9999312)    | -3.557042<br>(.7526447)   | -5.780977<br>(.9006401)   |
| Observations             | 697                        | 610                       | 697                       |
| Pseudo R-Squared         | 0.5978                     | 0.6785                    | 0.6175                    |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

In the 2009 election, there is a significant increase in the number of independent variables that predict a party vote. There are five significant variables in the model for an FrP vote - H partisanship, FrP partisanship, aged over 50, female, and salience of economic issues at the personal level. The strongest variable is FrP partisanship at 7.92, followed by H partisanship at 2.47, then salience of economic issues at the personal level at -1.03, aged over 50 at .83, and being female at -.63. This model explains 60% of the variance of voting for the FrP. A positive

relationship between FrP partisanship, H partisanship, and a vote for FrP is not surprising, as both are parties on the right side of the political spectrum so voters could easily support either party. The negative coefficient of personal level issue salience tells us that voters that found sociocultural issues rather than economic issues important were more likely to vote FrP.

There are three significant variables in the model for DNA vote in 2009, DNA partisanship, the salience of economic issues at the personal level, and right-wing ideology. The DNA partisanship variable is very strong and positive at 4.98, followed by the salience variable at the personal level, which is positive at .80, and right-wing ideology at -1.03. So, if one thinks economic issues are important at the personal level, then they are more likely to support DNA. The FrP partisanship variable was omitted as it predicts perfect failure, meaning respondents that held FrP partisanship never voted for DNA. The model explains 68% of the variance in votes for DNA. There are five significant variables in the model for H vote, there are H Partisanship, right-wing ideology, FrP partisanship, post-secondary education, and aged over 50. The H partisanship variable is relatively strong and positive at 3.6, right-wing ideology at 2.31, FrP partisanship at -1.99, and the education variable is weak at .95, meaning that more highly educated people are more likely to support H, and the aged over 50 variables is negative at -.55. The model explains 63% of the variance in H votes.

Once again, the partisanship variables were by far the most significant vote choice predictor, so it is worth investigating if some of the independent variables may influence partisanship. In 2005 the issue salience variables were not significant for FrP partisanship. Personal level issue salience was significant for H partisanship at .54 and country level issue salience was significant for DNA partisanship at .38 (see table 5.9). In 2009 issue salience was again not significant for FrP partisanship, but personal level and country level issue salience

were significant and positive for DNA partisanship at .73 and .38 (see Table 5.10). These models indicate that economic issue importance affects mainstream party partisanship but not FrP partisanship. Apart from the issue salience variables, the post-secondary education and ideology variables were significant indicators of partisanship for every party in each election.

Table 5.9. Norway 2005 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses

|                          | FrP Partisanship           | DNA Partisanship           | H Partisanship           |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Aged Over 50             | -.5295939**<br>(.2687343)  | .3442072*<br>(.1873874)    | -.002003<br>(.2352569)   |
| Female                   | -.5084256*<br>(.2766625)   | -.188499<br>(.1868797)     | .021461<br>(.2370219)    |
| Post-Secondary Education | -1.794085***<br>(.3248502) | -.5220858***<br>(.1919911) | 1.109858***<br>(.23016)  |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.2068118<br>(.2627949)    | .0657395<br>(.1931842)     | .5367212**<br>(.2399817) |
| Country Issue Salience   | -.1283569<br>(.2539611)    | .3774299**<br>(.1840232)   | -.1556478<br>(.2291306)  |
| Right-wing Ideology      | 2.434218***<br>(.3285234)  | -2.635909***<br>(.209291)  | 4.583632***<br>(.519761) |
| Constant                 | -1.951471<br>(.530102)     | .6049919<br>(.3460546)     | -5.431543<br>(.6686418)  |
| Observations             | 731                        | 731                        | 731                      |
| Pseudo R-Squared         | 0.2344                     | 0.2444                     | 0.3859                   |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

Table 5.10. Norway 2009 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses

|                          | FrP Partisanship           | DNA Partisanship           | H Partisanship            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aged Over 50             | .110524<br>(.2487199)      | -.1253287<br>(.1925219)    | .1068772<br>(.2084644)    |
| Female                   | -.3430426<br>(.2607743)    | .1956047<br>(.1919315)     | -.029352<br>(.2142054)    |
| Post-Secondary Education | -1.485863***<br>(.2947751) | -.5481521***<br>(.1954542) | .945467***<br>(.2134693)  |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.0831342<br>(.2532701)    | .7316345***<br>(.201328)   | -.0061917<br>(.2124733)   |
| Country Issue Salience   | -.3166965<br>(.2537287)    | .3802223*<br>(.1959086)    | .0547981<br>(.2127891)    |
| Right-wing Ideology      | 4.133946***<br>(.722102)   | -2.936582***<br>(.2097099) | 4.800882***<br>(.5926965) |
| Constant                 | -4.1749<br>(.8299056)      | .2685172<br>(.3656126)     | -5.288001<br>(.6972109)   |
| Observations             | 739                        | 739                        | 739                       |
| Pseudo R-Squared         | 0.2747                     | 0.2971                     | 0.3544                    |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

The Norwegian political arena has become much more evenly divided between sociocultural and economic issues and in 2009 it seems favours of sociocultural issues. The multivariate analyses showed that personal level issue salience affected voter support for FrP, DNA, and H support in at least one election. Both the mainstream parties favoured sociocultural issues in their election manifestos in 2005 and 2009, and public opinion was focused more on sociocultural issues in 2009 as well. Though some of the most salient issues are not RRWP issues per se, such as environmentalism and climate change policy, it does help move the political discussion to new cultural issues. Some core issues of the far-right have been appearing more in manifestos and public opinion like immigration and refugee policy, culture, defence and security, terrorism, and the European Union. This is surely beneficial to the FrP. Though the FrP focuses more on economic issues in its manifestos, it is clear that its voters focus on issues traditional to RRWP, like immigration, care of the elderly, and the EU. This means that the party is benefitting from the increase in issue salience of RRWP issues in public opinion and from its position as the radical right-wing party within the Norwegian party system. Based on the public opinion and manifesto data it could be said that the Norwegian public and parties have moved towards replacing many salient economic issues with sociocultural issues.



## **Chapter 6: Iceland**

In the Nordic landscape, Iceland stands as the only country to not have a radical right-wing populist party emerge onto the political landscape. It did not follow Denmark and Norway in their second wave of tax populist parties in the 1970s and subsequent transformation into radical right-wing party, nor did it follow Finland's agrarian party's evolution into a radical right-wing party in the 1990s. Even Sweden, though late, has recently seen the parliamentary breakthrough of the far-right Swedish Democrats in 2010.

Despite the Nordic party space being similar enough to be studied as a group (Grendstad 2003; Jungar & Jupskas 2014; Widfeldt 2018), Iceland's party system is unique in its historical absence of a radical right-wing populist party. This characteristic makes it worthy for this study to ask - why is there no right-wing populist party in Iceland? The prediction for this case is that sociocultural issues were less salient than economic issues, which made it unfavourable for a radical right-wing party to emerge. Iceland was one of the countries hit hardest by the 2008 economic crisis. Following the literature that states RRWP are less likely to emerge in economically weaker countries because economic issues are more salient, I predict this theory will explain the Icelandic case's absence of a radical right-wing party. This section will do a brief overview of the literature on the Icelandic party system and elections, which is relatively small in the English language, followed by a review of party manifesto data, and then public opinion data.

### **6.1. Iceland's Political and Party System History**

Unlike other Nordic countries that had the introduction of new parties in the 1970s, Iceland's party system has been stable for more than half a century, only rocked by the economic crisis in 2008 and resulting political 'crisis' afterwards. The Icelandic party system has been

dominated by four parties since the 1930s - the right-wing socially and economically conservative Independence Party (IP), the centre-right Progressive Party (PP) which was previously an agrarian party but rebranded in the 21st century as a more centrist party, the centre-left Social Democratic Party, and until 1998 the left-wing People's Alliance (Önnudóttir et al., 2017: 164). Historically the right-wing parties have been stronger electorally and more stable, compared to several party splits on the left occurring over time.

Currently, the major parties include the Independence Party and Progressive Party on the centre-right side of the political spectrum, the Social Democratic Alliance (SDA), a successor to the Social Democratic Party, and the Left-Green Movement, formed as a splinter party from the now-defunct People's Alliance, on the left side of the political spectrum. Since 1971 every election has featured a small party that is normally elected into parliament but does not survive another election (Önnudóttir et al., 2017: 164). To date, there has never been a right-wing or ethno-nationalist party in Iceland, with most smaller parties that emerged being Left-Socialist, Social Democratic, or Liberal/Conservative (Indridason 2005: 445). In the 2013 election, several different parties across the spectrum emerged. These parties included the Bright Future party on the left, the Reform Party on the right, and the Pirate Party focused on civil rights and direct democracy (John, 2016). These parties shook up the traditional party system by emerging as parliamentary opposition. However, in the 2007, election only the four main parties plus the Liberal Party were elected into parliament and in 2009 only the main four parties were elected into parliament.

