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Union Membership and Electoral Demand for Redistribution among Left-authoritarians

Line Rennwald (FORS)
Line.Rennwald@fors.unil.ch

Nadja Mosimann (University of Zurich)
Mosimann@ipz.uzh.ch

FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES DE LA SOCIÉTÉ
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT:

Against the background of rising income inequality, this paper examines the role of trade unions in sustaining electoral demand for redistribution. We focus on the ability of trade unions to translate their members' pro-redistribution preferences into pro-redistribution voting, despite the widespread presence of anti-immigration attitudes among union members and the population at large. We argue that union members are less likely to realign their vote choice with their preferences on cultural issues and more likely to choose a party aligned with their pro-redistribution preferences than non-members. Using data from the Inequality and Politics survey from 2020, we analyze the association between union membership and left voting (capturing roughly pro-redistribution voting) in fourteen democracies. Employing unique questions on union membership, we leverage variation in the political orientation of the trade unions in line with literature emphasizing heterogeneity in the "union effect". We find that it matters whether individuals are affiliated with confederations rooted in the socialist labor movement. The paper contributes to the literature on the politics of inequality by showing how de-unionization matters. It also speaks to the literature on "working-class populism" by highlighting the importance of intermediary organizations for political behaviour.

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Introduction

All over Western Europe, income inequality has significantly risen over the past three decades. Even though several economic, political and institutional factors fuel this development, research has shown that the almost ubiquitous decline in union strength is highly associated with rising levels of inequality (e.g., Kristal and Cohen 2016, OECD 2011, Pontusson 2013). In this paper, we propose to study the role of trade unions in sustaining electoral demand for redistribution. To the extent that the union membership effect on electoral demand for redistribution is a positive one, the massive drop in unionization rates across Western Europe appears to be highly relevant when addressing the puzzle of why it is that we do not observe more cases of democratically elected governments responding to the rise in inequality by introducing new redistributive policies (see Pontusson 2013).

More specifically, we focus on the ability of trade unions to translate their members' pro-redistribution preferences into pro-redistribution voting that we roughly capture by looking at left voting, despite the widespread presence of anti-immigration attitudes among union members and the population at large and the fact that such attitudes are not satisfyingly addressed by left parties' pro-immigration platforms. We argue that union members are less likely to realign their vote choice with their preferences on cultural issues such as immigration and more likely to choose a party aligned with their pro-redistribution preferences than non-members. The rise of a new integration-demarcation cleavage (fueled by the rise of radical right parties) has helped immigration to gain center stage in party competition and become crucial for individuals' voting decisions (e.g., Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). In this new electoral arena, attitudes towards immigration seem to outweigh economic preferences when it comes to party choice and opponents of immigration cast their vote in favor of radical right-wing parties in pursuit of exclusionary immigration policies irrespective of their redistribution preferences. In such a context, support for left parties and the pro-redistribution platforms they commonly go after decreases despite persisting levels of redistribution support in the population as shown by Roemer and colleagues (Roemer et al. 2007). We argue and show in this paper that such a route towards the radical right does not apply to trade union members who continue to vote

based on their pro-redistribution preferences. However, declining union density makes culturally realigned voting more likely among large shares of the electorate, and consequently decreases electoral demand for redistribution.

Research has shown that unionization reduces inequality in a myriad of ways. On the micro level, it has been repeatedly shown that union membership is linked to anti-inequality attitudes and redistribution support – especially among high-income voters (e.g., Checchi et al. 2010, Macdonald 2019, Mosimann and Pontusson 2017, Yang and Kwon 2021).[1] We have also seen that union membership raises turnout among low- and middle-income voters (e.g., Kerrissey and Schofer 2013, Leighly and Nagler 2007) and that unionization increases the political influence of less affluent voters (e.g., Becher and Stegmueller 2021, Becher et al. 2018, Flavin 2016). The effect of union membership on the translation of redistribution preferences into voting has to our knowledge not been analyzed so far. Our paper thus contributes to all of this research on the effects of unions on economic inequality.

Our paper also addresses research gaps related to the rise of what could be labelled "working-class populism." It has been shown that workers voting for radical right-wing parties do so mainly because of their anti-immigration preferences. Conversely, left parties (also still in the running for the working-class vote) are supported by workers because of their left-wing economic preferences (e.g., Bornschier and Kriesi 2013; Oesch and Rennwald 2018). While the importance of cultural issues for the working-class' right-wing vote is relatively uncontested in the literature, it remains unclear why some workers base their vote on cultural issues (and

[1] At the macro-level, research has shown important effects of unions on inequality as well. Unions have, for instance, an equalizing effect on the wage distribution – either by boosting workers' wages through collective bargaining or limiting compensation among top-income shares (e.g., Freeman and Medoff 1984, Wallerstein 1999, DiNardo et al. 2000, Bradley et al. 2001, Pontusson et al. 2002, Card et al. 2004, Scheve and Stasavage 2009, Western and Rosenfeld 2011, Pontusson 2013, Gomez and Tzioumis 2013, Shin 2014, Rosenfeld 2014, Huber et al. 2015, Ahlquist 2017). Unions are also linked to redistributive politics and redistributive welfare policies (e.g., Bradley et al. 2001, Iversen and Soskice 2006, Pontusson 2013).

assign more importance to such issues), whereas others choose parties serving their economic preferences (and assign more salience to economic issues). We propose that the role of unions merits more attention in this respect. There are few studies on "working class populism" theoretically and/or empirically integrating union membership and/or union density variables (see, however, on union membership and radical right voting, Arndt and Rennwald 2017, 2016; Mosimann et al. 2019). Moreover, recent research has shown that it is uncommon for voters to directly switch from social democratic to radical right-wing parties (Rennwald and Pontusson 2021; Abou-Chadi et al. 2021). We rather observe long-term patterns of voting realignment through generational renewal. Paying attention to what trade unions are (still) able to do today in terms of voter mobilization for the left closes a gap within this research agenda.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. The next section reviews the literature on "cross-pressured" or "left-authoritarian" voters and introduces the combination of immigration and redistribution preferences that we use to define "cross-pressuredness" or "left-authoritarianism" in this article. We then present the theoretical argument and several hypotheses. We continue by introducing the data, operationalization and statistical method employed in this article. The next section shows and discusses the empirical findings. We also turn our attention to the issue of self-selection looming over every inquiry into "union effects." We finish with some concluding remarks.

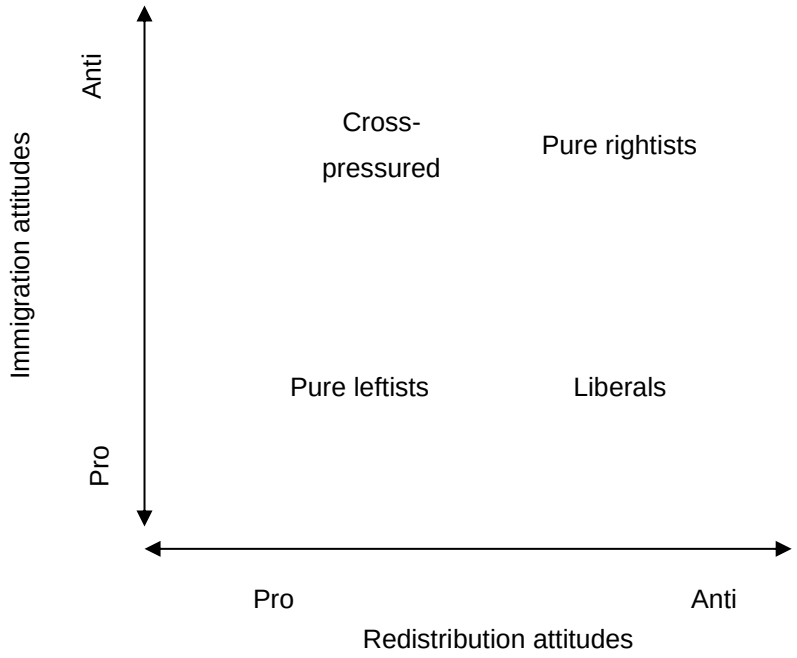
Conflicting preferences in the two-dimensional political space

A large set of studies have argued and shown that voters' attitudes and parties' positions are structured along two dimensions (e.g., Bornschier 2010; Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008; Hooghe et al. 2002; Oesch and Rennwald 2018). An economic dimension pertaining to the role of the state in the market is complemented by a cultural dimension pertaining to immigration and morality issues (also labeled libertarian-universalistic/traditionalist-communitarian or GAL/TAN dimensions). This two-dimensional space increases the complexity of individuals' vote choice. While some voters find a party matching their position on both the economic and cultural axis, others are left with a party close to them on one axis only. The literature has paid particular

attention to a group of voters falling into the latter category deemed "left-authoritarian" voters that hold left positions on the economic dimension and conservative positions on the cultural dimension (e.g., Finseraas 2012; Hillen and Steiner 2019; Kurella and Rosset 2017, 2018; Lefkofridi et al. 2014; Thomassen 2012). What makes this group special is the scarcity of parties corresponding to these voters' location on the two axes. Many parties combine either a left position on both the economic and the cultural axis, or a right position on both the economic and cultural axis (Van Der Brug and Van Spanje 2009). On the demand side, conversely, voters tend to display more eclectic combinations of economic and cultural preferences (Malka et al. 2019; Van Der Brug and Van Spanje 2009). The lack of congruence between parties and voters in the political space potentially creates a "left-authoritarian supply gap" with detrimental effects on turnout, satisfaction with democracy and political trust (Hillen and Steiner 2019). It has also been shown that the radical right clearly wins the support of left-authoritarian voters over the left in some contexts (e.g. in Switzerland, see Kurella and Rosset 2018).

Building on this literature, we propose to identify four groups of voters based on the combination of immigration attitudes and redistribution preference as depicted in Figure 1: supporting redistribution and immigration constitutes the pure leftist quadrant ("pure leftists"), opposing both defines the pure rightist quadrant ("pure rightists"). Opposing redistribution but supporting immigration makes up the liberal quadrant ("liberals") and – and this preference set is at the center of this paper – those supporting redistribution while opposing immigration are the cross-pressured (or left-authoritarian) voters. Importantly, and that's why we deem these voters cross-pressured, we can assume that people with these specific preferencs, will lack a vote choice that supplies them with an offer corresponding to their whole preference set simultaneously. Left parties will deliver on their redistribution preferences but not on their immigration attitudes, radical right parties will offer them an anti-immigration-platform but not a pro-redistribution one. Because these voters are consequently pressured into choosing between two sub-optimal vote choices, we think of them as cross-pressured.

Figure 1: Combination of immigration and redistribution attitudes



Literature has shown that the group of cross-pressured people is sizeable in European electorates, making up about a quarter to a third of European electorates on average (e.g., Van Der Brug and Van Spanje 2009; Lefkofridi et al. 2014). As shown in Appendix A, we also find that cross-pressured voters constitute a sizeable share of the electorate in the Inequality and Politics data that we employ in this article (36 percent).[2] What is important to note is that both

[2] Based on the Inequality and Politics data used throughout this article, we define redistribution supporters as those either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that the government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels, immigration opponents are defined as those either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that immigration should be restricted to protect the national identity of their respective country. Respondents falling into one of these answer categories on both questions end up in the group of cross-pressured voters. Both, support for redistribution (71 percent of respondents) and opposition towards immigration (52 percent of respondents) are wildly popular in our survey. See Appendix A for more details on the identification of cross-pressured voters and robustness checks pertaining to this identification.

working-class voters (43 percent) and union members (38 percent among all union members, 42 percent among members affiliated with socialist union confederations) are overrepresented among left-authoritarians. This is not entirely surprising in as far as previous research has shown union membership to be associated with more pro-redistributive attitudes (e.g., Mosimann and Pontusson 2017, 2022; for social class, see Oesch and Rennwald 2018), while effects of union membership on immigration attitudes are less clear. While Donnelly (2014) highlights the increasingly pro-immigration stance of trade union leaders, other research emphasises country variation in the position of trade unions towards migrants and immigration policies (e.g., Marino et al. 2017; Penninx and Roosblad 2000). In accordance with these expectations, our survey data suggests a positive effect of union membership on redistribution support but no significant differences in immigration attitudes across union membership status (see Appendix B).

