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Do Mainstream Parties Adapt to the Welfare Chauvinism of Populist Parties?

Gijs Schumacher, University of Southern Denmark

Kees van Kersbergen, Aarhus University

Abstract

Populist parties increasingly take a welfare chauvinistic position. They criticize mainstream parties for cutting and slashing welfare at the expense of the 'native' population and to the benefit of the 'undeserving' immigrant. Given the electoral success of populist parties, we investigate whether and when mainstream parties ignore, attack or accommodate welfare chauvinism.

Using key theories of party behaviour, we test whether mainstream parties (1) respond immediately to populist parties, (2) respond with a time lag, or (3) respond only when they lose elections or are in opposition. Our quantitative analyses of party manifestos, speeches and policies of European mainstream and populist parties (1980–2012) show that mainstream parties adapt to populist parties on welfare chauvinism, but which parties adapt and when varies significantly. In our in-depth examinations of the Dutch and Danish cases, we highlight important cross-country and cross-party differences.

The electoral rise of populist parties in Western Europe is by now a well-established fact (Bale 2003; Barr 2009; Van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie 2000, 2005; Van der Brug and Van Spanje 2009; Van Kessel 2011; Mudde 2004; Rooduijn 2013; Taggart 2004). Whether mainstream parties adapt to the issues of populist parties is subject to debate, with confirmatory (Van Spanje 2010), negative (Rooduijn, De Lange, and Van der Brug 2012) and ambiguous findings (Bale et al. 2010). Most of these studies analyse party positions on the EU issue or the immigration/integration issue. Here we analyse welfare chauvinism, which by now has become part of the programme of many West European populist parties. Welfare chauvinism was pioneered by the Danish People's Party (DF) and this party's electoral success and influence on government policy has motivated diffusion of welfare chauvinism to the Dutch Freedom Party (PVV) and to a lesser extent to the Sweden Democrats (SD), The Finns (PS) and the French National Front (FN) (see figure 1). The rise of welfare chauvinism therefore provides an excellent case to analyse and contribute to our knowledge of whether, when and how mainstream parties respond to populist parties. In addition, because the welfare chauvinism of populist parties stands in sharp contrast to their earlier neoliberal position on the welfare state, we also have an opportunity to study how populist parties respond to the changing political establishment.

Populist parties act like chameleons: They change colour to adapt to new political environments (Taggart 2000). For example, populist parties in Austria and Switzerland have been instrumental in cutting the welfare state in the 1990s and early 2000s (Afonso 2014; Kitschelt and McGann 1995) and the Danish and Norwegian Progress Parties were explicitly anti-welfare. However, when mainstream parties throughout Western Europe cut popular social policies, populist parties transformed into zealous defenders of the welfare state. Their reading is that immigrants make excessive use of the welfare state, which makes it unaffordable. The solution is welfare chauvinism: the view that access to welfare should be restricted to the 'deserving' natives. This links left-wing economic attitudes to redistribution with right-wing cultural views on deservingness (Alesina and Glaeser 2004; Crepaz and Regan 2009; Emmenegger and Klemmensen 2013a, 2013b; de Koster,

Achterberg, and van der Waal 2013; van Oorschot 2000; Van Oorschot 2006; van der Waal et al. 2010). This confluence of left-wing and right-wing views provokes different responses from mainstream parties than when populist parties take a radical position (e.g. anti-immigrant or anti-EU).

Due to the electoral successes of these populist parties, mainstream parties feel pressured to respond. We pose four questions. First, do mainstream parties ignore welfare chauvinism or do they respond to it? Second, if they respond, do they do so immediately or with a time lag? Third, are parties that lose elections or that are in opposition more likely to respond, as some theories suggest (Meguid 2005; Riker 1982; De Vries and Hobolt 2012)? Third, how do mainstream parties respond: Do they attack populists by defending the welfare state for all or do they accommodate the populist party (Meguid 2005, 2008)? Organizing our study around these questions, we widen the number of issues analysed in the field of party behaviour (Bale et al. 2010; Van Spanje 2010; De Vries and Hobolt 2012) and thereby contribute to theories of issue entrepreneurship, party adaptation and innovation (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Ezrow 2010; Meguid 2005, 2008; Riker 1982; De Vries and Hobolt 2012). In addition to that, our study has interesting implications for students of populism and the welfare state.

Section 2 explains why populists engage with welfare chauvinism; Section 3 develops hypotheses on how and when mainstream parties respond; Section 4 presents our method; Section 5 tests our hypotheses in a large-N between-country analysis of the party manifestos of European mainstream parties (1980–2010); and Section 6 zooms in on Denmark and the Netherlands to further substantiate our quantitative findings. We use the Manifesto Projects' Data (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006) as well as an original coding of party manifestos, coalition agreements and other documents.

2. Populism and welfare chauvinism

Why have populist parties embraced welfare chauvinism? The literature (Abts and Rummens 2007; Barr 2009; Canovan 1999; Decker 2003; Houwen 2011; Kaltwasser 2011; Van Kessel 2011; Mény and Surel 2002; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2011; Pasquino 2008; Plattner 2010; Rooduijn 2013; Taggart 2000; Weyland 2001) stresses that the heart of populism concerns the conflict between, on the one hand, the mythical, homogeneous, and unified common people and, on the other hand, an enemy that consists of a divisive political, economic and cultural elite, to which very often a dangerous and threatening 'other' is added. The content of a populist party's programme thus depends on who is identified as the elite or the establishment, to what extent a dangerous 'other' is specified, and which already existing values and ideas are embraced. For example, if the establishment is perceived as neoliberal, capitalist, pro-American, and anti-interventionist, then populism appears as anti-capitalist, radical socialist, and anti-American, as in the case of *Chavismo* in Venezuela in the 2000s (Hawkins 2010). If the establishment is perceived as authoritarian and statist, then populism appears as radical neoliberal individualism, as Fujimori in the 1990s in Peru, the Danish and Norwegian Progress Parties in the 1970s and Le Pen's FN. Currently, the establishment in many countries in Western Europe is perceived as liberal-left, tolerant, permissive and pro-European, but also as supportive of outsourcing state activities to the market and retrenching the welfare state. Most West European countries have seen successive rounds of cost containment of welfare arrangements, reduction of welfare benefits and tightening of eligibility conditions of social welfare provisions. Welfare retrenchment and restructuring cause widespread anxiety among voters who (expect to) depend on social services and transfers (the sick, the old, the unemployed) and there is therefore a strong demand for political protection of social security (Boeri, Börsch-Supan, and Tabellini 2001; Kumlin and Stadelmann-Steffen 2014). Still, both the left and the right engage in welfare state retrenchment. Taking the opposite stand of the establishment, contemporary populist parties in Western Europe thus stand for a monocultural society, a stop to European integration and