The policy competition in Icelandic politics is dominated by the left-right cleavage, with a focus on the welfare state and government intervention, followed by the urban-rural/centre-periphery cleavage, and in the latter half of the 20th century, foreign policy has been another

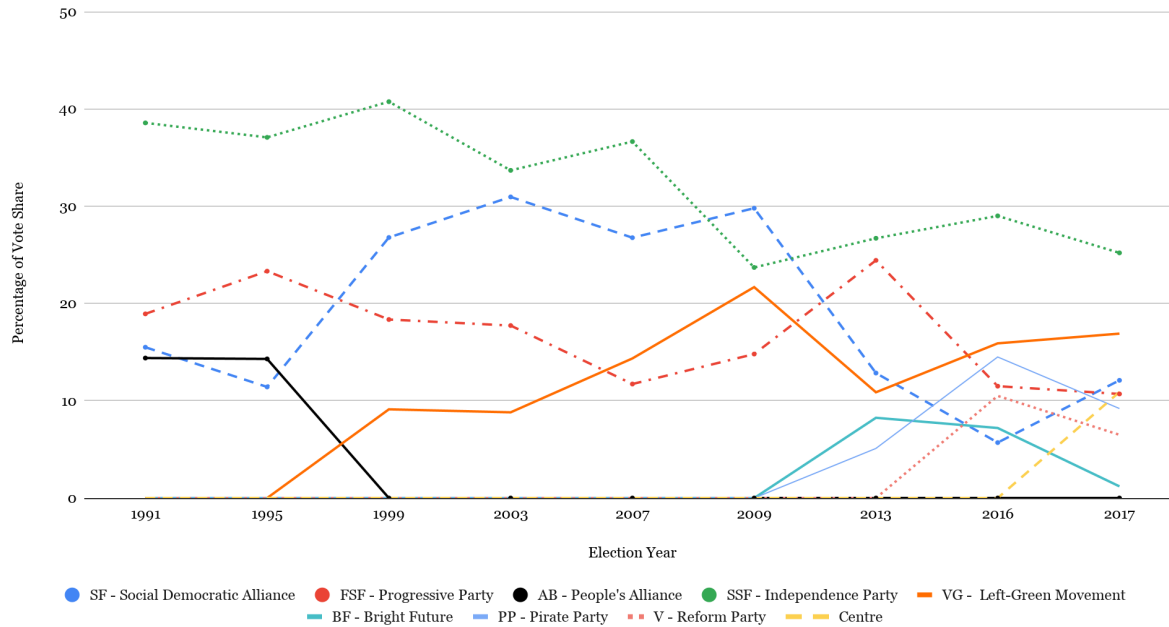
relatively important cleavage (Hardarson & Kristinsson 2008: 373). In the 2009 election, a previous study found that economic issues were highly salient, specifically those related to borrowing foreign currency and mortgage payments (Önnudóttir, Schmitt, and Harðarson 2017: 162).

Iceland elects 63 members to a unicameral parliament. There are six constituencies in Iceland, each electing between 9 and 12 members, with nine seats in parliament distributed based on the national results to ensure proportionality. A party must surpass a 5% threshold to be allocated one of these nine seats (Hardarson & Kristinsson 2002: 373).

Between 1995 and 2007, for three consecutive terms, the Independence Party and Progressive Party were in a centre-right coalition government (Hardarson & Kristinsson 2008: 373). Before the 2007 election, both the Independence Party and Progressive Party elected new leaders, and both focused on traditional left-right issues: welfare issues, care of the elderly, education, health, and family issues (ibid). The Left-Green Movement focused on environmental issues, which were particularly salient at the time because of recent proposals to expand energy-intensive industries around the country. The Progressive Party was the biggest loser in the 2007 election, as it lost six percentage points of its vote share from 2003. The Social Democratic Alliance also decreased its vote share. The Left-Green Movement was the winner, increasing its vote share by five percentage points. The Independence also increased its vote share but more modestly (Hardarson & Kristinsson 2008: 374). In 2007 a grand coalition was formed between the Independence Party and the Social Democratic Alliance; this is notable as it followed several years of polarization in Icelandic politics.

Figure 6.1.

### Icelandic Parliamentary Election Results 1991 - 2017



#### 6.1.1. Iceland's 2009 Election

The 2009 election was early, called after the dissolution of the grand coalition between the IP and SDA as a result of the aftershock of the economic crisis. In 2008 the three major Icelandic banks collapsed, and since the banks had grown to be over nine times the size of the Icelandic economy, the government couldn't back the banks during the crisis (Hardarson & Kristinsson 2010: 523). Following the crash, mass protests broke out in Reykjavik calling for an election and the resignation of politically appointed members of the finance sector. These protests have gone on to be called the 'pots and pans revolution' demanding "the rascals to be thrown out" (ibid: 524). Around 25% of the Icelandic population participated in the government protests and around 75% of Icelanders supported the demands of the protesters: government resignation, an election, and the resignation of major figures in the Central Bank and Icelandic

Financial Supervisory Authority, and constitutional revision of the political system. The protests continued for around four months until all the demands were met (Önnudóttir, Schmitt, Harðarson 2017: 163).

During the mass protests, the SDA as a member of the coalition government called for the Prime Minister (a member of the Independence Party) to resign. After the IP refused the SDA pulled out of the coalition and the government fell. The Progressive Party stated they would support a left-wing government if it was formed and in February 2009 a coalition government was formed by the SDA and the Left-Green Movement with support from the PP on the condition that an election was called as soon as possible (Hardarson & Kristinsson 2010: 524). Though the SDA had been in government during the crash, the Independence Party had been in government for over a decade and therefore took the blame for the crash over the SDA, which had only been in government since 2007 (ibid). The Left-Green Movement saw an increase in public support during this political crisis partly because they were publicly driving the anti-government protests.

In preparation for the 2009 election and response to the protests, the parties changed many of their candidates, and three of the four major parties changed leadership (two did so within a month of the election) (ibid). In 2009, 43% of candidates elected were new to parliamentary politics (Hardarson & Kristinsson 2010: 525). Opinion polls as early as February indicated that this election could produce the largest swing of support to left-wing parties in Icelandic history and potential for the first-ever majority socialist government (Hardarson & Kristinsson 2010: 525). The biggest loser by far in the election was the Independence Party, losing thirteen percentage points of its vote share. This resulted in them no longer being the biggest party in parliament (ibid). The Social Democratic Alliance and Left-Green Movement

together won 52% of all votes and went on to form a majority coalition for the first time in history (ibid).

Considering the Independence Party is historically the party most associated with economic freedom and policy, and they were the party blamed and subsequently punished for the economic crisis, this should have opened the party system for another right-wing party. The Independence Party was also socially conservative and nationalistic and had ties to both the working class and trade unions as well as the upper class (Indridason 2005: 442). Given the IP's sociocultural beliefs, there should have been an electorate with preferences that match the ideology and position of a radical right-wing party on social issues. But instead of a right-wing party benefitting or emerging from the Independence Party's demise, it was primarily the left-wing parties that benefited from the realignment of the electorate.

The Progressive Party increased its vote share in 2009 by under three percentage points, but the Left-Green Movement increased its vote share by over seven percentage points and the SDA by just over three percentage points, meaning the left-wing parties took more than two-thirds of the Independence Parties prior supporters (Norwegian Centre for Research Data). The Progressive Party may have slightly increased its vote, but they remained the fourth biggest party, a position they found themselves in 2007 for the first time in more than a decade. In 2013 the Independence Party and Progressive Party were re-elected into office, arguably because they were able to capitalize on populist electoral promises desired by the public (Önnudóttir, Schmitt, and Harðarson 2017: 165).

## **6.2. Issue Salience**

Iceland is rarely used as a country case study, nor is it often considered in small-N comparative studies, even when looking at Nordic politics. This means that Iceland has been

largely neglected in the literature looking at party politics, issue salience, and public opinion, even though there is a large set of public opinion data and party manifesto data available to researchers. Given the country has seldom been looked at, this study can offer insight into issue salience in the country, and the salience of economic compared to sociocultural issues between 2007 and 2009.

Following the last two country cases, this section will look at the manifesto content of the two major left and right parties in Iceland, the Social Democratic Alliance (The Alliance for short) (SDA) and the Independence Party (IP). All content of the manifestos was successfully coded into categories, so 100% of content has been considered. After looking at a comparison of aggregated economic and sociocultural issues by party manifesto, there will be an analysis of the individually most important issue by party to gain insight into the aggregated data. After the manifesto data, there will be a similar aggregation of public opinion responses of the most important issues at the personal and country level. There were 1,595 respondents in 2007 and 1,385 respondents in 2009 in the Icelandic National Election Study and the Comparative Study of Electoral System survey that were run together.

### ***6.2.1. Issue Salience in Party Literature***

The issue salience in party manifestos in Iceland is surprising. In 2007, the two major parties are almost evenly split between economic and sociocultural issues. The Social Democratic Alliance's content was slightly in favour of sociocultural issues at 51.4% to economic issues at 48.6% (see figure 6.2) and The Independence Party leaned slightly in favour of economic issues at 51.3%, compared to 48.7% for sociocultural issues. This equal division between economic and sociocultural issues echoes the data from the Norwegian election studies and could signify a move towards new cultural issues coming to shape how the political

competition is thought about in Iceland.

Figure 6.2.