Theory and hypotheses

Union membership effect on voting through mobilization and saliency

We expect that union membership boosts voting for left-wing parties in pursuit of redistributive politics among redistribution supporters (and among immigration opponents as well). This effect is due to two different mechanisms. First, we expect a *mobilization effect* from union membership. Recognizing that election outcomes are crucial in implementing pro-labor legislation and redistributive policies, trade unions regularly engage in voter mobilization campaigns in times of elections. Although such mobilization activities can be relatively diverse from one country and electoral context to the next, trade unions often invite their members to support specific candidates and parties by contacting them (by mail, phone or at home), organizing events or 'get out the vote' campaigns. The literature widely acknowledges a direct mobilization effect of trade unions which enhances union members' turnout (e.g., Ahlquist 2017;

Francia and Orr 2014; Kerrissey and Schofer 2013; Kim 2022; Lamare 2010; Leighley and Nagler 2007; Pontusson 2013; Rosenfeld 2010).[3]

Second, we expect a union membership effect on voting through a *saliency mechanism*. Trade unions engage in discourses around redistribution and support specific policies to tackle challenges related to inequality – especially in periods of growing income inequality.[4] By communicating these positions to their members, trade unions influence the worldview of their members. Trade unions therefore contribute to rendering redistribution issues particularly salient among their members, relegating immigration issues to a second, less salient position. Without even changing the preferences of their members, trade unions influence how they evaluate pressing issues that require political action – they help to prioritize between issues.[5] Cross-pressured union members are therefore more likely to choose parties and candidates that are closest to them on redistribution issues, while ignoring immigration issues to a certain degree.

To be able to entirely unfold, the two mechanisms require or assume a certain ideological orientation of trade unions. The direct mobilization mechanism discussed above is more likely to occur when unions have some formal or informal ties to political parties. This is especially

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[3] The literature also emphasizes more indirect mobilization channels, such as the promotion of civic skills among union members or the fact that trade unions attempt to influence government decisions and thereby foster the attention of their members to political processes.

[4] Trade unions and trade union confederations across the globe publish, for instance, regular reports on inequality and disperse these reports as well as additional information on income inequality among their members. Inequality features, for example, prominently in reports, analyses, blog posts and press releases of Britain's TUC (https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/equality [4 June 2021], the AFL-CIO in the US (https://aflcio.org/issues/better-pay-and-benefits [4 June 2021]), or Switzerland's SGB (https://www.sgb.ch/themen/wirtschaft/detail/dossier-140-verteilungsbericht-2020 [4 June 2021]. See also Macdonald (2019).

[5] The mobilization and saliency mechanisms relate to the preferences of union members in different ways. To put it simply, the mobilization mechanism emphasizes a group belonging and the capacity of an organization to bring its members to act. To a certain degree, this can occur irrespectively of the existing preferences of their members. By contrast, the saliency effect refers to the ordering of existing preferences. The mobilization and saliency effects are not mutually exclusive and probably interrelated. When combined, these effects are likely to bring forth a stronger overall union effect on voting.

true where we find links between a country's main union confederation(s) (in most countries those are the ones rooted in the socialist labor movement) and social democratic (or socialist or labor) parties as well as communist parties (Allern and Bale 2017; Ebbinghaus 1995). Academic confederations, Christian confederations or confederations claiming to be apolitical have no or weaker relationships with left-wing parties which supposedly weakens the mobilization effect of union membership. Thinking about our second mechanism related to saliency, we also expect the ties to left parties (and therefore the political orientation) of unions and union confederations to play a role. Egalitarianism represents a core value of trade unions rooted in the socialist tradition. It is therefore likely that socialist confederations will push for a redistributive agenda and make inequality a salient issue. We therefore argue that support for left-wing parties is stronger among (cross-pressured) members affiliated with trade union confederations historically rooted in the socialist labor movement.[6] Our first hypothesis is the following:

H1: Among cross-pressured workers, union members (affiliated with trade union confederations historically rooted in the socialist labor movement) are more likely to vote for left parties than non-members.

Our argumentation builds on existing literature that has emphasized important variations among trade unions with respect to their ideology, their history and the policies they advocate. Examining redistribution preferences, Mosimann and Pontusson (2020, 2017) have emphasized that the "union effect" is more heterogeneous than commonly assumed and that the specific union (and the type of wage policies supported by this union) to which an individual belongs should be taken into account when looking into union effects. Regarding voting behaviour, Arndt and Rennwald (2016) have argued that the strength of different confederations within national union movements conditions vote choice among union members in Western Europe. The authors show that support for social democratic parties increases among union

[6] We define the socialist movement broadly and refrain from differentiating between communist, anarcho-syndicalist and reformist tendencies that have deeply divided the labor movement in some countries.

members in countries dominated by trade union confederations with close ties to social democrats. Conversely, support for social democratic parties decreases among union members in countries with bigger membership shares in academic or professional trade union confederations.

In the preceding section, we have briefly discussed that working-class voters are particularly prone to be among the group of cross-pressured voters. It is why our hypotheses focus on the specific group of workers. However, we expect that the hypothesized union membership effect also applies to the middle-class. We do not see any reason why it would not be the case. It thus strikes us as important to check whether the hypothesized union membership effect presented here holds for the middle class. To anticipate, we will systematically present our empirical results in a first step for the working class and, in a second step, verify whether they hold for the middle class.

Self-selection issues

Are union members not simply sharing common values with left parties without any intervention from trade unions? One could argue that there is some important self-selection going on. In our case, this would imply that mainly left-authoritarians self-identifying as left (their immigration attitudes non-withstanding) and keen to vote for political parties on the left of the political spectrum would join unions in the first place. Union membership (and especially membership in a socialist confederation) would then simply become a proxy for having left-leaning voting tendencies.

A burgeoning literature conceives of trade unions as important actors in shaping political behavior (e.g., Francia and Bigelow 2010; Kerrissey and Schofer 2013 or Arndt and Rennwald 2016) and preferences with regard to redistribution (Mosimann and Pontusson 2017), social investment (Bledow and Busemeyer 2020), trade policy (Kim and Margalit 2017 or Ahlquist et al. 2014) or income inequality (Bergene and Drange 2021). However, other authors reject the

idea that unions influence the preferences of their members, and rather suggest that an important selection of like-minded individuals occurs. Checchi et al. (2010) suggest, for instance, that differences in support for redistribution between union members and non-members may be explained by the fact that individuals with egalitarian values are more likely to join unions. Comparing current union members to previous members, Armingeon (2021) finds a strong similarity in their political attitudes and behaviour. He interprets this closeness as an indicator of a selection effect – politically interested and left-wing individuals are more likely to join unions (see also Armingeon 2007).

The causal element in the association between union membership and political attitudes remains subject of controversies in the literature. Analyzing Swiss and British panel data, Hadziabdic and Baccaro (2020) find that the effect of union membership on a broad set of political outcomes (participation, party preferences, etc.) disappears once individual-level fixed effects are introduced. They thus confirm an important selection effect. At the same time, they call to go beyond the simple opposition between a molding effect and a selection effect. They argue theoretically that the effect of joining a union is not simply an "on/off switch". Rather, they associate union membership to "a process that unfolds in time before, during, and sometimes after the experience of membership" (Hadziabdic and Baccaro, 2020: 467). Empirically, they find important "anticipation effects". Workers start to change their preferences before they join unions – and the decision to become member is the result of this transformation. They also find some "maturation effects", in the sense that attitudinal changes require some time to appear, with the implication that the effects do not disappear once people leave the union.

While our ambition in this paper is not to solve the self-selection issues,[7] we will present in the empirical part some specific tests to give more robustness to our idea that unions mobilize and

[7] To some extent, the mobilization mechanism that we discussed before is still compatible with self-selection. Even if unions gather convinced left people, unions can still make a difference on election results if they engage in a strong mobilization campaign. The second mechanism, the one related to saliency, is more vulnerable to self-selection. We argued that union help to order the preferences of

shape the preferences of their members. The intervention of unions might be limited, but the results cannot be entirely attributed to selection of convinced leftists in trade unions.

Heterogeneity in the union membership effect on voting at the micro-level

The theory presented so far assigns an important role to the exposure of union members to the discourses and activities of their unions. This requires that union members listen to what unions say. Recent literature has examined such effects of union communication. Kim and Margalit (2017) show, for instance, a congruence in the attitudes between members of the United Auto Workers union (UAW) in the US and its members towards trade policy and how this congruence persisted when the UAW sharply shifted its position on a specific policy deal. Similarly, Ahlquist et al. (2014) illustrate how members of the International Longshore Warehouse Union (ILWU) on the US West Coast took on a protectionist position on trade policy in line with the ILWU's position even though this stance cut against their material self-interest. Importantly, both Kim and Margalit (2017) and Ahlquist et al. (2014) found that the congruence between the positions of these unions and their members was stronger when union communications were more frequent. One could also argue that exposure increases with time. The longer individuals are members of a union, the higher is the chance that they are socialized to the values and ideas promoted by trade unions. We pose two hypotheses:

H2a: The union membership effect identified in H1 becomes more pronounced with union members' exposure to communication from their union.

H2b: The union membership effect identified in H1 becomes more pronounced with a longer duration of membership.

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their members, but people who value economic issues more could be more likely to join unions in the first place.

Heterogeneity in the union membership effect on voting across party systems

We have emphasized above that the actions and discourses of unions matter for individuals' vote choices. In a next step, we consider how the actions and discourses of unions interact with and resonate in current political contexts. Especially party system variations linked to the presence and programs of radical right parties are likely to condition the ability of unions to rally their members around left parties. Radical right parties have traditionally combined an anti-immigration position with a neoliberal position on economic issues (Kitschelt and McGann 1995). Cross-pressured individuals are arguably attracted by the anti-immigration policies of radical right parties, but not by their neoliberal economic policies (Oesch and Rennwald 2018). When unions campaign against economic inequality (thereby contributing to increasing the saliency of economic issues among their members), they simultaneously call out opponents of economic equality. Where radical right parties endorse a neoliberal agenda, trade unions can easily portray radical right parties as anti-redistribution actors, thereby making the radical right a less attractive choice for cross-pressured voters. Where radical right parties endorse a redistributive agenda (albeit a particular one with strong anti-universalistic components), it conversely becomes more complicated for unions to argue that radical right parties act against the pro-redistributive preferences of their left-authoritarian members. Cross-pressured voters become simply less cross-pressured where such a party offer is available, because it provides them with a party delivering on their pro-redistribution and anti-immigration preferences. Recently, radical right parties have increasingly incorporated redistribution issues and (chauvinist) pro-welfare positions into their party platforms (Afonso and Rennwald 2018; Lefkofridi and Michel 2017).[8] Research suggests that economic grievances (and in particular economic insecurities underlying cultural issues such as immigration) allow radical right parties to significantly expand their vote share by mobilizing beyond their core constituency (Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2022, 2020). However, research also points to significant cross-national variation in the agenda of radical right parties (e.g., Afonso and Rennwald 2018). We

[8] Busemeyer et al. (2022) and Rathgeb (2021) challenge the view that radical right parties have endorsed a pro-welfare agenda. Such parties, so these authors argue, instead advance the notion of a 'particularistic-authoritarian welfare state,' in which deservingness strongly conditions support for welfare schemes, support for workfare is high and endorsement of social investment is low (see also Enggist and Pinggera 2021).

therefore examine how the radical right's positions on redistribution condition the union effect.

H3: The union membership effect identified in H1 becomes less pronounced in countries with radical right parties advocating a welfare chauvinistic program.

Data and variables

We rely on original survey data from the Inequality and Politics dataset to analyze our hypotheses. The survey was carried out in thirteen West European countries and the US between June and September of 2019. It is made up of representative samples (based on region of residence, gender, age, education and income) of at least 2,000 respondents per country and mainly focuses on citizens' perceptions of economic and political inequalities as well as their stance towards policies related to inequality and the correction of inequality (for more information, see Pontusson et al. 2020). Importantly, the dataset includes an extensive module on union membership which we describe in more detail in a next section. The countries included in our analysis are Austria (national election in September 2019), Belgium (May 2019), Denmark (June 2019), France (April 2017), Germany (September 2017 and January 2021), Ireland (February 2016 and 2020), Italy (March 2018), Netherlands (March 2017 and 2021), Portugal (October 2019), Spain (November 2019), Sweden (September 2018), Switzerland (October 2019), United Kingdom (December 2019) and United States (November 2020).

At the individual level, we limit the sample to citizens aged 18 (16 in Austria) and above (that is, the set of potential voters) and those currently either in full-time, part-time or self-employment (that is, the pool of potential union members in most countries). We additionally remove respondents with missing values on covariates from the sample and restrict the sample to respondents with left-authoritarian preferences as described above, which leaves us with 3,314 working-class respondents (and 2,213 middle-class respondents) across countries.

