Dual multiscalarities:

The effect of economic inequality on the populist radical right vote at different electoral levels

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1.   <u>Introduction</u>

The everyday decisions of people's lives are made at a variety of scales. Produce may be purchased at a regional farmers' market as products are simultaneously custom-ordered from across continents; conversations may be had with village friends in the afternoon while late-night online discussions feature participants from any- and everywhere. But although (digital) globalisation has for many put an end to the idea of leading a *purely* locally circumscribed life—by allowing people to form socioeconomic and cultural relationships in what have been termed 'communities without propinquity' (Webber, 1963)—it is undeniable that one's local environment remains of significant influence in structuring how choices are expressed at higher scales (Johnston & Pattie, 2006; Miller, 1977).

This is no different in the case of political choices. In the European Union, processes of Europeanisation in conjunction with unprecedented sub- and supra-regional interaction have placed political practices, first and foremost that of voting, into a veritably multiscalar context (Gattermann et al., 2021; Jeffery & Hough, 2003; Pallarés & Keating, 2003). This has caused some to speak, in a Webberian vein, of the "'eclipse of distance' and the degradation of place" (Berezin & Díez-Medrano, 2008, p. 2) caused by an ever-closer interlocking of European, national, and sub-national political arenas. Such developments are an important area of study for scholars interested in governance itself and the multiscalar issues it concerns itself with (e.g.

Hooghe & Marks, 2001), as they also are for researchers wishing to determine the significance of those issues for citizens' voting behaviour at different electoral levels (e.g. Cabeza, 2018). The relevance of different scales, however, is not restricted to the themes that characterise party positions in, say, European Parliament elections as opposed to those at the national level—different scales are involved, too, *within* the local context that influences how people vote.

Populist radical right parties constitute a political grouping for which the question of scale is supposed to be particularly salient. Local contextual factors that have most prominently been linked with the 'losers' class of explanations (cf. Betz, 1994) of the populist radical right voting, according to which the populist radical right electorate exhibits specific cultural-economic grievances, include those to do with immigrant presence and economic inequality, both of which are plausibly scale-sensitive.

Previous research, however, has only looked at the relationship between populist radical right voting and economic inequality in the context of single elections, often national parliamentary. Few studies take a rigorous over-time approach; cross-country examinations of European Parliament election results form the only class of exceptions—yet these are problematic, because they do not contend with differences in scale *within* countries—not least between countries of different sizes and levels of internal social cohesion—which plausibly account for a far greater share of variance in populist radical right voting than national level variables do. Furthermore, it is unclear whether the psychological mechanism supposed to underlie economic inequality can function without reference to an explicitly defined grouping of people against whom comparisons are made and who subsequently form the target of a subject's resentment (Runciman, 1966).

In spite of their absence at the intersection of the aforementioned literatures, the fact of different electoral levels as characterised by differences in voting patterns is, on the other hand, well-established in scholarship on second-order elections.

The primary theme of this thesis is bringing together the multiscalarity of locally determined economic inequality with the multiscalarity of different electoral levels. It asks **how economic inequality**—between contiguous neighbourhoods, within districts, and within municipalities—**affects populist radical right voting at different electoral levels**—in European Parliament, national parliamentary, and provincial elections in the Netherlands between 2012 and 2019.

This thesis' academic contributions are twofold. Firstly, it innovatively places scholarship on economic inequality and populist radical right parties in the context of the literature on second-order elections, which by itself already sees little rigorous cross-electoral analysis (but cf. Cabeza, 2018). It thereby adds a novel dimension to discussions in urban studies on locally restricted contextual factors predicting populist radical right voting and polarisation (Gravelle et al., 2021). Secondly, it adds to established economic inequality literature: first, by re-emphasising the significance of a consistent psycho-perceptual causal mechanism through which effects arise, and furthermore by following Cremaschi et al. (2022) in expanding the study beyond classic indicators of inequality to encompass public service access, too.

In a broader sense, this thesis is particularly topical for political reality in the Netherlands and the European Union more widely. If the scale of economic inequality has an impact on populist radical right voting patterns in different electoral levels, then they form a fruitful and necessary area of consideration for policymakers on all electoral levels. Trust and legitimacy are highly necessary ingredients for any decrease in polarisation (Khodyakov, 2007) and increase in joint civic participation (Kleiner, 2021)—and fostering this kind of trust requires more precise knowledge of how socioeconomic inequality causes its erosion in the first place.

2.   <u>Literature review</u>

2.1.   Populist radical right parties

2.1.1. Introduction

Populist radical right parties have been an unwavering fixture in electoral studies scholarship for decades (Stockemer et al., 2018). This section surveys parts of the rich literature that has in this timeframe amassed around them, so as to identify a baseline picture into which further findings can be slotted. In particular, it is asked what 'demand-side' (Carter, 2005) factors contribute to or diminish the probability of a populist radical right vote, and what causal mechanisms are thought to underlie these links. While a broad class of 'grievance-based' explanations serve to illuminate some of the established picture, there remains substantial unclarity on how this framework might best accommodate the effect of a varied range of *economic* factors, at the contextual level specifically—a concern which is highlighted by the emergence and proliferation, in some places, of a novel sub-class of increasingly culturally-oriented populist radical right parties (Kessenich & van der Brug, 2022).

2.1.2. Sketching a baseline picture

In most classic formulations, populist radical right parties are characterised by nativism, populism, and authoritarianism (Mudde, 2007; Rydgren, 2005). Nativism is here understood as a dislike and sometimes fear of adventitious elements, whether people or ideas, which are

perceived to threaten the sociocultural stability of the homogeneous nation-state. This most frequently manifests itself in anti-immigration standpoints that are explicitly justified as necessary for the protection of national culture or soul (Mudde, 2016). Populism refers to political behaviour and discourse which prominently involves contrasting 'corrupt' elites with a 'pure' people, inciting and feeding off a more general distrust of not only established political systems but also educational, journalistic, and scientific instutitions (Müller, 2017; Rydgren, 2017; Schouten & Custers, 2022, pp. 189-190). Finally, authoritarianism is typified by a rigid, anti-pluralistic idea of social order, into which it is deemed imperative that society organise itself so as to be able to ward off external threats, like perceived overreach from the European Union into national affairs (Mudde, 2019).

These characteristics may be thought of as necessary conditions—a description a party must, at the very least, fall under to belong to the populist radical right. Typical examples of such parties include Denmark's Danish People's Party *(Dansk Folkeparti;* Rydgren, 2004), France's National Rally[1] *(Rassemblement National;* Ivaldi, 2016), Germany's Alternative for Germany *(Alternative für Deutschland;* Arzheimer & Berning, 2019), the Netherlands' Freedom Party *(Partij voor de Vrijheid;* Rooduijn, 2014), and Poland's Law and Justice *(Prawo I Sprawiedliwosc;* Gómez-Reino & Llamazarez, 2013).[2] The aforementioned common criteria for categorisation along the populist radical right label, embodied as they are in these parties, are nevertheless fulfilled in ways that mirror national peculiarities: the authoritarian trait possesses a distinctly Catholic grounding for Law and Justice (Minkenberg, 2018), for example.

Such differences notwithstanding, the electorate that binds itself to populist radical right parties and their political hallmarks are frequently described in relatively monolithic terms, relative to more mainstream political parties. They have been supposed to comprise "new 'loser'

[1] Known until 2018 as National Front *(Front National).*
[2] Typical examples such as these tend to be drawn from a pool of overwhelmingly Western European countries, and there at times been resistance to extending without caveats the populist radical right label to Central and Eastern European parties (e.g. Santana et al., 2020). In the case of Poland's Law and Justice, in particular, these caveats have been made with respect to health policy (Zabdyr-Jamróz et al., 2021) and even with respect to the 'radical' label (Pankowski, 2010, p. 7).

groups"[3] (Rydgren, 2005, p. 415), peculiarly susceptible to a fundamental distrustfulness towards and grievances with the political establishment for its purported role in—or inaction in the face of—an ever-increasing backsliding of voters' traditional cultural and economic position in society. In this respect, descriptions do not always differ from those of the populist radical left: Hooghe and Dassonneville (2018), for instance, find that citizens who vote for populist parties[4] *in general* become chronically more distrusting over time than other voters— further entrenching these 'loser' electorates with the—ostensibly only—parties that address their concerns (cf. Bartolini & Mair, 1990). More specifically, those electorates are bound to the only parties that appear to address their concerns with the same intensity with which those concerns are *"salient"* to them, as mere attention to issues such as opposition to immigration or Euroscepticism is not exclusive to the populist radical flanks (Mudde, 2016, p. 299).

This class of 'demand-side' (i.e. electorate- rather than party-oriented) explanations, where the voters in question are rendered politically resentful due to decreased cultural and economic security as a result of processes of modernisation and immigration-inducing globalisation (Betz, 1994), has lent itself well to grounding the testing of various voter characteristics associated with the 'loser' profile. Individual attributes generally considered in this connection include lower levels of education (e.g. Achterberg & Houtman, 2006; Ivarsflaten & Stubager, 2012; Lubbers et al., 2002), majority ethnicity (e.g. Rydgren, 2006; Zanotti et al., 2023), working class background (e.g. Bornschier & Kriesi, 2012; McGann & Kitschelt, 2005; Oesch, 2008), as well as—disproportionately—male gender (e.g. Harteveld et al., 2015).[5]

These particular voter-level characteristics have generally been correlated with support for populist radical right parties, and they at first glance fit rather snugly into the grievance-

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[3] The phrase 'losers of modernisation' is Betz' (1994), and covers broadly the explanations that this thesis centres around. However, this thesis will continue to use only the term "loser" to highlight the grievance-aspect that is supposed to be the underlying mechanism.
[4] Strictly speaking, Hooghe and Dassonneville (2018) focus on 'protest parties', of which populist parties are only a proper subset.
[5] Another much-studied attribute is that of youth, but it has had a much more mixed track record in terms of concrete findings (Stockemer et al., 2018).

based 'losers' narrative. But it is not always obvious what the precise mechanisms are through which these factors would exert their causal influence, or how much and in what relation to each other they contribute to the populist radical right vote. Thus, hypotheses that connect authoritarianism with socio-structural differences between men and women—in terms of work-related traditions, for example—consistently fail to explain the gender gap in populist radical right party voting (Harteveld et al., 2015; Spierings & Zaslove, 2015). Nor is such parties' engagement with issues like women's rights consistently authoritarian to the extent that they could in that sense be deemed *Männerparteien* (Rashkova & Zankina, 2017; but see Akkermans, 2015). And where the draw of populism and level of education may seem inversely related to one another, those with higher levels of education have been found to be all but immune: strikingly, for instance, such voters are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties when those parties become more electorally successful (Immerzeel & Pickup, 2015). Furthermore, where higher-educated voters *are* more politically trusting, this might derive not as much from their education as from having experienced pre-adult socialisation contexts conducive to trust (Hooghe et al., 2015)—shared contexts that make one less open to a societal pessimism that finds refuge in the nostalgia of populist radical right party nativism (Steenvoorden & Harteveld, 2018).

What these last considerations suggest is that the populist radical right vote cannot be a function solely of voters' actual individual characteristics. In other words, while the grievance-based framework has some explanatory power, what it would mean to be a 'loser' in this regard is not sufficiently answered by mere reference to whether one is working class, male, or lower-educated. The question that is raised is: in what *contexts* might voters consider themselves, as such, 'losers'—and who are supposed to be the 'winners'?

2.1.3. *Multiscalar context: the effects of immigrant populations*

The argument for taking contextual effects into consideration does not only arise in the way it has here, when confronted with the inadequacy of so-called 'compositional' approaches. The idea that one's local environment has an effect on political behaviour is nowadays widely agreed upon by electoral geographers, for instance, with a broad class of so-called 'neighbourhood effects' channeling geospatially circumscribed factors to cause otherwise similar people to engage in divergent political behaviour, given different milieux (Johnston et al., 2005; Weaver, 2014). The case, as Johnston and Pattie (2006) make clear, is quite an intuitive one: for many voters, "the people they talk to about political issues, the organizations that they join which have political purposes, their responses to changes in the local economy—these and many more are place-based, so that where they live (their personal geographies) can have a strong impact, may even be the major influence, on their political and electoral choices" (p. 40).

With respect to the populist radical right vote, the major influence has undoubtedly been the local presence or absence of immigrant or immigrant-descended populations—specifically those of broadly non-western origin (e.g. Cordero et al., 2022; Rydgren & Ruth, 2011; Sümeghy, 2022). Within the grievance-based framework previously outlined, the accompanying explanation centres around the cultural anxiety and alienation that drives voters in high-percentage immigrant environs towards the nativism espoused by the populist radical right. There is a socioeconomic aspect to this mechanism as well—non-native arrivals are seen to constitute undeserving competition for jobs and resources, a threat that, for example, older men lacking college education are more sensitive to (Oesch, 2008). However, the 'cultural' backlash is generally thought to be the more impactful of what might be termed the two sub-mechanisms, even among economic have-nots (Achterberg & Houtman, 2006; Inglehart & Norris, 2016). Accordingly, economic threat does not increase anti-immigrant attitudes as much as symbolic (i.e. cultural) threat does (Schmuck & Matthes, 2017).

Care must be taken, however, when tying contextual effects to political behaviour. There can be, for one, an indeterminacy in relation to *scale:* different scales overlap in terms of constituting the context in which an individual leads their life, and this can be problematic if no robust explanation can be given for the causal effect of one over the other. Thus, immigrant presence in *surrounding* neighbourhoods ('halo effect') can sometimes be more predictive of populist radical right voting than immigrant presence in voters' own neighbourhoods (Sümeghy, 2022). Along much the same lines, proportional immigrant population had a divergent effect on National Front vote share in the 2007 French presidential election, depending on the scale of measurement: at the level of states and regions, disproportionate immigrant presence caused an increase in populist radical right voting, while the effect was the reverse at the level of towns and cities (Della Posta, 2013). And Bijlsma and Koopmans (1996) note that the percentage of Turkish and Moroccan inhabitants explains significantly more variance in populist radical right voting at the (larger) district level than at the (smaller) neighbourhood level.

One explanation given for findings of this nature is that at smaller scales, frequent interaction gives rise to positive affect towards immigrants, where a lack of such interaction—as is more likely at larger scales—fosters a negative affect that may already be the baseline. This proposed mechanism, that is to say, sets scale as the determinant according to which either negative 'conflict' (Esses et al., 1993) or positive 'contact' (Vasilopoulos et al., 2022) wins out in structuring the area's aggregated view towards immigrants. To the extent that this means that more concentrated immigrant spread reduces the attractiveness of nativism, and thereby populist radical right voting, scale may also play a role in determining the very salience of immigration *qua* issue. In this connection, self-avowed migration-related reasons for indicating populist radical right support tend to get reported *less* in peak immigration periods at the national level (Mols & Jetten, 2017).

The upshot of these considerations is that multiscalarity does not admit of any singular explanations with respect to contextually-induced political behaviour. In the case of immigration, the influence of scale extends to the salience, direction, and size of the effect on populist radical right voting—or, to link back to the mechanism supposed to underlie such voting, it has a substantial role to play in determining whether and how one might find themselves in alignment with the 'loser' picture.

2.1.4. The uncertain role of general economic context

In the foregoing discussion, a grievance-based framework was outlined. Within such a framework, the importance of delineating with scale-specific precision the 'weight' of various contextual components was highlighted—after all, the mechanisms which are presumed to seize 'losers' and spit out populist radical right voters appear neither analytically nor empirically sustainable without an account of the multiscalar reality in which such voters experience their 'losing'. In the case of immigrant presence, at least one account of this nature is available. Where economic context is concerned, however, the picture is much less clear.

To start with, there is more complexity even at the compositional level. Even though "[m]ost research agrees that the main supporters of radical right parties are young, unskilled, blue-collar working men with anti-immigrant sentiments" (Sümeghy, 2022, p. 138), it is notable that middle class voters often support such parties at an equal or even greater rate (Mols & Jetten, 2017; Norris, 2005). Explanations have been attempted in terms of national or even global economic context, with a particular focus on economic crises. But while, for example, the late-2000's Great Recession is popularly thought to have contributed to populist rhetoric, it did not produce any sharp increase in populist radical right parties' electoral fortunes, with Mudde (2014) arguing that "[d]uring an economic crisis the political debate is dominated by

socioeconomic issues, on which far right parties put little emphasis and have little credible expertise [as opposed to sociocultural issues]".

Studies that relate the middle class vote to broader unemployment rates have also yielded mixed results. Some have found a straightforwardly positive effect between populist radical right voting and aggregate unemployment (e.g. Golder, 2003; Jackman–Volpert, 1996), while other research has found the reverse or insignificant relationship (Arzheimer & Carter, 2006; Lubbers et al., 2002). And even though the interactivity of economic and sociocultural concerns may raise the possibility of unemployment having a positive effect in the presence of immigration (cf. Golder, 2016; Gidron & Hall, 2017; Halikiopoulou & Vlandas, 2020; Oesch, 2008), on the whole, the case is weaker than may be suspected: Sipma and Lubbers (2020) note, in their meta-analysis of contextual unemployment as a driver of the populist radical right vote, that "the limited number of studies testing interactions between unemployment and migrant numbers produced no evidence that the effect of unemployment on radical right voting is greater when migrant populations are larger" (p. 368)—with, in any case, only a marginally positive overall effect of unemployment.

The lack of consensus on the role of economic dimensions in structuring the populist radical right vote is all the more unsustainable with the advent of a novel sub-class of populist radical parties, which reflect the loss of salience of traditional economic cleavages *even within the populist radical right*. Most notably, recent years have seen the growth of populist radical right parties with significantly more appeal to higher-educated voters, including Vox in Spain (Turnbull-Dugarte et al., 2020) and Forum for Democracy in the Netherlands (Lubbers, 2022). To comprehensively model the voting motives of the populist radical right, the perhaps divergent appeal of this sub-class must be taken into account. Higher-educated populist radical right voting patterns eschew traditional economic explanations even more strongly that populist radical right voting patterns in general, with their particular in-group sometimes

framed as 'losers of *post*modernisation' (Rydgren, 2005)—including a greater emphasis on political cynicism as shaped by political knowledge and not a lack thereof (Schouten & Custers, 2022).

These considerations should not lead to the conclusion that economic features are unimportant, and play no role at all in motivating the populist radical right vote. That, itself, would be a gross misreading of the literature; a case of hyperfocusing on 'unnatural' and 'new' voting behaviours and losing sight of the forest through the trees (Achterberg & Houtman, 2006). Rather, the challenge is to pursue a more fine-grained picture of the economic role in things: this entails careful attention, as in investigating immigration-related motivations, not only to depersonalised general economic contexts, but to the multiscalar local environments in which economic relations between individuals are most tangible.