### Iceland 2007 Election Manifesto Content

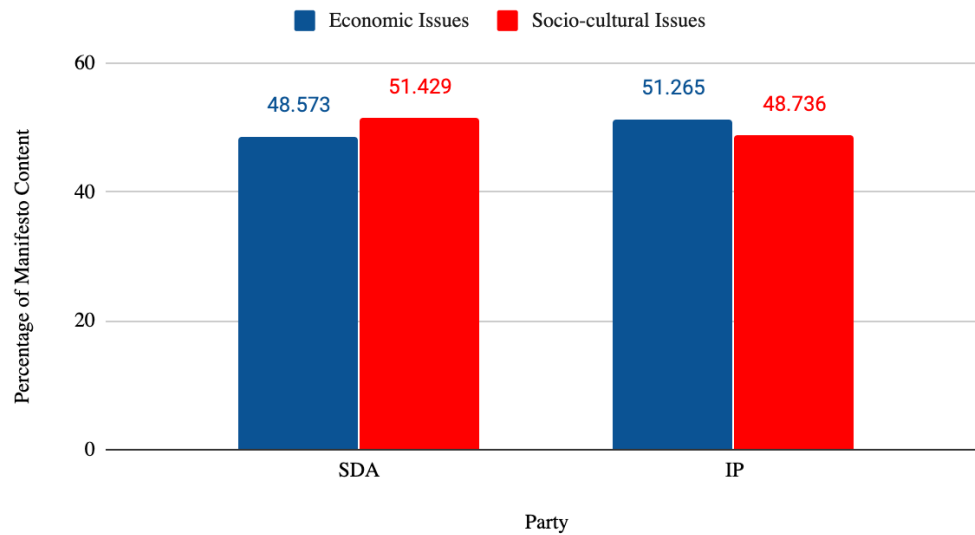
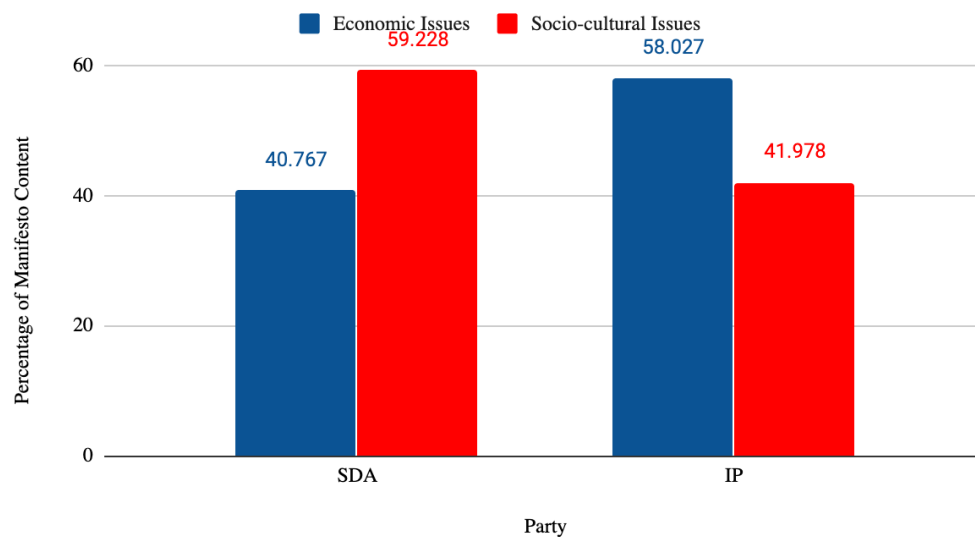


Figure 6.3.

### Iceland 2009 Election Manifesto Content



In 2009, soon after the economic crash, the manifesto content is not as economically skewed as expected. The Independence Party did move towards more economic content, increasing to 58%, a seven percentage point increase at the expense of sociocultural issues. The



Social Democratic Alliance increased its sociocultural content to 59%, an increase of seven percentage points at the expense of economic issues. Despite the economic crisis the SDA retained sociocultural issues as more salient in its manifesto.

When looking at the most salient issues in the Social Democratic Alliance's manifesto, they too are evenly divided between economic (three issues) and sociocultural issues (four issues) in both election manifestos (see table 6.1). The fact that sociocultural issues are more salient in 2009 for the party is more easily explained when seeing that three issues 'Equality', the 'EU', and 'Environmental Protection' together make up 35% of the manifesto. The EU has become a salient issue in 2009 having previously not met the threshold of significance (5%) is not surprising, since joining the EU and adopting the Euro was a very popular proposal after the economic crash. Apart from this, between 2007 and 2009 there is more than a ten percentage point decrease in SDA's manifesto content allocated to Welfare State Expansion, Economic Goals content is halved, Education Expansion and Government Efficiency both drop below the 5% threshold of significance. In both years Equality holds around 14-15% of manifesto content, clearly an issue of ownership for the SDA. Between the elections, five of seven of the most salient issues remain as the most important issues. Issues seem to be relatively stable and the changes in significance of issues are largely explained by events in the political world.

Table 6.1. Social Democratic Alliance Manifesto Issue Saliency

|               | 2007                                       | %      | 2009                               | %      |
|---------------|--|--------|------------------------------------|--------|
| Economic      | Welfare State Expansion                    | 17.143 | Economic Growth: Positive          | 11.538 |
|               | Economic Goals                             | 11.429 | Economic Goals                     | 6.154  |
|               | Governmental and Administrative Efficiency | 5.714  | Welfare State Expansion            | 6.154  |
| Sociocultural | Equality: Positive                         | 15.714 | Equality: Positive                 | 14.615 |
|               | Education Expansion                        | 7.143  | European Community/Union: Positive | 11.538 |
|               | Environmental Protection                   | 5.714  | Environmental Protection           | 10.769 |
|               | Democracy                                  | 4.286  | Democracy                          | 6.154  |

The Independence Party's most salient issues are reflective of the aggregate data, with slightly more economic issues making up its significant issues in both elections. Five of nine of the issues in 2007 and five of seven in 2009 are economic issues. In 2007 the top three issues of Welfare State Expansion, Economic Growth, and Technology and Infrastructure make up 30% of manifesto content.

Table 6.2. Independence Party Manifesto Issue Salience

|               | 2007                                    | %      | 2009                      | %      |
|---------------|---|--------|---------------------------|--------|
| Economic      | Welfare State Expansion                 | 12.658 | Incentives: Positive      | 9.877  |
|               | Economic Growth: Positive               | 10.759 | Economic Goals            | 9.877  |
|               | Technology and Infrastructure: Positive | 7.595  | Free Market Economy       | 8.642  |
|               | Free Market Economy                     | 5.063  | Economic Growth: Positive | 8.642  |
|               | Economic Orthodoxy                      | 5.063  | Economic Orthodoxy        | 8.642  |
| Sociocultural | Equality: Positive                      | 7.595  | Political Authority       | 11.111 |
|               | Environmental Protection                | 5.063  | Democracy                 | 7.407  |
|               | Education Expansion                     | 5.063  |                           |        |
|               | Non-economic Demographic Groups         | 5.063  |                           |        |

In 2009 the most salient issue is Political Authority, which is fitting given the anti-government protests, but the next five most salient issues were economic and together made up 45% of manifesto content. Only four issues are present in the most salient issues in both 2007 and 2009, Economic Goals, Economic Growth (Positive), Free-Market Economy, and Economic Orthodoxy, all of them economic and related to typical right-wing liberal-conservative economic policies, but there is less consistency in which sociocultural issues are salient in the manifesto.

In all parties' manifestos the issues of Equality, Economic Growth. Economic Goals and Democracy have been salient in both elections. Apart from these, there is not much consistency in issues across parties or even across elections. Sociocultural issues, in particular, seem to be less consistent when considering which ones are salient. This suggests that perhaps individual

parties have not established clear issue ownership of sociocultural issues. This could also suggest that economic issues still define the party competition and the policies that parties choose to focus on in their manifestos.

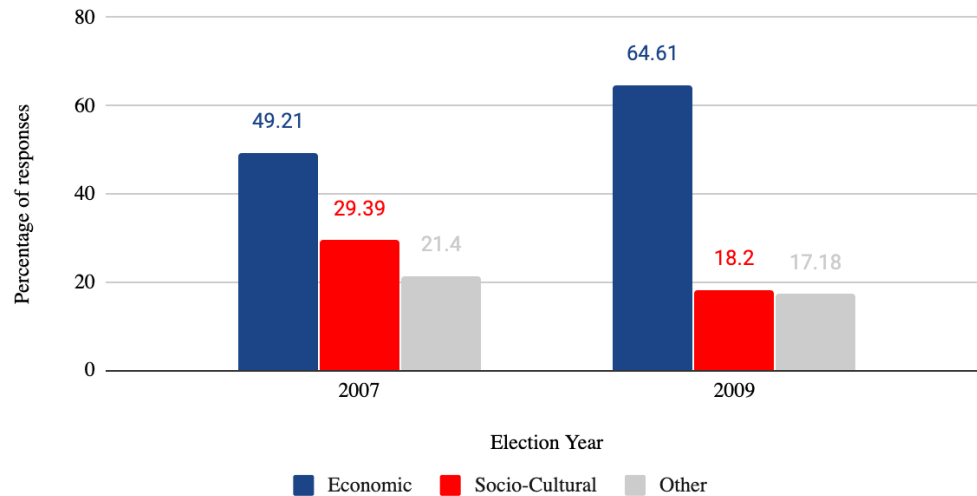
### ***6.2.2. Public Opinion***

I expect economic issues to be more salient than sociocultural issues in the Icelandic public opinion data even though in the manifesto data, sociocultural issues were more salient for at least one party in each election. Unlike the case studies of Finland and Norway, the number of responses that fit into the 'Other' category in Iceland is much higher. These responses include 'Don't know', 'Other problem', 'No problem', or 'Refused' The 'Other' category makes up just over 36% of responses to the country level question in 2009. The majority of the responses that contribute to this high number are 'Don't know' and 'Other problem'. This in itself is interesting as this means one-fifth of responses were not categorized into either economic or sociocultural issues. Keeping this in mind, when looking at the data, the public is much more focused on economic issues at both the personal and country level.