the maintenance of a generous welfare state. Welfare chauvinism primarily links the first issue (immigration/integration) and the third issue (welfare).¹ Populists taking a welfare chauvinistic position blame the elite for cutting the welfare rights of deserving 'natives' and the non-natives for their excessive claims on the welfare state. For example, FN's Marine Le Pen stated: 'We must reserve our welfare and our social policy for our compatriots, as well as give them priority access to employment and housing'. She directly links these issues with her goal of banning immigration, arguing that it is 'absurd to continue to bring hundreds of thousands of foreigners into our country, when we have five million people unemployed'.² Clearly, Le Pen 'seeks to promote feelings of xenophobic welfare chauvinism by depicting immigrants as lazy parasites living on state subsidies' (Rydgren 2008: 173). To give another example, the Dutch PVV stressed the costs of mass immigration in its manifesto of 2010: 'The billions that are spent on additional prisons, extra police, extra housing, extra care, extra education, and additional benefits need to come from somewhere. Who pays the price for the multicultural society? From whose wallet does the money come? From you, the ordinary, hard-working Dutch citizens who never asked for mass-immigration.'³

3. Welfare Chauvinism and Mainstream Party Responses

Do mainstream parties respond or ignore populist parties that take a welfare chauvinistic position? And if mainstream parties respond, do they attack or accommodate the populist party (Meguid 2005, 2008)? If mainstream parties *accommodate*, they take the same welfare chauvinistic position

¹ Because some retrenchment measures are taken to meet the European Union's (EU) 3% budget deficit rule, populists occasionally link the EU issue with the welfare issue too.

² http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2011/01/17/marine-le-pen-reprend-le-credo-de-la-preference-nationale_1466519_823448.html, our translation.

³ <http://www.pvv.nl/index.php/visie.html>, our translation.

as the populist parties. As mentioned, welfare chauvinism links two issues: welfare and multiculturalism. To identify a response to welfare chauvinism, we propose to analyse how parties change on these two issues. Mainstream parties *attack* the populist party's welfare chauvinistic position, if they prioritize issues such as equality, universalism or positive mentions of multiculturalism. Mainstream parties can also *ignore* populist parties so that we should not observe any change in a mainstream party's position on welfare or multiculturalism.

Why do mainstream parties respond to populist parties? The most straightforward reason is that they expect or experience that the populist party's welfare chauvinism endangers their electoral performance and thereby their potential to rule. Parties anticipating electoral losses adjust their issue positions to maintain or improve their electoral performance (Erikson, Mackuen, and Stimson 2002). Hence, if a party puts a new issue position on the party system agenda, other parties respond out of fear for electoral losses (H1).

H1: Mainstream parties respond (attack or accommodate) to a populist party with a welfare chauvinistic position at the same election.

Cognitive limitations and institutional restraints – say, party activists opposing new directions in policy – cause friction and can delay party responsiveness to rival parties (Baumgartner, Green-Pedersen, and Jones 2006; Walgrave and Nuytemans 2009). For that reason, parties may not respond directly to populist parties, but with a time lag of one election (H2).

H2: Mainstream parties respond (attack or accommodate) to a populist party with a welfare chauvinistic position at the next election.

The effect of a populist party taking a welfare chauvinistic position may be stronger if a party experiences losses. Research on shifts in parties' left-right positions finds that parties change

position after they lose elections (Budge 1994; Somer-Topcu 2009). A lost election indicates that a party is out of touch with public opinion (Budge 1994). Parties need to change their platform in order to align it with public opinion and improve their electoral performance. However, losing depends on context. Losing elections in multi-party systems does not necessarily mean losing cabinet participation and, reversely, winning elections does not guarantee cabinet participation. Hence, we propose two hypotheses.

H3: If a mainstream party has lost the previous elections, it is more likely to respond (attack or accommodate) to a populist party taking a welfare chauvinist position.

H4: If a mainstream party is in opposition prior to the election, it is more likely to respond (attack or accommodate) to a populist party taking a welfare chauvinist position.

A third aspect that may influence a mainstream party's response is the party's general ideological orientation. Left-wing parties are likely to respond differently to populist parties than right-wing parties. First, left-wing parties – traditionally associated with welfare universalism – may respond to a welfare chauvinistic challenge by prioritizing welfare more. In fact, it may be difficult for left-wing parties to respond by taking a more sceptical position on multiculturalism, because many of these parties are internally divided on this issue. Right-wing parties – traditionally associated with nationalism, monoculturalism and immigration scepticism – may respond to a populist party by stressing scepticism on multiculturalism. For right-wing parties welfare is an internally divisive issue and therefore it is unlikely that right-wing parties prioritize welfare more. Hence, our hypothesis is that if mainstream parties respond, they do so on the issue they are traditionally associated with. If they are losing votes, they may have lost the ownership of a particular issue and a way to get back lost votes is to regain issue ownership on an important issue. Hence, our final hypotheses are the following:

H5: The left responds to a populist party taking a welfare chauvinistic position by increasing its attention to welfare.

H6: The right responds to a populist party taking a welfare chauvinistic position by becoming more sceptical of immigration.