2.1.5. Conclusion

In the foregoing discussion, an overarching grievance-based 'losers' narrative was examined, and the importance of taking multiscalar context into account highlighted with reference to immigration-induced populist radical right voting. Indeed, and in particular in relation to economic factors that have given rise to such mixed scholarship, the 'losers' story implicitly calls us a question that requires sensitivity to scale: who am I a loser in comparison to?

2.2. Economic inequality

2.2.1. Introduction

The scholarship in [Section 2.1] suggests that, as things stand, the grievance-based framework is insufficiently reflective of a complex reality in which populist radical right parties attract a wide range of "strange socio-economic bedfellows" (Mols & Jetten, 2020). Built into that very framework is an ambiguity with respect to the multiscalar contexts in which it makes sense to

be designated a 'loser' at all. Especially in economic terms, this raises the question: who, at what scale, constitutes the frame of reference for inequality? In order to address this question, the psycho-perceptual mechanisms that implicitly underlie the grievance-based picture must be articulated in more detail.

Thus, this section begins by clarifying an understanding of economic inequality as causative through the psycho-perceptual mechanisms of 'relative deprivation' and 'relative gratification'. The historical basis of these concepts, in spite of divergent uses in different academic literatures, provides a robust explanatory framework under which to study economic motivations for populist radical right support. However, in tracing existing research in this area, this basis is often found ignored, with a skewed relationship between proposed causal mechanisms and results as a consequence. Furthermore, the aforementioned importance of multiscalarity is not in any robust sense addressed. Besides traditional income-related inequality indicators, this section also highlights public service access-related indicators that offer the possibility of examining a wider range of forms that economic inequality—and the psycho-perceptual processes through which it may affect political behaviour—may take.

2.2.2. *Relative deprivation and gratification*

The psycho-perceptual mechanism through which the 'losers' picture is meant to exert its causal influence is known as 'relative deprivation' (cf. Betz, 1994). Roughly, relative deprivation occurs when a person or group of persons feels unjustly deprived of a material or immaterial good that someone else or another group *does* have access to (Runciman, 1966; Walker & Pettigrew, 1986).

The use of Stouffer et al.'s (1949) original formulation of relative deprivation is an illustrative one. In their study of the American soldier, they discovered that while those in the Air Force were most likely to be promoted, they were also least satisfied of all forces with the

Army's promotion policies—promoted and non-promoted servicemen alike. In order to explain these apparently paradoxical results, the researchers conjecture that this dissatisfaction was a product of Air Force soldiers comparing between *themselves* and not with those in units with fewer promotions: the greater rate of promotion in the Air Force would have caused bitterness both in those promoted (who would have felt that oversaturation rendered their achievement less valuable) and those not promoted (who would have felt disproportionately passed over). The frame of comparison employed by these soldiers—in this case pointed at others *"in the same boat as them"* (p. 251)—generated dissatisfaction that did not arise for objectively identically situated persons in other units.

The example is helpful, because it highlights two important tenets of the mechanism. First of all, the central unhappiness over perceived unfair deprivation is, in principle, independent of objective differences. The resentment is a product if psycho-perceptual (i.e. subjective) frames of reference. Secondly, there is a real and tangible 'other' to which comparison is made.

The early development of the relative deprivation concept was especially fruitful in historical and sociological research into political violence (e.g. Caplan & Paige, 1968), where it offered a robust social psychological explanatory framework (see Power et al, 2020). Over time, however, various literatures that explicitly employ the term 'relative deprivation' have done so in a distinctly more 'objectified' way—indeed, even in early studies of political violence, this had sometimes been the case (cf. Gurr, 1970; Pettigrew, 2015). Thus, in poverty research (cf. Halleröd, 2006) and social epidemiology (e.g. Jaffe et al., 2005), it really can just mean comparative deprivation—that is, absolute deprivation relative to some other salient actor, group or contextual scale (e.g. neighbourhood). In many such cases, there simply is not meant to be a link to Stouffer et al.'s (1949) theory, since the interest is entirely in objective metrics that have non-psychologically mediated causal effects on persons (cf. Galster, 2010; Rothwell

& Massey, 2015). But in other cases, a psycho-perceptual relative deprivation is still supposed to ground theoretical expectations (e.g. Rooduijn & Burgoon, 2018).

The 'objectification' of relative deprivation along these lines is not necessarily problematic. The psycho-perceptual mechanism that remains assumes resentment with comparatively worse absolute conditions, and while that is most certainly more reductionistic than classic relative deprivation, it is a plausible assumption as far as social psychology is concerned. And even though a degree of specificity is given up (i.e. comparisons between same-socioeconomic status groups now yield no results, when they may have done so under a fully psycho-perceptual theory), the scope for quantitative research in the field—granted caution surrounding ecological effects (Pettigrew, 2015; see also [Section 4.1.2])—is widened.

In fact, by supplementing the reductionistic relative deprivation mechanism with a reductionistic relative *gratification* mechanism (Grofman & Muller, 1973), it is possible to cover much of the ground covered by the original psycho-perceptual thesis. Relative gratification here is a basic inverse of deprivation: the feeling of satisfaction at having access to material or immaterial goods that one believes some other person or group of persons is, in some sense, *justly* deprived of (LeBlanc et al., 2015). This concept is closely connected with wealthy concerns about losing an acquired position of privilege, which are aggravated when other social groups—particularly migrant outgroups—are perceived to be 'catching up' (Grofman & Muller, 1973; Jetten et al., 2020). There is a clear theoretical link to the authoritarian—and to some extent nativist—hallmarks of populist radical right parties that would motivate the vote of relatively gratified 'losers' of this kind (Jettten et al., 2015; Mols & Jetten, 2020). Thus, theoretical causal mechanisms based on 'objectified' relative deprivation and relative gratification would be expected to cause increased populist radical right voting at both extremes of absolute economic inequality.

2.2.3. *Relative mechanisms and the populist radical right*

Studies into the effect of economic inequality on the populist radical right vote, which are simultaneously predicated on this type of 'objectified' psycho-perceptual mechanism, abound. Thus, Rooduijn and Burgoon's (2018) results indicate that the negative relationship between voters' (self-reported) absolute economic status and their electoral radicality becomes less pronounced when macro-conditions are unfavourable. In other words, when the national socioeconomic average is lower, being worse-off will be a weaker predictor of populist radical right voting than when the average is higher. In the latter case, persons' feelings of deprivation will be caused by "benchmark[ing] their own problematic economic circumstances against the favorable socioeconomic conditions at the national level" (1728). Interestingly, in the case of radical right voters in particular, this holds for macro-socioeconomic conditions *as opposed to macro-sociocultural conditions* (i.e. immigration), in contradiction to the earlier mentioned observation that populist radical left parties are, more so that their right-wing counterparts, persuasive to those attracted by an economic egalitarianism (Akkerman et al., 2017; Coffé et al., 2007; Mudde, 2014). In one empirical case showing the same results, personal income relative to the national average was a central predictor of Alternative for Germany voting (Dorn et al., 2020).

In the same vein, Abts and Baute (2022) investigate whether a politics of social resentment feeds into motivations for people to vote for Eurosceptic parties, finding that group relative deprivation has a significant effect—this time, however, mediated by individual anti-immigration stances and political cynicism. Not only nativism and authoritarianism are related to mechanisms of deprivation and gratification, as was mentioned earlier: higher levels of general economic inequality at the national level (as measured by the Gini coefficient) enhanced the desire for the restoration of order and a strong leader to make it happen—challenging democratic values if necessary (Sprong et al., 2019). This latter finding is taken by

Mols & Jetten (2020) to only support the idea that within-household, over-time increases of economic inequality motivate authoritarian voting behaviour, but it also lends credence to the pro-authoritarian voting effect of economic inequality *at any given time.* Indeed, the idea that social order must be restored is closely linked to the relative gratification concept: in concordance with Sprong et al.'s (2019) results, Engler and Weisstanner (2021) find that those of 'high social status' are more likely to vote for the populist radical right when income inequality increases. In fact, this holds for both low income and high income persons, indicating some level of socio-cultural interaction (cf. Sümeghy, 2022)—the authors' proposed explanation, that the threat of social status decline moreso than objective deprivation pushes voters to the authoritarian right, nevertheless fits into the relative gratification picture, since the immaterial social goods are 'deservedly' held by the voters (Jesuit et al., 2009).

Some have, contrastively, taken this focus on immaterial social goods to apply only to one economic group—based on social identity theory, Han (2016) maintains that the poorer people are relative to their peers, the less attached to class *and therefore* more attached to country (i.e. nationalistic) they become; with the reverse being true for wealthier groups. As a result, greater income inequality skews the populist radical right electorate more towards the socio-economically less well-off. Han's argument is that this does not necessarily contradict previous results, because it will depend on the pre-existing party electorate whether a given populist radical right party benefits from a rise in income inequality: if they are generally rich, then more rich voters are lost than poor voters gained; while if the electorate is poorer, a rise in income inequality might engender increased support despite rich people leaving. One issue, however, is connected to the discussion of new populist radical right parties entering the frame: within such a fast-moving arena, it is not straightforward to delineate who *is* and who *is not* part of a given electorate (cf. Schouten & Custers, 2022).

The literature, then, appears to offer some evidence to the effect that economic inequality motivates the populist radical right vote *on both ends of the socio-economic 'ruler',* through different psycho-perceptual mechanisms of relative deprivation and gratification. There are, however, two important difficulties to be noted—they are, in fact, related to each other. The first is that scale is persistently left out of many studies, which mostly operate at the level of national averages (i.e. Gini-coefficients, self-reported positions relative to an abstract national average). The second is less obvious, but perhaps more important: recall that the second tenet of Stouffer et al.'s (1949) relative deprivation theory was that reference groups are supposed to have a certain measure or concreteness that can bring about targeted feelings of envy and dissatisfaction (or in the case of gratification, something akin to Schadenfreude). However, little research takes an appropriately thoroughgoing approach to this tenet—and unlike in the case of 'objectification', it is absolutely vital to the psycho-perceptual mechanisms that are supposed to underlie the causal picture. In other words, it is vital to retaining the connection between one's results and the theoretical mechanism that is supposed to have given rise to them.

One way of putting the *relationship* between these two difficulties is that precisely by ignoring scale is the problem of reference groups also ignored. This is often a necessity when working with surveys that do not allow for scale-sensitive interpretation: Cena et al. (2023), for example, purport to use a "direct indicator of relative deprivation" (p. 34)—but this turns out to be a question asking respondents to compare themselves with generic 'others' in the same *country,* which is unlikely to constitute a specific reference group (cf. Pettigrew, 2015).[6] Indeed, it has long been suggested that geographical proximity is one main determinant of what choice of reference group resentment is directed against (San Sebastián et al., 2018; Singer, 1981). Furthermore, like in the case of immigrant-related concerns, relative deprivation has

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[6] It must be said that Cena et al. (2023) are not scale-insensitive as such, considering that they apply a multilevel model at the individual and country levels. However, in the context at hand, this is not a particularly promising form of scale-sensitivity, given the sheer difference in size.

been found to have wildly different effects at different scales: thus, Inoue et al. (2019), show that relative deprivation causes more deleterious mental health effects when considered at higher geospatial scales relative to lower ones (cf. also Sakketa-Gerber, 2018).

2.2.4. *Public service deprivation*

These difficulties are in part a product of the categories being analysed—in the study of income inequality, it can be difficult to avoid using the Gini coefficient, for instance. It may be helpful, in this connection—but also to broaden the thesis' scope of the different forms economic inequality may take—to briefly consider one variety of economic inequality that is both closely related to the psycho-perceptual paradigms that have been set out, and the scale-sensitivity required to properly conceptualise them.

Cremaschi et al. (2022) posit that "[p]ublic service deprivation increases the appeal of far-right parties by making people more worried about immigration and increased competition for reduced public services" (p. 2) (cf. Rodríguez-Pose, 2018). By 'public service deprivation' they understand reduced access to local level public services. These, as much as income or benefits, are economic resources that admit to unequal distributions—except such distributions are inevitably geographically grounded. At the same time, resources of this kind *are* closely related to motivations to vote for the populist radical right: in terms of housing, for instance, Cavaille & Ferwerda (2022) find that the broadening of access to immigrants increased far right voting. The paradigm, to link back to what has been mentioned before, of 'losing' may well be to lose one's privileged position with respect to public resource access (Cramer, 2016). This competition need not only be in terms of material resources, but may also take the form of resentment in terms of the symbolic or cultural value of public service resources, which constitute pillars around which communities live and are formed.

Cremaschi et al. (2022) focus on public service deprivation in Italy over the course of a number of studies. They find that lesser access to public services at the municipal level increases the populist radical right vote—not by decreasing trust, but by increasing anti-immigrant sentiment and economically right-wing views. Within the context of public service reducing reforms, they make use of pre- and post-reform data to demonstrate a causal connection, and they find that the presence of immigrants strengthens the populist radical right vote increase begotten by public service deprivation.

2.2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has clarified an understanding of economic inequality as 'worked' through relative deprivation and gratification. These psycho-perceptual mechanisms provide a compelling causal story from which to consider a variety of populist radical right voting motivations. Importantly, however, research in these areas does not typically conduct or operationalise the psychological comparisons in question in ways that are properly aligned with their mechanisms. Relatedly, the question of scale is rarely taken up, and both are important to retaining a connection between proposed causality and the results of any study—especially when those results appear to be 'in line' with what has been proposed.

It is not only electoral *motivations* within the 'losers' framework that must be grounded in a psychologically robust scale-sensitivity. The question of how voting behaviour differs between election types is, in part predicated on a similar question—and thus raises the challenge: how might motivational scales and voting arena scales interact in determining political behaviour?

2.3. First- and second-order elections

2.3.1. Introduction

Previous sections started off from the observation that there is room within the grievance-based paradigm of populist radical right voting mechanisms to elucidate how such mechanisms interact with people's economic circumstances. In particular, this question presses because of the implicit weight placed by 'losers' theories on the relevant contextual scales at which such 'losing' is supposed to take place. That question led to discussion on what role is played by contextual economic inequality. A clearer sense of the core psychological causality underlying the picture was articulated in the form of relative deprivation and relative gratification mechanisms.

Having, then, arrived at a point where the significance of scale is understood, it must be noted that it is not merely the *causes* of voting behaviour that are to be seen in this multiscalar fashion—the behaviour itself, in more than a merely metaphorical sense, takes place at varying scales. And if electoral choices in European Parliament elections make reference to a range of thoughts and groundings which in turn make reference to the European political arena (and voters' desires and fears with respect to it); if the same scale-sensitive considerations are at play in national parliamentary elections; and the same for regional, or even sub-regional elections—then it seems that the prospect that *those* considerations might be sensitive to the various scales at which economic inequality is experienced merits further investigation. Concretely, it may be asked, is there reason to think that a multiscalar economic inequality affects the populist radical right vote differentially across electoral levels?

In this shorter section, another rather sprawling literature is surveyed—this time on second-order elections. Centrally: how are populist radical right parties generally seen to perform in second-order elections, and why so?

2.3.2.   *"What's at stake?"*

In perhaps the most influential strand of voting behaviour research, academics have been interested in reasons for observed differences in turnout and voter choice between electoral 'levels'. According to the second-order election model, voters' decisions in contests at sub- and supra-national levels are primarily informed by cues taken from the national arena—the governing coalition's performance, for instance, or policy issues that are relevant at the state but not European level (Clark & Rohrschneider, 2009; Hix & Marsh, 2007; Reif & Schmitt, 1980). This renders such elections 'second-order' relative to 'first-order' national parliamentary or presidential elections in which support for smaller and opposition parties is generally less pronounced and turnout is consistently higher, as voters perceive there to be more 'at stake'.

The sprawling literature spawned by the second-order election model substantially concerns itself with interrogating the conditions under which these 'rules' fail to hold, as well as the precise mechanisms through which they are realised. Górecki (2013) argues that the vote-diminishing effect of holding second-order elections right after a first-order election is substantially stronger for inexperienced voters. And municipal elections, for example, have long been held to possess a somewhat diminished second-orderedness, with concerns at this lower scale more easily visible in voters' lives (Heath et al., 1999; Lelieveldt & Van der Does, 2014) and electoral candidates often more familiar (Górecki et al., 2022). At the same time, research increasingly shows that European issues *do* matter to voters, as they gain territory in public opinion and national political discourse (Hooghe & Marks, 2018). Thus, Hobolt and De Vries (2016) argue that evaluations of the European Union's handling of the financial crisis figured significantly in voters' choices, with particularly affected and disapproving voters more likely to opt for Eurosceptic parties.

But although election types might be broadly clustered under the same 'second-order' denominator, the shape their second-orderedness takes may be informed by their unique

peculiarities: the European and provincial arenas each boast their own peculiar themes and issues, and may therefore be differently involved in what electorates turn out and who they vote for. For instance, Kedar's (2005) compensational model suggests that voting 'extreme' in European Parliament elections possesses a distinct quality, as the European Parliament is not a 'power-sharing' or coalition-based government, and so may give rise to separate, strategic voting considerations.

2.3.3. The populist radical right and economic inequality across elections

Evidence for the relevance of different electoral levels to populist radical right voting is, however, muddled. if one goes by the literature. Some find little evidence for significant differences, for example, in terms of voter characteristics: Otjes & Voerman (2016) note that patterns of lower education and "working class" as characteristics of Freedom Party voters are largely identical between national and European elections in 2012 and 2014, respectively. There is also conflicting evidence on abstention in European Parliament elections—as caused mainly by either Euroscepticism (Schmitt et al., 2020) or by younger citizens' lack of voting habituation (Górecki, 2013).

Some research shows that people blame the European Union for deleterious national developments, such as a country-level rise in inequality (Kuhn et al., 2016). And while the Great Recession was mentioned earlier as not necessarily causing an overall rise in populist radical right voting, the matter of whether it functioned as a reason for those who did vote populist radical right appears is a different one: it is interesting, if only because the Great Recession was the cause for two prominent parties in the family, the Front National and the Freedom Party, to first suggest exiting the European Union in 2012 (Mudde, 2014). However, despite this party-side concern with the European arena, combined with the general 'protest'-nature of many second-order elections (Reif & Schmitt, 1980), Schulte-Cloos and Leininger

(2022) contend that when turnout *does* swell in second-order elections, this only entails more populist radical right votes if trust is low; populist radical right parties actually get fewer votes when trust is high. As they note: "these findings are critical as they suggest that increased mobilization in the "second-order" [European Parliament] elections, which have a history of amplifying the prospects of radical challenger parties mobilizing against further European integration ... actually *dampens* the electoral success of the radical right" [their italics] (p. 438).