Though responses to both the personal and country level questions indicate that economic issues are more salient, the personal level responses are more skewed economically. In 2007 before the financial crisis, economic issues made up almost 50% of responses as the most important personal issues. In 2009 an even clearer preference for economic issues is shown, with nearly 65% of responses being economic issues (see figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4.

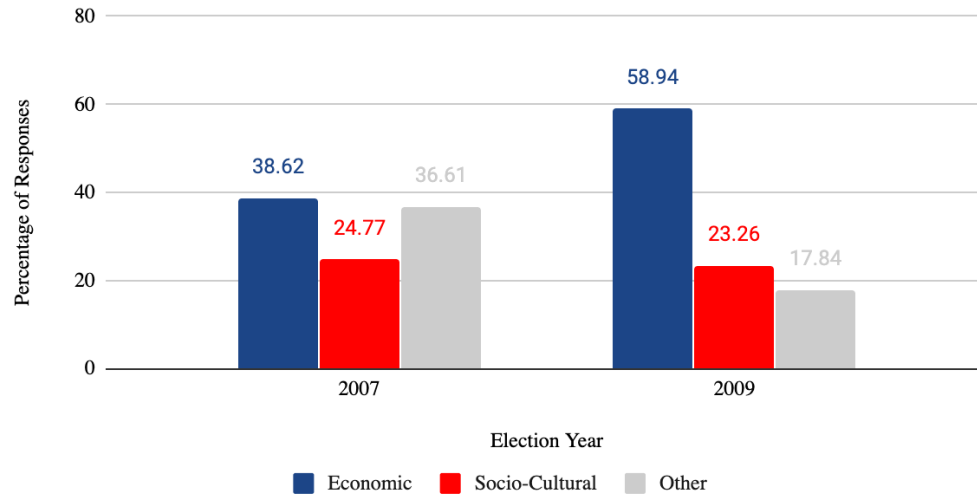
What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Iceland)



At the country level in 2007, around 36% of answers fit into the ‘Other’ category, but of the remaining answers just over 38% are economic issues, compared to 24% sociocultural issues (see figure 6.5). This is by far the smallest difference between the salience of economic and sociocultural issues in Iceland in either election. In 2009, similar to the personal level responses that year, economic issues become far more salient, increasing to just over 58% from 38% in 2007. When looking at the categorized and aggregated data, economic issues are far more salient than sociocultural issues in the public’s mind at the country level.

Figure 6.5

What do you think is the most important political problem facing Iceland today?



In 2007 when looking at the data breakdown of the exact issues' respondents gave for the personal level question, the most common response was 'Don't know' making up nearly 15% of responses (see table below). This is a big contributor to the 'Other' category and helps explain why the category was so big. The next most salient issues were The Elderly/People With Disability at 12%, then Social Welfare at 11%, followed by Environmental Issues at 8%. The personal level salience question in this election saw the highest responses of sociocultural issues at 29%. The Elderly/People With Disability and Environmental Issues alone make up 20% (of the total 28%) meaning there is not a variety of sociocultural issues that are dominant in Iceland, but instead a relatively high percentage dominated by fewer issues.

In 2009 at the personal level, nearly 45% of all responses related to the top three issues The Economy, The Economic Crisis, and Welfare of the Households (the Economic crisis). The fifth most salient is the EU and European issues (around 7% of responses) and is categorized as a sociocultural issue. Depending on whether European issues focused on the adoption of the Euro

it could have been categorized as an economic issue, but since the issue was defined as ‘European issues/EU/EEA/EFTA/the Euro’, it is difficult to say whether it was framed in an economic or sociocultural way. Regardless of the framing of the one issue, most of the responses of salient issues in 2009 at the personal level focus on the economy. After the broad EU category, Employment and Social Welfare, are the next most salient issues. Apart from European issues, each sociocultural issue received less than 3% of responses.

Table 6.3. Iceland - What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Egocentric)

| 2007                                      | %     | 2009  | %     |
|---|-------|---|-------|
| The elderly / people with disability      | 12.52 | The economy                                     | 15.38 |
| Social welfare                            | 11.45 | The economic crisis/bank crisis/currency crisis | 15.23 |
| Environmental Issues                      | 8.24  | Welfare of the households (the Economic crisis) | 13.57 |
| The economy                               | 6.61  | European issues / EU / EEA / EFTA / the Euro    | 6.93  |
| Health matters                            | 6.48  | Employment                                      | 6.79  |
| Family matters                            | 5.85  | Social welfare                                  | 3.1   |
| Employment                                | 3.84  | Other problem (not specifiable)                 | 3.1   |
| Education                                 | 3.65  | Democracy / democratic reform / political trust | 2.53  |
| Transportation / Regional policy          | 3.65  | Family matters                                  | 2.38  |
| Building up power stations/ energy issues | 2.52  | Joining the EU/adopting the euro                | 1.73  |

In 2007 at the country level, just over 30% of respondents gave the response ‘Don’t know’. This helps clarify the 36% of responses that contributed to the ‘Other’ category for that year and question. The response ‘Don’t know’ was by far the most salient, with the next most salient issue being Energy Issues/Power Stations at around 7%. After this the issues are relatively evenly divided between economic and sociocultural issues, with Environmental Issues receiving nearly 6%, followed by The Economy, European Issues, The Elderly/People with Disability, Equality/Living Standards, and The Fishery Quota System all received between 3 and 4% of responses. Apart from the response ‘Don’t know’, no issue dominated public opinion during this

election.

In 2009 the most salient issue was The Economic Crisis, receiving just under 30% of responses (see table 6.4). The second most salient response was ‘Don’t know’ at 10%, followed by Icesave (bank) at 9%. Restoration/Saving the Country/Nation received 6% of responses and Welfare of the People (the Economic Crisis) received 5%. These four issues (those mentioned above except ‘Don’t know’) together made up 50% of responses, and each of them relates directly to the economic crisis (other more general answers related to the economy and employment also received responses but are not included in the total listed). Of the ten issues that received more than 3% of responses, six are economic, two are sociocultural (both relating to the European Union/European issues), and the remaining are ‘Don’t know’ and ‘Other problem’. The most salient issues were therefore made up predominantly of economic issues.

Table 6.4. What do you think is the most important political problem facing Iceland today? (Sociotropic)

| 2007                                    | %    | 2009  | %     |
|---|------|---|-------|
| Energy issues / power stations          | 6.96 | The economic crisis/bank crisis/currency crisis | 29.75 |
| Environmental Issues                    | 5.77 | Icesave (bank)                                  | 9.17  |
| The economy                             | 4.83 | European issues / European Union / Euro         | 7.44  |
| European issues / European Union / Euro | 4.83 | Restoration /saving the country /nation         | 6.21  |
| The elderly / people with disability    | 3.76 | Employment                                      | 6.14  |
| Equality, living standards              | 3.32 | The economy                                     | 5.56  |
| The fishery quota system                | 3.13 | Welfare of the people (the Economic crisis)     | 5.05  |
| Other problem (not specifiable)         | 2.82 | Other problem (not specifiable)                 | 4.4   |
| Economic stability                      | 2.76 | Joining the EU / adopting the euro              | 3.39  |
| Social welfare                          | 2.7  | Democracy / political trust                     | 2.24  |

Table 6.5 shows the most important issue depending on the respondents’ vote choice, those that voted for the SDA found sociocultural issues more important than those that voted for IP. This is likely because the SDA argued that joining the EU and adopting the Euro would help

the economic crisis, while the IP did not agree with this, so the EU as an issue is more likely to have been important to SDA voters. In 2009 the only sociocultural issues that are highly salient are European Issues and Joining the EU. These two issues, though sociocultural, were likely discussed in relation to the economic crisis. The IP's most salient issues are predominantly economic, with only two non-economic issues in either election at either level – Environmental Issues in 2007 at the country level and The Elderly at the personal level in 2007. In 2009 the IP's top issues were only economic. According to the public, economic issues appear to be significantly more salient than sociocultural issues even though parties' manifesto content is more evenly divided.

Table 6.5. Most Salient Issue by Party Vote - Iceland

| SDA                  |       |                |        |                 |        |   |        |
|----------------------|-------|----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|---|--------|
| 2007                 |       |                |        | 2009            |        |   |        |
| Country Level        |       | Personal Level |        | Country Level   |        | Personal Level  |        |
| European issues/EU   | 6.30% | Social Welfare | 18.44% | The economy     | 31.34% | The economy   | 17.01% |
| Energy issues        | 5.73% | The elderly    | 15.56% | European issues | 9.85%  | Welfare of the households/the people, the economic crisis | 14.93% |
| Equality             | 5.73% | Family matters | 9.22%  | Joining the EU  | 8.66%  | The economic crisis                                       | 13.43% |
|                      |       |                |        |                 |        | European issues   | 12.24% |
| IP                   |       |                |        |                 |        |   |        |
| 2007                 |       |                |        | 2009            |        |   |        |
| Country Level        |       | Personal Level |        | Country Level   |        | Personal Level  |        |
| The economy          | 7.36% | The economy    | 13.55% | The economy     | 33.47% | The economic crisis                                       | 19.01% |
| Energy issues        | 6.34% | The elderly    | 12.73% | Employment      | 11.57% | The economy   | 19.01% |
| Environmental issues | 6.34% | Social welfare | 8.01%  | Icesave bank    | 10.33% | Welfare of the households/the people, the economic crisis | 13.64% |
|                      |       | Health matters | 8.01%  |                 |        |   |        |



### **6.2.3. Multivariate Analyses**

Multivariate analysis can tell us more about the relationship between economic and cultural issue salience and party vote choice in Icelandic politics. In the 2007 election SDA vote choice model there are two significant variables, SDA Partisanship and economic issue salience at the country level (see table 6.7). The partisanship variable is very strong at 6.35 and the salience variable is relatively weak at .83. Since the salience variable is positive it means those that think economic issues at the personal level are salient are more likely to vote for the SDA. The model explains 75% of the variance in the SDA voting. There are two significant variables in the model for the IP vote choice, IP partisanship and right-wing ideology. The partisanship variable is very strong at 6.08 and right-wing ideology is positive at 1.50. The model explains 82% of the variation in IP votes. In this election voters for each party were influenced by important economic issues, but for IP supporters they were issues at the personal level and for SDA supporters at the country level.