4. Methods

We first conduct a quantitative cross-country analysis of two dependent variables, namely mainstream parties' position on two issues that are at the core of welfare chauvinism: welfare and multiculturalism. For this purpose, we employ the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP). The CMP codes over 1500 party manifestos into 56 different categories. Some categories indicate a party's emphasis on one position of an issue (e.g. emphasis on welfare state expansion). We use these one-positional emphases on welfare and multiculturalism to construct two scales. Specifically, we use five issues: welfare state expansion, welfare state limitation, equality, positive references to multiculturalism and negative references to multiculturalism (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006). For welfare we create a position measure by summing the percentages of quasi-sentences dedicated to welfare state expansion and equality in each manifesto and subtracting the number of references to welfare state limitation (Schumacher 2011).⁴ For multiculturalism we created a positional scale subtracting the number of positive references to multiculturalism from the negative references to multiculturalism. Hence, a score of above zero is a position sceptical of multiculturalism. We looked at those parties marked as populists by the majority of the studies on populism: Sweden Democrats (SD) (Sweden), Progress Party (Denmark and Norway, FrP-D/FrP-N), Danish People's Party (DF) (Denmark), The Finns (PS) (Finland), List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) and Freedom Party (PVV) (Netherlands), Freedom Party Austria (FPÖ) and Alliance for the Future (BZÖ) (Austria)

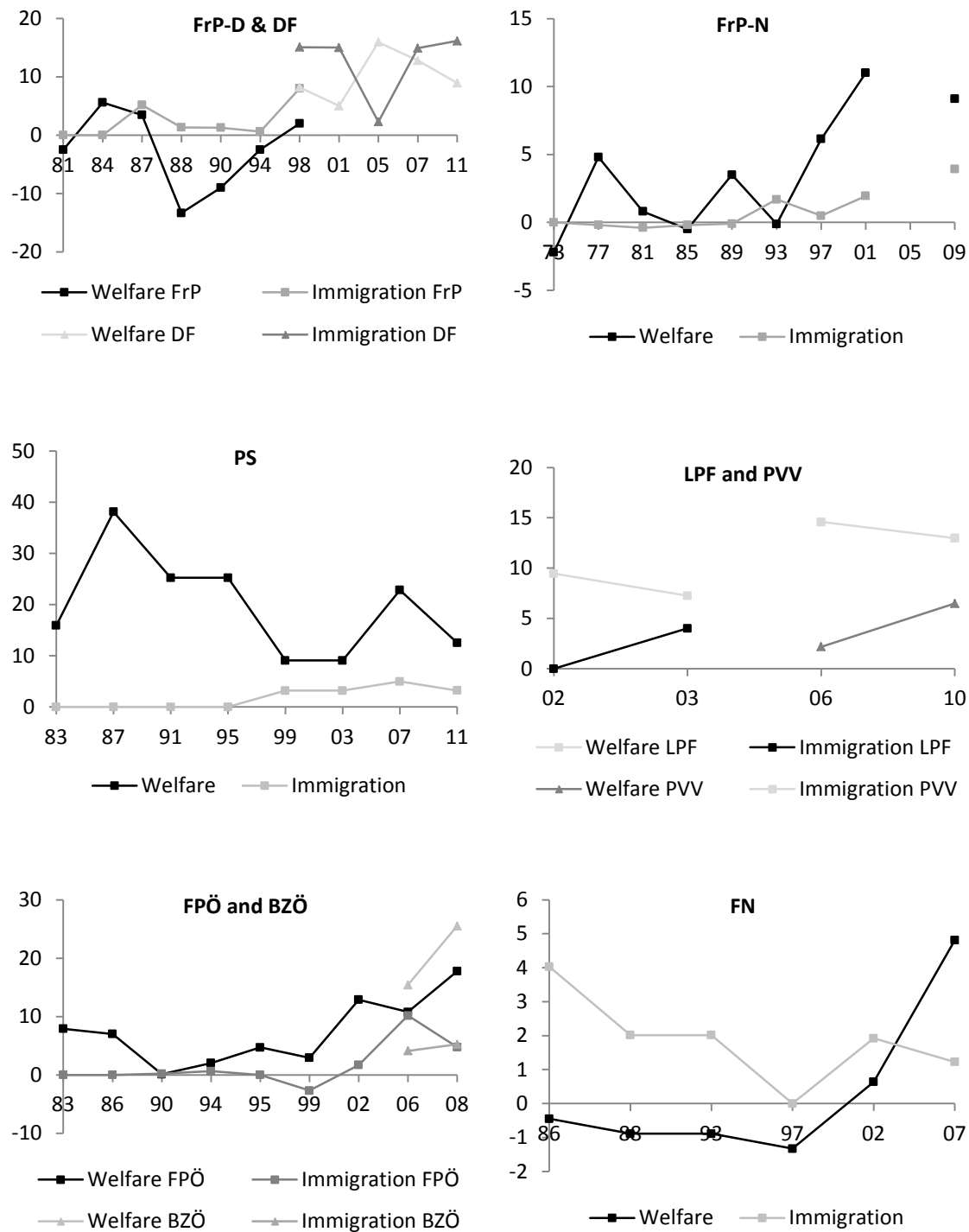
⁴ The number of references to welfare state limitation is extremely low. Therefore, results are unaffected if we leave this item out of the position score.

and National Front (FN) (France)⁵. We calculated their welfare chauvinism score by multiplying the welfare position with negative mentions of multiculturalism. We label this variable *welfare chauvinism*. We multiply the two positions, because for welfare chauvinism parties need to occupy both a pro-welfare position and a sceptical position on multiculturalism. If we simply added the two issues, parties scoring high on one of the two issues would be wrongly identified as welfare chauvinistic.

We calculate for all mainstream parties their positions on multiculturalism and welfare after 1980. This results in a total of 94 mainstream parties with 593 party_election year observations. Figure 1 displays the welfare attention and multiculturalism position of some of our cases. The top graphs show the Norwegian and Danish Progress Parties. Originally anti-tax and anti-welfare parties (Goul Andersen and Bjorklund 1990), they favor shrinking the welfare state and have no clear opinion on immigration. Similarly, the Austrian FPÖ, the French FN, and the Finnish Rural Party (later: The Finns, PS) also supported a neoliberal anti-welfare position roughly before the 2000s (Kitschelt and McGann 1995). In Denmark, there is a clear break in 1998 with the first electoral participation of the DF, which combines a strongly pro-welfare position with an anti-immigrant position. The Norwegian FrP gradually became more sceptical in 2001 and more so in 2009 and has increased attention to welfare since 1993. The Dutch LPF has a centrist position on multiculturalism in its 2002 manifesto, but not in 2003. In Austria there is a clear break in 2006 when FPÖ and BZÖ became pro-welfare and sceptical on multiculturalism. In sum, we clearly see a shift in populist party strategies from anti-welfare to pro-welfare, which – in combination with scepticism on multiculturalism – constitutes welfare chauvinism.