In other words, populist radical right success in second-order elections appears, at least in high-turnout elections, to be more closely linked with the types of voters mobilised than it does with the 'cultural' dimension of European-level policies. So what is known about voters that *do* turn out? There are some reasons for connecting this discussion with that of scale-sensitive effects on voting behaviour: firstly, neighbourhood effects have already been shown to affect turnout rates in single-type elections—one of the determining differences between first and second order elections (Dyck & Seabrook, 2010; Gimpel et al., 2004; Sui & Hugill, 2002). There thus already is an indirect link between contextual effects and the primary variable distinguishing different election types. Furthermore, additional differentiators of second order elections—that is, those not dependent on the national theatre—frequently include prima facie relevant indicators, like local identity (Oliver & Ha, 2017) or European solidarity (e.g. Pellegata & Visconti, 2022). Indeed, the idea that neighbourhood might have differential impact between electoral levels is implied as far back as the seventies (cf. Bodman, 1983). Koerntjes (2022) compares national parliamentary and municipal elections, noting that traditional neighbourhood and municipality compositional factors (i.e. lower income and lower education) explain difference in turnout. Indeed, on the same topic, ethnic minority populations boast consistently lower turnout numbers (Van der Zwan et al., 2020), but it is still unclear how the composition of the electorate that *does* turnout affects the populist radical right vote.

Importantly, it is a similar story as far as the relevance of economic inequality—considered as *an sich* causative through relative deprivation and relative gratification—at different electoral levels is concerned. The reason for this is that studies tend to take place at single levels.

2.3.4. Conclusion

In considering second-order elections, significant unclarities remain—in the case of the populist radical right vote, this is because results are largely mixed and the exact relationship between turnout and radical voting variable. In the case of economic inequality, however, little systematic research beyond that attended to already is available; there is, in other words, a research gap.

3. Research puzzle

3.1. Where is the gap?

The previous chapter may be summarised in a slightly different 'direction'. One contextual factor to affect people's voting behaviour is that of economic inequality. There are reasons to treat economic inequality *an sich* qua psychologically causative, and to take seriously the mechanisms that are supposed to underlie it, namely relative deprivation and relative gratification. The psycho-perceptual nature of these mechanisms raises a question of how experiential scale is involved. After all, particularly in groups, the scope of self-identification itself determines levels of deprivation. But the question thrown up at this stage is, in fact, two-pronged. Firstly, what does this mean for elections that take place at different scales and concern themselves with issues at different scales? This is, in other words, the topic of second-order elections. Then, the second of the two prongs: the issue of scale is itself crucial to the

issue of economic inequality as we have discussed it. That is to say, it matters at what scale relative deprivation-like attitudes are felt, experienced, or, indeed, perceived.

It is at this juncture that these questions intersect: insofar as in the European and provincial arenas there is felt to be less 'at stake' than in national elections, this psychological basis for turnout may be sensitive to immediately present economic inequality. The question is particularly relevant in the case of populist radical right parties, for whom such grievance-based motivations are common, but differential role between electoral levels unclear.

Outside of academic significance, this thesis concerns itself with matters of increasing societal relevance. Increased polarisation and economic inequality go hand in hand, and it is vital that the interaction between both in the voting booth are fully understood—this entails, among other things, studying the effect across electoral levels. The arenas those participate in are, after all, only slated to become more intertwined (cf. Hooghe & Marks, 2001).

3.2. Research question

The intersection between these literatures is an important one, as it reflects a gap in our understanding of how economic inequality affects electoral behaviour across different scales, and how these effects interact with election categories at different scales for populist radical right parties. These are, furthermore, all connections there is good reason to think are relevant on psycho-social grounds.

(RQ)   *How does economic inequality affect populist radical right voting at different electoral levels?*

4. Research design

4.1. Electoral geography

4.1.1. Quantification

There are two main themes to the present approach to the question. The first is the choice to engage with the research question through quantitative methods, centering around electoral data. In terms of specificity, there are reasons to prefer smaller-scale, quantitative analysis—after all, as Schmitt et al. (2020) tersely note, "electoral results are silent about the determinants of electoral behaviour" (p. 7). However, the necessity of analysing electoral levels over time makes any such approach unfeasible. Within quantitative study, there is, alternatively, the option of employing survey data. Considering the importance of scale-sensitivity to the question at hand, however, combined wth the necessity, once again, of including temporally distinct election types, few appropriate sources remain. Troost et al. (2022) use the extremely comprehensive Netherlands Social Statistical Database, which includes geospatial data necessary for the desired scale-sensitivity—the issue is that access is financially costly. Other surveys, such as those used in de Blok & van der Meer (2018) and Gravelle et al. (2021) offer less geospatial information. Therefore, this thesis goes the 'multivariate statistics' way (cf. Galster, 2010), on which causal mechanisms are *inferred* from electoral and demographic data. While this type of inference, especially given the psycho-perceptual nature of the proposed mechanisms, would be more trustworthy in survey research, the sheer volume of data available to be analysed speak in favour of utilising the present approach.

4.1.2. Aggregation

The electoral results that this thesis centres around possess a geospatial nature, which is used to link them to the scale-sensitive variables that function as independent variables. In particular, electoral results are aggregated to the level of neighbourhoods, which are administrative units (see [Section 4.3]).

There are, however, specific issues with tying research to such units, sometimes known as the *uncertain geographic context problem* (Kwan, 2012a, b; Weaver, 2014), or more broadly ecological fallacies. The issue is multifaceted, but in the first place revolves around the validity of ascribing meaning to artificial or arbitrary units. On a practical note, there is no other way of analysing electoral data in the way that is necessary here, but there is also a more analytical note: besides the fact that administrative divisions can, over time, become infused with 'natural' meaning (e.g. presence in identity discourses; Terlouw, 2018; van Beek & Haas, 2015), the present concern is *scale*-sensitivity. Thus, even though individual units at the same level may be arbitrary, *the difference in scale between units at different levels is not.* Nonetheless, it is a distinct limit to the method employed here that although the mechanisms that this study is based on work at the individual level, no conclusions about individuals can be derived from the research here. It is impotant to be careful about this, and not to 'anthropomorphise' the aggregated units that are under study. Other concerns related to the artificiality of administrative regions are the possibility that they might change over time, and—specifically in the context of voting—that borders do not generally represent impediments to casting ballots. On the latter point, most voters tend to choose nearby polling stations (Orford et al., 2011; cf. Stouffer, 1940), and a normal distribution may be assumed for those who accordingly vote in nearby cross-border stations. This has not generally been seen to be a fatal issue in previous research (Koerntjes, 2022), but it must be taken into account—see also [Section 5]. The structure of the statistical model employed may help to alleviate some of the pressure of changing units of aggregation; practically, once again, these are concerns to be aware of when interpreting the results—to therefore do so with caution.

4.2.   Hypotheses

These hypotheses serve as expectations based on the literature outlined in previous sections, but also as frameworks through which to enable easier interpretation of the results. First of all, based on the idea that both ('objectified') relative deprivation and relative gratification play a role in structuring the populist radical right vote, it is hypothesised that the more towards the 'extremes' (high and low socioeconomic attributes/high public service access) a neighbourhood finds itself *relative to its surroundings*, the greater the populist radical right vote share.

> H1a.   *Economic inequality, experienced at the extremes, <u>increases</u> populist radical right voting.*

Economic inequality is expected to have a stronger positive effect on the populist radical right vote share at smaller geospatial scales. Since little literature is available on this front, this hypothesis is based on natural expectations with respect to the relevance of scale (i.e. smaller scales offer more 'at stake'). This effect is thus most pronounced for sub-national second-order elections:

> H1b.   *Economic inequality, experienced at the extremes, increases populist radical right voting <u>most strongly in sub-national elections</u>.*

Furthermore, in order to comprehensively interrogate the nature of the relative deprivation and relative gratification mechanisms at play, it is hypothesised that the more at the extremes the *absolute* level of income or employment of a neighbourhood is (or the absolute level of migrants for neighbourhoods with lesser access to public services), the stronger the populist radical right vote increase will be. That is to say, the effect of relative deprivation and

gratification is expected to be even stronger for neighbourhoods that are *objectively* at the socioeconomic extremes.

H2a. *Higher rates of economic and cultural 'extremes' increase populist radical right voting <u>more strongly</u>.*

Again, the scale of relevant electoral levels is expected to play an important role.

H2b. *Higher rates of economic and cultural 'extremes' increase populist radical right voting <u>most strongly in sub-national elections</u>.*

Finally, all effects are expected to be more consistent at smaller geospatial scales. This, in effect, amounts to an expectation regarding the interaction between the dual multiscalarities under study (economic inequality and electoral level). The expectation is that the strengthening effect of smaller-scale elections will itself be more consistent at smaller geospatial scales, because of a psycho-perceptual association—in terms of relative immediacy—between them.

H3. *Effects in [H1a-2b] are more consistent at smaller geospatial scales.*

4.3. Data

4.3.1. The Netherlands

These hypotheses are tested with reference to results for European Parliament, national parliamentary, and provincial elections in the Netherlands, between 2012 and 2019. In connection with earlier comments on the quantitative, aggregative nature of this thesis' research design, it is worth first briefly attending to some broader Dutch peculiarities.

In the Netherlands, the administrative structure at the sub-municipal level consists of neighbourhoods *(buurten),* exhaustively nested in districts *(wijken),* which are in turn exhaustively nested in municipalities *(gemeenten).*[7] Configuration and delineation of these units is determined by the relevant municipal government. The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics *(Centraal Bureau Statistiek)* publishes national guidelines for neighbourhood and district specification,[8] and it fulfils an advisory function when reconfigurations occur. As such, comparability between units in terms of scale, size, and classification is maintained (Centraal Bureau Statistiek, 2020b).

It is a somewhat different story with respect to intra-unit temporal comparability. In 2012, the mean neighbourhood population was around 1400; districts, on average, boasted nearly 6400 inhabitants (Centraal Bureau Statistiek, 2016b). Meanwhile, in 2019, the corresponding numbers were almost 1300 and over 5400, respectively (Centraal Bureau Statistiek, 2022b). These changes are related to processes of administrative reconfiguration, which have seen municipalities specify smaller units that are more in line with the guidelines set out by the Central Bureau of Statistics and permit collection of more representative data on inhabitants' living environments—accordingly allowing for more fine-tuned policy (Bresters, 2019).

Such developments complicate over-time analysis, as the Central Bureau of Statistics itself cautions (e.g. Bresters, 2019). However, from an empirical perspective, neighbourhoods in the Netherlands tend to stay fairly constant over time, socioeconomically speaking. With the exception of novel construction or destruction of existing housing (i.e. changes in housing stock), the socioeconomic profile of neighbourhoods has, over the course of four decades, not

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[7] Neighbourhoods are overwhelmingly composed of contiguous land. In exceptional cases, primarily in sparsely inhabited areas surrounding population clusters, are non-contiguous areas sometimes organised into one neighbourhood. Internal characteristics tend to be very similar for such non-contiguous areas (Centraal Bureau Statistiek & Kadaster, 2015; 2016; 2017; 2019; 2021).

[8] Delineation takes place on the basis of "spatial planning and historical or urban planning-related characteristics" [author's translation] (Centraal Bureau Statistiek, 2020b, p. 3).

been strongly affected by temporal trends, including residential mobility (Zwiers, 2018). This is not the case everywhere (e.g. Patias et al., 2022), and offers good reason to consider Dutch aggregated units especially representative of the individuals living within their borders. From a meta-academic perspective, too, the choice to focus on the Netherlands has its upsides. As Leib and Quinton (2011, p. 12) note, research on contextual factors in voting behaviour until fifteen years ago tended to centre around the United Kingdom and United States, making contributions to the increasingly vibrant Dutch electoral geography literature—especially on the populist radical right vote (e.g. de Blok & van der Meer, 2018; Gravelle et al., 2021; van Gent et al., 2014)—all the more important as relatively foundational for future investigations.

In the timeframe under consideration, two populist radical right parties participated in Dutch elections: Geert Wilders' Freedom Party (2012-2019) and Thierry Baudet's Forum for Democracy *(Forum voor Democratie,* 2017-2019). The first of these has long functioned as 'epitome' of a populist radical right party (e.g. Otjes & Louwerse, 2015). On the other hand, Forum for Democracy, being newer, has received significantly less academic attention—at least where *systematic* classification is concerned (for exceptions, see Lehmann et al., 2022; Rooduijn et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the populist radical right label has been applied to the party, which—if perhaps less populist than the Freedom Party—has been overtly nativist and authoritarian,[9] and the electorate of which has predominantly overlapped with that of Wilders' faction (e.g. Kessenich & van der Brug, 2022; Maussen & Appels, 2021; Otjes, 2021a).

Importantly, the combination of Freedom Party and Forum for Democracy represents a mix of traditional and novel sub-class of populist radical right, while still sharing—in the period between 2012 and 2019, at least[10]—substantially the same voter base. Slight differences

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[9] The 2019 Chapel Hill Expert Survey scores Forum for Democracy and the Freedom Party the same on immigration policy and multiculturalism (9.92/10) (Jolly et al., 2022). Some caution is warranted in applying these rankings, seeing as they explicitly apply to national parties in the national (i.e. first-order) context, and therefore need not necessarily be representative of the full range of a party's behaviour (Bruinsma & Gemenis, 2020; Steenbergen & Marks, 2007). Nevertheless, there are no *prima facie* substantial differences in populist radical right extent between electoral levels in the timeframe under question (Maussen & Appels, 2021).
[10] Towards the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the run-up to the 2021 Dutch parliamentary elections, one Forum for Democracy faction split off into JA21, a new, "moderate radical right populist party" (Otjes, 2021a, p. 73). One important reason was the former's increasingly fanatical course on pandemic-related topics, alienating a substantial portion of their electorate (Schouten & Custers, 2021, pp. 207-9).

in socioeconomic orientation would become more pronounced during the pandemic, in which "the [Freedom Party] campaigned for care sector workers, whereas [Forum for Democracy] fought for the interests of independents and entrepreneurs." (De Lange, 2022). Rather than form a research impediment, subtle differences of this sort make the Dutch case well-suited to the study of the full range of populist radical right politics, and how economic inequality and election types influence its vote share. Thus, while a more specified approach, focusing on only one party, may thereby allow for narrower conclusions, studying a more representative range allows for more relevant conclusions, given continued splintering along the populist radical right flank.

Furthermore, in line with Kitschelt and McGann (1995), the Netherlands' low general rate of between-party political convergence may form one salient factor in the relative 'distinctiveness' of its populist radical right. The particular timeframe under consideration is important in this connection, however, since it leaves out the period between 2010 and 2012 in which the Freedom Party lent its parliamentary support to the Dutch government. This makes for problematic cross-temporal examination, as it becomes difficult to account for any anti-governmental voting motivations that are central in the second-order election framework; not to mention the concurrent possibility of an increased legitimacy lent to the party by more conventional government allies (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; van Spanje & de Graaf, 2018). By commencing from 2012, when snap elections followed the refusal of the Freedom Party to further lend its support to the government, these issues are avoided. Unfortunately, this does entail lesser comparability with the study of the populist radical right in countries where it governs or provides parliamentary support to the government (e.g. Italy, Sweden), as—for more obvious reasons—is the case for studies of the populist radical right in majoritarian systems (e.g. United Kingdom).

Finally, the choice of election types merits some explanation. In particular, municipal elections are not considered, as these come with at least two major problems: local parties are both too numerous across space and time as well as too multifaceted to be straightforwardly designated 'populist radical-right wing' (cf. Otjes, 2021b). The Dutch case makes this particularly difficult: local parties take up a plurality of the national vote, achieving 36% of the total vote in 2022, thereby continuing an upwards trend that goes back decades (Van Ostaaijen et al., 2021). This is in stark contrast to, say, the United Kingdom, where local party share of the vote is insignificant for the purposes of study (e.g. Heath et al., 1999). The necessity of taking local parties into account would be all the more vital in view of the fact that the Freedom Party has historically not participated in more than thirty municipalities for local elections (i.e. more than 8.8% of municipalities as of 2023). Local elections are, for these reasons, excluded from the analysis.

Moreover, taking provincial elections as the relevant sub-national second-order elections has distinct advantages: unlike regional counterparts in other European states, and with the exception of the Dutch province of Friesland, provincial identities are more or less absent in the Netherlands. As Dijkink (1995) notes, "[t]he entire geographical and administrative configuration in [t]he Netherlands seems to re-emphasize the significance of the national level" (p. 339). This allows for a 'purer' examination of the first- to second-order election structure, and a narrower investigation—without having to account for strong regional identities, that is—into the raw effect of scale within this structure. Additionally, in the timeframe under consideration, provincial elections and European Parliament elections have occurred at roughly the same time, around the midpoint between national parliamentary elections. Therefore, arguably the most important confounder in determining second-order election results is avoided: the timing of any such election relative to the first-order election cycle (Górecki, 2013; Schakel & Dandoy, 2014; Schakel, 2015; Reif & Schmitt, 1980).

4.3.2. Collection

Publically available voting data was retrieved from official records, at the level of polling stations[11] for European Parliament, national parliamentary, and provincial elections held in the Netherlands between 2012 and 2019 (Kiesraad 2020a; 2020b; 2020c; 2020d; 2022a; 2022b). This timeframe comprises two European Parliament elections, two national parliamentary elections, and two provincial elections.

Data were retrieved in machine-readable EML format for elections in 2012, 2014, 2015, and 2019. Official voting data for 2017's national parliamentary election were not available in a centralised, machine-readable format, so data for a majority of municipalities in that year were manually copied or typed into one central file from records[12] delivered by individual municipalities and collected into one folder by the Dutch Elections Commission (Kiesraad, 2020c). Due to the scattered, incomplete nature of some of these data, some municipalities (e.g. Gooise Meren) were unavailable at the polling station level, and therefore left out of the analysis. These omissions appear random (i.e. not related to municipality size or composition).

Polling station-level voting data were then linked to geographical locations— information not contained in any official, centralised repositories. For the 2019 provincial elections, Open State Foundation (2019a) provides virtually complete geolocated voting data; missing entries were manually[13] added based on official records. For the European Parliament election in 2019, Open State Foundation (2019b) provides an ordered list with polling station addresses and/or coordinates. These data were quasi-manually aligned with the relevant voting data, locating gaps and errors by programmatically comparing polling station numbers and

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[11] Since the data is necessarily examined at the level of (aggregated) polling stations, another important reason for analysing the time period in question *and no further* is that the national parliamentary elections of 2021 featured mail-in voting, in addition to selective voting locations and dates for older voters. The data, for the purposes of answering this thesis' research question, would be skewed beyond belief.
[12] Often, joyfully, in scanned PDF format.
[13] Missing entries included the municipality of Medemblik, as well as municipalities in the province of Flevoland, which—with the exception of Zoetermeer—had undergone a recount (Open State Foundation, 2021a).

postal codes if given with the voting data, and manually amending missing or mistaken entries.[14] Using this 'master' list as a baseline, voting data from prior years were compared, and changes and gaps identified and filled manually with the aid of *un*ordered (i.e. scrambled) reference lists for the 2014 municipal and 2017 national parliamentary elections (Open State Foundation, 2020; 2021c), with manual verification and supplementation through a wide range of internet sources (e.g. Gemeente Son en Breugel, 2014; KBS De Zandberg, 2014).