In the 2009 SDA vote choice model, the only significant variable is SDA Partisanship at 4.87. The model explains 58% of the variation in SDA votes. There are three significant variables in the model for IP vote choice, these are IP partisanship, which is strong at 4.54, being female at .56, and right-wing ideology at 1.25. This means that being female and holding right-wing ideology both make one more likely to vote IP. The model explains 62% of the variation in votes choice for the Independence Party. In each of these elections' partisanship is the most significant variable. Issues are only significant for SDA vote choice in the 2007 election and only at the personal level.

Table 6.6. Iceland 2007 Election Multivariate Analyses

|                          | SDA Vote                  | IP Vote                   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| IP Partisanship          | -.4449231<br>(.7880179)   | 6.076516***<br>(.6230132) |
| SDA Partisanship         | 6.345117***<br>(.5981655) | -1.624838<br>(1.110369)   |
| Aged Over 50             | .4890929<br>(.4531042)    | .0047893<br>(.4954014)    |
| Female                   | -.2378488<br>(.4558487)   | .8141094<br>(.5394698)    |
| Post-Secondary Education | .0133907<br>(.4638258)    | .3635104<br>(.5130127)    |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.7027843<br>(.4973375)   | .6436388<br>(.5277609)    |
| Country Issue Salience   | .8319713*<br>(.4582945)   | .7323075<br>(.5233429)    |
| Right-wing Ideology      | .1460608<br>(.5781145)    | 1.495768***<br>(.5402425) |
| constant                 | -3.706483<br>(.9999389)   | -6.447593<br>(1.274532)   |
| Observations             | 596                       | 596                       |
| Pseudo R-squared         | 0.7463                    | 0.8172                    |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

Table 6.7. Iceland 2009 Election Multivariate Analyses

|                          | SDA Vote                  | IP Vote                   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| IP Partisanship          | -.2506069<br>(.48465)     | 4.542691***<br>(.5702364) |
| SDA Partisanship         | 4.869733***<br>(.3615964) | -1.252899<br>(1.126032)   |
| Aged Over 50             | -.0836697<br>(.3018507)   | .3344582<br>(.3277363)    |
| Female                   | -.2516952<br>(.3122141)   | .5633666*<br>(.3413951)   |
| Post-Secondary Education | .2499762<br>(.32546)      | -.1145388<br>(.3612802)   |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.3152405<br>(.3429156)   | .0822123<br>(.4054037)    |
| Country issue salience   | -.1849645<br>(.3276085)   | .4049264<br>(.35543)      |
| Right-wing Ideology      | .4707328<br>(.422282)     | 1.2549***<br>(.442485)    |
| Constant                 | -2.286808<br>(.6861095)   | -5.779505<br>(.9462539)   |
| Observations             | 650                       | 650                       |
| Pseudo R-squared         | 0.5760                    | 0.6165                    |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

Similar to Finland and Norway, partisanship is the most significant independent variable, so once again an investigation into whether the independent variables could explain partisanship is relevant. When looking at partisanship, there are two significant variables for SDA partisanship in each election. In 2007 the coefficient for personal level issue salience was positive at .63 and in 2009 it was negative at -.62. In 2007 finding economic issues important had a positive influence on holding SDA partisanship, but in 2009 it had a negative influence on SDA partisanship (see tables 6.8 and 6.9). In both elections' ideology was also significant, unsurprisingly there is a negative relationship with holding right-wing ideology and SDA partisanship. In 2007 the right-wing ideology coefficient was -1.87 and in 2009 it was -1.36. For the IP the only significant variable in either election was right-wing ideology. This was positive in both elections, 3.62 in 2007 and 3.55 in 2009, so holding right-wing ideology has a positive effect on holding IP partisanship.

Table 6.8. Iceland 2007 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses

|                          | SDA Partisanship           | IP Partisanship          |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Aged Over 50             | .3545881*<br>(.1950238)    | .1599215<br>(.2288255)   |
| Female                   | .1410967<br>(.1993834)     | -.1002262<br>(.2370101)  |
| Post-Secondary Education | .2940402<br>(.2044174)     | -.0646391<br>(.238985)   |
| Personal Issue Salience  | .6266651***<br>(.2083188)  | .0568499<br>(.2428737)   |
| Country Issue Salience   | .161665<br>(.1949786)      | -.1836352<br>(.2279144)  |
| Right-wing ideology      | -1.874471***<br>(.2224294) | 3.615004***<br>(.258771) |
| Constant                 | -1.268514<br>(.4162935)    | -2.415618<br>(.523129)   |
| Observations             | 633                        | 633                      |
| Pseudo R-Squared         | 0.1337                     | 0.3911                   |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*\*Significance at 5%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

Table 6.9. Iceland 2009 Partisanship Multivariate Analyses

|                          | SDA Partisanship           | IP Partisanship         |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Aged Over 50             | .1428741<br>(.1766577)     | -.0498825<br>(.22535)   |
| Female                   | .3051358*<br>(.1765449)    | -.0796727<br>(.2292528) |
| Post-Secondary Education | .1666728<br>(.1884188)     | -.0611238<br>(.2503196) |
| Personal Issue Salience  | -.6237336***<br>(.1976096) | .3605071<br>(.2758549)  |
| Country Issue Salience   | -.1542357<br>(.1885697)    | .0318755<br>(.2534824)  |
| Right-wing Ideology      | -1.360438***<br>(.1957458) | 3.55315***<br>(.261107) |
| Constant                 | -.3310794<br>(.3733847)    | -3.011851<br>(.5460866) |
| Observations             | 691                        | 691                     |
| Pseudo R-Squared         | 0.0917                     | 0.3771                  |

\*\*\*Significance at 1%. \*Significance at 10%. Standard Error in parentheses.

### 6.3. Conclusion

After looking at the data on Iceland several interesting and unexpected findings have emerged. The manifesto data in 2007 was much more evenly divided between economic and social issues for the two main parties, SDA and IP. Content for both parties was split between the two issue categories at a ratio of 49:51, with each favouring either economic or social issues. In 2009 the manifesto breakdown polarized more, with each of the main parties focusing more on the category of issues that it was originally skewed towards. The Social Democratic Alliance's sociocultural content increased to make up 59% of its manifesto and the Independence Party increased economic content to 58%. The emphasis on sociocultural issues in The Social Democratic Alliance's manifesto is surprising given the economic crisis. The public opinion data showed that the issues in the public are much more focused on economic issues. Even before the economic crisis in 2007 there was still a preference for economic issues. When looking at the multivariate analyses the only consistently significant independent variable was partisanship,

with country level issues significant in 2007. The data has demonstrated that the public is very focused on economic issues in Iceland, but one party, the SDA is more focused on sociocultural issues.

The Icelandic public's focus on economic issues both before and after the economic crisis could be one reason for the absence of a radical right-wing party in Icelandic politics. Political issues core to RRWP ideology are also missing from Icelandic politics, though some new left issues have become more salient. It could also be that compared to other Nordic countries, political parties have remained polarized enough that there is no room or need for a radical right-wing party in the party system. These three things together likely play a big part in explaining why Iceland has never had a radical right-wing party.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

There are a variety of factors that go into a party's electoral success, making it difficult to determine exactly why non-mainstream parties are seeing increasing popularity. The varied electoral success of RRWP in particular in national politics across the European continent is still a puzzle that remains unsolved. By looking at Finland, Norway, and Iceland, this work has investigated three understudied, but valuable cases of countries with varied radical right-wing party success. The question guiding this thesis asked what influences radical right-wing party electoral success and why radical right-wing parties are more electorally successful in some countries than others. It offered the hypothesis that varied economic and sociocultural issue salience affects the supply and demand of RRWP and therefore the success of these parties. By looking at data on public opinion and party manifestos this study has done an in-depth analysis of issue salience in both the supply and demand of RRWP, which has yet to be given significant attention in the discipline. A broad summary of the findings is that in the country with the strongest radical right-wing party, Norway, public opinion was either equally divided between economic and sociocultural issues or more focused on sociocultural issues. Manifesto content was also generally skewed towards sociocultural issues in Norway. This is in contrast to Finland and Iceland where economic issues remained the most important by a significant margin in public opinion, and manifestos were evenly divided between economic and sociocultural issues.

### **7.1. Manifesto and Public Opinion Data Conclusions**

When looking at manifesto data, there was not always a clear divide of issue salience by party type or by election. In Norway, the two mainstream parties both focused on cultural issues over economic issues in each election, though curiously the radical right party focused on economic issues in both elections. The mainstream parties' focus on sociocultural issues suggests

that the Norwegian party system has moved towards sociocultural issues, which is favourable to the radical right. In Finland, the radical right-wing party emphasized sociocultural issues in both elections. The mainstream right-wing party focused on sociocultural issues in the second election, which could signal a cooptation reaction to the far-right. Iceland in both elections presents the more traditional left and right-wing issue breakdown, with the left focusing on sociocultural individualistic issues and the right on economic issues.