⁵ For Belgium, Flemish Interest and New Flemish Alliance meet our criteria, but their scores may be inflated due to conflict between the Flemish and Walloons concerning the distribution of welfare between regions. Therefore, we ignore Belgium here. For Italy we find – surprisingly – that Lega Nord does not take a welfare chauvinistic position.

Figure 1. Attention to welfare and multiculturalism by populist parties



FrP-D: Progress Party (Denmark), DF: Danish People's Party, FrP-N: Progress Party (Norway), PS: The Finns, LFP: List Pim Fortuyn, PVV: Freedom Party (Netherlands), FPÖ: Freedom Party (Austria), BZÖ: Alliance for the Future of Austria, FN: Front National.

In our cross-country analysis we use the change in position on welfare and on multiculturalism as dependent variables. To test our hypothesis that populists' emphasis on welfare chauvinism spreads to mainstream parties, we use the welfare chauvinism variable described earlier at the current election (H1) and the previous election (H2). To evaluate H3 and H4 we include a dummy variable indicating whether a party is in government (0) or in opposition (1) and a variable indicating the change in seat share at the previous election. We interact these variables with the degree of welfare chauvinism of the populist party. Table 1 lists the descriptive statistics of these variables.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of variables in regression analyses

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Δ Multiculturalism position	0.02	1.75	-12.38	10
Δ Welfare position	0.26	7.38	-45.83	30.85
Multiculturalism position (t-1)	-0.32	1.64	-9.43	12.96
Welfare position (t-1)	12.21	7.66	0	58.33
Change in seat %	-.002	0.08	-0.57	0.38
Welfare chauvinism (t)	10.73	34.26	0	190.13
Welfare chauvinism (t-1)	6.58	27.34	0	190.13
Dichotomous variable	%			
In gov / opp	46.93%			

Because our dataset has a party_year structure, we use a time-series-cross-sectional model, controlling for serial correlation by including a lagged dependent variable. Moreover, because we expect different effects for left-wing and right-wing parties, we perform separate regressions.

For a more in-depth analysis of our hypotheses we performed qualitative analyses of two cases: Denmark and the Netherlands. This allows us to develop a more fine-grained measure of a party's position on welfare and multiculturalism and a closer identification of whether, when and how mainstream parties respond to populist parties. We choose these two cases because of all our cases they have the longest 'tradition' of populist parties emphasizing welfare chauvinism. Hence, we have the most time-points to observe (a variety of) mainstream party responses. For this analysis we use the variables of the quantitative analyses, but also our own coding of party manifestos. We took all Danish (since 1990) and Dutch (since 2002) party manifestos and coded each sentence that

specifically proposed to reduce welfare state arrangements for non-natives, or that mentioned non-natives and welfare in a negative way. Additionally, we read coalition agreements, party leader speeches, newspaper articles and the existing literature for evidence of welfare chauvinism or for analyses of how mainstream parties adapted to welfare chauvinism.

5. Cross-country analysis of mainstream party adaptation

Do mainstream parties change position on welfare and multiculturalism if a populist party shifts to a welfare chauvinistic position? Table 2 reports the coefficients of four regression analyses. First, we took the party's multiculturalist position as dependent variable. For left parties we find an insignificant coefficient for change in seat share and government/opposition status and a positive effect for welfare chauvinism (model 1). This means that the more populist parties emphasize welfare chauvinism, the more left parties become sceptical of multiculturalism. To be precise: an average score on welfare chauvinism (10.73 – see table 1) produces a position shift of 0.06, and a score on welfare chauvinism one standard deviation above the mean (44.99 – see table 1) produces a position shift of 0.27. The maximum score on welfare chauvinism (190 – see table 1) produces a position shift of 1.14. For right-wing parties we also find a positive effect for welfare chauvinism and no significant effects for the changes in seat share and opposition/government status. Hence, also right-wing parties become sceptical of multiculturalism when the populist party shifts to welfare chauvinism. The effect size is comparable to that of left-wing parties.

Table 2. Time-series cross-sectional regressions of multiculturalism position and welfare attention

	Multiculturalism		Welfare	
	Left	Right	Left	Right
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Lag. level d.v.	-.794* (.065)	-.421* (.051)	-.524* (.061)	-.574* (.044)
Change in seat %	-1.17 (.785)	-1.39 (1.23)	.932 (5.85)	1.19 (3.79)
In gov / opp	-.115 (.133)	-.242 (.194)	-.138 (.992)	.102 (.596)

Welfare chauvinism (t)	.006* (.002)	.007* (.003)	.005 (.016)	.025* (.008)
N	223	363	233	363
R2	.41	.18	.26	.33

* p < .05.

For welfare we find no significant effect of welfare chauvinism for the left-wing parties (model 3) and a positive effect for the right-wing parties (model 4). This means that right-wing parties become more pro-welfare when populists emphasize welfare chauvinism. The effect size is much larger than in the case of multiculturalism. Right-wing parties shift on average 1.12 points in their welfare position if a populist party had a welfare chauvinism score one standard deviation above the mean. This contradicts our hypotheses on ideology (H5 and H6). We expected the left and the right to change on issues they own, welfare and scepticism of multiculturalism respectively. Instead, they do the reverse: The left stays the same on welfare, but becomes more sceptical of multiculturalism, and the right becomes more pro-welfare and more sceptical of multiculturalism. The alternative explanation is that the left is still confident on the welfare issue, but appreciates that it is losing votes by being too positive about multiculturalism. The right is unconfident about both its position on welfare and its position on multiculturalism.

Table 3 replicates the models in table 2 and adds a lagged welfare chauvinism variable. This way we can evaluate whether mainstream parties respond directly or with a one election lag to welfare chauvinism. Lagged welfare chauvinism is insignificant in all but one case. Right-wing parties apparently become less sceptical of multiculturalism if a populist party emphasized welfare chauvinism at the previous election. The direct effect of welfare chauvinism remains positive and significant in model 6. This means that mainstream right-wing parties become more sceptical of multiculturalism at the same election as the populist party in their party system, but revert to a less sceptical position at the next election.