The following categories of polling station were removed, to reduce excessive lack of local representativeness of electoral data: voting booths explicitly located in or in front of commuter hubs (e.g. active train stations); mobile voting booths *(mobiele stembureaus);* 'special' voting booths *(bijzondere stembureaus)* (i.e. polling stations with irregular opening hours, often spontaneously employed in strategic locations); and any voting booths for which an address could not reliably be determined.[15] While other studies of a similar nature also exclude some of these categories, the scope of exclusion is sometimes wider, extending to polling stations in town halls (van Gent et al., 2014), and those in universities and hospitals (van der Zwan et al., 2020). The case for dropping these additional types of voting booth revolves around the fact that they will disproportionately represent non-local voters. While this is undoubtedly true, it is such to some extent for *any* polling location that fulfils a social or work-related function. The difference between those stations and the ones situated in hospitals, universities, and town halls is supposed to be the purported size of the disproportionate effect. However, it is unclear whether that size is always, and exceptionally in such cases, peculiarly problematic, and broad brush removal may cause underrepresentation of communities around the voting booths in question.

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[14] Possibilities for further automation are limited in this endeavour, for at least two reasons. The first is that polling station names in both official and Open State Foundation (2020; 2021b; 2021c) lists are extremely inconsistent in ways that would not particularly productively admit of e.g. 'fuzzy' string matching algorithms. Secondly, the cross-temporal nature of the data renders limited the utility of automatic geolocation software, since present locations of e.g. schools—and even postal codes—are very frequently discordant with past locations. The Google Maps geocoding API (Kahle, 2023) was therefore only used where possible and its results checked quasi-manually.

[15] These comprise, in the majority of cases, polling stations with generic names and no postal code in the official voting data.

It was therefore instead decided not to exclude on the basis of arbitrary quantitative criteria, but on qualitative differences: commuter stations, mobile stations, and special stations are *explicitly* set up to accumulate non-local votes and serve no natural social or work-related functions whatsoever. As such, rather than not excluding any booths at all (Koerntjes, 2022), such voting locations were considered necessary to remove.

Once geolocated, voting data were linked to and aggregated at the level of administrative neighbourhoods in QGIS 3.28, using map data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (Centraal Bureau Statistiek & Kadaster, 2015; 2016; 2017; 2019; 2021). In a handful of cases, this process revealed incongruencies in the Open State Foundation data which were rectified manually. 'Master list' coordinates were automatically mapped in QGIS, while addresses were first parsed through the PDOK geocoding plugin (Jager, 2019), which cross-references and maps them through the Dutch national address database *(Basisregistratie Addressen en Gebouwen)*.[16] Within QGIS, spatially lagged income inequality proxies (see [Table 1] below) were generated.

4.3.3. *Variables*

Independent spatial variables are given in [Table 1]. All control variables are considered at three levels (neighbourhood, district, and municipality). Independent variables are considered at two levels (neighbourhood and district). See the further notes in [Table 1] for detailed explanation of variables (Centraal Bureau Statistiek, 2016a; 2018a; 2018b; 2018c; 2019a; 2020a; 2021a; 2022a). Variables not included here but in the model are time (yearly) and electoral level (election type).

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[16] Once again, polling stations were manually geolocated if PDOK was unable to due to errors in the Open State Foundation dataset or obsolete place names. In a single case, a polling station was 'moved' from one municipality into another: this pertains to a voting booth in the municipality of Apeldoorn serving voters from the municipality of Ede just across the border—exclusively voters from Ede, that is, as voting is generally only permitted within the municipality one is registered to. The polling station in question was moved into the adjoining Ede neighbourhood.

The reason for choosing percentage of high and percentage of low income households as a measure of income level—and relative variants as measures of income variety—over raw income measures has to do with the potential of skew with raw average income. Moreover, it is plausible that the proportion of low and high income households are a much better representation of the *kind* of neighbourhoods, perceptually, these are.

Table 1.   Overview of spatial variables of interest. Centering values ($\bar{x}^*$) are given where appropriate.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: INCOME[17] AND PUBLIC SERVICE ACCESS[18]

High income [Rel.]	Difference in percentage of high income households from the average of contiguous neighbourhoods/districts. Expressed in percent points.	**Hospital**	Average distance to the nearest hospital. Expressed in kilometers.	$\bar{x}^* = 7$
Low income [Rel.]	Difference in percentage of low income households from the average of contiguous neighbourhoods/districts. Expressed in percent points.	**School**	Average minimum radius within which a full assortment of secondary education is available. Expressed in kilometers.	$\bar{x}^* = 3$
		Library	Average distance to the nearest library. Expressed in kilometers.	$\bar{x}^* = 2$
Benefits [Rel.]	Difference in percentage of persons receiving welfare benefits. Expressed in percent points.	**Station**	Average distance to the nearest train station. Expressed in kilometers.	$\bar{x}^* = 5$

CONTROL VARIABLES[19]

High income [Abs.]	Percentage of high income households	$\bar{x}^* = 20$
Low income [Abs.]	Percentage of low income households	$\bar{x}^* = 40$
Benefits [Abs.]	Percentage of persons receiving welfare benefits	$\bar{x}^* = 2.5$
Age: 45+	Percentage of persons aged 45 or over	$\bar{x}^* = 50$
Non-western migr. backgr.	Percentage of persons with a non-western migration background	$\bar{x}^* = 10$
Urban density	Average number of addresses (×100) per square kilometer within a one-kilometer radius	$\bar{x}^* = 15$

Further notes:

[17] Households are designated *'high income'* and *'low income'* when they belong to the national top 20% and bottom 40% of household incomes, respectively. Percentages of persons receiving *'welfare benefits'* are relative to total number of persons receiving an income. Welfare benefits are those benefits issued before 2015 under the Dutch Work and Social Assistance Act ('Wet werk en bijstand'), and since 2015 under the Participation Act ('Participatiewet'). They are meant to ensure a minimum standard of living in the Netherlands, and do not include benefits arranged under other government schemes, including pension benefits, short-term unemployment benefits, or disability benefits.

[18] Average distances are computed by calculating the distance by road for individual inhabitants to the nearest relevant public service locations, and then averaging over all inhabitants in the neighbourhood/district. The *"full assortment of secondary education"* refers to at least one instance of each of the following programmes being offered: preparatory secondary vocational education ('VMBO'), senior general secondary education ('HAVO'), and pre-university education ('VWO'). To be included in *'library'*, libraries are required to be open more than 15 hours a week, offer complete digital access, and organise cultural and educational activities. Service points, smaller library outposts, are also included if they are open more than 4 hours a week and offer personal consultation (i.e. are not self-service).

[19] See footnote 5 above on high income, low income, and welfare benefits. Persons with a *'migration background'* are categorised as such if at least one of their parents was not born in the Netherlands. Persons are said to have a *'non-western'* migration background if they or their parent(s) were born in Turkey, Africa, Latin America, or Asia (excluding Indonesia and Japan).

Variables, with the exception of the relative income-related ones, are centred around meaningful values. Thus, for instance, for public service acces variables, it means that the final model intercept will represent a neighbourhood for which the nearest hospital is seven kilometres away; the smallest radius within which a full assortment of school types is offered is three kilometres away; the nearest library is two kilometres away, and the nearest train station is five kilometres away.[20] These numbers represent, in broad strokes, to low- to medium-urban levels of public service access.

In the full models, relative income-related variables are interacted with their absolute counterparts, and public service access variables are interacted with the non-western migrant background shares. By considering, first, how relative forms of economic inequality—considered from both the 'lower' and 'higher' extremes on the scale, as well as for benefits—affect the populist radical right vote differently *depending* on the own absolute level of wealth, it is possible to determine whether results are truly consistent with the psycho-perceptual mechanisms underlying the 'losers' framework. Furthermore, by interacting public service access variables with immigration-related variables, it is possible to test for the degree to which economic inequalities interact with socio-cultural concerns, as shown in Cremaschi et al. (2022).

The particular variables chosen as proxies for public service deprivation express a wide range of social, work- and health-related functions. Note that these variables are not spatially lagged. This is because, where distances are concerned, averaging between surrounding neighbourhoods is not a sensible way to investigate relative public service access of the central neighbourhood—this is, in a sense, part and parcel of there being a set number of public services, with particular distances to them more informative than aggregated differences. The

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[20] This 'average' level of public service access is not restricted to (moderately) urban areas: for illustration, two neighbourhoods with similar values have been 's Graveland in Wijdemeren in 2017 *(H = 6.7, Sch. = 2.9, L = 1.6, St. = 4.9)*, and Canopusbuurt in Velsen in 2019 *(H = 6.6, Sch. = 2.8, L = 2.5, St. = 5.6)*. The respective urban densities of these neighbourhoods at these times, however, differed significantly: 532 versus 2287 addresses per km^2 within a one-kilometer radius (Centraal Bureau Statistiek & Kadaster, 2019; 2021).

zero-sum nature of public service availability means that, in some sense, the 'target' group against which relative deprivation or relative gratification may be felt includes everyone competing for those public services—but as has been said, this is not generally felt to be a distinct group. Therefore, testing against non-western migrant presence allows for a concrete test of the relative deprivation and gratification mechanisms.

Some of the aforementioned variables are not available for neighbourhoods with fewer than a certain number of households. This means that, in particular, areas with very low levels of habitation are not included in the regression, even if polling station might have been present there. This is an important caveat to consider in interpreting the results, and accounts for the different number of observations between regressions. Education data, although ideally controlled for, was not available.

4.3.4. Methodology

To determine the effect of multiscalar economic inequality on the populist radical right vote share across electoral levels, mixed effects ('multilevel') logistic models were fitted with Stata/MP 15.1 statistical software. Multilevel models are *prima facie* appropriate to properly account for the nested nature of these scales (Nezlek, 2008). Logistic regression is well-suited to the bounded nature of neighbourhoods' populist radical right vote share—or the 'success' rate of populist radical right voting over a number of 'trials' equal to neighbourhoods' total ballots cast (Sommet & Morselli, 2017).

Observations per election at the neighbourhood level were nested in time-invariant neighbourhoods, time-invariant districts, and time-invariant municipalities, taking general cues from established cross-sectional time-series analyses (e.g. Fairbrother, 2014; Heiss, 2021). The model employs random intercepts, which allow the modelling of random differences in populist radical right vote share between municipalities, districts within municipalities, and

neighbourhoods within districts within municipalities. The point of allowing intercepts to randomly vary between these groupings is to account for shared variation within them—that is to say, to account for the non-independence of observations within the same cross-temporal administrative unit. The non-independence in question is therefore both temporal and geospatial, and merits some further remarks.

The assumption that geographical proximity comes with non-randomly correlated observations is a standard one (e.g. Van Gent et al., 2014), and is particularly plausible where between-cluster divisions are historically or functionally rooted, as is the case in the present dataset (Bresters, 2019). On the other hand, temporal correlations are familiarly engaged in classic longitudinal mixed models. As has been discussed, however, complications arise with administrative reconfigurations: when a district is broken up into multiple, smaller districts, how might non-independence between observations from unchanged neighbourhoods *within* the pre- and post-breakup units be taken into account? The same concern appears to extend to municipal mergers, again, given no changes in the sub-municipal units involved. One option would be to allow such neighbourhoods to be nested within multiple higher-level units, known as a 'multiple membership' model. Unfortunately, significant computational constraints come with this approach,[21] and upon further reflection, there are reasons to think the problem not quite so intractable as to warrant taking those on.

Importantly, where reconfiguration occurs at the municipal level, electoral profiles for seemingly untransformed neighbourhoods *change* according to the new municipal electorate as a whole, since voters can only vote in the municipality they are registered to. Thus, given a merger between municipalities A and B into municipality C, erstwhile neighbourhood A1's vote will be differently 'diluted' by extra-neighbourhood votes, since former municipality B voters are free to cast their ballot in an A1 polling station. Secondly, administrative

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[21] In Stata/MP 15.1, the syntax for such models is the same as for so-called 'cross-classified' models. Both are exponentially more complex than hierarchically nested models, and greatly reduce the computationally feasible scope of analysis (cf. Rabe-Hesketh & Skrondal, 2021).

transformations without such electoral effect (e.g. districts splitting) may also be the result of substantial changes to neighbourhood living conditions, like novel housing construction, and are not fatally numerous. So, even though in classic hierarchical modelling the group of observations that are nested in changing higher-level units must be considered as a separate grouping post-transformation, this was deemed preferable to model simplification in order to fit within the computational restrictions thrown up a more sophisticated modelling approach.

As such, time-invariant level two, three, and four groupings were quasi-manually formed, utilising official data detailing whether or not there had been substantive adminstrative changes from the previous year (Centraal Bureau Statistiek, 2016b; 2018d; 2018e; 2018f; 2019b; 2020c; 2021b; 2022b). As briefly alluded to in [Section 4.3.3] above, the effect of time itself was controlled for for all time-invariant groupings.[22]

It has been said that variables were centred around meaningful values to facilitate interpretation of the intercept. Where the interest is in explicitly filtering out within-or between-cluster effects, it can be helpful to (further) centre variables at lower levels around higher-level means. Since that distinction is of limited relevance here, higher-level variables were independently added to the model (i.e. the 'Mundlak' model; Mundlak, 1978), thereby directly measuring the *contextual* effect of these higher-level variables—that is, for instance, how the same neighbourhood would vote in a district with different district-level parameters. Bell et al. (2019, p. 1056) correctly note that with classic longitudinal data, "the contextual effect is fairly meaningless: it doesn't make sense for an observation (level 1) to move from one (level 2) individual to another, because they are by definition belonging to a specific individual". However, the panel data used in this thesis lends itself quite well to the relevant hypothetical: there is a clear sense in what it would mean for a neighbourhood to be part of a differently

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[22] Modelling time as a fixed effect is only possible on the plausible assumption that the populist radical right vote experiences log-linear growth or deterioration over the years (cf. Bale et al., 2010; Golder, 2016). Alternatively, time could me modelled as part of the random structure (i.e. a 'two-way error' model; Rabe-Hesketh & Skrondal, 2021), but it is not at all compelling to think of the 2012-2019 timeframe as a 'selection' from a random distribution of years: see [Section 4.3.1] for specific comments on the representativeness and significance of this temporal selection.

parameterised district or municipality, and that difference is of particular interest—it represents the *additional* effect of district scale on top of neighbourhood scale.

5.   Results

Regression results for income-related economic inequality measures are shown in [Table 2].[23] Regression results for public services-related economic inequality measures are shown in [Table 4]. In presenting the results, election types are referred to by acronyms corresponding to their previously noted Dutch titles: EP (European Parliament elections), PS (provincial elections), and TK (national parliamentary elections).

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[23] All regression tables were exported from Stata/MP 15.1 using the -asdoc- (Shah, 2018) plugin. Versions of [Table 2] and [Table 3] that include standard errors can be found in [Appendix 1] and [Appendix 3].

Table 2. Mixed effects logistic regression (DV: neighbourhood populist radical right vote || IVs: income inequality) *N = 30,239*

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Election type						
EP		-0.0299***	-0.0486***	-0.0500***	-0.0628***	-0.0712***
PS		0.1555***	0.1442***	0.1444***	0.1334***	0.1394***
Neighbourhood						
Low income [Rel.]		**0.0052***	**0.0038***	**0.0028***	**0.0032***	**0.0024***
EP			0.0016***	0.0016***	-0.0008*	-0.0009**
PS			0.0028***	0.0029***	0.0035***	0.0035***
Low income [Abs.]		-0.0075***	-0.0055***	-0.0047***	-0.0053***	-0.0048***
EP			-0.0035***	-0.0034***	0.0007	0.0010*
PS			-0.0020***	-0.0020***	-0.0033***	-0.0033***
Low income [Rel. x Abs.]			-0.0001***	-0.0001***	-0.0001***	-0.0001***
EP			-0.0001***	-0.0001***	-0.0001***	-0.0001***
PS			0.0001***	0.0001***	0.0000***	0.0000***
High income [Rel.]		**0.0073***	**0.0078***	**0.0057***	**0.0053***	**0.0044***
EP			-0.0012***	-0.0011***	-0.0015***	-0.0014***
PS			0.0002	0.0003	0.0020***	0.0025***
High income [Abs.]		-0.0198***	-0.0223***	-0.0175***	-0.0164***	-0.0158***
EP			0.0026***	0.0025***	0.0029***	0.0028***
PS			0.0051***	0.0049***	0.0019***	0.0014**
High income [Rel. x Abs.]			0.0000	-0.0000	-0.0000*	-0.0000*
EP			0.0001***	0.0001***	0.0001***	0.0001***
PS			-0.0000*	-0.0000*	-0.0000	-0.0000
Benefits [Rel.]		**-0.0036***	**0.0041***	**-0.0022**	**-0.0013**	**-0.0018**
EP			-0.0087***	-0.0083***	-0.0037**	-0.0021
PS			-0.0082***	-0.0078***	-0.0122***	-0.0117***

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Benefits [Abs.]		0.0060***	0.0038**	0.0202***	0.0214***	0.0232***
EP			0.0191***	0.0186***	0.0072***	0.0052**
PS			0.0028**	0.0023*	0.0090***	0.0081***
Benefits [Rel. x Abs.]			-0.0006***	-0.0006***	-0.0007***	-0.0008***
EP			0.0000	0.0000	0.0001	0.0002
PS			0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0002*
Age: 45+		0.0014***	0.0002	0.0011***	0.0011***	0.0011***
Non-western migr. backgr.		0.0069***	0.0058***	0.0013**	0.0011*	0.0008
Urban density		-0.0136***	-0.0137***	-0.0061***	-0.0062***	-0.0069***
District						
Low income [Rel.]				**0.0109*****	**0.0108*****	**0.0097*****
EP					0.0015**	0.0005
PS					-0.0020***	-0.0023***
Low income [Abs.]				-0.0087***	-0.0080***	-0.0075***
EP					-0.0056***	-0.0047***
PS					0.0026***	0.0031***
Low income [Rel. x Abs.]					-0.0001***	-0.0000
EP					-0.0001***	-0.0001***
PS					0.0000***	0.0001***
High income [Rel.]				**0.0009**	**0.0021****	**-0.0004**
EP					-0.0009	-0.0018***
PS					-0.0057***	-0.0058***
High income [Abs.]				-0.0086***	-0.0122***	-0.0080***
EP					0.0005	0.0015*
PS					0.0064***	0.0066***
High income [Rel. x Abs.]					0.0003***	0.0003***
EP					0.0001**	0.0000*
PS					0.0000	0.0000

	(M0) Empty	(M1) Neighbourhood Partial	(M2) Neighbourhood Interactions	(M3) District Partial	(M4) District Interactions	(M5) Full
Benefits [Rel.]				0.0044***	0.0013	-0.0008
EP					-0.0008	0.0004
PS					0.0032*	0.0041**
Benefits [Abs.]				-0.0269***	-0.0315***	-0.0076**
EP					0.0156***	0.0151***
PS					-0.0096***	-0.0120***
Benefits [Rel. x Abs.]					0.0009***	0.0008***
EP					0.0007***	0.0007***
PS					-0.0000	-0.0000
Age: 45+				-0.0037***	-0.0041***	-0.0022***
Non-western migr. backgr.				0.0103***	0.0095***	0.0060***
Urban density				-0.0107***	-0.0108***	-0.0029***
Municipality						
Low income [Abs.]						0.0002
High income [Abs.]						0.0045***
Benefits [Abs.]						-0.0162***
Age: 45+						-0.0133***
Non-western migr. backgr.						0.0220***
Urban density						-0.0985***
Year		0.0963***	0.0977***	0.0970***	0.0978***	0.1113***
Intercept	-1.8573***	-2.2768***	-2.2692***	-2.3079***	-2.3126***	-2.7322***
Variance components						
Municipality	0.3267	0.3074	0.3142	0.3216	0.3236	0.7450
District	0.3000	0.2106	0.2105	0.2115	0.2106	0.2050
Neighbourhood	0.2946	0.2447	0.2400	0.2404	0.2402	0.2368

Notes: *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05 (two-tailed). Variance components represent standard deviations.