To outline the findings in the paper, Table 7.1 (pg. 118) breaks down the salience of economic compared to sociocultural issues in each country for every party type and election, and Table 7.2 summarizes public opinion findings on both the personal and country level in each country. I have devised five different categories to describe the ‘preference’ a party or the public in each country had towards economic or sociocultural issues depending on the difference in the salience of economic and sociocultural issues when they were aggregated into ‘economic’ and ‘sociocultural’ categories (percentage totals seen in bar graphs for country cases). When the sociocultural dimension was more salient the text was bolded in Tables 7.1 and 7.2. The preference for issues is categorized as follows:

1. ‘Even split’ indicates there was less than a two percentage point difference in manifesto content/survey responses of each dimension;
2. ‘Slight preference’ indicates a two to five percentage point difference in manifesto content/survey responses of each dimension;
3. ‘Moderate preference’ indicates a five to ten percentage point difference in manifesto content/survey responses of each dimension;
4. ‘Strong preference’ indicates between ten to twenty percentage point difference in manifesto content/survey responses of each dimension;
5. ‘Very strong preference’ indicates over twenty percentage point difference in manifesto content/survey responses of each dimension.

Table 7.1. Summary of Manifesto Findings

|         | Left-Wing Manifesto  | Right-Wing Manifesto   | Far-right Manifesto   |
|---------|--|--|---|
| Finland | 2007: Strong economic preference<br>2011: Very strong economic preference                    | 2007: Strong economic preference<br>2011: <b>Moderate sociocultural preference</b>           | 2007: <b>Very strong sociocultural preference</b><br>2011: <b>Strong sociocultural preference</b> |
| Iceland | 2007: <b>Slight sociocultural preference</b><br>2009: <b>Strong sociocultural preference</b> | 2007: Slight economic preference<br>2009: Strong economic preference                         | n/a   |
| Norway  | 2005: <b>Strong sociocultural preference</b><br>2009: <b>Strong sociocultural preference</b> | 2005: <b>Slight sociocultural preference</b><br>2009: <b>Slight sociocultural preference</b> | 2005: Slight economic preference<br>2009: Strong economic preference                              |

Table 7.2. Summary of Public Opinion Findings

|         | Public Opinion - Personal  | Public Opinion - Country   |
|---------|--|--|
| Finland | 2007: Very strong economic preference<br>2011: Moderate economic preference    | 2007: Very strong economic preference<br>2011: Very strong economic preference |
| Iceland | 2007: Very strong economic preference<br>2009: Very strong economic preference | 2007: Strong economic preference<br>2009: Very strong economic preference      |
| Norway  | 2005: Strong economic preference<br>2009: Even split                           | 2005: Even split<br>2009: <b>Moderate sociocultural preference</b>             |

## 7.2. Multivariate Analyses Conclusions

The breakdown of issues helps give some insight into the competing issue dimensions, but multivariate analysis models help to look specifically at the relationship between vote choice and the influence of economic and sociocultural issues. Tables 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5 lists each



significant independent variable for every party vote choice in each country. Issue salience at the personal level was significant four times, and issue salience at the country level was significant once. This suggests personal level issue salience is more likely to influence vote choice than country level issue salience.

In the 2007 Finnish election, finding economic issues important at the personal level increased the likelihood of voting for Kok. In the 2007 Icelandic election finding economic issues important at the national level increased the chances of voting for the SDA. The issue salience variables were the most significant in Norway. Economic issues were important at the personal level and increased the likelihood of voting for H in 2005 and DNA in 2009. If sociocultural issues were important at the personal level in 2009 one was more likely to vote for the FrP. Partisanship is by far the most frequent significant variable, with age, education, and gender all being significant at least once.

Table 7.3. Finland Vote Choice- Significant Independent Variables and Coefficients

| Party | Country and Election | Variables p values <0.10 | Coefficient |
|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| PS    | Finland 2007         | PS Partisanship          | 5.347708    |
| SDP   | Finland 2007         | SDP Partisanship         | 5.341858    |
|       |                      | PS Partisanship          | 1.626345    |
| Kok   | Finland 2007         | Kok Partisanship         | 5.910334    |
|       |                      | PS partisanship          | 2.009725    |
|       |                      | Personal Issue Salience  | 1.252593    |
|       |                      | Right-wing Ideology      | 1.787881    |
| PS    | Finland 2011         | PS Partisanship          | 5.969187    |
|       |                      | Aged Over 50             | 1.499416    |
| SDP   | Finland 2011         | SDP Partisanship         | 5.409356    |
|       |                      | Right-wing Ideology      | -1.161014   |
| Kok   | Finland 2011         | Kok Partisanship         | 5.958655    |
|       |                      | Aged Over 50             | .8093582    |
|       |                      | Personal Issue Salience  | .9814474    |

Table 7.4. Iceland Vote Choice- Significant Independent Variables and their Coefficients

| Party | Country and Election | Variables p values <0.10 | Coefficient |
|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| IP    | Iceland 2007         | IP Partisanship          | 6.076516    |
|       |                      | Right-wing Ideology      | 1.495768    |
| SDA   | Iceland 2007         | SDA Partisanship         | 6.345117    |
|       |                      | Country Issue Salience   | .8319713    |
| IP    | Iceland 2009         | IP Partisanship          | 4.542691    |
|       |                      | Female                   | .5633666    |
|       |                      | Right-wing Ideology      | 1.2549      |
| SDA   | Iceland 2009         | SDA Partisanship         | 4.869733    |

Table 7.5. Norway Vote Choice - Significant Independent Variables and their Coefficients

| Party | Country and Election | Variables p values <0.10 | Coefficient |
|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| FrP   | Norway 2005          | Post-Secondary Education | -.7408344   |
|       |                      | Right-wing Ideology      | 2.11676     |
| DNA   | Norway 2005          | DNA Partisanship         | 5.003788    |
|       |                      | Right-wing Ideology      | -1.356479   |
|       |                      | Female                   | .6424931    |
| H     | Norway 2005          | Post-Secondary Education | 1.254544    |
|       |                      | Personal Issue Salience  | 1.161159    |
| FrP   | Norway 2009          | FrP Partisanship         | 7.918656    |
|       |                      | H Partisanship           | 2.469851    |
|       |                      | Aged Over 50             | .8296685    |
|       |                      | Female                   | -.6250121   |
|       |                      | Personal Issue Salience  | -1.029784   |
| DNA   | Norway 2009          | A Partisanship           | 4.984341    |
|       |                      | Personal Issue Salience  | .7980877    |
|       |                      | Right-wing Ideology      | -1.02541    |
| H     | Norway 2009          | H Partisanship           | 3.564559    |
|       |                      | FrP Partisanship         | -1.993487   |
|       |                      | Aged Over 50             | -.5485835   |
|       |                      | Post-Secondary Education | .9487475    |
|       |                      | Right-wing Ideology      | 2.311104    |

### 7.3. Core Findings and Future Work

This work has presented some broad findings on issue salience and how it relates to vote choice and RRWP electoral success. The multivariate analysis for vote choice found that issue

salience normally does not affect vote choice, but when it does, vote choice is more likely to be influenced by personal level issue salience. However, the multivariate analyses that looked at partisanship as the dependent variable told us that issue salience does have a significant influence on partisanship. In Finland, partisanship of every party was influenced by issue salience. In Iceland, there is not as clear a relationship between issue salience and vote choice or partisanship. In Norway, there is not a clear relationship between issue salience and vote choice or partisanship either. The manifesto data is not so clearly economically skewed, but Norway is the only country whose parties seem to be competing on mostly sociocultural issues. When looking at issues of importance by party voted for, it is clear that in Norway and Finland sociocultural issues were more likely to be in the top three issues than in Iceland.

There were two hypotheses presented at the start of this paper, the first was about whether radical right-wing party success was influenced by sociocultural issues when they were more salient than economic issues. When looking at the data presented, this hypothesis is tentatively true in all countries. The Norwegian FrP was the most electorally successful radical right-wing party that was looked at and Norway was the one country where public opinion did focus more on sociocultural issues than economic issues. The hypothesis is further supported by the fact that in Iceland and Finland economic issues were by far more salient in public opinion than sociocultural issues. The higher salience of economic issues also correlated with right-wing parties having no electoral success in Iceland and more moderate electoral success in Finland. The second hypothesis suggested that radical right-wing parties would be more successful if the salience of other parties' manifestos focused on sociocultural issues. In Iceland, this is not true, the left-wing party focuses on sociocultural issues and there is no radical right-wing party. In Finland, in 2011 the mainstream right-wing party did focus on sociocultural issues more than

economic issues. This could, therefore, be true in Finland, as the PS' increase in votes did coincide with the Kok's introduction of more sociocultural issues to its manifesto. In Norway, both mainstream parties focused on sociocultural issues more in each election, so this hypothesis would be true.