Table 3. Regression coefficients for different operationalizations of populist emphasis

	Multiculturalism		Welfare	
	Left	Right	Left	Right

	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Welfare chauvinism(t)	.005*	.012*	-.004	.028*
	(.003)	(.003)	(.019)	(.010)
Welfare chauvinism(t-1)	.003	-.011*	.002	-.008
	(.004)	(.004)	(.026)	(.013)

* p < .05, for full regression tables see appendix table A1.

We find no effect of losing elections or opposition/government status in models 1 to 4. However, our hypothesis concerns an interaction effect, and table 4 reports the regression coefficients of the interaction between welfare chauvinism and change in seat share at previous election (models 9–12) and welfare chauvinism and opposition/government status (models 13–16; for full regressions see table A2). The interaction effects are insignificant⁶ except one: in model 9 we find a significant negative interaction effect. To facilitate the interpretation of this effect we plot the marginal effect of changes in seat shares for different levels of welfare chauvinism (see figure 2). The plot shows that if the populist party in the party system did not emphasize welfare chauvinism (score = 0) there is no effect of changes in seat shares on the multiculturalist position of left-wing parties. However, when a populist party does emphasize welfare chauvinism, the effect of changes in seat shares becomes strongly negative and significant. This means that losing elections (a negative value for the change in the seat share variable) produces a shift towards a more sceptical position on multiculturalism. In other words, mainstream left parties that lost the previous election become more sceptical of multiculturalism if a populist party emphasizes welfare chauvinism.

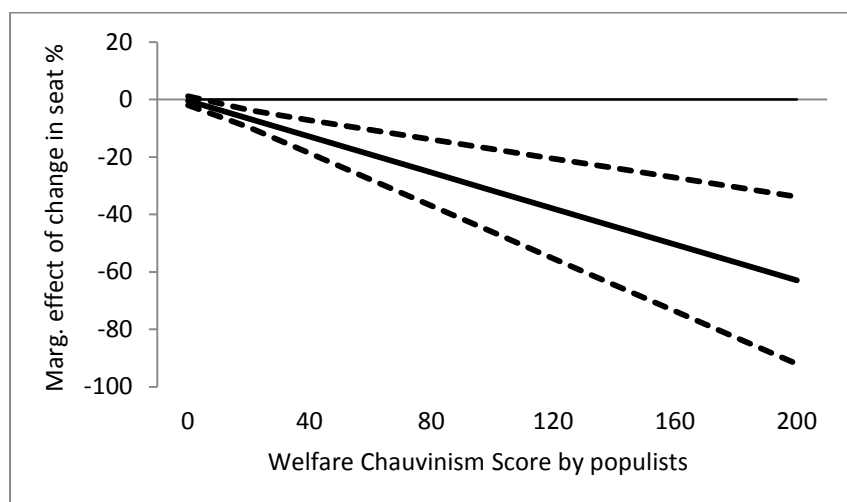
Table 4. Regression coefficients for different operationalizations of populist emphasis

	Multiculturalism		Welfare	
	Left	Right	Left	Right
	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
Welfare chauvinism(t) x	-.313*	-.063	.202	-.016
Change in seat %	(.075)	(.047)	(.579)	(.143)
	Model 13	Model 14	Model 15	Model 16
Welfare chauvinism(t) x	.004	-.007	.019	.005
In gov / in opp	(.003)	(.005)	(.033)	(.016)

⁶ To evaluate this we calculated marginal effects and standard errors for different values of welfare chauvinism. Almost none of these marginal effects were significant, except those in model 9.

* $p < .05$, for full regression tables see appendix table A2 and A3.

Figure 2. Marginal effect of change in seat share for different levels of welfare chauvinism (left-wing parties)



We now turn to the in-depth country analyses to see whether and how welfare chauvinism is accommodated, attacked or ignored.

Denmark: Massive Mainstream Response

We first look at the position changes of Danish mainstream parties (see figure 3) between 1994 and 2011. In 1998, the DF – the pioneer in welfare chauvinism – participated for the first time in national elections. In 1998 all parties (Social Democrats, S; Liberals, V; Conservatives, KF) – except the Social Liberals (RV) – became more sceptical on multiculturalism and more pro-welfare. This trend continues over the next elections with each party reverting to a less pro-welfare position and a less sceptical multiculturalism position. Interestingly, the RV moves in the opposite direction, becoming more positive on multicultural issues and thereby developing into DF's natural opponent on this issue. Unlike the other mainstream parties, the RV chose to attack the DF.

Figure 3. Position on welfare (left) and multiculturalism (right) of mainstream parties

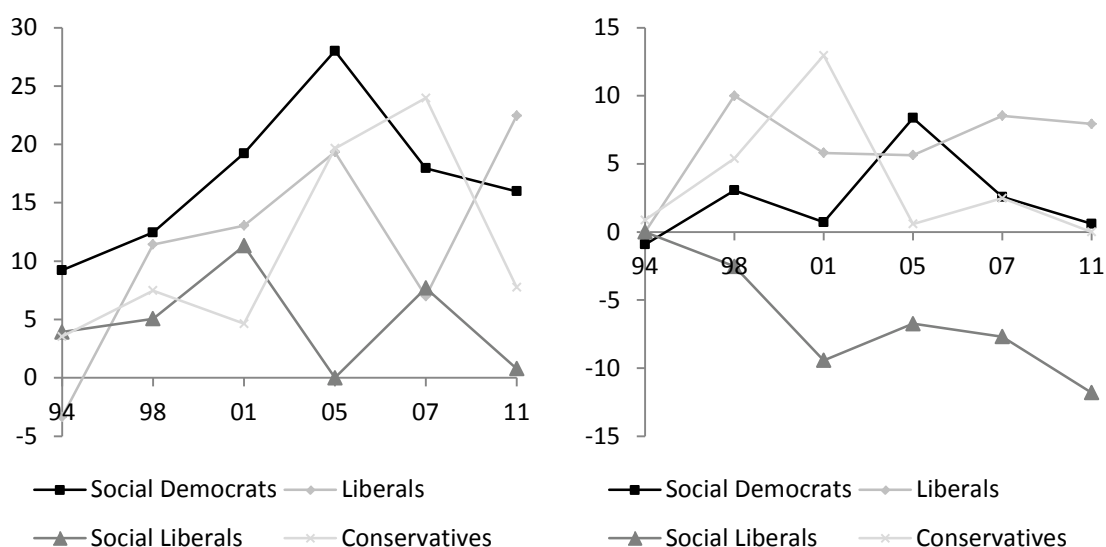
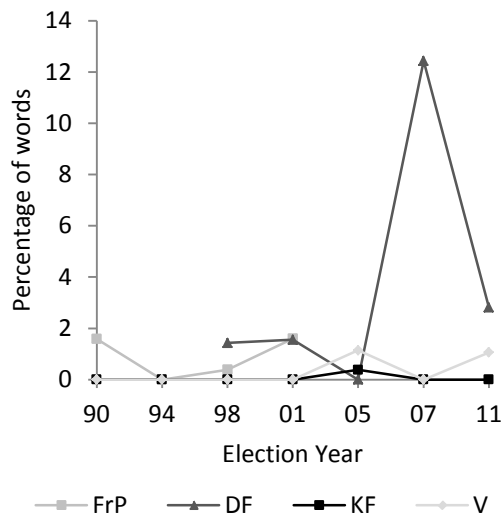