Vote choice

Our dependent variable relies on respondents' self-reported vote intention: "If there were a national election in [Country] tomorrow, which party would you vote for?"[9] Since we are mainly interested in capturing votes for the left, that is, parties in pursuit of inclusionary immigration policies and redistribution, we recode the extensive list of parties per country provided by the Inequalities and Politics dataset into a simplified categorization of party choice that separates voting for 1 "left parties," from voting for 2 "centre-right and other parties," voting for 3 "radical right parties," and 4 "not voting" (comprising a large variety of respondents choosing no party, preferring not to answer and not knowing). The classification of political parties can be found in Table 1. Our sample includes some countries – namely Ireland and Portugal – in which no option on the radical right end of the political spectrum is available to voters. To check whether the absence of a radical right party might affect union membership effects on voting, we also recalculate our models without these countries.

As shown in Table 1, we abstain from differentiating between various types of left-wing parties such as green, communist or social democratic parties in this version of our dependent variable. The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES; Bakker et al. 2020) on party positions indicates that they all favor redistributive policies and oppose restrictive immigration policies by about the same degree, and that they differ on both dimensions from parties coded as centre-right and radical right. Votes for all types of parties coded as left can thus be interpreted as electoral demand for redistribution. Unions are, however, unlikely to endorse, for example, green parties or to actively mobilize their members for such parties. That is why we check our result with a second version of our dependent variable that codes green parties into a separate category. Note, however, that grouping left-wing parties with and without close ties to unions together probably results in a more conservative test of union membership effects on electoral demand for redistribution.

[9] Even though self-reporting tends to overstate voting (e.g., Ansolabehere and Hersh 2012) and underestimate voting for radical right-wing parties (e.g., Ivaldi 2001), we have no reason to expect such misrepresentation to be more common among union members than non-members.

Table 1: Classification of parties

	Left	Centre-right and others	Radical Right
Austria	• Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (SPÖ) • Jetzt – Liste Pilz • Die Grünen	• Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP) • NEOS	• Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ)
Belgium			
Flanders	• Socialistische Partij Anders (sp.a) • Groen (Groen) • Partij van de Arbeid van België (PVDA/PTB)	• Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (N-VA) • Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams (CD&V) • Open Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten (Open VLD) • Union des francophones (UF)	• Vlaams Belang (VB)
Wallonia	• Parti socialiste (PS) • Ecolo • Parti du travail de Belgique (PTB/PvdA)	• Mouvement réformateur (MR) • Centre démocrate humaniste (cdH) • Parti populaire (PP) • Démocrate fédéraliste indépendant (DéFI)	
Denmark	• Socialdemokraterne • Enhedslisten • Alternativet • Radikale Venstre • Socialistik Folkeparti	• Venstre • Det konservative Folkeparti • Folkebevægelsen mod EU	• Dansk Folkeparti
France	• La France insoumise (FI) • Parti socialiste (PS) • Europe Écologie Les Verts (EELV) • Parti communiste français (PCF) • Génération.s, le mouvement	• La république en marche (LREM) • Les républicains (LR) • Mouvement démocrate (MODEM) • Union des démocrates et indépendants (UDI) • Union Populaire Républicaine	• Rassemblement national (RN) • Les Patriotes
Germany	• Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) • Die Linke (Linke) • Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (Grüne)	• Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU) • Christlich-Soziale Union (CSU) • Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP) • Freie Wähler	• Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)
Ireland*	• Labour Party (LP) • Sinn Féin (SF) • Green Party (GP)	• Fine Gael (FG) • Fianna Fáil (FF) • Independence Alliance	
Italy	• Partito Democratico (PD) • La Sinistra	• Forza Italia (FI) • Movimento 5 Stelle • +Europa	• Lega nord (LN) • Fratelli d'Italia (FDI)

Table 1 continued

Netherlands	• Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA) • Socialistische Partij (SP) • Democraten 66 (D66) • GroenLinks (GL) • Partij voor de Dieren • DENK	• Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD) • Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA) • ChristenUnie (CU) • 50PLUS (50+) • Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (SGP)	• Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV) • Forum voor Democratie (FvD)
Portugal*	• Partido Socialista (PS) • Bloco de Esquerda (BE) • Partido Comunista Português (PCP) • Partido Ecologista «Os Verdes» (PEV)	• Partido Social Democrata (PPD/PSD) • CDS – Partido Popular (CDS-PP)	
Spain	• Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) • Podemos • Izquierda Unida (IU) • Equo • Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya-Sobiranistes (ERC-Sobiranistes)	• Partido Popular (PP) • Ciudadanos (C's) • Junts per Catalunya • Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea/Partido Nacionalista Vasco (EAJ/PNV) • EH Bildu	• Vox
Sweden	• Socialdemokraterna • Miljöpartiet • Vänsterpartiet	• Moderaterna • Centerpartiet • Liberalerna • Kristdemokraterna	• Sverigedemokraterna
Switzerland	• Sozialdemokratische Partei (SP) • Grüne Partei der Schweiz (GPS)	• Schweizerische Volkspartei (SVP) • Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei (FDP) (Die Liberalen) • Christlichdemokratische Volkspartei (CVP) • Grünliberale Partei (GLP) • Bürgerlich-Demokratische Partei (BDP)	• Schweizerische Volkspartei (SVP)
UK	• Labour Party • The Green Party of England and Wales	• Conservative Party • Liberal Democrats • Scottish National Party (SNP) • Change UK – The Independent Group	• Brexit Party • UKIP
USA	• Democratic Party		• Republican Party

* Countries without a radical right party.

__ Greens and social-liberal parties are underlined in the first column. In a second version of our dependent variable, they constitute a separate and additional category "greens".

Independent variables at the individual level

The main independent variable of interest is union membership that we differentiate according to the political orientation of trade unions. We do this on the basis of trade union confederations. In the survey, each (current) union member was asked which confederation her own trade union is affiliated to. A list of confederations was presented to the respondent, with an additional option of "none of the above."[10] As shown in Table 2, we distinguish confederations that have their origins in the socialist labor movement from all other types of trade union confederations (Christian confederations, white-collar confederations, apolitical confederations, etc.). To ensure cross-national comparison and to keep a sizeable number of respondents in each category, we define the socialist movement broadly and refrain from differentiating between communist, anarcho-syndicalist and reformist tendencies.[11] Please note that some union members were unable to identify the confederation to which their trade union belongs, so we retain a category for "unknown" confederation (we refrain, however, from showing effects from this residual category in our main results).

[10] In countries with two main confederations, the respondent was directly asked whether her union was affiliated to confederation A or confederation B, with "neither" as an additional option. In Austria and the UK, respondents were asked whether their union is part of the ÖGB or the TUC.

[11] We assign the German and Austrian unitary confederations to the socialist labor movement given their close relationship with these countries' respective social democratic party.

Table 2: Classification of trade union confederations

	Main/socialist	Non-socialist
Austria	*ÖGB*	*Non-affiliated unions*
Belgium	*FGTB/ABVV*	*CSV/ACV* *CGSLB/ACLVB* *Non-affiliated unions*
Denmark	*LO* *FTF* *FH*	*Akademikerne* *Non-affiliated unions*
France	*CGT* *CFDT* *FO*	*UNSA* *Other/non-affiliated unions*
Germany	*DGB*	*DBB* *Other/non-affiliated unions*
Ireland	*ICTU*	*Non-affiliated unions*
Italy	*CGIL* *UIL*	*CISL* *Other/non-affiliated unions*
Netherlands	*FNV*	*CNV* *VCP* *Non-affiliated unions*
Portugal	*CGTP* *UGT*	*Other/non-affiliated unions*
Spain	*CCOO* *UGT*	*Other/non-affiliated unions*
Sweden	*LO*	*TCO* *SACO* *Non-affiliated unions*
Switzerland	*SGB/USS*	*Travail.Suisse* *Non-affiliated unions*
United Kingdom	*TUC*	*Non-affiliated unions*
USA	*AFL-CIO* *Change to Win*	*Non-affiliated unions*

Note. "Socialist" confederations are those seeking to speak for the "working class," with formal or informal ties to left parties or, at least, a high incidence of "leftist" members and leaders.

When looking at heterogeneity in the union membership effect on voting across members, we are interested in how exposure to communication from one's union conditions the likelihood of left voting among left-authoritarians. We capture the intensity of the exposure to trade union discourses with a question on the frequency of reading communication from the union ("How often do you read newsletters or engage with other communications from your union?"). Responses include "never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often" and "very often." Because of low numbers of respondents in the answer category "never," we collapse "never" and "rarely" into a single category. For the duration of membership, we use a question on how long people have been a union member, in four categories ("less than 2 years", "2-5 years", "6-10 years", "more than 10 years").

We control for several factors that have been shown to influence vote choice and/or might alter the effect of union membership on vote choice: Sex, age, place of residence, income, public sector employment and temporary employment. Sex differentiates women, coded as 1, from men, coded as 0. Age is captured by categories with the lower bound defined by the voting age in each country (mostly 18). Place of residence distinguishes between different settings ranging from (1) " village" to (4) "big city," thus indicating an increase in urban living. To measure income, we use a variable on respondents' recoded household net income in deciles. Whether a respondent works in the public sector and whether she has a permanent contract can affect both the propensity to join a union (e.g., Oesch 2006; Pontusson 2013) as well as voting behavior. We thus introduce dummies to capture both public sector and temporary employment.

Our main analyses focus on working-class respondents. As discussed, we expect working-class voters to be more prone to display left-authoritarian preferences than other classes and thus constitute the class most strongly fought for by parties either pursuing redistributive or anti-immigration policies. To identify working-class respondents, we rely on a class scheme proposed by Oesch (2006). Emphasizing vertical differences between classes and coming close to the Erikson and Goldthorpe scheme, this model comprises the following categories: the

routine working class, the skilled working class, the lower middle class, the upper middle class and the small business owners. We define the working class as encompassing the routine and the skilled working-class categories (and thus comprising routine and skilled workers in production and non-production jobs). We operationalize social class by using a combination of respondent's self-placement into one of the broad occupational categories in the Inequality and Politics dataset and their level of education.

Independent variables at the party level

H3 introduces conditioning factors at the level of parties. To capture the degree to which radical right parties pursue a redistributive agenda in the form of welfare chauvinism, we measure the radical right's stance on redistribution. The position of radical right parties on redistribution is available in the 2019 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (Bakker et al. 2020) and coded on a scale from 0 to 10. The value 0 indicates that a party is fully in favor of redistribution, whereas the value 10 indicates that a party is fully opposed to redistribution.

Method

We estimate multinomial logit models to test our hypotheses because the dependent variable is a nominal choice among vote options. These models simultaneously fit binary logits for all comparisons among the alternative vote choices (see Long and Freese 2014). The available vote choices are (1) voting for a left-wing party, (2) voting for a centre-right party, (3) voting for a radical right-wing party, and (4) non-voting with (1) as the reference group for the coefficients listed in the full models that are shown in Appendix E.[12] Models contain robust standard errors and account for the fact that respondents are clustered within countries by including country dummies.

[12] Multinomial logit models rely on an assumption regarding the independence of irrelevant alternatives (Long and Freese 2014: 207). A Hausman-McFadden test (Hausman and McFadden 1984) of this assumption provides no evidence that the odds of choosing between any two categories on the dependent variable are not independent.

Based on our weighted representative sample restricted to left-authoritarians and the estimated coefficients, we present the average predicted probabilities to choose the four options in our empirical sections since the interpretation of raw multinomial logit estimates is complex. Full regression results can be found in Appendix E.

Since our sample only contains fourteen countries, we are restricted in what we can do to test H3 that is interested in how party characteristics affect the effect of membership in a socialist trade union confederation on left voting. We thus have to opt for merely descriptive analyses when it comes to this hypothesis and show a visualization of the relationship between the union effect on voting and the radical right's support of redistribution. In a first step of this exercise, we calculate for each country the average marginal effects of socialist confederation membership on vote intention (via a multinomial logit model controlling for income, age, sex, place of residence, public sector employment and temporary employment, while also applying robust standard errors and weights). In a second step, we plot these effects against the radical right's position towards redistribution.