This paper looked at three cases in the Nordic region, only a fraction of the cases of radical right-wing parties in Europe. Both the Norwegian public and parties have moved towards sociocultural issues, and this combination could help explain why parties are so electorally successful in other countries like Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, and why they may be emerging in Germany and the Netherlands. There is some literature on issue salience but there is room for much more investigation into how it relates to party success and failure in Europe, especially for parties like the radical right that focus on a core set of issues. Expanding these findings to see if they apply in similar cases across Europe could help demonstrate just how relevant issue competition and salience could be to radical right-wing success.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

Table 1: Comparative Manifesto Project categories divided into non-economic and economic issues from Spies & Franzmann 2011, with updated category titles from the 2019 Codebook

| <i>Non-economic issue categories</i>          | <i>Economic issue categories</i>                            |
|---|---|
| Per101 Foreign special relationship: positive | Per303 Governmental and administrative efficiency: positive |
| Per102 Foreign special relationship: negative | Per401 Free Market Economy                                  |
| Per103 Anti-imperialism                       | Per402 Incentives: Positive                                 |
| Per104 Military: positive                     | Per403 Market regulation                                    |
| Per105 Military: negative                     | Per404 Economic planning                                    |
| Per106 Peace                                  | Per405 Corporatism/Mixed Economy                            |
| Per107 Internationalism: positive             | Per406 Protectionism: positive                              |
| Per108 European community: positive           | Per407 Protectionism: negative                              |
| Per109 Internationalism: negative             | Per408 Economic Growth: Positive                            |
| Per110 European community: negative           | Per409 Keynesian demand management                          |
| Per201 Freedom and human rights               | Per410 Productivity   |
| Per202 Democracy                              | Per411 Technology and infrastructure                        |
| Per203 Constitutionalism: positive            | Per412 Controlled economy                                   |
| Per204 Constitutionalism: negative            | Per413 Nationalisation                                      |
| Per301 Decentralisation                       | Per414 Economic orthodoxy                                   |
| Per302 Centralisation                         | Per415 Marxist analysis                                     |
| Per304 Political corruption                   | Per416 Anti-growth economy                                  |
| Per305 Political authority                    | Per504 Welfare state expansion                              |
| Per501 Environmental protection               | Per505 Welfare state limitation                             |
| Per502 Culture: Positive                      | Per701 Labour groups: positive                              |
| Per503 Equality: Positive                     | Per702 Labour groups: negative                              |
| Per506 Education expansion                    | Per703 Agriculture and farmers                              |
| Per507 Education limitation                   | Per704 Middle class and professional groups                 |
| Per601 National way of life: positive         |   |
| Per602 National way of life: negative         |   |
| Per603 Traditional morality: positive         |   |
| Per604 Traditional morality: negative         |   |
| Per605 Law and order: positive                |   |
| Per606 Civic Mindedness: positive             |   |
| Per607 Multiculturalism: positive             |   |
| Per608 Multiculturalism: negative             |   |
| Per705 Underprivileged minority groups        |   |
| Per706 Non-economic demographic Groups        |   |

## Appendix B

### Module 3 Codebook: Variables Description

“Q1a. Most important problem-egocentric-first mention.

What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election?

This is usually an open-ended question. Collaborators coded this variable in a detailed way and with a minimum of at least twenty categories.” (CSES codebook, pg 154)

“Q2a. Most important problem-sociotropic-first mention.

What do you think is the most important political problem facing [COUNTRY] today?

This is an open-ended question. Collaborators coded this variable in a detailed way and with a minimum of at least twenty categories.” (CSES codebook pg. 188/189)

## Appendix C

*Full value labels from Finnish Election Study, 2007 and 2011*

Finland: What has been the most important issue to you personally in this election? (Egocentric)

1. Pensioner issues / pensions
2. Taxation of pensioners, subsistence
3. Health care resources / labor shortage / working conditions
4. Social and health care in general
5. Wage level in health care
6. Care of the elderly
7. Status of family caregivers, home care
8. Mental health care
9. Employment/unemployment
10. Special issues of labor policy, coping at work
11. Status and support of families with children
12. Education
13. Taxation/tax policy
14. Correcting individual taxes, tax deductions
15. Maintaining welfare / the welfare state, social policy
16. Special issues of welfare / social policy
17. Low income / poverty issues
18. Growth of income disparity / social inequality / social justice
19. Social security
20. Status of students
21. Increasing the study grants / subsistence of students
22. Energy policy
23. Nuclear power
24. Climate / climate change, natural disasters
25. Nature conservation / environmental issues

26. Traffic policy
27. Housing policy, rents
28. Regional policy / keeping the whole of Finland inhabited
29. Municipal policy / issues
30. Agricultural issues
31. Entrepreneur issues, prerequisites for entrepreneurship
32. Fairer wages / social justice
33. Worker issues, worker welfare
34. Equality / (gender) equality
35. Status / issues of minorities / special groups
36. Immigrant policy
37. Finnishness, Finland for Finns
38. Economy / economic policy / special issues of Finnish economic policy
39. Development of Finland in general
40. NATO
41. Foreign and security policy
42. EU / EU policy, in general
43. Peace
44. Swedish language
45. Government base and prime minister
46. Other issues connected to elections and voting
47. Values, morals
48. Beating racism / tolerance / value pluralism / multiculturalism
49. Changing Finnish policies / regime change / protest
50. Animal protection
51. Giving up economic growth / reducing consumption
52. Gender-neutral marriage law
53. Crime / domestic security / more police officers
54. Grey economy
55. Human rights
56. Cultural policy
57. Finnish economy / sustaining welfare / raising retirement age
58. Poverty / universal basic income / exclusion / marginalization
59. Negative EU issues / support indebted countries / stability funds
60. Other problem (not specifiable)
61. Volunteered: refused
62. Volunteered: don't know
63. Missing

What do you think is the most important political problem facing Finland today? (Sociotropic)

1. Foreign and security policy / international Relations / development aid / Russia
2. EU / EU policy / bailouts / financial stability funds
3. NATO membership
4. Peace/threats to peace
5. Functioning of democracy / democracy / bureaucracy / corruption
6. Politicians' and officials' actions / competence / impeccability / or fairness
7. Economic development / global economy / economic globalization
8. Employment / unemployment / youth unemployment
9. Entrepreneur issues / prerequisites for entrepreneurship
10. Health care in general
11. Education and know-how

12. Poverty / low income issues / inequality / income disparity / social exclusion / suffering
13. Housing situation / homelessness / housing prices
14. Equality / (gender) equality
15. Taxation and national economy
16. Status of municipalities / municipal economy
17. Regional policy / regional development / Regional inequality
18. Nature conservation / environmental issues / Ecological lifestyle
19. Elderly issues / care of the elderly
20. Youth issues
21. Issues of families with children
22. Single parent issues
23. Employee issues / subsistence / prices / cost of living
24. Agriculture / agricultural issues
25. Criminality / insecurity / the preservation of law and order / beggars / criminal sentences
26. Selfishness/values/the lack or preservation of morals
27. Immigrants / foreigner issues / multiculturalism: positive attitude / more multiculturalism and tolerance
28. Nuclear power
29. Alcohol / (illegal) drugs / other intoxicants
30. Social security / the conservation of welfare / the support for special groups
31. Welfare services and securing of services (in general)
32. Shortage of nurses / nurse salaries / the shortage of doctors
33. Pensioner issues / pensions / pensions are too small
34. Status of young people and students / inadequacy of grants / benefits
35. Special issues of employment opportunities and workplaces (e.g. age racism / burn out / insecurity)
36. Retirement / baby boomers / aging
37. Energy policy / energy prices
38. Correct allocation of political decisions
39. Climate change / nature disasters
40. Immigrants / refugees: neutral attitudes
41. Immigrants / refugees: negative attitudes
42. Nationalism / rise of the true Finns
43. Weakened status of swedish language
44. Mental health problems / mental health services
45. Poor protection of minority rights / support by legislation
46. Growing racism
47. Taxation
48. National economy / public economy / debts
49. Other problem (not specifiable)
50. Volunteered: refused
51. Volunteered: don't know
52. Missing



## Appendix D

*Full value labels from Icelandic Election Study, 2007 and 2009*

1. Foreign Policy
2. Joining the European Union / adopting the euro
3. Not joining the European Union / not adopting the euro
4. The Economic crisis / bank crisis / currency crisis
5. The Economy
6. Economical stability
8. Reducing public expenditure / fair distribution of public expenditure
9. Taxes
10. Wages / living standards / taxes
11. Change of government / throwing the rascals out / voting in parties that have been in opposition
12. Prices / inflation / interest rates
13. Agriculture
14. Fisheries
15. The fishery quota system
16. Holding those accountable who were responsible for the bank crisis
17. Continuation of building up power stations / energy issues / big industry
18. Reducing / stopping big industry
19. Restoration / saving the country / nation
20. Social welfare
21. Equality, gender issues
22. Equality, living standards
23. Icesave (bank)
24. Education
25. Health matters
26. Family matters
27. Improving the image of Iceland (internationally)
28. Welfare of companies
29. Welfare of the households / the people (the Economic crisis)
30. Employment
31. Regional policy
32. Transportation / Regional policy
33. Democracy / democratic reform / honesty / political trust
34. European issues / European Union / EEA / EFTA / the Euro
35. Environmental issues
36. The elderly / people with disability
37. Immigration
39. Energy issues / power stations
40. Nationalistic issues / guard the independency of the country