Figure 4 summarizes the explicit mention of welfare chauvinism in the party manifestos based on our own coding of the material. The Progress Party (FrP) and the DF emphasized welfare chauvinism in the 1990s. The DF spent about 2% of its entire manifesto on sentences that are explicitly welfare chauvinist. Yet the mainstream parties did not pick this up until 2005 and even then the share of sentences on welfare chauvinism is minimal. In 2001 welfare chauvinism was present in V's election campaign, in which the party emphasized that Denmark is not the world's social safety net (Bale 2003). The party leadership reasoned that since the DF's voters mostly came from the social democrats, more campaign emphasis on the immigration and welfare issue could be beneficial for V too (Mortensen 2008: 142). In terms of policy the influence of welfare chauvinism is evident from 1998 onwards. In 1999 the Social Democratic government introduced (but later retracted) a law reducing social assistance for immigrants (Andersen 2007). After 2001 the right-wing coalition government, which received parliamentary support from the DF, introduced measures restricting access to benefits or lowering the level of benefits for immigrants (Andersen 2007). Other measures – in particular in child care – in fact increased immigrants' access to social services (Andersen 2007).

Figure 4. Percentage of welfare chauvinism in party manifesto.



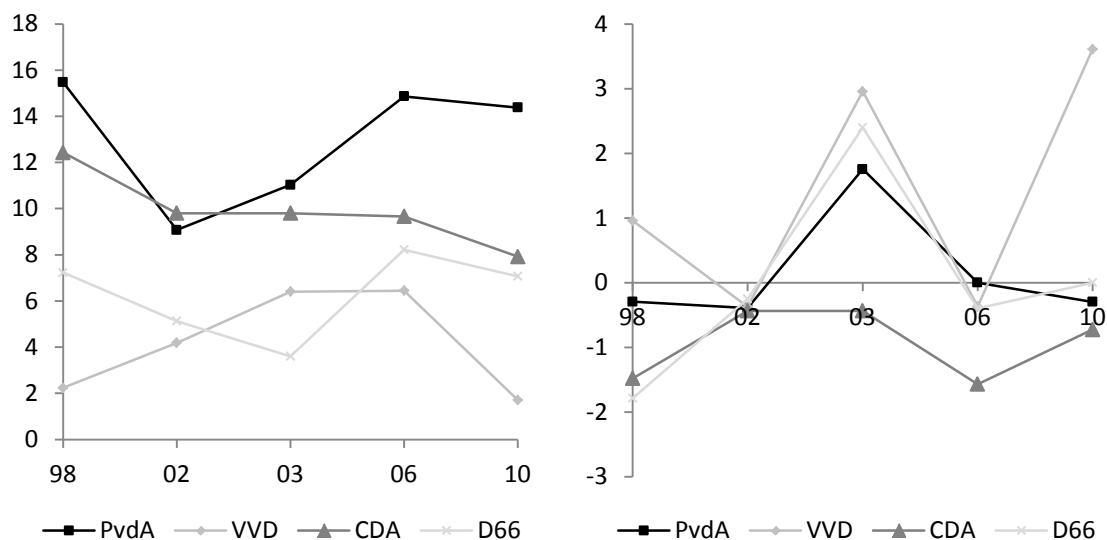
As we can see, the Danish mainstream parties respond, and the responses come from the left (S) and the right (V and K). Most responses were accommodating, but the RV attacked the DF's position on multiculturalism. We see these responses at the 1998 election, in new policies in 1999 and also at the 2001 elections. Hence, the responses are relatively quick and in the case of 1998 come prior to the DF's electoral success. The mechanism here is that parties anticipate a loss of seats because it was expected from DF's foundation in 1995 that the party would gain a substantial foothold in Danish parliament.

The Netherlands: Delayed and Partial Responses by the Mainstream

In 2002 the mainstream parties had converged on a position that was slightly positive of multiculturalism. However, after the meteoric rise of Pim Fortuyn and his List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) in 2002 the mainstream parties – with the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) as the exception – shifted towards scepticism on multiculturalism. In the shadow of the LPF's electoral success, the CDA won the 2002 elections, re-establishing itself as the pivot party in the Dutch party system (Van Kersbergen 2008). The Labour Party (PvdA), the Conservative Liberals (VVD) and the Social Liberals (D66) were the main losers and they had also been the main targets of the LPF. With LPF's demise in

the 2003 elections, the mainstream parties again became less sceptical of multiculturalism in the 2006 elections, only to become more sceptical in 2010 in response to the PVV's electoral success.

Figure 5. Position on welfare (left) and multiculturalism (right) of mainstream parties



In figure 6 we analyse mention of welfare chauvinism based on our own coding of the manifestos.⁷

In 2003, the LPF explicitly included welfare chauvinism in its manifesto. The established parties also showed more concern with multiculturalism and the economic position of immigrants.