The coefficients in [Table 2] are on a log-odds scale.[24] They represent, for a one-unit increase in the value of the variable in question, the accompanying change in log-odds of a given vote in a given neighbourhood going to the populist radical right; positive values thus denote an increase and negative values a decrease in likelihood. Models were fitted accumulatively, adding single-term neighbourhood characteristics (M1) to an empty model (M0), then neighbourhood-level interaction terms (M2), then single-term district characteristics (M3) and interaction-terms (M4), and finally municipality-level characteristics (M5). Unless otherwise noted, discussion of the results focuses on the final model, both here and for [Table 3]. Where different coefficients are given per electoral level, these indicate *differences:* main effect coefficients are given for national parliamentary elections, and changes with respect to this number are then given for European Parliament and provincial elections.

Exponentiating the intercept term in the full model yields a baseline odds of ~0.0651, which comes down to a 'per-trial' (Bolker, 2008) probability of ~6.11%. This baseline likelihood of a given vote (i.e. trial) in a given neighbourhood being cast for the populist radical right is contingent upon setting all other parameters to zero, which for most represents the value around which they were centred in [Table 1]. The 'corresponding' election baseline is the national parliamentary election of 2012. This probability is substantially lower than the real Freedom Party vote share for that year (10.08%). One important reason flows from the centering values used: municipal urban density has a strongly negative effect on populist radical right voting but was centered at a relatively high value ($\bar{x}^* = 15$). Moreover, random intercepts (i.e. unit-specific random 'additions' or 'subtractions' from the baseline intercept) are necessarily set to zero for the baseline odds, and plausibly account for substantial variation:

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[24] Instead of adhering to a log-odds scale, presenting regression results as odds ratios generally allows for an easier, more tangible interpretation: a single-term coefficient would here then represent, for a one-unit increase in the value of the variable in question, the concomitant change in the odds that a given vote in a given neighbourhood is cast for a populist radical right party. The tables in the results section of this thesis are nonetheless given in log-odds format, since inter-electoral comparison is of primary concern, and interpreting differences between election type coefficients additively is more straightforward than doing so multiplicatively, as would be appropriate with odds ratios. Moreover, graphs will also be in log odds due to the necessity of comparing slopes—consistency is another reason for not using odds ratios. When discussing the results, only the intercept term $\{\beta_0\}$ is translated into 'baseline' odds $\{e^{\beta_0}\}$ and simple probability $\{\frac{e^{\beta_0}}{1 + e^{\beta_0}}\}$, for ease of understanding.

across most of the models, variance is spread relatively equally across levels, reproducing patterns seen in the 2010 national parliamentary elections (Van Gent et al., 2014).

These variance components are given as average standard deviations from the mean unit populist radical right vote, taking into account the fixed effect variables. One notable observation is the sudden increase of municipality-level variance with the introduction of municipal-level variables. Pillinger's (2023) example, drawing on the work of Jones & Bullen (1993) on domestic property prices, helps elucidate what is going on: suppose house prices *per se* are similar across geographic units, but houses in certain areas (e.g. in the centre of town) are consistently smaller than in other areas (e.g. in the suburbs). In such a case, the addition of an explanatory variable that controls for house area will increase variance, as it 'reveals' that geographic units are not so similar after all (see also Gelman & Hill, 2006, pp. 480-482). Similarly, municipalities turn out to be significantly less similar when their respective non-western migrant populations, densities, etc. are taken into account. This is also reflected in the intra-class coefficient (ICC), a measure of residual intra-group correlation given the model's fixed effects, which shows high purely grouping-related correlations across nested units in the final model (~15% versus ~4.5% in [M4]). These values can be found in [Appendix 2].

Before interpreting coefficient values for income inequality variables, it is worth briefly noting some more general patterns: the likelihood of populist radical right voting shows a clear increase over time, and a decrease with higher urbanity that is consistent across scale. The effect is, however, significantly more pronounced at the level of municipalities—that is, when the municipality as a whole is more urban, neighbourhood neighbourhood populist radical right voting decrease much more than if only the district or neighbourhood show a high level of urbanity (e.g. in a high-density core bordered by many sparse suburbs). The influence of non-western migrant background presence is positive for both districts and municipalities but insignificant at the level of neighbourhoods. This corroborates the aforementioned scholarship

that emphasises the disassociation of populist radical right voting from immigration when the latter takes place at lower levels (Sümeghy, 2022; Della Posta, 2013; Vasilopoulos et al.,. 2022).[25]

Income inequality coefficients are visually represented in [Figure 1]—here, coefficients are absolute per electoral level (i.e. not relative to one another), to allow for easier comparisons.
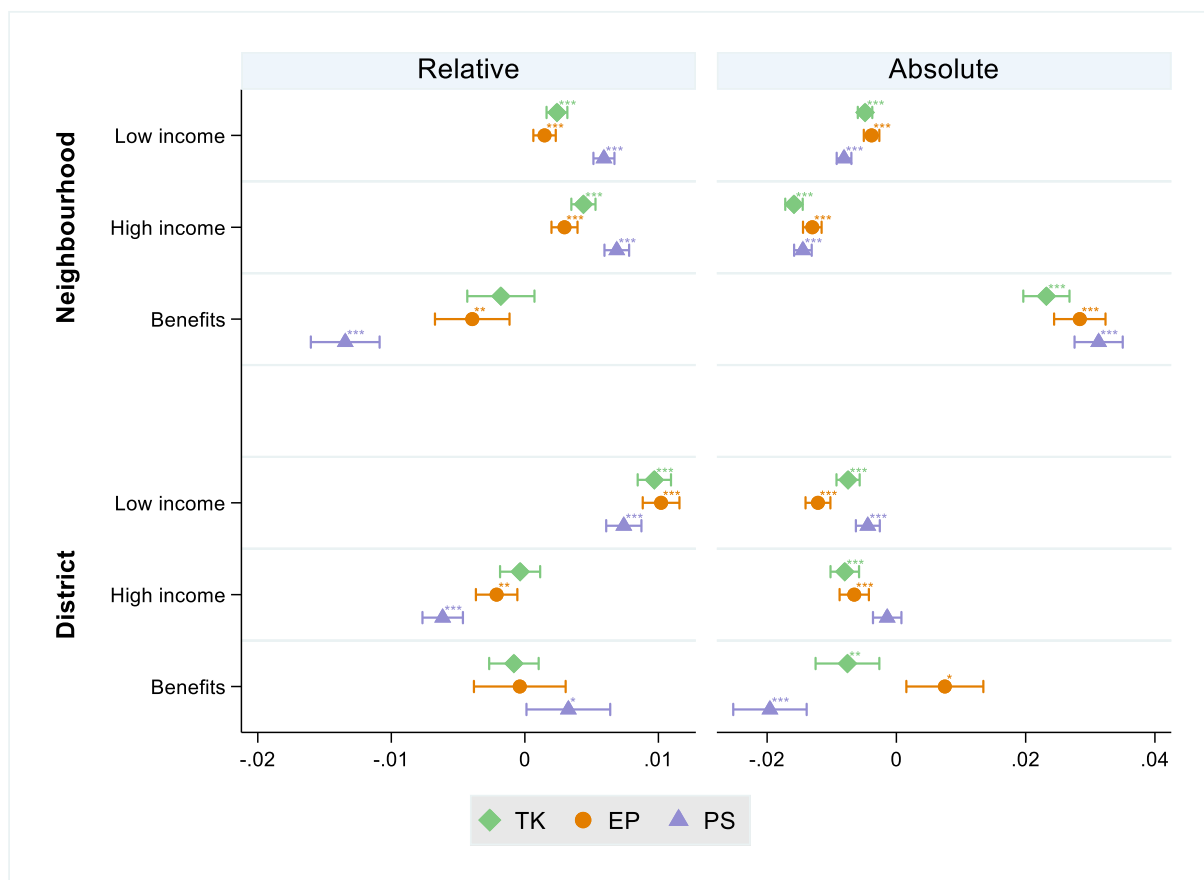
Figure 1.[26]   Visual representation of relative and absolute income-related coefficients (with 95% CIs).
Stars indicate significance level of difference from zero at *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05 (two-tailed).

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[25] There is an important question, not so much to do with the significance of such results (cf. Wasserstein et al., 2019), but with substantive *meaning*. In certain cases, as can be gleaned from the table, significant results were obtained with coefficients so small that they are not visibly different from 1.0000. The 'cutoff' for meaningfulness, then, was set at the four-decimal point. What effect size does a coefficient of 0.0001 actually entail? Suppose a quasi-baseline odds of 0.15 (~13.04%) in a neighbourhood with 2000 voters. A coefficient of 0.0001 would then by itself entail an absolute increase from ~260.87 to ~260.89 votes. While that increase *an sich* is distinctly uninteresting, these coefficients are generally for interaction terms, where they have a more substantial impact due to the multiplicative relationship to the main effects.
[26] Graphs were created in Stata/MP 15.1 using the -coefplot- (Jann, 2013), -grc1leg2- (Over, 2016), and -mplotoffset- (Winter, 2017) plugins. Other sources consulted, in particular with respect to visual choices, include Brewer et al. (2013), Sanborne (2021), and UCLA Statistical Methods and Data Analytics (2016).

It must be emphasised that this visualisation, like the table coefficients it is based upon, do not represent the whole picture—the final effects of income inequality variables are themselves contingent upon the interaction effects that the model specifies and which are discussed below. However, the visualisation is particularly helpful, because it highlights a potentially disconcerting feature of the results: relative and absolute income metrics appear to roughly mirror one another, at least in direction. The reason this may cause concern is related to an earlier discussed difficulty, regarding the possibility of cross-border voting. While it was argued that a normal distribution and general trends of nearby voting resolve this issue, there is a counterargument along the following lines, which might be termed "the simple story".

This story states that, since e.g. absolute high income predicts lower shares of populist radical right voting, relative high income only predicts the reverse due to the cross-border voting *from surrounding neihgbourhoods*, which dilute in accordance with their different proportion of high income households. The simple story relies, however, more or less, on the idea of a general law of movement, whereby those from adjacent neighbourhoods vote in some relatively steady proportion across borders. The fact that there are systematic differences between elections without any changes in polling station numbers or concentration suggests that this idea of a general law of movement is mistaken—moreover, the interaction effects that are considered below form an important point of rebuttal.

Figure 2. Populist radical right vote probability for low income household percentages (neighbourhood). *Left graph (A): probability by election type. Right graph (B): difference in probability from national parliamentary elections (with 95% CIs). <u>All</u> outer percentage values are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*

Figure 3. Populist radical right vote probability for high income household percentages (neighbourhood). *Left graph (A): probability by election type. Right graph (B): difference in probability from national parliamentary elections (with 95% CIs). <u>All</u> outer percentage values are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*
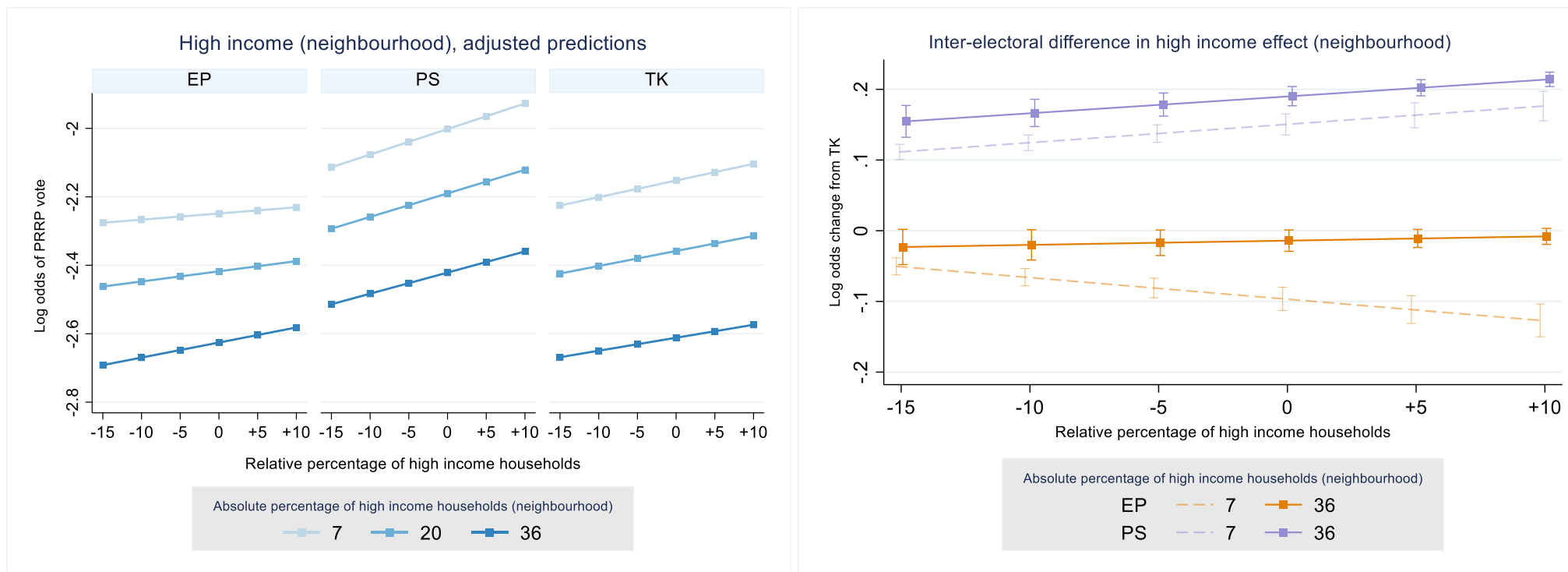
Figure 3. Populist radical right vote probability for high income household percentages (neighbourhood). *Left graph (A): probability by election type. Right graph (B): difference in probability from national parliamentary elections (with 95% CIs). <u>All</u> outer percentage values are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*
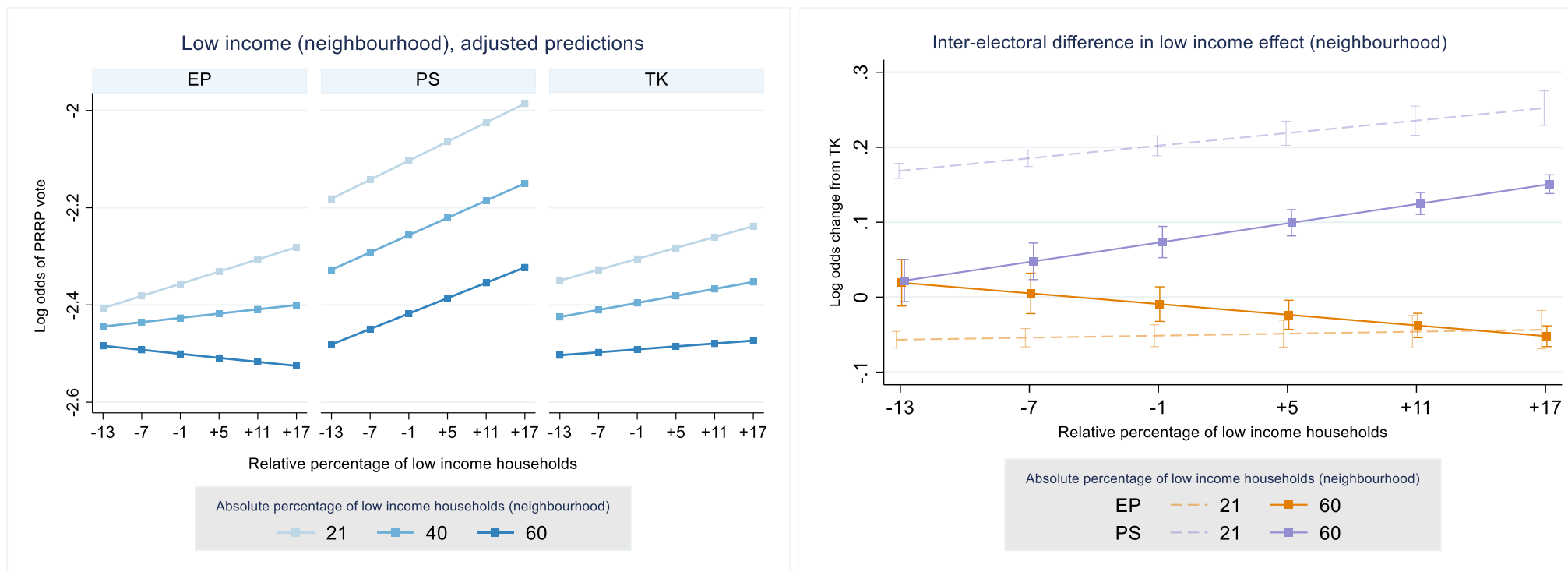
Figure 4. Populist radical right vote probability for welfare recipient percentages (neighbourhood). *Left graph (A): probability by election type. Right graph (B): difference in probability from national parliamentary elections (with 95% CIs). <u>All</u> outer percentage values are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*

The general direction of slope in [Figure 2A], [Figure 3A], and [Figure 4A] may be said to represent the general effect of the respective x-axis variables. Thus, neighbourhoods with higher relative proportions of high *as well as* low incomes are generally more likely to vote for the populist radical right, while higher relative rates of welfare cause a very slight decrease in populist radical right voting odds. Recall that these effects are contingent upon other effects remaining constant. Under this assumption, the graphed effects of high and low income increases are effects of such increases *at the expense of middle incomes* (and vice versa for decreases). In other words, the more of an extreme income-profile a neighbourhood enjoys relative to surrounding neighbourhoods—the larger its high income (and the smaller its middle income) proportion of households is *than that of theirs,* or the larger its low income (and the smaller its middle income) proportion of households is *than that of theirs*—the larger its populist radical right vote share will be. The reverse is true as well: when bordering neighbourhoods have income profiles that are comparatively more skewed towards the extremes, populist radical right voting diminishes.