Findings

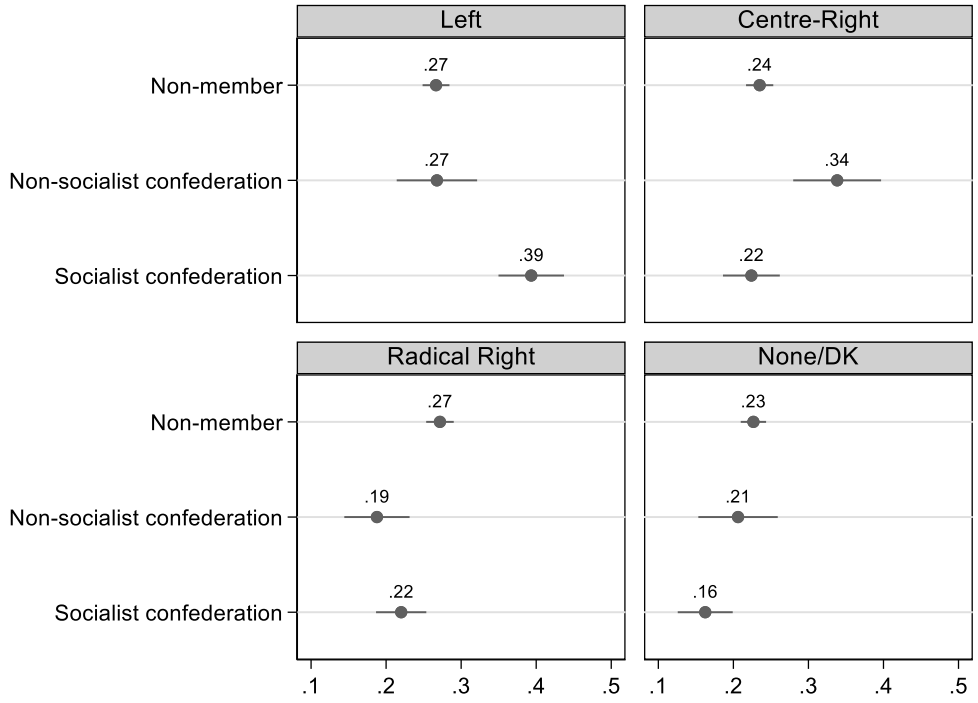
Effect of membership in a socialist confederation on voting among left-authoritarians

Figure 2 reveals that cross-pressured workers who are members of socialist confederations are more likely to vote for a left party than comparable non-members as assumed in H1.[13] The positive effect of union membership on voting left does not hold among members of trade union confederations without links to or roots in the socialist labor movement. Non-socialist confederations members are indeed very close to non-members. This finding confirms our theoretical expectations. It is union membership in specific confederations that boosts left voting. The opposite pattern is found for centre-right voting. It is now membership in non-

[13] This finding holds whether we group green parties with socialist and radical left parties into a broad left category or not and whether we exclude countries in which voters have no option to choose a radical right party.

socialist confederations that boosts centre-right support, while membership in socialist confederations slightly decreases centre-right support.

Figure 2: Predicted vote intention by union membership status among cross-pressured working-class respondents



Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from a multinomial logit model printed in Table E.1, M1 (Appendix E). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Interestingly, union membership also affects voting for the other option probably appealing to cross pressured voters, that is, voting for the radical right. Trade union members are significantly less likely to vote radical right than non-members. It is now both socialist confederations and non-socialist confederations that contribute to decrease radical right support. Members of socialist confederations are also less likely to be "uncertain" about their vote intention (not choosing any party or saying they do not know). Overall, the vote intention of non-members are very much spread across our four alternatives (left, centre-right, radical right, no party). In contrast, for members of socialist confederations, the first choice becomes very clearly left

voting, 17 percentage points before center right or radical right voting. This against lends support to our first hypothesis – when one considers left voting relatively to the other options (and not in isolation).

In terms of country-variation, a substantial increase in left support among unionized workers can be observed in nine countries out of fourteen (see Figure C.1 in Appendix C).[14] We take this as an additional confirmation for H1. However, in several countries, the confidence intervals overlap to an important degree, an element that must be put in relation with the small resulting number of cases when we limit our sample to cross-pressured workers. This calls for caution in interpreting the country-specific results. In three countries (France, the Netherlands and Portugal), vote intention for the left is relatively similar between members of socialist confederations and non-members. In two other countries (Ireland and UK), vote intention for the Left, compared to non-members, decreases among members of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and to a smaller extent among members of the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

It is now interesting to replicate the main analysis for middle class respondents only (see Figure C.2 in Appendix C). As it was the case for cross-pressured workers, socialist confederation membership boosts support for left parties. There is therefore nothing specific to working-class unionization on the choices of cross-pressured citizens – the union effect applies to both working class and middle-class respondents. The difference is simply that the pool of cross-pressured middle-class respondents is much smaller. However, the results are different for the radical right. In this case, belonging to a socialist confederation has much less impact on radical right voting among middle-class respondents than among working-class respondents. To some degree, the middle class does not need any union to "guide" its choice, since the attraction of the radical right is much lower from the start – radical right reaches 22% among non-unionized middle-class respondents, but it reaches 27% among non-unionized working-class individuals.

[14] Please note that we will return later to country-variation in radical right voting.

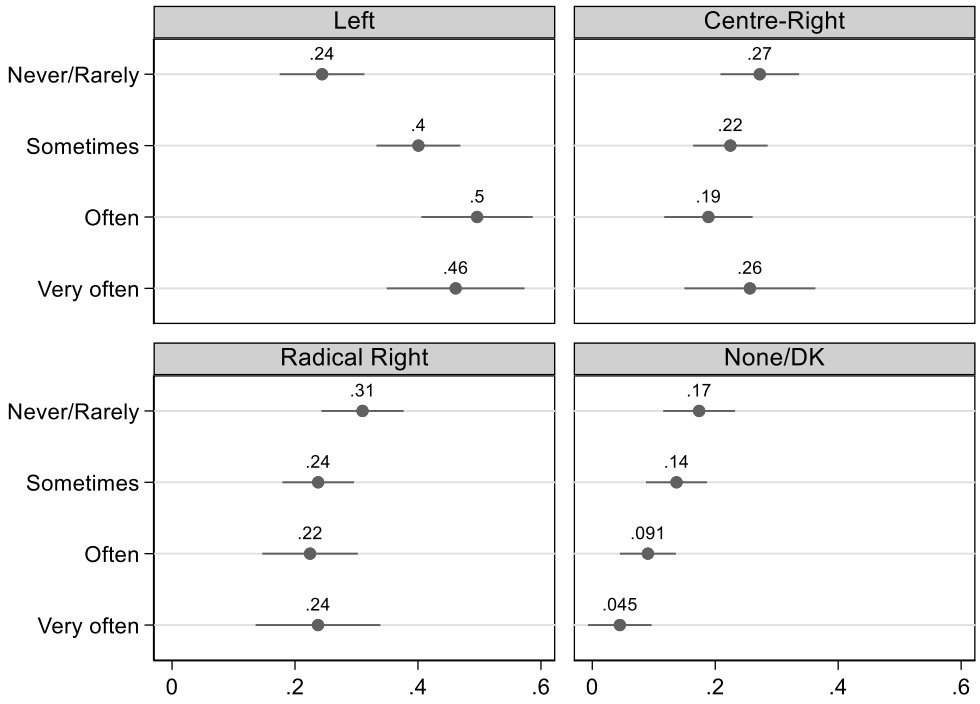
At this point, readers might want to question our underlying idea that unions mobilize their members or influence the ranking of their preferences. Are union members, and especially members of socialist confederations, not simply convinced left voters, without any intervention from trade unions? To be clear, our results reveal only an association between union membership and voting intentions. Our design does not allow us to prove any causal direction. However, we have conducted a few additional analyses in Appendix D to deal with the issue of self-selection. The results lend more credential to the claim that something "happens" within trade unions. This union "effect" might be relatively small (and we cannot quantify its size). But at least, our results do not seem to indicate that the higher support for left parties is *entirely* due to the higher probability of convinced left voters to join socialist confederations. Importantly, we do not consider self-selection and union effect to be mutually exclusive – they might well co-exist.

Heterogeneity across union members

To analyse the degree to which members are exposed to the discourses and activities of their unions, we now restrict the analysis to union members, and in particular, to members of socialist confederations. In line with H2a, we find in Figure 3 that members affiliated with a socialist confederation who engage at least sometimes with communication from their union are more likely to vote for a left party than comparable members who rarely or never engage with union communication. Going one level higher (to those who often engage with union communication) continues to increase left voting. A threshold seems to be reached, because members who read very often their union communication are not significantly more likely to support left parties than those who do it sometimes.

For the radical right option, the division is between those who never or rarely read the union's newsletters and all others. Engaging more with union communication reduces the probability to support the radical right. Regarding the last option of not chosing any party, each further engagement with union communication decreases the probability to select this category.

Figure 3: Predicted vote intention by engagement with union communication among members of socialist confederations (cross-pressured working-class respondents only)



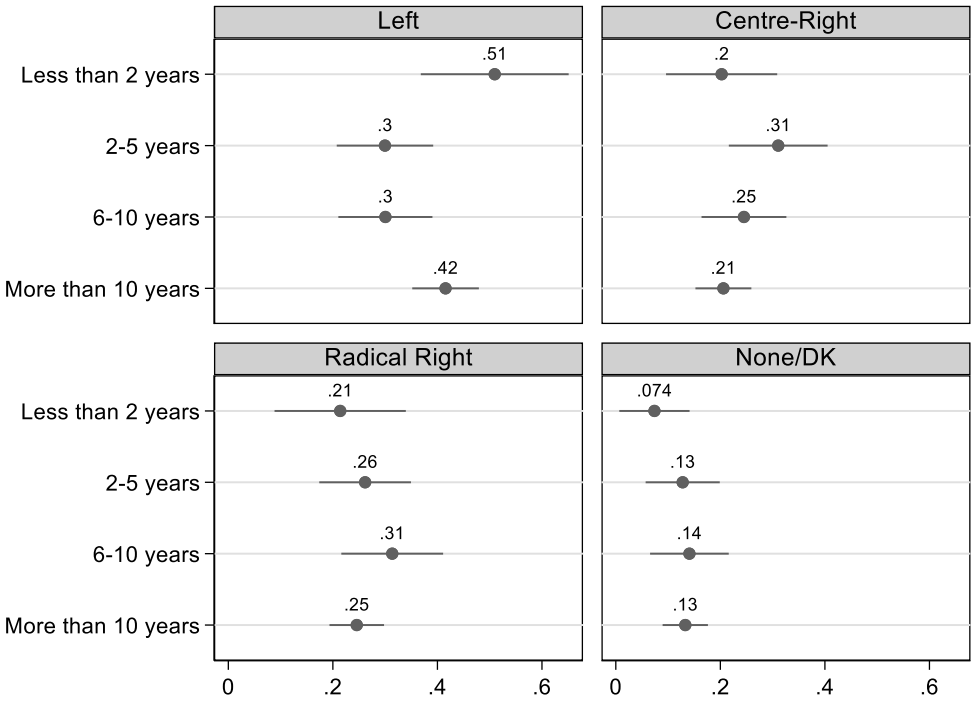
Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from a multinomial logit model printed in Table E.2, M1 (Appendix E). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Figure C.3 in Appendix C replicates this analysis for middle-class respondents. Interestingly, union communication has very little impact on the probability to vote left. Unionized respondents with a middle-class background are supporters of the left, irrespective of their engagement with union communication. There are also few differences for radical right voting across the frequency to read communication. Middle class members who engage often or very often with their union communication are not less likely to support the radical right. The only difference is for those who engage sometimes – they are cleary less likely to support the radical right than those who rarely or never engage. The last option of not chosing any party reveals a similar pattern as the one identified before for working-class respondents. Each additional engagement with union communication decreases the probability of not chosing any party.

Overall, these findings suggest that middle class respondents are less impacted by the exposure to the discourses and activites of their unions than working-class respondents. Working-class cross-pressured respondents seem to need more exposure to union communication to turn to left parties and to get away from radical right parties.

The exposure to union discourses and activities depends also on the length of membership. The longer individuals are members, the more likely they are influenced and socialized by their trade union. Figure 4 displays the vote intention of socialist confederation members according to their membership duration. One should remind the reader here that our models include controls for age categories – the results of membership duration are therefore net of any age influence. The findings are not conform to our hypothesis H2b. The union membership effect becomes not more pronounced with a longer duration of membership. Cross-pressured workers who are newly members of socialist confederations (less than two years) are the strongest supporters of left parties. Going higher on the membership duration scale (2-5 years, 6-10 years) decreases significantly the probability to vote left. It is exactly among the two categories of medium membership duration that radical right parties (in particular in the 6-10 yeary category) and centre-right parties (in particular for the 2-5 years category) score points among cross-pressured workers. Support for centre-right and radical right is again more modest among the new and old members, although the radical right option remains relatively substantial among old members. These results indicate a form of decreasing reception and enthousiasm after the very first years of membership that strongly boost left voting. Passing this stage and becoming a long-term, loyal union member again stabilizes left voting to a medium level.