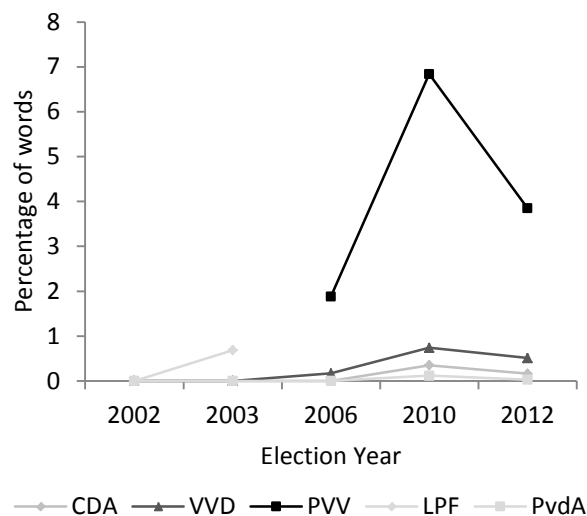
In 2006 the PVV participated in elections for the first time. It devoted almost 2 percent of its manifesto to welfare chauvinism. In 2010 the party made welfare chauvinism a key part of its election programme. Some policy proposals were already present in the 2006 document: Immigrants should only receive social security benefits after 10 years of working in the Netherlands; the export of benefits should be limited; the borders should be closed 'as long as possible' to Eastern European workers; and a limitation of benefits for immigrants whose Dutch is inadequate and for women who wear a burqa. The mainstream parties also paid some lip service to welfare chauvinism, with the VVD dedicating almost 1 percent of its manifesto to it. The PvdA and the CDA each made unspecific proposals that labor migrants should work and not live off benefits. The VVD was much more

⁷ Figure 5 leaves out attention ratios of D66 and GroenLinks, which were (almost) 0 for all five elections.

specific and in fact copied the PVV's proposal that immigrants can only receive social security benefits after 10 years of working in the Netherlands and that language fluency and sufficient integration into society should be a condition for benefits. The subsequent VVD-CDA government, supported by the PVV, included welfare chauvinist proposals in its coalition agreement.⁸

In the 2012 elections attention to welfare chauvinism declined. The PVV made about half as many references to welfare chauvinism. The core policy proposals remained, but now Europe had become the central issue of the party's electoral campaign. As a consequence there was less attention to welfare chauvinism, although the policy intentions were unchanged. The same conclusion holds for the VVD. The PvdA and CDA also decreased attention, but their attention was already minimal.

Figure 6. Percentage of welfare chauvinism in party manifesto.



Having described welfare chauvinism in Dutch manifestos, we now ask what explains the increase and decrease of welfare chauvinism. Our explanation is straightforward: The LPF's electoral success placed the negative side of a multicultural society higher on the political agendas of the losing

⁸ This document was also analysed and received a welfare chauvinism score of 0.7, which equals the score of the VVD election manifesto.

mainstream parties (VVD, PvdA, D66), but the lack of electoral success of the populists in 2003 made most parties return to their initial levels of attention to the multicultural society. Explicit welfare chauvinism only arose after the electoral success of the PVV's specifically welfare chauvinist programme of 2006. Mainstream right-wing parties gradually adopted this position, in particular the right-wing CDA and VVD, which both lost at the 2006 elections. The center-left parties mostly steered clear of this position even though they also lost elections.

To illustrate in more detail how parties switch to welfare chauvinism, we briefly describe the case of the VVD (2006–2010) and the leadership of Mark Rutte. Prior to the 2006 general elections the VVD organized a primary to select a successor to the outgoing party leader. Mark Rutte, a self-described classic liberal with a concern for social affairs and state secretary for Education, Culture and Science, competed with the populist, right-wing Rita Verdonk, minister for Immigration and Integration. Rutte drafted a small manifesto listing his main policy ideas.⁹ It emphasized a green economy, less bureaucracy, and more economic growth, while immigration was framed as an opportunity to attract international talent. The primary was a very close call, demonstrating the deep rift within the VVD between an anti-immigration camp – seeking a coalition with the PVV – and a more left-liberal camp. The latter won a temporary victory with the selection of Rutte as party leader. Our data show that Rutte's victory had a strong impact on the 2006 election manifesto because it downplayed the critique of the multicultural society compared to the manifesto of 2003. The manifesto contained one single welfare chauvinistic sentence and it only referred to seasonal workers. Rutte quickly ran into problems, however. First, the VVD lost the election and its position as government coalition partner. Second and more problematic, the number 2 of the party and Rutte's former competitor for the leadership obtained more votes than Rutte himself. Third, unexpectedly, the PVV with its strongly welfare chauvinist and anti-Islam programme exceeded expectations in the 2006 elections.

⁹ <http://web.archive.org/web/20060523070205/http://www.markrutte.nl/images/9puntenplan.pdf>

Fourth, Rutte's left-wing course was seen internally as the cause of the party's poor performance because it had invited an attack from the right.¹⁰

As of March 2007, Rutte started to move to the right by criticizing ministers for having dual nationalities. The VVD continued to promote this agenda and produced an immigration note in November 2007 which explicitly linked immigration with the welfare state. Rutte was initially reluctant, but favorable polls for Rita Verdonk and the PVV pressed Rutte to write a new constituent party manifesto that contained a strongly-worded critical paragraph on immigration.

Rutte spiralled deeper into problems when in May 2009 the VVD MPs ceased supporting him as party leader. The impending electoral defeat at the 2009 European elections and the massive support for the PVV in the polls pushed Rutte further to the right. In speeches between May 2009 and September 2009, Rutte firmly opposed immigration and stressed the link between excessive welfare state costs and immigration. Continuing along these lines, the VVD included welfare chauvinism in its 2010 general election programme. In 2010, the VVD won the elections and subsequently wrote most of its welfare chauvinistic proposals into the coalition agreement between the PVV and the CDA.

This illustration of the VVD and welfare chauvinism demonstrates how a combination of poor electoral performance, poor electoral prospects indicated by opinion polls, intra-party pressure and stiff competition on the right force a reluctant party leader to accept welfare chauvinism.