It is not, then, the 'raw' fact of economic inequality that matters, since the inequality *an sich* is no different in the last-mentioned case. In line with [H1a], these results indicate that vantage point matters where income inequality is concerned. What, then, accounts for the very slight reverse trend seen for neighbourhoods' comparative percentage of welfare recipients? One possible explanation would be that while the absolute presence of welfare recipients has a significant, positive effect on the populist radical right vote, it is less salient in structuring psycho-perceptual comparisons of neighbourhood inhabitants towards contiguous neighbourhoods. This could be, for example, because the rate of persons receiving welfare is not as visible as the income profile of a neighbourhood, and therefore requires the more intimate knowledge of an home area for it to affect political choices (cf. Hebbani et al., 2018).

At any rate, it is clear that benefits-related measures of economic inequality do not fit the same mould as other income-related measures.

Zooming in on differences between election types, provincial elections stand out for consistently showing the strongest effect (i.e. steepest slope) of relative inequality metrics. This is most clearly seen by looking at [Figure 2B], [Figure 3B], and [Figure 4B], which chart the difference in populist radical right voting probability for the second-order election types against the first-order one. Here, all provincial slopes follow the general direction seen in the first graphs, indicating steeper slopes than the national parliamentary ones: the higher the relative percentage of low and high income households (positive effect), the larger the probability gap between the electoral levels grows; the higher the relative percentage of welfare recipients (negative effect), the smaller that same gap turns. As can be gleaned from the graphs, European Parliament elections are not similarly consistent. These results would seem to match [H1b], according to which the psycho-perceptual effects of economic inequality are fortified disproportionately in sub-national elections.

At the same time, however, virtually no interaction effects are at play for provincial elections. The presence of such effects can be deduced from divergent or convergent lines within a single electoral level (i.e. different internal slopes). In [Figure 2A], for instance, the 'fanning out' pattern for European Parliament elections indicates that the greater the percentage of low income households in a neighbourhood *actually* is, the weaker the pro-populist radical right effect of having *proportionally* more low income households than surrounding units becomes—until it even reverses. The same interaction effect obtains for national parliamentary elections, but it is less pronounced. Indeed, this interaction is the major difference between high and low income results: whereas the positive effect of a neighbourhood being more 'high income' than its neighbours is broadly independent of how 'high income' the neighbourhood

actually is, the *less* 'low income' a neighbourhood objectively is, the stronger the positive effect of being *more* 'low income' than surrounding neighbourhoods.

This difference between low and high income effects lends some support to the idea that deprivation-mediated mechanisms for the populist radical right diminish in power with greater objective socioeconomic decline, perhaps because left-wing parties are seen as more reliable allies in tangible poverty (Mudde, 2014). In any case, these results must be taken into account as only partly corroborating [H2a]—however, the neutrality of the sub-national electoral level in this respect—perhaps because the sub-national arena more readily encourages micro-level comparisons—constitutes an important caveat and renders [H2b] unsubstantiated.

Results at the district level, reproduced in [Figures 13, 14, and 15], are much less clear-cut. Outside of a curious, difficult to explain reversal of the interaction effect between relatively more welfare and absolute district rates of persons receiving benefits, the most striking discontinuity vis-à-vis the neighbourhood scale is the reversed direction of relative high income effect [Figure 13a] [Figure 13b], with a considerable boost to this anti-populist radical right trend the fewer high income households the broader district has proportionally. While these findings do not endanger the potential truth of [H3], it is clear that the evidence for [H1a], [H1b], and [H1c] is not at all consistent across even as small scales as neighbourhoods and districts. Though there is some evidence at the neighbourhood level for [H1a] and [H1b], the role of election types in determining interaction effect sizes and directions remains not-well understood, and there has not been much to follow up the expectation that sub-national elections, specifically, most strongly augment any and all (interactions that underlie) positive populist radical right vote effects.
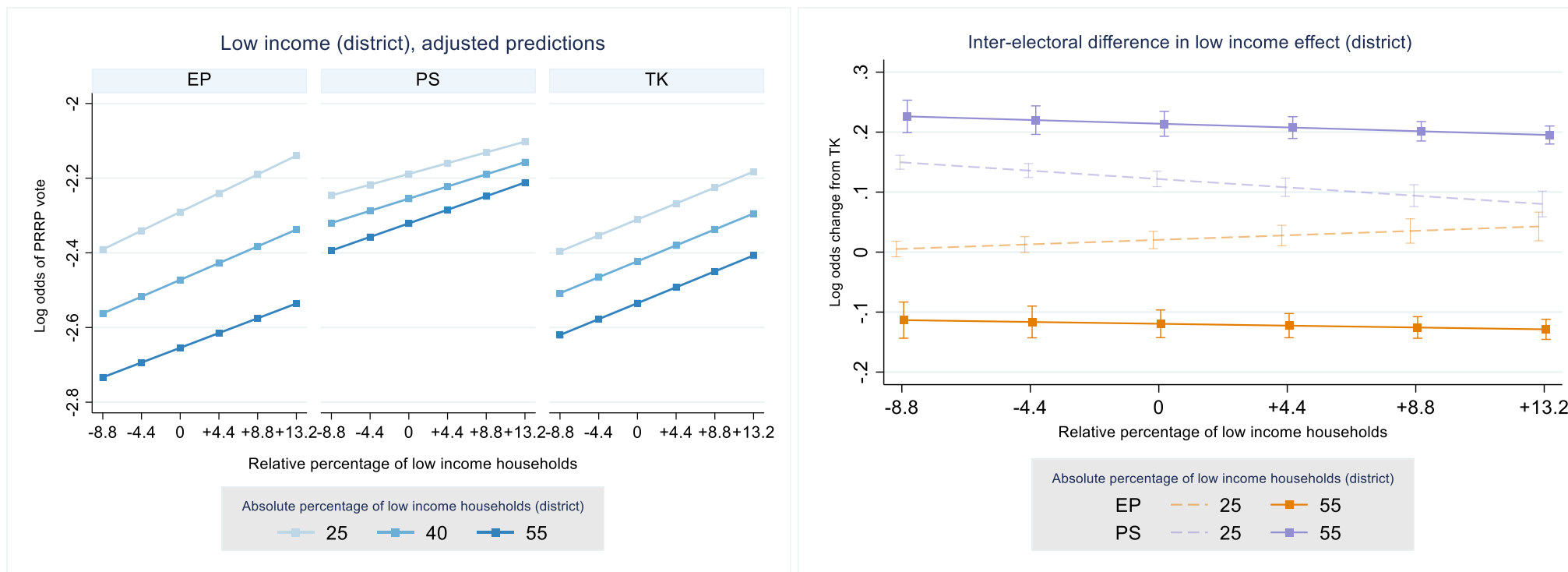
Figure 5. Populist radical right vote probability for low income household percentages (district). *Left graph (A): probability by election type. Right graph (B): difference in probability from national parliamentary elections (with 95% CIs).* <u>*All*</u> *outer percentage values are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*
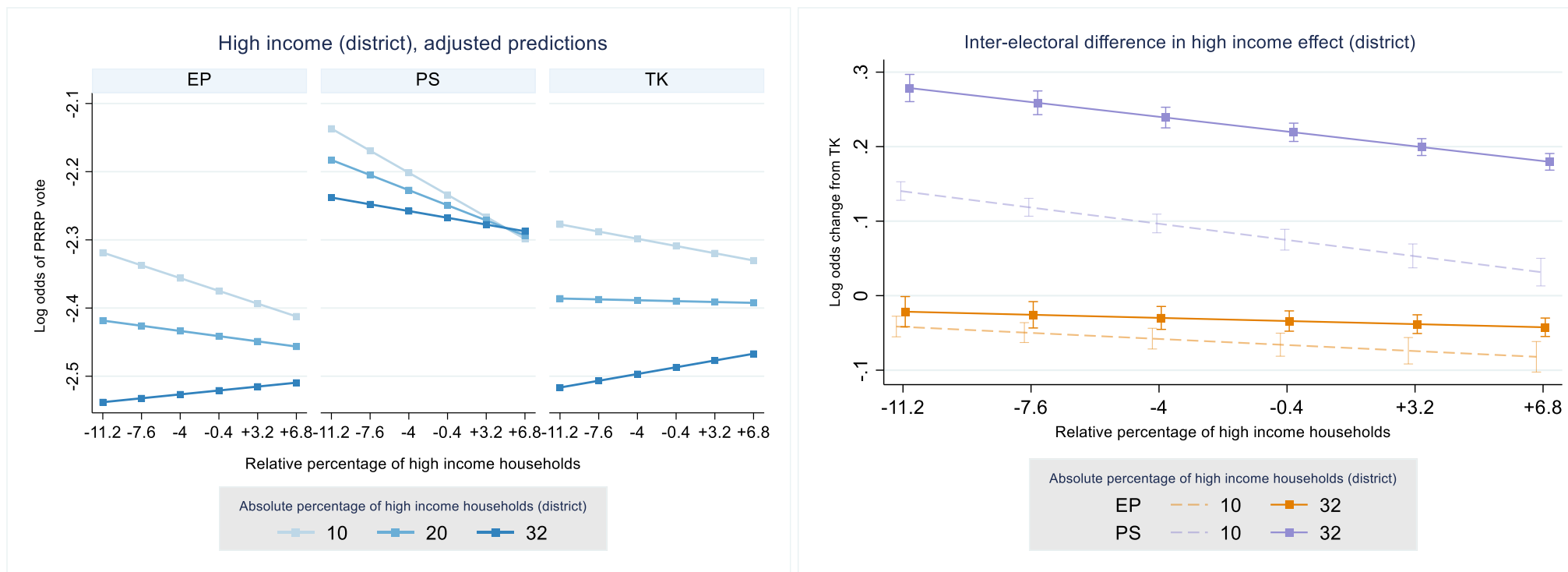
Figure 6. Populist radical right vote probability for high income household percentages (district). *Left graph (A): probability by election type. Right graph (B): difference in probability from national parliamentary elections (with 95% CIs). <u>All</u> outer percentage values are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*
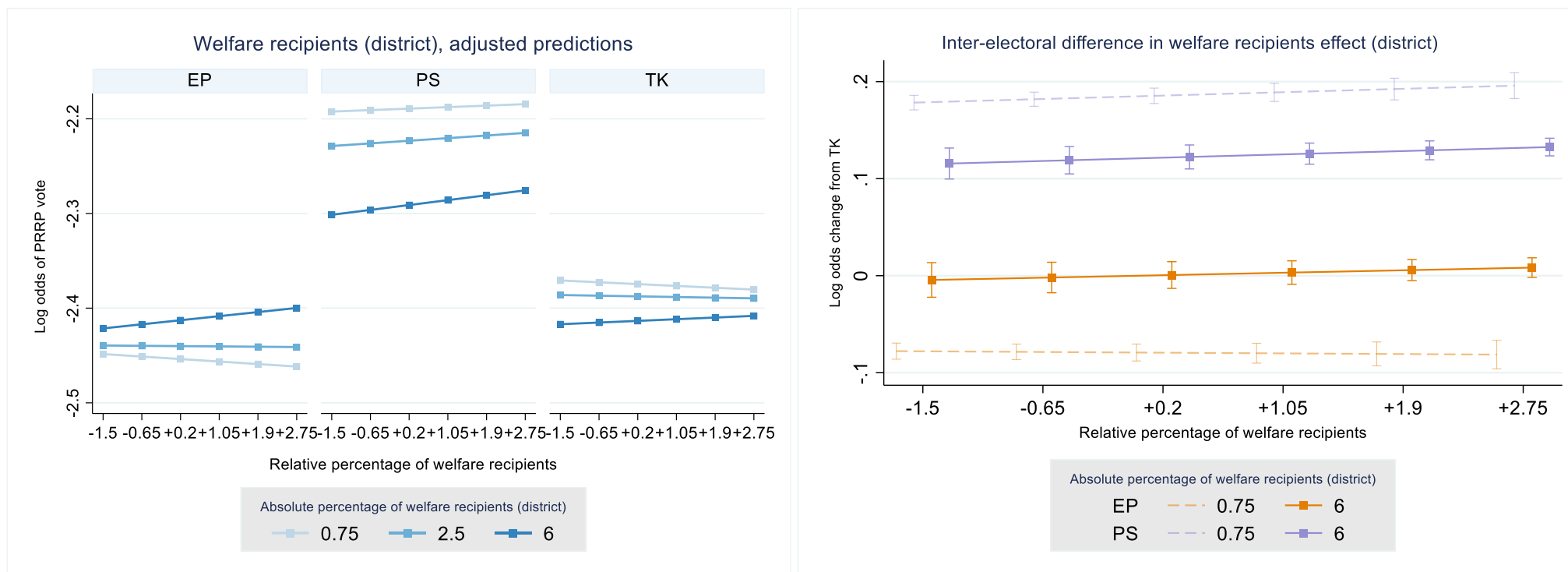
Figure 7. Populist radical right vote probability for welfare recipient percentages (district). *Left graph (A): probability by election type. Right graph (B): difference in probability from national parliamentary elections (with 95% CIs). <u>All</u> outer percentage values are representative of approximate 10ᵗʰ and 90ᵗʰ percentile values.*

Table 3. Mixed effects logistic regression (DV: neighbourhood populist radical right vote || IVs: public service deprivation) *N = 32,289*

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Election type						
EP		-0.0325***	-0.0357***	-0.0380***	-0.0379***	-0.0519***
PS		0.1510***	0.1701***	0.1693***	0.1745***	0.1757***
Neighbourhood						
Hospital		**-0.0003**	**-0.0000**	**0.0035**	**0.0035**	**0.0038**
EP			-0.0022***	-0.0022***	-0.0004	-0.0001
PS			0.0032***	0.0031***	0.0033	0.0033
Hospital x Non-western migr. backgr.			0.0003***	0.0004***	0.0002**	0.0002*
EP			-0.0004***	-0.0004***	-0.0002*	-0.0002*
PS			0.0002***	0.0002***	-0.0000	-0.0000
School		**0.0102***	**0.0102***	**0.0063****	**0.0059***	**0.0042**
EP			0.0022**	0.0021**	0.0061*	0.0056*
PS			0.0046***	0.0044***	0.0052*	0.0048*
School x Non-western migr. backgr.			0.0002	0.0002	0.0004*	0.0003*
EP			0.0004***	0.0004***	-0.0002	-0.0002
PS			0.0004***	0.0003***	0.0007***	0.0007***
Library		**-0.0015**	**-0.0030****	**-0.0029**	**-0.0044**	**-0.0044**
EP			-0.0018	-0.0022*	0.0002	-0.0004
PS			0.0103***	0.0098***	0.0093***	0.0098***
Library x Non-western migr. backgr.			-0.0004***	-0.0003**	-0.0001	-0.0001
EP			0.0007***	0.0006***	0.0004*	0.0004*
PS			0.0015***	0.0014***	0.0002	0.0003
Station		**0.0098***	**0.0073***	**0.0270***	**0.0269***	**0.0263***
EP			0.0026***	0.0026***	0.0017	0.0013
PS			0.0022***	0.0023***	0.0054**	0.0057**
Station x Non-western migr. backgr.			-0.0003***	-0.0003***	0.0000	-0.0000
EP			0.0001***	0.0001**	0.0002*	0.0001
PS			0.0006***	0.0006***	0.0001*	0.0001*

	(M0) Empty	(M1) Neighbourhood Partial	(M2) Neighbourhood Interactions	(M3) District Partial	(M4) District Interactions	(M5) Full
Non-western migr. backgr.		0.0073***	0.0064***	0.0017**	0.0025***	0.0020***
EP			0.0008***	0.0006**	0.0017***	0.0016***
PS			0.0045***	0.0043***	0.0007*	0.0007*
Low income [A]		-0.0029***	-0.0028***	-0.0017***	-0.0017***	-0.0020***
High income [A]		-0.0129***	-0.0129***	-0.0095***	-0.0094***	-0.0097***
Benefits [A]		0.0042***	0.0047***	0.0130***	0.0132***	0.0138***
Age: 45+		0.0016***	0.0014***	0.0018***	0.0018***	0.0018***
Urban density		-0.0121***	-0.0122***	-0.0037***	-0.0035***	-0.0043***
District						
Hospital				-0.0038	-0.0037	-0.0041
EP					-0.0026	-0.0030
PS					0.0011	0.0002
Hospital x Non-western migr. backgr.					0.0003**	0.0002*
EP					-0.0004***	-0.0005***
PS					0.0005***	0.0004***
School				0.0046	0.0037	0.0043
EP					-0.0032	-0.0034
PS					-0.0001	-0.0002
School x Non-western migr. backgr.					-0.0003	-0.0006**
EP					0.0008***	0.0009***
PS					-0.0005**	-0.0004*
Library				0.0011	0.0024	0.0140***
EP					-0.0024	-0.0065*
PS					0.0029	-0.0019
Library x Non-western migr. backgr.					-0.0004	0.0009***
EP					0.0004*	-0.0002
PS					0.0018***	0.0012***

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Station				-0.0212***	-0.0218***	-0.0229***
EP					0.0009	0.0011
PS					-0.0022	-0.0027
Station x Non-western migr. backgr.					-0.0004***	-0.0006***
EP					-0.0000	0.0000
PS					0.0007***	0.0007***
Non-western migr. backgr.				0.0109***	0.0096***	0.0053***
EP					-0.0017***	-0.0021***
PS					0.0053***	0.0042***
Low income [A]				-0.0045***	-0.0045***	-0.0007
High income [A]				-0.0110***	-0.0110***	-0.0072***
Benefits [A]				-0.0158***	-0.0156***	0.0028
Age: 45+				-0.0019***	-0.0020***	-0.0013*
Urban density				-0.0128***	-0.0131***	-0.0061***
Municipality						
Non-western migr. backgr.						0.0230***
Low income [Abs.]						-0.0078***
High income [Abs.]						0.0022
Benefits [Abs.]						-0.0139***
Age: 45+						-0.0125***
Urban density						-0.0986***
Year		0.0963***	0.0964***	0.0965***	0.0966***	0.1103***
Intercept	-1.8664***	-2.3378***	-2.3271***	-2.3211***	-2.3215***	-2.7690***
Variance components						
Municipality	0.3307	0.3334	0.3274	0.3288	0.3280	0.7877
District	0.2939	0.2173	0.2154	0.2130	0.2130	0.2045
Neighbourhood	0.2942	0.2466	0.2463	0.2453	0.2451	0.2422