Figure 4: Predicted vote intention by membership duration among members of socialist confederations (cross-pressured working-class respondents only)



Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from a multinomial logit model printed in Table E.3, M1 (Appendix E). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Again we replicate this analysis for middle-class cross-pressured citizens (see Figure C.4 in Appendix C). As for union communication, we again note substantial variation between working-class and middle-class unionized respondents. Left voting varies only to a limited degree across the length of membership. It is only among the long-term members (more than 10 years) that left voting slightly decreases. Radical right support varies also little according to membership duration. Only the new members (less than 2 years) are significantly less likely to support the radical right. Overall, the results suggest that the vote intention of middle-class respondents are less subject to variation in membership duration (and less subject to this drop in "enthusiasm" after a few years of membership).

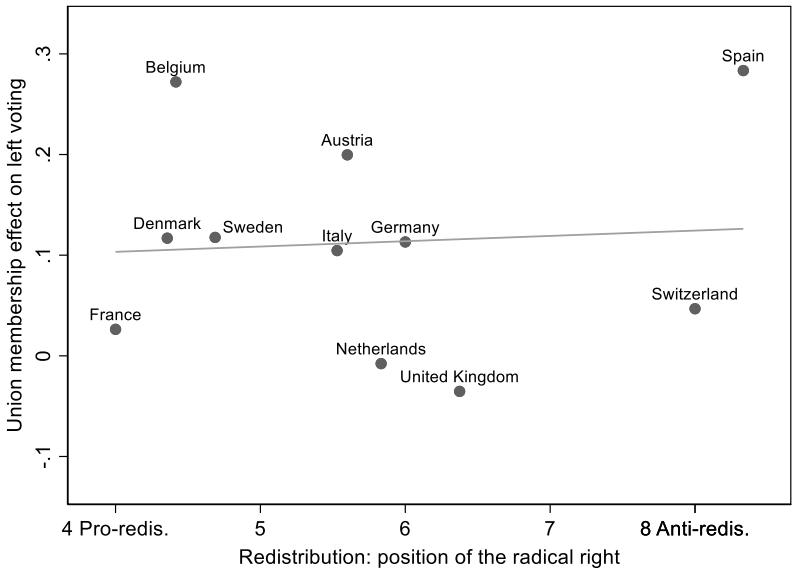
Supply side variation

The presence of radical right parties committed to redistribution and welfare-state provisions (for natives) might reduce the union effect on voting because voters favoring redistribution and restrictive immigration are simply less cross-pressured in such settings. We now investigate in a descriptive way the relationship between the position of radical right parties and voting. As said already before, the number of cases become relatively limited when we investigate each country separately. In particular, the number of individuals in the category of union members tend to be small in countries with modest union density. Results must therefore be interpreted with caution.

Figure 5 shows the relationship between the position of radical right parties on redistribution[15] and the effect of union membership, that is membership in a socialist confederation, on the probability to vote left in the different countries in our sample. This exercise reveals that the radical right's position and the effect of union membership on left voting does not seem to correlate in any meaningful way. H3 is therefore not confirmed.

[15] For countries with multiple radical right parties, the value for the most redistributive party has been used to compile Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5: Relationship between the radical right's position on redistribution and the socialist confederation membership effect on left voting

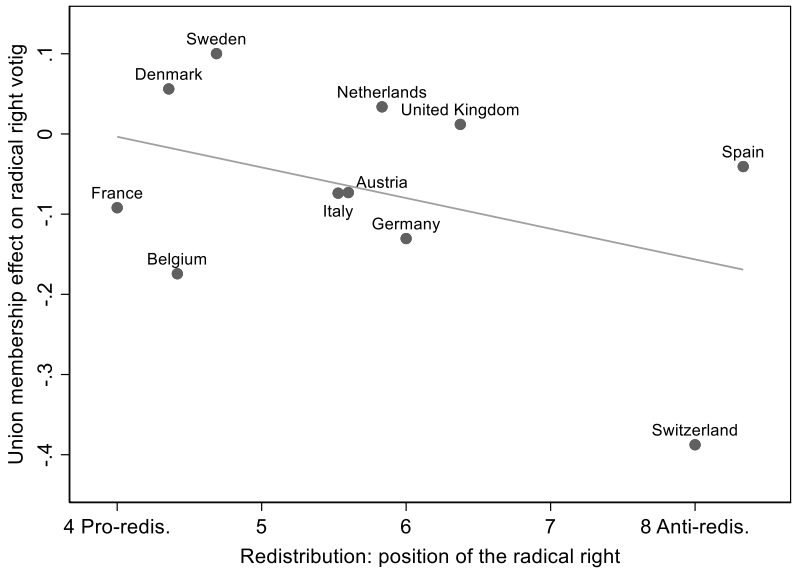


Note. The socialist confederation membership effect refers to the average marginal effect of socialist confederation membership (reference category=non-members) from a multinomial logit model for each country separately (available upon request). The position of the radical right is calculated from the 2019 Chapel Hill Expert Survey.

Figure 6 focuses more directly on radical right voting – it considers again the relationship between the radical right's redistributive position and the union membership effect on voting. We find that where the radical right is more opposed to redistribution, the negative effect of union membership on radical right voting is larger. This is line with the spirit of H3 – we deal here with radical right voting while the hypothesis focuses on the left. In Sweden and Denmark, two countries in which radical right parties endorse redistribution, socialist confederation membership even (slightly) increases support for the radical right. When the radical right becomes more supportive of redistribution, trade unions seem therefore to have more difficulties to discourage their members to vote radical right. However, we hasten to precise that Switzerland – where we only have a few union members – is a powerful driver for the observed relationship. Removing Switzerland from the sample would suppress the relationship between

the two variables. We therefore have only limited evidence at hand for an impact of the position of the radical right on the union effect.

Figure 6: Relationship between the radical right's position on redistribution and the socialist confederation membership effect on radical right voting



Note. The socialist confederation membership effect refers to the average marginal effect of socialist confederation membership (reference category=non-members) from a multinomial logit model for each country separately (full regression results available upon request). The position of the radical right is calculated from the 2019 Chapel Hill Expert Survey.

Conclusion

Against the background of increasing economic inequality, this paper examined the ability of trade unions to translate their members' pro-redistribution preferences into pro-redistribution voting. The role of redistribution issues for voting decisions has been challenged by immigration issues that have gained center stage in (right-wing) party platforms and public opinion. In the new and more complex multidimensional political space, we argued that trade unions, to some extent, keep their members focused on redistributive issues and hinder them to be "distracted" by immigration issues when it comes to elections. Furthermore, we argued that especially trade unions rooted in the socialist labor movement and therefore having formal or informal ties to left parties are likely to shape a pro-redistributive political behaviour.

Working-class voters are particularly prone to be among the group of citizens supporting redistribution but at the same time opposing immigration (we call them cross-pressured voters). We therefore tested our argument for working-class voters in priority. Our results show an association between union membership on the one hand and pro-redistribution voting on the other hand. Left-authoritarian (or cross-pressured) workers who are members of a trade union are more likely to vote for left parties – left voting being a proxy for pro-redistribution voting – than non-members. However, this association holds only for members of trade union confederations with roots in the socialist labor movement. Non-socialist confederation members are indeed very close to non-members in their support for left parties. Critically, socialist confederation members are also less likely to support radical right parties.

We furthermore examined heterogeneity among union members. Not surprisingly, we found that members of socialist confederations, with increasing exposure to union communication (at least until a certain threshold), are more likely to support left parties. We did not find any similar relationship with the length of membership. In a last step, we tentatively explored the relationship between the union "effect" and the policy positions of radical right parties. We found that union members are more attracted by the radical right when this party family advocates a welfare chauvinistic program.

Overall, our results show that trade unions are crucial actors to translate their members' pro-redistribution preferences into pro-redistribution voting. Trade unions effectively mobilize some preferences of their voters for behaviour and contribute to decrease the salience of other preferences for voting decisions. While the literature often emphasizes the effect of trade unions on the transformation of preferences (for a review, see Hadziabdic and Baccaro 2020), this paper rather suggests that the mobilization of preferences is the key element.

This paper complements the existing literature on the effects of trade unions on inequality. The political activities of trade unions and their relationship to political parties on which we focused represent another mean through which unions contribute to reduce inequality. Union membership keeps alive demand for redistribution among voters. Accordingly, the pronounced trend of de-unionization in advanced democracies has the effect to mute demand for redistribution among the electorate. Our paper also speaks to the literature on the electorate of radical right parties and new cleavages. It signals the essential role of intermediary organizations who contribute to filter the anti-immigration message of radical right parties.

Future research should examine more closely the activities of trade unions around politics and elections. This should then allow to test the mechanisms linking union membership to voting, a task that we have not completed in this paper. Beyond conceptualizing and measuring the political and electoral activities of trade unions, it would be also decisive to analyze the reception of these messages among the membership. The acceptance of political messages is certainly a key variable for any project of electoral mobilization. Such an endeavor could be also linked to another aspect of the study of self-selection, i.e., the selection out of trade unions. In this respect, it would be important to assess the relevance of political considerations for leaving trade unions, compared to other motivations.

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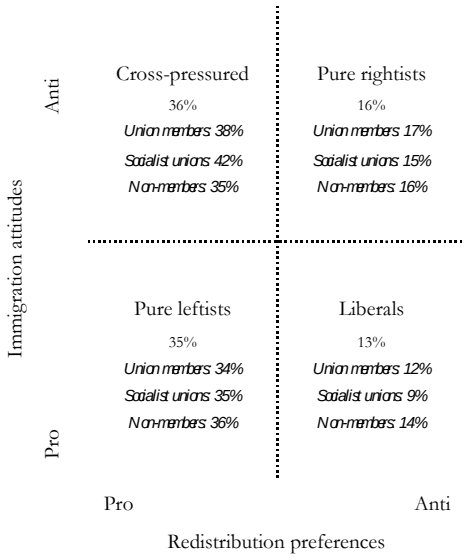
Appendix

Appendix A: Defining left-authoritarian voters

Figure A1. Distribution of respondents across the four combinations of redistribution preferences and immigration attitudes



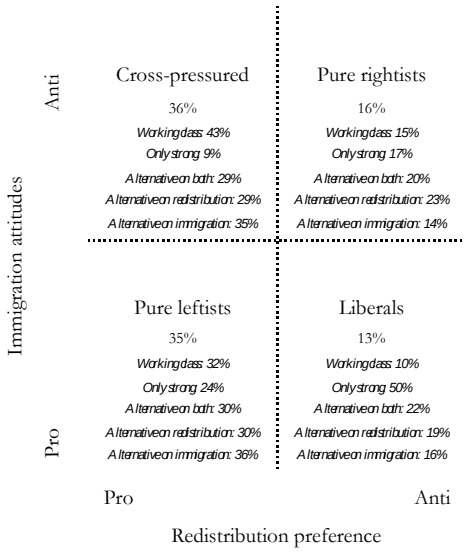
Data: Inequality and Politics data 2020.

Table A.1: Share of responses on items on redistribution and immigration preferences

	Support for redistribution	*Opposition towards immigration*
Disagree strongly	3.10	10.36
Disagree	8.07	18.02
Neither agree nor disagree	18.19	19.98
Agree	37.81	25.92
Agree strongly	32.83	25.72

Inequality and Politics Data 2020.

Figure A2. Distribution of different subgroups of voters across the four combinations of redistribution preferences and immigration attitudes



Inequality and Politics Data 2020.

Working class only looks at respondents belonging to the routine and skilled working class. *Only strong* looks at those strongly supporting redistribution and strongly opposing immigration coded as cross-pressured. *Alternative on both* defines support of redistribution coded as indicating 6 and above (on a scale from 0 (fully opposed to redistribution) to 10 (fully in favor of redistribution)) when asked: "What is your position on redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor." Opposition towards immigration coded as either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement that "Immigration should be restricted to ensure well-paying jobs for unskilled workers." *Alternative on redistribution* keeps original item on immigration but replaces item on redistribution with the above. *Alternative on immigration* keeps original item on redistribution but replaces that on immigration with above.