6. Conclusion

We show, on the basis of comparative data on electoral manifestos, that populist parties – originally neoliberal and anti-welfare – have embraced a pro-welfare position, a strategy that has been

¹⁰ 'Partijbureau veegt vloer aan met campagne VVD' *Volkskrant*, 3 januari 2007.

particularly successful in Denmark and the Netherlands. This transformation of populist parties on the economic policy dimension was already observed in earlier analyses of populist party programmes (de Lange 2007; Rovny 2012). We expected that mainstream parties would adapt in response to these successes. Our quantitative analysis indicates that mainstream right-wing parties became more sceptical of multiculturalism and more pro-welfare when a populist party took a welfare chauvinistic position. In our qualitative analysis we illustrated how the mainstream right accommodated the welfare chauvinism of populist parties. The mainstream left also became more sceptical of multiculturalism, in particular after they had lost an election. The mainstream left did not become more pro-welfare, nor did we find explicit welfare chauvinism among the Danish and Dutch social democrats.

Our quantitative results indicate that mainstream responses to welfare chauvinism took place at the same election that the populist party shifted to a (stronger) welfare chauvinistic position. Hence, contrary to our expectations, we did not find a delayed effect (H2), an effect of losing elections (H3 – with the exception of the left and multiculturalism) or an effect of opposition status (H4). Since we did find evidence of a direct response of mainstream parties (H1), we conclude that it is the prospect of losing votes to a populist party that motivates mainstream party responses. This finding contrasts with several studies (Budge, Ezrow, and McDonald 2010; Budge 1994; Somer-Topcu 2009) that argue that parties first need to lose an election before they change.

Our case studies of the Netherlands and Denmark revealed two interesting facts that deserve further attention. First, in the Netherlands the pivot party in the 2000s – the CDA – was remarkably unresponsive to welfare chauvinism. It seems that being a pivot party and thus being guaranteed government participation enables a party to remain unresponsive and stick to its own policies. Second, in Denmark, the RV shifted to a strongly pro-multiculturalism position and thus attacked the welfare chauvinism of the Danish People's Party. Traditionally, the RV is the pivot party in Denmark. Even though the party is not always in government, its central position in the party system and the

minority status of many Danish governments enables the RV to exercise considerable power on government. Hence, we theorize that a central position in a minority cabinet system allows a mainstream party to follow a course close to its core values.

The electoral success of populists with their welfare chauvinistic agenda also changes the political alliances that underlie the welfare state. Afonso (2014) demonstrates that due to the electoral successes of the SVP (Switzerland) and FPÖ (Austria) a majority for welfare state retrenchment emerged. Although it has not been our goal to track policy changes, our reading of the Danish and Dutch cases suggests that populist parties ally with the mainstream right in reducing welfare for immigrants, but ally with the mainstream – or even radical – left in maintaining generous welfare programmes for insiders.

In conclusion, welfare chauvinism is a typical populist response to establishment parties that were involved in downsizing the welfare state. Populist parties embrace a pro-welfare stance in an attempt to pit the people (victims of retrenchment) against the elite (those who attack the established welfare rights of the people), occasionally also blaming others (immigrants) for the welfare state's trouble. This strategy works well for populist parties and is thus an example of an evolving 'winning strategy' of populist parties (Kitschelt and McGann 1995; de Lange 2007). This success motivates mainstream parties (to varying extents) to accommodate the populist parties. In fact, this confirms Meguid's (2005, 2008) analysis of the electoral consequences of mainstream party responses to niche parties, namely that accommodation is the best electoral strategy. This then leads to an interesting dynamic: (1) Populists take a position that opposes the establishment; (2) from this position, populists enjoy electoral success; (3) mainstream parties accommodate populist parties by adjusting their policy positions away from their traditional stance. One could see this in a positive light: Populist parties force mainstream parties to stay on track with shifts in public opinion. Or one could put it in a negative perspective: Mainstream parties compromise their own ideas by following the alleged populist sentiment solely for electoral reasons and hence fail to offer voters an

alternative. Because of a lack of public opinion data on welfare chauvinism, we unfortunately cannot uncritically accept one of the two versions.

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Appendix

Table A1. Full regression table of analysis summarized in table 3.

	Multiculturalism		Welfare	
	Left	Right	Left	Right
	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Lag. level d.v.	-.803*	-.386*	-.500*	-.547*
	(.066)	(.051)	(.061)	(.044)
Change in seat %	-1.17	-1.50	1.17	1.18
	(.786)	(1.22)	(5.93)	(4.07)
In gov / opp	-.118	-.257	-.087	.56
	(.137)	(.192)	(1.01)	(.64)
Welfare chauvinism(t)	.005*	.012*	-.004	.028*
	(.003)	(.003)	(.019)	(.010)
Welfare chauvinism(t-1)	.003	-.011*	.002	-.008
	(.004)	(.004)	(.026)	(.013)
N	223	363	223	363
R2	.41	.19	.24	.32

* p < .05.

Table A2. Full regression table of analysis summarized in table 4.

	Multiculturalism		Welfare	
	Left	Right	Left	Right
	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
Lag. level d.v.	-.78*	-.429*	-.525*	-.574*
	(.063)	(.051)	(.061)	(.044)
Change in seat %	-.448	-.977	.453	1.29
	(.777)	(1.27)	(6.02)	(3.91)
In gov / opp	-.112	-.234	-.139	.103
	(.128)	(.194)	(.994)	(.597)
Welfare chauvinism (t)	-.0002	.007*	.009	.025*

	(.003)	(.003)	(.02)	(.008)
Welfare chauvinism(t) x	-.313*	-.063	.202	-.016
Change in seat %	(.075)	(.047)	(.579)	(.143)
N	223	363	223	363
R2	.45	.18	.26	.33

* p < .05, for full regression tables see appendix table A1 and A2.

Table A3. Full regression table of analysis summarized in table 4.

	Multiculturalism		Welfare	
	Left	Right	Left	Right
	Model 13	Model 14	Model 15	Model 16
Lag. level d.v.	-.786*	-.415*	-.523*	-.575*
	(.066)	(.051)	(.061)	(.044)
Change in seat %	-1.15	-1.41	1.07	1.20
	(.786)	(1.23)	(5.86)	(3.8)
In gov / opp	-.146	-.159	-.291	.038
	(.138)	(.203)	(1.03)	(.63)
Welfare chauvinism(t)	.005 ⁺	.011*	-.001	.022 ⁺
	(.003)	(.004)	(.02)	(.011)
Welfare chauvinism(t) x	.004	-.007	.019	.005
in gov / in opp	(.003)	(.005)	(.033)	(.016)
N	223	363	223	363
R2	.41	.18	.26	.33

* p < .05 + p < .1.