*Notes: *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05 (two-tailed). Variance components represent standard deviations.*
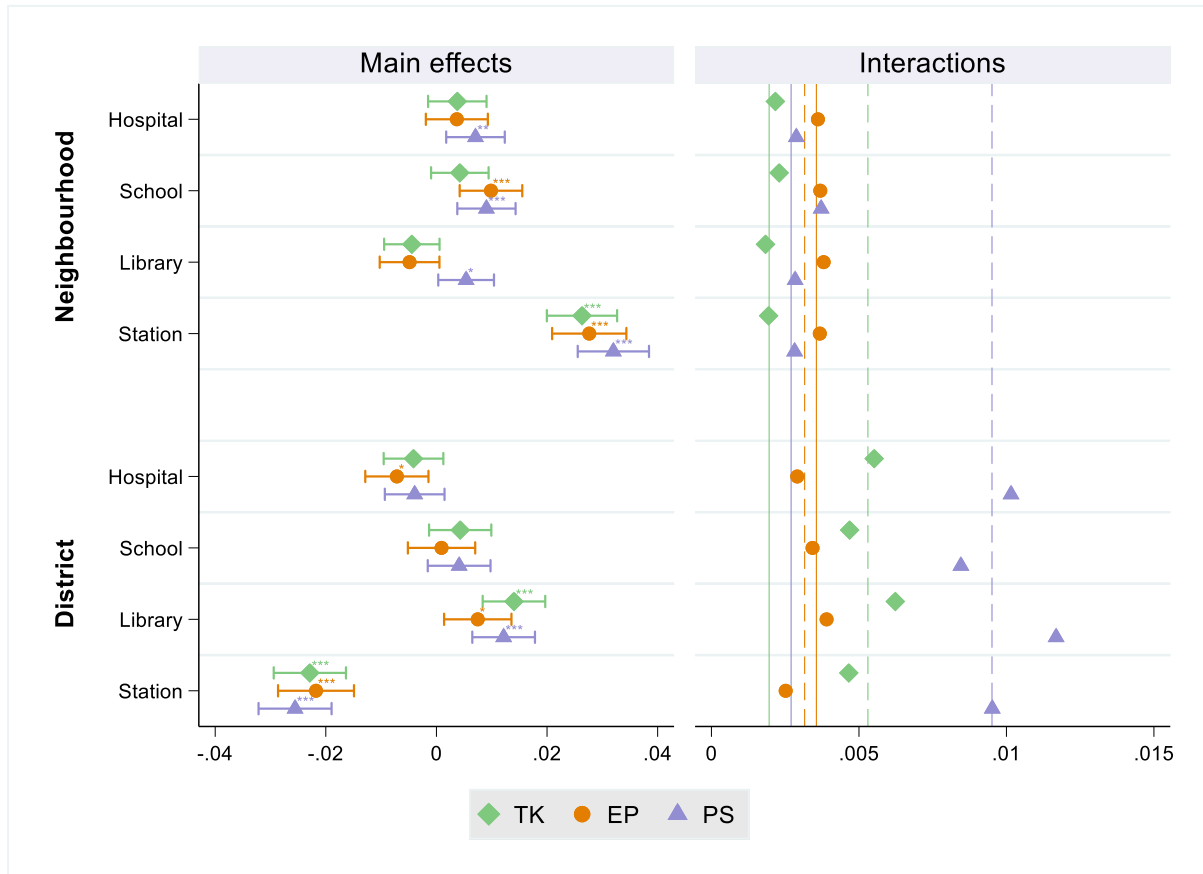
Figure 8. Visual representation of full model public service access coefficients (with 95% CIs).
Left graph: stars indicate significance level of difference zero at *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05 (two-tailed).
Right graph: vertical lines denote main effects of non-western migrant backgrounds, solid at the neighbourhood and dashed at the district level.

In the right plot of [Figure 8], we see a visual representation of the size of the interaction effects, or how the effect of average distance to public services changes with an increase in the percentage of non-western migrant backgrounds in an area. The markers indicate the effect of increasing the percentage of non-western migrant backgrounds by one percent point, from {0} to {1}, while holding distances steady at a value of [1]. The vertical lines then represent the main effect of an increase of that magnitude in non-western migrant backgrounds, leaving the distance between the vertical line and its markers to indicate the size of the interaction effect. No confidence intervals are given. This is for reasons of visual perspicaciousness; in graphs below, confidence intervals are given to indicate confidence levels for differences between election types (our main concern).

It must be emphasised that the main effects possess only limited independent meaning, since their size and direction change with changes in their interaction term partners. [Figure 5] shows how the initial main effects (holding percentage of non-western migrant backgrounds at zero) affect the populist radical right vote. There are a few striking observations to be made: first, provincial elections at the neighbourhood level appear to consistently give more positive 'weight' to public service distance in terms of its effect on the populist radical right vote relative to national parliamentary elections (i.e. purple tends right more than green). Where it is not much stronger than orange (for school radius distance at the neighbourhood level), we see that there is a substantially greater positive interaction effect.
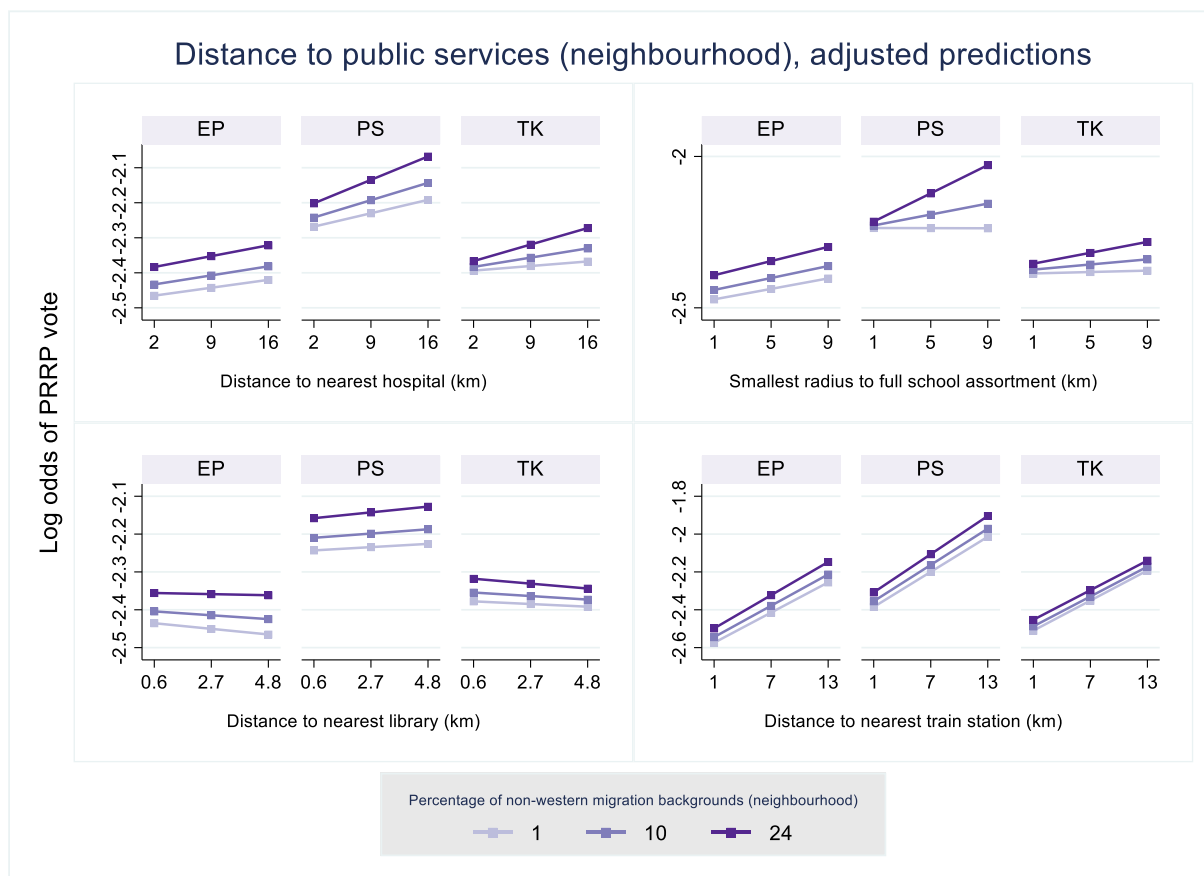
Figure 9. Predictions of populist radical right vote probability for public service distances per neighbourhood, by election type. *Distance ranges (i.e. x-axes' scales) are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values. Outer values of non-western migration background percentage are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*

At the neighbourhood-level, a clear pattern emerges. In terms of the distance main effects—recall, these coefficients have no independent, concrete 'reality', as the actual effect of distance is a function of both distance and migration as determined by the relevant interaction term—it is clear that a greater distance from hospitals, schools, and train stations leads to a greater neighbourhood share of populist radical right votes (H1a), and this effects increases the more migrants there are proportionally in a neighbourhood (H2a). For libraries at the neighbourhood level, there is insufficient evidence to conclude anything either way—both interaction effects as well as main effects show little significance.
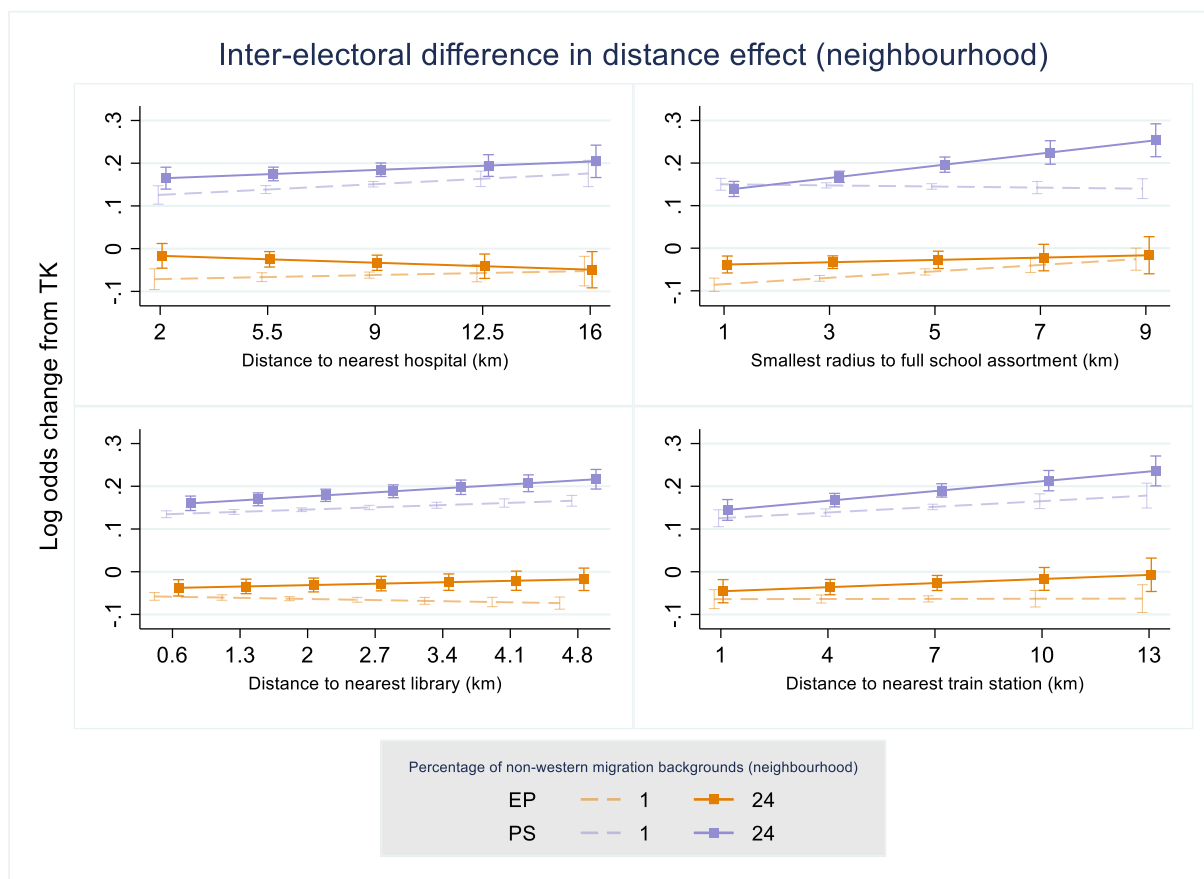
Figure 10.   Inter-electoral difference in populist radical right vote probability for average public service distances per neighbourhood (with 95% CIs). *Distance ranges (i.e. x-axes' scales) are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values. Values of non-western migration background percentage are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*
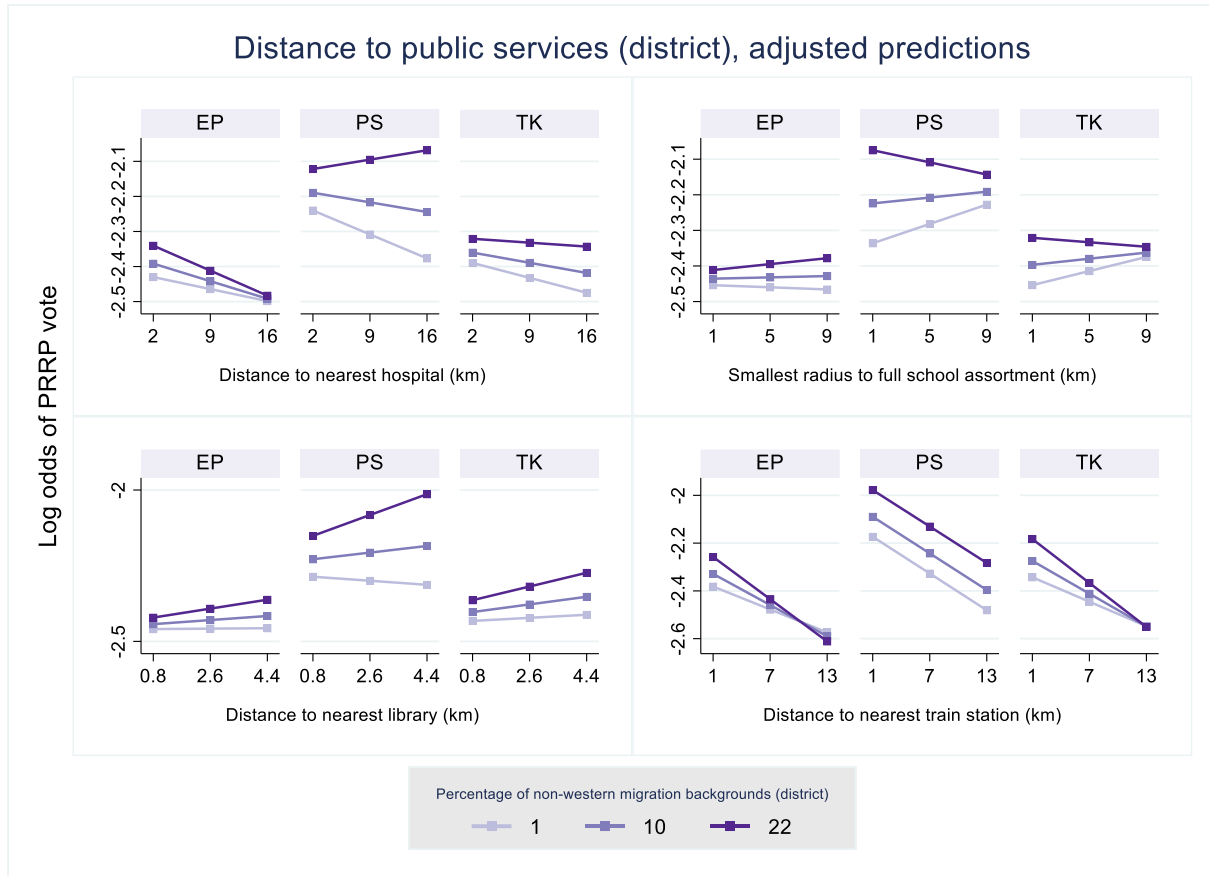
Figure 11. Predictions of populist radical right vote probability for average public service distances per district, by election type. *Distance ranges (i.e. x-axes' scales) are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values. Outer values of non-western migration background percentage are representative of approximate 10th and 90th percentile values.*

At the district level, on the other hand, no distinct patterns emerge, in line with [H3].
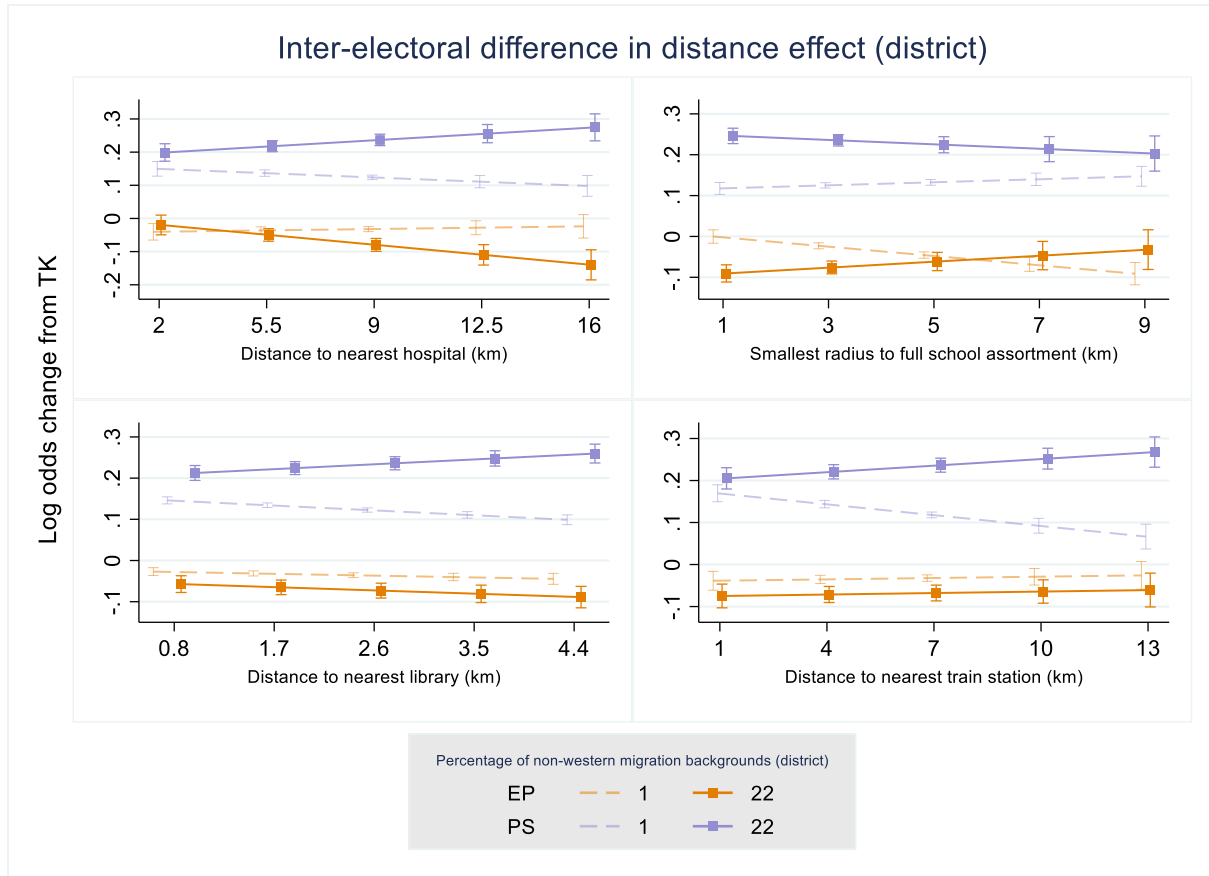
Figure 12.   Inter-electoral difference in populist radical right vote probability for average public service distances per district (with 95% CIs). *Distance ranges (i.e. x-axes' scales) are representative of approximate 10ᵗʰ and 90ᵗʰ percentile values. Values of non-western migration background percentage are representative of approximate 10ᵗʰ and 90ᵗʰ percentile values.*

6.   Conclusion

The primary aim of this thesis is bringing together the multiscalarity of locally determined relative deprivation with the multiscalarity of different electoral levels. The results show some evidence in favour of the hypotheses constructed, particularly at the neighbourhood level. This thesis therefore, with some caveats, shows the relevance of scale to differential populist radical right voting across electoral levels.