Ignoring variations in the other preference sets, we find that cross-pressured voters make up about a third of respondents in our dataset irrespective of the questions used to code preference sets. We find that switching the item to capture immigration attitudes from a question about national identity to a question about unskilled workers' jobs does change the distribution of preferences only slightly. Conversely, redistribution of wealth seems to be less popular than redistribution of income and lowers the share of respondents falling into the left-hand side of Figure A.2.

Importantly, we find that cross-pressured voters are slighlty overrepresented among working-class voters, 43 percent of whom indicate support for redistribution while simultaneously opposing immigration.

Cross-checking with the ESS 2018 (for Austria, Belgium Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, France, UK, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and a sample restricted to currently emplyoed citizens above the age of 18 (16 in Austria)), we find that less people are opposing immigration in the ESS than in the Inequality and Politics dataset (40%, coded as those choosing 6 or above on a scale from 0 (cultural life undermined) to 10 (cultural life enriched) when asked whether "[Country's] cultural life is undermined or enriched by immigrants") while about the same share of ESS-respondents as in our dataset supports redistribution (69%, coded as those either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that "the government should reduce differences in income levels"). This yields a smaller set of cross-pressured voters in ESS 2018 (28%) and a larger set of pure leftists (42 %, liberals 18%, pure rightists 13%) when compared to the shares in the Inequality and Politics dataset. Note, however, that cross-pressured voters also make up almost a third of respondents in ESS and that it is the second-largest group of voters.

When looking at variation across countries, we observe that cross-presuredness is most common in Portugal (48%) and Belgium (45%) and least common in Denmark (24%), Spain (25%) and the US (25%). While respondents in Denmark are the least supportive of redistribution (49%, followed by the Netherlands with 60%), Portuguese (91%), Spanish (81%) and Italian (80%, average is 71%) respondents are overwhelmingly in favor of redistribution. The US (40%) and Spain (34%) are the countries with the lowest shares of opposition towards immigration and we find the highest level of opposition towards immigration in Belgium (68%) and France (64%, average is 52%).

Appendix B: Union membership effects on political preferences

Table B1. Average marginal effect of union membership on redistribution preferences and immigration attitudes

	Support for redistribution	*Support of immigration*
Union membership		
…among all	**.052**	-.011
	(.000)	(.112)
…among working class	**.023**	-.012
	(.001)	(.202)

Data. Politics and Inequality 2020.

Note. Full regression results available upon request. P-values in parentheses, bold font = p<.05. Reference category for union membership is non-member.

Trade union membership separates current union members from everyone else.

We capture redistribution preferences with a replication of the ESS question about whether the government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels and attitudes towards immigration with a reaction to the statement that immigration should be restricted to protect national identity and culture.

Both variables are standardized to go from 0 to 1 with higher values indicating the more leftist or progressive position.

Appendix C: Supplementary analyses

Figure C.1: Predicted vote intention by union membership status among cross-pressured working-class respondents in each country

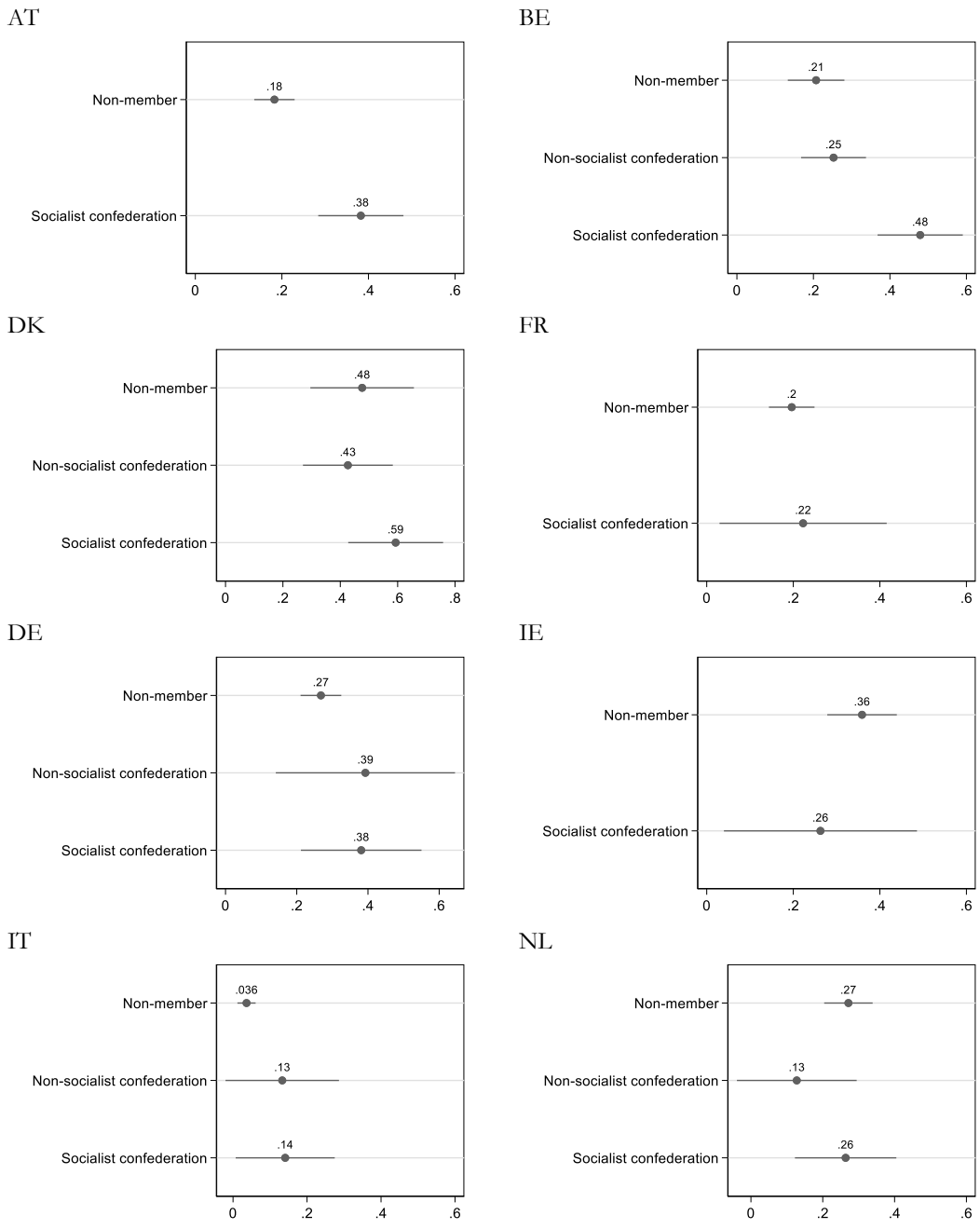
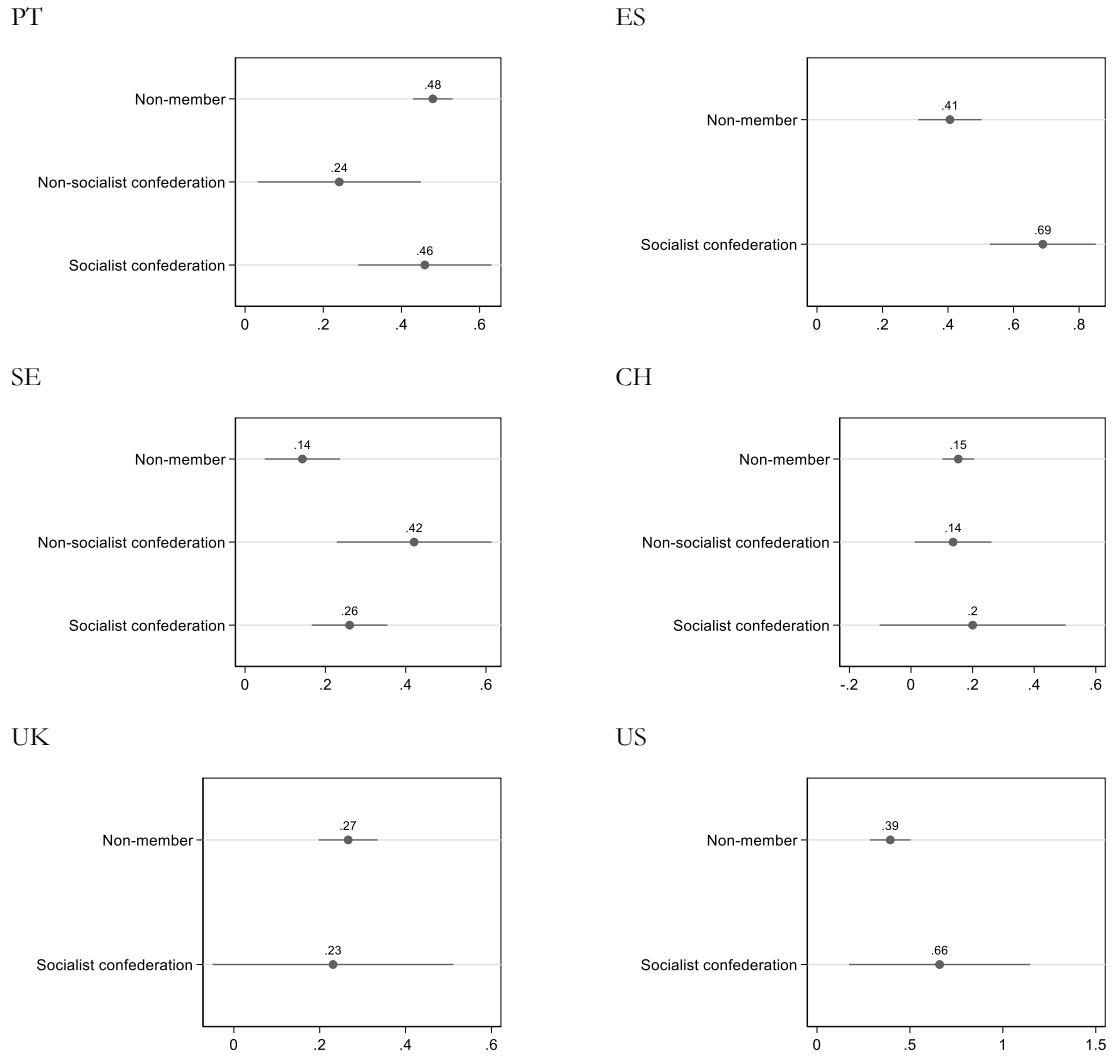
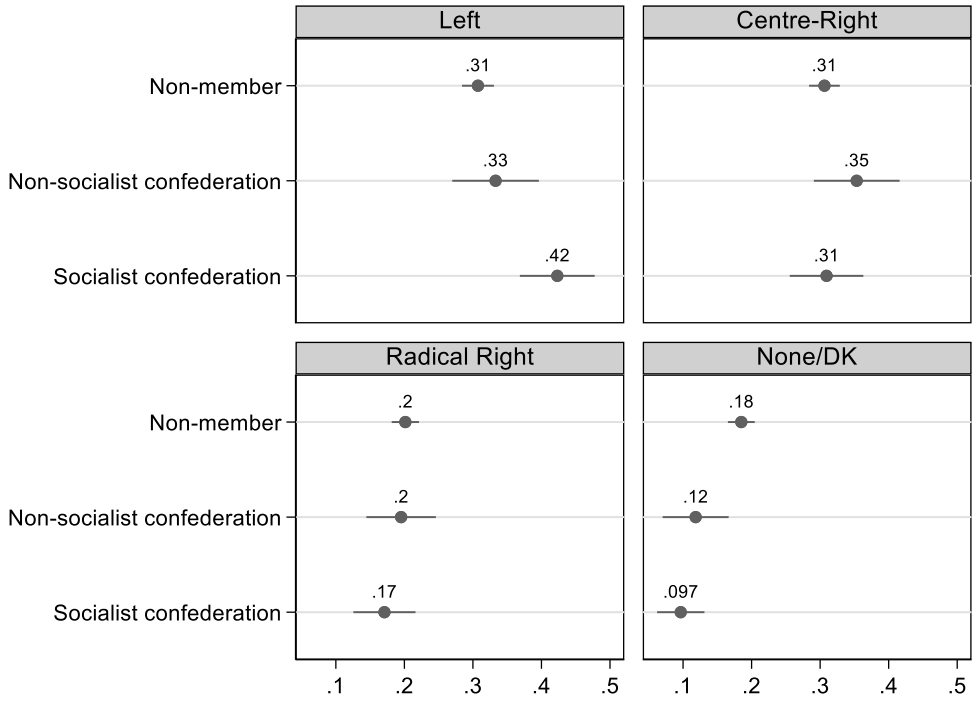