## Appendix E

*Full value labels from Norwegian Election Study, 2005 and 2009*

Note: Value labels start at 11 in the codebook.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 11. Employment  | 71. The question of government alternatives |
| 12. Taxes   | 72. Gender equality                         |
| 13. Social equalization / distribution                      | 73. Fighting bureaucracy                    |
| 15. Industrial / trade politics                             | 74. Public vs. Private                      |
| 16. Interest rates  | 76. Working life                            |
| 17. Oil funds   | 77. Vehicle excise duty                     |
| 18. Raising prices  | 78. Local government                        |
| 19. (Other) economic issues                                 | 79. Culture                                 |
| 21. Care for the elderly                                    | 81. UN                                      |
| 22. Health service  | 82. Fight against terrorism                 |
| 23. Age pensioners  | 83. Peace                                   |
| 24. Welfare benefits  | 84. National income after the oil-age       |
| 25. Sickness benefits                                       | 85. Trade                                   |
| 26. Modernization of public sector                          | 86. Alternative energy sources              |
| 27. Housing   | 87. Financial crisis                        |
| 28. Poverty   |   |
| 29. (Other) health / social issues                          |   |
| 31. Kindergartens   |   |
| 32. Cash benefit for families with small children           |   |
| 35. (Other) child and family issues                         |   |
| 39. School and educational issues                           |   |
| 41. Abortion  |   |
| 42. Gay rights  |   |
| 43. (Other) welfare issues                                  |   |
| 45. (Other) moral / religious issues                        |   |
| 46. EU  |   |
| 51. NATO  |   |
| 52. Disarmament of nuclear weapons                          |   |
| 53. Defense and security policy issues                      |   |
| 54. Climate change / policy                                 |   |
| 55. (Other) foreign policy issues                           |   |
| 56. Environmental issues                                    |   |
| 57. public transportation                                   |   |
| 58. Oil politics / distribution of national resources       |   |
| 59. Communication / transport                               |   |
| 61. Decentralization / support for sparsely populated areas |   |
| 62. Agricultural / fishery policies                         |   |
| 66. Criminal policy   |   |
| 67. Immigration / refugee policy                            |   |
| 68. Aid to developing countries                             |   |
| 69. Party politics  |   |

## Appendix F

Finland Election Study Egocentric Issues Categorization 2007 & 2011 (by author)  
Data collected and provided by Comparative Study of Electoral Systems.

| Economic Issues  | Sociocultural Issues   | Other   |
|--|--|---|
| Agricultural issues<br>Care of the elderly<br>Development of Finland (general)<br>Economy<br>Employment/unemployment<br>Entrepreneur issues<br>Fairer wages<br>Finnish economy<br>Grey economy<br>Growth of income disparity<br>Health care resources<br>Housing policy<br>Increasing study grants<br>Low income / poverty issues<br>Mental health care<br>Pensioner issues<br>Poverty<br>Social and health care (general)<br>Social security<br>Special issues of labor policy<br>Special issues of welfare<br>Status and support of families with children<br>Tax deductions<br>Taxation<br>Taxation of pensioners<br>The welfare state<br>Traffic policy<br>Wage level in health care<br>Wage level in health care<br>Worker issues | Animal protection<br>Climate change<br>Crime<br>Cultural policy<br>Education<br>Energy policy<br>EU<br>Finnishness<br>Foreign and security policy<br>Gender equality<br>Gender-neutral marriage law<br>Government base and prime minister<br>Human rights<br>Immigrant policy<br>Issues of minorities<br>Municipal policy<br>NATO<br>Nature conservation<br>Negative EU issues / stability funds<br>Nuclear power<br>Other issues connected to elections and voting<br>Peace<br>Regime change / protest<br>Regional policy<br>Status of students<br>Swedish language<br>Tolerance & multiculturalism<br>Values | Missing<br>Other problem (not specifiable)<br>Volunteered: refused<br>Volunteered: don't know |

## Appendix G

Finland Election Study Sociotropic Issue Categorization 2007 & 2011 (by author)  
Data collected and provided by Comparative Study of Electoral Systems.

| Economic Issues   | Sociocultural Issues   | Other   |
|---|--|---|
| Agriculture / agricultural issues<br>Economic development<br>Elderly issues<br>Employee issues<br>Employment/unemployment<br>Energy policy<br>Entrepreneur issues<br>Health care (general)<br>Housing situation<br>Issues of families with children<br>Mental health services<br>National economy<br>Pensioner issues<br>Poverty<br>Regional policy<br>Retirement<br>Shortage of nurses / nurse salaries /<br>the shortage of doctors<br>Single parent issues<br>Social security<br>Special issues of employment<br>Status of municipalities<br>Status of young people and students /<br>inadequacy of grants / benefits<br>Taxation<br>Welfare (general)<br>Youth issues | Alcohol / illegal drugs<br>Climate change / nature disasters<br>Correct allocation of political<br>decisions<br>Democracy<br>Education<br>Environmental issues<br>EU<br>Foreign and security policy<br>Gender equality<br>Growing racism<br>Immigrants: negative attitudes<br>Immigrants: neutral attitudes<br>Immigrants: positive<br>Law and order<br>Nationalism / True Finns<br>NATO membership<br>Nuclear power<br>Peace<br>Politicians' competence<br>Protection of minority rights<br>Status of Swedish language<br>Status of young people/students<br>Values | Missing<br>Other problem (not<br>specifiable)<br>Volunteered: refused<br>Volunteered: don't<br>know |

## Appendix H

Iceland Election Study Egocentric and Sociotropic Issues Categorization 2007 & 2009 (by author)  
Data collected and provided by Comparative Study of Electoral Systems.

| Economic  | Sociocultural   | Other  |
|---|---|--|
| Agriculture<br>Continuation of building up power stations/ energy issues / big industry<br>Economic stability<br>Employment<br>Equality, living standards<br>Family matters<br>Fisheries<br>Health matters<br>Icesave (bank)<br>Princes/inflation/interest rates<br>Social welfare<br>Taxes<br>The economic crisis/bank crisis/currency crisis<br>The economy<br>The fishery quota system<br>Transportation / Regional policy<br>Wages/living standards/taxes<br>Welfare of the households / the people (the Economic crisis) | Change of government / throwing the rascals out /<br>Democracy / democratic reform / honesty /<br>Education<br>Environmental Issues<br>Equality, gender issues<br>European issues / European Union / EEA / EFTA /<br>Foreign policy<br>Holding those accountable who were responsible/ for the bank crisis<br>Immigration<br>Joining the European union/adopting the euro<br>Not joining the European union/not adopting the euro<br>political trust<br>Regional policy<br>The elderly / people with disability<br>the Euro<br>voting in parties that have been in opposition | Missing<br>No problem<br>Other problem (not specifiable)<br>Volunteered:<br>refused<br>Volunteered: don't know |

## Appendix I

Norway Election Study Egocentric and Sociotropic Issues Categorization 2005 & 2009 (by author)  
Data collected and provided by Comparative Study of Electoral Systems.

| Economic  | Sociocultural   | Other  |
|---|---|--|
| (Other) child and family issues<br>(Other) economic issues<br>(Other) health / social issues<br>(Other) welfare issues<br>Age pensioners<br>Agricultural / fishery policies<br>Alternative energy sources<br>areas<br>Care for the elderly<br>Communication/transport<br>Decentralization / support for sparsely<br>populated<br>Employment<br>Financial crisis<br>Health service<br>Industrial/trade politics<br>Interest rates<br>Modernization of public sector<br>National income after the oil-age<br>Oil funds<br>Oil politics / distribution of National<br>resources<br>Poverty<br>Public transportation<br>Public vs. Private<br>Raising prices<br>Sickness benefits<br>Social equalization/distribution<br>Taxes<br>Trade<br>Welfare benefits<br>Working life | (Other) foreign policy issues<br>(Other) moral / religious issues<br>Abortion<br>Aid to developing countries<br>Climate change / policy<br>Criminal policy<br>Culture<br>Defense and security policy<br>issues<br>Environmental issues<br>EU<br>Fight against terrorism<br>Fighting bureaucracy<br>Gay rights<br>Gender equality<br>Immigration / refugee policy<br>Kindergartens<br>Local government<br>NATO<br>Party politics<br>Peace<br>School and educational issues<br>The question of government<br>alternatives<br>UN | Missing<br>Other problem (not<br>specifiable)<br>Volunteered: refused<br>Volunteered: don't know |

## Appendix J

The vote choice variables were coded with the relevant party responses as 1 and all other party responses as 0, with don't know, missing, and refused (997/999) coded out. Partisanship dummy variables were created the same way as the vote choice variable, a positive coefficient would mean there is a positive relationship between holding the partisanship and voting for the party of the dependent variable, and the opposite if the coefficient is negative. The age variable, called "Aged Over 50", was coded as a dummy variable with ages 17 to 49 coded as 0 and ages 50 to 100 coded as 1. If the age variable is positive, this means that those above 50 are more likely to vote for the dependent variable party. The gender variable, "Female" was coded with male respondents as 1 and female respondents as 2, so a positive coefficient means females are more likely to vote for the dependent party variable, and a negative coefficient means males are more likely to vote for the party. The post-secondary education was coded as a dummy variable, any level of education up to the completion of high school was coded as 0 and any level of post-secondary education (even incomplete) was coded as 1.

The "Personal Issue Salience" variable and "Country Issue Salience" variables, were coded as dummy variables. "Personal Issue Salience" includes responses for the personal level salience question, with economic issues coded as 1 and sociocultural issues coded as 0 (for the categorization of issues see Appendices F, G, H, and I). The "Country Issue Salience", includes all of the issues that were mentioned in responses to the country level salience question, with economic issues coded as 1 and sociocultural issues coded as 0 (for the categorization of issues see Appendices F, G, H, and I). For both variables a positive coefficient would indicate that if economic issues were important to the voters, they were more likely to vote for the respective

party, and if the coefficient is negative it indicates that if sociocultural issues were important a voter is less likely to vote for the respective party.