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	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Election type						
EP		-0.0299***	-0.0486***	-0.0500***	-0.0628***	-0.0712***
		(0.0013)	(0.0019)	(0.0019)	(0.0024)	(0.0024)
PS		0.1555***	0.1442***	0.1444***	0.1334***	0.1394***
		(0.0012)	(0.0017)	(0.0018)	(0.0022)	(0.0022)
Neighbourhood						
Low income [Rel.]		**0.0052***	**0.0038***	**0.0028***	**0.0032***	**0.0024***
		(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
EP			0.0016***	0.0016***	-0.0008*	-0.0009**
			(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
PS			0.0028***	0.0029***	0.0035***	0.0035***
			(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)
Low income [Abs.]		-0.0075***	-0.0055***	-0.0047***	-0.0053***	-0.0048***
		(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)
EP			-0.0035***	-0.0034***	0.0007	0.0010*
			(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)
PS			-0.0020***	-0.0020***	-0.0033***	-0.0033***
			(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Low income [Rel. x Abs.]			-0.0001***	-0.0001***	-0.0001***	-0.0001***
			(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)
EP			-0.0001***	-0.0001***	-0.0001***	-0.0001***
			(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)
PS			0.0001***	0.0001***	0.0000***	0.0000***
			(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)
High income [Rel.]		**0.0073***	**0.0078***	**0.0057***	**0.0053***	**0.0044***
		(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
EP			-0.0012*** (0.0003)	-0.0011*** (0.0003)	-0.0015*** (0.0004)	-0.0014*** (0.0004)
PS			0.0002 (0.0003)	0.0003 (0.0003)	0.0020*** (0.0003)	0.0025*** (0.0003)
High income [Abs.]		-0.0198*** (0.0005)	-0.0223*** (0.0005)	-0.0175*** (0.0007)	-0.0164*** (0.0007)	-0.0158*** (0.0007)
EP			0.0026*** (0.0003)	0.0025*** (0.0003)	0.0029*** (0.0005)	0.0028*** (0.0005)
PS			0.0051*** (0.0003)	0.0049*** (0.0003)	0.0019*** (0.0005)	0.0014** (0.0005)
High income [Rel. x Abs.]			0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000* (0.0000)	-0.0000* (0.0000)
EP			0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)
PS			-0.0000* (0.0000)	-0.0000* (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)
Benefits [Rel.]		**-0.0036*** (0.0010)	**0.0041*** (0.0011)	**-0.0022** (0.0012)	**-0.0013** (0.0013)	**-0.0018** (0.0013)
EP			-0.0087*** (0.0010)	-0.0083*** (0.0010)	-0.0037** (0.0013)	-0.0021 (0.0013)
PS			-0.0082*** (0.0009)	-0.0078*** (0.0009)	-0.0122*** (0.0011)	-0.0117*** (0.0011)
Benefits [Abs.]		0.0060*** (0.0011)	0.0038** (0.0012)	0.0202*** (0.0017)	0.0214*** (0.0018)	0.0232*** (0.0018)
EP			0.0191*** (0.0010)	0.0186*** (0.0010)	0.0072*** (0.0016)	0.0052** (0.0016)
PS			0.0028** (0.0009)	0.0023* (0.0009)	0.0090*** (0.0014)	0.0081*** (0.0015)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) Neighbourhood Partial	(M2) Neighbourhood Interactions	(M3) District Partial	(M4) District Interactions	(M5) Full
Benefits [Rel. x Abs.]			-0.0006*** (0.0001)	-0.0006*** (0.0001)	-0.0007*** (0.0001)	-0.0008*** (0.0001)
EP			0.0000 (0.0001)	0.0000 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0002 (0.0001)
PS			0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0002* (0.0001)
Age: 45+		0.0014*** (0.0003)	0.0002 (0.0003)	0.0011*** (0.0003)	0.0011*** (0.0003)	0.0011*** (0.0003)
Non-western migr. backgr.		0.0069*** (0.0004)	0.0058*** (0.0004)	0.0013** (0.0005)	0.0011* (0.0005)	0.0008 (0.0005)
Urban density		-0.0136*** (0.0004)	-0.0137*** (0.0004)	-0.0061*** (0.0006)	-0.0062*** (0.0006)	-0.0069*** (0.0006)
District						
Low income [Rel.]				**0.0109*** (0.0006)**	**0.0108*** (0.0006)**	**0.0097*** (0.0006)**
EP					0.0015** (0.0005)	0.0005 (0.0005)
PS					-0.0020*** (0.0004)	-0.0023*** (0.0004)
Low income [Abs.]				-0.0087*** (0.0008)	-0.0080*** (0.0008)	-0.0075*** (0.0009)
EP					-0.0056*** (0.0006)	-0.0047*** (0.0006)
PS					0.0026*** (0.0006)	0.0031*** (0.0006)
Low income [Rel. x Abs.]					-0.0001*** (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
EP					-0.0001*** (0.0000)	-0.0001*** (0.0000)
PS					0.0000*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)
High income [Rel.]				**0.0009** (0.0007)	**0.0021**** (0.0008)	**-0.0004** (0.0008)
EP					-0.0009 (0.0005)	-0.0018*** (0.0005)
PS					-0.0057*** (0.0004)	-0.0058*** (0.0004)
High income [Abs.]				-0.0086*** (0.0010)	-0.0122*** (0.0011)	-0.0080*** (0.0011)
EP					0.0005 (0.0006)	0.0015* (0.0006)
PS					0.0064*** (0.0006)	0.0066*** (0.0006)
High income [Rel. x Abs.]					0.0003*** (0.0000)	0.0003*** (0.0000)
EP					0.0001** (0.0000)	0.0000* (0.0000)
PS					0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Benefits [Rel.]				**0.0044**** (0.0008)	**0.0013** (0.0009)	**-0.0008** (0.0009)
EP					-0.0008 (0.0016)	0.0004 (0.0016)
PS					0.0032* (0.0015)	0.0041** (0.0015)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Benefits [Abs.]				-0.0269*** (0.0019)	-0.0315*** (0.0020)	-0.0076** (0.0025)
EP					0.0156*** (0.0021)	0.0151*** (0.0021)
PS					-0.0096*** (0.0019)	-0.0120*** (0.0019)
Benefits [Rel. x Abs.]					0.0009*** (0.0002)	0.0008*** (0.0002)
EP					0.0007*** (0.0002)	0.0007*** (0.0002)
PS					-0.0000 (0.0002)	-0.0000 (0.0002)
Age: 45+				-0.0037*** (0.0005)	-0.0041*** (0.0005)	-0.0022*** (0.0005)
Non-western migr. backgr.				0.0103*** (0.0007)	0.0095*** (0.0007)	0.0060*** (0.0008)
Urban density				-0.0107*** (0.0007)	-0.0108*** (0.0007)	-0.0029*** (0.0007)
Municipality						
Low income [Abs.]						0.0002 (0.0008)
High income [Abs.]						0.0045*** (0.0013)
Benefits [Abs.]						-0.0162*** (0.0027)
Age: 45+						-0.0133*** (0.0010)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Non-western migr. backgr.						0.0220*** (0.0013)
Urban density						-0.0985*** (0.0016)
Year		0.0963*** (0.0003)	0.0977*** (0.0003)	0.0970*** (0.0004)	0.0978*** (0.0004)	0.1113*** (0.0007)
Intercept	-1.8573*** (0.0179)	-2.2768*** (0.0166)	-2.2692*** (0.0168)	-2.3079*** (0.0174)	-2.3126*** (0.0176)	-2.7322*** (0.0379)
Variance components						
Municipality	0.3267 (0.0140)	0.3074 (0.0123)	0.3142 (0.0124)	0.3216 (0.0127)	0.3236 (0.0127)	0.7450 (0.0280)
District	0.3000 (0.0059)	0.2106 (0.0048)	0.2105 (0.0048)	0.2115 (0.0049)	0.2106 (0.0050)	0.2050 (0.0048)
Neighbourhood	0.2946 (0.0030)	0.2447 (0.0026)	0.2400 (0.0026)	0.2404 (0.0026)	0.2402 (0.0026)	0.2368 (0.0025)

*Notes: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Standard errors in brackets. Variance components represent standard deviations.*

Appendix 2.   Mixed effects logistic regression (DV: neighbourhood populist radical right vote || IVs: income inequality), ICC

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Municipality	0.0299	0.0277	0.0283	0.0296	0.0299	0.1407
	(0.0025)	(0.0021)	(0.0022)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0091)
District (in municipality)	0.0550	0.0404	0.0410	0.0424	0.0426	0.1514
	(0.0025)	(0.0022)	(0.0022)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0090)
Neighbourhood (in district in municipality)	0.0793	0.0577	0.0575	0.0589	0.0591	0.1656
	(0.0025)	(0.0021)	(0.0022)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0088)

Standard errors in brackets.

Appendix 3.   Mixed effects logistic regression (DV: neighbourhood populist radical right vote || IVs: public service deprivation), SEs   *N = 32,289*

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Election type						
EP		-0.0325***	-0.0357***	-0.0380***	-0.0379***	-0.0519***
		(0.0013)	(0.0016)	(0.0017)	(0.0018)	(0.0018)
PS		0.1510***	0.1701***	0.1693***	0.1745***	0.1757***
		(0.0012)	(0.0015)	(0.0015)	(0.0016)	(0.0016)
Neighbourhood						
Hospital		**-0.0003**	**-0.0000**	**0.0035**	**0.0035**	**0.0038**
		(0.0004)	(0.0005)	(0.0025)	(0.0027)	(0.0027)
EP			-0.0022***	-0.0022***	-0.0004	-0.0001
			(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0020)	(0.0020)
PS			0.0032***	0.0031***	0.0033	0.0033
			(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0018)	(0.0018)
Hospital x Non-western migr. backgr.			0.0003***	0.0004***	0.0002**	0.0002*
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
EP			-0.0004***	-0.0004***	-0.0002*	-0.0002*
			(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
PS			0.0002***	0.0002***	-0.0000	-0.0000
			(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
School		**0.0102*****	**0.0102*****	**0.0063****	**0.0059***	**0.0042**
		(0.0005)	(0.0009)	(0.0024)	(0.0027)	(0.0027)
EP			0.0022**	0.0021**	0.0061*	0.0056*
			(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0024)	(0.0024)
PS			0.0046***	0.0044***	0.0052*	0.0048*
			(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)
School x Non-western migr. backgr.			0.0002	0.0002	0.0004*	0.0003*
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
EP			0.0004***	0.0004***	-0.0002	-0.0002
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
PS			0.0004***	0.0003***	0.0007***	0.0007***
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Library		**-0.0015**	**-0.0030****	**-0.0029**	**-0.0044**	**-0.0044**
		(0.0008)	(0.0011)	(0.0023)	(0.0026)	(0.0026)
EP			-0.0018	-0.0022*	0.0002	-0.0004
			(0.0010)	(0.0010)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)
PS			0.0103***	0.0098***	0.0093***	0.0098***
			(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0020)	(0.0020)
Library x Non-western migr. backgr.			-0.0004***	-0.0003**	-0.0001	-0.0001
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
EP			0.0007***	0.0006***	0.0004*	0.0004*
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
PS			0.0015***	0.0014***	0.0002	0.0003
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
Train station		**0.0098*****	**0.0073*****	**0.0270*****	**0.0269*****	**0.0263*****
		(0.0006)	(0.0007)	(0.0031)	(0.0033)	(0.0032)
EP			0.0026***	0.0026***	0.0017	0.0013
			(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0022)	(0.0022)
PS			0.0022***	0.0023***	0.0054**	0.0057**
			(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0020)	(0.0020)
Train station x Non-western migr. backgr.			-0.0003***	-0.0003***	0.0000	-0.0000
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
EP			0.0001***	0.0001**	0.0002*	0.0001
			(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
PS			0.0006***	0.0006***	0.0001*	0.0001*
			(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Non-western migr. backgr.		0.0073***	0.0064***	0.0017**	0.0025***	0.0020***
		(0.0004)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)
EP			0.0008***	0.0006**	0.0017***	0.0016***
			(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)
PS			0.0045***	0.0043***	0.0007*	0.0007*
			(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)
Low income [A]		-0.0029***	-0.0028***	-0.0017***	-0.0017***	-0.0020***
		(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)
High income [A]		-0.0129***	-0.0129***	-0.0095***	-0.0094***	-0.0097***
		(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Benefits [A]		0.0042***	0.0047***	0.0130***	0.0132***	0.0138***
		(0.0008)	(0.0008)	(0.0011)	(0.0011)	(0.0011)
Age: 45+		0.0016***	0.0014***	0.0018***	0.0018***	0.0018***
		(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)
Urban density		-0.0121***	-0.0122***	-0.0037***	-0.0035***	-0.0043***
		(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)
District						
Hospital				**-0.0038**	**-0.0037**	**-0.0041**
				(0.0026)	(0.0028)	(0.0028)
EP					-0.0026	-0.0030
					(0.0021)	(0.0021)
PS					0.0011	0.0002
					(0.0019)	(0.0019)
Hospital x Non-western migr. backgr.					0.0003**	0.0002*
					(0.0001)	(0.0001)
EP					-0.0004***	-0.0005***
					(0.0001)	(0.0001)
PS					0.0005***	0.0004***
					(0.0001)	(0.0001)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
School				**0.0046** (0.0025)	**0.0037** (0.0029)	**0.0043** (0.0029)
EP					-0.0032 (0.0025)	-0.0034 (0.0025)
PS					-0.0001 (0.0023)	-0.0002 (0.0023)
School x Non-western migr. backgr.					-0.0003 (0.0002)	-0.0006** (0.0002)
EP					0.0008*** (0.0002)	0.0009*** (0.0002)
PS					-0.0005** (0.0002)	-0.0004* (0.0002)
Library				**0.0011** (0.0025)	**0.0024** (0.0029)	**0.0140*** (0.0029)
EP					-0.0024 (0.0026)	-0.0065* (0.0026)
PS					0.0029 (0.0023)	-0.0019 (0.0023)
Library x Non-western migr. backgr.					-0.0004 (0.0023)	0.0009*** (0.0023)
EP					0.0004* (0.0002)	-0.0002 (0.0002)
PS					0.0018*** (0.0002)	0.0012*** (0.0002)
Train station				**-0.0212*** (0.0032)	**-0.0218*** (0.0033)	**-0.0229*** (0.0033)
EP					0.0009 (0.0022)	0.0011 (0.0022)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
PS					-0.0022	-0.0027
					(0.0020)	(0.0020)
Train station x Non-western migr. backgr.					-0.0004***	-0.0006***
					(0.0001)	(0.0001)
EP					-0.0000	0.0000
					(0.0001)	(0.0001)
PS					0.0007***	0.0007***
					(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Non-western migr. backgr.				0.0109***	0.0096***	0.0053***
				(0.0007)	(0.0008)	(0.0008)
EP					-0.0017***	-0.0021***
					(0.0004)	(0.0004)
PS					0.0053***	0.0042***
					(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Low income [A]				-0.0045***	-0.0045***	-0.0007
				(0.0005)	(0.0005)	(0.0006)
High income [A]				-0.0110***	-0.0110***	-0.0072***
				(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)
Benefits [A]				-0.0158***	-0.0156***	0.0028
				(0.0016)	(0.0016)	(0.0021)
Age: 45+				-0.0019***	-0.0020***	-0.0013*
				(0.0005)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)
Urban density				-0.0128***	-0.0131***	-0.0061***
				(0.0008)	(0.0008)	(0.0008)
Municipality						
Non-western migr. backgr.						0.0230***
						(0.0013)

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Low income [Abs.]						-0.0078*** (0.0008)
High income [Abs.]						0.0022 (0.0013)
Benefits [Abs.]						-0.0139*** (0.0025)
Age: 45+						-0.0125*** (0.0009)
Urban density						-0.0986*** (0.0016)
Year		0.0963*** (0.0003)	0.0964*** (0.0003)	0.0965*** (0.0004)	0.0966*** (0.0004)	0.1103*** (0.0007)
Intercept	-1.8664*** (0.0177)	-2.3378*** (0.0175)	-2.3271*** (0.0174)	-2.3211*** (0.0177)	-2.3215*** (0.0178)	-2.7690*** (0.0397)
Variance components						
Municipality	0.3307 (0.0137)	0.3334 (0.0130)	0.3274 (0.0128)	0.3288 (0.0129)	0.3280 (0.0128)	0.7877 (0.0294)
District	0.2939 (0.0056)	0.2173 (0.0047)	0.2154 (0.0047)	0.2130 (0.0049)	0.2130 (0.0049)	0.2045 (0.0046)
Neighbourhood	0.2942 (0.0029)	0.2466 (0.0026)	0.2463 (0.0026)	0.2453 (0.0026)	0.2451 (0.0026)	0.2422 (0.0025)

Notes: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Standard errors in brackets. Variance components represent standard deviations.

Appendix 4.   Mixed effects logistic regression (DV: neighbourhood populist radical right vote || IVs: public service deprivation), ICC

	(M0) Empty	(M1) *Neighbourhood* Partial	(M2) *Neighbourhood* Interactions	(M3) *District* Partial	(M4) *District* Interactions	(M5) Full
Municipality	0.0306	0.0317	0.0306	0.0308	0.0307	0.1547
	(0.0025)	(0.0024)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0098)
District (in municipality)	0.0548	0.0451	0.0438	0.0438	0.0437	0.1651
	(0.0025)	(0.0024)	(0.0023)	(0.0024)	(0.0024)	(0.0097)
Neighbourhood (in district in municipality)	0.0790	0.0625	0.0611	0.0610	0.0608	0.1797
	(0.0025)	(0.0024)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0095)

Standard errors in brackets.