Figure C.1 continued



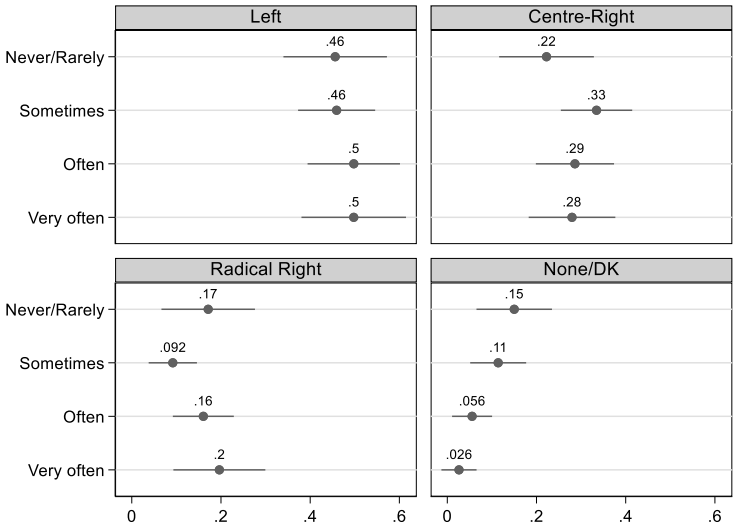
Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from a multinomial logit model in each country separately. The number of cases varies between 84 in the United States and 463 in Portugal. Results for non-socialist confederations are not shown when the number of individuals in this category is smaller than 10. Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Figure C.2: Predicted vote intention by union membership status among cross-pressured middle-class respondents



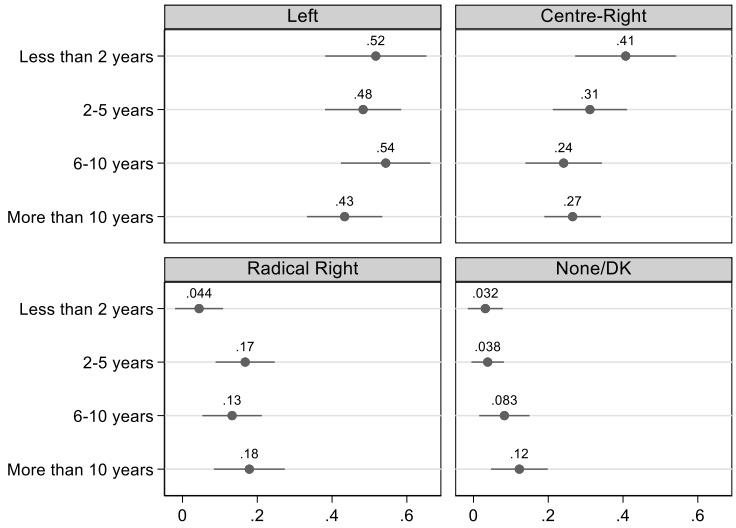
Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from multinomial logit models printed in Table E.1, M2 (Appendix E). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Figure C.3: Predicted vote intention by engagement with union communication among members of socialist confederations (cross-pressured middle-class respondents only)



Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from a multinomial logit model printed in Table E.2, M2 (Appendix E). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Figure C.4: Predicted vote intention by membership duration among members of socialist confederations (cross-pressured middle-class respondents only)



Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from a multinomial logit model printed in Table E.3, M2 (Appendix E). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Appendix D: Self-selection

We propose to tackle the self-selection issue with two analyses. In a first step, we include additional controls in our models to exclude a pure self-selection logic. In a second step, we propose to restrict to the Swedish case our analysis pertaining to the differences between unionized and non-unionized workers. We expect that, for blue-collar workers, selection into trade unions based on ideological considerations is relatively weak in this country. This is due to important material incentives to join unions in Sweden and the absence of rival (blue-collar) confederations. If the association between union membership and voting persists in Sweden, we take it as a confirmation that the union-voting association cannot be due entirely to self-selection. To be clear, we do not pretend to solve the self-selection problem in this appendix. However, this appendix gives more robustness to our claim of a union *effect*.

Additional controls: Ideology and opinion toward trade unions

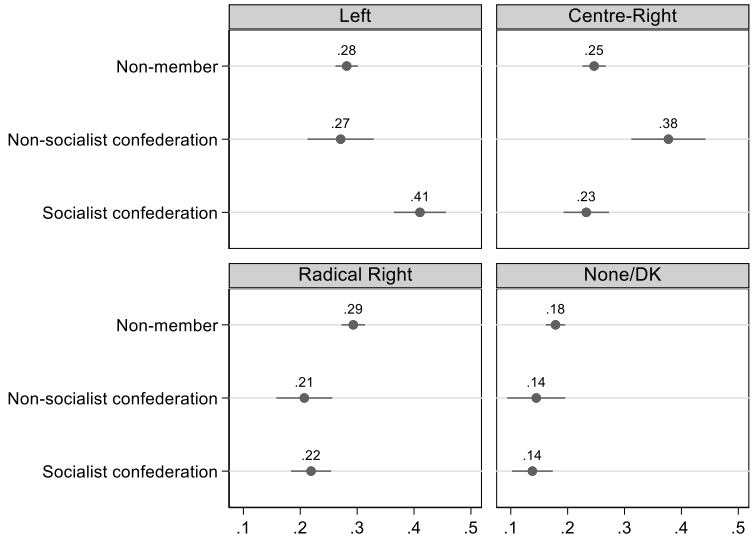
First, we introduce a variable in our models that captures respondents' ideology, namely the respondent's left-right self-placement (measured on a 0-10 scale, 0 being left and 10 right). In a pure self-selection logic, union membership, and especially membership in a socialist confederation, would be simply a proxy for having left-leaning sympathies, and thus left-leaning voting tendencies.[16] The effect of being in a socialist confederation would then simply disappear when controlling for left-right self-placement. Second, to increase our confidence that something happens to individuals that are organized in trade unions, we also include another control, namely the opinion toward the importance of trade unions. Respondents in our survey were asked whether they agree with the statement that "Employees need strong trade unions to protect their working conditions and wages." Many workers, without being members, have positive considerations toward trade unions (Frangi et al. 2017; Turner and D'Art 2012). They may listen to what unions say in the public sphere and be influenced by their evaluation of

[16] Cross-pressured workers who are members of a socialist confederation are more leftist (mean of 5.47 on the left-right scale) than non-members (mean of 5.61) and members of non-socialist confederations (mean of 5.83).

political parties. We therefore aim to neutralize sympathy toward trade unions to capture more closely the effect of being a member of a trade union.

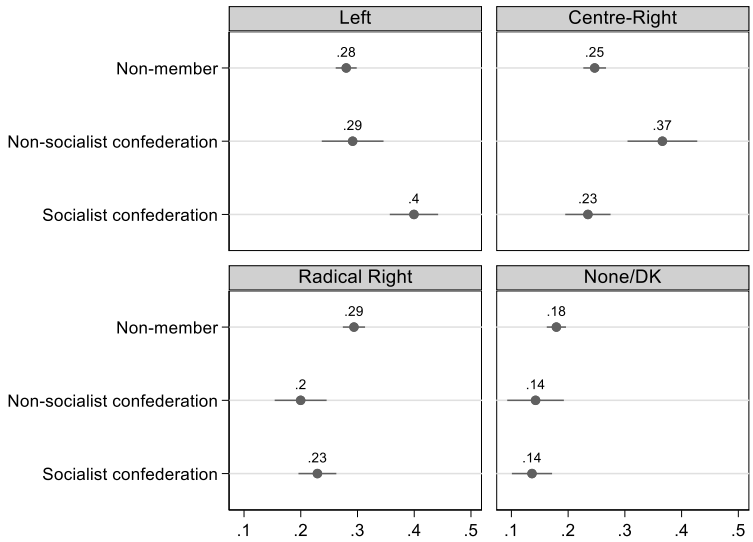
We start by presenting in Figure D.1 a replication of Figure 2 on a slightly reduced sample. The additional covariates, and especially the left-right self-placement variable, reduce the number of valid observations ("Don't know" answers on the left-right scale are coded as missing values). Figure D.2 shows the effect of union membership in a model that controls for left-right self-placement, and then figure D.3 displays the union membership effect once opinion toward trade union is controlled for. The results indicate that the differences between non-members and members of socialist confederations for the four alternatives are only slightly reduced once we include these additional controls.

Figure D.1: Predicted vote intention by union membership status among cross-pressured working-class respondents (reduced sample, replication of Figure 2)



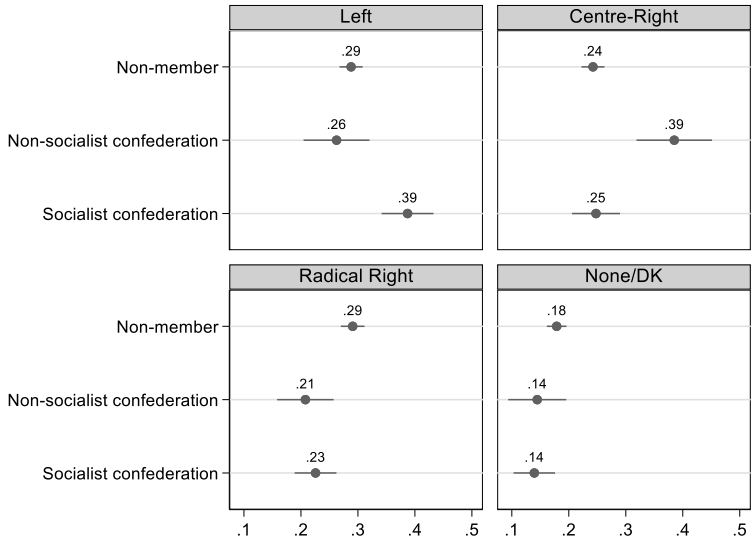
Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from a multinomial logit model. Full regression results available upon request. Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Figure D.2: Predicted vote intention by union membership status among cross-pressured working-class respondents, with **left-right self-placement** as control



Note. See under Figure D.1.

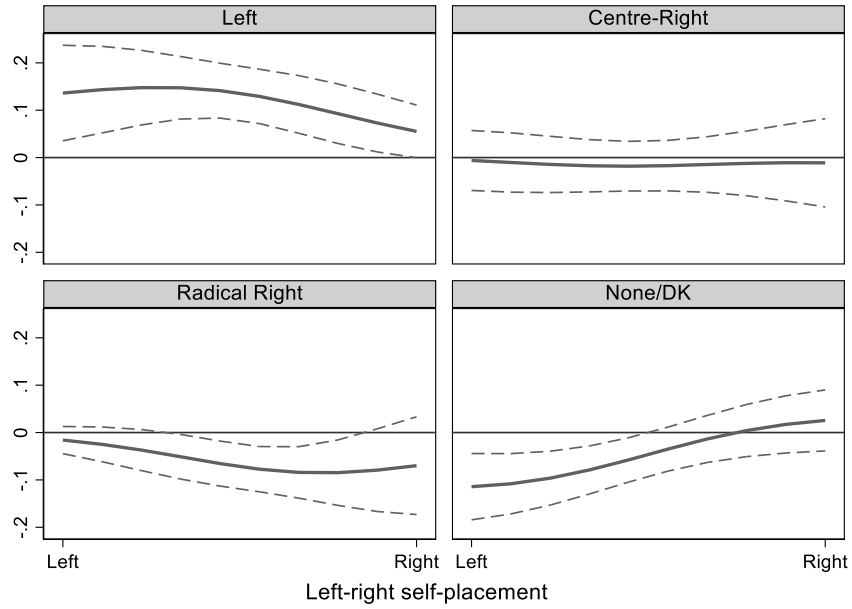
Figure D.3: Predicted vote intention by union membership status among cross-pressured working-class respondents, with **opinion toward trade unions** as control



Note. See under Figure D.1.

We also check whether the effect of union membership persists among people identifying as being centrist or rightist. A possible critique would be that the union membership effects on voting are restricted to left-authoritarians self-identifying as left, or possibly centrist (this means with a 5 on our left-right axis). The proportion of cross-pressured workers who identify as being right is relatively widespread.[17] We therefore interact union membership with left-right self-placement. Figure D.4 presents the effect of being in socialist confederations (relatively to non-members) across different levels of ideological self-placement.

Figure D.4: Effect of socialist confederation membership on vote intention by ideological self-placement (cross-pressured working-class respondents only)



Note. Average marginal effect of socialist confederation membership (reference category=non-members) calculated from a multinomial logit model including an interaction between union membership status and left-right self-placement. Full regression results available upon request. Dashed lines denote 95% confidence intervals.

[17] In our sample of cross-pressured workers, 27% place themselves to the left (31% for workers organized in socialist confederations), 25% place themselves in the center (22% for workers organized in socialist confederations), 47% place themselves to the right (48% for workers organized in socialist confederations).

Regarding left voting, the figure reveals that the (socialist) union membership effect persists well beyond the group of leftist left-authoritarians and prevail among the sizeble groups of centre- and right-leaning cross-pressured workers. For radical right voting, membership in a socialist confederation has a negative effect across the whole ideological spectrum. Importantly, the effect is significant and of a certain size among the centrist and moderately rightist respondents. For respondents who dot chose any particular party, the effect is only negative among leftist and centrist respondents.

Weaker self-selection in trade unions in Sweden

As a next investigation into self-selection, we leverage that fact that, at the country level, self-selection should be weakest when there are strong material incentives to join union – and therefore decision to join a union is less influenced by ideological and partisan choices. An important variable in this respect is the presence of a union-administered unemployment insurance (Ghent). Through union membership, workers join an unemployment insurance fund (and receive access to unemployment benefits if they become unemployed). This system can be found, with some variation, in Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, and has been considered as an important factor for the high level of unionization in these countries (Ebbinghaus et al. 2011; Rasmussen and Pontusson 2017). Moreover, we also expect self-selection to be lower in countries and sectors in which there is no competition between unions. France is the paradigmatic case of a fragmented trade union landscape in which rival confederations compete for membership – often based on ideological differences. In contrast, Sweden offers the best case for a single socialist confederation organizing all unionized blue-collar workers. If they want to join a union, Swedish blue-collar workers do not face any choice. They will, by definition, become members of a "socialist" confederation. Based on these two elements, we decide to restrict our analysis to the Swedish case, and further limit our sample to cross-pressured *blue-collar workers* (the main analyses focused on all working-class respondents, irrespective of them being in production or non-production jobs). Sweden is the only country in our

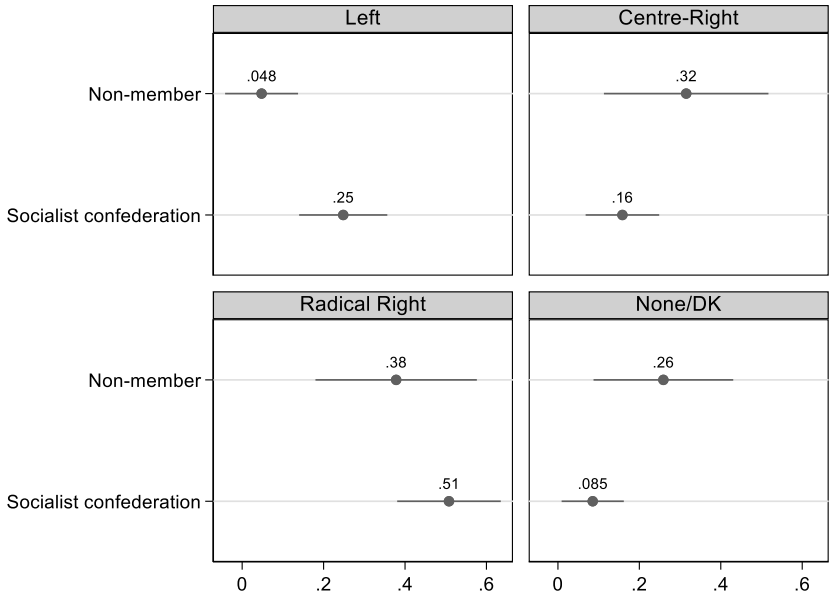
sample to combine the two characteristics of the Ghent system and the absence of competition between unions.[18]

Figure D.5 presents the result of this exercise. It replicates Figure 2 (main text) for the Swedish case alone.[19] The results must be interpreted with caution since the number of observations is small (N=130). Importantly, the difference in left vote intention between non-members and socialist confederation members can still be found in Sweden. However, the negative effect of socialist confederation membership is not confirmed for radical right voting. Socialist confederation membership seems even to increase radical right vote intention, although one must add that the confidence intervals overlap. The effect of membership on centre-right voting is now more clearly negative than in Figure 2. The persistence of the association between union membership and left voting in Sweden lends credential to the existence of a small union effect. However, the more surprising result for the radical right suggests that this union effect is perhaps not as effective as what union leaders would like it to be.

[18] Belgium has strong Christian trade unions that compete with socialist trade unions for organizing the working class. Denmark, in principle, share the two characteristics of the Ghent system and the absence of competition (this is also the case of Finland, but the country is not included in our sample). However, changes in the legislation in these two countries have made affiliation to unemployment funds more independent from union membership – it is possible to join low-cost funds without being union member (Lindellee and Berglund, 2022).

[19] We took advantage of the survey design which included an oversampling of union members in Sweden (alongside Germany and UK). The advantage is to increase the number of observations (130 instead of 80 observations). Importantly, the results are very similar if we do not include the boosted sample.

Figure D.5: Predicted vote intention by union membership status among cross-pressured working-class respondents in **Sweden**



Note. Average predicted probabilities calculated from a multinomial logit model. Full regression results available upon request. Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Appendix E: Multinomial regression models

Table E.1: Membership in a socialist confederation and other determinants of vote intention, multinomial logistic regression models (Figures 2 and C.2)

	M1: working class only			M2: middle class only		
	Centre-right	Radical right	None/ DK	Centre-right	Radical right	None/ DK
Union membership (ref.=non-member)						
Non-socialist conf.	0.364^{+}	-0.420*	-0.111	0.073	-0.120	-0.541^{+}
	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.20)	(0.23)	(0.28)
Socialist conf.	-0.481**	-0.684***	-0.759***	-0.341*	-0.529*	-1.010***
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.21)	(0.23)
Unknown conf.	0.317	0.111	0.106	0.592	-0.012	0.482
	(0.28)	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.38)	(0.48)	(0.43)
Income	0.057**	0.014	-0.033	0.085***	0.023	-0.033
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Age	-0.023	0.012	0.003	0.011	0.053	0.036
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Sex (ref.=male)	0.039	-0.117	0.405***	0.045	-0.117	0.415**
	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Place of residence (ref.=village)						
Town or small city	-0.006	-0.010	0.025	-0.035	-0.484*	-0.143
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.18)	(0.20)	(0.20)
Suburbs of a big city	-0.136	-0.226	-0.129	-0.228	-0.424*	-0.339
	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.21)
Big city	-0.248	-0.315*	-0.295^{+}	-0.169	-0.768***	-0.473*
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.18)	(0.21)	(0.21)
Public sector employment	-0.072	-0.161	-0.112	-0.243^{+}	-0.285^{+}	-0.050
	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Temporary employment	-0.085	-0.282*	-0.086	-0.079	-0.210	-0.244
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.16)	(0.19)	(0.18)
Constant	0.351	0.648*	-0.391	-0.024	0.518	0.199
	(0.26)	(0.25)	(0.28)	(0.35)	(0.39)	(0.40)
Country dummies		Yes			Yes	
N		3,314			2,213	

Note: Coefficients based on multinomial logistic regression with vote for the Left as base category, robust standard errors in parentheses - *** significant at .01%, ** significant at 1%, * significant at 5%, $^{+}$ significant at 10%.

Table E.2: Engagement with union communication and other determinants of vote intention among members of socialist confederations (cross-pressured respondents only) (Figures 3 and C.3)

	M1: working class only			M2: middle class only		
	Centre-right	Radical right	None/ DK	Centre-right	Radical right	None/ DK
Union communication (ref.=never/rarely)						
Sometimes	-0.764*	-0.863**	-0.810*	0.514	-0.715	-0.303
	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.37)	(0.47)	(0.59)	(0.59)
Often	-1.207**	-1.170**	-1.500***	0.172	-0.209	-1.231+
	(0.38)	(0.38)	(0.42)	(0.51)	(0.56)	(0.71)
Very often	-0.789+	-1.026*	-2.135**	0.123	0.017	-2.030*
	(0.43)	(0.43)	(0.71)	(0.52)	(0.64)	(0.92)
Income	0.062	-0.141*	-0.129*	0.040	0.095	0.117
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.10)
Age	-0.167	0.034	0.185	-0.139	-0.010	0.349
	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.16)	(0.21)
Sex (ref.=male)	0.191	-0.322	0.415	0.196	0.543	1.094*
	(0.26)	(0.28)	(0.32)	(0.33)	(0.43)	(0.50)
Place of residence (ref.=village)						
Town or small city	-0.022	-0.268	-0.072	1.144*	0.205	0.526
	(0.35)	(0.34)	(0.43)	(0.57)	(0.71)	(0.71)
Suburbs of a big city	-0.907*	-0.434	-0.364	0.264	-0.387	-0.562
	(0.44)	(0.41)	(0.52)	(0.61)	(0.73)	(0.92)
Big city	-0.393	-0.639	-0.089	0.822	-0.197	0.353
	(0.38)	(0.39)	(0.48)	(0.51)	(0.64)	(0.67)
Public sector employment	-0.099	0.123	-0.172	0.149	-0.643	0.262
	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.33)	(0.32)	(0.42)	(0.49)
Temporary employment	0.782*	-0.241	0.924*	0.018	0.492	-1.149
	(0.39)	(0.41)	(0.44)	(0.42)	(0.49)	(0.82)
Constant	0.505	1.440*	-0.820	-1.495+	-0.799	-2.922*
	(0.67)	(0.64)	(0.83)	(0.90)	(1.23)	(1.23)
Country dummies		Yes			Yes	
N		515			324	

Note: Coefficients based on multinomial logistic regression with vote for the Left as base category, robust standard errors in parentheses - *** significant at .01%, ** significant at 1%, * significant at 5%, + significant at 10%.

Table E.3: Duration of membership and other determinants of vote intention among members of socialist confederations (cross-pressured respondents only) (Figures 4 and C.4)

	M1: working class only			M2: middle class only		
	Centre-right	Radical right	None/ DK	Centre-right	Radical right	None/ DK
Duration of membership (ref.=less than 2 years)						
2-5 years	1.067*	0.827	1.175+	-0.295	1.509+	0.256
	(0.47)	(0.54)	(0.64)	(0.49)	(0.86)	(0.99)
6-10 years	0.798	1.052+	1.268+	-0.741	1.129	0.914
	(0.49)	(0.56)	(0.65)	(0.54)	(0.92)	(0.95)
More than 10 years	0.252	0.395	0.846	-0.341	1.736+	1.652
	(0.46)	(0.53)	(0.62)	(0.49)	(0.95)	(1.02)
Income	0.075	-0.137*	-0.111+	0.049	0.070	0.098
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Age	-0.102	0.055	0.161	-0.129	-0.076	0.068
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.19)	(0.22)
Sex (ref.=male)	0.172	-0.352	0.416	0.203	0.439	1.063*
	(0.26)	(0.27)	(0.31)	(0.33)	(0.44)	(0.50)
Place of residence (ref.=village)						
Town or small city	0.021	-0.229	0.048	1.055+	0.285	0.691
	(0.34)	(0.33)	(0.42)	(0.57)	(0.71)	(0.63)
Suburbs of a big city	-0.810+	-0.437	-0.254	0.195	-0.222	-0.874
	(0.43)	(0.41)	(0.51)	(0.60)	(0.73)	(0.96)
Big city	-0.380	-0.659+	-0.034	0.740	-0.024	0.364
	(0.38)	(0.39)	(0.47)	(0.52)	(0.66)	(0.69)
Public sector employment	-0.145	0.045	-0.305	0.058	-0.493	0.127
	(0.27)	(0.26)	(0.32)	(0.32)	(0.42)	(0.51)
Temporary employment	0.754+	-0.240	0.953*	-0.089	0.445	-1.158
	(0.40)	(0.41)	(0.44)	(0.42)	(0.49)	(0.83)
Constant	-0.855	0.158	-2.539*	-0.856	-2.314+	-3.930**
	(0.75)	(0.71)	(0.99)	(0.94)	(1.36)	(1.33)
Country dummies		Yes			Yes	
N		514			322	

Note: Coefficients based on multinomial logistic regression with vote for the Left as base category, robust standard errors in parentheses - *** significant at .01%, ** significant at 1%, * significant at 5%, + significant at 10%.